

Low GI Daily Menu: Indian Dal and Spice Day

Saturday 24 October 2026 | Indian dal and spice | Recipes & method (serves 2)

Today we're turning to the comforting spices of India with a menu built around legumes, basmati rice and fragrant home spice blends. Each dish keeps carbs moderate and fibre high, so you get warming, satisfying flavour without the blood glucose rollercoaster.

Daily total per person (approx.): 112 g carbs | 31 g fibre | 68 g protein | 1210 kcal

BREAKFAST

LOW GI

Spiced Besan Chilla with Spinach and Mint Raita

Savoury chickpea flour pancakes studded with spinach and tomato, served with a cooling cucumber mint raita.

Prep 10 min | Cook 15 min | Serves 2

Per serve: 32 g carbs | 9 g fibre | 18 g protein | 14 g fat | 360 kcal

Ingredients

- 1 cup (120 g) besan (chickpea flour)
- 1 cup (250 ml) water
- 1 small brown onion, finely diced
- 1 cup (30 g) baby spinach, finely chopped
- 1 small tomato, diced
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp ground turmeric
- 1/4 tsp chilli powder
- 2 tsp olive oil, for cooking
- 200 g natural unsweetened yoghurt
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, grated
- small handful mint leaves, chopped

Method

1. Whisk besan, water, turmeric and chilli powder into a smooth, thin batter.
2. Stir in cumin seeds, onion, spinach and tomato.
3. Heat 1 tsp oil in a non-stick pan, pour in a ladle of batter, spread thin and cook 3-4 minutes each side; repeat.
4. Mix yoghurt, grated cucumber and mint with a pinch of salt for the raita.
5. Serve chillas warm with raita on the side.

Why it's low GI: Besan (chickpea flour) is a low GI legume flour that's high in protein and fibre, while unsweetened yoghurt adds protein without added sugar, both helping to slow glucose release.

Tip: Leftover batter keeps in the fridge for 2 days; cooked chillas reheat well in a dry pan.

Drink: Unsweetened masala chai (black tea with cardamom, cinnamon and ginger, splash of milk, no sugar).

LUNCH

LOW GI

Tandoori Chicken, Chickpea and Cucumber Salad

Lightly spiced grilled chicken tossed with chickpeas, crunchy vegetables and a zesty mint yoghurt dressing.

Prep 15 min | Cook 10 min | Serves 2

Per serve: 38 g carbs | 10 g fibre | 30 g protein | 16 g fat | 430 kcal

Ingredients

- 250 g chicken breast, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp tandoori spice mix
- 1 tsp olive oil
- 400 g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 1 Lebanese cucumber, diced
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 1/2 red capsicum, diced
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1/4 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 small wholegrain or sourdough flatbreads, warmed
- 100 g natural yoghurt, mint and lemon juice, for dressing

Method

1. Toss chicken with tandoori spice mix and oil, marinate 10 minutes.
2. Pan-fry chicken 5-6 minutes until cooked through, rest, then slice.
3. Combine chickpeas, cucumber, tomatoes, capsicum, spinach and red onion in a large bowl.
4. Whisk yoghurt, lemon juice, chopped mint, salt and pepper for the dressing.
5. Top salad with sliced chicken, drizzle with dressing and serve with warmed flatbread.

Why it's low GI: Canned chickpeas and a small wholegrain flatbread provide slow-release, low GI carbohydrates, while lean chicken breast keeps saturated fat low.

Tip: Swap chicken for grilled paneer or extra chickpeas for a vegetarian version.

Drink: Sparkling water with fresh mint and lime wedges.

Spiced Red Lentil Dal with Basmati Rice and Garlicky Spinach

A warming, fragrant masoor dal simmered with onion, garlic and ginger, served over basmati rice with wilted spinach and cucumber raita.

Prep 10 min | Cook 25 min | Serves 2

Per serve: 42 g carbs | 12 g fibre | 20 g protein | 12 g fat | 420 kcal

Ingredients

- 1 cup (200 g) red lentils (masoor dal), rinsed
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 brown onion, finely diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 1 tomato, diced
- 2 cups (500 ml) water or salt-reduced vegetable stock
- 200 g baby spinach
- 3/4 cup (150 g) basmati rice, dry
- 150 g natural yoghurt, for raita

Method

1. Heat oil in a saucepan, add cumin seeds until fragrant, then add onion and cook until soft.
2. Stir in garlic, ginger, turmeric and coriander, cook 1 minute.
3. Add lentils, tomato and water or stock, simmer 20 minutes until lentils are soft, stirring occasionally.
4. Stir in garam masala and half the spinach, cook until wilted, then season.
5. Meanwhile cook basmati rice according to packet instructions.
6. Serve dal over rice, top with remaining raw spinach wilting on top, with yoghurt raita on the side.

Why it's low GI: Red lentils and basmati rice are both low GI, and together with the vegetables provide sustained energy and plenty of fibre for an evening meal.

Tip: Make a double batch of dal and freeze portions for busy weeknights.

Drink: Warm cumin (jeera) water or chamomile tea, unsweetened.

Why this menu helps

This menu leans on legumes (chickpea flour, chickpeas and red lentils) and basmati rice, all of which digest slowly and help keep blood glucose steadier across the day. Lean proteins like chicken and yoghurt are paired with every meal, and vegetables add bulk and fibre without extra carbs. Fragrant Indian spices bring big flavour with no need for sugar or sweetened sauces, and every drink is naturally zero sugar.

Nutrition values are estimates per serve and will vary with brands and portion sizes. Everyone's needs are different; talk to your GP,

accredited practising dietitian or credentialled diabetes educator about the right amount of carbohydrate for you, and check your blood glucose as advised.