

RECIPE

Sandesh with Burfie Frosting



Ready in **6- 24 hours**

Serves **16**

For the frosting

- 4 cups half and half
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground saffron threads
- ¼ cardamon powder

• For the Sandesh

8 cups whole milk

¼ cup strained lemon juice

Few drops lemon coloring

Triple layer of cheese cloth + colander + bowl of water to press curds

For the simple syrup

7 cups of water + 6 cups of sugar + 1 tablespoon cornstarch dissolved in 2 tps water + candy thermometer

Preparation + Tools

You'll need 3 large saucepans: 1 to make the cheese 1 to make the frosting. + 1 for the simple syrup.

Have margarine or vegetable oil on hand to coat your hands when forming the cheese balls. You'll need a whisk or two, a baking rack for draining the Sandesh, a dedicated spatula, a slotted spoon, candy thermometer, a Pyrex pitcher to hold boiling water, patience and a cautious approach.

1. Place the half and half, ¼ cup of sugar in a large heavy bottomed saucepan over high heat and bring to a boil stirring constantly with a whisk. Continue to vigorously boil stirring

until it is reduced to 1 cup. Add the powdered saffron threads and cardamon and reduce the heat to moderate. Stir constantly or it will burn! Cook until it forms a paste. Turn off the flame and transfer to a plate to cool then refrigerate covered.

2. Place milk in a 5 quart saucepan over high heat and stirring constantly with a whisk bring to a frothing boil. Reduce heat to moderate, pour in the lemon juice and stir gently. Turn off the flame. Within a minute you'll see the curds separating from the whey. If the cheese has not formed by then add up to 1 tbs of lemon juice. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside for ten minutes.

3. Line a colander with a triple layer of cheese cloth. Place the colander in a bowl to catch the whey. Carefully pour the curds and whey onto the cheese cloth. Gather the 4 corners of the cheese cloth rinsing the bundle under lukewarm water for ten minutes. Gently twist the cloth to extract excess water. Now place the cheese in the colander in a new 2 quart bowl. Flatten the top by resting a salad plate on top of the cheesecloth and then place another large bowl or pan filled with water on top of the plate. This will press the cheese draining excess moisture. Allow this for 20-45 minutes.

4. Next make the simple syrup by placing 6 cups of sugar and 7 cups of water in a heavy 5 quart saucepan. Bring it to a boil over moderate heat until the sugar dissolves. Increase the heat to 220F . Use your candy thermometer to test the temperature. Then

turn down the heat to the lowest flame possible while you move onto the next step.

5. Unwrap the cheese placing it on a clean work surface. Roughly break it apart and press with paper towels to extract excess moisture. Using the heel & palm of your hand spread it out. Now use the spatula to gather it into a mass and bray the cheese for at least 5 minutes. Keep braying until the cheese is smooth without any trace of graininess. Should be silky. Then wash your hands , dry them and coat with a film of oil or margarine. Gather the cheese into a mass. Divide into 8 or 16 portions. Roll into balls.

6. Bring the syrup back to a gentle boil and one by one add the cheese balls and cook slowly for one minute. Then raise the heat to high and boil vigorously while covered for 20 minutes. But here's the catch. You want the syrup to stay at the same temperature of 220F. In order to achieve that you're going to add ¼ cup of boiling water using your Pyrex cup by pouring the hot water down the side of the pan at 4 minute intervals. Cornstarch will be added along with the first ¼ cup of hot water AFTER the first 4 minutes of cooking time. Do not pour the hot water directly onto the cheese balls. The syrup should look like a mass of frothing bubbles. The cheese balls will expand in size . During the last 3 minutes sprinkle the syrup with water every minute. Finally turn off the flame, remove from the heat and allow the Sandesh to soak for 6 hours and maximum of 24 hours.

7. Then remove the cheese balls with slotted spoon and drain using either a baking rack or trivet for ½ an hour.

8. Now get ready to add the frosting to the top of each using a palate knife or spatula. Do this by carefully heating up the chilled frosting in a saucepan using a little milk.. A fork can be very useful here to break up the clumps.

Garnish each piece with a blanched pistachio or half a walnut if you like. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Adapted from Yamuna Devi's Lord Krsna's Cuisine The Art of Indian Vegetarian Cooking Published in 1987 by Bala Books.

Tips

Make sure your pots are spotlessly clean.