

CURRY

IN India, Burma, and the East Indies, the preparation of curry, with the necessary accompaniment of chutneys and properly-cooked rice, is considered the all-important branch of cookery.

It certainly is very popular here, too, and quite as much so in hot weather as in cold; so here are some good recipes for making various curries. Strangely enough, many men in New Zealand are experts at this dish, and I hope some of them will send us in some specials.

Real curry is *not* just a stew with curry-powder mixed in with flour or cornflour thickening! Although many a harassed housewife with a quantity of left-over stew has thus camouflaged it for next day's lunch!

General Base for all Curries

Melt $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. butter in saucepan, heating until butter is clear. Use lard or dripping at present. Drop in 4 or 5 sliced and salted onions and fry golden brown. Add 3 tablespoons of good curry powder, stirring continuously until mixture is practically dry. Squeeze in the juice of a lemon (or lime), add a finely-cut apple, and cook for a few more minutes, stirring all the time. Gradually stir in one cup of coconut milk (see below); add a little freshly-grated coconut or uncooked desiccated coconut, and a tablespoon of tomato puree. Keep stirring briskly until all ingredients are blended into a nice creamy pulp; then add a few chopped raisins or sultanas, a dessertspoon of demerara or coarse brown sugar, and a large cup of stock, or diluted meat extract, or water. Bring to boil, stirring all the time. To this prepared base, add cut-up cooked fish, meat, vegetables, or halved hard-boiled eggs. Crayfish is delightful done this way.

Coconut Milk

Grate the flesh of a fresh coconut; add a teacup of hot water, squeeze pulp well, and strain through a cloth or fine strainer. The pulp can be used 2 or 3 times more—the same quantity of water being added each time after squeezing. If using desiccated coconut, add a breakfastcup of boiling water to 1 tablespoon of it, stand aside for about an hour, then strain.

Curried Frickadels

(Meat Balls)

Prepare the curry base, as above. Mix together 1 lb. fresh minced beef, 1 or 2 finely-chopped onions, a thick slice of bread crumbled, a pinch or two of ground cloves, cinnamon and ginger (or a few drops of these essences); season with pepper and salt, add the juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon, and bind all with a lightly-beaten egg. Make into very small balls, like marbles, dip in beaten egg, roll in bread-crumbs, and fry in hot butter. Put these into the curry base, and simmer gently for about 10 minutes.

Day Curry

(Indian)

Use cut-up veal, mutton, lamb, beef or rabbit for this. Heat $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. butter (or a little less good dripping) in a saucepan

and in it fry 2 or 3 sliced onions till deep brown; do not let them burn. Strain off the fat. Add meat (which should not be too lean), cut into small pieces, and sprinkle it with curry powder; stir over fire for 5 or 10 minutes, till the juice from the meat mixes and blends with the onions to form a thick gravy. Pour in, at side of saucepan, a very little water or stock, add salt to taste, a tablespoon of chutney and 2 chopped gherkins; simmer gently for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours or a little more. Just before serving, add the juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon. Serve with boiled rice. The quantity of water or stock added can be increased according to taste.

Rice

(for Curries)

Shake the rice into plenty of boiling salted water, and boil steadily for 20 minutes. Strain through colander, and hold under cold tap till all stickiness has been washed away. Return to saucepan and heat in oven, or over gentle heat, stirring well, until grains are dry and separate. Serve in dish by itself. The helping of rice should be placed on plate first, and the serving of curry heaped on top of it.

Dhal

This is frequently served with curry. It is merely about 4 tablespoons of lentils, covered with water, boiled till transparent, and thick, and served in a sauceboat. Often a dessertspoon of curry powder is cooked with it.

FROM THE MAILBAG

Setting Colours

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I would be very grateful if you could inform me of the best way to wash a pure silk floral crepe de chine dress. I cut a wee piece out of the seam, and find that the colours run, there being black and various other colours in it. I regularly read *The Listener*, so shall look forward to your answer in it.—Yvonne, Eltham.

As you are lucky enough to possess pure silk crepe de chine in these silkless days, I would recommend getting the frock dry-cleaned, rather than risk trouble with colours. However, here are the directions for setting colours, though I think cotton material is implied. It is unusual for floral crepe de chine not to wash perfectly; most of us have washed it in all colours in the past without disaster:—(1) Grate 2 medium potatoes finely, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt. Let stand 10 minutes. Add 1 gallon of water, and soak the article in this for 20 minutes before washing as usual. Sets colours and also makes them fadeless. (2) For blue and green:—Make a solution of salt and water in the proportion of 2 breakfast cups salt to 1 gallon water. (3) For blues, lavenders and dark colours:—1 cup vinegar to each gallon water. (4) For pinks and reds:—1 tablespoon alum to each quart of water. (5) For mixed colours (patterns):—1 tablespoon sugar of lead to each quart of water. In all cases, rinse in clear water before washing, then wash with soap flakes in lukewarm water. Wash quickly.

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