

Pam Corbin's courgette chutney



Enjoy this chutney with just about everything: cheese, cold meats, curries. You can use up overgrown courgettes, but it is best made using young, tender courgettes when they are about 15-20cm.

1kg courgettes
1tbsp fine sea salt
1tbsp coriander seeds
1tbsp cumin seeds
1 large onion, peeled and quartered
3 fat garlic cloves, peeled
1 red chilli, split and deseeded
40g root ginger, peeled
100ml sunflower oil
2tbsp black mustard seeds
1tsp turmeric powder (kurkuma)
300ml cider vinegar
200g demerara sugar

Have ready 4 x 300ml sterilised jars and lids.

Rinse the courgettes, trimming off the stalk ends and the remains of any flower heads. Slice small courgettes into approximately 1cm pieces; for larger courgettes, halve and quarter lengthwise before slicing. Place in a bowl and sprinkle with the salt, tossing lightly to cover all the surfaces – the salt will draw excess water from the courgettes and prevent them becoming mushy. Set aside in a cool place for two hours.

Turn the courgettes into a large sieve or colander and rinse with plenty of cold water to remove the salt. Drain and dry well.

Meanwhile, toast the coriander and cumin seeds in a dry frying pan for 3-4 minutes until fragrant. Remove from the heat and pound/grind to a powder. Place the onion, garlic, chilli, ginger and half the oil in a blender and blitz to a paste.

Heat the remaining oil in a roomy saucepan or preserving pan. Sprinkle in the mustard seeds and lightly fry until they sizzle. Add the onion paste, ground spices and turmeric powder and cook for five minutes, stirring to prevent the mixture catching. Add the vinegar, sugar and finally the courgettes, stirring to combine, then bring to simmering point.

Cook over a gentle heat until the courgettes are just cooked (30-60 minutes), then turn up the heat for a few more minutes to drive off any excess liquid. Remove from the heat.

Spoon into the prepared jars, tapping them on the work surface to remove any pockets of air. Seal immediately with vinegar-proof lids. Can be eaten immediately but will improve if stored for 3-4 weeks.