SRI LANKA / WILL AND FRIENDS

POACHED EGG WITH AUBERGINE RELISH

Poached egg with aubergine relish is eggs on toast with a Sri Lankan twist: a spiced fried aubergine and onion relish on multigrain toast, a soft egg on top and a little chilli oil.



SERVES	PREP	COOK	TOTAL	DIFFICULTY	SPICE
4	25 min	35 min	1 h	Medium	Medium

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE AUBERGINE RELISH

1 large aubergine (about 350 g), cut into batons
1 large onion, sliced into thin sticks
Oil, for deep frying
3 tbsp oil

1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp mustard seeds
2 dried red chillies
10 curry leaves
1 tbsp garlic paste
100 g cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1 tbsp vinegar
Salt, to taste
Chopped coriander, to finish

FOR THE POACHED EGGS

4 very fresh eggs
A little oil
Plastic wrap, for lining the bowls

TO SERVE

4 slices multigrain toast, or 4 toasted bread rolls, halved
A handful of baby rocket
Chilli oil

METHOD

FRY THE ONION AND AUBERGINE

1 Heat the deep-frying oil until very hot. Fry the onion until golden brown and a little dry, then lift out. Fry the aubergine for about 5 minutes, until brown outside and crisp, golden inside. Drain.

BUILD THE RELISH

2. Heat the 3 tbsp oil in a hot pan. Add the cumin and mustard seeds, then the dried chillies and curry leaves until the oil is fragrant.
3. Add the garlic paste and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes and cook until the oil splits from the paste.
4. Stir in the turmeric, the fried onion and the fried aubergine, then the vinegar. Simmer for 5 minutes. Season with salt and finish with coriander.

POACH THE EGGS

5. Lay a square of plastic wrap in a small bowl and brush it with a little oil. Crack an egg into it, gather the wrap into a tight bundle and twist the top closed.
6. Lower the bundles into barely simmering water for 3 1/2 to 4 minutes. Lift out and unwrap.

SERVE

7. Toast the bread. Spoon relish onto each slice, add a little rocket, top with a poached egg and finish with a drizzle of chilli oil.

USEFUL SHORTCUTS FOR HOME COOKS

The relish keeps in the fridge for about a week and is good with rice, grilled fish and sandwiches.

No plastic wrap: poach the eggs in barely simmering water with a splash of vinegar. Plastic wrap gives the neatest result.

Fry the aubergine until properly brown. Pale aubergine tastes of nothing.

Will cooks with his friend Palm Amatawet, who calls the dish a mix of Asian and Western. It is poached eggs on toast, in the style of eggs Benedict, with a Sri Lankan aubergine relish in place of the hollandaise.Palm fries onion and aubergine in very hot oil until brown outside and a little crisp, then builds the relish with...