

Stay energised all day with these Bengali sehri dishes

With Ramadan now here, planning healthy and substantial sehri meals is a necessity in a bid to keep your body active throughout the day. The following traditional Bengali meals give a wonderful balance of proteins, fibres, and flavour, keeping your body full and content. Each of these meals contains elements that are perfect for enduring energy, along with a feast for your senses. If your heart desires a filling vegetable mishmash, or for a rich flavour of mustard-infused fish curry, these meals shall make your predawn meal healthy and delicious.

PEPE DIYE MURGIR MANGSHO (CHICKEN WITH GREEN PAPAYA)

Ingredients

500g chicken, curry cut
1 medium sized papaya
10-12 garlic clove, crushed
1-inch ginger piece, grated
1 onion, finely chopped
1 tomato chopped
1 tsp red chilli powder
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1/2 tsp cumin powder
1/2 tsp coriander powder
1/4 tsp garam masala powder
Salt, according to taste

Method

Heat oil in a pan, and temper with onion and garlic. Sauté until the onion turns translucent. Add ginger, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, cumin powder, coriander powder, tomatoes and salt. Mix and stir till the tomatoes become mushy. Now add chicken and papaya and give a quick stir. Cook for 2 minutes. Add water and cook for 10 minutes with the lid on. Open the lid and add garam masala powder. Mix well and cook another 1 minute. When it is done, remove from heat. Serve hot with plain steamed rice.

AAM KASHUNDI CHINGRI (PRAWN WITH MANGO AND MUSTARD DIP)

Ingredients

250g prawns, deveined and cleaned
3 tbsp kashundi



1 raw mango, grated
4-5 green chillies
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
Salt to taste
Sugar to taste

Method

Wash the prawns properly. Marinade the prawns with salt and pinch of turmeric powder. Set aside. In a wok, add oil and once hot, add the prawns, turmeric powder, red chilli powder and green chillies. Sauté on low heat till the prawns change colour slightly, or about 2 minutes. Add the grated raw mango and salt. Stir and cook for 2 minutes. Add the kashundi and mix well. Add 1 cup of water, and check seasoning. Cover, and let it simmer on low heat, till the water has evaporated, and there is a thick gravy coating the prawns.



SHOSHA DIYE DAAL (CUCUMBER LENTIL)

Ingredients

1 medium sized cucumber
1 cup red lentils
1/4 tsp ground garlic
1/2 tsp cumin seeds
1 tbsp sliced onions
2 green chillies, pared
1 tbsp oil
Salt to taste

Method

Peel, wash and cut the cucumber into cubes. Rinse the lentils and drain water. In a saucepan, place all the ingredients except the onion, chilli and oil. Add 3-4 cups of water, cover and simmer till lentils and cucumber are cooked. Add green chillies and bring to a boil. Heat oil in a separate small pan. Fry the onion till brown and pour

in the lentil. Cover the daal and leave them for few minutes. Serve with boiled rice or roti.

SHORSHE PABDA JHOL (CAT FISH WITH MUSTARD SEEDS FLAVOURED GRAVY)

Ingredients

6 pabda fish
1 tsp red chilli powder
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1/4 cup mustard seeds paste
2 green chillies
1/2 tsp nigella seeds
2 tbsp mustard oil
Salt to taste

Method

Wash and clean the fish. Marinate and mix with salt and turmeric powder. Rub all over fish. Marinate for at least 30 minutes and keep aside. Heat oil in a pan. Temper 1/2 teaspoon of nigella seeds and 2 pieces of green chilli. Stir for a few seconds. Now add mustard seeds paste, red chilli powder, turmeric powder and salt. Mix well. Sauté for 2 minutes. When oil starts to separate from sides of pan, add 1 cup of water. Mix and cover the pan. Cook for 15 minutes on medium heat. Once gravy starts to thicken, and fish are done, add 1 teaspoon of mustard oil into the fish curry. Mix and switch off the flame. Transfer to a serving dish. Serve hot with steamed rice.

LABRA (VEGETABLE MISHMASH)

Ingredients

1 cup eggplant, thickly sliced
1/2 cup carrots, sliced in thick long wedges
1 cup cauliflower, small separated florets
1/2 cup cabbage, thickly chopped
1/2 cup yard long beans
1 cup pumpkin, cut into small cubes
1/3 cup radish, cut into cubes
1 cup pui shak, thickly chopped
1 tsp ginger paste
1/2 tsp panch phoron or Bengali five spices
2 dry red chillies
1/4 tsp turmeric powder
1 tbsp ghee
Salt to taste
Sugar to taste

Method

Cut and wash the vegetables separately. Heat ghee in a heavy bottom pan. Add the panch phoron and dry red chillies. Once they splutter, add the ginger paste, mixed with 1 tablespoon of water and salt. Stir



and cook till the water evaporates. Add the cabbage, radish, carrots, and yard long beans. Stir and add turmeric. Cover and let it cook for 3-4 minutes. Uncover and add the rest of the vegetables. Mix and cover. Let it cook, on a medium heat, for 8-10 minutes, or till the vegetables are soft. Adjust the seasoning and add 1/2 cup water and sugar to balance the taste. Cover and cook till the water is absorbed, and vegetables are coated with the gravy. Serve with rice or roti.

LAU GHONTO (BOTTLE GOURD CURRY)

Ingredients

500g bottle gourd
1/2 cup peas
10-12 fried bori (dried lentil dumplings)
1/2 tsp panch phoron
2 dry red chillies
3-4 green chillies
1/2 cup coriander leaves
3 tbsp oil
1 tbsp ghee
Salt to taste

Method

Peel and wash the bottle gourd, cut into thin round slices, and shred them lengthwise. Keep aside. Heat 1 tablespoon of oil, fry the bori until golden. Keep aside. Heat the remain oil, add the panch phoron and dry red chillies. When the spices start spluttering, add the chopped bottle gourd. Sprinkle a little salt. Mix and turn the heat to low and let the gourd cook in its own juice. When the gourd starts turning tender, add the peas, bori and green chillies. Keep cooking till the water has almost dried up. Add the chopped coriander leaves and finish with the ghee. Serve with rice.

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