

Kaalan

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Kaalan is a very traditional Malayali dish made using **Yogurt**, **Coconut** and **fruits** or **vegetables**. It is always part of an **Onam Sadhya**. Back home, we never used to make Kaalan. Instead, **Pulishshery** was made using Yogurt and Coconut. After coming to US, my friend Lisha made Kaalan for Onam 2009 and it was great. She shared her Kaalan recipe with me.



Here is my friend **Lisha's Kaalan** recipe. This is how they make it in the **northern regions of Kerala**. Thank you Lisha for this wonderful recipe !

The main vegetables used for making Kaalan are **Ash Gourd**, **Raw Plantain** and **Yam**. You can also add **Pumpkin** and **Cucumber**. The **main difference between Kaalan and Pulishshery** is that **Kalan is very thick** in consistency with very little gravy. You need to stir Kaalan for a long time till the gravy thickens. If Kaalan is prepared properly, it doesn't require refrigeration and will stay fresh upto one week. Whereas, for pullishery, you add curd and remove it from heat immediately and it has lot of gravy. You can check out my [Pulishshery](#) recipe here.

Ingredients

1. Diced Chena (Yam) – 2 cups
2. Kaya/Vazhakka (Raw Plantain) – 1 medium sized plantain
3. Kumbalanga (Ash Gourd) – 1/4 of a medium sized ash gourd
4. Vella Mathanga (White Pumpkin) – 2 cups (optional)
5. Vellarikka (Sambar Cucumber/Yellow Cucumber) – 1/2 of a small Cucumber (optional)
6. Turmeric powder – 1/4 tsp
7. Pepper Powder – 2 tsp

8. Salt – to taste
9. Yogurt – 3 cups

For Grinding

1. Grated Coconut – 1 cup
2. Green Chillies – 4 or 5
3. Jeera (Cumin) – 1/4 tsp
4. Curry Leaves – A few (optional)
5. Water – 1/2 cup

For Seasoning

1. Oil – 1 tbsp
2. Mustard Seeds – 1/4 tsp
3. Dry Red Chillies – 4
4. Curry Leaves – A sprig

Preparation Method

1. Peel skin and dice all the vegetables into bite sized pieces.
2. Soak the plantain in turmeric water for 5 minutes.
3. Cook all the vegetables with salt and turmeric until half cooked. Be careful not to over cook the veggies.
4. Meanwhile, grind coconut, green chillies and jeera along with little water to form a fine paste.
5. Add the ground coconut paste to the cooked vegetables and simmer for 5-7 minutes.
6. Blend the yogurt lightly along with salt and add it to the above pan.
7. Reduce flame and stir for around 30 minutes so that the kaalan thickens and there is very little gravy left.
8. Just before removing from stove top, add 2 tsp pepper and mix well.
9. Finally, season with mustard, red chillies and curry leaves.