

Master Gordon Ramsay's Chicken Tikka Masala Recipe (Bold Flavor, Simple Steps)

Boneless Chicken Thighs, cubed



TIME
20 min

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INGREDIENTS

Ingredient Quantity Notes
For the Sauce Oil or Ghee:

DIRECTIONS

1. Prep : Time: 20 minutes | Marinating Time: 1 hour (up to 12 hours) | Cooking Time: 30 minutes
2. Marinate the Chicken: In a medium bowl, combine all the marinade ingredients: cubed chicken, yogurt, garam masala, turmeric, cumin, paprika, lemon juice, minced garlic, grated ginger, and salt.
3. Toss thoroughly until every piece of chicken is coated.
4. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. For the best result, let it marinate for up to 12 hours.
5. Cook the Chicken: Preheat your broiler on high, or preheat an outdoor grill to medium-high heat.
6. Place the marinated chicken pieces on a foil-lined baking sheet or thread them onto skewers.
7. Grill or broil the chicken for 8-12 minutes, turning halfway, until the pieces are lightly charred and cooked through (internal temperature of 165°F). Set the chicken aside.
8. Build the Sauce Base: In a large, deep skillet or Dutch oven, heat the oil or ghee over medium heat.
9. Add the chopped onion and sauté until they soften and turn golden brown, about 5-7 minutes.
10. Add the remaining minced garlic and grated ginger. Cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
11. Toast the Spices: Stir in the ground coriander, paprika, cumin, cinnamon, and the 1 teaspoon of garam masala, along with the tomato paste.
12. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes. This crucial step "blooms" the spices and tomato paste, deepening their flavor.

13. Simmer and Finish: Pour in the canned crushed tomatoes. Stir everything together, bring the sauce to a simmer, and let it cook for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to meld.
14. Reduce the heat to low. Pour in the heavy cream and stir until the sauce is smooth and a beautiful orange-red color.
15. Add the grilled chicken pieces to the sauce. Simmer for another 10 minutes, allowing the chicken to soak up the sauce's flavor.
16. Season generously with salt and pepper to taste.
17. Garnish with fresh cilantro before serving.

SWAPS & NOTES

For the Chicken Marinade Boneless Chicken Thighs, cubed 1.5 lbs Thighs stay moister than breasts.

Plain Yogurt 1 cup Full-fat is recommended for flavor.

Garam Masala 2 teaspoons Key spice for warmth and depth.

Turmeric 1 teaspoon Adds color and earthy flavor.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

The Power of Marinating: Do not skip the marinating step.

The acid in the lemon juice and the enzymes in the yogurt are what break down the chicken fibers, resulting in that melt-in-your-mouth texture.

Blooming the Spices: The step where you cook the dry spices and tomato paste in oil for 1-2 minutes is non-negotiable for an authentic, deep flavor.

The Char is Key: Getting a light char on the chicken before adding it to the sauce is what gives the final dish the smoky, "tikka" flavor traditionally achieved in a tandoor.

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