

Saag-Style Collards

Serves 4 to 5

1 teaspoon coriander seeds
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 tablespoons ghee
2 cups minced yellow onion (1 to 1 1/2 large onions)
1 tablespoon minced ginger
1 1/2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 tablespoon tomato paste
2 1/4 teaspoons garam masala
1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
2 1/2 pounds collard greens, tough ribs and stems removed, leaves finely chopped (* to 10 cups, from about 2 bunches)
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon mustard seed oil or peanut oil
1/2 teaspoon amchur (dried mango powder)
1/2 teaspoon sugar

Toast the coriander seeds in a small, dry pan over medium heat for about 1 minute. Add the cumin seeds and toast, shaking the pan gently so that the seeds toast evenly and do not burn, until both spices are fragrant, about 1 more minute. Remove from the heat and, when cool enough to handle, crush with a mortar and pestle or grind coarsely in a spice grinder or coffee grinder. Set aside.

Heat the ghee in a Dutch oven or other wide, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-low heat until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Add the onions and cook, stirring occasionally, until they are caramelized, about 40 minutes. Cooking the onions low and slow until they caramelize is the key in this recipe; be patient and do not rush this step. You are looking for most of the liquid to cook out and for the onions to take on a caramel-brown color. They will break down to more of a paste consistency than individual pieces.

Once the onions have caramelized, add the ginger and garlic and cook, stirring, for 3 to 4 minutes. Add the tomato paste, stir, and cook for 3 to 4 minutes more. Stir in the crushed coriander and cumin, garam masala, and turmeric and cook for 2 to 3 more minutes, until fragrant. Add 3/4 cup water and stir, scraping up any bits that may have stuck to the bottom. At this point, you should have a richly fragrant brown paste in the bottom of the pot. Stir in the greens and salt. Mix very well to coat the greens in the onion and spice paste. Turn the heat down to low, cover, and cook until the greens have begun to soften and are no longer crunchy, about 20 minutes. They will wilt and reduce substantially. Stir in the cream, cover, and cook for 8 to 10 minutes, until the cream has thickened and the greens are cooked through. You may need

to add a touch more water if the greens appear too dry. Stir in the mustard oil, amchur, and sugar. Taste and season with additional salt if needed. Indian restaurants in the United States often serve a very smooth saag. If you prefer that smooth texture, blend the greens with an immersion blender before serving. (I do not blend my saag.) (*I didn't either —MB*) Serve hot.