**Chole Masala**

Prep time: 9 hours Cook time: 30 min

**Ingredients:**

**For the Chickpeas:**

* 2 cups chole (chickpeas) – rinsed and soaked overnight
* 1 inch ginger – peeled and sliced
* 2 dry red chilies
* 2 bay leaves (tej patta)
* 1 inch cinnamon stick (dalchini)
* Low sodium salt – to taste
* 3–4 cups water
* ½ tsp turmeric powder (haldi)
* ½ tsp red chili powder
* Optional: 1 tea bag (for color and flavor, remove after cooking)

**For the Spice Powder:**

* 1 ½ tbsp coriander seeds (dhaniya)
* 3 black cardamom pods
* 1 tbsp black peppercorns
* 2 tsp cumin seeds (jeera)
* 6 cloves
* 1 mace (javitri)
* 4 green cardamom pods
* ¼ tsp carom seeds (ajwain)
* ½ tsp asafoetida (hing)
* 1 tbsp dry pomegranate seeds (anardana)
* 1 tbsp kasuri methi (dry fenugreek leaves)

**For the Gravy:**

* 3 tbsp oil
* 1 tsp cumin seeds (jeera)
* 3 garlic cloves – finely chopped
* 1 inch ginger – minced (or use some from the sliced ginger if reserved)
* 3 onions – finely chopped
* 3 green chilies – finely chopped (adjust according to heat preference)
* 2 tomatoes – diced (or 1 large tomato)
* 2 cups curd (yogurt) – beaten (preferably at room temperature; whisk with 1 tsp gram flour)
* 2 tbsp coriander leaves (cilantro) – chopped (plus extra for garnish)

**Instructions:**

**Pressure Cook the Chickpeas**

1. In a pressure cooker, combine the soaked and rinsed chickpeas with sliced ginger, dry red chilies, bay leaves, cinnamon stick, salt, turmeric powder, red chili powder, and 3–4 cups of water.
2. (Optional) Add a used tea bag for enhanced color and flavor; remove it after cooking.
3. Close the lid and cook for 4 whistles on medium-high heat. Once the pressure naturally releases, open the cooker.
4. Gently mash a few chickpeas using the back of a spoon to help thicken the gravy. Set aside.

**Prepare the Spice Powder**

1. In a small, dry pan, add coriander seeds, black cardamom, black peppercorns, cumin seeds, cloves, mace, green cardamom, carom seeds, and asafoetida.
2. Dry roast these spices on medium heat for about 2 minutes until fragrant.
3. Add dry pomegranate seeds and kasuri methi. Toss for an additional minute.
4. Remove from heat and let the spices cool slightly.
5. Transfer the roasted spices to a mixer grinder or spice grinder and grind them into a fine powder. Set aside this spice mix.

**Prepare the Gravy**

1. In a large kadai or deep pan, heat 3 tablespoons of oil over medium heat.
2. Add 1 teaspoon of cumin seeds and let them splutter.
3. Add finely chopped garlic and ginger. Sauté for about 30 seconds until aromatic.
4. Add finely chopped onions and cook until they turn golden brown.
5. Stir in the green chilies and continue to sauté for another minute.
6. Add the previously ground spice mix. Cook for 2 minutes to let the spices bloom.
7. Add the diced tomatoes and cook until they soften and break down, forming a thick base.
8. Lower the heat and slowly add the beaten curd, stirring continuously to avoid curdling. (Mixing the curd with 1 tsp gram flour before adding helps prevent curdling.)
9. Allow the gravy to simmer for 2–3 minutes for the flavors to meld.

**Combine and Finish the Curry**

1. Add the pressure-cooked chickpeas along with their cooking liquid to the gravy.
2. Stir well and bring the mixture to a simmer over medium heat.
3. Cover and cook on medium-low heat for 10–15 minutes to allow the chickpeas to absorb the flavors.
4. In the last few minutes, add chopped coriander leaves and diced tomatoes (for fresh tomato texture).
5. Taste and adjust salt or spices if needed.

**Serve**

1. Serve your chole hot, garnished with additional coriander leaves.
2. Enjoy with steamed rice, jeera rice, or roti.