

# palate pleaser



# **Tea-licious bites**

Tea is the most widely consumed beverage in the world and chefs have tried to use the flavour and aroma of tea to create interesting food combinations

PAPIA LAHIRI AND **ADITI PANCHOLI** 

THE ASIAN AGE

Tea is a must have beverage in most Indian homes. The humble brew has come a long way. At a recent city event, celebrity chef, Vicky Ratnani used tea along with whole spices, butter and olive oil to create a broth to cook chicken breast and cottage cheese. The dish had a lingering taste and flavour. We talk to city chefs about how tea can be used in numerous ways in various dishes.

### TEA-BASED DISHES

"The flavour of masala tea is quite strong and manages to retain its individuality amidst spices like cardamom, cinnamon and cloves. The brown rich stain that it infuses in the chicken and the paneer makes it look very palatable," said Vicky at the tea and food pairing event, Out of the Pot, organised by the UK-based tea brand, Typhoo. He prepared masala tea poached chicken with masala mashed potato and pickled cucumber ribbons. Sandeep Panwar, executive chef, The Metropolitan Hotel and Spa uses the tea water to prepare a soya chaap dish. The use of tea water is to add a dash of brown to the chaap. We add tea water at the end and cook the chaap for five to seven minutes," he says.

# TEA FLAVOURED DISHES

"Tea can be used creatively in making some special dishes like Dhungar Ke Murg, where chicken is placed in the centre in a separate vessel and tea is poured in the surrounding.

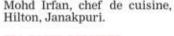


Masala tea poached chicken with masala mashed potato and pickled cucumber ribbons; (below) green tea creme brûlée

which adds slightly bitter, Mohd Irfan, chef de cuisine, astringent flavour to the chicken. Tea is not used to marinate or cook the chicken, in this case. Rather it is utilised for Have you ever thought about a additional flavour which is tea-based dessert? Tea there, yet one can't make out infused desserts are the presence of the tea," says

Tea helps in creating balance, gives lingering flavour and goes well in a classic french gateaux

CHEF JITENDER SINGH AMOUR







# PEPPERED COTTAGE CHEESE IN MASALA CHAI STOCK

For peppered cottage cheese

- 140 gm cottage cheese cut into medal-
- 1 tbsp mixed peppercorns
- 1 tbsp corn flour
- Olive oil for pan searing

high on demand amongst tea lovers. "The green tea creme

brůlée, a twist to classical

french cuisine, is rich and earthy, ethereal and soft,

crispy and sweet. It is made

using special matcha green

tea to balance its herbacious-

ness and toastiness with the

sweetness of a dairy custard

milk to give it a light texture,"

says executive chef, Diwas

Another interesting dessert is

the black and white chocolate

gateaux, tea anglaise. "Since it

is a gateaux, which is made of

black and white chocolate, I

wanted to give it a taste that

would go well, create balance

and last on palate. I infused it

with the Darjeeling tea and it turned yummy," says chef Jitender Singh, Amour-The

Patio Restaurant.

Wadhera, Mosaic Hotels.

Mix cornflour and peppercorn in a dish. Dust the cottage cheese pieces with it and fry in the pan on either side. For the Masala Mash

- 400 gm mashed potatoes
- 1-2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tbsp mustard seeds
- 1 tbsp ginger, finely minced
- fresh coriander leaves
- 50 gm butter
- salt, pepper according to taste

Boil the peeled potatoes in salted water and cook. Dry the potatoes well, and while the potatoes are still hot, mash it. Heat the butter in a pan, and add the mustard and cumin seeds. When they begin to crackle, add the rest of the ingredients (except the mashed potatoes) and fry well. Add the mashed potatoes mixture to this. Season to taste and mix well.

## For the Masala chai stock

- 300ml masala tea bag infused water/stock
- 1 tbsp sliced ginger
- Whole spices (2 cardamom, 1 cinnamon stick, 2 peppercorns, 1 bay leaf and a pinch of mace)

## Method

Infuse the masala chai stock with the spices in a saucepan. Bring to a gentle simmer. Strain the tea into another pan. Place the peppered cottage into the stock and poach for 15 minutes. Rest until needed. Strain the stock and add a dash of cream. Now add half-ateaspoon to butter. Serve the chai sauce with the cottage cheese and the masala mash.