Traditional Maharashtrian Karanji

Adapted from Dassana Amit, Dassana's Veg Recipes | https://www.vegrecipesofindia.com/karanji-recipe-maharashtrian-karanji-recipe/

Sweet coconut-filled festive pastries

Yield: 14 karanji	Prep: 40 min	Cook: 40 min	Total: 1 hr 20 min

Ingredients — Sweet filling

- ½ cup unsweetened desiccated coconut
- 1 tbsp white sesame seeds
- 8–9 almonds
- 9–10 cashews
- 9–10 golden raisins
- ½ tsp cardamom powder (or 4 crushed green cardamoms)
- 3 tbsp powdered sugar, or to taste
- Pinch of nutmeg powder
- ½ tbsp ghee

Ingredients — Pastry dough

- 2 cups (250 g) all-purpose flour (maida)
- 2 tbsp ghee
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup plus 1 tbsp milk, approximately; adjust as needed
- Oil for deep-frying

Method — Prepare the filling

1. Warm ½ tbsp ghee in a frying pan. Add coconut and stir over low heat until lightly golden; transfer to a plate.
2. Toast the sesame seeds in the same pan until fragrant and they begin to pop. Combine with the coconut.
3. Pulse almonds, cashews and raisins into a fairly fine mixture (or chop them finely). Stir into the coconut and sesame.
4. Mix in powdered sugar, cardamom and nutmeg. Set the filling aside.

Method — Make the dough

5. Warm 2 tbsp ghee. Add it and the salt to the flour; gently mix to distribute.
6. Gradually work in the milk and knead briefly until smooth but firm. Avoid making a soft dough.
7. Cover with a damp towel and rest for 15–20 minutes.

Method — Shape and fry

8. Divide the dough into manageable pieces. Roll each into a circle about 4–5 inches across, keeping unused dough covered.
9. Place 1–2 tbsp filling on one half, allowing a border. Moisten the edge with water, fold over into a half-moon and press closed. Pleat the rim or crimp with a fork to seal.
10. Heat deep-frying oil to a moderate temperature. Fry a few pastries at a time so the oil does not cool too much.
11. Turn carefully while cooking until both sides are evenly golden and the pastry is crisp. Drain on paper towels.
12. Cool before transferring to an airtight container.

Helpful tips

- A firm, smooth dough helps produce a flaky, crisp exterior; too much liquid can make it soft.
- Avoid overfilling and ensure the seam is fully sealed to prevent leakage during frying.
- Use moderately hot oil: overly hot oil browns the outside too fast, while cool oil makes the pastry greasy.
- The source’s FAQ recommends keeping fully cooled karanji airtight at room temperature for up to one week.