

## CALLING ALL FOODIES!

The "MCL Spice of the Month Club" is a monthly "take-and-make" kit featuring a variety of unique spices, herbs, or blends. Included in each kit will be information about the featured spice, its history and fun facts, two simple recipe suggestions, and a small packet of the featured spice with enough for two recipes.

Once you have created your culinary masterpiece at home, we'd love you to share photos of your successes (and fails), opinions, tips, and love (or not) of the spice of the month on the Library's

**Facebook page using:**

**@MukwonagoLibrary.**

You can always email your pictures and thoughts to us at

**[info@mukwonagolibrary.org](mailto:info@mukwonagolibrary.org)**

*Spice of the Month Kits are free, but supplies are limited. Please, only one kit per household.*



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# SPICE

*Of the Month*

# CLUB



## Asafoetida

Asafoetida, also known as asafetida, (or in Hindi, hing,) is a staple ingredient in Indian cooking and most commonly used in vegetarian recipes. It is a dark brown, resin-like substance that is derived from the root of ferula. Ferula is a perennial herb related to celery, parsley, and carrots and looks like a giant fennel plant.

When raw, the pungent scent of Asafoetida, is unpleasant; hence the nickname "devil's dung." but it dissipates while cooking, and transforms into a buttery onion-garlic flavor. Used along with turmeric, it is a standard component of lentil curries, such as dal, chickpea curries, and vegetable dishes, especially those based on potato and cauliflower.

It is produced primarily in India, but also made in Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Northwest China.

### FUN FACTS

- Devotees of the Hare Krishna movement use asafoetida in their food, as they are not allowed to consume onions or garlic.
- During the Italian Renaissance, asafoetida was used as part of the exorcism ritual.
- It was first brought to Europe from Iran during an expedition of Alexander the Great.

## Indian Aloo Gobi



Cook time: 35 mins. Servings: 5-6

Aloo Gobi is a simple Indian vegetarian main dish or side made with potatoes, cauliflower, spices and herbs. The dish gets its name from the Hindi words, - 'Aloo' translates to 'potatoes' and 'Gobi' to 'Cauliflower'. It's deeply nourishing and comforting, easy to make, and budget-friendly!

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 red chiles, seeded and chopped
- 1 small bunch fresh cilantro
- coconut shavings
- 1 small head cauliflower , or 1/2 a big one, cut into large florets
- 1 splash vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon black mustard seeds
- 1 large pinch asafoetida
- 12 curry leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 4 medium-sized potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 big handful frozen peas

### DIRECTIONS

1. Bring a pot of salted water to the boil and add your cauliflower. Bring back to the boil for 1 minute, then remove the florets with a slotted spoon and leave in a colander. Keep the cauliflower water to one side.
2. Heat a wide pan big enough to hold all the ingredients at once. Add a good splash of vegetable oil and when it's hot, add the mustard seeds, the asafoetida, the curry leaves and turmeric. Fry for a few seconds then add the diced potatoes, just enough of the cauliflower water to cover them and some salt. Cover with a lid and simmer gently until the potatoes are just cooked. Add the peas, chillies and cauliflower florets, stir and replace the lid. Cook over a gentle heat until everything is cooked and soft, and the liquid has reduced. Taste and season well with salt and pepper, sprinkle with loads of chopped cilantro and some coconut shavings and serve.

## Masoor Dal (Indian Red Lentil Curry)

Prep Time: 5 mins.

Cook Time: 45 mins.

Servings: 6

Golden Milk (turmeric milk) is at the top of the list for a healthy, healing drink. Golden milk is a mix of turmeric and dairy-free milk along with a pinch of pepper, cinnamon and maple syrup. It's a tasty drink with potent anti-inflammatory benefits!



### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups red lentils (uncooked)
- 2 teaspoons salt (plus more to taste)
- 1/2 teaspoons turmeric
- 1/4 cup avocado oil (see notes for substitutes)
- 1/8 teaspoon asafoetida
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1/4 cup loosely packed curry leaves
- 1 tablespoon ginger minced
- 2-3 Thai green chiles split lengthwise (3 can be quite hot)
- 1/2 cup diced tomato fresh or canned

### DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse lentils and bring to a boil over high heat with 5 cups of water, salt and turmeric. Reduce heat and simmer, mostly covered but with the lid cracked.
2. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 30-40 minutes, until very soft. Add more water if at any point lentils stick to the bottom of the pot. Stir in turmeric.
3. Place oil in a small saucepan over medium heat. When shimmering hot, sprinkle asafoetida (if using) over the oil, then add the mustard seeds and curry leaves.
4. As soon as the first mustard seeds pop, reduce heat to low and stir in the ginger and chiles. Fry for about 15 seconds, then carefully add the tomatoes.
5. Pour the hot oil mixture into the cooked lentils (oil and all). Use caution, it will sputter.

### **Recipe Sources**

#### **Indian Aloo Gobi**

[www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/vegetables-recipes/the-best-aloo-gobi/](http://www.jamieoliver.com/recipes/vegetables-recipes/the-best-aloo-gobi/)

#### **Masoor Dal**

[www.foodess.com/masoor-lentil-dal-recipe/](http://www.foodess.com/masoor-lentil-dal-recipe/)