Mumbai with its cornucopia of pan Asian dishes has attracted exotic cultures and their food for centuries. This cauliflower dish celebrates its Chinese history but in true Mumbai fashion it 'story-fies' the recipe to make it Indian. The result? A textured, slightly crunchy cauliflower tempura dressed in a tangy gravy with a background heat. It's a sensory experience.
Gobi Manchurian (Mumbai) Vegan

FOR THE BATTER
80g corn flour (sifted)
5 tablespoons gram flour (sifted)
1 medium to large cauliflower
1 tsp garlic paste
1 tsp ginger paste
Salt

FOR THE GRAVY
1 medium sized red onion (roughly chopped)
1 green pepper (coarsely cut)
2 finger green chillies (finely chopped)
2 tsp garlic paste
2 tsp ginger paste
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoons chilli sauce (moderate to taste)
2 tablespoons tomato ketchup
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
2 tablespoons spring onions (finely chopped)

SERVES 6

In a large pan of boiling salted water, boil the cauliflower (cut into bite-sized florets) over a medium heat for 5 minutes or until al dente. Drain thoroughly and soak up any excess water on kitchen paper.

Make the batter by mixing the flours, garlic and ginger paste, salt and gradually adding up to 120ml water until the batter is similar to a pancake mixture, i.e. it sticks to the back of a wooden spoon but drips gently.

Add the cauliflower florets ensuring they’re coated thoroughly.

Using either a deep fat fryer (160oC) or deep pan, heat enough sunflower oil over a medium high heat. Test the heat with a breadcrumb and see if it sizzles and if so, the oil is ready for frying. In batches of 6-8 florets, carefully add them into the oil, frying until they turn a gorgeous golden brown. Repeat until all the florets are fried and drained on kitchen paper towel.

NB You want the cauliflower batter to be nice and crispy so make this dish when you’re ready to eat.

To cook the gravy, heat the oil over a medium heat and add the onion, green pepper, green chillies and garlic/ginger pastes. Cook for 3-4 minutes until soft.

Now add the soy sauce, tomato ketchup, chilli sauce and salt. Stir well and cook for a couple of minutes.

Add the fried cauliflower florets and toss thoroughly until totally covered.

Serve up with scattered spring onions over the top and a side helping of chilli sauce for those who want it hotter.

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