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COMMUNITY

A taste of Diwali

Families celebrate festival with their favorite recipes

By **SAPNA PUNJABI-GUPTA**
Special Contributor

Diwali is the most celebrated day by Hindus the world over. Lighting of earthen oil lamps are one of the integral traditions of Diwali celebrations. It guides us through the darkness to seek the eternal truth and symbolizes the spiritual victory of good over evil, knowledge over ignorance.

The celebrations of Diwali are spread over five days during the fall season, and this year Diwali continues through Saturday. Before the Diwali festivities begin, homes are deep-cleaned, old items are donated to charity, and businesses settle

their accounts and get their finances in order for a new year. This is also the official shopping season. New clothes, jewelry or items for home are purchased.

Every family has traditional recipes for special sweet and savory treats that are exchanged among friends and family. Homes are decorated with fresh marigold flowers and banana leaves. The entryway is decorated with rangoli — a geometrical pattern created with colored rice, powdered chalk or fresh flowers. Small earthen oil lamps are lit around the home and outside the entryway.

Diwali comes in the fall when the weather slowly changes to dry, windy and cold. Apart from decorating and cleaning the home, the traditional rituals of Diwali focus on physical and emotional cleansing of oneself.

The traditional food and treats prepared for Diwali are based on ayurvedic principles. The balancing tastes for this season are sweet, sour and salty, which can be grounding and pacifying. Try sharing the following sweet and savory recipes with friends and family.

Sapna Punjabi-Gupta of Irving is a registered dietitian, ayurvedic wellness expert and founder of BeSpiced.com.

BESAN BURFI (CHICKPEA FUDGE)

- 1/2 cup ghee or unsalted butter
- 1 cup chickpea flour
- 1 1/2 cups whole milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom
- 1 tablespoon sliced almonds
- 1 tablespoon chopped pistachios
- 1 tablespoon hemp hearts
- 1 tablespoon dried rose petals

Carly Geraci/Staff Photographer

In a heavy-bottom pan, heat ghee or unsalted butter. Add chickpea flour. Roast the chickpea flour for about 5-7 minutes until it is medium-brown, the color and consistency of peanut butter.

Add whole milk and sugar, and whisk until the fudge leaves the sides of the pan and forms into a ball. Add cardamom. Stir well.

Spread the fudge on a greased plate. Garnish with sliced almonds, pistachios, hemp hearts and dried rose petals. Allow to cool. Cut into squares and store in an airtight container.

ONLINE For more recipes to celebrate Diwali, go to dallasnews.com/life/cooking.

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