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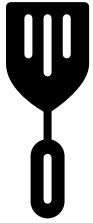
Cavendish Living Lab



Global Plates, Local Practices

Across cultures, food is how we care, for each other, for our traditions, and for the land. This book brings together recipes rooted in culture, memory, and care for the planet. It celebrates the way communities around the world cook with intention, using what's local, wasting nothing, and honoring the earth. Each dish is more than food; it's a story of connection, resilience, and love passed down through generations.

In this edition...



Food is one of the most powerful ways we connect—with our cultures, our families, our environments, and each other. Across the globe, people have long cooked with care and creativity—making the most of what’s available, wasting little, and honoring the land that feeds us.

Global Plates, Local Practices is a celebration of those traditions. Each recipe in this book carries more than flavor; it holds memory, place, and purpose. These dishes, shared by individuals from diverse backgrounds, show how sustainability has always been part of everyday life—rooted in seasonality, resourcefulness, and deep respect for the earth.

This is a book about food, yes—but also about resilience, community, and the wisdom passed down through generations. Whether it’s bread revived after a feast, lentils turned into comfort, or garden harvests preserved for winter, these recipes tell stories of how we nourish ourselves—and each other—sustainably.

Welcome to our table.

About Us

We are the Food & Community Team, part of the Cavendish Living Lab project—a group of community connectors who believe food is a powerful bridge between people, cultures, and sustainable living.

Our work brings us into direct conversation with local communities. We interview people, gather stories, attend events, and carry out research to understand how everyday food practices reflect deep, often overlooked, forms of sustainability. From using leftovers creatively to cooking with seasonal, local ingredients, we’ve seen how these traditions are passed down, adapted, and shared across generations.

Through this collection, the Food & Community Team invites you to explore how sustainability already lives in our kitchens, our memories, and our communities. This book is a celebration of that quiet, ongoing work—and of the people who make it happen.





Fattet Musakhan

from Palestine

This dish is what you make the day after the big family gathering—when the laughter lingers, and the leftovers are plenty. Made with local staples like olive oil, sumac, onions, and flatbread, Fattet Musakhan is a creative way to turn what’s left into something fresh and comforting. It’s a reminder that in many cultures, sustainability isn’t a trend—it’s tradition. Nothing is wasted, and every meal is another chance to gather, share, and honor the flavors of home.

Ingredients

- Leftover flatbread (ideally taboon bread, but any type of pita or flatbread works)
- Olive oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 3 tbsp sumac
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Leftover cooked chicken (grilled, roasted, or even boiled), shredded
- Tahini yogurt dressing:
 - 3 tbsp tahini
 - 3 tbsp plain yogurt
 - 1 tsp vinegar
 - Juice of half a lemon
 - 1 small garlic clove, crushed
 - ½ cup mixed nuts, such as almonds, pine nuts, or walnuts

Why It’s Sustainable

Fattet Musakhan is a delicious way to reduce food waste. It transforms leftovers—especially stale bread and cooked chicken—into a fresh, satisfying dish. The ingredients are simple, plant-forward, and rooted in traditional practices of reusing what’s available instead of throwing it away. It’s a dish that’s been doing “sustainable” long before the word became trendy.



Recipe shared by *Maysoon Al-Shareef*

Directions

1. Prepare the bread:

Cut the leftover flatbread into bite-sized pieces. Drizzle with olive oil and toast in the oven until crispy and golden.

Caramelize the onions:

In a pan, heat a few tablespoons of olive oil and slowly cook the sliced onions until soft and golden brown. Add the sumac, cumin, and lemon juice. Stir and let the flavors combine and thicken slightly.

2. Revive the chicken:

Add the shredded leftover chicken to the onion mixture and sauté together for a few minutes to soak up the flavor and bring the chicken back to life.

Fry the nuts:

In a small pan, lightly fry the mixed nuts in a bit of olive oil until golden. Set aside.

3. Layer the dish:

In a large serving dish, place the toasted bread at the bottom. Add the warm onion and chicken mixture on top.

4. Make the dressing:

Whisk together the tahini, yogurt, lemon juice, vinegar, and crushed garlic until smooth and creamy.

5. Assemble and serve:

Drizzle the tahini-yogurt dressing over the top. Sprinkle with the fried nuts just before serving for crunch and richness.





Koshari

On quiet afternoons, my mother would say, “Let’s make Koshari.” Simple ingredients, big flavor. She’d fry onions until golden, add garlic, cumin, and chili to the sauce—“to keep it lively.” We’d share one big bowl with family and neighbors, layering rice, lentils, pasta, sauce, and crispy onions. More than food, it was comfort, tradition, and love all in one bite.

Ingredients

- **Base:**
 - ½ cup brown lentils
 - ½ cup short-grain rice
 - ¾ cup elbow macaroni or small pasta
 - ¾ cup spaghetti, broken into 2-inch pieces
 - 1 tbsp vegetable oil
 - Salt
- **Spiced tomato sauce:**
 - 1 tsp vegetable oil
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - ¾ cup tomato passata or crushed tomatoes
 - ½ tbsp vinegar
 - ½ tsp ground cumin
 - Salt and pepper to taste
 - Optional: pinch of chili flakes
- **Crispy onions:**
 - 1 large onion, thinly sliced
 - Vegetable oil for frying
- **Garlic vinegar dressing (daqqa):**
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1 tbsp white vinegar
 - ¼ tsp ground cumin
 - Pinch of chili flakes (optional)
 - ¼ cup water
 - Salt

Why It’s Sustainable

Koshari is sustainable because it uses simple, local, mostly plant-based ingredients and helps reduce food waste by using pantry staples. It’s low-impact, and promotes sharing, making it good for both people and the planet.



Recipe shared by Mariam Selim

Directions

Cook lentils:

Rinse and boil in salted water until tender (15–20 min). Drain and set aside.

Cook rice:

In a pot, sauté rice in ½ tbsp oil. Add 1 cup water, a pinch of salt, and cooked lentils. Simmer on low until water is absorbed (about 15 min).

Boil pasta and spaghetti:

Boil elbow macaroni and broken spaghetti together in salted water until just al dente. Drain and toss with a little oil to prevent sticking.

Fry onions:

Heat oil in a pan, fry sliced onions until deep golden and crisp. Drain on paper towels. Keep some of the onion oil for flavor.

Make tomato sauce:

In a small pan, heat 1 tsp oil, sauté garlic until golden. Add tomato passata, vinegar, cumin, salt, pepper, and chili (optional). Simmer 10–12 minutes until slightly thick.

Make daqqa (garlic-vinegar dressing):

Sauté garlic in a dash of oil, add vinegar, water, cumin, chili flakes, and salt. Simmer for 1–2 minutes.

Assemble:

In each bowl, layer: rice + lentils → pasta + spaghetti → tomato sauce → daqqa → crispy onions on top.





Homemade Pickled Vegetables

My grandparents' garden was a true showcase of sustainable living. They grew cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots, beetroot, radishes, peppers, onions, dill, cabbage, and more. Once harvested, most of it was pickled, jarred, and stored in the cold cellar for the winter. This traditional method of preserving the harvest ensured we always had vegetables on hand, with no need to rely on supermarkets.

My grandmother often said, "Don't buy vegetables from the shop—too many chemicals. What we grow ourselves is clean, natural, and made with care." These pickles were ever-present on our table, especially during family celebrations. Even today, no proper Russian meal feels complete without homemade pickles.

In winter, as a child, I'd play outside in the snow all day long. Russia's winters are long and bitterly cold, and I'd return home with red cheeks, boots soaked, hands numb. I'd hear my grandmother calling from the window, "Slava, come home, it's lunchtime!" I'd walk into our warm kitchen, and there it was: steaming borscht, a plate of colourful pickles, and hot tea brewed in a samovar, served with bubliki (ring-shaped bread rolls). Those winter lunches were a source of warmth, love, and resilience—and they all started from a garden.



Recipe shared by Viacheslav Efremov

Ingredients

- Use a mix of seasonal vegetables like cucumbers, tomatoes, carrots, beetroot, radishes, peppers, onions, dill, and cabbage.
- Water
- Salt
- Sugar (optional, small amount)
- Garlic cloves
- Black peppercorns
- Bay leaves
- Mustard seeds (optional)
- Vinegar (optional, depending on recipe style—some Russian pickles rely on fermentation instead)

Directions

1. Wash and prepare vegetables (slice or leave whole as needed).
2. Sterilize jars and place dill, garlic, bay leaves, and peppercorns at the bottom.
3. Pack vegetables tightly into jars.
4. Boil water with salt (2 tbsp per liter) and a little sugar (optional).
5. Pour hot brine over vegetables, leaving space at the top.
6. Cover jars—loose lid for fermentation, tight for vinegar pickles.
7. For fermentation, keep at room temp 5–7 days, then refrigerate.
8. Store in a cool, dark place for months.





Afghan Sabzi Challow

(Spinach Stew with Rice)

A comforting, nutritious dish that makes the most of leftover greens. Growing up, Saturdays meant Mum's Sabzi Challow, fluffy rice topped with rich spinach stew. I wasn't a fan, always leaving leftovers behind, hoping to avoid them the next day. But Mum never wasted food. She would take the leftovers, add a touch of homemade yogurt, some dried mint, and in no time, yesterday's meal became something new and delicious. Slowly, I realised my mother's magic, she could turn anything into something special. Leftovers weren't just food, they were love, creativity, and a reminder that nothing, not even scraps, ever went to waste.

Why it's sustainable:

- Uses wilted spinach or greens that might otherwise go to waste.
- Incorporates onion peels and herb stems to make a quick stock (optional).
- Completely vegetarian (or vegan), reducing environmental impact.
- Can be made with seasonal or surplus vegetables.



Ingredients

- 2 tbsp oil (vegetable or olive)
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp turmeric
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- ½ tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- Hand full of fresh spinach (or mixed greens, even slightly wilted)
- 1 medium potato, diced (optional you can use up leftovers)
- Salt to taste
- 1 cup cooked rice (preferably leftover rice)

Directions

1. Sauté aromatics: In a pan, heat oil and sauté the onion until golden. Add garlic, coriander, turmeric, and black pepper. Cook until fragrant.
2. Add greens: Stir in chopped spinach (or other greens). Let them wilt down, if using leftover greens, reduce cooking time slightly.
3. Add potato, If using, stir in diced leftover boiled or roasted potato. Cook until tender.
4. Simmer: Add a splash of water if needed. Simmer gently for 10–15 minutes. Season to taste.
5. Serve: Spoon over warm or leftover rice (Challow). Garnish with fresh herbs or lemon juice if available.

Waste-reduction tips:

- Use soft spinach, radish tops, beet greens, or even broccoli leaves.
- Save onion skins and herb stems to make a simple veggie broth.
- Leftover stew can be repurposed as a filling for wraps or pastries.



Recipe shared by Laima Tokhi





Greek Dolma

with Garden-Fresh Vine Leaves

A traditional, zero-waste, plant-based dish made with love and leaves from your backyard. How to use your garden vine leaves (many London gardens have vines) to make dolma—an excellent combination of using what is at hand at minimal cost, and a centuries-long traditional recipe to boot.

Ingredients

- **For the vine leaves:**
- 60 fresh vine leaves (young and tender)
- Boiling water (for blanching)
-
- **For the filling:**
- 1½ cups (300g) uncooked short-grain rice
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- ½ cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ cup chopped fresh dill
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint
- ½ cup olive oil
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Optional: 1 tomato, finely grated
-
- **For cooking:**
- Juice of 1 lemon
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1½ cups water
- Extra vine leaves to line the pot



Recipe shared by Ioannis Glinavos

Directions

1. Harvest & Prepare Leaves:

Pick ~60 fresh, young vine leaves. Rinse thoroughly. Blanch in boiling water for 2–3 minutes, then drain and cool.

2. Make the Filling:

In a bowl, mix uncooked rice, onion, herbs, olive oil, lemon juice, and seasonings. Add grated tomato if using.

3. Roll the Dolmas:

Lay each leaf vein-side up. Place 1 tsp–1 tbsp of filling near the stem end. Fold in sides, roll tightly like a cigar.

Layer in Pot:

Line pot bottom with spare vine leaves. Pack dolmas seam-side down in layers.

4. Cook:

Add lemon juice, olive oil, and water. Weigh down with a plate, cover, and simmer on low for 40–60 minutes.

Serve cold or room temp with lemon wedges or yogurt (if desired).



Why It's Sustainable

Homegrown Leaves: Reduces packaging, transport, and food waste.

Plant-Based & Vegan: Lower environmental footprint.

Seasonal & Local: Utilizes what's abundant and fresh.

Zero Waste: Even imperfect leaves are put to use.





Clafoutis aux Cerises

Clafoutis is made with all sorts of fruits these days. Clafoutis means “filling” so a kind of set custard pie with fruits.

The original is made with cherries! And has always been made with Cherries in my family.

This recipe comes from my great grandmother “Meme” who was probably the original foodie in our family.

She is quite a legend in our family. If someone says “this was as good as Meme’s” or “Meme couldn’t have made it better” (although I haven’t heard the last one yet!), you just received the greatest compliment there is for any wannabe cook in our clan.

Ingredients

- **For the cherries**
 - 450g best-quality ripe cherries (such as Montmorency or Morello), stoned
 - 50g caster sugar
 - 2–3 tbsp kirsch, to taste
- **For preparing the dish**
 - 10g unsalted butter, melted
 - 30g caster sugar, plus extra to finish
- **For the batter**
 - 2 organic/free-range medium eggs
 - 45g caster sugar
 - ½ tsp vanilla extract or vanilla syrup
 - 20g unsalted butter
 - 20g plain flour
 - 50ml whole milk
 - 75ml whipping cream
 - 1 pinch sea salt

Why It’s Sustainable

Using cherries or other seasonal fruits—especially fresh, local varieties—supports seasonal eating, reduces transport emissions, and helps sustain local growers. This is a heritage recipe — passed down through generations. Promoting and preserving traditional recipes like this helps keep food knowledge alive and encourages people to cook at home with whole ingredients, which is inherently more sustainable than processed alternatives.



Recipe shared by David Vacher

Directions

Step 1

To prepare the cherries:

Gently mix the cherries, sugar and kirsch in a bowl. Cover and leave to macerate for 2 hours. While macerating, the sugar slowly permeates the fruit and intensifies the taste. Preheat the oven to 180°C/Gas 4.

Step 2

To prepare the dish:

Brush the inside with the melted butter. Add the sugar and tilt the dish to coat the sides and base evenly; shake out the excess.

Step 3

To make the clafoutis:

The clafoutis mixture can be prepared a day in advance. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, caster sugar and vanilla together until creamy. Meanwhile, melt the butter in a small pan and cook to a *beurre noisette* - the foaming butter will turn a hazelnut colour. This butter will give a nutty flavour to the clafoutis. Add the flour to the egg and sugar mixture and whisk until smooth, then slowly incorporate the milk, cream, salt and *beurre noisette*. Stir in the cherries with their juice and then pour into the prepared baking dish.

Step 4

To cook the clafoutis:

Bake for 30–35 minutes until the clafoutis is lightly risen and a knife inserted into the middle comes out clean. The centre is always the last part to cook, so you must test it. Note that a dip in the middle suggests the clafoutis is undercooked. Leave to stand for about 10 minutes. Sprinkle with caster sugar if using and serve just warm or cold with a scoop of ice cream





The Peel Fry

I grew up watching many MasterChef episodes, and I used to make my mom sit with me every evening to watch it. This recipe was one of the recipes made in the competition and immediately became our favourite. Since that day, every time we make potatoes at home, there has always been a side of these crunchy fries after lunch or as an evening snack that my whole family eats, paired with filter coffee. This dish reminds me of when my entire family shared time together, filled with laughter.

Ingredients

- Potato or Carrot skin
- Oil
- Flour (Corn or Gram)
- Salt
- Pepper
- Chilli Powder
- Garam Masala
- Truffle oil
- Parmesan cheese
- Rosemary salt



*Recipe shared by Anagha Tatachar
Sridharan*

Directions

1. Wash your potato/Carrot peel thoroughly and pat dry with a kitchen towel
2. Place the dried peels in a mixing bowl and mix them with corn or gram flour
3. Heat a pan with oil and deep fry the mixed peel in it until golden brown
4. Take the fried peels into another mixing jar and while they are still hot, add in your seasoning. Add in salt, chilli powder, coriander powder and garam masala. No measuring, just eyeballing for a desi taste. Add parmesan cheese and rosemary salt, along with some Truffle oil for a cheesy and salty kick
5. Serve them hot with ketchup and mayonnaise.



Why It's Sustainable

It uses potato peels — a food scrap most people throw away. Instead of binning them, the recipe turns waste into something edible and delicious. That's classic upcycling — reducing food waste at the source. When you start thinking about how to use every part of an ingredient, you're making sustainable choices second nature.





Kolokouthkia me ta Afka

(Courgettes with Eggs)

My Yiayia (grandmother) used to make this dish every summer afternoon in her village kitchen in Paphos. She would pick the eggs early in the morning and the courgettes from her garden, before noon, still warm from the sun. I remember the rhythmic sound of her wooden spoon hitting the side of the pan as she gently stirred in the eggs. She always said this dish tasted better when made with love and laughter. Of course, there would also be a Greek salad on the table as well with fresh tomatoes, cucumber, and some olives. Even when times were hard, this meal brought us together.

Ingredients

- 4 medium courgettes, sliced into thin half-moons
- 1 onion, finely sliced
- 4 eggs
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- Salt & pepper

Directions

1. Fried in a cast iron or clay pan using olive oil.
2. Beaten eggs are stirred in gently to coat the vegetables, a technique passed down orally.



Recipe shared by Maria Neofytou

Why It's Sustainable

A humble, seasonal Cypriot dish rooted in tradition and love.

Seasonal/Local Ingredients

- Courgettes (zucchini) – abundant in Cyprus during the summer months
- Fresh eggs – often sourced from backyard hens
- Onion – a staple in Cypriot cooking
- Olive oil – locally pressed, central to Cypriot cuisine
- Sea salt & cracked black pepper – minimal but essential

Reduces Waste

- This dish uses courgettes at all stages—even those slightly overripe.
- Leftovers can be eaten cold or in a wrap the next day.
- Onion skins and courgette ends can go into stock or compost.





South Indian Pepper Chicken Peratu

I call it South Indian Pepper Chicken Peratu – “peratu” means a dry curry in my mother tongue Tamil.

I came up with this dish when I was bored of the usual chicken curry and wanted something bold and different. It uses coconut oil, which contains medium-chain fatty acids and is a healthier alternative to most other cooking oils.

Ingredients

- Chicken (breast or thighs) – 900g
- Coconut oil – 2 tbsp
- Mustard seeds – 1 tsp
- Jeera (cumin seeds) – 1 tsp
- Onions – 2 (diced)
- Green chillies – 2 (slit)
- Curry leaves – a handful
- Chilli flakes – 1 tsp
- Crushed black pepper – 1.5 tsp
- Garam masala – 1 tsp
- Coriander powder – 1 tsp
- Tomato – 1 (chopped)
- Fresh coriander – for garnish
- To marinate the chicken (30 mins):
- ½ tsp turmeric
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp lemon juice

Directions

1. Heat coconut oil in a pan. Add mustard seeds and jeera; let the mustard seeds pop.
2. Add onions, green chillies, curry leaves, and chilli flakes. Sauté until the onions turn translucent.
3. Lower the heat and add crushed pepper, garam masala, and coriander powder. Sauté briefly.
4. Add chopped tomato and cook until soft.
5. Add the marinated chicken. Cook covered until the chicken releases its water and is tender.
6. Remove the lid and cook on medium-high to reduce the liquid and make the dish dry.
7. Garnish with fresh coriander, if desired.

Why It's Sustainable

This dish is all about bold flavors, low waste, and simple cooking using pantry staples and fresh, local ingredients.



Recipe shared by Kezia B Rajappa



Potato cakes

In July I always end up with a glut of potatoes and typically end up with an excess of mashed potato. So this recipe is a perfect solution for that. In Northern Ireland it's called Potato Bread or Potato Farls, but in the Republic it's called Potato cakes. It uses traditional methods as far as Ireland is concerned in that it's fried! Also we're strangely fond of unleavened bread (see also Soda bread, wheaten bread). This bread makes up a key part of what is known as an Ulster Fry, which is also affectionately referred to as a heart attack on a plate. It was a HUGE treat to get an Ulster Fry when I was a kid. The sheer decadence of it! Tatty bread is one of the first things I learned how to cook, the recipe coming from my great grandmother (hence the vague quantities). It's also very amusing to say 'tatty bread' in my accent to people in England because apparently it sounds like I'm saying something rude...

Ingredients

- Leftover mashed potatoes
- Less than 1/3 of the amount of mashed potato of flour
- Knob of melted butter
- Salt (if you used unsalted butter)

Directions

Throw everything in a bowl and mix until it becomes difficult to keep mixing. You may need more flour to get there. Mix with your hands, still in the bowl, and if the dough is too sticky to handle add more flour. Tip out of the bowl and give it a quick knead until smooth. Roll out to just over half a centimeter thickness. You can cut into squares or wedges. Roughly the size of a beer mat. Fry in some oil and butter over a medium heat, until golden. You can eat them now, or freeze them and re-fry them later. Frying is a must!!



Recipe shared by Cathy Moore

Why It's Sustainable

This recipe is sustainable because it gives new life to leftover mashed potatoes—cutting down on food waste and maximizing ingredients already on hand. It reflects a tradition of resourcefulness, where nothing is thrown away and every bit of food is transformed into something delicious. Passed down through generations and made with simple, local staples, potato bread (or tatty bread) shows how sustainable practices are often embedded in everyday cooking, long before “zero waste” became a trend.





Nettle Soup

‘sisnu ko daal’ in nepali

Growing up in Pakyong, a small town in Sikkim, I remember my mother making Sisnu ko Daal often for our family. It was humble, nourishing, and made from ingredients we could forage locally especially during times when resources were limited. I absolutely love this dish. The aroma of nettle and garlic still takes me back to our family kitchen, a reminder of home, resilience, and the quiet wisdom of Himalayan living.

This nourishing soup is a staple of Himalayan cuisine, especially in the hilly regions of Sikkim, India, and across Nepal. Known locally as Sisnu ko Daal in Nepali, this traditional dish is not only comforting and full of flavour, but also deeply rooted in cultural memory and celebrated for its sustainability. Nettle, a wild and foraged edible green, grows abundantly in the Himalayan foothills and requires no cultivation, fertiliser, or irrigation making it a highly sustainable and accessible ingredient.

Why It's Sustainable

This recipe is sustainable because it uses nettle, a wild, foraged green that grows naturally without the need for cultivation, irrigation, or fertilizers. Harvesting nettles responsibly requires no industrial farming inputs, reducing environmental impact. It relies on local, seasonal ingredients that are abundant and renewable, minimizing waste and transport emissions. Plus, the recipe embraces traditional knowledge and practices, connecting food to place and culture—key elements of sustainable living.



Recipe shared by Pooja Basnett

Ingredients

- 250g fresh nettle leaves (tender leaves and stem only, mature stems removed)
- 500ml water (adjust according to desired consistency)
- 4–6 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- A few drops of oil (mustard oil or vegetable oil)
- Salt, to taste

Directions

1. Harvest with care: Use tongs or gloves to pluck 250g of tender nettle leaves. Avoid older, tougher leaves. Carefully remove mature stems and wash the leaves 5–6 times in clean water.
2. Boil water: In a medium pan, bring 500ml of water to a boil.
3. Cook the nettles: Once boiling, gently add the clean nettle leaves to the pot. Add crushed garlic, chopped onion, a few drops of oil, and salt. Let it boil on medium heat until the leaves are completely soft and cooked through. For a richer flavour, sauté the garlic and onion in butter beforehand, and then add to the boiling nettle mixture.
4. Mash the leaves: Once softened, mash the leaves gently with a spatula or spoon to break them down.
5. Blend for smoothness: Sieve out the nettles (reserving the water), then transfer the cooked/mashed leaves to a blender or mixer. Blend to a smooth, paste-like consistency.





Panta Bhat

(fermented water rice)

My parents are from Bangladesh. My father, Sahara's nana (grandad), is from a region in which they would only have one rice crop a year. And the village would have 6 months of water season. Monsoon season, high sea levels and flooding would occur. The dam that, built by the Indian nation, has decreased the fish count, made pollution increase and has caused further flooding. My father, grandfather and uncles would fish using old traditional methods. Below are some of the recipes.

When it was not the water season the plants, fruits, herbs and chilies would be harvested and eaten when in season. They would also be dried so that when the seasons changed or when monsoon weather was bad, they would still have food.

Ingredients

- Fermented rice.
- Left over rice (bowl of rice)
- Water
- Salt

Directions

Left overnight for 8 hours

This recipe is simple and uses leftover cooked rice. Place rice in a bowl with salt and a little bit of water. This is left over night for 8 hours covered.



*Recipe written by Sahara's mother (Rasheda),
shared by Sahara Rahman*

My parents, to this day, still cook this for gut health or when they have indigestion. I have seen my fathers' parents do the same when they came to London to visit the family when I was little. For breakfast they would eat it either on its own, or with brown sesame seeds. Fermented rice is a great prebiotic – great for gut health. Some people also like to eat this with locally sourced fish that is lightly fried in turmeric and fried onions, with dried chilies.

Why It's Sustainable

Panta Bhat uses leftover rice, so it prevents food waste right from the start. Instead of throwing out extra cooked rice, it's repurposed and fermented—a natural preservation method that requires no energy beyond simple soaking.

The ingredients are local and seasonal: rice, water, salt, and sometimes dried herbs or fish caught with traditional, low-impact fishing methods. No industrial farming, no transport emissions. Fermentation improves gut health, reducing reliance on processed medicine.

The preservation techniques—drying herbs, fermenting rice—are time-tested, low-tech, and resource-efficient ways to keep food edible through harsh monsoon seasons and floods when fresh produce is scarce.





Khichdi with Seasonal Veggies (Pan-India)

As a child, I used to dislike khichdi because it was mostly served at home when someone was unwell or the weather was gloomy. But as I grew older, it surprisingly became my go-to comfort food. During my teenage years, I explored different regional varieties of khichdi from across India, and my absolute favourite turned out to be the Bengali khichdi, which is traditionally prepared during festivals in Bengal.

Ingredients

- 1 cup rice (locally sourced)
- ½ cup moong dal (split yellow mung lentils)
- 1-2 cups mixed seasonal vegetables (e.g., carrot, beans, pumpkin, peas, cauliflower)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ¼ tsp asafoetida ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1-2 green chilies (optional, chopped)
- 1 tbsp oil or ghee
- Salt to taste
- 4 cups water (adjust for preferred consistency)
- Fresh coriander for garnish (optional)

Directions

1. Rinse rice and moong dal together 2-3 times. Soak for 20-30 minutes if you have time (helps cook faster).
2. Wash and chop seasonal vegetables into small pieces.
3. Heat oil or ghee in a pressure cooker or heavy pot. Add cumin seeds and let them splutter. Add asafoetida and green chilies, saute briefly.
4. Toss in chopped seasonal vegetables and saute for 2-3 minutes.
5. Drain soaked rice and dal, add to the pot. Stir well with turmeric and salt.
6. Pour in 4 cups water, stir to combine.



Recipe shared by Soumya Sharma

Cook: If using a pressure cooker: Close lid and cook for 3-4 whistles on medium heat. If using a pot: Cover and simmer for 25-30 minutes or until dal and rice are soft and cooked through, stirring occasionally. Once cooked, gently fluff with a spoon. Adjust salt and consistency by adding hot water if needed.

Garnish & serve: Top with fresh coriander leaves. Serve hot with yogurt, pickle, or papad.

Why It's Sustainable

- Uses local grains and lentils, reducing food miles.
- Seasonal vegetables mean fresher produce with lower environmental impact.
- One-pot meal reduces energy use and water consumption.
- Minimizes food waste by adapting vegetables based on availability.
- Khichdi is a light, easily digestible, and nourishing meal, often recommended in Indian households and hospitals during recovery from illness, digestive discomfort, or as a comfort food. Its balanced carbohydrates, protein from lentils, and vitamins from veggies aid healing and provide energy without taxing the digestive system.
- In colder or rainy seasons, warm khichdi provides comfort and hydration, while the spices (like cumin and asafoetida) help with digestion and immunity. During hot months, lighter vegetables and increased water content keep the meal cooling and refreshing.





Bobó de Camarão

(Shrimp in Cassava Cream)

Traditional Brazilian dish from Bahia – rich in flavor and cultural history

The bobó de camarão brings me back to my Brazilian roots because this is a dish that we usually cook at family events, such as birthdays and even Christmas. The comforting flavors of cassava, coconut milk, and dendê oil remind me of home and shared meals around a big table.

Ingredients

- 500g (1 lb) cassava (peeled and chopped into chunks)
- 500g (1 lb) shrimp (peeled and deveined, shells reserved for stock)
- 1 medium onion (chopped)
- 3 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 bell pepper (red or yellow, chopped)
- 2 medium tomatoes (chopped)
- 200ml (about 3/4 cup) coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons dendê oil (palm oil)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of 1 lime
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Chopped cilantro or parsley to finish

Directions

1. Make a quick shrimp stock (optional but adds depth):

Boil the reserved shrimp shells with 2 cups of water for 10 minutes. Strain and re-serve the liquid.

2. Cook the cassava: In a pot, cover the cassava with water and cook until soft (about 20–30 min). Remove the fibrous core, if needed. Blend the cassava with some of its cooking water or the shrimp stock until creamy.

3. Marinate the shrimp:

Toss shrimp with lime juice, salt, and pepper. Let it sit while preparing the base.

4. Make the flavor base:

In a large pan, heat olive oil and sauté onion, garlic, and bell pepper until soft. Add tomatoes and cook until they break down.

5. Combine everything:

Add the cassava cream and coconut milk to the pan. Stir well and simmer gently. Add dendê oil and adjust seasoning. Finally, stir in the shrimp and cook for 5–7 minutes until just done.

6. Finish and serve:

Top with chopped cilantro or parsley. Serve with rice and farofa (toasted cassava flour).

Why It's Sustainable

This recipe highlights seasonal and local ingredients like cassava (manioc), which is drought-resistant and a staple in Brazil. Using plant-based ingredients like coconut milk and traditional techniques to thicken the stew makes it low-impact. The cassava is fully utilized, minimizing food waste, and supporting small-scale farmers.



Recipe shared by Julia Pinheiro Bassani



Doce de Casca de Banana

(Banana Peel Jam)

A zero-waste Brazilian dessert that transforms leftovers into comfort food.

This is a recipe I learned from my grandmother. She grew up with very little and believed nothing should go to waste. Banana peel jam was her way of turning scraps into something beautiful—and it always brings back the warmth of her kitchen.

Ingredients

- Peels from 4 ripe bananas (thoroughly washed)
- 1 cup sugar (can reduce slightly if using very ripe peels)
- 1 cinnamon stick or 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 cloves
- 1 cup water
- Juice of half a lemon (optional, helps preserve and brighten flavor)

Directions

Prepare the peels:

Remove any banana strings and chop peels into small pieces.

Boil and soften:

Boil peels in water for 5–10 minutes to soften and remove any bitterness. Drain.

Cook the jam:

In a pan, combine softened peels, sugar, cinnamon, cloves, and 1 cup fresh water. Bring to a boil, then simmer, stirring often, until thickened (about 20–30 minutes). Add lemon juice at the end if using.

Store or serve:

Once it reaches a jam-like consistency, let it cool. Store in a clean jar in the fridge. Delicious on toast, with cheese, or even swirled into yogurt.



Recipe shared by Julia Pinheiro Bassani

Why It's Sustainable

This dessert transforms banana peels—usually discarded—into a delicious, sweet treat. It reduces household food waste and highlights how traditional knowledge fosters sustainable habits. It's affordable, low-impact, and full of flavor.





Fatar Biran

(Batter fried Gourd leaf)

When I was younger, I remember my mum frying the gourd leaves and flowers. This was only during the summer when gourd was harvested and there would be an abundance of leaves and flowers from the gourd plant. Rather than going to waste, my mum would fry them as an accompaniment to rice or as a summer snack for us 7 children. I last made this batch of fried leaves (as shown in the picture) for my sons and nieces, with leaves that were cleaned and given to me by my mum.

Ingredients

- Gourd leaf
- A cup of Gram flour
- Half a cup of Plain Flour
- Half a cup of Rice flour
- Salt
- Turmeric
- Chili powder

Customisable based on accessible household ingredients, easy and quick to make.
Measurements are made by eye



Recipe written by Sahara's aunt Rukea, taught to her by her mother and her mother-in-law., shared by Sahara Rahman

Directions

1. Wash the leaves, let it drain in the colander
 2. Make the batter; add the dry ingredients (a cup of gram, half a cup of plain, half a cup of rice) to a bowl, salt to taste, other spices to taste (half a teaspoon of chili, half of turmeric) with water.
 3. Deep fry both sides of the leave until golden (≈ 3 mins each side)
- Best served warm, with condiments on the side.

Why It's Sustainable

Stem, leaf everything about the plant is used. In Bangladesh there are several varieties of gourd which are native (snake gourd, bottle gourd, bitter gourd, ridge gourd), and they are harvested and cooked in curries and other dishes. In Bangladesh, since many people live in poverty, there are lots of creative leftover-based recipes and this is one of them. will just use all parts of the plant as it is accessible, cheap and easy to use in recipes like this. Fata biran is eaten in the summer, as gourd is grown and found in abundance in summer.





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Global Plates, Local Practices is an ongoing collection of recipes rooted in tradition, memory, and care for the planet. Created by the Food & Community Team at the Cavendish Living Lab, this book celebrates the sustainable food practices that connect communities across the world and invites you to be part of the story.

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