

Chicken Curries

Restaurant-style curries are stir-fries. They are not stews which are given a long, slow cooking. There are no cauldrons of chicken Madras, chicken korma or whatever bubbling away in the restaurant kitchen waiting for a portion to be spooned out. Restaurant curries are cooked to order and in portions for 1 or 2 people only.

The restaurant chef will tend to pre-cook large batches of chicken in some curry base and refrigerate it until needed. When the time comes for the chef to make the curries the chicken can be cooked extremely quickly.

The home cook can adopt some of the curry chef's methods in order to achieve a good facsimile of a restaurant curry. That means we have to :

- make our own [Curry Base](#)
- give the chicken an initial cooking before adding it to the curry

Cooking the chicken is the first stage in making your curry so you can do it just before you start the curry itself. It is also possible to cook the chicken some time in advance, let it cool to room temperature and then refrigerate it for later. This is ideal if you are planning to make a number of curries or are entertaining guests. When it's time to make the curries all you have to do is stir fry each one for a very short period.

ingredients

350g chicken breast meat (trimmed weight)

1 × 15ml spoon groundnut oil

4 × 15ml spoons [Curry Base](#)

2 × 15ml spoons water

method

1. Trim the chicken of all fat and tissue. Cut the chicken breasts into fairly large pieces. You are aiming to get about 18 pieces although 1 or 2 more is not a problem.
2. Heat the oil in a 20cm heavy bottomed pan over a low heat.

3. Add the chicken and stir round until all the pieces are coated in oil.
4. Raise the heat to medium and gently stir-fry until the chicken is starting to turn white.
5. Add the Curry Base and water, stir to mix and bring to the boil. Boil the chicken, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes. The liquid should be obviously boiling and not just simmering.
6. At the end of the cooking time the chicken should still be simmering in enough sauce to cover the bottom of the pan and bubble around the pieces of chicken. If the sauce starts to sizzle add a little boiling water to ensure that the sauce keeps simmering and does not start frying.
7. Transfer the chicken and sauce into a bowl and set aside while you begin making the curry. Try and leave the chicken long enough for it to have cooled down sufficiently to have firmed up and absorbed some of the cooking juices.
8. Alternatively, you can let the chicken cool to room temperature and then refrigerate it until needed. This is ideal if you have a number of curries to make or are entertaining guests.
9. I must stress that you should refrigerate the chicken immediately after it has cooled to the point where it won't heat up other foodstuffs in your refrigerator. When you come to re-heat the chicken you should make sure it is piping hot all the way through before serving it.



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