

“Ayurvedic Cuisine”

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Abstract: *Literal translation of “AYURVEDA” may be understood as a science to increase life (AYUR). Ayurveda comes under the purview of Atharva Veda that is considered to be one of the four doctrines in Indian Culture and heritage. Essentially this branch of philosophy deals with Medicine and Surgery for the holistic wellbeing of humanity. Charaka Samhita, a codified treatise on general Medicine in classic Ayurveda has been written in Sanskrit during the time of Indus Valley Civilization around 1000 B.C.E. (Before the Common Era). This system of medicine has stood the test of times. It is not only the “how” and “what” we eat makes a difference in our health but how it is prepared does acclaim significance. Centered on this concept, Paatra Shuddhi (purity of vessel), Paaka Shuddhi (purity in cooking process) and Padartha Shuddhi (purity of the ingredients) are proposed by ancient Sages who followed Vedas. Indian cooking with all the taboos of being hot and spicy actually backed up with scientific rationale, with each ingredient added for a purpose and a deep rooted reasoning. It is all about balancing the key forces within our body and understanding the basic requirements to stay fit and healthy. Ayurvedic cooking is based on the understanding of the unique combination of Vata (Ether), Pitta (Fire) and Kapha (Water) that constitute the human body and balance its life forces. Our body is based on one or a combination of these factors. The Ayurvedic cuisine includes dishes made out of such food combination that balances these factors optimally in the human body. As it is a relatively unique concept, it can also fetch the market value in the form of new ventures in various countries. In this article due emphasis is laid up on Rajsic/tamsic/saatvic type of foods as per Ayurveda, basic human elements are revisited and summarized, food preparations related to the balancing of forces and elements of human body are discussed and reasons for following a particular step for the preparation in the cuisine are elaborated. Further this paper throws light on new ingenious business ideas based on Ayurvedic foods and supplements.*

Key Words: *Ayurvedic food, Cusines, Indian dishes, Hotel Management, Holistic health*

I. Introduction To Ayurvedic Cuisine

“Ayurveda treats the person not the disease”

Food is said to nourish, nurture and heal the soul for upliftment, required for well being of any living being. Ayurvedic cuisine is food prepared on the principles of Ayurveda, an age old system of medicine from India. It is based on the balance of nature, and more importantly, on our relationships with those around us and we ourselves as well. Ayurveda is one of the oldest healing systems, predicted to be up to 5,000 years old. Ayurveda is formulated on elemental system, where the qualities of the elements of nature of a human body and tastes of food, combined into three main doshas. Our dietary needs and digestion are affected by the changes in nature by means of different seasons etc and constantly changing parameters due to the global climatic changes. It makes it important for us to eat food sensibly and with lot of jurisdiction and right preferences.

Ideal nutritious diet is derived from consuming a variety of fresh foods that are appropriately prepared and eaten with knowledge of self. Food comes first. It is basic necessity for enhancing ones strength and immunity. It can be understood as the requirement of mind and nutrition. When we're healthy, we desire food that is healthy. But if our mind, body, or soul is out of balance, it all creates an imbalance and attracting a whole lot of problems.

II. Review Of Literature

To be able to understand the Ayurvedic cuisine, “Food” needs to be understood. Everything that is absorbed by five senses like Mouth (for food, water), Nose (for Breath), Ear (to listen to Chanting and sweet music), Skin (for touch and feel), Eyes (to see the beautiful Nature) is Food. When we consume a healthy and nutritious food in required amount, it gives us long life and youthfulness. However if consumed in an inappropriate amounts, it increases toxins in the body which play havoc in ones life if ignored. Having right food according to ones body needs and type is the initial step towards achieving healthy and cheerful life. But just having right food is not enough. right combination along with correct proportion of food is vital for an individual.

Most of the illness reported are due to incorrect and malnourished foods or not having food in a proper manner and also is due to the improper methods of preparation which might have been habituated because of

changing lifestyles and culture . Specific food's nutritive value and its detrimental effects are often decided by depending on its taste, attributes and healing value along with the nutrition .

Ayurveda as a field of science has three main focuses: to heal, to prevent and proper health care. This science in medical field is a method of personalized food requirement for each individual's healing process. Ayurvedic cooking methods are a rational way to prepare food ,keeping the dietary requirements of an individual derived from different body types into consideration.

Ayurveda categorizes food in to three main categories which are Satvic, Rajasic and Tamasic. These decide the type of food and individual should intake for the upkeep their health .

Ayurveda is said to be based on an elemental system, where the qualities of the elements and tastes are combined into three doshas, or constitutions by detailed study to inform how we view ourselves, food and those around us, by focusing on viewing within self.

The five key elemental qualities on which “DOSHA” is based are

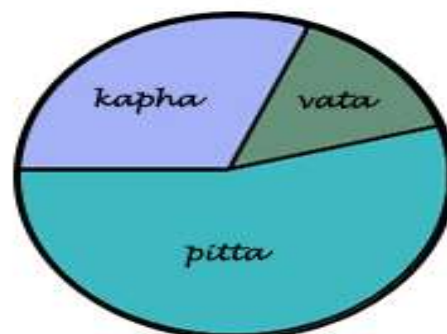
Ether/Space,
Air
Fire
Water
Earth

At times we feel irritable? Frustrated? Sluggish? If we are experiencing a sudden change in attitude or being it may be because of the imbalance in the doshas which probably are out of balance. Doshas are basic concept in Ayurvedic cuisine, which helps us understand that everything that is living constitutes and is made up of forces for vital energy which affects any wellbeing. These energy forces are called doshas, it is the combination of these in each of us that can directly be responsible for healthy or unhealthy being of everyone.

It is very important to understand the term “Doshā”. The entire ayurvedic cuisine is based upon knowing the dosha and working on it. The cuisine thus is based upon deep understanding of combination or a particular type of dosha rectification and treatment of the same.

The term “*dosha*” in Sanskrit means some force that can change or forces that may go wrong. These forces are present within our bodies and everywhere around us , these can change, shift and can even morph. When we consider the doshas, it is very important to understand that these are energetic qualities and they are not constant.. By maintaining a balance among these forces, we can remain health, wealthy and wise, by including food that are suitable for correcting the dosha or food that must be consumed if we have a particular kind of Dosha.. The Tridoshas- viz kapha, vata and pitta. Ayurveda's concept of the Tridoshas is very unique to medical science as one might think of. Ayurveda says that the body is made up of tissues known as dhatus, waste products or known as malas, and doshas (can be related to the Energetic Forces). It is the Tridoshas' play in the human system which amalgamate along with the formation of all of the various tissues in the body and to remove any toxin or unnecessary waste products from the body. It is also these Tridoshas which influence all movements, all transformations, sensory functions, and many of the other important activities in the human body and mind as well.

Sample of an individual prakruti



The Three doshas

. Vata Dosha - Responsible for all the movements in the Body,

Pitta Dosha - responsible for Metabolism in the Body,

Kapha Dosha - responsible for all Structure & lubrication in the Body

To find out which dosha you belong to, try the dosha test at - <http://tridosha.com/self-test>

When all these doshas are balanced, it leads to a harmony in the human system and helps heal self from within , providing us with an immense energy and positivity

It is said most of the illness or diseases start with wrong eating habits or in other words unhealthy intake of food that creates an imbalance in these doshas. “ We are what we eat” is a very common and very well known fact

To be able to understand Ayurvedic cuisine it becomes even more important to have a deep knowledge on these three Doshas because of their direct connectivity with the system of human body and an influence which these ultimately have on the overall wellbeing of one and all

अन्नं ब्रह्मा रसो विष्णुः
पक्वो देवो महेश्वरः ।
एवं ज्ञात्वा तु यो भुङ्क्ते
अन्न दोषो न लिप्यते ॥

The creative energy in the food is Brahma,
The nourishing energy in the body is Vishnu,
The transformation of food into pure consciousness is Shiva.
If you know this, then any impurities in the food you eat
will never become a part of you.

A relook at the important terms for better understanding- doshas, dhatus, malas based on which the cuisine of Ayurveda will be depending upon:

DOSHAS- is one of three bodily Bio elements that make up one's constitution

DHATUS- Are the seven tissues of the body. In English they are plasma, blood, muscle, fat, bone, marrow / nerve, and reproductive tissue

MALAS- the waste which is actually the toxin for the body including sweat apart from the other human waste. Effective elimination of malas is said to be important for maintaining good health.

General facts about the tastes: Some variety of foods may have more than one taste. For example, apples have both astringent and sweet taste whereas Turmeric at same time is astringent, bitter, pungent and a little sweet. The taste of Oranges that is both sour and sweet. And, within a type or category of food, individual items may have different qualities. To prevent ourselves from any disease, a good healthy and nutritious diet is eminent and therefore it is actually the best ‘substitute’ for stronger medicine. It is usually said that “by changing eating habits the humans , most of the diseases get cured without use of any medicine, however even with hundreds of best medicines cannot cure diseases hundred percent if the food eaten is wrong. Right food at right time in right quantity is the key to good health” it all starts from the selection and preparation of fresh, organic food. Well balanced food, herbs and condiments promote healthy bodily growth and harmful food produces disease by pacifying of imbalanced doshas. There are six different tastes, which can be traced back from the punchamahabhutas, are inculcated within Ayurveda, they are : sweet, sour, astringent, salty, pungent, and bitter. Each dosha is either enhanced or hindered by intake of certain taste preferences. For example if a person likes sour food, however the Kapha dosha is imbalanced, then the individual is prone to suffer from throat related diseases. In simple and easy to understand manner , below are few brief description for various Doshas and their treatments

Kapha dosha-

- These individuals require locations which are Warm, Dry & Light
- Preferred kind of food - Pungent, Bitter & Astringent
- Eat Dry & Astringent Fruits (apples & raisins), Raw Vegetables, Rice Cakes, Hot Spices & Spicy Herbal Teas (ginger)
- Avoid Sweet Fruits, Nuts, Dairy & Oil

Pitta dosha-

- Individuals with active Pitta dosha should stay in areas which are Cool, Dry & Heavier
- Sweet, Bitter & Astringent tastes are recommended
- Should eat Sweet Fruits, Bitter Vegetables (greens), Beans, Natural Sweeteners & Mild Cheeses (cottage cheese)
- Must avoid Sour Fruits, Pungent Vegetables (onion), Nuts, Hot Spices, Fermented Dairy (yogurt) & Oils

Vata dosha-

- Persons with active vata dosha must stay at areas which are Warm, Moist & Heavier
- Tastes preferred are -Sweet, Sour & Salty
- Must eat Sweet Fruits, Cooked Vegetables, Cooked Grains (oatmeal), Nuts, Natural Sweeteners, Mild/Warming Spices (basil) & Dairy in Moderation
- Should avoid Dry Fruits, Dry Grains (rice cakes), Raw Vegetables, Cabbage Family (broccoli) & Beans

This ancient science called “Ayurveda” actually discovered and elaborated on how cooking and the time taken to cook changes the composition of food completely and its affects on the body once ingested.

Simple example like the lycopene in tomatoes, enhances while cooking is easy to extract. However for onion tempering it with asafoetida balances those properties in onion thereby making it good for cough and cold and also aids in digestion

As a matter of fact, ayurvedic cooking does not encourage using browned onions as they have lost all their nutrients and can possibly cause acidity in a few cases. Also, blanching carrots reduces betacarotene, and so it is best eaten raw. In fact the all-popular methods of cooking -steaming done by wrapping vegetable in a leaf like banana leaf is also very much ayurvedic in nature as all the flavours, as there is very less loss of essential nutrients. And cooking takes place due to the moisture present in food itself.

Ayurvedic Cooking is all about the guiding principles of basic food combinations rather than rules:

- Food needs to be light, easily digestible and according to the season (heavier food in terms of fat or oil content is perfectly fine if used in moderations during Winter however in Summer it needs to be lighter and more of fresh ingredients to be used)
- Use spices in order to create a balance amongst the doshas
- Cooked food is considered much easier to digest and has more flavor than raw food
- Certain combinations of foods do not merge well with others eg: Milk in its natural form is not recommended as it does not go well with most fruits such as banana, yoghurt and other citrus fruits are also incompatible. However Yogurt which is prepared from milk itself combines well with most fruits

Balancing vata

"When vata is aggravated, your system becomes irregular and depleted, which affects weak organs and tissues," explains Dr Rama Prasad from Chatswood's [Ayurveda Elements](#).

Additional signs of vata imbalance:

- Constipation
- Dehydration
- Anxious
- Craving warmth
- Frequent viral infection
- Weight loss
- Disturbed sleep

Excessive consumption of bitter, astringent and spicy tastes contribute to vata imbalance. Prasad recommends pacifying with sweet, sour and salty tastes and warm, moist, easily digestible foods like:

- Boiled or steamed starchy vegetables (moderate broccoli, cauliflower, zucchini and leafy vegetables)
- Ripe fruits
- Warm milk (moderate dairy)
- Soupy grains: rice, wheat
- Mild spices: cumin, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, fennel, coriander, salt, cloves, mustard, black pepper
- Tea: camomile, fennel, ginger, liquorice, lemon

"Nourishing soups, casseroles and dahls are great for balancing vata, particular during winter," suggests Dr Matthews.

Balancing pitta

"When pitta is unbalanced, you can become aggressive and irritable. Internalising that fire can increase your self-critic, resulting in perfectionism," says Dr Matthews.

Additional signs of imbalance:

- Diarrhoea

- Over-heating, profuse sweating
- Colourful, violent dreams
- Excessive hunger
- Frequent bacterial infections
- Heartburn

Dr Prasad believes pitta imbalance may result from excessive alcohol or hot, spicy, oily, fried, salty, fermented foods. He suggests rebalancing with sweet, bitter and astringent tastes and cool, heavy foods including:

- Boiled, steamed, raw vegetables
- Sweet fruits
- Moderate amounts of dairy
- Soupy grains: rice, wheat, barley, oats
- Mild, cooling spices: coriander, cardamom, cloves, turmeric, cumin, curry leaves, mint
- Tea: fennel, camomile, peppermint, spearmint, liquorice, red clover

Balancing kapha

"When kapha is unbalanced, there is a tendency for mental and physical stagnation. Stimulation of all kinds helps to avoid that heavy, lethargic feeling," advises Dr Matthews.

Additional signs of imbalance:

- Sluggish bowels
- Procrastination
- Craving warmth, spicy foods
- Frequent candida
- Water retention
- Weight gain
- Excessive sleep

Dr Prasad advises excessive food consumption can contribute to kapha imbalance, and recommends a light, warm, low-fat diet of pungent, bitter and astringent tastes like:

- Boiled, steamed, raw vegetables
- Ripe fruits (except banana)
- Fat-free buttermilk (other dairy reduced)
- Grains: corn, millet, rye, oats, barley, wheatbran
- Strong spices: pepper, paprika, salt, garlic, basil, cloves, allspice, fennel, mustard, turmeric, cumin, ginger, cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, black pepper
- Honey instead of sugar
- Tea: cinnamon, fenugreek, peppermint, raspberry

In the wise world of Ayurveda, you really are what you eat; so discover and dine for your dosha to restore holistic health of hips, head and heart.

A small sample of Tridoshic Menu are as below

“VATA MENU”

Summer Day

Breakfast

Breakfast Rice

Hot tea or Milk

Lunch

Zucchini and mung dal rice

Whole wheat Chapati

Yoghurt(optional)

Snack

Fresh Figs , Apricot, Peaches or Melon

Dinner

Buttermilk khadhi over noodles Yam salad

Dessert

Coconut Macaroons

Beverage

Digestive Tea, Carrot juice, Lemonade

“Pitta Menu”

Summer Day

Breakfast

Puff Rice or Crispy Granola with wheat flakes milk , Soya milk or Coconut milk

Lunch

Avocado spread

Whole wheat Crackers or Chappatis

Large Tossed Salad

Snack

Grapes, Berries or other sweet fruits in season

Or cool mint tea

Dinner

Mung burger whole wheat bun with coriander chutny

Fresh cole slaw

Dessert

Khir

Beverage

Herbal teas Chamomile, Mint or Lemon Grass

‘Khapa Menu’

Summer Day

Breakfast

Fresh fruit or Crispy Granola

Goat or Soy milk with Cardamom

Lunch

Cauliflower Kadhi

Cornbread

Snowpea salad or tossed salad

- Khapa Menu

Snack

Apricot , berries and peaches

Dinner

Sautéed Tofu and Vegetables

Millet

Large Salad

Dessert

Unbuttered popcorn or Khapa fruit crumble

Beverage

Apple , Peach or Pomegranate Juice.

<p>V vata</p>	<p>p pitta</p>	<p>k kapha</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thin build • does not gain weight easily • quick to learn, quick to forget • enthusiastic & vivacious • becomes cold easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medium build • balanced weight • sharp intellect • goal oriented • becomes hot easily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • larger build • tendency for weight gain • slow to learn, slow to forget • sweet & even tempered • dislikes cold & damp weather
<p>vata in balance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • energetic... vivacious • learns easily • clear & alert mind • falls asleep easily at bedtime • balanced digestion & elimination • good circulation & even body temperature <p>vata out of balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tired and/or fatigued • forgetful, or spaced out • lack of focus • difficulty falling asleep • occasional constipation • poor circulation (cold feet & hands) • feelings of anxiousness & worry 	<p>pitta in balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perfectionist (type A personality) • strong intellect • strong digestion • radiant, glowing skin • sleeps through the night • inner peace & happiness <p>pitta out balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • controlling, fiery personality • workaholic tendencies • overheated, excess stomach acid • skin rashes & acne • interrupted sleep • loose bowel movements 	<p>kapha in balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stable temperament • good long-term memory • healthy robust physiology • strength & stamina • compassionate & affectionate • sound sleep <p>kapha out of balance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gains weight easily • sluggish digestion • prone to sinus & respiratory issues • lethargy • feelings of sadness • difficulty waking up • food cravings

Ayurveda an excellent way to balance the Doshas

All the three doshas have their unique quantity, qualities, and functions in human body. When all of them are well balanced, it is said to be normal or balanced (Dosha Shamyā). This condition is conducive to the well-being, healthy lifestyle, and wellness of the being from outside and the soul within. However, at times this balanced state will change as it is always changing depending on the season, environment, food intake etc. The Doshas may either become increased (vridhī) or decreased (kasaya). In both of these conditions it leads to ill-health or suffer from disease. However, increased Doshas cause greater problems in relation with the health than the decreased Doshas.

III. Objective

The main purpose of this research is to have an understanding of what to eat, when and how depending on the most prominent dosha as per the guidelines mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. Every spice we use has a reason for its usage e.g. turmeric is said to have antibiotic and builds immune system, cumin/ajwain are known for their aiding in stomach and bowel movements, green cardamom is said to help in reducing internal inflammation so on and so forth. Not only the spices used according to the geographical location, also the techniques or styles of cooking as per the rectification and intake of food depending on prevalent Dosha assists in healthy wellbeing without disturbing the ecological system.

IV. Conclusion

Dietary and eating habits, their cure/ remedies and health/ well being promoting our daily routines may differ from place to place, but their core principles remain the same throughout i.e. to observe all and everyone with deep harmony and oneness without discretion. Ayurveda can be effectively practiced in a self-reliant manner in any manner and will surely serve to build self-dependence rather than on experts and drug companies. Dhatus are majorly the seven basic and vital tissues/constructing elements in a human system. Malas are the waste products. Ether is the ultimate space, pure bliss along with emptiness, an unexplained distance.

In the simple sense, it is the ‘nothingness’ in and around which the basic electrons rotate around any atom.

Ayurvedic cooking or the cuisine as mostly understood is the idea that the tongue which is nothing but an organ for the six different tastes is a gateway to higher realm. Manna (heart) along with mind often takes on the experiment with various types of food combinations to see what goes well with what. Cooking is both body

and soul experience along with the intuition which tells if things need to be rectified or evolved or changed. One needs to feel it, smell it, taste it, innovate it, love it, and improvise it! Ghee, as we all know, is very highly considered as medicinal food when combined properly and eaten in accordance with understanding of ones Doshas.

V. Analysis And Interpretation

1. Eat according to ones dosha to improve on the innerself and to be able to reduce the illness related to the dosha
2. Include a high amount of seasonal and locally available fresh fruits and vegetables as they will give the required essential body building nutrients , thereby building ones immune system.
3. Keeping the digestive fire, or agni, well lit, as this will greatly improve the quality of digestion and be able to extract maximum nutrients from the food we intake

The digestive system is the said to be the most powerful of all , to improve immunity and good health. In general, it is well known fact that cold foods can hinder the digestive fire and make digestion sluggish/uneasy. Therefore it is best to avoid cold water or cold juice just before or during dinner is not a great idea.. On the other hand, stomach agni greatly is improved with intake of ginger-lemon juice along with a coriander, black salt, and a teaspoon of honey, this is an excellent way to activate one’s salivary glands, which in turn will generate enzymes that aid in nutrients absorption by the body.

The six basic tastes and their Elemental effects

Sweet	Earth & Water (decreases Vata and Pitta, increases Kapha)
Sour	Earth & Fire (decreases Vata, increases Pitta and Kapha)
Salty	Water & Fire (decreases Vata, increases Pitta and Kapha)
Pungent	Fire & Air (increases Vata and Pitta, decreases Kapha)
Bitter	Air & Space/ Ether (increases Vata, decreases Pitta and Kapha)
Astringent	Air & Earth (increases Vata, decreases Pitta and Kapha)

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