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South Indian Vegetable Curry

Ingredients

1 large courgette or 2 small
A small head of broccoli
A handful of green beans
2 carrots
1 medium potato
A piece of fresh coconut, about 40g
A handful of unsalted cashew nuts
1 tablespoon of toasted sesame oil
2 fat cloves of garlic
A small piece of fresh ginger
1 tablespoon of sunflower oil
1 level teaspoon of mustard seeds
6-7 fresh curry leaves
5-6 shallots
Salt and freshly milled black pepper
1 level teaspoon of chilli powder
1 heaped teaspoon of turmeric
2 large or 5 small vine tomatoes
250ml vegetable stock
250 ml coconut milk
Fresh coriander

Preparation

1. 1. First wash and prepare the vegetables. Cut the courgette, broccoli and green beans into small pieces. Peel the potato and carrots then chop them into small pieces too. [You can use other combinations of vegetables instead if you wish.]
2. 2. Grate the fresh coconut and chop the cashew nuts very finely. Heat the sesame oil in a wok over a low heat, then stir-fry the coconut and cashew nuts gently for a few minutes to brown them. Remove them from the heat, allow to cool and then grind together into a paste and set aside to be added later.
3. 3. Peel and chop the ginger finely, peel and crush the garlic then blend them both together into a paste.
4. 4. Heat the sunflower oil in a large wok and add the mustard seeds
5. be warned, they will pop! After a minute or two, add the fresh curry leaves. Stir in the ginger and garlic paste then the shallots, and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes to soften the shallot. Next sprinkle in a little salt and a grinding of black pepper, the chilli powder, turmeric and the tomatoes, chopped, and cook for another minute or two.
6. 5. Add the carrot and potato and cook gently for about 5 minutes, then add the broccoli, beans and courgette and cook for a further 5 minutes, stirring constantly to prevent them from sticking. Stir in the coconut and cashew paste. Pour in the hot stock and then the coconut milk, a little at a time, stirring to mix them in well. Simmer and stir occasionally for 20-25 minutes, or until the vegetables are cooked through and soft. Serve, sprinkled with fresh coriander leaves, accompanied by naan bread or a portion of rice.

Cooks Note

This vegetarian curry is packed full of flavour but can be fairly hot. If you prefer your curry milder, you could reduce the mustard seeds and spices, or add more coconut milk to reduce the heat.