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## SHREDDED CARROT AND LENTIL SALAD

### *Hesaru Bele Carrot Kosambri*

Summer, Fall • Serves 4 to 6

Vegan, Gluten-Free

Kosambri is a classic Karnataka salad made with crunchy vegetables, soaked lentils, coconut, lemon, cilantro, and fried spices and chiles. It's spicy, sweet, and tangy all at once. The colorful salad is usually made on festival days or special occasions. My mother would mix all of the ingredients up with her hand, and now so do I. I'm convinced that it tastes better that way. Kosambri comes in many different forms, but this version is the one that was made most often at home. It is referred to as hesaru bele carrot kosambri, which translates from Kannada as "skinned and split mung bean and carrot salad."

I use this recipe as a template and make variations depending on what I have on hand. For instance, I sometimes use mung bean sprouts instead of the moong dal, or cut grapes instead of the coconut.

2 tablespoons moong dal or  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup mung bean sprouts or other green sprouts  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup unsweetened grated coconut (fresh, frozen, or dried)  
3 medium carrots, peeled and shredded (about 2 cups)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cucumber, peeled, seeded, and finely chopped  
1 plum tomato, finely chopped  
2 teaspoons mild-flavored oil such as canola  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon black mustard seeds  
Pinch of asafetida (hing) powder  
4 or 5 fresh curry leaves  
1 or 2 Indian green chiles or serrano chiles, finely chopped  
Juice of half a lemon (about  $1 \frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons), plus more as needed  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped cilantro leaves, plus more for garnish  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt

Wash the moong dal until the water is clear, and soak it in water for 2 to 3 hours. It should have doubled in size.



Thaw frozen coconut or place dried coconut in a little hot water to plump it up.

Drain the dal well, discarding the soaking liquid, and place in a large bowl with the carrots, cucumber, tomato, and coconut.

Put the oil in a tempering pot or a little pan over medium heat. When the oil is hot and shimmering, add one black mustard seed. When the seed sizzles and pops, add the rest of the mustard seeds and the asafetida. Keep a lid handy to cover the pan while the mustard seeds are popping. When the popping starts to subside (a few seconds), turn the heat to medium-low. Rub the curry leaves between your fingers a little to release their natural oils, and drop them and the green chile into the oil. Cover immediately, as moisture from the curry leaves will cause the oil to spatter. Then stir to evenly coat everything with oil and continue to fry until the chile is less raw, 10 to 15 seconds. Turn off the heat.

Immediately pour the oil mixture over the vegetables. To get all of the oil out of the pan, put a spoonful or two of the salad into the pan, stir, and spoon it back into the bowl.

Add the lemon juice, cilantro, and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt, and mix well. Taste for lemon and salt and adjust if needed. Garnish with more cilantro and serve.

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