

Saag Paneer

Vegetarian, All Natural, Organic

Serves 7

Ingredients -

- 3 TBSP Canola or Vegetable oil
- 1 TSP turmeric
- ½ TSP cayenne
- 1 Pinch of Real® Salt
- ~7 Oz paneer (Indian cheese... either store-bought or homemade), cut into 1" cubes
- 1 ½ TBSP ghee
- 1 16 Oz container of fresh, organic spinach
- 3 small plum tomatoes
- 1 small white onion, finely chopped
- 1 (1-inch thumb) ginger, peeled and minced (about 1 tablespoon)
- 4 Cloves garlic, minced (combine with above and add to the food processor)
- 1 medium green serrano chili, finely chopped (seeds removed if you don't like it spicy!)
- ½ TSP garam masala (again either store-bought or homemade)
- 2 TSPs ground coriander
- 1 TSP ground cumin
- ½ Cup plain Greek styled yogurt, stirred until smooth (would let people add this to taste)



Important: For the best results, all ingredients should be fresh, local, all natural and organic... except where dried and/or canned are indicated.

Instructions –

In a large bowl, whisk together the turmeric, cayenne, 1 pinch of salt and 3 tablespoons canola oil. Gently, drop in the cubes of paneer and gently toss, taking care not to break the cubes if you're using the homemade kind. Let the cubes marinate while you get the rest of your ingredients together and prepped.

Prep the garlic and ginger ... and blend them together in a food processor (almost blend it to a paste). Put aside in a pinch bowl until required. Also set aside a pinch bowl with garam masala, coriander and cumin.

Rinse and drop the fresh, organic spinach and the tomato into a pot of boiling water ~5 minutes, then drain thoroughly and blend them together in a food processor (a rougher mix). I process in 3 batches in my blend stick chopping attachment. Work hard to get rid of excess water!

Place a large nonstick skillet over medium heat, and add the paneer as the pan warms. In a couple of minutes give the pan a toss; each piece of paneer should be browned on one side. Fry another minute or so, and then remove the paneer from the pan onto a plate with paper towel on top.

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Add the 1 ½ tablespoons ghee to the pan. Add the onions, ginger, garlic and chili. Now here's the important part: sauté the mixture until it's evenly toffee-colored, which should take about 15 minutes. Don't skip this step - this is the foundation of the dish! If you feel like the mixture is drying out and burning, add a couple of tablespoons of water.

Now add the garam masala, coriander and cumin from the pinch bowl set aside earlier. If you haven't already, sprinkle a little water to keep the spices from burning. Cook, stirring often, until the raw scent of the spices cook out, and it all smells a bit more melodious, 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the spinach and stir well, incorporating the spiced onion mixture into the spinach. Add a little salt and ½ cup of water, stir, and cook about 5 minutes with the lid off.

Turn the heat off. Send spinach mixture through a Vitamix® blender until smooth. Finally plate the spinach mixture and add a few cubes of paneer to each plate and fold in the optional yogurt (ideally let the yogurt get up to room temperature first and put in a little at a time -- to keep it from curdling) and then serve with Jasmati rice.

*Cook's Note: Paneer is very easy to make at home, and my recipe is quick, easy, and delicious. I also think homemade has a better texture than anything store-bought. If you'd like to buy it, this cheese is available in better supermarkets as well as specialty Asian markets.

Source: Adapted from the Food Network recipe by Aarti Sequeira (tags Aarti's Party - - the "Big Cheese" episode).

<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/aarti-sequeira/saag-paneer-spinach-with-indian-cheese-recipe.html>