

Spicy World

From Arpita's Kitchen



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Pav Bhaji

Durga puja is just a few days away. Every street of Bengal and other parts of India will be filled with people and food stalls. Among all of them 'chaat' stalls are my favourite. I like various type of chaats like panipuri, dahi puri chat, papri chat, samosa chat, nimki chat, batata puri chat, ghugni chat and so on. Though today I am not sharing any Bengali chaat, but 'pav bhaji' is quite famous in Mumbai and many other parts of India. 'Bhaji' indicates spicy, tangy mashed vegetable curry and 'pav' means bread / bun. After having a plate of 'pav bhaji', don't ever forget to have a cup of milky tea ... trust me on this one. Before start cooking this dish, you have to remember one simple thing - Butter makes everything better ! Do try this recipe in your kitchen and enjoy a great evening with your family.



Ingredients

1 big potato, boiled and mashed.
4 Tablespoons of chopped capsicum.
1 Teaspoon of ginger and garlic paste.
1 cup of boiled mix vegetables (carrots, cauliflower, green peas, beans).
2 tomatoes, finely chopped.
2 green chilies, chopped.
Spice powder (2 Teaspoons of roasted coriander powder, 1 Teaspoon of roasted cumin powder, 1 Teaspoon of garam masala, 1 Teaspoon of fennel powder, 1 Teaspoon of turmeric powder, 2 Teaspoons of hot red chilli powder, 1 Teaspoon of black pepper powder, 1 Tablespoon of kashmiri red chilli powder,

pinch of amchoor / dry mango powder).

Water.

Salt and sugar.

4 Tablespoons of butter.

1 big onion, finely chopped.

Steps

Place the butter in a flat pan and then turn on the heat on low.

When the butter melts down completely add the green chilies, ginger and garlic paste. Mix for 2 minutes on medium flame.

Then add chopped onion with pinch of salt.

Cook until it become golden in color.

Then add the chopped capsicum. For more color, you can also use red bell peppers. Cook

for another 4 minutes.

Then add the chopped tomatoes and some more salt. Cook this until it becomes mushy.

Now add all of the spice powder or store bought pav bhaji masala. Mix well for 3 minutes.

Add the boiled vegetables. Mix well and mash them a bit with a masher.

Then add mashed potato, salt and a big pinch of sugar. Mix very well.

Make a little hole inside the pan and add a cup of water. Mix everything slowly for 3 minutes.

Now mash everything very well with a masher.

If you like your bhaji on thinner side, then add some more water and cook for another 15 minutes.

Lastly add some chopped coriander leaves and turn off the heat.

In another pan toast the buns with some butter.

For serving place the 2 pavs in a plate, put some bhaji and some chopped onion.

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Dhaba style Mutton curry

We all love to eat food from Dhaba (road side food joint) while traveling. Nowadays you can find many fake dhabas and taste of their food is also fake, nowhere close to the authentic ones. Luckily few old and original dhabas in India still sells the best meals. After tasting those foods, you will probably think that their cooks must have some kind of magical hands. I once tasted their 'mutton curry' a rich, creamy, flavourful gravy and juicy, succulent meat pieces. Last weekend I recreated the same dish in my kitchen and surprisingly he said it tastes exactly like that dhaba's mutton curry . The recipe is very simple and easy to follow. Do try it at your home and enjoy a great lunch with your family.



Ingredients

500 gm withbone mutton pieces.
1 big onion, thinly sliced.
2 Tablespoons coarse paste of ginger, garlic and green chilies.
3 Tablespoons of yogurt.
Spice powder (1 Teaspoon of turmeric powder, 2 Teaspoons of hot red chilli powder, 1 Teaspoon of roasted coriander powder, 1 Teaspoon of garam masala powder).
3 slitted green chilies.
1 Teaspoon of chopped ginger.
2 Teaspoons of kasuri methi / dry fenugreek leaves.
1 Tablespoon of ghee / butter.

3 green cardamom.
2 cloves.
Salt and sugar.
3 Tablespoons of mustard oil.
Water.

Steps

Heat the mustard oil in a pan.
Fry the onion slices until golden in color.
Now add the coarse paste of ginger, garlic and green chilies. Cook for 2 minutes.
Add the washed mutton pieces with some salt. Cook for 10 minutes on high flame.
Now add all of the spice powder. Mix well for 5 minutes on medium flame.
Beat the yogurt with pinch of sugar. Lower the

heat for 10 seconds and add the beaten yogurt into the mutton. Mix well for few seconds.

Now bring the heat to medium and cook for 15 minutes.

Then add 2 cups of water, some salt and cook until the meat becomes fully tender. Feel free to use pressure cooker.

For the tempering, heat the ghee in a pan.

Slightly pound the green cardamom and cloves in a bowl, then add them in the hot ghee along with slitted green chilies, chopped ginger and kasuri methi. Saute for few seconds and pour it all over the cooked mutton. Mix well and turn off the heat.

Let it rest for few minutes, then serve. Before serving you can also add some chopped coriander leaves.

If you want the smokey flavour, put a hot charcoal in a steel bowl, place the bowl upon the mutton curry and drizzle few drops of oil on the hot coal. Immediately cover the vessel and let the smoke settle down for 3 minutes, then serve.

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Paneer Rezala

How many of you like the smell of 'capsicum' / green bell pepper in vegetarian dishes ?? I am. Whenever I cook, specially without onion and garlic dishes, most of the time I end up adding capsicum into it ... i know it sounds stupid but surprisingly the taste becomes more yummm ! Today's recipe is about 'paneer rezala', a vegetarian mughlai delicacy, where paneer cubes are cooked in a nut based white gravy and in that my very own addition is some fried capsicum. I made this last week for the first time and it has become one of our favourite. You can enjoy this with biriyani, pulao or some steamed rice. Do try this at your home and let me know how it turned out for you.



Ingredients

10 paneer cubes.
3 Teaspoons of poppy seeds paste.
3 Teaspoons of cashew nut paste.
Whole spices (4 black peppercorns, 3 cloves,
4 green cardamom, 1 bay leaf, 2 dry red
chilies, 1 small cinnamon stick).
3 Tablespoons of yogurt.
Salt and sugar.
1 Teaspoon of each (hot red chilli powder and
roasted coriander powder).
Water.
6 capsicum / green bell pepper cubes.
Pinch of garam masala.
A drop of mitha attar / 3 drops of rose water.
2 Tablespoons of oil and 2 Teaspoons of
ghee.

1 Teaspoon of ginger paste.

Steps

Heat the oil in a pan.
Add the paneer cubes and fry for 2 minutes.
Then transfer them to a bowl of warm water.
Keep it aside.
Now fry the capsicum cubes for few minutes
and remove them from the pan.
In the remaining oil add a Teaspoon of ghee.
Saute the whole spices for few seconds.
Lower the heat and add ginger paster, hot red
chilli powder and roasted coriander powder.
Mix well.
Now beat the yogurt with 2 Teaspoons of
water and a pinch of sugar. Add it to the oil.
Keep mixing it on low flame for 5 minutes.
Then add salt, poppyseed paste and cashew

paste. You can also add melon seeds / char mogoj paste. Cook for 15 minutes.

When the oil starts separating, the mixture will look like this. You have to cook it on low flame otherwise the raw smell of nuts will remain in the gravy.

Now add the fried paneer cubes, paneer soaked water and fried capsicums. Mix well and cook for 10 minutes.

Lastly add the remaining ghee, pinch of garam masala, mitha attar / rose water. Mix everything once and turn off the heat.

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Popcorn Chicken

In a rainy evening, a plate of hot, crispy popcorn chicken with a cup of tea / a glass of chilled beer can be seriously addictive! Yes today's blog is about 'popcorn chicken'. From younger to elder everybody loves this dish. This chicken recipe is very much different from 'chicken nuggets' or 'chicken pakora'. After frying them, you will get soft chicken inside and crispy coating (not breadcrumbs) outside ... guys, that is called perfection! Try this easy recipe in your kitchen and enjoy a great evening with your family.



Ingredients

- 20 pieces of boneless chicken cubes.
- 2 and half Teaspoons of black pepper powder.
- 2 and half Teaspoons of hot red chilli powder.
- 2 Teaspoons of lemon juice.
- Salt.
- Half cup of all purpose flour / maida.
- Half cup of cornflour.
- 1 egg.
- 3 Tablespoons of milk.
- Oil.
- 1 Teaspoon of chat masala.

Steps

Marinate the chicken pieces with 2 Teaspoons of salt, 1 Teaspoon of black pepper powder, 1

Teaspoon of hot red chilli powder and lemon juice. Keep it in the fridge for 1 hour.

In the meantime, season the flour and cornflour with 2 Teaspoons of salt, 1 Teaspoon of black pepper powder and remaining hot red chilli powder. Mix well and keep it aside. If you have onion powder or garlic powder, feel free to add them in the flour.

Beat the egg with the milk, pinch of salt and remaining black pepper powder.

After an hour take out the marinated chicken from fridge.

First lightly roll them in the flour mixture.

Then drop them in the egg mixture. Mix for few seconds.

After that immediately throw them in that flour mixture again and coat them very well. Keep them in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Take them out from the fridge and keep in the room temperature for 15 minutes before frying.

Heat a cup of oil.

Fry 5 - 7 pieces at a time in hot oil for 3 - 4 minutes.

Then remove them from oil and keep on a paper tissue. Sprinkle some chat masala all over the chicken and serve.

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Tandoori Fish Tikka

He bought a large packet of Tilapia fillets last week. He is a crazy fan of fish and can eat it everyday, whereas, I don't like to eat 'macher jhol' / 'mach vaja' each and every day like him. I get bored very quickly. So, this week I made these 'tandoori fish tikkas' along with some rice and simple daal. They came out delicious and also uplifted the taste of our boring lunch. I followed a very easy recipe to make these. Do try it at home and let me know how these tikkas turned out for you.



Ingredients

4 fish fillets, cut into chunk sized cubes. (Any white fish)
3 Tablespoons of curd / yogurt.
1 Teaspoon of ginger and garlic paste.
2 Teaspoons of hot red chilli powder.
3 Tablespoons of tandoori masala.
1 Teaspoon of ghee.
2 Tablespoons of oil.
1 Teaspoon of black pepper powder.
Salt.
Bamboo Skewers.

Steps

Add the curd, ginger and garlic paste, tandoori

masala, red chilli powder and ghee in a mixing bowl. Mix well.

Now add the fish cubes, salt and black pepper powder into the marination. Mix well and keep it in the fridge for 1 hour.

Soak the bamboo skewers in water for 10 minutes.

Then arrange the marinated fish cubes on skewers.

Heat the oil in a flat pan.

Place those skewers on hot oil for 3 minutes each side. Make sure that the oil is very hot.

Black pepper Mutton Curry

We both adore almost any type of mutton curry. I think, once in a week, mutton curry is must for every Bengali households. I made this curry with some plain roti / chapati in dinner last month, just didn't get time to post. Now finally I am sharing this yummy recipe with you all. If you love the strong flavour of black pepper, then believe me, 'morich mangsho' is worth giving a try. I am sure your tummy and heart will be happy after having this curry. So, let's get into the recipe ...



Ingredients

10 - 15 pieces of with bone mutton pieces.
1 big onion, finely chopped.
1 Teaspoon of ginger and garlic paste.
3 Tablespoons of hung curd / thick yogurt.
3 - 4 green chilies.
Whole spices (15 - 20 black pepper corns, 5 - 6 green cardamoms, 4 - 5 cloves).
4 Tablespoons of white oil.
Salt and sugar.
Warm water.

Steps

Dry roast the whole spices in a pan for 4 - 5 minutes.
Let them cool down a bit.
Then put the roasted spices in a grinder and make semi coarse powder out of them.
Heat oil in a pan.

Add chopped onion with some salt, fry it till golden in color.
Then add ginger and garlic paste. Mix well for 2 - 3 minutes.
Beat the hung curd with a Teaspoon of sugar.
Bring the heat to low and add beaten curd. Mix well for 4 - 5 minutes.
Bring the heat again medium.
Now add half of the dry roasted powder to the masala. Mix well.
Then add washed mutton pieces and salt. Mix well for 20 minutes.
Then add some warm water and cook till the meat becomes tender.
Lastly add some sliced green chilies and the remaining dry roasted powder. Simmer for 4 - 5 minutes.
Turn off the heat, let it rest for 2 - 3 minutes,

then serve.

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Mangsher Chop

Yesterday I experienced the worst ... my camera's memory card got corrupted and I lost more than half pictures of this recipe. We tried very hard to recover those photos but no luck!! It was nobody's fault, it's just that the tiny little piece of 'card' betrayed me very harshly .. and I felt tremendously helpless towards 'technology'. Now you guys know why there is no step by step pictures in this recipe. Anyway, among all of this depression, the brightest side is the dish 'mangsher chop'. In Bengal, it is one of the popular and lip smacking snack which you can get in many fast food centers. Spicy, crumbly mutton filling inside and crispy coating outside. Here in Austin, it was pouring heavily from last 2 - 3 days and I couldn't find any better day than this to make those croquettes. You can pair them with a cup of tea or a can of beer, every-time they will taste better and better.



Ingredients

8 - 9 medium pieces of mutton.
1 boiled potato.
1 Teaspoon of ginger and garlic paste.
1 Teaspoon of chopped ginger and garlic.
3 green chilies, chopped.
1 Teaspoon of mustard oil.
1 Tablespoon of hot red chilli powder.
Salt.
4 Tablespoons of chopped onion.
2 Teaspoons of roasted cumin and coriander

powder.

1 Teaspoon of garam masala powder.
Some chopped coriander leaves.
1 egg.
Some breadcrumbs.
Oil for deep frying.
Water.

Steps

Marinate the mutton pieces with ginger garlic paste, half Tablespoon of red chilli powder, pinch of salt, mustard oil and half Teaspoon of

garam masala powder. Massage the mutton pieces with everything very well.

Keep it in the fridge for overnight or at least for 4 hours.

Now take a pressure cooker.

Add those mutton pieces with half cup of water in the cooker. Give it pressure until the meat becomes totally soft.

If you find some juice after opening the lid, bring the heat to high and stir the mutton until it absorbs all the juices.

Now add the mutton pieces into a blender and blend it to a smooth paste. Keep it aside.

While cooking the mutton, it must have released some oil. Do not discard it.

Add the chopped onion in that oil. Fry for 5 minutes.

Then add chopped ginger and garlic. Cook for 2 minutes.

Add the remaining garam masala powder, red chilli powder, roasted cumin and coriander powder. Mix well for 2 minutes.

Now peel the skin of the boiled potato, mash it well and add it in the cooker. Mix very well for 3 minutes.

Lastly add the mutton paste, chopped green chilies and coriander leaves, salt. Mix well for another 3 minutes and turn off the heat. The filling is ready.

Let it cool down a bit and then take some portion from the filling, make a patty like shape.

You will get 6 medium size croquettes out of this.

Beat the egg with pinch of salt.

Dip one patty into the egg and then roll it in breadcrumbs. You can also double coat it.

Make rest of them in this way and keep it in the fridge for 30 minutes.

After that fry them in hot oil, each side for 2 minutes.

Chanar Dalna

Chanar Dalna is a very hearty vegetarian preparation with simple ingredients. My mom used to serve this curry with 'Luchi' and the pair was heavenly. 'Chana' means curdled milk or homemade paneer and 'Dalna' means curry. Both of them are Bengali words. You can definitely make this dalna on any puja / vrat days as they are onion and garlic free. I have already shared 'chanar kalia' recipe with you all, but this one is much more simpler and hassle free than that. Try this recipe in your kitchen and enjoy a great lunch with your family.



Ingredients

6 - 10 pieces of chanar cube / homemade paneer cubes.
1 potato, cut into cubes.
1 tomato, chopped.
3 green chilies.
1 Teaspoon of ginger paste.
Spice powder (1 Teaspoon of turmeric powder, 1 Teaspoon of red chilli powder, Half Teaspoon of cumin powder and 1 Teaspoon of coriander powder).
Pinch of hing / asafoetida.
Salt and sugar.
1/4th cup of milk.
Whole spices (3 green cardamoms, 3 cloves,
1 Teaspoon of cumin seeds, half Teaspoon of

crushed coriander seeds, 1 bay leaf).

Warm water.

3 Tablespoons of oil.

1 Teaspoon of ghee.

A big pinch of garam masala.

Steps

Heat the oil in a pan.

Fry the chana / paneer cubes in hot oil for 2 minutes.

Now remove those cubes from oil and immediately soak them in some warm water.

In this way the cubes will remain soft.

Now fry the potatoes in that oil with pinch of salt and turmeric powder for 4 minutes. Then remove them from oil.

Add all of the spice powder, ginger paste,

pinch of salt and sugar in a bowl. Now add 3 Tablespoons of water in that and mix it. Keep aside.

Heat the remaining oil, add hing and saute the whole spices for few seconds.

Add that prepared spice paste and mix well for 3 minutes on medium flame.

When the oil starts separating, add the chopped tomatoes. Cook until they become mushy.

Add the fried potatoes and green chilies. Mix well for few minutes.

Now add the milk, paneer and paneer soaked water, some salt and sugar. Cook until the potatoes become soft.

Lastly add the ghee and garam masala powder. Mix and turn off the heat.

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