

A Passage to India

Spiced Meat Samosas

Cashew Crusted Crab Cakes with Carrot Ginger Chutney

Supreme of Chicken with Sweet Spices

Spicy Beef Curry

Jasmine Rice with Fruit and Nuts

Spiced Meat Samosas

A samosa is a common snack in India. It generally consists of a fried triangular shaped pastry shell with a savory potato, onion or cheese stuffing. Meat and fish filling are also often used.

Pastry Dough

1-½ cups all-purpose flour

1 teaspoon salt

4 tablespoons vegetable shortening

5 tablespoons water, more or less as needed

Filling

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 small onion, finely chopped

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

2 small chilies, seeded and finely chopped

1 pound ground beef or lamb

1-½ teaspoons salt

2 teaspoons garam masala

2 teaspoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons finely chopped cilantro

Vegetable oil

To make the pastry dough: Mix flour and salt in the bowl of a food processor. Add shortening and pulse until well combined. With the machine running, add enough water for the mixture to form a ball and then knead for 15 seconds. Remove dough from processor, coat with oil and place in a bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let it rest for ½ hour.

To make the filling: Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat and cook the onions until golden brown. Raise heat to high and add the meat; cook until browned. Lower heat and continue sautéing until meat is completely cooked. Turn off the heat and add the garam masala, lemon juice and cilantro. Let cool.

To make the samosas: Divide the dough into two equal parts. Roll each piece into a ½-inch thick rope. Cut each rope into eight equal pieces and then roll each piece into a ball. Roll each ball into a six-inch circle and then cut each circle in half.

Form each semicircle into a cone by moistening half of semicircle's straight edge with water, and bring the other half of the straight edge over it. Press the overlapped edges together to seal. Place a tablespoon of filling in the cone. Moisten the open end of the cone and pinch shut. Repeat with remaining pieces of dough.

Preheat oil in a deep, heavy skillet to 350 degrees. Add 8 to 10 of the pastries at a time. The temperature will drop to about 300 degrees. Let the pastries fry at that temperature until they are golden brown (about 10 to 12 minutes). Remove from oil and let drain on a wire rack. Serve warm.

Cashew Crusted Crab Cakes

- ¼ cup green onions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup red pepper, finely diced
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 large egg, slightly beaten
- 4 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley leaves
- 1 pound lump crab meat
- Fresh bread crumbs
- Salt and pepper
- 1 cup finely ground cashew nuts
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, divided
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ cup ghee

In a small bowl, mix green onions, red pepper, garam masala, mayonnaise and parsley. Fold mixture into crab meat and add just enough fresh breadcrumbs to bind the mixture. Season with salt and pepper. Form into small cakes, place on a lined baking sheet and refrigerate at least one hour.

Heat ghee in a large nonstick pan over medium heat. In a shallow bowl, mix nuts, cayenne and cumin. Season with salt and pepper. Dredge crab cakes in mixture, place in pan and cook, turning once, until golden brown. Serve with chutney.

Tomato-Cucumber Chutney

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Thai chilies, minced
- 1 medium red onion, finely chopped
- 6 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 English cucumber, seeded and finely diced
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons sliced basil
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds

In a large skillet, heat the vegetable oil. Add the garlic, chilies and onion and cook until softened. Add the tomatoes and curry powder and simmer until mixture begins to thicken. Add the honey and cook 5 more minutes. Add the cucumber and cook 2 more minutes. Remove from heat, season with salt and pepper, and stir in basil and sesame seeds. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Supreme of Chicken with Sweet Spices

- 2 tablespoons coriander seeds
- 1 tablespoon black cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon black peppercorns
- 1 teaspoon whole cloves
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 6 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 tablespoons minced onion
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon minced Thai chile
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- Salt and pepper
- 6 chicken breasts
- 1 cup chopped leeks
- 2 cups tiny cauliflower florets
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup peas
- Fresh thyme

Toast the coriander, cumin, peppercorns, cloves and cinnamon in a small pan. Transfer to a spice grinder and process until very fine.

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, ginger and chile. Saute until the vegetables for about 5 minutes or until golden. Add the spice mix and stir to combine. Remove from heat and let cool. Stir the yogurt, lime juice and salt into spice mixture. Place chicken in a shallow dish and cover with marinade. Let stand, refrigerated, for 1 hour.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. Remove chicken from marinade, scraping off any excess. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Saute the chicken until golden on both sides. Transfer chicken to a baking sheet and roast in the oven until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees. Remove from the oven and let stand 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, add remaining oil to the sauté pan. Add leeks and sauté until they begin to soften. Add the cauliflower and cook until crisp-tender. Add the cream, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer until vegetables are cooked and sauce has reduced slightly. Stir in the peas. Add the thyme and season with salt and pepper. Serve sauce over chicken.

Spicy Beef Curry

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound beef chuck, cut into $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch cubes
- 4 medium onions, chopped
- 1 teaspoon hot curry powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon saffron threads
- 4 cups beef or chicken stock
- 1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried yellow split peas
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup tomato paste
- Salt and pepper
- Fresh basil or mint

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Season the beef with salt and pepper. Bring a heavy Dutch oven to medium-high heat and add the meat. Cook until browned on all sides; remove from pan and set aside. Lower the heat to medium and add the onions. Cook onions until golden brown. Add the curry powder and cook 1 minute. Add back the reserved beef, saffron, stock and crushed tomatoes. Bring to a boil and transfer to oven and cook for 1 hour.

Remove pan from the oven and stir in the split peas and tomato paste. Place back in oven and cook until meat is very tender, about 1 to 1- $\frac{1}{2}$ more hours. Remove from oven, let cool slightly and then season with salt and pepper. Add basil and serve.

Jasmine Rice with Fruit and Pine Nuts

- 3 tablespoons ghee
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely minced onion
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 3 whole cloves
- 3 cardamom pods
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 2 cups jasmine rice, rinsed and drained
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2- $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup coconut milk
- Salt and pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup golden raisins
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup diced dried apricots
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup toasted pine nuts

Heat the ghee in a heavy-bottomed medium saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion, ginger, garlic, cloves, cardamom and cinnamon stick and sauté for 5 minutes. Stir in rice and turmeric and sauté for about 3 minutes or until the rice is shiny.

Raise the heat and add the water, coconut milk and salt. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to low and cover. Cook until liquid is absorbed. Add the raisins, apricots and pine nuts. Cover and let steam for 5 minutes. Fluff the rice and stir to combine; serve.