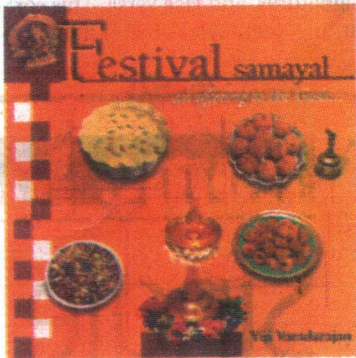


BOOKS

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FESTIVAL SAMAYAL — AN OFFERING TO THE GODS

By Viji Varadarajan
Orient Enterprises,
Price not stated

WITH *Festival Samayal*, author Viji Varadarajan doesn't just present a series of recipes to tide you through festivities. She also painstakingly explains the histories, meanings, and customs involved in the festivals celebrated in India. She writes in detail about everything from the elaborate four days of Pongal to the rather stoic days of Nombu, from the ritualistic Mahashivarathri to the joyous Varushapirappu (or Tamil New Year's Day). And then of course are the recipes. From the simple but tricky paal payasam to the quick puliyodharai sadam (tamarind rice), it's all in here. A value-add: Viji's tips on how to make your dish faster or taste better.

— Kamini Mathai