



In the Kitchen

Masala Arvi Creations By Anita Singh

Preparation time: 15 minutes Cooking time: 25 to 30 minutes Serves: 6 to 8

INGREDIENTS

- Arvi (medium size) 1/2 kg
- 2 large onions
- 2 medium tomatoes
- Tamarind (pulp) 1/2 cup
- Coconut grated 2 tbsp
- Cardamoms 3
- Bay leaves 2
- Curry leaves 10 to 12
- Mustard seeds 1/2 tsp
- Cumin seeds 1/2 tsp
- Fenugreek seeds 1/4 tsp
- Salt to taste
- Groundnut powder 1 tbsp
- Ginger Garlic paste 1 tbsp
- Chilli powder 1 tsp
- Turmeric powder 1/2 tsp
- Coriander powder 1 tsp
- Cumin powder (jeera) 1 tsp
- Garam masala 1 tsp

- Chopped Coriander 1 tbsp
- Water 2 to 3 cups of water
- Oil 3 tbsp

METHOD

1. Boil the arvi and peel and skin it. Cut into 2" length wise or breadth wise pieces and keep aside. Do not over boil as it will make the dish turn out to be pulpy.
2. Cut onions into thin slices and add 2 cardamoms, 2 bay leaves and boil in water till the onions become transparent. Drain out excess water, let it cool for sometime and then grind along with grated coconut until smooth.
3. Heat oil and add cumin seeds, mustard seeds and fenugreek seeds. Let it splutter, then add curry leaves and stir for a few seconds. Add the onion coconut paste and stir and let it cook for a minute and then add ginger garlic paste. Stir and cook until oil separates.
4. Add chopped tomatoes and groundnut powder, salt, chilli powder, turmeric powder, coriander powder and jeera powder. Stir for some time



and let it cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add 2 cups of water and stir for few seconds and let it come to a boil.

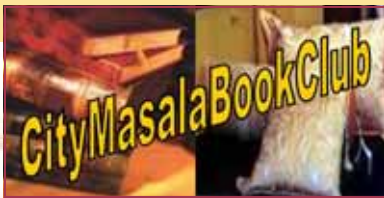
5. When the gravy comes to a boil, add tamarind pulp and stir, and let it cook. (NOTE: if you want more gravy you can add another cup of water at this time and then let it cook for a minute. Check for salt and tamarind juice.).
6. Add the boiled arvi and chopped coriander and cook till the gravy is thick.

To submit your recipe along with original picture, write to info@citymasala.com.

CityMasala Book Club

BOOK REVIEW

By: Sheniz Janmohamed



Black Candle

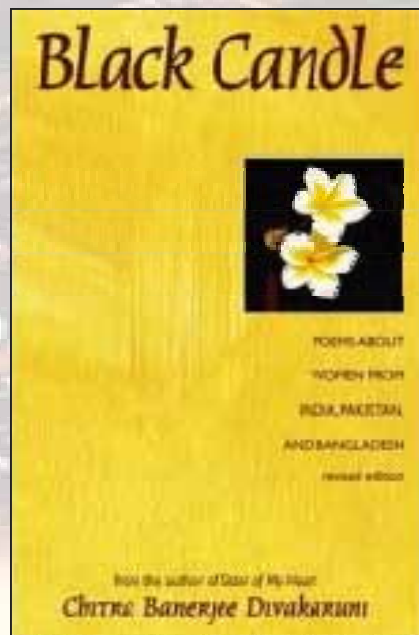
By: Chitra Divakaruni

Chitra Divakaruni's second collection of poems, *Black Candle*, is a tribute to south Asian women, their interactions with each other, and their experiences in the world at large.

Divakaruni manages to tell their stories through poignant imagery and sensitivity, using sensory detail to heighten emotion. One of the lovely poems in the collection is "My Mother Tells Me a Story". The poem is written from the perspective of a mother who is recalling the day she gave birth to her daughter. Divakaruni compares the growth of a mother's womb with the growth of a seed, "First you were/big as a mustard seed,/sputtering light,/then a starapple, tart-shining,/a persimmon/with the blood's own glow,/a pomelo, green and growing/as breath."

In this early collection, readers can recognize the beginnings of Divakaruni's poetic style- specifically her unique prose/narrative poems that have now become her trademark.

Black Candle also explores the relationship between mothers and daughters, from the fall-outs to the simple but significant moments. A memorable poem is "Making Samosas", an activity most south Asian women have participated in. The magical element about Divakaruni's poetry is that she's able to link mundane



activities with life-altering events, and she does this beautifully in "Making Samosas". She juxtaposes the making of *samosas* with the memory of a father, who ran out on his family.

The completion of the *samosas* is an act of recreating memory, a metaphorical exploration of the fragility of relationships. On a purely aesthetic level, Divakaruni's description is mouth-watering, "The filling/is already cooling, spread on/the round tin tray on the counter/where this winter day the late sun/catches it briefly, the warm yellow/potatoes, the green glint of peas."

Divakaruni, who is a staunch supporter of women's rights, also has poems that touch upon taboo topics in South Asia.

In "Burning Bride", she speaks from the voice of a young wife, who witnesses the dowry death of a fellow bride. The piece begins with the circling of a marriage fire, and ends with the image of a woman being forced onto a pyre, "Did they hold her down, struggling, /oozing the dark oily stain? /Did they silence her cries, / rough hand clamping across lips, /so the only sounds/were the sharp rasp of a match/and the quick blue hiss of fire/leaping in a night turned sudden red?"

To purchase *Black Candle*, visit www.amazon.com.