

Culinaire

ALBERTA / FOOD & DRINK / RECIPES NOVEMBER 2021



Exploring Indian Cuisine | Chilly Day Spirits | Rice Recipes

Fanning the Embers in November

BY KEANE STRAUB

When the weather turns cold, nothing is better than slipping into something simmering with spices. And, when those spices are fused with filling, comforting dishes, it's nothing

short of satisfying.

This month we asked Alberta chefs for their take on heating things up. From roasted peppers in savoury breads, to hearty stews infused with curry,

to international takes on the humble potato, there's no shortage of what a little spice, and a lot of love, can do to get your inner furnace flaring as we head into another Alberta winter.



At Canmore's ankôr, owner and head chef, **Danny Beaulieu**, marries contemporary Canadian cuisine with knowledge and excitement. From serving in Canadian restaurants to bartending in Japan, Beaulieu soon found the kitchen calling his name. "The restaurant industry has always been my passion," he explains. "I made sure to collect as much knowledge as possible by working in different fine dining establishments before finally taking the leap and opening my own."

He prides himself on sourcing products that most guests won't encounter anywhere else and taking advantage of one or two ingredients that are currently in season. "We often create dishes that focus on one ingredient, transforming it in a way that will wow our guests."

Beaulieu's other source of inspiration is his team at ankôr. "I have a vision of what we are working towards, but the technique and flavours in the dishes are created as a team." It's rather fitting then, that



PHOTO BY LINDA GARSON

this Poblano Cornbread recipe is one Beaulieu got from ankôr's pastry chef and baker, Jo-Annie Deschamp. "It reminds me of every holiday that I shared with friends and family," says Beaulieu. "It's comforting and perfect for the cold season coming ahead."

Poblano Cornbread

Makes one 22.5 cm loaf

- 3 poblano peppers
- 1¼ cups butter
- 2½ cups corn (fresh or frozen)
- ¾ cup (170 mL) cream
- 3 eggs
- 1¼ cups pastry flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ¾ cup cornmeal (fine)

1. Place poblano peppers directly on hot BBQ grill and blister the skin. Transfer to a sealed container and allow to steam and cool before peeling and removing the skins. Dice and peel the seeded poblanos and set aside.
2. Turn your oven on to 375° F and put in a 22.5 cm cast iron pan to heat.
3. Melt butter in a small pot over medium heat. Add corn and cook until golden.
4. Add corn and butter to a blender with the cream and blend until soft and creamy. Add eggs and blend thoroughly.
5. In a large bowl sift together all dry ingredients except for the cornmeal. Then whisk in cornmeal until well mixed.
6. Add wet ingredients and poblanos to dry ingredients and mix to combine.
7. Remove cast iron from oven and grease lightly with butter. Add batter to the pan. Bake for about 35-40 minutes to an internal temperature of 200° F.
8. Serve with plenty of butter.



Chef Nitin Jadhav has honed his culinary skills in hotels of the Taj, Marriott, and Fairmont groups, from India to Jasper. For more than a decade, he's been the Executive Chef at the Courtyard & Residence Inn by Marriott at the Calgary Airport. It's an experience he describes as both memorable and flavourful. "I'm enjoying every moment of it," he adds.

"Happy, satisfied guests influence my cooking," he continues, saying that there's no specific cuisine he prefers to cook. Guest cravings help shape Chef Jadhav's menu, but there's also underlying inspiration courtesy his mother. "Her food was and still is a topic of discussion in our family," he says. "Our friends and family always had a memorable meal at our home, so those memories always inspire me. I like for my guests to have the same memories with my food."

Vada (potato ball) Pav (bread roll) is a dish that Chef Jadhav says is close to his heart, and resonates his home in Mumbai: "As a kid, I remember devouring this with my brother until we could not move an inch," he recalls. "It's a dish that takes me for a walk through my beautiful childhood memories." Best served on rainy or cold days, Chef Jadhav advises to not rush the process. "Good food takes time and lots of love!"



PHOTO BY DONG KIM

Vada Pav

Serves 2-4

- 2 medium potatoes
- 3 Tbs (45 mL) vegetable oil
- ½ tsp mustard seeds
- 4 - 5 curry leaves
- 1 Tbs chopped garlic
- 1 tsp chopped green chilies
- ½ tsp chopped fresh ginger
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 2 tsp salt
- 25g chopped fresh cilantro

Batter:

- 2 cups chickpea flour
- 1 cup (250 mL) cold water
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- ¼ tsp baking powder

Oil for deep-frying

1. Boil potatoes with skin on in salty water until tender. Remove from water

- and allow to cool. Peel and smash potatoes, getting rid of any large lumps.
2. Heat oil in a pan, add mustard seeds and curry leaves to temper for a few minutes.
3. Add garlic, green chilies, and ginger. Sauté for one minute, then add turmeric and smashed potatoes. Continue to sauté over medium heat for a few minutes.
4. Stir in salt and cilantro, then remove mixture from pan and spread on a plate to cool.
5. While this cools, make the batter: in a bowl mix together chickpea flour and water and whisk until there are no lumps. Add remainder of batter ingredients, whisk together, then set aside.
6. Heat oil in a deep pan to 350° F.
7. Make small balls with potato mixture. Once oil has heated, dip balls in batter, shaking off excess, and then deep-fry until golden brown. Remove and place on paper towel to drain.
8. Serve hot on your favourite bun with your choice of chutney and toppings.



After working in Hawaii, Spain, London, and France, Calgary-born Chef **Lancelot Monteiro** came home once again and was the overseeing chef for Cilantro, Bar C, and Urban Butcher. Taking a year off in 2019 after Cilantro closed, he seized the opportunity to move to Banff where he is Chef at The Prow at Buffalo Mountain Lodge.

“I always like to make people happy,” Chef Monteiro explains, “and what better way to explore new foods and different tastes.” His mother is Ukrainian, and exposed him to different styles and flavours of European cooking, while his father is from the Middle East, and introduced him to a world of curries and spices.

He shares a recipe based on his grandmother’s curry lentil soup, one that he enjoyed as a child. “My grandmother would always tell us kids, ‘Eat more ginger and garlic and turmeric! It’s good for your blood!’” Today, he makes this stew for his kids on a cold day, or when they’re under the weather. “The smell of it cooking is one of my wife’s faves.”

Cooking low and slow makes all the difference in this dish, says Chef Monteiro, but more importantly cook with love and good energy. “When people ask why my food tastes great, my answer has always been love and care!”



COURTESY BUFFALO MOUNTAIN LODGE

Lentil and Sweet Potato Stew

Serves 6

- 4 Tbs (60 mL)** olive oil, divided
- 2 cloves** garlic, minced
- 1 Tbs** fresh ginger, grated
- 1 medium** yellow onion, diced
- 1 medium** carrot, diced
- 2 stalks** celery, diced
- 1 large** sweet potato, diced (approximately 2 cups)
- 1 tsp** curry powder
- 1 tsp** dried turmeric
- ½ tsp** dry fenugreek
- 1** bay leaf
- 2 cups (500 mL)** water
- 1 28 oz can** diced tomatoes
- 1 cup** red lentils (soaked in cold water for 15 minutes)
- 1 bouquet** garni (fresh thyme and rosemary)
- 1 medium** zucchini, diced
- To taste** salt and pepper
- 2 cups** kale, chopped

1. Heat 3 Tbs (45 mL) olive oil in medium sized pot and add onion, celery, carrot, ginger and garlic. Cook for 15 minutes on medium-low heat.

- 2.** Meanwhile, toss the sweet potato with 1 tbs (15 mL) olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast at 400° F for 10-15 minutes or until starting to brown. Set aside and let cool.
- 3.** Add curry powder, turmeric, fenugreek and bay leaf to the pot and continue to cook for 15 minutes on low heat, making a curry paste.
- 4.** Once your curry paste is cooked, add water to deglaze the bottom of your pot, making sure there is nothing sticking to it.
- 5.** Turn heat to med-high and add canned tomato, roasted sweet potato, soaked lentils, bouquet garni and diced zucchini. Bring up to boil and reduce to a low simmer. Let simmer for 35-40 minutes.
- 6.** Check to make sure the lentils are cooked through and check for seasoning (salt and pepper).
- 7.** Remove from heat and add kale. Let stew cool slightly before serving – but it’s always better to enjoy the next day. 🍴

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Keane Straub has travelled from Tofino to Charlottetown, sampling the different flavours Canada offers. The passion people have for their craft and culture inspires Keane to tell their stories.