

November 2024

IFCA Magazine

Food and Beyond....

Issue 3



**From WorldChefs
Election 2024
with Love**



**Future of Food;
Beyond Chef's
Imagination**



**Genetic
Modification in
the Food Industry**



Managing Editor's Note



This edition is definitely a banger, almost all articles touch upon sustainability in our field which is such a current, important and burning topic on our minds.

From hyper-local sourcing to understanding the use of genetic modification in achieving the UN sustainable development goals and from Lab grown meat to zero waste, we truly have a tantalising selection for you to read from in this edition brought to you by our ever dedicated team of writers.

What more is there to say, apart from I hope that sustainability can take root in your professional lives through these articles and help the world recover from the decades of harm that we have done to it. We as chefs have a social responsibility and this is where it should start.

Enjoy reading ahead! Until we meet again...

Culinary regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheraz Nair'.

Sheraz Nair

Managing Editor of IFCA Magazine and Newsletter.



contents

01 » **Presidium**

Meet and know the presidium of Indian Federation of Culinary Associations

02 » **Board of Advisor**

Meet and know the Board of Advisors of Indian Federation of Culinary Associations

03 » **From WorldChefs Election 2024 with Love**

Snapshots from the WorldChefs Election 2024.

04 » **New Global Leadership in Culinary Excellence: World Chef Elections Held at Worldchefs Congress and Expo 2024 in Singapore**

The World Association of Chefs' Societies (Worldchefs) held its much-anticipated World Chef Elections during the Worldchefs Congress and Expo 2024,

05 » **INDIA BAGS SILVER MEDAL IN THE INTERNATIONAL FHA DESSERT CHALLENGE 2024 IN SINGAPORE.**

Chef Sameema DF bags Silver

06 » **Press Note: Celebrating International Chef Day with a Heartwarming Event for Underprivileged Children**

In a beautiful initiative to commemorate International Chef Day, over 300 underprivileged children from across Goa were treated to a special lunch at Fr. Agnel College, Verna.

07 » **To meat or not to meet**

Lab-grown meat, also known as cultured or cell-based meat, is an innovative food product created by cultivating animal cells in a controlled environment.

09 » **Future of Food; Beyond Chef's Imagination**

The culinary world is undergoing an exciting transformation, blending innovation with tradition to create once-unimaginable food experiences.

10 » **Hyper-Local Sourcing: The Next Step in Farm-to-Table Dining**

In urban areas, where traditional farming is limited, hyper-local sourcing has led to the rise of rooftop gardens and vertical farms.

11 » **Genetic Modification in the Food Industry**

Some Methods of Genetic Modification and their Past Uses in the Industry

13 » **WorldChefs Presidential Campaign October 2024**

If Music and Dance can solve real problems, Carpe Diem.

14 » **Culinary Diplomacy: How Food Can Foster International Relations and Cultural Exchange**

In a world that is increasingly interconnected, the concept of culinary diplomacy has emerged as a powerful means of bridging cultural and national divides.

16 » **Sustainable Practices in Pastry Making: A Sweet Step towards a Greener Future.**

As the world becomes increasingly aware of sustainability, industries are rethinking their methods, and pastry making is no exception.

18 » **Make Friends with these Top 5 Kitchen Trends!**

Food lovers, fellow chefs, and anyone who loves peeking behind our kitchen curtains, SAT SRI AKAL and a big hello to everyone.

19 » **Coupling Ayurveda in Diet**

Ayurveda, an ancient Indian medical system, highlights the concept of Prakruti.



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From WorldChefs Election 2024 with Love

Snapshots from the WorldChefs
Election **2024.**



New Global Leadership in Culinary Excellence: World Chef Elections Held at Worldchefs Congress and Expo 2024 in Singapore

The World Association of Chefs' Societies (Worldchefs) held its much-anticipated World Chef Elections during the Worldchefs Congress and Expo 2024, a premier gathering of the global culinary community, from October 20-22 at Marina Bay Sands Convention Centre, Singapore. The last time this event was held in Singapore was in 1990, 34 years ago. Singapore was the first country in Asia to host it.

This year's event marked a milestone in culinary excellence, bringing together chefs, industry leaders, and culinary enthusiasts from over 110 countries to discuss the future of food, share innovations, and set new benchmarks in the culinary arts. Worldchefs Congress and Expo is a stellar line-up of educational speakers, intense competition with the world final of the Global Chefs Challenge, and a vibrant expo taking place at FHA-HoReCa, a global marketplace for leading foodservice & hospitality suppliers in Asia.

The 40th Worldchefs Congress theme was 'Culinary Horizons – Designing Our Future', challenges participants to reimagine the future of the culinary industry, emphasizing sustainability, innovation, and the evolving role of chefs in the global food system.

The World Chef Elections are held every four years, where leading culinary professionals from across the globe come together to elect the association's executive committee, including the President, who guide Worldchefs' mission to improve the culinary industry worldwide. The 2024 elections were particularly noteworthy, with a diverse lineup of candidates committed to advancing sustainability, education, and culinary inclusivity.



Newly Elected Leadership and Their Vision for Worldchefs

The newly elected President, Chef Andy Cuthbert brings decades of international experience and a passion for transforming the culinary landscape through sustainability and community empowerment. Cuthbert, president of the Emirates Culinary Guild, got elected in a straight and close contest with Manjit Singh Gill, president of Indian Federation of Culinary Association.

In his acceptance speech, Chef Andy Cuthbert emphasized a commitment to creating a more sustainable future for the industry, enhancing educational programs, and promoting diversity in professional kitchens worldwide. Under his leadership, the executive team plans to launch initiatives aimed at supporting sustainable food systems, enhancing culinary education, and fostering collaboration among global chef communities.

Focus on Sustainability and Culinary Innovation

The Congress and Expo showcased the latest in culinary innovation, featuring seminars, workshops, and live cooking demonstrations by some of the world's most celebrated chefs. This year's theme, "Crafting Tomorrow's Plate," highlighted the industry's ongoing transformation towards sustainable practices, with an emphasis on using locally sourced, organic ingredients and reducing food waste. Industry leaders discussed future trends, including plant-based diets, zero-waste kitchens, and ethical sourcing, underscoring a collective drive to make sustainability a central pillar of the culinary profession.

The Worldchefs Congress and Expo 2024 successfully united the international culinary community in Singapore, providing a platform for knowledge exchange, networking, and inspiration. As the new leadership embarks on its journey, Worldchefs is poised to continue its legacy of shaping the global culinary scene with a commitment to quality, education, and inclusivity.

About Worldchefs

The World Association of Chefs' Societies (Worldchefs), established in 1928, is a global network of chefs dedicated to advancing culinary standards and fostering collaboration within the industry. With a presence in over 110 countries, Worldchefs supports chefs' professional development, promotes sustainable culinary practices, and unites the culinary community under the shared goals of excellence and integrity.



INDIA BAGS SILVER MEDAL IN THE INTERNATIONAL FHA DESSERT CHALLENGE 2024 IN SINGAPORE.



Chef DF Samema, who is now in the second year of studying Catering Science and Hotel Management at Sri Ramakrishna College of Arts and Science, Nava India, Coimbatore, and who is being mentored by Chef Ajith Kumar K, was awarded a silver medal for representing India in the FHA Dessert Challenge that was held in Singapore.

Food Hotel Asia (FHA) based in the United States organizes international culinary competition in the Asian countries every year. This year, the competition was held in Singapore in which 30 selected chefs participated from various countries including India, China, Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, South Korea, Philippines and Singapore.

Among the other formidable competitors, India was represented by Chef DF Samema and Chef Ajith Kumar K, who demonstrated their exceptional pastry talents throughout the competition. This bagged her the prestigious silver medal. Moreover, she is the first youngest contestant from South India and the only participant from India. She was highly commended by the Singapore Pastry Alliance Association, the South Indian Chefs Association, and the Indian Federation of Culinary Association.

Thiru. D. Lakshminarayanawamy, Managing Trustee, SNR Sons Charitable Trust, Dr. B.L. Shivakumar, Principal & Secretary of the college greatly appreciated DF Samema for her excellence.

This accomplishment was accomplished with the assistance of Chef K. Ajith Kumar, who serves as a Culinary and Pastry Mentor in the Catering Science and Hotel Management department at SRCAS. Chef K. Ajith Kumar provided her with direction and motivation. The college management's financial assistance in her achievement is noteworthy.

Celebrating International Chef Day with a Heartwarming Event for Underprivileged Children



Date: October 14, 2024

Venue: Fr. Agnel College, Verna, Goa

Time: 12:30 PM

In a beautiful initiative to commemorate International Chef Day, over 300 underprivileged children from across Goa were treated to a special lunch at Fr. Agnel College, Verna. As part of this event, meals were specially delivered to several orphanages in the region, including: Agnel's Balgram, Pilar Balgram, Clunny Sisters Orphanage, Valentine's Little Heaven, Valentine's Little Heaven, Love, Joy & Hope Orphanage, Nuvern.

The event was organized with the assistance of 50 dedicated volunteers and aimed to spread joy and provide a memorable culinary experience to children in need.

This heartwarming event was made possible by the generosity of some of Goa's finest hospitality establishments. The sponsors of the lunch included renowned names such as Holiday Inn Resort Goa, Fisherman's Wharf, Zuri White Sands, Casino Gold, Caravela Beach Resort, Foodybreaks Academy, Donna Italia, Radisson Blu – Cavello, Planet Hollywood, Lemon Tree, and Hyfan Foods. Each sponsor contributed to making the day extra special, providing a variety of delicious meals and drinks for the children.

The celebration not only highlighted the spirit of giving but also aimed to foster a love for food and the culinary arts among young minds. It reinforced the message that food can unite communities and uplift lives, embodying the true essence of International Chef Day.

The organizers extended their heartfelt thanks to all the sponsors and volunteers who made the event a success and created cherished memories for the children.

To meat or not to meet

Amit Vohra

Chef Amit Vohra is an accomplished chef and academician with over 22 years of experience in Hotel Management, Retail, and Education. A proud alumnus of the Institute of Hotel Management, Bhopal, and the Taj Management Training Program, he has worked with top brands like The Taj Group, ITC Welcomgroup, The Oberoi Group, and Aditya Birla Retail. He excels in areas like new product development, training, and quality assurance. Since 2015, he has been involved in academia, specializing in Bakery, Pastry Arts, and Kitchen Maths. He is the author of notable books including "Kitchen Maths," "Kitchen Maths DECODED," and "Fundamentals of Baking." Chef Vohra currently heads the Culinary Arts department at Chitkara University, Punjab, and is pursuing a PhD in Synthetic Protein.



Lab-grown meat, also known as cultured or cell-based meat, is an innovative food product created by cultivating animal cells in a controlled environment. Instead of raising and slaughtering animals, scientists use a small sample of animal cells, often taken from a biopsy, and place them in a nutrient-rich medium where they multiply and develop into muscle tissue, mimicking the structure and taste of conventional meat. This technology holds the potential to redefine how meat is produced and consumed worldwide.

The development of lab-grown meat is driven by several pressing concerns. First, the traditional livestock industry faces scrutiny due to its significant environmental impact, including greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation, and water consumption. The livestock sector alone accounts for nearly 14.5% of global greenhouse emissions, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). With global populations projected to exceed 9 billion by 2050, the demand for protein will soar, placing unsustainable pressure on existing agricultural systems.

Moreover, the ethical concerns surrounding the treatment of animals in industrial farming have also fuelled interest in alternatives like cultured meat. Animal welfare organizations have long criticized factory farming practices for their cruelty, and lab-grown meat offers a potential solution by removing the need for animal slaughter. Additionally, advancements in biotechnology and growing consumer demand for sustainable, ethical products have accelerated research and investment in this emerging field.

Lab-grown meat has the potential to address many of the critical challenges facing the world today. From an environmental perspective, it could significantly reduce the carbon footprint of meat production by eliminating the need for large-scale animal farming. A study by the University of Oxford estimates that cultured meat could cut emissions by up to 96% compared to conventional meat production. It also uses far less land and water, offering a more efficient way to produce protein and mitigate the strain on natural resources.

Another major benefit lies in food security. With the growing global population and the threat of climate change disrupting agricultural practices, lab-grown meat could provide a stable, reliable source of protein. By decoupling meat production from traditional farming, lab-grown meat can be produced in urban settings and controlled environments, reducing the vulnerability of the food supply chain to environmental or geopolitical disruptions.

Despite its promise, lab-grown meat is not without challenges. One of the most significant hurdles is the current high cost of production. While prices have decreased dramatically since the first lab-grown burger in 2013, cultured meat is still far from being economically viable for mass production. Until costs are reduced, lab-grown meat will remain a niche product inaccessible to most consumers.



Moreover, the shift to lab-grown meat could have profound socio-economic consequences. Millions of people worldwide depend on traditional livestock farming for their livelihoods. A large-scale transition to lab-grown meat could lead to job losses and destabilize rural economies. In regions where animal farming is deeply ingrained in cultural and social systems, the adoption of lab-grown meat may face resistance, further complicating its widespread acceptance.

Additionally, there are concerns about the energy use of large bioreactors required for mass production. If these systems rely heavily on fossil fuels, the environmental benefits of lab-grown meat could be negated. Ensuring that the energy used in production is sustainable is critical to realizing its potential as an eco-friendly alternative.

Lab-grown meat offers an innovative solution to many of the problems associated with traditional meat production, from environmental sustainability to animal welfare. However, it is not a silver bullet. While it holds the promise of reducing the environmental and ethical impacts of meat consumption, significant economic, social, and energy-related challenges remain. Whether lab-grown meat becomes a mainstream solution or remains a niche product will depend on addressing these challenges, but its potential to reshape the global food landscape is undeniable.

Future of Food Beyond Chef's Imagination

Chef Prabhjot Singh



Chef Prabhjot Singh is presently working in bakery and pastry arts with Rambagh Palace, Jaipur, a property managed by The Taj Group of Hotels.



The culinary world is undergoing an exciting transformation, blending innovation with tradition to create once-unimaginable food experiences. Imagine indulging in chocolate that hasn't come from cocoa bean farms but is created in a laboratory, using a process that begins with stem cell extraction from cacao plants, these cells are placed in a bioreactor where they grow and multiply, mimicking the properties of traditional cocoa beans, as a result, the chocolate tastes just as indulgent but is produced ethically and sustainably, without the environmental and social issues tied to conventional cocoa farming, this will enable consumers to savour this lab-grown chocolate, offering a new level of guilt-free indulgence.

But chocolate isn't the only thing being reinvented. As the world searches for sustainable food sources, innovative farming methods like hydroponics and aeroponics are gaining popularity. Hydroponics allows plants to grow without soil, with their roots submerged in nutrient-rich water, ensuring faster growth using less water. Aeroponics takes it further by growing plants in air or mist environments, with roots suspended freely and sprayed with nutrients. This technique uses 90% less water than traditional farming, making it a game changer for regions with limited arable land. Together, these methods offer urban areas the chance to grow fresh produce locally with a minimal carbon footprint, which is crucial as cities continue to expand.

While these methods focus on the future of food production, the dining experience itself is also evolving into something magical. Enter La Petite Chef, a 3D dining experience that's taking the world by storm. As you sit down for a meal, a tiny animated chef is projected onto your table, embarking on a whimsical adventure as you enjoy dishes that align with the storyline. Originating in Dubai and expanding to cities like Delhi; La Petite Chef combines storytelling, 3D animation, and gourmet cuisine in a way that turns dining into a multi-sensory experience. It's a unique fusion of technology and gastronomy that is gaining global attention for transforming how we enjoy food.

These innovations remind us that while technology is reshaping the culinary world, it's still about human connection. Lab-grown chocolate offers a way to enjoy indulgence without harm, while hydroponics and aeroponics help ensure food security for future generations, and dining becomes more interactive and immersive, the joy of sharing meals with others remains at the heart of it all. As we look ahead, it's clear that the future of food is both imaginative and deeply rooted in creating meaningful connections over meals.



Hyper-Local Sourcing: The Next Step in Farm-to-Table Dining

Chef Karthikeyan Kumar

As sustainability takes hold in modern dining, hyper-local sourcing has emerged as an evolution of the farm-to-table movement. This approach narrows the focus to sourcing ingredients from the closest possible locations—often within a restaurant’s immediate surroundings or even on-site. It emphasizes fresher produce, reduced food miles, and a stronger connection between chefs and their ingredients, reshaping how we think about food and sustainability.

Urban Farms and Rooftop Gardens

In urban areas, where traditional farming is limited, hyper-local sourcing has led to the rise of rooftop gardens and vertical farms. Chefs can now grow herbs, microgreens, and seasonal vegetables just a few steps away from their kitchens. These gardens allow chefs to harvest ingredients at their peak freshness, adding both quality and creativity to their dishes.

This approach offers chefs greater control over the ingredients they use, enabling them to plan menus around what’s in season and thriving in their gardens. Urban farms also contribute to environmental benefits, such as reducing building temperatures and promoting biodiversity, all while minimizing the carbon footprint associated with long-distance food transport.

Foraging and Wild Ingredients

Another key component of hyper-local sourcing is foraging, a practice that connects chefs with their natural surroundings. By gathering wild ingredients from nearby forests, coastlines, or fields, chefs are able to incorporate unique, seasonal flavors into their menus. From wild herbs to mushrooms and berries, foraged ingredients offer tastes that reflect the specific terroir of the region.

For diners, foraging introduces an element of surprise, with flavors that are not only seasonal but also fleeting and rare. These ingredients embody the essence of hyper-local sourcing—providing a direct connection to nature’s bounty while adding depth and authenticity to dishes.

Supporting Local Farmers and Reducing Carbon Footprint

While urban farming and foraging are central to hyper-local sourcing, partnerships with local farmers also play a vital role. By sourcing ingredients from nearby small-scale producers, restaurants can maintain a steady supply of fresh, high-quality produce, meats, and dairy products. This fosters closer relationships with farmers who practice sustainable farming methods, such as crop rotation and organic cultivation.

Reducing food miles is a critical aspect of hyper-local sourcing. By cutting down on transportation, packaging, and refrigeration needs, restaurants can significantly lower their carbon footprint. Unlike conventional food systems, which often involve long supply chains, hyper-local sourcing simplifies the process, ensuring that ingredients reach the plate with minimal environmental impact.

Challenges and Opportunities

Despite its many benefits, hyper-local sourcing presents challenges. Yields from rooftop gardens or local suppliers may not always be sufficient to meet restaurant demands. However, these limitations inspire chefs to be flexible, adapting menus to seasonal availability and maximizing the use of every ingredient, further supporting the zero-waste movement.



Chef Karthikeyan is an accomplished culinary professional with a diverse blend of academic and industry experience. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Hotel Management, an MBA in Hotel Management, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Hospitality Administration. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. focusing on innovative trends in the hospitality sector.

His career spans international experience with prestigious cruise lines, where he honed his culinary expertise in high-pressure, fast-paced environments. Transitioning into academia, Chef Karthikeyan has become a dedicated culinary trainer and is currently the Head of the School of Hospitality and Tourism at AIMS Institutes in Bangalore. Here, he leads programs that combine practical training with academic rigor, ensuring students are equipped to excel in the global hospitality industry.

With his advanced qualifications and hands-on experience, Chef Karthikeyan is an influential leader and innovator in hospitality education, shaping the future of the culinary profession.

Conclusion

Hyper-local sourcing goes beyond the farm-to-table trend by embracing proximity and sustainability. As eco-conscious dining gains momentum, this approach not only ensures fresher and more flavorful meals but also deepens our connection to food, the environment, and local communities.

Genetic Modification in the Food Industry

Aditya Rajesh Nair

Genetic modification (GM) is an expanding area of biotechnology that is transforming environmental management, agriculture, and health industries. I find it important to explore how it will impact the food industry as well

It involves modifying an organism's DNA or genetic material to add new traits or change existing ones. Although genetic modification has a long history, the discovery of recombinant DNA in the 1970s gave way for modern genetic engineering (Berg et al., 1975). Since then, the technology has improved, increasing its impact and uses in several industries.

Some Methods of Genetic Modification and their Past Uses in the Industry

Cisgenesis and Transgenesis: Cisgenesis is the process of transferring genes across organisms of closely related species. Researchers have used cisgenesis to improve disease resistance in potatoes by using genes from wild potatoes (Haverkort et al., 2016). This is believed to be more "natural" and reduces ethical problems. Think of cisgenesis as a family reunion where you're only inviting close relatives. It involves transferring genes between organisms that are closely related, just like how family members share traits and traditions.

Whereas, transgenesis is the process of transferring genes between unrelated species. One example is Bt corn, which has been genetically altered to produce a protein, from *Bacillus thuringiensis* bacteria, that is poisonous to some pests and vermin. This has reduced the use of chemical pesticides as well as increased yields. (Head et al., 2014).

CRISPR-Cas9: Imagine if you could edit a book by just cutting and pasting pages—CRISPR-Cas9 works somewhat like that, but with DNA. The CRISPR-Cas9 technology, developed in 2012 by Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier, represents a substantial advancement in the field of genetic engineering (Doudna & Charpentier, 2014). This tool allows for very precise modifications to DNA, much like fine tuning a recipe, enabling scientists to knock out, insert, or replace specific genes. (Zhang et al., 2016).

The environmental impact of GMOs is also a concern. Issues such as biodiversity loss, gene transfer to non-target species, and the development of pesticide-resistant 'superbugs' also exist (Gould, 1998).

Applications and Benefits of Genetic Modification

Genetic modification has revolutionized agriculture. GM crops can be bred to resist pests, tolerate droughts, and raise yields as well as improve nutritional content, which can help us with the world food crisis, that began in 2022, as declared by the UN World Food Program.

Bt corn, again, stands out as maybe the best example for GM being used for enhancing crop performance, as it has reduced pest damage and increase yields by up to 15% (Brookes & Barfoot, 2018).

Another example of GM is Golden Rice. By inserting genes from daffodils and bacteria, it's been engineered to produce Beta-carotene— a compound that our livers turn into Vitamin A. This biofortified rice can combat vitamin A deficiency, which is prevalent in many developing countries where rice is a staple (Paine et al., 2005). This can also contribute to reach the the third UN Sustainable Development Goal (Good Health and Well-being)

Additionally, drought-tolerant GM crops can help farmers in regions with water scarcity, contributing to global food security which is the second UNSDG (Zero Hunger).



Aditya is a promising young chef who has already made a significant impact in the culinary world. At 16, as the youngest delegate from India at the 2024 World Chefs Congress, he represented the country with distinction, gaining invaluable insights from global culinary leaders. He holds a Level 2 diploma in food preparation and culinary arts, and is pursuing a Level 3 diplomas in pastry arts and supervisory diploma culinary arts from City and Guilds, London, achieved at the Bangalore Culinary Academy while balancing the rigorous International Baccalaureate Diploma program for his 11th grade . Aditya has excelled in numerous national-level culinary competitions, winning several awards for his creativity and skill. His passion for culinary research has never been more evident than in the following article.

Controversies and Ethical Considerations

Despite the benefits of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), they face scrutiny regarding possible health risks. Concerns range from possible toxicity to the emergence of antibiotic resistance. Although a comprehensive review by the National Academy of Sciences concluded that GM foods currently approved for consumption are as safe as their conventional counterparts (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016), public hesitation continues. Some studies have linked GMOs to health issues, but these findings remain inconclusive and debatable (Bøhn et al., 2014).

The environmental impact of GMOs is also a concern. Issues such as biodiversity loss, gene transfer to non-target species, and the development of pesticide-resistant 'superbugs' also exist (Gould, 1998). Societal and ethical concerns also complicate the issue, specifically about consumer awareness and labeling. It is difficult for customers to make informed choices due to the lack of consistent labelling regulations across countries. International initiatives to standardize regulations, like Codex Alimentarius, face challenges in seeking global implementation (Codex Alimentarius, 2017). Public trust in genetic modification is important, and maintaining transparency in research and regulation upholds it. Ethical debates, especially concerning germline editing (Genetically modifying reproductive gametes) and genetically modified animals, raise questions about the extent of human intervention in nature (Baltimore et al., 2015).

Conclusion

Genetic modification has the potential to tackle some of the biggest challenges we face, like food security. But it also brings up important debates and ethical questions that we need to think through carefully. By addressing these concerns, we can make the most of what genetic modification has to offer while keeping any risks in check and using it responsibly. As conversations about GMOs become more common, it's crucial to help people understand the issues better.





SICA

SOUTH INDIA CHEF'S ASSOCIATION

WorldChefs Presidential Campaign October 2024

Mr. Himanshu Barola

If Music and Dance can solve real problems, Carpe Diem.

The WorldChefs Presidential Election concluded on October 22, 2024, at Marina Bay Sands, Singapore, after a three-day conference from October 20-22, with the election taking place on the final day.

This election added another feather to the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations' (IFCA) cap. India has been a member of the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) for the past 20 years. For the first time in history, something unprecedented occurred: Chef Manjit Gill became the first Indian, the first Asian, and indeed the first representative from the Global South to contest this election.

Around the World, the status quo is being challenged, and our closely knit Chef Community is no exception. This time, we didn't come just to receive Awards, Applause, or Certificates. We came to challenge the Status Quo, bringing with us a vision - an Agenda, a Manifesto, and a plan for Execution. We wanted to look beyond Conferences, Competitions, and other routine Objectives.

As the aspirations of our Global Youth evolve, so must we. The most important constant in this World is change. Today's youth have access to Knowledge and Resources; what they seek from us is simply a listening ear. Only Luddites resist change, clinging to comfort zones and perhaps deliberately overlooking the hopes and dreams of those around them.



Once you have skin in the game, you no longer look at things superficially. That's exactly what we did. Even with limited data - whether by design or oversight - we connected with various presidents and Association Members Worldwide. At first, we simply sought votes. But as our journey progressed, we recognized a Wealth of hidden talent and potential. All these individuals need is a voice through which they can be heard and seen. We understood the linguistic diversity of our community, and Chef Manjit Gill's speech was translated into 13 languages, including Mandarin, Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese, Spanish, Greek, Portuguese, Russian, Italian, Arabic, Polish, French, and German.



Some may ask: where is the grace in losing? Before launching our campaign, we did the math and realized that we had only one vote - Chef Manjit Gill's. However, something remarkable happened during the conference. We met numerous International Delegates and gained invaluable insights.

Like any democratic election, Winning is a numbers game, something well understood by the "Mother of Democracy." People often assure each candidate of their support to avoid awkwardness, but the truth is revealed in close observation, conversations, understanding individual ambitions, reading messages, interpreting gestures - all of which indicate real intentions.



Himanshu Barola is Strategic Advisor for Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA). He is also Founder of Sustainability Company - "Everything Recycles". He was part of Chef Manjit Gill WorldChefs Election Campaign Team.



Immediately after the election, the votes were destroyed, a norm for WorldChefs elections. We have a general idea of the support we garnered, though without concrete data, any specifics would be mere conjecture.

Now, people see India as a beacon for unheard voices. Over 100 nations remain outside this prestigious Organization, and we met many countries eager to join but constrained by financial limitations. Many simply cannot afford the WorldChefs annual fees.

The sting of defeat has awakened a sleeping giant, stirring it to unleash its full strength. And as I close this article, I leave you with a thought from Ubuntu philosophy: "I am because we are."

Culinary Diplomacy: How Food Can Foster International Relations and Cultural Exchange

Ms. Purva Sharma

In a world that is increasingly interconnected, the concept of culinary diplomacy has emerged as a powerful means of bridging cultural and national divides. Food, a fundamental aspect of human experience, holds the potential to transcend barriers and foster meaningful connections between people from diverse backgrounds. Through culinary diplomacy, nations can utilize their culinary heritage to build relationships, promote cultural exchange, and enhance international understanding.

The Role of Food in Diplomacy

Food is more than sustenance; it is a reflection of cultural identity, tradition, and innovation. Culinary diplomacy leverages the universal appeal of food to create diplomatic opportunities and foster cultural exchange. By sharing their culinary traditions, countries can engage with international audiences in a way that transcends language and political differences. Here's how food plays a crucial role in this process:

- 1. Cultural Exchange:** Culinary diplomacy provides a platform for cultural exchange by introducing people to the flavors, ingredients, and cooking techniques of different cultures. Food festivals, culinary events, and international cooking competitions allow nations to showcase their culinary heritage and invite others to experience it firsthand.
- 2. Building Relationships:** Sharing meals has long been a way to build and strengthen relationships. Diplomatic dinners, state banquets, and culinary collaborations offer opportunities for leaders and citizens to engage in dialogue and foster mutual respect. These shared experiences can lay the foundation for stronger bilateral ties and collaborative partnership.

Promoting National Identity:

Countries use culinary diplomacy to promote their unique cultural identity and enhance their global image. By presenting their traditional cuisine in international forums, nations can highlight their cultural diversity and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of their heritage.

- 4. Fostering Understanding:** Food can serve as a bridge to understanding and empathy. Culinary diplomacy encourages people to explore and appreciate the food traditions of other cultures, fostering a deeper appreciation and respect for cultural differences.

Examples of Culinary Diplomacy in Action

Several high-profile examples illustrate the impact of culinary diplomacy in fostering international relations:

a) **State Banquets and Diplomatic Dinners:** Often hosted by governments to celebrate diplomatic milestones or foster bilateral relationships, these events feature traditional dishes from the host and guest countries. They provide a platform for leaders to discuss important issues in a relaxed and convivial setting. Such as Gala dinner during G-20.

b) **International Food Festivals:** Events like the World Food Festival or Taste of the World bring together culinary experts, chefs, and food enthusiasts from different countries. These festivals showcase diverse cuisines, encourage culinary innovation, and promote cross-cultural dialogue.

c) **Culinary Exchanges and Collaborations:** Partnerships between chefs and culinary institutions from different countries facilitate knowledge sharing and innovation. For example, culinary exchange programs allow chefs to work in international kitchens, promoting cross-cultural culinary techniques and fostering global networks.

The Impact of Culinary Diplomacy

Culinary diplomacy has the potential to create positive outcomes in various areas:

- 1. Strengthening Bilateral Relations:** By engaging in culinary diplomacy, countries can build stronger relationships and open channels for cooperation in other areas such as trade, education, and tourism.

- 2. Enhancing Global Understanding:** Food serves as a medium through which people can learn about and appreciate different cultures. Culinary diplomacy promotes a more inclusive and interconnected world by celebrating cultural diversity.

- 3. Encouraging Sustainable Practices:** Culinary diplomacy can also highlight and promote sustainable food practices, such as local sourcing and ethical production. This can contribute to global discussions on sustainability and environmental stewardship.



Ms. Purva Sharma, a B.Tech Food Technologist & is the founder of Wholix India.

- Contributed to the creation of five global manuals on reassurance in Vegetarianism and Veganism, highlighting her commitment to sustainable living.

- Led notable projects such as Vegetarian Quality Kitchen Management, Sattvik Textile Management, Sattvik Hospitality Management, and Vegetarian Friendly Railway Services.

- Fostered a successful collaboration between Sattvik Council and De Norske Veritas for Africa in 2022, showcasing her ability to drive global impact through partnerships.

- Orchestrated a significant partnership between Sattvik Council and UL (net worth valued at \$2.62B) in 2022, significantly contributing to the organization's global influence.

- Headed the ITC luxury hotels certification project that became part of the G-20, showcasing her expertise in ensuring high standards.

- Led initiatives for both Sattvik sustainable and conventional building standards, demonstrating a commitment to holistic sustainability, under which Novotel Jodhpur became the world's first vegetarian-certified hotel.

- Served as the main representative of the Singapore office, certifying over 20 renowned brands, including the notable Bikanervala and Holiday Inn Singapore.

- Played an integral role in the team that certified the Shri Ramayan Yatra (the world's first vegetarian-friendly train) and Vande Bharat.

- Headed the Indonesia project with Dr. Nunung Rusmaiti, ASITA Chairperson Indonesia.

- Established Wholix India to revolutionize the food industry.



4. Boosting Tourism and Economy: Countries that effectively use culinary diplomacy can attract tourists interested in experiencing their culinary traditions. This can boost the local economy and create opportunities for cultural tourism.

Conclusion

Culinary diplomacy demonstrates the profound impact that food can have on international relations and cultural exchange. By utilizing food as a tool for dialogue and engagement, nations can foster understanding, build relationships, and promote their cultural heritage on a global stage. As we continue to navigate an increasingly globalized world, culinary diplomacy offers a delicious and meaningful way to connect with others, celebrate diversity, and build a more harmonious international community.

Sustainable Practices in Pastry Making: A Sweet Step towards a Greener Future.

Chef Ajith Kumar K

As the world becomes increasingly aware of sustainability, industries are rethinking their methods, and pastry making is no exception. Traditionally known for its indulgent ingredients and lavish presentations, the pastry world is now embracing a more **eco-conscious** approach. From sourcing ingredients to reducing waste and energy use, sustainable practices in **pastry making** are transforming how we create and enjoy desserts.

The global food system is a major contributor to environmental degradation, with agriculture responsible for significant levels of **greenhouse gas** emissions, water use, and deforestation. Pastry chefs, often reliant on high-demand ingredients like butter, sugar, and chocolate, have a unique opportunity to mitigate this impact. Embracing sustainability in pastry making ensures that future generations can indulge in sweet treats without compromising the health of the planet. This shift also aligns with the growing consumer demand for ethical and environmentally friendly products. Today's consumers are more informed about the environmental and social impacts of their purchases, frequently seeking brands and establishments that prioritize sustainability. By adopting eco-friendly practices, pastry chefs not only contribute to a healthier planet but also meet the evolving expectations of their clientele.

A critical aspect of sustainable pastry making is the careful sourcing of ingredients. Many traditional pastry staples, such as chocolate, sugar, and vanilla, are linked to environmental and ethical concerns, including deforestation, biodiversity loss, and poor labor practices. To address these issues, chefs can choose ingredients that are certified as sustainable.

Fair Trade chocolate, for example, is associated with ethical labor practices and sustainable farming methods, ensuring that cacao farmers are paid fair wages and work under humane conditions. Additionally, organic chocolate supports biodiversity by being grown without harmful pesticides.

Supporting local farms by sourcing dairy and eggs locally not only reduces the carbon footprint associated with transportation but also bolsters regional economies. By working directly with farmers, pastry chefs can ensure humane conditions for animals and sustainable farming practices. Incorporating organic fruits, nuts, and grains helps minimize synthetic pesticide use, and embracing seasonal produce reduces the need for energy-intensive transport while ensuring the freshest ingredients.

The concept of "zero waste" is gaining momentum in the food industry, and pastry kitchens are no exception. Waste can arise from many sources: packaging, food scraps, and energy use. Chefs can implement several strategies to minimize waste. A key element is creatively using every part of an ingredient. For example, fruit peels can be candied, seeds can be toasted for toppings, and leftover dough can be repurposed into crumbles or cookies. This approach not only minimizes waste but also adds unique textures and flavors to pastries. Composting organic waste like fruit scraps and vegetable peels reduces landfill waste and creates nutrient-rich soil for sustainable produce. Additionally, switching to biodegradable or recyclable packaging materials, such as paper or plant-based plastics, can significantly reduce environmental impact.



Chef Ajith Kumar K is a distinguished pastry chef, culinary expert, and the founder of Jammy's company, with over 8 years of experience. Known for his consultancy in the HoReCa sector and as a culinary instructor in prestigious institutions, he holds memberships in esteemed organizations like the Indian Federation of Culinary Association. Chef Ajith is a three-time world record holder, recognized for creating India's tallest burger, the world's largest millet cake, and the longest pictured theme cake. He serves as a lead auditor and advisor for the Nature Science Foundation. His achievements extend to hosting over 40 workshops and training programs. He has also curated more than 10 unique food festivals and has been honored by the Tamil Nadu Ministry of Tourism and the World Culinary Chefs Society. Chef Ajith's work in culinary research includes developing sustainable foods such as low-calorie millet ice cream and chocolates made from Indian herbs.

Energy efficiency is another crucial area in sustainable pastry making. The processes involved in baking, refrigeration, and freezing are often energy-intensive. Modern, energy-efficient appliances can dramatically cut electricity or gas usage. For instance, convection ovens distribute heat more evenly, reducing baking time, while induction stoves consume less energy than traditional gas or electric options. Designing kitchens with sustainability in mind can also have a significant impact; incorporating natural lighting, energy-efficient HVAC systems, and renewable energy sources like solar panels can lower carbon emissions.

The shift toward sustainability in pastry making is more than just a trend; it's a necessary evolution in response to global environmental challenges. By adopting these practices, pastry chefs are demonstrating that it's possible to create indulgent, delicious desserts while respecting the planet's resources. Sustainability in the pastry kitchen is not about sacrificing quality or flavor; it reflects a deeper respect for the earth and its inhabitants. Through thoughtful sourcing, waste reduction, and energy efficiency, pastry chefs can contribute to a greener, more responsible food industry—one sweet treat at a time. As technology advances and consumer awareness grows, sustainable pastry making will likely continue to evolve, leading to even more innovative and eco-friendly approaches in the future.





Make Friends with these Top 5 Kitchen Trends!

Chef Manjit Singh Rattu

Chef Manjit Singh Rattu embarked on his culinary journey almost 24 years ago and continues to relish every bit of it. He lives by one mantra, "Food should be fresh and juicy". He loves cracking the code to his diners taste buds, a little of everything on a plate, and that transpires in his food which showcases different textures and intricate flavours. Chef Manjit loves incorporating play in his work and he is a proud holder of three Guinness World Records among other accolades. Currently he serves as the Senior Executive Chef at Holiday Inn Resorts, Goa and he is General Secretary of Culinary Forum of Goa.



Make Friends with these Top 5 Kitchen Trends!

Food lovers, fellow chefs, and anyone who loves peeking behind our kitchen curtains, **SAT SRI AKAL** and a big hello to everyone. We are all familiar with the crazy chaos of a commercial kitchen but we all love the magic that happens there. It's a jungle here, folks! But between the chaos, we chefs have been adapting and tuning into some pretty cool trends, secret sauces that have been shaking up the industry. Buckle up! I'm about to take you through the top 5 trends in commercial kitchens—Chef Style.

1. Vocal for Local: **DESI FLAVOURS KE MAZA!**

Remember when we used to chase those fancy imported ingredients? Well, it's time we embrace our own local produce. The "Vocal for Local" trend is all about celebrating what's grown right in our backyard or our country's backyard. Farmers are the new rock-stars! Food at all stages needs to be fresh and juicy, retaining all that natural flavour and let's be real, that's highly possible for food that has travelled 20 kms, not 2,000.

One mantra that I try to uphold in my career is, why source Global when you can embrace desi? We're making impossibly delicious dishes with local spices, artisanal cheeses from our mountain regions, and grains grown all around us. That kale and quinoa salad? Swap it with some amaranth (rajgira) and drumstick leaves for the same health benefits and loads of wholesome flavour.



2. Superfood Anyone? **Milletts Are The Name of The Game.**

Milletts are like that old friend who's suddenly become famous on Instagram. Bajra, jowar, ragi—they're back in the spotlight, and for good reason. These tiny grains are packed with nutrients, and guess what? They're as Indian as a dhol at a wedding. From salads to risottos, millets are sneaking into our menus like never before.

We chefs are now proudly preaching millets. You might see millet burgers, millet biryanis, and even millet pancakes on menus these days. It's versatile, healthy, and a great way to cut down on that wheat belly. Plus, they're eco-friendly. Why waste water on rice when you can get a killer dish with half the resources using millets?



3. Innovation: **When Chefs Become Scientists**

Let's talk about innovation in the kitchen—because who doesn't love a bit of kitchen JAADU, right? Molecular gastronomy may have had its moment, but now it's all about blending technology with tradition. We've moved beyond just sous-vide and smoking guns (although those are still fun). Today, you've got robotic arms flipping rotis, dosa printers and AI managing inventory like a pro.

Kathal ke kebab kahe hai kabhi? Yep, that's a normal day innovation for you. Using ingredients like jackfruit or watermelon as plant-based substitutes for meat and fish. We're coming up with plant-based alternatives, healthier versions of your guilty pleasures. The mad scientist vibe is alive, and let me tell you, "yeh toh bas shuruaat hai." Kitchens are evolving, and so is our approach to food.

4. Waste Management: **ZERO-WASTE ZINDABAD!**

Now, if there's one thing I hate, it's waste. Like my grandfather always said, If you're not actively growing anything, you have no right to waste even a single grain! This zero-waste movement is picking up steam in commercial kitchens, and we chefs are getting super creative with it.

You'll find us turning fruit peels into jams, using vegetable scraps for stock, and even dehydrating food waste for garnishes! "**KUCH BHI MAT PHENKO YAAR**", everything can be used." Plus, we're rethinking portion sizes, focusing on root-to-leaf cooking, and making sure that even the so-called waste adds value to our dishes. Less food in the bin means less guilt, and that's a win-win for the planet and the palate.

5. Sustainability: **Is it just a word for your reports?**

Sustainability isn't just a buzzword we throw around in meetings to sound cool—it's serious business. We chefs can be the superheroes of sustainability, except our capes are aprons, and our powers involve cooking just the right amount. From reducing plastic use to sourcing ingredients that don't contribute to deforestation, we're actively making choices that benefit the environment. Some kitchens are even switching to energy-efficient appliances, adopting sustainable seafood practices, and eliminating single-use plastics (goodbye, straws—you won't be missed). And while I may not be planting trees in the middle of service, I like to think that every choice we make in the kitchen is a little step towards a greener world. Plus, who doesn't feel good about serving a dish that is kind to both the planet and the palate.

And that ladies and gentlemen, is the scoop on the top 5 trends taking over commercial kitchens! Whether it's embracing local flavours or going green, these trends aren't just trending—they're shaping the future of food. So next time you sit down for a meal, know that behind the scenes, we chefs are putting in the work, balancing flavours, innovation, and sustainability like true kitchen ninjas.

Coupling Ayurveda in Diet

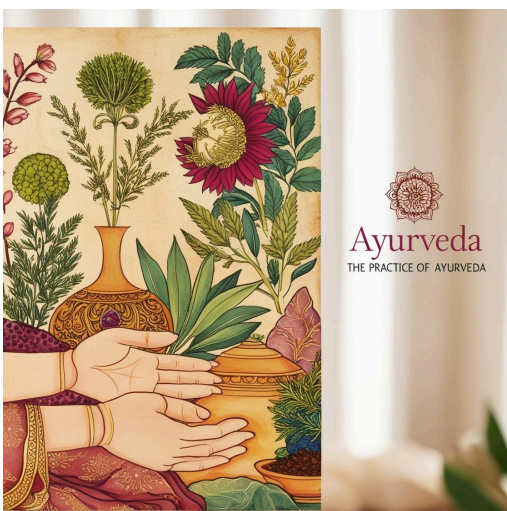
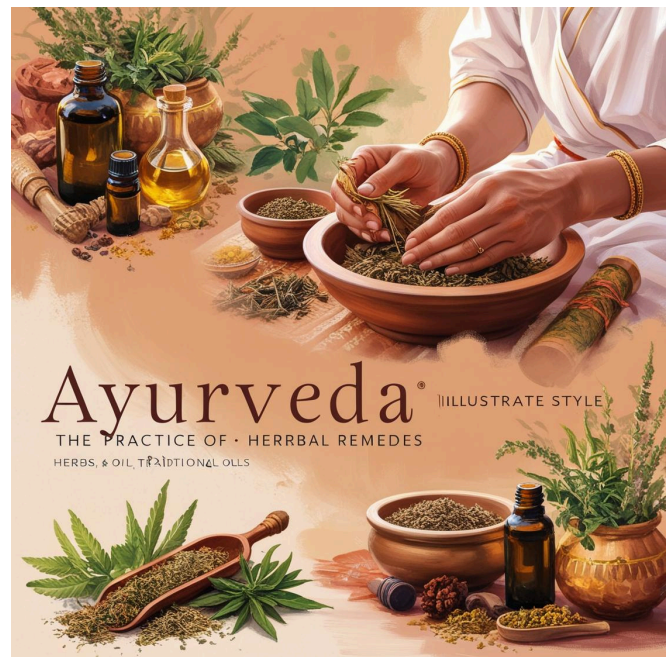
Dr. Chef Salla Vijay Kumar

➤ Dr Salla Vijay Kumar a National Awardee, am serving as Sr. Lecturer at IHM Ahmedabad @ Gandhinagar. Currently, in-charge of the Academic Department (Second term)



Ayurveda, an ancient Indian medical system, highlights the concept of Prakruti. Prakruti stems from the Tridosha theory, which posits that all organisms consist of five elements (ether, air, fire, water, and earth), amalgamating to form three functional principles known as Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. These doshas are not mere fluids but rather dynamic energies governing a broad spectrum of physiological and psychological functions. Understanding one's Prakruti yields numerous benefits, including tailored nutritional advice, lifestyle suggestions, and preventive healthcare. Ayurveda, an age-old healing method, aims to harmonize the body, mind, and spirit through natural remedies, lifestyle adjustments, and treatments tailored to individual constitutions (doshas).

Ayurveda emphasizes holistic well-being, encompassing physical, mental, social, moral, and spiritual facets. When addressing health and illness, this holistic medical system accounts for three primary factors: oushadha (medications and therapies), ahara (diet), and vihara (habits). According to prominent Ayurvedic texts, "diet (ahara)" constitutes one of the three fundamental pillars of health, alongside "adequate sleep (nidra)" and "self-restraint (brahmacharya)." Ayurveda approaches pathyavyavastha (dietary planning) methodically and holistically. Pathya (or advocating an optimal diet) is described as a "diet regimen" that nurtures the body's straits and is appetizing to the individual, thus fostering good health.



Ayurvedic diets encompass both vegetarian and non-vegetarian options. Serving sizes should be customized based on individual doshas (body constitution) and agnibal (digestive capacity). The three bodily humors aid in delineating a person's psychological attributes. Ayurveda titleholders the concept of Rasayana, or specific medicinal food supplements, favouring a bio-balanced diet over a materially balanced one. Embracing an Ayurveda lifestyle can enhance our immune system and emotional wellbeing. As we progress in the present era, it's essential to grasp the intricate harmony between maintaining the cultural integrity of Ayurveda and adjusting its principles to align with today's varied and ever-evolving lifestyle.



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IFCA Centre for Learning & Development

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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