

## Indian Okra



**PLU – 4656**

### Description/Taste

Indian green okra has a torpedo-shaped pod ranging in length of five to six inches when harvested mature. The pods are pale lime to lime green color, their exterior has furrowed lengthwise grooves. The skin can often be fuzzy to prickly, which can cause an allergic reaction to sensitive skin. The flesh bears a tender spongy membrane with many small white seeds. Okra is known less for its lean flavor and more for its sticky sap that creates the flesh's gelatinous texture.

### Current Facts

Indian okra is a member of the mallow family along with cotton, cocoa and hibiscus. The okra plant produces broad oak-shaped leaves with bold yellow and white hibiscus-like blossoms. The fruits sprout in vertical patterns from the plant's stems. The sign of a plant flowering indicates fruits will develop quickly within 3-5 days. Young fruits must be harvested daily as the fruits are known to grow so fast you can almost see them growing in front of your eyes. One plant can produce up to 100 okra. Okra left on the stem too long will become tough and essentially unfit for use. Okra is grown for fresh eating, but it also has many other purposes. Okra plants are grown commercially for pickling and canning alone or as a canned soup ingredient, while the seeds are also harvested for making oil and in some cultures are ground and used as a coffee substitute or supplement.

### Nutritional Value

Indian okra pods are a good source of dietary fiber and a mucilage substance that is said to help in easing digestion. Okra is similar to Kiwi fruits with high amounts of Vitamins K and C, manganese, and folate.

### Applications

With okra, harvesting young tender fruits and knowledge of how to cook it are two key ingredients. Okra is historically not eaten alone, rather paired in a multitude of recipes alongside ingredients with bold, complex flavors and varying textures. Indian okra is most often used as a soup or stew ingredient, though its textures and flavors are truly enhanced when fried and grilled. Okra pairs well with basil, bacon, beet greens, butter, cream, garlic, ham, lemon, kale, onions, parsley, olive oil, pickled vegetables, chile peppers and peppercorns, paprika, tomatoes and turnips.

# Bhindi Masala

Bhindi masala, a restaurant style north Indian okra dry dish that's easy, quick and healthy. Best bhindi masala fry for rice & chapathi.

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 50 mins

Total Time: 60 mins

Course: Main Dish  
Cuisine: North Indian

Servings: 5  
Author: Sailu



## Ingredients:

- 1/2 lb Bhindi (Indian Okra) – wash, dry, trim the ends and cut into 1" pieces
- 1 large onion – finely sliced
- 1 tomato – finely chopped
- 1/4 tsp Asafoetida (you can sub with garlic chives or nira)
- 1 tsp ginger green chili paste
- 1/4 tsp sugar
- 1/4 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp red chili powder
- 3/4 tsp coriander powder
- Pinch of garam masala powder
- 1/2 tsp Kasuri methi
- 1/2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- Salt to taste
- Coriander leaves for garnish (optional)

## Instructions:

1. Heat 1/2 tbsp oil in a cooking vessel, add the bhindi and sauté on low to medium flame for 12-15 mts. Remove from the vessel and keep aside.
2. In the same vessel, add the remaining oil. Once hot, asafoetida, sliced onions and sauté for 4 mts. Add the ginger green chili paste and sauté for 3 mts. Add red chili powder, turmeric powder, coriander powder and kasuri methi and mix.
3. Add chopped tomatoes and sauté for 6-7 mts on low to medium flame with lid.
4. Add the okra and sugar and mix well. Cook without lid for 15 mts. Add salt to taste, garam masala powder and lemon juice and mix. Turn off heat.
5. Remove onto a serving bowl and garnish with coriander leaves. Serve warm with rice or rotis.

### Tips

- Kasuri Methi is an optional ingredient.
- Ensure you wash and dry the okra before chopping it. Do not place lid while cooking bhindi.