



rajasthani thali

hours of sitting and working, a lot of the dishes in this thali work on two principles: nourishment and lightness. take the famous dhokla, for instance. this steamed cake-like snack is simultaneously light and filling on account of its low glycemic index, and is also a good source of selenium, omega 3 and magnesium. It is also a rich source of antioxidants, thanks to dishes such as undhiyu (a mixed vegetable preparation) and kadhi, chutneys and the fibre-rich kachumber (cubed onions and

tomatoes). this thali also plays on the interaction of sweet and sour, the sweet being used to create an appetite and the sour helping digest the meal.

#### SADYA

a well-known celebratory spread served during the festival of onam, this meal can incorporate as many as 28 dishes. traditionally served on a plantain leaf, a sadya spread includes par boiled red rice, side dishes, savouries, pickles and dessert. While the rice, rich in fibre and magnesium, is served first, the meal begins with parippu, a gram and ghee curry. this is followed by sambar, a stew-like preparation of mashed lentils and mixed vegetables. other dishes include aval (a



dhoklas are integral to a gujarati thali



traditionally, sadya is served on a plantain leaf

preparation of vegetables, coconut paste and green chillies), thoran (minced string beans, cabbage, radish and grated coconut) and olan (pumpkin and red grams cooked with coconut milk). for dessert, payasam (a pudding made using milk or sweet brown molasses) seals the deal. the meal doesn't end here, however. the final serving is of rice and rasam (a tamarind juice-based liquid preparation) which aids in digestion by stimulating the metabolism.

#### BENGALI THALI

this thali is served in a series of courses, each course designed in pairs such that one dish aids in the digestion of the



a Bengali spread

*a well-known celebratory spread, kerala's sadya can incorporate as many as 28 dishes*

other. the meal begins with shukto, a mixed vegetable preparation. a great source of fibre, Vitamin a, Vitamin C, folate, magnesium, potassium, zinc and manganese, shukto not only delivers the daily requirement of minerals but also cleanses the palate. the next course is usually luchi (deep-fried flour flatbread) and dal or a meat preparation, followed by rice and ghonto (a curry made using seasonal vegetables and fish). the meal usually ends with sweet rice pudding called paes. other dishes can include a bhaja (stir fried vegetables), mochar puff (banana flower preparation) and a fish delicacy. rich in omega 3 and cod liver oil, a Bengali thali offers a truly balanced meal.



# Sanskarika

Newsletter of the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre Apr 2020

*Happy Sinhala Tamil New Year*





# THE GREAT INDIAN THALI

*based on the basic principles of nourishment and seasonality, the thalis of india pack a carefully-curated balance of nutrients and minerals within delicious spreads. we bring you six among them that you must try on your next visit to the country*

Source: by Madhulika Dash | India Perspectives | Vol 32 | Issue 3 | 2018



Arguably India's most loved culinary tradition, the thali, or platter of assorted dishes that together make a complete meal, is essentially the celebration of a region's cuisine and culture. Each thali is based on two basic principles, nourishment and seasonality, and the selection of dishes is never random: each item is rich in an essential nutrient. Here are six stellar spreads from different regions in India that are must-tries.

## ASSAMESE THALI

If you ever wanted to explore northeast India through its food, the Assamese thali is the perfect muse to begin your culinary journey from. Incorporating influences from various tribes of the region, this thali is a balanced package of protection and nourishment for the body. The meal begins with a khar dish, so named because of its main ingredient, also called khar: an alkaline solution prepared using bananas. This is believed to be a conscious step towards preparing the gut for the

rest of the meal, which incorporates elements of sourness to facilitate better digestion. An Assamese thali normally concludes with a tenga dish, the word 'tenga' literally translating into 'sour'. This could be a fish curry, or a curry made using citrus fruits and vegetables. Other dishes served include poitabhat (fermented rice seasoned with mustard oil, onions and chillies), pitika (mashed vegetables, boiled or roasted) and pickle (which contains probiotic elements). Low on spices and sodium, this thali is all about using local greens and naturally-occurring salty components.

## PUNJABI THALI

Known best for its dal makhani, sarso ka saag, bajre ki roti and butter chicken, the beauty of the Punjabi thali lies in how it brings together the dishes best suited to the region's extreme climate: sweltering summers and cold winters. The Punjabi thali is believed to have been created around a community tradition called



sanjha chulha, or community kitchen. A quintessential version would have a flatbread – either made of wheat or bajra – dal, a bowl of greens, spinach (sarson during winter, palak during summer) and freshly chopped onion alongside a root vegetable such as radish or carrot. Made using ghee (clarified butter), this

meal combines the goodness of carbohydrates in the flatbread with the power of protein in the dal, while delivering an array of nutrients and antioxidants with the vegetables. The fresh onion works as a palate cleanser while also being a good source of Vitamin C; the lassi, a typical summer drink made using milk and yoghurt, is often served with the thali during the hotter months of the year, its fermented characteristics aiding in digestion. In winter, the meal begins with gur ka halwa, a sweet preparation made using jaggery, that warms up the body from within. Meat is said to be integral to the Punjabi thali during the colder months of the year.

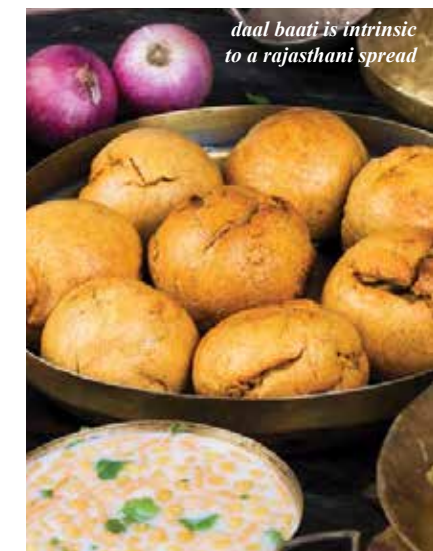
## RAJASTHANI THALI

One of the finest examples of sustainable consumption, the Rajasthani thali has several variants, believed to differ every 50 miles within the state! It can be broadly divided into two categories: the mewari thali and the marwari thali. While one is high on meat, the other is high on vegetables. Both

will typically feature a baati or thick roti, dal, a vegetable preparation, a yoghurt-based gravy dish, pickle and an assortment of chutneys with the occasional addition of a meat dish.

A highlight of this thali is that nearly all its components are slow-cooked and each delicacy has a distinct taste and texture. A popular dish that is a staple of nearly every Rajasthani

thali is ker sangri, a preparation of dried black berries and twiggy beans made using mustard oil, whole red chillies and raw mango. With the texture of a pickle, this is believed to be good for digestion.



## GUJARATI THALI

If there is one thali that can boast the largest collection of dishes based on the clever use of yoghurt and gram flour, it is the Gujarati thali. Believed to have been conceptualised for a profession that involves long