

Recipe for steamed hilsa fish with mustard sauce (Bhapa sorshe ilish)

Ingredients

- hilsa fish cut into large pieces – 1 kg (fresh fish is better for this dish)
- mustard oil – 2 table spoons
- mustard paste – 50 g
- poppy seeds – 50 g
- green chillies – 4–6 medium size (as per choice)
- yoghurt (thicker the better) – 200 g
- salt – to taste
- turmeric powder – 1 teaspoon
- grated coconut – 200 g

Method

Mustard sauce

- 1 Make a fine, creamy-textured paste with the mustard paste and poppy seeds.
- 2 Make a chili paste from the chillies and add to the mustard and poppy paste.
- 3 Add turmeric and salt.
- 4 In a blender, blend the yoghurt. Add the mustard and poppy paste, and two table spoons of mustard oil, and blend further.

Steamed hilsa fish

- 1 Clean the fish once only to reduce the loss of natural oil (if fresh). If the fish has roe, it can be included in the dish, or set aside for another dish. In this dish you should not include the fish head.
- 2 In a large, metal tiffin box place one layer of fish and cover with a layer of mustard sauce. Sprinkle some grated coconut. Place another layer of fish and cover with sauce and grated coconut.
- 3 Depending on how much fish you are using, you can use more tiffin boxes.
- 4 Stack the boxes and cover with the lid.
- 5 Steam for 5-10 minutes either in a pressure cooker or a larger vessel (rice making pot) with water in it.
- 6 Do not open the lid immediately. Allow half an hour of standing time.

Alternative cooking methods

- You can also use a bamboo steamer (put the fish inside the steamer on banana leaves) or an idli steamer.
- This dish is best served with steaming hot rice! You can put the rice into the water, and the rice and fish will take the same time to cook.