

Kadhai Paneer

Ingredients:

For Kadhai Masala (Dry Roasted & Ground):

- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 2 to 3 dry red chilies (adjust to spice level)

For Gravy:

- 250 grams paneer (cottage cheese), cubed
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 large green bell pepper (capsicum), sliced
- 2 tablespoons oil (vegetable or mustard oil)
- 1 tablespoon butter (optional for richness)
- 1 teaspoon ginger-garlic paste
- 2 medium tomatoes, finely chopped or pureed
- ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
- ½ teaspoon red chili powder (Kashmiri preferred for color)
- ½ teaspoon garam masala
- ½ teaspoon kasuri methi (dry fenugreek leaves), crushed
- Salt to taste
- ¼ cup water (adjust as needed)
- 1 tablespoon fresh cream (optional)
- 1 tablespoon chopped coriander leaves

Instructions:

1. In a pan, dry roast coriander seeds, cumin seeds, and dry red chilies on low heat until aromatic.
2. Cool and coarsely grind to a powder; set aside as kadhai masala.
3. Heat oil in a kadhai or deep pan over medium heat.
4. Add sliced onions and sauté until they turn soft and lightly golden.
5. Add ginger-garlic paste and sauté until raw smell disappears.
6. Add chopped or pureed tomatoes and cook until oil separates.
7. Add turmeric powder, red chili powder, salt, and the freshly ground kadhai masala.

8. Cook for 2–3 minutes until spices are well blended into the mixture.
9. Add sliced bell peppers and cook for 2–3 minutes (they should remain slightly crisp).
10. Add water to adjust gravy consistency and simmer for 2–3 minutes.
11. Add paneer cubes gently and mix to coat them evenly with masala.
12. Cook on low heat for 2–3 minutes to absorb flavors (avoid overcooking paneer).
13. Add butter and stir gently for richness (optional).
14. Crush kasuri methi between palms and add to the gravy.
15. Sprinkle garam masala and stir once more.
16. Turn off the heat and let the flavors settle for a minute.
17. If using cream, drizzle it over the dish and give a light stir.
18. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves and ginger juliennes.
19. Serve hot with naan, roti, paratha, or jeera rice.
20. Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container for up to 2 days.
21. Reheat on stovetop or microwave with a splash of water.
22. To make it spicier, increase red chilies in the kadhai masala.
23. Use homemade paneer or fresh store-bought for best texture.
24. Avoid overcooking bell peppers and paneer to maintain texture.
25. Kadhai paneer can also be made dry by reducing water and skipping cream.