

# Amritsar Chole & Rice

By Ameya Dhawan

*This is a traditional, easy Indian chickpea (chole) curry soup. A hearty soup perfect for winters, it's packed with nutrients and full of flavour. It is usually eaten with either rice or with roti (flat bread) or bhature (fried flat bread).*

SERVES: 8 | PREP TIME: 20 MIN | COOK TIME: 60 MIN

## Cultural Significance

Chickpeas are a staple food in India, especially in Punjab. Most Indians are vegetarian and chickpeas, being high in protein and very versatile, get used in a multitude of ways. Punjabis have been using chickpeas in curries and snacks, and as a flour called Besan (which is used frequently in desserts) for hundreds if not thousands of years. Chole recipes also vary from city to city and from household to household, each family has their own recipe which is passed down through generations. This is my family's age-old recipe.

## Ingredients

### Chole

- ❖ 1 can of chickpeas
- ❖ 2 cloves of garlic
- ❖ 1 medium red onion
- ❖ 1 ½ tsp cumin
- ❖ 1 ½ tsp coriander
- ❖ 2 cloves
- ❖ 1/2 black cardamom
- ❖ 2 tbsp oil
- ❖ 1 tsp haldi (turmeric)
- ❖ 1 bay leaf
- ❖ ½ - 1 Thai Chilli, or to taste
- ❖ 1 inch ginger
- ❖ 1 tomato
- ❖ 1 tsp tomato paste
- ❖ Chana masala (optional), to taste
- ❖ 2 tsp of salt, or to taste

### Rice

- ❖ 2 tbsp oil
- ❖ 2 tsp cumin
- ❖ 2 cups washed basmati rice
- ❖ 4 cups water
- ❖ 2 tsp salt, or to taste

## Steps

### Chole:

1. Place the onion into a food processor and purée
2. Place cumin, coriander, cloves, and black cardamom into a grinder
3. In a pan, heat oil over medium heat. Once hot add turmeric, grinded spice mix, and bay leaves
4. Add puréed onions to the pan. Fry the onions until the raw smell goes away and they are light golden brown in colour (about 15 minutes)
5. Stir occasionally and add more oil if the mixture starts to stick to the bottom of the pan
6. While onion spice mix is cooking, purée garlic, chilli and ginger or mince until you get a paste.
7. Blend tomato
8. Add garlic, chilli, ginger purée to onions spice mix and cook for about 5 minutes
9. Add tomato purée and tomato paste
10. Add water if mixture gets to dry
11. Add 1 tsp salt
12. Add the chickpeas and water to pot
13. Add chana masala, to taste, and more salt to taste
14. Mix well and mash some of the chickpeas
15. Let simmer on low heat for 20 minutes or until thickened

### Rice:

1. Heat oil (2 tbsp) on medium heat in a large pan
2. Add cumin (2 tsp) and cook until fragrant
3. Add 2 cups of washed basmati rice and stir
4. Add 4 cups water
5. Add 2 tsp of salt, or to taste
6. Boil on high until water covers just the top of the rice, then turn heat down to simmer, cover and cook for 10 minutes.

Generously ladle a cup of curry over some rice and enjoy!



# Masala Chai

By Ameya Dhawan

*Chai is the Hindi (and other Indian languages) word for tea. In India, chai is not the masala chai that people know of in the west, it's literally any type of tea. So when you're saying chai tea, you're literally saying "tea tea". Whereas when you say masala chai you're saying "spiced tea". Chai, specifically masala chai, is not just a tea, but it's almost like a way of living. Everywhere you go in India you will see a chai stand or someone drinking chai.*

**SERVES:** 3 (or 2 large) cups | **PREP TIME:** 5 MIN | **COOK TIME:** 20 MIN

## Cultural Significance

Masala chai's origins date back as far as 5000 years ago and legend has it that it was created when a king ordered a healing spiced beverage to be used in Ayurveda, a traditional and ancient Indian medicinal practice in which herbs and spices are used for healing. The original masala chai was not made with *Camellia sinensis* tea leaves and did not contain milk and sugar. The masala chai that we know today made with black tea leaves, milk, and sugar was popularised in the mid-1800s when the *Camellia sinensis* *assamica* tea plant variety was discovered in India and cultivated by the British.

As Masala Chai is thousands of years old, many variations and recipes have come and gone. However, there are typically 4 components in masala chai: black tea, spices, milk, and sweetener. Traditional chai spices mixed with black tea include cinnamon, star anise, cardamom, cloves, fennel, ginger and peppercorn. The heat from ginger and black pepper was believed to stimulate digestion; the antiseptic properties in cloves were thought to help relieve pain; cardamom was used as a mood elevator; cinnamon supported circulation and respiratory function; and fennel and star anise were known to freshen the breath. But every region and city has added their own twist to it that suits the region they live in. Chai recipes also vary from household to household and every family has their own recipe which is passed down through generations.

## Ingredients

- ❖ 2-3 cups water
- ❖ 1-2 tbsp of loose-leaf tea or 1-2 tea bags
- ❖ 4 slices fresh ginger
- ❖ 6-8 cardamom pods
- ❖ 3-4 whole cloves
- ❖ 1 cinnamon stick
- ❖ 1-2 star anise (optional)
- ❖ 6 peppercorn (optional)
- ❖ 2 cups milk
- ❖ Sugar, add to taste



## Steps

1. Lightly crush the cardamom pods, cloves, star anise and peppercorns using a mortar and pestle
2. Add water, crushed spices, ginger, and cinnamon in pot and bring to a boil
3. Once boiling, maintain a simmer for ~10 minutes
4. Add black tea and bring the tea to a simmer. Turn off heat and let steep for 5 minutes
5. Add your milk and bring the tea to a simmer. Once simmering, turn off the heat
6. Add your sugar little by little, adding more as needed
7. Strain your chai into a chai glass or mug
8. Enjoy!

## Tips and Tricks

I suggest using Assam or Darjeeling black tea as these are the teas that are traditionally used for masala chai. Before you boil your crushed spices, ginger, and cinnamon, I like muddling the ginger a bit in the pot. By doing this, you will get a better flavour profile. If you let your water spice mix steep after you simmer it for 10 minutes, you will also get a greater depth of flavour and a better chai.

A tip: Fresh spices make the best chai. Always try and start with the purest version of each spice — like cinnamon sticks, whole cloves and cardamom pods.