

# sambar kerala style



4.5 from 6 votes

this kerala style sambar recipe is a delicious and tasty variation of sambar made with mix vegetables and roasted coconut & spice paste.

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Prep Time

20 mins

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Cook Time

45 mins

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Total Time

1 hr 5 mins

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Course: main course

Cuisine: kerala, south indian      Servings: 8

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## Ingredients

### for the kerala sambar

- 1 cup tuvar dal (arhar dal, pigeon pea lentils)
- 1 small onion - sliced or chopped (optional)
- 1 to 2 pinch asafoetida (hing)
- 10 to 12 pearl onions or shallots
- 8 to 10 okra (bhindi or lady finger)
- 5 to 7 aubergines (brinjal or baingan)
- 1 large tomato or 2 medium size tomatoes
- 1 sprig curry leaves (kadi patta)
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder (haldi)
- ½ cup tamarind pulp – made with ½ cup water and 1 lemon sized ball of tamarind
- 2.5 to 3 cups water or add as required
- salt as required

### **for tempering the sambar**

- 2 tablespoons coconut oil or any vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds (rai)
- 1 teaspoon urad dal (split and husked black gram)
- 1 sprig curry leaves (kadi patta)
- 2 to 3 dry red kashmiri chillies - you can also use small red bor chillies for the tadka

### **for the sambar masala**

- ½ coconut, grated – will yield about 1 to 1.5 cups of grated coconut
- 3 to 4 pearl onions or shallots - chopped
- 12 to 15 curry leaves (kadi patta)
- 2 tablespoons coriander seeds (sabut dhania)
- 1 tablespoon cumin seeds (jeera)
- ¼ teaspoon whole black peppercorns (sabut kali mirch)
- ¼ teaspoon asafoetida (hing)
- ¼ teaspoon methi seeds (fenugreek seeds)
- 3 to 4 dry red chillies - I used 4 kashmiri red chillies
- 2 to 3 teaspoons coconut oil or any vegetable oil

## Instructions

### to make sambar masala

1. on a skillet, tava or a shallow frying pan, heat up 2 or 3 tsp coconut oil. add all the shallots and fry till they become translucent. add the rest of the spice and fry till they are light brown.

2. now add the grated coconut and roast it with the rest of the spices till everything is browned and you get a fragrant aroma in your kitchen. let this mixture cool.
3. once, cooled, grind this roasted spice mixture in the grinder with some water.

### **to make the kerala sambar**

1. first, boil the tuvar dal till in a pressure cooker with the sliced or chopped onion and hing, till the dal is soft and well cooked. mash the cooked dal slightly with a spoon when done.
2. cook the dal with the vegetables until they are half cooked. this takes about 11 to 12 minutes.
3. now add the chopped okra, tamarind pulp, and the ground masala. add some more water if the sambar has become thick.
4. add salt and give the sambar a rolling boil once and then simmer till the veggies are cooked. this will approximately take about 15-16 minutes.

5. close the flame when all the ingredients in the sambar have nicely infused with one another and you have a lovely sambar aroma pervading all around in your kitchen. keep the sambar closed with a lid and move on to the next step of tempering the sambar.

### **tempering for kerala sambar**

1. in a pan or the tadka utensil, heat oil. add the mustard seeds and let them pop. then add all the other ingredients and fry them till they become fragrant. take care they do not get burnt.
2. once the tadka is ready, directly pour the hot tadka on the hot sambar.
3. immediately, cover the kerala sambar with a lid and let it stay closed for some 8 to 10 minutes. We do this at home, so that the flavors and aroma of the tadka gets very well infused with the sambar or dal.
4. later mix well.

5. serve the kerala sambar with boiled rice and pappadums, accompanied by a side vegetable dish and a bowl of yogurt or raita. enjoy.
6. if there is any leftover sambar, you could have it the next day with dosa, idli, medu vada or dal vada. but keep the leftover sambar in the fridge.

## Notes

### **few tips for making sambar recipe kerala style:**

1. do not directly add the aubergines (brinjal) in sambar. chop them and keep them in salted water for 10-15 mins so that the bitter juices are extracted from them in the salted water.
2. the souring agent we use in sambar is generally tamarind. if your tamarind is too sour, then you will have to increase the chillies and salt with it and vice versa. the tamarind, chillies and salt have to balance each other. i came across this tip in chandra padmanabhan's cook book - "*Southern Spice: Delicious Vegetarian Recipes from South*

*India". its a nice book if you are looking for a variety of vegetarian recipes amongst the south indian cuisine. fortunately, whenever i have made sambar, the tamarind has never been too tart and the sambar has never become too sour.*

3. if you do not have fresh coconut, you could substitute it with dessicated coconut.
4. if you are using a lot of mixed vegetables, alter their amount (that is do not use the quantity of vegetables mentioned in this post) so that there is a balance of the vegetables and dal in the sambar.

## **Nutrition**

Serving: 4g

*full recipe - <https://www.vegrecipesofindia.com/kerala-sambar-recipe-kerala-sambar/>*