

# Chatgaiyya flavours: Recipes from Chattogram

From the bustling kitchens of Chattogram comes a bold and hearty array of flavours, rich with history and spice. In this recipe collection, we spotlight three beloved dishes, beef kala bhuna, beef curry, akhni biriyani, and steamed shutki curry that capture the essence of Chittagonian cuisine. Each recipe brings a taste of tradition, slow-cooked warmth, and the unmistakable flair of the region's culinary heritage.

## BEEF KALA BHUNA

### Ingredients

1 kg beef with bone, cut into medium pieces  
 For marination –  
 4 onions, finely chopped  
 5 green chillies  
 2 tbsp ginger paste  
 1 tbsp garlic paste  
 1 tsp cumin powder  
 1 tsp roasted cumin powder  
 1 tsp celery, powdered  
 3 bay leaves  
 2-inch cinnamon stick  
 6 green cardamoms  
 1 black cardamom  
 6 cloves  
 ¼ tsp mace powder  
 1 star anise  
 2 dry red chillies  
 Salt to taste  
 For gravy –  
 5 onions, thinly sliced  
 200g plain yoghurt  
 1 tsp chilli powder  
 Salt to taste  
 250ml mustard oil (For frying and cooking)

### Method

Wash and pat dry the meat.

In a bowl, take the meat along with a small portion of the chopped

onion, chopped green chillies, ginger-garlic paste, cumin powder, salt and 3 tablespoons of oil. Mix everything well.

Add all the whole spices and mix. Cover the bowl with a lid and rest them for 3-4 hours (preferably in a refrigerator).

Now, add roasted cumin powder and mix well. Heat oil in a pan and fry the rest of the chopped onion and dry red chillies until brown and crisp. Strain the onion and chillies from the oil and keep aside. Keep the flame on low. Add marinated meat to the same oil. Cook for around 45 minutes on low heat with frequent stirring. This step is for frying the meat.

Add beaten plain curd and fry for a further 15 minutes. The meat will start blackening by then. Now add the fried onion, and mix. Fry till the meat softens yet has the texture and shape. This will take 30 minutes more. The meat will release sufficient moisture. Cook till the meat turns blackish and the gravy has a semi-thick consistency.

Serve kala bhuna with rice or paratha.

to a bowl. Get a pot and add the soya bean oil then start heating the pot. Wait a few minutes for the oil to heat up then add the dry spices like black pepper, cinnamon stick, bay leaf, clove, and green cardamom. Stir these in the oil for about 5 minutes until you start to get that spicy aroma.

Now, add the sliced onions and stir until the onions are slightly caramelised but not cooked all the way through. After that, add 1 cup of water, stir, then add the powdered ingredients. These are turmeric, chilli, cumin, coriander powder, and salt. Coriander powder is slightly overbearing so it is advised you add half a teaspoon first, then add more if you do not prefer that ratio. Stir all the spices in, adding your ginger-garlic paste, and sauté 10 to 15 minutes until it all comes to a boil and you can see the oil surface above the spice mixture.

This is a good time to taste so you can adjust the salt level in the curry. Finally, add the meat and stir it well to coat in all

### Method

Take cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardamom, black peppercorn, nutmeg, mace and grind. Wash the meat and drain all the water. Heat oil in a large pan and fry the sliced onion until brown. Add meat, ginger and garlic paste, yoghurt, salt, bay leaves and the ground spices. Cook on medium heat for about 25-30 minutes or until beef is cooked and tender.

Add one cup of water, bit by bit, and stir the meat occasionally. Separate the meat, keeping the gravy and spices in the pan and set aside.

In the same pan, add the remaining water, ghee and milk, bring to a boil and add salt. Add washed and drained rice and cover. Once the water boils again, add the whole green chillies and cook on medium heat.

When the rice is about 50 per cent done, add the cooked meat. Mix carefully so that rice does not become mashed and cook covered, on medium-low heat. Turn off the stove but keep the lid on for 15-20 minutes



## BEEF CURRY

### Ingredients

1 kg beef  
 3 medium-sized onions  
 3 tbsp soya bean oil  
 500ml or 2 cups of water  
 2 tbsp ginger garlic paste  
 1 tsp turmeric  
 1 tsp chilli powder  
 ½ tsp cumin powder  
 1 tsp coriander powder (optional)  
 2 bay leaves, cut in half  
 1 cinnamon stick, roughly 3" (halved)  
 4-5 cloves  
 8-10 black peppers  
 4-5 green cardamom  
 2 black cardamoms  
 Salt to taste

### Method

First, wash the beef thoroughly and get rid of any excess fat and tissue. Slice the onions lengthwise and transfer them

the delicious spicy goodness. Cook at high heat for about 15 minutes, then add 1 cup of hot water and continue stirring it well. Now would also be a good time to taste and adjust the salt. Cook for about another 15 minutes. Turn the heat down and leave the meat for a final 30-40 minutes to rest.

After all that's done, garnish with some sautéed onions and coriander. Serve the dish with polao or ruti, and proceed to impress everyone with the ultimate beef curry!

## AKHNI BIRIYANI

### Ingredients

1½kg beef, small pieces  
 1kg aromatic rice  
 1 tsp cumin  
 1 tsp coriander  
 4 sticks of cinnamon, 2 inches each  
 4 green cardamoms  
 10 black peppers  
 ½ tsp nutmeg  
 ½ tsp mace  
 ¾ cup mustard oil  
 1 cup sliced onions  
 2 tbsp ginger paste  
 2 tbsp garlic paste  
 ½ cup yoghurt  
 3 bay leaves, 8 cup water  
 1 cup milk  
 15 green chillies  
 1 tbsp ghee (for flavour)  
 Salt to taste

before serving.

## STEAMED SHUTKI CURRY

### Ingredients

10-12 pcs loitya shutki/dried bombil  
 1 cup onion, chopped  
 1 tsp garlic paste  
 ½ tsp ginger paste  
 1 tbsp green chilli paste  
 1 tsp red chilli powder  
 1 tsp turmeric powder  
 ½ cup oil  
 ½ cup coriander leaves, chopped  
 Salt to taste  
 ½ cup water (for gravy)  
 1 medium size banana leaf (optional)

### Method

Chop fish into inch-long pieces and soak in warm water for 20 minutes, to make it soft and clean. Drain the water and wash the pieces. Mix all the ingredients in a large mixing bowl and give a good mix with clean hands and marinate for half an hour. Get one steel box with a lid.

Transfer the marinade to the box. Cover the box with banana leaf and then close the box with the lid. The banana leaf will help to add a subtle sweet leaf flavour. Put the box into a steamer and steam for about 30 minutes over medium flame. Serve with hot steamed rice.

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