

The ONAM recipes guide



**Written By
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This book is dedicated to Susan, my better half. Without her understanding and constant support maintaining the blog and writing an eBook would not have been possible.

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One final REQUEST....

If you downloaded this eBook and liked it, or have suggestions to improve this in future editions; please, please do not hesitate to leave a comment on our blog. We will certainly look into it and make amendments for the next issue in 2011.

Yours Sincerely

Abraham and Susan

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ONAM though popularly known as the harvest festival of Kerala, around the world, for a Malayalee it transcends the boundaries of season and brings in nostalgic memories of home. The rich culture and heritage of the golden state of Kerala is showcased in its grandest splendour during the Onam season. Onam season dotted with lot of cultural activities including intricately decorated Pookalam(flower decoration), breathtaking Snake Boat Race and exotic Kaikottikali dance are some of the most remarkable features of Onam .This is also the time of family reunions, the highlights of which are the grand Onam Sadhya(feast).

A Brief History of Onam

Onam falls during the Malayalam month of Chingam (Aug – Sep) and marks the homecoming of legendary King Mahabali. It is believed that during his reign, the world saw the peak of prosperity and individual integrity. It is believed that Onam celebrations started during the Sangam Period. Record of celebrations can be found from the time of Kulasekhara Perumals (800 AD). At that time Onam celebrations continued for a month.

Harvest Time

As it is a harvest season, the beautiful state of Kerala can be seen in its magnificent best. Weather is pleasantly sunny and warm calling for mirth and celebrations. Fields look brilliant as they glow with golden paddy grains. It is also the boom time of fruits and flowers. After the month of deprivation, Karkidakam (last month of Malayalam Calendar), farmers are happy with a bountiful harvest and celebrate the festival to the hilt.


ONASADHYA (The Grand Feast)

Onam is celebrated in four days, as Onnam Onam (first day of Onam) through Nalaam Onam (fourth day).

Onnam onam (first day) is celebrated on Uthradam (Malayalam star) and is considered as childrens Onam.

The second day, Thiruvonam is the most celebrated day where families get together and the women of the household prepares the grand Onam Feast.

The food, purely Vegetarian, is served on a clean Banana leaf and attention is given to the order and position of each Curry on this leaf. From left to right, the order is as follows: Banana chips (1-2 varieties), Pickles (Mango and Lime) Injicurry, Olan, Kichadi, Thoran, Aviyal, Kootucurry, Pachadi, Kalan. Rice is served with Parippu and Sambar and the Sadhya is finished with Pazham, Pappadam and Payasam.

 Looking your very first ONAM SADHYA (feast) can seem a little daunting, but it's definitely fun, and our experience tells us the best way to get started is to jump right in with both feet. You might splash around at first, but the end result will keep your head above.



Pookalam (Flower Decoration) during ONAM
Photographed by Chacko's Kitchen



Pookalam (Flower Decoration) during ONAM
Photographed by Chacko's Kitchen

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PAPPADAM

Pappadam is pronounced as (PAH-pah-duhm). Also known as Pappad in North India, & Poppadams in Europe. Pappadam's are wafer-thin bread made with lentil flour. South Indians generally prefer unseasoned, where-as Pappad in North India are flavoured variously. You will find different varieties such as Pepper Pappad, Garlic Pappad, Jeera(Cumin Seeds) Pappad & many more varieties are available commonly in Indian grocery stores. Deep fried Pappadams puff-up to almost double their size.

Pappadam's are a mainstay of Indian Meals, serve as an appetizer. Generally Pappadam's are deep fried in oil, but I prefer Pappadam's roasted. The advantages of roasting Pappad are: no oil required thus healthy and saves time in preparation.

Ingredients

Pappadam's – 10
Oil – 200 ml

Golden Touch Mise en Place [2 mins]

If you desire in small bites, cut as desired or as shown in the photo

Golden Touch Steps [5 mins]

Drop into hot Oil. Turn-over with a long handled ladle

Note:

- Once cooked please store away in air-tight containers
- If you liked Pappadam, then surely you'll like [**Masala Pappad**](#)



GINGER & YOGURT [INJITHAIR]

InjiThair - In Malayalam 'native language' of the Southern State of Kerala in India is : Inji (Ginger) and Thair (Yogurt)

Ginger is native to India and China. Ginger is also mentioned in Koran, thus was available to Arabs. In Europe it was part of the table setting, and barkeepers kept powdered ginger outside in small containers to be used with beer. Thus the 'ginger ale' was born.

In Indian cookery Ginger plays an essential role, either fresh minced, sliced or chopped. Ginger is commonly used as a digestive aid. Ginger's anti-inflammatory properties help relieve pain and reduce inflammation associated with arthritis, rheumatism and muscle spasms. Ginger's therapeutic properties effectively stimulate circulation of the blood, removing toxins from the body, cleansing the bowels and kidneys, and nourishing the skin. It also helps in treatment of asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory problems.

Things You'll Need

- Ginger - 100 grams
- Yogurt - 150 ml
- Salt to taste

Golden Touch Mise en place – [5 mins]

- Peel and shred the Ginger

Golden Touch Steps – [2 mins]

- Mix all the ingredients and stir well

SWEET & SOUR GINGER CHUTNEY (PULI INJI)

Puli is Tamarind and Inji is Ginger in Malayalam. Malayalam is the official language for the people of Southern Indian state of Kerala. This is a preparation where ginger is the main ingredient. It is cooked with Tamarind paste and Jaggery.

Puli (Tamarind) is considered an aphrodisiac as well as a laxative, which induces bowel movement and used for treatment of constipation. Ginger also do have the same goodness, thus as a combination is really good to have during such elaborate sadhyas.

Things you will need

Ginger - 250 grams
Dried Red Chillies - 2
Red chilly powder - 1 tbsp
Tamarind paste - 50 grams
Jaggery syrup - 50 ml
Coriander leaves - 1 sprig
Mustard seeds - 1/2 tsp
Oil - 2 tbsp
Salt - to taste



Golden Touch Mise en Place [20 mins]

1. Peel and chop ginger very finely
2. Soak tamarind in 50 ml of hot water for 20 min
3. Break Dried Red Chillies into small pieces

Golden Touch Steps [25 mins]

1. Heat oil in a pan and add the chopped ginger pieces saute till golden brown
2. Add the red chilly powder and stir well. Allow to cool
3. Grind the ginger to a thick paste without water
4. Heat tamarind paste along with jaggery syrup on low flame and bring to boil
5. Add the ginger paste and keep stirring until the mixture boils to a thick paste
6. To hot oil in a pan add mustard seeds allow to pop. Add broken dried red chillies and curry leaves. Add to the thickened paste

KAYA NURUKKU / BANANA CHIPS SADHYA STYLE

ONAM, the much awaited grand festival of Kerala is fast approaching and households in the villages of Kerala are busy preparing for the grand family unions and sumptuous feasts. Plantain has always been an unavoidable ingredient in Kerala dishes, thanks to its availability in abundance as the festival season approaches. The nostalgic images of grandmother, Mum and Aunts getting together and shouting orders to their trusted lieutenants to get the best plantains from the backyard and to each other to maintain the quality of the finished product are firmly etched in our memories. This recipe is a popular variation of the trademark banana chips of Kerala which is usually served in traditional sadhyas.

Things You'll Need:

Raw plantains 4 nos
Turmeric powder ½ tsp
Oil for deep frying
Salt as needed
Water 2 cups + ½ cup



Golden Touch Preparation

1. Wash the Plantains well and pat dry. Peel off the skin. In a bowl, add 2 cups water and Turmeric powder. Soak the plantains in this for at least 30 minutes.
2. Drain and dry the Plantains using a paper towel. Now cut the Plantain into quarter pieces (4 pieces per slice). Make sure that they are thinly sliced into even pieces.
3. Add Salt into half cup water with a pinch of Turmeric powder. Mix well and set aside.
4. Heat Oil in a deep pan and add the sliced pieces in batches. Using a slotted spoon, stir frequently to avoid clumping. When they bubble up to the surface (a sign they are half ready), add 1-2 tsp of Salt water to the Oil and continue frying until crisp (This may cause little splashing of Oil, so please stay away from the burner or be very careful while doing this.).
5. Drain excess oil onto a paper towel or newspaper and make sure the chips are completely cooled before storage in an air tight container.

MANGO PICKLE (ACHAR)

Achaar or pickle is a very spicy condiment which has to be eaten in very small quantities. Any Indian meal without pickle is unimaginable. Mango pickle can be considered to be the queen of pickles. It is easy to make and great to taste. We thought we would delight you with this easy to make mango pickle today, specially when this is the mango season in our god's own country. We are sure that most of you have nostalgic memories about spending your good old days amongst the mango groves in your ancestral homes!!! Let it bring a lotta memories!

Things you will need

Raw Mango 1 lb, cut to small cubes
Red chilly powder 4 tbsp
Turmeric powder ¼ tsp
Asafoetida powder ¼ tsp
Fenugreek powder ¼ tsp
Gingelly (Sesame) Oil ½ cup
Salt as needed
Water ¼ cup
Mustard seeds ¾ tsp
Dry red Chilly 4 nos
Curry leaves 2-3 sprigs



Golden Touch Steps [2 hrs marination + 30mins]

1. In a mixing bowl, add the cubed Mango pieces along with Turmeric powder and Salt. Mix these together well and set aside for at-least 2 hours.
2. After that, add red Chilly powder, Asafoetida and Fenugreek powder. Mix all well to combine.
3. Heat Oil (until fumes start to develop) in a heavy bottomed pan. Switch off flame and immediately add Mustard seeds, dry red Chilly and Curry leaves.
4. Add this over the Mango pieces and mix well. Continue mixing until the froth from oil is completely disappeared and the raw smell from the Chilly powder is gone.
5. Transfer this to another bowl and set aside.
6. Now in the same pan, boil ¼ cup water and add to the prepared Mango pickle. Mix well to combine and spicy, tasty Mango pickle is ready to serve..

BEETROOT PICKLE

Things you will need

- 1 Medium sized beetroot
- 3-4 Pitted dates
- 3 Garlic Cloves
- 1/2 Cup Vinegar
- Salt as required
- 1/2 tsp Red Chilli Powder



Golden Touch Steps

1. Clean the Beetroot and peel the skin. Cut it into 4 quarters.
2. Grate the Beetroot pieces using a Vegetable grater.
3. Chop the Dates and Garlic and mix with the grated Beetroot.
4. Add Salt, and the Chilli powder.
5. Add enough Vinegar to just cover all the ingredients. Mix well and keep refrigerated for a day or two.
6. Take out from refrigerator and mix well and adjust the Salt or sweetness using more Dates.
7. You may need to add little more Vinegar also, and is ready to use.
8. Keep refrigerated and it last for few weeks.

TOMATO RASAM (INDIAN SPICED TOMATO SOUP)

To a South Indian, there is no greater pleasure than having a bowl of Rasam and Rice. People from Kerala and Tamil Nadu call it Rasam. Were as people of Karnataka call it Charu and those from Andhra Pradesh call it Saru.

Legend says, a South Indian King threw a grand feast, and all the Sambar was consumed by the host himself. Now the kitchen staff was left with no Sambar for the rice. Here one of the chef took all the left over ingredients of Sambar like the tomatoes, tamarind juice and spiced it up in such a way that all present liked it very much. Here a new dish was born Rasam.

Today, Rasam has become he main stay South Indian Meals. A very good Rasam has a very nice flavour of pepper, garlic and curry leaves.

Asafoetida - is reputed to lessen flatulence.

Tamarind - Is an Indian aphrodisiac.

Aphrodisiac - aphrodisiac stimulates the desire for sex. The name comes from the Greek goddess of love Aphrodite.

Things You'll Need

- Ripe Tomatoes - 2 (size of a tennis ball)
- Shallots - 4
- Ginger - 1 inch size
- Garlic - 4 cloves
- Coriander Leaves - 50 grams
- Red Chili Powder - 1/2 tsp
- Crushed Pepper Corns - 10
- Turmeric Powder - a pinch
- Curry Leaves - 2 sprigs
- Cumin Seeds - 1/2 tsp
- Mustard Seeds - 1/2 tsp
- Dried Red Whole Chillies - 2
- Asafoetida - a pinch
- Tamarind - 50 grams
- Fenugreek Seeds - 1/4 tsp
- Water - 4 cups
- Oil - 2 tsp



Golden Touch Mise en place [5 mins]

1. Chop tomatoes, shallots, ginger, garlic and coriander leaves
2. Blend ginger and garlic to a smooth paste. At this stage keep 2 cloves of garlic aside.
3. Crush the 2 cloves of garlic and pepper corns together, keep aside for tempering*
4. Break the dried red chillies into 2 or 3 pieces
5. To 100 ml hot water add tamarind. Leave aside for 15 mins. Now squeeze out the tamarind juice

Golden Touch Steps [40 mins]

1. In a pressure cooker take all the chopped ingredients, ginger/garlic paste and tamarind juice
2. Add red chilli powder, turmeric powder, salt and Asafoetida. Add water. Bring to 1 whistle and simmer for 30 mins.
3. Use a potato masher to make a fine paste of the pressure cooked ingredients.
4. In a pan, heat oil. Add mustard seeds, when they pop, add cumin seeds, broken dried red chilli, Fenugreek seeds, curry leaves, crushed garlic & pepper corns and sauté for 2 mins.
5. Add this to the pressure cooked ingredients.

Notes:

* Tempering is the process where a combination of spices and oil is added to soups or sauces at the end of cooking, to boost the flavouring

KAACHIYA MORU (YOGHURT SOUP)

Spiced buttermilk, is Kaachiya moru. You could use it as a soup or as a curry with rice. Non-spicy and delicious. My family is a die-hard fan of this soup, any time any day, this is my favourite of Yoghurt preparation.

Things You'll Need

Natural Yoghurt – 500ml
Water – 250ml
Shallots - 5
Tomato – 1 (optional)
Ginger – 1inch size
Garlic Flakes - 2
Fenugreek Powder - 1/4tsp
Turmeric Powder - 1/4tsp
Chili Powder - ½ tsp
Curry Leaves – 2 sprigs
Dried Red Chili - 4
Mustard Seeds – 1 tsp
Oil - 1tbsp



Golden Touch Mise en Place [10 mins]

1. Using a hand blender, make a smooth paste of the Yoghurt. Add Salt, Turmeric, Chili powder & water to make a free-flowing butter-milk. Add more water if the Butter-milk is too thick
2. Chop Shallots, Ginger, Garlic & Tomato
3. Break the dried Red Chili into small pieces

Golden Touch Steps [20 mins]

1. In a deep bottomed pan heat oil. Add Mustard seeds allow to pop.
2. Add the Curry leaves, dried Red chilli, Shallots, Ginger, Garlic & sauté till Shallots become golden brown
3. Lower the flame. Sprinkle little water*.
4. Pour the Butter-milk, stir continuously** for 10mins. Remove from flame immediately on seeing steam coming-up***

NOTES:

*Sprinkling water allow the temperature of the pan to reduce, or else the Yoghurt starts curdling as soon as you pour into the pan

**Never allow the Yoghurt to settle or else will curdle & spoil

***Use a wooden ladle(spoon), for this preparation, once you see steam coming from the ladle, Moru is done. Leave the pan open till it cools down or will curdle from the heat

OKHRA KICHADI

Things You'll Need

Okhra - 150 grams
Natural Yoghurt – 300 ml
Green Chillies - 2
Dry Red Chillies - 3
Mustard Seeds - 1tsp
Grated Coconut - 100 grams
Curry Leaves - 2 sprigs
Oil - 2 tbsp
Salt to Taste



Golden Touch Mise en place – [5 mins]

1. Cut Okhra lengthwise. Now slice them into ½ inch size.
2. Grind grated coconut, green chillies and half of the mustard seeds. Keep aside
3. Break dried red chilli into 2 or 3 pieces

Golden Touch Steps – [15 mins]

1. Heat oil. Fry Okhra till crispy. Drain and remove.
2. Add the remaining mustard seeds into the same oil, allow to pop and add the broken red Chillies and curry leaves sauté for 2 mins.
3. Lower the flame and add the coconut paste, add in the Yoghurt slowly. Keep stirring.
4. Add Okhra and salt. Remove from flame.

Notes:

1. Pavakkai (Bitter Gourd) may also be used instead of Okhra as a variation
2. Okhra is also known as Bhindi, Ladies Finger
3. After the addition of Yoghurt do not increase the flame or allow to boil as Yoghurt will curdle and spoil

BLACK EYED BEANS & ASH GOURD OLAN

No Sadhya (Feast) in Kerala is complete without Olan. Such a great emphasis is on Olan for any Sadhya, yet it is the simplest to make. It's a unique dish, where not a single spice is added to it, Chili is optional. Olan is flavoured with Coconut milk and curry leaves, when all the ingredients are added in the right proportion, it tastes heavenly. You just cannot forget the taste in a rush.

Things You'll Need

- Black Eyed Beans - 100 grams
- Ash Gourd / Courgettes - 100 grams
- Green Chillies (optional) - 2
- Coconut Milk - 150 ml
- Water - 150 ml
- Coconut Oil - 1 tbsp
- Salt To taste
- Curry Leaves - 1 sprig



Golden Touch Mise en Place [10 mins]

1. Soak Black Eyed Beans preferably overnight
2. Peel and cut Ash Gourd or Courgettes into 1/2 inch by 1/2 inch cubes

Golden Touch Steps [30 mins]

1. In a pressure cooker, add water & Beans, bring to 1 whistle. Lower flame & simmer for 20 mins
2. Add Ash Gourd & Green Chili & cook for 10 mins. Lower flame.
3. Add Coconut Milk, simmer for 5 mins (do not allow to boil). Remove from flame
4. In a pan heat Oil, add Curry leaves & sauté for 2 mins. Remove & add to the Olan.

PUMPKIN & PLANTAIN OLAN

Olan is a traditional curry in Kerala. Different recipes are used in different areas, this is the one followed in Malabar regions.

Things You'll Need

- 1 cup white Pumpkin - cut into 1 inch squares
- 1-2 Green Chillies
- 1/2 cup raw Plantain(Pachakkaya) - Skinned and cut into thin round pieces
- 3-4 long beans , cut into 1 inch length pieces.
- 1/2 cup Coconut Milk
- Salt - as required
- 1/2 tbsp Coconut Oil



Golden Touch Steps [20 mins]

1. Cook Pumpkin, Plantain and the Beans together with Salt and enough Water to just cover the Vegetables.
2. Cover the pot with a lid so that the water does not evaporate.
3. Cook until the vegetables are soft. It takes about 10-12 minutes.
4. Add the green Chillies and Coconut milk and continue cooking at low flame for few more minutes.
5. Adjust the Salt if required.
6. Do not boil at this stage.
7. Pour the Coconut oil over the curry, mix well and remove from heat.

SAMBAR

The origins of this dish is uncertain though legends has it that it originated in the kitchen of Thanjavur Marathas ruler Shahuji, during the 18th Century. It is believed that Shahji had a liking for a dish called Amti which had Kokum as one of its main ingredients. In one particular season, the Kokum which was imported from the Maratha homeland ran out of supply and someone suggested him that the locals used tamarind pulp for sourness. Shahji experimented the dish with the Tuvar Dal, vegetables, spices and the tamarind pulp served his coterie and his cousin, Sambhaji who was visiting him. The court liked the dish and named it Sambhar after the guest of the day, Sambhaji. Source: WIKIPEDIA

Sambar as I have always seen my mummy preparing it included Brinjal, Drumstick, Ladies Finger (Okhra), Yam, Potatoes, Tomatoes and more.... But today you will find end number of varieties to Sambar, for e.g. Tomato Sambar, Garlic Sambar, drumstick Sambar, shallot Sambar the list just continues.... I still like the Sambar were all the above ingredients come together and are cooked in a thick gravy base of lentils. Some hotels in India serve Sambar which you could easily drink it.....

Tamarind is used to make it sour... and honestly it is yummy... You could cook this in a pressure cooker, but I like it cooked in a normal deep bottomed pan. The advantage here is you get the smell of Lentils (Dal), Garlic & Vegetables wafting from the kitchen to every room in the house, making you hungry even before it is 1/2 way through. This craving for Sambar makes it more and more delicious.

Please follow the vegetables cut, exactly as mentioned.

Things You'll Need

- Brinjal – 1 (100 grams)
- Raw Banana (Nenthakaya) – 1
- DrumStick – 2
- Ladies Finger (Okhra/Bhindi) – 4
- Tomato – 2
- Potato – 2
- Yam – 50 grams
- Tuvar Dal or Masur Dal (Red Lentils) – 100 grams
- Shallots – 10
- Coriander Leaves - ½ Bunch
- Green Chillies –
- Garlic – 6 pods
- Curry Leaves – 2 Sprigs
- Red Chilli Powder – 1 tsp
- Sambar Powder – 2 tbsp
- Tamarind – Golf ball size
- Asafoetida - ¼ tsp
- Fenugreek Seeds – ¼ tsp



- Turmeric Powder - ¼ tsp
- Salt to Taste
- Mustard Seeds - ½ tsp
- Whole Red Chilli Oil – 2 tbsp

Golden Touch Mise en place – [20 mins]

1. In a cup of hot water immerse the Tamarind for 10 mins
2. Cut Drumsticks into 3 inch pieces
3. Cut Okhra into 3 inch pieces and slit from centre making it into 2 halves
4. Cut Raw Banana and Brinjal into 3 by ½ inch batons
5. Cut Tomatoes into 4 quarters
6. Dice Yam & Potatoes into 1 1/2 by 1 1/2 inch cubes
7. Slit Green Chillies & Shallots into 2 halves
8. Chop Garlic and Coriander and store separately

Golden Touch Steps - [50 mins]

1. To a deep bottomed pan add Drumstick, Raw Banana, Brinjal, Tomatoes, Yam, Potatoes, Green chilli, Tuvar Dal and water just enough to cover them
2. Squeeze Tamarind pulp out of the water, add the pulp to the pan. Bring to boil and simmer for 30 mins on low flame
3. In a separate pan dry roast the powders Chilli/Coriander/Sambar & Fenugreek seeds for 5 mins till all the raw flavour is gone. Be careful not to burn. Add to the simmering Vegetables
4. Heat oil in a pan. Add the cut Okhra and fry till crispy. Drain and remove.
5. Add Mustard seeds, wait till it pops.
6. Add chopped Onions, Salt, Turmeric Powder, Garlic, Curry leaves and sauté till onions become golden brown.
7. Add the sautéed onions & Okhra to the simmering vegetable medley Add chopped Coriander leaves. Leave on low flame for another 7-8mins. Remove from flame.

AVIYAL

This is a Classic Kerala Sadhya(Feast) mainstay item. One of my kind reader and editor pointed out the importance of Aviyal in Sadhya, especially ONAM, and here it is. Aviyal is a kind of vegetable medley, made from various vegetables, therefore is healthy. It is a mild curry, and the taste lingers on...

"It is supposed to have been invented by Bhima (one of the Pandava brothers) during his agnaathavaasa. According to the legend, Ballav (Bheem's name during this time) when he assumed his duties as the cook in the kitchen of Virata, did not know how to cook. One of the first things he did was to chop up many different vegetables, boil them together and top the dish with grated coconut" - SOURCE: Wikipedia

The second thought about Aviyal is as follows: According to this source Aviyal was invented by the Head Chef in the Royal kitchen of [Travancore](#). The Chef ran out of vegetables to prepare his planned dishes, and in an instant he cut up all available vegetables and topped up with grated coconut & Aviyal was born.

My mummy always used to make Aviyal with gravy, probably that's what I have seen coming from Christian families. But Aviyal served during Marriage Luncheons & Onam Sadhya are always dry types, this variation is mostly prepared in the Hindu homes. My wife prepares this excellent variety, and here I have one of her classics. Like Sambar you can again pressure cook Aviyal but when slow cooked in a deep bottomed pan it pulls out all the juice from the vegetables and blends into a very tasty curry, plus half-way through smells wonderful. Most of us do not take time to lean over & enjoy the smells of food & miss out on this. Smelling is linked closely to the flavour of the food & one begins to enjoy the food being prepared by smelling.

These precautions you must follow in preparing Aviyal:

1. All vegetables are cut only lengthwise (2inch by 1/2inch)
2. Do not overcook or you'll end up in a soup.
3. The following vegetables are never used:
 - Beetroot - as it discolours the entire Aviyal as red
 - Tomato, Cabbage and Ladies Finger(Okra) makes Aviyal watery
 - Sweet Potato, Radish, Turnip, Cauliflower & Mushroom are best avoided
 - Instead of Tamarind use Raw Mango & a splash of Natural Yoghurt to get the sour taste
4. Depending upon availability the following Vegetables go well together:
 1. Plantain(Raw Green)
 2. Yam - Chena
 3. Brinjal
 4. Carrot
 5. Beans - Long Runner Beans
 6. Drumsticks(with proper Indian/Sadhya Vegetables)

7. Green Raw Mango
8. Potato
9. Snake Gourd -Trichosanthes Cucumerina
10. Ivy Gourd - Kovakai - Tindora
11. Courgette - Zucchini instead of Cucumber

Things You'll Need

1. Raw Green Plantain – 50 grams
2. Brinjal - 50 grams
3. Tindora - 50 grams (optional)
4. Yams- 50 grams
5. Carrot – 50 grams
6. Green Beans/Long String beans - 50 grams
7. Courgette/Ash Gourd - 50 grams
8. Potato - 50 grams (optional)
9. Drumsticks - 50 grams
10. Green Chillies – 2
11. Raw Mango -1/2
12. Turmeric Powder – 1/2 tsp
13. Salt – to taste
14. Water - 200ml
15. Grated Coconut – 1 cup
16. Cumin Seeds – 1/2 tsp
17. Curry Leaves - 2 sprigs
18. Curd – 2 tbsp
19. Coconut Oil- 2 tbsp



Golden Touch Mise en Place [10 mins]

1. Cut all vegetables into 2 inch by 1/2inch pieces like French Fries. Keep them separate.
2. Grind Coconut, Cumin seeds, Green Chillies to a fine paste. Keep aside.

Golden Touch Steps [40 mins]

1. In a deep bottomed pan, add all Vegetables, add water, Salt, Turmeric powder & slow cook for 20 mins.
2. Now add the Coconut paste, mix well, sprinkle the Coconut oil & Curry leaves, leave on low flame for another 10 mins, by now it will be dry & done
3. Allow to cool.
4. Mix in the Yoghurt and leave it covered.

Note:

** Place the slow cooking Vegetables at the bottom of the vessel. Eg: Drumsticks, Carrots. Place Yam & Brinjal in the middle layer. Place the fast cooking items in the topmost layer.

AVIYAL (with Vegetables locally available in West)

"AVIYAL" can arguably be stated as the king of Kerala Sadhya (large traditional feast). The unique proportions of various vegetables, the assortment of a plethora of colors, the clever use of coconut and that magical sprinkle of the coconut oil at the end by the head cook as they prepare Aviyal for the traditional sadhyas are delightful and mouthwatering memories of our childhood.

Things You'll Need:

Carrot (1 small)
Zucchini (Courgettes), Yellow Squash, Cuccuza Squash,
Drumsticks, Potato, Plantain (small) 1 each cut to batons
Grated Coconut $\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Cumin seeds a pinch
Green chilly 1 no, medium sized
Red Chilly powder $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp
Tamarind pulp 1tsp
Turmeric powder $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp
Salt as needed
Curry leaves 2 sprigs
Coconut oil 1 tsp



Golden Touch Preparation [30 mins]

1. Pulse together Coconut, Cumin seeds and Shallots (Chathachu edukuka). Set aside.
2. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp Coconut Oil to a deep pan and put a sprig of Curry leaves.
3. Add the Vegetables and green Chilly with Water just enough to cover the Veggies.
4. Add Turmeric powder, Chilly powder and Salt. Cook until 90% of the Water is evaporated and the Vegetables are cooked through.
5. Add the Tamarind and mix well.
6. Add the Coconut mixture and combine to mix. Cook for another 2 more minutes. Switch off the flame and add more Curry leaves, drizzle with Coconut oil. Mix. Keep covered until ready to serve.

THORAN

Thoran (pronounced [t̪oːɾan])*. Thoran is a preparation of the Southern Indian State of Kerala, where it is a everyday affair. This is a dry preparation of White Cabbage and Runner Beans. Cabbage & Beans blend well to give this excellent Thoran.

As it is slow cooked you will get the fresh aroma of Cabbage & Beans drafting in the air. It is a healthy preparation as it involves very less Oil and Spices. As a starter to Indian food, you will be pleased with yourself on preparing Cabbage Thoran, as it won't burn your taste buds.

Things You'll Need

White Cabbage – 500 grams
Runner Beans – 250 grams
Onion – 1 medium sized
Garlic cloves - 4
Black Gram (whole Urad Dal) - 1tbsp
Dried Red Chilly- 4
Turmeric Powder 1/4tsp
Red Chilly Powder 1/4tsp
Desiccated Coconut – 200 grams
Oil - 2tsp
Curry leaves - 2 sprigs
Mustard Seeds - 1/2tsp
Cumin Seeds - 1/4tsp
Salt to taste



Golden Touch Mise en Place [30 mins]

1. Chop Cabbage & Garlic finely (Do not use a shredder as it will make the Cabbage soggy)
2. Cut Beans at an angle of 45 degrees to get a diagonal shape, this gives the cooked Thoran a good look
3. Break the whole dried Red chilly into 3 or 4 pieces

Golden Touch Steps [25 mins]

1. Heat oil in a deep bottomed pan. Add Mustard seeds, allow to pop.
2. Now add rest of the ingredients. Mix well
3. Lower the flame, cover and cook for 10 mins till the Cabbage starts leaving water.
4. At this point leave the pan uncovered & cook for another 15 mins till you can bite into the Cabbage & Beans. At this stage all water must be dried-up & it will not be sticking to each other

NOTES:

Thoran pronunciation reference WIKIPEDIA

PINEAPPLE PACHHADY

Pineapple is eaten fresh or canned. Is available as juice or as a combination of juices. It is cooked, used in desserts, ice-creams and in fruit cocktail. Although pineapple is considered good for many illness, it also considered to induce child-birth in India.

Things You'll Need

- Semi-Ripe Pineapple – 500grams
- Grated Coconut – 200grams
- Natural Yoghurt – 200ml
- Dried Red Chili – 4
- Turmeric Powder – 1/2tsp
- Mustard Seeds – 1 tsp
- Water – 200ml
- Salt – to taste
- Oil – 1 tbsp



Golden Touch Mise en Place [5 mins]

1. Cut Pineapple into 2inch by 1/2inch batons
2. Grind Coconut and dried Red Chili to a smooth paste

Golden Touch Steps [5 mins]

1. Boil Pineapple in water with Turmeric & Salt for about 20 mins. Lower the flame
2. In a pan heat Oil, add Mustard Seeds, allow to pop. Add Curry leaves, add the Coconut paste sauté for 2 mins.
3. To the cooked Pineapple add Yoghurt and stir well, bring to boil, add the sautéed paste. Mix well

ULLI THEEYAL [Shallots in Creamy Coconut Gravy]

Being Onam, this week I ended up making many traditional and nostalgic Kerala dishes. Ulli Theeyal is one among many, Kerala dishes, which is an excellent combination to Rice and Chapattis. The smell and taste lingers on... I just love it!!

Theeyal is usually dark brown in colour and is derived by browning of Coconut. and is a mild dish thus anyone can enjoy this without burning there tongue.

Things You'll Need

- Shallots – 200grams
- Curry Leaves – 4 sprigs
- Grated Coconut – 200grams
- Water – 400ml
- Tamarind Paste – 50grams
- Mustard seeds – 1/2 teaspoon
- Asafoetida – 1 Pinch
- Dried Red Chillies – 6
- Coriander Powder – 1tbsp
- Cumin seeds – 1/4 tsp
- Turmeric powder – 1/4 tsp
- Oil – 3tbsp
- Salt to taste



Golden Touch Mise en Place [15 mins]

1. Peel and cut the shallots into 2 halves
2. Soak tamarind in hot water for 10mins

Golden Touch Steps [30 mins]

1. Heat 1tbsp Oil, reduce flame and sauté the grated Coconut and dried red Chillies till golden brown and you get the fine aroma of Coconut
2. Add Coriander powder, Cumin seeds and sauté for another 2 mins. Add 100ml water, to prevent it from burning. Remove from flame, allow to cool and grind to a smooth paste
3. In another pan heat the remaining Oil, add Mustard seeds allow to pop. Add Curry leaves
4. Add the Shallots sauté for 10 mins till lightly golden brown.
5. Now add Water and the remaining ingredients, bring to boil. Reduce flame and simmer for another 15 mins.

NOTES:

Ulli used here is Shallots also known as Chuvannulli.

VAZUTHANENGA THEEYAL [Aubergine in Coconut Gravy]

Brinjal is native to India, and since has moved to West Asia and the West. In India it has been cultivated since medieval times.

Brinjal is a good source of Folic acid and potassium. It is also high in Vitamin B6, is a good source of fibre, less of sugar. If one were to list the different dishes prepared from Brinjal, it would easily cross 100, from India itself. In the coming days I will try to compile some of the most commons ones.

Vazhuthanenga Theeyal is another favourite from the Southern State of Kerala in India. This curry is rich in flavours, taste and is usually dark brown colour. It's tangy. It's spicy with a rich Coconut flavour. Although Brinjal flesh on it own has a bitter taste, when when cooked well, absorbs all flavours, and disguises itself as one of the best vegetables around for cooking. Theeyal with Brinjal is a very popular dish of Kerala and goes very well with plain Rice. You need to really try this just once, and you'll fall in love with it!

Things You'll Need

- Brinjal -300grams
- Shallots – 10
- Grated or Desiccated Coconut – 150grams
- Water - 300ml
- Tamarind – golf ball size
- Red Chilly Powder – 1 tsp
- Coriander Powder- 2 tsp
- Turmeric Powder-1/4 tsp
- Asafoetida - a pinch
- Fenugreek Powder a pinch
- Mustard Seeds – 1/2 tsp
- Curry Leaves – 3 sprigs
- Dried Red Chillies – 2
- Cumin Seeds -1/2 tsp
- Salt – to taste
- Oil – 3 tbsp



Golden Touch Mise en Place [10 mins]

1. Cut Brinjal into 3inch by 1/2inch size
2. Soak tamarind in 300ml water for 20mins. Squeeze out the pulp and discard the seeds

Golden Touch Steps [30 mins]

1. In a pan heat 1 tbsp oil. Add Coconut, sauté till golden brown
2. Add Chilly powder, Coriander powder and Turmeric powder sauté for another 3-4 mins till you get the aroma of Coconut, add 50ml water and once cooled grind to a smooth paste. Keep aside.
3. In another pan heat the remaining 2 tbsp oil, add Mustard seeds allow to pop. Add Shallots, Cumin seeds, Curry leaves, salt and Fenugreek powder sauté for 5 mins
4. Now add the Brinjal and Tamarind water, bring to boil allow to simmer on low flame for 20 mins
5. To this add the coconut paste and simmer for another 5 mins

KALAN

Kalan is a preparation of raw Plantains (nenthra-kaya) and Yam (chena), in a thick gravy of Coconut and natural Yoghurt paste. This preparation is mild to taste buds, involving the use of very little Pepper and Chillies. Yams are considered to have 'lower glycemic index' than Potatoes, thus providing a more well balanced form of energy, protecting against obesity.

Things You'll Need

- Yam – 100grams
- Plantain (Raw Banana) – 100grams
- Yoghurt – 400 ml
- Desiccated Coconut – 100 grams
- Cumin Seeds – 1/2tsp
- Pepper Powder – 1tsp
- Water – 400ml
- Turmeric Powder – 1/4tsp
- Fenugreek Powder (Methi powder/Uluva) – 1/2tsp
- Dried Red Chili – 2
- Mustard Seeds – 1tsp
- Curry leaves 1sprig
- Salt – to taste
- Oil – 2tbsp



Golden Touch Mise en Place [10 mins]

1. Cut yam and plantain into 3inch by 1/2inch batons
2. Grind coconut and cumin seeds into a smooth paste, without water
3. Break red chili into 2/3 pieces

Golden Touch Steps [30 mins]

1. In a deep bottomed pan boil plantain and yam with salt, turmeric & pepper powder, cook till water dries up, about 20 mins. Lower flame
2. Add yogurt, mix well. Keep stirring to avoid yogurt from curdling. Lower the flame
3. To heated oil in a pan, add mustard seeds, allow to pop. Add red chillies, curry leaves, fenugreek powder and coconut/cumin seeds paste, stir till golden brown
4. Add this paste to the above mix, remove from pan once boiled

NENTHRAKAYA MEZHUKKUPURATTI

Nentharakaya in Malayalam is Raw Plantain and Mezhukkupuratti stands for frying. Malayalam is the local language of people from Kerala, the Southern State of India

Raw Plantains are shaped as batons and fried in oil. Used as a side dish for lunch or dinner. These plantain are firmer than normal dessert banana and have lesser sugar content. They are steamed, boiled, made as dessert - **Pazham Prathamam**, Banana Chips.

Things You'll Need

Raw Banana – 2 (about 300grams)

Turmeric powder – 1/4tsp

Chili Powder – 1tsp

Water – 100ml (optional)

Salt – to taste

Oil – 100 ml



Golden Touch Mise en Place [7 mins]

1. Peel and slice Plantain into 2 1/2 inch by 1/2 inch batons.
2. Immerse in water to avoid it from blackening; refer [Cooking Tips](#)
3. Rub in Turmeric, Chili powder and Salt

Golden Touch Steps [20mins]

Two ways of preparing this:

A. Heat Oil and deep fry on low flame, turning over occasionally, for 15-20 mins.

B. To lessen the use of Oil, boil Plantain in water for 10mins. Now transfer to a pan in which the Oil is hot, stir occasionally.

SQUASH AND RED BEAN ERISSERI

While browsing through the vegetable shelves in 'Asda' I came across Squash, which somewhat looks like our Pumpkin. Pumpkin and Squash are from the same family, and when I made an Eriserry of Squash & Red Beans tasted exactly the same. It was yummy... I like this curry on its own even without rice and is a mild curry, which tastes wonderful. The only difference I found between Squash and Pumpkin's were:

1. The flesh of squash is very hard, thus takes a longer time to cook
2. I hardly found any seeds in squash that I brought here in UK

Things You'll Need

- Pumpkin (Squash) - 300grams
- Red Beans - 100grams
- Coconut Milk - 140ml
- Dried Red Chili - 5
- Mustard Seeds - 1tsp
- Curry Leaves - 2 springs
- Water - 500ml
- Grated Coconut - 75grams
- Shallots - 4
- Garlic Flakes - 6
- Ginger – 2inch size
- Cumin Seeds - 1/2 tsp
- Turmeric Powder - 1/2 tsp
- Green Chili - 3
- Salt - to taste
- Oil - 2 tbsp



Golden Touch Mise en Place [10 mins]

1. Peel and cut Squash into 2inch cubes
2. Wash and soak Red beans, preferably overnight.
3. Finely slice Shallots

Golden Touch Steps – [45 mins]

1. Pressure cook Red beans and Squash cubes in water until 1 whistle and allow to simmer for 25mins on low flame
2. In a pan heat oil add Mustard seeds allow to pop. Add Curry leaves, grated Coconut, Turmeric powder, chopped Shallots, Salt and sauté for 5 mins till Shallots turn golden brown, remove from flame and keep aside
3. Blend Cumin seeds, Garlic, Ginger, Green chilli to a smooth paste
4. To the pressure cooked Squash and add the paste and cook for another 5 mins on high flame
5. Add the sautéed ingredients, along with Coconut Milk, cook for about 4 mins (do not allow to boil, as Coconut Milk gets split).
6. It is now ready to be served.

KOOTTU CURRY (Spicy Version)

Things You'll Need

- 1 cup Black Chickpeas, soaked in water for at least 3 hours
- 1/2 cup Plantain(Pachakkaya) cut into chickpea sized pieces
- 1/2 cup Elephant Yam(Chena) cut into cut into chickpea sized pieces
- 1/2 cup grated Coconut
- 4-5 pearl Onions, skinned
- 1/2 tsp Turmeric powder
- Few Curry leaves
- Few dry Coconut chunks(Thenga kothu)
- 1 tbsp Coconut oil
- Mustard seeds
- Salt as required
- 2 dried red chillies
- 1/2 tsp black pepper or pepper powder



Golden Touch Steps – [45 mins]

1. Cook the Chickpeas with Water and Salt until soft (Use a pressure cooker to cook fast, or soak in boiling water for at-least 8 hours).
2. In a thick bottomed vessel, cook the Plantain and Yam with enough Water to just cover the Vegetables.
3. Add Turmeric powder and Salt.
4. Keep the vessel covered to prevent drying out.
5. When the vegetables are soft add the cooked Chickpeas, along with some of the Water used to cook Chickpeas.
6. In another pan slightly fry the Coconut, black Pepper with the pearl Onions. Coarse grind this mixture and add to the cooked Chickpeas.
7. Mix well and let the Water evaporate. Splutter the Mustard seeds in Coconut Oil and then add the dried Chillies and dry Coconut chunks (Thenga Kothu).
8. Pour this over the prepared Koottu curry.

KOOTTU CURRY (Sweet Version)

Things You'll Need:

Chena/Yam 1 cup, cubed
Ashgourd 1 medium, cubed
Carrot 1 medium, cubed
Kadala Parippu/ whole black Chana ½ cup
Grated Coconut ¾ cup + ¾ cup
Turmeric powder ¾ tsp
Red Chilly powder 2 tsp
Sarkara/Jaggery ¼ cup
Curry leaves 2 sprigs
Mustard seeds ½ tsp
Cumin seeds ½ tsp
Salt as needed
Oil 1 tbsp



Golden Touch Preparation

1. Boil 1 cup water in a heavy bottomed pan. When it is boiled, add the Kadala Parippu/ whole black Chana. Cook until it is ¾ done.
2. Add the Vegetables. Add 1 more cup of Water, mix well and cook for 15-20 more minutes.
3. Meanwhile, grind together ¾ cup Coconut and ½ tsp Cumin to a smooth paste with 20ml water. Set aside.
4. When the Vegetables are almost cooked (when 95% of the water is evaporated) add Salt, ¾ tsp Turmeric powder, 2 tsp Chilly powder and ¼ cup of Jaggery.
5. Mix well until the Jaggery is dissolved and add the ground Coconut paste and Curry leaves. Combine well and switch off the flame.
6. In another pan add Oil and splutter Mustard seeds. Add the remaining ¾ cup Coconut and roast it until a golden brown colour. Add this over the Kootucurry and mix.

KATTI KALAN

Things You'll Need:

Yam ¼ cup, cut to chunks
Plantain 1 small, Skin peeled off and cut to diagonal chunks
Yoghurt 4 cups
Turmeric powder ½ tsp
Black Pepper powder 1 ½ tsp
Green Chilly 2 nos
Cumin seeds ¼ tsp
Grated Coconut 1 cup
Fenugreek powder a pinch, roasted
Salt as needed
Curry leaves
Mustard seeds ½ tsp
Dry red chilly 2 nos
Oil 1 tbsp
Ghee 1 tsp



Golden Touch Preparation [55 mins]

1. Heat a wide mouth pan at medium heat and add the Yam and Plantain pieces with a cup of water.
2. Add Turmeric powder and Pepper powder. Allow the Vegetables to cook well and then add Salt.
3. When the liquid from Vegetables are almost dried up, add 1 tsp. Ghee and mix well.
4. Mash the veggies gently, reduce flame to low and add the beaten Yoghurt to this.
5. Throw in Curry leaves and stir well until Yoghurt starts to boil.
6. Meanwhile grind together Coconut, Cumin seeds and green Chilly to a fine paste with 20ml Water.
7. When the liquid from Yoghurt is completely evaporated (4 cups Yoghurt will get reduced to almost 2 cups), add the Coconut paste and mix well. Cook for a few more minutes.
8. Add a pinch of Fenugreek powder and switch off the stove.
9. Heat 1 tsp Oil in another pan and splutter Mustard seeds and dry red Chilly with some Curry leaves. Pour the tempering over the Yoghurt and adjust Salt if needed.

VADA KOOTUCURRY

Things You'll Need:

For making Vadas:

Urad Dal(Lentils) ½ cup
Whole black peppercorns ½ tsp
Salt as needed
Oil for frying

Golden Touch Preparation

1. Soak Urad Dal for at least 4 hours.
2. Grind the soaked Dal without water to a smooth consistency.
3. Add the Peppercorns and Salt.
Heat Oil in a pan for frying the Vadas.
4. Take a spoonful of batter and drop into Oil. Fry until a reddish brown colour is attained.
5. Drain excess oil to a paper towel. Repeat until the batter is finished. Keep aside.

For making Kootucurry

Red onions 1 no, big, diced
Shallots 5 nos, sliced
Green chilly 3 nos, slit
Garlic 2 pods, sliced
Potato 2 small, cubed
Coconut milk ½ cup
Red chilly powder 1 ½ tsp
Coriander powder 3 tsp
Turmeric powder ¼ tsp
Garam Masala 1 tsp
Dry red chilly 2 nos
Mustard seeds ½ tsp
Curry leaves 1 sprig
Oil 2 tbsps



Golden Touch Preparation

1. Heat (med-high) Oil in a heavy bottomed pan.
2. Splutter Mustard seeds, add dry red Chilly and Curry leaves.
3. Next add Shallots and fry for a minute.
4. Add in red Onions, Garlic and green Chilly, sauté till Onions are translucent.
5. Mix together red Chilly powder, Coriander powder, Turmeric powder and Garam masala in a bowl and add to the onions.

6. Fry till the raw smell from the dry Masala is gone.
7. Now add the cubed Potatoes and mix well.
8. Add water to cover the Potatoes and cook covered.
9. When the Potatoes are cooked, reduce flame to low and add in the fried Vada.
10. Sprinkle Salt as needed and allow the Vadas to soak in the gravy for a minute or so.
11. Lastly add half cup of Coconut Milk and mix well to combine. Remove from flame.

PAZHAM PRATHAMAN (Banana Dessert)

Pazham is Banana and Prathamam is Dessert in Malayalam. Malayalam is the official language for the people of Southern Indian state of Kerala.

Prathamam has been an essential dish throughout the history of India. Were as Kheer is the North Indian version of Prathamam. It is usually served during feasts, ceremonies or festivals. In Southern India, any marriage celebration without Prathamam is considered incomplete and is served after lunch or dinner on Banana leaf.

Prathamam is made of Rice, Vermicelli, Wheat or Pazham which is cooked in Milk or Coconut milk. I love Plantain fried, boiled, and baked... Plantain are firmer and rich in Protein. The blacker the Plantain skin gets the more tasty (sweet) it turns. Plantains are normally available in African and Indian grocery stores, usually always.

The plantain flower and shoot is also used in cooking in Indian homes. Plantain leaves are used as plates to serve Lunch, especially during festival. Here we will learn to make a simple and brilliant Prathamam as made in Indian kitchen.

Things You'll Need

Ripe Plantain* Large – 2 (about 400grams)
Jaggery – 200 – 300 grams (depending on individual requirements)
Milk** – 500 ml
Water – 200 ml
Cashew nuts– 10
Raisins – 10
Ghee (Clarified butter) – 1 tsp
Cardamom Powder - ¼ tsp

Golden Touch Mise en place – [2 mins]

Peel and slice Plantain into 1 inch thick roundels

Golden Touch Steps – [30 mins]

1. Boil the sliced Plantains in water for about 25 mins till it is reduced to pulp
2. Boil Milk and Jaggery together, till reduced to half quantity.
3. Use a Potato masher to mash the Plantain into a smooth paste
4. Pour the Milk and Jaggery into the Plantain pulp and stir well
5. In a separate pan melt the butter and sauté the Cashew nuts and Raisins till light golden brown
6. Add the Cashew nuts and Raisins to the Banana pulp along with the Cardamom powder

NOTES:

* The blacker the skin gets the more ripe and sweet is the Plantain

**You may use pressed Coconut Milk instead of normal Milk. As Coconut tend to have lot more fat in it, I prefer to go with Milk, which gives me more or less the same taste



PAL (MILK) PAYASAM

Things You'll Need

Whole Milk	6 cups + 2 cups
Red Rice (Unakalari)	1 ½ cup
Sugar	3 cups
Cardamom	3 pod, crushed
Cashew nuts	¼ cup, halved
Golden Raisins	¼ cup
Ghee	1 tbsp



Golden Touch Steps

1. Wash the Rice in Water and drain. Set aside.
2. Boil 2 cups of Milk (medium heat) along with the cleaned Rice. Allow the Rice to cook 70%, stirring continuously.
3. Add sugar and stir continuously until Sugar dissolves.
4. Now add 2 more cups of Milk from the 8 cups measured. Cook this until the whole volume reduces to half. Make sure you constantly stir the Milk or else it gets burned at the bottom of the pan. When it reaches half in volume add the rest 4 cups of Milk.
5. Cook this for another 20-30 more minutes or until the Rice is completely cooked.
6. Add crushed Cardamom and switch off from the stove.
7. In another pan, melt Ghee and fry Raisins and Cashew nuts to a golden colour.
8. Pour this over the Payasam and enjoy!!!