

Murgh Makhani [Buttery Chicken Curry]

Serves 4 PREPARATION → 20 minutes, plus 1 hour marinating time or overnight if possible
COOKING 30 minutes

800g skinless chicken breast, cut into 2.5cm cubes

boiled rice or Laccha Paratha, to serve

For the marinade

50g natural yogurt

1 teaspoon red Kashmiri chilli powder

or mix 3 parts paprika with 1 part cayenne pepper and use equal amount of the mix

1 tablespoon ginger-garlic paste

2 tablespoons lemon juice

1/2 teaspoon garam masala salt

For the makhani sauce

2 tablespoons salted butter

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon dried fenugreek leaves (kasoori methi), plus extra to serve;

or substitute with equal amount of honey Dijon mustard

1 fresh green chilli, finely chopped

1 tablespoon ginger-garlic paste

150g tomato purée

1/2 teaspoon Kashmiri red chilli powder;

or mix 3 parts paprika with 1 part cayenne pepper and use equal amount of the mix

The rest of the mixture is great on potatoes.

1/2 teaspoon garam masala

2 tablespoons honey

100ml single cream, plus extra to serve

1 Combine the marinade ingredients in a bowl and add the cubed chicken. Cover and leave to marinate in the fridge for at least for 1 hour or overnight if possible.

2 Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Transfer the chicken and marinade to an ovenproof dish and bake for 10–15 minutes until tender and cooked through.

3 For the makhani sauce, heat the butter and oil in a saucepan over a high heat and add the kasoori methi and green chilli. Stir in the ginger-garlic paste, cook for a minute or so, then add the tomato purée and stir to blend for a couple of minutes.

4 Mix in the chilli powder, garam masala and honey, and season with salt. Finish with the cream, then add enough water to give the sauce a pouring consistency.

5 Add the cooked chicken to the sauce. Serve with rice or laccha paratha, with a swirl of single cream and a sprinkling of kasoori methi.

NOTE: This is a very popular north Indian restaurant dish. The original recipe was created by the Moti Mahal restaurant in New Delhi and it is still a top-seller. Marinated chicken is usually cooked in the tandoor, then folded into a buttery or 'makhani' sauce. I use a mixture of oil and butter so that the

butter does not burn when heated. You can use paneer instead of chicken for a vegetarian version. The sauce should be spicy, sweet and tangy, with the fragrance of butter and herbs.

Bharadwaj, Monisha. Indian Cookery Course