

## What are the different types of Papadams and how are they made?

Poppadums or the Indian papad occupies an important place in Indian cuisine. While it is a well known snack or appetizer in North Indian cuisine, it is an important part of all South Indian meals and is known as Papadam. Papad is a form of flat bread, wafer or a tortilla that is crisp and thin. Generally rice flour, black gram, chickpea or lentils are used to prepare this wafer thin appetizer. You can get different types of poppadums depending on your palate and preferences that range from versions made from lentils, spicy or even plain. Sometimes even Tapioca or sabudana and jackfruit is also used to prepare papads.

In recent years, new factories and machines have started being used to make papads, but handmade papads are still popular in India. As a matter of fact, this cottage industry is a major source of income for women in many parts of the country.

Basic poppadums are prepared with lentil flour that is mixed with sodium bicarbonate, spices, and salt along with water to prepare dough. This dough is kept aside for sometime and then is cut into round balls. These round balls are rolled into paper-thin papads that are almost translucent. They are dried in the sun and then made into packages to be sold in the market.

There are a number of ways to cook a poppadums depending your tastes and preferences. Health conscious people like roasting them while some like the deep fried versions. Papads curry is also popular in North India.

Here are some well known ways of cooking poppadums:

• **Open flame cooking:** You can use a gas stove to cook a papad. It is one of the quickest ways to cook it and the oldest too. All you need to do is to use some tongs to hold the papad over the flame. Keep moving it back and forth so that it doesn't burn and cooks all over. This method does not take more than ten seconds and you have a low calorie snack ready in seconds!

• **Deep-fried papads:** Deep fried papads are a popular snack for parties and get together. Heat some vegetable or sunflower oil and slide the papad gently into it. Within no time, the papad is cooked and rises up. You can take it out with a pair of tongs and place it on a paper towel to drain the excess oil.

• **Microwave:** This is one of the most preferred ways to cook papad these days. It does not add any calories to the papad and does not burn it either. You can simply put the papad in the microwave and cook it for about 15 seconds on either side on full power. Some people prefer cooking it for sixty seconds on low power.

You can cook poppadums in any of the ways mentioned above. These can be eaten with chutneys or sauce or on their own. Cholesterol free and tasty, papads are one of the best snacks for a growling tummy!