

# IFCA MAGAZINE



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*The official newsletter of IFCA*



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## Chef Manjit Gill – “Together we Created Tomorrow”



A glance at Chef Manjit Gill’s Presidential Campaign for Worldchefs.

In Chef Gill’s words **“My presidency will be marked by a relentless pursuit of a dedication to excellence, sustainability, and a nun-wavering support for the global culinary community”**

As President of WorldChefs 2024, Chef Gill and his team envision a united global culinary community where chefs are not just creators, but also inspirers and nourishers. Honouring our traditions, embracing innovation, and leading the way in sustainability. In this vision, every chef is empowered, every kitchen is sustainable, every plate tells a story, and every meal makes a difference.

Chef Gill’s proposal as a presidential candidate for Worldchefs

**To Be Sustainable**

**Expand Borders**

**Be Inclusive**

**Embody Trust and Transparency**

**Addressing Well Being and Mental Health**



Witness the campaign @ <https://www.chefmanjitgill.com>

The campaign team for Chef Manjit Gill's presidential bid for WACS 2024 comprises distinguished chefs from every continent, ensuring a diverse and comprehensive approach to leadership. Each member brings unique perspectives, culinary traditions, and expertise from their respective regions, creating a truly global representation.

### **Chef Hossam Soliman – Egyptian Chefs Association President**



Chef Hossam an esteemed culinary figure, has been at the forefront of the gastronomic world since 1995, pioneering a unique fusion of African and Middle Eastern cuisine. Chef Soliman has emerged as a mentor and educator, sharing his wealth of knowledge with emerging chefs in the region. As a culinary director, he has held key leadership positions, shaping culinary teams and setting new standards of excellence in the industry.

As a key member of the Worldchefs presidential campaign team, Chef Soliman's partnership with Chef Gill signifies a united vision for the future of gastronomy. Their joint efforts aim to revolutionize the culinary landscape, fostering creativity, talent, and a deep-rooted appreciation for diverse culinary traditions.

 <https://www.instagram.com/hossam580?igsh=NHljcHI0OHBmdzVw>

### **Chef Stafford DeCambra – USA Ambassador for the American Continent**

Renowned for his expertise in structuring industrial organizations, Chef Stafford balances innovation with tradition in shaping the future of food trends. Serving as a Director at Worldchef's USA, he spearheads initiatives like Chefs without Borders to empower and uplift chefs worldwide. His advocacy for culinary traditions and forward-thinking approach to culinary evolution make him a standout candidate for this prestigious role.



 <https://www.instagram.com/stafford.decambra?igsh=MXJpemdkc2p3aHc3ZA==>



### **Chef Alla Mishina – Russia – European Ambassador**

Renowned for her expertise in modern Russian cuisine and innovative fusion techniques.

Passionate advocate for sustainable seafood practices and the preservation of traditional Russian flavours, Chef Alla brings to the table her expertise in leading culinary training classes and organizing fierce competitions to cultivate the next generation of chefs, embodying unwavering perseverance.

Handpicked for her unyielding resolve and unwavering strength, Chef Alla stands as a fierce fighter in the culinary arena, championing progress and excellence with unmatched ferocity.

 <https://www.instagram.com/alla.mishina?igsh=bnphOWhrYTRuYnFz>

### **Chef Tarek Ibrahim – Australia – Ambassador Australia and Pacific Rim**

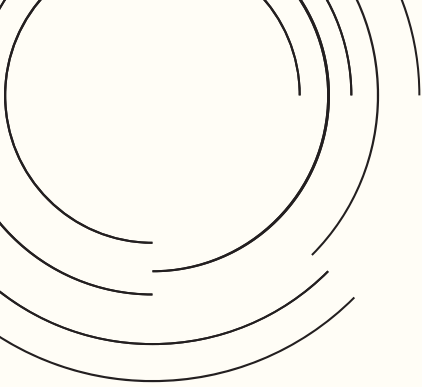
Champion of indigenous Australian ingredients and bush food cuisine.

He leads initiatives promoting sustainable seafood sourcing and enhancing culinary tourism. Chef Tarek's dedication to young chefs development and engagement with multicultural communities underscores his commitment to inclusivity and growth in the culinary industry. Chef Tarek's unique blend of culinary expertise, dedication to sustainability, and commitment to culinary education position him as a transformative leader in the global culinary community.



With a vision aimed at elevating the respect for chefs globally, Chef Tarek educates on food waste, world hunger, and sustainability practices, driving impactful change.

 <https://www.instagram.com/cheftarekibrahim?igsh=ZnpvMnhzZ2d4d3E2>



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## MANAGING EDITORS NOTE

Over the past few months IFCA has begun its mission in creating a diverse culinary ecosystem by bringing together industry professionals, from chefs to academia, through its various initiatives and task forces.

IFCA is building communities around key areas such as, entrepreneurial support, nutrition, food waste, UN sustainable development goal 12 and well-being, as well as public, industry and international relations.

The people driving these communities are taking on significant roles and working towards building a strong authority in the culinary space that will be recognised and respected globally.

The next few months will see all of these teams gain momentum and build strong bonds within the culinary fraternity.

What an interesting time to be part of this industry!

When you turn through the following pages you will come across articles on a wide variety of topics, ranging from the role of food in diplomacy to Indian traditions and festivals as well as new technologies in our industry and their impact. Don't forget to attempt the quiz and test your knowledge on food labels.

Signing off until next time.

Culinary regards,



Sheraz Nair

Managing Editor of IFCA Magazine and Newsletter



# Meet *the* Editorial Team

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**Dr. Chef Kumar Satyam**  
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**Chef Sanjay Sharma**  
Emerging Technologies

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International Relations

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**Dr. Chef David Isaac**  
Titbits and Humor



## IFCA Presidium



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President



**Chef Sheetharam Prasad**  
Vice President



**Chef Vijaya Baskaran**  
General Secretary



**Chef Madhusudan Gupta**  
Treasurer

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**Chef Prabhu Manickam**

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**Dr. V Jay Kumar**

**Chef (Dr) Varinder S Rana**

**Chef Alam Singh**



## *Anuga Select India: A Culinary Extravaganza Shaping the Future of Food*

The culinary scene in India is reaching new heights as the grand inauguration of Anuga Select India unfolds at the Bombay Exhibition Center in Mumbai. This much-anticipated event has brought together the nation's top chefs, all geared up to display their remarkable skills and creativity. Among the luminaries gracing the event are renowned chefs Manjit Singh Gill, Vijaya Baskaran, and Nimish Bhatia, each ready to contribute to what promises to be an unforgettable journey in the world of hospitality.



Day 2 of Anuga Select India continued the momentum, with a rich exchange of culinary insights and global perspectives. The Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA) played a key role in these discussions, featuring Chef Manjit Singh Gill alongside Chile's Minister for Agriculture, Esteban Valenzuela. Their dialogue on the future of food explored themes of innovation, sustainability, and the global trends shaping the culinary industry. Anuga Select India is not just a showcase; it's a pivotal event driving the evolution of the food and hospitality sectors.





# Inside the Kitchen: An Exclusive Interview with..

Chef Srijith Girija Gopinath

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## About the Author:

**2 star Michelin Chef, Restaurateur, Food and Beverage Consultant, Co-owner at Ettan, Palo Alto, Chief Culinary Officer at Sempera Organics, Chef and Food and Beverage Director at Taj Campton Place.**

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### **1. What challenges did you face when starting out in the culinary world and how did you overcome that?**

*As a student in Bangalore, finding a job wasn't as difficult as it might have been elsewhere. However, my real challenge stemmed from being born and raised in a rural village. Many of my batchmates were from cities, except for a few who struggled with English. Even though I attended a convent school and spoke English, I wasn't as fluent as those from cities like Bangalore or Chennai. This created a significant communication barrier when interacting with chefs and managers, which, in turn, affected my confidence and opportunities.*

*Despite securing a job, I faced constant challenges due to the language gap. I could speak English better than many others, but not at the level of those "city boys." This was particularly noticeable during interviews, where I would struggle to express myself fluently in group discussions. Unfortunately, this often led to me being overlooked, as the first impression in such situations hinges heavily on how well you can articulate your thoughts. This left me feeling incomplete, knowing I could have done better if my language skills were more polished.*

*While I eventually made progress, not everyone did. Many of my batchmates couldn't overcome this hurdle and ended up leaving the industry altogether, despite studying for three years. I'd estimate that less than 5% of my batchmates remained in the industry. Back then, job opportunities were scarce, with options limited to a few star hotels or the difficult prospect of working abroad.*

Once in the industry, the challenges didn't stop. I was always eager to explore cuisines that were less familiar to us, particularly French cuisine. However, gaining access to information was tough. In those days, we relied heavily on books, which were expensive and hard to find. I remember frequently visiting a specific place in Bangalore just to buy culinary books.

My interest in French cuisine was driven by its disciplined approach—everything was documented in precise measurements and detailed procedures, unlike what we often encountered in our kitchens.

## **2. How to do you adapt traditional recipes to modern tastes?**

*There was a time when I would take traditional recipes and fuse them with new and readily available ingredients. However, as I gained more experience, I realized this approach often diluted the originality of the dish. I came to understand that it's important to preserve and promote traditional recipes in their authentic form. Given that I was one of the early ambassadors of Indian cuisine in the USA, I recognized my responsibility to educate people about the true essence of Indian food.*

*When I established my restaurant company, particularly with my South Indian restaurant, I made it a priority to maintain authenticity and educate diners about traditional dishes. There's a way to introduce modern elements without compromising the integrity of a recipe—by keeping the recipe authentic while enhancing its presentation to appeal to contemporary tastes. This approach ensures that the dish remains visually appealing while preserving its original flavours.*

*I believe food should be presented thoughtfully, not just served as it might be at home. I'm not a fan of altering traditional recipes unnecessarily. However, being in California, I sometimes incorporate seasonal ingredients to subtly enhance the flavours while staying true to the original dish.*

## **3. What role does presentation play in your dishes and how do you approach it?**

*While presentation is important, it shouldn't be the sole focus. If you ask me whether one should dedicate their entire time and energy to presentation, the answer is no. It's essential to keep the dish as natural as possible while still incorporating artistic elements. The key is finding a balance between creativity and efficiency. You shouldn't push the artistic aspect to the point where it compromises the quality of the dish or makes it impractical for service.*

*From a commercial perspective, food presentation must be efficient without sacrificing the taste or experience. In a restaurant setting, we have to consider both the aesthetic appeal and the practicality of serving the dish. Overemphasizing presentation can lead to inefficiencies, and ultimately, the end product suffers. The level of presentation should depend on what you're serving, ensuring that both the dish's appearance and execution align with the overall dining experience.*

#### **4. what steps do you take to minimize food waste in your kitchen?**

*In an à la carte restaurant like mine, there's only one way to approach production: the traditional method. The key is to produce exactly what you need based on a clear understanding of daily covers. In this setup, predicting the number of covers from Monday to Sunday is crucial, as occupancy can fluctuate anywhere from 80% to 120%. With this in mind, it's essential to standardize your recipes and portion sizes.*

*Accurate forecasting helps manage food wastage effectively. For an à la carte setup, you'll need to maintain a buffer stock, but it's important to store it properly so it's only used if necessary. Ultimately, managing food waste differs depending on the type of restaurant, but in an à la carte setting, careful planning and standardization are key to minimizing waste while maintaining efficiency.*

#### **5. what advice would you give to home cooks who want to make their kitchen more sustainable?**

*Sustainability begins with sourcing ingredients locally—using products from your own backyard or local markets and supporting your nearby farmers. It's important to minimize the use of imported goods whenever possible. Prioritizing seasonal vegetables and fruits is key. For instance, here in California during the summer, I make it a point to use ingredients like corn, tomatoes, okra, and melons that are abundant during that season.*

*The goal is to focus on what's locally available. Using ingredients from your village or nearby areas not only supports local communities but also helps create a more sustainable kitchen.*

## Emerging Technologies

# Food Labels: The key to a healthier you!

B.Jameema Priya

*"Jameemapriya is a dedicated culinary art enthusiast with a passion for traditional Indian cuisine. Aspiring to become a successful hotelier, she aims to serve the public with honesty and outstanding service while continuously learning and exploring further more".*



A food label, the information presented on a food product, is one of the most important and direct means of communicating information to the consumer. It provides a wide range of information to help consumers make food choices. Food labels carry useful information to help you make informed choices about what you and your family eat and drink.

Nowadays, many of us rely on packaged foods and instant or precooked meals due to our busy lives. However, a significant number of people tend to ignore food labels.

The food label contains much information regarding what you are buying to eat. It provides information about nutrition, allergens, preservatives, etc. This includes information about food additives, colors, flavors, the name and complete address of the manufacturer, and the date of manufacture or packing

It's important to pay attention to food labels, not just for the best before date, but also to know what ingredients are in the food you're eating. For example, products labeled as "zero sugar" may not contain actual sugars, but they may contain artificial sweeteners as a substitute.

It is important for everyone to be aware of the food items they are buying and the ingredients that are present.











In every academic institution, students should learn about reading food labels from an early age. Awareness programs should also be conducted by the government in densely populated areas.

Initiatives by the Ministry of Health and Welfare to display this information in public waiting areas would also be beneficial.

Among consumers who say they are watching their weight, 81 percent read the nutritional panel on product labels, and of these the reality of packaged food is reflected in its food labels as they provide detailed information about the product



**"This quiz is designed for chefs to test their knowledge about food labels and nutrition."**

1. What does the symbol on the food label mean? 
  - a. fortified food
  - b. food
  - c. fruit product
  - d. processed food
2. What does this symbol represent on food labels? 
  - a. diabetic friendly
  - b. Radura
  - c. pre-pack food containing egg
  - d. BIS
3. In food labelling, what does this symbol signify? 
  - a. vegan
  - b. natural
  - c. Jaivik Bharath
  - d. Organic
4. What meaning does this symbol hold in food labelling? 
  - a. natural
  - b. vegan
  - c. milk-based
  - d. Inorganic
5. What is the significance of this symbol on food labels? 
  - a. vegetarian
  - b. nonvegetarian
  - c. high in fat
  - d. milk product included
6. What does this symbol represent on food labels? 
  - a. meat
  - b. vegetarian
  - c. not meant for consumption
  - d. allergens
7. In the context of food labeling, what does this symbol indicate? 
  - a. Farmers product organization
  - b. Fruit products organization
  - c. Follow public offer
  - d. Food processed organization
8. What meaning does this symbol hold in food labelling? 
  - a. ECO mark
  - b. Vegan
  - c. FPOd. agriculture
9. who issues this? 
  - a. ISI
  - b. BIS
  - c. FSSAI
  - d. Agmark
10. What is the significance of this symbol on food labels? 
  - a. Gluten free
  - b. Tree nuts
  - c. Peanuts
  - d. Soybeans

Answers

1. A 2. B 3. C 4. B 5. B 6. C 7. B 8. A 9. B 10. A



## **Challenges in Retaining Kitchen Staff in Restaurants and Hotels and How to Overcome Them**

PADALA PADMA RAO

*"Instructor at IHM HYDERABAD."*

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Retaining kitchen staff in restaurants and hotels is a significant challenge due to the demanding nature of the work and the high turnover rates typically seen in the hospitality industry. Several key challenges contribute to this issue, but there are also effective strategies that can help overcome them.

### **Key Challenges:**

1. **High Stress and Burnout:** The fast-paced and high-pressure environment of kitchens can lead to stress and burnout among staff. Long hours, physical demands, and the need to consistently meet high standards can contribute to mental and physical exhaustion.
2. **Low Wages:** Many kitchen staff positions, especially entry-level ones, offer low wages. This can make it difficult for employees to stay motivated and feel valued, leading them to seek higher-paying opportunities elsewhere.
3. **Lack of Career Advancement:** Many kitchen staff may feel there are limited opportunities for career advancement within their current place of employment. This can lead to a sense of stagnation and prompt employees to look for growth opportunities elsewhere.
4. **Inconsistent Work Hours:** The irregular and often long hours in the hospitality industry can disrupt work-life balance, making it difficult for staff to manage personal commitments and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
5. **Workplace Culture:** A negative workplace culture, characterized by poor communication, lack of teamwork, and inadequate management support, can drive employees away. A toxic work environment can significantly impact morale and job satisfaction.



## Strategies to Overcome Challenges

According to industrial experts, the following are some of the strategies and steps taken by Hotels & Restaurants in order to retain their staff and subsequently to overcome challenges.

### 1. Improving Compensation and Benefits:

- **Competitive Wages:** Offer competitive wages that reflect the skills and hard work of kitchen staff. Regularly review and adjust pay rates to stay competitive in the market.
- **Benefits Packages:** Provide benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, and paid time off. Consider offering perks like free meals, discounts, and wellness programs.

### 2. Promoting Work-Life Balance:

- **Flexible Scheduling:** Offer flexible scheduling options to accommodate employees' personal lives. Consider implementing shift rotations to avoid burnout.
- **Reasonable Work Hours:** Ensure that staff are not consistently working excessive hours. Monitor workloads and distribute tasks evenly.

### 3. Providing Career Development Opportunities:

- **Training Programs:** Invest in regular training and development programs to help staff improve their skills and advance in their careers.
- **Clear Career Paths:** Establish clear career advancement paths within the organization. Promote from within whenever possible to show employees there are opportunities for growth.

### 4. Recognizing and Rewarding Efforts:

- **Recognition Programs:** Implement programs to regularly recognize and reward employees for their hard work and achievements. This can include Employee of the Month awards, bonuses, or public acknowledgment.
- **Incentives:** Provide incentives such as performance-based bonuses, extra time off, or other rewards for exceptional work.

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***An apple a day keeps the doctor away. A pumpkin a week, keeps the husband away.***

## About the Author



**Chef Kimsan Pol is a renowned culinary expert and advocate for Cambodian cuisine. As the President of the Cambodia Chefs Association and Culinary Director of Embassy Khmer Gastronomy, Sombok and Amok Restaurant.**

**She has honed her skills with three-star Michelin chef Regis Marcon, shared her expertise at the prestigious Lausanne Hotel School in Switzerland, and had some training in a one-star Michelin restaurant in Japan. Invited by former Prime Minister Hun Sen, she had also showcased Khmer cuisine at the World Economic Forum in Davos.**



# FISH AMOK RECIPE

Chef Kimsan. Cambodia



## STORY

Passionate about sharing the rich flavors of Cambodian cuisine with the world, I want everyone to enjoy a perfect Amok, Cambodian national dish, even in their own kitchens. That is why I am sharing the secrets of Amok so that you all can recreate a true Cambodian Amok at home.



## METHOD

- Slice the fish into bite sizes, keep aside
- Clean noni leaves and all mushroom then slice, keep aside
- Mix and whisk all the ingredients together
- Put the mix in banana basket, top with coconut cream, kaffir lime and slice red bell pepper for garnish
- Steam about 25 minutes

## AMOK SPICES

Lemongrass Stalk	50 g
Garlic	15 g
Galangal	5 g
Kaffir Lime leave	4 g
Turmeric	5 g
Finger Root	2 g

## INGREDIENTS

Amok Spice	80 g
Noni Leave	15 g
Coconut Milk	160 g
Shrimp Paste	3 g
Fish Sauce	3 g
Palm Sugar	6 g
Chicken Powder	4 g
Chili Paste	3 g
Snakehead Fish Fillet	120 g
Egg	1 pc
White Mushroom	20 g
Straw Mushroom	30 g





## Health over Taste

DILRAJ SINGH SHADEV

*“Sr lecturer, IHM Gurdaspur Punjab”*

Taste plays a significant role in the pleasure derived from food, yet it should not overshadow the paramount importance of health considerations in dietary decision-making. A diet centred on whole, minimally processed foods is essential as it offers vital nutrients and dietary fibre that are crucial for overall health and wellbeing. Conversely, highly palatable ultra-processed foods, which are often laden with added sugars, salt, and unhealthy fats, may be delectable but offer scant nutritional value.

The interplay between attitudes towards health and taste significantly affects dietary preferences. Achieving a balance between health and taste preferences can be a challenge, yet the rewards are substantial. By progressively reducing consumption of excessively salty or sweet foods, the taste receptors adapt, rendering healthier alternatives more enticing over time. Moreover, with a touch of creativity, numerous nutritious foods can be transformed into palatable dishes.

### **Perspectives on Health and Taste**

Consumer and marketing research consistently indicates that taste, rather than perceived nutritional value or health benefits, is the primary factor influencing food choices. However, research on phytonutrients and health has often overlooked the bitter taste of vegetables and other plant-based foods.

In fact, cancer researchers have suggested that an increased bitterness in foods, such as broccoli sprouts, could be beneficial, enabling consumers to select those with the highest glucosinolate content.

The food industry frequently removes phenols, flavonoids, isoflavones, terpenes, and glucosinolates from plant foods through selective breeding and debittering processes. These bioactive phytonutrients, which are currently studied for their health benefits, have often been viewed by both the industry and consumers as undesirable bitter components.

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The challenge lies in reconciling the demands for palatability and health benefits when it comes to bitter phytonutrients.

### **The Interplay of Taste, Nutrition, and Health**

The sensation of flavour is the intricate integration of aroma, taste, texture, and chemesthetic (oral and nasal irritation) cues from a food. A flavour plays a crucial role in determining the palatability of food, which in turn can significantly influence dietary choices, nutrition, and health. Despite recent advancements, there remain significant gaps in our understanding of how taste and flavor cues are detected, transmitted to the brain, and interpreted as conscious sensations.

Recent research has also shed light on the possibility that fatty acids and carbohydrates may convey nutrient-specific signals to the gut and brain, informing them about the nature of the nutrients ingested. The study of sweet taste in relation to health and nutrition has been a longstanding area of research in chemosensory science, spanning over 50 years

### **The Role of Sodium in Flavor**

From a culinary standpoint, salt possesses numerous desirable attributes. The addition of salt enhances the sensory properties of a wide range of foods consumed by humans.

The human inclination towards excessive salt consumption is well-documented. Children, in particular, exhibit a preference for foods with higher salt concentrations. The ability to modify the perception of salt taste through exposure to foods with lower sodium content is feasible but challenging.

The food industry is continuously working to improve the palatability of foods with reduced salt content. Strategies include the use of dried seafood stocks, yeast extracts, and amino acids like glutamate to augment savoury, umami flavours. However, these methods have their limitations and may not fully compensate for the taste. Ultimately, changes in public policy may be necessary to alter the overall sodium intake of the population.

While taste is recognized as one of the five traditional senses, the importance of health transcends mere survival; it is fundamental to flourishing. By prioritizing health in our dietary choices, while still allowing for the enjoyment of food, we can enhance our nutritional intake for a long and vibrant existence. The human body and taste buds exhibit remarkable adaptability dietary modifications.



## **“Unveiling the cultural significance of Durga Puja: A festival of Food, Faith and Community.”**

Arunava Nandy

*“Assistant Lecturer at IHM Bhopal,”*

Bengal, a land of rich culture and heritage, has a storied past, having been the capital of the British Empire in India. Despite influences from the Mughal and British eras, Bengal has preserved its cultural heritage in its most authentic form. Festivals are an integral part of Bengali culture, with a unique aspect being the widespread public involvement. Unlike other parts of the country, Bengali festivals are celebrated in large groups and communities, bringing together people from all walks of life.

Durga Puja, the paramount festival of Bengal, was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2021, recognizing its profound cultural significance. The month of Ashwin (September 18th to October 17th) heralds the triumphant homecoming of Bengal's revered daughter, Uma, an occasion of unbridled jubilation and devotion. Bengalis have cultivated an intimate affinity with the Mother Goddess, venerating Durga Puja as the auspicious return of a married daughter, thereby underscoring the festival's emotional resonance.

This grand celebration is not merely an occasion for revelry but also a period of dedicated service to the Divine Mother Durga, characterized by fervent ritualistic worship. Notable customs like Maha-Snan, wherein the image of the Goddess (reflection on a metallic mirror) is ritually bathed with approximately 96 items, and Navapatrika puja, a tribute to Mother Nature, wherein nine plants are ceremoniously draped in a red bordered yellow saree and worshiped as an embodiment of the Divine Mother, are integral to the festivities.



*Afternoon Bhog offered to the Goddess*

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Bhog, or cooked Prasad offerings, is an indispensable component of Durga Puja, with diverse culinary delights presented to the Goddess throughout the day. The day commences with the Mangal Arati (Early Morning Vesper) and the offering of Mishtanna (mildly sweetened cottage cheese cakes), followed by Balya Bhog, a sumptuous repast comprising Khichuri (a flavorful Khichdi) and Bhaja (an assortment of fried vegetables).

In the afternoon, a lavish lunch platter, replete with at least four types of rice preparations and an array of accompanying dishes catering to all six tastes - savory, hot, bitter, sour, astringent, and sweet - is presented to the Goddess, in accordance with the scriptural injunction, "Annam chaturvidham Devim, swadayair shadhbhi samanwitam, uttamam pranadanchaiva grihana mamabhavatah."

This delectable spread typically features Ghee Bhaat, Basanti Pulao, Pushpanna, Alur Dom, Labra Torkari, Chhanar Kopta, Dhokar Dalna, and an assortment of fish preparations. According to the Smriti Shastra of Bengal, a venerable text that governs traditional practices, five species of fish have been graciously exempted from the categorization of non-vegetarian fare. The esteemed text decrees, "Illisha Chingikaschaiva, Bhetkir, Madguram evacha, Rohita matsyarajendra, pancha matsyaa niramisha" effectively absolving Hilsha, Prawns, Becti, Catfish, and Rohu from the conventional classification of non-vegetarian offerings.

In consonance with Bengali traditions, these revered finned offerings are ceremoniously presented to the Goddess during the afternoon Bhog, with various preparations showcasing their culinary versatility. Sweet chutney, usually crafted with tomatoes, is also offered during this time, followed by Payesh (rice kheer) and an array of sweets including mishit doi (sweetened yogurt). The food offerings are succeeded by the afternoon Vesper service, known as Bhog Arati, after which the Prasad offered to the Goddess is distributed among the devotees, fostering a sense of communal bonding.

In the evening, within 1 hour 36 minutes from sunset, the Evening Vesper service or Sandhya Arati is performed, followed by the Shital Bhog, a delectable offering comprising Luchi (deep-fried flatbread) and Sujir Payesh (semolina kheer), accompanied by an assortment of sweets.

Durga Puja is a vibrant diversity of tradition, culture, and devotion, woven with intricate threads of ritualistic worship, sumptuous culinary offerings, and communal celebration. As the Divine Mother Durga descends upon the earthly realm, Bengalis welcome her with open arms, hearts filled with love and reverence.

Through the sacred rituals and mouth-watering Bhog offerings, the festival transcends its religious significance, becoming a testament to the universal human spirit of gratitude, hospitality, and joy. As the festivities come to a close, the memories of Durga Puja linger, a lasting reminder of the transformative power of faith, community, and the unwavering bond between the divine and the mortal, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of all who participate.



*Image of Goddess Durga*



# Emerging Trends in Food Processing and Packaging: The Impact of AI, Automation, and New Technologies

Chef Sudhir Pai

“FnB Consultant”



The food processing and packaging industry is witnessing a revolution driven by advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and new technologies. These innovations are not only enhancing efficiency and productivity but are also ensuring higher safety standards and meeting the growing consumer demand for sustainable practices. This article delves into the key emerging trends shaping the future of food processing and packaging.

## **Artificial Intelligence:** Revolutionizing Quality Control and Efficiency

AI is at the forefront of transforming the food industry, offering solutions that enhance

- quality control
- predictive maintenance
- and operational efficiency.

Machine learning algorithms analyse vast amounts of data from various stages of the food processing pipeline to identify patterns and predict potential issues. This allows for real-time adjustments, reducing waste and improving product quality.

One significant application of AI in food processing is in visual inspection systems.

## **Automation:** Enhancing Precision and Productivity

Automation is another key trend reshaping the food processing and packaging landscape. Automated systems, including robotic arms and conveyors, are streamlining repetitive tasks, increasing precision, and boosting productivity. These systems can handle a wide range of tasks, from sorting and grading to slicing and packaging, with minimal human intervention.

In packaging, automation is driving innovations like automated guided vehicles (AGVs) and robotic palletizers. These technologies handle product transportation and stacking more efficiently and accurately. This reduces labor costs and the risk of injuries, making the workplace safer.

## **New Technologies:** Innovating for Sustainability

Sustainability is a major focus in the food industry, and new technologies are playing a crucial role in achieving greener practices.

Biodegradable and edible packaging materials are gaining traction as they reduce the environmental impact of plastic waste.

Innovations in smart packaging, which incorporate sensors and indicators, provide real-time information about the freshness and quality of the product, reducing food waste.

Another ground-breaking technology is high-pressure processing (HPP), which uses high pressure instead of heat to preserve food.

This method extends shelf life while maintaining the nutritional value and flavor of the product, catering to the growing consumer demand for fresh and healthy options.

#### **Integration of IoT and Blockchain for Transparency and Traceability:**

The integration of the Internet of Things (IoT) and blockchain technology is enhancing transparency and traceability in the food supply chain. IoT devices collect data on various parameters, such as temperature and humidity, throughout the production and distribution process. This data is then recorded on a block chain, providing an immutable and transparent record of the product's journey from farm to table.

This level of traceability not only ensures food safety but also allows consumers to make informed choices about the products they purchase. For instance, block chain can verify the authenticity of organic labels or the ethical sourcing of ingredients, building consumer trust and brand loyalty. This technology is already being used in various sectors like fresh produce, chocolate, coffee, dairy products & shrimp and seafood.

#### **Conclusion:**

The food processing and packaging industry is undergoing a transformative phase, driven by AI, automation, and new technologies. These advancements are not only enhancing operational efficiency and product quality but also promoting sustainability and transparency. As the industry continues to evolve, embracing these emerging trends will be crucial for businesses to stay competitive and meet the ever-changing demands of consumers. The future of food processing and packaging looks promising, with technology paving the way for safer, smarter, and more sustainable practices.

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*My daughter Cinderella is a little crazy, she wants her carriage to turn into Strawberries.*



# Prospects and Obstacles for Indian Agritech Startups

Mrs. Namita Rawat Negi

*"Mrs. Namita Rawat Negi is the co-founder of Doon Gooseberry Farm. Mrs. Namita is a pioneering permaculture farmer and innovator, revolutionizing sustainable agriculture by harnessing smart technology's power to produce healthy and abundant food products."*

## INTRODUCTION:

Indian Agri-tech entrepreneurs are transforming the agricultural industry by using technology to improve value generation and production. One billion dollars is planned to be spent on farm input tech. These startups pioneer innovative solutions for small and marginal farmers in the agricultural sector. Agritech start-ups have reduced produce prices, created rural jobs, and reduced delivery times by eliminating intermediaries and optimizing supply chains. "Digital India" is a government attempt to bridge the rural-urban divide by informing farmers about agriculture innovations and giving internet access. From 2013 to 2020, India's agritech sector grew to over 1,000. Farmer awareness and Internet penetration in rural India increase the demand for agriculture efficiency. These firms provide India's food and nutrition demands while enhancing its capabilities and worldwide standing by introducing innovative farming technology and offering access to current technologies.

## VENTURE-FUNDED

## AGRITECH

### COMPANY GROWTH AND TREND:

Agritech businesses funded by venture capital have grown significantly in recent years. Way Cool, AgroStar, NinjaCart, Bijak, and Stellapps are top agritech fundraisers. Data analytics, machine learning, and SaaS are used by these firms to solve supply chain, storage, payments, credit, packaging, and advisory problems. The total venture funding by agritech firms from 2018 to 2023 shows constant increase, suggesting investor interest and trust in this area. The considerable growth in financing 2022 and 2023 may be driven to technical advances, favourable government regulations, and rising demand for Agri solutions.

### AGRITEC STARTUPS IN INDIA:

#### CropIn Technology Solution

In 2010, Krishna Kumar and Kunal Prasads founded CropIn, a solutions platform that helps agribusinesses improve performance and sustainability. It provides weather data for farm management and crop output, reducing risks and increasing yields.

Allowing stakeholders across the agriculture industry to collaborate seamlessly. These tools enable real-time data interpretation and standing crop insights. Technology can drive digital transformation, regulatory compliance, and sustainability. Over 5.5 million acres of agricultural have been digitised, affecting roughly 2.1 million farmers. More than 380 crops and 3,600 crop varieties from 46 nations on six continents have been examined by the company.

#### **Stellapps:**

Stellapps was formed in 2011 by Ranjit Mukundan and Ramakrishna Adukuri to help dairy farmers and cooperatives maximise profits by digitising and streaming milk procurement and cold chain management on their smart platform. It develops dairy management software using cutting-edge technologies to improve the dairy supply chain. Using big data, cloud computing, and data analytics to improve milk procurement, production, animal insurance, cold chain management, and farmer payment.

#### **EM3 AgServices:**

EM3 Agri Services, founded in 2013, offers cheap agricultural instruments to small and marginal farmers. The new method leases agricultural gear to farmers to boost output at a lower cost. Call centers, apps, and farming and service platforms with offline middlemen exist.

EM3 offers farmers a variety of production-cycle agriculture services. These include post-harvest management, crop control, land preparation, and transplanting. Farmers can conveniently arrange services, track crop production, and leverage transactions. It collaborates with local governments and top national and international equipment manufacturers to improve its activities and products across India.

#### **Way Cool:**

Way Cool, a pioneering B2B Agritech enterprise created by Sanjay Dasari and Karthik Jayaram in July 2015, aspires to be the world's largest food and distribution company.

Way Cool manages the entire agricultural supply chain, from growing inputs to delivery, with cutting-edge technology that allows farmers to sell their produce through a variety of channels.

It processes, purchases, and distributes fresh produce, required commodities, and dairy products. Strategic technology and innovation make logistics and distribution more efficient. Through strategic collaborations, the company creates and brands a diverse selection of high-quality private-label merchandise for retail stores and e-commerce platforms in Chennai.

### Intello Labs:

Digital solutions specialist Intello Labs was founded in 2016 by Milan Sharma and Devendra Chandani. It owned Intello Track, sort, and Deep to use computers to evaluate produce. It monitors and grades commodities with the goal of becoming the premier platform for the value chain, trade, grading, procurement, and marketing. Intello Labs has partnered with Reliance Fresh and Ocean Spray to grow and affect agriculture.

### Bijak:

Bijak was formed in 2019 to help dealers and distributors find new suppliers, process payments, and acquire operating capital. It is a B2B agricultural commodity market that provides logistics for buyers and sellers. Bijak works in over 27 Indian states, including Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Bihar, and Punjab, to promote trading in varied commodities for growth and agriculture.

#### INDIAN AGRICULTURAL ENTREPRENEURS' CHALLENGES

Agripreneurs in India face many obstacles that could limit their success and agriculture sector growth. Agripreneurs encounter several key obstacles:

S.no	Obstacles	Description
1	Financial Limitations	Lack of infrastructure including storage, transportation, and cold chain logistics delays produce delivery to markets and causes post-harvest losses for Agripreneur.
2	No Professional Support	Farmers in rural areas struggle to capitalize on agricultural advances and competitiveness due to a lack of market integration, organizational support, and management.
3	Complex Regulatory Framework	Agritech firms face extensive regulatory frameworks and compliance requirements when dealing with agricultural practices and food safety standards.
4	Poor Marketing and Distribution	Inefficient marketing and distribution systems undercut agricultural produce prices and raise intermediary costs.
5	Environmental and Climate Change Risks	Climate change is raising agribusiness difficulties such water scarcity, weather, pests, and diseases. Environmental hazards threaten crop yields, profitability, and farm productivity, threatening agribusinesses.
6	Change Resistance	Innovative agriculture solutions are hindered by resistance to new technologies and existing farming methods.

### CONCLUSION:

Indian agriculture need to use IoT, AI, and other modern technology in farming and agrotech businesses help farmers get new technologies. Agriculture technology is essential for India to become a farming powerhouse. The agritech business is changing the ecosystem for society and stakeholders. The Indian government wants to establish a cluster-based value chain model to improve cooperation among farmers, industrial inputs, states, and market links, focusing on dairy, animal husbandry, and fisheries to address loan access issues. Agritech companies in similar regions have great domestic and worldwide growth potential. Food security technology can be transferred to developing nations through international collaborations.

# The Vegan Veda: India's Ancient and Modern Plant-Based Practices

Arekrevelu Shalini

*"A dedicated and consistent hotel hospitality student, aiming to make strides in the industry. Currently pursuing Final year, B.Sc H&HA at IHM Hyderabad."*



The plant-based cuisine trend is causing significant changes in the culinary industry. This movement is changing the food choices of restaurants, from Michelin-starred restaurants to school cafeterias, all driven by ethical, environmental, and health considerations.

India's culinary landscape has long celebrated plant-based food with profound cultural, religious, and ethical roots. India is the country with the most vegetarian population, and this phenomenon is not just limited to food but is considered a way of life. As the global plant-based movement gains popularity, the diverse and flavourful Indian cuisine is being appreciated across the world.

This article explores the historical roots, health benefits, and modern innovations in Indian plant-based food, catering to all culinary professionals alike.

Plant-based diets have been an essential component of Indian culture, influenced by religious beliefs that include Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. These faiths preach nonviolence (Ahimsa) and compassion for all living beings, which has led many

people to choose vegetarian diets. Dal (lentil soup), sabzi (vegetable curry), and khichdi (a rice and lentil blend) are popular dishes throughout India, representing the country's unique culinary heritage.

Traditional Indian diets are extremely balanced and nutritious, featuring a variety of grains, legumes, vegetables, and spices. Spices such as turmeric and cumin not only enhance flavor but also offer health benefits, such as anti-inflammatory and digestive properties. This approach aligns with modern nutritional guidelines and supports the overall well-being of the average person.

The global rise in plant-based eating has highlighted Indian cuisine's naturally vegetarian and vegan-friendly options. Chefs and home cooks are experimenting with modern ingredients like tofu and tempeh creating new imaginative dishes such as Tofu Tikka Masala and Seitan Biryani that blend traditional flavors with contemporary tastes. Indian street foods and classics such as the Samosa, and Vada Pav are being reimaged with a more plant-

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based and protein-rich substitute filling appealing to a broader more global audience.

This shift towards plant-based diets is beneficial for personal health and the planet. Animal agriculture is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, and water usage. By embracing plant-based foods, individuals can reduce their carbon footprint and contribute to a more sustainable and eco-friendlier lifestyle. This environmental perspective is especially critical as culinary professionals and educators guide the next generation of chefs and consumers toward more sustainable food practices.

Ethically, this aligns with the principles of non-violence and compassion, central to many Indian religious and cultural traditions. The concept of Ahimsa, or non-harming, encourages respect for all living beings, making plant-based diets a natural choice for those seeking to reduce animal suffering. As awareness of these ethical considerations grows, more people worldwide are choosing plant-based diets, not only for health and environmental benefits but also as a reflection of their values.

Indian plant-based cuisine, deeply embedded in cultural, religious, and ethical traditions, offers a rich tapestry of flavors and nutritional benefits. From its historical roots to modern adaptations, this culinary tradition exemplifies versatility and depth.

As the global community increasingly embraces plant-based diets, Indian cuisine continues to stand out, offering a delicious and conscientious choice for diners everywhere. This trend not only preserves India's rich culinary heritage but also paves the way for a healthier and more sustainable future.



***Steak Lover's mouth is always red, not that he always orders "rare or blue" but he licks the knife everytime.***

# Future of Technology in Culinary Space of Hospitality Industry

Chef Aradhya Jain

*“ Pastry Intern at Rosewood Sandhill, California USA.”*



The culinary space of the hospitality industry has always been very dynamic; however, with the advent of technology the changes are more frequent. The use of technology has touched all the facets of farm-to-fork and increasing use of technology is going to change the way food is not only cooked, but even how it is produced, transported, and consumed.

### **Here are a few interesting breakthroughs that are changing the future view of food:**

**Cellular Agriculture:** Re-evaluating animal-based Products is no longer necessary since animal items like meat, cheese, and eggs can be produced instead using cell cultures and a novel technique known as cellular agriculture. This offers an ethical substitute for traditional animal production that is far more ecologically friendly and sustainable. Stated differently, companies such as Memphis Meats, Perfect Day, and JUST are essentially leading the way in this emerging sector called cellular agriculture. They are the ones pushing the development of lab-grown dairy and beef that are identical to their traditional counterparts, as well as a different, sustainable, and ethically responsible future for food.

**Faux Meat:** Introduction to Plant-based meat, as more people look for animal alternatives, plant-based meat replacements are gaining traction. To replicate the texture and flavour of meat, these products blend a variety of plant-based components with proteins derived from wheat, soy, or peas. Companies like Redefine Meat and Juicy Marbles use assembly technology and 3D printing to create plant-based products that look like animal meats, complete with fat marbling and texture.

**Personalized Culinary Creations:** 3D Food Printing through the use of active edible components; 3D food printing fabricates intricate and personalized food constructions which have allowed culinary technology to step boldly into its latest era. This creates an abundance of opportunities to modify the flavour, texture, and nutritional value that chefs, food producers, and customers want. Businesses like Natural Machines, BeeHex, and ByFlow have been studying 3D food printing to customize meals based on individual dietary requirements and preferences.

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**AI-Powered Food Discovery:** AI has an impact on how people find and engage with food products by offering custom recommendations that consider their specific diet needs and flavour likes. AI systems look at huge amounts of data on recipes, meal plans, and product tips to give each user personalized taste, health aims, and food limits. Businesses like Innit, Food pairing, and Whisk use AI to assist consumers in trying new foods, making better food choices, and developing stronger relationships with food than they did in the past.

**Block chain Technology:** Encouraging Traceability and Transparency in the Food Supply Chain Block chain technology is transforming the food supply chain, bringing about improvements in traceability, transparency, and overall trust. Block chain technology reduces food fraud, increases food safety, and ensures product authenticity by recording each step of the food manufacturing process on a secure, decentralized ledger. Some block chain-based systems that emphasize accountability and transparency to build robust and long-lasting food supply chains are IBM Food Trust, Ve-Chain, and TE-FOOD.

**The Agricultural Revolution:** Vertical Farming has introduced the world to a new definition of agriculture for combating food production challenges in environmentally friendly and sustainable ways. The answer is, as described by the narrative of vertical stacking layers of crops grown in controlled indoor environments; thus, land use efficiency, less water use, and production year-round. As such, players including Aero Farms, Plenty, and Bowery Farming have taken early steps to ensure fresh produce can return – farming directly in the city with urban agriculture growing crops for a new century.

**Conclusion:**

A sea change in the food industry is imminent with the innovation wave of new technologies at play. What these technologies could amount to is an appreciably more sustainable, transparent, and personalized food ecosystem. Vertical farming and 3D printing of food, block chain in supply chains, and AI-powered food discovery are changing the game of how food is produced, distributed, and consumed. It is embracing all of these developments that the joining of forces, learning from each other, and collaboration from farm to fork in using the potential technology has in store will make a more resourceful, inclusive, and sustainable food system for future generations.

# Enhancing the Tourism Experience through Gastronomy in the Maldives

Chef Mariyam Noordeen

*"Founding President, Chefs Guild of Maldives."*



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## Introduction

Food is a fundamental aspect of human life, extending beyond mere sustenance to embody culture, customs, and identity. In recent years, gastronomic tourism has emerged as a distinct travel trend, focusing on the enjoyment of local cuisines and culinary traditions. This form of tourism not only enriches the travel experience but also reflects a destination's heritage and cultural richness. The Maldives, with its diverse culinary heritage and vibrant culture, stands poised to capitalize on this trend to enhance its tourism offerings.

## Gastronomic Tourism: An Emerging Trend

Gastronomic tourism involves traveling with the primary aim of enjoying and experiencing local food and drink. This niche has become a vital component of global destination marketing, highlighting the deep connection between tourism and gastronomy. The pursuit of authentic, ethnic, and contemporary cuisines is driving travelers to seek out destinations that offer unique culinary experiences. For many, local cuisine is a key factor in choosing a destination, as it provides a tangible link to the region's culture and history.

## The Culinary Heritage of the Maldives

The Maldives, an archipelago of approximately 1,000 coral islands, boasts a rich cultural tapestry influenced by South Asia, Africa, Arabia, and the East Indies. With tourism contributing significantly to the country's GDP, there is a pressing need to diversify beyond the traditional appeal of sun, sand, and sea.

Maldivian culture is deeply intertwined with its culinary practices. Traditional celebrations, music, and cuisine reflect a blend of influences and local traditions. Events such as Malaafaiy Keyn, Maahefun, and Tharavees highlight the role of food in Maldivian culture, celebrating various religious and cultural observances with grand feasts.

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The Maldives' traditional cuisine is characterized by its regional diversity, shaped by the islands' historical isolation and limited cultivable land. Reliance on seafood, along with local produce such as coconut, breadfruit, millet, and tubers, has led to a rich array of tastes and

textures in Maldivian food. Historical interactions with foreign cultures have also left an imprint on local cuisine, further enriching its flavor profile.

### The Current Tourism Landscape

The Maldives is home to over 170 luxury resorts and more than 800 guesthouses spread across its islands. While the natural beauty of the Maldives has traditionally been the primary draw for tourists, increasing competition from destinations with similar geographic features necessitates a diversification of tourism offerings. A focus on gastronomic tourism presents a promising opportunity to attract food enthusiasts and enhance the overall visitor experience.

A 2012 study indicated that while the Maldives is primarily known for its natural beauty, there is growing interest in local cuisine among visitors. This emerging trend suggests that gastronomic tourism could play a significant role in sustaining and expanding the Maldives' tourism sector. By integrating local culinary experiences into its tourism strategy, the Maldives can offer a distinctive and enriching experience that goes beyond the typical sun, sand, and sea appeal.

### Leveraging Gastronomy for Sustainable Tourism

The Maldives is well-positioned to develop a robust gastronomic tourism sector due to its abundance of seafood and diverse local produce. The country's rich culinary traditions and established dishes, along with a strong hospitality sector, provide a solid foundation for this initiative.

However, several challenges must be addressed to successfully implement gastronomic tourism:

1. Supply of Local Produce: Ensuring a steady supply of local ingredients is crucial. Collaboration between the tourism and agriculture sectors, along with

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partnerships with international stakeholders, can support this effort.

2. Authenticity of Cuisine: Preserving traditional cooking methods and avoiding reliance on imported ingredients is essential to maintaining the authenticity of Maldivian cuisine.
3. Lack of Structured Guidelines: Developing clear guidelines for gastronomic tourism will help maintain quality and authenticity.

### **Strategic Recommendations**

To capitalize on the potential of gastronomic tourism, the Maldives should consider the following strategies:

1. Pilot Programs: Introduce food festivals, cooking classes, and culinary tours to showcase Maldivian cuisine and refine offerings based on visitor feedback.
2. Industry Collaboration: Foster partnerships between tourism operators, local farmers, and international stakeholders to support and promote local produce.
3. Marketing and Promotion: Highlight Maldivian gastronomy as a unique aspect of the destination's tourism product, emphasizing its cultural and culinary heritage.

### **Conclusion**

Gastronomic tourism offers the Maldives a valuable opportunity to diversify its tourism offerings and enhance the visitor experience. By focusing on its rich culinary traditions and leveraging its local produce, the Maldives can create a distinctive and engaging tourism experience that complements its natural beauty. Gastronomy has the potential to sustain and grow the Maldives' tourism sector, support local industries, and preserve cultural heritage. Embracing this trend can lead to a more vibrant and resilient tourism industry, providing substantial benefits for both visitors and the local community.

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***Aglio - e - olio spaghetti felt dejected when a Chinese Food Lover called it "Fake Pasta" mistaking it for noodles.***



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## IFCA Centre for Learning & Development

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The Indian Federation of Culinary Association (IFCA) offers a learning development program aimed at enhancing culinary skills and knowledge within the Indian culinary community. This program focuses on providing professional development opportunities for chefs and culinary aspirants across the country. It covers a wide range of topics including traditional Indian cuisine, modern culinary techniques, international cuisines, food safety, nutrition, and hospitality management.

IFCA's learning development program incorporates workshops, seminars, masterclasses, and hands-on training sessions conducted by renowned chefs and industry experts. Participants have the opportunity to learn from experienced professionals, gain practical experience, and network with peers in the culinary field. The program is designed to cater to individuals at various skill levels, from beginners to experienced chefs looking to expand their expertise.

By fostering a culture of continuous learning and skill development, IFCA aims to elevate the standards of Indian culinary arts, promote innovation, and contribute to the growth and success of the culinary industry in India.



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**ಇಂಡಿಯನ್ ಫೆಡರೇಶನ್ ಆಫ್ ಕಲಿನರಿ ಅಸೋಸಿಯೇಷನ್**

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