

RECIPE: Lamb Bhuna

The term *bhuna* means to brown. In India we often brown the meat with the spices and *masala* paste towards the middle or end of the cooking process. This process, which involves turning, almost folding the meat in the pan along with the sauce over a high heat, really intensifies the flavour of the dish and here the rich, spicy sauce is thick enough to clings to the meat. We eat it with Indian breads and is lovely with a little yoghurt on the side.. Don't be put off by the long list of spices, it is a really easy dish to make.

Time:

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

5 tbs. vegetable oil
500g diced leg of lamb
1 medium-large onion, chopped
5 fat cloves garlic, peeled
15g piece of ginger, peeled
2 large tomatoes, quartered
1 good tsp. cumin powder
¼-1/2 tsp. red chilli powder or a little paprika powder for colour
2 tsp. coriander powder
1 tsp. garam masala
2-4 green chillies, whole
Handful of fresh coriander (and/or a few shredded mint leaves, optional)
Water, optional if curry gets dry in pan

Whole Spices

20 black peppercorns
2 bay leaves
5 cloves
1" piece of cinnamon
4 green cardamom pods
2 black cardamom pods

Method:

Brown the lamb shanks in the oil for 2-3 minutes, getting a little colour on all sides. Remove and set aside.

Blend the tomatoes, ginger and garlic to a fine paste.

Heat the oil in a large non-stick saucepan. Add the whole spices and onion and cook until the onion is well browned. Stir in the lamb, pureed tomatoes, powdered spices, green chillies and salt; bring to a boil. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, over a low heat until you have a little less than half of the liquid in the pan left, around 15-20 minutes.

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Then turn up the heat and *bhuno*, (see above) over the high flame to really intensify the flavours, until all the excess moisture has evaporated, around 6-8 minutes.

Add a couple of splashes of water, bring to a boil, cover and cook over a gentle flame until the lamb is tender and done to your liking, another 20 minutes or so.

Uncover, taste and adjust seasoning and add the lemon juice, if necessary. The sauce should cling to the meat. Stir in the coriander and serve.

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