

Pakorras



As the saying goes ‘We all adore a Pakora’ and who wouldn’t? These crunchy little vegetable nuggets are one of life’s not so guilty pleasures, although I think adoring just one pakora is ambitious, I guarantee that a pakora leads to two and then more.

Okay so they are deep fried, they have to be, it’s the crispiness that makes them so tasty and feeds the soul. Other than that they are bursting with health, gluten free chickpea or buckwheat flour and vegetables, just snacking on pakoras is likely to be one of your five a day.

Every street in Kathmandu has it’s own snack vendor, a hole in the wall with a single gas burner and a large karahi crusted with years of burnt oil. These little community snack shops are family affairs one person squatting over the karahi cooking while another bags the snacks to order. The cornerstone of the community the snack shops are open all day, starting with nepali doughnuts and rice doughnuts ‘sel’ for breakfast and progressing to their own ‘special’ pakoras later in the day. All while a gaggle of children and grandchildren run in and out of a grubby curtained room behind.



Pakorras aren't just popular in Kathmandu once outside Kathmandu the highways are lined with teashops all with piles of snacks beside the entrance, to entice hungry travellers to stop at their establishment, pakorras are always one of those offerings. Highway pakorras have a subtle but distinctive smoky taste and even young children fan the flames of the open fire as they expertly control the temperature of the cooking oil.



Once you get past the health and safety aspect and try these crispy vegetable nuggets you'll be hooked. Every vendor has their own 'secret family recipe' for the batter that is almost as closely guarded secret as the fresh chutneys that accompany the pakorras.



Type to enter text Pakorras have been popular at Yak Yeti Yak since we first opened and more recently at Phat Yaks where we've created a whole range of exciting combinations they are one of the most popular dishes our menu. We also have our secrets but we're willing to share somethings, here is a recipe for courgette pakorras that was first published in Crumbs Magazine.

Lemon and Courgette Pakoras with Sesame drizzle 4-6 as a starter

Pakorras

250 grams courgette
125 grams chickpea flour
1 small bunch fresh coriander
½ teaspoon ground coriander
½ lemon zest, finely grated
¼ teaspoon turmeric
½ teaspoon salt or to taste
water for mixing
oil for deep frying

Sesame drizzle

2 teaspoons tahini
1 green finger chilli (optional)
Juice of ½ lemon
2-3 tablespoons hot pre boiled water
salt to taste



Method

Pakorras

Coarsely grate the courgette and finely chop the fresh coriander, reserving some of the coriander for the salad. Make a batter by combining all the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl, add water a little at a time to make a smooth mixture similar to cake batter. Add the courgette and remaining fresh coriander to the batter and mix very well.

Heat the oil to 360°F (185°C). Test if the oil is up to temperature by dropping a couple of bits of batter into it, if they rise straight to the surface bubbling, then the oil is ready. Using a tablespoon as a measure, carefully drop rough nuggets of the Pakora mixture into the hot oil to fry, turning them so they cook evenly. Once the pakoras are golden brown on all sides, remove from the oil with a slotted spoon and drain on kitchen paper. Repeat until all the mixture is used.

Sesame drizzle

Chop the chilli very finely, if you are using. In a mixing bowl combine the tahini, lemon juice, adding hot water to mix until you have a drizzle consistency. Lastly add the chopped chilli and salt a little at a time to your required taste. Set aside to cool.

Either serve the pakoras on their own with drinks using the drizzle as a dip or serve them on a bed of green leaves with the drizzle and a little fresh red chilli sprinkled over the top.