

Krishna Indian Cooking School

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U of G Deep Dish Dialogues Class

Namaste and welcome! My name is Chitra Saravanan, and I come from south India. I started cooking since the age of 9 and have had a passion for cooking since then. Today, I will guide you to cook Indian vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals with a few simple ingredients based on home style cooking which is healthy, nutritious, and economical.

Introduction to Indian Cooking

India is a vast country with a total area of around 3.3 million square km. It is a land of striking contrasts, with huge variations in terms of climate, geography, religion, culture, and customs. All these factors have had a powerful influence on the country's cuisine. Cultures and customs have also had a considerable impact on Indian cuisine, over the centuries. Historical events have imposed many different cultures upon India, and the country has not only absorbed them, but has also encouraged each to flourish individually.

Principles of Indian Cooking

Until recently, no written record of Indian recipes has existed in India itself. Recipes have traditionally been handed down from one generation to another.

The key to successful Indian cooking lies in the art of blending spices and herbs, rather than sophisticated cooking techniques.

Guide to Spices and Ingredients

Spices are integral to both the flavour and aroma of a dish. Some spices are used principally for the taste and other spices are used mainly for their aroma.

| Cooking fats | Adding heat | Colouring agents |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Clarified butter (ghee) | Red chili powder | Turmeric, saffron |
| Sunflower, corn, or canola oil | Green chili, dry red chili | Garam masala, tomatoes |

Common Ingredients Used in Indian Cuisine

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Garam masala | Coconut |
| Turmeric powder | Curry leaves |
| Coriander powder | Coriander leaves |
| Cumin powder | Fennel seeds |
| Red chili powder | Whole spices like cardamom, cloves, cinnamon |

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How to Cook Indian Food?

There are really no hard and fast rules on the combinations of the spices. If you ask a cook about their recipe, the response would be to add a bit of ginger/garlic, some turmeric and chili, and finish off with a little garam masala. This is because many of us rely on approximations and therefore, the same dish will often vary from house to house.

Creating a dish is not an exact science but there are some basics to remember. When you first fry the spices, there is a pungent smell. As you stir, this sharp aroma mellows down and you get a more subtle blend of the spices. Your masala mix is cooked when the smell changes and when you keep cooking on a medium heat, the oil oozes out from the dish. It's all about the timing.

The term masala means spices.

Cooking Menu

- Coconut chickpea curry
- Peas pulao

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COCONUT CHICKPEA CURRY

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cans of chickpeas drained and rinsed (540 ml can)
- 1 medium size onion finely chopped
- 2 medium size tomatoes chopped or 1 cup diced canned tomatoes
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- 1 tsp garlic paste
- 2 tbsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp chili powder or to taste
- 1½ cup coconut milk (400 ml can)
- 1 tsp salt or to taste
- 2 tbsp canola oil or any cooking oil
- ½ cup chopped coriander leaves (optional)

METHOD

1. In a medium bottom pan add two tablespoon cooking oil, once the oil is hot add the cumin seeds and let it sizzle.
2. Then add the chopped onion and ginger garlic paste and cook until the onion are translucent.
3. Then add the chopped tomatoes and salt and cook until the tomatoes are soft.
4. Once the tomatoes are soft add the cumin powder, coriander powder, red chili powder, and turmeric powder and stir well.
5. Then add the drained and rinsed chickpeas and stir until the spices are well coated to the chickpeas.
6. Next add the coconut milk and cook the curry on a high flame for about 5-7 minutes and reduce the heat to medium flame and cook for another 10 minutes.
7. Finally add some chopped coriander leaves and switch off the stove and serve it hot with naan or basmati rice.

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PEAS PULAO

Pulao means a rice dish cooked with vegetables or meat with spices. Peas pulao is a very simple yet delicious rice dish that can be had all by itself or served with other dishes.

INGREDIENTS

Basmati rice – 2 cups
Canola oil or any cooking oil – 2 tbsp
Whole green cardamom – 2
Cloves – 2
1-inch-long cinnamon sticks – 2
Ginger paste – ½ tsp
Garlic paste – ½ tsp
Medium size onion chopped – 1
Frozen green peas – 1 cup
Black pepper powder – 1 tsp or to taste (optional)
Water – 4 cups of hot water
Salt – 1 ½ tsp (or to taste)

METHOD

The very first step is to rinse the rice 2 to 3 times to remove the debris and soak the rice in water for about 10 mins meanwhile when the rice is soaked you can start the next steps.

1. Heat the oil in a medium bottom pan.
2. Once the oil is hot, add the whole spices like cardamom, cinnamon and cloves and let it sizzle.
3. Next add the chopped onion and ginger garlic paste and cook until the onions are translucent.
4. Then add the frozen peas and black pepper powder and salt and stir gently.
5. Next add the soaked and drained rice in the pan and sauté for a minute.
6. Finally add four cups of hot water and give a stir and bring the rice to a rolling boil on high heat.
7. Then reduce it to medium heat and put the lid and cook the rice on medium heat for 20 minutes.
8. Switch off the flame and serve the peas pulao hot with some curry and enjoy!