

Chicken Tandoori (Tandoori Murgh)

Ingredients:

For Chicken Marinade – First Layer:

- 500 grams chicken (with bone, preferably leg quarters or drumsticks)
- 1 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon red chili powder

For Chicken Marinade – Second Layer:

- ½ cup thick curd (hung curd or Greek yogurt preferred)
- 1.5 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste
- 1 teaspoon Kashmiri red chili powder (for color)
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin powder
- ½ teaspoon garam masala
- ½ teaspoon black pepper powder
- 1 tablespoon mustard oil (or any oil)
- ½ teaspoon chaat masala (optional)
- Salt to taste

For Basting:

- 1 tablespoon butter or ghee (melted)
- ½ teaspoon chaat masala (for sprinkling)

For Garnish:

- Lemon wedges
- Onion rings
- Fresh coriander leaves (optional)

Instructions:

1. Clean and pat dry the chicken pieces thoroughly.
2. Make deep gashes or slits on each chicken piece to allow better absorption of marinade.
3. In a bowl, mix salt, lemon juice, and red chili powder; rub this mixture on the chicken.

4. Cover and keep aside for 15 to 20 minutes (this is the first marinade).
5. In another bowl, whisk together all ingredients listed under the second marinade.
6. Rub this second marinade thoroughly into the chicken pieces, coating them evenly and into the slits.
7. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 to 6 hours, or preferably overnight for best results.
8. Preheat oven to 200°C (392°F) or prepare a charcoal grill or stovetop grill pan.
9. Line a baking tray with foil and place a wire rack over it; place marinated chicken on the rack.
10. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes, then flip the chicken pieces.
11. Baste with melted butter or ghee and bake again for 15–20 minutes until cooked and slightly charred.
12. Alternatively, grill over charcoal or on a hot tawa/pan until cooked and charred, turning and basting as needed.
13. Ensure internal temperature reaches 75°C (167°F) or cut to check juices run clear.
14. Remove cooked chicken from heat and let it rest for 5 minutes.
15. Sprinkle chaat masala for added flavor (optional).
16. Garnish with lemon wedges, onion rings, and fresh coriander leaves.
17. Serve hot with mint chutney and naan or roti.
18. Refrigerate leftovers and reheat in oven or pan before serving.
19. To enhance smokiness, use the dhungar method: place a hot charcoal piece in a bowl inside the chicken tray, add ghee, and cover for 5 minutes.
20. For extra color, a pinch of red food color can be added to the marinade (optional).
21. Avoid overcooking to prevent chicken from drying out.
22. Use hung curd for a thicker marinade that clings well to chicken.
23. Chicken thighs and drumsticks are ideal for juiciness.
24. Do not skip the resting time post-cooking; it helps juices redistribute.
25. Enjoy your tandoori chicken as a starter or part of a meal.