**Veg Kurma**

Prep time: 20 min Cook time: 25 min

**Ingredients:**

**For the Kurma:**

* 1 tablespoon cold-pressed coconut oil or olive oil
* 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
* 1 bay leaf
* 1-inch cinnamon stick
* 2 cloves
* 2 green cardamoms
* 1 onion, finely chopped
* 1 teaspoon ginger-garlic paste
* 1 green chili, slit (optional)
* 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
* ½ teaspoon turmeric powder
* 1 teaspoon red chili powder (or paprika for milder spice)
* 1 teaspoon coriander powder
* ½ teaspoon garam masala
* 1 teaspoon low sodium salt (or as needed)
* 2½ cups mixed vegetables (carrot, beans, potato, peas, cauliflower, zucchini, bell peppers)
* 1½ cups water or low-sodium vegetable broth
* ¼ cup thick coconut milk (optional, for creaminess)
* 2 tablespoons chopped coriander leaves

**For the Kurma Masala Paste:**

* 2 tablespoons grated coconut (fresh or dried)
* 1 tablespoon roasted gram dal (bhuna chana)
* 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
* 6 cashews (or 8 almonds for a lower-fat option)
* 1 teaspoon white sesame seeds (for added nutrition)
* ¼ cup water (for grinding)

**Instructions:**

**Prepare the Kurma Masala Paste:**

1. In a blender, add grated coconut, roasted gram dal, fennel seeds, cashews (or almonds), and sesame seeds.
2. Blend with ¼ cup water into a smooth paste. Set aside.

**Cook the Vegetables:**

1. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large pan over medium heat.
2. Add cumin seeds, bay leaf, cinnamon, cloves, and cardamoms. Sauté until aromatic.
3. Add chopped onions and sauté until soft.
4. Stir in ginger-garlic paste and green chili. Sauté for 30 seconds.
5. Add tomatoes and cook until they turn mushy.

**Add Spices & Vegetables:**

1. Add turmeric, red chili powder, coriander powder, garam masala, and salt. Mix well.
2. Add chopped vegetables and stir for 2-3 minutes.

**Cook the Kurma:**

1. Add the prepared coconut-nut masala paste and mix well.
2. Pour water or broth and stir.
3. Cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender (For a quicker version, pressure cook for 1 whistle on medium heat).

**Finish & Serve:**

1. Stir in coconut milk (if using) and simmer for another 2 minutes.
2. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves.
3. Serve hot with whole wheat chapati, brown rice, millet dosa, or quinoa.