

Celebrate Easter with delicious traditional recipes

Easter, the day of celebration for the resurrection of Christ is celebrated world over with joy and glee. Generally a long weekend which starts with Good Friday and ends with Easter Sunday is an apt reason to cook traditional Easter recipes which spreads the joy of the celebration at your home. The recipes are all full of fresh seasonal flavor and entertaining your family and friends on Easter will never be so easy and delightful with these traditional Easter recipes.

We start our Easter repast with '*Hot Cross Buns*', many have heard or read the nursery rhyme based on these buns which are traditionally made and eaten hot or toasted on Good Friday with the cross on them signifying the crucifixion of Christ.

We need the following ingredients to make our Hot Cross Buns:

500 gms plain flour, plus extra for dusting, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoon ground cinnamon, 45gms unsalted butter plus extra for greasing, 100gms sugar, zest (lemon peel) of 1 lemon, 1 teaspoon dry yeast mixed in 100 ml lukewarm water, 1 egg, 300 ml warm milk, 200 gms mixed dry fruits. For the topping, we need 2 table spoons of plain flour, 2 tablespoons powdered sugar and 1 tablespoon honey.

So how do we make the Hot Cross Buns?

Start by sieving the flour, salt and cinnamon powder into a mixing bowl. Add the unsalted butter to the bowl along with sugar, lemon zest and yeast along with the egg which is thoroughly beaten and the warm milk to the sieved flour. Mix well the flour mixture to form a soft, pliable dough. Add the mixed dried fruits into the dough kneading it till it turns soft and elastic. Cover the dough with a plastic film for at least one and half hour till the yeast does its job and raises the dough to double its size. Then divide the dough into 12 equal balls and slightly flatten them with your palms giving them the needed bun shape.

In the meantime, preheat the oven to 240°Celsius and grease a baking tray with butter transferring the buns into it. To make the topping add together the plain flour and sugar with little cold water to make a thick paste which should be put on to the dough buns making a cross on each bun. Transfer the buns into the oven and let them bake for 15 -20 minutes checking the doneness in between or till they look golden brown. As soon as the buns are done, brush the top gently with honey and transfer to a dish to be eaten hot.

These traditional, spiced, honey glazed Hot Cross Buns served as a classic Easter treat can also be enjoyed any time of the year with strawberry or any other fruit jam.

Taking our Easter celebrations ahead, we offer you to indulge in a delicious meaty delight which is quite gourmet and traditionally European.

Stroganoff, said to have its origin in Russia and made with succulent pieces of lean beef is generally enjoyed as Easter's main dish in Russia.

For our readers, we will be giving a minor twist to the dish by making the Stroganoff with chicken (Vegetarians can make the same with Soy chunks).

We need the following ingredients to make our Chicken Stroganoff:

500 gms boneless chicken cut into lean pieces, 50 gms butter, 2 medium onions finely chopped, 50 gms plain flour, 300 ml chicken stock, 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard, packet of mushrooms (sliced), 50 gms sour yogurt, cup of white wine (if wine is not available, a tablespoon of vinegar will suffice), salt and pepper to taste.

So how do we make our Chicken Stroganoff?

We start by seasoning the pieces of boneless chicken with salt and pepper, then in a large frying pan we melt the butter and brown the seasoned chicken for 5 – 10 minutes. Then add the chopped onions to the frying pan and cook them for 5 minutes along with the chicken. Stir in the flour into the frying pan and mix in the chicken broth bringing it to a boil stirring constantly. Add the mustard simultaneously lowering the heat and cook till the chicken is tender. Add in the mushrooms, sour cream and white wine and add salt and pepper to taste cooking the Stroganoff completely.

Our Chicken Stroganoff can be served with boiled rice, egg noodles or penne pasta.

A meal is not complete without dessert and so is our Easter meal. We will be completing our meal with a dessert full of richness of liquor making up for the abstinence observed in Lent up to Easter by our fellow Christian readers.

We will be showing how to make Strawberry Ganache Truffles, a rich brandy filled dessert which will surely tantalize your sweet tooth on this Easter.

We need the following ingredients to make our Strawberry Ganache Truffles:

500 gms dark cooking chocolate (available at Crawford Market in Mumbai), 250 gms strawberry crush, 30 ml brandy, 100 ml honey, 150 gms unsalted butter and cocoa powder to dust.

So how do we make our Strawberry Ganache Truffles?

We start by melting 300gms of the dark chocolate in a heatproof bowl over simmering water. Then, on a separate gas bring the strawberry, brandy and honey to a boil, pour one third of the puree mixture into the melted chocolate stirring the chocolate simultaneously. Then add in the remaining puree mixture into the ganache and mix it well by stirring it constantly while it bubbles on to a low flame. At this point, the ganache will look smooth and very glossy.

Place a cling film on to the surface of the ganache and let it cool a bit off the gas, add in the butter and mix it thoroughly which will ensure that there are no lumps formed in the ganache. Leave the mixture in a cool place

for 24 hours ensuring that it doesn't solidifies. After 24 hours, the ganache should be rolled into thumb sized balls and dipped into the remaining 200 gms of melted dark chocolate and then dusted with cocoa powder and refrigerated. Hence, your Strawberry Ganache truffles will be ready.

These recipes are sure to make your Easter repast to be really joyous and will be truly enjoyed by your family and friends.

Happy Easter!!!