

SPICED BUTTERMILK COD WITH URAD DAL

Prepared by: Sarah Nelson, January 2019

Source: NOPI

1/2 tsp cumin seeds
1/2 tsp coriander seeds
1/2 tsp fennel seeds
1/2 tsp dried chilli flakes
1/2 tsp ground cardamom
3.5 Tbsp buttermilk
2 lbs cod fillet, skinless and boneless, cut into 6 pieces, each measuring about 8cm x 12cm
1 tbsp olive oil, to serve
1 lemon, cut into 6 wedges, to serve
coarse sea salt and black pepper

URAD DAL

2.5 tbsp yellow mustard seeds
4 Tbsp ghee
1/2 cup urad dal, rinsed
3 large onions, thinly sliced
8 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tbsp tomato paste
7cm piece of ginger, peeled and finely chopped
4 red chillies, de-seeded and finely diced
5 stems fresh curry leaves
8 plum tomatoes, quartered
1/2 cup baby spinach

In a frying pan, toast the cumin, coriander and fennel seeds until their aroma is released. Transfer to a spice grinder, along with the chile flakes, cardamom, 1/2 tsp of salt and pepper. Grind to a powder and transfer to a mixing bowl. Pour over the buttermilk, stir to combine, then add the pieces of cod, making sure all of the fish is submerged. Cover with plastic wrap and leave in the fridge to marinate for 4 to 6 hours. Do not leave overnight or the fish will break down.

To make the dal, place a small pan for which you have a lid over medium-high heat. Once hot, add the mustard seeds and cover with the lid. When you hear the popping begin, after about 1 minute, remove the pan from the heat and give it a little shake. Leave the lid on for another minute before transferring the seeds to a bowl and setting aside.

Place the ghee in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the urad dal and fry for 2 minutes stirring often, until fragrant. Add the onions along with 1/4 teaspoon of salt, and cook over medium heat for 8 minutes, until they are soft but have not taken on any color. Add the garlic, tomato paste, ginger, chiles, and curry leaves and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring from time to time, adding a tablespoon or so of water to the pan if the mixture starts to stick to the bottom. Add the tomatoes and cook for about 15 minutes, stirring from time to time until they have broken down and started to caramelize. Add the toasted mustard seeds, pour over 1/3 cup of water, and cook for another 5 minutes, stirring once or twice until the tomatoes have completely softened. Transfer the mixture to the large bowl of a food processor with 2

teaspoons of salt and a good grind of black pepper. Pulse a few times then return to the pan and set aside until ready to use.

Preheat the oven to 425 F.

Take the cod out of the marinade and lay the pieces on a foil-lined baking sheet. Place in the oven and set for 8-10 minutes, then broil for a final 2 minutes, until the fish is cooked through. Return the dal to the heat just before serving, and add the spinach. Stir for 30 seconds, just to wilt the spinach, and spoon onto individual plates. Top with cod, finish with a drizzle of olive oil, and serve with the lemon wedges.

Sarah's Notes: I didn't have curry leaf. I would sear the fish instead of baking it as the recipe had you do. I also subbed banana pepper for red chile. I would make this again.
