

TABLE TALK



Masala omelette and bacon
naan toastie by Namita Panjabi

PLUS Will Lyons leads a tour of Spain ● French food goes hipster in Hackney by Charlotte Ivers ● Microwave rice is given a spin ➔



**NAMITA
PANJABI**

If you have never tried adding a kick of spice to your breakfast, it's time you discovered what you are missing out on. At my Masala Zone restaurants we serve everything from idlis — steamed fermented lentil and rice cakes typical of southern India — to the scrambled egg and paratha bread dish that is eaten during the winter mustard harvest in the Punjab. Here are three simple recipes for your breakfast table at home. Have some cornflakes first if you really must.

Namita Panjabi is the owner of four Masala Zone restaurants in London, masalazone.com



**Masala omelette and
bacon naan toastie**

If there is one national breakfast dish in India it is the masala omelette, cooked in most homes, posh hotels, roadside stalls and by railway station vendors. I think it's even better served with our famous bacon naan toastie. It's not very traditional, but we think we've created an Anglo-Indian classic. I like the naan they stock at Waitrose, or look out for the Clay Oven brand, sold at Tesco and Morrisons.

Ingredients

(Serves 1)

- 4 rashers of your favourite bacon
- ½ tsp freshly ground pepper
- 1 heaped tbsp soft cheese
- 1 naan
- ½ tsp mustard powder
- 2 tbsp Maggi Hot & Sweet Sauce
- 1 tbsp tomato ketchup

For the masala omelette

- 1 tbsp oil
- Half a small red onion, finely chopped
- Half a medium tomato, chopped
- Half a green chilli, deseeded and chopped
- 1 tbsp coriander, finely chopped
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten

1 Fry the rashers of bacon until crisp and set aside. Mix the ground pepper into the cream cheese and spread it on the naan. Mix together the mustard powder, Maggi sauce and tomato ketchup and spread it on top of the cheese. Keep the naan to one side.

2 To make the omelette, put the oil in a 23cm frying pan on a medium heat and sauté the onion, tomato, green chilli and coriander for 3 min.

3 Add the beaten eggs and swirl the pan to spread them around. Turn up the heat a bit to cook the omelette for 2 min until the edges start to brown. Slide it onto a dinner plate, then carefully invert the plate back onto the pan so you can cook the other side of the omelette. Cook for 1 min.

4 Lift off the omelette and lay it on the naan. Leave to cool for 3 min, then put the bacon on

top and fold the naan in half, pressing down a bit to settle it. Grill for a minute or so, turning once, and eat while still hot.

**Punjabi bhurji with
tomato and ginger**

Gently spiced scrambled eggs are enjoyed all over northern India for breakfast and brunch, especially on cold and rainy days.

Ingredients

(Serves 2)

- 2 tbsp oil
- 1 red onion, finely chopped
- 2cm piece fresh ginger, grated
- Half a green chilli, deseeded
- 1½ medium tomatoes, chopped



- 2 tbsp chopped coriander
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp Kashmiri chilli powder
- ¼ tsp garam masala
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 10g butter
- 1 tbsp double cream

1 Put the oil in a frying pan on a medium heat and sauté the chopped onion for about 3 min or until it has turned golden brown. Add the ginger, green chilli, tomatoes, coriander and salt. Fry for 4 min until the tomato is mushy.

2 Add the spices and fry for 30 seconds, then add the

beaten eggs. Keep stirring, not allowing the mixture to form a settled layer at the bottom of the pan.

3 Take the pan off the heat while the eggs are still moist. Add the butter and cream, stirring for 30 seconds until fully integrated. Serve immediately.

Masala baked beans

Lovely on toast, it nicely spices up a full English.

Ingredients

- 1½ tsp oil
- A small pinch of cumin seeds
- 1 tbsp red onion, chopped
- ½ tsp grated ginger

- Half a medium tomato, chopped
- ¼ tsp Kashmiri chilli powder
- A pinch of turmeric powder
- A pinch of garam masala
- 200g baked beans
- Lemon juice, to serve
- Chopped coriander, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a small pan and fry the cumin seeds for 30 seconds. Add the onion, ginger and tomato and sauté for 1 min. Add the spices and sauté for 30 seconds, then add the baked beans and heat through.

2 Serve with a squeeze of lemon and a scattering of chopped coriander ■

Tasted! The best supermarket

FLAVOURED MICROWAVE RICE



OUR PICK

Tilda Sweet Chilli & Lime Basmati Rice

Ocado, 250g, £1.25

This pouch is fiery and zesty, with soft, light grains. A perfect match for prawns **5/5**

Nice Rice Chipotle

Waitrose, 250g, £2

Quite nice, as the name suggests. The smoky aroma slaps you around the face at first, but the chilli heat is subtle **4/5**

Worldwide Foods Special Peri Peri Rice

Aldi, 250g, 69p

As authentically Portuguese as Nando's. But the grains are light and delicate and it has a decent chilli kick **4/5**

Merchant Gourmet Spanish-Style Grains

Tesco, 250g, £2.15

The mix of grains gives a good texture but it has an unpleasant tomato puree taste. Use this for paella and Spain would never forgive you **3/5**

Ben's Original Mexican Style Rice

Asda, 220g, £1.40

A touch clumpy, but if you need a cheat's way to bulk out a meal with some spicy rice it's worth a try **2/5**

Spicy Mexican Rice

Sainsbury's, 250g, 85p

More like Tex-Mex. This is rice in a hurry, with beans and sweetcorn thrown into the mix **2/5**

Hannah Evans