

Easy Holiday Recipes

For Busy Home Cooks

Periods of lockdowns and circuit breakers have led to many people all over the globe realising their previously undiscovered passions and talents in cooking and baking for their loved ones. With the year-end festivities nearing, three medical students have generously shared here their favourite home cooking recipes for our readers to try for themselves. Happy Holidays!



Text and photos by Cassie Yang

Cassie is a final-year medical student. Between clinical postings and MBBS revision, she spends her remaining time on rock climbing and dressmaking.

With the mandated two month-long circuit breaker earlier this year, I too hopped onto the home cooking bandwagon. What started off as lazy, haphazard attempts to fuel myself for Zoom lectures soon morphed into a curious interest to create flavours that were uniquely mine – with the added challenge of having only limited ingredients from the nearby *mamak* shop and supermarket. It made me creative, having to think of feasible alternatives for otherwise obscure ingredients listed in online recipes. I eventually realised that cooking was less about following recipes and more about imagination. Using food as a medium, I found a way to share these fragments of my imagination with friends and family; a canvas to foster some semblance of companionship and comfort in this tumultuous time.



Finished fillets with dipping sauce and fried batter on the side



Crackered Mala Mackerel Bites

Ingredients

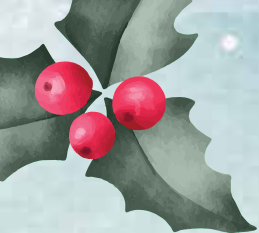
- 100 g curry prawn crackers (or any snack of your choice)
- 1 mackerel fillet
- 1 egg
- 2 tsp mala powder
- Cooking oil
- Ground black pepper (to taste)

Directions

1. Crush the curry prawn crackers. Use a food processor or mortar and pestle for this. Do not crush them too finely – you're looking to create granules that retain a texture of crunchiness.
2. Add mala powder to the crushed prawn crackers to spice up the flavour, then transfer the crushed crackers to a bowl.
3. Crack your egg and separate the yolk from the white.
4. To make the dipping sauce, whisk the egg yolk. Slowly and gradually add in 1 tbsp of cooking oil until you obtain a nice, thick and consistent texture with a pale yellow colour. Season the

mixture with ground black pepper and mix thoroughly.

5. Debone the mackerel fillet before slicing it into evenly-sized pieces.
6. Dip the mackerel pieces into the egg white, then coat them in the crushed crackers. Press the mackerel fillets firmly into the bowl of crushed crackers to ensure the coating sticks well.
7. Deep fry the battered mackerel pieces over medium heat – not too hot as the cracker coating typically burns very easily. Fry each piece for around 1 to 2 minutes, or until golden brown.
8. Mix the remaining egg white with any leftover crushed crackers, and separate them into smaller nuggets. Fry these nuggets for an extra snack to go with the fish.
9. Serve with dipping sauce.



Text and photos by
Nicholas Wong

Nicholas is a second-year medical student at the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine.

My passion for cooking stems from being able to make my loved ones happy, while being able to enjoy a sumptuous meal myself! Outside of school, I play rugby and work out often, so my dishes tend to be rather protein-rich and low-fat. Given the upcoming holiday season, I thought it would be apt for me to share a recipe that is not just simple to follow, but easy to mass produce! With a prep time of 10 minutes and a cook time of under 30 minutes, it will be sure to put your loved ones into a lovely state of postprandial somnolence.

Pasta

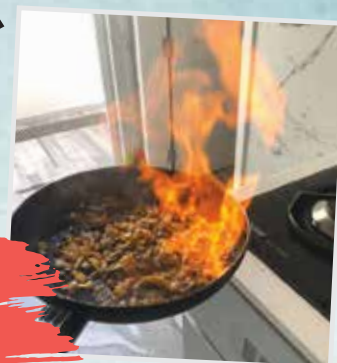
- 1 portion of pasta (fettuccine/tagliatelle preferred)
- ¼ onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- ½ pack white mushrooms
- 100 ml whole cream
- 100 ml chicken stock
- 2 strips of streaky bacon
- 1 tsp yellow mustard
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- Chilli flakes
- Pepper and salt (to taste)
- Whiskey (optional)

Proteins

- 1-inch-thick ribeye steak
- Knob of butter
- 1 clove of garlic
- Thyme (optional)
- Garlic powder, salt and pepper (to taste)



Just for the gram
- be careful not to
burn yourself!



Creamy Fettuccine with Ribeye Steak



Your sauce should
look a little like this,
messy, creamy and
soooo aromatic!

Directions

1. Start by preparing all your ingredients. Dice up the onion, garlic, bacon and white mushrooms, and prepare your other wet ingredients as well.
2. Set a large pot of water to boil, and salt it generously. Once boiling, add one ladle of oil and add in your pasta of choice. I personally like fettuccine because it holds onto the creamy sauce really well! Let that boil for about 8 to 9 minutes, depending on your pasta box's instructions (take a minute off from the cooking time).
3. At another hob, heat up a cast iron skillet (if not, any pan will do) and get it ripping hot! While it is heating up, pat dry your steak with kitchen towels and generously season with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Once hot, lightly drizzle the pan with olive oil and put the steak in away from you to prevent the oil from splattering all over you. *That. Sound.*
4. Go for about 2 minutes per side, or until a nice brown crust is formed (for a medium rare). After a total of 4 minutes (2 per side), turn the heat all the way down and throw in your knob of butter and clove of garlic (and a sprig of thyme if you're feeling fancy). Start spooning the foamy butter over the steak (aka basting) for about a minute or so. With a total cook time of slightly over 5 minutes, remove the steak from the pan and rest it on a cooking board.
5. With that same pan, toss in your sliced bacon, garlic, onions and mushrooms all at the same time. Fuss free. Add in chilli flakes and yellow mustard (I like Coleman's) at this point to taste. Now this is the Instagram-worthy portion. Carefully, introduce a dab of whiskey into the pan to deglaze it and get those sticky fond pieces off the bottom of the pan. Be sure to stand back as the whiskey catches on fire! Add in the chicken stock and whole cream, and let the entire sauce simmer over low-medium heat. For that kick of umami, add a few generous drops of Worcestershire sauce, and season to taste.
6. When your pasta is done, add it directly from the pot into the pan, without straining. A bit of pasta water is actually good to initiate the binding process between the sauce and the pasta. Mix and stir well, and top it off with your now cooled down sliced steak. You are sure to impress a loved one!



Text and photos
by Goh Xin Rong

Xin Rong is a fifth-year medical student from the Lee Kong Chian School of Medicine and creator of @coconutandlilies. She loves emceeing too!

I have been so addicted to making popsicles that they are starting to become a staple at home! All you need is a short 20 minutes and you get a yummy supply of popsicles. A good study/work break, wouldn't you say? Not to mention how customisable these are – you can add anything you desire to give them that extra oomph! Let's talk about getting those creative juices flowing.

Home cooking has opened up many opportunities for me as I get to recreate and even design flavour combinations I crave for, not forgetting how it is more affordable and allows me to control the amount of sugar going into my food. I share here one of my delicious and also incredibly pretty recipes.

Ingredients (for 12 popsicles)

Froyo base

- 1 cup yoghurt
- ½ to ¾ cup whipping cream
- 2 tbsp honey (to taste)

If you like something a little creamier, consider increasing the amount of whipping cream that you are adding in.

Berry jam layer

- ½ cup berries
(stone fruits would work well too!)
- ¼ cup water
- 1 tbsp sugar (optional, or to taste)
- 2 tbsp rum (optional)

Walnut crumble

- Generous handful of walnuts

Directions

Froyo base

1. Mix yoghurt, whipping cream and honey in a large bowl. Set aside.

Berry jam layer

2. Place berries (or fruit of your choice), sugar and water into a pan and cook it over a low flame. When berries start to turn soft, use the back of a fork to mash them up. Allow jam to thicken into a reduction of your desired consistency. Set aside and let it cool.

Walnut crumble

3. Using a food processor, blend a handful of walnuts till they resemble coarse bread crumbs. Alternatively, you may chop them up finely or crush them in a ziplock bag with the back of a spatula.

Assembly

4. In your popsicle mould, add 2 tbsp of your berry jam.
5. Fill up ⅓ of each popsicle mould with your yoghurt mix. Use a chopstick to gently mix the layers to obtain a swirling effect.

6. Add in your walnut layer.
7. Fill up ¾ of each mould with your remaining yoghurt mixture.
8. Finish off with the remaining of your jam, repeating the swirling process with a chopstick as described in Step 5.
9. Cover your popsicle mould and insert in the ice-cream stick according to the manufacturer's instructions.
10. Leave the popsicles in your freezer overnight and wait for magic to happen!

Alternatively, if you do not have a popsicle mould, you could mix all of these into a baking tin and leave it in the fridge to set over night. Remove the froyo 15 minutes before serving to allow you to scoop it out easily! ♦

No-churn strawberry and blackberry froyo popsicles with walnuts



Explore endless possibilities with how you choose to mix and design your layers – the sky is your limit!

