



TRADITIONAL SRI LANKAN COOKBOOK

66 Authentic Recipes from Sri Lanka



AUTHENTIC FLAVORS SERIES

First Edition • 2026

Welcome to Ceylon

Sri Lankan cuisine is a hidden gem of South Asia. Known for its rich use of spices, coconut milk, and fresh herbs, it offers a flavor profile that is distinct from its Indian neighbors. This island nation, historically known as the "Spice Island," has a culinary tradition influenced by traders from around the world.

The philosophy of Sri Lankan cooking is balance. It is about the interplay of heat from chili, creaminess from coconut, and the savory depth of roasted curry powder.

Who is this book for? This book is designed for the home cook. We have stripped away the complications. No professional equipment needed—just a love for authentic flavors.

Table of Contents

I. RICE & GRAINS

Yellow Rice (Kaha Bath)	05
Sri Lankan Red Rice	07

II. VEGETABLE CURRIES

Creamy Dhal Curry (Parippu)	10
Cashew Nut Curry	12
Potato White Curry	14

III. MEAT & FISH

Classic Chicken Curry (Kukul Mas)	24
Black Pork Curry	28
Spicy Fish Curry (Ambul Thiyal)	32

Creamy Dhal Curry

"Parippu" — The most essential dish in Sri Lankan cuisine. This mild, creamy lentil curry is eaten almost every day, perfect with rice or bread.

INGREDIENTS

1 cup red lentils (masoor dhal)

2 cups water

1 cup thick coconut milk

1 small onion, finely chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

2 green chilies, slit

1 tsp unroasted curry powder

1/2 tsp turmeric powder

1 cinnamon stick

1 sprig fresh curry leaves

1 tsp mustard seeds

Salt to taste

2 tbsp oil (for tempering)

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 In a medium pot, combine the washed lentils, water, turmeric, unroasted curry powder, green chilies, cinnamon stick, and half of the chopped onions.
- 2 Cook on medium heat until the lentils are soft and the water has mostly evaporated (about 10–12 minutes).
- 3 Add the thick coconut milk and salt. Stir well and simmer on low heat for 5 minutes until the gravy thickens lightly. Turn off the heat.
- 4 **Tempering:** In a separate small frying pan, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the garlic, curry leaves, and the remaining onions. Fry until golden brown.
- 5 Pour this hot oil mixture immediately over the cooked lentils. Stir gently and serve warm.

Classic Chicken Curry

"Kukul Mas" — A rich and spicy chicken curry made with roasted curry powder. Full of flavor but easy enough for a weeknight dinner.

INGREDIENTS

1.5 lbs chicken, cut pieces

2 tbsp roasted curry powder

1 tbsp chili powder

1 tsp turmeric powder

1 tbsp vinegar or lime juice

2 tbsp coconut oil

1 large onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 inch ginger, minced

1 cup thick coconut milk

1/2 cup water

Cardamom, cloves & cinnamon

INSTRUCTIONS

- 1 Marinate:** In a bowl, mix the chicken with roasted curry powder, chili powder, turmeric, vinegar, and salt. Rub well and let sit for 20 minutes.
- 2** Heat the oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add cinnamon, cardamom, curry leaves, onion, ginger, and garlic. Sauté until onions turn golden brown.
- 3** Add the marinated chicken to the pan. Stir well to coat with the aromatics. Cook for 5 minutes to brown the meat slightly.
- 4** Add the water, cover the pan, and cook on medium-low heat for 20 minutes until the chicken is tender.
- 5** Remove the lid, add coconut milk, and simmer uncovered for 5–8 minutes until the gravy thickens and oil begins to separate. Serve hot.