



Masala Recipes

Masala for Dry Veggie Dish (Sabzi)

MASALA is the starting point or base for Indian cuisine. It's the sautéed and caramelized base using onions, ginger, garlic and quite often tomato.

Don't mistake this with Garam Masala, a well-balanced spice mixture, which enhances flavour and is also beneficial for overall health.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large onion
- 4 – 5 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 inch piece of minced ginger (approx. 1 Tbs)
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 2 – 3 Tbs grapeseed or extra virgin olive oil (you can also use ghee)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp hot chili powder or cayenne
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 ½ tsp salt

METHOD

- STEP 1** Heat oil on medium high heat. Add cumin, cook for 1 -2 minutes.
- STEP 2** Add garlic and ginger, sauté for 2 minutes.
- STEP 3** Add onion, cook for about 6 minutes until lightly browned, stirring in between.
- STEP 3** Add chopped tomato, cook until it breaks down and blends with the onion mixture.
- STEP 4** Add spices (turmeric, garam masala, chili powder, coriander, salt). Stir to infuse the spices into the mixture.

Your masala is now ready for your veggie creation! You can use it right away or put it away in the fridge (for up to 3-4 days) to finish making the dish later.



Masala for a Smooth & Saucy Curry Dish

INGREDIENTS

- 1 large onion
- 4 – 5 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 inch piece of minced ginger (approx. 1 Tbs)
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 2 – 3 Tbs grapeseed or extra virgin olive oil (you can also use ghee)
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp hot chili powder or cayenne
- ½ tsp smoked paprika (optional)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup water

METHOD

STEP 1 Heat oil on medium heat. Add garlic and ginger, sauté for 3-4 minutes to lightly brown it before adding the onion.

STEP 2 Add onion, cook for 13 – 15 minutes until the mixture turns golden brown and nicely caramelized, stirring in between to prevent it from sticking to the bottom. Add a sprinkle of water any time it starts sticking to the pot.

STEP 3 Add chopped tomato, cook until it breaks down and blends in with the onion mixture (3 – 4 minutes).

STEP 4 Put masala mixture into blender along with 1 cup of water. Blend until smooth. Pour back into pot.

STEP 5 Add spices (turmeric, ground cumin, garam masala, chili powder, smoked paprika, salt). Stir to infuse the spices into the creamy mixture. (Note: I don't like to add spices into my blender. That's why I add them in the pot after the masala is blended)

Your masala is now ready for your favourite saucy curry dish! You can use it right away or put it away in the fridge (for up to 3-4 days) to finish making the curry dish later.



Masala Tips

- The key difference between making the masala for a dry veggie dish and a richer saucy dish (like chana masala for example) is the degree to which you brown the garlic/ginger/onion mixture.
- Browning/caramelizing deepens the flavour and brings out the richness in the sauce.
- Masala for the richer saucy dish is cooked longer but at a slightly lower temperature to prevent it from burning.
- For making the blended smooth masala, I don't like to add spices into my blender. That's why I add them in the pot after the masala is blended.
- You can use these 4 key spices to create most Indian dishes: whole or ground cumin, turmeric, garam masala, chili powder.
- The spices can either be added directly to the masala OR added after the other ingredients of the dish.
- I prefer to use cumin seeds for making rice and dry dishes BUT ground cumin in smooth saucy dishes.
- The cooking times may vary depending on the stove and type of cooking pot.
- Different brands of chili powder and cayenne can have varying intensity of heat. You can find your own balance by using a little less at first and then adjusting it according to your preference.