

Spicy fish

Tariwale macchi

1/3 cup (3 fl oz/90 ml) vegetable oil
3 yellow (brown) onions, finely chopped
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 tablespoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
4 tomatoes, finely chopped
1 teaspoon coriander seeds, ground in spice grinder
1/2 teaspoon aniseed, ground in spice grinder
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon Nilgiri's Garam Masala (page 28)
1 cup (8 fl oz/250 ml) water
1/2 cup (4 oz/125 g) plain whole-milk yogurt, whisked until smooth
1 1/2 lb (750 g) white fish fillets such as snapper or cod, skin and bones removed, cut into serving-sized portions if large
1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint
1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro (fresh coriander)

Steamed Basmati Rice (page 141) or Coconut Rice (page 85) and/or Home-style Bread (page 141) for serving
Spring Greens (page 56), Eggplant with Apple (page 57) and/or Tomato, Onion and Cucumber Relish (page 56) for serving

Although this spicy dish is a traditional main dish, it also makes a good cocktail snack if you cut the fish into 1-inch (2.5-cm) pieces. You can also substitute shrimp for the fish.

1. In a wide, heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat oil over medium–low heat. Add onions and salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until onions are dark golden brown, 20–25 minutes. Raise heat to medium, add garlic and ginger and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes.
2. Add tomatoes, coriander, aniseed, turmeric, chili powder and garam masala and stir over medium heat for 2 minutes. Stir in water and yogurt.
3. Add fish to pan and spoon sauce over it. Cook over low heat uncovered, turning once, until fish is just cooked and flakes when tested with a fork, 8–10 minutes.
4. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt if necessary. Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with mint and cilantro. Serve immediately.

Serves 4–6 with rice and/or bread and 1 or more accompaniments

Serves 6–8 with rice and/or bread, 1 or more accompaniments, 1 vegetarian main dish, and 1 chicken or lamb main dish

