



FUSION FEST

BY TANHA ZAHUR

Making food global

KEFTA PILAF

This is inspired by someone very close to my heart. On the evening of every Shab-e-barat I eagerly wait for her special kefta pilaf, and she unmistakably sends it as a ritual! So this recipe is a throwback for me. Notice that you can make the keftas with either ground beef, chicken, or prawn. Whatever is used, it is always flavourful. Although time-consuming, this is a must try!

Ingredients

1 cup ground beef (for kefta)
1 tbsp, chopped coriander leaves
1 tsp ground black pepper
½ tsp garam masala powder
2 green chillies, chopped
½ tsp salt
1 cup chopped onion (for beresta)
1 cup chopped onion (for pilaf)
2 cardamoms
2 cinnamon
2 bay leaves
1 tbsp ginger paste
½ tsp garlic paste
1 tsp salt
1 cup milk
6 raisins
10 cashews
2 tbsp kewra water
2 cup kalijeera rice
2 cup oil
2 tbsp ghee
6 green chillies, split into halves

Method

Mix ground beef and all the masalas for the kefta. Wash rice and drain. Heat oil in a wok. Make round, bite-sized keftas and fry in the oil till they turn brown. Remove from the wok and collect on a kitchen tissue.

In the same oil, add ghee and fry 1 cup of finely sliced onion till they caramelize. Remove them from the wok and set aside. Remove half of the oil from the wok. Add chopped onions and fry till they become translucent. Now add bay leaves, cardamom and cinnamon and sauté till fragrant. Add ginger garlic paste and salt, and sauté till the oil rises.

Sauté the keftas for a minute and add the cup of milk. Let it simmer till the liquid evaporates and the oil rises.

Remove the keftas and add 4 cups of water to the gravy.

When the water boils, add the rice and let it simmer on a high flame. When the rice and the water come to the same level, cover and cook on low flame. Add the cooked keftas with rice. Add kewra water, raisins and cashews and stir evenly.

Serve the pilaf hot, garnished with caramelised onions (beresta) on top.

THAI BASIL CHICKEN

In Thai, 'pad' means 'stir-fried'; most Thai cuisine are stir fried on high flame. Thai basil chicken or 'Pad kra Pao Gai' as they call it, is flavoured by basil leaves that has almost the same fragrance as mint leaves, that are now available in local superstores or kitchen markets (you can find them in Gulshan DCC vegetable market).

Ingredients

3 pieces chicken breasts, cut into bite size cubes
8 dry red chillies
6 cloves of garlic
3 tbsp oil
1 tbsp soya sauce



1 tsp oyster sauce, 1 tbsp fish sauce
1 tbsp Thai chilli paste (if you want the curry to be hot)
½ tsp salt, 1 cup basil leaves
1 tsp sugar

Method

Make a paste of dry red chillies and garlic cloves. I usually put them inside a zip-bag and pound hard. For better result, use a mortar and pestle. Heat oil in a wok. Add the chilli garlic paste and sauté for a minute. Add the chicken cubes and sauté on high flame till tender. You can add the Thai chilli paste at this stage, if you want a spicier curry. When the chicken is tender, add all the sauces one by one and sauté further until everything is mixed well, then add sugar and stir.

Add basil leaves and sauté to the count of five. Turn off heat and remove wok from the stove. Keeping the basil leaves for too long on heat can wilt them. Serve it hot with steamed rice.

LEMON CUPCAKES WITH LEMON GLAZE

These can be extremely addictive! For the use of fresh lemons, it will remind you of your childhood favourite - lemon flavoured lozenges. The lemony glaze adds a certain yummy tartness to the palate!

Ingredients

100g butter (for cake batter)
1 cup sugar
1 tsp lemon extract
1 tsp yellow food colour (optional)
2 whole eggs



2 egg whites (this adds sponginess to the cake)
2 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp lemon zest
1 cup flour
1 tsp baking powder
For glaze -
50g butter
1 cup icing sugar
½ cup lemon juice
1 tsp lemon extract
1 tbsp lemon zest (for garnish)

Method

Preheat oven to 100°C. Take a cupcake tin and line with 12 cupcake papers. Whisk together softened butter, sugar, whole eggs, egg whites, lemon extract and food colour. Mix flour and baking powder

together in a separate bowl. Add the flour mix gradually with the egg mix. Whisk thoroughly, add lemon juice and lemon zest, whisk again to make a smooth batter. Pour the batter into the cupcake papers. Remember to fill them only halfway to avoid overflowing. Bake the cupcakes for 10 to 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare the glaze. For that you need to double boil butter, icing sugar and lemon juice. (Double boiling means heating them in a container over boiling water). Mix thoroughly and add lemon extract.

Use a toothpick to check the cupcakes. A toothpick inserted in the centre of the cake that is baked through would come out clean. Take out, and let the cakes cool down completely.

Pour the glaze over the cakes. You can garnish them with lemon zest.

COCONUT COOKIES

I am not a big fan of coconut, but the idea of using them for making cookies struck me quite out of the blue, and the results turned really well. You must be wondering how grated coconut, which makes it soft, can be used for making cookies. Well, read on and find out!

Ingredients

1 cup grated coconut
3 tbsp sugar
50g butter, softened
1 egg, 1 cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract, 2½ cup flour
1 tsp baking powder

Method

Heat a cup of grated coconut with 3 table-spoons sugar in a non-stick pan on medium low heat. Stir every now and then. When coconut turns a bit brown, turn off heat and let it cool.

Preheat oven to 90°C.

Now, whisk softened butter, egg, a cup of sugar and vanilla extract, and grated coconut. Mix, and then add flour and baking powder. Knead the mixture into a dough. If it is too sticky, add a tablespoon of oil.

Separate the dough into twenty equal parts. Flatten each part like a cookie and set on a greased baking tray. Keep the cookies 3 cm apart. Bake the cookies for 15 minutes. Cool the cookies to room temperature when done, and store in an airtight jar.

Photo: Tanha Zahur

Food prepared by: Tanha Zahur

These and all Tanha's recipes can be found at www.homechef.com.bd

