



Jardaloo Salli Boti, A Classic Parsi Meat And Apricot Curry

Yield: 4

This unique dish is a true Parsi Cuisine classic, using boneless cubes (boti) of your meat of choice (I've used chicken for this recipe) and Persian touches like Jardaloo (apricot) cider vinegar, and jaggery or sugar, along with a blend of mouthwatering Indian spices and aromatics. Traditionally, this dish is best served topped with crisp 'Salli' or shoestring potatoes (although a handful of crushed potato chips work well too).

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb boneless chicken thigh Use any other boneless meat of choices like chicken breast, mutton, lamb, or beef, cut in 1-inch cubes. Bone-in works too.
- 2 tbsp ginger-garlic paste (or 1 tbsp each grated ginger and minced garlic)
- ½ teaspoon each salt & cracked black pepper
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 2 cups finely chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon fresh green chili pepper Thai or Serrano, *optional for a spicy kick*
- ½ teaspoon ground red chili or Cayenne pepper reduce if too spicy
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon Garam Masala *optional if on hand*

- 2 teaspoon jaggery or sugar
- 1 cup tomato puree *or 2 cups finely chopped fresh tomatoes*
- 6-8 Jardaloo or 4-5 regular dried apricots, *cut in half if large (see note below)*
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1½ tablespoon cider vinegar *can be replaced with white vinegar*
- Chopped cilantro for garnish
- Salli or shoestring potatoes or crushed potato chips as a topping

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a bowl, bring the cubes of boneless meat together with grated ginger and minced garlic (or use ginger garlic paste) and salt/pepper. Let the meat marinate refrigerated for at least 2 hours or even overnight, especially if using mutton or lamb.
2. Heat cooking oil in a large pan and add the chopped onions and fresh green chili (if using). Fry till the onion has browned well on a medium flame.
3. Mix the marinated meat into the onions, sauté together till the meat is coated with the aromatics (in my mom's words: let your nose guide you).
4. Next, sprinkle the dry spices and jaggery or sugar and sauté for a couple of minutes. If you feel the spices sticking to the bottom of the pan, add a few tablespoons of water to help it cook.
5. Add tomatoes, apricot, cider vinegar, and 2 cups of water. Bring this mixture to a boil and cook covered till the liquid is absorbed, and the meat and tomatoes are cooked through.
6. Taste for salt, adding more only if needed. Garnish with chopped cilantro.
7. Serve Jardaloo Salli Boti freshly made, topped with Salli or shoestring potatoes (a handful of crushed potatoes chips will work as a substitute) alongside warm Indian bread like roti-chapati, naan, or steamed basmati rice.

NOTES

Jardaloo (apricots) can be used un-pitted since the apricot will soften and blend into the gravy, pits can be removed prior to serving. To remove pits prior to adding, soak the apricot in water or cider vinegar. The pits will come right out with a light squeeze, and you can use the liquid in the curry. The regular dried apricot (Turkish or golden variety) available in Western countries are generally sold pitted and work just as well in lesser quantity for this preparation.

