

INDIAN FOOD



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Introduction

Indian cuisine consists of a variety of regional and traditional cuisines native to the Indian subcontinent. Given the diversity in soil, climate, culture, ethnic groups, and occupations, these cuisines vary substantially and use locally available spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits.

Indian food is also heavily influenced by religion, in particular Hinduism, cultural choices and traditions. Centuries of Islamic rule, particularly by the Mughals, also introduced dishes like samosa and pilaf.

Historical events such as invasions, trade relations, and colonialism have played a role in introducing certain foods to this country. The Columbian discovery of the New World brought a number of new vegetables and fruit to India. A number of these such as potatoes, tomatoes, chillies, peanuts, and guava have become staples in many regions of India.

Indian cuisine has shaped the history of international relations; the spice trade between India and Europe was the primary catalyst for Europe's Age of Discovery. Spices were bought from India and traded around Europe and Asia. Indian cuisine has influenced other cuisines across the world, especially those from Europe (especially Britain), the Middle East, Southern African, East Africa, Southeast Asia, North America, Mauritius, Fiji, Oceania, and the Caribbean.

Foods mentioned in ancient Indian scripture

While many ancient Indian recipes have been lost in history, one can look at ancient texts to see what was eaten in ancient and pre-historic India.

- **Barley**— (known as Yava in both Vedic and Classical Sanskrit) is mentioned many times in Rigveda and other Indian scriptures as one of the principal grains in ancient India
- **Betel leaf**— Primary use is as a wrapper for the chewing of areca nut or tobacco, where it is mainly used to add flavour; may also be used in cooking, usually raw, for its peppery taste
- **Breadfruit**—Fritters called jeev kadge phodi in Konkani or kadachakka varuthath in Malayalam are a local delicacy in coastal Karnataka and Kerala



- **Chickpeas**—Popular dishes are made with chickpea flour, such as mirchi bajji and mirapakaya bajji
- **Curd**—A traditional yogurt or fermented milk product, originating from the Indian subcontinent, usually prepared from cow's milk, and sometimes buffalo milk, or goat milk
- **Figs**—Cultivated from Afghanistan to Portugal, also grown in Pithoragarh in the Kumaon hills of India; from the 15th century onwards, also grown in areas including Northern Europe and the New World
- **Ghee**—A class of clarified butter that originated in ancient India, commonly used in the Indian subcontinent, Middle-Eastern cuisine, traditional medicine, and religious rituals
- **Grape wine**—First-known mention of grape-based wines in India is from the late 4th-century BC writings of Chanakya
- **Honey**—The spiritual and supposed therapeutic use of honey in ancient India was documented in both the Vedas and the Ayurveda texts
- **Mango**—The Jain goddess Ambika is traditionally represented as sitting under a mango tree
- **Mustard**—Brown mustard is a spice that was cultivated in the Indus Valley Civilization and is one of the important spices used in the Indian subcontinent today
- **Pomegranate**—In some Hindu traditions, the pomegranate (Hindi: anār) symbolizes prosperity and fertility, and is associated with both Bhoomidevi (the earth goddess) and Lord Ganesha (the one fond of the many-seeded fruit)
- **Rice**—Cultivated in the Indian subcontinent from as early as 5,000 BC
- **Rice cake**—Quite a variety are available
- **Rose apple**—Mainly eaten as a fruit and also used to make pickles (chambakka achar)



- **Saffron**—Almost all saffron grows in a belt from Spain in the west to Kashmir in the east
- **Salt**—Considered to be a very auspicious substance in Hinduism and is used in particular religious ceremonies like house-warmings and weddings; in Jainism, devotees lay an offering of raw rice with a pinch of salt before a deity to signify their devotion, and salt is sprinkled on a person's cremated remains before the ashes are buried
- **Sesame oil**—Popular in Asia, especially in Korea, China, and the South Indian states of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu, where its widespread use is similar to that of olive oil in the Mediterranean
- **Sorghum**—Commonly called jwaarie, jowar, jola, or jondhalaa, sorghum is one of the staple sources of nutrition
- **Sugar**—Produced in the Indian subcontinent since ancient times, its cultivation spread from there into modern-day Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass
- **Sugarcane**—The earliest known production of crystalline sugar began in northern India; the earliest evidence of sugar production comes from ancient Sanskrit and Pali texts
- **Turmeric**—Used widely as a spice in South Asian and Middle Eastern cooking



Ingredients

Staple foods of Indian cuisine include pearl millet (bājra), rice, whole-wheat flour (aṭṭa), and a variety of lentils, such as masoor (most often red lentils), tuer (pigeon peas), urad (black gram), and moong (mung beans). Lentils may be used whole, dehusked—for example, dhuli moong or dhuli urad—or split. Split lentils, or dal, are used extensively. Some pulses, such as channa or cholae (chickpeas), rajma (kidney beans), and lobiya (black-eyed peas) are very common, especially in the northern regions. Channa and moong are also processed into flour (besan).

Many Indian dishes are cooked in vegetable oil, but peanut oil is popular in northern and western India, mustard oil in eastern India, and coconut oil along the western coast, especially in Kerala and parts of southern Tamil Nadu. Gingelly (sesame) oil is common in the south since it imparts a fragrant, nutty aroma.

In recent decades, sunflower, safflower, cottonseed, and soybean oils have become popular across India. Hydrogenated vegetable oil, known as Vanaspati ghee, is another popular cooking medium. Butter-based ghee, or deshi ghee, is used frequently, though less than in the past.



Many types of meat are used for Indian cooking, but chicken and mutton tend to be the most commonly consumed meats. Fish and beef consumption are prevalent in some parts of India, but they are not widely consumed except for coastal areas, as well as the north east.

The most important and frequently used spices and flavourings in Indian cuisine are whole or powdered chilli pepper (mirch, introduced by the Portuguese from Mexico in the 16th century), black mustard seed (sarso), cardamom (elaichi), cumin (jeera), turmeric (haldi), asafoetida (hing), ginger (adrak), coriander (dhania), and garlic (lasoon).

One popular spice mix is garam masala, a powder that typically includes seven dried spices in a particular ratio, including black cardamom, cinnamon (dalchini), clove (laung), cumin (jeera), black peppercorns, coriander seeds and anise star.

Each culinary region has a distinctive garam masala blend—individual chefs may also have their own. Goda masala is a comparable, though sweet, spice mix popular in Maharashtra. Some leaves commonly used for flavouring include bay leaves (tejpat), coriander leaves, fenugreek (methi) leaves, and mint leaves. The use of curry leaves and roots for flavouring is typical of Gujarati and South Indian cuisine. Sweet dishes are often seasoned with cardamom, saffron, nutmeg, and rose petal essences.

Chapter 1: Butter Chicken

Butter Chicken simmers in a buttery tomato sauce and is punctuated by several special spices and herbs. Skip the Indian takeout and cook up your very own version of the popular dish!



Every celebratory occasion in the family, butter chicken made an appearance on the dinner table. I would grunt and nag mom for preferring him more than me—but all of us knew that was all a façade because I would always end up wiping the plate clean.

What Is Butter Chicken?

Butter chicken is prepared with marinated chicken that's first grilled and then served in a rich gravy (a.k.a. curry) made with tomato, butter, and a special spice blend as a base.

Unlike most Indian curries where the preparation of the base starts with a blend of onion and a ginger garlic paste cooked in oil, butter chicken uses tomato as a base and is cooked in butter, giving it a slightly sweet flavor. Cashews and almonds add to the sweetness and richness of the dish.

The History of Butter Chicken

The roots of butter chicken are only as recent as the 1950s, when it was developed accidentally by the chef of famous restaurant Moti Mahal in Delhi, the capital of India. For chef Kundan Lal Gujral, it was a common practice to throw in butter, tomatoes, and leftover tandoori chicken into a pot to make use of the leftovers.

Little did he know that this dish would become their best seller and put them on the map.

Now the recipe is adapted by restaurants across the world, though it's really a “special occasion” dish in Indian homes.



Butter Chicken vs. Chicken Tikka Masala

Some people get confused between butter chicken and [chicken tikka masala](#). The two might look and taste similar to some, too. The main difference is in the preparation.

Butter chicken uses a lot of butter (makhan in Hindi) while chicken tikka masala uses tikka masala (a spice blend) comprised of coriander, paprika, black and green cardamom, cinnamon, and turmeric. Butter chicken is sweeter and chicken tikka masala is spicier.

Even more importantly, butter chicken originated in India, while Chicken Tikka Masala was invented in the United Kingdom—it's the national dish!



The Spices for Butter Chicken

Kashmiri Lal Mirch: Butter chicken gets its bright color and its name from Kashmiri Lal Mirch, a variety of red chile from the northern region of Kashmir. I usually buy mine from our local Indian store but online retailers carry great varieties, too. (To cheat, though, if you can't find this spice, add a couple drops of red food coloring to brighten up the dish.)

Ginger Garlic Paste: Traditionally, freshly grated ginger and garlic are used for the paste but if you'd like to speed up the process you can also buy a jar of ginger garlic paste from a local specialty food store or order one online, such as Rani Ginger Garlic paste.

Kasuri Methi: The real unsung hero in this symphony of spices is kasuri methi, a variety of fenugreek leaves. It's added to the dish in a very small amount, but its earthy flavor balances the richness of cream and the depth of spices used in the dish. Takes the dish to up to a whole different level.

If you have a local Indian grocery, it should carry this spice. These days, major supermarkets including Whole Foods and Safeway also carry it.

Authentic Indian Food at Home

With this recipe, I have tried to stay as authentic as I can, while also keeping it simple enough that you could fix it for dinner tonight without breaking your back.

Feel free to use just garam masala or even chicken tikka masala spice mix if you do not have all the spices for the marinade. You can even use paprika instead of Kashmiri Lal Mirch if you have trouble finding it, and can completely omit Kasuri Methi if you absolutely have to (but remember, it sure is the unsung hero!).

I also used roasted canned tomatoes here to save the time of peeling whole tomatoes. Canned tomato also adds to the deep red color in the dish.



Make-Ahead Butter Chicken

You can freeze this dish in an airtight covered container or a zip-top bag for a month. Thaw and reheat in a saucepan over medium-low heat to retain the texture.

Ingredients

For the chicken and marinade:

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into roughly 1-inch cubes
- 1/4 cup full-fat plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon ginger garlic paste
- 1 teaspoon dried coriander
- 1 teaspoon Kashmiri Lal Mirch
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- Salt to taste

For the sauce:

- 8 to 10 whole almonds
- 8 to 10 whole cashews
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1 tablespoon ginger garlic paste
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 (15-ounce) can canned diced tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons dried coriander
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground Garam Masala
- 1/2 teaspoon ground Kashmiri Lal Mirch

- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup water
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 tablespoon Kasuri Methi

To serve:

Cooked [rice](#), roti, or naan bread

Method

1. Marinate the chicken:

Bring the chicken and the rest of the marinade ingredients together in a large bowl.

Using your hands, massage the marinade into the chicken.

Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour, or up to overnight.



2. Soak cashews and almonds:

Soak cashews and almonds in water for at least an hour to (or up to overnight) before preparing the rest of the recipe.

3. Cook the chicken:

Heat a skillet or grill pan over medium-high heat. Drizzle a teaspoon of oil to the pan.

Working in batches, remove chicken from the marinade and grill them on the pan

for 3 to 5 minutes on each side, until the chicken is cooked through (clear juice runs out of it when you cut into it). Do not crowd the pan.

Once cooked, transfer the chicken into a separate dish. Cover and set aside for later.



4. Start making the sauce:

Melt 1 1/2 tablespoons of the butter in a medium sized Dutch oven or a skillet on medium low heat. As soon as the butter melts, add the ginger garlic paste followed by sugar. Sauté for 1 to 2 minutes.

Stir in the tomato and cook for 8 to 10 minutes on medium high heat, until all the extra liquid is cooked off. The sauce should be a loose, paste-like consistency.

Add coriander, garam masala, Kashmiri Lal Mirch, and salt. Stir and cook on medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Turn off the heat.



5. Puree the sauce with the nuts:

Transfer the paste to a blender or the bowl of a food processor. Add the soaked cashews and almonds. Blend into a smooth paste.



6. Finish the dish:

Return the paste to the cooking pan over medium heat. Add the water to the paste

and stir to make a smooth sauce.

As the sauce begins to boil, add the grilled chicken and heavy cream. Stir well.

Cover the pan and simmer for 5 minutes.



7. Rest the butter chicken:

Turn off the heat and uncover the pan. Stir in the remaining 1/2 tablespoon butter and the kasuri methi. Cover again, and let the dish rest for 8 to 10 minutes so the flavor of kasuri methi can marry into the butter chicken.

8. Serve:

Serve the butter with a side of steamed basmati rice, roti, or naan. Leftovers will keep refrigerated, covered, for five days.

You can freeze this dish in an airtight covered container or a zip-top bag for a month. Thaw and reheat in a saucepan over medium-low heat to retain the texture.

Tips

- Marination is the key to get flavorful, tender & succulent pieces of chicken.
- Yogurt in the marinade tenderizes the chicken so do not skip it.
- Makhani recipe never uses onion so is this butter chicken recipe. Using onion changes the taste of the dish.
- The rich taste in the gravy comes from the cashews (or almonds) & cream.



- You can make the gravy ahead and refrigerate. Just grill the marinated chicken when needed
- And heat up the gravy. Then add the grilled chicken.

Chapter 2: Dal Baati Churma

Dal Baati Recipe | Rajasthani Dal Bati Churma | Dal Baati in Appe Pan with detailed photo and video recipe. A traditional rajasthani delicacy recipe made from dal, bati or wheat rolls and churma which is powdered wheat ball. It is generally served for lunch or dinner by mixing the dal with crushed baati and ghee topped on it. It is also popular in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh within the Malwa regions.



I introduced the appe pan twist to this recipe as the traditional one is prepared using baati oven. I find the appe pan recipe more practical and realistic as it can be found easily in many households. Also, the baati can also be prepared with Indian cooker. This can be a cumbersome process but can evenly effective as well.

Furthermore some important tips, suggestions and variations for rajasthani dal baati recipe. Firstly, while preparing the dough for baati, make sure to prepare a tight and hard dough. This can be achieved by adding a small amount of water in batches while kneading the dough. Secondly, while assembling the dal bati churma recipe, be generous while adding ghee to the mixture. Traditionally ghee makes an important role in the dal baati recipe as it enhances the flavour and taste. Lastly, the dal recipe for this dish is a combination of lentils like masoor dal, chana dal and mung dal. But it can also be served with simple dal recipe without combining all these lentils.

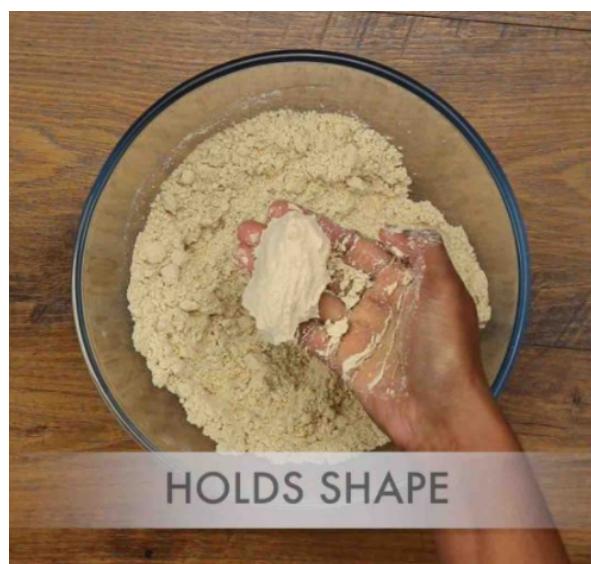
How to make dal baati recipe with step by step photo:

Bati preparation recipe:

1. Firstly, in a large bowl take 2 cup wheat flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp baking powder and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ghee.



2. Mix well making sure the dough is moist. Need to hold the shape when pressed with a fist.



3. Now add water as required and knead the dough.

4. Knead to the slightly stiff dough as prepared for poori.



5. Now pinch a small ball sized dough and roll.
6. Make a mark using your hand.
7. Further roll without giving much pressure.
8. Again make an x mark. This helps to uniform cooking of bati over appe pan.



9. Now heat appe pan or cooker on low flame with few drops of ghee.
10. Place the rolled bati in each mould.



11. Cover and cook on low flame for 15 minutes.
12. Flip over and cook other side.



13. Cover and continue to cook for further 15 minutes.
14. Now bati is cooked from all side and also inside.



COOKED COMPLETELY

15. Dip the bati in ghee for more soft bati from inside. You can alternatively soak for 15 minutes if you are not worried about calories.
16. Finally, **bati** is ready.



Churma preparation recipe:

1. Firstly, take 3 prepared bati and break into mixi.
2. Make coarse powder of bati.



3. Heat tawa with 2 tbsp of ghee and roast powdered bati.
4. Roast on low flame for 7 minutes or till it turns golden and aromatic.



5. Cool the mixture completely. Further add 3 tbsp powdered sugar, 2 tbsp chopped almonds-cashew and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cardamom powder.
6. Mix well. Finally **churma** is ready.



Rajasthani Dal Recipe:

1. Firstly in a pressure cooker take $\frac{1}{2}$ cup moong dal, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup masoor dal and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chana dal.



2. Pressure cook for 4 whistles adding 1 tsp ghee and 3 cup water.
3. Now in a large kadai heat 2 tsp ghee and splutter 1 tsp mustard, 1 tsp cumin and pinch hing.
4. Add 1 onion followed by 1 tsp ginger garlic paste and 1 green chilli. Saute well.

5. Further add 1 tomato and saute well.
 6. Additionally, add $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp turmeric, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp chilli powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp garam masala and 1 tsp salt. Saute on low flame.



7. Furthermore add in cooked dal, 1 cup water and mix.
 8. Simmer and boil for 5 minutes or till dal absorbs masala.
 9. Now add coriander leaves and mix well.



10. Finally, serve dal bati churma along with slices of onion and chilli.



Notes

- Firstly, adding ghee to bati is very important, else bati may end up hard.
- Cook bati in oven / cooker or even tandoor.
- Serve panchmel dal for better combination.
- Dal bati churma tastes great when prepared with fresh homemade ghee.



Chapter 3: Hyderabadi Chicken Biryani

Hyderabadi biryani, also known as **Hyderabadi Dum Biryani**, is a style of biryani from Hyderabad, India made with basmati rice and goat meat and cooked with the dum pukht method. Originating in the kitchens of the Nizam of Hyderabad, it combines elements of Hyderabadi and Mughlai cuisines.

About This Recipe

Hyderabadi chicken biryani is a traditional Mughlai rice dish made using long grain basmati rice, chicken, and a whole lot of spices. The bone-in chicken is marinated with yogurt and spices and is then layered under semi-cooked rice. This combination is then cooked on slow heat until perfection, creating a dish that is a treat to all the senses.

Hyderabadi biryani is one of the greatest gifts from the royal Mughals to the culinary world. Making chicken biryani takes time, patience, and expertise, but trust me, all the effort is worthwhile when you dig into this delicacy.

Hyderabadi chicken biryani is prepared in two ways – Kacchi or Pakki Biryani.

Kacchi chicken biryani is where the chicken is not cooked separately but gets cooked along with the rice while in the pakki chicken biryani, chicken is cooked prior to layering it with rice.

The method I have mentioned below is kacchi biryani method.

This chicken biryani is,

- Aromatic
- Lip-smacking
- Loaded with tender pieces of Chicken
- Perfect for special occasions
- Great for your weekend meals
- A great dish for Pot Lucks

Ingredients



Chicken – Traditionally bone-in skinless whole chicken cut into pieces is used to make chicken biryani. But you can choose to use only legs, legs with thighs, or even boneless chicken pieces.

First marination – The chicken is marinated twice so that it absorbs all the flavors and becomes tender. In the first marination, we will use ingredients including shahi jeera (caraway seeds), ghee, ginger garlic paste, garam masala powder, coriander powder, cumin powder, red chili powder, turmeric powder, salt, vegetable oil, green chili paste, and lime juice.

Second Marination – For the second marination, we will need yogurt, mint, coriander, and golden fried onion.

You can either fry the onion at home or use store-bought to save time.



Rice – Use aged (at least 2 years old) long grain basmati rice for the best results. They turn out separate, fluffy, and aromatic, which tastes yummy in this Hyderabadi biryani.

Potli Masala – A bouquet garni (potli) of spices is added while cooking the rice to flavor it. Once the rice is cooked and the aroma and taste of the spices are infused into it, the bouquet garni is removed.

In the potli, we will add whole black cardamom, whole green cardamom, whole javitri, whole cloves, cumin seeds, whole black peppercorn, whole star anise, whole cinnamon, and whole bay leaf.



Other Ingredients – Cumin seeds, ginger garlic paste, green chili paste, kewra essence (vetiver essence), lime juice, milk, saffron (soaked in water), and salt.

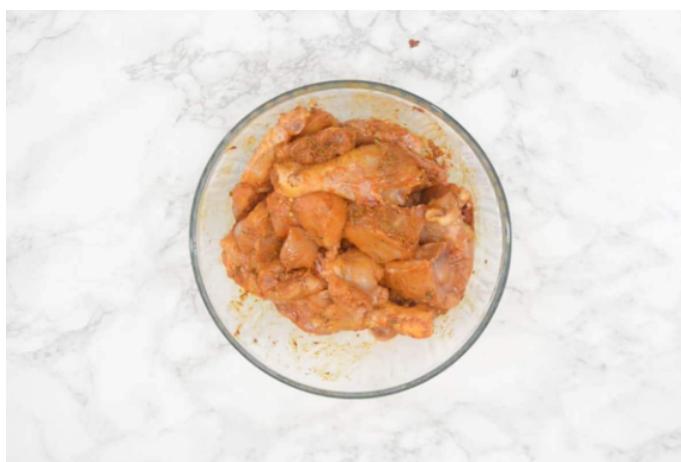
How to make Hyderabadi Chicken Biryani?

Start by marinating the chicken. To make the marinade, mix 1 tsp caraway seeds (shahi jeera), 2 tsp ghee, 4 tsp ginger garlic paste, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garam masala powder, 1 tsp coriander powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cumin powder, 2 tsp red chili powder, 1 tsp turmeric powder, 2 tsp salt, 2 tbsp vegetable oil, 4 tsp green chili paste, and 2 tbsp lime juice in a large mixing bowl.



Wash 1 pound (500 g) chicken and drain all the water. Add it to the bowl and mix well to coat it with the marinade.

Cover the bowl with a lid and refrigerate it for 10-12 hours. This is the first marination.



After 10-12 hours, take out the bowl from the refrigerator and marinate it for the second time. Add 200 g thick yogurt, 2 tbsp chopped mint, 2 tbsp chopped coriander, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup golden fried onion to the bowl. Mix everything well again.

Refrigerate the chicken for another hour.



Take an 8-inch square cotton cloth piece and add 1 tsp caraway seeds, 2 black cardamoms, 2-3 green cardamoms, 2 flowers of javitri, 3-4 cloves, 1 tsp cumin seeds, 5-6 black peppercorn, 1 star anise, 2-inch stick of cinnamon, and 2 bay leaves in the center. Bring the ends of the cloth together and tie a knot to make a potli (bouquet garni).



Wash 3 cups of long grain basmati rice 2-3 times with water until the water runs clear. Soak it in 5-6 cups of water for 30 minutes. Heat 6-8 cups of water in a large pot. Add the potli that we made earlier, 2 tsp ginger-garlic paste, 1 tbsp green chili paste, 2-3 drops of kewra essence, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp lime juice, and 4 tsp salt to the pot and bring the water to a boil.

Drain the rice and add it to the boiling water. Simmer the heat to medium and let the rice cook until it is 80% cooked. 80% cooked means that it still has a bite to it. Be very vigilant while cooking the rice. You don't want to overcook it, otherwise, the biryani will become mushy. If the rice is undercooked, it will taste raw.



Transfer the chicken along with the marinade to a large heavy bottom pan with a tight fitting lid. I used my 8 quart dutch oven to cook the biryani.



Once the rice gets 80% cooked, discard the potli. Take the rice out using a sieve and spread it over the chicken evenly.

Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk, 10-12 strands saffron soaked in water, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup golden brown onion, and 3 tbsp ghee on top.



Cover the pan with a tight fitting lid.

Place the pan on high heat and cook for 5-6 minutes. Simmer the heat to very low and cook the biryani for 35-40 minutes. You can keep a griddle below the pan if the heat in your stove cannot be set to very low. The idea is to slow cook or Dum the biryani.

Once the biryani is cooked for 35-40 minutes, remove the lid and mix the biryani gently using a large spoon to mix the chicken pieces and the masala with the rice. Serve hot with raita or salan.



Storage Suggestions

This Hyderabadi chicken biryani can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 to 4 days in an airtight container. Heat it properly, before serving. If you have a lot of portions, heat only the amount you want to serve.

You can even freeze biryani for about a **month**. Let it cool down completely before freezing. Once you are ready to eat it, thaw it overnight and heat it again, before serving.



Serving Suggestions

1. Hyderabadi chicken biryani can be served with any raita of your choice like **Onion Tomato Raita, Boondi Raita, or Pineapple Raita**.
2. You can serve **Mirchi Ka Salan** or **Ande Ka Salan** with it too.
3. Don't forget to top the chicken biryani with some browned onion before serving.

Chapter 4: Khaman Dhokla

This **khaman dhokla recipe** makes a wonderfully soft and fluffy, lightly sweet and savory cake that's perfect to enjoy anytime of the day. It's easy to prepare steamed on the stovetop or even in the Instant Pot with my step-by-step photos and instructions.



What is Khaman

Khaman, also known as khaman dhokla in other Indian states, is a popular delicacy from the Gujarati cuisine.

It is light, spongy and includes a hint of great savory flavor from a simple combination of gram flour (besan), spices, and herbs. Gram flour is ground skinned black chickpeas.

Khaman is a healthy savory-sweet snack that happens to be vegan and gluten-free too, if you skip semolina and asafoetida in the batter.

Khaman is also known as yellow dhokla as it has a yellow color or besan dhokla. It is also known as instant khaman.

They're perfect to enjoy for a hearty and satisfying breakfast or an afternoon or evening snack.

What is the Difference Between Dhokla and Khaman Dhokla?

Khaman is popularly referred to as khaman dhokla but in actuality, a dhokla is made differently than khaman.

Dhokla is made with ground, fermented batter of rice and lentils like chana dal or urad dal. You can check my recipe for an authentic [Dhokla](#) made with rice and chana dal.

While khaman is made instantly with gram flour. Khaman batter is not fermented unlike a dhokla batter.

In the taste department, fermentation gives dhokla a really complex flavorsome taste, but a khaman also tastes equally great.

The color of dhokla can range from cream to light yellow or yellow but a khaman always has a bright yellow color.

Eno (Fruit Salt)



As a leavening agent, we use in this khaman recipe is fruit salt. Eno is a popular Indian brand of fruit salt that is used to relieve acidity and heartburn.

Fruit salt is composed of citric acid, sodium bicarbonate (baking soda), and sodium carbonate.

Sodium bicarbonate and sodium carbonate are effervescent ingredients that bubble and release carbon dioxide when added to water.

Baking Soda or Eno

To make khaman, you can also use baking soda. But baking soda gives its soapy aroma if used in excess, so be careful not to add too much.

Eno gives you a perfect fluffy and soft khaman while the one made with baking soda is not that fluffy or spongy.

I personally prefer to use eno in khaman as it gives the best results. I do not favor baking soda, as firstly we cannot stand the soapy aroma and secondly the texture is not that airy or spongy in comparison to the khaman made with eno.

Use eno that is fresh and within its shelf period. If your eno is not fresh or active, the texture of khaman will be flat and dense. And please do not use flavored eno – the regular eno without any flavor works the best.

Both eno and baking soda react with turmeric powder and gives a red tinge or red spots in khaman dhokla. So add little turmeric powder or skip it completely.



Lemon Juice or Citric Acid

Citric acid gives a superb fluffy texture or lemon juice also works great, but citric acid wins here. That said, use whatever is easily available to you.

To swap citric acid with lemon juice, use this standard proportion of:

1 tablespoon lemon juice = ¼ teaspoon citric acid (in the powdered form)

For citric acid, use a food-grade and pure citric acid. I also suggest including freshly squeezed lemon juice. Use a fresh lemon.

How to make Khaman Dhokla

Preparation

1. Grease a steamer pan with 2 to 3 teaspoons oil.
2. Take 1.5 cups gram flour (120 grams besan) in a mixing bowl or pan. Do use gram flour which has a fine texture.

TIP: You can make khaman with chickpea flour as well.



3. Then add the following ingredients:
 - 2 to 3 pinches of turmeric powder
 - a generous pinch of asafoetida (skip to make a gluten-free version)
 - 1.5 tablespoons lemon or lime juice or $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pure citric acid
 - 1.5 teaspoons ginger paste (crush 1.5 inch ginger and 1.5 teaspoons green chilies in a mortar-pestle)
 - 1.5 teaspoons green chili paste
 - 1 tablespoon sugar or add according to taste
 - 1 teaspoon salt or add as per taste

TIP: Avoid adding too much of turmeric powder as then the fruit salt or baking soda reacts with the turmeric powder and makes it red in color, thereby giving reddish dots, specks or tones in the khaman.

4. Add 1 cup water (or more or less as needed) and 1 tablespoon oil to make a thick yet smooth flowing batter. The amount of water needed depends on the quality of flour, so start with 1 cup and add as required. Stir well to combine.
5. Add 1 tablespoon rava (semolina). This is entirely optional but adds a good texture to the khaman. Skip rava or semolina for a gluten-free option.
6. Stir with a whisk to create a smooth, thick batter without any lumps.
7. The batter should be thick yet flow easily off of the whisk. A quick tip is that if the batter becomes thin, then 1 to 2 tablespoons of gram flour.

Next bring 2 to 2.5 cups of water to a boil in a steamer pan or electric cooker or pressure cooker. The amount of water to be added depends on the size of the steamer or pressure cooker.

NOTE: To know more about the steaming in a pan, cooker and Instant Pot in detail, do read the tips section below.



8. Next add 2 teaspoons Eno or fruit salt. 2 teaspoons of Eno makes the khaman soft and fluffy. But there is a slightly alkaline taste to Eno.

If you're not a fan of this flavor then add only 1.5 teaspoons of Eno. If using baking soda as your leavening agent add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon to $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon.

9. Stir the eno with the batter briskly and quickly.

10. The fruit salt should be mixed evenly with the batter or else you get uneven texture in the khaman.
11. The eno will make the batter become frothy, so you need to work quickly to whisk it in thoroughly.



12. Pour the prepared batter into the greased pan.
13. Gently shake so that the batter evens out in the pan. Below is a picture of the batter ready to be steamed.

Steaming

1. Place the pan in a steamer or electric rice cooker or pressure cooker. The water should already be boiling or hot when you place the pan with the khaman batter. When using a pressure cooker, remove the vent weight/whistle from the lid and cover the cooker tightly with its lid.



NOTE: I have listed the detailed directions of steaming in a pan, pressure cooker and Instant pot in the tips sections below.

2. Steam for 15 to 20 minutes in an electric rice cooker. If using a pan or pressure cooker or Instant Pot, steam for 12 to 15 minutes on a medium to medium-high heat. In the below photo the khaman is cooked for 17 minutes using an electric rice cooker.

You can begin working on the spice and herb solution for **tempering the khaman** while it cooks. Continue reading for the instructions.



3. To check the doneness, insert a toothpick. It should come out clean if the khaman is done. If the toothpick has the batter on it, then you need to steam for another

minutes or so.

4. Let the khaman become warm or cool completely. Gently slide a butter knife along the edges to release the khaman from the pan. Place a plate or tray on top of the pan.
5. Then quickly invert the pan.



6. If greased well, the khaman will easily slide out onto the plate.



7. Use a sharp knife to slice the khaman in and **set aside until ready to temper**. Since I used a concave plate, the khaman settled down in the center. This won't happen if you use a flat plate.



Preparing Tempering

1. Tempering is essential to infuse the khaman with flavor and add moisture to the gram flour sponge. To make the temper, first heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a small pan on the stove. Use peanut oil or any neutral-tasting oil.
2. Add 1 teaspoon of mustard seeds and allow them to crackle.



3. When the mustard seeds are crackling, add 10 to 12 curry leaves, and, if you like, 1 teaspoon of cumin seeds and 1 teaspoon of chopped green chili.



4. Stir and then add 2 teaspoon white sesame seeds.
5. Fry the sesame seeds for some seconds. But don't brown them to become bitter.



6. Next carefully add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of water. You can switch off the heat when adding water.
7. Then add 2 teaspoons of sugar.
8. Stir and allow the tempering mixture to come to a boil. Make sure that the sugar is dissolved.



Making Khaman

1. Remove from the heat and immediately pour this tempering mixture evenly on the khaman dhokla so that it seeps through the sliced edges.
2. Garnish with 2 to 3 tablespoons of chopped coriander leaves and 2 to 3 tablespoons grated coconut, if you like.



Serving Suggestions

Serve the khaman dhokla straight away or you can store it in an airtight box and serve later after an hour. If enjoying khaman later after several hours, then don't add coconut until ready to eat.

You can also refrigerate them, and then when ready to serve just sprinkle some water and heat in a microwave for a few seconds until just warmed.



Storage

If you plan to serve khaman after a few hours or next day, then I do not recommend to add coconut or coriander. Simply pour the tempering.

Refrigerate the khaman in a covered container. While serving you can warm with a sprinkling of water in a microwave or an oven.

If using the instant pot to warm, then steam for 1 to 2 minutes. While serving add the coconut and coriander leaves.

The sweet, savory, fluffy cakes pair great with our usual assortment of Indian chutneys like Papaya Chutney, Mint Chutney, or even Coriander Chutney.

Expert Tips

Batter Consistency

The batter consistency has to be flowing but thick to medium-thick. 1 cup water with 1.5 cups of gram flour, always gives me perfect results, but you can add a few tablespoons of water if your batter looks very thick. A super thick batter will make the khaman hard and dense. A thin batter won't hold shape and will become a mess.



Steaming

You can steam khaman in a pan, stove-top pressure cooker, or in an Instant Pot. I list below in detail on steaming khaman in each.

1. Steaming in a pan or pot

- Place a small trivet in a large steaming pan that has enough room to keep the pan with the batter. Pour 2 to 2.5 cups of water. Bring it to a boil.
- Place the batter pan as soon you mix with eno. Cover with a lid but one that has a vent or will allow some steam to pass through.
- Steam for 12 to 15 minutes on medium-high heat. The deeper the pan is in touch with the boiling water, the faster the steaming is. If it is away from the boiling water, the steaming will take a bit more time.

2. Steaming in a stove-top pressure cooker

- Place the trivet in a pressure cooker. Add 2 to 2.5 cups water. Heat the water until it begins boiling. Secure the pan tightly between tongs and carefully place it on the trivet.
- Remove the whistle (vent weight) from the lid and seal the lid tightly. Steam for 12 to 15 minutes on medium to medium-high heat.

3. Instant Pot Steaming

- Pour 2 to 2.5 cups of water in the steel insert of your IP. Place a trivet (not short or long, but kind of in between).
- Use the sauté function and let the water get heated up and start simmering.
- Using tongs or with oven mitts carefully place the pan with the khaman batter on the trivet. Do not cover with any lid.
- Cover and seal IP with its lid and keep the vent position to steam release. Press the steam button and steam on high pressure for 12 to 15 minutes.



- Keep a check of the time using a clock or watch as Instant pot does will not beep after the elapsed time and will continue to steam. Let all the pressure release and the valve fall down. Then open the lid carefully.

Chapter 5: Kosha Mangsho

Kosha Mangsho or Mutton Kosha is a delicious spicy **Bengali style mutton curry** that is full of flavors from mutton, spices, and mustard oil. Here is how to make it.



About This Recipe

Kosha Mangsho or mutton kosha is a very popular traditional dish in Bengal, translated as **sautéed meat**. The gravy is slow-cooked over low flame for a very long time to get a rich, dark-brown gravy and melt-in-the-mouth mutton (goat) pieces. This thick gravy made with the strong flavors of mutton is a favorite at every Bengali household.

A **little high on the spice quotient**, this kosha mangsho recipe or Bengali style mutton curry can be had with traditional crisp Bengali luchi or with a portion of the delicious Bengali mishti pulao.

This dish is traditionally made in an **iron kadai** which gives it a deep dark brown color. This Bengali mutton recipe is an instant hit at every Navratri and Poila Baisakh or the Bengali New Year celebrations.

Ingredients



Goat Mutton – To make this recipe, choose the best goat meat with bones. Meat from the shoulder or the hind legs are best to make the curries. Ask your butcher to cut you from these areas. Wash the mutton very well before using and drain all the excess water.

If goat meat is not available, you can use **lamb** in its place.

For Marination – To make this curry, firstly mutton is marinated and for the same, you will need – thick yogurt, ginger paste, garlic paste.

Mutton is marinated so that it becomes tender and also soaks up the flavors really nicely. To **make thick yogurt**, simply transfer plain yogurt to a fine sieve and let it rest for an hour in the refrigerator over a bowl. All the excess water will drip down and the yogurt will be thick and creamy. You can use Greek yogurt in place of thick yogurt as it is already quick thick.

Oil – The mustard oil really brings out the flavor of the curry. If not mustard oil, then you can use any vegetable oil or even ghee.

Whole Spices – For the curry, you will need whole spices such as – black cardamom, green cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, dry red chilies, and bay leaves. When infused in hot oil, these release a nice aroma and also flavors up the curry.

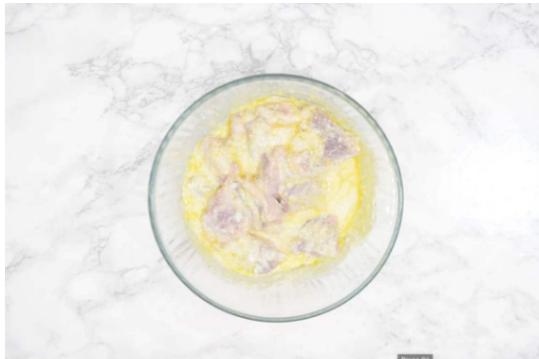
Potatoes – This Bengali mutton curry also uses potatoes along with mutton. Peel and cut the potatoes in thick rounds and then add to the curry.

Spice Powders – To enhance the flavor, even more, we will add coriander powder, turmeric powder, Kashmiri red chili powder, cumin powder, and garam masala powder.

Others – Another set of ingredients that are required for this delicious curry – onion, ginger, garlic, tomatoes, lime juice, fresh coriander, and water.

How to make Kosha Mangsho?

In a large bowl, mix 1 pound ($\frac{1}{2}$ kg) bone-in goat mutton, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup thick yogurt, 1 tsp ginger paste, 1 tsp garlic paste, and 1 tbsp mustard oil. Cover the bowl with a lid and refrigerate it for 3-4 hours and marinate the mutton well.



Heat 4 tbsp mustard oil over medium-high heat in a large pan. An iron pan is best to make this dish as it gives a deep blackish color to the dish but if you don't have one, use any heavy bottom pan. I used my steel kadai.

Slightly crush 2 whole black cardamoms, 3-4 whole green cardamoms, 1-inch piece of whole cinnamon stick, and 2-3 whole cloves in a mortar and pestle. Crushing the spices helps in releasing all their flavor in the oil. When the oil is hot, add 2 whole bay leaves, crushed spices, 3-4 whole dry red chilies, and 1 tsp sugar to the pan and fry for 4-5 seconds.



Add 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ cups of thinly sliced onion and fry until they turn slightly brown. Keep stirring at regular intervals. It will take 6-8 minutes.

Add 1 tsp chopped ginger and 1 tsp chopped garlic and fry until the onions are nicely browned. It will take 8-10 minutes.



Now add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes.

Add the marinated mutton pieces along with the marinade and 2-3 medium size potatoes cut into halves and fry for 5-6 minutes on high heat.



Add the dry spices like 2 tsp coriander powder, 1 tsp turmeric powder, 2 tsp Kashmiri red chili powder, 1 tsp cumin powder, and salt to taste, and cook for 2-3 minutes. Now add a cup of water and cover the pan. Cook for 1.5 to 2 hours on low heat until the mutton is tender. Keep stirring in between. Add more water while cooking if the mutton is getting dry and the masala is burning at the bottom of the pan. The consistency of Kosha Mangsho is slightly thick, so keep that in mind.



Finally, add $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garam masala powder and 1 tbsp lime juice and mix well.

Cook for another 3-4 minutes until the gravy is slightly thickened. Serve hot.





Tips

Some people also add **raw papaya** as a meat tenderizer but I have not added it. If you wish, you can add 2 tsp of grated raw papaya while marinating the meat.

If you are short on time, cook the curry in a **pressure cooker**. Once the mutton is added, close the lid of the cooker and pressure cook for one whistle on high heat. Then simmer the heat to low and cook for 20 minutes. Let the pressure release naturally and then open the lid.

This dish tastes best the **next day**. So if you have planned it before, make it a day prior to serving.

To make a restaurant-style **smooth gravy**, you can also grind the fried onion masala and then add it back to the pan.

Potatoes are a must-add in this curry and no Kosha Mangsho is complete without adding a few.

You can drizzle a few teaspoon of **ghee** over the ready gravy just before serving.

Storage Suggestions

You can refrigerate it for **2 days** in an airtight container. It can be frozen for up to a **month** in an airtight freezer-safe container. When ready to serve, thaw it for a few hours over the counter. Then reheat in a pan or in the microwave. Add little water if the gravy is too thick.

Chapter 6: Makki Di Roti & Sarson Da Saag

Sarson ka saag recipe with step by step photos – One of the Indian recipe that is a labor of love, time and patience. **Sarson** is the hindi/Punjabi word for **Mustard** and Saag means **Greens**.

Sarson Ka Saag is a popular vegetarian dish from the northern region of the India. It is made from mustard greens and spices such as ginger and garlic. It is often served with makki ki roti. Sarson Ka Saag and makki ki roti is considered a special dish in entire North India.



Saag is a Punjabi term which means greens. so the English translations is mustard greens. So you will have [Palak saag](#) Or bathua saag or [Chane ka saag](#) and so on.

There is **No shortcut method in making sarson ka saag**. sorting the greens, washing them, chopping and then cooking them Blending them and again cooking them is a time-intensive method.

And in today's world of curry in a hurry, if you really want to savor the taste of an authentic sarson ka saag, then you do have to invest some time in preparing it.

The sarson ka saag recipe is very easy, it is just the preparation and the method that takes time. Usually, I clean the greens one day before and keep them in an airtight containers. So half of the work is over. The next day then, it is easy to prepare the saag.

At home, we generally use 5 green leafy vegetables to make the saag. They are mustard, bathua (also known as chenopodium in english), spinach, radish and fenugreek.



The flavor and taste in the saag, Comes predominantly from mustard greens. The saag has bitter and pungent notes of the mustard which are subdued by the presence of bathua and radish.

After all the cooking and simmering what you get in the end is a creamy, green saag bursting with mellowness & flavors from all the greens. A bowl full of antioxidants and health.

Winter is the time when the mustard and Bathua are available in India.

Hence during this season, sarson ka saag is always made in the homes and hearths of north India, especially in Punjab from where this traditional recipe comes from.

The sarson ka saag topped with homemade butter and served with [Makki ki roti](#) (flat breads from maize flour) is not only comforting but also warms up the palate as well as the body. This is a winter meal you see. So that extra topping of butter is alright. Also the saag is served with an accompaniment of sliced or chopped onions and some green chilies.



From what I have observed is that the taste of the saag improves in a day and as it ages. Mine usually does not last for more than 4-5 days. You can also freeze the saag. Before tempering, thaw the saag.

The proportion of bathua to spinach to mustard that we use is **1:1:2**. Ex. If you are using 1 whole bunch of mustard leaves then use 1/2 bunch of bathua and spinach in approximation or for 1 kg of mustard leaves, use 1/2 kg of bathua leaves and spinach.

The other two greens, ie. Radish and fenugreek are also added by the Indian method of Andaz meaning estimation.

This sarson ka saag recipe works well for 8-9 serving portions and can be easily halved or doubled.

How to make Sarson Da Saag

1. Chop and clean all the greens. Chop off the lower end of the mustard seems just a few centimeters from the base. The mustard stems can be tough. In this case you can discard the stems or keep them. If you keep them, then they have to be cooked really well so that they become soft. Luckily, I had tender stems in the mustard bunch. All the greens, sorted and nicely laid on the table... All going in the fridge for the saag to be made the next day.



2. Washing the greens. This is the tough part. You have to really wash the greens, especially the mustard greens well to get rid of the mud or soil clinging to the stems. I did this task in batches.
3. Add the washed greens in the pressure cooker.
4. Add other veggies – radish, onion, tomatoes, ginger and garlic.



5. Add some spice & salt – green chilies, red chili powder, asafoetida & salt. The saag is mildly spiced and yet tastes good.
6. Pour water.
7. Cover and pressure cook for 6-7 minutes or more till the greens become soft. You can also cook in a pan. Cover and let the greens cook till they become soft.
8. Now let the pressure settle in the cooker. When you open the lid, you will see the greens, onions, tomatoes etc. all have cooked well. Let the green mixture warm or cool at the room temperature.

9. Then in a blender take some of the greens.
10. Add maize flour. It helps in making the saag smooth as well as thickening it and does impart its flavor to the saag.
11. Blend till smooth. I usually make a smooth puree. Some folks like a coarse texture. So you decide how you want your saag. I blended in batches. You can also use a hand blender for the same and blend in the cooker itself. If doing this then chop the greens before you pressure cook them. It is easier to blend with a hand blender then. The traditional way is to use a Madani (the Indian hand blender) to blend the greens.
12. Pour the greens puree in a pan. I used the pressure cooker as while simmering the saag, it bubbles and splutters. So, be careful and use a deep pan.
13. Simmer for a good 25-30 minutes. Stir occasionally so that the saag does not stick to the bottom of the pan. Check the seasoning and add more salt if required. Once cooled, the saag can be kept in an airtight container in the fridge.



Tempering for Sarson Da Saag

1. The saag is not ready to be served yet. We have to temper the saag. We always temper the saag with onions, but you can temper with some ginger, green chilies and tomatoes too along with the onions. Heat oil or ghee and add chopped onions. The amount of oil/ghee and onions to be added depends on the portions of saag you will be serving. So for 3 servings, 1 to 2 tbsp oil with 1 medium sized onion is alright.
2. Lightly brown the onions.



3. Add the cooked sarson ka saag. Simmer.
4. Serve the hot sarson ka saag straight away with makki di roti. The best is to serve with makki di roti. Nothing beats this combination. But you can also serve sarson ka saag with parathas and steamed rice.

Ingredients

For Sarson Ka Saag

- 1 bunch mustard leaves (sarson)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch bathua leaves (chenopodium)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bunch spinach leaves
- 1 cup chopped tender radish leaves (mooli ke patte)
- 2 to 3 inches white radish root



- 1 cup fenugreek leaves, chopped
- 2 medium sized onions, chopped
- 3 medium sized tomatoes, chopped
- 2 inch ginger, chopped
- 2 green chilies, chopped
- 7 to 8 garlic, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red chili powder
- 1 to 2 pinch asafoetida or $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon asafoetida powder (hing)
- 2 to 3 cups water
- 2 tablespoon maize flour
- Salt as required

Chapter 7: Malai Kofta

Malai Kofta needs no introduction. Deep fried balls (koftas) made with potato and paneer are dunked in a creamy spiced velvety smooth curry.

It's the ultimate indulgence and pairs beautifully with [garlic naan](#).



I remember whenever we would go out, we would always order either of these 2 dishes- one was [dal makhani](#) and other was malai kofta.

Probably because these rich and creamy dishes were not made at home often, maybe once or twice a year for special occasions.

So they always had a special place in my heart. I have already shared the dal makhani recipe (which you guys love)!



What is Malai Kofta

Malai Kofta is a very popular Indian vegetarian dish where balls (kofta) made of potato and paneer are deep fried and served with a creamy and spiced tomato based curry.

The literal translation of this dish is malai=creamy/buttery and kofta=spiced balls (in this case made of potatoes and paneer).

There are two parts to this dish:

The Kofta

Any round ball made of meats and veggies is referred to as **Kofta** in several Asian countries. You can say they are like meatballs. In India, a lot of koftas are made with vegetables and spices and deep fried.

The kofta in this malai kofta is made with paneer, potato, ginger, cilantro, nuts, and raisins. I also add some cardamom and white pepper powder to enhance the flavor of the kofta.

One other thing which is added to the kofta here is cornstarch. It binds the koftas so that they don't disintegrate in the hot oil.

The Gravy/Curry

The koftas are served with a creamy gravy which forms the base of this dish. It is made with onion, tomatoes, cashews, ginger, garlic and a lot of whole spices. The gravy is silky smooth, lightly sweetened and spiced mainly with spices like cardamom, cinnamon, cloves etc. Cream and butter are added to make it rich and creamy.

Once the onion, tomatoes and whole spices are cooked, you have to grind them to a paste.

However, even after grinding the gravy will not be super smooth, so it's important to pass the puree through a strainer. That will make it silky smooth and that's what you need for this recipe.

Use homemade paneer in the kofta if possible. The fresh homemade paneer makes them taste much better. Do not add too much cornstarch to the kofta.

For the Malai Kofta recipe, I added have added 1.5 tablespoons of cornstarch and that was enough to just bind the koftas together.

If you add too much of the cornstarch, it does interfere with the taste and flavor of the kofta.



These kofta need to carefully handled. Make sure the oil in the kadai/wok is hot enough. If not, the koftas can break when dropped into oil.

They can also stick to the bottom of the pan while frying. So, make sure the oil is hot before you drop the koftas in oil. Sprinkle cardamom powder on top of the gravy once it's cooked. Just a sprinkle of cardamom powder on top really adds to the flavor.

Also drizzle some cream before serving the dish. Don't cut down on the fat.

If you want to make restaurant style malai kofta, then you need to use fat in form of butter and cream. They add to the flavor and richness of the dish. I like using amul butter for extra flavor.

Serving Suggestions

This malai kofta tastes best with some [homemade naan](#). It also pairs well with [jeera rice](#).

To serve place koftas on plate and top with the gravy. Garnish with cream and cilantro or you can also place the gravy first on the serving plate, drizzle with cream and place koftas on top.

If you like melt in mouth koftas, it's also a good idea to let the koftas simmer in the gravy for 2 minutes before serving.

Ingredients

Gravy

- 1 tablespoon oil 15 ml, I used avocado oil
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 inch cinnamon stick



- 4 whole green cardamoms slightly crushed
- 3 cloves
- 1 teaspoon shahi jeera caraway seeds
- 6-7 large garlic cloves 22 grams, roughly chopped
- 1.5 inch ginger 16 grams, roughly chopped
- 1 green chili chopped
- 1 large yellow onion 190 grams, chopped
- 2 large tomatoes 390 grams, chopped
- 12 cashews whole and raw
- 2 cups water 16 oz
- 2 tablespoons butter 28 grams
- 1 teaspoon oil 5 ml
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 1/4 teaspoon kashmiri red chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt or to taste
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon garam masala or more to taste
- 2 teaspoons crushed kasuri methi dried fenugreek leaves
- 3 tablespoons heavy cream 45 ml
- Pinch cardamom powder
- Cilantro to garnish



Malai Kofta

- 1 cup mashed & boiled potatoes
- 1 cup grated paneer
- 1 tablespoons finely chopped ginger
- 1.5 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- 1 green chili chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped cashews
- 1 tablespoon chopped raisins golden raisins
- 1.5 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper powder
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom powder
- Oil for frying, I used sunflower oil

Method

Make the gravy/curry

1. Heat a pot/pan on medium heat. Once hot, add 1 tablespoon oil and then add the bay leaf, cinnamon, green cardamom, cloves and shahi jeera.
2. Let the spices sizzle for few seconds and then add the chopped garlic, ginger, green chili and onion. Saute for around 2 minutes, do not brown the onion.
3. Then add the tomatoes along with cashews.
4. Add 2 cups water and stir.



5. Cover the pot with a lid and cook for around 10 to 12 minutes until tomatoes soften.
6. Let it cool down a bit (around 15 minutes, if you blend it while it's hot it might blow off from the blender), then discard the bay leaf and transfer mixture to a blender. Blend to a smooth paste.
7. Use a strainer and strain the puree into another bowl. This makes sure the gravy is really smooth.

8. Put the pan on medium heat again. Once hot, add 2 tablespoons unsalted butter and 1 teaspoon oil. Let the butter melt.



9. Add in the pureed gravy and cook for 2 minutes.
10. Then add the coriander powder, kashmiri red chili powder, salt, sugar and garam masala. Let the curry cook for 2 to 3 minutes.
11. Add crushed kasuri methi and then cream.
12. Cook for additional 2 to 3 minutes on medium-low heat. Sprinkle some cardamom powder on top. The gravy is now done. Set aside and make kofta.



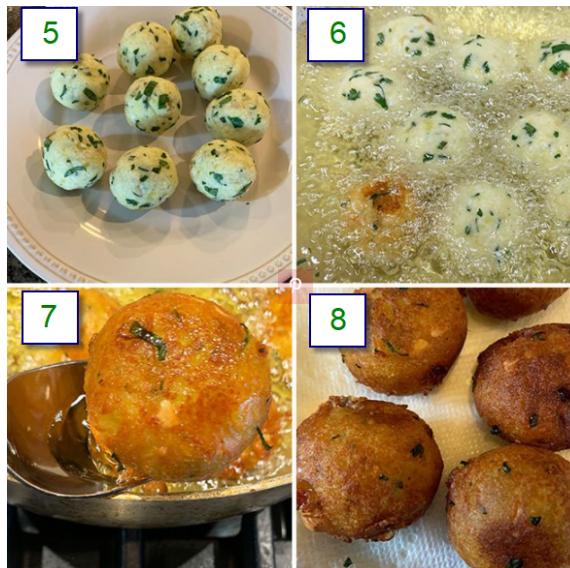
Make the kofta

1. Boil the potatoes using a pressure cooker, 8-9 whistles on a stove-top pressure cooker. You can do this on the side while making the gravy. Once the potatoes are boiled, let them cool a bit then peel and mash them.
2. To a large bowl, now add all ingredients for kofta- boiled and mashed potatoes, grated paneer, finely chopped ginger, cilantro, green chili, cashews, cornstarch, salt, white pepper powder and 1/4 teaspoon cardamom powder.
3. Mix everything together with your hands to form a dough.
4. Start making koftas from the dough. Take some part of the dough and roll between your palms to make it round.



5. Similarly makes all the koftas. I made 9 koftas, each around 40 to 42 grams.
6. Heat enough oil to fry in a kadai on medium-high heat. Make sure oil is hot, else koftas can stick to the pan and also disintegrate in the oil.
7. Drop koftas in hot oil.
8. Fry until golden brown from both sides. You can also shallow fry them, just press the koftas and flatten them like a burger tikki and shallow fry.

9. Remove the fried koftas on a paper towel.



To serve place koftas on plate and top with the gravy. Garnish with cream and cilantro Or you can also place the gravy first on the serving plate, drizzle with cream and place koftas on top.

If you like melt in mouth soft koftas, it's also a good idea to let the koftas simmer in the gravy for 2 minutes before serving.

Enjoy malai kofta with naan or rice!

Note

If using store bought paneer for the kofta, make sure to put the block of paneer in hot water first for 20-30 minutes. Then remove paneer block from hot water, pat dry with a paper towel and then grate the paneer for the kofta. If using homemade paneer, you don't need to do this step.

Chapter 8: Misal Pav

Misal Pav is a vibrant meal consisting of a spicy sprouted bean curry topped with crunchy Farsan, crisp red onions, and fresh cilantro that is served with lightly buttered Pav or dinner rolls. The bold flavors of this peppery dish are accentuated with a dash of lemon, packing in an explosion of flavors in every bite.



What is Misal Pav?

“**Misal**” is a spicy sprouted bean curry also known as “**matkichi usal**” and “**Pav**” are buns or dinner rolls. The misal curry is garnished with fresh onions, cilantro, and farsan and served with warm buttery rolls.

Farsan is a crispy and flavourful snack that is also used as a garnish in chat and Indian breakfast dishes. The beans used in this recipe are called Math or Moth translated in English as Turkish or Dew beans



Served as a **hearty breakfast** in small street-side restaurants in Western India, Misal pav is extremely well-loved street food. It is always an instant hit at potlucks and gatherings. For me, it is a hearty meal that can be enjoyed any time of the day!

The sprouted math/moth bean curry is simmered in a thin gravy known as “kat” or “rassa” with authentic flavors being induced by the freshly ground ginger, garlic, and a warming spice blend called **misal masala**. Misal masala is available at Indian grocery stores, but I use my own homemade spice mix as I love the intense flavors of freshly ground spices.



Origins of Misal Pav

While the dish traces its origins to Nashik in Western India, over time, locals have tweaked the basic recipe of how to make misal, to suit their palettes. **Puneri Misal, Nagpuri Misal, Kolhapuri Misal, Nashik Misal, Khandeshi Misal** are some of the variants of this immensely popular dish.

My mother always whipped up this spicy dish on dull rainy days and it never failed to lift up our dampened spirits. As the **matki usal** simmered away in an incredible combination of fresh ground ginger, garlic, coconut, and misal masala, our kitchen would come alive with many delightful aromas.

Meanwhile, the condiments of diced onions, tomatoes, cilantro, lemon wedges, and crispy farsan placed neatly in small white bowls made for a visual delight. I remember us all waiting in cheerful anticipation as the misal cooked to sublime perfection.



I often make misal pav for easy protein-packed weeknight meals. This steaming wholesome dish leaves us completely satiated and instantly transports me back down memory lane to my home in India.

How to Sprout Moth Beans

Sprouting beans at home is easy, it just needs a little bit of planning.

- **Rinse** 1 cup moth beans and soak in 3 cups of warm filter water for 8 hours or overnight.
- **Drain** Drain the water with a colander, wire mesh basket, or silicone basket making sure all the water is drained out.
- Then place the basket in the Instant Pot, close the lid, and set the Instant Pot to **Yogurt mode** for 24 to 36 hours.





Curry's Pro Tips for the best and authentic Misal Pav:

Vadilal brand frozen sprouted moth beans are available in most Indian grocery stores. They come in handy when you do not have time to sprout the matki at home

The traditional Misal recipe has lots of thin gravy also known as “rassa” or “kat” which is used to drench in the soft pillow pav for each bite. Add more or less water depending on how much gravy you like. You can always add more hot water after the pressure cooking cycle has completed to thin out the gravy.

Many people love a thin layer of oil known as “Tarri” or “Tavang” on the gravy. Oil called for in this recipe is on the medium side, but feel free to add more or less. Adding more oil will have a layer of the “tarri” to the final dish.

I love using my [mom's garam masala](#) in this recipe and I use 2 tablespoons in this recipe. Any [Garam masala](#) will work in this recipe, start with 1 teaspoon and adjust as per your taste. You can also use store-bought Misal Masala, start with 1 tablespoon as it tends to be on the spicier side, and add more as needed.

Variations

1. Substitute half of the sprouted moth beans with mung beans.
2. You can skip the green chilies to make the curry mild or add more for a spicier curry.
3. You can add only 2 cups of water while pressure cooking the beans and then add warm water as needed to bring the curry to your desired consistency.
4. Although, sprouted beans are traditionally used in this recipe, in a pinch you can use soaked and un-sprouted beans. Use same pressure cooking time for soaked beans. To use dry moth beans increase the pressure cooking time to 15 minutes.

Here is my Step by step recipe to make Maharashtrian Misal Pav:

Step 1 – Blend tomato, chilies, ginger, garlic, and coconut in a blender to make a smooth paste (photos 1 – 2).



Step 2 – Set the Instant Pot to saute mode and heat oil. Add mustard seeds and allow them to pop. This may take 2 to 3 minutes. Add hing, turmeric, curry leaves, 1/4 cup cilantro, and onions. Saute everything as the onions start to turn translucent, it may take around 3 to 4 minutes. Cook covered to speed up the process (photos 3 – 6).



Step 3 – Next, stir in the spice paste and saute for another minute. Add red chili powder, ground coriander, garam masala, ground cumin, and salt. Mix well. Add sprouted beans and mix well. Add water and give a quick stir. Secure the Instant Pot with the pressure valve to sealing. Pressure Cook (Hi) for 5 minutes followed by 10-minute natural pressure release (photos 7 – 10).



Step 4 – Release the remaining pressure by turning the pressure release valve to venting. Open the lid and give a quick stir. Garnish with remaining cilantro (photos 11 – 12).



How to Serve Misal Pav?

Heat a nonstick griddle or pan. Lightly spread butter or ghee on each half of the bun/pav and place them on the pan. Gently pressing them down with a spatula cook both sides until they are heated through. **Serve hot pav alongside the misal topped with farsan, red onions, and cilantro.** Here is a tip, serve the farsan on the side so it stays crunchy. I like to serve plain yogurt on the side along with lemon wedges.

To serve this dish as a **gluten-free option**, simply add lots of diced onion, tomatoes, farsan, and few spoonfuls of plain yogurt over the curry and enjoy with a squeeze of fresh lemon or serve it over steamed rice for a complete meal.



Ingredients

- 2½ cups sprouted moth beans
- 1 tomato quartered
- 2 green chilies
- 1½ inch ginger rough chopped
- 6 garlic cloves
- 1 tablespoon dry shredded coconut unsweetened
- 2 to 4 tablespoon oil
- 1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
- ¼ teaspoon asafetida hing optional
- 10 curry leaves
- 1 medium yellow onion finely diced
- 1 tablespoon Kashmiri red chili powder
- 2 tablespoons Mom's Garam Masala see notes
- 1 tablespoon ground coriander



- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground turmeric
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt
- 3 cups water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cilantro chopped

To Serve Misal Pav

- 12 Soft Buns
- 2 tablespoon ghee or butter
- 1 to 2 cups sev farsan
- 1 cup red onion diced
- 6 lemon wedges

Notes

1. Sprouted mung beans can be used instead of moth beans. Or half and half of both sprouts work well too.
2. You can skip the green chilies to make the curry mild or add more for a spicier curry.
3. Add only 2 cups of water while pressure cooking and then add more warm water to adjust the gravy.
4. Sprouted beans are used traditionally, but if you do not have them handy you can also use soaked moth beans with the same pressure cook time or dry moth beans with an increased pressure cook time of 15 minutes.

Chapter 9: Paneer Butter Masala

Paneer Butter Masala is one of India's most popular paneer gravy recipe. This recipe with Indian cottage cheese cubes in a creamy tomato sauce is one that I have been making for a long time. With the step-by-step guide you can easily make restaurant style paneer butter masala at home!



About this recipe

This **Paneer Butter Masala** recipe is a rich and creamy dish of paneer (cottage cheese) in a tomato, butter and cashew sauce (known as Makhani gravy).

The dish has a lovely tang coming from the tomatoes and is slightly sweet with a creamy and velvety feel to it.

With my easy, quick and delicious recipe you can prepare this restaurant style paneer butter masala recipe within minutes.

Called by various names such as butter paneer or butter paneer masala or paneer makhani this dish is of the most popular Indian paneer dish. Obviously being so popular it is served in many Indian restaurants.

Ingredients

Ripe red juicy tomatoes: Tomatoes are a key ingredient here which form the base of the makhani sauce or gravy. Makhani sauce is prepared from scratch with fresh ingredients like tomatoes (specifically pureed tomatoes), cashews and butter. Onions can be added if you want. Though traditionally onions are never added in a makhani gravy. So do use tomatoes



that are ripe and have a slight sweetness in them. Avoid adding tomatoes that are sour or too tart or unripe.

Cashews: Yet another important ingredient is cashews which imparts a lovely creaminess and sheen in the dish. The sweetness of the cashews also balances the tanginess of the tomatoes. To give a creamy consistency and a sweet tinge, I add both cashew paste and cream.

Cream: As mentioned above, apart from cashews I also add a bit of cream which thickens the gravy slightly and makes it rich.

Butter: The amount of butter that is added is not huge but just right in this paneer butter masala recipe. Butter makes the curry a bit rich and buttery. Though you can go overboard by adding some more butter.

Panier: A quality of paneer can make or break your dish. What you want are succulent soft paneer cubes gently coated with a smooth, buttery tomato sauce. So make sure to use either homemade paneer or good quality store brought paneer.

Spices & herbs: The list of spices is not much. For that brilliant orange color, you need to add kashmiri red chilli powder. You can sub it with cayenne pepper or paprika. You will also need garam masala powder. Kasuri methi which are dried fenugreek leaves also add a good flavor. Just skip them if you do not have. For garnish cilantro (coriander leaves) are added.

Swaps for a vegan version

If you are a vegan don't worry! You can easily substitute the dairy ingredients with vegan alternatives and still get a delicious dish.

Tofu: To make a vegan recipe, replace tofu, seitan, tempeh with paneer.

Vegan butter or oil: Add a neutral-tasting oil or vegan butter and skip cream altogether.

Coconut cream: You can even use coconut cream, but with coconut cream, the flavors of coconut will be felt in the final dish.

How to make Paneer Butter Masala

You will have to do some prep work before you begin making this delicious recipe. It starts with soaking your cashews, making tomato puree and blending soaked cashews.

Preparation

1. Soak 18 to 20 cashews in $\frac{1}{3}$ cup hot water for 20 to 30 minutes.



2. When the cashews are soaking, you can prep the other ingredients like chopping tomatoes, chopping and preparing the ginger-garlic paste, slicing paneer etc.
3. Crush 1-inch ginger + 3 to 4 medium-sized garlic to a paste in a mortar pestle to a semi-fine or fine paste. Keep aside. Don't add any water in crushing ginger & garlic.



4. After 20 to 30 minutes, drain the water and add the soaked cashews in a blender or mixer-grinder. Also, add 2 to 3 tablespoons fresh water or as required.
5. Blend to a smooth paste without any tiny bits or chunks of cashews. Remove the cashew paste in a bowl and set aside.
6. In the same blender add 2 cups of diced or roughly chopped tomatoes. No need to blanch the tomatoes before blending.
7. Blend to a smooth tomato puree. Set aside. Don't add any water while blending the tomatoes.



Making Tomato Gravy

1. Heat a thick bottomed pan or a heavy pan. Keep the flame to a low or medium-low. Add 2 tablespoons butter or 1 tablespoon oil + 1 or 2 tbsp butter in a pan.



2. Adding oil prevents the butter from browning too quickly. You can even add 3 to 4 tablespoons butter for a rich buttery version. Both salted or unsalted butter can be added.
3. Keep the flame to a low. Add 1 medium-sized tej patta (Indian bay leaf). Fry for 2 to 3 seconds or till the oil becomes fragrant from the aroma of the tej patta.
4. Add the prepared crushed ginger-garlic or 1 teaspoon ready ginger-garlic paste.
5. Fry for some seconds till the raw aroma of the ginger-garlic disappears.





6. Pour the prepared tomato puree. Be careful while adding the puree as it may splutter.
7. Mix it very well with the butter.
8. Begin to cook the tomato puree on a low to medium-low flame. Stir at intervals.
9. The tomato puree mixture will start simmering.
10. In case the tomato puree splutters too much while cooking then cover the pan partly with a lid or cover fully with a splatter lid (channi lid). the tomato puree might splutter if there is more water content in the tomatoes.
11. Simmer the puree for 5 to 6 minutes.
12. Then add 1 teaspoon Kashmiri red chilli powder or deghi mirch. You can even add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon Kashmiri red chilli powder or $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of cayenne pepper or paprika or any other variety of red chilli powder.
13. Mix well and continue to stir and sauté the tomato puree.
14. Sauté till the butter starts leaving the sides of the pan and the entire tomato puree mixture comes together as a whole.

This entire cooking and sautéing of the tomato puree take about 14 to 17 minutes on a low flame to medium-low flame.

Time will vary depending on the thickness of the pan, size, the intensity of flame etc.



Adding Cashew Paste

1. Now add the prepared cashew paste.



2. Mix the cashew paste very well with the cooked tomato puree and continue to stir and sauté on a low to medium-low flame. Stir non-stop after adding cashew paste.
3. Sauté till the cashew paste is cooked and again the oil will start to leave the sides of the masala. The cashew will begin to cook fast. Approx 3 to 4 minutes on a low flame. So keep on stirring non-stop.



4. Add 1.5 cups water.

Making Paneer Butter Masala

1. Mix the water very well with the tomato-cashew makhani masala. If there are lumps of the tomato-cashew masala, then break with a spoon. You can even use a wired whisk for mixing.



2. Let the curry simmer and come to a boil. Stir occasionally.
3. After 2 to 3 mins, add ginger julienne (about 1-inch ginger – cut in julienne (thin matchstick-like strips). Reserve a few for garnishing. The curry will also begin to thicken.
4. Add 1 or 2 slit green chillies.
5. Also, add salt as per taste and $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 teaspoon sugar (optional). You can add sugar from $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp to 1 teaspoon or more depending on the sourness of the tomatoes. Sugar is optional and you can skip it too. If you add cream, then you will need to add less sugar.
6. Mix very well and simmer for a minute.
7. After the gravy thickens to your desired consistency, then add the paneer cubes (200 or 250 grams). The consistency you want before you add paneer as you will be cooking the paneer for a few seconds. You can also fry the paneer and then add the paneer once the gravy has become creamy. I keep the gravy to a medium

consistency gravy.



8. Stir and mix the paneer cubes gently in the gravy. You can switch off the heat at this point. If you find that the paneer cubes are still raw to taste, then switch off heat after adding cream.
9. Now quickly add 1 teaspoon crushed kasuri methi leaves (dry fenugreek leaves) and 1 teaspoon garam masala to the gravy. Addition of crushed kasuri methi gives a restaurant flavor. Kasuri methi is optional and can be skipped.
10. Next add 2 to 3 tablespoons of low-fat cream or 1 to 2 tablespoons of heavy whipping cream.



11. Stir gently but well and switch off the heat.



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12. Serve Paneer Butter Masala with 1 to 2 tablespoons of chopped coriander leaves (cilantro) and the remaining ginger julienne. You can also drizzle some cream or dot with butter while serving.



Chapter 10: Punjabi Chole Masala

This Punjabi Chana Masala or Chole Masala is an authentic North Indian style Chickpea Curry made with white chickpeas, freshly powdered spices, onions, tomatoes and herbs.

Chana masala is a naturally vegan recipe with added health benefits of the chickpeas which are packed full of protein, minerals and fiber.

In this post, I am sharing 2 super delicious chana masala recipes.

Authentic Punjabi Chana Masala – Made in a pan on the stovetop with freshly ground spices.

Instant Pot Chana Masala (Home Style) – One pot, super easy and don't require the special chana masala spice blend or powder.

What is Chana Masala?

Chana Masala is a popular Indian dish of white chickpeas in a spicy and tangy gravy. In North India, chana masala is called as ‘chhole masala’ or simply ‘chhole’.

Both the words “Chana” and “Chole” refer to chickpeas.

In Hindi language, the word “Masala” means a mixture of spices. In chana masala – specifically the word ‘masala’ means a mixture of ground spices.

There are many variations of making chana masala, but I like the Punjabi chana recipe shared here the most.

About Chole Masala Recipe

This chana masala recipe reminds me of Chole Bhature, which is our favorite dish. Chole Bhature is a Punjabi chickpea curry dish that is served with a fried leavened puffed bread known as “Bhature”.

It tastes exactly like the North Indian street side chickpea curry, minus the heat, since we don't prefer our food to be too spicy.

However if you prefer spicier food, increase the quantity of red chili powder, green chillies and garam masala powder to get the extra spice and heat.



Soaking Chickpeas

While making any chickpea or Rajma (Kidney Bean Curry), it is always better to soak the chickpeas overnight or at least for 8 hours as then it is easier to cook them.

Soaking beans or chickpeas reduce the phytic acid which causes bloating and flatulence. I would always suggest to soak chickpeas and not directly cook the dried chickpeas.

Soaking also reduces the cooking time and ensures that the chickpeas are really softened well. This not only gives a good texture but the chickpeas also become easy to digest.

Tips & Substitutes

Dried Amla (Dried Indian Gooseberry) and Dry Pomegranate Seeds:

The dried amla gives a dark color to the chole, along with a light tang. The pomegranate seeds give a sour taste. Find these ingredients at Indian specialty food stores or online at amazon.com.

If you cannot find these ingredients, add dry mango powder (amchur powder) towards the end. In the absence of amchur powder, you can also squeeze some lime juice towards the end.

You can also use a black tea bag to achieve the darker color. If you are not fussy about the dark color, then just cook the chickpeas in water with some salt.

Chana Masala Spices:

What contributes to the flavors and aroma of this dish are the freshly ground chole masala spices. The whole spices are roasted until they get extra browned and are later ground. This chole masala spice powder is then blended with a sautéed onion-ginger-tomato mixture that makes the chickpea curry more flavorful.

How to make Chana Masala?

For ease of understanding, I have divided this post into 3 steps:

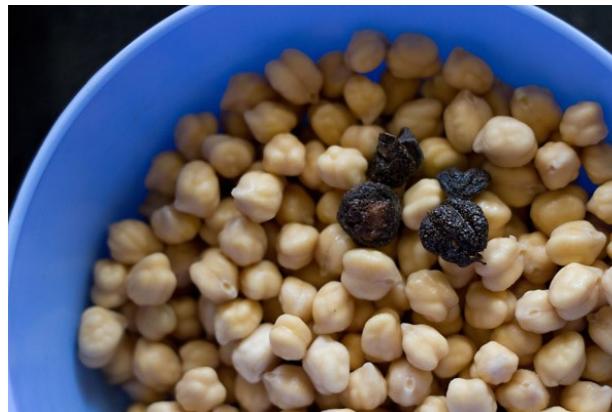
- Step 1 – Soaking and cooking chickpeas.
- Step 2 – Roasting spices to make chana masala powder.
- Step 3 – Making chana gravy.

Step 1 – Soaking and Pressure Cooking Chickpeas

1. Wash and soak 1 cup chickpeas (chana or chole) in enough water overnight. Add enough water to the chickpeas to increase in size during soaking. Rinse the soaked

chickpeas in water. Rinsed and soaked chickpeas pictured below.

2. To give a dark color to the chickpeas, traditionally dried amla (Indian gooseberries) are added. These also give a faint sourness to the stock. If you do not have dried amla, then add 1 black tea bag. If you do not care about the dark color, then you can also just cook the chickpeas with salt and water.



3. In a pressure cooker add the chickpeas along with the 2 to 3 dried amla pieces or 1 black tea bag. Taj tea bags work very well. Then pour in 2.5 to 3 cups water.
4. Season with $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt. Stir very well.
5. Pressure cook the chickpeas for 12 to 15 whistles. The chickpeas should be cooked well and softened. The chickpeas should be soft when you mash it with a spoon. The chickpeas should not give you a bite when you eat it. If you don't have a pressure cooker, then cook the chickpeas in a pot with plenty of water. Depending on the quality of chickpeas, it can take less or more time.



Step 2 – Making Chole Masala Powder

Meanwhile, in a pan, take all the whole spices for the chole masala and on a low heat begin to roast them. The spices used for masala are the following:

- 2 black cardamoms
- 1 inch cinnamon
- 3 to 4 peppercorns
- 2 cloves
- 1 medium tej patta (Indian bay leaf) or 2 small tej patta
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp carom seeds (ajwain)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dry pomegranate seeds

- 1 or 2 dry red chilies



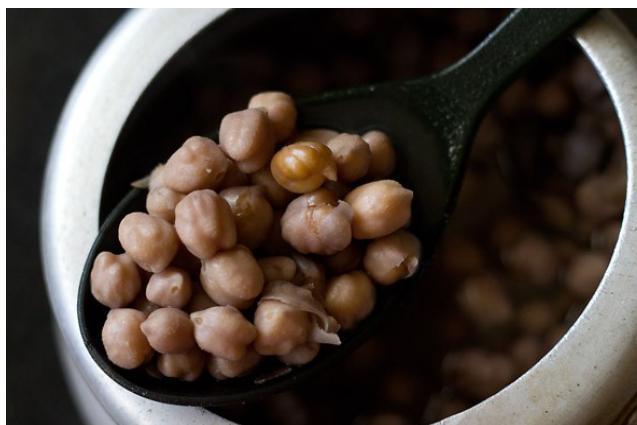
1. Stir often and roast the spices until they get extra browned. Don't burn them, but you have to go beyond a normal roasting point with them. Don't stop even after they become fragrant, as they need to get more browned than usual.
2. The extra browned and roasted spices are pictured below.



3. Let these roasted spices cool and then grind them finely in a coffee grinder or in a dry grinder.



4. By now the chickpeas are cooked (pictured below). You will see a darker brown shade in the white chickpeas. Remove the amla pieces, which would have softened by now, or the tea bag from the stock and discard them.



Step 3 – Making Chana Masala Gravy

1. Heat 1.5 to 2 tbsp oil in a pan or kadai. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ginger-garlic paste and sauté until their raw aroma goes away.
2. Then add 1 medium sized finely chopped onion and saute till the onions turn light brown.
3. Add 1 medium sized finely chopped tomato.
4. Sauté the tomatoes until they soften and the oil starts to leave aside of the masala.

5. Then add the powdered spices that we made, along with $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red chili powder and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon turmeric powder.



6. Stir well. Then add 2 to 3 slit green chilies to the onion-ginger-tomato mixture.
7. Add the cooked & drained chickpeas. Reserve the stock.
8. Mix very well.
9. Season with salt as per requirement. Mix again. Keep the addition of salt in check as salt is also there in the stock.
10. Add about 1 to 1.25 cups of the reserved stock or water. Stir well.



11. Cover and simmer on a low to medium flame. You can also cook chickpeas without the lid. The gravy will thicken and reduce. Mash a few chickpeas. This will help thicken the chickpea curry. You can keep the consistency you prefer. At home, we

prefer chole with a bit of gravy.

12. If you have not added dry pomegranate seeds while roasting the spices, then you need to add amchur powder (dry mango powder) now. About 1 teaspoon amchur powder is enough. However, you can add less or more of it as per your taste. Stir the gravy very well.
13. The chana masala is ready to be served.



14. Garnish with chopped onions and cilantro (coriander leaves). Serve the Punjabi chole with a fried Indian breads like bhatura or poori, along with sliced onions, ginger julienne and lime wedges. This chickpea curry also tastes good with plain rice or cumin rice.



Chapter 11: Rogan Josh

Succulent pieces of Goat or Lamb braised in gravy flavored with aromatic spices like fennel, cloves, cardamom, cinnamon & ginger. This dish get fiery red color from powdered Kashmiri chili peppers which have more color than heat.



Being Indian and having grown up in the Middle-East, I've eaten more goat in my life than beef and I miss that it is not as easily available here in the States, and hardly ever features on restaurant menus. So needless to say, I jumped at the chance to get my hands on some fresh, home raised goat.

In India, we refer to goat meat as "Mutton" and sheep meat as "Lamb". So when you see mutton on the menu across the country, it is referring to goat meat. From what I gather, this isn't technically the same terminology used here, where both 'lamb' and 'mutton' are sheep meat and the only distinction is the age of the sheep when processed. The meat from sheep under one year is called 'Lamb' and the meat of sheep (usually 2-3 years) is called 'Mutton'. Anyway whatever the technical terms are... goat, lamb, and mutton are all delicious and underrated meats here in the U.S. For this recipe, we used fresh raised Goat meat, but you can easily substitute with lamb or beef (although beef won't have the same flavor, it's still delicious).



The dish we're talking about today Rogan Josh hails from the Kashmir region of India, but was first introduced by the Mughals from Persia to the region. Rogan Josh usually gets it's vibrant red color from powdered Kashmiri Chili Peppers that pack a lot of color, but not as much heat. So although it seems like a red-hot spicy Indian curry, don't let it's appearance fool you... this dish is very flavorful and aromatic but it doesn't generally pack a lot of heat.



There are also numerous versions of this dish. Some with or without garlic and onion where asafoetida (a plant resin of sorts) is used to imitate the flavor base of onion & garlic. The addition of yogurt is also debated as an optional part of this gravy, but is featured in most recipes of the dish. Some versions also use tomatoes to create more volume, although this really alters the flavor profile of the original dish. The main ingredients of this dish are commonly Kashmiri chili powder, fennel seed powder and powdered dry ginger. The other spices or garam masala as we call it and the ratios varies from recipe to recipe, cook to cook.

The method to cook this dish is rather simple though. It starts with frying whole spices in oil or ghee and then adding the onions and caramelizing them until golden. Then the garlic & ginger are added and the meat is browned with the aromatics. Lastly we added the powdered spices (mixed with water to form a paste, so they don't burn and turn bitter) and whisked yogurt and the meat is cooked covered in it's own juices until the oil separate on top. Then you can then either slow cook the meat (this is how it is traditionally cooked) until the meat is tender, or you can cheat and use a pressure cooker (or Instant Pot) and expedite the cooking time to 20-30 mins instead.

Serve the curry with fragrant long-grain basmati rice or Naan or better still both!

Rogan Josh (Mutton/Lamb in a Red Chili Pepper Gravy)



Succulent pieces of Goat or Lamb braised in gravy flavored with aromatic spices like fennel, cloves, cardamom, cinnamon & ginger. This dish gets it's fiery red color from powdered Kashmiri chili peppers which have more color than heat.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs mutton/meat (washed and cubed)
- 2tbsp Ghee + 2 tbsp oil
- 4-5 Shallots (finely sliced)
- 2 tsp ginger garlic paste
- 2 tbsp Kashmiri red chilli powder
- 1- 1.5 tsp fennel powder
- 1/2 tsp dry ginger powder
- 1/2 cup yogurt (whisked well)
- 1.25 cups water
- Pinch of saffron (optional)
- Salt - to taste
- A handful of chopped coriander leaves, for garnish



Garam Masala

- 1" Cinnamon stick
- 3 cloves
- 3-4 green cardamom
- 1 Tsp Cumin Seeds
- 1-2 Black Cardamoms
- 1 bay leaf



Instructions

1. Powder the whole spices/ garam masala (Cinnamon, cloves, green cardamom & Cumin Seeds) together excluding the black cardamom and bay leaf & set aside.
2. In another small bowl, add the Kashmiri Chilli powder, fennel seed powder and ginger powder with 1/4 cup of water and mix together.
3. In a heavy bottom pot, heat the ghee & oil on medium high and add the cardamom & bay leaf to the oil.
4. Then add the sliced shallots and fry them on medium-low heat until they turn golden brown. (This takes a good 8-10 minutes so be patient, but don't turn up the heat)
5. Add the ginger garlic paste and fry for a minute or two.
6. Then add in the mutton (goat meat)/ lamb cubes and turn up the heat browning the meat well.
7. Once the meat is browned on all sides, add the Kashmiri chilli spices we mixed with water and fry it for 2-3 mins.
8. Stir in the whisked yogurt, a pinch of saffron (optional)and salt to taste. Cover and let the curry simmer on medium for 15 mins until the oil starts separating from the curry.
9. Once you see the oil start separating, add half of the powdered garam masala (whole spices) and add a cup of water to loosen the curry.
10. You can now transfer the curry to a pressure cooker(aka Instant pot) and cook on high for 8-10 mins then natural release the pressure. Or you can lower the heat, cover the pot and allow the curry to simmer for 45mins-60 mins until the meat gets tender.
11. Check if the meat is tender (if you're cooking bone-in the meat should be falling off the bone) & season with salt if needed. When it's melt-in-the mouth tender stir in



the remaining garam masala powder and turn off the heat.

12. Garnish with a handful of chopped cilantro and serve with fragrant basmati rice or Naan.

Notes

Any cut of meat will work for this recipe, however, bone-in and shanks halved lend this dish the most flavor. I used a goat leg and while I cubed the meat, I added the bone in the pot for more flavor.

Make sure to whisk the yogurt before adding it to the pot, as this will help it not break and curdle.

Adding half the garam masala at the end helps give the dish an added layer of flavor.

Chapter 12: Tandoori Chicken

Tandoori Chicken - an iconic restaurant style smoky grilled chicken appetizer dish. It's authentic, easy and the best.



Often it tends to happen that we crave for tandoori dishes and most of the time it's tandoori chicken.

Most of the time, my family particularly asks me to make it at home. Believe me, they can eat it almost every day. They are so much fond of this delicious smoky grilled chicken legs.

Undoubtedly, it is an easy and the best recipe that I am sharing here. And, there is absolutely no secret of any store bought tandoori masala behind it. At home, it easily comes together without any fuss.

About The Recipe

Tandoori Chicken is a crazy good and smoky chicken appetiser that you will love truly.

Traditionally, it is prepared by roasting or grilling the marinated chicken in a clay oven or tandoor. The marinade consists of thick yogurt (curd/dahi), few handy basic spices and powders and the secret star ingredient - Mustard oil.

The Indian restaurants and the dhabas makes the use of red food colour in the marinade. The addition of food color gives nice bright and fiery red appeal to the tandoori chicken.

But, the recipe that I am sharing with you today has no artificial colour at all. All that beautiful red colour you see here is due to the use of good quality Kashmiri red chili powder.

The marination actually is done in two steps - the first marination and the second marination. The double marination process gives the best result.



This Tandoori Chicken Is

- Easiest and the Tastiest.
- Healthy.
- Without any artificial food colour.
- Traditional and authentic version.
- Low in carbs.
- Keto friendly.
- Gluten free.
- Exactly like that of Indian restaurants or Dhabas.
- Can easily be made in clay tandoor, in oven, on a gas stove in pan, in air fryer, Instant pot or Mealthy multipot.

The Best Chicken Pieces For This Recipe

Traditionally and ideally, the best chicken cut to go for is the whole chicken legs (chicken drumsticks with thigh).

Do you know why? Because, that cut of chicken meat has higher fat content making it juicy, moist and more flavourful.

However, you can also go for chicken breasts for the healthier version. All you need to do is follow the same procedure, that's it. Cooking time in the may vary couple of minutes here and there.

How Long Should We Marinate The Chicken?

As we do the two marinations here in this process, let the first marination be for 45 minutes - 1 hour under refrigeration. But, nothing less than at least 30 minutes only in the case of strict crunch of time.

For second marination time, please let the chicken peacefully rest in the yogurt and spices for good 8 hours or overnight under refrigeration.

Similarly, only in strict case of short of time, still I would insist you to let it marinate for minimum 4 hours.

Honestly, I do not really want to compromise on its flavors. So, I always go for at least 45 mins of first marination time and 8 hours for second marination time.

Storage And Freezing Grilled Chicken

If we talk about freezing the cooked or grilled chicken here, then I would strictly say **NO**.

Rather, I would highly recommend you to freeze the marinated chicken in the freezer in a clean air tight container or zip pouches in portions.

Whenever, you plan to have a meal with it, thaw it overnight in the refrigerator or for few hours on the counter. Go on ahead with cooking as per the method you prefer and then enjoy.

Marinated chicken stay very well in the freezer for good 2-3 months.





Tips

- Always, clean and wash the chicken pieces well. Ensure to pat dry the chicken meat to avoid any excess liquid in to it.
- Always, use sharp knife to make deep cuts on meat pieces. The cuts ensures the deep penetration of marinade making it perfect and juicy.
- The secret behind the best tandoori chicken recipe is it's marination process and the use of mustard oil.
- Always use thick curd, either the hung curd or the greek yogurt to make the marinade.
- If you do not have the access to Kashmiri red chili powder, use any medium hot chili powder to the marinade. You can also choose to use smoked paprika powder or cayenne pepper as well.
- For the best taste and flavors, make sure to use mustard oil only. However, if it not available in your part of the world, then you can go ahead to use any vegetable oil of choice. You can use melted butter as well.
- The longer you marinate the chicken, the better will be the flavor always. So, follow the marination time accordingly. If, in case you have the crunch of time, then try to marinate it for minimum 4 hours at least.
- Let me tell you the secret that I follow most of the time to make the tandoori chicken smoky. I always prefer to give charcoal dhungar just before grilling/cooking them or right after the cooking is over.
- So, the either way works best and you get nice smoky murgh tandoori at home.

Side Dish To Serve

Sprinkle some chaat masala over the tandoori chicken and serve it with **Saffron Rice** or **Zafrani Pulao** along with some onion rings, lemon wedges and mint yogurt chutney or Green Chutney on the side.

You can also, serve it with nan or any Indian flat bread. Enjoy it on its own as an appetiser/starter with chutney.



Ingredients

- 1 Kg Chicken Legs (de-skinned and trimmed fat, cut into serving pieces)

For First Marinade

- 1 tablespoon Ginger Garlic Paste
- 2-3 teaspoon Kashmiri Chili Powder (I have added 1 tablespoon)
- 1 tablespoon Lemon Juice
- Salt To Taste

For Second Marinade

- 300 grams Greek Yogurt / Hung Curd
- 1 tablespoon Ginger Garlic Paste
- 2-3 teaspoons Kashmiri Red Chili Powder ((or any chilli powder that gives good colour))
- 1 teaspoon Coriander Powder
- 1 teaspoon Garam Masala Powder
- ¾ teaspoon Black Salt or regular salt
- ½ teaspoon Black Pepper Powder
- 1 teaspoon Cumin Powder
- ½ cup Mustard Oil
- Red Food Colour (optional) (I have not used any food colour in this recipe)

For Instant Pot Version Only

- 1 cup Water

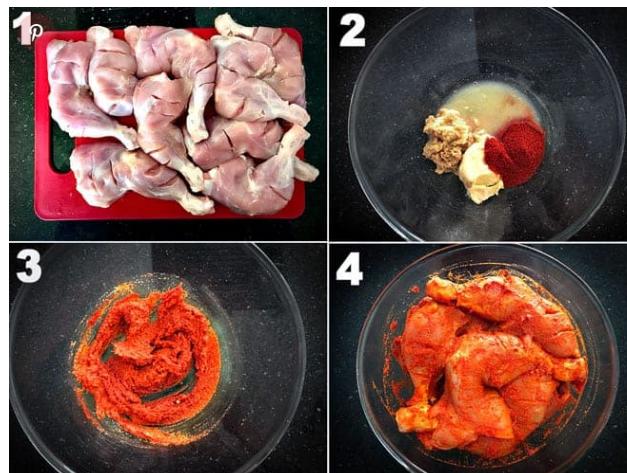
How To Make Tandoori Chicken?

For the recipe, we need to do the double marination as mentioned above in the post. The method involves the series of steps that I shall be mentioning in detail below.

So, here's how to make the best tandoori chicken at home in 4 ways.

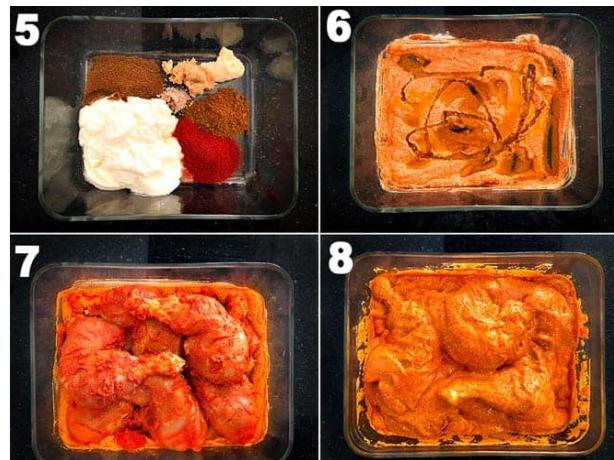
Preparation Of Marinade

1. To start off, First, clean, wash and make cuts on the chicken using a sharp knife.
(photo 1)
2. For the 1st marination process, we need - Ginger garlic paste, Kashmiri red chili powder, lemon juice and salt. In a large bowl, whisk all these 5 ingredients and mix well. (photo 2 and 3)



3. Add chicken and mix it very well in the marinade, then, cover the bowl with a plastic cover and leave it for 45-1 hour under refrigeration. (photo 4)
4. Coming to the second marination of chicken, we need - Roasted cumin powder, ginger paste and garlic paste, Kashmiri red chili powder, Coriander Powder, Garam masala powder, thick or hung yogurt (curd), black salt and pepper powder, Mustard oil.
5. In another bowl, add all the ingredients of a second marination and mix it very well.
(photo 5 and 6)

6. Once the first marinade is done, transfer the chicken in this second marinade.
(photo 7)
7. Cover the second bowl also with a plastic cover and refrigerate for 7-8 hours or overnight. (photo 8)



Smoking the Marinated Chicken

1. Now comes the interesting part, if you wish to give smoky flavor to the dish, then simply give the charcoal smoke to the marinated chicken just before cooking it.
2. Place a small steel bowl over the chicken and put 1 teaspoon of ghee over the live charcoal. Immediately cover the bowl with lid and allow it to rest for 8-10 minutes.
(photo 1 and 2).
3. However, you can choose to do this charcoal smoking step after the meat is cooked.
4. But, personally I prefer doing this process before cooking it in the oven or pan or instant pot or air fryer.



How To Bake It In The Oven?

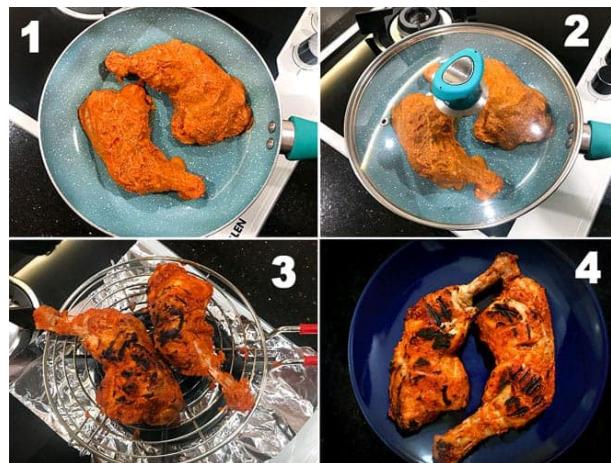
1. If you do not have Tandoor oven or Angethi (Coal Barbecue), it is totally okay. But, if you have an oven, you have the right alternative to make this tandoori chicken recipe.
2. Pre-heat the oven at 220 degrees centigrade.
3. Remove the chicken from the marinade and arrange it on a baking tray or a wire rack. (Photo 1 and 2)
4. Grill the chicken in the oven for 25-30 minutes and then broil it for 5-7 minutes.
5. The chicken is ready to serve. (Photo 3)



How to Make it on Gas Stove In Pan?

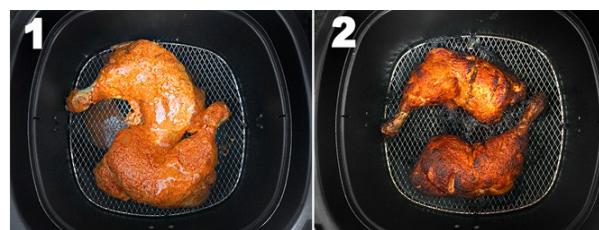
1. If you can't resist roast chicken and you don't have an oven either, do not worry at all. You must be having a gas stove at home.
2. You may use a roasting grill. This roast grill is easily available in the supermarkets. So, fetch one and place it over your burner.
3. Having said that, if you do not have a roast grill, that's fine, simply cook it in a pan and give charcoal smoke in the end.
4. Furthermore, make a note to place a foil beneath the stove to avoid the platform getting oily and greasy.
5. Firstly, heat the pan, and place the chicken on it. (Photo 1)
6. Then cover and cook until done, do flip it once in between. (Photo 2)

7. Grease the grill with oil so that the cooked chicken pieces does not stick over the grill. Place the cooked meat upon the grill and turn the flame to medium high. Then grill from both the sides until it is slight charred and release smoky aroma. (Photo 3 and 4)



How to Make in the Airfryer?

1. You can also place the marinated chicken pieces in an air fryer if you possess one.
2. First, pre-heat the airfryer at 200 degrees. Then, brush the airfryer basket with little oil or butter.
3. Arrange the marinated chicken in the basket and air fry it 20 minutes or until charred. (you can flip it once in between).



How To Make It In The Instant Pot?

First, follow the marination step as mentioned above.

If you see the photo 1 and 2 below, I have placed the trivet first, then I have placed a basket over the trivet. So, basically, you can either cook the chicken by placing it on trivet directly or in the basket. Either of the two works well. Photo 1 and 2.



Now, add 1 cup of water in the inner pot of the IP. Then, place the trivet in the pot. Place the marinated chicken on the trivet, I have used fryer basket. Photo 3.

Close the IP with lid, put the valve to sealing position and then pressure cook on high for 12 minutes. (Photo 4) Once the IP beeps, turn the valve to vent, quickly release the pressure and open the pot. (Photo 5)

For crispier chicken, you can follow the either way:

- Arrange them on the tray and pop it in pre-heated oven and broil for 7-8 minutes, until charred.
- Use Mealthy crisp lid to make them more crisp and delicious.

Unplug the IP and plug the mealthy crisp lid, place it on the inner pot of IP. You need to lower the handle of the crisp lid. Now, set the temperature to 200 degrees. Photo 6.



Cook the chicken for 12 minutes. (As I love the crispier chicken, I cooked it for couple of more minutes extra)

You can flip it once in between - first cook for 5-6 minutes on one side. Then, flip and cook for another 5-6 minutes on the other side. Crisp outer, so juicy within makes it outrageously delicious!

Dish out, sprinkle some chaat masala over it and serve along with chutney, onion rings and rice or naan.

