

WARM UP

1 Quickly read the text about Indian sweets and match a picture with each sweet.

- 1 Rasgulla
 2 Burfi
 3 Gulab jamuns

SOUTH-EAST ASIAN SWEET RECIPES

India has a wide variety of desserts and many popular Indian sweets such as Rasgulla are common throughout South Asia, while many others are local favourites, typical of specific areas of India. Indian desserts can be divided into two categories: milk-based such as Kalakan, Rasgulla, Rasmalai, Kalakand and Burfi; or flour-based, such as Gulab Jamun, Malpuwa, Halwa and Ladoo.

Rasgulla is a popular milk-based (soft cheese) Indian dessert. Rasgullas are essentially spherical fresh cheese balls in sugar syrup. Some also add semolina to firmly hold fresh cheese together in the spherical shape. Originally from Orissa, not Bengal, but Bengali chefs are credited with perfecting the recipe and spreading it throughout the Indian subcontinent. In Nepal, it is commonly known as 'rasbari'.

Burfi or Barfi is a classic Indian dessert popular throughout the Indian subcontinent. It is made from milk and is similar to a spiced Indian version of cheese cake or fudge.

Gulab Jamuns are an Indian version of donuts immersed in warm sweet syrup. Served as a dessert, this is a staple in most parts of India.



RASGULLA

Ingredients (Makes 8)

- 4 cups of whole milk
- 1 teaspoon lemon or lime juice
- 1 and ½ cups sugar
- ½ teaspoon cardamom powder
- 3 cups water

Method

- Add a teaspoon of lemon juice to milk and bring it to boil. The lemon juice will separate the milk into watery whey and solid chunks.
- Throw away the liquid part by shifting the mixture through a clean muslin cloth. Then squeeze out the extra water.
- Mix solid milk with cardamom. Knead it like dough.
- Make small balls (around 1 cm diameter) out of dough
- Boil the water in a wide utensil over medium-low heat.
- Add sugar to the boiling water to make a sweet syrup.
- Gently drop the solid balls in the boiling syrup.
- Cook the balls in the boiling syrup for about half hour minutes. Balls will expand about twice its size.
- Remove from the heat, cool and serve at room temperature or colder.

BURFI

Ingredients (Makes 8 pieces)

- 1 cup khoya (a kind of unsalted ricotta cheese)
- ½ cup ghee (clarified butter)
- ½ tsp cardamom powder
- 1 cup sugar

Method

- Mix the ricotta cheese, sugar and cardamom.
- Slowly fry the ricotta cheese mixture with ghee on a low heat until golden and paste consistency.
- Place onto a greased plate and cut in 8 diamonds.
- Serve chilled.

GULAB JAMUNS

Ingredients (Makes 20 pieces)

1 cup non-fat milk powder

¼ cup plain flour

3 tablespoons unsalted butter (room temperature)

¼ cup whole milk (room temperature)

pinch of baking soda

1 ¾ cups sugar

1 ½ cups water

coarsely ground cardamom seeds

oil for deep-frying

Method

For the syrup:

- In a large pan, add water, sugar and ground cardamom seeds and bring it to a boil.
- Let the syrup boil for a minute then remove it from the heat.
- Stir the syrup until the sugar is dissolved.
- Set the syrup aside.

For the Gulab Jamun:

- In a bowl, mix milk powder, flour and baking soda.
- Add the butter and mix well.
- Now add milk to make soft dough. The dough will be sticky.
- Let the dough sit for a few minutes. Milk powder will absorb the extra milk. If the dough is dry, add more milk, as the dough should be soft.
- Knead the dough. Grease your hands with butter before working with the dough.
- Divide the dough into about 20 equal portions and roll them into round balls.
- Heat enough oil in a frying pan to cover the balls on medium heat.
- Place the Gulab Jamuns in the frying pan. Remember they will double in volume, so give them enough space.
- It should take about 7 minutes to fry the Gulab Jamuns. While frying keep rolling the Gulab Jamuns around so they are evenly browned.
- Let the gulab jamuns cool off for a few minutes before placing in the hot syrup.
- The gulab jamuns should sit in the hot syrup for at least 20 minutes prior to serving.

READING COMPREHENSION

2 Read the four recipes and answer the following questions. Be careful, some of the questions have more than one answer.

Which recipe...

- 1 contains cardamom powder? _____
- 2 cooks in boiling syrup? _____
- 3 is cut in diamonds? _____
- 4 makes 20 pieces? _____
- 5 makes 8 pieces? _____
- 6 uses a muslin cloth to shift the mixture? _____
- 7 will double in volume when cooked? _____

SPEAKING

3 Work in pairs. Discuss the Indian sweet recipes above and decide which ones you prefer and how you would alter them to suit 'your country's palates'.

WRITING

4 Write one typical milk-based dessert recipe and one flour-based dessert recipe of your country. Display the recipes for your classmates to see. Decide which recipes you prefer.