INDIA CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION COOKBOOK



Recipes Across the Generations

favorite recipes & family stories from the ICA of Central Texas

BREAKFAST & SNACKS · CONDIMENTS & SALADS · RICE & BREADS · VEGETABLES & DALS
MAINS · DESSERTS · KUSWAR

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PREFACE

India Catholic Association Cookbook: Recipes Across the Generations

In the summer of 2026, our India Catholic Association (ICA) youth, led by Melissa Sacrafamilia and Ramona Kar, went on a recipe treasure hunt and found priceless gems – favorite recipes from ICA parents and grandparents and some of their own culinary creations.

Using the analogy of a recipe, our team cooked up a dish we are proud of!

INGREDIENTS

- The energy and creativity of Jeremiah, Adam, Mark, Nicolai, Gabriella, Laina, Kira, Lexa, Ryan, Sophia, Anna, Lara and Jay
- Stories, tips, and memories from ICA moms, dads, and grandparents
- Many animated brainstorming sessions
- Phone calls, with plenty of "What is the serving size?" and "What is the cook time?"
- Illustrations, draft layouts, and painstaking editing and proofreading

HOW WE GOT THE DISH TO THE TABLE

The ICA youth gathered at Melissa's home during the summer of 2026 for several lively brainstorming sessions. We stirred each person's talents into the mix, and added a generous helping of laughter, especially on the day we made kulkuls together.

Relish this one-of-a-kind cookbook brimming with recipes, from breakfast classics to Christmas goodies. Most are beloved traditions of our ICA families, handed down through generations, savored during Christmas mornings, picnics, family gatherings and feast days. In collecting them, our youth absorbed the beauty and nostalgia of the family lore behind each recipe.

Along the way, they practiced editing, proofreading, creating layouts, and marketing research — skills that will be useful on their professional paths.

We are very thankful to the moms, dads, and grandparents who dug deep into their memories, and shared their culinary secrets.

We deeply appreciate Myra D'Souza for making this book possible through her generous gift of time and expertise.

We hope you cherish this book as a family keepsake.

To serve, open any page, pick a recipe, and cook it with someone you love. Then pass it on.

THE YOUTH TEAM

The cooks behind the book

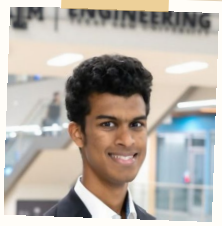
Recipe hunters, interviewers, editors, proofreaders, layout designers — and official kulkul makers.



Jeremiah



Adam



Mark



Nicolai



Gabriella



Laina



Kira



Lexa



Ryan



Sophia



Anna



Lara



Jay

Led by Melissa Sacrafamilia and Ramona Kar · Summer 2026

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CHAPTER 1

Breakfast & Snacks

Tea-time plates, after-school treats and the first meal of the day.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Mama's After-School Ribbon Sandwiches *Mona Cardozo*
Filos (Banana Fritters) *Aldila Lobo*
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Mama's After-School Ribbon Sandwiches

from the kitchen of Mona Cardozo

SERVES 6–8 · ABOUT 2 HOURS



Maria J. Coutinho



> *My mother used to lovingly prepare these sandwiches for my siblings and me, welcoming us home the moment we walked through the door after school. Paired with a hot cup of evening tea, these hearty, satisfying sandwiches were the ultimate comfort food — and more than enough to keep us completely full until dinner time.*

INGREDIENTS

Green filling (first layer)

- 1 bunch coriander leaves
- ½ bunch mint leaves
- 3 green chilies
- 4 cloves garlic
- 10 cashews, soaked in water
- ½ cup grated coconut
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp salt
- A little water, for grinding
- 1 tbsp butter

Orange filling (second layer)

- 2 large carrots, chopped small
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- A pinch each of salt and pepper
- 3 tbsp mayonnaise

Red filling (third layer)

- 2 medium beetroots, peeled and cubed
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp mayonnaise

Assembling

- 4 slices thin sandwich bread per sandwich

METHOD

Green filling (first layer)

1. Grind the coriander, mint, green chilies, garlic, soaked cashews, coconut, lemon juice, salt and a little water into a thick paste.

2 Melt the butter in a pan, pour in the green filling and sauté until thick.

3 Let it cool completely and set aside in a bowl.

Orange filling (second layer)

4 Boil the carrots until fork-tender, then drain.

5 Heat the butter with the oil (the oil keeps the butter from burning). Add the onion and cook until caramelized.

6 Add the carrots, salt and pepper and sauté together.

7 Once cool, grind the carrots and onion with the mayonnaise into a thick filling.

Red filling (third layer)

8 Boil the beetroot until fork-tender and let it cool.

9 Grind with the salt and pepper — it should be a little thick, not runny.

10 Mix in the mayonnaise.

Assembling

11 Spread a slice of bread with the green filling and top with a second slice.

12 Spread with the carrot filling and top with a third slice.

13 Spread with the beetroot filling and close with the fourth slice.

14 Press gently so the layers settle, trim the crusts, and cut each sandwich into four bite-size pieces.

FROM THE COOK

— Some recipes butter the bread while layering. Since the fillings already have butter, I skip it.

Filos (Banana Fritters)

from the kitchen of Aldila Lobo

MAKES ABOUT 15



Aldila & Adam

> *Growing up in Kuwait, I have vivid memories of my mom whipping this up as a weekend snack. She always made it when none of us touched the bananas and they were all brown — too mushy to eat, but perfect for filos. One of the best parts is the joy of the mess: my boys loved getting their (clean!) hands into the banana batter like it was playdough. Every time we make filos, the aroma in the house reminds me of my mom.*



INGREDIENTS

- 5 over-ripe bananas
- ¼ cup sugar or jaggery
- ¼ tsp cardamom
- 1 cup flour (whole wheat works too)
- ¼–½ cup coconut oil

METHOD

1. Mash the bananas well in a bowl.
2. Add the sugar and cardamom, then fold in the flour until just mixed. The batter should be like pancake batter.
3. Heat the oil in a shallow pan. Drop in heaping tablespoons of batter, 5–6 at a time, and cook on medium heat about 3 minutes, until set and crunchy-brown underneath.
4. Flip gently and cook the other side 3–4 minutes.
5. Drain on paper towels and enjoy with a nice cup of tea.

FROM THE COOK

— This is an eyeball-it recipe — scale it to however many bananas you have.

Bhel Puri

from the kitchen of Malissa D'Souza

SERVES 6–8 · ABOUT 2 HOURS

> *The secret to delicious bhel puri is preparing your own chutney.*

INGREDIENTS

Tamarind–date chutney

- 1 cup dates
- ½ cup tamarind
- ⅓ cup jaggery
- 2–3 dried Kashmiri chilies
- 2–3 dry red chilies
- ½ tsp dry ginger powder
- ½ tsp fennel seeds
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp rock salt, or to taste

Assembly

- 2 boiled potatoes, cubed
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped (keep ¼ cup for garnish)
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 2–3 green chilies
- Salt, to taste
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1–2 tsp chaat masala
- 1 cup chivda mix of your choice
- 2 cups murmura (puffed rice)
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- Papdis, to serve

METHOD

Tamarind–date chutney

1. Soak the dates, tamarind and jaggery for at least an hour.
2. Boil the soaked mixture with the chilies, ginger, fennel, cumin and rock salt for about 10 minutes.
3. Grind into a smooth chutney.

Assembly

4. In a large bowl, mix the potatoes, onion, tomato, green chilies, salt and lime juice with the chutney.
5. Add the chaat masala, chivda, murmura and cilantro and toss.
6. Serve right away with papdis.

Dahi Vada

from the kitchen of Rehana Rodrigues

MAKES ABOUT 30 · 6 HOURS SOAKING + 2 HOURS



Rehana Rodrigues

> *When I lived in Delhi, a close friend shared this recipe with me. Since then, I have been customizing it and preparing it for potlucks and family dinners.*



INGREDIENTS

Vadas

- 1 cup urad dal
- A pinch of asafoetida (hing)
- 1-inch piece ginger
- 2 green chilies
- 3–4 tsp water
- Salt, to taste
- About 250 ml oil, for frying

Dahi base

- 2 cups thick curd (yogurt)
- ½ cup milk or water
- 1 tsp roasted cumin powder
- 1 tsp Kashmiri red chili powder

Tadka

- 3 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 4–5 small dried red chilies
- A pinch of asafoetida
- 20 curry leaves

METHOD

Vadas

1. Wash and soak the dal for about 6 hours.
2. Grind with the ginger, chilies, hing and a little salt, adding water a tablespoon at a time — use as little as possible for a smooth paste. Rest 10 minutes.
3. While the oil heats in a kadai, whisk the batter by hand for about 5 minutes until light and fluffy.

4 With wet fingers, drop lime-sized balls into the hot oil without crowding. Fry on medium for 2–3 minutes until golden on both sides. Drain.

5 Soak the vadas in 2–3 cups warm water with 1 tsp salt for 20 minutes, then squeeze each one very gently.

Dahi base

6 Whisk the curd with a little salt and the cumin and chili powders, thinning with milk or water to a thick, pourable consistency.

7 Dip each vada in the curd and arrange on a serving plate. Top with more curd and a sprinkle of cumin and chili powder.

Tadka

8 Heat the oil, add the cumin, chilies and hing, stir briefly and turn off the heat. Add the curry leaves and pour the hot tadka over the vadas.

FROM THE COOK

— It's easiest to grind and fry the vadas the day before and finish the rest the next day.

Homemade Samosas

from the kitchen of Lara Prabhu

MAKES 12–16 · ABOUT 2 HOURS



Lara Prabhu

> *For the longest time, we believed samosas had to be store-bought — too laborious to make at home. But one day Mai, our grandmother, and her sister came up with this easy recipe using simple kitchen ingredients. Over time they perfected it, and suddenly our family realized samosas no longer meant a trip to the store.*

INGREDIENTS

Crust

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp softened butter
- ½ tsp ajwain (carom seeds)
- 1 tsp salt
- About ¾ cup lukewarm water

Filling

- 2 lb potatoes
- ½ medium onion, chopped
- 1 green chili, chopped
- 10 curry leaves, chopped
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- Salt, to taste
- 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 1 tsp amchur (or 2 tsp lemon juice)
- ¼ tsp sugar
- Oil

Sealing paste

- ¼ cup flour
- 4 tbsp warm water

Assemble and fry

- About 2 cups oil, for frying
- 2 pinches each of salt and red chili powder

METHOD

Crust

1. Rub the flour, butter, ajwain and salt together for about 2 minutes.
2. Add the water a little at a time and knead 5 minutes into a firm, smooth, non-sticky dough.
3. Coat with a little oil, cover and rest 30 minutes.

Filling

4. Boil the potatoes and mash while warm — leave them a little chunky.

5 Heat a couple tablespoons of oil and add the mustard seeds. When they pop, add the onion, chili, curry leaves and a pinch of salt and cook until translucent.

6 Stir in the potatoes and turmeric and cook 2 minutes on low. Turn off the heat.

7 Stir in the amchur, sugar and cilantro. Adjust salt and spice.

Sealing paste

8 Mix into a smooth, wet paste — this is your “glue.”

Assemble and fry

9 Roll golf-ball-sized pieces of dough into thin circles, about the size of a small tortilla, and cut each in half.

10 Brush the paste along the edges of a half-circle, fold into a cone and fill with about 2 tbsp filling. Seal the top firmly with paste.

11 Heat the oil to 325–350°F (160–175°C) and fry up to four at a time, turning, for 8–10 minutes until deep golden.

12 Drain and serve warm with tea, green chutney or a tamarind dip.

FROM THE COOK

— Assemble a big batch ahead and freeze them uncooked, then fry fresh on the day.

Best Blueberry Muffins

from the kitchen of Lara Prabhu

MAKES 12 · ABOUT 1 HOUR



Lara Prabhu

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ¾ tsp salt
- 1 stick (½ cup) butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1½ tsp vanilla extract
- ½ cup milk
- 2¼ cups blueberries

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Mix the flour, baking powder and salt.
2. Cream the butter and sugar, then beat in the eggs and vanilla.
3. Mix in the flour mixture, alternating with the milk.
4. Fold in the blueberries and divide among lined muffin cups.
5. Bake about 25 minutes, until lightly golden.

Roast Beef Sandwiches

from the kitchen of Alba Gonsalves

ABOUT 8 SANDWICHES · 8 HOURS MARINATING + 3 HOURS



Alba Gonsalves

> *We used to live in Kuwait, where my boys finished high school. One day I packed roast beef sandwiches for their lunch. When they came home I asked one of my sons if he enjoyed them. "No!" he said. "One fell out of my hand and I had to throw it away." What about the other one? "I felt so sad for the sandwich that fell, I couldn't enjoy the second one!"*

INGREDIENTS

Beef and marinade

- 2 lb beef, one whole uncut piece
- 3-inch piece ginger, finely chopped
- 10 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 15 whole cloves
- 4-inch cinnamon stick
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1½ tbsp salt
- 5 tbsp vinegar
- 1½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp pepper

Cooking and assembly

- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 medium onion, halved
- 3 cups water
- 1 loaf sandwich bread
- Butter
- Mustard

METHOD

Beef and marinade

1. Rub the salt all over the beef, then pierce it deeply all over with a fork for 3–4 minutes.
2. Coat with the ginger and garlic, then the turmeric, cumin and pepper, lemon juice and vinegar. Fork again for 3 minutes. Scatter the cloves and cinnamon around, seal and refrigerate.
3. After 4 hours, fork the meat again for 2 minutes and marinate 4 more hours.

Cooking and assembly

4. Scrape the whole spices, ginger and garlic off the beef into a bowl. Stir in the water a cup at a time, then strain and keep the spiced water.
5. Heat the oil in a deep pot, sauté the onion for a minute, then sear the beef on all sides, about 2 minutes.
6. Pour in the spiced water, bring to a simmer, cover and cook on medium until the beef is completely tender and the liquid has nearly dried up. Cool completely.
7. Slice thinly. Spread bread with butter and a little mustard and layer in one or two slices of beef.

Healthy Zucchini Brownies

from the kitchen of Mithila Saldhanha

MAKES 9 · 40–55 MINUTES

> *My kids love treats, especially after school or after a heavy meal. The best way to get them to eat veggies is to sneak them into treats. A win-win for everyone!*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 zucchini, grated
- ½ cup honey
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup oat flour (ground quick oats), plus extra
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ cup chocolate chips

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and line a 9×9-inch pan with parchment.
2. Mix the zucchini, honey, oil, egg and vanilla.
3. Stir in the oat flour, cocoa and baking soda. I don't squeeze the zucchini, so keep a little extra oat flour handy to get a thick batter.
4. Fold in the chocolate chips and spread in the pan.
5. Bake 30–35 minutes, until the center is just set — don't overbake if you like them fudgy. Cool completely before cutting.

Granola

from the kitchen of Nicolai Sacrafamilia

MAKES 6 CUPS · ABOUT 35 MINUTES



INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups rolled oats
- 2 cups assorted nuts and seeds (almonds, walnuts, pecans, pumpkin and sunflower seeds)
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut flakes
- ¼ cup coconut oil
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup maple syrup
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tsp cinnamon

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F (163°C) and line a sheet pan with parchment.
2. Combine the oats, cinnamon and coconut flakes.
3. Warm the honey and coconut oil about 15 seconds until melted, then stir in the maple syrup and vanilla.
4. Pour over the oats, stir until evenly coated and spread on the pan.
5. Bake 18–20 minutes, stirring halfway. Stir in the nuts and seeds for the last 5 minutes.
6. Cool completely on the pan, break into clusters and store airtight.

Akuri (Parsi-Style Scrambled Eggs)

from the kitchen of Hilla D'Souza

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 6 eggs
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 medium tomatoes, finely chopped
- ¾ tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 2 green chilies, seeded and finely diced
- ½ tsp turmeric
- A pinch of Kashmiri red chili powder
- 2 tbsp chopped cilantro
- Oil
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Heat a splash of oil in a heavy pan and fry the onion until rich medium-brown. Add the green chilies and sauté.
2. Add the ginger-garlic paste and cook 1–2 minutes until the raw smell is gone. Add the tomatoes and cook until soft and mushy.
3. Sprinkle in the turmeric and chili powder. Beat the eggs in a separate bowl.
4. Pour in the eggs, season with salt and scramble gently on medium-low.
5. Just before they set, fold in the cilantro. Serve soft and moist with warm buttered toast.

Easy Cornflake Chivda

from the kitchen of Neil Sacrafamilia

SERVES 10 · 20–25 MINUTES



Neil Sacrafamilia



> *Meet chivda: India's savory answer to granola and the ultimate anytime snack. Store-bought versions are often heavy on additives and deep-fried, but making it at home puts you in control. It comes together in minutes, scales up easily and stays crisp for weeks.*

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups corn flakes
- 1 tbsp oil
- 3 tsp chaat masala, garam masala or spice blend of your choice
- ½ cup cashews
- ½ cup peanuts
- ¼ cup chana dal
- 10–15 curry leaves
- ¼ cup coconut shards
- ¼ cup fox nuts (makhana)
- ½ tsp chili powder
- 2 tsp powdered sugar
- A pinch of amchur (optional)
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a wok or wide pan.
2. Sauté the peanuts and cashews until just golden.
3. Add the chana dal and curry leaves for 30–60 seconds.
4. Stir in the masala, then the coconut, then the fox nuts.
5. Finish with the corn flakes, amchur, chili powder, sugar and salt, and toss well.

FROM THE COOK

— Keeps 2–3 weeks in an airtight container.

Sweet Poha (Beaten Rice)

from the kitchen of Melissa Sacrafamilia

SERVES 2 · 10 MINUTES

> *I grew up having sweet poha as one of my breakfast options, and it is my favorite, especially topped with mangoes and chia seeds. Most days I rely on the humble banana to make it wholesome. It comes together in less than 10 minutes — great for those on the run.*



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups thin poha (beaten rice)
- 1 cup grated coconut, thawed if frozen
- 2–3 tsp jaggery, honey or maple syrup
- A pinch of cardamom (optional)
- 1 tsp ghee or coconut oil (optional)
- Chopped banana or mango
- Nuts, chia or pumpkin seeds (optional)

METHOD

1. Mix the poha with the coconut, sweetener, cardamom and ghee.
2. Top with banana or mango and any seeds or nuts you like.

CHAPTER 2

Condiments & Salads

Chutneys to bottle, salads to share, and the little things that finish a table.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Mango Chutney *Robin Kar*
Green Coconut Chutney *Maria Rodrigues*
Potato Salad *Cheryl Fernandes*
Signature Corn and Bean Salad *Sophia Paul*
Easy Fruit & Greens Salad *Selma D'Mello*

Mango Chutney

from the kitchen of Robin Kar

MAKES SEVERAL JARS



Mary Kar

> *My mother, Mary, used to make this chutney in May, when mangoes were abundant. My sister Roma, my grandmother and I enjoyed helping my mother in this chutney enterprise.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg mangoes, very finely diced
- 1 kg sugar
- About 560 ml distilled white vinegar (¾ of a 750 ml bottle)
- 40 g dried red chilies
- 40 g peeled ginger
- 40 g peeled garlic, sliced lengthwise

METHOD

1. Grind the chilies and ginger to a smooth paste, adding a splash of the vinegar as needed.
2. In a large heavy-bottomed pot, simmer the mangoes with the sugar until completely soft and cooked through.
3. Stir in the chili-ginger paste and garlic and simmer a few minutes.
4. Pour in the remaining vinegar, bring back to a rolling boil and turn off the heat immediately.
5. Cool completely, then bottle in clean, sterilized jars.

FROM THE COOK

— The original recipe used the standard 750 ml vinegar bottles of 1970s–80s Mumbai. Adjust the vinegar slightly depending on how tart your mangoes are.

Green Coconut Chutney

from the kitchen of Maria Rodrigues

30 MINUTES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup fresh coconut
- 1 bunch cilantro
- 4 green chilies
- 1 clove garlic
- A small piece of ginger (smaller than the garlic)
- ½-inch piece tamarind
- A pinch of turmeric
- ¼ tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp sugar
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Grind everything together to a fine paste.

FROM THE COOK

— Spread on sliced bread for classic chutney sandwiches.

Potato Salad

from the kitchen of Cheryl Fernandes

SERVES 6–8



Cheryl Fernandes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb medium red potatoes
- 4–6 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 small celery stalk, finely chopped
- 3 small onions, finely chopped
- 4 tbsp minced sweet onion (optional)
- ¼ cup minced parsley (optional), plus more to garnish
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp white vinegar
- 3 tbsp yellow mustard
- 2 tsp salt, or to taste
- ¼–½ tsp black pepper

METHOD

1. Boil the potatoes in their skins about 25 minutes, until just fork-tender — overcooking makes them starchy. Drain.
2. Cool and peel the potatoes and eggs. Cube the potatoes and chop the egg whites into a bowl; set the yolks aside.
3. Mash the yolks with the vinegar, mustard, salt, pepper and mayonnaise.
4. Add the celery, onions, sweet onion and parsley to the potatoes.
5. Fold in the yolk dressing until everything is coated. Garnish with parsley and serve warm or chilled.

Signature Corn and Bean Salad

from the kitchen of Sophia Paul

SERVES 8–10 · 10 MINUTES



Sophia Paul

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can corn, drained
- 1 can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 apple, chopped
- 1 handful cilantro, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- Ranch dressing, to taste
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Combine the corn, beans, onion, apple and cilantro in a large bowl.
2. Drizzle with lemon juice and ranch, add a pinch of salt and toss well.

Easy Fruit & Greens Salad

from the kitchen of Selma D'Mello

SERVES 5 · 30 MINUTES



Selma D'Mello



INGREDIENTS

Dressing

- 2 tbsp lime or lemon juice
- 1 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ tsp Dijon mustard
- ⅛ tsp lemon zest
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Salad

- One 5 oz box spring mix (or Boston lettuce with arugula)
- 1 Anjou pear
- 1 Texas peach
- 1 large navel orange
- ⅓ cup toasted pistachios

METHOD

Dressing

1. Shake everything together vigorously in a small jar.

Salad

2. Lay down the greens and add the chopped fruit.
3. Add about ¼ cup dressing and toss.
4. Top with the pistachios.

FROM THE COOK

— Dress just before serving so the greens don't wilt.

— Cut the fruit small so it doesn't sink, and add the nuts last to keep them crunchy.

— Adjust the ratio of greens to fruit as you like.

CHAPTER 3

Rice & Breads

Sannas for the feast, parathas for the morning, and rice for every day in between.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Mai's Sannas *Melissa Sacrafamilia*
Pan Pole (Rice Pancakes) *Nathaniel Sacrafamilia*
Aloo Parathas *Tanu Frias*
Chicken Biryani *Leonie D'Souza*
Vegetable Pulao *Elsa Rapose*
Andhra Yogurt Rice *Anita Soares*

Mai's Sannas

from the kitchen of Melissa Sacrafamilia

MAKES 25–30 · ABOUT 6 HOURS, MOSTLY SOAKING AND RISING



> *In every Goan and Mangalorean home, sannas are the heart of any special occasion, and ours was no different. The sweet aroma of steaming batter would fill the kitchen first thing in the morning as my mom worked her magic. Before rushing off to Christmas morning Mass, we always managed to steal a few hot sannas drenched in golden honey and ghee. By midday they were a comforting lunch with a warm bowl of bone broth. But the real finale was Christmas dinner, where these pillowy wonders soaked up every drop of mutton curry and spicy pork bafat.*

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups ponni rice
- 1 cup basmati rice
- ¼ cup urad dal
- About 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp instant yeast
- 2 tsp sugar
- ½ cup tepid water (never boiling)

METHOD

1. Wash both rices and the dal and soak at least 2 hours.
2. Grind in batches to a fine paste the consistency of pancake or dosa batter. Pour into a large, deep pot — it will double.
3. Dissolve the sugar in the warm water, stir in the yeast and wait 5–10 minutes until frothy. If it doesn't froth, the water was too hot or too cool; start again — working yeast is crucial.
4. Mix the yeast into the batter with salt to taste. Cover and leave somewhere warm to double. Check at 90–120 minutes; it can overflow.
5. Once doubled, do not stir — or the sannas won't be fluffy.
6. Bring water to a boil in your steamer (tondor). Fill the molds or ramekins halfway, cover and steam 5–7 minutes.
7. Turn the ramekins upside down on a baking sheet and cover with a wet towel. When cool, gently coax each sanna out. Repeat with the rest of the batter.

FROM THE COOK

— Best the day they're made, but they freeze well. Thaw and warm in the microwave for a minute under a damp cloth.

Pan Pole (Rice Pancakes)

from the kitchen of Nathaniel Sacrafamilia

MAKES ABOUT 15 · 1 HOUR · GLUTEN-FREE



Nathaniel Sacrafamilia



> *Pan poles are one of my favorite breakfasts. I love drizzling honey and ghee on hot pan poles and just gobbling them up. They are very addictive — it's easy to eat far more than you planned!*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup basmati rice
- Water, as needed
- Salt, to taste

Variation: Portha Pole

- ½ cup grated coconut
- Jaggery, to taste
- ½ tsp cardamom

METHOD

1. Soak the rice in enough water to cover for about 30 minutes.

2 Blend with enough water to make a batter as thin as milk.

3 Heat a pan and pour in about ¼ cup batter, swirling the pan as you pour so it spreads evenly.

4 Cover and cook about 1 minute, then lift onto a wire rack so the steam escapes.

5 When cool, fold in half and then in quarters, like a folded handkerchief.

6 Serve with chutney, or honey and ghee, or alongside a meat curry or vegetables.

Variation: Portha Pole

7 Make the pan poles as above but don't fold them.

8 Place a spoonful of the coconut-jaggery mixture in the center, fold in the sides and roll up like a spring roll. Best eaten the same day.

Aloo Parathas

from the kitchen of Tanu Frias

MAKES 5–8 · 50 MINUTES



> *Growing up, one of my favorite things was waking up to the smell of my mom making aloo parathas — ghee, toasted atta and seasoned potatoes filling the whole house. I loved sitting nearby and watching her roll out the dough, tuck in the filling and cook each one until golden. It wasn't just the food; it was the love she poured into every single one. Now well into her 80s, she still loves making them for her children, and these days for her grandchildren too. Some recipes feed your stomach, but this one has always fed my heart.*

INGREDIENTS

Filling

- 3–4 medium potatoes
- ¼ cup finely chopped white onion
- 2 tbsp chopped cilantro
- ½ tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- Salt and black pepper, to taste

Dough

- 2 cups whole wheat flour (atta)
- About ½ cup water
- Extra flour, for rolling
- Ghee or oil, for cooking

METHOD

Filling

1. Boil the potatoes on the stovetop (not the microwave) until just fork-tender — mushy potatoes make a soft filling. In a pressure cooker, 3–4 whistles with 1 cup water.
2. Cool, peel and mash until mostly smooth; don't over-mash.
3. Mix in the onion, cilantro, spices, salt and pepper. Taste and adjust, then divide into 5–8 portions.

Dough

4 Add the water to the atta a little at a time, kneading into a soft, smooth, non-sticky dough. Divide into 5–8 balls.

Shape and cook

5 Roll a dough ball into a 4-inch circle, place a portion of filling in the middle and pinch the edges up over it to seal. Turn seam-side down.

6 Roll gently into a larger circle, rotating a little every 4–6 strokes so it doesn't tear. Use only a light dusting of flour — too much smokes on the griddle.

7 Heat a griddle over medium-high. Cook a paratha 1–2 minutes until bubbles appear, then flip and press gently so it puffs.

8 Drizzle about 1 tsp ghee, flip, drizzle a little more, and cook, pressing the edges, until both sides are golden with crisp charred spots.

FROM THE COOK

— Serve hot with plain yogurt, pickle, butter, mint chutney and a cup of chai.

Chicken Biryani

from the kitchen of Leonie D'Souza

SERVES 6–8 · 2 HOURS

> *This majestic dish was probably introduced by Persian merchants who traveled the Indian subcontinent, then adapted and perfected in the royal kitchens of the Mughal Empire. This is my recipe, perfected for my family with love.*

INGREDIENTS

Chicken

- 4 tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 large potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp minced ginger
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 medium tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 2 tbsp chopped mint, plus more for layering
- Fresh cilantro
- ½ tsp ground cardamom
- 2-inch cinnamon stick
- 3 lb chicken, cut into pieces

Rice

- 2½ cups basmati rice
- 2½ tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- A pinch of saffron
- 5 cardamom pods
- 3 cloves
- 1-inch cinnamon stick
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1½ tsp salt
- Boiled eggs, to garnish (optional)

METHOD

Chicken

1. Fry the potatoes in 2 tbsp oil until brown. Drain and set aside.
2. Add the rest of the oil and fry the onion, garlic and ginger until soft and golden.
3. Add the chili powder, pepper, turmeric, cumin, salt and tomatoes and fry, stirring, for 5 minutes.
4. Add the yogurt, mint, cardamom and cinnamon. Cover and cook on low, stirring now and then, until the tomatoes break down to a pulp. Add a splash of hot water if it sticks.
5. When thick and smooth, stir in the chicken. Cover and cook on very low 35–45 minutes until tender, with only a little thick gravy left.

Rice

6. Wash the rice and drain in a colander at least 30 minutes.
7. Fry the onion in the oil until golden.

8 Add the saffron, whole spices, ginger and rice and stir until the rice is coated.

9 Heat the stock with the salt, pour over the rice, stir and let it absorb.

Layer and finish

10 Layer the rice, chicken and potatoes, cilantro, mint and fried onions in a heavy pan.

11 Cover tightly and cook on the lowest heat 45 minutes to 1 hour without lifting the lid or stirring.

12 Decorate with boiled eggs and serve.

Vegetable Pulao

from the kitchen of Elsa Rapose

SERVES 8 · 30 MINUTES



Elsa Rapose

> *I love creating wholesome dishes that never compromise on flavor. Instead of relying on bouillon cubes, I build taste naturally — a vibrant spice blend adds just the right kick and turns a simple pulao into a crowd-pleaser.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup basmati rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 tbsp oil
- 6 curry leaves
- 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 3 cloves
- 4 peppercorns
- ½-inch cinnamon stick
- 2 bay leaves
- 1½ tsp Shan biryani masala
- About 1 cup frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste

METHOD

1. Soak the rice 10 minutes and drain.
2. Heat the oil on medium and fry the curry leaves, then the onion until light brown.
3. Add all the spices and stir for a minute, then the vegetables for another minute.
4. Stir in the rice to coat it with the spices.
5. Add the water and cook on medium until no liquid clings to a fork dipped into the pan.
6. Turn off the heat and rest 10 minutes, fluffing with a fork a couple of times.
7. Serve with a bold meat curry, or simple dal and papad.

Andhra Yogurt Rice

from the kitchen of Anita Soares

SERVES 4–6 · 20 MINUTES



Anita Soares

> *I first learned Andhra-style cooking in my grandmother's South Indian kitchen. When my husband Chester and I visited my ancestral home in Andhra Pradesh, my aunt prepared chitrannam — "variety rice" — lemon rice, yogurt rice, tamarind rice, coconut rice and sweet rice.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup soft-cooked white rice (slightly overcooked is right)
- 2 cups plain yogurt
- 2 cups water
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- ½ tsp urad dal
- 6–8 fenugreek seeds
- 10–12 curry leaves
- 1–2 dried red chilies
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 3–4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1–2 tsp Andhra sambar powder or your favorite spice mix
- Diced green chili and ginger (optional)
- Salt, to taste
- Cilantro, to garnish

METHOD

1. Whisk the yogurt and water until smooth, adding more water if too thick.
2. Heat the oil and add the mustard seeds, fenugreek, urad dal, red chilies and curry leaves.
3. When the mustard seeds pop, lower the heat and add the onion, garlic and the green chili and ginger, if using. Sauté until brown.
4. Stir in the sambar powder.
5. Add the cooled rice (mash it first if you like) and the yogurt mixture. Season with salt and garnish with cilantro.

CHAPTER 4

Vegetables & Dals

The everyday dals and vegetable dishes that hold a meal together.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Suzie's Easy Everyday Dal *Sonali DeSouza*
Sai Bhaji (Sindhi Spinach & Chana Dal) *Indra D'Mello*
Drumstick (Moringa) Dal Curry *Celine D'Souza*
Navratan Korma *Jane Noronha*
Tawa Paneer *Sheela Sharon*

Suzie's Easy Everyday Dal

from the kitchen of Sonali DeSouza

SERVES 8 · 30 MINUTES SOAKING + 15 MINUTES

> *More than 20 years ago, I visited my Aunt Suzie in Bahrain and tasted this incredible dal for the first time. It was love at first bite, and I couldn't leave without the recipe. It's still a regular at our table, and so many people have asked for the secret that it's now affectionately known as "Suzie's Dal." Enjoy!*

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup toor dal, washed and soaked at least 30 minutes
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 green chili, slit
- 1 tsp tomato paste
- 2 cups water, plus more to adjust
- 2 tsp oil
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp fenugreek (methi) seeds
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- A pinch of hing
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Salt, to taste
- Chopped cilantro, to garnish

METHOD

1. Drain the dal and pressure cook with the water, tomatoes, green chili and tomato paste for 2 whistles. Let the pressure release naturally.
2. Heat the oil and let the mustard seeds splutter. Add the cumin, methi, curry leaves, hing and turmeric and toast briefly.
3. Pour the tadka into the dal, add water to your preferred consistency and season with salt.
4. Boil 5 minutes and garnish with cilantro.

Sai Bhaji (Sindhi Spinach & Chana Dal)

from the kitchen of Indra D'Mello

SERVES 15 AS A SIDE · 30 MINUTES, PLUS SOAKING



Indra D'Mello



INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups chana dal
- 1 lb fresh baby spinach, chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh methi leaves (or 1 tbsp dried)
- 2 tsp avocado or canola oil
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tsp ginger-garlic, chopped or paste
- 1 small green chili, chopped
- 1½ tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- 1 tsp garam masala
- Salt, to taste
- 2 cups water

METHOD

1. Soak the chana dal 3–4 hours; wash and drain.
2. Heat the oil in a pressure cooker and fry the onions light brown. Stir in the tomatoes, ginger-garlic, green chili and salt.
3. Add the dal, coriander, cumin, turmeric and chili powder, mix, and pour in the water.

4. Pressure cook and turn off the heat 2 minutes after the first hiss. Let the pressure release. The dal should be cooked but firm, not mushy.
5. Set aside half the dal. To the rest, add the spinach, methi and garam masala and cook uncovered until wilted.
6. Purée with an immersion blender, then stir the reserved dal back in. Adjust salt and serve warm with rice, chapati or naan.

Drumstick (Moringa) Dal Curry

from the kitchen of Celine D'Souza

SERVES 4 · 45 MINUTES–1 HOUR

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup toor dal
- 4–5 drumsticks, cut into medium pieces
- Salt, to taste

To grind

- ½ cup freshly grated coconut
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp mustard seeds
- 2–3 dried red chilies
- ½ onion, chopped
- 4–5 peppercorns
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 3–4 cloves garlic
- A little tamarind

To season

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- A few mustard seeds
- 2–3 cloves garlic, crushed with the skin on
- A few curry leaves

METHOD

1. Wash and soak the dal for 10 minutes.
2. Grind the spices to a fine paste.
3. Cook the dal; when half done, add the drumsticks and cook until tender. Add salt.
4. Stir in the ground paste and simmer.
5. Heat the oil, splutter the mustard seeds, then add the garlic and curry leaves. Pour over the curry.

Navratan Korma

from the kitchen of Jane Noronha

SERVES 4–6 · 40–50 MINUTES

> *Jane and her husband, originally from Aldona, Goa, moved to Georgetown, Texas, from Michigan to get away from the cold. "Navratan" means nine gems — a mild, sweet, creamy North Indian curry of vegetables and nuts that pairs well with parathas, roti or flavored rice.*

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 russet potatoes, cubed
- 4 carrots, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 small cauliflower, cut into florets
- ½ cup tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp curry powder
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 cup frozen green peas
- ½ green bell pepper, chopped
- ½ red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 cup full-fat coconut milk
- 3 tbsp crushed cashews or almonds

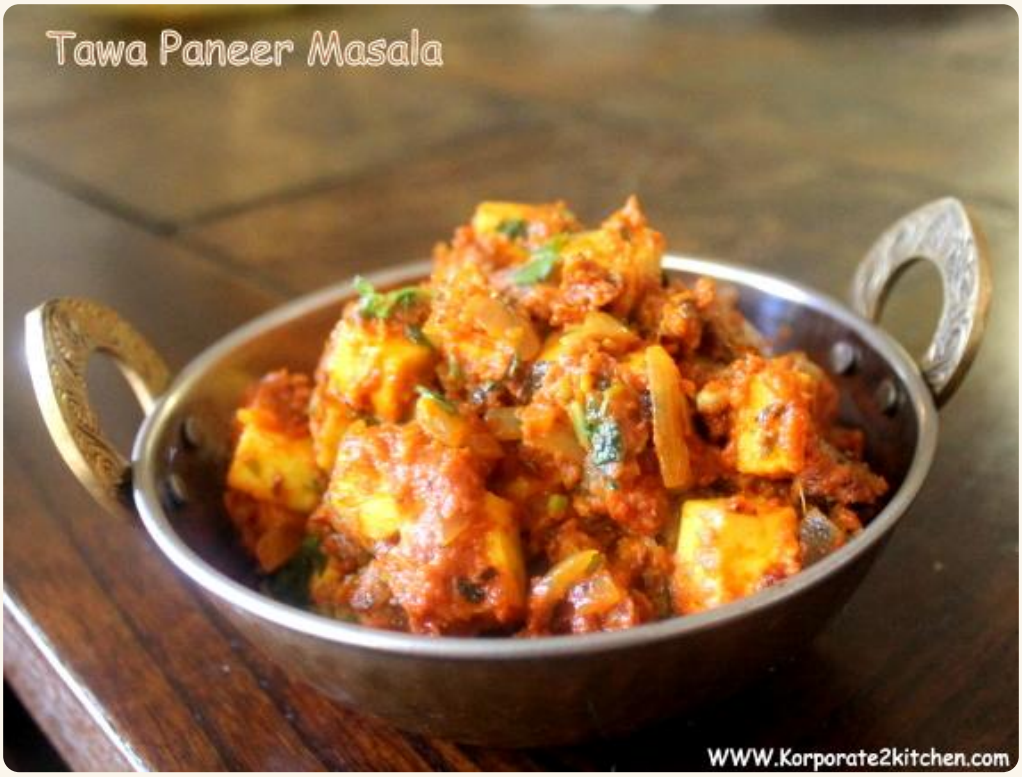
METHOD

1. Heat the oil over medium and cook the onion until tender. Add the ginger and garlic for a few minutes.
2. Add the potatoes, carrots, cauliflower and tomato sauce, season with curry powder and salt, and cook 15 minutes, stirring now and then, until the potatoes are tender.
3. Stir in the peas, peppers and coconut milk. Cover and simmer on low 10–15 minutes.
4. Garnish with the nuts and serve hot with rice or bread.

Tawa Paneer

from the kitchen of Sheela Sharon

SERVES 4 · 1 HOUR MARINATING + 40 MINUTES



> *Tawa paneer is one of our favorite paneer dishes — I make it at least once a week. It goes beautifully with rotis and is super simple and extremely tasty. (More of my recipes are on my blog, Korporate to Kitchen.)*

INGREDIENTS

- 1½ cups paneer cubes
- ½ cup yogurt
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tbsp tandoori masala
- Salt, to taste
- 3 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp ajwain (carom seeds)
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp garlic paste
- Purée of 2 medium tomatoes
- Cilantro, to garnish

METHOD

1. Mix the yogurt, tomato paste, salt, turmeric, chili powder and tandoori masala, and marinate the paneer for an hour (or use right away if you're in a hurry).

2. Heat the oil and fry the paneer about 3 minutes until the coating thickens. Remove and set aside.
3. In the same pan, add the cumin and ajwain, then the onion and ginger-garlic, and sauté a few minutes.
4. Add the tomato purée and cook about 5 minutes, partly covered, until the oil separates.
5. Return the paneer, mix and cook a minute. Garnish with cilantro.

FROM THE COOK

— Add a little water or cream if you'd like more gravy.

CHAPTER 5

Mains

Sunday curries, feast-day roasts, Friday fish and the dishes everyone asks for.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Nona's Ginger & Green Pepper Chicken *Sonali DeSouza*
Curry Leaf Chicken *Neelam Lobo*
Honey Garlic Chicken with Hibachi Fried Rice *Amani Frias*
Mom's Spanish Chicken *Marlon Menezes*
Chicken Momos *Zangmo*
Linkin's Seekh Kebabs *Linkin*
Mom's Pork Chili *Preeti D'Souza*
Pork Bafat *Carol D'Costa*
Betty's Sorpotel *Praveen D'Souza*
The Best Pork Ribs *Cheryl Fernandes*
Pork Vindaloo *Blanka Cruz*
Vodli Mai's Bombay Beef Roast *Sonali DeSouza*
Goat Chops Fry *Noella Baretto*
Simple Fish Curry *Sanchia Sequeira*
Kerala Fish Curry *Veronica Alumkal*
Fried Prawns *Melissa Sacrafamilia*
Khube Mootli (Cockles with Rice Dumplings) *Edle Lobo Prabhu*
Grandma Piedade's Friday Poached Egg Gravy *Mona Cardozo*

Nona's Ginger & Green Pepper Chicken

from the kitchen of Sonali DeSouza

SERVES 6 · 30 MINUTES MARINATING + 20 MINUTES

> *In memory of my mum, Nona. She created this recipe one day using just a few leftover ingredients from the fridge, and it quickly became a family favorite. It is simple to make and packed with flavor. I hope y'all enjoy it as much as we do!*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb bone-in chicken, cut into curry pieces
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt, to taste
- 3 tbsp oil
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- 1 medium red onion, sliced
- 1-inch piece ginger, cut into matchsticks
- 2 green chilies, slit
- 2 sprigs curry leaves
- 2 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp pepper
- 1 green bell pepper (capsicum), sliced

METHOD

1. Marinate the chicken with ½ tsp salt and the lime juice for 30 minutes.
2. Heat the oil and add the cumin seeds. When they sizzle, add the onion, green chilies, ginger, curry leaves, chicken and all the ground spices.
3. Mix well, cover and cook on medium-low until the chicken is almost done.
4. Add the bell pepper for the last 3 minutes. Adjust the salt.

Curry Leaf Chicken

from the kitchen of Neelam Lobo

SERVES 3–4

INGREDIENTS

Curry leaf masala

- 1-inch cinnamon stick
- 2 cloves
- 3 cardamom pods
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns (less for a milder curry)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ cup fresh curry leaves

Chicken

- 3 tbsp oil
- 3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1-inch piece ginger, finely chopped
- 3 green chilies, chopped
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- 1 cup sliced shallots or onion
- Salt, to taste
- 1 handful fresh curry leaves
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- Chili powder (optional)
- About 1 kg boneless chicken thighs

METHOD

Curry leaf masala

1. Dry-roast the whole spices in a pan on low heat for about 2 minutes, stirring gently.
2. Add the curry leaves and roast 2 minutes more. Cool completely and grind to a fine powder.

Chicken

3. Heat the oil and sauté the garlic, ginger and green chilies until the raw ginger smell is gone. Add the turmeric.
4. Add the shallots and salt and cook until nicely browned. Toss in the handful of curry leaves.
5. Stir in the ground masala, coriander powder and chili powder, if using. Add the chicken and coat it well.
6. Cover and cook on medium, stirring occasionally, until tender. Adjust salt, then simmer uncovered a few minutes so the masala clings to the chicken.

FROM THE COOK

— The curry leaves are the star — add a few fresh ones in the last minutes for extra aroma.

— Serve hot with rice, chapati, appam or naan.

Honey Garlic Chicken with Hibachi Fried Rice

from the kitchen of Amani Frias

SERVES 3–4



Amani Frias



INGREDIENTS

Chicken

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken thighs, bite-size pieces
- 2 tbsp garlic powder
- 4 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- A pinch of salt
- Oil
- 1 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- Chopped green onions (optional)

Hibachi fried rice

- 1 cup white rice
- 2 cups water
- A handful of chopped carrots
- A handful of peas (optional)
- 1–2 eggs
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- Oil

METHOD

Chicken

1. Whisk the garlic powder, cornstarch, pepper and salt, and toss the chicken to coat.
2. Brown the chicken in a splash of oil over medium-high until nearly cooked through.
3. Push it aside, sauté the ginger and garlic a few seconds, then add the honey. When it bubbles and thickens, add the soy sauce and stir until the chicken is glazed and caramelized.

Hibachi fried rice

4. Cook the rice in the water until tender.
5. Sauté the carrots and peas in a little oil until slightly soft.

6 Add the rice and soy sauce and toss. Clear a space, scramble the eggs in it, then fold them in.

7 Serve with the chicken and garnish with green onions.

Mom's Spanish Chicken

from the kitchen of Marlon Menezes

SERVES 4–6



Matilde Menezes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium chicken, cut into serving pieces
- ¼ cup olive oil
- Thumb-sized piece ginger, crushed
- Garlic, to taste
- 4 large onions, finely sliced
- Bay leaves
- ¾ cup tomato ketchup
- ¼ cup vinegar
- ½ tsp pepper
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ¼ tsp saffron powder
- 2 green chilies

METHOD

1. Heat the oil and fry the ginger, then the garlic.
2. Add the onions and fry until browned.
3. Add the chicken and fry well. When it begins to simmer, add the bay leaves.
4. Add the remaining ingredients and cook until the oil floats on top.

Chicken Momos

from the kitchen of Zangmo

ABOUT 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES



Zangmo

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ tsp salt
- About ¾ cup water
- 500 g ground chicken
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2–3 green onions, chopped
- 3 tbsp chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp sesame oil (optional)
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Mix the flour, salt and water into a smooth dough. Cover and rest 30 minutes.
2. Combine all the filling ingredients.
3. Roll the dough into 3–4-inch circles, place a spoonful of filling in each and fold and seal tightly.
4. Steam 15–18 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through.
5. Serve hot with spicy momo chutney or chili sauce.

Linkin's Seekh Kebabs

from the kitchen of Linkin

SERVES 8 · 40 MINUTES



Linkin

INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb ground chicken
- ½ cup grated mozzarella
- 1 tbsp bread crumbs
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped and squeezed dry
- 1 tbsp crumbled store-bought fried onions
- ½ cup cilantro leaves
- ¼ cup mint leaves
- 1 tsp peppercorns
- 2 green chilies
- 2 cloves garlic
- ½-inch piece ginger
- About 1 tsp salt
- 8 skewers (soak wooden ones in water)



METHOD

1. Mix the chicken with the mozzarella, bread crumbs, chopped onion and fried onions.
2. Blend the cilantro, mint, peppercorns, chilies, garlic and ginger into a paste — no water.
3. Mix the paste and salt into the chicken. The kebabs shape most easily at room temperature.
4. Divide into 8 portions and form a log around each skewer.
5. Bake on a sheet at 350°F for 8–10 minutes, turning once. Slide off the skewers and cut into bite-size pieces if you like.

Mom's Pork Chili

from the kitchen of Preeti D'Souza

SERVES 6–8 · 2 HOURS



Sharmila D'Souza

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg pork, cubed and boiled with a little salt
- 2 green bell peppers, cubed
- 1 large onion, cubed
- 1½ heads garlic, finely chopped
- 2-inch piece ginger, finely chopped
- 5 green chilies, finely chopped
- 3 tsp tomato ketchup
- 1½ tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp green chili sauce
- 1 tsp vinegar
- ½ tsp sugar
- Spring onions, finely chopped
- A few celery leaves and a small stem, finely chopped
- Oil, salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Sauté the bell peppers and onion in a wok with a little oil, salt and pepper — don't overcook. Set aside.
2. Add more oil if needed and sauté the garlic, then the ginger and green chilies.
3. Add the soy sauce, sugar, chili sauce, ketchup and vinegar.
4. Add the pork and adjust the salt and sauces to taste. Cook until all the liquid evaporates.
5. Toss in the peppers and onion, spring onions and celery, cook a few minutes and check the salt.

Pork Bafat

from the kitchen of Carol D'Costa

SERVES 6–8



Carol D'Costa

> *An easy, spicy and delicious pork curry, traditionally made in Mangalorean Catholic homes with the classic spice blend known as bafat powder.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg pork, preferably with fat
- 3–4 large onions, cut into large cubes
- 2–3 green chilies, slit
- 10–12 cloves garlic, julienned
- 2-inch piece ginger, julienned
- 2-inch cinnamon stick
- 4 cloves
- 2 bay leaves
- 2–3 tbsp bafat powder
- 3–4 tsp vinegar
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Cut the pork into medium cubes so that each piece has a little fat.
2. Put everything into a pan together — meat, onions, ginger, garlic, chilies, whole spices, bay leaves, salt, vinegar and bafat powder.
3. Cook on a slow fire until done. There's no need to add water unless the meat is very lean.
4. Serve piping hot with sannas or pulao.

Betty's Sorpotel

from the kitchen of Praveen D'Souza

SERVES 40–45 · 2–2½ HOURS, BEST MADE A DAY AHEAD



Praveen with Aunt Betty



> *Aunt Betty was my father's cousin, a renowned matchmaker and social worker in Mangalore. She transformed countless lives by helping people find work around the world, breaking the cycle of poverty for entire families. I was fortunate to spend time with her in my youth at our ancestral home in Jeppu. As she got older, her grandson Rohan began documenting her recipes. This dish was my father's favorite, and I made a point of learning it from her. Every time I make it, I think of Aunt Betty and her legacy of service. I hope it inspires us all to help those less fortunate.*

INGREDIENTS

- 3 kg pork butt, with skin and a few bones (heart, liver, ear and blood may be added for a more traditional taste)
- 3 tbsp bafat powder
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 5 tsp salt
- Oil
- 1 tsp cloves
- 5 cinnamon sticks (2-inch)
- 600 g onion, chopped
- 125 g garlic, chopped
- 50 g ginger, chopped
- 4 Thai chilies
- 5 cups water
- 6 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp paprika
- 6 tbsp sugarcane vinegar
- 4 tbsp tamarind paste

METHOD

1. Marinate the pork with the bafat powder, turmeric and salt for an hour.
2. Heat oil and fry the cloves and cinnamon. Add half the onions and fry until golden.
3. Add all the ginger, half the garlic and the chilies and fry until the raw ginger smell is gone. Transfer to a large pot with the remaining raw onion and garlic.
4. In another pan, brown the pork in a little oil and add it to the pot.
5. Add the water, bay leaves, paprika, vinegar and tamarind. Bring to a boil, then simmer until cooked.
6. For the best flavor, cool overnight. Reheat the next day and adjust the salt, tamarind or vinegar.

The Best Pork Ribs

from the kitchen of Cheryl Fernandes

SERVES 4–5 · OVERNIGHT MARINATING + 1¼ HOURS



Cheryl Fernandes



> *One of my most requested recipes whenever family and friends come for dinner. The star is East Indian bottle masala — a blend of 25–30 hand-roasted spices, red chilies foremost, made by the East Indian Christian community of the North Konkan around Mumbai. It is traditionally made once a year before the monsoon and stored in sterilized glass beer or whisky bottles, which is how it got its name.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 rack pork back or spare ribs
- 2 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 3 tbsp East Indian bottle masala
- 2 tbsp garam masala
- 1–2 tbsp chili powder
- 2 tbsp ketchup
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 3 tbsp honey
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp vinegar
- Salt, about 2–3 tsp

METHOD

1. Cut the rack into individual ribs, toss in the marinade, cover and refrigerate overnight.
2. Arrange the ribs in a deep, heavy non-stick pan over medium-low heat with the lid half on — enough steam to tenderize while letting moisture escape.
3. Don't stir with a spoon, which tears the meat from the bone. Shake the pan by the handle to turn the ribs.
4. At about 30 minutes, taste the sauce and add salt, lime or chili as needed.
5. Simmer until tender and the juices reduce to a thick glaze, then let the ribs fry in their own fat until deeply browned and crisp at the edges.

Pork Vindaloo

from the kitchen of Blanka Cruz

SERVES 4 · ABOUT 4 HOURS



Blanka Cruz

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb cubed pork
- 4 oz onions, finely chopped
- 4 tbsp vindaloo masala paste
- 6 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 6 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp fenugreek powder
- ½ tsp mustard powder
- 1½ tsp sugar
- Salt, to taste
- 1 cup water

METHOD

1. Mix everything except the water in a heavy pan and marinate about 2 hours.
2. Add the water, bring to a boil and simmer on low about 2 hours.
3. Serve hot over steamed rice.

Vodli Mai's Bombay Beef Roast

from the kitchen of Sonali DeSouza

SERVES 8 · OVERNIGHT MARINATING + 40 MINUTES

> *My grandmother, Gertrude Aranha, was an extraordinary cook with the palate of a Michelin-starred chef — a true master of hult kerche, the delicate art of tasting and adjusting seasoning to perfection. She cooked all the traditional Mangalorean specialties, but this Bombay beef roast was a standout, always requested as the perfect accompaniment to drinks.*

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lb boneless beef chuck, sliced against the grain into 1-inch pieces, ¼-inch thick
- 15 Kashmiri chilies (seed half for medium heat)
- 3 pieces cinnamon, 1 inch each
- ½ tsp cloves
- ¾ tsp peppercorns
- 8 green cardamoms
- 2 heaped tsp ginger-garlic paste
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 5 tbsp white vinegar
- 1 tsp salt, plus more as needed
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ cup water
- 1 medium potato, skin on, cut into ¼-inch rounds

METHOD

1. Mix the beef with the chilies, whole spices, ginger-garlic paste, turmeric, vinegar and salt. Cover and marinate overnight.
2. Put the beef and marinade in a pressure cooker or Instant Pot with the bay leaves and water. Cook 4 whistles (or 8 minutes on high) and release naturally.
3. The meat will be about 95% done. Add the potatoes and cook 10 minutes until both are done. Adjust the seasoning.

FROM THE COOK

— If the meat is already fully cooked when you open the cooker, lift it out, cook the potatoes in the stock, then return the meat.

Goat Chops Fry

from the kitchen of Noella Baretto

SERVES 4–5 · ABOUT 1¼ HOURS



Noella Baretto

> *Goat chops fry was one of my childhood favorites, especially on Sundays when my mum and dad made it for our family meal. The aroma of the spices and curry leaves always made it feel special. The chops are cooked low and slow, then tossed with onions, spices and curry leaves until rich, dark and full of flavor. Simple ingredients, great taste, made with love.*

INGREDIENTS

Goat chops

- 750 g goat chops
- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp red chili powder
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1½ tsp salt
- About 1½ cups water

The fry

- 3 tbsp oil
- 2 medium onions, thinly sliced
- 2 green chilies, slit
- 1 sprig curry leaves
- 1½ tsp red chili powder
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- 1 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp garam masala (optional)
- ¼–½ cup water or goat stock
- 1 tsp lemon juice or vinegar (optional)
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

Goat chops

1. Put everything in a deep pan, cover and cook on medium until the meat is tender and most of the water has dried up. Set aside.

The fry

2. Fry the onions in the oil on medium until soft and golden. Add the green chilies and curry leaves for a few seconds.
3. Add the ground spices and cook 1–2 minutes until the raw smell disappears.
4. Add the chops and coat them in the masala.
5. Fry on medium-low, stirring now and then and adding a splash of water or stock if it sticks, until the masala is thick, dark and clinging and the edges turn crisp.
6. Adjust the salt, add the lemon juice or vinegar if you like, and cook a minute more.

FROM THE COOK

— Serve with steamed rice, chapati, neer dosa, sannas or pao.

Simple Fish Curry

from the kitchen of Sanchia Sequeira

SERVES 4–6 · 30 MINUTES



Leena Sequeira

> *My mother's comforting, flavorful fish curry — easy to make and perfect with neer dosa, rice or chapati. It's a classic home-style dish of the Canara coast: everyday cooking rather than festival food, built on coconut, dried red chilies and tamarind so the fish stays the star. Every household has its own version.*

INGREDIENTS

Masala

- ½ cup packed grated coconut
- 4 dried long red chilies
- 2 dried short red chilies (optional, for heat)
- 5 peppercorns
- 2 tsp tamarind
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp fenugreek seeds
- 1 small onion, roughly chopped
- 5 cloves garlic

Curry

- 500 g firm fish, cut into medium pieces
- 2 tsp oil
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 green chili, slit and seeded
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

Masala

1. Grind everything to a very smooth paste with a little water. For deeper flavor, lightly dry-roast the whole spices and coconut first (not the tamarind, onion or garlic).

Curry

2. Heat the oil on medium and fry the onion golden. Add the green chili for 30 seconds.
3. Add the masala and sauté 2–3 minutes, then add water for a medium-thick curry. Season and bring to a gentle simmer.
4. Slide in the fish pieces one by one and simmer 5–10 minutes until cooked. Don't stir hard or the fish will break.
5. Turn off the heat and rest a few minutes before serving with steamed rice.

FROM THE COOK

- It tastes even better after resting 15–20 minutes.
- Some families sour it with kokum or bimbul instead of tamarind. A clay pot adds extra depth.
- Also lovely with sannas, pole, appam or rice roti.

Kerala Fish Curry

from the kitchen of Veronica Alumkal

SERVES 4



Veronica Alumkal

INGREDIENTS

- 1–1½ lb fish (kingfish, salmon or tilapia), cut into pieces
- 1 small raw mango, peeled, cut into 6–8 pieces
- 2 tbsp coconut oil
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- A large pinch of methi seeds
- ¼ cup coconut milk (optional)
- Salt, to taste

Bowl 1

- 7–8 curry leaves
- 10 shallots or ½ onion, finely sliced lengthwise
- 6–7 cloves garlic, sliced lengthwise
- 1-inch piece ginger, sliced lengthwise
- 1–3 green chilies, slit

Bowl 2

- 1–2 tbsp Kashmiri chili powder
- 1 tbsp coriander powder
- ¼ tsp turmeric

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a wide pan and add the mustard seeds. When they splutter, add the methi and fry 10 seconds.
2. Add Bowl 1 and sauté until the raw smell is gone.
3. Mix Bowl 2 into a paste with 3–4 tbsp water, add it and fry on low until the oil separates.
4. Add the mango and about ¾ cup water and bring to a boil.
5. Add the fish, cover and cook on medium about 20 minutes until tender and the gravy is thick. Stir in the coconut milk, if using.
6. Take off the heat and leave covered 30 minutes so the flavors blend.

FROM THE COOK

— Kashmiri chili powder is milder than regular chili powder. It and raw mangoes are at Indian grocery stores.

Fried Prawns

from the kitchen of Melissa Sacrafamilia

SERVES 4–6 · 30–40 MINUTES, PLUS MARINATING

> *An easy recipe that tastes amazing with hot rice and dal or a vegetable curry. I always loved it growing up, it's on my comfort-food list, and it's a favorite with my children too.*



INGREDIENTS

- 500 g prawns, cleaned and deveined
- 1–2 tsp bafat powder
- ½ tsp cumin (jeera) powder
- ¼ tsp coriander powder
- ¼ tsp pepper
- ½ tsp ginger-garlic paste (optional)
- Juice of ½ lime
- Salt, to taste
- 2 tbsp oil
- A sprig of curry leaves
- Bread crumbs (optional)

METHOD

1. Marinate the prawns with the salt, spices, ginger-garlic paste, lime juice and 1 tbsp oil. Fry right away, or refrigerate 30 minutes to overnight. Dredge in bread crumbs now, if using.
2. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a frying pan and fry the prawns 3–4 minutes a side.
3. Garnish with curry leaves and serve hot with rice, dal and papad.

Khube Mootli (Cockles with Rice Dumplings)

from the kitchen of Edle Lobo Prabhu

SERVES 4–6 · 1½ HOURS, PLUS SOAKING

> *A traditional coastal curry in which steamed rice dumplings are cooked with cockles in a spicy masala.*

INGREDIENTS

- ½ kg cockles
- ½ kg boiled (parboiled) rice
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 2 tbsp oil
- Salt, to taste

Masala

- Grated flesh of 1 coconut
- 4 dried red chilies
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 4 peppercorns
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- ¼ tsp turmeric
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 onion
- A small ball of tamarind

METHOD

1. Wash and soak the rice at least 3–4 hours, then grind to a fine paste with a little water.
2. Shape into marble-sized dumplings (mootlis), press the centers slightly into ovals, and steam until cooked.
3. Dip the cockles in gently boiling water for 3 minutes and wash well. Steam, cool, and remove one half of each shell, leaving the flesh on the other.
4. Roast the masala ingredients separately and grind to a paste.
5. Brown the sliced onion in the oil. Add the masala and 1½–2 cups water and cook well.
6. Add the dumplings and cook 5 minutes, then the cockles for another 5, until done. Thin with a little hot water if needed and simmer 5 minutes.

Grandma Piedade's Friday Poached Egg Gravy

from the kitchen of Mona Cardozo

SERVES 4–6



> *In a traditional Goan Catholic home, Friday was a day of abstinence from meat — a tradition that turned simple ingredients into something wonderful. Out of that weekly ritual, my grandmother, Piedade Coutinho, perfected her poached egg gravy. Passed from my grandmother to my mother and finally to me, it is a cherished piece of our Fridays: simple, yet full of warmth. I share it hoping it brings your table the same comfort and happiness it has brought to mine.*

INGREDIENTS

Gravy paste

- 1 bunch coriander leaves
- ½ bunch mint leaves
- 4 green chilies
- 6 large cloves garlic
- ½ cup grated coconut
- ¾ tsp cumin seeds
- ¾ tsp fennel seeds
- 10 peppercorns
- 8 cloves
- ½ cinnamon stick
- 10–15 cashews, soaked

Gravy and eggs

- 3 tbsp oil
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- ½ tomato, diced
- 2 cups water, plus ½ cup if needed
- ½ tsp salt, or to taste
- Up to 6 eggs
- Chopped coriander (optional)

METHOD

Gravy paste

1. Blend into a smooth paste and set aside.

Gravy and eggs

2. Heat the oil and fry the onion until translucent. Add the ginger-garlic paste and sauté, then the tomato until tender.
3. Stir in the gravy paste, add the water and bring to a boil. Add the salt and taste — the gravy should be runny enough to poach the eggs.
4. Lower to a gentle simmer. Break each egg into a small bowl and slide it very gently into the gravy, spacing them apart.
5. Half-cover and cook 3–4 minutes, then carefully flip each egg with a large spoon and cook until set — not too runny inside.
6. Add a little water if the gravy has thickened too much, cook 4 minutes more, and check the salt. Sprinkle with coriander and serve over rice or with chapatis.

CHAPTER 6

Desserts

Birthday puddings, Sunday cakes and sweets made the same way for generations.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Mom's Dudhache Vorn *Preeti Pereira*
Eula's Flan (Caramel Custard) *Eula Sequeira*
Patholi *Maria D'Souza*
Treacle Loaf *Neisha Alfonso*
Rasmalai *Jeremiah Sacrafamilia*
Mango Mousse *Smeetha Moras*
Chocolate Cake *Melissa Sacrafamilia*
Basque Burnt Cheesecake *Rachana Varghese*
Tiramisu *Brenda D'Cunha*

Mom’s Dudhache Vorn

from the kitchen of Preeti Pereira

SERVES 4–5 · MANGALOREAN



Celine & Henry D’Souza

> *A beloved heirloom from our home: a comforting sweet of rice, moong dal and sabudana slow-cooked in milk and sweetened with jaggery. For 48 years, Mom has made it every year for Dad’s birthday, just as she did their first year together. The gentle sweetness, the warmth of cardamom and the creamy richness make it more than a dessert — it’s love, patience and tradition in every spoonful.*

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup raw rice
- ½ cup moong dal
- ¼ cup sabudana (tapioca pearls)
- 120 g jaggery
- 1 tsp cardamom powder
- A pinch of salt (about ¼ tsp)
- ½ cup cashews and raisins
- 1½ cups milk
- Water, as needed

METHOD

1. Soak the rice 5 hours, grind to a fine paste with ¼ cup water, then mix with 1 more cup water and set aside. Wash and soak the moong dal and the sabudana separately for 1 hour each.
2. Cook the dal in 3 cups water until soft. Add the sabudana and cook until soft and transparent. Add the salt.
3. Add the jaggery, stirring constantly so it doesn’t stick.
4. Stir in the rice water and bring to a boil, stirring all the while.
5. Add the milk. When it boils, add the cashews, raisins and cardamom. Serve warm.

Eula's Flan (Caramel Custard)

from the kitchen of Eula Sequeira

SERVES 6–8 · ABOUT 1 HOUR, PLUS CHILLING



> *Nonna at the helm, surrounded by wooden spoons, warm caramel and her three focused sous-chefs, Liam, Ella and Aria — guiding six small hands through the very same flan she once taught their mom and uncle. The best family traditions aren't just written in ink; they're passed down side by side in the kitchen.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup white sugar, for the caramel
- 4 eggs
- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 can water (use the condensed milk can)
- 1 tsp cornstarch (optional)
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

METHOD

1. Melt the sugar in a pan over medium-low heat until golden. Pour into a 1-quart casserole or mold and swirl to coat the bottom and sides. Let it cool.

2 Whisk the eggs, then the condensed milk and water. If using cornstarch, dissolve it in 1 tbsp water and add. Stir in the vanilla last.

3 Pour into the caramel-coated dish and set it in a pan with 1–2 inches of water, keeping water out of the custard.

4 Bake at 325°F on the middle rack for 45–50 minutes, until a knife comes out clean. (You can also steam it on the stovetop.)

5 Cool completely, invert onto a plate so the caramel runs over, and chill at least 2 hours.

Patholi

from the kitchen of Maria D'Souza

MAKES 12–15



Maria D'Souza



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup boiled (parboiled) rice
- Grated coconut
- About ½ cup jaggery, to taste
- Salt, to taste
- 12–15 turmeric leaves

METHOD

1. Soak the rice 2 hours and grind it fine.
2. Mix the coconut and jaggery and set aside.
3. Cook the rice batter in a pan on low heat, stirring constantly, until it's thick enough to spread.
4. Spread the batter as thin as possible on a turmeric leaf, spoon the coconut-jaggery filling down the center and fold the leaf over.
5. Line the steamer (thondor) tray with foil or banana leaves, add the patholi and steam for 30 minutes.

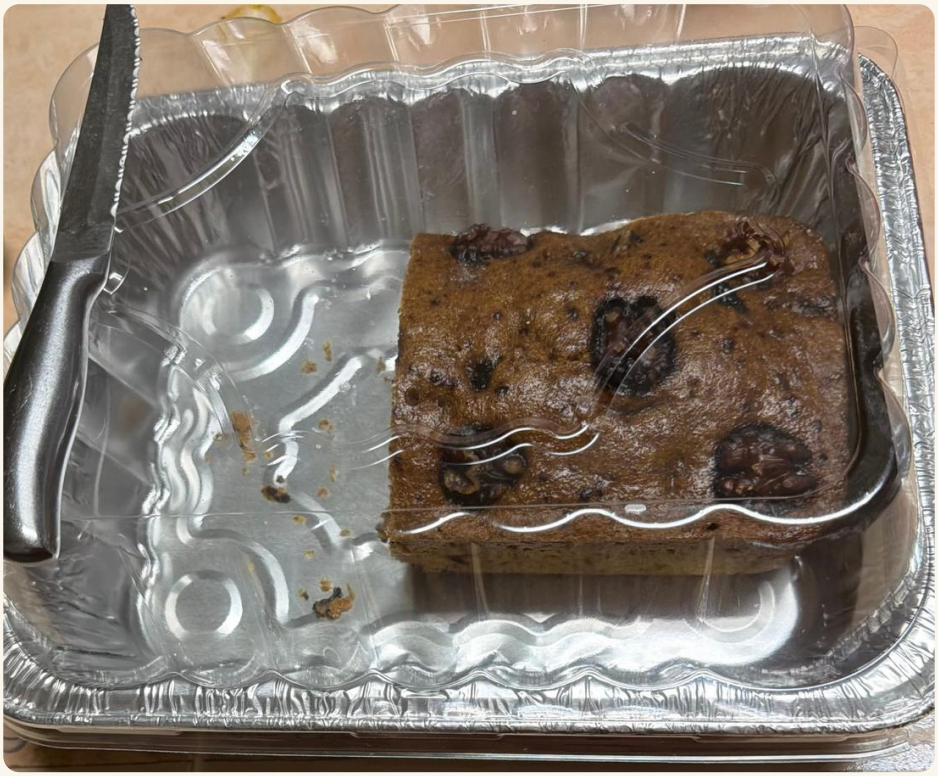
FROM THE COOK

— Best eaten fresh. Refrigerate leftovers and reheat gently in the microwave for 3–5 minutes.

Treacle Loaf

from the kitchen of Neisha Alfonso

MAKES 1 LOAF · ABOUT 1½ HOURS



> *A treasured recipe from my mother's side of the family. Originally made with jaggery, it was later adapted with honey, which makes it wonderfully moist. Growing up, it was a favorite breakfast treat and a staple on family road trips — my mother packed slices for the journey, a comforting taste of home wherever we went. Today my own children love it just as much.*

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 egg
- ½ cup (100 g) brown sugar
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup oil
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- ¼ tsp grated nutmeg
- ½ cup raisins
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

METHOD

1. Grease a steaming bowl or pudding basin.
2. Sift the flour with the baking soda.
3. Whisk the oil, honey, brown sugar, egg and water, then add the vanilla and nutmeg.

4. Stir in the flour until smooth and fold in the raisins and walnuts.
5. Pour into the bowl, cover with foil and steam 1–1½ hours, until a skewer comes out clean.
6. Cool slightly before turning out.

Rasmalai

from the kitchen of Jeremiah Sacrafamilia

MAKES 28–30

INGREDIENTS

Milk syrup

- 2 liters milk
- 2 cups sugar
- 15 cardamoms, coarsely powdered
- 2 pinches saffron

Balls

- 2 cups milk powder
- 1 large egg, plus 1 more if needed
- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 tsp baking powder
- Chopped pistachios and cashews, and a pinch of saffron, to garnish

METHOD

Milk syrup

1. Boil the milk with the sugar and cardamom, then simmer on low until slightly thickened. Dissolve the saffron in a little warm milk and stir it in. Keep at a low simmer.

Balls

2. Combine the milk powder, egg, oil and baking powder and knead into a soft dough like chapati dough, adding some of the second egg if too dry.
3. Roll into smooth, crack-free balls the size of small lemons.
4. Drop them one by one into the simmering milk and cook on low 10–15 minutes, without stirring, until doubled and spongy.
5. Cool, then chill well. Serve on a shallow platter garnished with the nuts and saffron.

Mango Mousse

from the kitchen of Smeetha Moras

MAKES 1 SMALL TRAY · 6–7 HOURS CHILLING



Smeetha Moras

> *I'm fond of mousse desserts and a fan of mango, but I couldn't find a mango mousse recipe I liked — so I created my own, borrowing tips from similar desserts.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup mango purée, room temperature
- ¾ cup whipping cream, whipped to peaks
- 1½–2 tsp unflavored gelatin
- 1–2 tsp confectioners' sugar
- A pinch of salt

METHOD

1. Dissolve the gelatin in ¼ cup warm water and mix it thoroughly into the purée.
2. Gently fold in the whipped cream, then the sugar and salt.
3. Pour into a serving bowl and refrigerate 6–7 hours (or freeze for a quicker set).

FROM THE COOK

— For a glossy top, pour on a thin layer of purée mixed with gelatin once set, scatter on mint or chopped cherries, and chill 2 hours more.

Chocolate Cake

from the kitchen of Melissa Sacrafamilia

SERVES 15–18 · ABOUT 1¼ HOURS, PLUS SETTING

INGREDIENTS

Cake

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 1½ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 cup warm whole milk
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- ½ cup + 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 tbsp vinegar
- 2 tsp instant coffee

Ganache filling

- 2 cups whipping cream
- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

Chocolate buttercream

- 1½ cups (3 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- ¼ cup cocoa
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- 3–4 tbsp milk or cream
- 1 tsp vanilla
- A pinch of salt

METHOD

Cake

1. Preheat to 350°F. Grease two 9-inch pans and line with parchment.
2. Mix the dry ingredients. In another bowl, mix the milk, eggs, oil and vanilla. Stir the coffee and vinegar into the boiling water.
3. Add the wet mixture to the dry, then slowly pour in the hot water. The batter is very thin — mix until smooth but don't overmix.
4. Divide between the pans and bake about 25 minutes, then test with a toothpick, giving it 5–10 minutes more if needed. Cool completely.

Ganache filling

5. Bring the cream to a simmer, add the chips, turn off the heat and cover 5 minutes. Whisk smooth and chill at least 2 hours.
6. Slice each cake into two layers and stack with a third of the ganache between each. Chill, or chill to firm up before covering with buttercream.

Chocolate buttercream

7. Beat the butter 4–5 minutes, add the cocoa, salt and sugar slowly, then the milk and vanilla, and beat 5 minutes more until fluffy.

FROM THE COOK

- Endlessly versatile: add berries to the filling, make it Black Forest with cream and cherries, or soak with ½ cup strong coffee for mocha.
- Keep the cake covered in the fridge. Buttercream keeps 2 weeks refrigerated or 2 months frozen.

Basque Burnt Cheesecake

from the kitchen of Rachana Varghese

SERVES 10–12 · ABOUT 1 HOUR 20 MINUTES, PLUS COOLING



Rachana Varghese

INGREDIENTS

- Butter, for the pan
- 2 lb (4 blocks) cream cheese, room temperature
- 1½ cups (300 g) sugar
- 6 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ⅓ cup (50 g) all-purpose flour

METHOD

1. Preheat to 400°F (200°C). Butter a 10-inch springform pan and press in two overlapping sheets of parchment, standing at least 2 inches above the rim. Creases are fine — they make the rustic edges.
2. Beat the cream cheese and sugar on medium-low about 2 minutes until completely smooth.
3. On medium, add the eggs one at a time. On low, pour in the cream, salt and vanilla and mix 30 seconds.
4. Sift the flour over, mix on low until just smooth and give a final fold by hand.
5. Bake 50–60 minutes, until deeply browned, almost black, and puffed, with a distinct wobble in the center.
6. Cool completely in the pan (it will sink), then unmold, peel off the parchment and slice.

FROM THE COOK

— Best chilled 4–5 hours or overnight. Keeps 3 days in the fridge.

— Lovely with a quick berry compote of frozen berries simmered with a little sugar and lemon.

Tiramisu

from the kitchen of Brenda D'Cunha

SERVES 8–10 · CHILL OVERNIGHT

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz cream cheese, room temperature
- 6 tbsp sugar, divided
- 3 egg yolks
- 8 oz Cool Whip, thawed
- 1 cup strong brewed coffee, room temperature
- 1 package Savoiardi ladyfingers
- Cocoa powder, to dust

METHOD

1. Beat the cream cheese with 3 tbsp sugar until the sugar dissolves.
2. Whisk the yolks with the remaining sugar over a double boiler for 1–2 minutes, until cooked and lemon-yellow. Immediately mix into the cream cheese.
3. Fold in the Cool Whip.
4. Dip each ladyfinger in coffee for 1–2 seconds a side and cover the bottom of a square or rectangular dish.
5. Spread with half the filling, add another layer of dipped ladyfingers, and top with the rest of the filling.
6. Dust with cocoa and chill overnight to set.

CHAPTER 7

Kuswar

The Christmas sweets — made together in December, shared plate by plate with neighbors.

IN THIS CHAPTER

Kulkuls *Amy Mathias*
Christmas Indian Rose Cookies *Sophia Paul*
Mangalorean Chaklis *Edna Moras*
Nankhatai (Indian Shortbread) *Ethel Coutinho*
Goan Milk Cream *Synthia Fernandes*
Goan Dodol *Jane Noronha*
Bebinca *Olive Sacrafamilia*
Christmas Fruit Cake (Plum Cake) *Sheela Rodrigues*
Grape Wine *Ramona Kar*

Kulkuls

from the kitchen of Amy Mathias

MAKES ABOUT 1 KG



Amy Mathias

> *Kulkuls are a traditional Christmas sweet prepared in Goa and Mangalore.*

INGREDIENTS

Dough

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup suji (cream of wheat)
- 1 stick (4 oz) butter
- ½ tsp salt
- 1½ cups hot milk
- Oil, for frying

Sugar coating

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- ½ tsp vanilla or a little cardamom (optional)

METHOD

Dough

1. Melt the butter and stir in the flour and suji.
2. Dissolve the salt in a little water and add it.
3. Knead with the hot milk into a dough. Cover with a damp cloth and rest 30 minutes.
4. Roll marble-sized balls, flatten each on the back of a fork or the thick side of a comb, and roll it off into a tight ridged curl.
5. Deep-fry in hot oil in a heavy pan until light golden.

Sugar coating

6. Heat the sugar and water until dissolved and starting to thicken. When a drop in cold water forms a medium-soft ball, take it off the heat.
7. Add the vanilla or cardamom, quickly toss in the kulkuls and stir until coated.
8. Cool and store airtight.

Christmas Indian Rose Cookies

from the kitchen of Sophia Paul

MAKES SEVERAL DOZEN



Sophia Paul

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups coconut milk, plus water as needed
- A pinch of salt
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- Oil, for deep-frying

METHOD

1. Soak the rose cookie mold in oil overnight.
2. Whisk everything into a smooth batter — neither too thick nor too runny.
3. Heat oil for deep-frying in a wide pan over medium-high, with the mold submerged in it to heat up too.
4. Lower the heat to medium. Dip the hot mold into the batter without letting the batter cover the top, then hold it in the oil until the cookie is golden and slips off. Repeat, and enjoy!

Mangalorean Chaklis

from the kitchen of Edna Moras

MAKES 50–60

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups rice flour
- 1 cup roasted urad dal flour
- 4 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp chili powder, or to taste
- 4 tbsp sesame seeds
- 1½ tsp salt, or to taste
- About 2½ cups water
- Vegetable oil, for frying

METHOD

1. Combine everything into a smooth dough, neither crumbly nor wet — adjust with water or extra rice flour.
2. Press spirals with a chakli mold onto foil or wax paper.
3. Heat oil over medium in a deep pan and slide the chaklis in one at a time.
4. When the sizzling stops, lift them out onto kitchen towels.
5. Cool and store in a dry airtight container for up to a month.

FROM THE COOK

— Fry right after making the dough — it tends to rise as it sits and the spirals lose their shape. If you can't, refrigerate it until ready.

Nankhatai (Indian Shortbread)

from the kitchen of Ethel Coutinho

MAKES 20–25



Ethel Coutinho

INGREDIENTS

- 500 g all-purpose flour
- 250 g sugar
- 250 g ghee
- 1 tsp vanilla

METHOD

1. Cream the sugar and ghee by hand or with a mixer for 5–8 minutes.
2. Add the vanilla, then the flour a little at a time to make a soft dough.
3. Roll into small balls, flatten the tops slightly and space them on a baking sheet.
4. Bake at 350°F for about 10 minutes, until very lightly browned.

FROM THE COOK

— Add 1–2 tsp cardamom if you like.

— For a variation, use 250 g besan (chickpea flour) and 250 g all-purpose flour.

Goan Milk Cream

from the kitchen of Synthia Fernandes

DRIES OVERNIGHT

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- ⅓ cup almond flour (or cashew powder)
- 1 tbsp salted butter, plus melted butter for shaping
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

METHOD

1. Stir the condensed milk and almond flour in a heavy or non-stick pan over medium-low with a wooden spatula until smooth, then keep stirring about 15 minutes until thick.
2. Add the butter and stir about 5 minutes more, until the mixture leaves the sides of the pan. Add the vanilla and cook 2–3 minutes.
3. Test: drop a little into cold water — if you can roll it into a soft ball, it's done. If not, cook 2–3 minutes more.
4. Spread on a greased plate and cool 20–30 minutes, then knead lightly into a ball.
5. Grease the molds and your palms with butter. Roll small smooth balls, press into the molds, smooth the backs, and tap out onto parchment.
6. Let them dry overnight — firm outside, melt-in-the-mouth inside.

FROM THE COOK

— Keeps 2 weeks airtight at room temperature, longer in the fridge. Bring to room temperature to serve.

Goan Dodol

from the kitchen of Jane Noronha

MAKES 1 TRAY

> *Dodol is a much-loved Goan Christmas sweet — thick, rich and made from coconut milk, coconut jaggery and rice. The joy is in the making: during the long cooking you must keep stirring, because pausing will burn it. It's ready when it's firm and no longer sticks to your fingers.*

INGREDIENTS

- 2 fresh coconuts, grated (or 500 g freshly grated coconut)
- ½ kg dark coconut jaggery
- 200 g white rice or rice flour
- ¼ cup sliced almonds (about 22 whole)
- ¼ cup chopped cashews (about 15 whole)
- Salt, to taste

METHOD

1. Blend the coconut with ½ cup warm water and strain to get thick coconut milk. Soak the pulp in more warm water and strain again for a thinner milk.
2. Soak the rice 30 minutes and grind to a paste (or soak rice flour in just enough water to make a smooth paste).
3. Mix the rice paste into the thin coconut milk in a heavy pot with salt. Dissolve the jaggery in the thick coconut milk and strain it.
4. Blanch, peel and sliver the almonds; chop the cashews.
5. Set the rice mixture on a slow flame and stir constantly with a strong wooden spoon. As it thickens, add the jaggery-coconut milk and keep stirring. Add the nuts as it thickens further.
6. Keep stirring until it leaves the sides of the pot. Spread in a dish, smooth the top, and decorate with nuts if you like.
7. Cool, then cut into shapes.

Bebinca

from the kitchen of Olive Sacrafamilia

SERVES 12 · ABOUT 2 HOURS



> *Bebinca dates to 17th-century Goa. Folklore credits Sister Bebiana of the Convent of Santa Monica in Old Goa: the nuns starched their habits with egg whites, leaving a surplus of yolks, and she layered them into a cake of seven layers for the seven hills of Lisbon and Old Goa. This version, from Jennifer Fernandes' "100 Easy-to-Make Goan Dishes," was adapted by Olive, Lolita Sacrafamilia's mother, and is made by the family every Christmas.*

INGREDIENTS

- 2½ cups thick coconut milk (canned is fine)
- 3½ cups sugar
- 10 egg yolks
- 1 tsp cardamom powder (less, or none, if you prefer)
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- A pinch of salt
- 1 cup flour
- ¾ cup melted ghee (or half ghee, half coconut oil)

METHOD

1. You'll need a loaf pan and your oven's broiler (a toaster oven with broil works too).
2. Warm the coconut milk and sugar gently until the sugar dissolves. Let it cool.
3. Mix in the cardamom, nutmeg, salt and yolks, then fold in the flour gently. Strain if there are lumps.
4. Pour ½–¾ cup batter into the pan and set it right under the broiler. Watch closely — it burns fast. After about 2 minutes, pull it out and brush with ghee.
5. Broil another 2–3 minutes until nicely browned, then add the next layer of batter.
6. Repeat until the batter is used up, popping any air bubbles with a toothpick.
7. Cool completely before slicing.

FROM THE COOK

— Bebinca takes practice and patience.

— In our house, we lightly toast the slices in a pan before eating.

Christmas Fruit Cake (Plum Cake)

from the kitchen of Sheela Rodrigues

SERVES 20–30 · 2–3 DAYS SOAKING + 2 HOURS



> *I always look forward to the Christmas season, and every year we love fruit cake. I made it for many years without ever being quite satisfied — family and guests praised it, but I felt it could be better. After a lot of research and trial and error, I found my perfect Christmas cake. The oven stays low because a cake this full of sugar, fruit and brandy needs a long, slow bake.*

INGREDIENTS

Fruit (soak 2–3 days ahead)

- 1 cup black raisins
- 1 cup sultanas
- 1 cup tutti frutti
- 1 cup chopped cranberries
- ½ cup candied orange peel, chopped
- 1 cup apple juice
- Brandy or rum (optional)

Caramel

- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup water, plus ½ cup more

Cake

- 250 g butter
- 1½ cups powdered brown sugar
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 tsp vanilla essence
- ¼ tsp salt
- 250 g all-purpose flour, plus ¼ cup for the fruit
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp each cinnamon, nutmeg, cumin and ginger
- 6 cloves, finely crushed
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

METHOD

Fruit (soak 2–3 days ahead)

1. Combine the fruit with the apple juice (and brandy, if using) in an airtight container and leave at room temperature 2–3 days — or overnight if you're in a hurry. Add a little sugar if the juice is sour.

Caramel

2. Boil the sugar and ¼ cup water on medium, stirring occasionally, 5–8 minutes until dark brown, almost black. Off the heat, add ½ cup water and rest 20 minutes. You need ½ cup of this liquid.

Cake

3. Line a 9-inch tin with two layers of parchment. Heat the oven to 300°F (150°C).
4. Cream the butter and sugar until fluffy. Add the eggs a little at a time, beating well — don't rush or it may curdle. (If it does, a spoonful of flour helps.)
5. Mix in the vanilla, salt and ½ cup caramel.
6. Fold in the flour, baking powder and spices until just combined.
7. Toss the fruit and walnuts in ¼ cup flour so they don't sink, and fold into the batter in three additions.
8. Spoon into the tin, smooth the top and make a slight dip in the center. Wipe batter smears off the paper so they don't burn.
9. Bake about 90 minutes without opening the door often; start testing at 75 minutes. It's done when deep brown and a skewer comes out clean.
10. Cool in the tin an hour, then turn out to cool completely. Wrap in parchment or foil and store airtight.

FROM THE COOK

— To feed with brandy, prick the cooled cake and spoon over 2–3 tbsp every two weeks until Christmas.

— For clean slices, freeze the cake briefly before cutting.

Grape Wine

from the kitchen of Ramona Kar

21+ DAYS FERMENTING



Eliza Dias

> *My mother, Eliza Dias, enjoyed making grape wine from green or purple grapes and took pride in serving it to guests. She was always grateful to our friend George Ferreira for the recipe. We loved sipping Mum's grape wine with Christmas cake after coming home from midnight Mass.*

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg fresh grapes, crushed
- 1 kg sugar
- About 1 liter water (two 500 ml bottles)
- 1 tsp yeast
- 1 cup whole wheat grains
- 1 egg white

METHOD

1. Boil the water and let it cool.
2. Proof the yeast: mix it with 2/3 tsp sugar in a little lukewarm water; it's ready when it bubbles.
3. Add the grapes, sugar, wheat and yeast to the water in a wide-mouthed bucket. Cover with a breathable cloth or loose lid.
4. Stir with a wooden spoon at the same time every day for 21 days or more.
5. When the fermenting stops (no more bubbles), strain through muslin.
6. Return the liquid to the bucket and stir in the whisked egg white to clarify it.
7. Leave several days for the sediment to settle — the longer the better — then siphon into bottles. It improves with age.

FROM THE COOK

— This recipe comes from a note in my mother's diary, so make a small test batch first. You can also use a commercial wine yeast suited to green or red grapes.

FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

Glossary

Measurements are given the way each family cooks — some in cups and spoons, some in grams. A cup is the standard US 8-oz cup. Many recipes are meant to be tasted and adjusted, so trust your palate. Most ingredients below can be found at Indian grocery stores around Austin.

Amchur	Dried green mango powder; adds a gentle sourness.
Ajwain	Carom seeds, small and thyme-like in flavor.
Bafat powder	Mangalorean Catholic spice blend of roasted red chilies and whole spices, used for pork bafat, sorpotel and more.
Bottle masala	East Indian spice blend of 25–30 roasted spices, traditionally made once a year and stored in glass bottles.
Chana dal / Toor dal / Urad dal / Moong dal	Split chickpeas, pigeon peas, black gram and mung beans.
Curry leaves	Fragrant leaves of the kadi patta tree, fried in oil at the start or end of a dish.
Ghee	Clarified butter.
Hing	Asafoetida; a pinch in hot oil gives a savory, oniony depth.
Jaggery	Unrefined cane or palm sugar. Coconut jaggery is darker and richer.
Kashmiri chili	A mild, deep-red dried chili used for color more than heat.
Kuswar	The assortment of sweets made at Christmas in Goan and Mangalorean homes and shared with family and neighbors.
Methi	Fenugreek — the seeds are bitter-sweet; the leaves are used fresh or dried.
Poha	Flattened (beaten) rice.
Sabudana	Tapioca pearls.
Suji	Semolina or cream of wheat.
Tadka	Spices sizzled in hot oil and poured over a dish to finish it.
Tondor / thondor	A traditional steamer used for sannas, patholi and mootlis.

WITH GRATITUDE

Our cooks

These families opened their recipe boxes, diaries and memories to make this book.

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Noella Baretto	Goat Chops Fry p.62
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THANK YOU

Keep the stove warm

Thank you to every family who shared a recipe and a memory, and to everyone who will carry these dishes forward. If your family has a recipe that belongs in a future edition, we would love to hear from you.

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