

Perfect aloo gobi



📷 Felicity Cloake's perfect aloo gobi. Photograph: Felicity Cloake for the Guardian

(Serves 4)

4 tbsp neutral oil

1 tsp cumin seeds

½ tsp nigella seeds

350g waxy potatoes, cut into rough 2.5cm dice

1 medium cauliflower, cut into florets and chunks of stalk slightly larger than the potato

1 yellow onion, finely sliced

4 garlic cloves, crushed

1 tbsp grated ginger

1 tin of plum tomatoes, roughly chopped, or 5 chopped fresh tomatoes and 1 tbsp tomato puree

2 tsp coriander seeds, toasted in a dry pan and ground

½-1 tsp medium chilli powder

½ tsp turmeric

2-4 small green chillies, slit along their length

1 tsp salt

1 tbsp methi (dried fenugreek leaves)

1 tsp garam masala

Juice of ½ a lime

Small bunch of fresh coriander, chopped

Heat the oil in a wide, lidded pan over a medium-high heat. When it's hot, add the cumin and nigella seeds and cook for a few seconds until they pop, then add the potatoes and sauté until golden. Scoop out with a slotted spoon and repeat with the cauliflower, then scoop this out into a separate bowl.

Turn the heat down to medium-low, add a little more oil if necessary, and add the onion. Cook until soft and golden but not brown, then stir in the garlic and ginger and cook for a couple of minutes. Tip in the tomatoes, ground coriander, chilli and turmeric and cook, stirring regularly, until the oil begins to pool around the side of the pan.

Add the potatoes back in along with the fresh chillies and salt, bring to a simmer, turn down the heat, cover and cook for five minutes. Add the cauliflower and a good splash of water, cover and cook until both are tender, stirring occasionally to make sure it doesn't stick, and adding more water if necessary.

Take off the heat, stir in the methi and garam masala and leave for 10 minutes, then stir in the lime juice and fresh coriander before serving - Usmani recommends pairing it with "plain basmati, naan, paratha or brioche buns, and a pickle or chutney".

Aloo gobi: can cauliflower get any better? How do you cook yours - regional variations especially welcome - and which other Indian vegan and vegetarian recipes would you recommend?
