

Balanced Meal Plan (Feb 9 – Mar 1, 2025)

This **21-day vegetarian (Jain)** meal plan provides balanced nutrition with a variety of cuisines each week. Each day includes **breakfast, lunch, snack, and dinner**, emphasizing 80% unique dishes (with a few favorite repeats like parathas). All recipes are Jain-compliant – **no meat, no eggs, no fish, no onion, no garlic** (potatoes are included). The plan spans Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi, South Indian, Asian (Chinese/Thai), Japanese, Italian, Mexican, Rajasthani, and Nepali cuisines, ensuring the twins enjoy diverse flavors. Each meal's approximate **calories, protein, carbs, and fats** are listed, and detailed **recipes** are provided in the appendix for easy reference.

Week 1: Feb 9 – Feb 15, 2025

Day 1 – Sunday, 9th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Aloo Paratha with Curd (Punjabi):** Two whole-wheat parathas stuffed with spiced potato, served with plain yogurt. A hearty start rich in carbs for energy and some protein from yogurt. **Nutritional:** ~ 445 kcal, 6.8 g protein, 45 g carbs, 27 g fat (per 2 parathas with minimal oil) ([Calories of whole wheat Aloo Paratha. Is aloo paratha good for weight loss?](#)). (A single paratha ~222 kcal, 3.4 g prot, 22.7 g carb, 13.5 g fat ([Calories of whole wheat Aloo Paratha. Is aloo paratha good for weight loss?](#))).
- **Lunch – Dal Dhokli (Gujarati One-Pot Meal):** Whole-wheat dough *dhokli* simmered in lentil curry. This comforting dish provides protein from **dal** and energy from wheat, with a balance of spices (made Jain-style without garlic/onion). **Nutritional:** ~ 250 kcal, 12.7 g protein, 41.6 g carbs, 3.9 g fat per bowl ([Calories of Methi Dal Dhokli | Tarladalal.com](#)).
- **Evening Snack – Khaman Dhokla (Gujarati):** Steamed gram flour cake tempered with mustard and curry leaves. It's light yet protein-rich from besan. **Nutritional** (per piece): ~ 81 kcal, 3 g protein, 12 g carbs, 2 g fat ([Calories of Khaman Dhokla. Is Khaman Dhokla healthy? Is it good for diabetics?](#)). (Two pieces ~162 kcal.)
- **Dinner – Moong Dal Khichdi with Yogurt (Light Dinner):** A gentle moong-lentil and rice porridge seasoned with cumin and turmeric. Served with a side of probiotic-rich curd for digestion. **Nutritional:** ~ 259 kcal, 8.1 g protein, 42.6 g carbs, 6.2 g fat per medium bowl ([Moong dal khichdi recipe - Clearcal](#)). (Easy to digest and calming for the evening.)

Day 2 – Monday, 10th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Batata Poha (Maharashtrian):** Flattened rice cooked with peanuts, turmeric, and diced potato (**kanda** or onion skipped for Jain compliance). A quick, light breakfast providing sustained carbs. **Nutritional:** ~ 234 kcal, 3.5 g protein, 42.5 g carbs, 5.5 g fat per serving ([Calories for Batata Poha, Aloo Poha | Is Batata Poha healthy?](#)).

- **Lunch – Chole with Jeera Rice (Punjabi):** Spicy chickpea curry (**chole**) made without onion/garlic, paired with cumin-flavored basmati rice. Chickpeas offer protein and fiber, while rice provides energy. **Nutritional: Chole** ~223 kcal, 7.2 g protein, 26.8 g carbs, 9.7 g fat per cup ([Calories of Chole, Punjabi Chole Masala, Is Chole healthy?](#)) + **1 cup Jeera rice** ~171 kcal, 2.9 g protein, 33.6 g carbs, 2.7 g fat ([Calories of Rice, Cooked Rice | Tarladalal.com](#)). *Combined ~394 kcal, ~10 g protein, 60+ g carbs.*
- **Evening Snack – Bhel Puri (Mumbai Chaat, Jain style):** Puffed rice tossed with tomatoes, boiled potatoes, chutneys and sev. (No raw onions or garlic chutney.) A tangy, crunchy low-fat snack. **Nutritional: ~ 467 kcal, 11.8 g protein, 60 g carbs, 19.9 g fat** per generous serving ([Calories of Bhel Puri, Bhel Puri Chaat Recipe | Tarladalal.com](#)) (can be portioned smaller for a lighter snack).
- **Dinner – Tomato Soup with Whole-Wheat Bread:** A warm puree of tomatoes and carrots (both Jain-friendly), seasoned with herbs. Served with a slice of buttered whole-grain bread. Light and vitamin-rich. **Nutritional: Soup** ~90 kcal, 4 g protein, 12 g carbs, 2 g fat per bowl ([Calories of Tomato Soup, Veg Tomato Soup, Is it healthy? - Tarla Dalal](#)); **Bread slice** ~70 kcal, 3 g protein, 12 g carbs, 1 g fat. *Total ~160 kcal. (Easy on the stomach after a spicy lunch.)*

Day 3 – Tuesday, 11th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Idli with Coconut Chutney (South Indian):** Steamed rice–lentil cakes (**idli**) served with coconut-cilantro chutney (no garlic). This fermented breakfast is gut-friendly and low in fat. **Nutritional: 3 idlis** ~195 kcal, **6 g** protein, **42 g** carbs, **<1 g** fat (approx. 65 kcal each ([Calories of Idli \(How To Make Idli \), Is Idli healthy? Tarladalal.com](#))). Chutney (2 tbsp) adds ~50 kcal mostly from healthy fats in coconut.
- **Lunch – Pesto Veggie Pasta (Italian):** Whole-wheat fusilli tossed in a basil pesto (made without garlic) with sautéed bell peppers, zucchini, and cherry tomatoes. A global twist providing complex carbs and healthy fats from olive oil & nuts. **Nutritional: ~ 380 kcal, 8–11 g** protein, **28 g** carbs, **25 g** fat per cup ([Carbs in Pasta With Pesto Sauce, Noodles](#)). *(One generous serving ≈1.5 cups ~570 kcal.)*
- **Evening Snack – Moong Sprouts Salad:** A protein-packed chaat of boiled **moong sprouts**, chopped cucumber, tomatoes, and a squeeze of lemon. Light yet filling and rich in fiber. **Nutritional: ~ 100 kcal, 6.5 g** protein, **17.5 g** carbs, **0.4 g** fat per bowl ([How many calories does one serving of Sprouted Moong Salad have?](#)).
- **Dinner – Palak Khichdi (Spinach Khichdi):** A one-pot dish of rice, lentils, and pureed spinach cooked to a soft consistency. Mildly spiced with cumin and asafoetida in place of garlic. This **iron-rich** dinner is easy to digest. **Nutritional: ~ 320 kcal, 7–8 g** protein, **50 g** carbs, **4 g** fat per serving (similar to dal khichdi) ([Calories of Dal Khichdi | is dal khichdi healthy? is it good for weight loss?](#)). *Served with a dollop of ghee and papad for crunch.*

Day 4 – Wednesday, 12th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Methi Thepla with Chutney (Gujarati):** Fenugreek-spiced flatbreads made from whole wheat, served with sweet mango chutney. These are aromatic and full of fiber from methi (fenugreek). **Nutritional:** ~ **120 kcal** per thepla (6" dia), **2.3 g** protein, **13 g** carbs, **6.5 g** fat ([Calories of Thepla \(Gujarati Recipe\) |Is Thepla healthy? Tarladalal.com](#)). (Typically 2 theplas ~240 kcal for a meal.) ([Calories of Thepla \(Gujarati Recipe\) |Is Thepla healthy? Tarladalal.com](#))
- **Lunch – Rajma Masala with Rice (North Indian):** Red kidney bean curry cooked Punjabi-style (tomato-based, no onion) accompanied by steamed basmati rice. High in plant protein and iron. **Nutritional:** **Rajma** ~207 kcal, **6.4 g** protein, **19 g** carbs, **11.7 g** fat per serving ([Why you should be eating Rajma Curry \(Rajma Masala\) ? Calories of Rajma Curry.](#)); **Rice** ~171 kcal, **2.9 g** protein, **33.6 g** carbs, **2.7 g** fat per cup ([Calories of Rice, Cooked Rice | Tarladalal.com](#)). *Combined ~378 kcal, ~9 g protein.*
- **Evening Snack – Fruit Yogurt Parfait:** Layers of low-fat yogurt, fresh fruit (banana slices, berries), and a sprinkle of granola. This provides calcium, vitamins, and probiotics in a fun form. **Nutritional:** ~ **125 kcal**, **5 g** protein, **23.6 g** carbs, **1.5 g** fat per small cup ([Carbs in Yogurt Parfait With Fruit And Granola | Carb Manager](#)) (using mostly fruit and unsweetened yogurt; a larger portion with granola can be ~200+ kcal).
- **Dinner – Dalia Khichdi (Broken Wheat & Lentil):** A **broken wheat** (dalia) and moong dal khichdi with mixed veggies (like peas and carrot) for a high-fiber, diabetic-friendly meal. Tempered with cumin and curry leaves (no onion). **Nutritional:** ~ **208 kcal**, **4.6 g** protein, **29.1 g** carbs, **8.1 g** fat per serving ([Calories of Fada Ni Khichdi, Is Fada Ni Khichdi healthy?](#)). *(Low-GI carbs from wheat help keep one satiated; easy to digest.)*

Day 5 – Thursday, 13th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Rava Upma with Vegetables (South Indian):** Semolina porridge cooked with peas, diced carrots, and cashews, tempered with mustard seeds and curry leaves. A warm, savory start providing moderate calories and some protein from lentils in the tadka. **Nutritional:** ~ **192 kcal**, **4 g** protein, **30.8 g** carbs, **5.8 g** fat per serving ([Calories for Upma, Quick Upma Recipe | Is Upma healthy?](#)).
- **Lunch – Mexican Burrito Bowl:** A colorful bowl of **brown rice**, black beans, sweet corn, cherry tomatoes, and avocado, drizzled with cilantro-lime dressing. (Jain adaptation: no garlic or onions in the salsa.) High in fiber, healthy fats, and protein. **Nutritional:** ~ **430 kcal**, **16 g** protein, **60 g** carbs, **14 g** fat per bowl (approximation) ([Lunchtime! Veggie Burrito Bowl ~ \(430 calories, 16g protein\) - Reddit](#)).
- **Evening Snack – Roasted Masala Makhana:** Fox nuts pan-roasted in ghee with turmeric, salt, and pepper. A crunchy, **low-calorie** snack rich in calcium and protein. **Nutritional:** ~ **180 kcal**, **5 g** protein, **32 g** carbs, **2 g** fat per cup (makhana is naturally low in fat). *(Light but keeps the twins munching happily.)*
- **Dinner – Moong Dal Cheela with Chutney:** Thin protein-rich crepes made from ground moong dal batter (spiced with cumin and ginger), served with tangy tomato chutney (no garlic). These **cheelas** are light yet nutritious, great for an evening meal. **Nutritional:** ~ **128 kcal**, **7.5 g** protein, **21 g** carbs, **1.5 g** fat per cheela ([Calories of Moong Dal Chilla | Is It healthy? - Tarla Dalal](#)). (Two cheelas ~256 kcal.)

Day 6 – Friday, 14th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Overnight Oats with Fruits & Nuts:** Rolled oats soaked in almond milk overnight, mixed with yogurt, chia seeds, chopped apples, and almonds. A no-cook **high-fiber** breakfast that's creamy and naturally sweetened. **Nutritional:** ~ **215 kcal**, **9 g** protein, **33 g** carbs, **5 g** fat per serving (basic recipe) ([7 Tasty and Healthy Overnight Oats Recipes - Healthline](#)). *(Adds plenty of energy and Omega-3s from chia for the day.)*
- **Lunch – Punjabi Kadhi with Pakora + Jeera Rice:** A traditional yogurt-based gram flour curry (**kadhi**) with spinach pakoras (fried fritters) – made Jain-style (no garlic). Served with cumin rice. The kadhi offers protein and calcium from yogurt, and the pakoras add a fun crunch. **Nutritional:** **Kadhi** ~276 kcal, **10 g** protein, **24 g** carbs, **13.8 g** fat per serving ([Calories of Punjabi Pakoda Kadhi. Is it healthy for diabetics.](#)); **Rice** ~171 kcal, **2.9 g** protein, **33.6 g** carbs, **2.7 g** fat ([Calories of Rice, Cooked Rice | Tarladalal.com](#)). *Combined ~447 kcal.*
- **Evening Snack – Vegetable Sticks with Hummus:** Crunchy carrot, cucumber, and bell pepper sticks with a side of homemade hummus (chickpea dip) sans garlic. High in fiber and vitamins, with protein from chickpeas and sesame (tahini). **Nutritional:** ~ **150 kcal**, **5 g** protein, **15 g** carbs, **8 g** fat for a small bowl of hummus with veggies (approximate). *(A fun way for the twins to eat raw veggies.)*
- **Dinner – Veg Sushi Rolls & Miso Soup (Japanese Night):** **Cucumber-Avocado Sushi** – vinegared rice rolled in nori seaweed with cucumber, avocado, and carrot sticks (served with soy sauce); plus a side of **miso soup** with tofu and seaweed. Light but satisfying and rich in umami. **Nutritional:** **6-piece veg sushi roll** ~ **200 kcal**, **4 g** protein, **40 g** carbs, **3 g** fat; **Miso soup** (1 cup) ~ **40 kcal**, **3 g** protein, **4 g** carbs, **1 g** fat (rich in sodium and probiotics) ([Tomato soup, or ready-to-serve, prepared with water - Nutrition Value](#)). *An exciting, low-fat dinner introducing new flavors.*

Day 7 – Saturday, 15th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Sabudana Khichdi (Maharashtrian Fasting Dish):** Tapioca pearls sautéed with peanuts, boiled potato, and mild spices. Usually a **vrat** dish, it's energy-dense and kid-friendly. **Nutritional:** ~ **330 kcal**, **5 g** protein, **45 g** carbs, **14 g** fat per serving (with peanuts and ghee). *(Provides quick energy from carbs and healthy fats from peanuts.)*
- **Lunch – Dal Baati Churma (Rajasthani Feast):** A platter featuring **Dal** (mixed lentils curry tempered with cloves, cumin – made without onion/garlic), **Baati** (whole-wheat baked dough balls soaked in ghee), and **Churma** (sweet crumbled baati with jaggery). A festive treat high in calories – best for an active day. **Nutritional:** One serving (2 baati + dal + a bit of churma) ~ **600 kcal**, **15 g** protein, **75 g** carbs, **25 g** fat (approx.). *(Rich but full of protein from dal and energy for growing kids.)*
- **Evening Snack – Masala Corn Cups:** Steamed sweet corn kernels tossed with butter, chaat masala, and lemon. Served warm in cups – a street-style snack that's nutritious and fun. **Nutritional:** ~ **150 kcal**, **4 g** protein, **28 g** carbs, **2 g** fat per cup (from the corn; butter in moderation).

- **Dinner – Vegetable Pulao with Raita:** Fragrant basmati rice pilaf cooked with peas, carrots, green beans (no onion), and mild spices, served with cucumber raita (yogurt). This one-pot meal is flavorful yet light on spices for dinner. **Nutritional: Pulao ~ 300 kcal, 6 g protein, 50 g carbs, 8 g fat** per serving (with a bit of oil and cashews); **Raita** (half-cup) ~ **50 kcal, 2 g protein**. *Calming and aromatic end to the week.*

Week 2: Feb 16 – Feb 22, 2025

Day 8 – Sunday, 16th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Paneer Paratha with Pickle (North Indian):** Whole-wheat flatbread stuffed with seasoned grated paneer (Indian cottage cheese) and herbs. Served with tangy mango pickle and yogurt. High in protein and calcium for the morning. **Nutritional: ~ 250 kcal, 9 g protein, 28 g carbs, 10 g fat** per paratha (estimate, as paneer increases protein) – two parathas ~500 kcal.
- **Lunch – Dal Makhani with Jeera Rice (Punjabi):** Slow-cooked black lentils and red kidney beans in a creamy tomato gravy (made **without cream** and with no onion/garlic, yet deliciously spiced). Served with cumin basmati rice. **Nutritional: Dal Makhani ~ 278 kcal, 12 g protein, 26 g carbs, 13 g fat** per bowl (with modest butter); **Rice ~171 kcal** as before ([Calories of Rice, Cooked Rice | Tarladalal.com](#)). *Rich in protein and iron.*
- **Evening Snack – Fruit Chaat:** An assortment of seasonal fruits (banana, apple, orange, pomegranate) tossed with a pinch of chaat masala and roasted cumin powder. Naturally sweet and packed with vitamins. **Nutritional: ~ 120 kcal, 2 g protein, 30 g carbs, 0 g fat** (from a bowl of mixed fruits).
- **Dinner – Rava Dosa with Coconut Chutney (South Indian):** A crispy, lacey crepe made from semolina and rice flour batter (fermentation not required), spiced with cumin and chilies. No stuffing (plain) for easy digestion, served with coconut chutney. **Nutritional: ~ 150 kcal** per rava dosa, **3 g protein, 18 g carbs, 6 g fat** (as it's pan-cooked with oil); plus **2 tbsp chutney ~ 50 kcal** (mostly fats from coconut). *A light yet satisfying end to the day.*

Day 9 – Monday, 17th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Besan Chilla (Protein Pancake):** Savory crepe made from gram flour batter, enriched with finely chopped cilantro and tomatoes, and pan-cooked with minimal oil. Served with mint-coriander chutney. It's high in protein and quick to make. **Nutritional: ~ 128 kcal** per chilla (6" diameter) ([Calories of Moong Dal Chilla | Is It healthy? - Tarla Dalal](#)), **7-8 g protein, 15-20 g carbs, 2-4 g fat** ([Moong Dal Chilla Calories 100-120 kcal Protein 7-9 ... - Instagram](#)). (Two chillas ~250 kcal.)
- **Lunch – Thai Green Curry with Tofu & Rice:** Creamy coconut-based green curry loaded with veggies (broccoli, bell peppers, baby corn) and tofu cubes for protein. Flavored with Thai herbs (lemongrass, basil) and served with jasmine rice. (Prepared without fish sauce, of course, and mild spice for kids.) **Nutritional: ~ 350 kcal, 8 g**

protein, **30 g** carbs, **20 g** fat per serving of curry (coconut milk adds fats) + **150 kcal** from a small bowl of rice.

- **Evening Snack – Khandvi (Gujarati Rolls):** Delicate rolls made from cooked gram flour and yogurt, tempered with sesame and curry leaves. Soft, melt-in-mouth texture – a good source of protein from besan. **Nutritional:** ~ **100 kcal**, **5 g** protein, **10 g** carbs, **4 g** fat per 4-5 small rolls. (*Light and easy to digest.*)
- **Dinner – Minestrone Soup with Garlic-Free Bread (Italian):** A hearty soup brimming with tomatoes, carrots, zucchini, beans, and pasta, simmered with Italian herbs. Served with a slice of toasted whole-wheat baguette (brushed with herbed butter, no garlic). **Nutritional:** ~ **200 kcal**, **8 g** protein, **30 g** carbs, **5 g** fat per large bowl of soup ([Black Bean Burrito Bowl - Simply Recipes](#)) (pasta and beans contribute carbs and protein). Bread ~70 kcal. *Comforting and packed with veggies for a nutrient boost.*

Day 10 – Tuesday, 18th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Thalipeeth (Multigrain Pancake):** A traditional Maharashtrian breakfast – flatbread made from a mix of flours (jowar, bajra, chickpea, wheat) and spices, with grated zucchini (instead of onion). Served with curd. **Nutritional:** ~ **150 kcal**, **4 g** protein, **20 g** carbs, **5 g** fat per thalipeeth (approx.). Multigrains add iron and B-vitamins.
- **Lunch – Nepali Dal-Bhat-Tarkari:** A Nepali-style platter with **Dal** (lentil soup, e.g. moong or masoor dal with turmeric), **Bhat** (steamed rice), and **Tarkari** (seasonal vegetable curry like cabbage-potato). Mildly spiced, nourishing and homely. **Nutritional:** ~ **400 kcal** for a serving (dal ~150 kcal, rice ~180 kcal, veg curry ~70 kcal), **12–15 g** protein (from dal), **65 g** carbs, **8 g** fat.
- **Evening Snack – Banana Date Smoothie:** A quick shake blending milk, ripe banana, and a couple of dates. Naturally sweet, rich in potassium and calcium. **Nutritional:** ~ **180 kcal**, **5 g** protein, **34 g** carbs, **2 g** fat per glass (using low-fat milk). (*Great for an energy boost.*)
- **Dinner – Steamed Veg Momos with Clear Soup (Tibetan/Nepalese):** Dumplings stuffed with cabbage, carrot, and a bit of paneer, steamed to perfection. Paired with a mild clear soup of vegetables. This light meal introduces a new texture. **Nutritional:** ~ **250 kcal** for 5 momos (estimate ~50 kcal each, mainly carbs), **6 g** protein, **40 g** carbs, **4 g** fat; **Soup ~ 30 kcal.** *Low-oil, easy to digest, and fun to eat.*

Day 11 – Wednesday, 19th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Masala Uttapam (South Indian):** Thick rice–lentil pancake topped with diced tomato, capsicum, and cilantro (no onion). Served with coconut chutney. Provides carbs from rice and protein from urad dal. **Nutritional:** ~ **120 kcal** per small uttapam, **3 g** protein, **18 g** carbs, **3 g** fat (cooked with little oil). Two pieces ~240 kcal plus chutney (~50 kcal).
- **Lunch – Achari Paneer with Missi Roti (Punjabi):** Soft cubes of paneer cooked in a tangy gravy flavored with pickling spices (**achari**), thickened with tomato and yogurt (no onion). Accompanied by **Missi Roti** – flatbread made of whole wheat and besan (adds

protein). **Nutritional:** **Paneer curry ~ 300 kcal, 12 g protein, 10 g carbs, 23 g fat** (paneer provides fat); **1 missi roti ~ 130 kcal, 4 g protein** ([Calories in Methi Thepla by Dina and Nutrition Facts - MyNetDiary](#)). *High-protein, strongly flavored meal.*

- **Evening Snack – Oats & Nuts Energy Bars:** Homemade bars of rolled oats, chopped almonds, dates, and honey pressed together (baked lightly). These chewy bars are fiber-rich and iron-rich (from dates), perfect for kids. **Nutritional:** ~ **150 kcal** per bar (~30g), **3 g protein, 20 g carbs, 6 g fat.**
- **Dinner – Tom Kha Soup with Rice Noodles (Thai):** A fragrant coconut milk soup with vegetables (mushroom, carrot) and tofu, infused with lemongrass, galangal, and kaffir lime. Served with a small portion of soft rice noodles in the broth. Creamy yet light on the stomach. **Nutritional:** ~ **250 kcal, 6 g protein, 15 g carbs, 18 g fat** per bowl (coconut milk is high in fat; tofu adds protein). *(Warming and aromatic for the evening.)*

Day 12 – Thursday, 20th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Gobi Paratha with Curd (Punjabi):** Whole-wheat paratha stuffed with spiced grated cauliflower (steamed beforehand, no onion). Served with a side of probiotic curd. A fiber-rich, savory start. **Nutritional:** ~ **200 kcal, 5 g protein, 25 g carbs, 8 g fat** per paratha (approx.). Two parathas ~400 kcal.
- **Lunch – Veg Manchurian & Fried Rice (Indo-Chinese):** **Vegetable Manchurian** balls (grated cabbage, carrot, and flour dumplings) cooked in a soy-tomato gravy (made without garlic), paired with **fried rice** loaded with peas, beans, carrots (stir-fried in minimal oil). A fusion favorite – we use Jain soy sauce (no onion/garlic). **Nutritional:** **Manchurian (4-5 pcs) ~ 300 kcal, 6 g protein, 30 g carbs, 15 g fat** (fried then sauced); **1 cup fried rice ~ 200 kcal, 4 g protein, 34 g carbs, 6 g fat.** *An occasional treat with bold flavors.*
- **Evening Snack – Roasted Chickpeas (Chana):** Crunchy dry-roasted chickpeas tossed in chat masala. High in protein and fiber, these curb hunger well. **Nutritional:** ~ **120 kcal, 6 g protein, 18 g carbs, 2 g fat** per 1/2 cup. *(Guilt-free munchies.)*
- **Dinner – Bajra Rotla with Gujarati Kadhi:** Traditional pearl millet flatbread (**rotla**) served with a mild, soupy **Gujarati kadhi** (yogurt and gram flour curry, slightly sweetened, no pakoras). Bajra is gluten-free and rich in iron; kadhi soothes the stomach. **Nutritional:** **1 bajra rotla ~ 100 kcal, 3 g protein, 20 g carbs, 1 g fat; 1 cup kadhi ~ 130 kcal, 5 g protein, 15 g carbs, 5 g fat** (made with low-fat curd). *Comforting village-style meal.*

Day 13 – Friday, 21st February 2025

- **Breakfast – Banana Pancakes with Honey (Eggless):** Fluffy pancakes made with whole-wheat flour and mashed ripe banana (as a natural sweetener and binder), pan-cooked with minimal butter. Drizzled with a teaspoon of honey and topped with berries. **Nutritional:** ~ **180 kcal** for 2 small pancakes, **4 g protein, 35 g carbs, 3 g fat** (without excessive syrup).

- **Lunch – Gatte ki Sabzi with Masala Poori (Rajasthani):** **Gatte** – gram flour dumplings boiled and then simmered in a spicy yogurt gravy (no garlic) – served with **masala poori** (whole-wheat bread fried, with ajwain/carom seeds). A Rajasthani specialty high in protein from besan. **Nutritional: Gatte curry ~ 200 kcal, 8 g protein, 20 g carbs, 10 g fat per serving; 2 small pooris ~ 150 kcal, 3 g protein, 15 g carbs, 8 g fat (fried).**
- **Evening Snack – Apple with Peanut Butter:** Slices of fresh apple served with a side of peanut butter for dipping. The combo offers vitamins, good fats, and protein in a fun way. **Nutritional: 1 medium apple ~ 95 kcal, 0.5 g protein, 25 g carbs, 0 g fat; 1 tbsp peanut butter ~ 94 kcal, 4 g protein, 3 g carbs, 8 g fat. Together ~189 kcal.**
- **Dinner – Ven Pongal with Coconut Chutney (South Indian):** A soothing rice and yellow moong dal porridge cooked with black pepper, cumin, and ginger, tempered in ghee with curry leaves and cashews. Served soft and warm with coconut chutney. **Nutritional: ~ 240 kcal, 6 g protein, 32 g carbs, 8 g fat per serving (pongali is akin to khichdi) – rich in amino acids from dal. (Chutney ~50 kcal.) Easy on the tummy and induces good sleep.**

Day 14 – Saturday, 22nd February 2025

- **Breakfast – Misal Pav (Jain style, Marathi):** A spicy curry of mixed sprouts (**misal** – usually moth bean and moong) cooked in a tomato base, topped with farsan (crunchy chickpea noodles) and fresh cilantro. Served with **pav** (soft bread roll). We prepare without onion/garlic, using asafoetida for aroma. **Nutritional: Misal ~ 200 kcal, 10 g protein, 30 g carbs, 5 g fat per bowl (sprouts are protein-rich); 1 pav ~ 150 kcal, 4 g protein, 28 g carbs, 2 g fat. A filling, spicy start – can be toned down in chili for kids.**
- **Lunch – Veggie Pizza (Homemade, Italian):** A whole-wheat thin-crust pizza topped with tomato sauce (garlic-free), mozzarella cheese, and an array of veggies (bell peppers, sweet corn, olives, cherry tomatoes, basil). Baked until crisp. A fun weekend treat for the twins. **Nutritional: ~ 300 kcal per 2-slice serving (6" personal pizza ~600 kcal total), 12 g protein, 40 g carbs, 20 g fat (cheese contributes fat and protein).**
- **Evening Snack – Strawberry Yogurt Smoothie:** Fresh strawberries blended with yogurt, a splash of milk, and a bit of honey. Frothy and pink, loaded with vitamin C and calcium. **Nutritional: ~ 130 kcal, 5 g protein, 25 g carbs, 1.5 g fat per glass (using low-fat yogurt).**
- **Dinner – Lemon Rice with Cucumber Raita (South Indian):** Fragrant rice tossed with lemon juice, curry leaves, turmeric, and peanuts, giving it a zesty flavor and yellow hue. Paired with cooling cucumber-yogurt raita. Light on spices yet flavorful. **Nutritional: Lemon rice ~ 352 kcal, 6 g protein, 77 g carbs, 3.4 g fat per cup ([Jeera rice Nutrition - SnapCalorie](#)) (peanuts included); Raita ~ 50 kcal as earlier. A gentle finish to the week with balanced flavors.**

Week 3: Feb 23 – Mar 1, 2025

Day 15 – Sunday, 23rd February 2025

- **Breakfast – Aloo Paratha with Curd** (repeat of Day 1): Sunday treat repeat – the twins' favorite **aloo parathas** for breakfast. **Nutritional:** ~ **445 kcal** for two parathas & curd, **6.8 g** protein, **45 g** carbs, **27 g** fat (see Day 1) ([Calories of whole wheat Aloo Paratha. Is aloo paratha good for weight loss?](#)).
- **Lunch – Vegetable Biryani with Raita:** A medley of basmati rice and vegetables (carrots, beans, peas, cauliflower) layered and slow-cooked ("dum") with spices like saffron, cardamom, and cloves. Prepared Jain-style (no fried onions). Served with cool mint-cucumber **raita**. **Nutritional:** ~ **400 kcal**, **8 g** protein, **65 g** carbs, **10 g** fat per serving (biryani is lighter on oil if steamed; includes cashews). Raita ~50 kcal. *An aromatic, royal dish to spice up the weekend.*
- **Evening Snack – Dahi Papdi Chaat:** Crunchy flat puris (**papdi**) topped with boiled potato cubes, yogurt, tamarind chutney, and sev. Made without onions/garlic. It's a burst of sweet, sour, and savory in each bite – the yogurt adds protein and calcium. **Nutritional:** ~ **250 kcal**, **6 g** protein, **35 g** carbs, **8 g** fat per plate (moderate portion).
- **Dinner – Palak Paneer with Tandoori Roti:** Smooth **spinach gravy** cooked with spices (clove, cinnamon) and blended, then simmered with cubes of paneer; finished with a touch of cream. Served with whole-wheat rotis. (Onion/garlic omitted; flavor enhanced with cumin and kasuri methi.) This dish is rich in calcium and iron. **Nutritional:** **Palak paneer** ~ **240 kcal**, **10 g** protein, **10 g** carbs, **18 g** fat per serving (mostly from paneer); **1 roti** ~ **80 kcal**, **3 g** protein, **15 g** carbs, **1 g** fat. *Comforting yet nutrient-dense for dinner.*

Day 16 – Monday, 24th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Ragi Dosa with Chutney:** Crisp crepes made from a fermented batter of finger millet (**ragi**), rice, and urad dal. Ragi increases the iron and calcium content. Served with tomato-coconut chutney. **Nutritional:** ~ **100 kcal** per dosa (6-7" size, since ragi batter is light), **2 g** protein, **17 g** carbs, **2 g** fat; Chutney ~40 kcal.
- **Lunch – Tofu-Veggie Stir Fry with Brown Rice (Asian):** Cubes of tofu, broccoli, and bell peppers stir-fried in a light soy sauce-based sauce with ginger (no garlic), served over steamed brown rice. High in protein from tofu and fiber from brown rice and veggies. **Nutritional:** ~ **350 kcal** per plate, **15 g** protein, **50 g** carbs, **10 g** fat (tofu and sesame oil).
- **Evening Snack – Fresh Fruit & Nut Salad:** A simple mix of orange segments, pear slices, and grapes tossed with toasted almonds and a drizzle of honey-lime. Hydrating and crunchy. **Nutritional:** ~ **140 kcal**, **3 g** protein, **25 g** carbs, **4 g** fat per serving (nuts contribute the fat and protein).
- **Dinner – Curd Rice with Pomegranate (South Indian):** The ultimate soothing meal – rice mixed with yogurt and a tadka of mustard seeds, curry leaves, and grated ginger. Garnished with pomegranate arils for a hint of sweetness and vitamins. Served slightly cool. **Nutritional:** ~ **250 kcal**, **6 g** protein, **40 g** carbs, **6 g** fat per bowl (using low-fat curd). *Calms the digestive system and is a probiotic-rich end to the day.*

Day 17 – Tuesday, 25th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Paneer Bhurji with Whole-Grain Toast:** Crumbled paneer sautéed with tomatoes, capsicum, and Indian spices (a dry “scramble”), sans onions. Served on a slice of whole-grain toast. This provides a protein-packed start similar to scrambled eggs but vegetarian. **Nutritional:** ~ 220 kcal, 11 g protein, 12 g carbs, 14 g fat (for 1/2 cup paneer bhurji and toast).
- **Lunch – Black Bean & Veggie Quesadilla (Mexican):** A whole-wheat tortilla filled with spiced black beans, sautéed bell peppers, corn, and a little cheese, folded and grilled. Served with a dollop of fresh tomato salsa (no onion) and guacamole. **Nutritional:** ~ 300 kcal, 10 g protein, 35 g carbs, 12 g fat per quesadilla (half a large tortilla). Two halves ~600 kcal if extra hungry.
- **Evening Snack – Peanut Chaat:** Boiled peanuts tossed with diced cucumber, tomatoes, coriander, and spices. Like a peanut *sundal* or chaat – providing protein and healthy fats. **Nutritional:** ~ 150 kcal, 7 g protein, 10 g carbs, 9 g fat per 1/2 cup serving. *(Heart-healthy and tasty.)*
- **Dinner – Masala Dosa with Sambar (South Indian):** A fermented rice-lentil **dosa** crepe stuffed with spiced potato (**masala** made Jain-style without onion). Served with **sambar** (lentil-vegetable soup, with pumpkin, drumstick, etc., and no onion) and coconut chutney. **Nutritional:** 1 masala dosa ~ 300 kcal, 6 g protein, 50 g carbs, 8 g fat; 1 cup sambar ~ 120 kcal, 4 g protein, 18 g carbs, 3 g fat. *A balanced dinner with carbs, protein, and plenty of flavor.*

Day 18 – Wednesday, 26th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Besan Bread Toast (Eggless French Toast):** Whole-grain bread slices dipped in a spiced gram flour batter and pan-toasted. Tastes like a savory French toast but high in protein and fiber from besan. Served with ketchup or chutney. **Nutritional:** ~ 130 kcal per slice, 5 g protein, 20 g carbs, 3 g fat (since besan adds nutrients). Two slices ~260 kcal.
- **Lunch – Jain Pav Bhaji (Mumbai Special):** A flavorful mash of vegetables (potatoes, peas, tomatoes, capsicum, **no onion/garlic**) cooked with butter and bhaji masala, served with butter-toasted pav bread. We sneak in carrots and bottle gourd for extra nutrition in the bhaji. **Nutritional:** Bhaji ~ 200 kcal per cup, 5 g protein, 24 g carbs, 9 g fat; 2 pav ~ 300 kcal, 8 g protein, 56 g carbs, 4 g fat. *Indulgent but loaded with veggies.*
- **Evening Snack – Khakhra with Chutney (Gujarati):** Crispy roasted whole-wheat crackers (methi khakhra) enjoyed with a teaspoon of dry garlic-free chutney powder or pickle. A low-oil snack ideal with tea. **Nutritional:** ~ 120 kcal, 3 g protein, 18 g carbs, 3 g fat for 2 khakhras.
- **Dinner – Oats and Vegetable Khichdi:** A healthy twist on khichdi using oats + moong dal instead of rice. Cooked to a porridge consistency with diced veggies like carrot (if using), peas, and tomatoes. Tempered with cumin and a pinch of asafoetida. **Nutritional:** ~ 239 kcal, 7.3 g protein, 35 g carbs, 7 g fat per serving ([Yogita Jangid | Weight loss recipe - Instagram](#)) (oats khichdi is high in fiber and keeps one full with less quantity). *Very light and great for midweek dinner.*

Day 19 – Thursday, 27th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Grilled Veg Sandwich with Cheese:** A toasted sandwich with whole-grain bread, sliced tomato, cucumber, and a thin slice of paneer or cheese, spread with cilantro chutney (no onion). Quick to make and easy to handheld. **Nutritional:** ~ **250 kcal, 9 g protein, 30 g carbs, 10 g fat** (with 1 slice low-fat cheese).
- **Lunch – Dal Palak with Rice:** Simple and nutritious – Yellow lentils cooked with spinach puree (palak dal) and mild spices, served with steamed rice. Iron, protein, and carbs all in one meal. **Nutritional:** **Palak dal ~ 180 kcal, 9 g protein, 20 g carbs, 6 g fat** per cup; **rice ~ 171 kcal, 2.9 g protein, 33.6 g carbs, 2.7 g fat** ([Calories of Rice, Cooked Rice | Tarladalal.com](https://www.tarladalal.com/calories-of-cooked-rice)). *Wholesome and gentle on the palate.*
- **Evening Snack – Koshimbir (Cucumber Peanut Salad):** A cooling Maharashtrian yogurt salad – finely chopped cucumber and roasted crushed peanuts mixed with curd, tempered with mustard seeds. Lightly seasoned with salt, sugar, and cumin. **Nutritional:** ~ **100 kcal, 3 g protein, 6 g carbs, 7 g fat** per small bowl (peanuts and yogurt contribute nutrients).
- **Dinner – Pumpkin Soup with Whole-Grain Crackers:** A creamy soup made from boiled pumpkin blended with herbs and a touch of milk, seasoned with nutmeg. Served with a couple of whole-grain crackers instead of bread. Rich in vitamin A and very light. **Nutritional:** ~ **120 kcal, 3 g protein, 15 g carbs, 5 g fat** per large bowl (if milk added); crackers ~50 kcal. *Easily digestible and warming.*

Day 20 – Friday, 28th February 2025

- **Breakfast – Vermicelli Upma (Sevai Upma):** Thin vermicelli pasta cooked like upma with vegetables (peas, beans, a bit of carrot) and peanuts, tempered with mustard seeds and curry leaves. Soft and appealing for kids. **Nutritional:** ~ **200 kcal, 5 g protein, 30 g carbs, 6 g fat** per cup (vermicelli is made of wheat, peanuts add protein).
- **Lunch – Chole Bhatura (Punjabi):** A treat to wrap up February – **Chole** (spicy chickpea curry, as on Day 2) served with **Bhatura**, a fluffy deep-fried leavened bread. We make a **whole-wheat bhatura** to slightly improve fiber content. **Nutritional:** **Chole ~223 kcal, 7.2 g protein** ([Calories of Chole, Punjabi Chole Masala, Is Chole healthy?](https://www.caloriesofchole.com/punjabi-chole-masala-is-chole-healthy/)); **1 bhatura ~ 250 kcal, 5–6 g protein, 35 g carbs, 8–10 g fat** (fried). *(Likely the highest-calorie lunch in the plan – a well-deserved indulgence!)
- **Evening Snack – Dates & Nuts Ladoo:** Energy balls made by blending dates, almonds, cashews, and walnuts – rolled into bite-size **laddoos**. No added sugar; all sweetness from dates. Rich in iron and good fats. **Nutritional:** ~ **100 kcal** per ladoo (20–25g), **2 g protein, 12 g carbs, 5 g fat**. One or two pieces satisfy sweet cravings healthily.
- **Dinner – Pithla & Bhakri (Maharashtrian):** **Pithla** is a thick gram flour and yogurt-based curry (similar to a Kadhi but thicker, often with tempered spices and no fried fritters) – we include chopped fenugreek for flavor. Served with **Jowar Bhakri**, an unleavened sorghum flatbread. Rustic and hearty yet light. **Nutritional:** **Pithla ~ 180 kcal, 8 g protein, 20 g carbs, 7 g fat** per serving; **1 jowar bhakri ~ 100 kcal, 2.5 g protein, 20 g carbs, 1 g fat**. *High in folate and good for a change in grain.*

Day 21 – Saturday, 1st March 2025

- **Breakfast – Handvo (Gujarati Lentil Cake):** A savory cake made of fermented rice and lentil batter mixed with grated bottle gourd (doodhi) and tempered with sesame and mustard. Baked or pan-cooked until crunchy on the outside and soft inside. Served in wedges. High in protein and very flavorful. **Nutritional:** ~ **150 kcal, 5 g** protein, **20 g** carbs, **5 g** fat per slice.
 - **Lunch – Bisi Bele Bath (Karnataka Special):** A spicy one-pot rice, lentil, and vegetable dish akin to sambar-rice. Contains toor dal, rice, tamarind, veggies (drumstick, pumpkin, beans), and a special spice powder. Drizzled with ghee and served hot. **Nutritional:** ~ **320 kcal, 8 g** protein, **50 g** carbs, **8 g** fat per serving (rich in fiber and protein from dal).
 - **Evening Snack – Til Dry Fruit Ladoo:** Sesame seed and mixed dry fruit laddoos – sesame, peanuts, almonds jaggery bound together into a nutritious sweet ball. Full of calcium from til (sesame) and iron from jaggery. **Nutritional:** ~ **130 kcal, 3 g** protein, **16 g** carbs, **6 g** fat per laddoo.
 - **Dinner – Moong Dal Khichdi & Kadhi:** We conclude the plan with a simple **moong dal khichdi** (split green gram and rice porridge, lightly salted) paired with **Gujarati kadhi**. This duo is soul-food – very light and calming on the stomach, ensuring a good night's sleep. **Nutritional:** **Khichdi** ~ **259 kcal, 8.1 g** protein, **42.6 g** carbs, **6.2 g** fat ([Moong dal khichdi recipe - Clearcals](#)); **Kadhi** ~ **130 kcal, 5 g** protein, **15 g** carbs, **5 g** fat (half cup).
A modest, nourishing finish to 21 days of diverse meals!
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Note: All dishes are prepared **Jain-style** – without onion and garlic – using alternatives like asafoetida (hing), ginger, and additional spices/herbs to enhance flavor. The **nutritional values** are approximate and based on standard recipes/serving sizes, cited where available. Portion sizes can be adjusted for the twins' appetite. The plan provides a balanced mix of **carbohydrates** for energy, **proteins** for growth, and **fats** for essential nutrients, while also ensuring ample **micronutrients** through fruits and vegetables.

Recipes Appendix (Jain Vegetarian)

(Below are recipes for each unique dish in the meal plan, organized for reference. All recipes omit onions and garlic to remain Jain-compliant. Spices can be adjusted to suit the twins' taste. Measurements are given in common household terms.)

Aloo Paratha (Potato-Stuffed Flatbread)

Ingredients: For 4 parathas – Whole wheat flour (2 cups); Boiled potatoes (2 medium, mashed); Ginger-green chili paste (1 tsp); Cumin powder (1/2 tsp); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Coriander leaves (2 tbsp, chopped); Salt to taste; Ghee or oil for cooking.

Method:

1. **Prepare Dough:** In a bowl, knead the wheat flour with water and a pinch of salt into a soft dough. Rest for 15 minutes.
2. **Prepare Filling:** In another bowl, mix mashed potatoes with ginger-chili paste, cumin, turmeric, chopped coriander, and salt. Mash well to make a uniform filling.
3. **Stuff Parathas:** Divide dough into equal balls. Roll out one ball into a small disc, place 2 tbsp of potato filling in center, and bring edges together to seal. Gently roll the stuffed ball into a flat round (~6 inches), being careful not to let the filling spill.
4. **Cook:** Heat a tava (griddle) and roast the paratha. When one side is partly cooked, flip, apply ghee/oil on top, then flip again and apply on the other side. Cook until both sides are golden brown with spots.
5. **Serve:** Hot, with a side of fresh curd (yogurt) for dipping. *(Tip: Press gently while roasting to ensure even cooking. These parathas freeze well; you can make extra and refrigerate.)*

Dal Dhokli (Lentil Stew with Wheat Dumplings)

Ingredients: Toor dal/Arhar dal (3/4 cup); Whole wheat flour (1 cup); Besan/gram flour (2 tbsp); Tomato (1, chopped); Peanuts (2 tbsp); Jaggery (1 tsp); Tamarind pulp (1 tbsp) or lemon juice (optional, for tang); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1/2 tsp); Mustard seeds (1/2 tsp); Cumin seeds (1/2 tsp); Asafoetida (a pinch); Curry leaves (6-8); Ghee (2 tsp); Salt to taste; Spices for dough – carom seeds (1/2 tsp), turmeric (1/4 tsp).

Method:

1. **Pressure-cook Dal:** Rinse dal and pressure cook with 2.5 cups water, turmeric, and salt until soft (2-3 whistles). Mash the cooked dal slightly for a smooth texture.
2. **Make Dhokli Dough:** In a bowl, mix wheat flour, besan, carom seeds, a pinch of turmeric, salt, and 1 tsp oil. Add water gradually to form a firm yet pliable dough. Rest for 10 minutes.
3. **Shape & Cook Dhoklis:** Divide dough into small balls. Roll each ball thin and cut into diamond shapes (approx 1-inch size). In a pot of boiling water, drop these pieces and boil for ~5 minutes (they will float when cooked). Alternatively, you can directly cook them in the simmering dal (next step) to save a step.
4. **Combine with Dal:** Add boiled dhoklis (drained) to the pot of cooked dal. Stir in chopped tomato, peanuts, jaggery, and tamarind pulp (if using). Simmer on low heat, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Add water if too thick – the consistency should be like a hearty stew.
5. **Tadka (Tempering):** In a small pan, heat ghee. Add mustard seeds and cumin seeds; let them splutter. Add curry leaves, asafoetida, and red chili powder. Immediately pour this aromatic tadka over the simmering dal-dhokli. Stir and let cook for 2 more minutes.
6. **Serve:** Hot in bowls. Garnish with fresh coriander. *(Tip: This is a one-dish meal. Traditionally served with a squeeze of lemon. Ensure the dal is thin enough before adding dhokli, as the flour can thicken it on cooking.)*

Khaman Dhokla (Steamed Gram Flour Snack)

Ingredients: Besan (1½ cups); Sooji/rava (2 tbsp, for texture); Yogurt (2 tbsp); Eno fruit salt (1 tsp) or baking soda (1/2 tsp); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Sugar (1 tbsp); Lemon juice (1 tbsp); Salt to taste. **Tempering:** Oil (1 tbsp); Mustard seeds (1 tsp); Green chilies (2, slit); Curry leaves (8); Asafoetida (a pinch); Water (1/4 cup) + Sugar (1 tsp) for syrup.

Method:

1. **Prepare Batter:** In a bowl, mix besan, sooji, turmeric, salt, and sugar. Add yogurt, lemon juice, and about 3/4 cup water. Whisk well to make a lump-free, thick batter (like pancake batter). Let it rest 10 minutes (the sooji will soften).
2. **Steam Dhokla:** Prepare steamer with water boiling. Grease a flat thali or cake pan that fits in the steamer. Just before steaming, stir Eno into the batter and mix quickly in one direction – the batter will become frothy and light. Immediately pour into greased pan. Steam for ~15 minutes on medium flame (insert a knife to test – it should come out clean). Turn off heat and let it rest 5 minutes before removing.
3. **Tempering:** In a small pan, heat oil. Add mustard seeds and allow to crackle. Add slit green chilies, curry leaves, and asafoetida. Fry for a few seconds. Add 1/4 cup water + 1 tsp sugar to this tempering and bring to a quick boil (careful, it may splutter). Pour this tempering evenly over the warm dhokla. The water keeps it moist.
4. **Serve:** After 5 minutes (letting the tempering soak in), cut dhokla into squares. Garnish with chopped coriander. Serve with green chutney. *(These fluffy khaman are best fresh. You can store in fridge and re-steam/sprinkle water before serving to moisten.)*

Moong Dal Khichdi (Yellow Lentil Rice Porridge)

Ingredients: Yellow moong dal (1/2 cup); Rice (1/2 cup); Ghee (1 tbsp); Cumin seeds (1 tsp); Asafoetida (a pinch); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Salt to taste; Water (~3.5 cups).

Method:

1. **Rinse and Soak:** Wash the rice and dal together. Optional: soak for 15-20 min to reduce cooking time.
2. **Pressure Cook:** In a pressure cooker, heat ghee. Add cumin seeds and a pinch of asafoetida. Once cumin sizzles, add the drained rice and dal. Stir for a minute. Add turmeric, salt, and ~3.5 cups of water. (For a more porridge-like khichdi, add 4 cups water.)
3. **Cook:** Pressure cook for 3 whistles on medium flame. Allow the steam to release naturally. The khichdi should be soft and slightly mushy – you can adjust water at this stage if needed (add hot water and simmer for a minute if too thick).
4. **Serve:** Warm, with a teaspoon of ghee on top for flavor. Excellent with a side of yogurt or pickle. *(For variety, you can add a handful of peas or small diced carrots before pressure cooking – but here we kept it plain for easy digestion.)*

Batata Poha (Potato Poha)

Ingredients: Thick Poha (flattened rice, 2 cups); Potato (1 medium, peeled & diced small); Peanuts (2 tbsp); Green chilies (1, chopped); Ginger (1/2 inch, finely chopped); Curry leaves

(6); Mustard seeds (1 tsp); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Sugar (1/2 tsp); Salt to taste; Oil (1.5 tbsp); Lemon (1/2); Fresh coriander to garnish.

Method:

1. **Prep Poha:** Put the poha in a colander and rinse gently under water for 10-15 seconds. Let it drain. The flakes should soften but not break – after 5 minutes they'll be fluffy. Sprinkle turmeric, salt, and sugar on the wet poha and mix lightly.
2. **Temper and Cook Veggies:** Heat oil in a kadhai. Fry peanuts on medium till golden, remove and set aside. In the same oil, add mustard seeds and curry leaves. When seeds pop, add chopped green chilies and ginger. Sauté for a few seconds. Add diced potatoes and a pinch of salt. Cover and cook for ~5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender.
3. **Add Poha:** Once potatoes are almost cooked, add the seasoned poha. Mix gently with the tempering and potatoes. Cook on low heat for 2-3 minutes, tossing carefully so it heats through. If it seems dry, sprinkle a tablespoon of water.
4. **Finish:** Turn off heat. Squeeze fresh lemon juice over the poha and add fried peanuts and chopped coriander. Mix and cover for 2 minutes to let flavors meld.
5. **Serve:** Warm. Optionally, top with sev (fried gram noodles) for crunch when serving (Jain sev has no garlic). *(This dish is quick – have all ingredients ready because poha can turn mushy if left sitting wet too long.)*

Chole (Punjabi Chickpea Curry)

Ingredients: Dried white chickpeas – chana (1 cup, or 2.5 cups canned chickpeas); Tomatoes (2 large, pureed); Ginger (1 inch, minced); Green chili (1, slit); Whole spices: bay leaf (1), cinnamon (1" stick), cloves (3), cumin seeds (1 tsp); Coriander powder (2 tsp); Cumin powder (1 tsp); Red chili powder (1 tsp); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Chole masala or Garam masala (2 tsp); Tea bag (1, optional, for dark color); Oil (2 tbsp); Salt to taste; Fresh coriander to garnish.

Method:

1. **Soak & Boil Chana:** Rinse and soak dried chickpeas overnight in water. Next day, drain and pressure cook with fresh water, a pinch of salt, and the tea bag (for color) until soft (3-4 whistles or about 20–25 minutes). Discard tea bag, drain (reserve some cooking liquid). If using canned chickpeas, rinse and proceed (no soaking needed).
2. **Make Gravy Base:** Heat oil in a pan. Add bay leaf, cinnamon, cloves, and cumin seeds. Sauté until fragrant. Add minced ginger and green chili; stir for 30 seconds. Pour in tomato puree. Cook on medium, stirring, until oil separates (about 5-7 minutes).
3. **Spice it:** Add coriander powder, cumin powder, red chili powder, turmeric, and salt. Cook for another minute. The masala will thicken.
4. **Simmer Chole:** Add boiled chickpeas to the pan. Stir to coat them in the masala. Add about 1 to 1.5 cups of the reserved chickpea cooking broth (or water) to make gravy. Mix in chole masala (or garam masala). Simmer curry on low heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. If it thickens too much, add a bit more water – you want a medium consistency gravy.

5. **Finish:** Taste and adjust salt/spices. Sprinkle fresh chopped coriander. *(Optional: for a tangy note, you can add 1/2 tsp amchur (dry mango powder) or a squeeze of lemon at the end since we skipped onions which add sweetness.)*
6. **Serve:** Hot, with jeera rice or bhatura. This curry actually tastes better after a few hours as flavors deepen.

Jeera Rice (Cumin Rice)

Ingredients: Basmati rice (1 cup); Cumin seeds (1.5 tsp); Ghee or oil (1 tbsp); Salt to taste; Water as needed; A few cilantro leaves to garnish.

Method:

1. **Rinse Rice:** Wash basmati rice under running water until clear. Soak rice in water for 15-20 minutes (this helps grains stay separate). Drain.
2. **Temper Cumin:** In a deep pan or handi, heat ghee. Add cumin seeds and let them crackle, turning aromatic (take care not to burn).
3. **Cook Rice:** Add drained rice to the pan. Gently stir-fry the rice in the ghee for 1-2 minutes (this coats the grains with flavor). Add about 1.75 cups hot water and salt to taste. Stir once. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to low, cover with a tight lid, and cook for ~10 minutes until rice is tender and water is absorbed. (Do not open lid frequently; check once at 10 min and fluff with fork to see if done. If needed, cook 2-3 min more.)
4. **Rest:** Turn off flame and let rice rest covered for 5 minutes (steam finish cooking).
5. **Serve:** Fluff rice gently. Garnish with cilantro. The rice will have a warm cumin fragrance that pairs well with rich gravies. *(For extra flavor, you can toss in a bay leaf or a few peppercorns in the ghee with cumin. But simple jeera aroma is usually appealing enough for kids.)*

Bhel Puri (Jain Style)

Ingredients: Puffed rice (murmura, 3 cups); Sev (1/2 cup); Boiled potato (1 small, diced); Moong sprouts or boiled moong (1/4 cup, for protein – optional); Tomato (1, finely chopped); **Sweet tamarind chutney** – dates, tamarind, jaggery blend (3 tbsp); **Green chutney** – coriander, chili blend (2 tbsp, prepared without garlic); Roasted peanuts (2 tbsp); Chaat masala (1 tsp); Cumin powder (1/2 tsp); Salt to taste; Lemon wedge.

Method:

1. **Prep Work:** Make sure you have all components ready: boiled potato cubes, the two chutneys (they can be homemade or store-bought Jain versions), and chopped tomatoes. Keep puffed rice in a large mixing bowl.
2. **Mix Base:** To the puffed rice, add boiled potatoes, tomatoes, sprouts (if using), and peanuts. Sprinkle chaat masala, cumin powder, and salt. Drizzle both **green chutney** and **sweet chutney** over it.
3. **Toss:** Mix everything together quickly but gently with clean hands or two large spoons. The puffed rice should get coated lightly with the chutneys and spices.

4. **Finish:** Add sev and a squeeze of lemon juice. Toss once more. Taste and adjust seasoning – add more chutney or salt if needed.
5. **Serve Immediately:** Bhel puri gets soggy if left to sit, so serve in individual bowls/paper cones right after mixing. *(Feel free to add other Jain chaat elements like boiled corn or pomegranate seeds for variety. Avoid onions; we've compensated with sprouts for texture.)*

Tomato Soup

Ingredients: Ripe tomatoes (5-6 medium); Carrot (1 small, adds sweetness); Bay leaf (1); Butter (1 tsp) or olive oil; All-purpose flour (1 tsp, for slight thickening, optional); Black pepper (1/2 tsp, freshly ground); Sugar (1/2 tsp, to balance acidity); Salt to taste; Fresh cream (1 tbsp, optional for garnish); Water or veg stock (~2 cups).

Method:

1. **Boil Tomatoes:** Blanch tomatoes and carrot in boiling water for 5-6 minutes until tomatoes skin splits. Remove tomatoes, peel off skins, and roughly chop. Chop the carrot.
2. **Cook Base:** In a saucepan, melt butter. Add bay leaf. If using flour, stir it in now and cook for 30 seconds (do not brown). Add chopped tomatoes and carrot. Sauté for a minute. Add 2 cups water or stock. Bring to a boil, then simmer 10 minutes. Remove bay leaf.
3. **Blend:** Let cool slightly, then puree the soup in a blender until smooth (or use a hand blender). For extra smoothness, strain the puree back into the pan.
4. **Season:** Return soup to heat. Add salt, a pinch of sugar, and black pepper. Simmer 2 more minutes. Adjust consistency with water if too thick.
5. **Serve:** Hot. Swirl in a teaspoon of fresh cream on top for the kids if desired. Serve with a buttered toast on the side. *(This mild soup is onion-garlic free. The carrot provides natural sweetness. You can also add a bit of beetroot while boiling to enhance color, but a little goes a long way.)*

Idli (Steamed Rice-Lentil Cakes)

Ingredients: Idli rice or parboiled rice (2 cups); Whole or split urad dal (1 cup); Fenugreek seeds (methi, 1/2 tsp); Salt (to taste); Oil for greasing.

Method:

1. **Soak:** Wash rice and dal separately. Soak rice in water ~6 hours. Soak urad dal with fenugreek seeds ~6 hours.
2. **Grind Batter:** Drain water. Grind urad dal + methi with a little fresh water until light and fluffy. Separately, grind rice coarsely (slightly gritty texture). Mix both into one batter. Add salt and mix well. Batter should be thick but pouring consistency.
3. **Ferment:** Cover batter and keep in a warm place for 8-12 hours (overnight) to ferment. It should rise and turn slightly bubbly with a pleasant sour aroma.

4. **Steam Idlis:** Grease idli plates lightly with oil. Stir the batter gently (don't overmix). Pour batter into idli molds (about 3/4 full). Steam in an idli steamer or pressure cooker (without whistle) for ~12-15 minutes. A knife inserted should come out clean.
5. **Serve:** Remove plates, cool for a minute, then scoop out idlis with a wet spoon. Serve hot with coconut chutney. *(Tip: If batter doesn't ferment well due to cold weather, you can add a pinch of baking soda just before steaming to get fluffier idlis. Leftover idlis can be refrigerated and later crumbled for a snack like "idli upma.")*

Coconut Chutney

Ingredients: Fresh grated coconut (1 cup); Roasted chana dal (dalia, 2 tbsp); Green chilies (1-2); Ginger (1/2 inch); Salt to taste; Curd or water (for grinding, a few tbsp). **Tempering:** Oil (1 tsp); Mustard seeds (1/2 tsp); Urad dal (1/2 tsp); Curry leaves (5); Asafoetida (a pinch).

Method:

1. **Grind:** In a mixer, take coconut, roasted chana dal, green chili, ginger, salt, and a splash of curd or water. Grind to a smooth paste. Transfer to a bowl. If too thick, mix in a bit of water to reach desired consistency (should be dip-able).
2. **Temper:** Heat oil in a tadka pan. Add mustard seeds; let them pop. Add urad dal and fry until light golden. Add curry leaves and a pinch of hing. Turn off heat and pour this tempering over the chutney.
3. **Stir and Serve:** Mix well. Serve fresh with idli, dosa, or upma. *(Since this is Jain, we omitted garlic commonly used in some chutneys. Adding a spoon of curd while grinding gives a slight tang and smoothness instead.)*

Pesto Veggie Pasta

Ingredients: Whole wheat pasta (penne/fusilli, 2 cups dry); **Pesto Sauce** – Fresh basil leaves (2 cups), Pine nuts or walnuts (2 tbsp), Olive oil (1/4 cup), Parmesan cheese grated (2 tbsp) – omit or use vegetarian hard cheese if strict Jain, Salt & pepper; Garlic (1 clove) *[omit for Jain pesto and add a pinch of hing instead]*; Veggies: Bell peppers (1 cup, sliced), Zucchini (1/2 cup, sliced), Cherry tomatoes (1/2 cup, halved); Olive oil (1 tbsp for sauté); Salt & Italian herbs to taste.

Method:

1. **Cook Pasta:** Boil pasta in salted water as per package until al dente. Drain and reserve 1/2 cup pasta water. Drizzle a little olive oil to prevent sticking.
2. **Make Pesto:** In a blender, add basil leaves, nuts, cheese, hing (instead of garlic), a pinch of salt and pepper. Blend while slowly pouring in 1/4 cup olive oil, until you get a smooth paste. (If too thick, add a spoon of water. Taste and adjust salt.)
3. **Sauté Veggies:** Heat 1 tbsp oil in a pan. Add bell peppers and zucchini; sauté 3-4 min till slightly tender but still bright. Add cherry tomatoes last and toss for a minute. Sprinkle salt and a bit of dried oregano or Italian seasoning.
4. **Combine:** Add cooked pasta to the pan of veggies. Toss. Spoon in the pesto sauce (start with 3-4 tablespoons and add more to coat as desired). Mix on low flame until

pasta is well coated. If it looks dry, add a splash of reserved pasta water for a silky texture. Adjust seasoning.

5. **Serve:** Warm, with a sprinkle of grated cheese on top if liked. *(Leftover pesto can be refrigerated for 3-4 days. You can also use it as a sandwich spread. Ensure not to cook pesto on high heat for long as it will turn dark and lose its fresh flavor.)*

Moong Sprouts Salad

Ingredients: Moong bean sprouts (1 cup, blanched if raw taste is strong); Cucumber (1, diced); Tomato (1, diced); Boiled potato (1 small, optional, diced); Roasted peanuts (1-2 tbsp); Lemon juice (1 tbsp); Chaat masala (1/2 tsp); Cumin powder (1/4 tsp); Black salt or regular salt; Fresh coriander to garnish.

Method:

1. **Prep Sprouts:** If you prefer raw, use the sprouts as is. For a softer bite, blanch sprouts in boiling water for 2 minutes and drain. Cool them.
2. **Mix Ingredients:** In a mixing bowl combine sprouts, cucumber, tomato, (and potato if using). Add peanuts.
3. **Season:** Sprinkle chaat masala, cumin powder, and a pinch of black salt. Squeeze lemon juice over it. Toss everything well. Adjust salt to taste.
4. **Serve:** Immediately for best crunch. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves. *(This salad is versatile – you can add other veggies like grated carrot or pomegranate seeds. For a spicy kick, a chopped green chili can be added. It's a nutrient powerhouse!)*

Palak Khichdi (Spinach Rice-Lentil Khichdi)

(Process is similar to Moong Dal Khichdi with added spinach.)

Ingredients: Rice (3/4 cup); Yellow moong dal (1/2 cup); Spinach leaves (2 cups); Ghee (1 tbsp); Cumin (1 tsp); Ginger (1/2 inch, grated); Green chili (1, slit); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Salt; Water (~4 cups).

Method:

1. **Prep Spinach:** Blanch spinach in hot water for 1 minute, drain and puree it. Keep aside. (You can also finely chop and use directly, but puree hides it – good for picky eaters.)
2. **Rinse Rice & Dal:** Wash and drain rice and dal.
3. **Cook Khichdi:** In pressure cooker, heat ghee. Add cumin and let splutter. Add grated ginger and green chili, sauté few seconds. Add rice & dal, stir. Add turmeric, salt, and 4 cups water. Pour in the spinach puree and mix well. Pressure cook for 3 whistles on medium. Let pressure release.
4. **Stir:** Open and stir the khichdi. It should be a lovely green and semi-soft in texture. If too thick, add hot water and simmer. Remove chili if visible (for kids).
5. **Serve:** Drizzle with ghee. This khichdi has the goodness of spinach but tastes mild. Pair with plain yogurt or a papad for crunch.

Methi Thepla

Ingredients: Whole wheat flour (2 cups); Besan (2 tbsp); Fresh/frozen methi leaves (1 cup, finely chopped); Yogurt (2 tbsp); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1/2 tsp); Ajwain/carom seeds (1/2 tsp); Salt; Oil (1 tbsp for dough + extra for cooking).

Method:

1. **Make Dough:** In a large bowl, mix flour, besan, methi leaves, turmeric, chili powder, ajwain, salt. Add yogurt and a tablespoon of oil. Mix and then add water gradually to form a semi-stiff dough. Knead well. (The dough will get softer as methi releases moisture, so don't make it too soft initially.) Rest it for 15 minutes.
2. **Roll Theplas:** Divide dough into small balls. Roll each ball out on a floured surface into a thin round (~5-6 inches). Theplas are typically thinner than parathas.
3. **Cook:** Heat a tava. Cook each thepla on medium heat. Flip when one side shows brown spots. Apply a little oil/ghee on each side as you cook, flipping until fully cooked with golden spots and a few brown blisters. Stack them in a cloth or insulated box to keep soft.
4. **Serve:** With pickle or chutney, and curd on the side. *(Theplas are great for travel as they stay soft. For variety, you can add grated doodhi (bottle gourd) in the dough or swap methi with spinach.)*

Rajma Masala (Kidney Bean Curry)

Ingredients: Rajma (red kidney beans, 1 cup dried or 2 cans); Tomatoes (3 large, pureed); Yogurt (2 tbsp, beaten, optional for richness); Ginger (1 inch, grated); Green chili (1, slit); Cumin seeds (1 tsp); Bay leaf (1); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Kashmiri red chili powder (1 tsp, less spicy, for color); Coriander powder (2 tsp); Garam masala (1 tsp); Oil (2 tbsp); Salt; Fresh coriander.

Method:

1. **Soak & Boil Beans:** Soak dried rajma overnight. Pressure cook with salt and water until very soft (4-5 whistles or ~30 min). If using canned, drain and rinse.
2. **Masala Base:** Heat oil in a pan. Add bay leaf and cumin seeds. When aromatic, add grated ginger (and 1 clove garlic in non-Jain version – skip here) and green chili; sauté 30 sec. Pour tomato puree in. Cook this down for ~8 minutes until the raw smell disappears and oil starts to show at edges.
3. **Spice it:** Add turmeric, red chili powder, coriander powder, and salt. Cook 2 minutes, stirring. Lower heat and mix in the yogurt (if using) quickly to avoid curdling, cooking for another minute.
4. **Add Rajma:** Tip in the boiled rajma along with about 1 to 1.5 cups of its cooking liquid (or water) depending on gravy thickness desired. Stir well. Simmer the curry on low for 10-15 minutes so the beans absorb the flavors. Mash a few beans with the spoon to naturally thicken the gravy.
5. **Finish:** Stir in garam masala. Simmer 2 more minutes. Garnish with fresh coriander leaves. Remove bay leaf.

6. **Serve:** Best with steamed rice. (*Rajma masala often tastes better the next day as flavors deepen, so leftovers are welcome!*)

Fruit Yogurt Parfait

Ingredients: Greek yogurt or hung curd (1 cup); Mixed fresh fruits (1 cup, e.g., diced berries, banana, mango – any sweet fruits); Granola or muesli (1/2 cup); Honey (1-2 tbsp) or date syrup for sweetness; Vanilla extract (a few drops, optional).

Method:

1. **Prepare Yogurt:** If using regular yogurt, strain it for an hour to thicken (optional). Sweeten the yogurt by stirring in honey and a drop of vanilla for flavor (skip honey if fruits are very sweet or for a lower sugar option).
2. **Chop Fruits:** Peel and dice fruits into small bite-size pieces. Keep some berries or pretty fruit slices aside for topping.
3. **Layer Parfait:** Take 2-3 glasses or mason jars. In each, spoon a layer of sweetened yogurt at the bottom. Add a layer of mixed fruits. Add a layer of granola. Repeat layers – yogurt, fruit, granola – until glass is filled, ending with a yogurt layer.
4. **Top & Serve:** Top with a few pieces of fruit and a sprinkle of granola for presentation. Serve chilled. (*For a fun twist, you can let the kids assemble their own parfaits. Serve immediately if using granola so it stays crunchy; or layer granola just on top if preparing ahead.*)

Broken Wheat Khichdi (Fada ni Khichdi)

(See “Dalia Khichdi” on Day 4 Dinner for primary recipe – this is the same.)

- **Note:** The recipe is identical to *Moong Dal Khichdi* but uses **broken wheat (dalia)** instead of rice, and often includes moong dal and veggies. Combine 1 cup broken wheat + 1/2 cup yellow moong dal; add veggies like peas, carrot cubes, and follow khichdi steps. Temper with cumin, mustard seeds, curry leaves, ginger. Broken wheat might need slightly more water (about 4 cups) and whistles (4 whistles). Outcome: a slightly chewy, very nutritious khichdi.

Rava Upma

Ingredients: Semolina (sooji/rava, 1 cup); Mixed chopped veggies (1/2 cup – e.g., carrots, beans, peas) – optional but adds nutrition; Oil or ghee (2 tbsp); Mustard seeds (1 tsp); Urad dal skinned (1 tsp); Chana dal (1 tsp); Curry leaves (6); Green chili (1, slit); Ginger (1/2 tsp, grated); Asafoetida (a pinch); Water (2.5 cups); Salt; Lemon juice (1 tsp); Coriander leaves and roasted cashews for garnish.

Method:

1. **Dry Roast Rava:** In a kadai, dry roast semolina on medium flame for 4-5 minutes, stirring continuously, until it's a shade darker and emits a slight aroma. Do not burn. Remove to a plate.
2. **Boil Veggies:** In a saucepan, boil 2.5 cups water. You can blanch the chopped veggies in this water for 2 minutes if using (alternatively, steam them separately). Keep water hot.
3. **Tempering:** In the same kadai, heat oil/ghee. Add mustard seeds; let them splutter. Add urad dal and chana dal; fry till light golden. Add curry leaves, slit chili, ginger, and a pinch of hing. Sauté a few seconds.
4. **Add Semolina:** Lower flame and add the roasted semolina to the pan. Stir well so it coats with the tempering. If using veggies, also add the blanched veggies now.
5. **Cook Upma:** Carefully pour the hot water into the semolina, stirring briskly to avoid lumps (it will sizzle, so be cautious). Add salt. Keep stirring as the mixture will thicken quickly. Cover and cook on low heat for 3-4 minutes until semolina absorbs water and the upma is fluffy and soft.
6. **Finish:** Turn off flame. Stir in lemon juice. Garnish with chopped coriander and roasted cashews.
7. **Serve:** Hot. *(Upma can be served with coconut chutney or just as is. Adjust water to your preferred consistency – 2.5 cups gives a soft, slightly moist upma. For very soft upma, use 3 cups water.)*

Mexican Burrito Bowl

Ingredients: Brown rice (1 cup raw); Black beans (1 cup cooked or canned, drained); Bell pepper (1, diced); Sweet corn kernels (1/2 cup, boiled); Tomato (1, diced); Lettuce (1 cup, shredded); Ripe avocado (1, sliced or cubed); Cheddar or Mexican blend cheese (1/2 cup, shredded); **For dressing:** Olive oil (2 tbsp), Lime juice (1 tbsp), Cumin powder (1/2 tsp), Red chili flakes or paprika (1/2 tsp), Salt, Fresh cilantro (2 tbsp, chopped). *(Optionally, also use 2 tbsp of Jain-safe salsa instead of or in addition to dressing.)*

Method:

1. **Cook Rice:** Boil brown rice with slightly salted water until tender (brown rice takes ~30-35 min). Fluff and let it cool a bit.
2. **Season Beans:** If beans are plain, in a small pan warm them with a dash of cumin, salt, and a squeeze of lime so they're flavorful (you can add a bit of tomato puree and taco seasoning if available).
3. **Prepare Dressing:** Whisk olive oil, lime juice, cumin, chili flakes, salt, and cilantro in a bowl. This will be drizzled over the assembled bowl.
4. **Assemble Bowl:** In each serving bowl, put a layer of brown rice. Top with a portion of black beans. Arrange lettuce, diced bell pepper, corn, and tomato around. Place avocado on top. Sprinkle shredded cheese over everything.
5. **Finish:** Drizzle the prepared dressing evenly over the bowls. If using salsa, spoon some over the veggies.

6. **Serve:** Room temperature. Have the kids mix up the bowl to distribute flavors. *(This is a versatile bowl – you can add a dollop of sour cream or substitute kidney beans for black beans. The components cover all macro groups, making it a balanced meal.)*

Roasted Masala Makhana (Fox Nuts)

Ingredients: Phool makhana (lotus seeds, 2 cups); Ghee (2 tsp); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Red chili powder (1/4 tsp, optional for mild heat); Chaat masala or black salt (to taste); Salt (to taste).

Method:

1. **Dry Roast:** Heat a pan on low-medium flame. Add the makhanas (without oil) and roast for 4-5 minutes, stirring often, until they become crisp and light brown spots appear. Test by crushing one between fingers – it should be brittle, not chewy.
2. **Flavor:** Push makhanas to the pan's edge. Add ghee in the center. Once it melts, add turmeric, chili powder, and a pinch of salt. Stir this spiced ghee quickly (don't burn the spices) and toss the makhanas back in, coating them evenly with the yellow spiced ghee. Roast another minute.
3. **Season:** Turn off heat. Sprinkle chaat masala or a bit of extra salt as per taste and toss well.
4. **Cool & Store:** Let them cool completely (they become crunchier upon cooling). Serve immediately or store in an airtight container for a few days. *(Makhana is a great alternative to popcorn – you can experiment with other seasonings like cheese powder or peri-peri spice for variety, just ensure it's Jain-friendly.)*

Moong Dal Cheela (Lentil Crepes)

Ingredients: Yellow moong dal (1 cup); Ginger (1/2 inch); Green chili (1, optional); Cumin seeds (1/2 tsp); Asafoetida (a pinch); Salt; Oil for greasing pan. **Optional mix-ins:** Finely grated carrots or chopped coriander to sprinkle on cheela.

Method:

1. **Soak & Grind:** Wash and soak moong dal in water for 2-3 hours. Drain. Grind the dal with ginger, green chili, a pinch of hing, salt, and a little water to a smooth batter (like dosa batter consistency – should coat a spoon but be pourable).
2. **Rest (Optional):** You can use the batter immediately (no fermentation needed) or rest for 15 minutes.
3. **Cook Cheela:** Heat a non-stick tawa. Lightly grease it. Pour a ladle of batter and spread it quickly in circular motion into a thin round (like making a dosa). If desired, sprinkle a few carrot shreds or coriander on top. Drizzle a few drops of oil around edges. Cook on medium flame.
4. **Flip:** When the bottom is golden and the top looks mostly cooked, loosen edges and flip the cheela. Cook the other side for another minute until you see brown spots.
5. **Serve:** Hot with chutney (tomato or coconut) or ketchup. They taste best fresh as they can dry out. *(Tip: Stir batter between batches. If it thickens, add a spoon of water. You*

can also make a variation by adding a couple of tablespoons of rice flour to make them crisper.)

Overnight Oats

Ingredients: Rolled oats (1/2 cup); Milk (3/4 cup, dairy or almond milk); Yogurt (2 tbsp, adds creaminess); Chia seeds (1 tsp, optional for nutrition); Honey or maple syrup (1-2 tsp to taste); Vanilla extract (a couple drops, optional); Toppings: chopped fruits (banana, berries), nuts, a pinch of cinnamon etc.

Method:

1. **Mix Base:** In a mason jar or bowl, combine oats, milk, yogurt, chia seeds, sweetener, and vanilla. Stir well so chia doesn't clump.
2. **Refrigerate:** Cover and place in the refrigerator overnight (or at least 5-6 hours). The oats will soak and soften and chia will gel, creating a pudding-like consistency.
3. **Stir & Serve:** In the morning, give it a good stir. If it's too thick, mix in a splash of milk. Top with fresh fruits (e.g., banana slices and a few berries) and nuts. Sprinkle a dash of cinnamon if desired. Serve cold.
4. **Variations:** You can make different flavors by adding cocoa powder for chocolate oats, or grated apple and cinnamon for "apple pie" oats. *(Overnight oats are very convenient – you can prepare 2-3 jars for a couple of days. They last about 2 days refrigerated. Great for busy mornings.)*

Punjabi Kadhi (Yogurt Gram Flour Curry with Pakoras)

Ingredients for Kadhi: Yogurt (2 cups, slightly sour is good); Besan (1/2 cup); Water (4 cups); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1 tsp); Salt; Ginger (1/2 inch, grated). **Ingredients for Pakora:** Besan (1 cup); Chopped spinach or methi leaves (1/2 cup) or shredded cabbage (for texture, instead of onion); Baking soda (a pinch); Salt; Oil for deep frying. **Tempering:** Ghee/oil (1 tbsp); Cumin seeds (1 tsp); Mustard seeds (1/2 tsp); Fenugreek seeds (1/4 tsp); Dry red chilies (2); Curry leaves (8-10); Asafoetida (a pinch).

Method:

1. **Blend Kadhi Base:** In a large bowl, whisk yogurt until smooth. Add besan and mix well to avoid lumps. Add 4 cups water gradually and whisk. Add turmeric, red chili powder, salt, and grated ginger. This is the kadhi mixture.
2. **Cook Kadhi:** Pour the mixture into a deep pot. Cook on medium flame, stirring frequently (to prevent sticking) until it comes to a boil. Then simmer on low, stirring occasionally. It will thicken slightly. Simmer for about 15-20 minutes to cook the besan (you'll see a glossy look and the raw smell gone).
3. **Make Pakoras:** In a bowl, mix besan, chopped greens (spinach/methi/cabbage), a pinch of baking soda, salt, and enough water to make a thick batter (like fritter batter). Heat oil in a kadhai for deep frying. Drop spoonfuls of batter into hot oil and fry pakoras on medium heat until golden. Remove and drain on paper. (Make small pakoras so they absorb kadhi flavor well.)

4. **Add Pakoras:** Add the fried pakoras to the simmering kadhi. Let them simmer in the kadhi for 5 minutes so they soften and soak a bit.
5. **Tempering:** In a tadka pan, heat ghee/oil. Add cumin, mustard, and fenugreek seeds. Once sputtering, add dry red chilies, curry leaves, and a pinch of asafoetida. Fry for a few seconds (don't burn). Pour this tempering over the kadhi. It will sizzle and impart a wonderful aroma.
6. **Serve:** Stir gently and serve hot. Great with steamed rice or khichdi. *(For a simpler weeknight kadhi, you can skip pakoras and just temper the spiced yogurt-besan mix. But pakoras make it a special dish. Since no onion, we use greens for pakora bulk and flavor.)*

Veg Hummus (for Veggie Sticks)

Ingredients: Boiled chickpeas (1 cup; if canned, drain & rinse); Tahini (sesame paste, 1 tbsp) – or lightly roasted sesame seeds (2 tsp); Lemon juice (2 tbsp); Olive oil (2 tbsp); Cumin powder (1/2 tsp); Salt; Ice-cold water (as needed, a few tbsp); Asafoetida (a pinch, substitute for garlic flavor); Paprika (for garnish, optional).

Method:

1. **Blend Base:** In a food processor, combine chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, olive oil, cumin, asafoetida, and salt. Blend into a coarse paste.
2. **Smooth it Out:** While blending, add ice-cold water one tablespoon at a time until the hummus is very smooth and creamy (usually 2-4 tbsp water). The cold water helps emulsify the tahini and olive oil, giving a fluffy texture.
3. **Taste & Adjust:** Check seasoning – add more salt or lemon as needed. Traditional hummus has garlic, but the hing will give a slight oniony hint.
4. **Serve:** Transfer to a bowl. Drizzle a little olive oil on top and sprinkle paprika or chopped parsley if desired. Serve with carrot, cucumber, and bell pepper sticks. *(Hummus can be refrigerated in a tight container for up to a week. If it thickens in fridge, stir in a bit of water or olive oil to loosen.)*

Veg Sushi Rolls

Ingredients: Sushi rice (1 cup); Nori seaweed sheets (4); Rice vinegar (2 tbsp); Sugar (1 tbsp); Salt (1/2 tsp); Filling: julienned cucumber, avocado slices, carrot thin strips, and boiled asparagus or pickled radish (as available); A bamboo sushi mat (for rolling, or use a clean kitchen towel); **To Serve:** Soy sauce (Jain – ensure no added MSG or non-veg), wasabi (optional).

Method:

1. **Cook Sushi Rice:** Rinse rice well. Cook with 1¼ cup water (sushi rice requires slightly less than 1:1.5 ratio). Once cooked and water absorbed, keep covered 10 min. Mix vinegar, sugar, salt in a bowl (stir to dissolve). Transfer rice to a wide bowl, pour seasoned vinegar over it. Gently fold with a spatula or spoon so that each grain is

coated and the rice cools. Cover with damp cloth and let it come to room temp (do not refrigerate, rice will harden).

2. **Prep Filling:** Cut veggies into thin long strips. Have them ready on a plate.
3. **Rolling:** Place bamboo mat on a surface. Put a nori sheet on it, shiny side down. Wet your hands (to prevent sticking) and take a ball of seasoned rice. Spread rice on the nori evenly, covering about 3/4 of the sheet (leave the top 1 inch of nori empty for sealing). Press rice gently. Arrange a few pieces of cucumber, carrot, and avocado in a horizontal line about 1 inch from the bottom of the sheet (the end closest to you).
4. **Roll it Tight:** Using the mat, start rolling the sushi away from you. Tuck the filling in and roll tightly, applying gentle pressure. Use the mat to press and shape the roll. Wet the top border of nori (that empty 1 inch) with a bit of water, then finish rolling to seal the roll. You should have a firm log.
5. **Cut:** Using a sharp knife, cut the roll into 6-8 equal pieces. Wipe knife with a wet cloth between cuts for neat pieces.
6. **Serve:** Arrange sushi pieces cut-side up. Serve with a small dish of soy sauce for dipping. Wasabi and pickled ginger if available (though kids might skip those). *(The rolling takes practice – even if not perfect, it will taste good! Ensure rice is cool and fingers are wet. You can also make an “inside-out” roll with rice on outside, but that’s advanced; sticking to nori-outside is easier to handle.)*

Sabudana Khichdi

Ingredients: Sabudana (sago pearls, 1 cup); Peanut powder (roasted peanuts coarsely ground, 1/4 cup); Boiled potato (1 medium, diced); Green chilies (2, slit lengthwise); Cumin seeds (1 tsp); Ghee or oil (2 tbsp); Curry leaves (optional, 4-5 for aroma); Salt; Sugar (1 tsp, traditional for balance); Lemon juice (to taste); Fresh coriander.

Method:

1. **Soak Sabudana:** Rinse sabudana under water until water runs clear (to remove excess starch). Then soak in water just enough to cover them by about 1/2 inch, for 5-6 hours or overnight. They will absorb water and soften. Drain any excess water. Sabudana pearls should be soft (check by pressing one – it should mash easily).
2. **Mix Peanuts:** Toss the soaked sabudana with peanut powder, salt to taste, and sugar. The peanut powder helps keep them separate and adds flavor.
3. **Cook:** Heat ghee in a wide pan. Add cumin seeds and let them sizzle. Add curry leaves (if using) and green chilies; sauté a few seconds. Add diced boiled potatoes and sauté 2 minutes. Now add the sabudana-peanut mixture. Stir well on medium-low heat.
4. **Stir-Fry:** Cook while stirring gently for about 5-7 minutes. The sabudana pearls will turn from opaque white to translucent and lightly golden (don’t cook on high or too long, they may turn sticky or hard). Taste to ensure they’re cooked (should be soft, not chewy).
5. **Finish:** Turn off heat. Sprinkle lemon juice and toss. Garnish with chopped coriander.
6. **Serve:** Hot. This tends to be slightly chewy, nutty, and very filling. *(Avoid overcrowding pan – if doubling recipe, cook in batches for even cooking. Also, too much water in sabudana leads to stickiness, so proper soaking and draining is key.)*

Dal Baati Churma

- **Dal (Panchmel Dal):** Mix 5 lentils – e.g., toor, moong, chana, urad, masoor (2 tbsp each). Pressure cook with turmeric and salt until soft. In ghee, temper cumin, hing, ginger, green chili, and tomatoes. Add to boiled dal with red chili powder, garam masala, amchur (skip garlic/onion). Simmer. Finish with cilantro. Dal should be medium consistency.
- **Baati:** Combine whole wheat flour (2 cups), sooji (1/4 cup), salt, ajwain (1/2 tsp). Add 1/4 cup melted ghee, mix to breadcrumb texture. Add water to form a stiff dough. Shape into lemon-sized balls, slightly flatten. Bake in preheated oven at 180°C for ~30 mins, turning once, until golden and hard outside. Traditionally, baatis are then dipped in ghee. You can brush them with ghee after baking for flavor.
- **Churma:** Crumble 4-5 of the baked baatis. Grind coarsely. In a pan, heat 2 tbsp ghee, add the baati crumbs and roast further with 2-3 tbsp powdered sugar (or jaggery) and 1/2 tsp cardamom powder until golden and aromatic. This sweet crumble is *churma*.
To Serve: Crush baati, pour dal over, and enjoy with a side of sweet churma. *(It's a heavy dish – often served on special occasions. We made it manageable by baking instead of traditional fire roasting.)*

Masala Corn

Ingredients: Sweet corn kernels (2 cups, use fresh or frozen); Butter (1 tbsp); Chaat masala (1 tsp); Red chili powder (optional 1/4 tsp); Salt; Lemon juice (1 tbsp); Optional: a sprinkle of black pepper or cumin powder.

Method:

1. **Boil Corn:** If using fresh corn on the cob, boil and then slice off kernels. If frozen, steam or microwave the kernels until hot and tender. Drain any water.
2. **Mix Seasoning:** In a bowl, toss hot corn with butter (it will melt), chaat masala, chili powder (if using), and salt to taste. Squeeze lemon juice over and mix.
3. **Serve:** in cups or bowls while warm. You can garnish with chopped cilantro if desired.
(This is a very quick recipe – you can have variations like adding a bit of grated cheese to make it “cheesy corn” or a dollop of mayo for “Russian corn,” but plain masala is healthiest.)

Vegetable Pulao

Ingredients: Basmati rice (1.5 cups); Mix vegetables – carrot, peas, green beans, cauliflower (total 1.5 cups, chopped); Whole spices – cumin (1 tsp), bay leaf (1), cinnamon (1 stick), cloves (3), cardamom (2); Ghee/oil (2 tbsp); Ginger (1 tsp chopped); Green chili (1, slit); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Garam masala (1/2 tsp); Salt; Water (~3 cups); Cashews (8, optional, fried for garnish).

Method:

1. **Prep:** Rinse rice and soak for 20 min. Drain. Parboil tougher veggies like cauliflower and beans for 2 min (optional, to ensure even cooking).

2. **Sauté Spices & Veg:** Heat ghee in a pot. Add cumin, bay leaf, cinnamon, cloves, cardamom. Sauté 30 sec. Add ginger and green chili, fry briefly. Add all mixed vegetables. Sauté on medium for 2-3 min. Add turmeric and a pinch of salt.
3. **Add Rice:** Mix drained rice with the veggies gently. Stir for a minute so rice gets coated in the spices and fat.
4. **Cook:** Add ~3 cups water (slightly less than 2:1 since we soaked rice). Add salt to taste (approx 1 tsp). Bring to boil, then cover and simmer on low for about 10 minutes or until rice is cooked and liquid is absorbed. (Avoid stirring while cooking to keep rice grains intact.)
5. **Finish:** Sprinkle garam masala on top and gently fluff the pulao with a fork. Cover and let it rest 5 minutes.
6. **Serve:** Garnish with fried cashews. Pair with raita. *(Pulao is forgiving: you can include whatever veggies the kids like. For added protein, occasionally add paneer cubes or soy nuggets. The aroma of whole spices usually attracts kids to this mild dish.)*

Paneer Paratha

(Similar to aloo paratha; just different filling.)

- **Ingredients:** Wheat dough (as in aloo paratha); Filling – Grated paneer (1.5 cups), Cumin powder (1/2 tsp), Garam masala (1/2 tsp), Finely chopped coriander, Salt.
- **Method:** Mix filling ingredients. Place inside rolled dough and cook parathas on tawa with oil/ghee as done for aloo paratha. *Paneer parathas are softer, handle gently while rolling.* Serve with pickle or curd.

Dal Makhani

Ingredients: Whole black urad dal (1/2 cup); Rajma (2 tbsp); Chana dal (2 tbsp); Tomatoes (2 pureed); Fresh cream (2 tbsp); Kasuri methi (dried fenugreek leaves, 1 tsp); Butter (2 tbsp); Cumin (1 tsp); Ginger (1 tsp paste); Kashmiri chili powder (1 tsp); Garam masala (1 tsp); Salt.

Method:

1. **Soak & Boil:** Soak urad, rajma, chana dal overnight. Pressure cook with salt until very soft (they should almost mash).
2. **Masala:** Heat butter, add cumin. Then add ginger paste (and garlic in non-Jain version, skip here). Sauté, add tomato puree and cook till thick. Add chili powder, garam masala, kasuri methi (crush it between fingers). Cook 2 min.
3. **Simmer:** Add cooked dals with their water. Simmer on low for 20-30 minutes, stirring often, until creamy. Stir in fresh cream at the end. (If too thick, add water; if too thin, simmer longer.)
4. **Serve:** with rice or naan. *Dal makhani traditionally cooks for hours; slow simmer yields best flavor. We skip onions/garlic, but long cooking, butter, and cream compensate for richness.*

Fruit Chaat

Ingredients: Seasonal fruits like apple, banana, orange, grapes, pomegranate (total ~3 cups chopped); Chaat masala (1 tsp); Black salt (a pinch); Honey or jaggery syrup (1 tsp, optional for extra sweetness); Lemon juice (2 tsp); Mint leaves (few, torn).

Method:

1. **Chop Fruits:** Peel and dice fruits into bite-size pieces. (E.g., apples in cubes, bananas in slices, orange segmented, etc.) Place in a large bowl.
2. **Mix Seasoning:** Sprinkle chaat masala and black salt over fruits. Drizzle lemon juice and a touch of honey if using. Toss everything gently to coat.
3. **Garnish:** Add fresh mint leaves and give a final toss.
4. **Serve:** Fresh. This works well as an after-school snack too. *(The spices make fruit interesting; feel free to adjust masala. Avoid fruits that may not pair well with spices (like watermelon) in this chaat.)*

Rava Dosa

Ingredients: Rava/sooji (1/2 cup); Rice flour (1/2 cup); All-purpose flour (Maida, 2 tbsp); Cumin seeds (1/2 tsp); Crushed black pepper (1/2 tsp); Green chili (1, finely chopped); Curry leaves (4, chopped); Yogurt (2 tbsp); Salt; Water (~2.5 cups); Oil for drizzling.

Method:

1. **Prepare Batter:** In a bowl, mix rava, rice flour, maida. Add cumin, pepper, green chili, curry leaves, salt, and yogurt. Pour water gradually to make a very thin batter (like buttermilk consistency). This batter will be runny – let it rest 15 minutes for rava to bloom. Check consistency again – it should be thin; add more water if needed.
2. **Cook Dosa:** Heat a non-stick pan until medium hot. Stir batter (flour tends to settle). Pour batter from a height onto the pan – do not spread with ladle; it will form lace-like holes by itself. Fill any huge gaps with a bit more batter. Drizzle a little oil around edges.
3. **Cook:** Let dosa cook on medium flame until the bottom turns golden and releases easily (takes 2-3 minutes). No need to flip – rava dosa is thin and cooks through, but you can if you want it extra crispy on both sides (cook 30 sec after flipping).
4. **Serve:** Remove with spatula and serve immediately with coconut chutney. Stir batter before making each dosa. *(The key to rava dosa is the thin batter and a hot pan. It might stick if pan isn't hot enough or if batter is too thick. Adjust as you go – first dosa might be a trial.)*

Besan Chilla

Ingredients: Besan (1 cup); Semolina (1 tbsp, for crunch, optional); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Red chili powder (1/4 tsp); Asafoetida (a pinch); Ajwain (carom seeds, 1/4 tsp, crushed); Salt; Water (~3/4 cup); Oil. **Optional mix-ins:** Finely chopped tomato, coriander, and grated carrot (total 1/4 cup) – to make it “veg omelette” style.

Method:

1. **Batter:** In a bowl, combine besan, semolina, turmeric, chili powder, hing, ajwain, and salt. Add water gradually, whisking to form a smooth, lump-free batter. Consistency should be like pancake batter (pourable but not too thin). If adding veggies, mix them into the batter. Let it rest 10 minutes.
2. **Cook:** Heat a non-stick pan and grease lightly. Pour a ladle of batter and spread gently into a circle (about 5-6 inch). Not too thin like a dosa; slightly thick is fine. Drizzle a few drops of oil on edges. Cook on medium until the top looks set and bottom is golden.
3. **Flip:** Flip the chilla and cook the other side for another minute until golden spots form.
4. **Serve:** Hot, with mint chutney or ketchup. *(These are quick. Stir batter each time; besan can settle. If batter thickens, add a spoon of water. They are best eaten fresh, as they can dry out if kept long.)*

Minestrone Soup

Ingredients: Olive oil (1 tbsp); Onion (1, finely chopped – skip for Jain, use cabbage instead 1/4 cup for sweetness); Carrot (1, diced); Celery (1 stalk, diced – if available; if not, use 1/2 cup diced bottle gourd for neutrality); Garlic (2 cloves, minced – skip, use 1/4 tsp hing instead); Tomato puree (1 cup); Mixed vegetables: zucchini (1/2 cup diced), green beans (1/2 cup), cabbage (1/2 cup shredded); Cooked kidney beans or white beans (1 cup); Small pasta (macaroni or shells, 1/2 cup); Dried oregano (1 tsp); Dried basil (1 tsp); Bay leaf (1); Salt and pepper to taste; Vegetable broth or water (4 cups); Parmesan cheese for serving (optional).

Method:

1. **Sauté Base:** Heat olive oil in a large pot. Add hing (to mimic garlic flavor) and bay leaf. Then add chopped carrot (and celery if using). Sauté 2-3 min. (If not strictly Jain and using onion/garlic, add now and sauté till translucent.)
2. **Build Soup:** Add tomato puree and cook for 2 minutes. Then add all other veggies (zucchini, beans, cabbage) and stir. Add dried oregano and basil. Pour in broth/water. Add the beans. Stir and bring to a boil.
3. **Simmer & Pasta:** Add salt and pepper. Add the small pasta. Reduce heat and let the soup simmer until the pasta is cooked and veggies are tender (~10-12 minutes). Stir occasionally to prevent pasta from sticking to bottom.
4. **Adjust:** If soup is too thick (pasta can absorb water), add a bit more hot water to reach desired consistency. Taste and adjust seasoning. Remove bay leaf before serving.
5. **Serve:** Ladle into bowls. Top with a sprinkle of grated Parmesan cheese (skip for vegan or Jain strictness, as some Parmesan contains animal rennet; use a vegetarian hard cheese if available). Serve with crusty bread. *(This is a very adaptable soup – use whatever veggies you have. Without onion/garlic it's still hearty thanks to herbs and tomato. You can boil the pasta separately and add, to avoid over-starch in soup, especially if planning leftovers.)*

Thalipeeth

Ingredients: Multigrain flour mix – e.g., Jowar (1/2 cup), Bajra (1/2 cup), Wheat (1/2 cup), Besan (1/4 cup), Rice flour (1/4 cup); Onion (1 finely chopped – skip for Jain, use grated bottle gourd or 2 tbsp yogurt for moisture); Fresh Methi or spinach (1/4 cup chopped, optional); Green chili (1, minced); Yogurt (2 tbsp); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Sesame seeds (1 tsp); Salt; Oil for cooking.

Method:

1. **Dough:** In a bowl, combine all flours, turmeric, sesame seeds, green chili, chopped greens (if using), and salt. Add yogurt for some moisture and tang. Add water gradually and knead to form a stiff dough (harder than chapati dough, but pliable). Because of multigrains, it might crack – the yogurt helps bind. Let it rest 15 min.
2. **Pat Roti:** Take a plastic sheet or banana leaf. Grease it. Take a ball of dough, place on sheet and pat it out with fingers to a circle ~5-6 inches diameter (thickness ~3-4 mm). You can wet your fingers to prevent sticking. Poke a few holes with finger in the thalipeeth (helps cook evenly).
3. **Cook:** Transfer gently to a hot tawa (inverting the sheet and peeling it off). Drizzle a little oil around and in the holes. Cook on medium flame. Once brown spots appear underside, flip and cook other side until done (press gently with spatula for even cooking).
4. **Serve:** Hot, with a dollop of butter or curd. *(Thalipeeth is super nutritious and usually spicy. In Jain version without onion, using grated bottle gourd or zucchini keeps it moist. You can also add boiled mashed pumpkin in dough for softness. It's typically eaten by itself or with pickles.)*

Achari Paneer

Ingredients: Paneer (200g, cubed); Tomato puree (1 cup); Yogurt (2 tbsp); **Achari spice mix:** Mustard seeds (1/2 tsp), Fenugreek seeds (1/4 tsp), Fennel seeds (1/2 tsp), Nigella seeds/Kalonji (1/4 tsp), Cumin seeds (1/2 tsp) – dry roast and coarsely crush; Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1 tsp); Oil (2 tbsp); Asafoetida (a pinch); Salt; Jaggery (1 tsp, for slight sweetness); Kasuri methi (1 tsp).

Method:

1. **Sear Paneer:** (Optional) Lightly sauté paneer cubes in a little oil until golden edges, then keep aside (or use as is for softer texture).
2. **Temper Spices:** Heat oil in a pan. Add asafoetida and all the achari whole spices (mustard, fenugreek, fennel, nigella, cumin). Let them crackle (keep heat medium, fenugreek can burn and turn bitter – a quick 30 sec is enough).
3. **Make Gravy:** Add tomato puree. Cook for 5-6 minutes till it reduces and oil shows at edges. Add turmeric, red chili powder, and salt. Stir. Lower flame and add whisked yogurt slowly, stirring continuously to avoid curdling. Cook for 2 minutes. Add a splash of water if too thick. Stir in jaggery to balance the tanginess (achari gravy is slightly tangy-sweet).
4. **Simmer Paneer:** Add paneer cubes to the gravy. Mix gently to coat. Cover and simmer on low for 5 minutes so paneer absorbs flavor. Crush kasuri methi between your palms and sprinkle in at the end for aroma.

5. **Serve:** Garnish with cilantro. Pairs well with roti or paratha. *(Tastes like pickle due to spices – if kids find it too sharp, reduce the whole spices slightly. The jaggery helps mellow it. This dish has no onion/garlic by design usually; hing and spices do the magic.)*

Missi Roti

Ingredients: Besan (1 cup); Whole wheat flour (1 cup); Carom seeds (ajwain, 1/2 tsp); Chili powder (1/2 tsp); Salt; Oil (1 tbsp) + for cooking; Finely chopped coriander (2 tbsp); Water to knead.

Method:

1. **Dough:** Mix besan, wheat, ajwain, chili powder, salt, and coriander. Add 1 tbsp oil and rub in. Add water gradually to form a medium-soft dough. Besan makes it a bit stiff; knead well until smooth. Cover and rest 15 min.
2. **Roll:** Take medium portions, roll into thick rotis (~5 inch diameter, slightly thicker than plain chapati). Use dry flour to dust as needed.
3. **Cook:** Place on hot tawa. Cook until brown spots, flip, apply oil/ghee on cooked side. Flip again, apply on other side, cook both sides till golden with some brown patches.
4. **Serve:** Hot. *(These rotis have a lovely flavor from besan. They can be made slightly smaller and thicker to stay soft. Great with any curry.)*

Trail Mix Energy Bars

Ingredients: Rolled oats (1 cup); Dates (1 cup, pitted); Mixed nuts (1 cup – almonds, cashews, walnuts); Peanut butter (1/4 cup) or 2 tbsp ghee; Honey (2 tbsp); Raisins or dried cranberries (1/4 cup); Sesame seeds or flax seeds (2 tbsp); Salt (a pinch).

Method:

1. **Prep Date Paste:** Soak dates in warm water for 10 min if dry. Drain and pulse in a food processor to make a rough paste.
2. **Mix Dry:** Lightly roast oats in a pan for 3 min (just to remove raw taste). Coarsely chop nuts (you can roast these too for flavor). In a bowl combine oats, nuts, seeds, and dried fruits.
3. **Combine:** Add date paste, peanut butter, and honey to the bowl. Add a tiny pinch of salt to enhance sweetness. Mix everything – it will be sticky. You may use your hands (grease them) to really combine well into a dough-like mass. If too dry, add a spoon more honey or a bit of water. If too wet, add a few more oats.
4. **Set:** Line a square pan or plate with parchment. Press the mixture into it firmly to about 1/2 inch thickness. Use the back of a spoon or a small rolling pin to flatten and compact it tightly.
5. **Chill & Cut:** Refrigerate for 1-2 hours until set. Lift out and cut into bars or squares.
6. **Store:** Keep in fridge (especially in warm climates) in an airtight box with parchment between layers. Will last 1-2 weeks refrigerated. *(These no-bake bars are flexible – you can vary nuts and dried fruits. Just keep the ratio of sticky (dates/honey) to dry (oats/nuts) such that it binds. Great for quick snacks.)*

Tom Kha (Thai Coconut Soup)

Ingredients: Coconut milk (400 ml can or 1.5 cups); Vegetable broth or water (1.5 cups); Galangal or ginger (5-6 slices); Lemongrass (2 stalks, bruised and cut into 2" pieces); Kaffir lime leaves (4, tear them) – optional but authentic; Mushrooms (1 cup, quartered) – optional for Jain (sub extra veggies if avoiding mushrooms); Mixed veggies: carrot slices, baby corn, broccoli florets (total 1 cup); Tofu (1/2 cup cubed, optional protein); Thai red curry paste (1 tsp, ensure no shrimp for vegetarian – or use 1 dry red chili for heat); Soy sauce (1 tbsp); Salt to taste; Lime juice (1-2 tbsp); Fresh coriander for garnish.

Method:

1. **Simmer Broth:** In a pot, combine coconut milk and broth. Add galangal (or ginger), lemongrass, and kaffir lime leaves. Bring to a gentle boil and simmer for 5 minutes to infuse flavors.
2. **Add Veggies:** Stir in the Thai red curry paste (for a mild soup use just a bit) or a whole red chili for slight heat. Add carrots, baby corn, and broccoli. Simmer 3-4 minutes. Add mushrooms (if using) and tofu. Simmer another 5 minutes until veggies are tender but not mushy.
3. **Season:** Add soy sauce and salt if needed (soy provides saltiness). The soup should be creamy and fragrant. Turn off heat and remove lemongrass pieces, galangal, and lime leaves (they're not eaten; just for flavor).
4. **Finish:** Stir in lime juice to taste (start with 1 tbsp, add more for tang).
5. **Serve:** Hot, garnished with fresh coriander. This soup is usually enjoyed as is, but we served it with some rice noodles (or you can serve with steamed rice on side) to make it a filling dinner. *(The key flavors are lemongrass, ginger, and lime in creamy coconut. Adjust the red curry paste to the twins' spice tolerance. This version is vegetarian; traditional Tom Kha has fish sauce and chicken, which we omit.)*

Gatte ki Sabzi

Ingredients (Gatte): Besan (1 cup); Yogurt (2 tbsp); Oil (1 tbsp); Carom seeds (ajwain, 1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1/2 tsp); Turmeric (1/4 tsp); Salt; **For gravy:** Yogurt (1 cup, beaten); Besan (1 tsp); Oil (2 tbsp); Cumin (1 tsp); Asafoetida (a pinch); Ginger paste (1 tsp); Tomato (1, pureed); Coriander powder (2 tsp); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1 tsp); Garam masala (1/2 tsp); Salt; Kasuri methi (1 tsp).

Method:

1. **Make Gatta Dough:** In a bowl, mix besan, chili powder, turmeric, ajwain, salt. Add yogurt and 1 tbsp oil. Mix and knead into a stiff dough (use a few tsp of water if needed). Divide into 4 portions. Roll each into a long cylinder/log about 1/2 inch thick.
2. **Boil Gatte:** Boil 4-5 cups water in a wide pan. Gently drop besan logs in boiling water. Boil for about 10-12 minutes. They will float and firm up. Remove logs and reserve the boiling water (for gravy). Cut logs into 1/2 inch thick round pieces (these are the *gatte*).
3. **Gravy:** Heat oil in a kadhai. Add cumin and a pinch of hing. When cumin sizzles, add ginger paste (and garlic paste in non-Jain, skip here) and sauté a bit. Add tomato puree

and cook 2-3 minutes. Stir in coriander powder, turmeric, red chili powder, salt. Cook til oil separates. Lower flame, add beaten yogurt (mix 1 tsp besan into yogurt to prevent curdling) while stirring. Cook 2 min.

4. **Simmer Gatte:** Add about 1.5 cups of the reserved water from boiling gatte. Bring gravy to a boil. Add the gatte pieces. Simmer on low for 5-7 minutes so they absorb gravy. Crush kasuri methi and sprinkle in, along with garam masala. Mix gently. Gravy should be medium-thick.
5. **Serve:** Garnish with coriander. Serve hot with roti or poori. *(This dish has a unique gramflour-on-gramflour combination; the yogurt gravy keeps it lighter than a cream one. Ensure yogurt is fresh sour and stirred constantly when adding to avoid splitting.)*

Ven Pongal

Ingredients: Rice (3/4 cup); Yellow moong dal (1/4 cup); Black peppercorns (1 tsp); Cumin seeds (1 tsp); Ginger (1 tsp finely chopped); Curry leaves (8); Cashews (8, broken); Ghee (2 tbsps); Turmeric (a pinch, optional); Salt.

Method:

1. **Dry Roast Dal:** In a pan, dry roast moong dal on low flame for 2-3 min until slightly aromatic (don't brown too much). Rinse rice and roasted dal together.
2. **Pressure Cook:** Transfer rice & dal to a cooker. Add ~4 cups water (pongali is mushy). Add turmeric if you like a yellowish hue (optional). Add salt. Pressure cook for 3 whistles on medium. Let pressure release. The mixture should be very soft and slightly runny. If too thick, stir in some hot water. Lightly mash.
3. **Temper:** In a small pan, heat ghee. Add cashews, fry till golden, remove and set aside. In same ghee, add whole peppercorns and cumin – they will splutter. Add ginger and curry leaves (careful, may splutter). Fry few seconds. Pour this tempering into the cooked rice-dal. Add fried cashews.
4. **Mix:** Stir well so ghee and spices incorporate. Pongali should be like a soft porridge with some whole dal visible and studded with spices and nuts.
5. **Serve:** Hot, with coconut chutney or extra ghee on top. *(Pongali is very mild – the whole peppercorns give occasional heat. You can crush some pepper if you want it distributed. Adjust water to reach your desired consistency; traditionally it's almost like a thick oatmeal.)*

Misal (Sprouts Curry) – Jain Style

Ingredients: Mixed sprouts (matki/moth bean sprout traditionally, use moong + others, ~2 cups); Potatoes (2 small, boiled & diced, for substance); Tomato puree (1 cup); Oil (2 tbsps); Mustard seeds (1 tsp); Cumin (1 tsp); Hing (a pinch); Curry leaves (6); Ginger paste (1 tsp); Green chili (1, chopped); Goda masala or Misal masala powder (2 tsp) *[Note: ensure blend has no onion/garlic powder]*; Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Red chili powder (1 tsp); Jaggery (1 tsp); Salt; Water (3-4 cups); Farsan/sev for topping (1 cup); Chopped coriander; Lemon wedges.

Method:

1. **Cook Sprouts:** You can pressure cook the sprouts with water for 2 whistles to soften them, or boil until nearly done. Keep aside with water.
2. **Make Kat (gravy):** Heat oil in pot. Add mustard seeds, let pop. Add cumin, then hing, curry leaves, ginger paste, and green chili. Sauté a few seconds. Add tomato puree and cook 5 min till raw smell goes. Add turmeric, red chili powder, goda/misal masala and salt. Fry spice with tomato for 2 min (add a splash of water if sticking).
3. **Simmer Misal:** Pour in the cooked sprouts along with their water. Add boiled potato chunks. There should be a good amount of thin gravy (“rassa”). Add more water to submerge everything – misal is supposed to be a bit watery to dunk the pav. Add jaggery. Bring to boil and then simmer 10-15 min. The oil might float on top and sprouts fully tender. Taste and adjust salt/spice – it should be tangy, spicy, a bit sweet.
4. **Serve:** In deep bowls – first the sprouts curry (misal), then topped generously with crunchy farsan/sev. Garnish with raw onion (skip for Jain – we omit), coriander, and a lemon wedge on side. Usually eaten with pav bread. *(This is a toned-down heat version; misal is famously spicy in Maharashtra. Adjust chili to taste. Pav can be substituted with toasted bread. The combination of hot misal and crunchy cool toppings is its allure!)*

Veggie Pizza (Homemade)

Ingredients (Dough): Whole wheat flour (1 cup) + Maida (1 cup) *[or use 2 cups all-purpose for softer crust]*; Instant yeast (1 tsp); Sugar (1 tsp); Salt (1 tsp); Olive oil (2 tbsp); Warm water (~3/4 cup). **Toppings:** Pizza sauce (1/2 cup) – use tomato puree cooked with herbs (no onion/garlic); Mozzarella cheese (1.5 cups shredded); Veggies: capsicum slices, sweet corn, tomato slices, olives, paneer cubes (as desired); Dried oregano and basil for sprinkling.

Method:

1. **Make Dough:** In warm water, dissolve sugar and yeast. Wait 5-10 min for it to foam (if using instant yeast, this proofing can be skipped, but it verifies yeast is active). In a large bowl, mix flours and salt. Add yeast water and olive oil. Knead into a soft dough for 8-10 minutes (it should become smooth and elastic). Coat lightly with oil, cover and let it rise in a warm place ~1 hour until doubled.
2. **Prep Base:** Preheat oven to 220°C (425°F). Punch down dough, divide into 2 balls. On a floured surface, roll or press one dough ball into a circle ~10-12” (or make smaller individual pizzas). Transfer to a baking tray or pizza stone (lightly oiled or dusted with cornmeal).
3. **Assemble Pizza:** Spread pizza sauce thinly over base, leaving small border. Sprinkle half the cheese. Arrange veggie toppings evenly (don’t overload so it bakes well). Top with remaining cheese. Sprinkle a pinch of dried oregano/basil on top for flavor.
4. **Bake:** Bake in preheated oven for ~12-15 minutes until crust is golden and cheese is melted and slightly browned. (If bottom isn’t browning, bake a couple more minutes; avoid burning cheese.)
5. **Serve:** Let cool 2-3 min, slice and serve. *(Homemade pizza is flexible – adjust toppings to what kids like. Jain sauce: simmer tomato puree with salt, basil, and a bit of sugar; skip typical garlic. The twins can help decorate the pizza with toppings as a fun activity!)*

Lemon Rice

Ingredients: Cooked rice (2 cups, preferably cooled leftover rice); Oil (1.5 tbsp); Mustard seeds (1 tsp); Urad dal (1 tsp); Chana dal (1 tsp); Peanuts (2 tbsp); Curry leaves (10); Green chilies (2, slit); Asafoetida (a pinch); Turmeric (1/2 tsp); Salt; Lemon juice (2 tbsp); Cilantro to garnish.

Method:

1. **Temper Spices:** In a wok or pan, heat oil. Add mustard seeds and let them crackle. Add peanuts, fry till lightly golden. Then add urad dal and chana dal; fry until golden. Add curry leaves, green chilies, and hing. Sauté a few seconds.
2. **Flavor Oil:** Add turmeric to the oil and immediately add the cooked rice. (Turmeric in oil releases color and aroma nicely.)
3. **Stir-fry Rice:** Gently mix so all rice turns yellow with turmeric. Add salt to taste. Stir-fry on low heat for 2-3 minutes until rice is heated through and coated in the tempered spices.
4. **Finish:** Turn off flame. Pour lemon juice over the rice and mix well. Check the balance of salt and tang, adjust if needed. Remove from pan to avoid rice sticking.
5. **Serve:** Warm or at room temp, garnished with fresh cilantro. *(Great served with a raita or plain yogurt. For kids, remove the whole chilies and curry leaves while serving. The dish has a tangy, fresh flavor they often enjoy.)*

This detailed plan ensures each day's menu is **nutritionally balanced**, with a good mix of **proteins** (dal, paneer, legumes, sprouts, tofu), **carbohydrates** (grains, breads), and healthy **fats** (ghee, nuts, avocado). Diverse cuisines and recipes keep it interesting so the twins look forward to meals. Enjoy this culinary journey around India and the world, all while sticking to Jain vegetarian guidelines. **Happy cooking and eating!**