

Bengali Chicken Curry

From *A Year in Chicken Soup* by Hattie Garlick on Talking of Food. Jaheeda, whose mother's recipe this is, says:

"You can add veg if you like, we like it with potato, broccoli, cauliflower or even butter nut squash goes really well but if you do, add this after the chicken has marinated in the sauce."

Ingredients

750 g --1 Kg	chicken(mix of breast, leg, whatever you want) - if you can get it, halal is better
4	onions
3 tbsp	garlic, <i>crushed</i>
3 tbsp	ginger, <i>crushed</i>
3 tbsp	oil (of your choice)
4 tbsp	salt (you may need to add more if not salty enough!)
2 sticks	cinnamon
8-10	cardamom pods
3	bay leaves
½ tbsp	ground turmeric
½ tbsp	ground coriander
1 tbsp	ground cumin
2 tbsp	mixed curry powder to suit your taste
or	
1 tbsp	chilli powder
2	tomatoes (optional)
handful bunch	coriander

Method

Have a kettle full of boiling water ready.

Heat the oil in a pan on medium till hot, then add the garlic and ginger and wait for it to just go brown and then add the onions. Add cinnamon, cardamoms, bay leaves, and salt, then stir and cover, leaving on medium heat.

Cut and wash the chicken into 1 inch cubes if using breast but leave legs etc as they are. Drain the chicken.

When the onions have softened, mash any big bits with a potato masher to leave a smooth paste. Add all the spices and the tomatoes if using. Add a tablespoon of boiling water. Cover and leave for 5 mins on a medium to semi-high heat (careful the bottom doesn't catch because it might do at this point, so keep stirring occasionally so this doesn't happen). Put the chicken in, turn the heat up to high and cover for 10 mins.

If you're going to add a veg, prepare it now. Otherwise read a book!

The chicken will start to release water. After the 10 mins on high heat, if you want to add veg do it now. If you see that it's looking a little dry add water from the kettle — half a mug should enrich the curry sauce. Leave on a high heat still.

Once you start to see that the chicken looks cooked, lower the heat to medium and keep it covered. Let it simmer until the colour becomes a golden brown and the chicken no longer looks white but starts to take on the colour of the curry around it (about 15-20 mins). If it is dried out, add more water and continue to simmer.

Finish off with fresh coriander. Stir it into the curry. You can top with more to garnish if you like.