



#### Method

Mix, pick, rinse several times and soak the lentils in water for 2 hours. In a deep pan add mixed lentils, salt, turmeric powder and water, cover the pan and cook for 30-40 minutes. Stir the daal occasionally. Add some more water if needed. In a separate pan, pour ghee and let it heat up. Carefully add a pinch of *hing* and cumin seeds. When cumin is brown, add ginger-garlic paste, sauté well; then add onions and sauté again till brown in colour.

Now add tomatoes, green chillies, coriander powder and cook well till oil separates from the mixture. Now just whisk the *daal* slightly and pour it in the pan. Mix well, add some water if needed and cook on low heat for 15 minutes. Adjust the consistency of the daal to a creamy texture. When it is done remove the pan. Garnish with coriander leaves and serve it with rice or *roti*.

#### CHINGRI MALAI CURRY

*Chingri malai curry*, with its luxurious blend of coconut milk and prawns, is a crown jewel of Puja feasting. It is the kind of curry that makes conversations linger, plates refill, and memories last well beyond Puja. Its richness embodies the indulgent spirit of the season, a time when joy is best measured in abundance.

#### Ingredients

10 large size prawn/galda chingri (medium-sized shrimps can also be used)  
2 whole cinnamons  
2 tsp green chilli paste  
8 green cardamoms  
500ml liquid milk  
5-6 cloves  
300g onion paste

1 tsp ginger paste  
1 tsp garlic paste  
1 tsp garam masala powder  
1 tsp turmeric powder  
½ tsp red chilli powder  
1 tsp ghee  
1 tsp salt  
200ml mustard oil  
*Masala paste*—  
1 tsp mustard seed (black)  
1 tsp moury  
10 cashew nuts  
200 ml yoghurt  
*For the gravy*—  
300g grated coconut  
500ml hot water

#### Method

*Masala paste*—  
Take a blender. Add mustard seed, moury, nuts, and yoghurt. Make a smooth paste.

#### *For the gravy*—

Add coconut and hot water in a blender and whisk for a couple of minutes. Pour the contents into a bowl with a fine strainer, to extract the milk. Press with a spoon on the coconut shreds so that all the milk is strained.

#### *The curry*—

Prawns with shells work best for chingri malai curry. Wash them thoroughly and devein each and every prawn before cooking. Now, rub some salt, chilli powder and turmeric powder and leave those for 5 minutes.

Heat oil in a deep vessel. Fry prawns one by one without tempering the shell on medium flame until the prawns turn pink in colour. After straining the prawns from the hot oil, add half of the ghee. Temper the ghee-oil mixture with cinnamon, green cardamoms, and cloves. Add onion paste. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until the paste is cooked properly and turned pinkish-brown

in colour. Add garlic-ginger paste and green chilli paste. Cook for 2-3 minutes.

Now, add turmeric powder, sugar, salt, red chilli powder, and masala paste into the mixture. Cook for 5-7 minutes on low flame until oil separates from the mixture. If required add 1 tsp water in between. Add Coconut Milk to the mixture and mix properly. Add liquid milk and bring it to a boil. Finally, add fried prawns to the gravy.

Cover the pan with a lid and cook for 5-6 minutes on low flame until the gravy thickens to a medium consistency. Add garam masala powder and ghee to chingri malai curry and mix properly.

#### STEAMED HILSHA WITH BOTTLE GOURD LEAVES (LAU PATAE BHAPA ILISH)

#### Ingredients

6 pcs bottle gourd leaves (whole)  
6 pcs fish fillets (hilsha)  
1 tbsp mustard seeds  
5 green chillies  
¼ cup mustard oil  
½ tsp turmeric powder  
2 tbsp coconut paste (optional)  
Salt to taste

#### Method

Grind mustard seeds and green chillies into a paste. Marinate the fish fillets with mustard paste, salt, turmeric powder, coconut paste, and a dash of mustard oil. Place the marinated fish on a bottle gourd leaf and wrap it securely. Steam the wrapped fish in a steamer or pressure cooker for 10-15 minutes. Serve the fish in the leaf parcel with steamed rice.

#### KHEERSHA PULI

No Puja is complete without sweets, and kheersha puli carries with it the warmth of homemade indulgence. Crispy on the outside with a molten heart of kheersha, these little pockets are often made in batches, their aroma filling the kitchen with festive cheer.

#### Ingredients

1 cup rice flour  
1 cup jaggery

1½ cup water  
1 cup kheersha  
1/8 tsp salt  
Oil for deep fry

#### Method

Boil water and add jaggery and salt to it. Add rice flour to boiling water and keep stirring with wooden spoon to form a firm but soft and not sticky dough. Adjust accordingly. Knead well for about 3-4 minutes. Take a portion of the dough and roll it out as thick tortilla. Cut out circles with a cookie cutter. Place a small amount of kheersha on each circle. Repeat the process with the remaining dough. Brush the edges with water and seal tightly to form a semi-circle. Heat oil in a pan. Fry the kheersha puli in medium heat until the dough is cooked through and golden. Serve warm or at room temperature

#### PERA SONDESH

Simple yet elegant, this is the quintessential sweet that embodies Puja hospitality. Whether offered to guests dropping in after pandal-hopping or served to children waiting eagerly after *anjali*, its melt-in-the-mouth texture makes it a universal favourite.



#### Ingredients

2 cups of milk powder  
½ cup milk  
½ cup sugar  
2 tbsp ghee  
¼ tsp cardamom powder  
Pistachios for garnish

#### Method

Heat milk in a pan. Add sugar and mix until dissolved. Stir in milk powder. Mix and mash on low flame. Add ghee and cardamom powder. Turn off the heat and mix well until smooth and soft. Let it cool. Create round balls with the mix, press down in the centre with your thumb, and place a pistachio in the centre before serving. Enjoy.

— LS Desk

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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\* শুধুমাত্র এক্সপার্ট ডিশওয়াশ লিকুইড ৫০০ মিঃ লিঃ এর সাথে ২পিস ৭৫ গ্রাম এক্সপার্ট বার ফ্রী!