

Less than 45 minutes

(+ pickling time)

Serves 6-8

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Ingredients:

Battered deep-fried fish:

- Vegetable oil, for frying
- 2kg firm white fish (we used hake)
- 2 cups (500ml) cake flour
- 2 Tbsp (30ml) fish masala spice mix
- 2 cups (500ml) milk
- Salt and milled pepper

Pickling liquid:

- 5 cups (1.25L) water
- 4 cups (1L) white spirit vinegar
- 3-4 bay leaves
- 3 Tbsp (45ml) curry powder
- 1 Tbsp (15ml) fish masala spice mix
- 2 Tbsp (30ml) ground turmeric
- 1 Tbsp (15ml) black peppercorns
- 1 Tbsp (15ml) coriander seeds
- 2 cups (500ml) brown sugar
- 1 jar (290g) apricot jam
- 2 Tbsp (30ml) cornflour
- 6-8 onions, sliced into rings

Method

1. Heat oil in a large pot.

2. Cut fish into portions and pat dry with kitchen paper.
3. Combine flour, spice mix, milk and seasoning.
4. Dip each fish portion into batter, making sure to coat evenly, and deep-fry in batches for 4-6 minutes or until golden and cooked through.
5. Drain on kitchen paper and repeat with remaining fish and batter.
6. Arrange cooked fish in a deep baking tray or large bowl with a lid.
7. For pickling liquid, combine water, vinegar, bay leaves and all spices in a large pot and bring to the boil.
8. Boil mixture for about 8 minutes.
9. Add brown sugar and apricot jam and simmer on high for 10-12 minutes.
10. Combine cornflour and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) pickling liquid in a separate bowl to create a smooth paste.
11. Whisk mixture back into pot and simmer for 5 minutes or until sauce has thickened slightly. Taste sauce and adjust seasoning as desired.
12. Add onion and simmer for 5 minutes. (Adding them at this stage will ensure onions have some bite and aren't limp.)
13. Pour over fish and cool completely, cover and refrigerate.
14. Pickle for at least 48 hours before serving, or store for up to 3 weeks.

Cook's note: Can't find fish masala on shelf? Make your own!

Toast $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60ml) coriander seeds, 2 Tbsp (30ml) each cumin seeds, fennel seeds and black peppercorns, 8 cloves and a handful fresh or dried curry leaves in a dry, hot pan for 1-2 minutes or until fragrant. Cool completely and grind using a pestle and mortar until fine. Combine with 1 Tbsp (15ml) each garlic powder, ground ginger, cinnamon, medium curry powder and ground turmeric and a pinch of salt. Store in an airtight container. MAKES $\frac{3}{4}$ CUP.

[Cooking pickled fish for the first time? Follow our easy step-by-step recipe and you'll soon be a pro!](#)