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BAKERY

Business Magazine for Bakery & Confectionery Professionals

REVIEW



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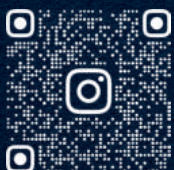
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Editorial



With the start of the new financial year, the Indian hospitality industry is gearing up with new strategies and renewed plans. Despite serious geopolitical and economic concerns worldwide, strong domestic demand continues to serve as a key pillar supporting our sector growth.

A significant driver of this momentum is the rising popularity of café culture. Today, coffee culture has evolved into a unique, global experience that blends culture, craftsmanship, and community, brought to life by some of the finest cafés. In this issue, our cover story explores how café culture is gaining remarkable momentum and redefining the way consumers engage with hospitality.

Our business story explores how frozen products are emerging as a practical solution for modern bakery businesses. They help save costs, maintain consistency, and run operations more efficiently while meeting the growing demands of today's food service industry.

The feature story examines the growing influence of social media in shaping bakery sales and consumer engagement. From showcasing products to building emotional connections, it is transforming how establishments reach audiences and turn everyday offerings into powerful brand conversations.

Another story highlights how seasonal fruits are inspiring creativity in artisan baking. By using ingredients at their peak, bakers are crafting flavourful combinations that reflect the essence of each season while enhancing both taste and freshness.

Alongside these features, our News, Events, and Reports section brings you the latest updates from the industry. From new product launches to key developments, the magazine keeps you informed and connected with what's happening around you.

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Aahar 2026

The International Food & Hospitality Fair

March 10-14, 2026, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

The 40th edition of AAHAR - The International Food & Hospitality Fair was organised by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) in collaboration with the Ministry of Food Processing Industries. The event was organised from March 10-14, 2026 at the iconic venue of Bharat Mandapam (New Delhi), with great success and drew a record-breaking 1.25 lakh visitors this time.

AAHAR is one of Asia's best known brands in Food & Hospitality shows. The show has grown by leaps & bounds in recent years and is today a well known destination for global vendors and sourcing professionals. It is the largest fair in the food & beverage and the hospitality sectors in India. This edition featured new trends in F&B as well as hospitality services, food processing, culinary tech, retail and new innovations.

Marking a significant milestone, the event witnessed a notable surge in exhibitor participation and expanded space bookings compared to previous editions. The fair emerged as a dynamic platform for brand visibility, business opportunities and curated buyer-seller networking sessions. Its official mobile app played a pivotal role in driving engagement, garnering over 17,000 downloads and facilitating nearly 2,800 structured business meetings. Attracting more than 1.25 lakh business visitors from India and overseas, the exhibition reaffirmed AAHAR's enduring significance as a dynamic marketplace where businesses connect, engage and transform conversations into tangible opportunities.



The fair featured a wide range of Food Products, Machinery, F&B equipment, Hospitality and Décor Solutions, Confectionary items from participants from India and overseas. Apart from the meaningful display, the fair offered an insight to operational and food safety concerns and innovations to become energy-efficient, finding budget friendly raw materials boosting productivity, while still aiming for greater profitability.

The show was visited by a large number of trade visitors, including top echelons of the Hotel and Hospitality industry including CEOs, Managing Directors, Vice Presidents, Directors, General Managers, Executive Chefs, Executive Housekeepers, Purchase Managers, etc. Besides, senior representatives from catering industry and academic institutions, training hotel management professionals also visited

the fair.

Aahar also provides an effective platform for the players across the global food & beverage and hospitality industry to disseminate/gather relevant information and gauge ongoing and future trends, which can greatly benefit the participants at the fair.

At the valedictory ceremony, Jawed Ashraf, Chairman of ITPO, presented the 'Awards for Excellence in Display' to participants who stood out across multiple categories. The ceremony was also attended by H.E. Kenneth Félix Haczynski da Nóbrega, Ambassador of Brazil to New Delhi, alongside senior officials, industry leaders and members of the diplomatic community. Among the key honours, Italy was awarded the Gold Medal as the Partner Country. In the 'Processed Food & Beverages (Domestic)' category, Jivo Wellness Pvt Ltd clinched the Gold, while Nestlé India Limited secured top honours in the 'Dairy/Bakery/Confectionery' segment. The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Government of India, was recognised with the Gold Medal in the 'Spices/Agri Products' category, while the Government of Meghalaya (Meghalayan Age Limited) emerged as the winner in the 'Central Ministries/State Governments' category.

Commenting on the growing scale of the fair, Chairman Ashraf noted Italy's role as the Partner Country for the 2026 edition and expressed confidence that future editions would see even greater international participation and collaboration.

AAHAR 2026: AT GLANCE





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The Arena of Accountability: How DISTIN-GU-ISH-ED 2026 Redefined Culinary Excellence



Hospitality talks endlessly about standards, yet the industry often retreats into the comfort of private celebrations - openings, awards and expansions. While these milestones matter, they rarely subject raw skill to the heat of public scrutiny. True excellence is not born in isolation; it is forged in the arena. From February 21st to 23rd, 2026, the École Ducasse India, ISH Gurugram campus transformed into that very arena, hosting the fourth edition of DISTIN-GU-ISH-ED.

Beyond the Spectacle: A Structural Shift

For too long, hospitality education has focused on a linear path: train, certify and place. However, this model often lacks the “competitive infrastructure” seen in other elite professions. Law has its moot courts; technology has its high-pressure hackathons. DISTIN-GU-ISH-ED 2026 was designed to bridge this gap, moving beyond ceremonial spectacle to create a platform for genuine calibration.

Over three rigorous days, the competition collapsed the barriers between

different echelons of the culinary world:

Day 1: The Student Vanguard (Category A) - Future leaders from institutes and universities across India moved beyond the classroom to test their skill-based creativity.

Day 2: The Enthusiast’s Pulse (Category B) - Home bakers and home chefs brought product storytelling and technical flair to the professional stage, proving that craft orientation knows no boundaries.

Day 3: The Professional Standard (Category C) - Seasoned chefs from top hotels, restaurants and patisseries faced advanced technical challenges and sustainability-driven formats.

Scrutiny as a Catalyst for Growth

The 2026 edition featured over 100 participants and 12 competition categories, all operating under standardised evaluation criteria and transparent judging protocols. Crucially, the jury was not composed of ceremonial figures, but of 25+ senior chefs and industry leaders - working professionals

who provided direct technical guidance and hands-on mentorship loops.

In this environment, sustainability was not just a buzzword but a constraint. Participants were judged on zero-waste practices, ingredient responsibility and conscious sourcing, ensuring that the next generation of talent is as ethically grounded as they are technically proficient.

Building the Future Pipeline

By normalising public benchmarking, DISTIN-GU-ISH-ED 2026 realigned expectations. When a student competes in the same arena as a professional, capability becomes measurable and resilience develops. This is the “competitive infrastructure” India’s hospitality sector requires to achieve global credibility.

Standards do not rise in comfort; they rise when performance is measured openly. As the curtains close on this edition, the message to hospitality education is clear: exposure must become routine and the public arena must become a structural part of learning.



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Ladurée Unveils Café Concept at UB City, Bengaluru

Ladurée has expanded its presence in Bengaluru with the launch of a new café-style format at Marriott Executive Apartments, located within The Collection at UB City. The move follows the strong response to its earlier pop-up cart at the same destination,



signalling a strategic evolution of the brand's footprint in the city.

Positioned as an all-day destination, the café is designed to cater to varied occasions—from

quick morning coffee stops to casual meetings and relaxed afternoon indulgences. The refined format builds on Ladurée's signature Parisian elegance while adapting to Bengaluru's evolving café culture.

Founded in Paris in 1862, Ladurée has over 160 years of heritage and is globally recognised as a symbol of French art de vivre. The maison is credited with popularising the modern macaron and continues to create iconic café experiences across international markets.

The Cheesecake Factory Bakery Enters India with Bengaluru Launch

The Cheesecake Factory Bakery has officially entered the Indian market through a licensing partnership with The Gourmet Cafe, marking its debut in the country's rapidly expanding premium dessert segment.

The Gourmet Cafe has outlined an investment plan of approximately \$60 million to establish 55 outlets across India over the next four to five years. The venture is projected to generate revenues of ₹200–250 crore within five years as the brand builds a nationwide footprint.

The first outlet has opened in Bengaluru, with plans to launch an additional 3 to 6 stores in the city during 2026. The expansion roadmap includes entry into major metropolitan markets such as Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Ahmedabad.

In its initial phase, the company has already secured agreements with four malls to roll out six outlets this year across key consumption hubs. Looking ahead, the brand aims to tap into emerging cities like Chandigarh, Kochi, and Coimbatore, targeting a network of 6–10 premium outlets across leading metro markets in the long term.



Old Madras Baking Company Introduces Global-Inspired Menu

Old Madras Baking Company hosted a special event in Chennai to unveil an exciting range of new artisanal bakery creations developed in collaboration with renowned Australian baking consultants. The launch event brought together industry experts and guests to experience the new creations, which blend international flavours with Old Madras

Garlic Butter etc. will be introduced across Old Madras Baking Company outlets in phases, after which the complete range will be available across all outlets in India (Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad).

The launch was supported by two highly acclaimed Australian baking consultants who collaborated closely with the team to develop the menu.



Baking Company's signature baking craftsmanship.

The newly introduced dishes like Flammekueches (Mushroom, Spinach, Bacon & Onion), Croissants (Avocado & Feta, Chicken, Lamb, Salmon), Pies (Scrambled Paneer, Pepper Veg, Chicken, Lamb, Chicken Masala, Passion Fruit, Banoffee Tart), Wraps (Salad, Chicken, Lamb), Flat Bread with Hummus, Pesto &

Speaking at the event, Graham Martin, A World Flatbread Competition winner (Las Vegas, 2025) and director of the Australian baking company Rick's on Sixth, shared insights into emerging global baking trends.

He highlighted how global trends such as loaded croissants, European-style Flammekueche from the Alsace region of France and contemporary flatbreads are



gaining popularity worldwide. The menu development was also supported by an award-winning Australian pie specialist who has won over 200 medals for meat pies, bringing expertise in crafting premium pies to the new range.

The products were prepared alongside Chef Pazhanisamy kaliyaperumal, who has been part of Old Madras Baking Company for the past eight years. With this new range, Old Madras Baking Company continues its commitment to introducing innovative baked products while maintaining traditional baking techniques and high-quality ingredients.



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SIGEP USA Debuts In Las Vegas



Italian Exhibition Group (IEG) launched another overseas initiative. At the end of March, at the Las Vegas Convention Center, SIGEP World made its debut on the US market with the first edition of SIGEP USA as part of the International Pizza Expo (IPE) organised in collaboration with ITA – Italian Trade Agency and Emerald, the organiser of the International Pizza Expo.

SIGEP USA featured leading companies in the gelato, pastry, chocolate and coffee sectors, some of which joined the SIGEP Club for the first time, a recognition for brands that participate in multiple SIGEP network events around the world. The Club consisted of elite companies that shared an international

vision and contributed to building value at all the Sigep brand's venues.

"With the US debut," said IEG CEO, Corrado Peraboni, "Sigep's international network consolidated its presence in the most dynamic global foodservice markets. In 2026, we will also be holding SIGEP China with the roadshow scheduled for spring in Shanghai, and SIGEP Asia from 15 to 17 July in Singapore. The Las Vegas event completes a strategy that covers some of the most strategic areas for the sector's global development."

The central role of gelato in the SIGEP world was confirmed by the Gelato Festival World Masters Grand Finale, which took place during the International Pizza Expo.



This international competition featured the world's best gelato makers. SIGEP, together with Carpigiani, is a strategic partner in the project, which saw the conclusion of the international selections at SIGEP World in Rimini, where the Italian final took place. The Rimini edition highlighted a growth in internationalisation, strengthening SIGEP World's role as a global platform for top foodservice supply chains and companies amid innovation and new business models.

SMOOR Unveils Mega Chocolate Experience Hub in Bengaluru

SMOOR has inaugurated India's largest consumer-facing Chocolate Factory Experience Centre in Bengaluru, marking a significant move into experiential retail and hospitality. Spread across 68,000 sq. ft., the facility brings together manufacturing, R&D, café operations and direct consumer engagement within a single integrated space.



Established in 2015, the brand has grown into a multi-city presence across Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi NCR, and Chennai, with over 75 physical outlets supported by a strong dark kitchen and online gifting network.

Located in Avalahalli, the standalone unit features a 2,200 sq. ft. café

accommodating around 60 guests, while the overall facility can host up to 350 visitors daily through advance bookings. Guests can witness and engage in various stages of chocolate-making—from grinding and conching to tempering, moulding, and packaging—with additional processes like roasting and winnowing planned soon. On the infrastructure front, the centre is equipped with machinery sourced from Germany, Italy, and India, with nearly half of the equipment domestically manufactured. European-imported moulds ensure global production standards.

The experience-led format allows visitors to craft personalised chocolate bars, explore guided tastings such as Indian cocoa flights and participate in chef-led workshops and pairing sessions.

The Baker's Dozen Joins Hands with RCB for 2026 Season

The Baker's Dozen has announced a partnership with Royal Challengers Bengaluru, becoming its official bakery and snacking partner for the 2026 season. The collaboration taps into the country's deep-rooted cricket



enthusiasm, particularly during the Indian Premier League.

As part of the association, the brand will introduce special RCB-themed packaging across its product range as well as limited-edition collectible stickers tucked inside the company's Protein Chips, spotlighting stars such as Virat Kohli, Rajat Patidar, Krunal Pandya, Josh Hazlewood and Bhuvneshwar Kumar and bringing the thrill of match day closer to fans at home.

With cricket continuing to dominate India's cultural landscape, especially during the IPL, the partnership positions The Baker's Dozen at the heart of match-day traditions—where snacks are just as integral as the game itself.

By merging sport, food, and a sense of nostalgia, the initiative aims to transform everyday bakery products into collectible experiences, giving fans yet another way to celebrate and connect with their favourite team.

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Pour Over Coffee Roasters Launches New Café in Delhi

Pour Over Coffee Roasters (POCR) has opened its newest café at Santushti Complex, Chanakyapuri, further strengthening its presence in New Delhi's evolving coffee landscape. The café spans a thoughtfully designed space with 45 covers, offering amphitheatre-style seating, lounge and comfortable chair seating.

Founded by siblings Ritika Sharma and Aditya Sharma, Pour Over Coffee Roasters was created to bridge the gap between specialty coffee and everyday accessibility. Each cup is brewed with a focus on balance, aroma and texture, allowing the natural characteristics of the beans to shine without over-complication. True to their style coffee is served in a handleless cup, with a palate cleanser and a Know Your Coffee (KYC) Card.

"From sourcing to cup, each stage is consciously driven, keeping global

marketplace value in mind, its impact to livelihood and coffee innovation, yet removing the fluff and providing authentic, honest and seriously brewed coffee, accessible by everyone! We have got it all from Pour Over



to Aeropress. Our brewing culture is simple, come over to our café and enjoy your cup brewed to precision from temperature to ratio, or request for beans ground to your size and choice of house blends, we make sure you get freshly ground beans at your door," explains Aditya Sharma, co-founder of POCR.

The coffee menu is complemented by café-style food, small plates, and baked offerings designed to pair seamlessly with the brews.

MOISHI Makes Its Indian Debut with CK Israni Group

CK Israni Group, one of India's most diversified and forward-thinking conglomerates, is thrilled to announce the expansion of its Lifestyle segment with the landmark introduction of MOISHI, UAE's cult-favourite Japanese confectionary brand, to the Indian market. With this move, the CK Israni Group is not simply introducing a new dessert brand, it is establishing and leading an entirely new category within India's organised food and beverage market.



Its India debut represents not just a brand launch, but the formal entry of premium mochi ice cream as an organised retail segment within the country's evolving dessert landscape.

MOISHI's arrival marks a genuine first—a category-defining moment for Indian food culture.

"India's lifestyle and F&B sector is at an inflection point," said Chandni Nath Israni, Co-Founder of CK Israni Group. "Over the past decade, we have seen a decisive shift in consumer behaviour. Urban audiences are more travelled, more informed and far more receptive to globally benchmarked formats. The market is no longer just experimenting with international concepts, it is ready to institutionalize them. MOISHI allows us to enter India with a proven category leader and build the premium mochi ice cream segment in a structured, scalable manner. This is not about following a trend. It is about recognising a ripe market opportunity and moving early with conviction."

With MOISHI, CK Israni Group is not following a trend. It is setting the standard for premium mocha ice cream in India and taking early leadership in a segment poised for rapid growth among young, globally aware consumers.

Nagpur Brothers Ajinkya and Vikram Gandhe Win MasterChef India Season 9

Café-owning brothers Ajinkya and Vikram Gandhe from Nagpur have won MasterChef India Season 9, taking home the coveted trophy, the Golden Chef Coat and a cash prize of ₹25 lakh. The grand finale aired on March 6 on Sony Entertainment Television.



The season introduced a unique jodi format, where family members competed as pairs. Throughout the competition, the Gandhe brothers distinguished themselves with their seamless teamwork and their ability to reinterpret traditional Maharashtrian flavours with refined, contemporary presentation. Their thoughtfully executed final spread ultimately secured them the title.

Judged by renowned chefs Vikas Khanna, Ranveer Brar and Kunal Kapur, the season celebrated regional Indian cuisine through a series of demanding mystery boxes, elimination rounds and creative challenges. The finale also featured a special appearance by culinary icon Sanjeev Kapoor as a guest judge.

The Gandhe brothers competed against two strong finalist teams, sisters Anju Pradhan and Manju Ojha from Puri and mother-daughter duo Chandana and Sai Sri Rachakonda from Telangana, before emerging victorious and bringing the trophy home to Maharashtra's Orange City.



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Pineapple Puree	1kg x 4
Apricot Puree	1kg x 4
Strawberry Puree	1kg x 4
Mango Puree	1kg x 4
Apple Puree	1kg x 4
Banana Puree	1kg x 4
Blackberry Puree	1kg x 4
Blueberry Puree	1kg x 4
Coconut Puree	1kg x 4
Lime Puree	1kg x 4
Mandarine Puree	1kg x 4

FROZEN FRUITS IQF	
Strawberry Frozen	2.5kg x 4
Blackberry Frozen	1kg x 5
Red Currant	1kg x 5
Black Currant Frozen	1kg x 5
Blueberry Frozen	1kg x 5
Blueberry Frozen	10kg x 1
Cranberries Frozen	1kg x 5
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Adhira & Appa Appoints Shruti Haasan, Murali Sharma as Brand Ambassadors

Adhira & Appa Coffee, a sustainability-driven café brand under the EBG Group, has announced actors Shruti Haasan and Murali Sharma as its brand ambassadors. Rooted in authenticity and eco-conscious practices, the brand is now gearing up for a nationwide expansion in line with India's evolving QSR and beverage market.

With a focus on delivering authentic South Indian filter coffee, Adhira & Appa uses premium beans and environmentally responsible processes that significantly lower carbon emissions compared to conventional brewing methods. Sustainability and in-house sourcing remain central to its identity as it scales operations.

Riding on strong early growth, the company aims to expand to 400 outlets



across metro and Tier-2 cities by 2027, positioning itself as a homegrown alternative to global café chains.

The collaboration with Haasan and Sharma is expected to amplify the brand's vision of blending tradition with modern appeal. Murali Sharma noted that the brand celebrates India's coffee heritage while

embracing innovation, expressing confidence in its nationwide acceptance. Shruti Haasan highlighted the brand's ability to capture the essence of South Indian filter coffee with a contemporary twist, adding that its eco-conscious approach resonates with her personal values.

Karan Mendon, COO of Adhira & Appa, said, "We offer a thoughtfully curated food menu including dosa, tacos, medu vada waffles and filter coffee tiramisu, appealing to a new generation of coffee and food lovers seeking comfort, culture, and quality. Our sustainable practices ensure every sip supports ethical farming and low-waste production, setting us apart as an authentic alternative to global chains like Starbucks and Third Wave Coffee Roasters."

Qaffeine Bistro Debuts with Indian Coffee Blend and All-Day Dining Concept

Qaffeine Bistro has launched its artisanal café format, built around Indian-origin coffee beans and a thoughtfully curated food pairing programme. The concept combines a beverage-first approach with an all-day dining experience, catering to urban consumers seeking both specialty coffee and casual dining in one space.



At the core of its offering is the Baaghini Blend, crafted using beans sourced from key Indian coffee regions including Chikmagalur, Coorg, Wayanad, Yercaud, Koraput, and Nagaland. The blend is designed to deliver a balanced flavour profile with moderate

bitterness and a smooth finish, making it suitable for a range of brewing styles, from espresso-based drinks to milk-led beverages.

The beverage menu features classic café staples such as cappuccino and cold coffee, alongside more distinctive creations like kokum-based brews, regional-inspired lattes, cascara drinks, and a signature filter coffee.

Complementing the beverage programme, the food menu offers a mix of small plates and mains, including globally inspired and Indian-fusion dishes. The café's design blends contemporary aesthetics with natural elements, creating a space that encourages longer stays through a mix of individual and communal seating, aligning with its positioning as a relaxed, all-day destination.

Jacob's Brew House Debuts Design-Led Specialty Café in Jaipur

Jacob's Brew House has entered Jaipur's evolving hospitality scene with the launch of a design-forward, all-day café concept that merges specialty coffee with strong architectural storytelling.

Drawing inspiration from the legacy of Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob, the café adopts a distinctive "Rustic Garage" aesthetic, blending heritage influences



with industrial materials and contemporary design. The space reflects Jaipur's rich craftsmanship traditions while presenting them through a modern café lens.

The specialty coffee programme is helmed by Sonam Dorje Sherpa and centres on traceable beans, precise roasting techniques, and carefully calibrated brewing methods.

On the culinary front, the menu features a mix of globally inspired dishes, including Neapolitan-style pizzas, handmade pastas, and American-style smash burgers. Rooted in European and Mediterranean café traditions, the offerings are adapted for local preferences while retaining international techniques and flavours.

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Spread of **Coffee Culture** *..... in India*



When the global origin of coffee countries is discussed, places like Ethiopia, Columbia are quick to surface. But tucked away in the southern stretch of the Indian peninsula lies a lesser discussed coffee story of a multi generation of coffee farmers and coffee consumers. Coffee culture of South India is as rich and aromatic as the brew itself. The gentle aroma of freshly ground beans mixed with chicory, served in stainless steel tumblers, is a regular occurrence in several south Indian homes. However, India's urban landscape saw a dramatic change in consumption of coffee when youths had study sessions, business meetings and caught up with friends at cafés sipping cappuccinos or cold brews. The new generation is crafting its own narrative, balancing tradition and innovation. Today's young Indians are not only inheriting centuries-old customs but remixing and redefining what it means to be an Indian of the 21st century. **Ashok Malkani** views India's cafe culture scenario.



Café culture was popularised in India by Café Coffee Day (CCD), which started its first outlet in India on July 11, 1996, at Brigade Road, Bangalore and soon spread to other cities, including Mumbai, which was also patronised by this writer in his younger days. The rise and popularity of café culture can be attributed to the human desire for space where they could pause, connect and belong. Once the epitome of India's burgeoning café culture, synonymous with first dates, study sessions, business meetings and casual hangouts CCD which promised "a lot can happen over coffee" is presently battling a financial crisis. However, the popularity of café culture continues to grow with cafes like Star Bucks and several others mushrooming in every city. Coffee culture has, today, transcended into unique international experience in culture, coffee and community at some of the best cafes.

Normally, when one talks about the most popular drink in India, the inevitable conjecture is chai or tea. Today, for gen-Z, coffee has become more popular. The question thus arises, did coffee culture start overseas and when did it spread across the country?

Sourav Chowdhury, Assistant Director – Food & Beverage at Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel disclosed, "Café culture began in European cities like Paris and Vienna as intellectual and social hubs. In India, it evolved

into casual hangouts blending espresso drinks with local snacks and group-friendly spaces. Interestingly, India also has its own deep-rooted coffee heritage – South Indian filter coffee, served in steel tumblers, has been a beloved ritual for generations, which gave early café culture a uniquely familiar footing in the country.

The trend of café culture gained momentum in the late 1990s and early 2000s with mall culture and urban growth. College students and young professionals were the key early adopters. The opening of Café Coffee Day's first outlet in Bengaluru in 1996 is often cited as the spark that formalised café culture in India, making it



the country's first truly organized café chain aimed at the youth.

International brands like Starbucks expanded consumer exposure to premium coffee experiences. Their presence increased competition, improved quality standards and accelerated organised café growth. Starbucks' entry into India in 2012 in partnership with Tata was a watershed moment – it not only introduced Indians to handcrafted beverages but also legitimised café visits as an aspirational lifestyle choice."

Kazim Mehdi, Director of Food & Beverage, Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru, explicates, "Café culture began in the Middle East in the 15th century, especially in Ottoman coffeehouses, before spreading to Europe in the 17th century. It came to India much later through two channels. The early coffee drinking tradition was introduced from Yemen, which eventually established Indian coffee cultivation. Modern café culture arrived through institutions like the Indian Coffee House (1957, Bengaluru) and later through globalisation-led café chains from the 1990s onwards.

The modern café movement in India began in the mid-to-late 1990s, when organised café formats started expanding nationally and introduced the idea of coffee as a social, affordable urban experience rather than just a beverage. The primary drivers were young consumers, particularly students, early

professionals and millennials. They embraced cafés as neutral social spaces to meet, work, study and connect, supported by Wi-Fi access and informal hangout environments. Over time, this demographic helped shape café culture into a lifestyle trend that continues to evolve across age groups today.”

He adds, “Global coffee chains have contributed to accelerating the growth and visibility of café culture in India by introducing structured formats, premium positioning and a strong lifestyle narrative around coffee consumption.

However, they are only part of the larger story. Homegrown brands laid the foundation by building familiarity, accessibility, and everyday coffee habits among Indian consumers. Together, both global and domestic influences have shaped a dynamic and evolving café ecosystem across the country.”

Vikram Khurana, CEO, Kaapi Solutions states, “Café culture, as we know it today, traces its roots to the coffeehouses of 15th-century Yemen and the Ottoman Empire, where coffee became a social ritual around conversation, commerce and community. Europe picked it up beautifully—the Viennese café, the Parisian bistro, the Italian espresso bar—each culture made it their own. When it arrived in India, it came through two distinct channels. The colonial-era Indian Coffee House chain, established in the 1940s, gave us our first taste of café culture—intellectuals, freedom fighters and students gathering over filter coffee to debate ideas. That was India’s original café culture, deeply rooted in our own fabric. The modern iteration, however, came to us through globalisation in the 1990s and early 2000s, riding the wave of economic liberalisation. Suddenly, Indian consumers were travelling abroad, watching global media, and aspiring to a lifestyle that included sitting in a well-designed space with a good cup of coffee. At Kaapi Solutions, we always say that coffee was never alien to India – we’ve been growing some of the world’s finest beans in Coorg, Chikmagalur and Wayanad for centuries. What changed was how we chose to consume and celebrate it.”

He continues, “As far as café craze in India is concerned, the real inflection point was the early 2000s. Café Coffee Day had already begun its expansion in the late 1990s, but



Kazim Mehdi

it was between 2000 and 2010 that cafés became a genuine cultural phenomenon across India’s urban landscape. The driving demographic was unambiguously the 18-to-28-year-old cohort—college students, young professionals and early-career millennials who were earning their first salaries and craving a “third place” that wasn’t home or office. For this generation, a café was an identity statement. It was where you had your first real conversation with someone you were dating, where you pulled an all-nighter working on a project, where you celebrated a job offer. The café became emotionally significant to an entire generation, and that emotional bond is something our industry has built upon ever since.

I would say that global coffee chains were catalysts. But I would hand them all the credit for the spread of cafés in India. Starbucks

entering India in 2012 was symbolically significant – it validated India as a serious café market on the global stage. It signalled to investors, entrepreneurs and consumers alike that premium coffee culture had arrived. However, the groundwork was laid by homegrown brands. Café Coffee Day, which at its peak had over 1,700 outlets, democratised the café experience for middle-class India. Barista, Costa Coffee and later Tim Hortons each brought their own flavour to the conversation. What global chains truly contributed was the benchmarking of quality standards – in equipment, training, consistency and experience. At Kaapi Solutions, we’ve worked with both global chains and independent cafés, and I can tell you that the entry of international players raised the bar for everyone. It pushed the entire ecosystem – from equipment suppliers like us to coffee roasters to barista training institutes – to elevate their game considerably.”

Dushyant Singh, Founder, Coffee Sutra declares, “Coffee culture in its modern café format has existed globally for over 50–60 years, largely influenced by Western markets. In India, the organised café movement began with Café Coffee Day in 1996, introducing urban consumers to the concept of café spaces. Barista followed in the early 2000s, further elevating and shaping the lifestyle café experience.

While coffee has long been part of India’s history, the contemporary café culture was inspired by global trends and has since evolved into a distinctly Indian phenomenon.

I may add that café culture in India began gaining strong momentum in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with the rise of organised café chains that introduced the concept of coffee as a social experience rather than just a beverage. Initially, millennials were the primary drivers of this movement. Cafés became spaces to meet friends, hold informal meetings, study and spend leisure time. Over the years, Gen Z has further accelerated this trend, making cafés more experience-driven, aesthetic and community-oriented.

That said, coffee today is no longer confined to any one age group. From students and young professionals to entrepreneurs and families, cafés have evolved into inclusive spaces where every generation finds its own



Vikram Khurana

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One can say that global coffee chains have certainly played a significant role in accelerating the growth and spread of café culture in India. When international brands like Starbucks entered the market, it marked a turning point not just in terms of scale, but in positioning coffee as a premium lifestyle experience. The later entry of brands like Tim Hortons further reinforced the idea that India is a strong and evolving coffee market.

Their presence increased consumer awareness, standardised quality benchmarks, and elevated expectations around ambiance, service and product consistency.

At the same time, it has been a strong learning curve for homegrown brands. Indian café operators have observed global best practices in branding, operations and customer engagement while adapting them to local tastes and price sensitivities.

So yes, global chains contributed significantly but the real growth today is being shaped by both international players and ambitious Indian brands building their own identity in the specialty coffee space."

Widespread Recognition

India's café culture is no longer metro centric. Over the last few years, particularly after the pandemic, tier 2 and tier 3 cities have emerged as popular venues for cafés as well as café-led QSR formats of the hospitality industry. While metros contribute high revenues it is found that there is an increasing number of first-time consumers in tier 2 and tier 3 cities. Lower real-estate costs, rising disposable incomes, digital adoption and changing youth lifestyles are contributing to this rising growth of cafes in smaller cities. A couple of core drivers are:

- Younger median ages in tier 2 and tier 3 cities than metros.
- Students, first-jobbers and young entrepreneurs are seeking social spaces that combine affordability, Wi-Fi and modern ambiance.

Gurmeet Singh, Assistant Vice President – Operations Brigade Hospitality, declares, "Cafe culture is popular in tier 2 and tier 3 cities and this is the biggest growth opportunity. Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities are seeing rapid adoption due to rising income levels and social media influence. The next



Dushyant Singh

wave of 50% growth will come from non-metro cities."

Sourav Chowdhury states, "While metros pioneered the trend, tier-I2 and tier-3 cities are now seeing strong growth. Youth populations and new retail developments are expanding the café footprint. Cities like Indore, Coimbatore, Lucknow and Kochi are emerging as vibrant café hubs, with homegrown local brands often outpacing national chains by offering hyper-local menus and community-driven experiences that resonate deeply with their audiences."

Kazim Mehdi says, "Café culture is certainly no longer limited to metros. While in India, Four Seasons Hotel operates in Bengaluru and Mumbai, we closely observe strong growth in tier-2 and tier-3 cities as well. Aspirational lifestyles, increased exposure to global trends and a younger demographic are driving demand for quality coffee experiences beyond metropolitan hubs, prompting both



Sourav Chowdhury

domestic and international brands to expand their presence there."

Vikram Khurana avers, "The popularity of café culture in tier 2 and tier 3 cities in India is perhaps the most exciting development in our industry right now, and it is something I speak about with great conviction because we're seeing it directly through Kaapi Solutions' own market reach. Café culture is emphatically not confined to metros anymore. Cities like Indore, Coimbatore, Vizag, Nashik, Jaipur and Dehradun are witnessing a genuine café boom. A young person in Tier-2 India today is as digitally connected, as aspirationally driven, and as aware of global café trends as their counterparts in Mumbai or Bengaluru. What's more, the economics of setting up a café in a Tier-2 city are considerably more favourable – lower real estate costs, lower labour costs and often less competition mean that a well-conceived café can achieve profitability faster. We at Kaapi Solutions have been actively supporting entrepreneurs in these markets with the right equipment, training and guidance. The next chapter of India's café story will be written in these cities."

Reasons for Growth

India's coffee culture is not only transforming the urban landscape but also that of tier II and tier III cities. With an increasing amount of people having the choice of work-from-home Cafés are becoming third places for work and socialising. Many youngsters are preferring to work from cafés due to the flexible environment, Wi-Fi and an ambient setting that balances productivity with comfort.

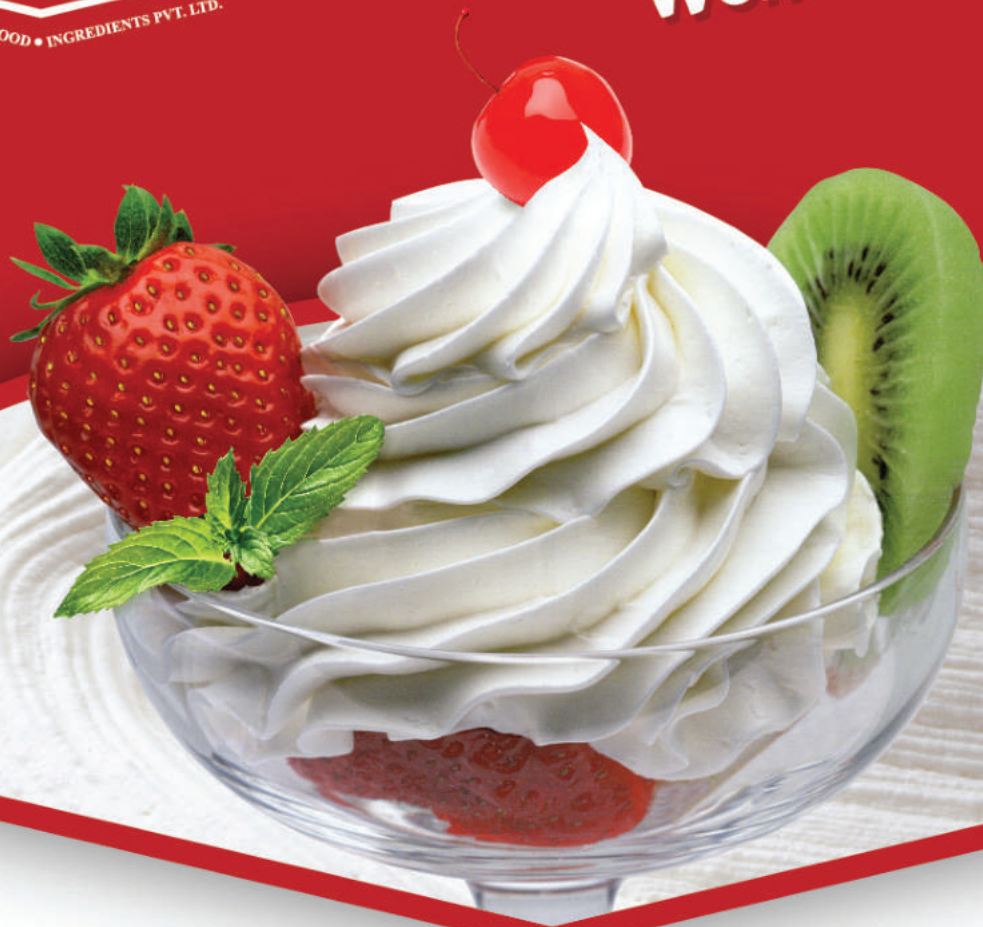
The Indian coffee retail chains market is expected to reach INR 83.4 billion by 2030 and is projected to grow at a CAGR of 8.1% from 2024 to 2030. This is mainly because Gen-Z and millennials, today, consider cafés as not just places to grab a cup of coffee but as meeting points, brainstorming spaces and sometimes even event venues. Cafés are no longer just about the coffee. Their success also depends on the interior décor of the place and how it makes the people feel. Several aspects (like: Does it inspire calm? Encourage collaboration? Invite photography?) have to be taken into consideration for its success.

Kazim Mehdi declares, "Café culture

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today is shaped by far more than coffee. It stems from urban lifestyle changes where people seek relaxed “third spaces” to work or unwind. Cafés have evolved into social hubs for conversations and networking rather than merely beverage stops. This growth is driven by an aspirational, globally influenced youth demographic, for whom cafés represent a modern lifestyle choice. The appeal is amplified by Instagrammable interiors and experiential ambience, making the setting as important as the menu. This evolution is equally evident within luxury hospitality. At Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru, we are witnessing a growing preference for curated coffee experiences that balance craftsmanship, provenance and atmosphere, where the ritual of coffee is elevated beyond taste to a complete sensory experience.”

He adds, “Interior design also plays a pivotal role in a café’s popularity today. Guests are not just seeking great coffee, but an experience. Ambience, lighting, spatial comfort and thoughtfully curated aesthetics significantly influence footfall. Younger audiences, in particular, often choose cafés as social and creative spaces, making design a strong differentiator in a competitive market. In a luxury environment such as Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru, every element of design is intentional. We create spaces that balance comfort with refinement, allowing guests to meet, work or unwind while enjoying a seamless coffee experience.”

Vikram Khurana states, “If café culture were purely about coffee, it would have



Gurmeet Singh

remained a niche. What fuelled its explosion is the intersection of several powerful social forces. Urbanisation brought millions of young Indians into cities where they needed neutral social spaces. The rise of the gig economy and remote work created demand for productive, comfortable spaces outside of home. Social media, particularly Instagram turned a beautifully presented latte or a charming café corner into content currency. People don’t just visit cafés; they document them, share them and build identity around them. There’s also the aspiration economy at work – a well-crafted café experience, even at a few hundred rupees, delivers a feeling of luxury that is accessible to a broad economic segment. And increasingly, cafés are becoming cultural venues – hosting

open mics, art exhibitions, book clubs and community events. The coffee is almost the entry ticket. The experience is what keeps people coming back.”

He continues, “Interior design has also played an essential role. In today’s world, the interior of a café is part of its brand language. Consumers today are sophisticated – they can sense immediately whether a space has been thoughtfully designed or simply thrown together. The right lighting, the acoustic environment, the choice of materials, the flow of seating – all of these influence how long a customer stays, how comfortable they feel, and critically, whether they photograph the space and share it. A café that is Instagrammable has a built-in marketing engine. We’ve seen clients at Kaapi Solutions invest meaningfully in equipment and product quality but underestimate the design element, and it shows in their footfall. On the other hand, a café with a distinct, well-executed aesthetic creates an emotional memory for the customer. They don’t just remember the coffee – they remember how they felt sitting there. That’s the difference between a transaction and a relationship.”

Sourav Chowdhury affirms, “Growth of cafes goes beyond coffee. Today, cafés function as social hubs, co-working spots and lifestyle spaces. Fusion menus, Wi-Fi access and experiential ambience play a major role. The rise of the “third place” concept – a space beyond home and work – has been central to café culture’s success, with many Indians now choosing cafés for everything from client meetings to birthday celebrations. I may add that the success of a café also depends on its interior designing. Thoughtful design creates comfort, mood and brand identity that attract repeat customers. In hotel cafés, premium décor and layout elevate them into business and leisure meeting destinations.”

Variances

Indian coffee vs western coffee culture is more than just taste and tradition of the beverage. It is a reflection of lifestyle, history and community. There are vast differences in the operational mode of the cafés.

Dushyant Singh disclosed, “In Western countries, cafés typically operate with smaller teams and more compact menus.





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Due to higher salary structures, many cafés are run by minimal staff, and often the founders themselves manage daily operations. Efficiency and lean staffing models are common there.

In contrast, cafés in India usually have larger teams, as workforce availability is higher and salary structures are different."

Sourav Chowdhury says, "Indian cafés typically offer extensive food menus with local and fusion dishes. They often operate longer hours and cater more to group gatherings than quick solo visits. Unlike the grab-and-go culture prevalent in Western cafés, the Indian café experience is inherently leisurely – with larger seating areas, sharing-friendly platters and a pace of service designed to encourage guests to linger and socialize."

Kazim Mehdi avers, "There is a clear difference between the functioning of cafés in India and those in the West. Indian cafés are more culturally layered compared to their Western counterparts. They often operate as hybrid spaces, offering coffee alongside chai, Indian snacks and fusion menus, creating a distinctly localised experience rather than a coffee-only focus. They also function as informal social addas, centred around conversation and community, rather than being primarily work or study-driven spaces. Indian consumers tend to be more value-conscious, which influences pricing, menu design and ambience."

At Four Seasons, we interpret this difference thoughtfully. While global coffee standards guide quality, our café experiences are shaped by local preferences, cultural context and a sense of community, resulting in spaces that feel both refined and rooted in India's social fabric."

Future

Coffee consumption in India increased to over one million 60-kilogram bags between 2023 and 2025. According to Mordor Intelligence India's coffee landscape is transforming. Speciality roasters such as Third Wave Coffee are driving this shift by expanding to over 90 outlets in six cities. There is a significant growth of cafes in India. Besides standalone eateries & restaurants, chained outlets and cafes are thriving across length and breadth

of the country.

Kazim Mehdi disclosed, "The future of India's café landscape is strong and experience-driven. Growth will accelerate most rapidly in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, fuelled by rising incomes and a young, aspirational demographic adopting cafés as lifestyle spaces."

The next phase will be shaped by specialty coffee, artisanal brews, co-working cafés, wellness-oriented menus, sustainability practices and hyper-local sourcing, reflecting evolving consumer sophistication.

Increasingly, cafés will function as community-driven cultural hubs, valued as spaces for connection, creativity and shared experiences rather than simply beverage outlets."

Gurmeet Singh believes, "The future is experience-led, community-driven, premium



but accessible, digitally integrated, multi-city scalable. Cafes will evolve into lifestyle spaces offering bakery, desserts, artisanal beverages and curated ambience.

Vikram Khurana avers, "I am profoundly optimistic. India is at an inflection point in its café journey – we are roughly where China was a decade ago in terms of café penetration and consumer sophistication, and we've seen what happened in China since. The next decade will see several defining trends shape our industry. Specialty and third-wave coffee will move from niche to mainstream as consumer education deepens. Technology integration – from automated brewing equipment to AI-driven personalisation – will reshape café operations significantly. Sustainability will move from being a differentiator to a baseline expectation, with consumers demanding ethically sourced beans, reduced waste and environmentally

responsible practices. The Tier-2 and Tier-3 market expansion will create thousands of new café entrepreneurs and tens of thousands of new jobs. And I believe Indian café brands – built on our unique cultural context, our extraordinary coffee-growing heritage and our unmatched hospitality traditions – will increasingly tell a story to the world that is distinctly, proudly Indian. At Kaapi Solutions, we consider it our privilege and responsibility to power that future, one great cup at a time."

Dushyant Singh states, "The future of cafés in India looks extremely promising. We are still in a strong growth phase, where expansion is not limited to metro cities but is equally visible in Tier 2 and Tier 3 markets. Consumer awareness, rising disposable income and lifestyle shifts are accelerating café culture across the country."

If we look at what many refer to as the fifth wave of coffee, the focus is now on scalability, systems and structured brand growth. It's no longer just about brewing good coffee, it's about building sustainable, scalable café ecosystems.

In the coming years, we won't just see metro brands expanding into smaller cities; we will also see powerful regional brands from Tier 2 markets entering metros and building strong national identities.

For a brand like Coffee Sutra, rooted in a Tier 2 city, the vision is clear to create a national footprint while delivering coffee that stands at par with leading global café chains. The opportunity today is not defined by geography, but by quality, consistency and ambition.

Conclusion

India's tryst with coffee, which began with Baba Budan, who smuggled seven Arabica beans from Yemen to Chikmagalur, Karnataka, in the 1600s, is growing at a rapid pace due to the spiralling growth of cafés. According to IMARC Group India coffee shops/cafes market size reached \$ 424.6 Million in 2025 and is expected to reach \$1,152.1 million by 2034 exhibiting a growth rate (CAGR) of 11.14% during 2026-2034. India's coffee culture thus seems to have a bright and positively sunny future. ■

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Frozen Revolution in Bakery Production



The bakery industry has been undergoing revolutionary changes, Over the past three decades it has moved from producing buns and bread to being a multi-segment industry spanning industrial bread, packaged biscuits, premium patisserie to present day frozen foods. Modern technology has enabled the industry to revolutionise by producing frozen bakery items which have a long shelf life while retaining their health benefits. **Ashok Malkani** views the frozen bakery food products and their popularity across the country.

Over the past decade the food service industry across the globe has been undergoing a quiet transformation. Restaurants, bakeries, coffee shops, et al. have been trying to effectively tackle rising costs and labour shortages while delivering consistent quality. One of the options in this situation is to opt for frozen foods. Though there is a lot of debate whether frozen foods are the best choice there is little doubt about their benefits.

In the case of bakeries, replacing in-store fully baked goods with frozen bakery products (partially or fully frozen) is a practical solution for financial and operational benefits.

It may be mentioned that at present, frozen bakery products which are processed by automatic freezer machines, to keep the food at a low temperature, are then sent to major supermarkets, restaurants, etc. Health-conscious Indian consumers are now demanding healthier frozen baked products that contain natural, nutrient-dense ingredients.

Alayman, who thinks that bakery products merely consist of cakes, may wonder as to what is meant by “frozen” bakery products.

The frozen bakery products include a variety of baked goods such as bread, cakes, pies, and pastries, which are frozen to preserve their quality and taste for long periods.

Rajesh Sanghvi, Founder of Delta Nutritives Pvt. Ltd., explains, “Frozen bakery products are those which are sold in the frozen form and are ready to be baked and consumed, giving a freshly baked experience.”

He adds, “Frozen Bakery products include breads, cakes, pastries, croissants, Viennoiserie, Danish and muffins.

“Frozen parathas and savoury items such as thin dough sheets, spring roll sheets and filo pastry sheets are amongst the popular items.”

He adds, “Footlongs, Pizzas, Buns, Croissants etc are widely sold in the Indian market.”

Akhilesh Singh Suryavanshi, Bakery Chef, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore, further elucidates, “As a pastry chef, I would like to state that frozen bakery items are products that are prepared fully – or partially – and then frozen at –18°C to maintain freshness,



structure, taste and hygiene until final use.”

He continues, “These products can be:

- Ready-to-Bake
- Par-Baked (partially baked)
- Ready-to-Proof Dough
- Fully Baked & Frozen

“Common Frozen Bakery Items Used in Pastry Kitchen are Croissants & Danish pastry, Bread loaves, buns & rolls, Pizza base and focaccia, Muffins & sponge sheets, Frozen cakes & gateaux, Baguette & artisan bread and Tart shells. These help chefs maintain consistency and speed in production.”

Reasons for Freezing Bakery Products

One may state that there are several reasons for freezing bakery products. Some of the

benefits are:

Extended Shelf Life: By freezing bakery products, one can preserve their freshness and quality for a longer duration. This is possible because by reducing the temperature, the growth of microorganisms and enzymatic activity slows down thus slowing the spoilage process.

Quality Retention: Several qualities of bakery products like texture, flavour and overall quality of the product can be maintained for a longer duration by freezing the product. This is because when they are frozen correctly their moisture content and structure are preserved.

Year-long Availability: As these products maintain their quality for a long period of time, they are available throughout the year. As an example one may state that frozen fruit pies or holiday-themed baked goods can be prepared and frozen during their respective seasons, then thawed, when needed.

Cost Saving: Since freezing bakery products allows for a longer preservation of important ingredients like whole grains, fruits or other ingredients with high nutritional content, it can lead to cost saving

According to IMARC Group, the Indian frozen baked goods market size reached \$1,680.23 Million in 2024 and is expected to reach \$3,398.18 Million by 2033, exhibiting a growth rate (CAGR) of 8.14% during 2025-2033. IMARC Group reveals that the market is propelled by boosting consumer demand for ready-to-eat (RTE) and convenient foods, urbanisation, changing dietary habits and rising disposable incomes, which promote product innovation and increased distribution channels.

The growing demand for frozen baked food in India is attributed, primarily, to increasing need for convenience food due to busy urban lifestyles, hectic work timetables and the expansion of nuclear families.

Quick and easy-to-prepare frozen baked foods like bread, pizza bases, pastries and croissants are convenient options without diluting taste and quality. Furthermore, expansion of food delivery platforms online and growth of modern retail chains have increased access to such products among consumers in urban and semi-urban locations. Quick-service restaurants (QSR), cafes and cloud kitchens also depend significantly on



Rajesh Sanghvi

frozen bakery products for convenience of operation and time reduction for preparation. Advances in cold chain logistics and better packaging solutions guarantee longer shelf life and freshness, causing further consumers' confidence boost. As convenience is still an important buying driver, the frozen baked foods segment will continue to grow in the years ahead.

Growing Popularity

Geographically, the market for frozen bakery goods is witnessing a significant growth in metropolitan areas like Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore due to the increasing number of retail outlets and bakeries offering frozen products.

The growth of frozen bakery products has been steadily increasing

MENAFN predicts, "Frozen Bakery market would surpass \$66 billion in 2030. Asia-Pacific will be the largest region in the frozen bakery market in 2030, valued at \$21 billion. It states: The strong growth can be attributed to rapid urbanization, rising disposable incomes, expanding modern retail and cold chain infrastructure, increasing westernisation of dietary habits, growing demand for convenience foods, and strong expansion of quick-service restaurants and foodservice chains across key markets.

Chef Akhilesh discloses, "Frozen bakery is extremely popular in Europe, USA and developed Asian markets. The reasons for High Global Demand are:

- Convenience and time saving
- Standardised quality
- High labour cost in Western countries
- Strong cold chain logistics
- Huge demand from airlines"

He adds, "Today many famous bakery brands and hotel chains depend heavily on frozen dough and par-baked products for daily operations. In countries like France and Germany, even artisan bakeries sometimes use par-baked frozen baguettes during peak hours. Frozen bakery products are growing very fast in India, especially in hotels, catering companies, QSR outlets, cloud kitchens and modern retail stores."

He further adds, "The market in India is also growing. This is due to:

- Urban lifestyle & working professionals
- Demand for international bakery



Chef Akhilesh Singh Suryavanshi

products

- Labour shortage in skilled pastry chefs
- Food delivery platforms growth
- Improved freezer and logistics technology

Earlier, Indian bakeries preferred fresh daily production, but now many professional kitchens use frozen dough to manage bulk orders, events, breakfast rush and night production."

Frozen Dough

Frozen dough has become an important bakery product. Global Market Insights Inc. (GMI) discloses that global frozen dough market size was estimated at \$ 26.1 billion in 2024 and is expected to grow from \$ 27.7 billion in 2025 to \$ 50.9 billion in 2034, at a CAGR of 7%.

Commercial production and marketing of frozen doughs for extended shelf life and convenience are the main points for the frozen dough market. The market encompasses a multitude of segments such as bread, pizza, pastry and cookie dough.

GMI states that the frozen dough industry is evolving in many ways. Changes such as gluten-free and vegan types of dough being in demand are because of an increased number of health-conscious customers looking for healthier options.

In India, the frozen dough market is a rapidly growing industry as frozen dough is a convenient and cost-effective option for food manufacturers and food service providers.

It may be mentioned that the popularity of pizza and other Western-style baked goods has been increasing in India. This is also propelling the growth of the frozen dough market in India. Moreover, the market is also

driven by the growth of modern retail markets such as supermarkets and hypermarkets. These retailers are increasingly stocking frozen dough products which makes them more accessible to consumers. However, there is a lack of awareness among consumers about the convenience of frozen dough products and issues with logistics & storage.

One may ask what is frozen dough and why is it popular?

Frozen dough, it may be mentioned, is dough that has been prepared, portioned and frozen for later use. It can be made from several ingredients like yeast, flour, water, salt and sugar,

The technology of freezing dough was known since the 1950s. However, its implementation was introduced in the 1970s. This helped pave the way for the spread of in-store retail bakeries. Such outlets do not have the time and/or resources to process and bake a regular dough from scratch.

Several types of frozen doughs are available today. Some of them are:

Yeast-based Dough: This is made with yeast and is ideal for making bread, pizza, and other yeast-based baked goods.

Pastry Dough: This type of dough is made with a high proportion of fat (such as butter or lard) and is ideal for making pastries, pies and other sweet and savory treats.

Phyllo Dough: This is made with layers of butter and dough. It is ideal for making flaky, crispy pastries and desserts.

Bakerpedia.com explains how frozen dough is used. It avers that bread is a complex, dynamic and biologically active system. If quality products are to be produced from frozen dough, biological materials (yeast, flour and added enzymes) must remain viable and metabolically active until baking stage in which these ingredients are thermally denatured and/or killed.,

It cites processing considerations thus:

Mixing Frozen Dough Ingredients: The use of chilled water, ice and a cooling system are all advisable to keep a low dough temperature. The lower the temperature, the lower the yeast activity, the smaller the temperature differential for a quicker freezing operation. Final dough temperature should be between 72–75°F (22–24°C).

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Conveying Times: These should be kept to a minimum to prevent excessive yeast activity and keep as many starting yeast cells as possible.

Dividing and Moulding: These can be carried out with regular equipment.

Freezing: Blast freezing of moulded dough pieces is a standard practice.

Blast freeze dough pieces immediately after forming or makeup to a core temperature of 20°F (-6.7°C). The freezing process can be completed by storing partially frozen dough pieces at 0°F (-17.8°C) to 10°F (-23.3°C).

Storage of frozen dough: There is an indirect relationship between length of frozen storage and baking quality of the dough. The longer the frozen storage, the weaker and slacker dough will become. This effect may be caused by the release of glutathione (a reducing agent) from dead yeast cells as well as structural damage to the gluten matrix caused by small ice crystals formation.

Thawing: This step may be carried out slowly at room temperature in a retarder box. Once the dough reaches room temperature, it will resume fermentation that will mellow the dough, improve flavour and aroma in the finished product.

Dough temperature should be raised to refrigeration ranges by placing the product into a storage temperature of 34–40°F (1–4°C) and holding it for a given time to thaw and equilibrate dough temperature. This thawing process can take 12–18 hours, depending on the initial and final temperature and rate of heat transfer.

Thawing equipment or room should prevent any dry conditions that may lead to product dehydration and/or too humid conditions that may lead to condensation of moisture on the dough pieces.

Proofing (optional, after thawing): Time, temperature and humidity conditions should be adjusted to promote as much yeast activity as possible to help maintain product volume, texture and flavour.

Proofing conditions are usually 90–110°F (32–43°C) at a relative humidity of 70–75%. Proofing times are longer (80–100 minutes) than those of fresh operations (50–70 minutes). This is of course due to the much greater temperature differential between the initial temperature of the dough pieces at refrigeration values and the final

temperature of the proofed product (95°F or 35°C).

Baking: Bake products to an internal temperature of 205°F (96°C). Addition of higher amounts of sugars and emulsifiers and lower levels of water can affect starch gelatinisation.³ At high levels, they can raise the gelatinisation temperature of starch in addition to prolonging the crumb set during baking.

Baking time and temperature are dependent on the type of oven, heating pattern, size and dimensions of dough pieces.

Shelf Life

But one has to remember that there is a certain shelf life for frozen bakery goods.

“Rajesh Sanghvi reveals, “The shelf life of frozen bakery items is 6-8 months at minus 18°C”

Chef Akhilesh states, “The shelf of different frozen bakery products are:

- Bread & buns → 3 to 6 months
 - Cakes & muffins → 2 to 4 months
 - Frozen dough (croissant / pizza / bread) → 6 to 12 months
 - Par-baked products → 4 to 6 months.”
- He adds, “Quality remains best when stored at -18°C in proper airtight packaging.”
- He continues, “Some of the frozen dairy products are:
- Butter → 6 to 9 months
 - Cheese → 4 to 6 months
 - Cream / cream-based desserts → 2 to 3 months
 - Ice cream → 6 to 8 months.”

Challenges

There are ample opportunities in the frozen bakery industry but one has also to take its challenges into consideration. A few of them can be listed as:

Production Costs: The frozen bakery industry requires advanced freezing and packaging techniques, which may increase production costs.

Storage Sensitivity: Frozen bakery products need to be always stored at low temperatures to maintain their quality. This requires large investments in storage and transportation facilities.

High Competition: With the increasing demand for frozen baked goods, producers

face intense competition, which forces them to provide innovative and high-quality products.

History

The Frozen Bakery and dairy product market is an evolving sector. It has been constantly innovating and the latest development, with increased use of technology, is freezing the bakery products to ensure longer shelf life. So when will this process start?

Chef Akhilesh states “The history of frozen bakery and dairy products started in the early 20th century, when quick-freezing technology was developed by Clarence Birdseye. His invention of blast freezing in the 1920s helped preserve food quality, texture and nutrients.

Frozen dairy products like ice cream and butter storage became common first, followed by frozen bakery products. By the 1960s–1980s, Europe and the USA began using frozen dough and par-baked bread in large industrial bakeries to improve production efficiency.”

He continues, “In the 1990s onwards, with better refrigeration, packaging and cold-chain logistics, frozen croissants, pizza bases and artisan breads became popular in hotels, airlines and retail markets.”

He says, “From a pastry chef’s perspective, frozen bakery evolved from being just a storage method to a modern production support system, helping kitchens maintain consistency, speed and large-scale operations.”

Conclusion

The frozen bakery products market in India and across the globe is steadily transforming. It has evolved far beyond simple storage solutions. Today, frozen bakery products enable one to store healthy and nutritious bakery products which are fresh tasting and delectable. Advancements in freezing technology have made it possible to preserve taste, texture, and nutritional value to products ranging from bread and pizza crusts to cakes and pastries.

Briefly, one may state that the overall competitive landscape of the frozen bakery market is marked by innovations focusing on health consciousness, convenience and sustainability. ■

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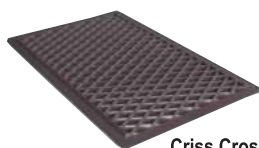
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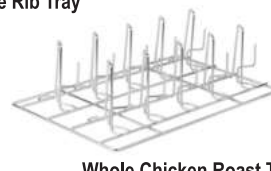
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'Social Media Plays a Crucial Role in Driving Bakery Sales!'

By Sharmila Chand

In an era of digital world, social media platform plays a significant role in promoting various businesses and bakery industry is no exception.

Whether it is showcasing new product range, promoting special offers or engaging with customers directly, the power of social media can help take the establishment and operations to the next level generating successful results.

Here we get an insight from experts on how social media has influenced their bakery operations.

"Social Media platform turns products into conversations"

Chef Kevin, Executive Chef, L'Opéra

Social media has fundamentally changed how people discover and engage with bakeries. A great example is Cédric Grolet – he built an enormous global following purely through his videos. People who have never set foot in Paris know his work intimately, and the moment they visit France, his pâtisserie is on their must-visit list. That's the power of social media – it turns a local bakery into a global destination.

Also, social media content removes geographical barriers. A person sitting in

India can discover, follow, and become a loyal admirer of a bakery in Paris – or in our case, someone in Bangalore can fall in love with what we do in Delhi. Geography



"It allows for real-time storytelling. We can respond to seasons, festivals, and moments as they happen — keeping the brand relevant and top-of-mind in a way that static marketing simply cannot"

- Chef Kevin, Executive Chef, L'Opéra

is no longer a factor in the discovery and consumption of content.

It builds an emotional connection before the first purchase. When people watch the process – the lamination of a croissant, the tempering of chocolate – they develop a relationship with the craft and the brand long before they ever walk through the door.

Further, it turns products into conversations -

A well-shot reel or a behind-the-scenes story doesn't just showcase a product – it invites people to share, tag, and talk about it. That organic word-of-mouth is more powerful than any traditional advertisement.

For example, this Valentine's Day, we deliberately moved away from the usual product catalogue approach. Instead, we put out a short video where I spoke directly to viewers – sharing a simple recipe they could make at home for their significant other, especially if they were short on time. It wasn't a sales pitch; it was genuinely helpful content. And that's exactly what resonated. The engagement on that video far outpaced our standard promotional posts, and it drove both footfall and online orders because people felt a personal connection to the brand, not just the product.

“There is definitely a proportional correlation in our social media strategy and sales and revenue”

Vijendra Singh Chauhan, Corporate Chef, Pour Over Coffee Roasters

Social media has become one of the most influential platforms for driving bakery sales today. With visually appealing products like croissants, freshly baked breads, cake decorations, and almost tempting ASMRs of chocolate oozing flaky french pastries brands can effectively showcase their offerings.

For example, we have had very positive results. We received direct message enquiries on instagram about bulk order for our tiramisu for someone’s birthday.

In our unit in Noida a customer generated reel spiked our sale or our in-house cheesecake.

In today’s world if you are not using social media as a tool you are not relevant in the market. We have seen



“Social media has immense visual appeal which helps in customer engagement, targeted marketing towards the right audience and instant feedback”

- Vijendra Singh Chauhan, Corporate Chef, Pour Over Coffee Roasters

day-wise significant footfall if a consumer generated reel is put up. Many consumers also order food and beverage items that we have recently posted about.

“Visual Appeal Creates Demand”

Anand Panwar, Executive Pastry Chef, Roseate Hotels and Resorts

Social Media Plays A Crucial Role In Driving Business for Bakery Products.

Social media has become an essential platform for businesses across all industries. Bakery products are inherently visual and emotional, the sight of freshly baked breads, cakes, and desserts instantly triggers cravings and draws people in. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook give chefs a powerful space to showcase their creativity and connect directly with their customers.

In my own journey as a chef, social media has played a pivotal role in building visibility for my Hotel Roseate concepts

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“In the coming years, bakeries and cafés that combine exceptional products with strong social media storytelling will build the most successful and enduring brands”

-Anand Panwar, Executive Pastry Chef, Roseate Hotels and Resorts

and products.

For example, whenever we posted desserts, mithai, or festive hampers, customers would immediately begin reaching out through Instagram with pre-orders and customisation requests. This generated excitement and drove demand even before production had begun.

Social media has essentially allowed us to build recognition well beyond the physical boundaries of our bakery and connect with a much wider audience.

Social Media catalyses bakery business

Visual Appeal Creates Demand “Jo Dikhta Hai, Wahi Bikta Hai” -

Bakery products are inherently beautiful and indulgent. Posting high-quality photos and videos of cakes, pastries, and breads instantly captures attention and triggers cravings, turning viewers into potential customers.

Direct Customer Engagement

Through comments, messages, and queries, chefs can directly interact with their customers, understand their preferences, and even accept customised orders swiftly and efficiently.

Brand Building and Storytelling

Social media gives chefs a platform to share the story behind their creations, from ingredients and baking techniques to personal inspirations. This builds trust and fosters a genuine emotional connection with the audience.

Viral Marketing and Word of Mouth

When customers share photos of your creations or tag chefs in their celebrations, the content spreads organically, reaching a wider audience without any additional marketing spend.

“Social media has transformed bakeries from being location-led to attention-led”

Ashish Singh, Chief Operating Officer and Culinary Director, Café Delhi Heights, Bakehouse Comfort, Ikigai & IKI&GAI

Today, visibility drives viability. If your product looks irresistible on screen, it already has a market before it reaches the shelf.

- It converts visuals into instant cravings, accelerating decision-making.
- It shifts power from advertising to discovery, where the customer finds you, not the other way around.
- It builds a living brand story that evolves daily, not a static identity.
- It creates recall through repetition, making products feel familiar even before



“Social media is not just a platform, it is a behavioural trigger. It influences what people crave, when they crave it, and where they choose to fulfil it. For bakeries, it has become the most powerful bridge between imagination and consumption”

- Ashish Singh, Chief Operating Officer and Culinary Director, Café Delhi Heights, Bakehouse Comfort, Ikigai & IKI&GAI

the first purchase.

Social media has redefined recognition

It is no longer about being known, but being remembered in the moment of craving. When content aligns with emotion and timing, it directly translates into intent and action without friction.

To Conclude

In today’s digital world, social media is no longer just a marketing platform, it is a powerful business growth engine for the bakery industry. It empowers chefs and brands to showcase their creativity, build a loyal community, and convert online engagement into real, tangible sales.

For bakery businesses, where presentation and emotion are at the heart of everything, social media allows chefs to turn every product into a story and every customer into a brand ambassador. When used consistently and creatively, it has the potential to significantly accelerate the growth of any brand. ■

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Baking with the Seasons

Seasonal Fruits in Artisan Baking

By Nikita Madan

From the fresh fruity scents of summer to the warm cosy aromas of cinnamon and cloves in autumn, each season brings its own unique flavours and feel to the world of baking. Adapting to seasonal shifts lets us make flavourful profiles and baked goods that fit each holiday and season. Bakers pick fruits when they are at their peak ripeness to get the best taste and nutrition. Seasonal fruits like spring and summer berries and stone fruits, autumn apples and pumpkins and winter citruses each bring their own sweetness and acidity to desserts. Each season brings fruits that give us a chance to try new ideas in baked goods.

Types of Fruits Used and Flavour Pairings

Bakers use a wide variety of fruits, often chosen by season. Common groups include:

In the spring and the summer, berries like strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries and cranberries are prized for their sweetness and acidity. Berries pair well with lemon or orange zest, vanilla, ginger and fresh herbs. For example, mint or basil

complements strawberry desserts and lemon or lavender brighten blueberry or raspberry cakes. Stone fruits like Peaches, plums, cherries and apricots are juicy and sweet. They pair with warm spices like cinnamon, nutmeg or cardamom and with floral or



"I usually adjust the sugar level based on the fruit's natural sweetness."

Arif Vohra, Executive Chef- Product development and innovation, Theobroma Foods Private Limited

herbal notes (for instance ginger-almond with apricot). Peaches and apricots often combine well with ginger, cloves and nuts.

Apples and pears are autumn staples. These firm fruits absorb heat and keep structure. Classic spice pairings include cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cloves and allspice like the apple pie or pear tart with ginger is a common combination. In addition, hardy herbs like rosemary or sage can accentuate apple fillings. Nuts like walnuts, pecans & almonds and ingredients like caramel or brown sugar are also natural partners with apples and pears.

Lemons, oranges, limes and grapefruits shine when ovens are warm in the winter. Citrus zest and juice add acidity and lift; they pair with earthy herbs and mild spices. For example, thyme or rosemary can complement orange cakes, and ginger or cinnamon suit lemon bars. Citrus also marries well with coconut or tropical flavours in fusion recipes.

Fruits like pineapple, mango, banana, passion fruit or guava may be in season locally at different times or imported. They work well with coconut, chili, ginger or lime.

For instance, grilled pineapple might be dusted with chili or used in upside-down cakes, while mango pairs with cardamom or coconut.

Arif Vohra, Executive Chef- Product development and innovation, Theobroma Foods Private Limited says, “One of my most successful seasonal desserts is a Mango and passion fruit entremet, where flavour pairing is essential for balance. The intense, floral sweetness of ripe mango needs the sharp acidity of passion fruit to create a refreshing, sophisticated profile.

I use the same logic for other seasons: the bright tartness of raspberry enhances the mellow juice of strawberries, while the richness of coconut balances the bold acidity of pineapple. These pairings work because they balance sweetness with acidity, ensuring the dessert stays light and memorable throughout the seasons.”

Techniques for Using Fruit

Different culinary techniques unlock the best texture and flavour from fruit. The



“My goal is to achieve a clean, refreshing finish.”
Chef Amit Kumar, Culinary Head,
L’Opera, India

simplest method is to bake fruit directly within pastries, cakes, muffins or breads. For example, blueberries or diced apples can be folded into batter, or fruit can be layered between cake tiers (as in a layered fruit sponge). Roasting or grilling the fruit

concentrates its natural sugars and adds a caramelised flavour. Poaching the fruit involves gently simmering fruit in liquid liker water, wine or juice with sugar and spices giving it a tender, evenly-flavoured result. Classic examples are poached pears or apples. Poaching infuses flavour into the fruit; the low-heat bath prevents caramelisation but yields uniformly soft texture. Broiling or Brûléeing fruits adds a caramel crust or deep colour. The fruit can be sprinkled with sugar and quickly heated from above until the sugar liquefies and browns will brûlée the surface. Grilling the fruit imparts smoky notes. For example, grilled peaches often serve as a vibrant layer in tarts or as a garnish for cakes, with the charred edges contrasting sweet flesh.

When asked about the techniques he most frequently used when working with fruit, Dinesh Kumar, Pastry Chef, Mrs Kaur’s Bakery and Café replied, “This depends entirely on the fruit and product I’m creating. I would lean mostly on pureeing and reduction as this provides enhancement of the flavour

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along with the desired texture outcome.”

While Chef Amit Kumar, Culinary Head, L’Opera, India stated, “My most frequently used techniques are roasting, puréeing, and reduction, as they concentrate flavour while maintaining the fruit’s character. Roasting works exceptionally well for stone fruits and berries, enhancing natural sugars through light caramelisation. Puréeing is essential for mousses, gels, and inserts where smooth texture is critical. Reduction is particularly useful for sauces and glazes, intensifying both colour and taste. I use poaching for delicate fruits like pears when I want to retain shape and elegance. The technique always depends on the dessert style and the water content of the fruit.”

Turning fruit into a smooth puree by cooking and blending or processing raw fruit, yields a versatile ingredient. Fruit purées can be folded into batters (e.g. pumpkin puree in muffins), stirred into icings and sauces, or used as a filling. Chef Dinesh continues, “Folding fruit into batter versus layering or using a reduction/compote depends entirely on the item. Both are frequent in my methods; in mousses it’s generally layering and in cream-based desserts it’s more of folding the fruit to incorporate.”

Technical Considerations

When adding fruit, professional bakers must balance moisture, structure and stability. Fresh fruit has very high water activity (around 0.97–0.99) compared to the baked goods. This high “free water” tends to migrate into the surrounding batter or dough, which can cause a soggy ring near fruit inclusions and shorten the shelf life of the baked product. Bakers often add sugar, because sugar competes for water, reducing water activity and extending microbial stability. Hydrocolloids or modified starches such as ClearJel, pectin or xanthan gum in fillings can bind excess moisture before it weakens the structure. Chef Arif Vohra says, “To manage high-moisture fruits, I typically reduce them into a compote or jam; this removes excess water and concentrates natural sugars to avoid a soggy batter. For fresh applications, I lightly coat fruit pieces in flour or starch before folding—similar to a carrot cake technique—to ensure they stay suspended.



“Desserts are a fine art for any baker, it’s knowing how and what to pair with each fruit.”

Dinesh Kumar, Pastry Chef, Mrs Kaur’s Bakery and Café

I also use freeze-dried fruits to get intense flavour and vibrant colour without adding any water. This controlled approach keeps a juicy profile while maintaining a stable, professional cake structure.”

Fresh, frozen and puréed fruits each behave differently in baking. Frozen fruit (thawed) typically releases more juice into the batter. Frozen fruit also tends to colour the surrounding batter (e.g. purple blueberry bleed) unless rinsed and patted dry. By contrast, fresh fruit is preferred in recipes where appearance and texture matters. No extra liquid is released, so crusts stay crisp and cakes don’t weaken. Whereas puréed fruit offers a third alternative, because it is uniform and often heat-processed, it brings consistent sweetness and moisture.

Some fruit preparations must be stabilised to maintain texture. Thickening agents like cornstarch, tapioca or specially modified starch are commonly used in pie fillings and fruit compotes to thicken the fruit juices. Pectin, the fruit’s natural gelling agent can be added to form jams and gelled layers. Gelatin or agar is used when a soft gel is desired. Gelatin is perfect for creating soft, creamy fillings with chill, while pectin is ideal for firm, shelf-stable fillings. Chef Dinesh remarks, “I prefer plant-based stabilisers such as pectin and agar agar, both of them are neutral in taste and give an amazing veg or egg free option. I use pectin while cooking berries or other fruits for layering and agar agar in stabilising mousses and cream.”

Fruit folding vs. layering vs. Reduction: These refer to methods of incorporating fruit. Folding fruit into batter distributes pieces throughout. This gives little bursts of fruit in each bite, but also creates many moist pockets. Layering fruit keeps fruit in a distinct sheet or circle. This concentrates moisture in one layer. Reduction involves cooking fruit (often with sugar) down to a thicker consistency (compote, jam or coulis). Reducing evaporates water and concentrates flavour. The resulting thick fruit preparation can then be dolloped, swirled or spread into a batter. Each approach affects distribution and moisture, folding yields uniform but potentially wet crumb pockets; layering creates a clear fruit component and reduction yields intense flavour with minimal extra water.

Fruit additions inevitably alter the texture of cakes and breads. Excess water from fruit can hydrate gluten and make the crumb dense or gummy. To counteract this, bakers often add extra fat or adjust flour to offset the moisture. Chef Amit Kumar asserts, “My preference depends on the final product, but generally I favour layering or using a compote for better flavour control and visual definition. Folding fruit into batter works well for rustic cakes and quick breads, but it can dilute flavour and release excess moisture during baking. Layering or inserting a compote allows precise placement, cleaner slices, and more intense fruit impact in each bite. It also improves shelf life and texture stability. In modern pastry work, controlled fruit inserts or gels usually deliver more consistent and professional results than simple folding methods.”

Conclusion

Using seasonal fruits in baking adds vibrant taste and visual appeal, but it also brings some technical challenges. By understanding each fruit’s seasonality and pairing it with complementary flavours like spices, herbs, nuts or other fruits, bakers can create desserts that fit the time of year. A careful approach to formulation ensures the final product has the desired texture and shelf life. With these methods, bakers can turn seasonal fruits into reliable, crowd-pleasing treats that keep people happy from spring through winter. ■

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Certificate Program In Home Professional Chef Duration-4 months A combination of theoretical and practical classes Batch intake: January/July Timing: Morning: 9:30 am to 1:30 pm Days: Monday to Friday	Diploma In Food Preparation Cooking (Patisserie / Culinary) Duration-12 months (6 months at Institute and 6 months Paid industrial training) Batch intake: January/July Timing: Morning 9:30 am to 4:00 pm Days: Monday to Friday	Advanced Diploma in Food Preparation cooking (Patisserie / Culinary) Duration-18 months (9 months at Institute and 9 months Paid industrial training) Batch intake: January/July Timing: Morning 9:30 am to 5:00 pm Days: Monday to Friday

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At Empire Foods, we are building a platform that delivers the world's finest ingredients



Yogesh Grover is a name synonymous with transformation in India's frozen food industry. A Chartered Accountant by qualification and Founder Director of the Indian Frozen Food Importers and Traders Association, he is credited with introducing and popularizing Basa fish in India. His leadership has propelled the company to the forefront of the industry, with a strong presence spanning seafood, meat, dairy, and vegetarian offerings, supported by a well-established, state-of-the-art cold-chain distribution system across India. The company has recently expanded into the premium bakery ingredients segment, further strengthening its diversified portfolio.

In an exclusive interview with Rajat Taneja, he tells us about his journey and more

How do you see the future growth direction of Empire Foods over the next five years?

Our focus is clear, scale, strengthen, and lead. We are building Empire Foods into a category-defining foodservice partner in India, with a sharp focus on premium dairy, bakery, and gourmet segments. With the launch of Candia and upcoming additions like Philadelphia Cream Cheese, French fruit purées, and premium chocolate, we are creating a complete, high-performance portfolio for professional kitchens.

What are the key changes you are witnessing in buying behaviour from hotels, restaurants, and caterers today?

The market has moved decisively from price-driven to performance-driven. Chefs today demand consistency, reliability, and superior results. In bakery and patisserie, there is zero tolerance for variability, which is why high-quality dairy solutions like Candia are gaining strong traction.

What operational capability has become most critical for success in the frozen food business in India?

Execution. Flawless cold-chain, speed,

and consistency. The ability to deliver the same quality product, every time, across multiple cities, that is the real differentiator.

How important is supply-chain reliability and cold-chain infrastructure in building long-term customer trust?

It is everything. In our business, trust is built on consistency, and consistency comes from discipline in supply chain execution. Without a robust cold chain, there is no product integrity, and without integrity, there is no brand.

From your perspective as President of the Indian Frozen Food Importers and Traders Association, what is the biggest challenge currently faced by the industry?

The biggest challenge remains regulatory complexity and infrastructure gaps. While demand is growing rapidly, the ecosystem needs to evolve faster to support efficient and compliant movement of imported food products.

What drove Empire Foods to enter the bakery ingredients segment from its core frozen foods

business?

It was a strategic move driven by customer demand and market evolution. Our customers wanted solutions, not just products. Entering bakery ingredients, with brands like Candia, allows us to deliver performance-led, professional-grade solutions to chefs.

Which bakery and pastry product categories have you launched, and how do they align with your vision for this segment in India?

We started with Candia whipping cream and butter sheets, and we are now building a complete bakery ecosystem, including Philadelphia Cream Cheese, French fruit purées, and premium chocolate. The goal is simple: offer chefs everything they need, at global standards, through a single trusted partner.

What advice would you give to emerging entrepreneurs entering the organised frozen food and foodservice supply market?

Focus on discipline over shortcuts. This is a business of trust, infrastructure, and consistency. If you get those right, growth will follow.

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05-06 August 2026
www.pastryqueenindia.com



Third Edition
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CHALLENGE INDIA 2026
7th August 2026
www.masterbakersindia.com



Second Edition
8th August 2026
www.culinaryleague.in

Criteria	Pastry Queen India (PQI)
Date	05-06 August 2026
Eligibility	18 Years or Older and Trained or Currently Working in Pastry, Bakery, or Dessert Arts.
Team Format	1 Contestant + 1 Mentor
Participation Fee	Applicable, Refer Website
Max Participants	8 Individuals
Prize	Pastry Queen India Title + International Trip + Training
Theme	"The Dance of Birds" Across 8 Pastry Categories
Duration	2 Days
Venue	Competition Arena, Hall 12, IHE Expo
Judging Criteria	700 Points Across Multiple Metrics
Pre-Briefing	4 Aug, 2:30 PM
Setup Time	4 Aug, 3 - 6 PM
Competition Time	8 AM - 5 PM (Day 1), 8 AM - 4 PM (Day 2)
Award Ceremony	6 Aug, 5 PM Onwards

Master Bakers Challenge
7 August 2026
Professional Chefs, 24+ years
Individual
Applicable, Refer Website
8 Individuals
Master Baker Title + International Trip + Training
6 Artisanal Bakery Products (e.g., Breads, Quiche)
1 Day (6 hrs Competition)
Competition Arena, Hall 12, IHE Expo
Taste, Creativity, Hygiene, Time, Cleanliness
4 Aug, 3 - 4 PM
7 Aug, 9 - 10 AM
10 AM - 4 PM
7 Aug, 5 PM Onwards

Culinary League
8 August 2026
Home Cooks, 18+ years
Team of 2 Home Cooks
Applicable, Refer Website
8 Teams
₹25K / ₹15K / ₹10K + Gifts + Media Coverage
Battle of Besan (3 Recipes using Besan)
1 Day (7 hrs total)
Competition Arena, Hall 12, IHE Expo
180 Points (Taste, Innovation, Besan use, etc.)
4 Aug, 3 - 4 PM
8 Aug, 8 - 8:30 AM
8:30 AM - 1:30 PM
8 Aug, 3 PM Onwards

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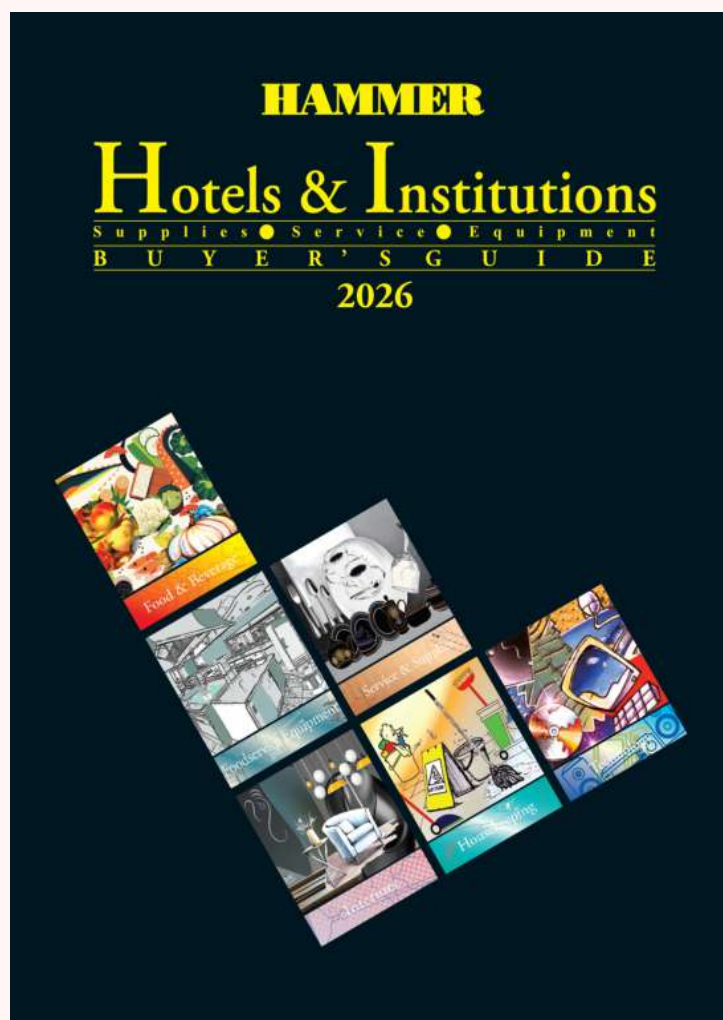
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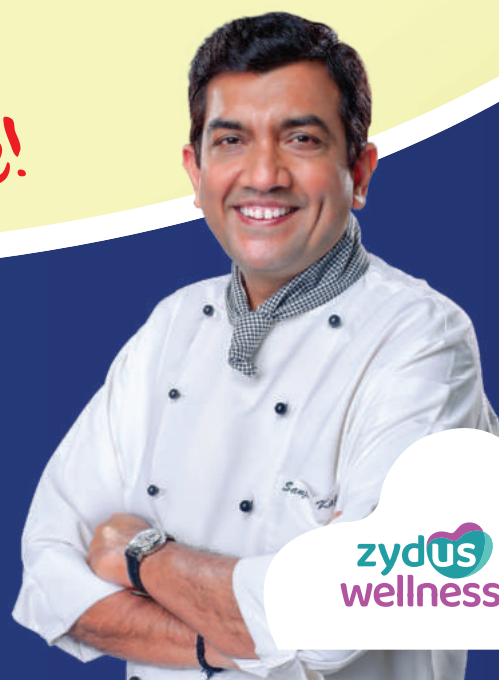


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