

SPICE OF THE MONTH CLUB

March 2023

Join us to discuss

Tuesday, 03/28 / 6:00pm / Conference Room

Spend the month cooking with your spice and join us to discuss your opinions, experiences, and recipes!



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This month's spice: Garam Masala

History

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 is believed to have originated in Northern Indian cuisine, where it is especially found in traditional Mughal dishes. In Ayurvedic medicine, the spices in garam masala are warming, meaning that they increase the metabolism (rather than spiciness). Northern India has more areas that have cold seasons, so warming spices are welcome. Garam masala spread throughout the Indian subcontinent and as far west as present-day Iran.



Use

Garam masala adds warmth, sweetness, floral notes, and a touch of heat from the black pepper. It is intended to be a fragrant spice as well as flavorful. While cumin, coriander, and turmeric may remind you of curry, garam masala is generally not firey hot. Garam masala is usually added near the end of cooking so that it not only seasons the dish but adds to the aroma. Some additional garam masala may also be sprinkled on top of the dish.

Garam Masala Chicken Curry

Total prep and cook time: 40 minutes

Yields 6 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp ghee
- 1 1/2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- 1 yellow onion chopped fine
- 2 tsp finely ground real salt
- 1 tbsp garlic
- 2 tbsp finely grated ginger
- 2 tbsp garam masala
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper powder
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 2 cups coconut milk
- chopped cilantro to serve



STEPS:

1. Warm the ghee in a Dutch oven over medium high heat. When it melts, toss in the chopped chicken. Sauté the chicken in the hot fat until it turns opaque, and then stir in the yellow onions. Turn down the heat to medium, and sprinkle the salt over the onions. Stir frequently and allow the onions to cook in the ghee until translucent, about 10 minutes.
2. Stir in the garlic, ginger, turmeric, cayenne and garam masala. Continue stirring the spices into the chicken and onions until they're completely coated. Then stir in the diced tomatoes and coconut milk.
3. Simmer the sauce over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is fall-apart tender and the sauce thickens - about 20 minutes. Serve warm over rice with chopped cilantro.

Paneer & Lentil Masala

Total prep and cook time: 55 minutes

Yields 2 servings

INGREDIENTS:

2/3 cup white basmati rice
2/3 cup green lentils
4oz paneer cheese
4oz spinach
1 lime
1 yellow onion
2 tbsp tomato paste
1 inch piece ginger

1/4 cup heavy cream
1 bunch mint
1 tbsp paneer spice blend
• ground coriander
• garam masala
• ground Kashmiri chile
• ground cardamon
• onion powder
• ground cinnamon
• ground fenugreek

STEPS:

1. Wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and medium dice the onion. Peel and finely chop the ginger. Peel and roughly chop the garlic. Medium dice the cheese.
2. In a medium saucepan, heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, 3 to 4 minutes, or until softened and fragrant. Add the tomato paste; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, 1 to 2 minutes, or until dark red and fragrant.
3. Add the spice blend and a drizzle of olive oil to the saucepan. Cook on medium-high, stirring constantly, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until fragrant. Add the lentils, cheese, and 3 ½ cups of water. Heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, reduce the heat to medium-high. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 28 to 32 minutes, or until the lentils are tender and most of the water has been absorbed.
4. While the lentils cook, in a small saucepan, combine the rice, a big pinch of salt, and 1 cup of water. Heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, cover and reduce the heat to low. Cook 14 to 16 minutes, or until the water has been absorbed and the rice is tender. Turn off the heat and fluff the cooked rice with a fork. Cover and set aside in a warm place.
5. While the rice cooks, using a peeler, remove the green rind of the lime, avoiding the white pith; mince the rind to get 2 teaspoons of zest (or use a zester). Quarter the lime. Pick the mint leaves off the stems; discard the stems.
6. Add the spinach and heavy cream (shaking the bottle before opening) to the saucepan of cooked lentils and cheese. Cook, stirring constantly, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until thoroughly combined and the spinach has wilted. Turn off the heat. Stir in the juice of 2 lime wedges. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Stir the lime zest into the saucepan of cooked rice. Divide the finished rice and finished lentils and cheese between 2 dishes. Garnish with the mint (tearing the leaves just before adding). Serve with the remaining lime wedges on the side. Enjoy!

Chicken Tikka Masala

Total prep and cook time: 2 hours 30 minutes

Yields 4 serving

INGREDIENTS:

Chicken:

1/4 cup plain yogurt
2 tsp garam masala
2 tsp paprika
1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
1/2 ground coriander
1 lb skinless, boneless chicken breast cut
into 1-inch strips

Sauce:

3 tbsp vegetable oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 large onion, chopped
2 green chile peppers, minced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
2 medium Roma tomatoes, diced
1/2 cup tomato paste
1/4 cup water
1 tsp garam masala
1/2 tsp coriander
1/2 tsp ground turmeric
1/2 tsp salt, or to taste
1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
1/2 bunch fresh cilantro, chopped

STEPS:

1. Make the chicken: Combine yogurt, garam masala, paprika, black pepper, salt, cayenne pepper, and coriander in a large bowl. Add chicken strips and toss to coat. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 2 hours.
2. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F (230 degrees C). Grease a rimmed baking sheet.
3. Remove chicken from marinade and place onto the prepared baking sheet, leaving space between each piece.
4. Bake in the preheated oven until browned and no longer pink inside, about 10 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165 degrees F (74 degrees C). Remove from the oven and set aside.
5. Make the sauce: Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add cumin seeds and cook, siring gently, until lightly toasted and aromatic, about 3 minutes. Add onion; cook and stir until onion begins to soften, 4 to 5 minutes. Add chile peppers, garlic, and ginger; continue to cook and stir until onion is browned, 15 to 20 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, tomato paste, and water; cook, stirring occasionally, until tomatoes begin to break down, about 10 minutes.
6. Add garam masala, coriander, turmeric, and salt, then stir in chicken and cream until well combined; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Garnish with cilantro.