

## RECIPES WITH A TWIST

## Shumona's after work cooking

I am a working mother and I find cooking therapeutic and often take refuge in cooking to bring balance to my life and work. I try to use easy to get ingredients, and cook those in a healthy way, with spending as little time as possible.

Here are just some of my recipes. Bon appetit!

### MOONG LENTILS WITH NEW POTATOES

Slow cooked with turmeric, garam masala, salt, onion, garlic, chillies and olive oil.

I usually do not have time to soak the lentils, so instead, wash one cup of yellow lentils, and put it on stove in a medium pot with lots of water. Skim the white foam out and add a teaspoon of turmeric powder, another teaspoon of garam masala, some salt and let it simmer. Skin new potatoes and put them in the pot. Then peel a whole garlic head and add the cloves, lightly crushed with the back of a knife to the simmering liquid. 30 minutes later, add chopped green chillies and a teaspoon of extra virgin olive oil, and voila, the lentil soup is ready.

### EASY CAKE

After years, if not decades, I baked a German pound cake with cranberry topping, from scratch. Molly, my 30-year-old small electric oven, baked this soft, fluffy and mood uplifting cake in 35 minutes. Use two large eggs, a pinch of baking powder, half cup sugar, a cup of sunflower oil, a cup of flour, pinch of salt. Mix the oil and sugar in a bowl with a fork, add eggs, then sift the flour and baking powder over the bowl using a tea strainer. Scatter a handful of dried cranberries on top. I was not sure about the taste, so I cut it before taking a photo!

### INSTANT MOOD BOOSTER NOODLES

Nothing compares to the joy of eating a bowl of instant noodles on Christmas eve. For this, use olive oil, garlic slivers, green chilli, lime juice, shredded cooked chicken, fresh peas, all cooked together over moderate heat. Boil 300ml water, add aforementioned ingredients, and a pack of noodles.

### A DORM FRIENDLY LIFE-SAVER TUNA WITH SHALLOTS

My child always asked me for easy things to make with canned goods when he lived in a dorm. So this was tailored for his convenience.

A can of tuna in water, or brine, a cup of lengthwise cut shallots or spring onions or green onions, slivers of garlic — two teaspoons, salt and chillies to taste, and 2 teaspoons of olive oil.

Drain the water from the tuna, add everything together in a wok, cook for 15 minutes on medium heat, and its done. This goes extremely well with steamed rice.

By Nahida Rahman Shumona



## READER'S RECIPE

# Something yummy, something healthy

Tired of the usual Caesar salad this, and fruit salad that? Well, we can't blame you because most typical 'green' recipes are hard on taste buds that have experienced more flavour elsewhere. So try these off-beat, and more definitely tasteful dishes, and treat your taste buds to the flavour it really deserves.

### COCONUT DAAL

#### Ingredients

2 tbsp coconut oil  
2 cups red dry lentils  
3 cups water  
2 cups coconut milk  
½ cup chopped tomatoes  
2 tbsp ginger, peeled and minced  
1 tsp turmeric powder  
1 tsp coriander powder  
1 tsp cumin  
½ tsp pepper, 1 tsp salt  
5-10 curry leaves  
2 bay leaves  
Fresh coriander leaves

#### Method

Heat the water, lentils and turmeric in a pan, and bring to the boil. Simmer for about an hour, or until soft. If necessary, add a bit of extra water. Heat the oil in a small pan, sauté the tomatoes, ginger, coriander powder, cumin, curry leaves and bay leaves. Remove the bay leaves and add this mixture into the cooked lentils. You can choose to blend the daal to have a more refined texture and make it like a creamy soup or choose to have it as it is. Add the coconut milk to the dal and simmer for 5-10 minutes. Garnish with fresh coriander.

### WATERMELON GAZPACHO

#### Ingredients

6 cups watermelon  
1 cucumber  
1 red bell pepper  
Lemon juice, Molasses  
¼ cup mint  
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Pinch of salt  
Pinch of pepper

#### Method

Chop the watermelon, cucumber and bell pepper into pieces to make it easier to blend in the blender. Add lemon juice, molasses and olive oil once the base of the soup is well blended. Once everything is blended into a soup consistency, add salt and pepper according to your taste. Add mint and blend on low speed. Chill for at least 30 minutes. Garnish with a dash of olive oil and some mint.

### CREAMY PUMPKIN AND MUSHROOM CURRY

#### Ingredients

2 tbsp sesame oil  
2 cups pumpkin, cubed  
2 cups mushrooms, cut in halves  
1 cup cashews (soaked overnight or kept in boiled water for 30 minutes)  
3 cups water or vegetable stock  
2 tbsp ginger  
2 tbsp tomato paste  
Half a lime  
1 tsp turmeric powder  
1 tsp coriander powder  
1 tsp cumin powder  
1 tsp cardamom powder  
2 teaspoon fenugreek powder  
1 tsp pepper  
2 tbsp salt  
Fresh coriander leaves

#### Method:

Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add ginger, tomato paste, lime and cook for 3-4 minutes until softened. Add the turmeric, coriander, cumin, cardamom and fenugreek powder and stir until fragrant. Add the cubed pumpkin and sauté for 10 minutes. Add the water or vegetable stock and cover for another 20 minutes. Let the pumpkin simmer in low heat until soft. Add the mushroom and let it cook for 5 minutes. Add salt and pepper according to your taste. Keep in mind, if you have added store bought stock, there is salt that should

be considered before you add more to the curry. Blend the cashew to make cashew milk and add it to the curry. Simmer for 10 minutes on low heat. Garnish with fresh coriander leaves.

### HONEY ROASTED BEETROOT AND CAULIFLOWER SALAD

#### Ingredients

6-8 beets, peeled and cut into cubes  
1 head of a cauliflower, cut into florets  
2 tbsp olive oil  
½ cup walnuts, 1 tbsp honey  
3 tbsp lemon juice  
Pinch of salt  
Freshly cracked pepper  
2 cups of baby spinach leaves  
For dressing, 1 tbsp honey  
2 tbsp olive oil  
2 tbsp sesame paste  
Pinch of salt

#### Method

Preheat oven to 180°C before preparing the beetroot and cauliflower. In a baking tray, drizzle the cubed beetroot with 2 tablespoons of olive oil, honey and lemon juice and a good sprinkling of salt. Roast in the oven for about 50 minutes, or until tender when pierced with a fork. After the beetroot has been in the oven for approximately 30 minutes, add the cauliflower to another baking tray and drizzle with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, salt and pepper and add it to the oven. 5 minutes before the beetroot is due to come out of the oven, add the walnuts to the baking tray and cook for the last 5 minutes. While everything is in the oven, make the salad dressing by combining all ingredients in a screw top jar and shaking well. Taste and season as desired. Remove the baking trays from the oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes or so. Arrange the spinach in a salad bowl and top with the roasted beetroot, cauliflower and walnuts.

By Sobia Ameen

Photo: Collected