



Curries around the world

Growing up in an Asian home, we could not be more familiar with the sublime, yet chunky and mouth-watering curry. But while we devour our own form of this delicious dish, the world is enjoying a different version, recipe, and consistency in every corner. If you are ever bored of your everyday curry dish, but want something new yet familiar, these world famous recipes might be able to satisfy your taste buds.

INDIA

When talking about curries, this should be the first stop, and unlike most other countries, we cannot stop at one dish either because they hold some of the most mouth-watering curries one can find on the entire planet.

The famous 'Butter Chicken'

Almost synonymous to Indian food, butter chicken is not very complicated, and is exactly what it sounds like, and that means a taste so heavenly that one can never really forget. This historical Punjabi curry, also known as Murg Makhani, has a very thick creamy texture, and is fiery orange in colour. Spice level is usually adjusted according to taste, but as it is, it is not the spiciest, but lies more on the creamy side. The texture makes this go great with any form of carb, but it tastes best when combined with some naan bread.

Magnificent Palak Paneer

Vegetarians rejoice, for the creamy texture of a curry can also be found in the Palak Paneer. Originating in North India, the base of this dish is a thick spinach puree with chunks of paneer. The creamy paneer complements the fibrous palak by creating a nice texture and tastes amazing with white rice. In India, it is usually served with some garlic naan to amplify the taste even further.

Korma

Korma is any dish that has a base of coconut milk for the gravy. Chicken korma is the most popular amongst all, where the

chicken has been marinated in yoghurt to really let those flavours seep in, and then cooked in a gravy of coconut milk until it thickens to a cream like consistency. When considering the level of spice, it is pretty mild and is sweeter than most other Indian curries. A vegetarian form of this dish is also available where you swap out the chicken with nine types of vegetables, called Navratan Korma.

GREATEST HITS FROM THE REST OF THE WORLD

Malaysian Laksa

Laksa is a staple when it comes to Malaysian food and is found in a lot of other places as well, like Shanghai and Bangkok. This is thick wheat noodles in a broth of rich and heavy coconut milk, spicy curry, sour asam, which is tamarind in Malay, and incorporated with different sorts of seafood, and sometimes chicken as well. The dish is usually consumed by itself unlike Indian curries, since it incorporates both the protein and carb in one curry.

Curry Laksa, also known as Curry Mee, is another Malay curry that incorporates noodles directly into the broth. It comes with sides of deep fried tofu and bean sprouts. Another similar version includes hard boiled eggs, chilli paste and anchovies, and goes by the name Nasi Lemak.

Gundruk ko Jhol

'Gundruk ko Jhol' is one of the most famous dishes from Nepal, composed of a lot of different fermented leafy vegetables. The fermentation helps it develop a tangy flavour, which is then mixed with soybeans to create a delicious watery curry that is finished off with lime juice. Gundruk tastes great on its own, but one can combine it with steamed rice to have it like the locals.

Colour coded Thai Curries

Curries in Thailand are colour coded according to the spices used, which makes it easier to remember the names. The Gaeng Daeng

or Red Curry as it is called, for the red chillies it uses, is a combination of meat, red curry paste, kaffir leaves, and coconut milk of course, given this is a Thai dish. It is mildly spicy and sometimes, you get hints of sweetness as well, and a slight fragrance from the condiments.

A similar counterpart is the Gaeng Keow Wan Kai or Green Chicken Curry. Here, you also have chicken, eggplants, bamboo shoots, coriander and sweet basil – and a heap of green curry paste for the distinct colour, which gives its name. All of this is stirred into a broth of creamy coconut milk.

All these curries are served with a bowl of fragrant rice which lets you enjoy and cherish the distinct gravy flavours.

Indonesian Woku

Also called the Manado soup curry, this is usually fish or chicken combined with a blend of spices, chilies, lemon basil, garlic and many more herbs. The consistency differs from place to place, and can resemble anything from a heavy curry to a light soup-like curry. It packs a punch of flavour, has a hot spicy sensation, along with lemon basil for a hint of tanginess and freshness.

Japanese Kare Pan

The Kare Pan or curry bread is a famous Japanese delicacy. The curry is wrapped in dough, coated in crumbs, and finally deep fried for a crunchy bite. From street vendors to restaurants, this can be found pretty much everywhere, not to mention a common food in their mangas too.

Curry goat in Jamaica

Moving into the Caribbean islands, rich curries can be seen a lot as occasion foods, especially the Jamaican Curry Goat, which originated from India. From street vendors to restaurants, this dish can be found everywhere, so no one is at a loss when it comes to options. Consistency and taste resemble that of Asian curries, and tastes best when had with flat bread.

Bunny Chow

South African curries incorporate lots of

coconut milk and nuts because of Malaysian influence, and one of the dishes that represent this perfectly is the bunny chow. This is a curry that is served in a hollowed out loaf of bread. The curry itself varies as it can be made from mutton, lamb, chicken, or vegetables. Sambals are a common side dish with the bunny chow, which is grated carrots, chilli and onion, which packs a fresh crunch.

Middle Eastern Ful Mudammas (Ancient Vegetarian Recipe)

The Middle East is a hub for the most fulfilling of cuisines, and the Ful Mudammas is amongst them. Unlike the name, the dish is anything but foul. Fava beans, parsley, garlic, olive oil and lemon make up this dish, and the various textures together create a unique combination rarely found elsewhere.

Bangladeshi Beef Curry

Last but not least, we arrive at the very familiar beef curry. The chunks of beef in a thick, spicy, and redlined curry base is a staple for Eid and many other occasions, and with the juicy beef strands that release flavour with every bite, there is no reason for it not to be. Combined with lightweight thin luchis, this creates a taste unmatched by even the most exotic of curries.

The best part about curries are their versatility. You can always swap out one protein for another, or completely change it with vegetables for different preferences. The spice level is always a choice and so is the choice of carb you have with it. Overall, it is like a universal dish, yet very personalised, and definitely a crowd favourite, Asian or not.

By Anisha Hassan

Photo: Collected

**** Disclaimer:** So many cultures have their own versions of the curry, adapting it to their palate! The aforementioned delicacies comprise of just a part of the wide plethora of curries we find in various contemporary cuisines.