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COVID
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FROM THE FOUNDER'S DESK



Dear Readers,

We hope this issue finds you and your loved ones healthy and safe.

It has truly been a terrible few weeks with the pandemic and the lockdown, not to mention the uncertainty looming over us all. While the fear for health and safety was inevitable, we also believe that it has brought a lot of things into perspective for us.

As we emerge from this, doubly strong and ready to rebuild the blocks of our economy from scratch, I have nothing but admiration for the undying Indian spirit of entrepreneurship.

If you ever find yourself lost and unable to find your way out, I urge you to

remember that every entrepreneur, including me, who has dared to risk it all, is sailing in the same sea as you are. We're all picking up the pieces of a dwindling economy and trying to make sense of it. It would also help to remember that while businesses are pivoting towards building more efficient models, our foundations are still strong and unshaken.

More power to us all,

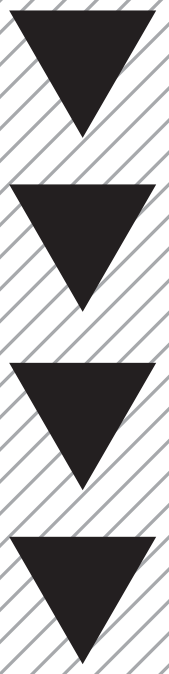
Vyom Shah

Vyom Shah - **FOUNDER, FOODISM**



"If It's Food,
It's foodism"

Prologue



WW

While the past few weeks have been rough for most businesses, forcing some to lay their staff off and even down their shutters for good, there are many entrepreneurs who continue to focus on 'what next', rather than 'what if'. In these trying times, we wanted to bring to you the courage of a chosen few, who aren't treating this as a failure but a roadblock. Do leaf through our Big Story, 'Taking Challenges In Their Stride', to read about the enthusiasm and undying spirit of entrepreneurship and human compassion.

While courage is important in times like these, wisdom is in knowing the thin line that separates bravery from foolishness. The threat that is looming outside still exists and we urge every reader to follow government guidelines. Failure won't kill us, but the failure to change just might. Our story on 'Life After Covid' will help you navigate through the everyday changes that we may be expected to make for the months to come.

As long as you're staying home, do try some of the sumptuous recipes put together by a few handpicked home chefs from across India. And speaking of India – we're all for the #VocalForLocal movement! Our editorial team has curated some popular global recipes that can be made with local ingredients! Please try these at home.

Also, did you know that Parle G biscuits just announced record-breaking sales during the lockdown! We were so happy to hear this, especially because our Snack Review product this month is Parle G! Read tidbits about its rich history and more.

We hope you enjoy this issue and (because we cannot say this enough) please follow appropriate social distancing, sanitize often and stay safe.

Kalgi Desai - **Editor**

foodism

“if it’s food, it’s foodism”

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TAKING
CHALLENGES
IN
THEIR
STRIDE



From breakages in the supply chain to a collective decrease in food sales, these bright and enterprising food entrepreneurs faced challenges at every step of the Covid lockdown. However, undeterred by the storm, they simply turned with the winds and moved on. While some found solace in using their resources to feed others, some used the downtime to plan the future and some others pivoted their business strategies and persevered. We bring you stories of ten entrepreneurs, who chose to look at the silver lining and followed the rainbow.

With production and sales at an eerie standstill and food supply chains heavily disrupted - the F&B sector had a lot to lose during the world's strictest and harshest lockdown. We spoke to some dynamic and passionate people in the food sector, who've got their feet firmly rooted to the ground without losing sight of the silver lining and a hopeful tomorrow.

Udeet Shah, Poetry

“Tough times don't last, passionate entrepreneurs do!”



The brightly lit foyers beckon you into a gravel-lined courtyard with chairs and palm trees, because at Poetry, even a 45 minute long wait must be endured in beauty. As you drink in the archaic stone sculptures, from the owner's grandfather's personal collection of architectural ruins, and catch up with your friends and family while you wait, it is almost time to go in and dine under a faux starry sky. Among the handful of fine-dine restaurants that Ahmedabad has to offer, Poetry is a popular choice for the young and old alike.

So what happens when this beautiful place falls prey to a lockdown without any surety of when 'dining in' will be an option again? “We are paying hefty property rentals, salaries and we are continuously maintaining the beauty of our restaurant, making sure that everything is just as it should be, even though our

customers aren't coming in right now. The lockdown has been harsh on us, mainly because there has been no income and the overheads have been the same, if not more. From ensuring the health and safety of our staff to looking after their accommodation and food requirements, without a shred of certainty about what the future of dine-in is going to be, it has been quiet an experience. After the first few days of the lockdown, reports of people going hungry started to come in. We had a running kitchen and some in-house staff, so we used our resources to start sending out food packets. With the help of an NGO, Vasantram Atmaram Charitable Trust, we were able to deliver over 32,000 food packets to the needy. I believe that is what kept us all going.”

The pandemic has definitely rained on a lot of parties, including

Udeet's. “We had a new project coming up, a very large endeavor with a banquet and a party lawn – that has been stalled. I consider myself lucky, because we've only just started working on the construction and now we'll be able to build it according to the new guidelines, if this continues. For now, we're incorporating some drastic changes to our menu. Since our food is all about experiential dining, we're working on a separate set of food items that are inspired from our signature dishes, but are delivery friendly. I'm very positive about this. While the lockdown had its dark side, I prefer to look at the brighter side of it too. Tough times don't last, but entrepreneurs who are passionate and willing to accommodate change, they do. So that's what we are working on. Until then, we aim to continue with our charity kitchen and work on future plans.”



**Rohan Bhatt, Kapil Matharani
& Poojan Thakkar,
Big Spoon Foods Pvt Ltd**

When three men took it upon themselves to recreate Moti Mahal's iconic butter chicken, box it up and deliver it to people's doorsteps, they left no stone unturned to ensure that the 'out-of-the-box' experience was just as good as the dine-in one. Makhni Brothers became a household name within weeks of their launch, with their soft, melt-in-the mouth, whole-wheat roomali rotis, luscious gravies, succulent tikkas and fragrant biryanis – all delivered to homes and offices, piping hot. This wasn't just another food delivery business because Big Spoon Foods had a well-strategized cloud kitchen planned ahead. Within months, they launched their second brand – Oven and Grill, to tantalize local taste buds with some desi-American fare. It was only the beginning.

As luck would have it, less than a year after the launch, the lockdown came crashing down on businesses. How badly were they affected? "Not a lot really. As long as the government allowed food deliveries, we were operational, with due permissions and SOPs. Yes, food sales were affected and non-vegetarian orders went down considerably. One challenge we faced was to repair the broken supply chain on our own, which wasn't too hard considering all our ingredients are locally sourced. Once we found a vendor, we realized that people needed essentials, so we started selling safe and sanitized groceries. We simply responded to change and that helped us gain new opportunities. Our staff issues were minimal, because most of them stay close to the

Simply responding to change, will pave the path for new opportunities.”

kitchen and we got passes made for them.”

Big Spoons has the first mover advantage too. As restaurateurs try to figure out how to pivot their business to a delivery model, these three have cracked it already. "As things go back to normal, we'll simply pick up from where we left off, without having to change anything. From day one, since we launched in August 2019, we've paid attention to hygiene. We built our ethical

prototype called HETH – Health, Economy, Taste and Hygiene. We sent out multilayered packaging, so that your food remains contact free. We have encouraged people to come see our kitchen. We've sent sanitizer wipes with every package, so you can clean your hands before eating. And from the day we launched, we sent out letters to people explaining our hygiene policies to them. This has helped build trust.”

**Mihir Shah,
Food Consultant &
Co-owner, Juggernaut**



From being one of the first 'pizza places' of Ahmedabad to dishing out countless plates of sev puri, chutney puri and bhel, Choice Snack Bar has been iconic for the city since decades. The canteen/cafeteria-like setup, the bright red and yellow branding, and the snacky fare – nothing much has changed, although you can see little upgrades like air-conditioners now. But even today, when you step into Choice, especially the one on C.G Road, a little part of you takes a nostalgic detour to the 90's.

Cut to present day, Choice now has two more kitchen brands to cater to the needs of a growing, food-obsessed population. Juggernaut Café and Arena, which is home to a football ground and a groovy café and From The North, a dine-in restaurant which serves vegetarian, North Indian fare. With the lockdown wreaking havoc on the food industry in totality, these brands were not spared either. "80% of our total income is from dine-in and deliveries only accounts for 20% - so you can imagine how it must have been. Moreover, even the deliveries were cut to half and the overheads remained the same. There were hefty rentals and staff salaries to pay. With the help of other restaurant owners, we were able to send 40 workers back home safely on a bus. The ones who stayed back with us were given food and accommodation. Salary cuts were inevitable because we were virtually not making any money.

This is not the time to lose heart and hope. ”

But Mihir is hopeful, like many others in the F&B industry. He believes that business will pick up and new ones will flourish. "This is not the time to lose heart and hope. Going forward, I believe that cloud kitchens will have a massive advantage. Another business that will sky rocket is the frozen foods and readymade foods sector. Fluctuating vegetable prices and qualities have encouraged people to go for frozen produce, gravy mixes and even frozen patties, fries samosas etc. I know some brands of ready-to-mix gravies that have started selling retail, because with the shutting down of restaurants, their sales also got massively affected. As far as we're concerned, now it is all about playing with the margins. We might have to increase the prices on our menu." Through all the gloom, Mihir has not failed to see the silver lining, "The one good thing that has come out of this is that false competition will reduce and only the solid players will stay in the market. There were people who entered the food business just because they had money to invest, but no real know-how or appetite for the business. These will get weeded out."

**Sriram Nair,
Terra**

Sanitization will be a must now – and that's fantastic! ”

We didn't know salads could be comfort food too, until Terra arrived in the city with their beautifully plated, colorful bowls of guilt-free indulgence. While the food floored most of us, the gleaming, cozy café nestled on the bustling SG Road was a sight for sore eyes. Add to the mix, a whole new menu with Filipino & Cuban dishes and indulgent desserts. Terra had struck the winning trifecta of an interesting menu, great food quality and the perfect ambience. Until, the lockdown came crashing down on them.

"The past 2-3 months have gone in a blur but they have been the harshest. Our staff had left and to hunt for new talent was a challenge. While we were still grappling with uncertainties and staff issues, a whole new problem for us was the disrupted supply chain. 80% of our produce was imported, including frozen croissants that came in from France. Our exotic fruits, vegetables and meats came from different parts of the world, which abruptly stopped. We've set a benchmark for food quality, so maintaining the same taste with ingredients sourced locally might become a challenge. We don't know when it will be safe to import foods again from these countries. Apart from this, it has become difficult to predict the pattern for customers."

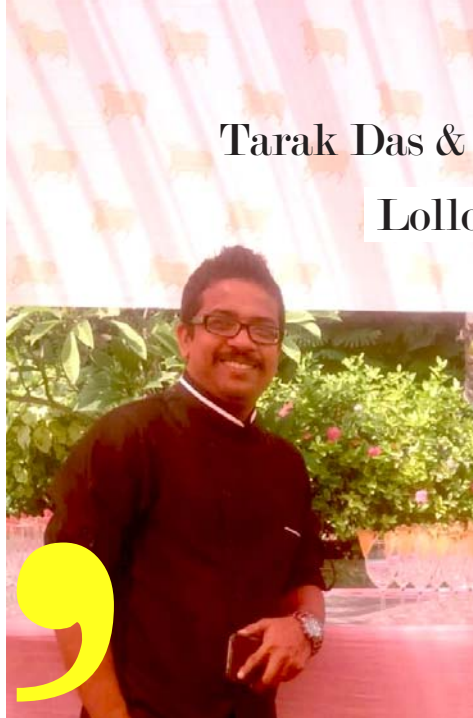
To battle these challenges, Sriram has been working on creating a new menu and reducing costs. "The costliest item on our menu used to cost INR 700. But with job cuts and people's apprehensiveness to eat out, we've reworked our price points and our menu. We've limited our prices to INR 350 now; no item will exceed this amount. We're also incorporating local produce into our dishes. This lockdown has given us a lot of perspective. We're focusing more on deliveries and going 100% plastic free now, from the cutlery to the packaging. It is imperative to touch upon all the problem areas now. The good thing is that health checks, food inspections, kitchen hygiene will become a priority. We have a five star rating for cleanliness and we've always been careful about hygiene from day one. The positive side of this lockdown is that sanitization will be a must now and that's fantastic. It is something we have always believed in as a brand."

Big bowls filled with the goodness of exotic produce, prepared in ways that would leave you spoilt for choice – Lollo Rosso had won hearts and appetites within weeks of opening. The word of a fresh global menu travelled fast, so much so, that they built a loyal

“Your goodwill will get you through this.”

and strong following while operating from a small non-descript location. And if you too, were one of those who went hunting for the tiny place that served delicious bowl meals, chances are that you may have been one of the loyal, happy customers who followed them to the spacious, dine-in restaurant that they moved to, sometime last year and endured the long queues, just to be able to dig into that delicious Sante Fe bowl and enjoy one of their glamorous desserts.

For a restaurant that mainly relied on imported food and a regular dine-in crowd, the lockdown was doubly harsh. “Everything was at a standstill, it felt like nothing was moving at all. The handful of staff members who stayed back, would cook in our kitchens and slowly the word spread. We began to supply food to people in our vicinity, who had no access to food – staff from other



Tarak Das & Alaap Shah, Lollo Rosso

restaurants, labourers etc. Once deliveries were allowed, we regained some normalcy and fired up the kitchen again, but then the second lockdown came in, the one where Gujarat was cut off from all supplies except dairy and medicines. The supply chain was truly interrupted after this. We're now working at establishing our own supply now, ensuring that the quality we serve remains consistent. We're all geared up now. The lockdown has stalled some of our future plans, like we were planning to start retailing a few things. A lot of plans will have to wait now.”

For Alaap and Tarak, the lockdown wasn't entirely a sour experience, “We got a chance to give back to the society in whatever little way we could. We distributed food packets for 60 days regularly. But I think what inspired and

overwhelmed us the most, was customers calling us to place orders. Our biggest glimmer of happiness was that even during a pandemic, our customers trusted us enough to eat our food. On bad days, this is the one thing we clutched on to.” Moving forward, Lollo Rosso has plans in place. “We're going digital with menus and payments. In fact, we were in Philippines when Covid struck and we came back and destroyed the menus even before there was a case in India. We're also starting a drive and dine concept, where people can come to Lollo Rosso and sit in their cars, while a server will take their orders and give them a wooden plank for support that will act as a table for their food. This way, they don't have to come inside and still enjoy fresh, hot food from our kitchens.”

Rishit Patel, Varietea Lounge & VCater Kitchen

For years now, the young and old alike have frequented Varietea Lounge for its laid-back ambience, its variety of beverages and the scrumptious finger food – we're dreaming of the butter garlic fries already. Long before 'Instagrammable food' was a thing, Varietea had started serving delicately spiced and freshly brewed teas in glass

kettles and refreshing icy pick-me-ups in large, fancy containers. Before we knew it, Varietea sprouted in multiple locations and today they've got cafes in Mumbai as well, where they serve tea-based cocktails.

For a café, whose main audience were professionals looking for a quiet place to work, women

catching up on some gossip with a side of delectable paninis and youngsters looking for a place to hangout, the lockdown had its effects. “While a lot of places were partially functioning through deliveries, we had shut down completely. Our business is all about personal interactions with our customers. We urge our customers to try a new dish or

sample one of our exotic blends, so translating this experience in food deliveries didn't make sense. Most of our migrant staff had left in the nick of time. We're not planning to lay anyone off or cut salaries, in fact, we're planning to open only around end of June. By then, hopefully our staff will be able to return. We've worked out a systematic re-opening plan, with stricter SOPs. Our seating arrangements have been planned to incorporate social distancing. Slashing down the overall capacity of the place is inevitable, but I guess that's why they're calling it the 'new normal'.

Rishit has made excellent use of the 60 days he got and has no regrets. "Yes, we lost business, but we also saw this as an opportunity to turn lemons into lemonade, or in our case, a refreshing lemon iced tea! We had been planning to get into a separate food delivery business

since a few months, when the lockdown happened. So this was a window for me to focus fully on



freezing the plans for VCater, a kitchen that will offer a wide variety of cuisines at very affordable rates. We have a segment that offers meals for under INR 99/- too! I knew doorstep food delivery was the next 'big thing', but this lockdown reinforced my belief in the concept we have created. I was assured that it was the

“We took this as an opportunity to turn lemons, into a refreshing lemon iced tea!”

perfect time to launch it. We're also working on plans to retail bottled beverages. The downtime gave me a chance to focus and fast track that idea too.”

In November 2019, marathon runner, enterprising entrepreneur and a true blue fitness freak, Pathik Patel launched his pet project – Fit and Flex. Not long after its launch, every small and big retailer - offline and online - had brightly coloured, shiny packets of this crunchy granola flying off their shelves. Says the proud owner of the brand, “We worked very hard on creating a breakfast staple that was delicious, healthy and enjoyable to eat. We made use of European technology to create India's crunchiest, baked granola in exotic fruity flavors.”

Unlike the granola varieties available in the market, which turn soggy and chewy when added to milk and yogurt, Fit and Flex hit the sweet spot for breakfast lovers who liked their cereal crispy and melt-in-the-mouth.

However, merely four months after a triumphant launch, the

lockdown forced the factory to shut down abruptly. “Granola is a relatively new product in breakfast cereals. When the lockdown happened, we were still a new FMCG brand, trying to establish a strong foothold in the industry. Post lockdown, our biggest challenge was to get our product to the market because our distributors had stopped operating. While production had stopped, we had stock that was ready to be shipped. The global economical standstill was starting to feel eerie. We couldn't address a lot of inquiries that we had

going to launch in major metros like Mumbai this year, but looks like that'll have to wait now.”

Not one to lose heart easily, Pathik believes that they will restart with a big bang. “We're calling it the 'new normal acceleration', because we know that we won't stop growing. In fact we envisage our business to rebound more

Pathik Patel, Fit & Flex

“It is time for a 'new normal acceleration' plan.”

generated over the past few months. As the lockdown got extended, we realized we would have to stall some expansion plans. It set our business strategy back by a few months. We were



strongly than ever, post-Covid. The government has given a go-ahead for the packaged food industry to resume work, as long as we follow the guidelines. We're being more than careful because the safety of our employees and our customers is of prime importance. From business meetings to product handling, we're using advanced technology to make sure that our product has zero manhandling and our daily lives are as contactless as possible. We're aiming for global granola domination now."



Kamini Patel, Kitchen Therapy

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“The lockdown has changed our perspective, we're now kinder towards each other.

risky. We'll wait it out.” Kamini is meanwhile selling products from her

Taking from the age-old 'gruh udyog' concept, Kamini Patel used her inventive skills to launch a gourmet version of it. With Kitchen Therapy, Kamini dove headfirst into crafting goodies that were handmade, preservative-free and made only in small batches to retain their freshness. From yummy trail mixes to delightful mukhwaas mixes and even instant beverage, each of her offerings has a certain, 'homemade' charm. The Kitchen Therapy unit is an all-women run brand, which just makes it more delightful!

The lockdown stopped her production with immediate effect. The good thing was that because of their small batch production, they didn't have a lot of stock. However, it did change the way their business functioned. “We had to shut operations completely, because all the women who work for Kitchen Therapy came from different parts of the city. With no mode of transportation, I couldn't risk their safety or the food's hygiene. I don't think we'll open for the next few weeks also, despite the government having given permission. I still feel it is too

other brand, Nature Therapy where she sells all-natural beauty products and body oils. “For the first two months, we made sure that we didn't cut salaries. But it is affecting our business now. Since we'll have to keep the unit shut for a few more weeks further, we might consider some salary cuts now.”

However, Kamini has not forgotten to look at the silver lining, despite the difficulties. “The lockdown has been harsh, it has been devastating for many. But if I were to look at the better side of this, I feel it has made us all more humane than before. We are kinder to each other; we have a shifted sense of perspective now. The new normal has taught us to really what is more important in life. Even business-wise, right from the clients to the courier guys, people have become politer, softer. Business-wise, I'd also say brands that have gotten more welcoming. With essentials becoming a part of food delivery apps, I was able to get on-board with Swiggy and Zomato to sell my products. This, for a small batch production unit like mine, is a big gain.”

Harsh Kandoi, Kandoi Bhogilal Mulchand

Afifth-generation-run brand, with a legacy that runs 150 years old – Kandoi has come a far way. From a quaint shop in the walled area of Ahmedabad to global reach, Kandoi Bhogilal Mulchand has been dishing out its most popular offering - the luscious, ghee-laden, moreish mohanthal to Indians across the world. Through their lively loaded hampers, they have been making it possible for sisters to send rakhi sweets to their brothers from halfway across the world and for children to send Diwali wishes to their parents, while living in different time zones. Always a customer centric brand, Kandoi has been the one-stop-destination to commemorate the sweeter joys of life.

For a brand that runs largely on retail and walk-ins, the lockdown spelled losses that were beyond business. “When the lockdown was first announced, our first thought was to empty our stock. Our products are made fresh and have a lower shelf life. So we went to every one of our stores, collecting sweets and namkeens and gathering them in one spot.

We made small hampers and distributed them amongst the needy. Within days, our shelves were empty. Most of our staff is local, so that wasn't an issue for us. The actual challenge began afterwards, when we sat down to rethink and rework our future strategies. We cannot predict customer trends anymore. Once the lockdown on retailing food eased, we began to operate two stores with minimal goods on the shelf, just 20 products."

Like most brands who are whirling towards food deliveries now, Kandoi too began to set foot in that direction, but not without losing sight of their age old business practices. "This lockdown has taught us to embrace and adapt to change, so we're doing just that. During the lockdown, we worked on a plan to start food deliveries. We won't be partnering with existing



This lockdown has taught us to embrace and adapt to change. ”

players because we're devising our own logistics team. These delivery boys will be under our scrutiny and training, so we can fully ensure the safety of our customers. We'll personally make sure that they aptly follow guidelines. We are also focusing on the improvising the packaging of our products, so that once global sales start, we're prepared. This lockdown has steered us into a new direction, but it has also brought to light the loyalty, trust and love that customers have showered on us. If people trust our hygiene standards enough to buy our food during a pandemic, we must have done something right!

Shaival Patel, Exclusif Handcrafted Holidays



“The local Indian tourism industry will boom!”

For a little over four years, Shaival Patel of Exclusif Handcrafted Holidays has been curating tailor-made travel experiences for enthusiasts from across the country. Their expertise lies in curating special, food oriented tours for their clients. Be it wine tasting in France or a pizza making class in Italy or a homegrown food trail in Bali, if it is local food you're looking for, they're your go-to guys!

With the tourism industry being touted as the worst affected sector in this pandemic, we wanted to know his thoughts on the way forward. "Yes, the industry is in its worst phase ever right now. There is no certainty and with the spiraling economy and rampant job cuts, travelling will be the first to go off the bucket list for families and individuals. Hotels will be forced to cut down to 50% of their capacity, so will flights and trains. To follow social distancing norms, a lot of changes will have to be made, some of which may not be feasible for smaller businesses. On the food front, hotels will do away with the lavish buffet spreads now, which most people enjoy. Food will either be served in packets or in-room dining will become the norm. This is a big blow for hotels, because food packets won't convey the same charm and luxury that a buffet does."

Like everything else, there is a brighter side to this too. "On a better note, I see the Indian tourism industry booming this year, which is great! People would not want to venture too far from home; they'll want to travel in their own cars. So local properties will see a surge. Indian travel destinations will get their long-awaited due, as exotic foreign locales are no longer safer to travel to. I see the local industry picking up, six months down the line. We've already begun to receive calls for Mount Abu and Udaipur inquiries! Travelling will also involve staying in villas and resorts, instead of hotels. For those who are travelling on a budget and cannot afford a resort, a thorough background check on the property you plan to stay in, is non-negotiable. Try to hold off the booking, until you've seen the place and are satisfied with its hygiene standards."





Life Post Lockdown

With uncertainties looming, the 'new normal' that everyone's talking about is inevitable. Times are a-changing and how! Masks are evolving into a fashion statement, sanitizers are becoming a necessity and travel for leisure seems like a distant dream. Here's what will change, when it comes to food, post lock down.

by Kalgi Patel Desai



While we slowly move towards normalcy, there is no denying that the definition of normal has changed. Gone are the days when you would simply get your favorite foods off the streets and demolish it within seconds or go shopping and pick, smell, feel the fruits and vegetables you want to buy. Here's what life will look like, at least till the end of 2020.

1. We'll wash everything that comes from outside

From washing vegetables and fruits immediately after getting them home, to rinsing off milk pouches and even biscuit packets, washing is going to be a very important part of our lives now. According to the Food and Drug Administration of

America, washing produce under running



water for 20 seconds is enough to get rid of anything harmful on it. They believe that there is no need for sanitizers or other chemicals in order to clean your fresh produce. For packaged goods that don't need refrigeration, a gentle wipe down with a soft napkin

dipped in water and a little disinfectant should do the trick.

2. More sanitization products will come up

We can easily assume that the market will be flooded with products that help sanitize your groceries and supermarket supplies. How effective or useful they will be, there is no telling. But your food

markets will definitely not look the same.

3. Shopping in supermarkets will be different

Masks up, gloves on, sanitizer bottles out and a 6 feet distance between every single shopper. Long waiting queues, entry only for a limited number of shoppers and you may not find every food product that you're looking for. Supermarket shopping will be very different than how we know it.







4. We will ration food

This lockdown taught us many important lessons – gratitude above all. With the migrant crisis, hunger, food unavailability, each one of us learnt to be grateful for every morsel on our plates. The one food change we will see in all of us is rationing of food. We won't make all the vegetables all at once, we won't over calculate

how much we have to cook. And even as we eat with peace and joy, we will continue to remember these days and hold back on using up all our resources, all our supplies – a life skill our mothers and grandmothers mastered, but we forgot.

5. Occasionally eating out

Remember the time when you were a child and eating out was only meant for special occasions like birthdays and anniversaries? Well, get set to jet back to the nineties because we might have to embrace this trend again. Eating out will suffer massively, as we fear contagion. As opposed to the weekly eating out/ordering in regime, a lot of home cooked meals are in the offing now. Especially because every other person we know has channeled the extra lockdown time into becoming a master chef at home!

6. Equality in the kitchen

With more and more men lending a helping hand in the household chores during the lockdown, the equality in the household will be restored. it won't

just be upto the women to cook and clean, everyone will play their part. The dearth of servants and cooks during this period has truly sparked joy within families.

7. We will start buying from smaller stores

If this pandemic taught us one thing, it was to be scared of crowds. Which is why there is a large possibility that we might start buying from smaller stores instead of large supermarkets. The grocer round the corner, the green grocer down the road, will all indulge in friendly banter again! To avoid crowds and long queues, we'll support smaller businesses more.

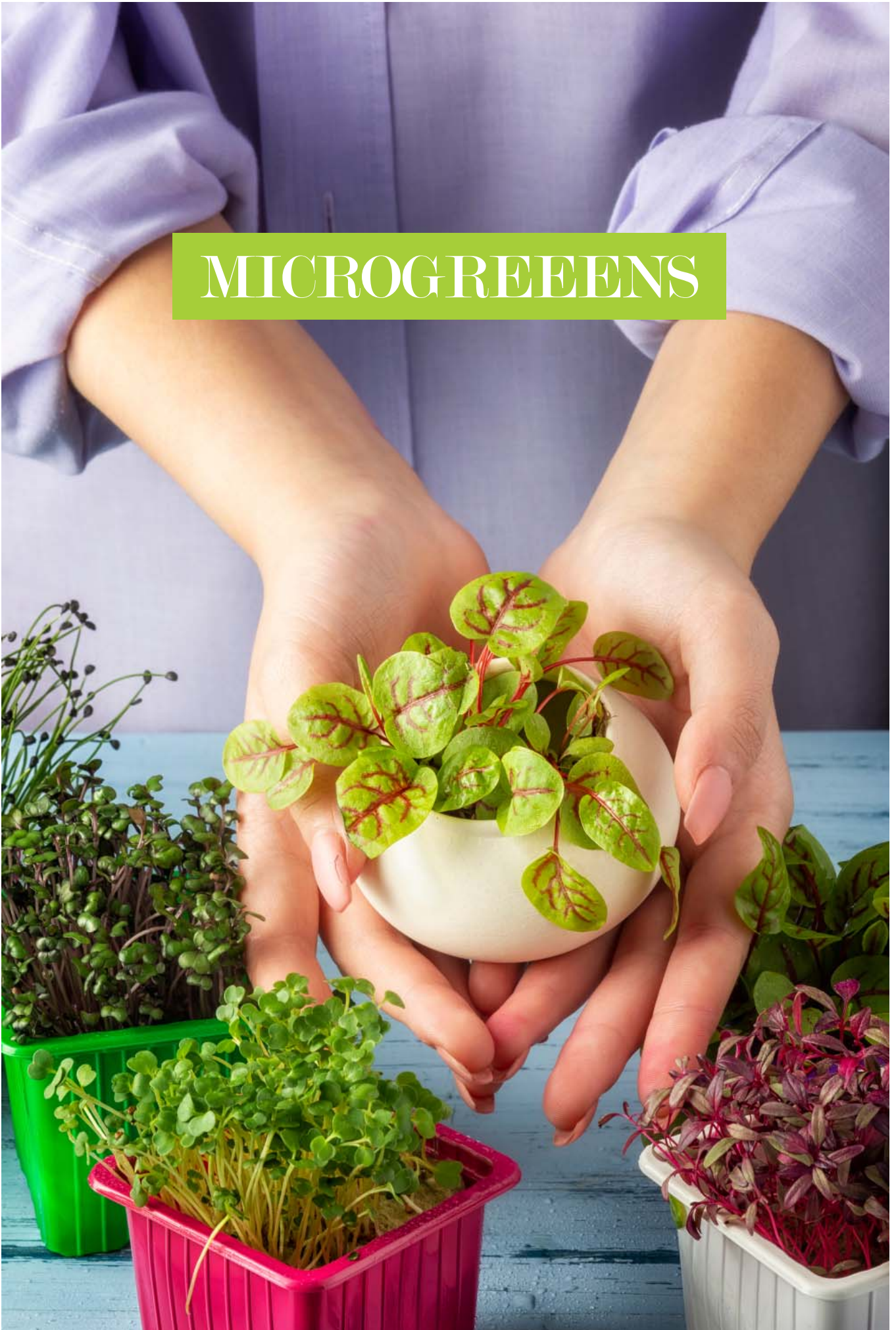
8. Meat eaters will decrease in numbers

While the novel corona virus does not spread by eating meat, a lot of people have already given up on non-vegetarian food owing to fear. The meat consumption is likely to go down, if only for a few months.





MICROGREENS





GROW YOUR OWN SUPERFOOD!



The past few weeks have been trying for us and have truly made us introspect. Learning to grow your own food can be liberating, especially during times like these. While a large part of the population struggled to find decent produce of fresh fruits and vegetables, there were also those who had kitchen gardens or farms and sustained themselves through this trying time. Is it time to finally pick a space and get digging?

by Tanya Khambolja

While not everyone has the luxury of space to grow a sustainable kitchen garden, growing micro greens in a container can certainly be done. All you need is a shallow, sturdy container made of plastic or terra cotta, some fertile, compost rich soil, dry leaves and a few seeds from your kitchen pantry. We're sure you can manage these.

What are micro greens?

Before you begin to develop your green thumb, I'd like to delve a little deeper into what micro greens are, if you haven't already heard of them. Micro greens are edible plants that fall somewhere

between sprouts and baby plants. They're the homegrown equivalents of your baby corn, cherry tomatoes etc. only, smaller, more nutrition dense and very, very quick and easy to grow. They are known as specialty greens. A very simple way of understanding micro greens is that they are herbs and plants, which are harvested just before the leaves, develop. They can be grown in a small space at home and consumed all year long. They are choc-a-block with all things healthy and nutritious because they are the purest form of plants.

How to eat micro greens?

They are super versatile! You can get as creative as you want with micro greens as long as you follow the two-step rule.

1. Micro greens must be eaten raw.
2. They must be consumed within hours of harvesting to utilize their nutrition value at the best.

Add them to your soups and top your salads with them, add a little crunch to your rice or wraps with these super healthy plants. You could even throw in a few micro greens to your smoothie to pack a powerful punch to them. Since they are so pretty, they're great for

garnishing your dishes – as long as you promise to eat them too! You could incorporate micro greens to your Indian dishes by adding them in the kachumber / koshimbir / green salad or topping your vegetable curry with a few sprigs. The best thing about these greens is that they don't alter the taste of anything, only add a ton of health and goodness to your dishes.



Let's get started...

Here's what you need

- A shallow bowl, plastic reusable box, terra cotta pot, any clay pot or a garden container
- Dry leaves
- Compost rich soil
- Water
- Seeds (can be from your pantry)

Micro greens that you can grow: Mustard, sesame, green peas, spinach, fenugreek, radish, amaranth, and beetroot. You may find a lot of these in your pantry essentials.



Method

1. Take a pot/plastic reusable container/bowl from your home.
2. Fill it a little with soil, compost, and crushed dry leaves. This should cover about 10 inches of your container. Make sure the soil is moist.
3. Evenly spread the seeds on top of the soil. Cover the seeds with a thin layer of soil and spray the surface with water (the seeds will come up after you spray the water, just cover them with soil again)
4. Leave it in a semi-shade room or a well lit area in the house. Avoid direct sunlight – these seeds take about 10- 12 days to evenly germinate. Lightly water the pot everyday. Make sure you do not over water or under-water the pot.
5. Greens are usually ready to harvest in 14-18 days, depending on the type of seed used.
6. On the 14-16th day when the micro greens have grown about 3 inch, you can harvest them from the roots and consume it directly/raw. Don't forget to wash them!

We hope you enjoy this process and try it at home! Truth be told – anything you grow will always taste sweeter and better.

Tanya Khambolja is the Co-founder of Riverfarm Community Farm & Founder of Urban Khetti





SNACK REVIEW

Parle-G

The one product that has seen you evolve from a five-year-old child agonizing over his/her glass of milk to a serial chai drinker is Parle G. In all these years of growing up, a lot may have changed, but even today, nothing compares to the joy of dunking this delicious biscuit into your choice of beverage and swiftly fishing it out to eat it, before it gets too soggy and lands at the bottom of your glass/mug.

Parle, a name that instantly transports you back to your childhood - was a brand established in 1928 by Mohanlal Dayal, a silk trader who was smitten by the Swadeshi movement. The genius businessman transformed a run-down cattle shed into a confectionery factory. Legend has it, that he got so busy setting up the place that he forgot to name it and it just went by the name Parle, because that is where it was located! Initially they started with boiled, hard confectionaries, and baked their very first biscuit only in 1939, almost a decade later. The biscuits were custom made to suit Indian taste palates and to match their spending capacity. These were India's answers to British biscuits and they picked up and how! However, for a short period after the tragic partition of India in 1947, Parle had to stop production owing to a severe shortage of wheat. They started selling biscuits made of barley, trying to convince people to eat these until the wheat situation improves. Soon enough - Parle Glucose was back with its original wheat, sugar, milk recipe. But new challenges lay ahead for the brand. For starters, competitors were lining up to copy the biscuits! It was time for Parle to rebrand and reclaim their ownership to these sweet, rectangular wonders. They renamed Parle Glucose to Parle G and even came up with the catchy tagline, 'G mane Genius'. They used the illustration of a super cute baby girl, to distinguish themselves amidst a sea of rival glucose biscuits. This turned out to be a successful endeavor and soon enough, people went to shops asking for Parle G biscuits, instead of glucose biscuits.

Pros

Nobody can put a price or a review on the nostalgia element of these biscuits - they're legendary in their own, sweet way! Parle G biscuits are the cheapest possible way to ward off hunger pangs and refuel your body with an instant rush of energy. They are accessible - from gourmet food stores to the smallest groceries in the remotest villages, these are literally available everywhere. With chefs turning to this humble biscuit to create decadent dishes like Parle G Cheesecake and even a Parle G Tiramisu, it is definitely going places. These biscuits come with a long shelf (six months) and so become excellent travel companions too! In fact, a news item had reported how Mumbai was facing a massive shortage of Parle G biscuits during the recent Covid-19 lockdown. That itself speaks volumes about the popularity of this biscuit. That and the fact that a survey conducted in 2015 concluded that Parle G was one of India's most trusted food products.

Cons

We hate to list down the cons for a product this legendary - and there's really just one downside to these delicious biscuits. They're unhealthy. Made from only refined flour or maida with very high sugar content, a single packet of Parle G biscuits clocks in close to 450 calories. That's almost 25% of your daily calorie requirement - gone down in a single teatime snack. With next to none quantities of dietary fiber and 25g of sugar in a single packet, these biscuits do more harm than good to your body. And if that wasn't enough, these biscuits also contain hydrogenated oils that increase the bad cholesterol in your body.

Parle G biscuits have always been a part of our diet and will continue to do so for the rest of our lives. All we need is a little sense of moderation when eating these. Pro tip: Try the instant Parle G cake recipe (look it up on the internet) - we promise, you won't regret it!



EDITOR'S PICK!

This month, we decided to bring to you, your favorite global dishes, made with local ingredients! We're all about supporting indigenous produce and going vocal for local – but we also know how much you love your Mexican and Italian dishes. So here's a spread, made with ingredients from your pantry, nothing fancy, nothing expensive – just home-cooked world cuisine.





HUMMUS

This Middle Eastern delicacy has found its way into regular global cuisine owing to its neutral palate. Eat it as a dip, drizzle it on your salads as a dressing or simply eat it by the spoonful, this is a simple, knockout dish that you can impress anyone with.

Prep Time 10 hours

Cooking Time 12-15 minutes

Serves 3-4

INGREDIENTS

Chickpeas 2 cups

Lemon juice 1 tbsp

White sesame seeds ½ cup

Salt as required

Mint Leaves 8-10

Any non-flavored oil (olive, sunflower, canola)

Garlic 10 cloves

METHOD

1. Wash and soak the chickpeas in warm water overnight or for 8 – 9 hours until they double in size.
2. Pressure-cook the soaked chickpeas for 8 whistles. Cool the cooker and drain the chickpeas. Don't throw the water away, save it.
3. While the chickpeas cook, In a nonstick frying pan, roast the sesame seeds over a slow flame until fragrant. Be careful, they may begin to pop all over.
4. Cool the sesame seeds and grind them with a little oil to make a thick paste. This is your tahini.
5. Now, in a powerful blender, add the cooled chickpeas, garlic, oil, salt, tahini and the lemon juice. Blend till there are no lumps.
6. Add 1/4th cup of the reserved chickpeas water and blend again to make a smooth paste. If you are using this as a salad dressing and want it runnier, add more water. Adjust the seasoning according to your taste.
7. Garnish with a spoon of oil and some chilli powder before you serve.

NACHOS

You don't need fancy groceries to create your favorite Mexican fare at home. Just a few regular ingredients from your pantry and refrigerator and you're set!



Prep Time 8 hours
Cooking Time 1 hour
Serves 3-4

INGREDIENTS

For the Nachos

- Whole-wheat flour** 1 cup
- Corn meal** 1 cup
- Salt** 1 tsp
- Carom seeds (Ajwain)** 1 tsp
- Hot water** to knead
- Oil** for frying

For the Sauce

- Red kidney beans** 1.5 cups
- Tomato paste** 300 g
- Onion paste** 200 g
- Garlic** 12-15 cloves
- Oil** 2 tbsp
- Salt** as required
- Chilli powder** 3 tsp
- Cumin powder** 3 tsp
- Black pepper** 3 tsp
- Sugar** 3 tsp
- Tomato ketchup** 3 tbsp
- Grated Cheese** 1 cup

For the Sour Cream

- Hung curd** ½ cup
- Salt** 2 tbsp
- Lemon juice** 1 tsp
- Garlic Powder** 2 tsp

For the salsa

- Finely chopped tomatoes** 4 tbsp
- Finely chopped onions** 4 tbsp
- Finely chopped green chillies** 1
tbsp
- Finely chopped coriander** 1 tbsp

METHOD

- 1.** Soak the kidney beans overnight or for 8-10 hours. Pressure-cook the beans for 5-6 whistles, release the pressure and drain the water.
- 2.** Mix the two flours, salt, carom seeds with warm water. Knead a soft, firm, and crack free dough. Cover and rest it for 30 minutes.
- 3.** While the dough rests, heat some oil in a non-stick pan, add finely chopped garlic and fry until slightly brown.
- 4.** Add onion paste and fry till it the rawness goes away and it releases oil.
- 5.** Add the salt, chilli powder, cumin powder and fry for 2-3 minutes. Add the tomato paste and sugar. Add the boiled kidney beans; mash a few if you wish to. Stir until everything is mixed well. Add the ketchup and switch the flame off. Adjust seasoning and set aside to cool.
- 6.** Remove the dough and pat with a spoon of oil. Knead it again. Divide it into 4 equal portions and roll them out into thin rotis.
- 7.** Cut square, round or diamond shapes and fry in hot oil. Repeat with the rest of the dough until you have fried all the nacho chips. Sprinkle a little salt over your chips and set them aside.
- 8.** While the sauce and the nachos cool, mix the hung curd, salt, garlic powder and lemon juice. Whisk well until combined. Put this prepared sour cream in the fridge to chill.
- 9.** Assemble your nachos by first spreading the nacho chips on the plate. Ladle the sauce onto the chips, followed by the grated cheese. Heat in the microwave for 1-2 minutes, until the cheese melts. Top it with the sour cream and finally the finely chopped onions, tomatoes, chillies and coriander. Serve and enjoy!



GNOCCHI

Bring home the warm Italian sunshine with this simple gnocchi recipe and we promise you wouldn't ever order gnocchi from anywhere ever. This is the easiest fresh pasta dish you can make at home.

METHOD

1. Prepare the sauce, by roasting the whole tomatoes in an oven or over the stove on an open flame. Cool and peel them.
2. Blend the tomatoes with the cashews until smooth.
3. In a nonstick vessel, heat 2 tbsp oil and add finely chopped garlic to it. Fry until brown and add the tomato cashew puree to it. Season with salt, chilli flakes and sugar and cook until it releases oil from the sides. Switch off the flame and add the cream and stir well.
4. Boil a big pot of water, drizzled with oil and 2 tbsp salt.
5. To make the gnocchi, cool, dry and mash the boiled potatoes and pass them through a sieve to get a lump-free mixture. Add pepper and flour to the potatoes and knead a soft dough. Ensure that the potatoes are completely dry to avoid the dough from getting watery.
6. Roll the dough into thin, uniform logs and cut into 1 inch pieces. You can decorate these pieces by rolling them onto a fork, or simply roll them to give them a more defined shape.
7. Drop the prepared gnocchi into the boiling water and cook them for 4 minutes, until they start floating on the top.
8. Quickly pick the cooked gnocchi with a slotted spoon and drop them into the sauce. Repeat, as many batches as are required, do not overcrowd the pan. Boil in small batches.
9. Serve with a sprig of mint on top.

Prep Time 1 hour
Cooking Time 45 minutes
Serves 2

INGREDIENTS

For the pasta

Boiled potatoes 5 large
Refined flour/maida 100 g
Salt as per taste
Pepper a pinch

For the sauce

Tomatoes 1 kg
Garlic 20 cloves
Salt as per taste
Sugar 1 tbsp
Chilli flakes 1 tbsp
Cashews 10 nos
Cream 2 tbsp





Prep Time 1 hour
Cooking Time 20 minutes
Serves 2

MOMOS

A Tibetan staple that also goes by the Oriental name 'dumplings' and even mantu for people living in the Afghan province. The humble steamed dumpling/momo may have multiple origins but it has fans across the globe. Learn how to make this classic favorite with a few ingredients at home.

INGREDIENTS

Refined flour/maida 2 cups
Salt 1 tsp + more for seasoning
Warm water as required
Finely chopped onions 2 tbsp
Finely chopped cabbage 1 cup
Finely chopped carrots ½ cup
Finely chopped French beans ¼ cup
Finely chopped green chillies 2 nos
Finely chopped ginger 2 inch piece
Finely chopped garlic 20 cloves
Soya granules ¼ cup
Soya sauce ½ tsp
Green chilli sauce ½ tsp
Pepper as required

METHOD

1. Mix the maida with salt and slowly add the warm water to it, to form a soft pliable dough. Cover and rest it for 15 minutes.
2. Soak the soya granules in hot water and drain them well. Set aside.
3. In a nonstick pan, heat some oil (preferably sesame oil) and add the chopped ginger and garlic. Fry for 2-3 minutes on medium flame, do not let it brown.
4. Add all the vegetables and green chillies to this along with the salt, pepper, soya sauce and green chilli sauce. Add the soaked soya granules and mix the stuffing well. Set aside to cool.
5. Knead your dough again and divide it into small portions. On a floured surface, roll the dough as thin as possible to form the outer encasing for the momos. This should be about 3-4 inches in diameter. Apply very little water on the edges of rolled dough.
6. Spoon a little vegetable stuffing onto this prepared dough and gently fold the edges. Seal them carefully and set aside. Cover with a cloth so that they don't dry out.
7. Repeat this with all the dough portions and prepare all the momos first.
8. Steam the momos in an idli cooker or steam oven. If you have neither, fill 1/4th of a large vessel with water and carefully place a stand inside. Heat the vessel until the water begins to simmer. Place a greased plate onto this stand, ensuring it doesn't touch the water. Place the momos on the plate and cover the vessel to generate steam. Let it cook for 10-15 minutes.
9. Serve the momos with a garlic chutney.

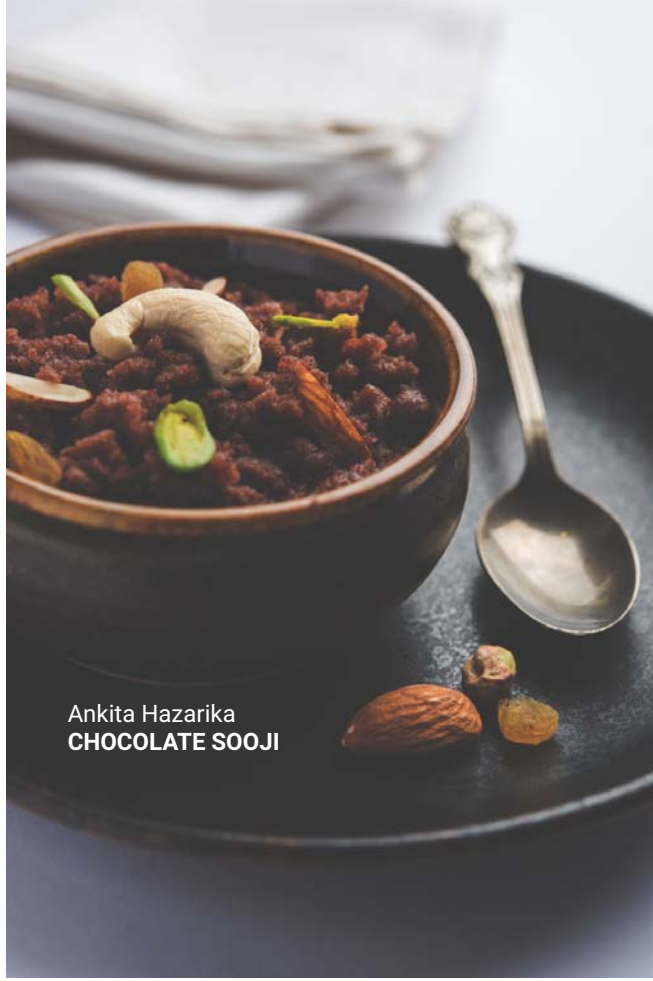
P.S: You can even stuff the momos with grated cheese to make cheese momos.



Dev Gandhi
CINNAMON CARROT SOUP



Ganga Avarekad
CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES



Ankita Hazarika
CHOCOLATE SOOJI



Dhara Manthan Palkhiwala
MONO MEXICANO

*Look may differ.

MASTER HOMECHEF WINNING RECIPES!

Last month, we held a contest, requesting people to submit recipes that they were cooking at home during the lockdown. We've shortlisted some of our favorite dishes for a special feature! These yummy recipes are full of flavor and impressively quick to make!

To participate in our next Master Homechef contest, follow us on our Instagram page @foodism.xyz

CINNAMON CARROT SOUP

We loved this protein-packed, fibrous, soul warming concoction with a hint of cinnamon for its lush creaminess.

INGREDIENTS

Milk 400 ml
Cinnamon powder 2-3 tsp
Cinnamon sticks 4
Pepper ½ tsp
Brown sugar 1 tsp
Grated carrots ¾ cup
Grated ginger ½ tsp
Grated garlic 1 tsp
Turmeric 1 tsp
Olive oil 1 tbsp
Paneer 120g
Pumpkin seeds 1 tbsp
Grated bell peppers 1 tsp
Salt to taste

METHOD

1. Pour milk in a steel utensil. Add cinnamon powder, sticks & brown sugar. Heat on medium high flame, until it comes to a boil. Cover and set aside.
2. In a non-stick pan, heat olive oil. Add carrot, ginger & garlic. Let it cook for 2 minutes. Add the turmeric powder and mix it well.
3. Take off the heat and stir in the pepper. Use a sieve to remove all the particles from cinnamon milk infusion. Mix the cooked carrots, ginger & garlic with the cinnamon milk. Blend well until smooth.
4. Add paneer and olive oil and blend again until it forms a thick,

smooth mixture.

5. Serve, garnished with some grated carrot & red bell pepper on top with pumpkin seeds.

CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES

When sweet cravings strike at odd hours – this dish comes to the rescue. Made with a few, accessible ingredients, it is truly a saviour!

INGREDIENTS

120g Dark chocolate 120g
Amul fresh cream 50g
Butter 60g
Salt a pinch

METHOD

1. In a pan on low heat, melt together dark chocolate and cream till half of the Chocolate melts.
2. Take it off the stove and stir till the rest of the chocolate melts to form a creamy texture.
3. Add the butter and salt.
4. Stir well till the butter has melted into it.
5. Keep the mix in the fridge for 3-4 hours.
6. Take it out, roll it into small balls. (use a spoon to scoop, so u get equal size truffles)
7. Now roll them on cocoa powder, sprinkles or roasted nuts of your choice.
8. Keep these in the freezer for 15 minutes and they're ready to eat!

9. You can even store them in an air tight container in your fridge.

CHOCOLATE SOOJI

We may have a soft spot for quick and easy desserts – especially when there's chocolate in it! This dish is made with sooji and nuts, making this gooey, fudgy preparation, quiet guilt free too.

INGREDIENTS

Cocoa powder or chocolate powder 3 tbsp
Sooji (semolina) 2 cups
Milk 4 cups
Dry fruits (optional)
Vanilla essence (optional)
Sugar 2-3 tbsp
Ghee 1 cup

METHOD

1. Boil the milk. Once it simmers, add 3 tablespoons of cocoa powder or chocolate chunks/powder and sugar. You can add more sugar if you want it sweeter. Stir in the vanilla essence and cook for 5-6 minutes.
2. Next, in a different pan, heat 1 cup of ghee. Roast the sooji till it turns light brown and fragrant. Add the flavored milk to this and stir till it thickens slightly.
3. Pour this thick liquid onto a serving dish and add dry fruits over it. Garnish with some chocolate and serve.

MONO MEXICANO

A delicious, snacky recipe that will leave you wanting more! This is a great way to impress your family and a welcome change from the regular canapés we make from Monaco biscuits.

INGREDIENTS

Monaco biscuits 22 pcs
Boiled raw banana 2 pcs
Grated cheese 1 cup
Chilli flakes 2 tbsp
Oregano 1 tbsp
Mexican seasoning 3 tbsp
Green capsicum 1/4 cup
Red bell pepper 1/4 cup
Yellow bell pepper 1/4 cup
Salt to taste
Oil 2 tbsp
Ketchup or pizza sauce to taste
Nylon sev to garnish

METHOD

1. Heat oil in a pan and stir fry the capsicum and bell peppers for 3-4 minutes. Add the boiled raw bananas and keep stirring.
2. Add salt, chilli flakes, oregano and the Mexican seasoning and mix well.
3. Add some grated cheese and take off the heat. This is the stuffing.
4. To assemble, sandwich the stuffing between two biscuits and dip it in the ketchup. Gently roll this over the nylon sev. Repeat with all the biscuits and serve.

OUR NEXT MASTER
 HOMECHIEF CONTEST



@FOODISM.XYZ



MASALA KHICHDI

If you are in the mood for something healthy but tasty and spicy, this is the perfect dish for you. It is quick to make too!

Recipe: Mrs. Heena Gautam

Photo: Harsh Chaudhary

INGREDIENTS

Rice 1/2 cup
Moong Dal 1/2 cup
Toor dal 1/2 cup
Bay leaf 1
Khada masala 1 tsp
Jeera 1 tsp
Ginger, chilli, garlic 1 tbsp minced
Finely chopped onion 1/2 cup
Green peas 1/2 cup
Chopped Carrots 1/2 cup
Chopped Bottle Gourd 1 cup
Salt to taste
Turmeric 1/2 tsp
Red chilli powder 1 tsp
Garam masala 1/2 tsp

METHOD

1. Wash and soak the rice and dal for 20 min.
2. Heat ghee in a pressure cooker and add the jeera, bayleaf, whole spices (khada masala) and sauté till fragrant.
3. Add the ginger, garlic and green chillies paste and sauté for 2 min.
4. Add the chopped vegetables and coat them well with the masala.
5. Add the washed dal and rice and gently combine everything in the cooker.
6. Add all the spices along with 5 cups of water,
7. Cover and pressure cook for 4 whistles on a medium flame.
8. Serve hot with curd and pickle.

PALAK CORN KHICHDI

Cleanse all that heavy bingeing with a delicious spinach khichdi made better with sweet kernels of corn.



INGREDIENTS

Rice 1/2 cup
Moong dal ½ cup
Ghee 1 tbsp
Turmeric 1/4 tsp
Jeera 1 tsp
Salt to taste
Khada masala 1 tsp
Dried red chillies 2
Onion, finely chopped 1/2 cup
Minced ginger, chillies and garlic 1 tbsp
Tomato, finely chopped 1/4 cup
Spinach purée 1/2 cup
Boiled sweet corn 1/2 cup

Recipe: Mrs. Heena Gautam
Photo: Harsh Chaudhary

METHOD

1. Wash and soak rice and mung dal for 20 min in a bowl.
2. Pressure cook for 3 whistles, with turmeric and salt with three cups of water. Turn off the heat and let it cool for 10 min.
3. Heat ghee in a pan and sauté the cumin seeds (jeera) and all khada masala for 2-3 minutes until fragrant. Add dried red chillies.
4. Add the ginger-chili-garlic paste and chopped onions and sauté for 2 min.
5. Add tomatoes, sweet corn kernels and sauté for 3-5 min.
6. Now add spinach puree and cook for 3 min.
7. Add the boiled khichdi to this with 1 cup water and gently mix until combined.
8. Simmer and boil for 5 minutes or till khichdi absorbs spinach flavour.
9. Finally, serve spinach khichdi hot topped with more ghee if required.

HOME CHEF

A Bucket Full of Creative Ideas- Brand Bucket

When Dhara Shah walked out of St. Xavier's College with a Masters in English Literature, little did she know that she'd be building a career in food – but that's how life is. You never know when the right note hits you and you realize you have reached exactly where you were always supposed to be.

by Bhumika Raval

Dhara Shah is vivacious to say the least – she is full of dreams, hopes and enthusiasm and she makes sure that she channels all that positivity into the food she makes and sells, under the name Brand Bucket. When questioned about why she would chose a name like Brand Bucket, Dhara quips, “Well I wanted to be known for a bucket full of creative ideas, you see, I love cooking! And I love to experiment and create new dishes when I'm in the kitchen. This is what led to the name Brand Bucket. Another reason for the name is the fact that I sell my food in jars.”

Dhara is a powerhouse of food ideas, she cooks up delicious savoury bakes and dips in her kitchen because they are quiet literally her favorite item to make.

“I excel at cooking baked dips and savoury baked items – desi and globally inspired both. My food usually boasts of a lot of local produce as well as some exotic ingredients.”



A very big advantage that Dhara has in the food business is the fact that she recognized her passion for cooking very early on. She did not have to spend a lot of time, dillydallying between jobs to realize her one true love was to cook.

“Home cooked food is comforting and free of preservatives and chemicals. People love it and that's how I first decided to make this a home-based venture. Eventually, I may look at outdoor catering – once things get streamlined. As of now this is a one-woman-show and I'm proudly running it without much help. A few years down the line, this is how I want to take my career forward.”

For someone who looks so positive and self assured, Dhara sure did face her fair share of obstacles,
“Most of my obstacles were born out of my own decisions – right from the time I started Brand Bucket, I had made up my mind to use pure and natural ingredients only. The kind of things that I cook, sometimes require special imported ingredients, that take time to come or aren't usually in stock. I prefer to not replace it with what is available – thus retaining the authenticity of the dish. This is where I sometimes face problems.”

Signing off, Dhara has one crucial advice for every young beginner cook out there – just give your 100% to cooking. She urges aspiring home chefs to create their own recipes and come up with their own inventions and focus on the flavors of the dishes they serve.

Fast-Four

Who are your favorite Chefs?

George Colambaris, Matt Preston and Yotam Ottolenghi. Closer to home, I like Ranveer Brar and Vicky Ratnani

Where do you find inspiration?

I follow a lot of international chefs on social media and keenly look for inspiration in techniques and pay attention to the ingredients they are cooking with.

One crucial aspect of your business is...

Constant feedback. I take feedback from clients all the time.

Advice for beginners?

A: Start right now – you can start learning how to cook at home through youtube videos also.

How do you define your cooking?

I believe that I add a sprinkle of

happiness to people's lives with my food. The world we live in today is full of stress and I'm doing my bit to ease it off with some great food.

What makes your food stand out?

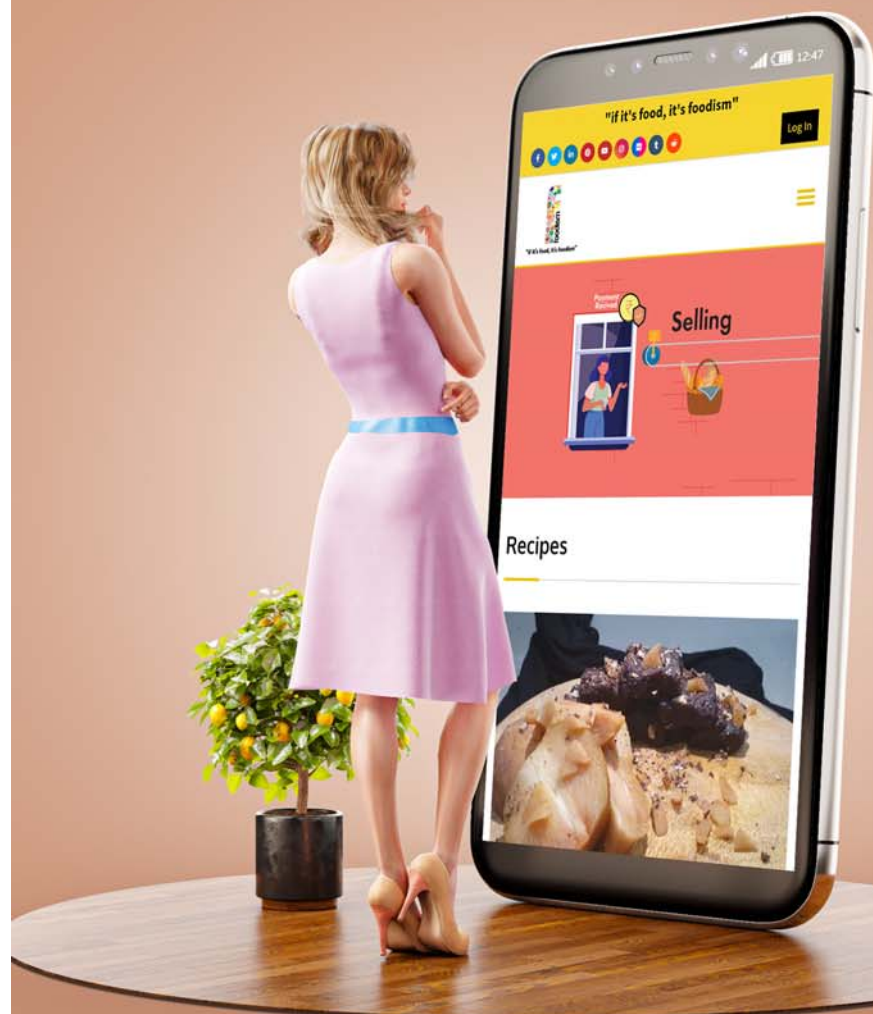
I use a mix of local produce and imported ingredients in my food. This is what makes it so great. It is a good balance of flavors and freshness.

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We'll push sales, help market your food & give you an appropriate place on our store!*

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Please get in touch on help@foodism.xyz with Home Cook E-Store in the subject line. Let us know what you can bring to the platform and we'll get back soonest!

“The key to being a good content creator is to be transparent, ethical and clear.”

Ayushi Shah is a young and enterprising food consultant who has designed inventive menus at The Little French House & Mexicana By The Bay. Not one to stop at that, she has even forayed into digital media as a content creator. She tells Foodism what it takes to develop, authentic and appealing food content.

What led you to be a part of the industry? What motivated you to develop interest in this industry and communicate it digitally?

Pure passion for cooking and exploring food kept me going and I was so engrossed in it, that it didn't even feel like 'work'. The people who loved my work and appreciated it inspired me to do better. So I decided to spread my experiences with food to more food loving people across the world. My heart, like many others, beats for food, and that's how I came to name my Instagram handle Foodbeat.

How do you communicate your true personality and knowledge of the food industry through your content on social media?

Does plagiarism bother you?

You don't have to build a particular type of content to define your personality. I just kept sharing my real experiences with food and that reflects who I am. I share my failures and successes both on social media because it can be a lesson to someone out there who is experimenting with food. It never has really bothered me if someone is copying the content off my page, because what I have observed is people root for originality in the long run.

What has been your experience, being an influencer or communicator in Ahmedabad?

The best experience for me will always be that Social media has made me whatever I am today. Being an influencer gives me so

much happiness, because I can instantly see how my work is being appreciated across the city. When people trust my content, it motivates me to do better. The key to being a good content creator is to be transparent, ethical and clear.

As a digital influencer / communicator sharing stories on social media, what is it that you wish to communicate to your followers?

Considering stories, my daily routine covers various things related to food- easy recipe hacks, new outlets and their reviews, reviews of food products used in everyday life and my experience in relation to everything

Share your positive & negative experiences of being a digital influencer.

Positive- it gives me an identity and motivates me to do better each day.
Negative - some restaurants or food product agencies force you to share good reviews regarding food in exchange of service or money.

Do you face any road blocks/creative blocks when you're continuously creating



AYUSHI SHAH

content? How do you keep yourself going on such days?

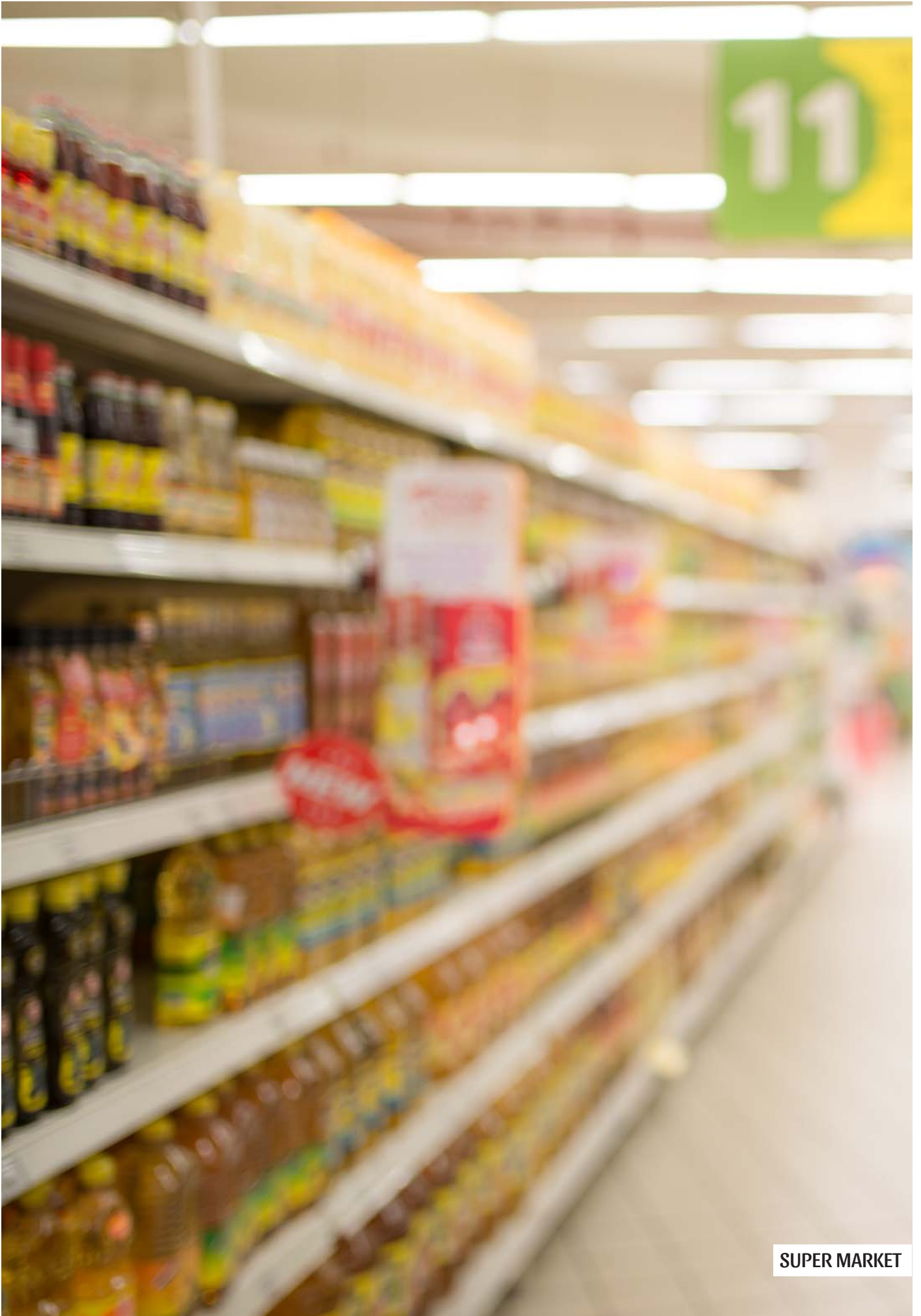
Yes definitely. There are many more blogs doing better than mine. But it has never been a block for me, it inspires me to give my best and hence that helps me create the best content and it keeps me going.

Name 3 social media handles, which you religiously follow to keep yourself, updated with what's happening.

I follow @taramilktea, @beautifulcuisines and @thebakefeed on Instagram.

Which food shows do you follow for recipe inspirations?

I love watching Masterchef Australia and The pioneer woman.



SUPER MARKET



SUPERMARKETS & STORES OR YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD GROCER?

When larger supermarkets and superstores began operating, we changed our way of life and began shopping from those. They were hip, convenient and they offered great discounts. It was the new way of life. But times are changing and we're steering towards a new normal. Is the new normal, all about going back in time? Remove your shoes when you enter your house, wash up when you come home from outside, don't touch anything random, don't eat out so frequently. Is it time for us to return to our ways and our friendly old kirana wala?

by Huta Raval

We take a look at a few pros and cons of this.

1. Home Deliveries

Your local kirana store has mastered deliveries long before bigger players entered the market. Your mothers and grandmothers would simply call your local store and have them write down the order. There was certain camaraderie, because this store owner knew what brand our families prefer. The goods would be delivered at your doorstep and payments would be made then or even later – it didn't matter. It would be nice to go back to the same warmth and have someone look after the needs of your families like you do.

The downside with larger supermarket chains is that they will simply cancel your order if that particular product is not available in your preferred brand. There is no 'to and fro', no personal calls asking if you'd like another brand. While your kirana storeowner knows that your household simply cannot run without certain products, that personal touch won't come from larger chains.

2. Product Range

With our changing lifestyles, we may have gotten used to a certain products that smaller storeowners may not have. That bottle of balsamic vinegar or the jar of pimento stuffed olives that only your favourite superstore might have. Exclusive smaller, home-grown brands, organic goods, flavoured honeys, imported/native cheeses, these are all the forte of the larger chains. The smaller stores may never have a product range as wide as these super stores.

3. Safety and Sanitisation

While your kirana wala might do his best to follow government safety guidelines, being a small enterprise you cannot expect adherence to that steep standard of hygiene, which is a part-and-parcel of supermarket chains. It has become more important than ever now, to follow a strict sanitisation schedule and ensure that every product that enters your household has been handled with proper care. For well reputed supermarket chains, sanitisation is a part of their standard operating procedure. So smaller stores will definitely have to up their game to compete with these larger chains.

4. Social Distancing

In terms of social distancing kirana stores win hands-down – as their

customer service system is watertight leaving no leeway for customers to touch products or surfaces. Customers simply stand across the counter and inquire about their products; the kirana store employee then shows it to them; and they decide what to pick up, place the order and return with their shopping. Supermarkets are risky because every product and surface has been touched by people going in before them. If window-shopping is a mandate for your purchase decisions then the risk element at grocery malls is high as you are touching a lot of surfaces and products, which have already been visited by multiple hands!

In the battle between malls and kirana stores, it eventually boils down to your preferences. Malls win hands down when it comes to product range and sanitisation, however, experientially; kirana stores are much better and safer bets.



Kitchen Hacks

CLEANING

Most of us would disagree with the above! For, while cooking is fun, cleaning up is a major challenge. Here's sharing some time-tested kitchen hacks to help you clean up faster...



1. Remove yucky cooking smells (picked up from garlic or onions) from your hands by rubbing them with lemon juice, baking soda, or stainless steel.

2. To make electric kettles and other metal kitchen tools shimmer and shine like they're brand new, scrub them with one part vinegar to one part water.

3. Clean the fresh produce of fruit and veggies with a mixture of baking soda and water to remove grit, grime, and pesticides.

4. Add a new life to wooden spoons by boiling them in a pot of water and leaving them in the sun to dry.

5. Clean cast-iron with a salt scrub to remove stuck-on bits of food.

**“It's
weird, I
know; but
I find
cleaning
cathartic”**


*-Rachel
Nichols*

6. Coffee grinders don't exactly get dirty, but grinds often clump inside the grinding well. To remove these, throw in a few chunks of stale bread into the small appliance, pulse, then dump the crumbs. Viola the coffee will stick to the bread!

7. Scrub the wooden cutting board with coarse salt and massage with a half-cut lemon to clean away food particles and food smells. And do remember to condition the wood on a monthly basis by rubbing the board with food-grade mineral oil.

Try these hacks the next time you want to make your kitchen spic-and-span and hey don't forget to share your feedback!

by Huta Raval



CUES

Setting up Your Kitchen

What's the best way to set up a kitchen?

Gone are the days of the kitchen work triangle; now there's a new line of thinking which advocates setting up the kitchen in terms of work zones.

by Huta Raval

Let's take a quick look at how to do so

1. Divide your kitchen into five zones

a. Consumables Zone: The area used for food storage. This can be split into two zones: refrigerator; and pantry or food cabinets

b. Non-consumables Zone: The area used to store everyday dishes (plates, bowls, glasses, and silverware)

c. Cleaning Zone: The area that contains the sink and dishwasher (if you have one)

d. Preparation Zone: The area where most of your kitchen prep happens – a portion of the countertop or a kitchen island

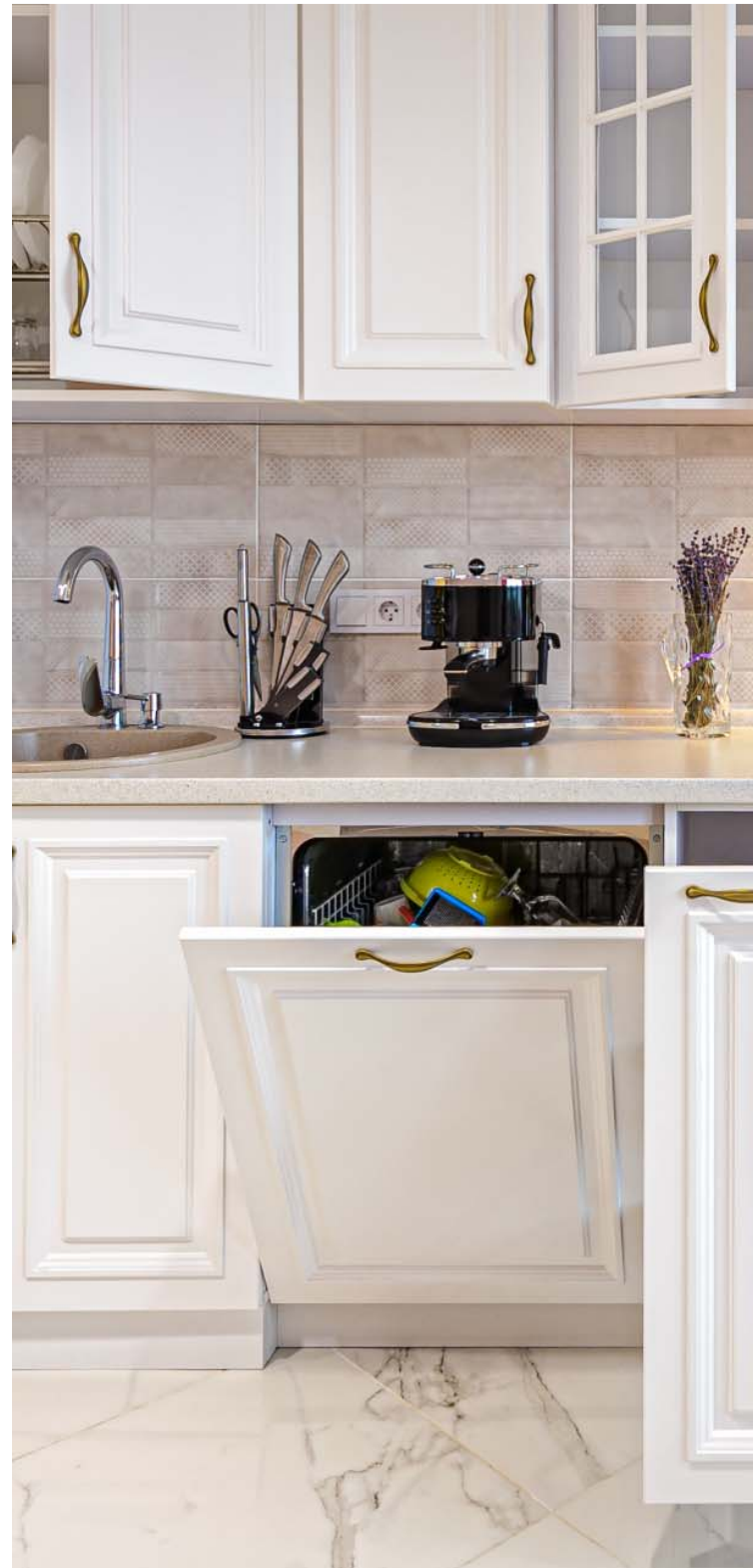
e. Cooking Zone: The area that contains the stovetop, oven, or range, and possibly the microwave

2. Store items as close to their related zone as possible.

For example, knives, mixing bowls, chopping boards, spices, and other prep utensils should be stored where you do most of your prep work, in the preparation zone. Cooking utensils, pots, pans, and bake-ware should be stored near the stove or oven, in the cooking zone. Daily dishes could be stored right next to the cleaning zone, or where your sink and dishwasher are.

3. Create prep space as close to the stove as possible.

Of course, keeping items precisely within their zone isn't always entirely possible - but viewing your kitchen as a collection of zones and grouping things together by their purpose is just to ease the mammoth task of setting up your kitchen.







LOCAL CENTRAL: IT IS TIME WE RESPECT OUR LOCAL FOOD HERITAGE!

The past few years, we've seen vegetable vendors flaunting deep purple cabbages, watery crisp lettuce, overpriced avacados and what not! Due to our growing demands for international vegetables and fruits, our native produce had somehow begun to lose the respect it truly deserves. The pandemic has forced us to shift focus and see them in a completely new light.

by Mrs. Heena Gautam



ripeness as opposed to crops that have been harvested early so that they can be shipped and distributed to your local grocery stores. Many times the produce you find at local markets and vegetable vendors has been picked within the last day itself. While grains have been grown recently too!

2. Eating local food means you are eating in accordance with the seasons. Even though we wish mangoes were grown year all year round, the best time to eat them is when they naturally grow. This is when you can purchase them directly from a local grower. They are always full of flavour and taste better than the mangoes you can find in the winter, that have been grown artificially or preserved with chemicals.

The lockdown (and Instagram) managed to turn a lot of people into master chefs, trying to create magic in the kitchen. And with the gradual unavailability of fancy fruits and veggies, people slowly took to home-grown native produce to cook their dishes. Cooking Indian sweetmeats at home became a trend, different ways to cook bhindi were being experimented with, Indian-Chinese made with French beans, local cabbage and capsicum (yes, not 'bell peppers') was savored. To top it all, our PM called for a 'Vocal for Local' movement, to encourage the sale of native products to boost the spiraling economy. Local foods are finally making a much-needed comeback!

What Does it Mean to Eat Locally?

Local food is everything that grows naturally in the soil of the region you live in. Overtime, we have mastered the art of growing red and yellow bell peppers and broccoli by growing them in a temperature controlled environment and by manipulating the soil, but these cannot be considered 'locally grown'. For a food product to be indigenous, it is imperative that it grows in the same soil and weather condition that your region has. Which is why we have seasonal crop! When you think of it, Mother Nature had it all figured out – summers were for watery foods like cucumbers, melons and gourds, ensuring that you 'eat your water' and remain hydrated. Winters are for foods that warm you up from the inside like sarson and methi.

Benefits of Eating Local

1. Locally grown food tastes better! When grown locally, the crops you consume will be picked at the peak of

3. Local food has far more nutrients because it is always fresher. They are harvested and sent to be sold before they begin to go stale. So it is far less likely that the nutrient value has decreased during that short time. As food gets old, it loses its nutritional value. Food imported from far-away states and countries is often older, has travelled, and sits in distribution centres before it gets to you. Another reason to eat locally!

4. You support your local economy when you decide to eat locally sourced foods. The money that is exchanged between you and local farmers and growers stays close to home and is then reinvested with businesses and services within your community. It makes sure that everyone around you benefits from a booming economy!

5. Deciding to eat locally also benefits the environment. Purchasing locally grown foods helps maintain farmland and green open spaces within your region. More greenery means less global warming and unnecessary urbanization.

6. If you purchase from local growers you can easily find out from them how the food was grown. You can ask what practices they use to raise and harvest their crops. When you know where your food comes from and trust the people who grew it, you know a lot more about that your food and feel better about it.

So all we can say is, go local - it is healthier, safer, and a more scalable model for rebuilding our economy and making up for the business we have lost due to this global pandemic.

CHEF

STYLISH UNUSUAL DEIGNED

From dishing out hearty Indian meals from various parts of the country to donning breezy kurtas and shirts made from breathable cotton and creating his desi style statement – Chef Ranveer Brar has our hearts.

by Khushi Kothari

“

The garment that I wear is not just a piece of cloth, but a collection of stories about the people behind it and the love labour put into it.

–Chef Ranveer Brar

Chef, fitness freak, family man, and style icon – there is so much to this super talented chef than what meets the eye. Chef Brar rose to fame after his superb stint in the first-ever season of Masterchef India and there has been no looking back for him since then. He hosted a lot of food and travel shows including Food Tripping, The Great Indian Rasoi, and Homemade but what many don't know is that he was also the youngest executive chef, managing an entire kitchen at a five star, at the age of 25!

Chef Ranveer Brar has an earthy, modest personality – something that reflects in the food he cooks, the way he carries himself, and also the way he dresses. Maybe that is why the audience finds him so relatable. His signature dressing style infuses comfort with functionality and fluidity. His aesthetics include flowy kurtas, tailored shirts, and well-fitting blazers and trousers in sorbet hues. On his travel shows, he has been seen wearing a simple t-shirt with a shirt casually thrown over for good measure and neutral-toned shorts or trousers for added comfort. When he isn't working, we see him on his social media pages, cooking up a storm or indulging in interesting conversations with

Ranveer Brar



Image: ranveerbrar-youtube.com

other chefs, wearing bandh gala kurtas with a pair of jeans, or just simple checked shirts and trousers. While his casual comfort is something to look up to, his chef coats are always earthy and neutral-toned. His very real, non-pretentious aura, somehow seeps into the way he dresses. Chef Brar does not shy away from Indian motifs and carries paisley patterns and geometric prints with elan. According to an interview, a trip to a cotton farm somewhere in West Bengal opened his eyes to the treasure chest of Indian fabrics.

He has since, promoted and encouraged the use of breathable Indian fabrics and clothing that is made in the country. Although, Ranveer's all-time essentials include Tom Ford shades and Hugo Boss perfume with a Victorinox geo-locator, which he never travels without.

When it comes to grooming – we've seldom seen the chef sans his well-groomed beard and a messy mop of hair that lends him a certain boyish charm, despite his age (he is 42 – men do age well!).



Essential Tools
for Home Bakers

Pg. No. 53

Nice-to-Have Baking Tools

'Nothing says home like the smell of baking'...
goes a popular quote

But baking not only requires a knack but also some handy tools to make your most tried-and-true baking recipes quicker and easier. Here's presenting a snapshot of them -

- 1.** Pastry Blender for cutting cold butter or shortening into flour much easier (alternative: two butter knives)
- 2.** Offset Spatula/Spreader for putting the perfectly smooth finishing touches on cakes or a pan of brownies
- 3.** Zester/Rasp Grater the best possible way to rind a lemon (alternative: sharp knife)
- 4.** Pastry Wheel for smoothly cutting pastry dough (alternative: sharp knife)
- 5.** Slotted Spoon for quickly and easily spooning out large spices like a cinnamon stick or vanilla bean
- 6.** Citrus Juicer for juicing every last drop out of a lemon; with the sieve straining the pulp and seeds (alternative: hands or fork)

7. Knives like serrated bread knife, tomato knife, chef's knife and paring knife

8. Springform Pan as this has a latch that opens so one can remove the sides, making it perfectly convenient for authentic cheesecakes and deep-dish pizza

9. Fluted Tube Pan for those home chefs fond of preparing a traditional bundt or angel food cake

10. Pizza Pan for the perfectly round pizzas

11. Jelly-Roll Pan for whipping up jelly rolls, cake rolls, pumpkin bars and also for toasting nuts and roasting veggies

12. Ramekins for preparing custards and puddings

13. Food Processor for crushing cookies and crackers for crusts; mixing up piecrusts; albeit bowls, pastry cutters, knives and rolling pins may suffice this requirement

Blender, Tart Pans and Soufflé Dish are other nice-to-have baking tools

by Huta Raval

Helpful Cues

for Home Chefs

The best part about a kitchen is that a flair for creativity and experimentation can bring in solutions to all sorts of issues!

Let's show you how

1. Home chefs face a major challenge holding the cutting board in place and a little carelessness may lead to a serious accident! Keep your cutting board anchored with a cut-to-fit piece of rug pad or shelf liner.

2. In case you are looking at cooking an entire meal—say, steak, vegetables, and bread—simultaneously on a gas grill; then divide the grill into three zones: a direct, high-heat area for searing and fast grilling; an indirect, medium-heat area for big pieces and long-cooking items; and a low-heat safe zone, where you can toast bread and move food to.

This is how to do it on a charcoal grill

- Light the coals and let them burn for at least 10 minutes till they're glowing and covered with light grey ash
- Spread two-thirds of the lit coals in a double layer over a third of the bottom grill grate – voila your hot zone, for direct-heat grilling is ready!
- Spread the remaining coals in a single layer over the centre third of the grill grate – hey presto your medium-heat zone, for indirect grilling is raring to go!
- Leave a third of the grill grate coal-free – behold your safe zone; where you can move juicy burgers and skin-on chicken pieces that are flaring or foods that need to be kept warm
- Attach the top grate and get grilling

by Huta Raval

ESSENTIAL TOOLS

For Home Bakers

Here is a list of tools you absolutely need in your kitchen if you're baking a cake or stirring up a batch of cookies -

Measuring Cups (Liquid and Dry) and Spoons

- Baking is all about precision, so having a full set of dry and wet measuring cups and spoons on hand is a mandate.
- Most measuring spoon sets have a tablespoon, teaspoon, ½ teaspoon, and ¼ teaspoon; while measuring cups come in sets with one cup, ½ cup, 1/3 cup, and ¼ cup. For liquid measuring cups, you can manage with a 1-cup size, but it would be good to have 2-cup and 4-cup ones in your cupboard, too.

Wooden Spoon(s)

A couple of sturdy wooden spoons are great for all kinds of stirring. Do hand-wash them post-usage so they don't end up cracked.

Rubber Spatula/Scraper

This one's an ideal tool for scraping the last bit of

batter or dough out of a pan or for scraping all the nooks and crannies of a jar. Remember to opt for silicone scrapers

Spatula/Metal Turner

A spatula with a thin metal blade is perfect for transferring fresh-out-of-the-oven cookies to a cooling rack or for serving a piece of cake from a 9x13 pan

Other must-haves include

– wire rack; hand-mixer; pie-plate; cookie sheet; whisk; parchment paper; kitchen scissors; pans (rectangular baking; muffin; square baking; loaf pan; round cake); pastry brush; rolling pin; fine-mesh sieve; and knives (paring and chef's)

Do ensure you have the above tools handy the next time you whip up a baked delicacy for your loved ones!

by Huta Raval

How Foodism Will Help Your Business After Covid-19?

We're in the middle of a pandemic that has us all under a national lockdown. We know, that the other side of the lockdown will change things drastically for many of us. It will change the way we work and do business also.

Here's how being a Foodism member will help you post Covid-19.

Businesses Will Go Online

'Contactless deliveries' is the new ecommerce buzzword. It will continue for a long time to come and retail businesses like yours are sure to go online. Foodism, with its own state-of-the-art ecommerce portal helps smaller home based businesses like yours. No need to invest in your own portal – register with us, become a member and start selling your products on our e-shop today, without the massive investment.

New Rules

If you're finding it hard to keep up with the old rules and laws regarding food selling and distribution, it is only about to get more complicated. We're all set to help you, we'll hand hold you into the legalities and help you figure out everything, right from the new rules to the new guidelines, to help you get your business back on track.

Connect Virtually

Apart from the e-shop, Foodism also has its own in-house magazine, a blog, a website and an avid social media following. We won't just put your product on our portal – we'll even introduce you to your audience. We'll help you connect on a personal and human level with a potential audience through our editorial media. There is no better time to connect with an audience, right? Interviews, Instagram Lives and collaborations will help you converse with your audience on our portal.

Push Sales

Once your product is on our portal, our teams will push your products like they are their own. Be it chai or breads or flavoured butters, baked goodies, pickles – we'll push your online sales for you through well-tailored campaigns and more.



ZODIAC

FUN FOOD FORECAST

ARIES



Step on the scale to see how your hard work is paying off. With all the housework and home workouts you've been doing during the lockdown, it is time to bid adieu to the pizzas and pastas and embrace veggies, paneer and whole grains. Spend the rest of 2020 looking fitter and hotter!

GEMINI



Do not give into temptation and load up on carbs! That burger may look like it is calling out to you and that bag of chips is screaming to be eaten, but look the other way. Remember you're stronger than your temptations. Don't let them win and by the end of this month, you'll reach your target weight.

LEO



As the lockdown opens and life returns to normal, make sure you meet each and every one of your friends for coffee/meals. Yes, even the ones you don't like very much. There will be loads o catch up on and this will make you feel better than you have felt in weeks. Do it!

TAURUS



Your food dreams say a lot about what you're going through in real life! A bunch of grapes or mangoes, just hanging about, might be an indication of how much you've missed your friends. But a solitary watermelon could also be indicative of how much you miss your solitude now that normalcy is returning. Make sure to give yourself some me-time this month.

CANCER



Desserts are the flavor of the month. You'll find yourself indulging your sweet tooth more often these days. So take control and work out a little to balance all that sugar out.

VIRGO



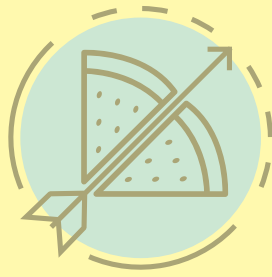
The chances of you winning Master Chef India are higher than you odds for getting to travel for leisure. Stop us if we're wrong, but that is exactly how it is. Since travel is not on the cards this year, maybe it is time to up those newly developed cooking scales and start making the world on a platter. Delicious eats from your kitchen > cozy meals in a foreign land.

LIBRA



Keep bits of chocolate handy – you're going to need them. It seems that this month is going to be rough on you and you will lose your mood several times. To avoid turning this into a full blown scream-a-thon just keep chocolate handy and eat it when you feel like the world is drowning you out. It will keep you afloat atleast.

SAGITTARIUS



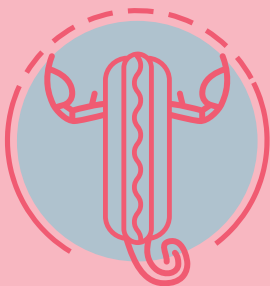
You need to be more inspired, try and find inspiration – leaf through some delicious gourmet magazines or eat something intriguing like pani puri – who would have thought that someone could fry dough, purr it up and put flavored water in it! Inspired, right?

AQUARIUS



You are pained and gloomy right now, but do not worry, things will pick up. Instant gratification will only make it worse, be it false sweet words from fair weather friends and ill-meaning acquaintances or indulgent, carb laden, fat laced foods that will give you a momentary high. Stay away from both.

SCORPIO



2020 is not a year, it is a cruel joke. After all that we've been through, we're now going to ask you to do the one thing you hate. Compromise and apologize. It is time to show humility and gratitude, apologize to save a relationship, even if you don't mean it. Just do it. We know we've put you in a tight spot but years later, you're going to want the person in your life.

CAPRICORN



You find yourself more drawn to quality than anything. It is time to up the game a little and move towards what you deserve in your personal and professional lives both. Work at becoming sushi instead of sev puri. But occasionally, revisit the sev puri stall too when you feel like it.

PISCES



Just because it is on the table, does not mean you must have it! This applies to everything – those cupcakes are good until they're in limit otherwise they're just bad. Same goes for that crazy offer to travel – now is not the time. Stay put, stay at home until this pandemic wave passes.



foodism.xyz

Mango

Your welcome won't be as glorious and extravagant as the previous seasons but we know you will resonate happiness and joy with your tropical vibe.



by Khushi Kothari



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