

AAPPAYON

BY SHAWKAT OSMAN



The Emperor's Table in Osmani Style

Being Bengalis we often relish consuming rich food that resonates drooling, dripping masala and meat concoction. Here we have assembled few stunning dishes from the veteran recipe writer and food connoisseur Shawkat Osman only for your indulgence.

KHASIR RAAN

Raan or leg of goat is a festive dish, and is cooked for special occasions. Since boning makes the visual size very small for a 'chief guest', the bone is left on to show bulk. Order a goat leg from your butcher, after he has weighed the leg ask him to remove the outer membrane and superfluous fat, which he will do diligently, because all the extras he collects from such trimming is extra money for him. Then ask him to weigh it again, the final weight is required for ensuring the cooking time. Roast two or three legs at a time, since the working process and the time required to cook are the same.

Ingredients

2 goat legs
2 cups yoghurt, 2 tsp salt
1 tsp black pepper, freshly ground
5 cm long cinnamon stick
10 cloves, 3 tbsp onion paste
1 tbsp garlic paste
1/2 tbsp ginger paste
1/2 tbsp coriander powder
2 tsp cumin powder
1/2 tsp nutmeg freshly grated
1 tsp mace freshly ground
2 tbsp mawa, grated, 1 tbsp rose water
1/2 tsp kewra essence, 2 tbsp ghee

Method

In a mixing bowl, combine the yoghurt, salt, and pepper. Whisk to a smooth silky mixture. Set aside.

Wipe the leg with a cloth. Prick the meat down to the bone with a fork. Or score criss-cross with the point of a sharp knife. Rub leg with the yoghurt mixture and place it on a tray. Cover with cling film, and keep refrigerated for 2 hours.

In a mortar, pound the cardamom, cinnamon and cloves. Crush to a fine powder and transfer to a mixing bowl. Add coriander, cumin, nutmeg, mace, mawa, onion, ginger, rose water, kewra water and mix them. Take the leg out of the fridge and rub it in the spice mixture. Grease a roasting tray with 1 tablespoon ghee. Place the leg on the roasting tray and drizzle 2 tablespoons ghee on it.

Cover the leg with an aluminium foil. Position the tray in the mid-section of a preheated 180 degree Celsius oven. Cook for 20 minutes, plus 20 minutes for every 1/2 kg of meat.

When the meat is well roasted, remove it from the oven and serve it along with its gravy on a bed of pulao.

OSMAN'S BIRYANI

If you have enough time and the inclination to cook a 'grand' biryani, try this recipe. I assure you that it will not fail you or your guests. It is a bit elaborate and incorporates more than the usual number of ingredients, but each stage of the cooking is formulated in such a fashion that the common risks are eliminated.

Ingredients

2 kg goat shank in one piece
4 kg goat meat, assorted cuts, 32 pieces
1½ litre milk, 2 kg Kalijira rice
100g ginger, chopped
50g ginger, ground
350g garlic clove
100g garlic, ground
10 cloves, 1 kg ghee
250g red onions, quartered
250g red onions, ground
1 tbsp coriander powder
6tsp salt, 1litre yoghurt
1 tbsp paprika powder
2 tsp gorom moshla powder
30 cardamom pods, gently cracked
60 cloves
12 (2.5cm long) cinnamon sticks
100g green chillies, slit
1 tbsp caraway seeds (Irani jeera)
6 egg whites, 1 tsp gorom moshla powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
4 tbsp corn flour, 2 cups ghee

Method

In a large, heavy pot, combine the 2 kg meat, chopped ginger, 100gram garlic, quartered onions, 4 cups of water, 2 teaspoons of salt and bring to a boil. Cook until meat is tender. With a pair of kitchen tongs, lift out the meat. Strip the meat from the bones, and cut meat into bite size pieces. Reserve meat, and discard the bones.

Strain and retain the stock; you should have 2 cups of stock. If it is less than 2 cups, add some chicken stock to get the required amount. If stock is more than 2 cups, reduce stock over high flame.

Clean the above pot and return to the flame. Heat 2 tablespoons of ghee and toss in 20 cloves. Sauté for a few seconds and

pour in the stock. Bring it to a boil, turn off the flame, and strain it to remove the cloves. Set aside.

Place milk in a stainless steel pan, add 250 gram of garlic cloves, and bring it to a boil. Cook to reduce the milk to half its volume, discard the garlic, and pour milk into a bowl.

Clean the steel pan, put it back over the flame, and heat 1 tablespoon of ghee. Toss in 10 cardamoms, sauté for a minute, and then pour in the reserved milk. Bring milk to a boil, and cook for 10minutes. Strain the milk to remove the cardamom, set milk aside.

Cook rice in salted water, until it is ¾th done. Tip off the water and spread out the rice over a steel strainer, and let dry in an airy place while you prepare the 4 kg meat. In a mixing bowl, combine the yoghurt, coriander powder, ground ginger, ground garlic, ground onion, 4 teaspoons salt and 1 cup of water. Whisk the mixture with a hand held wire beater.

Drop the raw meat pieces into the mixing bowl, and smear the pieces with the mixture to coat each piece evenly. Let it stand. Heat ghee in a wok, put in the coated meat and sauté, stirring frequently, for 10minutes.

Stir in the paprika powder, 10 cardamom, 6 cinnamon sticks, and 20 cloves and cook till the meat is done but has a small quantity of

gravy (otherwise add milk/stock).

Place the cooked rice in another mixing bowl, pour in the stock and combine. Spread the bottom of a heavy pot with 2 tablespoons ghee, sprinkle with caraway seeds to cover the bottom.

Layer half the rice on top of the caraway seeds, sprinkle the rice surface with 10 cardamom, 6 cinnamon sticks, 20 cloves, and green chillies. Arrange the 32 pieces of meat on top of the rice, and then cover the meat with the remaining rice. Sprinkle the rice surface with flavoured milk. Seal tightly with a close fitting lid (or seal with dough) and cook, in a preheated oven at 180 C for 20minutes.

Switch off the oven and let it sit until you require serving.

In a small mixing bowl, combine egg white, 1 teaspoon gorom moshla, 1 teaspoon red chilli powder, half teaspoon salt, and corn flour. Whisk well to get a smooth batter. Heat 2 cups ghee in a wok, dip the chopped shank meat pieces in batter, and deep-fry to golden brown.

Serve the biryani in a large rice dish and arrange the deep-fried meat pieces on top of the biryani.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food styling and
preparation: RBR

