

Recipes for Staples of Indian Cuisine

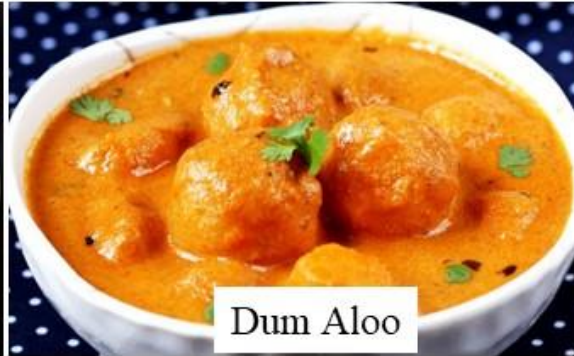
From the Caltech Y India Cultural Trip

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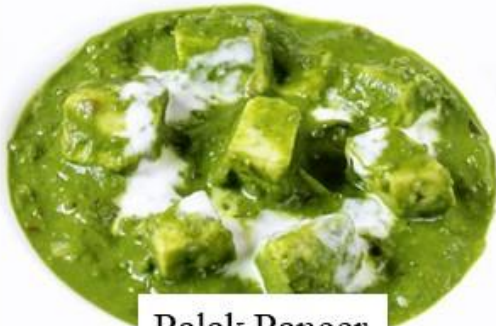
(Recipes and images compiled from indianhealthyrecipes.com)



Chana Masala



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Chana Masala (3-4 servings, 50 minutes)

This onion tomato gravy with chickpeas is often served as a side with rice, roti, or paratha.

Ingredients:

3/4 cup chana or chickpeas raw
(2 1/4 cups soaked or canned)

1 1/2 cups water

1 pinch baking soda or cooking soda (skip if canned)

For frying & blending

1 tbsp oil or as needed

1 1/2 cup onions (thinly sliced, about 2 to 3 medium)

3/4 to 1 tbsp ginger garlic paste

1 1/4 to 1 1/2 cup tomatoes (chopped, 2 medium)

1/2 to 3/4 tbsp red chili powder (adjust as desired)

1/4 tsp turmeric or haldi

Salt as needed

For chana gravy:

2 tbsp oil or as needed

1 small bay leaf or tej patta

1 pinch cinnamon or dalchini

1 green chili slit

1 to 1 1/2 tsp garam masala

1 1/2 tsp coriander powder or daniya powder

1 tsp kasuri methi (or dried fenugreek leaves)

1/4 cup coriander leaves or cilantro chopped finely

2 to 3 cloves or laung (optional)

2 to 3 green cardamoms or elaichi (optional)

1/2 cup onions (fine chopped) (optional)

1 to 2 tbsp lemon juice (optional)

1. Wash uncanned chickpeas thoroughly and soak for 6 to 8 hours. Add them to a pot or pressure cooker. Pour 1 1/2 cups water and add a pinch of soda. You can also cook them in a pot adding more water as needed.
2. Cook until soft for 2 to 3 whistles. When you bite the chana it must be soft and should not feel a bite.
3. While the chana cooks, saute onions until golden in 1 tbsp oil.
4. Saute ginger garlic paste as well to remove the raw smell.
5. Fry chopped tomatoes with salt. Make sure tomatoes turn soft and the raw smell goes away.
6. Saute again along with chili powder and turmeric till the raw smell goes away then blend once cooled to a smooth paste.
7. Saute cinnamon, cloves, bay leaf and cardamom in 2 tbsp oil. optional - Add chopped onions and chilli. Fry until golden.
8. Next transfer the blended paste. Stir well. Add garam masala powder, coriander powder and saute until the mixture leaves the sides of the pan.
9. Add the cooked chickpeas and then the stock (chana cooked water) as needed. You may need to use up all. If needed pour little more water to bring it to a consistency.
10. Bring it to a boil. Simmer for about 5 minutes or until it reaches the desired consistency. Taste the gravy and add more garam masala and salt if needed. Cook further for another 2 to 3 mins.
11. Add kasuri methi and amchur. Stir. Add chopped coriander leaves. Cover and set aside until served.

Dum Aloo (4 servings, 35 minutes)

This gravy, made of spicy onion, potatoes, cashews & yogurt, is often served at celebrations.

Ingredients:

250 grams potatoes (about 25 small baby potatoes)

1 cup onions cubed or 2 large	3 tbsps thick curd or dahi or plain yogurt (not sour)
1 tomato ripe medium deseeded	1 bay leaf -very small or half - tej patta
10 cashew nuts or almonds	1 green cardamom or ealichi
1 to 2 tbsp oil	1/2 to 3/4 tsp garam masala
1 green chilli slit	1/2 to 3/4 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp ginger garlic paste	1/2 to 3/4 tsp kashmiri chilli powder
salt as needed	1/8 tsp turmeric powder
2 tbsp coriander leaves chopped	1/2 tsp kasuri methi or dried fenugreek leaves

1. Wash and peel potatoes. If using large potatoes, then cube them to equal size. If using baby potatoes make sure all are of the same size. Prick them with a fork to ensure they get cooked from inside as well.
2. Parboil them for 3 to 4 mins. Then cool & shallow fry them in 3 to 4 tbsps of oil until golden. Set them aside.
3. Make a fine paste of cashews, onions and tomatoes. Keep this aside.
4. Heat a pan with oil, and saute bay leaf and cardamom. Fry ginger garlic paste until the raw smell goes.
5. Add the onion tomato paste and saute until the raw smell goes away and the paste thickens slightly.
6. Next add chili powder, garam masala, salt and turmeric. Saute until the masala smells good and leave the sides of the pan.
7. Pour curd and saute until it turns thick.
8. Add potatoes and 1/2 to 3/4 cup water. Stir well and bring the mixture to a boil. Cover with a tight lid or foil. Dum cook on a low heat for 5 to 7 minutes. At this stage the gravy must be thick and potatoes fully cooked.
9. Sprinkle crushed kasuri methi. Stir and cook for just another minute.
10. Sprinkle coriander leaves and transfer dum aloo to a serving bowl. Keep covered until dum aloo is served.

Palak Paneer (3 servings, 35 minutes)

This smooth, creamy spinach gravy is a popular North Indian dish eaten with rice, naan, paratha, or roti.

Ingredients:

1 1/4 cup paneer or 150 grams Indian cottage cheese	8 to 10 cashewnuts or 3 tbsps cream
2 cups palak or indian spinach, tightly packed	1/2 tsp garam masala
2 tbsp Oil or butter as needed	1/2 tsp kasuri methi or dried fenugreek leaves
2 to 3 green chilies deseeded	1/8 tsp cumin or jeera
3/4 cup onions finely chopped or 1/2 cup paste	2 green cardamoms or elaichi
1 tsp ginger garlic paste or garlic paste	1 inch cinnamon or dalchini
1/2 cup tomatoes (deseeded & chopped) or puree	2 cloves or laung
salt as needed	

1. For best taste always use young and tender palak. Check each spinach leaf for worms. Pluck only the leaves and discard the stems as they may leave a bitter taste.
2. Add them to a large pot of water. Rinse them well few times & drain to a colander. Allow the water to drain completely otherwise it will let out lot of moisture.
3. Heat 1 tsp oil in a pan. Fry green chilies and spinach for 2 to 3 mins until the leaves wilt off thoroughly. Do not overcook. OR another option is to blanch the palak in 4 cups of hot water with 1/4 tsp salt for 2 mins. Then immerse in ice cold water. Drain completely.
3. Cool & blend chilies, palak & cashews to a smooth puree in a mixer jar.
4. Add cinnamon, cardamoms, cloves & cumin to hot oil. When they begin to splutter, add onions and fry till they turn transparent.
5. Next add ginger garlic paste and fry until the raw smell goes away.
6. Then put in tomatoes and sprinkle salt. Fry till they turn mushy.
7. Add kasuri methi & garam masala. Saute until the mixture leaves the sides of the pan.
8. Pour half cup water and cook until the mixture thickens. Simmer the flame, add the pureed spinach. Mix well and cook until it begins to bubble for about 2 to 3 mins. Avoid overcooking.
9. Add paneer & mix well. If using cream pour it now. Switch off.
10. Serve palak paneer with naan, roti or rice.

Sambar (4-5 servings, 60 minutes)

This South Indian lentil and vegetable soup is commonly eaten as a side dish to a meal.

Ingredients:

1/4 cup Coriander leaves few with tender stalks - chopped	1 green chili slit (optional)
3/4 cup Toor dal (or split pigeon peas)	1 medium tomato chopped
1/8 tsp turmeric (skip if your sambar powder has it)	1 tbsp coriander seeds (or daniya)
12 to 15 shallots (or small onions) or 1 medium onion sliced	2 tsp ghee or oil
1 to 2 tbsp Tamarind or tamarind paste as needed	1 sprig curry leaves
1 to 2 vegetable drumsticks (or moringa)	1/2 tsp cumin (or jeera)
2 to 3 Ladies finger (or okra, bhindi)	1/2 tsp mustard seeds
3 to 4 cubed red pumpkin pieces (optional)	1 Pinch methi seeds or fenugreek seeds
1 tbsp Chana dal (or skinned split bengal gram)	2 pinches asafoetida or hing
1 tsp urad dal (or skinned split black gram)	1 Red chili broken (less spicy variety)
1/4 to 1/2 tsp methi seeds (or fenugreek seeds)	1/2 tsp cumin (or jeera)
4 to 5 red chilies (kashmiri or byadgi) (less spicy variety)	

1. Wash toor dal a few times in cooker or pot until the water runs clear.
2. Pour 2 cups water & pressure cook on a medium heat for 2 to 4 whistles depending on the brand of cooker. The dal needs to be cooked till smooth. It can even be cooked in a pot.
3. Wash all the veggies. Scrape the drumsticks lightly & rinse. Chop them to 2 inch pieces. Peel the shallots as well & rinse. Chop tomatoes & okra to 1 inch pieces. If using pumpkin peel the skin & dice them. Set aside.
4. While the dal cooks, make the sambar powder. Dry roast red chilies, urad dal and chana dal until golden & crisp. Add coriander seeds & fry till aromatic. Remove to a plate.
5. Next add methi seeds and saute until slightly dark. Then add cumin, fry for a minute. Cool these and powder finely.
6. Pour 5 cups of water to a pot, add the chopped veggies. Cook on a medium flame until soft. optional - You can also saute all the veggies in a tsp of oil until the flavor comes - for 3 to 5 mins.
7. When the water turns slightly hot, transfer about 1/4 cup hot water with a ladle to a separate bowl and soak tamarind in it.
8. When the pressure goes off, mash the dal to smooth. When the vegetables are completely cooked, add sambhar powder, turmeric & salt. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes.
10. Pour the tamarind pulp, filter if you desire. Add smooth dal, mix well to blend the dal with water. Bring it to a boil. Check if there is enough salt & sourness. If needed add more. Add coriander leaves & stir.
11. Heat another pan with oil or ghee. Add mustard, cumin & methi. When they begin to sizzle, add curry leaves, broken red chili and leave until crisp. You can also add 1/8 to 1/4 tsp of sambar powder to the hot pan. Quickly pour this seasoning to the sambar. Stir well. Simmer for 2 to 3 minutes

Crispy Dosa (12 dosas, 12.5 hours)

Dosa is a popular South Indian thin crepe that is made of fermented rice and lentil batter.

Ingredients:

1/2 cup Urad dal (or whole skinned black gram)
1 1/2 cups Rice (Refer notes)
1 tbsp chana dal (or bengal gram)
1/2 tsp fenugreek seeds or methi seeds (optional)
2 tbsp poha or attukulu or beaten rice
non iodized salt or crystal salt as needed
fresh water as needed (do not use lentil soaked water)

1. Firstly wash urad dal, chana dal, methi seeds several times. Soak them together in enough water for 4 hours.
2. Wash rice until water runs clear. Soak separately in ample water for 4 hours. Wash and soak poha just 30 mins before grinding.
3. Add dals, methi and poha along with salt to a mixer jar. Pour water just as needed. Grind to a smooth paste until bubbly or frothy. You can skip using salt during summer. Add it just before you make dosa.
4. Transfer this to a large pot if using a mixer. If using a wet grinder, you can just keep the urad dal batter in the container if making in small quantity as much mentioned in the recipe.
5. Add rice to the jar and then very little water. Blend to a thick paste.
6. Add this to the urad dal batter and mix. Check the consistency. It must not be very thick or very thin otherwise the batter will not ferment well. Check the salt as well and adjust.
7. Keep this in a warm place until fermented. It may take anywhere from 5 to 16 hours depending on the temperature.
8. Next morning gently stir the batter once. Add water enough to thin it down to make it of a pouring consistency yet thick.
9. Grease a dosa pan or tawa with few drops of oil. If using a iron tawa, grease tawa with oil and a slice of onion.
10. Heat it until hot enough. Pour a ladle full of batter on the center of the tawa. Spread it evenly in a circular shape.
11. Drizzle oil and allow to cook on a medium high heat until red or golden.
12. Flip it when the edges begin to rise from the pan.
13. Cook on both the sides if you desire.
14. Repeat making more on the hot tawa.
15. Serve dosa with chutney and potato masala.

Paratha (8 parathas, 60 minutes)

Parathas are unleavened Indian flat bread made with whole wheat flour.

Ingredients:

2 cups wheat flour or atta (substitute with all-purpose flour)

2 tps oil (optional)

3/4 to 1 cup water (or luke warm water)

1/4 tsp salt (optional)

2 tbsp ghee or oil as needed

1. Mix together flour, salt, oil in a wide mixing bowl. Pour water little by little to make a tight or stiff dough. The dough must not be sticky.
2. Knead well to make the dough soft and pliable. If necessary knead with moist fingers.
3. Wrap it in a moist cloth and set aside for 30 mins. You can also grease the ball with a few drops of oil and cover.
4. Knead the dough lightly. Divide the dough to 8 parts. Then roll them to balls. Keep them covered.
5. Take a few tbsps of flour to a small bowl. Flour the rolling area. Dip a ball in the flour and dust off excess.
6. Place the ball on the rolling area and flatten it slightly with fingers.
7. With the help of a rolling pin begin to roll each ball to a round layer or roti of 7 inches. Apply ghee all over and fold 1/3 part of it and then apply the ghee to the folded part as well. Repeat folding the other 1/3 part and then further to get a square.
8. Sprinkle little more flour if needed to prevent sticking. Then roll the square further to make a 7 inch square paratha.
9. Heat a tawa or griddle until hot on a medium high flame. Transfer paratha to the griddle. When you see bubbles, flip it.
10. Fry on a medium high flame on the other side as well until brown spots appear.
11. Drizzle ghee on both sides.
12. Stack them one over the other and keep them covered in a kitchen tissue or a cloth.
13. Serve paratha with curry or chutney.

Gulab Jamun (14-18 jamuns, 30 minutes)

This is a popular classic Indian sweet made of milk solids and sugar.

Ingredients:

1 cup milk powder	1 tsp pistachios chopped
5 tbsp all-purpose flour or maida	1 1/4 to 1 1/2 cups Sugar
1 tsp ghee or oil	1 1/2 cup water
1 tbsp ghee or oil for greasing	4 pods green cardamom or 1/4 tsp cardamom powder
2 tbsp milk (use more as needed)	1 tsp rose water
1 tbsp curd or yogurt or 3/4 tbsp lemon juice	
1 large pinch Baking soda or 1/8 th tsp	
Ghee or oil for deep frying	

1. Mix together water, sugar and crushed cardamoms in a pot.
2. Boil the syrup until it turns slightly sticky. Turn off the stove before it goes to a 1 string consistency.
3. If it reaches a 1 string consistency, then add 2 tbsp of water and mix. Add rose water and mix. Set aside to keep it hot.
4. Fluff up the flour in the jar with a fork and then measure correctly.
5. Mix together flour, milk powder and soda in a bowl. Either sieve it or mix uniformly.
6. Add ghee to it. Mix well. In a small bowl, mix together lemon juice or yogurt and 2 tbsp milk. Pour 1.5 tbsp of this to the flour mixture.
7. Begin to bring the flour together to make a dough. If the dough is too dry, add little more milk & curd. Do not add a lot. Use only as needed.
8. The dough turns sticky. Grease your fingers and make a ball. The dough must not be soggy. It must hold the shape well.
9. Divide to 14 to 18 equal sized portions. Grease your hands and roll to smooth balls. They must be smooth without any cracks or lines otherwise you will find many cracks on the gulab jamuns. Keep them covered.
10. Heat up the pan with ghee or oil on a medium heat.
11. Also check if the syrup is hot. If it is not hot, heat it up a bit. It must be hot and not very hot. When the ghee is just medium hot, add the balls. Make sure the oil is not very hot else the gulab jamuns will brown without cooking well. To check the right temp, you can drop a small piece of dough in the oil. It must rise slowly without changing its color. If it rises rapidly then you will need to cool the oil a bit before frying.
12. Fry the balls on a medium flame until golden. Keep stirring gently to fry them uniformly.
13. Add them to the hot syrup. Allow them to rest for 3 hours and serve.
14. Garnish gulab jamun with chopped pistachios.

Jalebi (8 servings, 30 minutes)

Jalebi is a spiral shaped crisp & juicy sweet that is one of the most popular desserts from Indian subcontinent.

Ingredients:

1 cup all-purpose flour or organic maida	oil or ghee as needed
2 tbsps corn flour (or besan if fermenting batter)	1 cup sugar (use organic)
1/8 tsp turmeric or use natural food color	1/2 to 3/4 cup water (I used 1/2 + 2 tbsps)
1/2 cup curd (or water if fermenting batter)	1 pinch saffron or kesar optional
1/2 cup water (more if needed)	1/4 tsp cardamom powder or elaichi powder
1/2 tsp soda (or 1 large pinch for fermented batter)	1 tsp lemon juice
1 tsp lemon juice	1 sauce bottle or Zip lock bag or cloth bag

1. Add sugar and water to a pot. Boil on a medium heat until it reaches a 1 string consistency. Take a small portion of the syrup in between your thumb and fore finger. Gently move the fingers away from each other, you must see a single string.
2. Remove from heat. Pour lemon juice, cardamom powder and saffron. Stir and set aside.
3. Add maida, cornflour and turmeric to a mixing bowl. Mix everything well until uniform. Next add curd. Pour water & make a thick lump free batter. The batter has to be thick but of flowing consistency. If needed add more water. Beat the batter well with a whisk in one direction in a circular motion for 4 mins.
4. Heat ghee or oil on a medium heat to fry jalebis. If using oil, then add 1 to 2 tbsp ghee to the oil.
5. Pour 1 tsp lemon juice to the batter & mix. Skip the lemon juice if you have fermented the batter.
6. Add soda and mix gently just until combined. Check batter consistency: The prepared batter must be smooth free flowing and thick. Spoon just 2 to 3 tbsp of batter to the sauce bottle to check if the consistency is right.
7. Next check if the oil is hot enough by dropping a small portion of the batter. It has to come up immediately without browning.
8. Now squeeze the bottle gently and move in circular motion to get spiral. If you are getting very thick jalebi, then the batter is thick. Next if you are getting very thin flat jalebis the batter is thin.
9. To fix thick batter, add a tbsp or more water. Next to fix thin batter, add a tbsp of maida
10. Mix the batter well. Spoon it to the bottle.
11. Ensure oil is hot and the flame set to medium high heat. Squeeze in the batter gently in circular motions starting from the center moving outside. You can also do it the other way. You will get properly shaped ones after making a few.
12. While the jalebi is getting fried, check the syrup. It must be slightly hot to warm when the jalebi is dipped into it. If not heat up a bit.
13. When the jalebi is done it turns crisp. Remove it with a skewer and add to the warm sugar syrup directly.
14. Allow to rest for 2 mins. Remove to a plate. Serve hot.