

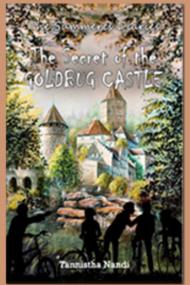


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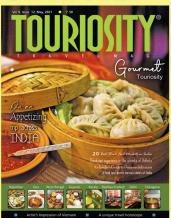












Touriosity Travelmag May 2021 Issue

Dear Reader,

If you would like to share your memorable experiences with us, please feel free to contact us with your write ups, articles, anecdotes, photos and others. Good pictures will be acknowledged and published in the Reader's Click section. For the Travel Humour section, you can send us any travel related funny photos or sketches.

For more about us, visit our website: www.touriositytravel.com and www.thetouriosity.com

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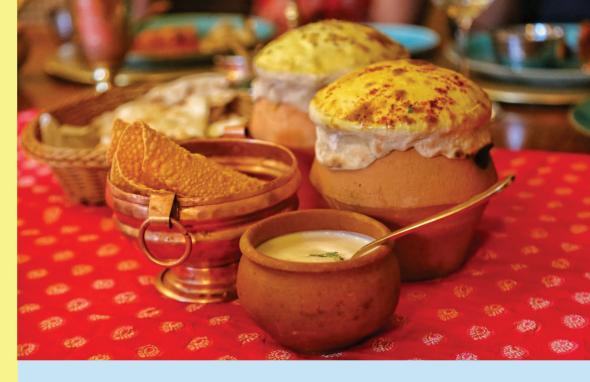
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COVER PHOTO: Momos in Ladakh

Photo by Grete Howard, UK

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With the COVID 19 pandemic not in control yet and international travel as well as domestic travel in India being largely restricted we thought it was a good time to give our readers a gastronomic trip of various Indian states. Food is an important part of tourism and many travel with the desire of exploring local cuisines. This issue of Touriosity will be able to guide our readers as to which delicacies to have in the bucket list the next time you travel. India being a big and diverse country, a single issue is not enough to cover all the regional culinary treats. So we have covered only half of the country leaving the rest for yet another issue in future.



EDITORIAL

Diversity is the true essence of India. There's so much diversity in people, our languages, caste and communities, races and religion, physical attributes, geography and climatic condition. The culinary traditions of the diverse groups of people also differ based on a variety of many other factors, including the availability of natural resources, which in a country like India, drastically varies from region to region. To add to this is the great variety of spices and herbs grown in various parts of the country that go to render each dish uniquely flavourful. Colonialization and foreign influences have also largely impacted the regional cuisines. Then again you have different foreign powers who have set up their colonies in different parts of India at different times in history, and brought along their gastronomic traditions and ingredients to this land.

The uniquely diverse culinary portfolio that has resulted from all these makes the country an interesting one to visit and explore. For, after all, food is an indispensable part of tourism. And India is a country of food lovers. So for an average Indian, culinary exploration of other regions also brings great pleasure. But with hundreds of thousands of varieties of different foods to try in various parts of each Indian state, a single lifetime seems not enough. Nonetheless, there again one can find the beauty of the country, in its limitless attractions.

With the pandemic scenario in India not much improved yet, we thought a good theme for this month's issue could be 'Food'. Due to the restrictions on movement and socialising I know many of us are spending time at home, planning about future trips and praying that the pandemic be soon a thing of the past. Many of us are also busy experimenting with good food in our kitchens. The abundant leisure time that we have now can be gainfully utilised in learning new things, one of them being the culinary traditions of various regions of India. This will not only help us make a checklist of places to visit in India and delicacies to try once the world is COVID-

free but also inspire the inner chef in our readers to let their imaginations travel, while physically this may not be possible, to far off lands in different corners of the country. I am sure this will help us stay optimistic and maintain our sanity. After all, in these difficult times, staying happy, busy and hopeful is crucial.

We have decided to have two back to back issues dedicated to gastronomic tours. The first one, this issue, is dedicated entirely to India and the cuisines of different regions of India. Due to the sheer diversity and magnitude of cuisines in the country, we could only afford to bring a food tour of about 10 Indian states and Union Territories in the limited number of pages. So there has to be a sequel to this issue sometime in future to cover the other states and regions. That will be soon, I promise. The second one, the next issue, we have thought about dedicating to the 'World' and our readers will be taken to faraway lands on a trip like never before. I am not going to spill the beans now. I hope our readers will like this issue. Do send us your feedback and suggestions at touriosity2012@gmail.com

I would request all our readers to stay at home, keep maintaining the Covid-19 protocols, avoid gatherings and holidaying at the moment, get vaccinated and take all necessary safety measures. Let us hope that the pandemic is soon over. We pray for the health and safety of all and once again convey our heartfelt gratitude to the frontline warriors, volunteers for social work and other professionals and service providers who are toiling day in and day out to minimise the hardships the society as a whole is facing.

Rupanjana De



AN APPEAL TO TOURISTS

For foodies, gastronomic tours bring utter delight. It also often exposes us to unusual food habits of people in various regions which may not go well with our taste. But it is important to show the respect for people's culture and traditions. One should not openly express disgust at other people's food habits and cuisines. It is important to travel with an open mind. LET'S BE RESPONSIBLE TOURISTS.

GUIDE TO THE MAG

To make your reading through TOURIOSITY TRAVELMAG better, here's presenting a quick glance at the various sections and features in the magazine.

DESTINATION

It introduces the readers to various destinations in India with an emphasis on at least one destination from each region. It provides an in-depth information on the locations. In addition, there is also handy tourist information to help our readers plan ahead of trips.

AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

A travelling artist makes it to faraway lands and brings memories in the form of impressive water colour paintings. This section is a visual treat and interesting to read at the same time.



FFATURE

Here we bring to our readers an article based on the theme of the issue not necessarily focussing on travelling or travel information.



MEMOIRS OF A BACKPACKER

A new adventure every time in an entirely new place across the globe by a solo female backpacker. We follow the locals she meets, the unusual things she comes across, the surprises she gets and the problems she faces in her journeys with a backpack across the world.



In this section we bring travel experiences of one of our readers from popular places around the world.



GLOBETROTTER'S DIARY

This section explores the world of a globetrotter, whose passion is to travel, travel and travel more. It brings to readers unique facts and information from remote corners of the world.



COUNTRYSCAPE / CITYSCAPE

Here we introduce a new country / city each time. We bring to our readers facts and photos of people, culture, locales, tourist places, food and traditions of a country / city. Our aim is to take our readers on a magical journey of an unseen land.



PHOTO TRAVELOGUE

Here we bring to our readers a travelogue in



PHOTO FFATURE

In photo feature, we cover the theme of a particular issue in photographs from one of our readers.



This section is an ideal one for quick browsing. It provides interesting information from across the globe with a focus on the theme of the issue.



AT A GLANCE

A quick look at a destination. Here, we bring to our readers locations from the lesser beaten paths in otherwise popular touristy regions.



POINT OF VIEW

Here we bring to our readers useful articles with offbeat content. The idea is to give you the stimulus for thinking. It covers important issues that are in some way connected to travel and tourism.



ADVENTURE

We present here stories of unique adventures undertaken by our readers in some part of the world with a focus on the issue theme



MOUNTAINEERING / TREKKING

This section focuses solely on trekking and mountaineering adventures across the world.

CONTENTS

The Foodies' Paradise

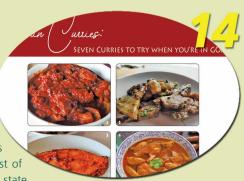
Dar jeeling

This hill station is a true pride of Bengal. Its cultural heritage surpasses its popularity as 'a hill retreat'. It was once the most sought after resort town during the British colonial times. The legacy still lives on, in its buildings, its educational institutions, its tea gardens and its food. In this article Abhirup Ghosh takes us on a

trip across the most famous eateries of Darjeeling.

Goa

Sun, sand, sea and sandy beaches, and a number of adventure sports options, that's what comes to ones mind at the thought of Goa. But did you know that Goa is a paradise for foodies? Explore this least explored side of Goa with Sharvani Chandvale as she takes our readers along on a quest of the lesser known 'curries' of this Indian state.



Kerala

tional dishes of Kerala

Another small state of India, Kerala is called 'God's Own Country' and that's hardly an exaggeration. Apart from its pristine landscapes, plantations, forests and backwaters, it has so much more to offer to visitors. Take for example its culinary tradition.

A look at the sheer variety of dishes the state has to offer can get you bowled over. This article lists out the most important dishes to try in Kerala.

Rajasthan

This land of the royals is a favourite tourism destination for foreigners and Indians alike. Colourful, opulent, diverse, majestic and breathtaking are only some of the adjective we often use to describe various aspects of the beauty of this state. The gastronomic heritage the state enjoys is quite distinct from most others in India. This article offers a sneak peek into the Rajputana kitchen.



Kashmir

A famout Persian poet had once said that if there was paradise on earth, it was in Kashmir. The paradisiacal natural views one witnesses here hardly leaves any doubt about that. But do not stop there, Kashmir is a paradise for foodies too. This article lists out the 'must try' items from Kashmiri cuisine.





Saigon

The modern day Ho Chi Minh City, erst-while Saigon, is a city with a life. From historical structures to modern sky-scrapers, from museums to malls, from boat rides to underground tunnels, this city has so many things to offer to visitors. Watercolour artist Joaquin Dorao takes us on a

trip to this city with his illustrations in this article.

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Distributor K.K. Puri News Distributors Pvt.Ltd. 9, Decares Lane, Kolkata - 700069

DESTINATIONS IN THIS ISSUE







nternational Conference on Sustainable Tourism

https://www.icstglobal.com



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2019

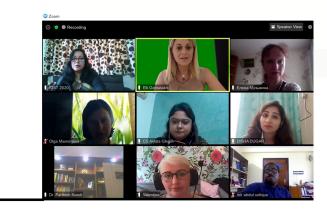


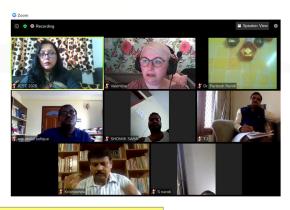






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Awarding of Certificates by: 31st July, 2021

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Darjeeling, also known as the Queen of Hills, has a colonial past. Back in the days when Calcutta used to be the capital of the British Raj, Darjeeling happened to be the most coveted hill station for the *Gora Sahibs* and the *Mems*. It was only an overnight train from Calcutta, followed by a 12-hour journey on the toy train from Siliguri. Even to date, the place is covered with buildings of the colonial era, which are now occupied by government offices.

Much to the predilection of the European tourists, a lot of eateries offering European food sprung up in and around the center of the town, some of them operate even today.

Here in this article, the author wishes to talk about his experience in some of the finest eateries in Darjeeling. While the town hosts a number good places to eat, some located in renowned hotels, for this article, the author has shortlisted four standalone restaurants for the readers.

Keventer's or Kev's

Keventer's is one of the most iconic and oldest eateries in Darjeeling. The classic rooftop restaurant of the Keventer's has also featured in the Bollywood movie, Barfi. The maestro, Mr. Satyajit Ray, in several of his novels and stories talked about the Keventer's specialty – hot chocolate. This is located right in the heart of Darjeeling town.

A 110-year old shop, established in 1911, it was a part of a chain of businesses owned by Mr. Edward Keventer, a Swedish entrepreneur. The estate in Darjeeling consisted of a shop, a restaurant on the same premises, and a farm in Ghoom. After independence, Mr. Keventer sold all of his businesses in different parts of the country to different families. The property in Darjeeling was sold to a Bengali family. The Jalans, the current owners of the shop and restaurant, bought it from the Bengali family only in the 1970s.





Darjeeling, also known as the Queen of Hills, has a colonial past. Back in the days when Calcutta used to be the capital of the British Raj, Darjeeling happened to be the most coveted hill station for the Gora Sahibs and the Mems. It was only an overnight train from Calcutta, followed by a 12-hour journey on toy train from Siliguri. Even to date, the place is covered with buildings of the colonial era, which are now occupied by government offices.

In terms of offerings, the eatery was originally a milkshake bar, remained as such for the first four or five decades of its existence, and it was only in the 1960s that it started serving food items too.

Before and after the independence, the managers of most of the tea gardens in and around Darjeeling were Europeans; also the hills of Darjeeling houses several convent schools and hostels, and most of the students in these schools were European. Hence, the European clientele of this place continued to influence the menu. The restaurant serves European food items like sausages, meatloaf, ham, bacon, baked beans and, more.

Interestingly, they manufacture the meat and the milk products served by them in their restaurants, which is their USP.

The restaurant being located in one of the iconic areas of Darjeeling, this place famously feeds anywhere between 800 – 1000 customers in a day. Some of the favourites in Keventer's are Sunny Side Up, Pork Platter, Bacon Sandwich, Meat Platter, Salami Sandwich, Sausage, Hotdogs, Hot Chocolate and Coffee.



The average pocket-pinch for a couple here will be only Rs. 400 - Rs. 600 depending on the appetite.

Glenary's

Yet another old and renowned eatery in Darjeeling is the Glenary's. Located a couple of blocks away from the Kev's, this one houses a bakery, a coffee shop, a restaurant, and a pub, all in one building. This is one place you would like to eat at, every time you visit Darjeeling.

This place is currently run by the Edwards family, however, it has a long and interesting story. This place was originally started by Mr. Vado, an Italian gentleman, and was known

- 1. The iconic Darjeeling tea;
- 2. The entrance of Keventer's. One can notice a queue of diners waiting to enter;
- 3. Keventer's, as seen from a distance;
- 4. The Meat Platter at Keventer's.







as Vado's. Later, one Mr. Adolph Pliva, bought half of the business, and the name of this place was changed to Vado's and Pliva's. Subsequently, Mr. Pliva bought the other half too, and named it Pliva's.

After the independence, a Patna based Bengali family bought this place. It was in 1945 that Mr. A. T. Edwards started working at this place. Around late 1950s, he was made the manager of this place. Later his family bought the property, and named it Glenary's. The place has been renovated several times after that, but the idea was to keep

the ambience of this place intact, while the outlook of this place was modified.

As it stands today, the ground floor acts as the bakery and the coffee shop, the first floor houses the restaurant and an extension of the coffee shop (which is newly built), and the basement houses a pub, named the Buzz. All the three floors put together, this place has a seating capacity of 350.

On an average day, this place handles a crowd of 1200 – 1500, whereas, during peak season, the number increases to 5000 – 6000 heads a day.

The moment you enter the coffee shop and the bakery, the appetizing aroma of freshly baked cakes and bread will make you feel hungry. The coffee shop has both indoor and outdoor sitting arrangements. The open terrace adjacent to the coffee shop counter has around five tables, a seat in any of these will give you a panoramic view of the Darjeeling city. A cup of hot chocolate on a winter morning will transport to you to a different era altogether.

Towards the right of the entrance, there is

a space which the owners have allocated for display and sale of gift items and other handicrafts produced by local entrepreneurs. The shop does not charge anything from them, only 10% of the their sales go the Edward Foundation, which is a nonprofit organization formed by the Edwards family for the social upliftment of the people in this region. This was started after a number of locals lost their jobs due to COVID 19.

Just near this area, there is a stairway leading to the restaurant in the floor above, and the pub in the floor beneath.

The restaurant in the first floor is a huge dining hall, with wooden flooring, giving colonial vibes. The restaurant has a fire place, French windows and broad columns. Live music is played in the restaurant during the weekends. The dim-lit environment with live acoustic music and awesome food will make your dinner taste even better.

The pub below the café is named the Buzz. The get-up here is a bit modern, as compared to the classic décor of the restaurant. This place hosts acoustic musicians every evening, and the local bands on weekends.

^{1.} One of the earliest photographs of Vado and Pliva Confectioners [Source: Facebook];

^{2.} The present day Glenary's;

^{3.} The outdoor Coffee Shop at Glenary's;

^{4.} First floor Dining Hall;

^{5.} The Buzz, the pub located in the basement, where live music is played every evening:

^{6.} The cosy wooden interiors of the Kunga's shop.







Before and after the independence, the managers of most of the tea gardens in and around Darjeeling were European; also the hills of Darjeeling houses several convent schools and hostels, and most of the students in these schools were European. Hence, the European clientele of this place continued to influence the menu. The restaurant serves European food items sausages, meatloaf, ham, bacon, baked beans and, more.

In terms of menu, there are three – one for the bakery and the coffee shop, one for the restaurant, and the last one being the liquor menu offered in the pub. The core of the food and the coffee shop menu has been preserved from its earlier days, with certain level of modifications to give a modern touch. The bakery section uses the same moulds which it has been using since the beginning of Glenary's. This place was also the first to have a woodfire oven in Darjeeling. The oven was imported from England, which came in parts and later assembled here. This was subsequently replaced by a Diesel oven, which was again a first in the town.

Here are some of the must try dishes from each of the sections of the Glenary's shop:

From the bakery and coffee shop:

Cream Roll, Lemon Tart, Rum Chocolate, Chocolate Muffin, Choco Chip Cookies, Cheesecake, Hot Chocolate, Pizza, Bacon etc. The author's personal favourite: Lemon Tart, Rum Chocolate, Hot Chocolate and Chicken Pizza.

From the restaurant: Hamburger Steak, Roasted Pork, Pie and Sizzler. The author's personal favourite: Chilli Beef, Fish and Chips, and Hamburger Steak.

The items here are moderately priced. In the coffee shop, for a couple to have a hearty meal, the pocket pinch will be around Rs. 400 – Rs. 500, whereas in the restaurant, the same will be in the range of Rs. 1000 – Rs. 1200.

Timings: The café and the bakery stay open from 6:30 AM till 7:30 PM. The restaurant stays open from 12 Noon till 9:30 PM.

Kunga's

If you wish to experience some authentic Tibetan and Chinese food, then Kunga's is the place you ought to be. This small dingy shop is located diagonally opposite Keventer's. The shop is so small that it can easily get overlooked. As compared to the others discussed so far, this shop is considerably younger, being in existence for only 27 years.

With only five tables, only about 30 people can be fed at once in this shop. However, the reputation of the shop outweighs the size of the shop by a great margin, hence, you will find a long queue of diners waiting outside the shop at any given point of time during a day.

The unique selling proposition of this place is to serve authentic Tibetan food, however, it offers vast range of food items



in the menu, with even lassi in it.

Some of the must tries would include Momos (Chicken, Pork, or Beef), Chilli Pork, Chilli Beef, Thenthuk Soup (Flat Handmade Noodles Soup). The author's personal favourites are Chicken Momos and Chilli Pork.

The average pocket pinch for a couple visiting this place would be around Rs. 500 - 600, depending on the appetite. As a matter of caution, it is recommended that one must not order too much at once, because one portion of anything will easily feed a couple of people with average appetite.

Hasty Tasty

If you are a vegetarian, this is the place you need to be in Darjeeling. It is a very popular restaurant in Darjeeling, and offers various vegetarian dishes and cuisines, including South Indian, North Indian, Punjabi, Gujarati, and even Jain food. They also offer Chinese food and Pizza.

This restaurant is located only a couple of blocks from the Glenary's.

They have a fairly large dining hall with a number of tables lined up. This being a self service shop, one has to place an order and wait for their turn.

The ambience is casual, and one part of the restaurant offers a fine view of the valley.

Some of the dishes that one may try from here are Rajma, Alu Matar, Chana Masala. They also have North Indian and South Indian thalis.

The pocket pinch for a couple will be around Rs. 300 – Rs. 400.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks Mr. Rahul Jha, the owner of the Keventer's shop and restaurant in Darjeeling, for taking out time from his busy schedule and contributing material for this writeup. The author would also like to thank Ms. Justina Beatrice, fourth generation of the Edwards family looking after the Glenary's shop and currently heading the bakery, for taking out time from her busy schedule and sitting with the author and sharing inputs for this writeup.

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SEVEN CURRIES TO TRY WHEN YOU'RE IN GOA







Admit it, Goan cuisine is comfort food in itself, hitting all the right notes, while simultaneously bringing all the essential nutrition to the table! If you were to look at a typical crowd-pleaser of Goan Thali, you'd spot the veggies, the curries, the fish, (or maybe the chicken) and the rice. I think no matter what you pick, Goan food makes for a very wholesome nutritious meal that deserves an afternoon siesta. Yet, as I find my way through Goan restaurants and most food blogs around social media, I realise that the Goan Fish curry is just one pre-defined entity made of coconut and prawns. It doesn't end there.

There's a myriad of Goan curry preparations ranging from the humble but spicy hooman, a coconut based fish curry that is usually consumed with Kodi, a popular drink prepared from kokum and coconut. This helps take the edge off of the spice. Another crowd favourite breakfast favourite is the Tonak, a curry made with the local harvest of alsande, or the cowpea/ black-eyed pea best enjoyed with rice dosas or tender coconut pole. Apart from this the more popular ones are the tangy balchao, the spicy vindaloo, the flavourful Cafreal and the much loved, sweet and spicy xacuti.

Don't get us wrong, the curries represent a unique aspect i.e. the Saraswat Brahmin Hindu influence and the Portuguese Catholic influence on the cuisine of Goa. They would be the first thing we'd recommend too! What's disheartening is that the spotlight sidelines a lot of other fabulous gravies and curries that are just as lip-smacking!

So here's our list of Goan Curries you should try when you're tired of the Xacuti or the Cafreal:

Khatkhatem

A vegetable-loaded dish that is synonymous with the much loved festival of Ganesh Chaturthi in Goa, the Khatkhatem is as blissful as food can get! It is a crucial delicacy of the Saraswat Brahmins of Goa.

According to Sneha, a Goan Food Blogger, "Khatkhate is basically a spiced vegetable stew". The base of the curry is made from grated coconut, lentils, and a whole lot of vegetables ranging from corn, brinjals, cucumbers, pumpkin and everything else that you can think of! For most Goan recipes, a touch of jaggery is what brings it all together.

On her Instagram blog (@thegoanfoodstory), she further adds that the addition of 'tirphal', or Sichuan pepper is what gives the vegetable curry a unique flavour. If you ever visit Mum's Kitchen or the Caravela Cafe in Panjim, it's recommended that you try their Khatkhatem. It tastes best when served with rice or the pao.

Caldinha

Caldinha / Caldin / Caldeen is a preparation similar to the Khatkhatem, but was once a dish consumed only by the more elite class. The sole reason for this was the exorbitant price of coconuts in the days bygone. Funnily enough, this didn't hinder Goans from adding coconut to most of their curries and other culinary preparations such as deserts and liquor.



This wonderful fusion of Portuguese and Konkan cuisine derives its name from the Portuguese word for soup, 'caldo'. It has a very rich, creamy texture that comes from preparing ground coconut with flavourful spices like cumin and turmeric. The base is made using coconut milk which is obtained after this coconut paste is strained. According to the owner of Viva Panjim, Linda D'Souza,

- 1-8. Some of the more popular curries of Goa:
 - 1. Pork Vindaloo (photo by Rupanjana De);
 - 2. Pork Cafreal (photo by Rupanjana De);
 - 3. King fish Rechaedo (photo by Rupanjana De);
 - 4. Goan Fish curry (photo by Sanghamitra);
 - 5. Coconut lamb curry (photo by Rupanjana De);
 - 6. Chicken xacuti (photo by Rupanjana De);
 - 7. Prawn caldeirada (photo by Sanghamitra);
 - 8. Crab Xec Xec (photo by Sanghamitra);

9-10. Curries featured in this article:

- 9. Khatkhatem (photo by Sneha Mangaonkar @thegoanfoodstory)
- 10. Chicken Caldinha (photo by Rupanjana De).





an entire coconut goes into preparing one serving of caldinha. This curry can be made with either fish or vegetables, or both. A prawn and cauliflower caldinho is just as popular as an okra, mushroom or pumpkin caldinho. It is light on the spices, just delightfully creamy and is best enjoyed with Goan Pao or rice.

The best places to try this delectable preparation is Viva Panjim, Cafe Caravela or Mum's Kitchen, all located in the capital city of Panjim.

Feijoada

According to most, feijoada comes from Brazil. A part of the name itself - 'feijao' - translates to 'beans', from Portuguese. One can even say that this dish stands out as some sort of a mascot for Portugal, finding it's modifications throughout all Portuguese colonies, from Brazil to Goa to Angola and so on. While the Brazilian recipe mainly thrives on pork cuts and black beans, its Goan counterpart languishes in rajma (kidney beans) and choriz (Goan pork sausages).

The dish is best had with, of course, pao or poie until your bowl is wiped clean. If any remains, don't forget, most Goan Curries age well and taste better with every passing day that they sit in your refrigerator. Find this sumptuous preparation in the Caravala Cafe.

A mbot Tik

On the other end of the curries spectrum, lies the Ambot Tik or the Ambotik. It lacks coconut, which was considered relatively expensive although typical to most Goan curries and hence, was known as the poor man's curry. It's a tangy, spicy preparation that comes as a celebration of flavours in your mouth. You'll thoroughly enjoy the experience of eating Ambotik which is best served with hot rice.

Ambot is the Konkani word for sour and Tik refers to spicy (in Portuguese). It is usually prepared with calamari, sharks or sardines but you can make it with whatever fish fancies you. Its major flavours come from palm vinegar and tamarind, but some chefs go a step ahead and even use raw mangoes! The spiciness comes from the use of red chillies that are available in plenitude and in innumerable varieties in Goa.

Uddamethi

Uddamethi is an element of the Saraswat Brahmin Cuisine, belonging proudly to a community of Goan Brahmins that consume all local produce, including fish and meat.

The name is derives from an amalgamation of two Konkani / marathi words - urad i.e. black gram, and methi i.e. Fenugreek. So uddamethi is a Goan fish curry that is made using black gram and Fenugreek seeds and hence, has a very flavorful bitter undertone to it. Along with this, coconut and peppercorns, along with jaggery, raw mangoes and ambade (hog plum), help create a smooth, sweet and spicy base for the curry. A substitute for the latter two ingredients would be tamarind which adds a similar tanginess.



Popular especially during summers when raw mangoes make their appearance in Goa, the uddamethi tastes best with rice and when prepared with mackerels or bimbli (tendli / ivy gourd) for a vegetarian version. A traditional preparation would be done in an earthen pot.

S orpotel

Sorpotel is a Goan preparation that came all the way from







Lisbon with the Portuguese sailors. Initially it was made from all and any available parts of a pig and preserved using vinegar to last on the long naval voyages. The name itself means a mix or mismash, and that is what sorpotel is. Best enjoyed with sannas, popular steamed rice bread, the key ingredient for a good sorpotel is toddy vinegar along with Kashmiri chillies, goan chillies and a variety of other spices. The toddy vinegar is made from the coconut palm today that takes almost a fortnight to collect and then ferment into vinegar.

Then the curry is prepared with its trademark sourness and refrigerated to be consumed for weeks. The sorpotel can be kept in an earthen *kunddlem* (an earthen pot used for cooking) for a few days to ripen it, further enhancing its flavour.

S aasav

Saasav is every Goan's summer favourite and is usually prepared with mangoes or pineapples. The more popular version is the Ghotache Saasav which is a preparation made from baby mangoes during the summer season. These baby mangoes are known as ghota in the Konkani language. Saasav, from Konkani translates to mustard seeds and is used as a base for this curry. The main ingredients that add to the flavour of this sweet and tangy curry are coconut, jaggery, chillies and mustard seeds. The mangoes are then squeezed after which the pulp and the seeds are both added to the curry. Consume it hot with rotis!

Goan cuisine has the kind of warmth that'd make any gloomy day better. We believe that it deserves all the love that us, as foodies, can give it. It doesn't stop at the fish thali. There is so much more to the Goan Cuisine that one can enjoy. The best experience one could get is dining in a Goan home hosted by a local family, driving diverse items – the Catholic elements, the Hindu elements, and even the tribal elements that are hidden away in the forests of Goa. The catholics have a certain speciality, Hindus have another, the tribes in goa also prepare things differently. Focus on diversity in the different locations in Goa. I think the reconnect to Goa session on food can help with some info. So when you come down, do try the vindaloo, the Cafreal, the balchao and the Xacuti. But don't forget that there's so much more that defines Goa than just these beauties.

- 1. Feijoada (photo by Alisha Fernandes @tyeeao @therecipebookclub);
- 2. Ambotik (photo by Aaron DSouza @thegoanpoie);
- 3. Uddamethi (photo by Sayuli Raiker @sayulipr);
- 4. Sorpotel (photo by Sanghamitra);
- 5. Saasav (photo by Bipin Sawant @bipsphotography).

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Women have many roles to play in various arenas. Her place in society is punctuated with many tasks. While accomplishing such tasks she compromises with her love to explore the unknown. Kayaking through seas, relishing exquisite delicacies of various countries, experiencing deep water snorkelling or just seeing the world can be any woman's dream waiting to be fulfilled. Making such dreams come true for many women are the new era all-women travel services.

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SPRINGE.



FENI: Goa's Magic Concoction

Article by Sharvani Chandvale Photos by Soul Travelling

Come March and every corner of Goa is teeming with the sweet aroma of ripe Cashew apples. Goans get ready to not only roast the cashew nut, but also to brew Goa's favourite elixirs - Urrack and Feni. While Urrack has a very short shelf life, Feni can be stored and aged for up to 10 years! Just like wine, the more you age the Feni, the pricier it gets. A delicious drink replete with fruity, pungent and earthy aromas, Feni gets at least half of Goa's population reminiscing nostalgically. It is an emotion stronger than wine or whiskey and it has us and many tourists, swooning over its unbeatable goodness in all its myriad flavours!

So how do they brew this magical and mysterious concoction? We picked the mind of Hansel Vaz, and his reservoir of wisdom

spilled the secrets behind a good Feni. The founder of Cazulo Feni and owner of the world's first ever Feni cellar in the world, Hansel gave us insights into the Naked Feni and why it is cherished by Goans. We couldn't help but be fascinated!

So let's begin right at the start, when Feni didn't exist in Goa. That was until the Portuguese colonists trudged in with their chillies, potatoes, tomatoes and... cashews! Yes! Cashew came to Goa all the way from Brazil. The goal was to prevent topsoil erosion with the trees during Goa's heavy monsoons. Who knew it'd spread its roots straight into our hearts!

To begin with, the cashew apples are collected when they ripen in March and fall

off the trees by pickers known as cazkars. Next, they're crushed by stomping on them. This is done on a basin cut of rock called the *colmbi*. The juice is then transferred into a mud pot which is buried in the earth for three days to ferment the juice. The pulp that remains after squashing the fruit is used to extract Neero, a refreshing non-alcoholic summer beverage.

These earthen pots are almost 1 - 1.5 metres long in diameter, thin like eggshells, and hence extremely light and easily breakable. Known as *kodem* or *bhann* these pots are no longer made and the ones used currently have all been unearthed by careful and tedious digging from older distilleries! What's more, according to Vaz, his distillery is one of the only two that use these pots to









make feni; others use plastic drums.

What makes Feni all the more attractive is the fact that the potters who made these bhanns don't exist anymore. According to Vas, only one such potter still lives. They ensure that the temperature remains stable and the yeast grows uniformly.

Okay, moving on. The cashew fruit pulp has to be fermented, mind you, without the use of any external yeast, to conserve its fruity flavour. The yeast gets trapped in the pores on the mud pot and gets used for consequent fermentation processes.

Once this is done, the juice has to be distilled by boiling in an earthen pot called bhann, connected to a water bath. a bamboo tube filters the vapours from the pot that are condensed in the water bath and collected in another clay pot. It's a tedious process of triple distillation, but it's every bit worth it. The first distillation gets you Urrack, having 15% alcohol by volume, the second gets you Cazulo (40-42% alcohol) and the final one gives

you Feni (45% alcohol). Although, most distillers stick to Cazulo Feni as the latter is too strong.

Furthermore, this Feni can be stored in garrafões (vintage, hand-blown glass containers) that Vaz has acquired from locals for exorbitant prices. Aged Feni is a magical experience of its own.

Goa is home to almost 30,000 small distillers and six large ones in the feni industry. Feni started as a local brew, and ended up being classified as a 'heritage spirit of Goa' in 2016. It was also granted a GI (geographical indication) tag in 2013. It doesn't stop there; Feni got itself makeovers over the years finding itself being aged in barrels and infused with aromas.

Cashew apple isn't the only one. Feni is also made from coconut toddy. Known as nasha paani, coconut feni was the original feni that existed before the Portuguese arrived. It's tart and light.

Feni can also be infused with flavours, usu-

ally single botanical flavouring each time. As the stories go, each of these flavours are traditional Indian ingredients that help alleviate certain ailments. For instance, they have jeera (cumin) for an upset stomach, allem (ginger) for a sore throat, kodu (bitter gourd) for diabetics, louson (garlic) for the heart and so on. The way they're prepared is even more intriguing. The flavours are created by hanging cloth potlis or pouches over the still and letting them infuse into the vapours.

A third kind of Feni prepared is Dukshiri, made with the Indian sarsaparilla root (dukshiri). The root was used as a coolant and a painkiller, hence the name. Dukshiri is a smoky, earthy drink with a faint aftertaste of peanuts.

There's also a semi-mythical feni called Kölléācho, or fox feni. Our Goan ancestors trusted it as a sure cure for tuberculosis, bronchitis and other respiratory illnesses. The word *kolleacho* refers to a fox. You might not believe it, but this Feni was one of the hardest to make. The sole









Sake and Scotch might be exotic, but a drink that tastes of the history of our land in every sip is incomparable. It's not just fruit pulp fermented and distilled, it is a story boiled to perfection. When we think Feni, we think of a culture that's been a heirloom for centuries, of remedies being passed down and memories being made with your clan. For Goans, alcohol isn't just about getting "sloshed" till you pass out or the buzz to keep you dancing all night, it's about togetherness and remembering, more than forgetting. Next time you sip on this art, be wary of its exciting history.



reason for this was the work it took to junto down a fox or a jackal. You were lucky if you came across a roadkill; that's when distillation began. Fret not! They always discarded the pots after a single use.

Café Conserva' or coffee feni, is another lesser known feni. It was once a dessert liqueur, served after local Goan weddings.

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Traditional dishes of Kerala



This tiny southern Indian state on the western coast of the country has lots to offer to visitors in the form of plantations, forests, backwaters, islands and culture. Add to that a culinary adventure to complete your experience. The traditional cuisine of Kerala is rich and extravagant and to say the least they burst with flavours and aroma. It incorporates Arabian, Malabari and French influences. This article takes our readers down a culinary trip of the state. From traditional festive platters consisting of an array of vegetarian items to popular non-vegetarian dishes and desserts, you find all types of traditional dishes from Kerala here.

The cuisine of Kerala has an equally important place for both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. The latter is prepared with a variety of sea-food items and different types of meat including beef. Grated coconut or coconut milk, coconut oil, rice and fish are its most common ingredients in almost all preparations. The flavours of the dishes are enhanced by generous usage of aromatic and flavourful spices grown

in the state itself.

Breakfast items

Idiyappam

Idiyappam or string hopper is a popular breakfast item. Also called Noolappam or Nool Puttu, these are basically thin vermicelli prepared with rice flour, salt and water through the process of steaming, tucked together in portions that give it a unique texture. These are served with vegetable stew or egg curry.

Appam or Pallappam

It is a rice pancake with a thin and crispy exterior and a thick and fluffy centre and can be enjoyed at any time of the day. It is prepared with fermented rice batter in a special Appam griddle. Appam can be enjoyed with a variety of side dishes and especially with kadala curry or non-vegetarian dishes like chicken, mutton or Kerala's special beef curry, or simply with coconut milk and sugar.

Kalappam

It is a typical breakfast item like dosa. It is served with fish or chicken curry or chutney.

Dosa Ghee Roast with Sambar

This is a special type of Dosa as well as Sambar. Made from

- 1. Puttu (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 2. Pathiri (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 3. Idiyappam (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 4. Kuzhi paniyaram (pic: Onkita Banerjee);
- 5. Pallappam (pic: Onkita Banerjee);
- 6. Idli and Chamandi (pic: Onkita Banerjee);
- 7. Ishtu, Kerala Vegetable Stew (pic: Shilpi Gupta);
- 8. Mathanga eriserry (pic: Onkita Banerjee);
- 9. Malabar Paneer (pic: Shilpi Gupta); 10. Avial (pic: Shilpi Gupta).

fermented rice and lentils, the ghee roast dosa is cooked in pure ghee, and then roasted until crisp.

Idli with Sambar

These idlis are also a little different from other South Indian states. The rice cakes are prepared with fermented rice and eaten with a tangy curry of lentils, vegetables and spices.

Puttu

Another popular breakfast item, Puttus are steamed rice cakes cylindrical in shape and cooked with grated coconut. Puttus are traditionally served with mildly spicy Kadala curry.

Kappa Kuzhachathu

It is a traditional dish made by boiling tapioca (kappa), smashing it, and then mixing it with spices. It is eaten with spicy fish curry, chicken curry, beef curry or chutney.

Kuzhi Paniyaram

Also called Paddu it is prepared by steaming a batter made of black lentils and rice in a mould like idli.

Curries

Kadala curry

It is a black chickpea curry cooked with grated coconut and aromatic spices. It is often served as accompaniment for breakfast items like Puttu, Dosa and Idiyappam.

Erissery (Lentil & Pumpkin Stew)

Traditionally this is the main side dish in most meals in every home. A favourite with both locals and tourists, this curry from Kerala is a prepared with

two main ingredients, lentils and pumpkin. The other ingredients are coconut, vegetables like raw banana and yams, flavourful spices and garlic. It is generally served with steamed rice.

Ishtu

It is the local vegetable stew version inspired by the European stew, and prepared with coconut milk, cinnamon, cloves and shallots, is also a popular accompaniment of appams.

Avial

It is a traditional dish of mixed vegetables cooked in a paste of ground coconut and flavoured with coconut oil. It is eaten with rice. There is a legend associated with this dish. It is said that Bhima, one of the Pandava brothers from The Mahabharata was once made to cook during his exile. Not knowing what to cook, he chopped up whatever vegetables he could lay hands on cooked them together.

Malabar Curry

This type of curry is associated with Malabar cuisine.
The gravy in this curry consists mainly of cashew paste which is garnished with spices and curry leaves. Fish, prawns, chicken as well as vegetables or paneer can be cooked in this manner.

Parippu Curry (Curried Dal)

Rather than a plain dal, Parippu is rich in the flavours of pure ghee, chillies and spices.

Kallumakkaya Ularthiyathu (Mussel Stir Fry)

There is abundance of seafood in Kerala. This mussels dish

is one of the local favourites. Cleaned mussels are cooked in shallots, garlic, chillies and other aromatic spices and grated coconut.

Meen Molee

Fish Moilee is a dish with Portuguese origin. Meen Molee or the Kerala version of Fish Moilee is a favourite with locals and tourists alike. The dish is prepared by stewing fish in coconut milk and aromatic spices.

Erachi Varutharacha Curry (Mutton Curry)

Another dish that had its origin in the Syrian Christian community, this curry has become a part of the traditional food of Kerala. Spices are fried and grounded and then added to the mixture of mutton, onions and tomatoes.

Nadan Kozhi Varuthathu (Spicy Fried Chicken)

This is one of the most popular non-vegetarian dishes. This spicy chicken dish is cooked with garlic, onion, vinegar, coriander and generous doses of chilli and other spices and is Kerala's answer to KFC. Nadan Kozhi Varuthathu is served on a banana leaf with rotis, porotta (Kerala's version of paratha), appam or rice.

Chemmeen Curry (Prawn Curry)

This traditional prawn curry is cooked in coconut milk and jaggery with loads of chilli and other spices and garnished with curry leaves. It is popular accompaniment with steamed rice or chapattis.

Chemmeen Roast (Prawn Roast)

Having a long coastline, the state of Kerala is blessed with











abundance of seafood. This prawn fry is another popular dish. Freshly caught prawns are fried in coconut oil, with ingredients like mustard seeds, curry leaves, turmeric and chillies and served crisp.

Karimeen Pollichathu (Fish)

By far one of Kerala's most famous dishes is Karimeen Pollichathu which traces its origin to the Syrian Christians. The main ingredient of this dish is Pearl Spot Fish that comes from the backwaters of Alleppey and Kumarakom. The fish is marinated in a mixture of lemon juice, red chillies, and loads of other spices, then wrapped in plantain leaves and baked or grilled. The plaintain leaf adds a unique flavour to the fish.

Nadan Beef

Kerala is one of the states in India where there is no stigma associated with eating beef. Hence many traditional dishes have beef as the main ingredient. Nadan Beef is a popular beef dish of Kerala wherein the meat is either roasted or cooked in thick gravy. The meat is cooked to perfection for a melt-in-the-mouth experience and the dish is served with Porotta or rice.

Beef Ularthiyathu

Often referred to as the 'state dish of Kerala' Beef ularthiyathu is a dish of pan-roasted beef that is slow-cooked in a combination of spices, curry leaves and fried coconut slices.

Rice and Breads

Malabar (Thalassery) Biryani

This version of biryani is characterised by profuse aroma and flavour as a result of the use of an array of fragrant spices. It originates from the Thalassery town of northern Kerala which is known for a medley of Arabian, Persian, Indian and European influences in its cuisine.

Thenga Rice

This is a popular coconut rice of Kerala and is also called Malabar Thenga Rice or Thenga Sadham.

Ney Choru

This aromatic rice prepared with ghee, spices and dry fruits is a special recipe from the Malabar cuisine. It can be eaten with a spicy curry.

Malabar Parotta

This is a favourite dish of the people of Kerala. The Parotta is a multi-layered paratha originating from the Malabar region of coastal Kerala. The beef curry is prepared in traditional style with aromatic spices and pieces of fried coconut are added. The crispy, flaky and crumbly texture of the parotta and the lip-smacking taste of the









curry together make it an ideal accompaniment with alcohol.

Pathiri

This is a unique and thin white roti made with pounded rice flour and is eaten mainly with non-vegetarian curries. It can be consumed at any time of the day.

Malabar Neypathiri

Another breakfast dish, this deep fried rice rotti is Malabar version of north Indian Puri and is made with coconut and parboiled rice. It is served with a spicy curry.

Snacks

Banana Chips

Needless to mention, this is one of the ubiquitous delicacies of the state of Kerala. The crunchy slightly sweet and salty chips are made from thin sun-dried slices of raw bananas which are then deep fried. It is a popular snacks item. This is also one of the main items that tourists bring along while returning from a trip to the state. However, banana chips are nowadays available more or less all across the country.

Pazham Pori

Another popular snack item made from banana is the Pazham Pori. Also called Ethakka Appam, these banana fritters are made from long slices of ripe plantain bananas cut length-wise and then dipped in a batter of flour and deep fried in oil. The key to perfection of these fritters is choosing the correct ripeness of the bananas. These are served with evening tea or coffee.

Unnakaya

Another banana snack item, Unnakaya are golden coloured balls deep fried in oil. Mashed ripe bananas are flattened into patties, filling with a mixture of grated coconut and jiggery and then made into balls and fried. Popular among the Muslim communities, these are consumed during festivities.









Meals

Ela Sadhya

If your trip to Kerala is hurried and you have less time to try individual items, Ela Sadhya is your best bet. It is a complete meal with many components and is one of the finest gastronomic traditions of the state. Ela Sadhya is served in a plaintain leaf and comes with a huge number of vegetarian items. It is prepared and served during religious and ceremonial occasions like festivals, weddings and cultural gatherings. This royal platter contains items like steamed rice, parippu, erissery, pachadi, kichadi, pulissery, injipuli, olan, sambar, rasam, varavu, thoran, avial, kaalan, banana chips, payasam, pappadam and Kaaya Varuthathu in small amounts and a whole ripe banana. Having it is a great way of tasting Kerala's versatile cuisine.

Desserts

Palada Payasam

Payasam is a sweet rice dish like *kheer*. It is generally prepared during auspicious occasions and festivals like Onam. Of the many varieties of payasam, Palada Payasam is the most popular and is prepared from rice ada (cooked rice flakes), milk, sugar and ghee.

Ada Pradhaman

Ada Pradhaman is another variety of payasam which is very popular in the state. It is cooked with rice ada or rice flakes and in addi-

tion to the ingredients of payasam it also contains coconut milk.

Chatti Pathiri

Somewhat similar to the Italian lasagne, to prepare this dish one must use pancakes made out of flour, eggs, oil and water instead of the lasagne sheets. The filling contains sweetened beaten eggs, nuts, raisins and cardamoms.

Ela Ada

It is another sweet delicacy and consists of rice doughs stuffed with coconut and jaggery/sugar fillings inside, that are then steamed in a banana leaf.

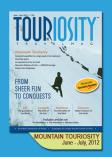
Other Desserts

Some of the other dessert items include Unniappam which is a fried banana bread and kozhakkatta which are rice dumplings stuffed with a sweet mixture of coconut and jaggery.

- 1. Neymeen Pollichathu inside banana leaf and (inset) after opening (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 2. Ela Ada (pic: Shilpi Gupta);
- 3. Ney Choru rice (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 4. Thenga rice, chemeen curry and kozhi curry (pic: Onkita Banerjee);
- 5. Ela Sadhya meal (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 6. Freshly fried Banana Chips (pic: Rupanjana De);
- 7. Tourists often take cooking classes from local chefs while visiting Kerala. Seen in this photo is a foreign tourist taking such a class (pic: Rupanjana De); 8. Red snapper fry (pic: Rupanjana De).

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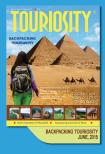


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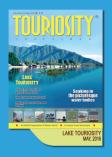














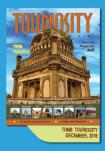


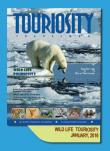






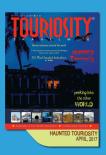








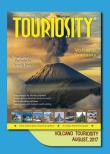




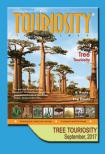








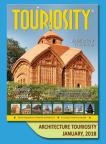
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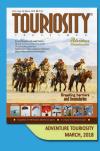






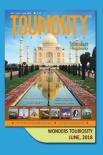




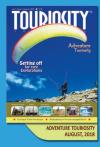




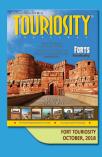


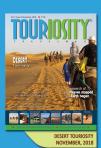










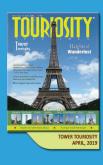




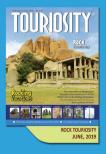










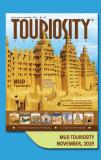




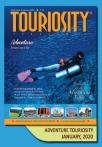


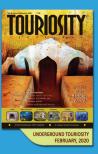




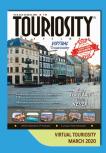








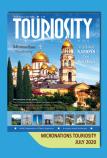
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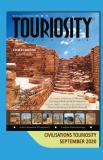












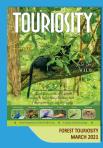




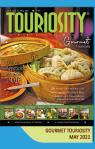














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You embrace yourself as a unique individual, and are less likely to follow the crowd. You're attracted to ideas that seem unusual, bizarre, futuristic, or innovative, and to people who are original thinkers.

Places to visit: Blue Lagoon, Iceland - The Blue Lagoon, with its milky-white quiet waters, is a bizarre sight. The lagoon is manmade and fed by water from the Svartsengi, a nearby geothermal power plant.

Visakhapatnam - Known for its pristine beaches, natural beauty and scenic landscape along with a rich cultural and historical heritage, Visakhapatnam, better known as Vizag is a port city and a gem of South India.

Favorable Dates: June 3, 10, 12, 19, 21, 30 Favorable Colors: Yellow & Grey

You want the mental stimulation being around other people provides for you. If single, you can meet someone through a relative. If in a relationship, you try to forge more emotional bond with your partner.

Places to visit: Bora Bora, French Polynesia – It is a dreamlike island with a dormant volcano at its heart, covered by thick jungle, surrounded by an emerald necklace of tiny sand-fringed islands that form a turquoise lagoon hiding rich coral reefs and thousands of colorful fish.

Chandigarh - Designed by the ace consisting of 47 self-contained sectors, India's first planned city is known for its unique blend of urbane architecture and natural bliss.

Favorable Dates: June 2, 5, 11, 14, 20, 23 Favorable Colors: Red & Green





You're more romantic and charismatic, and you want your love to transcend, though you may not see the person you're with clearly. You are more nurturing and supportive of your family. This is a good time to improve your physical self with a makeover or cosmetic surgery.

Places to visit: Fiordland National Park, New Zealand - Huge granite mountains are dotted with emerald lakes, dense rainforests, and animals that do not exist anywhere else.

Bengaluru - Having evolved gradually from being the Garden city to the Silicon Valley of India, Bengaluru is India's third largest city, being the most livable city in India.

Favorable Dates: June 3, 7, 12, 16, 21, 25 Favorable Colors: Black & Yellow

You're forward-thinking, and can decide to try something new out of the blue that's completely different from your usual life. You can be more passionate and sensual in love, and if you're in a relationship, you want to let your passionate side out.

Places to visit: Garden of the Gods, Colorado, USA --- Hundreds of immense red sandstone spires, bridges, and other precariously balanced rock formations are intersected by 15 miles of well-managed trails.

Kodaikanal - Kodaikanal is the most sought after honeymoon destination in South India because of its scenic beauty and it has the attribute to leave any nature lover mesmerized by its charisma.

Favorable Dates: June 7, 9, 16, 18, 25, 27 Favorable Colors: Yellow & White





You're optimistic about whatever happens, and you feel good. You may tend to go on a new journey in life, start a big new project, grab the opportunities that surround you. You're enthusiastic and have a positive attitude about whatever you do.

Places to visit: The Charles Bridge, Prague, Czech Republic -This spectacular stone bridge across the Vltava river "perfectly frames the sight of Prague Castle above and links Old Town with Malá Strana.

Alleppey - Famous backwaters of God's own country, Kerela, the city of Alleppey is known for its beaches, temples, boat races and Ayurvedic spa and wellness centers.

Favorable Dates: June 2, 6, 11, 15, 20, 24 Favorable Colors: Red & Green

You feel most like yourself when you are engaging your mind. You want to spend more time around other people for the mental stimulation, and you can learn something new on your own or take a class. You may come across as more curious and intellectual during this period.

Places to visit: Mount Thor -The most famous summit in Canada and made of pure granite, Mount you can also visit the site and camp out instead. These epic vacations are perfect for adrenaline junkies.

Mcleodganj - It is a hill station near Dharamshala, popular among trekkers and with a heavy Tibetan culture with British influence.

Favorable Dates: June 5, 6, 14, 15, 23, 24 Favorable Colors: Green & Purple





This is a good time to accomplish something and tackle goals, though it may be at the expense of everything else in your life. You have a greater belief in yourself.

Places to visit: Angel Falls, Venezuela - it remains one of Venezuela's top tourist attractions, and the pictures make it easy to see why. The falls include a 2,648-foot plunge and a quarter of a mile of sloped cascades and rapids.

Kanha National Park - A delightful town situated in the district of Mandla, Kanha National park is the haven of an exceptionally wide variety of wild animals, including the majestic creature tiger.

Favorable Dates: June 2, 4, 11, 13, 20, 22

Favorable Colors: Red & Yellow

You may feel stronger, have more vitality and your mind may be sharper and more active. You may have an easier time making money, and an even easier time spending it, and your self confidence may be stronger. You feel romantic and have an easier time committing yourself to someone.

Places to visit: Milan - The internationally renowned city has an extremely positive image in all corners of the world and attracts a large number of travellers, making it a leading destination.

Shimla - It is the capital city of Himachal Pradesh famous for its Mall road, the Ridge, toy train etc. among honeymooners and families alike.

Favorable Dates: June 6, 8, 15, 17, 24, 26 Favorable Colors: Blue & Yellow





This can be a good time to bring everything full circle and take advantage of opportunities that get put to the side and make progress with the things that got slowed down in the past.

Places to visit: Gdansk's expressive and distinctive character give it strong and implicit recognition among European cities. This Polish city has got its own spirit which makes it impossible to mistake Gdansk for any other place.

Manali – It is nestled at one end of the Kullu Valley, Manali is a hill station with attraction such as the Rohtang pass nearby and is popular among tourists, especially during summers.

Favorable Dates: June 2, 8, 11, 17, 20, 26 Favorable Colors: Blue & White

This can be an excellent time to make a transformation of something in your life, or of yourself. It's likely that you feel something needs to change, and you have the energy and drive to do that now. You can broaden your horizons, and open your mind to the world.

Places to visit: Athens - From the iconic Acropolis, rising above the city, to charming up and coming neighborhoods and contemporary art galleries, the city is a majestically quirky clash of past and present.

Khajjar in Himachal Pradesh offers a beautiful panoramic view of the densely populated forests and the meadows and snowy peaks of Himalayas

Favorable Dates: June 3, 4, 12, 13, 20, 26 Favorable Colors: Blue & White





You can be presented with a new job opportunity, start a new work project, find renewed energy and love for your work, start a new routine, or embark on a healthier lifestyle.. In love, you can be more affectionate and if in a relationship, you want to spend more time with your partner.

Places to visit: Vienna - Vienna's Ringstrasse is the most beautiful boulevard in the world. Nowhere else can you find such a dense concentration of so many representative buildings, palaces and parks.

Darjeeling - Experience the chills, admire the hypnotic creations of Nature and slurp on that sizzling delicious tea at Darjeeling.

Favorable Dates: June 2, 7, 11, 16, 20, 25 Favorable Colors: Blue & Yellow

You can feel more like your true self, and are willing to go outside of the box and be a little different if it means getting what you want. You can improve your existing relationships, enter into a new partnership, commit yourself to something, make a compromise, strike a balance, or bring some peace into your life.

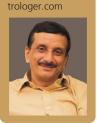
Places to visit: Tuscany - Tuscany in Italy, with its renowned culinary region is full of quaint eateries serving up traditional Italian fare.

Munnar - Munnar is an idyllic hill station, famous for its tea estates, exotic scenery, abundance of flora and fauna and craggy peaks.

Favorable Dates: June 5, 7, 14, 18, 23, 25 Favorable Colors: Green & Purple



OUROSCOB Manish Kumar **Arora** is a renowned KP Astrologer, Numerologist, Tarot Reader and Vastu Consultant. He will be with Touriosity Travelmag to bring to our readers monthly predictions based on zodiac signs with special emphasis on travel predictions. Our readers can plan their tours accord-



ingly. He can be reached at man-

ish@manishas-



A veritable paradise for foodies: Rajasthan

Rajasthan is a veritable paradise for foodies, especially the vegetarian ones. Countless delectable dishes cooked with utmost love and passion and served with the unparalleled Rajputana elegance have, beyond all doubts, made it the source of the most sought after Thali amongst all the regional cuisines of India. In this article, while we will talk about the ubiquitous royal Rajasthani thali, we will delve deeper into the individual dishes to start with.

Offering a range of items from spicy starters to tangy drinks, from lip-smacking curries and pickles to a variety of breads and papads, and countless number of delicious desserts, Rajasthani cuisine has no match in sheer diversity. But before one starts a gastronomic trip of the state, it is important to remember that the cuisine of the state has been largely influenced by its arid climatic condition. Fresh fruits and vegetables are rarely found in the ingredients, while the more common fixtures are lentils, gram flour, beans, corn, barley, millet, bajra and dairy products like ghee and milk. Wide usage of oil helps preserve the food longer and red chillies help reduce the need for water. And although majority of the dishes are vegetarian, there are a few popular non-vegetarian options too.

The following are some of the 'must try' items from













the Rajasthani cuisine that one should try and tick off during a trip to the state.

Curries and main dishes

Dal baati churma

If there were to be a State dish, this dish would wear the crown. Talk of Rajasthan and Dal baati Churma comes to your mind. It is a dish consisting of three individual items and the dish is accordingly named. The spicy Dal is cooked from lentils and needs no introduction. The crunchy Baati is a hard bread cooked with minimum usage of water. The sweet Churma is a coarsely ground mixture of









wheat and jaggery cooked in ghee that provides the much needed diversion in taste.

Panchkuta

This is a curry cooked by using five ingredients commonly found in the Thar Desert and is eaten with roti. These five ingredients are the sangria (the wild bean), ker and gunda (two types of wild berries), kumat (seeds from the pod of a tree) and dry red chillies. The curry can be preserved for a longer time.

Ker sangri

This is a popular 'bean and berry' item prepared using the available produces of the arid region. Ker is a wild berry, a little tangy and peppery in taste and Sangri is a long bean that is found abundantly in the desert areas and even during the times of drought. Together these are cooked in buttermilk or water to give the dish a tangy and piquant taste. Ker Saangri is best relished with Bajre ki Roti.

Bajre ki roti

This is the quintessential bread in the menu of a Rajasthani meal. Bajra is a black millet flour produced abundantly in the state. Bajra roti is usually accompanied by lehsun ki chutney, a garlic dip or any vegetable curry.

Papad ki subzi

This is a curry of roughly broken roasted papads in a yoghurt-based gravy. It is made spicy by the use of several spices and is generally served with steamed rice.

Boondi Raita

Rajasthani food can be very spicy and because water is scarce, boondi raita acts as the taste stabiliser. It is a healthy side dish that is served cold. It consists of small fried flour balls (boondi) soaked in

- 1. Dal Baati Churma (pic: Pushpa Shekhani, Bikaner);
- 2. Tikddi (pic: Deepak Patwa, New Delhi);
- 3. Ker Sangri Achar (pic: Hanshika Dhadda, Kolkata);
- 4. Sev ki Sabzi (pic: Sanghamitra, Kolkata);
- 5. Gatte ki Sabzi (pic: Shashi Baid, Howrah);
- 6. Papad ki Sabzi (pic: Sanghamitra, Kolkata);
- 7. Raab (pic: Sanghamitra, Kolkata);
- 8. Mogar ki Puri and Kadhi (pic: Shashi Baid, Howrah);
- 9. Gatta Fry (pic: Shashi Baid, Howrah);
- 10. Laal Maans and Missi Roti (pic: Rupanjana De. Kolkata)







fresh mint infused yoghurt.

Gatte ki subzi

This is a curry of fried flour dumplings with a thick, spicy and tangy gravy made up of tomato and buttermilk. It is served both with rotis and rice.

Kadhi

This is a spicy curry made from gram flour and pakodis on a yoghurt-based gravy. It has a thick gravy and is generally served with rice or roti.

Laal maans

The most popular non-vegetarian item of this predominantly vegetarian state is the Laal Maans, which liter-

> the dish was cooked using the meat of hunted wild boar or deer but today mutton is the more common meat used for this dish. The meat is cooked on a low heat in spicy sauce of red chillies, tomato, garlic paste, sliced onions and curds. Because of the abundant use of red hot chillies and





tomato the gravy turns red and hence the name of the dish. This is a must-try dish for non-vegetarians visiting the state.

Mohan Maas

Another popular non-vegetarian dish, Mohan maas is a delicately cooked mutton dish. The meat is cooked in milk and cream along with spices like cardamom and cinnamon and is garnished with dry fruits.

Desserts

Kalakand

This famous Indian sweet item is said to have originated in Rajasthan. It is made from coagulated sweetened milk and then cut into square shape portions. Alwar's Kalakand is especially famous.

Mawa Kachori

These sweet kachoris are stuffed with mawa (coagulated milk) and crispy dry fruits and served hot.

Badam ka Halwa

It is one of the most popular desserts of Rajasthan. Soaked almonds are ground and stewed in ghee. This extremely healthy and tasty dish has high calorific value too. So weight watchers beware!

ally translates to 'red meat'. Originally

Vol 9, Issue 12, Touriosity Travelmag, May 2021







This is a sweet dish prepared from Moong dal (green grams), sugar and ghee and garnished with dry fruits. It is a popular item for special occasions and marriage ceremonies.

Ghevar

This is a crunchy sweet dish made in a mould that gives it the shape of a disc. It is made from flour, soaked in ghee, milk and is garnished with sliced almonds.

Malpua

Pushkar is famous for its malpuas. It is kind of a sweetened pancake and is prepared from flour, milk, sugar and coagulated milk and is garnished with dry fruits. Malpuas are often served along with Rabdi, another dessert.

Churma Ladoo

This ladoo is famous equally in Rajasthan and Gujarat. A mixture of wheat flour, jaggery and ghee are made into balls and sprinkled with poppy seeds.

Gujia

Rajasthani Gujia is like a crispy deep fried dumpling filled with sweetened milk solids like Mawa and crushed dry fruits. The external coating is made out of flour or semolina or maida.





Mohan Thaal

This sweet dish is prepared from besan (chick pea flour), ghee, sugar and dry fruits and nuts. It is also a part of Gujarati cuisine.

Pickles

Variety of Chutneys

A typical Rajasthani meal is incomplete without one or two variety of chutneys. These are spicy and tangy and come in a number of varieties like wild melons, tamarind, garlic and tomatoes. These serve as dip for rotis and taste enhancers in general.

Aam ki Launji

Apart from pickles another popular side-kick is this item prepared with raw mangos. It is a sweet and sour item prepared by cooking marinated raw mangoes in aromatic spices and sugar.

- 1. Fogle ka Dhokla (pic: Shashi Baid, Howrah);
- 2. Kanji Vada (pic: Shilpa Baid, Kathmandu);
- 3. Pyaaz ki Kachori (pic: Vinita Lodha, Chandigarh);
- 4. Bikaneri Bhujia; (pic: Sweeta Dhadda, Kolkata)
- 5. Mirchi Bada (pic: Sanghamitra, Kolkata);
- 6. Rajasthani Thali at The Amber Vatika, Jaipur (pic: Rupanjana De, Kolkata);
- 7. Rajasthani Thali at The Rajdhani Restaurant, Kolkata (pic: Rupanjana De, Kolkata);
- 8. Ghevar (pic: Grete Howard, Bristol, UK);
- 9. Bajre ki Roti (pic: Sanghamitra, Kolkata).



Snacks

Methi Bajra Puri

Eaten mostly during winters, this is a deep-fried puffed bread made from a combination of pearl millet flour (bajra) and fenugreek leaves (methi). Bajra provides a crunch while methi provides the taste and flavour.

Pyaaz ki kachori

Originating in Jodhpur, this kachori now features among the top Rajasthani snacks items. These kachoris are flaky, deep fried breads made from plain flour. The stuffing inside is of onion and other spices. These are generally served with chutneys.

Kalmi Vada

This crunchy snacks item is also quite healthy. A blend of coarsely grounded split chickpeas, green chillies, onion and spices is made into small bite size pieces and deep fried in oil. These are served hot with chutney.

Kanji Vada

This is a Rajasthani delicacy wherein deep fried lentil dumplings are soaked in mustard flavoured fermented liquid.

Mirchi Bada

These snacks are perfect accompaniment with evening tea. Chillies are covered in a coating of gram flour batter infused with spices and deep fried in oil. These are served hot.

Drinks

Jaljeera

It is a typical Rajasthani drink tangy in taste. Prepared using a combination of spices and ingredients it is an appetizer as also a drink to beat the heat.

Chhaach

Buttermilk is an integral part of Rajasthani food culture. In Masala Chhaach spices are also added. Buttermilk is an important drink in arid climate and is relished at any time of the day.

Raab

This is a healthy thick broth, like a soup, made by combin-

ing pearl millet flour (bajra), ghee and buttermilk in an earthen pot, then heating over a low flame for several hours. In 'makki ki raab', boiled corn kernels are also added. Raab is ideal during winters.

Meal

Rajasthani Thali

With so many varieties of dishes to try, it becomes very difficult for visitors to taste everything during a single visit to the state. A great way to succeed in doing this is by going for the elaborate Rajasthani platter, the Thali. Many restaurants across Rajasthan offer Thali options, but in order to have a wide coverage of maximum items possible the best places are Chokhi Dhani or Amber Vatika in Jaipur. The former has found its way to the bucket list of most tourists visiting the state. To avoid the crowd here, one may opt for the latter, a promising competitor and located right opposite to it. Foodies who want to try Rajasthani Thalis in other places may visit the Rajdhani restaurant whose elaborate Thali make for an experience to remember.

Both Chokhi Dhani and Amber Vatika are located in the heart of Jaipur and have a decor that reminds one of a rural setting in Rajasthan. There is a typical Rajasthani village with mud houses with traditional designs, camel carts, people dressed in ethnic attire and doing routine activities. There are dances and songs taking place, as also a puppeteer or astrologer or some other performer presenting their skills at some other corner.

After a couple of hours of enjoying the culture and traditional Rajasthani hospitality, guests can go for the food. A Rajasthani Thali is usually offered and waiters dressed in ethnic attires come in turns and while serving a portion of a particular item they carefully explain the food and its ingredients. If you like something, you can always request for a second serving. To start with there is the welcoming drink, usually the Jaljeera. A variety of breads

like Makki ki roti, Bajre ki roti, Gehu ki roti and Bejad ki roti is served with curries like daal, kadhi, gatte ki subzi and Ker sangri. Then there is the white rice, moth bajra ro khichda, Dal Bati Churma along with salad, papad, chutney and ghee. To end the meal on a sweet note there are the desserts like jalebi, rabdi and malpua. The menu may differ from place to place but the traditional items are generally there. After a hearty meal served with smile by men in traditional clothing, the guest is bound to feel invigorated. This is a great way to experience the richness of

culture of this state.



Rajasthani cuisine has no match in sheer diversity. But before one starts a gastro-nomic trip of the state, it is important to remember that the cuisine of the state has been largely influenced by its arid climatic condition. Fresh fruits and vegetables are rarely found in the ingredients, while the more common fixtures are lentils, gram flour, beans, corn, barley, millet, bajra and dairy products like ghee and milk.







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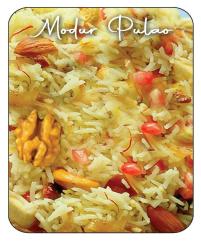
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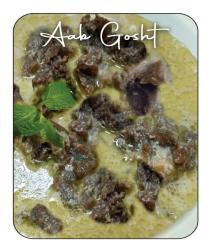
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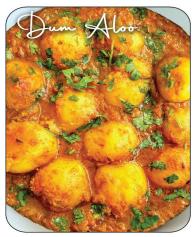
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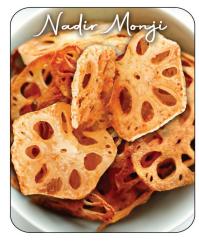
















Kashmiri cuisine has been influenced by the cuisines of the Mughals, the Arabs and the local style of cooking of the Kashmiri pundits. While most of the signature delicacies of the region are non-vegetarian, there are many interesting vegetarian dishes to try as well. In the non-vegetarian dishes, mutton, chicken or fish is the main ingredient. There is abundant use of spices like cardamom, fennel, ginger, cinnamon, cloves and saffron giving the food not only exquisite taste but also rich aroma. In this article we bring to our readers 16 'must try' items from Kashmiri cuisine.

Rogan Josh

Beyond any doubt this signature dish wears the crown of Kashmiri cuisine. Rogan Josh was introduced by the Mughals to Kashmiri cuisine. It is an aromatic lamb curry cooked with various spices and yogurt and robust with the flavour of browned onions. It is served with rice or naan.

Yakhni Pulao

This signature rice dish of Kashmir is similar to biryani in taste but the procedure of cooking differs. Yakhni means 'soup' or 'stock' and it is made first using the meat and spices. Long grained basmati rice is then cooked on this yakhni. Yakhni pulao is flavourful one pot dish and a must have one in Kashmir. The distinctive flavour of this rice leaves you craving for more even after you have had your fill.

Modur Pulao

This sweetened pulao is prepared using milk, saffron, ghee, a little sugar, cardamom and cinnamon. The saffron adds a light golden yellowish colour to the rice making it visually tempting. It is then garnished with dry fruits like almonds, cashews, walnuts and raisins and often also with fruits like apples and pomegranate pearls.

Dum Olav

It is the traditional Dum Aaloo, a signature vegetarian dish of Kashmiri cuisine. Baby potatoes are cooked in yogurt, ginger paste, fennel and hot spices to give it a unique flavour and aroma that hangs in the air giving you appetite. It is served with roti or naan.

Yakhni Lamb Curry

To prepare this dish lamb is cooked in the gravy of yogurt, amaranth flowers, onion paste and mint leaves

along with aromatic spices like black and green cardamoms and fennel. Yakhni lamb is best served with steamed rice.

Shab Deg

It is a dish wherein a rooster is cooked with turnips and aromatic spices overnight. The vessel is sealed with dough to ensure that the flavour stays in.

Aab Gosht

This mutton dish is cooked in milk and flavourful spices during special occasions. Of the 30 varieties of mutton dishes in Kashmiri cuisine it is one of the more popular ones. It is best served with saffron rice.



This traditional dish originated as a dish for the royalty. Today it is made only on special occasions in the Kashmiri homes. To prepare this dish minced mutton balls are cooked in a yogurt-based gravy and various aromatic spices. It can be eaten both with rice and roti.

Lyodur Tschaman

Also called Lyader Tschaman, it is a Kashmiri cottage cheese cooked in creamy yellow gravy. It is almost an every day item in Kashmiri homes.

Kashmiri Muji Gaad

This is a Kashmiri fish dish that is prepared on special occasions and festivals like Gaada Bata held in the month of December. The fish is generally cooked with radish (nadur) and hot spices and herbs and the combination of fish with vegetables gives it a unique taste.

Kashmiri Rajma

It is one of the most popular Kashmiri vegetarian dishes and is full of aroma. It can be enjoyed with steamed rice or roti.

Kashmiri Baingan

Yet another Kashmiri vegetarian dish, it brings diced brinjal cooked in yoghurt-based gravy with aromatic spices.

Sheermal

The Kashmiri version of these flatbreads is a little different from the Lucknowi version. It is flavoured with saffron and has a fluffy texture. It has a melt-in-the-mouth consistency and can be had with any gravy item.

Matschgand

This dish of minced meatballs is cooked in spicy red gravy. To add more richness often, nuts and dry fruits are also added.

Nadir Monji

Made from lotus stem, Nadir Monji is a type of spicy chips and is a favour-

ite snack item in Kashmir. These are served with a mint dip and are easily available around Dal Lake.

Kahva

This herbal green tea (also called Maugal Chai) is infused with saffron, spices and dry fruits. It is prepared in every household, and also during feasts and festivals.

The above dishes have been specially picked for our readers. The best way to taste all these royal delicacies is by getting oneself invited to a Kashmiri household during a visit to Kashmir. Also attending a Kashmiri food festival is another great option. Most restaurants also serve these dishes.



ast-o, hami ast-o, hami ast" said Persian poet Amir Khusru referring to Kashmir (or so it is believed). It literally translates to "If there is a paradise upon earth, it is here, it is here, it is here". Kashmir is indeed a heavenly place, but not only so in terms of its pristine landscapes. Its gastronomic delights are equally out-of-this-world. This makes it a must visit place, all the more.







India as a country enjoys huge diversity in every aspect, be it in terms of languages, communities, religions, looks of people, geographical terrains, weather conditions, and so on. In such a diverse country it was but natural to have a great diversity of cuisines too. As a result of the diversity of races, communities and religion, the impact of geographical advantages and restrictions and prolonged exposure to various external influences over many centuries, the various regions of the country has been able to develop a unique culinary portfolio. As such there is nothing like Indian Cuisine in general, it is a group of cuisines coming together, viz., South Indian cuisine, Punjabi cuisine, Rajathani cuisine, Goan cuisine, Kashmiri cuisine, Bengali Cuisine, Maharashtrian cuisine and so on. A great way to explore this diverse food portfolio is to visit the local street food markets while visiting different towns and cities across the country. These street food markets are heaven for foodies. They have a character of their own and you are ready to give up the idea of dining in a upmarket restaurant in order to grab that experience of eating amidst all that chaos and being a part of that character for a while.

In this article we thought of taking our readers on a culinary adventure trip across the 'most sought after' street food markets across India. Next time you visit one of these cities you will know exactly where to land in order to have a bite of the best local delicacies. It may be noted here that we are not talking about specific 'street foods' here, we are rather focusing on 'food streets' only. These are streets, lanes, or areas which are known for their concentration of fast food stalls or for some specific food items that are not found anywhere else, or are specifically popular in these places. [Readers

looking for information about specific street food items may look at Touriosity's December 2019 issue for '86 Famous Street Foods of India' (p 40)

Mosque Road, Bangalore

Mosque Road in Frazer town of Bangalore is one of its busiest shopping areas. It is also a hub for delectable food in the city and the 'Iftar' celebration here during Ramzaan is especially famous due to the presence of many mosques nearby. There are many eateries and food joints here that are bustling with life round the year. But the area is at its best during the Ramzaan season when many new temporary stalls are also set up. These stalls as well as the established eateries here dish out Iftar treats like samosas, chicken fry, mutton keema, sheek kebab, kalmi kebab, beef sukka, pathar ghost, haleem, Mughlai Parantha, different types of Biryani and desserts like firni and Shahi Tukda. One may also try various seafood options, fried quail and paya with bun.

Manek Chowk, Ahmedabad

A city square in Old Ahmedabad, Manek Chowk is surrounded by historical structures including the Jama Masjid. In the morning it is a vegetable market, during the day time it is a prominent jewellery market but after the sunset it turns into a foodie's favourite haunt. It has a huge variety of food items on offer, both vegetarian and non-vegetarian options including some very innovative dishes like ice-cream sandwiches. Gujarati people are great lovers of food and have many varieties of traditional snacks items that are known all over India, but at Manek Chowk, the items are not traditional Gujarati ones. From Dosas and Idlis to Sandwiches, from kebabs to kulfi, from dabelis to a variety of chaats and from pakoras to pan and mouth fresheners, you find hundreds of options here. As the night progresses the night food market comes to life and for the best experience one must visit only around 10 pm when all shops are open and the area is bustling with people, ready food and great aroma.

Sarafa Bazaar, Indore

Similar to the Manek Chowk, the Sarafa Bazaar of Indore is a jewellery market by day and a haven for foodies by night. The market is located right behind the iconic Rajwada Palace which was once a seat of the Holkar Dynasty. Starting from the closure of the jewellery market at 8 pm, the food stalls start opening up and by 10 pm it comes alive with a sea of people making a beeline for the various delicacies on offer. It is believed that the market originated more than a 100 years ago at the initiative of the jewellery shop owners who thought that the hustle and bustle here would ensure that their shops were secure at night. Generations of food vendors perfecting their







Chowk area extends from the Gol Darwaza to the Akbari Darwaza and retains its old-world vibe giving a visitor the feel of the Nawabi era here. The eateries offer a wide range of delectable food items from the Awadhi and Mughlai cuisines. The signature dishes of Lucknow to be tried here are tunday kebabs, galouti kebabs, biriyani, kormas, nihari, and shawarmas. There are also several options for vegetarians like sheermals, kulchas, paranthe, pakore, golgappe, kulfi, tokri chaat and sweet items like shahi Tukda and falooda. There are also several paan shops.

recipes and techniques have led to what the Sarafa Bazaar is today, irreplaceable and indispensable part of the city's food culture. Both locals and tourists come here for a memorable experience. Items sold here are mainly vegetarian. While there are a hundred varieties of food items on offer at the various stalls, the most favourite specialities here are Poha Jalebi, Sabudana Khichdi, Bhutte ki kees, Garadu, Malpua, Khopra patties, Ratalu, Icecream with Shrikhand, Egg Benjo, Dal Bafla, Jaleba, Pani Puri with 10 types of flavoured waters, Indori Shikanji, Kanji Vada, Petha Paan and a variety of chaats and sweets like gulab jamuns, rabdi, kalakand and malpuas.

MG Marg, Gangtok

Chowk, Lucknow

This is the ultimate place to hang around when you are in Gangtok. The beautiful pedestrian street ornate lamps reminiscent of the bygone era is skirted on both sides by hotels, restaurants, small eateries and gift shops. There are benches where you can sit and watch the people and activity. The eateries dish out everything from traditional Sikkimese food to famous delicacies from Tibetan cuisine. Noodles, momos, Thukpas (noodle soup with meat, eggs or vegetables) and Phagshapa (Pork fat stewed with vegetables) are the best things to taste at the eateries here.

Located in Hazratgunj area of Lucknow, it is one of the oldest markets in the whole of northern India. It is one of the most prominent shopping areas of Lucknow and one can come here to buy anything ranging from clothes with the legendary Chikankari work, ornaments, nagara shoes and perfumes to scrumptious kebabs. The labyrinthine alleys have from both sides been taken over by different shops and even if you do not intend to purchase anything, just visiting the chowk to do people watching is a great experience. Among the network of narrow lanes there are some that are famous for roadside eateries that are especially a haven for meat-lovers. The

Territy Bazaar, Kolkata

Many of us have visited China Towns in various big cities across various countries in South East Asia. These are especially popular for the variety of food options that they offer to visitors. There is one such China Town even in India that not many people are aware about. It is in Kolkata. The city has a substantial population of Chinese people who had migrated here almost a century back. They had brought with them their distinct cuisine and culture which they continue to maintain even to this date. They have their own school, their temples, and even a food bazaar where you can go early in the morning for a memorable breakfast! Known as the Territy Bazaar, this morning market located on the Surya Sen Road, starts as early as 5 in the morning and lasts only for a couple of hours. There are not many options though, yet whatever is on sale is uniquely Chinese. About 10 – 15 vendors set up their table to sell items like momos and dumplings made of fish, chicken or pork, fish ball soup, breaded pork chops, sticky rice, sui mai, rice balls, breads, sausages and fritters of various types. Some also sell in-



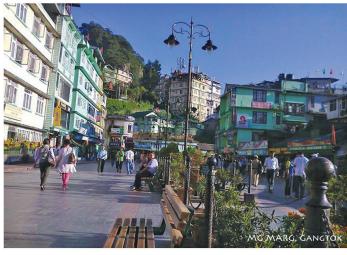


gredients for cooking that you can bring home. The area is a favourite haunt for morning walkers or people returning from a late-night party, but there are others who also get up in the wee hours of the day to come here to have breakfast.

Apart from this street food market, there are many others in Kolkata. The city is known for its street food culture. Street food here is not only tasty but very pocket friendly too. From Papri Chaat, Phuchkas, hot kathi rolls, jhalmuri, chops, tele bhaja (fritters), cutlets, fish fingers, chowmein, biryani, momos and pakoras to sweets like rosogolla, sandesh and chomchom, one finds thousands of varieties of mouthwatering food items on the streets of Kolkata.

Mohammad Ali Road Khau Galli, Mumbai

This food street is a paradise for meat lovers, but there are vegetarian options as well. Some of the most popular items that the eateries here dish out are keema samosas, mutton kheema rolls, nalli nihari, shawarmas, shahi Sherbet, succulent kebabs, colourful and delectable tikkas, melt-in-the-mouth naans and sweet items like malpuas, aflatoon and Jalebi. The masala milk at Noorani Milk Centre, Kebab platters at Shalimar and phirni at Suleiman Bakery are especially famous. One also finds here fresh fruit salads. This Khau Galli turns into a Mecca for Mughlai food during the month of Ramzaan. There are carts selling Vadapav, the Mumbai version of burger as well. This food street is so popular that it is even possible to spot Bollywood stars feasting on deli-



cacies here during their cheat days. Some signature dishes that one may try here are Gosht Khichda, Surti Barah Handi, Mutton Khiri Kebab, Nalli Nihari, Mutton Keema Pav, Tandoori Quail, Gurda, Baida Roti, Roti pe bhuni Boti, Hyderabadi Haleem, White Biryani and Phirni.

It may be noted that 'the Khau Gali' concept is deep rooted in the culinary culture of Mumbai. These are food streets that are usually located near railway stations, college and office areas. A khau galli is usually a network of few narrow lanes that are lined with food carts on both sides. There are also hole-in-the-wall eateries. Thousands of people make a beeline for the food stalls and these streets remain busy from noon till midnight. Apart from the Mohammad Ali Road Khau Galli the most prominent Khau Gallis of Mumbai are the Carter Road Kahu Galli, SNDT Khau Galli, Ghatkopar Khau Galli, Kharghar Khau Galli, Tardeo Khau Galli, Zaveri Bazaar Khao Galli, Princess Street Khau Galli, Mahim Khau Galli and Chembur Khau Galli.

Paranthe Wali Gali, Delhi

This narrow street located in the Chandni Chowk area of Old Delhi is an absolute stunner. You have to be here in person to feel the vibe and have a great experience. This narrow lane has a series of shops selling Paranthe or Indian fired flatbreads. The lane was earlier known for its jewellery shops established as early as 1650 AD during the Mughal era, but starting from 1870s paranthe shops started opening up. Today although a few jewellery shops still remain, it has been mostly taken over by food shops. The food to be tasted here are mainly different varieties of greasy paranthas like gobi parantha, parat parantha, plain paranthas and ones with delicious fillings like that of kheer, rabdi, badam, kaju etc. The paranthas are served with various types of chutneys, pickles and vegetarian curries. The food served in this area are 'Jaini' meaning that these are not only vegetarian, but also do not include the two ingredients of onion and garlic.

Apart from the paranthe wali gali, there are other streets of Old Delhi that are popular for succulent kababs, crispy and tangy panipuris, lip-smacking chhole bhature, syrupy jalebis, mouth watering chaat, rajma chawal and even varieties of momos.





During Ramadan, Nahari and Haleem are famous. The Indian capital city has something for every food lover. And besides the legendary Chandni Chowk area, another place to satisfy your taste buds is the Connaught Place which is full of restaurants of all sizes and budgets. One also finds great street food options at Rajinder Nagar area in New Delhi.

Charminar Area, Hyderabad

Hyderabad is a delightful place to be in, with a plethora of historical sights happily sharing the space with modern parks and malls, friendly people and absorbable culture. It is also a gourmet's paradise with innumerable options to try, starting from succulent kebabs and the legendary Hyderabadi Dum Biryani to hundreds of varieties from the South Indian cuisine. In fact, they say that at Hyderabad if you try a new food for every meal and snack time, you can stay up to months without repeating an item. In the cuisine of the city the Mughlai, Turkish, Andhra and South Indian cuisines have blended perfectly into each other resulting in numerous lip-smacking food options.

There are many Food Streets in Hyderabad that have their own speciality like the Necklace Road for an evening food outing, Pragati Gally for breakfast items, Madina for Mughlai foods, Sindhi Colony for a variety of chaats, Ameerpet for South Indian delicacies and Kachiguda for North Indian and continental food. But what takes the crown even in this regard is probably the Charminar Area. This landmark is the very heartbeat of the city and to think that it is just an architectural beauty will be wrong. The area is full of life with the Churi Bazaar, the Mecca Mosque and more tourist options lying nearby. It is also a great place to try scrumptious food of all kinds. The must try items here are Osmania Biscuits and Irani Chai at Nimrah Cafe, Butter Dosa at Govind's Bandi, Butter Idlis at Ravi Bandi, Kesar Pista Lassi and Ghee Puri Sabzi at Agra Mithai Ghar, lassi at Matwale Doodh Ghar, Kachoris and Jalebis at Rajasthani Jalebi and Namkeen, Sheermal and Nihari at Shadab, Biryani and Haleem at Pista House, Chicken 65 in Akbar Food Corner, Sheek Kebabs, Boti Kebabs and Warqi Paranthas at Kebab-e-Jahangir and so on.

Police Bazaar, Shillong

A little away from the mainstream, this Food Street in Shillong, the



capital city of Meghalaya needs a place in this article. It is one of the most important commercial areas of the city and has a great variety of street food side by side with established restaurants. It is mainly a place for the non-vegetarians. But for vegetarians there are fresh produces like maize and fruits like strawberries, raspberries, mulberries and Sohshang, a tart berry are available to try. Of the delicacies on offer, non-vegetarians may try barbecued meats like beef and pork, meat cutlets and curries, momos, pork roast, spare ribs or be bold enough to go for the delicious Jadoh, a traditional dish cooked with chicken blood and pork pieces, served with liver and pickled bamboo. There are also bakeries that sell cakes and pastries.

Other famous Food Streets

India is a great place for foodies. There are so many different varieties of foods to try that a single life is not enough to have them all. Apart from the famous food streets mentioned above there are others: Ghantagar Bazaar in Jodhpur, Ratri Bazaar in Baroda, Kachori Gali and Dashashwamedh Ghat in Varanasi, Sea Beach side in Puri for seafood and so on. The metropolitan cities mentioned above like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata and Hyderabad also have other great locations for street food apart from the ones mentioned above.





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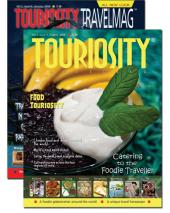






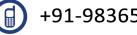
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TRAVEL JOURNAL

This is the journal of the trip I did to Ho Chi Minh City, former Saigon (Vietnam). It doesn't intend to be a complete guide of the place, but an extract of my personal impres-

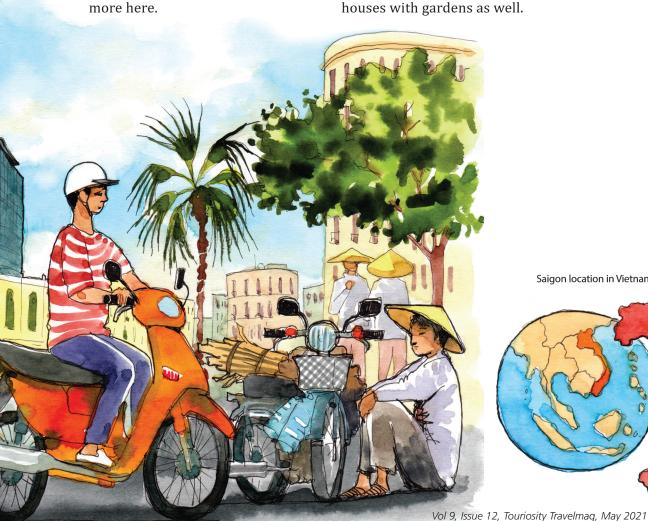


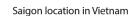
AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION

The former capital of the French Indochina, Saigon, is now Ho Chi Minh City, a vibrant and chaotic mega-city, and symbol of the new Vietnam. Icon of the colonial era, the city was influenced by the French during their colonisation of Vietnam, and there are still a lot of classical Western-style buildings and French villas in the city. But this colonial Saigon coexists with a modern HCMC, with numerous skyscrapers that have changed the silhouette of this Southeast Asian enclave.

The first thing that struck me when I arrived in the city was the motorcycles. Many other Asian cities share the circulatory chaos, but in none have I seen so many motorcycles plying everywhere. It is a sensation that was repeated in other cities during the rest of my trip through Vietnam, but Saigon being my first city in the country, perhaps it impacted me more here.

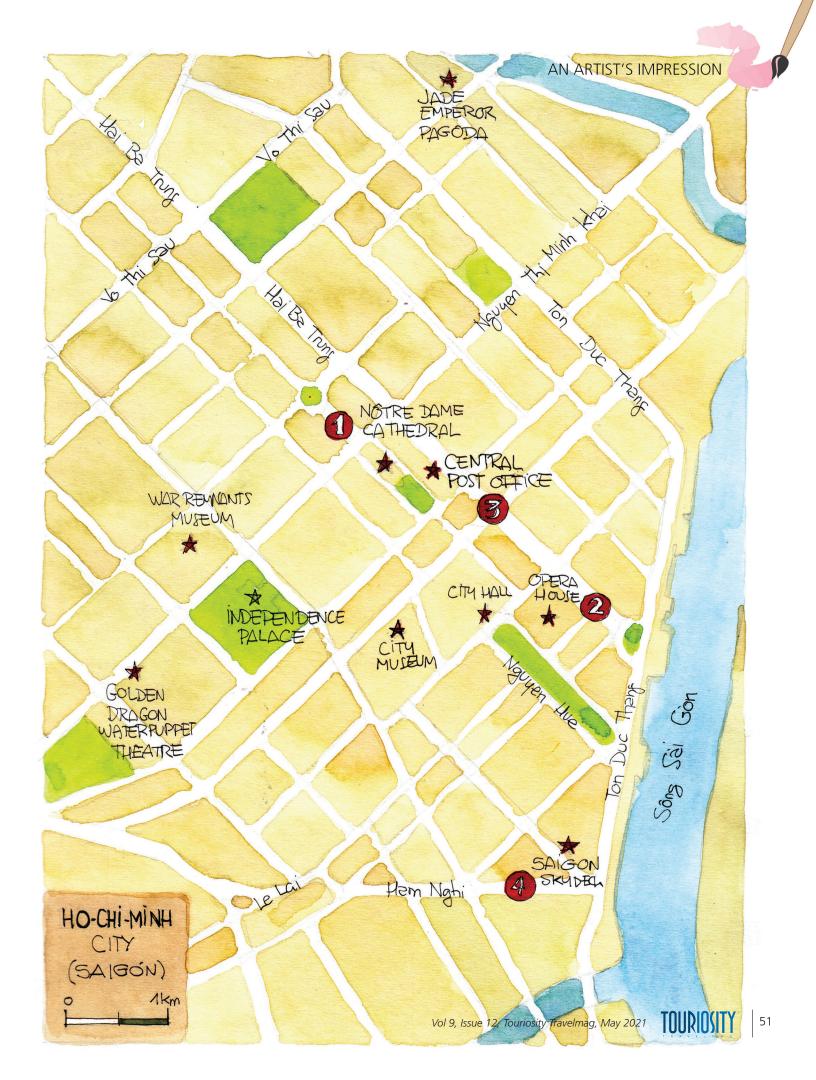
The first thing I did after arriving was to go to the old center, to discover the colonial Saigon that I had imagined and seen so many times in films that recreated the time. In the center there are several official buildings that remind us of the colonial style of that time: the Town Hall (today the headquarters of the Popular Committee), the Post Office, the Opera or the Notre Dame Cathedral, all within walking distance of each other. In the middle of so many official buildings there are streets that preserve those colonial Local bike at the street



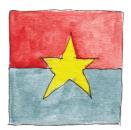








AN ARTIST'S IMPRESSION



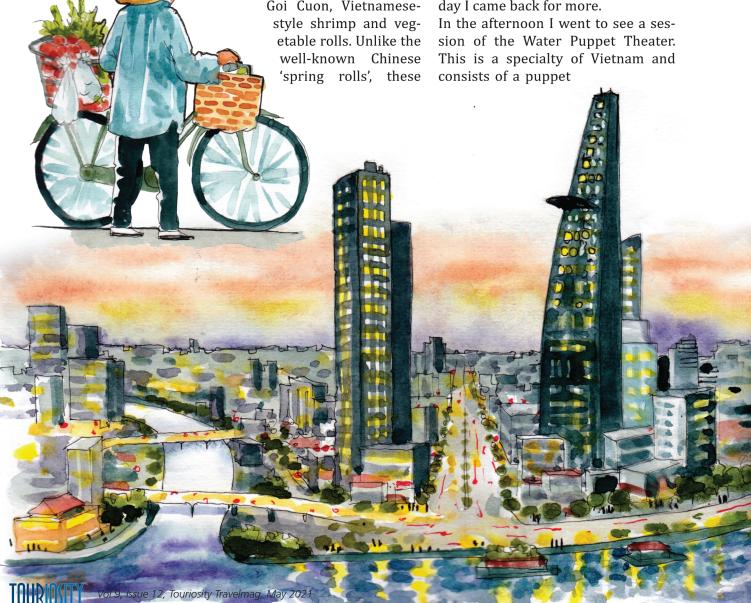
Flag of VietCong Army

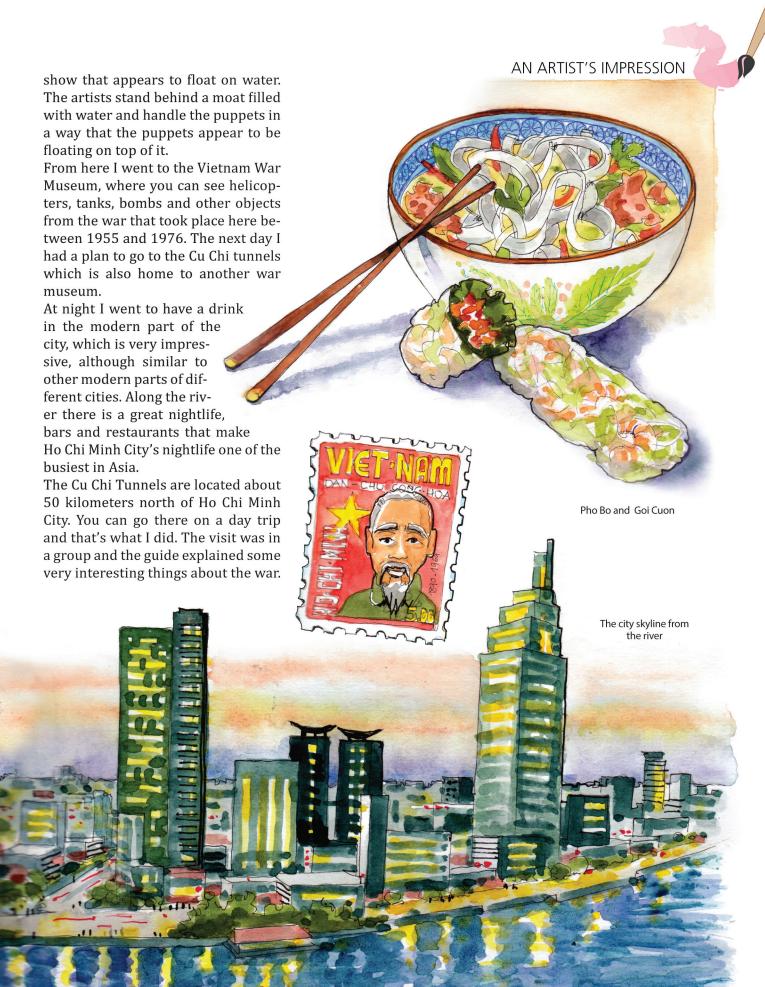
Next I went to Ben Thanh Market, a popular market where you can experience the local atmosphere. Here you can still see peasant women who come from the outskirts of the city with their bicycle and their triangular hat to sell the vegetables and products of the many farms of the Mekong Delta. I have always liked visiting the local markets in the places I visit. Apart from the local atmosphere, I find them very attractive to draw, being always full of color and interesting items to draw in my notebook.

In one of the small popular restaurants around the market I went to taste some dishes of the

> famous Vietnamese cuisine. I started with some Goi Cuon, Vietnamesestyle shrimp and vegetable rolls. Unlike the well-known Chinese

are not fried. They are made with semitransparent rice paper, and are served cold. They have a jelly-like appearance on the outside, but the ones I tried were delicious. Normally in these restaurants there are chopsticks on the table, but you can ask for western cutlery if you are new to chopsticks. As a second course I had a Pho Bo, which is a typical Vietnamese soup with rice noodles, beef, vegetables and various spices. It's a hearty dish, and mine was huge, but I finished it because it was really delicious. For dessert I had some sweets from a little shop that I found next to the market. I asked the clerk to explain as to what these were and, although I couldn't understand what he said, they were so good that the next day I came back for more.





Vol 9, Issue 12, Touriosity Travelmag, May 2021

ELCOME TO THE CU CHI TUNNELS

CU CHI SAIGON Diagram of the

Throughout this area, an immense network of tunnels was dug and the same served as a refuge for the Viet Cong troops from the attacks of the North American army. Once camouflaged in the jungle, the entrances to these tunnels were practically invisible, and the North Americans had to use methods like sniffer dogs to locate them. To avoid this, the Viet Cong infused the entrances and vents with strong odours to mislead the dogs.

The visit began with a talk in which they explained what the Vietnam War was and how the tunnels were used; they showed us old bombs that are now stored there. There

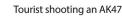
> are also some American helicopters shot down and cap-

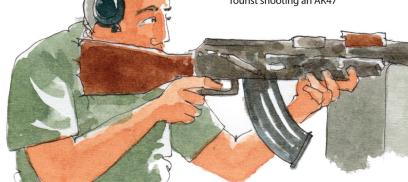
tured. There are photos of the time and explanatory panels. The first 48 kilometers of these tunnels were built in 1945 during the French invasion. And in the war of 1955-76 they were extended 200

kilometers further. There are similar tunnel networks in other parts of the country, but the Cu Chi Tunnels are the only ones open to tourism.

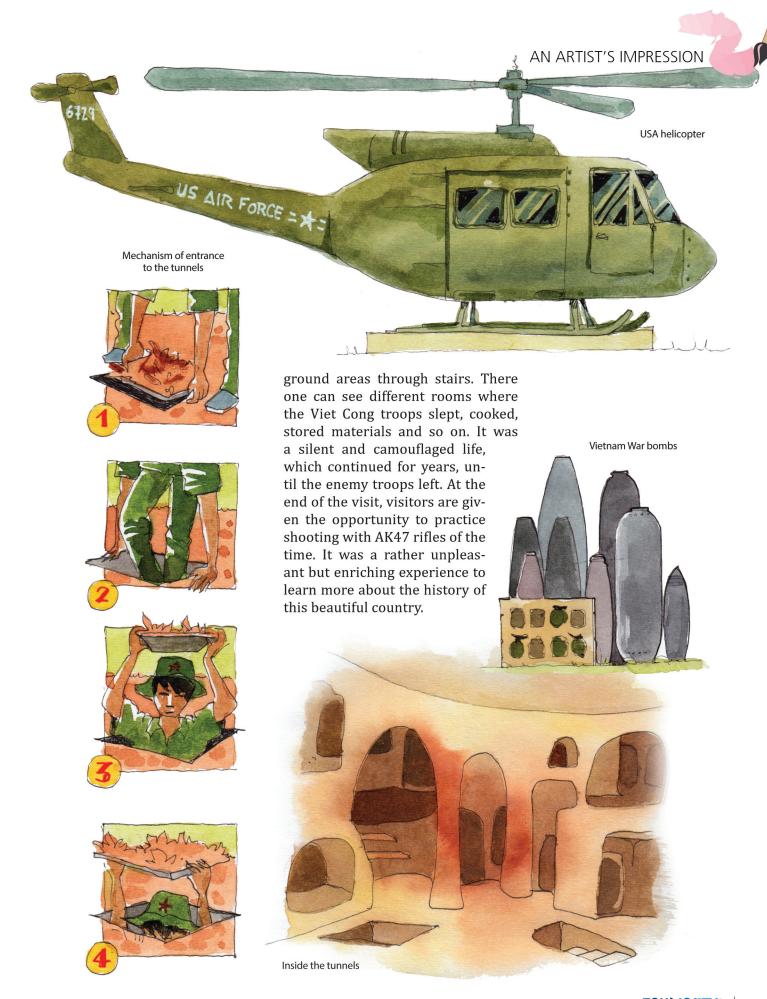
> After the explanation the guide took us to the forest to see the tunnel entrances. He showed us

how the Viet Cong soldiers used to enter the tunnels and then close the gates without leaving any trace of their existence. There are also traps that they made in pits with bamboo stakes. One can enter the under-





tunnels





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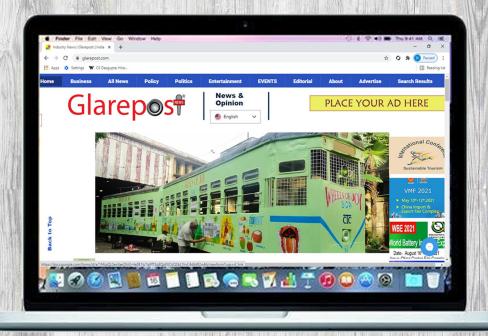
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Touriosity Travelmag, Vol 9, Issue 12, May 2021, RNI No. WBENG/2012/124080, Published from #E, B/6, Bapujinagar, Kolkata - 700092; Editor: Rupanjana De, #E, B/6, Bapujinagar, Kolkata - 700092, India.