

AAPPAYON
BY SHAWKAT OSMAN



Sweet, Sweet release

VARIATIONS ON VERMICELLI

The Vermicelli appears in different avatars in different countries. In this sub-continent, the most popular form of preparing the noodles is of “shemai”, a type of sweet dessert like rice pudding, or a variation of the sweet kheer. This shemai is now synonymous with Eid in Bangladesh, with most preferring to finish their Eid breakfast with this delectably sweet delight. Because of the versatility of vermicelli, everyone is free to add their own unique touch to the end product. This week, two of Star Lifestyle's most popular food columnists bring you their twists to the traditional treat. We have a luxurious variant in saffron, one with the caress of cardamom, another lapped in milk and one that makes your spice buds tingle. Take your pick and do something different this Eid; be sure to add your own special touch if you want!

SHAWKAT OSMAN

Sweet Vermicelli in Saffron

(Serves 12)

Ingredients

½ cup ghee
500g shemai (vermicelli)
3 cups water
¼ tsp saffron, soaked in
½ cup water
75g castor sugar
1 tbs almond slivers

Heat ghee in a pot. Break the vermicelli into 10cm-long pieces and add to the pot. Cook until these turn dark in colour.

Pour water in the pot, swirl to mix. Add saffron and sugar. Cook over high flame until all the water evaporates and the vermicelli gets a sheen on its surface. Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle almonds on

top. Serve at room temperature.

SWEET VERMICELLI WITH CARDAMOM

(Serves 12)

Ingredients

500g shemai (vermicelli)
100g castor sugar
½ cup ghee
5 cardamoms, seeds only, milled into powder

Method

Break the vermicelli into 8cm-long pieces. Place the pieces in the centre of a piece of cotton cloth. Tie the corners of the

cloth into a neat bundle, containing the vermicelli.

Heat water to a rolling boil, and dip the cloth packet the boiling water and cook for a minute. Take out the packet, open, and spread out the vermicelli on a flat platter. Place the platter in an airy place and allow the vermicelli to dry until all moisture evaporates.

Transfer the vermicelli to a serving bowl and mix with sugar, ghee and cardmom. Serve at room temperature.



SWEET VERMICELLI IN MILK

Ingredients

100g ghee
500g shemai (vermicelli)
2 litres milk, reduced to 1 litre
750g sugar
1 tbs almonds, slivered
1 tbs pistachios, slivered
2 tbs raisins
1/2 tsp salt, 1 tsp rose water

Method

Heat ghee in a pot and add vermicelli, broken into small pieces. Roast until they start changing colour. Pour milk and bring to a boil. Add sugar, almonds, pistachios, raisins and salt, and bring to boil again. Pour into a serving dish, sprinkle with rose water and cover immediately with cling-wrap. Chill before serving.