



Black Pepper Butter Chicken

This quick, tasty recipe is my version of a Punjabi dish, kali mirch murgh makhani (literally black pepper chicken with butter). It's nothing like the fluoro-orange butter chicken of Indian restaurants (which I also love!), nor is it as spicy as the amount of pepper, garlic and ginger might suggest. The yoghurt and lime juice give it a nice tang; I like Meredith Dairy natural sheep milk yoghurt for its thickness and clean flavour. The tomato salad adds a great splash of colour. I really enjoy a glass of pinot noir with the spice in this dish – like the ones from Soumah in the cool Warramate Foothills of the Yarra Valley.

Serves 4



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup natural yoghurt
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- ¼ cup grated ginger
- 3 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, coarsely crushed
- 650g chicken thigh fillets, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 125g butter
- 1 red onion, finely sliced
- Salt flakes, to taste
- 2 stems (¼ cup) curry leaves
- 2 teaspoons strained lime juice
- Steamed basmati rice, for serving

Tomato Salad

- 200g grape tomatoes, quartered
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, chopped
- 4 green onions, chopped

METHOD

1. Combine yoghurt, garlic, ginger, pepper and cumin.
2. Add chicken pieces, stir well, cover and refrigerate for 2-3 hours.
3. Make Tomato Salad: combine all ingredients. Set aside.
4. Melt 100g of the butter in a heavy-based frying pan over medium heat.
5. Add onion and a good pinch of salt, cover and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until it starts to colour.
6. Add chicken and yoghurt mixture and cook for 5 minutes or so over low-medium heat, stirring often, until chicken is just cooked through.
7. Meanwhile, melt remaining butter in a small saucepan, add curry leaves and fry until crisp.
8. Stir lime juice through the chicken and pour curry leaves and butter over the top.
9. Serve with steamed rice and Tomato Salad on the side.