

Chana Masala | Curried Chickpeas

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 1 hour

Chef's Notes

Dried chickpeas that have been soaked and cooked can definitely be used for this dish. Canned chickpeas are much quicker and still produce great results.

Step 1: Cooking the Onions

To start, first finely dice the onions. Then heat a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-low heat and add the oil. Once melted, add the onions followed by the salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 30 minutes or until soft and golden.

*Note: If desired, omit the oil and sweat the onions with a bit of vegetable stock or water.

Meanwhile, prepare the rest of your mise en place.

Step 2: Preparing Your Mise en Place

To prepare your mise en place, first crush the garlic into a paste. Finely chop the ginger and mince the chilies. Depending on how spicy you like your curry, you may want to remove some of the ribs and seeds. Next, core and dice the tomatoes into medium dice. Drain and rinse the chickpeas under cold water and set aside.

*Note: For the best flavor and results, soak and cook about 1 cup or so of dried chickpeas from scratch. Using canned chickpeas is faster but the flavor and texture of the dish is not as good as it could be.

Remember to stir the onions occasionally and adjust the heat downward, if necessary. They need to cook slowly until they become a nice, even golden color.

Next, using a spice grinder or mortar and pestle, finely grind the coriander followed by the cumin. Lastly measure out the cayenne, turmeric and Kashmiri powder.

*Kashmiri powder can be substituted with regular chili powder.

Step 3: Cooking the Dish

Once the onions are soft and golden, add the garlic, ginger and chilies. Stir to coat with the oil and let cook for a minute or so until they release their aroma. Then add the spices and fry just until they release their fragrance.

Next, turn the heat up to medium, add the tomatoes and stir to combine. Then add the salt and cook until the tomatoes start to break down and soften, about 10 minutes. Once the tomatoes are soft, add the chickpeas and water. Stir to coat with the onions and spices. Bring the mixture to a quick boil and then turn down the heat to low. Cover but leave the lid slightly ajar. This will allow the moisture to evaporate very slowly, while the chickpeas cook. Let this simmer and cook for about 20 minutes in total, stirring occasionally to ensure nothing is sticking. After about 10 minutes, check to see how much moisture remains. You want it to reduce and thicken, but still have some liquid.

Meanwhile, you can prepare the garnish.

Step 4: Finishing the Dish

While the chickpeas cook, roll the lemon to release its juices and then cut in half. Roughly chop the cilantro and measure out the yogurt.

Check on the chickpeas. Once almost all of the liquid has evaporated, squeeze the lemon juice over top and let cook for another minute or so. To finish the dish, turn off the heat and stir in the yogurt.

NOTE: Either plain non-dairy yogurt, [Cashew Cream](#) or full-fat coconut milk work well in this recipe.

Just before serving, fold in the cilantro and test for seasoning.

Served with rice, this delicious vegetarian dish is hearty enough to be served as a main course. However, it's also great served with a variety of other dishes such as dal and grilled pappadums.