

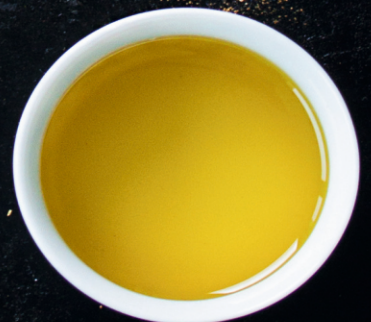


PURNABRAHMA



Jan - Mar 2024
Year 4 | Volume- 1

Traditional Foods



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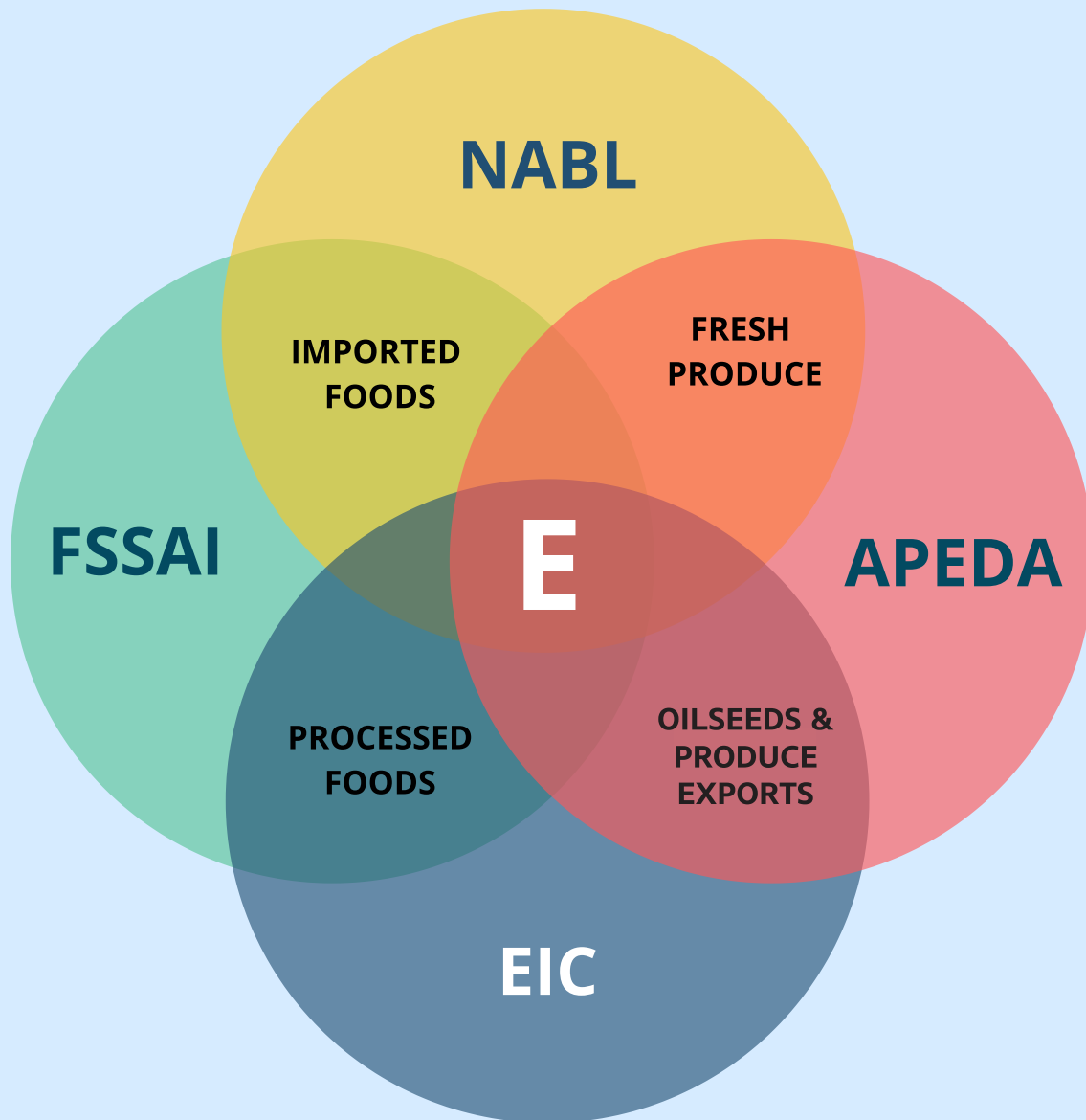




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CASMB ACTIVITIES



Our president at the Chamber for Advancement of Small & Medium Businesses - Nilesh Lele attended the Thought Leadership Workshop under Coalition for Food Systems Transformation in India (CoFTI) organized by Food Future Foundation and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH at New Delhi



USA Blueberry Product Development Seminar, a collaborative effort between the Chamber for Advancement of Small & Medium Businesses (CASMB) and CuliNEX - Food Development Pros.



CASMB has successfully concluded its role as a supporting partner for the recently concluded event, "Millets for Sustainability, Health & Wellness." The event, held in commemoration of National Nutrition Month (Sept 2023) and World Food Day (16th Oct 2023), took place at the College of Home Science, Nirmala Niketan, in collaboration with Kellogg Company India Pvt Ltd.



IFAT 2023



CASMB at Agro Vision 2023 (at the 2 day Food Processing Conclave Non 25 and 26th).



CASMB MEMBER'S ACHIVEMENT



Dr Rita Patil, Vice Principal - Maniben Nanavati Women's College, Vile Parle received Best Teacher Award of SNDT Women's University from the Governor of Maharashtra



Mr. Sanket Naik's startup "SoftWood" got selected in Top 25 Startups Maharashtra. He received the certificate appreciation through the hands of Honourable Minister Shri Mangal Prabhat Lodha (Department of Skills, Employment, Entrepreneurship & Innovation)- 09 Oct 2023



Ms. Kanika Nandurdikar has been nominated as one of the 50 nominees of the Haagen- Dazs Rose project, a global initiative recognizing women startups- 24 Nov 2023.



Dr. Umesh Kamble Honoured with AFSTI-FSSAI Award 2023 for Outstanding Contribution in the field of Food safety at the 9th International Food Congress (IFCoN) held in Mysuru on December 7, 2023.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dr. Prabodh Halde

**Chairman
Chamber for Advancement of
Small and Medium Businesses,
CASMB**



Dear Readers,
Happy New Year

As we delve into the heart of our culture's sustenance, I am honored to address you on the significant theme of "Traditional Food" in this edition of **Purnabrahma**. Food is not merely sustenance; it embodies heritage, history, and health—a mosaic of flavors passed down through generations, reflecting the soul of our civilization.

As we embark on this culinary journey celebrating the essence of "**Traditional Food**," it is crucial to recognize the inseparable bond between civilization and food culture. History bears witness to civilizations like Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Peru, whose decline mirrored the loss of their traditional cuisines. The erosion of their food culture contributed significantly to the fading of their distinctive identities. Contrastingly, the resilience of Indian and Chinese civilizations is intertwined with the preservation of their traditional food culture, safeguarding their unique heritage through the ages.

The resurgence of interest in traditional cuisines amid modern dining trends, particularly post COVID, is noteworthy. Notably, esteemed restaurants now proudly offer traditional delicacies once confined to local kitchens. From five-star hotels serving Cutting Chai to flights offering Dal Bhat, Poha, and Upma, the appeal of these authentic flavors has transcended boundaries.

Delving deeper, the roots of Indian traditional food extend back over 10,000 years, intertwining with our rich history. References in ancient texts like the Mahabharata and Chanakya's Arthashastra emphasize the significance of food and its impact on human life. Even Lord Krishna beautifully elucidated the importance of satvik food in the Geeta in chapter 17, verse 8.

"आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।

रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिराहृद्याआहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥ ८ ॥"

Lord Krishna explained that the mode of goodness is pure, illuminating, and serene, and creates a sense of happiness and satisfaction. Foods in the mode of goodness have the same effect. In the above verse, these foods are described with the words āyuh sattva, meaning "which promote longevity." They bestow good health, virtue, happiness, and satisfaction. Such

foods are juicy, naturally tasteful, mild, and beneficial. These include grains, pulses, beans, fruits, vegetables, milk, and other vegetarian foods.

Staple ingredients like pearl millet, rice, and various legumes form the bedrock of our culinary heritage. Beyond taste, these foods harbor sustainability, often utilizing locally-sourced ingredients, embodying health benefits, and ecological harmony.

India's historical narrative is marked by over a millennium of external rule, yet its adherence to its indigenous food culture has been pivotal in preserving its identity. The preservation of our traditional food has served as an anchor in turbulent times, shielding our culture from dilution and ensuring its continuity.

In stark contrast, many nations, albeit developed, have experienced cultural dilution due to the erosion of their indigenous food culture. Countries like America, the UK, Malaysia, Dubai, South Africa, Brazil, among others, have witnessed a gradual dissociation from their roots, primarily due to the diminishing significance of their native food culture.

Thus, the preservation of India's traditional food becomes an imperative responsibility, serving as a bastion for our rich cultural heritage. On behalf of the Chambers for Small and Medium Businesses (CASMB), we earnestly appeal to the Government to establish a Traditional Food Board. This board would play an important role in documenting and safeguarding the culinary traditions of various states, conducting scientific studies to comprehend their impact, nutritional value, and cultural significance.

Reflecting on our past endeavors, during my tenure as President of AFST Mumbai, we initiated the "**Parampara**" program, aimed at preserving traditional foods and infusing scientific knowledge into their aspects. It brings me great joy to witness Purnabrahma magazine shedding light on such a critical and timely theme.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the editor for championing this significant discourse. As we embrace the dawn of a new year, let us collectively pledge to safeguard our culinary legacy. ***I encourage each one of you to dedicate at least one day a week to relish a home-cooked traditional dish. Similarly, when dining out, let us request and relish traditional dishes, thereby encouraging restaurants to preserve and promote our rich food heritage.***

May this initiative serve as a beacon, guiding us towards a future where the flavors of our traditions remain vibrant and cherished.

With warm regards

**Dr Prabodh Halde
Chairman
CASMB**



**CHAMBER FOR ADVANCEMENT
OF SMALL & MEDIUM BUSINESSES**

Nilesh Lele

**President,
Chamber for Advancement
of Small and Medium
Business**



Celebrating the Rich Tapestry of Traditional Foods and
Wishing You a Flavorful & Happy New Year !!

Dear Readers of Purnabrahma Magazine,

As we embark on a new year filled with hope and possibilities, I am delighted to extend my warmest wishes to each one of you. May the coming year be filled with joy, prosperity, and good health for you and your loved ones.

In this edition of Purnabrahma Magazine, we delve into the heart of our cultural heritage and celebrate the vibrant array of traditional foods that have been an integral part of the tapestry of India. Our culinary traditions are a reflection of our rich history, diverse communities, and the myriad flavors that make India a gastronomic paradise.

India's traditional foods are a treasure trove of unique tastes, textures, and aromas, each dish telling a story of generations past. From the aromatic biryanis of Hyderabad to the spicy curries of Kerala, and the delectable sweets of Bengal, our culinary heritage is a

testament to the unity in diversity that defines our great nation.

As we explore the pages of this magazine dedicated to traditional foods, let us take a moment to appreciate the culinary craftsmanship that has been passed down through generations.

In the spirit of the new year, let us also resolve to cherish and preserve our culinary heritage. Whether it's rediscovering forgotten recipes or introducing the younger generation to the joys of traditional cooking, let us ensure that the flavors of our past continue to enrich our present and future.

May the coming year be a time of rediscovery, celebration, and sharing the warmth of traditional foods with family and friends.

Wishing you a Happy New Year filled with love, laughter, and the delicious flavors of our traditional foods.

Warm regards,

Mr. Nilesh Lele

**President,
Chamber for the Advancement of Small and
Medium Business**



Dr. Umesh Kamble

Secretary General
Chamber for the
advancement of Small &
Medium Business
(CASMB)



Emphasizing the Significance of Health and Nutrition in the Modern Era, and the Timeless Appeal of Traditional Foods

Dear Esteemed Readers,

In an era where the pace of life seems to accelerate exponentially, our collective focus on health and nutrition has never been more critical. The choices we make in nourishing our bodies profoundly impact our overall well-being and vitality. Amidst this fast-paced lifestyle, the wisdom embedded in traditional foods emerges as a beacon, offering a harmonious blend of taste, nutrition, and cultural significance.

Traditional foods, rooted in the rich heritage of our communities, have stood the test of time. They embody not only the artistry of culinary traditions but also the inherent understanding of the delicate balance between flavour and nutritional value. In

preserving the essence of taste, traditional foods provide a compelling solution to the challenge of sustaining a healthy lifestyle.

It is inspiring to witness a renewed enthusiasm for traditional diets as individuals acknowledge the inherent value they possess. These culinary gems transcend being mere compilations of recipes; rather, they serve as archives of age-old wisdom intricately blending taste, nutrition, and cultural identity.

In our quest for overall well-being, let us revive our gratitude for the enriching attributes of traditional foods. As we step into a new year, may our pursuit of improved health be steered by the profound insights embedded in our culinary heritage. May the flavours of tradition serve as a wellspring of motivation, directing us towards a life that is not only healthier but also more satisfying.

Wishing you a New Year filled with the goodness of health and the richness of tradition.

Best regards,



Dr. Umesh Kamble,
Secretary General
Chamber for the advancement of Small &
Medium Business (CASMB)



PURNABRAHMA

**Dr. Rahuul
Marwah**

M.D. Ayurveda, DYA,
CCKS
Founder Avothikaryaa
Ayurveda, Wellness &
Beauty, Colaba,
Mumbai



Regional & Seasonal - The Guru Mantra for Health and Wellness

In the times of globalization, local food and farm produces have started to get affected in order to fulfil the newer demands. This has led to decline in the local food which is actually the most suitable for anyone in that specific geographical region. The soil of the specific region and the environment is always conducive to certain foods and that too in specific seasons. Hence, there has always been a tradition to celebrate these changes and start consuming the new season food stuff. For example, Makar Sankrant indicates the start of Later winters (called as Shishir Ritu in India). These late winters are very harshly cold and dry on the body. Hence, the body needs the warmth and the lubrication in order to function properly. So, we consume Til Gul which consists of sesame and jaggery, where sesame provides the lubrication

and jaggery being warm, provides the warmth and the satiety for the body to function in its optimum. Similar action is seen in different regions in the form of Payasam, Gud Papadi, Aldaiya Pak, Methi laddoo etc. Since ages, these have taken a form of a tradition and people have been benefited. Therefore, for anyone to stay healthy in a newer geographical region than their original, it's always beneficial to adapt to the local traditions and food instead of continuing their original ones.

In this edition of Purnabhram, we have complied different traditional foods and their benefits right from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, not only from India but also from European countries. The idea is very simple, once you have its knowledge only then you will be able to understand it, trust it and follow it, thereby become healthy.

Praying to the lord of health, Bhagwan Dhanwantari, to always bestow everyone with amazing health.

Dr. Rahuul Marwah

M.D. Ayurveda, DYA, CCKS
Founder Avothikaryaa Ayurveda, Wellness &
Beauty, Colaba, Mumbai



PURNABRAHMA

Dr. Ritika Joshi

**Sub-Editor
Purnabrahma**



When we think of comfy and divine food which truly satiates our heart, soul, palate and stomach, it has to be our traditional dishes. Not only that it brings family and friends together and helps us reconnect with one another.

Most of the traditional foods have been discovered by our home-makers who have used their culinary skills to creatively and sensibly combine the produce and ingredients available at hand. The choice of raw materials used were dependent mainly upon the geographical locations, agricultural produce and the climate of the region in general. The way of cooking was mostly characterised by the local habits, financial condition of the family and personal food choices or preferences.

Traditional foods which have been passed down through generations may not necessarily be healthy and or nutritious because of the high fat or energy content. Thus, it makes sense to modify the nutrient composition of some traditional foods

to make them more appropriate for the 21st century.

The current issue of “Purnabrahma” directs its efforts in providing a gourmet of traditional foods not only from our country but also from the world. Some of these foods may also be the lost foods or the foods that need to be revived or foods that need modification so that it becomes apt with the 21st century. In line with this, the current issue also aims to encourage the food industries and enterprises to use more of the locally available and healthy ingredients which can become essential ingredients of the 21st century traditional foods.

Our country is known for its unity in diversity. So let's keep this diversity intact while also urging the homemakers of the 21st century to rethink, revise, modify and rediscover the traditional foods so that they would become the most sought after, healthy food through generations, unbounded by time!

Thank you.

Dr. Ritika Joshi

Sub-Editor CASMB

Assistant Professor in Chemistry
S.B.E.S. College of Science, Aurangabad



Dr. Prakash Kondekar

Fellow of Royal Society of Health (London)

वक्रतुंड महाकाय सूर्यकोटि समप्रभ,
निर्विघ्नं कुरु मे देव सर्वकार्येषु सर्वदा ।

Traditional Foods

India is a vast country, with many religions, many castes and that is the reason we have many communities and cultures, leading to 'n' number of traditional foods with their uniqueness. That's why India is correctly referred to as the land of unity in diversity.

In India, traditional foods have been surpassed by culinary arts that refers to everything that goes into a plate, from the appetizer through the entree. This could include breakfast, lunch, dinner, or snacks. It can include soups, salads, proteins, grains, veggies, and more. And the service style could be plated, family-style, small plates, passed appetizers or buffet.

After the pandemic, people and the foodservice industry have become more inclined towards nutritious, inclusive, and delicious dining options. Thus there continues to be a **growing demand for plant-based culinary schools**. In fact, the global plant-based food market size is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 11.82%, reaching a value of \$22.27 billion by 2029. From the past three years, plant-based foods have surpassed total foods in both dollar and unit sales. Many chefs nationally and internationally, can enjoy learning the fundamentals and methods of plant-based recipes, basic ingredients to have on hand in a plant-based kitchen, meal compositions, seasonal menu planning, cultural plant-based cuisine, food safety, allergen awareness, and traditional ingredient substitutions. This is good on one hand however it can be a threat to the traditional Foods. Students will be

introduced to techniques for replacing traditional baking ingredients with plant-based alternatives and how to build flavor in their plant-based pastry dishes.

To withstand this situation, traditional food inventors will have to have innovations in their traditional recipes, without compromising on quality and tastes at a fairly competitive price. In the era of Artificial Intelligence this is also possible. The pandemic times and post pandemic times have seen a substantial implementation of hybrid mode in various fields. Similarly, we can have hybrid traditional foods with the introduction of plant based ingredients which is need of the hour.

I am happy to note that this Purnabrahma issue has a response from the authors not only from India but also from other countries like Kenya, Germany, Hungary and Denmark. We are thankful to all of them.

- ❖ Man made meat is a reality now
- ❖ Onion waste can be a source of good fibre food because of quercetin as phenolic ingredient in it
- ❖ Grape-seed polymers can be a preventive food for Alzheimer's disease
- ❖ Large quantity of human-derived gelatin can be a substitute for some 300000 MT of Animal-based gelatin used for candy and deserts
- ❖ Double layer fibre from oats & wheat would help to reduce the cholesterol

So traditional foods everywhere need a few innovations for their existence and utility.

Wishing Healthy 2024 to one and all.



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The Humble Hurda: Winter delicacy of Maharashtra

Swapnil S Muley

CEO & Co-Founder,
Renaissance Superfoods



Introduction

The farming community in Maharashtra looks forward to the winter season with excitement, not only because this is the time when the crops are harvested, but also because this is when they can enjoy a delicacy called *hurda*—the tender and sweet seeds of jowar freshly plucked off the plant. *Hurda* is high in fiber and provides much-needed nutrition. Farmers cultivate species such as *Gulbhendi*, *Surti* and *PhuleUttara* specifically to sell as *hurda*. Otherwise, after they have ripened, these varieties don't fetch a good price. Only some species of jowar yield sweet and chewy *hurda*, which is the kind that is most popular. Sorghum cultivated in arid areas like Marathwada is said to taste better than the varieties grown on farms with irrigation.

Main Text:

Many farmers around Pune, Solapur, Nashik and Aurangabad in Maharashtra arrange commercial *hurda* parties. At *hurda* parties, usually hosted on farms, the roasted grain is enjoyed by the warmth of a campfire. *Hurda* connoisseurs make sure to find out where friends or organizers will be hosting parties in order to savor this seasonal delicacy. *Hurda* parties are arranged at sorghum farms from December to February.

Jowar or sorghum is a millet which is a staple grain in many parts of Maharashtra and Gujarat. In its mature form, it is often milled into flour and used to make *bhakris* or flatbreads. Containing more fiber and vitamins than popular grains such as wheat or rice, millets, like jowar, have found renewed popularity in recent years. Although it is difficult to eat jowar in its



mature form unless it is cooked, *hurda* has a mellow sweetness which is accentuated by the spicy accompaniments that it is served with. *Hurda* is best eaten fresh. Farmers or organizers harvest cobs of tender jowar.

Process of roasting

They are roasted for 5-7 mins on dried cow dung or wood. Cakes of dried cow dung make for an excellent roasting medium - slow and long lasting. It requires skill to roast jowar in a way that it retains moisture and does not become too dry. Bunches of *hurda* with stems that work as a grip are pushed in the hot pit. In about five minutes the tender grains are nicely roasted. The pit keepers, i.e., *hurda* makers, have mastered the art of holding the roasted *hurda*, burning hot, in their bare palms. Vigorous rubbing, using both the palms, separates the roasted *hurda* from the chaff.

All this hard work results in a delicious heap of *hurda*! It can be directly eaten after roasting when it is still hot and tender. Jaggery (*gud*), *shengdana-lasunchutney* (both red and green) (groundnut-garlic chutney), dry *khobra* chutney (dry coconut), *wanga bhaji* (Brinjal vegetable) and *taak* (butter milk) is also served as accompaniments. Hot and spicy *thecha* made of green chilies and garlic is also served. In addition to this central component, there are other foods that are also served at *hurda* parties. Some staples include *bhakris* made of jowar flour, vegetable curries and *saoji* meat curries which are popular in various parts of Maharashtra.

TECHNICAL ARTICLE

Health benefits:

Jowar is commonly eaten with the hull, which retains the majority of the nutrients. The plant is very high in fiber and iron, with a fairly high protein level and also a good source of phosphorus and thiamine. Jowar is rich in antioxidants and all sorghum varieties are gluten-free, an attractive alternative for wheat allergy sufferers.

The newfound fascination for *hurda* parties has prompted various recipes with this ingredient as a base. If you happen to visit a party, you might be offered *hurdachaat* or fritters, *bhakri* (flatbread), and *pithla* (a curry made from gram flour). Occasionally, corn, eggplant, and onion are roasted along with *hurda*.

History

Even though *hurda* parties could be mistaken as a modern day phenomenon, they actually stem from a long-standing pan-Indian tradition of celebrating harvests. Maharashtra [and India in general], has had a tradition of celebrating the harvest of many farm products, like millets, mango, or sugarcane. Though it

has not been documented, it is believed that the tradition of *hurda* parties might be at least a century old. In earlier times, farmers would spend day and night guarding the valuable jowar grains that were about to be harvested. Hence, in order to entertain themselves, they may have started bonfires and roasted tender jowar to eat. Realizing that this tender *ponkh* or *hurda* was tasty, they may have begun arranging get-togethers for friends and relatives to enjoy it.

What lies ahead?

Apart from farms, *hurda* is also sold in markets during the winter season. This seasonal delicacy can also be ordered online, and many restaurants have begun to showcase it in dishes. But amidst the rising popularity, a whisper of concern arises. Like quinoa and amaranth, *hurda* now faces the risk of becoming expensive, potentially slipping away from the very communities that nurtured it for generations. To ensure its survival, conscious choices must be made, ensuring that this humble harvest treat remains accessible for all. ❑



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Celebrating Millet Kulfi: A Fusion of Tradition Food and Health

Grishma Mehta



In the rich tapestry of Indian culinary heritage, millets have emerged as nutritional powerhouses that have sustained generations for centuries. As we step into the year 2023, declared as the International Year of Millet, it is apt to explore the intersection of tradition and health through a beloved Indian dessert – *Millet Kulfi*. Additionally, recognizing the significance of millets in Indian agriculture, the year 2018 was declared the National Year of Millet, emphasizing the importance of these ancient grains.

The Tradition of Millets and Kulfi in India:

Millet cultivation in India dates back to ancient times, deeply rooted in the country's agricultural practices. Millets, such as pearl millet, sorghum, foxtail millet, and finger millet, have been staple foods in various regions of India, contributing to the resilience of communities in the face of diverse climatic conditions.

The word "*millet*" is derived from the Old French term "*millet*", which itself has roots in *Latin*. The *Latin* word "*milium*" refers to millet or a similar grain.

These ancient grains have been cultivated for thousands of years and have played a crucial role in the diets of various communities across the world, especially in Asia and Africa.

Here are some key points about millets:

1. *Varieties of Millets*-Large millets include pearl, foxtail, proso, and finger (*ragi*), while small millets comprise kodo, barnyard, little, Guinea, browntop, fonio, and adlay (Job's tears).
2. *Nutritional Content*- Millets are highly nutritious

and offer a rich source of essential nutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, dietary fiber, vitamins (especially B-complex vitamins), and minerals (iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and zinc). They are also known for their relatively high protein content compared to other cereals.

3. *Gluten-Free Grains*-Millets are naturally gluten-free, making them suitable for individuals with gluten sensitivities or those diagnosed with celiac disease. This characteristic has contributed to the growing popularity of millets as a gluten-free alternative in various food products.
4. *Drought-Tolerant Crops*- Millets are hardy crops that can thrive in semi-arid and arid conditions with minimal water requirements. Their ability to grow in regions with less rainfall makes them well-suited for cultivation in areas facing water scarcity.
5. *Sustainable Agriculture*-The cultivation of millets contributes to sustainable agriculture practices due to their low water requirements and ability to grow in less fertile soils. Millets can be part of crop rotation strategies, enhancing soil fertility and reducing the need for chemical inputs.
6. *Low Glycemic Index*-Millets generally have a lower glycemic index compared to some other grains, resulting in a slower release of glucose into the bloodstream. This property can be beneficial for managing blood sugar levels, making millets suitable for individuals with diabetes.
7. *Benefits of Millet*-Millet is a gluten-free whole grain that offers a range of health benefits. It is a good source of dietary fiber, which aids digestion and helps in maintaining a healthy weight. Millets also contain antioxidants, including phenolic compounds, which may contribute to the prevention of chronic diseases.

Similarly, *kulfi*, a frozen dairy dessert, holds a special place in Indian culinary traditions. Believed to have originated in the Indian subcontinent during the Mughal era, *kulfi* has evolved over the years, adapting to regional tastes and ingredients.

The International Year of Millet 2023:

The International Year of Millet aims to raise awareness about the nutritional benefits of millets and their role in achieving food security. Millets are not only rich in essential nutrients such as iron, magnesium, and B vitamins, but they are also resilient crops that require minimal water and can thrive in harsh conditions, making them crucial for sustainable agriculture.

Combining Tradition with Health: Millet Kulfi

Millet Kulfi serves as a delightful example of merging tradition with health-conscious choices. By incorporating millets into this beloved dessert, we not only pay homage to our cultural roots but also embrace a more nutritious and sustainable way of living.

Recipe for Millet Kulfi:

Ingredients:

- 1 cup millet flour (any preferred millet)
- 2 cups full-fat milk
- 1 cup condensed milk
- 1/2 cup sugar (adjust according to taste)
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts (almonds, pistachios)
- 1/2 teaspoon cardamom powder
- Saffron strands for garnishing (optional)

Instructions:

Roast millet flour in a pan until it emits a nutty aroma. In a separate pan, bring the full-fat milk to a boil. Add the

roasted millet flour to the boiling milk, stirring continuously to avoid lumps. Once the mixture thickens, add condensed milk and sugar. Continue stirring until the sugar dissolves. Add chopped nuts and cardamom powder. Mix well. Allow the mixture to cool slightly before pouring it into *kulfi* molds or any desired containers. Freeze the *kulfi* for at least 6 hours or overnight. Garnish with saffron strands before serving.

Millets will have a profound impact on the economy too, especially for small-scale farmers. Millets are often hardy crops that require less intensive care compared to some major cereals. Their cultivation can contribute to rural livelihoods, promoting sustainable agriculture practices and enhancing food security at the community level. Thereby not limiting millet to a “poor man's diet”.

As we celebrate the International Year of Millet in 2023, let us acknowledge the nutritional prowess of these ancient grains and relish the cultural treasures they bring to our tables. *MilletKulfi*, with its blend of tradition and health, stands as a testament to the adaptability and timelessness of Indian culinary heritage. Let this year be an initiation, encouraging us not just to commemorate the International Year of Millet, but to increase the usage of these traditional grains in our daily lives. By incorporating millets into our diets and recipes, we can embrace a healthier lifestyle while preserving the rich heritage that millets have woven into the fabric of our culinary traditions. Let the International Year of Millet be a catalyst for a sustained and widespread appreciation of these versatile and nutritious grains, ensuring their continued significance in the years to come. ❑

Nutrigram sweet stuffed balls / Pesarapappu Pooli Boorellu

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Introduction:

Exploring traditional south Indian dishes, especially those from Andhra cuisine, feels like a journey into our heritage and roots. There's a distinct richness and cultural essence in each dish that speaks volumes about our tradition.

Introducing these dishes to our children isn't just about food; it's about passing down a legacy, sharing stories about our culture, and connecting them to their heritage. And in doing so, it becomes a journey about ensuring that these recipes don't just remain in cookbooks but become living tradition, cherished and celebrated at family gatherings.

Preserving these recipes isn't merely about the flavors; it's about preserving a piece of our identity. Through these dishes, we keep alive the memories of our ancestors and the essence of our heritage. And by teaching these to the younger generation, we empower them with a sense of pride and belonging, strengthening their connection to their roots.

So, as you embark on this culinary journey, remember that every dish holds within it a piece of its unique history. The effort to explore and pass down these traditional Andhra specialties is not just for present but the legacy of flavors, stories and culture significance that it will leave behind.

Main Text:

Recipe of Pesarapappu Pooli Boorellu

Preparation time: 30 – 40 mins; **Cooking time:** 1 hour

Makes ready about 18-20 pieces

Ingredients:

Black gram dal: ½ cup (25 g)
Rice: 1 cup (50g)
Moog dal: 1 cup (180 g)
Grated fresh coconut: ½ cup (20g)
Powered jaggery: ½ cup (150 g)
Cardamon powder: ½ tsp
Salt to taste
Oil for deep frying

Methods & Preparation:

Preparation of outer cover

Step 1: Combine black gram and rice and soak in enough water for 4 – 6 hours. Drain and grind to a smooth batter using enough water. The batter should have the consistency of heavy cream. Add salt and set aside.

Poonam preparation

Step 2: Soak green gram dal in enough water for 1-2h. Drain the water and grind to thick consistency like idly batter then add little water and salt.

Preparation of filling

Step 3: Pour the moong dal batter into greased Idli plates and steam cook for 12-15 minutes. Switch off the stove and allow it to cool. Chop and grind the pieces and set aside.

Step 4: Take heavy bottomed vessel on medium heat, cook the jaggery with a sprinkle of water until it melts. Add mashed green gram dal and cook till the mixture comes together and does not stick anymore. Add grated coconut and cook for 1 more minute.

Step 5: Turn off the heat and let the mixture cool for 10 minutes. Then divide the filling into equal sized balls. Place them on a plate to cool completely.

Step 6: Take one filling ball and dip in covering batter. Roll it to cover evenly with the batter. Remove and gently slide into the hot oil. Cook by stirring occasionally, until boorellu turns golden brown from all the sides. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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Nutritive value for ingredient used in *pessara papu boorelu*

Ingredient	Grams	Calories	Fats	Protien	Carbo-hydrates
Blackgram dal	½ cup (25 g)	86.75	0.35	0.8	14.9
Rice	1 cup (50 g)	172.5	0.5	3.4	38.35
Green gram dal	1 ¾ (180 g)	cup 601	2.34	43.2	102.06
Jaggery/sugar	1 ½ cup (150 g)	574	0.9	0.6	142.5
Coconut	¾ cup (20 g)	62.4	0.56	0.9	9.58
Cardamon powder	½ tsp	-	-	-	-
Salt	For taste	-	-	-	-
Total		1496.65	4.65	48.9	307.39

Calories Fats Protien Carbo-hydrates

Total serving 1496.65 4.65 48.9 307.39

One piece 83.1 0.2 2.7 17.77

Tips:

1. Adding little jaggery or sugar in the batter gives mild sweet taste to the outer covering.
2. *Poornam* should be thick and there should not be any moisture content in it else it will disperse in oil when we deep fry the balls. ❑



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Wazwan... A Kashmiri Delicacy

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Wazwan is a traditional multi-course meal served in Kashmiri cuisine, specifically associated with the region of Kashmir. It is considered a grand feast and is an integral part of the rich cultural heritage of the Kashmiri people. The term "Wazwan" is derived from "Waz", meaning "chef" or "cooking", highlighting the importance of skilled chefs in its preparation.

A typical *Wazwan* meal is a lavish spread of aromatic, flavourful dishes. It predominantly features meat-based preparations, particularly lamb, along with an array of spices and local ingredients. The meal begins with a series of famous dishes *Seekh Kabab*, *Tabak Maaz*, *Meethi maaz*, *Dani Phol*.



*Mr Mir in
Mumbai*



*Mr. Mir with
Traditional, पापड.*

The main course of *Wazwan* is centred on the legendary dish called "*Rista*", which consists of large meatballs made from minced lamb cooked in a rich and spicy red gravy. Another highlight is the "*Rogan Josh*", a slow-cooked lamb curry infused with Kashmiri spices. Other dishes like "*Yakhni*," a yogurt-based mutton curry, and "*Goshtaba*," meatballs served in a thick yogurt-based gravy add to the variety and richness of the meal.

Accompaniments like steamed rice, (*Mushk-e-Budgi*), is served alongside the main dishes.

To round off the meal, desserts like "*Phirni*," a creamy rice pudding flavoured with cardamom and saffron, is served.

It is important to note that a *Wazwan* feast typically includes several dishes showcasing the culinary expertise and hospitality of the Kashmiri people. The meal is usually enjoyed communally, where guests sit together on a large cloth called a "*dastarkhwan*" and relish the aromatic flavours as well as textures of each dish.

The richness, intricacy, and distinct flavours of Kashmiri *Wazwan* have made it renowned not only in Kashmir but also across the Indian subcontinent and beyond. It has become an epitome of Kashmiri culture and is cherished as a significant culinary tradition by both locals and tourists alike. □



Tradition of Devotion

Dr. Priya Ghatwai



In the timeless tradition of India, the kitchen is a sacred space. Vedic culture allows one to awaken, express and nourish love for God in every aspect of life including art, music, architecture, literature, medicine, and most importantly, cooking and eating.

In several cultures around the world, people express gratitude and thanks for the meal on their plate before eating. Certainly this aspect is present in our culture as "Vadani Kawal Gheta Naav Ghya Sri Hari che..."

However, what distinguishes Vedic cooking from other types of cooking is that the food is cooked FOR the Lord!! The cook's consciousness is different! The food is not just cooked for the pleasure of the tongue, or for profit, or indeed, survival, but as an act or offering of love and devotion to the almighty. God first enjoys the food and we honor the prasadam - God's mercy or blessings. Such prasadam nourishes not only the body and the mind, but also soul. The proof of the pudding is in the eating!

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 9, Verse 26:

पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।
तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥

If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I will accept it.



Fig: The holy Basil or Tulsi

Whether it is an opulent chappan bhog, or a glass of water and the holy basil (Tulsi) leaf, or the tribal Dasya Bauri's coconut - the offered item(s) doesn't matter to the Lord. What matters is the thought and the love that goes into the process. A person of every economic stratum can participate in this loving exchange.

This can be done in a home setting or a temple setting! For e.g., the kitchen of Jagannath Puri is the largest in the world, about 1 hectare in size. 5000 kg of food is cooked here daily on 752 stoves, exclusively in clay pots, without electricity or machines! On festival days such as Rath Yatra, up to 1 crore people can be served sumptuous prasadam from this kitchen. "Vilayati subjis" such as tomatoes, potatoes, cauliflower, etc., are not used. Only indigenous, local produce is used for cooking. An interesting fact about how rice has been cooked here for centuries is that after cooking rice, a small hole is made at the bottom of the pot to drain the water, which is transported to a tank outside the temple by pipes, where it is consumed by many animals!

In Jagannath Puri, one can buy the prasadam from the vendors in Anand Bazar for a nominal price - dal, rice, succulent subjis, kheer, sweets like the famous khaja are all available - fresh and in plenty! And if you hold out your hand in front of a vendor, they must give you a serving of whatever it is you desire from the sacred pots in front of them - without taking any money! Anand Bazaar, true to its name, is truly blissful! Young and old, rich and poor, all come together to honor and celebrate the glorious mahaprasad of Lord Jagannath. Leftover rice is dried and called Nirmalya; it is sacred, treasured and used to break Ekadashi fasts, etc.



Picture: Khaja Prasad from Jagannath Puri

Many temples are famous for their age old, distinctive prasadam items! Some such as Tirupati Laddoo, and the Odisha Rasagollas have even received the Geographical Indication tag.



Fig: Tirupati Laddoo

It is said that Goddess Lakshmi was angry with Lord Jagannath when he goes for his Rath Yatra without informing her. So much so, that when he returns, she locks the gate to the sanctum sanctorum to prevent Him from entering. In a wonderful tradition, Lord Jagannath then appeases her by offering rasagollas!!



Fig. Odisha Rasagollas

Our country has so many cultures and literally, infinite styles of cooking and a heritage of practically infinite preparations. Complete, nutritious, balanced meals can be made from these! There are food items for feasting, fasting, convalescence!

In the age of globalization, the cosmopolitan chef is more aware of how to make cakes, pizza and pasta than the local cuisine of the land. (Speaking of cakes, did you know a type of cake has been offered in Jagannath Puri for centuries? It is called chenna poda and comprises mainly chenna, rava and jaggery baked in an open wood-fired oven.)

There are some noteworthy people who have attempted to document regional cuisines. Kamalabai Ogale in Ruchira for mainly Maharashtrian cuisine, Meenakshi Ammal in Samaithu Paar for Tamil cuisine, Ratna Roy in Thamma's Recipes for vegetarian Bengali dishes, Komala Sista Rao (mother of Pari Hu Main singer Sunita Rao) in The Andhra Cookbook for Andhra cuisine, Usha Rani Tripathy in A Taste of Odisha for Odia cuisine, and of course, Tarla Dalal for Gujarati, Rajasthani, Punjabi and other dishes! These cookbooks are readily available and we can certainly benefit from their research and expertise!

To conclude, Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 9, Verse 27,

यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।
यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform – do that, O son of Kunti, as an offering to Me.

Eating and cooking, fasting and feasting, serving food to guests, mendicants, pilgrims, the elderly, sick, convalescents, children, babies, etc. are all expressions of love and devotion and a true, time-honored tradition of our land. Let us embrace this tradition and experience the bliss of tradition with devotion!

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DECLARATION



- The contents of this issue is referred and compiled from various sources and Purnabrahma doesn't claim it's authenticity.
- The contents given in the article are the views of the respective authors.

Water Footprint Of Indian Diets

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The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations officially instituted World Food Day on 16th October 1979. The World Food Day is observed annually and encourages action for the future of food, people, and the planet. 'Water is Life, Water is Food. Leave No One Behind' is the theme of World Food Day 2023. The theme seeks to emphasise the pivotal significance of water in sustaining life on the planet and its fundamental role as the basis for our food sources. The planet's water supplies are facing escalating stress due to rapid population increase, urbanisation, economic expansion, and climate change. Simultaneously, there has been a 20% decrease in per capita freshwater resources over the past few decades, accompanied by a rapid deterioration in water availability and quality. Currently, there is a population of over 2.4 billion individuals residing in nations that experience water scarcity. Approximately 600 million individuals, whose livelihoods rely to some extent on aquatic food systems, are currently experiencing the adverse consequences of pollution, deterioration of ecosystems, unsustainable practises, and climate change. Three SDGs directly and closely linked with water are – SDG2 Zero Hunger, SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation and SDG 14 Life below Water. The challenge is to produce more food to meet SDG2 with caution to achieve SDG 6 and 14 too.

The simple steps to be taken by various stake holders are -

Produce sustainably – Produce low water footprint foods.

Choose sustainably – Select and consume foods with low water footprint.

Act sustainably – avoid food wastage.

Water footprint of various food crops

The concept of water footprint is employed to quantify the utilisation of water in relation to one's diet. The water footprint is categorised into three distinct components, namely green, blue, and grey. The green water footprint symbolises the amount of precipitation utilised in the process of production. The blue water footprint signifies the volume of ground and surface water allocated for irrigation purposes in crop cultivation. Lastly, the grey water footprint depicts the quantity of freshwater needed to dilute agricultural pollutants.

India is home to a diverse range of crops because of the extremely different soil and climatic conditions that exist in its various topographies. These agricultural products are categorised primarily as cash crops, horticulture crops, food cereals, and plantation crops. Water is a fundamental resource that is indispensable for the healthy development of these commodities. The production of 1kg of rice necessitates a water input ranging from 3,000 to 5,000 gallons; production of 1 kg of cotton requires 22,500 gallons of water; cultivation of sugarcane requires 1500 and 3000 L of water per kg while the production of soybeans requires approximately 900 L of water per kg of harvested yield. The infrastructure and methods for using surface and ground water have made it feasible to intensify food production to support our country's expanding population, hence increasing the blue water footprint.

Indian food based dietary guidelines to promote individual and planet health

The dietary guidelines for the Indian population established by the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad, promote the adequate consumption of cereals and legumes/beans, a liberal intake of vegetables and fruits, a moderate consumption of animal source foods and oils, and a limited consumption of highly processed foods that are rich in sugar and fat. The suggestions have been developed with the objective of optimising sustainability for both individuals and the environment. After conducting an

analysis of food patterns among individuals across the nation and comparing them with the recommended dietary requirements, it is evident that there is a significant discrepancy between observed dietary practises and the prescribed recommendations.

Water footprint of current indian diets

The present-day Indian diets are high in cereals and therefore, meet the energy requirements however, the % energy derived from proteins is below the recommended levels. The diets can be classified into two main categories: those based on rice and those based on wheat, although there are minor differences arising due to incorporation of fruits, vegetables, and livestock in varying proportions. The intake of fruits and vegetables is reported to be very low across all the regions. The water footprints generated by these diets show considerable variation because of diverse patterns of food intake and socio-demographic variables. The blue water footprint of meals in northern regions of India is found to be around 1.5 times higher than that of diets in southern regions. Diets in urban areas exhibit a significantly greater blue water footprint in comparison to diets observed in rural regions of India. It has been demonstrated that rice-based diets have a greater green water footprint while wheat-based diets have a higher blue water footprint.

The water footprint of diets is significantly influenced not only by their composition but also by their processing, transportation, retailing, and consumption. Urban populations seek more of convenience and processed foods adding to the water as well as the carbon footprint. Rural diets predominantly consist of components that are minimally processed. However, when evaluating the water footprints of food in rural India, the inclusion of cooking fuel significantly outweighs other factors, hence exerting a dominant influence on the overall water footprint.

The aspirational diets in India often show a shift towards animal source foods. Most animal source foods have a higher water footprint viz. chicken requires 4,325 litres of water, cattle 15,415 litres, lamb 10,412 litres, and pork 5,988 litres to produce 1 kg of animal-derived foods. However, the per capita meat consumption in India is notably lesser at 4 kg, in contrast to industrialised nations such as the United States of America where it stands at 124 kg per

person. Also, it is the sole source of protein in certain indigenous populations and isn't produced on an industrial scale hence it should not be a major cause of concern and action.

Actions for promoting individual and planet health

It is imperative to implement a series of timely interventions aimed at promoting dietary patterns that prioritise both individual and planetary well-being. According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 5 data, there is a consistent presence of malnutrition, which encompasses undernutrition, over nutrition, and micronutrient deficiencies, either individually or in combination. The national guidelines mandate a modest increase in overall energy intake by 3%, accompanied by more substantial increases in fruit intake by 18% and vegetable intake by 72%. Modelling studies estimate that adherence to healthy recommendations will result in a modest increase of approximately 3-5% in environmental footprints, namely in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, blue and green water footprints, and land use. However, it is important to acknowledge that the national averages tend to normalise the discrepancies prevalent within individual sub-populations. For example, in the event that individuals with dietary energy intake below the recommended levels were to shift towards more nutritious eating patterns, it would result in a 28% escalation in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, an 18% augmentation in blue water footprints, a 34% rise in green water footprints, and a 41% expansion in land use. A parallel reduction in environmental consequences is expected in populations who currently consume dietary energy beyond the recommended levels, with footprints decreasing by 6% to 16%.

Approximately one-third of the global food supply is lost or wasted. Food loss and waste occurs throughout the food supply chain, encompassing farms, facilities, storage, distribution, retail businesses, and households. Globally, root crops demonstrate a higher prevalence of food loss and waste approximately, 40-50%, followed by fish- 35% and cereals- 30%. Oilseeds, livestock, and dairy products indicate a lower incidence of food loss and waste, estimated at 20%. In the context of India, animal-derived goods make a relatively minor contribution to the overall water footprint of food loss and waste,

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accounting for less than 4% of the total. In contrast, sugarcane, maize, rice, and potatoes collectively contribute to over 70% of the water footprint associated with food loss and waste. According to estimates, a total of approximately 115 ± 4.15 billion m³ of water is wasted in India because of food losses. The use of strategies to prevent food loss and waste can successfully address the challenges of water shortage and food insecurity.

It will be prudent to cutdown on processed foods including sugar and salt associated with increased prevalence of non-communicable diseases. Replace the staples with high water footprint and high glycemic index with low water footprint and low glycemic index

i.e. replace wheat and rice with millets. Optimise the protein intake through judicious incorporation of various plant proteins. To address the issue at hand, it is highly probable that the implementation of a more efficient food production system and the decrease of food waste would be necessary. Advocacy to shift towards healthy water resilient diets is necessary. Taxing of unhealthy foods along with subsidizing healthy foods has proven to be beneficial in reducing the water footprint and the burden of non-communicable diseases. Timely stringent measures will help in mitigating the impending water crisis and give impetus to the theme 'Water is Life, Water is Food. Leave No One Behind'. ❑



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Puran Poli: A Timeless Culinary Treasure

Priyanka Kumbhar

Food Technologist



Introduction

India, a land of diverse cultures and traditions, boasts a kaleidoscope of festivals celebrated with fervour and unique culinary delights. Maharashtra, a state with a rich cultural tapestry, is no exception. Amidst the vibrant festivities of Holi, Shraavan, Ganapati-Gauri, Gudipadwa, Diwali, and more, one culinary gem takes centre stage – the beloved *Puran Poli*.

This classical Maharashtrian sweet dish, often referred to as flatbread, has transcended geographical boundaries, making its way to tables across America and Europe. *Puran Poli*, a true signature dish of Maharashtra, holds a special place in the hearts and homes of locals.

This sweet and indulgent treat, consumed during significant occasions and festivals, encapsulates the essence of Maharashtra's culinary heritage. With its roots deeply embedded in tradition, *Puran Poli* has acquired various regional names like *Vedmi* in Gujarat, *Boli* in Malayalam/Tamil regions, *Bobbattu/Bakshalu* in Telugu, *Holige* and *Obbattu* in Kannada, and *Ubbatti* or *Poli* in Konkani dialect. In its native Marathi, it is simply known as *Puran Poli*.

At its core, *Puran Poli* is a flatbread generously stuffed with a delectable mixture of jaggery and Bengal gram (split). Served with a side of spicy curry, often referred to as *Katachi Aamti*, or accompanied by milk or thick mango juice, this dish is a harmonious blend of sweet and savory flavors. During festivals, *Puran Poli* takes on a divine role as it is presented to the Gods,

symbolizing devotion and gratitude, and referred to as *Nevedyam*.

As this culinary masterpiece continues to traverse seas and continents, it brings with it the warmth of Maharashtra's kitchens and the spirit of its festivals. This article will take you to the flavourful journey as we discover the cultural significance of *Puran Poli* that makes it an indispensable part of Maharashtra's culinary landscape.

Historical Imprints:

Puran Poli stands as a timeless culinary treasure, tracing its origins back to approximately 2000 years ago during the *Shaliwana* era. This delectable dish, a flatbread filled with a sweet mixture of jaggery and Bengal gram, has woven its delightful narrative through the corridors of time. The *Puran Poli*'s existence resonates in the ancient Marathi script, *Keakwali*, providing an attractive hint of its flavours from about a millennium ago. Progressing into the 12th century, the Sanskrit text by Someshwar proudly acknowledges the enduring presence of *Puran Poli*.

Even the revered *Dyanshwari*, another Marathi script, pays homage to this culinary gem under the name of *Mande*. The historical story continues with *Manucharitra*, a Telugu encyclopedia, offering a glimpse into the past with its mention of the *bakshyam* recipe. Fast-forwarding to the 17th century, the esteemed Bhavaprakash & Bhaishajya Ratnavali by Govind Dasa recognizes *Puran Poli* as an ayurvedic preparation. The 18th century adds another chapter to its legacy as Sawai Madhavarao's wedding letter immortalizes the dish, noting its distinguished presence on the menu, generously paired with ghee.

Over many centuries and through different writings, *Puran Poli* stands out as an amazing dish, showcasing Maharashtra's rich culinary history.

Nutritional Importance:

Puran Poli, a traditional Maharashtrian sweet dish, has a distinguished place on festive tables, celebrated for its rich flavours and cultural significance. This indulgent treat is not just a delight for the taste buds but also a nutritional powerhouse. The key ingredients, including Bengal gram, jaggery, wheat flour, and spices such as nutmeg and cardamom, contribute to a well-rounded blend of nutrients.

Bengal gram (chickpea), the protein-packed hero of *Puran Poli*, offers a substantial dose of arginine, tyrosine, and around 11% fiber. This legume not only aids in building strong muscles but also provides essential micronutrients like zinc, folate, and calcium. The inclusion of jaggery enhances its mineral profile, offering iron, calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus. It is known as "Medicinal Sugar," and serves as a natural sweetener offering both color and a distinctive flavour. Chickpeas are also a good source of all essential amino acids except sulphur amino acid, and methionine. Although deficient in essential amino acid lysine, wheat flour is a good source of cysteine and methionine. The nutritional complementarity of cereals and legume proteins is well-known. Chickpeas are a rich source of lysine, the combined use of chickpeas and wheat flour constitutes protein complementation thereby providing complete protein.

In Ayurveda, *Puran Poli* is hailed as a *sattvic* dish with sweet, mild, and nourishing tastes. The addition of cardamom and nutmeg brings not just delightful flavours but also digestive benefits, combating mucus production and aiding digestion.

Advance studies:

A study by Vanarase Pooja *et al.* (2018) explored the optimization of *Puran Poli*, a traditional Indian sweet flatbread. The research focused on different combinations of Bengal gram and jaggery, assessing sensory, color, and texture aspects. Dough preparation was fine-tuned based on proving time. *Puran Poli* was then stored in LDPE, zip lock pouch, and laminated aluminium zip pouch under freezing conditions (-18°C) for 28 days. Physicochemical, microbial, and sensory evaluations were conducted at intervals. The pH slightly decreased in LDPE and zip lock pouch samples, with no significant change in the laminated aluminium zip pouch sample. Microbiologically, *Puran Poli* in the laminated aluminium zip pouch remained safe throughout the 28 day storage, indicating stability and acceptability under frozen conditions (-18°C).

In 2018 study, Kadbhane VS and Giram KK aimed to simplify the preparation of *Puran Poli* by introducing an instant premix powder. Using key ingredients like Bengal gram, jaggery, coconut powder, and cardamom, they created different samples, dried at varying temperatures. Sample C, dried at 60 °C, emerged as the most acceptable based on sensory characteristics and nutritional content. This premix study offers a convenient and time-saving solution without compromising on the traditional flavours of *Puran Poli*.

In a 2019 study, Nilesh Balasaheb Kardile explored a time-efficient method for preparing *Puran*, the stuffing of *Puran Poli* —a traditional Indian sweet flatbread. Instant *Puran Powder* (IPP) was created through hot air drying (HAD) and vacuum drying (VD) at temperatures ranging from 40 to 60°C. The vacuum-dried IPP at 60°C showed superior attributes, including high water absorption, rehydration ratio, and overall acceptability. The drying method had minimal impact on protein digestibility and mineral content. Notably, IPP dried by VD at 60°C exhibited the highest moisture diffusivity and the lowest activation energy. This research offers an innovative solution to streamline the traditional *Puran* preparation process.

Conclusion:

Puran Poli stands not only as a delectable dish but as a culinary time capsule, preserving the rich heritage of Maharashtra for over two millennia. Its journey, chronicled in ancient scripts, ayurvedic texts, and even royal menus, is a testament to its enduring popularity.

Puran Poli emerges as a nutritional powerhouse, blending proteins and fibres from chickpeas, jaggery, and wheat flour. Recognized in Ayurveda as a '*sattvic*' dish, it not only pleases the palate but aligns with principles of holistic well-being.

The evolving landscape of *Puran Poli* is marked by contemporary studies, leveraging technological advancements. Pioneering efforts by researchers such as Vanarase Pooja, Kadbhane VS, Giram KK, and Nilesh Balasaheb Kardile delve into the realms of instant mixes and innovative drying techniques. These endeavours represent a harmonious fusion of tradition and technology, ensuring *Puran Poli*'s resonance with the demands of modern, fast-paced lifestyles.

As we gaze into the future of *Puran Poli*, the prospect of a seamlessly blended tradition and technology emerges. The challenge lies in preserving its distinctive flavour profile while catering to the rapid pace of modern life.

In a world where traditional dishes often face the risk of fading, *Puran Poli* stands strong, a symbol of resilience. It's timeless journey, from ancient scripts to today's research labs, reflects its ability to adapt and remain beloved. With every delightful bite of *Puran Poli*, we not only experience the sweetness of the dish but also savor the richness of Maharashtra's culinary legacy. ■

Conservation and Promotion of traditional food culture

(Recipes from Central India)

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The value of food is much more than the means of survival or source of nutrients. It represents the cultural identity of a particular region and passion of the people belonging to that region. In the 21st century, due to whooping advancements in technology, people can order any sort of food to get at their doorsteps. Food is transformed from being a basic necessity to a marketable commodity. Yet, due to emotional and cultural binding, there is always a craze for traditional food.

Central India cuisine is known for its tangy, spicy and tasty recipes, which also demonstrate a balanced nutrition. So, we have offered some traditional recipes from central India for you to relish.



Fig: 1 Ambil

1. Jowar Ambil (Fermented sorghum porridge)

Sorghum is the most common millet cultivated in central India. Fermented and cooked porridge is an essential item of the '*Prasad*' offered during the *Mahalaxmi poojan*, along with elaborate menu of *Puran Poli* and several other accompaniments.

Ingredients:

1 bowl full (app 100g) Sorghum grits, 1/4th bowl sour curd, 1 Tablespoon each (App 10-15 g) of *Khus khus* (poppy seeds), *Til* (Sesame seeds), Roasted groundnuts, small pieces of fresh coconut, 1 teaspoon of *Charoli*(Almondette), 1 teaspoonful each of grated ginger, shredded curry leaves and green coriander, 1 teaspoonful of cumin seeds, 2/3 green chillies cut in small pieces, salt and sugar to taste.

Tadka: 1/2 teaspoonful each of mustard seeds and *hing* (Asaphoetida), 1 tablespoonful oil

Method:

1. Mix sorghum grits with curd, about 1 bowl full water and a pinch of salt and leave the slurry for 3-4 hours for fermentation, till it shows slight bubble formation and gives typical fermented flavour.
2. Boil about 1 bowl full water in a heavy bottomed pan. When it begins to boil, then add fermented slurry with constant stirring, to avoid lump formation. Add all ingredients except *tadka* ingredients, and keep on stirring till the mixture thickens. Add more water if necessary, to achieve consistency of soft porridge, mix and cover the pot with a lid, and let the mass cook thoroughly.
3. At the end, prepare *tadka* with oil, mustard seeds, and *hing*. Add this *tadka* to the cooked slurry, and again cover and cook for few minutes.

Serve *ambil* in a bowl, garnished with chopped coriander leaves.

Variation: In some families, '*Ambil*' is cooked avoiding chillies, curry leaves, coriander, and *tadka*. This '*Ambil*' is served with milk and sugar.

Nutrition: Sorghum, being a millet, is a good source of fiber, and micronutrients. Nutritional value is enhanced by poppy seeds, sesame seeds, ground nut, coconut and the micronutrients generated during fermentation. Curry leaves, green chillies and coriander add to the taste, along with the carotenoids and iron.

Overall, *Ambil* is a healthy dish that can be

incorporated in our regular weekly or fortnightly schedule and not to be restricted to once a year 'Prasad' to goddess *Mahalaxmi*.



Fig: 2 Gola Bhat

2. Gola Bhat (Fried rice with lentil balls)

Gola Bhat is a popular traditional menu in Chandrapur and nearby areas. It represents a convenient way to incorporate rice and legumes in a tasty one dish meal. Pilgrims used to carry *bharada* with them and cook a satisfying meal equivalent to *dal-bhat* in a single pot.

Ingredients

2 bowl full rice, 1 bowl full coarsely ground mixture-called as *Bharada*- of channa dal (Split Bengal gram) and Tuar dal (Split red gram), 1 teaspoon each of red chilli powder, turmeric powder, coriander powder and til (sesame seeds), $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon *ajwain* (Carom seeds), salt to taste. 6-8 pods of garlic (optional).

Tadka: 1 teaspoon mustard seeds, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin seeds, 1 teaspoon Asaphoetida, 2 tablespoon oil, 4-6 dry red chillies.

Method –

1. Mix coarse mixture of *channa* and *toor* dal with red chili powder, turmeric, coriander powder, *til*, *ajwain*, salt and 1 teaspoon oil. Add water to prepare a loose dough, and leave for some time.
2. Wash the rice. Prepare *tadka* using 1 teaspoon oil, cumin seeds, $\frac{1}{2}$ tea spoon turmeric powder and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon asaphoetida in a heavy bottom pot. Add rice and 2-2.5 bowls water for cooking of rice.
3. Check the dough prepared earlier, and add little

water if necessary, and form small oval dumplings of the dough.

4. When the rice is swollen and half cooked, carefully insert the prepared dumplings in rice, check if it needs more water, and cover the pot with a lid. Carefully stir the rice once or twice, without breaking the dumplings, till both are well cooked.
5. Prepare *tadka* with 3 tablespoon oil, mustard seeds dry red chillies and asaphoetida.

Serve rice along with $\frac{1}{2}$ dumplings in a plate. Crush the dumplings (*Gola*). Add 1 teaspoonful of *tadka* with red chillies with rice, and enjoy a tasty spicy variation of fried rice. It is generally accompanied with sweet and sour tamarind *saar*.

Nutrition: It represents a perfect combination of rice with legumes, a perfect balanced meal.



Fig: 3 Khar wadi kept for drying

3. Kharwadi

KharWadi is traditional recipe from central India (a dry crisp tangy finger food enjoyed by young and old alike - good timepass, especially in hot summer afternoons).

Ingredients -

- 1 bowl full Bajara
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bowl *til* seeds (sesame)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ th bowl sour curd
- 10-12 garlic cloves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful asafoetida (*hing*)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful jeera powder

Salt and chilli powder as per taste (or finely chopped green chilli)

4 bowls Water

Method:

1. Roast bajra seeds in a *kadhai*, till they appear swollen. Cool, and grind to coarse powder.
2. Soak bajra powder in curd and 1 bowl water, to make smooth paste, and leave for around 1 hour.
3. Heat 3 bowlful of water in a thick bottomed pan. As the water starts boiling, remove one bowlful of hot water in a container.
4. Add salt, chopped garlic pods, green/red chilli, asafoetida, jeera powder and til to remaining hot water, and bring it to boil. Now, slowly add soaked bajra paste with constant stirring, to avoid lump formation, till the mixture thickens to form a

semisolid mass and the uncooked taste is removed. Additional hot water may be added if necessary. It is advised to cook this at night and leave it overnight, to cool, by covering the pot by fine cloth.

Next morning, spread a plastic sheet in a plastic tray, or flat bamboo tray. Mix the pasty mass thoroughly, and drop small blobs on plastic sheet with finger tips. You can dip fingers in water to facilitate this. Keep the tray in sunlight for two consecutive days, till the blobs are completely dry. Store in airtight container.

While serving, sprinkle some oil on dry *kharwadi* pieces in a bowl. Shake well and add slices of raw onion as accompaniments.

Nutrition: Bajara contains much more iron, calcium, vitamins and antioxidants compared to wheat or rice. Fermentation with curd further improves bioavailability of micronutrients. Addition of *til* seeds provides proteins as well as good fats. ☐



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A Tribute to the Late Shri M. M. Chitale - A Pillar in the Food Industry



Dear Readers,

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Shri M. M. Chitale at the age of 78 in Pune. Shri Chitale, an esteemed alumnus of UDCT Mumbai (now ICT) and a highly revered food technologist, left an indelible mark on the food industry.

A mentor to over 100 food technologists, including myself, Shri Chitale played a pivotal role in shaping careers and fostering talent. His guidance facilitated my acceptance into AFST Mumbai, and under his mentorship, I later assumed the position of President of AFST.

Shri Chitale was not just a mentor; he was a firm guide and a cherished friend. Despite his advanced age, he remained young at heart, showcasing exceptional expertise in formulation and regulation. His commitment to learning was evident when he acquired computer skills at the age of 60, illustrating his adaptability and openness to embracing new technologies.

The food industry has lost a stalwart, as Shri Chitale supported numerous start-ups and businesses throughout his lifetime. Known for nurturing young talent, he provided invaluable guidance to many, serving as my co-guide during my PhD, which I successfully completed at MIT Pune this year under his mentorship.

Shri Chitale's legacy in the food industry will be deeply missed, and his contributions will continue to inspire generations to come. A true "Karmayogi," he dedicated himself to his work until the very end, even contributing from his hospital bed.

In honour of Shri M. M. Chitale, let us collectively strive to work and contribute to the food industry and society, making him proud and perpetuating his impactful legacy.

Sincerely,

Team CASMB.

Traditional Foods - Exploring their Cultural Significance

**Ms. Asha S
Proprietary**

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Introduction:

India is a nation endowed with rich diversity. Everyone is united by food despite the great diversity of people, cultures and traditions. Food has become a lifeline and a point of connection for everyone.

Urbanization is often accompanied by changes in lifestyle, including dietary habits. People in urban areas adopt more convenient and processed foods, deviating from traditional, time-intensive cooking practices.

Also, our younger generations adopt different lifestyles and dietary preferences; there may be a gradual loss of culinary knowledge associated with the preparation of traditional dishes. This can lead to a decline in the transmission of traditional recipes and cooking techniques.

Go the Traditional Route:

Cultural Preservation: Regional cuisines frequently take inspiration from local customs and traditions. By supporting local foods, communities contribute to the preservation of their culinary heritage. The cultural legacy and customs of Kotte kadabu-making are preserved when a community actively supports local artists who make such traditional dishes.

Nutrient Retention: Because locally sourced food travels less, it is frequently fresher. When compared to foods that travel great distances, this may lead to a higher retention of nutrients. Consuming locally caught fish rather than imported varieties retains its freshness and is more nutritious due to shorter transit durations.

Seasonal Variability: Consuming food grown nearby fosters a relationship with seasonal foods, which are at their optimum when harvested and have the best flavor and nutritional value. Example: Savoring strawberries

that are grown nearby during the peak season guarantees the best flavor and nutritional value while also fostering a connection with the natural cycle.

Reduced Carbon Footprint: Foods that are sourced locally usually travel fewer distances from farm to table, thereby lowering transportation related carbon emissions. Hence, choose locally grown vegetables over imported goods at a local farmers' market.

Preservation of Biodiversity: Encouraging the development of varied, region-specific crops and kinds is one way that supports local farmers and contributes to the preservation of biodiversity. For instance, supporting a local orchard that grows classic apple types, helps to preserve biodiversity by preserving traditional and region-specific apple breeds.

Supports Local Economy: Buying locally produced food directly supports the livelihoods of nearby producers, farmers, and businesses. Buying honey from a nearby beekeeper directly benefits the beekeeper's financial stability and the local economy.

As people connect over food on a variety of levels. Focusing on our treasured traditional delicacies, we will discuss various cuisine cultures and popular Karnataka recipes specific to the Northern region.

As we all know, North Karnataka offers a wide range of traditional meals that are distinct, flavorful and spicy. This region's primary cuisine, jowar, is making a comeback because of a change in people's perceptions about millets. Whole jowar grains and their flour are used to make a variety of foods, including roti, usli/salad, mudde, dosa and ambli/porridge. Jowar mudde, however, needs special attention.

Let me tell how this traditional mudde is prepared.

Jowar Mudde:

Ingredients: Jowar flour- 1 cup

- Onion- 1 small (chopped)
- Tomato- 1 small (chopped)
- Green chilly- 1 in number
- Oil- 2 tsp
- Mustard seeds- 1/2 tsp
- Cumin seeds- 1/2 tsp
- Curry leaves- 5 in number
- Coriander leaves- as required
- Turmeric powder- 1/2 tsp
- Salt- to taste
- Water- 2 cups

Method of preparation:

- Turn on the pan and let it heat up
- Add cumin and mustard seeds to the oil
- Add chopped onions, curry leaves, and green chilies once they begin to sputter
- When the onions start to turn golden brown, add chopped tomatoes
- Add the turmeric powder and salt
- Finally, pour in the water and cover with the lid to bring it to a boil
- To avoid lumps, add the jowar flour slowly while stirring constantly
- Turn off the heat and wait a few minutes.
- Serve the hot mudde with linseed chutney powder and ghee.

Health Benefits: This dish provides fullness and contains complex carbs. Fiber facilitates smooth bowel movement and supports a healthy digestive system. It also contains a good number of essential minerals, such as calcium, magnesium, zinc, B vitamins, and antioxidants, which help lower blood sugar and cholesterol, control weight, preserve bone health, and enhance overall health.

Conclusion: Preserving our culinary heritage through tradition:

Celebrating our treasured traditional delicacies involves more than savoring flavors; it entails contributing to the resilience and sustainability of our culinary heritage. Through a shared commitment to traditional foods, we bridge the gap between the past and the present, ensuring that the richness of our culinary legacy endures for generations to come. By embracing and revitalizing traditional flavors, we not only honor our roots but also lay the foundation for a culturally rich and sustainable future. ❑



Tamil Nadu: A Vegetarian Journey Through Chettinad Cuisine's Diverse Flavours

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Introduction

Tamil Nadu, located in Southern part of Bharat, has a rich and diversified cultural legacy that extends to its culinary traditions. The famed *Chettinad* cuisine is at the centre of this culinary tapestry, a tribute to the historical influences that have moulded the region's food. The *Chettiars*, a merchant and trading society, were instrumental in the creation of *Chettinad* cuisine. The *Chettiars* brought back a rich trove of spices, herbs, and culinary methods from all over the world, inspired by their enormous trade networks. This ancient cross-cultural interchange established the particular flavours and aromatic subtleties that distinguish *Chettinad* vegetarian food.

Chettinad's vegetarian journey, as part of the greater canvas of Tamil Nadu's culinary scene, is firmly anchored in the region's historical history. As *Chettinad* grew into a thriving commercial centre, the combination of indigenous products with foreign spices became the signature of its cuisine. Although renowned for its spicy non-vegetarian dishes, *Chettinad* has a lesser-known but equally diverse vegetarian side that beckons exploration. Tamil Nadu's diversified agricultural terrain, from rich plains to coastal areas, supplied an abundance of fresh vegetables that made its way into *Chettinad's*

vegetarian repertory. This historical interaction of trade, agriculture, and cultural exchanges has resulted in a one-of-a-kind vegetarian tour through *Chettinad* cuisine, providing a delectable voyage that represents centuries of culinary evolution and Tamil Nadu's rich legacy.

Chettinad's Vegetarian Palette: A Symphony of Spices

Chettinad cuisine is distinguished by its heavy use of spices and is profoundly entrenched in the culinary traditions of the *Chettiars*. In the vegetarian sphere, these spices take basic foods to a new degree of richness and depth. A well-balanced combination of spices is responsible for the characteristic scent of *Chettinad's* vegetarian meal. The smell of the food is enhanced by the trio of star anise, stone flower (*Kalpasi*), and *marathi mokku* (dried flower pods). Cumin, coriander, and fennel seeds are essential in generating the complex spice profiles that distinguish *Chettinad's* vegetarian offerings.

Signature Vegetarian Delights

- ◆ **PoonduKuzhambu (Garlic Curry):** PoonduKuzhambu is a tangy and spicy curry cooked with garlic cloves, tamarind, and a medley of spices that is a mainstay in Chettinad vegetarian cuisine. The garlic adds a powerful flavour, while the spices add layers of depth, making it a hearty meal that pairs well with steaming rice.
- ◆ **KaikariMandi (Mixed Vegetable Stew):** KaikariMandi is a delectable mixed vegetable stew that highlights the variety of Chettinad products. A healthful and savoury dish is created by simmering several vegetables in a coconut milk-based stew laced with green chilies, curry leaves, and mustard seeds.
- ◆ **MilaguKuzhambu (Pepper Gravy):** MilaguKuzhambu is a pepper-infused gravy that epitomises Chettinad's penchant for robust flavours. Black pepper, cumin, and garlic are pounded into a thick paste and combined with a tamarind base to create a spicy and fragrant sauce that goes perfectly with rice.

Dosa Delights

- ◆ **Chettinad Adai:** Adai, a protein-rich dosa made from lentils and rice, is heightened in Chettinad cuisine with shredded coconut, red chilies, and asafoetida. This produces a crispy and delicious dosa that goes well with a variety of chutneys.

♦ **Paniyaram Varieties:** In Chettinad, Kuzhi Paniyaram, a bite-sized treat, takes in numerous guises. These small dumplings exhibit the range of Chettinad flavours, from the savoury Kara Paniyaram, laced with spices and green chilies, to the sweet Kuzhi Paniyaram, enhanced with jaggery and coconut.

Accompaniments: The Perfect Harmony

♦ **ParuppuPodi (Dal Powder):** ParuppuPodi is a versatile spice combination prepared with roasted

lentils, red chilies, and curry leaves. It offers a blast of flavour to rice, idlis, and dosas when mixed with ghee or sesame oil.

♦ **ThengaiThogayal (Coconut Chutney):** ThengaiThogayal is a coconut chutney with a Chettinad twist. Roasted urad dal, red chilies, and tamarind are ground with fresh coconut, creating a thick and flavorful chutney that complements the spiciness of Chettinad dishes.



Fig: Milagu Kulambu



Fig: Kuzhi Paniyaram



Fig: Paruppu Podi

Preserving Tradition

In the ever-changing environment of culinary arts, maintaining heritage becomes an obligation, particularly in the context of Tamil Nadu's Chettinad cuisine. As the globe embraces current culinary trends, there is a growing appreciation for the distinct flavours and health advantages contained in Chettinad's traditional vegetarian dishes. The culinary history of the Chettiars is more than just a historical relic; it is a living tradition that chefs and home cooks are passionately recreating and adapting to modern tastes. These culinary stewards offer a modern spin to age-old dishes while preserving the integrity of Chettinad's vegetarian history. This devotion to tradition not only honours Chettinad cuisine's

beginnings, but also adds to its continuous relevance in the ever-changing gourmet landscape.

Conclusion

As we near the end of our gourmet tour through Chettinad's vegetarian delights, it's evident that the region's food is a testament to taste inventiveness. Chettinad's vegetarian alternatives showcase the breadth of Tamil Nadu's culinary legacy, from complex spice mixes to a wide range of dosas and hearty curries. So, the next time you're seeking for unique vegetarian experiences, head to Chettinad - a place where every flavour tells a narrative of history, innovation, and a love of spices. ❑

Overview of Odisha's Traditional Fermented Foods, and Beverages

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Introduction

The state of Odisha, often known as Orissa, is situated on the eastern coast of India. It is widely recognised for its abundant cultural legacy and varied culinary customs. Odisha, a region characterised by its varied topography with unspoiled coastlines, verdant woodlands, and historic temples, is renowned for its deeply ingrained cultural practises that permeate all facets of existence, including its food, which is known for its abundance and distinctiveness.

Odisha is a state with a rich cultural heritage, influenced by Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions. Its architectural marvels include the Sun Temple, Jagannath Temple, and ancient caverns. Odia cuisine is a blend of flavours, influenced by its abundant agricultural and marine resources. Rice is the primary grain, with lentils, vegetables, and spices. The culinary landscape is diverse, with coastal areas offering seafood and inland regions showcasing vegetarian specialties influenced by temple customs. The state has a significant range of indigenous fermented foods, which are often shaped by the geographical and climatic variations within the region. The topic of fermented foods is addressed in this chapter, organised into the following sections: Cereal-based fermented foods and beverages are a category of food products that undergo fermentation processes and are mostly derived from cereals and the topic of interest pertains to the combination of rice and legumes in meal preparation.

1. Water rice (*Pakahla*)

Pakahla, an Odiya term for water rice, is a partially

fermented homemade non-alcoholic rice product. It can be classified into different types based on rice quality and additives like spices and curd. *Pakahla* is popular during the summer season, when temperatures are high, and humidity is high. The process involves boiling rice, removing excess water, and adding water to the rice. The excess water is then fermented at room temperature for 8 to 12 hours. The fermented rice, called *torani*, is served with roasted vegetables and fried small fish. *Pakahla* can also be co-fermented with curd, cucumber, cumin seeds, fried onion, and mint leaves. Traditionally, *Pakahla* is included in the recipe of Lord Jagannath, the eternal deity of Odiya people. It has been introduced to 3- and 5-star hotel menus in Odisha to attract guests interested in traditional ethnic cuisines. Preliminary studies show that *Pakahla* contains yeast and *lactobacilli*, providing a typical aroma and sourness.



Water rice (*Pakahla*)

2. Fermented cooked rice (*Handia*)

Handia is an un-distilled fermented rice beverage (wine) popular in Odisha, primarily consumed by tribals. Originating from the word "*handi*," a large earthen pot, the drink is a source of energy and cools the stomach. It is a customary beverage for tribals to celebrate festive occasions and social ceremonies. *Handia* is prepared by boiling 1-2 kg of rice and drying it for 3-4 hours. After drying, 2-3 *bakhar tablets* (a mixture of rice flour, yeasts, and medicinal plant parts) are added to the rice and soaked in water for 2 days. The rice is completely fermented on the third day, making it ready for consumption. *Handia* is used as wine and medication for constipation, urinary infections, and liver disorders. *Bakhar* is a unique preparation method used by tribal people, using rice, plant parts, and fermenting organisms. The process involves grounding raw rice into a powder, adding medicinal plant roots and barks, and mixing *bakhar tablets* with the rice-plant powder mixture.



Fermented cooked rice (Handia)

3. Rice batter cake (*Pitha*)

Rice is the primary ingredient in many cakes, including *chitoupitha*, a fermented batter made from sugar and grated coconut, and *arisapitha*, a thick batter made from rice flour and *Jantani*. *Chitou* is prepared by mixing fermented batter with sugar and grated coconut, then fried on low heat. It is typically eaten fresh and hot, often with curry, sugar, curd, or milk. *Arisa pitha* is prepared by submerging raw rice in water for 8 to 12 hours, then drying and grinding it into fine flour using a mechanical grinder. The shelf-life of *Arisa pitha* varies from six months to one year. *Chitou* is prepared during harvest festivals like maker Sankranti and *chitouamabasya*. Both cakes are delicious when eaten fresh and hot.



Chitoupitha



Arish pitha

4. Cereal and legume batter fermented cakes

4.1 Chakuli pitha

Chakuli pitha is a round, fried pancake in Odisha, made from varying proportions of par-boiled rice and black gram. It can be sweetened with jaggery or jackfruit pulp, palm, sweet potato, or *mahua* flower paste. Rice is washed, soaked, dewatered, and sun-dried, then pounded into a fine powder. Black gram is soaked until the seed coat is easily removable, then rubbed with hands to loosen it. The paste is made into a smooth paste using a stone grinder, beaten with rice powder, lukewarm water, and salt. The batter is left to ferment for 4-5 hours in summer and 15 hours in winter. The batter is

then fried into a round-shaped flat cake. Spices like ginger, onion, and black pepper are sometimes added during frying. *Chakuli* is eaten as breakfast or snacks with side dishes like sambar, sugar, jaggery, milk, vegetable curry, mutton, or without any dish. Although the shelf-life is one day, they are best consumed hot and fresh for optimum delicacy.



Chakuli pitha

4.2 Chhuchipatrapitha

Chhuchipatrapitha is a traditional Indian dish made by flattening fermented batter in a hot greased pan. It features grated coconut, curd cheese, and sugar fillings, which are then folded into a square shape for frying. The *pitha* has a shelf life of two days and is typically eaten without any accompaniment due to its sweet taste. Although the art of preparing this *pitha* is becoming less popular due to its cumbersome nature, it is traditionally prepared during the Raja Sankranti festival in rural Odisha.



Chhuchipatrapitha

4.3 Enduri pitha

Enduri pitha is a steamed, flavoured cake made by fermenting batter in a turmeric leaf and folding it through mid-vain. It is traditionally prepared in Odisha during *Prathamstami*, a festival celebrating the wellness of the eldest child. The cake is filled with coconut, boiled green gram, and sugar. The batter-filled folded leaves are

cooked over steam, with a shelf-life of about two days. *Enduri pitha* is a traditional delicacy that demonstrates the medicinal properties of turmeric plant, with Ayurvedic physicians claiming that eating the extract from turmeric leaves in winter strengthens the immune system.



Enduri pitha

4.4 Munha pitha

Munha pitha is a South Indian dish made by mixing par-boiled rice powder and black gram paste in a 3:1 ratio. It can be served with sugar, jaggery, coconut, raisins, and cashew nuts. To prepare, water is taken in a *handi* pitcher, and a cloth is tied over its mouth. When boiling, a thick batter is poured over the cloth, and steam is captured. The batter is cooked continuously, and the completion of cooking is checked by inserting a sharp object through the centre of the batter mass. A good quality *munhapitha* is spongy and served with sugar or curry. It is prepared during various festivals, especially during the raja (harvest) festival in June.



Munha pitha

5. Burnt sweet cheese (*Chhenapoda*)

Chhenapoda, or 'burnt sweet cheese', is a popular Indian dessert made from cottage cheese, sugar, cashew nuts, and raisins. Originating in Odisha in the 20th century, it is baked slowly until brown and is the only known Indian dessert with a flavour primarily derived from sugar caramelization. Its shelf life is typically 3-4 days.



Burnt sweet cheese (*Chhenapoda*)

Conclusion

The production of fermented foods and beverages has historically been a customary practise within the rural communities of Odisha. Nevertheless, due to the phenomenon of sub-urbanization, shifts in family structure, and heightened mobility, the younger cohort is progressively adopting contemporary fast-food options while simultaneously undervaluing their own customary culinary offerings. The increasing time and effort required by traditional fermentation methods have resulted in their substitution with industrially processed and convenient food alternatives. Consequently, there is a depletion of traditional knowledge and precious resources prior to their comprehensive comprehension and utilisation for the benefit of future generations. Traditional processing methods, which have been refined over time through empirical experimentation, consider both environmental and cultural limitations. This highlights the significance of traditional processes and instils the confidence in individuals regarding the value of their accumulated knowledge. ❑

Umbadiyu

(An original winter Barbeque dish of south Gujarat)

**Ms. Nikita
Kansara,**

B.Sc. (Micro) PGNFT



Umbadiyu is the cousin of *Oondhiyu*—a popular, seasonal (winter) Gujarati dish featuring an array of winter greens and root vegetables. It is either cooked in *Surti* or *Kathiyawadi* style. The dish derives its name from the Gujarati word *undhu* means 'upside down'. It is a so-called 'Barbeque dish' due to its rich, smoky aroma which it gets from its unique cooking style in earthen pots.

Ingredients:

Umbadiyu is made with fresh winter veggies — *Surti papdi*, *tuvarfali*, *kand*, potatoes and sweet potatoes. It is spiced with ginger, garlic, green chilies, coriander leaves, salt, oil, carrom seeds and turmeric powder. *Kalhar leaf* (Indian nettle) and *Kamboi* (Black honey shrub) are used to give a unique fragrance and earthiness flavor to *Umbadiyu*.

[Note: The whole plant is aromatic and is traditionally employed in Ayurvedic, Unani and Homeopathic systems of medicines.]

Preparation Process:

In an earthen pot, all the seasonal vegetables are

marinated with a simple paste of green masala and seasoned with extra spices. A few *kalhar* and *kamboi* leaves are placed at the base.

The vegetables are introduced to the pot in layers and sealed with *Kalhar* leaf at the top. To prevent the vegetables from getting burnt, the *kalhar* and *Kamboi* leaves of these plants are used to make a protective layer in and around the pot. They also serve as an added flavor. The pot is then buried in a ground that is covered in hay, sugarcane, and dung cakes. This is then lit with fire. With the soil burning up, the pot gets enough heat to cook its vegetables. After 45 minutes of cooking, the pot is cooled and the vegetables are removed.

Serving style:

The cooked *Umbadiyu* is served hot with green *chutney* and *chaas*.

Availability:

Umbadiyu ingredients are available only in winter seasons, especially from the last week of November. Cooked *Umbadiyu* dish is made in rural areas of Valsad or near National Highway 48 from Dongri to Umargam and at Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu.

Nutritional Facts:

Umbadiyu is rich in calories, carbohydrates, fibres, vitamins and minerals. Compared to *Oondhiyu* it contains less fats.

Difference between Umbadiyu and Oondhiyu:-

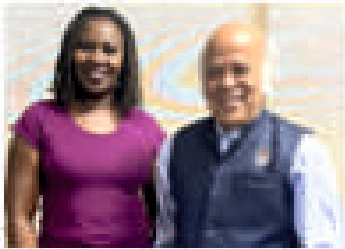
Oondhiyu is prepared on gas in a pot or pressure cooker. It is prepared in lots of oil where as *Umbadiyu* is always prepared in earthen pots with less oil. It gets cooked in the heat of its own steam (water content of different veggies). □



Traditional Foods of Kenya

Lois Ndiba

(MSc. Food Safety & Quality)
Thika, Kenya.



*Ms. Lois Ndiba &
Dr. Prakash Kondekar in
Envirocare Labs, Thane,
on 6th Dec 2023.*

Kenya, like most African countries, has many different ethnic groups whose traditions differ significantly one from another. Even though the modern world culture has somewhat infiltrated into traditional cultures, the remnants of traditions live on in the foods and cuisines of Kenya at large.

To understand the traditional foods of Kenya, one has to transverse through the ethnic regions scattered across the country. These regions can be broadly classified as coastal, inland highlands, inland lowlands, and lake regions. Each of these ethnic regions practiced different livelihoods and their foods and cuisines also differed.

It is encouraging to note that all diets were fairly balanced with proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals found among the staple foods of each ethnic group. It is also noteworthy that every ethnic group had a recreational alcoholic drink made from different raw materials.

We shall now take a journey through the different regions of Kenya and explore their traditional foods and cuisines.

- Coastal regions** along the Indian Ocean are occupied by mixed ethnicities who are offsprings of intermarriages between the indigenous Bantu and the immigrants of the 16th-19th Century namely Indians, Arabs, Portuguese, and later Europeans. Out of this influence, their main occupation remained trade, hospitality, and some lackluster farming.

The staple foods and cuisines of the coastal region are thus quite extensive and heavily influenced from

outside Africa. The staple foods include rice, wheat, legumes and pulses (lentils, chickpeas, peas), root tubers (cassava, yams, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes), fish, coconuts, and spices.



Figure 1: Legumes and pulses



Figure 2: Spices

The cuisines of the coastal people are quite elaborate with a single staple being made into various dishes, and heavily characterized by spices. Food processing and preparations including cooking methods were varied and much developed than in other regions. Processing fruit preserves, sweets & candy, pickles, wines, fermented drinks, sorbets among others are widely practiced. Elaborate and varied preparation and cooking methods for foods including deep frying, sauté, boiling, roasting, baking, stewing, skewer grilling was practiced. Women spent a lot of the time preparing foods for their families and visitors. Their popular recreational drink was alcoholic palm wine (*mnazi*).



*Figure 3: Chapati from
wheat flour*



*Figure 4: Candied
wheat-based pastry*

The coastal cuisines remain popular in the coastal regions and other urban centers. The common dishes include *Pilau* (rice & meat spicy dish), *chapati* (wheat flat bread), *bhajia* (lentil flour coated potato), coconut rice, *mshikaki* (meat on skewer) and *Samakiwakupaka* (coated fish) being most popular.



*Figure 5 : Pilau (Spicy rice
with meat)*



*Figure 6: Assorted
chicken and rice dishes*

2. **Inland highlands** regions extend in the fertile central region of the country and were occupied by Bantu ethnic groups. The main occupation of the inland highland dwellers was animal and crop farming. Both men and women spent most time in the farms.

The highland dwellers had a rich staple diet made up of various grains (maize, sorghum, beans, millets), root tubers (sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, arrowroots), milk (from cows), meat (sheep, goat), bananas and wild fruits and herbs. The only food processing practiced included fermenting milk and brewing. Different tribes had different methods of fermenting milk, with some adding herbs and charcoal from herbal trees. Other foods were obtained and cooked fresh from the farm.



Figure 7: Githeri (Boiled rice, beans and potatoes)



Figure 8: Mukimo (Mashed maize, green bananas, herbs)

The cuisines were simply made from boiling the produce, pounding and/or roasting, and adding a little salt. Milk and its ferments were taken with meals. The different tribes in the region had different social drinks made from brewing sugar cane with herbs and tree barks, or other raw material.

The popular dishes that have remained to date include *Irio* (boiled and mashed maize, beans and green banana), *githeri* (boiled maize and beans), *ugali* (maize meal with herbs), fermented milk, porridge and roast meat.



Figure 9: Cuddled milk



Figure 10: Porridge made from brown sorghum.

3. **Inland lowlands** are characterized by arid and semi-arid areas, prone to draught and famine. They

were inhabited by nilo-cushites whose main occupation was pastoralism. They lived nomadic lives, following their cattle around the upper regions of the country and extending along similar lowlands towards the south of the country following pasture, and back again following rain patterns.

The staple foods of the pastoralists included meat (raw or roasted), blood (raw), milk (fresh or cuddled), honey, herbs, tree roots, tree barks and fruits gathered in the wild and consumed directly. Their diet lacked heavily on carbohydrates, and they maintained tall lanky bodies.

There were no cuisines to write home about, other than meat, which was roasted, other products were consumed raw. Milk would be mixed with freshly harvested blood and taken directly; it made up the main meal of the day. The only food processing practiced was preserving meat with honey and /or brine and brewing. The pastoralist brewed an alcoholic drink from a mixture of herbs and tree barks.

The meat roasting/grilling and consumption culture has persisted in most urban towns, and the pastoralists remain the main suppliers of goat meat.



Figure 11: Chama choma (roast goat meat)

4. **Lake Regions** extend from north to south of the western parts of Kenya, following the Rift Valley, the lakes and waterways. They were occupied by Nilotic tribes whose main occupation was fishing and cultivation of crops.

The main staple foods of Lake region dwellers were fish, grains (maize, sorghum, millets), tubers (cassava), chicken, herbs and wild fruits. Fish preservation by drying and/or smoking and brewing were the only food processing practiced. The lake region dwellers made their alcoholic social drink from brewing a mixture of grains (Busaa), sometimes with further distillation into alcoholic spirit.



Figure 12: Busaa (social alcoholic drink drank with straws from common pot

Their cuisines were equally simple, characterized by boiling, roasting or steaming the fish, eaten with grain meal paste and herbs. The dish is still popular in the urban setting.



Figure 13: Ugali (sorghum paste) served with herbs



Figure 14: Ugali (maize meal paste), fish & herbs

All the popular traditional foods of Kenya have been enhanced and reproduced in various cuisines served in the hospitality industry in Kenya.

Disclaimer: the photos used are not the writer's original, they are obtained from internet to illustrate, and may be enhanced. ❑



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Danish Traditional Foods

Dr. Nutan Limaye

Associate Professor,
Department of Computer
Science and Engineering,
IIT Bombay, India.



AND
Associate Professor,
Department of Computer
Science,
IT University of
Copenhagen, Denmark.

(**Note** - Dr. Nutan is a daughter of my friend, with whom, I enjoy playing Table Tennis regularly. Recently, Nutan was in Mumbai and I grabbed that opportunity to take her interview for Purnabrahma.....).

Dr. Prakash Kondekar, Advisor, CASMB.

A couple of years ago I moved to Denmark. This country is geographically closer to India than the USA or the UK but due to limited cultural exchanges between Denmark and India, it felt like I travelled further than I actually did. Its harsh weather and shorter days in the winter, its glorious spring and summer, it was all too new.

For me, one way to feel at home in any new place is to start enjoying the local cuisine. If I were in the UK I would have probably started with baked beans and eggs. In the USA I would have perhaps tried out burgers and pancakes. I was not sure where to start in Denmark. Apart from a vague reference to Denmark's dairy industry in my geography textbooks, I knew close to nothing about its food. I had heard some stereotypes such as "they only eat meat and potatoes", "do they

know any spices other than salt and pepper?". But now, after two years in Denmark, I am quite happy to say that I have a reasonably extensive list of culinary delights I can suggest to a food tourist in Denmark.

Denmark has almost 1/70th of the land area of India. However,



surprisingly, its coastline is almost 300 km longer than that of India! So, it is no surprise that seafood is one of the main foods here. One of the cheapest and most consumed fish dishes is the marinated herring. In the local language it is **called sild (pronounced as sille)**. People often bring this for their lunch at work. This is also served as one of the first courses in a multicourse lavish meal. It is best consumed on a piece of rye bread with some capers, dill, and thinly sliced onion pieces.

Speaking about rye bread or bread in general, Denmark is well-known for its bread. You may have eaten a good **French baguette** or perhaps a hearty multi-grain German bread. But wait till you eat a true Danish bread to decide which one you like the most. If you ask a Dane who lives abroad what they miss the most from Denmark, a modest bread might be on top of their list. You get so many varieties and so many ways of eating them. For example, '**Smørrebrød**' (loosely translated as open-faced sandwich) is a staple. Often cuts of meat or boiled potatoes are served on these open-faced sandwiches. There is a variety for every choice of meat and non-meat option. For an Indian who prefers spices in most of her meals, a meal with smørrebrød is a pleasant change I have started embracing here in Denmark.



While I enjoy a good fish every once in a while, I am not very keen on eating other meats. Some very typical meat dishes are meatballs, known as **frikadeller** or liver pate, known as **leverpostej**. Unfortunately, I have not tasted either of them. But I know that a typical Dane would eat each at least once a week at home. It is a food for every day, as much as rajma chawal and *pohé* is for us.

An elaborate Danish meal is incomplete without a dessert. Danish people have a sweet tooth, perhaps not as much as the jalebi and gulabjam lovers among us. Their desserts are seldom so sweet. But they enjoy a good deal of cakes, pastries, homemade delicacies and the like. Around the time of Christmas there is one dessert that every household always makes. It is called **risalamande**. The simple translation is '**rice with almonds**'. Here is how it is made. Rice is heated with milk and sugar, like we do for kheer. After it reduces a bit, the whole mixture is slow-baked in the oven. Once ready, it is mixed with whipped cream. After which small



cut pieces of almonds are added to it. It is often served with a cherry sauce.

Except that there is a small twist! When almonds are added to the rice, just one full almond is added to the mix. When the entire family eats their Christmas meal, the

person who gets the full almond is considered to be the lucky person. Kids often fight to get the almond and if the adults get the almond, they are obliged to be kind enough to pass the luck to the younger ones in the family!

Danish cuisine has evolved over the years. Globalisation and migration has changed the kinds of foods available here. Denmark has a fairly large Turkish-expat population. This means that they have a lot of kebab shops and many tasty Turkish delicacies. There are hardly any Indians in Denmark but surprisingly almost every neighbourhood in Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark has an Indian restaurant. Admittedly, the food is not great but getting to enjoy a slice of India every now and then is a luxury for me.

Another kind of evolution in Danish cuisine is its vibrant high-end food culture. For the last decade or so, restaurants in Denmark have been on the world's best restaurant lists consistently. In 2010, 2011, 2013 and 2014, a Danish restaurant "**Noma**" topped the world's

best restaurant list. Noma had such a reputation that at one point to enjoy a meal there you had to make a reservation at least a year in advance! It gained its reputation from serving seasonal and local delicacies. They serve seafood in winter, vegetables in summer and forest harvests in autumn. Noma was not allowed to compete in its older form after topping the list several times. After this, they went under a major change and in their new avatar, **Noma 2.0**, they again topped the list in 2019 and 2021! Apart from Noma, there are dozens of other Michelin star restaurants all over Copenhagen. Alchemist and Geranium are a couple of others which also made it to the top-5 in these global lists. For a country this small, such a high standing in global lists is truly impressive!

Finally, I cannot end this article without talking about Danish beers and Danish alcohol in general. Danes love their alcohol. You would be surprised that in two neighbouring countries, namely Norway and Sweden, alcohol is only sold in government shops like for example in Tamil Nadu in India. Alcohol is heavily regulated and taxed in those countries. On the other hand, it is easily available in Danish supermarkets and stores. It is typical to order a glass of beer with friends in the evenings. In fact, almost every Danish workplace, even a university, has a 'Friday-bar'. That is, on Friday evenings, workplace colleagues get together at a bar in the workplace and enjoy a few drinks before heading home for the weekend.

Birthdays, graduation ceremonies, Christmas dinners and family gatherings are not complete without alcoholic drinks. You may have heard about Carlsberg beer which is also available in India. It is a Danish brand. There are many microbreweries all around Denmark which create their own unique blend of beers. If you come for food tourism to Denmark, I would highly recommend having a Mikkeller beer or any wheat beer in a Danish microbrewery.

Danes are known to be among the happiest people in the world. After having enjoyed their culinary culture, I am not surprised! I hope this article will serve as a window into Danish food culture and when you are in Denmark you will treat yourself with some of the foods and drinks we talked about. Afterall, are we not all in pursuit of a little bit of happiness?

(All the images in this article are taken from Wikipedia.)

Our Favorite German Traditional Foods

Ms. Rosemarie Kelle

Bielefeld, Germany



(Ms. R Kelle and her family is known to me since sixteen plus years while she was living in Mumbai. She has even attended many Naturopathy and Ayurveda programs in India. On her invitation I visited Bielefeld in 2009 where I also met nearly hundred Indo-German families on the occasion of Diwali. In Germany, I tasted their traditional food and also made the Germans taste ours. During pre-pandemic times, whenever Ms. Kelle used to come to Mumbai, we used to meet, or even a phone helped us keep in touch.

On 13th January 2024, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, our advisor, Dr. Prakash Kondekar spoke to Ms. Kelle on behalf of our Purnabrahma Magazine.

Dr. PK. Ms. R Kelle, ma'am can you tell us about the various types of German Traditional foods?

Ms. R. K. Sure. Because of severe cold climatic conditions, we have to use foods, like, Rouladen. **Speaking of German food, most people tend to think of sausages, beer and sauerkraut but that is not all that this wonderful country has to offer your taste buds. Each region has its own traditional recipes**

and dishes but there are also some national dishes that are eaten all over Germany.

Dr. PK. Can you tell us more about Rouladen?

Ms. RK Yes, Rouladen is a typical German dinner, often served with potato dumplings, red cabbage and gravy. It can also be served with vegetables or mashed potatoes. In wintertime, because of the cold Rouladen helps to keep the body warm.



Dr. PK. Mam, over the years, which can be said to be your favorite German Foods?

Ms. RK Sauerbraten is considered as the national food of Germany and unless you're vegetarian or vegan, you should definitely have yourself some sauerbraten when you travel to Germany. It is one of my favorite food.



Dr. PK. Which are the German foods, you prepare at home?

Ms. RK People ask me if I have an authentic German Sauerbraten recipe that I can share with them, I say, yes! How many do you want? You might wonder like many other people that there is only one German recipe that is truly authentic. The fact is that depending on the region there are a variety of German Sauerbraten recipes.

Many regions have similar recipes and the traditional recipe that is the classic recipe in Germany and probably the style of Sauerbraten that you might get served in a German Gasthaus (restaurants).

Thanks Ms. **Rosemarie** and **Healthy 2024** from me and **Purnabrahma** family.

Dr. Prakash Kondekar



Traditional Hungarian cuisine

Prof Moreshwar Patil



Traditional Hungarian cuisine, is a combination of hundreds of different types of flavors. Traditional Hungarian dishes are extremely simple and fresh while others are laden with aromatics and spice for flavor and color. These are few of the Traditional Hungarian foods that I had an opportunity to taste. (Recently one of my friend, **Prof. Patil**, visited Budapest and other cities in Europe, He spoke to me on 8th January 2024 and narrated his experience about the Hungarian Traditional foods which he tasted).

Dr. Prakash Kondekar (Dr. PK).



Paprikas Csirke Töltött Paprika Lángos Gulyás

Dr. PK: Prof Patil, can you tell us about the various type of Hungarian traditional food that you have tasted?

Prof Patil: In India foods are spicy and we have typical

regional foods. Whereas the Hungarian traditional foods are mild in taste. **Paprikas Csirke**, dish is little spicy which I liked. It is a chicken based dish cooked in a creamy paprika sauce. It's often served with sour cream and one can find this dish in most restaurants around the country. **Töltött Paprika** is another favorite dish of mine and a classic Hungarian dish. The peppers can be filled with meat, rice and vegetables cooked in a sauce. There are vegetarian versions as well with meat.

Dr. PK: Which are the other dishes you could taste?

Prof Patil: **Lángos**, is so delicious, cheap and easily available in Hungary. Lángos is basically deep-fried bread served with various toppings. Sour cream and cheese are popular choices as toppings. **Gulyás** is without a doubt one of the most traditional Hungarian foods and it's known worldwide as goulash. The dish is made of chunks of beef, potatoes, vegetables, paprika and spices. But I could not taste it. There are many other traditional foods which we could not taste due to our short stay in Budapest.



Főzelék A simple vegetarian stew that's full of flavour. *Főzelék* is one of Budapest's most filling vegetarian dishes. It falls somewhere between a soup and a stew. Its name simply translates to "something that's cooked", so the dish is sometimes prefixed by the

main ingredient. Commonly used vegetables include bell peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, squash, beans, peas and carrots. Dill, caraway seeds, paprika, bay leaves and garlic can be added to boost the flavour. If you like meat, smoked sausage or meatballs can further enhance főzelék.



Kürtöskalács Hungary's favourite sweet treat

Kürtöskalács is known as 'chimney cake', which makes a lot of sense when you see it. A sweet yeast dough is rolled out and wound

around a cylindrical spit. This is coated with melted butter, and rolled in a mix of cinnamon and icing sugar. Vendors carefully slide the pastry off, and that truncated stovepipe shape is apparent. Kürtöskalács is often sold at markets and roadside kiosks – Budapest's 19th century Central Market Hall is a good place to try this sweet treat.

Dr Prakash Kondekar
CASMB Advisor





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The Culinary Consultant's Journey: Navigating Trends, Overcoming Challenges, and Innovating in the Food Industry



Ms. Rupa Kanvinde

Ms. Rupa Kanvinde is a highly accomplished professional with a multifaceted background encompassing the food industry, consultancy, and business excellence. With an extensive career, she has made notable contributions to various organizations and initiatives, showcasing exceptional leadership skills and a commitment to promoting health and nutrition. Ms. Rupa currently holds the position of Founder Director at Indo Compass LLP. In this role, she spearheads initiatives focused on empowering women to achieve a better lifestyle and health in the public sector. Her leadership at Indo Compass reflects a dedication to societal well-being and an integration of her expertise in environmental science, health, nutrition, and finance.

As the Proprietor of Cherish Foods Consultancy and Business Excellency, Rupa leverages her extensive experience in the food industry to provide consultancy services. Her strategic insights and in-depth knowledge contribute to the success and growth of businesses, aligning them with the ever-evolving dynamics of the food sector.

Previous Leadership Roles: Vice President, AFSTI, Pune: Ms. Rupa has served as the Vice President of

the Association of Food Scientists and Technologists (AFSTI), Pune. In this capacity, she played a pivotal role in fostering collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and advancements in food science and technology within the Pune region.

Co-convener, FSSAI-Netprofan, Pune: Ms. Rapa's commitment to ensuring food safety is evident in her role as Co-convener of FSSAI-Netprofan, Pune. Collaborating with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), she actively contributes to initiatives aimed at promoting food safety practices and standards.

In addition to her impactful roles, Rupa Kanvinde has been a dedicated mentor for over a decade at the De Asra Foundation, offering valuable guidance and support to aspiring individuals in the food sector. She further contributes her expertise as a core management team member of both CASMB and the Global Chamber of Saraswat Entrepreneurs. Beyond her professional engagements, Ms. Rupa had her passion for writing as the Chief Editor of Purnabrahma magazine. Notably, she is currently in the process of authoring her own books on food entrepreneurship, demonstrating her commitment to sharing knowledge and fostering innovation in the dynamic realm of food business.

Ms. Rapa's entrepreneurial journey is marked by her role as the Proprietor of Cherish Foods, where she brought innovation to the bakery industry. Her commitment to providing nutritious and healthy alternatives showcased her entrepreneurial acumen. Though Cherish Foods is no longer operational, Ms. Rupa continues to influence the food sector through her consultancy and Indo Compass LLP.

AL: Welcome, Ms. Rupa! It's a pleasure to have you here. Let's start with a classic question. Can you tell us a bit about yourself and how you got started in the food industry?

RK: Thank you, Anjali. It's great to be here. Well, I hold a Master's degree in Chemistry and Environmental Science. My journey into the food industry began with a post-graduation diploma in Food Processing and Preservation Technology. Following that, I pursued another post-graduation diploma in Nutrition and Dietetics. My professional background involves experiences in Quality Control and Research and Development.

AL: That's quite an impressive academic and

professional background, Ms. Rupa. Could you share more about your passion for the food industry and the journey that led you to start your own business, Cherish Foods in Pune?

RK: Absolutely, Anjali. My passion for the food industry stems from a deep interest in the science behind food and nutrition. After gaining knowledge and expertise through my academic pursuits, I felt the urge to translate that into something tangible. That's when I ventured into Quality Control and R&D roles, learning the intricacies of ensuring both the safety and deliciousness of food products.

As for Cherish Foods, it was a dream turned into reality. I started the business in Pune, pouring my heart into creating culinary delights.

AL: It's evident that your journey has been shaped by a commitment to both your professional pursuits and family. Could you elaborate on the challenges you faced in managing your own business while balancing family responsibilities, and how did you navigate through them?

RK: Managing a business like Cherish Foods while juggling family commitments was undoubtedly challenging. The food industry demands time and dedication, and so does a family. I had to make decisions that were tough but necessary. Balancing work and family required meticulous planning and prioritization. Unfortunately, Cherish Foods had to take a backseat to ensure the well-being and education of my son. It's a delicate balance, and every entrepreneur faces such challenges. It's about making choices that align with your priorities at a given time.

But I always wanted to do something for the society so with the background in Environmental science, Health & nutrition in Public Sector, Finance and food sector, I started consulting others with their businesses. My vision is to consult people with my rich experience in different areas of food sector. The one line that comes to my mind is that "The show must go on" which keeps me motivated to fight against the tough times.

AL: What are the key milestones you are particularly proud of in your entrepreneurial journey?

RK: Achieving appreciation and winning the Young Entrepreneur Award in 2012 for Cherish Foods are key milestones. Now, with Indo compass LLP, my focus is on helping women achieve better lifestyle and health in the public sector.

AL: How do you differentiate your products/services in a competitive food industry?

RK: I didn't compete with others but trusted my own products, focusing on their nutritional values. Offering a variety of products like cookies, cakes, pastries, and more helped set my business apart.

AL: How do you stay updated on the latest trends in the food industry & how has your business adapted to these changes?

RK: Staying informed about consumer preferences, continuous learning, self-analysis, and networking with like-minded individuals help me stay updated and adapt my business to the latest trends.

AL: Can you share any leadership lessons you have learned along the way?

RK: Leadership involves prioritizing your team over yourself, having strong willpower, being a fast learner, maintaining public relations, and being a problem solver with good adaptation skills.

AL: Thank you for sharing that, Ms. Rupa. It's a perspective many can relate to. As we wrap up, what advice would you give to aspiring entrepreneurs, especially those in the food industry, based on your experiences?

RK: My advice would be to follow your passion wholeheartedly, but also be mindful of the commitments in your life. Success is not just about professional achievements; it's about finding that delicate balance between work and personal life. Embrace challenges, make informed decisions, and remember that your journey may have unexpected turns. And, most importantly, cherish every moment of it.

AL: Wise words, Ms. Rupa. Thank you for sharing your insights and experiences with us today. It's been a pleasure having you here.

RK: Thank you, Anjali. It's been a pleasure sharing my journey with you.



Interview by - Anjali Lokare



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