

Makani Sauce

There are many variations of Butter Chicken that call for adding Cashew Nuts, and a variety of other spices. This is the basic recipe for this sauce, and you can go beyond and experiment at your pleasure. The key to getting this recipe perfect is to balance the tartness of the Tomatoes with a sweetener – taste the sauce and adjust the quantity of sugar as needed. Dried Fenugreek Leaves and Cardamom Powder are essential to the flavour, and the Tomato Paste adds another layer of flavour. If you use powdered spices to make this sauce, as this recipe calls for, whether you strain the sauce or not is your preference. However, if you choose to use the whole Garam Masala spices, it's recommended that you strain the sauce to remove the fibres of the spices to make a smooth sauce.

Serves: 6 cups

Ingredients

- ½ stick Butter
- 1.5 pounds Tomatoes (preferably ripe)
- 6 oz can Tomato Paste
- 1" piece of Ginger (coarsely chopped)
- 6-8 Garlic Cloves
- 1-2 Green Chillies (to taste)
- 2 tsp Kashmiri Red Chilli powder
- 2 tbsp Dried Fenugreek Leaves (Qasoori Methi)
- ½ tsp Garam Masala powder
- ½ cup Heavy Cream
- Honey or Sugar (to taste)
- 1 tsp Salt (to taste)
- 1 cup Chicken Stock (optional, can substitute with water)

Instructions

1. Cut up the tomatoes; large chunks are okay, because they're going to be pureed.
2. Make the Dried Fenugreek Leaves powder by toasting them in a pan on low heat until the leaves become crispy, and then when they cool, crush them to a powder with your fingers or in a mortar and pestle.
3. In a pot, add the Tomatoes, Ginger, Garlic and Green Chillies in 3 cups of water, and bring to a boil. Simmer for 30 minutes, turn off the heat, and allow to cool.
4. Once the contents of the pot have cooled enough, empty them into a blender and puree to a smooth paste.
5. Strain the pureed tomatoes into the same pot. Squeeze out as much of the sauce as possible and you should only have the seeds and skin of the Tomatoes left behind in the strainer.
6. Add a cup of Chicken Stock, along with the Butter, Tomato Paste, Kashmiri Red Chili and/or Paprika to the pot, mix well and simmer for 30 minutes. NOTE: Kashmiri Red Chili adds heat and a deep red color to the sauce. If you'd like to reduce the heat level, you can substitute half of the Kashmiri Red Chili Powder with Paprika.
7. Add the Garam Masala, Dried Fenugreek Leaves (crushed), and Salt and mix well, and continue simmering for another 5 minutes.
8. Add the cream and mix well. Taste the sauce and add Sugar or Honey to balance the tartness of the Tomatoes.