**Paneer Chettinad Curry**

Prep time: 15 min Cook time: 25 min

**Ingredients:**

**For the Spice Blend:**

* 1 tsp fennel seeds
* 1 tsp cumin seeds
* 1 tsp coriander seeds
* 1 tsp black peppercorns
* 2 dried red chilies
* ½ tsp poppy seeds (optional)
* ½ inch cinnamon stick
* 2 cloves
* 1 cardamom pod

**For the Curry:**

* 200g paneer (low-fat, cut into cubes)
* 1 medium onion (finely chopped)
* 2 medium tomatoes (pureed)
* ½-inch ginger (grated)
* 3 garlic cloves (minced)
* ½ tsp turmeric powder
* 1 tsp red chili powder
* 1 tsp garam masala
* ½ tsp low sodium salt (adjust to taste)
* ½ cup coconut milk (light)
* 1 tbsp yogurt (low-fat, optional)
* 1 tsp oil (cold-pressed coconut or olive oil)
* 8-10 curry leaves
* 1 tsp mustard seeds
* Fresh coriander leaves (for garnish)

**Instructions:**

**Dry Roast the Spices**

1. In a dry pan, roast fennel, cumin, coriander seeds, black peppercorns, red chilies, poppy seeds, cinnamon, cloves, and cardamom on low heat until aromatic.
2. Cool and grind into a fine powder. Set aside.

**Prepare the Curry Base**

1. Heat 1 tsp oil in a pan. Add mustard seeds and let them splutter.
2. Add curry leaves, chopped onions, ginger, and garlic.
3. Sauté until golden brown.
4. Stir in the freshly ground spice blend, turmeric, chili powder, and garam masala.
5. Cook for 30 seconds.
6. Add pureed tomatoes and cook until oil slightly separates (about 5-6 minutes).

**Finish the Curry**

1. Add coconut milk and yogurt (if using). Mix well.
2. Add paneer cubes and simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Adjust salt and consistency with a little water if needed.

**Garnish & Serve**

1. Garnish with fresh coriander leaves and serve hot with brown rice, quinoa, or whole wheat chapati.