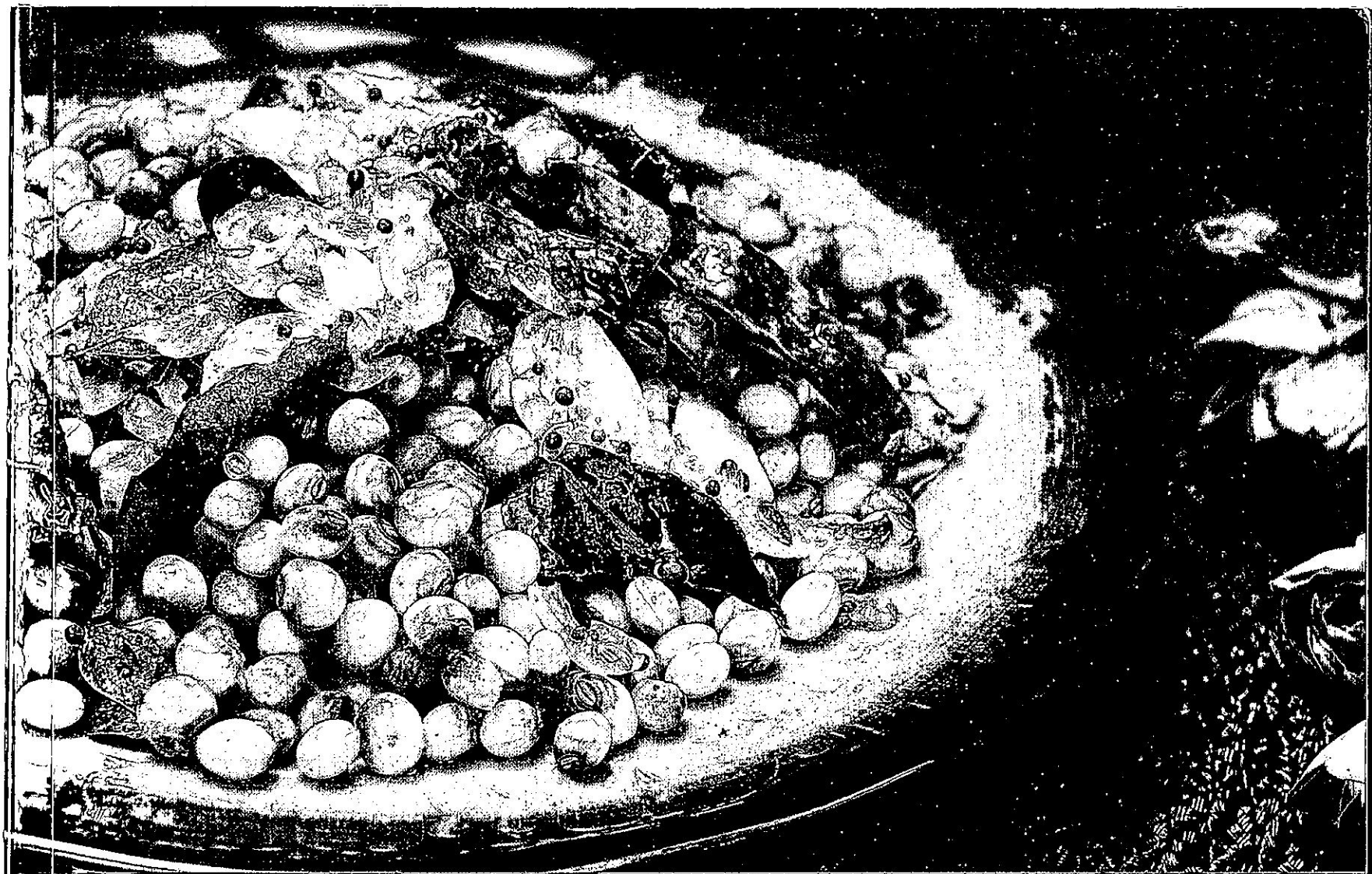




The Indian Slow Cooker

50 HEALTHY, EASY, AUTHENTIC RECIPES | Anupy Singla

Chicken Tikka Masala

SLOW COOKER SIZE: 5-QUART • COOKING TIME: AT LEAST 2 HOURS TO MARINATE, THEN 6 TO 8 HOURS ON HIGH • YIELD: 14 CUPS (3.31 L)

There are many theories for how this dish came about. One is that a Bangladeshi-British chef in the United Kingdom came up with the idea to add tomatoes and cream to the original tandoor-cooked chicken and *masala*. Regardless, the popularity of chicken *tikka masala* in the West, especially in Great Britain, is indisputable.

I modified the recipe for the slow cooker and eliminated the step of first grilling the chicken. It still tastes great. If you prefer, grill the chicken before adding it. But try it my way first—you may just find you like it and don't want to bother with the extra step.

Chicken:

2 cups (473 mL) plain yogurt
3 tablespoons (44 mL) lemon juice
1 (1-inch [2.5 cm]) piece ginger, peeled and grated
5 cloves garlic, peeled and grated
1 tablespoon (15 mL) paprika
1 teaspoon –1 tablespoon (5–15 mL) red chile powder
2 teaspoons (10 mL) ground cinnamon
2 teaspoons (10 mL) black pepper
2 teaspoons (10 mL) salt
3 pounds (1.36 kg) boneless, skinless chicken, cut into 2-inch pieces

1. Whisk together all the ingredients except the chicken in a deep mixing bowl. Add the chicken and mix gently until all the pieces are coated.
2. Cover and refrigerate at least 2 hours, or, ideally, overnight.

Masala:

6 medium tomatoes
3 medium yellow or red onions, peeled and cut into large pieces
6 cloves garlic, peeled
4–6 green Thai, serrano, or cayenne chiles, stems removed
2 (6 oz [50 g]) cans tomato paste
2 tablespoons (30 mL) garam masala
2 tablespoons (30 mL) ground coriander
1 tablespoon (15 mL) red chile powder
1 tablespoon (15 mL) salt
1 tablespoon (15 mL) brown sugar
3 tablespoons (44 mL) blanched sliced almonds (optional)
1 teaspoon (5 mL) ground cinnamon
½ cup (125 mL) water
6 cardamom pods, crushed slightly in a mortar and pestle
1 cup (250 mL) heavy cream
1 cup (201 g) chopped fresh cilantro
Chopped onions, for garnish
Chopped green chiles, for garnish

Chicken Tikka Masala (continued)

1. Bring a pot of water to a boil on the stovetop. Cut an X into the non-stem end of each tomato with a sharp knife and add the tomatoes to the boiling water. Cook for about 2 minutes, or until the peel starts to curl back. Pull the tomatoes out of the water with tongs, allow them to cool, and peel them. Roughly chop the tomatoes.

2. In a food processor grind the onions, garlic, green chiles, tomato paste, *garam masala*, coriander, red chile powder, salt, brown sugar, almonds, cinnamon, and water until completely smooth. Be patient, as this might take 5–10 minutes. Stop and scrape down the sides as needed.

3. Add the tomatoes to the food processor and pulse a few times until they break down but are not completely blended. Put this mixture in the slow cooker, along with the crushed cardamom pods.

4. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, slowly add the marinated chicken to the slow cooker.

Discard the remaining marinade to make a thicker base for the chicken, or add it to the slow cooker for a thinner *masala*.

5. Cook on high for 6 to 8 hours. If you want an even thicker sauce, remove the lid an hour before the cooking time ends.

6. Add the cream and cilantro. Garnish with the chopped onions and green chiles. Serve with *roti* or *naan*.

Try This! If you want to add another layer of flavor to the dish, brown the marinated chicken in oil on the stovetop before adding it to the slow cooker. You can also grill the chicken after marinating and serve it with toothpicks as an appetizer.

To make this dish in a 3½-quart slow cooker, halve all the ingredients and proceed with the recipe. A half recipe makes 7 cups (1.66 mL).