

Festivals -A Celebration of Culinary Diversity

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One of the world's most flavourful and delicate cuisines is Indian. Culinary diversity is one of India's treasures. Indian food is so diverse that it is better to speak of "Indian Cuisines." Each region offers a variety of traditional foods as well as its own unique culinary traits. Due to the presence of functional ingredients like probiotics, dietary fibre, antioxidants, and body-healing compounds, traditional foods from India are also considered as functional foods.

Karnataka is blessed with a wide range of flora and fauna. In this region of the country, many of the people still rely on traditional foods and medicines to treat illnesses. Since ancient times, these communities have sourced their nutraceuticals from both wild and domesticated plant species. These customs are typically connected to local festivals and ceremonies, as well as the various seasons.

Festivals- An Expression of Culinary Diversity

"Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." is a well-known quote by Hippocrates, the father of medicine. "Food as medicine" is emerging as an important concept in managing health and wellness. Particular foods produced especially for festivals have a long tradition of being made as deity gifts and have several health advantages.

Ganesh Chaturthi - The Festival of Hope and Prosperity

Ganesh Chaturthi, also called Vinayaka Chavithi, is an auspicious Hindu festival celebrated in the Bhadra month as per the Hindu calendar and marks the birthday of the beloved Lord Ganesha

known as the God of wealth, sciences, knowledge, wisdom and prosperity.



As per the mythology of Ganesha, after consuming the demon Anasur, he faced a lot of irritation and acidity, attributable to a heavy meal. When everything else failed, durvas were offered to him, which gave him relief. Durva grass (Garike) assists in maintaining the alkalinity of the body; thereby it acts as a natural blood purifier. The festive cuisine includes puri, bhaji, dal rice, green sabzi, and favourite desserts like modak, laddoos, coconut barfi, and holige. Chakkali, Poha, Aloo Pakora, and Kothimbir (Coriander) Vada are a few snack items that are commonly offered to Ganesha. This balance diet offers the body the necessary macronutrients, micronutrients, and fluids in the right amounts and helps people maintain their ideal body weight and lowers their chance of developing chronic diseases. The nuts in modak contain unsaturated fat, omega-3 and vitamin E, which prevent the development of plaques in arteries. Coconut has no

sodium or cholesterol, which helps to protect the heart and decrease blood pressure.

Makara Sankranti



The winter chill is dissipating as the sun has emerged. Many have abandoned their blankets to enjoy the sunshine on the roof while colourful kites circle the clear skies. It is the season of the year when Makar Sankranti is celebrated. And as with any festivity in India, it comes with many traditional delicacies like seasonal vegetables, rice, pulses, nuts, sesame seeds, and sugarcane.

There are a variety of signature dishes and ingredients associated with Makar Sankranti. Sweet delights are made with coconut, sesame seeds, cardamom, besan, jaggery, or milk. And for a good reason – these ingredients are no less than super foods. Jaggery or gud activates the digestive enzymes in our body, aiding digestion and flushing out toxins from our system. By providing minerals like zinc and potassium. Til (sesame seeds) are a powerhouse of protein, vitamins, dietary fiber, vitamin B₁ and D₂ along with phosphorous, iron, magnesium, calcium, manganese, copper, and zinc. Sesame seeds and oil can help with arthritis, maintain sugar levels, and lower blood pressure. It is mentioned in a document that an Indian physician, Sushruta, used ladoos made of sesame seeds, jaggery, and peanuts as an antiseptic to treat his

surgical patients. The ghee is also rich in conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) and vitamins A, K₂, and E.

Sharad Navaratri

The nine days of fasting known as Shardiya Navratri signal the beginning of the festival in many parts of India. The most significant is by lowering pittprakopawastha (excess heat in the body). "The heat causes neurological, metabolic, and hormonal problems. Through the consumption of fruits, buttermilk, or coconut water during a fast, the body is detoxified while also becoming more cooled down.

The festive meal of chana, poori and halwa in ghee on Ashtami or the eighth day is for a purpose. The ghee calms the pitta (heat) and vatta (air) dosha. Kala chana (black chickpeas) gives strength to the body by providing iron, phosphate and calcium, and other minerals which are a boon for the bones and haemoglobin. If a full meal is consumed as part of a fast, it comprises things made of singhara (water chestnut), sabudana (sago), kuttu (buckwheat), samak (barnyard millet) and makhana (foxtail nuts). Seasonal changes make allergies, restlessness, and irritability worse. The satvik meal restores equilibrium to the body by upsetting pitta and vatta, particularly in women's pelvic muscles. Sabudana is a healthy energy food that is very simple to digest and has a cooling impact on the body and is a rich source of carbs. Rajgira atta, also known as amaranth flour, is another delectable and healthful option to ordinary wheat flour. This is gluten free, protein dense and tastes precisely the same as normal flour.

Ugadi- The new year for Hindus

The beginning of New Year, is celebrated as Ugadi, GudiPadwa, and this festival ushers in new hopes and aspirations. Traditional Ugadi sweets like obbattu or hollige is prepared from toordaal, wheat flour, jaggery and ghee. So, it has carbohydrates, proteins, fats and fibre, all of these

you need for a balanced diet. Bevu bella or pachadi as known in Andhra and Telengana, is a symbolic dish to signify six different tastes of life. Six distinctly different ingredients are used in the dish shows six different flavours of life. All the family members are encouraged to taste it. It is customary to begin the day with Ugadi Pachadi, a combination of six tastes- sweet, bitter, spice, salt, sour and tangy as it is believed that life is a combination of various feelings and emotions. The six ingredients used in the Bevubella or pachadi are, neem flowers; which symbolise bitterness of life, tamarind symbolises the challenges we face, pepper powder is for anger or upsetting moments in life, raw mango symbolises surprises in life, salt is for zest for life and jaggery symbolise the sweet taste of life like happiness.

Deepavali- The Festival of Lights

Festivals are the biggest cultural events that not only bring people together but spread happiness in our lives as well. It's a festival on which people love to make lots of food and treat their loved ones with both sweets and savoury dishes. There is one vegetable, which is a must-cook on this festival, as it

is said to bring wealth and prosperity to your home. Elephant Foot Yam, also known as suvarnagadde, is what it is. In many houses, it has been customary to prepare suvarnagadde ki Sabzi and serve it with poori. Making this curry on Diwali is thought to be auspicious as it is wonderful at reducing inflammatory responses in the body. It was probably done to make sure people ate this nutritious vegetable during the changing of the seasons, when one is more susceptible to seasonal illnesses. Moreover, it is reported to possess qualities that lower blood pressure and aid in the treatment of infections.

In conclusion, Indian cuisine, regardless of geography, is well-balanced, incredibly healthy, and nutrient-rich. It contains antioxidants, vital minerals, and vitamins that aid in digestion, hasten metabolism, and elevates cholesterol and blood sugar levels. The substances strengthen immunity, promote brain health, improve memory, and lower inflammation. In addition to adding a delightful taste, flavour, and perfume, Indian spices and herbs provide therapeutic and medicinal benefits. Even the festival fare is created for a fun and wholesome season.

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