

Chicken Curry

- SERVINGS: 4 TO 6
- TIME: 60 MINUTES
- SOURCE: CHETNA MAKAN

Note: This dish was previously, incorrectly called "Chicken Tikka Masala." All the other recipe notes are at the end of the recipe, since there are many.

- 2 1/4 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1 cup plain, full-fat yogurt (I use Greek; with Greek, 2% worked too)
- 4 garlic cloves, minced or grated, divided
- 2-inch piece of ginger, minced or grated, divided
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided, plus more to taste
- 2 to 3 tablespoons neutral oil or ghee
- 2 large yellow onions, minced
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- About 2 1/2 cups small diced fresh tomatoes, from 3 to 4 roma tomatoes, or 1 15-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 tablespoon ground coriander
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon cayenne or a mild chile powder, such as kashmiri, or to taste
- 1/2 cup water

Combine chicken thighs with yogurt, half of garlic, ginger, and salt in a bowl and set aside for whatever time you've got — you can use them right away, in an hour, or up to a day.

In a large (4 quarts), heavy pan with a lid, heat oil or ghee. Once hot add onions and cumin seeds, cook 5 minutes, until browned at edges. Add remaining ginger and garlic and cook one to two minutes more. Add remaining salt, turmeric, garam masala, coriander, and cayenne or another chile powder cook for two minutes. Add tomatoes and cook until they begin to break down, 4 minutes. Add tomato paste, cook for another 2 minutes. Add chicken and yogurt marinade from bowl, plus water, stir to combine, and bring to a simmer, stirring. Simmer 25 to 30 minutes over low heat, covered, stirring once or twice to ensure everything is cooking evenly.

Chicken is done when it is cooked through and very tender (you can cut a larger chunk in half to check for doneness). Adjust seasoning as needed and serve with rice.

Notes:

* In the video, Chetna Makan makes this with one whole chicken that's been skinned and cut into chunks; I do not doubt that having bones in the mix provide a deeper flavor. I went with boneless chicken thighs for speed and ease.

* Re, fresh tomatoes: I often see fresh tomatoes suggested in Indian dishes and found it surprising, when they're so lousy out of season and canned tomatoes are so consistent. But in Priya Krishna's Indian-ish cookbook, she suggests that you only use canned tomatoes "if you have to." She said she finds that even those sad fresh winter tomatoes seem to work better in bringing that necessary brightness to Indian dishes than canned ones." I've used fresh tomatoes in dishes that call for them since, even firm, unjuicy ones, and really like the complexity they bring once cooked. I'm fully converted.

* Re, removing dairy: I definitely think you could marinate the chicken in full-fat coconut milk (I find the cans from Trader Joe's particularly rich) for a similarly delicious dish.

* Re, InstantPot: Yes, I think you could. Chunks of boneless thighs usually take 7 minutes for me on high, however, I suspect by the time the IP comes up to pressure and then releases, you'll have saved little of the 25 minutes stovetop simmering time. But, the IP is hands-off, and that counts too.

<https://smittenkitchen.com/2019/10/chicken-curry/>

Cauliflower Cheese Baked Potatoes

from Smitten Kitchen Keepers: New Classics for Your Forever Files by Deb Perelman.

4 baking potatoes, russet or Idaho (each about 8 ounces)

Olive oil

1 large (2½-to-3-pound) head cauliflower, cut into medium florets

Kosher salt, and freshly ground pepper or ground cayenne

4 tablespoons (2 ounces) unsalted butter

1 medium leek, white and light-green parts, halved lengthwise, cleaned, thinly sliced

4 tablespoons (1 ounce) all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons mustard powder, or ¾ teaspoon smooth Dijon mustard

Ground cayenne pepper (optional)

2 cups milk, whole or low-fat

1¼ cups plus 2 tablespoons (about 5½ ounces, total) grated sharp cheddar

2 tablespoons minced fresh chives, for garnish (optional)

Sour cream

Bake the potatoes: Heat the oven to 450°F. Pierce the potatoes all over with a fork, and rub them with 1 tablespoon olive oil. Place the potatoes on the oven rack, and bake for 1 hour, or until tender in the center when pierced with a skewer.

While the potatoes bake, prepare the cauliflower: Coat a baking sheet with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Add the cauliflower florets, and toss to coat. Season well with salt and pepper. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes total, tossing once, until nicely browned at the edges. Let the cauliflower cool while the potatoes finish.

Meanwhile, make the sauce: In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the sliced leek, and cook until softened, about 8 to 10 minutes. Add the flour, and whisk to combine; cook for 1 minute to ensure you get rid of the floury taste. Add the mustard powder and a pinch of cayenne or few grinds of black pepper, and stir to combine. Drizzle in the milk in a thin, steady stream, whisking the whole time so that no lumps form. Season with salt, and bring the mixture to a simmer, stirring with a spoon; the sauce should begin to thicken. Remove from the heat, and stir in 1¼ cups grated cheddar, a handful at a time, letting each handful melt before adding the next. Taste the sauce, and adjust seasonings if needed. Add the roasted cauliflower, and stir until it's coated with sauce.

Assemble potatoes: Once the potatoes are ready, slice them in half lengthwise, and, using a pot holder, arrange them snugly, cut side up, in a 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Season the cut sides with salt and pepper, and use the tip of a knife to score them in a grid, cutting ½ to 1 inch into the potato. Spoon the cauliflower cheese sauce over each potato. Sprinkle them with the remaining cheddar, and return them to the oven to cook until the cauliflower topping is browned, 5 to 10 minutes.

To serve: Scatter with chives, if desired. Serve with sour cream.



Mini pecan and banana bundt cakes with lemon cheese frosting

foodleclub.com

MAKES: 8 servings

PREP TIME: 15 mins

COOK TIME: 20 mins

I'm totally in love with these mini pecan and banana bundt cakes with a tangy lemon flavoured cream cheese frosting. They make a nice change from the normal banana bread that we always seem to make when we have spotty old bananas to use up. The pecan nuts add an element of crunch and the tangy lemon cheese frosting really turns them into something special.

INGREDIENTS

Cake batter:

- 1/3 cup butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 1/2 cups plain all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, optional
- 4 medium bananas, mashed (approx 2 cups)
- 3/4 cup pecan nuts, chopped

Frosting:

- 1 cup icing sugar
- 1/2 cup soft cream cheese
- 1 teaspoon lemon essence

DIRECTIONS

Cake Batter

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C / 375°F



2. Mash the bananas with a fork until most of the lumps have been removed. Set aside.
3. Chop the pecans into small pieces -slightly larger than a grain of cooked rice. Set aside.
4. Using an electric hand mixer, cream the butter and sugar together until it is light and fluffy, and pale in colour. If you don't have a hand mixer, just use a wooden spoon.
5. Add the egg and vanilla essence and continue to whisk until the egg is fully incorporated.
6. Tip in the flour, chopped pecan nuts, bananas, flour, salt, and baking powder. Use a wooden spoon to mix until everything is well combined and you have a thick batter,
7. Spray a silicone mould lightly with cooking spray.
8. Spoon the batter into the mould until the inner spike is just covered and the batter is level with the top of the mould.
9. Transfer the silicone mould onto a baking tray and place it in the preheated oven for 20 minutes.
10. When the cakes are done a toothpick inserted into the thickest part of the cake will come out cleanly.
11. Allow the cakes to cool in the pan before removing them.

Frosting

12. Combine all the ingredients in a small mixing bowl until you have a smooth thick paste.
13. Fill the holes in the pecan and banana bundt cakes with the icing, and top with half a pecan nut.
14. Store in the refrigerator and allow to come to room temperature before serving.

NOTES

You can use self-raising powder and omit the baking powder.

If you prefer to make smaller cakes with the hole going right through them, then fill the baking tray only $\frac{3}{4}$ full (ie to the top of the inner spike). Check for doneness after 15 minutes.

If you've made the cakes smaller, ie with a hole running all the way through, you may just prefer to drizzle the icing over the cakes. In this case, thin the frosting mixture down slightly with the addition of a little milk - one teaspoon at a time until you have a more runny consistency.