A Real Taste of Sri Lanka: The Traditional Sri Lankan Breakfast

Posted on

A typical Sri Lankan breakfast includes a delicious spread of mouthwatering food from creamy kiribath to crispy hoppers, soft pittu, and pol roti. Each meal is prepared uniquely, fused with flavors of Sri Lankan touch to kick start the day. It is a nutritious spread with a combination of savory and sweet dishes that are sure to fill your tummy.



The best accompaniment of creamy kiribath is spicy lunu miris or seeni sambol and ambul thiyal.



Pittu is a filling meal – enjoy a plate of soft pittu in a sweet or savory style.



Popular idi appa (string hoppers) is a best combo with kiri hodhi or spicy curry

Enjoying a Sri Lankan meal is more than relishing the flavors of the meals. It is a magical display of an assortment of authentic cuisine that combines richness, hospitality, and attention to detail.

Milk rice (kiribath), the Queen of Sri Lankan breakfast meal, is served at celebrations epitomizing festivity and joy. The rice is boiled in rich coconut milk and cut into elegant diamond-shaped pieces. Milk rice is traditional on the first day of

each month in many homes. Sharp spice relishes made of onions, Maldive fish (katta sambol), hot and sweet caramelized onions (seeni sambol), and traditional ambul thiyal add contrast to the creaminess of the milk rice. You can complete this heavenly breakfast with a banana.



Pittu is another great dish. Cylindrical-shaped, soft pittu is made out of steamed rice flour and coconut. There are two varieties, the red (kurakkan) and white pittu. It can be consumed with curry and/or coconut milk, which softens it into a crumble texture. Ideally, pittu is a fantastic combo with flavorful spicy fish, crab, mutton, or chicken curry.

String hoppers (idi appa) are served as neat little stacks on flat dishes. White rice flour and red rice flour lend the white and brown color to the string hoppers. The thin strands resemble vermicelli, but the subtle rice flour taste is noticeably different. They are served with either a white or mild curry or spicy curry and hot relishes as accompaniments.

The preparation of hoppers (appa), string hoppers, and pittu require practice and dexterity. Their preparation can be seen at roadside hopper kiosks throughout the country.



Hot and crispy hoppers are an all time favorite for Sri Lankans.



Enjoy crunchy coconut pancakes (pol roti) with lunu miris or katta sambol.



Warm egg rotis are mouthwatering.

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It is fascinating to watch as hopper makers pour dollops of batter into small wok-shaped pans and twirl them in the air. A variation to the plain hoppers is the egg hoppers and milk hoppers (Kiri appa). Hoppers can be eaten with fish/chicken curry, spicy lunu miris (a tangy chili paste with sliced onions and Maldive fish), or a fiery pol sambol. The hopper pans with batches of hoppers being prepared swiftly and deftly resemble a mini assembly line. Pol roti is made of wheat flour blended with grated coconut, onions, and green chilies and shaped into soft, small rounds. Pol roti with lunu miris, or fish/chicken curry is another yummy treat. Add butter on hot pol roti and it will surely melt in your mouth. Egg roti, another type of roti tastes good on its own and it is quite filling. Taste the Sri Lankan bread with a well-baked crust – Roast paan – straight from a traditional wood-fueled oven. Roast paan is available at bakeries or roadside cafes. Chicken curry or a fiery pol sambol is a spicy alternative to marmalade with bread. Another type is the favorite traditional Sri Lankan Kadé Paan that can be enjoyed with dhal and spicy pol sambol or fish/chicken curry. Roast paan and kadé paan can be enjoyed with a flavorful crab curry too. Unwind with a cup of freshly brewed milk tea or plain tea. Another popular breakfast choice amongst Sri Lankans is chickpeas (kadala) in the morning

to ensure you are ready for the day. The most common way to prepare kadala is to stir-fry it with mustard seeds, chili flakes, onions, curry leaves, and coconut slices. It can also be boiled and consumed with grated coconut and jaggery.

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A popular Sri Lankan breakfast – roast paan or kadé paan is best combined with dhal, sambol and curry.



Hot and seasoned kadala is a tempting breakfast meal.



Nutritious kola kenda.

Another protein-rich meal is boiled mung beans, served with grated coconut. While boiled manioc with lunu miris or pol sambol is also another favorite! Herbal porridge (Kenda) prepared out of herbal leaves is an invigorating breakfast entrée. Steeped with medicinal herbal leaves such as gotu kola (Centella Asiatica), wel penela

(Cardiosperm halicacabum), and hathawariya (Asparagus falcatus), it is claimed to be an elixir of life. It is usually consumed with a piece of jaggery. With its diversity of cooking styles and delicious range of ingredients, the Sri Lankan breakfast has been savored with the same excitement over the years. To experience it, try the small roadside kiosks or request a traditional breakfast at a hotel or rest house. It’s a real taste of Sri Lanka.

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