

FUSION FLAVOURS

CHIANGMI TALUKDER
LENA



Feast of the Bizu festival

'Bizu' is not only the biggest traditional festival bidding farewell to the year (*Chaitra Sankranti*) and ushering the Bengali New Year, but also a festival of feast, which carries much significance to the Chakma community.

Food and culture are interwoven and the festival becomes incomplete without having *pazon*, a dish that includes every edible part of various plants grown in the hills and around 20-50 other types of green or dried seasonal vegetables. The process involved in preparing, serving, and sharing certain food carry an important social and cultural value. One of the greatest things about consuming *pazon* in *Chaitra Sankranti* is the traditional belief that it will boost the immune system to deal with health troubles in the coming new year. It is said that using a variety of ingredients not only makes the taste better, but also works as a 'power food' that has many health benefits.

Making and eating *pazon*, and visiting at least seven houses to taste seven different



pazon is considered part of the 'true-bizu-celebration' that solidifies social bonds. The feast of the 'three-day' long Bizu festival is celebrated with *pazon*, different types of traditional sweets, *pide* or *pitha*, seasonal hilly fruits, and brewed fermented rice liquor.

PAZON

To cook *pazon* the quantity, usage and

accuracy of measurement of raw ingredients are not mandatory.

Ingredients

- Different types of seasonal vegetables
- Dry fish (churi shutki/ghoinya/lakkha/shol macher shutki)
- Chopped onions
- Ginger-garlic paste
- Green chilli paste
- Turmeric powder



- Red chilli powder
- Cumin powder
- Oil
- Salt
- Water

Method

Heat a cooking pan with oil on medium heat. Add onion, ginger, garlic and green chilli paste and fry for a while. Add dry fish pieces, turmeric, red chilli, cumin powder, salt and fry for a few minutes.

Add the first batch of hard vegetables such as potatoes, yams, carrots, beans, seeds, raw jackfruit, etc. and add the required amount of water, cook for a few minutes. Then add a second batch of vegetables such as eggplant, cauliflower, cabbage, etc. Add water if needed. Keep on flame until everything gets well-cooked. Adjust the amount of gravy and salt.

BORA PIDE

Ingredients

- 2 cups glutinous rice flour
- 1 cup shredded coconut or coconut chunks
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2-4 tbsp lukewarm water
- Oil, for frying

Method

In a mixing bowl, add rice flour, coconut chunks, salt, sugar and little water at a time to make a soft dough. Take little portions, make balls and then press one palm over the other to make the ball flat like a round cookie. Heat a frying pan with oil on medium heat and fry them until golden brown. The skin of these fried cakes should be crispy, with a soft chewy texture inside.

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