

RECIPE

Cheesy affairs

Cold evenings, piping hot cups of your favourite macula chai, and slices of salty or unsalted local Dhaka paneer to cut through the flavours of those warm spices from the tea is what winter dreams are made of.



butte r to it. Allow to melt and then add cumin seeds. When they stop spluttering, add the green chillies and onion. Fry till the onion is soft. Add the tomatoes, turmeric powder, red chilli powder and salt to taste. Stir well. Cook for 2 minutes stirring frequently.

Add the paneer and mix well. Stir fry for 3-4 minutes and then turn off the fire. Allow to cool a little.

Lay the slices of bread on a clean cutting board, and butter. Now put a generous amount of the prepared paneer mixture on 4 of the slices. Spread to cover entire slice. Top with another buttered slice.

Grill or toast the sandwich till crispy and golden.

Serious cheese lovers will tell you that it is best to enjoy this creamy addictive versatile cheese on its own, but truth of the matter is that there is nothing wrong with changing things up a bit now then. Check out new ways to enjoy local cheese with these recipes.

TOASTY PANEER SANDWICH

Ingredients

1 cup local cheese (salty; crumbled)
2 tbsp unsalted butter
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 large onion (chopped, very fine)
Optional —

2 green chillies (chopped very fine)
2 medium tomatoes (chopped fine)
1/4 tsp turmeric powder
1/2 tsp red chilli powder
Salt to taste
8 slices fresh, soft sandwich bread of your choice

Method

Heat a pan on a medium flame and add

Note — This is especially nice when done in a sandwich toaster which seals the edges, preventing the paneer from falling out later. Serve hot with tomato ketchup.

PANEER SZECHUAN

Ingredients

750g paneer (cut into 1" cubes)
5 tbsp all-purpose flour
3 tbsp corn flour, Salt (to taste)
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
Cooking oil for deep frying
3 tbsp vegetable/canola/sunflower cooking oil
3 spring onions, chopped coarsely (bulb and leaves)
1 cup Indo-Chinese Szechuan sauce
1 large green bell pepper (seeds removed and chopped into 1" squares)
2 cups vegetable stock
1 tbsp corn flour (for thickening gravy)

Method

Start to heat the cooking oil for deep frying. The temperature should ideally be between 170-180°C / 338-356°F.

While the oil is heating, put the flour, corn flour, salt to taste and pepper into a large mixing bowl. Add a little water at a time to the mix to make a medium thick batter — the same consistency as pancake batter. Mix well till there are no more lumps and the batter is smooth.

Add paneer cubes and stir to coat them well with the above batter. Once the oil is hot, gently add a few battered cubes at a time and fry till crisp and golden in colour. Drain well and remove from the oil. Keep aside on paper towels for later use.

In another pan or wok, heated on high, add the 3 tablespoon vegetable/canola/sunflower cooking oil. When the oil is smokey hot, add the spring onions (reserve a little to garnish the dish later). Sauté for a minute.

Now add the Indo-Chinese Szechuan sauce and chicken stock. Mix well. Cook for 2 minutes.

Omit this step if you want the dish to be

dry or would like to serve it as an appetizer; instead — mix 1 tablespoon of corn flour with 1/2 cup of cold water and stir to mix well. Make sure there are no lumps in this mixture. Pour into the above gravy and stir well. The gravy will start to thicken. Once this happens, turn off the heat.

Now add the previously fried cubes and the chopped bell pepper to this gravy. Stir well to coat all the chicken and peppers with the gravy. Spoon into a serving dish, garnish with reserved, chopped spring onions and serve.

BELL PEPPER STUFFED WITH COTTAGE CHEESE

Ingredient

Bell pepper
Cottage cheese (low fat)
Tomato paste
1 slice cheese
Herbs of your choice
Salt
Pepper

Method

Clean bell pepper; cut the top off and remove the insides. Now put the cottage cheese, the tomato paste, your herbs, a bit of salt, and a bit of pepper in a bowl, and mix it through with a spoon.

Just go buck wild on the herbs — basil, parsley, thyme, rosemary, chive, marjoram, etc. Just throw it all in there. Pre-heat your oven at 200°C / 390°F. Now fill your bell pepper up, put a slice of cheese on top and put it in the oven for 20 minutes. Serve as is, or with some tomato sauce, maybe some rice, maybe both.

Enjoy!

You could also replace some (or all) of the tomato paste with curry paste, if you require some kick with your meal. Careful though, could easily turn into a steel-cupped boot to the teeth if you are not careful.

Compiled by Supriti Sarkar

Photo: LS Archive

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Dairy

cheese



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