



Coriander & Mint Sauce

This slightly spicy herb sauce is inspired by one that Ajoy Joshi serves at Nilgiri's Indian Restaurant in Cremorne; it's a riff on hari chutney the traditional accompaniment to that colourful crunchy street-side snack called chaat. I was tempted to call it a chutney, until I remembered Ajoy explaining that, unlike European chutney, traditional Indian chatnis aren't cooked, they're a blend of herbs and spices used to add a touch of freshness to cooked dishes (see video below for an example). The word chutney comes from the Hindi 'chatni', meaning 'to lick' or 'to eat with hearty appetite', referring to chutney's role as an appetite stimulant. This vibrant green sauce certainly makes me want to lick the plate when I drizzle it over anything! I usually serve it with baked chicken or prawns accompanied by a wedge of lime, so I don't add any lime to the sauce itself, but if you're serving it with something else add a good squeeze of lime juice to the finished sauce.

Serves 2 as an accompaniment

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 small brown onion, finely sliced
- Salt flakes, to taste
- ½ cup mint leaves, roughly chopped
- ½ cup coriander leaves and stems, roughly chopped
- 2 teaspoons crushed garlic
- 2 teaspoons finely grated ginger
- 1 medium green chilli, seeded and finely chopped
- ½ teaspoon dried green peppercorns
- ½ teaspoon fennel seeds
- 2 tablespoons coconut cream



METHOD

1. Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat, add onion and a good pinch of salt and cook for about 10 minutes, until tender but not coloured.
2. Meanwhile, blitz mint, coriander, garlic, ginger, chilli, peppercorns and fennel seeds together to form a paste.
3. Stir paste into the onion and cook for a further 4–5 minutes, until it's aromatic and the oil separates.
4. Stir in coconut cream and cook for a few more minutes, until oil separates again.
5. Blitz again to give a smooth sauce.
6. Transfer to a serving dish and set aside. Serve at room temperature.