

Indian Masala Chili

Swick

Serves 6 to 8 | Active Time: 30 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour

Step 1: Gathering & Preparing Your Mise en Place

- 1 lrg onion, diced
- 1 orange pepper, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1/2 to 1 jalapeño, finely minced
- 2 tsp curry powder, or to taste*
- 2 tsp Chili Powder
- 1 tsp gr turmeric
- 1 tsp gr cumin
- 1/2 tsp gr coriander
- 1/4 tsp gr cardamom
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/8 tsp cayenne, or to taste
- 3/4 cup red lentils
- 1/2 to 1 tsp sea salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 - 28 oz can diced tomatoes (preferably fire-roasted)
- 1 1/2 cups cooked kidney beans (1 - 15 oz can)*
- 1 1/2 cups cooked chickpeas (1 - 15 oz can)**
- 1 1/2 cups cooked black beans

For this recipe, like so many others, you can easily play around with using different ingredients and/or different spice combinations. This particular combination just happens to work both visually, texturally and flavorwise.

For the this recipe, we used this Chili Powder blend, which is not super spicy. If using another chili powder, you may need to adjust the amount—the same goes for the curry powder.

Step 2: Cooking the Chili

- 1 to 2 tbsp oil, optional
- 3 cups water, more as needed*
- 1 to 2 tbsp sweetener, optional

To start, heat a large pot over medium heat. Once hot, add the onions and a good pinch of salt and dry-sauté the onions (or use a couple of tablespoons of oil) and let cook until soft and translucent—a bit of color is perfectly fine. If the pot gets too dry, add a touch of water to help release the onions.

Next, add the garlic and jalapeño and let cook for about a minute. Once the garlic just starts to turn a light golden color, add the spices and let cook for another 30 seconds or so. If needed, add a touch of water (or oil) so that the spices don't burn.

At this point, add the orange peppers, red lentils, and water. Bring the mixture to a boil and then reduce the heat and let simmer for about 30 minutes, or until the lentils are almost cooked through. Check the lentils from time to time, if needed, add more a bit more water to ensure they are fully submerged.

The reason we add the lentils first is that we often find that they don't cook very well when mixed with tomato. The acid in the tomato seems to make them take forever to cook.

Note, for a crunchy texture, the orange peppers can be added a bit later in the process.

Once the lentils are almost fully cooked, add the tomato paste, diced tomatoes, and cooked beans. Note: Kidney beans, chickpeas, black beans or any combination of these work well in this recipe; however feel free to experiment with other beans, if desired. Let the chili continue to cook for another 30 to 60 minutes (or longer if desired). The amount of time really depends on how you like your chili.

Once everything has fully cooked and the flavors have come together, taste for seasoning—adding more salt and/or spices as desired.

If needed, add a touch of sweetener, such as agave or even mango chutney to the chili.

Step 3: Serving the Chili

- freshly chopped cilantro
- lemon wedges
- sliced or minced jalapeño
- sliced green onions or diced red onion
- Cashew Sour Cream or Tahini Sauce

While the chili is delicious served on its own, it's even better with a bit of fresh cilantro, a squeeze of lemon, a few slices of jalapeño and a big dollop of Cashew Sour Cream or Tahini Sauce.

This chili can definitely be made the day before and any leftovers will keep for a few days in the refrigerator.