

REGIONAL CUISINES

# RAJASTHAN

[www.theculinarygene.com](http://www.theculinarygene.com)



STHUBANTA  
MUKHERJEE

Culinary gems of the Desert Rose







The land of the Maharajas, with its spectacular forts and the glory of Rajputs - Rajasthan!!! The largest state in India, this magnificent region with its diverse landscape and colourful history has always enthralled visitors. Home to the Great Indian Desert--Thar, Rajasthan excels at celebrating colour and effervescence despite the arid backdrop of a harsh landscape and an unforgiving sun.

The captivating cultural extravaganza of the desert is expressed in many forms, from the Kathputli puppet show to the beautiful Ghoomar dance of the Bhil Tribe. The folk music of Rajasthan is unique and endearing, while the attire of the women is a celebration of colour and sparkle. The men aren't too shy either, sporting colourful turbans in the most vibrant hues.

Colour is synonymous with being Rajasthani. Even the cities are colour coded! There is Jaipur the Pink City, then the desert city Jaisalmer known as Golden City while its close cousin Bikaner is the Red City. Not to forget the other side of the colour spectrum we have The Blue City of Jodhpur and almost as if to purify the senses the holy town of Pushkar has its White colour nomenclature.

Beyond its spectacular forts, magnificent palaces and vast wildlife sanctuaries, there is a heavy dose of culture and tradition that captivates every visitor. History captivates while handicraft and cultural nuances enthrall. The legendary hospitality of the state will ensure that you experience every miracle it has to offer and what better place to start than with the delectable cuisine of the desert. It will scorch and soothe in equal measure. A delight to the senses.

# CULINARY GEMS OF THE DESERT ROSE

RAJASTHAN--THE LAND OF THE MAHARAJAS

---



*Geography invariably defines major elements of cuisine. Along with climatic conditions, the culinary preferences of the people of a region are often defined by the landscape that surrounds them.*

**I**ndian cuisine boasts of varied colours and flavours. Every state holds a special place when it comes to showcasing local cuisine. India's largest state by area, Rajasthan, just like its size, has a large array of dishes. With a landscape that is primarily desert, this region of India still has the richest tastes to entice your taste buds.

With the hardships of the terrain, come the difficulties of water scarcity, crops, extreme climatic conditions and difficulties in rearing of livestock. However, such challenging circumstances inspire unique cooking styles, extreme selection of ingredients as well as distinctive flavours and tastes.

Although only a segment of the population lived the royal Rajputana lifestyle, this has left an indelible mark on the cuisine of the region. Hunting, or Shikaar, as it is more popularly known, was a royal pastime and the non-vegetarian dishes of this region are inextricably linked with the Royal Rajputs. Recipes were vigorously guarded and handed over from one generation to another. The most famous traditional Rajasthani meat dishes are Laal Maas, Banjara Gosht, Jungle Mass, Mohan Maas and Safed Maas.

The vegetarian cuisine is even more delectable and while the Dal Baati Churma and Pyaaz ki Kachori have stolen most of the limelight, there are many dishes that clamour for equal attention. Availability of ingredients is a major factor that makes Rajasthani food quite different from that of its neighbouring states that have more verdant landscapes. Geography influenced their lives in every way. Food was no exception. The cuisine is rich and spicy, allowing them to beat the desert heat.

In this book, I shall share some of the most interesting and loved recipes of Rajasthani cuisine, along with a tale of a city boy who travelled to Rajasthan for a work assignment and was forever transformed by his experience in this beautiful region of India. The story is interspersed with the culinary indulgences, as life almost always is.

*Sthubanta*

# THE CUISINE OF RAJASTHAN

## UNDERSTANDING THE FOOD OF THIS REGION

---

**T**he large state of Rajasthan is situated on the western side of India, with a vast area within the Thar Desert or Great Indian Desert (also known as Rajasthan Desert). The geographic location of a place is one of the factors that is bound to have an impact on the cuisine of that place and Rajasthan is no different. The arid area with scarcity of water, extreme weather conditions and mostly inhospitable desert hinders mass scale cultivation of fresh produce.

Another factor that has an indelible effect on Rajasthani cuisine is the war like lifestyle of the people. The Rajputs have protected their land by fighting fiercely, even sacrificing their lives to resist invasion. Due to the above mentioned factors, food in Rajasthan is basically planned around dishes that incorporate a lot of ingredients that can be dried and stored for a long time and the dishes were mostly ones that could last for a long time without getting spoilt.

As water is a scarce commodity, the people of Rajasthan often substitute it with milk for cooking purposes. Buttermilk and curd are also used in place of water, in cooking. A variety of drinks like lassi, chaach and thandai as well as meal accompaniments like raita are also made of buttermilk and curd. These aid in beating the heat – both of the cuisine and the climate. Dried mango powder (amchur) is used as a substitute for fresh tomato.

Rajasthan means 'Land of the Kings'; the royal cuisine of Rajasthan has gifted the state with many delicious dishes. However, these dishes were quite rich with loads of dry fruits, ghee, cream, khoya/mawa (milk solids/evaporated milk) and butter, making them loaded with fat and calories.

Health consciousness is one of the reasons that has resulted in the watering down of the original recipes and some among the Royalty lament the marring of original recipes. The Marwaris of Rajasthan are known for the delicious vegetarian fare they cook at home.

Barley, wheat, pulses, oil seeds and sugarcane are grown in Rajasthan. Due to the scarcity of water, green vegetables cannot be grown in abundance, all year round. Rajasthanis use dried beans and some wild berries in their dishes. The hot and spicy cuisine is balanced by generous helpings of ghee (clarified butter) that is served with the different typed of rotis (Indian flat breads). Flour of wheat, millet, corn or maize (makka), gram are used to make rotis.











Spicy chutneys like lahsun ki chutney (made of garlic and red chillies) are sometimes had with rotis and this combination can even be a meal in itself, in the absence of vegetables. Various types of papads and pickles in addition to chutneys are also part of the cuisine in Rajasthan. Papads are made of corn or gram and can be stored in the dry form for long periods of time. These papads are also used to make dishes like rabodi (papad ki subzi) – papad soaked in buttermilk is the main ingredient in this dish.

Mangodis and wadis/badis (nuggets/dumplings) are also made of lentils and grams. Gram or lentils are soaked and ground with spices, shaped into balls and flattened or shaped like nuggets or dumplings and dried in the sun. These can be stored for a very long time and used in curries and subzis (vegetable preparation) as and when required. When soaked in water, they are re-hydrated. These may be deep fried or soaked and used in curries.

Aloo mangodi ki subzi has spicy dumplings made of split green lentils, red chillies and salt made in the manner mentioned above. These dumplings and cubed potatoes are the main ingredients of this subzi. Sevs and bhujias (famous Bikaneri bhujia) in various flavours are other treats from Rajasthan. These are eaten as snacks or even incorporated into certain dishes.

Karela (bitter-gourd), gajar (carrots), lauki (bottle gourd), matar (green peas) and beans are made into subzis (vegetable based preparations). Paneer (cottage cheese) is another main ingredient used in many vegetarian dishes. Certain varieties of spinach and other greens like methi saag (fenugreek leaves), makki ki saag, gawarfali ki saag, and kumatiya ka saag are also used in curries.

Gatte ki sabzi and Ker Sangri kumatia are two vegetarian dishes from Rajasthan that has become as popular as non-vegetarian ones like Laal maas and Safed maas. Ker Sangri kumatia subzi is made of wild berries (ker), dried beans (sangri) and dried flat pods (kumatia). Whole red chillies and mango powder are other ingredients used in this dish and the combination of these five ingredients has given it the name “paanch-kuta”. Five different lentils are used to make ‘panchmel’ dal and another subzi made with beans, cucumber, and three types of bell peppers is called ‘panchmel subzi’. Coming back to Gatte ki sabzi, it is made of dumplings of gram flour (besan), cooked in a rich gravy of onions, tomatoes, garlic, lots of yogurt and spices.

Lasode ki subzi is another dish that is cooked with wild berries. Have you heard of gulab jamuns? Well, most of us associate it with the term dessert or sweet, isn't it? In Rajasthani cuisine, you even have Gulab Jamun ki sabzi – gulab jamun balls are dipped in a rich savoury gravy instead of sweet syrup, in this preparation.

Kadhi is another staple in Rajasthan – buttermilk is used in this dish. Lentils are cooked as curries – not very thick and seasoned and tempered, to be eaten with rotis or the famous baati. In fact, the famous Dal-Baati-Churma from Rajasthan is a complete meal in itself. Baatis can be made and stored – these dumplings are made of flour and either cooked in a tandoor/clay oven or deep fried in ghee. You also have the stuffed variety – with a stuffing of onions, peas or sattu. Baati is served with dal and ghee. Unsalted baatis are crushed to make churma, which is sweet. Traditionally, rotis or baatis made of wheat flour or bajri were crushed to make churma. It can also be made by crushing coarsely ground wheat and cooking it with ghee and sugar.

Laal Maas is a hot and spicy meat preparation that is red (laal means red) in colour, with loads of chillies and garlic in it. Spices and curd (yoghurt) are used in this preparation of mutton. Traditionally, Laal Maas was made with wild game meat like meat of boar or deer, hunted by the royalty. To overpower and camouflage the gamey odours of such meat a good measure of red chillies were used. On the contrary, Safed Maas is whitish in colour.

The royalty of Rajasthan led a lavish lifestyle at one time – they ate good food and entertained in style. Sula (known as suda) was smoked meat from the back of a goat leg. The meat was first marinated and roasted over an open charcoal fire before smoking it to enhance the flavours with hot ghee poured over it. Nowadays, Sula is made with mutton, chicken, wild boar or fish. The meat pieces are marinated in yogurt and spices, skewered and grilled.

Khad Khargosh is another dish gifted by the palaces – it is wild hare, stuffed with spices and roasted in a covered pit, underground. Mohan Maas is a meat dish wherein the meat is cooked in milk. The royal cuisine also had dishes like Bina Pani ki Roti – literally meaning flatbread without water. Instead of water, milk is used in the dough that also has boora, ghee and flour. This roti is said to last up to 45 days!

Khoba roti, Missi roti and Jowar Pyaaz roti are popular in this state, in addition to Wheat rotis and Bajra rotis etc. Khus Khus ki roti – made of poppy seeds, was another type of roti made in palaces. Anjeer mutton (mutton with figs), Lauki ki kheer [kheer or Payash (dessert) made with lauki], Kalegi ka raita, Khargosh ki Mokal, Govind Gatta and Doodh ke Samosey were part of royal cuisine. Mouth watering pilaffs and biryanis loaded with ghee and dry fruits also form part of the menu in addition to assorted rotis.











Berries, vegetables and meat are pickled in Rajasthan. Saanth ro achaar (pickled wild boar) is delectable and relished by many. Mirchi badas and Kachoris are Marwari specialties – these are served as snacks. In Rajasthan, sweets form part of the main meal and are served along with the meal – not before or after. Thus, the concept of serving dessert at the end of the meal did not exist earlier. In addition to churma, there are many types of sweets made in Rajasthan.

Ghewar is made with maida (all purpose flour). This disc shaped sweet originated in Jaipur; it is soaked in sugar syrup and could be plain, mawa or malai ghewar. Seero is the name of halwa prepared in Rajasthan. Jhajhariya is another sweet – it is made of corn, milk, ghee, sugar, nuts and raisins.

Then there is the Marwari delicacy from Jodhpur – Dilkushar or Dal Badam Chakki which is made of gram flour, almonds, mawa, ghee and sugar. The famous Gujia or sweet dumplings are made of semolina (suji) or all purpose flour/wheat flour and has a delicious stuffing of mawa/khoya, coconut scrapings and dry fruit. Goond ke laddoo is made with wheat flour, edible gum, ghee, pepper and nuts. Imarti, Milk cake, Palang Torh, Malpua and Balushahi are some more to add to this drool-worthy list!

The cuisine of the desert rose is distinctive and vast, delighting your tastebuds while fuelling your curiosity in terms of the choice of ingredients and method of preparation. The climatic conditions and harsh terrain have unleashed great culinary creativity in Rajasthan!!



## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# THE STORY

<b>An Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Author's Note</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Cuisine of Rajasthan</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Rajasthan Diaries</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Chapter 1</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Chapter 2</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Chapter 3</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Chapter 4</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Chapter 5</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Chapter 7</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>Chapter 8</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>Chapter 9</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>About the Author</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>TCG Profile</b>	<b>136</b>













## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# RECIPES

<b>Jaljeera</b>	24
<b>Pyaaaz ki Kachori</b>	26
<b>Chaanch</b>	31
<b>Besan ka Chilla</b>	34
<b>Kalmi Vada</b>	37
<b>Bajra Roti</b>	40
<b>Churma</b>	46
<b>Dal Baati Churma</b>	50
<b>Ker Sangri</b>	56
<b>Gatte ki Khichdi</b>	62
<b>Gatte ki Sabzi</b>	66



## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# RECIPES

<b>Govind Gatte</b>	70
<b>Gawarphali ki Sabzi</b>	76
<b>Panchmel Dal Tadka</b>	80
<b>Kadhi</b>	84
<b>Laal Maas</b>	90
<b>Mohan Maas</b>	94
<b>Ghewar</b>	100
<b>Sheera Halwa</b>	104
<b>Mawa Kachori</b>	110
<b>Imarti</b>	114
<b>Balushahi</b>	120
<b>Besan ki Chakki</b>	124
<b>Gujia</b>	128















## TOP CITIES

<b>Jodhpur</b>	29
<b>Jaipur</b>	38
<b>Bikaner</b>	58
<b>Jaisalmer</b>	69
<b>Udaipur</b>	83
<b>Pushkar</b>	107









# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Introduction

As the bus rattled along towards Jaipur, all the questions that had loomed over me over the last couple of months evaporated with the blazing sun. Questions that bothered me for months: “What was I doing? Should I be doing this? What will the world think of me?” All of that seemed irrelevant at that moment. Here I was, a boy from the capital of India, Delhi, trying to make it big, in a non-metro city. Not your ideal story, I know. But true. Ever since I developed an understanding of things, I wanted to design and build a motorcycle. Didn’t know how or when, and didn’t have the money, but this was my aspiration. While I did not have the resources to hone that passion, I got to hone my other interest—shoes!! Not buying them, but designing them. And that is what brought me here, to the desert of treasures that is Rajasthan.

A Delhi boy travelling to Rajasthan for work, is pretty much doing it the other way round. Of course, like Sinatra delightfully crooned, “I did it my way!” This was my destiny, this was my journey. No regrets.

I was commissioned by the United Nations Development Program (yes, yes, I had fancy credentials like that), to learn the art of designing mojaris. So, Rajasthan. But the minute I landed here, I knew this place was for me, and I wasn’t going anywhere else.

As the bus came to a halt at Jaipur depot, I spotted a man with my name on a placard. That was the day I met the man, who would eventually become my constant, my Alfred, and his name was Jaisingh. A wide eyed, good-humoured man, who made an impression in a safari suit. With a toothy smile, slightly stained with paan, and the sunglass quotient on point, this man was composed yet delightfully affable.

He asked if I was hungry, and hearing my enthusiastic affirmation, he said he would treat me to one of the famous breakfast favourites of Rajasthan, Pyaaz ki Kachori. “*Ye kachori nahi, hamare des ki shaan hai. Iske har bite mein alag hi jaan hai.*” Loosely translated, that meant, this is not just a kachori, but the pride of Rajasthan. The rest of the sentence was just for poetic effect, which I soon learned he had a penchant for.

As we walked towards the tea stall, to treat ourselves to the ‘Des ki Shaan’, I took in the simple yet colourful environment that surrounded me. Jaipur being one of the bigger cities in Rajasthan, and with us being in the hub of the city, the place was thronged with a sea of tourists and locals alike.

While we sipped on the sweet jaggery laden tea and stuffed ourselves with the flavourful, crisp and really filling kachoris, Jaisingh briefed me about the set-up that awaited me, and a little about the people there. This man seemed to know his job really well, and it would be safe to say, he saw God in details.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Jaljeera

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup	Mint leaves
1 tbsp	Cumin seeds
1 cup	Coriander leaves
2 tsp	Lemon juice
1/4 inch	Ginger
1 tsp	Sugar
1/2 tsp	Black salt
1/2 tsp	Salt
1/4 tsp	Black pepper powder
2 cups	Water

## METHOD

In a chutney jar of the mixer, add all the ingredients except the water and ice.

Grind it to a smooth paste, using a little water if required.

In a deep pot, add the paste and the remaining water.

Mix well and refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours.

After 2 to 3 hours, using a fine strainer, strain the water, and squeeze out as much juice as you can from the remains in the strainer.

Pour the jaljeera into glasses and serve immediately.

## NOTES

Instead of resting the jaljeera and water mix, you could just add the ground paste to a muslin cloth and squeeze the juice out and then add the water and serve immediately.





RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Pyaaaz ki Kachori

## INGREDIENTS

### For the dough

3 cups	All purpose flour maida
6 tbsp	Ghee
To taste	Salt

### For the Stuffing

4 pcs	Red onions, chopped
2 pcs	Potatoes, boiled and peeled
2 tbsp	Cooking oil
1 tsp	Mustard seeds
1 tsp	Cumin seeds
A pinch	Asafoetida
2 tbsp	Coriander seeds , crushed
To taste	Salt
2 tbsp	Chickpea flour (besan)
2 tsp	Dried mango powder
1 tsp	Garlic, crushed
1 tsp	Ginger, crushed
2 pcs	Green chilies, finely chopped
2 tsp	Red chilli powder
1 tsp	Garam masala
1 tsp	Sugar
1 pc	Yellow onion, chopped
To fry	Oil

## METHOD

### To make the dough

Mix all the dry ingredients in a large bowl. Now add water and knead a stiff but pliable dough.

Once the dough has come together, knead it further for 5 to 6 minutes. Once done, cover the dough with a damp muslin cloth and let it rest for 30 minutes.

### To make the stuffing

Grate the potatoes and set aside.

In a heavy bottomed pan, add oil and let it heat up on a medium high flame.

Once hot, add asafoetida, cumin seeds, mustard seeds, and crushed coriander seeds.

Let the seeds crackle. Once they do, chopped red onions, salt and continue to sauté until the onions turn light brown.





Now add garlic, ginger, green chilies, and red chili powder, and dried mango powder. Mix well and sauté for a minute. Once mixed, add the grated boiled potatoes, gram flour, sugar, and garam masala powder.

Mix well and make sure the spices, potatoes and onions are all well mixed and evenly distributed. Cook for about 3-4 minutes on a medium heat, stirring at intervals. Turn the heat off and add the yellow onion and mix well. Once mixed, let it cool.

### **To complete the kachori**

Once the dough is rested, divide it into 12 equal portions. Using a rolling pin, on a flat surface, roll out each portion into 2 ½ diameter circle. Now place 3 tbsp of the onion filling in the centre of the circle.

Next, collect the edges of the circle and bring them to the top centre of the circle, making sure the stuffing is encased in the dough. Seal the top, and gently pat it down to flatten it slightly. Prick the top of the kachori using a fork, so any air trapped is released. Add enough oil to a heavy bottomed pan, for deep frying. The oil should cover at least 2/3rd of the pan. Once the oil is hot, turn the heat down to medium low and deep fry the kachoris. Once the kachoris are golden, using a slotted spoon take them out on an absorbent paper and let the excess oil drain out. Serve the kachoris hot with mint and coriander chutney or a tangy tamarind chutney.

---

## NOTES

The Pyaaz ki Kachori will not fluff up, it needs to be flat, therefore, it is important that you prick the top layer with a fork to make a few holes.

Do not crowd the pan when frying. Since the kachoris are quite thick, make sure you fry only 2 to 3 of them at once, so the temperature of the oil remains constant.

It is important that you fry at a constant temperature at a medium low heat so the covering of the kachori gets cooked inside – out, as the covering is slightly thick.





## JODHPUR - MARWAR BLUE

Jodhpur, the blue city of Rajasthan was founded by Rao Jodha in 1459. It was the capital of the Kingdom of Marwar.

In this city the favourite food is Pyaaz Kachori, a deep-fried bread with an onion filling. People love to eat this tempting dish for breakfast.

Historically, it is believed that because the main trade routes crossed through Marwar, the Marwaris controlled the region and had access to the best products. Mild spices were considered suitable for the climatic condition of the region.









RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Chaanch

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup	Yogurt
1 tsp	Green chilli, finely chopped
2 cups	Chilled water
1/2 cup	Ice
1 tsp	Chaat masala
1 tbsp	Black salt
1 tsp	Cumin seeds, roasted, crushed
1 tsp	Ginger, grated
1 tbsp	Coriander leaves, finely chopped

## METHOD

In a large pot, preferably earthen pot, add all the ingredients for the chaanch (except the ice).

Using a wire whisk, wooden whisk or a hand blender, blend/ whisk all the ingredients together till the mix is frothy.

Add ice cubes, whisk once, pour into glasses and serve.

You could also rest the chaanch in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 hours and then strain and serve it if you don't like the chillies or coriander coming in the way of drinking the chaanch.

But I would strongly suggest, you serve it without straining the aromatics from the chaanch.

## NOTES

The flavour of the chaanch is enhanced when made in an earthen pot.

Chaanch can be served immediately after preparing, or you could refrigerate it and serve later. If doing so, give the chaanch a good stir before you serve it.

Chaanch has to be served cold.





# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 1

The ride in the state bus from Jaipur to Nawa turned out to be bumpier than I expected. Even though I was no stranger to earth-splitting heat, the heat in Rajasthan was something else. The large expanse of desert that we crossed from time to time, only made the city boy in me swelter and silently curse my “rebellious” decision.

What made it tolerable, was the reassuring company I had. Jaisingh, I discovered, was not the type to keep chattering away nineteen to a dozen. He had this subtle way of imparting pearls of wisdom when least expected, and also seemed to have a very practical solution of every problem. When the bus stopped en route, so we could stretch our legs and refresh ourselves, Jaisingh and I, along with the other passengers headed to a man sitting with a large earthen pot, under a lone tree in the middle of the desert. This gentleman was like the revered godman everyone was thronging around. I was informed that he made the most delicious Masala Chanch, a thirst quenching, cooling drink, made with curd and spices, that helps the body deal with the dry, arid heat of Rajasthan. So, while the travellers in the bus jostled against one other to get a glass full of it, Jaisingh stood calmly under the shade of the tree, and asked me to stand next to him.

I did I as was told, because I was sure he had a plan of action, and yet wondered why he was so cruel to my parched throat. After the crowd thinned a bit, Jaisingh asked me to stay where I was and disappeared into the crowd. In about 3 minutes, he appeared with two camel-packs, handed me one, and we headed to the bus. The pack was full of ice-cold Masala Chanch! My throat and soul thanked Jaisingh, and I just couldn't be in more awe of him. Turns out, he had briefed the chanch gentleman to make arrangements for the camel-packs to stay cooled and ready for us to take. At that moment I knew, Jaisingh would be my man! My Alfred!

While en route, I caught a glimpse of some mountains across the huge expanse of desert and I also saw some waterbody which I thought was a mirage, but Jaisingh told me it wasn't. So, Nawa was this little city flanked by the Arawalis on two sides and the Sambhar lake and Thuratmati river on two others. Hence the salt pans. The sand did look whiter than most of what I had seen until now, and Jaisingh pointed to the salt pans in the distance as the bus trudged along.

Eventually we reached the Nawa bus depot. The sun now shining in all its glory right above us.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Besan ka Chilla

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups	Besan
1 piece	Onion, finely chopped
1 piece	Green Chilli, chopped
1 tsp	Ajwain
1 tsp	Pepper Powder
1 tsp	Red Chilli Powder
1 tsp	Cumin Powder
1 tsp	Chat Masala
1 tsp	Coriander Powder
1/4 cup	Coriander Leaves
To taste	Salt
As needed	Water
For frying	Oil

## NOTES

Make sure the batter is not too watery or too thin.

Make sure your pan is not too hot or cold. It should be hot enough for the batter to stick to the pan once poured.

It helps to use a non-stick pan, because you end up using less oil. You could also use a cast iron pan.

## METHOD

Mix all the dry ingredients, spices and chopped aromatics in a bowl.

Now add water little by little while whisking simultaneously, to form a batter without lumps. The batter should be of a dosa batter consistency.

Take a non-stick tawa/ skillet. On a medium heat, let the pan get hot, and brush it with a little oil.

Now take a ladle full of the batter and add it to the centre of the skillet. Let it spread on its own. Now cook for 1 min on one side and then flip over and cook on other side too.

The indication that the chilla is cooked on the bottom, is that it comes off the pan easily without using much pressure.

Drizzle some more oil on the pan, just a few drops. Cook on both sides till it gets crispy. Done. Serve hot with green chutney.











## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Kalmi Vada

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup	Chana dal
1 pc	Green chilli, chopped
1 tsp	Ginger, chopped
1/2 tsp	Red chilli powder
1 tbsp	Coriander seeds
2 tsp	Fennel seeds
2 tbsp	Coriander leaves, chopped
To taste	Salt
1 pc	Onion, chopped
To deep fry	Oil

## METHOD

Add chana dal to a sieve and wash well under running water. Add the washed dal to a pot, and add enough water, so it soaks the dal and rises half way up above the level of the dal. Soak the dal for 3 hours.

After 3 hours, using a sieve drain the water and keep the dal aside in the sieve, so the excess water drains out.

In a small pan, add the coriander seeds, and dry roast them on a medium heat. Once roasted, roughly crush the seeds using a mortar and pestle.

Now in the mortar and pestle, add the ginger and green chillies and add a dash of sea salt. Crush the ginger and chillies as fine as you can.

Then add the chana dal and little more salt to the grinder attachment of a mixer. To this, add the crushed ginger and chillies, and coriander seeds. Sprinkle a few drops of water and grind the chana dal mix into a coarse batter.



## JAIPUR - THE PINK CITY

Jaipur is also known as the pink city. The iconic dish of this colourful city is Dal Baati Churma. Baati is believed to have originated during the amount of Bappa Rawal, the founding father of the dominion of Mewar.

When the Rajputs were setting up their stronghold in the province, baati was their preferred wartime meal. Ultimately, churma is a sweet crumb that was added to this dish by Mewar's Guhilot clan. When Rani Jodha Bai tied the knot with Emperor Akbar, Dal Baati Churma finally reached the Mughal palace.

For those with a sweet tooth, the Pink city offers the famous Ghevar. It is a disc-shaped sweet made with all-purpose flour, fried in desi ghee, and soaked in sugar syrup. There are several types of Ghevar, including plain, mawa, and malai ghevar.



Once done, transfer the batter to bowl. To the batter, add finely chopped onions, crushed fennel seeds, red chilli powder and finely chopped coriander leaves. Mix and keep the batter aside until ready to fry.

In a heavy bottomed pan, add oil to cover 1/4th of the pan, and let the oil come up to heat on a medium flame. Now, take 2 to 3 ping pong ball sized portions of the batter, shape them into cylinders and gently release them in the pan. Fry until slightly browned, using a slotted spoon, take them out, and set aside to cool slightly. Repeat this step with the remaining batter. Once the cylinders are fried and cold enough to handle slice them into halves lengthwise.

On the side, add more oil to the same pan, enough to totally cover 2/3rd of the pan, and begin to heat the oil. Once the oil is hot, gently add the sliced halves and deep fry until golden brown. Take the fried kalmivadas out with a slotted spoon and lay them on an absorbent paper towel to soak the excess oil.

Kalmi vadas are ready. Serve them hot with a tangy tamarind chutney or a spicy green chutney.

---

## NOTES

Make sure the batter for the vada is not runny or watery. It needs to be coarse and gritty enough to be able to shape it.

I would suggest, you begin grinding the drained dal first and then add a sprinkling of water to adjust the consistency. Use a spatula to scrape the dal off the sides of the grinder utensil.

The first round of frying has to be almost shallow, so the vadas are just cooked enough to cut and retain shape.

This is a traditional recipe for the Kalmivada. However, if you want to add a bit of tang to it, you could add 3 tbsps of grated raw mango.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Bajra Roti

---

## INGREDIENTS

2½ cups	Bajra flour
2 tsp	Ghee
1 tsp	Salt
As required	Water
To dust	Bajra flour
To roast	Ghee

## METHOD

### To knead the dough

Take warm water (about 2 cups) and add salt and oil to it. Stir it well to incorporate the oil and salt.

Add the bajra flour to the water, oil mix. Stir with a spoon to incorporate the flour.

Knead into a smooth dough, at this stage if the dough is very dry or flaky, add some more warm water to aid the kneading of the dough.

If the dough becomes sticky, then add more flour. The perfect dough should be soft but not sticky.

### To make the rotis

Take a cast iron tawa, or a heavy skillet. Put it over high heat, and let the tawa get hot. Divide the dough into equal pin pong ball sized portions.

---





Take a damp muslin cloth or parchment paper, or a thin sheet of plastic. Dust a dough ball with enough flour and lay it on the centre of the muslin/ parchment paper/ plastic sheet.

Begin rolling the dough ball gently with firm strokes, to form a flat roti (about ½ cm thick), dust with bajra flour if you have difficulty in rolling or it sticks to the pin. Very gently, release the roti from the surface, and lay it on the hot tawa, turn the heat down to medium.

Using a dry kitchen towel, lightly pat the top of the roti. Using a brush, brush the top with some water. Once the water on the top has almost dried, flip the roti. Once again with the dry towel, press the roti lightly so it puffs up.

Cook till both sides have brown spots on them. Done. While still hot, generously apply ghee to one side of each roti, and serve hot.

---

## NOTES

Make sure the dough is not too sticky, neither is it hard or flaky. Be careful with the amount of water and flour you are adding, or it will be an endless circle, and you will eventually end up with a large amount of dough.

The water is brushed on the top of the roti while cooking, so once the water dries up, it indicates, that the roti has begun to cook evenly on the inside as well.

Be careful while rolling the roti as it might break or crack during the process, because of the lack of gluten to bind it. Don't lose heart, just roll the cracked roti into a doughball once again and continue with the rolling process. You will get the hang of it soon.

I would not recommend having this roti during the summer months, as it could heat up your body even more, as it releases heat, as the roti digests, making it ideal to be eaten on a cold day.

A serving tip, on a hot bajra roti, generously apply ghee, and crumble jaggery. It is divine!

---





# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 2

We took a little break before we embarked on the last leg of our journey to Badu. The arrival of the jeep would take anywhere from an hour to an hour and a half. We thought we might as well park ourselves at the dhaba and get done with lunch while we waited.

Jaisingh, gestured me to sit, and told me this was the local fare that the dhaba was famous for. We started with what was called farsan, which consisted of lachha pakoris--onion fritters--lightly coated with besan (gram flour) and fried to perfection. Then there was gatte ki sabzi--steamed and fried mildly spiced balls of besan--in a mildly spiced curry. Then of course there was kadhi, which is a yogurt, mildly flavoured with a tempering of spices. This was different from the kadhi I was used to having at home, but I rather preferred this version. Then came the Ker Sangri, which is a vegetable native and staple to Rajasthan. So much so that it deserved another poetic rendition from Jaisingh. "Ker sangri is rare jewel, with pride it makes our heart swell."

Ah the multilingually, poetically eloquent Jaisingh! But there was a reason for his pride though, the ingredients of ker sangri, specifically could be found in the state of Rajasthan, and though this was a staple in most Rajasthani households, it was said to be a hot favourite among tourists. All of this was served with bajra rotis, which is made with millet flour. Of course, for added flavour, the rotis were served with dollops of ghee, with some crushed jaggery on the side, and there was some pickle and chutney for the pakoris, as a palette cleanser I guess, so each of these dishes could be tasted in all their glory.

After the plates were cleared, a grinning young man brought us two bowls full of something, a steel jug and two glasses. I was seriously stuffed and couldn't eat more. Being my first day there and with Jaisingh being such a brilliant host, I didn't want to seem rude, and accepted a bowl, while the young man placed the jug and glasses on the table. In the bowl was a dessert I had never tasted before. It was called Jhajariya. It's made out of grated corn, and sugar and ghee, and takes quite a while to make because it has to be dried out completely.

Jaisingh excused himself, while the owner chatted me up and continued with the story of his famous jhajariya and filled the glass in front of me with the contents of the jug. Enthusiastically, he explained that jaljeera was the best drink to have after a meal, and was a complete essential in every household. He went on to explain how the ingredients used to make jaljeera, were full of digestive properties, and how they cool and hydrate and break down the food for easy digestion.

In the midst of the lesson, the man we were waiting for alighted from a jeep covered with sand, with a moustache longer than that sported by Yamraj! His name was Rana, and he and I would forge a deep friendship in times to come. Anyway, we got into the jeep and got going to Badu. With his flamboyant moustache and raw charm, Rana got twenty people to fit into our jeep. Jaisingh just smirked. I wasn't complaining but was amused, to say the least. Anyway, an hour and a half later, punctuated with interesting conversations, we arrived at our destination.







## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Churma

---

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup	Wheat flour
10 tbsp	Ghee
4 tbsp	Semolina
1½ cups	Vegetable oil
1/2 cup	Powdered sugar
As required	Milk (to knead the dough)
4 tbsp	Mixed dry fruits – finely chopped

---

## METHOD

To make the churma mix, add the wheat flour and semolina in a large bowl. Mix well and then add 4 tablespoons of ghee.

Using your hands, crumble the mixture to get a sand-like consistency.

Add milk little by little and knead it into a dough, so that the wheat and semolina mixture don't fall apart, but the dough shouldn't be too smooth or sticky either. It has to be roughly kneaded, yet not rock hard or crumbly. Keep in mind, you will eventually need to make dough balls out of these.

Once the dough is kneaded, cover the dough with a muslin cloth for 30 to 45 minutes. This will allow the semolina to soak some of the milk, and also the wheat to activate the gluten.

After 45 minutes, lay the dough on a flat surface, and knead it once more for about 2 to 3 minutes.

---





Once all the doughballs are flattened, it is time to fry them. Add oil to a heavy bottomed pan, and let it heat on a full flame.

Once the oil is hot, gently drop the flattened churma balls in, one by one, making sure you fry only about 4 to 5 churma balls in one batch. Let them deep fry until golden brown. Once fried, using a slotted spoon, take them out of the pan, and drain them on a paper towel, so that the excess oil is absorbed.

Repeat the process for the remaining churma balls. Once all the churma balls are fried, let them rest and cool to room temperature.

Now, roughly break the churma balls and add them to a grinder jar. Grind the churma balls till you get a fine powder. This will form the base of your churma mix.

To bring the churma together, in a large mixing bowl, add the powdered churma balls, powdered sugar, and half the dry fruits. Mix the dry ingredients thoroughly. Heat the remaining ghee, so it's just warm and pour that into the churma mix. Using a fork, or your fingers, evenly mix the ghee with the churma.

Once mixed, top with the remaining chopped dry fruits and serve with 'dal baati'.

---

## NOTES

The powdered sugar can easily be substituted with powdered jaggery for a different and unique flavour.

Instead of milk, you could also use water to knead the dough, but milk definitely enhances the flavour.

When you flatten the dough ball, just make sure you flatten it just a tad, without using too much pressure. Only the top and bottom of the doughball needs to be slightly flattened. DO NOT flatten it like a pancake or roti. It should still look like a doughball.





If you want the churma to be a little chunky in texture, use your hands to break the fried churma balls and then crush them using your hands as well. Then you can proceed to mix in the ghee, sugar/jaggery and the nuts.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Dal Baati Churma

## INGREDIENTS

	For the Bati	1/3 cup	To serve
			Ghee
1 cup	Atta/ wholewheat flour		
1/4 cup	Semolina		
2 tbsp	Besan	1 tsp	Vegetable oil
1/4 tsp	Ajwain	1 tsp	Ghee
1/4 tsp	Fennel powder	1/2 tsp	Mustard seeds
1/8 tsp	Red Chilli powder	1/2 tsp	Cumin seeds
1/2 tsp	Salt	1 1/2 tsp	Garlic
A pinch	Baking soda		(finely chopped)
As needed	Ghee, to form a stiff dough		
1/3 cup	Milk		
To brush	Ghee		

### For the Panchmel Dal

1 cup	Mixed dal
4 cups	Water
1/4 tsp	Turmeric powder
1 tsp	Salt
1/2 tsp	Ginger, (finely chopped)
1no	1 Green chilli, (finely chopped)
1no	Red onion, (medium sized, finely chopped)
3 pcs	Tomatoes
1 tsp	Coriander powder
1 tsp	Cumin powder
1/2 tsp	Garam masala
To taste	Salt
1/4 tsp	Green cardamom powder





## METHOD

### **To make the Bati**

To start with, first preheat the oven to 190 degree Celsius. Line a baking tray with parchment paper and set aside.

In a large bowl add atta, semolina, besan, chickpea flour, ajwain, fennel powder, red chilli powder, salt and pinch of baking soda. Mix the dry ingredients till well combined. To this mix add 1/3 cup melted ghee. Mix ghee into the flour, rubbing it into the flour with your fingers till it resembles breadcrumbs.

Now add milk little by little and start kneading the dough. Once the loose bits have all come together, add a little more milk, and knead it into a stiff dough. Cover with a dry muslin cloth, and let it rest for 10 to 15 minutes. After the dough has rested, divide it into 8 equal parts. Make a ball out of each portion.

Using the palm of your hand, flatten the dough balls slightly, and then using your thumb, press the centre of the slightly flattened dough ball to make a dent in the centre.

Repeat the process for the remaining dough balls. This forms the bati part of the meal. Transfer the prepared batis on to a baking sheet and brush them with ghee using a pastry brush. Bake at 200 degree Celsius for 15-18 minutes or till the bottom surface turns light golden brown in colour. Now take them out of the oven, flip all the batis and bake again for 15-18 minutes till the other side is also done.

The batis are ready. Once taken out of the oven, let them rest at room temperature, covered with a dry kitchen towel.



## **To make the Panchmel Dal**

To make the dal, first you need to add all the dals in a large bowl and add enough water to cover the mixed dal completely. Soak the dal for around 3-4 hours. Once soaked, using a sieve drain the water and keeping the dal in the sieve, wash it well under running water.

Add the dal to a pressure cooker, add 4 cups of water, salt and turmeric powder and mix it together. Pressure cook the dal on high heat for up to 2 whistles. Once the whistles are done, lower the heat to low and cook for 10-15 minutes. This will completely soften the dals. Turn the heat off and wait for the pressure to release. Once the pressure is released, set the cooked dal aside.

Now in a sturdy, deep bottomed pan, heat oil and ghee on a medium heat. Once hot, add mustard seeds and cumin seeds and let them crackle. Then add chopped garlic, ginger and green chilli and saute for few seconds, till they start turning golden brown. Add chopped onion and saute till the onions turn translucent. Now add the tomatoes and cook for 2-3 minutes, until the tomatoes soften. Now add coriander powder, cumin powder, garam masala and salt.

Cook the dry spices along with the onion tomato mix for about 2 minutes, making sure, you keep sauteing the mix, so it doesn't stick to the pan. Now very carefully add the cooked dal to the pan.

Mix the cooked dal with the spice mix. At this point, you could adjust the consistency of the dal. If you want it thinner, you could add a little more water to it. However, I would suggest, if adding water, add it little by little, so you reach the consistency you want without it getting too watery.

Let the dal simmer for 5 minutes. Then sprinkle the cardamom powder and the remaining garam masala. Top with chopped coriander leaves and turn the heat off. Serve immediately with bati and extra ghee.

To serve the dal bati, crush the bati roughly, top with the dal and add ghee on top of the dal and serve hot.

## NOTES

In case you do not have an oven, use a cast iron pan to make the bati. To make the bati in a cast iron pan, first heat the pan on a high heat. Once the pan is hot, turn the heat to low and carefully cover the base of the pan with aluminium foil. Now add the batis on to the foiled pan. Turn the heat up to medium, cover the pan and cook the batis for 10 to 12 minutes, or until the bottom of the batis turn golden brown. Once golden, turn the batis, and cook once more for 10 to 12 minutes, to brown the other side of the bati. Once done, take the batis out, cover them with a dry kitchen towel and let them rest.

Traditionally the batis are made in a wood fire oven, or over hot coals, that lends it a delicious smoky flavour.

When cooking the dal, make sure the dals have properly broken down and are not whole. In case after taking the lid off the cooker, the dals still look undercooked (read hasn't completely melted) add a little more water and cook on a medium heat till you can comfortably crush the dal.

---

*A traditional Rajasthani delicacy, that consists of dal, bati or wheat rolls and churma which is powdered wheat ball. It is a meal by itself and is generally served for lunch or dinner by mixing the dal with crushed baati and then topped with ghee. This flavourful and nutritious meal has become widely popular in various regions in India and remains one of the quintessential dishes that is synonymous with Rajasthani cuisine.*





RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Ker Sangri/ Panchkuta

---

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup	Ker
1½ cup	Sangri
5 tbsp	Oil
1/4 tsp	Hing
1 tsp	Cumin seeds
1 tsp	Fennel seeds
4-5 pcs	Dry red chillies
3 tbsp	Coriander powder
2 tsp	Red chilli powder
1 tsp	Turmeric powder
1 tsp	Garam masala powder
2 tbsp	Dry mango powder
2 tbsp	Yogurt
1/4 cup	Raisins
To taste	Salt
2 tbsp	Fresh coriander, chopped

## METHOD

Both Ker and Sangri tend to have a lot of dirt on them, so make sure wash them well under running water.

Soak them in water for at least 8 to 10 hours or overnight. Make sure the ker and sangri are covered in adequate water.

After soaking, drain the water using a sieve. Once again wash them in the sieve under running water.

Add ker and sangri in a pressure cooker, add 2 cups of water and 1 teaspoon of salt.

Ker Sangri is a very popular vegetarian preparation in Rajasthan. Given the extremely hot and dry weather, ker, which is a kind of berry found in Rajasthan, is cooked with sangri, a kind of beans that also grows in abundance in the arid region of Rajasthan. The people of Rajasthan take a lot of pride in this preparation, as some of the ingredients are native only to Rajasthan.

---







Ker and Sangri are mixed together with ingredients like amchur (dry mango powder), gunda (bird lime) and kumat (biological name: acacia senegal). Hence it is also called Panchkuta, since it is made with 5 main ingredients.

Pressure cook this until 1 whistle on high heat. Turn off the flame. Let the pressure release and then open the cooker. Drain the ker sangri using a sieve and set aside. In an iron wok or heavy bottomed wok, heat the oil.

When the oil is hot, add hing, cumin seeds and fennel seeds. Once the seeds crackle, add dry red chillies and fry for 3 to 4 seconds. Once the red chillies get slightly darker, add the cooked and drained ker and sangri.

Now add coriander powder, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, garam masala powder, dry mango powder and mix well, till all the dry spices and the kersangri are mixed.

Now add beaten yogurt, raisins and salt and mix again. Cover and cook for 6-8 minutes. Take the lid off, turn the heat to high and saute for a minute.

## NOTES

Although the recipe is very simple, it is very, very important to wash and drain the ker and sangri really well, as they have a lot of mud and dirt, given the conditions and dry atmosphere they grow in.

This vegetable can be stored for at least up to a week without being refrigerated, so it is perfect for a long travel. However, if cooking to be taken on a journey, I would suggest you ditch the yogurt and use water instead to cook the sabzi.





## BIKANER - THE CAMEL HUB

Bikaner, situated in the Thar Desert, is also known as camel country. It is home to one of the best, mouth-watering snacks of Rajasthan. The famous “Bikaner Bhujia”.

This Indian crispy snack is made using besan (gram flour), moth beans and spices. It was first created in 1877, during the reign of Maharaja Shri Dungar Singh. As per poet Ashok Vajpeyi, there is a famous tale in which it is stated that Bikaner is the only city where half of its population is occupied in making Bhujia and the other half is engaged in eating it. You will find this snack in almost all the cities of India.









# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 3

Our home in Badu was nothing like I had imagined. A palace with a huge courtyard with spacious rooms surrounding it and people, lots of people, working in those rooms. At that moment I felt privileged and humbled all at once. These were rockstars of their craft. Deft, efficient, and supremely talented. I was just awestruck.

The palace was owned by an erstwhile prince who had moved to another palace, close by. He had given this place to be used for the betterment of fine arts. While I was still dealing with the information about dinner, Jaisingh appeared with three people following him, carrying tea-time snacks. It was literally like my day was planned around meals! I wasn't complaining!

Sweet cups of tea were accompanied with plates of Kalmi wada, a delicious pakora made with crushed Bengal gram that is crispy on the outside and soft on the inside, just one word, DELICIOUS! And plates of Imarti, which happens to be a close cousin of the jalebi. All really yummy and filling too. I asked Jaisingh if this was a regular fare or was it only because it was my first day. He just smiled and mentioned that Rajasthan was all about food, and the people of Rajasthan did in fact only think of food, all day. So great.

I was happy. I spent the rest of the evening just chilling and walking around the palace. With the setting sun, the activity in the palace also died down, and I waited for Jaisingh to arrive so we could head for dinner. The ride was bumpy, but interesting. In true royal style, there was an usher waiting for us at the door, and then another, to usher us to the dinner location, which happened to be the terrace of the palace. Just like on a movie set, this location was done up with subtle lighting with chandeliers and candles, placed right at locations where there made the maximum impact.

On the terrace, where the prince was seated, was a bottle of a very expensive single malt and silver plates with some very delicious looking galauti kebabs and seekh kebabs. The prince himself, Pratapsingh, who insisted I call him Pratap (yes, a lot of people in princely people in Rajasthan are named Pratap.), was actually quite unlike I expected him to be. I expected a prince, in all his finery, with a turban and the air of royalty. Instead, the man I met was dressed in a white kurta pajama, very chilled out and in tune with the times.

Pratap himself had been to art school in LA, and that is exactly what inspired him to let the palace out to the lost and forgotten art of making mojaris. He was a fabric designer so it pained him to see this beautiful art go unnoticed. So, the man pulled some strings, got some wheels greased, and set up the mojari workshop. After preliminary introductions and intense conversation, I was treated to some scotch and kebabs. Long story short, we connected, decided to work together and make it happen, for both of us. We did have our individual stories to prove, so yeah.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Gatte ki Khichadi

## INGREDIENTS

**For the Gatta**

1/2 cup	Besan
To taste	Salt
To taste	Red chilli powder
1/2 tsp	Fennel seeds
1/2 tsp	Carom seeds
1/2 tsp	Coriander powder
3 tsp	Oil
1/2 tbsp	Curd
2 tbsp	Water
3 cups	Oil for Deep Frying

## METHOD

**To make the Gattas**

In a big bowl, add all the ingredients for the gattas. Mix all the ingredients well together, and then adding water little by little, knead a stiff dough. Roll the dough into a large cylinder of 1 inch thickness and divide the cylinder further into 1 inch cubes.

Boil the 3 cups of water in a deep pot. Once the water boils, add the gattas gently into the water and cook them for 5 to 8 minutes.

Once cooked the gattas will rise to the top. Using a sieve drain the water and keep the gattas aside.

Now heat oil in a deep bottomed pan on high heat. Make sure at least 2/3rd of the pan is covered with the oil. Once the oil is hot, drop in the strained gattas gently, one at a time, and deep fry them until golden brown.

Take them out with a slotted spoon and leave them on a paper towel to drain excess oil. Repeat the same process with the rest of the gattas.







### **For the Khichadi**

1 cup	Rice
1/3 cup	Yellow Split Gram
1 cup	Fried gattas
1/2 cup	Sliced onion,fried
2 pieces	Green chillies, chopped
1 tsp	Ginger , chopped
1 tsp	Garlic, grated
1 tsp	Cumin seeds
1 tsp	Mustard seeds
1/4 tsp	Asafoetida
2 pieces	Dry Red Chillies
3 pieces	Black Peppers
2 pieces	Cloves
To taste	Salt
1/2 tsp	Turmeric Powder
2 tbsp	Desi Ghee

### **To make the Khichadi**

Mix the dal and rice in a sieve.  
Wash the dal and rice together,  
rinsing well under running water.

Once washed, transfer them to a  
bowl, and add enough water to  
cover the dal and rice mix. Soak it  
in the water for 10-15 minutes.

In a deep, thick bottomed and stur-  
dy pot, boil 2 1/2 cups of water.

Once the water comes up to a boil,  
drain the water off the dal-rice  
mix, and add the mix to the pot of  
boiling water. Stir it in and cover  
the pot.

On a medium heat, let the dal and  
rice cook together in the covered  
pot, until done. This should take  
about 15 minutes. Remember to  
take the lid off at intervals, and  
stir this mix, till cooked.

Now on a medium heat, heat the  
ghee in a deep,cast iron or non-  
stick pan.Once the ghee is hot,  
add the asafoetida, cumin seeds  
and mustard seeds. Once the seeds  
crackle, add the red chillies, cloves  
and whole black pepper and saute  
for 4 to 5 seconds.



Now add the ginger, garlic and green chilies and saute again for 3 to 4 seconds.

Now add turmeric powder, the cooked rice and dal, the fried gattas and the fried onions and salt and mix well to make sure the cooked rice and dal are mixed well with the ghee tempering. Do so gently, so you don't break the gattas.

Cook on medium flame for 2 minutes more and stirring continuously but gently. Done. Serve hot with a bowl full of curd and pickle, or with kadi.

---

## NOTES

Make sure the dough for the gattas is nice and stiff and not soft or sticky. So please add water and curd little by little to get the right consistency.

The dal and rice can also be cooked in a pressure cooker. To cook in a pressure cooker, add water to the cooker, let it come to a boil, and then add the soaked dal and rice to it, and cook for up to 3 whistles. Then let the steam release. Done. For this make sure the water is 3 times the quantity of the dal and rice together.

When mixing in the , please use a light hand and stir gently, so as not to break the gattas.

Remember to fry the gattas in batches, and do not crowd the pan.

Once the gattas are cooked in the water, drain them well, and dry them with a paper towel, so they don't splutter when added to the hot oil.

---

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Gatte ki Sabzi

## INGREDIENTS

### For the Gatta

1/2 cup	Besan/ chickpea flour
To taste	Salt
To taste	Red chilli powder
1/2 tsp	Fennel seeds
1/2 tsp	Carom seeds
1/2 tsp	Coriander powder
3 tsp	Ghee
1/2 tbsp	Curd
As required	Water

### For the gravy

1 cup	Yogurt
3 to 4	Garlic cloves
1 inch	Ginger
2 pieces	Green Chillies
1 tsp	Mustard Seeds
1 tsp	Cumin Seeds
1/4 tsp	Asafoetida
1/2 tsp	Turmeric Powder
1 tsp	Red Chilli Powder
1/2 tsp	Coriander Powder
1/2 tsp	Garam Masala
To taste	Salt
1 tbsp	Oil
2 tbsp	Coriander leaves

## METHOD

### To make the Gattas

In a big bowl, add all the ingredients for the gattas. Mix all the ingredients well and then adding water little by little, knead a stiff dough.

Roll the dough into a large cylinder of 1 inch thickness and divide the cylinder further into 1 inch cubes.

Boil the 3 cups of water in a deep pot. Once the water boils, add the gattas gently into the water and cook them for 5 to 8 minutes.

Once cooked, the gattas will rise to the top. Once they rise, using a sieve drain the water and keep the gattas aside.

Spread them out on an absorbent paper towel and let them cool.

### To make the gravy

First, add the ginger, garlic, and green chillies to a grinder, and grind them into a smooth paste. You could also make the paste using a mortar and pestle.





To make the curry, heat oil to a thick bottomed pan. Once hot, add the mustard seeds. As soon as the mustard seeds crackle, add the asafoetida and cumin seeds. Let the cumin seeds crackle as well.

Turn the heat down to medium, and add the ginger, garlic, and chilli paste. Stir fry the paste for about 3 seconds and then add in the turmeric, chilli powder, garam masala, dhania powder and salt, and turn the flame to low. Stirring continuously, cook the masalas on a low flame for 2 minutes. Now add ½ cup water to deglaze the pan and further cook the masalas. Continue cooking the masalas till most of the water has evaporated and the oil begins to separate at the sides.

Take the yogurt and using a whisk, whisk the yogurt until it is smooth and devoid of any lumps. Make sure the flame is on low, and gently, while stirring the gravy continuously, add the whisked yogurt to the masala. Mix it well with the masala. Once again, while you continue to stir the gravy, gently add ½ cup water. On a low flame, let the curry come up to one boil. Make sure you stir it at intervals.

Once boiled, you will see the oil come up to the surface. At this point add in the gattas and let the gravy simmer for another 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, turn the flame off, transfer the gravy to a serving bowl, and sprinkle chopped coriander leaves on the top. Serve hot with bajreki roti, or just a simple roti or naan.

---

## NOTES

Make sure the dough for the gattas is nice and stiff and not soft or sticky. So please add water and curd little by little to get the right consistency. When making the curry always keep the flame on a low medium, from the time you add the dry spices, so they don't burn.

When adding the yogurt keep stirring it into the masala, or once again it might split. Please make sure the flame is on low, as too much heat will again, yes, split the gravy.

Also, when adding water, after the yogurt has been added, do so gently. And make sure the flame is on low.





## JAISALMER - THE GOLDEN CITY

Jaisalmer--The golden city-- famous for its historical forts, palaces, temples, and food. Jaisalmer fort, built in the 12th century, is a UNESCO World Heritage site. This desert city is also the place where you will find the most famous and delicious dish of Rajasthan, Gatte Ki Sabji. This yogurt-based tangy curry with boiled chickpea flour dumplings, is also called besan ke gatte.

This traditional dish of Rajasthan originated from the desert area and was created due to the non-availability of green vegetables. If you want to experience the authentic cuisine of Rajasthan, you must savour this dish and it is served at almost every restaurant in Jaisalmer and other cities of Rajasthan as well. An everyday meal in this part of the world would typically have this as an inclusion and this is hugely popular in Rajasthani households.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Govind Gatte

## INGREDIENTS

	For the gattas
1 cup	Chickpea flour/besan
1 tbsp	Oil
1/4 tsp	Salt
1/2 tsp	Onion paste
1/2 tsp	Green chilli paste
1/2 tsp	Ginger+ garlic paste
1/2 tsp	Red chilli powder
1/4 tsp	Turmeric powder
1/4 tsp	Garam masala
1/2 tsp	Cumin seeds
1 tsp	Kasurimethi
5 tbsp	Yogurt
A pinch	Asafoetida
5 cups	Water
To fry	Oil

## METHOD

### To make the gattas

In a large bowl, add all the ingredients for the gatta. Mix them well. Then slowly adding water (if required), knead the mix into a soft dough. Cover with a muslin cloth, and let the dough rest for 30 minutes.

### To make the stuffing

Take all the ingredients for the stuffing in a bowl. With light hands mix the ingredients well into a crumbly mix. Set aside.

### To shape the Govind gattas

Once the dough has rested, grease the palms of your hands with some oil. Divide the dough into 8 to 10 equal portions and roll each portion into a smooth ball. Now take 1 dough ball on your palm and using your fingers, spread it out to make a flat, and even circle of 3 inch diameter.

Now add 2 teaspoons of stuffing mixture on the flat circle, and carefully seal the flat circle, and bind the dough into a ball again. Repeat the process with the remaining dough balls.







### **For stuffing the gattas**

1/2 cup	Paneer, grated
10 to 12	Raisins
1 tbsp	Cashews,crushed
1/2 tsp	Black pepper powder
1 tsp	Coriander leaves, chopped

### **To make the gravy**

1½ cups	Yogurt, whisked
1/4 cup	Ginger + garlic paste
1/4 cup	Onion paste
1 piece	Bay leaf
1 tsp	Coriander powder
1 tsp	Red chili powder
1/2 tsp	Turmeric powder
1/2 tsp	Garam masala
1 tsp	Cumin seeds
2 tsp	Kasurimethi
A pinch	Asafoetida
1/2 cup	Water
1/2 cup	Coriander, chopped

### **Cooking the Govind gattas**

Boil the 5 cups of water in a deep pot. Once the water boils, add the gattas gently into the water and cook them for 5 to 8 minutes.

Once cooked the gattas will rise to the top. Once they rise, using a sieve drain the water and keep the gattas aside on an absorbent paper towel, so it soaks the excess water.

Now heat oil in a deep bottomed pan on high heat. Make sure at least 2/3rd of the pan is covered with the oil.

Once the oil is hot, drop in the strained gattas gently, one at a time, and deep fry them until golden brown. Take them out with a slotted spoon and leave them on a paper towel to drain excess oil.

Repeat the same process with the remaining gattas.

### **To make the gravy**

Now take another thick bottomed pan, add oil to it. Once hot, turn the flame to medium and add the bay leaf, cumin seeds, and asafoetida. Once the seeds begin to splutter, add the ginger + garlic and onion paste. Cook this on a medium heat, until the paste turns a very light golden brown and the oil separates from the sides.



Now add chilli powder, coriander powder, turmeric powder and garam masala powder. On a low heat, mix the dry spices with the paste in the pan, sauteing continuously. Now add about 5 tbsp of water, again while stirring constantly and let the masalas cook with the water on a medium flame. Cook for another 5 minutes, stirring at intervals, on medium heat.

At this stage, make sure the flame is on low, and gently, while stirring the gravy continuously, add the whisked yogurt to the masala. Mix it well with the masala. Keep stirring the gravy on a low heat till it comes to a boil. Now, while you continue to stir the gravy, gently add ½ cup water. On a low flame, let the curry come up to one boil. Make sure you keep stirring it. Once boiled, you will see the oil come up to the surface.

At this point add in the stuffed gattas and let the gravy simmer for another 7 to 8 minutes, covered and undisturbed. Garnish with grated paneer and coriander leaves and serve hot with pooris or roti.

---

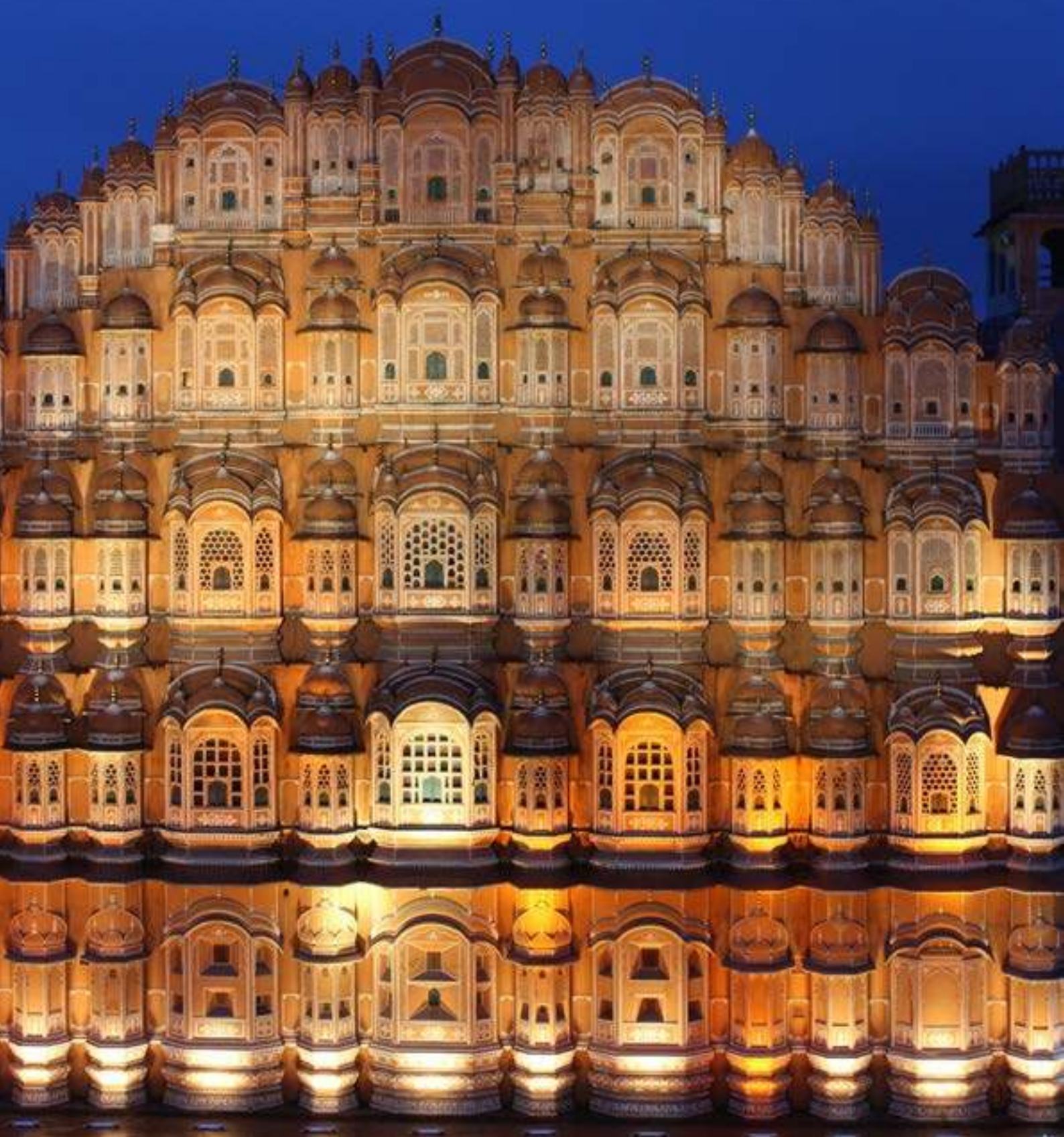
## NOTES

Make sure the dough for the gattas is soft. So please add water little by little to get the right consistency. Remember to fry the gattas in batches, and do not crowd the pan.

Once the gattas are cooked in the water, drain them well, and dry them with a paper towel, so they don't splutter when added to the hot oil. When making the curry always keep the flame on a low medium, from the time you add the dry spices, so they don't burn.

Make sure the yogurt is at room temperature and whisked really well, so it has no lumps whatsoever. When adding the yogurt keep stirring it into the masala, or once again it might split. Please make sure the flame is on low, as too much heat will again, yes, split the gravy.

Also, when adding water, after the yogurt has been added, do so gently, while you keep incorporating the water into the gravy simultaneously. And make sure the flame is on low.





# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 4

We are still at Pratap's palace in Badu. After enjoying our scotch, we we moved on to dinner. Here, I got the chance to see something I had never witnessed in my entire life. There were just people coming in with trays and trays laden with the most amazing food I had ever experienced. Literally, on a 5ft x 6ft table there was laid at least eight dishes for three people. I really don't know how much they ate, like really. But for me, it seemed more overwhelming than a wedding buffet. Who makes so much food for thee people?

Anyway, like I said, I was here to embrace the experience and all that came with it, so I was ready. Let me describe this incredible spread to you. From left to right, the first bowl looked liked meat in a red, hot curry. Turns out it was Laal Maas. The quintessential Rajasthani royal meat, with succulent pieces of lamb delicately marinated and cooked with tons of chillies and spices. Next to that, was something called Pithorh ki Sabzi, which is considered a regular in most homes, and is one sabzi, made during days you are fasting and not eating any onion or garlic. Hmm, looked great, but the irony of serving that with Laal Maas cannot be missed!

Next to that was the Panchmel Dal, a lentil curry so delicious, you will just be converted when you look at it. Next to that was a secret cousin of the Laal Maas and Safed Maas, known as Mohan Maas. Next was something, again, quite unexpected, Govind Gatte ki Sabzi. I have to tell you this, but the vegetarian cuisine in Rajasthan, is just absolutely AMAZING. Now, this is like the royal version of Gatte ki Sabzi. But the royal counterpart, is stuffed with paneer and is so beautifully done, I could eat it every damn day. In fact, I almost did. But that's a story for another day.

Moving on, the next on the table were Aaloo Matar Saag and Dahi Aaloo. Two potato-based curries, the former slightly drier than the latter, but it was refreshing to see potatoes treated so differently and passionately. I mean they were potatoes, but one was so beautifully spiced and the other so subtly, I just couldn't believe they were the same vegetable. To accompany that, there was a platter full of pulao, and what looked like bajra rotis, to feed an entire town.

The serious question in my head was how on earth could one expect another person to eat so much food. I was one tiny person. But I would have surprised myself and you, by the amount I ate that night. Foodcoma was not not a word invented then, but yeah, that is what happened.

In the dessert spread, there was something that looked like rice noodles. This is something called Sutar Feni, nothing to do with the Goa feni, but mind-blowingly delicious. It is sweet, melts in your mouth and is absolutely yummy. Next came Alwar ka Mewa, a very delicate and intricate dessert made with simple ingredients like milk and sugar. I didn't ever think that milk and sugar could make something so delectable. I know I am repeating myself, by if you taste it, you will know why. And last but not the least, was Palang torh, which is not actually a dessert, but a paan, which is also considered an aphrodisiac. Hence, the name. I don't know about its aphrodisiac capacities, but it tasted like heaven in a bite. By the end of dinner, I was mighty stuffed, supremely impressed and ready to hit the sack. We said our goodbyes and headed back.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Gawarfali ki Sabzi

---

## INGREDIENTS

250gms	Cluster beans / Gawarphali
1/2 cup	Yoghurt
1/2 tsp	Carom Seeds
1/2 tsp	Red Chilli powder
1 tsp	Coriander Powder
1½ tsp	Fennel Seeds (coarsely powdered)
1/2 tsp	Sugar
1/4 tsp	Turmeric Powder
A pinch of	Asafoetida
3 pcs	Green Chillies (finely chopped)
3 tbsp	Mustard Oil
To taste	Salt

## METHOD

Wash and de-string the cluster beans and chop into 1 inch pieces. Now in a pressure cooker, add the beans and add 1 cup of water.

Secure the lid of the cooker, and on a high heat, let the beans cook for up to 3 whistles. Turn the flame off after 3 whistles, and water for the pressure to release on its own.

Once the pressure has released, open the cooker and tip the beans into a colander to drain off all the water. Leaving the beans in the colander to naturally drain off any excess water, set it aside.

In a thick bottomed wok or pan, add oil and on a high heat, heat the oil. Add the carrom seeds and asafoetida and let the carrom seeds turn a golden brown (about 4 to 5 seconds). Now add green chilli and saute for 4 to 5 seconds.

Next, add the turmeric, boiled cluster beans, and salt, and saute on a high heat for about a minute.

---





Now take the curd in a bowl and into it add sugar, chili powder, coriander powder and fennel powder. Whisk this together until well combined, and until the sugar dissolves. Turn the heat down to low and gently add the yogurt mix to the pan, while you stir continuously to combine.

Once combined, cook this on a low heat for about 4 minutes, making sure you stir it at intervals. After 4 to 5 minutes, you will see that the gravy has thickened. At this point turn the flame off. The sabzi is ready to be eaten with hot rotis or bajra bhakri.

---

## NOTES

The time taken to cook the cluster beans in the cooker, depends upon the quality of the beans. If the beans are extremely tender, only 1 whistle should suffice. However, if the beans range from anywhere between being almost matured, to matured and thick, 3 whistles should suffice to get them cooked.

To see the tenderness of the cluster beans, here are a few signs to remember: a) The greener, brighter, smaller, and thinner the beans the more tender they will be. b) If you bend the beans and they snap easily, they are very tender, however, if they are bendy and do not snap, it obviously means the beans are mature.

The tenderness or maturity of the beans do not affect the taste of the vegetable, as long as they are de strung and cooked well.

In case you happen to make this vegetable to take with you on a journey, instead of the yogurt, use the same amount of tamarind water or lime water (not juice, but juice of one lime mixed with water), as the yogurt used in this recipe. However, if using either tamarind or lime, adjust the salt and sugar accordingly to balance the taste to your preference.

---





RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Dal Tadka – Panchmel dal

## INGREDIENTS

1/4 cup	Urad dal chilka (split black lentils)
1/4 cup	Chana dal (split Bengal gram)
1/4 cup	Green moong dal chilka (split green grams)
1/4 cup	Masoor dal (split red lentils)
1/4 cup	Toor dal or Arhar dal (split pigeon peas )
To taste	Salt
1/2 tsp + 1/2 tsp	Turmeric powder
2 tsp	Coriander powder
1/2 tsp	Garam masala powder
1/2 tsp	Black pepper powder
6 cups	Water
1 pc	Onion, finely chopped
1 tbsp	Ginger, crushed
1 tbsp	Garlic, crushed
3 pcs	Green chillies
3 pcs	Tomatoes,
1/8 tsp	finely chopped
1/2 tsp	Asafoetida
1/2 tsp	Mustard seeds
2 tbsp + 3 tbsp	Cumin seeds
2 tbsp	Ghee
2 pcs	Oil
2 pcs	Dry red chillies
2 tbsp	Green chillies, chopped
	Fresh coriander leaves,
To taste	finely chopped
	Lemon juice

## METHOD

To make the dal, first you need to add all the dals in a large bowl and add enough water to cover the mixed dal completely.

Soak the dal for around 3-4 hours. Once soaked, using a sieve drain the water and keeping the dal in the sieve, wash it well under running water.

Add the dal to a pressure cooker, add 4 cups of water, salt, a pinch of asafoetida, 1tbsp ghee and turmeric powder and mix it together. Pressure-cook the dal on high heat for up to 2 whistles.

Once the whistles are done, lower the heat to low and cook for 10-15 minutes. This will completely soften the dals. Turn the heat off and wait for the pressure to release. Once the pressure is released, set the cooked dal aside.





Now in a sturdy, deep bottomed pan, heat oil and remaining ghee on a medium heat. Once hot, add asafoetida, mustard seeds and cumin seeds and let them crackle.

At this point, you could adjust the consistency of the dal. If you want it thinner, you could add a little more water to it. However, I would suggest, if adding water, add it little by little, so you reach the consistency you want without it getting too watery. Let the dal simmer for 5 minutes.

Then add chopped garlic, ginger and green chilli and saute for few seconds, till they start turning golden brown. Then add chopped onion and saute till the onions turn translucent. Now add the tomatoes and cook for 2-3 minutes, until the tomatoes soften. Now add coriander powder, cumin powder, garam masala, pepper powder and salt. Cook the dry spices along with the onion tomato mix for about 2 minutes, making sure, you keep sauteing the mix, so it doesn't stick to the pan.

At this point you could add a dash of water to deglaze the pan. Now very carefully add the cooked dal to the pan. Mix the cooked dal with the spice mix. Then sprinkle the cardamom powder and the remaining garam masala and turn the heat down to low. Now take some more ghee in a tadka pan, and to that bring it up to heat. Once the ghee is hot, add the dry red chillies and whole green chillies, split.

Once that crackles, immediately tip the tadka into the dal and turn the heat off on the dal. Sprinkle with coriander leaves and serve hot.

---

## NOTES

When cooking the dal, make sure the dals have properly broken down and are not whole. In case after taking the lid off the cooker, the dals still look undercooked, add a little more water and cook on a medium heat till you can comfortably crush the dal. Also, you could whisk the dal together to break it down.

Remember to add water little by little (if adding) to adjust the consistency of the dal, and not add too much water at once. If adding more water, check the seasoning and adjust accordingly. The consistency of the dal should not be too thick or too runny. It should be creamy and flow easily.





## UDAIPUR - THE LAKE CITY

Udaipur was the historic capital of the Mewar Kingdom. It is also referred to as the town of lakes. It is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Rajasthan. You will find a variety of food in Udaipur, but the most popular dish is Papad ki Subji.

It's a traditional Rajasthani dish made by adding fried papad to a spicy tomato and curd gravy. Many traditional Rajasthani dishes are made without using leafy vegetables due to the desert conditions.



RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Kadhi

## INGREDIENTS

1 cup	Sour yogurt
3 to 4 tbsp	Chickpea flour besan
To taste	Salt
2 cups	Water
1/2 tsp	Turmeric powder

### **For the tempering**

2 tbsp	Oil
2 pcs	Dry red chillies
1/2 tsp	Mustard seeds
1/4 tsp	Asafoetida
1/2 tsp	Cumin seeds
1 pc	Bay leaf
1/4 tsp	Fenugreek seeds
1/2 tsp	Red chilli powder

## METHOD

In a deep, thick bottomed pan, mix add all the ingredients for the kadhi.

Using a wire whisk or a wooden whisk, whisk all the ingredients together until well combined, with no lumps remaining.

Now put the pan on the flame, and on a very low heat, let the kadhi mix come up to a simmer, making sure you keep stirring it every minute or so.

Keep cooking on a low heat, while stirring at intervals for at least 12 to 15 minutes.

By this time, the besan will have cooked, and the kadhi will be of a thicker consistency than it had started out.

The consistency should be thick enough to just about coat the back of the spoon but not stay on it.

Once this consistency is achieved, turn the heat off, and keep cover the kadhi.





### **For the tempering**

In a small tadka pan, add the oil. On a medium high flame, let the oil heat. Once hot, add the mustard seeds along with the bay leaf. Once the mustard seeds begin to crackle, add the cumin seeds and fenugreek seeds. Let the cumin seeds sizzle, then add the red chillies and asafoetida.

Fry for a few seconds till the red chillies darken a bit and turn the flame off. Immediately add the red chilli powder and stir. And instantly pour this tempering into the kadhi. Cover and let the tempering flavours infuse with the kadhi.

After 6 to 8 minutes, take the lid off, stir in the tempering and serve hot with steamed rice or bajra roti.

---

## NOTES

Make sure to cook the base of the kadhi on the lowest flame possible. This will ensure your kadhi does not split.

Whisk in all the ingredients well, so there are no lumps in the kadhi and it cooks and thickens evenly. A small tip is, to take the besan in a cup and add enough water to make sure you form a slurry. Then add this water to the kadhi, this will ensure the besa doesn't lump up. However, do whisk all the ingredients well.

Make sure the kadhi is off the flame and ready before you add in the tempering, or you might risk splitting it.

It is important that the curd used should be full fat and sour, or you will end up compromising on the flavour and texture of this creamy kadhi.

When you add the tempering it will sizzle, so be a tad careful.

---











# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 5

A couple of months went by. I was having a good time, life was good. Moving at a comfortable pace, doing some amazing work and eating tons and tons of good food; but surprisingly not getting fat! Then one night, while I was fast asleep, I was woken up by a loud rap on my door. I woke up with a start and saw flames rising outside my window! My whole life flashed in front of my eyes, I said a quick prayer and ran to the door hoping to get out before the flames engulfed me.

I opened the door with a loud snap, and to my shock and extreme amusement I saw Jaisingh standing there with a larger than usual turban, his huge moustache looking perkier than usual and a wide grin on his face. Grinning he said, "Holi Hai!" The fire in fact was the ceremony of Holika Dahan that was happening in the courtyard, and Jaisingh was at my door to invite me to join the others. So, with a wide grin on my face I joined the others. It was beautiful. There was a huge fire, with people gathered all around it laughing, talking and generally being merry.

There were massive trays of Mohanthaal being passed around. Sweet and crumbly besan barfi, full of ghee, and tons of nuts. I was always a fan, and since I was alive and rocking, I made sure as had as many as I could. The next day was of course Rang-wali Holi, so everyone had to gear up for that, because it was a big deal, and I was informed that a huge celebration was planned in the palace courtyard.

Next morning, Jaisingh came calling really early with a package and a thali full of gulaal, and in true poetic style, greeted me with a quote, "Radha ne Shri Krishna se poocha, pyar ka asli matlab kya hota hai? Shri Krishna ne has kar kaha, jahan matlab hota hai wahan pyar hi kahan hota hai! Happy Holi sir! May you find love like Krishna and Radha!" This man! He always made my day.

At the end of his quote, he smeared some gulaal on my cheeks and handed me the package. It contained a white kurta pajama that had some intricate chikankari work on it. I was so touched. Not only were these people fabulous artists they were equally kind, hospitable and bloody good cooks! I was looking forward to the feast. I got ready. The kurta fitted perfectly. Jaisingh truly was a genius.

I could hear the preparations in progress in the courtyard. Since I was ready, I thought I could at least go help. I stepped out and saw my crew busy with placing huge plates of colour, buckets of water, pichkaris (water jets), and in another corner, people busy setting up the food. And then I spotted Rana in tow with a woman clad in festive finery, with her head covered, sporting a large bindi, and jewellery (like most women I had seen so far in Rajasthan), walk towards me with a plate covered with a beautiful, red, bandhani cloth. Next to them was a cute little girl, hopping to keep up with them. Rana came and stood in front of me, flashed his signature smile, took some gulaal from a nearby plate and put a teeka on my forehead. He introduced his wife and little girl to me. His wife, Laali, insisted on touching my feet, but I was never going to let that happen, so I told her that she was like my younger sister, and where I came from we respect women too much to let them touch our feet (true story in my home). She gave a shy smile and tried to dislodge Timri, her daughter, from her pallu.

Rana's wife unveiled the thaali and offered its contents to me. I was wondering if it was Pyaaz ke kachori again, but Rana explained they were Mawa Kachoris, a festive delight, where kachoris are stuffed with evaporated milk, sugar, and tons of dry fruits. His wife had specially made some for me since she was meeting me for the first time. I thanked her and took a bite. They were melt in the mouth delicious. Although they looked like the covering would be hard to chew, it was extremely morish. I thanked her for it and complimented her cooking skills.

## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Lal Maas

### INGREDIENTS

750 gms	Lamb, boneless
6-8 pcs	Kashmiri red chillies
1/2 cup	Yoghurt
2 tsp	Cumin powder
2 tsp	Coriander powder
1/4 tsp	Turmeric powder
2 tbsp	Ginger garlic paste
4 tbsp	Ghee
2 pcs	Black cardamoms
3-4 pcs	Green cardamoms
1 inch	Cinnamon
3 to 4	Cloves
1 pc	Bay leaf
4 pcs	Onions, finely chopped
1/2 tsp	Garam masala
To taste	Salt
For garnish	Coriander sprigs
For garnish	Lemon wedges
2 to 3 pieces	Charcoal
To cook	Water

### METHOD

First, drain the water off the soaked chillies and grind them to a fine paste in a blender. Next in a large mixing bowl, combine the mutton, yogurt, cumin powder, coriander powder, turmeric powder, one tablespoon ginger- garlic paste and the red chilli paste.

Mix this well with the mutton pieces and set aside to marinate in the refrigerator for at least an hour, but ideally overnight. After the marination is done, take the meat out of the refrigerator and let it come back to room temperature.

In a thick bottomed pressure cooker, add ghee and let it come up to heat on a high flame. Once the ghee is hot, turn the heat down to medium and add black cardamom, green cardamoms, cinnamon, cloves and bay leaf and sauté till all of it is fragrant (about 12 to 15 seconds).

Next, add the onions and sauté till they turn light brown in colour. Then add the remaining ginger garlic paste and sauté for a minute.







Add a dash of water to deglaze the pan, and saute once again for about 20 seconds. Now turn the heat to high and add the marinated lamb pieces to the pressure cooker and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, till the onion mix coats the mutton pieces well.

Add salt and water to cover all the mutton pieces and give it one stir to mix it all up together. Secure the lid of the cooker and let it cook, on a low medium heat for 7 to 8 whistles. Once done, turn the heat off and wait for the pressure to release. Once the pressure has released, take the lid off.

Now using a pair of tongs, on the gas flame, light the piece of charcoal until it is red hot. Place the charcoal on a small metal bowl and using a sturdy pair of tongs, place the bowl in the centre of the pressure cooker.

Carefully add 2 to 3 cloves to the coal and pour some ghee on the coal. As soon as you add the ghee, immediately cover the cooker with a lid and set aside for 2 to 3 minutes. Next take the lid off and remove the container with the charcoal. Put the curry back on heat, add garam masala and give a quick stir and after about a couple of minutes, turn the heat off and take it off the heat. Take the curry out in a bowl, and garnish with a sprig of coriander and lemon wedges. Serve this luscious curry with rotis or pulav.







## NOTES

I would strongly suggest you marinate the meat overnight.

Always remember, to wash the meat well and make sure it is at room temperature before you marinate it or cook it. This holds true for any kind of meat. This helps the meat cook evenly and faster and stay succulent

When sauteing the whole spices, make sure you don't burn them or they will end up releasing a bitter flavour, as they will continue to cook with the onions. So, make sure your flame is on medium high, and you keep sauteing the spices, till they are fragrant.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Mohan Maas

## INGREDIENTS

500gms	Mutton
2 pcs	Mathania chilli
4 pcs	Kashmiri red chilli
3 pcs	Dry red chilli
1 tsp	Black peppercorns
6 pcs	Cloves
2 pcs	Black cardamom
6 pcs	Green cardamom
1 tsp	Cumin seeds
1 tsp	Coriander seeds
2 pcs	Bay leaf
2 pcs	Cinnamon stick
1 tsp	Turmeric powder
1 tsp	Coriander powder
20 cloves	Garlic
2 inch piece	Ginger
3 pcs	Red onions, sliced
1/2 cup	Yoghurt
1/2 cup	Ghee
To taste	Salt

## METHOD

First soak the three kinds of chillies (Mathania chili, Kashmiri red chili, and dried red chili) in one cup of lukewarm water for an hour.

Next using a grater, grate the ginger. Crush one black cardamom and 10 garlic cloves separately using a mortar and pestle.

Now to make the marinade for the meat, in a grinder, add the crushed garlic cloves, 1tsp of grated ginger, black peppercorns, 3 green cardamoms, cumin seeds, and coriander seeds. Pulse them for 30 seconds.

Transfer the mix in a bowl and keep aside. In the same grinder, make a fine paste of red chillies along with the water that they were soaked in.

Once the chillies are ground, add the pulsed spices to the red chili paste and grind again for 30 seconds.

To marinate the meat, first thoroughly clean and wash the mutton pieces with running water.





In a bowl, add the spice and chilli mixture, yogurt, turmeric powder, and salt, and mix them well together. Add the washed mutton pieces to this mix and coat the mutton well with the marinade and refrigerate at least for an hour, ideally overnight.

Before you cook the meat, remember to take it out and leave it to come to room temperature. Next add the ghee to a thick bottomed heavy pan and heat till smoking point.

As soon as the ghee is hot, turn the heat to medium and add bay leaves, cinnamon sticks, the remaining black cardamom, green cardamoms and grated ginger. Saute the whole spices for 25 to 30 seconds till they are fragrant. Next add the sliced onions and coriander powder. Mix them well with the ghee and whole spices.

Then cover the pan and let this cook on a medium heat for 3 minutes while you stir this at intervals. Once the onions soften, add the marinated pieces of mutton along with the remaining marinade to the pan. Coat the mutton pieces with the masala in the pan, stirring the pieces gently.

Now add about 1/4th cup of water to the mutton and mix it well. Cover and cook it for an hour on a medium heat. Make sure you keep stirring the meat at 10min intervals, so, the mutton pieces do not stick to the bottom of the pan.

After an hour, take a piece of mutton and insert a skewer through it to check if done. If the mutton is done, the skewer should slide through without resistance. This means the Mohan Maas is ready.

To serve, garnish the Mohan Maas with chopped fresh coriander and some cream.

---





## NOTES

I would strongly suggest you marinate the meat overnight.

Always remember, to wash the meat well and make sure it is at room temperature before you marinate it or cook it. This holds true for any kind of meat. This helps the meat cook evenly and faster and stay succulent.

When sauteing the whole spices, make sure you don't burn them or they will end up releasing a bitter flavour, as they will continue to cook with the onions. So, make sure your flame is on medium high, and you keep sauteing the spices, till they are fragrant.

Remember to cook the meat on medium heat, while stirring at intervals. If at any point the water has evaporated, but the meat is yet to cook, add an additional 1/4th cup of water to the meat, stir in it well, and carry on cooking with the lid on.





# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 6

The Holi celebration was really elaborate. The food, laid out in huge brass containers, ran all along the sides of courtyard, and when I counted, there were at least 21 pots. Jaisingh mentioned this was sponsored by Pratapsingh, and every year he would do this for his people. My mind was finally at rest. Yep, he could afford it, but at the same time I commended his love and generosity, and once again I was touched by the large-heartedness of the people of Rajasthan. I joined in the celebrations with renewed fervour, and a few minutes later, my white kurta, would have itself forgotten what colour it had been, and I couldn't have recognised myself if I had a mirror in front of me!

All of a sudden there was a tap on my shoulder. Jaisingh was holding up a large brass glass to me, with a calm smile on his face. In the glass, was the most delicious thandai I had ever had. A traditional drink especially made during the festival of Holi. I took it gleefully, and separated myself from the crowd, and stood-by and watched the celebrations carry on; the smell of ghee still filling the air with its sweet aroma. While I savoured my thandai, we moved to survey the spread. I was curious, 21 pots of food?

The first pot had the traditional Gujiyas of course. Garnished with rose petals, crisp and dripping with sugar syrup they were a sight to behold. I couldn't resist and had to help myself to one. The next pot was laden with ghee soaked Ghevar, again an essential for festivals in Rajasthan. The next had the most tantalising Balushahi I had seen. Perfectly shaped and coated with sugar, it could give any doughnut a run for its money. Now mind you, this was not the dessert counter. These were just the festive sweets that one just had to have during Holi celebrations! Now I began to see how they could have filled 21 pots!

Rajasthanis loved to eat, cooked from their hearts, respected their produce, and literally lived to savour. Because good food was a feature of prime importance in their lives. The varieties in dishes they could come up with, with only a handful of ingredients that were locally available to them, was simply amazing and they deserved serious respect for their creativity.

Next came the appetisers. There was Kalmi wada, Pakoras, Methi Matri, (crisp discs made with flour and fenugreek leaves), Moong dal kachori, Kachoris stuffed with a spicy moong dal filling, and yes, they do love their kachoris in every form. Sweet or savoury doesn't matter. Next, came an essential no Rajasthani meal would be complete without, Dal Baati Churma. I had this for lunch a few times during my stay, but the mere sight of them, warmed the cockles of my heart! Wheat dumplings baked and crumbled with the tastiest panchmel dal, (it is called so because it is made with five types of pulses), and then topped with tons of ghee! I was happy.

In the next pot was a seasonal favourite called Mogar ki Dal, a curry made with raw mangoes and moong dal, which packs quite a punch and is a favourite because of its perfect balance of hot, sour and slightly sweetish flavours. This one I was definitely going to try. The next was the Besan Gatte or Gatte ki Sabzi, which I had eaten on multiple occasions, and simply loved. What was there not to love? Soft gram flour dumplings soaking a simple yet luscious curry, that could play a part at an elaborate feast, or even a simple meal.

The next one confused me. Because it looked like Aamras topped with boondi. As always, Jaisingh read my mind and explained that this was something called Aamras ki Kadhi or Aam Kadhi. It's an actual kadhi, made with raw and ripe mangoes, buttermilk, spices and gram flour. It's sweet, sour and very mildly spicy, but a completely different flavour from the Mogar ki Sabzi. Then there was another Gatte ki Sabzi like sabzi. Once again, I had confusion setting in on my face, and again Jaisingh came to the rescue. This was what was called Shahi Gatte ki Sabzi, which was made on special occasions. He reminded me of the Govind Gatte we had at Pratap's, this was a slightly more special cousin. It was stuffed with mawa and paneer. And the dough for the gatta was also special and different. Because it was primarily kneaded with yogurt, which made them pillowy soft and melt in your mouth. At this stage, my amazement and respect for Rajasthani cuisine grew to another level.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Ghevar

## INGREDIENTS

1/2 cup	Ghee for kneading
1/2 cup	Full fat milk, cold
1 cup	Ice cold water
1cup	Maida/ All-purpose flour
1/4 tsp	Cardamom powder
4 to 5	Saffron strands
1/2 cup	Chopped nuts, to garnish
As needed	Ghee, for deep frying

1½ cup	<b>For the sugar syrup</b>
1 cup	Sugar
	Water

## METHOD

Making the sugar syrup.

To make the sugar syrup, take a thick bottomed pan. Add the sugar and ½ a cup of water, along with the green cardamom powder. Set the pan on medium heat. Stir once and let the sugar dissolve. Once the sugar dissolves, let the mixture come to a boil.

Once the syrup boils, take a little bit of the syrup on a spoon, blow air to cool it, then dip the tip of your forefinger into the syrup. Now touch the forefinger to the thumb and then pull them apart. You should see a thin string begin to form. This means your sugar syrup is done. In case you do not get the string consistency, boil the sugar syrup for a minute more, and then do the 1 string test again.

Make sure the sugar syrup reaches the 1 string consistency before you turn off the heat.





Once the sugar syrup is done, set it aside while you make the ghevar. Begin by adding ghee. Now add 1 tablespoon of cold milk and 1 tablespoon of ice-cold water to it. The milk, flour and water need to be added in parts and not in one go. Start beating this mix together using a stand or hand mixer. Once it's all nice and combined, add 1/4 cup of flour and mix to combine. Again add 1-2 tablespoons more of milk and water and combine. Add cardamom powder and mix. Add 1/4 cup flour again and mix. Also add in saffron strands. Now add the remaining 1/2 cup flour.

Keep adding water and milk little by little and mix till you get a completely smooth and pouring consistency batter. You may need to add more water to the batter than what is mentioned in the recipe if your batter isn't pouring consistency. Now heat ghee in a deep pan on high heat. Once the ghee has heated, using a ladle, pour batter from a height of at least 6-7 inches.

Pour batter little by little in a constant flow into centre of the pan. The batter will sizzle up and spread immediately.

Wait for a minute and then pour another ladle full of batter from a height into the centre of the pan. Wait few seconds and then using a chopstick or aseekh, remove some batter from the centre so what you get a hole in the centre to lift the ghevar once it's done. Pour 2 more ladles of batter, repeating the same process. You could add more batter if you want a thicker ghevar. Once you are done with all the layers, take a stick and press ghevar slightly into the hot ghee so that the top gets evenly cooked.

Once it's all golden brown, very carefully, insert the chopstick/seekh in the centre of the ghevar and take it out of the pan. Place the ghevar on a large serving plate and drizzle evenly with warm sugar syrup. Alternatively, you could also dip the ghevar in the sugar syrup. Make sure sugar syrup is warm when you dip the ghevar in it. Garnish ghevar with nuts, rabdi (thickened milk) and enjoy!

---



*Once fried, ghevar is very delicate. You have to be extremely careful while handling it, especially when you drop it in the sugar syrup. Use a chopstick or butter knife to hold in from the centre carefully else it might break.*

---

## NOTES

Use a deep and sturdy pan to make ghevar. The batter comes up as you drop it from a height, the ghee is very hot.

The pan should be more than half filled with oil or ghee.

To make the batter, use cold milk and cold water. This will ensure that your ghevar turns out crispy, which is what you want before you soak it in sugar syrup. It is imperative that the batter for the ghevar is of pouring consistency. It should drop easily and freely from the ladle. You may need to add more cold water if your batter isn't of pouring consistency.

Ghevar needs to be fried in very hot ghee.

Ideally use a container with a pointed tip to drop the batter into the hot oil. You could use a ladle, but the pattern will be more prominent if you use utensil with a pointed tip, like a milk pouring jug.

Always drop the batter into the pan from a height of around 6-7 inches. The height is important to get the authentic web like pattern.

Remember to always drop/pour the batter into the centre of the pan, at the same spot. This way batter will distribute evenly each time. Drop the batter, little by little in a constant flow.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Sheera Halwa

---

## INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup	Ghee
2 tbsp	Ghee
1½ cups	Yellow moong dal
1 cup	Full-fat milk
1 cup	Khoya/ evaporated milk
1 cup	Sugar
1 tbsp	Cardamom powder
1/4 cup	Chopped nuts (almond, pistachio, cashews)

---

## METHOD

Soak the moong dal in ample water, for 3 to 4 hours, making sure the dal is fully covered with water, and then some. After 4 hours, using a sieve, drain the excess water and wash well under running water.

In the grinder, add the dal and grind it to a soft paste. If needed, you could add a couple of tablespoons of water to aid the grinding.

Take a medium- sized, wide, non-stick pan. Add 4 tbsp of ghee and bring it up to heat. Add the grounded moong dal paste and begin cooking on a medium-low heat.

Now, you will need to keep stirring the halwa all along. Every 5 minutes keep adding 2 tbsp of ghee to the halwa and continue stirring.

After about 30 minutes, once you get a nutty aroma, slowly add in the milk, making sure you stir to combine the dal and the milk well.

---





On a low heat, once the mixture bubbles, cook stirring at intervals till all the water has evaporated, and you get a nice dry mix remaining in the pan. Add khoya and continue cooking for 5 to 7 minutes or until the ghee leaves the sides. Make sure at this stage, you stir the halwa constantly.

Add the sugar and once again, keep stirring and cook on medium heat for about 5 minutes. After 5 minutes, add in the cardamom powder, the chopped nuts and the remaining 2tbsp of ghee.

Mix well and keep stirring for about a minute while you cook it on a medium flame. Serve hot garnished with rose petals and nuts.

The halwa can be refrigerated for a month in an air-tight container.

---

## NOTES

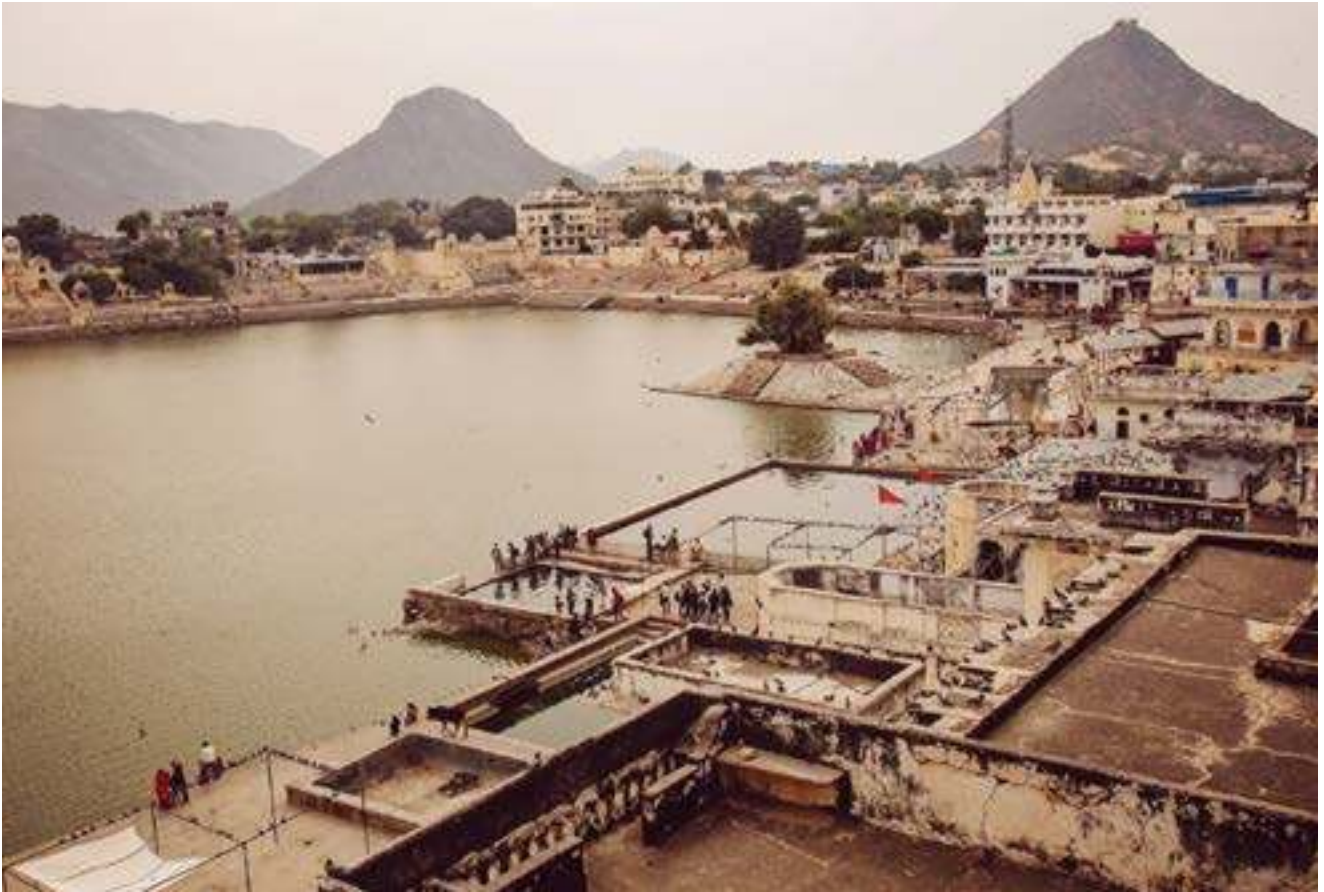
The dal has to be soaked well in order to get a nice rich halwa. So please make sure you do not skip or compromise this step.

Although it may be tedious, it is imperative to keep stirring the halwa, throughout the cooking process, and please make sure you add the ghee at intervals.

The stirring will ensure the dal does not stick to the sides of the pan, and then get burnt, leaving you with a funny smelling halwa.

*The Rajasthani Moong Dal Halwa is a classic and makes its presence felt deliciously during the winter months. A must have at winter wedding parties. This halwa is actually quite easy to make, and the flavours along with the goodness of the lentils make for a perfect winter dessert.*





## PUSHKAR - TEMPLE TOWN

Pushkar, the city bordering the Thar Desert, has hundreds of temples. There is a 14th-century Jagatpita Brahma Mandir located in this beautiful city. This temple has a peculiar red spire and walls inlaid with silver coins from pilgrims. The popular sweet of Pushkar is the famous “Malpua”. It is made by adding jaggery or sugar to liquid wheat flour batter.

This sweet dish is mentioned in the “Rig Veda”. Food historians have found mention of these cakes made from rice or barley. There are varieties of Malpua but the Rajasthani favourite is Rabri Malpua.









# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 7

I was still exploring the 21 pots at the Holi party. Jaisingh was explaining the contents of each pot in great detail. The next in line was a dry sabzi, made with soaked methi seeds, or fenugreek seeds called Dana Methi ki Sabzi. These seeds are cooked with a variety of spices. To counter the bitterness, dates, raisins and dry mango powder are added.

Next came a myriad of rice preparations. There was of course the regular Khichdi, a simple preparation made with moong dal, rice, turmeric and tons of ghee, and there was a plain Jeera Rice. Then there was a Gatta Khichdi, once again the star gattas were added to rice which was spiced with whole spices. The wonders they could do with Gattas! Then came the rotis, Tandoor Roti and a very beautiful to look at Khooba Roti. A simple wheat flatbread, that is pinched at the surface to create patterns. When held over fire, the pinched surface would cook first, and form an intricate design, while the rest of the roti cooked slowly and remained soft. And that was the spread for lunch. So many vegetarian items at once and such diversity using just a few ingredients, was something I had never imagined could be possible.

While I was simply in awe, and couldn't stop complimenting Jaisingh on the culinary genius of Rajasthan, Rana hurriedly strode over and whispered something to Jaisingh. Apparently Pratapsingh had indeed accepted the invitation and arrived. We could see him walk in, this time in his princely finery, complete with a glistening turban and very expensive, custom-made mojaris (trust me, I could tell). Entering with a namaste to everyone who came towards him, and of course people did flock towards him with respect, and he in a very calm manner had a word or two with each one of them. Finally, after exchanging greetings he reached us. This time, greeting us with a khamagani.

Rana came running with a gulaal ki thaal and indicated, I needed to put a teeka on his forehead, which I did, and he reciprocated. Then he informed Jaisingh that the thaals of dessert were at the entrance, and that he would need to instruct the people delivering them, where they needed to be placed. While Jaisingh walked away with a purpose, and Rana scurried after him, Pratap asked me how I was liking the celebration. I told him how genuinely in awe I was of the entire thing. The camaraderie, the hospitality, the innocence of it all. And most of all, the food. He laughed and rightfully said, "You must always make the most of the resources you have been gifted with and never complain. That way you will always have more than enough." True that! The fine words of a fine prince.

We spoke shop for a while, over thandai, gujiyas and ghevar and after an hour or so, he excused himself saying he had to be home for the family lunch and walked away with the same flair and humility he had walked in with. After he left, Jaisingh ushered me towards where the desserts were. He did take pride and a certain amount of amusement in introducing me to his culture, and in seeing my jaw drop. We went into a room, where massive thaals of desserts were placed. And my five senses had a feast. On one, was the one dessert I recognised, Dilkushar, a rich cousin of the Besan ki barfi, that smells and tastes as divine as it looks. Gram flour cooked in tons of ghee. It is absolutely divine! On another thaal in silver bowls was the delicious Sheero Halwa, painstakingly made with moong dal and again tons of ghee, nuts and sugar. This again is the most delicious halwa I have ever had in my life.

After surveying the delicious desserts, anointed with silver foil, we headed back to the celebrations, where people were slowly but surely getting tired and heading to the gorge on the delicious lunch, while some just headed for desserts. Children got less enthusiastic, and slowly the colour spraying and celebrations quietened down and people started getting more into conversations over delicious food, which, I know is always the greatest conversation catalyst. We all had lunch, and the crowd started trickling out. I retired to my room, tired but very, very happy. It was so nice to see a huge community of people come together have so much fun and be together. It was exhilarating and humbling for me at the same time.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Mawa Kachori

---

## INGREDIENTS

### **For the outer covering**

1 cup	Maida
2 tbsp	Ghee
1/2 cup	Milk, for kneading

### **For Filling**

1 cup	Khoya/ Mawa/ Evaporated Milk Solids
1/2 cup	Powdered Sugar
1/2 cup	Mixed Nuts(for filling and garnish)
	Oil for frying

### **For Sugar Syrup**

2 cups	Sugar
1/2 tsp	Green Cardamom powder
1 cup	Water

---

## METHOD

### **To make the filling**

In a mixer jar, add the nuts, and then pulse it 2 to 3 times, till the nuts are slightly chunky; or simply chop them into small chunks using a knife.

In a thick bottomed, non-stick pan, add ghee, on a low medium flame, let the ghee become hot.

Now, crumble the mawa into the ghee. Making sure the heat is low medium, saute the mawa well in the ghee, stirring continuously, until the mawa turns a slight golden brown. Take the sauted mawa out of the pan and set it aside in a large bowl to cool.

Once cooled, add the chopped nuts and powdered sugar to the mawa. Mix well until it is all uniformly incorporated. The filling is done.

---





## **Bringing the kachori together**

To bring the kachoris together, divide the dough equally, into tennis ball sized portions, and make those into smooth balls. On a plain surface, using a rolling pin, roll out each ball into a circular disc of about 3-4inch diameter.

In the centre of the disc add 1 to 1.5tbsp of the stuffing. Dip your index finger in some water and run it along the edges of the disc. Now, without spilling the filling, starting from one edge, gather the edges of the disc and seal it together in the centre like a little potli. Pinch and twist the folded end to securely seal the filling inside the potli. Repeat this with the remaining portions of dough. Once all the kachoris are stuffed and sealed, cover the prepared kachoris with a damp muslin cloth.

Heat oil in a deep, heavy bottomed pan. Please remember, the oil should at least cover 3/4th of the depth of the pan. Now, on a low heat, proceed to heat the oil. To check if the oil is hot enough, drop a small ball of dough into the hot oil. It should sizzle and very slowly rise to the surface.

Once this test is done, and the oil is hot enough, drop the kachoris very gently, one by one into the hot oil. Make sure you don't overcrowd the pan, so, frying 2 to 3 kachoris at a time, would be a good idea.

Fry them until they are golden brown all over and rise to the surface. Using a slotted spoon, take them out of the oil, and drop them immediately into the sugar syrup. Repeat the process for the remaining kachoris.

The kachoris need to sit in the sugar syrup for a good 10 minutes, and make sure they are completely submerged in the sugar syrup, and therefore nicely coated. After 10 minutes, again, using a slotted spoon, take the kachoris out one by one, and lay them on a serving plate.

To serve, garnish generously with chopped nuts, and edible silver foil.

These, when completely cooled, can be stored in an airtight container for up to 20 days.



## NOTES

The dough of the kachori has to be soft and well rested. If not, you will end up with a hard exterior that will not be easy to bite into. The exterior has to be thick and crumbly.

It is imperative that once you add the stuffing, the kachoris have to be sealed really well, or you might end up with the stuffing falling out in the pan when frying.

To ensure the edges are sealed, make sure you moisten the edges.

Please also make sure, when frying each batch of kachoris, the rest of the prepared kachoris (ready to be fried), are covered with a damp cloth, so the dough doesn't dry out, which may in turn lead it to crack.

The time the kachoris soak in the sugar syrup will have to be monitored, as each kachori will be soaked in it as soon as they come out of the pan, so be a tad careful with that. You don't want the kachoris to soak too much or too little syrup. `

Make sure you fry the kachoris on a low heat. If the heat is high, only the outer portion will cook, and the insides will remain raw.

Do not crowd your pan when frying the kachoris. The heat will not be distributed evenly, if you do so, and that might end in the kachoris being over or under cooked.

---

*Mawa kachoris, are deep fried pies, stuffed with a generous filling of mawa/ khoya/ evaporated milk. It is truly delicious, and a traditional Rajasthani speciality made especially during the festive season. The melt in the mouth filling, along with a crispy thick yet light filling, makes this one delightful pie to devour.*

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Imarti

## INGREDIENTS

250gms	Split Black gram (split Urad dal)
250gms	Sugar
1 tbsp	Powdered carda- mom
25	Saffron strands
1 cup	Milk
4 cups	Ghee

*Imarti a close and delightfully delicious cousin of the famous Jalebi, comes with a shy yet robust and ardent following.*

## METHOD

Soak the dal in enough water to the dal, and then some, in water overnight.

Next morning drain the water using a sieve and wash the dal under running water.

Then using the grinder attachment of the mixer, grind it to a paste.

In a thick bottomed pan, add sugar and then 2 cups of water, saffron and cardamom powder to make the sugar syrup.

Make sure to cook this on a low flame, till the sugar dissolves, and then add the saffron strands. Let it boil and stand, until it has reduced to 1/3rd of the original syrup, and then turn the gas off and let it come to room temperature.

Now, add milk to the urad dal batter, so it comes to a uttapam batter consistency.

Next, now this part is tricky, so follow the instructions to the T.





Heat enough ghee in deep frying pan to a smoking point. Then lower the heat and encase the batter in a thick cotton cloth or in a coconut shell with a small central hole and form the mixture into two coils sticking to each other and then form small circles all-round the coils overlapping each other, into the ghee.

Once you leave each Imarti in the ghee, deep fry until golden brown. Repeat the process for the rest of the batter. Once all the Imartis are fried, take them out on an absorbent kitchen towel.

Now dunk all the imartis in the warm sugar syrup and let them rest for 15 to 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, use a slotted spoon and remove the Imartis on to a wide plate.

Take the silver leaf foil, and spread it over the Imartis, and you are good to serve the yummy deliciousness in all its glory!

---

## NOTES

The sugar syrup has to be warm and not hot. So please keep that in mind.

Please remember to drain the imarti once fried.

The consistency of the batter is of prime importance, so please make sure you follow the measurements and steps meticulously.

The temperature of the ghee once heated, and then on a low flame, needs to be constant. Remember not to overcrowd the pan.

---

*Made with urad dal and then dipped in a calorific sugar syrup anointed with loads of saffron, this one is a sure winner. And in winter months, had with a dollop of warm rabdi or cold ice cream, Imarti dons the sash of the winner with ease and humility.*











# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 8

I woke up once again to a rap on my door. This time though, I realised I had woken up on the rocking chair, with no fire but sunlight outside. I checked my watch and realised it was 8.30. Clearly not evening, but the next morning. I got up, realising the rocking chair just wasn't one of the places my back could handle. I opened the door, and there was my darling Jaisingh, with his signature smile. He stood there with an envelope. I took it from him and he told me my breakfast would be waiting for me. I thanked him, shut the door, left the envelope on the table and went to make my coffee. I really didn't know what time I slept the previous day, and definitely wasn't too happy about waking up in the rocking chair, and really needed my coffee. Everything else could wait.

Later, when I was having an interesting breakfast of Makke ki Raab (a porridge made with crushed corn, curd and spices), I remembered the envelope on the table and went ahead and grabbed it. Opened it, read it, and well, my heart sank and no amount of Makke ki Raab could have lifted my energy. Turns out I had one week to wrap things up here and head back to Delhi for another assignment. Apparently, my current boss had quit, and the new gentleman, wanted me back. Why? No one knows. Maybe I would find out, maybe I wouldn't. But that day, I was especially disappointed. I loved what I was doing here. Loved the people, loved the work, loved the fact that I had Jaisingh, and most definitely loved the culture and the food. I did hate, not detest, hate, the fact that I had to go back to a world where pretty much no one cared about anyone but themselves. Nevertheless, I had to.

The breakfast that day was way longer than it should have been. While I was still at it, Jaisingh arrived. This man does not need words to convey anything. He immediately knew something was wrong. I gave him the sad news and in typical style, he quoted, "jab jab, jo jo hona hai, tab tab, woh woh, hovega.", smiled and asked me to get ready. You never asked him questions like why, or what for, I had learned that. So, I did as I was told. When I came out, I was met with a teary eyed Rana. Jaisingh had just told him and he was heartbroken. He immediately told me I should join them for dinner the next day at his home. Of course, I accepted.

While he continued to do his job with a broken heart, Jaisingh and I set out into town. After roaming around town, no conversations, just a calming silence, we reached a sweet shop. Here, Jaisingh just had to walk up, and people were at his service. They brought out a bowl of delicious looking sugar-soaked dumplings. This was called Makhan Bada, sweet dumplings made out of maida, deep fried and then soaked in sugar syrup that make them just lovely and crispy on the outside and buttery soft on the inside. That is why the name. I swear they made me feel better. Trust me, if everyone thought like the people of Rajasthan and used food to fix their problems, we would have attained world peace by now! Anyway, feeling better, we went back because both of us had work to do.

The next day Rana and I headed to his place in the jeep. His house wasn't grand, but it definitely was warm and cosy. His family was welcoming and warm and this time, I actually managed to get a couple of smiles from Timri, without her seeking refuge in a tent! We talked. His wife also was pretty chatty this time round. Guess the comfort of your home, does make you loosen up. Anyway, we had a fun evening and a really delicious meal of Daal, chawal, kaat, which is rice, a simple daal cooked with turmeric and no other spice, and kaat, which is made with the starch water from the rice, tamarind water and some spices. It's a simple, hearty and delicious meal. After dinner, Rana dropped me back, and once again it broke my heart to think that I had to leave all these people and head back.

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Balushahi

## INGREDIENTS

3 cups	Maida
	All purpose flour
1/4 tsp	Salt
1/2 tsp	Baking Soda
1/4 cup	Ghee
As required	ice cold water
1/4 cup	Yoghurt
3 cups	Ghee for frying
2 cups	Sugar
1 cup	Water
1/2 tsp	Cardamom powder
A pinch	Saffron

*At any point if you think the sugar syrup has cooled completely, just warm it up on low heat, and proceed with coating the balushahi.*

## METHOD

Take a large bowl, and sieve the maida, baking soda and salt into it. This helps add a certain amount of lightness to the mix, so please don't skip this step, as it helps with the texture of the final Balushahi.

Next, make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients, and add the ghee. Using your fingertips, lightly start bringing in the flour from the sides of the well to the centre, while mixing the ghee nicely with the flour.

Once the ghee has mixed well, you will get a sand like texture. Now add the yogurt and once again, mix it well with the dough. Make sure the ghee and yogurt are evenly spread and mixed. Start with adding a little ice-cold water at a time and proceed to knead the dough.

Keep adding water and kneading till you get a soft pliable dough. The dough should not be dry or sticky. Cover the dough with a muslin cloth and let it rest for almost 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, divide the dough into 20 to 25, ping-pong ball sized portions. Make sure the dough balls are not very smooth. Just roughly shape them into balls. Press the centre of each dough ball with your thumb to create a depression in the centre. Set the ready dough balls aside, cover with a muslin cloth.





## **Frying the Balushahi**

Add ghee to a heavy bottomed and turn the heat to medium. The temperature of the ghee is very crucial. When bubbles start forming at the base of the pan, gently drop in one balushahi at a time into the ghee.

Only fry 2 to 3 balushahi at a time. Gently keep turning the balushahis from time to time and fry them at a low-medium heat, until golden brown.

Once golden, remove them from the heat, and let them rest and cool down on a large plate. Continue the process for the rest of the dough balls.

## **To make the sugar syrup**

You can start with getting the sugar syrup ready while the dough for the balushahi rests. In a deep-bottomed pan, add sugar, water, cardamom and saffron. Turn the flame on to medium and stir the mix once. On a medium heat, let the sugar melt and then let the syrup come to a boil.

Once the syrup boils, take a little bit of the syrup on a spoon, blow air to cool it, then dip the tip of your forefinger into the syrup. Now touch the forefinger to the thumb and then pull them apart. You should see a thin string begin to form. This means your sugar syrup is done.

In case you do not get the string consistency, boil the sugar syrup for a minute more, and then do the 1 string test again. Make sure the sugar syrup reaches the 1 string consistency before you turn off the heat.

## **To complete the balushahi**

While the sugar syrup is still warm, using a spoon dip each balushahi into the syrup, coating them evenly all over with the sugar syrup.

Set the coated balushahi down on a lightly greased plate, and let them dry for at least 2 to 3 hours. You will see a crust of sugar form on the balushahi.

To garnish use edible silver foil (Varak), and gently add a few bits of the foil to each Balushahi.

Scatter rose petals and slivered pistachios on the Balushahi and serve. The balushahi can be stored in an airtight container for at least 2 weeks.



## NOTES

Although the process to make balushahi is fairly simple, please bear in mind, each and every step is extremely crucial; i.e the kneading, resting, frying and the sugar syrup.

The kneading and resting is very important, as it will activate the gluten in the dough, and give it the flaky texture, and make this rather heavy sweet, easier to digest.

When frying, do keep in mind, the ghee should not be too hot or too cold. If the ghee is not at a temperature that is just right. For instance, if the ghee is too cold, the dough balls will soak up too much ghee which will make them hard and heavy. On the other hand, if the ghee is too hot, only the exterior will get cooked, leaving the interior raw.

To test if the ghee is at the right temperature, take a tiny amount of the ready dough and add to the ghee after it has been heating on a medium heat for about 3 to 4 minutes. The dough should immediately release slow bubbles and in another 3 minutes slowly rise to the top. This is an indication of the ghee being at the right temperature.

Do not crowd the pan, as that will drop the temperature of the ghee, and again you will end up with hard and heavy balushahi.

Please be patient with the frying process. If at anytime during the frying process, the ghee gets too hot, turn the flame off and let it cool for 2 to 3 minutes. Then turn the flame back on, set it to low, and proceed with frying rest of the balushahi.

When frying one set of dough balls, please cover the rest with a muslin cloth so that they don't dry out.

Knead the dough with ice cold water. However, make sure you don't over knead the dough. Or you will end up with soggy balushahis.

The sugar syrup has to be a one string consistency and warm. This consistency and temperature of the syrup is of prime importance; if it is too thin, it will not coat the balushahi, and if too thick or cold, it will leave an unsavoury layer of thick sugar syrup on it.

---

*The flavourful and textural delight, the Balushahi, has its origin in the royal kitchens of Rajasthan. Also known as the Indian doughnut, but quite different from its Western counterpart, Balushahi has a crispy exterior with a flaky, almost crumbly interior. Doused with a sinful sugar syrup and garnished with nuts and rose petals, Balushahi sure earns its well-deserved place as a festive favourite.*

RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Besan Ki Chakki

---

## INGREDIENTS

2 cups	Chickpea flour (besan)
1½ cups	Sugar
1 cup	Ghee (to knead the dough)
As needed	Water
1/4 cup	Cashew nuts (finely chopped)
1/4 cup	Almonds (finely chopped)
2 tbsp	Pistachios (finely chopped)
1 tsp	Green Cardamom powder

---

## METHOD

In a big mixing bowl, add the chickpea flour and 1/4th of the ghee.

Mix them as evenly as possible. Now, add water little by little to make a stiff dough. Break the dough into 1 inch pieces.

Lay one piece on the palm of your hands, and using your fingers make a tight fist around the piece of dough, so the dough binds tightly and well together (into an oblong shape), and does not crumble. Repeat the process with the rest of the dough pieces.

Take a shallow pan and add enough ghee to cover the base of the pan.

Turn the heat on, and let the ghee come up to the right temperature at a medium heat. Now, very gently, add the bound pieces of dough to the ghee. Only add 5 to 6 pieces in each batch. Shallow fry them until golden brown on all sides, making sure you keep turning the pieces, so that they brown evenly.

Take them out of the ghee, using a slotted spoon and lay them gently on a plate lined with absorbent paper, to drain the excess ghee. Repeat the process with the remaining pieces. Let the shallow fried pieces cool completely before you proceed further.

---





Once cooled completely, break the pieces roughly using a mortar and pestle. Add the broken pieces of the fried dough to a mixer jar, and grind until you get a grainy powder. Set aside.

Take a thick bottomed pan. Add the sugar and  $\frac{1}{2}$  a cup of water, along with the green cardamom powder. Set the pan on medium heat. Stir once and let the sugar dissolve. Once the sugar dissolves, let the mixture come to a boil.

Once the syrup boils, take a little bit of the syrup on a spoon, blow air to cool it, then dip the tip of your forefinger into the syrup. Now touch the forefinger to the thumb and then pull them apart. You should see a thin string begin to form. This means your sugar syrup is done. In case you do not get the string consistency, boil the sugar syrup for a minute more, and then do the string test again. Make sure the sugar syrup reaches the one string consistency before you turn off the heat.

Once the heat is off, add the powdered chickpea mixture and cashews to the hot sugar syrup. Using firm strokes, mix well.

Take a round plate (8inch diameter, with 4inch raised edges), or a square (6inch x 9inch) baking tray. Take 1tbsp ghee, and generously and evenly grease the tray/plate. Tip the hot barfi mix into the prepared setting utensil. Let the mixture cool at room temperature (about 35 to 40 minutes).

Once the mix has come to room temperature, using a sharp, non-serrated knife, cut the 1 x1.5inch squares of the barfi, while it is still setting on the plate. Once you make the cuts. Let the barfi rest for another hour before you remove it. To remove the barfi, heat the base of the baking tray evenly for just about 3 to 4 seconds.

Very gently, using a thin and flat steel spatula or palette knife, lift each piece of the barfi very gently, and arrange them on a plate.

Once completely cooled the besanchakki can be stored in an airtight container in a cool dry place for at least a month.



*This is one favourite on the sweet platter in Rajasthan, and marks its coveted place at every festival or special occasion. Made with chickpea flour, or besan, this gluten-free delight ranks very high on the taste scale and is very easy to make. Just a bite of this soft and delicately flavoured barfi is sure to leave you craving for more. A hot favourite during the festival of Holi, the Rajasthani gujia is a perfect accompaniment with a glass of thandai.*

---

## NOTES

The kneading of the chickpea flour dough is very crucial. It is imperative that the kneaded dough is stiff and feels hard and not pliable when touched. To ensure that, please be sure you add water little by little as frugally as possible.

In case you happen to add too much water, don't panic. Just keep adding chickpea flour till you get a stiff dough. However, do remember to increase the sugar syrup accordingly. So, in case you happen to add more flour, measure before you do so. That way you can adjust the ratio with the sugar syrup proportionately.

In case you want the chakki to get a stronger yellow colour, feel free to add a couple of drops of yellow food colouring. However, if you like a slightly warmer hue, add 4 to 5 strands of good quality saffron to the sugar syrup when making it.

## RAJASTHANI CUISINE

# Gujia

### INGREDIENTS

2 cups	Refined flour (maida)
1/4 cup	Ghee
1/2 cup	Wheat flour
1/3 cup	Chickpea flour
3/4 cup	Sugar (powdered)
2 cups	Sugar (for sugar syrup)
1/4 cup	Coconut (grated)
1/4 cup	Cashews (roughly chopped)
1/4 cup	Almond flakes
1 tsp	Cardamom powder
1/4 cup	Milk
25 to 30	Saffron threads
For deep frying	Oil

*Gujia is a popular sweet empanada that is stuffed usually using khoya and nuts. The Rajasthani version uses a churma filling, which makes this gujia easy to store longer than its khoya stuffed counterpart.*

### METHOD

Take 1/3 cup of wheat flour, add 1/3 cup of chickpea flour to it and mix both the ingredients well. Now add a tablespoon of ghee to it and mix well. Make a well in the centre and add 1/4 cup of milk little by little and knead a stiff dough.

After kneading the dough, roll and flatten. Roll the dough into a thick paratha using a rolling pin. Preheat a pan and spread some ghee on it.

Cook parantha on a low to medium flame until brown spots appear on it. Flip it. Spread some ghee evenly on the other side too and flip it. Cook it on the low flame until brown spots appear both sides.

Once the entire paratha has browned, take it off the pan and roughly break it into pieces, and let it cool. Once cooled, add the pieces to the grinder jar of your mixer, and using the pulse setting, coarsely grind the pieces.





In a heavy bottomed pan, add a tablespoon of ghee and bring it up to heat on a low flame.

Once the ghee is hot, add the ground mixture to the ghee, and using a spatula, roast the mixture until it turns a golden brown. Once roasted, take the mixture out into a big bowl and add the powdered sugar, and using a fork, thoroughly mix the sugar in with the mixture. Now add in the grated coconut, cashews, almond flakes, cardamom powder to it. Mix all the ingredients well. Your stuffing is now ready.

### **For the sugar syrup**

In a large heavy bottomed pan, add the sugar then add 1.5 cups of water and cook on a medium heat till the sugar dissolves. Stir it in intervals and cook it. Once sugar has dissolved in the water, add 25 to 30 saffron strands to it. Cook it for about 2 to 3 minutes and take it off the flame.

### **Bringing the Gujiya together**

Once the dough has rested for an hour, take the towel off and once again knead the dough for about 2 to 3 minutes. Divide the dough into ping pong ball sized portions. Then using a rolling pin, roll each ball into a flaround roti of diameter 3 to 3.5 inches. Repeat this for all the portions.

To the centre of each roti, add 2 to 2 ½ tbsp of the gujiya filling. Now dip your finger in some water and run it along the edges of the roti. Now take one end of the roti and bring it over the other to form a half moon, sealing the stuffing inside.

Using your fingers, seal the gujiya. You could use a fork, to create a pattern on the edges. Just make sure, the fork is coated with a light dusting of flour.

Repeat the process for the remaining rotis, and once the gujias are stuffed, cover them with a muslin cloth and let them rest for at least 30 minutes.

In a thick bottomed wok, add enough ghee to deep fry the gujias. The ghee should cover half the depth of the wok.



Heat the ghee. Once the ghee is hot, turn the flame down to a low medium and begin adding the stuffed gujias. Remember to add only 3 to 4 gujias at a time, so they get evenly cooked. Once the gujias turn a golden brown, using a slotted spoon, take out the gujias and let them rest on a absorbent paper towel. Repeat the frying process for the remaining gujias.

Once all the gujias are fried, warm the sugar syrup and soak the gujias in the sugar syrup for at least 15 minutes.

After 15 minutes, drain the excess sugar syrup and serve the gujias garnished with chopped nuts and rose petals.

---

## NOTES

While stuffing the gujias, it is very important to make sure the edges are firmly sealed.

Do remember not to overstuff or under stuff the gujias. Overstuffing, might end up tearing the roti when you try to seal the stuffing in. If you don't use enough stuffing, the gujias will be hollow and trust me, you don't want that.

It is very important to make sure the ghee is very hot before frying the gujias. To get the temperature right, just drop a small ball of the dough used for coating the gujia. If the dough ball rises to the surface within a few seconds, the ghee is hot enough.

Also remember to fry the gujias on a low flame. For the gujias to be completely cooked and flaky you need to fry them on a low flame, or the gujia will be overcooked outside, but remain raw inside.

The resting time for the dough is very essential to the texture of the gujia. The gluten in the dough needs to be rested to get a crisp and flaky gujia. So please don't compromise on that front.

The sugar syrup when drained can be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight jar and used at will to sweeten tea or coffee.







# RAJASTHAN DIARIES

## Chapter 9

The next few days passed in a whirl, with me moping, coping and working. My friend Jaisingh was always there, just when I needed him. I was going to dearly miss him and my team. Anyway, on my last day of work, Jaisingh came in, gave me a smile, and said he'd pick me up the next day, after which we would go to his house for lunch and then Rana would join and then they would drop me off in Jaipur. I said they didn't have to do that, but knowing those two, there was absolutely no point. So, I agreed. While I was packing up that evening, Jaisingh confirmed that Pratap could meet for breakfast the next morning. The next morning, we headed for breakfast with Pratap and the conversation revolved around my plans for the future. As we said goodbye, he thanked me for my work at workshop and I thanked him for his hospitality.

Jaisingh's house was as simple and tastefully done, as him. No loud colours, everything in symmetry and colour co-ordinated. Uday and Rani welcomed me with a tall glass of Masala Chaach. We sat around, drinking our chaach and chatting. Uday was the chatty one, he wanted to know all about life in a big city, what I studied, the cars, just about everything. We moved to the dining room for lunch. Jaisingh's soul was simple and on the lunch menu each dish was there for a reason. There was Gajar ke gajre ki sabzi, it's made with the leaves from carrots, or gajre, and is delicious, unique, made with very basic spices, and is super healthy. Next on the table, because, I like bitter gourd, was Karela besan ki sabzi, a basic sabzi, made with bitter gourd, gram flour, and basic spices. Next was a basic Gavar ki sabzi, that is cluster beans, very simply stir fried, again with basic spices. This along with khichadi and rotis. Rani mentioned, since I had to travel a long way, a simple plate of not so spicy, but delicious food would be light on my stomach, therefore, no emergency bathroom runs!

So, lunch done, our trio said our goodbyes. Rani handed me a box of homemade Besan Chakki which is a very delicious besan barfi and said this was for my parents. A small gift from Rajasthan. With a warm smile, and a pat on my cheek, she handed me another dubba with Ker Sangri, and Bajra roti, for the way, with a promise that when I came to Rajasthan next, I would bring her dubba back! I said goodbye to Uday, and as a parting gift, gave him my sunglasses he so loved. He was elated. And we hit the road. The ride to Jaipur, was nothing like the one from there when I came. It was quiet, very quiet. No pearls of wisdom, no tour guiding, just three people staring out of the window, lost in our thoughts.

We reached the Jaipur bus depot, I got my ticket and didn't know how to say goodbye to the two most incredible people I had ever met. Rana was all tears, and my dear Alfred, all fatherly. For the first time in my entire time there, he hugged me and said, "Every new beginning, comes from the beginning of some end.", with that and the rare wide smile, Jaisingh bid me goodbye. I promised to write to both of them, and they said they would write too. With that I got into the bus, and well, the bus was on its way to Delhi.

I kept looking and waving out of the window, till dust got into my eyes, and I literally couldn't see anymore! Anyway, my experience at Badu, made a better person. Made me realise I wasn't such a city boy after all. More importantly, I discovered that there are incredibly simple, sweet, kind and very, very talented people, who are the epitome of humility. This was my best experience at work ever. Anyway back in Delhi, I stayed in the rat race for a while and eventually quit my job. I really missed Jaisingh and Rana. Wrote to them a few times. They wrote back. I sent Rana a cool leather jacket, and in his next letter, he sent me a picture with him wearing it. He looked real cute. I sent Jaisingh a beret, and he wrote back saying he would wear it when he came to Delhi, and that Rani would definitely make sure he made a trip because she wanted her dubba back!

Well, it's been 20 years since that experience in Badu and it was definitely the job that I enjoyed doing the most. I do something completely different now, definitely not what I would like to do, or something that I should be doing. I still miss Jaisingh. We lost touch years ago. But I have a feeling, he'll always find me, if I ever need him. He had that in him. Or perhaps, one day I will find my way back to the desert and its beautiful people.

Subscribe to the  
[YouTube Channel](#) to watch my videos  
Rajasthani Cuisine - Regional Indian Cuisine





WATCH THE RECIPE  
VIDEO ON YOUTUBE

CLICK HERE



STHUBANTA  
MUKHERJEE



CONNECT WITH ME

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

INSTAGRAM

FACEBOOK

BLOG

EXPLORING REGIONAL INDIAN CUISINE



# The Culinary Gene

## CUISINES

INDIAN | INTERNATIONAL

## DRINK

SPIRITS | WINE | BEER | COFFEE | TEA | BEVERAGES

## HEALTH AND NUTRITION

MEDICAL ISSUES AND DIET | WEIGHT LOSS DIETS

## CHANGING LIFESTYLES

ORGANIC FOOD | THE NEW NORMAL

## RESOURCE

DICTIONARY OF FOOD | EBOOKS | VIDEOS | PODCASTS

## CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

TWITTER | FACEBOOK | INSTAGRAM | PINTEREST | YOUTUBE



The background of the entire page is a warm, close-up photograph of various Indian dishes. In the foreground, there's a large copper bowl filled with a colorful vegetable salad or stir-fry, featuring green beans, red bell peppers, and shredded carrots. To the left, another copper bowl contains a rich, dark brown curry with chunks of meat. In the bottom left corner, a small copper cup holds several cinnamon sticks. The background is softly blurred, showing more copper cookware and hints of other dishes, creating a sense of a traditional Indian kitchen or a restaurant setting. The lighting is warm and golden, enhancing the textures of the food and the metallic sheen of the copper.

WWW.THECULINARYGENE.COM

# DOWNLOAD EBOOKS

*Explore Indian  
Regional Cuisine*  
HOME CHEF SERIES





SUBSCRIBE TO RECEIVE UPDATES ON LATEST E-BOOKS, PODCASTS AND VIDEOS  
CONNECT ON SOCIAL MEDIA TO FOLLOW OUR CULINARY ADVENTURES