

Indian / British

Main Courses

Classic Chicken Tikka Masala

⌚ Prep: 25m

🔥 Cook: 35m

❄️ Rest: 1h

Σ Total: 120m

🍽️ 6 servings



Video ref: Food Wishes (Chef John)

MISE EN PLACE / INGREDIENTS [17]

- ☐ 2 lbs Boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1.5-inch pieces
- ☐ 0.75 cup Whole milk plain Greek yogurt (Fage Total 5%)
- ☐ 6 cloves Fresh garlic cloves, finely grated
- ☐ 2 tbsp Fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
- ☐ 2 tbsp Aromatic garam masala spice blend
- ☐ 2 tsp Ground cumin
- ☐ 1 tsp Ground coriander
- ☐ 1 tsp Ground turmeric
- ☐ 0.5 tsp Cayenne pepper or Kashmiri chili powder
- ☐ 2 tsp Kosher salt
- ☐ 3 tbsp Unsalted butter or ghee
- ☐ 1 large Large yellow onion, finely diced
- ☐ 1 can (28 oz) Canned crushed tomatoes (San Marzano or Muir Glen)
- ☐ 0.75 cup Heavy whipping cream
- ☐ 1 tbsp Dried fenugreek leaves (Kasoori Methi)
- ☐ 0.25 cup Fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- ☐ 3 cups Steamed white basmati rice, for serving

US SUPERMARKET BRAND GUIDE

Kasoori Methi (Dried Fenugreek): Swad Kasoori Methi Dried Leaves

The irreplaceable secret restaurant spice that produces authentic Indian curry aroma. • 📍 Indian / International spice aisle.

Garam Masala: Rani Authentic Indian Garam Masala

Warm sweet spices that ground the savory tomato base. • 📍 Spice aisle.

COOKING SEQUENCE & CHECKPOINTS

- 1

Yogurt Marinade

⌚ 1h (60m)
- Whisk Greek yogurt, half the grated garlic and ginger, half the garam masala, ground cumin, coriander, turmeric, cayenne, and kosher salt. Coat chicken and chill 1 hour (60 minutes restTime).
- ✓ Checkpoint: Thickly coated chicken thighs.
- 2

Blister Under the Broiler

⌚ 12 min
- Arrange chicken chunks on a wire rack set in a sheet pan. Broil on high for 10 to 12 minutes until charred at the edges and $\geq 165^{\circ}\text{F}$ (74°C).
- ✓ Checkpoint: Sizzling chicken pieces with smoky blackened edges.
- 3

Build the Masala Sauce

⌚ 18 min
- Melt butter or ghee in a Dutch oven and sauté diced yellow onion for 8 minutes until golden. Stir in remaining garlic, ginger, garam masala, and crushed tomatoes; simmer gently for 15 minutes.
- ✓ Checkpoint: Thick, deeply fragrant brick-red sauce.
- 4

Enrich with Cream and Simmer

⌚ 5 min
- Whisk in heavy cream and crushed Kasoori Methi. Add broiled chicken and its resting juices; simmer for 5 minutes until chicken reaches 175°F – 185°F (79°C – 85°C) for maximum dark-meat tenderness. Garnish with fresh cilantro and serve with steamed basmati rice.
- ✓ Checkpoint: Velvety orange-red curry bursting with aroma.

🛡️ **FOOD SAFETY & INTERNAL TEMPERATURE: 165°F (74°C) MANDATORY USDA SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURE FOR ALL POULTRY**

USDA Poultry Safety Minimum ($\geq 165^{\circ}\text{F}$ / 74°C) vs Dark-Meat Texture Target (175°F – 185°F / 79°C – 85°C): All poultry is microbiologically safe at the mandatory USDA minimum of 165°F (74°C). Cooking chicken thighs, drumsticks, and bone-in quarters to 175°F – 185°F (79°C – 85°C) melts collagen and yields a noticeably more tender, succulent bite.

👁️ **MASTER DONENESS CHECKPOINT:**

Tender, charred-edged chicken cubes submerged in a glowing terracotta cream sauce with fragrant aromatic spices.

🔬 **WHY IT WORKS:**

The Broiler Tandoor Effect: Roasting marinated chicken pieces spaced on an elevated wire rack beneath a high broiler chars the yogurt exterior and creates smoky depth without drying out the dark meat.

⚠️ **TROUBLESHOOTING:**

The sauce is unpleasantly acidic: Stir in 1 tsp brown sugar or honey and let the tomatoes simmer for 10 more minutes before adding the heavy cream.