

# Spice for Life



A FEAST OF HEALTHY SOUTH ASIAN RECIPES FROM  
PROFESSOR SUDHESH KUMAR AND AKTAR ISLAM

# Heart friendly, waist friendly – delicious!

We all know that obesity is now a major problem in the UK. Currently, it is a major focus of research in Warwick Medical School.

In particular, we have studied obesity – and obesity related diseases such as diabetes, heart attacks and strokes – in the South Asian population. There has been a dramatic increase in the prevalence of diabetes in people of South Asian origin and they are four to five times more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes than Europeans. A high-fat diet is thought to be one of the major contributors to increasing obesity and obesity-related diseases among South Asians.

If all of us take a few simple steps to reduce portion sizes, eat a little less salt, sugar and fat (oil) and make a point of being a bit more physically active, we will go a long way to containing this obesity epidemic. What we all have to do now is to change our lifestyles so that we incorporate these healthy habits as part of our daily routine.

The University of Warwick has teamed up with the award-winning Lasan Restaurant in Birmingham to create a delicious range of innovative, contemporary and healthy South Asian recipes. You can cook using these tried and tested recipes or you can, of course, experiment and create new versions for yourself – so long as you remember to use less salt, healthy oils and also less sugar. I am sure you will enjoy them!

**Professor Sudhesh Kumar**

Warwick Medical School  
The University of Warwick



**Warwick**  
Medical School

# Enjoy your favourite curry without guilt



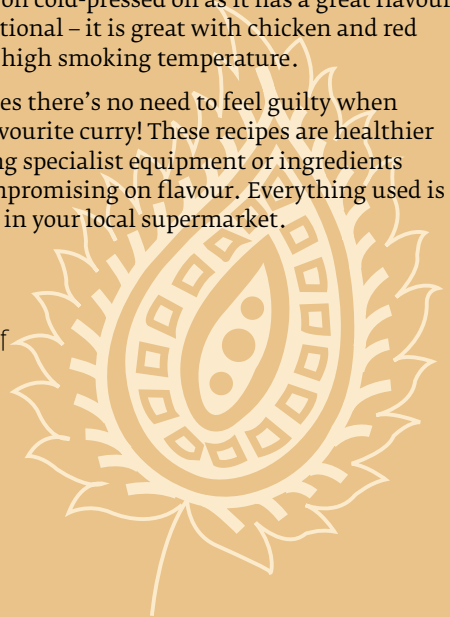
For those who have been brought up with spice as a part of their daily lives the flavour of traditional Indian food is something that can't be replaced by any other cuisine. Nothing else produces the level of satisfaction that a good home cooked curry can provide! So we need to look at how we can still enjoy good Indian food without guilt.

Curries have a tendency to be high in unhealthy saturated fats due to the traditional use of ghee and vegetable oils. The use of modern non-stick cookware and alternative oils is a great way to reduce the levels of unhealthy fats required in the cooking process. The availability of healthier oils makes it possible to retain authentic cooking practices and flavour. Olive oil is great with fish and vegetables – try to go for the virgin option as the lesser grades tend to be mixed with other vegetable oil. I also use rapeseed oil in my cooking; I insist on cold-pressed oil as it has a great flavour and is very nutritional – it is great with chicken and red meats and has a high smoking temperature.

With these recipes there's no need to feel guilty when enjoying your favourite curry! These recipes are healthier without requiring specialist equipment or ingredients and without compromising on flavour. Everything used is readily available in your local supermarket.

## **Enjoy!**

**Aktar Islam**  
Development Chef  
Lasan Restaurant



## The food critic's verdict



Paul Fulford, *Birmingham Mail* restaurant critic and food writer, sampling recipes from this book with Jabbar Khan, Director, Lasan Restaurant Group

*'The food lacks none of the flavour, vibrancy or texture of traditionally prepared dishes. It is just as tasty and satisfying. Warwick University and Lasan should be applauded for coming up with recipes to make South Asian food a whole lot healthier while losing none of the characteristics that make it so delicious.'*

Paul Fulford, *Birmingham Mail*

# The recipes

## *Light bites*

---

Chicken Tikka	6
Chok Ki Tikki	7
Shami Kebab	8
Tandoori Salmon	9

## *Chicken Dishes*

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Dhaba Murgh	11
Kali Mirchwala Murgh	13
Murgh Dopiazza	14
Tandoori Poussin	15

## *Lamb Dishes*

---

Lamb Madras	16
Nali Bhuna	18
Rajasthani Gosht	19

## *Seafood Dishes*

---

Achari Jingha	21
Bengali Mass-er Tenga	22
Keralan Sour Fish Curry with Kokum	23
Methiwali Jingha	24
Sarson Ka Jingha	25
Shorshe Mach	27

## *Vegetables & sundries*

---

Baingan Bartha	28
Dhal Makhni	29
Kashmiri Dum Aloo	31
Nawabi Pilau	32
Palak Paneer	33
Traditional Thadka Dhal	35

## *Desserts*

---

Orange Chocolate Shirkhand	37
Rasmalai	38



# Chicken Tikka

SUCCULENT CHUNKS OF BONELESS CHICKEN BREAST, MARINATED AND ROASTED UNDER AN OPEN FLAME

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 250ml hung yoghurt
- ◆ ¾ tsp toasted cumin seeds
- ◆ ¾ tsp toasted coriander seeds
- ◆ 1 tbsp garlic paste
- ◆ 1 tbsp ginger paste
- ◆ 1 tbsp mustard oil
- ◆ 2 tbsp fresh lime juice
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ ¾ tsp turmeric
- ◆ ½ tsp garam masala
- ◆ ½ tsp black pepper
- ◆ 1 tsp deghi mirch
- ◆ 3 green chillies
- ◆ handful chopped coriander
- ◆ 3 skinless, boneless chicken breasts cut into 3.5cm cubes

## METHOD

- ◆ Purée all ingredients except chicken in a blender until spices are well ground.
- ◆ Put chicken in a large bowl. Add yogurt and spice mixture. Marinate chicken, covered and chilled, for at least 4 hours.
- ◆ Divide chicken among skewers leaving 1 cm space between cubes. Arrange skewers suspended across a baking tray.
- ◆ Grill chicken about 4 inches from heat, turning regularly, until browned in spots and just cooked through (9 to 12 minutes).

*Hung yoghurt: pour yoghurt on to a cheesecloth and tie. Hang over a bowl in fridge to extract unwanted moisture.*

# Chok Ki Tikki

LIGHTLY SPICED, TRADITIONAL POTATO CAKES, FLAVOURED WITH GROUND POMEGRANATE AND CHAT MASALA

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 4 large baking potatoes
- ◆ 2 green chillies, finely chopped
- ◆ 1 tsp chilli flakes
- ◆ 4cm ginger, grated
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ ½ tsp anardana (ground pomegranate seeds)
- ◆ ½ tsp cracked black pepper
- ◆ 1 tsp chat masala
- ◆ handful coriander, finely chopped
- ◆ cold-pressed rapeseed oil for brushing

## METHOD

- ◆ Boil the potatoes (skin on) for 20 minutes then place on a roasting tray. Bake for a further 20 minutes at 180°C/gas mark 4.
- ◆ Peel the potatoes and mash smooth.
- ◆ Mix the mash with all the other ingredients and shape into small patties.
- ◆ Brush a non-stick roasting tray with rapeseed oil and place in a pre-heated oven at 200°C/gas mark 6.
- ◆ Brush the patties with the oil and place on the hot roasting tray.
- ◆ Roast the patties for 15 minutes or until golden.



# Shami Kebab

## SPICED LAMB PATTIES

### INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 500g lean minced lamb
- ◆ 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- ◆ generous handful of coriander, finely chopped
- ◆ 1 tbsp ginger paste
- ◆ 1 tbsp garlic paste
- ◆ 2-3 green chillies, finely chopped
- ◆ salt, to taste
- ◆ 1 tsp toasted coriander seeds, crushed
- ◆ ½ tsp red chilli powder
- ◆ ½ tsp cumin powder
- ◆ ¼ tsp garam masala
- ◆ 2 tbsp lemon juice
- ◆ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ◆ 2 eggs
- ◆ ¼ cup breadcrumbs

### METHOD

- ◆ Mix all the ingredients together and leave to marinate for two hours.
- ◆ Form the mixture into patties.
- ◆ Brush a non-stick griddle pan with cold-pressed rapeseed oil and cook the patties over a moderate heat for 5 minutes on either side.

*This recipe also works well using chicken or beef.*







# Tandoori Salmon

SALMON MARINATED IN LIME AND GINGER

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 500g salmon, cut into 4cm cubes
- For the marinade*
- ◆ 8 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- ◆ small bunch coriander leaves
- ◆ 4cm fresh root ginger, roughly chopped
- ◆ 8-10 curry leaves, roughly chopped
- ◆ 2 tbsp lime juice
- ◆ 1 tbsp grated lime zest
- ◆ 1 tbsp deghi mirch
- ◆ ½ tbsp garam masala
- ◆ ½ tbsp salt
- ◆ 50ml cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 1 tbsp gram flour
- ◆ 100g hung yoghurt (see p6)

## METHOD

- ◆ Use a pestle and mortar to make a fine paste with the oil, garlic, coriander, ginger, curry leaves, lime juice and zest, deghi mirch, garam masala and salt.
- ◆ Heat oil in a pan and add the gram flour, stirring to make a paste, and cook for about 1 minute without burning.
- ◆ Transfer the mixture to a bowl and combine the spice paste and yoghurt. Gently stir in the salmon and marinate for 1 hour.
- ◆ Pre-heat the oven to 200°C/gas mark 6. Spread out the marinated salmon in a baking dish. Cook for 10-15 minutes, basting once or twice during cooking.



*Chicken is an excellent source of protein and contains less fat than most other meats.*

# Dhaba Murgh

TRADITIONAL CHICKEN CURRY SERVED IN ROADSIDE CAFÉS ACROSS NORTH INDIA

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 1 whole chicken, cut into 8-10 pieces
- ◆ 3 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 2 bay leaves
- ◆ 1 star anise
- ◆ 250g onion, chopped
- ◆ 3 tomatoes, finely chopped
- ◆ 1 tbsp garlic-ginger paste
- ◆ ½ tsp cumin seeds, toasted and crushed
- ◆ 1 tsp ground turmeric
- ◆ 1 tbsp ground coriander
- ◆ 1 tsp ground red chillies
- ◆ 2 dried red chillies
- ◆ 1 tsp garam masala
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ 400ml water
- ◆ handful finely chopped coriander

## METHOD

- ◆ Heat oil and add cumin, star anise, bay leaves, and dried red chillies. When the cumin begins to splutter, add garam masala and onions. Sauté until the onions have softened.
- ◆ Add the garlic-ginger paste, turmeric, ground coriander, ground chillies, and salt. Toss the spices on a low heat until the mixture releases the oil.
- ◆ Add the chicken and the tomatoes. Stir well.
- ◆ Reduce the heat to a fast simmer. Boil the water and pour over the chicken.
- ◆ Cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
- ◆ Remove the lid and reduce to achieve the consistency of the gravy you want.
- ◆ Garnish with chopped coriander.



# Kali Mirchwala Murgh

CHICKEN STEWED IN A SMOOTH YOGHURT AND PEPPERCORN SAUCE

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## INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken breasts, cut into large chunks (or 1 small chicken)
- 3 onions, finely chopped
- 4 ripe tomatoes, chopped finely
- 2 plump cloves of garlic
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- 1 tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 200ml yoghurt, whisked
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 2 tsp brown sugar
- 15g black peppercorns, crushed
- ¾ tsp salt
- 3 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil

## METHOD

- Heat oil over moderate heat in a non-stick pan and sauté the onions until softened.
- Add the garlic, ginger paste, garam masala, turmeric, cumin and peppercorns. Toss for 2 minutes, then add the chicken.
- Pour in the whisked yoghurt, chopped tomatoes, brown sugar and salt.
- Stir and cover. Simmer over a moderate heat for 20 minutes.



# Murgh Dopiazza

TRADITIONAL BENGALI CURRY – CHICKEN ON THE BONE COOKED WITH SWEET BABY ONIONS IN A SPICY REDUCED GRAVY

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 1 small chicken, cut into 10 pieces
- ◆ 4 medium onions, puréed. Extract juice from the onions by squeezing through a cheesecloth. Reserve juice, set aside 1 tbsp and discard remaining pulp
- ◆ 12 baby onions, cut in half
- ◆ 3 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 4 cloves of garlic, crushed
- ◆ 1 tsp ginger purée
- ◆ 3 tomatoes, chopped
- ◆ 150ml yoghurt, whisked
- ◆ 3 bay leaves
- ◆ 6 cloves
- ◆ 2 sticks of cinnamon
- ◆ 6 green cardamoms
- ◆ 3 whole red, dry roasted chillies
- ◆ 10 peppercorns
- ◆ 1 heaped tsp coriander seeds, toasted and crushed
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ ½ tsp sugar
- ◆ 3 tsp deghi mirch
- ◆ ½ tsp turmeric
- ◆ ½ tsp garam masala
- ◆ juice of ½ a lime
- ◆ handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped



## METHOD

- ◆ Heat oil in a non-stick oven proof casserole dish. Sauté the baby onions until golden brown. Remove, pat dry and set aside.
- ◆ Fry bay leaves, cinnamon, cardamoms, peppercorns, cloves and dry red chillies for 2 minutes, followed by the onion pulp.
- ◆ Make a paste with the deghi mirch and turmeric, add the whole spices to the pan and sauté for 30 seconds; add the garlic and ginger. Stir continuously.
- ◆ Place the chicken and the browned onions in the pot with the tomatoes, yoghurt, salt and sugar. Stir and reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes.
- ◆ Add the onion juice and toasted coriander seeds. Stir well.
- ◆ Simmer on a moderate heat for 20 minutes.
- ◆ Sprinkle over garam masala, coriander and lime juice just before you serve.

# Tandoori Poussin

CLOVE SMOKED POUSSIN MARINATED IN YOGHURT AND CARDAMOM

## INGREDIENTS

- 6 whole poussin, quartered

*For the marinade*

- 250ml hung yoghurt (see p6)
- 1½ tbsp green chilli and coriander paste (3 green chillies pureéd with a handful of chopped coriander)
- 2 tbsp mustard oil
- ½ tsp cracked black pepper
- 2 tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp ground green cardamom
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp garam masala
- salt to taste
- 3cm ginger, grated
- 7 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 small onion, grated
- lemon juice

*For the smoking process*

- 1 tsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- two pieces of charcoal
- 6 cloves

## METHOD

- Marinade:** in a large bowl mix together all the ingredients for the marinade to make a paste.
- Add the poussin:** make some cuts in the meat, massage the marinade into the cuts and set aside for at least 3 hours.
- Arrange the poussin** in a large pot, put the smouldering coals in a small metal ramekin and place in the middle of the poussin, add the cloves and rapeseed oil. Cover the pot with a damp cloth, followed by the lid, and leave to smoke for 1 hour.
- Cook the poussin** on a hot barbecue or under a hot grill for 3-4 minutes on each side, until cooked through. Drizzle with lemon juice before you serve.



# Lamb Madras

FIERY HOT TAMIL LAMB STEW WITH MUSTARD SEEDS, FENUGREEK AND TAMARIND

## INGREDIENTS

*For the Madras curry powder*

- ◆ 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- ◆ 2 tsp fenugreek seeds
- ◆ 1 tsp mustard seeds
- ◆ 2 tsp poppy seeds
- ◆ 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ◆ 1 tsp black peppercorns
- ◆ ½ tsp fennel seeds
- ◆ 1 stick cinnamon about 7.5cm long
- ◆ 5 whole cloves
- ◆ 1 tbsp turmeric
- ◆ 1 tsp chilli powder

*For the chilli, garlic and ginger paste*

- ◆ 2 small green chillies
- ◆ 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ◆ 1.5cm ginger
- ◆ ½ tbsp water

*For the curry*


- ◆ 900g lamb, cut into large cubes
- ◆ 2½ tbsp Madras curry powder
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ 1 tsp red chilli powder
- ◆ 3 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 1 tsp black mustard seeds
- ◆ 2 onions, finely chopped
- ◆ 12 curry leaves
- ◆ 200g chopped tomatoes, puréed
- ◆ 2 tsp tamarind paste
- ◆ 100ml water
- ◆ 150 ml yoghurt
- ◆ coriander, to garnish



## METHOD

- ◆ Toast all the spices. Combine black peppercorns, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, fenugreek, mustard, poppy, cumin and fennel seeds, and grind to a fine powder with an electric grinder, or a pestle and mortar. Stir in the turmeric and chilli powder.
- ◆ Purée the chillies, garlic and ginger with the water to make a paste.
- ◆ Put the lamb in a large bowl, rub with the Madras curry powder, yoghurt and salt, and set aside for 2 hours.
- ◆ Heat the rapeseed oil in a large non-stick pot until hot.
- ◆ Add the mustard seeds, let them pop for a few seconds and then stir in the curry leaves and onions.
- ◆ Soften the onions for a few minutes before adding the salt, green chilli, garlic and ginger paste.
- ◆ Keep stirring – do not allow the masala to catch on the bottom of the pan.
- ◆ After a few minutes, once you get the aroma of toasted spice, add the tomatoes, tamarind, red chilli powder and water.
- ◆ Bring to the boil and then add the lamb and any accumulated juices to the pan.
- ◆ Cover and simmer for 1 hour until the masala has thickened and the lamb is tender. Garnish with the coriander.



A collection of various spices is displayed on a light-colored wooden surface. In the upper left, a white bowl is filled with bright red, elongated chili peppers. To its right, another white bowl contains dark, irregularly shaped spices. In the center, a white bowl holds a mound of vibrant yellow turmeric powder. Below this, several long, light-brown cinnamon sticks are scattered. To the left of the cinnamon sticks, there is a pile of dark brown, elongated cardamom pods. In the foreground, several large, brown, eight-pointed star anise pods are prominently featured. To the right of the star anise, there is a pile of small, light-brown fennel seeds. The overall scene is well-lit, highlighting the textures and colors of the different spices.

*Some of the spices used in  
South Asian cooking*

# Nali Bhuna

SLOW STEWED SHANKS OF LAMB IN A THICK, SPICY ONION GRAVY

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 4 trimmed lamb shanks
- ◆ 3 fresh green chillies
- ◆ handful fresh coriander stalks
- ◆ 2 tsp grated ginger root
- ◆ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ◆ 2 tbs cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 4 garlic cloves
- ◆ 2 onions, sliced
- ◆ 3 cloves
- ◆ 1 bay leaf
- ◆ 1 cinnamon stick
- ◆ 4 green cardamom pods, bruised
- ◆ 10 whole black peppercorns
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ 1 tsp ground deghi mirch
- ◆ 1 tsp garam masala
- ◆ 1 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- ◆ 1 tsp ground cumin
- ◆ 4 tbs yoghurt
- ◆ 4 ripe tomatoes, finely chopped
- ◆ 300ml water



## METHOD

- ◆ Blend the coriander stalks, chillies, ginger, cumin and garlic with a little water in a food processor to make a paste.
- ◆ Place the lamb shanks in a dish, pour the puréed mixture over the lamb and rub into the shanks. Leave to marinate in the fridge for a minimum of 2 hours.
- ◆ Heat the oil in a large pan, then add the onion slices, stirring until they have turned a golden colour. Add the salt, peppercorns, cloves, cinnamon, cardamom, garam masala, nutmeg, deghi mirch, cumin and bay leaf and stir to ensure the onion is well coated. Sauté on a low heat.
- ◆ Add the lamb shanks to the pan and stir until browned, then add the chopped tomatoes.
- ◆ Pour in the water and yoghurt. Cover and leave to simmer slowly for 1½ hours. Remove the cover and simmer for a further 30 minutes until the sauce has thickened and the meat is tender.

# Rajasthani Gosht

LAMB, SLOW COOKED UNTIL TENDER AND FLAVOURED WITH GROUND CORIANDER AND CARDAMOM, PRODUCING A RICH BHUNA GRAVY

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 600g lamb
- ◆ 2 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 6 cardamoms, split
- ◆ 6-8 cloves
- ◆ 1 cinnamon stick
- ◆ 4 bay leaves
- ◆ 10 peppercorns
- ◆ 3 large onions, very finely chopped
- ◆ 1 tsp salt
- ◆ 2 tbsp ground coriander
- ◆ ½ tsp turmeric
- ◆ 3 tsp deghi mirch
- ◆ 6 garlic cloves, crushed to a paste
- ◆ 4cm ginger, finely grated
- ◆ 250g tomatoes, diced
- ◆ 3 tbsp yoghurt
- ◆ 100g raw papaya, finely grated
- ◆ 2 tbsp chopped coriander, to garnish

*For the smoking process*

- ◆ charcoal (for smoking)
- ◆ 2 elephant cardamoms
- ◆ 1 tsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil

## METHOD

- ◆ Heat the oil in a large pot, add the cardamoms, cloves, cinnamon stick, bay leaves and peppercorns and fry until they start popping.
- ◆ Add the onions and sauté until golden brown.
- ◆ Mix the salt, ground coriander, turmeric and deghi mirch with a little water to form a spice paste. Add this to the pan and stir well.
- ◆ Stir in the garlic and ginger and continue cooking for another 2-3 minutes.
- ◆ Add the lamb pieces, stir well to coat all the meat with the spices.
- ◆ Add the tomatoes, papaya, yoghurt and 300ml water. Cover and reduce the heat.
- ◆ Simmer slowly for 1 hour, until the lamb is tender and the sauce is reduced. Stir regularly – do not let it catch.
- ◆ Finally smoke the curry: pour the curry into a flat dish; place the smouldering coals in a steel ramekin along with the elephant cardamoms and drizzle over the rapeseed oil. Place the ramekin beside the lamb and cover. Allow to mature for one hour.
- ◆ Remove the lid and foil and garnish with chopped coriander.



*Eating fish regularly is a good way to maintain a healthy heart.*



# Achari Jingha

FRESH WATER PRAWNS SIMMERED IN A PUNGENT SAUCE,  
FLAVOURED WITH PICKLING SPICES

## INGREDIENTS

- 800g medium to large raw prawns (de-veined)
- 4 tomatoes
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- ½ tsp garlic paste
- ½ tsp ginger paste
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp brown mustard seeds
- 1 tsp nigella seeds
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp fenugreek seeds
- 2-3 green chillies, halved lengthways and seeds removed
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- salt, to taste
- 400ml water
- handful of coriander, chopped

## METHOD

- In a food processor, purée the tomatoes and set aside.
- Toast the seeds for 2 minutes and crush lightly in a pestle and mortar.
- Heat the oil in a non-stick saucepan and gently fry the seeds for 30 seconds – the seeds should release a nutty aroma.
- Add the onion and fry for about 10 minutes, until coloured. Add the garlic and ginger pastes and the chillies. Sauté for 1 minute, then add the turmeric, ground coriander and salt.
- Pour in the puréed tomatoes and simmer, adding splashes of hot water to loosen the mixture. Simmer until the oil rises to the surface – about 10 minutes.
- Add the prawns and the water. Bring to the boil and then reduce the heat to a slow simmer. Cover and simmer for 3-4 minutes, until the prawns are nearly cooked.
- Remove the cover and stir over a high heat until the sauce thickens. Stir in the remaining ingredients: pepper, lemon juice and fresh coriander.

*Ginger –  
warming and  
aromatic –  
and an aid to  
digestion*

# Bengali Mass-er Tenga

A POPULAR BENGALI FISH CURRY – STEAKS OF SEA BASS, PAN FRIED AND SIMMERED IN A THIN TOMATO AND CORIANDER BROTH

## INGREDIENTS

*For the fish*

- 2 large sea bass, scaled, gutted and cut into 2cm steaks
- 1 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- 1 tsp ground chilli
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tbsp flour

*For the sauce*

- 2 medium-sized onions, finely grated
- 4 ripe plum tomatoes, chopped
- 5 cloves of garlic, chopped
- 3 green chillies, split
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- juice of ½ a lime
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1½ tsp ground chilli
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp of salt
- 400ml water
- generous handful of fresh coriander

## METHOD

- Wash and dry the fish, squeezing as much moisture from it as possible.
- Mix the flour and the spices on a flat tray.
- Lightly press the pieces of fish on to the mixed flour and spices.
- Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan on a moderate to high heat. Pan fry the pieces of fish until the skin is crisp and golden.
- Pat off the excess cooking oil and set aside.
- Heat olive oil in a non-stick pan.
- Add the garlic, onion, green chillies and salt. Sauté the mixture for 10 minutes on a low heat until the oil has been released.
- Add the ground chilli, turmeric and coriander. Mix well and sauté for a further 3 minutes.
- Add the chopped tomatoes and water and bring to the boil. Boil for 20 minutes.
- When the tomatoes have broken down, add the fish and simmer slowly for 7-10 minutes.
- Add lime juice. Check for seasoning.
- Garnish with fresh coriander.





## Keralan Sour Fish Curry with Kokum

MONKFISH COOKED IN A THIN SOUR SAUCE FLAVOURED WITH KOKUM AND MUSTARD SEEDS

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 pieces kokum (fish tamarind), washed and left to soak in 50ml warm water
- 500g monkfish tail, cut into 12 pieces
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground turmeric, plus extra for marinating
- ½ tsp fenugreek seeds
- 2 tbsp red chilli paste
- 400ml water
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- 10-12 curry leaves
- 2 medium onions, grated
- 1 tbsp peeled and finely sliced garlic

### METHOD

- Rinse the fish, pat dry and rub in turmeric and some of the salt. Set aside to marinate.
- Dry-roast the fenugreek seeds for a few seconds in a small frying pan, then grind. Be careful not to over-roast the seeds as this will make them bitter.
- Mix the fenugreek, chilli paste and half a teaspoon of turmeric together with 50ml of water, forming a paste.
- Heat the oil in a deep heavy-based frying pan. Add the mustard seeds; when they pop after a few seconds, add the curry leaves, onion and garlic and fry until the onion is translucent (about 3-4 minutes), then add the remaining salt.
- Add the fenugreek paste and fry, stirring, for a further 3-4 minutes. Add the remaining water, bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 20 minutes.
- Add the soaked kokum plus its soaking water.
- Simmer for a further 10 minutes, until the mixture thickens a little.
- Add the monkfish and simmer gently for 10 minutes until the fish is cooked through.

# Methiwala Jingha

HYDERABADI STYLE KING PRAWNS COOKED WITH SPRING ONIONS AND FRESH FENUGREEK LEAVES

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 500g raw king prawns, de-veined and shelled (leave tails on)
- ◆ 300g chopped spring onions; separate 100g green tips from white bulbs
- ◆ 100g fenugreek leaves, finely chopped
- ◆ 2 green chillies, finely chopped
- ◆ 3 plump garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ◆ 1 tsp finely chopped ginger
- ◆ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ◆ 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ◆ 1 tsp lime juice
- ◆ ¾ tsp salt
- ◆ ¾ tsp round turmeric
- ◆ 1 tsp ground chilli powder
- ◆ ½ tsp ground coriander
- ◆ generous handful of fresh coriander, finely chopped, plus a little for garnish

## METHOD

- ◆ Soak spring onions in salted water for 20 minutes. Drain and set aside.
- ◆ Mix the king prawns with salt, turmeric, ground coriander, chilli powder and lemon juice. Marinate for 30 minutes.
- ◆ In a non-stick pan heat the oil and add the white pieces from the spring onions, the green chillies, garlic and ginger. Sauté on a moderate heat for 5 minutes.
- ◆ Remove the prawns from the marinade and set aside.
- ◆ Pour the marinade into the pan and sauté for 2-3 minutes.
- ◆ Add the washed spring onion tips (keep a few back to garnish), coriander and fenugreek leaves. Toss until the herbs wilt.
- ◆ Add the prawns with 100ml water and simmer on a low heat until the prawns are cooked.
- ◆ Add the remaining spring onion tips and lime juice just before serving and garnish with chopped coriander.





# Sarson Ka Jingha

KING PRAWNS IN A MUSTARD TANDOORI MARINADE



## INGREDIENTS

- 10 large raw king prawns
- 1 tbsp mustard oil
- 1 tsp ginger paste
- 1 tsp garlic paste
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp coriander seeds, toasted and crushed
- 1 tsp deghi mirch
- ½ tsp ground turmeric
- ½ tsp garam masala
- ½ tsp ground coriander
- 2 tbsp hung yoghurt (see p6)
- 2 green chillies, finely chopped
- 1 heaped tsp mustard seeds, toasted and crushed
- juice of ½ a small lemon
- ½ tsp salt

## METHOD

- Shell and de-vein the king prawns leaving the tail on.
- Combine all of the remaining ingredients to make a paste.
- Mix in the prawns and allow to marinate for 2 hours.
- Place the prawns on skewers and grill for 2 minutes on either side, then baste with remaining marinade and cook for a further 2 minutes.



# Shorshe Mach

BENGALI STYLE FISH IN AN ORANGE-SCENTED MUSTARD GRAVY

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 4 fillets of sea bream or sea bass, cut into 4cm fillets
- ◆ 2 medium-sized onions, finely chopped
- ◆ dried peel of a small orange
- ◆ 2 tsp turmeric
- ◆ 2 tbsp mustard oil
- ◆ 1 tsp chilli powder
- ◆ ¾ tsp coriander powder
- ◆ ½ tsp nigella seeds
- ◆ 1 ½ tsp mustard seeds
- ◆ ½ tsp salt
- ◆ 3 green chillies, split and deseeded
- ◆ squeeze of lemon juice
- ◆ 350ml water



## METHOD

- ◆ Season the pieces of fish with salt and a pinch of the turmeric. Heat the mustard oil in a non-stick pan and lightly fry the pieces of fish, skin side down first, until almost cooked. Remove and set aside.
- ◆ In a bowl mix the remaining turmeric, coriander and chilli powder with some water to make a paste.
- ◆ Add nigella seeds to the oil, cook for about a minute, then add the turmeric paste. Stir for a few seconds. Add the salt, onion and orange peel. Add some more water to loosen the sauce and simmer for 5 minutes. Pour in the remaining water and simmer for 10 minutes.
- ◆ Blend the mustard seeds and 1 green chilli together with a pinch of salt to make a paste.
- ◆ Return the fish pieces to the pan. Add the mustard paste and stir into the sauce without overworking the fish. Season with a little more salt and add the remaining split green chillies. Cook on a gentle heat for another 2 minutes. Add a squeeze of lemon juice.
- ◆ Remove the fish from the pan. Continue to simmer the sauce until reduced. Spoon the sauce over the fish and serve.

# Baingan Bartha

TRADITIONAL ROAST AUBERGINE FROM NORTH INDIA

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 3 medium sized aubergines, roasted
- ◆ 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- ◆ 4 plump cloves of garlic, roasted
- ◆ 2 tomatoes, finely chopped
- ◆ 2 green chillies, finely chopped
- ◆ salt, to taste
- ◆ 1 tsp toasted coriander seeds
- ◆ ½ tsp red chilli powder
- ◆ ½ tsp chilli flakes
- ◆ ½ tsp garam masala
- ◆ ¾ tsp amchoor
- ◆ 2-3 tsp olive oil
- ◆ handful coriander leaves, finely chopped

## METHOD

- ◆ Coarsely mash the roasted aubergine.
- ◆ In a non-stick pan, add the oil.
- ◆ Sauté the onions until soft, then add the tomatoes. Cook for 5-7 minutes.
- ◆ Add all the spices and mix through. Add the aubergine and garlic, followed by the green chillies.
- ◆ Reduce the heat and toss the mixture for 15-20 mins until well reduced.
- ◆ Season to taste.
- ◆ Garnish with finely chopped coriander.





# Dhal Makhni

TRADITIONAL PUNJABI BLACK LENTILS WITH TOMATO

## INGREDIENTS

- 150g (soaked) whole black lentils
- 50g (soaked) kidney beans
- 100g (soaked) channa dhal
- 1 tbsp garlic-ginger paste
- 2 tbsp hung yoghurt (see p6), beaten
- 10 tbsp pulped tomato
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- ½ tsp garam masala
- 500ml water
- handful coriander leaves, finely chopped

## METHOD

- Clean the pulses well.
- Add water, salt, chilli powder, onion, tomato pulp and garlic-ginger paste. Cook in pressure cooker for about 40 minutes or till the pulses are cooked. If you do not have a pressure cooker, simmer the mixture for 1½ hours, adding water occasionally.
- Mash the pulses and leave on low heat.
- Add the beaten yoghurt and cook for 3-4 minutes.
- Garnish with coriander leaves and garam masala.

*If the dhal thickens too much, just add water and bring back to the boil.*



# Kashmiri Dum Aloo

SPICED ROASTED NEW POTATOES SIMMERED IN AN ONION AND YOGHURT GRAVY

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## INGREDIENTS

- 250g new potatoes
  - 100ml hung yoghurt (see p6)
  - ½ tbsp poppy seeds
  - ½ tbsp coriander seeds
  - ½ tbsp cumin seeds
  - 2-3 cloves
  - 2-3 cardamoms
  - salt to taste
  - ½ tbsp red chilli powder
  - ½ tbsp turmeric powder
  - 1 small sliced onion
  - ½ tbsp garlic-ginger paste
  - 2 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
  - 1 tsp garam masala
  - fresh coriander to garnish
- 

## METHOD

- Prick the potatoes all over with a fork.
- Mix yoghurt, salt, chilli powder, turmeric and garlic-ginger paste and marinate potatoes for about an hour.
- Remove the potatoes from the marinade and arrange them neatly on a baking sheet. Roast at 180°C/gas mark 4 for about 20 minutes.
- In a non-stick pan, heat the oil. Add sliced onions and sauté till brown.
- Place the onions in a liquidiser. Add 50ml water and blend to a paste.
- Roast coriander seeds, poppy seeds, cloves, cumin seeds and cardamoms and grind.
- Combine the onion paste and ground spice and blend well.
- Return the paste to the pan and bring to a fast simmer.
- Add roasted potatoes to the mixture and stir well for about 3-4 minutes.
- Add the remaining marinade along with 3-4 tablespoons of water.
- Simmer for about 20-25 minutes.
- Sprinkle the garam masala over the potatoes before serving.
- Garnish with fresh coriander.

# Nawabi Pilau

AROMATIC BASMATI RICE COOKED WITH CASHEW NUTS AND SAFFRON

## INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 250g basmati rice, washed thoroughly
- ◆ 120g cashew nuts
- ◆ 1 tbsp cold-pressed rapeseed oil
- ◆ 4 cloves
- ◆ 2 cardamom pods
- ◆ 1 stick of cinnamon
- ◆ 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ◆ 6 shallots, sliced
- ◆ 120g raisins
- ◆ 1 tsp turmeric powder
- ◆ 1 tsp saffron
- ◆ 500ml water
- ◆ ½ tsp salt
- ◆ ½ tsp sugar

## METHOD

- ◆ Wash and drain the rice 2-3 times and leave to soak in water for 10-15 minutes.
- ◆ Boil the 500ml of water and add the saffron.
- ◆ In a separate pot, heat the oil to a high temperature. Add the nuts, cloves, cardamoms, cumin seeds and cinnamon and fry for a couple of minutes.
- ◆ Add the shallots and fry for 2 minutes, till they are translucent. Add the raisins, salt, sugar and turmeric and stir for a few seconds.
- ◆ Add rice and stir well until all the grains have been coated with the spices.
- ◆ Add the boiling water.
- ◆ Partially cover the pan and reduce heat to a slow simmer, allowing the rice to cook gently in its spices. This should take about 12-15 minutes.
- ◆ When the water has been absorbed, test the rice by tasting it to see if it is done. If necessary, leave for another minute or two, with the lid on.





# Palak Paneer

CLASSIC NORTH INDIAN DISH, MILDLY FLAVOURED WITH SPINACH AND INDIAN COTTAGE CHEESE

## INGREDIENTS

- 500g spinach
- 100g paneer
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2-3 bay leaves
- 1 tsp toasted cumin seeds, coarsely crushed
- 1 tsp toasted coriander seeds, coarsely crushed
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp garam masala
- salt to taste
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 2cm piece of ginger, crushed
- 2 green chillies, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- handful of chopped coriander leaves, plus some for garnish

## METHOD

- In a pressure cooker, add a cup of water followed by the garlic, ginger, green chillies, coriander leaves and spinach. Cook for 10 minutes. Allow the mixture to cool and blitz to a smooth paste.
- Cut the paneer into small cubes. Heat the oil in a pan. Fry the paneer pieces on medium heat till they turn slightly brown, and set aside.
- In the same pan, add the bay leaves, cumin and coriander seeds. Sauté for a couple of minutes, then add the onion. Toss until softened.
- Add salt, black pepper and garam masala. Stir well.
- Add the spinach paste and the paneer to the onions.
- Allow the mixture to simmer on a low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Season to taste, and garnish with chopped coriander.

*Spinach is an excellent source of iron and is rich in vitamin C.*





# Traditional Thadka Dhal

CLASSIC BLEND OF CREAMY LENTILS WITH CUMIN AND GARLIC, FINISHED WITH LEMON

## INGREDIENTS

- 150g red split lentils
- 100g thoor dhal
- 10 curry leaves
- 2 slices of unpeeled fresh root ginger
- 1 ripe tomato, chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cumin seeds, slightly crushed
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 1 red chilli, chopped
- juice of ½ a lemon
- ¾ tsp salt
- handful of coriander leaves, finely chopped

## METHOD

- Put all the lentils in a pan and cover with 500ml cold water.
- Bring to the boil.
- Remove any white scum and reduce to simmering.
- Add the turmeric, tomato and ginger. Simmer until all the water has been absorbed and the lentils are tender.
- Ensure the lentils do not catch.
- Remove from the heat and add the salt.
- Remove ginger.
- Put the olive oil into a frying pan.
- Heat and add the cumin seeds, coriander seeds, garlic, chilli and curry leaves. Fry gently for a few minutes.
- Add the spices to the lentils and stir well.
- Finish with lemon juice and garnish with chopped coriander.

*If the dhal thickens too much, just add water and bring back to the boil.*



Fresh fruit makes the best possible dessert. It's quick and easy to prepare and you can find a fantastic selection of fruit from all over the world at any supermarket.



- ◆ Choose a selection of fruits of different flavours, colours and textures.
- ◆ Prepare as necessary and arrange on a large platter.
- ◆ Sprinkle over some lemon juice to prevent discoloration.
- ◆ Add a few ice cubes to keep the fruit really fresh.
- ◆ Serve and enjoy!

*Remember: to keep healthy, everyone should include at least five portions of fruit and vegetables in their daily diet.*

# Orange Chocolate Shirkhand

SIMPLE CHILLED DESSERT YOGHURT, FLAVOURED WITH ORANGE CHOCOLATE AND CINNAMON

## INGREDIENTS

- 1ltr hung yoghurt (see p6 – hung for at least 24 hrs)
- 2 tbsp icing sugar
- 1 tsp ground cardamom mace
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 100g dark orange chocolate, grated

## METHOD

- In a large bowl whisk the yoghurt, using a balloon whisk, until it becomes quite fluffy.
- Add the sugar, followed by the ground spices, and whisk thoroughly.
- Sprinkle the grated chocolate over the mixture and fold in.
- Chill the mixture for an hour before serving.

*Instead of chocolate, you can use a fruit coulis or a light dessert sauce.*



# Rasmalai

TRADITIONAL BENGALI MILK CURD DUMPLINGS SIMMERED IN A ROSE-SCENTED SYRUP

## INGREDIENTS

### *Rasmalai dumplings*

- ◆ 800g milk curd or ricotta cheese
- ◆ 4 tbsp sugar
- ◆ ½ tsp green cardamom mace

### *Syrup*

- ◆ 400ml condensed milk
- ◆ 400ml milk
- ◆ ½ tbsp rose water

## METHOD

- ◆ Mix the milk curd, sugar and cardamom.
- ◆ Spread the mixture on a baking tray, place in a preheated oven set at 150°C/gas mark 2 and bake for 20 minutes. (Do not allow to brown).
- ◆ Remove from oven and allow to cool.
- ◆ Form into dumplings, about 4cm long and 2cm wide.
- ◆ Place the dumplings in a raised-sided roasting tin.

### *To make the milk syrup*

- ◆ Pour the condensed milk, normal milk and rose water into a heavy-based pan and simmer for 10 minutes. Do not boil.
- ◆ Pour the syrup over the dumplings.
- ◆ Place the roasting pan in an oven preheated to 170°C/gas mark 3.
- ◆ Bake for 15 minutes. Turn off the oven and allow to cool.
- ◆ Once at room temperature, chill the dumplings and syrup for a few hours. Serve chilled.



DESSERTS

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## Spices & seasonings

The recipes in this book rely for flavour on a delicate and individual mix of spices and seasonings. The most well known and commonly used spices in South Asian cuisine include cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, fennel, fenugreek, garlic, ginger, mustard, nutmeg, poppy seeds, saffron and turmeric, as well as blends such as chat masala and garam masala.

We have also used:

**Amchoor** – a powder made from crushed dried green mango. It has a slightly sour, fruity flavour and is used with meat and fish and in vegetable dishes.

**Anardana** – dried pomegranate seeds. A tangy, fruity flavour, often used in vegetable dishes.

**Deghi mirch** – a bright red Indian paprika, made from the crushed pods of sun-dried chillies. It's mild in flavour and adds colour to the food.

**Kokum** – also known as 'fish tamarind'. A purple fruit from South India with a sweet/sour taste, often used dried, infused in hot water.

**Nigella seeds** – seeds of the nigella flower, usually toasted to bring out the nutty and slightly peppery flavour.

**Star anise** – dried seed pods with a strong flavour of aniseed.



# Guidelines for healthy cooking

We hope you have enjoyed trying these recipes – and that they’ve proved to you that good Indian food can be both healthy and delicious!

But don’t stop here! You can adapt these recipes using different kinds of meat or fish. You can also adapt your own favourite recipes by following these simple guidelines:

- Use oil instead of ghee. Olive oil (choose virgin or extra-virgin) is good with fish and vegetables; rapeseed oil (cold-pressed for choice) is great with chicken and red meats.
- Use non-stick cookware (but don’t heat to a temperature of more than 450 degrees).
- Grill, oven roast or shallow fry instead of deep fat frying.
- Cut down on salt. Use sea salt – it is a lot stronger in flavour so less is required. Use herbs and spices to add flavour and never add salt at the table.
- Use less sugar.
- To help break down onions in curries where oil is required, use a food processor to chop the onions.

*And the result? Great curry, without the guilt!*



## The University of Warwick



The University of Warwick was founded in the mid-1960s. In just over 40 years it has risen to become one of the UK's leading universities, with an acknowledged reputation for excellence in research and teaching, for innovation and for links with business and industry. In the UK media league tables, Warwick has consistently been listed in the top ten UK universities and each year receives around 30,000 applications for 3,000 undergraduate places.

The University's Medical School was established in 2000 in response to the UK's need for more doctors. It now offers the largest graduate-only medical degree in the UK, with many of its students staying in the Midlands after graduation to work in the region's hospitals and GP practices.

Warwick Medical School also has an ambitious research programme which is already making news in the important areas of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and reproduction. Warwick medical experts such as Professor Sudhesh Kumar are particularly interested in obesity, and are working in the areas of obesity and ethnicity, obesity and diabetes, childhood obesity and how the brain affects the condition.

## Lasan Restaurant



Lasan is at the cutting edge of eating out Indian style. It offers the very latest in menu innovation, interior design and sensory indulgences.

Only the freshest and highest quality ingredients are used to create authentic Indian food based on classic formulas with a modern and imaginative approach.

From gorgeous and intricate creations, to the rich-tasting but healthy meals that are low-fat, low-salt, but high on flavour, our menus all have that all-important Lasan 'feast factor'.

Lasan was voted one of the Top Ten Indian Restaurants in the UK by *The Independent* and *The Times*. This ongoing success has been re-affirmed by our inclusion in the Michelin Guide and glowing praise from many food critics and journalists, most recently by Paul Fulford in the *Birmingham Mail*: 'Virtually everything I've eaten at Lasan is better than at any other Indian restaurant I've visited.'

Recent Awards:

Winner of British Curry Award  
Sponsored by LloydsTSB and 'Spice Business' Magazine

Top Ten Indian Restaurants in the UK  
*The Independent* and *The Times*

Winner of Taste of Birmingham Award for Best Service  
Sponsored by Bank of Scotland and ITV Central

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