

DESHI MIX
BY SALINA PARVIN



Poush Sankranti

In Bangladesh, festivals arrive one after the other to keep us cheerful and active. Poush Sankranti is the spring festival, enjoyed with lots of outdoor activities that keep us close to nature and remind us of how closely we are bonded with our environment. Poush Sankranti, also known as Makar Sankranti is also popular in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Makar Sankranti is celebrated in different parts of India with different styles. It is celebrated on 14 January every year in Bangladesh, with kids and adults flocking to terraces and other open spaces with colourful kites. The sky is dotted with bright kites and the atmosphere is abuzz with the festive spirit.

Traditional festive food is served, often in the open field or a park, or in the garden of one's home. Delectable dishes such as laddu, kheer, pitha and such are typical on the occasion.

CHENNAPODA (BAKED COTTAGE CHEESE)

Chennapoda is a popular sweet from Odisha. It's made with chhanna or fresh cot-



tage cheese, the entire dish is baked and can also be described as a paneer cake.

Chennapoda is made during festivals like Poush Sankranti, Diwali or Puja.

Ingredients

250g chhanna
1/2 cup sugar or jaggery powder
1/2 tsp cardamom powder
1/2 tbsp rice flour
2 tbsp cashews and raisins
Some ghee for greasing
1 large banana leaf

Method

First, line a baking pan with some chopped banana leaves. Grease the banana leaves with some ghee. Preheat the oven at 180° C for 15 minutes. Then take fresh cottage cheese and crumble it very well. Add sugar or jaggery and mix well. Continue to mash and knead the cottage cheese. The mixture has to become loose, light and attain a cake-batter like consistency. In case the mixture looks dry, you can add a few tablespoons of milk. Add rice flour, cardamom powder, cashews and raisins. Mix well. Now pour the mixture in the baking pan. Shake the pan gently. Level the top with a spatula. Place the pan in the oven and bake for 30-40 minutes. Remove from the oven once done. Let the cake cool completely in the pan, then remove it. Slice and serve.

MOHANTHAL

Mohenthal is a traditional Indian dessert, served on festivals, made with chickpea flour



and sugar syrup. This recipe originates from Gujarat and Rajasthan-- western states of India. Mohenthal is most popular during festivals like Poush Sankranti, Diwali and Janmastami.

Ingredients

1 cup chickpea flour
1/2 cup mawa, crumbled
1 cup sugar, 1/2 cup ghee
2-3 tbsp milk
1/4 tsp cardamom powder
Almond and pistachios for garnish
1/2 cup water

Method

Take chickpea flour in a mixing bowl, add 2 tablespoons of ghee to it and mix until well combined. Then add the milk to the flour



mixture and knead it well to make dough. Cover and set aside for 15-20 minutes.

In a pan, add sugar and water and let the sugar dissolve completely. Let the syrup boil for 2 minutes. To roast the flour dough, heat the remaining ghee in a heavy bottomed pan. Add the flour dough to the ghee and roast.

Stir continuously on medium flame for 7-8 minutes or till it stops smelling raw. Now add the crumbled mawa and continue roasting for another 3-4 minutes. Add the prepared sugar syrup and cardamom powder and mix well. Keep stirring until it becomes very thick and leaves the sides of the pan. Pour the mixture on a greased plate. Sprinkle the roasted nuts on top and press gently. Let it cool completely to set and cut



of pinni, mawa is not included, but the addition gives a nice flavour to the dessert. You can also add jaggery.

Ingredients

300g wheat flour, 300g ghee
1/2 tsp cardamom seeds, crushed
3 tbsp milk, 1/2 cup mawa
300g powdered sugar
1/4 cup mixed dry fruit, slivered

Method

Heat ghee in a large heavy-bottomed pan. Add flour, stir-fry on low heat. When the flour is evenly browned and aromatic; remove from heat. Spread contents of pan on to a plate, allow it to cool. Add sifted powdered sugar, cardamom, mawa, and dry fruit. Mix very gently, but thoroughly. Use milk as the binding mixture when required. Shape into balls, no bigger than ping-pongs. Cool completely before storing in airtight boxes.

Photo: Collected



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