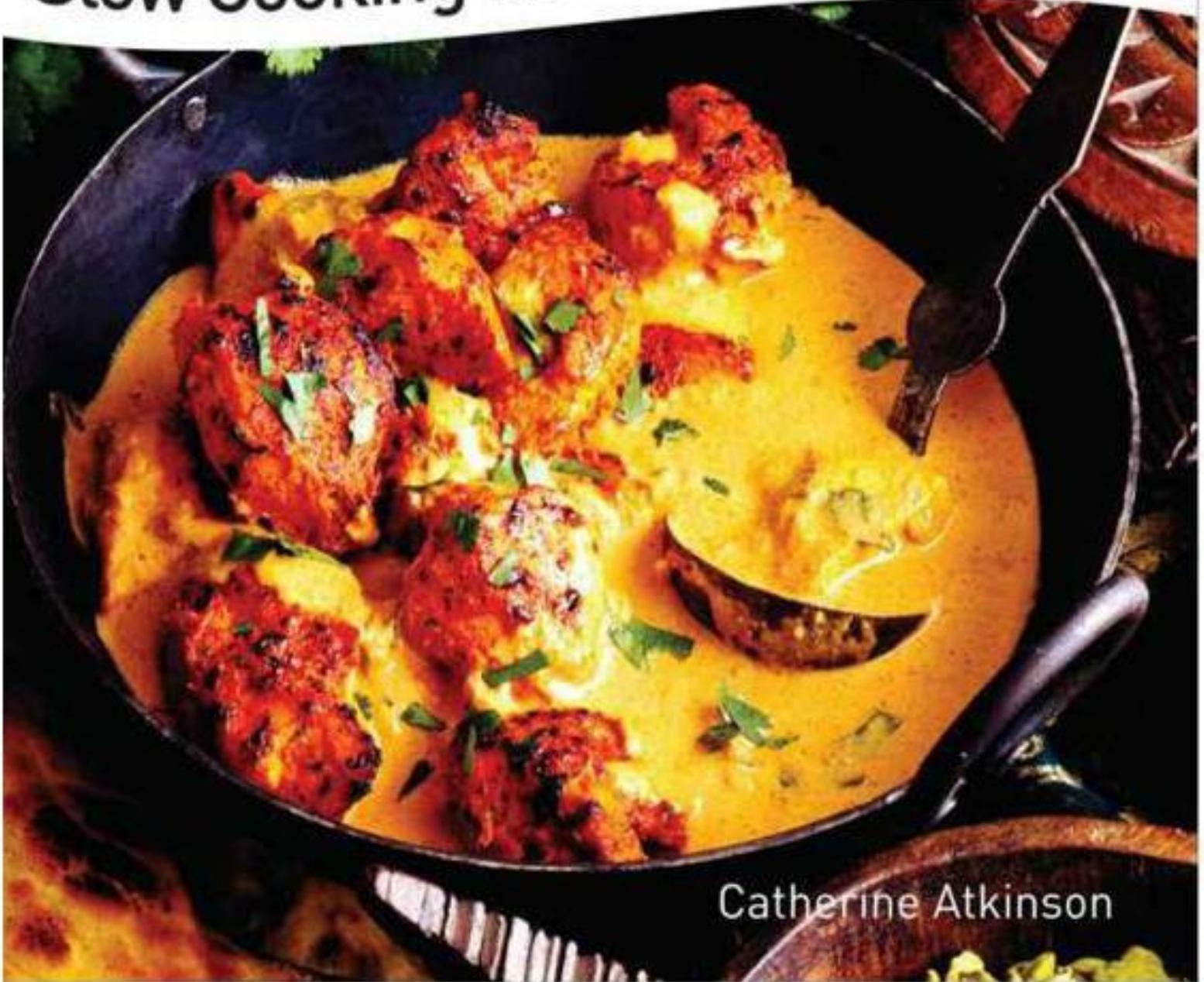


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Slow Cooking Indian Curry Recipes



Catherine Atkinson

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Catherine Atkinson

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# Table of Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Choosing a Slow Cooker](#)
- [Using and Caring For Your Slow Cooker](#)
- [Safety](#)
- [Cooking Times](#)
- [Tips for Slow Cooking Curries](#)
- [Notes on the Recipes](#)
- [Chicken and Duck](#)
- [Lamb and Pork](#)
- [Beef](#)
- [Fish and Seafood](#)
- [Vegetable and Vegetarian](#)
- [Side Dishes and Accompaniments](#)

# Introduction

When I was young, we all looked forward to 'curry night' when my mother would serve a chicken or meat casserole cooked with a handful of sultanas - or if we were lucky, a tin of pineapple - sprinkled on after cooking with a teaspoon or two of curry powder. It was a far cry from authentic Indian cooking. Over the last 20 years or so, our love of Indian food has grown and so has our knowledge - we are now aware of the huge variety and subtlety that this cuisine has to offer. Many of us regularly dine in Indian restaurants and buy ready-prepared curries.

At the end of a busy day you are likely to feel tired, hungry and looking forward to sitting down and enjoying a meal. Rather than dashing out for a takeaway or settling for a chilled meal from a packet, wouldn't it be great to serve a delicious home-cooked Indian curry from your slow cooker, ready to serve with rice or accompany with warm breads? This book is packed with a whole range of curry and spicy dishes. Some use curry pastes to keep preparation to an absolute minimum and some have a combination of fresh spices that you blend yourself; at last, you can bring the flavour of your local curry restaurant to your home.

The basic principle behind the slow cooker is that it cooks food slowly at a constant temperature. This is the way that Indian food has been made for centuries and one of the greatest advantages of making curries in the slow cooker is that it develops and enhances the flavour of food; it allows spices to release all their essential oils giving a real depth and intensity to the finished dish. While vegetables retain their texture, it makes even the toughest meat meltingly tender, making long marinating unnecessary.

Slow cookers are also environmentally friendly; their low wattage consumes about the same amount of electricity as a light bulb. They can save up to five times the energy of stove-top and conventional oven cooking, making them ideal for those on a budget. The essentials of slow cooking are incredibly simple, but do have a look at the following few pages before you begin.

# Choosing a Slow Cooker

Slow cookers come in a wide selection of sizes, shapes, colours and prices and these factors need to be considered before you decide which one is right for you.

Appearance is the first thing you'll notice; you'll find contemporary stainless steel, rich-coloured and pristine-looking white models, as well as the rustic-looking cream and brown versions. There are round or oval ones, and the heat-resistant lid may be ceramic or toughened glass. The latter allows you to monitor the food without lifting the lid and losing precious heat.

The size of slow cookers ranges from a tiny 600 ml/1 pint/2½ cup cooking pot to a massive 6.5 litre/11½ pint/27 cup one, so choose a size that suits your needs. These recipes mainly serve four, so a 4 litre/7 pint/16 cup size is about right.

# Using and Caring For Your Slow Cooker

Because slow cooker models vary, make sure you read the manufacturer's instructions before using yours for the first time. Some slow cookers need to be preheated before you start cooking; others advise against heating it when empty.

Before using for the first time, wash the inner ceramic cooking pot in hot soapy water, rinse and dry. You may notice a slight odour as the slow cooker heats up; this is caused by the burning off of manufacturing residues and should disappear after the first few uses. Don't worry if the ceramic glaze becomes slightly crazed; this is perfectly normal.

You'll notice that many of the recipes advise using very hot, not boiling, water and stock when adding it straight to the cooking pot. Never pour boiling water into the cold cooking pot (you can do so when it is already warm or hot, or when there are other ingredients covering the base) nor plunge it into cold water immediately after use as this could crack it. Remember that it is an electrical appliance, so the outer casing should be wiped clean and never immersed in or filled with water.

When following a recipe, bear in mind that every model is slightly different and, even when using the same settings, some will cook much faster than others. For this reason a range of cooking times is given on most recipes; check after the shorter time given, this will usually be sufficient, but the food won't spoil for the extra time. Some small models cook quite quickly on High, so you may prefer to use the Low setting. After trying a few recipes, you will know whether your slow cooker is faster or slower and be able to adjust the recipe cooking times accordingly.

# Safety

The slow cooker is a very safe appliance, but commonsense precautions should be followed. Although it cooks at a low temperature, the outer casing, lid and food inside may get extremely hot, so you should always use oven gloves when removing the ceramic cooking pot. Stand the slow cooker on a heat-resistant surface when in use, away from the edge where it might accidentally get knocked off, and make sure that the mains lead is tucked safely behind it. Take extra care that it's out of reach if you have young children or inquisitive pets.

Slow cookers cook food at a relatively low heat - around 90°C/194°F on the Low setting to about 150°C/300°F on the High setting. Any bacteria present in food is destroyed at 74°C/165°F, so as long as it's cooked for the correct time the temperature of the slow cooker will ensure that the food is safe to eat. You should take care, however, not to reduce the cooking temperature:

- Unless a recipe tells you to stir a dish part way through cooking, it should be left undisturbed and you should avoid lifting the lid. If you do need to lift the lid during cooking other than when specified, add an extra 10-15 minutes cooking time to make up for the heat loss.
- Ideally ingredients should be at room temperature when you start to cook; increase the cooking time if you use frozen vegetables. Never add frozen or part-frozen meat to the slow cooker.
- Avoid placing the slow cooker near a draught.
- Always check that meat is thoroughly cooked, particularly poultry and pork, preferably using a meat thermometer.

# Cooking Times

The cooking temperatures and settings vary on different models, but most have four settings: Off, Low, High and Auto. Some also have a Medium setting. At the lowest temperature the food will barely simmer; at the highest it will boil very gently. When set to Auto, the cooking temperature will build up to High, then remain at this temperature for an hour or so before automatically switching to Low. This setting is useful if you are using frozen vegetables.

Food should be monitored when using the High setting as some liquid will evaporate. Some flexibility can be introduced to the total cooking time by adjusting the temperature settings. As a rough guide, the cooking time on Low is about double that of High.

Low	Auto or Medium	High
2-4	1½-2½	1-2
6-8	4-6	3-4
8-10	6-8	4-6

If at the end of the cooking time the food is not quite ready, replace the lid and switch the slow cooker to High. Once ready, many dishes (but not rice or fish) can be kept hot for an hour or more without any risk of spoiling, by switching to Low.

If you are planning to go out for the day and your chosen recipe does not take as many hours to cook as you will be away, you can use a time-delay plug so that the start of cooking is delayed by several hours. If you are going to delay the start of cooking, it's important that all the ingredients - including stock - are cold (preferably chilled) when added to the ceramic cooking pot. Never use a time-delay plug when cooking chicken or when the kitchen will be warm; e.g. on a sunny day or if the central heating will be on before cooking commences.

Modern slow cookers tend to cook at a slightly higher temperature than older ones, so if you have a newer model, check whether the food is ready at the minimum suggested cooking time.

# Tips for Slow Cooking Curries

Any of your usual curry recipes can be cooked in the slow cooker but remember that liquid doesn't evaporate as much as it does when cooking conventionally, so cut down the liquid content by 20-30 per cent. You can always add a little extra liquid at the end of cooking if necessary, to thin the sauce. Should there be too much liquid at the end of cooking, strain it into a saucepan and boil rapidly for several minutes until it is reduced to the quantity and consistency you require. Alternatively, you can thicken it with a little cornflour (cornstarch) blended with cold water, or a little extra creamed coconut, if appropriate.

Many traditional Indian curry recipes include yoghurt. Although this would typically be plain yoghurt, thick plain or Greek-style yoghurts have been suggested here as ordinary plain yoghurt may separate after very long low-temperature cooking. For the same reason, some recipes have the addition of a tiny amount of cornflour which will prevent the sauce from separating. Avoid using low-fat or reduced-fat yoghurts in the slow cooker; if you want to reduce the fat content of a dish, substitute stock for some of the yoghurt.

Some of the recipes here call for 'ghee'; this is clarified butter that has been cooked so that its natural sugars caramelize a little, giving it a slightly nutty flavour. Unlike ordinary butter, it can withstand high temperature. Unsalted (sweet) butter can be substituted, but it is better if you clarify your own butter: gently melt unsalted butter until it separates into three layers. Skim off the white froth that floats to the top, then carefully tip the golden liquid in the middle into a container. Discard the milk solids at the bottom. Cool and store in the fridge - it will keep for several weeks.

During cooking, steam condenses on the lid of the slow cooker, then trickles back into the pot, helping to retain heat and reduce strong cooking smells. Make sure that the lid is placed centrally on the cooking pot.

Allow a 5 cm/2 in distance between the food and top of a ceramic cooking pot. While all the recipes in the book take this into account, bear it in mind if you decide to double the ingredients to make a larger amount.

Onions and root vegetables, such as carrots, take longer to cook than meat as the liquid simmers rather than boils. Cut into smallish, even-sized chunks. For many dishes, it is best to fry onions before adding them as the flavour is different from when they are slow cooked from raw.

It is preferable for frozen vegetables to be thawed before adding but it isn't essential. If time allows, spread them out on kitchen paper (paper towels) at room temperature to thaw.

Ordinary long-grain rice doesn't cook well in the slow cooker, but easy-cook (converted rice) or 'parboiled' rice, will cook to perfection. It has been steamed under pressure, ensuring the grains remain separate.

Fresh herbs cooked for a long time will lose their colour and pungency. Use dried herbs at the start of cooking and add fresh ones at the end. Many Indian recipes use fresh coriander (cilantro). You can substitute parsley, if you prefer.

Some recipes use curry powders or pastes. There are many varieties which vary in flavour, heat and spiciness. These include:

- **Korma** Coconut and coriander *Mild*
- **Tikka masala** Tomato and coconut *Medium*
- **Balti** Tomato and coriander *Medium*
- **Bhuna** Tomato and tamarind *Medium*
- **Biryani** Coriander and cumin *Medium*

- **Jalfrezi** Sweet pepper and coconut *Medium*
- **Garam masala** Cinnamon and ginger *Hot*
- **Madras** Cumin and chilli *Hot*

# Notes on the Recipes

- Do not mix metric, imperial and American measures. Follow one set only. American terms are given in brackets.
- All spoon measurements are level: 1 tsp = 5 ml; 1 tbsp = 15 ml.
- Always wash, peel, core, deseed etc. fresh foods before use. Ensure that all produce is as fresh as possible and that it is in good condition.
- If you want to save preparation time, use ready-prepared ingredients such as frozen diced onions and shallots, bottled or frozen grated ginger and garlic and chilli purées (pastes). The quantities needed are given as an alternative to their fresh counterpart in the recipes.
- Seasoning is very much a matter of personal taste. Sample the food before serving and adjust to suit your own palate.
- There is a wide range of chillies available. In general, the large, fat ones are milder than the thin ones. Most of the heat is in the seeds and white pith; these can be removed or left in, as you prefer.
- All cooking times are approximate and are intended as a guide only. Get to know your slow cooker; you will soon know if it cooks a little faster or slower than the times given here.
- Can and packet sizes depend on the particular brand.

# Chicken and Duck

Chicken and duck make the perfect partners to curry - the meat simply soaks up all the fragrant spices. For succulence, flavour and versatility, it's an unbeatable combination. Plus, using the slow cooker allows the whole dish to become flavoursome and succulent.

Some of the most popular Indian dishes include korma, tandoori and butter chicken. The slow cooker makes moist and flavoursome chicken curries whichever cut you choose: breast, quarters, thighs or drumsticks. You'll also find wonderful ways to cook duck in this chapter. It's a rich meat which works well in spicier curries. In Indian cuisine, the skin is nearly always removed from poultry to allow flavour to penetrate the meat, which makes it lower in fat too.

Buy poultry from a reliable source and refrigerate as soon as possible after purchase. If you can't cook it within a day or two, poultry will keep for up to three months in the freezer; defrost overnight in the refrigerator and always check that it is thawed before adding to the slow cooker. You should also make sure that larger pieces, such as portions and thighs, are thoroughly cooked before serving by piercing them at the thickest point; the juices should run clear and not be at all pink.

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## Chicken Korma

*This mild curry has a rich thick sauce made from ground almonds, coconut milk and cream and is one of the most popular dishes in Indian restaurants and takeaways.*

### Serves 4

75 g/3 oz/¾ cup toasted flaked (slivered) almonds

15 ml/1 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter

10 ml/2 tsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion

2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)

4 cardamom pods

10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin

5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander

1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon

1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground turmeric

2.5 ml/½ tsp salt

300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups coconut milk

450 g/1 lb chicken fillets, cut into large bite-sized chunks

5 ml/1 tsp tomato purée (paste)

100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup boiling chicken or vegetable stock

60 ml/4 tbsp double (heavy) cream

15 ml/1 tbsp fresh lime juice or 10 ml/2 tsp fresh or bottled lemon juice with 5 ml/1 tsp water

5 ml/1 tsp garam masala

1. Reserve about a quarter of the almonds for garnishing, then put the rest into a spice grinder or coffee mill and grind until fine.

2. Heat the ghee or butter and the oil in a large frying pan. Fry the onion for 5 minutes until beginning to soften. Add the garlic, cardamom pods, cumin, ground coriander, cinnamon and turmeric and cook for a further minute, stirring. Turn off the heat and stir in the salt and coconut milk.
3. Put the chicken in the ceramic cooking pot and pour over the spice and coconut mixture. Stir the tomato purée into the stock and add that as well. Mix together, cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 3-5 hours or until the chicken is tender.
4. Stir the cream, lime or lemon juice and garam masala into the curry and cook for a further 30 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with Saffron or Turmeric Rice and popadoms.

## TIPS

If you can't find ready-toasted flaked almonds, dry-fry flaked almonds in a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes until just beginning to colour - take care, and keep watch, as they burn easily.

To contrast the sweetness of the coconut milk, a dash of lemon or lime juice is added in this recipe, but you can leave this out if you prefer.

For a hotter version, you can add a pinch of dried chilli flakes with the spices.

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## Aromatic Chicken Curry

*This creamy curry is ideal for those who prefer mildly spiced dishes. The flavours blend well and are absorbed by the chicken. Of course you can make it hotter if you wish but if you are not sure, try my version first, then spice it up next time.*

### Serves 4

4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts  
100 g/4 oz creamed coconut  
350 ml/12fl oz/1½ cups boiling chicken or vegetable stock  
15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
5 ml/1 tsp ground ginger  
10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Trim the chicken breasts, then cut each into 3 equal-sized pieces. Place in the ceramic cooking pot. Roughly chop the coconut and stir it into the stock until dissolved. Set aside.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and cook for 6-7 minutes. Stir in the garlic and dry spices and cook for 1 minute, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat. Stir in a little of the coconut stock, then pour the mixture over the chicken.
3. Pour in the remaining coconut stock and season with salt and pepper. Cover with the lid and

switch on the slow cooker to Low.

4. Cook for 4-6 hours or until the chicken is very tender. Stir in the chopped coriander and serve at once with boiled or steamed rice or warm Indian breads.

## TIP

If you prefer a hotter version you could add a couple of finely chopped seeded red chillies or 5 ml/1 tsp hot chilli powder with the spices.

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## Chicken in a Spicy Sauce

*This is a simplified version of murghi bhuna masala, a delicious dish where chicken breasts are pan-fried until a rich brown colour, then gently simmered in a small amount of spicy sauce to make a fairly dry curry. I've added a little more sauce to ensure the chicken remains moist as it slowly cooks and soaks up all the flavours.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp sunflower oil  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
4 chicken breasts or supremes with skin on  
2 onions, finely chopped, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
2 green cardamom pods, split  
2 green chillies, seeded and finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp chilli purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp ground ginger  
Pinch of ground turmeric  
Pinch of ground cloves  
400 g/14 oz/1 large can of chopped tomatoes  
75 ml/5 tbsp boiling chicken stock or water  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat half the oil and half the ghee in a frying pan. Add the chicken breasts, skin-side down and cook for 4-5 minutes until a dark golden brown. Remove from the pan and place in the ceramic cooking pot, skin-side up.
2. Add the rest of the oil and ghee to the frying pan. Add the onions and cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring, then add the garlic, seeds from the cardamom pods, chillies, ginger, turmeric and cloves. Cook for 1 minute, stirring all the time.
3. Add the tomatoes and stock or water to the pan. Season with salt and pepper. Gently heat until steaming hot, then carefully pour over the chicken.
4. Cover the ceramic cooking pot with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to Low. Cook for 4-6 hours, or until the chicken is very tender and the sauce very thick.
5. Lift the chicken on to warmed serving plates. Stir the coriander into the sauce and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Spoon the sauce over the chicken before serving with Cucumber and Coriander Raita.

## VARIATION

You could use thin turkey steaks for this recipe.

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### Tandoori Chicken

*Traditionally cooked in a hot clay oven (tandoor), a slow cooker won't produce the blackened effect associated with this dish, but the chicken will be superbly moist and flavoursome. You also won't need to marinate it first for several hours in the fridge to allow the spices to penetrate the meat, although you can if you want to prepare it the night before.*

#### **Serves 4**

4 large chicken portions, skinned  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground ginger  
30 ml/2 tbsp ground paprika  
15 ml/1 tbsp garam masala  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
2.5 ml/½ tsp salt  
45 ml/3 tbsp lime juice or 30 ml/2 tbsp bottled lemon juice with 15 ml/1 tbsp water  
200 ml/7 fl oz/scant 1 cup thick plain yoghurt

1. Make several deep slashes in the chicken to allow the flavours to penetrate. Place in the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Blend together the garlic, ground coriander, ginger, paprika, garam masala, turmeric, cornflour, salt and lime or lemon juice and water to make a smooth paste. Stir in the yoghurt.
3. Spoon and spread the spice mixture all over the chicken, then cover the slow cooker with the lid and switch on to Low.
4. Cook for 4-6 hours or until the chicken is cooked and very tender. Lift out of the juices with a draining spoon and serve with salad or plain rice and chutney.

### TIP

Use the tandoori mix with other meats or fish.

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### Chicken with Spinach and Lentils

*This tasty chicken curry is really low in fat, yet full of flavour and you can use your favourite curry powder or paste. Lentils are used to thicken the sauce; the long slow cooking reduces them to a creamy purée.*

#### **Serves 4**

30 ml/2 tbsp curry powder or paste  
375 ml/13 fl oz/1½ cups hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock

1 bay leaf  
75 g/3 oz/scant ½ cup red lentils  
8 chicken thighs, skinned  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
200 g/7 oz fresh spinach leaves  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Put the curry powder or paste into the ceramic cooking pot. Add a little of the stock and stir until blended, then stir in the remaining stock. Add the bay leaf.
2. Put the lentils in a sieve (strainer) and rinse under cold running water. Drain, then tip into the cooking pot. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 3 hours.
3. Season the chicken thighs with salt and pepper and place in a single layer on top of the lentils. Replace the cover and cook for a further 2 hours or until the chicken is just tender.
4. Meanwhile, finely shred the spinach. Add to the ceramic pot, gently pressing it down into the hot stock. Cover and cook for a further 30-45 minutes or until the spinach has wilted and is tender. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve sprinkled with chopped coriander on a bed of rice.

## TIP

Shredded fresh spinach enhances the dish, but you will need a large slow cooker for this. If yours has a capacity less than 3.5 litres/6 pints/15 cups, make this with thawed and drained frozen spinach.

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## Chicken Kofta Curry

*This is a simple dish of chicken meatballs flavoured with ginger, garlic and coriander cooked in a curry sauce with rice. There's no need to serve anything else with this complete meal, but it is delicious with a little Fresh Green Chutney drizzled on top.*

### Serves 4

450 g/1 lb minced chicken  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
30 ml/2 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, finely chopped, or 45 ml/ 3 tbsp frozen chopped onion  
30 ml/2 tbsp mild or medium curry paste  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
350 ml/12 fl oz/11/3 cups boiling chicken or vegetable stock  
90 g/3½ oz/1/3 cup easy-cook (converted) basmati rice

1. Put the chicken, ginger, garlic and chopped coriander in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper and mix together. Shape into small bite-sized balls.
2. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan. Add the onion and cook for 7-8 minutes until

almost soft. Add the curry paste and cook for a further minute, stirring all the time. Stir in the chopped tomatoes and heat until steaming hot, but not boiling.

3. Tip the tomato mixture into the ceramic cooking pot and stir in the stock. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to High. Cook for a few minutes while browning the meatballs.
4. Wipe the frying pan clean and heat the remaining oil. Fry the meatballs for 4-5 minutes, turning until browned all over. Sprinkle the rice over the sauce in the ceramic cooking pot and stir, then add the meatballs in a single layer on top.
5. Cover with the lid and cook for 1¾ hours or until the chicken koftas are cooked, the rice is tender and has soaked up most of the liquid to make a thick sauce. Serve straight away.

## TIP

For a creamy Chicken Kofta Curry, stir 45 ml/3 tbsp double (heavy) cream into the sauce about 15 minutes before the end of cooking time.

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## Chicken with Cashew Sauce

*Making a curry with a nut paste is a classic style of cooking which came from the Moghuls, centuries ago, but is still very much in vogue in Indian cuisine. Dishes made this way are known as 'Mughlai' and have a very rich, yet delicately flavoured sauce. Serve with plain boiled or steamed basmati rice and some fruity chutney for a memorable meal.*

### Serves 4

50 g/2 oz/½ cup unsalted cashew nuts  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp lemon juice  
15 ml/1 tbsp cold water  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp salt  
400 g/14 oz chicken breast fillets, cut into bite-sized chunks  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
225 g/8 oz baby button mushrooms  
300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups very hot (not boiling) chicken stock  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Put the cashew nuts, onion, garlic, tomato purée, lemon juice, water, garam masala, chilli, turmeric and salt into a food processor and blend to a fairly smooth paste, adding a little more water if necessary.
2. Place the chicken in the ceramic pot. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan, add the mushrooms and fry for 2-3 minutes or until lightly browned. Lift out of the pan with a slotted spoon, leaving any juices behind.
3. Add the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp of oil to the frying pan. Spoon in the nut paste, turn down the

heat and gently fry for 3-4 minutes. Turn off the heat, then stir in the stock. Tip into the ceramic pot, then gently stir to mix everything together.

4. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 4-5 hours, stirring halfway through cooking time, if possible, until the chicken is tender and the sauce fairly thick. Stir in the coriander at the end and adjust the seasoning, if needed. Serve with basmati rice and chutney.

## TIP

Make sure you use unsalted cashews.

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## Saffron-scented Chicken

*Saffron is known as the 'royal spice' in India and is used on special occasions. It is very expensive, but a little goes a long way and it adds a beautiful golden colour and aroma to food. A fresh green vegetable such as spinach or green beans will add the finishing touch.*

### Serves 4

4 skinless chicken breasts  
15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
5 ml/1 tsp fennel seeds  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
60 ml/4 tbsp korma curry paste  
A pinch of saffron strands  
5 ml/1 tsp honey  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
30 ml/2 tbsp double (heavy) cream  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup thick plain yoghurt  
50 g/2 oz/½ cup toasted flaked (slivered) almonds  
Salt, to taste

1. Cut each chicken breast into three chunks and place in the ceramic cooking pot. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the fennel seeds and cook for a few seconds, until they begin to sizzle.
2. Add the onion to the pan and cook for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the garlic and korma paste and cook for 1 more minute, stirring. Turn off the heat.
3. Stir in the saffron, honey and stock, then tip the mixture over the chicken. Blend the cornflour with the cream, then stir in the yoghurt. Add to the cooking pot and mix well.
4. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-6 hours or until the chicken is cooked and tender. Sprinkle with toasted almonds and serve with rice or naan bread, mango chutney and a green vegetable.

## TIP

You can use turmeric if you don't have saffron but it is not an exact equivalent.

# Northern Chicken Curry

*Cooking chicken 'on the bone' adds flavour and succulence to this dish. The recipe comes from the Punjab and has all the robust flavours of onions, tomatoes, garlic, ginger and garam masala. Use chicken pieces - drumsticks or chicken thighs are ideal - and remove the skins before cooking to allow the spices to penetrate.*

## Serves 4

8 chicken drumsticks or thighs or 4 of each  
15 ml/1 tbsp plain (all-purpose) flour  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
45 ml/3 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
4 whole cloves  
4 green cardamom pods, split  
½ cinnamon stick  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
15 ml/1 tbsp ground coriander  
200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes  
450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala

1. Remove the skin from the chicken pieces, rinse under cold water and pat dry with kitchen paper (paper towels). Season the flour with salt and pepper and use to lightly dust the chicken. Heat 30 ml/2 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan and fry the chicken until browned on all sides. Lift out of the pan with a slotted spoon, leaving any fat and juices behind and transfer to the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the remaining oil to the pan. Fry the cloves, cardamom pods and cinnamon stick for a few seconds until aromatic. Add the onion and fry for 5-6 minutes until beginning to colour, then stir in the garlic, ginger, chilli, turmeric and ground coriander. Cook for a further minute.
3. Turn off the heat, then stir in the tomatoes and stock. Pour over the chicken pieces, cover with the lid and cook on Low for 5-7 hours, or until the chicken is cooked and very tender.
4. Lift the chicken pieces on to serving plates. Stir the garam masala into the sauce, then taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary. Spoon the sauce over the chicken. Serve with Mushroom Pilau or Lemon-scented Rice.

## TIP

Meaning 'warming spice mix', garam masala can be added at the start of cooking, but is more usually stirred in at the end. It contains a mixture of cassia leaf, black pepper, coriander, cumin, chilli, cardamom, cloves, fennel, mace and nutmeg.

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## Chicken Mangalore

*Coconut and chillies are typical ingredients of Mangalorean cuisine. Although food from this region of South India is often hot and fiery, this is a mild to medium curry. A wild variety of spinach grows in abundance here, so Spiced Spinach Rice or a simple side dish of steamed baby spinach leaves makes an excellent accompaniment.*

### Serves 4

8 chicken drumsticks or thighs, or 4 of each

75 ml/5 tbsp desiccated coconut

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion

3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)

15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

15 ml/1 tbsp coriander seeds

4 whole cloves

1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon

1-2 red chillies, seeded and finely chopped, or 5-10 ml/1-2 tsp red chilli purée (paste)

4 tomatoes, roughly chopped

400 ml/14 fl oz/1¾ cups very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Remove the skins from the chicken pieces, rinse under cold water and pat dry. Place in a single layer in the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Put the coconut in a dry non-stick frying pan and gently toast over a medium heat for a few minutes until golden, stirring all the time. Tip on to a plate.
3. Add the oil to the pan and fry the onion for 6-7 minutes, until beginning to soften. Add the garlic, ginger, coriander seeds, cloves, cinnamon and chillies and cook for 2 minutes, stirring frequently.
4. Turn off the heat and stir in about half of the toasted coconut along with all of the tomatoes and stock. Pour over the chicken. Season with salt and pepper.
5. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2½-3 hours or on Low for 5-7 hours or until the chicken is thoroughly cooked and tender. Check the seasoning again.
6. Sprinkle with the rest of the coconut and serve with Spiced Spinach Rice.

## TIP

As an alternative, you could serve this with naan bread and steamed spinach.

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## Chicken with Red Lentils

*Dhankak is a popular dish among the Parsi community where it is often made on Sundays due to the long preparation time. It's traditionally served with brown rice and a cachumbar salad. This is a simplified version and is particularly good made in the slow cooker.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion

1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli purée (paste)  
2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp soft brown sugar  
15 ml/1 tbsp wine vinegar  
200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes  
4 skinless chicken breasts, each cut into 3 large pieces  
175 g/6 oz/1 cup red lentils  
2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 4 cm/1½ in chunks  
750 ml/1¼ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
10 ml/2 tsp garam masala  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and gently cook the onion for 7-8 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, green chilli and chilli powder, turmeric, ground coriander and cumin. Cook for a further minute, stirring all the time.
2. Add the sugar, vinegar and tomatoes to the pan and gently heat for a few minutes. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Add the chicken, lentils and potatoes to the pot and stir. Pour in the stock and season with a little salt and pepper. Mix everything together, then cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker.
4. Cook on High for 2-3 hours or Low for 4-6 hours or until everything is tender and the lentils have soaked up most of the stock to make a thick sauce.
5. Stir in the garam masala and chopped coriander, then check the seasoning again before serving with brown rice and a cachumbar salad.

## VARIATION

For a prawn dhanzak, leave out the chicken and substitute 400 g/14 oz large raw prawns, thawed if frozen and drained in a sieve (strainer), for just the last 45 minutes of cooking time.

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## Chicken Biryani

*This is a lightly spiced chicken and rice dish with golden caramelised onions and the added crunchy texture of cashew nuts. You can buy cashews ready toasted or prepare your own by dry-frying in a non-stick pan over a medium heat for a few minutes.*

### Serves 4

400 g/14 oz/large can of fried onions in olive oil  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp biryani curry paste  
1 litre/1¾ pints/4¼ cups very hot (not boiling) chicken stock  
700 g/1½ lb diced chicken breast or 4 chicken breasts, cut into thin strips  
300 g/11 oz small florets of fresh or frozen cauliflower

200 g/7 oz/8 tbsp frozen peas  
300 g/11 oz/1½ cups easy-cook (converted) rice  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
150 g/5 oz/1½ cups unsalted toasted cashew nuts  
60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Put the onions, garlic and curry paste in the ceramic cooking pot. Pour in a small amount of the stock and stir until the curry paste is blended, then stir in the rest of the stock.
2. Add the chicken, cauliflower, peas and rice and season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir, then cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to High.
3. Cook for 1-1¼ hours or until the chicken is cooked through and the rice is tender and has absorbed most of the stock.
4. Stir the nuts and fresh coriander into the rice, then spoon on to warmed plates and serve straight away while hot, topped with a spoonful of thick plain yoghurt along with a large pile of popadoms.

## TIPS

If you prefer, less expensive unsalted roasted peanuts may be used instead of the cashews. If you can't find canned fried onions, prepare your own by frying 2 finely sliced onions in 30 ml/2 tbsp light olive oil over a low heat for 12-15 minutes, stirring frequently until lightly browned.

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## Chicken Jalfrezi

*Jalfrezi or jhal frezi means 'dry fry' and so this hottish curry has little sauce. It is cooked for a relatively short time in the slow cooker, so keeps all the fresh flavours of the tomatoes and pepper. For a creamy finish to this dish, stir in some yoghurt at the end of cooking.*

### Serves 4

45 ml/3 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
8 skinned boneless chicken thighs, halved  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cloves  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock  
1 green (bell) pepper, halved, seeded and sliced  
6 tomatoes, roughly chopped  
Salt, to taste  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)  
75 ml/5 tbsp thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt (optional)

1. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a pan and fry the chicken for 2-3 minutes, turning until beginning to brown in places. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the remaining oil to the pan and fry the onion for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Add the garlic, ginger, ground coriander, cumin, turmeric, cinnamon and cloves. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute.
3. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock. Tip the mixture over the chicken, then add the green pepper and tomatoes and season with a little salt. Stir well.
4. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours. Stir in the chopped coriander, then taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary. For a creamy sauce, stir in the yoghurt. Serve with basmati rice.

## TIP

Chicken thighs are less expensive than breast and are excellent in curries.

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## Butter Chicken

*Murgh makhani, or butter chicken, comes from the Punjab and dates back to the Moghul empire. The buttery smooth sauce thickened with ground cashew nuts and cream makes this a very rich dish. Traditionally, the chicken is left to marinate overnight in a spicy yoghurt mixture, but cooking in the slow cooker makes this step unnecessary.*

### Serves 4

100 g/4 oz/1 cup unsalted cashew nuts  
30 ml/2 tbsp medium curry powder  
3 garlic cloves, peeled, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
15 ml/1 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup thick plain yoghurt  
45 ml/3 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
8 boneless skinless chicken thighs  
1 onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
4 green cardamom pods, split  
15 ml/1 tbsp red or white wine vinegar  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup boiling chicken stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
60 ml/4 tbsp double (heavy) cream

1. In a non-stick frying pan, dry-roast the cashews over a low heat for 2 minutes. Sprinkle over the curry powder and cook for a further 1-2 minutes, stirring all the time until the cashews are just beginning to turn golden.
2. Tip into a spice or coffee mill and grind to a powder. In a blender, process the ground cashew

nuts, garlic, ginger, tomato purée, chilli powder, cinnamon and half the yoghurt to a smooth paste. Add the rest of the yoghurt and briefly blend again.

3. Melt half the ghee or butter in a large saucepan and fry the chicken thighs for a minute or two on each side until golden. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot.
4. Put the rest of the ghee or butter, the onions and cardamoms into the pan and fry for 7-8 minutes until the onions begin to soften. Stir in the vinegar. Tip the mixture over the chicken thighs in the cooking pot.
5. Mix the tomatoes, stock and a little salt and pepper together, then pour into the cooking pot. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2-3 hours or Low for 4-6 hours, until the chicken is tender.
6. Lift the chicken on to warmed serving plates. Stir the cream into the sauce, then taste and add more seasoning if necessary. Serve with plain boiled basmati rice and a side salad or green vegetable.

## TIP

If you have a can of whole tomatoes, simply remove the top, insert a knife into the can and chop roughly in the can.

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## Chicken Masala Soup

*This makes a lovely starter, or you can serve it as a lunch or supper dish. Indian spices add both warmth and colour to this dish which is a cross between a soup and a stew. A steaming bowlful topped with a dollop of thick plain yoghurt and a sprinkling of chopped fresh coriander is sure to please everyone.*

### Serves 4

1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground ginger  
450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups very hot (not boiling) chicken stock  
450 g/1 lb chicken breast or mini chicken fillets  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
200 g/7 oz fresh or frozen green beans, halved  
400 g/14 oz/large can chick peas (garbanzos), drained and rinsed  
15 ml/1 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen chopped coriander (cilantro)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the onion, garlic, ground coriander, cumin, turmeric and ginger in the ceramic cooking pot and turn the slow cooker on to Low.
2. Pour the stock over, cover with the lid and leave for a few minutes while measuring and preparing the rest of the ingredients.
3. Cut the chicken into 2 cm/¾ in wide strips. Add to the pot with the tomatoes, beans and chick

peas. Replace the lid and cook for 4-5 hours or until the chicken is tender and the vegetables are cooked.

4. Stir in most of the chopped coriander and season to taste with salt and pepper. Garnish with the remaining coriander. Serve with strips of warm naan bread.

## TIP

To save time, use 15 ml/1 tbsp of your favourite curry powder or paste instead of the individual dry spices.

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## Spiced Duck

*Long, gentle simmering in the slow cooker makes duck portions wonderfully tender and succulent. Jaggery is a completely unrefined sugar made from boiling the sap from the date palm until thick enough to set hard.*

### Serves 4

- 30 ml/2 tbsp whole coriander seeds
- 10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds
- 4 duck portions, skinned
- 30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil
- 2 onions, chopped, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion
- 15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)
- 6 whole cloves
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 5 ml/1 tsp hot chilli powder
- 10 ml/2 tsp jaggery or muscovado sugar
- 15 ml/1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock
- Salt, to taste
- 60 ml/4 tbsp thick plain or Greek yoghurt
- 60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Process the coriander seeds and cumin seeds in a spice or coffee grinder until finely ground. Alternatively, crush them with a pestle and mortar or in a bowl, using the end of a wooden rolling pin.
2. Pack the duck into the slow cooker in a single layer, as snugly as possible. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the onions for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Stir in the ginger, garlic, cloves, cinnamon, chilli and jaggery or sugar and cook for a further minute, stirring.
3. Turn off the heat, then stir in vinegar, followed by the stock. Season with a little salt and pour over the duck.
4. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours or until the duck is very tender.
5. Lift the duck on to warmed serving plates. Stir a little of the hot sauce into the yoghurt, then stir this mixture into the sauce with the chopped coriander. Taste and adjust the seasoning, if

necessary. Spoon the sauce over the duck and serve with Lemon-scented or plain basmati rice.

## TIP

If you can't find jaggery, muscovado sugar can be used instead.

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## Coconut Duck Curry

*This fantastic curry comes from Kerala and uses both coconut milk and freshly grated coconut. Although this dish involves a little more preparation time, it is well worth the effort. As duck is quite a fatty meat, it's important to remove the skin and fat. Alternatively, after cooking you can cool and chill the curry, then skim the fat off the surface before reheating.*

### Serves 4

4 duck portions, skinned  
6 curry leaves  
150 g/5 oz fresh coconut, grated  
15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 onion, sliced, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp mild curry powder  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
5 ml/1 tsp mild chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cinnamon  
400 ml/14 oz/large can coconut milk  
175 ml/6 fl oz/¾ cup boiling vegetable or chicken stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Pack the duck into the slow cooker in a single layer, as snugly as possible. Tuck the curry leaves in between the portions and sprinkle over about half of the grated coconut.
2. Heat the oil in a pan and fry the onion for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Mix in the ginger, garlic, curry powder, ground coriander, turmeric, chilli and cinnamon and cook for a further minute, stirring. Turn off the heat, then stir in the coconut milk and stock. Season with a little salt and pour the mixture over the duck portions.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours or until the duck is very tender.
4. Lift the duck portions on to warmed plates. Stir the chopped coriander into the sauce, taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Garnish with the remaining grated coconut and serve with basmati or Saffron Rice.

## TIP

Curry leaves are often used in southern Indian cooking and are picked from the curry tree. They have a

distinct flavour and aroma and can be bought fresh or dried; the fresh ones can be frozen.

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## Royal Duck Biryani

*Derived from the Persian word 'birian' meaning roasted before cooking, a biryani is a combination of rice, meat or vegetables together with yoghurt and spices, often served at festive occasions. It's traditionally served topped with golden fried onions; these are cooked early in this recipe, but you can quickly reheat them in a pan or in the microwave before serving.*

### Serves 4

4 duck breasts, skinned  
3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
15 ml/1 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
2 onions, thinly sliced  
30 ml/2 tbsp medium curry powder  
10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds  
6 whole cloves  
6 black peppercorns  
6 green cardamom pods, split  
200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes  
200 ml/7 fl oz/scant 1 cup very hot (not boiling) chicken or vegetable stock  
350 g/12 oz/1½ cups basmati rice  
5 ml/1 tsp saffron threads  
45 ml/3 tbsp hot milk  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Cut the duck into large chunks. Mix the garlic, ginger and yoghurt in a large bowl, add the duck and stir well. Cover and leave for 30 minutes at room temperature or in the fridge for up to 6 hours, if preferred.
2. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil with the ghee or butter in a frying pan and gently cook the onions for 10 minutes, until soft and beginning to turn golden. Transfer half of the onions to the ceramic cooking pot. Cook the rest of the onions for a further 4-5 minutes, stirring frequently until a rich golden brown colour. Transfer to another bowl and set aside.
3. Remove the duck from the marinade. Heat the rest of the oil in the frying pan and brown the duck on all sides. Lift out of the pan with a draining spoon leaving the juices behind and add to the pot.
4. Fry the curry powder, cumin seeds, cloves, peppercorns and cardamom in the pan juices for 30 seconds, stirring. Turn off the heat and stir in the tomatoes and stock. Pour over the duck.
5. Cover and cook on High for 3 hours or Low for 6 hours. Towards the end of cooking, cook the rice according to the packet instructions. Drain well. While the rice is cooking, infuse the saffron in the hot milk for 10 minutes.
6. Lift the duck portions on to a warmed plate. Gently stir the rice into the sauce. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Spoon on to plates, then place a portion of duck on top of each. Drizzle with the saffron milk, then spoon over the reserved fried onion. Serve with a green salad and Sweet Mango Chutney.

## TIP

A bowl of minted yoghurt complements most curry meals.

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# Lamb and Pork

Along with chicken, lamb is a very popular meat in India and this is reflected by a huge number of flavoursome lamb dishes, all of which convert very well to the slow cooker. Pork is ideal for very spicy dishes. Most curries need a long, slow cooking time so what could be more appropriate than to prepare these wonderful recipes in the slow cooker for the most delicious results.

Some of the most popular lamb curries include lamb madras, rogan josh and dopiaza to name but a few. Generally, the best cuts of lamb for slow cooker curries are shoulder and neck, as they are wonderfully tender after long slow cooking, but you can use leg of lamb if you prefer. In India the bones are often left in the meat as they add to the flavour of the sauce; if you do this you will need almost double the amount of meat given here.

Goat is also widely eaten throughout India; I haven't featured any recipes for this, but it can be used instead of lamb in any of these dishes.

Although the Hindus and Muslims of India do not usually eat pork, Indian Christians do, so there is a handful of pork curries here. Using spices helps to offset the richness of pork as seen in one of the best known curries - vindaloo - a very hot and sour Goan speciality from India's west coast.

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## Fragrant Lamb with Spinach

*This attractive curry with chunks of tender lamb is warmly spiced rather than fiery hot and contains crushed cardamom, cinnamon and nutmeg. The curry will look fairly thick after the initial cooking, but the sauce will become thinner with the juices from the spinach.*

### **Serves 4**

30 ml/2 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
Seeds from 6 cardamom pods, crushed  
5 ml/1 tsp paprika  
10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg  
700 g/1½ lb lean boneless lamb, cubed  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
15 ml/1 tbsp cold water  
175 ml/6 fl oz/¾ cup Greek-style yoghurt  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup very hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
150 g/5 oz bag baby spinach leaves  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 7 minutes until beginning to soften. Stir in the garlic, ginger, cardamom seeds, paprika, cumin, ground coriander, cinnamon and nutmeg and cook for a further minute, stirring all the time. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Stir the lamb into the pot, coating it with the spicy onion mixture. Blend the cornflour with the cold water and stir into the yoghurt. Mix the yoghurt in with the lamb then stir in the stock, salt and pepper.
3. Cover the slow cooker with the lid and switch on to Low. Cook for 5-6 hours or until the lamb is tender. Add the spinach leaves, pressing down into the hot liquid. Cover and cook for a further 30-45 minutes or until the spinach has wilted.
4. Give the curry a stir to incorporate the spinach and add the chopped coriander. Serve straight away with plain basmati rice or Tomato and Cashew Nut Rice.

## TIP

Crush cardamom seeds in a pestle and mortar or by pressing with a teaspoon on a chopping board.

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## Lamb Korma

*Korma is one of the mildest curries and therefore ideal for those who don't like their food too spicy - a good way of introducing children to Indian food. Like many kormas, this one contains ground almonds which make a rich and thick creamy sauce. Garam masala and thick yoghurt are stirred in at the end of cooking to add the perfect finishing touch. Serve with a dhal or Lemon-scented Rice to counteract the richness.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean lamb, trimmed and cut into cubes  
1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
50 g/2 oz/½ cup ground almonds  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock  
3 green cardamom pods, split  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
2.5 ml/½ tsp mild chilli powder  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
2.5 ml/½ tsp caster (superfine) sugar  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
2.5 ml/½ tsp garam masala  
60 ml/4 tbsp thick plain yoghurt or single (light) cream

1. Heat 20 ml/4 tsp of the oil in a large frying pan, add the meat and fry until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon, leaving most of the oil and juices

behind. Add the remaining oil to the pan and cook the onion for 4-5 minutes, stirring until it begins to colour.

2. In a bowl, blend the garlic, ginger and ground almonds with 75 ml/5 tbsp of the stock. Add the cardamom, cumin, ground coriander, chilli powder, cinnamon and sugar to the pan and stir for a minute, then stir in the almond mixture and cook for a further minute. Turn off the heat and stir in the rest of the stock, then tip the mixture over the lamb in the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours until the lamb is very tender.
4. Stir in the garam masala and yoghurt or cream, taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with Tarka Dhal or Lemon-scented Rice.

## TIP

Bags of frozen diced onion are a great freezer standby as you can simply tip out what you need and return the rest to the freezer.

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## Indian Lamb with Spiced Lentils

*This dhansak-style lamb curry has a wonderful fragrance and, although it is a little time-consuming to prepare, it's worth grinding your own spices to achieve this. The dish contains green lentils which unlike red lentils keep their shape during the long slow cooking.*

### Serves 4

225 g/8 oz/1¼ cups green lentils

Seeds from 8 green cardamom pods

15 ml/1 tbsp cumin seeds

4 black peppercorns

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 large onion, sliced, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion

2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)

30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon

Pinch of dried red chilli or 5 ml/1 tsp red chilli purée (paste)

450 g/1lb lean boneless leg of lamb, trimmed and cut into cubes

600 ml/1 pint/2½ cups very hot (not boiling) lamb stock

6 plum tomatoes, roughly chopped

15 ml/1 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice

45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Rinse the lentils in a sieve (strainer) under cold running water, then tip them into a bowl. Cover with cold water and leave to soak for several minutes while preparing the rest of the ingredients.
2. Crush the cardamom seeds and cumin seeds and peppercorns in a pestle and mortar or grind them in a spice or coffee grinder. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and fry the onion for 7-8 minutes or until almost soft. Add the garlic, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, chilli and crushed spices and cook for a further minute, stirring all the time. Scrape the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.

3. Add the lamb, stock, tomatoes and lemon juice to the cooking pot. Drain the lentils and add them as well. Stir everything together. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3-3½ hours or Low for 6-7 hours until very tender.
4. Stir in the chopped coriander and serve with Saffron Rice and Sweet Mango Chutney.

## VARIATION

This curry is equally good made with beef, but it would need a slightly longer cooking time.

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## Aromatic Lamb

*Known as Kashmiri tamatari ghosht, this is a mild dish with fragrant spices including cinnamon, cloves and fresh ginger. Relatively low in fat, it already contains potatoes, so there's no need to serve it with anything else - although some steamed green beans or warmed Indian bread such as naan, would make a great accompaniment.*

### Serves 4

- 15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 onion, thinly sliced, or 45 ml/ 3 tbsp frozen diced onion
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric
- 3 whole cloves
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 bay leaf
- 700 g/1½ lb lean boneless lamb, cut into chunks
- 1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)
- 10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger
- 2 large potatoes, about 450 g/1 lb, peeled and cut into chunks
- 400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes
- 300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a heavy-based frying pan and sprinkle in the cumin seeds. When they start to pop, add the onion, turmeric, cloves, cinnamon and bay leaf and cook gently for 1-2 minutes, stirring.
2. Add the lamb and fry for about 5 minutes until the meat is lightly browned on all sides. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 minute, stirring continuously.
3. Transfer the lamb mixture to the ceramic cooking pot and switch the slow cooker to Low. Stir in the potatoes, tomatoes and stock, then season with salt and pepper.
4. Cover with the lid and cook for 6-8 hours or until the lamb and vegetables are very tender.
5. Serve the lamb drizzled with yoghurt and scattered with chopped coriander.

## TIP

As the lamb is cooked slowly, you can use any cut of meat.

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## Lamb Dopiaza

*Dopiaza broadly translates as 'two onions' or 'double onions' and some versions of this recipe use twice the weight of onions to meat. Others, like here, use the onions both as a paste and as a finishing garnish of golden fried onions.*

### Serves 4

3 large onions  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp coriander seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp black mustard seeds  
1.5-2.5 ml/¼-½ tsp crushed dried chillies  
200 ml/7 fl oz/scant 1 cup lamb or vegetable stock, or water  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean diced lamb  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
120 ml/4 fl oz/½ cup thick plain yoghurt  
4 whole cloves  
4 green cardamom pods, split  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala

1. Roughly chop one of the onions and put in a food processor with the garlic, ginger, cumin, coriander and mustard seeds and chillies. Add 30 ml/2 tbsp of the stock or water and process until finely chopped. Add a further 60 ml/4 tbsp of the stock or water and blend until smooth.
2. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the ghee or butter and 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan. Fry the lamb in batches until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot using a slotted spoon, leaving the fat and juices behind.
3. Add the spice paste to the frying pan and fry, stirring for 1 minute. Stir in the remaining stock or water. In a separate bowl, blend the cornflour with a little of the yoghurt, then stir in the rest of the yoghurt. Stir into the spice mixture in the frying pan.
4. Pour the contents of the pan over the lamb, add the cloves and cardamom pods and season with salt and pepper. Stir, then cover with the lid. Cook on High for 3 hours or Low for 6.
5. Towards the end of cooking time, finely slice the remaining onions. Heat the rest of the ghee or butter and oil in a frying pan and cook the onions for about 10 minutes, stirring frequently until golden and soft.
6. When the curry has cooked, stir in the garam masala, then taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve scattered with the fried onions along with basmati rice and chutney.

## TIP

The whole spices are always left in the curry, to be removed by the diners, so don't forget to mention this when serving.

## Rogan Josh

*This well-known lamb curry gets its rich red colour from the combination of spices and other ingredients it contains, including dried red chillies, paprika and a good spoonful of tomato purée. There are many different versions of this dish; this one is very simple and uses ready-made curry paste rather than a huge range of whole and ground spices.*

### Serves 4

30ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean diced lamb  
2 onions, chopped, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onions  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
45 ml/3 tbsp Madras curry paste  
10 ml/2 tsp paprika  
6 green cardamom pods, split  
4 whole cloves  
2 bay leaves  
2 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
175 ml/6 fl oz/¾ cup thick plain yoghurt

1. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Add the lamb and fry over a high heat for 3-4 minutes, until browned all over. Lift out with a slotted spoon, leaving the juices behind, and transfer to the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp oil to the pan, then gently cook the onions for 6-7 minutes until beginning to soften. Stir in the garlic, ginger, curry paste, paprika, cardamom and cloves. Cook for a further minute, stirring.
3. Add the bay leaves and tomato purée, then slowly stir in the stock. Season with salt and pepper. Heat until steaming hot, but not boiling, then pour over the lamb in the pot.
4. In a separate bowl, blend the cornflour with a little of the yoghurt, then stir in the rest of the yoghurt. Gradually stir into the lamb mixture. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or Low for 6 hours until really tender.
5. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary, before serving with plain basmati rice or Mushroom Pilau.

## TIP

Keep curry paste in the fridge once opened and use before the use-by date for the best flavour.

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## Lamb Parsi

*This is a similar dish to biryani, but here the lamb is marinated in yoghurt, a traditional technique in Parsi cuisine which makes the meat beautifully moist and tender. This is my adaptation of a conventionally cooked dish and it works extremely well.*

## Serves 4

2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)

2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)

10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin

5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander

5 ml/1 tsp cayenne pepper

10 ml/2 tsp garam masala

300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups Greek-style yoghurt

700 g/1½ lb lean lamb, trimmed and diced

30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 large onion, sliced, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion

350 g/12 oz potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

400 ml/14 fl oz/1¾ cups hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock

350 g/12 oz/1½ cups basmati rice

1. Make the marinade in a large bowl by mixing the cornflour, garlic, cumin, ground coriander, cayenne pepper, garam masala and about 30 ml/2 tbsp of the yoghurt together. Stir in the rest of the yoghurt. Add the lamb, stir to coat, then cover and leave to marinate in the fridge for 2-3 hours or overnight if you prefer.
2. Heat half the ghee or butter and 5 ml/1 tsp of the oil in a large frying pan. Add the onion and fry for 7-8 minutes or until almost soft. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
3. Remove the lamb from the marinade. Add the rest of the ghee and oil to the pan, then fry the lamb in batches until it's evenly browned, transferring each batch to the ceramic cooking pot. Tip the potatoes in on top of the lamb, season with a little salt and pepper and stir everything together.
4. Add a little of the stock to the frying pan and swirl to dissolve any sediment. Tip into the ceramic pot. Blend the remaining marinade with the rest of the stock and add to the pot as well. Stir again.
5. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours. Towards the end of cooking time, cook the rice according to the packet directions. Drain well and fork through the cooked meat and sauce. Serve with popadoms, salad and raita.

## TIP

With this type of dish, cooking the rice separately, then stirring it into the finished dish, ensures the grains stay fluffy.

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## Spicy Lamb with Sweet Potatoes

*Sweet potatoes are grown in many parts of India and their flavour goes beautifully with lamb. They will be very soft and almost falling apart at the end of cooking time, which will help to thicken the sauce.*

## Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

2 onions, sliced, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion  
700 g/1½ lb lean boneless lamb, cut into chunks  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
15 ml/1 tbsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cayenne pepper  
4 whole cloves  
450 g/1 lb sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups boiling lamb or vegetable stock or water  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup plain yoghurt

1. Heat the oil in a large pan and fry the onions for 5 minutes. Add the lamb, garlic, ginger, coriander, cumin seeds, turmeric, cayenne pepper and cloves and cook for 5 minutes, stirring all the time until the lamb is browned all over. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the sweet potatoes, tomatoes and stock or water to the pot. Season with salt and pepper, then stir well to mix everything together.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours, or until the lamb is very tender. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.
4. Spoon on to warmed plates and drizzle over the yoghurt. Serve with parathas or popadoms.

## TIP

Choose a 'sharp' plain yoghurt rather than a mild or creamy variety to help offset the sweetness of this curry.

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## Spiced Lamb in Almond Sauce

*This rich and creamy dish - badami elachi gosht - is an elegant pale colour and was created for the Moghul royalty. It has a fragrant blend of cardamom and cinnamon and a surprising fierce kick from the addition of green chillies. Serve with Saffron Rice and a colourful accompaniment such as Tomato and Onion Cachumbar.*

### Serves 4

2 garlic cloves or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
1 large onion, roughly chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
4 green chillies, seeded and roughly chopped  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup light lamb or vegetable stock  
75 ml/5 tbsp ground almonds  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
8 green cardamom pods, split  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
700 g/1½ lb lean lamb, cut into chunks

2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
75 ml/5 tbsp thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt  
Salt and white pepper  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup double (heavy) cream

1. Put the garlic, onion and chillies in a small food processor and blend until finely chopped. Add 60 ml/4 tbsp of the stock and blend to a purée. Mix in the ground almonds.
2. Heat the ghee or butter in a pan, add the purée, cardamom pods and cinnamon and cook for 4-5 minutes, stirring continuously. Stir in the lamb, then turn off the heat. Tip the contents of the pan into the slow cooker, then stir in the rest of the stock. Blend the cornflour with the yoghurt and stir that in too. Season with salt and white pepper.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-6 hours, or until the lamb is fairly tender. Stir in the cream and cook for a further 30 minutes.
4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with Saffron Rice and Tomato and Onion Cachumbar.

## TIP

You could also serve it with Turmeric Rice and an onion salad.

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## Lamb and Chick Pea Curry

*Like other pulses, chick peas are a good source of protein and are a staple food for many vegetarian Indians. Here they are used to 'stretch' the amount of meat used and add a great texture to the curry. Because they are fairly bland, they soak up all the spices to make a richly flavoured dish.*

### Serves 4

10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground ginger  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli flakes  
15 ml/1 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
15 ml/1 tbsp water  
450 g/1 lb lean boneless lamb, cubed  
1 onion, finely chopped, or 45 ml/ 3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 red (bell) pepper, seeded and cut into 2cm/¾ in chunks  
200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
400 g/14 oz/large can chick peas (garbanzos)

1. Put the spices into the ceramic cooking pot with the lemon juice and water and mix together. Add the lamb and stir to coat all the pieces in the spicy mixture. Leave for a few minutes, while preparing the rest of the ingredients.

2. Add the onion, red pepper, tomatoes and stock to the cooking pot. Season with salt and pepper. Stir well, then cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 2-3 hours on High or 4-6 hours on Low, or until the lamb and onions are very tender.
3. Tip the chick peas into a sieve (strainer) and allow to drain, then pour half a kettle full of boiling water over them (this will help warm them up, so that the temperature of the lamb curry isn't lowered). Add to the ceramic cooking pot, quickly stir, then put the lid back on and cook for a further 20-30 minutes to heat through.
4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Drizzle a few spoonfuls of yoghurt over the lamb and serve with basmati or Spiced Spinach Rice.

## VARIATION

Replace the lamb with a second can of chick peas for a vegetarian version.

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## Madras Lamb Curry

*One of the most popular restaurant curries, a Madras is named after the city in India now known as Chennai. This dish is fairly hot and fiery and this easy version uses Madras curry paste - a blend of ground coriander, cumin, turmeric, chilli, garlic and small amounts of other spices and seasonings. Serve with chappatis or naan breads and a cooling accompaniment such as a cucumber raita.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean diced lamb  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
45-60 ml/3-4 tbsp Madras curry paste  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup Greek-style yoghurt  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan. Add the lamb and brown on all sides. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
2. Add the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp of oil to the pan and gently fry the onion for 6-7 minutes, or until almost soft. Stir in the curry paste and cook for another minute. Turn off the heat and stir in about half of the stock. Pour over the lamb.
3. In a separate bowl, blend the cornflour with a spoonful of yoghurt, then stir in the rest of the yoghurt. Stir in the remaining stock, then pour into the ceramic cooking pot. Stir well, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or Low for 6-7 hours, or until the lamb is really tender.
4. Taste the sauce and season with salt and pepper if necessary. Serve with chapattis and Cucumber and Coriander Raita.

## TIP

You could serve this with naan breads instead of chapattis.

## Slow-cooked Leg of Lamb

*There's nothing quite like slow-roasted lamb, cooked until it is so tender that the meat almost falls from the bone. If you want to avoid having your oven on for several hours, here's a slow-cooker version where the meat is flavoured with fragrant Indian spices. It's a fabulous dish for a summer late lunch and makes a great alternative to Sunday roast.*

### Serves 4

½ leg of lamb, about 900 g/2 lb

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds

5 ml/1 tsp black mustard seeds

Seeds from 2 green cardamom pods

1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)

15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp green chilli purée (paste)

10 ml/2 tsp paprika

250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup thick plain yoghurt

5 ml/1 tsp soft brown sugar

5 ml/1 tsp salt

60 ml/4 tbsp hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock or water

1. Make some small shallow slits all over the lamb to allow the flavours to penetrate during cooking.
2. Heat the oil in a small frying pan, add the cumin, mustard and cardamom seeds and cook until they begin to pop. Stir in the garlic, ginger, chilli and paprika and cook for a further minute, stirring. Turn off the heat and leave to cool for a few minutes.
3. Place the yoghurt in a bowl and stir in the spice mixture, sugar and salt. Spread this mixture all over the lamb. Place the lamb in the ceramic cooking pot, then carefully pour in the stock or water between the lamb joint and the side of the pot. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 8 hours or until the lamb is cooked and very tender.
4. Carefully remove the meat from the slow cooker and carve into thick slices or chunks. Serve with Bombay Potatoes and Tomato and Onion Cachumber and chutney.

## TIP

Make sure that the piece of lamb you choose will fit into your slow cooker.

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## Koftas with Chilli and Cinnamon

*These boldly flavoured little meatballs are made with lean minced lamb and are bound together with a beaten egg. As they cook, their juices help to enrich the thick tomatoey sauce. This is classic Punjabi food and is best served simply with plain basmati rice or warmed Indian breads and plain yoghurt.*

### Serves 4

1 bunch spring onions (scallions), trimmed and thinly sliced

400 g/14 oz/large can of chopped tomatoes

150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup boiling vegetable stock

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric

2.5 ml/½ tsp garam masala

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

450 g/1 lb very lean minced lamb

2 green chillies, seeded and finely chopped, or 20 ml/4 tsp green chilli purée (paste)

5 ml/1 tsp ground cinnamon

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground ginger

1 egg, lightly beaten

45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Put the spring onions and chopped tomatoes in the ceramic cooking pot. Pour in the stock and add the turmeric and garam masala. Season with salt and pepper. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to High. Cook while preparing the meatballs.
2. Put the lamb, chillies, cinnamon, ginger and egg in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper, then mix thoroughly. Using wet hands, shape the mixture into walnut-sized meatballs.
3. Carefully place the meatballs in the hot sauce, arranging them in a single layer. Put the lid back on and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours or until the meatballs are cooked through.
4. Lift the meatballs on to plates. Stir the chopped coriander into the sauce, taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary, before spooning over the meatballs. Serve drizzled with yoghurt and accompanied by rice or Indian bread.

## TIPS

Use spring onions rather than ordinary onions as they don't need to be pre-cooked.

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## Kashmir Lamb Curry

*Most people's perception of a 'curry' is a hot and spicy dish. This recipe demonstrates the diversity of Indian cuisine; it is very mild, yet wonderfully fragrant and aromatic. It is typical of dishes from the region of Kashmir having no onions and using ground rather than fresh ginger. The lamb shanks become beautifully tender when slow-cooked. It is not necessary to pre-cook any of the ingredients.*

### Serves 4

4 lamb shanks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

6 green cardamom pods, split

5 ml/1 tsp fennel seeds

2 bay leaves

5 ml/1 tsp ground ginger

1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon

2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)

300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups thick plain yoghurt

250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup hot (not boiling) lamb or vegetable stock

Handful of coriander (cilantro) leaves, torn into small pieces

1. Remove any excess fat from the lamb shanks. Season well with plenty of salt and pepper. Place in the ceramic cooking pot in a single layer. Add the cardamom pods, fennel seeds and bay leaves.
2. Blend the ginger, cinnamon and cornflour with a little of the yoghurt in a large jug, then stir in the rest of the yoghurt. Gradually stir the stock into the yoghurt and pour over the lamb in the pot.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-7 hours or until the lamb is very tender. Skim any excess fat from the top (alternatively, you can cool the dish, refrigerate overnight and remove the solidified fat before reheating it on the hob).
4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Scatter with torn coriander leaves over the top and serve with plain or Lemon-scented Rice.

## TIP

You can brown the lamb shanks first, if you prefer.

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## Pork Vindaloo

*This Goan classic originated in Portugal and was adapted to fit local ingredients and cooking techniques. It is a thick curry with little sauce. Ideally, it should be made a day ahead, to allow the flavours to mingle and develop.*

### Serves 4

5 ml/1 tsp paprika  
5 ml/ 1 tsp garam masala  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
2 hot red chillies, seeded if preferred and finely chopped, or 15 ml/1 tbsp chilli paste  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
45 ml/3 tbsp white wine vinegar  
450 g/1 lb lean boneless pork, cubed  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, sliced, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 star anise  
5 ml/1 tsp soft brown sugar  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Mix together the paprika, garam masala, turmeric, cinnamon, chillies, ginger, garlic and vinegar in the ceramic cooking pot. Add the pork and stir well to coat. Cover with the lid and leave to marinate for a few minutes.
2. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and cook the onion for 7-8 minutes until beginning to colour. Add the star anise and sugar and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring. Turn off the heat. Pour in the vegetable stock, stir, then tip the mixture over the pork.
3. Stir, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6-7 hours until the pork is tender.
4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with naan breads, plain yoghurt, lime pickle

and chutney.

## TIP

If you plan to make this curry a day ahead, cool the curry quickly when it has finished cooking and chill in the fridge overnight. Remove any solid fat from the top before reheating in a saucepan on the hob.

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## One-pot Pork Balti

*Although it isn't an authentic Indian dish, this balti is sure to become a family favourite. Chunks of tender pork are cooked with rice and peas in a rich sauce to make a great all-in-one meal that's full of flavour but not too heavy.*

### Serves 4

550 g/1¼ lb diced pork shoulder  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, sliced, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
60 ml/4 tbsp balti curry paste  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
450 ml/¾ pint/1¾ cups boiling vegetable stock  
175 g/6 oz/2/3 cup easy-cook (converted) rice  
75 g/3 oz/½ cup frozen peas, thawed  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)  
Salt, to taste

1. Pat the pieces of pork dry with kitchen paper (paper towels) to help them brown when added to the pan. Heat 15 ml/ 1 tbsp of the oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add the pork and fry for 3-4 minutes until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
2. Add the rest of the oil to the pan and gently fry the onion for 6-7 minutes, until almost soft. Stir in the curry paste and cook for 30 seconds, then turn off the heat and stir in the chopped tomatoes. Pour over the pork, then mix in the stock.
3. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to High. Cook for 2-3 hours, or until the pork is almost tender.
4. Stir the rice into the hot mixture and cook for a further 45 minutes. Stir in the peas and cook for a final 10-15 minutes or until the pork is tender and the rice cooked. Stir in the chopped coriander, then taste and season with a little salt, if necessary. Serve with naan breads or popadoms.

## VARIATION

This dish can be made with diced chicken breast instead of pork.

## Hot and Sour Pork Curry

*Vinegar often features in Goan cuisine, giving a sharpness which contrasts with the richness of meats such as belly of pork. Long slow cooking mellows its flavour.*

## **Serves 4**

900 g/2 lb belly of pork, skinned and cut into large cubes  
90 ml/6 tbsp white wine vinegar  
7.5 ml/1½ tsp hot chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp yellow mustard seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp soft dark brown sugar  
1 large onion, finely sliced, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
350 ml/12 fl oz/11/3 cups cold water

1. Put the meat in a large non-metallic bowl with the vinegar, chilli powder, turmeric, cumin and mustard seeds and sugar. Mix well, cover and chill for 6 hours, or overnight if preferred.
2. Add the onion, garlic and ginger to the pork. Season well with salt and pepper, then stir everything until thoroughly mixed. Tip into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Stir in the water, then cover with the lid and cook on Low for 5-7 hours or until the pork is very tender.
4. Skim any fat that is floating on the surface, then taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary. Serve with Bombay Potatoes or Spinach and Potato Curry and chutney.

## **TIP**

If possible, make this dish the day before, chill, then skim off the fat before reheating - the flavours will be even better.

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## **Goan Pork Curry**

*Like many pork dishes from Goa, this one has a classic slightly sharp flavour from the addition of vinegar, but balsamic vinegar is used for a more subtle and refined flavour and richer colour. Tamarind further intensifies the tangy note, but is balanced by a good spoonful of jaggery or sugar.*

## **Serves 4**

2 onions or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion  
3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
700 g/1½ lb pork shoulder, cut into thick strips  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
5 ml/1 tsp mustard seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
2.5 ml/½ tsp dried chilli flakes  
15 ml/1 tbsp jaggery or light muscavado sugar  
45 ml/3 tbsp balsamic vinegar  
15 ml/1 tbsp tamarind paste

400 ml/14 fl oz/1¾ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock

Salt, to taste

1. Roughly chop one of the onions (or use half the frozen diced onion) and put in a food processor with the garlic and ginger. Process until finely chopped, then add 45 ml/3 tbsp cold water and blend to a purée.
2. Pat the pieces of pork dry with kitchen paper (paper towels) to help them brown more efficiently. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add the pork and fry for 3-4 minutes until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
3. Finely slice the second onion. Heat the remaining 15 ml/ 1 tbsp of oil and cook the mustard seeds for a few seconds, until fragrant. Add the onion and cook for 7-8 minutes, until beginning to colour. Add the onion purée, cumin, cinnamon, chilli and jaggery and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring. Stir in the balsamic vinegar, then turn off the heat.
4. In a separate bowl, blend the tamarind paste with a few spoonfuls of the stock, then stir in the rest of it. Pour into the pan, stirring, then tip the mixture over the pork. Stir well, cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or Low for 6 until really tender. Serve spooned over Turmeric Rice.

## TIP

Sugar will work perfectly well if you cannot obtain jaggery.

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## Pork Jardaloo

*Pork lends itself to fruity sauces with a touch of tartness as they help to balance the richness of the meat. The long, gentle cooking ensures that the pork is really tender and the apricots plump up having soaked up all the delicious meat juices.*

### Serves 4

550 g/1¼ lb lean pork, trimmed and cut into cubes

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onions

45 ml/3 tbsp rogan josh curry paste

200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes

150 g/5 oz dried apricots, halved

450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups boiling vegetable stock

30 ml/2 tbsp double (heavy) cream or Greek-style yoghurt

30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

Salt, to taste

1. Pat the pieces of pork dry with kitchen paper (paper towels) to help them brown more efficiently. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a frying pan over a high heat, add the pork and fry for 3-4 minutes until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
2. Heat the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp of oil in the pan and fry the onion for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the curry paste and cook for a further 30 seconds, stirring continuously.
3. Turn off the heat and stir in the chopped tomatoes and dried apricots. Tip over the pork, pour in

the stock and stir well. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-6 hours or until the pork is very tender.

4. Stir in the cream or yoghurt and chopped coriander. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with basmati rice and popadoms.

## VARIATION

Jardaloo is traditionally made with lamb, but I think it's even better made with pork - you can, of course, easily substitute lamb, if you prefer.

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## Pork Korma with Spinach

*Instead of chunks of meat, this curry is made from minced meat. Like most kormas, the sauce is enriched and thickened with almonds, but this version is less rich and doesn't contain cream or ghee.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
450 g/1 lb lean minced (ground) pork  
2 onions, thinly sliced, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
Seeds of 6 green cardamom pods  
15 ml/1 tbsp cumin seeds  
700 g/1½ lb new potatoes, scrubbed and halved  
450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups hot (not boiling) vegetable or chicken stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
10 ml/2 tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt  
75 g/3 oz/¾ cup ground almonds  
150 g/5 oz bag baby spinach leaves  
25 g/1oz/¼ cup flaked (slivered) almonds

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over a medium high heat. Add the pork and fry for 2-3 minutes until no longer pink and all the grains are separate. Add the onions, garlic, cardamom seeds and cumin seeds and cook for a further 5 minutes, stirring. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the potatoes and stock, season with salt and pepper and mix everything together. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or Low for 4 hours.
3. In a separate bowl, blend the cornflour with 150 ml/¼ pint/ 2/3 cup of the yoghurt and the ground almonds. Stir this mixture into the curry. Add the spinach leaves, pressing down into the hot liquid. Cover and cook for a further 30-45 minutes or until the spinach has wilted.
4. Stir the spinach into the curry, taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Drizzle with the rest of the yoghurt and sprinkle with the flaked almonds before serving.

## VARIATIONS

Minced pork has been used in this kofta dish, but lean beef or lamb would work equally well.



# Beef

Because Hindus make up the majority of the Indian population and regard the cow as a sacred animal, beef curries are only served in a few parts of India. However, I've included a chapter of interesting and tasty recipes because the slow cooker excels when it comes to cooking beef, making it succulent and delicious.

Don't go for the most expensive cuts of beef believing that they will produce a better curry. Ideal beef cuts for slow cooking are generally the cheaper ones such as brisket and chuck steak as they have a looser texture. During cooking the fibres open up and allow moisture and spices to penetrate, creating a delicious, rich, tasty sauce.

More expensive cuts, such as fine-grained and densely textured sirloin (porterhouse) steak, are less suitable for slow cooking because the tightness of the fibres prevents them from absorbing the liquid around them. This means that although they become tender when cooked in a slow cooker, the curry will lack succulence and flavour.

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## Beef Biryani

*Introduced to central India by the Moghuls, this meat and rice dish is usually layered and baked. In this simplified version, they are cooked separately to allow the beef to benefit from lengthy slow cooking until meltingly tender, before stirring the rice in at the end.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
2 onions, thinly sliced, or 90 ml/ 6 tbsp frozen diced onions  
15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean braising or chuck steak, diced  
5 ml/1 tsp ground ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon  
2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder  
2.5 ml/½ tsp caraway seeds  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup very hot (not boiling) beef stock  
2 green cardamom pods, split  
1 bay leaf  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
350 g/12 oz/1½ cups basmati rice  
75 g/3 oz/½ cup frozen peas  
45 ml/3 tbsp desiccated (shredded) coconut, to garnish

1. Heat the ghee or butter in a large frying pan. Add the onions and fry, stirring for about 10 minutes, until golden. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
2. Heat the oil in the same pan and fry the beef until brown on all sides. Sprinkle over the ginger,

- garam masala, cinnamon, chilli and caraway seeds. Cook for a further minute.
3. Stir in the beef stock, then tip the mixture into the cooking pot. Add the cardamom pods and bay leaf to the pot, then stir in the yoghurt. Season with salt and pepper, cover with the lid and cook on High for 3-4 hours or Low for 6-8 hours.
  4. Meanwhile, cook the rice according to the packet instructions, adding the peas for the last 5 minutes. Drain well.
  5. Gently stir the rice into the beef mixture. Spoon on to warmed plates and serve with popadoms and mango chutney.

## VARIATION

This biryani can be made with lamb instead of beef, although I suggest you reduce the cooking time by 30 minutes if cooking on High, 1 hour if cooking on Low.

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## Bangladeshi Beef Curry

*Known as rezala, this is a thick spicy curry with the chunks of beef so tender they can be cut with a spoon. Here the meat is moistened with just enough stock and yoghurt for it to be coated in sauce, although some traditional versions are much drier. Serve this with a moist accompaniment - a dhal or a juicy Mushroom Pilau would be ideal.*

### Serves 4

- 60 ml/4 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter
- 700 g/1½ lb braising or chuck steak, cut into 4 cm/1½ in cubes
- 2 onions, sliced, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onions
- 1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/ 1 tsp garlic purée (paste)
- 1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli paste
- 4 green cardamom pods, split
- 4 whole cloves
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp caster (superfine) sugar
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp salt
- 100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup beef stock or water
- 300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups thick plain yoghurt

1. Heat half the ghee or butter in a large frying pan and cook the beef in batches until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon, leaving the fat and juices behind.
2. Add the rest of the ghee or butter to the pan and cook the onions for 7-8 minutes until beginning to colour. Add the garlic, chilli, cardamom pods, cloves, cumin, coriander, turmeric, cayenne pepper and sugar and stir for a further 1-2 minutes. Stir in the salt and stock or water. Turn off the heat and tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Stir the yoghurt into the curry a little at a time. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3-4 hours or on Low for 6-8 hours, or until the meat is really tender and the sauce very thick.

4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with Lentil Dhal with Toasted Almonds.

## TIP

You could use chicken stock if you prefer.

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## Beef Keema

*This is a mild and mellow curry, ideal for introducing children to spicy food. Make sure you use good quality very lean mince. It's delicious served with a pile of freshly cooked parathas or chapattis. It can also be spooned into warmed naan or pitta bread.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onions

2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli purée (paste) (optional)

5 ml/1 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

15 ml/1 tbsp mild curry paste

450 g/1 lb lean minced (ground) beef

2.5 ml/½ tsp caster (superfine) sugar

30 ml/2 tbsp tomato purée (paste)

150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup boiling beef stock or water

400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

175 g/6 oz/1 cup fresh or frozen peas

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and fry the onion for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Add the garlic, chilli, if using, ginger and curry paste and stir for a few seconds until mixed.
2. Add the minced beef and stir-fry for 3-4 minutes until the meat is no longer pink and all the grains are separate. Stir in the sugar, tomato purée and about half the stock or water. Heat until steaming hot, but not boiling.
3. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot, stir in the rest of the stock or water and chopped tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours or until the meat is tender and the sauce thick.
4. If using frozen peas, spread them out on a plate to thaw while the meat is cooking. Put the peas in a sieve (strainer) and pour over about half a kettleful of boiling water, so that the peas are hot when added to the cooking pot. Stir the peas into the minced beef mixture, put the lid back on and cook for a further 15 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with Indian breads.

## VARIATION

This keema is equally good made with lamb instead of beef; the cooking times remain the same.

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# Madras Beef Curry

*Individual spices are ground to a paste to give this curry an authentic flavour, far better than any shop-bought version. The aromatic-flavoured meat that has been cooked for so long almost melts in your mouth.*

## Serves 4

2 green cardamom pods, split  
5 ml/1 tsp coriander seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp crushed dried chillies  
5 black peppercorns  
2.5 ml/½ tsp salt  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
2 onions or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onions  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
700 g/1½ lb braising or chuck steak, cut into cubes  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup hot beef stock  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup thick plain yoghurt

1. Open the cardamom pods and remove the black seeds. Put them into a spice or coffee grinder with the coriander and cumin seeds, chillies, peppercorns and salt. Grind to a coarse powder. Add the ginger, one of the onions, roughly chopped, the garlic and tomato purée. Blend to a fairly smooth paste.
2. Put the beef in a glass bowl. Add the curry paste and mix well until the meat is coated. Tightly cover with clingfilm (plastic wrap) and leave to marinate in the fridge for at least 1 hour, or overnight, if you prefer.
3. Thinly slice the remaining onion. Heat half the ghee or butter with 5 ml/1 tsp of the oil in a large frying pan and cook the onion for 6-7 minutes or until beginning to turn golden. Transfer to the ceramic pot. Add the rest of the ghee or butter and oil to the pan, then cook the beef for 3-4 minutes until browned all over. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
4. In a separate bowl, blend the cornflour with a spoonful of yoghurt, then mix with the rest of the yoghurt. Gradually stir into the beef mixture. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3-4 hours or on Low for 6-8 hours, until the beef is really tender. Serve with Indian breads such as naan or parathas.

## TIP

Although not so authentic, you can save time by buying Madras curry paste, blending 45 ml/3 tbsp with 15 ml/1 tbsp water and adding it at step 2.

## VARIATION

For a change, try this recipe with lamb, cooking it for just 2½-3 hours on High or 5-6 hours on Low.

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## Kofta Curry

*Try these spicy meatballs simmered in a rich tomato and onion sauce. After the meatballs are made, they are lightly fried while the sauce starts cooking; this not only browns them, but removes most of the fat. Make sure you use good quality minced beef for the best results.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp coriander seeds  
10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon  
45 ml/3 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
4 green cardamom pods, split  
4 whole cloves  
200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup boiling beef stock  
450 g/1lb lean minced (ground) beef  
Pinch of salt

1. Heat a dry non-stick frying pan over a high heat. Add the coriander and cumin seeds and stir for a few seconds until they darken slightly. Tip them into a spice or coffee grinder and blend to a fine powder. Alternatively grind with a pestle and mortar or the end of a rolling pin in a bowl. Mix with the garam masala, chilli, turmeric and cinnamon.
2. Heat 30 ml/2 tbsp of the oil in the frying pan, add the onion and cook for 7-8 minutes until soft. Add the garlic and ground spices and cook for a further minute, stirring. Spoon half of the mixture into a mixing bowl and leave to cool. Scrape the rest of the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Add the cardamom pods, cloves and chopped tomatoes to the pot, then pour in the beef stock. Stir, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 30 minutes.
4. While the sauce is cooking, make the meatballs. Add the beef to the reserved onion and spice mixture in the bowl, season with a little salt, then mix together well. Shape into about 20 small balls.
5. Wipe the frying pan clean with kitchen paper (paper towel), and heat the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp oil. Fry the meatballs for 2-3 minutes, turning until lightly browned all over.
6. Transfer the meatballs to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon, leaving the fat behind in the pan. Put the lid back on and switch the slow cooker to Low. Cook for 3 hours or until the meatballs are cooked through and the sauce is thick. Serve with basmati rice.

## VARIATION

Try using minced lamb for a change.

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## Beef Pathia

*Also known as patia, this medium-hot curry has a distinctive sweet and sour taste, provided by a combination of tamarind and tomatoes. My version may be less bright than those served in Indian restaurants, where a powdered red food dye is usually added to the curry.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
700 g/1½ lb lean braising or chuck steak, diced  
5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
15 ml/1 tbsp medium or hot curry powder  
5 ml/1 tsp hot chilli powder  
10 ml/2 tsp ground turmeric  
10 ml/2 tsp garam masala  
Pinch of ground cinnamon  
30 ml/2 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp tamarind purée (paste)  
300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups very hot (not boiling) beef stock  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
Salt, to taste

1. Heat the oil and half of the ghee or butter in a large frying pan. Add the beef and fry until browned on all sides. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon, leaving the fat and any juices behind.
2. Add the cumin seeds to the pan and cook for a few seconds until they start to sizzle. Add the rest of the ghee or butter and the onion and cook for 6-7 minutes until beginning to soften.
3. Add the garlic, ginger, curry powder, chilli powder, turmeric, garam masala, and cinnamon. Cook for a further minute, stirring. Turn off the heat.
4. In a bowl, blend the tomato and tamarind purées with a few spoonfuls of the stock, then stir in the rest of the stock. Add to the frying pan, stir, then tip the mixture over the beef. Add the chopped tomatoes and season with a little salt.
5. Stir, then cover with the lid and cook on Low for 6-8 hours or until the beef is very tender. Serve with rice and peas.

## TIP

You can make this curry milder by reducing the strength of curry and chilli powders.

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## Beef and Lentil Curry

*Red lentils soak up the cooking juices to make a thick spicy sauce in this curry. Some plain basmati*

*rice and a dish of cucumber raita - or mango chutney if you prefer - is all that's needed to complete this easy-to-make meal.*

#### **Serves 4**

2 onions, chopped, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli purée (paste) or 1.5 ml/¼ tsp crushed dried chilli flakes  
30 ml/2 tbsp korma or other mild curry paste  
450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups very hot (not boiling) beef stock  
175 g/6 oz/1cup red lentils  
450 g/1 lb braising or chuck steak cut into bite-sized cubes  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the onion, garlic, ginger, chilli and curry paste in the ceramic cooking pot. Stir in a little of the stock and blend everything together, then pour in the remaining stock. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to Low. Leave for a few minutes while measuring and preparing the rest of the ingredients.
2. Rinse the lentils in a sieve (strainer) under cold running water, then add to the pot with the beef and tomatoes. Cover again and cook for 5-7 hours or until the meat and lentils are very tender.
3. Taste and season the curry with salt and pepper. Serve straight away with basmati rice and cucumber raita.

## **TIP**

Sweet Mango Chutney goes very well with this dish.

## **VARIATIONS**

Cubes of pork or lamb may be used for this dish instead of the beef for 4-6 hours on Low.

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## **Beef in Spiced Yoghurt**

*Since the days when the Moghuls came to India, there has been a method of cooking known as 'dum' in which a luting paste - a stiff flour and water dough - is shaped into a rope and pressed between the top of the pot and lid, so that no steam can escape. Cooking in a slow cooker covered with a tea towel produces the same effect and is used to make this 'dum gosht'.*

#### **Serves 4**

45 ml/3 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean braising or chuck steak, diced  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen chopped onion  
4 garlic cloves, crushed, or 20 ml/4 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp paprika  
5 ml/1 tsp ground ginger  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp cayenne pepper  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup strong beef stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2.5 ml/½ tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
300 ml/½ pint thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt

1. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan and fry the beef until it is browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
2. Add the remaining 30 ml/2 tbsp oil to the pan. Fry the onion, stirring continuously, for 6-7 minutes, until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, paprika, ginger and cayenne pepper and cook for a further 30 seconds. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock.
3. Season with salt and pepper, then pour the mixture over the beef. In a separate bowl, blend the cornflour with a spoonful of the yoghurt, then add the rest of the yoghurt. Stir into the beef mixture.
4. Cover with the lid, then place a folded tea towel over the lid and cook on Low for 5-8 hours or until the beef is very tender. Serve with Coconut or Saffron Rice or Mushroom Pilau.

## TIP

The steak should be lean but it is not necessary to use an expensive cut.

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## Spiced Beef and Aubergine Curry

*Although mixing or grinding your own spices is the best way to achieve the exact flavour you want, ready-mixed curry powders still produce excellent results and often contain a vast number of spices that would be expensive to buy individually. They also cut preparation time down substantially.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
2 onions, very thinly sliced, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 aubergine (eggplant), trimmed and cut into bite-sized chunks  
700 g/1½ lb braising or chuck steak, cut into 4 cm/1½ in chunks  
30-45 ml/2-3 tbsp mild or medium curry powder  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup hot (not boiling) beef stock  
2 red (bell) peppers, seeded and cut into strips  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat half the oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Add the onions and aubergine and fry for 7-8 minutes, stirring frequently until soft and beginning to colour. Tip into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Heat the remaining oil in the pan and fry the beef until browned all over. Sprinkle over the curry powder and stir-fry for a minute, then pour in the stock. Tip into the cooking pot with the red peppers and tomatoes and season with salt and pepper. Stir well.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3-4 hours or on Low for 6-8 hours, until the beef and vegetables are very tender.
4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with basmati rice and popadoms.

## TIP

Always purchase small quantities of curry powder from a store that has a high turn-over and use by the sell-by date, as ground spices quickly lose their aromatic qualities.

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## Beef Bhuna

*Bhuna is the term given to a technique in which spices are cooked in oil to bring out their flavour. In a bhuna curry, meat is added to this spice mixture and left to cook in its own juices over a very low heat to make a fairly dry dish. In the slow cooker, additional liquid is needed to tenderise the meat, giving the same results, but with a little more sauce. This is a very simple version using ready-made bhuna curry paste.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
75 ml/5 tbsp bhuna curry paste  
700 g/1½ lb braising or chuck steak, cubed  
200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes  
120 ml/4 fl oz/½ cup boiling beef stock  
Salt, to taste

1. Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan, add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes. Stir in the curry paste and cook for about 15 seconds more.
2. Add the beef and continue cooking over a medium heat for a further 3-4 minutes, stirring until the spices are very fragrant and the beef is beginning to brown.
3. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot, then stir in the tomatoes followed by the stock. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 5-8 hours, or until the beef is very tender.
4. Taste and season with salt if necessary. Serve with Carrot and Coriander Relish and warmed Indian breads.

## TIP

There's a whole range of interesting breads in the supermarkets so experiment to discover the ones you enjoy most.

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## Beef Pasanda

*This is a spicy, yet fairly mild beef curry with a thick sauce made from nuts, coconut milk and cream. For a less rich dish, use thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt instead of the cream. Serve it with Lemon-scented or Spiced Spinach Rice and a Tomato and Onion Cachumbar.*

### Serves 4

50 g/2 oz/½ cup unsalted cashew nuts  
50 g/2 oz/½ cup blanched almonds  
15 ml/1 tbsp sesame seeds  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

2 garlic cloves  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb lean braising or chuck steak, cut into 4 cm/1½ in chunks  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
6 green cardamom pods, split  
4 whole cloves  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup very hot (not boiling) beef stock  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup coconut milk  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup double (heavy) cream  
15 ml/1 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
Salt, to taste

1. Put the cashews and almonds in a non-stick frying pan over a low heat and cook, stirring frequently for 2 minutes. Add the sesame seeds and continue cooking until just starting to turn golden brown. Remove from the heat and leave to cool.
2. Tip the nuts and seeds into a spice or coffee grinder and process until the nuts are finely chopped. Blend with the ginger, garlic and 30 ml/2 tbsp cold water to make a smooth purée.
3. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of oil in the pan and fry the beef until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot using a slotted spoon, leaving the fat and juices behind in the pan.
4. Add the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp oil to the pan and cook the onion for 5 minutes. Stir in the ground coriander, cumin, turmeric, cardamom pods and cloves, followed by the nut purée. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Stir in the stock.
5. Tip the mixture over the beef, then stir in the coconut milk and cream. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 6-8 hours, or until the beef is very tender.
6. Stir in the lemon juice and salt to taste. Serve with Lemon-scented Rice and Tomato and Onion Cachumbar.

## VARIATIONS

This pasanda is equally good made with lamb or chicken thighs cooked on Low for 5-7 hours. This dish also goes well with Spiced Spinach Rice.

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## Royal Beef with Almond Sauce

*Many Indian dishes like this beef korma with a rich cream and almond sauce were inspired centuries ago by dishes from other countries such as Persia. Choose a simple accompaniment such as plain rice or naan bread and a green salad.*

### Serves 4

4 garlic cloves, crushed, or 20 ml/4 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
50 g/2 oz/½ cup blanched almonds  
60 ml/4 tbsp cold water

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
700 g/1½ lb beef, braising or chuck steak, cubed  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
6 green cardamom pods, split  
6 whole cloves  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground cinnamon  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin  
Pinch of cayenne pepper  
350 ml/12 fl oz/1⅓ cups very hot (not boiling) light beef or vegetable stock  
150 ml/¼ pint/⅔ cup double (heavy) cream  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala

1. Put the garlic, ginger and almonds in a spice or coffee grinder or small food processor and blend until finely chopped. Add the water and blend to a smooth purée.
2. Heat 15 ml/1 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan and fry the beef until browned all over. Transfer to the ceramic cooking pot with a slotted spoon.
3. Add the remaining oil to the pan and fry the onion for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the cardamom pods, cloves, cinnamon, coriander, cumin and cayenne pepper and the almond purée. Cook, stirring, for a further 2 minutes.
4. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock and cream. Season with salt and pepper and tip the mixture over the beef in the pot. Stir well.
5. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 6-8 hours or until the beef is very tender. Stir in the garam masala, then taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with basmati rice or naan bread and a salad.

## TIP

The whole spices aren't meant to be eaten, so remove them, if you prefer, before serving.

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# Fish and Seafood

Much of India is surrounded by sea, abundant with fish and seafood, and this is reflected in its range of wonderful curries. Healthy and delicious, fish is eminently suitable for the slow cooker as the gentle, even cooking ensures that it retains its shape and texture and doesn't disintegrate during cooking.

Although large whole fish won't fit into the slow cooker, it's absolutely perfect for fish steaks and fillets. Unlike meat, fish cooks relatively quickly in the slow cooker so is unsuitable for all-day cooking and many of the dishes in this chapter cook in less than 2 hours.

When buying fish and seafood, remember that if it's really fresh it shouldn't smell 'fishy'. Obviously, it's difficult to test pre-packed fish for freshness but buy from a reliable source and make sure that it looks firm and moist.

Both fresh and frozen seafood should be put in the refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible and, ideally, fresh fish should be cooked and eaten on the day you buy it.

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## Tandoori Fish with Cucumber

*This fish dish has all the lively taste that is characteristic of tandoori cooking and is a great way to prepare thick white fish fillets. Here, it is paired with a fresh-tasting sambal, a spicy relish which adds both colour and flavour. There is no need to marinate the fish as the aromatic flavours will seep into it during cooking.*

### **Serves 4**

5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin

5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric

2.5 ml/½ tsp paprika

2.5 ml/½ tsp mild chilli powder

Pinch of salt

15 ml/1 tbsp lemon juice

150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup Greek-style yoghurt

4 pieces of thick firm white fish fillet, about 150 g/5 oz each

*For the cucumber and tomato sambal:*

15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil

5 ml/1 tsp lime or lemon juice

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 small red onion, finely chopped

4 ripe tomatoes, seeded and chopped

½ cucumber, chopped

30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Blend the cumin, ground coriander, turmeric, paprika, chilli powder, salt and lemon juice together in a bowl. Stir in the yoghurt. Arrange the fish in a single layer in the ceramic cooking

- pot and spread the yoghurt mixture all over the fish. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 1-1½ hours or until the fish is opaque and flakes easily.
2. Meanwhile, to make the sambal, whisk the oil and citrus juice in a bowl with a little salt and pepper. Add the red onion and stir to coat in the dressing. Leave for a few minutes to mellow while preparing the remaining ingredients.
  3. Stir in the tomatoes, cucumber and chopped coriander. Cover and leave at room temperature until the fish is ready, or if preparing the dish in advance, chill in the fridge.
  4. Carefully transfer the fish to warmed serving plates using a fish slice. Garnish with wedges of lime or lemon and serve with rice and the sambal.
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## Keralan Fish Curry

*The combination of dried red chillies and creamy coconut milk is popular in South Indian cooking as this traditional curry illustrates. Serve with plenty of plain boiled or steamed rice to soak up the sauce and, if you like, some wedges of fresh lime to squeeze over the fish.*

### Serves 4

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric

10 ml/2 tsp paprika

Juice of 1 lime

450 g/1 lb firm white fish such as turbot, cut into large bite-sized chunks

5 ml/1 tsp mustard seeds

1.5 ml/¼ tsp fenugreek seeds

15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil

1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion

2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)

15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

1.5 ml/¼ tsp crushed dried red chillies

5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander

250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup coconut milk

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Mix the turmeric, paprika and lime juice in the ceramic cooking pot. Add the chunks of fish and stir to coat. Leave to marinade for a few minutes.
2. Meanwhile, put the mustard and fenugreek seeds in a dry non-stick frying pan over a medium heat for 1-2 minutes until they give off a spicy aroma. Tip on to a small bowl or plate.
3. Add the oil to the pan and fry the onion for 7-8 minutes until soft. Add the garlic, ginger, chillies, ground coriander and mustard and fenugreek seeds. Cook for 1 more minute, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat, then stir in the coconut milk and season with salt and pepper.
4. Pour the spicy coconut mixture over the fish and stir well. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 1¼-1½ hours or until the fish is cooked and opaque. Serve with rice and wedges of fresh lime, if you like.

## TIP

Remember that fish cooks quickly so cannot be left for too long even in the slow cooker.

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## Creamy Coconut Salmon

*Salmon is quite a firm fish and retains its shape and texture well in the slow cooker. Here it is cooked in a rich sauce made from a fragrant blend of spices, garlic and chilli. Coconut milk mellows the sauce and gives it a thick creamy texture. Serve with plain steamed or boiled rice, raita and a green vegetable.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, finely chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
1 fresh green chilli, seeded and chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
15 ml/1 tbsp lemon juice  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup coconut milk  
4 salmon steaks, each about 175 g/6 oz  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and gently fry for 5 minutes, stirring often. Add the garlic, ginger, chilli, cumin, coriander, chilli powder and turmeric and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat and stir in the lemon juice.
2. Spoon the mixture into a food processor or blender and pour in about half of the coconut milk. Blend to a smooth purée.
3. Tip the purée into the ceramic cooking pot and stir in the rest of the coconut milk. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker. Cook for 1 hour on High or 2 hours on Low.
4. Add the salmon steaks to the sauce, arranging them in a single layer and spooning some of the sauce over the top to keep the fish moist as it cooks. Cover with the lid again and cook on Low for a further 45-60 minutes or until the fish flakes easily and is tender.
5. Lift the fish on to warmed serving plates and spoon the sauce over. Serve with basmati rice and a side dish such as cucumber raita or a green vegetable dish.

## VARIATIONS

Use any firm-fleshed fish instead of salmon.

You could also serve this with Cucumber and Coriander Raita.

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## Spiced Halibut Curry

*Halibut is a firm white fish which works well in this robust tomato-spiced curry. The richness of the fish is balanced with the acidity of the lemon juice and vinegar and the sweetness of tomatoes and*

sugar, which give the sauce an almost sweet and sour flavour.

### **Serves 4**

30 ml/2 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
15 ml/1 tbsp red wine vinegar  
30 ml/2 tbsp cumin seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
700 g/1½ lb halibut fillets, skinned and cut into large bite-sized chunks  
30 ml/2 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
2 x 400 g/14 oz/large cans chopped tomatoes  
2.5 ml/½ tsp salt  
5 ml/1 tsp sugar  
15 ml/1 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Mix together the lemon juice, vinegar, cumin seeds, chilli powder and turmeric in the ceramic cooking pot. Add the fish chunks and stir to coat all the pieces. Leave to marinate for a few minutes.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for a further minute. Stir in one of the cans of chopped tomatoes, salt and sugar and heat gently until steaming hot. Pour over the fish.
3. Stir the remaining can of chopped tomatoes into the pot. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to Low. Cook for 1-1¼ hours or until the fish is tender and opaque.
4. Stir in half the chopped coriander and serve scattered with the rest, accompanied with warmed naan bread.

## **VARIATION**

Any other firm white fish such as fresh haddock can be used for this recipe.

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## **Mackerel Curry with Coconut**

*Mackerel is a popular fish in the south of India and its firm texture makes it ideal for curries. This dish from Chennai has the contrasting taste of sweet and creamy coconut and tangy tamarind.*

### **Serves 4**

About 550 g/1¼ lb whole mackerel, cleaned and cut into steaks 4 cm/1½ in thick  
6 curry leaves  
3 green chillies, left whole  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
2.5 ml/½ tsp fenugreek

5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp tamarind paste  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup hot vegetable stock  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup coconut milk  
Salt, to taste

1. Rinse the mackerel steaks under cold running water and place in a single layer in the ceramic cooking pot. Add the curry leaves and whole green chillies.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion for 6-7 minutes or until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, ginger, fenugreek and cumin seeds, turmeric, chilli powder and ground coriander and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat.
3. In a bowl, blend the tamarind with a few spoonfuls of stock, then stir in the rest of the stock. Add to the pan with the coconut milk and season with a little salt. Pour over the fish.
4. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker. Cook for 1 hour on High or for 2 hours on Low, or until the mackerel is opaque and flakes easily from the bone. Serve with plain boiled basmati rice.

## TIP

Buy large mackerel for this recipe and cut across into thick steaks (or ask the fishmonger to do this for you); cooking the fish on the bone adds to the flavour of the sauce.

---

## Fish in Spicy Tomato Sauce

*When made with the freshest fish, this simple supper with its flavoursome tomato sauce is a real winner. Serve the curry with rice or even crusty bread to make sure that you can enjoy all of the sauce.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
1 red chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp chilli paste  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground ginger  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground turmeric  
10 ml/2 tsp curry paste  
30 ml/2 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup passata (bottled strained tomatoes)  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup boiling fish or vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
700-900 g/1½-2 lb firm white fish fillets, skinned  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and cook gently, stirring, for 10 minutes until soft. Stir in the garlic, chilli, ginger, turmeric, curry paste and lemon juice and cook for 2 more minutes.
2. Add the passata to the pan and gently heat for a minute. Carefully pour the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot, then stir in the stock.
3. Lightly season the fish fillets, then add to the pot. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for about 1 hour (the fish will look opaque and flake easily when its ready).
4. Lift the fish on to warmed serving plates. Stir the chopped coriander into the sauce, then taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Spoon the sauce over the fish and serve straight away with Saffron Rice or Spiced Spinach Rice.

## TIP

Choose thick rather than thin fish fillets as they will hold their shape better. Remove any bones before cooking.

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## Mangalorean Fish Curry

*This unusual curry comes from the south west coast of India, abundant in fresh fish, seafood and coconuts. Instead of rice or Indian-style bread, it is served with tiny rice dumplings which absorb all the delicious flavours as they cook. These would normally be made by soaking rice for many hours, then grinding it by hand into flour. Fortunately, we can simply buy rice flour.*

### Serves 4

- 1 onion, roughly chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onions
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)
- 100 g/4 oz creamed coconut, roughly chopped
- 5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds
- 10 ml/2 tsp coriander seeds
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp mustard seeds
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder
- 600 ml/1 pint/2½ cups hot (not boiling) fish or vegetable stock
- 15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil
- 5 ml/1 tsp tamarind paste
- 700-900 g/1½-2lb firm white fish, skinned
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

### *For the dumplings:*

- 100 g/4 oz/1 cup rice flour
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp salt
- 90 ml/6 tbsp cold water

1. Put the onion, garlic, 75 g/3 oz of the creamed coconut, cumin, coriander and mustard seeds, turmeric and chilli powder in a food processor or blender with a few tablespoons of the fish or vegetable stock. Process until finely chopped. Add a further 150ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup of the stock and blend until smooth.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan and pour in the purée. Cook until all the liquid has evaporated and the

spices have reduced to a thick paste. Turn off the heat. Add the tamarind then gradually stir in the rest of the stock. Pour into the ceramic cooking pot, cover with the lid and switch on to High. Leave to cook for a few minutes while preparing the fish and dumplings.

3. Cut the fish into 4 cm/1½ in chunks and lightly season with salt and pepper.
4. For the dumplings, sift the flour and a pinch of salt into a bowl. Finely grate the remaining 25 g/1 oz creamed coconut and stir into the flour. Stir in the cold water and mix to a soft dough. Shape into 16 small balls.
5. Stir the fish into the curry sauce. Add the dumplings in a single layer on top, spacing them slightly apart. Put the lid back on, switch on to Low and cook for about 1 hour or until both the fish and dumplings are cooked. Taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary. Serve with steamed green beans or spinach.

## TIP

Always use floured hands when shaping dumplings and don't knead them for any longer than necessary.

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## Spiced Fish with Mango

*This is a deliciously simple way to cook firm white fish; the dried mango soaks up the coconut milk as it cooks to make a thick creamy sauce with a hint of sweet and sour.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 onion, sliced, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen chopped onion  
45 ml/3 tbsp medium curry paste  
15 ml/1 tbsp lime juice or 10 ml/2 tsp fresh or bottled lemon juice with 5 ml/1 tsp water  
400 ml/14 oz/large can coconut milk  
700 g/1½ lb firm skinless white fish, cut into large chunks  
75 g/3 oz dried mango pieces, roughly chopped  
1 red (bell) pepper, seeded and thickly sliced  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and gently cook the onion for 7-8 minutes or until almost soft. Stir in the curry paste and citrus juice and cook for a further minute, stirring. Pour in the coconut milk and stir until blended, then turn off the heat.
2. Put the fish, mango and red pepper into the ceramic cooking pot. Season with salt and pepper and then pour over the onion and coconut mixture. Gently stir to mix, then cover with the lid and cook on Low for 1-1½ hours or until the fish is opaque and flakes easily.
3. Stir in the chopped coriander, then taste and add a little more citrus juice if needed. Serve with warm naan bread.

## TIPS

If you want a less rich and lower calorie dish, substitute 150 ml/ ¼ pint/2/3 cup of coconut milk with

the same amount of vegetable stock.

Don't use reduced-fat coconut milk as it tends to separate with long slow cooking.

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## Goan Prawn Curry

*This curry is really quick and simple to make, especially if you use ready-prepared prawns. The flavours complement each other beautifully and the aroma that is produced during cooking is mouth watering.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp ground coriander

15 ml/1 tbsp paprika

5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin

2.5 ml/½ tsp cayenne pepper

1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground turmeric

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

15 ml/1 tbsp lemon juice

100 ml/¾ fl oz/scant ½ cup water

2 large shallots, finely chopped, or 30 ml/2 tbsp frozen chopped shallots

400 ml/14 fl oz/large can coconut milk

400 g/14 oz large raw prawns (shrimp), peeled and de-veined

45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Put the ground coriander, paprika, cumin, cayenne pepper, turmeric, salt and pepper into the ceramic cooking pot. Add the lemon juice, then gradually blend in the water to make a smooth paste.
2. Stir in the shallots and coconut milk. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 3-5 hours or until the shallots are very tender.
3. Stir the prawns into the sauce, replace the cover and cook for a further 15-30 minutes or until the prawns are just cooked and have turned completely pink and opaque.
4. Stir in the chopped coriander. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary, and serve the prawns and sauce on a bed of steamed or boiled basmati rice.

## VARIATION

You can use this basic sauce to make a Goan fish curry, by replacing the prawns with an equal weight of firm white fish, such as haddock, removing the skin and any bones and cutting it into 4 cm/1½ in chunks.

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## Coconut Jinga

*This is my easy version, using spring onions which don't require pre-cooking, bought curry paste and ready-cooked prawns which can be stirred into the cooked sauce about 15 minutes before serving to heat through. Traditionally, this dish is served with plain steamed or boiled rice.*

### Serves 4

1 bunch spring onions (scallions)

10 ml/2 tsp fresh or bottled lemon or lime juice  
5 ml/1 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
30 ml/2 tbsp mild or medium curry paste e.g. korma or tikka  
75 g/3 oz creamed coconut, roughly chopped  
5 ml/1 tsp tomato purée (paste)  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water  
450 g/1lb cooked shelled prawns (shrimp)  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Trim the roots and most of the dark green stalks off the spring onions and finely slice them. Put in the ceramic cooking pot and switch the slow cooker on to High or Auto.
2. In a bowl, stir the citrus juice, ginger, curry paste, creamed coconut and tomato purée into the vegetable stock or water until the coconut has dissolved. Pour this over the spring onions. Cover with the lid and cook on High or Auto for 1-1½ hours, or switch to Low and cook for 2-3 hours, until the spring onions are tender.
3. Drain the prawns in a sieve (strainer), then stir into the hot sauce. Replace the cover and cook for a further 15 minutes or until heated through.
4. Stir in the chopped coriander and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with some flaked or desiccated coconut and serve with rice.

## TIP

For the garnish, you can lightly toast the desiccated coconut by dry-frying it in a non-stick pan over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes, stirring all the time.

This dish also makes a fabulous topping for baked potatoes.

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## Kerala Prawn Curry

*Tamarind gives this dish a very distinctive flavour. It comes from the seed pods harvested from tamarind trees and is used extensively in Indian cooking. It has a unique sour and slightly sweet taste and comes in seeded and block form and also as a thick black paste, which is the quickest and easiest form to use.*

### Serves 4

5 ml/1 tsp tamarind paste  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
120 ml/4 fl oz/½ cup boiling vegetable stock or water  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
1 red chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp chilli paste  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup coconut milk  
400 g/14 oz large raw prawns (shrimp), peeled and de-veined  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the tamarind paste, cumin and turmeric in a small bowl. Add 60 ml/4 tbsp of the boiling stock or water and stir until blended.
2. Put the garlic, ginger, chilli and coconut milk in the ceramic cooking pot. Stir in the tamarind mixture and the rest of the stock or water. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 1 hour or on Low for 2 hours.
3. Stir in the prawns. Cook for a further 15 minutes on High or 30 minutes on Low or until the prawns turn pink and are just cooked through.
4. Stir in the chopped coriander, taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve with basmati rice and with wedges of lime to squeeze over the prawns, if you like.

## TIP

Tamarind paste is easy to buy in Asian grocery stores or major supermarkets.

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## King Prawn and Spinach Balti

*This easy curry with large juicy prawns has a spicy kick. The sauce is slowly simmered for several hours, then the prawns are added for the last few minutes so they are cooked but not toughened. The term 'balti' refers to the steel or iron pot in which the food is usually cooked, but a slow cooker works just as well!*

### Serves 4

100 g/4 oz creamed coconut, chopped  
450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
45 ml/3 tbsp balti curry paste  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
1 red chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp red chilli purée (paste) (optional)  
1 onion, finely chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
100 g/4 oz roughly chopped fresh or frozen cooked spinach  
400 g/14 oz peeled raw tiger prawns (jumbo shrimp)  
60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the creamed coconut in the ceramic cooking pot. Add the stock and stir until the coconut has dissolved.
2. Stir in the curry paste, garlic and chilli (if using) until blended. Add the onion, cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to Low. Cook for 2-3 hours or until the onion is very tender.
3. Meanwhile, if you are using frozen spinach, put it in a sieve (strainer) over a bowl and leave to defrost and drain at room temperature. Stir the thawed or fresh spinach into the curry mixture along with the prawns and most of the chopped coriander. Cook for a further 15 minutes or until the prawns are tender and completely pink.
4. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Serve with the remaining coriander sprinkled over and warm naan bread.

## TIP

Balti is traditionally served without a knife and fork; torn pieces of warmed naan bread are used to scoop up the curry.

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# Vegetable and Vegetarian

Indian vegetarian cuisine is incredibly varied and you'll find a great choice of mouth-watering curries in this chapter. Many are based on vegetables, others on beans and pulses and a few on eggs or paneer - a delicious fresh Indian cheese.

You don't have to be a vegetarian to enjoy these meat- and fish-free dishes.

Because food gently simmers rather than boils in the slow cooker, vegetables retain their shape and texture and are complemented by the use of spices. Slow cooking also ensures that you retain most of their nutrients as the cooking juices become part of the curry sauce.

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## Vegetable Kashmiri

*Vegetables are cooked in an aromatic yoghurt sauce and topped with a generous amount of toasted flaked almonds to add protein to this vegetarian main course. You can, of course, vary the vegetables according to your personal taste and seasonal availability. This is delicious served with parathas or deep-fried pooris.*

### Serves 4

Seeds of 2 green cardamom pods

10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds

4 black peppercorns

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground cinnamon

2.5 ml/½ tsp freshly ground nutmeg

2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder

2.5 ml/½ tsp salt

45 ml/3 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp green chilli purée (paste)

15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in chunks

½ cauliflower, broken into smaller florets

450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups hot (not boiling) vegetable stock

150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup Greek-style yoghurt

225 g/8 oz okra, thickly sliced

50 g/2 oz/½ cup flaked (slivered) almonds, toasted

1. Put the cardamom seeds, cumin seeds and peppercorns in a mortar or spice grinder and grind until fairly fine. Mix together with the cinnamon, nutmeg, chilli powder and salt.
2. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the green chilli and ginger and fry for a minute, stirring continuously. Add the ground spice mixture and continue frying for a further 2 minutes, stirring to prevent the spices sticking. Turn off the heat.
3. Put the potatoes and cauliflower in the ceramic cooking pot. Stir a little of the stock into the spice mixture, then tip over the vegetables. Stir to coat them evenly in the mixture. Pour in the rest of the stock, cover the slow cooker with a lid and switch on to Low. Cook for 3 hours.

4. Stir a few spoonfuls of the stock from the slow cooker into the yoghurt in a bowl. Add the okra and the yoghurt to the pot and stir until combined.
5. Cook for a further 2-3 hours or until all the vegetables are very tender. Sprinkle with toasted flaked almonds and serve with Indian breads.

## TIP

Use ¼ tsp of ground cardamom if you don't have the pods.

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## Aubergine Biryani

*Biryani is one of India's most famous rice dishes. Often served at festivities, it traditionally takes centre stage. This all-in-one dish is usually baked in the oven with the rice piled on top or alongside a meat or vegetable curry; here it is all mixed together. Biryanis should never be very hot and are flavoured instead with a subtle mixture of fragrant spices.*

### Serves 4

- 1 aubergine (eggplant), sliced
- 2 onions, chopped, or 90 ml/6 tbsp frozen diced onions
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)
- 15 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger
- 750 ml/1¼ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock
- 45 ml/3 tbsp sunflower oil
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin
- 5 ml/1 tsp chilli powder
- 1 yellow (bell) pepper, seeded and sliced
- 250 g/9 oz/1½ cups easy-cook (converted) basmati rice
- 40 g/1½ oz/¼ cup sultanas (golden raisins)
- Pinch of salt
- 100 g/4 oz/1 cup unsalted cashew nuts, toasted

1. Layer the aubergine slices in a colander, lightly sprinkling with salt between the layers. Leave to drain while preparing the rest of the ingredients.
2. Put one of the chopped onions (or half of the frozen diced onions) in a food processor with the garlic and ginger. Add 60 ml/4 tbsp of the stock and blend to a smooth paste.
3. Heat 30 ml/2 tbsp of the oil in a large frying pan and add the remaining chopped onion. Gently fry for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until soft and just beginning to colour.
4. Thoroughly rinse the aubergine slices under cold running water to remove the excess salt, then cut into small chunks of about 1 cm/½ in. Add the aubergine to the onion and cook for 2-3 minutes or until it starts to soften. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
5. Add the remaining 15 ml/1 tbsp oil to the pan, add the onion paste and cook for 2 minutes, stirring. Mix in the ground coriander, cumin and chilli and cook for another minute.
6. Turn off the heat, stir in a little of the stock and tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot. Add the yellow pepper and stir in the rest of the stock, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or Low for 4 or until the vegetables are tender.

7. Sprinkle the rice and sultanas into the vegetable mixture and stir. Replace the cover and cook on High for a further 45 minutes to 1 hour or until the rice is tender and most of the stock has been absorbed.
8. Turn off the slow cooker and leave for 5 minutes, then taste and season with a little extra salt, if needed. Scatter with the cashew nuts and serve with plain yoghurt.

## TIP

Bottled ginger is useful to keep in the fridge.

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## Potato and Chick Pea Curry

*Aloo chana comes from the Punjab, a northern state in India, and is typically eaten with Indian bread such as roti or naan. High in protein and a good source of iron, chick peas are used extensively in Indian vegetarian food. The slow cooker is brilliant for cooking pulses (it was first invented commercially for cooking baked beans).*

### Serves 4

225 g/8 oz/1½ cups dried chick peas (garbanzos)

1 bay leaf

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen diced onions

1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)

15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin

5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander

2 green cardamom pods, split

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli purée (paste)

150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cups vegetable stock or water

2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in chunks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the chick peas in a large bowl and cover with plenty of cold water. Leave to soak for at least 6 hours, or overnight, if preferred.
2. Drain the soaked chick peas and tip into a saucepan. Pour over just enough boiling water to cover and add the bay leaf. Bring to the boil and boil rapidly for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and leave to cool for 3-5 minutes, then tip the chick peas with the cooking water into the ceramic cooking pot. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3-4 hours or Low for 6-8 hours, until tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed.
3. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 10 minutes until beginning to turn golden, stirring frequently. Stir in the garlic, ginger, cumin, ground coriander, cardamom pods and chilli. Cook for 1 more minute. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock or water.
4. Add the potatoes to the chick peas and season with salt and pepper. Pour the onion and spice mixture on top and stir well. Replace the lid and cook on High for a further 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours, until tender. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving with warmed Indian breads.

## TIP

If you haven't time to soak and pre-cook dried chick peas, use two large cans of chick peas, drained and rinsed, instead with 60 ml/4 tbsp extra stock or water and start from step 3.

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## Aubergine Balti

*Good food does not have to be complicated or time consuming. A winning combination of vegetables, this balti is easy to make and so delicious, it is destined to become a firm family favourite. Serve with basmati rice and naan bread or chapattis to make a substantial meal.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 aubergine (eggplant), trimmed and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in chunks  
30-45 ml/2-3 tbsp balti curry paste  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
1 large potato, peeled and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in chunks  
225 g/8 oz button mushrooms  
400 ml/14 oz/large can coconut milk  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
Chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro) (optional)

1. Heat the oil in a large frying pan and fry the onion for 5 minutes. Add the aubergine and curry paste and cook for a couple of minutes, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat and stir in about half of the stock.
2. Tip the onion and aubergine mixture into the ceramic cooking pot. Add the potato, mushrooms, coconut milk and the rest of the stock. Season with salt and pepper and stir well.
3. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 4-5 hours, or until the vegetables are very tender.
4. Serve the curry with boiled or steamed basmati rice and naan bread or chapattis. If you like, you can scatter with some chopped fresh coriander before serving.

## TIP

It's not essential to peel or salt aubergines before use. Older varieties used to be bitter, but this is no longer the case.

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## Vegetable and Lentil Curry

*This is a low-fat curry, packed with vegetables and combined with lentils which cook to a delicious sauce. Sultanas add a sweetness and fruity flavour to the dish. Choose your favourite vegetables or make the most of seasonal produce.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

2 red onions, chopped  
45 ml/3 tbsp curry paste  
750 ml/1¼ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
700 g/1½ lb mixed vegetables, such as carrots, parsnips, turnips (rutabaga) or sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2 cm/¾ in chunks  
100 g/4 oz/¾ cup red lentils  
40 g/1½ oz sultanas (golden raisins)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onions for 7-8 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the curry paste and cook for a further minute. Turn off the heat and stir in a little of the stock. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the vegetables, lentils and sultanas and pour in the rest of the stock. Season with a little salt and pepper and stir well.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-5 hours or until the vegetables are tender and the lentils have cooked to a sauce. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with white or brown basmati rice.

## TIP

You can substitute ready-to-eat dried apricots for the sultanas if you prefer.

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## Vegetable Curry

*This is a satisfying main course with loads of flavour and also ensures that you get your '5-a-day'. Cut the vegetables into even-sized pieces of about 2.5 cm/1 in, so that they cook evenly.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted butter  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds  
10 ml/2 tsp garam masala  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
150 g/5 oz creamed coconut, roughly chopped  
15 ml/1 tbsp tomato purée (paste)  
600 ml/1 pint/2½ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water  
15 ml/1 tbsp fresh lime or lemon juice  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1 aubergine (eggplant), trimmed and diced  
1 red (bell) pepper, seeded and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in pieces  
1 carrot, sliced  
1 large potato, peeled and diced  
200 g/7 oz broccoli, cut into florets  
100 g/4 oz/2/3 cup frozen peas  
1 bay leaf

1. Heat the ghee or butter in a large saucepan, add the onion and fry for 6-7 minutes, until it is almost soft. Add the garlic, cumin seeds, garam masala and turmeric and cook for a further minute, stirring all the time.
2. Add the coconut, tomato purée and about half of the stock or water, and stir until the coconut has melted. Turn off the heat, stir in the citrus juice and season with salt and pepper.
3. Put the aubergine, red pepper, carrot, potato, broccoli and peas in the ceramic cooking pot. Add the bay leaf. Pour over the spicy coconut sauce. Cover with the lid, switch the slow cooker to High and cook for 3 hours or to Low for 6 hours, or until the vegetables are tender.
4. Remove the bay leaf, taste the curry and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with basmati rice or spiced naan breads.

## VARIATIONS

You can ring the changes with different vegetables such as courgettes (zucchini) instead of aubergines (eggplants) or cauliflower instead of broccoli.

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## Chick Pea Curry

*Canned chick peas make this homely curry blissfully simple. It includes pomegranate molasses, a dark and sticky reduction of pomegranate juices, which adds a sweet tartness and a rich colour. It's most commonly used in Middle Eastern cuisine, but also features in some Indian dishes.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder  
2.5 ml/½ tsp garam masala  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
10 ml/2 tsp tomato purée (paste)  
350 g/12 oz ripe tomatoes, skinned, seeded and chopped  
400 g/14 oz/large can chick peas (garbanzos), drained and rinsed  
15 ml/1 tbsp pomegranate molasses  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the onion and cook for 7-8 minutes until soft. Stir in the ginger, ground turmeric, chilli powder and garam masala and cook for a further 30 seconds. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock and tomato purée.
2. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot, then stir in the tomatoes, chick peas and pomegranate molasses. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 3-4 hours or until the tomatoes are very pulpy and the sauce is thick. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with warmed naan bread or parathas.

## TIP

You can buy pomegranate molasses in most supermarkets.

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## Aubergine and Lentil Madras

*I love this as an accompaniment to a chicken or lamb curry, but it's great with plain grilled meat or poultry, too. Lentils and aubergines are a winning combination and a few soya beans or peas add freshness and colour. Using a can of fried onions and a ready-made Madras curry paste makes this dish incredibly quick to prepare.*

### Serves 4

175 g/6 oz/1 cup red split lentils  
750 ml/1½ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water  
2 large waxy potatoes, peeled and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in chunks  
1 large aubergine (eggplant), trimmed and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in chunks  
400 g/14 oz/large can of fried onions in olive oil  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
45 ml/3 tbsp Madras curry paste  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup thick plain yoghurt  
100 g/4 oz/2/3 cup frozen peas  
Salt, to taste

1. Rinse the lentils in a sieve (strainer) under cold running water, then tip them into the ceramic cooking pot with the stock or water. Switch on the slow cooker to High and leave to cook for a few minutes while preparing the rest of the ingredients.
2. Add the potatoes, aubergine and onions to the slow cooker. In a bowl, stir the garlic and curry paste with a little of the yoghurt to blend, then stir in the rest of the yoghurt. Pour over the vegetables and lentils and stir everything together.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for a further 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours or until the lentils, potatoes and aubergine are tender.
4. Meanwhile, allow the peas to thaw in the sieve. Briefly rinse with boiling water, then stir into the curry. Cook for a further 15 minutes on High or 30 minutes on Low. Taste and season with salt before serving with warmed naan bread.

## TIP

Always buy good-quality curry pastes for the best flavour.

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## Red Lentil and Vegetable Dhal

*This dhal recipe involves no pre-cooking or frying making it quick and easy to prepare. A bag of frozen mixed grilled vegetables is a great buy - slices of red and yellow (bell) peppers, courgettes (zucchini), aubergines (eggplant) are already lightly grilled, which brings out their flavour. Combined with spiced lentils, they make a wonderful vegetarian meal. A sprinkling of nuts adds both protein and*

*some texture.*

### **Serves 4**

1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30-45 ml/2-3 tbsp curry paste  
750 ml/1¼ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
100 g/4 oz/2/3 cup red lentils  
750 g/1¾ lb bag of frozen grilled (broiled) vegetables, preferably thawed  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the onion, garlic and curry paste in the ceramic cooking pot, add a little of the stock and stir thoroughly until the curry paste is well blended.
2. Rinse the lentils in a sieve (strainer) under cold running water. Allow to drain well then add them to the pot with the remaining stock and grilled vegetables. Stir to combine, then cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low.
3. Cook for 3-5 hours or until the lentils and vegetables are very tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Serve the dhal, drizzled with a little yoghurt and scattered with toasted flaked almonds.

## **TIP**

You can use your favourite curry paste for this recipe.

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## **Egg and Lentil Curry**

*Sometimes referred to as continental lentils, 'green' and 'brown' lentils have a distinctive disc shape that is retained when cooked. Here they are simmered in a mild and creamy coconut curry sauce and served with eggs gently poached in the sauce.*

### **Serves 4**

100 g/4 oz creamed coconut  
1.2 litres/2 pints/5 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp korma curry paste or other mild alternative  
175 g/6 oz/1 cup green or brown lentils  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
4 eggs

1. Roughly chop the creamed coconut and put in the ceramic cooking pot. Pour the stock over and stir until the coconut has dissolved. Add the onion, garlic and curry paste. Switch on the slow cooker to High.
2. Rinse the lentils in a sieve (strainer) under cold running water. Allow to drain well, then add to the pot. Season with freshly ground black pepper, stir, then cover with the lid and cook for 1-1¼ hours or until the lentils are just tender and have absorbed most of the liquid.

3. Season the lentils with a little salt, then make a 4 small hollows in the mixture. One by one, break the eggs on to a saucer, then gently tip into a hollow. Put the lid back on and cook for a further 15 minutes or until the egg whites are set and the yolks are still soft, or cook for a little longer if you prefer them firmer.
4. Carefully spoon the curried lentils and eggs on to warmed serving plates. Serve at once with some warmed coriander and garlic naan bread.

## TIP

Don't add salt to lentils or pulses while cooking as it toughens them up and they will take longer to cook.

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## Eggs in Mughlai Sauce

*Mughlai cuisine dates back to the 16th century and the Moghul emperors, yet is still a popular style of cooking in Delhi and the Punjab. The dishes are characterised by aromatic and rich creamy sauces.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp cayenne pepper  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
2.5 ml/½ tsp garam masala  
2.5 ml/½ tsp salt  
15 ml/1 tbsp lemon juice  
10 ml/2 tsp tomato purée (paste)  
120 ml/4 fl oz/½ cup vegetable stock  
5 ml/1 tsp cornflour (cornstarch)  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup single (light) cream  
6-8 eggs, at room temperature  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and cook for 10 minutes, stirring from time to time until it just begins to colour. Stir in the ginger, cayenne pepper, cumin, ground coriander and garam masala and cook for a further minute. Turn off the heat.
2. Stir in the salt, lemon juice, tomato purée and vegetable stock. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot, scraping the pan well.
3. Blend the cornflour with a little of the cream in a bowl, then stir in the rest of the cream. Add to the spice mixture in the pot and mix well. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook the sauce for 2-4 hours.
4. About 20 minutes before you are ready to serve, bring a pan of water to the boil. Lower the eggs one at a time on a spoon into the simmering water, taking care not to let them drop on to the base of the pan or they will crack. When the water starts simmering again, cook for 7-8 minutes (depending on whether the eggs are medium-sized or large).

5. Plunge the eggs into cold water and leave for 2-3 minutes or until just cool enough to peel. Cut each egg in half lengthwise. Add the eggs to the sauce, replace the cover on the pot and cook for a further 15 minutes, until heated through.
6. Sprinkle with chopped coriander and serve with warmed Indian breads.

## VARIATION

Instead of hard-boiled eggs, you could add ready-cooked chicken or vegetables to the sauce and reheat until piping hot.

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## Tomato and Cashew Nut Rice

*With contrasting textures of tender vegetables and crunchy cashews in brown rice, this makes a great dish on its own or as an accompaniment to meat dishes, so is perfect if you are entertaining both vegetarians and meat-eaters.*

### Serves 4

- 1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion
- 30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin
- 275 g/10 oz/1½ cups easy-cook (converted) brown rice
- 2 carrots, peeled and coarsely grated
- 100 g/4 oz green beans, trimmed and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in lengths
- 6 tomatoes, chopped
- 750 ml/1¼ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 75 g/3 oz/¾ cup unsalted cashew nuts, toasted

1. In a frying pan, gently cook the onion in the ghee or butter for 7-8 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, ground coriander and cumin and cook for a further minute, stirring continuously.
2. Add the rice and stir for a few seconds to coat in the ghee or butter, then stir in the carrots, beans and tomatoes. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Stir in the vegetable stock, then cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker to High. Cook for 1¾ hours or until the rice is cooked and tender, and has absorbed the stock.
4. Season with salt and pepper to taste and stir in most of the cashew nuts. Sprinkle the rest of the cashew nuts on top of the rice and serve with thick plain yoghurt.

## TIP

For non-vegans, scatter some diced paneer - fresh Indian cheese - over the top just before serving.

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## Spiced Dhal with Cauliflower

*Cauliflower and potatoes are a favourite combination for vegetable curries. In this dish, they are cooked with colourful red peppers, spinach and lentils to provide a variety of complementary flavours and textures. Serve topped with a few spoonfuls of plain yoghurt for a healthy low-fat meal.*

#### **Serves 4**

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/ 4 tbsp frozen chopped onion  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
30 ml/2 tbsp mild curry paste  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
900 ml/1½ pints/3¾ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water  
175 g/6 oz/1 cup red lentils  
350 g/12 oz small new potatoes, halved  
1 small cauliflower, broken into florets  
1 red (bell) pepper, seeded and chopped  
5 ml/1 tsp salt  
150 g/5 oz bag baby spinach leaves

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and gently cook the onion for 6-7 minutes. Add the garlic, ginger, curry paste and turmeric and cook for 2 more minutes, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat and stir in a little of the stock or water - about 150 ml/ ¼ pint/2/3 cup.
2. Put the lentils in a sieve (strainer) and rinse with cold water. Drain well and tip them with the potatoes, cauliflower and red pepper into the slow cooker. Add the spicy onion mixture, then stir in the rest of the stock. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low. Cook for 4 hours or until the lentils are thick and pulpy and the vegetables are just tender.
3. Stir in the salt. Add the spinach leaves, pressing them down into the hot lentil mixture. Replace the lid and cook for a further 30-45 minutes or until the spinach has wilted.
4. Stir the spinach into the lentil and vegetable mixture and serve topped with a few spoonfuls of plain yogurt.

### **TIP**

Don't worry if the sauce looks very thick after step 2 - a lot of juices will come from the spinach as it steams in the pot.

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## **Cauliflower and Coconut Dhal**

*Always use full-fat coconut milk when cooking in the slow cooker as half-fat versions may separate during the long cooking process. If you want to reduce the fat content of this dish (or any other containing coconut milk), you can substitute stock for some or all of the coconut milk.*

#### **Serves 4**

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 onion, finely chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

45 ml/3 tbsp hot curry paste  
75 g/3 oz red lentils, washed and drained  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
1 small cauliflower, cut into florets  
400 ml/14 fl oz/large can coconut milk  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
100 g/4 oz/¾ cup frozen peas, thawed  
45 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro) or parsley  
15 ml/1 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Add the garlic, ginger and curry paste and cook for 1 minute, stirring all the time. Turn off the heat and stir in the lentils and stock.
2. Put the cauliflower in the ceramic cooking pot. Pour in the spicy onion mixture and stir to coat, then add the coconut milk. Season with salt and pepper, then stir again.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-5 hours or until the cauliflower is tender and the lentils have cooked to a pulpy sauce. Stir in the peas and cook for a further 15 minutes.
4. Stir in the coriander or parsley and lemon juice, then taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with naan bread.

## TIP

If canned coconut milk is unavailable, use 150 g/5 oz creamed coconut mixed with 400 ml/14 fl oz/1¾ cups boiling water.

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## Indian Potatoes and Okra

*Also known as ladies' fingers or bhindi, okra is used extensively in Indian cooking and its sticky juices help thicken and enrich dishes. This is an excellent main course for 2-3 when served with plenty of Indian breads such as pooris or paratha, or you can serve it as a vegetable side dish.*

### Serves 4

1 large onion, roughly chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, peeled, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 red chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp chilli purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp black mustard seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
400 ml/14 fl oz/1¾ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
175 g/6 oz okra, trimmed and sliced  
450 g/1 lb potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks  
25 g/1 oz sultanas (golden raisins)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the onion, garlic and ginger in a food processor and blend to a smooth purée (paste). Heat the oil in a large saucepan and pour in the purée and add the chilli. Cook over a low heat for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
2. Add the mustard seeds, ground coriander, cumin and turmeric and cook for a further minute. Turn off the heat. Pour in roughly a third of the stock and stir well. Tip into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Add the chopped tomatoes, okra, potatoes and sultanas to the pot. Season with salt and pepper. Pour in the rest of the stock and mix well. Cover with the lid and switch the slow cooker on to Low.
4. Cook for 4-6 hours or until the vegetables are tender. If having as a main dish, top with a spoonful of plain yoghurt and serve with rice or Indian breads.

## TIP

Always use chillis or chilli purée to suit your own taste.

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## Vegetable and Chick Pea Balti

*Ready-made curry paste flavours the mixed vegetables in this colourful contemporary curry; a good mixture of roots and softer vegetables gives a varied texture. It makes a substantial meal for four, accompanied with basmati rice and naan bread or chapattis, or could be served as an accompaniment to a meat curry for 6-8 people.*

### Serves 4

1 large onion, roughly chopped  
3 garlic cloves, crushed, or 15 ml/1 tbsp garlic purée (paste)  
3 red chillies, seeded and roughly chopped  
10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
45 ml/3 tbsp balti curry paste  
350 g/12 oz ripe tomatoes, chopped  
225 g/8 oz potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks  
225 g/8 oz butternut squash, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks  
1 carrot, peeled and sliced  
400 g/14 oz/large can chick peas (garbanzos), drained and rinsed  
30 ml/2 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
450 ml/¾ pint/2 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the onion, garlic, chillies and ginger in a food processor with 15 ml/1 tbsp cold water and blend until fairly smooth.
2. Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onion mixture and gently fry for 10 minutes, stirring often. Stir in the curry paste and cook for 1 more minute. Add the tomatoes, potatoes, squash, carrot, chick peas, lemon juice and stock. Season with salt and pepper. Mix well, then tip into the

ceramic cooking pot.

- Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2-3 hours or on Low for 4-6 hours or until all the vegetables are tender.
- Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with basmati rice and naan or chapattis.

## TIP

You could use canned tomatoes instead of fresh.

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## Paneer Korma

*Paneer is a simple fresh cheese, similar to cottage cheese, but smooth and usually served cut into cubes. Unlike most cheeses, it does not contain rennet, so is suitable for vegetarians. It is now sold in most supermarkets or you can make your own. Here it is added to a creamy spiced tomato sauce which involves no pre-frying. Serve with popadoms for simplicity or for a more substantial meal with another vegetable dish such as Indian Potatoes and Okra.*

### Serves 4

- 4 shallots, finely chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen chopped shallots
- 1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/ 1 tsp garlic purée (paste)
- 1 red chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp red chilli purée (paste)
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric
- 5 ml/1 tsp garam masala
- 200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes
- 15 ml/1 tbsp tomato purée (paste)
- 2.5 ml/½ tsp soft light brown sugar
- 150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup boiling vegetable stock or water
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 175 g/6 oz/1 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup single (light) cream
- 350 g/12 oz paneer, cut into 2.5 cm/1 in cubes

*For the paneer:*

Makes 350 g/12 oz

- 1.75 litres/3 pints/7½ cups whole milk
- 22 ml/1½ tbsp lemon juice

- Put the shallots, garlic, chilli, ground coriander, cumin, turmeric, garam masala and chopped tomatoes into the ceramic cooking pot.
- Stir the tomato purée and sugar into the boiling stock or water and carefully pour into the pot. Season with salt and pepper, stir, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours, or until the shallots are very tender.
- Put the peas in a sieve (strainer) and briefly rinse with boiling water (so that they will quickly heat when added to the cooking pot). Add to the pot with the cream. Stir well, then add the paneer and gently mix everything together. Replace the lid and cook for a further 30 minutes on High or

1 hour on Low, or until the paneer is heated through and the peas are cooked. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary and serve with popadoms or Indian Potatoes and Okra.

### **To make the paneer:**

1. Gently warm the milk over a medium heat. When it starts to boil, add the lemon juice and stir well. After 5-7 minutes, the milk will separate into curds (white lumps) and whey (thin yellow liquid).
2. Turn off the heat and drain through a sieve lined with muslin (cheesecloth). Discard the whey, or use it in baking.
3. Tie up the cloth and place it in the sieve over a bowl. Put a weight on top, a plate with a can of beans on top for example, then leave in the fridge to drip and compress for at least 6 hours, or overnight, until the cheese is firm. Use within four days.

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## **Sweet Potato and Paneer Curry**

*Sweet potatoes have a creamy texture and a sweet flavour that make a delicious combination with spices in curries. There are two types: one with bright orange flesh, the other with pale cream flesh; if possible, buy some of each for this dish. Home-made paneer works particularly well in this curry as the lemon juice makes it slightly tangier than the shop-bought version.*

### **Serves 4**

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
15 ml/1 tbsp mild curry powder  
400 g/14 oz/large can chopped tomatoes  
450 g/1 lb sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
100 g/4 oz/¾ cup frozen peas  
350 g/12 oz paneer, cut into bite-sized cubes  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion for 6-7 minutes, until almost soft. Add the garlic, ginger and curry powder and cook for a further 2 minutes. Stir in the chopped tomatoes, then tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the sweet potatoes and stock and season with salt and pepper. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2½ hours or on Low for 5 hours.
3. Meanwhile, allow the peas to defrost, then add them to the curry with the paneer and cook for a further 30 minutes on High or 1 hour on Low until the potatoes are tender.
4. Stir in the chopped coriander. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve with naan bread.

## TIP

You can buy paneer in Asian stores if you don't wish to make your own.

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## Vegetable Vindaloo

*Originally brought to Goa by the Portuguese (the 'vin' part refers to the wine or vinegar in the dish), this curry is known for its hot and fiery kick. Vindaloo curry paste makes this version quick and easy to prepare; it contains a blend of chillies, cumin, coriander and turmeric with a dash of vinegar. Serve with a cooling cucumber raita.*

### Serves 4

45 ml/3 tbsp vindaloo curry paste  
15 ml/1 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
5 ml/1 tsp soft brown sugar  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
350g/12 oz cauliflower florets (about half a head)  
3 courgettes (zucchini), thickly sliced  
400 g/14 oz/large can chick peas (garbanzos), drained and rinsed  
350 ml/12 fl oz/11/3 cups passata (bottled sieved tomatoes)  
150 g/5 oz bag baby spinach leaves  
Salt, to taste

1. Put the curry paste, lemon juice and sugar in the ceramic cooking pot. Add a few spoonfuls of the stock and stir until blended, then stir in the rest of the stock. Add the cauliflower, courgettes and chick peas. Stir the passata in well.
2. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours until the cauliflower is tender.
3. Place the spinach on top of the vegetables, pushing it down into the hot liquid. Replace the lid and cook for a further 30-45 minutes or until the spinach has wilted.
4. Stir the spinach into the vegetable mixture. Season with salt to taste. Serve with basmati rice, popadoms and Cucumber and Coriander Raita.

## TIP

Vindaloo is a hot mixture so use according to taste.

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## Vegetables with Jaipuri Spices

*Jaipur, also known as 'the pink city' is the capital of the Indian state of Rajasthan. The food from this region tends to be milder and more subtly spiced, as this delicious vegetable curry shows. This dish may also be served as an accompaniment to a meat or fish curry for 6-8 people.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion

30 ml/2 tbsp rogan josh curry paste  
250 ml/8 fl oz/1 cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water  
1 large potato, about 225 g/8 oz, peeled and diced  
2 large carrots, peeled, halved lengthways and sliced  
225 g/8 oz green beans, trimmed and halved  
4 tomatoes, skinned and seeded, if preferred, chopped  
175 g/6 oz frozen peas  
15 ml/1 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
45 ml/3 tbsp thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)  
50 g/2 oz/½ cup flaked (slivered) toasted almonds

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan, then add the cumin seeds. When they smell fragrant, stir in the onion. Cook for 6-7 minutes until starting to colour. Stir in the curry paste and cook for a further 30 seconds. Turn off the heat.
2. Gradually add the stock or water to the pan, stirring to mix. Put the potato, carrots, green beans and tomatoes into the ceramic cooking pot and pour over the spicy onion mixture.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2½ hours or on Low for 5 hours, until the vegetables are tender.
4. Meanwhile, let the peas thaw in a sieve (strainer). Pour over some boiling water to heat them and add to the cooking pot with the lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. Stir, then replace the lid and cook for a further 15 minutes on High, 30 minutes on Low.
5. Stir in the yoghurt and most of the chopped coriander. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Sprinkle with the remaining coriander and flaked almonds and serve hot with Indian breads.

## TIP

Use full fat plain or Greek-style yoghurt, or the sauce may split and separate.

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# Side Dishes and Accompaniments

It's the side dishes and accompaniments that turn an Indian curry into a special occasion. No curry would be complete without a bowl of steaming basmati rice, either plain or one of the many flavoured variations or pilaus suggested here. Many are best cooked conventionally to complement your slow-cooked curry. Mix and match to create the perfect Indian meal.

The following side dishes can either be cooked conventionally on the hob, or in the slow cooker if you have cooked your curry the day before or if you are lucky enough to have two slow cookers.

In this chapter you'll also discover recipes for vegetable side dishes such as mushroom bhaji and Bombay potatoes, lentil dhals and preserves including mango chutney.

## Cooking Rice

*White basmati rice - whether plain or cooked with spices or flavourings such as coconut - is a classic accompaniment to Indian curries and is considered to be the finest variety of rice.*

Mainly grown in northern India, in the foothills of the Himalayas and in the Punjab, Basmati rice has fine slender grains and a unique aromatic taste and texture - the word 'basmati' means 'the fragrant one'. It is also possible to buy brown basmati rice.

Ordinary long-grain rice and basmati rice do not cook well in the slow cooker as the two types require fast boiling, but 'easy-cook' (also known as 'parboiled' or 'converted') rice is very successful and this type is very popular in India where the technique of preparing it was created. In spite of its name, 'easy-cook' rice takes almost half as long again to cook as most long grain rices, but the grains always stay separate after cooking.

The whole grain rice is soaked in water and then steamed and for white rice, the bran is then removed. The parboiled rice grains are more yellow than those of normal rice, but this discolouration disappears during cooking. In this chapter, you'll find recipes for cooking rice on the hob - ideal when you are cooking a curry in your slow cooker - and also several for cooking rice in the slow cooker.

## Boiling rice

This is the easiest way to cook rice. Some varieties need to be rinsed or soaked first, so check the instructions on the packet. To accompany a main meal, allow 75 g/3 oz/1/3 cup per person.

**Pan-of-water method:** Half-fill a large pan with boiling water and add a pinch of salt (you need roughly 1.2 litres/2 pints/5 cups for every 200 g/7 oz/1 cup rice). Heat until the water boils rapidly, then add the rice and bring it back to the boil. Turn down the heat a little and cook the rice for as long as it says on the packet (usually 10-15 minutes). Test it by removing a few grains; they should be just tender. Drain through a large sieve (strainer) or fine-holed colander. If you've used ordinary long-grain or basmati (rather than easy-cook) and it looks a bit 'sticky', pour a kettle of boiling water over it, drain again and stir gently with a fork to fluff up the grains. Stir in a little butter or chopped fresh herbs if you like. To keep warm, either return the rice to the pan and cover or leave in the sieve and set it over the pan with a little boiling water in the bottom.

**Absorption method:** To cook rice in a measured amount of water (or stock, which gives it a wonderful flavour), measure the rice in a cup, then add exactly double that amount of water (plus a little salt, to taste) or stock. Heat them both in the pan to boiling point, stir once, then turn down the

heat a little. Cover the pan with a tight-fitting lid. Cook the rice for as long as it says on the pack. If any liquid is left, continue cooking without the lid for another minute. This method is perfect if you want to add flavourings to the rice such as curry leaves or whole spices.

**Saffron Rice:** Follow the absorption method of cooking rice. Soak a generous pinch of saffron strands in 30 ml/2 tbsp hot water for a few minutes. Add to the water or stock.

**Turmeric Rice:** Follow the absorption method of cooking rice, adding 5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric to the water or stock.

**Coconut Rice:** Follow the absorption method of cooking rice, substituting coconut milk for up to a third of the water or stock.

**Lemon-scented Rice:** Follow either the pan-of-water or the absorption method, adding a large strip of lemon rind to the stock or water. After cooking, add 15 g/½ oz butter and 30 ml/2 tbsp fresh or bottled lemon juice to the rice and stir well. If serving with a dish that has a very rich and creamy sauce, leave out the butter.

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## Pilau Rice with Whole Spices

*This dish makes a great alternative to plain boiled rice: aromatic basmati rice is subtly flavoured and coloured with saffron, cumin, cardamom and bay leaves and cooked with plump sultanas.*

### Serves 4

Pinch of saffron strands  
600 ml/1 pint/2½ cups boiling vegetable or chicken stock  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
1 onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
2.5 ml/½ tsp cumin seeds  
6 green cardamom pods, split  
2 bay leaves  
250 g/9 oz/11/3 cups easy-cook (converted) basmati rice  
25 g/1 oz sultanas (golden raisins)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Stir the saffron into the boiling stock in a bowl and set aside to infuse. Heat the ghee or butter in a frying pan, add the onion and cook gently for 7-8 minutes until almost soft.
2. Stir in the garlic, cumin seeds, cardamom pods and bay leaves and cook for a further minute, stirring constantly. Add the rice and sultanas and stir to coat in the ghee.
3. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot. Pour over the stock and season with salt and pepper. Stir everything together.
4. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to High. Cook for 50 minutes to 1 hour or until the rice is tender and has absorbed all the stock. Fluff up the rice with a fork, taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving.

## TIP

To turn it into a main course suitable for vegetarians, simply scatter with some toasted flaked (slivered) almonds or cashew nuts and paneer chopped into cubes.

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## Mushroom Pilau

*The delicious juices from the mushrooms soak into the rice as this dish cooks; the flavours are enhanced by ginger, lemon and lots of chopped fresh coriander, which adds colour too. This can be served on its own as a light lunch or as an accompaniment to a meat or chicken curry.*

### Serves 4

*30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter or 30 ml/2 tbsp sunflower oil*

*2 shallots, finely chopped, or 30 ml/2 tbsp frozen chopped shallots*

*1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic pur e (paste)*

*10 ml/2 tsp freshly grated or bottled ginger*

*175 g/6 oz/2½ cups button mushrooms, sliced*

*250 g/9 oz/11/3 cups easy-cook (converted) basmati rice*

*Thinly pared strip of lemon rind (optional)*

*2.5 ml/½ tsp garam masala*

*500 ml/17 fl oz//2¼ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock*

*Salt and freshly ground black pepper*

*60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)*

1. Heat the ghee, butter or oil in a large frying pan. Add the shallots and gently cook for 5 minutes, then stir in the garlic, ginger and mushrooms and cook for 2-3 minutes or until the mushrooms are beginning to colour and soften.
2. Stir in the rice, lemon rind, if using, and garam masala. Turn off the heat and tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot. Pour over the stock and season with salt and pepper. Mix everything together.
3. Cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to High. Cook for 50 minutes to 1 hour or until the rice is tender and has absorbed all the stock. Fluff up the rice with a fork, taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving.

## TIP

If you prefer a stronger mushroom flavour, use field or large open mushrooms and roughly chop them instead of slicing.

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## Spiced Spinach Rice

*This is a great way to make an all-in-one rice and vegetable dish. It is subtly spiced, so is ideal for serving with a variety of curries. You can, of course, reduce the spices if serving with a very hot curry or make it hotter with the addition of a finely chopped red chilli or 5 ml/1 tsp of chilli pur e (paste).*

### Serves 4

*15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil*

*1 onion, finely chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen diced onion*

*1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic pur e (paste)*

*5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander*

*5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin*

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
750 ml/1¼ pints/3 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
225 g/8 oz easy-cook (converted) rice  
150 g/5 oz bag baby spinach leaves

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the onion and cook gently for 7-8 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the garlic and spices and cook for a further minute, stirring continuously. Turn off the heat and transfer the mixture to the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Pour the stock over the onion mixture and season with salt and pepper. Stir, then cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker to High. Cook for another 30 minutes.
3. Stir in the rice, replace the lid and cook for 35 minutes.
4. Lay the spinach on the surface of the rice, replace the lid and cook for a further 20-25 minutes or until the spinach has wilted and the rice is cooked and tender.
5. Stir to mix the rice and spinach together before serving.

## TIP

If you can't find baby spinach leaves, use ordinary spinach leaves instead, removing any tough stalks and chopping the leaves roughly before adding to the rice.

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## Sweet Potatoes with Courgettes

*The colourful appearance and sweet flavour of this vegetable dish goes particularly well with lamb and chicken curries and can be served as an alternative to rice or Indian breads.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp sunflower oil  
1 onion, chopped, or 45 ml/3 tbsp frozen chopped onion  
30-45 ml/2-3 tbsp mild curry paste e.g. korma  
600 ml/1 pint/2½ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
2 large sweet potatoes (about 750 g/1¾ lb), peeled and cut into large bite-sized chunks  
450 g/1 lb potatoes, peeled and cut into large bite-sized chunks  
2 small courgettes (zucchini), trimmed and thickly sliced  
Pinch of salt

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Stir in the curry paste and cook for a minute or two, stirring all the time. Stir in a few spoonfuls of the stock.
2. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot, then add the sweet potatoes, potatoes and courgettes. Pour in the rest of the stock and add a pinch of salt. Stir well, then cover with the lid and switch on the slow cooker.
3. Cook on High for 2-3 hours or on Low for 4-6 hours or until the vegetables are very tender.
4. Serve topped with a few spoonfuls of plain yoghurt.

## TIPS

The courgettes will be very soft at the end of cooking, so if you prefer them to be firmer, add them halfway through.

You can substitute 175 g/6 oz/1 cup thawed frozen peas for the courgettes, adding them about 15 minutes before the end of cooking time.

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## Bombay Potatoes

*These simple spiced potatoes are one of the most popular Indian side dishes. Traditionally, they are made by parboiling them first, then frying in oil and they need frequent stirring to prevent sticking. It's so much simpler to cook them in the slow cooker and with much less oil, making them a healthier alternative.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli paste

5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander

5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric

90 ml/6 tbsp hot (but not boiling) vegetable stock or water

700 g/1½ lb potatoes, peeled and cut into 4 cm/1½ in chunks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the ghee or butter and oil together in a small frying pan. Add the chilli, ground coriander, cumin and turmeric and stir over a medium heat for 30 seconds. Turn off the heat and stir in the stock.
2. Put the potatoes in the ceramic cooking pot and season with salt and pepper. Pour over the spice mixture and stir well.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours or until the potatoes are very tender.
4. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Stir in some diced tomatoes and chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander, if you like, before serving.

## TIP

If you like, you can stir in some skinned and diced tomato and chopped fresh coriander (cilantro) at the end of cooking.

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## Spinach and Potato Curry

*Sag aloo is a popular side dish for meat curries and can be served instead of, or as well as, rice. For convenience, I use a bag of ready-washed baby spinach leaves, but you can substitute ordinary spinach or chard, if you prefer. You can add these with the potatoes, but they have a much fresher flavour and brighter colour if added halfway through cooking time.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
1 onion, thinly sliced, or 45 ml/ 3 tbsp frozen diced onion  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp hot chilli powder  
100 ml/3½ fl oz/scant ½ cup very hot (not boiling) water  
2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into 2.5 cm/1 in dice  
Salt to taste  
150 g/5 oz bag baby spinach leaves

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the cumin seeds and onion and cook for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, turmeric, garam masala and chilli powder and cook for 1 minute, stirring. Turn off the heat and pour in the water.
2. Put the potatoes in the ceramic cooking pot and pour over the spice mixture. Season to taste with salt. Stir well to coat, then cover and cook on High for 1 hour or on Low for 2 hours.
3. Stir the potatoes, then add the spinach to the cooking pot, placing on top of the potatoes, so that it will steam in the heat. Replace the lid and cook for a further 1-2 hours on High or 2-3 hours on Low or until the potatoes and spinach are tender.
4. Stir the spinach into the potatoes, and taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving.

## TIP

You will need a large slow cooker if you are going to use fresh spinach.

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## Mushroom Bhaji

*It's important to pre-fry the mushrooms to give them a good brown colour. This is also lovely made with tiny whole baby button mushrooms. If you like a more pronounced mushroom flavour, use chestnut mushrooms or large open or field mushrooms, halved, then sliced.*

### Serves 4

15 ml/1 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
1 small onion, chopped, or 30 ml/2 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée  
350 g/12 oz button mushrooms, thickly sliced  
5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander  
5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin  
2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp salt  
10 ml/2 tsp tomato purée (paste)  
60 ml/4 tbsp hot (not boiling) light vegetable stock or water  
30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro) or parsley

1. Melt the ghee or butter in a frying pan and cook the onion for 3-4 minutes. Add the garlic and mushrooms, turn up the heat a little and cook for 5 minutes, or until the mushrooms and onion are slightly browned.
2. Add the ground coriander, cumin, turmeric and chilli powder and cook for a further 30 seconds. Turn off the heat and stir in the salt, tomato purée and stock. Tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or Low for 4 hours or until the mushrooms and onions are very tender.
4. Stir in the chopped coriander or parsley. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving.

## TIP

The tomato purée helps to flavour and thicken the juices, but you can leave it out if you prefer.

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## Lentil Dhal with Toasted Almonds

*Dhal (or dal) is one of the staples of Indian cooking. Traditionally, it has a sauce-like consistency, but here it is a little thicker; perfect for scooping up with pieces of warm naan bread or chapattis. This is an ideal accompaniment for spicy hot or medium chicken or meat curries.*

### Serves 4

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil  
1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion  
2 garlic cloves, crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
10 ml/2 tsp cumin seeds  
10 ml/2 tsp mustard seeds  
10 ml/2 tsp ground turmeric  
5 ml/1 tsp mild chilli powder  
5 ml/1 tsp garam masala  
225 g/8 oz/1 cup split red lentils, washed and drained  
400 ml/14 fl oz/12/3 cup very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock  
400 ml/14 fl oz/12/3 cup coconut milk  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
15 ml/1 tbsp lime juice or 10 ml/2 tsp lemon juice  
60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)  
25 g/1 oz/¼ cup flaked (slivered) almonds

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the onion and cook for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, ginger, cumin and mustard seeds, turmeric, chilli powder and garam masala. Cook for a further minute or two, stirring all the time.
2. Stir in the lentils to coat in the spicy mixture. Turn off the heat and stir in about half of the stock, then tip it all into the ceramic cooking pot.
3. Add the remaining stock and coconut milk to the pot and season with salt and pepper. Stir well, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours, or until the lentils are soft. Give it another stir about 20 minutes before the end of cooking time, to prevent the lentils

from sticking to the bottom.

4. Stir in the lime or lemon juice with 45 ml/3 tbsp of the chopped coriander. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary (you may also want to add a little more citrus juice).
5. Spoon into a warm serving dish and serve sprinkled with the rest of the coriander and flaked almonds.

## TIP

You can also serve this on its own with naan bread.

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## Makhani Dhal

*Makhani is the Hindustani word meaning 'with butter' and this dhal is a classic dish from the Punjab in northern India. Traditionally, it is cooked over a very low flame for several hours giving it a rich flavour and smooth texture; the slow cooker gives equally good results.*

### Serves 4

225 g/8 oz/11/3 cups dried split black lentils (urad dal)  
30 ml/2 tbsp ghee or unsalted (sweet) butter  
1 large onion, finely chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onions  
2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed, or 10 ml/2 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
2 green chillies, seeded and finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp green chilli purée (paste)  
15 ml/1 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
10 ml/2 tsp ground coriander  
10 ml/2 tsp ground cumin  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
2.5 ml/½ tsp chilli powder  
1.5 litres/2½ pints/6 cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water  
2 bay leaves  
400 g/14 oz/large can red kidney beans, drained  
2 tomatoes, quartered, seeded and chopped  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup double (heavy) cream  
2.5 ml/½ tsp garam masala  
60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the lentils in a bowl and cover with cold water. Leave to soak for a few minutes while preparing the rest of the ingredients. Cook the onion in the ghee or butter in a large frying pan for 6-7 minutes until almost soft.
2. Add the garlic, green chillies, ginger, ground coriander, cumin, turmeric and chilli powder. Cook for 1 more minute, stirring. Stir in about 150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup of the stock or water into the pan, then tip the mixture into the ceramic cooking pot. Add the bay leaves.
3. Rinse the lentils in a sieve (strainer) under cold running water and add to the pot. Pour in the rest of the stock or water, cover with the lid and cook on Low for 4-5 hours or until the lentils are tender.
4. Briefly rinse the kidney beans with boiling water to warm them and drain. Add to the cooking pot

with the tomatoes, cream and garam masala. Replace the lid and cook for a further hour. Stir in the chopped coriander and season with salt and pepper to taste.

## VARIATIONS

You can reduce the ghee or butter a little and use Greek-style yoghurt instead of cream for a healthier dish.

For a vegan version, replace the butter with oil and the cream with thick coconut milk.

## TIP

Dried split black lentils or urad dal are available from Indian food stores and some major supermarkets.

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## Tarka Dhal

*Lentils are one of the world's oldest crops; they are grown all over southern India, where tarka dhal is eaten as an everyday staple. A good source of protein, B vitamins and iron, red lentils cook more quickly than most other pulses to make a thick pulpy purée. In this dish they are cooked with tomatoes and simply flavoured with ginger, chilli and fresh coriander. Tarka, a mixture of spicy seeds, chilli and garlic sprinkled on at the end, gives the dish some zing.*

### Serves 4

225 g/8 oz red split lentils

2.5 ml/½ tsp ground turmeric

10 ml/2 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 5 ml/1 tsp green chilli purée (paste)

200 g/7 oz/small can chopped tomatoes

1 litre/1¾ pints/4¼ cups very hot (not boiling) vegetable stock or water

60 ml/4 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

*For the tarka:*

15 ml/1 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds

10 ml/2 tsp black mustard seeds

2 garlic cloves, finely sliced

Pinch of dried red chillies

1. Put the lentils in a bowl and cover with cold water. Leave to soak for a few minutes while preparing the rest of the ingredients. Rinse them under cold running water in a sieve (strainer), drain, then tip into the ceramic cooking pot.
2. Add the turmeric, ginger, chilli and tomatoes. Pour in the stock or water. Stir, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or Low for 4 hours or until the lentils are very tender and have absorbed most of the liquid. If possible give the mixture a stir about half an hour before the end of cooking time to prevent it sticking.
3. Meanwhile, make the tarka. Heat the oil in a small frying pan and cook the cumin and mustard seeds for a few seconds. Add the garlic and dried chillies and fry, stirring constantly for 1-2 minutes or until the garlic is pale golden.

4. Stir the chopped coriander into the dhal and season with salt and pepper. Spoon into a warmed bowl and serve with the tarka drizzled over the top.

## TIP

Use the tarka to spice up other lentil dishes.

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## South Indian Pumpkin

*When cooked, pumpkin develops a sweet flavour and makes the perfect contrast for hot and spicy curries. It has a lovely orange hue and is particularly good with chicken and lamb curries.*

### Serves 4

- 30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil
- 1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion
- 15 ml/1 tbsp black mustard seeds
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground coriander
- 5 ml/1 tsp ground cumin
- 5 ml/1 tsp garam masala
- Pinch of dried chilli flakes
- 150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup water
- 1 small pumpkin, about 750 g/ 1¾ lb, peeled, seeded and cut into small chunks
- Salt, to taste

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 6-7 minutes until almost soft. Stir in the mustard seeds and cook for 30 seconds more.
2. Add the ground coriander, cumin, garam masala and chilli flakes and cook for a further 30 seconds, stirring. Turn off the heat and stir in the water.
3. Put the pumpkin in the ceramic cooking pot and season with salt. Pour over the spicy onion mixture and stir well to coat the pumpkin.
4. Cover with the lid and cook on High for 2 hours or on Low for 4 hours until the pumpkin is tender. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.

## TIP

If pumpkin is unavailable, use butternut squash or other orange-fleshed squash instead.

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## Potato and Cauliflower Curry

*Known as gobi aloo, this is popular in northern India and makes a great alternative to serve with meat dishes instead of rice. This is also good as a light supper dish, served with an egg or sprinkled with cheese.*

### Serves 4

- 30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil
- 1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion

1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
5 ml/1 tsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
5 ml/1 tsp cumin seeds  
2.5 ml/½ tsp coriander seeds  
5 ml/1 tsp ground turmeric  
Pinch dried chilli flakes  
1 small cauliflower, cut into florets  
2 large potatoes, peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks  
150 ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup very hot (not boiling) light vegetable stock or water  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the onion for 7-8 minutes, until almost soft. Stir in the garlic, ginger, cumin and coriander seeds, turmeric and chilli flakes. Fry, stirring continuously for 2 minutes.
2. Add the cauliflower and potatoes and stir until coated in the mixture. Stir in the stock or water and seasoning to taste.
3. Tip into the ceramic cooking pot, cover with the lid and cook on High for 3 hours or on Low for 6 hours, or until the vegetables are tender.
4. Stir gently, then taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary before serving.

## TIP

Add a couple of skinned, seeded and chopped tomatoes with the vegetables for added colour and flavour.

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## Sweet Mango Chutney

*No Indian meal would be complete without this classic chutney with its rich vivid colour and fruity flavour. It complements both mild and hot curries and is especially good with chicken dishes. In restaurants it is often served as a dip with crisp popadoms before the main course arrives.*

### **Makes 450 g**

4 firm mangoes (slightly under-ripe ones are fine)  
120 ml/4 fl oz/½ cup cider or white wine vinegar  
200 g/7 oz/scant cup caster (superfine) sugar  
1 garlic clove, crushed, or 5 ml/1 tsp garlic purée (paste)  
30 ml/2 tbsp grated fresh or bottled ginger  
1.5 ml/¼ tsp crushed dried red chillies  
2 bay leaves  
2.5 ml/½ tsp salt

1. Peel the mangoes and remove the stones, then roughly cut the flesh into small chunks. Put in the ceramic cooking pot with the vinegar. Stir, then cover with the lid and cook on High for 1½ hours or on Low for 3 hours, stirring the mixture halfway through cooking time.
2. Add the sugar, garlic, ginger, chillies, bay leaves and salt and stir until the sugar has dissolved.

Replace the lid and cook for a further 1½ hours on High or 3 hours on Low.

3. Take off the lid and cook on High for a further 1 hour, stirring every 20 minutes or so, or until the chutney is reduced to a thick consistency.
4. Remove the bay leaves and spoon the hot chutney into warmed, sterilised jars and seal immediately.
5. When cold, store the jars in a cool, dark place and leave the chutney to mature for at least 2 weeks before eating. Use within 1 year. Once opened, keep it refrigerated.

## TIP

For a hotter version, double the dried red chillies or add 2 finely chopped green chillies instead.

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## Apricot and Almond Chutney

*In this deep-golden coloured chutney, infused with the flavours of orange, coriander and turmeric, the juices from the butternut squash are soaked up by dried apricots as they slowly cook together. The flaked almonds add a wonderful texture. This is particularly good with creamy and coconut-based curries, such as kormas.*

### Makes 1.75 kg

400 g/14 oz/2 cups golden caster or white caster (superfine) sugar

300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups cider or white wine vinegar

1 butternut squash, weighing about 900 g/2 lb

1 large onion, chopped, or 60 ml/4 tbsp frozen diced onion

Finely grated zest and juice of 1 orange

275 g/10 oz/1¼ cups ready-to-eat dried apricots, chopped

1.5 ml/¼ tsp ground turmeric

10 ml/2 tsp coriander seeds

10 ml/2 tsp salt

100 g/4 oz/1 cup flaked (slivered) almonds

1. Put the sugar and vinegar in the ceramic cooking pot and switch to High or Auto. Heat while preparing the remaining ingredients, stirring after about 20 minutes to help dissolve the sugar.
2. Halve the butternut squash and scoop out the seeds. Peel off the skin, then cut the flesh into cubes of about 1 cm/½ in. Add to the pot with the onion, orange zest and juice, apricots, turmeric, coriander seeds and salt. Mix well.
3. Cover with the lid and switch to Low or leave on Auto. Cook for 5 hours, stirring occasionally towards the end of cooking time. After 4 hours, the chutney should have a fairly thick consistency. If there is still a lot of liquid, remove the lid, switch to High and cook for the last hour uncovered.
4. Stir in the flaked almonds, then spoon the hot chutney into warmed, sterilised jars and seal immediately.
5. When cold, store the jars in a cool, dark place and leave the chutney to mature for at least 2 weeks before eating. Use within 1 year. Once opened, keep refrigerated.

## TIP

Although this is particularly good with kormas, you can serve it with any curries.

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## Fresh Green Chutney

*This is a vibrant green chutney which makes a great accompaniment to hot and spicy curries - it looks stunning simply drizzled across the top. You can also serve it as a dip before a meal with mini popadoms. Because it is made with fresh herbs, it will only keep for a day or two in the fridge.*

### Serves 4

45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh mint

45ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1 green chilli, seeded and finely chopped, or 10 ml/2 tsp green chilli purée (paste)

10 ml/2 tsp fresh or bottled lemon juice

150ml/¼ pint/2/3 cup plain yoghurt

Pinch of salt

1. Put the mint, coriander and chilli in a bowl and stir in the lemon juice. Add the yoghurt and mix well. Season to taste with a little salt.
  2. Alternatively, wash and dry a large handful of mint leaves and a large handful of coriander leaves and pat dry on kitchen paper. Put in a small blender with the chilli, lemon juice and half the yogurt. Pulse until the herbs are finely chopped. Tip into a bowl, stir in the rest of the yoghurt and season with salt.
- 

## Tomato & Onion Cachumbar

*Serving a simple vegetable side dish adds freshness, colour and texture to an Indian meal. Tossing the onion in the dressing for half an hour before mixing with the other ingredients helps to mellow the flavour. Salt draws out some of the juices from the tomato and cucumber, making them firmer and crunchier.*

### Serves 4

1 red onion

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

10 ml/2 tsp red wine vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper

6 firm ripe tomatoes

10 cm/4 in piece cucumber

2.5 ml/½ tsp salt

30 ml/2 tbsp chopped fresh or thawed frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Cut the onion into quarters and slice very thinly. Whisk the oil, vinegar and pepper together in a bowl. Add the onion slices and mix well. Set aside.
2. Meanwhile, cut the tomatoes and cucumber into fine dice. Put in a sieve (strainer) over a bowl or in the sink and sprinkle with the salt. Leave to drain for 30 minutes. Add to the onion along with

the coriander and mix well.

---

## Carrot and Coriander Relish

*This is a cooling accompaniment for hot and spicy curries, or can be served as a simple dip with popadoms before a meal. Sprinkling the cucumber with salt draws out some of the moisture which would otherwise dilute the yoghurt. It also gives the cucumber a crisper texture.*

### Serves 4

350 g/12 oz carrots, peeled

2.5 ml/½ tsp salt

10 ml/2 tsp fresh or bottled lemon juice

45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

30 ml/2 tbsp groundnut (peanut) or sunflower oil

15 ml/1 tbsp black mustard seeds

1. Coarsely grate the carrots into a bowl. Sprinkle with the salt and lemon juice and stir in the chopped coriander.
2. Heat the oil in a very small pan over a medium heat. Fry the mustard seeds for 20-30 seconds or until they start to pop. Tip the hot seeds and oil over the carrots and stir well.

## NOTE

Although best made fresh, this relish can be stored in a covered bowl in the fridge for 2-3 days.

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## Cucumber and Coriander Raita

*This cooling combination will enhance any Indian meal, especially one that includes some hot dishes. Leave the skin on the cucumber for colour, flavour and texture.*

### Serves 4

½ cucumber, grated

1.5 ml/¼ tsp salt

300 ml/½ pint/1¼ cups thick plain or Greek-style yoghurt

45 ml/3 tbsp chopped fresh or frozen coriander (cilantro)

1. Put the cucumber in a stainless steel or plastic sieve (strainer) and sprinkle with the salt. Leave to drain for 15 minutes, then press out some of the juices with a back of a spoon.
  2. Tip the cucumber into a bowl and stir in the yoghurt and coriander. Cover and chill in the fridge until needed. Garnish with a sprig of fresh coriander before serving, if you like.
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# Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Introduction	4
Choosing a Slow Cooker	5
Using and Caring For Your Slow Cooker	6
Safety	7
Cooking Times	8
Tips for Slow Cooking Curries	9
Notes on the Recipes	11
Chicken and Duck	12
Lamb and Pork	29
Beef	47
Fish and Seafood	58
Vegetable and Vegetarian	69
Side Dishes and Accompaniments	86