

Red Masala Paste Recipe

Ingredients:

30 g garlic
60 g ginger root
Water for soaking
50 g dried red chilies
25 g fresh red chilies
40 g fresh green chilies
1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons salt
1 tablespoon oil

Method:

Soak the garlic and ginger in water for 10 minutes for ease of peeling. De-stalk the dried red chilies (don't over handle them - wear kitchen gloves), and place in a medium-sized bowl filled with lukewarm water, immersing about three quarters of the chilies; stir to wet them all. Collect any spilled seeds and add them to the soaking chilies. Soak for 15 minutes until soft. De-stalk the fresh red and green chilies, and soak in a separate bowl for 10 minutes. Drain the garlic and ginger. Peel the garlic and scrape the ginger clean of skin with a serrated knife or the edge of a spoon, until shiny and yellow. Rinse, then dice, removing any dark spots or stems. Drain the dried chilies in a colander placed in a bowl to collect spilled seeds. Return the seeds to the chilies. Drain the fresh chilies, and slice into quarters, careful not to touch the sliced chili flesh. (Be sure to wash your hands after this step). Mince all the chilies in a food processor to a coarse paste, first on low speed, then on high. Add the ginger, then the garlic, mincing until the paste is even and mainly smooth. Stir the paste every now and again to ensure evenness. Scoop the paste into a mixing bowl. Pour the lemon juice into the food processor to 'clean' out the last of the paste, then add this to the bowl and stir well. Mix in the salt until dissolved, and then the oil. Red masala should be an even, glistening, slightly dark red paste with a strong chili aroma. Store it in an airtight container in the deep freezer, where it will keep for up to one year. Note that because of the masala's salt and oil, it never freezes completely solid, and may be scooped straight from its container.