

Surati Khus-Khus (poppy seed) ki Sabzi सूरती खस-खस की सब्ज़ी

Lavanya Shah

Veg, main dish, spicy, Surati



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Lavanya grew up in Mumbai in an artistic environment. Her father, Pandit Narendra Sharma, was a renowned Hindi poet; her mother, Susheela Sharma, painted with oil and water colour mediums. Lavanya started writing poems when she was 3 years old. *Fir Ga Utha Prawasee* (The traveller sings again) फिर गा उठा प्रवसी is her first book of poems. Her Hindi blog is *Lavanyam -Antarman* (Inner Voice of Lavanya) लावण्यम् अन्तर्मन् She lives in the US and can be reached @ lavnis@gmail.com.

In the early 1960s, when I was a school-going child, we lived in Bombay (now Mumbai) in a bungalow that had several fruit trees and jasmine shrubs in the back yard. My amma, late Shrimati Susheela Narendra Sharma, was an excellent cook. Her style of cooking was Surati (Surat is a city in Gujarat), which is spicier (using green chillies), oilier, and more elaborate than other Gujarati cuisine. A Gujarati saying praises this cuisine in this way: सुरतनुं जमए ने कशीनुं मरए (meal be from Surat, death be in Kashi.)

Often, Amma would set up a coal *sigdi* (सिगड़ी), a traditional Indian stove, in our back yard. I remember Amma's bent figure as she coaxed the coals to light, and then put on a heavy brass pot. The pot had a heavy lid on which she would put some coals.

Amma would serve the hot sabzi with Bajre ka Rotla, a Gujarati roti made from Bajra.

This recipe uses Khus-Khus seeds - the same poppy seeds that are used on muffins and bagels in the US!

Ingredients

- Khus-khus (poppy) seeds - 0.5 kg 1 lb
- Mint - a small bunch, around 20 leaves or so
- White Onion - 1 large one or 2 small
- Ginger - 0.5 inch piece
- Cumin - 0.5 teaspoon
- Green chillies - 1
- Fresh coriander leaves - to taste
- Red chili powder to taste

Method

Soak Khus-khus overnight.

Next day, grind the Khus-khus on a stone grinder.

Chop the onion into fine cubes.

Grind the chillies and ginger into a paste.

In a large pot, heat some oil.

Fry the cumin seeds, and then add the chillies & ginger paste and the onions.

Fry until the onions are translucent & golden brown.
Now add the mint and the ground khus-khus, and stir thoroughly.
Reduce the heat and add water.
Add 2 tablespoonful of cooking oil.
Let the mixture simmer gently.

If possible, put a few hot coals on the pan's lid so that the food gets heat from both the top and bottom. This was the traditional way.

The sabzi will be ready in 25 minutes.
Sprinkle fresh coriander leaves and red chili powder on top.

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