

A decorative black border with ornate floral and scrollwork patterns on the left and right sides, framing the central text.

# A Dozen Ways To Celebrate

...  
Twelve Decadent Indian Feasts  
For The Culinary Indulgent  
...

Nandita Godbole

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1. Cooking 2. Indian. 3. Menu Planning.

Limited Release, First Edition



My favorite spices, by row, top to bottom.

First row: Curry Cravings™ Goda Masala, Black Cumin, Fenugreek & Black Pepper

Second Row: Whole Coriander Seeds, Green Cardamom Pods, Black Mustard Seeds & Cayenne Pepper Powder

Third Row: Nigella Seeds, Cumin-Coriander Powder, Turmeric & Cloves



# A DOZEN WAY TO CELEBRATE: TWELVE DECADENT FEASTS FOR THE CULINARY INDULGENT

## Chapter One

### ❧ INTRODUCTION TO THE INDIAN CUISINE

	1
What IS The Indian Cuisine?	1
Indian Meals: Practices, Courses & Types	2
Multicultural Feasting	7

## Chapter Two

### ❧ SPICES & AYURVEDA

	9
Ayurveda & Indian Food	15

## Chapter Three

### ❧ IN THIS BOOK

	19
Structure	19
Servings	19
Calories	19
Diets & Substitutions	20
Time Allowance	23
Ease	23

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## Chapter Four

### ☞ SUMMER PARTY 25

Kashmiri Green Tea	28
Paneer Spinach & Cashew Cakes	30
Jalapeños-Mint Sour Cream Dip	32
Yellow Moon	33
Paneer, Pineapple & Vegetable Jalfraize	34
Cashew & Squash Daal	36
Badami Chicken	38
Paratha	40
Jeera Pulao	42
Silver Moon	43

## Chapter Five

### ☞ COASTAL INSPIRED 47

Spiced Malabar Lassi	50
Sago & Potato Fritters	52
Spicy Garlic Chutney	54
Coriander Cakes	55
Green Mango & Coconut Chutney	57
Batter-Fried Sesame Shrimp	58
Steamed Snapper Packets	59
Pomfret/Butterfish Ambotik	60
Rice Flour Bhakri	62
Sol Kadhi	64
Waley Bhaat	65
Coconut Mango Fudge	67

## Chapter Six

### ☞ SOUTH INDIAN DOSA PARTY 71

Kokum-Ginger Fizz	74
Thair Wadai	76
Saambar Wadai	80
Saambar	80
Dosa	82
Potatoes & Peas	84
Vegetable Korma	86
Puliyodharai/Tamarind Rice	87
Lime Rice	88
Tomato Chutney	89
Vermicelli & Tapioca Payasam	90

## Chapter Seven

### ☞ NAWABI FEAST 95

Fig & Tulsi Lassi	97
Nawabi Green Chicken Kebabs	98
Minty Yogurt Dip	100
Onion & Beetroot Raita	101
Paneer & Fennel Stuffed Tomato Boats	102
Makhani Chicken	104
Stuffed & Batter-Fried Okra	106
Paratha	107
Navrattan Pulao	108
Pistachio Vermicelli Kheer	110

## Chapter Eight

### ☞ CREPE ESCAPE 115

Masala Chai	117
Campus Dosa	118
Besan Pooa	120
Uttappam	122
Whole Wheat Crepes with Cashew & Squash Daal	124
Adai with Honey-Ginger Yogurt	126
Honey-Ginger Yogurt	127
Malpua	128

## Chapter Nine

### ☞ DIWALI: CELEBRATIONS OF LIGHT 133

Spicy Tomato Sipper	135
Chiwda	136
Masala Poori	138
Fresh Citrus-Carrot Salad with Fennel & Mint	140
Cheesy Stuffed Poblano Peppers	142
Kadhi	144
Layered Mixed Vegetable Biryani	146
Cashew & Pistachio Burfi	148
Saffron Shrikhand	150
Significance of Rangoli	153
How To Make A Maharashtra Rangoli	155

**Chapter Ten**

<b>THE FAMILY FEAST</b>	<b>157</b>
Persimmon Tea	159
Marinated Paneer & Feta Chunks	160
Fried Tomatoes	162
Nigella Spiced Verts with Almonds & Goat Cheese	164
Potato Hash Donuts	166
Spicy Stuffing	168
Rosemary-Infused Jamaican Style Chicken	170
Hot Cranberry-Cherry Sauce	172
Rogan-Josh	174
Pav Bread	176
Fig & Pine Nuts Tart	178
Bottle Gourd Halwa	180
Goodie-Bag Triple Chocolate Biscotti	182

**Chapter Eleven**

<b>STREET-EATS</b>	<b>187</b>
Mango Lassi	190
Mixed Vegetable Bhajjya	192
Sheesh Kebab Medallions	194
Scallion-Cucumber Raita with Black Pepper	196
Coconut Stuffed Okra	198
Pav Bhaji	200
Pistachio Falooda	202

**Chapter Twelve**

<b>STREET-EATS 2</b>	<b>207</b>
Jal-Jeera	209
Chatpatta Warm Nut Cones	210
Avocado & Quinoa Pong with Pomegranate	212
Griddle-Fried Fish Cakes with Herbed Butter	214
Herbed Butter	215
Choley-Bhatura: Choley	216
Bhatura	218
Lemon Rice with Peas & Cashews	220
Kurmura Chikki	222

**Chapter Thirteen**

<b>GREAT NORTHERN CUISINE</b>	<b>229</b>
Tomato Fennel Yakhni Shorba	231
Cumin & Paneer Bake	232
Gozi Rajma	234
Dum Aaloo	235
Modur Polay	237

**Chapter Fourteen**

<b>TAPAS &amp; GAME NIGHT</b>	<b>243</b>
Rosemary-Orange Marinated Olives	244
Shahi Paneer Tukde	246
Carrot & Fresh Mango-Turmeric Soup with Quinoa	248
Batatey Wadey	250
Tamarind Chutney	252
Pistachio Stuffed Grilled Chicken in Cashew Cream Sauce	254
Mixed Vegetable Khitchidi	256
Pistachio Cardamom Cookies with Fresh Cream & Mangoes	258

**Chapter Fifteen**

<b>WEEKEND BRUNCH-LUNCH: A CHEF'S MEAL</b>	<b>263</b>
Mysore Cardamom Coffee	266
Poha with Onion & Potatoes	268
Spinach Thepla	270
Thalipeeth	272
Dahi Wada	274
Fried Idli with Tomato Chutney	276
Chicken Biryani	278
Carrot Halwa	281

<b>EPILOGUE</b>	<b>285</b>
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<b>APPENDIX &amp; SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>287</b>
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## Dosa

Anyone who has eaten at a South Indian restaurant will have tried this ubiquitous crisp dish, sometimes stuffed with spicy potatoes or served alongside various chutneys and saambar. I learned rather quickly after being married that dosas serve as both the starch and the protein component of a meal, and requires as much merit on a plate as a serving of vegetables. Restaurant-style dosas, or the thin and crispy variety, are faster to make and appear to be easier to digest than thick dosas. They are actually less filling as a stand-alone meal, because they use very little batter compared to thick dosas, and their crisp texture is achieved through the generous dousing of oil! The best dosas are the thickness of thin pancakes or fat crepes. According to my husband, his grandma's dosas were at least a ¼" thick, soft, pillowy and perfectly filling. To me, any kind of dosa is delicious. Note: dosas are not suited for strict Jain diets, but progressive Jains may include them in their diets. Devout Jains may add a rising agent to unfermented batter to mimic the fermentation process.

Makes: Eight or more servings; 360 calories ea.

Diet: Vegan adaptable, Jain, Gluten-free

Prep Time: 3 hours soak, plus overnight fermentation

Cook Time, Ease: <25 minutes, Moderately easy

### ✿ INGREDIENTS

3 cups raw basmati, sona masoori or parboiled rice

1 cup raw skinless split urad daal (black gram)

Salt, to taste

Oil or ghee, as needed

### ✿ METHOD

Wash and soak both the rice and the urad daal separately for 6 hours. Drain and rinse separately. Use a blender to grind each of them separately into a very fine paste using only small amounts and ½ cup of water at a time. They produce batters of different viscosity - the ground rice creates a sand-textured batter whereas the urad daal creates a sticky batter. After each has been ground, combine both in a utensil deep enough to allow the batter to rise. The combined batter should be kept at the consistency of a heavy cake batter. The utensil should be covered with a tight-fitting lid and kept in a warm, dark place overnight to ferment. The best places to ferment the batter include draft-free spaces such as a preheated oven that is turned off at 120°F or on a kitchen counter, wrapped in kitchen towels, away from windows. Do not keep the batter in a hot space, such as under direct sunlight, or the batter will turn very sour. The fermented batter will be light and airy and may double or triple in volume overnight. It may also have a slight sour smell; this is normal. If the batter does not appear to have

risen, keep it covered in a warm spot for a few more hours. Dosa batters are typically ready to use within 6-8 hours, but only if they have fermented and risen. Unused batters, after they have achieved the first rise, may be stored in the refrigerator for up to 3 days.

To make dosas, spoon out a small quantity of fermented batter into a separate bowl. Each dosa requires  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of fermented batter. Add a little water to bring this fermented batter to pancake batter consistency, and salt to taste, mixing it very lightly.

Heat a nonstick skillet. Wipe the bottom of the hot skillet with a little oil. Drop a ladle full of the thinned out batter, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup, on the skillet and spread it quickly in a circular motion with the back of the ladle to be as thin or thick as desired. Drizzle a little oil or ghee all around and let the dosa cook uncovered on medium heat. If preparing a thick dosa, cover the skillet to allow the dosa to steam cook. When the edges begin to separate from the skillet, the dosa is ready to be turned over. Cook in the same manner on the other side, but for half the time as the first. Gently slide the dosa off the skillet onto a serving plate. Serve hot with suitable accompaniment.

*Dosa: These are best eaten fresh off the griddle, so serve them in place of a bread component in a meal. Dosa batter is very versatile, as it also transforms into uttappam and idlis.*







## Mango Lassi

Lassi and mangoes are both popular during the hot summer months in India. According to Ayurveda, lassi made with fresh yogurt is considered cooling for the body even when served at room temperature.

One will find hoards of food stalls and hawkers lined along city streets selling this sweet and cooling thirst quencher. Grocery stores conveniently carry different types of fresh mango as well as mango pulp. Different brands use a variety of mangoes to produce pulp, and each has a distinct taste. As many mango varieties are found easily, mango lassi is an easy-to-make year-round treat. The combination of creamy yogurt, sweet mangoes and cardamom creates a complex flavor profile, so use the best ingredients for the maximum impact and compliments.

Makes: Twelve 4-oz servings; 160 calories ea.

Diet: Jain, Ritual friendly, Gluten-free

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Cook Time, Ease: Nil, Easy

### 🌿 INGREDIENTS

2 cups unflavored Greek yogurt, cold

1½ cups Alphonso mango pulp or 2 large Kent mangoes or 5 ripe

Champagne® mangoes, see pre-prep note

4 cups cold water

¾ cup sugar, or to taste

½ cup heavy cream

2-3 green cardamom pods, seeded and finely crushed

¼ cup raw unsalted slivered almonds, for garnish (optional)

### 🌿 PRE-PREP

If using fresh mangoes, wash and wipe the fruit thoroughly and remove the stems and the naturally occurring sap around the stems. Working over a large bowl, peel away the skin in long sections with a vegetable peeler. Using a small paring knife, cut away the flesh of each mango going as close to the seed as possible. The single seed is large and sits at the core of the fruit. Kent, Alphonso and Champagne® mangoes are less fibrous than other varieties. As you cut away, give the mango a little taste. Tart fresh mangoes are excellent for salsa but not lassi. Chop the sections of mango flesh into smaller bits for the blender. Reserve a few for garnish.

Sour yogurt, mangoes or mango pulp must be avoided. Fresh mangoes must be checked for ripeness before they are cut open. A cut fruit does not ripen. Do not be tempted to squeeze the fruit; it only spoils quicker. An Alphonso or Kent mango will be golden yellow when ripe. Champagne® mangoes are ripe when their skin has slightly wrinkled and the fruit has turned into a soft sunrise yellow. If you cannot tell the difference, take a whiff of the fruit near its stem. A ripe mango will smell sweeter than the rest.

## ✿ METHOD

Start with cold yogurt and water. Do not use iced water, as ice will cause the cream to clot up. Taste both the yogurt and the mango before you combine, so you know what to expect for sweetness.

Whisk the yogurt and mango pulp or pieces in a blender until smooth. While the motor is running, add a slow stream of water into the blender jar. This will ensure that the water mixes evenly with the yogurt. Stop the blender and sample the blend. Add sugar to taste, up to 1 tablespoon per serving. Alternately, increase sweetness by adding mango (pulp or wedges) and blend for 1 minute until smooth. Add the heavy cream and crushed cardamom seeds in the last 10 seconds and turn off the blender. Pour into glasses of your choosing and garnish with slivered almonds. Serve immediately.







## Mysore Cardamom Coffee

Mysore cardamom coffee is not a typical espresso shot, coffee shop latte or even the house coffee from an average drip coffee machine. Coffee came to the hills of South India in the late 14th and early 15th centuries. South Indian coffee reflects its special connection to the land where coffee is frequently planted in the same micro region as many spices, such as cardamom, cinnamon and cloves. This particular recipe combines two such unique local flavors from South India: coffee and cardamom.

The unique flavor of regional South Indian coffee, with or without cardamom, comes from the addition of the chicory root to finely ground coffee. Chicory root is naturally caffeine free and it lightens the jolt of caffeine without compromising the taste, and gives it a mild, sandalwood-like aroma. Depending on the regional source of the coffee beans, extent of roasting, ratio of chicory to coffee, method of preparation, milk-to-coffee ratio, and sweeteners used, a chicory blended coffee such as this one can bring you a genteel caffeine fix or a jolt of energy and adrenalin.

My father-in-law fondly remembers how his sister, who was responsible for making the coffee, sweetened it with palm sugar in place of cane sugar. Though the use of palm sugar in coffee is a regional cultural preference, it is frequently used in Ayurvedic preparations to treat patients with iron deficiency. My husband loves to make the traditional South Indian filter coffee the old fashioned way with a stainless steel filter apparatus, whereas I prefer a much lighter cup. I will share a two-step method that does not use traditional utensils (unless you already have the filter apparatus), but an espresso machine instead. The distinctive aroma of this coffee takes me to the lush, misty hillsides of Coorg.

Makes: Twelve 2½-oz servings; 45 calories ea.

Diet: Jain, Ritual friendly, Vegetarian, Gluten-free

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time, Ease: 10 minutes, Easy

### ✦ INGREDIENTS

2-3 tbsp South Indian chicory blend coffee

1 cup hot water

4 cups whole milk

2-3 tbsp sweetened condensed milk (optional)

3-4 green cardamom pods

4 tbsp raw sugar, jaggery or palm sugar (or sweeten to taste)



## ☞ METHOD

Prepare a decoction of the coffee using your preferred coffee maker.

In a saucepan, bring the milk to a low boil. Lightly crush the cardamom pods, place them in a tea ball or infuser, and add it to the milk. Let this to brew for 4-5 minutes on low until the cardamom fragrance is distinctive. Brew a little more for a more intense cardamom flavor. Carefully remove the tea ball. Add the condensed milk, if desired, and stir in until it dissolves. Add the coffee decoction into the hot milk and stir in. Sweeten to taste.

To serve, “pull” the prepared coffee by pouring rapidly between a tall heat-proof glass or cup and the saucepan, allowing the milk to froth, cool slightly, and aerate simultaneously. I find it easier to pull the coffee using utensils that have a lip or spout such as a measuring cup or a creamer cup. This form of pulling also ensures that the flavors mix well. A mechanical frother will only mix and froth, but not cool the coffee. Serve immediately in small cups of your choice with the milk foam on top.



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