

CHINTAN



# Tasty Frugal Green



*The Gourmet's  
Guide to  
Sustainable Eating*



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*The Gourmet's  
Guide to  
Sustainable Eating*



CHINTAN  
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**CHINTAN**  
ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH  
AND ACTION GROUP

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#### About Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group:

We are a registered non-profit organization with a vision of inclusive, sustainable, and equitable growth for all. Our mission is to reduce ecological footprints and increase environmental justice through systemic change brought about through partnerships, capacity building at the grassroots, advocacy and research, and sustainable, scalable models on the ground.

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# Introduction

## Don't Waste It, It Can Be Yummy!

India has had a rich tradition—one that we are fast losing—of using almost every part of a fruit or vegetable as food. Some of this was due to a centuries-old understanding of how nutritious these parts are, such as jackfruit seeds, which are very high in protein. Some of it was due to a culture of frugality. And some of it was simply on account of ecological conditions—watermelon rind was popular in arid regions, for example, because it contains a lot of water, and few vegetables and fruit grow in such areas anyway. Nothing could be wasted.

Till the 1990s, thrift dominated every part of Indian life, and affected attitudes towards food as well. Well-to-do young children would be reminded not to waste their food because hundreds of thousands of other children like them did not get enough to eat. At a time of modest incomes all round, conserving food was a smart and responsible thing to do. For many, food was also sacred—something they were blessed to have enough of.

Today, a lot of this has changed, and changed dramatically. Part of the reason is the problem of plenty. The growing middle class has much more disposable income and there are many more global food choices available. Food is easier to get, and in greater varieties. It's a commodity now. There's also attitude. In his book *Waste*, Tristram Stuart writes how vegetables with an imperfect, asymmetrical 'look' are tossed

away instead of being packed and sold. The idea of food as identity, as something sacred and as a gift of one's hard work is no longer celebrated in the age of supermarket discrimination. The moral imperative of saving every little morsel scarcely exists.

But it should.

India is home to the largest number of hungry and food-insecure people on the planet. A staggering 214 million people suffer from chronic food insecurity, representing approximately 17% of the country's total population. One in every three malnourished children in the world lives in India. About 33% of women and 28% of men are underweight. Although people here starve more due to faulty distribution and access inequity than a lack of food itself, it is still important to bear in mind that so many people are being underfed and are undernourished. And it is not India's challenge alone, it is a global crisis. Tristram Stuart's book reminds us how cruelly unfair the world is. He points out that a third of the world's entire current food supply could be saved by reducing waste. This would be enough to meet the nutritional needs of three billion people—nearly half the world's population.

It is easy to say these are issues too large for individuals to address. You might ask, '*What can I do about it?*' The answer, as this recipe book attempts to show, is simple: stop wasting food in your own kitchen.

In India, we are lucky that we have a cultural heritage of cooking all edible parts of fruits and vegetables innovatively and deliciously. Exploring and reviving these recipes, and

sharing them, is a great means to access sustainable practices of the past. In the context of mass deprivation and climate change, doing this also becomes essential. The recipes in this book are not about making 'waste' edible anyhow, but about strategy-eating for nutrition, taste and thrift. They are proof not of 'jugad', but of highly sophisticated culinary craft.

At Chintan, many of us recalled eating stems-and-peels dishes at home, and we had long thought of a recipe book like this. When we spoke to citizens about composting, we would also wish more parts of food would get used in the kitchen instead of ending up in compost pits. Luckily, an enterprising intern, Raghav Bikhchandani, decided to make this plan a reality. He decided to work on this recipe book. It took him a year, far longer than anyone imagined. It was not easy.

This book is fundamentally crowd-sourced. We all put our strength behind Raghav and asked for recipes via Facebook, email, word of mouth and every other possible means. We heard from hundreds of generous people. We compiled all the recipes in an excel sheet and spent time testing them with a professional chef, to ensure they tasted good and the proportions were right. This was the part we loved. But we utterly dreaded the part where we had to pick only a limited number of recipes. Finally, we removed those that were similar, balanced the range of key ingredients (we had an extraordinarily large number of vegetable soups and watermelon rind recipes, for instance) and kept the most delicious and easy-to-make recipes. We took the liberty of removing anything that tasted medicinal.

We hope you'll enjoy this labour of love, because it is really a microcosm of the culture of Indian frugality. That culture is

something we must revive, not only because of the moral and material crisis of enormous food waste globally, but because we have no option but to consume sustainably on a planet hit by climate change and resource depletion. And above all, it's a culture of great-tasting food, full of delightful surprises. Why ignore it, then?

Bharati Chaturvedi  
Director

Chintan Environmental Research and Action Group



## Soups, Snacks, Chutneys



# Carrot-Peel and Coriander-Stem Soup

Contributed by Banashree Banerjee

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 1

## Ingredients

- 2 cups carrot peels
- 1 cup hara dhan (coriander) stems
- 1 tomato (medium)
- 1 onion (medium) chopped
- 1/2" piece ginger chopped
- 4-5 coriander whole pepper
- 2 cups water
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander leaves
- A dash of butter/olive oil



## Method

Wash thoroughly and pressure cook all ingredients except salt and coriander leaves for 4 minutes. Cool and mix in a blender, then pass through a sieve. Heat the resulting broth and add salt to taste. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves and a dash of butter or olive oil. Serve hot with toast.

*Did you know that coriander has documented effects on Type II diabetes and lowers cholesterol? It is also used in folk medicine around the world for reducing anxiety or as a digestive aid or as a diuretic. It also contains antioxidants that can prevent food from being spoiled or delay its spoilage.*

# Pea Shell Soup

Contributed by Banashree Banerjee

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 1



## Ingredients

- Fresh green shells from 1/2 cup peas (washed and deveined)
- 1 large onion chopped
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1 tsp maida (refined flour)
- A pinch of nutmeg powder
- Salt to taste
- 1/4 spoon sugar
- Fresh cream (optional)

## Method

Cook the pea shells and chopped onion together in a pressure cooker with 2 cups of water for 4-5 minutes. When cool, pass through a sieve and throw away the hard inner lining of the shells. Add the sugar to the liquid, boil and keep covered. Dissolve the maida in a little milk. Heat the rest of the milk on a slow flame and add the milk-maida mixture to it, stirring all the time. Add this to the pea shell liquid and mix well. Add salt to taste and the nutmeg powder. Pour into cups/bowls and serve with toasted bread on the side. For added flavour, you could garnish the soup with cream and parsley.

*After the British conquered most of North America from the French, the French Canadians, then North America's cheap labour, were derogatorily called 'pea-soups' by the British, because they could work all day eating nothing but pea soup. It would be fair to assume then that pea soup has a lot of nutritional value!*

# Pea Pod and Cauliflower Stem Soup

Contributed by Promila Chaturvedi

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 4

## Ingredients

- 1 cup green pea pods (add as much as you want, it makes the soup sweeter)
- 1 large cauliflower stem, chopped into chunks of 2 inches
- 1 can of sweet corn
- Seasoning (salt, vinegar, soy sauce)

## Method

Boil the pea pods and cauliflower with water one and a half times the volume of the vegetables. When the cauliflower stem is very soft, sieve the stock and vegetables. There may be some pulp that can be strained—use it. Add the can of sweet corn to this broth. Season with salt, soy sauce and vinegar.





# Rubbish Soup

Contributed by Nalini Nadkarni

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 1

## Ingredients

- Any discarded parts of vegetables that are still salvageable—stalks and skins of cauliflower greens, carrot stems, radish leaves, bitter parts of other vegetables, etc.
- ½ tomato / imli (tamarind)
- A pinch of sugar
- Salt and pepper powder to taste

### Tempering:

- 1 tsp ghee
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 chopped onion



## Method

Boil the vegetables in enough water so that vegetable parts are immersed (and the broth will be thick to your liking). Put the resulting boil in a mixer and grind it. Strain it through a strainer, throw away the pulp and keep the broth.

Boil the broth and add tomato/imli, salt, pepper powder and sugar. In another pan heat ghee and add garlic and chopped onion. Saute and then add the broth. Garnish with coriander leaves.



*In many Western countries, it is common to see people jumping into dumpsters used by food retailers to reclaim food discarded as non-marketable because it is bumped or not visually attractive. After appropriate disinfecting with a water-diluted vinegar solution, the food is totally safe to eat, as long as it contains no meat or animal by-products.*

*While originally this was something people did only if they were really desperate, or if they were part of an anti-consumerist group, the practice is now becoming more and more mainstream, thanks in part to groups like Food Not Bombs—which distributes meals made from dumpster-dived food—and the mainstream media, which has raised awareness about food waste.*



## Stalk Soup

Contributed by Asha Satish Philar

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 1

### Ingredients

- 2 bunches of stalks of coriander leaves
- 1 bunch of stalks of methi (fenugreek) leaves
- 1 bunch of stalks of saunf (fennel)
- 2 bunches of stalks of pudina (mint)
- 2 tomatoes
- 1 small bottle gourd
- 1 small carrot
- 1 small onion
- Salt & black pepper to taste

### Method

Boil stalks and mash. Sieve and to the resulting liquid, add the pulp of blanched tomato, bottle gourd, carrot and onion. Boil this soup. Add salt and pepper.



## Snake Gourd Seed Pakoras

Contributed by Asha Satish Philar

Preparation time: 15 min Cooking time: 8 min Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- Seeds of 1 chichinda or parwal (snake gourd) seeds
- 1-1/2 cup besan (chickpea flour)
- 4 green chillies, chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 medium-size onion
- 1-1/2 cup cooking oil

### Method

Crush the tender seeds lightly. Add besan, onions, green chilli and salt to taste. Make balls of this mixture and deep fry.



*Snake gourd juice has been found to be effective in treating dandruff. The juice should be massaged into the scalp. The juice is also used in traditional medicines for treating jaundice or as a decoction obtained by boiling snake gourd leaves in water combined with coriander seeds.*

# Matar Chhilka Pakoras

Contributed by Heeru Chari

Preparation time: 20 min Cooking time: 8 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- 2 cups boiled matar chhilka (pea shells)
- 1 tsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp red chilli powder or 6 green chillies
- 2 tbsp besan (chickpea flour)
- 1-1/2 cup cooking oil

## Method

Grind all ingredients and shape into tikkis or pakoras and then deep fry.



# Chapatti Pakora

Contributed by Supriya Bhardwaj

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 5 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- 2 leftover chapattis
- 1/2 tsp dhania (coriander powder)
- 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup besan (chickpea flour)
- 2 cups cooking oil

## Method

Make a thin batter of besan and water and add coriander powder, turmeric powder and salt to it. Tear chapattis into bite-sized pieces and add into the batter. Make small balls of the mixture and deep fry. Serve hot with tomato sauce.



# Pumpkin Fibre Chutney

Contributed by Pushkala

Preparation time: 30 min Cooking time: 5 min Serves: 2



## Ingredients

- Pumpkin fibre (discarded inside part of the pumpkin where seeds are attached)
- 1 big spoon of urad daal (black gram)
- 4-5 dry red chillies
- 1 tsp salt
- 10-15 curry leaves
- 1 tsp oil
- Imli (tamarind) to taste
- A pinch of hing (asafoetida)
- 1 tsp mustard seeds

## Method

Pour oil into a kadhai (deep cooking dish) and fry urad daal and dry red chillies. Once these are fried well, add pumpkin fibre after removing the seeds. Switch off the gas and add curry leaves, tamarind and salt. Grind to a paste (add water only if required). Remove the paste to a dish. Splutter mustard seeds and asafoetida in a little oil and add to this paste. Garnish with curry leaves and red chilli.

You can have the chutney along with rice, chapatti, porridge, etc. Those who prefer can add coconut also while making this pumpkin paste, which would become a variant of this chutney.

*Native Americans never wasted pumpkins, either. They would flatten and dry strips of pumpkins and use them to make mattresses.*

# Ridge Gourd Chutney

Contributed by Neelam Kane

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 5 min Serves: 2



## Ingredients

- 1 cup peels from 2 turai (ridge gourds)
- 1 tsp white sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp grated dry coconut
- 1/2 tsp jeera (cumin)
- Salt and red chilli powder to taste
- 1 tbsp cooking oil

## Method

Dry roast cumin, sesame seeds and grated coconut. Fry the ridge gourd peels in oil till crunchy. (You could also fry chopped green chillies with the peels.) Grind everything together. The chutney stays well for a week.

*'Gourde' is the French word for 'canteen' since water used to be carried in canteens made by hollowing out and drying large gourds and squashes. Sadhus still use gourds in this fashion to make kamandalus (small, round hand-held vessels that are carried by Hindu divinities—by Shiva and Brahma depicted as ascetics, for instance, and by water deities like Varuna, Ganga and Sarasvati).*

# Watermelon Rind Chutney

Contributed by Alladi Jayasri

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 45 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- 2 cups watermelon rind cubes
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp chopped ginger
- 1 large green chilli
- 1 clove of garlic
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 tsp black peppercorns
- 2 cups water
- Salt & pepper to taste

## Method

Put the watermelon rind cubes, white sugar, minced ginger, minced green chilli, minced garlic, apple cider vinegar, water, crushed black peppercorns and salt into a large saucepan. Over medium heat, bring it all to a boil. When the mixture begins to boil, reduce heat to low and let the contents simmer for at least 45 minutes, stirring constantly to dissolve all the sugar, until the watermelon rind has turned translucent, and is cooked tender. Remove the saucepan from the flame.

Once the chutney has cooled, pour it into an airtight container to chill in the refrigerator for one to three days, or until the flavour blends and mellows.



*A USDA study found that the white part of the watermelon rind offers a high dose of citrulline, an amino acid that converts in the human body to arginine, which is vital to healthy functioning of the heart and the immune system, and helps dilate blood vessels, which improves circulation. Unfortunately, most of us eat only the red part and waste the white part of watermelons. Now that you know how good it is for the body, never waste the white part again.*



Rice,  
Rotis,  
Dosas



## Chapatti Noodles

Contributed by Sandhya Singh

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 5 min Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 4 leftover chapattis
- 1 onion chopped lengthwise
- 1/4 cup cabbage chopped lengthwise
- 3 tbsp carrot chopped lengthwise
- 2 tbsp capsicum chopped lengthwise
- 5 cloves of garlic chopped finely
- 1 tsp black pepper powder
- 1/4 tsp soy sauce
- 2 tsp tomato sauce
- Salt to taste
- 1 tbsp cooking oil

### Method

Stack the chapattis and cut into four squares. You can also use kitchen scissors. Cut each quarter into two. Then cut into thin strips lengthwise. Heat oil, add onion and garlic and sauté until browned. Now add the chopped carrot and cabbage, sauté them on medium-high flame. Then add chopped capsicum and sauté for a minute. Add soy sauce, tomato sauce and pepper powder and mix well. Add salt. Now add the chapatti strips and mix well. Simmer for 2 minutes, give a quick stir and switch off. Add sambar powder and coriander powder to give it a nice flavour.



# Watermelon Rind Rava Dosa

Contributed by Nalini Nadkarni

Preparation time: 30 min Cooking time: 20 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- Rind of 1 small watermelon
- 6 tbsp rava (semolina)
- 2-1/2 cups rice
- 1 tbsp flour
- 3 to 4 green chillies chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp jaggery
- 2 tbsp scraped coconut
- 3 tbsp canola oil

## Method

Cut the white part off the watermelon rind. Grate this white part.

Add rava and rice flour (ratio of about 2:1) to the grated rinds until it has the consistency of a thick batter. Add a few pinches of salt (to taste), chillies, a little jaggery, a few tablespoons of scraped coconut.

On a non-stick tava, heat a little oil and spread the batter with a katori; make it as thin as possible. After 1/2 minute (when it bubbles a bit and browns), turn it over. When it thickens, the dosa is done. Serve with coconut or coriander mint chutney.

*A regular dosa is a particularly healthy option for not only breakfast but also lunch or dinner—especially as it can be had plain or with a stuffing of potatoes and many other vegetables (there are even non-vegetarian options available!). Low on calories, a dosa has significant good carbohydrates, is low on saturated fats and has above-average protein content.*



# Masala Rice

Contributed by Sonali

Preparation time: 5–7 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 3

## Ingredients

- Leftover cooked rice – 3 cups  
*Important: Avoid using rice more than a day old*
- 1/2 tsp mustard seeds
- 1/2 tsp garam masala
- 1/4 tsp haldi (turmeric powder)
- 2 tbsp mungphali (groundnuts, with the skin)
- 6–8 curry leaves
- 1 large green chilli chopped
- A pinch of hing (asafoetida)
- 1 tbsp cooking oil or ghee
- Salt and red chilli powder to taste
- Some fresh coriander leaves chopped

## Method

Heat the oil in a pan. Add the mustard seeds and allow them to pop, then add the hing, haldi and the groundnuts. Cook till the groundnuts are reddish-brown. Then add the green chilli, curry leaves and garam masala and the leftover rice. Sprinkle a little water over the rice (about 2 tbsp), cover and cook over low heat for 4–5 minutes. Garnish with the chopped coriander leaves.

*Wastage of food grains alone amounts to approximately 20 to 30 million tonnes per year in India, enough to feed about 70 to 100 million people or between 3 and 5 times the population of the entire National Capital Region of Delhi.*

# Daal Parantha

Contributed by Sonali

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 5–10 min Serves: 4

## Ingredients

- 1 large cup of leftover cooked daal (chana or kulthi daal—horse gram—are ideal for this recipe, but any leftover daal will do)
- 3–4 cups atta (wheat flour)
- 1 tsp ghee or oil (optional)
- 1/2 tsp ajwain (carom seeds)
- 1 tsp roasted jeera (cumin seeds) (optional)
- 1 small onion chopped fine (optional)
- A couple of sprigs of fresh dhania (coriander) leaves chopped (optional)
- 1 large green chilli chopped
- 1/4 tsp red chilli powder (avoid if you can't handle anything too hot)
- 1 tsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- 1 tbsp kasuri methi (dry fenugreek leaves) (optional)
- 1 or 1/2 tsp salt

## Method

Mix the atta, daal, ajwain, jeera, kasuri methi, salt, red chilli powder, amchoor and chopped onion, chilli and coriander and knead into a soft, firm dough. Add water only if necessary—if the water in the daal isn't enough. When done, add the ghee/oil and knead again. Then set aside for 10–15 minutes. Roll out parathas with the dough and then cook them on a hot tava with some ghee or cooking oil as you would do for regular parathas. Serve hot with some pickle and raita.

Sabzis,  
Curries,  
Raitas



## Lauki Peels Bhurji

Contributed by Paromita Dey

Preparation time: 15 min Cooking time: 15 min Serves: 2

### Ingredients

- 2 cup lauki (bottle gourd) peels
- 1 big onion
- 1 tsp haldi (turmeric)
- 1 tbsp khus khus (poppy seeds)
- 3 tbsp cooking oil
- Salt to taste

### Method

Chop lauki peels finely. Fry the chopped onions first, add the chopped peels, salt, turmeric, and khus khus. Cook dry till done.



# Crispy Karele ka Chhilka

Contributed by Daya Bikhchandani

Preparation time: 40 min Cooking time: 15 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- 6-8 karelas (bitter gourd)
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp aata (wheat flour)
- 1 tsp curd

## Method

Remove the skin of the karelas. Wash the skin under tap water in a sieve. Put in a bowl and add the salt, curd and flour. Mix well and leave for 30 minutes. After that, wash in a sieve and squeeze out the water, to remove the bitterness. Deep fry in hot oil till crisp.

Note: The remaining karela—without the peel—is perfectly suited to making a regular subzi: stuffed karela or karela slices cooked like any other vegetable, with onion, garlic, salt and red chilli and amchoor powder.

*Karela or bitter gourd has many health benefits that are little known. For instance, fresh pods are said to be an excellent remedy for respiratory problems due to asthma, or cold and coughing. Consuming karela regularly is also known to help cure a number of skin problems like acne and skin blemishes. It is also rich in free radicals, which have anti-ageing properties.*

# Potato Skin Charchari

Contributed by Meena Mukherjee

Preparation time: 15 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- Skin of 10-15 potatoes
- 1 tsp panch phoran (a mix of dry spices, easily available in most food and provision stores in india)
- 2 tsp khus khus (poppy seeds)
- 1 green chilli finely chopped
- 1 tbsp mustard oil
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- Salt to taste
- Sugar to taste

## Method

Heat the oil in a pan. Add the panch phoran, khus khus, green chilli and let it crackle. Add the strips of potato skin and cook till they are tender. Add salt, turmeric, red chilli powder, sugar and a little bit of water. Cook till done. Garnish with finely chopped coriander and ginger.

*Potato skin has more nutrients than the rest of the potato, when compared gram for gram. Potato skin contains B vitamins, vitamin C, iron, calcium, potassium and other nutrients as well as lots of fibre, approximately 2 grams per ounce. A medium baked potato, including the skin, contains almost 4 grams of fibre, 2 milligrams of iron and 926 grams of potassium. So are you sure you want to peel that potato now?*



# Vegetable Charchari

Contributed by Ila Prakash Singh

Preparation time: 15 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 2



## Ingredients

- 1 cup cauliflower (gobhi) stems
- 1 cup julienne radish peels
- 1/2 cup julienne of carrot peels
- 1/2 cup julienne of potato peels
- 1 small brinjal
- 1 tsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- A pinch of panch phoran (a popular mix of whole, dry Indian spices)
- A pinch of hing
- 1 tbsp mustard oil

## Method

Peel gobhi stems and cut into thin strips and boil. In hot oil, put in the boiled stems and other chopped peels and vegetables. Then add the normal dry masalas and stir fry and at the end, add a dash of amchoor and sugar. Temper with panch phoran and hing in mustard oil. Serve hot with govind bhog rice and moong dal.

*Vegetable peels are often used in many Bengali dishes, especially charchari, a style of cooking where ingredients are either stir-fried or braised. Different versions can be made and may contain vegetable peels, roots, scrapings, and other leftovers that are often discarded. In a more elaborate and non-vegetarian version of the dish, one may incorporate the head portion of a fish, which is often discarded. This is truly a great Bengali contribution to reducing all sorts of food waste.*

# Mukundphali (Pumpkin Peel) Sabzi

Contributed by Promila Chaturvedi

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10–12 min Serves: 4

## Ingredients

- Peels from 1 kg yellow pumpkin (The peels would be much less than 1 kilo)
- 2 medium-sized boiled potatoes
- 1/4 tsp methi (fenugreek) seeds
- 1/2 tsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- 1 tsp dhania (coriander) powder
- A pinch of haldi (turmeric) powder
- Red chilli powder to taste
- Salt to taste
- 3 tbsp cooking oil

## Method

Cut the pumpkin peels into slim strips and steam till slightly tender but not soft. Cut the boiled potato into strips. It may be hard to cut the potato into the same size, but do not make the strips much larger than the pumpkin peel strips. Heat the oil in a saucepan, along with the methi seeds and haldi. Add both the peels and potatoes to this and stir for a minute. Then add the rest of the spices and cook till brown.



# Raw Banana Peel Sabzi

Contributed by Promila Chaturvedi

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- 5 raw bananas
- 1/2 tsp jeera (cumin) seeds
- 1/2 tsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- 1 tsp dhania (coriander) powder
- A pinch of hing (asafoetida)
- A pinch of haldi (turmeric) powder
- Red chilli powder to taste
- Salt to taste
- 4 tbsp of oil or ghee

## Method

Boil the raw bananas and remove the peels. (If you have unboiled peels, boil them in hot water for 15 minutes or till soft.) Cut the peels into strips, following the natural grooves of the banana. Heat the oil. Add the hing and jeera and pinch of haldi. Within 15 seconds, add the banana peels. Cook till you see the peels turn from wet to dry. As they dry up, add the rest of the spices and stir well. Turn off the heat and remove from stove at once.

*Raw bananas—usually eaten boiled—are rich in 'resistant starch' which helps control blood sugar and lowers cholesterol levels in the body. They are also rich in fibre, which helps regulate appetite and control weight.*

# Mooli Patte aur Aaloo ki Sabzi

Contributed by Vidya

Preparation time: 5 min Cooking time: 15 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- Fresh green leaves of 8 radishes (moolis)
- Two medium-sized potatoes
- 3-4 cloves of garlic (chopped fine)
- 2 tbsp mustard oil
- 1 tsp ajwain (carom) seeds
- One whole dried red chilli
- 1/4 tsp red chilli powder
- 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
- 1 tsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- A pinch of hing (asafoetida)
- Salt to taste

## Method

Wash the leaves, drain and then chop them (including the stalks). Peel and wash the potatoes and cut into small pieces. Heat the mustard oil in a pan or kadhai. When it smokes, add the ajwain and hing. After about 10 seconds, add the garlic and the red chilli, broken into 2 or 3 pieces. When the garlic begins to brown a little at the edges, add the potatoes and sauté till they're light brown. Add the chopped radish leaves, sauté for 2 minutes, then cover the pan and let it simmer. After 8-10 minutes, uncover the pan, add the turmeric, red chilli and amchoor powder and salt. Stir for another two minutes and the sabzi is done. Best had with hot parathas or rotis and curd.

*Radish leaves are to be valued not only for their unique, pungent taste, but also for several health benefits: they are a rich source of vitamins C and B complex, potassium and folic acid. They also have significant anti-carcinogenic and anti-oxidant properties.*



# Chatpata Watermelon Curry

Contributed by Anshuli

Preparation time: 15 min Cooking time: 10 min Serves: 2

## Ingredients

- 1 small watermelon (white portion between the actual red pulp and green peel) cut into small pieces
- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- Salt to taste
- 1 tsp chilli powder
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1/4 tsp mustard seeds
- 1/4 tsp of methi (fenugreek) seeds
- 1/2 tsp saunf (fennel)
- 1 tsp jeera (cumin)
- 1 tbsp amchoor (dry mango powder)
- 2–3 tbsp sugar/jaggery

## Method

Heat the cooking oil in a pressure cooker. When oil is heated, add mustard seeds, fenugreek, fennel, cumin; add salt, chilli powder, turmeric powder and put watermelon pieces. Cook with closed lid for 2 whistles. On cooling, add dry mango powder and sugar/jaggery. Mix and bring it to one boil and serve with hot chapattis.



*Watermelons originated from the Kalahari Desert of Africa. The first recorded watermelon harvest occurred nearly 5,000 years ago in Egypt and is depicted on the walls of ancient Egyptian buildings in hieroglyphics. Watermelons were even buried in the tombs of Pharaohs to nourish them in the afterlife. Let us use all parts of this precious fruit in this life!*



# Jackfruit Seeds Curry

Contributed by Vidya Kamath

Preparation time: 30 min Cooking time: 20 min Serves: 1

## Ingredients

- 1 cup jackfruit seeds (pressure cooked to creamy consistency)
- 1 cup bamboo shoots (pressure cooked with the jackfruit seeds)

For the masala:

- 1/2 cup grated coconut
- 2-4 whole red chillies
- 1 tsp roast coriander seeds
- 1 tsp urad daal (black gram)
- 1/2 tsp tamarind extract
- 2 tbsp jaggery
- Salt to taste

Tempering:

- 1 tbsp oil
- 1/2 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 sprig curry leaves (10-12 leaves)
- 1 red chilli
- A pinch of hing (asafoetida)

## Method

Grind the masala ingredients, adding salt to taste. Prepare the tempering in a pan by heating all those ingredients. As soon as the mustard splutters add the ground masala and fry until the oil starts to separate. Add the cooked jackfruit seeds and bamboo shoots and bring to a boil. Then add a little more salt (if necessary, and suited to your taste) and it is ready.



*Jackfruit seeds are very rich in protein. Their phytonutrients have wide-ranging health benefits, with anti-ageing, antioxidant, anti-cancer, anti-ulcer and anti-hypertensive properties. Jackfruit seeds may help prevent nervousness and tension and the high potassium content can lower blood pressure. The flesh of jackfruit, on the other hand, is used in traditional Chinese medicine for treating hangovers.*

# Sweet Sour Watermelon Peel Curry

Contributed by Sabiha Anjum Zaidi

Preparation time: 30 min Cooking time: 15 min Serves: 4

## Ingredients

- Rind of 1 small watermelon
- 3–4 medium size tomatoes
- 2 medium size onions
- 1 tbsp tamarind paste
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp kalonji (onion seeds)
- 3–4 bay leaves
- 2 pieces black cardamom
- 2 tbsp cooking oil
- Salt to taste
- A small amount of jaggery (the size of a black cardamom)
- 1 cup water
- Fresh mint leaves to garnish

*Every part of the watermelon is edible, even its seeds which are also consumed as a traditional snack in Vietnam for Tết, the Vietnamese Lunar New Year's day.*

## Method

Wash the watermelon thoroughly before you cut it. Take the hard and green rinds/peels. Remove any red pulp of watermelon that may still be there on the rinds. Lightly scrape the green rinds and chop them up into medium-size pieces. Keep aside. Chop the onion and tomatoes.

Heat oil in a pressure cooker. Add cumin and onion seeds. Add onions and tomatoes and lightly sauté till they blend together. Then add the chopped rind. Mix well. Add turmeric powder, chilli powder, black cardamom, bay leaf and salt. Add 1 cup of water. Pressure cook on low flame till 3 whistles. When the cooker is slightly cool, open it and add tamarind paste and jaggery. Cook for 1–2 minutes. Stir lightly. The rind should be soft and blended with the gravy.

Garnish with mint leaves. Serve with rice.



# Watermelon Rind Raita

Contributed by Neelam Kane

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 5 min Serves: 4

## Ingredients

- 1 cup chopped or grated watermelon rind with white flesh
- 2 cups curd
- 2 tbsp peanut powder
- 1/2 cup grated coconut
- 2 tsp chopped dhania (coriander) leaves
- 2 green chillies
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp sugar

Tempering (tadka):

- 1/2 tsp ghee
- 1 tsp roasted jeera (cumin)
- A pinch of hing (asafoetida)
- 1 dry red chilli

*In Japan, some farmers grow watermelons in cubic glass boxes so that the melons are easier to fit in the refrigerator and look somewhat fancy. These are often sold at staggering prices of 10,000 japanese yen a piece, more than 6000 rupees!*

## Method

Beat the curd well. Add salt and sugar and keep aside. Make a tadka with ghee, jeera, hing and red chillies. Chop or grate watermelon rind with white flesh. Add to the curd mixture with peanut powder, grated coconut and green chillies.

Garnish with coriander leaves.



## Desserts



## Bread Crumb Cake

Contributed by Helen Noronha

Preparation time: 30 min Cooking time: 40–45 min Serves: 3–4

### Ingredients

- 10 tbsp ground bread crumbs
- 10 tbsp sugar
- 4 eggs
- 200 ml (just under 1 cup) refined oil
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 1 tsp baking powder

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Mix all the above ingredients (with an electric beater if possible) and pour the batter into a pre-greased baking dish. Then bake for about 45 minutes at moderate heat. (Optional: a banana or chopped apple may be added to the batter).

Note: The bread crumbs can be from old or dried bread slices. If not sufficiently dry, the bread can be dried in the sun and then ground in a grinder.

*The total area used to grow all the food wasted on a global level is 14 million square kilometers. That is bigger than the size of Canada (the 2nd largest country in the world) and more than 4 times the size of India (the 7th largest country).*

# Watermelon Rind Payasam

Contributed by Vinila Rose

Preparation time: 10 min Cooking time: 5 min Serves: 1

## Ingredients

- 1 cup grated watermelon rind
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup dried watermelon seeds
- 2 cups milk
- 2 tsp ghee
- 2 tsp shelled watermelon seeds (or chopped cashew nuts)
- A pinch of powdered cardamom

## Method

Grind the dried watermelon seeds in a blender. Add 1/2 cup milk to it and grind it again. Strain the mixture and keep it aside. Heat 2 tsp ghee in a heavy-bottomed pan. Fry the shelled watermelon seeds (or cashew nuts) and keep aside. Add the grated watermelon rind in and fry it until all the water is absorbed and it starts to turn brown. Add in the sugar. After the sugar melts, add the strained watermelon paste. Add the rest of the milk and cardamom powder and the fried watermelon seeds (or cashew nuts).

Garnish with chandi varq (silver foil) and almond flakes. Serve at room temperature.



*Nature's 'Gatorade': A watermelon's total weight is 92% water. It is also high in electrolytes like sodium and potassium, which gives it further hydrating properties.*



# The Team

This project was initiated by Chintan as part of its focus on sustainable consumption. It was undertaken and brought to fruition by Raghav Bikhchandani as part of his internship with Chintan in 2013–14.

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# Tasty, Frugal, Green

In India, we are lucky that we have a cultural heritage of cooking all edible parts of fruits and vegetables innovatively and deliciously. Exploring and reviving these recipes, and sharing them, is a great means to access sustainable practices of the past. In the context of mass deprivation and climate change, doing this also becomes essential. The recipes in this book are not about making 'waste' edible anyhow, but about strategy-eating for nutrition, taste and thrift. They are proof not of 'jugad', but of highly sophisticated culinary craft. Enjoy these delicious recipes, and dig out—or invent—your own!



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