



Manjula's Kitchen

Best of Indian Vegetarian Recipes

Second Edition



Manjula Jain

Manjula's Kitchen®
Best of Indian Vegetarian Recipes
Second Edition
Author: Manjula Jain

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<http://www.manjulaskitchen.com>

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I have devoted hundreds of hours to perfecting these recipes. If you are new to Indian cooking, I encourage you to adhere closely to my detailed instructions in the recipes. You will create your own success story, sure to impress your friends and family.

Nothing gives me greater joy than sharing the traditional cuisine of India with you, in a practical format you can implement with ease and confidence.

Manjula

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INTRODUCTION

If you love Indian vegetarian cooking and wish you knew how to create magnificent dishes for your friends and family, this book of delicious recipes is for you.

You will learn how to make over one hundred mouthwatering Indian vegetarian dishes: Samosas, Naan, Roti, Palak Paneer, Vegetable Korma, Gulab Jamun, and many more. Best of all, you can follow my time-tested recipes without any prior cooking knowledge and feel confident of surprising yourself and impressing your friends with your achievement.

I am here to teach you simple and practical recipes that embody the authenticity of Indian vegetarian cooking. If you are new to cooking or to Indian vegetarian cooking, these recipes will make it easy to understand the fundamentals of cooking Indian dishes. If you are an experienced chef, you will pick up new techniques to make cooking easier and more flavorful.

In the seven years my first cooking video appeared on YouTube I have posted over 350 video recipes, many of which are vegan and gluten free. Some have commented that the wide variety of choices and flavors in Indian cuisine makes it easy to be vegetarian.

I have devoted hundreds of hours to perfecting these recipes. The right recipe and combination of ingredients is not always easy to come up with!

If you are new to Indian cooking, I encourage you to adhere closely to my detailed instructions. Once you have gained some experience with the recipes, I hope you will feel free to experiment and make these dishes uniquely your own. Half the fun is in the experimenting!

You will create your own success story, with variations sure to impress your friends and family.

About Indian Vegetarian Cooking

Indian flavors have come to play an important role in international cuisine.

It is unfortunate that many Westerners are under the impression that Indian cooking takes too long, calls for too many ingredients, and is overly spicy and greasy. Such misconceptions have arisen because the West was introduced to Indian cuisine in restaurants, where the primary concern is shelf life of the food, ease of preparation, and appearance.

In reality, Indian food is healthful, colorful, aromatic, full of flavor, and easy to prepare.

Every region of India has its own distinct way of cooking and its own specialties. The result is a huge variety of recipes with an endless array of savory main dishes based on rice, lentils, and vegetables, a wide assortment of breads, and a plethora of scrumptious desserts, snacks, and drinks.

Spices are an essential element of Indian cuisine. The different combinations enhance the flavors of each dish and make each dish unique. But the benefits go far beyond taste and aroma. The spices used in Indian food are famous for their food preservation and medicinal properties as well.

Most of the dry goods and spices listed in this book are available at the Indian grocery stores and at Amazon.com.

About Me and my website

<http://www.manjulaskitchen.com>

My kitchen is my art studio. Instead of playing with colors, I play with ingredients. Cooking is my hobby and my passion. For decades I have cooked for my family, friends, colleagues, and anyone who shows up at my home.

I was born in a vegetarian family in North India. My mother was an excellent cook who paid attention to every detail and always insisted on fresh ingredients. From a young age I enjoyed helping my mom in the kitchen. I learned how to use spices and herbs to enhance the taste of the vegetables, grains, and lentils.

After I married and moved to the United States in the late 1960s, my family remained vegetarian because of our adherence to the Jain religion. One of the main principles of the Jain religion is the belief in non-violence to all living beings and the belief that we should “live and let live.” I am passionate about this way of life today.

Nothing gives me greater joy than sharing the traditional cuisine of India with you, in a practical format you can implement with ease and confidence.

To your Indian culinary adventure,

Manjula



Appetizers, Snacks, & Chaat



Bhel Puri

Spicy, Crunchy Snack



[Watch the Video on Website](#)

Bhel Puri is a simple spicy snack with a light crunch! This is a popular snack with street vendors in Mumbai. Every vendor has his own twist to bhel puri but two main ingredients remain the same . . . puffed rice (murmura) and fine sev. Bhel puri is a low-fat, nutritious, delicious snack!

Serves 4 to 6

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups murmura (puffed rice) (available in Indian grocery stores)
- 1 cup fine sev (vermicelli-like snack made from gram flour) (available in Indian grocery stores)
- 1 cup papdi broken in small pieces (buy it in Indian grocery stores)
- ½ cup potato boiled, peeled and cubed in small pieces
- ½ cup cucumber peeled and cubed in small pieces
- ½ cup tomatoes seeded and cubed in small pieces
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- ½ teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 4 tablespoons [hari cilantro chutney](#)
- 4 tablespoons [tamarind chutney](#)
- 1 tablespoon green pepper, minced (optional)

GARNISH

- ¼ cup fine sev (vermicelli-like snack made from gram flour) (available in Indian grocery stores)
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice

METHOD

1. In a frying pan over medium heat, dry-roast the puffed rice for three to four minutes, Let it cool.
2. Combine the dry ingredients (puffed rice, sev, papdi, and salt) together and mix well. Set aside until ready to serve.
3. Mix chopped potatoes, cucumber, tomatoes, cilantro, and minced green pepper if you like it hot, and set aside.
4. When ready to serve, combine the dry ingredients and potato mixture.
5. Add hari cilantro and tamarind chutneys to your taste, making sure the chutneys coat the bhel puri. Garnish with sev and drizzle with lemon juice to taste.

NOTES

Assemble bhel puri just before serving to prevent the puffed rice and sev from getting soggy.

SUGGESTIONS

Bhel puri dry mix can be prepared in advance and can be served as a dry snack or just with chutneys, without adding the veggie. Bhel puri can be served as snack or even as a light lunch.

TIPS

Puffed rice (murmura) loses some of its crispness with time. Roasting restores the crispness and freshness.

Bread Potato Rolls

Bread with potato filling makes a mouthwatering snack. This is a perfect snack with afternoon tea or served as an appetizer. Bread Potato Rolls are crunchy outside, spicy and soft inside. Easy to prepare.



Makes 8 Bread Rolls

[Watch the Video on Website](#)

INGREDIENTS

- 4 bread slices (bread should be firm)
- 2 medium potatoes, boiled, peeled, and mashed (this makes about 1¼ cup mashed potatoes)
- ¼ cup green peas, boiled
- 1 teaspoon oil
- ¼ teaspoon cumin seeds (jeera)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon red chili powder
- ½ teaspoon mango powder (amchoor)
- 1 tablespoon cilantro (hara dhania), finely chopped
- 1 green chili (hari mirch), minced (adjust to taste)
- 1 teaspoon ginger, finely chopped
- Oil for frying

METHOD

1. Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the cumin seed. When the cumin seed starts to crack, add green peas, green chili, and ginger, and stir for a few seconds.
2. Add the potatoes and all the spices (chili powder, mango powder, salt, cilantro) and stir-fry for a minute. Turn off the heat.
3. Taste the mixture; it should be a little spicier than you like, as it will taste milder inside the bread. Set aside.
4. Trim the edges of the bread slices and cut them into two pieces. Set aside.
5. Roll 1½ tablespoons of the mixture at a time into an oval shape. Make twelve rolls. (The size of the potato rolls will depend on the size of the bread.)
6. Fill a small bowl with water to wet the bread. Dip one side of a slice of the bread lightly in the water. Place the slice between your palms and press, squeezing out the excess water. This makes the bread moist.
7. Place the filling in the center of this bread and mold the bread to completely cover it all around, giving an oval shape.
8. Repeat to make all the rolls. Before frying, let them sit for about five minutes. (This will evaporate some of the water from the bread so that it absorbs less oil while frying, making the bread rolls crisper.)
9. Heat the oil in a frying pan on medium high heat. Drop the rolls slowly into it, taking care not to overlap them.
10. Fry the bread rolls until they are golden brown, turning occasionally. This should take about two to three minutes. Take them out over a paper towel.
11. Serve them hot with hari cilantro chutney and tamarind sweet and sour chutney.

SUGGESTIONS

Serve them hot with [hari cilantro chutney](#) and [tamarind sweet and sour chutney](#).



[Watch the Video on Website](#)

Chole Chaat is a zesty snack for people who enjoy spicy food. This is a very easy recipe to prepare, and quite an aromatic dish.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup chickpeas uncooked (Garbanzo beans, kabuli chana)
- 1 medium potato, boiled
- 2 tablespoons oil
- ¼ cup besan (gram flour) (*available in Indian grocery stores*)
- 1 tablespoon ginger, finely grated
- 1 seeded minced green chili (adjust to taste)
- 1½ teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 1 teaspoon black salt (kala namak)
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon roasted cumin seed powder*
- 1 teaspoon mango powder (amchoor)
- 1 tablespoon garam masala
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

GARNISH

- 2 tablespoons [ginger relish](#)
- A few slices of lemon
- 8 Romaine lettuce leaves

METHOD

1. Peel and cut the boiled potato into ¼-inch cubes. Set aside.
2. Wash the chickpeas and soak in four cups water for at least eight hours. Chickpeas will increase to two and a half times their original volume while soaking.
3. Drain the water and wash the chickpeas.
4. Place the chickpeas in a pressure cooker with four cups water. Cook on medium high heat. When it starts to steam, turn down the heat to medium, and cook for another eight minutes.
5. Turn off the heat and wait until steam has stopped before opening the pressure cooker. Chickpeas should be soft and tender.
6. Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat, add the gram flour (besan) and stir fry one to two minutes, until the color changes to golden brown.
7. Add the grated ginger and minced green chili, stir for a few seconds. Add the chickpeas to the gram flour.
8. Add salt, black salt, black pepper, roasted cumin seed powder, and mango powder. Lightly mash chickpeas while mixing in the spices. Cook on low heat 10 to 15 minutes. Turn off the heat.
9. Add the potatoes, [garam masala](#), and lemon juice. Mix gently.
10. Before serving, let the chickpeas sit at least half an hour to absorb all the flavors. The gravy will thicken as it cools.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Chole chaat tastes best when served warm.

Garnish the chole chaat with ginger relish and/or a slice of lemon.

Serve chole chaat as a lettuce wrap using Romaine lettuce leaves. It provides a nice crunch to the chaat and makes for a beautiful presentation.

TIPS

For an easier and quicker recipe, substitute canned chickpeas.

*The roasted cumin seed powder is prepared by dry roasting whole cumin seeds and then grinding them to a powder.

Dahi Vadas are lentil dumplings dipped in yogurt and topped with spicy savory tamarind chutney. These are perfect as a side dish for a formal dinner, as an appetizer, or served as a chaat.



Makes about 30

[Watch the Video on Website](#)

INGREDIENTS

VADAS

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup washed moong dal (*available in Indian grocery stores*)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup washed urad dal (*available in Indian grocery stores*)
- Oil to fry

GARNISH

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cup yogurt (dahai, curd)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon red chili powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon roasted cumin seed powder (jeera)*
- 3 tablespoons tamarind chutney

METHOD

TO MAKE VADAS

1. Mix both dals and wash.
2. Soak dal in four cups water for at least six hours.
3. Drain the water. In a blender, blend the dal to very creamy texture. Use only as much water as needed to blend. Using too much water for blending will not give the desired creamy texture.
4. Whip the dal batter, stirring with a spoon in a circular motion two to three minutes, until batter is light and fluffy. Add a few spoonfuls of water as needed.
5. Use a flat frying pan, pan should have about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of oil and heat over medium high heat. Test the oil by dropping a little batter into it. When the oil sizzles, it is ready.
6. Place 1 tablespoon of batter into the oil. The oil should not be deep enough to cover the batter; the vadas will be softer if they are shallow-fried. The vadas will begin to expand slowly, without changing color.

7. Fry the vadas in small batches, until golden all around.
8. After you have made all of the vadas, place them in lukewarm water and soak for about 20 minutes.
9. Squeeze the vadas gently to remove the water, being careful not to break the vadas.

TO MAKE YOGURT TOPPING AND GARNISH

10. Mix two cups of yogurt until smooth. Add a little milk as needed to make the consistency similar to pancake batter or lassi. Add about one teaspoon salt, to taste.
11. Soak the vadas in the yogurt batter for at least half an hour, giving the vadas time to absorb the yogurt.
12. Slowly pick up each vada and transfer it to a serving dish. Pour a few spoons more yogurt over the Vadas.
13. Just before serving, sprinkle some salt as needed, ground roasted cumin seeds, red chile powder, and finish off with a drizzle of tamarind chutney.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

You can make the dahi vadas in advance and freeze them before soaking in water.

When ready to use, soak as many as needed in hot water for about half an hour, then change the water to room temperature and soak for another ten minutes.

Now proceed according to the recipe.

VARIATIONS

Change the proportion of dals, or use only urad dal.

As an alternative, you can add chopped green chilies and crushed coriander seeds to the dal batter just before frying.

Instead of serving with **tamarind chutney**, you can sprinkle chopped cilantro over the dahi vadas.

If you are vegan, you can soak the vadas in tamarind chutney instead of yogurt and sprinkle some chopped cilantro or chopped mint leaves.



Watch the Video on Website

Dhokla is a traditional gujrati snack, spongy and fluffy in texture. Dhokla makes a great appetizer.

Makes about 20 pieces

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup fine semolina flour (sooji)
- 1 cup yogurt
- ¼ cup water as needed
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Pinch of turmeric (haldi)
- 1 green chili, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons fine chopped cilantro (hara dhania)
- 1 teaspoon Eno's fruit salt (Sodium Bicarbonate and Citric Acid, available in Indian grocery stores)

SEASONING

- 2 tablespoons oil
- ½ teaspoon black mustard seed
- 2 green peppers, chopped into ¼" pieces

METHOD

1. Mix the sooji, yogurt, salt, lemon juice, green chili, and cilantro together and make a smooth batter of a pouring consistency. Add water as needed.
2. Allow batter to rest 15 to 20 minutes.
3. Grease the cake pan and set aside.
4. Set the cake rack in the pan. Add one cup of water, just enough to touch the cake rack, and bring to a boil. This will be used to steam the dhoklas.
5. When the water boils, turn down the heat to medium.
6. Add the fruit salt (Eno) to the batter just before steaming. The batter will foam up.
7. Quickly pour batter into a greased cake pan. Place the cake pan into the saucepan over the cake rack. Cover the pan. Steam for about 10 minutes on medium heat.
8. Check dhokla with a knife. If the knife comes out clean, the dhokla is ready. Turn off the heat and remove the cake pan from the saucepan.
9. Let it cool to room temperature, then cut into triangle or square shapes.
10. Prepare the seasoning
11. Heat oil in a small pan over medium heat.
12. Add the mustard seeds. When the seeds crack, add green chili stir for a few seconds.
13. Drizzle the seasoning over the dhokla. Serve with green chutney.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Dhokla can be refrigerated for a few days. Before serving, heat the dhokla in a microwave or over steam.

UTENSILS TO STEAM DHOKLA

Dhokla maker – or, if you don't have that, use all three of the following:

- Covered pan large enough to hold your cake rack
- Round cake-cooling rack
- Round 9" cake pan

Fruit Salad

This is a bright, colorful, and refreshing fruit chaat (snack) that can also be used as a fruit salad. My siblings and I looked forward to the fruit chaat, served regularly as part of our lunch. It was a delicious way of eating a great variety of fresh, seasonal fruit. This by itself will brighten up any meal, and it tastes great at any time of day.

Fruit Chaat



Serves 4

[Watch the Video on Website](#)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 oranges, skin removed, each slice cut in half
- 1 apple, peeled and cubed into ½-inch pieces
- 1 firm banana, sliced into ¼-inch rounds
- ½ cup sliced strawberries
- 1 cup English or Asian cucumber cubed into ¼ inch pieces
- 1 green chili, finely chopped (optional)
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped

DRESSING

- Approx. 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Approx. 1 tablespoon ginger juice
- ½ teaspoon roasted powdered cumin seeds
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon black salt (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

METHOD

1. In a large bowl, combine the fruit and cucumber with the green chili and cilantro.
2. Toss and set aside.
3. Mix all the dressing ingredients together in a small bowl, making sure the sugar is completely dissolved.
4. Pour the dressing over the fruit when ready to serve.

TIPS

I have used many different varieties of fruit in this chaat dish; however, I always keep the oranges and bananas, as they add a lot of color and texture to the dish.

Khasta Kachori

Spicy Puffed Pastry



[Watch the Video on Website](#)

Khasta kachori is a delicious, spicy, fried puff pastry. Kachoris are great as an appetizer or as part of a festive meal for any occasion.

Makes 12 Kachoris

INGREDIENTS

DOUGH

- 1 cup all-purpose flour (plain flour or maida)
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons oil
- ¼ cup chilled water, more or less as needed

FILLING

- ¼ cup yellow moong dal (*available in Indian grocery stores*)
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground fennel seeds (saunf)
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground coriander seeds (dhania)
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

- ¼ teaspoon ginger powder
- ½ teaspoon mango powder (amchoor)
- Pinch of asafetida (hing)
- ½ teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- Oil to deep-fry

METHOD

DOUGH

1. Mix the flour, salt and oil.
2. Add the chilled water slowly, mixing with your fingers as you pour.
3. Do not knead the dough. It should be very soft.
4. Cover the dough and let it sit at least fifteen minutes.

TO MAKE FILLING

5. Grind the moong dal dry, almost to a powder.
6. Mix 1 tablespoon of oil into the ground dal in a frying pan and roast over medium heat two to three minutes, or until the dal changes color slightly. Stir continuously.
7. Turn off the heat. Add all the spices and mix well. Let the mixture cool off.
8. Add two tablespoons warm water and mix well.
9. Let sit ten minutes, covered with a damp cloth.

TO MAKE THE KACHORIS:

10. Take the dough and knead it for minutes. Divide the dough in twelve equal parts.
11. Take one part of the dough and with your fingers flatten the

edges to form a three-inch circle, leaving the center a little thicker than the edges.

12. Mold the dough into a cup and place one teaspoon of the filling in the center. Pull the edges of the dough to wrap the dal filling. Proceed to make all twelve balls.
13. Let the filled balls sit for three to four minutes before rolling.
14. Set the filled balls on a surface with the seams facing up. Using the base of your palm, slowly flatten them into circles about three inches in diameter.
15. Heat the oil in frying pan over medium heat frying pan should have about one inch of oil. To check if oil is ready put a little piece of dough in the oil. It should sizzle, and come up very slow.
16. Fry them on medium-low heat. After they start to puff, slowly turn them over. Fry until golden-brown on both sides. If the kachoris are fried on high heat, they will get soft and will not be crispy.
17. Kachoris can be stored for at least a week in an airtight container.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Kachoris can be served plain, with a variety of chutneys, with chola (a chickpea dish), or with dam aloo (a potato dish). Serve them as a chat, pouring plain yogurt and chutney on top.

TIPS

Don't roll the kachoris with a rolling pin. Rolling pins can create small holes in the dough that let the oil seep into the kachoris, and they can also cause the kachoris to come out with one side thicker than the other.

VARIATIONS

Instead of using moong dal, you can use washed urad dal or chana dal. The rest of the recipe remains the same.

Salad on Papadam

Crispy papad topped with spicy salad makes a very refreshing appetizer. Masala Papad is full of flavors and very tempting. This is a very simple and easy recipe to make.

Papad is a round, flat, dry cracker made with a variety of lentils. They are sold uncooked in Indian grocery stores. You can deep-fry them or dry-roast them.

Serves 2



[Watch the Video on Website](#)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 plain papad (available in Indian grocery stores)
- 2 medium tomatoes, seeded and diced very small to make approx. 1 cup
- ½ English or deseeded cucumber cut in very small pieces to make about ½ cup
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon ginger, finely shredded (optional)
- 1 green chili, finely chopped (optional)
- ½ lemon
- 2 teaspoons oil

SPICE MIX FOR GARNISH

- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black salt
- ½ teaspoon dry roasted cumin seed powder
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper
- Pinch of red chili

METHOD

1. Mix tomatoes, cucumbers, cilantro, ginger, and green chili. Set aside.
2. Mix all the dry ingredients to make a spice mix. Set aside.
3. Lightly oil the papads on both sides, set aside.
4. Preheat the skillet over medium high heat. Roast the papads on both sides in the skillet one at a time, pressing with spatula. The papads will change to a light yellow with a few brown spots. Be careful not to over-roast. Fold the Papads in quarters while they are hot, making triangles right on the skillet.
5. Remove the papads from the skillet and break on the folds, creating four triangles from each one.
6. Take one piece of papad and top it with cucumber, tomato, ginger, green chili, and cilantro. Drizzle with lemon juice and sprinkle the spice mix on top.

NOTES

Removing the seeds from the tomatoes keeps the papads crunchy.

English cucumber is crisper on the outside and tender on the inside.

You can prepare the masala papad in advance, and add the toppings just before serving.

Matra Chaat

Snack made from a relative of the Dried Green Pea



Watch the Video on Website

This is a delicious spicy snack. Matar Ki Chaat can be served as a snack, or as a main dish with Kulcha or Naan.

Serves 4

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup matara (light brown in color, they look almost like chick peas; *available in Indian grocery stores*)
- 1 teaspoon salt (adjust to taste)
- 1 teaspoon black salt (adjust to taste)
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon cumin seed
- 1 tablespoon coriander
- 2 tablespoons ginger, finely chopped
- 2 small green chilies, finely chopped (adjust to taste)
- 2 tablespoons tamarind pulp
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice

FOR GARNISH

- A few slices of lemon
- 2 tablespoons ginger, finely chopped
- 2 green chilies, finely chopped

METHOD

1. Wash and soak the matra in three cups of water overnight. After soaking, the matra will be about 2½ times the volume of the original.
2. Dry roast the cumin seeds and coriander separately, until they are brown and you can smell their aroma. Let them cool and grind to powder consistency.
3. Put the matra in a pressure cooker with 2½ cups of water. Add the salt, ginger, and green chili. Cook on medium high heat.
4. When the pressure cooker starts to steam, turn the heat down to medium and cook eight to nine minutes more.
5. Turn off the heat and wait until the steam has stopped before opening the pressure cooker. Matra should be soft and tender.
6. Add all the spices; this is the time to adjust the salt and pepper to your taste. Mix the spices well. Add a little water if they look too dry; the gravy should be thick.

SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Serve warm. Garnish with ginger and slices of green chili and lemon.