



BESAN LADDOO

INGREDIENTS:

To make 12 to 14 medium size Laddoos

- 2 cups gram flour (besan)
- 4 tbsps fine sooji
- 1 1/2 cups sugar (ground/powdered)
- 1 cup ghee
- 1 tsp each almonds, pistachios, cashew nuts (chopped)
- 1/2 tsp cardamom powder

METHOD

1. Mix gram flour, sooji and ghee in a kadai over low heat.
2. Keep stirring constantly to avoid lumps (takes around 14 to 15 minutes).
3. This mix is ready when it emits an appetizing aroma.
4. Remove from heat and allow it to cool for some time.
5. Add sugar, cardamom powder and nuts to the gram flour and mix thoroughly.
6. Form small ping-pong size balls with this mixture.



NOTE: If the mixture is dry, add a little warm milk. If it is too soft, add a little sooji sautéed in a pan until light brown in color. Don't allow the mixture to cool down too much before adding the sugar and nuts. If the mixture is a little warm, it is easier to form the laddoos.

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

QUICK TIPS IN THE KITCHEN

How to make fresh coriander last longer.

Fresh coriander is often used in Indian cooking as an ingredient during the preparation of a dish or as a garnish after the dish is ready. It is however, not always easily available or perishes quickly. The next time you buy fresh coriander, keep it fresh for a longer time by chopping off the roots and then wrapping the leaves in a sheet of newspaper. Store in the crisper section of your refrigerator.

How to get rid of lingering cooking smells.

Indian cooking smells can be strong and while they are great while you're cooking and hungry, they are less than desirable when you're done with your meal. You don't want to keep smelling the curry you made yesterday, for the rest of the week! Simply place a small, uncovered bowl of soda bicarbonate in a corner on the kitchen counter. It will absorb all the smells and leave your kitchen and the rest of your house, free of cooking smells.

BOOK REVIEW

Shopping For Sabzi: Stories By Nitin Deckha

If you're looking for an enjoyable read after the holidays, order a copy of *Nitin Deckha's Shopping for Sabzi*.

A collection of humorous, well crafted short stories, *Shopping for Sabzi* embodies many of the concerns and questions young South Asians face in the Western world. Each story has a subtle leitmotif - an idea or image that strings the narrative together, and makes the stories more nuanced and fascinating to read.

"*Enterprising Widow*" tells the story of a young South Asian man dating outside his culture, and how his girlfriend and his mother develop a friendship. "*Ketchup*" enters the mindset of a young father, and his memories of being a rebel and activist in university. "*Spick and Span*" is a hilarious look at the dating scene in the South Asian community, from the perspective of a single South Asian woman.

Deckha's strength lies in his ability to describe images with precision and detail. For example, "*Kamala was near statuesque in a cream and soft pink sari, save for her slightly protruding caramel belly.*" Deckha weaves humor and sarcasm in the text, and his characters are people we recognize in our own



lives: the young activist fighting for community projects, the friendly waitress with bigger dreams, the self-conscious young man who fears his own mother, the newly arrived immigrant.

By: Sheniz Janmohamed

ONE ON ONE WITH NITIN DECKHA

Q: Which story is your favorite in *Shopping for Sabzi*?

A: "Enterprising Widow," with "Diva Desperada" as a very close second.

Q: Is there a character you loathe?

A: There aren't too many villains in these stories, but Heath in "I 900 Hey Baby" is probably the most loathsome and morally bankrupt character in the collection.

Q: Which story was the most difficult to write?

A: "Will Model for Food"

Q: Is there a character in the collection who shares your personality (i.e., you with a different name)?

A: I suppose the character that is closest to me is Kish in "Ketchup."

Q: What is your favorite collection of short stories?

A: I am a big fan of short stories. I enjoyed Hanif Kureishi's "Love in a Blue Time" and Nell Freudenberger's "Lucky Girls" a great deal.