

CHICKEN TIKKA PESHWARI

(BIR STYLE)

Inspired by the classic curry house style

Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE CHICKEN TIKKA

- 300g chicken tikka pieces (homemade or takeaway style)
- Few drops of oil (for frying)

FOR THE CURRY

- 3 tbsp oil or ghee
- 1 tsp garlic & ginger paste
- 1 tbsp diluted tomato paste
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp Kashmiri chilli powder (optional)
- 250–300ml BIR base gravy
- 2–3 tbsp single cream (more to taste)
- Pinch garam masala
- Fresh coriander, chopped
- Salt to taste

PESHWARI PASTE

- 2 tbsp coconut powder
- 2 tbsp ground almonds
- 1½ tbsp mango chutney
- 1 tbsp sultanas (blitzed or finely chopped)
- 1 tsp sugar or honey (optional)
- Small pinch cardamom powder
- Tiny pinch salt
- 1 tsp melted butter or ghee
- Splash of milk or pineapple juice to loosen

Blitz or mix to a smooth paste.

METHOD

- 1 Prepare the chicken tikka: Fry in a non-stick pan with a few drops of oil until charred in places. Transfer to a hot oven to keep warm while you make the curry.
- 2 Heat oil or ghee in a pan on medium heat.
- 3 Add garlic & ginger paste and fry for 20–30 seconds.
- 4 Add tomato paste, ground coriander, cumin, turmeric and chilli. Fry into a thick masala.
- 5 Add the Peshwari paste and cook for 1 minute, stirring, until fragrant.
- 6 Add half the base gravy. Cook on high heat, stirring, until the sauce reduces and oil starts to separate.
- 7 Add the chicken tikka and the remaining base gravy. Simmer for 5–8 minutes until the sauce thickens and coats the chicken.
- 8 Stir in cream. Simmer gently for 2 minutes.
- 9 Finish with a knob of butter and a squeeze of lemon juice. Mix through.
- 10 Sprinkle with garam masala and fresh coriander. Serve hot.

TIPS FOR THE AUTHENTIC FLAVOUR

- ✓ Charring the tikka adds that classic smoky restaurant taste.
- ✓ The Peshwari paste is the key – cook it well to bring out the aroma.
- ✓ Adjust the sweetness with a little more mango chutney if needed.
- ✓ Use cream to get the colour and richness just right.

NOTES / NEXT TIME I WILL TRY...

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This recipe is inspired by a much-loved curry from my old local restaurant, Shapla. After many attempts, the missing piece was creating a proper Peshwari-style paste.



CHICKEN TIKKA – BEST RESULTS

- Heat a non-stick pan on high.
- Add a few drops of oil and the tikka pieces.
- Fry until charred in places (this adds flavour).
- Remove and place in a hot oven (about 80–100°C) to rest while you make the curry.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Mount with a knob of butter and a squeeze of lemon juice to balance the sweetness and add richness.



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