**Kathirikai Podi Curry**

Prep time: 10 min Cook time: 20 min

**Ingredients:**

* 250g small brinjals (eggplants), chopped
* 1 tbsp cold-pressed sesame oil (or any healthy oil)
* ½ tsp mustard seeds
* ½ tsp cumin seeds
* 1 sprig curry leaves
* ¼ tsp turmeric powder
* ½ tsp low sodium salt (adjust to taste)
* ½ tsp red chili powder (adjust to spice preference)
* 2 tbsp water (if needed)

For the Podi (Spice Powder)

* 1 tbsp chana dal (Bengal gram)
* 1 tbsp urad dal (black gram)
* 1 tbsp coriander seeds
* 3-4 dried red chilies (adjust spice level)
* 1 tsp sesame seeds
* ½ tsp black peppercorns
* ¼ tsp hing (asafoetida)
* 2 tbsp grated coconut (optional, for added flavor)

**Instructions:**

**Prepare the Podi (Spice Powder)**

1. Dry roast chana dal, urad dal, coriander seeds, red chilies, sesame seeds, black peppercorns, and hing until aromatic.
2. Cool and grind to a coarse powder. Set aside.

**Cook the Brinjals**

1. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a pan. Add mustard seeds and cumin seeds. Let them splutter.
2. Add curry leaves, turmeric powder, and chopped brinjals. Stir well.
3. Sprinkle a little salt and mix. Cover and cook on low heat for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**Add Spice Powder & Finish**

1. Once the brinjals are soft, add 2-3 tbsp of the prepared podi and red chili powder.
2. Stir well and cook for another 2-3 minutes, allowing the flavors to blend. If too dry, sprinkle some water.
3. Adjust salt and remove from heat.
4. Serve hot with steamed rice and sambar or curd rice!