



Eat like an East End girl

Famed for its curry houses and Bengali sweet shops, Dina Begum's debut book, Brick Lane Cookbook, encapsulates the eclectic and vibrant food scene of London's famous foodie street.

Chicken korma

Chicken korma cooked at home is unlike any restaurant version (which I would never eat). Originating from Mughlai cuisine, a real korma is rich, decadent and very special. It's usually made with a mixture of whole spices, yoghurt and ghee, and cooked slowly to create a depth of flavour you really can't get in a hurry.

SERVES 6

Ingredients

- 6 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- 5cm piece ginger, roughly chopped
- 100ml oil
- 2tbsp ghee
- 1tsp panch phoron
- 3 medium onions, finely sliced
- 1½tsp salt
- 3 dried red chillies
- 2 bay leaves
- 8 cardamom pods
- 4 cloves

- 6 black peppercorns
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 star anise
- 1½tbsp ground cumin
- 1½tbsp ground coriander
- ½tsp chilli powder
- Eighth of a teaspoon of ground turmeric
- 800g skinless chicken breast and thigh meat, chopped into bite-size pieces
- 300g Greek yogurt
- 6 whole green chillies

METHOD

Crush the garlic and ginger together in a mortar and pestle.

Heat the oil and ghee in a large pan on a medium-high heat and add the garlic, ginger and panch phoron.

After a minute add the onions, salt, dried red chillies, bay leaves, cardamom, cloves, black peppercorns, cinnamon sticks and star anise and sauté until golden – around ten minutes.

Add 200ml of water, cover and simmer on low heat for 20 to 25 minutes, until the onions have broken up and the oil has separated.

Keep checking regularly and if the mixture gets too dry or catches at the bottom of the pan add a dash of water and continue cooking.

At this point stir in the cumin, coriander, chilli powder and turmeric and turn up the heat to medium. Cook for two to three minutes until the spices are fragrant and have separated from the oil. If the mixture gets too dry, add a dash of water so the spices don't burn then cover and cook for a few minutes.

Now take the chicken pieces and add them to the pan. Stir this around for a couple of minutes to seal the meat, then cover and cook for ten minutes, checking now and then to make sure nothing's burning.



DECADENT DINING: Main picture top, chicken korma; above, chai malai cake.