

Payal Bisht,
AUSTRALIA

SAMBAR, SOUTHERN INDIAN LENTILS

Sambar is a south Indian dish, made with yellow lentils, tamarind and vegetables. It can be served with rice but it's also a traditional accompaniment for dosa, rice and lentil pancakes made with fermented batter.



Serves: 4

Time: 45 minutes



INGREDIENTS



Sambar Masala

50 grams (1.8 oz) whole dried red chillies
50 grams (1.8 oz) coriander seeds
20 grams (0.7 oz) fenugreek seeds
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp black peppercorns
pinch asafoetida, optional (see Tips)
1 tsp turmeric powder
few curry leaves

4 fresh green chillies, cut in half lengthwise
10-12 curry leaves
1 small eggplant, finely sliced
3 shallots, chopped
handful snake beans, green beans or okra
1 large tomato, chopped
1 ½ tsp sambar powder
salt, to taste
1 tbsp tamarind pulp (see Tips)
handful coriander leaves

Sambar

1 cup split yellow lentils (also called toor dal or split pigeon peas)
¼ tsp turmeric powder
4 tbsp oil
½ tsp mustard seeds
4 dried red chillies, torn
½ tsp fenugreek seeds
½ tablespoon ginger-garlic paste (or 2cm ginger, grated and 1 garlic clove, crushed) - [see Jessi Singh's ginger garlic paste](#)
pinch asafoetida, optional (see Tips)

METHOD

Thermomix Method

Sambar Masala

1. Place all ingredients in mixing bowl and toast **7 min/Varoma/speed 1, MC off**, until you get a nice aroma.
2. Allow to cool with lid off, then grind **1 min/speed 10** or until fine.

Sambar

3. Soak the lentils for 20 minutes in cold water, then drain.
4. Place lentils in saucepan with 5 cups of water, turmeric powder and 1 tsp oil. Cook over medium heat until soft (about 35 minutes).
5. Meantime, place remaining oil and mustard seeds in mixing bowl. Cook for **4 min/100°C (212°F)/speed 1**.

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6. Add red chillies, fenugreek seeds, ginger-garlic paste and asafoetida, if using. Cook for **2 min/100°C (212°F)/speed 1** or until fragrant.

7. Add green chillies, curry leaves, eggplant, tomato, shallots and beans or okra. Cook **1 min 30 sec/100°C (212°F)/speed 1**.

8. Add sambhar powder, salt and 1 cup water. Cook **7 min/100°C (212°F)/Rev/speed 1** or until vegetables are cooked.

9. Add boiled lentils and tamarind pulp cook for a further **3 min/100°C (212°F)/Rev/speed 1**. Adjust flavour by adding salt and more masala if needed.

10. To serve, garnish with chopped coriander and serve with rice or dosa.

Traditional Method

Sambar Masala

1. Toast ingredients one by one in a heavy-based dry pan until each is fragrant.

2. Allow to cool, then grind in a mortar and pestle or blender until fine.

Sambar

3. Soak the lentils for 20 minutes in cold water, then drain.



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4. Place lentils in saucepan with 5 cups of water, turmeric powder and 1 tsp oil. Cook over medium heat until soft, then mash lightly with wooden spoon or spatula.

5. Meantime, heat oil in a heavy-based pan over medium heat and add mustard seeds. Cook until they start to sputter then add red chillies, fenugreek seeds, ginger-garlic paste and asafoetida, if using, if using. Stir for a couple of minutes until fragrant.

6. Add green chillies, curry leaves, eggplant, tomato, shallots and okra. Stir for a minute or two over medium heat.

7. Add sambar powder, salt and 1 cup water. Cook gently until vegetables are just cooked.

8. Add boiled lentils and tamarind pulp and cook for 3 minutes, then adjust flavour by adding salt and more masala if needed.

9. To serve, garnish with chopped coriander and serve with rice or dosa.

Tips:

- Tamarind is sold in preserved blocks of pulp and seeds. Break off a chunk, soak in warm water, and strain. Use the liquid in this recipe. Tamarind is sometimes also sold in liquid form. It adds a fruity sourness but if you can't find it, replace with lime or lemon juice.
- Asafoetida is called 'hing' in Hindi. It's sold in powdered form and is the dried gum from particular rhizomes. It has a very pungent aroma but once it's cooked in a dish it brings a smooth onion-y flavour.

SAMBAR, SOUTHERN INDIAN LENTILS



Serves: 4



SHOPPING LIST:

- Whole dried red chillies (80 grams / 2.8 oz)
- Coriander seeds (50 grams / 1.8 oz)
- Fenugreek seeds (30 grams / 1 oz)
- Cumin seeds (1 tsp)
- Black peppercorns (½ tsp)
- Asafoetida (2 pinches)
- Turmeric powder (1 tsp)
- Curry leaves (16)
- Split yellow lentils (1 cup)
- Turmeric powder (¼ tsp)
- Oil (4 tbsp)
- Mustard seeds (½ tsp)
- Fresh green chillies (4)
- Eggplant (1 small)
- Ginger-garlic paste (½ tbsp or 2cm ginger, grated and 1 garlic clove, crushed)



- Shallots
- Snake beans, green beans or okra (handful)
- Tomato (1 large)
- Salt
- Tamarind pulp (1 tbsp)
- Coriander leaves (handful)

NOTES & TIPS:

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