

IN
THE
MOOD
FOR
MUGHAL
FOOD

Ikram (Ike) Naqvi

Also by Ikram Naqvi

SAFARNAMA

In 1946, in the heat of an Indian summer, a six year old boy, playing in the courtyard of his home in Amroha, was told by a gypsy fortune teller that his future lay on a small, cold island in the southern ocean, a long way from home. This is his journey – story of leaving and landing, of loss and of love.

‘Naqvi’s story has all the ingredients of a great tale – unexpected twists, romance, triumph over adversity and humour. And its central character is honourable and likeable. Safarnama is an intimate look at a wonderfully diverse family that leaves us feeling that if we were all as accepting, loving and caring as the Naqvi’s, the world would be a better place.’

**Allan De Weys, Sunday Books, Sunday
Tasmanian, June 20, 2010**

SAFARNAMA

ISBN: 81-88413-44-5

Published 2010

available from

www.amrohainternationalsociety.com

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Happy Cooking and Eating,

I.H. Naqvi

*For
My Family and Friends
Who are scattered around
the world*

Especially

*My Grandchildren
Amaan, Aaliya, Zain, Zac, Mia,
Zoe and Noah*

In Memory of Ammi

1916 - 1998

Qamrun Nisa Naqvi

*Her preparations knew neither
digital timers nor food processors
and her every meal was awarded
with*

'Bohut Lazeez'

(sooo delicious)

*IN
THE
MOOD
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Mughal
FOOD*

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Acknowledgements

the Urdu language to India the Mughals also brought the religion of Islam.

INTRODUCTION

I have always loved to eat well. My family and friends know this and they tease me about my passion for food.

As an Australian, born in India, I often return to India to enjoy my favorite dishes in the homes of my relatives and friends and in my favorite Mughal restaurants, especially the Karim Hotel in Delhi, near the Jama Masjid (Great Mosque).

In Australia I have learnt to adapt my families' and friends' traditional Mughal recipes to the ingredients available locally and to suit my life style, which is to prepare delicious Mughal food, fast.

India is so vast that the food varies from region to region. However, in general, south Indian food is hotter than food in the north. This book contains northern Indian food and specifically, my adaptations of Mughal food. The recipes for this style of cooking were introduced to India during the Mughal Empire, before the time of the British Raj. Restaurants in Australia using the names of Taj Mahal, Akbar or Shah Jahan, are probably specializing in this kind of food. As well as bringing Persian art, architecture, culture, food and

Muslims eat meat and that is why the majority of recipes in this book are meat-based.

Preparing good food provides me with comfort and pleasure. (My skills in the kitchen provide my wife, Jane, with comfort and pleasure, too). Whilst cooking, I listen to music, mainly traditional Urdu ghazals, which are a kind of jazz, the vocals coming from Urdu love poetry.

I started collecting recipes over forty years ago and was a weekend cook until my retirement. Now cooking is my hobby, an outlet for creativity and experimentation. Over the years I have watched Mughal foods being prepared and cooked in humble homes, grand residences and in roadside-stalls and sophisticated restaurants. The recipes in this book represent best my most successful modifications from their proud and ancient Mughal roots.

Ikram (IKE) Naqvi

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MEATS

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- 1. Istu:** (veal, beef shanks, lamb chops or chicken)
Istu is one of my favorite dishes and my recipe has evolved from the kitchens of Naheed in my birthplace, Amroha, India, from Sabiha in London and from Mumtaz in Melbourne.
- 2. Qorma:** (lamb or chicken)
And this is Jane's favourite; she can smell onions frying from the top of our driveway. Then she takes over. Bhai Kamal, a famous Indian film director and producer of Bollywood movies, once told me that the test of an excellent khansama (chef) is through the quality of his Qorma.
- 3. Roghan Josh:** (lamb or veal)
Yasmin calls this 'Dad's Classic.'
- 4. Pasande:** (beef mince)
The feature of this curry is that the quantity of the onions is equal to that of the meat. Kamal says, 'You can cook this for me any time.'
- 5. Do Piyaza:** (veal or beef shanks or lamb chops and a heap of onions)
Zehra has labeled this 'Dad's Ultimate.'
- 6. Paai:** (veal or beef shanks or lamb)
I pinched this one from my great friend, Anwer.
- 7. Palak Gosht:** (red meat and spinach)
Not so pretty to look at perhaps, but very, very tasty.
- 8. Amroha Shaljam Gosht:** (any red meat and spinach)
This is a typical Amroha dish, which I look forward to on my visits home; its method of cooking is learned from the wonderful Naheed.
- 9. Karhai gosht:** (any red meat)
A Bazmi speciality.
- 10. Shami Kabab:** (fine beef mince)
The Northern Indian equivalent of the Big Cooked Breakfast. We usually eat these soft, round kebabs with a triangle-shaped paratha. No real reason why you can't have them for lunch or dinner too. In London, I have often enjoyed shami kebabs in the home of Bhabi Shaheen and Nawab Bhai. I have a feeling my recipe is strongly influenced by those visits.
- 11. Seekh Kabab:** (beef mince)
These can either be threaded onto skewers or made like hamburgers. Bung 'em on a BBQ, alongside some tikkas. We usually eat them with a paratha or a few pooris. I have a feeling this recipe is strongly influenced by spending lots of my youth and old age with Anwer.
- 12. Tikka:** (lamb or chicken)
Bung 'em on your BBQ, alongside some Seekh Kababs.
- 13. Kofte:** (lamb or beef mince)
Another super dish, absorbed as a small child when clinging to Ammi's shalwar as she worked over the kitchen fire.
- 14. Keema:** (beef mince)
Najma's way with mincemeat; breakfast, lunch or dinner.

15. Bakra chops: (lamb chops)
Indu's Hobart specialty.

CHICKEN SPECIALITIES

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16. Murgh Mussallam: (roasted whole chicken)

This one is for Scott, who has become the best American curry chef I know. I also remember eating it while laughing and learning the recipe alongside Shamsa, many years ago.

17. Murgha kaa saalan: (skinned, chicken pieces)

And this one is for Joel whose passion for the baking of cakes rivals my passion for cooking curries.

FISH

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18. Machli Masala: (white-fleshed fish fillets)

Little Mia loves a good fish curry.

19. Baked Machli : (white-fleshed fish fillets)

Nargis serves this one with style.

20. Machli Kabab: (any firm fish cutlets or fillets)

Zarrein's Lucknow special.

VEGETABLES

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I know it's a bit naughty in this day and age of healthy eating, but for me, vegetables are more of a side dish than a main.

21. Bhindi: (okra)
When it comes to veggies, this is my favourite.

22. Gaajar bhurta: (carrot)
Badrin can knock up this dish in just few minutes.

23. Turai: (zucchini)
Safia's zucchini complements meat and chicken.

24. Aaloo Bhaaji: (potato)
To bulk up a meal for Amaan this concoction is perfect.

25. Talai Aaloo: (potato)
Aaliya's spicy substitute for chips.

26. Baigan: (aubergine/eggplant)
Many years ago Ammi visited me in Australia and introduced me to aubergine and we've worked well together ever since.

LENTILS

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Like veggies, I generally serve lentils (daal, dhal or dal) as a side dish.

27. Maash daal: (skinned, black split lentils)

Persian folklore has daal as being good for virility and lentils are in vogue now too as healthy fare.

28. Masoor daal: (red split lentils)
Ehteram loves this daal for lunch; hearty, hot, healthy and not too filling.

RICE

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Of course plain rice has its place as an accompaniment and when there's some left over, you can make a dessert out of it (see my Doodh-

Chaval recipe in the Desserts section). However, made through a Mughal method, a rice dish can be eaten as a meal on its own. Biryanis and Pulaos can be cooked with meat or chicken. They can feed a crowd and they are delicious and rich and filling.

29. Pulao: (long grain basmati rice)

Nihal and Zoya and Islam, all lovers of rice dishes, endorse this pulao, the recipe of which I think I stole from Anwer.

30. Biryani: (long grain basmati rice)

Sabiha's made-in-England biryani. Yum. Mumtaz's Melbourne version. Amazing. Aligarh style by Zebi and Huzoor. Superb. I have learned from them all.

BREADS

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Whilst all Mughal curries can be eaten with rice, the authentic way to eat it is with some kind of roti (Indian bread). Here's how to eat it - tear off a piece of roti, wrap it around a piece of your food including the sauce/gravy and hold it between the fingers on your right hand; whilst you eat it, remain elegant by not getting any remnants above the middle joints from your thumb to your ring finger.

Often, for a daily meal, I buy ready-made chapattis and parathas, but my own, cooked on a tava, are much preferred by my family and friends. The three recipes I include in this book, are not for every-day consumption nor to serve up to guests; these are more for holidays or weekends with the family, when there's time to eat big, talk, laugh and languish around the dining table.

31. Paratha:

Great for an indulgent breakfast. Against any semblance of Mughal tradition, my grandchildren love parathas with jam and whipped cream. And, although it pains me to say it, my adult children have been similarly corrupted. By their mother.

32. Bairi Roti:

Najma's finger-lickin' good, onions, chilli and ghee imbedded creation. She cooks this roti to accompany seekh kebabs on skewers, alloo bhaji, keema and rabri. There's nothing better than getting into this stuff and journeying down memory lane.

33. Baisni Roti:

In my hometown, during the mango season we relish these with chopped and spiced mangoes with mint chutney.

SOUP

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34. Moong Daal (lentils) *Jamal and Atiq are old friends from Alberta, Canada, who cook commercially. Their soup is great to warm up with on a freezing Edmonton evening. Or in Hobart in July.*

Desserts

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35. Gajar Halva: (carrot)

This is Flora's recipe and it is my favourite sweet. I can justify eating lots because its main ingredients are non-fattening carrots.

36. Sivayan: (vermicelli noodles)

I can cook fast. Ishrat can eat faster.

37. Sheer Qorma: (vermicelli noodles) *I*

have to cook this one slowly for it's more of a special occasion dish. Anyone who doesn't love this dish, I believe, is unlucky.

38. **Anda Halva:** (eggs)
This quick and satisfying dish was loved by Mehrun Nisa and is also a legacy of the late Bhai Ghamman.

39. **Chana Halva:** (lentils)
I have always been grateful that Ammi taught me how to cook this one, as it is a favourite mithai (sweet) for many.

40. **Shahi Tukra:** (white bread)
Babajan loved Shahi Tukra, which was appropriate, as it is a noble dish (sometimes called King's Toast) and he was a noble man. It can be a bit tricky, so stay true to the recipe or you might end up with British bread and butter pudding.

41. **Safia's Special Shahi Tukra**
(white bread)
Similar to the Shahi Tukra cooked in my hometown; a bit less fiddly and traditional, but equally rich.

42. **Shakarqandi ki kheer**
(sweet potato)
Intezam once told me that he would like this for dessert every day.

43. **Doodh Chaval** (milk and rice)
An economical dessert that can be made from left-over plain white rice.

SWEETS

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44. **Barfi:** (powdered milk)
Who pinched all the burfi? Zac, Zain or Zoe?

45. **Rabri:** (milk)
This was the first sweet I ever made. I was twelve and I cooked it over an open fire

during a hot Indian summer. As well as a sweet rabri can be a side dish with keema and paratha for an indulgent weekend breakfast.

46. **Meethi Poori:** (flour and semolina)
*Who ate the last meethi poori?
This sweet snack is a bit like a thickish, round biscuit or a pikelet, but firmer.*

47. **Kulfi:** (milk)
*Home-made icecream, Mulghal style.
It presents well and drips beautifully all the way down Noah's clean t-shirt as all good icecream is made to do.*

SAVOURIES

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48. **Kabli Chana:** (lentils)
Badrin's hot recipe and Hassan's favourite snack.

49. **Pakora:** (pea flour savoury fritters)
Flora's recipe and Jane's favourite Indian snack.

DRINKS

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50. **A Good Cup of Tea:** (chai)
I fancy myself as a bit of a tea connoisseur. Even as a child I loved tea and I always tried to have more than anyone else. My technique was to drink half the cup and then tell my mother that the sugar was insufficient so that more could be added. Now I claimed it was too sweet so more tea was needed. When that was fixed I needed more milk added because the tea was now too dark.

51. **Masala Chai:** (tea and spices)
Once I drank 18 blovais (clay cups) of masala chai at one sitting in Amroha. I am told it is a record that still stands.

52. **Lassi:** (yoghurt and milk)

A brilliant thirst-quencher on a hot day.

Recipes

Meat

Note: for all meat recipes, when frying, I prefer to use extra-virgin olive oil although any good cooking oil is fine.

Cooking in ghee (clarified butter) makes everything taste delicious but I think the chubby Mughals died young. Maybe use ghee for a special occasion.

1. Istu

Ingredients

½ kg veal, beef shanks, lamb chops or chicken
3 onions, peeled, sliced
2 tbsp garlic
1 tsp ginger
6 cloves
6 black pepper pods
3 tbsp oil
1 cup (approx.) water

Method

Cut meat or chicken into largish bite-size portions.
Mix everything in the water.
Cook on hob in saucepan or in a pressure-cooker until meat is cooked and soft and the oil separates from spices.

2. Qorma

Ingredients

½ kg lamb or chicken
3 tbsp extra virgin oil (or ghee)
2 brown onions, peeled, sliced
1 lump fresh ginger

6 cloves garlic
8 small cardamon pods with seeds
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tbsp cumin powder
1 tbsp garam masala powder
4+ tbsp yoghurt
1 tsp salt
1tbsp desiccated coconut
½ - 1 cup water
handful fresh coriander

Method

Cut lamb or chicken into bite-size portions.
Chop onions into small bits.
Crush garlic and ginger.
Fry the onions in oil until brown.
Remove half the onions and put aside.
Add garlic and ginger and add to onion mix.
Put in the meat and cook until brown.
Make paste of dry spices and coconut with 2 tbsp water.
Put this liquid paste with the onions.
Add yoghurt and keep adding a spoon full of yoghurt, one spoon at a time, until completely dissolved.
Fry for about 10 minutes on low heat.
Add cardamom, cloves, black peppers, cinnamon stick, bay leaf and one cup of water and cook on low heat until the meat becomes soft.
Keep cooking until oil separates from spices.
Add the remaining browned onions by stirring in gently.
When ready to serve, chop the fresh coriander and spread on top.

3. Roghan Josh

Ingredients

½ kg lamb or veal shanks
2 tbsp ginger paste
2 tbsp garlic paste
6 tbsp oil

5 small cardamom
2 bay leaves
5 whole cloves
6 whole pepper corns
2 cms stick of cinnamon
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped
1 tbsp coriander powder
1 tsp cumin powder
3 tsp paprika
1 tsp cayenne pepper
4tbsp yoghurt
½ tsp garam masala powder
1 tsp ground black pepper

Method

Heat the oil in and brown the meat.
Take out meat and put aside.
Put cardamom, bay leaves, cloves, peppercorns, and cinnamon into the same hot oil. Stir for a few seconds until cloves swell and bay leaves begin to take colour.

Now, put in the onions and fry onions until brown.

Add ginger and garlic and stir for 30 seconds.

Add coriander, cumin, paprika, cayenne, and salt to taste. Fry for couple of minutes on low heat.

Now, put back the meat and juices. Fry for a couple of minutes on low heat.

Add yoghurt.

Keep cooking for another five minutes. Cook until meat becomes soft and oil separates from spices.

Sprinkle the top with garam masala and black pepper.

4. Pasande

Ingredients

½ kg beef mince
3 onions, peeled and sliced
1 tsp garam masala
2 tsp chana (dried lentils, stripped of outer hulls and split)
1 tsp khashkhash (poppy seed)
2 green chillies, cut in small pieces
3 tomatoes, cut in small piece
3 tbsp oil

Method

Fry the onions in oil until brown.
Take out half the onions and mix in the mince.

Put tomatoes and other ingredients in the pot with remaining onions and cook slowly into a thick gravy.

Make mince balls the size of golf balls and place them in the gravy.

Cook slowly until slightly brown and the oil separates from the gravy.

5. Do piyaza

Ingredients

½ kg veal, beef shanks or lamb chops
3t bsp oil
8 onions, peeled and sliced
2 cups yoghurt
1 tbsp chopped fresh coriander leaves
2 tbsp ginger paste
2tbsp garlic paste
1 tsp coriander powder
4 small cardamoms
1 tsp garam masala powder
2 tsp chilli powder

2 cups water

Method

Fry half the onions until they turn golden brown.
Remove the onions from the oil and put aside.
Fry the meat until slightly brown then take out the meat and put aside.
Put the rest of the onions in oil with chilli powder, meat, and yoghurt and cook this mixture for a few minutes.
Add salt, ginger, garlic, coriander, cardamoms, garam masala, the browned meat and two cups of water.
Cook slowly until meat becomes soft and oil separates from spices.
Put the fried onions back into the mix before serving.

6. Paai

Ingredients

½ kg lamb, veal or beef shanks

2 onions, peeled and cut
2 tbsp garlic paste
1 tbsp coriander powder
1 tsp chilli powder
¼ tsp turmeric
1 tsp cumin powder
2 bay leaves
4 cloves
5 black peppers
3 tbsp oil

Method

Brown onions in 3 tbsp oil.

Slightly brown the meat.
Add garlic.
Add all spices and two cups of water.
Boil till meat is soft or pressure cook for 20 minutes.

7. Palak gosht

Ingredients

½ kg meat or chicken
1 packet of frozen spinach or ½ kg fresh spinach
1 tbsp garlic paste
2 tbsp oil
2 tsp chilli powder
2 tsp turmeric powder
2 tbsp yoghurt

Method

Put everything (except the garlic) in one pot.
Cook on low heat until meat is soft.
Put in the garlic and continue to cook on low heat until oil separates from spinach.

8. Amroha Shaljam Gosht

Ingredients

½ kg spinach
½ kg meat
3 tbsp oil
1 onion, peeled and crushed
1 green or red fresh chilli
1 tsp turmeric
1 tb coriander powder
1 tsp poppy seed (khashkhash)
2 tbsp garlic paste
½ tsp salt

Method

Brown the onions in oil.
Chop the spinach.
Add spinach, dry spices, chilli and salt.
Fry on low heat until oil separates

from the spices.
Add meat and cook it until it is soft and well-cooked.
Add garlic and mix on low heat for five minutes.

9. Karhai Gosht

Ingredients

½ kg meat
3 medium tomatoes
1 tbsp garam masala
1 tsp chillies
1 tsp turmeric
2 tbsps ginger paste
2 tbsps garlic paste
2 tbsp oil
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp garam masala

Method

Put the meat and spices (except the garam masala) in a pot and fry in the oil until brown.

Add the tomatoes and fry for about 15 minutes. The tomatoes will create a liquid.

Cook on low heat until the meat is cooked well.

Mix in the garam masala.

10. Shami kabab

Ingredients

½ kg beef mince
2 tbsps chana daal
2 tbsps garlic paste
salt to taste
2 tsps chilli powder
8 clove pods

1 tsp garam masala powder
1 egg
2 cups water
2 green chillies, cut into small pieces
2 tsps fresh, chopped coriander
2 tbs+ oil

Method

Put all ingredients, except the chillies and coriander, in the water.

Cook on low heat till daal becomes soft and mince becomes almost dry.

Mince this mixture in blender.

Make a mixture of green chilli and coriander.

In your hands, shape the kabab like hamburger, putting a small amount of the green chillies and chopped fresh coriander inside.

Fry each kabab in a pan with oil on low to medium heat for a few minutes, then let it cool a bit. This is to prevent the kabab breaking.

Turn the kabab over and fry the other side.

11. Seekh kabab

Ingredients

½ kg fine beef mince
salt to taste
½ tsp tenderizer
1 tsp poppy seeds (khashkhash)
2 tbsps desiccated coconut
1 tsp aniseed
2 tsps coriander powder
1 tsp garam masala
2 tbsps yoghurt or milk powder

2 onions, peeled and cut.

1 tsp chilli powder

1 tbsps oil

Method

Mix salt, tenderizer and the rest of the spices into mince. Put in pot.

Brown the onions in oil in a separate pan.

Tip the browned onions in with mince.

Leave the mixture for a couple of hours.

Prepare the kabab either like a hamburger or thread it onto a skewer.

Bung it on a barbecue, turning carefully.

12. Tikka

Ingredients

½ kg lamb or chicken cut into bite-size portions

1 tsp coriander powder

1 tbsp cumin powder

1 tsp chilli powder 1 tsp

salt to taste

1 tsp garam masala powder

2 tbsps yoghurt

1 tsp meat tenderizer (if using lamb)

Method

Mix everything.

Marinate the mixture for a couple of hours.

Fry on barbecue plate or in frying pan with small amount of oil until the meat becomes slightly brown.

Serve immediately, whilst hot.

13. Kofte

Ingredients

½ kg mince

1 cup chana daal

2 onions

1 tsp garam masala powder

1 tbsp ginger paste

3 tbsps garlic paste

1 tsp chilli powder

2 tbsps oil

salt to taste

1 tbsp tenderizer

1 tsp poppy seeds (khashkhash)

Method

Peel and chop onions, and brown them in oil in a pot.

Add coriander, chilli, garlic and salt.

Cook on low heat until the oil separates from the spices.

Brown chana daal in a pan, then crush it.

Mix together the raw mince, meat tenderizer, onions, garam masala, crushed chana daal and poppy seeds. The oil and whatever doesn't come easily out of the pot remains in the pot to be used as a gravy.

Put the mixture into a blender or food processor and blend until it is well mixed and pliable.

Make golf size balls from the mince, onions, spice and chana daal mixture.

Put the kofte balls back in the pot with the gravy.

Add a bit of water if necessary and cook on low heat until the oil separates from the spices and the balls are a golden brown.

14. Keema

Ingredients

½ kg coarse beef mince
1 tbsp ginger paste,
2 tbsp garlic paste
2 onions
4 full chillies
5 cloves
6 black peppers
2 bay leaves
2 tbsps oil
1 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp mace
1 cup water

Method

Chop chillies into small pieces.

Peel, slice or chop onions.

Brown onions in oil.

Put all the other ingredients, including the mince and the water, into a pot.

Cook on low heat until the mince is slightly brown.

15. Bakra

Ingredients:

1 kg lamb chops
½ kg tomatoes
3 onions
1 tbsp garlic paste
1 tsp ginger paste
1 tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp chillies powder
¼ tsp salt
1 tsp garam masala
2 tbsp oil

Method

Peel and chop or slice onions.

Brown onions until they are golden brown.

Add tomatoes, ginger, garlic, other spices and salt.

Cook slowly for a few minutes.

Add the lamb chops.

Bring to boil then simmer until the chops are fully cooked.

Chicken Specialities

16. Murgh Masallam (spicy, roasted chicken)

Ingredients

1 whole chicken
3 tsp chilli powder
4 tps coriander powder
½ tsp turmeric
1 tsp desiccated coconut
1 tsp almonds powder
2 onions
2 tbsp oil
2 tbsp yoghurt
2 tbsp garlic
4 small cardamom
1 lemon

Method

Remove the skin from the chicken.

Make several shallow cuts over the chicken, including legs and wings.

Squeeze lemon juice in to the cuts.

Stand chicken for thirty minutes.

Chop one onion roughly and then crush it in a blender or food processor.

In a pot fry the crushed onion mix in oil until golden brown.

Add spices and yoghurt and continue to fry on low heat.

Add garlic.

Smother chicken with half the cooked spices, particularly in cuts.

Put the other half of cooked spices and four green cardamoms inside the chicken.

Set oven at around 170°C.

Put 1 tbsp oil in heavy roasting tray to heat.

Put chicken in roasting tray and into the oven.

Peel and slice the other raw onion.

After 30 minutes of cooking add the

onion to the roasting tray. This will make an onion gravy.
Cook for another 30 minutes or so.
The chicken should be slightly brown when ready to serve.
Pour onion gravy over chicken.

17. Murgh Kaa Saalan (chicken curry)

Ingredients

1 kg chicken
3 onions
4 tbsp yoghurt
1 tsp garlic paste
1 tsp ginger paste
3 tbsp oil
1tbsp coriander powder
1 tbsp cumin powder
1 tsp chillie powder
1 tsp garam masala
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp khaskhas (optional)
4 small cardamoms

Method

Remove the skin from the chicken.
Cut chicken into bite-size portions.
Peel and cut up onions roughly.
Stick the onions in a blender or food processor briefly, stopping before they become a paste. Alternatively, cut them up into very small, fine pieces.
Fry the onion mixture in oil until they become a light golden colour.
Fry the chicken pieces in with the onions, until the chicken is slightly brown.
Add a spoonful of yoghurt and stir in until it dissolves into the mixture.
Repeat this process until all the yoghurt is gone.
Put the spices and salt into a bowl.
Mix with a bit of water so the combined spices become a paste.
Add this spice paste to the pot.
Fry gently for a few minutes until the oil separates from the spices.
Add one cup of water and simmer for about twenty or thirty minutes until the chicken is fully cooked.

Fish

18. Machli Masala (spicy fish)

Ingredients

½ kg white-flesh fish fillets
2 tsp coriander powder
chilli powder to taste
¼ tsp turmeric
2 onions
2 tbsp oil
1 tsp garam masala
salt to taste
1 tbsp garlic paste or 10 pods fresh garlic

Method

Cut the fish fillets into large pieces.
Crush the garlic.
Marinate fish in garlic for around 15 minutes.
Peel and chop onions and brown them in oil.
Add all the spices except the garam masala to the onion mix.
Cook on low heat until the spices separate from the oil.
Add fish and garam masala on low heat for about fifteen minutes.

19. Baked Machli (baked fish)

Ingredients

½ kg fish fillets
10 tbsp yoghurt
1 tbsp vinegar
1 tsp garam masala
1 tbsp garlic
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp chilli powder
1 fresh lime
1 tbsp oil
salt

Method

Wash the fish fillets.
Juice the lime.
Rub salt and lime juice over the fish.
Marinate for about 15 minutes.
Mix all the spices in the yoghurt.
Put the fish, spices mixed with yoghurt, and the oil in a baking tray.
Bake the fish for 15 to 20 minutes at 170°C.

20. Machli Kababs (fish kebabs)

Ingredients

½ kg fish cutlets or fillets
1 tbsp garlic paste
chilli powder to taste
1 tbsp breadcrumbs
salt to taste
3 tbsp yoghurt
1 tbsp oil

Method

Wash the fish.
Make a paste of all ingredients, except the oil, by mixing with the yoghurt.
Smother the fillets in this paste.
Marinate for a while.
Heat the oil in a frying pan or wok.
Fry until the fillets are cooked through.

VEGETABLES

21. Bhindi (Okra)

Ingredients

½ kg frozen pieces or fresh okra fingers
1 fresh green or red chilli
1 onion, peeled and cut
2 tbsp oil
Salt to taste
½ cup water

Method

Note: If using frozen okra pieces, there is no need to thaw first.

Peel and chop onion.

If okra is fresh, cut into 2cm or 3cm lengths

Cut the chilli into small pieces

Brown the onions in oil in a small pot.

Add the okra, chilli and salt and cook gently on low heat for two or three minutes.

Add water and simmer for about five minutes until only a very small amount of liquid is left.

(Note: more water will be needed for fresh okra than for frozen).

22. Gaajar Kaa Bhurta (Carrot)

Ingredients

5 carrots
1 large tomato
1 onion
1 tsp turmeric
1 onion, peeled and cut
1 tsp green coriander
1 tsp cumin seeds
2 dry chillies
fresh green coriander leaves

Method

Chop carrots into small pieces.
Cut tomato into small pieces.
Cook carrots in about 2 cups water.
Using a little of the water from the carrot pot make a paste with the carrots, tomato, turmeric, salt and chilli. This can be done in a blender or food processor.
Brown the onions in oil in a pot.
Add cumin seeds for a minute.
Add the carrot paste and fry until the carrots paste is golden color.
To serve scatter the coriander leaves on top.

23. Turai (Zucchini / Courgette)

Ingredients

2 or 3 zuccinis
1 onion
2 tbsp oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1/2 tsp turmeric
1 green chilli sliced thin
2 tsp garlic paste
Fresh green coriander

Method

Peel the zucchinis and slice thinly in rounds.
Peel and slice onion.
Brown onion in oil in a pot until the mixture is golden brown.
Add cumin seeds and brown slightly.
Add turmeric and cook for one minute.
Add garlic and cook for one minute.
Add zuccinis, salt and green chilli and fry for one minute.
Add 1/2 cup water.
Cook slowly until the zucchinis are cooked and the liquid has mainly dissolved.
Finely chop the coriander and sprinkle over to serve.

24. Aaloo Bhaaji (Potato)

Ingredients

4 medium size potatoes
1 tbsp oil
1 tsp turmeric
chilli powder to taste
salt to taste

Method

Peel potatoes and cut into small wedges.
Boil until almost cooked.
Transfer the potatoes to a wok, pan or pot.
Add oil, turmeric, salt and chilli and fry gently until the potato wedges are fully cooked.

25. Talai Aaloo (potatoes with onions)

Ingredients

4 potatoes

1 onion
2 tbsp oil
1 tsp cumin seed
3 full dry chillies
Salt to taste

Method

Peel and slice potatoes thinly.
Peel and slice the onions.
Brown the onions and chilli together.
When they are nearly cooked add the cumin seeds for a minute only.
Add water to the pot and put in the potatoes.
Simmer until the potatoes are cooked.

26. Baigan (aubergine / eggplant)

Ingredients

1 large aubergine
4 tbsp oil
1 tbsp ginger paste
1 tbsp garlic paste
2 large tomatoes
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp chilli powder or to taste
salt to taste

Method

Cut the aubergine into slices.
Chop the tomatoes.
Fry the slices in oil in a pan until reddish brown. Take them out and put aside. Heat more oil in the pan over medium heat.
Add cumin seeds for a minute.
Add tomato, ginger, garlic, coriander, turmeric, chilli and salt.
Stir and cook for 5 minutes, breaking tomato pieces with the back of a slotted spoon. Turn the heat up until the spice mixture gets thick.
Put in the fried aubergine slices and mix gently.
Simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring gently.
Cover the pan, turn heat to very low

and cook another 5 minutes.

LENTILS

27. Maash Daal (dal/dahl)

Ingredients

2 cups white split lentils
2 full chillies
½ tsp salt
1 cm ginger
1 tsp cumin seed
1 onion, peeled and sliced
2 tbsp oil

Method

Peel and slice the onion. Put aside.

Put the mash daal, salt, and ginger into a pot with 1 cup of water.

Simmer on low heat until the daal becomes soft.

Brown the onions in oil. Just before the onions become brown add the whole chillies and the cumin seeds for only a few seconds.

Pour this mixture over the daal.

28. Masoor Daal (dal/dahl)

Ingredients

1 cup red split lentils
8 cups water
¼ tsp turmeric

3 tbsp olive oil

1 large onion

½ tsp cumin seeds

1 tsp chopped ginger

1 tbsp lime juice

salt to taste

2 green chillies (optional)

Method

Bring four cups water to the boil.

Add the red split lentils and turmeric.

Cook uncovered over medium-low heat until the daal is tender and almost all liquid has evaporated.

Peel and slice the onions.

Fry the onions in oil until they are translucent.

Add salt to taste.

Add lemon juice.

Pour this mixture over the daal.

RICE

29. Pulao

Ingredients

1/2 kg meat cut in small pieces

1 cup rice

2 tbsp aniseed (sonf)

2 tbsp whole coriander

5 pieces garlic

4 bay leaves

2 onions,

1 onion whole

3 tbsp oil

6 cloves

6 black pepper pods

1 tsp cumin seeds

2 cms cinnamon stick

Salt to taste

Method

Put coriander and aniseed in the centre of a clean cloth (about the size of a man's handkerchief) and tie it like a

bag.

Put meat, cloth bag and one whole onion in 2 cups of water in a pot and heat on medium heat until the meat is soft.

Take meat, whole onion and cloth bag out of the pot and rest the meat on a plate. Discard the whole onion, cloth bag and its contents, but retain the water (yakhni) in the pot.

Peel and chop the other onion and in a separate pot fry in the oil until the onion mixture is brown.

Add the cumin seeds and fry for another 30 seconds or so.

Peel and crush the garlic.

Add the cooked meat and garlic and fry for one minute.

Add rice and fry for 30 seconds.

Add one and half cups of the yakhni (boiled meat water). If there is not enough of this water, add a small amount of plain water.

Add cloves, black pepper, cinnamon, garlic, bay leaves and salt.

Bring to the boil, then turn heat to very low and simmer with the lid on for 20 minutes.

30. Biryani

Ingredients

1/2 kg meat

2 cms ginger peeled and grated

3 onions, peeled and sliced

4 cloves of garlic

1/2 cup oil

1 cup rice

1 mace bulb or piece

1/2 tsp nutmeg

5 cloves

5 black peppercorns

5 small cardamom

1 tsp cumin seeds

2 cms cinnamon stick

Salt to taste

Method

Peel and slice the onions.

Peel and grate the ginger.

Peel and crush the garlic

Crush the cloves, mace and small cardamoms.

Cut the meat into large bit-size pieces.

Fry the onions in oil in a large pot until brown.

Take half of the onions out and set aside.

Put the meat, ginger and garlic in the pot. Add two cups of water.

Cook on low-medium heat until the meat becomes soft.

Add rice and crushed cloves, peppercorns, small cardamoms and mace. Then, chuck in the nutmeg and the cinnamon stick.

Boil for around 20 minutes.

Turn heat to very low and simmer gently.

Put the browned onions you have set aside in a pan with some oil, throw in the cumin seeds and fry gently. When the rice is cooked tip this mixture over the top.

Optional: Pour a tiny amount of rose-water or kewra essence over the top.

You can also make the biryani look festive by mixing a few strands of saffron or turmeric or orange food colour in 1 tsp of milk and pouring it over the top and down the sides.

BREADS

31. Paratha

Ingredients

1 cup plain wheat flour
½ cup wholemeal flour
warm water as needed
2 tsp oil

Method

Put flour and oil into a food processor. Turn the food processor on and pour in water gradually until the flour becomes pliable dough. Knead it into about 6 cm diameter balls. Spread 1 tsp oil on to a work place and flatten one ball to about 15 cm in circumference. Then use a rolling pin until it is about 20 cm round. Spread a little oil over the surface of the paratha and fold it in half. Spread a little more oil over the surface of the half and fold it again to form a triangle. Roll out the triangle into a larger triangle with each side measuring about 12 cm. Put a frying pan on to medium heat. When the pan is hot brush it with a bit of oil and slap the paratha on it. Let it cook for about a minute. Using a spatula, pick it up. Brush the pan again with a bit of oil. Turn the paratha over and slap it on the pan again to cook the other side. When cooked, both sides should have reddish-brown spots. Repeat for the rest. Wrap the parathas in foil as you go, to keep them hot. Serve hot and crisp.

32. Bairi Roti

Ingredients

2 cups plain wheat flour

1 cup besan (gram/chickpea) flour
1 cup chana daal (yellow bean lentils)
packet or homemade chapattis
1 onion
chilli powder to taste
1 tsp garam masala
4 tbsp ghee or oil

Method

Make a soft dough of flour and besan, using a tsp oil with water. Boil chana daal in two cups water until daal is tender. Discard the water and mash the daal in a blender or food processor. Peel and chop the onion into small pieces. Add all ingredients to mashed daal to make a daal paste. Make two thin chapattis (or take them out of a packet or the freezer). Put the daal paste in between two chapattis. Spread ghee or oil onto a tava or frying pan. Cook until light brown on both sides.

33. Baisni Roti

Ingredients

2 cups plain wheat flour
1 cup besan (gram/chickpea) flour
salt to taste
1 onion
1 tsp turmeric
ghee or butter or oil

Method

Peel and roughly cut the onion. Crush the onion in a pestle or blender, adding a bit of water if necessary. Add the turmeric to the crushed onion. Make dough from a combination of the flour and the onion mix, either in a food processor or by hand. Make balls from the dough. Roll out each ball like a chapatti. Fry each chapatti on a tava or in a frying pan until light brown on both sides.

Dissolve ½ tsp ghee on top.
Serve and with sliced mangoes
alongside a condiment of mint and
chilli chutney.

SOUP

34. Moong Daal (lentil soup)

Ingredients

1 cup moong daal (green bean lentils)
2 cms celery pieces
1 onion
1 carrot, peeled and cut
1 chicken stock
1 tsp cumin powder
chilli powder to taste

Method

Boil lentils in four cups water until
tender.

Peel and cut the carrot into small
pieces.

Peel and slice the onion.

Put all ingredients in a pot and boil
until creamy.

*Optional: Mushrooms, cauliflower, pumpkin
or broccoli can be used in place of, or as well
as, the carrot.*

DESSERTS

35. Gajar Halva

Ingredients

5 medium size grated carrots
1 small bottle of cream
2 tbsp sugar
3 small cardamom, crushed
2 tbsp oil or ghee
2 tbsp desiccated coconut (naaryal)
1 tbsp grated almonds.

Method

Fry oil in a frying pan.
Add small cardamoms when the oil is
hot.

Add carrots and turn until they are a
golden color.

Add cream and simmer until the cream
is absorbed into carrots.

Add sugar.

Continue frying until the oil separates
from the carrots.

To serve sprinkle the coconut and
almonds on top.

Note: Gajar Halva can be served hot or cold.

36. Sivayan

Ingredients

1 cup thin vermicelli noodles
2 tbsp oil
4 small cardamoms
4 cups milk
1 cup cream
2 tbsp sugar
1 tsp crushed pistachio nuts or slivered
almonds

Method

Crush the cardamoms.

Crush the vermicelli.

Fry the vermicelli with oil in a frying
pan until it turns a golden color.

Add milk and cream and cardamoms
and simmer gently until the milk has
almost evaporated.

Add sugar.

Decorate with the pistachio nuts and/or
almonds.

37. Sheer Qorma

Ingredients

1 cup vermicelli noodles (sivayan)
4 cups milk
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup rice
4 small cardamoms
2 tbsp oil or ghee
2 tsp desiccated coconut
½ tsp kewra essence (rose water)

Method

Crush the vermicelli.

Cook the rice in the milk.

Crush in a food processor (or use a rolling pin).
Add sugar.
Brown the sivayan in ghee or oil until it is golden.
Put the sivayan in the pot with the milk rice mixture.
Cook gently for ten minutes.
Add the coconut and the cardamoms.
Optional: Trickle kewra on top.

38. Anda Halva

Ingredients

6 eggs
1 cup sugar
2 tbsp ghee
Shredded or dessicated coconut

Method

Beat the eggs well.
Add sugar and ghee then beat some more.
Put this mixture in a frying pan and keep ghee moving continuously on medium heat until it turns a golden colour.
Add coconut.

39. Chana Halva

Ingredients

1 cup Chana daal
2 cups sugar
4 tbsp ghee or oil
4 cups milk
5 green cardamoms
2 tbsp milk powder
2 tbsp desiccated coconut

Method

Boil chana daal in milk until tender.
Crush the mixture in a blender.
Heat oil in a frying pan.
When the oil is hot add the cardamoms.
Put crushed daal in the pan and fry until it turns a golden color.
Add powdered milk and sugar.
Cook until until liquids have

evaporated.
Add coconut.
Remove from pan and flatten it gently with your hands or a rolling pin.
Cut into diamond shaped pieces.

40. Shahi Tukra

Ingredients

8 pieces of sliced white bread
3 cups milk
1 cup sugar
4 green cardamoms, skinned and crushed
4 tbsp oil or ghee

Method

Combine the sugar and milk in a large pot and boil until it becomes thick like cream.
Brown bread slices in ghee one at a time, then put them into in the thickened milk.
Simmer for 15 minutes on low heat.
Skin the cardamoms. Crush the seeds in a pestle. Sprinkle on top.

41. Safia's Special Shahi Tukra

Ingredients

3 cups milk
1 cup cream
4 eggs
2 tbsp ghee
½ cup sugar
4 slices of white bread
1 tbsp desiccated coconut
1 tsp pistachio
1 tsp flaked almonds
½ tsp kewra essence or rose water

Method

Soak bread in milk for about 10 minutes.
Mix all ingredients in a blender.
Add kewra essence or rose water.
Pour everything into a greased-proofed oven dish.
Bake at 170c for an hour or until set.
Take out and put it in the fridge for

few minutes.
Sprinkle the coconut, pistachio and almonds on top.
Cut into small pieces to serve.

42. Shakarqandi Ki Kheer

Ingredients

1 medium to large sweet potato
4 cups milk
1 cup cream
1 cup sugar
2 small cardamoms
1 tbsp desiccated coconut
2 cups water

Method

Peel and chop the sweet potato.
Boil the sweet potato in two cups of water in a pot until tender.
Remove the sweet potato and put it in a blender with one cup of milk and blend until it is creamy.
Now, tip into a pot and boil with remaining three cups of milk and the cream until it thickens slightly.
Stir in the sugar.
Put the cardamom and coconut on top to serve.

43. Doodh Chaval

Ingredients

1 cup rice
6 cups milk
1 cup cream
2 tbsp sugar
4 cardamom pods
2 tbsp desiccated coconut
1 tsp desiccated almonds

Method

Crush the cardamom pods.
Boil rice with milk and cream until about one third of the volume is left.
Add sugar, cardamom pods, coconut and almonds.
Simmer for five to ten minutes.
Serve hot or cold.

SWEETS

44. Barfi

Ingredients

4 cups powdered milk
4 small cardamom
2 cups sugar
2 tbsp oil
½ cup water
1 tin evaporated milk

Method

Mix the powdered milk with the evaporated milk and knead it into a dough.
Put the dough in the freezer for about fifteen minutes.
Remove from freezer and grate it coarsely.
Put oil in frying pan and add cardamom, grated dough, sugar and water.
Cook on a low heat and stir until the liquid has evaporated.
Remove from pan.
Optional: Add a few drops of kewra.
When cool cut into diamond-shaped pieces.

45. Rabri

Ingredients

6 cups milk
3 tbsp sugar
½ finely shredded pistachio
1tsp shredded almonds
1tsp kewra (optional)

Method

Boil the milk in a deep and heavy karhai (Indian wok) or pot over medium heat, stirring continuously, keeping the cream and the skin of the milk towards the sides of the pot.
Boil until three-quarters of the milk has evaporated.
Gently scrape the cream from the sides of the pot and put it in the middle.

Add sugar and stir it into the mixture until it is fully dissolved.

Remove from the heat.

Optional: Sprinkle kewra over the top.

Cool the rabri.

Sprinkle almonds and pistachio over the top.

Serve at room temperature.

46. Meethi Poori

Ingredients

2 cups plain flour

3 cups semolina

2 tbsp ghee or oil

1 cup sugar

2 tbsp finely desiccated coconut

½ tsp salt

3 small cardamoms, skinned and crushed

1 cup milk

Method

Boil milk with sugar.

By hand or in a food processor knead all the other ingredients until they become smooth dough.

Flatten this dough by hand or rolling pin until it is about 1 cm thick.

Turn a drinking glass upside down and press down on the dough to make circles.

Cut around the circles to make round meethi pooris.

Fry each meethi poori on both sides in a frying pan in ghee, butter or oil until slightly brown.

Serve hot or cold.

47. Kulfi

Ingredients

2 litres milk

10 whole cardamom pods

4 tbsp sugar

½ tbsp blanched almonds

1 tbsp finely chopped, unsalted pistachios

Method

Grate the almonds (or use almond meal)

Bring the milk to the boil in a heavy pot.

As soon as milk begins to rise, turn the heat down, adjusting it to allow the milk to simmer vigorously without boiling over. The aim is for the milk to reduce to a third of its original volume.

Toss in the cardamom pods.

When the milk has been reduced, remove the cardamom pods and discard them.

Add sugar and almonds.

Stir and simmer gently for a few more minutes.

Pour the kulfi into portion size, freezer-safe, containers or into icy-pole trays.

Sprinkle with the pistachios.

Freeze.

SAVOURIES

48. Kabli Chana

Ingredients

1 tin kabli chana or 1 cup fresh chana daal

1 onion

1 tomato

2 green chillies, or to taste

½ tsp red chilli powder, or to taste

2 tbsp oil

2 cups water

Salt to taste

1 tsp cumin seeds

Method

If using fresh chana, soak it in water for a couple of hours before cooking.

Peel and slice the onion.

Chop the tomato.

Slice the green chillies

Put chana into a pot and boil in two

cups water for 25 minutes.
Fry the cumin seeds in oil for five seconds.
Add onions and tomatoes and simmer for ten minutes or until they form a paste.
Add the chana, salt and chillies to this mixture, stir it together and then simmer for another ten minutes.
Serve immediately.

49. Pakora

Ingredients

1- 2 cups besan (pea/gram flour)
½ tsp baking powder
salt to taste
chilli powder to taste
¼ tsp garam masala
½ onion peeled and cut
2 tbsp cauliflower or eggplant or capsicum or parboiled potato or spinach
1 tsp garlic paste
1 tsp turmeric
1 tbsp ginger
1-2 cups oil

Method

Peel and chop the onion finely.
Chop the other chosen vegetable finely.
If using fresh garlic and ginger, peel and crush well.
In a food processor mix everything with a little warm water and oil to make a slightly stiff batter.
Put the oil in a pot for deep-frying and heat until dangerously hot.
Now turn the heat down to medium.
With a dessert-spoon take a dollop of the batter mixture and drop it carefully into the pot. Turn frequently until it turns a golden-brown.
Repeat – cooking several at a time.
Serve hot.

DRINKS

50. A Good Cup of Tea

Ingredients

Darjeeling long leaf, loose black tea

(My favourite is Darjeeling Lipton Green Label, claimed to be the champagne of teas)

water
milk
sugar (to taste)

Method

(I prefer a good cast iron teapot, preferably with a built-in strainer and tight-fitting lid).

Heat the teapot by pouring a little boiling water in it, then by pouring it out.
Boil the water, starting from cold tap water.
Put in 1 tsp of tea for the teapot and 1 tsp of tea for each cup.
Pour the boiling water into the teapot, sufficient for the number of cups needed, and close the lid.
Heat the milk (subject to taste).
Let the tea brew between four and five minutes.
Pour the milk (hot or cold) into the cups.
Pour through a strainer (if necessary).
Drink and revive.

51. Masala Chai

Ingredients

3 cups water
1 cm cinnamon stick
4 small cardamoms
4 whole cloves
3 tbsp milk
3 tbsp sugar free or sugar
2 tsp tea
¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp mace

Method

Crush cloves, cardamom, nutmeg and mace.
Boil these crushed ingredients along

with the cinnamon stick in four cups of water in a saucepan for five minutes. Add the tea and boil for another five minutes.

Add milk and simmer for another minute.

Add sugar, either into the pot or into individual cups, according to taste.

Serve the tea, leaving spices and tea leaves in the pot.

52. Lassi

Ingredients

2 cups yoghurt

1 cup milk

2 tbsp sugar (to taste)

pinch of salt (to taste)

Kewra (optional)

4 ice cubes

Method

Put all the ingredients in a blender and blend on high for a couple of minutes.

Pour into glasses.

Optional: Add slices of mango, and turn it into a mango lassi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For teaching me to cook and allowing me to use and modify their home recipes I thank:

Indu Du and Flora Rao from Hobart; Mumtaz Naqvi from Melbourne; Jamal and Atiq Ghani from Edmonton and Bhabi and Hasan Hadi from Toronto; Safia Sultana from New York; Sabiha Naqvi and Shaheen and Nawab Siddiqui from London; Anwer Risvi and Badrun Naqvi from Delhi; Nargis Naqvi from Noida; Bazmi and Kamal Abidi and Zarrein and Qamar Naqvi from Lucknow; Zebi and Huzoor Khan from Aligarh; Najma Abidi and Naheed Naqvi from Amroha.

For editing the text I am indebted to Albert Goede along with Jane, Kamal, Zehra and Yasmin Naqvi.

For saying 'Bahut Lazeez,' I'm grateful to my hungry family and friends.

