

Cook like Mary

A new cookbook offers a glimpse into the Parsi Narielwala household, its soirees and elaborate menus that embrace British, Portuguese and Mughlai dishes along with home staples

PHORUM DALAL
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LAST year, Adi Narielwala handed his godchild, Nicole Mody, a tattered red book. Inside was a collection of over 100 recipes, which includes magazine cut-outs, typed chits and scribbles. These belonged to his mother Mary, who took her kitchen very seriously. In the 1960s, the Narielwalas, a Mumbai-based Parsi family, hosted a lot of dinners; the recipes were sourced from Jerroo Mehta's iconic *101 Parsi Recipes and Time and Talents*

Cookbook magazines and family. From menus prepared during "Adi's End of Term Lunch (the lunch they hosted after Adi's end term in school), Lunch with Shirin Gooloo and Shapoor, and Buffet Dinner for Building Party", Mary has meticulously made notes, to ensure that dishes were never repeated when the same guests visited, unless they requested to have something they had enjoyed. Last August, Narielwala launched *From The Table of Mary S Narielwala: A Perspective on Parsi Cooking* (Spenn

ta Multimedia), which Mody has compiled and edited. The book is not just a compilation of recipes, but gives a glimpse into the world of Parsi homes. It is peppered with interesting trivia. For instance, one had to be fully dressed to sit at a family table for a meal. "Parsi food works on khaatu, meethu and tukku (sour, sweet and spicy); a Gujarati version of the Western ternet pillau, but it tasted delicious," says Mody, who roped in her brother, Darius Madon, a sous chef at Tres Ind. They tried out every recipe, before it went into the book. "The dish that made Adi uncle pick up the phone and call me was quiche lorraine. He said it tasted just like mum made it," says Mody. While the dhansak involves grinding the masala from scratch, the puff pastries and desserts are elaborate. "I have mentioned in the book that since it is a home chef's book, the consistency, each time you make it, can vary. For example, if one uses old tamarind, the gravy would be darker; if they use green tomatoes, the shade would change again," says Mody.

As she heads to the kitchen, she picks up an elephant-printed apron, and hands us one to play sous chef. We are ready to dish out the chicken and macaroni bake. We are excited to try it out as Mary's tomato sauce has a secret addition of bacon, and her tip to beat egg white and egg yolk separately promises to make it fluffier.



1 For the sauce, Mody adds chopped tomatoes, ginger, onion, red and green chillies and bacon. She pours in four cups of water and lets it simmer for 20 minutes, before blending it. In another pan, she takes a slice of butter and mixes in flour to make a roux that we add to the sauce, so that it thickens.

2 The bake dish requires a lot of small preparations that lead to the final layering. She begins by separating the rind from the bacon, making a mixture of milk and mustard and boiling the eggs and macaroni. In a pan, she fries the bacon, potatoes, and square pieces of boiled eggs.

3 In a deep dish, we scatter the macaroni, potatoes, eggs, bacon pieces and chicken (that has been cooked in the red and green chillies). We pour in the mustard milk and top it with the sauce.

4 She adds a thick blanket of grated cheese to this, slathering the dish with a mixture of egg white and yolk that was beaten separately. "I realised it gives a better rise," says Mody.

5 Before closing the oven door, Nicole throws in a few dollops of butter to give the final dish an airy soufflé rise and brownish texture.

Cooking tips
Give bread and butter custards a delicious flavour by beating up banana or a few drops of lemon with eggs and sugar
Add a drop of cold water to egg whites before whisking, they will froth better
Rub salt on your fingers when cleaning fowl meat, as it prevents your hands from slipping



Chicken and macaroni bake



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Cookbook, magazines and family. From menus prepared during Adi's last term in school, lunch with Shirin Gooloo and Supriya, and Buffet Dinner for the "Loving Parry", Mary has meticulously made notes, to ensure that dishes were never repeated when the same guests visited, unless they requested to have something they had enjoyed.

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salt, fat acid, but better. Our food also has European, British and Goan influences," explains Mody. "The Portuguese influence came from the Goan cooks who made Goan curry, fried fish."

The book collates appetisers, pans and bakes, mains and desserts. There is wader per retho, malagatawyo soup to chicken and ham pie, and a Mughlai pillau that serves 20 people. "For the latter, we have retained the recipe as is, and not reduced the portion size. Interestingly, the dish requires use of coconut milk, which I found to be weird in a pillau, but it tasted delicious," says Mody, who roped in her brother, Darius Madon, a sous chef at Tres Ind. They tried out every recipe, before it went

into the book. The dish that made Adi uncle pick up the phone and call me was quite ironic. He said it tasted just like mum made it," says Mody.

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PHOTO: ASHISH RAJE

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Chicken tikka pizza



Alfredo's

A renovation can sometimes be the death of a place, if it changes its

Bombay pizza



A sangria for every mood

