



IFCA MAGAZINE

The Official Magazine of Indian Federation of Culinary Associations



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MANAGING EDITORS NOTE



The past few editions of the IFCA newsletter have brought about a new mindset to the culinary world, nudging us to think beyond our kitchens and the food we put on the plate. It will continue to be our endeavor to bring to you, news, information and facts that compel us to revolutionized the way we work and influence our industry, and to bring to the world the significant contribution our industry makes towards a more conscious future.

This edition carries articles ranging from “The Dried Fish Paradox” and “Food Labels” to recipes from an international cuisine, brought to you by our very dedicated editorial team.

As the current torch bearer of my position, I hope to bring a perspective unlike any other and bring together as many interesting and relevant articles from corners of the industry to your eyes. India is leading the world in innovation, humanities, sciences, and now culinary arts. Keep up with the change and read on...

One such instance of India taking the lead is demonstrated by our dearest and distinguished Chef (Dr.) Manjit Gill, contending for the Presidency of The World Association of Chefs’ Societies. As always, our prayers and support are with him.

Indian cuisine's vast diversity has never been fully documented, until now. Another first initiated by the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA) is documenting and standardizing regional Indian cuisine for the global audience, spearheaded by the ever-radiant Chef Nimish Bhatia. Learn more in this newsletter about how you could be part of this significant project and contribute with authentic regional information.

I hope you enjoy this edition and look forward to the next.

Culinary regards,
Dr. Chef Sheraz Nair
Managing Editor of IFCA Magazine and Newsletter.



Dr. Chef Manjit Singh Gill, President of the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA) and Chairman of the Culture and Heritage Committee of the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS), is vying for the prestigious position of Worldchefs President.

The election will occur during the Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2024, set to take place in Singapore from October 20-24. Should Chef Gill win, he will make history as the first Asian to hold this esteemed role in the 96-year-old global organization.

Known for his leadership in Indian culinary arts and his significant contributions as the former head of ITC Hotels, Chef Gill has been a prominent ambassador of Indian cuisine worldwide. His campaign promises to enhance inclusivity, advance sustainability, and celebrate global culinary heritage, while integrating Ayurvedic principles for better wellness. Competing against him are Chef Cornelia Volino from Canada, working in Saudi Arabia, and Chef Andy Cuthbert, an Australian based in Dubai. With a dedicated campaign team based in Bangalore, Chef Gill aims to spotlight Indian cuisine and foster global culinary excellence.

Meet *the* Editorial Team



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Titbits and Humor

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Dr. V Jay Kumar

Chef (Dr) Varinder S Rana

Chef Alam Singh

From Chef Nimish Bhatia on "The Great Indian Cuisine"



Today, we are diving into a fascinating topic, one very close to my heart: Indian cuisine and its deep connection with us as Indian chefs. Join me and my team as we undertake this exciting crusade of documenting our vast culinary heritage encapsulated in a comprehensive documentation of "The Great Indian Cuisine." A book that will define Indian cuisine in its true essence, with its stories, ingredients, beliefs, inherited and evolved cooking practices, the vibrant festivities and traditions all centred around food.

This book will take the readers through a culinary adventure like no other, from firing up the cooking range to exploring a range of cooking utensils, seeking out ingredients, flavours, and aromas across the landscape of the country.

As Chefs, our training has often focused on European Culinary styles because they are well-documented. We can easily find precise definitions and techniques for gratination, consommé clarification, and mother sauces in authoritative texts like "Larousse Gastronomique," much like how an English scholar relies on the Oxford Dictionary. But what about Indian cuisine?



The answer lies in a rich but scattered heritage. Indian culinary knowledge exists in various forms, fragmented and diverse. We have multiple versions of similar dishes, distinct culinary practices, unique ingredient combinations, and regional variations that all contribute to the country's gastronomic tapestry.

I've always believed that if you face a challenge, you should tackle it head-on. This philosophy inspired me to propose the idea of collating and standardizing Indian cuisine to Chef Manjit Gill and Chef Vijaya Baskaran, who wholeheartedly supported the initiative. Together, we aim to create a definitive document for the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA) that encapsulates the entirety of Indian cuisine.

We have gathered a core team of chefs, culinary historians, educators, and epicureans to contribute to this Indian Gastronomy Bank. Chefs like Chef Subroto Goswami, Chef Ramesh Babu Javvaji, Chef Akshay Kulkarni, Ms. Madhulika Dash, Chef Sheraz Nair, and Chef Subhadip Majumdar have joined us in this mission. Our goal is to document the diverse patterns, ingredients, cooking methods, and serving styles that define Indian food, creating a holistic and inspirational resource.

As we shared this vision, we received enthusiastic support from chefs across India, including Chef Izzat Hussain, Chef Vikas Seth, Chef Vivek, Chef Rajneesh, Chef Rahul Walli, Chef Poonam Dedhia, Chef Vikas Pathak, Chef Altamash, and Chef Rajesh Nair. We feel a sense of belonging and pride as we work together to celebrate and elevate Indian cuisine.

Now we would like to extend this invitation to all you chefs to contribute to this project, whether by sharing regional specialties or broader aspects of Indian cuisine. Let us unite as chefs to make India proud and showcase our culinary genius to the world.

To contribute, please email us at: ifcaindiancuisineproject@gmail.com



The Him Anchal Culinary Challenge 2024

The Him Anchal Culinary Challenge 2024 was a vibrant showcase of culinary talent, bringing together participants from diverse backgrounds including school children and student chefs. Held under the auspices of the Him Anchal Chefs Association in partnership with IFCA, the event highlighted the creativity and skill of each participant. From innovative dishes to traditional flavors, the competition captivated attendees and celebrated the rich culinary heritage of Himachal Pradesh. The atmosphere was filled with excitement and camaraderie, making it an unforgettable experience for all involved.



World Milk Day 2024: Royal Rajasthan Chefs Society Celebrates with a Kalakand Extravaganza

On June 1, 2024, the Royal Rajasthan Chefs Society celebrated World Milk Day with a grand event spotlighting Kalakand, a traditional Indian sweet made with Amul Milk. Held at 11 AM, the event featured 21 distinguished chefs, including Dr. Chef Pavinder Singh Bali, Chef Gunjan Goela, and others. This celebration also coincided with the 7502nd episode of a major live recipe show, marking its 1506th consecutive day of broadcast.



The chefs showcased their unique takes on Kalakand, using Amul Milk to enhance the dessert's rich, creamy texture. The live demonstration highlighted both the versatility of milk and the importance of high-quality ingredients in culinary arts. The event paid tribute to World Milk Day by celebrating traditional recipes and culinary innovation, inspiring viewers with its blend of expertise and creativity.

Cate Fete 2024



On July 12, 2024, the 7th edition of Cate Fete, the esteemed National Level Hospitality Fest, unfolded with grandeur at the Army Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology in Bengaluru. The event was graced by Major General V.T. Mathew AVSM, YSM, GOC, Sub Area K&K and Chairman of AIHMCT, alongside renowned chefs Manjit Singh Gill and Vijaya Baskaran, along with other esteemed members of IFCA.

More than 20 teams from colleges across India participated, showcasing their passion and expertise in various culinary and hospitality challenges with tremendous enthusiasm. Cate Fete not only serves as a competition but also as a significant platform for nurturing the future leaders of the hospitality industry. The event highlighted innovation, skill, and teamwork, making it a memorable and impactful gathering for all participants and attendees.





Upcoming Event: Anuga Select India

Get ready to immerse yourself in the excitement of Anuga Select India! Taking place from August 28th to 30th at the prestigious Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai, India, this event promises to be a highlight for food and beverage enthusiasts everywhere.

IFCA (Indian Federation of Culinary Associations) is proud to be a supporting partner for this esteemed gathering, where attendees can expect to discover the latest trends and innovations in the industry. Renowned chefs such as Dr. Chef Saurabh Sharma, Chef Vinod Kumar Bhati, Chef Jerson Fernandes, and many others will be present, showcasing their expertise and culinary creations.

Don't miss this opportunity to explore a world of flavors, network with industry leaders, and experience firsthand the future of the food and beverage landscape. Anuga Select India is set to be an unforgettable event for anyone passionate about gastronomy and culinary excellence!



ANUGA SELECT INDIA

Announcing the transformation: Anufood India evolves into Anuga Select India, inspired by the foremost global food and beverage event. Gathering buyers from India and beyond, the expo will showcase the nation's finest products. With exhibitors spanning 10 sectors - from industry giants to startups - Anuga Select India unites key players, fostering a positive business milieu and reshaping India's culinary landscape.

Key Segments



Visitor Profile

- Supermarket
- Grocery and Convenience Store
- Distributor, Wholesaler & Retailer
- Food Catering / Food Service
- Hotel, Restaurant and Bar
- Packaging & Distribution Centre
- Food Manufacturer
- Food Importer / Exporter
- Cash & Carry Company
- Departmental Store
- Fast Food
- Bakery / Bakery Organization
- Club & Resort
- Airline



Why Participate?

Opportunity to explore world's fastest growing food	Get connected with Anuga's largest food & beverage network in the world.	Meet key decision makers from variety of companies and brands.	Digital communication & marketing platform enabling 360° promotions opportunities.	Learn, experience the new latest trends in food & beverage industry
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Sustainability insights from the Maestro

Dr. Chef K Damodharan

What is sustainability practice according to you?

Sustainability, as I understand it, involves prioritizing local and seasonal ingredients. It encompasses three key aspects: economic, social, and environmental sustainability. When sourcing local food, ensuring it is environmentally sustainable is essential, often achieved through organic practices. Thus, a holistic approach to sustainability should integrate these three elements.

“Dr. Chef K. Damodharan, aka Chef Damu, is an Indian celebrity chef, the first to earn a Ph.D. in Hotel Management and Catering Technology, and a Guinness World Record holder”.

How do you prioritize sourcing of sustainable ingredients for your dishes?

When designing a menu, it should be based on the availability of local and seasonal foods. For example, if it's the season for ladyfinger and brinjal, these should be featured, whereas items like broccoli, which are not currently available, should be excluded. By doing this, we support local farmers and encourage them to grow more organic vegetables. Directly procuring vegetables from farmers lowers costs and promotes local agriculture.

These ingredients should be organic and their taste should be preserved through careful handling. Procuring locally available organic vegetables directly from farmers is the best option for sourcing sustainable ingredients, as it benefits both the environment and the local economy, and facilitates better communication.

How do you educate your team about the importance of reducing food waste in your kitchen and its impact on sustainability?

Minimizing food waste is vital. Repurpose vegetable peelings and meat trimmings for broth and soup. Train staff in efficient techniques to reduce waste further. Educate people on waste reduction, especially at large events, by serving guests based on preferences. Be mindful of food waste to help combat global hunger.

What do you think about traditional culinary practice with innovation in food?

Traditional culinary practices hold significant value and can be adapted for modern appeal. For example, millet-based porridge from South India can be transformed into sweet dishes like ladoos or momos. Historically, cooking in mud pots enhanced flavor, a practice we can still value. Innovating traditional foods, like shaping peanut and jaggery mixtures into appealing desserts, makes them enjoyable for contemporary tastes.

Another traditional ingredient is "thinai" (foxtail millet). Historically, it was powdered, mixed with honey and sugar, and formed into balls, especially beneficial for those experiencing menopause or menstruation. Today, thinai can be transformed into various forms, making it more attractive without losing its nutritional benefits. By creatively presenting these traditional ingredients, we can encourage people to consume them without realizing they are eating millets.

Innovation can preserve the authenticity of traditional dishes by incorporating traditional ingredients into modern recipes or presenting them appealingly, maintaining their essence while appealing to contemporary tastes.

How do you think culinary school can better integrate sustainability into their curriculum to prepare future chefs?

Invest in sustainable equipment like cast iron and stainless steel tools to reduce environmental impact. Include high-quality meat and more plant-based dishes to meet demand and ensure safety. Use multipurpose equipment and adopt eco-friendly tools like convection ovens and induction cooktops. Train students in traditional and plant-based cooking, slow cooking, and the importance of local, seasonal foods. Emphasize certified poultry and protein-rich pulses. These practices equip students for success in the culinary industry.

“According to the American writer, Nika Standen Hazelton “Chocolate in a blue wrapper won’t sell in Shanghai or Hong Kong because the Chinese associate blue with death.”

Evolving Paradigm of Technology in Hotels, Restaurants & Culinary Spaces

Chef Jewel Sharma



Over the years we have observed our industry transforming from being manually skilled and proficient to the present where there is technological input in almost every recipe, be it in preparing, cooking, indenting, costing or selling. Professionals from all over the world have openly embraced technological input in their operations and assured that technological advancements don't reduce the workforce, but instead, expertise in the usage of such appliances makes them more desirable candidates in the job market. This article explores some of the new appliances I have worked with here in Paris, with the experience of working in pastry for restaurants doing covers of 550-600 per service. I heavily rely on tech to get me through the service smoothly.

- Consumer Insights with AI: Various software's are used by big-scale fine dining restaurants which collect a plethora of customer insights, for instance: which tables are being occupied more, what dishes are most preferred,

what dietetic preferences and eating habits of the customer, at what time does the restaurant experience the highest footfall and more...

After processing and analysing this data, the AI tool suggests possible alternatives which a restaurateur can implement to boost their sales and profits based on the data.

- Augmented Reality (AR): Not only hotels but other hosting platforms such as Airbnb are providing potential customers to experience their chosen place of stay from the comfort of their home with the help of Augmented Reality. It is similar to Google's Street View where an individual can tour and get familiar with the ambience of their choice of stay, helping them make an informed decision. It also provides the organisation with a marketing opportunity to stand out from its competition with a focus on consumer-centric needs.

•3D Food Printing: There have been various iterations of such machines already existing in the market for a few years now; our restaurant has an iteration of 3D Food Printing Machine which prepares custom-designed pancakes for our Sunday Brunch.

•Smart Oven & Ranges: With integration of Bluetooth, cameras and AI in the new Smart Ovens, makes its use seamless and more convenient. One such use for me is, before every service I load my oven with sweet delicacies, connect my smartphone to the oven and can multitask without fretting as I can keep a check on the baking process while having access to instant alerts in case the process is interrupted.

At the end of the day, “The technological tools you choose aren't what leave a mark; it's the experience you craft with them that truly matters.”

•Smart Dough Mixers: A very recent addition, the Smart Dough Mixer is a machine, which has two unique features which make it stand out from a traditional dough mixer: Its ability to automatically adjust the mixing style and the kneading speed concerning the recipe, dough hydration and the stages of gluten formation

•Automated robotic cookers: One such appliance my head chef swears by is our ThermoCook Pro. It is a smart automated cooking machine with an integrated weighing scale, recipes and an option to upload and create recipes of your own. It can peel and clean vegetables itself. With its inbuilt weighing scale, the operator knows exactly the right amount of ingredients to add after adjusting the cooking mode; the whole cooking process is automated and with newer models with AI integration; you no longer have to be physically present to monitor the cooking process.

The integration of evolving tech into our kitchens, hotels & restaurants is transforming how we look at technological upgrades as an investment. With passing time, we see technology continuing to advance in all sectors, hence, we can expect emerging solutions to transform the Culinary & Hospitality Industry, setting new standards for exemplary service and efficiency.



AAM CHINGRIR POSTO (SHRIMP WITH MANGO AND POPPY SEEDS)

Dr. (Chef) Subhadip Majumder

This dish is a rare and forgotten recipe from the South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal. There is a village called 'Sorishar Haat' near Diamond Harbour, where this dish used to be extremely popular in the past. Following the partition of Bengal, the region was divided into West Bengal and East Bengal. East Bengal which was initially part of Pakistan and is now recognised as Bangladesh. The inhabitants of West Bengal are referred to as 'Ghoti', while those who came from East Pakistan are called 'Bangal'. Posto, also known as poppy seeds, is a distinctive ingredient commonly found in Ghoti cuisine, which originates from West Bengal.

Poppy seeds are commonly used in vegetarian Bengali dishes, but there are a few non-vegetarian recipes featuring prawns and poppy seeds. This particular dish is considered a "lost recipe" due to the rising cost of poppy seeds and the export of high-quality prawns, making it less affordable for local families.

Ingredients	Qty.	Protein	Fat	Carbohydrate
Shrimp (without shell)	400gms.	76.4	4	7.2
Raw Mango	70gms.	0.49	0.07	7.07
Ripe Mango	50gms.	0.3	0.2	8.45
Poppy Seeds	30gms.	6.51	5.79	11.04
Mustard Oil	30ml.	Nil	30	Nil
Green Chilly	20gms.	0.38	0.08	1.76
Black Cumin Seeds	3gms.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Turmeric Powder	5gms.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Seasoning	As required	N/A	N/A	N/A
Coconut Milk	90ml.	3.06	36.9	10.71
TOTAL		87.14	77.04	46.23

Total Nutritive Value (for 1 person) - 52.60gms.

Total Calorific Value (for 1 person) - 306.71kcal

PROCEDURE:

1. Peel and grate raw mango.
2. Make a smooth paste with poppy seeds, grated raw mango and half of the green chilly.
3. Cut ripe mango into cubes (macedoine) and store.
4. Slit rest of the green chillies and set aside.
5. In a pan (preferably iron kadhai) take mustard oil and bring it to smoke point.
6. Add a tempering of black cumin and slit green chilly and allow the cumin to crackle.
7. Immediately add the shrimp and continue to sauté until the shrimp turns light pink in colour.
8. Add salt and continue to sauté.
9. Once the shrimps are little firm, add the poppy seed and mango paste diluted with coconut milk and simmer the flame.
10. Cook till the liquid turns thick. At this time add little turmeric powder and continue cooking.
11. Once the gravy is thick, increase the flame a little and keep on stirring vigorously so that it does not stick in the cooking vessel.
12. Adjust the seasoning further and complete cooking.
13. Just before serving, reheat the dish and mix the dices of ripe mango.
14. On the serving platter, top with some drops of raw mustard oil and a slit green chilly for garnish and serve. (Optionally add chopped coriander leaf).



"Tiramisu" (Pick-me-up) becomes "TiraMissedYou" when the dessert fails to patch up the last attempt by the couple, before official Break up.

Advancements in Food Waste Management

Mr. Sunny Arya



The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) reports that approximately 2.5 billion tons of food are wasted globally each year, representing about 40% of all food produced by farmers. To illustrate, this is equivalent to letting four out of every ten bags of groceries spoil in the parking lot. Food waste is a significant humanitarian issue with far-reaching consequences. According to the WWF, food waste from farms alone generates 2.2 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually, constituting 4% of all greenhouse gas emissions from human activities and 16% from agriculture.

This is roughly comparable to the annual emissions from 75% of all cars driven in the United States and Europe.

Addressing food waste is critical in combating food insecurity and mitigating the environmental impact of the food industry.

Both food entrepreneurs and large corporations are increasingly focusing on reducing food waste to enhance sustainability and cut operational costs. Advanced food monitoring technologies are being adopted by food producers, restaurants, and smart cities to proactively manage and reduce food waste. There is also a growing trend towards zero-waste strategies in food production, which emphasize the reuse and upcycling of food waste to create value and appeal to environmentally conscious consumers. A notable example is the rise of 3D food printing technologies that use food waste to produce edible food products, effectively reducing waste at restaurants and other food establishments while promoting sustainability.

Innovations in fruit preservation, such as protective stickers coated with plant-based antimicrobial substances, are also emerging.

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. These stickers slow down the ripening process of fruits, extending their shelf-life by up to two weeks. Designed to be non-toxic, they mimic natural plant chemicals to protect fruits like apples, avocados, mangoes, and citrus fruits from fungal infections, offering a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to protective sprays or coatings.

Lumitics, a start-up based in Singapore, specializes in monitoring food waste with its smart food waste tracker, Insight. Utilizing advanced AI-powered image recognition technology, Insight provides chefs with detailed analyses of food waste, enabling continuous improvement in food quality and alignment with customer preferences. This proactive approach helps restaurants and food service providers streamline production processes and customize menus more efficiently. Lumitics' Insight has been effective in reducing food waste and operational costs across various sectors, including hotels, airlines, and cruise ships.

In conclusion, tackling food waste is a multifaceted challenge that demands innovative solutions and collective effort from all sectors of society. By embracing advanced technologies, zero-waste strategies, and sustainable practices, we can significantly reduce food waste, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and create a more sustainable food system. Initiatives like Lumitics' AI-powered food waste tracker and protective stickers for fruit preservation exemplify the practical steps that can be taken to address this critical issue.

As awareness and adoption of such solutions grow, we move closer to a future where food waste is minimized and environmental and humanitarian impacts are mitigated.



“The Culinary Journey” Of Chef Ammar from Lebanon

Chef Ammar Molki

Lebanese cuisine is renowned for its rich flavour's, fresh ingredients, and the harmonious blend of herbs and spices. Reflecting Lebanon's history and culture, the food combines influences from the Mediterranean, the Middle East, and beyond.

Lebanese cuisine is more than just food; it's an expression of the country's vibrant culture and social life. Sharing meals is an important aspect of Lebanese hospitality, emphasising generosity and community. Whether you're enjoying a simple Mezze spread or a lavish feast, Lebanese cuisine offers a delicious and memorable culinary experience.

Lebanon's location at the crossroads of various civilisations has enriched its cuisine with diverse flavours and techniques from the Phoenicians, Ottomans, French, and others. This blend of cultures contributes to the complexity and uniqueness of Lebanese food.

Lebanon itself is a culinary destination, attracting food enthusiasts who seek authentic experiences. This exposure helps propagate Lebanese cuisine globally as tourists bring back their experiences and inspire others.

the global inspiration drawn from Lebanese cuisine lies in its rich heritage, health benefits, flavourful dishes, and the vibrant culture that surrounds it. This combination of factors ensures that Lebanese cuisine continues to captivate and influence food enthusiasts worldwide.

Certain Lebanese dishes, such as hummus, falafel, tabbouleh, charcoal grills, have become staples in international cuisine. Their versatility and deliciousness make them popular choices in various culinary settings, from casual eateries to fine dining.

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The charcoal grill not only enhances the taste and aroma of the food but also provides a communal cooking experience, often becoming the centrepiece of social gatherings and family meals. The art of grilling over charcoal is deeply rooted in Lebanese culinary tradition, symbolising hospitality and the joy of shared meals.

Lebanese cuisine has had a notable influence on various countries, especially due to the Lebanese diaspora and the popularity of its flavourful and healthful dishes. The key elements that have helped Lebanese cuisine spread globally include its use of fresh ingredients, reliance on olive oil, grains, and legumes, and a balance of flavours that appeal to a broad range of palates.

Lebanese cuisine is known for its health benefits, largely due to its reliance on fresh ingredients, balanced flavours, and traditional cooking methods.

Many Lebanese food products, such as pita bread, tahini, and spices like sumac and za'atar, are now widely available in grocery stores, allowing home cooks to incorporate Lebanese flavours into their meals.

Lebanese cuisine is often featured in cooking shows, food blogs, and culinary schools, increasing its visibility and appreciation. This exposure has helped educate people about the cultural and historical significance of Lebanese food.

The global impact of Lebanese foods is a testament to their versatility, healthfulness, and rich cultural heritage, making them a beloved part of the global culinary landscape.

Lebanese cuisine has contributed to the health and wellness movement or its presence in the global food industry, Lebanese cuisine stands as a testament to the power of food to connect and enrich lives across diverse cultures.



"Exploring the Flavors of Egypt: A Culinary Journey Through Ancient and Modern Dishes"

Chef Hossam Soliman

Egyptian cuisine is a testament to the country's rich history and diverse cultural influences. Rooted in ancient traditions and enriched by various cultures over millennia, Egyptian food is a delightful blend of flavors, textures, and aromas. As we explore this fascinating culinary landscape, we uncover the essence of Egypt through its traditional dishes and contemporary adaptations.

The foundations of Egyptian cuisine stretch back to the era of the Pharaohs. Ancient Egyptians thrived on a diet rich in grains, legumes, and the bounty of the fertile Nile River valley. Wheat, barley, and a variety of fruits and vegetables formed the core of their meals, with bread, particularly the iconic Aish Baladi, holding a place of special significance that continues to this day.

Egyptian cuisine is defined by a vibrant array of staple ingredients. Beans, lentils, rice, and of course, bread, form the building blocks of countless dishes.

Ful Medames, a hearty fava bean stew seasoned with simple yet potent ingredients like olive oil, garlic, and lemon juice, exemplifies the essence of Egyptian cooking – flavorful and unpretentious..

Another beloved dish, Koshari, is a national treasure. This satisfying combination of rice, lentils, pasta, and chickpeas, topped with a tangy tomato sauce and the irresistible crunch of fried onions, reflects Egypt's cosmopolitan spirit

Its ingredients whisper stories of Italian, Indian, and Middle Eastern influences, harmoniously blended into a uniquely Egyptian creation.

While vegetarian options are abundant, Egyptian cuisine also features a variety of meat and seafood dishes. Succulent kebabs and koftas, made from spiced minced meat and grilled to perfection, are a carnivore's delight.

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Fatta is a beloved Egyptian dish that takes center stage during special occasions and celebrations. It consists of layers of rice, crispy fried or toasted bread, and tender meat, usually beef or lamb. The preparation involves cooking the meat with garlic and vinegar, which creates a rich, flavorful broth. This broth is then poured over the bread and rice, allowing the bread to soak up the savory juices and integrate with the other ingredients.

Often served during major festivities such as Eid al-Adha, Fatta is more than just a meal; it's a symbol of communal celebration and tradition. The dish is typically garnished with fresh herbs and may be accompanied by a garlic vinegar sauce for extra flavor. Its layered texture and rich taste make it a standout centerpiece at festive gatherings, showcasing the Egyptian love for hearty and flavorful fare.

- 1 cup rice
- 1 cup brown lentils
- 1 cup elbow macaroni
- 1 can (400g) chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar
- Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

Cooking Instructions for Koshari:

Cook Lentils: Rinse, boil, and simmer lentils for 20–25 minutes until tender. Drain.

Cook Rice: Prepare rice until fluffy according to package instructions. Set aside.

Cook Macaroni: Boil macaroni in salted water until al dente. Drain.

Fry Onions: Fry sliced onions in vegetable oil until golden and crispy. Drain.

Prepare Tomato Sauce: Sauté garlic, then add tomato sauce, cumin, coriander, chili powder, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 10–15 minutes, then stir in white vinegar.

Assemble Koshari: Layer rice, lentils, and macaroni. Top with tomato sauce, chickpeas, and crispy onions. Garnish with parsley.

Vishwaguru: Can India lead the way in the Food Processing Industry?

Chef Avik Adhikari



In the current circumstances, food processing is one of the few vital factors that can make or break a nation. The political instability around many parts of the world and unforgettably the pandemic have taught us an important lesson on the profound importance of the Food Processing Industry for any nation including India. In the last century, India has witnessed rapid transformative strides in its Food Processing field. With favourable policies of the government, major industrialisation has taken place. Mid- twentieth century saw the effects of both Green and White Revolutions. The Green Revolution led to India becoming self-sufficient in terms of nutrition and even made India capable to export its surplus edible products. On the other hand, White Revolution under the leadership of the legendary Verghese Kurien established a robust network linking milk producers to consumers.

It is because of the White Revolution that India claimed the prestigious position of being the largest milk producer in the world. Over seven decades have passed since Independence. Standing in the 21st century, India is facing the productive fervour of “Make in India” movement wherein more stress is being put on manufacturing products within the country itself rather than importing from the foreign. Its food processing industry is no exception. It has been observed that there is a rising demand for “All Things Indian” particularly from the expat sector. Indian delicacies have been recently deepening its mark on the global culinary map. So does the need for suitable Indian wines or alcoholic beverages to pair with such dishes. Alcoholic beverage companies like Sula & Indri won several accolades in international forums for the quality of their products. Furthermore, there has been a rise of cultivating exotic fruits like kiwi, dragon fruits in the country rather than importing.

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With rapid growth in logistics and ready availability of infrastructure, India is witnessing a boom in online grocery delivery which is not only enhancing the options for the consumer but also encouraging better connection with the local producers. Apart from grocery, there has been rapid popularisation of online food delivery which is not only providing more choice and convenience for the consumers but also opening new horizons for various eateries.

While the food processing industry focuses on the ingredients, it is imperative that the industry cannot be improved without the availability of proper packaging. Currently, limelight is on the sustainable options wherein several firms are researching on developing biodegradable plastics or even edible packaging.

While German firms have recently realised the importance of biodegradable plates made of leaves, Indians led the world in this regard for centuries. In view of improving the incomes and conditions of farmers of India,

a conference was organised by National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management (NIFTEM) wherein it was announced that the government intends to utilise frontier technologies in food processing and agricultural sectors.

India has a rich history in food processing but currently trails behind countries like China and Germany. However, there's great potential for growth, particularly in ready-to-eat Indian delicacies for expats. The industry is predicted to exceed half a trillion dollars and is growing at 7%. Innovations like AI could help India reclaim its status as a leader in the food processing industry.

***The question now
however is not “Can
India lead in the Food
Processing Industry?”
but rather “When?”***



The Dried Fish Paradox: Why India's Staple Ingredient Deserves Global Recognition

Chef Vineet Sheemar

Have you ever come across a smell after a long time that instantly triggers nostalgia? You then don't think of it as good or bad, instead, it resurrects memories of a distant childhood or a particular evening.

As a child, the smell of dried fish filled my surroundings and I could identify the house preparing it that Sunday. It was everywhere - in the building, the market, in clothes, in tiffin boxes, by the river.

During a recent visit to my hometown, in the markets around the Godavari River banks I had an epiphany. Why do Indian restaurants seldom feature this beloved ingredient on their menus? Why haven't preserved fish dishes from India gained popularity like those from other countries?

We are the 3rd largest fish-producing nation, relying heavily on fish as a staple in various regions. Despite abundant catches, seasonal availability of fresh fish poses challenges. Traditional fish preservation methods play a crucial role in bridging this gap.

Dried fish and its products are not only a significant export but also a cherished local delicacy. A variety of dried fish neatly arranged in bamboo baskets called 'topli' and heaps of dried shrimp are a common sight in south western fish markets.

Worldwide, preserved fish like *Korea's Jeotgal, Norway's Tørrfisk, Japan's Niboshi, Portugal's Bacalhau* reflect regional culinary identities. These flavours may seem intense or unfamiliar to the 'uninitiated' but still have a cult following.

Dried fish and seafood is widely eaten in India as well and the household cooking techniques vary widely, contributing to diverse dishes. Yet, it does not see itself on the International food map.

I think it is time we culinarians explore the untapped potential of this indigenous category of ingredients; write, recreate, experiment and elevate it to a global level.

Makhana: The Cultural Gem of Mithila Cuisine

Mr. Vijoy Kumar



Mithila, a region steeped in rich cultural heritage, lies in the heart of the Indian subcontinent, spanning parts of Bihar and Nepal. Its cuisine is an integral part of its identity, reflecting the region's history, geography and agricultural abundance. Among the many unique ingredients that define Mithila cuisine; Makhana (Fox-nut) stands out as a symbol of cultural integrity and culinary tradition. Makhana, harvested from the Euryale ferox plant, grows abundantly in the water bodies of Mithila. It is celebrated not just for its unique taste and texture but also for its impressive nutritional profile. The process of harvesting and processing makhana is labour-intensive, reflecting the dedication and skill of the local farmers. The seeds are collected from the water, dried, roasted, and then popped to create the crunchy, white puffballs that are a staple in Mithila kitchens.

Historical Significance

Makhana has been cultivated in Mithila for centuries,

revered in culture and classical texts, and used in royal and religious ceremonies. Its traditional cultivation techniques reflect the region's deep-rooted agricultural practices.

Geographical and Climatic Suitability

Mithila's unique climate and numerous wetlands provide an ideal environment for Makhana cultivation. The subtropical monsoon climate supports the growth of the prickly waterlily plant, essential for Makhana, highlighting its importance in the region's agriculture.

Culinary Uses and Nutritional Value:

- Savoury Dishes: Roasted and spiced Makhana makes a crunchy snack, and it adds texture to curries and stir-fries.
- Desserts: "Makhana Kheer" is a popular dessert made with Makhana, milk, and spices, enjoyed during festivals and special occasions.

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Symbol of Cultural Identity:

Makhana's role in Mithila cuisine is more than just a culinary ingredient; it is a symbol of the region's cultural identity and heritage. Its cultivation and use connect the people of Mithila to their land, their history, and their ancestors. In a rapidly modernizing world, where traditional practices are often overshadowed by contemporary lifestyles, Makhana stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of Mithila culture.

Role in Festivals and Rituals:

The significance of Makhana extends beyond the kitchen to the cultural and religious spheres of Mithila life. During major festivals such as Chhath Puja and Diwali, Makhana is an essential component of the offerings made to deities. Its purity and auspiciousness make it a favoured ingredient in "prasada," the food offered to gods and later distributed among devotees.

In wedding ceremonies, Makhana is often included in traditional rituals and feasts, symbolizing prosperity and purity. The use of Makhana in such significant life events underscores its cultural importance and the role it plays in preserving Maithili traditions.

Health Benefits:

Rich in protein, fibre, antioxidants, and essential minerals such as magnesium, potassium, and phosphorus, makhana is often hailed as a superfood. It is low in calories and has a low glycaemic index, making it a popular choice for health-conscious individuals. The health benefits of makhana are manifold. It is known to aid in weight management due to its low-calorie content and high satiety value. The antioxidants present in makhana help combat free radicals, reducing oxidative stress and promoting healthy aging. Its high magnesium content supports heart health by improving blood circulation and regulating blood pressure. Additionally, makhana's anti-inflammatory properties make it beneficial for those with arthritis and other inflammatory conditions.

Conclusion:

Makhana, integral to Mithila cuisine, embodies tradition, nutrition, and cultural pride. Its historical significance and role in festivals make it a cultural gem, honoring Mithila's heritage and timeless traditions.



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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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