

kathríkkaí varuval

preparation time: 20 minutes
cooking time: 45 minutes
chilli rating: medium

difficulty level: easy
serves: 6 as part of an
Indian meal

ingredients

500 g small, round purple eggplants
1 tbs plus ½ cup vegetable oil
1 brown onion, chopped
1 tsp salt
2 tsp black peppercorns
1 tsp coriander seeds
1 tsp cumin seeds
2 dried red chillies
2 whole cloves
2-inch piece cinnamon stick
1 cup desiccated coconut
2 tsp fresh ginger, grated
1 ripe tomato, chopped
1 tsp tamarind concentrate
¼ tsp ground turmeric
½ cup fresh coriander leaves,
chopped, to serve

method

Starting from the blossom (bottom) end of each eggplant, cut a cross, stopping just short of stem. Place in a bowl of water to cover. Set aside.

In a large frying pan, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-low heat. Add onion and salt and cook, uncovered, stirring often, until onion is softened. Transfer to small food processor.

Add peppercorns, coriander, cumin, chillies, cloves and cinnamon to pan and cook, over medium heat, until fragrant. Transfer to spice grinder. Add coconut to pan and cook, stirring, until golden brown. Remove pan from heat and let cool slightly.

Grind spices to a powder. Transfer to food processor along with coconut, ginger, garlic, tomato, tamarind and turmeric. Process until a fine paste forms.

Preheat oven to 170C.

Drain eggplant and pat dry with paper towel. Stuff equal amount of paste into centre of each eggplant.

In a frying pan, heat remaining oil over medium heat. When hot, place eggplant into oil. Cook, turning often, until eggplants start to soften. Transfer eggplants to baking dish. Pour any remaining hot oil from pan over eggplants. Cover with foil.

Bake, turning occasionally, for 20–30 minutes until eggplants very tender.

Serve immediately, sprinkled with the coriander.

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