

DESHI MIX
SALINA PARVIN



Pithas to savour this winter

Winter in Bangladesh signifies three things; travelling across the country, badminton tournaments in every neighbourhood, and of course mouth-watering pithas to suit just about every palate. There are at least hundreds of different varieties of pithas. Some are associated with the harvest (Nabanna) in winter while some others are prepared on any grand occasions like weddings, Eid or Puja. Some are crunchy, some steamed and others delightfully soaked in sugar, molasses, milk or date palm syrup. Most of them are sweet, though there are some savoury pithas too for those of you who likes things spicy.

ZAFRANI KHEER PATISHAPTA

Patishapta is a thin Swedish pancake or crepe style pitha, very special and adored by Bengalis. No special occasion is complete without it, there are many variations. You can use coconut with molasses for the stuffing, and sometimes the kheer or the kheersha can be used. Vegetables, meat or even cooked noodles, can be used as the stuffing. This uses saffron, dry nuts and raisins.

Ingredients

For the batter -

1 cup rice flour

2 tbsp all-purpose flour

½ cup Liquid molasses

1 cup liquid milk

For the stuffing -

2Ltr milk

2 tbsp rice flour

Saffron, soaked in milk

Sugar to taste

Chopped dried nuts, pista, almond, walnut and raisins

Method

Make a thin batter with the batter ingredients. The batter should not be too runny or too thin, but rather free flowing. Cover and keep it aside for at least an hour. Make the stuffing. Heat the milk with



sugar and keep stirring until it is reduced to half. Soak saffron in another small bowl in milk and add it to the milk. Add sugar and milk mixed with the rice flour. Keep stirring. Soon, the milk will thicken. Add mix nuts and raisins. Mix well. Remove from heat, allow it to cool down. Now heat the non-stick pan and grease a little oil on the surface. Take a small amount of batter at a time and spread on its hot surface in round shapes. Take 2 spoonful of stuffing, place on the side of the pitha and roll into a cylindrical shape. Arrange in a plate and prepare to serve.

DUDH CHITOI PITHA

Ingredients

1 cup rice flour (parboiled rice)

½ cup white rice flour (atop chaal)

1½ cup luke warm water

Salt to taste

½ cup date jaggery



3Ltr milk

Method

Mix the rice flour with lukewarm water and a pinch of salt. The batter should not be thick. It should be thin, but not too thin. Now heat the clay pot or iron wok. It should be very hot. Grease the wok with little oil. Pour some batter and cover the wok. Cook the pitha on low flame for 3 minutes. Cook just one side and loosen the edges around the pitha from the wok with a knife and take them out. Now heat milk in a large pan. Bring to a boil. Add jaggery and when the milk is reduced to half, turn off the stove. Now add the warm pitha into the syrup. Cover it and let the pithas to be soaked at least 4-5 hours, and serve.

NARIKEL-TIL PITHA

Ingredients

1 cup rice flour

½ cup plain flour

½ cup roasted sesame seeds

½ cup freshly grated coconut

1 cup sugar

1 cup milk

2 tbsp butter

Method

Combine milk, plain flour and rice flour in a bowl and whisk well so that no lumps remain. In another bowl, combine sugar, sesame seeds and coconut. Mix well and keep aside. Heat a non-stick pan and grease with butter. Pour approximately 2 tablespoons of the batter and spread to form a small, round and thin pitha. Cook lightly on both the sides. Spread a little of coconut-sesame mixture on half side and cover with other half to form a semi-circle. Repeat the same to make more pithas using remaining ingredients. Serve immediately.

KHEJUR PITHA

Ingredients

1 cup semolina

½ cup flour

1 egg

¼ cup sugar

1 tbsp ghee

¼ tsp baking powder

4 tbsp warm milk

Oil for deep fry

Pinch of salt

Method

Take semolina, flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, and ghee in a large bowl and mix well. Now add the egg and knead the dough. Dough must not be too dry or too soft. Make small balls from the dough. Take one ball and shape it like an egg, then spread it on top of a colander thinly and start to fold from one end and finish it to another end and close it. In the same process, make all the pithas. Now heat oil in a pan. Fry the pithas until golden brown and then take them out from oil to a paper tissue. You can preserve these pithas in an airtight box for 2-3 weeks.

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