



# Goan Prawn Curry

from Nicole Mody

**Amateur yogi, semi-professional dancer and self-taught cook, Nicole Mody thoroughly enjoys experimenting with different forms of expression, most importantly food. She has been the curator for food at the Kala Ghada Arts Festival, Mumbai, since 2012, and is the author and editor of *Flavours of Kala Ghada*, a book of recipes compiled from her years as the food curator at the festival. More recently, she has written and released *From the Table of Mary S Narielwala – A Perspective on Parsi Cooking*, a collection of recipes from the Narielwala family from the 1950s and '60s, written more in memoir style than as recipes.**

 @nicolemody

“Mumbai is a city of migrants. People come here from all over the country and what they miss most of all is their food. I can't tell you how many friends I've had come from Delhi and say, 'This is not chaat', 'What are these parathas?' and 'Your kebabs are laughable'. With so many people living away from home, it stands to reason that regional food is the need of the hour! We have become so enamoured of everything that is 'foreign' that we have forgotten the abundant bounty we get right here at home, in India, and, within India, in each state. Maharashtra itself has 36 districts, each with variations in its cuisine that make the taste completely different! Imagine that across the

entire country. It's time to discover our own backyard, and people are only now starting to realise that. Regional food discovery and exploration has taken on a life of its own, and I'm glad for it. We are so multicultural that it's important to rediscover your culinary heritage, the food of the state you live in, the area you are from, and where your friends are from.”

“ I was 21 years old before I was allowed to go to Goa with my friends. My parents are protective, and they didn't want me to run wild. What struck me the most about Goa was the food. Most people will say the beaches, the markets, but, for me, it has always been about the food. It's amazing that we live on the same coast, get the same kind of seafood in Mumbai that we do in Goa, but still go completely crazy over things like *rava*-fried prawns, butter garlic squid and prawn curry! I distinctly remember sitting at Britto's on Baga Beach one evening, eating plates of *rava*-fried goodness, butter-garlic deliciousness, and then tucking into a bowl of bright orange prawn curry. The rice was different (I had yet to learn that everything was not Basmati) and it added the most amazing texture to this beautiful thick curry with tiny prawns in it. It was heaven on a plate, and, even though I was completely stuffed, I had two huge helpings. Prawn curry is my absolute favourite dish, and I love the variety in the kinds of curries you can make – with tamarind, with tomato, in a mustard base and so many more from across the length and breadth of our country. Give me a Goa curry any day, though! ”

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## GOAN PRAWN CURRY

### INGREDIENTS

3 tbsp sunflower or vegetable oil  
2 onions, finely sliced  
2 to 3 green chillies, slit down the middle  
500g prawns, with tails on  
Salt, to taste

### TO BE GROUND

1 handful tamarind, soaked in 1 cup hot water for 10 minutes  
15 to 20 dried Kashmiri chillies, soaked in 2 cups hot water for 10 minutes  
2 tbsp whole coriander seeds (*dhania*)  
2 tsp cumin (*jeera*)  
2-inch piece ginger  
8 to 10 garlic cloves  
1 coconut, grated or cut into small pieces

### METHOD

- Put the tamarind, Kashmiri chilli, coriander seeds, cumin, ginger, garlic and grated coconut into the mixer and grind, slowly adding the tamarind and chilli water, to a smooth, thick paste. Put through a strainer, and collect the masala in a bowl (use force, if you have to, to push that masala through – I use a steel spoon and really exhaust myself with this step!). Add water to the remnants of the masala in the strainer, put back into the mixer, and grind again. Push through the strainer once more. Repeat.
- Heat the oil in a heavy-bottomed saucepan, and sauté the onion until translucent. Add the masala, and stir well. Bring to a boil, and cook for 10 minutes more.
- If you are using frozen prawns, add to the curry now. Cook for a further 10 minutes. Depending on the consistency of how you like your curry, you may add water to thin it out. If you're using fresh prawns, add them now. Let the curry come back to a boil.
- Add the green chillies and salt to taste.
- Remove from the flame, and serve hot with rough, unpolished rice, fried papad, and an onion and coriander kachumber.

Serves  
**SIX**

