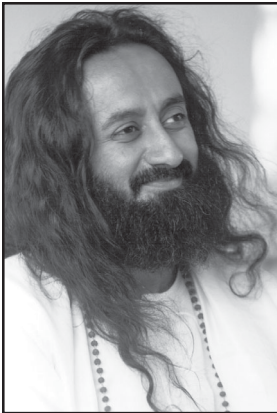


Worshipping The Divine



His Holiness Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is the founder of the *Art of Living Foundation*, a multi-faceted organization that offers a wide array of educational and humanitarian programs that uplift individuals, make a difference in local communities, and foster global change. To learn more, please visit www.artofliving.org/atlanta or contact us at 877-AOLIVING or atlanta@us.artofliving.org.

Understand this word ‘pooja’. ‘Poo’ means ‘poornatha’, fullness. ‘Ja’ means ‘born out of’. That which is born

out of fullness is pooja. When your consciousness becomes so full and in that state when you do an action, that is known as pooja. When the heart is full and you are overwhelmed, gratitude is expressed as pooja.

What is pooja? Imitating all that God is doing to us is pooja. God has given you crops and grains, so you offer rice. God has given you water and you offer water. Perfumes have been given and you offer perfumes. Fruits have been put on trees for you and you offer fruits. He is doing *aarati* to you by the sun and moon everyday and going round you, so you light a lamp and imitate that *aarati*.

God is worshipping you everyday! We imitate that. God wishes that you be happy: “We have created so many varieties for you. There is so much diversity in the creation for you. Even then why do you remain sad? Only one type of vegetable was not created. Creation of flowers was not stopped at one variety. Varieties of flowers, vegetables, people, colors! When such a diverse creation has been created by looking at something so beautiful, waves of beauty should arise in your everyday! You should live in love and celebration, instead you are sad, bothering about small things. Awake.”

This voice is heard from the consciousness everyday. When one can have this message of creation, one is filled with so much gratitude and that

which arises out of this gratitude is known as pooja. It is very difficult to express the emotions. How can they be expressed? However you express an emotion, you will still feel that the expression has fallen short of the emotion felt inside and the expression is never complete. Worship, feeling joyful inside.

Ancient and New

Surrender, *sharangati* or *namaha* is the same. What is *namaha*? It is where the mind does not exist. Mind means the consciousness is outward bound. Mind views the scene through the eyes. It is the mind that sees. Even if the eyes are open and the mind is elsewhere, then is it possible for you to see? Even if the waves of sound are dashing against the eardrum and your mind is elsewhere, then can you hear? You cannot listen. It is the mind, which communicates with the external world via the eyes, ears, nose and skin.

If you reverse the word ‘man’ or mind, it becomes *namaha*. *Mamaha* becomes *namah*. That mind which is inward bound is *namah*.

What is the need to utter the age-old *mantras*? Whenever you recite it, it is new. Your mind is also ancient. Your mind is ten, twenty thousand years old. The body is new every moment. In the same way, mind is ancient, but at the same time it is new. It is like the river Ganges which is flowing for thousands of years, but the water in it is fresh. In the same way, the mind is very ancient but at the same time it is new.

You assume that your body is old. In spite of the age, it is still new. In spite of having your body from fifty years, this body of yours is fresh. You have just eaten bread and vegetables in the morning and the energy obtained out of it is new.

It is ancient and yet new.



WHAT’S COOKING?

BY P.S. LAKSHMI RAO

Poha Upma

2 cups thick atukulu (poha). Pour atukulu in to colander and wash them with warm water three times. Keep it aside covered in a bowl.

Tadka

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1- teaspoon ghee (clarified butter)
- 1 teaspoon red mustard seeds
- 2- teaspoon chana dal
- 3 teaspoons urad dal
- 3 tablespoons cashew pieces

- 1 small potato peeled and cut in to small cubes
- 1 small carrot peeled and cut in to small cubes
- ½ cup cauliflower pieces
- 1 small onion cut in to small pieces
- 4 long hot green chilies cut in to thin pieces



- 2 inches long fresh ginger peeled and cut in to small pieces
- 2 long stems curry leaves removed from the stem
- ½ cup frozen peas
- ½ cup tomato pieces
- ¼ cup water
- 1- teaspoon salt or to taste
- Fresh lemon juice from one lemon or more to taste (optional)

Heat oil and ghee in a medium saucepan. Add mustard seeds and wait until they start to pop. Add chana dal, urad dal, and cashew pieces in medium low heat and fry until they become light brown.

Add potato cubes, carrot cubes, cauliflower, and fry for three minutes. Add onions, green chilies, ginger, and curry leaves. Fry for two more minutes or until onions become translucent. Add peas, tomatoes and salt and fry for two minutes, Add ¼ cup water and cover the pan for a minute. Remove the lid and add atukulu, and lemon juice. Mix slowly to incorporate flavors with a heatproof plastic spoon or spatula so that atukulu will retain their shape. Turn the heat off and keep it covered until ready to eat.

Prasadam Or Soji Halwa

- 1 tablespoons ghee (clarified butter)
- 2 tablespoons cashew pieces
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 1-tablespoon ghee
- 1-cup coarse rava (soji or cream of

- wheat)
- 2 cups milk or one cup milk and one cup water
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 ripe banana mashed (place the peeled banana in a flat plate and mash it course with a fork.)
- ¼ cup ghee
- ¼ teaspoon saffron (optional) soaked in tablespoon of milk
- 1 teaspoon crushed cardamom powder (elaichi)

- Grease a glass dish with little ghee and set aside. (8 1/2x 8 ½ or 7x11)
- Heat milk in a saucepan pan in low heat and keep it ready

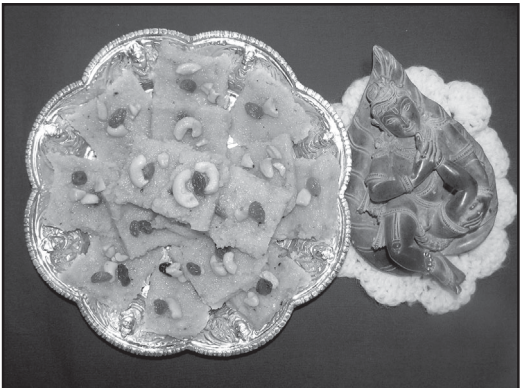
In a three-quart saucepan heat ghee in medium low heat and add cashew pieces and raisins. Fry until cashews are light brown and raisins are plump. Remove cashews and raisins from the pan in to a separate plate.

Save half of the cashews and raisins for garnishing.

Clean the pan, add one tablespoon of ghee and rava. Fry in medium low heat until rava releases slight aroma for five minutes. Add hot milk to rava mixing very fast making sure not to have any lumps. You can remove the pan from heat to mix for few seconds and transfer back to the heat and add sugar and mix vigorously. Keep mixing until prasadam becomes thick and add half of the raisins, and half of the cashews,

banana, ghee, saffron, and cardamom powder. Mix three minutes more or until you see ghee starts to come out to edges. Transfer prasadam in to the greased glass dish and distribute evenly with a bottom of the greased spoon. After the prasadam cooled, cut it into small squares and garnish with saved raisins and cashews.

Note: When ever we had Pooja in our house we always looked forward to the prasadam. Before offering prasadam to the God, the priest used to peel a banana and place it on top of the prasadam.



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