

Coconut Chicken Curry — SCRAPs by Carolina Gelen

Serves 4 | Prep Time: 20 minutes | Cook Time: 40 minutes

CHICKEN

- 1 to 1.5 pounds (450 to 700 g) chicken breast or chicken thighs (about 4 to 6), cubed into 1-inch (2.5-cm cubes)
- 2 shallots, finely sliced
- 2 jalapeños or 1 red or yellow bell pepper, finely chopped
- 1 knob ginger, finely chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional
- 6 kaffir lime leaves or 2 teaspoons lime zest (about the zest of one lime)
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 13.5 fl oz (400 ml) coconut milk
- 13.5 fl oz (400 ml) water
- Neutral oil for sautéing
- Kosher salt

RICE

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 2 cups water
- 3 cardamom pods
- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds
- Neutral oil for frying
- Kosher salt

1. Heat 3 tablespoons of neutral oil in a 3-qt pot over medium heat. Add the cubed chicken and season with a big pinch of salt. The chicken will boil first, then start searing in oil once most of the water has evaporated. Toss the chicken using a wooden spoon every once in a while and sear on each side.
2. Once most of the cooked chicken is seared and golden brown, push it to the side, add another tablespoon of oil in the pot. Add the pepper, shallot and ginger and sauté for 3 to 4 minutes, until softened.
3. You'll notice lots of flavor developing at the bottom of the pan. To prevent those flavorful bits from burning, lower the heat as needed or add a splash of water to the pan to deglaze.
4. Mix the spices and tomato paste with the shallots, ginger, peppers, chicken and cook for 2 to 3 more minutes, until the tomato paste is darker and color and the spices are fragrant.
5. Add the garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until fragrant then add the coconut milk to the pot. Fill up the empty can of coconut milk with water and add that to the pan. Add in the lime leaves, or lime zest. Partially cover the pot with a lid and simmer for 20 minutes.
6. After 20 minutes of simmering, combine the cornstarch and water in a small bowl. Pour the mixture in the simmering curry. The curry should thicken in no time.
7. In the meantime, prepare the rice. You can cook the rice anyway you want to, but here's what I do: I overcook the rice until a clumpy and sticky, then fry it until all those clumps get nice and crispy. You'll end up with a really fun texture combo, the rice is slightly sticky, crunchy, and absorbs the stew so well.
8. Add rice to a small saucepan or pan. Cover with water then run your fingers through the rice. We're trying to wash off most of the starch. Pour the starchy water out (while keeping the rice in the pot), and repeat this step 3 to 4 more times, until the water you pour off the rice looks clear.
9. Once you're left with the washed rice in the pot, add 2 cups of water, a pinch of salt, 3 cardamom pods and 2 teaspoons cumin seeds. Cover with a lid and place the pot over medium heat. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 15 to 18 minutes. Keep an eye on it, the liquid might overflow. Remove the pot off the heat and keep the lid on. Allow the rice to steam for the next 10 to 12 minutes.
10. Add drizzle of neutral oil to a nonstick pan. Add the rice and evenly spread it across the pan. Sear for 6 to 8 minutes. Flip and sear for another 5 to 7 minutes.
11. Plate everything together. Top it off with cilantro and a drizzle of lime juice.