

PANDEMIC PANTRY RECIPES ~ JULY 11, 2020

A TASTE OF INDIA

Fresh Coriander Chutney (serves 3 – 6)

3 cups lightly packed cilantro without lower stems and roots, coarsely chopped
½ of 1 fresh hot green chili pepper, coarsely chopped
1 ½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
½ teaspoon Kosher salt
½ teaspoon ground roasted cumin seeds
Black pepper to taste

Combine all of the ingredients in a blender. Keep pushing down until it becomes a paste. I had to add a little water to loosen it up. Empty the paste into a non metallic bowl

Onion Relish (serves 4)

1 medium onion, peeled
¾ teaspoon kosher salt
4 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
¼ teaspoon paprika (redder in color the better)
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper

Chop the onion into small pieces. Add all of the other ingredients. Toss and mix well. Set aside for 30 minutes to let the flavors develop before serving.

Cucumber / Mint Raita (serves 6)

2 2/3 cups plain yogurt
1 small cucumber, peeled and grated
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint
½ teaspoon ground, roasted cumin seeds
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon Kosher salt
Black pepper to taste

Put the yogurt in a bowl. Beat lightly until creamy. Add all of the other ingredients and mix. Cover and refrigerate until ready to eat.

Stove Top Naan (serves 6)

3 cups (426 grams) unbleached all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
3/4 cup (180 milliliters) whole or low-fat buttermilk, at room temperature
About 3/4 cup warm water
Canola oil, for greasing the cast iron pan or griddle
1 to 2 tablespoons melted ghee or unsalted butter, for brushing

In a large bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt. Pour the buttermilk over the flour mixture and quickly stir it in. The flour will still be fairly dry, with some wet clumps.

Pour a few tablespoons of the warm water over the flour, stirring it in with a spatula or wooden spoon. Repeat until the flour comes together to form a soft ball. You will use about 3/4 cup of the warm water in total, but it may need a little more or less depending on your exact measurements or the weather. You want the dough to be very soft, close to being slightly sticky, so if you add an extra tablespoon or so, it won't hurt. Using your hands, gather the ball, picking up any dry flour in the bottom of the bowl, and knead it to form a smooth, soft ball of dough, 1 to 2 minutes. If it's a little too sticky to handle, dust your hands with flour, but do not add any more flour to the dough, if possible.

Lightly grease a rimmed baking sheet with the canola oil. Cut the dough into 6 equal portions (the dough will be roughly 700 grams, so aim for about 116 grams each). Shape each portion into a round, cupping and tucking the edges underneath as best you can to make it smooth. (Don't sweat this too much, as the dough is pretty forgiving and you're going to roll it out anyway.) Place on the baking sheet. Brush the rounds with the melted ghee or butter and cover with plastic wrap or a slightly dampened clean dish towel. Let sit at room temperature for 30 minutes. The dough needs to rest, but will not rise or change much in appearance.

With about 10 minutes left in the dough resting time, preheat a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium heat.

Lightly dust a work surface with flour. Place one of the dough rounds on the surface and then turn it over so that both sides are floured. (Keep the remaining dough rounds covered.) Using a lightly floured rolling pin, roll the dough into an 8- to 9-inch circle, rotating the dough 90 degrees after each motion to create an even round. Dust the work surface and rolling pin with just enough flour to keep things from sticking; you don't want to overdo it. Again, don't get too obsessed with the perfect shape. Part of the charm of naan is its rustic appearance.

When the skillet is sizzling-hot (check by sprinkling a few small drops of water; if they bounce and quickly evaporate, it's ready), add the first portion of rolled dough. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until lots of bubbles appear on the top and the bottom dries out and is freckled with brown spots. Using tongs — or your fingers if you're careful — flip the dough and cover the skillet with a lid or large, rimmed baking sheet if you don't have a top that fits the pan. Cook for another 2 minutes, until the dough is cooked through and there are plenty of very dark, almost charred spots on what was the top and now the bottom of the naan. You may find you need to reduce the heat or cook time slightly as the skillet gets very hot throughout the batch. While the first naan cooks, roll out the second. Remove the finished naan from the skillet, transfer to a baking sheet or serving platter, and brush with more of the melted ghee or butter. Cover with foil or a clean dish towel to keep warm. Transfer the second naan to the skillet, and continue to roll and cook the remaining dough. Serve warm.

Chana Masala (Chickpeas) (serves 6 – 8)

- 2 tbsp coconut oil or vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 yellow onions, finely diced (2 cups)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp minced ginger (~1/2" piece)
- 4 whole dried red chiles, more or less to taste

2 green cardamom pods
2 whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 bay leaf
1 tsp ground coriander
1/2 tsp ground cayenne or hot chili powder
1/2 tsp garam masala
1/4 tsp turmeric
freshly ground black pepper
1 to 1 1/2 tsp Kosher salt to taste
3 cups (28oz can) cooked chickpeas, drained and rinsed
26oz can strained, crushed, or puréed tomatoes
minced cilantro, for garnish

Heat a large, heavy bottomed pot over medium-low heat and add the oil. Add the onion and a pinch of salt and cook for about 10 minutes until translucent and softened.

Add the garlic, ginger, and the whole spices: dried red chiles, cardamom pods, cloves, cinnamon stick, and bay leaf. Cook for 1-2 minutes stirring constantly so the garlic doesn't burn.

Add the ground spices: ground coriander, cayenne, garam masala, turmeric, black pepper, and 1 tsp of salt. Stir in and let cook for 30 seconds.

Add the chickpeas and tomatoes. Partially cover, bring to a simmer, and let simmer for 25-30 minutes stirring occasionally.

Turn off the heat. Taste and adjust the salt and pepper. Remove the whole cinnamon stick, bay leaf, and cardamom pods & cloves if you can see them.

Serve with a dab of vegan butter to melt on top if desired. Garnish with cilantro and minced yellow onion. Enjoy with basmati rice and/or some garlic naan, and vegan unsweetened yogurt

Chicken Tikka Masala (serves 4)

2 tbsp olive oil
1 small onion chopped
3 cloves garlic minced
1 1- inch piece of ginger peeled and chopped
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp garam masala
1 tsp ground turmeric
2 tsp cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper optional
2 tsp Kosher salt
1 14 oz can diced tomatoes with juice
1.5 lbs boneless skinless chicken breast
1 cup canned coconut milk
Juice of 1 lemon

1 tbsp cornstarch optional
Chopped fresh basil or cilantro optional

Heat the oil. Add onion, ginger, and garlic and cook until translucent. Add all of the spices and cook for one minute. Add the tomatoes and coconut milk and bring to a simmer. Add chicken. Bring to a simmer, cover, and bake in a 350 degree oven for about 30 minutes. You may need to thicken the sauce with cornstarch when it comes out of the oven. You may also need to readjust for more salt. Add lemon juice and cilantro / basil garnish.

Gulab Janum (Delicious fried donut balls, serves 4 – 6)

6 cups water
3 cups granulated sugar
1 tablespoon cardamom powder
2 tablespoons rose water
3 cups powdered milk
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup heavy cream (or double cream, thickened; approximately)
Vegetable, canola, or sunflower oil (for frying)

In a deep pan, mix the water and sugar and boil until all the sugar is dissolved. Turn off the heat and add the cardamom powder and rose water. Mix well and set aside. In a large bowl, mix the powdered milk, flour, and baking powder well. Add a little of the thickened cream at a time and knead to make a dough that is medium-soft but not sticky. You do not need to use all the cream, just enough to reach the desired consistency; the smoother it is, the better. Once the dough is ready, divide it into walnut-sized balls and roll between lightly greased palms until smooth. Any cracks that show up get worse later and could lead to the "milk balls" cracking as they are fried. This is not desirable, so take all the time you need for this step in order to get it right. While you are making the balls, heat the oil for deep frying in a wide pan on low to medium heat. Fry the dumplings, stirring often to brown on all sides. Do not cook on very high heat as the dumplings will burn on the outside and remain raw inside. Once cooked, drain with a slotted spoon while removing the dumplings from the oil and transfer immediately into the rose syrup. Repeat this until all the dumplings are cooked and in the syrup. Allow the dumplings to soak in the syrup for at least 2 hours before serving.