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Other books by Axel Åberg:

Fiction

Stockholm Sin (2012)

Cortona Crime (2013)

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He's been enthusiastically cooking Indian, and Asian food for 40 years.

## Foreword

I started writing this book because of my love for all types of exotic foodstuffs – and to lay out my favorite recipes in an easy-to-read style.

I've travelled extensively in Asia, and the Axel's 5-Star Indian Recipes sub-continent, and there's nothing better Axel's 5-Star Indian Recipes than to find new, exotic ingredients in a marketplace, or to taste a dish and wonder at how it was made! I'm always collecting recipes, and trying to remember ingredients, and sequences of using them. It's a bit like a computer program, really. It all works if you put the right stuff in, and do things in the right order! Otherwise, disaster.

So, treat this book as my personal collection of favorites that can act as your guide. If you are an experienced cook, nothing in here is difficult. If you are a beginner, then nothing should be seen as too much Axel's 5-Star Indian Recipes of a challenge. Learn as you go. Mastering the

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subtleties of spicing Indian food is a lifetime's work. Try under-spicing and work upwards. Less is always more. I tried to keep the cooking instructions very clear, and using the minimum number of words. Some books just go on and on about browning onions, popping spices, and testing if meat is tender. I just assume you can follow the steps. If something seems like it needs a little less time, or more, then adjust the instructions yourself. Cooking is a perpetual journey, never a destination.

I Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes try to draw a balance between meat/fish and vegetable dishes. Yes, I listed some starter suggestions, but pretty well any of the Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes dishes could be served in small quantities as a starter, or snack. Lamb is important in Indian cooking, since beef is not eaten by Hindus and is less available. If you want the truth, they probably use more goat, but that's not always available to us. But do experiment by replacing lamb with beef in any of the dishes (or vice versa!).

Don't feel that every Indian dish should be accompanied by rice. Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes Far more common, in reality, are accompaniments of pickles and breads. Indian people are quite happy to roll some food in bread, just like a Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes burrito, or wrap, to eat on the go.

I have taken some basic spice mixes (masalas), and pastes and separated Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes their recipes into a separate section. That way, the main recipes can just specify which mix/paste to use, and assume that you have got some pre-made in your refrigerator! But this makes it easier to write a lot of the recipes in a shorter space. There are several suggested regional varieties of *garam masala*, which is nearly always added at the end of cooking, and just before serving. Try them all. Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes Experiment. But do organize your spices before starting to cook. Get a large plate, or board - measure out the spices in sequence around the plate. That way, you won't forget one, or have to go searching in a cupboard at a crucial moment!

Marinating is a key technique of Indian cooking. Typically ingredients, such as fish, are Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes marinated for up to 1 hour in turmeric, and salt. But some dishes Axle's 5-Star Indian Recipes require much more complex marinades, and much longer period to wait. Always refrigerate longer marinades. Never use uncooked marinade as a dip (and most certainly never, if it contained raw chicken).

Indian spices need to be fresh! There is no point in using a jar of curry powder from the back of a kitchen press and wondering why your dish has no flavor. Purchase spices in small quantities, preferable store them in screwtop jars, and don't keep them forever. Grind your own for ultimate freshness. A lot of recipes prescribe pre-toasting whole spices on a dry pan, and then grinding them. Believe me, this will be a glorious sensory experience in your kitchen.

My recipes are aimed to serve four hungry people. In most cases, with rice, breads, and side dishes, you will find they serve 6-8. But practice before serving friends. Leftovers will improve if refrigerated another day, or two.

As to measuring ingredients! I provide advice for each quantity, but in truth you need to develop

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a sense of judgement about Indian spices. It's a matter of timing, and balance. I try to consistently indicate both US and metric quantities. Apologies if I missed any.

Indian recipes often specify *ghee*, which means *clarified butter*. This can be heated to a much higher temperature than normal butter since the milk solids are removed. But making *ghee* takes a long time, and is generally substituted with a good vegetable oil – such as sunflower, rice, or rapeseed – that can take a high temperature. Do not use virgin olive oil since it's just too strongly flavored. Where a specific flavor is desired, a recipe will specify an oil such as coconut, mustard or other.

And finally, since some Indian vegetables, and fish, are just not available outside that wonderful country, I have made creative suggestions on substitutes that you will be able to obtain easily.

Axel's 5-Star Indian Recipes

Happy cooking!

Axel

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