

## THE FEARLESS OLIVE

BY REEMA ISLAM



# A healthy twist to Pohela Baishakh

**O**f festivities and new beginnings, we welcome the first day of the Bangabdo 1422 with a splash of colours on our platter and tastes of the season to delight our palates. As we all turn to our core Bangali side on this Pohela Baishakh, let us try to play around with traditional flavours in the healthiest way possible. Come let's start the Nobo Borsho with a healthy menu!

### Carrot Kothimira Pachadi:

Pachadi is the South Indian version of a food that no Bangali can do without: the quintessential bhorta! Pachadi however is a pounded version of the bhorta and not a mashed one.

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups grated carrot
- 1 cup chopped fresh coriander
- 2 tbsp split black gram daal (Urad daal) and 1 tsp Bengal gram (boot)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- 1-2 dry red chillies
- 2-3 garlic cloves, sliced
- 2 green chillies, slit in middle
- 1 tbsp grated jaggery (gur)
- Juice of 1 small lemon
- 1 tbsp mustard oil
- For the tadka -
- 1 tsp any cooking oil
- ½ mustard seeds
- ½ tsp split gram daal (chana dal)
- 8-10 curry leaves

#### Method:

Heat the mustard oil and add the garlic, cumin, Urad and Boot daals, red chillies and mustard seeds and stir on medium heat till the daals turn slightly red and a lovely aroma fills up your kitchen.

Remove the roasted spices, straining the left over oil and keep aside. In the same pan,



add a tsp of oil if required, add the slit green chillies and grated carrot and sauté till slightly tender. Remove and keep aside. In the same pan, add another tsp of oil and sauté the chopped coriander leaves for a minute.

Remove from heat and cool. Grind the roasted daal mixture first, followed by the sautéed carrot and coriander, jaggery along with salt, to a coarse paste without adding any water.

For the Tadka: Pop the mustard seeds in the oil, then add the chana daal and curry leaves and fry till the daal turns red. Add this seasoning along with lemon juice to the ground pachadi.

### Pineapple bhorta:

Pineapples have already started appearing on road sides and what better combo on a sweltering day then a mix of spices mixed with a poly bag full of chopped pineapples and seasoned to quench your thirst! SO here's the Fearless Olive's Baishakhi take on

the palpable pineapple!

#### Ingredients:

- 2 pineapples (small ones or calendar pine-apples)
- 1 tbsp dried chilli flakes
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 tsp mustard oil
- 2 cloves garlic sliced

#### Method:

Let those spices pop in the pan as you add mustard oil and watch the garlic turn slightly pink along with the mustard seeds then take them off. Make sure the pineapple is properly diced without any of its "eyes" that make our throats itchy! Mash the pineapple and then sauté it for 1 minute with the other ingredients and then in the end just add some salt and those chilli flakes.

### Strawberry bhorta:

Strawberries this season have delighted us in every possible way with their abundance and still being available in many stores,

allow the Fearless Olive to take a 'deshi' spin on this foreign fruit.

#### Ingredients:

- 250g of strawberries washed and mashed
- 2-3 large jalapenos or those huge chillies available in markets
- 1 green chilli
- ¼ cup mint leaves
- 1 tbsp roasted sesame seeds
- ½ tsp molasses
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### Method:

Boil the jalapenos and chilli in water till they are soft enough to be peeled. Mash up the pulp after extracting the seeds. Make a paste of the mint leaves also. Mix the sesame, mint paste, salt and pepper and chilli mash with the strawberry pulp. Add some molasses to balance the tastes.

### Kaoner chaal:

With 4 times the calcium and twice as much iron and magnesium than in wheat, this ancient food consumed by the Incas and eventually travelling down to our parts of the world is the humble candidate for gluten free cuisine yet we hardly know much about it. Today, I bring to you Kaoner Chaal so let us celebrate Pohela Baishakh with something ancient and traditional!

250g Kaoner chaal should be added to a pot of boiling water, where the water is just twice the amount of the rice. Boil for about 5 minutes then take the pot off the fire and let it cool. After another 2-3 minutes drain the water out and spoon through the rice, then add a hint of mustard oil to give it a glaze and that special zing!

Serving: Enjoy a Boishakhi platter of foods of Bangladesh with a healthy twist. Lay all the above mentioned bhortas and Pachadi with the Kaoner chaal in the middle. Shubho Noboborsho!

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