

Kashmiri Butter Chicken Recipe

Ingredients:

1 onion, finely chopped
4 garlic cloves, crushed
2.5cm-piece ginger, grated, plus 5cm-piece ginger,
cut into fine matchsticks
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon chili powder (optional)
2 teaspoons paprika
2 tablespoons sunflower or canola oil
1.5 kg whole chicken, jointed into 8 pieces
(ask your butcher to do this)
40 g unsalted butter
3 tablespoons tomato paste
1 tablespoon raw sugar
150 ml thickened cream
1/4 cup coriander (cilantro) leaves, to serve

Kashmiri garam masala:

1 1/2 teaspoons cumin seeds
1 1/2 teaspoons fennel seeds
3/4 teaspoon cardamom seeds (not pods)
1/4 teaspoon nigella seeds (kolonji)* (obtainable from
Indian food stores and specialty-spice shops)
1/4 teaspoon whole black peppercorns
1cm-piece cinnamon quill
4 cloves
1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg

Method:

For the garam masala, heat a heavy-based frying pan over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and add all the spices except the nutmeg. Shake spices around in the pan for a few seconds until they darken slightly and become aromatic. Tip into a spice grinder or a mortar and grind to a fine powder. Stir in the nutmeg. Any leftover garam masala will keep, sealed in a small glass jar, for up to 2 months.

Place the onion, garlic, grated ginger, lemon juice, chili powder (if using), and paprika in a food processor with 1 teaspoon of the garam masala and 1 tablespoon of the oil. Blend to form a paste, adding a tablespoon or 2 of water if necessary.

Heat remaining oil in a large, deep frying pan or flameproof casserole dish over medium-high heat. Add the chicken, in batches if necessary, and fry until lightly browned on all sides. Remove and set aside. Add butter and spice paste to pan and fry over low heat for 3-4 minutes until paste starts to separate from oil.

Place tomato paste in a bowl and mix with sugar, 1 cup water and 1 teaspoon salt. Add to pan, cover and simmer for 10 minutes.

Stir finely sliced ginger and cream into sauce and return chicken to the pan, turning pieces to coat in sauce. Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chicken is tender and cooked through.

Uncover and add 1 extra teaspoon of garam masala. Sprinkle butter chicken with coriander and serve with naan bread and steamed basmati rice, if desired.

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