

Oppositi- gest

ISSUE 5 | DECEMBER 2021





This month's cover page showcases Michelle Satur Shyam's year end platter celebrating the colors and spirit of Advent! A complete meal including an OPOS Frittata, pressure baked veggies, stuffed bellpepper and a warm bowl of OPOS Peas and Ginger soup. All sorted for the chilly winters ahead!

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A series of interesting aspects about food and how it impacts us, researched and put together for us by the OPOS100 team

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Your favourite celebrity chef recipes getting the magical OPOS touch! Complex, overly time consuming recipes simplified and presented to you!

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A monthly column to help you with facts that can shape your thoughts and choices.

08 THE TEAM BEHIND

Featuring the Cookbook Team this month - the team that is creating the cookbooks of today and the future!!

Founder's Note

Cooking made us human. It shaped our bodies and our values. It promoted pair bonding, generosity, tolerance and charity argues primatologist Richard Wrangham.

Our food choices are ours alone. Intolerance has no place, especially in this festive season. Matthew 15: "What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them." OPOS teaches you to cook everything, in two simple lessons. What you choose to cook is completely up to you.

This magic is possible because of standardized equipment and standardized recipes. We keep refining both. The 2L Neo and the Version 3 CookBot launched this year are powerful devices. They can help you cook for just one person or over 10 at one shot.

OPOS Prime subscription service launched this year, makes food a non-issue. With a huge array of benefits, it is designed to eliminate all your cooking related problems. OPOS cookbooks make festive cooking a breeze. There's one for every festival.

Please share your festive cooking experience with us, mentioning pain points, if any. We will try our best to fix them.

Merry Christmas!

Food & Traditions

How They Came About & How They're Evolving With OPOS

Christmas, a celebration of the birth of Christ, is around the corner and billions around the world are gearing up to celebrate it. Every country, every region and every family has a set of Christmas traditions they follow each year. For some families, it's a plum cake, for some a whole roast turkey or chicken and for some mash potatoes, pasta, sanas or yummy biryanis. These dishes are particularly made for Christmas and these special recipes are passed down from generation to generation. There is a certain comfort in believing that this is how Christmas was always celebrated in our family.

The celebrations, the food traditions and even the way we dress up for festivities keep us connected to our native lands. After all, as humans, we all have this intense need to belong and be connected to our roots wherever life takes us. No one wants to be called a migrant. But, unfortunately, the truth is, every one of us is a migrant.

We evolved in Africa 200,000 years ago and stayed there for the first 100,000 years before climatic changes forced us to venture out. Till this time, there were no modern humans anywhere in the world. When we started our long trek, we just walked by the seashore, for tens of thousands of years. The beach was the path of least resistance. We did not need to hack through thick forests, risk being ambushed, adapt to different climates, topographies, or diets. We never strayed far from the sea, moving inland only for freshwater or for hunting large game.

We walked around the Indian coast in 10-15,000 years. Some of us settled in nice places and our early genes still exist in many communities. These were the ancient Indians. Some of us moved on, eventually covering the world. During this long trek, our diet consisted primarily of seafood, but we also ate a wide variety of plants, animals, tubers and insects. Tubers were dug up, mashed, leached in water and left to dry, making something like instant potatoes. We moved on only when food became scarce or conditions became adverse. Men hunted, women & children gathered, elders taught, made medicine, and told stories, as they do in many aboriginal tribes even today. There were no cuisines. We either ate food raw, roasted it or boiled it, in that order. We were in paradise.

Animal stomachs, bamboo hollows and large shells were the earliest cooking utensils. We learned to fill natural depressions with water, drop heated stones in them and use the heated water for cooking. We even baked, by digging a hole, lining it with superheated stones and making an oven. We wrapped food in leaves/ clay, placed it over the stones and covered the hole, letting the food cook for hours or even days. On our trek, we met, interbred and later wiped out other hominids like the Neanderthals, who were stronger than us, but less clever.

All of us were one race till around 35,000 years back, when we started differentiating into different races and cultures. 10,000 years ago, cuisines, which are nothing but food preferences, started emerging. With the emerging cuisines came recipes and years later we started preserving and passing down recipes to our future generations. Each one of us starts thinking our way of life and our food is the best. This is how traditions in general and food traditions emerge. In its crudest form, traditions we follow are nothing but a set of preferences passed down generations. They keep us connected and rooted. But they can also blind us to other ways.

OPOS lets you stay rooted, but still look beyond traditional ways. It makes festive cooking a breeze, by empowering you to dish out an elaborate Christmas Feast in under an hour. Let OPOS simplify Christmas for you this year! Gift yourself some extra merry time!





Myth Busters

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OPOS HAS DISRUPTED TRADITIONAL WAYS OF COOKING IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE. MYTH BUSTERS IS OUR MONTHLY COLUMN TO HELP YOU WITH FACTS THAT CAN SHAPE YOUR THOUGHTS AND CHOICES!

.....

Gyaan: Everything has to be simmered together for flavours to infuse well.

AntiGyaan: ...Which is why all pickles are simmered.

Fact:

We do not simmer coffee or fruit juice after adding sugar. We do not simmer lassi after adding salt. We do not simmer fruit chaats after mixing in chat masala. We do not simmer salads after we mix in dressing. We do not simmer pickles after mixing in spices. In all these cases, salt/ sugar/ flavours get infused by osmosis.

Osmosis just needs time. Not heat.

Let's see how the flavour penetration happens when things are just mixed together in a pickle. First, salt/ sugar draws out the liquid from the ingredients by osmosis. Then the drawn out liquid gets filled with salt & water soluble flavours. This liquid (spiced brine) is reabsorbed into pickle while the acid 'cooks' it and breaks down cell walls. The spiced brine takes water-soluble flavours deep into the pickle, filling it with flavour. Oil soluble flavours from spices get absorbed by the oil during the tadka. These flavours do not penetrate food but just coat its surface. Irrespective of how long you let it rest or how long you simmer, these flavours will not penetrate food. Note that heat is not essential here. Just time.

Simmering is not desirable in most vegetable/ seafood curries as it overcooks the ingredients. Instead all you need to do is to marinate the ingredients, pressure bake them, mix in bottled tadka, curry paste and just let it rest. Osmosis will take care of the rest. Almost all our curries are semi pickles. They get better with time as the flavours penetrate deeper over time. This is very visible in tamarind based curries or heavily spiced curries. This is why even biryani tastes better the next day.

Bottom-line:

Simmering food wastes fuel, water, labour and nutrition. Heat speeds up osmosis, but it also overcooks vegetables/ seafood. Marination, mixing in curry paste and letting curries rest are better ways to infuse flavours than simmering.



OPOS Christmas Specials



Tom Yum Goong Soup

App ID: 10793 | Author/ Picture: Alpana Keertikar

In a 2L magic pot, layer as below:

1. 2Tbsp fish sauce.
2. 325g prawns, 125g sliced white mushroom, 2 cut lemongrass, 4 chopped birds' eye chillies, 5 makrut lime leaves, 3 inch sliced galangal. Mix all.
3. 2Tbsp Thai chilli paste.
4. Cook on high for 9 Whistles or 6 minutes.
5. Release pressure. Open. Add 3C prawn shell stock, 1C coconut milk, 2Tbsp each (fish sauce, chopped cilantro), 1Tbsp makrut lime juice. Mix all & Serve.

Replace / Supplement :

1. Prawns with seafood / chicken / tofu.
2. Thai chilli paste with your favorite chilli paste or chilli sauce.
3. Prawn shell stock with your favorite stock.
4. Coconut milk with evaporated milk.

Tips :

1. Can deseed the chillies for less spicy version.
2. Can skip coconut milk for clear soup.
3. Can dilute as per the needed consistency.



Whole Roast Chicken

App ID: 2108 | Author: OPOS Chef | Picture By: Tazin Faiz

Prep:

1. Pat dry whole chicken (900gs). Make deep slits.
2. Spice mix: Mix 2 tbsp chilli powder, 1 tbsp each (OPOS ginger garlic paste, salt), 1/2 tbsp garam masala, 1 tbsp oil to a paste. Marinate the chicken. Wipe the spice paste from the base of the chicken touching the pot.

In a 2L magic pot, layer as below:

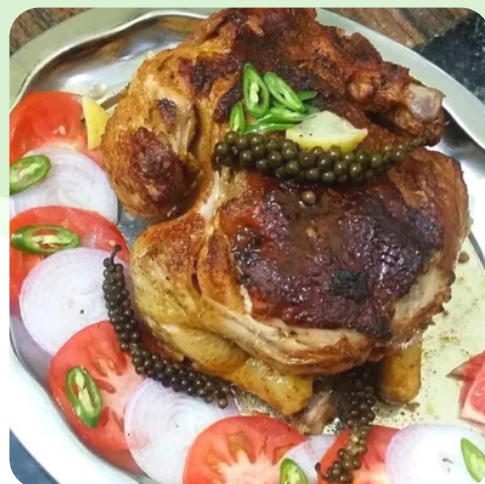
1. 1/4 cup oil
2. Marinated whole chicken.
3. Cook on high for 12 minutes (18 whistles).
4. Let pressure settle. Open, drain the excess oil and serve.

Replace / Supplement :

1. Chicken with quail.
2. Chilli powder with chicken masala/ favourite spice mix.

Tips :

1. Make multiple deep slits so that the chicken cooks evenly inside.
2. Can marinate overnight for deeper flavour.



OPOS Christmas Specials



Pesto Pasta

App ID: 4389 by Visalakshi KV

Prep:

1. Soak 125g pasta (Durum wheat) in water for 30 mins in water & drain.
2. Pesto sauce: Blend 1/2C (40g) basil leaves, 2Tbsp (25g) walnut, 1 garlic clove, 1/4tsp each (salt, pepper powder), 1Tbsp olive oil to a smooth paste. Mix in 3Tbsp grated parmesan, 1Tbsp olive oil. Can add 1-2Tbsp water while blending if needed.

In a 2L magic pot, layer as below:

1. 1Tbsp butter, Soaked (& drained) pasta, water just enough to cover the pasta (1C).
2. Cook on high for 5 Whistles or 5 minutes.
3. Let pressure settle. Open, mix in 1/4C pesto sauce, 2Tbsp shredded cheese, 1/2tsp chilli flakes & serve.

Replace / Supplement :

1. Butter with oil.
2. Walnut with pine nuts.
3. Basil with cilantro, mint, any fav herbs.
4. Parmesan with any hard cheese.

Tips :

1. The pasta will thicken up on cooling
2. Italian / whole-wheat / gluten free pasta needs more cooking time / pressure settle
3. Release pressure for al dente texture. Let pressure settle for a softer texture



Coconut Milk Jelly Pudding

App ID: 9068 by Tazin Faiz

Prep:

1. Pudding mixture: In a bowl, add 1C thick coconut milk, 2.5Tbsp corn flour, 2Tbsp sugar. Mix well without any lumps

In a 2L magic pot, layer as below:

1. 1/4C water
2. 1C (150g) chopped ripe mango
3. 1/4C sugar
4. Place the inner vessel with pudding mixture over a trivet. Close
5. Cook on high for 5 minutes (6 Whistles)
6. Let pressure settle. Remove the inner vessel. Whisk well. Pour in to the pudding/ jelly moulds, and allow to set. Blend the mangoes to smooth sauce
7. Pour the sauce over the jelly and serve

Replace / Supplement :

1. Mango with ripe strawberry/ chickoo/ apple
2. Sugar with jaggery

Tips :

1. Tastes best when serve chilled
2. Can increase sugar for more sweetness



Meet the cookbook team

The OPOS promise is to demystify and simplify cooking for everyone. It's sheer genius how with a magicpot you can whip up anything from gajar halwa to a whole roast chicken in a matter of minutes. But did you know there's a whole team of magicians that co-ordinate, help create and compile these perfect recipes?

Who all are in the cookbook team?

Prashita Krishnan, Srilakshmi Anand, Tazin Faiz, Visalakshi Venkataraman

How did you guys get together?

The Thali Cookbook brought us together. Initially, it was Visa and Ashwini who embarked on the journey of the Story of India cookbook. Srilakshmi joined to help with illustrations and later Tazin Faiz joined to help us complete the book. We started doing live videos to generate content for multiple books and eventually the OPOSChef App. After the Thali book, we did the OPOS Staples and Blockbusters of OPOS. That led to a series of books during the 1st lockdown period and we had the Disaster Management series. We then compiled the first OPOS paperback book published by HarperCollins. We then started off attempting to release One Cookbook A Day and that's when Prashita who had been helping us earlier with some proof reading during the Thali book time, joined in as a full fledged team member. We have published 70 cookbooks as a team.

How do you select Authors?

We don't. We encourage every single OPOStar to become a cookbook author!

Any upcoming cookbook you're really excited about?

The Street Food Cookbook and the Tambahm Bible.

Which cookbooks have become Amazon bestsellers?

The Story of India through Food, Staples, Best of OPOS, Diwali Cookbook, Mom & Me - Part 1, Snacks & Appetizers, Soups, Margazhi Fest, Sadhya Specials, Vrat / Puja Specials to name a few...

Which has been your most successful cookbook so far?

Quite a few - OPOS Staples, Diwali Cookbook, Best of OPOS, Vrat / Puja Specials

Which was the most challenging cookbook to write?

The Story of India through Food - The text was provided by RK. It's his brain child. We only compiled the content, gave the book a shape and frame by attaching the missing pieces, generating live videos with a group of 50+ members, shooting grand thali images, getting relevant illustrations for each cuisine, validating every single cuisine and ensuring every single recipe listed in the book lives up to the OPOS promise. It's been 2 years and it's up for an update now.

How do you decide on a topic for a cookbook?

We try to read the pulse of the group. Our strategies have been changing based on our target audience, market and sales.

Who has been your biggest critic or source of motivation?

Our biggest critics, our biggest motivators, and our driving force are our baby OPOStars! We design cookbooks keeping baby OPOStars in mind. We wish to make their lives easy by creating reference volumes which would help them cook free!

Let's Talk Food



A SERIES OF INTERESTING ASPECTS ABOUT FOOD AND HOW IT IMPACTS US, RESEARCHED AND PUT TOGETHER FOR US BY THE OPOS100 TEAM. THIS MONTH'S FEATURE HELPS US UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT INTERMITTENT FASTING AND IT'S BENEFITS.

The Benefits of Intermittent Fasting

01 Lowers blood sugar, reduces the risk of diabetes

02 Reduces cell damage from oxidation and inflammation

03 Improves blood pressure and resting heart rate

04 Improves connections in the brain's hippocampus

05 Regulates circadian rhythm, which improves sleep

Intermittent fasting at a basic level simply allows the body to use its stored energy, by burning off excess body fat, which is in essence food energy that has been stored away. If you don't eat, your body will simply "feed itself" its own fat for energy.

While this is often normal and humans have evolved to fast for shorter time periods - hours or days - without detrimental health consequences, here's how it works. Every time we eat, food energy is ingested and there's some that can immediately be used. Excess energy must be stored away for later use. Insulin is the hormone produced by the pancreas involved in the storage of food energy.

After we eat, insulin rises, helping to store the excess energy in two separate ways. Carbohydrates are broken down into individual glucose (sugar) units that are linked into long chains to form glycogen. Glycogen is then stored within the liver or muscle cells.





The body has a very limited storage capacity for carbohydrates; and once that's reached, the liver starts to convert the surplus glucose into fat and is stored in the liver, and the remaining exported to other fat deposits within the body. This is a complicated process and there's almost no limit to the amount of fat that can be created.

So, two complementary food energy storage systems exist in our bodies. One is more accessible but with limited space for storing (glycogen), and the other is harder to access but has almost unlimited space for storing (body fat).

The process goes in reverse when we fast or don't eat. Insulin levels fall and glucagon levels rise (another hormone produced by the pancreas that signals the liver to start burning stored energy because no more is coming through food).

Glycogen is the most easily accessible energy source and is broken down into glucose molecules to provide energy for the body's other cells. This is enough to provide energy to power much of the body's needs for 24-36 hours. After that, the body will primarily be breaking down fat for energy.

If you're eating every two to three hours, then your body will constantly use the incoming food energy and has no need to tap into much of the body's fat. Over a period, you'll just be storing fat.

did
you
know?



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CELEBRITY CHEF OPOS REWRITES

An initiative to rewrite traditional recipes by celebrity chefs using the OPOS techniques. Each such recipe has been carefully rewritten, validated and published with live videos making seemingly complex, time consuming recipes a child's play, literally! We have picked 2 Christmas specials for this month's celebrity chef rewrites.



Honey Chilli Potatoes

App Recipe Id : 10383 by Chitra | Original Recipe: Sanjeev Kapoor Kazana

In a 2L magic pot, layer as below:

1. In a 2L magic pot, add 200g oil.
2. Place an inner vessel touching the base. Add 1Tbsp each (oil, chopped ginger, chopped garlic).
3. 200g crushed baby potato (at the base).
4. Place another vessel over a trivet. Add 1.5Tbsp chilli sauce, 1tsp chilli flakes, 1/8tsp each (sugar, salt, pepper).
5. Cook on high for 10 minutes.
6. Release pressure. Open, remove both the inner vessels and drain the oil. Gently press the baby potatoes flat. Add 1Tbsp chopped spring onions, 2tsp honey. Mix all & serve.

Note: Cold Pressure Frying (CPF) is an advanced OPOS Technique. DO NOT try till you master basic OPOS Techniques. This CPF recipe should be done using the OPOS Magic Pot on an induction stove only.



Replace/Supplement:

1. Baby potato with chopped potato cubes.
2. Chilli sauce with tomato sauce/your favourite sauce.



Caramel Sauce

Recipe ID# 9912 by Ranjitha Jeurkar | Original Recipe: HomeCooking Show

In a 2L magic pot, layer as below:

1. In a 2L magic pot, add 200g sugar, 60ml water, 50g unsalted butter. Mix.
2. Cook on high for 7 minutes or until the lap time exceeds 15 seconds.
3. Release pressure. Open and mix in 1/2C fresh cream, 60g butter, 1/4tsp salt.
4. Pour into a bowl and bottle after it cools.

Replace / Supplement:

1. Unsalted butter with salted butter

Tips:

1. Increase salt to 1/2tsp for salted caramel sauce
2. Transfer to a bowl immediately after mixing to avoid syrup from hardening in retained heat
3. Bottle after it cools. Store it in the fridge, in an airtight container
4. Use as a topping for desserts/ in milkshakes
5. Follow the weights and measures precisely. Do not attempt with non-standard equipment.





Jams Decoded!

We covered the Halwa template in last month's edition. OPOSers around the world built on the same template, tweaked it slightly and unlocked the secret of perfect home made jams, marmalades and spreads. Try out some of the OPOS jam recipes this Christmas and make your cakes, puddings, cookies and biscuits extra special with generous dollops of your favourite jams!

Pictures of mixed fruit jam, strawberry chia seeds jam, apple jam and plum jam shared by members on the OPOS Support Group



Secret Santa!

...with a twist!



Everyone has played the popular game of Secret Santa. To kick start December in true X'Mas spirit we bring to you Secret Santa with a twist!!

Looks like Santa Claus is all curious about OPOS too. Read through the issue to spot 5 little Santas (exactly like the one here on the left) hidden anywhere across the pages.

Let us know where you spot them - [Click here to send in your responses](#) before Dec 20th 2021. One lucky winner gets a month's premium OPOS Chef App subscription as a prize!

get featured!

Email us on
oposmagazine@gmail.com
with pictures of your OPOS
dishes or your own poems,
doodles, memes inspired by
OPOS. Time to get creative
and share it with the OPOS
world. We cannot wait to see
what you have in store!

Congratulations

Manasa Krishna

You are the winner of the
November OPOS Digest
Diwali Word Search Contest.

Reach out to us on
oposmagazine@gmail.com to
claim your prize!!





OPOS A to Z

H is for Hydro Distillation

An excerpt from Sreeja Praveen's OPOS Alphabet Train:

*H might sound like a bit of chemistry,
Hydro distillation is behind this mystery
Extract the deep flavours with water or steam
Come on, it's not as tough as it seems.*



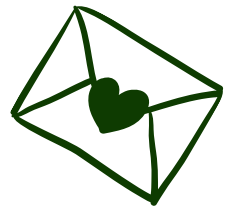
Hydro-distillation is a time honored technique of extracting flavour from water-soluble fragrant materials. In case of food, the flavour comes chiefly from the volatile oils present in many plants. These oils are actually chemical weapons, toxins, evolved by the plants to prevent them being eaten. Mankind has learnt to prize many of these toxins for their flavour. Depending on the plant, these oils are concentrated in different parts of the plant.

Maceration (crushing the plant material) and the higher pressure helps in speeding up the process. In many OPOS recipes, crushed whole spices/ herbs are layered and arranged so that boiling water/ steam can pass through them and release the flavours. Both the essential oils and the flavoured water are then distributed throughout food, but remain locked in inside the cooking vessel, intensely flavouring food. Herbs and spices like Caraway, Clove, Nutmeg, Saffron, Cinnamon, Cumin, Ginger, Lavender, Lilac, Citrus zest, Peppermint, Spearmint, & Mint work well with hydro-distillation. Certain delicate flavours like jasmine/cilantro can be mixed in after the cooking process is completed.

For effective hydro-distillation, the cooking chamber needs to be sealed and needs to be made from a non-reactive metal. In open pot cooking, hydro-distillation happens, but the flavours are lost as the volatile oils evaporate away.

Would you like to try a Rose Syrup, Pineapple Sarbat or even a Non-Veg Stock this Christmas to serve to your guests? Do send in your pics to oposmagazine@gmail.com

Reader's Corner



LET US SEE HOW OPOS SIMPLIFIED DIWALI THIS TIME AROUND FOR SOME OF OUR READERS. KEEP SHARING YOUR PICTURES WITH US AND GET FEATURED IN THE DIGEST!



This Diwali, Aarti Yadav made 25 boxes of sweet & savory goodies for her family & friends. The box contains badusha, dharwad peda, buttermuruku, karasev, milk peda, masala cashew, masala almonds and nuvvu laddo all OPOSed with ease!

Abhinaya Chandrasekar who is the mother of a toddler, single handedly made mysorepak, chocolates, besan laddoo and coconut burfi to share with family & friends during Diwali. She says it was possible only because of OPOS.



LI'L OPOS ELVES IN THE KITCHEN



Shivay Negi

5 year old Shivay is seen here making his favourite white sauce and bell pepper pasta for Papa & him.

Lakshita Yacha
8 year old Lakshita doesn't wait for Mummy to make veggie Masala noodles. She's an expert



Shrikavin Kanmani Ramprasath

3 year old Shrikavin often helps out in the kitchen. With a little help from his Mamma, he's seen here making mixed fruit jam.

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Lesson 2 standardizes the technique of Pressure Baking

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Magazine Team

Harini Seshadri

Misha Negi

Priya Vivek

Design

Niranjana Selvasundar