

# Gund Paak

GUM ARABIC SQUARES

TIME  
60–90 minutes

YIELD  
20 pieces

VEGETARIAN

Of all the Indian sweets, this is Noorbanu’s daughter Khadija’s favourite.

She says, “Mom’s Gund Paak is the best that I’ve had and I enjoy it down to the last crumb. With the combination of rich almonds and pistachios, the crunch from the ‘Gum Arabic’ (*gund*) and the flavours from the spices and jaggery—no other square even comes close.” Karen agrees. She thinks it tastes like pure love.

1 cup	sunflower oil or Ghee (page 43) (for frying Gum Arabic)
5 ounces	Gum Arabic
¾ lb	coarsely chopped almonds
4 ounces	chopped pistachios
1 Tablespoon	ground green cardamom seeds
1 Tablespoon	coarsely ground fennel seeds
1 teaspoon	ground nutmeg
½ teaspoon	saffron
1 lb	salted butter
1 lb	unsalted butter, divided
1 lb	whole wheat flour
¾ cup	semolina ( <i>sooji</i> )
¾ cup	chana flour OR urad flour

¾ cup	medium flake coconut
¾ cup	powdered milk
½ cup	milk (2%)
¼ teaspoon	yellow food colouring powder
1 lb	chopped jaggery
1	(10 ½ ounce/300 mL) can sweetened condensed milk
2 ounces	finely slivered almonds
2 ounces	finely slivered pistachios
1 teaspoon	white poppy seeds

- Heat the oil or Ghee in a wok.
- Deep-fry the Gum Arabic pieces over medium heat, ½ a Tablespoon at a time, until they pop and then remove them with a slotted spoon and set them aside on a paper towel covered plate. Repeat until all are fried, discarding any Gum Arabic that do not pop.
- Combine the chopped nuts, cardamom, fennel, nutmeg and saffron. Set aside.
- Melt 1 lb of salted butter and ¾ of a lb of unsalted butter in a saucepan on medium heat.
- Add the whole wheat flour, semolina and chana or urad flour and fry until a very light golden colour, stirring continuously.

- Add the coconut and fry for a few minutes, remove from heat and add the powdered milk and stir for a few minutes. Set aside.
- Heat the ½ cup of milk and food colour in another saucepan on medium heat and mix well.
- Melt the remaining ¼ pound of butter in another saucepan, add the jaggery and cook until all the jaggery is melted and starts bubbling.
- Remove from heat and pour the jaggery—through a strainer—into the milk mixture and then return to heat and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes.
- Add the chopped nut mixture to the flour mixture and return to low heat.

- Blend in the jaggery mixture now and cook until well mixed, stirring continuously.
- Stir in the condensed milk and lastly add the fried Gum Arabic and mix well.
- Pour the mixture into a 2 × 10 × 15-inch pan and spread evenly.
- Garnish the top with the slivered almonds and pistachios while still warm, and press them firmly into the top with the back of a firm metal spatula.
- Enjoy sprinkled with the poppy seeds last and cut into diamond shapes or squares.

