

Stuffed Okra (Bhindi)

Recipes are tributes, and this stuffed okra dish certainly is one—to my mom, who taught it to me. It's no surprise that there are recipes that can easily flood us with emotions—nostalgia, joy, and gratitude. They speak volumes about family and tradition through the art of cooking. Preparing this dish is not just about re-creating my mom's recipe; it's about preserving a piece of her and sharing it with love.

SERVES 4

1 pound 4-inch-long okra (about 36)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup chickpea flour

1 teaspoon white sesame seeds

4 garlic cloves, grated

1-inch knob fresh ginger, grated (about 1 teaspoon)

2 teaspoons ground cumin

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cayenne

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon amchur (mango powder), or 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cane sugar

Kosher salt

3 tablespoons neutral oil

1. Rinse the okra with cold water and pat dry with a clean kitchen towel. Using a paring knife, trim the top and bottom off. Carefully make a slit lengthwise in the okra. Do not cut all the way through end to end—you want to create more of a pocket than an open-ended taco.
2. Combine the chickpea flour, sesame seeds, garlic, ginger, cumin, cayenne, amchur, sugar, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Working over the bowl, use your fingers to gently stuff the center of each okra with filling. Reserve any remaining mixture to add to the dish once the okra is tender.
3. Heat the oil in a large skillet with a lid over medium heat until it is shimmering. Add the stuffed okra, filling side up, and reduce the heat to medium-low. Cover and cook until the okra is bright green, about 10 minutes. Remove the lid and sprinkle any reserved filling on top of the okra. Cook, uncovered, until the extra filling is absorbed and the okra is tender, about 10 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning, adding more salt if desired, and serve immediately.

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