

GOODFOODLINE

RASHMI UDAY SINGH



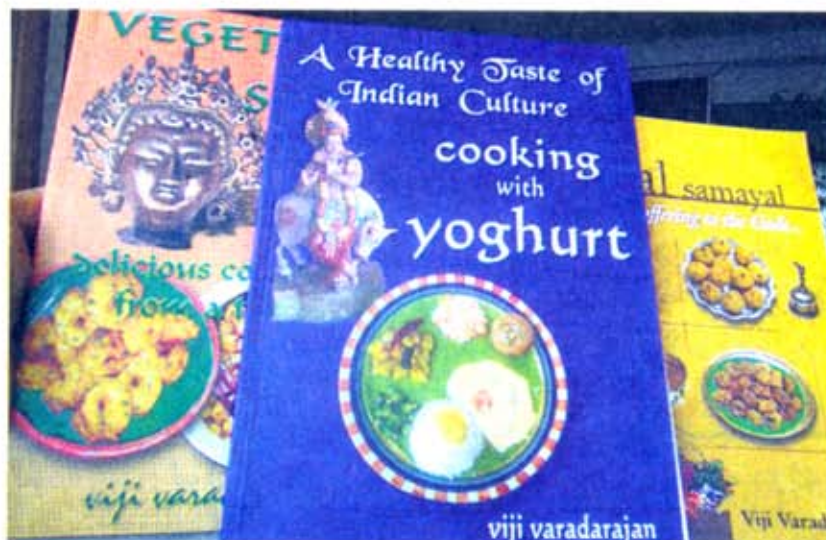
BOOK Viji Varadarajan's "Cooking with Yoghurt", "Festival Samayal" and "Vegetarian Samayal of South India" serve up interesting recipes

The doorbell rings. In walks the postman with a packet. Out tumble three cookbooks, sent from Chennai. What a pleasant surprise! I am delighted. I devour them. Happily and greedily. The latest one "A healthy taste of Indian culture - Cooking with Yoghurt" holds my attention. The other two, "Festival Samayal" and "Vegetarian Samayal of South India", also serve up interesting recipes.

An accompanying covering letter from Viji Varadarajan, the author, whets my appetite even more. It is packed with useful tips and guidelines on everything from storing to using the microwave and the pressure cooker. It also thoughtfully includes individual pictures of the ingredients used in the book and of course, a compilation of yoghurt-based recipes.

Interestingly Viji (an accomplished dancer, and a director in her husband's engineering company) learnt cooking from her mother-in-law when she got married and moved from Hyderabad to Chennai. Since then she has dedicatedly written three books (one is its fourth edition). I excerpt two recipes from her latest Yoghurt book: one that uses ripe mangoes and the other, a dessert, that can be made in less than ten minutes in the microwave.

Mambazha puliserry (Ripe



mango cooked in yoghurt gravy)

Ingredients

Ripened mango - 1 large/ half lb
Yoghurt - 3 cups, mix with half-cup water

Turmeric powder - half tsp

Salt - half tsp

Oil - 2 tsp

For seasoning:

Mustard seeds - quarter tsp

Red chilli - 1, halved

Curry leaves - a few, torn into pieces

Asafoetida - one pinch

For the paste:

Coconut, grated/frozen - half cup

Green chillies - 2-3

Fenugreek seeds - half tsp

Cumin seeds - half tsp

Method

Chop mango vertically into 3 pieces and discard the centre with seed. Heat 2 cups of water and cook the mango on medium-low flame for 5 minutes. The mango should be cooked but firm. Heat a teaspoon of oil in a seasoning saucepan and roast the fenugreek briskly for 10 seconds till they turn dark brown. Drain the oil and blend fenugreek with green chillies, cumin seeds and grated coconut into a smooth paste, adding 1-2 tablespoons of water. Mix the paste, cooked mango, the beaten yo-

ghurt and turmeric powder and cook over a medium-low flame, for 2-3 minutes until it thickens a little. Stir constantly with a ladle. Heat the rest of the oil in the seasoning saucepan and pop the mustard seeds. Add the red chilli and stir for 5 seconds until bright red and crispy. Remove from flame and add the curry leaves and asafoetida. Stir all this into the gravy and mix well.

(Serve hot with steaming rice and a vegetable of your choice.)

Thayir theratipaal - A tasty yoghurt milk dessert

Ingredients

Sweetened, condensed milk - 1 tin /200gm

Ghee/Clarified butter - 2 tbsp (refer page 40)

Yoghurt - 1 tbsp

Method

Stir the sweetened, condensed milk and ghee and pour into a microwave dish that is double in size. Microwave on 'high' for 5 minutes. Remove and stir in the yoghurt. Microwave on 'high' for another 5 minutes.

(Serve this interesting dessert hot or cooled.) Timely Tip: You can use this Khova/theratipaal as stuffing in puris and turn them into malpuas (a popular North Indian dessert)!