

# BUNNY CHOW

*No, this recipe does not contain any bunnies. 'Bunny' is derived from the word 'bania', which was a name given to the Indian merchants who sold the take-away curry originally in Durban. Essentially the dish is curry of your choice (usually mutton, chicken or bean) which is spooned into a hollowed-out section of a loaf of bread – basically an edible curry lunchbox. You eat your curry topped with a carrot sambal and there is no need for rice as it is replaced with the bread you tear away as you work your way down, where eventually you are left very, very full.*

*A few years back when writing a curry story for Delicious magazine, I spent a whole day circling the city in search of the best 'bunny'. I think I sampled 8 or 9 different bunny chows that day – and the thing that was consistent is that each of the curries was big in flavour – but not pretence. This is my version, which I perfected with the chefs at the famed Oyster Box Hotel just north of Durban.*

## SERVES: 4

¼ cup ghee (or 50g unsalted butter with a splash of oil)  
1 large onion, thinly sliced  
1 bunch coriander, stalks chopped, leaves picked  
1 handful (about 10) fresh curry leaves  
3 garlic cloves, chopped  
1 tbsp chopped or grated ginger  
1 tbsp mild curry powder  
2 tsp garam masala  
1 tsp chilli powder (if you want a little heat)  
6 large chicken thigh fillets, cut into 3cm pieces  
2 tbsp tomato paste  
3 tomatoes, cut into 3cm chunks  
400g can tomatoes  
3 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into 3cm chunks  
1 loaf white bread (not sliced)

## CARROT SAMBAL

1 red onion, thinly sliced  
1 large or 2 small carrots, coarsely grated  
2 long green chillies, seeds removed, sliced  
2 tbsp apple cider or other vinegar  
pinch of salt

Heat ghee (or oil and butter) in a saucepan or deep frying pan over medium heat, then add the onion with the coriander stalks and curry leaves and cook for 3–4 minutes until softened. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 2–3 minutes until fragrant. Add the curry powder, garam masala and chilli powder and cook for 30 seconds.

Add chicken to the pan and continue to cook for 4–5 minutes so it starts to caramelise a bit, then add the tomato paste as well as the fresh and canned tomatoes and cook for another couple of minutes. Add 1 cup of water and the potato then bring to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes until potato is very tender and sauce has reduced. Add a little water if needed. Season to taste.

For the sambal, combine all the ingredients in a small bowl and set aside.

Taste the curry and season to taste. You can add some more of the spice if you want a bit more of a kick or even some chilli powder for some heat.

Divide the loaf into 4 then scoop out the filling, leaving the base of each piece covered, so the bread acts like a bowl. Serve the curry in the bread bowls, topped with coriander and serve with the sambal and extra bread on the side.

**Note:** Traditionally you don't serve with yoghurt, but at your house it's your rules, so you can serve alongside if you want to balance out the heat a little. Also the curry base is great and you can use it with rice too.

