

VEGETARIAN INDIAN INSTANT POT COOKBOOK



Authentic Recipes Made Quick and Easy | **Pavani Nandula**



VEGETARIAN INDIAN
INSTANT POT
COOKBOOK

Authentic Recipes Made Quick and Easy

Pavani Nandula
Photography by Elysa Weitala

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Interior and [Cover](#) Designer: Elizabeth Zuhl

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Production Manager: Jose Olivera

Photography © Elysa Weitala, 2021, food styling by Victoria Woollard.

ISBN: Print 978-1-64876-746-3 | eBook 978-1-64876-747-0

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**To my wonderfully funny, intelligent,
and crazy family—Harsha, Dhruva, and
Disha. Love you guys. This one is for
you.**





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INTRODUCTION

Food and cooking have always been my passion. I grew up in a South Indian vegetarian household, and most of our family conversations happened around the dinner table. Often, my focus was more on the food than on the discussions. My mom is an excellent cook and an expert in planning meals to satisfy all our family's picky taste buds. I am glad that I inherited her love of cooking and sharing food.

The most vivid memory I have of my childhood kitchen is the hissing sound from the pressure cooker early in the morning. It was my alarm to wake up. I also remember the task of counting the whistles while my mom did other chores. In other words, I cannot imagine an Indian kitchen without a pressure cooker. It was used to make whole meals starting with rice, lentils, and even curries.

The pressure cooker is such an integral part of an Indian kitchen that my mom made me carry one in my luggage when I traveled to the United States as a graduate student. She wanted to make sure her daughter didn't miss her daily dose of rice and dal in the foreign land. Sure enough, over the years I collected quite a few of them in various sizes, and each one had a specific purpose—one to make rice for a family of four, another to make biryani for a crowd, and so on.

Over the past few years, the Instant Pot has literally changed my kitchen. I bought into the craze early on and got myself an electric pressure cooker. In the early days, I used it exclusively to make rice dishes and to cook beans. But gradually I understood the potential of this all-in-one appliance, and now most of my cooking is done in the Instant Pot.

It is quieter and so much more versatile than the stovetop pressure cooker I grew up with. I love the wide range of programmable settings, ranging from pressure cooking to yogurt making. Also, the variety of dishes that can be made in the Instant Pot is mind-blowing. You can make a comforting weeknight meal of dal or lentils and basmati rice to go along with it or a kid-friendly pasta—and steam some vegetarian dumplings while you are at it.

In this book, you will explore a wide variety of vegetarian Indian dishes that can be easily made in your Instant Pot. I include classic restaurant favorites and other scrumptious recipes that are made in Indian homes daily.

A large portion of the Indian population is vegetarian, mostly due to religious beliefs. So instead of meat, fish, and poultry, the emphasis is on fresh produce, legumes, and dairy products. Even in meat-eating households, vegetables and vegetarian dishes play an integral part in everyday meals. Moreover, meat is expensive in India, so budget constraints are also a driving force behind the adoption of a vegetarian diet.

Many of the recipes in this book can be prepared in less than 45 minutes and are made entirely in the Instant Pot. There is no stovetop or oven cooking required except for a few staple recipes.

With its spices and (to some) unfamiliar ingredients, Indian cooking can be slightly intimidating in the beginning. But as you try these recipes, you will get familiar with the different spices and ingredients and how they interact to create unique flavors. Once you learn this, you can unlock the magic of Indian cooking.

My hope is that you dive into making vegetarian Indian dishes in your Instant Pot with confidence and enjoy these recipes with your family and friends. Happy cooking!



CHAPTER 1

THE INDIAN KITCHEN

Indian food is a rich blend of spices and herbs crafted into sauces and seasonings for grains and vegetables. It is possible for anyone to re-create the food of India with a little knowledge and the willingness to try different flavor combinations. In recent years, the Instant Pot has become very popular in many Indian homes. This all-in-one appliance saves lots of cooking time and energy and keeps the authentic flavors intact. This section will help familiarize you with Instant Pot cooking techniques and key spices and ingredients that are used throughout this book.

THE INSTANT POT AND INDIAN COOKING

Traditional Indian cooking is a time-intensive process because most Indian dishes involve boiling and steaming food. Because cooking fuel is expensive in India, pressure cooking has become the most efficient and economical way of making meals. In addition, it saves time by infusing flavors into any dish in a short amount of time.

In recent years, many home cooks have pivoted from the less reliable stovetop pressure cookers to the Instant Pot, both in the United States and in India. Many traditional Indian recipes work perfectly in an Instant Pot. The moist, pressurized environment is well suited for imparting the best flavor and nutrient retention for classic Indian dishes including:

Biryani: This rice casserole usually requires multiple pots and pans and a lot of time, but with the Instant Pot, the prep and cooking are streamlined, and the result tastes just as delicious.

Dal: Lentils and beans take a long time to cook on the stovetop and need periodic attention, but the Instant Pot's preset bean/chili option makes cooking them a breeze.

Curry: Many Indian curries have sautéed vegetable and protein components and sauces that require long simmering times. In an Instant Pot, you can do all the prep and cooking in one vessel and then pressure-cook the sauce for perfect curry in no time.

THE INDIAN PANTRY

Stocking your pantry can feel overwhelming if you are new to Indian cooking, but most of the ingredients needed to make delicious dishes are readily available in your local supermarket. A few might require you to look online or make a trip to an Indian grocery store. For any of these specialty

ingredients, I'll explain why they're necessary and offer easy-to-find alternatives when possible.

Spices

Spices are the backbone of Indian cooking. I highly recommend buying whole spices and storing them in airtight jars in a cool, dark place in the pantry. When stored properly, whole spices will last for at least a year, but ground spices lose their potency after a couple of months, so grind only a small batch to enjoy the freshest flavor in your dishes.

Asafetida (hing): The dried resin from a fennel-like plant, this spice is always added to hot oil, which tames its pungency and imparts an umami flavor to the dish. Look for it in Indian groceries or online.

Bay leaves: Dried bay leaves are used whole to flavor rice and curries. They're fibrous and tough, so always remember to remove them before serving.

Black peppercorns (kali mirch): Both whole and ground peppercorns are used for their flavor and aroma in many dishes.

Cardamom pods (elaichi): These green pods have tiny black seeds inside. The whole pods are used to infuse hot oil with a sweet, delicate flavor.

Cinnamon (dalchini): This highly aromatic, sweet spice is commonly used to flavor the oil in which vegetables and lentils simmer. When toasted and ground, it produces a gentle warmth in spice blends like [Garam Masala](#).

Cloves (laung): These flower buds have a distinctive, pungent flavor. Whole cloves can be used to flavor dishes, or they can be roasted and then ground to make [Garam Masala](#).

Coriander seeds (dhaniya): These brownish-yellow seeds have a slightly citrusy, fennel-like taste. Coriander seeds are available in most well-stocked grocery stores in the spice aisle. To make the ground version, dry-roast the seeds in a small skillet over medium-low heat until fragrant, 3 to 4 minutes; then cool and grind to a powder. Store in an airtight container in the pantry.

Cumin seeds (jeera): One of the most popular spices in Indian cooking, cumin can be used whole or ground. To make the ground version, follow the same instructions as for ground coriander.

Mustard seeds (rai): These tiny seeds have a spicy, pungent flavor. You can use either black/brown or yellow in these recipes.

Salt: I use regular table salt for my everyday cooking. If you're using kosher salt, I suggest adding a little more than the amount called for in the recipes. In addition to regular salt, some recipes call for black salt (kala namak). It has a very distinctive smell and a savory, umami taste that's typically associated with dishes called chaat in India. Look for it in an Indian grocery store or online.

Turmeric (haldi): This is one of the few spices you should buy in ground form. Ground turmeric has a vibrant color and a slightly bitter taste that mellows after cooking. A little bit of this spice goes a long way.

Masalas for the Instant Pot

Masalas, or spice blends, are quintessential ingredients in Indian cooking. They add depth of flavor to dishes and can make even simple ingredients taste amazing. Indians use several spice blends in their daily cooking, and each household has its own special version. Making them from scratch will ensure the best and most vibrant flavor, but you can use store-bought versions in a pinch—just be aware that they can affect the flavor of the finished dish.

Traditionally, a mortar and pestle are used to grind spices. I still use them when I am making a small batch of masala, but I find that an electric spice grinder or coffee grinder is a great way to quickly grind a large quantity of whole spices to a fine texture.

I have included recipes for three spice blends that I use almost every day:

- » **[Garam Masala](#)**: This spicy blend is common across India and can be used in curries, lentils, and even rice dishes.
- » **[Chaat Masala](#)**: This tangy, spicy blend is used to season snacks known as chaat (which means “to lick” in Hindi), such as [Aloo Chaat](#) and [Chole Chaat](#). This spice blend gives dishes their characteristic salty, spicy (and a bit funky) flavor.
- » **[Sambar Masala](#)**: This flavorful South Indian blend of roasted spices and legumes is used to make the tangy lentil and vegetable stew [Sambar](#).

Aromatics and Fresh Herbs

You’ll need a few basic fresh ingredients to make the recipes in this book. Most of them are readily available in your local grocery store.

Chiles (mirchi): I use green serrano chiles in my everyday cooking. If they’re too hot for you, you can remove the membrane and seeds to tone down the heat. As for dried chiles, I recommend buying chiles de árbol, which are sold in most grocery stores. Ground cayenne pepper is also commonly used. Keep in mind that the heat of cayenne varies between brands, so use the quantity listed in the recipes as a guideline and adjust accordingly.

Cilantro (kothimeer): Fresh cilantro can be used both as an ingredient in a dish and as a garnish. Look for fresh, vibrant-looking leaves that are not bruised.

Curry leaves (kari patta): These aromatic leaves are available both fresh and dried in Indian grocery stores. But if they are not easily accessible, feel free to omit them from the recipe—this will not adversely affect the taste of the dish.

Garlic (lasoon): Fresh garlic is used extensively in Indian cooking to add assertive flavor. I use either a grater or a garlic press to finely mince the

garlic.

Ginger (adrak): Fresh ginger is a common ingredient used throughout India. Look for a fresh, heavy root that snaps easily and is not fibrous. A grater is the perfect tool to grate ginger.

Mint (pudina): Fresh mint is used in chutneys, rice dishes, and curries. The spearmint variety is more common in Indian cooking than peppermint.

Onions (pyaz): Most Indian recipes call for onions. You can use any variety you choose. I like using white and yellow onions to add subtle flavor and red onions to add strong flavor to dishes.

Lentils and Legumes

Dried lentils and legumes are an integral part of Indian cuisine because they are economical and are a wonderfully nutritious source of protein and fiber. Broadly known as “dal,” lentils in one form or another have a place in virtually every Indian meal. Here are the lentils and legumes that are used in this book’s recipes.

Black-eyed peas (lobia): These buttery, creamy beans are widely available in cans and also frozen. They are quick and easy to cook from their dried form as well.

Black lentils (urad dal): For the recipes in this book, you will need both whole black lentils and skinned black lentils. You can easily find them in Indian grocery stores.

Chickpeas (kabuli chana): I always keep canned chickpeas in my pantry to make quick protein-packed recipes.

Mung beans (mung dal): Mung beans are one of the fastest-cooking lentils. You will need whole mung beans to make [Spinach Mung Beans](#) and split, skinned mung beans to make [Vegetable Kootu](#).

Peanuts: Store-bought roasted, unsalted peanuts are a pantry staple in my house. But you can also buy unroasted peanuts, roast them until lightly golden, and then store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to

two months.

Pigeon peas (toor dal): This is the most common type of lentil in India. You can easily find them in Indian grocery stores and some well-stocked supermarkets.

Red kidney beans (rajma): These beans have a hearty texture and aroma. I always have a few cans of these in the pantry.

Red lentils (masoor dal): These easy-to-cook lentils are popular all over the world. They are available in almost every grocery store.

Yellow split peas (chana dal): These peas are split and hulled. They are firm and tend to keep their shape after cooking, and they are available in most-well stocked grocery stores.

Dairy Ingredients

Ghee: Also known as clarified butter, ghee is available in many regular grocery stores, but it can also easily be made at home in an Instant Pot (see [here](#)).

Paneer: This fresh, unripened (not aged) Indian cheese can be easily made at home (see [here](#)). Indian grocery stores and some specialty stores sell paneer in blocks in the refrigerated section.

Yogurt (dahi): Making homemade yogurt (see [here](#)) is easy and convenient in an Instant Pot, but you can also use plain full-fat or 2 percent Greek yogurt in most recipes in this book.

Cream (malai): Use either heavy or light cream for the recipes in this book. Half-and-half is a suitable substitute, but the dish may not be as creamy.

Miscellaneous Ingredients

Chickpea flour (besan): Made from dried chickpeas, this pale yellow flour is high in dietary fiber and protein. It's available in most well-stocked

grocery stores and Asian markets.

Coconut milk: I prefer to use full-fat coconut milk (look for brands with no additives) in these recipes to add creaminess and texture, but light coconut milk will work, too.

Rice: I recommend basmati rice grown in India or Pakistan for its fragrance and delicate texture, but you can also use regular long-grain rice in the recipes in this book. To make [Idli](#), you need parboiled or idli rice.

Shredded coconut: You can find fresh shredded coconut in the freezer section of your grocery store or use unsweetened coconut flakes or shredded coconut.

Tamarind: I recommend buying a jar of tamarind concentrate paste, which will last for a few months in the refrigerator. Look for it in Indian grocery stores or online.

Tomatoes: I prefer using vine-ripened or Roma varieties for their juiciness and tangy flavor. I also keep canned tomato puree and tomato paste in the pantry for tomato emergencies.

Tips for Instant Pot Success

Here are a few tips that will help you get the most out of cooking with the Instant Pot:

- » **Mise en place:** This French culinary term, which means “put in place,” is very important for Instant Pot cooking. Measuring all the ingredients, chopping the produce, and getting all ingredients prepped before starting the recipe will make the cooking process much smoother.
- » **Prevent scorching:** To avoid the dreaded “burn” alert on your Instant Pot, deglaze the pan with liquid after sautéing

and scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. If you do get the burn alert, there are a few things you can do: Quick release the pressure, open the pot, and scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add a little more water or liquid and continue pressure cooking. Make sure that the pressure release knob is set to sealing.

- » **Double recipes:** For most recipes, you can double the ingredients and use the same cooking time. Make sure not to overfill the pot, and note that it will take a little longer to build the pressure.
- » **Successfully quick release pressure:** Use quick release only for recipes that specifically call for it. Some vegetables will overcook if left in the pot for too long, but most dal and rice dishes will benefit from the gradual natural pressure release. Use caution when using quick release: Do it under a vent and keep a kitchen towel handy to cover the spout, if needed.
- » **High-altitude cooking:** If you live at a high altitude, you will have to adjust the cooking times because of the difference in atmospheric pressure. If a dish cooks under pressure for 20 minutes at sea level, then it would cook for 21 minutes at 3,000 feet and 23 minutes at 5,000 feet above sea level.

TECHNIQUES

Traditional Indian cooking involves some basic techniques that are used to build depth of flavor. These techniques can be adapted for the Instant Pot.

Toasting spices: Dry-roasting or toasting spices releases their essential oils and makes them more aromatic and the flavor more intense. Use the

Sauté function on the Instant Pot to toast spices, stirring frequently until they are fragrant and a shade darker in color. Your nose is the best indicator of doneness: As soon as you smell their aroma, they are ready. Make sure to remove the spices from the hot pan right away to avoid burning.

Tadka (tempering): Tadka is a technique that is unique to Indian cooking. To temper, heat oil in the Instant Pot using the Sauté function. Once the oil is hot, add the whole spices and stir them around. When you hear the spices begin to sputter and they smell fragrant, it's time to add the next ingredient or remove the spices for later use.

Bhunao (sautéing): This simple technique is a combination of sautéing, stir-frying, and stewing. It's used to create rich and deeply flavored sauces. For this technique, use the Sauté function on the Instant Pot and add small quantities of liquid, such as water or tomato puree, stirring constantly to prevent the ingredients from sticking to the bottom.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT AND INSTANT POT ACCESSORIES

For most of the recipes in this book, you'll need only your Instant Pot and some basic kitchen utensils, but there are a few other items that will come in handy.

Spice grinder or coffee grinder: A small grinder is great for making spice blends.

Stand blender or immersion blender: A blender is a helpful tool to blend ingredients to make soups, sauces, or batter for [Idli](#).

Food processor: This appliance is a great time-saver when you need to finely chop ingredients and also to make chutneys.

Silicone egg bite molds: These silicone molds are a great alternative to traditional molds that you will use to make [Idli](#). You can also use them to make mini [Vegetable Frittatas](#).

Stainless steel or silicone baking pans: A six- to seven-inch round pan fits perfectly in a six-quart Instant Pot and can be used for pot-in-pot cooking when making steamed dishes like [Dhokla](#) or [Vegetable Frittata](#).

Glass lid: It's handy to have a glass lid to use when sautéing and cooking in the Instant Pot without pressure. It helps trap steam and prevent sauce splatters. You can use any generic nine-inch glass lid with a vent hole.

ABOUT THE RECIPES

This book includes 85 recipes that primarily use the Instant Pot and its various cooking modes. I have made sure to include a selection of regional recipes from across India as well as some restaurant favorites. I recommend you read a recipe thoroughly first before diving into it. Make sure you have all the ingredients prepped and ready to go.

Each recipe was tested and retested in a six-quart Instant Pot Duo. For greater meal-planning ease, in addition to including prep time and time cooked under pressure, I have also included the time the pot takes to come to pressure and, where appropriate, the time it takes to naturally release pressure.

Some recipes feature a label indicating that they are **vegan**. A **super-fast** label is included for recipes that take 30 minutes or less from prep to table.

Throughout the book I'll provide tips and suggestions for a dish's preparation, more information about an ingredient, or an idea for a simple swap to change up the recipe. There will also be tips on how to make recipes vegan and suggestions for how to pair recipes from the book for a complete meal. For even more inspiration for putting together an Indian feast, see my sample [menu ideas](#).



[Vegetable Momos // Steamed Vegetable Dumplings](#)

CHAPTER 2

APPETIZERS AND SNACKS

Mulligatawny Soup // Creamy Lentil Soup

Spicy Tomato Rasam // South Indian Tomato Soup

Palak Shorba // Spinach Soup

Vegetable Thukpa // Noodle Soup

Sweet Potato and Peanut Salad

Chole Chaat // Street Food–Style Spicy Chickpea Stew

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Kheema Pav // Vegan Indian-Style Sloppy Joes

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Idli // Steamed Rice Cakes

Dhokla // Savory Steamed Chickpea-Flour Cakes

Mulligatawny Soup // CREAMY LENTIL SOUP

This creamy lentil soup is a popular item on many Indian restaurant menus. It's a British-Indian fusion dish made with lentils and vegetables. Apparently, this soup became very popular with the British soldiers stationed in India during the late 18th century. And when they returned home to England, they adapted the recipe to suit their palate. My version is vegan and flavored with garam masala.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 42 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Basic Basmati Rice](#) , [Paratha](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger

1 medium potato, peeled and diced
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
1 large tomato, chopped
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
½ cup red lentils (masoor dal), rinsed and drained
2½ cups water
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ cup full-fat coconut milk
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the potato, carrots, tomato, garam masala, and turmeric and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the tomato is soft. Stir in the red lentils, water, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Remove the lid from the pressure cooker and use an immersion blender to blend the soup to a smooth mixture. Stir in the coconut milk, mix well, and replace and lock the lid for 5 minutes to heat through.
- 5.** Add the lime or lemon juice, mix well, and garnish with the cilantro. Serve warm.

COOKING TIP: To make the recipe ahead of time, cook the lentils through step 4 (blend, but do not add the coconut milk). Cool completely and refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 3 days or freeze for up to 1 month. To serve, reheat until simmering, stir in the coconut milk, and continue with step 5. Do not refreeze.

Spicy Tomato Rasam // SOUTH INDIAN TOMATO SOUP

If you have ever been to a South Indian restaurant, there is a chance you've already tasted this spicy, tangy tomato soup, which is traditionally served as a welcome drink. It's a hot, peppery broth that will wake up your taste buds for the meal to be served. My recipe uses a simple homemade spice mix to flavor the rasam. Make a double or triple batch of the spice mix and store it in an airtight container in your pantry for up to 1 month so you can make this rasam anytime you want.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 4 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 44 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Basic Basmati Rice](#)

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 teaspoon coriander seeds

¼ teaspoon whole black peppercorns

2 dried red chiles (such as chile de árbol), broken into pieces

3 tablespoons pigeon peas (toor dal)

2 teaspoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon mustard seeds
2 large ripe tomatoes, finely chopped
3½ cups water
1 teaspoon salt
1½ teaspoons tamarind paste

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, combine the cumin seeds, coriander seeds, peppercorns, chiles, and pigeon peas. Stir constantly and toast until the spices are fragrant and the pigeon peas are lightly browned, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer the toasted spices and pigeon peas to a bowl and set aside to cool slightly.
- 2.** Melt the ghee in the pot. Then add the mustard seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until they start to sputter. Add the tomatoes and cook until they are very soft, 3 to 4 minutes.
- 3.** In the meantime, grind the toasted spices and pigeon peas to a powder in a spice grinder.
- 4.** Add the ground spice mixture, water, salt, and tamarind paste to the pot and mix well to ensure that there are no lumps.
- 5.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 4 minutes on high pressure.
- 6.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder. Open the pressure cooker and serve the rasam hot or warm.

Palak Shorba // SPINACH SOUP

You'll be amazed that this vibrant and creamy spinach soup has no dairy in it. The potato gives it a silky texture, and the serrano chiles add a spicy little kick. This nutritious soup is packed with flavor using only a few ingredients. You can make a big batch and freeze the rest for up to 2 months. Try serving it as an appetizer or as a side dish to any Indian meal.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 32 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Vegetable Biryani](#) or [Paratha](#)

- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ to 1 green serrano chile, coarsely chopped
- 1 medium potato, peeled and diced
- 1 large tomato, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 pound baby spinach

2 cups water, divided

½ teaspoon ground cumin

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and chile and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion is slightly browned around the edges. Add the potato, tomato, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the spinach and 1 cup of water and give it another stir.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and use an immersion blender to blend the soup to a smooth consistency. You will have to tilt the pot slightly to get everything smooth. Add the remaining 1 cup of water, the cumin, and lemon juice. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until heated through. Serve hot or warm.

COOKING TIP: You can use 1 (10-ounce) package frozen spinach instead of fresh. The cooking time will remain the same, but the Instant Pot might take a few more minutes to come to pressure.

Vegetable Thukpa // NOODLE SOUP

Thukpa is the Tibetan word for this noodle-based soup, which is widely made in the northeastern states of India. My vegan version is packed with vegetables and flavor. The noodles can be cooked along with the vegetables in the Instant Pot, making this a quick and easy weeknight dinner.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 2 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 4 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 36 minutes

2 medium tomatoes, roughly chopped

1 (1-inch) piece ginger, roughly chopped

4 garlic cloves

1 or 2 green serrano chiles

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

2 medium carrots, peeled and chopped

1 medium red or green bell pepper, seeded and chopped

2 cups chopped green cabbage

1 cup green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
1½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)
6 ounces spaghetti, broken in half
6 cups water
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice
2 scallions, both white and green parts, finely chopped
1 cup bean sprouts

1. Combine the tomatoes, ginger, garlic, and chiles in a blender or a food processor. Blend until smooth.
2. Select Sauté on the Instant Pot, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the tomato mixture and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until fragrant. Add the carrots, bell pepper, cabbage, green beans, salt, cumin, garam masala, and cayenne pepper (if using). Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Place the spaghetti on top of the vegetables and pour in the water. Push the spaghetti down with a wooden spoon to make sure the noodles are completely submerged, but do not stir.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 4 minutes on high pressure.
4. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
5. Open the pressure cooker and stir to combine the spaghetti and vegetables. Stir in the lime or lemon juice. Top with the scallions and bean sprouts and serve hot.

VARIATION: To make this a wholesome and filling one-pot meal, add 1 (15-ounce) can of drained chickpeas along with the vegetables

and continue with the recipe as written. You can also stir in 1½ cups of chopped firm tofu after the noodles are cooked.

COOKING TIP: You can use rice noodles instead of regular spaghetti. Add them to the Instant Pot in step 5 instead of in step 2. Select Sauté and simmer for 2 to 3 minutes, until the noodles are tender.

Sweet Potato and Peanut Salad

Light and simple vegetable-based salads are served either as an appetizer or as a snack in India. Cooking the sweet potatoes in the Instant Pot lets you put together this colorful and nutritious salad in no time. This salad is best served warm when all the veggies are still crisp.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total Time: 27 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Tomato Rice](#)

2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces

¾ cup water

½ teaspoon salt

1 small red onion, finely chopped

1 medium tomato, seeded and chopped

2 tablespoons chopped roasted, salted peanuts

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice

¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

¼ teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought

1. Put the sweet potatoes in the Instant Pot, add the water and salt, and stir. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
2. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
3. Open the pressure cooker and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and drain any excess water. Return the inner pot to the base and add the onion, tomato, peanuts, cilantro, lemon or lime juice, cayenne pepper, and chaat masala. Gently toss to evenly coat the sweet potatoes with the spices. Serve immediately.

VARIATION: You can also make this salad with your favorite winter squash. I love it with either butternut squash or acorn squash. Cook the squash on high pressure for 3 minutes; then follow the recipe as written.

Chole Chaat // STREET FOOD-STYLE SPICY CHICKPEA STEW

Chaat is a category of Indian street food that is spicy, sweet, and tangy all at the same time. This popular chickpea chaat is easy to make and very versatile. Try serving it topped with some yogurt, pomegranate seeds, and crushed pita chips. Or make it a meal by serving it over store-bought samosas or some crispy tater tots.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 8 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 43 minutes

PAIR WITH: Caramelized Onion Rice ([variation](#))

2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, rinsed and drained, divided

1 to 2 tablespoons water, plus 1½ cups

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

1 or 2 green serrano chiles, finely chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
1 cup canned tomato puree
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Put ½ cup of the chickpeas in a blender and blend to a smooth paste, adding a tablespoon or two of water as necessary.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until translucent. Stir in the chiles, ginger, coriander, cumin, garam masala, and turmeric and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly to prevent the spices from burning. Add the tomato puree, the remaining whole chickpeas, the chickpea puree, salt, and remaining 1½ cups of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 8 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the cilantro. Serve hot.

Aloo Chaat // STREET FOOD-STYLE TANGY POTATOES

Potatoes are one of India's favorite vegetables and are widely used across the whole country. This tangy potato chaat is a street food from northern India. Vendors carry boiled potatoes and the spiced tamarind water separately and make this chaat on demand. It can be served as a potato salad or as a light meal on its own. Make sure to use waxy potatoes like fingerlings or red potatoes so they hold their shape well after cooking.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 28 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Vegetable Frittata](#)

1 pound red or fingerling potatoes, peeled and cut into ½-inch rounds

½ cup water, plus 2 tablespoons

½ teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons tamarind paste

1 green serrano chile, finely chopped

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

½ teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought

- 1.** Put the potatoes in the pot, pour in ½ cup of water and the salt, and stir.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** In the meantime, in a small bowl, combine the remaining 2 tablespoons of water, the tamarind paste, chile, cilantro, and chaat masala. Mix to combine.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and drain any excess water from the potatoes. Return the potatoes to the pot.
- 6.** Add the tamarind mixture to the potatoes and gently toss to coat them evenly. Serve right away.

Kheema Pav // VEGAN INDIAN-STYLE SLOPPY JOES

Kheema pav is a popular meat-based street food in India that's very similar to American sloppy joes. Being a vegetarian, I've never tried it in its traditional form, but that hasn't stopped me from creating a homemade vegan version. I usually make this recipe with frozen vegan meat crumbles, but you could also use textured vegetable protein (aka soy granules). Serve this spicy and flavorful vegan kheema with toasted buns or bread.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 41 minutes

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 cup canned tomato puree

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground coriander
3/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
3 cups frozen vegan meat crumbles
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup fresh or frozen green peas
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
8 potato buns, toasted
1 lime, cut into wedges (optional)

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato puree, salt, coriander, cayenne pepper, cumin, and garam masala and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the vegan meat crumbles and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the peas. Close the lid and set aside for 5 minutes.
- 5.** To serve, sprinkle the cilantro on the kheema and serve with toasted buns and lime wedges (if using).

Pav Bhaji // SPICY MASHED VEGETABLES WITH DINNER ROLLS

Pav bhaji is probably one of the most popular Indian street foods sold in carts in Mumbai. It has gained international popularity because of its scrumptious taste and is now served at even fancy restaurants worldwide. It's a spicy, buttery vegetable mash (bhaji) served with toasted buns (pav), raw onions, and lime wedges. Traditionally, this is a time-consuming recipe to make, but the Instant Pot makes it fast and easy because everything is cooked in one pot.

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 45 minutes

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided, plus more for spreading

1 medium green or red bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger

3 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 large potatoes, peeled and chopped

3 cups fresh or frozen cauliflower florets

½ cup fresh or frozen green peas

1½ teaspoons salt
1 cup water
1 cup canned tomato puree
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
12 slider buns or 6 hamburger buns, for serving
1 small onion, finely chopped, for serving (optional)
1 lime, cut into wedges, for serving (optional)

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt 2 tablespoons of butter. Then, add the bell pepper and cook for 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the ginger and garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the potatoes, cauliflower florets, peas, salt, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and mash the veggies with a potato masher into a coarse paste. Stir in the remaining 1 tablespoon of butter, the tomato puree, cayenne pepper, garam masala, chaat masala, and turmeric and mix well. Select Sauté and cook for 5 to 6 minutes. The mixture will bubble and sputter at this point, so make sure to have a lid handy to cover the pot, if needed.
- 5.** In the meantime, toast the pav (buns) until golden and butter them generously.
- 6.** To serve, place the toasted buns and bhaji on a serving plate. Top the bhaji with onion (if using) and a squeeze of lime juice (if

using).

COOKING TIP: The bhaji can be made up to 2 days in advance. Store it in an airtight container in the refrigerator and warm gently before serving. Leftover bhaji can be frozen for up to 2 months.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Make vegan pav bhaji by using vegan butter or oil in the recipe.

Vegetable Momos // STEAMED

VEGETABLE DUMPLINGS

Momos are a version of dumplings and are widely made in the northeastern part of India. They are also a very popular street food in many parts of India. My vegan momos are made with vegetable filling and wrapped in store-bought wonton wrappers. You will need a steamer basket or a 7-inch stainless steel or silicone baking pan and a rack to steam the momos in the Instant Pot.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 20 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Steam cook: 12 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 40 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Cauliflower Fried Rice](#)

2 cups roughly chopped green cabbage

1 medium carrot, peeled and roughly chopped

2 scallions, both white and green parts, roughly chopped

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, peeled

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

20 store-bought wonton wrappers

2 cups water

Store-bought chili sauce, for serving

1. In a food processor, combine the cabbage, carrot, scallions, ginger, and garlic and process until finely chopped. Transfer the vegetable mixture to a medium bowl and season with the salt and pepper.
2. Work with 1 wonton wrapper at a time and keep the rest under a damp towel. Using your finger, rub water along the edge of the wrapper; then place about 2 teaspoons of filling in the center. Fold the dough over to encase the filling; then press the edges well to seal properly. Place the filled momo on a plate and keep it covered to prevent it from drying out. Repeat with the remaining wrappers until all the filling is used.
3. Select Sauté and pour the water into the Instant Pot. The water will start to simmer in 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Place the prepared momos on a steamer basket and place the basket into the pot.
5. Place the lid on, lock it, and keep the steam valve in the venting position. Select Steam and set a separate timer for 12 minutes. (The Instant Pot does not count down in the venting position.)
6. When the timer sounds, turn off the Instant Pot and natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
7. Open the pressure cooker and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the steamer basket. Serve the momos hot with some chili sauce.

VARIATION: Add ½ cup of crumbled firm tofu or [Paneer](#) to the filling to make it a protein-packed snack.

Idli // STEAMED RICE CAKES

Idli is a quintessential South Indian breakfast of steamed rice cakes made with fermented rice and lentil batter. For years, I have tried making idli batter in my very chilly American kitchen and failed miserably. But using the Instant Pot to ferment the batter has been a game changer. Don't be alarmed by the total time to make this recipe as most of it is hands-off. It takes the lentils and rice 6 hours to soak and then another 10 hours to ferment. But at the end of it, you will be rewarded with soft, fluffy idli. You will need 12 to 16 idli molds or silicone egg bite molds to make these.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 16 hours

Sauté: 3 minutes

Steam cook: 12 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 16 hours 20 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Sambar](#) , [Peanut Chutney](#)

1½ cups idli rice, rinsed and drained

½ cup whole skinned black lentils (urad dal), rinsed and drained

3 to 4 cups cold water, divided

1 teaspoon salt

Nonstick cooking spray

[Ghee](#), or store-bought, for serving

1. Put the rice in a medium bowl and pour in enough water to cover the rice by 2 inches. Put the lentils in another medium bowl and pour in enough water to cover the lentils by 4 inches. Let the rice and lentils soak for 4 to 6 hours at room temperature.
2. Drain the water from the lentils and transfer them to a blender or food processor. Blend to a smooth mixture by adding $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cold water, a little at a time, as needed. Transfer the ground lentils to the Instant Pot.
3. Drain the water from the rice and transfer to the blender or food processor. Blend to a smooth mixture by adding $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cold water, a little at a time, as needed. Pour the ground rice mixture over the lentil mixture in the Instant Pot. Using clean hands, mix the batter. It should resemble a thick pancake batter. Add more water as needed to get to the desired consistency.
4. Cover the pot with a glass lid. Select Yogurt and set the timer for 10 hours. If the batter does not ferment after 10 hours, then set the timer for another 2 hours. The batter should be foamy and will have increased in volume when ready.
5. Transfer the batter to a large bowl and stir in the salt. Quickly rinse the inner pot, wipe it clean, and return it to the base. Select Sauté and pour the remaining 2 cups of water into the pot. The water will start to simmer in 2 to 3 minutes.
6. In the meantime, lightly grease the idli molds or silicone egg bite molds with cooking spray. Pour the idli batter into the molds and place the molds in the Instant Pot.
7. Place the lid on, lock it, and keep the steam valve in the venting position. Select Steam and set a separate timer for 12 minutes. (The Instant Pot does not count down in the venting position.)
8. When the timer sounds, turn off the Instant Pot and natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
9. Open the pressure cooker and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the molds. Use a spoon to gently remove each idli. Serve hot, generously drizzled with ghee.

COOKING TIP: Leftover idli can be stored in an airtight container in

the refrigerator for up to 3 days or in the freezer for up to 2 months.

Dhokla // SAVORY STEAMED CHICKPEA-FLOUR CAKES

Dhokla is a soft, savory steamed cake from the northwestern Indian state of Gujarat. For my recipe, I use chickpea flour (besan), which is widely available in most well-stocked groceries. For the best fluffy texture, I add baking powder and baking soda to the batter just before steaming. Serve these hot with ketchup or spicy chili sauce.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 15 minutes, steam

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 41 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Green Chutney](#)

Nonstick cooking spray

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons chickpea flour (besan)

2½ teaspoons sugar, divided

¾ teaspoon salt, divided

2½ tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice, divided

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil, divided

½ to 1 green serrano chile, finely chopped

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger

3¼ cups water, divided

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

6 curry leaves (optional)

1½ teaspoons baking powder

¼ teaspoon baking soda

- 1.** Lightly grease a 7-inch round stainless steel or silicone baking pan with cooking spray. Have a rack ready for the Instant Pot.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, combine the chickpea flour, 1 teaspoon of sugar, ½ teaspoon of salt, 2 tablespoons of lemon juice, 1 tablespoon of oil, the chile, and ginger. Whisk to combine the ingredients. Add 1 cup of water and mix well to make sure there are no lumps. Set aside.
- 3.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil. Add the mustard seeds and curry leaves (if using). Once the seeds start to sputter, turn off the Instant Pot and let cool for 2 minutes. Pour in ¼ cup of water, the remaining ½ tablespoon of lemon juice, remaining 1½ teaspoons of sugar, and remaining ¼ teaspoon of salt. Mix well. Select Sauté and cook until the water starts to simmer, 1 to 2 minutes. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the mixture to a small bowl. Return the pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 4.** Pour the remaining 2 cups of water into the pot. Select Sauté and let it come to a simmer, about 2 minutes. Place the rack inside.
- 5.** Stir the baking powder and baking soda into the chickpea batter and pour it into the prepared baking pan. Carefully place the pan on the rack in the Instant Pot.
- 6.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Select Steam and set the timer for 15 minutes.

7. When the timer sounds, turn off the Instant Pot and natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
8. Open the pressure cooker and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan. Run a sharp knife around the edge of the pan and turn it over onto a plate. Pour the mustard seed mixture on top. Cut into squares and serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Traditionally, fruit salt is used as a leavener to make the batter rise during steaming. You can find fruit salt (Eno brand is quite popular) in Indian grocery stores. Use 1 teaspoon of fruit salt instead of the baking powder and baking soda in the recipe.



[Chana Saag // Chickpeas with Greens](#)

CHAPTER 3

DAL AND BEAN DISHES

Maa Ki Dal // Creamy Black Lentils

Rajma Masala // Kidney Bean Curry

Chana Saag // Chickpeas with Greens

Lobia Masala // Black-Eyed Pea Stew

Spinach Mung Beans

Dhansak // Parsi Vegetable Dal

Dalcha // Hyderabadil Lentil Stew

Everyday Dal

Dal Tadka

Kale Dal

Chayote Mung Dal

Pumpkin Dal

Sambar // South Indian Lentil Vegetable Stew

Vegetable Kootu // South Indian Dal with Vegetables and Coconut

Chana Dal Payasam // Split Pea and Coconut Pudding

Maa Ki Dal // CREAMY BLACK LENTILS

The name of this dish translates to “Mom’s lentils.” This is down-home comfort food made with whole black lentils. Traditionally, the lentils are simmered overnight, but the Instant Pot makes the whole process so much faster, and the texture is just as creamy and buttery. This is one of my favorite dishes to make ahead for dinner parties because it reheats beautifully. To make the dish vegan, use full-fat coconut milk or coconut cream instead of heavy cream.

Serves 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 45 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 1 hour 20 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Paratha](#)

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger

2 medium tomatoes, chopped

1¼ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon ground coriander

½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

1 cup whole black lentils (urad dal), rinsed and drained

2 to 2½ cups water, divided

3 tablespoons heavy (whipping) cream

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until they start to sputter.
- 2.** Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomatoes, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, garam masala, turmeric, lentils, and 2 cups of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom of the pot to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 45 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker, stir in the heavy cream, and mix well. Add up to ½ cup more of water if the mixture looks too thick. Select Sauté and cook for about 3 minutes, until heated through. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve hot or warm.

Rajma Masala // KIDNEY BEAN CURRY

This hearty, flavorful bean dish is an Indian version of chili. I always have cans of kidney beans in the pantry to make this easy home-cooked meal. This recipe uses the bhunao technique, in which tomato puree is cooked with spices over high heat to create a rich, deeply flavored sauce.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 8 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 43 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Basic Basmati Rice](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger

1 cup canned tomato puree

1¼ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
1½ cups water, divided
2 (15-ounce) cans red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato puree, salt, coriander, cumin, cayenne pepper, and turmeric and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cover with a glass lid if the mixture starts to sputter.
2. Stir in ½ cup of water and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes, until the oil starts to separate around the edges. Stir in the beans and remaining 1 cup of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 8 minutes on high pressure.
4. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
5. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the lemon juice and cilantro.

COOKING TIP: To use dried beans, soak for at least 4 hours or overnight. Cook with 2 cups of water for 30 minutes on high pressure.

Chana Saag // CHICKPEAS WITH GREENS

Beans with greens is a nourishing and tasty combination. This high-protein curry is rich in vitamins and minerals with chickpeas (chana) and hearty greens (saag) as the focus. I love making this dish with sturdy greens like kale or mustard greens as the longer cooking time in the Instant Pot makes them soft and delicious, but you can use any of your favorite greens. You can also use 5 ounces of frozen spinach instead of fresh greens with no need to thaw.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 8 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 43 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Jeera Rice](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger

2 medium tomatoes, chopped
8 ounces fresh kale or Swiss chard, chopped
2 (15-ounce) cans chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground coriander
¾ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
½ cup water

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion starts to turn lightly brown around the edges. Stir in the tomatoes, kale or Swiss chard, chickpeas, salt, coriander, cayenne pepper, turmeric, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 8 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and mix well. Serve hot or warm.

COOKING TIP: To make the recipe using dried chickpeas, soak 1 cup of chickpeas for at least 6 hours or overnight and drain. Follow the recipe as written, but use 1½ cups of water and cook for 20 minutes on high pressure in step 2.

Lobia Masala // BLACK-EYED PEA STEW

Black-eyed peas have a pleasant creamy texture and a delicious nutty taste. They are very easy to cook from dried form. In this recipe, they are cooked in a spicy onion and tomato sauce and then finished off with some coconut milk.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 20 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 55 minutes

PAIR WITH: Palak Paratha ([variation](#))

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

2 large onions, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger

1 medium tomato, chopped

1 cup black-eyed peas (lobia), rinsed and drained

1½ teaspoons ground coriander

1¼ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

2 cups water

1 cup full-fat coconut milk

2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onions and ginger and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onions start to turn lightly brown around the edges. Stir in the tomato, black-eyed peas, coriander, salt, cayenne pepper, turmeric, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 20 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker, stir in the coconut milk and cilantro, and cover for 5 minutes to heat through. Serve hot or warm.

VARIATION: Feel free to use canned or frozen black-eyed peas, but reduce the water to ½ cup and cook the stew for 6 minutes on high pressure in step 2.

Spinach Mung Beans

Whole mung beans are small, green beans that are native to India. They are slightly sweet and are sold as dried beans or as sprouts. They can be purchased from most Asian or well-stocked American groceries in the bulk goods section. These beans are easy to cook from dried form. In this recipe, mung beans are cooked with ginger and peppers to make a flavorful saucy stew that is great to serve as a side dish or as a meal by itself with crusty bread.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 15 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 55 minutes

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 serrano chiles, seeded (if desired) and finely chopped

1½ tablespoons finely grated fresh ginger

1 large tomato, chopped

1 cup whole mung beans (mung dal), rinsed and drained

1½ teaspoons salt

2½ cups water, divided

4 cups spinach, chopped

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until they sputter.
- 2.** Add the onion, chiles, and ginger and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion starts to turn brown around the edges. Stir in the tomato, mung beans, salt, and 2 cups of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 15 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the remaining ½ cup of water and spinach. Select Sauté and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the spinach is wilted. Stir in the lemon juice and serve hot.

Dhansak // PARSİ VEGETABLE DAL

Dhansak is a popular dish from the Parsi community in India. Parsis are Persians who migrated to the western Indian state of Gujarat between the 8th and 10th centuries. In this vegetarian version, vegetables and lentils are cooked with spices to make a flavorful stew combining Persian and Gujarati cuisines beautifully. You can add up to four vegetables and even greens like spinach and kale—it's a great recipe to use up those last bits of veggies in the refrigerator.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 8 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 46 minutes

PAIR WITH: Caramelized Onion Rice ([variation](#))

- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon finely grated fresh ginger
- 3 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 tablespoon tamarind paste
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
1 teaspoon ground coriander
¾ teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
3½ cups water, divided
¼ cup pigeon peas (toor dal), rinsed and drained
¼ cup split mung beans (mung dal), rinsed and drained
1 small sweet potato, peeled and diced
1 small zucchini, cut into 1-inch pieces
½ cup chopped eggplant
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion starts to turn translucent.
- 2.** Stir in the tamarind paste, brown sugar, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, coriander, cumin, turmeric, and 1 cup of water. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the spices are fragrant and the mixture starts to simmer.
- 3.** Add the pigeon peas, mung beans, sweet potato, zucchini, eggplant, and remaining 2½ cups of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 8 minutes on high pressure.

5. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
6. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the lemon juice and cilantro. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Other vegetables you can use in this recipe are potato, pumpkin, butternut squash, spinach, and kale. Use a total of 2 cups.

Dalcha // HYDERABADI LENTIL STEW

Dalcha is a wholesome lentil-based curry that hails from my hometown of Hyderabad in south-central India. In this vegetarian version, yellow split peas are cooked with seasonal vegetables to make a flavorful stew that pairs wonderfully with [Basic Basmati Rice](#). I typically use a combination of whatever vegetables I have on hand, but you can also make the dish with just one vegetable—use about 4 cups total.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 8 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 41 minutes

2 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

2 to 3 serrano chiles, seeded (if desired) and finely chopped

1 large potato, peeled and cut into big chunks

1 medium carrot, peeled and cut into ½-inch rounds

½ cup fresh or frozen green beans, cut into 1-inch pieces

2 cups chopped green cabbage

½ cup yellow split peas (chana dal), rinsed and drained

1 (2-inch) piece fresh ginger, cut into ¼-inch-thick slices

1¼ teaspoons salt

2½ cups water

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the cumin seeds, garlic, and chiles and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until the garlic is lightly golden. Add the potato, carrot, green beans, cabbage, split peas, ginger, salt, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 8 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the cilantro. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Do not be alarmed by the number of serrano chiles because the lentils and vegetables tone down the heat level considerably. But if you prefer a milder stew, use just 1 serrano chile and be sure to remove the seeds.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Use coconut or canola oil instead of ghee.

Everyday Dal

As you might guess from the name of this recipe, I make this dish almost every day. It also happens to be my kids' favorite. What I love about this recipe is that it works for any type of lentil; only the cooking time needs to be adjusted (see the [variation tip](#)). It's great to serve with rice or paratha. You can also add more water to thin it out and serve it as a soup.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 35 minutes

PAIR WITH: Vegetable Rice ([variation](#))

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 medium tomatoes, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

½ teaspoon ground coriander

1 cup red lentils (masoor dal), rinsed and drained

3 cups water

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cook for about 1 minute, until they start to sputter.
- 2.** Add the onion and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the tomatoes, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, lentils, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the lemon juice. Serve hot.

VARIATION: Use split pigeon peas (toor dal) and cook for 10 minutes. Split mung beans (mung dal) will take 6 minutes to cook.

Dal Tadka

This is one of my all-time-favorite lentil dishes to make for guests. It's a simple recipe that is elevated by the addition of ghee-laden tadka, or tempering, right before serving. The toasted spices and ghee add lots of flavor.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 10 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 40 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Cabbage Mint Pulao](#)

2 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter, divided

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

2 dried red chiles (such as chile de árbol), broken into pieces

¼ teaspoon asafetida (hing) (optional)

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 teaspoons finely grated fresh ginger

1 medium tomato, chopped

1½ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon ground coriander

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ cup split pigeon peas (toor dal), rinsed and drained

¼ cup yellow split peas (chana dal), rinsed and drained

3 cups water

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt 1½ tablespoons of ghee or unsalted butter. Then, add the cumin seeds and chiles and cook for 30 seconds to 1 minute, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the asafetida (if using) and mix well.
- 2.** Press the Cancel button and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the tadka to a small bowl. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 3.** Once the pot is hot, melt the remaining ½ tablespoon of ghee or unsalted butter. Then add the onion, garlic, and ginger and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the tomato, salt, coriander, cayenne pepper, turmeric, pigeon peas, split peas, and water. Stir to combine, scraping the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 10 minutes on high pressure.
- 5.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 6.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the tadka. Serve hot.

Kale Dal

I grew up eating green leafy vegetables for at least one meal a day, and most often they were combined with lentils as in this recipe. Greens are rich in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, and this easy dal recipe is a great way to incorporate them into your daily diet. This basic recipe works with any of your favorite greens like Swiss chard, beet greens, and spinach.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 1 minute

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 10 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 36 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Tomato Rice](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 small onion, chopped

2 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped

½ serrano chile, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

3 cups chopped kale

½ cup split pigeon peas (toor dal), rinsed and drained

2 cups water

1 to 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice (optional)

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter.
- 2.** Add the onion, garlic, chile, salt, cayenne pepper (if using), turmeric, kale, pigeon peas, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 10 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir well to make a smooth lentil mixture. Stir in the lemon or lime juice (if using). Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: You can use 5 ounces of frozen chopped spinach or other frozen greens instead of fresh in the recipe. There is no need to thaw them. Cook for the time indicated, but note that the Instant Pot will take a little longer to build pressure.

Chayote Mung Dal

Dal is made for almost every meal in Indian homes. I am always amazed how my mom came up with meal plans without repeating the same dish. This recipe is from a dear friend who shared it when I was looking for a different dal recipe. Chayote is a pear-shaped vegetable that is easily found in most American grocery stores. It has a crisp texture that works well when cooked with split mung beans.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 34 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Spinach Rice](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

¼ teaspoon asafetida (hing) (optional)

6 curry leaves (optional)

1 or 2 serrano chiles, chopped

1½ cups peeled and chopped chayote

1 medium tomato, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ cup split mung beans (mung dal), rinsed and drained

1½ cups water

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cook for about 1 minute, until the seeds start to sputter.
- 2.** Add the asafetida (if using), curry leaves (if using), and chiles and cook for 30 seconds. Stir in the chayote, tomato, salt, turmeric, mung beans, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir well. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: This dal can be prepared using zucchini, opo squash (lauki), pumpkin, or butternut squash.

Pumpkin Dal

I look forward to making this dal every fall when pumpkin and winter squash are in season. I especially love the contrast of the sweet pumpkin with the tangy lemon juice. Make sure that you lightly brown the pumpkin to intensify its sweetness. You can use red lentils instead of pigeon peas, but adjust the cooking time to 6 minutes.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 10 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 46 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Ven Pongal](#)

2 tablespoons [Sambar Masala](#), or store-bought

2 tablespoons shredded unsweetened coconut

4 cups water, divided

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

¼ teaspoon asafetida (hing)

2 cups peeled and chopped pumpkin or butternut squash

1 small red onion, chopped

¾ cup pigeon peas (toor dal), rinsed and drained

1¼ teaspoons salt

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice

- 1.** Combine the sambar masala and shredded coconut with ½ cup of water in a blender and blend to make a smooth paste.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds, cumin seeds, and asafetida and cook for about 1 minute, until the seeds start to sputter.
- 3.** Add the pumpkin or butternut squash and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until lightly browned around the edges. Add the onion and cook for 1 minute. Add the pigeon peas, sambar masala paste, remaining 3½ cups of water, and the salt. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 10 minutes on high pressure.
- 5.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 6.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the lemon or lime juice. Serve hot.

Sambar // SOUTH INDIAN LENTIL VEGETABLE STEW

This spicy vegetable stew is made almost every day in many South Indian homes. Each family has its own way of making this dish, but it's always some variation on lentils and vegetables simmered with tamarind and a flavorful spice blend. Freshly ground sambar masala adds a beautiful aroma and flavor to the dish. You can use 2 cups of other veggies like pearl onions, zucchini, leeks, and radishes.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 15 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 45 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Idli](#) , [Bulgur Upma](#)

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

¼ teaspoon asafetida (hing)

8 curry leaves (optional)
1 small onion, chopped
1 medium carrot, cut into ½-inch pieces
1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 tablespoon tamarind paste
2 teaspoons [Sambar Masala](#), or store-bought
1½ teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
½ cup red lentils (masoor dal), rinsed and drained
2½ cups water, plus more as needed

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter.
- 2.** Add the asafetida and curry leaves (if using) and cook for another 30 seconds. Add the onion, carrot, bell pepper, and tomatoes and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the tomatoes turn slightly soft. Add the tamarind paste, sambar masala, salt, turmeric, lentils, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 15 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Add more water if the sambar looks too thick. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Serve hot.

Vegetable Kootu // SOUTH INDIAN DAL WITH VEGETABLES AND COCONUT

Kootu is a generic term used for lentil and vegetable stew in South India, especially in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Coconut is widely used in both these cuisines and forms the base of this lentil dish. You can find shredded coconut in the frozen section of Indian or Asian grocery stores, or you can use dried unsweetened shredded coconut. You might need a bit more water to grind the spice paste if using dried shredded coconut. My favorite vegetables for this dish are carrots, potatoes, and green beans, but you can also use eggplant, cabbage, or frozen mixed vegetables.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 36 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Yogurt Rice](#)

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

½ teaspoon whole black peppercorns

2 dried red chiles (such as chile de árbol)

½ cup fresh or frozen shredded coconut

2½ cups water, divided

2 teaspoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

¼ teaspoon asafetida (hing)

6 curry leaves (optional)

¼ cup split mung beans (mung dal), rinsed and drained

3 cups chopped mixed vegetables

1 teaspoon salt

- 1.** In a blender or food processor, combine the cumin seeds, peppercorns, chiles, coconut, and ¼ cup of water. Blend into a smooth paste. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the mustard seeds, asafetida, and curry leaves (if using) and cook for about 1 minute, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the mung beans, vegetables, and 2 cups of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and add the ground paste and remaining ¼ cup of water. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until simmering. Serve hot.

Chana Dal Payasam // SPLIT PEA AND COCONUT PUDDING

This rich and flavorful payasam, or kheer, is a thin pudding that is made in South India. Yellow split peas are cooked until soft and then flavored with coconut milk and ground cardamom. This recipe is traditionally made with jaggery, which is an unrefined sugar. I find light or dark brown sugar is a great substitute. But if you can find coconut sugar, then it will taste much closer to the original version.

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 10 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 40 minutes

2 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter, divided

¼ cup chopped raw cashews or almonds

¼ cup dried coconut flakes (optional)

1 cup split peas (chana dal), rinsed and drained

2½ cups water, divided

½ cup full-fat coconut milk

¾ cup packed brown sugar

½ teaspoon ground cardamom

1. Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, melt 1 tablespoon of ghee. Then add the cashews or almonds and cook for about 1 minute, until the nuts turn golden. Add the coconut flakes and cook for about 30 seconds, until the coconut is toasted. Press the Cancel button and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the toasted nuts and coconut to a bowl. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
2. Combine the split peas and 2 cups of water in the pot and stir.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 10 minutes on high pressure.
4. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
5. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of water, the coconut milk, brown sugar, cardamom, and cashew-coconut mixture and mix well. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the sugar has melted and the pudding has slightly thickened.

COOKING TIP: The pudding will thicken as it cools. Warm to loosen it up a bit before serving.



[Vegetable Biryani](#)

CHAPTER 4

RICE DISHES

Jeera Rice // Cumin-Scented Rice

Cabbage Mint Pulao

Paneer Pulao

Mushroom Fried Rice

Spinach Rice

Vegetable Biryani

Egg Biryani

Vegetable Khichdi

Ven Pongal

Sambar Rice

Tomato Rice

Yogurt Rice

Carrot Rice Pudding

Jeera Rice // CUMIN-SCENTED RICE

This simple and flavorful rice dish is easy to make yet fancy enough for parties. Studded with aromatic spices, this is my go-to rice recipe for any Indian-themed dinners. The whole spices are quite strong when bitten into and are not meant to be eaten. Fish them out before serving or warn your guests to push them aside if they happen to have any on their plate.

SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 1 minute

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 29 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Lobia Masala](#)

1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¼ cups water

1 tablespoon [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 bay leaf

3 whole cloves

3 cardamom pods

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the cumin seeds, bay leaf, cloves, and cardamom pods and cook until the spices are toasted and fragrant, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add the rice along with the soaking water, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
4. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
5. Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the rice. Serve hot.

VARIATION: To make Caramelized Onion Rice, after the spices are toasted in step 2, add 1 thinly sliced large onion to the Instant Pot with a pinch of salt and pepper. Cook until the edges are browned and starting to caramelize, about 5 minutes. Stir in the rice, soaking water, salt, and pepper and make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Continue with the recipe as written.

To make Vegetable Rice, add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups of frozen mixed vegetables along with the rice and then follow the recipe as written.

Cabbage Mint Pulao

Rice is a staple food in India and is part of at least one meal per day, so Indian home cooks make sure to get as creative as they can in combining vegetables and proteins with rice. In this recipe, rice is cooked with cabbage and an aromatic spice mix to make a flavorful dish. This is a great alternative to plain rice, or you can add 1 cup of cubed [Paneer](#) or your favorite cooked or canned beans along with the rice, following the recipe as written, for a complete one-pot meal.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 41 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Chayote Mung Dal](#)

1½ cups basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¾ cups water

1 (1-inch) piece ginger, roughly chopped

3 garlic cloves, peeled

½ cup packed fresh mint leaves

1 serrano chile

2 teaspoons coriander seeds
2 tablespoons [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt
2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
2 cups chopped green cabbage
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1¼ teaspoons salt

- 1.** Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** In a blender or food processor, combine the ginger, garlic, mint, chile, coriander seeds, and yogurt and blend to a smooth mixture. Set aside.
- 3.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the edges start to turn lightly brown. Stir in the ground mint mixture and cook, stirring, until the ginger and garlic smell fragrant and are cooked through, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the cabbage, tomato, salt, and rice along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 5.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 6.** Open the pressure cooker and serve the rice hot.

Paneer Pulao

Paneer is a protein-rich ingredient that I try to incorporate into my family's diet at least once a week. In this spicy one-pot meal, all the spices and herbs are ground to a coarse mixture and then added to the rice. This adds tons of flavor to every bite of the pulao. Feel free to add 2 cups of chopped vegetables to make this a complete meal.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 7 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 42 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Vegetable Jalfrezi](#)

1½ cups basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¾ cups water

1 (1-inch) piece fresh ginger, roughly chopped

3 garlic cloves

1 green serrano chile

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

3 cardamom pods

3 whole cloves
1 (1-inch) cinnamon stick
½ cup packed fresh cilantro leaves
½ cup packed fresh mint leaves
3 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter
1 medium onion, chopped
1½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 cup cubed Spiced Paneer ([variation](#)) or plain [Paneer](#), or store-bought

1. Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
2. In a blender or food processor, combine the ginger, garlic, chile, cumin seeds, cardamom pods, cloves, cinnamon stick, cilantro, and mint. Blend to a coarse paste consistency. Set aside.
3. Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the onion and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until lightly browned around the edges. Stir in the ground paste and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until it smells aromatic. Add the salt, garam masala, turmeric, lemon juice, paneer, and basmati rice along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
5. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
6. Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the rice. Serve hot.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Use canola or vegetable oil instead of ghee.

Mushroom Fried Rice

Indo-Chinese cooking—dishes that use Chinese cooking and seasoning techniques—is very popular in India. This mushroom fried rice is one of my favorite dishes. Cooking mushrooms and rice together in one pot adds a ton of umami flavor that is characteristic of Indo-Chinese recipes. Feel free to add 1 cup of green peas or other chopped vegetables while cooking to add color and nutrition.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 38 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Manchurian-Style Meatballs](#)

1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¼ cups water

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

8 ounces white button or cremini mushrooms, cleaned and chopped

2 teaspoons soy sauce

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes

⅛ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons chopped scallions, both white and green parts

- 1.** Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until lightly browned around the edges. Add the mushrooms and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until soft. Add the soy sauce, salt, red pepper flakes, black pepper, and rice along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker, add the scallions, and gently stir them into the rice. Serve hot.

Spinach Rice

I think there is a version of this dish in almost every cuisine that uses rice. This is a very basic Indian version that is simple yet flavorful. You can serve it as a side dish or add 2 cups of cubed [Paneer](#) or cooked or canned chickpeas or black-eyed peas to make it a wholesome one-pot meal. Add them along with the rice to the Instant Pot and cook as written in the recipe.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 36 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Dal Tadka](#)

1½ cups basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¾ cups water

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 serrano chile, chopped

8 ounces baby spinach, chopped

¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1¼ teaspoons salt

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice

1. Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, garlic, and chile and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the spinach, cilantro, salt, pepper, lime or lemon juice, and rice along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
4. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
5. Open the pressure cooker and serve the rice hot.

VARIATION: Use 5 ounces of frozen chopped spinach instead of fresh.

Vegetable Biryani

Biryani is a very popular Indian layered rice casserole. It's quite time-consuming to make, and usually Sundays are reserved to prepare and enjoy this dish. Thankfully, this Instant Pot version has the same flavors but takes a fraction of the time. Most of the work involved is in prepping the vegetables. Don't be alarmed by the long list of ingredients—the majority are staples. Make sure to use bay leaves and cumin seeds, but you can skip the others if you don't have them on hand. Serve with Onion-Cucumber Raita ([variation](#)) for a delicious meal.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 46 minutes

2 cups basmati rice, rinsed and drained

2½ cups water

3 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or canola or vegetable oil

4 whole cloves (optional)

4 cardamom pods (optional)

1 (2-inch) cinnamon stick (optional)

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

2 bay leaves
2 tablespoons chopped raw cashews
1 large onion, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
4 large garlic cloves, finely minced
1 medium carrot, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 large potato, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas
½ cup chopped green beans
1 small red or green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 medium tomato, chopped
2 teaspoons salt
1½ teaspoons cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store bought
½ cup [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt
¼ cup chopped fresh mint
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, melt the ghee or oil. Then add the cloves (if using), cardamom pods (if using), cinnamon stick (if using), cumin seeds, bay leaves, and cashews. Cook for about 1 minute, until the spices are fragrant.
- 3.** Add the onion and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the edges begin to caramelize slightly. Stir in the ginger and garlic and cook for about 1 minute, until they are fragrant. Add the carrot, potato, peas, green beans, bell pepper, tomato, salt, cayenne pepper,

coriander, garam masala, and yogurt. Mix well; then add the rice along with the soaking water, mint, and cilantro. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.

4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
5. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
6. Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the rice. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Other vegetables that can be used in biryani are corn, mushrooms, and cauliflower. Feel free to use frozen vegetables to minimize the prep time. You need a total of 4 cups of veggies.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Replace the ghee with oil and the yogurt with plant-based yogurt or full-fat coconut milk.

VARIATION: Replace 1 cup of veggies with 1 cup of cubed [Paneer](#) to make Paneer Biryani.

Egg Biryani

The Instant Pot changed my life when it comes to making hard-boiled eggs. It's so convenient, and the process cannot be easier (see the [cooking tip](#) for how to make them). My family loves eggs, and since I'm a lacto-ovo vegetarian, they are one of my favorite sources of protein. For this dish, I love to crisp the eggs in spiced oil before adding them to the rice, but you can feel free to skip that step to save time.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 40 minutes

2 cups basmati or long-grain white rice, rinsed and drained

2½ cups water

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1¾ teaspoons salt, divided

1¾ teaspoons ground coriander, divided

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, divided

6 large hard-boiled eggs, peeled

1 bay leaf

4 whole cloves (optional)
4 cardamom pods (optional)
1 (1-inch) cinnamon stick (optional)
1 large onion, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
4 garlic cloves, finely minced
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 cup frozen or fresh green peas
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
2 tablespoons [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt

1. Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in 1 tablespoon of the oil. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of coriander, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of cayenne pepper and mix well. Add the eggs and stir them to coat evenly with the spices. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring until they are lightly crispy all over. Transfer the eggs to a plate and set aside.
3. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil, the bay leaf, cloves (if using), cardamom pods (if using), and cinnamon stick (if using) to the pot and cook for 30 seconds. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion is lightly browned around the edges. Add the tomatoes, peas, garam masala, remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of salt, remaining $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons of coriander, remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of cayenne pepper, the yogurt, and rice along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
5. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
6. Open the pressure cooker, add the eggs, and gently fluff the rice.

Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Pour 1 cup of water into the Instant Pot and place as many eggs as you can on a steamer rack. Note the 5-5-5 rule for making hard-boiled eggs: Cook on high pressure for 5 minutes, natural release for 5 minutes, and then place the eggs in a bowl of cold water for 5 minutes. Peel and use.

VARIATION: Add 2 cups of fresh or frozen chopped vegetables to the pot while cooking the rice, then proceed with the recipe as written to make a wholesome meal.

Vegetable Khichdi

Khichdi is a rice and lentil–based dish that is widely made across India. Each region has its own version that uses different spices and vegetables based on the local cuisine. I learned this version from a North Indian friend years ago and still make it for my family. You can also use split mung beans instead of red lentils or a combination of both. Feel free to add 3 cups of chopped vegetables like cauliflower, cabbage, and mushrooms for a filling one-pot meal that is perfect for a busy weeknight dinner.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 12 minutes, low

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 44 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Mushroom Masala](#)

1 cup basmati or long-grain white rice, rinsed and drained

½ cup red lentils (masoor dal), rinsed and drained

2½ cups water

2 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 small onion, thinly sliced

1 large potato, peeled and chopped
1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought

1. Combine the rice, lentils, and water in a bowl. Set aside.
2. Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until translucent.
3. Stir in the potato, carrot, peas, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, and the rice and lentils along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Select Rice, which will automatically set the timer for 12 minutes on low pressure.
5. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
6. Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the rice. Serve hot.

MAKE IT VEGAN: Replace the ghee with canola or vegetable oil.

Ven Pongal

This is the South Indian version of khichdi that screams comfort food to me. It has a soft texture that I think is very similar to Italian risotto. A short-grain rice variety like sona masoori or jasmine rice works great in this recipe because it gets very soft once cooked. But you can also use basmati rice; just be aware that the texture will be not be as fluffy. If you are not a fan of spicy food, reduce the peppercorns to ½ teaspoon and omit the chile.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 2 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 12 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 39 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Sambar](#)

1 cup short-grain rice, rinsed and drained

½ cup split mung beans (mung dal), rinsed and drained

4½ cups water, plus more as needed

3 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought

1 teaspoon whole black peppercorns

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

½ teaspoon asafetida (hing) (optional)

1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
1 serrano chile, chopped
8 curry leaves (optional)
2 tablespoons chopped raw cashews
1¾ teaspoons salt

- 1.** Combine the rice, mung beans, and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the peppercorns, cumin seeds, asafetida (if using), ginger, chile, curry leaves (if using), and cashews. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until fragrant. Press the Cancel button and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the tadka to a bowl. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 3.** Add the rice and lentils along with the soaking liquid and salt to the pot. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 12 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker, stir in the tadka, and mix well. If the pongal looks too thick, add ½ to 1 cup more water to get a porridge-like consistency. Serve hot.

Sambar Rice

This spicy and veggie-loaded one-pot meal is perfect to make on a busy weeknight. Traditionally, this recipe calls for pigeon peas, but you can use red lentils instead. Use about 2 cups total of any vegetables you have on hand—zucchini, sweet potato, green peas, and winter squash would all work great.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 15 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 50 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Yogurt](#)

1 cup basmati or long-grain rice, rinsed and drained

½ cup pigeon peas (toor dal), rinsed and drained

4½ cups water

2 tablespoons [Sambar Masala](#), or store-bought

2 tablespoons shredded unsweetened coconut

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 medium onion, chopped
6 curry leaves (optional)
1 medium potato, peeled and chopped
1 medium carrot, peeled and chopped
½ cup fresh or frozen chopped green beans
2 teaspoons tamarind paste
1¾ teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

- 1.** Combine the rice, pigeon peas, and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Combine the sambar masala and coconut in a spice grinder or blender and blend to a fine powder. Set aside.
- 3.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter.
- 4.** Add the onion and curry leaves (if using) and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the potato, carrot, green beans, tamarind paste, salt, turmeric, and rice and lentils along with the soaking water. Stir to combine.
- 5.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 15 minutes on high pressure.
- 6.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 7.** Open the pressure cooker and serve hot.

Tomato Rice

This simple tomato-packed recipe is my go-to when I run out of fresh vegetables. It can be jazzed up in many ways. Add 1 cup of chopped vegetables or cubed [Paneer](#) or cooked or canned beans to make it a wholesome meal. Add 1 teaspoon of [Sambar Masala](#) or [Garam Masala](#) to give it a different flavor.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 7 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 35 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Dalcha](#)

1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¼ cups water

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

2 tablespoons chopped raw peanuts (optional)

1 medium onion, finely chopped

1 green serrano chile, halved lengthwise

2 medium tomatoes, chopped

1¼ teaspoons salt

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper (optional)

- 1.** Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds and peanuts (if using) and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until the seeds start to sputter and the peanuts are toasted.
- 3.** Add the onion and chile and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the tomatoes, salt, and cayenne pepper (if using) and cook until the tomatoes are soft, about 2 minutes. Add the rice along with the soaking water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 5.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 6.** Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the rice. Serve hot.

Yogurt Rice

Yogurt is part of every meal in India, especially in South India. This yogurt rice is a common dish in most Indian homes. Rice is cooked until quite soft and then mixed with spiced yogurt. Add grated carrot, cucumber, or pomegranate seeds for extra crunch and another layer of flavor. Serve at room temperature or chilled as part of any meal.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 12 minutes, low

Pressure release: 15 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 50 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Tomato Chutney](#)

1 cup basmati or long-grain rice, rinsed and drained

2 cups water

1½ cups [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt

1 teaspoon salt, divided

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

2 tablespoons chopped raw cashews or peanuts

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 serrano chile, halved lengthwise
6 curry leaves (optional)

- 1.** Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, whisk together the yogurt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt until it's lump-free.
- 3.** Select Sauté, and when the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds and cashews or peanuts and cook for about 1 minute, until the seeds start to sputter and the nuts are golden. Stir in the ginger, chile, and curry leaves (if using) and cook for about 1 minute, until fragrant. Press the Cancel button and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the spice mixture to the bowl of yogurt. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 4.** Add the rice along with the soaking water and the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt to the pot.
- 5.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Select Rice, which will automatically set the time to 12 minutes on low pressure.
- 6.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 15 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 7.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the yogurt-spice mixture. Mix well and let the rice cool to room temperature before serving.

Carrot Rice Pudding

Nearly every country in the world has a rice pudding recipe. Even in India, there are numerous ways it's made. It's called payasam in South India and kheer in the North. But essentially, it's just slow-cooked rice, sweetened with sugar or jaggery (unrefined sugar) and tossed with nuts. My version includes carrots to add color and extra sweetness. Adjust the amount of sugar in the recipe to your liking.

Serves 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 20 minutes, high

Pressure release: 15 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 58 minutes

3 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter

1½ cups finely grated carrot (about 2 medium carrots)

2 tablespoons chopped raw cashews

2 tablespoons raisins

¼ cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

⅓ cup sugar, plus more as needed

3½ cups whole milk, plus more as needed

¼ teaspoon ground cardamom

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the carrot, cashews, and raisins and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the rice, sugar, milk, and cardamom. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Select Porridge, which will automatically set the timer for 20 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 15 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir to combine. Add another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of milk if the mixture seems too thick. Serve hot or warm.

VARIATION: To make traditional Indian rice pudding, use 2 tablespoons of ghee to sauté the raw cashews and raisins. Use $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of rice, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups of milk and follow the recipe as written.



[Tofu and Sweet Potato Vindaloo](#)

CHAPTER 5

CURRIES AND STEWS

Everyday Potato Curry

Green Beans with Coconut

Masala Cabbage // Spicy Cabbage

Jackfruit Masala

Baingan Masala // Stuffed Eggplant with Peanuts

Beet Curry

Mushroom Masala

Gujarati-Style Squash and Spinach Curry

Masala Tindora // Ivy Gourd and Onion Curry

Creamy Brussels Sprout Curry

Aviyal // Kerala-Style Mixed Vegetable Stew

Aloo Gobi // Potato and Cauliflower Curry

Dum Aloo // Spicy Baby Potatoes

Palak Paneer // Paneer in Creamy Spinach Sauce

Tofu and Sweet Potato Vindaloo

Paneer Makhani // Paneer in Buttery Tomato Sauce

Paneer Tikka Masala

Vegetable Kurma // Vegetables in Creamy Cashew Sauce

[Kadai Vegetables // Spicy Vegetable Curry](#)

[Vegetable Jalfrezi](#)

Everyday Potato Curry

My family loves potatoes and can eat them literally every single day. This potato curry is my go-to recipe for a quick weeknight side dish. Any variety of potato will work here—just make sure to chop them into equal-size pieces. Add 1 cup of cubed [Paneer](#) or cooked or canned chickpeas to make this a wholesome dish. Leftovers can be used as filling for sandwiches or wraps.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total Time: 30 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Chayote Mung Dal](#)

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

1 medium onion, thinly sliced

½ green serrano chile, finely minced

1 medium tomato, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cayenne pepper

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

3 medium potatoes (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces

½ cup water

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until they start to sputter. Add the onion and chile and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato, salt, cayenne pepper, and turmeric and cook for about 1 minute, until the tomato is soft. Stir in the potatoes and water.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Add ½ teaspoon of [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought, to jazz up this simple curry.

Green Beans with Coconut

Fresh coconut is widely used in many South Indian dishes. It adds slight sweetness and nuttiness to any dish. In this recipe, green beans are pressure-cooked until tender; then shredded coconut is added at the end. Feel free to use either fresh or dried unsweetened shredded coconut. Dried yellow split peas add a nice crunch and texture to the dish, but feel free to omit them if you don't have them on hand.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 1 minute

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 26 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Pumpkin Dal](#)

2 teaspoons coconut or canola oil

2 teaspoons yellow split peas (chana dal) (optional)

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

6 curry leaves (optional)

1 green serrano chile, finely minced

1 pound fresh green beans, cut into ½-inch pieces

¾ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

¼ cup water

¼ cup fresh, frozen, or dried shredded unsweetened coconut

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the yellow split peas (if using), mustard and cumin seeds, curry leaves (if using), and chile. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the seeds start to sputter and the lentils turn lightly browned, about 1 minute. Add the green beans, salt, turmeric, and water. Stir to combine.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the coconut. Mix well and let sit for 5 minutes.

COOKING TIP: You can use frozen chopped green beans in the recipe. The cooking time will be the same, although the Instant Pot might take a little longer to come to pressure.

Masala Cabbage // SPICY CABBAGE

Cabbage can sometimes be bland and uninspiring, but this spicy cabbage curry is anything but. This crowd-favorite recipe from North India is flavored with a warm blend of spices. If you find chopping cabbage a chore, then use a bag of store-bought coleslaw mix. This is a perfect side dish to serve with either [Basic Basmati Rice](#) or [Paratha](#).

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 1 minute, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 29 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Lobia Masala](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 medium onion, chopped

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1¼ teaspoons ground cumin

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon ground coriander

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

2 tablespoons water

1 pound cabbage (1 medium head), finely chopped

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook until the onion turns translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the cumin, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, turmeric, and water and cook for 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the cabbage and stir to combine.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 1 minute on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and mix well. If there is too much liquid, select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes to evaporate the excess water. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: If you prefer softer cabbage, cook for 2 minutes on high pressure in step 2.

Jackfruit Masala

Jackfruit is native to India and is widely used in many regional cuisines. Raw green jackfruit has a mild taste and a unique, tender, yet fibrous texture that has made it a popular replacement for meat around the world. In this recipe, canned jackfruit is cooked in a spicy tomato sauce until tender. The coconut milk gives a nice creaminess and balances the spiciness. Make sure to buy young green jackfruit in brine and not ripe jackfruit in syrup.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 42 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Kale Dal](#)

1 (20-ounce) can jackfruit in brine or water, rinsed and drained

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 large onion, finely chopped

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced
½ green serrano chile, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
½ cup water
½ cup full-fat coconut milk

- 1.** Cut the jackfruit into bite-size pieces; then use your fingers or a fork to shred the pieces.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the onion, ginger, garlic, and chile and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the tomatoes, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, and turmeric and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the tomatoes are very soft. Add the water and shredded jackfruit and mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the coconut milk. Cover for 5 minutes; then serve hot.

Baingan Masala // STUFFED EGGPLANT WITH PEANUTS

Eggplant is considered the king of vegetables in India because of its versatility and the fact that the stem looks like a crown. Each region in India has its own version of stuffed eggplant with different fillings and spices. In this version, baby eggplants are stuffed with a spiced peanut mixture and then cooked in an onion-tomato sauce for an easy, scrumptious side dish that is sure to please even picky eaters. Use either purple or green baby eggplants that are 2 to 3 inches long.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 4 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 32 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Everyday Dal](#)

½ cup roasted unsalted peanuts

1 teaspoon salt, divided

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, divided

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

8 to 10 baby eggplants, stems removed

1½ tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 medium tomatoes, chopped

¾ cup water

1. Combine the peanuts, ½ teaspoon of salt, ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper, and the turmeric in a food processor or blender and blend into a coarse powder. Transfer the mixture to a small bowl and set aside.
2. Slit each eggplant three-quarters of the way through by making two crosswise slits, forming an X. Stuff about 1 tablespoon of the peanut mixture in each eggplant. Reserve any remaining peanut mixture.
3. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the tomatoes, remaining ½ teaspoon of salt, and remaining ½ teaspoon of cayenne pepper and cook for about 2 minutes, until the tomatoes are very soft. Stir in the water, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Place the stuffed eggplant in the pot in a single layer and sprinkle the leftover peanut mixture on top. Do not mix.
4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 4 minutes on high pressure.
5. When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
6. Open the pressure cooker and carefully transfer the eggplants to a serving platter. Mix the sauce well and pour it over the eggplants. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: You can use 3 or 4 medium Chinese or Japanese eggplants instead of baby eggplants. Cut the Chinese eggplants into 2-inch pieces, slit, and stuff them. Then follow the recipe as written.

Beet Curry

Simple vegetable curries are part of everyday meals in many Indian homes, and the Instant Pot makes cooking beets for this recipe easy and convenient. Make sure to chop the beets into small, equal-size pieces to make sure they cook evenly. Dried black lentils and yellow split peas add a nice crunch to the curry, but feel free to omit them if you don't have them on hand. For a colorful presentation, use a combination of red and golden beets.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 1 minute

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 12 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 41 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Vegetable Kootu](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon split black lentils (urad dal) (optional)

1 teaspoon yellow split peas (chana dal) (optional)

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

3 or 4 medium beets (about 1 pound), peeled and cut into ½-inch cubes

1 green serrano chile, chopped

1 teaspoon salt

¼ cup water

2 tablespoons finely chopped roasted unsalted peanuts

3 tablespoons unsweetened shredded coconut

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the lentils (if using), split peas (if using), mustard and cumin seeds and cook for about 1 minute, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the beets, chile, salt, and water. Stir well.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 12 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the peanuts and coconut. Serve hot or warm.

COOKING TIP: If using roasted salted peanuts, reduce the amount of salt in the recipe to ¾ teaspoon.

Mushroom Masala

Mushrooms have a hearty texture and an earthy taste that combines deliciously with the spices in this curry. Feel free to use either cremini or white button mushrooms, but note that cremini mushrooms have a deeper, more pronounced flavor.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 4 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 33 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Dalcha](#)

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

½ cup canned tomato puree

¾ teaspoon salt

¾ teaspoon cayenne pepper

½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought

8 ounces cremini or white button mushrooms, chopped

1 cup frozen or fresh green peas

¼ cup water

¼ cup full-fat coconut milk

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion is lightly browned around the edges. Stir in the tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, and garam masala and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until simmering. Add the mushrooms, peas, and water and mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 4 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the coconut milk. Cover for 5 minutes; then serve hot.

VARIATION: Add ¼ cup of heavy cream instead of coconut milk for a nonvegan version of this curry.

Gujarati-Style Squash and Spinach Curry

Squash and spinach is a delicious combination for a side dish. Instead of butternut squash, you can use any winter squash you can find, like kabocha or even pumpkin. Look for small ones since they tend to have a lot more intense flavor. Use two serrano chiles to make the dish spicy or use just one and remove the seeds and membranes to tone down the heat.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 28 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Vegetable Khichdi](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

1 or 2 green serrano chiles, sliced

3 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 medium butternut squash (about 2 pounds), peeled, seeded, and cut into 1-inch pieces

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground turmeric

½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon ground coriander

½ cup water

2 medium tomatoes, chopped

5 ounces baby spinach, chopped

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds and cook until the seeds start to sputter, about 30 seconds. Add the chiles, garlic, squash, salt, turmeric, cumin, coriander, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the tomatoes and spinach. Select Sauté and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the spinach is wilted and bright green and the tomato is tender. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Replace the squash with the same weight of potatoes. Adjust the cooking time to 2 minutes on high pressure.

Masala Tindora // IVY GOURD AND ONION CURRY

Tindora, or ivy gourds, look like mini cucumbers and are crispy with slightly gelatinous seeds in the middle. Fresh tindora are available throughout the year in Indian grocery stores. Look for fresh, firm-looking gourds when shopping. In this recipe, the ivy gourds are cooked along with onions to make a delicious, savory side dish. I prefer using red onion for this recipe because it adds a slight sweetness that balances the other flavors.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 30 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Sambar](#)

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 large red onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 tablespoons water

1 pound ivy gourds (tindora), trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion and cook for about 3 minutes, until it is lightly browned around the edges. Stir in the garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the water, ivy gourds, and salt and mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and add the coriander and cayenne pepper. Select Sauté and cook for 1 minute, until all the water in the pot has evaporated.

VARIATION: Replace the tindora with green beans and adjust the cooking time to 2 minutes.

Creamy Brussels Sprout Curry

Brussels sprouts are not available in India, and I didn't know about this mini cabbage-like vegetable until I came to the United States. The first time I tasted a Brussels sprout, I knew it would lend itself beautifully to Indian spices just like cabbage. This creamy curry is one of my favorite recipes to make with the sprouts, and it takes only 2 minutes in the Instant Pot.

SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, low

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 25 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Paratha](#)

- 1 pound Brussels sprouts
- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, finely minced
- 1 cup canned tomato puree

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought

½ cup water

¼ cup heavy (whipping) cream

1. Prepare the Brussels sprouts by trimming the stem ends and then halving medium-size sprouts and quartering larger ones.
2. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onions start to brown around the edges. Add the tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, Brussels sprouts, and water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on low pressure.
4. When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
5. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the heavy cream; then cover for 5 minutes. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Frozen Brussels sprouts can be used in the recipe. There's no need to adjust the cooking time, although the Instant Pot might take longer to come to pressure.

Aviyal // KERALA-STYLE MIXED VEGETABLE STEW

Aviyal is one of the classic vegetable curries made in the South Indian state of Kerala. It is made with a combination of thinly cut vegetables cooked in a spicy coconut sauce. You can use almost any vegetable here—potato, sweet potato, or cucumber would all work. Curry leaves add a nice flavor that is characteristic to this dish, but if you don't have any on hand, simply omit them.

Serves 6

Prep time: 20 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 35 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Sambar](#) , [Basic Basmati Rice](#)

1 medium green plantain, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces

2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces

½ cup green beans, cut into 2-inch pieces

1 medium zucchini, cut into 2-inch pieces

1 teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

1 cup water, plus more for blending

½ cup fresh shredded coconut
1 or 2 green serrano chiles, chopped
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 cup [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt
½ cup green peas
2 tablespoons coconut oil
8 curry leaves (optional)

- 1.** Combine the plantain, carrots, green beans, zucchini, salt, turmeric, and water in the Instant Pot. Stir to combine.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** In the meantime, in a small bowl, combine the coconut, chiles, and cumin seeds with just enough water to make a smooth paste. In another small bowl, whisk the yogurt to make sure there are no lumps.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the peas, coconut paste, yogurt, coconut oil, and curry leaves (if using). Mix well and let stand for 10 minutes for the flavors to combine. Serve hot or warm.

Aloo Gobi // POTATO AND CAULIFLOWER CURRY

Potato (aloo) and cauliflower (gobi) is a classic combination, and this spicy curry is a popular menu item at Indian restaurants. Since the vegetables have different cooking times, I parcook the potato with the onion before adding the cauliflower. Make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits, which adds to the flavor and helps prevent getting the dreaded “burn” alert.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 1 minute, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 27 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Dal Tadka](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

1 medium onion, chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

2 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed
¾ cup water, divided
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon ground turmeric
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
3 cups fresh or frozen cauliflower florets

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until the seeds start to sputter. Add the onion, ginger, garlic, and potatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 2 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add ½ cup of water and mix well. Cover the pot with a glass lid and cook until the potatoes are slightly tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomatoes, salt, cayenne pepper, turmeric, and red pepper flakes and cook until the tomatoes are soft, about 1 minute. Stir in the remaining ¼ cup of water and scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the cauliflower florets right on top. Do not stir.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 1 minute on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir the cooked cauliflower into the curry. If there is any excess liquid, select Sauté and cook for 1 to 2 minutes to reduce the mixture. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: If using fresh cauliflower, chop it into big florets to ensure they hold their shape after cooking.

Dum Aloo // SPICY BABY POTATOES

Dum is the technique of trapping steam in a pan, which is easy to do in the Instant Pot. Dum aloo is a popular recipe that uses this technique to make a scrumptious curry with baby potatoes. Use thin-skinned new baby potatoes for the best flavor. There is no need to peel them.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 11 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 41 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Jeera Rice](#)

1 pound baby potatoes (16 to 18 small potatoes)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil, divided

1 large red onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 cup canned tomato puree

1¼ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground coriander

½ cup water

½ cup full-fat coconut milk or heavy (whipping) cream

3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Rinse and scrub the potatoes well. Pat them dry with a kitchen towel and pierce each one a few times with a fork.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in 1 tablespoon of oil. Add the potatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 to 6 minutes, until lightly golden on all sides. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the potatoes to a plate and set aside.
- 3.** Pour in the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil to the pot and add the onion, ginger, and garlic. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion is lightly browned around the edges. Add the tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, cumin, and coriander and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the water, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the potatoes and stir to combine.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
- 5.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 6.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the coconut milk or heavy cream and cilantro. Mix well and let sit for 5 minutes. Serve hot.

Palak Paneer // PANEER IN CREAMY SPINACH SAUCE

A lightly spiced spinach sauce with creamy paneer makes this curry a favorite even with picky eaters. Don't be surprised to see the pressure cook time of zero minutes—it is not a typo. The Instant Pot will come to pressure and then switch off. This will ensure that the spinach is not overcooked. Adjust the number of chiles used based on your spice preference. Remove the seeds and membrane to tone down the heat.

SUPER-FAST

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 10 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 0 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 23 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Paratha](#)

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

1 tablespoon [Ghee](#), or store-bought

1 small onion, chopped

1 or 2 green serrano chiles, chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground cumin
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
1 pound baby spinach, chopped
¾ cup water, divided
2 cups cubed [Paneer](#), or store-bought
2 tablespoons heavy (whipping) cream

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil and ghee. Add the onion and chiles and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the ginger and garlic and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the tomatoes, salt, cumin, garam masala, and turmeric and cook for about 2 minutes, until the tomatoes are soft. Make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Pile in the spinach and add ½ cup of water. Mix well.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 0 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and, using an immersion blender, blend the spinach into a smooth mixture. Add the remaining ¼ cup of water and the paneer. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the mixture starts to simmer. Stir in the cream and cook until heated through, about 1 minute. Serve hot.

Tofu and Sweet Potato Vindaloo

Vindaloo is a popular dish from the coastal state of Goa and is highly influenced by Portuguese cooking. It is notable for its tangy flavor from vinegar, a generous dose of garlic, and a liberal hit of spices.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 9 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 35 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Basic Basmati Rice](#)

1 (1-inch) piece ginger, peeled and roughly chopped

4 garlic cloves

2 teaspoons sugar

1¼ teaspoons salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon ground coriander

½ teaspoon ground turmeric
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
Pinch ground cloves (optional)
¾ cup water, divided
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar or distilled white vinegar
3 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil, divided
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces
2 cups fresh or frozen cauliflower florets
1 cup canned tomato puree
2 cups extra-firm cubed tofu (about 7 ounces)
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas

- 1.** In a blender or food processor, combine the ginger, garlic, sugar, salt, cayenne pepper, cumin, coriander, turmeric, black pepper, cardamom, cloves (if using), ¼ cup of water, the vinegar, and 1 tablespoon of oil. Blend to a smooth paste. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil. Add the onion and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until lightly browned around the edges. Add the ground paste and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Add the sweet potatoes, cauliflower, tomato puree, and remaining ½ cup of water. Stir to combine.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the cubed tofu and peas. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes to heat through. Serve immediately.

Paneer Makhani // PANEER IN BUTTERY TOMATO SAUCE

Makhani means “butter” in Hindi. True to its name, the base of this dish is a rich, creamy, and buttery tomato sauce. Fresh, ripe tomatoes are great to use in this recipe when in season, but I find that canned tomato puree gives the same depth of color and flavor to the dish. If using fresh tomatoes, use three medium tomatoes, chopped. The paneer can be replaced with 2 cups of cooked or canned chickpeas, chopped extra-firm tofu, or peeled and chopped potatoes.

SUPER-FAST

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 29 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Cabbage Mint Pulao](#)

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided

1 large onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 cup canned tomato puree
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
¾ cup water, divided, plus more as needed
¼ cup heavy (whipping) cream
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon sugar
2 cups cubed [Paneer](#), or store-bought
3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt 2 tablespoons of butter. Keep a glass lid handy if the butter starts to sputter. Then add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onions turn slightly browned around the edges. Add the tomato paste, tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, turmeric, and ½ cup of water and mix well. Make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and add the remaining ¼ cup of water. Using an immersion blender, blend the tomato sauce into a smooth mixture. You might have to tilt the pot slightly to do this.
- 5.** Add the remaining 1 tablespoon of butter, the heavy cream, garam masala, sugar, and paneer. Select Sauté and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the mixture starts to simmer. If the sauce looks too thick, add 2 to 3 tablespoons water. Have a lid handy to cover the pot if the mixture starts to sputter. Sprinkle the cilantro on top

and serve hot.

COOKING TIP: Make a double batch of the makhani sauce and freeze half for up to 2 months in an airtight container.

Paneer Tikka Masala

This is probably one of the most popular items on Indian restaurant menus all over the world. Tikka masala is said to have originated in the United Kingdom and is widely considered Britain's national dish. In this vegetarian version, cubes of marinated paneer are simmered in a creamy tomato sauce that is slightly sweet and spicy. Use full-fat yogurt to ensure that it does not curdle when added to the tomato sauce.

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 34 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Palak Paratha](#)

¼ cup [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt

1½ teaspoons [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought, divided

1¼ teaspoons ground cumin, divided

1¼ teaspoons salt, divided

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, divided

2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon or lime juice

2 cups cubed [Paneer](#), or store-bought

2 tablespoons [Ghee](#), or store-bought, or unsalted butter
1 medium red onion, chopped
1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
3 garlic cloves, finely minced
¼ cup blanched almonds or raw cashews, chopped
1 cup canned tomato puree
½ cup water
¼ cup heavy (whipping) cream
1 tablespoon honey or sugar
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** In a medium bowl, whisk the yogurt until there are no lumps. Add ½ teaspoon of garam masala, ¼ teaspoon of cumin, ½ teaspoon of salt, ¼ teaspoon of cayenne pepper, and the lemon or lime juice and mix well. Add the paneer and toss gently to coat the pieces evenly with the spiced yogurt. Cover and set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt the ghee. Then add the onion, bell pepper, ginger, garlic, and almonds or cashews and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion turns lightly browned around the edges and the bell pepper is crisp-tender. Stir in the tomato puree, remaining 1 teaspoon of cumin, remaining ¾ teaspoon of salt, remaining ¾ teaspoon of cayenne pepper, and water and mix well. Make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and, using an immersion blender, blend the tomatoes into a smooth mixture. You might have to tilt

the pot slightly to do this.

6. Add the heavy cream, honey or sugar, remaining 1 teaspoon of garam masala, and the marinated paneer along with any remaining yogurt mixture. Select Sauté on low and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the curry is heated through. Have a lid handy to cover the pot if the mixture starts to sputter. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve hot.

COOKING TIP: For a nut-free version, omit the almonds or cashews and increase the heavy cream to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.

Vegetable Kurma // VEGETABLES IN CREAMY CASHEW SAUCE

This special-occasion curry features the rich flavors that originated from the royal Mughal kitchens in India. My Instant Pot version is made with a colorful mix of vegetables and cooked in a nutty, spicy sauce. The recipe needs a total of 6 cups of chopped vegetables; feel free to use whatever vegetables you have on hand or replace some of the vegetables with cubed firm tofu, cubed [Paneer](#), or cooked or canned beans to make this a wholesome one-pot dish.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 31 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Spinach Rice](#)

¼ cup raw cashews or blanched almonds

1 (1-inch) piece ginger, roughly chopped

3 garlic cloves, peeled

1 green serrano chile

1 large tomato, roughly chopped
1½ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
1 teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
1½ cups water, divided
2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 medium potato, peeled and cubed
1 large carrot, peeled and cubed
1 cup fresh or frozen chopped green beans
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas
2 cups fresh or frozen cauliflower florets
½ cup full-fat coconut milk

- 1.** In a blender or food processor, combine the cashews or almonds, ginger, garlic, chile, tomato, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, coriander, cumin, turmeric, and ¼ cup of water. Blend to a smooth paste. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until translucent. Add the ground nut mixture. Pour ¼ cup of water into the blender, slosh it around a bit, and then pour it into the pot to get all that great flavor. Cook, stirring constantly and scraping the bottom, for 2 to 3 minutes, until fragrant. Stir in the potato, carrot, green beans, peas, cauliflower, and remaining 1 cup of water. Stir to combine, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.

- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the coconut milk. Mix well and cover the pot for 3 to 4 minutes to heat through. Serve right away.

Kadai Vegetables // SPICY VEGETABLE CURRY

Kadai refers to the small wok that is traditionally used to make this dish. The freshly ground spice blend is called kadai masala because the spices are toasted in the kadai, which provides the characteristic flavor to this curry. I typically use a mix of carrots, green beans, mushrooms, and green peas to make this curry, but you can feel free to make it with just one or two of your favorite vegetables. But do not skip the bell peppers, as they provide the necessary crunch that is typical of this curry.

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 12 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 44 minutes

PAIR WITH: Caramelized Onion Rice ([variation](#))

2 teaspoons coriander seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

2 cardamom pods

3 cloves

1 (½-inch) cinnamon stick

2 dried red chiles (such as chile de árbol)
2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil
1 bay leaf
1 large onion, chopped
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
3 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 green serrano chile, seeded and finely chopped
2 tablespoons water, plus ¼ cup
½ cup canned tomato puree
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
5 cups chopped vegetables of choice
1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas
¼ cup heavy (whipping) cream
3 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, put in the coriander and cumin seeds, cardamom pods, cloves, cinnamon stick, and dried red chiles. Cook, stirring constantly, until the spices are fragrant and lightly toasted, 1 to 2 minutes. Press the Cancel button and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the spices to a small bowl to cool. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 2.** Once the spices are slightly cooled, put them in a spice grinder or blender and blend into a smooth powder. Set aside.
- 3.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the bay leaf and cook for a few seconds. Add the onion, ginger, garlic,

and serrano chile and cook until the onion is lightly browned around the edges, 3 to 4 minutes. Add 2 tablespoons of water, the tomato puree, salt, garam masala, turmeric, and ground spice mixture and cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the chopped vegetables (but not the bell pepper or peas yet) and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water. Stir to combine.

4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
5. When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
6. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the bell pepper and peas. Select Sauté and cook, stirring frequently, for 3 to 5 minutes, until the bell pepper is tender. Press the Cancel button and add the heavy cream. Mix well and let sit for 5 minutes. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve hot.

VARIATION: Make a double batch of the ground spice mixture and store it in an airtight container for up to a month so you can whip up this curry in no time, whenever you want.

Vegetable Jalfrezi

Jalfrezi is a colorful curry made using a Chinese stir-frying technique combined with Indian spices and flavors. It is a versatile dish that can be made with any combination of vegetables. The key is to not overcook the veggies, so some of them are cooked under pressure until tender while the quick-cooking ones are added afterward. I love adding chopped baby corn to this dish. Look for it in the canned veggie section in the grocery store.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 8 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 34 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Maa Ki Dal](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 medium red onion, sliced

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

½ green serrano chile, sliced
¾ cup water, divided
2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch matchsticks
1 cup fresh or frozen chopped green beans
1 cup chopped canned baby corn
½ cup canned tomato puree
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
¼ teaspoon ground turmeric
2 tablespoons ketchup
1 medium green or red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
½ cup fresh or frozen green peas
½ cup fresh or frozen corn
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook for about 30 seconds, until they start to sputter. Add the onion, ginger, garlic, and chile and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion starts to turn brown around the edges. Add ¼ cup of water and scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Stir in the carrots, green beans, baby corn, tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, turmeric, and remaining ½ cup of water. Stir to combine.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the ketchup, bell pepper, peas, and corn. Select Sauté and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until

the pepper is crisp-tender. Cover with a glass lid if the curry starts to sputter. Stir in the cilantro and serve hot.

VARIATION: Add 1 cup of cubed [Paneer](#) or extra-firm tofu along with the bell pepper in step 4.



[Kathi Rolls with Steamed Egg Filling](#)

CHAPTER 6

HEARTY VEGETABLE AND GRAIN DISHES

Indian-Style Baked Potatoes

Paneer and Rice Stuffed Bell Peppers

Cauliflower Fried Rice

Masala Oats

Bulgur Upma

Coconut Barley Pulao

Tomato Quinoa

Spicy Tomato Pasta

Hakka Noodles

Indian-Style Mac and Cheese

Kathi Rolls with Steamed Egg Filling

Tofu and Potato Tacos

Vegetable Frittata

Indian-Style Burrito Bowls

Manchurian-Style Meatballs

Indian-Style Baked Potatoes

These potatoes are not actually baked, as the Instant Pot provides a much faster way to make perfectly cooked spuds. My kids love potatoes, and this is their favorite weeknight dinner. Use similar-size potatoes to ensure they cook evenly. The cooking time varies depending on the size you use; if they are not completely cooked after the set time, put the lid back on and continue to cook until they are done.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 18 to 25 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 43 to 50 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Spicy Tomato Rasam](#)

For the green chutney

2 cups packed cilantro leaves and tender stems

1 garlic clove, peeled

½ green serrano chile

2 tablespoons water, plus more as needed

1 to 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon sugar

For the potatoes

4 medium russet or baking potatoes

2 cups water

2 cups cooked or canned chickpeas

1 small cucumber, peeled and diced

1 medium tomato, seeded and diced

½ green serrano chile, seeded and finely chopped

2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh cilantro

1 teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought

1 teaspoon salt, plus more for seasoning the potatoes

To make the green chutney

1. In a blender or food processor, combine the cilantro, garlic, chile, water, lemon juice, salt, and sugar and blend to a smooth paste. Add more water, as needed, to make a slightly pourable chutney. Set aside.

To make the potatoes

2. Wash, scrub, and pierce the potatoes all over with a fork.
3. Place the rack in the Instant Pot and pour in the water. Place the potatoes on the rack.
4. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Depending on the size of the potatoes used, set the time between 18 and 25 minutes on high pressure. For smaller potatoes, start with 18 minutes; for large potatoes, start with 25 minutes. If the potatoes are not cooked through after the set time, put the lid back on and cook for a little longer, until fork-tender.
5. In the meantime, in a medium bowl, combine the chickpeas,

cucumber, tomato, chile, lemon juice, cilantro, chaat masala, and salt. Cover and set aside until ready to use.

6. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
7. Open the pressure cooker and, using tongs, carefully remove the potatoes. Make a slit in the top of each potato and carefully scoop out the potato flesh into the bowl with the chickpea filling, keeping the potato skin intact. Season the potato skins with salt.
8. Lightly mash the potato flesh while mixing it into the chickpea mixture. Spoon the filling back into the potato skins. Drizzle with the green chutney and serve right away.

VARIATION: [Paneer](#) and most bean dishes are great to use to top baked potatoes.

Paneer and Rice Stuffed Bell Peppers

My mom used to make bell peppers stuffed with potato curry quite often when we were growing up. I have taken my mom's version and replaced the stuffing with spicy paneer and rice to make it more filling and wholesome. You can replace the paneer with cubed firm tofu or cooked or canned beans to make this dish vegan. Use different-colored bell peppers for a colorful presentation.

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 6 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 37 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Sweet Potato and Peanut Salad](#)

- 4 large bell peppers (any color)
- 1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 medium tomato, chopped
½ cup fresh or frozen green peas
½ cup fresh or frozen corn
1 cup ¼-inch-cubed [Paneer](#), or store-bought
1¼ teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
1½ cups [Basic Basmati Rice](#) or other cooked rice
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
1 cup water

[Green Chutney](#), for serving

- 1.** Cut the tops off the bell peppers. Remove the stems, seeds, and membranes. If necessary, slice a tiny piece off the bottom to make them stand upright.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the cumin seeds and cook until the seeds start to sputter, about 30 seconds. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato, peas, corn, paneer, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, and garam masala and cook for about 2 minutes, until the tomato is soft. Press the Cancel button and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the paneer mixture to a large bowl. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 3.** Add the rice and cilantro to the paneer and mix gently to combine.
- 4.** Fill the bell peppers with the rice and paneer stuffing up to the top. Do not overstuff.
- 5.** Place a rack with handles in the Instant Pot and pour in the water.

Arrange the stuffed peppers on the rack.

6. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 6 minutes on high pressure.
7. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
8. Open the pressure cooker, carefully remove the rack from the Instant Pot, and transfer the stuffed peppers to a serving plate. Drizzle with green chutney and serve hot.

VARIATION: The rice can be replaced with another cooked grain, such as quinoa or barley.

Cauliflower Fried Rice

Cauliflower rice is a nutritious alternative to rice and can be used instead of rice in most recipes. My simple veggie-loaded recipe is quick and easy to make. You can make your own cauliflower rice by either grating a medium head of cauliflower on a box grater or processing it until very fine in a food processor. I use frozen edamame to add protein to the dish, but feel free to replace it with 1 cup of firm cubed tofu or your choice of cooked or canned beans.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 1 minute, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 29 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Mulligatawny Soup](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 medium green or red bell pepper, seeded and diced

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 cup frozen edamame
1 cup frozen or fresh corn
½ cup fresh or frozen green peas
1 (12-ounce) bag frozen (no need to thaw) or 3½ cups fresh cauliflower rice
1 tablespoon soy sauce
¾ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
⅛ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons water (only if using fresh cauliflower rice)
2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice (optional)

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, ginger, and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the edamame, corn, peas, cauliflower rice, soy sauce, salt, red pepper flakes, black pepper, and water (if using fresh cauliflower rice). Mix well, breaking up any big pieces of frozen cauliflower rice, and make sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 1 minute on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the lime or lemon juice (if using). If there is excess liquid, select Sauté and cook for 1 to 2 minutes to evaporate it. Serve hot.

Masala Oats

Oats are not limited to just breakfast in my home. I make this savory spiced oat recipe as a light meal for any time of the day. In less than 10 minutes of hands-on time, you can make this filling and comforting dish. I always have rolled oats in my pantry, but if you prefer steel-cut oats, increase the water to 4 cups and adjust the cooking time to 10 minutes on high pressure.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 1 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 30 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Everyday Dal](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 tablespoon chopped raw cashews

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

½ green serrano chile, sliced
6 curry leaves (optional)
1 medium potato, peeled and cut into ½-inch pieces
½ cup fresh or frozen green peas
1 medium tomato, chopped
1½ cups rolled oats
3 cups water
1 teaspoon salt

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cashews and cook until the seeds start to sputter and the cashews are golden, about 1 minute. Add the onion, ginger, chile, and curry leaves (if using) and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the potato, peas, tomato, oats, water, and salt. Mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 1 minute on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir well. Serve hot.

Bulgur Upma

Upma is a thick porridge that is typically made with semolina. My version uses bulgur instead because it is more easily found in the United States. If you can't source it at your local grocery store, check out the bulk section of a health food store. I use medium-grind grain since it holds its shape better. Feel free to add up to 2 cups of chopped vegetables or your favorite cooked or canned beans to make this a complete meal.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 12 minutes, low

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 44 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Peanut Chutney](#)

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 small onion, chopped

½ green serrano chile, chopped

1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
6 curry leaves (optional)
1 cup medium grain bulgur
1 cup water
1 teaspoon salt
¼ cup roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds and cook until the seeds start to sputter, about 30 seconds. Add the onion, chile, ginger, and curry leaves (if using) and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Stir in the bulgur, water, and salt and mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 12 minutes on low pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and add the peanuts and lime or lemon juice. Cover for 5 minutes; then gently fluff the grains. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: If you can find only coarse or extra-coarse bulgur, grind it in a blender briefly to break up the grains before cooking.

Coconut Barley Pulao

Barley is the fourth most widely grown grain crop globally after wheat, rice, and corn. It looks very similar to rice but has a slightly chewy texture and nutty flavor. I prefer pearl barley because it is quick to cook. This coconut barley pulao is my take on the popular coconut rice recipe. Serve it as a side dish for a spicy curry or dal for a filling meal.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 20 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 46 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Tomato Chutney](#)

2 teaspoons coconut oil

1 teaspoon mustard seeds

1 teaspoon cumin seeds

2 tablespoons chopped raw cashews

½ green serrano chile, chopped

8 curry leaves (optional)

1½ cups pearl barley, rinsed and drained

2¾ cups water

½ cup full-fat coconut milk

¾ teaspoon salt

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard and cumin seeds, cashews, chile, and curry leaves (if using) and cook for about 1 minute, until the seeds sputter and the cashews are toasted. Stir in the barley and mix well. Cook for 1 minute. Add the water, coconut milk, and salt and mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 20 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the grains. If there is any excess moisture, it will be absorbed as you stir. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: To make plain barley in the Instant Pot, combine 1 cup of pearl barley with 2 cups of water and cook for 20 minutes on high pressure. If using hulled barley, increase the water to 3 cups and cook for 25 minutes.

Tomato Quinoa

Quinoa is one of my favorite grains, and I use it quite frequently in my cooking. Even though it is not part of traditional Indian cuisine, this superfood is slowly gaining popularity in the Indian market as well. In this recipe, quinoa is cooked with tomato and curry leaves, infusing it with Indian flavors. If you don't have curry leaves, simply omit them or substitute with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chopped fresh cilantro.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 3 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 35 minutes

PAIR WITH: Onion-Cucumber Raita ([variation](#))

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon mustard seeds

1 large onion, finely chopped

$\frac{1}{2}$ green serrano chile, chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

6 curry leaves (optional)
1 large tomato, chopped
1¼ teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1½ cups quinoa, rinsed and drained
1½ cups water
¼ cup roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds and cook until the seeds start to sputter, about 30 seconds. Add the onion, chile, ginger, and curry leaves (if using) and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato, salt, cayenne pepper, quinoa, and water and mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 3 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir in the peanuts and lime or lemon juice. Cover for 5 minutes; then gently fluff the grains. Serve hot.

COOKING TIP: To make plain quinoa, combine 1 cup of quinoa with 1¼ cups of water and cook for 2 minutes on high pressure.

Spicy Tomato Pasta

My kids would happily eat pasta every single day, so I try to come up with new recipes to keep things interesting. This fusion dish combines a traditional tomato-based sauce with Indian flavors, then I add vegetables to make it colorful and filling. The traditional way of cooking short-cut pasta on the stovetop takes 9 to 12 minutes, but in the Instant Pot, that time is reduced to only 2 minutes. If you use a pasta that has a different cooking time, either increase or decrease the cooking time by 1 minute.

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 23 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Palak Shorba](#)

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 large onion, chopped

1 large green or red bell pepper, seeded and chopped

8 ounces white button or cremini mushrooms, chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
½ cup canned tomato puree
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon ground coriander
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
2 cups water
8 ounces short-cut pasta (such as penne or rotini)

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, mushrooms, ginger, and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, garam masala, and water. Stir well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the pasta and push down with a wooden spoon to make sure it is completely submerged, but do not stir.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker, gently mix the pasta, and serve warm.

COOKING TIP: Make the pasta creamy by stirring in ¼ cup of full-fat coconut milk or heavy cream in step 4.

Hakka Noodles

This very popular Indo-Chinese dish uses the Chinese stir-fry technique to cook veggies just until crisp-tender and then flavors them with a spicy, tangy sauce. In this Instant Pot version, the veggies are cooked first and then tossed with cooked noodles. If you can, try to find hakka noodles at an Indian grocery store, but spaghetti makes a great alternative—just cook for 4 minutes instead of 1 minute.

VEGAN

Serves 4

Prep time: 15 minutes

Sauté: 7 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 1 minute, high

Pressure release: 3 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 36 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Manchurian-Style Meatballs](#)

1 (2-inch) piece fresh ginger, roughly chopped

3 garlic cloves, peeled

2 tablespoons tomato paste or ketchup

1 tablespoon sriracha

3¾ cups water, divided

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil
4 scallions, both white and green parts, chopped
1 cup thinly sliced green cabbage
1 medium green or red bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
1 medium carrot, cut into thin matchsticks
1 teaspoon salt, divided
½ teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 cup broccoli florets
2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
1 tablespoon rice wine or white wine vinegar
8 ounces hakka noodles or spaghetti, broken in half

- 1.** In a blender or food processor, combine the ginger, garlic, tomato paste or ketchup, sriracha, and ¼ cup of water. Blend to a smooth paste. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the scallions and cook for about 1 minute, until wilted. Stir in the ground paste and cook for 2 minutes, stirring constantly and scraping the bottom. Add the cabbage, bell pepper, carrot, ½ teaspoon of salt, and the red pepper flakes and cook for 2 minutes. Add the broccoli and cook for about 2 minutes, until crisp-tender. Press the Cancel button and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the veggies to a medium bowl. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 3.** Add the remaining 3½ cups of water, the soy sauce, vinegar, and remaining ½ teaspoon of salt to the pot and mix well. Add the noodles and push them down with a wooden spoon to make sure they are completely submerged, but do not stir.
- 4.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 1 minute on high pressure if using hakka noodles or 4 minutes

if using spaghetti.

5. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 3 minutes; quick release the remainder.
6. Open the pressure cooker, return the cooked veggies to the pot, and close the lid for 5 minutes. Stir the noodles and veggies together and serve hot.

VARIATION: When tossing the sautéed veggies with the noodles in step 6, add 2 cups of cubed firm tofu or [Paneer](#).

Indian-Style Mac and Cheese

As a graduate student, I ate my share of boxed mac and cheese. But over the years, I have come up with a creamy, veggie-loaded fusion recipe that tastes so much better and contains all-natural ingredients. The best thing is my kids love it, too. Cubes of paneer along with a melting cheese like pepper jack or cheddar make this dish extra cheesy and delicious. Feel free to use store-bought pasta sauce.

SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 23 minutes

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 medium carrot, peeled and diced

½ cup fresh or frozen chopped green beans

1 cup canned tomato puree

1 cup cubed [Paneer](#), or store-bought

½ cup fresh or frozen corn
½ cup fresh or frozen green peas
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon ground cumin
2 cups water or vegetable broth
8 ounces macaroni pasta
½ cup heavy (whipping) cream
1 cup grated cheddar or pepper jack cheese

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, melt the butter. Then add the onion, garlic, carrot, and green beans and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato puree, paneer, corn, peas, salt, cayenne pepper, garam masala, cumin, and water or vegetable broth. Mix well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the pasta and push it down with a wooden spoon to make sure it is completely submerged, but do not stir.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker, add the cream and cheese, and stir well to melt the cheese. Serve warm.

Kathi Rolls with Steamed Egg Filling

Kathi rolls are a popular street food in India. They are basically kebabs wrapped in an Indian flatbread. In this vegetarian version, I use a savory steamed egg cake sautéed with veggies as the filling. Steaming whisked eggs is a popular Asian technique that makes a fluffy, soufflé-like cake that absorbs any flavor added to it. For a vegan version, replace the eggs with crumbled tofu.

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 9 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 12 minutes, steam

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 44 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Vegetable Thukpa](#)

2 cups water

Nonstick cooking spray

4 large eggs

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt, divided

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper, divided

1/8 teaspoon freshly black pepper
2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1 small red or green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 medium tomato, chopped
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
1/8 teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought
4 [Paratha](#) or store-bought whole-wheat tortillas, warmed
1/4 cup [Green Chutney](#), for serving

1. Select Sauté, and pour the water into the Instant Pot. The water will start to simmer in 2 to 3 minutes. Place the rack in the pot. Lightly grease a 6- or 7-inch round stainless steel or silicone baking pan with cooking spray.
2. Crack the eggs into a small bowl and add 1/4 teaspoon of salt, 1/8 teaspoon of cayenne pepper, and the black pepper and whisk until well combined. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan; then cover tightly with aluminum foil. Carefully place the pan on the rack in the pot.
3. Place the lid on, lock it, and keep the steam valve in the venting position. Select Steam and set the timer for 12 minutes. The Instant Pot does not count down in the venting position, so set a timer separately.
4. When the timer sounds, turn off the Instant Pot and natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
5. Using oven mitts, carefully remove the pan from the Instant Pot and invert it onto a cutting board. Cool for a couple of minutes; then cut the steamed egg into bite-size pieces.
6. Pour out the water from the Instant Pot and wipe it dry. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, and garlic and cook for 3 to 5 minutes, until the veggies

are tender. Stir in the tomato, coriander, chaat masala, remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of salt, and remaining $\frac{3}{8}$ teaspoon of cayenne pepper and cook until the tomato is soft, about 2 minutes. Add the steamed egg and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until heated through.

7. To assemble the kathi rolls, spread some chutney on each paratha or tortilla. Add one-quarter of the steamed egg mixture on the bottom half. Fold the bottom and sides over the filling and roll it over to make a wrap. Repeat with the remaining parathas or tortillas and serve right away with green chutney.

Tofu and Potato Tacos

My family gets very excited for Taco Tuesday! My fusion taco recipe is extra flavorful with the addition of warm Indian spices. Cooking the veggies and tofu in the Instant Pot infuses them with lots of flavor. Serve the tofu-potato mixture with tacos or make a taco bowl with [Basic Basmati Rice](#) and a sprinkle of cheese.

SUPER-FAST

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 2 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 24 minutes

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, finely chopped

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

¼ cup canned tomato puree

1 cup water, divided

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
2 large potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 cups grated extra-firm tofu (about 7 ounces)
1 cup fresh or frozen green peas
3 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lime juice
12 corn tortillas, warmed
[Green Chutney](#), for serving
[Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt, for serving

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, ginger, and garlic and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, until the onion turns translucent. Add the tomato puree, ¼ cup of water, the salt, cayenne pepper, chaat masala, and garam masala and cook for about 1 minute, until simmering. Add the potatoes, tofu, peas, and remaining ¾ cup of water. Stir well.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 2 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and stir in the cilantro and lime juice.
- 5.** To serve, divide the tofu-potato filling evenly among the tortillas. Drizzle with green chutney and yogurt and serve.

Vegetable Frittata

This veggie-loaded frittata is filling and perfect to serve for breakfast, lunch, or even a light dinner. I use a mix of vegetables to make it colorful and filling. I like to sauté the veggies until crisp-tender, which gives the spices a chance to cook and mellow down. But you can skip that step and just add the chopped veggies and spices to the eggs.

Serves 4

Prep time: 10 minutes

Sauté: 6 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 20 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 56 minutes

PAIR WITH: [Sweet Potato and Peanut Salad](#)

6 large eggs

1 teaspoon salt, divided

¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Nonstick cooking spray

2 teaspoons canola or vegetable oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

1 small red or green bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped

1 small potato, peeled and finely chopped
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 small tomato, chopped
½ cup fresh or frozen green peas
½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought
2 cups water

- 1.** In a medium bowl, whisk the eggs with ½ teaspoon of salt and the black pepper. Set aside.
- 2.** Lightly grease a 7-inch round stainless steel or silicone baking pan with cooking spray.
- 3.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, potato, and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 5 minutes, until the veggies are crisp-tender. Add the tomato, peas, cayenne pepper, garam masala, and remaining ½ teaspoon of salt and cook for about 1 minute, until the tomato is soft. Press the Cancel button and, using oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and transfer the veggie mixture to a bowl to cool. Return the inner pot to the base. There is no need to clean the pot.
- 4.** Select Sauté and pour the water into the Instant Pot. The water will start to simmer in 2 to 3 minutes. Place the rack in the pot.
- 5.** Add the slightly cooled veggies to the egg mixture and mix well. Pour the veggie-egg mixture into the prepared baking pan and cover tightly with aluminum foil. Carefully place the baking pan on the rack in the Instant Pot.
- 6.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 20 minutes on high pressure.
- 7.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 8.** Open the pressure cooker and let the frittata sit for a couple of minutes, until it deflates and settles into the pan. Using oven

mitts, carefully lift the baking pan out of the pot. Remove the foil. Cut the frittata into wedges and serve warm.

VARIATION: To make a cheesy frittata, stir $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of shredded cheddar or pepper jack cheese into the egg mixture in step 1.

Indian-Style Burrito Bowls

Who doesn't love a one-pot meal? They are easy, convenient, and perfect to make on a busy weeknight. This burrito bowl is my Indian twist on our favorite Mexican takeout dish.

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 4 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 34 minutes

1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¼ cups water

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

1 medium onion, chopped

1 medium red or green bell pepper, seeded and diced

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

1 cup canned tomato puree

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

1 teaspoon ground coriander

1 teaspoon [Chaat Masala](#), or store-bought

½ teaspoon [Garam Masala](#), or store-bought

1 (15-ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained

1 cup grated cheddar or pepper jack cheese (optional)

Onion-Cucumber Raita ([variation](#)) or [Yogurt](#), or store-bought plain Greek yogurt, for serving

Sliced avocado, for serving

Chopped tomato, for serving

- 1.** Combine the rice and water in a bowl. Set aside.
- 2.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, ginger, and garlic and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, until the onion is lightly browned around the edges. Add the tomato puree, salt, cayenne pepper, coriander, chaat masala, garam masala, and beans. Stir well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the rice along with the soaking water.
- 3.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker and, if using, sprinkle the cheese evenly on top and cover for 5 minutes to let it melt. Gently fluff the rice and serve topped with raita, avocado, and tomato.

Manchurian-Style Meatballs

Manchurian fritters are a popular Indo-Chinese dish served in many Indian restaurants. Traditionally, they are crispy deep-fried vegetable fritters that are tossed in a tangy, spicy sauce. In my Instant Pot version, I use store-bought meatless meatballs instead of the fritters. They absorb the flavors beautifully and make this a quick and easy dish to serve with [Basic Basmati Rice](#).

VEGAN, SUPER-FAST

Serves 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 3 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 4 minutes, high

Pressure release: Quick

Total time: 20 minutes

2 tablespoons canola or vegetable oil

2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely minced

4 scallions, both white and green parts, chopped

1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and diced

1¾ cups water, divided

1 tablespoon soy sauce

1 teaspoon sriracha
1 tablespoon ketchup or tomato paste
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon sugar
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 (12-ounce) package frozen meatless meatballs
1 tablespoon cornstarch

- 1.** Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the ginger, garlic, and scallions and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 1 minute, until fragrant. Add the bell pepper, 1½ cups of water, the soy sauce, sriracha, ketchup or tomato paste, salt, sugar, and black pepper. Stir well, making sure to scrape the bottom to loosen any browned bits. Add the meatballs.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 4 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** In the meantime, in a small bowl, whisk the cornstarch into the remaining ¼ cup of water to form a smooth slurry.
- 4.** When the timer sounds, quick release the pressure.
- 5.** Open the pressure cooker, stir in the cornstarch slurry, and mix well. Select Sauté and cook, stirring, for about 2 minutes, until the sauce thickens. Serve warm.



CHAPTER 7

STAPLES

Ghee

Paneer

Yogurt

Basic Basmati Rice

Peanut Chutney

Paratha // Indian Flatbread

Tomato Chutney

Garam Masala

Sambar Masala // South Indian Lentil Spice Powder

Chaat Masala

Ghee

Ghee is one of the primary cooking fats in India. It is made by gently browning unsalted butter, which results in a nutty flavor that is the key taste in many Indian dishes. A little goes a long way with ghee, so use it sparingly. Buy good-quality unsalted butter for the best flavor. I prefer using cultured butter over regular butter. Make sure not to leave the pot unattended because the difference between nutty, golden-hued ghee and burnt butter is only a few minutes.

SUPER-FAST

Makes 1½ cups

Prep time: 1 minute

Sauté: 14 minutes

Total time: 15 minutes

1 pound (4 sticks) unsalted (preferably cultured) butter, chopped

1. Select Sauté and add the butter to the pot. It will start to melt and foam, but as the butter simmers the foam will subside. Cook for 10 to 12 minutes; by this point, the milk solids (which look like little specks) will start to settle at the bottom of the pot and slowly turn a rich golden-brown color. Once the ghee (the liquid portion) turns clear with a golden hue, press Cancel and, wearing oven mitts, carefully remove the inner pot and place it on a trivet to cool.
2. Once cool enough to handle, carefully pour the ghee through a fine-mesh strainer lined with cheesecloth into a clean, dry, 2-cup mason jar. Discard the milk solids and set the ghee aside to cool

completely before covering the jar with a lid.

COOKING TIP: Ghee can be stored at room temperature for up to 3 months or in the refrigerator for up to 6 months.

Paneer

Paneer is fresh cheese that is one of the most popular vegetarian proteins in Indian cooking. The traditional process of making it is time-consuming and needs some attention, but the Instant Pot makes it nearly effortless. Paneer is made by coagulating whole milk with vinegar. My version uses a combination of milk and half-and-half because I love the firmer texture of the resulting paneer.

Makes 2 cups

Prep time: 2 minutes

Pressure build: 15 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, low

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Setting time: 2 hours

Total time: 3 hours 32 minutes

4 cups whole milk

2 cups half-and-half

¼ cup distilled white vinegar

1. Combine the milk, half-and-half, and vinegar in the Instant Pot.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on low pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir gently. The milk and cream will

have separated into curds and watery whey.

5. Line a colander with cheesecloth, making sure to have an overhang on the sides, and set it in the sink. Pour the cheese and whey into the colander. Let it drain as it cools.
6. After about 5 minutes, gather the edges of the cheesecloth and fold them over to cover it and squeeze as much whey out of the paneer as possible.
7. Transfer the cheesecloth-wrapped paneer to a plate and place a large, heavy can of tomatoes or beans on it. Set it aside at room temperature for 2 hours to firm up and form a cohesive block.
8. Remove the weight and unwrap the firm cheese. Use it right away or wrap it in plastic and store in the refrigerator for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 2 months.

VARIATION: Make Spiced Paneer by adding 1 teaspoon of salt, 1 teaspoon of cumin seeds, ½ teaspoon of ground coriander, and ½ teaspoon of red pepper flakes to the milk and vinegar in step 1. Use this flavored paneer to make [Paneer Pulao](#).

Yogurt

Most households in India make fresh yogurt almost every day. Yogurt requires consistent, warm temperatures to ferment properly, so I had trouble setting yogurt for years in my chilly American kitchen. That changed after I started using the Instant Pot. Now I can make thick yogurt without a problem. If you are making it for the first time, you will need store-bought yogurt that contains live cultures (it will say so on the container). After that, you can use some of your homemade yogurt for the starter. Don't be alarmed by the long preparation time; most of that time is hands-off while the Instant Pot does its thing.

Makes 4 cups

Prep time: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 10 minutes

Pressure cook: 1 minute, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Setting time: 8 hours

Total time: 8 hours 26 minutes

1 cup water

4 cups whole milk

1 tablespoon plain yogurt with live cultures

1. Place the rack in the Instant Pot and pour in the water. Place a wide 6- or 7-cup stainless steel or heatproof glass bowl on the rack. Pour the milk into the bowl.
2. Lock the lid and close the steam valve. Select Steam and set the

timer for 1 minute.

3. When the timer sounds, natural release the pressure.
4. Open the pressure cooker and let the milk cool to 115°F. If you have an instant-read thermometer, check the temperature periodically. Otherwise wait 20 to 25 minutes until the milk is lukewarm to the touch. Add the plain yogurt to the milk and mix well to evenly distribute the cultures.
5. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Select Yogurt and set the timer for 8 hours.
6. When the timer sounds, open the pressure cooker and remove the bowl. At this point, the yogurt will be thick and set and ready to use. The yogurt will keep in a covered container in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

COOKING TIP: I use whole milk, but you can also use 2 percent or 1 percent milk. However, the texture and mouthfeel will be slightly different.

VARIATION: Make Onion-Cucumber Raita by combining 2 cups of yogurt, 1 small finely diced onion, 1 medium grated English cucumber, $\frac{1}{2}$ finely chopped serrano chile, 2 tablespoons of finely chopped cilantro, and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon of salt in a medium bowl. Mix well, cover, and refrigerate until ready to serve. It will keep in the refrigerator for up 2 days.

Basic Basmati Rice

Basmati means “the perfumed one” in Hindi, and basmati rice is one of the most sought-after aromatic rice varieties in the world. This naturally aged rice is less starchy and the grains are more slender than other long-grain rice. Add a tablespoon of ghee or unsalted butter while cooking to enrich the flavor.

SUPER-FAST

Makes 4

Prep time: 5 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 10 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 28 minutes

1 cup basmati rice, rinsed and drained

1¼ cups water

¼ teaspoon salt

- 1.** Combine the rice, water, and salt in the Instant Pot.
- 2.** Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
- 3.** When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 10 minutes; quick release the remainder.
- 4.** Open the pressure cooker and gently fluff the rice. Serve hot.

Peanut Chutney

This is one of my favorite chutneys because it takes just 10 minutes to make and is perfect to serve with [Idli](#), [Vegetable Khichdi](#), or [Bulgur Upma](#). If your peanuts are not roasted, you can roast them in a dry skillet over medium heat until they are evenly browned on all sides. Stir frequently to avoid burning them.

SUPER-FAST

Makes 1 cup

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

¾ cup roasted unsalted peanuts

2 tablespoons chopped raw cashews (optional)

½ green serrano chile

1 (½-inch) piece fresh ginger, chopped

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon cumin seeds

1 to 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime or lemon juice

½ cup water, plus more as needed

2 teaspoons vegetable or canola oil

½ teaspoon mustard seeds

1 dried red chile (such as chile de árbol), broken into pieces

4 to 6 curry leaves (optional)

- 1.** Combine the peanuts, cashews (if using), serrano chile, ginger, salt, cumin seeds, lime or lemon juice, and water in a blender. Blend into a smooth puree. Add more water if the mixture looks too thick. Transfer the peanut mixture to a bowl.
- 2.** In a small saucepan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the mustard seeds and cook until they start to sputter. Add the dried red chile and curry leaves (if using). Cook for 30 seconds, then add the hot oil to the peanut mixture and mix well. Serve right away.

COOKING TIP: If all you have on hand are salted peanuts, then use them and omit the salt in the recipe.

VARIATION: Blend $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of fresh cilantro leaves and tender stems along with the peanuts for added flavor.

Paratha // INDIAN FLATBREAD

Paratha is unleavened flatbread made daily in most Indian households. These flatbreads are perfect “utensils” to eat Indian curries and dal. Chapati flour, or atta, which is a lower-protein Indian whole-wheat flour, is traditionally used to make these soft, flaky parathas. It is sold in Indian or Asian grocery stores. If you do not have access to atta, then use half regular whole-wheat flour and half all-purpose flour.

VEGAN

Serves 4 to 6

Prep time: 10 minutes, plus 10 minutes to rest

Cook time: 20 minutes

Total time: 40 minutes

2 cups chapati flour (or 1 cup all-purpose flour and 1 cup whole-wheat flour), plus more for dusting

½ teaspoon salt

1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil, plus more for greasing the bowl

¾ cup lukewarm water, plus more as needed

[Ghee](#), or store-bought, for brushing (optional)

1. In a large bowl, sift the flour and salt together. Make a well in the center and add the oil and water. Mix with a wooden spoon until the dough starts to leave the sides of the bowl, adding more water as needed. Knead the dough on a lightly floured work surface for 4 to 5 minutes, until it is soft and pliable, neither dry nor sticky.

Place the dough in a lightly greased bowl, cover with a kitchen towel, and set aside for at least 10 minutes.

2. Divide the dough into 10 equal pieces. Work with 1 portion at a time and keep the rest covered with a kitchen towel. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion into a 6-inch circle. Sprinkle a little flour on the rolled-out paratha and stack them on a plate, covered with a kitchen towel, while you roll out the remaining dough.
3. Heat a griddle or heavy-bottomed frying pan over medium-high heat. Carefully place a dough round on the griddle and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until light-brown spots start to form on the bottom. Turn the paratha over and cook for another minute. Make sure not to overcook the paratha; the cooking and turning process should be quick to ensure that the parathas stay soft. Keep the cooked parathas covered with a kitchen towel while you cook the rest. Brush the paratha with ghee (if using), and serve warm.

VARIATION: To make Palak Paratha (spinach paratha), blanch 2 cups of baby spinach; then blend to a smooth puree. Use the spinach puree instead of water to make the dough.

Tomato Chutney

This is one of the most common chutneys made across India, but each region uses different spices to make it. My version is simple and flavored with garlic, cayenne pepper, and tamarind paste. I use a mild, not-too spicy variety of cayenne pepper, but if your pepper is spicy, reduce the amount called for in the recipe. This is a great recipe to make with fresh, ripe tomatoes.

VEGAN

Serves 6

Prep time: 5 minutes

Sauté: 30 minutes

Pressure build: 8 minutes

Pressure cook: 5 minutes, high

Pressure release: 5 minutes natural, then quick

Total time: 53 minutes

¼ cup canola or vegetable oil

1½ teaspoons mustard seeds

4 large garlic cloves, coarsely chopped

2 pounds tomatoes (about 6 medium-size tomatoes), chopped

2 teaspoons salt

2 teaspoons cayenne pepper

1 tablespoon tamarind paste

1. Select Sauté, and once the pot is hot, pour in the oil. Add the mustard seeds and cook until they start to sputter, about 30 seconds. Add the garlic and tomatoes and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the salt, cayenne pepper, and tamarind paste and mix well.
2. Place the lid on, lock it, and close the steam valve. Set the timer for 5 minutes on high pressure.
3. When the timer sounds, natural release the steam for 5 minutes; quick release the remainder.
4. Open the pressure cooker and stir well. Select Sauté on high and cook until the chutney is thick, 20 to 25 minutes total, stirring once every 5 minutes. Make sure to scrape the bottom so that the chutney does not stick to the bottom and burn. Transfer to a clean mason jar, cool completely, and store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

COOKING TIP: I like to use either vine-ripened or Roma tomatoes in this recipe because they have an intense tomato flavor.

Garam Masala

Garam masala literally means “warming spice mix” and is probably the most widely used spice blend in Indian cooking. It is a mixture of whole or ground spices, and each region of India has its own blend. It is best to make your own masala because store-bought versions do not have as much flavor as freshly made ones.

SUPER-FAST

Makes ¼ cup

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

8 cardamom pods

1 bay leaf

6 whole cloves

1 (1-inch) cinnamon stick

1 tablespoon cumin seeds

2 teaspoons coriander seeds

¼ teaspoon whole black peppercorns

1. Place each cardamom pod on a cutting board and gently crush it with the back of a spoon or a butter knife to reveal the black seeds inside. Discard the papery skin and transfer the cardamom seeds to a small bowl.

- 2.** In a small skillet over medium-low heat, dry-roast all the spices, stirring frequently, until they are aromatic, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer the spices to a bowl and allow them to cool completely.
- 3.** Grind the spices in a spice grinder to a fine powder. Store the garam masala in an airtight jar at room temperature for up to 1 month.

Sambar Masala // SOUTH INDIAN LENTIL

SPICE POWDER

Each household in South India has its own version of sambar masala. This is my recipe that I always make sure to have in the pantry. It is used to make [Sambar](#). Adding dried yellow split peas to the spice powder not only adds flavor but also helps thicken the sambar.

SUPER-FAST

Makes ⅓ cup

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 15 minutes

Total time: 20 minutes

- 3 dried red chiles (such as chile de árbol)
- 1 (½-inch) cinnamon stick
- 1 tablespoon yellow split peas (chana dal)
- 1 tablespoon unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 tablespoon coriander seeds
- 1½ teaspoons cumin seeds
- ½ teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- ¼ teaspoon mustard seeds
- ¼ teaspoon ground turmeric

1. In a small skillet over medium-low heat, dry-roast each ingredient

separately until it is aromatic. It will take 2 to 3 minutes for each ingredient to toast. Make sure to stir occasionally to toast evenly and avoid burning. Transfer each ingredients as it is roasted to the same medium bowl and allow all the spices to cool completely.

- 2.** In a spice grinder, grind the mixture into a fine powder. Store the masala in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 month.

Chaat Masala

Chaat is a commonly used term to describe street food in India. These dishes are generally flavored with a unique spice blend called chaat masala that is salty, tangy, and spicy. It is used in snacks like [Aloo Chaat](#) and [Chole Chaat](#). In addition, it can be used in salad dressings or fruit juices or even sprinkled on fruits and vegetables.

SUPER-FAST

Makes ¼ cup

Prep time: 5 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Total time: 10 minutes

1 tablespoon cumin seeds

1½ tablespoons green mango powder (amchoor)

1½ teaspoons black salt (kala namak) or regular salt

1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

- 1.** In a small skillet over medium-low heat, toast the cumin seeds until they are aromatic. Transfer the toasted seeds to a bowl and let cool completely.
- 2.** In a spice grinder, grind the cumin seeds to a fine powder. Add the green mango powder, black salt, cayenne pepper, and black pepper and blend until the mixture is well combined. Store the chaat masala in an airtight container at room temperature for up

to 1 month.

COOKING TIP: Amchoor is made from sun-dried tart green mango slices that are ground to a powder. This adds a tart, sour flavor to chaat masala. It is available in Indian grocery stores or online.



MEASUREMENT CONVERSIONS

VOLUME EQUIVALENTS (LIQUID)

US STANDARD	US STANDARD (OUNCES)	METRIC (APPROXIMATE)
2 tablespoons	1 fl. oz.	30 mL
$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	2 fl. oz.	60 mL
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	4 fl. oz.	120 mL
1 cup	8 fl. oz.	240 mL
$1\frac{1}{2}$ cups	12 fl. oz.	355 mL
2 cups or 1 pint	16 fl. oz.	475 mL
4 cups or 1 quart	32 fl. oz.	1 L
1 gallon	128 fl. oz.	4 L

VOLUME EQUIVALENTS (DRY)

US STANDARD	METRIC (APPROXIMATE)
½ teaspoon	0.5 mL
¼ teaspoon	1 mL
½ teaspoon	2 mL
¾ teaspoon	4 mL
1 teaspoon	5 mL
1 tablespoon	15 mL
¼ cup	59 mL
⅓ cup	79 mL
½ cup	118 mL
⅔ cup	156 mL
¾ cup	177 mL
1 cup	235 mL
2 cups or 1 pint	475 mL
3 cups	700 mL
4 cups or 1 quart	1 L

OVEN TEMPERATURES

FAHRENHEIT (F)	CELSIUS (C) (APPROXIMATE)
250°F	120°C
300°F	150°C
325°F	165°C
350°F	180°C
375°F	190°C
400°F	200°C
425°F	220°C
450°F	230°C

WEIGHT EQUIVALENTS

US STANDARD	METRIC (APPROXIMATE)
½ ounce	15 g
1 ounce	30 g
2 ounces	60 g
4 ounces	115 g
8 ounces	225 g
12 ounces	340 g
16 ounces or 1 pound	455 g

[MENU IDEAS](#)

How do I plan an Indian meal? This is the most common question I get from my friends who didn't grow up with Indian food. But there is no mystery to planning a well-balanced vegetarian Indian meal. I usually start with the protein, so either a paneer or legume dish, and then pair it with a vegetable side and a starch. Along those lines, here are a few menus that are sure to please.

Everyday Lunch

[Everyday Dal](#)

[Everyday Potato Curry](#)

[Basic Basmati Rice](#)

[Yogurt](#)

Everyday Dinner

[Chana Saag](#)

[Mushroom Masala](#)

[Paratha](#)

Onion-Cucumber Raita ([variation](#))

South Indian Dinner Party

[Sweet Potato and Peanut Salad](#)

[Green Beans with Coconut](#)

[Sambar](#)

[Basic Basmati Rice](#)

[Yogurt Rice](#)

[Tomato Chutney](#)

North Indian Dinner Party

[Aloo Chaat](#)

[Gujarati-Style Squash and Spinach Curry](#)

[Maa Ki Dal](#)

Vegetable Rice ([variation](#))

[Paratha](#)

Onion-Cucumber Raita ([variation](#))

Holiday Celebration

[Chole Chaat](#)

[Palak Shorba](#)

[Vegetable Biryani](#)

[Paneer Makhani](#)

[Aloo Gobi](#)

[Onion-Cucumber Raita \(\[variation\]\(#\)\)](#)

[Palak Paratha \(\[variation\]\(#\)\)](#)

[Carrot Rice Pudding](#)

Vegan Meal

[Mulligatawny Soup](#)

[Rajma Masala](#)

[Beet Curry](#)

[Spinach Rice](#)

[Paratha](#)

Hearty Brunch

[Idli](#)

[Peanut Chutney](#)

[Sambar](#)

[Vegetable Frittata](#)

Indian Street Food Extravaganza

[Pav Bhaji](#)

[Hakka Noodles](#)

[Manchurian-Style Meatballs](#)

Kid-Friendly Party

[Vegetable Momos](#)

[Kathi Rolls with Steamed Egg Filling](#)

[Indian-Style Mac and Cheese](#)

Indian Fusion Dinner Party

[Kheema Pav](#)

[Tofu and Potato Tacos](#)

[Paneer and Rice Stuffed Bell Peppers](#)

[Chana Dal Payasam](#)

RESOURCES

Spices and Ingredients

Kalustyan's
123 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10016
FoodOfNations.com

Penzeys Spices
Multiple locations nationwide
Penzeys.com

Online Shopping

Amazon.com
DesiBasket.com
DistaCart.com
IndianOnlineGrocery.com
iShopIndian.com
shop.KhanaPakana.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank God for giving me this opportunity and guiding me through this process.

To my husband, Harsha, for all his support and being the best recipe guinea pig.

To my kids, Dhruva and Disha, my brutally honest critics and steadfast supporters.

To my dad, who is watching over me from up above and helping me achieve my dreams.

To my mom, for giving me the cooking bug and for answering all my phone calls about recipes at any hour of the day.

To my sister, Purnima, for helping me test the recipes and pitching in ideas; and to my nieces, Hasini and Hanvi, for being my adorable little cheering squad.

To my blog buddy and dear friend, Rajani, for being my amazing recipe tester, sharing her insights and recipes, and providing valuable feedback.

To Callisto Media, for believing in me and giving me this opportunity after writing *The Essential Vegetarian Indian Cookbook*. Special thanks to the Callisto Media editorial team for helping me deliver the best book possible.

Last but definitely not least, my sincere thanks to my family, friends, and blog readers for your constant encouragement, support, and feedback.

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