

APR-MAY '24 VOL. XV NO. 6 ₹ 100

# BAKERY

Business Magazine for Bakery & Confectionery Professionals

# REVIEW

## All About Tea

**Business**

**Bakery Equipment: A Growing Business**

**Feature**

**Food Styling**

**Dairy**

**Yoghurts For Summers**

**Industry**

**The Milling Industry**

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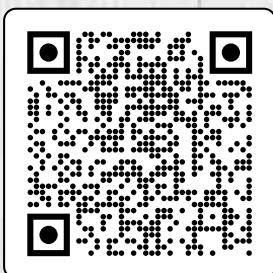
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Bakery Review is a bi-monthly magazine, printed, edited, owned and published by Rajneesh Sharma from 206, Samrat Bhawan, Ranjeet Nagar Commercial Complex, New Delhi. Printed at Print Creations, A-6/1, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi.

Editorial Policy: Editorial emphasis in Bakery Review magazine is on educational & informational material specifically designed to assist those responsible for managing Bakery & Confectionery business. Articles are welcome and will be published on the sole discretion of the editor.

Disclaimer: The editor and publisher believes that all information contained in this publication are correct at the time of publishing. Content published not necessarily are the opinion or view of the editor and publisher. Editor and publisher declines any responsibility for any action taken based on the information contained in this publication, including liability for error or omission.

Annual subscription rate within India is Rs. 600 and for overseas it is US \$110, for surface mail. Single issue is available for Rs. 100 in India and US \$25 for overseas. Cheques are payable to Hammer Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

## Editorial



Tea is the second most popular beverage after water. Tea is popular not only in India but also across the world, with significant consumption in various countries and regions. Cover story finds various facets and characteristics about one of the most popular brews in the world, its different formats, the diversity in the way it is prepared across the globe, the effect it has on one's health.

Since baked food is considered to be more wholesome, there has been a tendency to include more bakery products in daily meal. This has given a boost to the bakery industry which, in turn has boosted the number of bakeries. With growing number of bakeries there is an ample opportunity for bakery equipment manufacturers. Business story delves on the plethora of equipment needed by the bakery industry.

The Feature story finds Food styling is an art form and a specialised field for a career. It relies greatly on the knowledge of food and also on the design sense and designing expertise. Associated with style and glamour, the job requires ample skill, creativity, meticulous craftsmanship and patience.

Middle class population in India is showing increasing interest in a variety of bakery items, the demand for both traditional and new bakery items such as crackers, pasta, pizza and burgers are slated to grow even further. Industry section finds as the bakery industry progresses, its ancillary industries would also receive a fillip, like milling.

As usual, the News, Event and Report sections provide a rich information base pertaining to the bakery and confectionery industry.

# BAKERY

## REVIEW

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# Pastry Queen India 2024

3-4 August, 2024, At the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida, NCR, India



The 4th edition of 'Pastry Queen India 2024' will be held on 3rd & 4th August at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida, NCR, India. Two days of the competition will witness the extraordinary talents of female pastry chefs from across India and promises to captivate audience with its showcase of culinary artistry, innovation, and expertise.

The theme of the event this year is "Revolutionary Women". Participants must interpret this theme and portray the narrative of a woman who revolutionized and/or inspired the world through her innovations and endeavours. This theme encompasses various domains including music, art, entertainment, science, history, fashion, sports, literature, and more.

The objective the Pastry Queen India is to set up a training ground for large international events, while making it entertaining and showcasing the talents and future of younger generation pastry-chefs. By spotlighting them, we hope to engender a sense of belonging and valuable feelings of goodwill, quality, passion, creativity, collaboration and respect for colleagues. All are part of the ethics underpinning the sector, giving it solid roots and a constructive vision for the future.

It will be an opportunity to share experiences and a platform for growth for young people who represent the future of the international pastry-making sector. The Pastry event will play a vital role in achieving a career at the highest of technical standards.

The winner of the 'Pastry Queen India 2024', will be part of the national pastry team selection for the prestigious 'The Pastry Queen World Cup' to be held at SIGEP, Italy in 2025. The competition is open to talented Indian Female Pastry Chefs Open to Indian citizens aged 20 and above, with at least three years of experience, currently working as professional female pastry chefs in reputable organization. Each team consists of two members: one female pastry chef and one team manager.

The menu of the competition is the creations of Sugar Show Piece or Chocolate Show Piece, Chocolate cake, Innovative leavened breakfast item, Plated dessert, Street food with creative packaging (Dessert, Sweet in Nature).

The stages of event include:

Pre selection of Team on 3&4 August 2024

A presentation ceremony hosted in the presence of 200+ pastry fraternity at the Venue.

Sending team to Italy for final competition in January 2025.

The event will be open to mass Media, Pastry & Bakery fraternity.

The event will be judged by team of renowned Chefs from across India.

**For further information visit [www.pastryqueenindia.com](http://www.pastryqueenindia.com)**

## EVENT CALENDAR

4-6 June 2024

### The Hotel Show

Dubai World Trade Centre  
Dubai, UAE

<https://www.thehotelshow.com>

5-7 June 2024

### Annapoorna Inter Food

India International Convention & Expo  
Centre (IICC)  
New Delhi, India

<https://www.annapoomainterfood.com>

26-28 June 2024

### Sigep Asia 2024

Sands Expo & Convention Centre,  
Halls D & E, Basement 2, Singapore

<https://sigepasiasia.com.sg>

3-4 July 2024

### India Horeca Expo 2024

Trade Fair Complex  
Coimbatore, Tamilnadu, India

<https://indiahorecaexpo.com>

11-14 July 2024

### The 18th Thailand Retail, Food & Hospitality Services 2024

EH 102, Bitec  
Bangkok, Thailand

<https://trafs.net>

17-19 July 2024

### Malaysian International Food & Beverage Trade Fair

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

<https://mifb.com.my>

3-6 August 2024

### India International Hospitality Expo 24

India Expo centre & Mart  
Greater Noida, U.P., India

<https://ihexpo.com>

4-6 September 2024

### Asia Fruit Logistica

Hong Kong International Airport, Lantau  
Hong Kong, China

<http://www.asiafruitlogistica.com>

20-22 September 2024

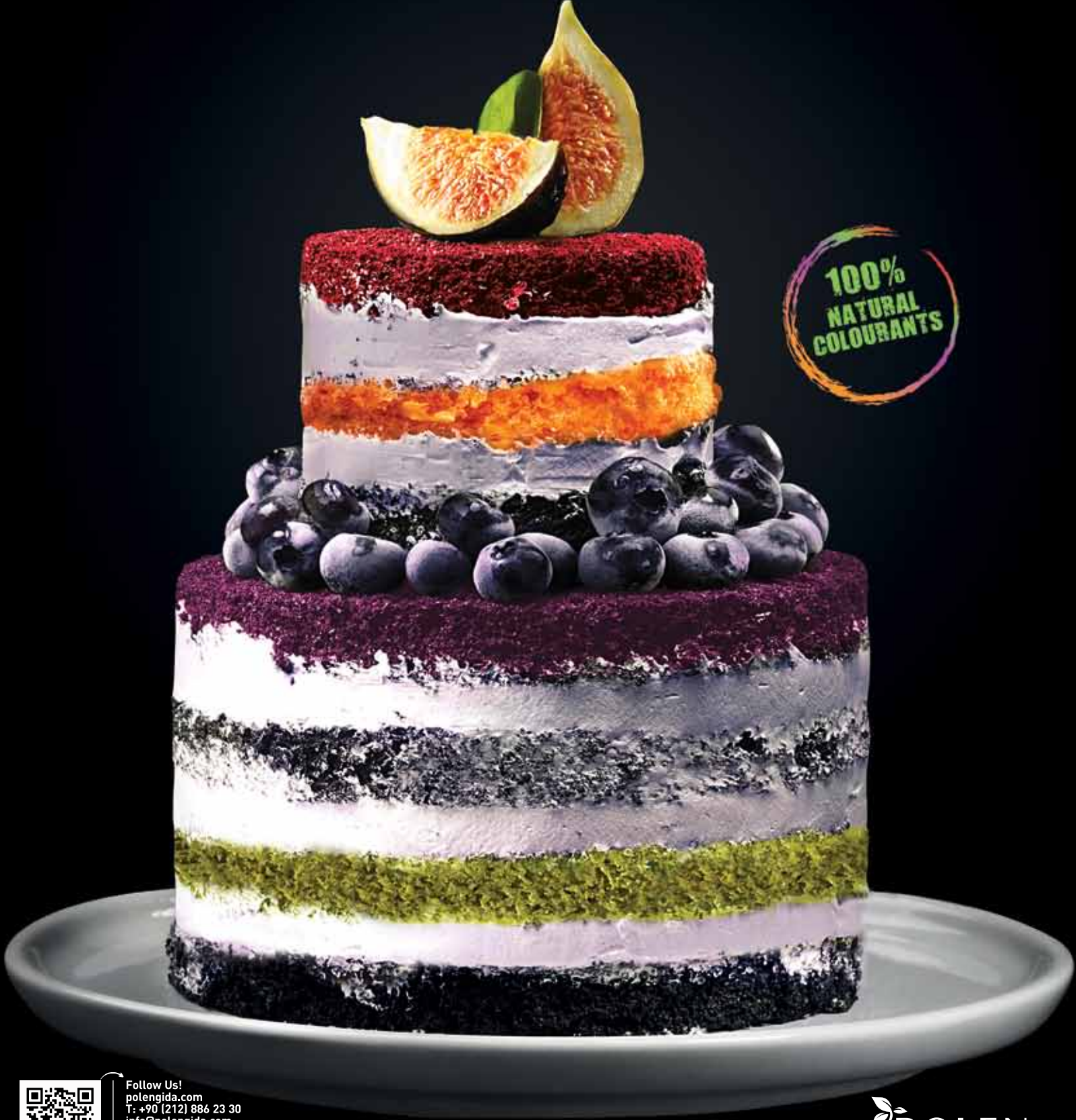
### India Bakery Expo

Chennai Trade Centre, Nandambakkam,  
Chennai, India | Hall No. 1, 2 & 3

<https://tnbfindia.in/>

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# Annapoorna Inter Food

**05-07 June, 2024 at India International Convention & Expo Centre (IICC), New Delhi**

Annapoorna is back to re-define the path of Indian food & beverage trade space as "Annapoorna Inter Food" - international food & beverage trade expo. The food and beverage trade capital of India, Delhi will host Annapoorna Inter Food - with more vigour and more focus to steam-up the food and beverage trade by defining new collaborations with an objective to drive inclusive growth of the sector.

Annapoorna Inter food exhibition is a trade fair where various food & beverage manufacturing companies gather to showcase their products. Annapoorna Inter Food is organized for food retailers, traders, hotels, restaurants, and other food-related businesses to explore new offerings, network, and learn about industry trends.

An exhibition on food can encompass a broad range of topics, including presentations, workshops, and demonstrations by chefs, nutritionists, and food experts.

This food products exhibition also focuses on showcasing food items that are sourced from different countries and regions apart from Indian food & beverage manufacturers. Annapoorna Inter Food exhibition allows attendees to discover a diverse range of products, taste unique flavours, and learn about the global food market.

Attending Annapoorna Inter Food Exhibition can be beneficial for various reasons. For businesses, they provide an opportunity to find new suppliers, explore innovative products, and network with industry professionals.

With over 1.4 bn consumer base with increasing demand for branded food, India is the fastest growing largest economy in the world. The growth is due to the changing dietary trends with increasing emphasis on quality of product than the cost and rise in the household consumption of processed food & beverages

There is greater acceptance of quick commerce as medium of buying food & beverage products with online grocery retail in India has seen a CAGR of over 50% and projected to grow to 12 Bn by 2025. The impact of globalization, increasing urbanization and advancements in technology are creating new opportunities and challenges for food and beverage producers, distributors, and retailers.

## IFBA Announces Strategic Partnership with IEG Asia



The International Food and Beverage Association (IFBA) and the Italian Exhibition Group (IEG) Asia have joined forces for the upcoming SIGEP Asia

2024, co-located with Restaurant Asia, Speciality Food & Drinks Asia, Speciality Coffee & Tea Asia, and Food2Go Asia 2024 to be held at the Sands Expo & Convention Centre in Singapore from 26 – 28 June 2024.

This strategic partnership marks a significant milestone in the food and beverage industry, uniting two leading organisations in their pursuit of innovation and excellence. Scheduled to be a highlight in the food and beverage calendar, SIGEP Asia 2024 will bring together industry leaders, professionals, visionaries, and enthusiasts under one roof. Through this partnership, IFBA and IEG Asia are committed to providing a dynamic platform for idea exchange, networking, and celebrating sector achievements.

A ceremonial signing event was at the Singapore headquarters of IEG Asia to signify the beginning of a promising collaboration. The event was graced by the presence of esteemed delegates from the IFBA. Their presence symbolises unity of purpose and vision, officially marking the commencement of this impactful partnership between the two organisations.



# Delivering Quality Food Products For all your culinary needs



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# Bakels India Unveils New Innovations

Bakels India has launched its innovative Pan release and dough divider solutions for the Indian market. These products offer a variety of application methods such as spray, brush, or manual application. Designed to cater to both bread and confectionery applications, Bakels' solutions ensure high performance and cost-efficiency, making them indispensable for bakers across the country.

Gaurang Bhasin aptly encapsulates the potential impact of these innovations, stating, "In the dynamic world of baking, embracing advanced solutions like those from Bakels is not just a choice, but a necessity for achieving unparalleled efficiency and product excellence."

Traditional oils, though widely used, have significant drawbacks. They produce carbon particles during baking, leading to fumes that can coat oven surfaces, moulds, and ceilings with a black residue. This not only affects hygiene but also results in costly cleaning and maintenance. Release agents from Bakels eliminate these issues, ensuring an easy release of baked goods, reducing wastage, and ultimately saving costs.

Bakels' new products enhance hygiene standards, a critical aspect of modern baking operations.



**Release 65:** This cereal-free release agent is a standout product in the Bakels range, formulated with beeswax and vegetable wax crystals. Its exceptional demoulding capabilities, thanks to crystallization technology, make it ideal for delicate items like meringues, sponges, and savoury treats. Release 65 is particularly effective in dough and batter handling, especially in freezer or retarder setups, and resists polymerization, ensuring smooth operations without the

build-up of residues.

**Tincol:** This tin greasing emulsion is perfect for the clean and trouble-free release of bread and rolls from baking tins and trays. Tincol's benefits include its easy spreadability, forming a thin yet efficient film on surfaces. It can be applied using a brush, hand spray gun, or fully automated equipment, making it versatile for various baking operations.

**Dovidol:** Designed to prevent dough pick-up and ensure clean release from all surfaces, Dovidol is a clear, bright pale-yellow oil made from highly refined pure vegetable oils. Its anti-gumming and anti-drying properties make it a preferred choice among bakers. Importantly, Dovidol eliminates the risk of tainting or unpleasant odors, ensuring the highest quality of baked goods.

Understanding that every customer has unique processes, Bakels India provides comprehensive technical support through its team of application specialists. This ensures that each customer receives the right product for their specific needs, enhancing their baking efficiency and product quality.

With the introduction of these advanced release solutions, Bakels is set to transform the baking landscape in India, offering products that promise superior performance, cost savings, and enhanced hygiene.

## India Sweet House Launches its 26th Store

India Sweet House announced the opening of its 26th store in the city of Mysuru. The new store promises to delight residents and visitors alike with its delectable range of traditional Indian sweets and snacks. The inauguration ceremony was graced by esteemed chief guests, Suttur Mutt Swamiji, Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji, Jagadguru Sri Veera Simhasana Mahasamsthana Mutt Suttur Sriksheetra along with the Cine Artist Sri. Sihi Kahi Chandru who is the Brand Ambassador of India Sweet House. Their presence underscores the significance of this momentous occasion for both India Sweet House and the local community.

India Sweet House's commitment to preserving and celebrating cultural heritage

resonates deeply with the decision to launch this flagship store in Mysuru. Known for its rich traditions and culinary delights, Mysore serves as the perfect backdrop for introducing the iconic Ghee Jaggery Mysore Pak, a specialty crafted to honour the city's heritage.

Commenting on the launch, Shwetha and Vishwanath, Founders of India Sweet House said, "Our expansion into Mysuru reflects our dedication to bringing the finest Indian sweets to every corner of the country. With the launch of our 26th store, we aim to provide the residents with a one-stop destination to indulge in a wide array of traditional sweets and savoury delicacies."

Spanning across 1500 square feet, the store boasts a spacious layout, with 750

square feet allocated to each floor. The first floor is dedicated entirely to seating, offering a comfortable ambiance for customers to savour their favourite treats. With a seating capacity of over 20, it provides an ideal setting for intimate gatherings and celebrations.

In addition to their grand opening in Mysuru, India Sweet House is announced another exciting expansion! An India Sweet House Express store has just opened its doors inside the Paakashala on the Bangalore-Mysore highway in Channapatna. This makes it the perfect destination for travelers seeking a delicious pitstop on their journey to Mysore. Another India Sweet House store is slated to open on Kalidasa Road, further solidifying the brand's presence in the region.



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# Le Cordon Bleu Gurugram Hosted Wedding Cake Workshop

In a delightful blend of sugar, flour, and creativity, Le Cordon Bleu Gurugram enthralled participants by hosting a highly anticipated wedding cake workshop. The event drew aspiring renowned pastry chefs, bakers, students, and even professionals from across the region, including Ankit Saini - Executive Pastry Chef, Lodhi Hotel, Rajendra Bhan - Pastry Chef, Cammelia, Abdul - Pastry Chef, Magnolia, Pankaj Sundriyal - Pastry Chef, Club 5, Chef Anand Pawar - Roseate, Bhupesh Kumar Jain - Angels in My Kitchen, Chef Sukanta Das - The Claridges, Delhi, Prof KC Kant - IHM, Pusa, Sanjeeva - Columbo, Ravish Swaroop - CEO, Praxis Services Pvt. Ltd., Shyam Mohan - CEO, Griffith Foods Inc., all eager to learn the intricate art of wedding cake design and decoration.

The students of all ages filled the spacious kitchen, each station equipped with all the necessary tools and ingredients. The aroma of freshly baked cakes mingled with the scent of buttercream frosting, creating an inviting atmosphere that set the tone for a day of learning and fun.



Leading the workshop was Le Cordon Bleu Asst. Professor Anushree Aiyer, a renowned cake artist pastry chef with number of experiences in the industry. Chef Aiyer, known for her stunning cake designs and innovative techniques, brought a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to the event. Her impressive portfolio includes cakes for high-profile clients and celebrities, making her the perfect instructor for this special workshop.

Throughout the day, the students were guided through the process of creating a wedding cake from scratch. The workshop covered essential skills such as baking the perfect cake layers, making and colouring fondant, and crafting intricate sugar flowers. Participants also learned the art of stacking and structuring multi-tiered cakes, a crucial skill for creating show-stopping wedding cakes.

One of the highlights of the workshop was the hands-on learning experience. Participants had the opportunity to try their hand at various techniques under Le Cordon Bleu chefs watchful eye. From rolling out smooth fondant to piping delicate lace patterns, everyone was encouraged to practice and perfect their skills. The students were



provided personalized tips and tricks, tailored to each participant's skill level. Beginners appreciated her patience and clear instructions, while more experienced bakers benefited from her advanced techniques and professional insights.

The workshop also fostered a collaborative and creative environment. The students shared their experiences, offered encouragement, and celebrated each other's successes. This sense of community added to the overall enjoyment of the day, as students of all levels bonded over their shared passion for cake decorating.

The workshop concluded with a showcase of the student's creations. Each cake was unique, reflecting the individual style and creativity of its maker. The array of designs, from classic and elegant to modern and whimsical, was a testament to the skills and techniques learned throughout the day.

The success of the wedding cake workshop highlights the growing interest in baking and cake decorating within the community. Le Cordon Bleu plans to host more workshops in the future, covering a range of topics from beginner baking basics to advanced pastry techniques. For those who missed out on this event, Le Cordon Bleu offers regular classes and private lessons, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to explore the world of cake decorating.



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Multi Baker



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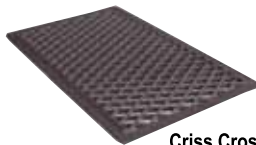
Grill Tray



Griddle Tray



Spare Rib Tray



Criss Cross Tray



Tandoori Skewers



Whole Chicken Roast Tray

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Perforated Pan 2/3



S.S Idli Tray



Combi Fry Pan



Granite Cooking Tray



Perforated Pan 1/1



Teflon Idli Tray



Mini Idli Tray



## Bespoke Bakery Equipment



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# All About Tea

'Chai pe charcha' has, today, become a popular phrase in India. While the general concept of the phrase is: 'Discussion over a cup of tea'; it also has another connotation: 'Discussion about tea'. **Ashok Malkani** examines the second aspect and various facets and characteristics about one of the most popular brews in the world. The different formats of tea, the diversity in the way it is prepared across the globe, the effect it has on one's health et al. are some of the aspects that the article discusses – or undertakes a charcha on.



Tea, according to the Tea Association of U.S.A., is the second most popular beverage in the world, after water. The ready-to-drink tea market is, according to a report by Future Market Insights, slated to rise from \$ 34.3 billion in 2023 to \$ 72.8 billion by 2033.

Hot or cold (iced), tea is ideal for physical and mental health benefits. It is a hydrating beverage with a range of different types and flavours. According to a survey conducted by Tatat Consumer Products tea is growing in popularity accounting for 46% of all hot beverages.

Sagar Kulkarni, Director of Food and Beverage, Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel, states, "Tea holds a special place as one of the most beloved beverages globally. Its diverse flavours, health benefits, cultural significance, and social aspects contribute to its widespread popularity.

He adds, "Tea is popular not only in India but also across the world, with significant consumption in various countries and regions. Here's a brief overview of tea's popularity globally:

**China:** China is the largest producer and consumer of tea in the world.

**India:** India is the second-largest producer of tea globally and has a strong domestic consumption culture.

**United Kingdom:** Tea is an integral part of British culture, with a long history dating back to the 17th century. The UK is one of the world's largest per capita consumers of tea, with traditions like afternoon tea and tea breaks being widely practised.

**Turkey:** Turkish tea, or çay, is a staple



beverage in Turkey and is consumed throughout the day.

**Russia:** Russia has a strong tea-drinking culture, with black tea being the preferred choice.

These examples demonstrate that tea enjoys widespread popularity and cultural significance across diverse regions of the world, each with its unique traditions and customs associated with tea consumption."

Ajendra Kumar, Executive Chef- Bhanu The Fern Forest Resort & Spa, Jambughoda, avers, "Tea's status as the most favourite drink can be attributed to various factors, the primary one being its rich and long history. In many cultures, tea is much more than just a beverage—it is a complete experience. Tea is one of the most versatile beverages that has something to offer for everyone's taste buds.

It comes in various flavours, types, and blends, catering to a wide range of preferences. Whether you prefer black,

grey, oolong, peppermint, or herbal teas, or even hot or iced tea, there's something for everyone. Additionally, many types of tea are believed to offer health benefits—some are rich in antioxidants, while others aid digestion or have a calming effect on the body."

He states, "Tea is popular across the world and enjoyed by people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and regions. While India boasts of a well-established tea culture and is indeed one of the largest consumers and producers of tea globally, tea consumption extends far beyond its borders, and across the world. In countries like China and Japan, tea holds deep cultural significance, with centuries-old traditions surrounding its cultivation, preparation, and consumption.

In the United Kingdom, tea holds a special place in British culture, with afternoon tea ceremonies and the tradition of "tea time" being cherished customs.





**Vikram Singh Kaplish**



**Ajendra Kumar**



**Tushar Malkani**



**Sagar Kulkarni**

Other countries where tea is popular include Turkey, where black tea is a staple beverage enjoyed throughout the day, and Russia, where strong black tea served from a samovar is a cultural tradition. Additionally, tea consumption is prevalent in many other parts of the world, including the United States. Owing to its long history and versatility, tea is a popular beverage across the globe. Countries with a rich longstanding tradition of tea consumption include China, Japan, India, UK, Turkey etc.”

Vikram Singh Kaplish, F&B manager ITC Grand Central Mumbai, disclosed, “Every year, tens of millions of kilos of tea are manufactured and produced in India alone, and this commodity has always shown high levels of demand for both export inquiry as well as domestic consumption. Tea has been a preferred drink in almost all households the world over as it is seen as a comfort drink. Another reason for its popularity would be its ability to cater to the needs of various demographics, be it as a refreshment, hot beverage, or even a health beverage. I may add that Leaf tea is the preferred form for export and consumption across the world.

A majority of the leaf teas that are produced in India, for example, are all bought by major exporters and sent abroad for packaging and consumption in foreign markets. It is a beverage that is not associated with only one country and has thus seen strong levels of demand all over the world, with companies producing and selling it all around the world for the last several decades.”

He adds, “As of today, the largest tea market is currently in China and India, with over a few million kilos of tea being produced and consumed every month, these markets have always held a stronghold about consumption. However, the Middle East, and Russia are now also coming up as major consumers in the tea industry.”

Chef Tushar Malkani, The Yellow House, Goa IHCL SeleQtions, states, “Tea is supposed to be the most favourite drink because of its variety in flavours, blends and wide range of options to suit different tastes and preferences. For today’s health-contentious generation, tea offers

numerous health benefits: e.g. green tea for its high levels of antioxidants, herbal tea for natural choices etc. Tea is a perfect low-calorie drink.”

He adds, “Tea is popular across the world in various forms. The main types come from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, but processing creates unique varieties. Black tea, strong and bold, is king (75% consumed globally) - think English Breakfast. Green tea, known for health benefits, is popular in China and Japan. Oolongs bridge the gap between black and green, with diverse flavors. Herbal teas, like peppermint or chamomile, are caffeine-free and enjoyed worldwide for their calming or medicinal properties. From iced tea in America to afternoon tea in Britain, tea cultures vary, but the love for this drink unites the globe.”

### Preparation

This versatile beverage is prepared across the world in different formats. In India, there is a variety of ways in which it is prepared. Some of the most popular tea preparations in India are: Masala Chai (made by using a mix of spices such as ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, clove, fennel seeds, black peppercorn, etc ), Adrak Chai (with addition of ginger), Elaichi Chai (with addition of cardamom), Suleiman Chai ((with cardamom, lemon and tea leaves brewed in Jaggery water), Noon Chai (This Kashmiri variety, also called the Gulabi chai, is made with gunpowder green tea leaves, salt and baking soda which gives it the pink or gulabi colour) Lembu Chai (popular in West Bengal, it is made with lemon, called as Lembu in West Bangal), Tulsi Chai (made with addition of Holy Basil plant, called as Tulsi), Ronga Saah(prepared in Assam, it is also known as laal chai due to its red colour), Kashmiri Kahwa (popular green tea preparation from Kashmir), Po Chai (popular in Tibet, it is made by boiling a brick of Pemagul black tea for hours before adding milk, salt, and yak butter and churning them), and there is also the Cutting Chai (most popular tea in Mumbai).

Tea drinking has evolved with different countries across the globe incorporating it in their cultures in ways which are unique in each country. So what are the different



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ways of preparation across the world and which are the most popular types of tea? Why?

Ajendra declares, "Owing to its versatility, tea is prepared in numerous ways across the world, reflecting cultural traditions, regional preferences, and individual tastes. Here are some of the different methods of preparing and enjoying tea from across the world:

**India-** Popularly known as 'chai', tea is a beloved and extremely popular beverage enjoyed throughout the day. Black tea is brewed with a blend of spices such as cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, and cloves, then simmered with milk and sweetened with sugar. Chai is often served hot and is a staple in Indian households and street stalls. It is often served with biscuits or traditional Indian namkeen or snacks.

**Turkey:** Turkish tea, known as 'çay', is prepared using a double-stacked kettle called a çaydanlık. Black tea leaves are steeped in the upper kettle with boiling water, while the lower kettle is filled with hot water to dilute the tea to the desired strength. Turkish tea is typically served in small tulip-shaped glasses and enjoyed hot.

**China:** In China, tea is usually prepared using the Gongfu Cha method, which involves multiple short infusions of high-quality tea leaves in a small teapot. Chinese teas, such as oolong tea, and Pu-erh tea, are mostly enjoyed for their delicate flavors and aromas.

**Japan:** Japanese tea ceremonies,

known as Chanoyu or Sado, are highly ritualized and emphasize the preparation and presentation of matcha, a powdered green tea. Matcha is whisked with hot water and served in small bowls, with great attention to detail and aesthetics.

**United Kingdom:** In the UK, black tea, often referred to as "English Breakfast Tea", is a beloved beverage enjoyed throughout the day. Tea is typically brewed strong with boiling water and served with milk and sugar. Afternoon tea ceremonies are also a popular tradition, featuring a selection of teas, sandwiches, scones with clotted cream and jam, and assorted pastries."

He adds, "There are several types of tea that are popular for various reasons. One of the most widely consumed is black tea. It's known for its bold flavour and robust aroma, often enjoyed with milk and sugar in countries like the UK and India. Then there's green tea, loved for its fresh, grassy taste and high antioxidant content. It's a staple in East Asian countries like China and Japan. Oolong tea falls between black and green tea, offering a balanced flavour profile with floral, fruity, and toasty notes. It's especially popular in China and Taiwan. Herbal teas, like chamomile and peppermint, are caffeine-free infusions prized for their soothing properties and potential health benefits. Finally, there's white tea, appreciated for its delicate flavour and subtle sweetness, along with its high antioxidant content. Each type of

tea has its own unique appeal and potential health benefits."

Sagar states, "The different ways of tea preparation across the world are: Chinese Tea Ceremony, Japanese Tea Ceremony, Indian Chai, Moroccan Mint Tea, and Turkish Tea. These are just a few examples of how tea is prepared and enjoyed across the world. Each reflects the unique customs, rituals, and flavours of its respective culture."

He adds, "The various types of tea popular across the globe are:

**Black Tea:** Black tea is one of the most consumed types globally, known for its robust flavour and bold aroma. Varieties include Assam, Darjeeling, Ceylon, and English Breakfast.

**Green Tea:** Green tea is celebrated for its fresh, grassy flavour and numerous health benefits attributed to its high antioxidant content, particularly catechins.

**Oolong Tea:** Oolong tea is a partially oxidized tea with flavours that fall between those of green and black tea. It's prized for its complex flavours, floral aromas, and potential health benefits.

**White Tea:** White tea is minimally processed, made from young tea leaves and buds, and known for its delicate flavour profile. It's appreciated for its subtle sweetness and light, refreshing taste."

Vikram discloses, "There are two kinds of teas: Dust tea and Leaf tea, with dust being responsible for the majority of the consumption across the world. These teas are prepared as refreshing beverages such as iced teas, hot drinks with milk, or even as black tea, or even as healthy versions of the beverage in the form of Green Tea or blue Tea. The different ways of preparing the drink typically involve mixing the leaves in water and either adding accompaniments like milk, cream, and sugar or merely drinking it as is in the case of leaf teas."

He adds, "Dust and Leaf tea are the primary forms of the beverage, however, these also come in the form of CTC and Orthodox. Leaf teas are mainly Orthodox while dust teas are usually in the CTC form. Leaf teas have begun to rise in popularity although they do not sell in as large quantities as dust tea due to the vast

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difference in price between the two, with Leaf teas being far more expensive due to the quality and standard of the tea. Dust however, sells in far greater numbers and is responsible for a majority of the income for a lot of producers all around the world. Hence it is seen that there are much higher levels of production for dust tea than that of Leaf tea presently.”

Tushar informs, “Tea has a long and rich cultural history in many countries, such as China, Japan, India, the UK, and others. It is often tied to traditions, ceremonies, and rituals, making it a deeply ingrained part of various cultures. While an elaborate Japanese tea-drinking ceremony is nothing less than regal symbolising beginnings, endings, safety, comfort and containment; English tea is more of a status symbol for the super-rich of Regency England. Having said that, Tea is a beverage that is often enjoyed in social settings, whether it’s sharing a cup of tea with friends or family, hosting tea parties, or even engaging in tea ceremonies. It brings people together and fosters social connections.”

He avers, “From black tea in Britain to iced tea in America, it’s a global favourite. Actually, black tea takes the crown! It makes up around 75% of all tea consumed globally, with green tea following at 20%. Interestingly, though India drinks the most tea overall, China is the world’s leading producer. From classic English Breakfast tea to refreshing iced tea in America, tea is a beloved beverage across the world.”

He adds, “There are two main tea categories: true teas from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, and herbal infusions. True tea varieties like black, green, oolong, and white tea differ based on processing. Black tea, fully oxidized, is the world’s favourite (think English Breakfast) for its strong flavour. Green tea, minimally processed, is popular for its health benefits. Oolongs fall between black and green, offering diverse tastes. Herbal infusions, like peppermint or chamomile, are caffeine-free and loved globally for relaxation and potential health effects.”

### Exquisite & Expensive

While this exquisite elixir comes in different flavours and has different processing techniques to provide the consumer varying experiences they seem to be distinguished only by their company brand names. Is that the only way one can distinguish them? One is tempted to know which is the most expensive and luxurious tea.

Ajendra affirms, “While brand names are undoubtedly a popular method for distinguishing between various teas, they represent just one facet of the intricate world of tea appreciation. Beyond branding, tea varieties are distinguished by their type – black, green, oolong, white, herbal – each with its own unique aroma, appearance, and flavour profile. Additionally, factors such as leaf quality, size, and origin – like the rich soil of Assam or the lofty

peaks of Darjeeling – further contribute to the diversity of tea experiences. Thus, while brands provide a starting point, it’s the combination of tea type, leaf characteristics, and regional influences that truly distinguish the multitude of tea varieties available to enthusiasts.”

Delving on luxurious and expensive teas he states, “I think Da Hong Pao (Big Red Robe) is revered as one of the most luxurious teas in the world. Grown in the Wuyi Mountains of China’s Fujian province (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), the legacy of this tea is steeped in luxury and tradition. Ancient tea bushes, some centuries old, yield the precious leaves that define Da Hong Pao’s rarity. With limited production from these revered plants, each harvest yields a scant quantity, adding to its exclusivity and allure. As far as expensiveness is concerned, there are many expensive varieties present in the market. I think Da Hong Pao (Big Red Robe) is the most expensive one owing to its rarity and exclusivity.”

Vikram declares, “Teas can be distinguished in the way that they appear, either as dust or leaf, and the way they are cut, appearing as CTC or Orthodox. They also appear in different sizes, with dust grades showing different levels of sizing, and the leaf teas showing different kinds of cutting as well. With dust teas, there are four primary grades, PD, RD, SRD, SFD and these are followed by secondaries that sell in smaller quantities and which are used mainly for blends. Leaf teas, however, have many more varieties, and can be divided into various grades that are split into a few sub-groups, those being: the whole-leaf teas, bolder broken grades, smaller broken grades, and the fannings. Overall, there are around 20+ kinds of leaf teas and several kinds of green teas as well; and each tea can be distinguished by its appearance, density, leaf colour, stalk content, and fragrance.”

He continues, “Usually, White Tea or HMT (Hand Made Tea) is the most ‘luxurious tea’, with these grades being produced very few times a year and only during certain seasons. The most expensive teas would be the specialty teas that come up for sale a few times a year, with the

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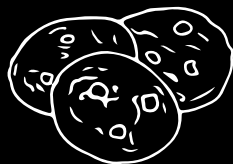


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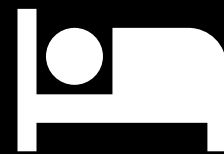
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dry leaf coming straight from the factory and selling in the tea auctions at prices like 11000-12000 per kilo. However, these quantities are extremely limited due to the high price but tend to be the best in quality.”

Sagar asserts, Teas can indeed be distinguished by their brands, but they are more commonly categorized by their types, which are based on factors such as processing methods, leaf size, and growing conditions. Here are some common varieties of tea and how they can be distinguished:

**Green Tea:** Green tea is unoxidized or lightly oxidized, resulting in a delicate flavour and a greenish colour. Varieties include Japanese Sencha, Chinese Dragon Well, and Matcha. Green teas are typically characterized by their grassy, vegetal, or nutty flavours.

**Black Tea:** Black tea is fully oxidized, leading to a rich flavour, dark colour, and bold aroma. Varieties include Assam, Darjeeling, Ceylon, and English Breakfast. Black teas can vary widely in taste, from malty and robust to fruity and floral.

**Oolong Tea:** Oolong tea is partially oxidized, resulting in a flavour profile that falls between green and black tea. Varieties include Tieguanyin, Wuyi Rock Tea, and Dong Ding. Oolong teas can range from floral and creamy to toasty and fruity,

depending on the level of oxidation and processing.

**White Tea:** White tea is minimally processed, and made from young tea leaves and buds, resulting in a delicate flavour and subtle sweetness. Varieties include Silver Needle and White Peony. White teas are known for their light, floral, and slightly sweet taste.

**Herbal Tea (Tisanes):** Herbal teas are caffeine-free infusions made from various plants, flowers, and herbs. Varieties include chamomile, peppermint, and rooibos. Herbal teas come in a wide range of flavours and are often enjoyed for their soothing properties and potential health benefits.

**Pu-erh Tea:** Pu-erh tea is a fermented tea from China, known for its earthy, rich flavour and smooth texture. Varieties include raw (sheng) and ripe pu-erh. Pu-erh teas can develop complex flavours over time, similar to wine.”

He continues “A few examples of teas that are often considered luxurious due to their exceptional quality, rarity, and cultural significance are:

**Da Hong Pao (Big Red Robe):** A highly prized oolong tea from the Wuyi Mountains in China. It’s known for its complex flavour profile, including floral, fruity, and mineral notes, as well as its rarity and historical significance. Some Da Hong Pao teas

have sold for thousands or even tens of thousands of dollars per ounce.

**Gyokuro:** is a premium Japanese green tea made from shade-grown tea leaves. It’s known for its lively green hue, sweet taste, and rich umami depth. Gyokuro is carefully produced and often considered one of the highest-quality green teas available.

### Healthy Effect

Before consuming any food, in any format, the first thing you want to know is: How does it affect my health? Since the consumption of tea has become so predominantly popular not only in the country but globally there has been a meta-analysis of studies published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. It found that tea consumption was associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease. It has also been widely studied for its association with a reduced cancer risk. A study published in the journal, Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention, found that tea consumption was associated with a reduced risk of certain cancers, including ovarian and breast cancer.

The questions that pop up in one’s mind are: Is tea drinking good for your health and which is the healthiest tea?

Tushar disclosed, “Tea is often associated with numerous health benefits – physical



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as well as mental. For example, green tea is known for its high levels of antioxidants, which are believed to help in reducing the risk of chronic diseases. Herbal teas are often used for their calming or medicinal properties. A hot cup of tea can provide warmth and comfort, especially on a cold day or when someone is feeling under the weather. It can be soothing and relaxing, making it a go-to-choice for many during times of stress or relaxation."

He informs, "As far as healthiest tea is concerned, Herbal teas boast a wide range of potential health promoters. Peppermint can aid digestion, chamomile might ease anxiety, and ginger can soothe nausea. They're naturally caffeine-free, making them a good evening drink."

Vikram states, "Tea drinking can have several benefits to one's health as it helps with weight loss builds good immunity and cleanses the system. However, this would vary depending on the kind of tea being consumed. Green tea is said to be the healthiest, with it being great for cleansing the system and helping with weight loss. There are several other healthy variants of tea, like Blue tea, which have similar effects."

Sagar says, "Tea drinking can be a healthy habit, as it offers various potential health benefits. It has antioxidant properties. Besides it is good for your heart, weight management, digestion and hydration. However, I may add that while tea can have health benefits, it's essential to understand that everyone's reaction may differ. It's wise to avoid drinking too much-caffeinated tea, especially for those who are sensitive to caffeine. As far as healthiest tea is concerned, it can vary based on what your body needs and what you like. In winter, when cold water might not be appealing, any tea is an effortless way to keep yourself hydrated."

Ajendra states, "Tea can be healthy due to its antioxidants and beneficial compounds, which may improve heart health, brain function, digestion, and immunity. However, moderation is key to avoid potential adverse effects like disrupted sleep and digestive issues, especially with highly caffeinated varieties."

Commenting on healthiest tea he says,

"It is difficult to declare a particular type of tea as the healthiest as this depends on various factors such as individual health goals, preferences, and nutritional needs of an individual. Green tea is renowned for its antioxidants and heart-healthy properties, potentially reducing disease risk. White tea offers antioxidants, delicate flavor, skin health benefits, and immune support. Herbal options like chamomile and peppermint provide soothing effects and aid digestion. Oolong tea may assist weight management and boost heart health, while matcha is rich in antioxidants, associated with increased energy and detoxification. Ultimately, the healthiest tea varies based on individual needs and tastes."

### History

With the immense popularity that tea enjoys across the globe one is keen to know about the origin of tea which is shrouded in myths and stories. It may be mentioned that from Chinese Emperors to Portuguese princesses, the history of tea is as rich as its taste. The earliest reference to the drink – tea – originates from China. It is said that a leaf fell into water being boiled for Emperor Shen Nung who found the taste refreshing. Thus was the first cup of tea invented!

Vikram says, "Tea has been produced and consumed in India for centuries, with various forms being drunk all over the country. In the more recent past however, tea has begun to be produced and sold through auctions, with several tea brokers entering the market and selling these teas from the estates to consumers of blenders and tea companies. These brokers have been around for almost 150-160 years and have usually tasted and valued the teas before putting them up for auction. Any cup of tea that is served in the country has first gone through an extremely elaborate production process, followed by the tasting, valuation, and sale via the auctions through tea brokers, after which the buyers ultimately collect the teas from the warehouses, package it for their blends or as its grade, and ultimately sell it to the consumers."

Sagar disclosed, "Tea originated in ancient China, believed to have been

discovered by Emperor Shen Nong around 2737 BCE. Initially valued for its health benefits, it soon became a favoured drink among emperors and scholars."

He continues, "From China, tea spread to Japan and Korea in the 8th and 9th centuries. In Japan, it evolved into the elegant Japanese tea ceremony, while Korea developed its unique tea traditions.

"Tea made its way to Europe via traders from Portugal and the Netherlands in the 16th century. It became popular among the aristocracy, leading to the establishment of tea houses and a flourishing tea culture across the continent.

"In Britain, tea gained status as a national drink in the 17th and 18th centuries, particularly after King Charles II married Catherine of Braganza, who had a fondness for tea. The British East India Company played a crucial role in importing tea from China and later from British colonies like India, shaping the tea-drinking habits of the British people.

"The expansion of tea cultivation in India started in regions like Darjeeling, Nilgiris, and Kangra Valley in 19th and early 20th century, when India produced unique tea varieties and flavours.

"Indian tea swiftly gained global recognition for its robust taste, making India a major tea producer and exporter today. Tea has become integral to Indian culture, with chai, a spiced milk tea, enjoyed across the nation.

"Overall, tea's history is a captivating tale from ancient China to its flourishing in countries like India."

Ajendra declared, "Tea has been enjoyed for a really long time, starting in China and then spreading to other parts of the world through trade. In India, the British introduced tea growing in the 1800s, mainly in Assam. It became popular among both British and Indian people. Nowadays, India is one of the biggest tea producers and drinkers globally, with places like Darjeeling and Assam famous for their tea. Tea is a big part of everyday life in India, especially with traditions like drinking chai."

Yes, tea drinking has grown over the years and it has culminated in becoming one of the most favoured drinks. So, lets raise a toast to Chai! ■

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# Bakery Equipment

## A Growing Business



Bakery industry has been growing steadily and, with the pandemic making people more health conscious, they have been more focused on consumption of healthy food. Since baked food is considered to be more wholesome, there has been a tendency to include more bakery products in their daily meal. This has given a further boost to the bakery industry which, in turn has boosted the number of bakeries not only in India but all across the globe. With the influx of international cafes and bakery chains in India, many entrepreneurs have shown a keen interest in entering the bakery industry in some form. While starting a bakery is a B2C business, having its own challenges, a B2B lucrative option would be entering in the bakery equipment manufacturing/dealership market. **Ashok Malkani** delves on the plethora of equipment needed by the bakery industry and how one can start a manufacturing facility or become a dealer in this fast progressing industry.

**B**akery industry is thriving in India. The industry has been flourishing in recent times due to the consumers' increasingly opting for bakery products, which are considered to be more healthy. This has had a snowballing effect on the industry. According to IMARC the Indian bakery market size was approximately \$ 12.6 Billion in 2023. Besides the health food fad, the increasing penetration of Western food trends and the growing popularity of cakes, bread, biscuits, cookies, donuts, pies, etc. have contributed to the growth.

The increasing demand for bakery products has resulted in the spread of bakeries in almost all parts of the country. There has thus been a plethora of bakeries coming up in India. According to Rentech Digital there are a total of 1,22,499 Bakery and Cake Shops in India as of April 20, 2024. And they are not small hole-in-the-wall enterprises. There are 49,159 5-star rated Bakery and Cake Shops. Besides this there are 17,627 4-star, 3,402 3-star, 690 2-star and 1,253 1-star rated Bakery and Cake Shops.

With such a high number of bakeries of different categories there is an ample opportunity for bakery equipment manufacturers. One can say the industry is equipped to accept enterprising entrepreneurs in the bakery equipment sector. However, when one is planning to enter the bakery equipment industry one has to take into consideration the needs of the global bakery industry too. Rising demand for baked goods across the world is playing a key role in driving the global bakery processing equipment market.

According to a report by Grand View Research the global bakery processing equipment market size was valued at \$ 13.4 billion in 2022 and is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 6.3% from 2023 to 2030. Growing demand for packaged food products, including ready-to-eat food & snack foods, owing to their convenience and shelf life is anticipated to drive the market demand for bakery processing equipment over the forecast period.

Bakery manufacturers are increasingly

focusing on enhancing their production efficiency owing to the increasing energy and labor costs, coupled with the growing raw material cost of food ingredients. This is expected to drive the demand for advanced automated bakery processing machines that ensure improved efficiency and minimum wastage of food ingredients.

It may be mentioned for an entrepreneur unfamiliar with the bakery industry that food processing equipment contributes to the efficient operation of these establishments. For instance, mixers, dough dividers, and sheeters streamline the production process, reducing manual labor and saving time. Automated processes allow for larger production volumes, helping meet increasing demands. Moreover, ovens and proofers with precise temperature controls and timers ensure optimal baking conditions, resulting in consistent and evenly baked products.

Due to inherent advantages such as quality control, durability, cleanliness, and preservation, processing equipment is extensively used by bakery and confectionery industry. The global market for bakery



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processing equipment is expected to expand significantly in the coming years due to rising demand for confectionery and baked goods as well as for packaged & convenience food, along with increasing customer desire for healthy and nutritious food items. According to HowToRobot, the food robotics market, encompassing bakery automation, which was valued at \$ 3.2 billion in 2022 was expected to expand at 12 % annually from 2023-2032.

An enterprising entrepreneur can enter the bakery equipment business either by becoming a manufacturer of one of the essential implements or you can become a dealer. In either case you must know basic facts about the bakeries and about the equipment, used by the bakeries and their utility. One has to be aware that bread and pastry shops, cake shops, etc. need different types of tools and machines.

### Baking Tools

The important baking tools needed by different types of bakeries are:

**Measuring tools:** These tools, which come in all shapes and sizes, comprise of Dry Measuring Cup (to measure and weigh ingredients like spices, salt, flour, sugar, or baking powder), Liquid Measuring Cup (with graduated measurement lines to measure wet ingredients like milk, yogurt, or water), Measuring Spoon, Baking Scale and Spoon Scale (digital scales to accurately measure food ingredients conveniently), Timer (to time the preparation of ingredients and

food), and Oven Thermometer (to measure temperature oil, water, and food in the oven).

**Mixing tools:** They comprise of Electric Mixers (used for whisking eggs and other wet ingredients they can also be used to knead dough), Mixing Spoon (used for mixing ingredients in containers. They come in different lengths and are made of Metal, wood, porcelain or plastic), Mixing Bowls (for preparing dry and wet baking ingredients), Whisks, and Spatula (made of silicone, stainless steel, rubber or plastic, they are used for mixing and scraping mixing bowls and plates).

**Preparatory tool:** Used for initial preparation of baking ingredients, they comprise of Flour Sifter (to sieve or separate clumps from bulk flour and other powder-like ingredients), Pastry Brush (to spread butter, egg wash, or oil on food), Rolling Pin (mainly made of wood or marble), Cake Tester (the cake tester needle helps check if Cake is baked), Baking Paper (Used for lining pans to prevent the food from touching pan directly and to ensure it bakes better), Pastry Mat (their non sticky surfaces are used for kneading, forming and cutting dough), Egg Separators (which help in separating egg yolks from whites), Cooling Racks ( which are made from stainless steel, aluminium or are chrome coated), Oven Mitts (Usually made of leather, cloth or silicon they protect hands from hot objects like ovens, baking pans, etc.)

**Cutting Tools:** They are essential items for bakery and they comprise of Graters

(for grating ingredients like cheese), Pantry Blender (for blending solid ingredients like butter, or lard, into flour to create dough) Cookie Cutters (are molds of various shapes with sharp edges for cutting dough into different shapes), Dough Cutters (for slicing and portioning dough), Pastry Cutting Wheel (for cutting dough and making patterned edges) Chefs Knives (these are of various kinds like Paring, Carving, Boning and Bread Knife)

**Cake Making and Decorating Tools:** These are essential in every bakery and they comprise of cake turntable stand (for smoothing sheets of icing, applying buttercream, pipe frosting, and decorating cake), Piping Bag (Conical in shape they are



used for decorating pastries by squeezing cream on the surface), Cake Board (a flat thick board made of corrugated cardboard or marble for carrying cakes), Cake Leveller (used for cutting and levelling cake) and Cake Spatula (for smoothing out the buttercream and icing on the side of the cake to create a flat surface)

### Commercial Bakery Equipment

Changing consumer preferences, urbanisation and rise in disposable income, which have fueled demand for baked goods have resulted in significant growth in commercial bakery machine market. Added to this, the technological advancements in bakery machinery and the increasing popularity of artisanal and specialty bakery products have also created new opportunities for commercial bakery machines.

One of the most important equipment for commercial bakeries would be ovens. Some of the popular ovens are:

**Convection & OTG ovens:** Commercial Convection ovens are extremely popular. They are equipped with fans that circulate hot air in the baking chamber creating

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uniform heat to prevent hot and cold spots which can lead to uneven baking. The OTG (Oven-Toaster Grill) has heating elements on the top and bottom, providing direct radiant heat. Like in traditional ovens, where the heat source is stationary, OTGs work on the same principle.

**Rotary Rack Ovens:** These ovens, while providing best utilisation of space gives consistency to every batch of baked goods. Since they have vertically aligned racks, they can bake abundant goodies at once, and since all the trays can be unloaded at the same time, consistency in baking is maintained.

**Tunnel Ovens:** Tunnel Ovens are continuous baking equipments which can be either direct gas-fired (DGF) or indirect heating units. The DGF tunnel ovens, which are versatile and simple to operate, are the most common type of equipment in high-speed bakeries producing either bread or cakes.

**Dough Mixers:** Commercial dough mixer machines are used for quickly mixing dough or batter. They work the entire bowl thoroughly using powerful motors and attachments, leaving the contents perfectly mixed and aerated.

**Dough Dividers, Rounders, Moulders, and Sheeters :** Dough Divider and Rounder machines turn a large portion of dough into perfectly weighed and shaped pieces. The dough sheeter can turn separate batches of dough into a continuous sheet. They are used

for laminated doughs such as croissants, Danish, and puff pastries.

There are several other machines like Slicing machines, Cream Roll making machines, Conveyor Belts & Other Automation Devices, Refrigerators, etc.

### Starting Bakery Equipment Business

Startup bakery equipment manufacturers and dealers have an opportunity to get onboard as consumers' love for baked goods is resulting not only in increasing number of bakeries and also expansion of existing bakeries. Growing health awareness among people and demand for new bakery products will also generate lucrative opportunities for leading bakery processing equipment manufacturers. The development of new-generation bakery processing machinery will aid in the expansion of the global market.

All these would result in an increase in demand for bakery tools and machinery. This provides an opportunity for an enterprising businessperson to venture into the field of manufacturing or dealership of bakery equipment. However, to start the business, besides becoming familiar with the equipment used by the bakeries and the demand for each of the equipment that is being used by different bakeries, you will also need to calculate the investment that would be needed for the project, which would include the ownership or lease cost

of the premises, the machinery required for producing the desired equipment, the cost of the labour that would be required and marketing expenses.

Besides this you will need licenses.

### Entering the B2B Market

It may be mentioned that Bakery equipment and supply dealers are entrenched in B2B (business-to-business) selling environment. Thus the new entrepreneur's business model will be geared towards selling equipment to other businesses. The B2B and B2C (business-to-customers) selling are extremely different. In B2C you are selling to customers. In the B2B selling you can't wait for the customers to come to you. B2B transactions rely on company's account management personnel to establish business client relationships. Traditional marketing practices help businesses connect with business clients.

Trade publications help in boosting your business as B2B advertising focuses on reaching the employees of a business responsible for making capital decisions, or the individual who is in charge of purchases. If one takes a look at the baker's equipment and supply industry one finds that industry leaders have embraced online sales and marketing trends. One has to realise that ecommerce begins with a solid business website which features an attractive and extensively elaborate catalogue, featuring a first-rate virtual catalog.

Besides this, to make a success of the business a thorough market research is necessary. Before establishing the business you have to find out the competition in the area. If the competition is extremely tough it is better to start business in a different area. Another option is to take up a franchisee dealership. Franchised businesses present a viable alternative for startup entrepreneurs interested in minimizing investment risk.

Finally one may state that bakery manufacturers, due to the increasing energy and labour costs and growing ingredients' cost, are focussing on enhancing their production. This is expected to drive the demand for advanced bakery processing machines. So, new entrepreneurs must focus on equipment that ensures improved efficiency and minimum wastage of good ingredients. ■



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# Food Styling

By Michael Swamy



**F**ood styling is an art form and a specialised field for a career. It relies greatly on the knowledge of food and also on the design sense and designing expertise. Associated with style and glamour, the job requires ample skill, creativity, meticulous craftsmanship and patience.

It also involves great communication skills as the food stylist should ideally facilitate the aroma, texture and taste of the food to reach the onlooker through a photograph. It is the job of the stylist to make the food look appealing, natural and not too complicated.

## Maturation of Food Styling

When I started out as a food stylist in India, there were very few of us in the field. Even

today, there are very few food stylists in the country who pursue the career after learning the craft professionally. In my case too, it was only after a couple of years of working in the food & beverage industry that I decided to try my hand at specialising in something different that would also give me a chance to improve on my hobby of photography. It was at the Le Cordon Bleu in London when I stumbled across the exciting field of food styling and on a copy of a book on the same topic. On my return to Mumbai, I decided to make a break into food styling.

When I started out in the career of food styling, I would mostly get offers for styling for images that went onto masala packets, pasta packets and tiny print ads wherein the picture of the food I styled was often

of the same size as that of a postal stamp.

But today, my scope of work encompasses cookery books, packaging, recipe booklets, newspaper articles, images for the Internet, television ad films, YouTube videos, food-based shows and movies. Styling Indian food is tough, but my experience with French cuisine and pre-plated ideas, using classical items and fabrics as props, has gone a long way into shooting interesting photographs pertaining to Indian food.

## What it Takes?

Great or even good food styling requires having in-depth knowledge of food and also knowledge of culture, of latest trends in art and design, of different types of printing techniques and of play of shadow and light.

In order to put together a great image, the efforts of the food stylist could be in coordination with a good photographer and sometimes with a prop stylist or an Art Director. However, mostly, the food stylists and their assistants themselves handle the job of propping and creating the feel of the frame.

I also like to keep abreast of what is new in the field, particularly through books by veteran stylists like Dolores Custer – who also teaches the subject, John Carafoli and Steve Bavister. The other great boon is the Internet, which gives easy access to what is happening in the world at large and helps one keep to keep in touch with other food stylists.

For becoming a good food stylist, besides understanding and learning the art of styling food, one has to learn a lot about various forms of printing and packaging, especially by way of design and layout. Being a photographer myself, I have an insight about lighting, colours, filters, lenses, camera angles and back lighting. These aspects are as important to the food stylist as understanding food and how it reacts in the presence of strong strobe lights and extreme weather conditions.

It is also essential for the food stylist to know about props, cutlery, plates and backgrounds. In fact, this body of knowledge is intrinsic to the job. Meeting with designers and producers of crockery and cutlery and shopping or browsing through markets help keep the food stylist in touch with the needs of customers and clients. The abundance of Italian crockery and cutlery has increased the resources available to a food stylist, by way of props.

### Challenges in Food Styling

Till a few years ago, much of the styling in India was done using fake materials such as shaving creams, make-up, toothpastes, etc. However, since the beginning of the past decade, speciality food stuffs are available in a greater range and variety, in the country. Coloured peppers, several types of lettuce, broccoli, grains like quinoa and a wide range of proprietary sauces and cheeses can be found more readily now, in the country. The up-market hospitality trade has encouraged this interesting



change in the colours, garnishes and styling of food.

The challenge of using natural food products in styling can be overcome if one is lucky to have a good photographer who also knows about food and with some support from products like fake ice, readymade oil sprays, smoke chips, gels and specialised props, the job becomes easier. Although I maintain that some of these above-mentioned products are difficult to come by. I often make purchases for props on my travels abroad, or ask friends to buy them and send to me.

As far as creating frames for Indian regional food goes, it is a bit more challenging as Indian colours tend to clash with the already colourful varieties of different forms of Indian cuisines. I like to use modern style pottery against a backdrop of antiques, blending rich Indian fabrics with plated food. Once Indian food



was typically presented in dishes using relatively little imagination, but gradually the scene is changing as agencies and Art Directors are respecting the food stylist's creativity and space.

Though our job is creative there is no denying the fact that food stylists, by and large, are a pressured lot. Food prepared for styling remains at its optimum best for only brief periods, sometimes lasting for mere minutes. This is where skill and decisiveness come in. The relationship between stylist and photographer must be very close as most photographers often do not understand the chemistry of food. The logistics of the job in hand should be sorted out well before the shoot and this may help to keep ingredients at hand in plenty.

### Need for More Recognition

Moreover, food styling is still not being given its due respect and importance in India. A food stylist is often the last person who is contacted for a food shoot and the budget for the food stylist (and ingredients he or she will use) is many-a-time a shoestring one. Though shocking, this is true, in many cases.

Added to this can be the frustration of having saddled with a fresh-out-of-college Art Director whose idea of creativity entails copying the design, layout and plating of some other product. However, as one gains more and more experience and thereby seniority in the field, the scenario becomes easier to handle for the food stylist.

Mumbai has always been a forerunner by way of promoting art & culture, and also in experimenting with new products and services. This makes it relatively easier for a food stylist to pursue his/her dreams in this city.

Overall, one can say that despite the various challenges involved in the job of food styling, I am happy to note that food styling has become one such career which many people are seeming to aspire. The only advice I have for these people is be patient and make sure you are thorough with your knowledge. After that, the sky can be the limit.

*The author is a renowned Chef*

# Yoghurts For Summers



However diverse the cuisines of India may be, every community in the country has always lend importance to yoghurt or dahi, as it is commonly known. And as the scorching heat conspires to dehydrate our bodies, like the soaring mercury, the importance of yoghurt only rises manifolds.

When asked about the brilliance of this unifying ingredient, if you take India as a whole, we are dependent on yoghurt or dahi in our daily routines as lassi up north, ghol in the east, chaas in the west and moor in the south. Yoghurt is as wonderful as a starter, or a side dish or a thirst quencher, or a dressing, a relish, mains, and a dessert all over & especially in the Indian subcontinent.

Dahi is taken as an appetiser in many Indian regional cuisines whereas raita is taken as an accompaniment. dahi as the main ingredient is very popular in north & as moor kozhambu in south. With onions, yoghurt is taken as a relish, with pachadi taken as a dressing; lassi acts as a thirst quencher and mishti doi is taken in as a dessert. And in international cuisine, the Greek yoghurt, Californian yoghurt cheese cakes, baked yoghurt, and loads of yoghurt dressings in salads are extremely popular for health reasons, where it replaces the mayonnaise in many cases.

## Varieties and Presentation

To offset its natural sourness, yoghurt can be savoured as sweet, flavoured, salty or in containers with fruits.

While 'Rahmjoghurt', a creamy yoghurt with much higher milkfat content (10%) than most yoghurts is available in Germany and other countries; 'Caspian Sea yoghurt' is believed to have been introduced into Japan in 1986 by researchers returning from a trip to the Caucasus region in Georgia. This variety, called matsoni, has a unique, viscous, honey-like texture. It is milder in taste than other varieties of yoghurts. Then there is jameed; a yoghurt which is salted and dried, and is to be preserved. It is popular in Jordan. Zabady is the yoghurt made in Egypt.

### Tips to add more yoghurt to everyday diet

- Replace mayonnaise and salad dressings with yogurt
- Replace ice cream and milk shake with frozen yogurt and mixed fruit yogurt smoothie
  - Make dips with yogurt instead of sour-cream
  - Try using yogurt cheese instead of cream cheese
  - Use to marinate meat and poultry

## The Quintessential Curd & Raita

Our very own raita is a yoghurt-based side dish. The yoghurt is seasoned with cilantro (coriander), cumin, mint, cayenne pepper, and other herbs and spices. Vegetables such as cucumber and onions are mixed in. The mixture is served chilled. Raita has a cooling effect on the palate which makes it a good foil for spicy Indian dishes.

The word, dahi, seems to be derived from the Sanskrit word dadhi. Dadhi is one of the five elixirs (Panchamrita) often used in Hindu rituals. It is found in different flavours, two of which are famous: i) sour yoghurt – tauk doi, and ii) sweet yoghurt – misti or poyadi doi. In India, it is often used in cosmetics, mixed with turmeric and honey. Sour yoghurt is also used as hair conditioner by women in many parts of India. Dahi is also known as thayiru (Malayalam), doi (Assamese, Bengali), dohi (Oriya), perugu (Telugu), mosaru (Kannada), or thayir (Tamil).

A very popular dessert of Maharashtra called srikand is made from drained yoghurt, saffron, cardamom or nutmeg and sugar, and sometimes fruits like mangos or pineapples.

## Quick Take on Yoghurt

While its taste enhancement capabilities are undisputed, the health benefits of yoghurt are also numerous. For those on a low-calorie diet, yoghurt is a boon. Easily available anywhere, it is a snack that tastes great at any time of the day; it is low in calories and can be sufficiently filling when combined with a high-fibre vegetable or fruit.

Increased yoghurt consumption may enhance the immune response, which would in turn increase resistance to immune-related diseases. Furthermore, yoghurt plays an important role in restoring the digestive tract to its normal condition after a course of antibiotics.

To be effective, yoghurt must contain sufficient amount of 'live' lactic cultures, meaning it must be 'fresh'. Make it at home, if you can. And always remember to keep it cold, as the helpful bacteria in yoghurt cannot withstand high temperatures.



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# The Milling Industry

Various reports suggest that the production of bakery items in India, including pastries, cakes, bread, biscuits, and buns is fast expanding. The middle class population in India is showing increasing interest in a variety of bakery items, the demand for both traditional and new bakery items such as crackers, pasta, pizza and burgers are slated to grow even further.

As the bakery industry progresses, its ancillary industries would also receive a fillip, like milling. This is a sector which offers ample opportunities, as it caters not only to the bakery sector but also to the packaged food industry.

Milling plays an important role not only in Indian homes but also in the bakery industry – Indian and international. Be it bread, biscuits, cookies, cakes, et al, the role of the chakki, or gristmill, cannot be overlooked. In fact, if you look around, you will find gristmill at every nook and corner of the country. And as the bakery industry progresses, there will be demand for better and bigger grinding mills, giving enterprising entrepreneurs an opportunity to invest in a growing industry.

## Mills in the Early Period

The millers in the early period also doubled up as bakers, and therefore they also used to draw immense respect from the society. However,

gradually, the division of labour became more prominent and the job of grinding the grains and baking got split into two separate jobs.

The grist mill in the ancient period was water-powered. In his Geography, the Greek geographer Strabon reported the existence of a water-powered grain-mill near the palace of King Mithradates VI Eupator at Cabira, Asia Minor, before 71 BC.

The early mills used to have horizontal paddle wheels. As many of such mills were found in Scandinavia, they later came to be known as 'Norse Wheels'. The shaft to which the paddle wheel was attached was, in turn, attached to the 'runner stone', the centre of the millstone. The force on the paddle wheels was produced by water, and it was transferred directly to the runner stone, causing it to grind against a stationary stone of a similar size and shape, which was called the 'bed'. Therefore the volume and flow of water determined the rotation speed of the stone. So it was difficult to maintain the required grinding speed when the volume and flow of water varied.

By the end of the first century BC, vertical wheels came into use in the Roman Empire. However, water mills continued to be used during the post-Roman period. The Domesday survey of 1086 AD provides a count of England's water-powered flour mills.

The use of geared gristmills was recorded

first in the countries ruled by Muslims during the medieval period. They were used for grinding grain and other seeds, besides other industrial uses. Both water and wind were utilised to power the gristmills in the Islamic world. Wind powered gristmills were first built in the regions that are now known as Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran during the 9th and 10th centuries.

Early mills were almost always built and supported by farming communities and the miller received the "miller's toll" in lieu of wages. Most towns and villages had their own mill so that local farmers could either easily transport their grains for milling. As bread was part of the staple diet, these communities were very much dependent on their local mill. Later designs of the gristmill incorporated horizontal steel or cast iron turbines and these were sometimes refitted into the old wheel mills.

## Modern-day Mills

Mills of the modern day generally use electricity or fossil fuel to spin heavy steel, or cast iron, serrated and flat rollers to separate the bran and germ from the endosperm. The endosperm is ground to create white flour, which may be recombined with the bran and germ to create whole grain or graham flour.

Different milling techniques can be used

to produce visibly different results, but they can also be used to produce nutritionally and functionally equivalent output. However, a lot of bakers these days prefer stone-ground flour because of its texture, nutty flavour, and the belief that it is nutritionally superior and has a better baking quality than steel-roller-milled flour. It is claimed that, as the stones grind relatively slowly, the wheat germ is not exposed to the sort of excessive temperatures that could cause the fat from the germ portion to oxidize and become rancid, which would destroy some of the vitamin content. It is found that compared to roller-milled flour, stone milled flour is relatively high in thiamin, especially when milled from hard wheat.

There are several kinds of grinders. The grain grinder that is best for you depends on how you intend to use it.

Grain grinders, grain mills or flour mills come in three basic styles:

#### Stone Grinders

Stone Grinders are the oldest type of grinders. They have two circular grinding stones. One stone turns against a stationary stone. Grooves are cut into the stone radiating out from the center of the stone to the ends. As the grooves near the ends of the stones, they become shallower, until they disappear at the outer edges. When grain is ground, it falls through a channel into the center of the two stones. As the stone rotates, it pulls the grain out through the channels where it is ground. The flour falls out of the outer edges of the two stones.

#### Advantages:

- Stone Grinders are known for their durability
- They can be adjusted to suit any setting; from cracked wheat to fine flour
- They are safe for grinding grains which are not completely cleaned.
- They generally last a lifetime

#### Disadvantages:

- As they are large and bulky machines, it is difficult to carry them
- As compared to impact grinders, stone grinders grind quite slowly
- In case one needs to grind oil bearing seeds or nuts, stone grinders get easily 'loaded'.

#### Burr Grinders

Burr grinders are identical to stone grinders, except their grinding wheels are made out

of steel with small burrs protruding out the sides (sometimes called "teeth") which shear the grain into flour. Burr grinders have some advantages and disadvantages over stone grinders.

#### Advantages:

- They are suitable to grind both dry grains as well as oil bearing seeds

#### Disadvantages:

- As compared to the stone grinders, the quality of grinding in burr grinders is found lacking.

#### Impact Grinders

In case of impact grinders, 'blades' are placed in circular rows on metal wheels. Just like the stone grinders, here too, while one wheel turns, the other wheel remains stationary. But in impact grinders, the two wheels are so aligned that the rows of blades intermesh. They run close to each other, but never touch the blades on the opposite wheel. The interaction of the two wheels produces fine flour, when grain is fed into the center of the fixed wheel.

#### Advantages:

- Impact grinders are quite compact and light. When not in use, they can even be put in the cupboard.

- They grind very fast

- They can turn grains into fine flour

#### Disadvantages:

- The blades of impact grains are not very strong, and as such if the grain is not cleaned properly before putting them for grinding, small rocks or metal pieces can damage the blades and misalign the wheels.

- They also produce quite a lot of noise.

With more organised sector of bakeries set for expansion and several FMCG manufacturers offering packaged flour – wheat, multigrain, rice, rye, et al. – the milling sector is poised for a take-off. A miller for the FMCG sector generally goes through the following procedures -

**Cleaning:** It is important to remove impurities, such as garlic bulbets, weed seeds and straw in the wheat.

**Tempering:** Through tempering moisture is applied to the kernel. It toughens the bran coat and helps in the easy separation of the bran from the endosperm.

**Grinding:** The tempered wheat is then ground, as already explained.

**Enrichment:** Before the flour is packaged,

the miller bleaches the flour and adds vitamins (such as niacin, thiamine and riboflavin), as well as iron, to it.

### Growing Market for Milling

As one of the largest sectors of the food industry, the estimated annual growth rate of 9.8 per cent for the bakery industry is on the lower side considering the present potentiality of bakery products, particularly in rural areas, where about 70 per cent of the population lives.

In India, there are reportedly 85,000 bakery units, of which 75,000 operate in unorganized sector, occupying 65 per cent of the market share. The per capita consumption of bakery products is still quite low when compared with that of the advanced countries. However, with increased urbanisation and growth of the middle class, the per capita consumption of bakery items is expected to go up significantly. Thus there is ample scope for the bakery industry to grow, which in turn will also provide a boost to the milling sector.

Besides, as people become more health conscious, the bakery industry is now turning to whole-wheat, multigrain, rye, and other grains for bread making. Such emerging trends in the bakery industry are expected to lead to improvement in the milling sector too.

With the lifestyle and eating habits of the Indians changing over the years, as a result of the high economic growth and affluence of a significant number of people, the market for relatively new bakery products such as crackers, pasta, pizza and burgers is also expanding. The entry and fast expansion of foreign bakery chains adequately reflect this trend. The rapid growth of population in India and expansion of the middle class population, along with increased urbanization have contributed immensely in popularizing such bakery items among the young, and the not so young population of our country. This growth of the bakery industry would also help its ancillary industries like milling.

Besides the bakery industry, the domestic consumption for flour is also on the rise. This has given rise to innumerable neighbourhood chakkis. The branded food manufacturers are also coming up with their own atta brands. Milling is thus the industry which is in the limelight at present and has an extremely bright future. ■

# ‘Dedicated to Nurturing Enterprises Rooted in Unwavering Values’

**Kazem Samandari, Founding Chairman, L’Opéra**

Armed with an illustrious educational background including a Ph.D in Industrial Economy, an MS in Electrical Engineering and a Business Degree from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Switzerland, Kazem Samandari is a legendary entrepreneur. Well known in India for launching an exclusive high end French Pastry brand, ‘L’Opéra,’ the visionary leader has created a niche for authentic French Bakery products. As the Co-Founder of the brand, he has been passionate in painstakingly promoting the French culinary culture in the country. “I am a happy man today as I seek great self fulfillment in the success of my brand,” says the gentleman in all humility. “I owe its success to the hard-core values and principles we have been following. We envisaged a company founded on values of excellence, quality, honesty, gender equality and sustainability. We made sure we abide by these principles in the company culture. By embodying these principles at every level, we enriched our culinary journey in India,” he adds with a smile.

More recently, Kazem co-founded the Trajectories of Hope Foundation which is dedicated to society-building endeavours. In 2015, Kazem was elevated by the French Government to the rank of “Knight” in the prestigious “National Order of Merit” (Chevalier de l’Ordre national du Mérite).

In an exclusive interview with **Sharmila Chand**, he talks about the secret behind the success of his brand and more.....

**You launched your brand in India in 2010 so how has the journey been?**

Wonderful and instructive. Yet as for any other journey, the road is never straight and flat. There are curves, hills and valleys, changing landscapes but with every step and every day spent on the journey, you come closer to your destination.

During the last 14 years, actually over 15 if we add the preparation period to it, we learned much about India, about our potential customers, about the business practices, about the prevailing culture and habits, the workforce, the regulatory environment and much more. But so did our patrons who discovered a totally new and exciting horizon with authentic French pastry and bakery products which we like to call “pâtisserie-boulangerie” and the new concept of “Salon de Thé” (French-style tea rooms) which we introduced to India.

**What were the kind of challenges you had to face to mark your space in the competitive market?**

This is a good question. Let me first speak of the challenges in general and



then about the competitive environment. The main challenges were the skilling and training of the staff for the essential functions of our operation from the pastry and bakery chefs to service personnel and housekeeping staff who had to learn the “French” way of executing their tasks. To this end, we invested considerable time, energy and resources in their training and continue to do so.

At a different level ensuring a reliable and

consistent supply chain was and remains a daily challenge for the company. The tough climate with extreme periods of humidity and dry conditions, hot and cold seasons and finally the far from ideal availability of adequate retail space are some of the other challenges.

Since we were and remain the pioneer and leader in our category, we did not have to face any serious competition in the initial years of our operation. However, as we created the market and this new segment, dozens of other followed the path we had treaded.

We, as a company welcome competitors and competition since it helps to develop the market and provide a choice to customers. However, we also believe that we should constantly endeavour to innovate, improve our products and services, maintain and excel our standards and provide a true experience of the French “joie de vivre” to any person who enters one of our outlets or simply tastes any of our products.

**What is the Secret behind the success of your brand?**

I would say our 10 Core Values around

which we have built and continue to build our company and our brand, and which remain our beacon and guiding principles. They are Commitment to Excellence & Quality; Truthfulness, Honesty & Transparency; Gender Equality; Meritocracy & Equal Opportunity; Courtesy; Collaboration & Mutual Respect; Consultation; Ownership & Accountability; Spirit of Service; Responsible and Sustainable Growth.

**Can you name 3 USPs of your brand?**

French authenticity expressed in “joie de vivre”; Excellence and Quality; Affordable luxury.

**At the personal level, what is your work philosophy which has helped you in your business?**

This is a very personal question, and it is very difficult for me to speak about myself without falling in the trap of self-aggrandisement. But I shall try. I have always loved and continue to love building

and creating something from nothing. L’Opéra, is, actually, the sixth start-up, I have been involved with. Each of these undertakings taught me a lesson. Honesty, trustworthiness, commitment, accountability persistent and consistent efforts towards achieving the set goals and perseverance have been some of the guiding principles in my life in addition to the core values enumerated above.

**What are your future plans?**

We are currently preparing a significant expansion plan for L’Opéra which will take us to new geographies. This will include almost all Tier 1 and several Tier 2 cities where we shall emulate the successful formula we have created for Delhi NCR. Moreover, we shall expand the formats and products we offer and experiment with new formulas for the delivery of our products and services.

**Your message to young entrepreneurs who would like to**

**launch their brand?**

There is so much I would like to share with young entrepreneurs. Here are some ideas off the top of my head. Come up with a unique idea and do not just copy somebody else; solve a true problem and satisfy a genuine need; prepare and plan well your project; ensure that you have all the necessary resources; work very hard; do not take any shortcuts; take a long-term view; be patient and persevere; never consider financial success as your main objective; do the right thing and financial success will follow.

**Anything else you would like to say?**

The Food & Beverage sector in India is a major source of employment and a rewarding activity with a significant growth potential which brings joy and happiness to patrons. By building a solid industry through educating the staff, engaging in healthy practices and consistent endeavours, the fraternity can make a significant contribution to the development of the country.

## Changing the Way You Cook

Authentic Italian Pizza can only be made in traditional oven offering the right process and temperature to create a perfect pizza. Chef forno in its unique creative approach developed for the first time in India a pizza oven, reaching almost next to the perfection in pizza making.

Chef's Forno innovation by Chef Gurmeet Singh Grover, created a ripples in pizza making technology by introducing a pizza oven offering the near perfection of pizza making, to the chef's satisfaction. After completing IHM from Bhubaneswar and specialization from IHM Pusa Delhi, he joined his 36 years old father's kitchen equipment business but wanted to create more innovative products for the ever changing foodservice industry in India.

Chef's Forno can create an authentic



Napoleon / Florence pizza in just 90 seconds and retain real flavour of pizza. It provides perfect burn marks on pizza dough as well as cheese in smaller time of baking. The refractory stone used in oven base and tomb, absorbs large amount heat in a smaller period of time, where by consuming lesser gas, thus reducing operational cost. The used to bake pizza is on the same lines as an Italian pizza is made.

Traditional pizza ovens weighs 800-900 kg weight where as Chef Forno only weighs 450 kg. Thus it can be easily installed and move around. This feature gives good reason for caterers to use it more often too.

Chef Forno is a perfect alternative to any Italian or imported pizza oven. It is more economical and easy to handle and serviced. With pan India service, company offers easy spares and service



to its customers. The oven is available in all colour options to match the interiors of the property.

The oven has already been installed at Radisson, ITC, Leela, Amici, Monkey Bar, Toast & Tonic, Olive Bar & Kitchen, The Coffee Shop, Fatty Bao, Wine Company, The Grid, a few to name.

**Guni Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.**  
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## Griddle Plates

AKASA Commercial Kitchen Equipment stands at the forefront of revolutionizing how Indian kitchens operate by offering culinary innovation and efficiency. In providing the versatile capabilities of griddle plates, a must-have for every commercial kitchen in India, AKASA's stand out as a symbol of excellence and innovation.

Griddle plates are a game-changer in the culinary landscape, offering a flat cooking surface that distributes heat evenly. This feature makes them ideal for cooking a wide range of dishes with

precision and consistency. From the bustling streets of Mumbai to the serene kitchens of Kerala, griddle plates have found their place in every corner of India's vibrant culinary scene.

The crispy goodness of dosas and the fluffy delight of uttapams come alive on griddle plates, capturing the essence of South Indian cuisine with every bite and



wholesome theplas to the iconic pav bhaji, griddle plates play a pivotal role in creating these beloved dishes that define the culinary landscape of West India. East Indian apas find their way to perfection on griddle plates, showcasing the culinary diversity that India proudly



boasts.

AKASA's griddle plates ensure even heat distribution, allowing chefs to achieve precise cooking results every time, from golden-brown dosas to perfectly cooked rotis. Built to withstand the rigors of a busy kitchen, AKASA griddle plates are crafted using high-quality materials, guaranteeing longevity and performance under demanding conditions. With rapid heating capabilities and easy-to-clean surfaces, AKASA griddle plates enhance kitchen efficiency, ensuring smooth operations even during peak hours.

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# “Never Give Up Even When Your Cake Does Not Rise”

**Subhankar Chitrakar, Chef Bakery, Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa**



Subhankar Chitrakar, hailing from West Bengal, has built an impressive career in the culinary arts. Subhankar completed his schooling at Rampur Vivekanand Mission Vidyamandir. and later moved to Bengaluru. His first assignment was at Eidden Park Divina Bakery. He joined The Taj Group of Hotels in 2016, working along with seasoned chefs and in a high-pressure environment, he quickly learned the intricacies of creating exquisite desserts and pastries that delighted all alike. He consistently demonstrated a passion for pastry arts, experimenting with flavours and techniques to create innovative desserts. He now holds the position of a pastry chef at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing the creation of all pastry items, from classic confections to contemporary desserts. In an exclusive interview with **Sharmila Chand**, he talks about his work philosophy and more.

## What are the current hot trends in Indian Bakery industry

Bakery today is progressing towards organic with a thrust on home baking. Fine bakeries are doing away with sugar or gluten and moving toward more health contentious choices. The trend to follow recipies as well as creative ideas like use of flowers, fermentation and being creative in our home kitchens is catching on at a fast pace.

## How did you become a Pastry Chef?

Coming to a Bakery was not by default. By default I am from a potter's community and am till date very passionate about the same. In my childhood I worked on intricate pottery designs and slowly I was encouraged to take up baking and designing every product that went thru my hands.

## What is your working (Cooking) philosophy?

While in the bakery leave all your negative thoughts outside. Come in with love, happiness, inspiration and your products will turn out great. It is important to remain cool and calm even when your cake does not rise.

## What are your Hot Selling bakery items

The hot selling bakery items at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa are personalised small cakes for celebrations. We discuss with guests what the occasion are and curate the cakes accordingly. The cakes reflects their

aspiration, sense of achievement and delivers them the message.

## What is the demand these days in Bakery?

For today's busy generation, guests need high quality at the same time comfort food for their traditional palate. Demand for freshly baked croissant, daily breads in multigrain, sour dough etc options. Products that are familiar but with a more European twist.

## What about the health quotient? How do you take care of that aspect

Catering to the environmental and health conscientious clientele, we have various options like gluten free, lactose free, sugar free etc. Some great examples being sour dough bread demand and usefulness of which is rising and how! Similarly, addition of millets in bread making which is age old in India is coming back.

## Your favourite tool? And why??

A set of Fondant tools is my best friend. This set of tool gives me wings where I can let my imagination fly. From creating inspirations from nature to anything and everything else, my fondant tools are my extra set of hands and has a piece of my heart.

## What are the challenges a bakery chef has to face in his job?

Trends and preferences in the baking industry can change quickly. Long hours and physical demands, meeting customer needs, ingredient fluctuations, working under

pressure where precision and consistency to ensure every batch meets quality standards.

## What do you like about your job?

In my job I have the freedom for creativity which I much desire. This field of job peace of mind is of utmost importance. Here in my bakery, I have that peace of mind to create what I wish to.

## What is your strength as a bakery chef?

My strengths are recipe creation and innovation, scaling and conversion, knowledge base and research. From suggesting recipe variations that cater to specific dietary needs or preferences, or scale recipes to different portion sizes and convert measurement between units ensuring consistency in baking.

## What are your dreams?

My dream is to be more and more creative in the work that I do. Be it pottery, chocolate, baking or fruit carving. Creativity is what inspires me.

## Your fav chef who has influenced you and inspired you the most and why?

The Chef I look up to is Abhiru Biswas in terms of his creativity. Not only he is a great pastry chef but an excellent chocolatier.

## What do you personally like to eat as your fav comfort food?

My favourite comfort food is fish curry rice cooked at home.

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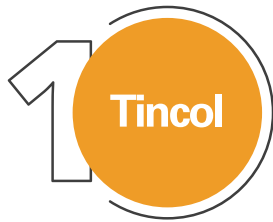


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