

MRIDULA'S ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS

Prawn Cake (Serves 4)

This is an Indo-Portuguese dish and it comes from Goa. It makes an excellent first course. Prawn Cake or 'Apa de Camrao' in Portugues, is made with a spicy prawn filling between thin layers of egg pancakes. In Goa, they cover the entire cake with mayonnaise, to make it look like an iced cake, but I have omitted this stage.



INGREDIENTS

For the filling:

- 250g cooked peeled prawns
- 2-3 tablespoons sunflower rapeseed or light olive oil
- 1 teaspoon fennel seeds, crushed
- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 green chilli, very finely chopped or minced (de-seeded if liked)
- 1cm piece of root ginger, finely grated
- 1 teaspoon garlic puree
- 1 teaspoon ginger puree
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- ½ teaspoon chilli powder
- Salt to taste
- 1 tablespoon tomato puree
- 2 tablespoons coriander leaves, finely chopped

For the pancakes:

- 6 medium eggs
- Salt and freshly milled black pepper to taste
- Sunflower rapeseed or light olive oil for cooking

METHOD

Using a large knife or a food processor with the pulse action, chop the prawns finely (avoid making a paste). Heat the oil over a medium heat and add the crushed fennel seeds. Let them sizzle for 15-20 seconds and add the onion and green chilli. Fry until the onion is soft (about 5 minutes) and add the ginger and garlic. Cook for 2-3 minutes and add the ground coriander and chilli powder. Cook for about a minute and add the prawns, salt, tomato puree and chopped coriander. Stir and mix well, remove from the heat. Do not cook the prawns over heat as they will start releasing the juices; you want a nice thick, moist mixture which has no extra liquid. To make the pancakes, beat the eggs and season with salt and pepper. In a 15cm frying pan, preferably non-stick, heat 1-2 teaspoons oil over a medium-low heat. Add two tablespoons beaten egg and spread it quickly over the surface of the pan. Allow to set and brown then turn or toss over and brown the other side. Make the remaining pancakes the same way. Pile them on top of one another placing a piece of greaseproof paper between each one. Put a pancake on a serving plate, spread with a little filling and top with another pancake. Continue layering this way until you have used up all the pancakes. Cut into wedges and serve with a garnish salad.