

The Symphony of Six Tastes – The Family Festive Table



In this final report of my series, I want to take you on a culinary journey into the Tamil New Year table. While the Sinhalese table is famous for its golden sweets, the Tamil festive table is a vibrant mosaic of savory, sweet, and spicy notes. My aim is to show you how this community balances flavor with health, creating a meal that is as nourishing for soul as it is for the body.

If there is one dish, I want you to imagine tasting, it is “**Pachadi**”. This is the crown jewel of the Tamil New Year. It is a salad-like dish that combines six distinct tastes: Sweet (Jaggary), Sour (mango), Bitter (neem flowers), Salty, Spicy (chili) and Astringent. As you taste it, your palate experiences every position emotion of life. It is refreshing, surprising, and deeply symbolic. I find this beautiful because it teaches us to accept life’s ups and downs with a balanced heart.

I have selected the famous **Vadai** for those who prefer savory over sweet. Imagine a donut-shaped fritter made from stone-ground lentils, fresh curry leaves, and green chilies, deep-fried to a perfect golden brown. It is crunchy on the outside and incredibly soft and fluffy on the inside. It’s high protein, energizing snack that provides a wonderful savory balance to the festive table.

No celebration is complete without “**Payasam**”. Imagine a warm creamy pudding made with fine vermicelli or sago, slow-cooked in sweetened milk and infused

with the fragrance of cardamom. It is generously garnished with golden-fried cashew nuts and raisins. Every spoonful is a luxurious, comforting embrace-sweet, silky and deeply satisfying.

Murukku are intricately twisted, spiral shaped snacks made from rice and urad dal flour (black gram flour). I suggest you try this for the ultimate crunch. It is savory and often spiced with cumin seeds or carom seeds, making it an addictive snack that adds a wonderful auditory element to the feast.

Using lentils (in vadai) and pulses makes this meal very grounding and rich in plant-based protein. The heavy use of ginger, curry leaves and mustered seeds ensures that these festive treats are easy on the stomach.

Through these reports, I hope I have brought a piece of a Sri Lanka to your heart in Germany. Whether it is the golden milk rice of the Sinhalese or the vibrant pachadi of the Tamils, our new year is a testament to our unity and our shared love for life's abundance. I am proud to share this heritage with you, and I hope you one day you can experience these flavors in person.



Pachadi



Vadai



Murukku



Payasam