

South Indian-style Chicken with curry leaves and black peppercorns (dakshin murgh)

Total time: 1 hour 10 minutes

Servings: 4

Spice Mix

14 fresh or 20 frozen curry leaves, torn into pieces

2 t. black mustard seeds

1 t. cumin seeds

3/4 t. fenugreek seeds

1 t. black peppercorns

6 whole cloves

3 green cardamom pods

1. Combine the spices in a skillet over medium heat and cook stirring until fragrant 1.5-2 minutes. Cool slightly and grind in a spice grinder.

Chicken and Assembly

2 pounds chicken thighs skinned

3/4 t. salt (divided) plus more to taste

1 t. ground black pepper

Juice of 1/2 lemon

3 T. canola oil

1/2 t. black mustard seeds

3 small whole dried red chiles

6 green cardamom pods

1 fresh hot green chile (Serrano) sliced crosswise into rounds (with seeds)

12 fresh or 18 frozen curry leaves, torn into pieces

The Spice Mix from above

1/4 C. unsweetened shredded coconut

1 (13.5 ounce) can coconut milk

2. Toss the chicken with 1/4 t. salt the pepper and lemon juice and let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

3. Combine the oil, mustard seeds, red chilies, cardamom, green chile and curry leaves in a large saucepan over medium high heat. Cover and cook until you hear the mustard seeds crackle 1-2 minutes. Add the ground spice mix and cook, stirring 30 seconds. Add the shredded coconut and cook, stirring 30 seconds.

4. Add the chicken and cook, stirring, until opaque, about 3-5 minutes.

5. Add the coconut milk and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer, partially covered, until the chicken is tender, 25-30 minutes. Stir two or three times during the last 10 minutes of cooking and scrape the pan to keep the sauce from sticking. Taste for salt, add more if desired and serve hot.