



HOPE Diwali Supper Menu

Suggested by the renowned chef and food writer Rakhi Dasgupta

HOPE UK would like to thank Rakhi Dasgupta for sharing this exclusive preview of the recipes from her exciting, upcoming book, *Eating Kolkata*.

Rakhi has been operating *Kewpie's Kitchen* in Kolkata since 1998, and is very well respected and known for her distinctive cuisine and love of Bengali food. Her mother was also a food writer and Rakhi, along with her father and sister, "decided to start an eating place [Kewpie] that served the kind of food our mother cooked and documented in her cookbooks".

"All the recipes are from my forthcoming book "Eating Kolkata". I have given you choices. Hope you have a fabulous meal!" Rakhi Dasgupta

This a 'suggested' menu for a Diwali Supper. You can either choose to create the whole menu or only a few dishes; or they may provide you with inspiration for your own celebration menu.

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Beguni - Brinjal/ Aubergine Fritters

Serves 2-4

250g large rounded brinjal/aubergine sliced into thin rounds

½ tsp onion seeds (kalonji)

½ tsp India poppy seed (posto)

½ tsp turmeric powder

¼ tsp red chilli powder or to taste

salt to taste

½ cup chick pea flour (besan)

½ cup rice flour

oil for deep frying

water

Method

In a bowl mix all the above ingredients together except brinjal, oil and water. Add a little water at a time so no lumps form and whisk into a thick batter.

Heat oil in a *karai* or wok and take the sliced eggplant dip in the batter and deep fry until golden brown on both sides (3-4 minutes). Place on kitchen paper. Serve hot with dal and rice.

Cooks tip: this can be done with a variety of vegetables such as cauliflower, large green chilli, spinach leaves, and potato. Serve hot with different chutneys

Luchi

The classic Bengali air-puffed fried bread enjoyed with almost anything

Makes 20

Ingredients

2 cups all purpose flour sifted

½ tsp salt

3 tbsp ghee or oil plus more if needed

1½ cups water, more or less

oil for deep frying

Method

Place flour in a large bowl, add salt and 2 tbsp oil or ghee, mix with finger until it forms crumbs, add half the water and knead until almost dry. Add the remaining water and knead until soft and pliable. Cover with a damp cloth and let it sit for 30 minutes. Divide the dough into 20 balls and sprinkle them with remaining oil (add more if needed) so that they are well lubricated.

Heat oil in a *karai* or wok for deep frying (oil should be half way up the *karai*). Roll out each ball into 5-inch diameter circles.

Once the oil is smoking lower heat and drop one *luchi* at a time into the hot oil, press the *luchi* with a slotted spoon to help it to puff up and change colour. Once it puffs up, turn it on to the other side and cook for another 30 seconds or so. Remove and place on kitchen paper to absorb excess oil. Serve immediately with vegetarian or non vegetarian dishes.

Cooks tip: *luchis* can be substituted for *puris*

Phulkopi Komola - Cauliflower with Oranges

A great party dish, this unusual combination is a delight

Serves 5-6

Ingredients:

1 kg cauliflower cut into large flowerets
2 large onions (250g) made into a paste with water
2 medium onions (150g) finely sliced
2 tsp turmeric powder
1 ½ -2 tsp salt or to taste
1½ tsp. sugar or to taste
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp cumin powder
1 tbsp ginger paste
1 ½ tsp garlic paste
1-inch piece cinnamon broken into bits
4 cloves
4 green cardamoms crushed
2 bay leaves
1 cup water
½ cup orange juice
4-5 slit green chillies
1 orange peeled skinned and pips removed
4 tbsp vegetable oil

Garnish (optional)

1 orange peeled, skin and pips removed
1 large onion (125g) fried until golden brown, drained on kitchen paper
1 tbsp raisins fried until golden brown

Method

Sprinkle cauliflower with ½ tsp salt and tsp turmeric powder, rub in well and lightly fry in 2 tablespoon of oil. Drain on kitchen paper.

Add remaining oil to pan. When hot add whole spices and bay leaves, sauté for a minute. Add sliced onions and fry until lightly brown, stir in onion, ginger and garlic pastes, and stir fry until it starts to change colour. Add turmeric, chilli, coriander and cumin powders, salt and sugar to taste with ¼ cup water. Stir fry over high heat until well blended. Stir in cauliflower, mix well, add remaining water, orange juice, green chillies and the orange segments, mix well and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer covered for 8- 10 minutes or until the cauliflower is cooked through and thick gravy remains. Check seasoning. Remove from heat, place in a dish, garnish with orange segments, fried onions and raisins if using.

Serve hot with rice, or *pullao* or *luchi*

Mator Dal Sabji Diye - Split Peas with Vegetables

Serves 6

Ingredients

200g split peas (*mator dal*), washed then soaked in water for ½ hour, drained and set aside

250g bottle gourd (*lau*) peeled and cut into 1 ½-inch pieces

100g shelled green peas

1 tsp salt to taste

½ tsp sugar or to taste

½ tsp turmeric powder

½ tsp onion seeds (*kalonji*)

4-5 slit green chillies

2 tbsp chopped coriander leaves

½ tbsp ghee/ butter/ oil

2 tsp ginger paste

½ tsp chilli powder (*optional*)

3 ½ cups water (*approximately*)

Method

In a pan place dal, add water, stir in ginger paste, salt and turmeric. Boil until the dal starts to break up, then smash with the back of a wooden spoon until smooth.

Add vegetables, stir in chilli powder, sugar and 1 tsp ghee and bring back to a boil. Lower heat and simmer until vegetables are cooked through. In a *karai*, or pan heat the remaining ghee / oil, add onion seeds and green chillies. Sauté until the chillies start to change colour. Pour in dal and vegetables, mix well and simmer for another 5-6 minutes. Stir in coriander leaves and check seasoning.

Serve with boiled rice, *pullao* or *luchi*.

Use courgette flowers instead

Shada Alur Dum - White Potato Curry

Serves 6-8

Ingredients

1 kg small potatoes, peeled and pricked all over

1 cup light cream

1 cup water

1 tsp chilli powder

1 tsp turmeric powder

1 tsp cumin powder

½ tsp coriander powder

½ tbsp ginger paste

6-8 green chillies, slit

2 bay leaves

1 ½ -2 tsp garam masala powder

1 tsp sugar or to taste

1 tsp salt or to taste

2-3 tbsp yogurt, beaten

4 tbsp ghee

Method

In a bowl, mix together cream and water, stir in chill, turmeric, cumin and coriander powders, along with ginger paste, salt and sugar. Add potatoes, mix well and marinate for 2-3 hours. Place potatoes along with the marinade in a pan, bring to a boil. Stir in green chillies, lower heat and simmer until almost tender: Stir in yoghurt, mix well, check seasoning and simmer until the potatoes are cooked through. Heat 3 tbsp ghee in a *karai*, add bay leaves and sauté for a few seconds. Add potatoes and sprinkle with *garam* masala and stir-fry until thick gravy remains. Pour in remaining ghee, mix well.

Serve with rice or *pullao* or *luchi*, *paratha*

Chicken Kasha - Slow Cooked Chicken

Serves 5-6

Ingredients

1 kg chicken without skin cut into 8-10 pieces
250g well-beaten yogurt
200g onions fried until golden brown and crumbled (3-4 medium onions)
6-10 almonds soaked in hot water, peeled, sliced and fried golden brown
2 tbsp fried raisins
3 medium onions (225g) made into paste
1 tbsp ginger paste
2 tsp garlic paste
1 ½ tsp cumin powder
1 ½ tsp coriander powder
1 tsp chilli powder
½ tsp Kashmiri chilli powder/cayenne pepper/paprika
50g Indian poppy seed (postto) ground to a paste with some water
½ tsp mace (jaitri) powder
½ tsp nutmeg (jaiphal) powder
1 tsp salt or to taste
1 tsp sugar or to taste
2 cardamoms
2 cloves
1-inch cinnamon broken into bits
2 bay leaves
4 tbsp ghee or oil
5-6 slit green chillies

Method

Place the chicken pieces in a glass, plastic or ceramic bowl. Mix together yogurt, onion, ginger and garlic pastes, chilli, coriander and cumin powders along with salt, sugar, poppy seed paste, powdered mace and nutmeg. Pour this mixture over the chicken pieces, rub into chicken and marinate for up to 4 hours in the fridge. Turn the pieces of chicken in the marinade a few times during this process. Heat 4 tbsp of oil or *ghee* in a *karai*, or pan; when hot add bay leaves and whole spices, sauté for 1 minute. Add the chicken pieces after shaking off the marinade. Fry until light brown on both sides. Stir in the marinade, ½ the fried onions, ½ the fried almonds and ½ the fried raisins; mix well, cover, lower heat and cook the chicken on low heat for 20-30 minutes or until tender. Check seasoning. Add slit green chillies and stir-fry on high until all the moisture is absorbed and the oil rises to the surface. Serve garnished with the remaining fried onions, almonds and raisins.

Serve with *paratha* or *Bangla pullao*

Dhone Malai Mangsho - Coriander and Cream Meat Curry

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

1 kg mutton cut into 2-inch pieces

juice of 2 limes

½ tsp asafoetida (*hing*) powder

1 ½ cups finely chopped fresh coriander leaves

3 ½ tbsp garlic paste

½ tbsp dry roasted coriander seeds, finely ground

1 tsp salt or to taste

1 tsp sugar or to taste

10-12 slit green chillies (optional)

1 ½ cups cream

¼ cup hot water

2-3 tbsp oil

Garnish

finely chopped coriander leaves

Method

In a bowl, place meat pieces, add garlic paste, coriander leaves, coriander powder, lime juice, sugar and salt. Mix well and marinate for ½ hour.

In a *karai*, or pan heat oil until smoking, add bay leaves and 5 green chillies and *hing* sauté until the chillies start to blister.

Add meat mixture and stir-fry until the meat pieces are well-browned on both sides. Pour in the remaining lime juice and hot water, mix well and bring to a boil. Lower heat and cook until nearly tender (30-35 minutes or so).

Fish in Coconut Gravy

Serves 4-8

Ingredients

8 hilsa steaks or any other thick fish steaks

300ml thick coconut milk

juice of 1 large or 2 small limes

2 large onions (250g) finely sliced

8-10 slit green chillies or to taste

½ tsp red chilli powder

½ tsp Kashmiri chilli powder/cayenne/ paprika

1 tsp turmeric powder

2 medium onions (150g) ground to a fine paste

1-inch piece ginger peeled and ground to a fine paste

1 ½ tsp salt or to taste

1 tsp sugar or to taste

8-10 curry leaves

2-inch piece cinnamon broken into bits

4 cloves

4 green cardamom crushed

1 ½- inch piece ginger peeled and julienned

4 tbsp ghee or oil

Method

Rub fish steaks with ½ tsp turmeric powder and ½ tsp salt.

In a pan or *karai* heat 2 tbsp *ghee*/oil, fry the steak lightly, remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.

Add the remaining oil/*ghee* to the pan. Once hot, add the whole spices and curry leaves and sauté for two minutes. Add the slit green chillies and sliced onions; sauté until onions turn transparent and limp. Stir in onion and ginger pastes, stir-fry for 3-4 minutes, adding some coconut milk, if needed, to stop it from sticking to the bottom of the pan. Add the remaining turmeric and chilli powders and stir-fry until well blended and the oil rises to the surface. Add the balance coconut milk, salt and sugar, mix well and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and let it simmer uncovered for 4-5 minutes.

Add the fish steaks and julienned ginger, cover and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until the fish is cooked through and the gravy has thickened. Pour in lime juice, mix well, check seasoning and remove from heat.

Prawn Chingri Maccher Vindaloo

Serves 6

Ingredients

1 kg medium-sized prawns washed, cleaned, de-veined, with tail kept intact

1 tbsp turmeric powder

½ tbsp chilli powder

1 ½ tsp coriander powder

2 tsp cumin powder

½ tbsp ginger paste

1 tbsp garlic paste

1 ½ tbsp mustard paste

2 tsp sugar or to taste

4 tbsp white or brown vinegar

4 tbsp mustard or white oil

3 cups hot water

salt to taste

Method

In bowl mix together turmeric, chilli, coriander and cumin powders with mustard garlic and ginger paste and half the vinegar to form a masala paste. Set aside.

Heat oil in a *karai* until smoking. Add the masala paste, lower heat to medium and stir-fry for 4-5 minutes or until well blended. Add the prawns and remaining vinegar, stir-fry until the vinegar is absorbed. Add water, mix well and bring to a boil. Stir in sugar and salt to taste. Lower heat, cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until the gravy has reduce by a fourth and the prawns are cooked through. Check seasoning. Remove from stove.

Serve hot with rice or *pullao*, bread or *porotha*.

Bangla Pullao Rice

A Bengal Style Pullao

Serves 6

Ingredients

1 ½ kg basmati rice or any long grain rice washed and soaked in water for 45 minutes, then drained and set aside

6 cups hot water

100g ghee or vegetable oil

75g halved cashew nuts

25g raisins soaked in hot water

4-inch pieces cinnamon broken into bits

6-8 bruised green cardamom

6-8 cloves

4-5 bay leaves

¼ piece nutmeg (jaiphal) powdered

½ tsp mace (jaitri) powder

1 tsp garam masala powder

1½ tsp screw pine essence (kewra water)

1 ½ tsp rose water

100g sugar

1 tsp salt or to taste

Garnish

4 medium onions (300g) finely sliced and fried until golden brown

rose petals

Method

Bring water to boil in a large pan, add rice and cook until ¾ done. Drain rice well, retaining 1 cup of water in which rice was cooked. Heat *ghee* in large pan or *dekchi*, add whole spices, raisins and cashew nuts.

Sauté until the nut start to turn golden.

Stir in rice, salt and sugar and stir-fry for a couple of minutes.

Add nutmeg, mace and *garam* masala powders, *kewra* and rose water. Mix well, then add 1 cup of rice water and cook covered over low heat for 6-10 minutes or until the water is absorbed and the grains separate.

Garnish with fried onions and rose petals before serving.

Coriander and Mint Chutney

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

100g fresh mint leaves

100g fresh coriander chopped

5-6 cloves garlic

1 ½ -inch piece of ginger peeled and chopped

2-3 green chillies chopped

1 tsp carom seeds

1 tsp sugar

½ tsp salt

1 tbsp lime juice or to taste

1 tbsp beaten yogurt

Method

Grind all the ingredients (except lime juice and yogurt) into a smooth paste in a food processor. Stir in lime juice and check seasoning.

Viceroy's Mango Chutney

Colonial lore has it that this recipe is the one used in Lord Napier's household when he was the Viceroy of India

Makes around 10 cups

Ingredients

25g dry red chillies

250g raisins

25g peeled and sliced ginger

25g peeled and sliced garlic

250g blanched, peeled and chopped almonds

½ tbsp salt or to taste

4 cups white vinegar

1kg 750g sugar

1 tsp Kashmiri chilli powder/cayenne

1 tsp ground ginger powder

2 ½ kg peeled raw mango sliced thickly

Method

Grind dry red chillies together with almonds, raisins, garlic and ginger with 1 cup vinegar or more to form a paste. Massage this paste into the mango pieces. Bring the remaining vinegar and sugar to a gentle boil, stir in salt, chilli powder and ginger powder and cook stirring until sugar melts. Add sliced mango pieces with the paste, mix well with a wooden spoon and cook over low heat, stirring from time to time so it does not catch at the bottom of the pan, until the fruit is tender and a thick syrup remains.

Place in sterilized jars and keep in a cool place

Thakuma's Payesh – My Grandmother's Rice Pudding

Serves 8-10

Ingredients

2 ½ litres of milk

1 tin condensed milk

50g sugar (more if needed)

100g chopped almonds, pistachios and cashew nuts

2 powdered green cardamom pods

2 bay leaves

50g basmati rice

Garnish

50g mixed chopped nuts (pista, almonds, cashews)

rose petals

Method

Place the milk and condensed milk in a large pan or *dekchi* and bring to a boil.

Wash and dry the rice. Add the rice and bay leaves to the boiling milk. Keep stirring from time to time till the rice is done. Add sugar and chopped nuts, stir and cook for another 10-15 minutes till sugar has dissolved.

Sprinkle the powdered cardamom over the *payesh* and remove from heat.

Once the *payesh* is cool, place in the refrigerator to chill

To serve, place in individual dessert bowls or plates and garnish with nuts and rose petals

Aam Kheer – Mango Cream

Serves 4-6

Ingredients

1½ litre milk

60g sugar

1 kg ripe mango peeled, stoned and cut into one-inch cubes and put in the fridge to chill

½ cup mango pulp or thick juice

Method

In a pan bring the milk to boil and keep stirring till it is reduced to half. Then add the sugar, stirring all the while, till the sugar is completely dissolved. Reduce the milk further to make a thick caramelized custard. Remember to keep stirring. Remove from heat and let it cool completely.

Then put into the fridge to chill.

Just before serving, mix the mangoes and mango pulp or juice into the *kheer*. Pour into a serving dish or individual dessert bowls.