

CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

(inspired by several sources)

2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
1/2 cup plain, full-fat yogurt
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons grape seed oil
1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
1 piece fresh ginger, grated to give about 1 tablespoon
1 tablespoon garam masala
2 teaspoons hot paprika
2 teaspoons kosher salt
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes (you will not use the full amount)
1/2 cup heavy cream
fresh cilantro leaves

Place the chicken pieces and yogurt in a bowl, toss well to coat the pieces. Cover and allow to sit in the fridge for a few hours (I like to do that early in the morning).

Heat the oven to 300°F. Melt the butter in the oil in a medium Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add the onion and sauté until just beginning to brown. Add the ginger and sauté for another minute or two, then add the garam masala, paprika, and salt, stirring to incorporate and toast the spices. Stir in the tomato paste and diced tomatoes. I use about 3/4 of the can, I found that using the full amount is a bit too much, but if you rather not have leftover tomatoes, use the whole can.

Add the marinated chicken (with any yogurt marinade), stirring until everything is well mixed. Cover and bake for 2 and a half hours, covered. Open the pan, stir the pieces around and drizzle the heavy cream all over. Cook uncovered for 20 to 30 more minutes, depending on how much sauce you like, if you prefer a drier texture, cook it longer to evaporate more liquid. Serve with fresh cilantro sprinkled on top.