



In This Month's Recipes:

- ♀ Indian Customs & Cuisine
- ♀ Menu & Recipes from Orissa, India

Orissa is one of India's eastern states, and lies on the coast of the Indian Ocean. With a simple yet delicious cuisine, Orissa follows a food pattern that is somewhat similar to its neighboring Indian states.

Rice, the staple food is paired with vegetables. Many people practice vegetarianism. But a significant proportion of the population relishes fish and other seafood delicacies like prawns, crabs and lobsters that are found in plenty at the vast coastline of the state.¹



People often eat with their right hand rather than with eating utensils.

Food is often served on palm leaves or several large leaves sewn together to form a disposable plate.

Our thanks to Karen Rushen O'Brien for providing--and testing--this month's recipes.



Menu

- **Spicy Prawn Rice**
- **Sabudanavadas** (Deep fried Indian potatoes)
- **Tomato Raita**
- **Ghugni** (Indian curry)
- **Rasgulla** (An Indian dessert)

Recipes from Orissa, India

Spicy Prawn Rice

Serves: 4

Cooking time (approx.): 20 minutes

Ingredients:

1 lb. headless prawns shelled and cleaned
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1 large onion, chopped
1 tsp each of coriander and red chili powders
1 tsp cumin seeds or ¼ ground cumin
4 bay leaves
2 cups long-grain rice, preferably Basmati
4 cups hot water
1 tsp ghee/butter
salt to taste



Grind to a fine paste:

1 tsp cinnamon pieces, or ¼ tsp cinnamon
1 tsp chopped ginger
2 green chilies chopped fine
4 green cardamoms peeled
2 cloves
salt to taste
water required to grind the paste

Rub the prawns with some salt and half the quantity of turmeric powder. Keep aside.

Heat the ghee / butter in a heavy bottomed pot and saute the prawns on medium heat for about 2 minutes. Remove the prawns onto a plate.

Add the bay leaves and cumin seeds to the same pot. Saute briefly. Add the chopped onions and saute till they are golden brown. Add the rice, the ground paste, turmeric, red chili and coriander powders. Stir fry briefly. Add the prawns, salt and the hot water. Bring to a boil and simmer on low heat for about 15 minutes or till all the water has evaporated and the rice is cooked but firm.

Serve hot.

TIPS:

The prawns need not be of a big size for this dish.

Basmati is an aromatic long-grain rice variety. Any other long-grain rice would do as well.

Proportionally, this dish contains a lot of rice. If you want a better balance of rice and protein, stir in 1 cup cooked peas when the rice is done cooking.

Recipe source: Full Orissa Recipes website at <http://recipe.fullorissa.com/>

Sabudanavadas

These deep fried treats are delicious—the tapioca makes a light, crunchy and chewy fritter. Serve them with coriander chutney, a fairly common Indian chutney which you should be able to get in the grocery store on the Indian food shelf.

Serves 4-6

Preparation time: 1-2 hours

Cooking Time: 15-20 minutes

Ingredients:

Pearl Tapioca, 1 ½ cups
3 medium potatoes, peeled, boiled and mashed
Roasted peanuts, coarsely ground, 1 cup
2 T Fresh coriander leaves, chopped fine
3 green chilies, minced fine
1 T lemon juice
a pinch of salt
Oil for deep frying

METHOD

Soak the tapioca pearls, in enough water to cover it, for about two hours. Drain off excess water. Mix together tapioca pearls, potatoes, peanuts, green chilies, coriander leaves, lemon juice and salt. Mix thoroughly. Divide into key lime sized balls, flatten between palms of your hands. Heat sufficient oil and deep fry in hot oil till golden brown. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve hot with chutney of your choice (Coriander chutney goes very well!)

Recipe Source: Sanjeev Kapoor, Celebrity Chef web site www.sanjeevkapoor.com



Tomato Raita

Preparation Time: 10 minutes

Serves 3-4

Ingredients

2 tomatoes
2 Tsp. chopped coriander leaves
1 green chili, minced
2 cups of plain yogurt
½ tsp. cumin powder
¼ tsp black pepper
1 Tbsp. sugar
salt to taste

Method:

Cut ripe tomatoes into halves and remove the seeds. Chop tomatoes into small pieces.



Take the curd in a bowl. Add sugar, salt, black pepper powder and cumin powder in it. Beat the curd till it becomes smooth.

Mix chopped tomatoes and chopped green chili with prepared curd and mix well.

Tomato Raita is ready to serve.

Take it out in a serving bowl and garnish with chopped coriander leaves and serve chilled.

Recipe Source: <http://recipe.snacksathome.com/chutney-raita-recipes/tomato-raita-recipe/>

Ghugni

In Orissa, this dish is usually served with Indian snacks like Sabudanavadas, Pakoras, Samosa etc. It is sometimes served as a curry with Roti bread for dinner. This is an awesome curry which is very easy to make and very healthy at the same time. Its main ingredient are dried peas (yellow/white/green) which are rich with protein.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

2 medium sized potatoes boiled, peeled and sliced into medium dices

2 cups of dried peas soaked overnight in water

3 small tomatoes sliced into small pieces

1 small red onion

1 tsp chopped ginger

1 tsp chopped garlic

2 cardamoms

1 tsp of cumin seeds

2 small pieces of cinnamon

3-4 cloves

1 tsp of cumin powder

1 tsp of coriander powder

Fresh coriander leaves

Red chilli powder to taste

2 Green Chilies

Turmeric powder

2-4 tsp cooking oil

Salt to taste

Method:

Make a 'masala paste' of onion, garlic, ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves with a little water

Boil the soaked peas with some salt till soft (You can pressure cook the peas, or use frozen peas)

Put 2 Tbs of oil in a frying pan and put the cumin seeds and let them splutter.

Add green chilies

Add the masala paste prepared earlier

Fry them till light brown

Add turmeric powder, cumin powder, coriander powder

Add finely chopped tomatoes and fry them till they are soft

Add diced potatoes and boiled peas, little water and salt and cook for 5-7minutes.

Garnish with coriander leaves and serve hot

Recipe Source: <http://oriyafood.blogspot.com>



Other easy hints to make your meal authentic:

- Serve as a side dish Indian style pickles (mango, lime, tomato, etc.) which you can buy in most grocery stores.
- Serve roti bread, or another Indian bread, as a side dish.
- Again, these are increasingly popular and easy-to-find side dishes sold in most grocery stores.

Questions or concerns?

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Additional recipe for dessert: Rasgulla

This is a popular relished sweetmeat in India. Originally a dessert in Orissa for centuries, this dish made its way to West Bengal when the Oriya cooks started migrating to West Bengal in search of jobs, bringing along the recipe. This dish is produced by the boiling of small balls of [casein](#) in sugar syrup. This sweet dessert can be found in many eastern Indian households.



Rasgulla is a popular sweet dish made from cottage cheese.

Ingredients:

Milk- 4 cups (Note: Use whole milk)

Lemon juice dissolved in water- 2 tablespoon lemon juice dissolved in 1 tablespoon of water

All purpose flour- 1 tablespoon

For the sugar syrup

- Sugar- 1 1/2 cup
- Water- 4 cups
- Cardamom powder- 1/4 teaspoon

Method

Heat milk in a pan and bring it to boil for about 8-10 minutes.

When it starts boiling, add lemon juice and wait for the milk to curdle completely.

Remove from the heat and let it cool for about 3-5 minutes.

Pour over a thin muslin/cotton cloth and tie it with a tight knot. On straining this milk, the curd is obtained is called "paneer." Wash paneer well using muslin cloth under cold running water to remove lemon juice flavor.

Knead paneer for about 5-7 minutes to make a smooth dough. Add flour and knead again for few minutes.

Make small balls of about 1 inch in size (8-10) of the dough and keep aside.

Next make sugar syrup. Mix sugar, water, and cardamom powder in a saucepan and bring it to boil.

Add paneer balls to the hot syrup on a medium heat and cook for about 15-20 minutes with lid partially covered.

Transfer into a serving dish.

Refrigerate and serve chilled.

Tips:

Rasgulla should always be cooked on a high flame. The softness of the rasgulla depends on how well you knead the paneer. The more you knead, the more spongy the rasgullas. While cooking, they should double their size. The cooking time of the rasgullas will vary depending on their size.

Adapted from: <http://blessedmom.hubpages.com/hub/How-to-make-Rasgulla-Indian-Dessert-Recipe>

Sources

¹ <http://www.orissatourism.org/orissa-cuisine.html>