

Nepalese Meatball Curry with Turmeric Rice & Peas



I am forever on the hunt for new curries to make and it appears there is no shortage of variations. When I was cleaning out my cookbook shelf (no surprise they are a huge weakness of mine), I came across an old Woman's Weekly 'Winter Favourites' book and this recipe immediately stood out. I was interested to see what made a curry 'Nepalese' and it would seem that they are pretty keen on Fenugreek. I have not cooked with Fenugreek very often (if at all, that would explain the unopened packet of seeds in my spice tub) and when I looked it up, it was described as a 'tangy, bitter, burnt-sugar' flavour. Hmmmmm, interesting. I felt I didn't have anything to lose, so decided to cook it anyway. I can't honestly say that I tasted what was described but I do wonder what the difference would be, had it been left out. I can say, it was a cracking curry and one I will definitely make

again.

As with most of my recipes, I like to make sure the whole dish packs a flavour punch, hence the Turmeric rice. You could just serve this with plain rice but for the sake of 5 minutes preparation and a few spices, it is totally worth it.

Prep time: 25 Minutes Cooking time: 40 Minutes
 \$\$ Medium Budget

Serves 4

500gm of Lamb mince

5cm piece of ginger, grated (half for meatballs, half for sauce)

4 garlic cloves, finely minced (half for meatballs, half for sauce)

1 tsp of ground cumin

1/2 tsp of ground turmeric

1 bunch of coriander roots and stems, rinsed thoroughly to remove any grit and finely chopped

1/2 cup of breadcrumbs

1 egg

Sea salt and cracked pepper

For the Sauce:

1 tbs of oil & 20gms of butter or 1 tbs of Ghee for frying

Half the ginger and garlic prepared for the meatballs

1 large brown onion, peeled, halved and sliced top to bottom

2 tsp of ground cumin

1 tsp of fenugreek seeds, or ground fenugreek

1 tsp of yellow mustard seeds

1 tsp of chilli flakes (optional)

1 tsp of turmeric

1 cup of beef stock

2 x 400gm tins of diced tomatoes

A squeeze of lemon

1/2 tsp of sugar

Sea salt and cracked pepper

1 cup of coriander leaves, chopped

Coriander sprigs, Greek yoghurt and poppadoms to serve

For the Turmeric Rice:

1/2 tbs of Ghee or 10gm of butter and 1/2 tbs of oil for frying

1/2 a small brown onion or 2 French eschallot, finely diced

1 tsp of cumin seeds

5 green cardamom pods, bruised with your knife

3 cloves

1/2 tsp of Turmeric

1 cup of basmati rice

1 1/2 cups of water

1 1/2 cups of frozen peas

Sea salt and cracked pepper

In a large bowl place all of the ingredients for the meatballs. Use your hands to combine, making sure everything is evenly dispersed throughout the mince. Wet your hands and roll meatballs, approximately the size of a golf ball. Set aside while you make the sauce.

Heat a large pan and add the ghee. Once bubbling, add the onion and fry for around 5 minutes on a moderate heat until soft. Add the garlic and ginger and fry for a minute or so and then sprinkle over the fenugreek and mustard seeds. When the mustard seeds start to pop, add the cumin, turmeric and chilli flakes. Stir and fry for a minute before pouring in the stock and lemon juice. Scrape the base of the pan to lift any spice residue and then add the tomatoes, sugar and season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine and once simmering, gently place the meatballs in the sauce. Simmer, with the lid off for approximately 10 minutes before turning the meatballs over. Simmer for another 10 minutes. If you think the curry is looking a little dry, add a touch of water. Stir the coriander leaves in just before serving.

Heat a large saucepan and add the ghee. Fry the eschallot (or

onion) for a few minutes until soft and then add the cumin seeds, cardamom pods and cloves. When aromatic, add the rice and turmeric and stir for one minute, coating the grains with the ghee. Pour in the water, season well with salt and pepper, stir and then bring to a simmer. Once simmering place on a tight fitting lid and cook for 12 minutes. After 12 minutes, remove from the heat and set aside for 5 minutes to steam, keeping the lid firmly in place. Place the peas in a microwave safe bowl with a tablespoon of water. Cover with cling wrap and cook in the microwave, on high for 4-5 minutes or until the peas are just cooked. Drain the peas and remove the lid from the rice and stir the peas through, fluffing the rice at the same time.

Divide the rice between serving bowls and spoon the curry over the top. Whack a nice dollop of yoghurt and a few coriander sprigs on top and serve with poppadoms.

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