

A Taste of Saffron

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FROM DISHES MENTIONED IN
SHAILA'S ABDULLAH'S NOVEL SAFFRON DREAMS



APPETIZERS

PAKORAS

Flour fritters great for appetizers

INGREDIENTS

2 teaspoons cumin powder
2 teaspoons coriander powder
1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon turmeric powder
8 ounces gram flour
1 teaspoon ginger/garlic paste
salt to taste

Optional

Add in julienned onion, potato or green chili to make specialty pakoras

DIRECTIONS

Mix the above with enough water to make a thick batter. Add chili powder and salt to taste. Heat oil in a wok and place spoonfuls of the mixture until puffed up and crispy. Lay on kitchen towel. Serve hot with ketchup or chutney.

CHEWRA

Slow roasted Rice Krispies snack

INGREDIENTS

3 cups Rice Krispies
1-2 dried red chili
1 teaspoon mustard seeds
4 to 6 curry leaves
½ teaspoon citric acid crystals
2 tablespoon peanuts
2 tablespoon dried coconut flakes
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
½ teaspoon chili powder
1 tablespoon olive oil
sugar to taste
salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

Heat oil in a pan or wok. Add the mustard seeds. As they pop and splutter, add in chili, curry leaves, peanuts and coconut flakes. Add this into the bowl of Rice Krispies and mix well with turmeric powder, chili powder, citric acid crystals, sugar, and salt. Bake the combination in the oven at 350° for 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let it cool and then store in an airtight container.

SAMOSAS

INGREDIENTS

1 lb. minced meat (beef, turkey, or chicken)
1 medium onion, chopped fine
2 tablespoon ginger garlic paste
1-2 serranos cut fine
½ teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon coriander powder
1 teaspoon cumin powder
½ teaspoon garam masala
1 packet samosa wrapper
3 tablespoon egg white
1 tablespoon olive oil
Chopped cilantro for garnish
salt to taste

METHOD

In a skillet, add in oil and cook the meat, stirring constantly. After a few minutes, add in the rest of the ingredients except cilantro and cook until the water evaporates. Stir frequently. Sprinkle with cilantro and let the stuffing cool. Take a samosa wrapper, fill it with the mixtures and seal the sides, making a triangle with egg white. Deep fry on medium heat till golden brown and crisp. Serve hot with yogurt or tamarind dip.



ENTRÉES

KARAHI GINGER CHICKEN

Chicken slow cooked in spices and ginger for a delectable flavor

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. of boneless chicken cut into medium size cubes
4 green serranos, coarsely chopped
2-inch piece of fresh ginger julienned
2 pounds of fresh red tomatoes, coarsely chopped
½ tablespoons olive oil
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
1 tablespoon cumin powder
1 tablespoon coriander powder
Red chili powder to taste
Chopped cilantro for garnish
Salt to taste

DIRECTIONS

Add olive oil in a wok or saucepan and stir in the tomatoes. Cook on medium heat until the tomatoes are tender and reduced to a sauce like consistency. Put the chicken pieces in with the spices and salt. Reduce heat to low and cook for 20 minutes. Add the ginger and green serranos to the chicken. Simmer for around five minutes. Before serving, sprinkle on chopped cilantro and serve with hot naan (flatbread) or pita.

SEEKH KEBAB

Skewered minced meat slow roasted in spices

INGREDIENTS

2 lbs. minced turkey, chicken, or beef
1 chopped onion
1 teaspoon chopped ginger
½ teaspoon chopped green chillies
1 teaspoon chopped coriander leaves
1 teaspoon cumin and coriander powder
1 teaspoon red chili powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
½ cubed small raw papaya
Salt to taste
Pam oil

DIRECTIONS

Mix all of the above ingredients except Pam and knead well. Leave overnight. Divide the paste into equal portions and make balls. Thread the mince balls onto the skewers lengthwise. Spray with Pam and bake at 350° in the oven for 15 minutes. Turn over, spray with Pam and bake for another 10 minutes.

Tip

For beef, spread the raw papaya cubes all over the marinade and leave overnight. Remove the papaya in the morning.

DAL MIX

Various lentils mixed into one tantalizing dish

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon moong dal
1 tablespoon masoor dal
1 tablespoon chana dal
2 tablespoons toor dal
Chopped cilantro for garnish

For the tempering

1 tablespoons olive oil
1 chopped tomato
½ teaspoon garam masala
2 tablespoons ginger garlic paste
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 onion, chopped
2 teaspoons coriander powder
1 teaspoon chilli powder
½ teaspoon turmeric powder
salt to taste

METHOD

Wash all the dals. Soak for 1 hour and then drain. Add all the dals with water and cook on a slow flame until soft. Blend the dals. Prepare the tempering by heating oil in a separate saucepan. Add the cumin seeds and cook until they begin to crackle. Add the onion and cook until light pink. Add in ginger garlic paste. After a few minutes, add in tomatoes with coriander powder, chilli powder, turmeric powder, garam masala and salt. Cook until the mixture turns brown. Add to the cooked dals and stir for 3 to 4 minutes. Sprinkle cilantro on top and serve hot.

BASMATI RICE

Fluffy white boiled basmati rice

INGREDIENTS

1 cup basmati rice
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 piece of cinnamon
2 slightly crushed green cardamom pods
2 whole cloves
1 tablespoon cumin seed
salt to taste

METHOD

Place rice into a bowl with enough water to cover. Set aside to soak for 20 minutes. Boil water in a large pot or saucepan over high heat. Add salt, cinnamon, cardamom pods, cloves, and cumin seed. When water starts to boil, wait a minute or two and then drain water from the rice. Add in oil in the pot and then put the drained rice back in. Cover, and reduce heat to low. Cook for 10 minutes and then turn off the heat. Serve hot with a curry dish.



DESSERTS

GULAB JAMUN

Fried sugary balls of flour

INGREDIENTS

For the Balls

½ cup all purpose flour
½ tsp baking soda
2 tablespoons melted butter
1 cup Carnation Milk Powder
Whole milk

For the Sugar Syrup

2 cup sugar
1 cup water
A few saffron strands
3 slightly crushed cardamoms pods
oil

METHOD

In a small saucepan, add 2 cups of sugar to 1 cup of water to make the hot sugar syrup. Add 4-5 cardamom pods and a few strands of saffron. Mix and heat on medium for 5-10 minutes until sugar is dissolved in water. Transfer this hot syrup into a serving dish.

Make the dough by combining milk powder and butter. Add just enough whole milk to make a medium-hard dough. Divide the dough into 18-20 portions. Make balls by gently rolling each portion between your palms into a smooth ball. Place the balls on a plate. Heat the oil on high and then lower the heat to medium. Slip in the balls into the hot oil from the side of the pan, one by one. Gently shake the pan to keep the balls from browning on just one side. After about 5 minutes, the balls would rise slowly to the top if the temperature is just right. Fry slowly to ensure complete cooking and even browning.

Add the fried gulab jamuns directly into the warm syrup. Serve hot or cold.

KHEER

Saffron rice pudding

INGREDIENTS

1 cup basmati rice, soaked in water for about 30 minutes
4 cups milk
2 tablespoon sweetened milk
1/4 teaspoon vanilla or rose extract
3 tablespoon sugar
2 crushed cardamom seeds
3 saffron threads, soaked in a little water
5 tablespoon chopped or slivered pistachios and almonds

METHOD

Boil the rice until soft and mushy. Add in milk, sugar and cardamom seeds. Cook on high for 5 minutes, reduce the heat and simmer for 20 more minutes over low heat or until the rice is soft and has a creamy texture. Add in the extract and saffron and simmer for a few minutes until fragrant. Sprinkle with chopped nuts.



CONDIMENTS

MANGO KA ACHAR

Tangy mango pickle

INGREDIENTS

6 unripe mangoes
4 cups oil
3 tablespoons salt
1 tablespoon coriander seeds
1 tablespoon white cumin seeds
1 tablespoon mustard seeds
1 tablespoon onion seeds
1 tablespoon garlic, finely minced
1 cup red chili powder

METHOD

Wash the mangoes and wipe dry. Cut into quarters. Mix the salt into the mangoes and spread out on a tray or baking tin and dry in the sun 2 or 3 days, until the skin of the fruit becomes soft and pliable. Fry all the whole spices in 2 cups of the oil until they are light brown. Remove from the oil and grind to a smooth paste. Set aside. Put the rest of the oil in a saucepan and heat well. Add all the ground spices and stir for 1 minute. Add the dry mangoes. Stir together briefly and remove immediately. Allow to cool completely to room temperature. Put the achar in airtight containers and store at room temperature. This achar can be preserved for at least one year.

IMLI KI CHUTNEY

Tamarind dipping sauce

INGREDIENTS

1 cup tamarind
3 cups grated jaggery
2 teaspoon cumin powder
2 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon garam masala
salt to taste

METHOD

Add 5 cups of water to tamarind and bring to boil over the flame. Cook for an additional 10 minutes. Strain and add the jaggery, chili powder, cumin powder, salt, and garam masala. Cook again on medium flame till jaggery dissolves completely and the chutney gets thicker. Discard the pulp from the tamarind mixture.

RAITA

Yogurt dipping sauce

INGREDIENTS

2 cups plain yogurt
1 tablespoons minced fresh mint
3 tablespoons minced fresh cilantro
1 minced green chili
1 large cucumber, finely shredded
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
salt to taste

METHOD

Blend yogurt with all the above ingredients except cucumber. Place the blended mixture in a medium bowl and stir in cucumber. Place, covered, in the refrigerator for 1 hour to cool and blend. Stir well and serve.



DRINKS

MASAL HOT TEA

Indian spiced tea for two

INGREDIENTS

2 teabag or 2 teaspoon of loose black tea (Tapal, Tetley, Brooke Bond, etc)
2 cups water
1/4 teaspoon ginger powder
1 inch stick of cinnamon
2 cardomom pods, lightly crushed
2 whole cloves
1/2 cup milk
4 teaspoon sugar or 2 teaspoon honey

METHOD

Put water, sugar, and tea in a pan. Add in the whole spices and bring to a full boil. Turn heat to low and add milk. Simmer for 10 minutes and turn off heat. Strain after a few minutes and serve hot.

LASSI

Refreshing yogurt drink

INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup plain yogurt

1 1/4 cup milk

1/2 teaspoon cumin seeds

1/4 teaspoon salt or sugar

1/4 teaspoon cumin powder

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

METHOD

Mix all and blend with crushed ice until frothy. Serve cold.