Tunisian-Spiced Beef & Apricot Tagine (Skillet Version)

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground beef (85–90%)
- 2 Tbsp olive oil, divided
- 3 medium carrots, sliced into coins
- 4 green onions (scallions), sliced
    - whites and greens separated
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup dried apricots, chopped
- ¾ cup Israeli couscous
- 1½ cups water
- 1 Tbsp Better Than Bouillon (chicken)
- 1½ tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Optional finish (recommended):

- ¼ cup sliced almonds, lightly toasted

Method

1. **Soften the carrots (strongly recommended)**
   Place sliced carrots in a microwave-safe bowl, cover with water, and microwave on high 3–4 minutes until just tender. Drain and set aside.

2. **Brown the beef**
   This recipe needs a big pan…like 14". Otherwise step 3 will need to be done in a separate skillet.

3. Heat 1 Tbsp olive oil in a **large** skillet over medium-high heat.
   Add ground beef, season lightly with salt and pepper, and cook until browned and mostly cooked through. Break it up well.

4. **Build the base**
   Push beef to one side. Add remaining 1 Tbsp olive oil, scallion whites, and garlic.
   Cook 30–60 seconds until fragrant. Push aside into the meat.

5. **Toast couscous + spices**
   To a dry part of the pan, add couscous, cumin, paprika, coriander, and cinnamon.
   Stir 1–2 minutes until couscous smells nutty and spices bloom. Combine with meat and onion mixture once toasted a bit.

6. **Simmer**
   Stir in softened carrots, apricots, water, and Better Than Bouillon.
   Bring to a gentle boil, then cover and reduce heat to very low.
   Simmer 8–10 minutes, stirring once or twice, until couscous is tender and liquid absorbed.

7. **Finish**
   Taste and adjust salt and pepper.
   Sprinkle with scallion greens and almonds if using.

Notes

- This is intentionally **savory-leaning**, not sweet. The apricots soften and round things out.
- Microwaving the carrots first prevents that frustrating "why are these still raw" situation.
- Keeps well and reheats beautifully — even better on day two.
- If it looks rustic, that's correct. This dish is about warmth, not polish.