



Delicious flavours from o par Bangla

This Durga Puja, I collaborated with Joyadrita Ragavendran Chatterjee from across the border to share some of her family favourites. Joyadrita grew up enjoying the culture of both East Bengal and West Bengal as her maternal side is from Bangladesh and her paternal side is from India.

Some of Joyadrita's favourites have been chosen in this Durga Puja special recipe list.

DUDH SHUKTO

This puja dish with korola needs more admirers than it currently enjoys!

Ingredients

250g sweet potato, carrot, potato
½-inch thick slices of 250g of bitter gourd (*korola or ucchey*); ridge gourd (*jhinga*)
¼ tsp fenugreek
¼ tsp fennel
¼ tsp ginger
1 tsp poppyseed
½ tsp mustard seeds
2 bay leaves
1 cup of *bori* (lentil dumplings)
1 cup milk
Mustard oil, to your preference

Method

Coat a wok with an oil brush to use minimal amounts of mustard oil and separately fry each vegetable in it. Ensure they remain soft (you may boil the harder

vegetables i.e., potatoes beforehand to ensure they are cooked through). Fry the *bori* similarly and set all aside. Now, add some oil in the wok and the masalas and cook for up to 2 minutes; then add the rest of the above fried ingredients and cook till oil separates. If the mix looks too dry you may add some extra oil. The sweet vegetables are meant to add the sweetness but feel free to add a pinch of sugar in case you need some. Once the oil separates, add milk and let it boil until the dish reaches your preferred consistency.

KALOJEERA BEGUN DIYE ILISH

A Fearless Olive take on this classic dish

Ingredients

4 large round eggplants
½ kg ilish, cut into pieces
2-3 bay leaves
½ tsp turmeric
1 tsp green chilli paste
1 tsp red chili powder
½ tsp fenugreek (*methi*)
1 tsp mustard seed paste
Juice of ½ a lemon and up to 2 tomatoes pureed
1 tbs garlic paste and onion paste
1 tbs nigella seeds paste (*kalojeera*)



2 kefir lime leaves (you can alternatively use *lebu pata* too)

½ tsp sesame seed paste

Mustard oil (to your individual preference)

Method

Boil the ilish with the kefir lime leaves and a pinch of salt until they are cooked through, then de-bone the fish. This is a little time consuming so if you wish, you may boil the pieces as they are and add them to the masala mix here below.

Scoop out the insides of the brinjal with a spoon and set aside. You may remove the excess seeds. Smear the outer shells with some mustard oil and bake in oven until they are cooked (about 10 minutes). Fry the onion and garlic paste and add the spices and cook till oil separates. Add the nigella seeds towards the end with the mustard and sesame seed paste and cook for up to 1 minute. Add the insides of the eggplant and cook until oil separates. Add tomato puree as a liquid to avoid mixture from sticking to the wok. Add the fish towards the end just before oil is about to separate and cover it to let it simmer. In both cases of adding whole pieces or a mash of the boiled fish, you

need to ensure the fish is properly coated with the masala mix.

Serving —

Fill the eggplant shells with the fish mix and sprinkle coriander on top before serving.

COCONUT BALLS (NAARU)

A different version of the traditional recipe

Ingredients

1 cup almond flour (skinned almonds, ground into powder)
3 cups shredded coconut
¾ cup *tal er gur* (palm molasses) or any other molasses you prefer
¼ cup coconut milk
½ tsp powdered fennel seeds (*moury/saunf*)

Method

In a large bowl, mix the ingredients gradually. It should not be too watery so add the coconut milk sparingly. In case of the molasses, adjust the sweetness accordingly. The *naaru* should reach a consistency where you can just roll them into bite sized balls and once done, refrigerate them.

By Joyadrita Ragavendran Chatterjee

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<https://www.instagram.com/foodofjoyflavoursfbengal/?hl=en>

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