FOOD & CULINARY

Butter Chicken Recipe Of Sanjeev Kapoor

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The Magic of Butter Chicken: Unveiling Sanjeev Kapoor's Signature Recipe

Few dishes in the culinary world command the universal love and respect that Butter Chicken commands. This iconic North Indian delicacy, known for its rich, creamy, and mildly spiced tomato-based gravy, has become a global sensation. While many chefs have their own take on this classic, few are as revered or as meticulously crafted as the **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor**. Chef Kapoor, a household name in Indian cooking, has perfected a version that balances traditional flavors with a refined technique, making it accessible for home cooks while delivering restaurant-quality results. This article will guide you through the essence of his renowned recipe, exploring the ingredients, the method, and the secrets that make this dish a true masterpiece.

Whether you are a seasoned cook or a beginner eager to impress your family, mastering this recipe is a rewarding journey. The allure of Butter Chicken, or Murgh Makhani, lies in its velvety texture and the harmonious blend of spices. Chef Sanjeev Kapoor's approach emphasizes the quality of ingredients, the importance of marination, and the critical step of "dum" cooking—slow cooking in a sealed pot to infuse flavors deeply. Let us dive into the world of spices, cream, and perfectly cooked chicken, following the footsteps of one of India's most beloved chefs.

Understanding the Essence of Sanjeev Kapoor's Butter Chicken

Before we get into the kitchen, it is important to understand what sets the **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor**apart from others. The recipe is a beautiful symphony of flavors: tangy from tomatoes, rich from butter and cream, aromatic from spices, and smoky from the traditional charcoal finish. Chef Kapoor's version is known for its balanced sweetness and heat, ensuring that no single flavor overpowers another. He uses a base of ginger-garlic paste, green chilies, and kasuri methi (dried fenugreek leaves) to create layers of depth.

The Core Philosophy: Freshness and Balance

Chef Sanjeev Kapoor always emphasizes using fresh ingredients. For this recipe, ripe, red tomatoes are crucial for the natural sweetness and color of the gravy. The use of butter is liberal but measured, creating a sauce that coats the back of a spoon without being greasy. The cream is added at the very end to preserve its freshness and to give the dish its signature silky finish. The balance of spices like garam masala, cumin, and coriander powder is carefully calibrated to create a warm, inviting aroma without being overwhelmingly spicy.

The Complete Ingredients List for the Recipe

To replicate the **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor**at home, you will need to gather the following

ingredients. It is best to prep everything before you start cooking, as the process moves quickly.

For the Chicken Marinade:

- 500 grams boneless chicken thighs or breasts (thighs are preferred for juiciness)
- 1 tablespoon ginger-garlic paste
- 1 teaspoon red chili powder
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon garam masala powder
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- 2 tablespoons yogurt (curd)
- 1 tablespoon butter (for cooking the chicken)

For the Gravy (Makhani Sauce):

- 4 large ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 2 medium onions, roughly chopped
- 6-8 cloves of garlic
- 1-inch piece of ginger
- 2-3 green chilies, slit
- 10-12 cashew nuts
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon red chili powder
- 1 teaspoon coriander powder
- 1 teaspoon garam masala powder
- 1 tablespoon dried fenugreek leaves (kasuri methi)
- 1/2 cup fresh cream
- 1 tablespoon honey or sugar (optional, for sweetness)
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander leaves for garnish

Step-by-Step Cooking Instructions

Follow these detailed steps to create the authentic **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor**. The process is divided into three main stages: marination, cooking the chicken, and preparing the gravy.

Stage 1: Marinating the Chicken

Step 1: Wash the chicken pieces and pat them dry with a paper towel. Cut them into bite-sized chunks.

Step 2: In a large mixing bowl, combine the yogurt, ginger-garlic paste, red chili powder, turmeric powder, garam masala, lemon juice, and salt. Mix well to form a smooth paste.

Step 3: Add the chicken pieces to the marinade and coat them thoroughly. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. For best results, marinate for 4-6 hours or overnight. This step is crucial for tender, flavorful chicken.

Stage 2: Cooking the Chicken (Tandoori Style at Home)

Step 4: Preheat your oven to 200°C (400°F). If you do not have an oven, you can use a grill pan or an air fryer.

Step 5: Thread the marinated chicken pieces onto skewers or place them on a baking tray lined with foil. Brush them lightly with butter.

Step 6: Cook the chicken in the oven for 15-20 minutes, turning once halfway through, until they are slightly

charred on the edges and cooked through. Alternatively, cook on a hot grill pan with a little butter for 5-6 minutes per side. Set aside.

Stage 3: Preparing the Makhani Gravy

Step 7: Boil the chopped tomatoes, onions, garlic, ginger, green chilies, and cashew nuts in 1 cup of water until the tomatoes are soft and mushy (about 10 minutes). Let this mixture cool completely.

Step 8: Blend the cooled mixture into a fine, smooth puree using a blender. Strain the puree through a sieve to remove any seeds or fibers for a velvety texture.

Step 9: In a deep, heavy-bottomed pan, heat the butter over medium heat. Add the cumin seeds and let them crackle.

Step 10: Pour in the strained puree. Be careful as it may splutter. Add red chili powder, coriander powder, and salt. Stir well.

Step 11: Cook the puree on low heat for 20-25 minutes, stirring occasionally. The gravy will thicken and reduce, and the raw taste of tomatoes will disappear. You will see butter separating on the sides.

Step 12: Add the garam masala powder and crushed kasuri methi (rub it between your palms to release the aroma). Stir and cook for another 2 minutes.

Step 13: Reduce the heat to the lowest setting. Add the fresh cream and stir gently until the gravy turns a rich, orangish-red color. If using, add honey or sugar to balance the acidity of the tomatoes.

Step 14: Add the cooked chicken pieces to the gravy. Simmer for 5-7 minutes on low heat so the chicken absorbs the flavors of the sauce.

Chef Sanjeev Kapoor's Pro Tips for the Perfect Butter Chicken

To elevate your **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor** to the next level, consider these expert tips:

- The Charcoal Smoke Trick: For an authentic smoky flavor, heat a small piece of charcoal on an open flame until red hot. Place it in a small steel bowl inside the pan of butter chicken. Pour a teaspoon of melted butter over the charcoal, cover the pan immediately with a lid, and let it sit for 5 minutes. This infuses a wonderful smokiness.
- Use Fresh Cream, Not Milk: Always use fresh heavy cream. It adds richness without curdling. Avoid using milk, which can make the gravy watery.
- Do Not Skip Kasuri Methi: This dried herb is non-negotiable. It provides the distinct, slightly bitter, and aromatic flavor that defines restaurant-style butter chicken.
- Strain the Puree: This is Chef Kapoor's secret to a silky sauce. Straining removes tomato seeds and skins, resulting in a luxurious texture.
- Cook on Low Heat: Patience is key. Cooking the gravy on low heat allows the spices to bloom and the flavors to meld together beautifully.

Nutritional Information and Serving Suggestions

This dish is rich and indulgent. A single serving (about 250 grams) contains approximately 450-550 calories, with a good amount of protein from the chicken and healthy fats from butter and cream. It is best enjoyed as part of a balanced meal.

How to Serve Butter Chicken

The classic way to serve **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor** is with:

- Butter Naan or Garlic Naan: The soft, chewy bread is perfect for soaking up the gravy.
- Steamed Basmati Rice or Jeera Rice: A subtle rice base lets the butter chicken shine.

- Onion Salad and Lemon Wedges: The crunch and acidity cut through the richness of the dish.
- A side of Raita: A cool yogurt salad with cucumber and mint balances the spices.

Why This Recipe is a Crowd-Pleaser

The genius of the **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor**lies in its universal appeal. It is mild enough for those who are sensitive to spice, yet flavorful enough for spice lovers. The creamy texture is comforting, and the aromatic spices evoke a sense of warmth and hospitality. This dish is a staple at dinner parties, festive gatherings, and even quiet family dinners. Unlike many complex Indian curries, this recipe is forgiving and can be adjusted to suit your taste preferences. You can increase the green chilies for heat or add more cream for extra richness.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Can I use chicken with bones?

Yes, you can, but boneless chicken is preferred for a more refined eating experience. If using bone-in, increase the cooking time slightly.

How can I make this recipe vegan?

Replace the chicken with paneer or firm tofu, use vegan butter, and substitute fresh cream with cashew cream or full-fat coconut milk. The flavor profile will change slightly but will still be delicious.

Can I make the gravy ahead of time?

Absolutely. You can prepare the makhani gravy up to 3 days in advance and store it in the refrigerator. Add the cooked chicken and fresh cream only when reheating to serve.

Why does my gravy taste sour?

This usually happens if the tomatoes are too tangy or if you have not cooked the puree long enough. Add a pinch of sugar or honey to balance the acidity. Cooking the puree for a full 20-25 minutes is essential.

Conclusion: A Dish to Master and Cherish

Mastering the **Butter Chicken Recipe of Sanjeev Kapoor**is more than just cooking a meal; it is about understanding the art of balancing flavors and textures. This recipe, with its detailed steps and thoughtful techniques, empowers you to create a dish that is both comforting and impressive. The rich, creamy gravy paired with tender, smoky chicken is a testament to

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