Pan of Bliss
Let's cook it real slow!

Pearl Spot Fish Pan Fry (Karimeen Fry)

https://panofbliss.com/pearl-spot-fish-pan-fry-karimeen-fry/

Naadan Karimeen Fry is one of the most sought-after delicacies in Kerala restaurants and Toddy shops. It is an exotic spicy dish and there are many popular varieties of karimeen preparations: such as Karimeen in coconut gravy or Karimeen Pollichatu (in Banana leaf).

Here I am sharing the recipe of Spicy Karimeen Pan Fry.

Ingredients

Karimeen: 4 to 5 pieces medium

Turmeric powder: 1/2 tsp

Chilli powder: 2 tsp

Salt: as per taste

Whole pepper: 1 tbsp

Ginger: 2 inch root

Garlic: 7 to 8

Shallots: 4 to 5

Curry leaves: 7 to 8

Coriander leaves: 1 small bunch

Vinegar or lemon: 1 tbsp (optional)

Coconut Oil: For frying

Method

Clean and cut fish into medium pieces. I have used medium karimeen and cut them into two halves. You can even keep the fish as whole for frying. Once cleaned, place the fish pieces in a mixing bowl for the marinade. Make small slits on both sides of the fish with a sharp knife.

For the marinade, in a grinder add the following spices: Whole pepper, ginger, garlic, shallots, curry leaves, coriander leaves. Grind into a coarse powder. Add chilli powder, turmeric powder and salt. To this you can either add vinegar or lemon juice. If using lemon juice, make sure there are no seeds in it. If you don't want to use vinegar or lemon juice, you can just add 1 tbsp water. Now, grind again to a smooth paste.

Take out the paste from the grinder and mix well. Check if the salt is sufficient. Apply the marinade covering the fish completely on both sides especially on the slits, so that the spices can enter well.

Keep the marinated fish inside the refrigerator for an hour or more. You can even keep it overnight.

Frying the fish

In a frying pan, heat 1 tbsp coconut oil. Let the oil cover the entire surface of the pan. Once the oil is hot, place 2 or 3 pieces of fish (depending on the size of the pan). If you have marinated the whole fish and not cut them, then fry one by one.

Partially cover the pan with a lid and shallow fry one side of the fish on medium or low flame for 5 to 7 minutes. Uncover the lid and flip the fish ensuring that it doesn't break while flipping and fry for 5 to 7 minutes on medium to low flame.

Repeat the process of flipping the fish on both sides until the fish is crisp, golden and cooked well.

Remove the fish pieces from the pan and place it on kitchen tissues to absorb oil.

Repeat the process of frying if you have more marinated fish left.

Garnish with chopped and fried garlic, green chillies, curry leaves and fresh lemon wedges.

Serve hot with rice, sambar or rasam.

Notes & Tips

Any variety of fish can be prepared in this way using the same spices for marination.

Frying fish in coconut oil gives it the authentic Kerala taste.

The spices can be adjusted as per your taste, especially the chilli and pepper powder.