



KHAANAKHAJANA

WEALTH OF FOOD





together as one



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KHAANA KHAJANA

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Disclaimer : Views and comments gathered and published in this booklet are through the research conducted as a part of the community project by volunteers. They do not represent the views of Apna Virsa or any associates in any way.





About Apna Virsa

Apna Virsa is a Community Voluntary Organisation established in 2007 to promote and celebrate traditional & contemporary South Asian culture and Arts in Slough. Our aim is to keep South Asian heritage and culture alive, especially amongst young British people of South Asian heritage who are losing touch with an immense wealth of traditions related to different festivals and cultural traditions.

Our activities engage participants and audiences from different generations and cultures, bringing them together to develop greater knowledge and enjoyment of South Asian culture and heritage along with an emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles. We were privileged and honoured to receive Queens award for voluntary service in the year 2015 in recognition of our far reaching contribution to the local community.

Our project, Khaana Khajana – wealth of food, is funded through the Heritage Lottery Fund. The project involved research, documentation and raising awareness of the important cultural heritage of South Asian food. The project explored the significance of the heritage of food in British Asian culture, from its importance in religious and cultural traditions to its evolution in Britain. Traditional recipes were recorded and shared through a variety of cooking courses for adults and young people.

Food is integral within British Asian culture, bringing families and communities together and connecting 2nd and 3rd generation British Asians with their rich heritage. Within South Asian culture, recipes are traditionally passed on orally, between generations within families. The fast pace of modern society and the breakdown of extended families has impacted these oral traditions. Important recipes, their significance and stories are at risk of being lost. Through this project, we made a conscious effort to capture and share this important knowledge and heritage through oral history interviews and community heritage activities.

None of this work would have been possible without the immense support of young volunteers from Aik Saath. They were instrumental in the oral history interviews and illustrated inter-generations working together at their best. With the support of Aik Saath's team of volunteers we have been able to put together this booklet, capturing all the experiences, stories, pictures and different wonderful recipes which were shared as a part of the project.

www.apnavirsa.org.uk



together as one

About Aik Saath

The words 'Aik Saath' mean 'Together As One' in Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu. They also embody the ethos of our Queen's award-winning charity- we believe in working together to prevent violence and hatred and to strengthen community cohesion. Aik Saath was established in response to gang violence between young people from Asian backgrounds in Slough in the late 1990s. The founders of our organisation believed that young people needed to lead the efforts to resolve this conflict and over 17 years later young people are still leading our efforts to encourage cohesion in our communities. Our projects are led by a group of over fifty young volunteers aged between 11 and 19. These young people deliver training to their peers and organise events and exhibitions with a view to making our town a safer, more cohesive place in the future.

www.aiksaath.com



About Heritage Lottery Fund

From the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks we love, from precious memories to rare wildlife... we use money raised by National Lottery players to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about.

Heritage provides the roots of our identities and enriches the quality of our lives. It inspires pride in communities and is at the heart of today's tourism industry, bringing investment into local economies of nearly £50billion every year and supporting over a million jobs. That's why we believe heritage should be protected for the future, and why everyone should have the chance to explore and look after it.

www.hlf.org.uk

Journey of Khaana Khajana - Wealth of Food

We conducted research exploring the transition and evolution of south asian food in Britain.

Fond memories of childhood cooking

Many of the interviewees shared fond memories of what life was like in the country they grew up in. Most of the people we interviewed grew up in the Punjab region of India or in Kenya, and many grew up on farms. Their parents were farmers and they produced their own food by milking cows, making their own butter and growing their own fruit and vegetables. Although it wasn't always healthy fruit and vegetables that they had fond memories of eating. Harpal remembers that as a child she would snap off the sugar canes growing in the fields to chew on for a sugary treat.

Many of the interviewees recalled that their first experiences of learning how to cook came from helping and watching their parents prepare and cook food in the home. They explained how this was the best method of being taught as they didn't realise they were learning, instead they were memorising recipes as part of their chores. Many of the women also had cookery lessons, which was common for girls in Indian schools.

Moving to the UK and changes to the way they cooked

The main difference which they noticed when moving to England was that ingredients were bought from shops rather than grown at home. Growing your own food was something that was common in India, as many of the interviewees grew up on farms and their families produced their own food. Our East African interviewees talked about how easily accessible they found a wide variety of fruit, such as guava and papaya.

They also noticed being able to use many more ingredients in their cooking when they arrived in England as they were used to cooking with only seasonal vegetables at certain times of the year in India. In England, out of season vegetables were available and also a wider variety of produce which had been imported from all over the world.

Some items, such as certain spices were harder to find in Slough. Initially, people like Usha and Surinder travelled to Southall to buy spices. Vijay shared that in 1967 a van owned by Mr Sharma used to visit once a week and people would buy spices and vegetables. In 1968 the first Asian shop opened on Bath road and that was called Pertwari.

Most of interviewees had developed a favourite dish since arriving in the UK. Some of the dishes they like are Pizza, Fish and Chips, Jacket Potato and Roast Chicken.

Religion and Festivals

Some of the interviewees had religious views on food, such as only eating meat on certain days and many of our interviewees were vegetarian for religious reasons.

Food plays an important part in celebrating different special occasions and religious festivals. Our interviewees explained that Diwali is normally a time for special dishes that people might rarely make throughout the year. Sweets are an important part of this particular festival. Some of our interviewees' favourites included Jalebi, gulab jaman, laddoo, barfi, rasmalai and bhesen.

The types of food eaten across different celebrations is often quite similar. However, one of our interviewees, Usma, explained how the ingredients used in the food for the various religious festivals is chosen according to what is in season at that time of year.

When it comes to festivals and food, Vaisakhi is important as it traditionally held a special significance for farmers. Vaisakhi marks the time for harvest of the winter crops. Foods such as halwa, saag and goat curry are popular dishes for this festival.

It is not just Sikh and Hindu religious festivals that were mentioned by our interviewees. At Christmas time, Harpal gives homemade samosas to her friends as gifts. She says they are always very popular as her English friends often get bored of eating the same types of foods at this time of year and welcome a non-traditional Christmas snack!



Teaching younger generations to cook

All of our interviewees felt it was very important for younger generations to learn about traditional Indian cooking methods and recipes. They felt that it was important to continue the traditions associated with their culture, otherwise they may die out.

They also felt that a knowledge of traditional foods has been lost amongst younger people. For example, there is a lack of understanding of the different types of daals (lentils). Many young people refer to daals (lentils) by their colours instead of their actual names. E.g Black instead of Maah, Yellow instead of Channa, Green instead of Mungi.

Some of the interviewees' daughters apparently knew nothing about Indian food and how to cook it whilst others said that their daughters were even better at cooking than they were! Amarjit reported that her daughter did not know about Indian food or how to cook it until she got married then she learnt how to cook Indian food for her husband.

One interviewee said "university is good because my grandchildren never learnt how to cook at home, but when they went to university they had to learn. My granddaughter makes really nice dishes now. One thing I've noticed is when they're at university they will cook their own food, but when they come back home they expect it to be cooked for them!"

Gurinder commented that it was important to preserve culture and traditions and the old cooking techniques as this can often make better tasting food. Food prepared using handheld tools such as pestel and mortar is more flavoursome than when prepared in a blender.

Many of the interviewees also commented that younger generations have the best of both worlds. They are able to fuse and mix up traditional recipes with foods from different cultures to create more exciting dishes. Tasting and making food from different cultures is a great way to learn about countries and people. Our interviewees felt strongly that it was important for their children to learn about their own culture and food, but also about other people's.

"Enjoyed learning authentic healthy and tasty recipes from the different parts of India.
Also Gained valuable cooking tips from the tutors and fellow students." **Meliza**

Time and health conscious (impact of both)

The interviewees have become more health conscious as they have started to get older. They've changed their ingredients and methodologies mainly due to health concerns such as worries about cholesterol and heart disease. They have cut down on fatty foods, they use butter and coconut oil instead of other oils to cook with. They also mentioned that they favour green chillies over red chillies for health reasons.

All the interviewees acknowledge that time is an important factor that effects how people prepare and cook food nowadays. Satbir commented that with young people having less time and a lot more women working there is less time to spend days preparing and cooking food.

This sometimes conflicts with their attempts to eat healthier food. They mentioned that grinding and blending ingredients loses nutrients whereas more traditional methods like pestel and mortar are better for making more flavoursome, nutritious food – however it can lengthen the food preparation process considerably.

Many now buy ingredients rather than making them as it is more convenient. For example, many sweet dishes are easier to buy as they are readily available and cheap.

"Taking part in the interviews was great, the idea of bonding through food was great as it's something we all love!" **Saleha**

Access to traditional heat sources and utensils

Food tastes different here because of the way it is prepared and cooked. In India they would use clay pots to cook in (tandoor), but here they are too expensive as they are rare to find and also the heat sources here are often not suitable for these types of pots. In India they would use a wood fire to cook which also gives the food a different taste. Many of the women still use a tawa (flat pan) to cook roti, however less people use tandoor now compared to when they were back in India.

They use wooden spoons to cook so the surface of the pots doesn't get scratched; however nowadays they prefer using metal utensils. The interviewees have also started to use frying pans and non-stick pans in recent times.

A changing Punjab (it's not just our interviewees who have changed)

Interviewees noticed many changes in the Punjab region of India since moving to the UK. Many of them return every year and have noticed big changes – even when it comes to the way food is produced and the ingredients that are used.

When they were growing up in India everything was organically produced however they have noticed that this has changed in recent years. Many things are now chemically produced and organic crops are becoming rarer. This has an impact on the taste of the food and how fresh and healthy they consider the food to be.

Another thing which has altered and is believed to have had an impact on the taste is the way food is prepared and cooked. Clay pots are used less frequently and other traditional cooking methods are being replaced by frying pans and more modern utensils which make cooking more convenient and less time consuming.

“I found it really lovely to see how the older generations enjoyed sharing their traditions and recipes with us” **Romina**

Reflection

From speaking to our interviewees it became evident how important the traditions and processes around preparing, cooking and eating food was in their life. Food is not only a source of sustenance and nutrition but also an important aspect of family and social interactions, religion, as well as playing a key role in special occasions.

Preserving traditional cooking methods and cuisine is important, particularly significant for those who have moved away from the country they were born in. However, maintaining traditional ways becomes increasingly difficult as the world changes and people have less time.

For many, although the way they prepare food on a daily basis may have changed over time they still value and hold dear the traditions associated with food. Our interviewees feel it is important for young people to learn about these traditions and recipes so that their knowledge can be passed on and their memories live on, like the dishes they have shared.



“It’s been a pleasure learning hyderabadi dishes and Delhi style cooking. I have tried some of the dishes at home and they have definitely been appreciated. So thank you to Seema for organising such lovely classes and thanks to Sonal and aunty for sharing their recipes.” **Amrit**



Meat or Chicken Biryani

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Meat or chicken, cooking oil, onion, rice, plain yogurt, red chilli powder, turmeric, ginger/garlic paste, lemon, onion, clove, black jeera, fresh cardamom, fresh green chillies, fresh coriander, fresh mint, food colour (optional), saffron, milk, salt.

Measurements:

• Meat or chicken	1 kg
• Onions	2 medium size sliced thinly and fried
• Cooking oil	1 cup
• Rice	3 cups
• Plain yogurt	450gm
• Red chilli powder	1 Tbsp
• Turmeric	½ Tbsp
• Salt	1Tbsp
• Ginger/garlic paste	2 Tbsp
• Clove	4
• Black Jeera	½ tsp
• Fresh cardamom	4
• Fresh green chillies	4 cut thinly
• Fresh coriander	1 bunch cut thinly
• Fresh Mint	½ bunch cut thinly
• Lemon juice	1 freshly squeezed juice
• Food colour	½ tsp
• Saffron	½ tsp (soak in milk)
• Milk	½ cup

Method:

1. Wash and soak rice for an hour
2. Wash and drain meat
3. Add yogurt, ginger/garlic paste, chilli powder, lemon juice, turmeric, salt, yogurt, ½ jeera, cardamom, fried onion, green chillies, coriander and mint to meat and mix well.
4. Add/mix half of the oil from frying, (make sure it isn't hot!) Leave to marinate for at least one hour
5. Boil water in a pan. Add 1 tsp of salt, add rice, ½ jeera and clove
6. Cook for approximately 7 minutes. Check rice, it should be half boiled rice. Now drain the rice in a sieve.
7. Spread some oil at the bottom of a pan. Spread the meat evenly on top of the oil (at the bottom of the pan).
8. Cover with ½ cooked rice. Sprinkle colour on top, add saffron to milk and sprinkle on rice some fried onion and fresh coriander.
9. Cover the lid firmly and cook on high heat for 5 minutes or until steam starts to come and then lower the gas to medium for about 15 minutes and to very low gas for 10 minutes.
10. Switch off the heat and wait for another 5 minutes before opening the lid.
11. Carefully mix the rice and meat
12. Now serve the meat/chicken Biryani with some yogurt chutney and fresh salad.



Recipes to Share

Authentic Regional Indian Cuisine

Beetroot Curry

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Fresh Beetroot, fresh tomatoes or chopped tomatoes, salt, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, fresh coriander, green chillies, ginger, garlic, , onion, cumin seeds (black), cooking oil, butter

Measurements:

· Beetroot	4-5 medium sized and sliced thickly
· Tomato	2-chopped
· Onion	Small size onion (optional)
· Turmeric	½ tsp
· Red chilli powder	1 tsp
· Cumin seeds	1 tsp
· Salt	1 tsp
· Crushed ginger/garlic	2 Tbsp
· Green chillies	2-3 (cut length wise)
· Fresh coriander	½ bunch (chopped)
· Cooking oil	2 Tbsp
· Kari Patta	Fresh or Dried (Few)



Method:

1. Put the oil into a medium sized pan and warm the oil.
 2. Add cumin seeds & kari patta for 2 minutes
 3. Add ginger and garlic paste and cook for 1-2- minutes
 4. Now add chilli powder, turmeric, & salt
 5. Add the sliced beetroot into the mix
 6. Leave on low heat for 10 minutes
 7. Now add chopped tomatoes and leave the mix for another 15 minutes
 8. It should be almost dry, now add green chillies and fresh coriander
 9. Leave to simmer for another 5-7 minutes
- Eat with fresh nan or boiled rice!

Baghar-e-Baigan (Aubergine)

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Aubergine, onion, red chilli powder, tumeric, garlic / ginger paste, salt, coriander powder, cumin powder, sesame seed, ground peanut, tamarind, fresh curry leaves, mustard seed, cooking oil

Measurements:

Brinjal/aubergine cut in 4 & wash in salted water	½ kg
Onion (boiled & grinded)	2 medium
Green bullet chillies (optional)	7 (whole)
Red Chilli powder	1 ½ tsp
Turmeric	¼ tsp
Garlic/ginger paste	1 ½ tsp
Salt	2 ½ tsp
Roasted ingredients: (1-4)	
Dhania (Coriander) powder	1 ½ tsp
Jeera (Cumin) powder	1 ½ tsp
Sesame seed (ground)	1 ½ tsp
Peanut (ground)	1 ½ tsp
Tamarind	3 oz

For Baghar:

Fresh Curry leaves	10-12 leaves
Cooking oil	1 cup
Rai (mustard seed)	½ tsp
Jeera (Cumin seeds)	½ tsp



Method:

1. Fry aubergines in batches. Leave in a strainer
2. Boil onion (peeled) until tender & almost dry, now grind
3. Add jeera and rai to oil. Fry for 2 minutes. Add ginger & garlic paste.
4. Now add turmeric, chilli powder mix and add onion paste. Fry the mixture until the moisture is dry.
5. Add all the spices (sesame seeds, dhania powder, jeera powder, curry leaves) mix and add fried aubergines. Mix lightly without breaking the aubergines, add bullet chillies (optional), fry lightly until all the ingredients are mixed.
6. In the mean time soak tamarind in warm water, press with your fingers and take the paste out of the seeds. Strain the paste and add to the mixture.
7. Mix and check salt, if needed, add as required. Cover and leave to simmer for 30 minutes.
8. Decorate with boiled eggs cut in halves and enjoy with boiled rice.

Meat Nihari

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Mutton boneless, mutton bones, masala, cooking oil, onion, garlic & ginger paste, red chilli powder, tumeric, salt, yogurt, coriander, plain flour, fresh lemon, cloves, black pepper, ginger, chillies

Measurements:

· Mutton boneless	1 kg
· Mutton bones	½ kg
· Packet masala for nihari	1/2
· Cooking oil	1 cup
· Onion	1 sliced and fried
· Garlic and ginger paste	2 Tbsp
· Red chilli powder	1 Tbsp
· Turmeric	½ tsp
· Salt	1 Tbsp
· Plain Yogurt	2 Tbsp
· Fresh coriander	½ bunch
· Plain Flour	4 Tbsp
· Fresh lemon	2 (cut into 4 pieces)
· Water	4 cups
· Cloves	Few
· Black pepper	few
· Crushed ginger	2 Tbsp
· Green Chillies	Optional



Image Source: www.desichef.com

Method:

1. Wash the meat and bones and leave in a strainer to dry.
2. Fry onions in cooking oil until its light brown/goldren. Remove the pan from the heat. Take half of the fried onion out to use later.
3. Add cloves, black pepper in pan and bring the pan back to heat for 2-3 mins.
4. Add ginger /garlic paste fry for another 2-3 mins and add meat and bones and fry until the meat has dried completely. Add nihari masala & add yogurt when it releases the oil.
5. Mix plain flour in 1 cup of water (thoroughly)then add 4 cups more, mix and add to meat.
6. Leave the pan on heat, covered completely to simmer for 40 mins. Check to see if the meat is cooked & soft.
7. Leave for another 10 mins. Garnish with coriander, add lemon.

Vegetarian Burger/Kebabs

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Boiled & mashed potatoes, spring onions (chopped), cabbage, red & green pepper, fresh spinach, eggs, Salt, black pepper, garlic paste, green chillies, fresh coriander, fresh bread crumbs and fresh lemon juice.

Measurements:

· Boiled & mashed potatoes	1 kg
· Spring onion	½ bunch
· Cabbage	small size (half) and chopped
· Red & green peppers	½ & ½ each
· Fresh spinach	100 grams (chopped)
· Eggs	2 (medium size)
· Salt	2 tsp
· Black pepper	1 tsp
· Garlic paste	2 tsp
· Green chillies	3 (chopped)
· Fresh coriander	½ bunch
· Fresh bread crumbs	2 cups
· Fresh lemon juice	1/2 tsp



Method:

1. Wash and boil potatoes fully covered in water until its soft to touch. Peel and mash
2. Chop spring onions, cabbage, red and green pepper and spinach
3. Mix all the ingredients into the mashed potatoes.
4. Add salt, black pepper, garlic paste, green chillies, fresh coriander and lemon juice and mix thoroughly.
5. Check salt, if needed add some more and mix.
6. Take a handful of mixture and make a round kebab.
7. To keep the kabab together dip it in eggs and cover it in bread crumbs and then fry.

Aloo Baigan (Potato & Aubergine)

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Potatos, aubergine, salt, red chillies, tumeric, garlic & ginger paste, jeera seeds, kari leaves, green chillies, coriander, oil

Measurements for Aloo Baigan (Potato & Aubergine):

• Potato Peeled and cut in squares	1 lb
• Brinjal/aubergine cut in squares	8 oz
• Salt	1 ½ tsp
• Crushed red Chillies	1 ½ tsp
• Turmeric	½ tsp
• Garlic/ginger paste	2 tsp
• Jeera seeds	½ tsp
• Fresh Kari leaves	Few
• Cooking oil	2 Tbsp
• Green chillies	2 (chopped) to garnish
• Fresh coriander to garnish	½ bunch



Image Source: www.unglamfam.wordpress.com

Method:

1. Warm the oil in a pan. Add curry leaves and jeera seeds, then add ginger/garlic paste and add salt and turmeric. Mix it for 2-3- minutes.
2. Add remaining ingredients, mix well together and leave on low heat for 15 minutes.
3. Check if the oil has come on top and vegetable is soft or else, close the lid and leave for another 5 minutes.
4. Before serving, sprinkle/garnish with fresh coriander and green chillies.
5. Enjoy it with chappati or boiled rice.

Tomato Cut

INGREDIENTS REQUIRED:

Peeled & Chopped tomatos, dhania powder, jeera, salt, chilli powder, tumeric, garlic paste, green chillies, kari leaves, garlic cloves, birds eye chillies

Measurements:

• Peeled and chopped tomato	400gm
• Dhania powder	1 tsp
• Jeera	1 tsp
• Salt	1 tsp
• Chilli powder	1 tsp
• Turmeric	½ tsp
• Garlic paste	1 1/2 tsp
• Green chillies	2 (chopped)
• Water	4 cups
• Fresh coriander to garnish	½ bunch
• Jeera seeds	½ tsp
• Kari leaves	Few
• Garlic cloves	3
• Birds eye chillies	Few, chopped into small pieces
• Cooking oil	2 Tbsp

Method:

1. Add all ingredients from 1-9 in a medium size pan and boil.
2. After few minutes reduce the heat and leave to simmer for 40 mins.
It should be thick consistency (not too watery). If it is, leave for 10 minutes more. Check salt to your taste.
3. Take off the pan from heat and leave to cool down for 15 minutes.
4. In the meantime warm the oil in a frying pan. Add jeera seeds, curry leaves & garlic cloves & few birds eye chillies.
5. When the garlic cloves are brown turn off the heat.
6. Wait couple of minutes for oil to settle down then pour onto the tomato mixture.
7. Take out in a deep dish garnish with coriander decorate with boiled eggs cut into halves and serve with boiled rice.



Quick Bite Recipes

Chapatti

Ingredients For the dough: 1 cup whole wheat flour and water, water as required

Method

1. For the dough: In a bowl add flour and slowly add water combining all the flour and making it into a dough of medium consistency. Knead it well for the gluten to work . Keep aside for 30 minutes
2. Knead the dough again for a couple of minutes
3. Now take a golf ball sized ball from the dough and flatten into small discs
4. Dust with a little flour and roll out using a rolling pin until the dough is approx. 5" in diameter
5. Heat a non-stick tawa (skillet) or a pan and place the chapatti on it
6. When tiny bubbles appear on the surface, turn chapatti over and continue to cook the other side until brown spots appear on the underside
7. Turnover and press lightly with a folded cloth until the chapatti is puffed
8. Remove from tawa, apply ghee on one side and serve hot with your choice of curry

Tomato & Onion Raita

Ingredients: 250g natural yogurt, ½ tsp cumin powder , 1 tomato deseeded and finely chopped, salt to taste, ½ onion finely chopped

Method

1. In a bowl, whisk the yogurt
2. Add the chopped onions and tomatoes and mix well
3. Add cumin powder and salt and serve

Teekha Murg

Ingredients For the dough: 500g boneless chicken pieces, ½ tsp red chilli powder , 1 onion finely chopped, ½ tsp black pepper powder ½ tin of chopped tomatoes, ½ tsp cumin powder , 1 tsp ginger & garlic paste, 1-2 green chillies , ½ tsp onion seeds (kalonji). salt to taste ½ tsp fennel seeds (saunf), vegetable/ olive oil as required, 7-8 curry leaves

Method

1. Thoroughly clean and dry the chicken
2. Fry curry leaves and crush them
3. Heat oil in a pan. Add the onion seeds and fennel seeds
4. After a couple of minutes add ginger-garlic paste and sauté for another couple of minutes
5. Add the chopped onion, tomato and green chillies and fry till onions turns brown in colour
6. Add the boneless chicken and stir for a 5 to 7 minutes
7. Add chilli powder, black pepper powder, cumin powder and mix well
8. Reduce the heat. Cover and cook for 7 to 10 minutes . Add water for required gravy thickness and cook for further 5-7 minutes
10. Add the crushed curry leaves and mix well
9. Serve hot and enjoy this with chapatti or rice
7. Turnover and press lightly with a folded cloth until the chapatti is puffed
8. Remove from tawa, apply ghee on one side and serve hot with your choice of curry

Pea Pilau Rice

Ingredients: 1 cup Basmati Rice, 2-3 peppercorns, 1 tsp. Cumin seeds, ½ cup peas, 1- 2 cloves, 2 tbsp. oil, 1- 2 green cardamoms, Salt to taste, 1 bay Leaf

Method

1. Wash and soak rice for around 20-30 minutes.
2. Heat oil in a pan and add cumin seeds, cloves, green cardamom, peppercorns and bay leaf and fry on a low flame.
3. Now add the peas and salt, mix well.
4. Add rice and 1½ cups of water. Let the water boil and then simmer and cook on low flame till rice is done.
5. Serve hot with choice of curry.

Aloo Tikki

Ingredients: 2 boiled potatoes, 1 tsp ginger paste, 1 slice bread, salt to taste, ½ tsp amchoor powder, 1 tbsp. cornflour, ½ tsp garam masala, fresh coriander leaves (optional), ½ tsp red chilli powder, oil for sautéing

Method

1. Boil and mash the potatoes with your hands and keep aside.
2. Dip the bread in water and immediately remove it. Squeeze gently in between the palms of your hands to remove excess water.
3. In a bowl add boiled potatoes, bread, garam masala, amchoor powder, red chilli powder, ginger paste, cornflour, salt and mix well.
4. Divide the mixture into golf size balls and flatten each ball.
5. Heat a table spoon of oil on a non-stick pan or tawa. Shallow fry the tikkis 1 or 2 at a time until brown and crisp on each side.
6. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve hot.

Onion Bhaji

Ingredients: 2 large onions - thickly chopped, 1 tbsp. lemon juice, 100g gram flour, ¼ tsp cumin powder (jeera), 1 tsp carom seeds (ajwain) ¼ tsp coriander powder, 1 tsp garam masala, cold water to mix, ½ tsp red chilli powder, vegetable oil for frying, ¼ tsp dry mango powder (amchoor), salt to taste

Method

1. In a bowl, add the gram flour, carom seeds, garam masala, red chilli powder, dry mango powder, lemon juice, cumin powder, coriander powder and salt. Make a well in the centre
2. Start by adding 3 tbsp. of cold water to the above and mix until a thick batter forms (slowly add more water if required)
3. Heat the oil in a karahi to smoking point
4. Add the onions to the batter and mix well to ensure the batter coats the onions evenly
5. Gather the mixture in a tablespoon and use the side of the bowl to tidy any loose pieces
6. Ensure the oil is hot enough by dropping a pinch of batter into the oil. It should rise instantly to the surface and not split
7. Slowly drop the tablespoon of batter into the oil from just above the surface of the oil. Fry 4-5 of these bhajis at one time
8. Deep fry on a medium heat, turning a couple of times until golden brown in colour
9. Drain on kitchen paper and serve with mint chutney or tomato ketchup

Lamb Seekh Kebab

Ingredients For the dough: 1 kg - Mince Lamb, ½ tsp chilli powder, 2" piece ginger grated or finely chopped, 1 tbsp. dry coriander powder, 2-3 green chillies 1tbsp lemon juice, 2-3 cardamoms (small, green, ground), ½ cup gram flour (besan), 1 tsp garam masala, Salt to taste

Method

1. Finely chop ginger and green chillies.
2. Mix the above with the lamb mince.
3. Add salt, chilli powder, coriander powder, lemon juice, cardamoms, garam masala and gram flour and knead the mixture like dough.
4. Take a large hand-full of the mixture and cover the bamboo skewer with the mixture about ¼" thick along the length.
5. Preheat oven to 375° F. Bake for 25 minutes or until brown. Serve hot with onions slices and lettuce with coriander chutney.

Coconut Laddoo

Ingredients: 1 tin condensed milk, 1½ cups desiccated coconut powder + extra for dusting laddoos

Method

1. In a bowl, take desiccated coconut and add condensed milk slowly. You may need little more or less of condensed milk, that depends on quality of your coconut.
2. Mix everything well to combine.
3. Take small portion of mix and press between palm to make into smooth round ball - laddoo shape. This will be very delicate so don't apply of too much of pressure.
4. In another bowl or plate take desiccated coconut and place the prepared laddoo. Roll the laddoo with dry coconut all over, if required slight roll again to shape it.
5. Laddoos stays good in room temperature for around 2-3 days, if you want to keep for longer then put them in the refrigerator.

Chole

Ingredients: 1 cup Chickpeas, 1 cup chopped tomatoes either tinned or fresh, 2 big cardamoms, ½ tsp garam masala, 1" stick cinnamon 1 tsp coriander powder, 1 tea bag, 1 tsp red chilli powder, 1 tsp ginger paste, 1 tsp cumin powder, 1½ tsp anardana powder, Salt to taste 2 onions finely chopped, 1 tbsp. oil

Method

1. Soak chickpeas with cardamom, cinnamon sticks and tea bag overnight with enough water.
2. Pressure cook all the ingredients together to one whistle. After the first whistle, keep on low flame for about 20 minutes. Keep aside to cool down.
3. Heat oil in a pan, add finely chopped onions and cook till golden brown.
4. Now add the chopped tomatoes. Cook them till the mixture turns brownish in colour.
5. Now add ginger and cook for further couple of minute on a low flame.
6. Add coriander powder, cumin powder, anardana powder, mix well.
7. From the pressure cooker, remove the tea bag and the whole spices and add the boiled chickpeas to the onion mix. Save the water as it might be required to make the gravy. Mix well and cook for 5-7 minutes. Add water if required to get desired consistency for the gravy.
8. Add garam masala, red chilli powder and salt. Mix well and cook for 10-15 minutes.
9. If the chanas become very dry some water can be added to get some gravy.
10. Serve hot with Bhaturas or Kulcha.

A Little peek into history of some of the recipes

Pakorras/ Bhajis

Pakorras an all-time favourite snack... enjoyed by people of all ages. Originally from India but it is found across South Asia especially in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Pakorras are created by taking one or two ingredients, such as onion, eggplant, potato, spinach, plantain, paneer, cauliflower, tomato, or chili pepper. They are also occasionally prepared with bread, buckwheat, groundnut, fish, or chicken. They are dipped in a batter made from gram flour and then deep-fried. The most popular varieties include pyaaz pakora, made from onion, and aloo pakora, made from potato.

Chapati/ Roti/ Phulka

Chapati is an unleavened flatbread (also known as roti or Phulka) from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. It is a common staple in South Asia as well as amongst South Asian expatriates throughout the world. Chapati forms the main part of a Indian diet along with a curry dish and a vegetable side.

Chapatis are made using a soft dough comprising Atta flour, salt and water. Atta is made from hard Gehun (Indian wheat, or durum). It is more finely ground than most western-style whole wheat flours. Traditionally, roti is prepared without salt to provide a bland background for spicy dishes.

Raita

Raita is an Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi side dish made with dahi (yogurt, often referred to as curd) together with raw or cooked vegetables like cucumber, boiled potatoes, pomegranate and pineapple. Raita is served as a side dish to be eaten with main course dishes. It helps to cool the palate when eating spicy dishes.



Our tutors who delivered cooking workshops:

Mrs Sonell Suneja

Having been born and brought up in an Indian family, my first cooking skills developed as a child, helping my mum and grandmother in the kitchen making chappitis and stirring the curries.

While growing up I attended lots of cookery lessons and practised the recipes on my family and friends. The school I attended also lay a lot of emphasis on cooking. There I not only learnt how to cook but the importance of how to present the food and the nutritional value of food.

Later I went to Lady Irwin College a specialst Home Economics college. One of the major subjects I learnt was Food Science. Where in early days cooking was a hobby then it became a passion. We tried new recipes and learnt all about the nutritional value and importance of various components that made our daily diet.

After getting married and having children it felt I was cooking all the time everytime, even then I always made an effort to try both old and new recipes. Recipes from around the world and from back home. Then I started making curry for my sons school fair, charity events and my work events. Friends and acquaintances all wanted to know the secret of my cooking and that's when the idea of a cookery school evolved.



Mrs Farida Ahmed

Mrs Ahmed has been in education and training for over 35 years. Some of her roles includes being a head teacher, an adult education trainer and an advisor at Citizen's advice bureau.

Due to her personal interest in cooking international cuisines for her extensive family she went and completed a two year accredited chef's course at East Berkshire college.

Until very recently she has been delivering various cooking courses from different venues in RBWM.

Mrs Ahmed has now retired from her career and is a carer for her elderly mother.





KHAANAKHAJANA

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