

☒ **Tandoori pigeon breast, black lentils, kachumber salad and naan bread recipe. This recipe would work perfectly on the BBQ.**

Ingredients

For the black lentils

250g/9oz black gram urad lentils, soaked in lukewarm water overnight

2½ litres/4½ pints water

1 tsp ginger paste

1 tsp garlic paste

1 tsp salt

1½ tsp red chilli powder

2 tbsp tomato purée

150g/5oz slightly salted butter

1 tsp garam masala

1 tsp ground dried fenugreek leaves

½ tsp sugar

50ml/2fl oz single cream

For the naan bread

35g/1¼oz sugar

2 free-range eggs

400ml/14fl oz full-fat milk

750g/1lb 11oz plain flour

1 tbsp salt

50ml/2fl oz vegetable oil

1½ tsp baking powder

2 tbsp chopped fresh coriander and garlic

2 tbsp black onion seeds

3 tbsp melted butter

For the pigeon

2 pigeon breasts, de-boned and skinned

2 tsp ginger-garlic paste

1/3 tsp salt

1 tsp Kashmiri red chilli powder

½ lemon, juice only

½ tsp cumin seeds

4 cloves

1 tbsp yoghurt

1 pinch sugar

½ tsp garam masala

1 tbsp vegetable oil

For the kachumber salad

15cm/6in piece cucumber, finely diced

1 tomato, seeds removed, chopped

1 red onion, finely diced

½ lemon, juice only

1 pinch salt

1 pinch sugar

Method

1. For the black lentils, boil the soaked lentils in the water in a large saucepan until the lentils are thoroughly cooked but are not completely mashed ? about one hour.
2. Add the ginger, garlic, salt and red chilli powder and simmer for another 10 minutes.
3. Add the tomato purée and butter and cook for further 15 minutes, or until the lentils are thick. Take care that the butter does not separate from the lentils.
4. Add the garam masala, dried fenugreek leaves and sugar. Taste and add salt and freshly ground black pepper if necessary, then whisk in the cream. Keep warm.
5. For the naan bread, preheat the oven to 225C/450F/Gas 8 and place a thick baking tray into the oven to heat.
6. Whisk together the sugar, eggs and milk in a mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt.
7. Add the milk mixture to the flour mixture and knead lightly to make a soft dough - take care not to work the dough too much or it will become too stretchy.
8. When all the ingredients are mixed thoroughly, cover with a damp cloth and leave to rest, in a warm place, for 15 minutes.
9. Once rested, pour over the oil and knock the air out of the dough.
10. Divide the dough into 16 equal-sized balls and roll out into a circle of approximately 10cm/4in diameter.

11. Spread the circles on the hot tray in the oven, scatter the onion and coriander over half of the naan and the black onion seeds over the other half. Bake for 4-5 minutes - you might need to turn the bread to ensure it is all cooked. You will also most likely need to cook the bread in batches. Brush with melted butter.

12. Marinade the squab pigeon while the dough is resting: pat the pigeon breasts dry with kitchen paper, then place them in a bowl with the ginger-garlic paste, salt, chilli powder and lemon juice.

13. Dry fry the cumin and cloves lightly in a hot frying pan and crush coarsely using a mortar and pestle.

14. Mix the cumin and clove mixture with the yoghurt, sugar, garam masala and oil to make a second marinade.

15. Add the yoghurt marinade to the breasts and set aside for 10-15 minutes. Heat a tandoor to 250-300C/480F-570F (or alternatively preheat the oven to 200C/400F/Gas 6).

16. Thread the meat onto skewers and cook in the tandoor for 4-5 minutes. Alternatively, fry the breasts in a very hot pan for about one minute each side and then place in the oven to cook for five minutes.

17. Remove the meat from the skewers, leave to rest for a couple of minutes and serve immediately.

18. For the kachumber salad, mix all the ingredients together in a bowl.

19. To serve, cut the breasts into two lengthways. Spoon the black lentils onto a plate and arrange the pigeon breasts on top. Place the salad and naan bread alongside.