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RAJASTHAN
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RAJASTHAN
Cuisine
Rajasthan has long been a major tourist destination, the prime subject of many wonderful travelogues, and for good reason. This incredible Indian state is a kaleidoscope of colours, landscapes, sounds and smells, a dazzling tapestry of myriad experiences. The one thing that stands out is the sheer strength and resilience of the people in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. These are a people who still hold on to their traditions of stoic honour and undaunted courage.
Poha is a staple breakfast option in Rajasthan
Though most famous for its impressive forts, stunning landscapes and rich cultural heritage, the food of Rajasthan stands as a behemoth due to its sheer creativity and exquisite taste.

**History**

It is an absolute marvel to witness the sheer ingenuity and artistry of Rajasthani cuisine, an enduring testament to the skill and grim determination of the people who have made their homes in this largely arid land. Rajasthan stands as a unique case study—where many ancient Indian civilisations flourished in the most resource-filled areas, these people created a powerful, complex, layered and regal culture among sandy dunes. The arid and often unforgiving land here made nothing easy—the paucity of large swaths of fertile soil meant fewer vegetables, and practically no leafy greens whatsoever; a definite challenge for a state that traditionally was, and continues to be, largely vegetarian.

It is an old adage that humanity conquered the world thanks largely to its ability to adapt to even the harshest environments and its resourcefulness in the face of woefully slim odds. Thus, where the folk of Rajasthan could not cultivate vast fields of food, they became champions of animal husbandry, nurturing and maintaining hordes of cattle despite the scarcity of grazing land. They found that lentils and legumes flourished in the semi-fertile land northeast of the Aravalis, and they made them an integral part of their diet. They discovered desert berries and
created magnificent dishes from them. Spices grow well even in the arid soil of this land, and are more pungent and potent because of it, making them the star ingredients in most dishes and imparting a wholly distinct flavour to the food.

An important fact to note is that different communities dominated different parts of Rajasthan, and while they used the same ingredients for the large part and even had many similar preparations, their different sensibilities created multiple branches of the exact same cuisine. The primary divisions are the Rajputs, who were a fiercely proud warrior caste famed for their code of honour and fearlessness in the face of battle; the Vaishnavs, who were followers of Vishnu and strongly devout in their faith; the Bishnois, a conservative spiritualist sect found mostly in the desert areas who believe in the conservation of all life; the Marwaris, an ethno-linguistic group who hail from the Marwar region and are prolific merchants; and the Jains, a
relative minority who ascribe to the ancient tenets of Jainism.

Ironically, despite the prolific popularity of the meat dishes in this culinary culture, the vast majority of inhabitants have always been staunch vegetarians. Only the Rajputs used to partake in meat and even then not frequently, usually preferring to keep a vegetarian and lacto-vegetarian diet. Chicken was not common at all and, hence, was a rarely used ingredient. Goat and lamb meat were widely used but they were still a bit of a secondary preference. Every other ethnic group and tribals such as Bhils, Bavris and Sansis in Rajasthan abstained from meat and partook in a rigid vegetarian diet that made use of local produce, both domestic and wild, and extensively relied on dairy products as both the base for curries and for cooking. The Jains, who were a fairly large subgroup and prominent in business circles, even abstained from most root vegetables, and fastidiously avoided onion and garlic, which are integral parts of most Rajasthani cooking but are believed by the Jains to embody the principles of greed, lust and anger.

Rajput kitchens tend to be non-fussy. The spices, for all their fieriness, are basic. All you need is red chilli powder, coriander powder, turmeric powder and salt. The cooking uses a considerable amount of garlic, and be prepared to peel and dice a lot of onions as well. With some curds or buttermilk, you’re set for cooking almost anything in Rajasthan—at least in the most basic way. The Marwari kitchen might fuss with dry fruits and other garnishes that money can buy, but the Rajput kitchen needs little else. The most important pans in the Rajasthani kitchen are dekhchi (recommended for meats), tapeli (for rice dishes and koftas) and kadhai (wok-like, excellent for frying).

Water is one of the most premium commodities in any desert economy, hence the use of water for cooking was considered wasteful and irresponsible. Instead, milk,
yoghurt and ghee were used as a medium of cooking. In the absence of a variety in vegetables, hardy grains like millet, wheat and gram became staples, along with lentils, legumes, beans and berries. The common households used the simplest of cooking paraphernalia to prepare the food. Each home was equipped with a basic stone or clay stove powered by wood and coal called an angeethi. In some of the more rural areas and among the nomadic tribes, food was cooked on stoves made of hardened mud and cow dung cakes were used as an inefficient but serviceable source of fuel. Since fuel like wood and coal was rare and expensive and often not available for days, food had to have a long shelf life and needed to be easily edible without requiring any heating or further preparation. These durable recipes were also preferred because of the necessity of travel for the menfolk, who were away from home for several days at a stretch, mostly for work or trade and sometimes hunting. Yet another reason was the constant state of internal conflict and war within Rajasthan as Rajputs eagerly engaged in frequent battles for land and honour. These battles often meant food supply routes were cut off, especially during sieges, so large quantities of food that could be preserved for long periods of time were prepared beforehand. That is why the magnificent and indomitable forts of Rajasthan had huge chambers for the storage of both raw ingredients and finished foods.

Interestingly, Rajasthani cuisine remains one of the most untouched fares in India, which means that there is relatively little influence from foreign trade, invaders and powers. This is despite the fact that there was extensive communication, ideological exchange and trade between the Rajput kings and the Mughal emperors. The Mughals heavily influenced Rajasthani architecture and even certain dressage and customs, yet the intensely popular Mughlai cuisine never truly infiltrated the cooking traditions of this glorious desert state. One of the reasons for this is the scarcity of the ingredients used in Mughlai cooking, which did not grow well in Rajasthan, as well as the lack of water. The

The iconic yet humble baati
few influences there are can be found in certain pulaos, the barbeque grilling technique used for making kebabs and, to an extent, the richness of meat curries.

**The Royal Heritage of Cuisine in Rajasthan**

The royal households of Rajasthan (called rajthikanas or rajgharanas) were famed for their lavish expenditure and their often ludicrously extravagant lifestyles. There was also a deep-rooted culture of competition where royal households vied with each other to see which was the most affluent and opulent. It was in the magnificent kitchens of these royal families that some of the richest and most flavourful dishes find their origins. Each royal gharana had a huge rasoda (kitchen) that usually had no economic restraints, and employed a minimum of 10 to 12 chefs, called rasoiyas.

Dry fruits were considered the epitome of delicacies and each king in Rajasthan had a particular allowance of dry fruits.
This system was so complex and rigid that one of the best ways to judge the might, influence and wealth of a royal family was through their dry fruit ration! One of the primary jobs of the rasoiyas was to cook new and innovative dishes using this ration and different ingredients. Food was a show of status, and the unrelenting one-upmanship among the royal kitchens is the stuff of legends. The royal breakfast itself had to consist of at least 10 dishes, and the displeasure of the king struck mortal fear in the heart of the cooks. It was during royal banquets that the true flair of the kitchen would see the limelight. When guests from neighbouring kingdoms were present, huge celebrations were held to honour them, with more than one hundred dishes being served. The central attraction would usually be something exotic that would have been created specifically for that celebration. These were presented in elaborate vessels made from the rarest of precious materials. Another interesting aspect is that the

Hotel Narain Niwas, where Thakur Amar Singh’s recipes still live on in the hotel’s royal thali
preparation of meat was the sole purview of men, and often the consumption of it as well. However, it would be a folly to believe that every single meal followed this kind of grandeur and ingredients. The regular daily fare of the royal family, while rich in variety and flavour, was usually vegetarian and incorporated simple ingredients prepared exquisitely.

These recipes were fiercely guarded by the chefs who would rather die than reveal their culinary secrets. This has led to a despairing loss of most of these incredible and unique recipes over time. Thankfully, there has been a strong resurgence of some of these forgotten recipes as the descendants of the royal families have finally decided to unlock their culinary vaults and share these recipes with the proletariat after centuries of keeping them secret. Boutique hotels and converted palaces in Rajasthan now hold workshops where they demonstrate the cooking techniques from royal rasowaras to domestic and international tourists who are enthralled to get a taste, literally, of the royal life. Jaipur’s Thakur Amar Singh had painstakingly curated 40 volumes of exclusive family recipes in Hindi, which are now on display at a museum dedicated to him. Several decades after the demise of this cultural and military stalwart, his family uses these recipes for crafting dishes in the royal thali at Hotel Narain Niwas and Royal Castle Kanota in Jaipur. This is just one example of a rapidly changing royal culture that is moving towards inclusion, a heartening sign for gastronomes worldwide.

**Flavours, Ingredients and Techniques**

The Rajasthanis cultivated hardy grains like millet, maize, jowar and ragi, as they used less water and lasted much longer in storage. The growth of wheat and vegetables...
was restricted to the more fertile areas. They learnt to use any and all resources for consumption, which is the basis for the mouthwatering delicacy ker sangri. Ker are wild berries which have a tangy and peppery finish, while sangri are wild beans that grow abundantly in the desert. They are cooked together in water or buttermilk along with an assortment of spices and are an integral part of Marwari cuisine.

Rajasthani cuisine is characterised by its extensive and impeccable use of spices, as they can be grown and cultivated easily. Condiments like tamarind, coriander, cumin, sesame, turmeric, ginger, garlic, cardamom, carom seeds, amchur (dried mango powder), cinnamon, nigella seeds, aniseed, cloves, asafoetida, dried fenugreek and, most importantly, red chillies, are used to create intricate recipes that burst with flavour, elevating otherwise humble ingredients to lofty dimensions. These are generally powdered in a heavy iron mortar and pestle just before they are added to the
food, so that they retain their coarse texture and natural flavour. They have mastered the art of drying condiments to preserve their flavour and longevity, and dried red chillies from Rajasthan are highly sought after across the country.

Further proof of Rajasthani ingenuity when it comes to adding flavour can be found in their incredible range of chutneys, from the tomato to the tamarind. They have also perfected the art of making papad, a thin, crisp disc-shaped savoury confection made from flour that can last for months. Snacks like the ubiquitous kachori, a truly delicious fried savoury or sweet pastry stuffed with various ingredients, most famously onion and mawa, are the stars of the street food culture here.

A faction of the cuisine that stands out from the rest is the vast range of Rajasthani desserts. Due to their prowess in the use of dairy, they have concocted scintillating sweets that utterly enchant the taste buds. These include the unique ghevar, a crunchy cake-like dish made from flour, soaked in ghee, milk and topped with sliced almonds, malpua (fried pancakes), kheer (an aromatic milk-based dessert), halwa (dense, sweet, pulpy confections) and laddus (ball-shaped sweets).

A technique of cooking particular to Rajasthan and inspired by the war-like nature of their expeditions is the pit cooking method, wherein the food is prepared in pits dug out in the sand. Another interesting indigenous practice is that of dungar cooking, wherein the prepared food is placed in a vessel (usually a bronze or copper pot) and a small container with a hot piece of coal is kept in the centre of the dish inside the vessel. Hot ghee is then poured onto the coal and the dish is covered for 30 minutes, giving the dish an intoxicating smoky flavour and aroma.

There is so much history and cultural significance involved in Rajasthani food that it boggles the mind. This cuisine pays homage to the spirit of the ‘land of kings’.
Considered one of the most flamboyant chapters in the annals of India’s culinary traditions, Rajasthani food is an ode to its people’s zeal and gastronomic ingenuity.

Standing amidst the large expanse of a sandy Jaisalmer, it could have been easy to think of Rajasthan as the land of the least. Not today. And a major credit for this transformation goes to its vibrant food culture. Easily one of India’s richest culinary smorgasbords, the brilliance of Rajasthani cuisine is that it is known today as much for its many regional variants as for its royal dishes. In fact, each delicacy here is a remarkable narrative of people’s zeal for survival, so often it is easy to think that many dishes in this chapter of food traditions have a royal origin. The proverbial apple doesn’t fall far from the tree either.

Take the case of Bajri Raab. A hearty porridge, this staple breakfast of farmers in Rajasthan is said to have been offered to Jodha Rao while he was on the run after losing his legendary citadel. Tradition has it that as he came to a Jat farmer’s house on the outskirts of what today is the township of Phalodi, in Rajasthan’s Jodhpur district. The lady of the house agreed to share her meagre meal with the Rao, who burnt his finger trying to eat from the portion that had warm ghee poured on top. Reprimanding him, the woman
Men bond over some nutritious camel milk.
said, “Stop making mistakes like Rao Jodha by going for the hottest spot...try the sides instead, which are cold.”

That lesson not only gave the raja the impetus to win back Mandore, it also went on to create one of Chittor's signature dishes, the Maans Bajri Soyeta. On the Mewar side, of course, the dish is made with makki instead of bajra. What is common between the royal dish and its frugal muse is the ghee and the character of it being a filling and nourishing one-pot-meal.

Fortunately, the Rajasthan culinary chapter is replete with such great examples that have either inspired or become an essential part of the royal food, and in so doing laid the foundation of the cuisine and its philosophy of being functional. One such masterpiece is the dal-baati-churma, or, as any proud Thakur will say, “Dal-baati and mirch-lehsun ki chutney.”

The simple rustic dish made in every household in Rajasthan today is believed to be at the core of the quintessential preparations of the kitchens here. The brilliance of this made-for-the-warrior and workforce meal is that traditionally it is prepared together. While the embers from the chulha are used to slow-bake the baati, on simmer is the dal with the dish of lehsun set on top to steam. A regular sight across the state—this method of preparing the meal not only saved time, it also cranked up the taste of a simple lentil dish that was usually tempered with dry chilli and ghee. It was a functional way of cooking as well, since it allowed people to use their time doing other productive work like farming, trading and even running the kingdom. Such was the effect of the slow-cooked food that often it was the ration that was made in bulk and part of the plethora of stores the armies carried with them to war.

But at the ground level, dishes like dal-baati-churma, Govind gatte, bina pani ke roti, goliya maans and khata (the traditional name of all forms of kadhi made in Rajasthan) shaped the kitchens of this predominantly arid land.
The Kitchen

Much like its food, which follows the philosophy of vibrancy in frugality, a staple kitchen in Rajasthan too is run along the same lines. The chulha is the centerpiece around which the cuisine has developed—and ideally, at any given time, there are two to three dishes, not just one, being prepared on this single equipment. An excellent example of this is Jodhpur’s famous Akha Baingan. Made of palm-sized eggplants, a produce of this region, the dish is prepared by first roasting the eggplants on the fire, before cooking them in a green tomato gravy, and then tempering with ghee. For best results, the roasting of the eggplant is done on the chulha that lends it a nice, earthy smokiness, further accentuated by the smoking of the same embers with a dollop of ghee. This interesting juxtaposition of flavours is today the benchmark of a well-made akha baingan.

Another important aspect of the kitchen are the earthen pots of varied sizes, each for a unique dish and purpose. The paraat or flat pan, for example, is used for all the kneading, soaking and even sieving, the copper lagan for heavy-duty cooking or for a dish that needs to breathe and dry quickly, such as the maans ki mokal, where the meat is cooked till it loses all its mois-
ture and is then enriched with spices and salt to be preserved for a week. Of course, there are the little ceramic *barnis* used for storing everything from fresh mint, coriander to kachri and even the spices, especially the chillies, and pickles. This aside, also used in preparing a typical Rajasthani meal is a *bonti* (a traditional iron carved knife with a footrest) and a series of bronze metal (*kansa*) serving spoons of different sizes. It is a long-held belief that a *kansa* bowl and plates are good for keeping the food warm and even make it more enjoyable. Of course, the royal kitchens marked the entry of silver and gold platters for serving up their meals.

Given the heavy reliance on milk and yoghurt to make most of their dishes, Rajasthani culinary traditions feature the use of an array of bowls that are made of special limestone sourced from Habur. Also referred to as Abur limestone, it has the unique ability of turning milk into good-quality curd in a day’s time and is considered worth its weight in gold. The most fascinating part of a Rajasthani kitchen is its underground storage space, where food and vegetables are stored for a long time. This indigenous practice uses the coolness of earth beneath the hot sand to preserve produce, especially garlic, onions and chillies—that today form the foundation of every dish—and, yes, curd too.

*Rajasthani mutton curry served with baati*
The Staples

Like the rest of India, Rajasthan too follows two forms of food culture: one based on produce accessible round the year—such as varieties of dried ker and kachris, vegetables like dried bhindi and desi cucumber as a flavorant, while grains like barley, wheat, sorghum and maize, groundnut and such form the primary ingredient; and the other that is made with fresh produce. In fact, the staples and their availability play a decisive role in identifying the way Rajasthan cooks. Take baati for instance. In Jaisalmer, which is closer to Sindh, the style of cooking is closer to the North Frontier style. Low on the ingredients list, the cooking here is more robust and often the baati is bigger in size. It is a land that has contributed heavily to the chutney variants available here, since eating roti and chapati is standard here. The meat dishes are more rustic as well, with a different kind of kachar maas to be found.

Marwar, which is the Jodhpur-Barmer area, has a more diversified cuisine that includes a lot of meat preparations, given that the best mutton is available here, and features the lavish and rich use of amchur, methi (fresh, dried and seeded), Mathania mirch (a primary ingredient of laal maas and others) and bajri.

In fact, some of the iconic dishes of this region are subz panchmel, dabaria (made of green wheat) and methidana ki sabzi (made with soaked fenugreek seeds and
curd). In fact, the Mewar-Marwar region is often considered to be the heartland of most meat dishes.

The most fertile region in Rajasthan, of course, is the Kota-Bundi belt. While the former is famous for its rich vegetation and fish, the latter is all about the best quality rice. The finest basmati in India comes from Bundi—a small area that is responsible for changing how we eat our biryanis, pulaoas and even plain rice. Fascinatingly, rice in Rajasthan is considered a peacetime offering and even while Bundi produces enough, the few times you would see a rice preparation on a spread is rare—and mostly on special occasions. Instead, the contribution of this twin-city has been more from the point of view of vegetable dishes like the rabodi—a rich, thin curry made both from papad (made out of lentils), as well as hand-rolled pasta (made out of maize cooked in buttermilk) and served with baati.

It is the Shekhawati region, however, that scores in making some of the most interesting Rajasthani dishes—not so much for the ingredients available, but because of the community that populated this old trading hub that trumped in developing a wide variety of kachoris, namkeens, sweets like ghevar and malpua and, of course, the mirch ka vada—an iconic street food. In fact, it is here under the Shekhawati rule that the famous railway standard—aloo sabzi and bedmi puri, made of urad dal—came to the fore, and with it the whole tradition of quick cooking.

**Fruits and Vegetables**

It is a myth that Rajasthan is all arid. At least not all year. There are months when the patches of sand are interrupted with a swathe of green that produces enough to fill the coffers of a state that has designed and developed its cuisine on locally available food—relying heavily on dried produce and staples. In other words, with a cornucopia of grains and lentils like barley, bajra, wheat, sorghum, maize, groundnut, sesame and pearl millet, and a series of dried vegetables that ranges from lotus stem, kachri, ker, sangri, bhindi, tinda, local cucumber and fogla, a special kind of seed that works much like chia and cools the body.
Interestingly, while the grains are a staple for most of the porridges made around the state, often paired with lentils to make the meal wholesome, the brilliance is in the use of the fresh vegetables available in the region. Most of the dried vegetables, in fact, are used in a fresh state as well along with a bunch of other leafy vegetables found in some parts of the state. The hara maas, for example, is made with spinach and other leafies that grow in the state; the panchkuta, which is the Rajasthani version of the Bengali delicacy, shukto, often uses most of the vegetables grown, including fresh ker and sangri as well. In some places you will find the kachri used too, which gives a nice tanginess to the dish.

As a fresh ingredient, kachri is treated like a vegetable that can be had on its own as a dish as well, but once dried it becomes a flavourant and a tenderiser, often used by cooks to soften a cold meat needed to prepare sula (barbeque). Likewise is the case of the sangri and methi that were made into sabzi. In fact, papad methi sabzi was one of the famous dishes

Above: Kachri (Cucumis callosus), the wild melon that is packed with anti-oxidants
from the Kota region. For vegetables that couldn’t be made into a dedicated dish, there was always the khata or kadhi preparation or the raita. A famous curd preparation is the **fogla raita**, had with parathas and puris in Rajasthan.

Fascinatingly, for a state renowned for its meat dishes, a common meal at every house was roti, dal, chutney and one vegetarian dish with curd. Dals—mostly chana and mung—were considered the third pillar of Rajasthani cuisine and played the dual role of being an important meal dish as well as sweet dishes and, of course, the key ingredients to the versatile gatta.

**Meat and Fish**
The safed maas is a unique preparation that was made for special guests, and contained dry fruits. In fact, so special was the preparation of safed maas—which used boiled onion paste, ginger-garlic paste, white pepper powder, cashew paste, and a tempering of whole red chillies—that its presence on the table was enough to signify the importance of the occasion and the guest. It was, and still is, considered to be a dish superior to the famed laal maas, which was often cooked to celebrate a victory. Thanks to its blood-red colour that came from the chili paste, it was once a dish that only male cooks in the household could make.

The lesser-known **kacher maas** and hara maas are two other variations. Though they had their genesis in the outdoors, the dishes soon found their place into the regular kitchen. Kacher maas was made using dried kachri and was a treat on any table.
Fish, compared to mutton and other poultry, had a limited run in Rajasthani food culture. But in the few places that had the access, fish dishes flourished—from plain fried with batter to gravies.

**The Bread Basket**
There is no denying that Rajasthan loves its breads. In fact, for a state that grows one of the finest varieties of rice in Bundi, its food grammar is directed towards the many varieties of rotis that can be made from all kinds of grains that are available in the state—and its variations. The baati is made from wheat, which is also the primary ingredient in bina pani ki roti, which is made of milk, ghee and whole-wheat flour; a thicker, more artistic version is called the khoba roti. There is also an array of puris, kachoris and parathas that use a wide blend of grains and pulses like the bedmi puri, which is made of urad dal, or the bejad ki roti that is made of multigrain flour. There is also tikkad, which is an ode to the makki ki roti; only this one has more spice and a generous use of onion, tomatoes and coriander in it. Sekma baatis, from the royal House of Mewar, are made with semolina or wheat flour and cooked over charcoal, giving them a distinct flakiness. This aside, Rajasthan has a wide variety of parathas and kachoris (and baked cornmeal buns made using papad kha) that can be had with an accompaniment or with chutney and pickle and curd, varying in size and thickness. The mix and match of rotis is often determined by the accompaniment it is had with.

**Oils, Spices & Herbs**
It is said that what Rajasthani cuisine lacks in terms of natural ingredients, it makes up with the deft use of just two ingredients: ghee and chillies. As one of the few states to have its own special chilli varieties, the cuisine does complete justice by exploiting their flavour profile to give dishes their unique flavour. While in khichdi it lends the right amount of warmth and aroma, in laal maas it is used to give the dish its fiery colour and name. Chillies in Rajasthani cuisine are, in fact, used as a coolant as well because the food made here is often hot on the palate.
And to get that hotness right, there is a variety of chillies that are used alongside the popular Mathania Mirch that is known for its fiery red colour. In fact, it is one of the reasons that the chilli is used widely in meat dishes as well as in panchkuta sabzi. Another ingredient that the kitchen cannot do without is garlic. One of the key flavourants of most dishes, the fresh garlic is used not just to ensure good aroma and taste, but also to keep the digestive system in good shape. This also explains the use of a lot of souring ingredients in cooking like amchur and kachri, which makes the dishes tangy and light.

Yet another ingredient that is used widely in Rajasthani cooking is fenugreek—both in seed form and fresh, as it lends dishes a contrasting bitterness. A smattering of cumin, turmeric and asafoetida completes the Rajasthani spice box.
When it comes to the medium of cooking the preference oscillates between ghee and mustard oil. While a lot of meat and vegetable preparations in Rajasthan are cooked with mustard oil, which lends the dish a unique taste profile, ghee, thanks to its high smoking point, has remained an equally favoured choice, although in most meals it is reserved for. The only exceptions to this are certain meat preparations like maas ka mokhal and, of course, sweets like halwa, ghevar, malpua and the wide range of soyetas where ghee plays the role of a tastemaker as well.

**Milk and Curd – The Lifeline**

If you have wondered how a state that is so devoid of water resources could create such rich gravies and kadhis, the answer lies in its milk resource, which is as unique as the dishes themselves. Here, while ghee is preferred made from cow’s milk, when it comes to dairy use, the milk of a goat or a camel is just as widely used, especially among the tribes. Milk, and its byproducts like paneer, curd and buttermilk, is not just a staple for people here (who love their curd in a kadhi, or on its own), it’s also used to create a variety of dishes including the bina pani ki roti. The thick flat bread uses milk to get the right dough consistency, resulting in a soft roti which is the perfect accompaniment to the slightly salty but delicious camel milk tea. The staple source of nutrients of the camel herders, camel milk, despite common perception, is often sweet with a fresh aftertaste. It is also light and makes for a lovely drink. It is often a better option compared to the overpowering goat’s milk that is also used widely in some parts of Rajasthan. When it comes to the larger use of milk and milk produce, however, cow milk is preferred to make rabdi, curd and buttermilk. In fact, buttermilk comes in handy to give gravies their distinct enjoyable sour taste as well.  

*Bina pani ki roti*
Curries are the cornerstone of the Rajasthani thali.
Curries

By Madhulika Dash

Curries are the ultimate indulgence in a Rajasthani thali. They are not just the finest specimens of the culinary ingenuity of the Mewari and Marwari cooks, but also a delicious representation of how food changed in Rajasthan through the ages—how political association, trade and growth transformed the way this erstwhile kingdom of warriors ate, enjoyed and even hosted.

So while there are practical dishes like ker sangri, gatte ki kadhi and dahi-pakora-kadhi, there is also the decadence of rabodi, subz panchmel (made with raw tomato, fresh kachri, kikoda that looks like karela, kakdi and torai/lauki) and aam ki launji that talk about Rajasthan’s rise as a powerful ally in India. Take the case of the dahi kadhi, a recurring base theme in most of the curries in the state—a tribute to Rajasthan’s very own ingenuity and that of besan, a primary ingredient of the trading community. Or kesar murg from the Shekhawati kitchens, which is a fragrant, rich chicken dish is an ode to the friendship forged between the royals of Rajasthan and the Mughal dynasty.

Another excellent example of Rajasthani curries is the innovative use of ingredients like gatte. This iconic steamed dumpling has been at the foundation of not only the famous gatte ki kadhi—a sublime, velvety dish that pairs beautifully with bajre ki roti and even safed palao—but also the shahi gatte ki sabzi that saw these bite-sized stubs filled with the finest quality dry fruits that trade and prosperity brought.
in. Legend has it that the dish was especially curated for a diplomatic table—and even today it is made during special occasions. A variation of this delicacy is the **pittod ki sabzi**, which is also made of steamed chick-pea dumpling shaped like Burmese tofu. A summer delicacy, this laid the foundation for numerous paneer-based dishes.

Of course, in the curry coterie are other variants that are known for their simplicity like the **dahi wale alu**. A palate-pleasing, mildly spiced light curry, dahi wale alu is, in fact, one of the few dishes including the papad ki sabzi that reminds one of the brilliance of the culinary minds here who could turn an accompaniment into a masterpiece of a dish much like **mirch ke tipore**, which showcases the love for green chilli and an innovative way to cook it. Here, the green chillies are chopped roughly and then tossed in a melange of spices like mustard seeds, fennel and dried mango powder; in any other state, this would be the very definition of a pickle, but in Rajasthan it is a tastemaker and an accompaniment rolled in one. In fact, **malai mirch**, a speciality from Udaipur, is yet another royal version that pays a tribute to Rajasthan’s every-lasting culinary affair with chilli, especially the plump green variety. In malai mirch, a dish that originated in the royal kitchens, the tempered chillies are slow cooked in a dollop of cream till they attain these unforgettable sweet-spicy notes. Over the years, while the basic dish saw the debut of vegetables like carrots, it also became the base to serve along with the meat, especially the **sula**, as it made for an interesting dip and palate cleanser.

The cleverness of Rajasthani curries is also hidden in its innovative use of fresh produce—both in its original state and dried. This gives each of their curries an amazing ability to adapt without losing much of their essence and taste. Like the Rajasthani **mogar**. Made with mung dal and raw mango, this staple of both royal and common tables is an exceptional example of simplistic taste and the culinary ingenuity of playing with different forms of ingredients. Another fine example of such food play is the ker sangri. A quintessen-
tial of any Rajasthani thali, this curry made with ker and sangri can be made into a dry bean curry as well as a saag, using the different leafy vegetables available in the market. The sangri, like gawar phali (cluster beans), can also be a part of simple dry vegetable as well, much like the besan wali kurkuri bhindi (okra) which is a well-spiced, besan-coated okra fried to a crisp, and serves as a brilliant add-on to a meal of buttered bajra roti and dal. Another interesting dish is **moongre ke alu**. Prepared using tender radish pods, this light curry, spiced with cumin seeds, asafoetida, chopped garlic and ginger and flavoured with amchur (now tomatoes), is quite a palate play in itself—and even better when paired with maize rotla or steamed rice.

Five ingredients come together to make **panchkutta**, an authentic desert offering. It is prepared with locally harvested beans, berries, seeds and fruits, tempered with spices. These include ker, sangri, amchur, gunda and kumati. The dish can be stored for a few days and serves as a great travel companion for Rajasthanis. Yet another delicacy worth trying is **karara**. This farmers’ dish of mung dal, buttermilk and spices is slow-cooked till it attains this thick, velvety consistency with a brilliant
taste. A close relative is the meenja, a rather curious dish of small globules made of besan (gram flour) spiced with salt, oil, and red chilli powder in it, mixed in spicy onion gravy.

The mangodi papad ki sabji is a Marwari kitchen classic that harks back to the early years of the cuisine where techniques, preservation and a keen sense of taste came together to create a dish with exceptional taste. It is one of those dishes that are both functional and artisanal, much like the chilke-wali sabzi and kakdi ki sabzi. Made of cucumber, this dish turns on its head the idea of cucumber being only a summer salad. Another impressive rustic dish is aloo udaygir, which is baby potatoes tempered with mustard seeds, fennel and crushed coriander, and chakki ka saag, which is steamed wheat dumplings cooked in a kadhi-like gravy.

Fascinatingly, when it comes to understanding curries and their importance in Rajasthan’s food culture, taking note of the meatier side of the affairs plays a crucial role. In fact, much like its Eastern cousin, Rajasthan’s food culture too believes in pairing different ingredients and grains with meat to
create hearty, delicious dishes. One such example is the kacher maas, which is prepared with dried kachri that gives the meat delicacy its softness and taste. Another example is the bajri maas soyeta, which takes a simple kheechda and turns it into one of the most nourishing, tasteful meals fit for a warrior. Also worth a try is the maas ki kadhi, a four-ingredient, curd-based delicacy that uses asafetida for its unique taste.

The legendary lal maas, which is known for its fiery red colour from the use of Mathania chilli, has several heirloom-status recipes, each of them unique thanks to not only how the ingredients are used, but also when and in what quantity. So one can find a lal maas that is spicy in one place and another which has a sweet aftertaste because of the amount of ghee poured on it!

And of course, worth mentioning is the safed maas, a technically complex dish which even today is made on special occasions and needs a special kind of skill to ensure that the dish maintains this delicate balance of spiciness and sweetness, without losing the bite of a meat dish in the process.
Regionwise Specialities: Curries

By Karan Kaushik

**MARWAR**

**Ker dak sabzi**

This lesser-known Marwari vegetarian delicacy used to feature in the royal main course. Cooked in a yoghurt-based gravy with the versatile berry of ker and sweet, juicy raisins, this preparation is known for its sweet-and-tangy flavour and is eaten with steaming bajra rotis.

**Rabori hara kanda**

Made in Marwari households on a regular basis, this vegetable dish has papad-style crumbs of dried corn flour flatbread — rabori — and spring onions — hara kanda — as its base. Asafoetida, along with spices like cumin and red chilli powder gives the dish its characteristic aroma and flavour. The recipe was created in response to the need for sustainable food in the hot and dry region, as raboris can last up to a year.

**Kabooli**

The aromatic Mughlai-Marwari fusion, first cooked up in Jodhpur’s royal rasoda, is layer-after-layer of textures and flavours. As you dig deeper under the surface, the pulao-style deli-
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cacy (but bordering more on biryani) reveals a hung curd-based gravy, fragrant rice with cashews and pomegranate pearls, and fried bread croutons. Modern servings often include a raita on the side, but the kabooli really does hold its own without anything on the side.

**Pittod ro saag**

Besan is a vital part of the aesthetic core of Rajasthani cuisine, and the Jodhpuri specialty pittod ro saag is ample proof. The preparation is simple: chickpea flour cake cubes tossed in an onion and yogurt gravy; the explosion of flavours, accompanied with the crumbly, mellow besan cubes, is an experience like no other.

**Cholia**

The green chickpea, or cholia, is relished across the state in a number of variations on the Cholia or Lilve Ki Sabzi. Marwaris, too, enjoy eating it with their rice — as methi chole — or as a flavourful vegetable curry that is scooped up with hot rotis. The green chickpea is a storehouse of health benefits—as its loaded with protein, vitamins A and C and folate.

**Khimpoli ki sabzi**

*Leptadenia pyrotechnica* is the botanical name of this desert herb. People of the Thar region use it for its medicinal value and also as a vegetable. Raw khimpoli is washed, cut and boiled. Oil is heated in a pan and a paste of chaach and gram flour is added to it. The boiled khimpolis are then added to this paste and cooked. You can also add grounded kachariya to it.

**Kachariya**

This is another dry desert herb and is eaten extensively in the Thar. The residents of Thar dry the herb and use it to make a sabzi. Jaisalmer is known for its sukhi kachri ki chutney, made using dry kachariya, palli, aakhi laal mirchi, garlic and cumin seeds.

**Chane Jaisalmer Ke**

Also known as dahi chane ki sabzi, this Jaisalmeri delight is a mildly spicy and tastes the best with missi roti. Red chickpeas are simmered in a curd gravy to prepare this easy-to-make dish. Special care is taken while adding the curd and gram flour mixture to the chana. To prevent the curd from splitting, stir continuously till the preparation comes to a boil.
**MEWAR**

*Mewari Khata*

Mewari Khata is where ordinary gram flour undergoes a transformation when the dumplings are brewed in a delicious medley of yoghurt gravy and Indian spices. The fried gram flour balls add a chewiness to the dish and can be enjoyed with roti or rice.

*Khada Desi Palak*

This mouth-watering vegetarian dish has a surprisingly healthy element as its star ingredient is spinach. Baby spinach leaves are stir-fried with whole garlic, cumin, and red chillies to create this nutritious concoction. Whip this preparation up in no time for a delightful healthy snack.

**Khari Daal**

Khari Daal, unlike the other lentil soups of India, is made of whole lentil fried with extra onions and typical Rajasthani spices. The tomato-onion masala combined with the lentil has an aromatic flavour. This preparation is commonly served with chapati.

**Papad ka Saag**

This is a common strongly flavored aromatic Rajasthani dish which you can also taste in Udaipur. It is basically made from papad — a kind of thin, crisp, disc-shaped food made of lentils. Easy and quick to make, all this tasty curry needs is chopped up tomatoes and onions plus a generous helping of yoghurt.

**SHEKHAWATI**

*Papad Mangodi ki Sabzi*

A twist to the much-loved papad ki sabzi, this dish has an added guest — moong dal mangodi. Unlike a regular papad sabzi, this dish avoids the use of onion, garlic and tomatoes, instead going for a yogurt-based gravy, tempered with mustard, cumin, chilli powder and other assorted spices.

**Jhajhariya**

It may use only four ingredients, but jhajhariya packs a flavoursome taste like no other.
pudding. Corn, milk, ghee and sugar come together to transform into a light, marvellous delicacy that is easy on the stomach. Slivers of raisins and nuts are often used for garnish, along with a touch of cardamom.

**Mangodi ki Kadhi**
One can never go wrong with kadhi, but have you considered making it from fresh butter-milk? Spicy sun-dried lentil dumplings are added to the kadhi, sometimes with vegetables like potatoes, peas, onions in either a tomato-based or yogurt-based gravy. As it cooks, pop in some roasted papads to make the dish aromatic and winter friendly.

**Fofalia ki sabzi**
It might be the bane of all kids’ tiffin boxes, but fofalia, or tinda — as it’s widely called — is actually a very healthy vegetable. Also known as baby pumpkin or ridge gourd, it is only available during monsoons. Sun-dried tindas can be infused with dry spices or plopped into a sabzi to bring out its earthy flavour. The Jain community favours this dish during *paryushana*, when leafy green vegetables are avoided.

**HADOTI**

**Daana methi ki sabzi**
This authentic Hadoti curry is made with dry fenugreek seeds, dried fruits like dates, cashews and raisins, and jaggery. The dish is both tasty and healthy. It also serves as a nice traveltime dish as it does not require refrigeration. To rid the fenugreek seeds of their pungent flavour they are first soaked in warm water and then washed well in running water.
You can either make it spicy or add jaggery or sugar to prepare a sweet and sour version.

**Paansi**
This traditional Hadoti dish is made using gram flour, dried chickpea leaves, split Bengal gram and corn meal. This healthy preparation is really easy to make and is mostly eaten in winters. However, it can be prepared throughout the year, since dried chickpea leaves are used. People of the Hadoti region usually store the leaves and cook the dish whenever they please.

**Besan ki sabzi**
This is the go-to recipe for a lot of Rajasthani moms when the vegetable stock in the fridge runs out or the kids want to eat something ‘different’. First, a curd-based tomato gravy is prepared and spices are added to it. A gram flour paste is then prepared and small drops of this paste are scattered all over the gravy and cooked on high flame. After some time, the droplets of gram flour rise and appear on the surface of the curry. These are then mixed with the curry and stirred well. Coriander leaves are used to garnish the spicy sabzi. Another version can be made by using chopped onion, garlic and green chillies, which are added to a gram flour based curry.

**DHUNDHAR**

**Dahi Bhindi**
Prepared with ladies finger, low fat curds and lots of spices, the Rajasthani dahi bhindi is as delicious as they come and a staple in most households of Jaipur. An easy to make dish, the nutritious and healthy offering uses steamed lady fingers, which are added to a curd based mixed which is rich in spices. Gram flour is also added to thicken the sabzi and to prevent the curd from curdling.

**Ajmer’s Sindhi Kadhi**
One of the most popular Sindhi dishes, the sindhi kadhi is a gram flour based curry, loaded with drumsticks, okra, cluster beans, potatoes and other vegetables. The spicy and tangy accompaniment tastes best with steamed rice. Ajmer has a vast population of sindhis and the evergreen sindhi kadhi has reached every household and restaurant.

**GODWAR**

**Gatte ki Khichdi**
While Rajasthanis are ardent lovers of their gatte ki sabzi, the people of Mount Abu, use
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the gram flour dumplings to prepare their own awesome version of the humble rice-based khichdi. A speciality of the hill town, the gatte ki khichdi is prepared with gatte and is rich in aromatic spices. What’s special about this offering is the fact that it is flavoured with coriander leaves, which serve as a taste enhancer. The dish is a favourite among tourists flocking the only hill station of Rajasthan.

VAGAD

Mogri Tamatar ki Sabzi

When visiting Dungarpur in the Vagat region, do try the Mogri Tamatar Sabzi, a popular offering at most restaurants and roadside eateries. Mogri is basically green and purple radish pods that resemble beans. A great source of vitamin B6, copper, magnesium and calcium, mogri is mixed with tomatoes and green chillies to make the spicy and tempting mogri tamatar sabzi.

MEWAT

Methi Mangodi

Mangodis are readily available in all parts of Rajasthan and the people of Mewat have their own version of the dish. Methi mangodi can be prepared quickly and easily. Adding moong daal mangodi balances the bitter taste of fenugreek while adding curd lends the dish a consistent flavour.

Gatte ki sabzi

The classic gatte ki sabzi enjoys a huge fanbase in the town of Alwar. Prepared with wheat flour, chickpea flour, yogurt and gram flour dumplings, the dish is super filling and every bit delectably spicy.
Cuisine of Rajasthan
By Karan Kaushik

If there’s one experience every tourist visiting the royal state of Rajasthan puts on top of the must-do list, it’s digging into a Rajasthani thali! When movie star Shah Rukh Khan sampled the glorious Rajasthani thali for the first time, he was so overwhelmed that he went on record to say he would visit Rajasthan at least once every three months just so he could eat a thali.

The thalis of Rajasthan are a true reflection of the unmatched hospitality of Rajasthani. No matter which region you visit in the desert state, its thali will speak volumes about the land and the people. The literal meaning of the word ‘thali’ is a round metal plate on which food is served. The word is also used to represent a pre-plated wholesome meal of a wide array of eclectic delicacies. What makes a thali meal special is the fact that it is not only balanced, but also caters to every taste known to the human palate—spicy, sour, sweet, salty, bitter and astringent.

Say ‘Rajasthani thali’ and it summons up visions of ghee-soaked baatis, spicy dal and sweet-and-crumbly churma. However, the various platters of Rajasthan go far beyond the dal-baati-churma narrative. Being the largest state of India, the culinary practices within the state vary greatly, depending on geographical and climatic factors. For instance, the arid regions of the desert belt such as Jaisalmer, Bikaner and Barmer use milk, buttermilk and butter to compensate for the scarcity of water, while the ravines of Chambal lack dry dishes like ker-sangri on their platter because of abundant water. Similarly, the thalis served in Udaipur and around the Mewar region are heavily influenced by neighbouring Gujarat.

By and large, a Rajasthani thali does serve a combo of baati (baked wheat balls redolent in ghee), panchmel dal (a mix of lentils) and a variety of rotis made from grains like sorghum, millet, maize and wheat flours. It also has helpings of gatte ki sabzi, kadhi, garlic chutney and churma, a sweetened
cereal, which could be made from either jaggery, wheat or mawa. To wash the spicy food down, there’s buttermilk or saffron thandai, depending on the season. One can say these are the essential elements.

However, the thalis of the royal kitchen, which you can tuck into at several heritage hotels across the state, will definitely have non-vegetarian dishes too. This is where the legendary Rajasthani lal maas, safed maas and jungli maas make an appearance. Relishing these generous meals under starry skies while listening to melodious folk singers with grand forts, opulent palaces or fresco-clad walls in the backdrop, is truly an unparalleled experience.

In former times, the princely families of Rajasthan would sit down on floor mats for their meals served in thalis made of silver and gold. Both these metals have curative properties. While gold possesses a high degree of resistance to bacterial colonisation, silver, on the other hand, is resistant to infection and fungus. The menu, usually decided by the royal physicians, was curated keeping the health benefits of the foods in mind. Then the chefs would step in to prepare the food to royal standards. The families would sit together on the floor to eat while keeping their thalis on a bajot, an intricately carved metal stool.

Rajasthan offers many variants of the thali—each special in its own right.

**Jaipur Thali**
In this variant of the Rajasthani thali, one would find bajre ki khichdi richly drenched in desi ghee as the show stealer. Giving it close competition are gulab ka churma or
malpuas, both divine. Crispy and savoury mung dal pakoras serve as a great starter and prepare you for the impressive meal ahead. Then there are seasonal vegetables like tinda tamatar and the evergreens including besan gatta, kadhi, ker sangri and chawli achaar along with the set menu of daal, baati, garlic chutney and papad. And, of course, different breads of maize, sorghum, millet and wheat. The meal is served, not on a metal plate, but in dona and pattal, made from the leaves of the sal tree. That’s how Rajasthanis always ate before plastic and metals took over.

**Jaisalmer Ki Rajputana Thali**

After you’re done enjoying your camel ride and marvelling at the tangerine desert sunsets, it is time to immerse yourself in the grand hospitality of Jaisalmer with its vibrant, one-of-a-kind Rajputana Thali. The exclusivity of this platter lies in the misri roti which overpowers everything else. Also, the ker sangri served in this platter is not a dry pickle, but a yoghurt-based curry cooked in oodles of oil to compensate for the lack of water. Another offering that stands out is the bajre ki roti, thanks to the sweetness and coarse texture of the locally grown bajra. You would be surprised to see how the meat is treated in three different ways. While the handi bhuta is a totally dry mutton dish, the simple and robust jungli maas cooked with basic ingredients, is richly soaked in ghee and the safed maas is creamy and buttery. Don’t expect a green salad though—you’re in the desert.

**Jaisalmer Shakahari Thali/ Shrinath Thali**

The Bhatia Marwaris of Jaisalmer are Vaishnavites who worship Shrinath Ji, an incarnation of Lord Krishna. This is precisely the reason that their food is *sattvic* in nature or simply put, sans onion and garlic. The food is served as *bhog* to Lord Krishna and can’t have *tamasic* elements, according to the scriptures the Vaishnavites live by. Tamasic food is believed to destroy the balance between mind, body and emotions. The first roti of a Jaisalmeri *shakahari* (vegetarian) platter...
is offered to the cow, which is considered holy by the Marwaris as it reside all gods and goddesses. The second roti is for a dog, representative of Yama, the god of death, and the third is for a crow, which symbolises their ancestors. Marwaris are staunch believers in the notion that consuming a vegetarian and sattvic diet inculcates sound moral values in an individual.

With dishes primarily cooked with home-ground spices, this thali is dominated by the aroma of heeng (asafoetida). Vegetables such as pungent radish leaves, or mooli ke patte ki sabzi, are suggestive of the scarcity of green leafy vegetables or GLVs in the region. The ker sangri in this platter is spicier than its counterparts eaten in other regions. Exclusive offerings include kachri ki sabzi; kachar fali; kheech, a khichdi prepared using whole mung dal and whole wheat; meethi kadhi, a yoghurt-based curry with fritters; and chana chawal, black chickpea curry with steamed rice.

**Jodhpur Thali**

Jodhpuris are partial to rabodia ki sabzi which is made from maize flour and chaach, (somewhat similar to papad ki sabzi); bajre ki roti; mung dal vadi ki sabzi, made using garlic, coriander leaves and heeng; chane ki dal and moth aur mung dal ki sabzi. The best way to savour a Jodhpuri thali is by crumbling the roti and soaking it with all the lentils and vegetable curries available. You can also eat them separately but preference should be given to the Jodhpuri style of eating. The crumbled roti, known as sogra ka choora, is undoubtedly the best part about this thali. Most of the offerings of the Jodhpuri thali are eaten during winters and are great sources of energy and boost one’s stamina too.

**Hadoti Thali**

What sets this one apart from its cousins is the presence of a sweet called katt and baafala, a variant of the baati. Baaflas are steamed wheat balls with added whole
spices like fennel and coriander seeds. They are boiled and roasted over a fire created by pats of dry cowdung to get that smoky flavour. Katts are barfis made from either sugar or jaggery. The panchdhaari sugar katt is made with five kinds of flour—mung dal flour, urad dal flour, wheat flour, gram flour and semolina, with added sugar and ghee. The jaggery version is made with bajra, jaggery and ghee topped with a thick layer of ghee and sugar, and sesame seeds which lend a nice crunch.

Other components in this platter include urad or arhar dal, the usual baati, chhoti kachoris, gatte ki sabzi and navratan pulao, which is richly garnished with cashew nuts, raisins, grapes and pomegranate seeds. To beat the heat, keri ka pana with namkeen bundis is also served as a beverage.

**Shekhawati Thali**

This thali offers authentic delicacies like sev tamatar ki sabzi, kadhi, gud ka churma, dal tadka, paneer-pyaz sabzi, garlic chutney and papad. The highlight, however, is the crumbled and ghee-laced Bejad ka roth, a large disc-shaped bread made from barley and chickpea flour. Too yummy for words!
Cuisine of Rajasthan
Lip-smacking Snacks

By Karan Kaushik

You know you are in Rajasthan when you see people pairing their usual dal roti with copious amounts of Bikaneri bhujia or a spicy namkeen mixture. Rajasthanis just can’t do without their helpings of chatar-patar. Snacks are their favourite travel companions, 4pm friends, midnight buddies, breakfast staples—and their pride. From the mirchi vadas and pyaz kachoris of Jodhpur to the king-sized Nasirabad ka kachora and flaky Kota kachoris, Rajasthanis snacks are about being crispy, crunchy and, most importantly, spicy. Snacks have been an integral part of the lifestyle of every true-blue Rajasthani. If you are attending a tourist festival in the state, you will come across people dressed in colourfull turbans and sporting lush moustaches battling it out over piping hot kachoris under the punishing Rajasthan sun. Yes, the state hosts kachori-eating competitions—such is the craze about snacks here. Most snacks are fried and weight watchers may be concerned when they are offered these savouries—but they’ll happily do that hour extra on the treadmill for these heavenly ‘cheats’.

Bikaneri Bhujia: Visit any home in Rajasthan and the hosts will welcome you with heaps of this spicy offering. Possibly Rajasthan’s biggest contribution to the culinary heritage of India, the Bikaneri bhujia is deep-fried moth dal vermicelli that comes richly spiced! The legacy of Bikaji and Haldiram has left its footprint all over the world—and how! You will be surprised to learn that, on an average, each worker in the Bikaji factory makes as much as 250kg bhujia every day and, yet, the supply doesn’t meet the ever-burgeoning demand. The word bhujia is derived from the word ‘bhunja’, which is said to have been coined by its inventor Haldiram-ji himself. ‘Bhunja hua’ means deep-fried in Marwari. What makes the Bikaneri bhujia special is the fact that it is prepared in Bikaner. The city’s dry climate ensures that the snack is free of moisture, while its groundwater’s salty
essence makes it what it is. Prepared using a mix of moth dal and chana dal, supported by a combination of spices such as black pepper powder, salt, asafoetida and others, the snack has found great popularity in many Indian homes. Bollywood A-listers endorse it, foreigners take loads back home. And Indians? Well, to put it mildly, they can’t have enough of it!

**Bikaneri Papad:** You must have come across at least one Bikaneri papad stall in every trade fair no matter which part of the country you are in. This pan-India favourite is made from split moong and black gram flours. Known for their crunchiness, these papads can either be roasted or fried. A perfect accompaniment, the papad adds zest to the everyday and often boring dal-sabji-roti meal. Toss in some finely chopped onions, tomatoes, cucumbers and add a squeeze of lime juice and, voilà, you have a yummy Bikaneri papad chaat to go!

**Mirchi Bada:** Travelling to Jodhpur and coming home without trying these sumptuous badas is a sin that you don’t want to commit. These badas need special Bhavnagari chillies, which are not spicy, but larger than regular ones. This makes it easier to accommodate the filling made with potatoes and spices. The chillies are then coated in a batter of gram flour and deep fried till golden brown. Anytime is a good time to relish these savoury vadas. However, the popularity of these golden, hot beauties
climbs to another level altogether during the rains, when an inordinate number can be demolished with ease.

**Pyaaaz Kachori**: This heavenly pleasure is a flaky ball made from white flour, and just a little bigger than the usual dal kachori. Layers of flour are kneaded with a generous amount of oil to give it that flaky texture. The filling is a mix of onions and potatoes which blend seamlessly with red chillies, whole coriander seeds, and dried mango powder. It tastes best when served with a tangy tamarind-and-jaggery chutney.

**Kota Kachori**: Anyone who has studied in Kota, still swears by its absolutely divine kachoris, which have travelled all the way to Bengaluru—and even Bangkok. They burn your lips, they set your tongue dancing, turn you teary-eyed and, just like true love, also make your heart content. Drenched in the aroma of asafoetida and served very crisp (*khasta*, Rajasthani-style) these kachoris will slay you at the first bite. Prepared with a filling of moong dal, garam masala, red chilli powder, asafoetida and whole black pepper, each kachori weighs around 85 grams. Best relished with a mix of coriander and tamarind chutney, and a handful of sev.

**Masala Baati**: Small round balls of wheat flour, generally served in a Rajasthani thali of daal baati as a snack. Wheat flour is kneaded with salt and oil. A spicy filling of potato, green peas, cashew nuts and raisins
Cuisine of Rajasthan is filled in the cavity created in the dough. They are then baked in the heat of cow dung cakes for a smoky flavour. The balls are then dipped in melted pure ghee and served with garlic chutney.

**Kadhi Kachori**: A thick gram flour-based curry, tempered with mustard seeds and curry leaves, served piping hot with moong dal kachoris. This kachori differs slightly from the dal kachori. The filling here is scanty as it is served with kadhi. Both the flavours do not overpower each other. Ajmer and Alwar offer the best kadhi kachori.

**Raj Kachori**: A big inflated crisp-fried ball of white flour is poked to make a cavity which is then filled with dahi vada, moong sprouts and boiled potatoes. This is then topped-up with chilled yoghurt, tamarind-jaggery chutney and coriander-mint chutney. It’s then heaped with chopped coriander, baby sev and some ruby pearls of pomegranate seeds.

**Samosa**: Rajasthan shares the countrywide obsession for the samosa. However, the Rajasthanis do it a tad differently. Being a royal state, even the samosas are filled with cashew nuts and raisins along with the regulation boiled potatoes and green peas. It goes without saying that the samosas of the royal state are also a bit bigger.

**Chhote Samose**: These mini versions of the samosa are as delightful as the bigger brother—the difference lying in the filling. Unlike their elder siblings, these are filled with a spicy, tangy filling of moong dal blended with red chilli powder, cloves and other spices. These have a long shelf-life and are packed for long rail journeys.

**Nasirabad ka Kachora**: It takes a family of four or a group of friends to finish one! As the name suggests, this one can be rightly called the
father of kachoris. If you are in Ajmer head out for Nasirabad to get your hands on them. A disc of deep-fried flour dough, filled with urad dal and spiced with red chillies and other spices, the kachora is so huge, it needs to be pricked with the tines of a fork before frying to prevent it from puffing up and to maintain its crispiness.

Kalmi Bada: A traditional Rajasthani dish, kalmi badas are prepared with chana dal, gram flour and a mixture of spices. The coarsely ground chana dal lends the lip-smacking snack its crispy brown texture. A favourite with picnicking families, this mildly spicy bada is best enjoyed with a cup of hot ginger tea.

Dal Bada: These are spicy fritters made with soaked and ground lentils. The choice of lentil depends on their abundance in the region where they are made. While the Shekhawati region uses chaula dal, Bikaner uses moth dal. A must-have on Makar Sankranti, these are also a part of wedding buffets.

Kanji Bada: The medu vada receives a Rajasthani twist when it is soaked in kanji. Powdered yellow mustard seeds, black salt, fennel seeds, asafoetida, red chilli powder, coriander powder and garam masala come together in cups of water and are kept in the sun for two days to turn the liquid sour. The medu vadas are soaked in this mixture for a few hours before serving.
Paneer Kofta: A quintessential Bikaneri snack, the paneer kofta encompasses every taste in the culinary spectrum. With every bite, one is bombarded with flavour; the crunchy deep-fried gram-flour batter gives way to a tangy-and-spicy mix of boiled and mashed potatoes, green chillies and green peas. What steals the show, however, is the balance provided by a layer of fresh creamy cottage cheese.

Gune: A Gangaur festival special, these are small deep-fried snacks made both as a savoury and a sweet dish. Gram flour is kneaded with salt, chilli powder and oil. A thin sheet is rolled out of the dough and cut in strips. The strip is wound around the finger and sealed along the edge. It is then removed from the finger and deep fried.

Pataur: A monsoon speciality, pataur is made with colocasia leaves (also called arbi patta). The leaves are layered with a thick spicy gram-flour paste. They are folded in a roll and then steamed. After they are cool, the rolls are cut in thick portions and deep fried till crisp. For a healthier version, they can be shallow fried with a tempering of mustard seeds.

Mathri: No festival in Rajasthan is complete without these oval-shaped, flaky, crisp and spiced biscuits. Rajasthanis also love their mathris as the quintessential 4pm snack or midnight saviour. Made from flour, water, salt and carom seeds, mathris don’t spoil for days. Some cooks use kasuri methi in their mathris.

Kadke: Kadke sev, or simply kadke, are a variety of sev namkeen and enjoy unmatched popularity all over Hadoti. Made with gram flour, asafoetida, coriander seeds, curry leaves and other spices, this snack is high on the spice and crunch quotients. Some homes and restaurants also use them to cook a special curry called kadke ki sabzi.

Laung Sev: A bit spicier than the famous Ratlami sev, these are an exquisite blend of clove powder and black pepper powder mixed with gram flour. They serve as a tasty garnish for poha or a perfect foil for kachoris and samosas.
Chabeni: Hot, spicy, tangy, salty, crispy and truly delectable, it’s a hot favourite in Bikaner. Ingredients include gram, potato wafers, fried lentils, groundnuts and bhujia. Spices such as black pepper, dry ginger, clove, nutmeg, red chilli powder, cardamoms and herbs lend it a one-of-a-kind flavour.

Bikaneri Chatpati Mungfali: This after-dark snack is best known to Indian foodies as karare peanuts. Prepared with a range of spices, these also serve as a great on-the-go snack. Peanuts are draped in a gram-flour batter and deep-fried.

Kota Mixture: An assortment of peanuts, coated peanuts, papri, gathia, long sev, spiced bundis and chana dal, the Kota mixture is one of the most spicy namkeens your palate will ever be blessed with.

Besan Papri: A Holi and Diwali speciality, the crunchy besan papris are flattened disc-shaped pooris. Gram flour is mixed with urad dal flour and a combination of spices. This mixture is kneaded into a dough. It is then rolled in a thin sheet, pricked and deep fried till the pooris turn red. Make sure to roll them as thin as possible for the best crunch.

Makke ka Dhokla: These are a must-have during winter as the corn boosts one’s stamina when the chill sets in. Maize flour is mixed with chopped green chillies and coriander, grated ginger, coriander seeds, red chilli powder, asafoetida and fennel seeds. Then the dough is kneaded and distributed in small balls that are then steamed. Mustard oil is drizzled on the steamed balls and served hot. To get the most out of these dhoklas, the steamed balls are cut in quarters. They are then garnished with a tempering of oil, mustard seeds and curry leaves. Best savoured with coriander-mint chutney.

Dhokla of Laana Seeds: A rare delicacy, this quintessentially rural snack is eaten around Jaisalmer. The dhoklas are made using the seeds of the Haloxylon salicornicum plant, locally known as laana. The seeds are mixed with bajra flour and scented with bur grass leaves.

Chana Zor Garam: This evergreen street-side snack is a hot favourite in Rajasthan, too. Made with flattened and deep-fried black chickpeas, the snack is supported by finely chopped tomatoes, onions, chillies and assorted spices.
Desserts

By Aroshi Handu

When talk comes round to Rajasthan’s astonishing culinary heritage, there’s plenty of fodder for debate. Though we instinctively summon up visuals of well-laden veggie thalis, and laal maas, cooked to perfection the old way, most Indians seem unaware of the delicious desserts and sweetmeats that are an integral part of Rajasthan’s culinary narrative.

What’s lovely is that, typically in a Rajasthani meal, the sweet dishes are served as part of the main course, to counter the lavish use of spices in the main dishes. Another little secret is the lashings of ghee that come into play. A Rajasthani dish without ghee is like a desert without a camel! All that ghee in their desserts drives one’s addiction to them—and doodhi jalebi fried in desi ghee or the creamy sweet-and-crackly sohan halwa are just for starters.

Ghevar, that delectable honeycomb confection, has every right to have a predominant role during festivities like Teej and Raksha Bandhan. The seamless marriage of ghee, milk and sugary syrup makes it as sinful as it can get—and you’ve got options too: Mawa ghevar, plain ghevar, malai ghevar…and most sinful of all, rabri ghevar. Gaund ke laddu, moong dal halwa, sohan halwa and atte ka malpua will haunt your tastebuds well after you’ve demolished what’s on the plate. And then there are the regional favourites. Jodhpur has its mawa kachori—a dry fruit and khoya-stuffed kachori which is deep-fried and then coated in sugar syrup. Ajmer’s ghee-laden sohan halwa will have you craving for more. Alwar is world-famous for its kalakand which has a crunchy cover and soft brown goodness inside. Bikaner will slay you with its melt-in-your-mouth rasgullas, while Udaipur’s soft-yet-crunchy dil jani will steal your heart away.

Malpua

Think soft, rich pancakes deep fried and soaked in saffron-flavoured syrup, and served with a topping of nuts: that’s malpua for you. Originally called apupa, it traces its roots from the Vedic period where once flat cakes made of barley flour were deep fried in...
Cuisine of Rajasthan

Clarified butter and then dipped in honey before being served. The modern malpua is made with sugar, milk and a hint of cardamom for that smoky-spicy flavour. Malpua is popularly garnished with chopped-up almond and pistachio slivers, or, for a more traditional twist, topped with rabdi. It is important to immediately soak the ghee-dripping malpua into the syrup so that it can soak in the flavour well. While this much-loved dessert has many variations throughout the country, with fresh fruits added or even being consumed with meat, trust the Rajasthani to keep it simple with sugar syrup and lots of ghee.

Ghevar

Made with flour and soaked in sugar syrup, this delicate sweet is somewhat tricky to prepare, but then it can be made with ingredients that one can easily find in any kitchen: flour, ghee and milk. The crispy fried disc is made of flour and clarified butter and dropped from a height into piping hot oil to form its classic honeycomb pattern. The trick lies in frying it with perfection. Once it’s cooled, it is topped with a sprinkling of saffron, dry fruits and a silver varak. One wouldn’t find ghevar in stores throughout the year, but mostly during the month of August which has festivals like Raksha Bandhan and Teej. The
monsoon season allows the ghevar to absorb the moisture from the atmosphere, giving it a good rise. Even though this sweet is laden with liberal amounts of ghee and sugar syrup, it isn’t too heavy on the stomach. Some say the ghevar made its way to India all the way from Persia but others dispute it for lack of evidence. It comes in myriad flavours such as malai, paneer and saffron and is traditionally presented as a gift by the parents of a new bride as a blessing for a happy, married life. When in Jaipur, Johri Bazar is the go-to place for a paneer ghevar so delectable you’ll find yourself trapped in its honeycomb goodness.

**Alwar Kalakand**
All you need is some fresh, full cream milk and a bit of sweetness to make this ambrosian burfi-like sweet, invented the very year India was born. Alwar Kalakand originated in the city of its name, and has now become a global favourite. Baba Thakur Das & Sons are credited for bringing the milk cakes to Alwar and putting the milk-surplus city on the map. It is said that Baba Thakur, when asked what it is that he had made, responded with ‘yehi toh kala hai’, meaning, ‘that is the skill’. The name—Kalakand—stuck and the market from where he operated came to be called Kalakand Market. The best part about the Kalakand is its delicious brown core, which people find hard to believe is created from milk, sugar, ghee and, of course, the high temperature which causes the outside to cool faster, thus trapping the heat and turning the inside brown.

**Churma Laddu**
This sweet dish is prepared by grinding wheat flour, jaggery and sugar together into a powdery form and then shaping the mixture into laddus. In Rajasthan, these are traditionally served with dal and baati. For the best texture and flavour, it is recommended that the wheat flour is coarsely ground, and while frying the balls, removing them from the pan as soon as they turn golden-brown.

**Feni**
This sweet with a cotton-candy-like texture, is made by dipping roasted rice flour threads in melted sugar syrup and topped with finely chopped almond and pistachio, this sweet is famous both in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Typi-
Cuisine of Rajasthan

cally white in colour, feni can be flavoured with rose water, kewra, saffron or cinnamon.

**Garlic Kheer**
This rare dish, sometimes referred to as *benami kheer* (the name of the main ingredient remains unspoken), from Mewar is a treat. When served with caramelised sugar crispies, it’s pure heaven on earth. It’s best had chilled.

**Dilkushar**
Dilkushar, also known as besan ki barfi, is a traditional Udaipur dessert made from khoya, cream, ghee and stir-fried besan. It is also popular as a Diwali gift and may be served hot or cold. It tastes best when cold and sprinkled with almonds & pistachios.

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**Gehun ka Doodhiya Kheench**
Straight from Udaipur’s kitchens, this winter favourite is made with hulled wheat, dried fruits, milk, sugar, and nuts. Served cold, it’s a popular offering to guests during the festivities of Akshaya Tritiya.

**Paniya Chrio**
The legendary Paniya chrio, made of crushed maize bread, jaggery and clarified butter, is a great digestive. To add the royal touch, huge amounts of ghee and dry fruits are added.

**Lapsi**
This Marwar speciality is made from broken wheat cooked in ghee and sweetened with jaggery.
Desserts: Regional Specialities

**AJMER**
*Sohan Halwa*
Devotees visiting the Dargah Shareef make sure to take loads of Sohan Halwa home.

*Rabri ke Puye*
What sets these apart from malpua is their rabri-based batter and a generous garnish of thick, creamy, saffron-rich rabri.

**BIKANER**
*Rasgulla*
A bit smaller in size and less spongier than their Bengali counterparts, Bikaneri rasgullas enjoy a longer shelf life.

**Gond Paak**
This barfi is prepared using edible gum and loads of dry fruits bound with sugar syrup.

**BHARATPUR**
*Gajak*
Bharatpur’s Anand Swaroop Gajak Wale need no introduction. The special kutema gud ki gajak is this famous shop’s most popular speciality.
Bistarband
The khurchan of Bharatpur is way milkier and more condensed than the khurchans of Old Delhi or Mathura. Bistarband literally translates into “bedding rolled into a bundle’.

Peda
Bharatpur also forms part of Brajbhoomi, and the melt-in-the-mouth, cardamom and saffron-spiced offering is a hit here, too.

BUNDI
Katt
The panchdhaari sugar katt is made with flours of moong, urad, wheat, gram and semolina, with sugar and ghee. There’s a jaggery version which is made with bajra and til.

DAUSA
Dovta
What differentiates it from balushahi is the treatment of refined flour, which is baked for a shorter time. Dovtas are usually garnished with saffron petals and are mildly sweet.

JAIPUR
Malpua
The zing of cardamom and fennel in the Jaipuri Malpua offsets its sweet milkiness.

Mishrimawa
It is prepared using mawa and mishri. Decorated with pistachios and scented with cardamom and rose water, it is best served cold.

Chaugani ke Ladoo
Jaipur’s Chaugani ladoos are made using milk, paneer, khoya, dry fruits and desi ghee.

Galeb Petha
These pethas are rectangular in shape and coated with a thick layering of mawa and garnished with pistachio slivers.

Gulab Shakri
It was made by a Jodhpuri halwai named Gulab, thus the name. It is similar to mishrimawa or the firni of Old Delhi.

Thaal ki Barfi
This is your quintessential melt-in-the-mouth dessert. Also known as mawa barfi, it is prepared with cooked mawa and sugar syrup.

JAISALMER
Ghotua
Boondi (tiny globules made from gram flour batter) are deep-fried in pure desi ghee (clari-
fied butter), soaked in sugar syrup, crushed with pestle. Cardamom powder and saffron are added and the laddoos are rolled up.

**Chamcham**
Chhena is cooked in sugar syrup over low heat, and rolled up into cylindrical balls whose center is filled with khoya.

**JHALAWAR**

**Poste ki Barfi**
The presence of post daana or poppy seeds lends these barfis their unique taste.

**JODHPUR**

**Mawa Kachori**
The Jodhpur specialty, invented by Rawat Mishthan Bhandar, is made from mawa stuffed in fried flat bread of refined flour.

**Doodh ke Ladoo**
These are cooked in full fat milk for a distinctive taste and a dark brown texture.

**KARAULI**

**Kheer Mohan**
Chhena is mashed and saffron is added to it to prepare a dough. Kheer Mohan can be rightly called a member of the rasgulla, rajbhog and gulab jamun family of sweets.

**PALI**

**Gulab Halwa**
Mashed rose petals are cooked in condensed milk. It can also be made with wheat flour, gram flour or semolina with fresh rose petals.

**SHEKHAWATI**

**Peda**
Traditionally made using dried condensed milk, pedas here are whiter and sweeter.

**UDAIPUR**

**Diljaani**
Made from gram flour, sugar syrup, clarified butter, saffron and dry fruits, this dessert is relished throughout the year.

**Mithil Rabri**
Another refreshing, sweet and digestion-friendly delicacy, this is a drink made from millet flour and yoghurt.

**Maave ki Kulfi**
Udaipur’s version of the pan-Indian kulfi comes loaded with the goodness of cardamom, dry fruits and kesar.
How would have civilisation survived and flourished in the hot and dry desert for centuries, if not for the libations devised by its people that helped slake their thirst? These drinks replenished the salts they had lost dragging on for miles in the desert, cooled the parched throats of the Manganiyars and washed down bare meals, with the spice of cumin and the zest of mint.

Below: The cooling and nutritious thandai being made
Right: Spiced buttermilk or chaach is a popular summer drink
The aromatic little seeds of cumin are the secret to the cooling charm of jal jeera and chhaachh, and fennel, its brighter dead ringer, finds its way into the festive treat of thandai. Occasionally, saffron visits from faraway lands, as is evident in the makhania lassi and some heritage liqueurs. And when it comes to flavours, sour trumps all—the spicy tang of nimbu shikanji and jal jeera, both of which abound with electrolytes, will attest to it.

The scarcity of water doesn’t deter the hardy people of the desert from concocting and enjoying their beverages to the brim. Dairy, you see, forms the cornerstone of the gastronomy, with thandai, lassi, and chhaachh loved and savoured in earthen cups equally across the state.

Innovation is second nature to Rajasthanis. The boondi balls that are a darling of foodies throughout India, are said to have originated in Rajasthan. They are used to garnish raita, the ubiquitous north Indian yoghurt-based dip, and to add an appetising crunch to the thirst-quenching jal jeera and buttermilk.

**Here’s a dip into the drinks of the state:**

**Thandai:** Come the Indian spring festival of Holi, and the whole of northern India drowns in the heady elixir that is thandai. In Rajasthan, the chilled, milk-based beverage makes for a healthy cooler in the desert climate. It is said to strengthen the immune system, provide instant energy, and aid digestion. The nutty texture of the thandai—which is laced with almonds and poppy seeds, and spiced with saffron, cardamom and fennel—complements well the thick consistency of its milk base. For a royal touch, garnish with silvered nuts and rose petals and sip away.
Chhaachh: Dairy dominates Rajasthani cuisine. If ghee, part of most of its food, bolsters immunity, the cooling nature of chhaachh (buttermilk) keeps the hot dry loo of the summer from getting the better of the land’s hardy inhabitants. For generations, chhaachh has helped many a desert denizen wash down a modest meal comprising a thick bajra roti, lehsun ki chutney and a whole onion or red chilli. An unmissable part of northern India’s post-lunch routine even today, the humble buttermilk has digestive benefits, too. Traditionally, it is made by churning yoghurt with water to reach a light consistency, and the method is employed even today, even though modern blender appliances are available. The spicy and aromatic powdered cumin, along with the occasional black pepper and refreshing mint, offsets the buttery mellowness of the chhaachh and provides a burst of palate-cleansing flavours.

Jal jeera: Rajasthan’s love for cumin continues with the jal jeera, a water-based drink that is best had chilled. The amchur takes the refreshing tanginess further, and mint and coriander provide a cool punch. The USP of the jal jeera is its spiciness, which acts as a counter to the summer heat, and complements the sourness beautifully. Often, the addition of drop-sized chickpea flour balls called khara boondi—another Rajasthani innovation used in several preparations—adds a savoury crunch to the drink. It is served at restaurants and street-side eateries throughout the state and made in homes at both lunch and dinnertime, unlike chhaachh.
Malaidar lassi: There must be only a few who can remain uncharmed by the rose-scented magic of the frothy, buttery, thick, smoothie-style yoghurt drink. You might associate lassi more often with the brawny, turbaned men of Punjab and Haryana, working in the golden fields and tending to their bullocks. And, yet, Rajasthan has its own version of the nutritious drink that is spiced with saffron. Foodies swear by Mishrilal’s in Jodhpur’s Sardar Market for a sip (or several) of lassi’s fragrant kesariya cousin, served in earthen glasses. From Jodhpur comes the famous makhaniya lassi, too. As the name suggests, this version is topped with a fat layer of butter and garnished with nuts.
You might have often heard how the lack of water and fresh vegetables in the barren land of Rajasthan drove its people to come up with spicy, tangy preparations that could only be eaten in tiny portions and stored for days. It was also necessitated by the pastoral and military lifestyles of its inhabitants.

Today, it has become a way of life for the Rajasthanis. The lip-smacking lehsun ki chutney, eaten in homes and food stalls with relish, is just the kind of food that has kept life going throughout extreme living conditions. Then there’s the contention about garlic being a natural blood thinner, in addition to a host of other health benefits. Chillies, and spices like asafoetida, fennel, fenugreek and mustard often feature in the pickles, helping the eater to perspire and cool off in the process.

Sides like tenti dehla or ker ka achar are an example of the philosophy of letting no part of the produce go to waste. It comes from the khejri tree, which also yields the primary ingredients for the iconic ker sangri vegetable dish. The bharwan mirch (stuffed chilli) makes use of chickpea flour, which abounds in the state, and promises a world of health benefits.

Also, much like its neighbour, Gujarat, the state boasts a smorgasbord of snacks and to-go munchies—pooris, pakoras, kachoris and the like—that can be had as breakfast, at teatime or while outdoors. And what better than a garlicky dip to keep your
A pickle-seller's stall in Shekhawati, Rajasthan
taste buds excited? Children happily eat a lunch of parathas if they are accompanied by ker ka achar or some boondi raita.

**Lehsun ki chutney:** That fire shall douse heat is nowhere clearer than is this fiery chutney. It is a highlight throughout homes, especially in Marwar—a regular accompaniment to parathas, pooris and kachoris. The mustard oil used for the tempering lends earthiness to the coarse paste-like sauce, which bursts with hits of chilli, ginger and dried mango powder. It’s a surprise that this garlic-based side is such a draw in a region peopled densely by the Jain community. In Ayurveda, garlic might be considered a tamasic (inducing darkness, or lethargy) food, but one can’t be blind to the fact that it is a great immunity booster and can even help prevent heart trouble.

**Tenti ka achaar:** The significance of the hardy, humble ker can never be stated enough. The bare, deciduous shrub, found across Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh, yields a dark pink fruit that is used to make the iconic vegetable dish, ker sangri. The beans of the tree—also called tenti in Uttar Pradesh and dehla as one progresses towards the Punjab border—are used to make a spicy, sour pickle that is sure to make your face pucker. To make...
tenti ka achaar, mustard oil is heated and then allowed to cool. A mixture of mustard seeds, chilli powder, fenugreek seeds, turmeric powder, dried mango powder, and salt are added to the mustard oil. Finally, the tenti beans join the fray, and the vessel is stored away in a cool, dry place.

**Mirchi ke tapore**: The fiery red ones may be the more illustrious of the chillies in Rajasthan, thanks in large part to lal maas, but the green ones more than hold their own in the finger-lickin’-good mirchi ke tapore. The chillies (usually the fatter, milder ones) are diced, tempered and stir-fried, to be served alongside dal-baati-churma. The powerful mustard aroma mates with the warm fragrance of fennel and asafoetida to deliver a unique zing to the thali. A pickle-style preparation, mirchi ke tapore also travels well and is an excellent accompaniment to parathas and kachoris.
Given the diversity of its royal gastronomic traditions and its rustic culinary environment, the food habits of its elite and its common folk, it’s no surprise that Rajasthan shines like a bright diamond in the kitchen department as well. For those visitors to the state, who can’t enjoy this plenitude in a Rajasthani home here, the burgeoning restaurant culture in the major cities offers opportunities aplenty to tuck into everything from the fiery laal maas to traditional ker sangri.

Despite Rajasthan’s largely arid climate and limited resources, it has not stopped the indomitable populace from tucking into a banquet of culinary delights—ranging from tangy vegetarian curries to spicy meats that leave you craving for more. Rajasthanis are nothing if not inventive. The dry plains of the state reduce the chances of growing fresh vegetables, but the cuisine compensates by being rich in spices and lentils, and produces one iconic dish after another. One novel example is the gatte ki sabzi, a vegetable dish which doesn’t use any vegetables at all! Each region of Rajasthan has its own trademark dish. Be it the mouth-watering dal-baati-churma trio of Jaipur, the pyaaz kachoris of Jodhpur, the papdi chaat in Udaipur, the gatte ki sabzi of Bikaner or Jaisalmer’s ker sangri—this state summons up some delightful iconic dishes for die-hard foodies.
Dal-baati-churma

If there was an award for a perfectly balanced dish in terms of sweet and savoury flavours, it would indubitably go to this classic Rajasthani treat. A plate of piping hot dal, soft and crumbly churma and fried baati is a typical Rajasthani delicacy enjoyed by many.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Ingredients</th>
<th>Baatis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Churma</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cup wheat flour</td>
<td>1 cup coarse whole wheat flour</td>
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<td>¼ cup semolina</td>
<td>½ cup semolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 tbsp melted ghee</td>
<td>2 tbsp besan</td>
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<td>2 tbsp almond slivers</td>
<td>½ cup milk</td>
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<tr>
<td>¼ tsp cardamom powder</td>
<td>4 tbsp melted ghee</td>
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<td>5 tbsp powdered sugar</td>
<td>1 tsp fennel seeds</td>
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<td>ghee for deep-frying</td>
<td>¼ tsp carom seeds</td>
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<td>Dal</td>
<td>salt to taste</td>
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<td>5 tbsp chana dal</td>
<td>1 tsp garlic paste</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 tbsp toovar dal</td>
<td>1 tsp chilli powder</td>
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<td>5 tbsp green mung dal</td>
<td>½ tsp garam masala</td>
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<td>1 tbsp urad dal</td>
<td>1 tsp coriander powder</td>
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<td>½ tsp turmeric powder</td>
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<td>1 tsp cumin seeds</td>
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<td>2 green chillies</td>
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<td>5 tbsp powdered sugar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a pinch of asafoetida</td>
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<td>1 tsp coriander powder</td>
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<td>1 cup finely chopped onions</td>
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<td>1 cup finely chopped tomatoes</td>
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<td>1 tsp coriander</td>
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<td>3 tbsp ghee</td>
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<td>3 cloves</td>
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<td>2 bay leaves</td>
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<td>1 tsp cumin seeds</td>
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<td>2 green chillies</td>
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<td>a pinch of asafoetida</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 tsp garlic paste</td>
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<td>1 cup finely chopped onions</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1 cup finely chopped tomatoes</td>
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<td>1 tsp coriander</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topping</td>
<td>salt to taste</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 tbsp melted ghee</td>
<td>ghee for deep-frying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 tbsp finely chopped onions</td>
<td>2 tsp lemon juice</td>
</tr>
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Method

- Let’s start with the baati. Mix all the ingredients for baati together, except the jaggery. Add that once you have mixed the rest well. Add water to the dough until it is smooth. Rest it for about 20 minutes to set. Now divide the dough into 12-15 palm-sized portions. Preheat the oven to 180°C and bake the baatis for half an hour until they’re golden-brown on all sides.
- To prepare the churma, take a couple of the baked baati balls and crush them along with a spoonful of jaggery in a mixer grinder until they crumble to a rough powder.
- Making the dal is simple enough. Add all the ingredients (except the tadka) in a pressure cooker; pour 2-2½ cups of water and let it cook for about 2-3 whistles. To make the tadka, heat ghee in a pan, add cumin seeds and red chillies. Let it roast for a bit and then pour this over your dal to season it.
- On a plate heap together helpings of churma, some freshly baked baatis and a cup of piping hot dal.
Khichdi

Cutting across status and income levels, this unpretentious one-pot meal is a simple yet satisfying solution at any time. Feeling sick? Have some khichdi. Don’t have your pantry stocked up? Khichdi doesn’t take too many ingredients.

Ingredients
1 cup rice
½-¾ cup mung dal (yellow)
8 peppercorns
1 pinch turmeric powder
salt to taste

For seasoning:
1 tbsp ghee
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 pinch asafoetida

Accompaniments:
Green chilli pickle/any other

Method
Place the washed mung dal and rice in a pressure cooker and add about 6 cups of water. Then add the rest of the ingredients, including the peppercorns, turmeric powder and salt. Pressure-cook this on high heat for a bit. Turn the heat to low after the first whistle and let it simmer for 10-15 minutes. Switch off the heat and set aside for 20 minutes. Open the lid of the cooker and boil it on low heat while stirring continuously. Add salt to taste. In a pan, add ghee, cumin seeds and asafoetida and set it on a medium flame. Once it starts to crackle a bit, switch off the heat and add the seasoning to the boiling khichdi. Serve piping hot with some green chilli pickle on the side.
Panchmel ki sabzi

As the name suggests, this dish is a mix of five ingredients, usually, gavarfali, chawli, capsicum, cucumber and carrots.

Ingredients
¾ cup chopped cluster beans
¾ cup finely chopped long beans
½ cup capsicum cubes
¾ cup cucumber cubes
½ cup carrot cubes
1 tbsp oil
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp ginger-green chilli paste
1 tsp chilli powder
¼ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp mango powder
salt to taste

Method
- Heat some oil in a non-stick pan. Add cumin seeds and some ginger-garlic paste in the pan and sauté it for about a minute on a medium flame. Next, take a handful of cluster beans and long beans, and mix them with the capsicum, cucumber and carrots. Add some chilli powder, turmeric powder and salt to the mixture. Make sure to add a tiny amount of water, say 5 tbsp, so that everything gels together. Place a lid on top of the pan; cook on a medium flame for about 10-12 minutes. Stir occasionally. Add a pinch of the dried mango powder and mix the sabzi well on a medium flame for about a minute. Switch off the heat and serve with hot rotis.
Gatte ki sabzi

A sabzi is technically made of vegetables, but gatte ki sabzi is a tasty exception. Made with chickpea-flour dumplings which are boiled and simmered in a yoghurt-based curry, it’s a great alternative when you’re lacking leafy vegetables.

Ingredients
- ½ cup gram flour
- ½ tablespoon refined oil
- ½ inches ginger
- Pinch of asafoetida
- ½ teaspoon red chilli powder
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ cup yoghurt
- ½ tablespoon ghee
- ½ teaspoon black mustard seeds
- ¼ teaspoon garam masala powder
- ½ teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 green chillies
- ¼ teaspoon coriander powder
- black pepper to taste
- salt to taste
- water

Method
◆ In a bowl, mix gram flour, turmeric powder, red chilli powder, salt and a pinch of asafoetida. To this, add 2½ tablespoons of ghee. To make the dough, lace your palms with some ghee and knead the dough while adding the required amount of water. Set the dough aside. Then, separate it into equal portions and roll each into a cylinder. On another burner, boil some water and add the besan rolls. Cook till soft and floating. Transfer to a plate.
◆ Heat up some cumin seeds, black mustard seeds and asafoetida in a pan with oil and sauté until it crackles. Meanwhile, blend together some ginger and green chillies and add that to the pan along with some red chilli and turmeric powder. Sauté till the raw smell evaporates. Next, add garam masala, coriander powder and salt. Do add a bit of water to avoid burning the spices. Alongside, beat the curd, add to the pan and stir. Make sure the consistency is thin. Cook for 6-7 minutes. Cut the besan rolls into small pieces and add to the gravy. Bring to a boil and reduce the flame. Let the rolls simmer in the gravy for 5-10 minutes. Transfer the curry to a bowl and serve with rotis or rice.
Safed Maas

With a luscious texture and a rich, creamy gravy complete with yoghurt, khoya and cashew nuts, this Rajasthani dish has long been a favourite at elite tables.

Ingredients

- 300gm mutton
- 1 bay leaf
- 1-inch cinnamon stick
- 3 cloves
- 1 cardamom pod
- 2 dry red chillies
- 1 teaspoon ginger-garlic paste
- ¼ cup milk
- ¼ cup yoghurt
- salt, to taste

To grind

- 2 tablespoon almonds, soaked and skin peeled
- 2 tablespoon cashew nuts, soaked
- 2 onions, chopped

Method

Although it might appear to be a little complicated, it really is not. The magic lies in getting the gravy right. To begin with, grind together the chopped onions, almonds, cashew nuts and a tiny bit of water into a smooth paste. Put some oil in a pressure cooker and put it on the gas. Add cardamom, cloves, a stick of cinnamon and a bay leaf and let it sizzle for about half a minute. Next, add the seeds of the dry red chillies, ginger and some ginger-garlic paste; and sauté together. Now add the onion and nut paste you made earlier to this mix. Add salt as required. Now, add 1 cup of water to this mixture and cook the mutton pieces in the pressure cooker for at least 8 whistles. After the last whistle, set it aside and let the pressure release naturally. Once that is done, open the lid and place it back on the stove to add milk and yoghurt and stir it some more. Check if the consistency of the gravy is to your liking. If not, add more water to it. Add salt to taste. Finally, dish out the curry in a bowl and serve hot with some chopped coriander on top.
Laal Maas

Rajasthani cuisine would be the poorer if laal maas wasn’t an essential ingredient in its vast repertoire, peppered with regional variations apart from the original offering from the kitchens of Rajput warriors.

Ingredients

- ½ kg mutton (cut in 1” pieces)
- 100 ml mustard oil
- 10 cloves
- 1 cup sliced onions
- 6 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 4 tbsp Mathania chilli paste
- 1 ½ cup curd/buttermilk
- 2 tbsp chopped garlic
- 2 tbsp ghee
- 1 small piece charcoal
- Salt to taste

Method

- Heat mustard oil till it smokes, and immediately turn off the flame. Cool oil to medium hot. Turn on the heat, add the cloves, add sliced onions once the cloves start crackling. When onions are golden brown add the mutton and fry for 5 minutes. Add the ginger-garlic paste, fry for a minute or two. Add the salt and Mathania chilli paste. Keep roasting this mixture and stirring for another 3 minutes. Increase the heat and add the whisked yoghurt. Stir continuously till the yoghurt comes to a boil. Make sure the flame is high at the time you add the curd, then the curd won’t split. Now simmer gently and cook till the mutton is done. You can add a little water or stock if need be now.
- Separately heat 1 tbsp of ghee and add chopped garlic. Sauté till golden then temper the mutton with it. Place a piece of live charcoal in the cup and place the cup atop the curry. (Some people opt to put in the cloves at this stage rather than earlier). Add a tbsp of ghee and immediately cover the utensil with a lid and allow the smoke to infuse the laal maas for about 3 minutes. Remove the charcoal, heat the curry once again and serve hot.
Wedding and Festive Fare

By Prannay Pathak

The various functions in a Rajasthani wedding see halls decked out in all their finery and buffets groaning with untold delights, richly redolent with scents and notes that engage our appetites and offer a peek into the culinary narratives of this legendary region of India.

It goes without saying that each and every offering of that wedding feast is prepared with the utmost meticulousness, to ensure guests can enjoy a memorable gourmet experience.

If dal-baati-churma represents a crumbly meeting point between sweet and savoury—kadhi pakodi and ram chane offer a burst of flavours that stand for the gastronomic soul of Rajasthan. The gatta pulao, scented with fennel and ajwain, takes the customary rice dish to another level. But if you’re having meethe chawal instead, the delightful lentil-based mogar ki sabzi will keep them good company.

Come festival time, and bite-sized snacks are made to be presented to visitors alongside garlic or sweet tamarind chutney. On the other hand, matar kachoris can be munched on without a side, thanks to their flavourful and chewy filling of peas that is elevated by a peppy spice mixture.

Holi and Diwali are occasions for families to sit down and roll gaund and churma laddus, not to mention sneak handfuls of the delicious panjiri mixture they are fashioned with. Holi is also a time to savour the tangy kadhi and counterbalance all the sweets one has gorged on. A relatively less-
The well-known version of the gatte ki sabzi, the ram chane—tasty balls of chickpea flour in a spicy curry—is also made in homes and has even found its way into restaurants.

**Matar kachori**: Try to recall spicy, mashed peas crumbling in your mouth as you bite into a crisp, flaky pastry. Or the fragrance of ghee mingling with the hit of fennel and nigella (*kalonji*). Familiar? Chances are that you’ve been eating the Rajasthani matar kachori, a regular at parties and potlucks. Kachoris abound across the state, in the food streets of Jaipur, near Clock Tower in Jodhpur and Suraj Pol in Udaipur. Fresh green peas, ginger, garlic, and green chillis are mashed together and sautéed with fennel, kalonji, chilli powder, garam masala, amchur powder, along with salt to taste. The mixture, once cooled, becomes the centre of dough balls made of whole-wheat flour, ghee and salt. The crisp pastry with a flavourful centre is usually dunked into tamarind or mint-coriander chutney and eaten.

*Below:* A traditional matar kachori served with tomato sauce  
*Facing Page:* Laddus are a must in any Rajasthani celebration, be it a wedding or a festival
**Gaund ke laddu:** Whole-wheat flour, makhanas, nuts, melon seeds, cardamom and powdered sugar are bound together with the help of an edible gum—the sap of the acacia tree that grows in abundance in Rajasthan. The mixture is deep-fried in desi ghee, which lends it a delightful crunch. The sweet, fragrant balls have a host of benefits rolled up, including ensuring smooth digestion, bolstering the immune system and adding its might to a speedy convalescence. Gaund laddus are often made for lactating mothers, and even enjoyed as a power snack for body heat in the winter. The antecedents of this winter delicacy and power snack remain the same throughout northern India: in its avatar as panjiri, it forms a key element of the diets of growing children and lactating mothers in Punjab too.

**Rajasthani kadhi pakodi:** In keeping with the reigning aesthetic of gastronomy in Rajasthan’s arid climate, the use of the wide array of spices—bay leaf, fenugreek, asafoetida, dry red chillies—make kadhi more piquant than its other northern Indian counterparts. The creaminess of the kadhi of lactose-loving Punjab makes way for a runny consistency, thanks to the fact that the Rajasthani version, called *khata*, uses buttermilk instead of yoghurt. The soft crunch of the chickpea flour pakodis lends another dimension to the preparation, although some recipes omit them. You may have it with steaming hot phulkas and/or cumin-based rice, but a serving of papad and some tangy pickle alongside are not to be missed.
Rajasthani ram chane: Looking at this sumptuous dish, you might mistake it for the familiar chhole, the chickpea-curry dish. However, wait until you’ve had it, and you’ll realise that those aren’t chickpea beans, but balls made from chickpea flour. The dough is made from besan, salt and oil—quite like the dough used in gatte ki sabzi. The different spices—coriander, turmeric, red chilli, cumin and the garam masala mix—lend the gravy its characteristic spiciness. Ram chane can be scooped up with parathas or ladled on to steaming rice to eat. Chickpea flour is a healthy alternative, too; it helps keep body weight in check, is gluten-free and counters anaemia. Its fibre content is even said to prevent artery blockage.

Matar mangodi: Made from peas and crunchy lentil nuggets that turn chewy after cooking, this is an essential part of the wedding feast. The scrumptious delicacy was conceived by the wise Marwaris who were no strangers to the scarcity of water and vegetables in southwestern Rajasthan. The mangodis, usually made of mung, are broken into smaller chunks, and roasted in ghee along with cumin seeds and asafoetida. The regulars—turmeric, salt, red chilli, coriander and green chillies—are next in, followed by peas and tomatoes. After it is cooked, the peas are mashed and served with sprigs of coriander and a squeeze of lime juice on top. The contrasting textures and flavours of matar and mangodi make for a zestful combination.
**Methi bajra poori:** Rajasthan is the fenugreek bowl and you’ll discover that methi is grown abundantly in Nagaur, Jhalawar, Udaipur, Kota and Bundi. On the other hand, bajra, or pearl millet, is another extensively cultivated crop in the state, accounting for over half of the country’s produce. While bajra rotis are a staple teatime and breakfast snack option in Rajasthan, methi bajra pooris, a staple winter snack, are a healthy choice, being packed with protein and other nutrients. Chopped fenugreek leaves, mashed potatoes and bajra flour are combined in a medium-soft dough along with yoghurt, asafoetida, red chilli powder and cumin seeds. The dough is used to make discs that are then tossed into oil and fried till golden. This deep-fried puffed bread is eaten either with aloo ki sabzi or garlic chutney, and is a popular breakfast snack and wedding hors d’oeuvre in neighbouring Gujarat as well. 

**Rajasthani mogar:** Moong, one of the primary lentils of Rajasthan, is a hotshot in the state’s culinary tradition. It features in snacks as pakode and kachoris; in the main course as one of the constituents of the panchmel dal, and even has its own halwa. What is most interesting, however, is the flavourful, fluffy mogar ki sabzi, often eaten with meethe chawal during celebrations. The Jodhpuri speciality takes little time to cook, and is loaded with protein. Owing to its extensive use of raw mango and a lot of dry spices, it has a cooling effect on the body.
The cosmopolitan modern city of Jaipur teems with restaurants serving both authentic Rajasthani cuisine and Continental and Italian fare.

Hitting The Food Trail In Jaipur

By Karan Kaushik

The Pink City is one of the most-visited tourist destinations in the world. Though the fame of its forts, palaces, heritage properties, textiles, jewellery and bazaars...even the Jaipur Literature Festival, is well documented, Jaipur’s culinary offerings have not really found their due recognition.

The city is blessed with both traditional and modern-day culinary enticements, tucked away in its many restaurants, cafés and street food markets.

Jaipur’s longstanding popularity with foreigners, thanks to being part of the Golden Triangle (Delhi-Jaipur-Agra), has led to a mushrooming of Italian, Continental, Asian and Mexican restaurants in the city. It has, over the past decade or so, seen a surge in rooftop lounges, pubs, waffle stores, gelato joints, coffee shops, brownie stores, doughnut points and much more. The aim, entrepreneurs and investors admit, is to cater to the burgeoning youth populace of the city, which though well rooted in their traditional favourites have been enjoying a wide range of contemporary western culinary delights as well.

Do you know that these days Jaipurites and tourists are being served by robots? Yes, you read that right. The town is now home to not one, but two, AI-based fine dining
restaurants—a recent fad with both foodies and geeky nerds. There’s also one restaurant where your order is served by trains! And then there are the high-end luxury restaurants housed in heritage and five-star hotels, which play host to thousands of tourists every year.

**Old favourites**

Every big city has a set of restaurants which will never lose their charm, no matter how many new restaurants try and nudge them out. **Chokhi Dhani** continues to be a huge draw with its traditional Rajasthani ambience and food offerings. **Lakshmi Mishtan Bhandar** (LMB) has pride of place in almost every food show on Jaipur. It serves an amazing Rajasthani thali and has the best ghevar of Jaipur.

**Sharma Dhaba** on Sikar Road, has been made famous by the likes of Aishwarya Rai, a frequent visitor. It’s well reputed for its mawa naan, has the best paneer masala in town and lets you dine in a rural set-up. Then there is **Niro’s**, on MI Road, which is great for Indian, Continental and Chinese and the ever-popular chicken *a la kiev*. Also on MI Road is **Copper Chimney**, which is revered by foodies for the best lal maas in town apart from some good vegetarian
dishes. The historic Indian Coffee House, which made its way to Jaipur in 1962, has played host to the likes of MF Husain and Indira Gandhi. It’s best loved for its South Indian food and, of course, coffee, with the Hot Cream Coffee being their competitive advantage. For sweets and savouries, do visit Rawat Mishtan Bhandar near Polo Victory, where you’ll taste the city’s best mirchi vada and pyaz kachori.

**Trending Now**

The latest fad around town for locals and tourists alike is India’s first Artificial Intelligence-based restaurant—The Robot Restaurant. Giving your orders to a robot and getting your food served by them is truly a first-of-its-kind experience for every diner. Turban-clad bots welcome you while a spider robot serves you sizzling brownies. Even the billing is done by robots! Then there’s The Yellow House: Robot Restaurant, where a bot named Ruby serves you pure vegetarian Italian, Asian and Indian delicacies. The bots will astonish you and so will the toy train that serves you at the quirky Vegetrainian. The witty menu with titles like “meethe ke cheento ke lie” and “failaane wala raayta” will have you and your friends in splits. Try out their paneer dishes for the best value for money. If having a great view appeals to you more than being served by bots and trains, head to The Tattoo Café, a hot favourite among Instagrammers. Set against the backdrop of the Hawa Mahal, the café offers great photo-ops, besides the awesome food. Their sandwiches, burgers, waffles, mango lassi and chai are to die for!

**Tapri Central** in C-Scheme is also a very popular rooftop café, which is frequented by youngsters in droves. Don’t miss out on their unique quinoa upma and tofu bhurji. If you are visiting Jaipur over a weekend, do try and grab the Sunday buffet breakfast at Cafe Bae in Bais Godam. The pasta and risotto section of their menu are superlative. The spaghetti meatballs are yum.
**Fine dining**

Myriad options when it comes to fine dining can make it a tad daunting. However, the ones that make the cut include Fort Chowk, Peacock Restaurant, Okra, Cinnamon and Handi. Top dishes to order at Fort Chowk are paneer lababdar, malai kofta and broccoli musallam. The warm ambience paired with the breezy rooftop seating will lure you to the multi-cuisine Peacock. Order murgh malai tikka sliders, tandoori aloo and Shanghai wings here. Okra is located in the Jaipur Marriott Hotel and patrons will vouch for its grilled salmon, considered the best in the city. Their Bengal fish curry is also unmatched. Cinnamon, at Jai Mahal Palace Hotel, blends traditional and contemporary like no other fine-dining restaurant in the city. Ardent fans of shami kebab and achaari paneer tikka should look no further than Handi, located on MI Road. Dagla – The Rooftop at Haveli Kalwara offers breathtaking views of the Nahargarh Fort overlooking the Pink City. The delectable Rajasthani cuisine here is most sought after.

**Luxury Dining**

When in Rajasthan, do as the royals do. The city offers plentiful options for the luxury diner. Here are some of the best: 1135 AD, next to Amer Fort, has excellent non-veg with Mughlai, Rajasthani and North Indian offerings. The restaurant, with its open-air dining space, derives its name from the year in which the Kachwaha clan founded the Rajput dynasty. The generous Thaal-E-Jodha
is the show-stopper but do save some space for the heavenly shahi tukda ice cream. **Peshawri**, at ITC Rajputana, introduces you to the authentic flavours of the Northwest frontier with barbecued specialities, baked Indian breads and a lavish spread of delicious kebabs. The inimitable dal bukhara is the *numéro uno* delicacy, hands down. **Suvarna Mahal**, at Hotel Rambagh Palace, embodies the rich heritage of Jaipur’s erstwhile rulers. Their chefs will take your taste buds for a joyride of the royal cuisines they have mastered from the princely states of Rajasthan, Awadh, Punjab and Hyderabad. Executive Chef Asish Kumar Roy has served the likes of Oprah Winfrey and Amitabh Bachchan. **Steam**, also in Rambagh Palace, serves the best high tea in town.

The City Palace is an integral part of Jaipur’s legacy and to get a taste of this heritage, one must visit **Baradari** here. Do try blue cheese- and bacon-stuffed naans...
served with cucumber wasabi raita and roast pumpkin soup; and then there’s the laal maas with baati and pan-seared kasundi fish to demolish.

**Street food/Takeaways**

The old city’s *Chatorio Ki Gali*, situated opposite the Bapu Bazaar Link Road, is famous countrywide. The ladies on shopping sprees can’t resist the plenitude of golgappas, chhole bhature, tikki chole and faluda available in this alley. For the best pav bhaji in Jaipur, head to *Pandit Pav Bhaji* opposite Birla Mandir. It’s better to take a local along as they’ll help you in spotting the original stall, as many others have started their own stalls with the same name.

*Aunty’s Cafe* in C-Scheme serves everything from masala dosa and chhole bhature to pav bhaji. The best part about this eatery is the amazing hospitality of Sarita Aunty, who treats her customers like gods. Not very far off is *Egg Dee-Sanjay Omelette*, located at Janta Store. This is ‘the place’ for every egg lover! The eatery serves around 150 varieties of egg dishes, with the egg pizza—a combination of omelette and pizza—and the *ooh la la* egg sandwich being the bestsellers.

*Sarvan Dosa* in Raja Park has the best street-side masala dosa in the city while *Abdul Bari Old Takeaway* (famous for its kebabs) on MI Road is the city’s most popular takeaway and outdoor seating eatery. *Talk of the Town*, also on MI Road, comes a close second as far as takeaways go. When done savouring the kebabs at Abdul Bari, you can also try the city’s most loved lassi at *Lassi Wala*, also on MI Road. Barbeque lovers must visit *Sethi Bar-Be-que* in Raja Park.

Street-food lovers can also visit *Kanha*, a popular restaurant chain in the town to satiate their hunger pangs. *Kanji*, located near Polo Victory, is another good option to get it all. *Annu Paan* at Raja Park will blow your mind with its chocolate paan.

**International Cuisine**

Jaipur has also emerged as a Italian food lover’s delight. *Little Italy* and *Warehouse Café* are the best Italian restaurants in town.
The latter serves authentic wood-fired pizza and cheese fondue. Giardino in Hotel Jai Mahal Palace is a bit expensive but the Italian food served here is as authentic as it comes.

House of Han, which offers Chinese is also quite popular and Hi Life Rooftop Grill at Ramada is pretty famous for its global cuisine and specialises in fusion food with an array of Mexican, Italian, Continental and Indian selections. If Thai food is what interests you, head for Dragon House at Khasa Kothi Circle. The most popular delicacies here are manchow soup, dimsums and jasmine tea.

Jaipur’s Hawker Market!
Nestled in the Ram Niwas Garden, opp Albert Hall Museum, Masala Chowk, an open-air food court, is a recent addition. This is where you can dive into the culinary delights of a slew of popular eateries from across town. Numerous booths serving almost every street food delicacy possible, lure you as you go booth-hopping. Some of the must-try street food dishes include samosa at Shankar’s, tea at Gulabji Chaiwala, faluda kesar kulfi at Brijwasi and kebabs and biryani at House on Fire.
Best Rajasthani Restaurants

ALWAR STD 0144
Prem Pravitra Bhojanalaya
Location Alwar Bus Stand, Near Main Market Tel 2702777 Cell 09829215299, 09414022777 Cuisine Rajasthani, Multicuisine Timings 10am-10pm

Hotel Inderlok Ananta
Location A12, Bhagat Singh Colony, Near Hari Bakery, Alwar Bypass Road Cell 07726006615 Cuisine Multicuisine Timings 7am-10pm

BARMER STD 02982
Anmol Hotel
Location Shubhas Chowk, Chohtan Road Cell 09460160042 Cuisine Local Rajasthani

Brahman Food Plaza
Location NH68, Mahaveer Nagar Cell 09461749914 Cuisine Rajasthani Signature Dishes Dal-Baati-Churma

BIKANER STD 0151
Hotel Bhanwar Niwas
Location Rampuria Street Tel 2529323, 2201043 Cell 09829218237 Cuisine Rajasthani, Indian Signature Dishes Khichda Timings Noon-3pm; 7pm-10.30pm

Laxmi Niwas Palace
Location Dr Karni Singh Road, Near Roadways Bus Stand Cell 8875025204 Cuisine Rajasthani Signature Dish Rajasthani Thali; Timings Noon-3pm; 7-10.30pm

BUNDI STD 0747
Baori View Restaurant
Location Bundi House, Bohra Ji Ka Kund, Balchand Para Cell 09828284348 Cuisine Rajasthani Timings 9am-11pm

Haveli Braj Bhushanjee
Location Opp Ayurvedic Hospital Tel 2442322 Cell 0978335586 Cuisine Rajasthani Timings 1pm-3pm, 7pm-11pm

Ishwari Niwas Palace
Location 1, New Colony, Civil Lines Tel 2442414 Cell 09414745388 Cuisine Rajasthani, Indian Signature Dishes Jungli Maas, Dal-Baati-Churma Timings Noon-2pm; 7pm-10pm

CHITTORGARH STD 01472
Castle Bijaipur
Location Village Bijaipur, Via Bassi Tel 276351 Cell 09414111510 Cuisine Local Rajasthani Timings All Day

Bassi Fort Palace
Location Village Bassi, Kio Rajmagal, NH78, Chittorgarh-Kota-Bundi Highway Cell 09799931999 Cuisine Local Rajasthani Timings All Day

Hotel Meera
Location 7, Neemuch Road, Near Railway Station, Cell 09152623610 Cuisine Local Rajasthani
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Hotel Panna RTDC</strong></th>
<th><strong>Location</strong> Pratap Nagar Road, Near Railway Station, Tel 241238 Cell 09413777900  rtdec.in <strong>Cuisine</strong> Rajasthani, Multicuisine <strong>Timings</strong> 7am-10.30pm</th>
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<td><strong>Hotel Padmini</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Near Sainik School, Bodiyana Tel 241711/12/18 Cell 09001902111  hotelpadmini.in <strong>Cuisine</strong> Rajasthani <strong>Timings</strong> 7am-11.30pm</td>
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<td><strong>Pratap Palace</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Hotel Pratap Palace, Railway Station, Near HPO Tel 2400099 Cell 09461141153 <strong>Cuisine</strong> Local Rajasthani <strong>Timings</strong> 7am-10.30pm</td>
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<td><strong>DUNGARPUR STD 02964</strong></td>
<td><strong>Udai Bilas Palace</strong> <strong>Location</strong> Chamanpura Tel 230808 Cell 09314653967  udaibilaspalace.com <strong>Cuisine</strong> Rajasthani, Multicuisine</td>
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<td><strong>JAIPUR STD 0141</strong></td>
<td><strong>Chokhi Dhani</strong> <strong>Location</strong> 12 Miles, Tonk Road Tel 5165000, 5166000 Cell 09667222203  chokhidhani.com <strong>Cuisine</strong> Rajasthani <strong>Timings</strong> 5.30pm-11pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dal Bati Choorma</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Gayatri Sadan, AC-4, near Collectorate, Bani Park Cell 08529558481 <strong>Cuisine</strong> Rajasthani <strong>Timings</strong> 11am-11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dagla – The Rooftop</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> 5th floor, Haveli Kalwara, Between Shop 94 and 95, Indira Bazar Road Cell 9829046805 <strong>Cuisine</strong> Rajasthani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Chanakya Restaurant</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Leisure Inn Grand Chanakya, MI Road, Cell 4333333 <strong>Signature Dish</strong> Mirchi Ka Halwa <strong>Timings</strong> 12.30pm-3.30pm, 7pm-11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hotel Apano Rajasthan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Harmara Ghati, Sikar Road Cell 09001892093  hotelapanorajasthan.com <strong>Signature Dish</strong> Rajasthani Thali <strong>Timings</strong> 11am-11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laxmi Mishtan Bhandar (restaurant)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Shop No 98-99, Johari Bazar, Bapu Bazar Cell 9024609609  hotellmb.com <strong>Signature Dishes</strong> Paneer Ghevar, Doodh Phini, Mishri Halwa <strong>Timings</strong> 7.30am-11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Laxmi Mishtan Bhandar (sweet shop)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Johari Bazaar Cell 09024609609 <strong>Cuisine</strong> Sweets <strong>Signature Dishes</strong> Paneer Ghevar, Doodh Phini, Mishri Halwa <strong>Timings</strong> 7.30am-11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natraj Restaurant</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> MI Road, near Panch Batti Tel 2375804 Cell 08890694713 <strong>Cuisines</strong> Rajasthani, Multicuisine <strong>Timings</strong> 11am-11pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Niros Restaurant</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> 319, MI Road, Panch Batti, C Scheme, Ashok Nagar Tel 2374493  nirosindia.com <strong>Cuisines</strong> Rajasthani, Continental, Mughlai, Chinese <strong>Signature Dishes</strong> Sula Kabab, Lal Maas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rawat Mishtan Bhandar</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong> Near Polo Victory Cinema, Station Road Tel 2367460, 2363593 Cell 09829013257/157  rawathotels.in <strong>Cuisines</strong> Rajasthani, Multicuisine <strong>Signature Dishes</strong> Pyaaz Ki Kachori, Mawa Kachori</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Spice Court
Location Achrol House, Jacob Road, Civil Lines
Tel 2220202, 4108252 Cell 09571970005
w spicecourtjaipur.com Signature Dishes Jungli Maas Keema Baati Timings 11am-11pm

Shri Thaal Village
Location 3, Rathore Nagar, Main Queens Road Cell 9680764000 Cuisine Rajasthani Signature Dishes Jalebi Timings 12.30-3.30pm, 6pm-11pm

The Banna’s Recipes
Location Vaishali Nagar Cell 09783529997 Cuisines Rajasthani (Rajputana style-only non-veg) Signature Dishes Kaleji Ki Curry

Virasat Heritage Restaurant
Location B Sahakar Marg 22, Godam Tel 2744482 Cell 0958777818 w virasatrestaurant.com Cuisines Rajasthani, Multicuisine Timings 11am-11pm

Copper Chimney (Now Handi Fusion)
Location Maya Mansion, Opp GPO, MI Road Cell 09829063600 w handirestaurant.com Cuisine Indian, Mughlai Timings Noon-11pm

Lassiwala
Location MI Road Cell 09667188811 Signature Drink Lassi Timings 7am-8pm

Pandit Kulfi
Location Hawa Mahal Road, Chand Ki Takshal, Cell 09414071922 Timings 11am-11pm

Pandit Pav Bhaji
Location Shop No. 4, Sarojini Marg, Statue

Abdul Bari Old Takeaway
Location Opp Laxmi Complex, MI Road Cell 09829275966

Aunty’s Café
Location Sarojini Marg, Panch Batti, C-Scheme Ashok Nagar Cell 09828011184

Baradari Restaurant & Bar
Location City Palace, Jalebi Chowk Tel 4088805

Cafe Bae
Location A/1, 21, Sahkar Marg, Near 22 Godown Circle, C-Scheme Tel 2743726, 2744131

Cinnamon
Location Jai Mahal Palace Hotel, Jacob Road, Civil Lines Tel 2223636-38, 6601111

Fort Chowk
Location P-20, SL Marg, Lal Bahadur Nagar, Adinath Nagar, Jaipur Cell 08766155155

Hi-Life, The Rooftop Grill, Ramada
Location 1st Avenue 1st, Govind Marg, Raja Park Tel 4066666 w ramadajaipur.com

House of Han
Location Hotel Crowne Plaza, Tonk Road Tel 7176666 w ihg.com

Kanha
Location Tonk Road Cell 09785401325
- **Kanji Sweets and Restaurant**  
  **Location**: FF, Station Road, Opp Polo Victory Cinema, Kanti Nagar, Gopalbari  
  **Tel**: 2204440

- **Little Italy**  
  **Location**: Prithviraj Road, C-Scheme  
  **Cell**: 08239656151

- **Masala Chowk**  
  **Location**: JLN Marg, Ram Niwas Garden  
  **Tel**: 2569696

- **Okra - Jaipur Marriott Hotel**  
  **Location**: Jaipur Marriott Hotel, Ashram Marg, Near Jawahar  
  **Tel**: 4567777  
  **Cell**: 08696950436

- **Peacock Restaurant**  
  **Location**: Pearl Palace Hotel, No. 51, Gopalbari  
  **Tel**: 2373700, 2373752  
  **Cell**: 09414236323

- **Peshawri**  
  **Location**: ITC Rajputana Hotel, Palace Road, Near Railway Station Road  
  **Tel**: 5100100, 5102101, 4051663, 5151663  
  **W** [itchotels.in](http://www.itchotels.in)

- **Sarvan Café**  
  **Location**: Street No. 4, Raja Park  
  **Cell**: 09214866533

- **Sethi Bar-Be-Que**  
  **Location**: Raja Park, Cell 09352999999  
  **Branch**: Malviya Nagar  
  **Cell**: 09828612345

- **Steam**  
  **Location**: Rambagh Palace, hawani Singh Road  
  **Tel**: 2385700  
  **W** [tajhotels.com](http://www.tajhotels.com)

- **Suvarna Mahal**  
  **Location**: Rambagh Palace, Bhawani Singh Road  
  **Tel**: 2385700  
  **W** [tajhotels.com](http://www.tajhotels.com)

- **Talk of the Town**  
  **Location**: B-5, Park Street, Khasa Kothi Circle, MI Road  
  **Cell**: 09785858585  
  **W** [tott.co.in](http://www.tott.co.in)

- **Tapri Central**  
  **Location**: B4-E, 3rd Floor, Survana Jewellers Building, C-Scheme  
  **Tel**: 4011713  
  **Cell**: 07733949494

- **The Robot Restaurant.**  
  **Location**: FF, Shree Gangour Sweets, Tonk Road,  
  **Cell**: 09116666822  
  **Branch**: MI Road  
  **Cell**: 09677067535

- **The Tattoo Café**  
  **Location**: 3rd Floor, No. 30 Opp Hawa Mahal, Badi Chaupar  
  **Tel**: 2600692, 6652289  
  **Cell**: 08619591294, 0982806533, 09782211541

- **The Yellow House: Robot Restaurant**  
  **Location**: Silver Square Mall, Upper Ground Floor, MI Road  
  **Cell**: 08619563985, 08619564853

- **Vegetrainian**  
  **Location**: B-46, Sahkar Marg, Lal Kothi Scheme,  
  **Cell**: 09660995001, 09887660667

- **The Warehouse Café**  
  **Location**: Haldiya Bhawan, Gandhi Nagar, Tonk Road  
  **Cell**: 09982129735
Circle, C-Scheme **Cell** 07725970330 **Signature Dishes** Pav Bhaji, Bhel Puri **Timings** 11am-11pm

**Suvarna Mahal**
**Location** Rambagh Palace, Bhawani Singh Road  
**Tel** 2385700  
**Cuisines** Rajasthani, Awadhi, **Signature Dishes** Lal Maas, Dum Biryani  
**Timings** 12.30pm-3pm, 7.30pm-11.30pm

**The Rajput Room**
**Location** Rambagh Palace, Bhawani Singh Road  
**Tel** 2385700  
**Signature Dish** Gosht Degehi Ke Soole  
**Timings** 6am-11.45pm

**Zoya – Fairmont**
**Location** 2, RIICO Kukas  
**Tel** 0142-6420011  
**Cuisine** Multi-Cuisine  
**Signature Dish** Lal Maas  
**Timings** 7am-11pm

**1135 AD**
**Location** Amber Palace, Level 2, Jalebi Chowk  
**Cell** 09829037170  
**Signature Dish** Murg Sula, Shahi Paneer Labadar  
**Timings** 11am-11pm

**Jaisalmer STD 02992**
**Desert Boys Dhani**
**Location** Main Road, Near Nagarpalika  
**Cell** 09784283777  
**Cuisine** Rajasthani  
**Timings** 11am-4pm, 6.30pm-11pm

**Moonlight Restaurant**
**Location** Hanuman Circle, At Hotel Moonlight, Opp Head Post Office, Jaisalmer  
**Cell** 09829939999

**Natraj Restaurant**
**Location** Aasani Road, Gopa Chowk, Near Salam

**Singh Ki Haveli**  
**Cell** 09636080656  
**Cuisine** Local Rajasthani, Indian  
**Timings** 9am-10.30pm

**Rupal Coffee Cafe**
**Location** Fort Rajwada Hotel, Jodhpur Barmer Link Road  
**Tel** 254608/9, 253233/533  
**Cell** 9828049555  
**Cuisines** Rajasthani, Multicuisine

**Rang Mahal Hotel**
**Location** Hotel Complex, Sam Road, Near Heritage Inn Hotel  
**Tel** 250907  
**Cell** 09667222872  
**Cuisines** Local Rajasthani, Multicuisine  
**Timings** 6am-11pm

**The Kafila Desert Camp**
**Location** Village Kanoi, Sam Sand Dunes  
**Cell** 09414148666  
**Cuisines** Rajasthani, Multicuisine; Open October-March

**The Trio**
**Location** WelcomHeritage Mandir Palace, Gandhi Chowk, Near Bank of Baroda  
**Tel** 2252733  
**Cell** 09414149533  
**Cuisines** Rajasthani, Multicuisine

**JHALAWAR STD 07432**
**Hotel Prithvi Vilas**
**Location** Badi Kothi, Civil Lines  
**Tel** 231347  
**Cell** 9891349555  
**Cuisines** Rajasthani, Indian  
**Signature Dishes** Gatte ki Sabzi, Lal Maas, Gatta Curry  
**Timings** 11am-11pm  
**Outsiders are allowed on prior request**

**JODHPUR STD 0291**
**Gypsy Dining Hall & The Gypsy Restaurant**
**Location** 689, 9th C Road, Sardar Pura  
**Tel** 07412074071/3  
**Cuisines** Rajasthani, Gujarati  
**Timings** Noon-4pm, 7pm-11pm
Mehran Terrace
Location Mehrangarh Fort, Fort Road Tel 2555389 w mehrangarh.org Signature Dish Thali

Nirali Dhani
Location Siddhnath Circle, Jaisalmer Link Road, Chopsani Road Cell 09309230083 w niralidhani.com Cuisine Rajasthani Timings 7am-11pm

On the Rocks
Location Circuit House Road Cell 09119364555 w ontherocksjodhpur.com Cuisine Rajasthani Timings Noon-3.30pm, 7pm-11pm

KEOLADEO / BHARATPUR STD 05644
Hotel Sunbird
Location Near Bird Sanctuary entrance gate Cell 09414026026 Cuisine Multicuisine, Rajasthani

KOTA STD 0744
Brijraj Bhawan
Location Heritage Bldg, Civil Lines, Nayapur Tel 2450529 Cell 09414309597 Cuisine Rajasthani Signature Dishes Chimti Bhatiya

MOUNT ABU STD 02974
Jaipur House Restaurant
Location Mount Abu, Near Sophia High School Tel 235640, 235001 Cell 09413124984 w royal familyjaipur.com Cuisines Rajasthani, Multicuisine

MOUNT ABU STD 02974
SunSet-Café, Hotel Sunset
Location Choti Basti, Near Pushkar Lake Cell 9828172234 Cuisine Rajasthani Timings 7am-11pm

SHEKHAWATI STD 01592
Roop Niwas Fort
Location Nawalgarh Cell 9828499517 w roopniwaskothi.com Cuisine Rajasthani Timings 7.30am-10.30am; 12.30pm-2.30pm; 7.30pm-10.30pm

The Piramal Haveli
Location Bagar, Jhunjhunu Cell 09414050058 w neemranahotels.com Cuisine Rajasthani Timings 12.30pm-2.30pm, 8pm-10pm

UDAIPUR STD 0294
Bougainvillea Terrace by the Lake
Location Hotel Lakend, Fatehsagar Lakeshore, Alkapuri Cell 7073199903/6 Cuisines Rajasthani, Multicuisine Timings 5pm-11.30pm Signature Dishes Kolkata Jhalmuri, Gobi 65 with Methi Thepla, Lal Maas, Prawn Chilli Butter Garlic

Chandni Restaurant - Udaipur Kothi
Location Hanuman Ghat Marg, Pichola Lake Tel 2432810-12 Cell 08875555775 w udaikothi.com Cuisines Rajasthani, Indian Timings 7am-10.30pm

Charcoal By Carlsson
Location Hotel Pratap Bhawan, 12, Lal Ghat Cell 08769160106 Cuisines Rajasthani, Mexican
Garden Thali Restaurant
Location Gulab Bagh Road, Garden Hotel, opposite Sajjan Niwas Garden Tel 2418881 Cuisine North Indian Timings 11.30am-3pm; 7pm-10pm

Gordhan Thal
Location 32, Shopping Centre, City Station Road
Cell 9672482345 w gordhanthaludaipur.com
Cuisines Rajasthani, Gujarati
Timing 11am-11pm

Krishna Dal Bati Restro
Location Jal Darshan Market, Hotel Green View Street, Brahmputi
Cell 9001055322 Cuisine
Rajasthani Timings 11am-4.30pm; 7pm-9.30pm

Natraj Dining Hall and Restaurant
Location 22-24, City Station Road, near Railway Stn, Jawahar Nagar, Shivaji Nagar
Cell 9414757893
Cuisines Gujarati, Rajasthani, North Indian, Chinese
Timings 11am-3.30pm; 6.30pm-10.30pm; New Bapu Bazaar branch
Cell 9414385450

Millet of Mewar
Location 16, Bhim Parmeshwar Marg, Hanuman Ghat
Cell 9636652269 Signature Dishes Millet-based dishes
Timings 8.30am-10.30pm

Panna Vilas Restaurant & Lounge
Location Fateh Sagar Lake, 758/280, Rani Road, OTC
Cell 9672222872, 8003092145 Signature Dishes
Chicken Banjara, Farm House Pizza, Lal Maas, Paneer Angare
Timings 7.30am-10.30am; 12.30pm-3.30pm; 6.30pm-10.30pm

Rajwada Bites
Location Mission Compound, near Swaroop Nagar

Cell 9413318796 w rajwadabitesudaipur.com
Cuisines Indian, Chinese, Sizzlers, Continental, Rajasthani
Signature Dishes Lal Maas, Mutton Rana, Special Biryani (veg/non veg), Chicken Afghani, Paneer Rajwada
Timing 11am-10pm

Santosh Bhojnalaya & Restaurant
Location Near Surajpole Circle
Cell 08094498647 w santoshdalbati.com Signature Dishes Rajasthani Thali, Besan Gatta
Timings 8am-11.30pm

Sabor at juSTa Sajjangarh Resort and Spa
Location Opp Biological Park
Cell 8875007342
w sabor.sajjangarh@justahotels.com Cuisines
Indian, Western, Oriental, Mexican, Italian, Rajasthani
Signature Dishes Palak Paneer Risotto, Gharelu Kukkad Enchilada, Badam Halwa
Timings 6.30am-10.30am; 12.30pm-3.30pm; 6.30pm-11pm

Swayamwar
Location Shourya Garh Resort & Spa, near Shipgram
Cell 8952079111 Signature Dishes
Noormahal Biryani, Bombay wala Paneer
Timings 12.30am-3pm; 7.30pm-10.30pm

Traditional Khana Restaurant
Location 48D, Panchwati
Cell 7665366999 Timings 11.30am-10.30pm

Trivedi Upchar Grah
Location Surajpole Circle, next to Udaipur Hotel
Cell 9414033558 Signature Dish Udad ke Laddu

Vyanjan
Location Shourya Residency, Gulab Bagh
Cell 09358003964 Signature Dish Khubani ka Halwa
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Glossary</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aam ki launji</td>
<td>thick mango chutney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amchur</td>
<td>mango powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bajot</td>
<td>Rajasthani traditional intricately carved metal stool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bajra</td>
<td>pearl millet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>besan</td>
<td>gram flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhakri</td>
<td>jowar rotis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhog</td>
<td>meatless consecratory offerings for the patron deity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bhuna kukda</td>
<td>roasted chicken Rajasthani-style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chawli</td>
<td>lobiya/black-eyed beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chhach</td>
<td>buttermilk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dum</td>
<td>(pressure/slow-cooking in a sealed container)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dona and pattal</td>
<td>traditional serving bowl and plate made from leaves of the sal tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doodhi</td>
<td>bottle gourd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gehun</td>
<td>wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gatte</td>
<td>dumplings made from gram flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gunde</td>
<td>lasora or bird lime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hakeem</td>
<td>Muslim physician practicing traditional medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hing</td>
<td>asafoetida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>juwar</td>
<td>sorghum, a kind of millet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kairi</td>
<td>raw mangoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ker</td>
<td>wild berry native to Rajasthan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>khansamas</td>
<td>traditional professional cooks from the princely courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kohla</td>
<td>ash gourd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kumat</td>
<td>seeds from the pod of the deciduous tree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lapsi</td>
<td>cracked/broken wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mawa</td>
<td>khoya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masoor</td>
<td>red lentils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methi</td>
<td>fenugreek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meetha neem</td>
<td>curry leaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mung</td>
<td>green gram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>poha</td>
<td>flaked rice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raab</td>
<td>thick broth made from bajra flour and buttermilk, which is heated and fermented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rai</td>
<td>mustard seeds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rajthikanas/rajgharanas</td>
<td>royal households of Rajasthan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rasowara</td>
<td>kitchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saatvik</td>
<td>light and simple food cooked without onions and garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sabudana</td>
<td>sago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sahjan ki phalli</td>
<td>drumsticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sangri</td>
<td>dried beans of the Khejri tree native of Rajasthan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saunf</td>
<td>aniseed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saunth</td>
<td>dry ginger powder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shakahari</td>
<td>vegetarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toor dal</td>
<td>arhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>varq</td>
<td>edible silver foil</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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DEEPAK SURI

**Front Cover**
SHUTTERSTOCK
Daal Baati Churma is a popular dish from Rajasthan

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Courtesy Images
TAJ HOTELS, RESORTS AND PALACES
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