

Tandoori Chicken

Instructions are given here for cooking the chicken on the barbecue, for authentic-looking charred chicken, but it can be cooked under the grill. Small clay tandoori ovens are available at specialist kitchenware shops, but they do not achieve the same results as the ones in Indian restaurants which cook at searingly high temperatures.

1 fresh hot red chilli, deseeded and chopped roughly
2 garlic cloves, chopped roughly
2.5 cm/1 inch piece of fresh root ginger, chopped roughly
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon coriander seeds
1 tablespoon cumin seeds
2 teaspoons garam masala

6 tablespoons natural yogurt
a few drops each of red and yellow food colouring
4 skinned chicken portions
salt
TO GARNISH:
lemon wedges
coriander sprigs

- 1** Put the chilli, garlic, ginger and lemon juice in an electric spice mill with the whole spices and garam masala and work to a paste.
- 2** Transfer the spice paste to a shallow dish in which the chicken portions will fit in a single layer. Add the yogurt, food colouring and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and stir well to mix. Set aside.
- 3** Score the flesh of the chicken deeply with a sharp pointed knife, cutting right down as far as the bone. Put the chicken in a single layer in the dish, then spoon the marinade over the chicken and brush it into the cuts in the flesh. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 4 hours, but preferably overnight.
- 4** Put the chicken on the grid over hot charcoal on the barbecue. Cook, turning often, for 30 minutes or until the juices run clear when pierced with a skewer or fork. Serve hot, garnished with lemon wedges and coriander sprigs, and accompanied by a salad of shredded lettuce, white cabbage and raw onion slices, a sauce made of yogurt and chopped mint, and plain or garlic naan bread.

Serves 4

Preparation time: 20 minutes, plus marinating

Cooking time: 40 minutes

VARIATION

Chicken Tikka

Replace the chicken portions with 4 large skinned and boned chicken breasts, cut into cubes, and proceed as in the main recipe. After marinating, thread the cubes of chicken on to kebab skewers. Place the skewers on the grid over hot charcoal on the barbecue (or under the grill) and cook, turning the skewers often, for 10-15 minutes until the chicken juices run clear.

