

Almond Lamb Curry Recipe

(Indian Almond Lamb Curry Recipe)

Ingredients:

500g boneless leg of lamb
200g blanched almonds
2 teaspoons poppy seeds
30g tamarind pulp
2 tablespoons oil
3 cloves
2 cinnamon sticks
3 green cardamom pods
8 curry leaves
2 medium onions, chopped
2 teaspoons ginger-garlic paste* (refer below)
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
3 teaspoons ground coriander
2 teaspoons red chili powder
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
20 almonds slivers, lightly toasted
Coriander (cilantro) sprigs, to garnish

Method:

Cut the lamb into 4-cm pieces. Soak the almonds in warm water to cover for 10 minutes, then drain and blend to a paste with the poppy seeds, using a blender or mini-processor. Soak the tamarind pulp in 4 tablespoons warm water for 20 minutes, then strain through a fine sieve. Heat the oil in a deep sauté pan, add the whole spices and curry leaves, and sauté until the spices crackle. Add the chopped onions and fry until softened and golden brown in color. Add the ginger-garlic paste and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes to lose the raw taste. Add the tomatoes and cook for about 10 minutes. Stir in the powdered spices and cook, stirring, for 2-3 minutes, adding a little water if needed. Add the lamb and sauté to seal on all sides. Add salt and 200ml water. Cook on a low heat for 30 minutes. Stir in the almond paste and tamarind liquid, and simmer for 15 minutes or until the lamb is cooked, adding a little water if the sauce is too thick. Serve sprinkled with almonds and coriander (cilantro) sprigs.

***Ginger-garlic paste:**

This is widely used in Indian recipes. To prepare, blend equal quantities of peeled garlic and ginger with 10% of the total weight in water, using a blender or mini-processor. The paste should be smooth and very fine. Store in a sealed container in the fridge. If you wish to keep the ginger-garlic paste for longer, add 5% vegetable oil and 2% lemon juice as you blend the paste; this improves the keeping quality and lightens the color of the paste. You can always freeze ginger-garlic paste in an ice-cube tray for future use.

Traditionally, this preparation takes its flavor from vadagam - a powdered, sun-dried blend of lentils and spices, which is tedious to make at home. Some Asian grocers stock it, but for this recipe I have simplified the flavors and used whole spices - it works well.