

INDIAN CUISINE

I am one of those people who would have a very hard time giving up meat, even though I know it would be better for my body, my pocketbook and the planet. However, if I were presented an Indian menu before very meal it would be a snap to become a vegetarian. My sister lived and worked in London for a year and while there she was introduced to a cuisine we had no clue about growing up in Nashville. She in turn introduced me to some of the Indian restaurants here in Atlanta and I can't get enough. It is the variety and combinations of spices that make this food so tantalizing; there are usually more seasoning ingredients than there are "main" ingredients. Once you stock your pantry with Indian spices, it's quite easy to start exploring this exceptional cuisine in your own kitchen!

COOKING
À LA *Lala*



FISH TIKKA À LA LALA

1 lb. firm, white fish, skin off
1 c. plain yoghurt
1 T. grated ginger
1 T. minced garlic
1 t. chili powder

1 t. ground turmeric
1 t. ground cumin
1 t. ground coriander
2 T. vegetable oil
3 T. lemon Juice

Start by combining all ingredients but the fish.

Preheat your oven to 450, or prepare your grill for medium high heat.

Cut the fish into 2" cubes and add to the yoghurt mixture and marinate in the fridge for at least an hour, or up to 8 hours. If using the oven put the fish on an oven proof dish, if grilling put the fish pieces on to skewers; if using bamboo skewers make sure to soak them in water for 30 minutes before using.

Bake or grill the fish for 15-20 minutes and serve with chopped cilantro and mint chutney.

SAAG PANEER À LA LALA

1 14 oz. package of Paneer cheese
2-3 T. vegetable oil
1 1/2 lbs. of fresh spinach thoroughly washed
1/4 c. butter or ghee
1 t. cumin seeds

3-4 cloves of garlic, minced
2 t. ground coriander
1 t. chili powder
Salt to taste
1/2 c. heavy cream (optional)

Cut the paneer into roughly 1/2" cubes and fry in the vegetable oil until golden brown. Remove from the pan and set aside.

In a large pot, add about a cup of water and steam the spinach until just wilted. Drain the spinach and pulse it a food processor until it is chopped to your liking.

In the pan you used for frying the paneer add the butter or ghee on medium high heat. When it is bubbling, add the cumin seeds. When they start to pop add the garlic and saute until golden. Now, add the coriander and chili powder and stir to combine. Add the spinach puree and salt to taste. Add the cubed paneer pieces and cream, if using, and stir, cooking for a few minutes until heated through.

Serve with some chopped fresh cilantro.



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(ALOO DUM) SPICED POTATOES À LA LALA

1 lb. new potatoes, roughly peeled and quartered
2 T. vegetable oil or ghee
3 whole cloves
1 bay leaf
2-3 whole green cardamom pods
1 t. ground turmeric
1 t. salt

1 medium onion, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2-3 T. chopped ginger
2-3 serrano peppers (remove the seeds if you want to tame the heat)
1-2 T. fresh lemon or lime juice
1 cinnamon stick

Cook the potatoes in a pot of salted water until they can be easily pricked with the tip of a knife. Drain and prick all over with a fork. This will help all of the flavors to permeate the potatoes. Set aside.

In a blender or food processor, make a paste out of the onion, garlic, ginger, peppers and citrus juice.

Heat the oil or ghee in a pan over medium high heat and add the bay leaf, cloves and cardamom pods. When the spices have swelled a bit, add the turmeric, salt and the ginger/garlic/pepper paste. Simmer the mixture for 10-15 minutes to let the flavors combine. Add 2-3 oz. of water, the cinnamon stick and the potatoes and cook, covered for another 10-15 minutes.

Before serving, top with the garam masala powder and chopped cilantro.



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MINT CHUTNEY À LA LALA

1 large bunch fresh mint, about 2 cups,
roughly chopped
1 medium sweet onion, roughly chopped
2-4 serrano peppers, chopped

1 t. Ground cumin
2 T. lemon or lime juice
1 T. water
Salt, to taste

Blend all of the ingredients in a blender or food processor, adding more water if necessary.

You can serve it as is, or add it to some yogurt for a smoother flavor.

Enjoy this chutney with your tikka or alongside any of your vegetables or papadams.



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RAITA À LA LALA

1 c. plain yoghurt
1/2 c. chopped or grated cucumber
1/2 c. chopped or grated radish
1-2 t. grated ginger

1 t. fresh lemon or lime juice
1/4 c. chopped fresh mint or cilantro
Salt to taste

Combine all ingredients and serve atop or alongside all of your favorite Indian dishes!



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