



## DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

The term “dog days of summer” is one that most people are familiar with. But do you know what it means? Technically, the “dog days of summer” run from July 3 to August 11, and are associated with the hottest days of the season.

The dog reference has to do with the night sky. Sirius, the brightest star in the summer sky, is in the constellation called Canis Major, which means “big dog.” Ancient people living in the Mediterranean region believed that such a large star as Sirius generated heat, just as the sun does. During the days from early July to mid-August, Sirius is in conjunction with the sun. This means that it rises and sets, and is in alignment with, the sun. These ancient people thought that the heat from the sun was being joined by the heat from Sirius, causing much warmer days. They called this time of year the “dog days,” after the constellation Canis Major.

Folklore about these unique days continued into relatively modern times. You can probably still find some older folks who remember the old wives’ tale about fish losing their teeth during the “dog days of summer.” With no teeth, the fish developed sore gums and were unable to feed until the return of cooler weather. For these folks, this helped explain why fishing at their regular fishing holes was so poor during the late summer months.



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## Slow Cooker Butter Chicken

- 2 tbs butter
- 2 tbs vegetable oil
- 4 large skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 (6 oz) can tomato paste
- 1 tbs curry paste
- 2 tsp curry powder
- 2 tsp tandoori masala
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 15 green cardamom pods
- 1 (14 oz) can coconut milk
- 1 cup low-fat plain yogurt
- salt to taste

Heat butter and oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Stir in chicken, onion, and garlic. Cook and stir until onion has



softened, about 10 minutes. Stir in tomato paste, curry paste, curry powder, tandoori masala, and garam masala until no lumps of tomato paste remain. Pour mixture into a slow cooker; stir in cardamom pods, coconut milk, and yogurt. Season with salt. Cook on high 4 to 6 hours (or on low 6 to 8 hours) until chicken is tender and sauce has reduced to desired consistency. Remove and discard cardamom pods before serving.



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