

DESHI MIX
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The Bengali Special

PUI-SHAK-ER (BASELLA ALBA) KURMURI

Pui-shak (basella alba) is a green, leafy vegetable rich in calcium, vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, and lots of soluble fibre. It is low in calories by volume, but high in protein per calories. It can be found everywhere throughout the year. Easy to get and it can be prepared and incorporated in various dishes that would allow individuals to benefit from its vitamins and mineral contents.

Basella alba is known under various common names, including vain spinach, red vain spinach, climbing spinach, creeping spinach, buffalo spinach, Malabar spinach and Ceylon spinach. In South Asia, it is known as pui-shak in Bengali.

Ingredients

1 bundle pui-shak (only leaves)
1 cup rice powder
½ cup sesame seeds
½ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
Salt to taste
Oil for deep frying

Method

Wash the pui leaves and leave it in colander until water drains completely. Mix rice powder, turmeric powder, red chilli powder and salt with small amount of water into a thick batter. Dip leaves into the batter and then spread sesame seeds all over them. Heat oil in a pan. Fry the leaves-coated with batter and sesame-until they turn brown. Serve hot.

TAKI MACHER BHARTA

Bharta are the simplest and the ultimate comfort food of Bangladesh. Bharta are delicious, smooth, fiery and flavourful mashed goodies. Depending on the type, for each bite of bharta, you can expect to have the crunch of sliced onion, sharpness of chilli, and aroma of roasted garlic.

Ingredients

2 pieces of big fish
Pinch of turmeric and red chilli powder

2 medium onions, thin sliced
3 dry red chillies, toasted
¼ tsp chopped ginger
2 tbsp mustard oil
Salt to taste

Method

Cut and wash the fishes thoroughly. Now rub turmeric, chilli powder and salt on the fish. Leave them for 10 minutes. Heat oil in a pan. Fry fish pieces until light brown. Take out the bones from the fish. Now by using your hand mix all the ingredients with the deboned fish. Mix well. Ready to serve with

¼ cup raisins
4 cups water
Salt to taste
1/3 cup shredded coconut

Method

Wash and soak rice for 1 hour, and let the water drain. Heat half the oil in a pan. Add onions and cook for 5-10 minutes or until crisp. Use a slotted spoon to transfer to a plate lined with paper towel. Heat remaining oil in the pan over low heat. Add the cinnamon stick, cardamom pods and



hot, plain rice.

CARDAMOM AND COCONUT RICE

Ingredients

500g aromatic rice
1/3 cup oil
2 large onion, thinly sliced
1 cinnamon stick
4 green cardamom pods
½ tsp cumin seeds
½ cup pistachio kernels



cumin seeds, cook for 30 seconds. Add the rice, pistachios and raisins, cook for few minutes. Add water and salt; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and cook for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to low and cover tightly with lid. Cook until tender. Meanwhile, place the coconut in a small frying pan over medium heat. Cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Place the rice mixture in a serving bowl. Top with the fried onion and coconut. Serve.

BHAPA CHINGRI

This dish is similar to bhapa ilish. Only you have to pep it up a little with some combination of spices. Yellow mustard paste, poppy seed paste and coconut paste are the main ingredients and can be used in any proportion or omitted even to suit individual taste and palate. Some recipes also use curd in it, but I prefer it this way. They are simply awesome.

Ingredients

15 pieces prawns
1 tsp ginger chopped
3 tsp chopped green chillies
1 tbsp yellow mustard seeds
1 tbsp poppy seeds
4 tbsp scraped coconut
2 tbsp mustard oil
1 tsp black and white peppercorns
1 stick cinnamon
2 green chillies, slit
1 tsp turmeric powder
Salt to taste

Method

Wash and de-vein the prawns well and clean it properly. Dry roast white and black peppercorns and cinnamon stick. Grind them together in a mortar and pestle to a fine mix. Soak the yellow mustard seeds, poppy seeds for half an hour and grind them together with green chillies, ginger and salt.

Add the ground spice mix, turmeric powder and the scraped coconut along with very little water. Grind it well to make a thick, creamy and smooth paste and add raw mustard oil.

Apply the paste evenly and generously on prawns and place the prawns in a container with lid. Pour little more mustard oil on top of the fish, add green chillies and close the lid. Steam the prawns for ten minutes. When it is done, serve the bhapa chingri with steamed rice.

SPICY ARHAR DAL

Arhar dal is the most popular and widely consumed dal in India. This dal is known