

SPECIAL RECIPES

A menu of memories

Recipes that are often of sentimental value to us are like tiny threads that weave a cloak of warm comfort around us, especially when we feel the need to connect to our past. The mere smell of certain dishes can take us back in time, and remind us of people, places and of times that we have left behind. Based on this delicate bond between food and emotions, some of our columnists have shared with us recipes that are close to their hearts. It is said that food made with love has a very positive effect on the person eating it. By reading the stories behind these recipes we hope to send that extra sprinkle of love your way. Interestingly enough, each of the recipes in this series has a sentimental value for a different reason, but the one thing that ties them all together is the parental bond.

DESHI MIX

BY SALINA PARVIN



BORI DIYE CHITOL MACHER JHOL (FISH CURRY WITH LENTIL DUMPLINGS)

Salina Parvin, has shared with us the recipe of traditionally made chitol maach. This recipe brings to fore a spate of emotions for her. Cooking for Salina has a deep connection to her father who was not only a food enthusiast, but also a seasoned cook.

Chitol maach is a tricky fish to clean and debone because of which most people prefer to get that done at the market itself. She recalls requesting her father, who always bought home cut and cleaned chitol from the market, to bring home an uncut chitol so that she could see what it looked like. Unable to deny her request he bought home the fish and took upon himself the time consuming task of cleaning and deboning it.

Another important element of this dish is bori, which she fondly recalls was something she made together with her father at home to suit their North Bengal taste buds, despite it being easily available in the markets.

The first time Salina made this dish she remembers how her father's eyes lit up with pleasure for he loved the taste.

Ingredients

6 pieces chitol fish
10-12 pieces bori (dried lentil dumplings)
10 baby potatoes, cut into half
3 onion slices
1 tsp ginger paste
½ tsp garlic paste
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp cumin-coriander powder
3 tbsp oil
Salt to taste

Method

Cut and wash the fish. Add ¼ tsp turmeric powder and salt, mix well and keep aside. Heat oil in a pan. Fry the potatoes for 4-5 minutes or until the potatoes turn golden brown. Remove potatoes and keep aside. In the same oil fry boris for 3-4 minutes until light brown and keep aside. Fry the fish pieces in the same oil till they are brown in colour. Keep aside. Now add remaining oil to the pan, add sliced onion, sauté until golden brown. Then add ginger-garlic paste, red chilli powder, turmeric powder and salt. Fry the spices until oil comes out to the surface.

Add 2 cups of water and bring to a boil. Add fried potatoes and bori. Cover and cook for 10 minutes. Now add fried fish pieces and cook for another 5 minutes. When it is done remove from heat. Serve with steamed rice.



THE FEARLESS OLIVE

BY REEMA ISLAM



CHICK PEA SALAD WITH AVOCADO CREAM

Reema Islam shares with us today the recipe of chickpea salad. The main ingredient of this salad is chickpeas or garbanzo beans.

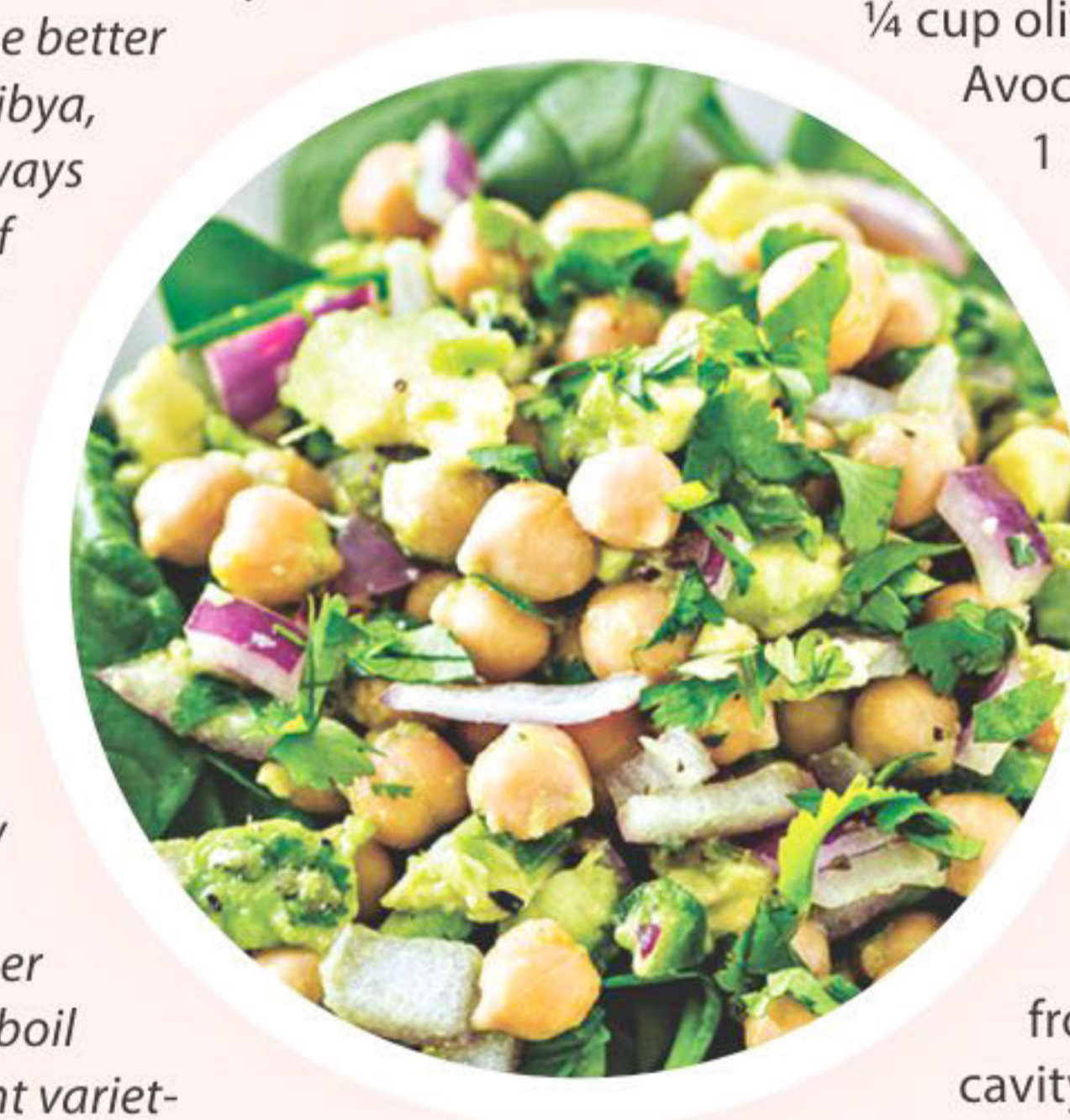
Beans are very close to her heart. They share a history. Having spent the better part of her childhood in Libya, she recalls her mother always stocking up on all kinds of beans. They were a staple in her household and ever since a young age she is habituated to snacking on beans alone.

Whenever hunger pangs hit her at any odd time, her mother used to boil different varieties of beans and serve them to her in delicious concoctions! She says she has never been a big snacker, but to this day whenever she feels grubby, beans are her go to snack.

Reema has given this recipe her famous 'Fearless Olive' twist adding new flavours to the simple chickpea salad her mother used to make.

Ingredients

½ kg chickpeas
2 large, long shaped eggplants
1 cabbage
250g tomatoes, peeled and diced
1 tbsp black sesame, roasted
½ tsp flax seed oil (you may use mustard oil or nigella seed/kalojira oil)
1 tsp cumin powder
¼ cup grated hog plum or amra
1 large star apple or kamranga
1 tbsp brown sugar and pinch of black pepper
¼ cup lemon juice (you can adjust the lemon according to your preference)



½ cup chopped coriander and ¼ cup chopped mint leaves
2 chopped jalapenos
1 tbsp celery leaves
¼ cup chopped green onions
2 tsp garlic paste
¼ cup olive oil

Avocado cream —
1 large avocado
¼ cup yoghurt

1 tbsp lemon juice, salt and pepper

Method

Boil chickpeas with a bit of salt, most of the garlic and celery, till they are boiled but firm. Roast the eggplants on an open fire and deseed. Cut in half vertically so each half is a long boat shaped eggplant. Scoop out

from the middle and make a small cavity. Mix the scooped-out mash with 2-3 drops of flax seed oil, salt and 1

tsp of garlic paste. For the star apple, peel and deseed the fruit then cut in long strips and boil with the sugar and a pinch of salt and pepper for about 5 minutes. Leave this at room temperature for about 1 hour. Cut them up into half inch strips.

For the cabbage, either steam them for about 1 minute or blanch them, in boiling water for about 5-10 seconds till they are just softened but still a bit crunchy. For the avocado cream, scoop out the avocado pulp and blend it with the yoghurt, lemon juice, 3 to 4 drops of olive oil, salt and pepper for about 15 seconds.

For the chickpea salad, mix everything except the cabbage, including the eggplant mash, star apples and avocado cream. Fill the eggplant shells with half of the mix. For the other half, wrap them in the cabbage leaves.

Serving

You may serve the avocado cream on the side as a dip or simply serve the cabbage rolls hot and the eggplant boats at room temperature.

Photo: Collected