

Pav Bhaji

Recipe by Nithya Vandivelu, CK 63

Pav Bhaji is a popular street food from Mumbai consisting of spiced, smoothly mashed, mixed vegetables, served with lightly toasted buttered bread. It can be eaten as a course for brunch, as an entree, as a snack, or a starter.

Prep time: 20 mins

Cook time: 20 mins

Yields: five 1 cup portions

Ingredients

For Pav Bhaji

- 3 Tbsp butter (salted or unsalted)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 2 tsp ginger-garlic paste (or use 1½ inch ginger and 5 to 6 medium garlic cloves combined in a mortar & pestle)
- 1 or 2 green chilies diced (add to taste)
- ½ cup green bell pepper, finely dice
- ½ cup orange bell pepper, finely diced
- 2 cups tightly packed finely diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp mango powder (can replace with lemon or lime juice in a pinch)
- 2 to 3 tbsp pav bhaji masala (alternatively, use garam masala; add masala to taste)
- 1 ½ -2 cups water or the stock in which the veggies are cooked
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- salt (to taste)
- 5 bread rolls (traditionally pav, or use slider rolls of your choice)
- Garnish: finely-chopped onion, lime wedges, chopped cilantro, butter, sour cream, and mint

For Vegetables for Bhaji

- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 - 1 ¼ cups cauliflower, diced small
- 1 cup carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 cup green peas, fresh or frozen
- ½ cup green beans, cut to ½ inch
- 2 ½ cups water for pressure cooking



Preparation

Preparing and Cooking the Veggies

Pressure cook the potatoes, cauliflower, carrot, green beans, and frozen green peas (they will thaw) for 12 minutes on medium heat for a stovetop pressure cooker and 15 minutes for an electric pressure cooker.

Set aside.

Preparing and Cooking the Bhaji

1. Heat a large pan, add 2 to 3 tablespoons butter.
2. As soon as the butter melts, add 1 teaspoon cumin seeds. Let the cumin seeds crackle and change their color.
3. Add finely chopped onions, mix with the butter on a low to medium flame until translucent.
4. Add ginger-garlic paste (or 1½ inch ginger and 5 to 6 medium garlic cloves in a mortar & pestle).
5. Mix and sauté until the raw aroma of both ginger and garlic goes away.
6. Add diced green chilies. Mix well.
7. Add finely diced tomatoes. Mix very well.
8. Begin to stew tomatoes on a low to medium flame. The tomatoes will become soft and mushy and you will see butter releasing from the sides. This takes about 6 to 7 minutes on a low to medium flame. If the tomatoes start sticking to the pan, then sprinkle in some water and mix well.
9. When the tomatoes have softened, add finely diced green and orange bell peppers. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes. If the mixture starts sticking to the pan, sprinkle in some water. You don't need to cook the peppers until very soft... a little crunch is okay!
10. Add turmeric powder and red chili powder and mango powder.
11. Add pav bhaji masala. Mix very well.
12. Add the cooked veggies with all of the stock or water from the pressure cooker in which the veggies were cooked. Mix very well.
13. Season with salt to taste.
14. With a potato masher, begin to mash the veggies directly in the pan, until you achieve your desired consistency. For a smoother mixture, mash more. For a chunky pav bhaji, mash less.
15. Keep on stirring occasionally and let the bhaji simmer for 8 to 10 minutes (if the bhaji becomes dry then add some more water; its consistency should be neither very thick nor thin).
16. Stir often so that the bhaji does not stick to the pan. When the pav bhaji simmers to the desired consistency, check the taste. Add more lemon, salt, pav bhaji masala, red chili powder or butter if preferred.
17. When the bhaji is simmering, you can fry the bread so that you serve the warm bread with hot bhaji. Slice the rolls.

Accompany with finely-chopped onion, lime wedges, chopped cilantro, butter, sour cream, and mint. Serve.