

Exploration Of Curry

If you ask yourself, “What is curry?” you will not be after listening to this! The word curry immediately brings to mind a flavorful and rich Indian delicacy. The term curry most likely comes from a misunderstanding of the Indian word “kari,” which implies a spiced dish of sauteed vegetables and meat.

Most curries consist of meat, fish, or vegetables prepared in a sauce or gravy containing a combination of regional spices and flavorings that are usually accompanied by rice or some type of bread. Curry can be made in many different ways, and each region has a specialty. Curry is heavily spiced and never lacks in taste. It can be mild or hot. When making it homemade, the amount of spice can depend on your preference and tolerance for spicy food.

Curry has an interesting history. No one really knows when curry started to be used in Indian cooking. The use of sauce with added spices to flavor meats has been traced back to 2500 BC. Archaeological evidence showcases the use of mustard, fennel, cumin, and tamarind pods to flavor food.

Today’s curry is the result of centuries of cross-cultural trade between India, Southeast Asia, and Europe, where it was adapted and modified to incorporate local ingredients. There are thousands of different types of curry throughout the world. Taste and consistency vary based on geography, availability of ingredients, and religious and cultural preferences of those residing in the specific region.

Curry is made up of many spices and does not relate to the curry tree (though the leaves are used in many dishes in India). Curry powder is a potpourri of dry spices. Curry powder typically has a golden Turmeric-tinted hue. Homemade curry powder is an easy way to have instant access to a great starting place for curry flavor. Most traditional Indian cooks make their curry seasoning from toasted whole spices that they grind themselves. There are many curry seasoning blends and most of them contain anywhere from 5 or 6 to as many as 30 different herbs and spices.

In the spice aisle of markets, this mixture might include turmeric, ground coriander, ground cumin, ground ginger, and black pepper. Read the ingredients list to see what is in the mixture. Dry curry powder is better for Indian-style dishes.

Curry paste is ideal for Thai-style curries. Curry paste is a blend of spices, oils, and fresh ingredients such as ginger and garlic. The paste can be red, yellow, or green.

Making a curry can be almost as enjoyable as eating it! There are no standard ingredients that go into the making of curry. Anyone with beginning cooking skills can create a comforting curry. If you have never made homemade curry, begin with a popular recipe like butter chicken or a more traditional curry. First, you will want to decide which seasoning type will work best for you. This can be a curry powder or paste, or you can start completely from scratch! Once the meal is prepared, it is best enjoyed piping hot with chutney and fresh naan bread.

There is one dish that can be found on menus across the country; it is butter chicken (also known as murgh makhani). This famous dish features yogurt-marinated chicken baked in a clay oven or tandoor, then coated in a creamy sauce of tomatoes, onions, and spices. It was developed around 1950 by three partners who owned a restaurant in India.

A bowl of freshly made curry can take you on a journey of the senses. This dish brings warmth and comfort to any family table. I hope this has inspired you to get into the kitchen and start cooking!

(Sources: nationaltoday.com; www.smithsonianmag.com; sukhis.com)