

# A FAMILY MEAL IN South Asia



## COOK & EAT

Work together as a family to prepare a traditional South Asian meal (recipes on back). While you eat, try out some customs shared among many South Asian cultures:

- Sit in a circle on a mat or rug. Put food in a common bowl and place it at the center of the circle.
- Have the girls serve the boys, a custom in some South Asian countries.
- Eat using your right hand only (it is considered bad manners to use your left hand). Be sure to wash your hands first!

## LEARN ABOUT SOUTH ASIA

The region of South Asia includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, and Sri Lanka. It is home to some of the world's tallest mountains, such as Mount Everest in Nepal. In India, the Ganges River area is the most populated area in the world.

Climates in South Asia vary from tropical and subtropical to semi-arid and alpine.

South Asia has many languages. In India alone, there are more than 300 languages. Hindi, the main language in India, has over 800 dialects. Try these Hindi words:

- Hello: *namaskaar*
- Goodbye: *alavida*
- Thank you: *dhanyavaad*
- You're welcome: *aapaka svaagat hai*

Religions originating in South Asia include Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. In India, 80% of people are Hindu. Hinduism is a polytheistic religion with over one million "gods."

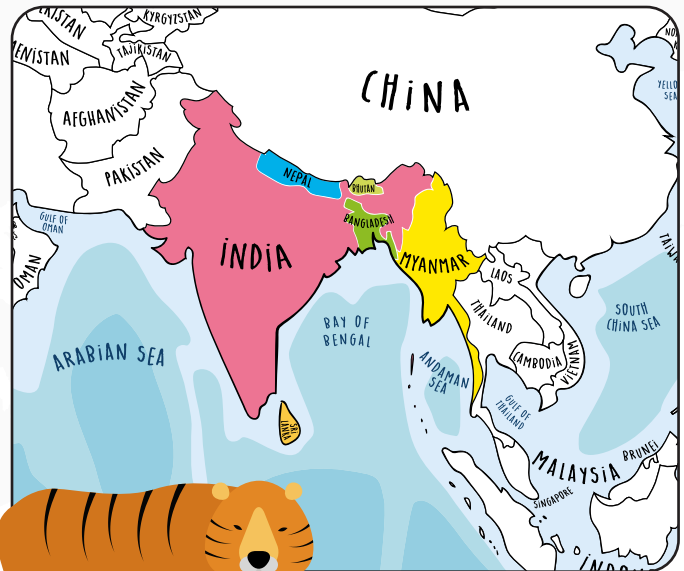
Some South Asian customs relating to food include:



- People eat two to three meals a day, according to their area's culture.
- In some countries, the women serve everyone else first, then they eat last.
- Families eat together unless male guests are present, in which case women will eat separately.
- Hindus are not allowed to eat beef, and some Hindus are vegetarians.

## READ THE BIBLE AND PRAY

Daniel's three friends—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—make an important decision while living as captives in Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar. Everyone else is bowing down to the golden image created by the king,



but the three men refuse to worship anything other than the One True God. Let's see how God is faithful to those who love Him and always provides a way out—even from a fiery furnace!

Read Daniel 3:19-30. Talk about how God protected Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and is also protecting you. Pray together.

# SOUTH ASIAN RECIPES

## DHAL

- |                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 1/2 c. dry red lentils              | 3 1/2 c. water                   |
| 1/4 tsp. turmeric, or more to taste   | 1 1/2 tsp. salt                  |
| 4 Tbsp. ghee, butter or vegetable oil | 1 c. minced onions               |
| 1 c. chopped tomatoes                 | 1 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger      |
| 2 Tbsp. ghee or vegetable oil         | 1 Tbsp. <i>panch phanon</i> mix* |
| 1-3 garlic cloves (crushed)           |                                  |



\**Panch phanon* is an Indian spice mix, also known as “five spice” (do not substitute Chinese five spice!). This mix includes equal proportions of whole cumin, fenugreek, anise, mustard, and Indian black onion seeds (*kalunji*).

1. Rinse lentils well, add water, turmeric and salt. Bring carefully to boil and cook over low to medium heat, covered, for 25 minutes. Cover and cook another 10 minutes. Adjust salt.
2. While lentils are cooking, cook onions in a frying pan until they are golden brown (approx. 10 minutes), stirring constantly. Add tomatoes and ginger and continue cooking until the tomatoes decompose into a delicious and fragrant mush (approx. 8 minutes). Stir constantly so that the tomato mixture doesn't stick. Turn heat to low if necessary.
3. Scrape out this mush into the lentils and stir it in. Let lentils mixture sit while you make the spiced oil.
4. Do a quick rinse of the frying pan, without soap, and dry thoroughly. Add the remaining 2 Tbsp. oil and heat over medium high heat. When oil is hot, add *panch phanon* mix and heat until the seeds begin to pop, about 15 seconds. Turn off heat, add the crushed garlic, and let sizzle for about 30 seconds. Stir this mixture into the lentils/tomato mixture and serve with rice.

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## BASMATI RICE

Purchase bags of uncooked basmati rice from a local grocery store and cook according to package directions.

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## CHAPATIS

For a quick version of this common Indian bread, we suggest one of the following options:

*“Flat-Out” brand Sandwich Wraps*

Purchase wraps at a local grocer. Cut each wrap into small pieces (8 per wrap).

OR

*Biscuit Flatbread*

Purchase ready-to-make biscuits (8-10 per can). Preheat oven according to package directions. Flatten biscuits to 1/4-inch thickness and place on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown.

