

CHRONICLES OF SAM Q



BY SAM Q

CELEBRATION TIME... come on!!

THE above lyrics of "Kool & the Gang" always comes to mind whenever any festival looms to view. I hope this time I got the name of the group right, because last time when I quoted the song 'Let it be', I gave away all the credit to John Lennon, instead of the deserving Paul McCartney. And, I still would have been oblivious to this huge gaffe, if my good friend Joy, an avid reader of my diary did not point it out. Thank you sweetie, you are a life saver. I think I must have gone down notches in the pop song lovers world.... but as I said to Joy before.... I should not have name dropped and should have just stuck to saying.... Beatles. Anyway, diary, forgive me for straying from my point. This year, three major celebrations are coming in quick succession. Eid-ul-Azha, Christmas and New Years. We Bangalis do celebrate with full gusto all the above mentioned occasions. But this year we hardly have reasons to celebrate. I am sorry guys, to put a damper on everything, but really, SIDR has just taken out the joy from everything. I personally feel as if I am enveloped in noxious fumes whenever I think about the helpless people engulfed in their unimaginable misery.

Yesterday as I was going through the magazine, 'Forum', a monthly publication of the Daily Star newspaper, two articles really touched my heart. Both were so close to home that I photocopied them to pass them among friends in case they missed reading them. One article was by Kamal Hossain, titled 'Circle of Death', and one was by Manzoor Elahi Chowdhury, titled 'Sleepwalking Nation'. Kudos to both the writers in portraying such poignant and realistic journalism.

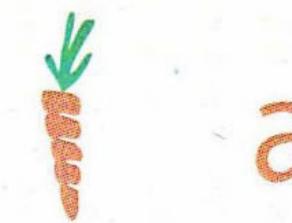
And from me to you diary, I am not going to give a whole spiel, because I know people are busy, but all I want to say is, let us do whatever we can, in our own way, so that it makes a difference in someone's life. To see people denuded of the very basic requirements of life, is so hard. Right after SIDR happened, I was running around like a headless chicken trying to figure out what I could do to help. It seemed like everybody was doing so much, but I wanted to, but did not know where to go or where to start. So then I suddenly thought why not help the people I know in my life? Like the school bua from The Aga Khan School, Shefali. Apparently her house is one of the millions of houses blown away. So I started digging and came up with a few deserving candidates. So people, gather up family and friends, make a list of people who you all know needs help, make a plan how to acquire, donate and distribute evenly and feel good to be a part of the re-building process.

Nothing can bollix up something so simple. Only a little bit of planning and organisational skills is required here and of course the most important of all, the willingness to help.

So happy holidays diary,
Celebrate the Sam Q way!



g u s t a t o r y



Chocolate Oat Bars

Ingredients:

200g butter melted
2 cups sugar (preferably brown)
2 eggs lightly beaten
1 tsp vanilla essence
2 1/2 cups of flour
1 tsp baking powder
3 cups oats

Filling:

300g chocolate chopped
1 can of condensed milk
30g butter

1 cup chopped walnuts or almonds

Method:

Pre-heat oven. Grease a 19 cm square cake pan & line them with two layers of baking paper in a large bowl.

Beat butter, sugar and rinds in a small bowl.

Add eggs one at a time until combined.

Add butter mixture to fruit mixture. Mix in sifted flour & spice. Spread mixture evenly into pan.

Decorate top with almonds. Bake uncovered for about three hours or until cooked.

Cool overnight.

Cappuccino cheesecake

Crust:

100g milk-coffee biscuits
75g dark chocolate, coarsely chopped
1/4 cup (70g) packed dark brown sugar
a pinch of ground nutmeg
40g hot, melted unsalted butter

Filling:

500g cream cheese (at room temperature)

1/2 cup sugar

1 tbsp plain flour

1/4 cup strongly brewed cappuccino flavoured

2 tbsp marmalade

200g butter softened
1 cup brown sugar
1 tsp grated orange rind
1 tsp grated lemon rind
4 eggs

2 cups plain flour

2 tsp of mixed spice (nutmeg & mace)

1 cup blanched whole almonds

1/4 cup 7Up.

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Cool overnight.

Coffee

1 tbsp cappuccino flavoured coffee

1 tsp vanilla extract

2 large eggs

Topping:

1/4 cup fresh cream (whipped cream optional)

1 tbsp sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

Method:

For the crust, finely grind biscuits,

chopped chocolate, brown sugar and nutmeg

in a food processor. Add hot butter and process until crumbs begin to stick together, for about 1 minute, scraping down the sides.

Transfer to 19cm springform pan with 9cm-high sides.

Wrap plastic wrap around fingers and press crumb mixture firmly over bottom of pan.

For the filling, preheat oven to 175°C.

Using an electric mixer, blend cream cheese

and sugar in large bowl. Beat in flour.

In a small bowl, stir brewed coffee, ground coffee

and vanilla until combined; beat into cream cheese mixture. Beat in eggs one at a time, occasionally scraping down sides of bowl.

Pour filling over crust. Place cheesecake on rimmed baking sheet. Bake on the middle shelf of oven until the top is brown, puffed and cracked at edges, about 45 minutes.

Transfer cheesecake to rack. Cool for 15 minutes while preparing topping (top of cheese-

cake will fall slightly). Maintain temperature.

For topping, whisk cream, sugar and

vanilla in medium bowl. Pour topping over hot cheesecake, spreading to cover com-

pletely. Bake until topping is set, about 10 minutes. Refrigerate hot cheesecake on rack until cool, about 3 hours. Loosen cheesecake from pan sides with a knife; serve on platter.

Mutton Souvlaki

Ingredients:

1 1/5 cups natural yoghurt
2 tbsp lemon juice
2 cloves garlic crushed
2 tsp fresh or dried oregano

Method:

For the crust, finely grind biscuits,

chopped chocolate, brown sugar and nutmeg

in a food processor. Add hot butter and process until crumbs begin to stick together, for about 1 minute, scraping down the sides.

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