

Marathi-Style Lamb Shank Recipe

Ingredients:

2 lamb shanks

Marinade:

1 teaspoon crushed dried red chili
1 tablespoon ginger-garlic paste* (refer below)
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
3 tablespoons yogurt
1 tablespoon lime juice
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Roasted Spice Blend:

4 dried red chilies
5cm cassia bark or cinnamon stick
8 cloves
8 green cardamom pods
2 black cardamom pods
2 tablespoons coriander (cilantro) seeds
1 teaspoon sesame seeds

Sauce:

3 large onions
5 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 1/2 tablespoons ginger-garlic paste* (refer below)
1 1/2 teaspoons ground turmeric
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 tablespoon chopped coriander (cilantro) leaves

Garnish:

Shredded scallions

Method:

Put the lamb shanks into a shallow dish. Mix together the ingredients for the marinade and apply to the lamb shanks, massaging well. Cover and leave to marinate in the fridge for 4-6 hours. To prepare the roasted spice blend, dry-fry the dried chilies, spices and sesame seeds in a heavy-based frying pan over a medium heat for 2-3 minutes until they crackle, shaking the pan constantly. Allow to cool, then grind to a powder, using a spice grinder, pestle and mortar or mini-processor; set aside.

For the sauce, thinly slice two of the onions; finely chop the other one and set aside. Heat the oil in a flameproof casserole or heavy-based deep pan. Add the sliced onions and fry until softened and golden. Add the chopped onion and sauté until softened and brown in color, then add the ginger-garlic paste and sauté for 2-3 minutes to lose the raw taste. Stir in the turmeric and roasted spice blend and sauté for 30 seconds.

Add the lamb shanks to the casserole or pan and sauté to seal all over, then add the tomato paste, salt and 100 ml water, and bring to a simmer, stirring. Cover and cook over a low heat or transfer to a preheated oven at 180 degrees Celsius and cook for about 45 minutes until the lamb shanks are tender. Uncover for the final 10 minutes' cooking.

Remove the lamb shanks from the sauce and place on a warmed platter; keep warm. Whiz the sauce in a blender until smooth, then pass through a sieve into a clean pan and reheat gently.

Finally, stir in the chopped coriander (cilantro).

Serve the lamb shanks with the sauce poured over and garnished with shredded scallions.

***Ginger-garlic paste:**

This is widely used in Indian recipes. To prepare, blend equal quantities of peeled garlic and ginger with 10% of the total weight in water, using a blender or mini-processor. The paste should be smooth and very fine. Store in a sealed container in the fridge. If you wish to keep the ginger-garlic paste for longer, add 5% vegetable oil and 2% lemon juice as you blend the paste; this improves the keeping quality and lightens the color of the paste. You can always freeze ginger-garlic paste in an ice-cube tray for future use.

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