



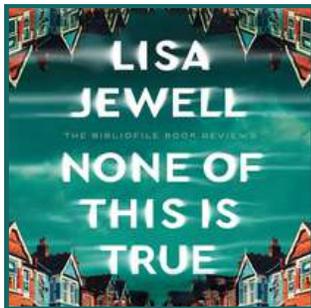
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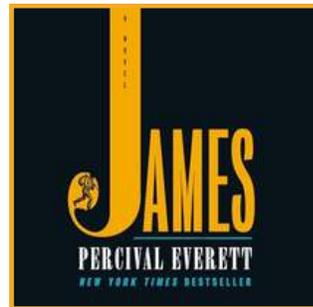
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Spice of the MONTH



garam masala

This blend of Garam Masala from The Spice Merchant contains:

Black Pepper, Coriander, Paprika, Cloves, Cinnamon, and Cardamom

Garam masala is a blend of ground spices used extensively in Indian cuisine. The spices for garam masala are usually toasted to bring out more flavor and aroma, and then ground.

garam masala

Garam masala is believed to have originated in Northern India, where it is commonly used in traditional Mughal cuisine. In Ayurvedic medicine, the spices found in garam masala are considered “warming,” meaning they are thought to stimulate metabolism. Early records suggest the blend was valued not only for its flavor but also for its healing properties such as supporting digestion. The term garam masala translates to “hot spice mix,” though “hot” refers to the warmth and intensity of the spices rather than spiciness. Because Northern India experiences colder seasons, warming spices have long been appreciated in the region.

Over time, garam masala spread throughout the Indian subcontinent and as far west as present-day Iran. Numerous regional variations emerged, each reflecting local ingredients, traditions, and cooking techniques, resulting in a wide range of distinctive flavors. Garam masala adds warmth, sweetness, floral notes, and a touch of heat from the black pepper. It is usually added near the end of cooking as it not only seasons the dish but adds to the aroma. Today, garam masala remains a staple of Indian cuisine and continues to grow in global popularity as cultures and culinary traditions are shared worldwide.

Fun Facts

- Garam Masala holds a cherished place as a beloved spice blend in culinary delights. A staple in Indian cuisine, its name, "garam," hails from Hindi, signifying the spices' ability to infuse warmth into the body.
- Garam Masala is the primary ingredient in Ayurvedic cuisine, believed to bring harmony between the body's doshas (vata, pitta, and kapha).

Information from The Spruce Eats

Instructions

1. In a large pot or pan over medium heat, sauté the chopped onion in the olive oil for 5 mins, stirring frequently. Then add the garlic and ginger and cook 1 more minute, until fragrant.
2. Add the garam masala, turmeric and red pepper flakes to the pan and stir into the onion mixture. Add a few tablespoons of water if the mixture is too dry.
3. Now add the dried lentils, canned tomatoes and their juices, coconut milk and vegetable broth to the pan. Stir well and turn the heat to high. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for about 15 mins, until the lentils are cooked and soft. Stir occasionally.
4. Squeeze the lemon juice into the pan, and stir in the spinach as well until wilted. Add salt to taste. I used 1 teaspoon.
5. Serve with brown or white rice.



Red Lentil Dahl

🕒 Total Time: 30 mins
🍽️ Servings: 8



Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped small
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- **1 tablespoon garam masala**
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper chili flakes
- 1 1/2 cups dried red lentils
- 14 ounce can diced tomatoes
- 13.5 ounce can full fat coconut milk
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- Half a lemon, juiced
- 3-4 cups baby spinach



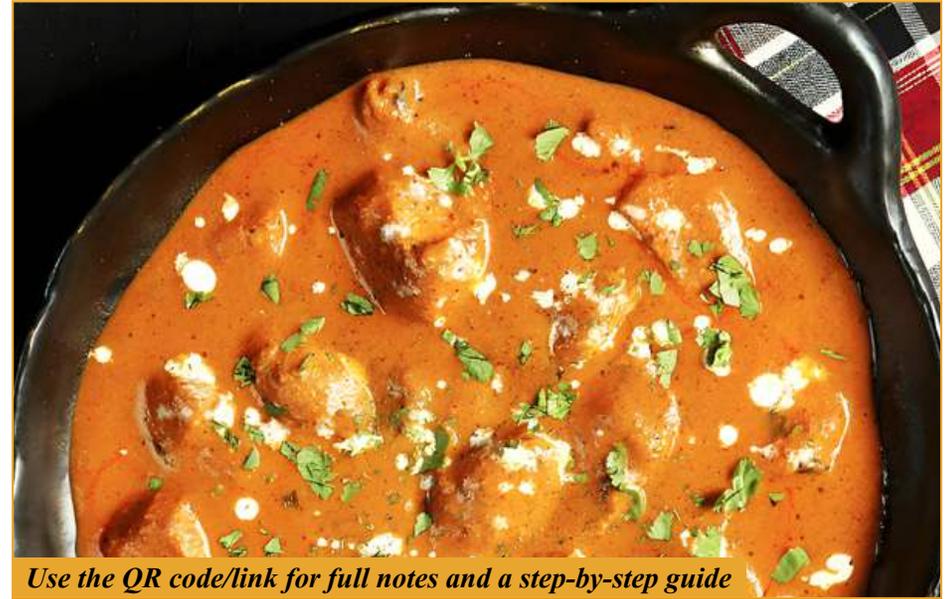
Recipe from: Nora Cooks

<https://www.noracooks.com/red-lentil-dahl/>



Butter Chicken

🕒 Total Time: 45 mins
🍽️ Servings: 4



Use the QR code/link for full notes and a step-by-step guide

First Marination

- 1.1 lbs. boneless chicken (cut to 1 inch pieces)
- 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon Kashmiri red chili powder (or paprika, adjust to taste)
- 1/4 to 1/3 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 3/4 to 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Second Marination

- 1/3 cup Greek yogurt (hung curd/thick curd)
- 3/4 tablespoon ginger garlic paste (or 1/2 tbsp fine grated ginger + 1/2 tbsp fine grated garlic)
- 1/8 teaspoon turmeric (*haldi*, optional)
- **3/4 to 1 teaspoon garam masala (adjust to taste)**
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin powder (*optional*)
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder (*optional*)
- 1 teaspoon kasuri methi (*optional, dried fenugreek leaves*)
- 3/4 to 1 tablespoon oil

Recipe from: Swasthi's Recipes

<https://www.indianhealthyrecipes.com/butter-chicken/>



For Sauce

- 2 to 3 tablespoons butter or ghee (divided)
- 2 inch cinnamon piece (optional, for extra flavor)
- 2 to 4 green cardamoms (optional, for added flavor)
- 2 to 4 cloves (optional)
- 1.3 lbs. fresh tomatoes (or 1 cup canned tomato puree or 1/3 cup double concentrate tomato paste)
- 3/4 tablespoon ginger garlic paste (or 1/2 tbsp each fine grated ginger and garlic)
- 1 to 2 green chilies (optional, deseed, slit or chop)
- 1/3 cup whole raw cashews (soaked in hot water, sub with 1/4 to 1/3 cup heavy cream)
- 1/2 cup water to blend (more if required)
- 1 to 2 teaspoons Kashmiri chili powder (adjust to taste)
- **1 to 1½ teaspoons garam masala (divided, adjust to taste)**
- 1 to 1½ teaspoon coriander powder (optional, adjust to taste)
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin powder (optional, adjust to taste)
- 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 1 teaspoon sugar (to balance the flavors)
- 1/2 tablespoon Kasuri methi (dried fenugreek leaves)
- 1½ cups hot water to make gravy (cut down to 1 cup if omitting cashews)
- 1/3 cup heavy cream or whipping cream (divided)
- 2 tablespoons coriander leaves (fine chopped to garnish)

Instructions

1. Marinate chicken with lemon juice, chili powder, and salt. Cover and rest for 20 mins. Next add yogurt, kasuri methi, oil, turmeric, ginger garlic paste, coriander powder, cumin powder and garam masala powder.
2. Marinate and rest for a minimum of 30 mins, or overnight for best results. Cover and refrigerate.
3. To a blender, add tomatoes, cashews, and water. Blend to a smooth puree. If you want you can also blend the cashews separately with water to a smooth cream.



Make the sauce

1. Remove the chicken from the refrigerator, to bring it close to room temperature.
2. Melt butter in a pan & add all the whole spices – cinnamon, cloves, and cardamoms.
3. When they begin to sizzle, stir in the ginger garlic paste and green chilies. Fry on a low heat, for a minute or 2, till it turns fragrant but not burnt.
4. Turn off the heat and stir in red chili powder, garam masala, cumin, and coriander powder.
5. Stir in the tomato cashew puree. If it is not smooth, strain it to the pan.
6. Mix well and cover partially. Bring it to a boil on a medium high heat, reduce the heat to low or medium. Cook until the puree turns thick, keep stirring occasionally.
7. Pour hot water and simmer for 10 mins, until the sauce thickens and traces of fats are visible on top of the sauce. Remove the whole spices and discard at this stage.

Grill or roast the chicken

1. Spread 1 tbsp. butter or ghee in a griddle/pan and heat it well. Place the marinated chicken pieces, spacing them a little apart.
2. Fry on a medium heat for 2 mins and turn them. Don't burn and do not over cook. Cook till the chicken is just cooked and all the marinade dries up. It is not necessary to fully cook the chicken at this stage.
3. Roast the chicken pieces in 2 to 3 batches, depending on the size of your skillet.

Make the butter chicken

1. Add chicken to the butter chicken gravy. Pour more hot water (about 1/2 cup, not in the recipe) if the sauce is too thick. Cover and simmer for about 5 to 7 mins till it becomes tender.
2. Stir in salt, sugar and kasuri methi. Taste test and optionally add more garam masala & another tablespoon butter for additional flavor (both are optional).
3. Turn off and stir in the heavy cream. Garnish butter chicken with chopped coriander leaves and some cream. Serve with turmeric rice, steamed basmati rice, butter naan, or cumin rice.

