

Treasure Barrel

Quick & Easy Homemade Butter Chicken Recipe

20 min Prep time	**30 min** Cook time	**50 min** Total time
4 Servings	**Easy** Difficulty	**Indian** Cuisine

Ingredients

For the Chicken Marinade

- [ ] 1.5 lbs boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
- [ ] 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- [ ] 1 tbsp lemon juice
- [ ] 1 tsp ground turmeric
- [ ] 1 tsp garam masala
- [ ] 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- [ ] 1 tsp salt

For the Sauce

- [ ] 2 tbsp butter
- [ ] 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- [ ] 1 large onion, finely chopped
- [ ] 1 tbsp minced garlic
- [ ] 1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
- [ ] 1 (15-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- [ ] 1 tsp ground coriander
- [ ] 1 tsp smoked paprika (or regular paprika)
- [ ] 1/2 tsp salt, or to taste
- [ ] 1/2 cup heavy cream
- [ ] 1 tsp garam masala (for finishing)
- [ ] 1 tbsp sugar (optional, to balance acidity)
- [ ] Fresh cilantro, for garnish

Instructions

1. First, let's get the chicken marinating. It's a lovely, quiet step. In a medium bowl, combine the chicken pieces with the plain yogurt, lemon juice, turmeric, garam masala, cumin, and salt. Use your hands or a spoon to mix everything together until each piece of chicken is nicely coated. There's something so satisfying about this part. Cover the bowl and let it sit on the counter for at least 15-20 minutes while you gather and prep the other ingredients. If you have more time, you can pop it in the fridge for a few hours.

2. Now for the sauce. Place a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat and add the butter and oil. Once the butter is melted and foaming gently, add the chopped onion. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is soft and translucent, which usually takes about 5-7 minutes. Then, add the minced garlic and grated ginger. Stir constantly for about one minute until you can smell their beautiful, sharp fragrance filling your kitchen. Be careful not to let them burn, we just want to wake them up.

3 Time to build the flavor. Stir in the ground coriander, smoked paprika, and salt. Let them toast for about 30 seconds until they're fragrant. Then, pour in the crushed tomatoes. Give everything a good stir, scraping up any little browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Bring the sauce to a gentle simmer, then reduce the heat to low, cover the pot, and let it cook for about 10 minutes. This allows the flavors to meld together and the tomatoes to deepen in flavor. Your house should be smelling pretty amazing right about now.

4 While the sauce is simmering, let's cook the chicken. You can do this in a separate skillet or just remove the sauce from the pot temporarily. I prefer a separate skillet for a better sear. Heat a little oil over medium-high heat and add the chicken in a single layer (you may need to do this in batches). Cook for a few minutes per side, until it's golden brown and cooked through. It doesn't need to be perfectly cooked, as it will finish simmering in the sauce. The little browned bits are pure flavor.

5 This next step is the secret to that velvety smooth sauce. You can use an immersion blender to blend the tomato sauce directly in the pot until it's completely smooth. Or, very carefully transfer the sauce to a regular blender. Once it's smooth, return it to the pot over low heat. Now, stir in the heavy cream, the final teaspoon of garam masala, and the optional sugar. Add the cooked chicken and all its juices back into the pot. Let it all simmer together gently for 5 more minutes, allowing the chicken to soak up all that creamy goodness. Taste it and adjust seasoning if needed.

6 And that's it, you're ready to serve. Ladle the beautiful, creamy butter chicken into bowls. I love to garnish it with a sprinkle of fresh, chopped cilantro for a bit of brightness and color. It's wonderful served hot with fluffy basmati rice or warm naan bread. Some nights are for quiet meals like this, and others are for something fun, like a gourmet pizza night. But tonight, it's all about this comforting bowl.

Nutrition per serving

450 kcal	35 g	15 g	30 g
Calories	Protein	Carbs	Fat

Tips & notes

- The tiny bit of sugar is optional, but I find it really helps to balance the acidity of the tomatoes and rounds out the flavor of the sauce beautifully. Give the sauce a taste before you add it; you might find your tomatoes are sweet enough on their own.
- For an even deeper flavor, you can marinate the chicken overnight in the refrigerator. The yogurt and lemon juice will have more time to work their magic, making the chicken exceptionally tender. It's a great little trick if you have the foresight!
- Don't skip the step of blending the sauce! It seems like an extra chore, but it's what creates that signature silky, luxurious texture that makes butter chicken so special. It's the difference between a rustic tomato sauce and a truly velvety one.