CHICKEN CURRY

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 30 MIN

Why resort to takeout? This spicy coconut sauce, brimming with stewed tomatoes, is a wonderful way to make weeknight chicken tempting again.

- 1½ lb skinless boneless chicken thighs (about 3 to 4)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 garlic cloves, smashed and chopped
- 2 teaspoons curry powder (preferably Madras)
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 (13- to 14-oz) can unsweetened coconut milk
- 1 (14½-oz) can stewed tomatoes
- ¼ cup dried currants
- 1 (10-oz) package frozen whole baby okra
- ½ cup unsalted roasted cashews (3 oz), chopped

ACCOMPANIMENT: jasmine or basmati rice

▸Pat chicken dry and sprinkle with ½ teaspoon salt.

▸Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then brown chicken, turning over once, about 5 minutes total. Transfer chicken with tongs to a plate. Stir garlic, curry, and cayenne into fat in skillet, then add coconut milk, tomatoes with their juice, currants, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt and bring to a simmer. Add okra and chicken along with any juices accumulated on plate and briskly simmer, partially covered, until chicken is cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes. Sprinkle with cashews.

FISH CAKES WITH PAPRIKA LEMON MAYONNAISE

SERVES 4

ACTIVE TIME: 10 MIN START TO FINISH: 25 MIN

Inspired by croquettes, these brightly spiced fish cakes will transport you to sunnier shores. The recipe takes advantage of the large flake and meatiness of hake to give crab cakes a run for their money.

FOR FISH CAKES

- 3 garlic cloves
- 1 cup coarsely chopped onion
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 large egg
- ⅓ cup fine dry bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- ¾ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ lb skinless hake or Pacific cod fillet, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 6 tablespoons olive oil

FOR MAYONNAISE

- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest (see Tips, page 127)
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- Rounded ¼ teaspoon hot paprika
- ¼ teaspoon salt

ACCOMPANIMENT: 1 (5-oz) bag baby salad greens such as herb salad, Asian mix, or mesclun

MAKE FISH CAKES: With motor running, drop garlic into a food processor and process until finely chopped. Add onion and pulse until finely chopped. Add coriander, egg, bread crumbs, mayonnaise, cumin, and salt and pulse until combined. Add fish and pulse until coarsely chopped.

▸Line a baking sheet with wax paper. Quickly form fish mixture into 8 (½-inch-thick) patties (about 3 inches in diameter), transferring to lined baking sheet as formed.

▸Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over moderate heat until hot but not smoking. Cook 4 cakes, turning over once, until golden brown and just cooked through (reduce heat if cakes brown too quickly), about 6 minutes total. Transfer cakes with a slotted spatula to a plate and keep warm, loosely covered with foil. Wipe out skillet and cook remaining 4 patties in remaining 3 tablespoons oil in same manner.

MAKE MAYONNAISE WHILE FISH CAKES COOK: Whisk together all mayonnaise ingredients in a small bowl until smooth.

TO SERVE: Divide fish cakes among 4 beds of greens and top with paprika lemon mayonnaise.

A fragrant yellow curry, rich with coconut milk and dotted with cashews and currants, brings an Indian accent to chicken and baby okra.