



# CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

SERVINGS: 6 ACTIVE TIME: 45 mins TOTAL TIME: 45 mins

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Chicken Tikka Masala is quite possibly the most accessible dish within Indian cuisine and is a great way to dip a toe into the water of the unknown for first-timers. Creamy, tangy and a great team player with basmati rice and Indian flatbread, Naan, Chicken Tikka Masala is a hearty and satisfying dish that will be a hit with newbies and connoisseurs alike.

## Ingredients

### For the Chicken

- > 1 1/2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- > 1/2 cup greek or whole milk yogurt
- > 1 garlic clove, minced
- > 1 teaspoon garam masala
- > 1 teaspoon cumin
- > 1 teaspoon coriander
- > The juice of a lemon

### For the Sauce

- > 1 onion, diced
- > 5 cloves garlic, minced
- > 1 tablespoon minced ginger
- > 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- > 1 28oz can diced tomatoes
- > 1 cup heavy cream
- > 1/2 cup water
- > 2 teaspoons garam masala
- > 1 teaspoon cumin
- > 1 teaspoon coriander
- > 1 teaspoon ground cardamom

### For the Rice

- > 2 cups basmati rice
- > 3 cups water
- > 1 2 inch cinnamon stick
- > The zest of a lemon

## Directions

1. Begin by zesting a lemon. Gather the lemon zest in a bit of plastic wrap and store it in the fridge to be used later. Cut the lemon in half and squeeze the juice from it into a gallon sized zip-top bag (it doesn't matter if the seeds get in there, we're making a marinade), and mix along with it the yogurt, minced garlic clove, garam masala, cumin and coriander listed in the "chicken ingredients," section. Add a pinch or two of salt and a crack or two of black pepper and then seal the top and mix thoroughly. Next add the chicken thighs to the bag, squeeze as much air out of the bag as possible and let marinate in the fridge for about 4 hours.
2. About 30 minutes before the chicken finishes marinating, measure the basmati rice into a small mixing bowl and add enough water to cover the rice. Let soak for 30 minutes. Pour into a fine mesh strainer and rinse thoroughly with cold water. Shake out as much water as you can over the sink and then allow to drain briefly over the mixing while you attend to the chicken.
3. Once the chicken has finished marinading, cover a baking sheet in foil and then set a wire rack into the center of it. Fold a paper towel in half a couple of times and drizzle a little bit of oil onto it. Lightly rub the paper towel across the wire rack to apply a little oil which will help keep the chicken from sticking.

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## Shopping List

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|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1 1/2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs | <input type="checkbox"/> 28oz can diced tomatoes | <input type="checkbox"/> garam masala      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> greek or whole milk yogurt                     | <input type="checkbox"/> 1"-2" piece of ginger   | <input type="checkbox"/> ground cumin      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heavy cream                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> 6 garlic cloves         | <input type="checkbox"/> ground coriander  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> basmati rice                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> a lemon                 | <input type="checkbox"/> ground cardamom   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tomato paste                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> an onion                | <input type="checkbox"/> 2" cinnamon stick |

Remove chicken thighs from the bag, scrape as much of the marinade off as possible and then lay the pieces out on the rack. Set an oven rack approximately six inches away from the broiler in your oven and light the broiler.

4. Measure three cups of water and pour into a small sauce pot. Cover with a lid and bring to a boil over high heat. In a separate, medium sauce pot, melt two tablespoons of butter or heat two tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat. Add the rice, cinnamon stick and lemon zest from earlier and stir lightly to coat in the fat. Mix in the boiling water from the other pot and bring back to a simmer over high heat. Once the water is simmering, reduce heat to low and cover. Let simmer for 15 minutes and then turn off the heat and allow the rice to steam for another 5 minutes. Note: Do not open the lid until it's had at least 5 minutes to steam. Resist the urge!
5. Once you've set the 15 minute timer for the rice, the broiler should be good and hot. Put the baking sheet with the chicken on it into the oven and let broil for 7 minutes. Remove from the oven and flip the thighs over. Put back under the broiler for another 6 minutes or until completely cooked through. Remove from the oven and set aside to cool slightly.
6. In a large skillet, melt two tablespoons of butter and add in the diced onions. Allow to sauté over medium heat for about 10 minutes, only stirring now and then to allow the onions to caramelize a little bit. Add in the minced garlic and ginger and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Next mix in the tomato paste, garam masala, cumin, coriander, cardamom and a pinch of cayenne, if you'd like, for a little heat. If I find the pan is a little dry, I'll mix in a splash or

two of the tomato juice from the can of diced tomatoes we'll be using in a few minute. Allow to cook for approximately two minutes, stirring frequently to keep the spices from burning. Once you've had a chance to develop some flavor, mix in the can of diced tomatoes and the 1/2 cup of water. Stir to thoroughly combine and allow to simmer for about 5 minutes to let the sauce thicken. Season with salt and pepper.

7. While the sauce is simmering and thickening, the chicken should now be cool enough to handle. Cut the chicken into bite-sized pieces. Note: If you are having naan with your dinner, now would be a good time to brush a little oil on it and warm it in the oven (or toaster oven). Mix the cut chicken and a cup of heavy cream into the sauce and allow to simmer for a few minutes to warm the chicken back up and bring the sauce together. Taste the sauce and make any flavor adjustments necessary. I usually find myself adding salt and heat more often than not.
8. While the sauce is finishing up, take two forks and lightly fluff up the rice. Fish out the cinnamon stick and discard. Spoon the rice into a serving dish and set on the table. Remove the chicken and sauce from the heat and spoon into a separate dish. Serve family style with a side of warm naan.



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