Deep, textured, and wonderfully satisfying, this mutton curry owes its heritage to the Bihari region, home to Patna and its Mutton delicacies. It's a 'proper' lamb curry which is best made the night before and refrigerated as it simply gets better since the spices have time to season the dish further.
Bihari Style Mutton Curry (Bihar)

SERVES 6

FOR THE MARINADE
1.5 kg mutton (cubed into 1 inch pieces)
4 tablespoons greek yoghurt
1 ½ tsp salt
2 tsp cumin powder
2 tsp garam masala
2 tablespoons ginger garlic paste
1 tsp turmeric powder
2 tsp black pepper (freshly crushed)

FOR THE CURRY
4 tablespoons rapeseed oil
2 bay leaves
4 dried whole red chillies
1 tsp salt
500g fresh spinach leaves
1 tsp garam masala
500ml water
Handful of coriander leaves for garnish

Marinade the mutton pieces with all the marinade ingredients and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight for really tender meat. Ensure the meat is at room temperature when you are ready to cook.

In a large pan, add the rapeseed oil. After 30 seconds add the dry spices – bay leaf, dried chillies and stir for 30 seconds in low heat to perfume the oil with the spices.

Now add the onion slices and sweat them out till they are tender, then add the salt and chillies.

Add the marinated mutton. Over a high heat brown the meat for 5 minutes to seal in the flavour.

Reduce the heat to a low temperature and cook the meat with the lid on for 3 hours, stirring periodically. Gradually add the water throughout the cooking process to make sure the meat doesn’t dry out.

Take the lid off and add the spinach and garam masala. Cover and cook for a further 30 minutes until the spinach has broken down in the pan and lends the dish an earthy depth of flavour.

The curry will also start to leave spice oil around the edges, that’s when you know its cooked. Test the meat before taking it off the heat. It should be tender and succulent…if not cook it for another 15 minutes or so with the lid off.

Garnish with coriander and serve the delicious mutton curry with Bangalorean Lemon Rice.

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