

The Humble Leaf as Cushion and Vessel

Orraise

Recipes

Adaptation of Thai herbal salad as roll

Dressing

- 1 tbsp Fish sauce
- ½ tbsp Palm or Coconut sugar
- 1 tbsp Coconut milk
- 2 Thai Chilis
- 1 ½ Lime juice

Salad

- 1 cup grated carrot
- ¼ cup yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 1 ½ ounce white turmeric, aka amba haldi or mango turmeric
- 1 tbsp tender parts of lemongrass, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp-fistful of roasted peanuts
- 1 tbsp-fistful of roasted cashews
- ½ tsp of kafir lime leaves, very thinly sliced
- 1 tsp betel leaf, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp cilantro, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp thai basil, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp-fistful fried shallots
- ½ tsp sesame seeds
- 1 head lettuce

Method

Mix salad dressing in a large bowl. Add all of the salad except lettuce and toss. Adjust seasons to your taste. Take lettuce leaf, and place herb salad into leaf and wrap.

Optional: add cooked shrimp or tofu for protein
Enjoy!

Malfouf Mahshi (Stuffed Cabbage rolls)

Cabbage leaves stuffed with meat and rice, cooked with garlic (we added white currents for sourness)

Ingredients

1 very large cabbage or 2 medium
Boiling water for blanching
2 cups short grain rice
300 g ground beef or lamb or mix of both
½ tablespoon salt
½ teaspoon seven spice
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ cup regular olive oil
1 tablespoon tomato concentrate
1 bulb of garlic peeled
2 cups of water + 1 teaspoon of salt + 1 lemon (to make the brine)
2 -3 tablespoon pomegranate molasses
½ teaspoon of dried mint

Instructions

Carefully separate the cabbage leaves trying not to rip them. Then in batches, add them to a pot of boiling water. Blanche for around five minutes until soft and set aside.

When they have cooled, trim off the thick stems, and divide the very large leaves into half so they are around the size of your whole hand

In a mixing bowl, add the ground meat, rice, seven spice, black pepper, cinnamon, ¼ cup of regular olive oil, the tomato concentrate and salt. Combine well and place on the table

On a large plate, flatten out a cabbage leaf

Take around 2 tablespoons of the stuffing and arrange in a cigar shape near the bottom of the cabbage leaf and simply roll up (see video)

Peel a whole bulb of garlic and roughly slice. Scatter the garlic between the layers of cabbage rolls

Prepare the brine by mixing 2 cups of water with 1 teaspoon of salt, and the juice of a whole lemon

When you have finished rolling the cabbage leaves, place a heatproof plate on top and pour over the brine water

Bring to the boil on high heat for around 20 minutes. Taste the brine water to see if you need to adjust the lemon/salt levels.

Remove the plate and then reduce the heat to a medium low simmer and add a good drizzle of regular olive oil and another of pomegranate molasses, as well as the dried mint

Cover with a lid and cook for another hour or so until the cabbage leaves are well done, tasting one malfouf roll before you turn the heat off

رجلة مكمورة Purslane with Tomatoes - Egyptian Style

I just came back from my community garden plot here in downtown Toronto, having “weeded out” some purslane. Purslane was once a staple in Egyptian kitchens, a simple green that was affordable and nutritious. It was the food of the poor, valued for its health benefits and its role in daily meals. But things changed. Colonial influence, driven by British domestic

education in 20th C Egypt, pushed a meat-centric diet upon Egypt, and looked down on greens like purslane, while meat was out of reach to many. Over time, this humble plant was pushed aside, seen as just "poor man's food" and forgotten by many Egyptians.

Capitalism added another layer to this of course. Unlike commercial crops that are mass-produced and marketed, purslane is a weed harvested on a small scale, right? It's not a commodity plant exactly; it grows freely and isn't suited to the commercial farming model. So big YES to free, easily foraged plants paving a way for us to push back on the larger western ideals of capital agricultural industrialism that dominates our world! Purslane is my own little way of resisting, especially as it got (much like myself) marginalized and sidelined, despite its rich nutritional value. Full of vitamins, minerals, and omega-3 fatty acids, it's more than just a weed. It's a way to be in harmony with nature - to let it heal our bodies and readjust them. Because it's succulent nature, and its abundance in the summer, it, no wonder, has a cooling effect on our bodies (during the zoom session with Nahla and Basil, I looked it up in Al Razi's book *منافع الأغذية ودفع مضارها* and found him recognizing its cooling and soothing effects (as per the traditional medicine humoral theory), making it ideal for hot summer days.

Today in the height of summer in July, I'm cooking it with another summer fruit, tomatoes, into a delicate stew, the way grandmother used to make it. She would call it Regla Makmoura رجلة مكمورة and because it was cheap to buy, she would make it for the last days of the month when she was more careful with not spending out all her kitchen budget. Today is July 27th, the end of the month for me too, so perfect! I looked up purslane in an old Egyptian cookbook also, being curious about other ways of cooking it, and found it in a book by Malaka Sa'ad from 1915, in which she recommends either eating it fresh or cooked, and advises to give its seeds to children with cough. She must mean to crush the seeds or maybe boil it into a tea or something, otherwise ironically you'd be giving children with a cough the chance to choke on them. Anyway, here's the stew recipe- just be mindful not to overcook the leaves too long.

Ingredients

- 500 grams of purslane (washed and chopped)
- 2 large tomatoes (chopped)
- 1 large onion (chopped)
- 2-3 cloves of garlic (minced)
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil or ghee
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/2 cup chicken broth or water

Method

1. In a large pot, heat the oil or ghee over medium heat.
2. Add the chopped onion and sauté until golden brown.
3. Add the minced garlic and sauté for a few minutes until fragrant.
4. Add the chopped tomatoes and continue cooking until the tomatoes soften and form a sauce.
6. Add the salt, black pepper, cumin, and coriander. Stir the ingredients well.
7. Add the chicken broth or water and let the mixture simmer on low heat for 15-20 minutes.
5. Add the chopped purslane and stir it with the mix. Let it simmer for 10 minutes or so, until the purslane but not-overcooked.
8. Serve the purslane with tomatoes hot alongside rice or bread.

Bel hana wel shifa **بالهنا والشفافا**

Khubaizeh Onigiri

Ingredients

Forgaged leafs : this can work with khubaizeh, vine, chard, or as we newly discovered, cucumber leafs

Mushrooms

Garlic

Rice (short grain)

Rice vinegar

Soya sauce

Sesame oil

Other seasoning: chilli flakes, truffle oil, grated ginger, vegetable stock, brown sugar, lime juice

Optional Toppings: pickled ginger, pickled onions, furikake, coriander, edible flowers

Cling film

Method

- Blanch the leafs in boiling water for 1 minute until tender
- Cook mushrooms, rice and seasoning to your liking, we like grilling the mushrooms separately first and then adding them to the rice
- Add rice vinegar to rice to make it more sticky
- Place leaf, veiny side up on a sheet of cling film
- Cover with a thin layer of the rice mixture
- Hold the corners of the cling film and twist until leaf and rice come together in a ball
- Face knot side down
- Douse with soya sauce and sesame oil to keep them moist

Yalanji

Ingredients

Vine leafs- fresh or preserved

Short grain Egyptian rice

Spring onions

Tomatoes

Parsley

Garlic

Mixed spice

Cumin

Paprika
Pomegranate molasses
Lemon juice
Olive oil
Chilli flakes
Potatoes

Method

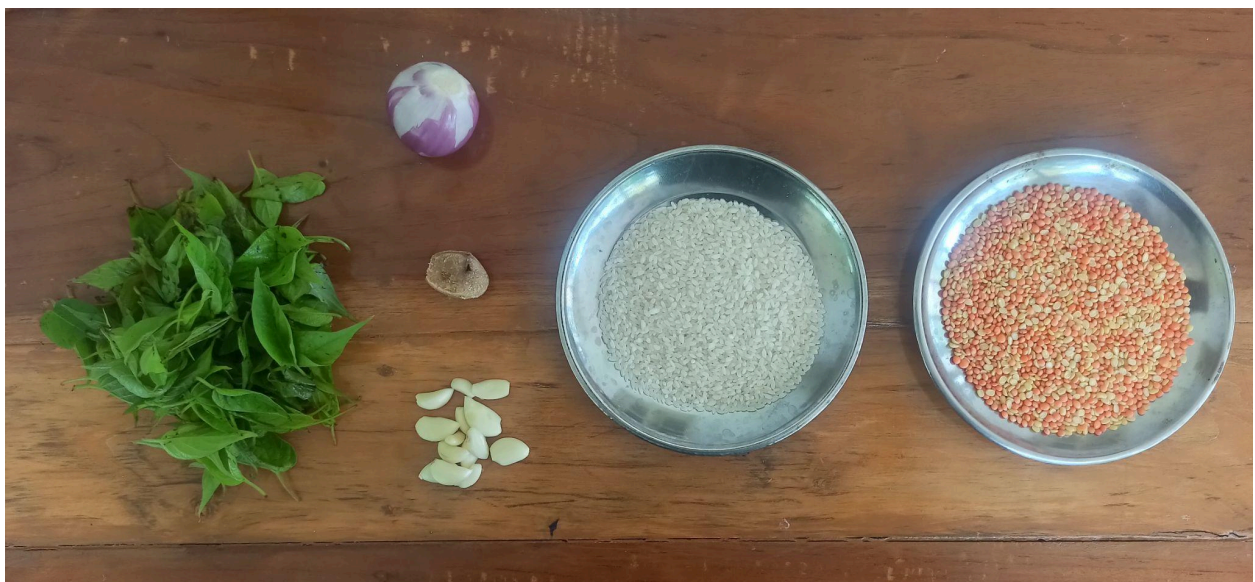
- Trim stems of the leafs
- Blanch in boiling water for up to a minute
- Combine rice with the vegetables and herbs finely chopped and the seasoning, it should taste intense with flavor
- Place leafs veiny side up, add a teaspoon of rice and roll securing the edges
- Line a pot with olive oil and sliced potatoes
- Layer the rolled leafs into the pot
- Prepare a broth of olive oil, water, lemon juice and an optional vegetable broth and pour on top of leafs
- If using a pressure cooker, go ahead and cook, if using a regular pot, place a plate firmly on top of the the leafs to prevent them from floating when cooking, and cook slowly for approximately an hour or until rice is cooked through
- Let them stand in the pot for an additional hour before flipping them onto a tray
- Dress further with olive oil and pomegranate molasses
- Enjoy!

Bhebeli Lota Pat (*Paederia foetida*) Pakora - Foraged leaf pakora recipe from Assam, India.



Bhebeli Lota - Foraged leaf sample

Ingredients



1 cup loosely packed Bhebheli lota leaves
A few cloves of garlic (ground to roughly one tsp)
A knob of ginger (ground to roughly one tsp)
1 small onion
3 tbsp short grain rice
4 tbsp mixed red and yellow lentils (moong-masoor daal)
Oil for deep frying

Method

Soak the rice and lentils separately in water for 2 hours.

After soaking, drain and grind all the ingredients except the onion.
Grind the ingredients into a thick coarse paste adding very little water as needed.

Chop the onions and add to the ground paste.
Fry dollops of the batter in neutral oil.

Serve with a chutney if you'd like.



Ground Paste



Single pakora



Texture



Pakorras