

**DESHI MIX**  
 SALINA PARVIN


# DISHES *with* the magic of CHILLI PEPPERS



Chilli peppers are the fruit of capsicum pepper plants, notable for their hot flavour. They are members of the nightshade family, related to bell peppers and tomatoes.

Many varieties of chilli peppers exist, such as cayenne and jalapeño. They are primarily used as a spice and can be cooked or dried and powdered.

There are over 100 varieties of chilli peppers in Mexico alone, each with its own distinct flavour. In general, the smaller the chilli, the hotter the taste — although this is not guaranteed.

Capsicum is the main bioactive plant compound in chilli peppers, responsible for their unique, pungent taste, and myriad health benefits.

Chilli peppers are rich in vitamins and minerals. They are powerful antioxidants, which is important for wound healing and immune functions.

Red chilli peppers are high in beta carotene, which the body converts into vitamin A. Chilli peppers provide some carbs and offer a small amount of protein and fibre.

#### HEALTH BENEFITS

Chilli peppers health benefits include improving cognitive function, contributing

to red blood cell formation, reducing blood pressure and preventing cardiovascular disease, acting as natural pain reliever, clearing nasal congestion, soothing intestinal diseases and disorders, boosting immunity and maintaining healthy eyes.

Other benefits include preventing cancer, promoting weight loss, and improving longevity.

The next time you prepare a meal, add an extra spark with chilli peppers. Getting a teary-eye or a slight burn in your tongue can be all worth getting used to, especially when you stand to benefit from such a long list of health benefits.



#### NAGA BHUT JOLOKIA CHICKEN GRAVY

The Naga chilli, locally known as Naga morich, is a chilli pepper cultivated in Bangladesh and Northeast India. It is one of the hottest known chilli peppers, and is closely related to the Bhut Jolokia. It was once recorded as the world's hottest chilli.

Like many varieties of the Chinese species, the Naga chilli is a small to medium shrub with large leaves, small, five petaled flowers, and hot fruit. It has a wrinkle texture as opposed to the smoother flesh of similar varieties.

The plants are cultivated in North East India, especially in Nagaland and Manipur, thus the origin of the name Naga. They are also grown in the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia for the production of hot sauces, and in Finland, where it is mainly sold fresh in market. It is also available in West Africa.

#### Ingredients

- 1 Naga chilli
- 6 green chillies, finely chopped
- 4 large chicken breasts slices, into pieces
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 3 onions, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp oil
- 4 large tomatoes roughly chopped
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 3 cups water
- 2 tbsp salt
- 3 tbsp yoghurt
- 1 tbsp ground coriander

#### Method

Heat oil in a large pan over medium heat. Add cumin. When hot, add onions. Fry for 3 minutes. Add the Naga chilli, green chillies, turmeric, ginger and garlic. Cook for 3-4

minutes. Add the tomatoes and yoghurt. Stir and mix well.

Add chicken, salt and mix. Fry for few minutes. Add water and garam masala powder. Cover and cook for 10 minutes. When it is done, remove from heat and serve hot.

#### CHILLI GARLIC PRAWNS

#### Ingredients

- 500g prawns
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 4 chillies, chopped
- 2 stalks spring onions
- ¼ cup Thai chilli sauce
- 1 tsp sesame seeds oil

#### Method

Mix chilli sauce, soy sauce and sesame oil in a bowl and keep aside. Trim the prawns of your liking. Heat oil in a pan. Add garlic, chilli and half of the spring onions. Sauté until aromatic. Add the prawns and let them cook until charred. When the prawns are almost cooked, add the sauce mixture and stir to combine. Once prawns and sauce mixture are well combined and start to caramelize, switch off the flame and add the remaining spring onions. Serve immediately with rice.

#### FRIED STUFFED CHILLIES

#### Ingredients

- 6 long big green chillies
- 2 large potatoes, boiled and mashed
- 1 cup gram flour
- 2 chillies, chopped
- ½ tsp chopped garlic
- ½ tsp ginger, chopped
- 1 lemon juice
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 2 tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- ¼ cup coriander leaves, chopped
- Oil for deep frying
- Salt to taste