

# Beetroot curry

Beetroot curry was the first curry I cooked, at the age of about 17.

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons oil   | 2 green chillies, sliced   |
| 1 onion, chopped  | 1 teaspoon curry powder    |
| 10 cm (4 in) piece of rampe<br>(pandanus leaf) (optional)     | ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric |
| 10 curry leaves or 2 bay leaves                               | ¼ teaspoon chilli powder   |
| 1 cinnamon stick  | 1 cup water                |
| 2 cloves garlic, sliced                                       | ½ cup coconut milk         |
| 500 g (1 lb 2 oz) beetroot, peeled<br>and sliced or julienned | salt to taste              |
| ¼ cup chopped or canned<br>tomatoes                           |                            |

Heat the oil in a large pan; add the onion, rampe, curry leaves, cinnamon and garlic and sauté until golden brown – about 1–1½ minutes. Add the beetroot and toss for another 2 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, green chillies, curry powder, turmeric and chilli and stir until spices are mixed through. Add the water, bring to boil then simmer until the beetroot is tender – about 7 minutes. Finally, add the coconut milk and salt to taste.

Serve with a meat dish, or with rice.

Serves 4.

## Variation

You can omit the coconut milk and water and stir-fry the rest of the ingredients for a crunchy curry without the sauce. When done like this it is known as a theldala dish. Sri Lankan people like the contrast of one curry with liquid, one pan-fried, at the same meal.



## Tip

If fresh beetroot is not available, use canned beetroot, but wash it thoroughly to remove the preserving liquid, and cook for just 5 minutes rather than the 7 in the recipe.

