

Incredible India

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE



Incredible for chefs...by chefs **CHEF**

ISSUE 22 | OCTOBER 2025 | PAGES 72



FOOD EXPLORER — CHEFS OF TOMORROW —



CHEF ABHIJEET THAKRE
Executive Chef, Vivanta New Delhi Dwarka

INTERVIEW



CHEF VAIBHAV SONI
Founder of Snowy Foods Real

HAKS
Hospitality & Kitchen Solutions

INTRODUCING

Blower Type Asian WOK Ranges



**In addition to all other
Commercial Kitchen Equipment Solutions!**

HEAD OFFICE & EXPERIENCE CENTER

B-56, First Floor, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-II, New Delhi-110028

info@haks.co.in

www.haks.co.in

+91 95600 85328



VEGETARIAN OYSTER-FLAVOURED SAUCE

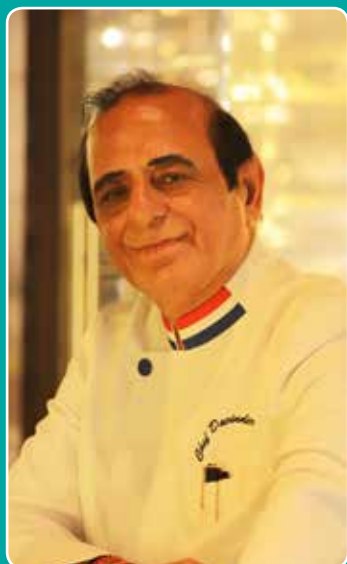
- Made with premium shiitake mushrooms
- 100% vegan and plant-based

**Available in
510G & 2.5KG**

For any queries, E-mail:

- South & West
debojyoti.deb@my.lkk.com
- North & East
prabhatkumar.rajana@my.lkk.com





DAVINDER KUMAR

President - ICF &
Vice President - Food
Production,
Le Meridien New Delhi

Dear Friends,

It is with immense pride that I welcome you to this special edition of Incredible Chef, commemorating the Annual Chefs Awards and Summit—an occasion that celebrates excellence, innovation, and the spirit of culinary leadership.

Over the years, the Indian Culinary Forum has grown into a dynamic force within the hospitality industry, forging meaningful partnerships with national and international organisations, and creating platforms that empower chefs across all stages of their careers. Our commitment to nurturing talent is reflected in the competitions, workshops, and masterclasses we support—each designed to challenge, inspire, and elevate the standards of Indian gastronomy.

One of our greatest strengths lies in guiding the next generation of chefs. Through mentorship, skill development, and exposure to global best practices, we continue to shape a fraternity that is not only technically proficient but also socially and environmentally conscious. Young chefs today are not just cooks—they are explorers, educators, and changemakers.

This edition of Incredible Chef is dedicated to the theme “Food Explorer – Chefs of Tomorrow”, spotlighting the evolving role of chefs in a world driven by sustainability, technology, and cultural storytelling. It captures how culinary professionals are embracing innovation while staying rooted in tradition—redefining what it means to lead in the kitchen and beyond.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our members, partners, and supporters for their unwavering belief in our mission. Together, we are building a legacy of excellence, and together, we will continue to inspire the future of Indian cuisine.

Happy cooking! ■

Chef Davinder Kumar
President, Indian Culinary Forum

THE ALL NEW KITKAT® SPREAD

Your Dessert's New Bestie!

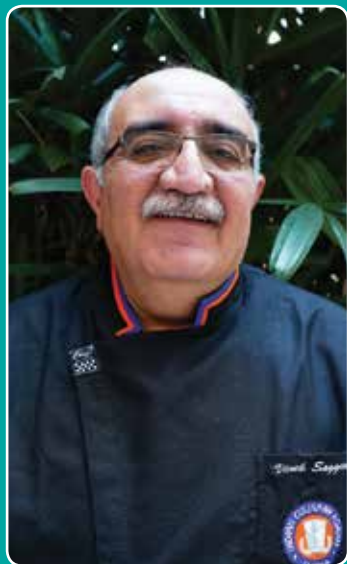


**BOOK
YOUR DEMO TODAY!**

CALL ON 1800-103-1947
OR VISIT www.nestleprofessional.in
OR SCAN HERE



Suggested Preparation. Creative Visualization.
KITKAT® is a registered trademark of Société des Produits Nestlé S.A.



VIVEK SAGGAR

Editorial Director
Incredible Chef
General Secretary, ICF
indianculinaryforum@gmail.com

Dear Chefs,

As someone who has worked closely with culinary professionals, I can say with conviction that the skills that will matter most in tomorrow's kitchens go far beyond technical prowess. Yes, mastering techniques will always be vital, but the kitchens of 2030 will demand something more: empathetic leadership, a commitment to wellness, and a fearless embrace of creativity.

Leadership in the kitchen is changing. The old model of authority rooted in hierarchy is giving way to a culture of respect, inclusivity, and collaboration. Tomorrow's chefs must lead by example - not through fear, but through inspiration. They must nurture teams that feel valued, supported, and empowered to grow.

Equally important is wellness. The culinary world has often glorified long hours and relentless pressure, but the cost has been immense - burnout, health issues, and sometimes broken spirits. The chefs of the future must place wellness at the center: balancing schedules, caring for mental health, and cultivating kitchens that are sustainable not just for the planet, but for the people inside them.

And then there is creativity - the lifeblood of this craft. Chefs will need to be explorers, storytellers, and innovators. They will play with new ingredients, adopt sustainable practices, and use technology without losing the soul of their food. Creativity will not just drive menus, it will shape experiences, connect cultures, and solve problems.

The skills of tomorrow are, in essence, timeless values sharpened for a new era: to lead with empathy, to live with balance, and to cook with imagination. If we can instil these qualities in today's young chefs, we will have kitchens that not only survive change but thrive in it.

I am happy to present to you this special edition of Incredible Chef magazine that focuses on the Chefs of Tomorrow. Industry experts have shared their viewpoint through the articles, which would definitely be a guiding line for future chefs.

I would like to take this opportunity to update you all on the huge participation from chefs that we have received for the much-awaited Annual Chef Awards. I would fail in my duties if I did not thank our supporters and partners, and the managing committee of ICF, for their relentless efforts in making the Summit and Awards a grand success.

Together we will grow to newer heights. ■

Chef Vivek Sagar



INDIAN CULINARY FORUM COMMITTEE

 Mr. R. Kumar Continental Equipment	 Chef Davinder Kumar President	 Chef Bharat Alagh Vice President	 Chef Sireesh Saxena Associate VP	 Chef Vivek Sagar General Secy
 Chef Vinod Bhatti Treasurer	 Chef Gautam Chaudhry Joint Secy	 Chef Arvind Rai Joint Secy	 Dr. Chef Prem Ram Joint Secy	 Chef Mahendra KK Joint Secy
 Chef Sanjay Agrawal Honorary Joint Secy	 Chef Rajiv Chopra Executive Member	 Chef Sanjeeb Ghatak Executive Member	 Chef Rajiv Malhotra Executive Member	 Chef Shailendra Singh Executive Member
 Chef Bharat Khemani Executive Member	 Chef Anirudh Sethi Executive Member	 Chef Lalit Mohan Executive Member		

By Chefs, For Chefs

www.indianculinaryforum.org

    /IndianCulinaryForum

**SUMIT JHA**

Managing Editor
Incredible Chef

sumitjha.pune@gmail.com

Celebrating the Skills of Tomorrow

This October, as the world comes together to celebrate International Chefs Day, we proudly embrace the theme of "Food Explorer" - a tribute to the spirit of curiosity, creativity, and resilience that defines the culinary world of today and tomorrow.

The role of a chef has never been more dynamic or far-reaching. From being guardians of timeless traditions to becoming champions of sustainability and innovation, chefs today are shaping not only the way we eat, but also the way we connect - with our culture, our communities, and our planet. They are explorers in every sense - navigating uncharted territories of flavour, technology, and inclusivity, while staying deeply rooted in heritage and purpose.

This special issue of Incredible Chef, coinciding with the 22nd Annual Chef Awards and the 13th Knowledge Summit, is a celebration of the Chefs of Tomorrow - the bold visionaries who are reinventing the kitchen, one idea and one plate at a time. Within these pages, we spotlight the young voices shaping the future, the mentors inspiring excellence, and the innovators driving a more sustainable and diverse culinary landscape.

Our feature stories and expert columns explore themes that are redefining India's culinary identity - Skills of Tomorrow That Will Define India's Culinary Leadership, Chefs as Community Builders, Mentoring the Next Generation, Cultivating Culinary Entrepreneurs, and Exploring the Culinary Map of India. We are also proud to present exclusive interviews with two exceptional chefs - Chef Abhijeet Thakre of the Taj Group and the young, dynamic Chef Vaibhav Soni - both trailblazers who are transforming India's gastronomic scene through innovation, creativity, and passion.

As you turn these pages, we invite you to pause and reflect on your own journey as a Food Explorer. What new flavours will you discover? What traditions will you honour and preserve? And how will you, in your own way, contribute to shaping the culinary stories of tomorrow?

Here's to the explorers, the dreamers, and the doers who are redefining the future of cuisine. ■

Sumit Jha

**YOUR TRUSTED RICE
PARTNER FOR EVERY KITCHEN**

Roop Mahal Rice



At **Roop Mahal Rice**, we understand that consistency, quality, and trust are the foundations of your business. For over a decade, we have been the preferred choice of leading:

- ★ **Hotels & Resorts**
- ★ **Restaurants & Cafes**
- ★ **Caterers & Institutions**
- ★ **Government
Departments & Large Chains**

WHY CHOOSE ROOP MAHAL RICE?

- ✓ **Premium Quality Grains** – Each batch carefully processed
- ✓ **Wide Range** – Basmati, Sella, and specialty rice varieties
- ✓ **Reliable Supply** – On-time delivery across India
- ✓ **Dedicated Customer Support** – Tailored service for B2B clients
- ✓ **Competitive Pricing** – Value that matches your business needs

**Roop Mahal Rice –
Serving Excellence,
Grain by Grain.**

For Bulk Orders & Business Partnerships: info@roopmahalrice.com ☎ 9968933188

OCTOBER 2025

CONTENTS

ICF NEWS

India-Nepal Forge
Landmark Culinary
Education Alliance

14



INFOCUS

Flashback Culinary Art
India 2025

22



Food Explorers Shaping
the Future

24

EXPERT VIEW



26

Skills of Tomorrow
Chef K Thiru



34

Exploring the Culinary Map
of India
Chef Avinash Martins



44

Reimagining Hospitality Education
in India
A.K. Singh



48

Future-Ready Kitchens
Jayant Chauhan



62

Flavors of Fellowship
Rahul Ahuja



66

From Job Seeker to Job Creator
Chelleswara Rao

INTERVIEW



30

Precision Meets Passion
Chef Abhijeet Thakre



52

Crafting the Future of Flavour
Chef Vaibhav Soni

SPOTLIGHT



40

The Chef as Community Builder

Incredible
for chefs... by chefs **CHEF**

MANAGING EDITOR
Sumit Jha
sumitjha.pune@gmail.com

**EDITORIAL
DIRECTOR - ICF**
Chef Vivek Saggarr

DESIGNER
Narendra Pardhi

**PUBLISHED FOR INDIAN
CULINARY FORUM BY**

Draft
Editorial Services

B-1, New Apsara
Apartments, 259,
Bund Garden Road,
Pune 411001



Indian Culinary Forum
305, Plot number 2, Vardhman
Crown Mall, Sector 19, Dwarka,
New Delhi - 110075
Mob: +91-8800339629
email: osicfnorth@gmail.com
website: www.icfnorth.org

Printed, Published and edited by Draft on behalf of Indian Culinary Forum.

The Publisher makes every effort to ensure that the content of the magazine are accurate; however we accept no responsibility for any errors or omissions. The views and opinions expressed by the guest writers are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of the publication. Unsolicited material is submitted entirely at the owner's risk, and the publisher accepts no responsibility for its loss or damage.

Images used are for representation purpose only. All material published in Incredible Chef is protected by copyright, and unauthorised reproduction in part or full is forbidden.

ICF 13TH KNOWLEDGE SUMMIT & 22ND ANNUAL CHEF AWARDS SUPPORTING PARTNERS

PRESENTATION PARTNER



ASSOCIATE PARTNER



POWERED BY



ASSOCIATE PARTNER



EVENT PARTNERS



MEDIA PARTNERS



SUPPORTING PARTNERS



ICF and CTH Partner to Advance Culinary Education and Hospitality Development in India

Indian Culinary Forum signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Confederation of Tourism & Hospitality (CTH) to strengthen culinary education and support the growth of hospitality professional development nationwide.



A strategic partnership was signed between ICF and CTH recently to strengthen culinary education and support the growth of hospitality professional development nationwide. By combining CTH's internationally recognised qualifications with ICF's extensive industry network and local expertise, the collaboration will provide a strong platform for advancing skills and professional standards in India.

At the MoU signing, Jayant Chauhan, CTH Country Manager for India, said: "The collaboration between ICF India and CTH UK sets a new benchmark for culinary and hospitality education in India - bringing global credibility, industry relevance and world-class opportunities to aspiring professionals."

Chef Bharat Alagh, Vice President, Indian Culinary Forum and Vice President Culinary and Operations, Orange Tiger Hospitality Pvt Ltd added: "We are delighted to sign this MOU between CTH and ICF, a partnership that will raise the benchmarks of training in the hospitality industry and create greater

opportunities for the next generation of professionals."

Chef Vivek Saggar, General Secretary, Indian Culinary Forum and Brand Ambassador for CTH in India, said: "Our collaboration with CTH, a distinguished British awarding organisation, marks a transformative step for India's hospitality and tourism education. This association will empower institutes, corporates and colleges to access globally benchmarked qualifications, ensuring British recognition and credibility. More importantly, it opens seamless pathways to overseas higher education and international career opportunities, while equipping learners with specialised skills tailored to the dynamic needs of the hospitality and tourism industry worldwide."

Together, CTH and ICF are laying the foundation for culinary education in India that is globally aligned, industry-relevant and designed to inspire the next generation of hospitality leaders. ■



The collaboration will support the introduction of CTH qualifications and endorsed programmes at training centres across India, while also encouraging joint seminars, networking initiatives and professional recognition. Importantly, the MoU also paves the way for greater student engagement, co-branded events and industry internship and placement opportunities for CTH-qualified learners.



Incredible India



FOOD PARTNERS

GOURMET DINNER
THE ASHOK, NEW DELHI

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2025



INDIA-NEPAL FORGE LANDMARK CULINARY EDUCATION ALLIANCE

MoU signing between Indian Culinary Forum and International Institute of Gastronomy, Nepal

In a landmark move set to redefine culinary education across South Asia, the **Indian Culinary Forum (ICF)**, New Delhi, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Institute of Gastronomy (IIG), Nepal. This first-of-its-kind collaboration marks a strategic partnership between India’s premier chef association and Nepal’s leading international-standard culinary institute.

The MoU aims to strengthen academic and professional ties between the two organisations, creating robust pathways for students and faculty to gain international exposure, share knowledge, and develop skills aligned with global hospitality benchmarks.

The partnership is positioned to foster innovation, enhance learning outcomes, and contribute meaningfully to the growth of the culinary and hospitality sectors in both countries.

Exclusive Partnership with Purpose

ICF has chosen IIG as its exclusive partner in Nepal, recognising the institute's commitment to bridging the gap between classroom learning and industry expectations. IIG delivers CTH-accredited diploma programs and a curriculum tailored to global hospitality standards.

Through hands-on exposure, internships, and collaborations with chefs, suppliers, and hospitality networks, IIG ensures its graduates are not only skilled but professionally ready.

"This MoU is more than a formal agreement—it's a bridge between two rich culinary cultures," said Chef Vivek Saggar, General



Secretary of ICF. "Together, we're empowering young chefs through shared knowledge and training, while preserving and promoting the diverse gastronomic traditions of India and Nepal on a global platform."

Echoing the sentiment, Sharon Adhikari, CEO of IIG Nepal, added, "At IIG, we don't just observe industry gaps—we act to close them. Our collaboration with ICF reflects our philosophy of driving opportunity and readiness for students through meaningful

international engagement."

Key Highlights of the MoU

Access for IIG students to ICF's competitions, festivals, and professional events in India Guest lectures, masterclasses, and faculty exchanges with top Indian culinary talent Stronger industry linkages with Indian hospitality suppliers and employers Joint culinary research, cultural food exchange, and regional integration initiatives

Regional Impact & Future Outlook

The partnership is expected to elevate Nepal's standing as an emerging hub for culinary education and skilled professionals. IIG students will gain industrial-level exposure in India while showcasing Nepal's talent on international platforms. The collaboration also aims to nurture employability and global career pathways for young chefs by ensuring their training is both industry-relevant and internationally accredited.

Together, ICF and IIG are set to empower the next generation of culinary professionals with practical training, global-standard curriculum, and real-world opportunities—preparing them to excel anywhere in the world. ■



PURE WATER. PROTECTED EQUIPMENT.

Everpure safeguards your coffee machines, combi ovens, ice machines and dishwashers from scale, corrosion, and costly downtime. Reliable water quality ensures safer, longer-lasting equipment.



Trusted by leading hospitality groups across India.
Premium Hotels | Restaurant Chains | Coffee Brands



LEARN MORE AT
www.aquainwent.com



CRYSTAL CLEAR ICE. SAFER KITCHENS.

Manitowoc delivers pure, hygienic ice that protects your food, beverages, and reputation. Energy-efficient, reliable, and built for professional kitchens.



EXPLORE AT
www.pentair.asia



HPMF and ICF Join Forces to Transform India’s Hospitality Sector



In a significant move to elevate industry standards, the Hospitality Purchasing Managers’ Forum (HPMF) and the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at AAHAR 2025.

The Hospitality Purchasing Managers’ Forum (HPMF) and the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) at AAHAR 2025, held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. This landmark collaboration aims to bridge the gap between procurement professionals and culinary experts, fostering innovation, skill development, and sustainable practices in the hospitality industry.

Building on HPMF’s recent alliance with the Forum of Indian Food Importers (FIFI), this new partnership underlines its commitment to driving excellence across the hospitality and culinary sectors. Key areas of focus include sustainable procurement strategies, skill enhancement programs, and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

Chef Davinder Kumar, President of the Indian Culinary Forum, hailed the agreement as a milestone, stating, “This collaboration with HPMF is a milestone in fostering synergy between culinary expertise and procurement efficiency. Together, we aim to set new benchmarks in industry standards and professional growth.”

Echoing this sentiment, Chef Vivek Saggar, General Secretary of ICF, emphasised the importance



of the partnership, adding, “Our partnership with HPMF will bridge the gap between culinary professionals and procurement specialists, ensuring a seamless exchange of best practices. This initiative will significantly contribute to the growth of India’s hospitality sector.”

“**This collaboration with HPMF is a milestone in fostering synergy between culinary expertise and procurement efficiency. Together, we aim to set new benchmarks in industry standards and professional growth.**”

Chef Davinder Kumar, President - ICF

“This partnership is a pivotal step in our journey to revolutionise the hospitality ecosystem in India,” said Dr Nitin Shankar Nagrale, Founder and General Secretary, HPMF. “It reflects our vision for a more collaborative, innovative, and sustainable industry.”

HPMF acknowledged the critical role played by Chef Davinder Kumar, Chef Vivek Saggar, and the ICF core team in making this collaboration possible.

This MOU is expected to pave the way for enhanced cooperation, bridging the gap between procurement professionals and culinary experts to create a more efficient, innovative, and sustainable hospitality ecosystem in India. ■

CONVOTHERM®

Even better visibility would be magic

Convotharm maxx pro floorstanding



Redefining quality in production kitchens:

- Combi oven operating status always in view with our unique device status floor lighting
- Bigger is better: 20.10 & 20.20, boiler or boilerless
- Extremely robust and long-living
- Reduced energy and water consumption
- Unique disappearing door
- Smoking, banqueting, grease management options

maxx pro. high definition.

SIRHA+
BOCUSE D'OR
MAIN EQUIPMENT SUPPLIER



Advancing Your Ambitions

FIFI and ICF Sign MoU to Foster Global Partnerships



Marking a significant milestone in India’s food and beverage sector, the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) and the Forum of Indian Food Importers (FIFI) have signed a groundbreaking, long-term Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This visionary partnership seeks to synchronize future endeavors, notably during the AAHAR extravaganza and other forthcoming opportunities, driving innovation, fostering global partnerships, and elevating India’s culinary landscape by uniting importers, chefs, and industry leaders.

This partnership, effective for three years, will create new opportunities in the sector, focusing on skill development and the introduction of world-class products to the Indian market. FIFI and ICF will work together to organize and promote culinary activities that highlight global ingredients and innovative techniques. This alliance is set to strengthen the F&B ecosystem, encouraging creativity, sustainability, and excellence, ultimately benefiting businesses, professionals, and food enthusiasts alike.

Speaking on the occasion, Chef Davinder Kumar, President of the Indian Culinary Forum, said, “This MoU with FIFI is a pivotal moment

for the Indian culinary community. It will not only bring global flavors to our kitchens but also provide our chefs with unparalleled opportunities to innovate and excel.”

“This historic MOU between FIFI and ICF marks a watershed moment for the industry, bridging the gap between premium gourmet foods and culinary excellence. By uniting esteemed chefs and exceptional ingredients, we unlock new avenues for gastronomic exploration, education, and indulgence, elevating the epicurean experience for all,” said Amit Lohani, Founding Director of FIFI.

“By joining hands with FIFI, we are set to revolutionise the way culinary activities are conducted in India. This partnership will

foster creativity, introduce global ingredients, and elevate the standards of our culinary offerings,” added Chef Vivek Saggar, General Secretary of the ICF.

As part of the agreement, FIFI will work closely with ICF to develop, curate, and execute culinary activities focusing on global ingredients. FIFI will also promote ICF’s flagship events, such as CAI and the Annual Chef Awards, among its members and the broader trade community. The partnership will encourage global stakeholders to participate in these culinary initiatives, while FIFI will provide necessary global ingredients, facilitate sponsorships, and enhance the appeal of these activities across the F&B community.

In return, ICF will offer opportunities for FIFI members to promote their products through various ICF activities and publications. The forum will also curate exclusive opportunities for FIFI members, foster interactions between the culinary and import communities, and provide culinary support to FIFI’s initiatives. This collaboration will pave the way for the next generation of F&B professionals, encouraging innovation and the inclusion of global perspectives.

The Indian Culinary Forum is a non-profit association of chefs, dedicated to advancing and recognizing culinary professionals in India. Registered under the Societies Registration Act 1960, ICF is committed to promoting excellence and innovation in the culinary arts. ■



As part of the agreement, FIFI will work closely with ICF to develop, curate, and execute culinary activities focusing on global ingredients. FIFI will also promote ICF's flagship events, such as CAI and the Annual Chef Awards, among its members and the broader trade community.



CONSISTENCY YOU'LL LOVE.
COST-EFFECTIVENESS
YOU'LL PROFIT FROM.



Miraya Ready-to-Use
CASHEW PASTE

- Cost-effective, boosts efficiency
- Rich, smooth texture for perfect gravies
- Best for creamy Indian curries
- Trusted by chefs worldwide

GET YOUR
ORDER NOW!

Ideal For:
Restaurants | Caterers | Bulk Kitchens | Hotels

+91 76830 74624 | 022 47500963 | enquiries@mirayaintrl.in | www.mirayaintrl.in



ICF Joins Hands with Tastepreneur 2025



Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) entered into an understanding as the Official Supporting Association Partner for Tastepreneur 2025, a national-level campaign initiated by the GSK Foundation, aimed at discovering, nurturing, and celebrating the entrepreneurial spirit of India's youth in the Food & Beverage sector. The initiative

is being managed by AGSKI360 Events. As part of the deliverables, members of ICF will actively participate as special invitees, jury members, or mentors for Tastepreneur 2025. "India is a young country, and now more than ever, its youth require the right platforms, mentorship, and

direction to bring innovation into traditional industries. Tastepreneur 2025 seeks to fulfill this objective by empowering aspiring culinary entrepreneurs, homegrown food startups, and hospitality innovators through expert guidance, exposure, and structured opportunities," stated a release. This initiative is in line with the Startup India Mission envisioned by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and aims to promote self-reliance, innovation, and cultural heritage through culinary enterprise. "We deeply value the Indian Culinary Forum's unwavering commitment towards nurturing India's culinary ecosystem. Through this association, we envision joining hands in a shared mission - to inspire, empower, and uplift the next generation of culinary entrepreneurs. Your involvement in this nation-building initiative would be a meaningful contribution to the larger cause of youth development and industry advancement," stated an official representing Tastepreneur.

Independence Day Celebrations at DIHM, New Delhi

In celebration of India's 79th Independence Day, ICF proudly hosted a vibrant and meaningful event at the Delhi Institute of Hotel Management (DIHM) that honored the spirit of freedom, culture, and culinary heritage. The event was a true reflection of unity in diversity, bringing together students, faculty, chefs, and guests to celebrate the nation through the universal language of food.



ICF & Chefs Unlimited Sign MoU for Brand Collaboration

Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) and Chefs Unlimited (a brand of Uniforms Unlimited) have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for being the official uniform partner for ICF. A snapshot.



DELIGHTFULLY FRESH

South Indian | North Indian | Chutneys | Spices | Herbs

More Than 200 Product for HORECA Industry

Producer of finest Indian Cuisine



www.sankalp-group.org | info@sankalponline.com Follow us f /sankalpfoodproducts 17th Floor, Sankalp Square 3-A,Taj Skyline, Sindhubhavan Road, Ahmedabad 380058

FLASHBACK

CULINARY ART INDIA 2025

Celebrating India's Finest Culinary Talent

The 17th edition of Culinary Art India 2025, hosted by the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) in association with ITPO and Hospitality First, was held alongside the 39th AAHAR International Fair. The prestigious event provided a dynamic platform for professional chefs to showcase their expertise and explore new dimensions of culinary artistry.

Wrapping up on a high note, the event further cemented its reputation as the nation's most prestigious showcase of culinary talent. It served as a testament to the evolving culinary landscape in India, celebrating the perfect blend of tradition and innovation. As the five-day extravaganza came to a close, it left an indelible mark on the industry, inspiring the next generation of chefs to strive for excellence in their culinary journeys.

The competition witnessed remarkable participation across 18 categories, with chefs displaying unparalleled creativity and craftsmanship. The Gold winners for each category showcased their exceptional culinary prowess.

Artistic Pastry Showpiece – Sanjeev Sagarwal and Praniti Jain
Three-Course Set Dinner Menu – Balmukund and Sanskriti Chhabra
Plated Appetizers – Abdul Peer Mohammed, Dibyendu Rana, Sanyam Kumar, Kishan Gupta, Harish Singh Danu and Lucky Pal

Artistic Vegetable & Fruit Carving – G Logetha, Arjun L.R. and Sana Begum

Live Cooking Mocktails – Saanchi Pareek, Himanshu Sharma, Vaaman Mehta, Virein Maluja, Dhruv Jha, Ishaan Kaushal, Mohd Ali, Tushar Joshi and Dhanush Devarasetti



Egg Benedict– Dahmeet Singh, Manomay Chandratre, Grav, Ravindra Singh Kanyal, Khushi Arora and Prem Kumar R

Live Sandwich – Aniket Kumar
Live Cooking student/ Apprentice – Nandini Gupta

Artistic Bakery Showpiece – Gaurav Singh Rawat and Sajid Petit Fours & Pralines – Amar Singh Bisht

Plated Desserts – Nikhil Dahiya, Saaisha Verma and Yug Kamlesh Prajapati

Dress the Cake – Yashita Wasson and Susheel Kumar

Authentic Indian Thali – Sandeep Singh Mahar

Reflecting on the remarkable success of the event, Chef Davinder Kumar, President of the Indian Culinary Forum, said, "Culinary Art India 2025 has once again demonstrated the immense talent within India's culinary industry. The level of innovation and skill showcased by the participants is truly commendable. This platform not only recognizes their efforts but



also nurtures the next generation of chefs who will take Indian cuisine to global heights."

Chef Vivek Saggar, General Secretary of the Indian Culinary Forum, added, "This year's competition highlighted the dynamic evolution of the culinary

industry. The passion, dedication, and artistry displayed by the chefs over the past five days reaffirm that India's culinary heritage is in excellent hands. Culinary Art India continues to inspire young chefs to push their creative boundaries."

Adding to the prestige of the competition, A distinguished jury panel, certified by the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS), evaluated the contestants, maintaining global standards of culinary excellence. Malaysian culinary legend Billy Lee Chan Hoong chaired the jury, ensuring that global standards of excellence were upheld throughout the event. Chef Sireesh Saxena and Chef Arvind Rai played instrumental roles as Organizing Secretaries, overseeing the competitions with meticulous attention to detail.

Chef Bharat Alagh, Vice President of the Indian Culinary Forum, emphasized the event's impact, stating, "Each edition of Culinary Art India sets new standards of excellence, and this year was no exception. The meticulous craftsmanship and the spirit of healthy competition showcased here prove that India's culinary industry is thriving. The winners have not just earned accolades but have also set an example for the future of Indian gastronomy."

Culinary Art India 2025 also featured exclusive Live Chef Masterclasses, where attendees had the opportunity to witness some of the industry's leading experts in action. The sessions provided invaluable insights into modern culinary trends, techniques, and innovations, with celebrated chefs such as Chef Sehaj, Chef Dhawal, Chef Pramod, Chef Vaibhav Bhargava, Chef Guntas Sethi, Chef Vaibhav Soni, Chef Gautam Chaudhry, Chef Balendra, Chef Domenico, Chef Divij Agrawal, Chef Pankaj, Chef Nishant Choubey, Chef Sanjeb Ghatak, Chef Boopesh Pichaimani, Chef Saby, Chef Anirudh Sethi, Chef Ashish Bhasin, Chef Vinod Kumar Rathore, and Chef Vinod Badoni sharing their expertise with an engaged audience. ■



FOOD EXPLORERS SHAPING THE FUTURE

How are the chefs today redefining food, culture, and community - exploring innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity.



In today's world, the role of the chef has transcended the boundaries of the kitchen. No longer confined to creating plates that please the palate alone, chefs are now storytellers, innovators, cultural custodians, and community leaders. They are "Food Explorers" - navigating uncharted territories of taste, sustainability, and inclusivity while shaping the future of global cuisine.

Redefining Innovation
The modern chef embraces innovation as a daily practice. From experimenting with fermentation and forgotten grains to adopting plant-based proteins and lab-grown alternatives, today's culinary leaders are pushing the boundaries of what food can be. For them, innovation isn't about gimmicks; it's about creating relevant,

responsible, and revolutionary experiences for diners.

Sustainability at the Core
The kitchen has become a frontline in the battle against climate change and food insecurity. Chefs are leading movements to minimise waste, champion local sourcing, and design menus that prioritise the planet as much as the palate. They recognise that sustainability is not just a trend, but an ethical responsibility - one that future generations of chefs must inherit and amplify.

Celebrating Culture and Diversity
Food has always been a vessel for culture, but chefs today are more deliberate in honoring diversity.

The future demands chefs who are explorers in every sense of the word: curious, adaptable, empathetic, and globally aware. They will need to balance artistry with advocacy, creativity with conscience, and innovation with inclusivity. These new-age food explorers are not only shaping the way we eat, but also the way we live, connect, and sustain our world.

They are preserving indigenous techniques, reviving traditional recipes, and ensuring that regional voices are not lost in the noise of globalised dining. Equally, they are embracing cross-cultural collaborations, proving that the future of food lies in fusion that respects roots rather than erases them.

Chefs as Community Builders
Chefs are increasingly stepping out of their restaurants to address larger societal challenges. From school meal programs to community kitchens, from mental health advocacy to culinary education for underprivileged youth - chefs are redefining leadership in hospitality by being advocates for change, not just artisans of taste. ■



Whip to Perfection

Indulgent Taste & Premium Finish



Rich & Creamy Mouthfeel



Superior Taste



Clean Taste



Elegant Matte Finish



Versatile Use



SKILLS OF TOMORROW



BY CHEF K THIRU
Ph.D. M.Sc. MBA. MIH
Founding Dean, School of Hospitality Management, Mahindra University, Hyderabad, Telangana

In the coming decade, the future of work will not only be about mastering technology or climbing career ladders. For young chefs and culinary innovators, success will depend on three timeless yet evolving skills: leadership, wellness, and creativity. And in today's world of the gig economy and niche specialisation, these skills can open up countless new opportunities for India's young minds.

Take the example of Chef Nikhil Nagpal, Executive Chef and Founding Team Member, Avartana (ITC Grand Chola, Chennai). His

Leadership, Wellness, and Kitchen Creativity - An Indian Perspective

As India's culinary landscape evolves, the kitchen is no longer just a place of preparation—it's a crucible for leadership, wellness, and creativity. In this forward-looking piece, **Chef K Thiru**, Founding Dean of the School of Hospitality Management at Mahindra University, explores how young chefs must embrace empathy-driven leadership, health-conscious innovation, and bold creativity to thrive in a dynamic food ecosystem. Drawing from real-world examples and emerging career paths, he presents a roadmap for future-ready culinary professionals who aim not just to cook, but to lead, heal, and inspire through food.

journey demonstrates how a chef can blend classical training with contemporary innovation to inspire the next generation. His work at Avartana reflects the skills of tomorrow - rooted in empathy, health-conscious thinking, and creativity.

For India's youth stepping into hospitality, food entrepreneurship, or even everyday culinary practice, the kitchen is more than a workplace - it is a laboratory of leadership, health, and innovation.

Leadership: Beyond Recipes, with Empathy at the Core

The World Economic Forum projects that by 2030, nearly 39 percent of workers' core skills will change, with leadership and social

influence among the most critical. But leadership in food doesn't just mean running a brigade - it means the ability to inspire, include, and innovate.

Chef Thomas Zacharias (Founder, The Locavore) is reviving forgotten regional ingredients and recipes, showing that leadership can mean preserving cultural heritage while empowering local communities.

Chef Hussain Shahzad (Executive Chef, Hunger Inc.) demonstrates how to modernise Indian traditions with contemporary flair, inspiring teams and shaping dining culture.

Chef Girish Nayak, the Chief



CHEF GIRISH NAYAK
Chief Mithaiwala (Master Halwai & Innovator), Bombay Sweet Shop

Mithaiwala (Master Halwai & Innovator) at Bombay Sweet Shop in Mumbai, has redefined the role of the Halwai by reimagining traditional Indian sweets, proving that leadership can also mean modernising heritage while keeping its soul intact.

At the heart of this leadership is empathy - understanding team struggles, respecting diverse traditions, and connecting emotionally with diners. For young chefs, every act of guidance, inclusion, or innovation builds leadership capital for the future.

Wellness: Feeding the Body and the Industry

India is at a crossroads in health and nutrition. According to The Lancet, poor diet was linked to 1.7 million deaths in India in 2017. WHO data shows Indians consume about 12 grams of salt daily, over double the recommended 5 grams, contributing to an estimated 175,000 annual deaths from high salt intake.

Quick Stats (India)

- Diet-related deaths per year: 1.7 million
 - Average salt intake: 12g/day vs. 5g WHO limit
 - Deaths linked to high salt intake: 175,000/year
 - Population unable to afford a healthy diet: ~71%
- This is both a challenge and an



CHEF HUSSAIN SHAHZAD
Executive Chef, Hunger Inc.

opportunity. By designing healthier menus - millet-based breads instead of refined flour, jaggery instead of sugar, low-sodium dishes enhanced with spices - chefs can be wellness leaders.

India's wellness industry, valued at US\$20 billion, is expanding rapidly. Young chefs who blend taste with nutrition will not only improve health outcomes but also tap into one of India's fastest-growing consumer markets.

Creativity: The Kitchen as a Playground of Innovation

Cooking has always been about creativity, but today it is also about problem-solving under constraints. Creativity in the kitchen now mirrors innovation labs:

Ingredient scarcity innovation: jackfruit as meat substitute, millets in gluten-free baking.

Cultural fusion new markets: dosa wraps, tandoori pasta, chai-infused desserts.

Sustainability eco-friendly practices: peel-to-stock cooking, millet husk flour, root-to-shoot usage.

Globally, research shows cooking activities improve mental well-being and resilience. In India, culinary creativity is also cultural storytelling, preserving heritage while adapting to modern demands. Every experiment a student makes in the kitchen becomes a lesson in resilience, innovation, and identity.



CHEF THOMAS ZACHARIAS
Founder, The Locavore

Futuristic Culinary Careers: An Interdisciplinary Approach

Culinary Experience Designer

Blending gastronomy, psychology, and immersive tech, these designers curate dining experiences that engage all senses. By integrating AR/VR environments, cultural storytelling, and neurogastronomy insights, they create meals that evoke emotion, enhance memory, and merge food with performance art.

Pop-up Innovator

At the intersection of entrepreneurship, event design, and urban sociology, pop-up innovators transform underutilised spaces into dining phenomena. They harness behavioural economics to drive scarcity-driven buzz, while collaborating with architects, musicians, and sustainability experts to create events that are as socially impactful as they are profitable.

Virtual Culinary Educator

Combining education, AI, and global communication studies, these chefs teach beyond borders. By using AI-driven personalisation, gamified learning, and cross-cultural exchange, they empower home cooks and professionals alike. Collaborations with nutritionists and anthropologists can help contextualise lessons within health trends and food heritage.

Food & Wellness Consultant

At the convergence of nutrition science, healthcare, and product innovation, consultants design food solutions that align with mental and physical wellness. By working with biotech startups, Ayurvedic practitioners, and wearable health-tech firms, they create data-informed meal plans and functional foods tailored to individual needs.

Culinary Content Creator

This role fuses storytelling, digital media strategy, and performance art. Beyond recipes, creators integrate food anthropology, sustainability narratives, and design thinking to craft content that informs, entertains, and inspires. Collaborations with filmmakers, psychologists, and environmental activists can elevate content from entertainment to social impact.

Niche Skill Specialisation: Standing Out in the Crowd

In an industry where algorithms often dictate visibility, deep specialisation creates resilience. Young chefs can integrate science, culture, and design into their niche identities:

Regional Revivalists: Pair culinary anthropology with modern techniques to revive forgotten Indian dishes, making them accessible to global palates.

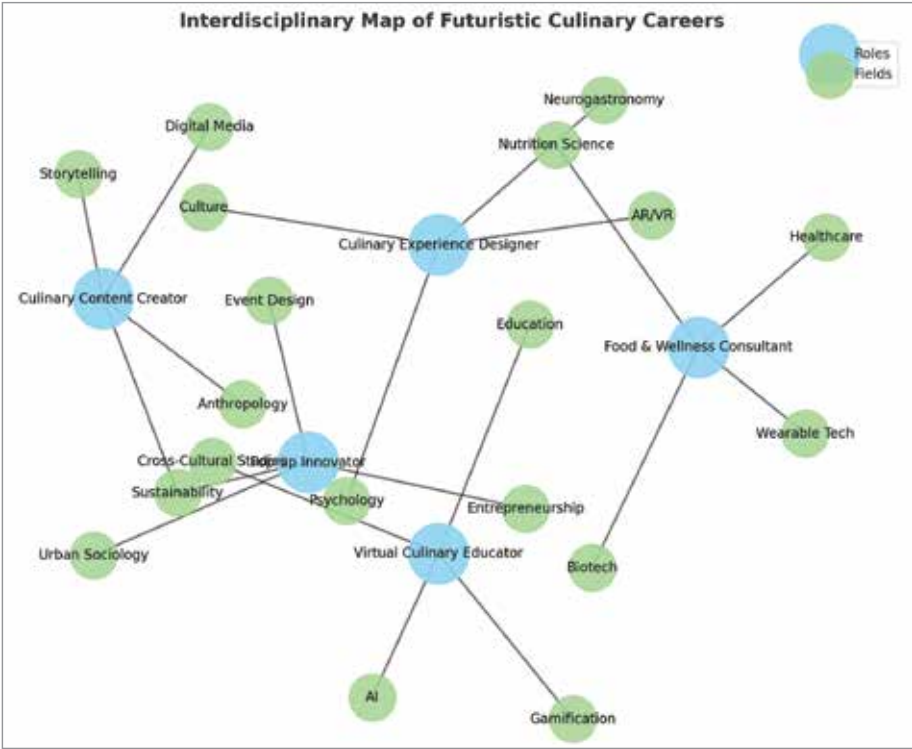
Plant-Based Innovators: Work with environmental scientists and wellness coaches to design vegan menus that address climate change and health simultaneously.

Artisan Bakers: Merge agricultural science and fermentation biology to experiment with millets, cacao, and local grains, creating unique value chains.

Food Stylists & Storytellers: Blend visual arts, semiotics, and digital media to showcase culinary creativity in ways that resonate globally.

The Bigger Picture: A Resilient Future for Chefs

By embracing interdisciplinary learning, chefs can future-proof



their careers. With India's food delivery market projected to exceed \$20 billion by 2026, opportunities lie not just in cooking, but in experience design, wellness innovation, digital storytelling, and sustainability consulting.

Chefs who diversify across these streams will not only thrive financially but also emerge as cultural leaders, innovators, and changemakers in a global food ecosystem.

Why This Matters for India's Young Chefs

India's food industry is booming, but the differentiator will not be just cooking skill - it will be the ability to lead with empathy, promote wellness, innovate boldly, and thrive in flexible gig models.

Food in India is culture, economy, and identity. By mastering these skills of tomorrow, young chefs can shape careers that are profitable, future-ready, and socially impactful.

For India's young culinary minds, the kitchen is your launchpad for tomorrow's opportunities. Whether you're leading with empathy like Chef Thomas Zacharias, innovating like Chef Hussain Shahzad,

redefining sweets like Chef Girish Nayak, or carving your niche in the gig economy, the skills of tomorrow - leadership, wellness, and bold creativity - will make you stand out in India and across the globe. ■

About the Author

Dr. (Chef) K. Thirugnanasambantham, widely known as Chef Thiru, is a distinguished culinary educator with over 35 years of experience. His academic journey began with a degree in hotel management, leading to leadership roles at ITC Hotels and Taj Group. Committed to advancing hospitality education, he spent 25 years at WGSMA, including six years as Principal, elevating it to India's top-ranked institute. His passion for research culminated in a doctorate in Food and Nutrition in 2022, focusing on cardiovascular health among hotel employees. Now, as Founding Dean at The School of Hospitality Management, Mahindra University, he is redefining hospitality education through innovation and global practices.



ROMIO TECHNOLOGIES

POINT OF SALE (POS) AND DISPLAY SOLUTIONS

POS Billing Machine



- 15.6 inch PCAP Touch
- Maximum Resolution 1024*768
- CPU Intel Core I5 and above
- System Memory 4GB Expandable
- Storage Memory 128GB SSD or 256GB SSD
- Smooth Touch Based POS



4520

POS Billing Machine All In One



- 15.6 inch PCAP Touch
- Maximum Resolution 1024*768
- CPU Intel Core I5 and above
- System Memory 4GB Expandable
- Storage Memory 128GB SSD or 256GB SSD
- LCD TFT Without Touch
- Customer Display 10.1 Screen
- Inbuilt Thermal Receipt Printer 80mm



4799



+91-9911012517
+91-9910272444

www.romiotech.com
Info@romiotech.com

Follow us



PRECISION MEETS PASSION

In a world where culinary artistry often battles the clock, **Chef Abhijeet Thakre** stands out as a quiet force of discipline, detail, and depth. From his formative years at IHM Mumbai and his early days as a Management Trainee at The Park Hotels, to his commanding presence at Taj Hotels as the Executive Chef at Vivanta New Delhi Dwarka, Chef Thakre's journey is a masterclass in consistency and character. Whether plating a seasonal dessert or orchestrating a state banquet, he brings a rare blend of humility and high standards to every dish. In this exclusive conversation **Sumit Jha** explores the mind behind the mise en place, the mentor behind the brigade, and the man who believes that professionalism isn't taught - it's absorbed.

Looking back at your time at IHM Mumbai, what values or habits from that phase still guide your kitchen today?

IHM Mumbai instilled in me a strong sense of discipline, precision, and technical foundation. These values continue to guide my kitchen operations, whether I'm designing menus or mentoring young chefs.

From your internship at the iconic Taj Mahal Hotel to your current role at Taj Hotels, what have been the turning points that shaped your culinary identity?

Launching Spice Junxion at Taj Deccan was a defining moment - it allowed me to explore fusion cuisine rooted in regional Indian flavors. Managing the legendary Orient Express at Taj Palace and leading innovative menus at Taj City Centre Gurugram further refined my culinary voice and operational leadership.

You've led kitchens across Taj properties. What's one operational habit you've carried with you, no matter the city or scale?

For me, HACCP compliance is non-negotiable. Alongside that, I've always prioritized mentoring junior chefs - helping them grow technically and professionally across every property I've worked at.

Dum Pukht, Tian, Avartana - each restaurant has a distinct philosophy. How have these spaces refined your own culinary voice?

I haven't had the opportunity to work directly in those iconic kitchens, but I deeply admire their philosophies. They've influenced my approach to authenticity, technique, and storytelling through food.

What's your process for balancing traditional Indian flavors with modern presentation?

I integrate classical Indian flavors with contemporary plating, drawing from my experience in specialty restaurants and



PRECISION, PASSION, AND PROGRESSIVE INDIAN CUISINE

With over 17 years of culinary mastery, **Chef Abhijeet Thakre** stands as a beacon of innovation and discipline in India's hospitality landscape. Currently the Executive Chef at Vivanta New Delhi Dwarka, his journey has traversed iconic Taj properties including Taj Palace New Delhi, Taj Deccan Hyderabad, and Taj City Centre Gurugram, where he has helmed signature dining experiences and orchestrated state-level banquets. A graduate of IHM Mumbai, Chef Thakre is revered for his meticulous technique, refined palate, and ability to elevate Indian cuisine with global finesse. His creations—like the Mango Baked Cheesecake and Mango Petit Gâteaux—reflect a seasonal sensibility and an eye for detail that's both artistic and grounded. Beyond the kitchen, he's a mentor, a street food enthusiast, and a collector of pens and knives—symbols of his precision and personal style. The journey of Chef Thakre brings not just culinary excellence but a philosophy rooted in discipline, humility, and continuous evolution.



flavor, but in technique.

Spice Junxion was a breakthrough project. We created fusion dishes that blended regional Indian flavors with modern techniques - like sous-vide and foam applications - resulting in bold, memorable plates.

How do you stay ahead of culinary trends while preserving authenticity? Are there any global techniques or tools you've adapted to enhance Indian cuisine?

I experiment with global techniques like sous-vide and molecular gastronomy to elevate Indian dishes. The key is to preserve core flavors while enhancing texture, presentation, and consistency.

What's your take on the rise of plant-forward menus and sustainability in Indian kitchens?

I fully support it. I often incorporate millets and seasonal produce into menus. It's not just a trend - it's a responsibility we have as chefs to promote sustainable practices.

international kitchens. It's about honoring tradition while embracing innovation.

Describe a dish you've created that felt like a breakthrough - not just in

As a chef known for precision, how do you approach the balance between technical mastery and creative freedom?

Mastering fundamentals is essential. Once you have that base, creativity flows naturally. It allows you to experiment with confidence and purpose.

What's one technique you believe every young chef should master before stepping into a professional kitchen?

Knife skills. They're the foundation of speed, safety, and precision. Without them, everything

RAPID FIRE WITH
CHEF ABHIJEET
THAKRE

- Favourite Food:** Vada Pao
- Favourite Beverage:** Kulladwali Chai
- Favourite Millet Dish:** Jwarichi Bhakri
- Favourite Restaurant:** Orient Express, Taj Palace
- Most Admired Chef:** Chef Roger Charles Willson
- Favourite Holiday Destination:** Goa
- Favourite Book:** Larousse Gastronomique
- Favourite Movie:** Kabhi Haan Kabhi Naa



CHEF'S REFLECTIONS: IN HIS OWN WORDS



"The institute taught me professionalism almost subconsciously."

- Kitchen Mantra:** Discipline is the first ingredient
- Signature Style:** Seasonal elegance with technical finesse
- Creative Fuel:** Street food nostalgia, global techniques, and a collector's eye for detail
- Leadership Lens:** Precision with empathy, always

Chef Thakre shares insights into his formative years, operational philosophy, and the evolving landscape of Indian cuisine, offering a masterclass in leadership for aspiring chefs.

else becomes harder to execute.

How do you mentor junior chefs to not just cook well, but think like professionals?

I involve them in menu planning, cost control, and HACCP practices. This holistic exposure helps them understand the business side of kitchens. I also emphasize sauce making - it teaches balance, layering, and is central to many cuisines.

What's your approach to building a kitchen culture that values both discipline and innovation?

I foster a structured yet

open environment. Discipline ensures consistency, while openness encourages feedback, experimentation, and continuous learning.

Street food and fine dining often seem worlds apart. How do you bridge that gap in your culinary imagination?

By elevating street food flavors through refined techniques and presentation. It's about capturing the soul of the dish and presenting it in a way that fits a fine dining experience.

What kind of dialogue or change do you hope to inspire at knowledge-sharing platforms for chefs?

I aim to promote regional Indian cuisines, sustainability, and mentorship. These platforms are vital for exchanging ideas and nurturing the next generation of chefs.

How do you see platforms such as the Annual Chef Awards and Chefs Summit shaping the future of Indian culinary talent?

They're essential. These platforms provide recognition, networking, and learning opportunities. They spotlight emerging talent and help build a stronger, more connected culinary community. ■

YOUR BREAD BASKET, SORTED.™

Packs and images are for representation purposes only.

EXPLORING THE CULINARY MAP OF INDIA



CHEF AVINASH MARTINS
Chef and Owner Cavatina & Janot

Chef as an explorer and a storyteller

India’s culinary landscape is not a single story - it’s a mosaic of 29 distinct narratives, each shaped by geography, history, culture, and spirituality. In this thought-provoking piece, **Chef Avinash Martins** invites readers to view the chef not merely as a cook, but as an explorer, historian, and storyteller. From the smoky hills of Kodagu to the fermented flavours of the Northeast, he maps out a journey that blends tradition with innovation, reverence with reinvention. For chefs, navigating India’s foodscape is both a professional calling and a soulful pursuit - one that demands curiosity, humility, and a deep respect for the land and its people.

India is not just a country, I like to call it 29 countries in the form of states with a living, breathing food map where every region, state, and even town offers a unique culinary story. For chefs, exploring India’s foodscape is both a professional necessity and a spiritual journey. The sheer diversity of flavours, techniques, ingredients, and cultural influences is unparalleled. To cook in India - or to cook Indian food anywhere in the world - requires not only technical skill but also sensitivity to tradition, geography, and people.

The culinary map of India is vast, and a chef must approach it like an explorer - curious, respectful, and willing to learn.

Location & Topography

Food Shaped by Land and Climate
India’s geography has dictated much of its cuisine. The lush coasts, arid deserts, fertile plains, high-altitude Himalayas, and river valleys - all yield different ingredients and eating habits. A chef should first study how the land shapes food:

North India: Wheat, dairy, slow-

cooked curries, kebabs, and breads dominate. Winters call for warming spices, rich gravies, and ghee.

South India: Rice, coconut, tamarind, and curry leaves create light, tangy, and spicy meals suited for the tropical climate.

East India: Rivers and coastline ensure an abundance of fish, mustard oil, and subtle use of spices.

West India: Dry climates inspire millet rotis, pickles, and inventive preservation techniques. The Konkan belt balances seafood with kokum, coconut, and cashew.



A Variety for Every Taste.





This is only a Brand Name and does not represent its true nature. ‡ Creative Visualisation

📞 1800-123-9912



Piece of History & Roots

Invaders, Traders, and Colonies
Indian cuisine is layered with centuries of historical influences. To explore the culinary map, a chef must read history not just in books, but in flavour, also food historians and traditional people.

Mughal Legacy: Rich biryanis, kormas, and kebabs represent Central Asian influence.

Portuguese Influence: Introduction of chilies, potatoes, tomatoes, and cashews to the subcontinent reshaped many cuisines.

British and French Colonial Impact: Bakeries, puddings, cutlets, and tea culture became woven into Indian food habits.

Trade with Southeast Asia and Arabia: Spices like black pepper, cinnamon, and cloves made India the center of global flavour exchange.

Food Bound by Religion

India is a kaleidoscope of various religions and cultures and one of the best meals are prepared during festivals or a religious offering to the Gods.

Indian food is often linked to spirituality. Temple offerings, langars, fasting diets, and festival feasts are rooted in devotion. Exploring the culinary map also means understanding food's sacred dimension - food as prasad, food as sharing, food as meditation.

Hindu traditions: Vegetarianism, fasting foods, temple prasadams.

Muslim communities, popularly known for Iftar Nihari, haleem, biryanis - meals built around meat and communal feasts.

Christian and Parsi cuisines: Fusions with colonial and regional flavours.

Tribal and indigenous foods: Forest produce, foraged greens, and fermented staples.



Chefs should balance professional training with grassroots learning. Often, it is a grandmother's trick or a street vendor's innovation that teaches the most profound lessons.



Micro Cuisine

India's food is regional, hyperlocal, and seasonal. Indian restaurant menus worldwide often reduce India to butter chicken, naan, samosa, and biryani. We need to break this cliché. Though the list is endless, some options could be:

- Bihari litti chokha, smoky and rustic
- Pandi curry from Kodagu
- Fermented fish chutneys of the Northeast
- Thepla and Undhiyu from Gujarat
- Nagaland smoked pork with bamboo shoot

Regional Techniques

Every Indian region has its signature techniques. Some examples:

- Dum cooking in Lucknow and Hyderabad
- Hand-pounded masalas in Maharashtra and Karnataka
- Fermentation in the Northeast and coastal states
- Sun-drying and preserving in Rajasthan and Gujarat
- Clay oven mastery in Punjab

Seasonality and Sustainability

Food is deeply tied to seasons. Mangoes in summer, millets in winter, leafy greens in monsoons - seasonality is respected in traditional cooking.

Sustainability: Cooking with what is available locally and in season.

Creativity: Designing menus that evolve through the year, honouring festivals and harvests.

Modern Interpretations

While tradition forms the base, chefs can also use the Indian culinary map as inspiration for innovation.

Regional food Cuisine of India

Hari GHOTRA

Northern Region

Climate - Hot summers and cold winters

Includes Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana and has a strong Mughal influence.

Punjab: Real flare and passion for food and drink! Mainly agricultural area that is rich in vegetables, lentils, flour, sugar cane as well as dairy produce such as yoghurts, lassi, makan, ghee.

Food tends to be mild using onion and garlic to create thick rich sauces using lots of spices to layer flavour. Garam masala is the key spice mix.

Kashmir: Mogul influences, rich in red meats, yoghurt & rice. Known for huge banquets and elaborate dishes such as briyani.

Typical Dishes: Rogan Josh.

Eastern Region

Climate - Wet!!

Abundant in green vegetables, fruit and rice. it is strongly influenced by Chinese and Mongolian cuisine. Also known for sweets & desserts. Coastal regions fish is very popular, inland pork.

Bengal: Meals start with a bitter dish, then lentils, veg fish and meat all presented separately. Paan phoran is the spice blend of choice as well as various pastes.

Typical dishes: Momos (steamed filled wontons), fish curry.

Western Region

Climate - Hot and dry

Population are mainly Hindu and vegetarians. The food is spicy with few vegetables available so pickling is very common. Staples include corn, lentils, gram flour and yoghurt.

Rajasthan: Red meats are common known for briyanis, dried fruits and nuts with food ranging from spicy to sour.

Gujarat: Jaggery is added to sweeten savoury dishes. Lots of different little dishes served together in a thali.

Goa: Coastal region that is abundant in coconut, peanuts, lots of seafood and rice. It has huge Portuguese influence and use vinegars in sauces.

Typical dishes: Vindaloo, Fish curry, Patia sauce.

Southern Region

Climate - Hot and humid with lots of rain

Spice garden of India abundant in tamarind, asafoetida, mustard seeds, peppercorns, chilli's & coconut. The main staple rice and is used in different forms. Food is hot & spicy.

Hydrabad: Known for raw meat briyanis, dried fruits, nuts and saffron with food balancing spicy to sour flavours.

Karela: Coastal region where seafood, fruit, vegetables and coconut are all in abundance. Mainly vegetarian with hot and fiery dishes made through the use of spice pastes.

Typical dishes: Idlis, Dosa, Rasam, Sambaar, poppadums.



Regional Map of Indian Cuisine
Source: Hari Ghotra
www.harighotra.co.uk

Modern plating, fusion with global ingredients, or molecular gastronomy can highlight Indian flavours in new forms. However, this requires sensitivity:

- Do not erase identity, instead retain the dish's essence
- Share the story behind reinterpretations
- Balance nostalgia with novelty

Document and Sharing for Posterity

Part of a chef's responsibility in exploring India's food is documentation. Many traditional recipes risk being forgotten as younger generations migrate to cities. Chefs can preserve knowledge by:

- Recording oral histories
- Publishing regional cookbooks
- Hosting culinary residencies and collaborations
- Using social media to highlight little-known

Putting Everything in a Nutshell

To explore the culinary map of India, chefs must step into the role of explorers - part historian, part anthropologist, part artist. They must be curious enough to travel, humble enough to learn, and bold enough to experiment. India's culinary diversity is so immense that no chef can ever fully master it, but the beauty lies in the pursuit.

Every thali, every street corner, every festive meal adds another line to the story. The responsibility of a chef is to honour these stories while creating new ones. By embracing geography, history, people, traditions, and innovation, chefs can not only explore but also expand the culinary map of India - making it richer for generations to come.

Chefs should balance professional training with grassroots learning. Often, it is a grandmother's trick or a street vendor's innovation that teaches the most profound lessons. ■



For chefs, exploring India's foodscape is both a professional necessity and a spiritual journey. The sheer diversity of flavours, techniques, ingredients, and cultural influences is unparalleled. To cook in India - or to cook Indian food anywhere in the world - requires not only technical skill but also sensitivity to tradition, geography, and people.



About the Author:
Chef Avinash Martins, a celebrated culinary visionary from Goa, has

redefined regional Indian cuisine through storytelling, sustainability, and innovation. After training with The Oberoi Group and honing his craft at Michelin-starred kitchens abroad, he returned to Goa to launch acclaimed restaurants like Cavatina, Table in the Hills, and Janôt. Known for reimagining Goan flavours with global finesse, Martins champions farm-to-fork philosophy and indigenous ingredients. His work has earned him top honours including Iron Chef India 2025 and Chef of the Year titles, while his menus have graced high-profile events from the G20 Summit to celebrity weddings

DABUR CARES: CALL OR WRITE - 8/3, ASAF ALI ROAD, NEW DELHI - 110002 | E-MAIL: daburcares@dabur.com | Website: dabur.com | TOLL FREE: 1800-103-1644

Available at [ZioMart](#) [zepto](#) [Blinkit](#) | Also available on www.daburshop.com, a store near you | Scan the QR code to buy now.

Creative visualization. Reconstituted 100% coconut water content. *Dabur India Ltd. claim as per NielsenIQ Retail Index data for period MAT Nov'24 for the India market in Juices and Nectar segment. *CONTAINS NATURALLY OCCURRING SUGARS. Real Fruit Power is registered Trademark of Dabur India Limited. Refer pack for details.



THE CHEF AS COMMUNITY BUILDER



In the popular imagination, chefs are often celebrated for their artistry, their ability to create memorable dishes, and their presence in glamorous kitchens. But in recent years, a quieter, more powerful narrative has emerged: chefs as community builders. These culinary leaders are stepping out of their restaurants to address pressing social challenges, proving that their influence extends far beyond the dining table.

Nourishing the Next Generation: School Nutrition

One of the most impactful ways chefs are shaping communities is through their involvement in school nutrition programs. By redesigning menus and advocating for fresh, balanced meals, chefs

are ensuring that children are not only fed but also educated about healthy eating. In many parts of the world, chefs have partnered with local governments and NGOs to introduce fruits, vegetables, and whole grains into school meals - transforming cafeterias into classrooms of wellness.

In India, initiatives led by organisations like Akshaya Patra Foundation have been supported by chefs who lend their expertise to design meals that are both nutritious and appealing to children. Globally, chefs like Jamie Oliver have pioneered campaigns to reform school lunches, highlighting the chef's potential as an educator and advocate.

Fighting Food Waste

Incredible Chef takes a deep-dive into how culinary leaders are transforming society beyond the plate.

With one-third of food produced globally going to waste, chefs have emerged as critical voices in promoting a zero-waste culture. Many are redesigning their kitchens to utilise every ingredient fully - turning peels into pickles, bones into stocks, and surplus produce into preserves. *Second Meals* - a book written by Chef Davinder Kumar, President, Indian Culinary Forum, highlights the use of food scrap. Keeping up with his spirit of breaking conventional norms, his book comprises 150 food recipes made from food waste - vegetable scraps, fruit peels, seeds, roots, stems and more.

Beyond their own establishments, chefs are collaborating with community kitchens and food banks to redirect excess food to those in need.

A shining example is Massimo Bottura's "Food for Soul" initiative, which creates community kitchens around the world, transforming surplus ingredients into meals for the underprivileged. Food for Soul began with a simple but powerful idea: to prevent food waste and loss and turn it into a force for good. Founded by Massimo Bottura and

Ventilate with
Chefmate®

CHEFMATE TECHNOLOGIES Hyderabad
Call: +91 9246377652 | sales@chefmateindia.com | www.chefmateindia.com

Lara Gilmore, they saw a world where surplus food could become a source of nourishment, hope, and dignity for those in need.

"Working alongside chefs from around the globe, we rescue food that would otherwise be discarded and transform it into delicious, life changing meals. The Refettorios we open are places of welcome, where people come together, not just to eat, but to experience connection, respect, and the power of community. We're not just feeding people or rescuing food; we're challenging the systems that allow waste and isolation to exist. Together, we are rethinking the value of food and rebuilding a more sustainable world, one meal at a time," believes Massimo Bottura.

In India, chefs like Thomas Zacharias and Saransh Goila have actively championed campaigns encouraging home cooks and restaurants to minimise waste while also redistributing excess food responsibly.

Chefs as Advocates for Inclusion

Modern chefs are also using their platforms to advocate for marginalised communities. By training underprivileged youth in culinary skills, they are providing livelihoods and pathways to dignity. Some chefs have created inclusive kitchens that employ differently-abled individuals or those from disadvantaged backgrounds, redefining what it means to run a socially responsible business.

Forexample, Chef Vikas Khanna's "Feed India" initiative during the pandemic distributed millions of meals to vulnerable communities. Feed India, or Barkat as Chef Vikas calls it, spread through social media when he asked his 2.3 million Twitter followers to go to orphanages, old-age homes and more to check if the residents there needed any ration and supplies.

Similarly, several homegrown chefs have partnered with local NGOs to train women in culinary entrepreneurship, helping them become financially independent.

Healing Through Food

Food is not just nourishment; it is healing. Recognising this, many chefs are involved in programs that address hunger, malnutrition, and trauma. Community kitchens established after natural disasters or during humanitarian crises have shown that chefs can be first responders - bringing comfort and stability when communities need it most.

Chefs have also begun to focus on mental health in kitchens, ensuring that wellness becomes part of the larger community they build within their teams. In doing so, they are not just building communities outside their walls, but also nurturing healthier, more resilient ones within.

The New Role of the Chef

The chef of today is more than an artist of flavor - they are an architect of social change. Whether it's teaching children the importance of good nutrition, reducing food waste, supporting vulnerable groups, or stepping in during crises, chefs are proving that their true impact lies in their ability to connect, empower, and inspire communities.

As the culinary world moves toward 2030, the most celebrated chefs may not be those with the most Michelin stars, but those who have fed the most people, mentored the most youth, or built the strongest bridges between food and society.

The future chef is, undeniably, a community builder. ■



TASTE MEANS TESTO™



FRUIT DRINK

Juicy joy in every drop



Customer Care - 1800-121-336666
Mail ID - info@testofoods.com
Address - Rehna Road, Ruheri, Aligarh U.P 204101

REIMAGINING HOSPITALITY EDUCATION IN INDIA

A Roadmap for Excellence, Innovation, and Industry Integration



A.K. SINGH
Director, FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management

India’s hospitality education system, now over seven decades old, has played a pivotal role in shaping the nation’s service economy. From its modest beginnings in 1954 with the Institute of Catering in Mumbai, the sector has evolved into a robust network of institutions producing skilled professionals for a rapidly expanding industry. As global hospitality trends shift toward experiential service, technological integration, and human-centric leadership, Indian hospitality institutes must recalibrate their approach - focusing on curriculum relevance, faculty development, industry collaboration, and student empowerment. In this article, **A.K. Singh**, Director of FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management, offers a comprehensive perspective on the evolution, current challenges, and future direction of hospitality education in India.

Hospitality management education in India traces its roots back to 1954, when the Institute of Catering was established in Mumbai. Its primary purpose was to train supervisory staff for nutritional snack outlets under the ‘Annapoorna’ initiative, which operated across cities like Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, and Kolhapur. These outlets were managed by the All India Women’s Council at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Andheri, and the program began modestly—with just six students in its inaugural year. The vision for structured

hospitality education gained momentum when Dr. K.M. Munshi, founder of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and former Agriculture Minister of India, requested international support to formalize the sector. Responding to this call, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) deputed Mr. Belfield Smith, a renowned catering expert from the UK, to help establish a framework for Catering Technology and Hotel Management education in India. Mr. Smith’s contributions were transformative. He not only developed campuses in Dadar, Pusa (Delhi), Calcutta, and Chennai,

but also laid the foundation for nine Food Craft Institutes in state capitals such as Lucknow, Bhopal, Hyderabad, Bangalore, and Chandigarh before completing his assignment in 1972.

Institutional Growth and Government Support

Over the decades, hospitality education in India has expanded significantly. Today, the country hosts:

- 21 Central Institutes of Hotel Management
- 35+ State Institutes

Numerous private institutes and university departments

This growth is unique globally—India is perhaps the only nation where both central and state governments have invested so extensively in hospitality education, establishing more than 60 Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) nationwide.

Curriculum Evolution and Global Context

In the 1990s, the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) introduced a four-year degree program in hotel management, complementing the existing three-year diploma and degree offerings. Unlike hospitality business schools in the United States and parts of Europe—which focus primarily on managerial theory—India’s programs offer a balanced blend of technical knowledge, operational skills, and managerial expertise. This holistic approach prepares students for a range of roles, from entry-level positions to supervisory and management trainee roles, depending on their aptitude, personality, communication skills, and decision-making abilities across departments such as operations, sales and marketing, human resources, and revenue management.

Faculty Development and Mentorship

Hospitality education must go beyond technical instruction. Institutes should foster self-learning, mentorship, and motivation from the very beginning. Students must be encouraged to develop their attitude, personality, and communication skills alongside their technical and operational competencies. Faculty members play a pivotal role in this journey. Faculty should:

- Identify individual student strengths
- Provide personal attention and guidance
- Encourage development of attitude, personality, and



communication from day one

To remain industry-relevant, faculty should undergo at least four weeks of industrial exposure annually in reputed hotels. Upon returning, they should revise their content and teaching methodology, incorporating live examples and projects that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Student-Centric Learning

India was among the first countries to integrate extensive industrial exposure into hospitality curricula. Students undergo 17 to 20 weeks of hands-on training during their studies, gaining real-world insights into core operational areas and functions such as marketing,



human resources, and revenue management. This experiential learning is invaluable. However, it requires close coordination between institutes and industry partners. Mentors should be assigned to student groups to monitor progress, address concerns, and ensure that students remain focused and extract maximum value from their training.

The recruitment landscape has also evolved. Leading hotel chains now conduct campus interviews at reputed IHMs, selecting students not only for management training programs but also for executive training tracks. This dual pathway ensures that even those not initially chosen for management roles have a fair chance to enter the industry. With strong performance, they can match the growth trajectory of



management trainees and establish long-term careers in hospitality. To future-proof graduates, hospitality curricula must be revisited and modernized. Institutes should prioritize relevant subjects and skill development, with a strong emphasis on managerial decision-making. Case studies, live projects, problem-solving exercises, and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence must be integrated into the learning experience. These elements help build strategic thinking, adaptability, and a well-rounded professional outlook.

Infrastructure and Institutional Support

Infrastructure also plays a critical role. Institutes must upgrade their training facilities regularly to keep pace with technological advancements. Financial support from government and industry stakeholders is essential, especially in the wake of COVID-19, which has strained institutional resources and impacted student enrollment. Additionally, hotel employees should be encouraged to participate in annual refresher programs—ideally lasting ten days—in academic settings. These programs not only enhance their knowledge and expose them to new technologies and management practices but also create opportunities for faculty-industry interaction, enriching the teaching ecosystem.

Adapting to Market Trends

Hospitality education must evolve in response to market trends such as the asset-light model, which brings varied stakeholder expectations. Meeting these demands requires competitive pay, improved working conditions—including nine-hour shifts and weekly offs—and clear career growth pathways. In recent years, the industry has expanded into Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, increasing room inventory and occupancy rates. To sustain this momentum, stakeholders must train and retain

“**Hospitality education must go beyond technical instruction. Institutes should foster self-learning, mentorship, and motivation from the very beginning. Students must be encouraged to develop their attitude, personality, and communication skills alongside their technical and operational competencies. Faculty members play a pivotal role in this journey.**”



local talent, reducing attrition and building community-based hospitality ecosystems. However, rapid expansion must not come at the cost of quality. Guest delight must remain the cornerstone of every operation. It has been observed that in the pursuit of growth, some hotel chains have compromised on the standards that once defined their global reputation. This issue must be addressed urgently. If left unchecked, it could lead to guest dissatisfaction and harm the long-term prospects of the industry. Finally, hospitality management institutes face a critical challenge: declining enrollment in the post-COVID era. Many are struggling to cover operational costs and require support to upgrade their infrastructure. Without intervention, the quality of graduates—and by extension, the industry's future—

could be compromised.

Conclusion
India's hospitality sector stands at a transformative juncture. By investing in curriculum relevance, faculty excellence, infrastructure, and industry collaboration, the country can produce globally competent professionals. With a renewed focus on quality, innovation, and guest experience, India is poised to lead the world in hospitality excellence. ■

About the Author

Arun Kumar Singh, a seasoned hospitality educator, holds an M.Sc. from Lucknow University, a Diploma in Hotel Management (1984), and a PG Diploma in Project Planning from Jaipur University. After four years in the hotel industry, he joined IHM Jaipur in 1987, later founding and leading its transformation into a State Institute. He served as Principal at IHM Lucknow and IHM Mumbai, retiring in 2021. Trained in India, Switzerland, and the USA, he now heads FHRAI-IHM, Greater Noida, steering it to financial sustainability and leading key industry summits on sustainability and HR transformation.



DELICIOUSLY SIMPLE, CONVENIENTLY YOURS



Karamat is a leader in Ready-To-Cook products in India, specifically designed for professional chefs and the food service (B2B) industry. Our products keep dishes consistently tasty, letting chefs focus on being creative. Every batch is guaranteed to taste great, maintaining the same delicious flavour all year round.





100+ VARIETIES

10+ COUNTRIES

35+ YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

CLIENTELE



CERTIFICATION



DESSERTS

SOUTH INDIAN

GRAVIES

TRADITIONAL MIX

MARINADE MIX

CHUTNEYS





HEALTHY



CONVENIENT



SUSTAINABLE



Connect with us on Social Media



Find all the products on our Website





Brand Owned and Marketed by:
FOOD Solution (INDIA) LIMITED
cooking revolution Email: info@fsl.in | www.karamat.co.in
Call: +91 84880 16311 | +91 96240 91914

46 | Incredible Chef | October 2025

FUTURE-READY KITCHENS

Skills of Tomorrow That Will Define India’s Culinary Leadership



JAYANT CHAUHAN
South Asia Head, Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality - United Kingdom

As the global hospitality landscape undergoes rapid transformation, the Indian culinary sector stands at a pivotal crossroads—where tradition meets innovation, and skill development becomes a strategic imperative. In this evolving narrative, kitchens are no longer confined to the art of cooking; they are emerging as crucibles of leadership, wellness, and creativity. With artificial intelligence, automation, and sustainable practices reshaping the contours of gastronomy, India’s chefs must be equipped not only with technical prowess but with the emotional intelligence, visionary thinking, and cultural fluency required to lead on the world stage. This article by **Jayant Chauhan**, South Asia Head, Confederation of Tourism and Hospitality - United Kingdom, explores the essential skills that will define tomorrow’s culinary leaders and outlines a roadmap for India to become a global benchmark in hospitality excellence.

In the rapidly evolving world of global hospitality, the kitchens of tomorrow demand more than culinary mastery. They require visionary leadership, a focus on wellness, and boundless creativity, all supported by the intelligent integration of technology. As India positions itself as a global hub for tourism and hospitality, equipping chefs with these forward-looking skills is essential for national and international competitiveness.

Leadership Beyond the Stove:
The modern kitchen is a

dynamic ecosystem, where efficiency, precision, and teamwork converge. Tomorrow’s chefs must be leaders capable of managing teams, driving innovation, and responding decisively under pressure. Leadership in the future extends beyond supervision; it involves mentoring emerging talent, fostering collaboration, and creating a culture of excellence and accountability. With India’s diverse culinary traditions, chefs have the unique opportunity to lead globally aware, culturally rooted teams capable of delivering extraordinary

experiences.

Wellness at the Core:

High-performing kitchens are sustainable only when the well-being of culinary teams is prioritised. This encompasses not only physical health and ergonomics but also mental resilience and mindfulness. Future-ready chefs will integrate nutrition science, stress management, and holistic wellness practices, ensuring that teams remain motivated, creative, and productive. In India, where

THE LOOK THAT COOKS

Unit No. 39, Municipal Industrial Estate, Gandhi Nagar, Worli, Mumbai- 400 018, India
Website: www.uuindia.com, Email: sales@uuindia.com Tel No. +91-22-24921998, Mob: +91-7045877488
Delhi: +91-9990803123 Kolkata: +91-9007271966 Bangalore: +91-9844373266
Hyderabad: +91-9819287254 Chennai: +91-7045959324

hospitality is expanding at an unprecedented pace, investing in staff wellness will be the differentiator between good kitchens and world-class operations.

Creativity as a Competitive Edge:

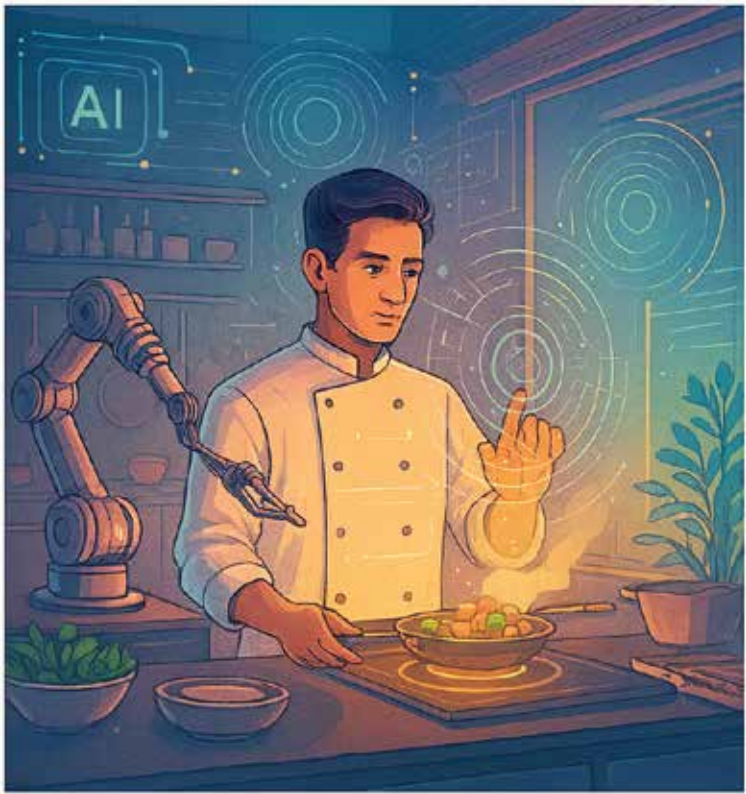
The diners of tomorrow seek experiences that delight all senses, and creativity has emerged as the most decisive factor. Chefs must blend heritage with innovation, honouring India's rich culinary culture while experimenting with international techniques, sustainable ingredients, and novel presentations. Leveraging AI-assisted menu design, predictive analytics for customer preferences, and automated kitchen solutions, chefs can create personalised, efficient, and innovative culinary experiences. This technological integration allows chefs to focus more on artistic expression, innovation, and high-value tasks rather than repetitive manual operations.

AI and Technology - Shaping Future Kitchens:

The future kitchen will be highly intelligent and data-driven. AI will assist in ingredient optimisation, waste reduction, flavour pairing, and even visual presentation. Robotics will handle repetitive, high-precision tasks, freeing chefs to focus on creative and strategic aspects of gastronomy. Embracing these technologies will be pivotal for India to lead in sustainable, efficient, and globally competitive culinary education.

The Role of Skill Development in India:

India's skill development ecosystem is entering a transformative era, with hospitality at the forefront. By integrating



internationally accredited programmes, AI-driven learning, experiential training, and leadership mentoring, culinary institutes can produce chefs who are globally competent yet deeply connected to local culture. This aligns with India's vision of upskilling millions for high-value careers and establishing the

High-performing kitchens are sustainable only when the well-being of culinary teams is prioritised. This encompasses not only physical health and ergonomics but also mental resilience and mindfulness.

nation as a premier destination for world-class culinary talent.

Looking Ahead:

Kitchens of the future will be more than spaces for cooking; they will be incubators of leadership, wellness, and creativity. With AI, automation, and sustainable practices at their disposal, Indian chefs are uniquely positioned to set global standards, innovate continuously, and deliver unmatched culinary experiences.

As we nurture the chefs of tomorrow, the focus must remain clear: to equip them with leadership acumen, wellness consciousness, creative flair, and technological sophistication, ensuring India's hospitality sector thrives, globally recognised for excellence, innovation, and cultural richness. ■

About the Author:



With over 25 years of distinguished experience in South Asia, Jayant Chauhan has been at the forefront of upskilling professionals to international standards in the hospitality sector. As a visionary leader, he has spearheaded the creation of Centers of Excellence across India, focusing on Culinary Arts, Bakery & Confectionery, Cruise Hospitality, and Bartending. Jayant's expertise includes designing industry-aligned curricula, establishing UK-accredited training facilities, and integrating international certification standards seamlessly. His relentless commitment to elevating the quality of hospitality education in India has empowered thousands of students and professionals to excel on global platforms.



Amrit Food

Coolm

High Quality Value Added MILK PRODUCTS

PIONEERS IN VALUE ADDED-DAIRY SINCE 1991



THE AMRIT FAMILY

Amrit Food is a division of Amrit Corp Limited. It was established in the year 1992 and is "recognized as a leading producer of UHT milk and milk products including ice cream mixes, whipping cream, ready to serve cold coffee products, etc"

Our environment-friendly plant is sprawled over an area of about 20,000sq mtrs. We are conscious of providing consistent product quality and services that meet the expectations of our valued & esteemed National and Multinational Corporate Clients. We are an FSSC 22000 certified company.



CRAFTING THE FUTURE OF FLAVOUR

Chef Vaibhav Soni, Founder of Snowy Foods Real, is not just a culinary expert - he's a storyteller, innovator, and mentor. His journey is a masterclass in dedication, reinvention, and cultural reverence. Graduated at CIHM Chandigarh, trained at The Oberoi and mentored through the prestigious OCLD programme, his career spans Michelin-starred kitchens in London, executive roles in Bangkok, and pioneering work in culinary education and FMCG innovation. With a vision rooted in sustainability, inclusivity, and authenticity, Chef Soni has carved a unique path that bridges tradition with modern technique. In this exclusive interview with **Sumit Jha**, he shares his journey leading culinary innovation, his passion for ancient grains, and how he's inspiring the next generation of chefs to cook with conscience and creativity.

REL!TEAUR®

GLUTEN FREE, EAT HAPPY!



No more compromises.
Just gluten-free goodness!

Get used to exquisite taste, satisfying texture, and pure deliciousness in every bite. With Reliteaur, gluten-free isn't a restriction, it's a celebration.

Go on - eat freely, live fully, no sacrifices.



Email: customercare@reliteaur.com
Toll Free No: 1800425305

Visit us for more
gluten-free recipes



What has inspired your journey into the culinary world? Where did it all start?

My culinary journey began in 2006, inspired by a family friend who saw creative potential in me and encouraged me to pursue a diploma in food production at CIHM Chandigarh. Immersed in the world of ingredients and techniques, I discovered my passion - especially through carving, which earned me multiple gold medals in college competitions.

Mentored by Chef Thakur, I pursued a degree at IHM Gurdaspur and was placed at The Oberoi New Delhi, later joining their prestigious OCLD programme. My career spanned roles at Oberoi Amarvilas, Michelin-star kitchens in London, and The Oberoi, New Delhi as a Pre-opening Chef of their Pan Asian restaurant Baoshuan and bar Cirrus 9.

Driven by curiosity, I became Executive Chef at Charcoal Grill & Mixology in Bangkok, then transitioned into culinary education at the Indian School of Hospitality. My hunger for innovation led me to Hector Beverages (Paper Boat) as India R&D Head, and eventually to launching my own brand - SNOWY FOODS REAL - focused on consulting for the HoReCa sector.

Which are the projects that you are currently associated with? What is in store for the future?

Over the past three years in hospitality consulting, I've worked across a diverse portfolio of hotels, cafés, restaurants, and large-scale catering units. Presently, I'm associated with several exciting ventures including Maruchi - Traven on the Greens, a premium Pan Asian restaurant near Saket Golf Course, HYVE Modern Bistro & Cocktail Bar, Radisson Hotel MG Road, and Zamana, an Indian street food concept in Kolkata. I've also curated menus for LoCal Café in Ramprastha Greens and Fortune Inn Riviera in Jammu, and serve as Brand Chef for HAKS (Hospitality and Kitchen Solutions).

Looking ahead, I'm collaborating with Tanko Snacks Pvt Ltd to launch

a new line of food bars this October. I'm also involved in a landmark river cruise project in Guwahati featuring five F&B outlets - the largest of its kind in the region. Additionally, new restaurant projects are underway in Bhopal, marking the next chapter in my culinary journey.

How has your culinary philosophy evolved over the years?

My journey began with a deep respect for the basics - repeating techniques until they became second nature. Working at Nimantran during my diploma days, earning ₹900 a month, I learned discipline, hierarchy, and consistency under the guidance of senior chefs we fondly called 'Ustad jis'.

Exposure to diverse cities and cultures transformed my view of food - from sustenance to storytelling. Pan Asian cuisine, especially Thai, taught me the art of balancing flavors. My time in Michelin-starred kitchens deepened my commitment to blending authenticity with modern presentation.

Transitioning into education at the Indian School of Hospitality, I discovered the sociology of food and the power of mentorship. Later, in the FMCG space with Hector Beverages, I learned to think beyond the plate - about scalability, nutrition, and consumer behavior.

Today, through my consultancy firm Snowy Foods Real, I see chefs as custodians of tradition, sustainability, and future talent. My philosophy now rests on four pillars:

Respect - for vendors, staff, and stakeholder values

Rise - empowering teams to grow through guidance

Resonance - crafting dishes that reflect origin and soul

Responsibility - toward customers, sustainability, and mentorship

It's no longer just about what I create - it's about what I pass on.

How do you balance tradition and innovation in your approach to Pan Asian cuisine?

My approach to Pan Asian cuisine



begins with mastering the fundamentals - learning directly from local experts about ingredients, cooking techniques, cultural traditions, and philosophies like Yin-Yang balance. Understanding the origins of dishes across regions - Chinese, Thai, Japanese, Vietnamese, Malaysian - helps preserve authenticity while crafting meaningful culinary experiences.

However, innovation becomes essential when adapting to local palates and ingredient availability. For example, replacing pork with chicken or plant-based proteins in Indian menus, or substituting fish sauce with umami-rich alternatives to suit vegetarian preferences. I believe chefs are magicians - able to honor tradition while creatively meeting modern demands.

I also experiment with format and flavor. At Charcoal Grill & Mixology in Bangkok, I successfully merged Indian flavors with Japanese techniques. Today, I've pioneered a millet-based Pan Asian menu - replacing rice in sushi, noodles, and dim sums - to promote health, sustainability, and regional produce.

For me, innovation means preserving the soul of a dish while evolving its form to resonate with today's diners. It's about storytelling through food - rooted in heritage, elevated by creativity.

Can you share a defining moment in your career that shaped your identity as a chef?

I originally aspired to be an architect, unaware that the culinary world

P K TRADING CO/TRIMAX INTERNATIONAL

AN ISO 22000:2005, HACCP AND GMP APPROVED COMPANY



**INDIA'S FINEST GRAIN
A WORLD OF FLAVOR IN EVERY BITE!**

**India Oasis®
BASMATI RICE**



RICE MILLERS, PROCESSORS AND EXPORTERS

A STAR EXPORT HOUSE RECOGNISED BY GOVT. OF INDIA

278 RAJDHANI ENCLAVE, BRITANIA RANI BAGH ROAD, PITAMPURA, NEW DELHI-110034, INDIA

TEL: 00911147999841, MOBILE: 00919810149841, WHAT'S APP: 00919810048451

MAIL: INFO@OASISRICE.COM, OASIS@OASISRICE.COM, WEB: WWW.OASISRICE.COM

**OTHER BRANDS: AL WAHA - WAHA AL HIND - ZINDABAAD - PRINCESS RACHA - PANTHER - FADIE - PRIME GOLD
REIS RIZ ARROZ RUST RISO RIS**

could offer a creative canvas of its own. A family friend introduced me to the profession, and the moment I stepped into a kitchen, I was captivated by its possibilities. That spark led me to pursue culinary arts.

A major milestone came when I earned a place in the prestigious OCLD programme at The Oberoi, New Delhi - after three rigorous attempts. It shaped me into a resilient, detail-driven leader.

But the true turning point was transitioning from luxury hotels to the FMCG sector. Suddenly, I wasn't just cooking - I was innovating for mass consumption, balancing authenticity with scalability. It taught me that being a chef isn't just about technique; it's about impact, adaptability, and creating food experiences that resonate far beyond the plate.

What trends or themes do you feel take the spotlighted in the Pan Asian culinary space?

Pan Asian cuisine continues to evolve, blending deep-rooted traditions with modern sensibilities. Here are the key themes currently shaping its culinary landscape:

Return to Authenticity: Chefs are revisiting the origins of regional cuisines - embracing traditional ingredients, cooking methods, and cultural nuances. Lighter curries, delicate broths, and refined dim sums reflect a modern palate while honoring heritage.

Rise of Plant-Based Innovation: With conscious dining on the rise, Pan Asian dishes are being reimaged using mushrooms, seaweed, soy-based proteins, and plant-forward alternatives. This shift reflects a growing demand for sustainable and inclusive menus.

Fermentation & Gut-Friendly Wellness: Ingredients like Korean kimchi, Japanese miso, Filipino buro, and Thai nam prik are gaining popularity for their bold flavors and health benefits. There's a renewed focus on balance - sweet, salty, sour, spicy, bitter, and umami - alongside teas, broths, and herbal infusions.

Street Food Inspiration: Pan Asian street staples like bao, satay, banh mi, momos, and pad thai are being elevated in fine-dining and modern casual formats. These dishes evoke nostalgia while offering sophistication - much like India's own love for golgappa and jalebi.

Sustainability & Local Sourcing: Chefs are increasingly turning to indigenous produce and responsibly sourced seafood. This not only reduces carbon footprint but also enhances storytelling through regional flavors and nutritional integrity.

Experience-Driven Dining: Interactive formats such as Teppanyaki, hot pot, DIY bao stations, and omakase counters are redefining the dining experience - making it immersive, social, and

memorable.

Pan Asian cuisine today is a dynamic canvas - where authenticity meets innovation, and every dish tells a story worth savoring.

Which ingredient or technique do you feel is underappreciated in Pan Asian kitchens today?

Despite the richness of Pan Asian culinary traditions, several ingredients and techniques remain underutilised in modern kitchens - often overshadowed by speed, convenience, or global standardisation.

Ingredients That Deserve More Attention

Seaweed (Beyond Sushi Nori): Kombu, wakame, and even coastal Indian seaweed offer deep umami and nutritional value. Yet, they're mostly confined to sushi rolls instead of being explored in broths, salads, and stir-fries.

Fermented Soy Products: Tempeh, natto, and doenjang are flavor-packed and historically significant, but remain niche outside their native cuisines. Their complexity and health benefits deserve wider appreciation.

Indigenous Rice Varieties: Heirloom rice across Asia carries cultural and sociological significance. Sadly, modern menus often reduce rice to generic jasmine or sticky variants, overlooking its diversity.

Techniques Worth Reviving

Pounding (Thai "Tam"): Using a mortar and pestle to release oils and aromas in curries and salads creates unmatched flavor depth. Yet, it's a dying art in fast-paced kitchens.

Clay Pot Cooking: From Chinese casseroles to Vietnamese caramelised dishes, clay pots offer earthy depth and slow heat control - often replaced by stainless steel for efficiency.

Broth-Making: Stocks like ramen dashi, pho, and tom yum are foundational, requiring patience and layering. Unfortunately, shortcuts



(AN AOV GROUP COMPANY)

AOV AGRO FOODS PVT. LTD.

AOV Agro Foods Pvt. Ltd. is a part of AOV Group having exports turnover of Rs. 900 crores; caters to the ever rising demand for high quality, hygienic, fresh frozen meat and meat products. We supply fresh chilled and frozen packaged meat of high quality to hotels/restaurants, corporate houses, government, organic outlets etc.



✓ **State of the Art Slaughtering Facility**



✓ **Processing Healthy Animals**



✓ **Clean & Hygienic Environment**



✓ **Thorough Inspection & Testing for Microbial Bacteria**

✓ **Air Chilling of the Fresh Meat**

✓ **Storage at 0-4 C for Fresh and Below 20 C for Frozen Meat**

✓ **Food Grade Material used in Packaging**

✓ **Refrigerated Vehicle for Transportation**



CERTIFIED FACILITY



FSSC



FSSAI



APEDA



HALAL

WE FOLLOW BEST INTERNATIONAL PRACTICES FOR ENSURING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF ANIMAL WELFARE, FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY THROUGHOUT THE ANIMAL'S LIFE.

Head Office: C-22/25, Sector-57, Noida-201301, U.P. (INDIA) | Phone : +91 99990 25786

Plant: Village-Tapkan, Distt. Mewat (NUH) Haryana 122107

Email us: nitin@aovagrofoods.com | Visit us: <http://www.aovagrofoods.com>

often dilute their soul.

Smoking with Local Woods/Leaves: Traditional smoking with bamboo, tea leaves, or coconut husks adds nuanced flavor. This technique holds immense potential in modern kitchens but remains underplayed.

Reviving these elements can reconnect chefs with the roots of Pan Asian cuisine - bringing authenticity, depth, and storytelling back to the plate.

How do you decide when to use traditional cooking methods versus modern techniques like sous-vide or molecular gastronomy?

When preparing dishes rooted in history - like Thai curries or Japanese ramen - I lean toward traditional methods. Techniques such as hand-pounding curry pastes or slow-simmering broths aren't just processes; they're part of the flavor narrative. These methods carry authenticity that machines simply can't replicate.

However, modern techniques like sous-vide offer precision and consistency, allowing ingredients to shine in their purest form. They're invaluable when the goal is refinement or innovation.

Ultimately, it's about the guest's experience. If the intent is comfort and nostalgia, tradition leads. If it's surprise and sophistication, modernity takes the stage. I don't view them as opposites, but as complementary tools. Tradition gives food its soul; modern techniques offer precision and possibility. The real craft lies in knowing when to honor heritage - and when to innovate for today's palate and market.

What's your vision for the future of Pan Asian cuisine on the global stage?

My vision for Pan Asian cuisine is to see it evolve as a global culinary language—one that celebrates balance, diversity, and innovation while staying rooted in its rich heritage. I believe the future lies in honoring traditional flavors and techniques, while embracing modern, sustainable methods

such as sous-vide, fermentation, and ingredient-forward experimentation.

A personal passion of mine is integrating ancient grains like millets into Pan Asian cooking. By using them in noodles, dumplings, rice alternatives, and broths, we can make the cuisine healthier, more inclusive, and globally relevant.

Ultimately, I see Pan Asian cuisine as a universal language of food that acts as a bridge between cultures - one that respects tradition, promotes sustainability, and continues to inspire chefs and diners across the world.

How do you stay creatively inspired amidst the demands of a professional kitchen?

For me, creativity begins with continuous learning. I believe gyan sab jagah hai, use samajh kar accept karna jaruri hai - wisdom is everywhere, it's essential to observe, absorb, and adapt. I regularly explore local markets, seasonal ingredients, and global cuisines. New flavors, textures, and techniques often spark ideas that evolve into signature dishes.

Even amidst a demanding schedule, I carve out time to experiment—whether it's testing a spice blend, trying a fermentation technique, or refining a plating concept. I also find inspiration in traditional cookbooks; understanding the history behind a dish adds depth and often leads to modern reinterpretations.

My team is my backbone. I actively involve them in brainstorming sessions, tastings, and menu development—often crediting their creations by name. Diverse perspectives fuel innovation and keep the kitchen dynamic.

Ultimately, I see creativity not as a moment, but a mindset—one that balances discipline with curiosity. Even under pressure, it's this approach that keeps my food fresh, exciting, and deeply personal.

What's your approach to mastering consistency across multiple plates during high-volume service?

Consistency in a high-volume

CHEFS CHOICE

Favourite food: Steamed fish in black bean sauce

Favourite beverage: Any freshly squeezed juice

Favourite millet dish: Ragi dimsums

Favourite restaurant: Maruchi

Most admired chef: Chef

Saurabh Taneja, Chef

Navdeep, Chef Nek Bahadur

Favourite holiday destination:

Home Sweet Home

Favourite book: The ABC of fruit and vegetable carving by Xiang wang

Favourite movie: How to train your dragon (all parts)

kitchen is built on three pillars: preparation, discipline, and a clear system.

It begins with mise en place - every ingredient is weighed, portioned, and prepped to standard before service starts. Whether it's a sauce, marinade, or garnish, the foundation for consistency is laid long before the first plate leaves the pass.

Standardisation is key. I define precise steps, cooking times, and portion sizes, and train my team to execute them uniformly. Repetition builds muscle memory, so even under pressure, the process becomes second nature.

During service, I maintain quality through real-time feedback - tasting, checking plating, and using visual guides and portioning tools to ensure every plate meets the mark. It's not just about replicating dishes - it's about delivering a consistent experience, plate after plate.

How do you adapt classic Pan asian recipes for contemporary palates while preserving authenticity?

My approach begins with identifying the soul of a dish—its defining flavors, textures, and techniques. Before making any changes, I ensure these core elements remain intact to preserve authenticity.

I then experiment with healthier or locally available ingredients and modern techniques. For



GURUGRAM
UDYOG VIHAR

- 200+ elegantly designed **Rooms & Suites**
- Strategic location near **Cyber City & Airport**
- Award-winning all-day dining restaurant — **Café NH8**
- Fine dining & handcrafted cocktails at **The Brew Bar**
- Refreshing wellness experiences at **Spa & Pool**
- Fully equipped venues spanning **35,000 sq. ft.**
- **Signature Radisson hospitality** with global standards



SCAN FOR
MORE



For Reservations, call +91 78386 60020

Adjacent to Plot No. 406, Nh-8, Udyog Vihar Phase 3 Rd, Udyog Vihar III, Sector 20, Gurugram, Haryana 122016

instance, substituting refined rice with millets or using sous-vide to enhance protein texture—while keeping the flavor profile true to its origins. Presentation also plays a role in aligning with contemporary expectations.

Each adaptation is rigorously tested to meet guest preferences without compromising cultural integrity. The goal is to surprise and delight, while maintaining respect for culture & tradition.

Are there any signature techniques or tools you rely on to elevate texture and mouthfeel in your dishes?

Texture and mouthfeel are as vital as flavor in crafting memorable dishes. I rely on a few key techniques and tools to bring depth and contrast to every bite:

Mortar & Pestle (Pounding): Hand-pounding spice pastes, dressings, and sauces releases essential oils and creates a layered texture that machines simply can't replicate. It adds vibrancy and authenticity to the dish.

Blanching & Shocking: Quick blanching followed by ice shocking helps vegetables retain their crunch, color, and bite—essential for freshness and precision in plating.

Controlled Frying & Caramelization: Understanding the ingredient's nature is crucial. Whether it's wok tossing or deep frying, adjusting temperature and timing ensures crisp exteriors and tender interiors without compromising flavor.

Textural Layering: A technique I refined while working at a two Michelin-starred restaurant in London. I often combine contrasting textures—crunchy nuts, soft broths, chewy noodles, and silky sauces—to create a dynamic and lasting mouthfeel in every dish.

These techniques allow me to build complexity and elevate the sensory experience, turning each plate into a journey of textures and taste.

How do you see sustainability and inclusivity shaping the next generation of culinary

professionals?

Sustainability and inclusivity are no longer trends - they're transformative forces redefining the culinary landscape. I believe the next generation of chefs will be deeply influenced by these values, not just in what they cook, but in how they think, source, and engage with the world.

Future kitchens will prioritise locally sourced, seasonal ingredients to reduce carbon footprints and uplift regional communities. There will be a stronger emphasis on plant-based proteins, millets, and alternative grains, making menus healthier and more environmentally conscious. Techniques like root-to-stem cooking will minimise waste, turning scraps into sauces, stocks, or creative new dishes.

With advancements in kitchen technology, chefs will adopt energy-efficient appliances, water-saving systems, and renewable energy solutions, making sustainability a core part of operations.

Inclusivity will also take center stage. Culinary spaces will become more welcoming - embracing talent across gender, ethnicity, and background. Collaboration with diverse communities will enrich menus with global flavors, interpreted with authenticity and respect.

Ultimately, the kitchens of tomorrow will be driven by purpose and progress - where creativity meets conscience, and every dish reflects a commitment to a better, more inclusive world.

How do you see platforms like the Indian Culinary Forum contributing to the growth of young chefs in India?

Though I've been part of the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF) for just six months, its impact is truly commendable. ICF is more than an association - it's a guiding force for chefs across India. Through workshops, competitions, masterclasses, and knowledge-sharing sessions, it equips young professionals with the skills, confidence, and exposure needed to grow and excel.

What sets ICF apart is its ability to celebrate emerging talent while bridging generations. Its competitions aren't just events - they're platforms for creativity, recognition, and transformation. Many chefs who now lead the industry, including myself, began their journey with ICF's encouragement.

I also admire ICF's global outreach. By connecting Indian chefs with international forums, it fosters cross-cultural learning while preserving our culinary heritage. It inspires us to innovate without losing our roots - preparing young chefs to become both custodians and ambassadors of Indian cuisine.

My message for every aspiring chef: ICF is where your passion finds direction, your skills earn recognition, and your dreams take flight.

What advice do you offer to aspiring chefs who want to make a mark in competitive culinary spaces?

I always say - Basics, basics, basics. Master your fundamentals: knife skills, cooking methods, flavor balancing, and ingredient knowledge. Trends may evolve, but strong foundations last a lifetime. Consistency is key. Learn to deliver excellence across high-volume services and high-stakes events. Replicating quality plate after plate is what sets great chefs apart.

Find your inner core. Experiment boldly to develop your own culinary identity, but never lose sight of the culture, origin, and tradition behind classical dishes. Respect time-honored techniques while embracing innovation. Learn from everyone - juniors, seniors, mentors, peers, even competitors. Every interaction is a chance to grow.

In today's connected world, success isn't just about skill - it's about visibility, collaboration, and mentorship. Share your journey, build credibility, and open doors for others. Remember, success rarely happens overnight. Every stage of your career lays the foundation for your future impact in the culinary world. ■



UNLEASH YOUR INNER CHEF

Turn your passion for food into a professional career.



Courses Offered

- Diploma in Bakery & Pastry Arts
- Diploma in Culinary Arts
- Certificate Course in Bakery & Pastry Arts
- Certificate Course in Culinary Arts
- Weekend Programs in Bakery & Pastry Arts



M-72, Connaught Place, New Delhi - 110001

+91 88825 95959 | www.tedcoeducation.com | info@tedcoeducation.com

FLAVORS OF FELLOWSHIP



RAHUL AHUJA
Dean Academic Affairs,
CII Institute of Hospitality

Chefs as Community Builders

In today’s evolving hospitality landscape, chefs are stepping far beyond the confines of their kitchens to become educators, cultural custodians, and agents of social change. In **Flavors of Fellowship**, **Rahul Ahuja** - Dean of Academic Affairs at CII Institute of Hospitality - explores how chefs are redefining their roles by building communities through food. From curbing waste and hunger to preserving culinary heritage and fostering inclusivity, this article celebrates the chef as a connector, a storyteller, and a leader. It’s a compelling vision of how every meal can be a catalyst for unity, empowerment, and transformation.

Food transcends mere nourishment, it is a powerful medium of expression - embodying culture, evoking memories, and fostering connections. Globally, each shared meal narrates a unique tale of individuals, locales, and intentions. In contemporary times, the role of chefs has evolved expansively beyond traditional kitchen boundaries. They now embrace multifaceted positions as educators, emissaries of cultural heritage, proponents of environmental sustainability, and pivotal agents in cultivating community bonds.

From Kitchens to Communities

Chefs were once perceived primarily as skilled craftsmen focusing on culinary expertise and aesthetic appeal. In contrast, the contemporary chef operates within a broader sphere of influence. There’s a growing recognition among today’s chefs that their craft has far-reaching implications touching upon the lives of farmers, vendors, local communities, economic structures, and ecological balance, reflecting a more comprehensive and interconnected understanding of their profession.

Chefs orchestrating community meals with surplus food otherwise bound for waste concurrently address hunger and curb food waste, embodying leadership that intertwines social and environmental consciousness.

Likewise, partnerships with local schools promoting wholesome eating among youngster’s nurture potential for lasting impact. Leveraging food as a catalyst, chefs unite people across varied backgrounds, transcending societal splits and reinforcing communal connections, fostering unity and togetherness through culinary initiatives.

Chefs as Storytellers of Culture

Every dish carries history, but it is the chef who interprets that history for the present. Chefs today play a vital role in preserving culinary traditions while also reimagining them for younger generations. For example, reviving forgotten grains,



SPECIAL OFFER!



Stock up on

NEW ZEALAND'S PREMIUM LAMB & MUTTON MINCE

***OFFER VALID UNTIL STOCK LAST**

 **Abhishek Pramanik +91 80974 26677** |  **orders@qualitynz.com** | **T&C apply***

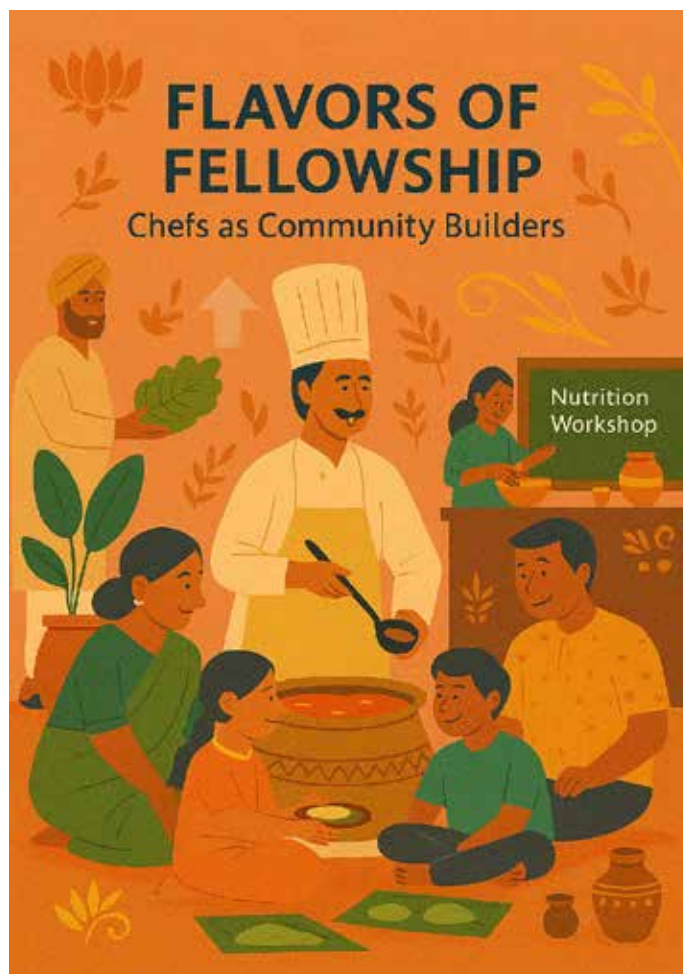
traditional cooking methods, or indigenous ingredients not only enhances the dining experience but also reconnects communities to their heritage. When chefs bring these stories to life in restaurants, community kitchens, or even digital platforms, they help people appreciate the value of local identity. This storytelling role is essential in an age where globalisation often threatens to erase regional uniqueness. Chefs, therefore, become custodians of culture, building community pride and resilience.

The Chef as an Educator

Beyond serving meals, many chefs now actively teach. They host workshops on nutrition, sustainable sourcing, or affordable home cooking. This educational role is especially powerful in underprivileged communities, where access to healthy food and knowledge can be limited. Consider a chef who leads a weekly cooking class at a community center. The participants are not only learning recipes but also gaining confidence, improving health, and fostering relationships with neighbors. In this way, the chef becomes a catalyst for empowerment. Education through food has a multiplying effect - knowledge spreads, families benefit, and communities thrive.

Building Bridges Through Collaboration

Chefs often act as connectors between different groups - farmers and consumers, policymakers and citizens, businesses and NGOs. By choosing to source from local producers, a chef can strengthen the local economy while promoting sustainability. By collaborating with policymakers, chefs can advocate for better food systems, including



farm-to-school programs, urban gardens, or improved food safety standards. Events like food festivals, charity dinners, or community feasts showcase this bridging role beautifully. When chefs curate menus that highlight local farmers, invite artists to perform, or use the platform to raise funds for social causes, they demonstrate how food can unite diverse communities around shared values.

The Chef of Tomorrow: A Vision

Looking ahead, the role of the chef will only expand. Tomorrow's chefs will not simply be culinary experts but holistic leaders who blend creativity with conscience. They will need to embrace sustainability by prioritising local sourcing, zero waste, and ethical practices. Leverage technology to share knowledge - through virtual cooking classes, recipe platforms, and social media storytelling. Foster inclusivity by ensuring food is accessible

and welcoming for all, regardless of income, background, or ability. Be global yet local, connecting international culinary innovations with the preservation of regional traditions. The chef of tomorrow will thus be as much a community builder as a kitchen artist.

The Power of a Meal

At its heart, the role of a chef is deeply human. Food nourishes the body, but the act of preparing and sharing it nourishes the soul of a community. Whether through education, sustainability, cultural preservation, or social activism, chefs today are proving that their influence extends far beyond the plate. In a world often divided, the table becomes a place of unity - and chefs are the hosts. They remind

us that every meal can be more than food: it can be a bridge, a story, a lesson, and a seed for collective growth. As we explore the future of food, it becomes clear that the chefs of tomorrow will not just feed us. They will connect us, empower us, and inspire us to imagine stronger, more compassionate communities - one dish at a time. ■

About the Author



Rahul Ahuja brings over 27 years of extensive experience in both operations and academics within the hospitality industry. He is a thorough professional, highly regarded for his expertise in mentorship. His core strength lies in setting up academic and operational systems in hospitality schools. Known for his bold leadership qualities, Ahuja has played a significant role in shaping top hospitality management institutions in India.

India's First Luxury Five-Star Hotel, Pure Vegetarian

- **Recognized Globally by Sattvik Certification, Singapore.**
- **Spacious 216 elegantly designed rooms spread across 6 floors, offering ultimate comfort.**
- **Exclusive Conference Rooms.**
- **Grand Venues – Over 60,000 sq. ft. of banqueting space with versatile halls that can host from 30 to 2000 guests.**
- **Gourmet Dining – 5 speciality restaurants serving exquisite Pan-Indian, Far East Asian, and Pan-European cuisines.**
- **Wellness & Leisure – World-class spa, salon, gym & swimming pool.**
- **Entertainment Redefined – A private 52-seater theatre for a unique cinematic experience.**

Country Inn & Suites By Radisson, Sahibabad, East Delhi NCR

For any queries Please Contact: 0120-4180000, 8010050123

FROM JOB SEEKER TO JOB CREATOR



CHELLESWARA RAO
B.Sc, MBA, Ph.D. Scholar
Training & Placement Officer
India Culinary Institute – Tirupati

Cultivating Culinary Entrepreneurs in India

In an era where the hospitality industry is rapidly evolving, the role of culinary professionals must expand beyond the kitchen. Today’s chefs are not only creators of flavor but also potential creators of opportunity. As India faces the dual challenge of unemployment and economic transformation, culinary institutes have a unique responsibility: to nurture entrepreneurs who can lead with innovation, resilience, and purpose. This article by **Chelleswara Rao**, Training & Placement Officer at India Culinary Institute, Tirupati, explores how culinary education can empower students to become job creators - through entrepreneurial pedagogy, government support, and a mindset shift that embraces leadership and self-reliance.

The Mindset Shift: From Going for Job to Giving Job

To foster economic growth, India must cultivate a culture where individuals aspire not just to secure employment but to generate it. This transformation from job seekers to job creators holds the key to sustainable job creation and economic self-reliance. Culinary entrepreneurs play a vital role in this transformation. They identify problems, create solutions, and generate employment not only for themselves but for others. By identifying market gaps, creating solutions, and launching ventures - from restaurants and bakeries to cloud kitchens and food startups

- they contribute meaningfully to both local and national economies. Whether through startups, small businesses, or social enterprises, job creators fill market gaps and contribute to the local and national economy. This highlights the transformative potential of encouraging more people to become job creators.

Countries like the U.S., China, and Israel have shown how entrepreneurial ecosystems drive innovation and job creation. In India, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) already account for a significant share of employment. The culinary sector, with its vast potential, must follow suit.

Designing Entrepreneurial Pedagogy in Culinary Institutes

Culinary education must evolve to include business acumen and entrepreneurial thinking. By graduation, students should be equipped with knowledge in:

Food Consumer Preferences: Understanding health-conscious, eco-aware, and digitally savvy customers.

Modern consumers are more health-conscious, environmentally aware, and digitally connected than ever before. There is growing demand for organic, vegan, gluten-free, and sustainable food options. Entrepreneurs must stay ahead



Partner with us

FROZEN GOURMET RANGE OF PRODUCTS

(Partial list)



Why Chef's Choose **AROI**

- ✓ Industry leading Chef's curated authentic recipes
- ✓ Consistent portions without compromising quality
- ✓ No preservatives, blast frozen for long shelf life
- ✓ Wide Range: Crystal Dimsums, Baos, Spring Rolls, Pockets and more.....



#startupindia

Arroy Foods Pvt Ltd

2nd FLOOR, D-10, SECTOR-80, NOIDA - 201305, U.P., INDIA

info@arroyfoods.com | +91 9811132262

(‘AROI’ is a registered trademark of Arroy Foods Pvt Ltd)

of these trends and be willing to adapt their offerings to meet evolving expectations.

Startup Costs & Operational Expenses: Budgeting for equipment, licenses, rent, and inventory.

One of the most immediate and significant challenges is the high capital investment required to start a culinary business. Whether opening a restaurant, food truck, bakery, or cloud kitchen, entrepreneurs need funds for equipment, licenses, location rent, and inventory. Unlike some other industries, culinary ventures often require a physical space, which adds to the financial burden.

Risk Management: Navigating high failure rates and adapting to market disruptions.

Perhaps the most sobering challenge is the high failure rate in the food industry. Studies show that a significant percentage of food businesses close within the first two to three years. Economic downturns, pandemics, or sudden changes in consumer behaviour can derail even well-planned ventures.

Food Delivery Ecosystems: Building sustainable models that balance convenience with environmental responsibility.

The use of plastic packaging, high fuel consumption for deliveries, and food waste are raising environmental concerns. There is growing pressure on companies to adopt sustainable practices, which may increase operational costs. The food delivery ecosystem in India has enormous potential, but it is riddled with operational, structural, and economic challenges. For long-term success, new entrepreneurs must focus on building sustainable models through better employee welfare, environmental responsibility, technological innovation, and strong vendor relationships.

Market Saturation & Competition: Innovating to stand out in crowded urban food landscapes.

The culinary industry is highly

saturated, especially in urban areas. New restaurants, cafes, and food delivery brands are constantly emerging, making it difficult to stand out. Customer loyalty is often fleeting, and trends change rapidly. Entrepreneurs must constantly innovate in terms of menu offerings, service experience, and marketing strategies to keep their brand relevant and attractive.

Facing Challenges as Students

College life is a training ground for resilience. Students must embrace challenges as part of growth. A positive mindset - "I will try my best" instead of "I can't do this" - fosters problem-solving and confidence. Mistakes are not setbacks but lessons. Seeking help from mentors, peers, or faculty is a sign of maturity and strength. Let students remember that failure is not the opposite of success, it is part of the process. They should learn from mistakes, instead of getting discouraged by low marks or failure. As a mentor, one should review their work to identify what went wrong and make a plan to improve and give them a chance to try again. Every mistake is a lesson that makes the student stronger. Strong students know when to seek help. Whether it's from teachers, friends, or parents, asking for support or clarification shows maturity, not weakness.

Government Support for Culinary Entrepreneurs

India offers a range of schemes to support aspiring food entrepreneurs:

PMFME Scheme: 35% credit-linked subsidy up to ₹10 lakh for micro food enterprises.

MUDRA Loans: Financial support for small vendors, food trucks, and home-based services.

Mega Food Park Scheme: Infrastructure, training, and incubation support via NIFTEM and IIFPT.

GeM Portal: Opportunities to supply food products to government institutions.

ODOP Scheme: Promotes district-specific food products with branding, export, and marketing support.

Ease of Doing Business: Simplified FSSAI licensing and single-window clearance in select states.

Conclusion: A Delicious Future Awaits

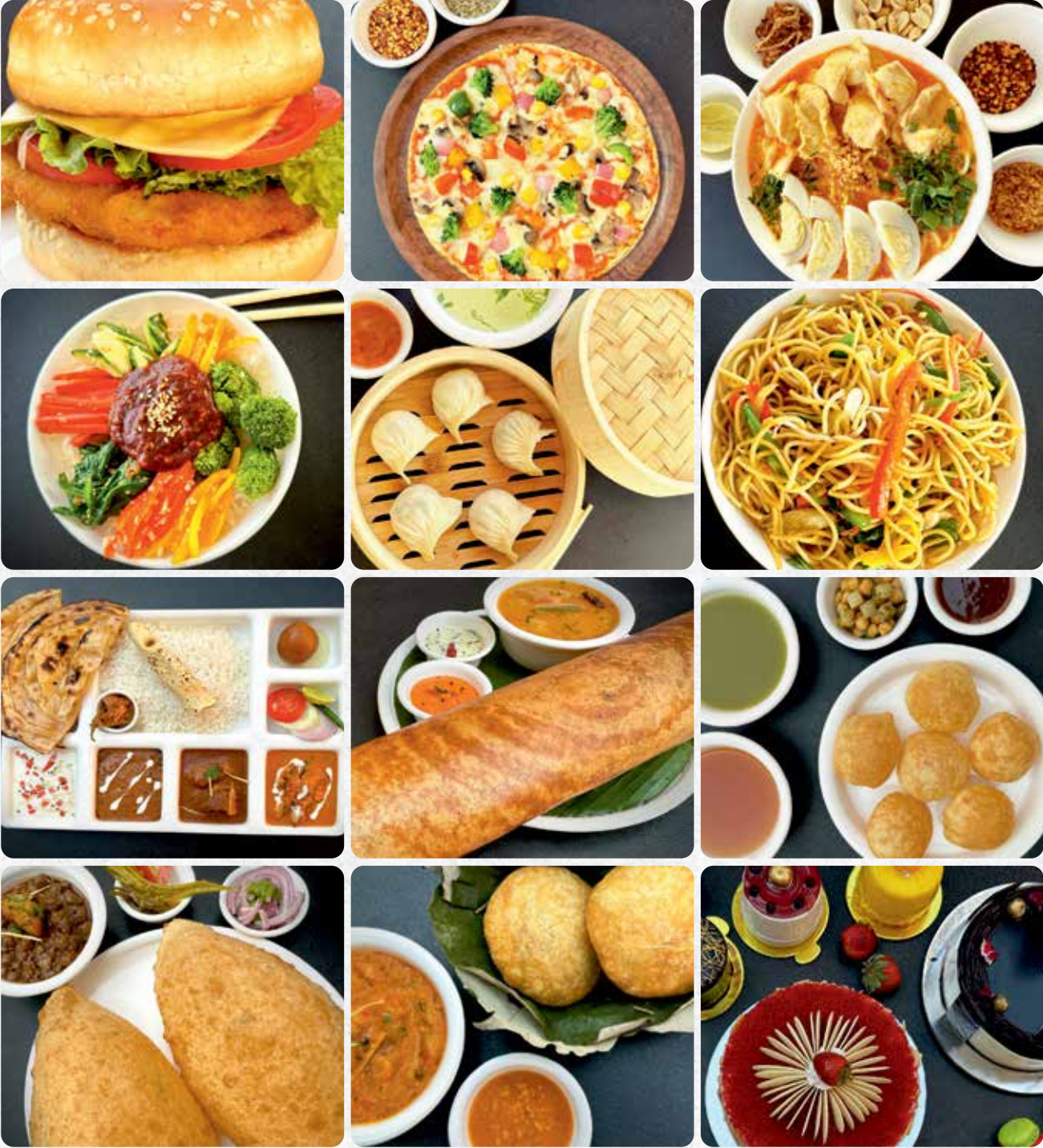
Culinary professionals must be empowered not only to cook but to lead. By integrating entrepreneurship into culinary education and leveraging government support, India can build a generation of chefs who are creators of jobs, culture, and community impact. The journey from kitchen to catalyst begins with a mindset, and a mission, to give jobs, not just get them. ■

About the Author



A seasoned hotelier with 20 years of experience across top brands like ITC Kakatiya, Marriott Hyderabad, and Quality Inn

Visakhapatnam, Chelleswara Rao blends operational expertise with academic excellence. A graduate of IHM Hyderabad, with a Master's degree from Bharathiar University, and a certified hospitality trainer by Costa Cruises, he has taught at leading institutes including the Culinary Academy of India and NITHM. Currently a research scholar, his specialisations include menu engineering, wine pairing, and cocktail demonstration. He has served VVIPs including the Malaysian President and Indian dignitaries, and mentored over 2,500 students - shaping the next generation of hospitality professionals with skill, precision, and passion.



WESTERN GRILL

NOT JUST CHAAT

BAKER'S BASKET

ASIAN WOK

INDIAN TAWA

SIPS & SCOOPS

HABITERIA at India Habitat Centre
Ground Floor, Core 4B, Lodhi Road,
New Delhi 110003. T: 011 4366 3150
(Entry from Gate No. 1)



THE FUTURE PLATE

GLOBAL CUISINE AND CHEF LEADERSHIP IN 2030

The “Future Plate” will belong to chefs who dare to explore - with conscience, creativity, and courage.

As we look toward 2030, the culinary landscape is set to evolve more rapidly than ever before. The challenges and opportunities of the next decade will redefine not only the way food is prepared and consumed but also the way chefs lead, inspire, and influence the world around them. The “Future Plate” will be more than a dining experience; it will be a reflection of sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation on a global scale.

The Plate as a Planetary Responsibility

Climate change, food insecurity, and resource scarcity will place sustainability at the center of every dining table. By 2030, we can expect global cuisine to focus heavily on:

Local and Hyperlocal Ingredients: Chefs will rely on nearby farms, urban gardens, and even rooftop agriculture to reduce carbon footprints.

Plant-Forward Menus: With protein alternatives like lab-grown meat, insect protein, and next-generation plant substitutes, the balance will shift toward environmentally responsible dining.

Zero-Waste Kitchens: Chefs will champion circular practices, where every peel, stem, and seed is valued, reimaged, and served creatively.

Chefs of the future won't just create dishes; they'll act as guardians of the planet.

Technology as a Culinary Ally

The rise of artificial intelligence, precision agriculture, and kitchen robotics will change the way food is created and experienced. By 2030, expect to see:

AI-Powered Menu Design: Algorithms predicting diner preferences and nutritional needs.

3D-Printed Food: Customised plating and nutrition at the press of a button.

Smart Kitchens: Energy-efficient, data-driven, and tech-integrated spaces where human creativity is enhanced by machine precision.

But the soul of cooking will remain human - technology will support, not replace, the chef's artistry.

Global Palates, Local Roots

Globalisation has already made every city a melting pot of cuisines. By 2030, food will be even more about fluidity and fusion, but with a deeper respect for origins.

Chefs will embrace culinary diplomacy, using food to bridge cultural divides.

Indigenous ingredients and forgotten traditions will find a place on international menus.

Street food inspirations will gain equal footing with fine dining, blurring lines between the casual and the elevated.

The future of global cuisine will be a celebration of diversity, where respect for authenticity coexists with fearless exploration.

Chefs as Leaders Beyond the Kitchen

Tomorrow's chefs will wield influence far beyond food. By 2030, they will be:

Educators: Shaping culinary schools to focus on wellness, sustainability, and entrepreneurship.

Community Builders: Using kitchens as platforms for social change, feeding the hungry, and supporting local economies.

Advocates: Speaking on issues like food justice, climate action, and inclusivity within hospitality.

Wellness Guides: Designing menus that nourish both body and mind in an era where health will be paramount.

The chef's toque will symbolise not just mastery in cooking but also leadership in creating a better, more equitable world.

The Chef of 2030: Traits That Will Matter

Looking ahead, the most successful chefs will embody:

Curiosity: A relentless drive to learn and explore new ideas.

Adaptability: The ability to pivot in response to crises, from pandemics to supply chain disruptions.

Empathy: Leading teams with care, prioritising wellness and mental health.

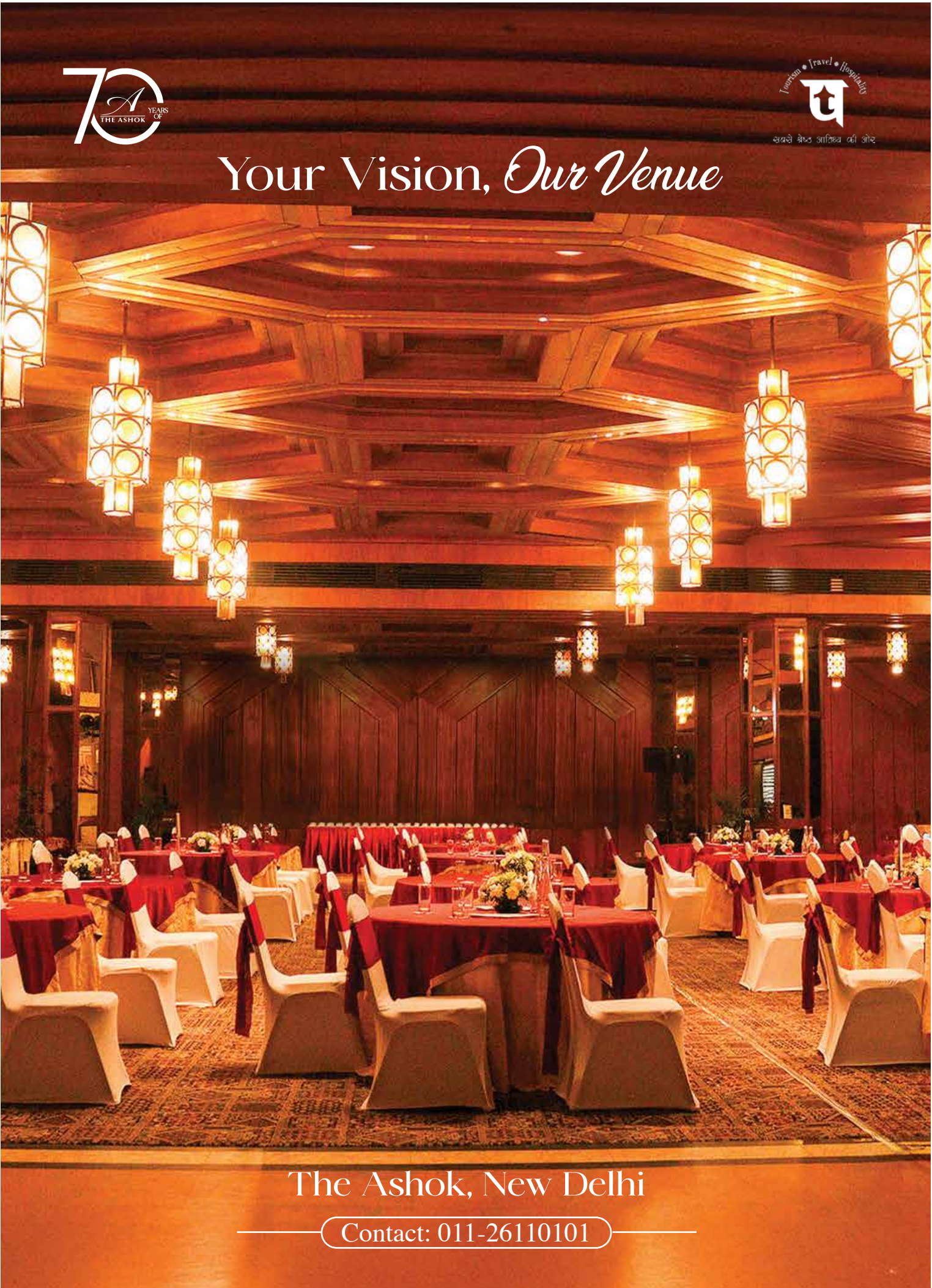
Global Awareness: Sensitivity to cultural, environmental, and ethical dimensions of food.

The chef of 2030 will be equal parts artisan, activist, innovator, and mentor.

The Future Plate is Ours to Shape

As we imagine the dining experiences of 2030, one thing is clear: the plate of the future will be far more than a vessel of nourishment. It will be a canvas for cultural dialogue, a stage for sustainability, and a symbol of leadership that extends beyond the kitchen.

The future is not just about what we will eat, but about how food will connect us, heal us, and drive us toward a more inclusive and responsible world. ■



Vital[®]

The Cooking Oil for New Generation

व्हाइटल[®]

नई पीढ़ी के लिए खाना बनाने का तेल

The healthy way to tasty cooking



**स्वास्थ्य हो या स्वाद,
जाने दिल की बात**



Vital[®]

Mahesh # 9911175353 & Pankaj # 9891744824

E mail : natureogipl@gmail.com