

## A timeless ritual: Ghugni

**Serves: 3-4**

**Preparation time: 8 hours soaking + 15 mins preparation [Mis en Place]**

**Cooking time: Up to 1.5 hours including boiling the chickpeas.**

A healthy vegetarian snack though it does require a little bit of advance planning.

### **Ingredients:**

Black dried Chickpeas [*Sookha Kaala Chana*]: 1 cup

Ginger: 1 medium slice for boiling and 1 tbsp finely chopped for the masala

Garlic: 1 tbsp, finely chopped

Onion: 1 cup finely chopped

Oil: 1 ½ tbsp. [I used Mustard oil as that is used traditionally and I like it's pungent smell and taste. You can use your regular cooking oil if you prefer]

Cumin seeds: 1/2 tsp

Cinnamon stick: 1 inch,

Bay leaf (dried): 1, medium sized

Dried red chilli: 1-2 (as per your tolerance).

Red onion: 1 cup, finely chopped

Dry Mango powder (Aamchoor): 2 ½ tsp

### **Ingredients for the spice paste:**

Turmeric powder: 1/8 tsp or a generous pinch

Chilli powder: ½ tsp

Coriander powder: 1 tbsp

Cumin powder: 1 ½ tsp

Water: 2 tbsp

### **Ingredients for garnishing:**

Onions: 1, finely chopped

Green chillies: 4-5, finely chopped

Lime: 1-2, cut anyway to squeeze the juice on the cooked ghugni.

### **How I did it:**

1. Wash and soak the *Sookha Kaala Chana* overnight or for about 8 hours in water.
2. Wash it again. In a pressure cooker, add the *Kaala chana*, sufficient water making to cover the chickpeas as well as extra to make sure there is enough room for the chickpeas to expand in volume, a pinch of salt & a slice of ginger. Start the pressure cooker on high heat. After the steam builds up [first whistle], lower the heat to cook for another 15 mins. If using an open pot, make sure the chickpeas are cooked through - You should be able to crush them if you press them between two fingers. They should retain their shape and not be mushy at all. Allow the steam to release on it's own. Discard the slice of ginger. Strain the mix, reserving the liquid for cooking.
3. In a deep bottomed pot or a wok / *Kadhai*, heat 1 tbsp mustard oil. Bring it to a smoking point, and then let it cool down. If using regular oil, simply heat the oil and move on to the next additions. Add cumin seeds, dry red chilli, cinnamon stick and bay leaf. Let the aroma release in the oil. Reduce heat if necessary, making sure the spices do not burn.
4. Next, add the finely chopped ginger and garlic. Fry for about 2 mins on low heat.
5. Add the finely chopped onions and a pinch of salt to season the masala. Fry on low-medium heat stirring continuously for about 7-8 mins until almost done.
6. While the onions are frying, mix together all the ingredients listed under 'Spice Mix' and add next.
7. Continue to cook the masala for another 2-3 mins until there is no raw smell of any masala.
8. Next add dry mango powder (*aamchoor*) & the drained and boiled *Kaala Chana*
9. Increase heat to high and continue to stir making sure the masala sticks to the *kaala chana*.
10. Now keep adding 2-3 ladles of the reserved boiling liquid and continue cooking on low-medium heat until the liquid is absorbed by the *Chana*. The liquid additions should be enough to make sure the *Chana* has some extra liquid. The idea is to slowly infuse all

the flavour from the liquid into the *Chana* while cooking the spices. This will help all the flavours to infuse into the *kaala chana*.

11. Repeat this process until all or most of the liquid is used up. Remember that the cooking liquid already contains salt. Taste often to adjust the salt if needed.
12. If serving later, heat up the chana, adding a little water to make it moist. We don't want this to be too dry. If adding water, adjust the level of salt.
13. Serve in bowls or a plate, garnished with chopped onions, green chillies and lime. Traditionally, this is served with chooda ka bhooja or lightly spiced and roasted beaten rice. I find this tastes great on it's own too.

Notes:

- Chop the ingredients for garnishing just before serving. The freshness of the onions, green chilli and lime will elevate your snack to another level.
- I spend a lot of time cooking this ghugni slowly. It helps to infuse flavours to these chickpeas and I find it totally worth the time and effort.

Sublime Palate