

Chikoo Milkshake

BY OMIKA, RISHIKA & AASHIKA JIKARIA | @JIKARIASISTERS

"Chikoo" has always meant home to us.

Our parents came to the U.S. from Gujarat in the 1980s, carrying just a few suitcases, some family recipes, and a dream for a better life. They eventually settled in Brooklyn, where they built a home that balanced two worlds: the fast pace and noise of New York City, and the warmth, flavor, and traditions of India.

They worked hard to keep us connected to our roots. Our house always smelled like cardamom and cumin, and our kitchen was where culture lived most vividly. One of the simplest but most special things they made for us was chikoo milkshakes.

If you know, you know — the sweet, caramel-like fruit, blended with cold milk, sometimes a sprinkle of cardamom. To us, it wasn't just a drink. It was our culture in a cup. Our parents would make them on Sunday mornings, or pack them up for school show-and-tell days, potlucks, and culture nights. While other kids brought pieces of their cultures, we'd walk in with chikoo milkshake, empowered to share a part of our world with our friends. Those milkshakes became our symbol of home. They reminded us that even though we were growing up far from where our parents started, we carried our culture in small, everyday rituals through food, stories, and love.

Years later, when we adopted our first dog, a tiny brown mini poodle, she reminded us of those same chikoo milkshakes from childhood: sweet, familiar, and so full of love. It only felt right to name her Chikoo.

Now, every time we call her name, it brings us back to that kitchen in Brooklyn. Chikoo isn't just a name for us. It's a reminder of where we come from, what we carry, and how love always finds a way to blend cultures together.

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SERVES: 2

INGREDIENTS

3–4 ripe chikoos (sapodillas) – peeled and deseeded
1½ cups cold milk (dairy or almond/oat milk if preferred)
1–2 tsp sugar or honey (optional — only if chikoos aren't very sweet)
2–3 ice cubes (optional, for thickness and chill)
¼ tsp cardamom powder or a pinch of cinnamon (optional flavor boost)
1 scoop vanilla ice cream or a spoon of cream

INSTRUCTIONS

01 Peel & prep

Peel the chikoos and remove all seeds.

02 Blend

In a blender, add chikoo pieces, milk, sugar/honey, and any optional add-ins (ice, cardamom, ice cream).

03 Blend until smooth

The mixture should be thick and creamy.

04 Taste and adjust

Add more milk if too thick, or more sugar if needed.

05 Serve immediately

Pour into glasses and enjoy chilled.