

Curry ain't Curry

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By : **Juggernaut**

Curry ain't curry without curry leaf.



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Subba Rao

The locals on the Big Island love food particularly Thai food. Every other restaurant on east side is a Thai restaurant. Juggernaut visited a very small Thai restaurant in Hilo where the chef, waitress and the owner was a friendly Thai woman. The menu has a list of curry dishes; Yellow, Red, Green, Penang, Massaman, Buddha and Rama Curry.

“I love curry, could I get a sample of each curry you have on the menu as a special order for me,” requested Juggernaut.

“Sure, no problem, I can get it from you, I see you are an Indian and they love curry,” said the petite woman.

“Sure, I love curry,” Juggernaut settled down to drink Thai Iced Tea, an intensely sweet drink that tastes more like milkshake with condensed milk in it. Then the waitress brought a large plate with small quantities of all the curries on the menu with red rice on the side. The curries look delicious with strong colors and flavors but none of authentic curry leaf aroma. The experience was no way close to eating curry served in Indian restaurants.

“You know I love these curries with great taste but I don't smell curry leaf in any one of them,” Juggernaut put it very politely to the Thai chef.

“Is not hot enough for you,” said the waitress and brought a small bottle of hot pepper sauce.

“No, I don't need hot sauce; I don't smell curry leaf in these dishes.”

“What curry leaf?” the waitress looked innocent.

“When you made this curry have you added curry leaf?”

“No, we have special curry sauce to make each curry,”

“Well, for an Indian, a curry without a curry leaf is not a curry. I enjoyed your tasty dishes but I missed the true curry flavor.”

“I am sorry, where can I get curry leaves?”

“You can get fresh curry leaves at ethnic grocery stores or you can buy a curry plant at a nursery to grow your own plant for fresh curry leaves,”

“How do you use the curry leaf in making curry?”

“The easy way is to add a few crushed curry leaves at the end of the cooking just before serving, some like mild and others like me prefer strong aroma,”

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“ I will try cooking curry with curry leaf next time when you visit us again,” said the lady. Juggernaut scribbled the following on a paper napkin and gave it to the wonderful Thai woman to her pleasant surprise.

Curry Ain't Curry without Curry Leaf

Red, green or Yellow Curry

Ain't Curry without Curry leaf

Penang, Buddha or Rama Curry

Ain't Curry without Curry leaf

Chicken, beef or fish curry

Ain't curry without Curry leaf

Curry without Curry leaf ain't Curry

Curry with Curry leaf is authentic Curry

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