

FOOD CULTURE AND CUISINE OF MANGALORE AND UDUPI

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the Culture, Cuisine and demography of Mangalore and Udupi and its multiple communities and practices and In order to explain the cuisine of this region and methods to prepare these food items this paper also gets into the cultural practices, weather, migration and caste. Findings from this tell how deeply community, geography and food habits are connected.

INTRODUCTION:

Humans have a very deep relationship with food which is also an evolutionary one. According to the World Economic Forum, earliest humans consumed a diet of fruits, seeds and occasionally meat but now food is consumed in various different styles. Cuisine is a style of cooking that is unique to a country, community or an establishment. Food and cuisine have evolved throughout history and studying about the food habits of people can tell a lot about their life, history, economic condition, geographical location, culture and it can also show the influence of global trade, colonization and war on the people. Thus it is fair to say that food has a direct relationship with these factors that has influenced and shaped people and their surroundings, this is the reason why people have a strong sense of belonging and faith with their cuisines and they use food as a tool to continue their cultural identity. In India food has its presence in religion, legends and even folklores. People worship food and tell stories about what food their deity loves savoring. In India cuisines have changed over a period of time with various changes happening around it and cuisines all over the country are very different and diverse. The way of cooking and style of serving can tell a lot about the place and the culture. But all over the country there are various stories around food, they can be general stories about how these recipes came into existence or any historical event or folklore related to it or they can be stories that each individual has with food and cuisine. These stories are very intimate and personal to those individuals and are built through their memories and experiences that only they have lived which makes these stories very unique and it's these stories about food and cuisine that fascinates me. My main focus will be on Udupi and Mangalore region of Karnataka.

MANGALORE AND UDUPI

These are coastal cities in the state of Karnataka. They lie on the west coast with a lot of beaches and also have the presence of thick and lush greenery. It has a very diverse population with people of various communities like Bunts, Mogaveeras, Billavas, Saraswat Brahmins, Catholics, Shivalli Brahmins, Byeari Muslims etc. The languages spoken here include Tulu, Kannada, Konkani and Byeari.

The cuisine here is also very diverse with each culture having its signature dishes. The Tuluva dishes include kori rotti, chicken sukka, chicken gassi, neer dose, fish curries like bangude puliunchi etc whereas dishes like pork bafat, bokra masache polov, sanna dukra maas are commonly seen in Catholic families and alcoholic beverages like kali which are caste occupation of Billava community.

Objective:

To understand and analyze the culture, cuisine, society and geography of Mangalore and Udupi with the help of oral history

'The Omnivorous Mind' by John S Allen says that food plays a very important role in human memory. For many native people of Udupi their earliest memory would be them trying to pluck raw mangoes with theri Ajjii(Grandmother) by using a long stick attached with a knife at the end. These plucked raw mangoes are then used to make chutney. Grandma told them to stand in a corner and observe what she was doing and learn from it. She chooses what mangoes would be good to eat and plucks them with the help of the knife. These mangoes are then taken to the kitchen and mixed with various other ingredients like green chilli, ginger, coconut and are put in a vatunche dhonda (grinding stone) . With a pinch of salt it is ready to be eaten and that heavenly feeling of having chutney with boiled rice in thier Ajjii's kitchen is something that many still remember and cherish.

Back in the day, work was divided amongst the family members in these regions as there were many people living under a roof. There would be more than thirty people in a household, which was very common back in those days, so each individual had a specific role either in the field or inside the house. Few used to predominantly work in the fields and help in the agricultural activities or other important activities like cutting grass to feed the cows or collecting jackfruits or betel nuts fallen on the ground in their estates. Bhaath (paddy) is the most grown crop and my ladies along with her sisters-in-laws and workers used to transplant the paddy seedlings and harvest the crops by singing native songs in Tulu language. During this time they also used to grow other vegetables and crops which were either sold in the market or used for cooking. These crops include peppercorns, green gram, ginger, betel nut, banana, etc. During the summer, they used to grow Uddu, Yellu, Hesperu, and huruli.

Modernisation brought a drastic change in these households. Migration from the village to the city led to many people migrating to Bombay in search of jobs. Compared to life in the villages of Udupi and Mangalore, life in Bombay was better and much easier as in villages, there was lack of employment and the income was scarce for the family due to the number of members in the family. Further, due to many villages in Udupi being in a hilly terrain because of the western ghats, there was a scarcity of flat fertile land which caused a problem to the members of large families. Many of the family migrated to the city of Bombay in order to find work and most of them ended up with blue collar jobs and many of them ended up working in hotels. People of the region who owned restaurants preferred to employ their people from their hometowns because the trust was high and this helped in employing a lot of people. Because of people moving out, the roles in the household changed and many women working in the fields had to take up the responsibility of the kitchen. Many of them had learnt basic cooking when they were young but they got married at a very young age. They all remember the first dish that they made in their house. It was ghawan (neer dosa) and chutney, ghawan or neer dose is a very common breakfast throughout the region.

1 NEER DOSE (GHAWAN)

Ingredients:

*Rice

*Grated coconut (optional)

*Salt

*Water

1. Wash and rinse the rice in clean water and soak the rice for a few hours to make it soft.
2. Add the soaked rice to a mixer or a grinding stone to make the batter and keep adding a bit of water as required.
3. Batter should have a perfect texture and consistently thin. Add freshly grated coconut(optional) and grind again to make a smooth batter.
4. Add a pinch of salt to the batter and mix well.
5. Heat a pan, brush a little oil (you can use a half cut onion). As the pan gets hot, stir the batter and put a ladle full

of it and spread it and make sure that the pan is on medium flame.

6. Cover the pan with a lid and cook the dosa for a min. When the dosa is cooked, do not flip the sides, just remove it from the pan.

CHUTNEY

Ingredients:

*kaathil

*Dry chilli

*Tamarind

*Salt

*Ginger and onion

1. Add grated coconut with dry chillies to a grinder or mixer and grind them.
2. Add water as required to make sure that the chutney has a thick texture to it.
3. Tamarind gives a sourness to the chutney which already has dry chillies in it and helps in balancing the taste. So, add a little bit of tamarind.
4. Add salt as per taste and other ingredients like onion and ginger can be added but Ajji does not.

Ghawan is also enjoyed with Kaatle Che Rus.

KAATHLE CHE RUS

Ingredients:

*Coconut milk

*Godd(jaggery)

*Elaichi

1. Grind the grated coconut and then add a little water and squeeze it to get coconut milk.
2. Add jaggery to this and mix it very well.
3. Add a little bit of elaichi for taste and smell.

Serve the Ghawan with the orange chutney or kathlie che rus and enjoy eating it.

People say that Ghawan is not a complicated dish and its easy for her to make. They soak the rice the day before and prepare the batter in the morning and making the batter in the vatunche dhonde (grinding stone) is an art which they have mastered with years of practice, it requires patience and knack. People also believe that it is a light food and gives an instant boost of energy which is helpful for people as they go out to work in the fields and it is also said that it is easily digestible and hence a very good choice when someone has diarrhea.

Scientifically speaking, one neer dose has somewhere around 60 calories in it making it a great alternative for people trying to lose weight. Neer dose has proteins, carbohydrates and fats. It has carbs in it which gives energy and also it has low fibre which makes it great for digestion.

It is very common in Brahmin households because they are from conservative families where consumption of meat is not encouraged. Being said that back then meat was not as easily available and affordable like it is now.

In India, the relationship between people and food relates to the caste system and it is still prevalent in the county. Dr B.R. Ambedkar said that food habits segregate people into three different categories: first are people who do not eat meat, second are people who consume non-vegetarian food except beef and third and last are those who consume beef. Each community developed a cuisine on economics of survival by using resources that were available and tried to get the maximum from all the available resources. People of the lower caste copied the recipes from the upper castes, but at the same time the ingredients used in the food and the style of preparing food was different from the upper caste says author and Dalit entrepreneur Chandra Bhan Prasad.

2.CHICKEN GASSI

Ingredients:

- *Byadgi chillies
- *Cinnamon,
- *Black mustard seeds
- *Dhaniya(coriander)
- *Methi dana fenugreek seeds
- *Lavang (clove)
- *Black peppercorn (sabut kali mirch)
- *Jeera (cumin seeds)
- *Turmeric powder (haldi)
- *Kaathli (grated coconut),
- *Lassun (Garlic,peeled and chopped)
- *Chinch ache sol(tamarind paste)
- *Kaanda (onions) chopped
- *Coconut milk
- *Boneless chicken , cut into small pieces
- *Curry leaves

1. Add coconut oil to a tawa(pan), as the oil gets hot add jeera and saasve(mustard). Stir it for a while and then toss in byadagi chilli and again stir it. Slide in cinnamon, dhaniya, methi, cloves, black pepper and cumin seeds.

2. Keep stirring them until they got roasted and you can smell that aroma, add halad(turmeric) and stir. Remove these

spices and keep them in a bowl

3. Once the roasted spices have cooled, put them in a mixer or vaatunche dhonde(grinding stone). Add roasted kaathli with chopped garlic to the mixer. Add chinch ache sol (tamarind paste) to it and make sure that the sol is pretty thin.

4. Grind it until it becomes a fine paste and after that if required add a bit of water.

5. Add coconut oil to the tawa and keep it at medium flame . Once the tawa is hot, add onion and sauté till it turns golden brown. Add the spice blend to the onions and stir it vigorously for about 1 minute. If the masala paste is looking thick and dry, add two tablespoons of coconut milk.

6. After 1 or 2 mins add in the chicken and mix it well with the masala paste and sauté it for a couple of minutes until you see the change in the texture of the meat.

7. Continue the heat at medium, coconut milk, water depending on the thickness required and the quantity of meat and salt. Keep stirring it occasionally, till the chicken is perfectly cooked and the gassi has thickened and the aroma spread all over the kitchen. It takes 30 mins for this to cook. Add the curry leaves and mix it well and stir it on low heat for 2 minutes. keep the lid closed for a few minutes.

kombade che gassi with kori rotti is the best way to enjoy this authentic Dakshina kannada cuisine.

The lower caste dishes of this region are not widely known unlike the upper caste and the royal dishes which are known throughout the world. Their food is much more spicier than our food and what the ingredients are made into is a bit different. An upper caste perspective of food is different because they are vegetarian and a few in the region cook without using a few ingredients whereas the people of lower castes used most of the ingredients available to them. Modernisation has changed caste based cuisine and now everyone consumes different types of food. Caste is a very passive aggressive issue in the region, unlike the northern states people are not very aggressive about their caste but it plays a very important role in elections and marriages. Upper caste people like brahmins, bunts and even the jain community were landlords and very powerful groups. The caste and class hierarchy was also the reason why naxalites were high in number for a few years in karkala and other regions.

One of the most popular non vegetarian delicacies of mangalore is chicken sukka or kori sukka. Chicken sukka is a very common non veg dish from this region and people love it and it's made in households and it is also commonly seen in hotels. Compared to other non veg dishes this one is made a lot in my house and enjoy having it with Ghawan or neer dose. While researching about chicken sukka I learnt that chicken sukka was frequently served for the Daiva during the Bhoota Kola in my native and all around the region, the other dishes like kori pundi is also a frequent serving. Bootha Kola is the spiritual worship of Daivas or Bhootas.

BHOOTHA KOLA:

It is a very old ritual prevalent among the communities in Dakshina Kannada or tulu nadu. It is tough to tell when daiva aradhane started but it is known that it was started by the moolanivasis or the tulu speaking tribal communities. It is believed that the daivas that people worship are the spirits that protect them, their livestock and their village. It is said that the cosmos is divided into three distinctions : gramya or the cultivated lands, aranya the forests and bhoota which are the spirits. The gramya symbolises civilisation, and is in constant conflict with the aranya , which represents the untamed forces of the natural world. The aranya has its own inhabitants which are the wild animals, they tend to destroy and clash with the gramya but it won't happen until and unless the gramya invokes the spirits of bhoota which will protect the people and the villages.

Every place has its own daiva like Panjurli whereas the Grama daiva or the Daiva of the area can be different and it can be kalkuda varthe. People of that region have a very strong faith in Daiva and believe that if you ignore daiva something bad will happen to you or your family and it is important to note that these Daivas are not bad or good and the whole idea of these daivas was to provide justice. During the kola there is a part where people can ask the Daiva questions and the person in whom the spirit is present will answer. Daiva aradhane is performed between december and may and it's performed differently depending on the Daiva and the place. There is a socioeconomic layer to bhootha

kola also, people who perform daiva aradane are predominantly from the scheduled caste or scheduled tribe communities and in a few areas even though we dont stay in the old system where there were landlords and a few dominating groups, the villagers still demand that the former landlords look after the Bhoota-Kola worship of the village deity that happens once every year.

3. CHICKEN SUKKA

Ingredients:

- *Chicken
- *Onion
- *Cardamom
- *Salt
- *Coriander
- *Pepper
- *Cinnamon stick
- *Byadagi chillies
- *Garlic
- *Ginger
- *Lavang (clove)
- *Black peppercorn
- *Jeera (cumin seeds)
- *Turmeric powder (haldi)
- *Kaathli (grated coconut),

1. Roast the byadagi chilies in a pan and keep stirring them.
2. After 2 minutes then add coriander, jeera, pepper, and cloves and kaathli to it and roast them all for a few mins.
3. To the same pan add sliced onion and ginger garlic paste and stir it until you smell the aroma.
4. Transfer these spices to a Grinder or a grinding stone to make spice mix of all the masala items and ingredients
5. Heat a pan and add oil to it and onions to it and cook it till the onions turn golden brown.
6. Add chicken to the pan and let it cook for a while
7. Add the spice masala grind to the chicken and mix it well and keep stirring it. Add salt as per requirement.
8. Lower the heat and let the chicken cook and then add some more kaathli.

9. Close the lid and let it cook at a low flame for five minutes.

Korri or chicken sukka is best with ghawan or Neer dose.

A few rituals happen before the BHOOTHA KOLA and in one of the rituals a chicken or more than one is sacrificed in front of the daiva and later on the same chicken is cooked and served to the people taking part in the Bhoota kola.

The Jain community and the Brahmins use a kumbalakayi(pumpkin) instead.

Rooster fights are also part of the culture, even though they are not legal, before the Kola, people participated in chicken fights and in fact people took a lot of pride in their roosters. The people of the region have fear, love and dedication to the Daiva.

CLIMATE ,CROPS AND LANGUAGES

The climate of Mangalore and Udupi is very hot and humid in the summer season and it is not cold in the winter. From March to May the temperature goes up to Maximum of **40 °C** and from December to February it is usually between **30 °C to 15 °C** . The monsoons or mungaaru male is from late June to early october, with an average rainfall of more than 4000 mm every year.

Few crops are predominately grown in the region because the cliamte enables them to do so.

* **Paddy**: It is the most grown crop in the region and many people depend on it. The region has a lot of rainfall and the water supply is good throughout the year because of which Paddy is grown on a huge scale all over the watered valleys and the low areas which are well irrigated.

* **Betel or areca nut**: This can be frequently seen in the region and this is one of the most exported goods of that place.

* **Pepper**: this is a very important spice that is grown in the region. These are grown with the help of the areca trees. Pepper is grown parallel with the areca tree. People have used this to increase their income as they can grow more than one crop.

The vegetable crops grown in the region are **Bhatkal badne, bood kumbala kayi, genasu, kesadu gadde, ere kai, nugge kayi, agal kayi, thode kayi, maragenasu, boge kayi, suvarna gedde, chouli kayi.**

Leafy vegetables include kottambari **soppu, sabakki soppu, dantu soppu, basale soppu, arve soppu.**

Coconut is used in almost every dish in this region. It is said that kaathli helps to bring down the spiciness and masala flavour of the food and give it a sweet taste. It is also believed that coconut is very cool for the body and energizes and rehydrates you very fast by replacing the salts and ions. The region in between the arabian sea and western ghats has a very humid temperature which helps in the growing of coconuts. Factors for abundance of coconut in the region are :

* **Sandy soil**

* **High temperature**

* **High rainfall**

* **High humidity**

People of the region have adapted to this by using every bit of the coconut which can be seen in the lifestyle and cuisine. Coconut milk is used as a side dish or used to make dishes like chicken sukka, ghawan, chicken gassie etc. Grated coconut is added in almost every food item, coconut oil is used for cooking and the body, people have experimented coconut with everything for survival. Patholi is a dish made in the region which also uses coconut.

4. PATHOLI

Ingredients:

*Turmeric leaves

*Jaggery

*Beaten Rice

*Kaathli (grated coconut)

*Cardamom powder

1. Soak the rice for a few hours to make it soft. Add kathli, beaten rice, jaggery and salt as per requirement and grind it in a grinder. Grind it into a smooth paste by adding a little bit of water .

Less water should be used while grinding the batter as the batter needs to be thick and dry.

2. The turmeric leaves should be cleaned carefully and wiped using a dry cloth. The turmeric leaves should not tear because it will spoil the taste.

3. Mix freshly grated coconut, grated or chopped jaggery and cardamom powder in a bowl. The amount of jaggery is very important because it gives the sweet taste to the patholi and hence jaggery needs to be added as per requirement.

4. Take a clean turmeric leaf and then apply a small amount of rice batter at one end of the leaf and spread it till the other part of the leaf . The edges of the leaf need to be avoided.

5. Place the jaggery mix in the centre of the leaf. Patholi's taste depends on the amount of jaggery mix placed inside the patholi.

6. The leaves must be folded into half along the centre of the leaf.

7. Keep a vessel with water on a medium flame. When the water boils the patholis must be placed inside the steamer.

8. Close the lid and steam the patholis for 20 to 25 minutes on a medium flame.

Patholi is normally savoured as a sweet item.

Culturally Dakshina Kannada and Udupi are very diverse places consisting people of various religions and languages. The dialects of Tulu, the local language, change from one town to another and from one community to another. Tulu is spoken in mangalore is different compared to Tulu spoken in Karkala. Konkani spoken in a GSB family is different compared to what a catholic family speaks. There are many cuisines that are specific to a community and it also tells a lot about the community, pork bafat is one of them. Pork is not preferred by the Hindu or the Muslim community but the catholics love it. It's a must for catholic weddings and also for other occasions. The Konkani speaking communities in mangalore including the Hindus and Catholics are migrants from Goa and nearby regions, they migrated because of various hardships. Now there are many Catholics in the region. A very common dish in Catholic

marriage or roce is Pork baffat.

5. PORK BAFAT

Ingredients

- *Pork: normally boneless pork cut into smaller pieces is preferred
- *Onions: cut into cubes
- *Ginger
- *Garlic
- *Green Chillies
- *Bay leaves
- *Pepper
- *Cinnamon
- *Cloves
- *Tamarind and Vinegar
- *Bafat powder : it is available in the market or it can be made at home.
- *Kashmiri Long red chillies
- *Short red chillies
- *Dhania (coriander)
- *Jeera (cumin)
- *Pepper
- *Haldiche kudke (driend turmeric sticks)

Add all of these spices in a grinder and grind them to get bafat powder

1. Take a vessel and slide in all the fine cut pork cubes.
2. To the meat add the bafat powder and mix it thoroughly
3. Add onions, garlic, ginger, green chillies, bay leaves, pepper, cinnamon and clove sticks
4. Add a little bit of water and add salt as per requirement and cook the meat until its well cooked.
5. After this when the meat is well cooked add a little bit of tamarind and vinegar.

Pork baffat is enjoyed with sannas or boiled rice and a favourite of many mangalorean catholics. Mangalore has always been diverse even though politically it is a bit polarized the place and people still love its diversity.

Conclusion

Culture and cuisine is deeply connected all over the region of Mangalore and Udupi. The cuisine is deeply influenced by the community, weather, economy and availability of resources. Many practices and ways of cooking are very unique to this region and the people of this region. Mangalore, Udupi cuisine and culture is very unique, special and has a very rich history. The paper touched areas never discussed in the mainstream like migration into the region and outside, Bhoota kola, caste and agricultural output.

