

# Indian Sambar

Sambar is a staple in many Indian states. The integrity of the dish is here with some alterations for our home cooking. This may take some extra effort to make, but once done, can easily be refrigerated or even frozen. We make a large batch and stretch this dish over 3-4 meals. Works great for winter holiday time.

## Ingredients:

- About 5 cups of misc. vegetables. Good choices include carrots, eggplant, fava or lima beans, moringa pods (also known as Indian drumsticks), and okra. I've also used celery and broccoli-although not traditional, these are more readily available in the United States.
- 2-3 cups of dal (red or yellow lentils or split skinned pigeon peas)
- 5 dried red chilies
- 3 onions, sliced (or 2 handfuls of pearl onions)
- 3 tablespoons coconut oil

## Spices:

- 1 inch of ginger diced
- 2 bulbs of garlic diced
- Sambar powder (available in International markets or online or see recipe below)
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- Chili powder (to taste)
- Sea salt to taste (usually more than you think-up to 3 tablespoons-add carefully tasting between adding more)
- (optional) fennel powder
- (optional) 3 bay leaves

## Preparation:

- Wash dal (lentils) until water runs clear. To aid digestion, you can soak in filtered water for 10-15 min with 2 tsp of ground fennel and rinse before cooking. Cook dal in pressure cooker with filtered water according to your device's instructions. Mine is 2x the amount of water for 5 min under pressure. Without a pressure cooker, you can boil dal in a pot of water for 20 min slightly covered, being careful of runoff. (It is optional to add fennel and bay leaves to the dal while cooking to increase digestion.)
- In a separate large pan, heat oil until warm, add onions and sauté till translucent. (If you are using pearl onions, skip sautéing the onions) Add ginger and red chilies mid-way.
- Add in ginger, garlic, turmeric, and chili powders and Sambar spice mixture. We like ours spicy so 3 tablespoons are good for us. Stir well and be sure all is mixed well for 1-2 min. Add sea salt now.
- Add chopped veggies (and pearl onions if using) and mix well with spices. Cover and let flavors envelope the veggies for 15-20min. You may need to add some water to keep everything free flowing. Up to 3 cups is good.
- Meanwhile, allow your dal to cool down a bit and process this in a blender until very smooth. You can add more water if needed.

- Once veggies are tender, add in the dal. You may need to switch to a large pot by now as you will add water until your Sambar is smooth, broth-like, and really soupy. In order for all the flavors to envelope, allow this to cook on low heat for 1-2 hours.
- You may serve with brown rice, Indian Idli, or just as a soup with a side salad.

Sambar Spice Mixture:

(Combine all and grind into a powder)

- 1 tablespoon coriander seed
- 1 tablespoon Chana dal
- 1 tsp Urad dal
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp fenugreek seeds
- 4-5 red chilies

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