

PRAWN MALAI CURRY

Ingredients:

King Prawns: 500 gms - the bigger the better! (smaller prawns are also fine) - The prawns in this picture are from the local grocer.. which reminds me haven't had a feast in a while!

Onion paste: 1 medium sized onion ground to a fine paste

Ginger paste: 1 tbsp

Garlic paste: 1/2 tsp (this is my personal preference and not part of the original recipe. you can ignore it if you like)

Coconut milk: 1/2 cup. I vary this depending on my guests' spice tolerance level. If I want a more authentic and spicy taste, I stick to 1/2 cup. However, sometimes I add more coconut milk when I need to tone down the spice.

Turmeric Powder: 1/2 tsp

Chilli Powder: 1/4 tsp or more depending on your spice tolerance level

Cumin seeds: 1/2 tsp

Garam Masala Powder: 1/4 tsp

Cinamon stick: 1/2 inch

Dried Bay leaf: 2

Sugar: 1/4 tsp

Oil: Use a neutral oil (I use a blend of Canola and Sunflower oil)

How I did it:

- Wash, de-vein, clean prawns. I like to remove the head and the vein but leave the tail behind. Put 1/4 tsp of turmeric powder and sprinkle a little bit of salt on the prawns. Mix this gently and keep it in the refrigerator until the Masala is ready.
- Use a heavy bottomed pan to cook this curry. Add oil. Once hot, add the bay leaf, cinnamon stick, sugar and cumin seeds. Let the cumin seeds crackle for about 10-20 seconds. Add the onion paste. Fry this until it turns brownish and sticks together as lumps. Do this on low heat to avoid burning. This may take 10 to 15 mins.
- To this fried onion paste, add the ginger paste, garlic paste, turmeric, chilli powder and salt. Fry this for 1-2 minutes until it is cooked and blends in with the masala.
- Take out the pre-marinated Prawns and add it to the masala now. Stir this to ensure that the prawns are coated well with the spices and the prawns turn a nice pink/brownish color. (2 to 3 mins).
- When the prawns turn pinkish, add the coconut milk. If you are using thick coconut milk like I did, you should add 1 cup of warm water along after adding the coconut milk. This curry is about your preference of coconut and spices. Remember that we have added sugar earlier, prawns are naturally sweet and coconut milk is also sweet. I strongly suggest you go slow on the coconut milk and taste it before adding more coconut milk. If the gravy is thick, add hot water into this to bring it to the right consistency. I alter the quantity of coconut milk and water to suit the palate of my guest.
- Add some garam masala powder (a spice mix readily available in an indian grocery store) to this curry now. Let it cook on medium heat for another 7-8 mins until the coconut milk is cooked and comes together with the curry. Prawns cook really fast, so make sure you don't overcook them.
- Goes best with steamed white rice :)