

Banana Leaf Meal



Makes: ~4 – 5 servings

INGREDIENTS

SPICY SQUASH

Whole Spices

- 1 tsp. whole cumin seeds
- ½ tsp. fenugreek seeds
- 4 whole dried red chili pepper
- a pinch of asafoetida (hing)

Ground Spices

- 1 tbsp. ground coriander
- ½ tsp. fennel seeds (coarsely grounded)
- **1 tsp. red chili powder (see Notes)
- ½ tsp. smoked paprika

Remaining Ingredients

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- **1 tsp. ginger paste (see Notes)
- 4 cups acorn squash (peeled, deseeded and cut into cubes)
- 2 cups water
- 2 tbsp. raw cane sugar or to taste
- 1½ tsp. salt or to taste
- a few sprigs cilantro



SPICY SQUASH

1. In a pot on medium heat, add the oil. Once the oil heats up, add the cumin and fenugreek seeds. Once they are fragrant, add the chili pepper and hing. Sauté until fragrant stirring often.
2. Once the whole spices are fragrant, add the ground spices and ginger paste. Sauté until fragrant stirring often.
3. Next, add the acorn squash, water, sugar and salt. Stir to combine and bring to a boil.
4. Reduce the heat to medium low to low heat. Cover the pot with a lid and simmer.
5. Simmer until the squash has softened. During this process, the liquid will evaporate and the squash may not have cooked through. If this is the case, add water 1 cup at a time and continuing simmering until the squash has softened. There should still be some gravy present when the squash has softened.
6. Once the squash has softened, taste the spicy squash. Season with more sugar and salt if necessary.
7. Finally, add the cilantro.
8. Remove from heat and serve.

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INGREDIENTS

ZUCCHINI SABZI

- 1½ tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. black mustard seeds
- 1 serrano pepper (sliced lengthwise)
- 1 garlic clove (finely minced)
- 2 medium zucchini (diced)
- ½ tsp. ground turmeric
- a pinch of smoked paprika
- ¼ cup water
- ½ tsp. salt or to taste

CABBAGE SABZI

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- ½ tsp. black mustard seeds
- 2 whole dried red chili pepper
- 12 curry leaves
- ¼ cup sliced red onion
- 1 garlic clove (finely minced)
- 4 cups shredded cabbage
- ¼ tsp. ground turmeric
- a pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- ¼ cup water
- ½ tsp. salt or to taste

ZUCCHINI SABZI

1. In a skillet on medium heat, add the oil. Once the oil heats up, add the mustard seeds.
2. When you hear the mustard seeds pop, add the serrano pepper.
3. Once both are fragrant, add the garlic. Sauté until fragrant stirring often.
4. Next, add the zucchini, turmeric, smoked paprika and water. Stir until well combined.
5. Cover the skillet with the lid and steam the zucchini until just cooked through.
6. Remove the lid and season with salt to taste.
7. Remove from heat and serve.

CABBAGE SABZI

1. In a skillet on medium heat, add the oil. Once the oil heats up, add the mustard seeds.
2. When you hear the mustard seeds pop, add the chili pepper and curry leaves.
3. Once both are fragrant, add the onion. Sauté until ¾th translucent.
4. Add garlic. Sauté until fragrant stirring often.
5. Next, add the cabbage, turmeric, hing and water. Stir until well combined.
6. Cover the skillet with the lid and steam the cabbage until just softened.
7. Remove lid once the cabbage is cooked through. Season with salt to taste.
8. Remove from heat and serve.

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INGREDIENTS

TOFU COCONUT CURRY

Tofu Spice Marinade

60 gm red onion (chopped to chunks)
6 garlic cloves (peeled)
4 fresh red chili peppers (roughly chopped – see Notes)
1 inch fresh ginger (peeled)

Tofu

1 – 15.5 oz. organic firm tofu (drained, pressed and cut into 1 inch cubes)

Whole Spices and Herb

2 green cardamom pods (lightly bruised)
2 bay leaves
1 cinnamon stick

Ground Spices + Water (mix into a paste)

**1 tbsp. red chili powder (see Notes)
½ tbsp. ground coriander
½ tbsp. ground turmeric
½ tbsp. ground cumin
3 tbsp. water

Remaining Ingredients

3 – 4 tbsp. olive oil
**3 cups water (see Notes)
3 tbsp. raw cane sugar
2 tsp. salt or to taste
black pepper to taste
**¼ – 1/3 cup coconut milk (see Notes)

TOFU COCONUT CURRY

1. In a food processor, add all the tofu spice marinade ingredients. Process into a fine paste.
2. Transfer the processed marinade into a flat dish. Add the tofu. Gently toss and coat each tofu pieces with the spice marinade.
3. Set aside. Marinate for at least 40 mins turning the tofu pieces every so often.
4. In a pot on medium heat, add the oil. Once the oil heats up, add the whole spices. Sauté until fragrant stirring often.
5. Once the whole spices are fragrant, add the ground spice paste. Turn the heat to medium low. Sauté until fragrant stirring often.
6. Next, add the tofu. Sauté until the raw onion smell from the tofu spice marinade dissipates.
7. Next, add the water, sugar, salt and black pepper to taste. Stir gently to combine. Turn the heat to medium and bring to a boil.
8. Once the tofu coconut curry boils, reduce the heat to medium low to low heat.
9. Add the coconut milk and stir to combine.
10. Cover the pot with lid and simmer for another 10 mins.
11. After 10 mins, taste the tofu curry. Season with more sugar and salt if necessary.
12. Remove from heat and set aside.

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INGREDIENTS

PICKLED CUCUMBER AND ONION

1 medium English cucumber (deseeded and diced)

1¼ tsp. salt

75 gm red onion (thinly sliced)

1 red chili pepper (sliced)

1 cup vinegar

5 tbsp. raw cane sugar

PICKLED CUCUMBER AND ONION

1. In a ceramic bowl, add the cucumber and salt. Stir to combine. Set aside.
2. After ~30 mins, strain the cucumber to remove excess liquid.
3. To the same bowl, add the onion, chili pepper, vinegar and sugar.
4. Stir to combine. Transfer to a jar with lid.
5. Place the jar of pickle in the refrigerator. Pickle at least for an hour preferably overnight before consuming.

NOTES

- There are many types of chili powder. I used red chili powder bought from an Indian grocery store specifically the Brahmins brand.
- I used minced ginger from The Ginger People.
- Tofu Coconut Curry:
 - If you like this curry to be less spicy, deseed the red chili pepper before processing it to make the marinade.
 - If you want more curry gravy, use up to 4 cups of water. Use up to 1/3 cup coconut milk or more for a richer gravy. Just remember to adjust sugar and salt accordingly.
- Serve the dishes in this recipe with steamed Basmati rice, your favorite chutney and papadum.