

DESHI MIX

BY SALINA PARVIN



Winter veggies to warm our souls

As hints of winter sweep through Dhaka, we are already craving the crunchy, warm delectable winter vegetables. Skim through the following recipes and pick your favourites. These definitely won't disappoint on a cool evening in your veranda.

PHULKOPIR REZALA

The Cauliflower Rezala is a Bengali curry adapted from the Nawabs when they ruled Bengal and its popularity expanded slowly among people. Rezala is immensely popular for its meat version, but in modern days, chefs have experimented with vegetables like cauliflower or paneer, and the outcome is equally good. In this recipe, large cauliflower florets are cooked in rich curd and a cashew nut based gravy. This curry has a very subtle flavour and tastes simply awesome.

Ingredients

1 cauliflower, cut into big florets
3 tbsp oil, 1 tsp ghee
1 dried red chilli
Whole garam masala (2 cardamoms, 2 cloves, 2 inch cinnamon)
1 bay leaf, 5 black peppercorn
1/4 cup onion paste



1 tbsp ginger garlic paste
2 tbsp cashew paste, 1 cup water
2 tbsp yogurt
Salt to taste, 1/2 tsp sugar, 1/4 tsp kewra

Method

Cut the cauliflower into big florets and soak them in salted water for 15 minutes. After that, drain and let dry. Now heat oil in a pan and sauté the cauliflower for a while, drain the oil and keep aside. In the same oil, add 1 teaspoon of ghee. Put the red dried red chilli and sauté for a while. Drain the oil and keep aside. Add whole garam masala, black pepper corn and bay leaf. Sauté them until it releases a beautiful aroma. Then add onion paste into the pan and start braising on a medium flame. Add ginger garlic paste and cook. Now add the cashew paste and cook until the oil separates. Now add the sautéed cauliflower florets into the pan and mix with the gravy. Add a cup of water and give it a stir. Cook it for 10 minutes with the lid on, or until the cauliflower softens. Next, add sugar, salt and whisked yogurt. Cook for another 5 minutes. Lastly, add kewra water and sautéed red chilli, mix it well with the curry and switch off the flame.

Tip: When you are cooking with cashew paste, do not add salt in the beginning, or the gravy will curdle easily.

PUR BHORA SHEEM (STUFFED FLAT BEAN FRITTERS)

Ingredients

10 Sheem or flat beans
2 tbsp poppy seeds
1/2 tsp yellow mustard seeds
1/4 tsp black mustard seeds
3-4 green chillies chopped
1 onion finely chopped
1/4 cup coconut shredded
2 cloves garlic finely chopped
2 tsp mustard oil
Salt to taste
For the batter --
1/2 cup besan
1/4 cup rice flour
1 tsp poppy seeds
A pinch turmeric powder
1/4 tsp salt
Oil for deep fry

Method

Soak the poppy seeds, yellow and black mustard seeds in warm water for about 10 minutes. Drain the water and make a fine paste with half of the green chillies and very little water. Keep aside. Heat 2 teaspoons of oil in a pan, add the chopped onions, garlic and green chillies and sauté for 4-5 minutes. Add the mustard-poppy seed paste and a sprinkle of salt. Cook on low flame for another 5 minutes. Add coconut and cook till the moisture has almost evaporated. The stuffing is ready.

Wash the flat bean and pat dry. Top, tail and string each of the beans. Gently slit along the edge of the bean with a sharp knife, creating a kind of pocket. Take a spoon of stuffing and carefully fill inside the bean. Repeat the same for all the beans and keep aside. Take all the ingredients for the batter in a bowl; add a little water to make a thick batter. Heat oil in a frying pan, dip each of the stuffed beans in the batter and fry till golden. Serve hot.

DAAL PALONG (SPINACH WITH LENTILS)

Spinach, among the world's healthiest vegetable, is at the top in the ranking for nutrient richness. It is rich in vitamins and minerals. It is recommended that adults include a leafy green like spinach in their diet at least 2-3 times a week. A cup of raw spinach contains 0.86 grams of protein, 7 calories and 0.7 grams of fibre. It also contains vitamin A, B complex, C, E, K, potassium, magnesium, iron, zinc and many more.

Ingredients

1 cup red lentil
3 cups chopped spinach
3 tbsp finely chopped onion
1/2 tsp ginger paste
1 tsp garlic paste, 1/4 tsp turmeric powder
1/2 tsp chilli powder, 2 dry red chilli
1/2 tsp cumin seeds

4 tbsp oil
Salt to taste

Method

Wash and cut the spinach. Keep aside. Boil the lentils with 3 cups of water for 15 minutes. Keep aside. Heat oil in a pan and fry the chopped onion and red chillies until brown and crispy. Keep aside. In the same oil, crackle some whole cumin. Add the ginger garlic paste and fry for a minute. Mix turmeric powder and 2 tablespoon of water. Sauté for 1 minute. Then add the boiled lentils and mix well. Mix water if you need so that the mixture does not dry up. Add the salt and chopped spinach. Mix well cover and cook for 5 minutes. Once the lentils



become thick, sprinkle fried onion and roasted dry chillies. Turn off the heat and serve hot.

MOTOR SHUTIR KOCHURI

This is an authentic delicious Bengali snack recipe stuffed with spicy mashed green peas and it is best served with aloor dom. I even like to have it on its own with my tea. Once can eat these kochuri with a meat curry too. This is a really famous dish in winter when you find green peas in the market. But these days you can get frozen green peas anytime from grocery shops.

Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour
1/2 tsp salt, 1/2 tsp sugar
2 tsp ghee
Warm water to make the dough

For the filling

2 cups fresh green peas
3 green chillies, 1 dry red chilli
1/2 tsp roasted cumin seeds
1/2 tsp ginger paste
1/2 tsp cumin powder or paste, 1/2 tsp sugar
1/2 tsp salt or according to taste
Refined white oil to cook

Method

Take a blender and add green peas, green chilli and make a paste. Heat a little oil in a pan. Add 1 dry red chilli and cumin seeds. Now add the green peas paste, salt sugar, cumin powder and ginger paste. Cook it on a low flame till the water evaporates. Keep it aside. Now take all the dough ingredients in a bowl. Make a smooth dough and let it rest for 15 minutes. Now make small balls from it and roll them into a round shape. It should be 4-5 inch in diameter. Now add 1-2 teaspoon filling in the centre of each rolled dough and take the sides together and close it. Make them into balls again. Now again

roll them keeping the same diameter measurement. Heat enough oil in a pan for deep frying. When the oil is hot, fry these one by one. Serve hot with aloor dum.

CABBAGE WITH MUTTON

Ingredients

1 big cabbage finely shredded
1 kg mutton
1/2 cup onion, sliced
2 tsp garlic paste, 1 tbsp ginger paste
1 tsp cumin paste
1 tsp garam masala powder
3 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp turmeric powder
3 bay leaves, 1 cup oil, salt to taste



Method

Grate and wash the cabbage. Leave in colander to drain the water. Cut and wash the mutton. Mix all the ingredients except the cabbage. Leave them to marinate for half an hour. Now cook the marinated mutton for 20 minutes with some water. When the water reduces, add the grated cabbage, and cook on low heat for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes, turn the curry and cook for another 10 minutes. When the meat is tender and oil floats on top, remove the pan from the heat and serve.

MIXED VEGETABLE LADDU

Ingredients

1/2 cup grated green papaya (blanched)
1/2 cup grated pumpkin (blanched)
1/2 cup grated carrot (blanched)
1/2 cup grated sweet potato (blanched)
1/2 cup grated cabbage (blanched)
1/2 cup grated beet root
1 cup sugar, 1/2 cup powder milk
1/2 cup cream, 1/2 cup mawa
2 cinnamon sticks, 2 cardamom pods
1 tbsp grated almond, 1 tbsp cashew nuts
1 tbsp raisins, 1/4 cup ghee

Method

Pour ghee into a non-stick pan. When it becomes hot, add the cardamom, cinnamon and all the blanched vegetables one after another. Keep on stirring the vegetables until the water inside them completely evaporates. Now add cream, sugar, and powder milk to it and keep on stirring the mixture until it separates from the pan. Mix mawa, almonds and raisins. When they are properly mixed, remove the pan and allow it to cool down. Take a small amount of mixture at a time and give them round shape with your hands. Coat them with mawa and serve.

Photo: Collected