



Bhel Puri

With curried roots and apple bhaji

Bhel Puri is a popular street snack found throughout India. It is based around puffed rice mixed with seasonal vegetables and cooked pulses dressed with a tangy sauce. Improve with the ingredients and adjust the spices and chilli to your palate. The apple in a bhaji is not traditional, but it is delicious. The combination of sweet and tart apples with the root vegetables, the puffed grain, veggies and pungent spices makes for a delicious dish. Prep the parts in advance, but assemble just before serving or it goes soggy!

For the bhaji:

- 500g of mixed root vegetables - washed, cubed and steamed until tender
- 2 tart cooking apples, peeled, cored and cubed
- 1 onion, sliced very fine
- 1 tsp green chillies, minced
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp ginger, minced
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 2 tbsp sunflower oil or gee
- 6 curry leaves

1. Heat oil or gee in a large pan over a medium heat. Add mustard seeds, when they start to pop, add the cumin seeds, curry leaves, green chillies, ginger and onions and sauté till the onions just start to turn brown.
2. Add the cooked roots, diced apples and turmeric and mix vigorously.
3. Add 2 tbsp of water then cover and cook on low heat for a few minutes and add salt to taste.

For the Bhel Puri

- 2 cups puffed rice, wheat or spelt
- 1 red onion, very finely chopped
- 1 large tomato, finely chopped
- ½ cucumber, diced
- Juice of one lime
- 250 ml natural yoghurt
- 2 tsp homemade masala or a shop bought chaat masala powder
- 2 green chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- 4 tbsp fresh coriander, chopped
- Salt to taste

1. For home made masala powder, dry roast 3 tsp cumin seeds, 1 tsp coriander seeds and 2 dried red chillies. Cool and grind together with a tsp of salt to a fine powder.
2. To make up Bhel Puri, just before serving, toss the puffed rice with the chopped vegetables, chillies and masala powder. Dress this with lime juice, mix well and top with a spoon of apple bhaji, some yoghurt and chopped coriander





Red Bean Chilli

This dish is quick to make, versatile and lends itself to bulking up and countless variations. Beans are inexpensive and nutritious. They are a good source of carbohydrates, vitamins B and fibre, and when eaten with bread or rice provide a source of vegetable protein. This will make enough chilli for 4 hungry people.

2 tins of red kidney, pinto or borlotti beans (drained and washed)
1 onion (chopped)
2 tomatoes (chopped) or ½ tin of plum tomatoes
1 sweet pepper (chopped)
1 clove of garlic
1 tbsp tomato puree
1 mild red chilli or 1 tsp chilli powder (optional)
Salt, sugar and pepper
Olive or sunflower oil

1. Heat 2 tbsp of oil in a saucepan and fry the chopped onions until browned.
2. Add the chopped garlic, green pepper and chilli and cook for a minute before adding the chopped tomatoes, tomato puree and the beans.
3. Cook on a medium heat for 5 minutes until the sauce starts to thicken. Season with a pinch of sugar, salt and extra chilli to taste.

Variations:

- **Meaty Chilli:** add 200g of lean beef or turkey mince to the onions and brown lightly before adding the vegetables and beans. You will need to cook this for a little longer to make sure the meat is thoroughly cooked.
- **Fajitas:** spread a large spoon of beans onto the bottom third of a tortilla bread, sprinkle over some tasty toppings like grated or cream cheese, chopped onion, fresh coriander or rocket. Fold in the end with the beans and roll up the tortilla.
- **Enchiladas:** roll up a tortilla with 3 heaped tbsp of beans inside up and place side by side in a baking tray. Pour over 200ml of crème fraîche or cheese sauce and layer with sliced tomatoes before baking in a hot oven for 20 minutes.
- **Nachos:** spoon the chilli beans over nacho corn chips, top with grated cheese and grill until the cheese melts. Serve with a chopped onion and pepper salad, dressed with fresh lime juice.
- **Quesadillas:** Spread a couple of tbsps of chilli beans over a tortilla bread and top with some grated cheese, chopped peppers and spring onions. Place another tortilla on top to make a sandwich. Heat a frying pan and dry fry on both sides until the bread is crisp and the cheese starts to ooze.





Guacamole

- 2 ripe avocados
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 or 2 cloves of garlic (this is a matter of taste)
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Salt and pepper

Cut the avocados in half and scoop the flesh into a bowl. Chop the tomatoes up finely, sprinkle with a little salt and put to one side. Chop or mash the garlic and add to the bowl. Add the lemon and mash with a fork to make a smooth paste. Add the chopped tomatoes and mix well. Season with salt and pepper and serve fresh, as avocados tend to go brown quite quickly.

Sweetcorn and pepper salad

- 250g frozen or tinned sweetcorn (preferably with no added sugar)
- 1 green pepper (finely sliced)
- 1 red pepper (finely sliced)
- 3 spring onions (chopped)
- 4 tbsp chopped fresh coriander
- Juice of one lime
- 1 mild red chilli
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt to taste

If using frozen corn, steam for a short time (3 min) and refresh in cold water before draining. Tinned corn can be drained and rinsed through with cold water. Add the corn to the chopped onions and peppers, and mix well. For the dressing, halve the chilli and remove the seeds. Chop very finely and mix with lime juice and oil. Add salt to taste and pour over the salad. Mix well and garnish with coriander.

Tomato salsa

- 250g ripe tomatoes (finely chopped)
- 1 red onion (very finely chopped)
- 1 hot red chilli (finely chopped)
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh coriander
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste

Prepare the tomatoes, onions, and chilli and place in a large bowl. Season this with salt and pepper and allow this to sit for a few minutes. To this add the tomato paste, sugar, coriander, oil and vinegar and mix well.





Caramelised rhubarb

With cinnamon crumpets and hazelnut brittle

Rhubarb comes into season in mid spring and is generally available until the late autumn. Rhubarb is quick to caramelize but be sure not to overcook it as it breaks down easily. The seed and nut brittle is easy to make and is a great source of carbohydrates, protein and healthy fats. You can use this combination of seeds and nuts or improvise and create your own. Serve the rhubarb on hot crumpets topped with cream and hazelnut brittle. Serves 4

Crumpets

1 cup/ 225g light brown self-raising flour or buckwheat flour (gluten free)
1 ¼ cup/250ml milk
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 tsp bicarbonate of soda or 2 tsp if using buckwheat
2 teaspoons sugar or 1 tbsp honey or blackstrap molasses
½ tsp finely ground cinnamon
sunflower oil

1. Sift flour, bicarbonate of soda, cinnamon and sugar into bowl. (Discard the husks)
2. In a separate bowl, beat the milk and eggs and then gradually stir in the flour and sugar to make a smooth batter with the consistency of double cream. If the batter feels too thick add some more milk, likewise if it seems too wet add more flour.
3. Coat a non-stick pan with sunflower oil. Pour 2 tbsp of mixture per crumpet into the heated pan. Cook over a medium heat. When bubbles appear, turn the crumpet. Cook until golden. Remove from pan and keep warm. Repeat with remaining mixture.
4. Serve plain or dusted with cinnamon powder or icing sugar, or spoon on a large tablespoon of caramelised apples and enjoy.

Caramelized rhubarb

3 big stalks of rhubarb, about 400g
2 tbsp/25g/1oz butter
2 tbsp/25g/1oz brown sugar

1. Prepare the rhubarb – top and tail and slice each piece in half lengthways and then cut into pieces
2. Heat a medium sized frying pan on a low - medium heat and melt 1tbsp of butter and cook the rhubarb gently for 5 minutes. The fruit should start to soften and give off a little liquid. Add the sugar and turn the heat up slightly and cook for a further few minutes or until a light glossy caramel has formed and then remove from the heat. This is where you need to be attentive as it only takes moments for the caramel to catch and burn.

Hazelnut brittle

2 tbsp chopped hazelnuts
2 tbsp each of pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds
1 tbsp barley malt syrup or runny honey (half of each if you have both)

1. Line a baking tray with greased paper or a light coating of sunflower oil. Dry toast the nuts and seeds in a large frying pan over a medium heat until, they go a shade or two darker. Turn the heat very low and add the sweetening directly to the pan and stir well.
2. Pour the hot, sticky seeds onto an oiled plate or baking paper. With wet hands, mould into a disk and push gently down. When cooled and dry, cut the slab into slices or diamond shaped wedges.

