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Winter Warmer

A spice that sums up winter for **Nikki Haynes** is cloves; spiked in ham, in a glass of mulled wine, an aromatic curry, tagine, or spicy cake . . .

IMAGES JOHN HELLON & GARY LOFTUS | RECIPES AND IMAGES LA PORTE DES VINS COORDINÉES BY NICHOLAS AND SHIRAZ MERY
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN HELLON AND PISHI AGRAWAL STYLING BY ANJA KUCHNER / ABSOLUTE PRESS PHOTOGRAPHY DAVID LOTTEN

Chickpea Flour Cannelloni of Spicy Prawns with Tomato-Pepper Sauce

Serves 4

Vegetable oil, for deep frying
500g / 1lb 2oz peeled raw prawns
2 onions, finely chopped
5-6 curry leaves
1 large tomato, chopped
1tsp brown sugar
Sea salt
Coriander and celery cress (or sprigs of coriander), to garnish

For the spice paste
2tsp red chilli flakes
5cm / 2in cinnamon stick
6-7 green cardamom pods
6-7 cloves
½tsp ground black pepper
½tsp cumin seeds
1tbsp ginger, crushed
1tbsp garlic, crushed
1tbsp fresh ginger, finely chopped
100ml / 3½fl oz white wine vinegar or malt vinegar

For the tomato-pepper sauce
2tbsp vegetable oil
1tbsp chopped garlic
½tsp cumin seeds
1 onion, sliced
3 tomatoes, chopped
½tsp ground coriander
¼tsp red chilli powder
¼tsp garam masala
1 red pepper, roasted, peeled and chopped
1tbsp coriander, finely chopped

For the chickpea flour pancakes
200g / 7oz gram (chickpea) flour
1tbsp cornflour
1 green chilli, finely chopped
1 onion, finely chopped
1tsp finely chopped fresh ginger
1tbsp chopped coriander leaves
1tbsp vegetable oil, plus a little extra for frying
150ml / ½pt of carbonated or still water

- 1 Put all the ingredients for the spice paste in a food processor and blend until smooth. Set aside.
- 2 Heat the oil for deep-frying in a wok, add the prawns and fry

for 2 mins. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper, set aside.

- 3 Heat 3tbsp of the oil in a separate pan, add the onions and cook over a medium heat until golden brown. Add the curry leaves and spice paste and cook for 2 mins, then add the chopped tomato and cook for 3-5 mins, until the tomato blends with the rest of the ingredients. Add the prawns, followed by the sugar and some salt, then cook, stirring, for 2-3 mins. Remove from the heat and keep warm. (You could make the prawn mixture in advance and store it in a sealed container in the fridge for 6-8 days.)

- 4 Next make the tomato-pepper sauce. Heat the oil in a pan, add the garlic and cumin seeds and sauté until the seeds start to pop. Add the onion and sauté until translucent. Stir in the tomatoes and ground spices and cook over a medium heat for 5-7 mins. Add the roasted pepper, then season with salt to taste. Stir in the coriander leaves, remove from the heat and keep warm.

- 5 For the pancakes, whisk all the ingredients together with a pinch of salt. Heat a little oil in a non-stick frying pan and pour in a small ladleful of batter. Tilt the pan quickly to spread the batter evenly over the surface, then cook over a medium heat for 1-2 mins, until they are lightly coloured underneath. Flip over and cook on the other side for 1-2 mins. Transfer to a well-oiled baking tray and repeat to make 8 pancakes.

- 6 To assemble, place a pancake flat on a board and put about 1½tbsp of the warm prawn mixture in the centre. Roll it up tightly, then trim off the sides and cut it into 5cm (2in) cylinders. Repeat with the remaining pancakes.

- 7 Spoon the tomato and pepper sauce into the centre of each plate and place 2 cylinders on top. Garnish with cress or coriander sprigs and serve straight away.



Roasted Duck Breasts in a Spicy Tamarind Sauce

The onion sauce and vadavam must be made beforehand.

Serves 4

For the onion sauce

6tbsp vegetable oil
2 bay leaves
4 cloves
2½cm / tin cinnamon stick
1 black cardamom pod
1 kg / 2lb 2oz Spanish onions, sliced
150ml / 5fl oz water

For the vadavam

100g / 3½oz Spanish onions, crushed with the juice retained
60g / 2oz garlic, peeled and crushed with the juice retained
10-15 sprigs fresh curry leaves, crushed with the juice retained
4tbsp masoor dal (red lentils)
4tbsp split urad dal (black lentils)
4tsp fenugreek
4tsp mustard seeds

4 unskinned Barbary duck breast fillets

For the marinade

1tsp black pepper powder
1tsp coriander powder
½tsp cumin powder
½tsp red chilli powder
½tsp turmeric powder
2tbsp vegetable oil
1tbsp malt vinegar
1 pinch fenugreek

For the sauce

2tbsp coriander seeds
4tsp cumin seeds
1 pinch fenugreek seeds
1tsp black peppercorns
1tsp whole cloves
2½cm / tin cinnamon stick
5 dried chillies
60g / 2oz desiccated coconut
3tbsp tomato paste
4tbsp tamarind pulp
150ml / 5fl oz onion sauce

1 First make the onion sauce. Heat the oil in a pan, add the bay leaves and spices followed by

the sliced onions and cook gently until the onions are translucent.

2 Add the water and bring to the boil. Simmer the onions to a pulp, about 30 mins. Leave to cool, then purée the sauce.

3 Store in a refrigerator for up to a week or in the freezer for up to a month, using as required.

4 Next make the vadavam. Mix all the ingredients together, spread them out on a baking tray and, if the weather is sunny and dry, leave outside exposed to the sun all day.

5 At sundown, bring indoors, roll the ingredients into balls, cover and leave overnight. Repeat the procedure until all the moisture has evaporated, 3-4 days. Alternatively, place the baking tray in a very slow oven - the setting you use to heat plates - and leave for several hours, repeating, like the sun-drying procedure, until all the moisture has evaporated, again after 3-4 days.

6 Now begin the main recipe. Prick the duck breasts in several places with a fork. Mix the marinade ingredients together and rub into the breasts. Set aside for at least half an hour, then pre-heat the oven to 180°C / gas 4.

7 Meanwhile, dry-roast separately over a medium heat each of the spice ingredients for the sauce, stirring continuously until the aroma is released, about 1 min. Roast the desiccated coconut until light brown. Grind or process together the vadavam and all the roasted ingredients, adding a little water, to make a fine paste. Mix the paste with the onion sauce and tomato paste in a pan and bring to the boil, stirring continuously. Simmer for 20 mins, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking, then add the tamarind pulp.

8 To finish, heat the oil in another pan, add the mustard seeds and the curry leaves and, in a few secs, as soon as the mustard seeds pop, stir into the sauce and add salt to taste.

9 Arrange the duck breasts (skin side down in an oiled roasting tin) and roast for 10-12 mins to cook the flesh pink, 18-20 mins for well done. Remove from the oven and cut breasts into narrow diagonal slices. Fan out on heated plates and pour over the sauce. Garnish with sprigs of fresh green peppercorns, fresh red

chilli juliennes and fried coconut chips. (Or use dehydrated coconut chips, dry-roasted until they're light brown).

fresh tip

This dish is ideal for a dinner party. Serve with basmati rice for a more filling meal.



La Porte des Indes Cookbook

(The legacy of France in Indian regional cuisine) by Mehesh and Sherin Mody. Photography by John Hellen www.laportedesindes.com



Fish Indian Style by Anil Kochhar published by Absolute Press. Photography by David Loftus www.banarrestaurant.com