

# TASTES OF TOWER HAMLETS

RECIPES FROM AROUND THE WORLD



## Notes

Temperatures are for fan ovens.  
If using a non-fan oven, increase  
the temperature by 10°C.

Most of these recipes have been  
handed down through the generations  
and were cooked for us from  
memory, without measurements.  
The measurements in this book are,  
therefore, approximate. Feel free to  
adjust to your palate.

tsp = teaspoon

tbsp = tablespoon



## Acknowledgements

This project and recipe book would not have been possible without those who generously gave up their time to share their recipes and culinary talents. Thanks also to London Borough of Tower Hamlets who provided the funding for the project and East End Homes for providing the kitchen space for free.

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FRONT COVER: **PISTACHIO AND CUSTARD**

**MILLE FEUILLE MOROCCO**

BACK COVER: **POTATO PANCAKES UKRAINE**





**MAURITIAN CHICKEN CURRY WITH SAUTÉED SPINACH**  
**MAURITIUS**





AUSTRALIAN PAVLOVA  
AUSTRALIA

# FOREWORD

**Tower Hamlets is home to an enormously diverse population. The borough's residents represent cultures and traditions from all over the world, living side by side in East London.**

In 2025, the council commissioned SocietyLinks Tower Hamlets, a community-based charity based in Whitechapel, to bring residents from different cultural backgrounds together to share recipes that represent their culture and ethnicity.

For three months in a community kitchen near Swedenborg Gardens, pots and pans bubbled and sizzled with spices and ingredients from around the world. People walking past the building stopped and asked about the enticing aromas seeping out of the open windows. The cooks shared techniques and ingredients, and talked about the significance of the dish they were cooking. Many had been taught the dish in question by older generations. Some of the cooks had lived in Tower Hamlets for decades, others had arrived months before.

This collection of recipes celebrates the cultural diversity of Tower Hamlets. The book features a broad range of exciting recipes for main dishes, side dishes and desserts from 20 countries around the world. Many of the dishes can be adapted for different dietary requirements.

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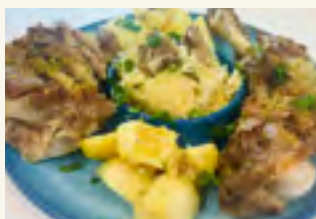
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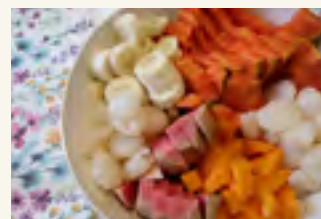
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# COUSCOUS WITH CHICKEN

This is a very common dish in Algeria and a meal like this would be cooked every Friday. Cooking couscous is a much more involved process in Algeria. People do not use the quick cook couscous eaten in this country (and used in this recipe), instead they steam it repeatedly in a process that takes 3-4 hours.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

2 courgettes, halved widthways and lengthways  
4 carrots, peeled, halved widthways and lengthways  
4 medium potatoes, peeled, quartered lengthways  
4 onions, roughly chopped  
7 garlic cloves, peeled  
4 small tomatoes, peeled and halved  
3 green chillies  
8 chicken legs  
1 lemon  
1 tbsp ras al hanout  
3 tbsp tomato paste  
2 tsp chilli powder  
2 tsp ground white pepper  
1 tin of chickpeas  
Salt  
Vegetable oil  
500g couscous  
1 tbsp butter  
Parsley to garnish

1. Put the onions, tomatoes and garlic cloves in a blender and blitz until puréed. Wash the chicken in a mixture of lemon juice, salt and water. Remove the skin and any stringy bits.
2. Cover the bottom of a large pan with vegetable oil and place over a medium heat. Once hot, arrange the chicken legs in a layer on the bottom. Cook until all the legs are browned on all sides.
3. Add the puréed onion mixture and the spices to the chicken, along with 2 tsp salt. Mix. Cook for five minutes over a medium heat.
4. Add the remaining vegetables and mix gently. Carefully pour 2 litres of boiling water into the pan, avoiding pouring it over the chicken. Cook covered for 30 minutes until the meat and vegetables are cooked through.
5. Add one whole green chilli to the sauce and continue cooking for 10-15 minutes with the lid half off so the sauce thickens.
6. Meanwhile prepare the couscous according to the packet instructions. When it is cooked, add a dollop of butter and fluff up with a fork.
7. Add the chickpeas to the chicken, stir and cook for a final 15 minutes uncovered. Check the seasoning. Put the couscous in a large platter or bowl and arrange the chicken and vegetables on top. Garnish with the remaining two chillies and some chopped parsley.



COOK: **FATIMA**

**ALGERIA**



# BUBBLY PANCAKES

## BEGHRIR

These pancakes behave a bit like crumpets. You only cook them on one side and bubbles form on the top surface. They're very easy to make and are a common dessert in Algeria.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **4-6** | **DESSERT**

150ml warm water  
1½ tbsp yeast  
1½ cups plain flour  
1 tbsp sugar  
1½ tbsp baking powder  
50g butter  
100g honey to serve

1. Pour the water into a large bowl and add the yeast. Whisk until the yeast is incorporated without lumps. Add all the dry ingredients and whisk together until smooth. It should have the consistency of single cream. If the batter is too thick, add a little more water. Blend with an electric stick blender until frothy. You can also do this with a hand whisk. Leave for 10 minutes.
2. Melt a small amount of butter in a frying pan. Once hot, add a ladle full of the batter to the pan and swirl so it covers the base. You can also make small pancakes by adding less batter. Cook the pancake for five minutes until the whole surface is covered with small bubbles and it is golden brown underneath.
3. Transfer to a plate and keep warm while you make the rest of the pancakes. Serve with melted butter and honey.



COOK: **FATIMA**

**ALGERIA**













# AUSTRALIAN PAVLOVA

Pavlova is a classic Australian dessert. Because of the process involved, it is rarely found in shops or restaurants and is nearly always home cooked. It is often cooked for family events and special occasions. Jenny's grandmother taught her how to make it. It's always very popular!

EFFORT LEVEL: **HARD** | SERVES: **12** | **DESSERT**

6 large eggs, whites (use fresh, not carton)

1½ tsp white vinegar

2 cups caster sugar

1½ tbsp vanilla extract

300g whipping cream

Fruit to decorate, e.g. strawberries, blueberries, kiwi, passionfruit and banana

1. Whisk the egg whites and vinegar in a large bowl, ideally with an electric whisk or stand mixer. When the egg whites are starting to stiffen (soft peaks), add the sugar a tablespoon at a time, continuing to whisk so that it dissolves fully. This process will take 20-30 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl every now and then. Test if the sugar has dissolved by rubbing a small amount of the mixture between your fingers. If it feels grainy, keep whisking. When it's ready the mixture should form stiff peaks. You should be able to turn it upside down and it will stay in the bowl! Add the vanilla extract and whisk in.
2. Preheat the oven to 115°C. Line a flat baking tray with greaseproof paper and transfer the mixture onto the tray. It should hold its shape as you spoon it out. Smooth it out on the top and sides so it is fairly round.
3. Bake for 75 minutes. When the cooking time has elapsed, open the oven door slightly and leave ajar for 30 minutes to cool gradually. After this you can remove from the oven and leave to cool fully overnight.
4. For the decoration, whip the cream until thick. Wash, dry and slice the fruit. Quarter the strawberries; peel and slice the kiwi. Carefully spread the whipped cream over the top of the pavlova, remembering that it is quite fragile. Leave a 1cm gap around the edge. Arrange the fruit in a circular pattern until all gaps are filled. When ready to serve, slice with a sharp knife.



COOK: **JENNY**

**AUSTRALIA**



# FISH BIRYANI

Fish biryani is common Bangladeshi dish. Traditionally cooked with *phanghash*, a Bangladeshi white fish, but cod or any firm, white fish works well. Sasi left Bangladeshi when she was 21 years old and has lived in east London ever since. She was taught how to cook this by her mother and mother-in-law in Bangladesh.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, FISH**

Vegetable oil

3-4 fillets of white fish in bite-sized chunks

3 large white onions, finely chopped

3 garlic cloves, finely sliced

1 tsp turmeric

¼ tsp chilli powder

½ tsp mild curry powder

¼ tsp garam masala

¼ tsp ground cumin

1 green chilli (optional), more to garnish

½ bunch of coriander, chopped

Basmati rice, 2 cups

1. In a medium bowl, toss the fish pieces in ½ tsp turmeric, chilli powder and 1 tbsp oil. Add 2 tbsp oil to a pan over a medium heat. Once hot, add the fish and fry until crispy and golden, about 10 minutes. You may need to do this in batches. Once cooked, put the fish on a plate lined with kitchen towel.
2. Heat 1-2 tbsp oil, add the onions and ½ tsp salt, sauté for a few minutes, then cover and continue cooking for 10-15 minutes until caramelised.
3. Meanwhile par-cook the rice. Rinse 3-4 times to remove the starch, cover with boiling water to 2cm above the level of the rice, bring to the boil and cook for 5-8 minutes until 70% cooked. Drain and cover.
4. Add the spices to the onions: the remaining ½ tsp turmeric, cumin, garam masala, mild curry powder and ¼ tsp salt. Mix well and fry for a further 10 minutes with the lid on, stirring occasionally.
5. Add the chopped chillies and coriander to the onions and cook for 5 more minutes.
6. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Prepare the dish for the oven. Fluff the par-cooked rice with a fork. Start by adding the rice in a layer in the bottom of the dish; then add the fish, ensuring all the rice is covered. Finally, spoon the onion mixture over the fish. Cover tightly with foil. Cook for 15 minutes until the rice is cooked through and the whole dish is piping hot. Sasi suggests serving this with a tomato and red onion salad dressed with lemon and salt.



COOK: **ASMA 'SOMOSA SASI' BEGUM**

**BANGLADESH**













# BANGLADESHI FISH FRY

This dish is cooked with Helicopter Catfish (*Boal Maas Biran*) which is native to Bangladesh. The dish is served to guests on special occasions. The fish is fried and served with a masala onion sauce.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-5** | **MAIN, FISH**

5-6 firm, white fish steaks

½ lemon, juiced

½ tsp turmeric

¼ tsp chilli powder,

¼ tsp ground cumin

2 tbsp mustard oil

For the masala onions:

1-2 tbsp mustard oil

2 large white onions, thinly sliced

2-3 garlic cloves, crushed

½ tsp salt

½ tsp turmeric

½ tsp chilli powder

3-4 whole green chillies

1-2 tbsp fresh coriander, roughly chopped

1. Add 1 cup of warm water, ½ tsp salt and the lemon juice to a large bowl. Place the fish steaks in the bowl, mix gently and leave to soak for 5 minutes. Rinse and drain the fish and pat dry with kitchen towel.
2. To make the marinade for the fish, mix the turmeric, chilli powder and cumin with 1 tbsp mustard oil. Pour over the fish and mix to ensure the fish is evenly coated. Heat a frying pan over a medium heat and pan fry the steaks for 5-6 minutes on each side until completely cooked through. Put to one side. Alternatively, you can use an air fryer and cook the fish steaks at 180°C for 15 mins turning halfway.
3. In another pan, heat 1-2 tbsp mustard oil. Add the onions, garlic and salt and cook until the onions have softened. Stir in the spices and cook for 8-10 minutes. Add a splash of water if needed. Add 3 whole green chillies and cook for 2-3 minutes.
4. Add the cooked fish steaks to the masala onions and very carefully turn them over to combine, ensuring the fish does not break. Cook for 6-7 minutes and garnish with fresh coriander.
5. Serve with hot fresh basmati rice and a wedge of lemon.



COOK: **RITA**

**BANGLADESH**



# LANCASHIRE HOT POT

This hot pot is designed to be affordable and filling. It would work well in a slow cooker. Some early recipes included kidneys and even oysters! Jim used bay leaves grown in Swedenborg Gardens Orchard next to the community kitchen where he was cooking.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

400g stewing lamb, cut into chunks  
150g unsalted butter  
2 carrots, peeled and sliced into rounds  
1 onion, roughly chopped  
400ml chicken stock  
12g plain flour  
2 bay leaves  
2 tsp Worcester sauce  
450g potatoes, peeled and sliced into 5mm rounds  
Salt and pepper

1. Melt half the butter in an overproof casserole dish or large saucepan. Add the lamb and sauté until brown. You may have to do this in batches. Remove the lamb to a plate and put aside.
2. Melt half the remaining butter and add the chopped onions and carrots. Sauté for 5 minutes until softened. Add the flour, Worcester sauce and chicken stock, stir to combine and bring to the boil.
3. Add the browned lamb and bay leaves to the vegetables. Stir and leave to simmer for 5-10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Preheat the oven to 140°C. If not already in an ovenproof casserole, transfer the lamb and vegetables to an overproof dish. Arrange the sliced potatoes in circles on top so the potato layer is two or three slices deep. Melt the remaining butter and drizzle on top.
5. Place the assembled dish in the oven and cook, covered, for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Remove the lid and increase the oven temperature to 200°C. Cook for a further 25 minutes until golden on top. Jim suggests serving this with pickled red cabbage.



COOK: **JIM**









# SALT FISH FRITTERS

Antoine learned to cook these fritters as a child. The recipe is from Guyana originally. These are always very popular with children: Antoine used to cook them at the Watford Youth Club Cooking Club!

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, FISH**

Vegetable oil

Bunch of spring onions, sliced finely

2 scotch bonnets, deseeded and finely chopped

4 peppers, ideally different colours  
(green, red, yellow, orange), finely diced

500g salt fish, skinless and boneless

1 egg

2½ cups of plain flour

1. Heat 1 tbsp of vegetable oil in a frying pan and add all the vegetables. Stir fry for 2-3 minutes until slightly softened. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. Put the fish in a saucepan with boiling water and simmer. When the water becomes frothy and cloudy (with salt), pour off and add new hot water. Repeat three times. Squeeze the fish to get rid of the water and tear into pieces.
3. Pour the flour into a large bowl. Add 1 cup of water and the egg. Whisk until you have a thick batter. Add the vegetables and fish and mix well.
4. Add 4 tbsp of vegetable oil to a frying pan over a high heat. Once hot, add spoonfuls of the fritter mixture and fry for 5-7 minutes until golden all over. Transfer to a plate lined with kitchen towel until all the fritters are ready.
5. Serve with sweet and sour sauce, ketchup or BBQ sauce. Antoine also recommends them on the side with Jerk chicken, rice and peas.



COOK: **ANTOINE**

**DOMINICA**









# HYDERABADI CHICKEN BIRYANI

Hyderabad in central India is famous for its chicken biryani. This dish is always served at gatherings of family and friends.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4** | **MAIN, MEAT**

For the chicken:

1 whole chicken, cut into large pieces,  
skin removed (bone in)  
4 garlic cloves, crushed  
1½ tbsp grated fresh ginger  
1½ lemons, juiced  
1 tbsp turmeric  
1 tbsp chilli powder  
1 tbsp garam masala  
10g fresh mint, finely chopped  
5g fresh coriander, finely chopped  
2 green chillies, finely chopped  
250ml sunflower oil  
500g onions, finely chopped  
125g Greek yogurt  
½ tbsp whole cardamon pods  
½ tbsp whole black peppercorns  
1 cinnamon stick  
1 bay leaf  
½ tbsp black cumin seeds

For the rice:

½ tbsp whole cardamon pods  
½ tbsp whole black peppercorns  
1 cinnamon stick  
1 bay leaf  
½ tbsp black cumin seeds  
½ whole mace (optional)  
¼ star anise  
3 cups basmati rice  
Bunch of fresh mint, leaves only, roughly chopped  
½ bunch of fresh coriander, roughly chopped  
Pinch of saffron  
2 tbsp milk

Raita:

½ onion, finely chopped  
½ cucumber, finely chopped  
1 green chilli, finely chopped  
1 small bunch of mint, finely chopped  
1 small bunch of coriander, finely chopped  
250g plain yogurt



COOK: **FATIMA**

**INDIA**



1. Wash the chicken pieces and pat dry. Rinse the rice until the water is clear and leave to soak in fresh water for 30 minutes.
2. Combine the garlic, ginger, lemon juice, turmeric, chilli powder, garam masala, green chillies and chopped herbs with 3-4 tbsp oil and massage into the chicken pieces.
3. Add 250ml sunflower oil to a large pan and add the onions. Fry for 30 minutes until brown and crispy. Drain the onions, reserving the oil. Once the oil is cooled, add 125ml of it to the chicken, along with the fried onions. Reserve a small amount of the onions to garnish at the end.
4. Add the Greek yoghurt, whole spices and bay leaf to the chicken, stir and leave to marinade for a minimum of three hours or overnight.
5. Put the whole spices and bay leaf and 2 litres of water to a large saucepan. Add the fresh mint. Bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes.
6. Transfer the chicken and marinade juice to a large pan. Cook for 10 minutes over a high heat, stirring once.
7. Drain the soaking rice and add to the spiced water. Simmer for 10-15 minutes until the rice is nearly cooked but still has a slight bite to it. Drain the rice and spoon in a layer on top of the chicken.
8. Drizzle the rest of the onion-flavoured oil over the top of the rice. Mix the saffron in 2 tbsp milk and drizzle on top. Sprinkle the remaining chopped herbs over the top. Cook for 5-6 minutes over a medium heat. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Cover the rice and chicken pan and put in the oven to cook for 12 minutes until the rice is cooked through.
9. To make the raita, combine all the ingredients in a bowl with ½ tsp salt.
10. To serve, reach under the top (saffron-coloured) layer of rice and spoon the white rice and chicken on to a large serving dish. Add spoonfuls of yellow saffron rice on top. Sprinkle with the reserved fried onions and some extra herbs if desired. Serve with homemade raita.



# STUFFED VEGETABLES

## DOLMA

This dish is cooked for special occasions in Iraq. Zhwan learnt how to cook this from her mother after she had got married and realised she didn't know how to cook!

EFFORT LEVEL: **HARD** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

600g Swiss chard, washed, stems cut off and put aside  
3 small tomatoes, 1 chopped finely  
2 small aubergines  
2 small courgettes  
2 green peppers  
2 onions  
8 cloves of garlic, finely chopped  
1 bunch of dill, roughly chopped  
1 bunch of parsley, roughly chopped  
2 spring onions, sliced finely  
500g lamb, chopped finely  
4 heaped tbsp tomato purée  
Vegetable oil  
½ tsp citric acid ("lemon salt")  
½ tsp of cumin  
1½ cups of short-grain rice, rinsed well  
1 green chill, roughly chopped  
Salt and pepper

1. Prepare the vegetables. Use a peeler to cut strips of skin off the aubergine lengthways (for decorative purposes only). Cut the courgette and aubergine in half and scoop out the middle, taking care not to damage the outer shell. You may want to use a knife to cut around the inside and then scrape with a spoon. Put the flesh to one side. To prepare the onion skins, top and tail them, then slice into the centre of the onion lengthways (only as far as the middle). Place them in a bowl of boiling water for 10 minutes to soften and separate the layers. Don't worry about separating each layer at this stage. Cut the top of the two whole tomatoes so they open like a lid. Scoop out the seedy flesh and put to one side.
2. Heat 100ml vegetable oil in a large frying pan on a medium heat. Then add the aubergine and courgette halves, the green pepper (whole) and the onion. You may need to do this in batches. Fry for five minutes, turning, to soften. Remove with a slotted spoon and put to one side.
3. Add the chopped lamb and courgette, aubergine and tomato flesh to the pan and fry for 15 minutes. Meanwhile rinse the rice thoroughly and leave to soak.
4. In a large bowl, mix the herbs and spring onions together. Add the cooked meat, chopped garlic, chopped tomato and the drained rice. Stir to combine thoroughly. Add 50ml oil, 2 tsp salt, ½ tsp citric acid ("lemon salt") and ½ tsp ground cumin. Mix well.



COOK: **ZHWAN**

**IRAQ**



5. To assemble the dish, you will need a large casserole pan or saucepan. If necessary, you could use two smaller ones. Line the bottom of the pan with the chard stems.
6. Take a chard leaf (prepared as per ingredients list), and place it flat on your hand bottom side (veins) up. Put 1 tbsp of the rice filling in the middle of the leaf. Fold the leaf over the filling (as if you are folding the leaf in half) and then roll up into a cigar shape. Trim the open ends so you have a neat cigar. Place this on top of the chard stems. Repeat until the bottom of the casserole is covered with 'chard cigars' and you can no longer see the stems.
7. Now you will stuff the other vegetables. Take the aubergine and courgette halves and fill them with 1½ tbsp of the rice filling. (Don't be tempted to fill more than half because the rice expands during cooking.) Take the two halves of the aubergine and nestle the open end of one half inside the other. Place on top of the chard cigars. Repeat with the courgette. Take the tomatoes and carefully lifting the 'lid', fill with 1 tbsp of the rice mixture. Close the lid and place next to the other stuffed vegetables in the pan. Separate the onion layers. Take one layer, place it on your hand and spoon 1 tbsp of rice onto the onion and roll the onion layer up. It will look like a shallot. Continue until you have stuffed all the onion layers. Place these in the pan next to the other vegetables. Finally, make an opening in the cooked green peppers. Scrape out the seeds and spoon in 1½ tbsp of rice or until it is half full. Place alongside the other vegetables. You will end up with a full layer of stuffed vegetables.
8. Now return to the chard leaves, stuff and roll as above and place them in a layer on top of the other vegetables. Keep going until you have used all the rice or the pan is full. If there is any liquid left in the rice mixture bowl, pour over the stuffed vegetables. Add one cup of water to the pan.
9. Cover the pan and place on the hob over a medium heat. Bring to the boil. Find a smaller lid which fits neatly inside the casserole (or you can use a plate). Press down on this to see if there is enough water in the pan. If the liquid does not come up over the sides of the inner lid, add a cup of boiling water. Keep going until the liquid appears over the side of the inner lid when pressed down. Leaving the inner lid on top of the vegetables, cover the pan and let it simmer/steam for 45 minutes until the rice is nearly cooked. After 20 minutes, check there is still enough liquid in the pan by pressing down on the inner lid. Take care because it will be very hot.
10. After 30 minutes of cooking, scatter the green chilli on top of the vegetables, if desired. Continue to cook for another 15 minutes. Open one of the vegetable 'parcels' to check if the rice is nearly cooked. If it is still hard, continue cooking for a further 10 minutes. When the rice is nearly cooked, remove the lids. Heat 50ml of vegetable or olive oil (or melt 50g of butter) and pour over the vegetables. Cook for a further 15 minutes uncovered until the rice is fully cooked.
11. Remove from the heat and leave to settle for 10 minutes. Traditionally, you then turn the contents out by placing a large plate over the top of the casserole and quickly flipping it upside down. Alternatively, you can spoon it out! Serve ensuring everyone gets a selection of different stuffed vegetables.









# IRISH SODA BREAD

This recipe has been in the family for generations. Eileen produced a black and white photo of her great grandmother with a freshly baked loaf outside the family cottage in Donegal. Traditionally soda bread would have been cooked on a pan lid over a fire.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **4-6** ONE LOAF | **SIDE DISH**

2 cups white self-raising flour  
1 tbsp wheat bran  
1 tsp salt  
½ tsp baking powder  
1 cup milk

1. Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl. Add milk and mix until combined. Transfer to a flat tray and sprinkle with flour. Shape into a round and flatten slightly.
2. Preheat the oven to 210°C. Cut a cross into the top of the loaf with a sharp knife. This is known as 'blessing the bread'.
3. Cook for 25 minutes, turning the loaf halfway through. Leave to cool before cutting.

To make a fruit loaf, add a handful of sultanas to the dry mixture, and 1 heaped tbsp of warm treacle to the milk before combining with the dry ingredients.



COOKS: **EILEEN, AMINA-ROSE, ROISIN** **IRELAND**





# JAMAICAN STEWED CHICKEN

This is Jamaican comfort food. It's quick to prepare and very popular in Jamaica and across the whole Caribbean. Nick was taught this dish by his mother and grandmother before he left Jamaica for the UK in 1965.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **4** | **MAIN, MEAT**

1.2kg chicken breast or boneless thighs, cut into chunks  
1 lemon, juiced  
1 tsp onion powder  
1 tsp garlic powder  
1 tsp smoked paprika  
1 tsp all-purpose seasoning  
1 tsp jerk seasoning  
5 whole pimento/all spice, crushed  
1 large onion, roughly chopped  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1 carrot, peeled and sliced into 5mm medallions  
1 potato, peeled and diced  
1 red pepper, diced  
1 scotch bonnet chilli, whole with top removed  
Olive or sunflower oil  
2 tbsp Jamaican/Caribbean curry powder  
2 bay leaves  
1 tin of coconut milk  
2.5cm piece of ginger, peeled and grated  
5 sprigs of thyme  
Salt and pepper

1. Wash the chicken pieces in a mixture of lemon juice and water. Drain and pat dry with kitchen towel. Prepare the vegetables as above.
2. Heat a large frying pan over a medium heat. Add 2 tsp oil. Once the oil is hot, add the chicken and fry until browned all over. Transfer the chicken to a bowl. Add the spices to the chicken and mix.
3. Add the onions to the frying pan and fry for 5 minutes to soften. Add the Jamaican curry powder and stir. Cook for 1 minute. Add 1½ tsp salt. Add the potatoes, peppers, carrots, garlic, ginger and scotch bonnet. Stir to mix.
4. Return the spiced chicken and any liquid in the bowl to the pan. Add the bay leaves, thyme and coconut milk. Stir to combine, cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Serve with jollof rice and fried plantain (see following recipe).



COOK: **NICK**

**JAMAICA**











# JOLLOF RICE AND FRIED PLANTAIN

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4** | **MAIN OR SIDE DISH, VEGETARIAN**

This is a very common side dish in Jamaica. It would also work well as a vegetarian main dish. The avocado and mango salad is optional, but a delicious addition.

2 spring onions, trimmed, left whole  
5 cherry tomatoes, halved  
5 pimento/all spice, whole  
80g tinned red kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
2½ tbsp jollof seasoning  
2 cups basmati rice  
400ml tin of coconut milk  
1 tbsp tomato ketchup  
1 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped, to garnish  
Vegetable oil  
A few sprigs of thyme  
2 small plantains, ripe (skin brown/black)  
1 avocado, peeled and diced (optional)  
1 mango, peeled, stone removed, diced (optional)  
½ lime, juiced (optional)

1. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a medium saucepan over a medium heat. Once hot, add the spring onions and pimento. Cook for two minutes.
2. Add the drained red kidney beans, 2 tbsp jollof seasoning, thyme and tomatoes. Stir to combine. Rinse and drain the rice, then add to the pan. Stir well and cook for two minutes.
3. Add the coconut milk and ketchup, and stir. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes over a low heat until the rice is cooked. Add more water if necessary. Once cooked, remove the lid and fluff up with a fork.
4. Meanwhile, cook the plantain. Remove the skin and halve widthways and then slice each half lengthways into 5mm thick slices.
5. Add 3 tbsp oil to a frying pan over a high heat. Fry the plantain slices in batches, five minutes each side until golden brown and crispy. Place the cooked plantain on kitchen towel while you cook the rest.
6. If you are making the side salad, mix the avocado, mango and lime juice in a small bowl. Serve alongside the jollof rice and fried plantain.



COOK: **NICK**

**JAMAICA**



# BAKED MACARONI

## IMQARRUN IL FORN

This is a very rustic Maltese recipe. Traditionally cooked with pork mince and pork belly, this recipe works well with beef mince, corned beef or vegetarian mince. Maltese cuisine is heavily influenced by Italy. Mario learnt to cook this recipe from watching his mother as a child. Some people add curry powder to the sauce.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **4** | **MAIN, MEAT**

2 small onions, roughly chopped  
Olive oil  
500g pork belly, cubed  
250g pork mince (or 750g of pork/beef/vegetarian mince)  
350g tomato passata  
1 heaped tbsp tomato purée  
500g pasta, rigatoni or similar  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
100g parmesan cheese  
Pepper and salt  
Frozen peas (optional)

1. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a large pan over a medium heat. Add the mince and sauté for 10-15 minutes until it is cooked fully, breaking up any lumps. Transfer to a plate. In the same pan, heat 1 tbsp oil and add the onions. Cook for 10 minutes to soften. Add the cooked pork and stir. Season with 2 tsp salt and a generous amount of black pepper.
2. Add the tomato passata and tomato purée. Stir to combine. Bring the sauce to the boil and allow to simmer for 20 minutes. Meanwhile cook the pasta according to the instructions on the packet and drain.
3. If the sauce becomes too thick, add 2-4 tbsp of pasta water to loosen. If you are using the peas, add them after 15 minutes of simmering and cook for a further five minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Combine the sauce with the pasta and add two beaten eggs and two-thirds of the parmesan cheese. Mix gently until all is combined. Transfer to a baking dish. Pour over the final egg, stirring it into the top layer of pasta. Sprinkle the remaining parmesan cheese on top and add a final grind of black pepper.
5. Cook on a high shelf in the oven until crunchy and golden on top, 30-40 minutes. Leave to rest for 10 minutes so it keeps its shape when dished up. Mario recommends eating it with chilli sauce on the side. A salad would also go well.

To make this dish vegetarian, use plant-based mince instead of meat.



COOK: **MARIO**

**MALTA**









# MAURITIAN CHICKEN CURRY WITH SAUTÉED SPINACH

This dish is a traditional Mauritian dish that is quick and easy to make. Lindsay was taught to cook this by his mother. Mauritian cuisine is a fusion of Creole, Asian and European influences. Mauritian curry powder is different from standard curry powder. Lindsay recommends 'Eagle Brand', which you can find online.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **5-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

1 medium-sized chicken, cut into "curry pieces",  
on the bone, skin removed  
1 onion, chopped  
1 inch piece of ginger  
3 cloves garlic  
2 tbsp Mauritian curry powder  
1 tbsp hot curry powder  
½ tin of chopped tomatoes  
1 cinnamon stick, crushed  
5 whole cloves  
Salt and pepper  
Vegetable oil  
2 tbsp fresh coriander, chopped  
2 cups basmati rice

For the spinach:

½ onion, chopped  
2 dried red chillies, sliced  
3 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed  
1 inch piece of ginger, grated  
2 bunches of spinach, big leaves not baby spinach,  
washed and chopped  
Handful of fresh coriander, chopped roughly  
½ tsp salt

1. Blitz the ginger and garlic into a paste in a blender, or you can crush the garlic and grate the ginger and mix.
2. Rub salt and pepper over the chicken pieces. Mix the curry powders with 2 tbsp of water in a bowl to make a paste.
3. Pour 2½ tbsp vegetable oil into a frying pan over a medium heat. Add the onion and cook for two minutes. Add the garlic and ginger mixture, then the curry powder paste. Stir and cook for five minutes.
4. Add the chicken pieces and cook for 15 minutes while stirring.
5. Add the tomatoes and ½ tsp salt. Stir and cook for 15 minutes. Add the crushed cinnamon stick and cloves and cook for 15 minutes more until the chicken is cooked through and the sauce thickened. Add 2 tbsp of fresh coriander.
6. Cook the rice as per the packet instructions.
7. Meanwhile, make the sautéed spinach. Heat 1 tbsp vegetable oil in a large saucepan over a high heat. Add the onion and cook for 5-10 minutes until golden. Add the chillies, garlic and ginger. Cook for a few minutes, then add the spinach and ½ tsp salt. Cover the pan and cook for 10 minutes until the spinach is wilted.
8. Serve the curry with the rice and a spoonful of spinach on the side.

For a meat-free version of this curry, Lindsay suggests adding potatoes, peas and squash instead of the chicken.



COOK: **LINDSAY**

**MAURITIUS**



# CHICKEN AND OLIVE TAGINE

Sara and Khadija met on a Moroccan Facebook group. Khadija is professional chef and helped Sara cook for the project. This is a very common dish in Morocco, where it is cooked in a tagine.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4** | **MAIN, MEAT**

1 whole chicken, cut into pieces, 2 baby chickens, or 8 chicken thighs, with skin and bone in  
3 onions, finely chopped  
50g butter  
75g pitted green olives, drained and sliced  
2 tbsp olive oil (or vegetable oil)  
½ preserved lemon, skin only, chopped finely  
1½ tsp harissa paste  
¾ tsp paprika  
Parsley to garnish

Marinade:

6 garlic cloves, peeled and grated  
½ preserved lemon, flesh only, pips removed  
½ tbsp turmeric  
1 tbsp ground ginger  
½ tsp ground cumin  
½ vegetable stock cube  
1 pinch of saffron soaked in 50ml of water  
1 pinch of ras al hanout (or *mrouzia* paste, a Moroccan spice mix, if you can find it)  
½ tsp ghee or butter  
½ tsp harissa paste  
½ tsp salt

1. Combine the marinade ingredients. Pierce holes in the skin of the chicken pieces and massage the marinade all over. If possible, leave for 24 hours.
2. Melt half the butter in a medium casserole dish and add 1 chopped onion and any dregs from the marinade mixture. Sauté for five minutes over a medium heat. Add 100ml of water.
3. Put the chicken on top of the cooked onion and cook covered, stirring occasionally, until the chicken is cooked through.
4. Add 2 tbsp olive oil to the pan and stir. Transfer the chicken to a baking tray with a slotted spoon, reserving the oniony liquid in the pan for the sauce. Combine 1 tbsp of butter, 1½ tsp harissa and ¾ tsp paprika in a small bowl and rub all over the chicken. Place under a medium grill to brown for 8-10 minutes, turning halfway through.
5. Meanwhile, finish the sauce. Add the finely chopped skin of half a preserved lemon, the remaining chopped onions and the sliced olives. Simmer the sauce for 20-30 minutes until thickened. Check the seasoning and adjust as necessary.
6. Pour the sauce into a serving dish and arrange the chicken on top. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve with flatbread.



COOKS: **SARA AND KHADIJA**

**MOROCCO**











# AUBERGINE AND TOMATO DIP

## ZAALOUK

The most important parts of this traditional Moroccan dish are good olive oil, cumin and lemon. This works well as a side dish for the chicken tagine, but also as a dip on its own with flatbread.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4** | **SIDE DISH/STARTER, VEGETARIAN**

3 aubergines  
1 red pepper, pointed ideally  
3 medium tomatoes  
7 garlic cloves, 2 grated  
1 tsp ground coriander  
1 tsp ground ginger  
1 tsp ground cumin  
½ tsp ground black pepper  
1 tsp paprika  
½ tbsp tomato purée  
Olive oil  
1 small bunch fresh parsley, finely chopped  
1 small bunch fresh coriander, finely chopped  
½ red chilli, chopped (optional)  
½ lemon, juiced  
Salt

1. Put the aubergines and pepper on a tray under a hot grill for 10 minutes, turning halfway through. Add the tomatoes and 5 whole cloves of garlic (in the skin), and grill for a further 10-15 minutes until the skins are blackened. Place all the vegetables in a bag to cool so that the skins loosen. When cool enough to handle, peel the vegetables and roughly chop the flesh. Put all the peeled vegetables in a medium bowl.
2. Add the 2 grated garlic cloves, 1 tsp ground coriander, 1 tsp ground ginger, ½ tsp ground cumin, ½ tsp ground black pepper, 1 tsp paprika and ½ tbsp of tomato purée to the vegetable flesh and mix.
3. Heat 1 tbsp olive oil in a pan over a medium heat. Add the vegetable mixture to the pan and fry, stirring, for 10 minutes. Add the chopped herbs, chilli (optional) and the lemon juice. Mix and cook for 15-20 minutes. Add 2 tsp of salt and season with more black pepper if desired. Add the other ½ tsp ground cumin, stir and taste to check the seasoning. Transfer to a shallow bowl or plate, smooth flat and drizzle with olive oil. Serve as a side dish with the chicken or as a dip with bread.



COOKS: **SARA AND KHADIJA**

**MOROCCO**





# PISTACHIO AND CUSTARD MILLE FEUILLE

## JAOUHARA

*Jaouhara*, literally translated as ‘pearl’, is a very old, traditional dessert in Morocco. It consists of layers of crispy pastry with custard flavoured with orange blossom water and pistachio nuts or almonds in between.

EFFORT LEVEL: **HARD** | SERVES: **6-8** | **DESSERT**

8 sheets of spring roll pastry  
850ml whole milk  
5 tbsp caster sugar  
3 tbsp cornflour  
1 tsp orange blossom water  
1 egg yolk  
1 tsp ground Arabic gum  
200g shelled pistachios or almonds  
Dried rose petals for decoration  
Vegetable oil

1. Cut the spring roll pastry sheets into circles. To do this, layer the sheets on a chopping board and place a 20cm plate on top. Cut around. You can make these bigger or smaller, as desired. Put to one side.
2. Put the milk, sugar, cornflour, orange blossom water, egg yolk and Arabic gum in a large bowl and whisk until well combined. Pour into a pan over a medium heat and bring to the boil, whisking continuously. Simmer for around 10 minutes until thick. Leave to cool, covered to prevent a skin forming.
3. Heat 2cm of vegetable oil in a deep frying pan. When the oil is hot (test with a scrap of pastry – it will sizzle when hot enough), fry the pastry sheets one or two at a time until golden and stiff. Leave to cool with pieces of kitchen towel in between the layers. Chop the pistachios finely or grind in a grinder or food processor. Give the cooled custard filling a final whisk to ensure it is smooth.
4. Now you are ready to assemble the jouhara on a flat serving dish or plate. Start with a sheet of crispy pastry on the bottom. Spoon 1-2 tbsp of the custard onto the pastry and gently spread it flat with a knife. Sprinkle with 1 tbsp of nuts. Place the next sheet of pastry on top and continue layering until the final sheet of pastry is in position. Spoon 1 tbsp of custard on top and sprinkle with 3 tbsp of nuts. Decorate with whole nuts and dried rose petals.



COOKS: **SARA AND KHADIJA**

**MOROCCO**













# PAKISTANI CHICKEN BIRYANI

Chicken biryani is a cornerstone of Pakistani cuisine, known for its bold, tangy flavours. Go to the India section to see how an Indian and Pakistani biryani vary!

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **8-10** | **MAIN, MEAT**

2 onions, blitzed in a processor or chopped very finely  
7-8 tbsp olive oil  
1 bulb of garlic, peeled and crushed  
1 inch piece of ginger, grated  
2 tomatoes, peeled and blitzed or grated  
1kg chicken breast, cut into chunks  
1 pack of 'Shan' *biryani masala* (Sumaira uses her own spice mixtures at home, but this is a good alternative)  
8-9 dried plums (*aloo bukhara*)  
2-3 tbsp whole mixed masala  
(available in most South Asian shops)  
500g Greek yoghurt

For the garnish:

3 onions, sliced thinly  
9-10 green chillies, sliced lengthways  
Pinch of saffron  
Yellow and red food colouring  
600-700g basmati rice (washed and soaked in water for 30 minutes)

For a vegetarian version, replace the chicken with vegetables. Vegans can omit the yoghurt.



COOK: **SUMAIRA**

1. In a large pan heat the oil over a medium heat and add the onions, ginger and garlic. Stir and cook for 7-8 minutes.
2. Add the biryani masala, the whole spice masala mixture and the tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes.
3. Add the chicken and cook over a high heat for 5 minutes while stirring, then reduce the heat to medium.
4. Add the dried plums and yoghurt and stir to combine. Continue cooking, covered, for 20 minutes. Add a splash of water if needed.
5. While the chicken is cooking, fry the onions in vegetable oil until brown and crispy. Put to one side on a plate lined with kitchen towel to drain.
6. Once the chicken is cooked, there should be some liquid left in the pan. If the mixture looks dry, add some water.
7. In another large pan, cover the rice with boiling water and cook until 70% cooked. Drain.
8. Transfer half the chicken mixture into a bowl. Spoon half the rice on top of the remaining chicken, then replace the chicken from the bowl on top of the rice layer. Finish with the remaining rice.
9. Scatter drops of the food colouring over the rice and a generous pinch of saffron, the green chillies and fried onions. Cover with foil and cook over a low heat for a further 10-15 mins or until the rice has completely cooked through.
10. When serving mix the rice and chicken so there is an even distribution of chicken throughout. Serve with raita or salad.

**PAKISTAN**



# BEEF STIR FRY

## LOMO SALTADO

This is a very common dish in Peru. Rosa adds ginger to give the dish her personal touch.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **2-3** | **MAIN, MEAT**

500g beef or lamb, boned, trimmed and cut into chunks (750g with bones in)  
2 red onions, sliced  
4 small tomatoes, quartered, seeds removed, roughly chopped  
½ red pepper, sliced  
½ green pepper, sliced  
½ yellow pepper, sliced  
2 hot red chillies, sliced  
1 green chilli, sliced  
Handful of coriander, finely chopped  
Bunch of spring onions, green part only, sliced  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1cm piece of ginger, grated  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
Freshly ground black pepper and salt  
3 tbsp red wine vinegar  
2 tbsp dark soy sauce  
3 tbsp oyster sauce  
Basmati rice  
3-4 potatoes, cut into strips (optional)  
Vegetable oil

1. Mix the beef or lamb pieces with 1 tsp vegetable oil, 1 tsp black pepper, 1 tsp ground cumin and the crushed garlic. Leave to marinade while you prepare the vegetables.
2. Rinse the rice thoroughly and cook according to the packet instructions. If making the fried potatoes, heat 3 tbsp oil until very hot (test with one piece of potato to check it is hot enough). Fry the potato strips in batches for 10 minutes until golden. Put to one side on a piece of kitchen towel and keep warm.
3. Add 1 tbsp oil to a frying pan or wok and heat over a high heat. Once hot, fry the lamb or beef until cooked through and browned.
4. Add the sliced onion, peppers and chillies to the pan. Add the red wine vinegar and stir. Cook for two minutes. Add the tomatoes, 1 tsp salt, dark soy sauce and oyster sauce, stir and cook for one minute. Add the ginger, spring onions and coriander. Stir fry for five minutes. Serve the stir-fried meat and vegetables with steamed rice and potatoes on the side. Garnish with coriander.

For a vegetarian option, replace the meat with tofu and cook as above, or simply increase the quantity of vegetables.



COOK: **ROSA**

**PERU**











# LAMB SHOULDER WITH RICE

## BARIIS ISKUKARIS

This is very traditional Somali dish, passed down through the generations, one woman to another. Somali families make their own olive oil.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

Lamb shoulder on the bone (approx 1.5kg)  
2 onions, chopped  
3 potatoes, peeled and quartered  
1 garlic bulb, peeled and diced  
1 inch of ginger, bashed and left whole  
1 green chilli  
Bunch of coriander, chopped  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp chicken stock powder or 1 cube  
1 tsp rice seasoning or other mixed seasoning (optional)  
Olive oil  
2 cups of rice

1. Rinse and soak the rice. Cut the meat into big chunks off the bone, leaving the last piece on the bone. Put the meat in a large saucepan filled with boiling water and add the piece of ginger. Simmer for 30 minutes, covered.
2. Remove the meat from the pan with a slotted spoon and put on a baking tray. Reserve the meat cooking liquid and two small pieces of lamb. Put ½ tsp chicken stock powder, 2 tbsp olive oil, two-thirds of the garlic and most of the coriander in a small bowl and mix to make a paste. Rub the paste over the lamb on the baking tray. Add the potatoes and one chopped onion. Cover with foil and cook in the oven for 30 minutes at 200°C.
3. Chop the reserved lamb into small pieces. In a medium saucepan, heat 1 tbsp olive oil and add the remaining pieces of lamb, the remaining onion and the rest of the garlic, crushed. Fry until golden for 5-8 minutes. Add the drained rice, the rice seasoning (if using), the rest of the chicken stock powder and 1 whole green chilli. Mix and stir fry for a couple of minutes. Add one cup of the meat cooking water and one cup of boiling water. Stir and cover. Cook over a low heat until all the water has been absorbed. Leave, covered, to steam. Before serving, fluff up the rice and season with salt.
4. Remove the lamb from the oven. Serve the lamb with the rice on the side, garnished with coriander.



COOK: **LIBAN**

**SOMALIA**



# BOBOTIE WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND YELLOW RICE

*Bobotie* is a Cape Malay dish, a fusion of Malay, Indonesian and African influences. Shaheed's mother used to cook this dish on Sundays. Shaheed learnt to cook during lockdown through an online cooking course.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

1kg beef mince or vegetarian mince  
1 onion, finely chopped  
3 garlic cloves, finely grated  
3 tbsp vegetable oil  
2 tsp turmeric  
2 tbsp masala powder  
2 tsp medium curry powder  
2 tsp white mustard seeds  
2 tsp cumin seeds  
2 tbsp apricot chutney or Mrs Balls Original Chutney  
Salt and pepper  
4 bay leaves  
4 slices of stale white bread, soaked in a little milk and squeezed dry  
3 tbsp butter  
½ cup milk  
3 eggs  
1 butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1cm round discs  
1 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp ground cinnamon

For the rice:

1 cup long grain rice, rinsed thoroughly  
1-2 cardamom pods  
2 cinnamon sticks  
1 tsp turmeric  
2 tsp brown sugar  
4 tbsp raisins  
50g unsalted butter

1. In a large pan, heat the oil and add the onions, 1 tsp salt and one bay leaf and sauté over a medium heat until the onions are golden brown. Add the mince and garlic and cook for a few minutes. Add the spices and chutney, and stir. Add a cup of hot water and simmer the mince for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.
2. Add the bread and butter and stir into the mince until combined. Check the seasoning. Transfer to an ovenproof dish.
3. Whisk the eggs with the milk and a pinch of turmeric and salt. Pour over the mince mixture and place the remaining bay leaves on top. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
4. Place the butternut squash slices onto a baking tray, drizzle with 1 tbsp olive oil. Season with salt and pepper and a sprinkle of cinnamon.
5. Put the bobotie and butternut squash in the oven. Bake for 25 minutes.
6. Meanwhile, prepare the Cape Malay 'yellow rice'. Put the drained rice in a medium saucepan and add 2 cups of boiling water, the cardamom pods, cinnamon sticks, turmeric, brown sugar and raisins. Mix, then add the butter. Cook, uncovered, until all the water has evaporated (10 minutes). Remove from the heat and leave to steam, covered, for 10 minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork and serve alongside the bobotie and butternut squash.



COOK: **SHAHEED**

**SOUTH AFRICA**











# SRI LANKAN FRUIT SALAD

Sri Lanka is home to an extraordinary abundance of exotic fruits. This colourful fruit salad is a simple, delicious way to round off a meal. If you cannot find rambutan, lychee are similar.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **6** | **DESSERT**

Handful of fresh rambutan, peeled and stoned, or tinned (keep the juice)

1 papaya, peeled, seeds removed and sliced

1 mango, peeled, stone removed and sliced

1 guava, peeled and sliced

1 banana, peeled and sliced into coins

Juice of 1 lime

1. Slice the fruit and arrange in a large bowl or on a platter. Squeeze lime all over and drizzle with the juice from the tin of rambutan if using. Serve with yoghurt, cream or ice cream, as desired.



COOK: **ASSALAMU**

**SRI LANKA**



# FALAFEL WITH AUBERGINE SALAD

## TAMIYA, SALATAT ASWAD

All the elements of this meal work really well on their own as well. *Salatat Aswad* is like a chunky dip with peanut butter and lime and is the most common way to eat aubergine in Sudan. Falafels are ubiquitous throughout the Middle East, but this is how the Sudanese make them.

EFFORT LEVEL: **HARD** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, VEGETARIAN**

3 cups of dried chickpeas (soaked in water for 24 hours)  
3 cloves garlic, peeled and chopped  
1 red onion, peeled and roughly chopped  
30g fresh dill, roughly chopped  
30g fresh coriander, roughly chopped  
30g fresh parsley, roughly chopped, extra as garnish  
1 tbsp ground cumin  
1 tbsp ground coriander  
2 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
2 tsp baking powder  
2 aubergines  
1 green pepper, cubed  
1 red pepper, cubed  
Vegetable oil

For the peanut sauce:

1 tbsp tomato purée  
1.5 tsp salt  
2 cloves of garlic, crushed  
1/2 lime, juice  
1 tsp ground cumin  
1 tsp ground coriander  
2 tbsp plain yoghurt  
2 tbsp smooth peanut butter

For the tahini sauce (optional):

3 tbsp tahini  
3 tbsp water  
3 tbsp plain yoghurt  
1/2 lime, juice  
1 clove of garlic, crushed  
1 tsp salt  
Pinch of black pepper

1. To make the falafels, roughly blitz the chickpeas, red onion and 3 garlic cloves in a food processor. Add the dill, coriander and parsley and 1-2 tbsp of water to loosen. Blitz until all the ingredients are finely chopped and well combined, but stop before it becomes a purée. Transfer to a bowl and add 2 tsp salt, ground cumin, bicarbonate of soda, baking powder and ground coriander. Mix well.
2. Take a heaped tablespoon of the mixture and shape into a flattened ball. Continue until the mixture is finished. Heat 5cm vegetable oil in a deep pan. Lower the falafels into the oil in batches and fry until golden. Remove and continue until all are cooked.
3. Prepare the aubergine by peeling the skin off in strips to achieve a striped effect. Halve lengthways and again into quarters and chop into 2cm chunks. Place the pieces into water for 5-10 minutes to remove any discolouration. Drain thoroughly. When the falafels are cooked, use the same pan and oil, deep fry the aubergine chunks until golden. Transfer with a slotted spoon to a plate lined with kitchen paper. Add the chopped pepper and fry for 5 minutes. Remove and put to one side.
4. To make the peanut sauce, cook the ingredients over a gentle heat while stirring for 5-7 minutes. Add the vegetables. Cook for a further two minutes then transfer to a bowl.
5. For the tahini sauce combine the ingredients and whisk until smooth. Add more water if too thick. The consistency should be like single cream.
6. Serve the falafel with the *salata Aswad*, tahini sauce and flatbread on the side.



COOKS: **KHADIJA AND MARIAM**

**SUDAN**







# STUFFED AUBERGINE WITH RICE AND CACIK

Aubergine with mince is very common in Turkey. Traditionally the aubergines are stuffed with the mince, but this is Ulku's slightly alternative version.

EFFORT LEVEL: **MEDIUM** | SERVES: **4-6** | **MAIN, MEAT**

4 tbsp olive oil  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
2 onions  
500g beef mince  
2 green peppers, diced  
4 medium tomatoes, roughly chopped  
Salt and pepper  
3 aubergines  
1 tbsp tomato purée  
500ml sunflower oil

For the rice:  
500g Tosya rice (short-grain)  
1 medium tomato, grated  
3-4 tbsp butter  
1½ tsp salt

For the *cacik*:  
2 cucumbers (or 4 small), peeled and diced  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
½ tsp salt  
5 heaped tbsp Greek yoghurt

1. To make the filling, heat 4 tbsp olive oil in a frying pan and add the onions. Cook until the onions have softened, then add the garlic and cook for two minutes. Add the beef mince, stir and cook until the mince has browned.
2. Add one green pepper, 3 chopped tomatoes, 1½ tsp salt and ½ tsp black pepper. Cook for 15 minutes over a medium high, stirring occasionally. Transfer the mixture to a bowl. Pre-heat the oven to 180°C.
3. Prepare the aubergines. Cut the tops off and slice the aubergines into 1cm round disks. Place in cold water with 1 tsp salt and soak for 15 minutes. Drain the aubergine slices and pat dry using kitchen towel.
4. In the same frying pan, fry the aubergine slices in 500ml sunflower oil until the slices turn slightly golden. You will need to do this in batches. Transfer the cooked slices to a plate lined with kitchen towel to drain the excess oil.
5. Chop the remaining green pepper into small cubes and slice the tomato. Set aside.
6. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper and arrange the aubergine slices on top. Using the back of a teaspoon make a small indentation in each slice of aubergine and fill it with 1 tbsp of the mince mixture. Top with a cube of pepper and slice of tomato.
7. Make a sauce by combining 1 tbsp tomato purée with two cups of boiling water. Pour this over the aubergine and mince slices and bake in the oven for 20-25mins.



COOK: **ULKU**

**TURKEY**











8. To make Turkish rice, soak the rice in 2 tsp salted lukewarm water for 30 mins. Wash thoroughly and drain. Grate 1 tomato and add to a large saucepan. Add 1 heaped tbsp butter and fry for 6-7 minutes. Add 1½ cups of boiling water, 1½ tsp salt and the drained Tosya rice. Cook uncovered until all the water has been absorbed. Turn the heat down for 7-8 minutes and remove from the heat.
9. In a small pan, add 2 tbsp butter. Cook over a low heat until the butter is brown and fragrant, ensuring that it does not burn. Pour over the cooked rice, cover and let it rest for 6 minutes. Fluff the rice with a fork before serving.
10. To make the *cacik*, mix the cucumbers, garlic, salt and yogurt, adding a splash of water to make a smooth mixture. Serve alongside the aubergine and rice.

**For a vegetarian option, replace the beef mince with plant-based mince or simply increase the quantity of vegetables.**



# POTATO PANCAKES

## DERUNY

*Deruny* are a beloved dish in Ukraine. Often shared at family tables, they are served simply, with a spoonful of sour cream and fresh dill.

EFFORT LEVEL: **EASY** | SERVES: **4** | **BREAKFAST/MAIN, VEGETARIAN**

6 medium, starchy potatoes, e.g. Maris Piper  
1 small onion  
1 egg  
2 tbsp plain flour  
1 garlic clove, crushed (optional)  
Salt and pepper  
3-4 tbsp sunflower oil  
Sour cream  
Fresh dill, finely chopped

1. Peel and finely grate the potatoes. Work quickly to prevent browning. Grate the onion and mix into the potatoes.
2. Place the mixture in a fine sieve over a bowl. Press down with a spoon to squeeze out the liquid. Let the mixture sit for a minute, then pour off the water.
3. Add the egg, flour,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt, pinch of pepper and the garlic, if using. Mix well to combine.
4. Heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat. Drop spoonfuls of the mixture into the pan and flatten gently. Fry the pancakes for 3-4 minutes on each side until golden and crispy.
5. Transfer to a plate lined with kitchen towel to drain off the oil while you cook the rest. Cover to keep them warm. Serve hot with sour cream and fresh dill.



COOK: **ANNA**

**UKRAINE**







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**STUFFED VEGETABLES DOLMA**  
**IRAQ**





SocietyLinks Tower Hamlets aims to create opportunities and activities to address the needs of residents and bring about radical lifestyle and social changes through the delivery of practical projects. We aim to change the lives of less fortunate residents and those who are at a disadvantage in Tower Hamlets so that they can take advantage of the ample opportunities around them and create a better future for themselves and their families.

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