

BEST SNACKS TO EAT FOR DIWALI

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The day known as the “Festival of Lights” also has delicious food you don’t want to miss out on.

Diwali, also known as the “Festival of Lights,” is a five-day event that’s one of the biggest holidays celebrated worldwide. It’s observed across multiple religions and cultures such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism, among others.

Common ways to celebrate the holiday include lighting diyas (lamps), decorating homes, doing puja (prayers), giving loved ones gifts and making a variety of sweets.

When it comes to sweets, there is so much to indulge in. In my family, my mom, Ireen Devi, loves to make snacks for days

before we pray. After we complete our puja, we invite family members over to exchange sweets as a way to share blessings.

“Diwali is the holiday of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity,” Devi said. “We give to have our house full of love and happiness. When you give more, you receive more.”

So how do you know what snack you want to eat? This list won’t cover the full scope of all the delicious goodies, but here are five options that will light your world.



BARFI

Barfi (pronounced baar-fee) was one of my top mithais (sweets) growing up because of its sweet texture. My mom uses powdered milk, sugar and ghee (clarified butter) as key ingredients, and they’re usually cut up into squares or diamonds. They’re typically tan in color, but food coloring adds more personality. The blue ones were my favorite, though the taste doesn’t differ.

Common ways to add more flavor to barfi include sprinkles, coconut shavings, chopped almonds and gram flour.



GULAB JAMUN

Gulab jamuns are a popular dessert option. The sphere shape and color is reminiscent of hush puppies, but the texture is smoother and softer, and the sweetness level is much higher. Milk powder or khoya, a dairy food made of dried milk, is the base ingredient. Once the dough is ready, the balls are deep-fried in oil.

Once they're cooked properly, they're coated in a syrup made of sugar, rose water and cardamom powder that elevates the sweetness, which makes you feel like you're in heaven with each bite.



SAMOSAS

Samosas are triangular-shaped deep-fried pastries. The outside layer is a fried tortilla, and my mom stuffs them with boiled mashed potatoes, carrots and peas, among other vegetables. This dish is reminiscent of egg rolls, or lumpia.

These pair best with chutney, a type of dipping sauce. For those who prefer a tangy sensation, imli (tamarind) chutney is another great option.



MURUKKU

For lovers of crunchy food, murukkus are for you. Rice flour is the base ingredient, and my mom adds pea flour, ajwain and salt to partner with the crunchiness.

They have to be molded into a spiral shape before being deep-frying to create their authentic look.

LADOO

Ladoos (spelled a few different ways) have been my favorite sweet since I was a kid. It's even a nickname someone has for me because of how I succumb to its taste.

Suji laddoo is my favorite type. They're made of semolina, powdered milk, sugar and cardamom powder that is combined with warm ghee. They're small white balls that melt as soon as they hit your mouth, and the simplicity of the bite keeps you returning for more.

