

Roast Turkey Shami Kebabs

can be made either
mild, medium or hot

makes 10–12 kebabs

It's become something of a tradition for me to create a recipe at this time of year in which you can use up some of the small mountain of cold roast turkey you have left over from Christmas dinner.

This year, instead of making a curry, I thought I would make some tasty little Shami Kebabs which you could serve as part of a spicy buffet.

Combine these Shami Kebabs with Aloo Tikki (spicy potato cakes), Onion Bhajis, *easy* Samosas and Coriander Relish and you have an unusual and exotic party buffet. The other recipes can be found in [The Curry House Premium Area](#).

I made numerous versions of the Shami Kebabs before I found one that I really liked. Some were too dense and stodgy while others were too crumbly and fell apart in the pan. In the end, I went back to basics and hunted out some traditional British recipes for rissoles which are savoury cakes made with minced leftover meat. Then I went to a favourite old cookery book, Mrs Balbir Singh's *Indian Cookery*, to remind myself of the ingredients and spicing for authentic Shami Kebabs. The resulting Anglo-Indian hybrid is what you find here.

We Brits don't seem as enthusiastic about the art of rissole making these days possibly because we don't cook as many roast dinners as previous generations. So this is a good opportunity to revive a flagging tradition while, at the same time, giving the humble British rissole a spicy Punjabi makeover.

ingredients

250g cold, roast turkey cut into chunks – all skin and bones removed

dry ingredients :

2 × 15ml spoons sieved gram flour (this is the ground chana dhal used to make onion bhajis – if unavailable, use plain wheat flour although the taste and texture will be different)

1 × 5ml spoon ground cumin seed

2 × 5ml spoons ground coriander seed

1 × 2.5ml spoon turmeric

2 × 5ml spoons paprika

½ × 2.5ml spoon ground cinnamon

chilli powder to taste for mild, medium or hot kebabs

a few good grinds of black peppercorns

salt to taste (to bring out the taste you will need plenty)

fresh ingredients :

2 fat cloves of garlic crushed to a pulp in a garlic press

1 × 5ml spoon of finely grated fresh ginger + juice

2 × 15ml spoons Greek-style (full fat) yoghurt

2 × 15ml spoons beaten egg

the finely grated zest of ½ a lime

1 × 5ml spoon lime juice

2 × 15ml spoons finely chopped fresh coriander (cilantro) leaves and fine stalks

butter or vegetable oil to fry the kebabs (butter gives the best results)

special equipment

A large (28cm/11") non-stick frying pan

a broad-bladed palette knife

method

1. Drop the chunks of cold roast turkey into the bowl of a food processor. Whiz the turkey in short bursts at first then slightly longer ones. Stop when the turkey resembles coarse breadcrumbs. Don't over-process the turkey or you will end up with patè!
2. Remove the blade from the food processor and pour the turkey "crumbs" into a large mixing bowl.
3. Now add all the dry ingredients to the mixing bowl and mix everything thoroughly with a fork.

4. Crush the garlic cloves in a garlic press and slide the resulting pulp into the bowl.
5. Peel a large piece of fresh root ginger. Grate the ginger, over a plate, using the cutting holes in the grater that are roughly 2mm across. Ease the soft tissue off the rough side of the grater with the stub of the ginger piece leaving behind all the fibrous bits. Use a knife to scrape the rest of the flesh off the back of the grater. Mix up the pulped flesh and juice, measure your 5ml spoonful and add it to the bowl.
6. Add all the other fresh ingredients to the bowl and stir with the fork until everything is thoroughly mixed. Finally, use a spatula to scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl and incorporate any stray mixture into the bulk.
7. Now it's time to get your hands messy! The mixture will be rather soggy but that's fine. After the kebabs have been fried for a while the egg will set and will bind everything together while still giving a light texture.
8. Take a walnut-sized piece of mixture and gently press it together. Don't compress it too much or you'll ruin the texture. Flatten your "walnut" on a work surface into a round, flat cake. Mould the sides of the kebab so they are vertical and not sloping. Gently slide a palette knife under the kebab and transfer it to a large plate.
9. Repeat the procedure until you have used up all the mixture. You should end up with 10-12 kebabs on your plate.
10. Cover the plate with cling film and place it in the fridge for **at least an hour** for the mixture to cool down and firm up.
11. Take the non-stick frying pan and place it over a medium heat. **Don't have the heat too high at first because you don't want to turn over the kebabs until the egg in the mixture has set and bound everything together.** Add enough butter or vegetable oil to generously cover the whole surface of the pan. Remove the plate of kebabs from the fridge.
12. When the butter/oil has heated up to pan temperature slide the palette knife under one of the kebabs and gently transfer it to the hot frying pan. Transfer all the kebabs in this way. Fry the kebabs for about 10 minutes occasionally agitating the pan to make sure the kebabs are not sticking.
13. Gently turn over the kebabs with the palette knife and fry the second side for 5-7 minutes. The kebabs should now be golden brown and crispy on both sides. If either side needs a little more cooking just raise the heat a little to finish off. Serve hot.



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