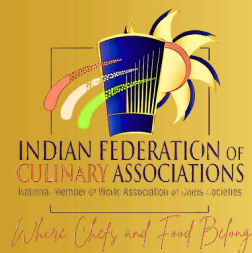


IFCA MAGAZINE

FOOD AND BEYOND

Official Magazine of



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MANAGING EDITOR'S NOTE



Dear Readers,

October holds a special place for chefs around the world. It's when we celebrate International Chefs Day, a day that honors the craft, creativity, and camaraderie that bind our community together. Across India, regional associations marked the occasion in inspiring ways, from culinary outreach programs and awareness sessions on healthy eating for children to workshops that celebrated sustainability and local produce. These initiatives reflected the very essence of what it means to be a chef: to share knowledge, nurture talent, and give back through food.

In this edition, we are proud to feature Chef Amit Gothwal, former Executive Chef at the President's Secretariat, whose journey offers a fascinating insight into the precision, discipline, and quiet excellence that define the kitchens of Rashtrapati Bhavan. His story reminds us that behind the grandeur of state banquets lies a chef's unwavering pursuit of perfection.

We also cover the Worldchefs Asian Presidents Forum 2025, held in Suzhou, China, an event that brought together leaders from across Asia to discuss innovation, education, and sustainability in gastronomy. It was a gathering that reaffirmed the growing global influence of Asian chefs and their commitment to shaping a more responsible future for food.

From our own kitchens, we explore the rediscovery of forgotten ingredients, humble yet powerful elements of India's culinary heritage that deserve their place on modern menus. And across continents, Chef Adrián Villarreal takes us through the distinctive world of Baja cuisine, where simplicity meets sophistication, and flavor is deeply tied to the land and sea.

This issue is a celebration of inspiration, of chefs who lead with heart, create with purpose, and remind us that food is both culture and connection.

Culinary regards,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Dr. Chef Sheraz Nair.

Dr. Chef Sheraz Nair
Managing Editor
IFCA Magazine

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Global Food Trends

Worldchefs Asian Presidents Forum 2025: Leaders of the Culinary World Unite in Suzhou, China

The most influential presidents, chefs, and culinary experts from across Asia gathered in Suzhou, China, from October 15–19, 2025, for the Worldchefs Asian Presidents Forum 2025. The forum is a prestigious event celebrating excellence, creativity, and collaboration within the dynamic culinary landscape of the region.

Hosted by the World Association of Chefs' Societies (Worldchefs), this esteemed forum aims to foster communication, strengthen regional cooperation, and explore emerging trends shaping the culinary industry. Featuring panel discussions, workshops, cultural exchanges, and culinary demonstrations with participation from presidents and officials of national chef associations, the event provided an exceptional platform for networking and learning.

Suzhou, renowned for its rich heritage, artistic traditions, and diverse gastronomy, served as the perfect setting for this celebration of Asian cuisine and hospitality. The summit also highlighted the growing importance of education, technology, and sustainability in shaping the future of gastronomy, reaffirming Worldchefs' commitment to ethical food practices and global culinary advancement.

The Worldchefs Asian Presidents Forum 2025 was more than a gathering of culinary minds—it was a celebration of shared passion, cross-cultural inspiration, and the boundless creativity that defines Asia's culinary identity. The convergence of chefs and industry leaders in Suzhou is expected to strengthen global collaboration and inspire the next generation of culinary professionals to lead with innovation and purpose.



Culinary Forum of Goa Celebrates International Chefs Day with Annual Charity Lunch at Agnel's Ashram, Verna

On October 15, 2025, the Culinary Forum of Goa, in collaboration with the Agnel Institute of Food Crafts and Culinary Sciences, Verna, honoured International Chefs Day with their beloved Annual Charity Lunch, which fed more over 300 local impoverished children.

This endearing project, which took place at Agnel's Ashram in Verna, demonstrates the Forum's continued dedication to supporting the community and motivating the upcoming generation of foodies. Chef Manjit Singh, Chef Ranjeet Pandey, Chef Yogender were the inspiration behind this event.

In order to make youngsters happy and raise awareness of the honorable profession of cooking, the Forum—which is well-known for its active participation in community and educational initiatives—prepared and served a healthy dinner. The Culinary Forum of Goa hopes to instill qualities of compassion, creativity, and service among aspiring culinary professionals through several outreach initiatives.

The wonderful support of Agnel Institute and our sponsors, supporters, and volunteers made this year's celebration possible. Their energy and teamwork perfectly embodied International Chefs Day's theme, "Growing Great Chefs."



Broadcasting the Radiance of Humanity on World Chef's Day

Jharkhand Chapter of the Eastern India Culinary Association (EICA) Commemorates Diwali by Providing Meals to Cancer Patients and Their Relatives.

While the world sparkled in the bright light of Diwali, with hues and brightness brightening every space, the Eastern India Culinary Association (EICA) – Jharkhand Chapter opted for an alternative way to honor the festival of lights. Instead of pursuing greatness, they illuminated lives by showing compassion, serving others, and exhibiting humanity.

Under the guidance of Chef Sandeep Kumar Pandey, along with Chef Ramchandra, and chefs Manoranjan Swain and Sameeran Chowdhury from The Sonnet Hotel, the EICA team executed a meaningful initiative in celebration of World Chefs Day. They went to the rest house close to MTMH Cancer Hospital in Bistupur, Jamshedpur, where nutritious meals were provided to cancer patients and their caregivers.

This gesture of goodwill conveyed a strong message — that the real spirit of celebrations is found not in lights or fireworks, but in the warmth of compassion and the happiness of sharing. Each smile that appeared on the faces of the patients and their families embodied the essence of Diwali — bringing hope in the midst of darkness.

EICA, a renowned culinary institution functioning in 14 states of Eastern India, remains dedicated to altruistic efforts for social welfare and community enhancement. In addition to their remarkable cooking skills, the chefs at EICA are recognized for their empathy — utilizing their culinary talent to offer solace and respect to those who require assistance. Backing this commendable effort was the Prateek Sangharsh Foundation (PSF), a committed social organization that conducts one of the largest food drives in the area. For this significant event, PSF has formally partnered with EICA Jharkhand Chapter to enhance their humanitarian efforts. Present at the event were Arijit Sarkar (Director, PSF), Kumaresh Hazra, Ravi Shankar, Uttam Kumar Gorai, Manoranjan Gaur, Saurabh Chatterjee, Shubhendu Mukherjee, and Surya Pratap. Together, they embodied the spirit of unity, compassion, and service. The event turned World Chefs Day into a celebration of life, love, and light — a day that reminded everyone that food is not just nourishment for the body, but also for the soul.



Celebrating International Chefs Day – The True Taste of Compassion

On the occasion of International Chefs Day, Telangana Chefs Association chose not to celebrate in grand halls or with elaborate feasts, but in the warmth of humanity. This year, our celebration found its true flavour at the Home for the Disabled, where we had the honour and joy of sharing smiles, laughter, and heartfelt meals with more than 700 beautiful souls.

Every plate we served was more than just food — it was a gesture of love, respect, and gratitude. In every act of service, we were reminded of why we cook and, more importantly, who we cook for.

Food has the power to heal, to unite, and to bring comfort. And on this special day, we experienced that power in its purest form — not through luxury or recognition, but through the happiness reflected in the eyes of those we served.

Because true celebration begins when we give back to society, when we nourish hearts, and when we spread kindness through the simple act of feeding others.

As we honour chefs around the world, let us remember that the finest ingredient in every recipe is compassion — the spirit that transforms cooking from a skill into an art of love.

Here's to every chef who cooks not just with hands, but with heart.

Telangana Chefs Association Kicks Off International Chefs Day Celebrations with a Blood Donation Camp
The Telangana Chefs Association commenced its International Chefs Day celebrations with a noble initiative — a Blood Donation Camp organized at Regency College of Hotel Management. The event brought together chefs, faculty, and students in a spirit of compassion and social responsibility, highlighting the association's commitment to serving the community beyond the kitchen.



On the 25th of October, TCA was fortunate to be part of a truly meaningful celebration at Devnar School for the Blind, where the Telangana Chefs Association, supported by Regency College of Hotel Management, commemorated International Chefs Day with the visually impaired students.

Chefs prepared and served delicious meals for over 500 children, while also engaging them in fun and interactive activities that brought smiles and joy all around.

The event was much more than a culinary initiative — it was a heartfelt expression of compassion, joy, and humanity. Every meal served carried the warmth of love and the spirit of inclusion, reminding us that the true essence of being a chef extends far beyond creating flavours — it lies in touching lives and nurturing hearts.

It was an unforgettable day filled with togetherness, gratitude, and purpose, reaffirming that food has the power to connect, comfort, and celebrate life in its most beautiful form.



Telangana Chefs Association Continues International Chefs Day Celebrations with 'Cooking Adventure 2024'

The Telangana Chefs Association continued its International Chefs Day celebrations with Cooking Adventure 2024, an exciting culinary event that brought together the brightest young chefs at Johnson Grammar School, Kuntloor, in association with Regency College of Culinary Arts & Hotel Management.

The event was a vibrant showcase of creativity, teamwork, and passion for the culinary arts. Young talents explored the joy of cooking through hands-on activities, guided by professional chefs who shared their expertise and inspired future culinary stars. It was truly a celebration of cooking, learning, and exploration — igniting curiosity, confidence, and a love for the culinary craft among the students.

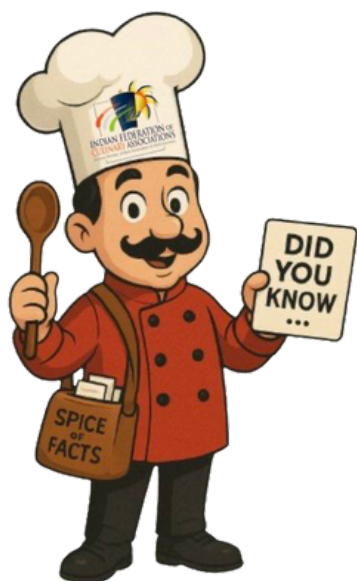


Telangana Chefs Association Continues International Chefs Day Celebrations at Hyderabad Central University.

As part of the ongoing International Chefs Day celebrations, the Telangana Chefs Association (TCA) organized an engaging culinary event at Hyderabad Central University. The session featured an impressive display of vegetable and fruit carving by professional chefs, captivating the students and giving them a glimpse into the artistry of the culinary world.

In addition to the demonstrations, chefs interacted with the students, sharing valuable insights on career opportunities in the culinary industry and inspiring them to pursue their passion for food and hospitality. A cooking competition was also organized for university students, where participants showcased their creativity, presentation, and cooking skills. The dishes were evaluated by the TCA chefs, who also provided constructive feedback and guidance to help students refine their techniques.

The event beautifully blended learning, creativity, and inspiration — reflecting the true spirit of International Chefs Day.



We celebrate Chef Day on October 20th to honor the culinary profession and its contributions to society. The day also aims to inspire the next generation by teaching children about healthy eating and encouraging chefs to pass on their skills and knowledge. It was established in 2004 by the late Dr. Bill Gallagher, a former president of the World Association of Chefs Societies (Worldchefs).



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Exclusive Interview with Chef Amit Gothwal

Presidential kitchen in India is unique and one of its kind, would you please share with the readers? It's unique identity and features.

Cooking for the President of India is both prestigious and highly specialized. It's entirely different from working in a regular restaurant or hotel. While certain operational aspects may appear similar on the surface, they operate on an entirely different level at the Rashtrapati Bhavan kitchen.

Security is paramount. A high-level security clearance is mandatory—one cannot simply walk in with a résumé. Every ingredient is rigorously checked for both quality and security and is sourced from only the most trusted suppliers. There are strict protocols for everything—from how the food is moved to how it's plated and served.

Menus often reflect a fusion of Indian heritage and international diplomacy, especially during state banquets and visits by foreign dignitaries. One day, you may be preparing a traditional Indian thali; the next, a French-style plated dessert. Culinary diplomacy, specific dietary preferences, and religious restrictions all play a vital role.

Mistakes are not an option. You are cooking for the Head of State, often in the presence of global leaders. Chefs must master not only flavor but also the art of presentation. Each dish is treated like a ceremonial offering, even if it's served to just a small VIP group.

In contrast, restaurants cater to hundreds of patrons daily with varying expectations. At Rashtrapati Bhavan, even meals for a dozen guests are executed with the care of a state banquet. The cooking style leans toward time-tested methods, though there is room for innovation when appropriate.

Have you ever had to craft bespoke menus for visiting heads of state or international dignitaries? How do you weave the essence of India into those dishes while respecting global tastes?

Yes, creating special menus for international dignitaries is a core responsibility. Every such occasion is unique and an opportunity to showcase India's warmth, diversity, and hospitality. The challenge—and the joy—is in striking a perfect balance between global familiarity and authentic Indian flavor.

We research the guests' countries, religious beliefs, dietary restrictions, and any known preferences or allergies. For example, when hosting guests from Japan, we avoid strong dairy flavors and focus on more subtle, delicate notes.

We present Indian ingredients and spices in a way that appeals to international palates. For instance:



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Chef Amit Gothwal is a highly skilled and goal-oriented professional with over two decades of experience in the dynamic hospitality industry. A former Executive Chef at the President of India's secretariat, he brings exceptional culinary expertise and leadership honed through years of service at the highest levels of the profession. His proficiency spans core departments such as Food & Beverage (Production and Service), Public Relations, and Human Resource Management. Specialising in food production with direct customer interface, he draws on extensive experience gained from working in diverse and demanding environments, particularly in five-star deluxe hotels.



Which obscure, almost-lost Indian ingredients do you keep coming back to, and how do they transform your dishes?

Reviving rare or forgotten ingredients is deeply fulfilling. When cooking at such a high level, you're not just preparing meals—you're telling the story of India's biodiversity and culinary legacy.



Some of my favorite ingredients include:

- **Ragi (Finger Millet):** Once considered a "poor man's grain," ragi is now celebrated for its nutrition. I use it in dosas, uttapams, chillas, and even laddoos.
- **Gucchi (Himalayan Morels):** These wild mushrooms are incredibly rare and expensive, akin to Indian truffles. We once prepared gucchi stuffed with Kashmiri spices, served alongside crispy lotus stem in a saffron reduction—it was a hit with a visiting delegation.

These dishes aren't just about taste—they preserve biodiversity, honor traditional farming, and reveal India's depth beyond the mainstream.

What advice would you give to young aspirants who want to become chefs, especially those dreaming of working in prestigious kitchens like Rashtrapati Bhavan?

From the heart, here's what I'd say:

Fall in love with the craft, not the fame.

Prestigious kitchens require humility, not ego. Don't chase TV shows or titles—chase technique, discipline, and consistency. Glory will come, but only when you respect the process.

Master the basics. You can't garnish with microgreens if you can't properly roast a cumin seed. Learn to temper spices, balance salt, respect heat. A presidential chef isn't flashy—it's someone who gets dal right, every single time.



Know your roots before you go global. You can't represent India on the world stage if you don't understand your own thali.

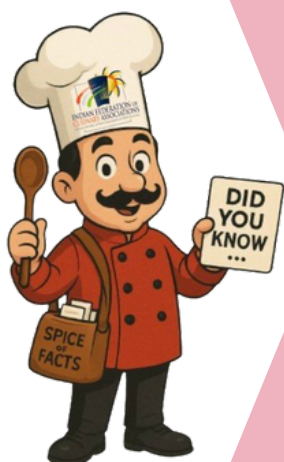
Rashtrapati Bhavan isn't just a kitchen—it's a surgical theatre with stainless steel, tradition, and legacy watching over you. Mis en place is sacred. Hygiene is non-negotiable. You don't cook here—you honor the nation.

If you had to recommend one dish that best represents India's culinary heritage, what would it be?

Ah, that's a beautifully difficult question. Without a doubt, I would say Khichdi—the great unifier of India.

Khichdi has roots across all regions: Bengali Bhuna Khichuri, Gujarati Vaghareli Khichdi, Tamil Pongal, Maharashtrian Moong Dal Khichdi, and many more. It speaks every Indian language without saying a word.

It is Ayurvedic, wholesome, sattvic, and healing. It is offered in temples, served to soldiers, and fed to infants. It's a dish that transcends class and context—from sages to sovereigns.



The Presidential Kitchen at Rashtrapati Bhavan functions much like a five-star hotel, with separate sections for bakery, hot kitchen, garde manger, and confectionery, managed by a skilled team of 40–50 chefs during state dinners. Each menu is thoughtfully crafted to reflect India's cultural diversity, often featuring dishes from multiple states, while also accommodating the dietary and religious preferences of foreign dignitaries in consultation with the Ministry of External Affairs. Many ingredients used are sourced from the estate's own organic gardens, promoting sustainability, and local sourcing.

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The Future of Farming: How Smart Ecosystems are Revolutionizing Agriculture

Pranav Misra

The global agricultural sector is undergoing a profound revolution, mirroring the recent digital transformation seen in industries like apiculture. Just as technology is reshaping the journey from hive to shelf, a new wave of innovation is redefining how we cultivate food. At the heart of this change are closed-loop, data-rich farming systems that are creating a more resilient, efficient, and trustworthy food future.

The core of this innovation is aquaponics, an integrated agricultural model that creates a powerful symbiotic ecosystem. This method is ideal for simultaneously cultivating delicate, nutrient-dense microgreens and sprouts while raising cold-water fish like Himalayan rainbow trout. In this system, the waste from the trout becomes a natural, nitrogen-rich fertilizer for the sprouts. The plants, in turn, absorb these nutrients, effectively filtering and purifying the water for the fish. This elegant, self-sustaining cycle is remarkably efficient, capable of reducing water consumption by over 90% compared to traditional farming while completely eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers.



[Hydroponic farming system showing modern agricultural technology in action]

This technology is a game-changer for regions facing environmental stress. A prime example is MountsTribe Agritech, a pioneering startup founded in Dehradun in 2019 by Ravi Vibhuty and Priya Rawat. Witnessing the agricultural decline and depopulation in the Indian Himalayas due to climate change, they implemented this very technology to produce high-value sprouts and trout, demonstrating its power to create sustainable solutions in challenging environments.



[Microgreens growing in controlled environment, showcasing the clean cultivation process]

What elevates these biological systems into a true revolution is the integration of modern digital tools. By embedding Internet of Things (IoT) sensors throughout the system, farmers can now monitor critical parameters like water temperature, pH, and nutrient levels in real-time. This data stream feeds into AI-powered analytics platforms that transform farming from a reactive to a proactive discipline. The system can predict potential issues and optimize conditions for the delicate balance required by both the fish and plants. This digital oversight de-risks the entire operation, ensuring consistent, high-quality yields and creating a verifiable record of the product's life cycle—a level of transparency that goes “beyond organic.”



Pranav Misra earned a BA in Sociology and Defence & Strategic Studies from DBS College, Dehradun. Now pursuing a Master's in Hotel Management at Graphic Era Deemed to be University, the journey reflects a blend of academic curiosity and genuine interest in the hospitality sector. This interdisciplinary background fosters a unique perspective within the field.

Future Scope and Market Potential

The potential of this technology is vast. Its self-contained nature means these smart ecosystems can be deployed almost anywhere, heralding an era of decentralized food production. From remote mountain communities to urban rooftops, this model can drastically shorten supply chains, reduce transportation emissions, and significantly enhance local food security.

Furthermore, this fusion of biology and data is creating a new market for what can be called “Tech-Tisan” (Technology + Artisanal) goods. Consumers are increasingly seeking products that not only have an authentic story but are also backed by verifiable proof of quality and sustainability. The data generated by these smart farms provides exactly that—an immutable record of a product's pristine journey from cultivation to consumer.

While challenges like high initial investment and the need for reliable energy remain, the trajectory is clear. The integration of smart, closed-loop ecosystems with IoT and AI is not merely an incremental improvement; it is the blueprint for a cleaner, more transparent, and fundamentally more resilient agricultural future.

Baja Cuisine

Chef Adrian Villareal

Born and raised in Tijuana, Chef Adrian is a culinary artist and business school graduate from UABC. With extensive training in diverse cooking styles, Adrian has honed his skills under the guidance of renowned chefs such as Guillermo Gonzalez Beristain. (Pangea, Mexico), Diego Hernandez (Corazon de Tierra & Bete. Noire, Mexico), Iñaki Aizpitarte (Le Chateaubriand, France), and Rene Redzepi (Noma, Denmark). His culinary creations showcase a harmonious fusion of flavors, inspired by his Mexican heritage and global experiences.

Baja California's cuisine is an intriguing blend of various elements, shaped by its unique history, Mediterranean-like climate, and the diverse migration waves it has experienced over time, which have contributed to its rich culinary heritage. In contrast with other more traditional Mexican regional cuisines like the Oaxacan cuisine- Baja's proposal is relatively new and showcases ideas, dishes and techniques directly brought by migrants from other places of Mexico and the world, like Pasta, Wine, Sushi, Chinese traditional dishes.

A little History and Location details

Geographically, the "Peninsula of Baja California" (which is composed of two states Baja California and Baja California Sur) comprehends the extension of approximately 760 miles from Tijuana in the North to Los Cabos in the south, and it's located in the Northwestern part of Mexico. It is surrounded by two bodies of water, the Sea of Cortez on the East and the Pacific Ocean to the west, which is one of the reasons there is such an important usage of Sea food and marine products in Baja's cuisine. It's also the direct southern neighbor to the United States, which creates a very vibrant economic and cultural exchange in the region with hundreds of thousands of people crossing the border back and forward everyday.

Baja like the rest of Mexico was mostly conquered by the Spanish empire in the early 16th century. Before this time the only people living in these lands for thousands of years were the nomadic YUMANO indigenous tribes and research has found that they were able to sustain themselves through hunting game animals, fishing, and foraging wild edible plants. Agriculture was only introduced after the Spanish settlers established themselves in the region.

Almost none of the native culinary ways survive today, but recent efforts by institutions like *Culinary Art School, researcher Ismene Venegas, Paola Pijoan, and chef *David Alarcón aim to recover and document ancestral recipes, as well as catalog the region's original edible flora and fauna.

Subsequent waves of migrants further enriched Baja's cuisine:

Tijuana: American influence was key to the cross border ingredient exchange

Mexicali: Chinese immigrants brought their ancestral recipes and crop systems with them.

Ensenada: With its Mediterranean-like climate, welcomed Russians and Italians, who brought Wine making with them, kickstarting the now prominent *Guadalupe Valley wine region. The Japanese brought elevated fishing methods and helped develop a seafood processing industry, similar to the ones already established in Japan—particularly for oysters, abalone, sea urchin, and lobster.

Each migration wave brought new ingredients and techniques—the most prominent being the Japanese, Italian, French, and Chinese—creating by extension Baja's dynamic culinary scene.

How "Mexican" Is Baja's Cuisine?

Interestingly, Baja California also became home to Mexicans from other states of the country, who brought traditional ingredients and techniques—such as mole (the iconic sauce) and nixtamalized corn (used for tortillas, tamales, and other staples). Nixtamalization, an ancient process involving alkaline cooking (with calcium hydroxide), transforms corn into nutritious, pliable masa, the cornerstone of Mexican cuisine.



With migrants from across Mexico, Baja's food scene became a "collage" of regional dishes. Yet, unlike other Mexican cuisines with deep ancestral roots, Baja's culinary proposal is new and evolving, shaped by waves of immigration rather than tradition.

One good example is that in recent years, the application of Japanese techniques in this cuisine has revolutionized local seafood preparation, elevating the Baja scene to a hub of very fine dining. Meanwhile, in the early 2000's the Guadalupe Valley's winemaking tradition inspired the creation of possibly the first predecessor of modern Baja's cuisine called Baja Med cuisine, which blended Mediterranean, Asian, on top of Mexican ingredients and techniques to create a super interesting mix of flavors that became something completely new, at least in Mexico.

Baja Cuisine, a gift to the world.

It's hard for Baja's Cuisine to be attributed to a single figure as the founder or creator, because it has involved several different actors in propelling it into what it is now. Chefs like Javier Plascencia (Baja-Mediterranean movement), Benito Molina (product-driven Baja cuisine), and Miguel Ángel Guerrero (BajaMed) have been instrumental in crafting its modern identity. Institutions like Culinary Art School have also played a crucial role, uniting chefs, producers, winemakers, historians, and the tourism sector to solidify what is now known as *Cocina de la Baja (as it's known in Spanish).

Nowadays, restaurants like Manzanilla, Misión 19, Animalón, La Carmelita, Oryx, Fauna, and Deckman's have earned spots on prestigious lists (Michelin, 50 Best, Latin America's 50 Best), showcasing Baja as one of Mexico's most exciting regional cuisines, and receiving guests from all over the world that are falling in love with its rich flavors and high quality ingredients.

Some of the Signature Ingredients of Baja Cuisine:

Sea: Abalone, octopus, oyster, scallops, lobster, bluefin and yellowfin tuna, marlin, snapper, yellowtail, sea bass, shrimp, sea urchin, sea cucumber, clams.

Land: Quail, lamb, rabbit, goat, chicken.

Produce: Chile, tomato, squash, lettuce, watermelon, chard, radish, cucumber, corn, asparagus, grapes, berries, carrots, beets.

Drinks: Craft beer, wine.

Campechana-Style Octopus Tostada

This dish highlights Baja's marine diversity, combining fresh seafood atop avocado and a crispy corn tostada (a dried, heat-toasted tortilla).

Ingredients (6 servings) Plating:

6 corn tostadas
Edible flowers (for garnish)

Octopus Terrine:

1 small octopus
12 cooked 16/20 shrimp, cleaned 6 U9 scallops

Jalapeño Relish:

200g jalapeño or green bell pepper
200ml simple syrup Pinch of salt
1 tsp xanthan gum

Miso Aioli:

1 cup Kewpie mayo 1 tbsp miso paste
Juice of 1 lemon

Avocado Purée:

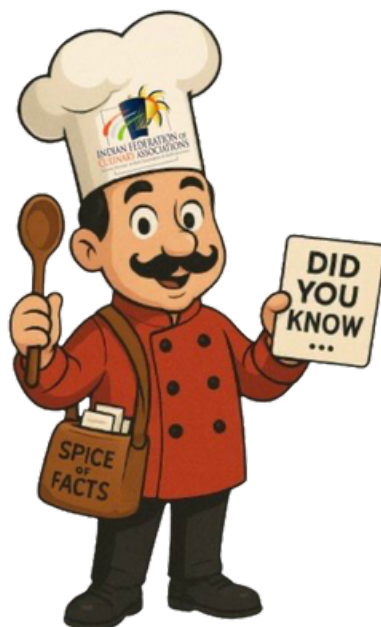
2 ripe avocados, finely mashed Pinch of salt

Baja Mignonette:

2 minced shallots
10g minced ginger
1 minced green pepper (deveined) 50ml olive oil
Pinch of salt and pepper

Method

1. Octopus: Simmer for 1 hour in salted water. Remove the head and beak, then tightly wrap in plastic to form a cylinder. Chill, then slice thinly (sushi-style).
2. Jalapeño Relish: Blanch peppers in syrup, blend with xanthan gum, and season.
3. Miso Aioli: Mix mayo, miso, and lemon juice; season.
4. Baja Mignonette: Combine shallots, ginger, pepper, oil, and lemon; season.
5. Assembly: Spread avocado on a tostada, top with scallop-shrimp ceviche (tossed in mignonette), add an octopus slice, and dot with aioli and relish. Garnish with flowers.



The concheros of Baja lived in areas of freshwater lagoons and always near the coasts, because their main food was the seafood and fish that they obtained from the shore after low tide. They were clams, abalone, crabs, mussels, snails, lobsters, turtles, oysters, and various fish that were eaten only by putting them on the fire—grilled—or by salting them to avoid the extreme conditions of peninsular geography.

Rediscovering Forgotten Ingredients in Indian & South Indian Cuisine

Dr.T.MILTON

Aromatic spices, and local variety, the rich mosaic of Indian and South Indian food is celebrated worldwide for its layered flavours less visible within the landscape of much-loved dishes is an abundance of ingredients that have over time drifted from common use, becoming "lost" or "overlooked". These culinary gems, once integral in heritage cooking, possess substantial potential for modern food craft and production, delivering unique flavours, heightened nutritive advantages, and pathways for better sustainability. The reduction of these ingredients can be linked to various reasons. It primarily promoted high-yield crops such as rice and wheat, neglecting indigenous grains, although the green revolution provided better food security. Prioritizing commercially viable and easily transportable ingredients, the process of globalization has led to the standardization of food systems. Urbanization and the transition away from farming lifestyles have played a role in the diminishing of heritage knowledge about growing and preparing these local gems, additionally.

Some ingredients were simply viewed as impractical or lacked the market attractiveness of their more popular alternatives. Moreover, throughout India, many ingredients have quietly faded from the culinary scene. For example, such as kodo (varagu), foxtail (thinai), barnyard (kuthiraivali), and little millet (samai), were once common staple grains, millets packed with minerals, and inherently gluten-free, they have been eclipsed by rice and wheat, known for being high in fiber. Their comeback is fuelled by increasing health awareness and a quest for sustainable options, reappearing in modern dishes like rotis, porridges, upma, and even desserts. Currently an aromatic lime native to Bengal, which is different from kaffir lime is used in various dishes.

Another instance is gondhoraj lebu, which was once integral in local curries and rice meals, adds a refined citrus flavour to today's culinary uses. The distinctive aroma of Kokum (garcinia indica), a souring agent primarily found in Konkan and Goan cuisines, has been overshadowed by tamarind, likewise. Its unique tangy flavours and antioxidant properties make it a valuable ingredient for unique beverages like Sol Kadhi and innovative sauces.



When it comes to South Indian cuisine, the list of overlooked gems grows. Once exclusively for royalty and thought to have healing properties, has fallen out of popularity due to its longer cooking time and less frequent cultivation, black rice (Kavuni arisi in Tamil Nadu) distinctive chewy texture, and nutty taste, making it ideal for heritage payasams, savory porridges, and even modern salads, its resurgence underscores its rich antioxidant profile. Palm jaggery, is a natural sweetener made from palm sap and served as a heritage substitute for refined sugar, panai karupatti. It presents a healthier and more flavourful alternative to cane sugar for sweets, coffees, and teas, packed with minerals and featuring a unique caramel-like taste which are frequently used either fresh or dried in Tamil Nadu and Kerala.



Dr. T. Milton, Principal of Saveetha Hospitality Institute of Food and Tourism (SIMATS, Chennai), is a visionary leader with over 32 years of experience bridging academia and the hotel industry. Renowned for redefining hospitality education, he has mentored countless students, pioneered innovative curricula, and built strong industry collaborations.

The modest manathakkali (black nightshade berries) were once a staple in home gardens, are ideal for heritage dishes such as vathal kuzhambu, curries, and thogayal, providing a complex flavours profile that is often absent in modern cooking, celebrated for their medicinal properties and distinctive bitter-sour flavours. Kaaraamani (black-eyed peas or cowpea), while still somewhat prevalent, tends to be underappreciated compared to other legumes, similarly curries, and poriyals, this versatile and nutritious pulse can be highlighted in recipes like sundal.

The path to reviving these ingredients in food craft and production is multi-faceted. Culinary institutes and forward-thinking chefs play a pivotal role in reintroducing them through innovative recipes and educational initiatives. Collaborating with local farmers to encourage sustainable cultivation of these indigenous varieties is crucial. Educating consumers about their nutritive advantages and unique flavours will drive demand. The rediscovery of these lost ingredients not only enriches our culinary heritage but also contributes to a more diverse, nutritious, and sustainable food future., ultimately Ensuring these forgotten flavours once again grace our tables, culinary professionals have the power to champion their return.



Conscious Consumption: The Power of Sustainable Food Choices

Chef Shrikala Rajan Sawant

In the food sector, sustainability means addressing environmental, economic, and social aspects while producing, processing, and consuming food in a way that satisfies present demands without endangering the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own. This includes actions like minimising the negative effects on the environment, guaranteeing financial stability, advocating for social fairness, and cultivating robust ecosystems along the whole food supply chain.

As we are working in the food industry, it is very necessary to change our entire process from farming to eating. Let us talk more about the process individually.

Farming- To feed the large and increasing population, our farmers start using pesticides and chemical-based fertilisers in farming. This gives a large production of various crops. But due to excessive use of pesticides and chemical-based fertilisers, we faced deterioration of soil quality. And it also impacted the environment as soil gets polluted, animals and human health. To change this, many farmers started practising organic farming. This helps not only to increase the quality of soil but also gives a positive effect on the environment, including animals and humans.

Cooking Practices- We need to follow effective cooking practices to reduce the wastage of food. Using energy-efficient techniques and equipment, planning meals, composting food waste, and selecting locally sourced, in-season, and long-lasting products and cookware are all examples of sustainable cooking practices.

Try to adopt a nose-to-tail attitude while using meat. So almost the whole animal will be used, and wastage will be less. There is one concept called "Grow your own Food". If you have a restaurant or small food hub, you can plant vegetables like Brinjal, Capsicum, Tomatoes, Chillies, Carrots, Leafy Vegetables, etc Herbs like Curry leaves, Coriander, etc.

You can also plant some fruits like Lemon, etc. If you start growing your own ingredients, then it will cut down the transportation and packaging, and this practice is also beneficial to the environment. And also, you can serve dishes by using these freshly grown ingredients. Start practising "Energy Efficient Cooking", which reduces the excess use of energy. Use equipment which are energy efficient, cook in lid-on pots and pans. Try to use cooking methods like steaming, stir-frying instead of baking and boiling, which also reduces the cooking time. Use seasonal ingredients, so you can rotate your menu with seasonal dishes and also keep your Chefs creative. It will be beneficial to your business because customers will definitely come to your restaurant to try seasonal delicacies. Try to use all the parts of vegetables. If not cooking every time, then in making Pickles, Jams, Sauces, Stocks, etc. Non-useable parts of vegetables can be used as compost in farming, which eventually helps in enriching the soil and also reducing organic waste. Planning meals and bulk cooking are also smarter way of reducing energy use and wastage of food.

Water Uses- Another way to make a kitchen more environmentally friendly is to utilise water wisely and swap out single-use goods for reusable ones. Pay attention to how much water you use. Even small adjustments, like turning off the tap while doing the dishes, can have a significant impact. Consider adding a low-flow tap aerator to your kitchen sink to further cut down on water wastage. You may save thousands of litres of water annually by using an easy-to-use device that can cut water flow by 50%⁴. Additionally, you may save a lot of water by just running your dishwasher when it is full.

There are various ways to start living a sustainable life. A small good change in our daily life can make others' lives more meaningful.



Passionate Chef. Hospitality Trainer. Research Scholar. Always ready to upgrade myself by new and innovative learning. A mother of a son, so always try new yet healthy recipes for him.





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CHEF GUHAN ANAND

As a pastry chef, Guhan Anand is passionate about creating beautiful and delicious desserts that bring joy to others. He specializes in crafting pastries, cakes, and confections with precision, creativity, and attention to detail. He enjoys experimenting with flavors, textures, and presentation to make each creation unique and memorable. His work demands patience, organization, and artistic vision — whether designing intricate desserts or perfecting classic recipes. Guhan takes pride in maintaining high-quality standards and ensuring every sweet treat looks as good as it tastes. Being a pastry chef allows him to express his creativity and share happiness through the art of baking.



N	G	T	V	J	F	F	F	E	E	K	S	Z	V	B	B	G	E
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F	O	C	A	C	C	I	A	T	V	G	I	T	C	G	M	E	X
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C	R	C	I	A	B	A	T	T	A	P	R	E	T	Z	E	L	D

Arboud
Arepa
Bagel
Baguette
Bammy

Biscotti
Brioche
Catalan
Ciabatta
Crumpet

Focaccia
Fougasse
Panettone
Pita
Pretzel

Culinary Capers

Last Month's : CULINARY-WORDSEARCH Say Cheese! A Goat Cheese Word Search

Say Cheese! A Goat Cheese Word Search - Answers

K	V	B	N	T	Y	Q	L	J	N	U	G	B	X	F	P	A	P
B	A	C	T	E	S	T	O	U	R	I	Y	S	Y	K	P	I	A
B	R	S	C	B	N	X	Q	T	J	E	G	P	D	F	I	H	Y
C	U	S	S	P	G	A	B	U	C	A	P	R	I	N	O	B	O
Q	A	C	R	E	C	N	B	L	T	L	M	J	O	Z	L	A	Y
U	I	C	H	O	R	H	E	U	Z	U	P	A	A	W	V	N	O
V	L	A	I	E	B	I	A	M	L	V	D	W	N	G	C	O	E
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Share a snapshot of your responses on your Instagram story, tag IFCA (@ifcachefsofindia), and seize the opportunity to win thrilling prizes!



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The advertisement features a chef in a white uniform and hat standing with arms crossed. Logos for the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations and the World Association of Chefs Societies are visible in the top corners.



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.

Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA)