

Indian Chicken Curry (Murgh Kari)

Submitted by Ayshren • Updated: October 3, 2025 • Tested by Allrecipes Test Kitchen
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Overview

A flavorful, weeknight-friendly chicken curry with a tomato–yogurt base and warm spices. Serve over basmati rice or with warm naan to soak up the sauce.

At a Glance

Yield	6 servings
Prep Time	20 minutes
Cook Time	40 minutes
Total Time	1 hour
Heat Level	Adjustable (cayenne to taste)

Ingredients

Chicken & Aromatics

- 2 lb skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt (for seasoning chicken)
- 3 tablespoons neutral cooking oil, more as needed
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons minced fresh ginger root

Spices & Base

- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 tablespoon water (to bloom spices)
- 1 (15 oz) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt (for sauce)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro (for finishing)

- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Equipment

Large skillet (with lid), tongs, instant-read thermometer.

Instructions

- Season & sear.** Sprinkle chicken with 2 teaspoons salt. Heat 1–2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over high heat. Brown chicken in batches, adding oil as needed, until golden on all sides and partially cooked. Transfer to a plate.
- Sauté aromatics.** Reduce heat to medium. In the remaining oil, cook onion, garlic, and ginger, stirring, until onion is soft and translucent, 5–8 minutes.
- Bloom spices.** Stir in curry powder, cumin, turmeric, coriander, cayenne, and 1 tablespoon water; cook 1 minute, stirring, until fragrant.
- Build the sauce.** Add crushed tomatoes, yogurt, 1 tablespoon cilantro, and 1 teaspoon salt; stir to combine.
- Return chicken.** Add chicken and any accumulated juices. Pour in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water; bring to a boil, turning chicken to coat. Sprinkle garam masala and 1 tablespoon cilantro over the chicken.
- Simmer through.** Cover and simmer gently until chicken is no longer pink and juices run clear, about 20 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165°F (74°C).
- Finish.** Drizzle with lemon juice. Adjust seasoning to taste.
- Serve.** Spoon over basmati rice or serve with warm naan. Garnish with additional cilantro if desired.

Cook's Notes

- **Chicken swap:** Boneless, skinless thighs work well in place of breasts (similar timing).
- **Dairy-free:** Unsweetened coconut milk may be used instead of yogurt.
- **Heat control:** Reduce cayenne for milder curry; add a pinch more for extra heat.

Nutrition (Approximate, per serving; 6 servings)

Calories	427
Fat	24 g
Carbohydrates	15 g
Protein	38 g

Food safety: Cook poultry to an internal temperature of 165°F (74°C).