

Indian Cooking Made Simple

The Next Step

Advanced Course



with Ravi Pathak

Introduction

The Next Step

This is a 5 week course covering simple recipes that will expand on your basic knowledge of spices and teach you how to develop more complex dishes and identify how various spices interact and enhance a dish. Good basic cooking experience is necessary.

Aims: To provide learners with hands-on experience of cooking more complex Indian dishes using fresh produce, herbs and spices. To also be able to recognise shortcuts, techniques and tips demonstrated by the Tutor during the practical sessions.

Objectives: To become familiar with and be able to list the main spices used in making the sauce for different curry dishes and be able to prepare a full Indian meal from starter to main dish to bread and rice using simple techniques and fresh ingredients.

What to bring: Please bring all the ingredients you need for each week's recipes, plus sealed containers to take your finished dishes home with you. Although utensils are provided, you may wish to bring your own and I recommend a heavy based saucepan. Please note – for dishes that require deep frying in oil (Week 1 and 5), you must bring heat-proof sealed containers to take your used oil home with you as we do not have the facilities to dispose of the oil for you.

Week 1 – Starter

Chana Dhal (v)
Lamb Kebab

Week 2 – Side Dish and Main Meal

Samosas (v)
Butter Chicken Curry

Week 3 – Side Dish and Main Meal

Brinjal Bhartha (Aubergine) (v)
Chicken Karai

Week 4 – Main Meals (Meat / Fish)

Lamb Chops Masala
King Prawn Balti

Week 5 – Indian Bread and Rice

Coconut Rice
Naan Bread
Stuffed Paratha (Potatoes)

Chana Dhal

Cooking Time: 45 mins



Ingredients:

- 120g chana or lentil dhal
- 2 sticks of curry leaves
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- salt
- 2 green chillies
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tomato, peeled and chopped
- 1/2 tsp red or green chilli paste (optional)
- 1 tsp garlic paste
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Coriander leaves for garnishing

Method:

1. Soak the dhal in water for half an hour.
2. In a saucepan, boil the dhal with little salt until just soft.
3. Heat the oil in a pan and add the mustard seeds. When the seeds start to crackle, add the curry leaves.
4. Add the tomato, turmeric, garlic paste and chillies/paste, braise for 5 mins on low heat.
5. Add the boiled dhal on a low heat for another 5 mins.
6. Add 250ml water and the lemon juice, then cook on a low heat until the gravy thickens slightly.
7. Add salt to taste, then garnish with coriander leaves.
8. Serve hot with Rotis and rice.

Note: You can add pieces of boiled potatoes to the dish if you wish.

Ravi's Top Tip!

For best results, always stir in garam masala towards the end of cooking – it works on an aromatic level, raising the whole nature of the dish.

Lamb Kebab

Cooking Time: 45 mins



Ingredients:

- 360g minced lamb
- 1 tbsp oil
- 30g fresh coriander leaves (washed and chopped)
- Juice of half a lemon
- 4 cloves garlic (crushed)
- 4 green chillies (de-seeded and chopped)
- ½ tsp coriander powder
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp black peppercorns (crushed)
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp garam masala
- 2 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp salt
- Wooden skewers – soak for at least 20 minutes in water before use

Method:

1. Mix 2 tsp of lemon juice into the mince and leave aside to tenderise the meat.
2. Blend the oil, garlic, ginger, chillies, crushed peppercorns, cumin, coriander powder, remaining lemon juice, turmeric powder and salt together.
3. Add the blended paste into the meat and then add the chopped fresh coriander leaves.
4. With wet hands, skewer the meat into long sausage shapes. Rotate the meat around the skewer, pressing gently all around.
5. Brush with a little oil and grill or place in the oven under a medium heat for 20 minutes until it's cooked right through.
6. Serve with hot pitta bread and tomato and chilli chutney.

Ravi's Top Tip!

For best results, I recommend you grind your own spices in relatively small quantities and keep them in airtight containers for use within a few days or weeks.

Samosas

Cooking Time: 55 mins



Ingredients:

Part 1:

- 360g plain flour (Maida)
- 4 level tbsp ghee or vegetable oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp Ajwain
- 8-9 tbsp cold water

Sealer:

- 1 tbsp plain flour (Maida)
- Cold water

Part 2:

- 2 medium sized potatoes – peeled, boiled (do not overcook) and crumbled.
- 120g green peas
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp ginger powder
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp ground cardamom
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp Amchoor (mango powder)
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 liter of oil for frying

Method:

Method Part 1

1. Mix the Ajwain and salt into the flour.
2. Add the ghee/oil and rub through thoroughly so there are no lumps.
3. Now add water a little at a time to make the dough, then knead for a good 5-7 minutes. The dough should be like pizza dough - pliable.
4. Gather the dough in a large ball. Cover it with a plastic film or damp kitchen towels to prevent drying and let it rest for 20 - 30 minutes.

Sealer

Mix plain flour with a little water to make a sticky slurry to act as the “glue”.

Method Part 2

1. Mix all ingredients together. Let the mixture cool.
2. Divide the dough into balls – roughly the size of a golf ball. Press them down to make them flat and round, then roll each ball out into a circle – you are aiming for thin pastry, about the thickness of a 1p coin (2mm). **Keep the remaining dough covered in plastic film.**
3. Now cut the circle in half through the middle to create semi-circular shaped pastries.
4. Pick up one half and apply the sealer to the straight edges (half on each side) and then form a cone, making a half inch wide, overlapping seam. Make sure you press the seam well to keep it sealed.
5. Hold the cone in one hand and fill with the mixture, allowing $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of pastry at the top. Seal the remaining side of the cone using the sealer, pressing down well to make sure there are no gaps or holes.
6. Preheat a deep fryer to 320° F / 160° C. Deep fry all the samosas until golden brown - about 4 to 6 minutes.

Ravi's Top Tip!

Knead the dough well, or the samosas will not come out as crisp. The oil temperature should be between 275 and 320°F - too low and the samosas will be oily; too high and the pastry will form bubbles. I use 320° F.

Butter Chicken

Cooking Time: 55 mins



Ingredients:

- 360g chicken, cut into small cubes
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1-inch piece ginger, grated
- 2 green chillies chopped finely (remove the seeds if you like it mild)
- Salt to taste
- 250ml water
- 75g butter
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 3 tbsp tomato ketchup
- 150ml single cream
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 3tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 2 cloves
- 1 tbsp coriander powder
- ½ tbsp turmeric
- ¼ tbsp garam masala
- 60g chopped fresh coriander

Method:

1. In a pan, add the chicken pieces, garlic, ginger, chillies, salt and 250ml of water (enough to cover the chicken) and bring it to the boil. Once boiled, remove from the heat and set aside.
2. In another pan, take the butter and add the chopped onions. Fry the onions until golden brown, making sure they don't burn.
3. To the fried onion, add tomato ketchup, cream and chopped tomatoes, plus a little bit of the chicken stock from the chicken you boiled earlier. Use a blender to blend the mix together to a fine paste.
4. In another pan (or the one you used to fry your onions), add sunflower oil, cumin seeds, cloves, coriander powder and turmeric and cook on a low heat until the cumin seeds start jumping about!
5. Now add the chicken pieces you boiled earlier and cook for 3-4 minutes.
6. Remove the pan from the heat and add the paste from the blender to the chicken. Return to the heat and simmer for a further 10 minutes, or until you have the required consistency of gravy.
7. Now add the garam masala, stir well and leave it covered for about 5 minutes until the butter separates. Skim off the excess butter with a spoon before serving.

Ravi's Top Tip!

If you're frying whole spices, make sure to fry them for 1-2 minutes before adding the rest of your ingredients.

Brinjal Bharta

(Aubergine)

Cooking Time: 35 mins



Ingredients:

- 1 Brinjal (aubergine)
- 3-5 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 chopped onions
- 1 chopped green chilli
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ½ tsp garam masala powder
- 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
- Salt to taste
- 1 finely chopped tomato
- 120gm cooked peas
- 1 tbsp chopped coriander leaves

Method:

1. Smear the aubergine with oil and roast in the oven on a medium heat for around 20 minutes. Turn it upside down when the lower portion becomes soft and keep on rotating it until it gets roasted properly.
2. Once cooked, remove from the heat and submerge in a bowl of cold water. When cool enough to handle, peel off the darkened skin and discard.
3. Mash the aubergine really well.
4. Heat 3tbsp of the oil in a frying pan or kadhai. Add the onion and green chilli and fry on a medium heat until the onions are nice and soft and turn golden brown. It's important that the onions are well cooked down before you move on to the next step. If they dry out, add more oil.
5. Now add the turmeric powder, garam masala, red chilli powder and salt, mix well and fry for a minute or so.
6. Now add the tomatoes and cook until the tomatoes become soft and break down.
7. Now add the peas and mashed aubergine. Stir thoroughly and fry for about 10 to 15 minutes on a medium heat. The aubergine is done when you can't see any fibres when you stir the mix. If it's still too fibrous, keep on cooking.
8. Serve garnished.

Ravi's Top Tip!

Prick the Brinjal from all sides so it cooks well from the inside and cooks faster.

Chicken Karai

Cooking Time: 45 mins



Ingredients:

- 3tbsp oil
- 360g skinless chicken breast, cut into small pieces (or leave in bone for a truly authentic experience)
- 4 large tomatoes, diced
- 2 tbsp ginger (fresh or paste)
- 1½ tbsp garlic (fresh or paste)
- 2 small hot green chillies
- Red chilli or paste, to taste
- 200ml water
- 120g yoghurt
- Methi (fenugreek) leaves, dried or fresh
- ½ tsp garam masala

Method:

1. Heat the oil and add the chicken to a wok (or heavy skillet) to sear it first.
2. Now add the tomatoes, ginger, garlic, green chillies, red chilli paste and water. Cook on a high heat, stirring often, until the water has boiled off and the curry starts to thicken to a consistency that you like.
3. Remove from the heat.
4. Add the yoghurt and stir really well. Return to the heat and cook on a high heat, stirring often, until the yoghurt has incorporated - you should not be able to taste the yoghurt on its own.
5. Add the methi leaves and cook for a further 5 minutes.
6. Now stir in the garam masala and add fresh coriander and cook for a couple more minutes.
7. Serve with roti and/or rice.

Ravi's Top Tip!

Use natural thickeners for a silky texture – tomato puree, coconut milk or cream and yoghurt all work perfectly.

Lamb Chops Masala

Cooking Time: 1 hr



Ingredients:

- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 3-4tbsp oil
- 4 green cardamoms
- 1 full cinnamon stick (4 inches)
- 2 medium chopped onions
- 1 tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp garlic paste
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 chopped green chilli
- 6-8 lamb chops
- 4 finely chopped tomatoes
- 120g yoghurt
- Salt to taste
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 3 tsp lemon juice
- 30g chopped coriander

Method:

1. Add 1 tsp cumin seeds to a hot plate or skillet and dry fry/roast for a couple of minutes. Remove from the heat and then grind them using a pestle and mortar or similar. This is your ground roasted cumin seeds. Put to one side.
2. Heat the oil in a pan, then add the cardamom and cinnamon stick and fry for a few minutes.
3. Add the onions and fry until golden brown and well cooked, stirring constantly. Make sure the onions don't burn. If the onions start to dry out, add more oil or a little water if preferred.
4. Add the ginger paste, garlic paste, ground coriander, ground roasted cumin, red chilli powder, turmeric, green chillies and a little water and fry for 3 minutes, stirring constantly.
5. Now add the lamb chops and continue to fry on a high heat for about 5 minutes, stirring constantly.
6. Remove from the heat and add the tomatoes, yoghurt and salt. Mix thoroughly.
7. Return to a low heat, cover and cook on a low heat for 45-60 minutes. Make sure your sauce doesn't stick to the pan - keep adding little amounts of water as necessary until the lamb falls away from the bone and the gravy is the consistency you require.
8. Add garam masala and lemon juice and stir. Cook for a further 5 mins or until the lemon is integrated.
9. Sprinkle with coriander and serve.

Ravi's Top Tip!

The secret to a good curry is when frying onions, make sure they are never under or over cooked. Add a pinch of salt to speed up the browning process.

King Prawn Balti

Cooking Time: 30 mins



Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp oil
- 2 onions, chopped
- 2 tbsp tomato puree
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 2 fresh green chillies
- 2 tbsp fresh coriander leaves, chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- 240g large king prawns
- 1 tsp red chilli powder (optional)

Method:

1. Either using a blender or a mini chopper (depending on how smooth you like your gravy), blend or chop the onions first.
2. Heat the oil in a wok and add your onions. Cook until caramelised and soft.
3. Now add tomato puree, ground coriander, turmeric, chillies and coriander leaves, lemon juice and salt and cook until the sauce is at your desired consistency. **You can add water if you prefer more gravy but bear in mind that once you add your prawns, they don't require much cooking so get the consistency of your sauce right before you add your prawns.**
4. Once you're happy with your sauce, add your prawns and cook over a medium heat for around 3-5 minutes (depending on whether they are cooked or raw, fresh or frozen).
5. To add more colour to your dish, add 1 tsp of red chilli powder and mix thoroughly.
6. Serve with the chopped chilli as a garnish.

Ravi's Top Tip!

Cook the spices properly – always have a little jug of water on hand to ensure the spices don't burn out at the bottom of the pan. If they do start to, just pour a few drops of water on the spice mix to lower the temperature.

Coconut Rice

Cooking Time: 25 mins



Ingredients:

- 200g basmati rice
- 2 tbsp ghee (clarified butter) or oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 cloves
- 4 black peppercorns
- 2 black or brown cardamom pods
- 60g desiccated or fresh grated coconut
- 400ml water
- 1 ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp each of chopped cashews, almonds and raisins (optional)

Method:

1. Pre-soak the rice for 20 mins and then rinse well.
2. Heat the ghee or oil in a heavy pot and sauté the cumin seeds for a couple of minutes. Keep stirring constantly and make sure they don't burn.
3. Add the cloves, peppercorns and cardamom and stir for about a minute.
4. Stir in the coconut and sauté until golden – around 3-5 minutes.
5. Add the rice and continue to sauté over a medium heat for a further 2 minutes.
6. Pour in the water, add salt, bring to the boil, then lower the heat, cover and cook for 10 minutes – DO NOT OPEN THE LID - until the water has evaporated and the rice is cooked.
7. Garnish with the cashews, raisins and almonds (optional).
8. Serve with any main curry.

Ravi's Top Tip!

To prevent the rice from becoming sticky, wash it thoroughly to get rid of the starch before cooking.

Naan Bread

Cooking Time: 45 mins



Ingredients:

- 100 ml milk
- 100 ml water
- 1 tsp yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 240g plain flour
- 2 tbsp yoghurt
- 4 tbsp clarified butter (Ghee) or vegetable oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp onion seeds

Method:

1. Warm the milk and water, add the yeast and sugar and whisk until the yeast is dissolved.
2. Cover and let it stand in a warm place for 10 minutes.
3. Add the flour to a large bowl, then add the yeast mixture, the yoghurt, 2 tbsp of ghee and salt to taste.
4. Mix into a soft dough then knead on a floured surface for about 5 minutes or until dough is smooth and elastic.
5. Place the dough in a large greased bowl, cover with clingfilm or a cloth and let stand in a warm place for 30-60 mins or until the dough is doubled in size.
6. Punch down the dough then knead for a further 5 minutes.
7. Divide the dough into 6 pieces. Roll each piece out into 8 inch round Naans. They should be about 1 cm thick.
8. Cover an oven tray with foil and grease the foil. Brush the Naan with a little of the remaining ghee and sprinkle with some of the onion seeds.
9. Cook the Naan under a very hot grill for about 2 minutes on each side or until puffed and just browned.

Ravi's Top Tip!

Instead of yeast, use the same amount of baking powder so you don't have to leave the dough to prove for hours. After just 10 minutes under a damp cloth, it's ready to shape.

Stuffed Paratha

(Potatoes)

Cooking Time: 45 mins



Ingredients:

- 240g potatoes (chopped, then boiled)
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- 30g fresh coriander
- 7 mint leaves
- ½ tbsp garam masala
- Salt (according to taste)
- 360g chapatti or wheat flour
- 2 tbsp oil (or ghee)

Method:

1. Place your cooked potatoes in a large bowl.
2. Add the red chilli powder, coriander, mint, garam masala and the salt according to taste.
3. Mix thoroughly and set aside.
4. In a separate bowl, mix the flour and oil and just a little water to create a dough. Knead until firm - if the dough is soft, add more flour and knead until the dough is firm and smooth.
5. Divide the dough into equal portions (approx. the size of a golf ball) and roll each portion into a ball, then flatten and roll out to about 10cm diameter. The chapatti should be around 0.5cm thick.
6. You need two chapattis for each paratha so make as many as you need first.
7. Now, place a little of the stuffing into the centre of one of the chapattis and spread it out to cover the chappati, leaving 1cm around the edge.
8. Place another chapatti over the top and seal the edges by crimping them together. If necessary, use a little water to help seal the edges.
9. Repeat until you've made enough parathas.
10. Heat a non-stick tava (griddle) on a medium heat. Add a small amount of oil to one side of the paratha. Place this side on to the tava for 1 minute. During this time add a small amount of oil to the exposed side. Now flip it over and keep flipping it over every minute until both sides are evenly cooked. This will ensure the stuffing is thoroughly cooked as part of the paratha.

Ravi's Top Tip!

If you want to prepare Aloo Paratha for breakfast, you can prepare the stuffing the previous night and store it in an airtight container in the fridge. Bring it to room temperature before use.