

VITRA SUMMIT

Culinary rituals for the home & the office

by Asma Khan

Baingan Bharta Purée d'aubergine

Serves 6

2 large aubergines (eggplants), approximately 1 kg/2 lb 4 oz

4 tbsp vegetable oil

150 g/5½ oz onions, diced

30 g/1 oz fresh ginger, peeled and minced

150 g/5½ oz fresh tomatoes, diced

4 green chillis

1 tsp chilli powder

1 tsp salt (adjust to taste)

Sprigs of mint for garnish

The aubergines can be prepared in of two ways, either roasted in the oven or charred directly over a gas burner.

If cooking in an oven, preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas mark 6. Place the aubergines in an oven tray and roast for 25–35 minutes or until the skin is charred all over and the flesh is cooked all the way through.

If cooking over a flame, use tongs to hold each aubergine directly over the burner of a gas hob (stove) until the skin is charred all over and the flesh is cooked all the way through. (While this method gives the aubergines a wonderful smokiness, it can also be messy and you will need to clean all surfaces afterwards. For easier cleaning, line your hob with foil to catch any drips, then discard the foil after cooking.)

Once the aubergine is cool enough to handle, remove the skin and mash the flesh into pulp. Do not discard any juices as they add to the flavour. In a small frying pan (skillet), heat the oil over a medium heat. Add the diced onions and minced ginger and cook until softened and starting to colour.

Increase the heat to high and add the tomatoes and whole green chillis to the pan. Cook for 5 minutes or until the tomato mixture is reduced.

Add the mashed aubergine to the pan along with the chilli powder and salt. Keeping the heat on high, reduce the mixture to a thick paste.

Before serving, taste to check the seasoning and adjust as necessary.

To serve, garnish with sprigs of mint.

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Rogni Roti

Serves 6

200 g wholemeal (whole wheat) or chapati flour

25 g pearl millet (Bajra – an indigenous coarse grain that can grow in dry soil)

½ tsp salt

1 small red onion, finely diced

1 green chilli finely chopped

8 tbsp whole milk

50 g melted ghee or butter, plus an extra 25 g for cooking

Place the flour, millet and salt in a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the centre and pour in the milk and melted ghee or butter. Add the chopped onions and green chillies. Mix all the ingredients together with your hands until they come together to form a moist dough. On a lightly floured work surface, knead the dough until firm. If the dough is too dry, add a splash of milk.

If you do not plan to cook the roti immediately, divide the dough into six equal parts and place it in a plastic container covered with a lid. Store in the refrigerator for up to two days.

When ready to cook the roti, roll each piece into a flat 13-cm/5-inch disc. Using a fork, prick each flattened roti all over.

Heat a tawa (flat iron griddle) or non-stick frying pan (skillet) over medium-high heat. Grease the pan with more melted ghee or butter, then cook the roti in batches on both sides. Using a wad of paper towels, press each roti down in the pan until brown.

The roti can be eaten either warm or cool. Once cooled, wrap the roti in aluminium foil and store at room temperature for several hours.