



TASTE & TRAILS

Kosha Aloo Dum



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Kosha Aloo Dum: A Culinary Journey of Tradition and Flavor

Prishika, a lively and curious food anchor, embarked on a new culinary adventure for her show, one that promised a deep dive into the heart of traditional Bengali cuisine. Her journey brought her to the quaint home of Aarti Didi, a Kolkata native known for her exceptional cooking skills. Today, Aarti Didi was going to share with Prishika her family's treasured recipe for Kosha Aloo Dum, a dish steeped in tradition and memories.

Aarti Didi's Connection to the Recipe

With a warm smile, Aarti Didi welcomed Prishika into her cozy kitchen. As they settled in, Aarti Didi began sharing the story behind her favorite recipe. She grew up in the bustling city of Kolkata, where her family would gather at her maternal grandmother's house, especially during Durga Puja. Her grandmother, an extraordinary cook, would prepare Kosha Aloo Dum, a dish that brought joy to the entire family. The rich aroma of spices and the taste of the dish have remained with Aarti Didi ever since, making it her all-time favorite.

Ingredients

Aarti Didi gathered the ingredients needed for the recipe:

- 600 grams of potatoes
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- Curry leaves
- A paste of ginger, garlic, and green chilies
- 2 large tomatoes, pureed
- 100 grams of coriander leaves for garnishing
- 250 ml of water
- Ganesh Marka Mustard Oil (Aarti Didi's preferred choice for its health benefits)
- Cumin seeds (jeera)
- Asafoetida (hing)

- Red chili powder
- Coriander powder
- Pink salt (Himalayan salt, as preferred by Aarti Didi)

Preparing the Potatoes

Aarti Didi's first step was to prepare the potatoes. She boiled 250 ml of water and added the peeled baby potatoes. "We need to cook these potatoes just right," she explained to Prishika, "so they hold their shape but are tender enough to absorb all the flavors." After bringing the water to a boil, she added the potatoes to the cooker and let it whistle twice. Once done, she cut the boiled potatoes into medium-sized pieces, not too small and not too big.

Sautéing the Onions and Curry Leaves

With the potatoes ready, it was time to sauté the onions and curry leaves. Aarti Didi heated a pan and added Ganesh Marka Mustard Oil. "This oil has been a staple in my kitchen since childhood," she said, "it's light and healthy, perfect for our Kosha Aloo Dum." She added the chopped onions and curry leaves to the hot oil and let them brown. The kitchen was soon filled with the delightful aroma of caramelized onions and curry leaves.

Browning the Potatoes

Once the onions were nicely browned, Aarti Didi added the potato pieces to the pan. She sautéed them until they turned a light brown. "This step is crucial," she emphasized, "it gives the potatoes a lovely texture and enhances their flavor." Once done, she transferred the potatoes and onions to a separate bowl.

Preparing the Masala

Aarti Didi then heated another pan and added more Ganesh Marka Mustard Oil. She tossed in cumin seeds and a pinch of asafoetida, which sizzled and released a fragrant aroma. Next, she added the ginger-garlic-green chili paste, red chili powder, and coriander powder. She mixed everything well and let it cook for a few minutes. "The key is to cook the spices just right," she told Prishika, "this is where the magic happens."

Adding Tomato Puree and Spices

The next step was to add the tomato puree. "These tomatoes add a rich, tangy flavor to our dish," Aarti Didi explained. She stirred the mixture, ensuring the spices and tomato puree blended well. "Don't forget the salt," she added, "I prefer using pink salt; it has a unique flavor and is healthier."

Bringing It All Together

After the tomato puree had cooked down, Aarti Didi added some water to the pan. She let the mixture simmer for a few minutes before adding the sautéed potatoes and onions back into the pan. She stirred everything together, making sure the potatoes were well-coated with the masala. "Now we let it cook on low heat," she said, "this slow cooking allows the potatoes to absorb all the wonderful flavors."

Final Touches

After simmering for about five minutes, the Kosha Aloo Dum was ready. The potatoes were tender and infused with a rich, spicy gravy. Aarti Didi garnished the dish with fresh coriander leaves, adding a burst of color and freshness. She served it with steaming hot rice, a perfect accompaniment to the flavorful Kosha Aloo Dum.

Making Puris

No Bengali meal is complete without puris. Aarti Didi moved on to preparing these. She mixed one cup of whole wheat flour with one cup of refined flour. To this, she added some ajwain (carom seeds) and crushed black ajwain. "Ajwain enhances the taste and helps with digestion," she noted. She then mixed in some Ganesh Marka Mustard Oil, explaining that it ensures the puris are crisp and light. Adding water gradually, she kneaded the mixture into a tight dough. "The dough needs to be just right—not too soft, not too hard," she advised.

Frying the Puris

With the dough ready, Aarti Didi rolled it into small, flat discs. She heated a generous amount of Ganesh Marka Mustard Oil in a deep-frying pan. "Deep frying gives the puris their characteristic puffiness," she said. Once the oil was hot, she gently slid the puris in, one by one. They puffed up beautifully, turning a lovely golden brown. "Mustard oil is traditionally used in Kolkata, but for a healthier option, I prefer Ganesh Marka Mustard Oil," she added.

The Final Feast

With the Kosha Aloo Dum and puris ready, Aarti Didi laid out the meal. The aromatic Kosha Aloo Dum, with its rich, spicy gravy, complemented the crisp, golden puris perfectly. Prishika took a bite, and her face lit up with delight. The flavors were a harmonious blend of spices, each bite telling a story of tradition and love. This delightful meal can be served to 4-5 people.

Conclusion

Prishika thanked Aarti Didi for sharing not just a recipe, but a piece of her heritage. The Kosha Aloo Dum, with its layers of flavors and rich history, was more than just a dish; it was a celebration of family, tradition, and the love that goes into cooking. This experience reminded Prishika why she loved her job—each recipe was a gateway to a new world, filled with stories and flavors waiting to be discovered.