HAMMER

Food & Beverage

Business Review

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Business magazine for food service & food retail professionals



Business
Union Budget 2022:
Its Effect on F&B and Hospitality Industry

Agri
Soya: A Healthy Substitute

Meat
Let's Talk HAM

Dairy
Coconut Milk

Beverage
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Every region in the world has own characteristics in making its food delicious. Hot and Spicy Asian kitchen ensures to never go hungry if you are open and willing to try unique taste experiences. It is impossible to objectively decide which cuisine is most delicious, but if you consider your taste buds, they know what will make you mouth water.

When it comes to Stir-fried rice and noodle dishes with lots of vegetables and curry-sauces, Thai food comes to mind. In Thai cuisine chilli is widely used as well as Thai basil, lemon grass and coconut. Diners are now more health conscious and Thai cuisine not only uses healthy ingredients but also satiate the tastes of Indians for spicy food. Cover story looks at the rising popularity of Thai Food in India.

F&B and hospitality industry, which is one of the worst hit in India due to lockdowns during the pandemic, was expecting some relief from the Finance Minister in this years' union budget. Business story finds if the current budget has live up to its expectations.

Chefs are making conscious efforts towards getting back to roots and indulge in soulful food preparations this year. Know from the leading chefs in the Trends story what they are cooking up this year.

The current issue of FBR has once again reached almost to its post-covid level, with a wide range of features on Agri, Dairy, Meat, Processed Food, Beverage and Foodservice Operations, Health & Nutrition and Hygiene. Enjoy reading and do not hesitate to send us your feedback and suggestions.



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International Hospitality Expo (IHE)

August 3-6, 2022 at India Expo Mart & Centre, Greater Noida

One of the country's leading food service and hospitality industry B2B show, India International Hospitality Expo (IHE), will feature its fifth edition on August 3-6, 2022, at the India Expo Mart & Centre, Greater Noida, in Delhi-NCR.

At the last edition of IHE, which was the first 'physical show' for the food service and hospitality sectors post-Covid, held from September 24-27, 2021, 160 exhibitors representing the major industry-relevant verticals, from food ingredients and new-generation beverages to kitchen equipment, furniture and furnishings, and tableware, were present in strength.

The north-eastern states were well-represented at the show, giving them an opportunity to showcase a variety of products, from bamboo furniture to organic ginger and turmeric, to fruit wines from Arunachal Pradesh. The inaugural session was graced by Ms. Mercy Epao, Joint Secretary, Ministry of MSME on 03 August, 2021.

The 8000-plus visitors who thronged IHE2021 included members of the Purchasing Professionals Forum-India (PPFI) and Hospitality Purchasing Managers Forum (HPMF), the leading ladies of WICCI, chef-members of the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF), founders of the Professional Housekeepers Association (PHA), and other hospitality industry decision-makers. The presence of these industry professionals greatly enhanced the value proposition to the exhibitors, who got to interact directly with their existing and potential clients.

Commenting on the response to IHE2021, when the country was just recovering from the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Dr Rakesh Kumar, Chairman, IEML, and Director-General, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) said, "The response to IHE2021 has far exceeded our expectations. With it, we were able to prove beyond any doubt that the IEML, which is a leader in the country's exhibitions and conferences sector, is ready and equipped to present physical shows. Our calendar is filling up fast for 2022 and 2023. And yes, we are returning with a much bigger and better edition of IHE during August 3-6, 2022."

Since its inception in 2018, IHE has been known for its concurrent programme. IHE2021 was no exception. The highlight of the programme was the Conclave, which saw animated conversations involving industry leaders such as Rajeev Menon, President (Asia Pacific excluding Greater China), Marriott International, Rattan Keswani (Lemon Tree Hotels), Samir MC (Fortune Park Hotels) and Anurag Katriar (Past President, National Restaurant Association of India).

Special Attractions

During the show its highlight event will be a one-day conference dedicated to the Bakery and Confectionary and Mithai and Namkeen sectors.

This year an important new attraction at this conference will be a Franchise Forum, where businesses exploring franchising options for further growth can network with their potential partners. This activity will be a part of the special event planned for the fifth anniversary year of the show, which was first held in 2018 at the India Expo Mart & Centre (IHE), Greater Noida, in Delhi-NCR.

Other activities planned for the fifth anniversary edition include a focused activity with hotel and restaurant purchase managers around the food and hospitality products being developed by the MSME sector in the North-East. The North-East Mart will be accompanied by a forum to highlight the work being done by our exhibition partners in that region.

Another new addition to the eclectic mix of the show's offerings will be a Startup Pavilion, which will host startups that are either active or starting out in the food and food tech verticals. Their products will be of great interest to our key audience segments, namely, decision-makers in the hotel and restaurant sectors.

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JFL Launches US Fried Chicken Brand Popeyes in India



Jubilant FoodWorks Limited (JFL), operators of Domino's Pizza and Dunkin' Donuts in India, has launched US Fried Chicken brand Popeyes in India with the opening of its first restaurant in Bengaluru. The Popeyes will start from Koramangala followed by in New BEL Road and Kammanahalli soon thereafter.

"JFL has built its own in-house Delivery fleet with 100% use of E-Bikes, enabling a zero-emission Delivery of the Popeyes experience," the company said in a statement.

Louisiana-born, Popeyes was founded in 1972 and has been one of America's most popular and fastest-growing Chicken brands. It has over 3,400 restaurants in over 25 countries.

The Popeyes India menu will feature the signature Cajun flavoured, world-famous Chicken Sandwich. The Indian menu will also feature an array of vegetarian options like Rice Bowls and Wraps.

Pratik Pota, CEO and Wholetime Director, (JFL), said, "Over the years, Popeyes® has emerged as one of the most loved brands across the globe, and we aspire to recreate that same excitement and loyalty for Popeyes® and its signature dishes in India as well."

JFL's Domino's Pizza franchise extends across a network of 1,435 restaurants in 307 cities in the country and has exclusive rights to operate Dunkin' Donuts with 28 restaurants across 8 cities in India.

Tata Starbucks on Expansion Spree

Tata Starbucks has announced its entry into six cities as part of its expansion into smaller cities in India. With these new additions, the company now operates 252 Starbucks stores in 26 cities. The company will now start operating Starbucks brand in Siliguri, Nashik, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram, Goa and Bhubaneswar, as per the company's communiqué. With a growing base of coffee enthusiasts across the country, the brand makes its first appearance in the states of Assam, Goa and Odisha.

Tata Starbucks, a 50:50 joint venture between Tata Consumer and Starbucks Corporation, said this is the largest store expansion in a year. The stores are a fusion of the signature Starbucks warm and welcoming design and the city's local culture and craftsmanship, serving as an extension of the neighbourhoods we serve, it added.

"Tata Starbucks is grounded in growing with its partners and customers together and thus expanding our footprint in India is a matter of great pride for us", Tata Starbucks CEO Sushant Dash said.

Curefoods Merges with Maverix

Curefoods, a cloud kitchen company that operates brands like EatFit, has announced its merger with cloud kitchen player Maverix. As part of the deal, Maverix will be merging its business with Curefoods and thus accelerating the latter's manufacturing capabilities and market presence.

Maverix, which had earlier raised investment from Swiggy, Accel Partners and Zephyr Peacock, opeartes 50 cloud kitchens across Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru. It also operates popular food brands such as Great Indian Khichdi, Canteen Central, and Home Plate.

Post the merger, Curefoods will become the second largest cloud kitchen in the country in terms of footprint with the largest manufacturing capability in the fresh food space. The merger allows Curefoods' market presence to reach 125 kitchens acros 12 cities catering to over 10 cuisines.

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Chowman Opens at Indiranagar

After reaching heights with its best of Oriental Cuisines, comprising an array of traditional Chinese and Thai dishes in Kolkata, Chowman has started spreading across the nation, starting with Bangalore. The brand has four dine-in restaurants in Bangalore at Kalyan Nagar, Arekere, Marathahalli and now Indiranagar and a recently opened cloud-kitchen in Banashankari. The 70-seater restaurant with its cosy sitting area, warm ambience dominated by the soothing, instrumental tune of the Chinese ethos, decors and interiors paralleling an ancient ambience of China, Chowman brings a world within itself.





Speaking on the occasion, Debaditya Chaudhury, MD, Chowman Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. said, "There's nothing that can express the immense pride, gratitude and happiness I feel with this launch! Chowman is in an expansive mode and I give a huge shout out to all the lovely people of Bengaluru who made this possible. Without their support, their love for Chowman, probably this dream would not have been possible. Indiranagar's Chowman is not just another outlet but is the first ever flagship outlet of Bengaluru. Chowman is growing and this is just the start!"

Diners are welcomed to satisfy their hunger pangs over the exotic spread of Chinese delicacies like Sui Mai, Crispy Tofu in Hong Kong style, Prawn Har Gao, Crispy Fried Crab Wontons, Barbeque Fish, Thai Style Drums of Heaven to Kung Pao Chicken, Roasted Lamb in Hunan Sauce, Chilli Pork, Lobster in sauce of your choice accompanied by an array of rice and noodles dishes like Coriander Burnt Garlic Rice, Seafood Fried Rice, Shanghai Mei Fun, Braised Noodles with Bellpepper and Black Mushroom. Apart from this, Chowman also has its chef's special dishes featuring Chowman's Special Chicken Soup, & Noodles.

Evolved Foods Launched Ready-To-Cook Product



Plant-based protein brand Evolved Foods launched their ready-to-cook product, Evolved Plant Meat, in Bengaluru with an unconventional chef's table at the Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore. The event hosted eminent chefs and key opinion leaders from across the city for a tasting of the protein-rich, versatile, sustainable ingredients that can be effortlessly added to your daily cooking to make your meals delectable and nutritious.



The menu curated by Chef Altamsh Patel showcased modern gastronomy at its best and presented signature dishes from across India and its bordering countries such as Haleem on Multigrain Toast with Gondhoraj Lime, Ema Datshi Churpi with Bhutanese Red Rice, Kofta and Pea Aubergine Salan with Thai Biryani, Bhujing Style BBQ flattened rice crusted meatball and potatoes, Ghosht Ka Halwa, to name just a few.

Speaking on the occasion, Chef Altamsh said, "These are very exciting times for chefs. Experimenting with ingredients like Evolved Plant Protein and Evolved Plant Meat opens up a whole new world for culinary experts. The scope to incorporate the ingredients in local to global cuisines is limitless. For hotels and restaurants, It is a wholesome, healthy ingredient that can be served to people with dietary restrictions to sports personalities looking for a higher dose of protein."

Evolved Foods, which launched the ingredient through the HORECA segment, was started with the purpose of introducing people to the wonders of plant based ingredients for everyday healthy cooking.

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BurgerMan Returns to Namma Bengaluru

After successfully running for over 8 years across Chennai and Bangalore with 133 kiosks, BurgerMan is back in a new avatar. BurgerMan 2.0 opens its first experiential outlet in Indiranagar, Bangalore. The prime focus is on "keeping it light and fun" in all realms of their operations across ambience, service, and food.

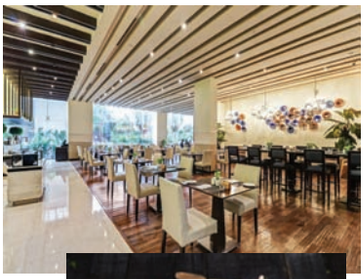


BurgerMan's new burgers include brown fiber-induced buns, flavourful meaty patties grilled to perfection, fresh veggies, and in-house sauces that are thoughtfully crafted so that oil does not trespass in their kitchen at all. BurgerMan not only offers tempting 'guilt-free' options, but a complete 'Meet-Greet-Treat' experience. Offering consumers a gastronomic voyage, using the freshest ingredients, with pure and intense flavours, BurgerMan will be serving their original dishes in their new menu.

Speaking at the launch of their first Bangalore outlet in Indiranagar, Chief Operating Officer, Ramesh Krishnan says, "BurgerMan 2.0 will add an exciting new option for diners in Bengaluru. The burger-bistro showcases a high energy vibe along with innovative slow-cooking techniques in a vibrant, quirky and fun setting.

BurgerMan 2.0 will give you the option to eat guilt-free burgers. We have re-done our burger buns, which are infused with fiber. The patties are grilled, and then smeared with delectable sauces taking the taste up a notch."

Annual Food Promotion at DoubleTree by Hilton Gurugram Baani Square





DoubleTree by Hilton Gurugram Baani Square is back with the second season of its annual food promotion, "22 REASONS TO BE HAPPY". The concept focusses on the theme 20'22' which brings curated menus. The wholesome ala carte menus offer 22 selections of Biryanis, Pizzas, Pastas, Burgers and Sandwiches at Glasshouse – the multi cuisine restaurant; tempting Cakes at Café O' Lait - the patisserie and refreshing Cocktails & Mocktails at Pose – The Fashion Bar.

Each menu has a Signature offering such as Choudhary Saab Ki Biryani, Big Pan Pasta, Chocolate Pizza, DoubleTree Cookie Cake, Mobley Burger, Glasshouse Club Sandwich and DoubleTree Cookie Shake, which are highly recommended!

Elaborating on this unique concept, Jai Chugh, General Manager said "We are thrilled to launch the second season and we are sure that our patrons would love the offerings curated by our talented Chefs. We have extended offerings this year which will leave you spoilt for choice and is definitely worth a try for anyone craving an extensive spread to nosh upon. The promotion is on till December 2022."







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TiEMumbai Kickstarts its "Cook Off" Series



TiEMumbai is always looking at innovative ways of engagement to foster entrepreneurship. The "Cook off" series which has recently kicked off is an interesting and fun concept where Startup celebrities, that is, entrepreneurs, investors and industry veterans are invited for a cook off with the renowned "Energy" Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi.

This Cook off series aims at forearming the young Startup brigade that India is churning by the hour these days, with the basic business know how. The guests on this series come with a treasure house of experience and this informal format enables them to get candid about their struggles, mistakes during their journey, handling success etc.

"As they say in entrepreneurship it's more important to know what not to do & we hope that through this format we'll be able to communicate these aspects that are kept away from the usual media limelight to young & aspiring entrepreneurs and of course with some interesting recipes in the backdrop." said SanketS, Lead- TiE Food Network.

"This cook off series in association with TiEMumbai is particularly interesting for me. We invite various guests who share their experiences on what one should look at when they want to begin their entrepreneurial journey. The conversations get more engaging as I cook some delicious recipes with them." said ChefHarpal Singh Sokhi, Celebrity Chef.



Cargill Opens Innovation Center in Gurugram

Cargill has launched the Cargill Innovation Center in Gurugram, Haryana, to develop innovative solutions to address food and beverage market needs. Cargill will partner with its F&B customers in India to identify consumer demands, translate global industry trends into local applications, and accelerate customer product innovation processes by jointly developing healthy and nutritious food options for the consumers.

This first state-of-the-art Innovation Center in India, which spans nearly 17,000 square feet, includes a sensory laboratory and demonstration kitchen, with the capacity to serve dairy, beverage, bakery and prepared food industries, as well as other specialized industries, culinary applications. It will be equipped with the most advanced applications and analytical capabilities, such as an Ultra High Temperature Processing (UHT) pilot plant and a chocolate processing line, to develop market-driven solutions.

The Innovation Center combines Cargill's expertise in different industry segments, including edible oils and specialty fats; starches, sweeteners and texturizers; cocoa and chocolate; and custom blended ingredients under one roof, providing a complete product innovation solution to the food and beverage industry.

To promote a healthy and nutritious diet in line with progressive food standards in India, the Center will help clients reformulate products that are low in fat, salt and sugar, while maintaining flavor and texture.

Simon George, President of Cargill India, said: "Consumer choices are rapidly evolving towards healthy food, without compromising taste, and this requires product innovation. Through this Innovation Center, we are making our clients the centerpiece in co-creating innovative solutions for discerning and health conscious consumers in India. This facility combines our global knowledge of food science with the size and scale of Cargill's businesses to bring together the unique R&D capabilities and the food value chain all under one roof. We will help develop healthy and nutritious products that reflect market trends. "

McDonald's West & South Introduces Books with Happy Meals

McDonald's India West and South has announced the launch of the Happy Meal Readers program. As part of the initiative, children will now get books in the iconic Happy Meal® by McDonald's. These books are aimed at feeding the curiosity of children and encouraging reading as a habit by making reading fun. The new Happy Meal will now contain a choice of burger, a beverage, a cup of hot, steamed corn and a book.

"Just like parents want the best for their children, we at McDonald's constantly work towards creating offerings that add value to the lives of all our young customers. Books play a pivotal role with our young customers, given that their curious minds are always looking for answers," shared Arvind R P, Director - Marketing & Communications at McDonald's India (West & South).

The collection of books in the Happy Meal Readers program is curated by award-winning British author Cressida Cowell, who is popularly known for her multiple children's series and is currently the Waterstones Children's Laureate (2019 – 2022). She has written a collection of 12 books, especially for McDonald's, of which two will be launched every month.

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India's First Carbonated Gin-based Cocktails



BEAT Cocktails has launched carbonated gin-based cocktails in Delhi. The brand's crafted cocktails are a healthier, lighter alternative to traditional alcoholic beverages and come in unique flavour mixes like BEAT Original, Watermelon Crush, and Cucumber Ice to cater to the consumer's palette. The idea is to make the cocktail drinking experience convenient, memorable, and value for money. The cocktail blends are the brand's proprietary concoctions made with different flavours chosen to create their distinct mixes.

Making cocktails is a tedious process, from procuring ingredients to getting the right recipes, making it challenging for the consumers to prepare and consume cocktails conveniently. BEAT's crafted cocktails redefine the cocktail drinking experience by offering a range of products in different spirit bases that are ready to drink, taking away the hassle of making a cocktail.

Launched by Alcopop Spirits, BEAT Cocktails is the brainchild of two young entrepreneurs, Vidur Relan and Rohan Khare, who are passionate about disrupting the drinking culture in India.

Explaining their vision, Vidur Relan says, "The era of ready-to-drink cocktails is now here. It intends to offer the evolved consumer segment a hassle-free drinking experience with convenience and great variety. We have started with gin-based cocktails as Gin is a preferred cocktail base and will soon be expanding this list to include more spirits. We aim to bring a range of uniquely crafted cocktails within our portfolio."

Crafted in India at a state-of-the-art facility in Goa, BEAT's refreshing cocktails have been specially formulated to cater to an evolved and diverse audience. With a range of gin-based cocktails and its upcoming range of other spirit cocktails, BEAT aims to penetrate the Indian market deeply and increase consumer awareness in this segment.

Bacardi Announces Its India-Made Innovation



Bacardi India has announced its foray into the brandy and IMFL (Indian Made Foreign Liquor) category with the launch of Good Man - the company's first-ever innovation made in India for Indian consumers. Aged for a minimum of two years in oak casks, this premium blended brandy is the perfect amalgamation of grain spirit with premium French and Indian grape brandies.

Speaking of the launch, Sanjit Randhawa, Managing Director, Bacardi India, said, "We are excited to announce Bacardi India's foray into the premium brandy segment with the launch of Good Man. Our aim is to grow the business five folds by 2030, and this launch reiterates our commitment to the market. It fortifies our premium portfolio as we continue to capture a larger share of the brown spirits category. It's also a major step to strengthening our presence in the country, with this being the first in-house brand created in the market, specifically with the Indian consumer in mind."

Ayaesha Gooptu, Head of Innovations, AMEA (Asia Middle-East and Africa) at Bacardi, said, "With innovation at the very core, Bacardi has always evolved and introduced new products to provide outstanding experiences to consumers. In line with that, Good Man, too, aims to offer an enhanced drinking experience to the discerning Indian consumer.

India is the largest brandy market globally, with 39% of the world's consumption, and it's the second-largest category in the country. While the brandy category is growing at 3% in the country, the premium brandy category is growing at a much faster rate at 16%.

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EU 'More Than Food' Campaign in India Exploring the Wonders of European Cuisine

The European Union and one of India's renowned chefs Chef Ajay Chopra together decoded the wonders of European gastronomy as they hosted a one-of-a-kind tasting event. Anchored by the EU Delegation to India and Chef Ajay Chopra, Ambassador for the 'More Than Food' campaign in India, the exclusive event marked its launch. The experiential was created to bring to life and give the audience an opportunity to explore the diverse range and vast variety of ingredients and agricultural products of the European Union.

The session began with a brief introduction by the EU Delegation to India, which walked the attendees through European food's heritage, the rich culture of Europe, and the great stories behind every ingredient and highlighted the authenticity, quality, safety and sustainability of European food and beverages.

Following the introduction, renowned Chef Ajay Chopra, hosted a LIVE 'Do-It-Yourself' grazing board session. The participants were sent a DIY preparation kit including some amazing food products from the EU prior to the event. The kit was curated by the Chef who introduced each ingredient, its origin and the best way to consume it which made this session a complete, immersive experience.



Talking about the campaign, H.E. Ugo Astuto, Ambassador of the EU to India and Bhutan, claims, "With a partnership of over 60 years, both India and the EU have maintained robust strategic relations. The 'More Than Food' campaign is a step towards strengthening this alliance by increasing awareness about EU's agricultural produce. All European produce is reinforced by vigorous food safety regulations, guaranteeing authentic, high quality, sustainable and safe products being exported all over the world. We want to bring the best of European food & beverages to India, and we hope the Indian market will enjoy the rich ingredients from Europe."

Speaking about the event, Chef Ajay Chopra, said, "I am extremely honoured and delighted to be a part of European Union's 'More Than Food' India campaign. The European ingredients truly embody the richness and diversity of the European culture. The 'More Than Food' India series will give the audience a chance to explore this richness and vast variety of European ingredients. This unique virtual tasting that we hosted with importers, distributors and our audience from the HORECA sector allowed us to showcase how they can enjoy these products, knowing that they are truly authentic, of excellent quality, sustainable and safe to consume. We had an exciting ensemble of products from the European Union, which truly highlighted and brought alive the authentic heritage of the European food culture. It was good to see how the audience created beautiful grazing boards with some of these amazing European ingredients."

The European Union has launched its communication journey in India with the 'More Than Food' campaign to create awareness about the diverse and rich nature of ingredients and agricultural products from the European Union. The campaign aims to create a range of culinary experiences, bringing alive applications of European food and beverages in Indian cuisine and promises to transport you to the picturesque and culturally abundant landscape of the European Union.

The campaign aims to increase awareness of the EU agricultural products in India by promoting the safety, quality, authenticity, sustainability, and diversity of EU agri-food and beverage products from the 27 EU Member States through a series of social media, B2B activities, and promotions.

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The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru Launches FALAK

The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru, has launched 'Falak' – a fine dine Indian restaurant and lounge offering the best of Awadhi and North West Frontier cuisine in its original style with modern day adaptations.

Promising a warm and inviting space with a mesmerising panoramic view of the city, the open-air specialty restaurant is one of the key highlights of this luxury hotel. The restaurant located on the top of the property much like a crowning jewel has been appropriately named Falak meaning 'Sky' in Urdu. With an elegant indoor and outdoor seating, Falak is styled in a contemporary chic' Indian look, decorated with traditional brass candle holders, intricately hand woven wall art, interiors displaying a myriad of Indian motifs coupled with their famous signature Jali work.

Falak offers some of the last few luxuries in the world by serving forgotten and lost recipes from the pre-partition days along with lesser known dishes from Amritsar, Old Delhi and Awadh. From bringing the famous kebabs of Multan in the Punjab province of Pakistan, signature dishes from the Mughal kitchens and streets of Amritsar to using the traditional ingredients and slow-style of cooking to give each dish that distinctive flavour, Celebrity Chef Farman Ali along with his extremely talented team of chefs has left no stone unturned to make Falak a truly celestial place.



Falak's menu is a true example of exemplary culinary skills. Some of the signature dishes on the menu are, Dal-E-Falak (which is the signature daal and the brand's own version of the most popular dal in the world, Dal Makhani. It has a 24-hour cooking process and is made in a traditional copper utensil containing generous amount of ghee specially sourced from Amritsar and homemade unsalted butter), Koyla Atta Chicken (is the aromatic masala marinated whole chicken roasted in a shell of whole wheat dough cooked over charcoal), Raan-E-Sikandari (is the braised and roasted leg of lamb with Indian spices), Shahi Nalli Nehari and last but not the least is the Tandoori Chicken, a star attraction of the property and arguably the best ever produced in the world!

The menu also includes an option of a chef's table titled 'Dastan-E-Goi', where the Chef joins the guests for the meal and takes them through the stories behind each dish; many of which has been brought to life from a bygone era and introduced for the first time in a modern avataar.

General Manager of The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru, Reuben Kataria said, "Falak is where the past and the future of Indian gastronomy come alive. The idea is to place the Indian cuisine on the world map and bring back the excitement around our regional, indigenous cuisines. With a menu designed so deeply, with every ingredient hand-picked thoughtfully, we are certain Falak will become one of the star attractions for travellers and the people of Bangalore in the days to come."

Hilton India Expands its Menu with Aayush

Hilton India launches a brand-new additional menu – Aayush, a sustainable health-focused vegetarian menu that brings back traditional Indian recipes rich in nutrients, low in calories and with natural healing properties. It will be available in all properties across India, curated by the culinary team in Hilton. Aayush is a concept that puts flavour and health together on the table, keeping in mind the rising desire of consumers for healthy food options and mindful eating choices.





As more and more consumers are exploring sustainable food choices, it is important to offer a sustainability based menu across all dining options. Aayush is a mindful creation that focuses at offering a healthier option, aimed at rejuvenating, purifying, and restoring inner strength of the body.

Commenting on the new menu, Prashant Kulkarni, Director F&B, India-Hilton said, "We at Hilton are amongst the pioneers in India to bring wholesome and mindful food options alongside our regular menu. It is part of our continuous endeavour to support the growing appetite for sustainable dining. In the past, our association with Wakao foods was welcomed by our guests for its innovation, sustainability, and deliciousness. Now with Aayush, we want to expand and cater to our conscious consumers with a satisfying meal, making dining out at any Hilton brand across the country a friendly and reliable experience."

"Aayush is a contemporary celebration of our ancient Indian food combinations and flavours that perfectly blends with the shift towards plant-based alternatives, vegetarianism, and vegan diets enduring to be dominant trends in 2022. The menu includes immunity-boosting dishes like "Moringa Saaru," a drumstick soup from Southern India that is full of potassium, vitamin C, and other essential nutrients."

This one-of-a-kind menu is Hilton's venture into re-popularizing ancient Indian ingredients and superfoods through an array of starters, main courses, and desserts–guests can savour dishes like Tulsi aur Jau ka Shorba, Kapalanga Thoran, Kathal Sukka, Malabar Nadaan Curry, Vegan Quinoa Kheer, and Turmeric Latte, among others.

According to Ayurveda, food has a great influence over one's overall wellbeing, with people across the globe switching to Indian alternatives for foods and superfoods. The Aayush menu is a step towards encouraging people to adapt to a lifestyle change with healthy and clean eating and processes that are connected to the roots of ancient India.



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Health and Wellness to Drive South Korea Seasonings, Dressings & Sauces Market

Condiments sauces, which are fermented and contain probiotics, are quite popular in South Korean market. Encouraged by this, the South Korean seasonings, dressings & sauces market is projected to grow from KRW2,115.3bn ($1.8bn) in 2021 to KRW 2,460.6bn ($2.2bn) in 2026, at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.1% during the period, forecasts GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's report, 'South Korea Seasonings, Dressings and Sauces Market Size by Categories, Distribution Channel, Market Share and Forecast, 2021-2026', reveals that the market growth will be mainly driven by the condiment sauces category, which is set to register the fastest value CAGR of 3% over 2021-2026. The category is followed by tomato pastes and purees, which will record a CAGR of 3.5% during the same period.

Likitha Nalluri, Consumer Analyst at GlobalData, says: "Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the salad dressing category has been undergoing a complete transformation with formulations being revamped with simpler, more natural, and clean-label ingredients. Just like seasonings, the new dressings and sauces are addressing the consumer desire to add more flavour to bland salads without compromising on their health goals.

"Besides making dishes more appetizing, the new product lines are evolving into pourable health and nutrition supplements that can instantly elevate the nutritional value of the meal. Along the same lines, organic fermented sauces and condiments that contain beneficial probiotics are fast gaining popularity in South Korea."

'E-retailers' was the leading distribution channel in the South Korean seasonings, dressings & sauces market in 2021, followed by 'hypermarkets & supermarkets', and convenience stores.

The per capita expenditure on seasonings, dressings & sauces in South Korea increased from $10.8 in 2016 to $17.4 in 2021 and will further reach $20.5 in 2026, which is markedly higher than the regional level of $9.1, and the global average of $13.8.

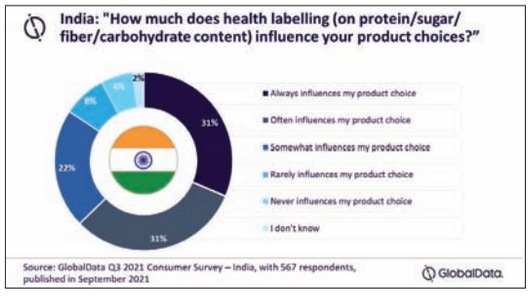
FSSAI health star rating in line with majority Indian respondents whose purchases are influenced by health labelling, finds GlobalData survey

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) will implement a 'health star rating' (HSR) system for packaged foods in 2022. Given that health labelling influences the purchasing decisions of Indian consumers, the FSSAI's HSR will drive the consumer and retailer shift towards healthier foods with higher star ratings, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

GlobalData's Q3 consumer survey (2021) reveals that 62% of Indian consumers are often or always influenced in their product choices by health labelling.

The Indian food safety regulator's front-of-pack-labelling (FoPL) system will grade the nutritional profile of packaged 'food and drinks' on five stars, with more stars accorded to products with less fat, salt and sugar content.

The Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad recommended the FSSAI to implement the Australian HSR system as it is perceived to be easier for consumers to understand than other FoPLs such as the UK's Traffic Lights, France's Nutri-Score, the Scandinavian KeyHole, and the Chilean Warning Labels.





The new regulations come at a time when non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and obesity have touched epidemic proportions in India due to excessive intake of high calorie food and drinks. Such junk food with empty calories is depriving consumers of much-needed nutrition, and thereby exacerbating the malnutrition crisis in India.

The HSR will enable consumers to easily compare products and make 'informed purchases' that will curtail the rising tide of NCDs due to unnecessary intake of high calorie food and drink.

Bobby Verghese, Consumer Analyst at GlobalData, says: "Front-of-pack-labelling is expected to be more effective in educating consumers and modifying their behavior than the present 'back-of-pack' labeling. This will drive a trend towards healthier and more nutritious packaged processed foods and alleviate malnutrition.

"The FSSAI is expected to implement the HSR in a phased manner, giving food and beverage companies a timeline to comply with the new regulation. The HSR will have a seismic impact on the food and beverage industry in India compelling the manufacturers time to reformulate products for better ratings and reformat their packaging designs."

Retailers will also come under pressure to stock shelves with healthier products, considering that 55% of Indian respondents in GlobalData's Q4 2021 consumer survey said that the availability/range of healthy and nutritious products is the most influential factor when deciding where to do their grocery shopping.

Verghese concludes: "The star rating will help shoppers to navigate better between the myriad of undefined health claims. However, as with every FoPL system, the HSR has drawbacks. While the system grades products according to the proportion of salt, sugar, and fat, it fails to consider the presence of nutrients such as protein, vitamins, fiber, and probiotics. It remains to be seen how the FSSAI will address such issues, and how it will implement the star rating."

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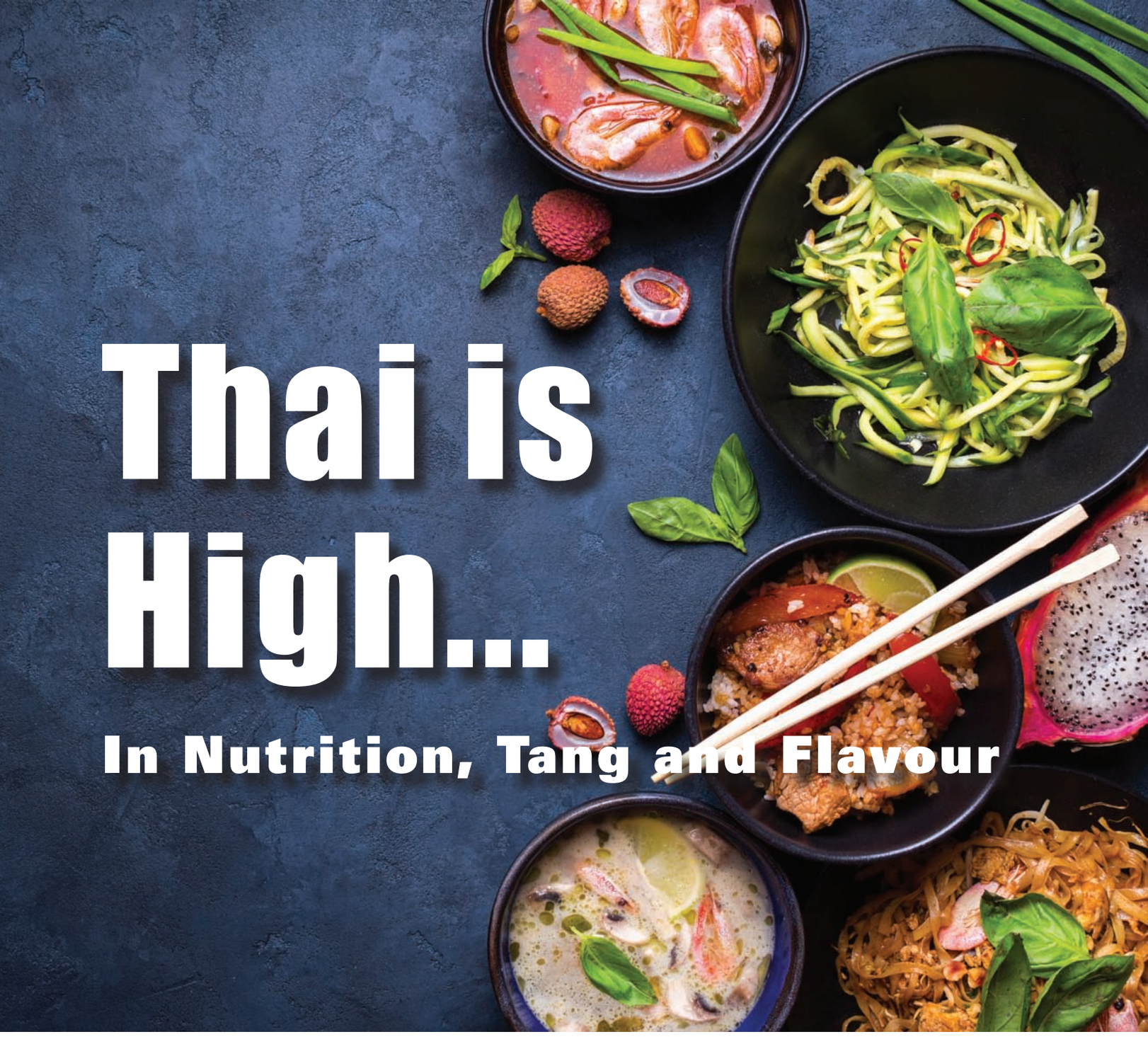




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Thai is High...

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With restrictions being relaxed, people are now venturing out to relax and spread camaraderie with friends and relatives at dine-in restaurants. They are also keen to experience new delectable cuisines which are not only high on taste and flavour. One of them that is proving popular is Thai fare. The reasons for this could be that diners are now more health conscious and this cuisine not only uses healthy ingredients like lemongrass, dried herbs, etc but also red hot chillies and garlic ginger paste to meet and satiate the tastes of Indians for spicy food. Relaxations in tourism and globalization have also helped bolster the acceptance and demand for Thai food. Ashok Malkani takes an overall look at the scenario prevalent today and reasons for the rising popularity of Thai food.

When we talk of food, the focus is primarily on taste. But when we adventure into new cuisines and recipes the whole sensory experience becomes equally important.

Since the past couple of years, due to the pandemic, the consumers have not been able to let their taste buds experience new savours and flavours as they were not able to visit dine-in restaurants and consume new cuisines and recipes.

It has to be realized that what the diners put on the platter isn't just to satiate their hunger. It must be an experience to satisfy all their sensory perceptions. Today, when people venture out to a restaurant, after a prolonged period of restrictions on movement, they are keen to taste new eye catching recipes that will tickle their taste buds.



Chinese cuisine has, since a long time, become quite popular in India. It has even been Indianised into what is popularly called as desi-Chinese. Another cuisine that is fast climbing the ladder of popularity is Thai food. A survey conducted, some time ago, by YouGov, a London based market research and data analytics, noted that nearly 65% of the Indian respondents said they liked Thai food. The surging popularity of Thai food could be attributed to increasing globalization and the bewildering range of cuisines.

Debaditya Chaudhury, Managing Director of Chowman Hospitality Pvt. Ltd., states, "Over the years Thai cuisine has gained a lot of popularity with quite a few premium stand-alone restaurants coming up. While earlier they were mostly located inside star properties, the demand for the cuisine seen many restaurants crop up across the country."

He adds, "Indians have come to really enjoy the cuisine. The extensive use of coconut milk, spices similar to ones used in Indian cuisine makes the dishes not just familiar but delicious and appealing to a wide audience."

Just thinking about the coconut-based Thai Red Curry, aromatic Tom Yum Soup, refreshing chicken minced salad- Larb Gai, can make any foodie's mouth water. It may be said that one of the reasons why Thai food is so popular is because of its similarity to Indian cuisine.



Udayshankar Shenoy, Owner & Chef of Lazy Suzy, Bengaluru, however, is of the opinion that Thai cuisine is popular in India but with only a certain segment of people and a few cities where there are authentic Thai cuisine restaurants.

He adds, "Indians definitely love Thai food but unlike Chinese food which is available right from 5-star to a street food stall, Thai food has not been able to make inroads from top to bottom of the food ecosystem in India."

Similarity between Thai and Indian Cuisines

It may be mentioned that Thai food holds the badge of being one of the most unique foods in Southeast Asia. It holds a quirky similarity-difference relationship with Indian and Chinese culture and cuisine. Thai food appeals to the Indian palate as, like Indian food, it is also spicy. But besides this it is also has sweet, bitter, salty, and sour tastes. The hot and spicy taste of Thai Food, craved by many, comes from fresh chilli used in the dishes.

Actually Thai cuisine is not about pungent food alone. It is a balance of a host of local herbs and ingredients providing, delicate sweet and sour tones, to distinguish their dishes from other South East Asian cuisines. The fresh flavours in Thai cuisine come from generous splashes of lemon grasss, kaffir lime, galangal and



basil which go hand in hand with the red and green chillies which provide it with the pungency. Coconut milk lends it the creaminess while tamarind paste adds a touch of sourness and palm sugar gives it the sweet tones.

Udayshankar states, "Thai food is originally very spicy in nature. This is primarily because of the extensive use of Bird's eye chili in Thailand. Indians can relate to Thai food due to many ingredients that are common in both cuisines. Thai cuisine uses: Coriander, Chillies, Coconut milk, Mango ginger, green n black pepper corn, Mint, concept of curry and rice, sour, spicy, sweet flavours. All these are also a part of Indian cuisine and Indians can easily relate to these factors."

He adds that as far as comparison between Chinese and Thai cuisines is concerned, one cannot equate or compare the popularity of the two "because, in India, since the early 20th century, there was Chinese immigration and settlements like the Tangra in Kolkata. These immigrants introduced rudimentary Chinese cuisine (called Indian Chinese) to the local Indian population and then the 5 stars provided the niche, high quality fine dining experience with expatriate Chefs from China and Hong Kong. Thus, there are Chinese food versions for every level in the society."

Debaditya, speaking about Indians' love for spicy food, declares that one cannot claim that Indians across all the states and generations prefer spicy food. "However," he adds, "an average person eating out, enjoys spicy food. Thai food doesn't have a reputation of being spicy although the bird's eye chili used extensively in Thai cuisine, packs quite a punch. Thai Food, due to their varied style of dishes – some subtle, some fiery, some zesty – offers something for every taste bud."

Comparing the popularity of the Thai and Chinese cuisines in India Debaditya declares that while the latter is available even in roadside stalls, Thai food, due to the use of premium ingredients used in its dishes, is not available in road side and hole-in- the-wall stalls."

Thai for Health

If one considers health, as one is prone to do during the ongoing pandemic, it may be stated that Thai dishes can be more beneficial than other types of cuisines because Thai restaurants typically use less salt in their cooking. Thai flavours come from fresh herbs, spices, and vegetables that aren't processed or contain additives.

Thai cuisine is considered to be one of the healthiest foods you can eat. Several Thai dishes are currently under scientific study for their incredible health benefits.



Debaditya Chaudhury

Health benefits of a few ingredients used in Thai cuisine

Turmeric: Curcumin, the active ingredient in turmeric is an anti-inflammatory agent. Turmeric is a valuable digestive aid. It improves cardiovascular conditions, helps people with arthritis.

Galangal: It alleviates abdominal discomfort and pain, assists in digestion, fights inflammation, thereby treating arthritis. It is used to treat diarrhea and treat ulcers.

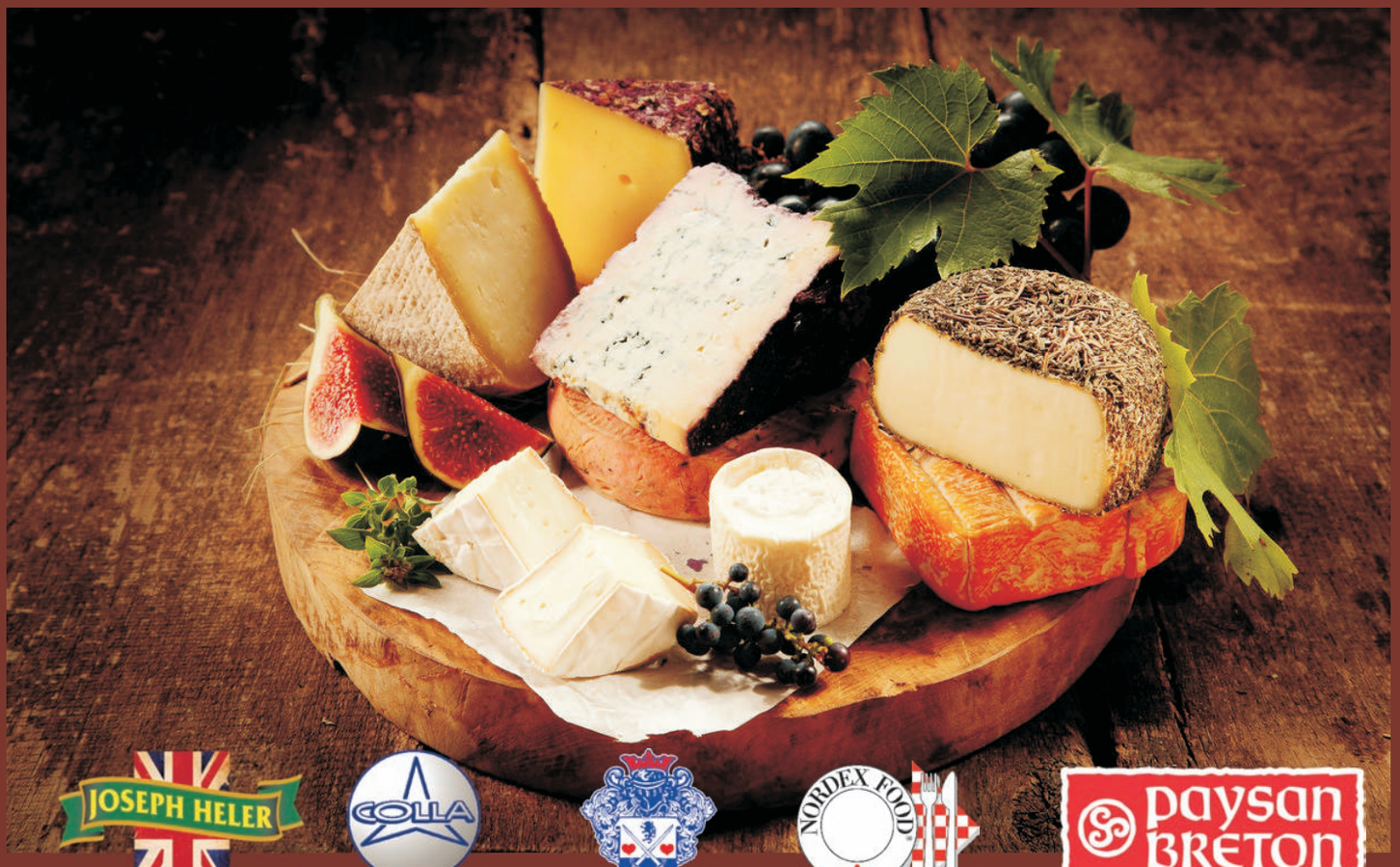
Lemongrass: is used to fight flu, cold, fever, headache, abdominal pain and arthritis and fungal conditions.

Coriander: It is useful for fighting gastronomical trouble, digestive problems, bacterial and fungal infections and loss of appetite.

Chilies: Recent studies show that eating chilies helps you keep your heart healthy and helps in maintaining consistent insulin levels

Coconut Milk: It lowers bad cholesterol

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(LDL), while promoting good, boosts immunity, modulates metabolic functions, provides valuable fatty acids and fights aging

It may be added that for diners looking to maintain a balanced diet or have dietary restrictions like gluten allergies, Thai cuisine is preferable compared to other cuisines. Thai dishes contain lemongrass and galangal root, which gives them an aromatic flavour. Add to this the advantage of fresh herbs, spices and vegetables and you can lap up the palate without worrying about eating foods with additives!

Popularity of Thai food in India

Australian chef David Thomson, an expert on Thai food observes that Thai cooking, unlike many other cuisines, is "about juggling of disparate elements to create a harmonious finish."

So how and when did this cuisine become popular in India?

Debaditya avers, "Travel opened up this world of Thai cuisine. Since Thailand is one of the most popular destinations for Indians, it is no surprise that the cuisine from the land has also found a big fan base in India. A 2019 survey by YouGov showed a whopping 65% of Indians prefers Thai food over other foreign food."

He adds that taste for Thai food has developed because an increasing number of Indians are touring Thailand.

10 lesser known Thai dishes

Guay Tiew Reua: or noodle soup simmered in a meat broth,

Khao Pad Sapparod: the aromatic pineapple fried rice

Pla Nueng: or steamed fish (usually snapper) with spicy lime sauce.

Tod Mun Pla: or Thai fish cakes, served with a sweet Thai dipping sauce



Udayshankar Shenoy

Kuay Teow Reua (boat noodles): They are named thus because originally they were served out of boats floating in the canals

Yam Tua Plu: a fresh salad made from chopped up winged beans, a few prawns or slices of squid, peanuts and cashews, dried coconut, all dressed in a tangy spicy sauce.

Gaeng Aom: It's a cross between a curry and a thick soup that is filled with vegetables, pork, and then loaded down with a variety of herbs.

Mah Hor: a royal snack made with mandarin orange or pineapple and topped with pork or chicken, a delicious combination of sweet and savoury.

Mango Sticky Rice: a combination of mangoes, coconut milk and sticky rice

Khao Kluk Kapit: a fried rice dish that's been tossed together with kapit – fermented ground shrimp and salt – until the aromatic shrimp paste coats the entirety of the rice.

He discloses that Thai restaurants are mostly in Metros and Tier I cities like Bengaluru and Pune which has some really good places serving Thai food. "Today," he says, "there are stand-alone restaurants offering Thai food all over the country. It's no longer restricted to only star hotels."

Udayshankar declares, "Travel to Thailand is definitely a primary reason for the larger section of the population taking to Thai food. But their exposure is limited to the usual dishes like Tom Yam soup, Thai papaya salad or Thai curries and Jasmine rice. Hence most of the pan Asian restaurants in India have these in their menus."

He affirms "Specialty/ Authentic Thai restaurants are primarily in big metros. In tier 2 cities, there might be few dishes that might make inroads into the menu of Pan Asian Restaurants. But not more than 3-4 dishes in the entire menu. A complete/ authentic/specialty THAI dining restaurant with an elaborate menu is mostly seen in 5 stars. There are a few standalones which are also doing well."

Future of Thai Cuisine in India

Thai cuisine, with its unique and interesting taste, makes it one of the most popular cuisines around the globe. As a manifestation of multiple cultures, Thai food is a sensory experience of anybody who understands it. Rich in veggie, luxurious in spices, flavourful and fragrant to the senses, it is situated between Indian and Chinese cuisine. Perhaps it is the popular Thai curries or the spices, which are nearly identical to what we'd find in our kitchens, that makes Thai cuisine so familiar to the Indians. Whatever the case, Thailand is unquestionably a success in the Indian food sector.

But what is its future?

Debaditya opines, "I feel eventually Thai food will become like Chinese food. Already you can see vegetable vendors in big cities selling ingredients like Lemon grass, bird's eye chili, Pok Choy, so it's a matter of time before you start seeing the dishes being sold everywhere at all price points."

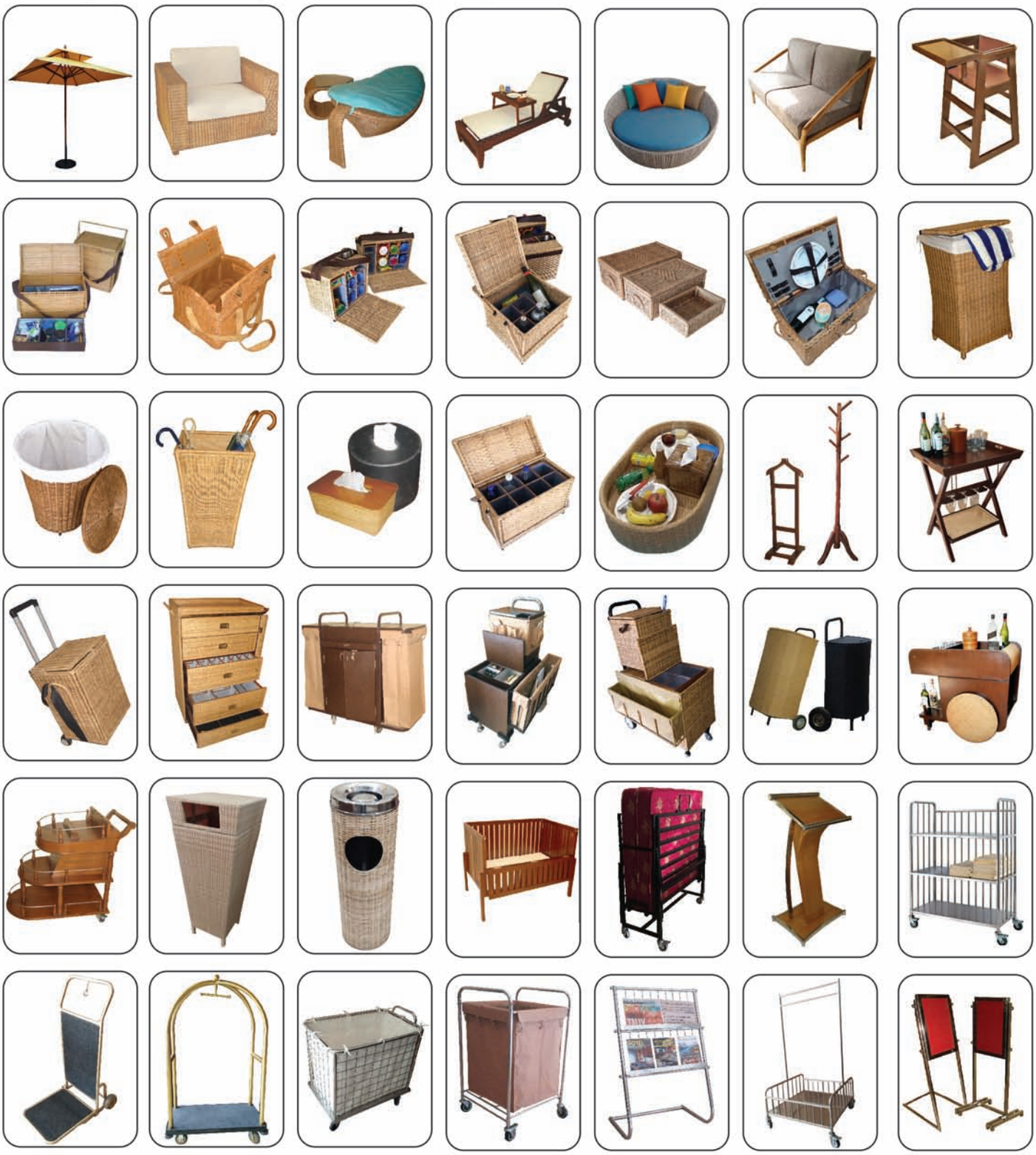
Udayshankar, however, feels, "Thai cuisine will remain as a specialty cuisine option, but may not be a mainstream cuisine like Chinese cuisine. Primarily because the ingredients for authentic Thai cuisine are not easily available in the Indian market and are available only through importers, which takes the cost up. For example: Kaffir lime leaves, Galangal, Lemon grass (what is sold or grown in India as lemon grass is actually citronella) Thai chili pastes, curry pastes, Jasmine rice etc. Moreover, the import and distribution costs don't favour Tier 2 cities. Also, a specialty Thai restaurant may not be very pocket friendly." ■



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Some Thai Recipes

Som Tam Thai

Sour and spicy Thai raw papaya salad

Ingredients

Fresh grated raw papaya	300 gms
Haricot beans stringed	05 nos
Cherry tomatoes/Deseeded tomatoes	05-08 nos/ 1 medium tomato
Unsalted roasted peanuts	50gms
Garlic peeled and chopped	2-3 cloves
Green chilies chopped	2-3 nos or as per preferred spice level
Coriander Stem chopped	1-2 stems
Palm sugar /Jaggery	50 gms
Light Soya sauce	30 ml / 2 tsp
Freshly squeezed lime juice	30 ml / 2 tsp
Sugar	30 gms / 2 Tsp
Salt	To taste

Method:

1. To make the dressing, take a small bowl, add the light soya sauce, lemon juice, sugar and salt. Stir it continuously till sugar is fully dissolved. Taste it, it should have a balanced sweet, sour and salty taste.

2. Finely chop the coriander stem and 1 green chili, add into the dressing. Mix well and keep aside.

3. Take a fully raw, green papaya and peel the skin. With the help of a serrated string grater, grate the white papaya flesh into long thin strips. Wash under running water to get rid of raw papaya milk resin.

Drain well and leave to dry. It is best if you can refrigerate the grated papaya for at least 1 hour. It would make it crunchy and crisp.

4. Chop the garlic cloves, green chilies and keep aside.

5. Cut the haricot beans into 1-inch batons, cut the tomatoes into half (remove the seeds if using big tomato and cut into 1-inch batons like beans)

6. Grate or crush the palm sugar/ jaggery.

To make the salad:

1. Take a wooden mortar and pestle (you can use a sturdy wooden or wide steel bowl), add in the chopped garlic and chopped chilies, pound 3-4 times, add the beans and half the tomatoes, pound again 4-5 times. do not put too much force and do not mash up the vegetables.

2. Half the peanuts and jaggery/ palm sugar and further pound 3-4 times to coarsely crush.

3. Add the grated papaya, mix all the ingredients with the help of a spoon and pound 3-4 times.

4. Now add the dressing, mix well with a spoon and pound for 2-3 times. Taste the salad, adjust the seasoning. The taste should be sour, spicy and sweet balanced.

5. Plate the salad and garnish with remaining tomatoes and peanuts. Serve immediately.

Udayshankar Shenoy,
Owner & Chef of Lazy Suzy, Bengaluru

Chicken In Thai Green Curry

Ingredients

Chicken	8 pcs of
Diced Onion and Baby corn	
Lemon Leaf	4 pcs
Lemon Grass	4 pcs
Basil Leaf	10 gm
Coconut Milk	50 gm
Ginger paste	½ tsp
Garlic paste	½ tsp
White-pepper	½ tsp
Coriander Paste	½ tsp
Salt	to taste
Sugar	to taste
Green Curry paste (Ready Made)	15 gm
Fish Sauce	1-2 Drops
Chicken Stock	
Oil-Refined	2 tsp.

Method

1. Heat the wok with 2tsp. refined oil and then put the diced onion, diced baby corn, ginger paste, garlic paste, coriander paste and sauté for a while
2. Add green curry paste, Coconut Milk and chicken stock
3. Add the chicken
4. Mix white pepper, salt, & sugar
5. Put few drops of Fish Sauce
6. Add the Lemon Leaf, Lemon Grass, and Basil leaf
7. Let it simmer for a while

Remove from heat and serve hot with steamed rice

Mixed Thai Style Noodles

Ingredients

200gms Boiled noodles (egg 1pes.+chicken 30gm+shrimps 20gm)
Shredded red, yellow & green capsicum, carrot, baby corn, onion, button mushroom, broccoli

Lemon leaves	2 pcs
Basil leaves	5 pcs.
Fish sauce	½ tsp.
Lemon juice	1 tsp.
Ginger chopped	½ tsp.
Garlic chopped	½ tsp.
White-pepper	½ tsp.
Salt	as-per-test
Vinegar	½ tsp.
Tomato Sauce & Chilli Paste	½ tsp.
Spring-Onion	5gm.
Oil	2 tsp.

Method

1. Heat the wok with 2tsp. oil and then put the boiled noodles with egg-chicken-shrimps.

2.Put shredded red-yellow & green capsicum, onion, carrot, button mushroom, broccoli, Ginger & garlic chopped, basil leaf, fish sauce.

3. Mix white pepper, vinegar, salt, chili paste & tomato sauce.

4. Garnish with spring-onion.

Debaditya Chaudhury,
Managing Director of Chowman Hospitality Pvt . Ltd.



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Union Budget 2022:

Its Effect on F&B and Hospitality Industry

The Covid-19 crisis has hit the hospitality and food & beverage industries hard. With repeated lockdowns, in different parts of the world, affecting tourism, the crisis has deepened further. Though there are, now, representations being made by the people globally, to their respective governments, for removal of restrictions and mandates the response has been extremely slow. The result is that the F&B and hospitality industry, which is one of the worst hit in India was expecting some relief from the Finance Minister in the union budget for 2022-23. The sector, which is confronting the bitterness of dwindling demand and curtailed investment, had made several representations to the government to help the industry. It was expecting the budget to help it overcome the problems encountered by it through the turbulent year. Ashok Malkani tries to find if the budget has met the industry's expectations.

The effect of the pandemic over the last two years has been a disaster for the hospitality industry globally. Tourism and hospitality industry thrives on patterns of visitations by tourists. However, with regular intermittent travel restrictions imposed by various countries tourism and hospitality industry have been beset with extreme challenges.

The hotel and restaurant business in India has been among the sectors hit hardest by the corona virus pandemic. Lockdowns and economic slowdowns have had a decimating effect on the revenues and profits of the hospitality industry. Many F& B outlets have had to be closed down.

Pradeep Shetty, Jt. Hon. Sec., Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) declares, "The hospitality industry has been severely impacted ever since the pandemic hit the country in early 2020. The first lockdown and restrictions brought the sector to a standstill for almost eight months. The industry was hoping for some revival post-November 2020, but the second wave hit us in April-May 2021 and completely disrupted the business once again.

The financial loss to the industry from the two waves caused around 30 per cent of hotels and restaurants to shut down permanently. During the third wave, the restrictions yet again lost the momentum which the sector had only just regained. As of today, hospitality establishments are running in losses. The hospitality industry has suffered a whopping Rs.1.40 lakh crore loss and around 50 million jobs have been lost due to the pandemic."



Nirmala Sitharaman

According to FHRAI, already 25 to 30 per cent of establishments in the organised sector comprising around 60,000 hotels and 5 lakh restaurants have shut and another 15 per cent could follow suit if there is no impetus from the government to revive the sector

Shamsher Dewan, Vice President & Group Head - Corporate Ratings, ICRA Limited, adds, "Hospitality remains one of the worst-hit sectors from the Covid-19 pandemic. The industry has been affected by the pandemic related lockdowns/ restrictions on mobility by various states and increased wariness to travel due to fear of infection contagion."

Industry Expectations

The Hospitality sector, which contributes 9 percent of India's GDP and employs more than 4.5 crore people, has been the worst-hit industry and has incurred heavy losses.

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) which acts as a catalyst in the promotion of industry, trade and entrepreneurship had, before the budget, made some recommendations for the upcoming Union Budget to help the hospitality sector get back on its feet.

The PHDCCI's ideas included bringing liquor under the ambit of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and revamping the GST system. People from the hospitality sector were demanding for a single-window clearance system in each state, for new hotels, which can ensure ease of doing business and greater transparency.

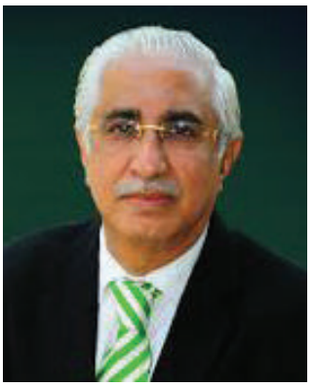




Pradeep Shetty



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli



Nakul Anand

The industry was also demanding that GST rates be standardised. This could also help reduce the disparity in between rates charged by restaurants inside starred hotels and standalone ones.

In January 2021, the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) had stated that more than 24 lakh people lost their jobs in the hospitality sector, after over 25 per cent restaurants were shut due to the lockdown last year.

Pradeep Shetty reveals "The hospitality industry had requested the FM to allow domestic travel for individuals and corporates to be a deductible expense in their IT returns. Inclusion of Hotels and Tourism related sectors in the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), Infrastructure status and Industry status for the Hospitality industry and allowing Input Tax Credit (ITC) for restaurants." He added, "We were also expecting long-term credit facilities in view of the vulnerabilities and the time it would take for businesses to resume normalcy."

Budget Benefits

The Finance Minister has, in the budget, announced support to the hospitality and related sectors. In an acknowledgement of the severe impact that these sectors have faced due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the FM proposed an extension to the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) for MSMEs till March 2023. While that in itself is important, what is more important is that the guarantee cover under the ECLGS was proposed to be extended by Rs 50,000 crore, with this amount being earmarked solely for enterprises in hospitality and related sectors.

It may be mentioned that under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), MSMEs get up to 20% of the borrower's total outstanding credit and up to Rs 25 crore is fully guaranteed by the government. The scheme is a part of the Rs 20-lakh crore Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan package announced by the government in May 2020

In absolute terms, S K Ghosh, SBI's group chief economic advisor, in a report, states, MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises) loan accounts worth Rs 1.8 lakh crore including Rs 12,000 crore of restructured loans have improved since May 2020

MSME loan accounts worth Rs 1.8 lakh crore including Rs 12,000 crore of restructured loans have improved since May 2020. The report adds, "This means that around 14% of the outstanding MSME credit (including 2% of restructured) has been saved from slipping into NPA because of the ECLG scheme." The report estimates that almost 13.5 lakh MSMEs accounts were saved due to the scheme (including restructured). Of these 48% belong to the micro category and 46% are small borrowers. The remaining 6% belong to the medium category, the report states.

Pradeep Shetty, however, avers, "There are only a couple of reliefs offered to the F&B industry, including an extension of ECLGS with additional allocation to the hospitality sector and provisioning an outlay of Rs.2 lakh crore through CGTMSE. The special allocation through ECLGS will support the struggling sector to mitigate some of the pandemic-induced challenges and the CGTMSE scheme is expected to facilitate additional credit of Rs.2 lakh crore for micro small enterprises and expand employment opportunities."

He adds, "Although, additional loans are being made available, availing them is plagued by implementation issues from the financial institutions. This too, has come as a result of the multiple representations and extensive meetings FHRAI held with the authorities since the start of the pandemic."

Among the states benefitted by the ELGS Gujarat has been the biggest beneficiary, followed by Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, according to the SBI report.

An analysis by SBI's research team indicates that if these units had turned nonperforming, then 1.5 crore workers would have become unemployed. In effect, the ECLG scheme saved the livelihood for 6.0 crore families assuming four family members per worker including the worker himself/herself.

Industry expectations fulfilled?

Nakul Anand, Chairman, Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH) feels that the budget could have provided more direct and immediate support. He states, "The Union Budget provides some relief and medium to long term infrastructure measures to stressed tourism travel & hospitality industry, but there was an immediate opportunity for more direct intervention to support the highly stressed tourism travel and hospitality companies and their

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employees."

Speaking about ECLGS, he says, "The extension of ECLGS expansion till 2023 with additional corpus of Rs 50000 crores dedicated to hospitality & allied industries will help provide relief. Hopefully, the fine print will enable moratorium extension of all previous schemes and debt restructuring.''

He believes that additional benefits could have come through the following measures:

• Direct wage support to employee of tourism travel and hospitality companies, till tourism revival happens.

• Abolishment of TCS on outbound travel to prevent travel expenditure shifting from Indian travel companies to offshore travel companies.

• Infrastructure status to hotels irrespective of their location or capital size to support capex growth.

• E- Visa fees waiver for all tourist visas for 2022 and beyond to support inbound revival

• Export status for tourism export earnings to support inbound revival.

• Doubled, expenditure allocation for tourism ministry to enable intensive global reach out to support inbound revival.

• Domestic income tax travel credit for Indian citizens and Indian companies to support domestic retail and domestic mice pickup.

• Global bidding fund to enable bidding support to Indian mice companies to bring global mice events to India.

• Setup of GST review committee to re-examine the tourism, travel & hospitality GST pain points

It may be noted that the hospitality and travel and tourism are interconnected. Nakul is of the opinion that the extension of ELGS is just a drop in the ocean for the sector. According to him, the whole tourism travel and hospitality industry was feeling quite dejected.

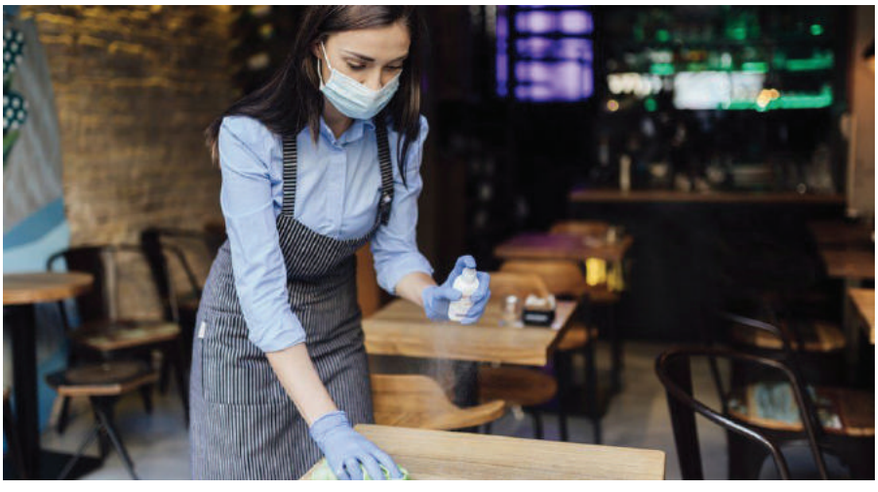
Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President of FHRAI disclosed that the number of meetings that the Federation had with the Finance Ministry and other ministries prior to the budget had led it to believe that the government was surely going to announce some sort of specific relief for the industry. "But it is a huge disappointment that it has not come through." He revealed that FHRAI had, in December 2021, submitted a list of recommendations to the finance ministry, outlining some of the measures the government should take in order to revive the debilitated industry.

The apex body had expected the inclusion of hotels and tourism related sectors in the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) – set up under the Development Financial Institution (DFI) by the Ministry of Finance – for promoting infrastructure funding. This would have enabled Covid-19 hit hospitality sector to avail funds with extended repayment periods at a low rate of interest.

He said that the extension of the ECLGS scheme is just a drop in the ocean for a sector that has been severely battered. Given the massive damages that decimated the entire sector's ecosystem, these measures are not adequate to bridge the losses and offer impetus to the hospitality and tourism industry.

He declared, "The number of meetings we held with the Finance Ministry and other ministries led us to believe that they were surely going to announce some sort of specific relief for the industry but it is a huge disappointment that it has not come through. We had requested the Finance Minister to allow domestic travel for individuals and corporates to be a deductible expense in their IT returns. Inclusion of Hotels and Tourism related sectors in the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), Infrastructure status and Industry status for the Hospitality industry and allowing Input Tax Credit (ITC) for restaurants. These are equally crucial requirements for the hospitality industry. The industry has been requesting long-term credit facilities in view of the vulnerabilities and the time it would take for businesses to resume normalcy."

Pradeep Shetty added, "Compared to the expectations, what the industry received is merely an extension on the ECLGS. The CGTMSE scheme is available for all micro and small enterprises and so, while such establishments that fall under the segment will benefit, there truly wasn't anything specific or dedicated in the Budget for the hospitality sector.



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Progress or revival is not even on the radar of the hospitality sector. At the moment, it is all about survival. The ECLGS announced in the Budget might have bought us time but the journey to recovery is long."

Will budget help industry to recover?

The hospitality, F&B and travel & tourism industries, which were all eagerly waiting for the budget, hoping that it would help in their revival, find that the budget could be summarized as a mix of hits and misses. The Economic Survey 2021-22 had acknowledged that the trajectory of tourism remained uncertain due to Omicron. The hospitality, F&B and travel and tourism industry are inter-dependent and it was believed that the budget would introduce measures to boost the revival of all segments of the industry. But it is found that while all the stakeholders had made several recommendations to the government at various forums, very few recommendations were incorporated in the budget.

Pradeep Shetty states, "It is imperative for the hospitality industry to have an environment conducive for businesses to sustain. Frequent lockdowns and restrictions coupled with travel restrictions are anti-business especially, for the hospitality and tourism sectors. Every time the situation eases a bit and the industry receives a glimmer of hope a new hurdle presents itself. The 'stop-start-stop' arrangement hasn't allowed the industry to do anything. Hotels and restaurants are in a state of suspended animation since 2020. The current situation also has a cascading impact on the employment in the sector. Travel and hospitality have been flagged as the 'Most Distressed Sectors due to COVID-19' in the country. There is a dire need to provide a sector specific special relief package to enable the sector in its fight for survival."

Quote, Unquote

The union budget presented by the Finance Minister has drawn a mixed reaction from the hospitality industry. Presented below are a few of the reactions presented by some leading figures in the industry:

While some focussed efforts for the industry from today's budget would have been great, I would still say that it was quite balanced on all fronts. Focus on pushing tourism via emphasis on infrastructure & railways will help boost the industry with the influx of people moving within the country. Digital ecosystem for skilling and livelihood will aim to skill, reskill, and upskill people via online training which would help in good talent inflow to our industry.

Aji Nair - COO - Mirah Hospitality

The Union Budget 2022 has no significant direct announcement impacting Travel, tourism and hotel though there is a extension of Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) upto March 2023, which is a welcome move. The same has been further expanded by 5000 crores for the Hospitality industry. This will help the cash strapped hotel entrepreneur to bounce back from the burden and losses of covid19.

Sibasish Mishra, Founder & CEO, BookingJini

The Emergency credit scheme increased from 50k crores to 5 lakh crores, and extended till March 2023, will bring some relief to the ailing hospitality sector. The 50,000 crore earmarked for hospitality and related sectors are also a welcome move. However, I see only a marginal impact of the e-passport announcement.

Mehul Sharma, Founder & CEO, Signum Hotels & Resorts,

Union Budget 2022-23 is a strong one that takes a future-ready strong stand and estimates India's GDP to grow at about 9.2%, the highest among all great economies.

Manish Aggarwal, Director, Bikano, Bikanervala Foods Pvt Ltd.

The budget saw no shocks and no gimmicks, it's focused on growth which is very encouraging. The 50000 cr allocated towards extension of ECLGS will help. New trains and routes will see a lot of domestic travel. All this will lead to creating jobs in the hospitality sector and it's time for brands in Metro cities to open in tier 2 & 3. There is huge craving for international cuisines in tier 2 & 3 and I hope Made in India brands grow by expanding there. One will be surprised to know that Mexican, Lebanese, Thai, and Sri Lankan & of course Chinese cuisines have a growing demand.

Dharmesh Karmokar, ESORA

"We welcome the attention given to the hospitality industry by the Finance Minister in the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) announcement. However, we await fine print on the relaxations on meeting debt ratio covenants of previous ECLGS schemes, if any, and if the Rs 200 crores cap under the scheme has been enhanced.

Sanjay Sethi, CEO and MD, Chalet Hotels Limited.

The budget unfortunately has given no attention to the hospitality industry in particular. Our industry continues to bear the brunt of the pandemic, probably more than a lot of other sectors. We were hoping for some relief or some measures that would help the industry in the months and years to come. However the bright side is the push to local tourism.

Tarak Bhattacharya - Executive Director at Mad Over Donuts.

The issuance of E-passports with embedded chips will positively impact the travel sector and make oversees travel more convenient and enhance international travel growth by digitally upgrading the process. From an overall travel and tourism perspective, the Union Budget did not provide any specific assistance to the sector.

Indiver Rastogi, President and Group Head, Global Business Travel at Thomas Cook (India) and SOTC.

The Union Budget 2022-23 has left India's hospitality and tourism industry disappointed. The travel, along with tourism and hospitality sectors, has been the worst impacted sector due to the COVID Pandemic. Hospitality is a labor-intensive sector, employing lakhs of people Pan-India. It was expecting much-needed relief and incentives from the Union Budget 2022-23 for our revival and for the smaller players who are on the brink of their business survival.

The extension of Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) is a welcome move and indicates that the government has acknowledged the distress in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Rohit Bajpai, General Manager, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore



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Food Trends to look out for in 2022

By Sharmila Chand

From local produce to plant-based diets, micro regional cuisine to zero-waste concept, chefs are making conscious efforts towards getting back to roots and indulge in soulful food preparations this year. Diners will see a mélange of flavours inspired by South East Asian and Japanese cuisine besides consuming healthy and specially curated menus by chefs.

We spoke with well known chefs and got a sneak peek into what the food industry looks like in 2022!

Key Food Trends In 2022

Chef Altamsh Patel, Executive Chef, Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore

Menu inspired by culinary heritage: Diners are keen to try new dishes and especially the ones with a story involved.

Plant Based Meat: There is already a great demand and going forward even restaurants will have dishes made of plant-based meat in their menu.

Limited Menu/ Chef's special curated menu: Streamlining the menu to focus on selected Chef's Special food without too many choices will help businesses effectively manage their costs especially during these uncertain and tough times.



"Micro cuisine menus are appreciated widely by the guests as they are always looking for something new to try or, in this case, re-explore. We try and explore this resurgence of heritage foods through various food festivals"

Chef Altamsh Patel, Executive Chef, Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore

Regional cuisine: Micro regional cuisines which were limited to certain households are now gaining popularity, thanks to social media platforms.

Chef Anurudh Khanna, Executive Chef, The Westin Gurgaon New Delhi & The Westin Sohna Resort and Spa

Sustainable food concept will shine – Our efforts would be to let Mother Nature heal up with zero carbon footprints and usage of fresh produce.

Local flavours and fresh take on the recipes will tick the mind more than ever.

Focus on special diets like Vegan, Keto and Meat free will come up very strongly.

Focus on nutritious and wholesome meals.

Cuisines inspired by South East Asian and Japanese flavours will be trendy with refreshing flavours.

Chef Vidushi Sharma, Founder of Truffle & Co. & Owner of Mensho Tokyo, India

- Focus on flavour and less gimmick.
- Nostalgic flavours will be chefs' delight.
- Millets and other functional foods will trend.

• Home chefs will finally get their due.

Chef Krishna Khetle, Director - Spice Laundry and Tafe - Terrace Café

• Sushis will continue to be in demand.
• Focus towards healthy produce.
• Plant-based meats.
• Ghost Kitchens - delivery and take away technology driven model kitchens serving multi-cuisine.

Harpal Singh, Executive Sous Chef, HOME New Delhi

Local Produce will shine - chefs are personally indulging themselves into foraging & looking for ingredients locally available.

Conscious effort towards 'Reduction of Waste' – high time to step up in this direction.

Micro Menus – Chefs will offer neat small menus with fewer options that are done really well.

Chef Ram Bahadur, Head Chef, Chowman Chain of Restaurants

Plant Based Meat: Many people who were non-vegetarians, will now shift to vegetarianism or even veganism



"I aim to organise POPUPs focusing on local and regional produce. Research and execute Wellness /Ayurveda cuisine for boosting immunity and health. Travel more and explore more ethnic flavours and try to imbibe the inspirations in my cooking"

Chef Anurudh Khanna, Executive Chef, The Westin Gurgaon New Delhi & The Westin Sohna Resort and Spa

Focused Menus: Chefs would prefer focused menus with one particular cuisine instead of multi-cuisine menus and keep changing the dishes on the menu every few months, depending on season and demand.

Experimentation: One thing that has come hand-in-hand with Progressive food ordering is experimentation. People are now more open to try various cuisines and experiment with food than ever before.

Fermented Food: The health benefits of fermented foods are not new to us. However, with time it has become more popular among the masses and also there's a wide variety of options available in the market these days

New Year Resolutions

Chef Altamsh Patel, Executive Chef, Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore

• Sourcing ingredients from local producers.
• Focus more on seasonal produce.
• Reduce Kitchen wastage
• Promoting regional cuisine: will make effort towards promoting heritage recipes and flavours.



Chef Anurudh Khanna, Executive Chef, The Westin Gurgaon New Delhi & The Westin Sohna Resort and Spa

This year I will have a complete dedication towards my team. To keep the teams' motto high, with more and more engagement with food, and having joyous moments in kitchen.

Chef Vidushi Sharma, Founder of Truffle & Co. & Owner of Mensho Tokyo, India

"I don't believe in resolutions, I believe in evolution and this year I would like to see me and my brands evolve into their best selves."

Harpal Singh, Executive Sous Chef, HOME New Delhi

- To be more kind with the team members & help as much as possible.
- Keeping creativity & innovation high with the resources.
- Celebrate vegetarianism.

Chef Ram Bahadur, Head Chef, Chowman Chain of Restaurants

- Encourage mindful sourcing of ingredients and reduce carbon footprints as much as possible.
- Avoid using single use plastic.
- Have a proper cost control. Hiring efficient staff with adept knowledge, proper maintenance of stock register, modern marketing strategy, reduces wastage.

Food Concepts IN for the Year

Chef Altamsh Patel, Executive Chef, Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore

Back to roots: Lockdown has made us all realise the importance of comfort foods and grandma's recipes. Even restaurants are including some of the classic ancestral recipes in their menu giving it some modern twists.

Focus towards Ayurvedic food concept: Ayurvedic food concept is trending to boost immunity and wellness.

Micro regional cuisine: Micro cuisine menus are appreciated widely by the guests as they're always looking for something new to try or, in this case, re-explore. We try and explore this resurgence of heritage foods through various food festivals like recently we hosted Kolhapuri food festival, Tangra Food festival and The Royal Cuisine of Sailana for people to taste the cuisines which are otherwise not easily available in Bangalore.

Chef Anurudh Khanna, Executive Chef, The Westin Gurgaon New Delhi & The Westin Sohna Resort and Spa

- Local fresh produce menus will be IN this year.
- Food focusing on health and wellness will be IN.



"I would like to focus on North East Indian Cuisine, environment-friendly food and dining concepts and cooking with fresh & time saving elements."

Harpal Singh, Executive Sous Chef, HOME New Delhi

Chef Vidushi Sharma, Founder of Truffle & Co. & Owner of Mensho Tokyo, India



"People are done with gimmicks and things that look great and taste like nothing. All sugar and chemicals and no real flavour will be totally out. I also wouldn't like to see inferior ingredients ruining dishes"

Chef Vidushi Sharma, Founder of Truffle & Co. & Owner of Mensho Tokyo, India

Key Food Trends at a Glance!

Local fresh produce menus will be trendy.
Food focusing on health and wellness.
Plant-based meats in demand.
Conscious effort towards reduction of waste.
Neat Micro menus by chefs
Back to comfort food and heritage recipes
Focus towards Ayurvedic food concept.
Micro regional cuisine trendy.
Quick Service Restaurants and Cloud Kitchen will be on the rise.

- Artisanal products.
- Homechefs curating weekly menus.
- Home food delivery will be buzzing.

Chef Ram Bahadur, Head Chef, Chowman Chain of Restaurants

Quick Service Restaurant: QSR and Cloud Kitchen will keep on being a major core of the food industry. Pandemic has brought in a huge alteration in the behavioural pattern in the customers. There's a huge buzz around QSR and Cloud kitchen this year.

Healthy Ingredients: People now have a better understanding of what they consume, hence healthy ingredients are going to be of prime importance in 2022.

Ultra-urban Farming: Covid has given people the time to indulge in farming and gardening. They now prefer organic products and grow their own herbs and hyper-local crops and this will continue in years to come.

Food Concepts that will be OUT

Chef Altamsh Patel, Executive Chef, Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore

Fusion food will be on its way out: People want to experience authentic flavours of a particular cuisine.

Imported food/ ingredients will no more be in demand.

Frozen or processed food: Chefs will prefer fresh farm produce and locally sourced products instead of frozen or processed food items.

Chef Anurudh Khanna, Executive Chef, The Westin Gurgaon New Delhi & The Westin Sohna Resort and Spa

Molecular gastronomy and usage of chemicals will be OUT. ■

Rakesh Tara.qxp_Couverture-2020 02/03/2022 09:26 Page 2

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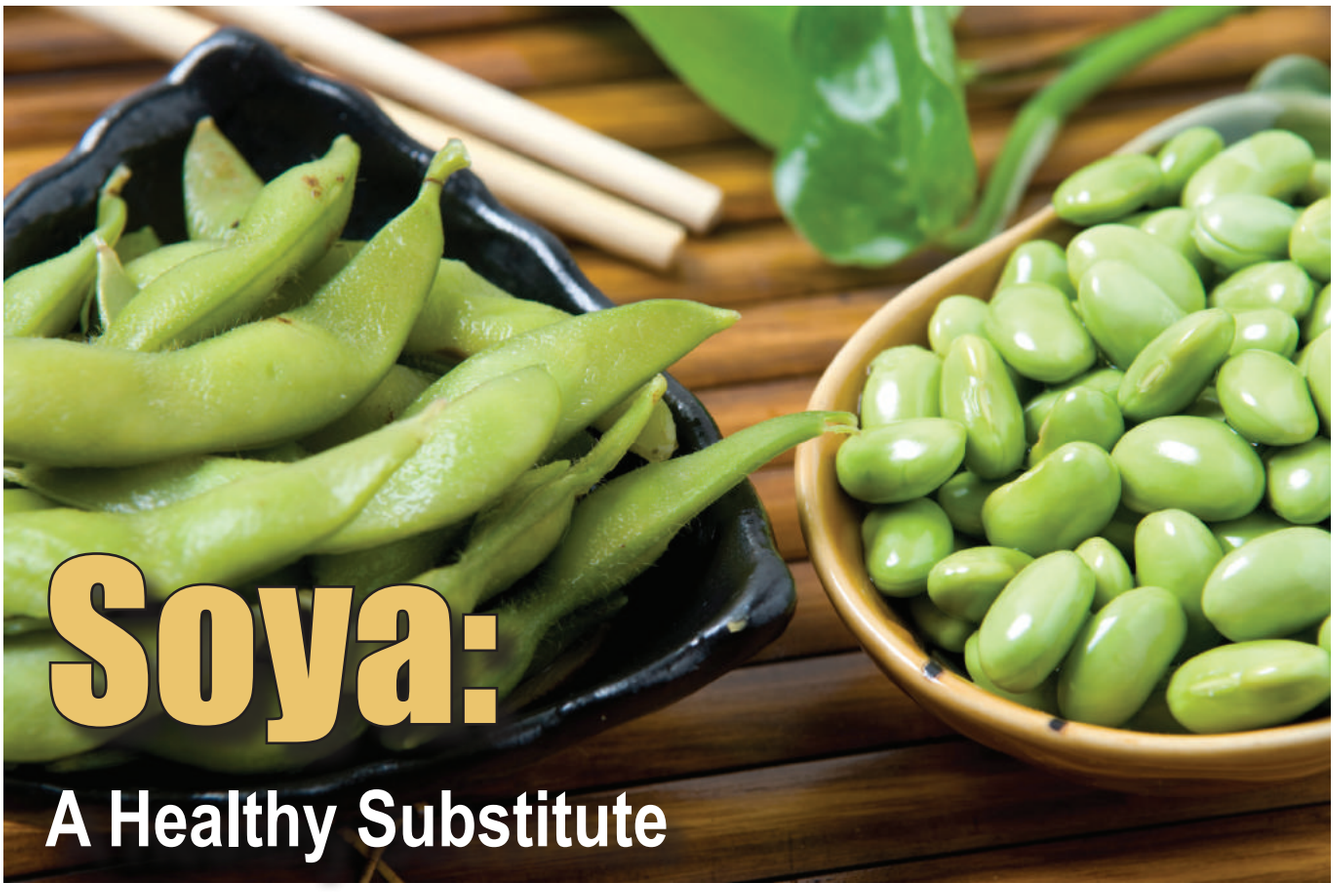
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Soya:
A Healthy Substitute

The origin of Soya (biological name: Sojae Praeparatum), a wild variety of Glycine Max dates back to 3000 B.C. Soybeans belong to the legume family and are native to East Asia. They have been an important protein source in the Orient for millions of people for over five thousand years.

The name Soya was derived from the word "Sou" in Chinese meaning "big bean". The legume, a native of Manchuria in China, first made its written record in a Chinese book "Pen Ts'ao Kong Mu", written by the Emperor, Cheng-Nung in 2838 B.C. Soya popular by varied names such as "Yellow Jewel" and "Heaven's Bird", was one among the five sacred grains, collectively known as "Wu Ku".

The cultivation of Soya spread to Japan, Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Nepal and India within the span of a few centuries. Soya was introduced to Europe during the 18th century and made its way to the U.S. in the 19th century. It was during the early 1900's, that a renowned agricultural researcher, George Washington Carver of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, discovered that Soya bean contains high protein content as well as a good source of oil.

Soybeans can be grown on a variety of soils and a wide range of climates, ranging from tropical Brazil to the snowy island Hokkaido in the north of Japan. As soybeans mature in the pod, they ripen into a hard, dry bean. Although most soybeans are yellow, there are also rare varieties in black, brown or green.

High Yield - A given area of land planted with soybeans can produce much more protein than land planted with other crops, or if the land were used to raise cattle.



Storing Soybeans - Green soybeans (edamame) should be refrigerated and used within two days. Frozen edamame can be kept for several months. Dried soybeans may be kept in an airtight container for a long period of time.

Composition

Soya bean is rich in protein and contains all nine essential amino acids. The fact that Soya bean is low in fat and cholesterol-free makes it a good meat substitute for non-vegetarians. Except Soya, which has protein content equivalent to that of milk, egg and meat, all plant proteins contain less protein content than those found in animals.

Apart from 50 per cent protein value in Soya, the legume contains carbohydrates, vitamins like Vitamin A, E, K and B complex and minerals like iron, calcium, potassium and phosphorus. In addition, isoflavones, saponins and phytosterols are also present. Soya bean is low in saturated fat and high in polyunsaturated fat.

Soya beans and other Soya bean foods



such as soy flour and tempeh, are an excellent source of dietary fibre whereas, tofu and soy milk contain very less amount of dietary fibre.

Health Benefits

• Reduces blood cholesterol levels, in turn reducing the risk of heart disease

• Reduces the cancer risk

• Controls the sugar content in blood

• Overcome allergic condition to cow and buffalo milk by consuming Soya milk

• Helps body retain and absorb calcium in the bones and hence, prevent osteoporosis.

• Slows or prevents the damage to the kidneys

• Prevents the effect of menopause

• Relieves symptoms of several digestive disorders

• Improves the immune system, so as to fight chronic diseases

• Decreases blood clots

• Reduces the risk of experiencing a stroke

Cooking Soybeans

Soybeans can be cooked and used in soups, sauces and stews. To prepare two cups of soybeans for cooking, soak in about six cups of water for six to eight hours. (Soaking shortens the cooking time and improves the texture and appearance of the beans). Drain, rinse and cook soaked soybeans in about six cups of fresh water. Don't add salt at this point or it will delay the softening of the soybeans. Pressure cook for about 40 min., then the beans will become tender. When cooking soybeans, make it worth by cooking two or three times what is needed and freezing the rest for later use.

Soya Foods

Soya bean: Soya beans can be eaten whole after boiling or roasting. They can be used in sauces, stews and soups. Cooked well Soya beans help in better digestion and absorption.

Soya milk: Soya beans soaked in water and ground fine extracts a liquid - Soya milk, which is rich in protein, Vitamin B and iron. Those allergic to cow and buffalo-milk benefit from Soya milk, which contains vitamins equivalent to those found in cow-milk. Soya milk is used to feed infants and in cereals, soups, shakes and puddings.

Soya bean Oil: Extracted from the whole Soya bean, the oil is rich in essential fatty acids, linoleic and linolenic acids. Since Soya bean contains no cholesterol, it is a reliable and leading source of edible oil.

Soy sauce: Soya bean mixed with wheat flour and yeast and then fermented, forms a thick liquid. On processing this liquid makes soy sauce. There are mainly 3 types of soy sauce - Shoyu, Tamari, and

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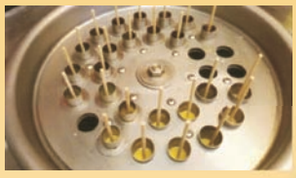
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Teriyaki. Soy sauce is a food-flavouring agent.

Tofu: A cheese-like cake, made from Soya milk by adding a coagulant. Tofu, also known as Soya Paneer is rich in protein, polyunsaturated fat, iron and low in sodium. Used in soups, salads, sandwiches, pakoras and palak paneer.

Miso: Fermented smooth paste, used in soups, sauces and salad dressings. Miso can thicken soups.

Soy Flour: Roasted Soya beans are ground into a fine powder to form soy flour. Soy flour added to wheat flour makes chapattis protein rich. Natural or full fat, defatted and lecithinated are the different kinds of soy flour available.

Meat Alternatives: Made from Soya beans, they are available in the form of frozen, canned or dried foods. Meat alternatives are rich in protein, Vitamin B and iron.

Soy Protein

Whole soybeans are an excellent source of protein (soybeans contain on average 37% protein!) and dietary fibre. Soy protein is the only vegetable whose protein is complete. Soy protein has attracted a lot of attention recently due to its ability to lower LDL (bad cholesterol) levels.

Results from research have prompted health professionals to request the government to officially give a stamp of approval for soy's cholesterol-lowering effects. The Food and Drug Administration has approved the cholesterol-lowering health claim for soy, indicating that daily consumption of 25 grams of soy protein (6.5 grams of soy protein per serving) may lower LDL cholesterol.

Soy protein has been used since 1959 as ingredients for its functional properties in a variety of foods such as salad dressings, soups, vegetarian foods and meat imitations. The functional properties of soy protein are emulsification and texturizing. Recently the popularity of soy protein has increased mainly due to the health benefits of soy protein. It has been proven that soy protein can prevent heart problems and many countries allow health claims for food, which are rich in soy protein.

In the US a soy protein health claim is allowed under the following conditions:

- One serving must contain at least 6.25 grams of soy protein.
- One serving should contain max 3 grams of fat, unless the product consists of or is derived from whole soy and contains no fat in addition to the fat inherently present in the whole soy.
- Less than 1 gram of saturated fat which should represent max 15% of total calories.
- The serving should contain less than 20 milligrams of cholesterol.
- The food should be low in sodium: less than 480 milligrams for an individual food, less than 720 milligrams for a main dish and less than 960 milligrams for a meal product.

There are three types of soy protein products:

Soy Protein Isolate

Soy protein isolate is the most refined form of soy protein and is mainly used in meat products to improve texture and eating quality. Soy protein isolates contain about 90 percent soy protein.

Soy Protein Concentrates

Soy protein concentrate is basically soybean without the water-soluble carbohydrates. Soy protein concentrate contains about 70 percent of soy protein.

Textured Soy Protein

Textured soy protein, often called TSP, is made from soy protein concentrate by giving it some texture. Textured soy protein is available as dry flakes or chunks. Textured soy protein keeps its structure when hydrated. Hydrated textured soy protein chunks have a texture similar to meat. They can be used as a meat replacement or can be added to meat. Textured soy protein contains about 70 percent of soy protein.



Soybean Oil

Soybean oil is widely used oil and is commonly called 'vegetable oil'. Soybean oil is a very healthy food ingredient despite the bad publicity regarding fats and oils in general. Soybean oil does not contain much saturated fat. Saturated fat causes heart diseases and is mainly found in products from animal origin. Soybean oil is also used by the food industry in a variety of food products including salad dressings, sandwich spreads, margarine, bread, mayonnaise, non-dairy coffee creamers and snack foods.

Soybean oil contains natural antioxidants which remain in the oil even after extraction. These antioxidants help to prevent the oxidative rancidity.

Storage of soybean oil

Soybean oil has normally a shelf life of 1 year but it is better to store the soybean oil only a few months at room temperature. Soybean oil should be stored in a dry and dark place. It should be stored away from heat and in order to keep soybean oil for longer periods it should be kept refrigerated. ■

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Let's Talk HAM

The word HAM means pork which comes from the hind leg of a hog. Ham made from the front leg of a hog will be labelled "pork shoulder picnic. "Turkey" Ham must be made from the thigh meat of Turkey.

Hams may be fresh, cured, or cured-and-smoked. The usual colour for cured ham is deep rose or pink, fresh ham (which is not cured) has the pale pink or beige colour of a fresh pork roast and country hams and prosciutto (which are dry cured) range from pink to mahogany colour.

Hams are either ready-to-eat or not. Ready-to-eat hams include prosciutto and fully cooked hams. They can be eaten right out of the package. Fresh hams and hams that are only trichina treated must be cooked before eating. These hams will bear the safe handling label.

Hams can be fresh, cook-before-eating, fully-cooked, picnic and country types. There are so many kinds, and their storage times and cooking times can be quite confusing.

Curing Solutions

Curing is the addition of salt, sodium nitrate (or saltpeter), nitrites and sometimes sugars, seasonings, phosphates and ascorbates to pork for preservation, colour development and flavour enhancement.

Nitrate and nitrites contribute to the characteristic cured flavour and reddish-pink colour of cured pork. Nitrite and salt inhibit the outgrowth of 'Clostridium botulinum', a deadly microorganism which can occur in foods.



The two most-used methods of adding solutions to pork are: injection into muscle by needle; and tumbling or massaging into muscle to produce a more tender product.

Dry Curing

In dry curing, the process used to make country hams and prosciutto, fresh meat is rubbed with a dry-cure mixture of salt and other ingredients. Dry curing produces a salty product. In 1992, FSIS approved a trichina treatment method that permits substituting up to half of the sodium chloride with potassium chloride to result in lower sodium levels.

Since dry curing draws out moisture, it reduces ham weight by at least 18% – usually 20 to 25%; this results in a more concentrated ham flavour.

Dry-cured hams may be aged from a few weeks to more than a year. Six months is the traditional process but may be shortened according to aging temperature.

These uncooked hams are safe stored at



room temperature because they contain so little water, bacteria can't multiply in them. Country hams may not be injected with curing solutions or placed in curing solutions but they may be smoked.

Wet Curing or Brine Cure

Brine curing is the most popular way of producing hams. It is a wet cure whereby fresh meat is injected with a curing solution before cooking. Brining ingredients can be salt, sugar, sodium nitrite, sodium nitrate, sodium erythorbate, sodium phosphate, potassium chloride, water and flavourings.

Smoke flavouring (liquid smoke) may also be injected with brine solution. Cooking may occur during this process.

Smoking & Smoke Flavouring

After curing, some hams are smoked. Smoking is a process by which ham is hung in a smokehouse and allowed to absorb smoke from smouldering fires. This gives added flavour and colour to meat and slows the development of rancidity.

Foodborne Organisms

These organisms are associated with ham:

Trichinella spiralis (trichina) - worms sometimes present in hogs. All hams are specifically processed to USDA guidelines to kill trichinae.

Staphylococcus aureus (staph) - is destroyed by cooking and processing but can be re-introduced via mishandling; the bacteria can then produce a toxin which is not destroyed by further cooking. Dry curing may or may not destroy S. aureus, but the high salt content on the exterior inhibits these bacteria. When the ham is sliced, the moister interior will permit staphylococcal multiplication; thus sliced dry-cured hams must be refrigerated.



Mold - can often be found on country cured ham. We believe most of these are harmless but some molds can produce mycotoxins. Molds grow

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on hams during the long curing and drying process because the high salt and low temperatures do not inhibit these robust organisms. Do not discard the ham. Wash it with hot water and scrub off the mold with a stiff vegetable brush.

Standard & Storage

When selecting a whole ham or shoulder a visual inspection will be difficult, because you will not be able to see any of the inside area of the cut. The meat of the cut you are selecting should be pink with a white to grayish tint of colouring and have a fine-grained texture. Meat from the loin is generally lighter in colour than the meat from the shoulder or leg.

The meat should be firm to the touch, look moist but not slimy wet, and should not emit any foul odours. The fat on the outer edges should be creamy white and be blemish free. If the fat has a yellowish tint, it is old and probably close to being spoiled. The package containing the cut should be cool to the touch and free of any holes or tears.

Pork should be purchased just before checking out at the store so it is exposed to unsafe temperatures for as short a time as possible. It should be placed in a plastic bag to prevent any leakage from contaminating any other foods. After purchasing it should be taken home and refrigerated as soon as possible.

Raw pork should be stored in the refrigerator at 40°F or lower and should be used within three to five days of the "sell by" date on the package or it should be frozen. Freezing should be avoided if possible because it will cause the pork to be less tender and juicy but, if it will not be used within the three to five day refrigerator storage time, it should be frozen to prevent it from perishing. Freezing meat has little effect on its nutritional value.

Pork should be stored tightly wrapped to prevent the meat from drying out when exposed to air. Whenever possible, leave the raw pork wrapped in its original package to minimize handling of the meat. If it is necessary to rewrap, be sure to wrap tightly in plastic wrap, foil, or leak proof bag, or place meat in an airtight container. The package should be placed on a dish with sides to prevent any meat juices from dripping on other foods and then stored in the coldest section of the refrigerator.

Quantity to Buy

When buying a ham, estimate the size needed according to the number of servings the type of ham should yield:

1/4 - 1/3 lb. per serving of boneless ham

1/3 - 1/2 lb. of meat per serving of ham with little bone

3/4 - 1 lb. of meat per serving of ham with large bone.

Cooking or Reheating Hams

Both vacuum-packaged fully cooked and canned hams can be eaten cold just as they come from their packaging. However, if you want to reheat these fully cooked hams, set the oven no lower than 325°F and heat to an internal temperature of 140°F as measured with a meat thermometer.

For fully cooked ham that has been repackaged in any other location outside the plant or for leftover fully cooked ham, heat to 165°F.

Cook-before-eating hams must reach 160°F to be safely cooked before serving. Cook in an oven set no lower than 325°F. Hams can also be safely cooked in a microwave oven, other countertop appliances and on the stove top.

Country hams can be soaked 4 to 12 hours or longer in the refrigerator to reduce the salt content before cooking. Then they can be cooked by boiling or baking.

Courtsey: USDA



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Coconut Milk

The tall coconut tree is associated in our minds with visions of sea shores –places of great leisure & beautiful beaches, Along with these are visions of scrumptious food from a variety of coastal cuisines. From Malaysian and Thai to Tamil and Goan-the coconut in its various forms & extractions finds pride of place in a variety of dishes in these cuisines. In fact, a Google search on the Internet for 'coconut milk' yields recipes from exotic cuisines like Brazilian to the East African ranging from plantains in coconut milk to aromatic salmons.

The ripe coconut fruit has a hard shell covered by a fibrous outer coat and contains an edible kernel. The shell is lined with rich thick 'meat' and the hollow at the centre is filled with a thin, slightly sweet liquid-also called coconut 'water'.



Coconut milk is the diluted cream pressed out from the thick, white flesh of a well-matured coconut. The process of extraction of coconut milk at home involves the typical following steps:

- Dehusking
- Scooping
- Grating
- Blending
- Pressing

Simply put, the process involves extracting and then grating the meat of the coconut into fine pieces. The gratings are then put in a muslin cloth & warm water is added. The muslin cloth is then formed into a ball & squeezed tightly for getting milk. The milk thus obtained is thick & creamy and is called first pressing milk. The gratings can then be diluted with water and squeezed again to get more milk, which would be thinner. Commercially, coconut cream is obtained by pressing grated coconut flesh by itself without water, using a specialized, heavy piece of machinery.

Obviously, first pressing milk is always the richest and creamiest with the best flavour. Good coconut milk has a clean, white colour and tastes rich, creamy and mildly sweet with the essence of coconut. It should have the depth of flavour and should not leave an unpleasant aftertaste.

The Nutritional Values of Coconut

The nutritional value of coconut products varies according to the different stages of development. The mature coconut is a good source of iron and potassium. Approximately 86% of the calories in coconuts are from fat, most of which is saturated fat. The saturated fat content according to studies is good saturated fat, easily metabolised to give the body quick energy. Contrary to popular myth, it does not transform into bad cholesterol to clog up arteries.

In fact, cultures around the world that depend on coconuts as their main source of fat have been known to be free of heart disease. The principle fatty acid in coconut milk is lauric acid which is the same as fat found in mother's milk and is known

to promote normal brain development and contributes to healthy bones. Coconut Fat is less likely to lead to weight gain in comparison to polyunsaturated oils.

Today there are a few brands of coconut milk that are available in the Indian market. Dabur Foods' Hommade Coconut Milk is in ready-to-use liquid form as it is packed in TetraPak cartons. The pack contents are 200 ml and it is claimed to be 'first pressing milk'. For coconut milk, the concentrated coconut cream is imported from Thailand. The concentrate has very high flavour, which is retained in the final end-product due to the TetraPak packaging which protects the product & its taste inside without any preservatives. Coconut cream from coconuts ripened in the right season give the best flavour.

In hotels & restaurants Coconut Milk is mostly used in Thai cooking as well as in the bar.

Coconut milk is not the liquid inside a coconut, although this liquid does make a satisfying drink. Rather, coconut milk is made by squeezing the grated flesh of a coconut with some hot water resulting in a rich white liquid that looks very much like cow's milk.





Coconut milk should be distinguished from coconut cream. Fresh coconut milk, when refrigerated, and canned coconut milk, if not shaken, separates into two layers, with the thick (upper) layer being the coconut cream and the thinner (bottom) layer constituting the milk.

The top layer can be skimmed off with a spoon and used for recipes requiring coconut cream (usually desserts) with the bottom layer being reserved for recipes specifying coconut milk.

Canned, frozen and powdered coconut milk is widely available, convenient to use and generally of acceptable quality.

A good indicator of a high quality coconut milk is one with a higher fat content, in which the fat separates from the watery portion. Although a high fat content is taboo in today's diet, studies show that the kind of fat in coconut milk, even though it is saturated fat, is good for you.

Coconut milk contains short- and medium-chain fatty acids, which are easily metabolized and converted into quick energy. Studies indicate that these acids are less likely to contribute to obesity than polyunsaturated oils because they are immediately used by the body as opposed to being stored. ■







Say Cheese to Feta Cheese

Whether you are having your morning burger, evening pizza or savouring a glass of premium wine at night, cheese can be the ideal accompaniment to all of these. This wonderful food product has various ways of finding the routes to your stomach. Formed by coagulation of the milk protein, cheese has been there since time immemorial in most societies across the world. People are using this milk product in myriad ways. Over the years, men have learned to produce cheese in different textures, forms and flavours with the milk of cow, sheep, goat and buffalo.

The Feta cheese of Greece has a niche position in the world of cheese. Rich in protein, fat, vitamin and calcium, feta is a white cheese, traditionally made with sheep and goat's milk, where the percentage of goat milk does not exceed 30 percent. For several months, Feta is cured in a brine solution. The cured cheese turns dry when brought out of the solution and becomes crumbly.

Salt is used as a preservative in this Greek cheese. However, if you wish to lessen the sharpness of salt in Feta cheese, it can be soaked in fresh cold water or milk for some time. The fat content in Feta cheese varies between 30 percent - 60 percent, although in most cases, one finds around 45 percent of milk fat in Feta cheese. The moisture content of this grainy white cheese is approximately 56 percent. Often cut in the sizes of square cakes or loafs, Feta cheese is available in both its soft tangy aroma and also in a slightly solid form.

Origin of Feta Cheese

Greece is the haven of cheese production. Despite anthotyros, batzos, galotyri, graviera, katiki, kefalograviera, kpanisti, ladotyri, manouri, metsovone, myzithra, touloumotyri and a host of other Greek cheeses, Feta cheese generally tops the popularity chart in Greece among cheeses. Legends have it that Gods sent Apollo and Cyrene's son Aristaios to bestow the Greeks with the gift of cheese making. This 'gift of everlasting value' has stood the test of time, which, according to the myth, was first prepared by Cyclope Polyfimos. Many trace the history of cheese making to 4000 B.C. However, the earliest reference of cheese making is found in Homer's Odyssey.

Since then, numerous Greek scholars and writers have referred to cheeses in different contexts. But specific reference to Feta cheese was first historically recorded during the Byzantine Empire. Therefore the term 'Feta' bears an Italian origin, meaning slice. In the literature of the Byzantine era, special reference was made to the Crete region of Greece for cheese making. Even today, Feta cheese is mainly produced in the mountainous regions of Greece where sheep and goats are generally reared. Lesvos Island, Thrace, Thessaly, Sterea, Peloponnese, Macedonia and Epirus are today the prime hubs of feta cheese production.

Feta Production in the Modern Era

Feta cheese in Greece is today produced by both small diaries run by families, and as well as large industrial units. Traditionally, the mixing of sheep milk with goat milk is prevalent in the Feta cheese production. But to produce good quality Feta cheese, the share of goat milk should not exceed more than 30 percent.

For large scale production, milk is brought to the dairies in large kegs and it is coagulated within two days. The Feta is soaked in brine, either in metal containers or in wooden barrels, for at least two months, so that it matures properly. Before packing it for sale, the cheese is sometimes matured for the second time in refrigerators for some time. Feta is sold both in airtight containers and also in packages with natural brine.

Here it deserves a mention that in preparing authentic Feta cheese, condensed milk, milk powder or artificial preservatives are not used.

Utility of Feta Cheese

Feta cheese is widely used in several Greek dishes. It is an important component of most Greek Salads, Pizzas, Pastries, Tyropita and Spanakopita. Stuffing the cheese in fishes or crumbling it on omelettes is also very common. The Greeks also like the cheese garnished with olives, roasted red peppers, herbs or nuts, with a pinch of oregano. Many habitually eat Baguette with Feta cheese. Well, you may also like the salty flavour of Feta with a glass of beer. ■

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Amplifying Foods Life



Food additives allow consumers to enjoy a variety of safe, wholesome and tasty food all-year-round, and make it possible to keep in our pantry or fridge a vast array of convenience foods without having to shop every day.

What keeps bread mould-free and salad dressings from separating, helps cake batters rise reliably during baking and keeps cured meats safe to eat? What improves the nutritional value of biscuits and pasta, gives margarine its pleasing yellow colour and prevents salt from becoming lumpy in its shaker? And what magic ingredient allows many foods to be available year-round, in great quantity and the best quality?

The answer is "Food Additives". Often maligned or misunderstood, the role of food additives in today's bountiful and nutritious food supply is vital. Food additives allow consumers to enjoy a variety of safe, wholesome and tasty food all-year-round, and make it possible to keep in our pantry or fridge a vast array of convenience foods without having to shop for them every day.

Although salt, baking powder and vanilla are the most commonly used additives today; many people tend to think of food additives as complex chemical compounds. Government authorities carefully regulate all food additives and various international organizations ensure that food additives are safe for their intended use and food containing them is accurately labeled.

What is a food additive?

If a substance is added to a food for a specific technological purpose, and is not a food itself, it is referred to as a food additive. For example, the intense sweetener aspartame, which may be used in beverages, yogurt, chewing gum and other foods, is considered a food additive. Additives are identified as such in the ingredient list on the label of packaged foods.

A colour additive is any dye, pigment or substance that can impart colour when added or applied to a food. Colour additives may be used in foods, drugs and cosmetics. Colour additives are used in foods for many reasons, including offsetting colour loss due to storage or processing of foods and to accommodate variations in natural food colour.

The names of many substances added to food may seem foreign but the compounds are actually quite familiar. For example, ascorbic acid is another name for vitamin C, alpha-tocopherol is better known as vitamin E, and beta-carotene is a source of vitamin A. Although there are no easy synonyms for all additives, it is helpful to remember that all food is made up of chemicals. Carbon, hydrogen and other chemical elements provide the basic building blocks of everything in life.

Regulating Additives

Our forefathers used salt to preserve meats and fish, added herbs and spices to improve the flavour of foods, preserved fruit with sugar, and pickled cucumbers in vinegar solution.

Over the years, however, improvements have been made in increasing the efficiency and ensuring the safety of all additives. Today food additives are more strictly regulated than at any other time in history.

The use of additives is carefully monitored and surveys are routinely carried out to make sure that people do not regularly consume more than the Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI). This is the amount of an additive that a person may eat or drink each day for an entire lifetime without causing any known harm to health.

The Food Regulations Act 1995, strictly controls the use of colours in food. Allergic reactions have been associated with some yellow/orange colours added to food. These reactions include urticaria (hives), rhinitis (runny nose), nausea, vomiting and asthma in certain sensitive individuals.

All additives, except flavourings, must be listed clearly on food labels, either by name or E number. More than one colour additive can be used to give food products a yellow/orange/red colour. Therefore you can try to avoid a colour additive by avoiding those food products that have it listed on their labels.

However, we are not aware of any reports of adverse reactions to orange flavourings. Most flavourings are complex mixtures of individual ingredients. The overall composition of and orange flavouring' varies between manufacturers

and from product to product. Each of the flavour ingredients is used in tiny amounts and contributes to the overall flavour.

Utility

Additives in foods perform a variety of useful functions that are often taken for granted. They help keep food wholesome and appealing while in transit or storage. Additives also improve the nutritional value of certain foods and can make them more appealing by improving their taste, texture, consistency or colour.

Some additives could be eliminated if we were willing to grow our own food, harvest and grind it, spend many hours cooking and canning, or accept increased risks of food spoilage. But most people today have come to rely on the many technological, aesthetic and convenience benefits that additives provide in food. Additives are used in foods mainly for five following reasons:

• To maintain product consistency

Emulsifiers give products a consistent texture and prevent oil and water phases from separating. Stabilizers and thickeners give smooth uniform texture. Anti-caking agents help substances such as salt to flow freely. Additives such as alginates, lecithin, mono- and diglycerides, carrageenan, glycerine, pectin, guar gum and sodium aluminosilicate are used in baked goods, cake mixes, salad dressings, ice cream, processed cheese, table salt and chocolate.

• To improve or maintain nutrition

Vitamins and minerals are added to many common foods such as flour, cereals and margarine to make up for those nutrients likely to be lacking in a person's diet or reduced in processing. Such restoration or fortification has helped reduce malnutrition. All products containing added nutrients must be appropriately labeled. Additives such as vitamins and minerals, including folate, thiamine, vitamin C, riboflavin, niacin, calcium and iron are used in breakfast cereals, flour, dairy products, margarine and fruit juice.

• To maintain taste and goodness

Preservatives retard product spoilage caused by mold, bacteria, fungi or yeast or exposure to air. Bacterial contamination can cause food-borne illness, including life-threatening botulism. Antioxidants are preservatives that prevent fats and oils in baked goods and other foods from becoming rancid or developing an "off" flavour. They also prevent the surface of fresh fruits such as apples from turning brown when cut and exposed to air. Additives such as propionic acid and its salts, ascorbic acid, butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), benzoates, sodium nitrite, citric acid and erythorbates are used in breads, cheeses, crackers, fats, oils, potato chips, cake mixes, cured meats, soft drinks and cordials.

• To provide leavening or control acidity/alkalinity

Leavening acids/agents release acids that react with baking powder when heated to help cakes, biscuits and other goods to rise during baking. Other additives help modify the acidity and alkalinity of foods for proper flavour, taste and colour. Additives such as sodium bicarbonate, citric acid, fumaric acid, phosphoric acid, lactic acid and tartrates are used in cakes, biscuits, breads, crackers and soft drinks.

• To enhance flavour or impart desired colour

Many natural and synthetic flavours enhance the taste of foods. Colours, likewise, enhance the appearance of certain foods to meet consumer expectations. Additives such as aspartame, saccharin, allura red, monosodium glutamate, caramel and annatto are used in soft drinks, cordials, soups, confectionery, baked goods and jams. ■

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Tomato is a pulp. One doesn't need skin and seeds while cooking. There are some varieties that look like slicers.

What makes a tomato paste is not how it looks?

It is characterized by possessing high amounts of sugars and acids (flavour), a lot of pectin (a group of neutral colloidal polymers occurring naturally in plant tissues), and less water than other tomato types. The higher amount of pectin, coupled with the lower amount of water makes the juice thicker and requires less time to cook down to a paste consistency.

Tomato paste consists of Tomatoes that have been cooked for several hours and reduced to a thick, red concentrate before being strained. Tomato paste is a commercial concentrate of pured tomatoes commonly sold in small cans and used to add flavour and body to sauces. While it is almost universally commercially produced now, it was made for years in the homes of Italy (la salsa secca) and other Mediterranean countries.



Puree, Paste & Sauce

Tomato Paste should not be confused with Tomato puree or Tomato sauce as Tomato puree consists of tomatoes that have been cooked briefly and strained, resulting in a thick liquid. While tomato sauce is a somewhat thinner tomato puree, and may include seasonings and other flavourings so that it is ready to be used in other dishes or as a base for other sauces. Tomato puree is thinner than tomato paste but thicker and more flavourful that tomato sauce. Tomato sauce has salt and other seasonings added.

Tomato paste can be used like regular tomatoes or for cooking in Italian dishes. The good quality firm Tomatoes are selected which have smooth-skinned and be at least pink in colour. Tomatoes that

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are partially green will ripen if left at room temperature. Always product that is too soft, wrinkled or that has broken skin is avoided. Tomatoes with a green blush will ripen, but product with blotchy green or brown areas are not used.

Tomato puree is made from ripe tomatoes that have been cooked then strained to make a pure thick sauce. No additional seasonings are added. Use as an addition to a sauce to add body, flavour and colour.

Tomato paste is used to thicken and accent the flavour and colour of sauces; however it is slightly bitter and should not be used alone or in large quantities.

Tomato paste is the generic name. It has broadly divided into three main categories, viz, Pharmaceutical (Lycopene extraction), Ketchup/Puree, and Beauty/Wellness and Health care. Very importantly, 1 kg of Tomato paste is equal to 125 to 140 medium size tomatoes without water. And it says that at least 10-12 times stronger than raw tomatoes and 3 times the puree.

Health Quotient

One of the basic components of Tomato paste is that the presence of Lycopene. Lycopene is the red pigment in tomatoes, which is naturally occurring strong antioxidant, found many times more in tomato concentrate than in raw tomatoes.



Research establishes that Lycopene helps in removing free radicals in the body. It makes the heart grow stronger, reduce bad cholesterol, prevents and aids in the fight against Osteoporosis, Diabetes, Acidity and Cancer. Sometimes it is also referred as the powerhouse of nutrients.

It also shows that the body can absorb Lycopene more efficiently after it has been processed into juice, sauce, paste, or ketchup. In fresh fruit, Lycopene is enclosed in the fruit tissue. Therefore, only a portion of the lycopene that is present in fresh fruit is absorbed. Processing fruit makes the lycopene more bio-available by increasing the surface area available for digestion.

They are also a great source of vitamin C, potassium, folate, and vitamin K.

India's Scenario

India being a vast country, the availability of quality tomatoes varies in different geographical regions. Tomato has only two crop seasons in the country. The main cause of concern is the quality of Tomatoes in India. Farmers pluck the fruit in green before it actually ripens, thus compromise on quality of product which is less competitive in international markets. Lack of flavour, colour, thickness and taste are the main reasons for less consistent quality of Indian tomatoes.

Unlike other countries, another major issue is lack of its transport facility. Tomato has 90% of water, can be damaged easily if not handled properly. What is needed is proper education to farmers and infrastructure. This can only be achieved by corporatising the Tomato farming. One of the companies in India has already taken serious steps towards the same.

Interestingly, Tomato paste is now becoming popular in the commercial foodservice sector. The main reasons why Tomato paste is preferred over Tomato is to make food look more colourful and moreover savings on time. It is always difficult to find ripen Tomato in the market. Even if they are found, it takes time for them to reach the kitchen and then it needs to be cleaned, cut, and boiled. Thus it is more convenient, economical and faster to have Tomato paste than the raw fruits. ■

Tomato Paste Recipe

Basically tomato paste is tomato that has been reduced, reduced again, and then reduced some more! It's ideal to make paste on a cold day, over the gentle heat of a coal range.

- 24 large tomatoes
- 2 teaspoons salt or to taste
- Olive oil

First score a cross on the bottom of each tomato using a sharp knife.

Blanch the tomatoes in boiling water, and then drop into ice cold water. After this the tomato peel should almost fall off. Pull the remaining peel off the tomatoes. Cut the core out and remove all the seeds. Keep the peelings for making homemade stock and the seeds for adding into stews etc.

Chop the flesh and measure what you're left with which would normally be around 4 litres.

Add ½ teaspoon of salt to each litre. Place the tomato and salt in a large pot and simmer over a low heat for around 1 hour, stirring often to prevent any catching and burning.

Remove from the heat and press through a fine sieve or process through a food mill.

Return the tomatoes to the pot and continue to cook very slowly until the paste holds its shape on a spoon, approximately 2 to 3 hours. Stir occasionally to prevent any sticking.

Spoon into hot sterilized jars, leaving 3cm (1 in) at the top. Slop on a little olive oil to cover and seal. Ensure the lids have vacuum sealed, or the paste will spoil. Alternatively you can fill and freeze ice cube trays and free flow cubes of paste in freezer bags for use later.

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Coffee:
A Primer for All



Coffee is today a buzzword for all ages in India. An excuse to meet for the youth, a quick business chat for the professionals and a light invigorating drink for those who want a rush of adrenalin to cope with the tasks ahead with concentration. Suddenly its all over the place, once the best kept secret of the south India or one that few knew about. Few people knew that such a variety existed in the types of variations the coffee offered.

Coffee is one beverage, which has seen the transformation no other beverage has seen in recent times. From a status symbol or elites' drink – branded for centuries - it has undergone a metamorphosis into a mass drink, the drink of the youth of today. In fact coffee has created a genre as far as lifestyles are concerned.

Simple, flavoured, brewed, with or without milk, as part of a cocktail drink or a health drink – Coffee is transformed into new avatars in many places.

Sipped in whatever form, today's coffee is the result of centuries old rich & traditional history in which it has seen several ups & downs. History apart the entire process of coffee from a plant to bean to the cup is as invigorating as the drink itself. From the early pilgrims who discovered this pep up drink, coffee making has gone a dramatic change. Commercial production of coffee that goes right into the cup is long story. The equipment and processes are as varied as the brew.

Types of Coffee (Species)

Though there are approx sixty different varieties of beans, there are only two species which have commercial importance – Coffee Arabica and Coffee Robusta.

Arabica

Arabica coffee represents three quarters of the worlds coffee production. Arabica plants thrive in nutrient rich soil and, because they are sensitive to heat and humidity, Grow best at high altitudes – at least 3000 ft. and above the sea level. Arabica beans produce a flavourful, full-bodied beverage with sharp taste.

Arabica Beans are flat and elongated in shape.

Robusta

Robusta coffee is more suitable to tropical climates and grows well within an altitude of 1000 ft. above sea level. The Robusta bean produces a beverage that embodies the full flavour and strength of the coffee bean with fine aroma

Robusta beans are small and rounded in shape.

Types of Coffee (Cultivated)

Specialty Coffee

The term "Specialty Coffee" has its origin from America where this term was used to differentiate high quality coffee from those available generally through supermarkets and retail outlets.

Specialty coffee (also known as Gourmet coffee) is distinguished by its clear origin, distinction made by careful cultivation practices, careful routine of plucking, special processing and above all, special branding, handling and appearance thereafter.

Organic Coffee

Like organic cultivation of fruits and vegetables, the organic coffee is grown without using chemicals and pesticides during the plantation and subsequent stages of Processing.

Increasing awareness about harmful effects of chemicals in food products and growing health and environment consciousness around the world has given substantial increase to the demand of organic coffee across the globe.

Decaffeinated Coffee

Decaffeinated coffee is nothing but regular coffee minus caffeine in it. The decaffeinated coffee is popular amongst

two groups one who are really health conscious and others, those, who just want a good night's sleep after coffee.

Though not many people will be aware of this but decaf coffee has been around for almost 100 years. However, unlike earlier days when removing caffeine, unfortunately also removed a lot of taste as well, the modern methods ensure that the taste remains unaffected while caffeine gets removed from the coffee.

Variety Coffee

As some of the coffee varieties are known to possess good inherent quality due to genetic make up of the plant, fruits from such varieties are harvested and processed separately to retain the unique & distinct qualities.

Journey of Coffee

Plantation

Optimal locations for growth of coffee plantations are hot-wet temperature climates, between Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, with frequent rains & temperatures varying from 15 degree to 25°C. Usually a Coffee plant attains Maximum 15 - 20 ft height at maturity and produces the first full crop when it is five years old. Thereafter it produces consistently for 15 - 20 years.

While Robusta coffee is grown at around 1500 feet & above, Arabica is grown at 3000 feet and above from the sea level. The plants are about spaced 10 - 15 feet apart.

Trees are planted near coffee plants to provide shade and to protect young plants from sunlight, heat and strong winds.

Harvesting

Coffee cherries are green in Colour and then turn yellow, orange, red and dark or ripe. Not all cherries ripen at the same time. So, it is impossible to pluck only ripen cherries mechanically. Hence people trained to watch the cherries that ripe usually handpick the cherries and sprinkling is done for blossoming after plucking..

Pulping

Coffee beans are seeds of the coffee cherries. Each coffee cherry usually produces two coffee beans. Through pulping process the beans are separated from the skin of the cherries. Robusta, after plucking, it is put to dry in the hot sun for almost a week or depending on the weather

Drying

After the pulping process the seeds go through the process of drying. Sun drying is very effective method to dry beans. A regular and steady drying, avoiding the moisture, results in a good bean development. Throughout the Process of drying the temperature is kept below 45°C. Sometimes a handful of dried cherries are taken and shaken. If they have dried up, then one can hear the sound of the dried cherries inside. That is the indication that it is ready

Milling

Beans are put into milling machines, which remove the parchment and the silver skin. Loose skin is blown off before beans get ready for next process, roasting.

Roasting

Roasting, which gives coffee its unique aroma, taste and colour, is the most critical stage in coffee processing. Each bean is roasted to its peak of flavour. The intense heat of the roasting process triggers a complex chemical reaction within Coffee Bean. Sugars and Starches in the coffee beans are transformed into volatile oils that give Coffee much of its rich flavour and aroma. This changes the bean from being soft and green into hard and crusty brown.

The degree of roasting varies from light (about 190°C) to medium (about 200°C) to dark (about 22°C) roast and the quality

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also varies accordingly.

During this phase internal gases swell the beans and cause an increase in volume of about 60 per cent with a weight loss of about 20 per cent. The cell walls of a perfect bean are suite thick and can resent the high-pressure generation by roasting. There are about 600 volatile aromas in one coffee bean. The roasting process takes about ten to fifteen minutes time on an average. After cooling and another round of cleaning, beans are ready for next stage – packaging.

Packaging

Roasted Coffee is packaged properly, so that all of its characteristics remain fresh until its brewed. If exposed to air, the beans run the risk of being oxidized; thus, destroying its organoleptic and aromatic.

Essentials for a Good Coffee

Proportion of Coffee to Water

The most important part of making great coffee

Brewing temperature: The brewing temperature of 92-96°C should be maintained for 90 per cent of the water contact time.

Grind – Fine to Coarse

Different brewing methods have different grind requirements so coffee should be Grinded as per the brewing method used. The amount of time coffee and water remain in touch during the brewing process have direct impact on the flavour and design of coffee in the cup. For example the grind for the espresso should be fine (due to shorter contact time) whereas the grind in a French Press should be courser (due to longer contact time)

Fresh Cold Water

As a cup of coffee is 98 per cent water, good quality water is equally important while making good coffee. Fresh and cold water having dissolved minerals between 100-200 ppm is ideal. The water should be clean & free from impurities specially from chemicals like chlorine which can make coffee taste bitter.

Fresh Ground

The essential of a good coffee will also depend on freshness of the grind. The rich aroma and full bodied taste of coffee can be experienced only when the beans are freshly grinded at the time of making coffee.

Good quality Brewing Equipment

Along with good aesthetics and appearance the coffee machine must be able to deliver coffee of desired flavour. For superb extraction it is important that during contact time the machine maintains optimal temperature of between 90 to 98°C. When the temperature is too low the taste will be weak and when temperature is too hot the coffee will burn and taste will be bitter.

Machines having features like inbuilt cup warmer, milk frother etc. should be preferred as these features give variety to the coffee menu.

Coffee Equipment

The Plunger / French Press

This is a very simple on the table serving equipment where the steward plunges the Coffee Container after hot water is poured into the unit in the pantry or kitchen area.

Filter Coffee

This is either a Small or Large Container that has a filter paper or muslin cloth in which resides ground coffee. Hot water is passed through the powder and the brew is collected and kept in a hot serving environment. Mostly used where high volumes are required within a short period of time.

Good for Banqueting or high volume Coffee Shops. Coffee Brewers today replace these as technology has introduced the automatic Coffee Brewers which are made of metal or paper filters that allow hot water with air to pass through the funnel and the decoction is collected in Glass Jugs or Carafes which can be kept hot on heating plates built in or separate to the coffee brewer.

Percolator

This is a simple and small two tier unit which uses a metal filter. The concentration of the brew is very high and uses more milk to whiten the coffee. Mostly used in the South of India. Aeration is done by hand by pouring coffee into tumblers at a height.

Instant or Soluble Coffee Machines (Dispenser type)

Instant coffee has been popular due to number of advantages over freshly brewed coffee, including ease & convenience. It remains fresher longer without loss of flavour. Instant coffee is prepared by spray drying or freeze drying method. Serving is through an electronic machine which vends per cup or Jug.

Espresso & Cappuccino

One important part of coffee processing is coffee machine. Following are the different types of commercial coffee machines.

Semi-Automatic or Traditional Type

Semi -automatic or traditional machines are quintessential part of dedicated Coffee Bars as the ambience requires Barista (trained operator) to make and serve the individual and distinguished shot in style.

Though, for operation semi-automatics require skilled and intense operator, thanks to its simple design - it requires little or no after sales service.

Fully Automatic Type

These machines do most of the functions on their own and hence can be operated by anyone, thanks to push buttons that are very clear and intelligent - with name and picture of the drink and also the digital display which shows the operation of the machine.

These machines are suitable for places where coffee is an add-on to the menu or the availability of trained operator (Barista) is scarce or available at high cost. As this type of machines does not require any special training for operation it is also ideal for places where staff turnover is very high. Just brief information on the machine and anyone is ready to make the coffee.

However due to complexity of design the automatic machines require more intense after sales service.

Flavoured Coffee are also served where different coffee based syrups are added to enhance the original coffee flavour. ■

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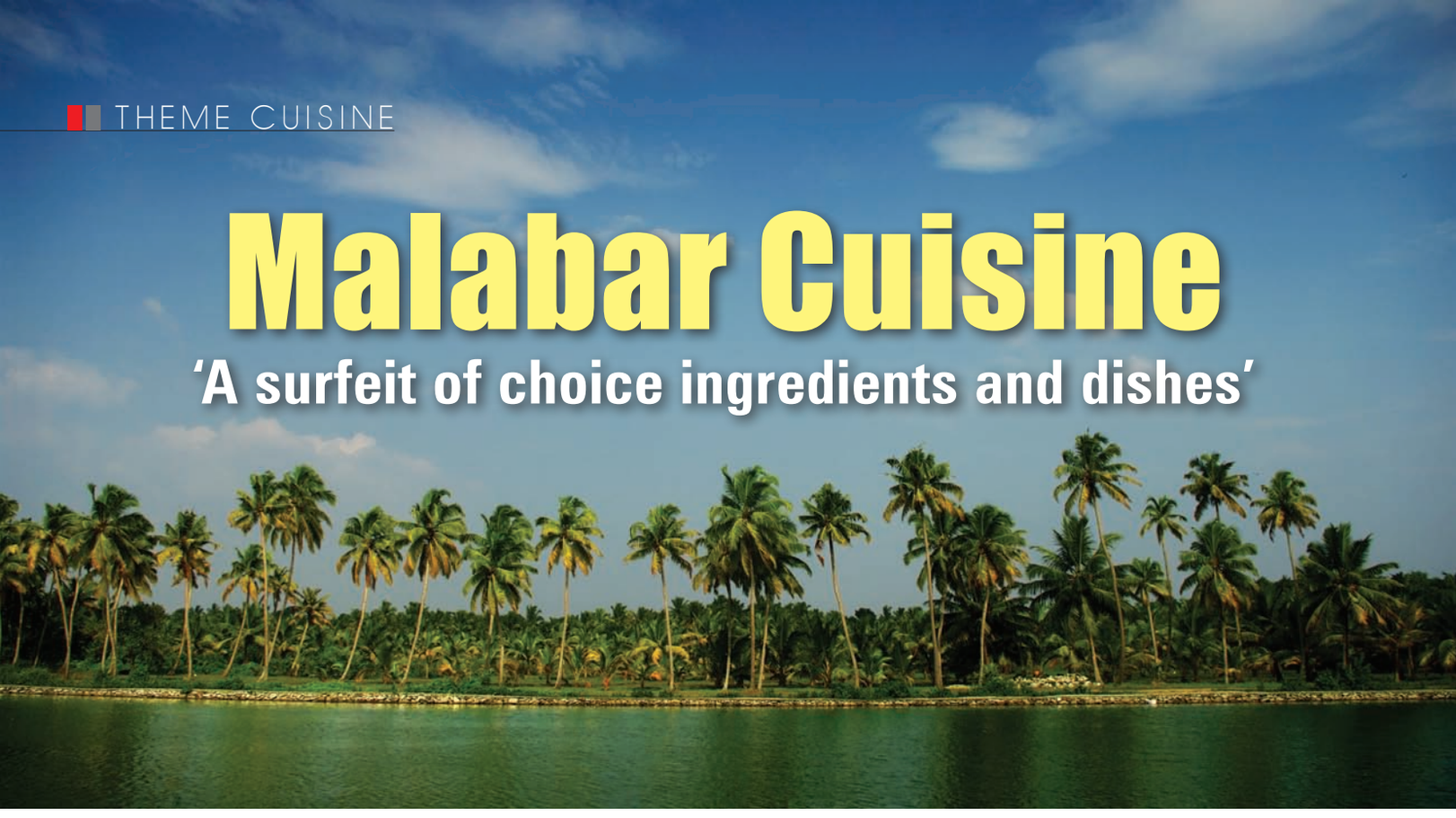
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Malabar Cuisine

'A surfeit of choice ingredients and dishes'



By Sharmila Chand

The distinctive cuisines of the south Indian state of Kerala encompass an interesting combination of vegetables, meats and seafood flavoured with a variety of spices, and cooked, almost always, in coconut milk. The northern parts of Kerala specialize in Malabar Cuisine, which is noted for its liberal use of a wide variety of spices.

The cuisine of Malabar, also referred as 'Mappila or Moppila cuisine', boasts of a distinct flavour and taste that has been influenced by the Arabs as well as by the locally available spices, products and culinary traditions. Traditional Malabar cuisine is spicy, characterized by the regular use of spices like black pepper, clove, cardamom, and almost always, cooked in fragrant coconut oil.

Nature in Bounty

High ranges of Kerala boast of vast plantations of cardamom, pepper, nutmeg, tea and coffee while in its lower elevations there are clove, ginger and turmeric. The midlands have paddy fields, tapioca, all sorts of hardy vegetables such as yam, gourd, drumstick, etc. and a huge collection of tropical fruits-banana, jackfruit, mango, pineapple and cashew.

In the lowlands, cultivation is mainly that of coconut trees and paddy. Like most South Indian cuisine, be it seafood or rice and other cereal dishes, the emphasis is on 'healthy food', less use of oil, sugar, and artificial additives, and more use of natural herbs, spices flavourings and coconut. Spices



that flavor the local cuisine give it a sharp pungency that is heightened with the use of two varieties of tamarind.

In the ancient past, voyagers from Greece, Italy, China, France and Africa came to the spice coast of Malabar in southwest India. Malabar cuisine, with its enchanting array of fish and meat delicacies, is a wonderful reminder of the foreign influence on India's southwest coast. The long stretch of coastline



and the rich marine life ensure that seafood, coconut and spices are an integral part of Malabar cuisine.

Malabar Cuisine

Malabar forming the northern Kerala is a mix of cultures. Malabar cuisine is noted for its variety of pancakes and steamed rice cakes made from pounded rice. Malabar food is generally mildly flavoured and gently cooked.

The mutton is cooked tender, the rice flaky and delicately spiced with the right portions of condiments, to leave the taste lingering for long. Then there is the special brand of Malabari Moppila biriyani. Biriyani - whether mutton, chicken, fish or prawn - is the USP of Malabar cuisine.

Specialities of Malabar

Though the same ingredients are used all over the state, each of the communities has its own specialties.

For the Muslims, the lightly flavoured Malabari biryani-made of mutton, chicken, egg or fish-takes pride of place. In seafood, mussels are a favourite. A concoction of mussel and rice flour, cooked in the shell is called Arikadaka. The Arab influence on the local cuisine is very visible in the rich meat curries and desserts.

For the Christians, who can be seen in large concentration in areas like Kottayam and Pala, 'Ishtew' (a derivation of the European stew), with Appam is a must for every

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marriage reception. There would also be beef cutlets with 'sallas' (a salad made of finely cut onions, green chilies and vinegar), chicken roast, 'olath erachi' (fried mutton, beef or pork), meen moilee (a yellow fish curry), meen mulligattathu (a fiery red fish curry), and peera pattichathu (a dry fish dish of grated coconut). Another interesting feature is the abundant use of coconut , coconut oil, mustard seeds, curry leaves, and coconut milk.

Malabar Biryani

The most famous dish of Malabar Cuisine is the 'Malabar Biryani' – introduced in India by the Arab Seafarers. 'Biryani' is a 'Moghul' dish comprising a rich rice preparation, cooked with meat, onions, chillies and other spices. The mutton is cooked tender, the rice flaky and delicately spiced with the right blend of seasonings, to leave a lingering taste in the mouth.

Other Popular Dishes

• The mildly flavoured and gently cooked Malabar cuisine is also famous for its variety of pancakes and steamed rice cakes made from pounded rice. While 'Pathiri' is a popular pancake made of rice flour, other notable Malabar dishes include Thoran, Appam, Avial etc.

• 'Meen Pathiri' (Steamed Rice Flour Pie with Fish), 'Adaku Pathiri' (Layered Rice and Egg), 'Kohzi Curry' (Chicken Curry) and 'Alsa' – a traditional Arabic delicacy made of wheat, meat (or chicken) and salt, are some of the well known dishes of Malabar cuisine which are worth a try while on tour to Kerala.



• Some of the exotic recipes of Malabar Cuisine include the 'Beef/Erachi Varatiyathu' - a flavoured meat preparation with very little gravy, and 'Aadu Porichathu' - whole roasted goat stuffed with chickens, which are further stuffed with eggs.

• A favourite breakfast dish is Pootu. Rice flour dough is layered with grated coconut and steamed in hollow bamboo cylinder. It is eaten sprinkled with sugar or with mashed bananas or with a spicy curry made of channa or chicpeas.

• Thorans are gravy-less dishes of finely chopped boiled vegetables and possibly meat and seafood. The mustard seed used in thorans gives them a pleasantly assertive flavour, while the lightly fried grated coconut adds the crunch.

• Avial, on the other hand, is mixed vegetable gravy dish thickened with coconut and yoghurt. Drumsticks, jack fruit seeds and slices of mango are often used.

• Olen is also a very gravy dish made of ash gourd and drum beans where the predominant flavour is that of coconut milk. It is a fairly thick liquid squeezed out from the white flesh of a fresh coconut.

• Bananas are very popular in Kerala Cuisine. Sliced finely and deep fried as chips, they are chewy snacks. Cut into bits, fried and dipped in jaggerey or sugar syrup, they are sweets. Cooked in thick yoghurt and seasoned with chilly, turmeric cumin seed and curry leaves, they become Kaalan accompaniment to the main meal.

• Malayalee Pachadi is a fairly thick sauce made of sugar, yoghurt, grated coconut, mustard seed and a wide spectrum range of spices including green and red chillies.

• A favourite dish of Syrian Christians residing at Kottayam is stew. Chicken and potatoes are simmered gently in a creamy white sauce flavoured with black pepper, cinnamon, cloves, green chillies, lime juice, shallots and coconut milk. The stew is eaten with Appams. Appams Kallappams or Vellayappams are rice flour pancakes which have soft, thick white spongy centres and thin golden crisp lace like edge. Meen vevichathu or fish in fiery red chilly sauce is also another favourite item. Besides the chicken and fish there is also red meat, erachi orlarthiathu. Beef (or lamb) is boiled with roasted cirruabder seeds, red chilles, cloves, onions, cummins, garlic, ginger, fried coconut chips and a little vinegar. Then with the water reduced, the, meat is almost fried dry in a little oil that has been flavoured with sliced shallots and highly aromatic curry leaves. ■



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Planning d' Soup

Planning right soups for a menu is vital as it sets the dining process rolling. This calls for an experienced hand and loads of common sense.

When it comes to appetizers, we always think of traditional paneer or chicken tikka that invariably, like any other appetizers (particularly soups) raises the thermometer of our appetite. Leaving them is difficult, and by the time we proceed towards the main course, stomachs are full.

This should not happen; appetizers are never considered as and for meal, but enhancers. Soup acts as an enhancer of appetite. It should be subtle, taste mildly to hot, but foremost, shouldn't make us feel too heavy and wanting for more (the appetizer). These characteristics should ideally be of a soup to compensate best the early cramps before a meal.

Changing Orientations

The variety in soups has been stretched to unimaginable areas. Now we can have soups



made out of fruits, even though they are good digestives, along with other products that seemed illogical once. The health options have become one of the guiding factors that are changing the food habit and the product orientation used for those.

For health conscious people fruit-based soups are a delight. It is very popular in the West and India is also taking note of it.

From an Apple-Cheese Soup to Apricot & Cucumber Soup, Banana Vichyssoise Soup, to Brandied Peach Soup one can have a number of varieties in this category. Traditional soups are renovated into new like the Citrus Gazpacho, Norwegian Fruit Soup (Frukt Suppe), etc.

Then the list is endless: barley based soups, corn based; all kinds of cereals are making impression in bringing out something new in soups. People desire for something new and thus permutation and combination are bound to happen, believe many food critics.

Portion Control

Portion control in any eating outlet defines the quantity or portion of food served in a dish. It is an important aspect of consideration not only for food serving but also in terms of the budget.

Portion control is basically the control over the quantity of the food served as per a standard measure or size. Even most menu planners feel perplexed if the portion control is not appropriate. In a food outlet as hotels or restaurants, this food portion varies for specific dishes. As the portion for a single serving for liquids differ from that of any solid food. Hence the portions should be in such a manner that the overall quantity should look consistent.

Quantity

The production in any food outlet is decided by the portion size, the menu item quantity and the number of portion needed. In mass production first the one portion quantity is decided and following that the total amount is prepared. Most production estimations are calculated in terms of volume - that is the relationship between total volume, portion size and the number of portions.

Credibility

Proper portioning establishes the credibility of a restaurant. The price of the dish is always judged by the quantity. A consistency in food has to be maintained. The taste, volume and the presentation should be similar for any particular dish no matter how many times it Is been ordered. While serving, one should avoid dilution (to increase the quantity) of the food, as it may change the taste and overall look of the food.

As per the standards, the distribution should be so balanced that the dish served on two different tables should be



indistinguishable. Before deciding the total production one should prepare yield tests to determine the actual portion cost of food items used to produce the complete dish on the menu.

Checks in Bars

It's a known fact in F&B sector – in no way one can stop pilferages of resources from its own staff in operation.

Not only in food but the portion control in beverage is a vital concern of the business. As these liquids can easily manipulated, hence the right measurement is a must for any bar. The bartenders may dilute the liquid in each portion so that at the end they can get an extra portion at the same cost. This not only degrades the taste of a drink but also spoils the image of the bar.

Standard Measurement

Many hotel/restaurants use special ladles for the serving portions. In some dishes two ladle equals to one serving and for some one is one serving. Size of the ladle varies as per the dish measured. For soups and other liquid foods, special soup bowls are used to get the exact quantity for each serving. The serving should be uniform and there should not be a scope for difference. For any production conscious food outlet, deciding the accurate portion is an essential part, as by serving a standard quantity they can decide the extra adornment on the food.

The planning and production are developed on predetermined costs, quality needed, number served and the portion size. Before deciding the total production one should assure control of quality and portions during each production period.

Sparing Nothing

Planning a soup for a menu is given utmost importance because soup being the first course of a meal builds the momentum for the whole menu. It should be in-sync with other courses in the menu. A provision of vegetarian and non-vegetarian soup is always kept and there could be more than one soup.

Taking the note from the classification of soup, it depends on the arranger what kind of soup to be included – clear or unclear, light or heavy, cold or hot, etc.

Soups could be fruit based or vegetable based. Both have different properties and selection should be made with a logical reasoning.

Soup Variations

Soups can be classified on the basis of region, like the European, Oriental and the Indian. If you see soup in the Western format, then it is a course and other courses follow after. In the Oriental or Indian cuisine the concept of soup is not specific. You begin the meal with soup and carry on along till the end with repeated servings.

There are many soups in the Indian cuisine like the Mulligatawny soup or the traditional Rasam, which are taken all along the meal. In South Indian food, one does not need



to order Rasam, as it is provided anyway, and is repeated.

There are many new styles of soup being made or constructed to entice consumers. They tend to demand more, something no usual. For example the Smoked Black Mushroom Cappuccino soup doesn't involve coffee for instance, but the name comes from the technique that is used for preparing the soup, just like Cappuccino; frothy, volumed and enticing.

Planning d' Soup

Soup is not an Indian concept. It has been derived entirely from our western counterparts. Here in India we can have soup at any time of the day, like Rasam and thus, in an Indian menu we can observe a lot of soups which are not Indian. Whether Chinese – Hot & Sour, Wonton soup, etc. or European – Sweet Corn Soup, all come under the plan. This is all "innovative" cuisine approach, where fruits are used a plenty in soups giving it a new dimension.

One should therefore be liberal in approach while deciding on the soup for a menu, yet understanding that there should be no repetitions i.e. a tomato shorba as soup and a tomato based vegetable dish as main course or side dish. One should avoid being repetitive, but should see that in totality, soup does not become heavy on stomach leaving no scope for other food items. ■

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Need for a Vegetable Washer

Commercial practices of sanitizing are sometime severe and have undesirable effect on food materials. Pressure cleaning has become vital and with equipment like vegetable washer it is now convenient for us to achieve the results with least effort.

As the growing trend or consciousness of having rich nutrient based wholesome food is increasing, we sometime apply that technically and loose on the front that is so obvious. True, we tend to divert from the fact that the very vital procedure towards ensuring food safety is proper cleaning of vegetables before it goes to the chopping board.

The procedure of cleaning vegetables is mostly considered of minute importance and guidelines are restricted to manuals that give information on step-by-step system to be followed. It is also practically impossible to follow each and every step of manuals in the kitchen, which remain busy throughout.

The only concern on which nothing should be compromised is the food hygiene, the reason for good food of any F&B service establishment.

Washing up Eatables

Washing vegetables sounds so simple yet has to be minutely monitored. Raw vegetables in any commercial foodservice establishments, come in bulk and thus before storage enough precautionary measure has to be taken for storing vegetables in acceptable conditions.

For almost 100 years, vegetables contamination has been the prime reason behind human infection and illness. Many of the viruses, bacteria and protozoan on vegetables, which causes food poisoning, are derived from human faeces. Contamination from animal faeces is also well known and there are always other microorganisms, which occur naturally in soil or are air-borne. However, microorganisms get added up



after harvesting of vegetables, and the condition of storage, transport and display are responsible for how pathogens grow or not grow.

Eliminating the risks is difficult. Managing them should be based on identifying and controlling factors that are important in preventing contamination or limiting growth of pathogenic microorganisms between the time food travels from farm till plate.



Nitin Kumar

A number of guidance documents has been developed. The International Fresh-cut Produce Association's guidelines for fresh fruit and vegetables, is based on principles of HACCP, Good Agricultural Practices, Good Handling Practices and Good Hygienic Practices.

Need for Vegetable Washer

Since a lot of fertilizers and chemicals are used during the farming fruits and vegetables, it is necessary to ensure that those chemicals do not find entry into our system, and thus the need for vegetable washer arises.

Research is on to understand better the mechanisms through which pathogens contaminate raw fruits and vegetables and procedures for removing pathogens.

There is always a cloud of doubt about the efficacy of disinfectants in killing parasites and viruses on fruits and vegetables. Washing fruits and vegetables in potable water is believed to remove a portion of microbial cells. In some instances, vigorous washing could give us result that a treatment with water containing 200mg/l chlorine would achieve.

Few considerations need to be taken into account when using a vegetable washer machine like controlling pH of the solution when using chlorine as a sanitizer; the temperature of wash water should be higher than that of the fruits and vegetables to minimize uptake of microorganisms by tissues. Although, disinfectants have variable effects on pathogen control on fresh fruits and vegetables, they are certainly useful for sanitizing wash water to prevent contamination of produce that

would result from using waters that are not safe.

Cooking is itself a process through which many pathogens die. But we eat many vegetables in raw form such as the salad preparations. Also, many cuisines try to retain the natural flavours of vegetables by not cooking dishes for long duration. Thus it is vital that consumption of raw fruits and vegetables is complemented by fresh and hygienic food.

Washing and Sanitizing

According to Nitin Kumar of Rans Technocrats Pvt. Ltd., manufacturer of Vegetable Washers, "Washing is aimed at sanitizing but we hardly achieve that condition. Pressure cleaning has become vital and with equipment like vegetable washer it is now convenient for us to achieve that result with least effort. The concept vegetable washer came about with the need to wash raw vegetables effectively without going through the tedious process that actually does not impart the result we would like to have."

Most fruit and vegetable washing systems are designed to remove gross



contamination and their effectiveness remain a doubtful matter with microbial contaminants taking the driver's seat. The sanitizing of vegetables and fruits has gained a lot of importance of late, primarily because of rise in ready-to-eat segment where food is sold with longer shelf life.

There have been reports that commercial practices of sanitizing are sometime severe and have undesirable effect on food materials.

Nitin further adds, "Some fruits and vegetables, nowadays, are coated with a food safe wax to preserve their shelf life. It becomes easy for dirt and residues to get settle on this wax coating. Since many consider water alone do not do the needful to get rid of all those organisms resulting in diseases, manufacturers have introduced products that help in good wash of vegetables or fruits."

It is believed that the standard of cleaning of vegetables should be high in food-based industries since large quantities of food is purchased and stored as per their convenience. But, it should not have negative impact on consumers.

Even though vegetable cleaning is important, sanitizing the other equipment used for preparing vegetables for cooking like cutting machine, mixers, grinders, etc., should also be taken care of to ensure that false steps do not mar the work done by the vegetable washer at the first place. ■

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A Charismatic Leader!

Dinesh Maan, Director of Food & Beverage, Conrad Pune



With a professional expertise of over 13 years in the hospitality industry, Dinesh Maan holds the responsible position of Director, F&B for the entire F&B operations across the 7 distinguished restaurants and bars at the luxury property, Conrad Pune. In his notable career, Maan has strongly looked after operations to maximise employee productivity, integrate F&B trends into the respective brand's culinary offerings, introduced measures to enhance the hygiene & safety standards and aligned F&B activities in tandem with maintaining smooth operations.

Dinesh is an adroit at planning as well as implementing the quality parameters for service areas in line with the standard and international guidelines to improve service performance. In addition, Maan is proficient in managing daily, monthly, periodical budgeting, forecasting, menu planning, and inventory management. Above all, he defines himself as a creative & open-minded person with ability to follow instructions and willingness to learn.

Regarded as a customer-centric and performance-driven F&B professional, Mann has been the driving force behind the operations of several well established hotel brands in India. Graduate in Bachelor of Hospitality Management from National Institute of Hotel Management Dehradun, Mann enjoys spending time with his family in his leisure time

In an exclusive interview with Sharmila Chand, he talks about his work philosophy and more...

What do you enjoy most about being a Food & Beverage Director at Conrad Pune?

The two most enjoyable things that I admire at Conrad Pune is to welcome each and every guest who walks in to the hotel to experience our bespoke hospitality, and another is to lead a charismatic team of Food and Beverage - which is my real asset!

Is your job challenging?

My beliefs are -"Challenges are the reasons why breakthroughs exist." and that's how it inspires me to explore further opportunities. Here are top challenges:

Ratings, ranking positions and new market entries increase pressure on managers- however; they challenge your leadership to think beyond your perceptions.

It is quite challenging for anyone to be creative all the time. I hear about challenges that come from employees. They struggle to be creative throughout- and then it is our time for the leaders to lead with examples to keep them motivated.

Retaining the best talent- Yes the one who believes and invests at the right time will never let you down - this is a personal belief.

What kind of pressures have you encountered at work?

Since you've been given an incredible opportunity, it is human nature to want to demonstrate your value to the organization and team. Remind yourself that you were chosen for this position for a reason. You deserve to be there & the best has to come out.

Can you suggest any tips or insights you exercise to strengthen your team?

Building self-awareness, having the ability to empathize with team members, and understanding how to regulate emotions (especially when the pressure mounts) will put you in the best position to support your team- this is something that I have learned with experience. Being within the team, doing one on one and appreciating their efforts makes a difference and give the sense of belonging.

Finally, how is your experience at the present role? How is it different from other places?

I have been a part of the pre-opening team for Conrad, Pune. I joined here as Restaurant Manager and then elevated to Assistant F&B Manager to F&B Manager and then to my current position – Director of Food & Beverage. I am enjoying my current role and always strive to achieve my four pillars – Guest satisfaction, team engagement,

revenue, innovation in F&B service with consistency in quality of food and unparalleled hospitality for which Conrad, Pune is known for. The working culture and values of my previous company Hilton always inspire me to do more and that's how I have completed 6 years with Hilton.

What is the USP of your F&B outlets?

Satiate your Asian taste buds at 'Koji', the Asian speciality restaurant that serves the best of Japanese, Chinese and Thai cuisine.

At 'Coriander Kitchen', you can relish multi-cuisine with a la carte and buffet serving extensive ice creams. It is equipped with an interactive kitchen that offers of 7 Live counters during all meals.

'Masu', an Asian-inspired bar offers exotic Asian cocktails, a wide selection of Sake and a food menu with a twist from Asia and India. You can also enjoy popular foot-tapping Bollywood music every Saturday.

'Al Di La' is the highest rooftop restaurant in Pune that offers Italian cuisine. Benefit from Open French Doors to give a unique experience as the indoor and outdoor sections are merged.

For an indulgent evening, dine at 'Zeera', the speciality Indian grill fine-dining restaurant with a display kitchen and an extensive menu featuring the best of North Indian vegetarian and non-vegetarian cuisine.

Recharge with a quick bite and refreshing cup of tea or coffee at Pune 'Sugar Box', the delicatessen that offers freshly baked pastries and savouries, fresh salads, a range of sandwiches and pastas as well as hand-made chocolates

For guests who enjoy the outdoors, the restful ambience of 'Kabana', the exclusive poolside café, offers an oasis in the city. The menu includes classic western lounge cuisine and a selection of refreshing beverages, wines and spirits.

What is your working philosophy?'

I believe in leading my team from the front and setting an example for others. I love to be in operation more than office and keep the team engaged through continuous training structure in place, outing & making their career path by setting the expectation.

What is your take on how best to cope with challenges of the present pandemic times?

This Pandemic has hit us very hard in terms of finances because we were the first to shut, however we have discovered a new revenue stream for the F&B service of takeaway, which is making the difference in overall revenue now. This has made our skill sharpen on managing our expenses well without compromising on guest experience and put us in the belief that leisure market also contributes a lot to the overall revenue of the hotel.

Your sign off message?

Hospitality is an amazing sector to work for and would like to convey the message to coming generation that stay focused on your work with full dedication. Set your goals and chase them to achieve with the right attitude and passion. You will be successful for sure!





Citrus Fruits:

For Healthy Immune System

Growing concerns about COVID-19 caused a surge in information on how to protect humans against the virus. In addition to proper hygiene, how one can improve health to fight virus? Most important control is our immune system. The immune system provides defense to the host against pathogenic organisms. A weak immune system increases susceptibility to infections and allows infections to become more severe.

One component of the immune response is inflammation. Where inflammation is excessive or uncontrolled it can damage host tissues and cause pathology. Limitation of oxidative stress is one means of controlling inflammation. Citrus fruit juices are a particularly good source of vitamin C and folate, which both have roles in sustaining the integrity of immunological barriers and in supporting the function of many types of immune cell. Vitamin C is an antioxidant and reduces aspects of the inflammatory response. Consuming orange juice daily for a period of weeks has been reported to reduce markers of inflammation. Micronutrients and other bioactives present in citrus fruit juices have established roles in controlling oxidative stress and inflammation and in supporting innate and acquired immune responses.

Citrus Fruits

Citrus fruits, which are cultivated worldwide, have been recognized as some of the most high-consumption fruits in terms of energy, nutrients and health supplements. What is more, a number of these fruits have been used as traditional medicinal herbs to cure diseases in several Asian countries.

Citrus fruits, which belong to the genus Citrus of the family Rutaceae, are of various forms and sizes (from round to oblong), commonly known as oranges, mandarins, limes, lemons, grapefruits and citrons. The sensory attributes of fruits (colour, sweet taste, bitterness, and astringency) constitute decisive organoleptic and commercial properties. Citrus species are consumed mainly as fresh or raw materials for juices or are canned as segments.

Citrus fruits are good sources of nutrition with an ample amount of vitamin C. Besides, the fruits are abundant in other macronutrients, including sugars, dietary fiber, potassium, folate, calcium, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B6, phosphorus, magnesium, copper, riboflavin and pantothenic acid.

Almost 33 % of the Citrus fruits are industrially processed for juice production, however, where about half of processed Citrus including peels, segment membrane and seeds end up as wastes

Citrus peel contains a high content of polymethoxylated flavones and flavanones, including primarily hesperidin, nobiletin, neohesperidin, naringin and tangeretin. A study suggested that hesperetin could be exploited as a potential functional ingredient and offered opportunities to develop new formulations of functional foods. Peels are also major source of essential oil as well as carotenoids, with approximately 70 % of the total fruit carotenoids, and their contents may be from two to six times higher than those of the endocarp. Besides, seeds are the major sources of limonoids.



Citrus Juices

Citrus juices are a fairly good source of minerals and particularly of potassium. Typical values of potassium content per 100 g are 150 mg in grapefruit juice and 200 mg in orange juice. The daily recommended intake for adults is 4,700 mg. Potassium is important in human nutrition. It plays an essential role in the electrolytic balance, muscle contraction, and heart activity.

On the other hand, citrus are very low in calcium content. For a food pretending to the position of the "No. 1 breakfast drink" this is a serious shortcoming. Therefore, leading citrus processors developed calcium-fortified citrus juices, having a calcium content equal to that of milk. Vitamin D is also added to some fortified citrus juices in an effort to make it more nutritionally attractive as a breakfast drink for young children.

Supplementation with iron of foods for infants and small children is an important. Citrus juice seems to be an ideal medium for iron supplementation of food for small children.

They are major sources of vitamin C and AA in the human diet. Besides the addition of vitamin C, as pointed out, other antioxidants compounds like polyphenols, flavonoids, or carotenoids are under study to be used in food industry in order to improve quality and cover the market demand. These alternative compounds can be obtained from agro-industrial wastes or under exploited fruit or vegetables. Strawberries, blackberries, mango's peel, pomegranate, bananas, and other endemic fruits have been used for this purpose. ■



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Cruising On a Delightful Culinary Path!

Pallavii Gupta and Arjun Shetty, Partners, Sante Spa Cuisine & Hungry Hippie, Bangalore



Pallavii Gupta and Arjun Shetty wanted to start their astounding journey in business and create a successful path of their own. Born and brought up in Delhi, Pallavii graduated from the National Institute of Fashion Technology in Mumbai. Being a fashion student, she often dabbles in designing and aesthetics bringing ideas to life. Pallavii is avid traveler and also enjoys reading and crafts.

Arjun, on the other hand, was born in Mumbai and has roots in Bangalore. Backed with credible expertise in the corporate world, Arjun spent most of his life in Mumbai taking up leadership and managerial roles with Fortune 500 companies. After a brief stint in this field, he decided to move back to Bangalore where his family roots descend in Karnataka.

It was around this time where Arjun was fueled with a desire to make a difference in his life. It was in 2016; an idea struck and led him to open his first business, a café called Hungry Hippie in Koramangala, Bangalore. The new café was lauded for its Gypsy/Boho concept and in 2017 won prestigious awards.

Arjun and Pallavii ventured into the vegetarian food industry with a vision to provide perfect vegetarian restaurant where unique flavours, fresh produce and balanced portions would come together. Having been a vegetarian for more than a decade, Arjun understood the limited choices people face and preferences for vegetarian dishes.

Arjun and Pallavii wanted to build something that would help bridge the gap by serving modern twists on conventional plates of vegetarian dining. They are extremely passionate about travelling and believe the best way to learn and experience a variety of cuisines and cultures is to travel and explore. It was in 2016 the idea struck the couple that led them to explore the Food and Beverage Industry, which was shortly followed by bringing in Santé Spa Cuisine to Bangalore in 2018.

The idea and concept of Santé Spa Cuisine, Bangalore was to create a perfect place for people to have an extensive choice of vegetarian dishes where plates of unique flavours, fresh produce, and balanced portions will make them want to grab a book, a freshly baked piece of cake, and never leave. They also dish out modern twists on conventional plates of dining for healthy, fresh, organic food items with options of vegan, gluten-free, keto and alkaline dishes. According to them, the main focus of the Santé Spa Cuisine, Bangalore is the use of fresh local produce in global cuisine.

In an exclusive interview with Sharmila Chand, the duo talks about their work philosophy and more....

What are the key challenges in launching a new brand?

Through our experience, there's a lot of time taken to identify talent that's right for the concept. Getting the brand narrative right, sticking to it and driving it to the finish line.

What helped you the most in launching your brand?

If the food is great, you don't need any launching per say. We do have a strong social media presence and make sure we are approachable.

We have always followed a very organic approach with all our brands - Santé Spa Cuisine, Bangalore and Hungry Hippie. We truly believe if you give the guests an experience to talk about, something they take back with them and that's the best kind of PR you will ever have. We have tackled curiosity around vegan, plant based and gluten free food and eventually let the flavours of our food talk.

What are the trickiest issues to tackle these days in hospitality/food business?

Aggregators are now deciding sales and marketing plans for restaurants, this excessive discounting and offers driven market is a serious issue. We do see so many restaurants falling for that and we wish they would just be more confident in their product.

What is the change in the food trend according to you?

We are definitely seeing restaurants and diners adopting plant-based options on their menus. Customers too are driven to trying new ingredients and concepts. The narrative of conscious and mindful dining is something we see trending.

What has helped you the most in image building of your brand?

As a policy we have stayed away from any discounting on offers for our customers. We do believe if you serve good food, you have customers who will pay a price and enjoy the experience; we just need to have that faith in product. We are diving deep to creating new dishes and experience for our guests to keep customers engaged in the brand.

Building a character, concept, food, experience is very important. It takes time but its key to creating an unforgettable dining experience.

What inspired you to launch this brand?

We identified the gap in market. There's a void, a large vegetarian menu hadn't evolved giving lesser options to the customers to choose from. With all our brands we own, we have focused on bridging that gap, whether it's vegetarian and plant-based options, or curated cuisines.

What is your work philosophy?

"Labor Omnia Vincit" truly. Work does conquer all!

What do you enjoy most about being in this business?

There's a different kind of joy associated with serving people great food. Presenting the final product after multiple trials and acing that recipe is sheer thrill for us! This industry also opens doors to wonderful collaborations with like-minded brands and entrepreneurs doing fabulous work. The networking is great! You get an opportunity to build a community and its only grows!

What do you dislike the most?

Maybe odd hours and missing out on special days! We work mostly all new years, Diwali and through Christmas. It's a full time commitment.

If you could change one thing about your position or business, what would it be?

Nothing, we love what we do! We probably have changed what we didn't like immediately.

What kind of pressures have you encountered at work?

Sometimes sourcing the right ingredients.

In this industry, staff is promoted quickly, they hop locations and finding great talent is a challenge. There's a lot of people with limited knowledge. It's tough to find a team that aligns with your thought process.

What are your future plans to expand your brand?

We are driven to change the notion of vegetarian and plant-based food. There's such fantastic produce in India, we are yet to make the most of it. We are constantly creating new recipes, new concepts and experiences.

We are currently working on a completely plant based concept !





Food Poisoning

Food poisoning occurs when food is contaminated with germs, or the toxins they produce, and is a leading cause of vomiting, diarrhoea and stomach cramps.

Bugs in Food

Many cases of food poisoning are caused by micro-organisms, including bacteria, viruses and moulds. The spread of these germs and the illnesses they cause can be prevented by practicing good food hygiene.

The bacteria responsible for food poisoning can multiply in food quickly, especially in warm and moist conditions. Just a single bacterium on an item of food left out of the fridge overnight could harbour many millions of bacteria by the morning, enough to make human being ill, if eaten.

Bacteria multiply best in a moist environment between 5°C and 63°C - a range of temperatures known as the "growth" or "danger" zone. Colder or hotter than this, bacteria cannot multiply effectively. This explains why one of the basics of food hygiene is to keep raw or cold food cold, and cooked or hot food, piping hot.

Bacteria that cause food poisoning are found in many normally nutritious foods, including:

- Meat and meat products - such as minced meat and patés
- Poultry - such as chicken or turkey
- Seafood - fish and shellfish
- Eggs and raw egg products - such as mayonnaise
- Un-pasteurised milk (or milk contaminated after pasteurisation)
- Soft and mould-ripened cheeses
- Cooked foods - such as fried rice

Improving Food Hygiene

Following some simple rules for buying, storing, preparing and cooking can stop bacteria from contaminating your food and multiplying in it. Good personal hygiene is an important way to stop food bugs from spreading. Washing your hands frequently is especially important. Avoid handling food if you are currently suffering from stomach problems such as diarrhoea and vomiting. Cover up cuts and sores with a waterproof plaster.



Store Food Correctly

Unless it is preserved, such as by canning or drying, food needs to be kept at the correct temperature. This helps to prevent bacteria from multiplying or toxins from forming. Look at the label for guidance on how to keep food.

- Always follow "Use by" dates on food
- Follow any instructions on the packet to keep fresh food in the fridge
- Don't overlook other instructions - for instance "once opened, keep refrigerated" or "once opened consume within three days"
- Raw food such as meat should be stored in airtight containers and kept at the bottom of the fridge to prevent juices or blood from dripping onto other food. Don't allow it to make contact with cooked food
- Store fresh food and meal leftovers in the fridge within two hours of purchase or preparation - sooner if the weather is hot. Leftovers will cool down more quickly if you store them in small containers
- Defrost frozen foods in the fridge - not



at room temperature

• Don't overfill the fridge - food may not cool properly

• Keep the fridge at less than 5°C and the freezer at - 18°C

Avoid Cross-contamination

Cross-contamination occurs when bacteria from one food spread to another food. There is a particular risk that bacteria will spread from raw meat to food that has already been cooked or is eaten raw, such as salads. To avoid cross-contamination:

• Use separate chopping boards for preparing raw meat, poultry and seafood and for fresh produce such as salads, fruit and vegetables

• Wash cloths and drying-up towels regularly on the hot cycle or soak in a dilute solution of bleach

• Wash up using hot (50-60°C) soapy water. Use rubber gloves if necessary

• Wipe down and disinfect surfaces and utensils regularly, using a detergent or dilute solution of bleach

• Never use a marinade that has already been used on raw meat for cooked food, unless it has been boiled thoroughly

• Always use a clean plate to serve food

Cook Food Safely

If food is not cooked to a hot enough temperature, food bacteria can still survive. So to cook safely follow recipe or packet instructions on cooking time and temperature, ensuring the oven is pre-heated properly food should be piping hot before serving. Take special care that sausages, burgers and poultry are cooked through and aren't pink in the middle.

Using a clean skewer, pierce the meat. When cooked properly, the juices run clear, don't cook foods too far in advance. Once cooked, keep foods covered and piping hot until it's time to eat them. When you microwave food, stir it well from time to time to ensure it cooks through evenly. Think about buying a food thermometer to check that food is cooked to the right temperature

Must for Restaurants

Most people who have suffered from suspected food poisoning believe that the culprit food was eaten away from home. Guests usually don't inspect the kitchens when they eat out, but there are certain warning signs of poor hygiene standards:

• Dirty restaurant, dirty toilets, dirty cutlery or crockery - the kitchen is likely to be even worse

• Rubbish and overflowing bins outside the restaurant - could attract vermin

• Staff in dirty uniforms, dirty fingernails, and long hair not tied back

• Hair or insects in food

• Raw food and ready to eat food displayed together

• Hot food that is not cooked through properly and cold food that is served lukewarm. ■



Laundry and Kitchen Solutions

Chandra Engineers provides a comprehensive range of commercial kitchen and laundry equipments, their spare parts and after sale service. It also offers turnkey projects. The company is specialist in installation & commissioning, repair & service and maintenance of imported and Indian made commercial kitchen and laundry equipments.



It has diverse clientele, spread across India, extending upto Bhutan and Nepal. The clientele includes star hotels, resorts, fast food chains, restaurants, clubs, caterers, offices and industrial canteens, multiplexes/food courts, flight kitchen, hospitals, garment exporters, commercial laundry companies having in-house kitchen among others. Moreover, as part of commitment to provide cost-effective, trouble free and tension free solution, Chandra Engineers offers annual maintenance contract for preventive maintenance (AMC & CAMC) for commercial laundry and kitchen equipments.

The imported kitchen equipments marketed by Chandra Engineers include Angelo PO, Nayati, Cleveland, Cooktek, Adventys, Firex, Ice-O-Matic, Scotsman Powerline, Electrolux, Hatco, Hobart, Kold-Draft, Salvajor, Vulcan, Waring, Bravilor-Bonamat_coffee range, Fimar, Forcar, Moreillon Gastrotechnik AG_Burnishing machines, Adamation_Burnishing machine, Monlith_Pre Rinse faucets, Starmix, Flamic. In laundry sector brands includes Danube-International, Chicagio, Edro-Dynawash, Forenta, Multimatic, Rema, Shraper Finish, Thermopatch & Power Line and dry-cleaning equipments include Maestrelli and Multimatic.

Chandra Engineers
info@chandraengineers.co.in

Chef's Choice



Knife is said to be 'life' of a chef. In fact, holding on to a good quality of knife is as important as for any user in the kitchen. In this very segment the most exclusive branded knife of India, which has been closely associated with star hotels and catering units is Remington Steel. Over the years the company has won an essential place in the commercial kitchens of India. The knives are made from tough, carbon stainless steel that ensures greater edge retention. These knives are heat treated and tempered in an inert atmosphere.

Remington knives are appreciated due to its sharp, long lasting edges, user-friendly shapes and sizes and wide range that it offers. The wide range includes French Cook's Knives, Paring Knives, Steak Knives, Vegetable Knives, Carving Knives, Slicing Knives, and many more. Remington Knives are fully forged to shape from high tough, Carbon Stainless Steel that ensures greater edge retention. Remington Knives are heat treated and tempered in an inert atmosphere. Edges of Remington Knives are ten times sharper and longer than the conventional knives. They are known for their full-length tang for perfect balance and for easier and less tiring cutting.

Quality of Remington Knives is at par or above as compared to imported knives. They are precisely handcrafted and finished with each blade honed to an exact perfection and lasting experience.

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Acumen Software Consultancy (ASC) is leading Provider of Property Management IT Solutions. Founded in 1997, ASC has successfully implemented HotSoft Suite of Products at numerous Hotels, Restaurants, Banquets and Clubs. With their mission to be the most preferred PMS provider, ASC is now moving towards future technologies in Hospitality industry.

Core team at ASC carries expertise of Hospitality industry and Information Technology. The company started with a goal of most versatile and parameterized IT solution to meet IT requirements of different kind of properties, operational processes and all level of users. During its journey of last 23 years, ASC customized it's solution to various client-requirements and delivered regulatory compliances in time.

HotSoft has been rigorously tested in live environments and beta-test sites, and hence has attained full stability. Designed with Strong software architectural principles and standard industry processes, Hotsoft easily become a lifeline of day-to-day operations.

With their product development team, ASC constantly evolve to meet newer technology and business requirements. With regular Customer Feedback and continuous efforts ASC ensures their philosophy of Living Software. Customer Service is first priority at ASC and 24X7 support aims issue-resolution and zero loss of business. Parametric adoption of client-side operations helps ASC to achieve quicker time-to-market.

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Kitchen Equipment

Sterling Solutions is one of the leading suppliers of Commercial Kitchen Equipment & Spare Parts. It offers one stop solution for all branded machine's spare parts at competitive prices. Being an established company the company has been serving the foodservice industry with an excellent track record and ensures best customer satisfaction. They are working with almost each brand which covers the trade range. They never compromise with the quality and the services provided to the customer.

Sterling Solutions
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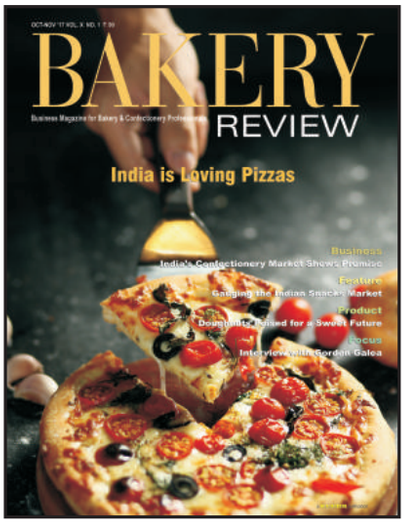


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Hotel Business Review - the first and only bi-monthly magazine exclusively for Indian hotel business. The magazine provides information to professionals seeking innovative strategies along with new ideas, opportunities and current issues that affect their organisation. This includes strategies in managing successful hotel operations, knowledge of purchasing, leadership style and management. The magazine provides exclusive editorial content to assist Corporate Management, Projects & Facility Planning and top-end Operational Management in maximizing their business.

Bakery Review - a bi-monthly magazine provides the latest information to the professionals seeking knowledge of the fast changing Indian Bakery & Confectionery industry. The magazine offers in-depth information on the issues that largerly affect the bakery business in India. 'Bakery Review' explores the new growth areas and latest developments in the baking industry. The magazine focus on the trends and developments in the Commercial & Retail Bakeries and Foodservice industry along with allied industries like Milling, Dairy, Snack food industries.

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The professional team of the company has vast experience and In-depth knowledge of the hospitality industry. It believes that advanced technological resources and a clear client-based focus are essential to meet the future demand of hospitality service professionals. Its partners have an average experience of 22 years in the industry.

The company's mission is to distribute and manufacture top quality equipment & accessories for the food service industry, based on its experience, know-how, specialised manufacturing potential and market research.

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Lastly, complete your perfect PRU with the accessories you need, such as a swivel to extend the life of the hoses and reduce the strain on employees' wrists, tees to split the water source and supply water to a chemical system, or even an add-on faucet that comes in various spout lengths.

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A Perfectionist by Nature and a Creator by Passion!

Chef Shyam Prasad Pandey, Executive Chef, URU Brewpark – Bangalore



From a small town in the foothills of the Himalayas, to the bustling metropolis of Bengaluru, the culinary journey of Executive Chef Shyam has taken him across different cities in India. With an experience of over 17 years he loves to create food that not only satisfies the soul but also creates a multisensory experience. Having made a mark at well known establishments like Olive Beach, Windmills, Shalom, Biergarten, The Ibnii, he continues to hone his skills and aims to elevate the gastronomical experience for his diners.

In an exclusive interview with Sharmila Chand, he highlights his work philosophy and more....

What is your philosophy of cooking?

Keeping it simple and fresh has always been my core philosophy when it comes to cooking. I have always respected nature & the bountiful produce that Mother Nature gives us. I love cooking with fresh locally grown produce and creating different dishes with the same ingredients.

What is your area of expertise?

Though I am well experienced in multi cuisine preparations, however my core expertise lies in Mediterranean, Pan Asian & Indian.

Had you not been chef then what?

If I was not a part of the culinary journey then I would have been in tourism sector or in Wellness arena like Yoga.

What is your source of inspiration?

My tryst with the culinary arts started way back in my childhood in my mother's kitchen. I have learnt a lot from my mother & grandfather both in terms of cooking skill as well as respecting the whole process of cooking.

My source of inspiration will always be my parents & my grandfather. Their support & encouragement have made me who I am today.

How has the journey been so far?

It's hard to describe in a few words the reality of this journey. It has been emotional, joyful & yes it's been amazing so far.

What skills are necessary to be a good chef?

Commitment towards work, passion, determination, skills, leadership, creativity, intuition & being able to take criticism in the right way.

How do you de-stress?

I love playing the flute whenever I can get some time. Other than that catching up with my old friends is a constant source of joy.

Favourite Ingredient?

The humble tomato for its versatile nature. You can play around with it and create from the simplest dishes to the most exotic ones.

Favourite Cuisine?

Nepali cuisine undoubtedly - it's what home means to me.

Favourite Spice?

Cinnamon – its complex subtleties elevates a dish instantly.

Favourite Equipment?

Chef's Knife- a magical equipment which plays several key roles. A sharp knife means more control and less slippage when you cut, leading to safer, more consistent slices. Why magical - because knife allows you to create visual as well as texture variations.

Fav Restaurant / food joint?

Geranium Fine Dining Restaurant in Denmark, for the art of food presentation & use of ingredients, by Chef Rasmus Kofoed.

Your fav Diner?

I love to prepare dinner for my family. They are my strongest supporters as well as the worst critics.

You favourite Culinary Destination?

France- where there is a story & history behind every single dish

The Best Compliment you have received?

The first time I cooked for my family after I started working as a chef. My mother told me I have become a better cook than her. That is & will be not just the best but my favourite compliment ever.

What is your philosophy of work?

My philosophy is simple- I always enjoy what I do and I also love helping others to get success.

Lessons learnt in the kitchen?

Safety first, it's very important to be careful not just for yourself but also when preparing for the guests.

Last meal on earth: What would you choose?

Food cooked by my mother

10 years from now?

Want to open of my dream project.

What are your future plans?

Not only grow to greater heights in this culinary journey but also teach aspiring chefs the art of cooking.

What is the best career advice you would like to give to youngsters aspiring to be chefs?

It's not an easy profession. Be passionate about what you do, and focus on learning new things. Update yourself & be patient. Don't be in a hurry to get success quick. Be patient and success will follow.

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