



Indian cuisine

Indian cuisine consists of a wide variety of regional and traditional cuisines native to the Indian subcontinent. Given the range of diversity in soil type, climate, culture, ethnic groups, and occupations, these cuisines vary substantially from each other and use locally available spices, herbs, vegetables and fruits. Indian food is also heavily influenced by religion, in particular Hindu, cultural choices and traditions. The cuisine is also influenced by centuries of Islamic rule, particularly the Mughal rule.

Indian Diet

Diet in India mainly consisted of legumes, vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy products, and honey. Staple foods eaten today include a variety of lentils (*dal*), whole-wheat flour (*atta*), rice, and pearl millet (*bajra*). Consumption of beef is taboo, due to cows being considered sacred in Hinduism. One popular spice mix is *garam masala*, a powder that typically includes seven dried spices in a particular ratio, including black cardamom, cinnamon (*dalchini*), clove (*laung*), cumin (jeera), black peppercorns, coriander seeds and anise star. Each culinary region has a distinctive *garam masala* blend—individual chef may also have their own.

Mughlai influence

Delhi was once the capital of the Mughal empire, and it became the birthplace of Mughlai cuisine. Delhi is known for its street food. The Paranthewali Gali in Chandani Chowk is just one of the culinary landmarks for stuffed flatbread (*paranths*). Delhi has people from different parts of India, thus the city has different types of food traditions; its cuisine is influenced by the various cultures. Punjabi cuisine is common, due to the dominance of Punjabi communities. Delhi cuisine is actually an amalgam of different Indian cuisines modified in unique ways. This is apparent in the different types of street food available. *Kababs*, *kachauri*, *chaat*, Indian sweets, Indian ice cream, and even western food items like sandwiches and patties, are prepared in a style unique to Delhi and are quite popular.

A fusion cuisine

Historical events such as foreign invasions, trade relations, and colonialism have played a role in introducing certain foods to this country. For instance, potato, a staple of the diet in some regions of India, was brought to India by the Portuguese, who also introduced chillies and breadfruit. Indian cuisine has shaped the history of international relations; the spice trade between India and Europe. Spices were bought from India and traded around Europe and Asia. Indian cuisine has influenced other cuisines across the world, especially those from Europe, the Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, South East Africa, the British Isles, Fiji, and the Caribbean Isles.

Typical Indian dishes

The typical Gujarati *thali* consists of *roti*, *daal* or *kadhi*, rice, *sabzi/shaak*, *papad* and *chaas* (buttermilk). The *sabzi* is a dish of different combinations of vegetables and spices which may be stir fried, spicy or sweet. Gujarati cuisine can vary widely in flavour and heat based on personal and regional tastes. Many Gujarati dishes are simultaneously sweet, salty, and spicy. In mango season, *keri no ras* (fresh mango pulp) is often an integral part of the meal. Spices also are seasonally. For example, *garam masala* is used much less in summer.

Punjab

Tandoori chicken is a popular grilled dish. The cuisine of Punjab is known for its diverse range of dishes. The cuisine is closely related to the cuisine of the neighbouring Punjab province of Pakistan. The state, being an agriculture center, is abundant with whole grains, vegetables, and fruits. Home-cooked and restaurant Punjabi cuisine can vary significantly. Restaurant-style Punjabi cooking puts emphasis on creamy textured foods by using *ghee*, butter and cream while, home-cooked meals center around whole wheat, rice, and other ingredients flavored with various kinds of masalas. Common dishes cooked at home are roti with daal and dahi (yogurt) with a side chutney and salad that includes raw onion, tomato, cucumber, etc. The meals are also abundant of local and seasonal vegetables usually sautéed with spices such as cumin, dried coriander, red chili powder, turmeric, black cloves, etc. tandoori food is a Punjabi specialty. Common meat dishes in this region are Bhakra curry (Goat) and fish dishes. Punjab consists of a high number of people following the Sikh religion who traditionally follow a vegetarian diet (which includes plant derived foods, milk, and milk by-products). Punjabi food is well liked in the world for its flavors, spices, and, versatile use of produce; and hence it is one of the most popular cuisine's from the sub continent.



Traditional drinks

Lassi is a traditional dahi (yogurt)-based drink in India. It is made by blending yogurt with water or milk and spices. Salted *lassi* is more common in villages of Punjab and in Porbandar, Gujarat. Traditional *lassi* is sometimes flavoured with ground roasted cumin. *Lassi* can also be flavoured with ingredients such as sugar, rose water, mango, lemon, strawberry, and saffron. Other popular alcoholic drinks in India include *fenny*, a Goan liquor made from either coconut or the juice of the cashew apple. The state of Goa has registered for a geographical indicator to allow its *fenny* distilleries to claim exclusive rights to production of liquor under the name "*fenny*."

Eating habits

Paan is often eaten after a meal.

Indians consider a healthy breakfast important. They generally prefer to drink tea or coffee with breakfast, though food preferences vary regionally. Traditional lunch in India usually consists of a main dish of rice in the south and the east, and whole wheat rotis in the north. It typically includes two or three kinds of vegetables, and sometimes items such as *kulcha*, *naan*, or parathas. *Paan* (stuffed, spiced and folded betel leaves, just like in the picture) which aids digestion is often eaten after lunch and dinner in many parts of India. Apart from that, many households, especially those in north and central India, prefer having sweets after the dinner (similar like the western concept of dessert after meals). Indian families often gather for "evening snack time", similar to tea time to talk and have tea and snacks.



Dietary restrictions

In India people often follow dietary restrictions based on their religion or faith:

- hindu communities consider beef taboo since it is believed that Hindu scriptures condemn cow slaughter. Cow slaughter has been banned in many states of India.
- Vaishnavism followers generally do not eat garlic and onions because they are advised against it in the bahavag gita.
- Jains follow a strict form of vegetarianism, known as jans vegetarianism, which in addition to being completely vegetarian, also excludes potatoes and other root vegetables because when the root is pulled up, organisms that live around the root also die.
- Muslims do not eat pork or pork products.

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Hailed as one of the top chefs in India and even the world, Manish Mehrotra has helped put modern Indian food on the gastronomic map, with Indian Accent at the heart. While he is touted as a champion for this cuisine, he says it's food, flavour and taste that are the true heroes.

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Curious dishes

Bhang Pakore: Cannabis leaves are used in making this is a popular dish. It is relished particularly at the onset of spring-around Shivratri and Holi

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPVlfWc7Rpw>



Red Ant Chutney: Known as Chaprah in Chhatisgarh, this delicious, tangy chutney is a much sought after dish by the local tribals.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZ7L_DKNDBE

