

Butternut Squash Yellow Curry

Ingredients

Neutral oil	3 Tbsp.	Coconut milk	2 (13.5 oz.) cans
Boneless skinless chicken thighs	2 lb.	Chicken stock	1½ cups
Butternut squash	3 lb.	Palm or brown sugar	1–2 Tbsp.
Yellow onion, medium	1	Fish sauce	1 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	4	Limes	2
Fresh ginger, minced	1 Tbsp.	Fresh cilantro	for garnish
Mae Ploy yellow curry paste	3–4 Tbsp.	Salt	to taste

Directions

Cut 2 lb. **chicken thighs** into 1–1½" chunks — Peel, seed, and cut **butternut squash** into 1" chunks; set aside in *Large Bowl #1* — Dice 1 medium **onion**; mince 4 **garlic cloves** and 1 Tbsp. **ginger**; combine in *Small Bowl #1* (aromatics) — Open 2 cans **coconut milk**; have 1½ cups **chicken stock**, **curry paste**, **sugar**, and **fish sauce** ready — Juice 2 **limes** and cut into wedges; chop **cilantro** for garnish

1. Heat 1½ Tbsp. **neutral oil** in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Brown **chicken thighs** in two batches, turning as needed, until golden on multiple sides and no longer pink on the surface, about 5–7 minutes per batch. Thighs are done when they release easily from the pan and show golden browning. Transfer **chicken thighs** to *Large Bowl #2* and set aside.
2. Add remaining 1½ Tbsp. **oil** to the pot. Brown **squash** (*Large Bowl #1*) in two batches over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until edges are golden and surfaces take on color, about 4–6 minutes per batch. Squash should not be fully tender. Transfer to *Large Bowl #1* and set aside.
3. Reduce heat to medium. Add **onion**, **garlic**, and **ginger** (*Small Bowl #1*) and cook, stirring, until **onion** is translucent and aromatics are fragrant, about 3–4 minutes. Do not brown.
4. Add 3–4 Tbsp. **Mae Ploy yellow curry paste** and cook, stirring constantly, until the paste darkens slightly and smells toasted and fragrant, about 2–3 minutes.
5. Pour in about half of the first can of **coconut milk** and stir to combine with the paste until smooth. Add remaining **coconut milk** from both cans, 1½ cups **chicken stock**, 1–2 Tbsp. **sugar**, and 1 Tbsp. **fish sauce**. Stir and bring to a simmer.

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6. Add **squash** (*Large Bowl #1*) and return to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered, stirring occasionally, for *18–22 minutes* until **squash** is tender: a paring knife inserted into the center of a chunk meets no resistance, and chunks hold their shape but are soft. Sauce should coat the back of a spoon. Continue simmering in *2–3 minute* increments until **squash** is tender.
7. Return **chicken thighs** and any accumulated juices (*Large Bowl #2*) to the pot. Simmer for *5–8 minutes* until **chicken thighs** reach *165°F* internally and **squash** is fully tender. Thighs are done when no pink remains and juices run clear.
8. Taste and adjust seasoning with **salt** if needed. Stir in **lime juice** to taste. Serve over steamed jasmine rice, garnished with **cilantro** and **lime wedges**.

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Yield

- Serves 8

Equipment Required

- Large Dutch oven or heavy pot (6–7 quart capacity)
- Cutting board and chef's knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon or silicone spatula
- Instant-read thermometer (for chicken)
- Small prep bowls (1)
- Large prep bowls (2)

Mise en Place

- Small Bowl #1 — aromatics: diced **onion**, minced **garlic**, minced **ginger**
- Large Bowl #1 — **butternut squash** chunks (about 8–10 cups); after browning, return to this bowl
- Large Bowl #2 — browned **chicken thighs** (set aside until final step)
- Have **coconut milk** opened, **chicken stock** measured, and **curry paste**, **sugar**, **fish sauce** ready before building the curry

Ingredient Tips

- Mae Ploy **yellow curry paste** is recommended; other brands may differ in salt and heat—taste and adjust
- **Fish sauce** is used lightly (1 Tbsp.) for subtle umami without dominating

- Full-fat **coconut milk** gives the best body and flavor
- **Palm sugar** is traditional; brown sugar works well

Preparation Tips

- Browning **chicken** and **squash** in sequence builds fond and sweetness; do not skip
- Bloom the **curry paste** until it darkens and smells toasted—raw paste tastes flat
- Uniform 1" **squash** chunks cook evenly; larger chunks need a few more minutes
- Adding **chicken** only at the end keeps it from overcooking and keeps **squash** as the focus
- Taste before serving; **lime juice** and **salt** balance the curry

Make Ahead & Storage

- Curry can be made 1–2 days ahead; flavors improve
- Store refrigerated up to 4 days
- Reheat gently; thin with **chicken stock** or **coconut milk** if sauce has thickened
- Add fresh **lime juice** and **cilantro** after reheating

Serving Suggestions

- Serve over steamed jasmine rice
- **Lime wedges** and extra **cilantro** at the table
- Thai basil or sliced fresh chile for optional heat and aroma