

Makhani Sauce

Easy · Vegetarian · enough for ± 4 dishes · 50 min

Makhani sauce is the base under a whole range of Indian dishes. In India almost every restaurant makes its own version and uses it for butter chicken, paneer makhani, aloo makhani and broccoli makhani.

The sauce turns thick and smooth from the cashews and from the tomatoes cooking covered for a long time in their own liquid. That is why almost no water goes in.

Allow about an hour. Most of that time the pan sits covered on a low heat.

Spiciness. This is the amount of chilli as it is used in India. For a milder dish, change only these two things: leave out the green chillies and use half the Kashmiri chili powder. The rest of the recipe stays the same.

Tip. Swap the butter for a plant-based one for a vegan sauce. Freeze the sauce in portions of about 250 ml, which is enough for one dish.

Ingredients

To fry

- 2 tbsp sunflower oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds (jeera)
- 3 to 4 medium onions, sliced
- 10 to 15 garlic cloves
- 2.5 cm fresh ginger, roughly chopped
- 3 to 4 green chillies

Ground spices

- 2 tbsp Kashmiri chili powder (mild, mostly there for the colour)
- 1 tbsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp kasuri methi (dried fenugreek leaves)
- 3 to 4 green cardamom pods

To simmer

- 1 kg tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 50 g cashew nuts, unsalted
- a small handful of coriander stems with their roots
- salt to taste
- 2 tbsp butter
- hot water, only if it threatens to cook dry

Method

1. Put a large, deep pan over medium heat. Add 2 tbsp oil, 1 tsp cumin seeds and the sliced onions, and fry the onions until light golden brown.
2. Add the garlic, ginger, green chillies, all the ground spices and the green cardamom pods. Mix well and cook for one more minute.
3. Now add the 1 kg chopped tomatoes, the cashews, the coriander stems with their roots, salt to taste and 2 tbsp butter. Mix and cook for 5 minutes over medium-high heat.
4. Lower the heat, put the lid on and let everything cook gently for 25 to 30 minutes. Stir now and then so nothing catches on the bottom.
5. The tomatoes release their own liquid, so no extra water is needed. If it does threaten to cook dry, add a splash of hot water, but not too much.
6. Once the tomatoes are cooked, turn off the heat and let it cool to room temperature. Hot sauce spatters in the blender and loses colour.
7. Put the mixture in a blender and blend completely smooth. In a hurry, you can blend in a few ice cubes to cool it faster.
8. Pour the purée through a sieve and push it through with a spoon. This takes out the last skins, seeds and fibres.
9. Done. Let the sauce cool and divide it into tubs or freezer bags. It keeps a few days in the fridge and months in the freezer.