

## Charge Chicken

Written by Vah RE Vah

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Chicken Chargha is a traditional and classic dish from the city of Lahore in Pakistan. It is an extremely rich, flavourful dish made with whole chicken or chicken breast marinated in a special Chargha masala consisting of a masala paste made from ginger, garlic, star anise, cinnamon, green cardamom, mace, shahi jeera, jeera, mustard seeds, red chillies and citric acid, turmeric, salt and mint leaves; which is made into a smooth paste and nicely coated into the chicken pieces, marinated, steam cooked, cooled and then deep fried to get a crispiness on the outer side of the chicken.

The special Chargha masala has a strong and piquant flavour with the use of garam masala, spices and tanginess from the citric acid. This actually enriches the aroma and taste of the chicken upon cooking. Chicken Chargha is popularly known as Lahori style roast chicken which is a very renowned dish in and around Lahore. Lahore is famous for its rich food culture and their love for food. Chicken chargha is a spicy, steamed and deep fried delicacy which can be eaten as side dish or main dish. Chargha is a very famous dish in Lahore and in Asian cuisine, especially in Pakistan.

Chargha means a whole chicken which is marinated with spices, cooked and deep in oil or ghee. Chargha masala tastes different according to individual taste and choice of ingredients used. Generally for the marinade, the ingredients included are curd (yoghurt), cumin powder, chilli powder, vinegar, ginger and garlic paste is used, but you can add your own spices. Chargha can be served as a starter, but tastes good with naan, salad and some dipping sauce. In most restaurants, the chargha is served with chips and salad with pickled green chillies.

Pakistani cuisine Pakistani cuisine is a typical blend of various regional cooking traditions of South Asia. It is well known for its richness and flavour used in their delicacies. They are known for having and using aromatic spices and most often their dishes contain liberal amounts of oil which contributes to a richer and mouth-feel flavour. Brown cardamom, green cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, mace and black pepper are most commonly used spices in the making of a wide variety of dishes throughout Pakistan. Apart from this garam masala is a very popular blend of spices used in many Pakistani dishes.

Pakistanis focus on meats such as beef, lamb, chicken, fish and vegetables as well as traditional fruit and dairy. The influence of Central Asian, South Asian and Middle Eastern cuisine in Pakistani food is ubiquitous. Meat and grilled meat are an important element in Pakistan region for centuries. Kebabs are a staple item in Pakistani cuisine today, and you can find countless varieties of kebabs all over the country. Each region has its own varieties of

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kebabs but most are found of the Seekh kebab, Chicken Tikka, Shami kebab, Phaldari kebab, Hara bhara kebab which are especially popular varieties throughout the country.