

Kurelo ra Alu Taareko

SAUTÉED ASPARAGUS

Asparagus is considered the king of vegetables in Nepal. The most popular way of cooking it is sautéing it in a little oil. This brings out a depth of flavor that boiling and steaming do not.

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1/8 teaspoon fenugreek seeds
**2 medium red potatoes, peeled
and cut into 1/4-inch pieces**
1/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
A small pinch ground asafetida
**2 fresh mild or hot green chilies,
cut into long slivers**
3 medium cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger

1 1/2 teaspoons ground coriander
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
**1/2 teaspoon freshly ground
black pepper**
**2 pounds asparagus, trimmed
and sliced diagonally into
1-inch pieces (about 6 cups)**

Heat the oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, but not smoking, add the fenugreek seeds and fry until dark brown and fully fragrant, about 5 seconds. Add the potatoes, turmeric, and asafetida and cook, stirring frequently, until the potatoes brown, 6 to 7 minutes. Add the green chilies, garlic, ginger, coriander, cumin, cayenne pepper, salt, and black pepper and mix well. Add the asparagus and cook for 1 minute. Reduce the heat to medium, cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender and the liquid has evaporated, 6 to 8 minutes. Do not overcook! When you think they are done, sample a piece. It should be firm with a bit of crunch. Transfer the vegetables to a serving dish and serve warm.

Makes 4 to 6 servings.