



# VARUNI

NEWSLETTER  
SEPT 2020

## *The Food Special*



*Navy Wives Welfare Association Goa*



### **NWWA Committee, Goa**

**Front Row (L-R):** Seena Menon, Monisha Rastogi, Babita Nair, Tripti Chauhan, Aparajita Menon, Charu Padbidri, Priya Philipose, Reena Pandey, Nidhi Verma, Panchali Ghosh, Preeti Purohit

**Back Row (L-R):** Shweta Varshney, Vidya Prashanth, Tanmayee Das, Snigdha Nehru, Sucheta Navet, Veenu Sheokhand, Aishwarya Harish, Sarika Bhargav, Toral Vora, Jyothi Sridhar, Amina Azad



### **Sub Committee, NWWA Goa**

**Front Row (L-R):** Mahi, Mahua, Priya Philipose, Charu Padbidri, Bembem

**Back Row (L-R):** Rukhsana, Radha, Dhanlakshmi, Pushpalatha

# Message from the President, NWWA Goa



**Dear Ladies,**

We are all going through a unique time warp. Since March we have been living home bound worried about an invisible but lethal virus. For many of us, it's after a long time that we got our children home with us-notwithstanding online classes or them working from home. Precious time together in this fast-paced life. We have come to understand and appreciate the contribution and ease of living our domestic help workers afford us in our homes and lives.

We have realised the blessing it is to know that the roof over our heads and the salary we are dependent on will remain steadfast through this difficult time unlike in the case of so many others. We now know how much more we need to do to show mother nature the love and respect she deserves from us. Hopefully living and dealing with the novel coronavirus has taught us all never to take life for granted.

This time of social distancing has hopefully instilled in us the value of relationships within our families and with our friends. It has taught us that we need to be kind to ourselves first and to the world around us. It made me feel really proud to be part of a vibrant team of community workers. Ladies got together and ensured that over 1000 masks were made and distributed amongst our conservancy staff and the staff at the naval hospital. NGOs that reached out to us were helped by our committed NWWA members.

This has been a time of learning - it was heartening to watch universities/ institutions and individuals reach out to the world at large with free classes on varying subjects. FOOD has been an escape and a solace during this unpredictable time. Recipes of easy and healthy dishes were exchanged on social media. The lockdown saw families cooking and eating together, which has been a great way to strengthen family bonds.

It has also been a time of correcting our eating habits and starting an exercise routine-small steps like ensuring fixed mealtimes, nutritious wholesome home-cooked meals, following a few simple breathing exercises and practising yoga at home. All of this has gone a long way in staying positive during this crisis. This issue of the Varuni is an ode to Food- our escape and joy during this difficult time. Hope you enjoy reading it and relate to all the experiences shared here by our contributors.

*"One of the very nicest things about life is the way we must regularly stop whatever it is we are doing and devote our attention to eating." - Luciano Pavarotti*

Stay Safe!

*Priya*

Priya Philipose  
President NWWA, Goa



# From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the new edition of Varuni 2020. I do hope and pray that each of you and your family are healthy and safe. The theme for this newsletter is something we arrived at unanimously and without a second thought. For who does not love FOOD? The comfort of a warm plate of deliciousness, a scoop of your favorite dessert, a deep-fried snack waiting to be dipped into your favorite chutney...ahh and I could go on and on. Working on this edition of Varuni has been a journey that has taken a year to fructify. Circumstances moved in such a way that just as we were about to go into print, the lockdown hit the entire nation, and how. What followed was endless days of waiting for a chance to be normal again. Little did we know then that this year there was going to be a 'new normal'.

However, even in these crazy times trust the naval wives to come up with the most innovative and fun ways to interact, safely. Goa naval area ladies also pitched in with their culinary skills on full display with the novel Bunker Galley, an initiative by Jayati Puri and Nidhi Verma that provided much needed meetha and teekha swaad to all our homes. This edition is dedicated to the resilience and tenacity of the naval community and explores our relationship with food. Read the story about how Hansa mess provides much needed relief to newbies in town. Aishwarya Harish and Amrisha Chauhan take us on a journey through cheeky traditions such as 'bouncing' and 'potluck parties' that we all have experienced. Preeti Jacob shares with us her journey as a home baker, and Harpreet Pasricha balances the scales with her article on healthy superfoods. Read Ashwini Avate's tips on choosing the right wine for your meals and Jyoti Shridhar confesses her insatiable desire for all things sweet and sinful. Culinary experts Shresthaa Paul and Yaman Roy share insights to their Bengali passion for cooking and Monisha Rastogi dives deep into examining our relationship with food and its affect on our mood. This time we have also launched a new Hindi section where Lakshita Bakshi has written an endearing piece on her mother's food and Bina Kumari shares her love for her mother's kitchen in verse.

So, as you can see food does bring out the absolute best in all of us. It is possibly the easiest and fastest way to lift you out of gloomy days and bring a smile to your lips. I sincerely hope that this edition of Varuni appeals to the foodie in you and you relish reading it just as much as I did putting it together for you.

Happy Reading & Bon Appétit!

*Amina*



Editor & Designer -  
Amina M Azad

Cover Image Courtesy:  
Preeti Jacob

## NWWA Committee Members

### Bid Farewell to...

Patricia Gonsalves  
Richa Dureja  
Dipali Sardana  
Kirti Sapre  
Tanmayee Das  
Charu Padbidri  
Vidya Prashanth  
Sarika Bhargava

### Welcome...

Savitha Theophillus  
Veenu Sheokhand  
Priti Kagti  
Babita Nair  
Jayati Puri  
Panchali Ghosh  
Sonal Darke  
Aishwarya Rai  
Rasika Bhutey  
Payal Swarup

# AROGYA

## Health & Wellness Outreach



On Independence Day 2019, Arogya organized a fruit distribution initiative at INHS Jeevanti. The patients admitted at the hospital received packets of fruits from Mrs Priya Philipose, President, NWWA, Goa and other committee members

### Swayam Siddha Grand Finale

Swayam Siddha or Smart Mom contest is an eagerly awaited event that always attracts enthusiastic participation from the ladies here. In 2019 the contest saw a host of lectures, health talks, quizzes and interactive sessions that culminated into the grand finale.



Winners of Smart Mom Contest

### Lecture on Depression

As part of Swayam Siddha, the women's empowerment program conducted by Arogya, a lecture was organised for the ladies of Varunapuri. Surg Lt Cdr Jishnu S Lalu, Officer-In-Charge, Station Health Organisation addressed the audience on "Depression in Women". The lecture was attended by 60 ladies from Goa Naval Area and was followed by active interactive session.



Lecture by Surg Lt Cdr Jishnu S Lalu, Officer-In-Charge, Station Health Organisation



# AROGYA

## Health & Wellness Outreach

### Medical Camp for Domestic Help & families

A medical camp was organized by Arogya in association with INHS Jeevanti and SHO (Goa) for the families of domestic help living in NOFRA on 30 October 2019. PHC Cortalim (Goa) provided the medical support for the screening of cancers, diabetes, hypertension, dental problems, and vaccination. The objective of this outreach program was to screen for non-communicable diseases and brief them on Health Insurance Scheme implemented by Government of Goa. More than 230 individuals were screened at the camp.



### Our Home - Bogmalo Old Age Home

Arogya in association with INHS Jeevanti organized a medical camp for the inmates of "Our Home" Old Age Home at Bogmalo on 14 Nov 2019. The team of doctors included Medical Specialist, Eye Specialist, ENT Specialist, and Dental Surgeon from INHS Jeevanti and a Geriatric Physician from Directorate of Health Services, Goa to provide expert care at the camp.



### St John of Cross Orphanage

As part Navy week activities Arogya, in association with INHS Jeevanti, organized a multi-speciality medical camp at St. John of Cross Convent Orphanage at Sancoale, Goa on 27 Nov 2019. 80 children residing at the orphanage were examined by a team of specialists from INHS Jeevanti.



# ASHIRWAD

## Outings with our Senior Citizens

### 'Never Stop Moving' Workshop - 2019

A Health talk, Laughter Therapy and Demonstration of Pain relief exercises by Dr. Shweta Varshney was conducted at the 'Never Stop Moving' activity in which 25 senior citizens were taken to the peaceful INWTC Sailing Club. The session included games to understand the movement problems faced by them and they were encouraged to make exercise a part of their daily routine.



### Visit to Mahalsa Narayani Mandir, Verna - 2019

Ashirwad organised an enriching trip to the serene Mahalsa Narayani Mandir, Verna for 54 senior citizens from GNA. The participants had the opportunity to explore the grand mandir and also be part of the bhajan kirtan program there.



# ASHIRWAD

## Outings with our Senior Citizens



### Visit to Naval Air Museum and Naval Coastal Battery - 2019

Members of the Ashirwad community enjoyed a relaxed outing at the Naval Air Museum followed by a beautiful sunset picnic at the Naval Coastal Battery.



# BALWADI

## Little Bundles of Joy



### Balwadi Annual Day 2019-20

Annual Day was held on 12 Mar 2020. The theme for the event was “Unity in Diversity”. The students of LKG and UKG performed four dances on the theme of National Integration and a nursery student performed the Grand Finale show. Four students of UKG were felicitated for their overall performance and were awarded scholarships and admissions in NCS and KV (two students each) by NWWA.

### Annual School Picnic

A fun filled school picnic was conducted on 24 Jan 2020 at Naval Aviation Museum. It was an enjoyable trip along with educational content about Naval Aviation.



# BALWADI

## Festive Times!



### Spreading the Festive Cheer

The children of Balwadi enthusiastically participated in all the various festive occasions through the year. At Christmas children from NCS Primary School conducted a cultural program at Balwadi. The atmosphere was bright and festive with gifts and cards and general cheer. Kite Flying was conducted to celebrate the festival of Makar Sankranti. There was a Diya making competition on Diwali and Independence Day saw a peppy display of josh among the little ones.



# JAGRITI

## Fun Zone for the little ones

### Annual Sports Day

Little Angels Sports Day was celebrated with much excitement and enthusiasm in 2019 as parents along with children from both Nofra and Varunapuri participated in the races and drills. The highlight of the event was the mini marathon that ended in an exhilarating photo finish.



### Movie Time for Balwadi

On 11 September 2019, a movie show (Angry Birds) was organised by Jagriti for the tiny tots of Balwadi and Little Angels children at Rajhans.



### Annual Day - 'Baalpan'

A grand Annual Day function was celebrated at Rajhans for the tiny tots of Little Angels school on 5 February 2020. The theme of the annual day was 'Baalpan'.



# PRAGATI

## Enhancing Skills, Encouraging Talent

### Independence Day 2019

Dressed in patriotic fervour the ladies of Welfare Centre left no stone unturned as they held a grand Independence Day celebration. With little ones in tow, the team made sure that the celebrations reflected their sentiments of pride and joy.



### Health Talk on Organ Donation

Dr Renu Ramakant from IMA, Vasco was invited to Welfare Centre to deliver an awareness health talk on Organ Donation in August 2019. The event saw an enthusiastic response and after the talk there was a Q&A session that was well received by all. Dr Renu also distributed forms for organ donation to the audience.

### Workshop on Stress Management

On 6 December 2019, Shobhika Jaju, Director of Silver Linings Counselling Centre Margao, was invited for a session on Mental Health. She spoke about stress management and took the audience through an enlightening discussion on mental health issues. The event was well attended, and the ladies participated in the session with queries and observations.



# PRAGATI

## Enhancing Skills, Encouraging Talent

### Masterchef Varunapuri

The ladies of Varunapuri cooked up a storm at the Pragati Cooking Competition on 25 September 2019. The participants presented sweet and savoury dishes with Sooji as the main ingredient and were marked on their presentation, innovation, and taste. The delicious competition was a treat for the judges who were tasting each of the dishes with relish and marvelling at the ingenuity of the home cooks.



### Teacher's Day celebrations

The Welfare Centre is a hub of learning and creativity for the ladies of Varunapuri. Most of the tutors here are naval wives who take various classes that range from tuitions, embroidery, tailoring, art & craft, dance, yoga, zoomba etc. Last year on Teacher's Day the gurus of Welfare Centre were felicitated by the team and their efforts were lauded by all.

### Sales Galore!

Welfare Centre was buzzing with sales last year as ladies put up vibrant stalls with festive delights such as Jewellery, Sarees, Suit materials, and homemade goodies such as chaat, pizza, and dabeli. The highlight of the Diwali sale was the Sankalp stall that had beautiful Diyas and cards made by the wonderful children of Sankalp.



### Rakhi making competition

Rakhi was celebrated by team Pragati with a creative flair as they held a Rakhi making competition in August 2019. The event was a huge success as ladies put their heart and soul into designing their most unique Rakhi. Three winners took home cash prizes that were presented to them by Mrs Priya Philipose, President NWWA, Goa.



# PRAGATI

## Enhancing Skills, Encouraging Talent

### Entrepreneurship Workshop

NWWA Goa pioneered the concept of entrepreneurship in Varunapuri with a special 25 days Entrepreneurship Program conducted by Learning Links Foundation. Over the course of the workshop 25 ladies from Varunapuri were trained in the nitty gritty of entrepreneurship by the team of Learning Links and were taught skills necessary to start and successfully run businesses of their own.





# PRAGATI

## Enhancing Skills, Encouraging Talent

### Inauguration of the newly renovated Welfare Centre

On 27 July 2020 the newly renovated Welfare Centre was inaugurated by Mrs Priya Philipose, President NWWA, Goa along with Mrs Charu Padbidri Pragati Coordinator. Following the protocols of COVID-19, the event was an intimate get together that included the Core Committee members and the Sub Committee members.



# PRAKRITI

## For the love of Nature



### Visit to Raj Bhavan

51 children from Varunapuri and Nofra visited Raj Bhawan. The highlight of the event was an interaction with the Governor, Mrs. Mridula Sinha. The gracious Governor was kind enough to give a patient audience to all the children. There was an interactive question - answer session, where the children were given an opportunity to ask the Governor, whatever they wanted to know. This interaction threw light on her personal as well as professional life. It was indeed worthwhile to listen to the Governor narrate her anecdotes to the children. The children visited the large estate at Raj Bhawan and enjoyed the well preserved natural surroundings as well as the serene chapel. A small bonsai plant was also gifted to the Governor as a token of our gratitude. It was one in a lifetime experience for children and the organizers were extremely grateful to the Governor for taking out time from her busy schedule to meet the children of Prakriti group.



# PRAKRITI

## For the love of Nature

### Visit to NCPOR (National Centre for Polar & Ocean Research) - 2019

50 children of the naval fraternity were taken to National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, Sada, Vasco as a part of Prakriti activity. They were welcomed by a research scholar Juhi and were taken to the Centre's auditorium. Dr Thamban, a senior scientist at the centre enlightened the children with his experience in Antarctica and threw light on research that takes place at the two poles. He was kind enough to answer the various questions put up to him by our curious children. Ajit, another research scholar showed a presentation on Himalayas and referred to it as "The Third Pole". He advised the children to come out of the world of technology and to learn to explore the world.



### Visit to Monginis Factory - 2019

Team Prakriti also took the children to Monginis to celebrate Children's Day. They enjoyed a tour of the factory and the aroma of freshly baked cakes was more than enticing. It was nice to see how cakes and pastries were baked and decorated on a large scale. A freshly baked chocolate cake straight from the factory was set on the table for the children and the youngest of the lot had the pleasure of cutting it.

# PRAKRITI

## For the love of Nature

### Visit to MES College, GSL and Zuari Industry - 2019

40 children of the naval fraternity were taken to MES College and Zuari Industry as a part of Prakriti activity. They were shown the Butterfly Park, the rain harvesting unit and a vermicompost unit. The children felt the need to be environmentally conscious citizens. They were also made to understand the need to do rainwater harvesting and that every colony can have one and work towards saving water in small little ways. The Butterfly park was getting ready to be inaugurated on 26 January, yet the college faculty was kind enough to show the children, not only the park but were kind enough to explain in detail the kind of plants needed to be planted in such park.



The visit to GSL was also an experience of its own. A small movie clipping was shown to the children. They were then taken to a round of the shipyard where they got to see how a ship is built at different levels.



The visit to Zuari was very fruitful. Step by step information was available on how to do vermicomposting at home too. The children enjoyed the feel of earthworms on their hands and they proved that there is no better learning than "To do it on your own". They were told how to make manure at home and live a healthy life.



# SANKALP

## Celebrating the unique & special

### Christmas & Annual Day Fiestas

The darling children of Sankalp were the stars of the show at the Christmas celebrations held last year. They also participated wholeheartedly in the Annual Day function at Little Angels. Dressed up in the theme of 'Baalpan' – the children lit up the stage with their joy and enthusiasm.



## Saundarya Beautiful You

### Beauty Therapy Advanced Course Certification - 2019

The beauty parlours Saundarya and Urvashi run by NWWA are constantly evolving into better and more well equipped centres of beauty and wellness for naval ladies in Goa. In June last year the ladies were trained and awarded certifications in Beauty Therapy Advanced Course. Currently both parlours are undergoing renovations and upgradation works.





# SPARSH

## Philanthropy for all

### Lunch with Conservancy Staff - 2019

As part of the social outreach programme Sparsh team organised a special lunch for the conservancy staff of Nofra 1 & 2 in Goa. The staff had a small interaction with the committee members and were thanked for their tireless service to the naval community by President NWWA as well as Sparsh Coordinator. A total of 45 packets of Biryani, gulab jamun and soft drinks were distributed at the event which included members of the conservancy staff, members of Nofra Admin office, Members of Maintenance office, NWWA admin staff, and the Security guards at Nofra 1 & 2 gates.



### Republic Day Lunch & Fun at Old Age Home Bogmalo

On the occasion of Republic Day, Sparsh organised a lunch and entertainment for the Senior Citizens residing at the Old Age Home in Bogmalo. The residents of the Home participated in games, songs, and dance with NWWA committee members and relished the lavish lunch that was presented by the team.



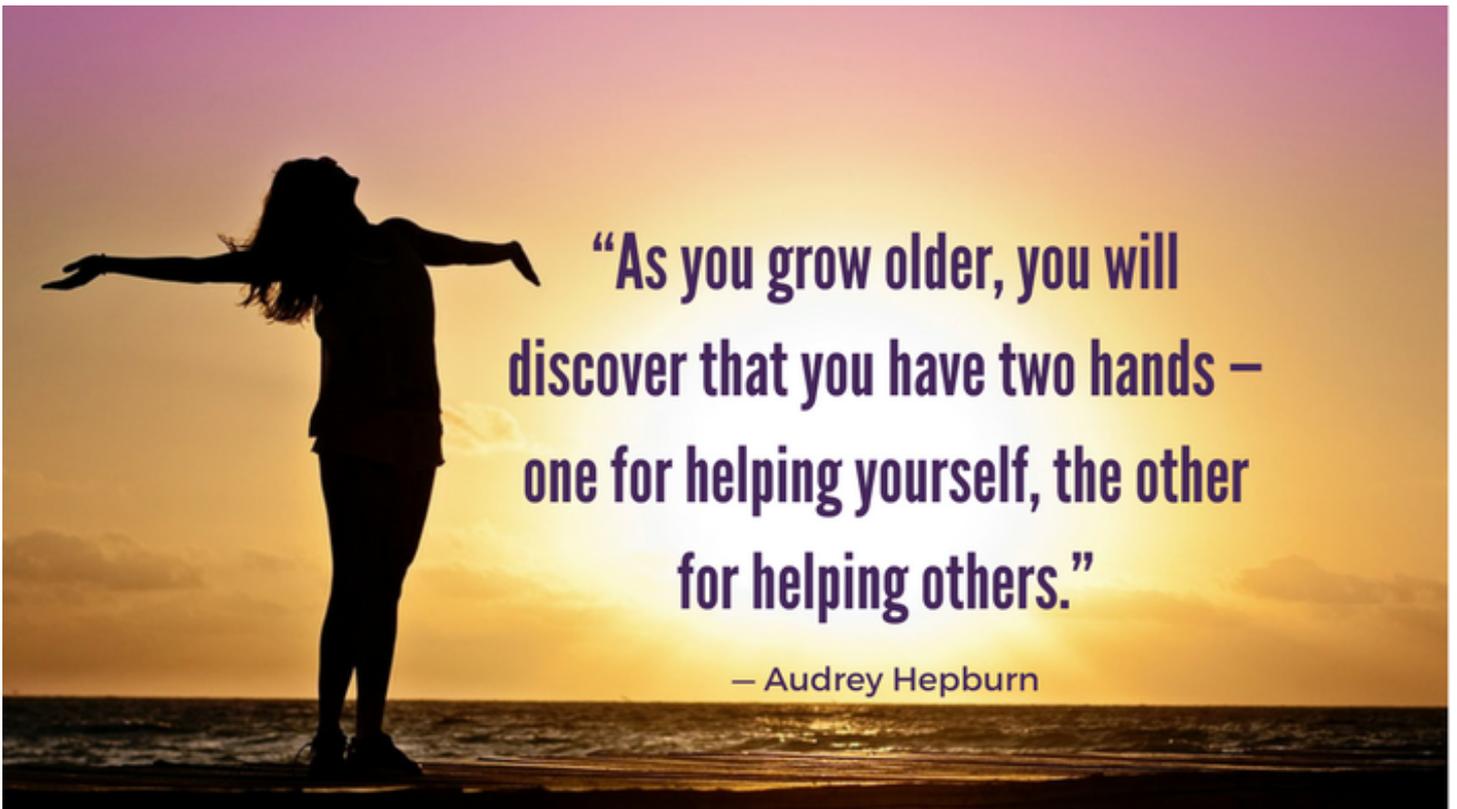


# UDYOGIKA

## Encouraging in-house talent

### Handmade goodies for Anubhavi ladies

In the month of November 2019 Udyogika made handkerchiefs and mobile pouches for our Anubhavi ladies. The Udyogika team made 60 mobile pouch and 120 handkerchiefs that were distributed at the Anubhavi lunch. Some of these were also kept in the Samudri shop for sale. A pop-up event was organised to entertain the ladies at the Anubhavi lunch.



# Special Events 2019-20

## NWWA Milan Theme: Indradhanush & Junoon



## NWWA Coffee Evening 2019 Theme: Disco



# Special Events 2019-20

## 14 Feb 2020 - NWWA Divas Sports Day



## NWWA Picnic 2019 Bondla Wildlife Sanctuary





## Special Events 2019-20

# Abhinandan - Sailor's Wives Orientation



# Anubhavi - Lunch with veteran ladies



# The Pandemic & Us



By the end of February there was a palpable tension in the country as the world began to wake up to the deadly Coronavirus. Come March and all hell broke loose with lockdowns and life came to a standstill for all of us. Even through the adversity NWWA Goa quickly adapted to the 'new normal' and took measured steps to help those who needed it the most. Over 1000 masks were stitched by the ladies and distributed free of cost to establishments such as Jeevanti, Nofra administration and the conservancy staff. These past few months have been a test of patience and faith and the entire naval community has stood steadfast in their resolve to not only care for their own but also to reach out to those beyond our gates. Online webinars, health videos, virtual meetings – 2020 has made us realise that the safest way to remain in touch is through technology. NWWA Goa has embraced the change with gusto and various arms of NWWA have regularly been conducting engaging activities online.



**Independence Day Celebrations at Welfare Centre 2020**



**Handing over Handmade masks to INS Jeevanti**



**Video presentation by Lt Col N Taralkar (Paediatrician) on 'Vaccination for children in Pandemic'**



**Online Presentation by Surg Lt Cdr Jishnu on ' An Introduction to Covid -19 Pandemic'**

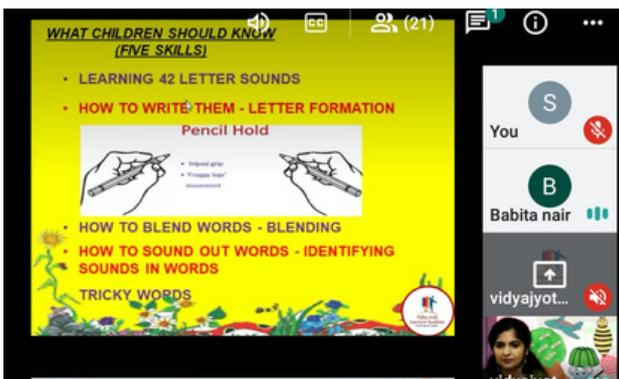
# The Pandemic & Us



**Stay Home, Stay Safe - Masked NWWA Committee**



**Mask makers of Varunapuri who stitched over a 1000 masks for free distribution**



**Webinar on Jolly Phonics organised by Kala Kendra**



**Handmade masks were presented to AO Nofra and Ration as well as masks were donated to Old Age Home Bogmalo during the lockdown**

A voice message was circulated about the proper usage of masks, social distancing, and hand sanitization to control the spread of Corona in the community by Dr Priti Kagti

A picture message was sent about the 'Benefits of Breast Feeding' as we celebrated Breast Feeding Week in August 2020

A video presentation was shared with everyone by Dr Priti Kagti on 'The Importance of Nutrition' as we celebrated National Nutrition Week in September 2020

# NWWA (GOA) COMMITTEE MEMBERS LIST NWWA KENDRA NOFRA 1

PHONE NO: 0832- 2585294 / 9405429817

E-MAIL: goanwwa@gmail.com

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<b>CORE COMMITTEE</b>		
01	PRESIDENT / SAKHI	MRS. PRIYA PHILIPOSE
02	VICE-PRESIDENT	MRS. APARAJITA MENON
03	SECRETARY	MRS. SNIGDHA NEHRU
04	TREASURER - WELFARE	MRS. NIDHI VERMA
05	TREASURER - CLUB	MRS. REENA PANDEY
<b>GROUP COORDINATORS</b>		
06	ASHIRWAD	MRS. PANCHALI GHOSH
		MRS SEENA DHANUSH
07	AROGYA	MRS. PRITI KAGTI
08	BALWADI	MRS. PREETI PUROHIT
09	CHETNA	MRS. SUCHETA NAVET
10	JAGRITI	MRS. TORAL VORA
11	KALA KENDRA	MRS. BABITA NAIR
		DR (MRS) AISHWARYA RAI
12	PRAGATI	MRS. SAVITHA THEOPHILUS
		MRS. VEENU SHEOKHAND
		MRS. RASIKA BHUTEY
13	PRAKRITI	MRS. MONISHA RASTOGI
		MRS. SONAL DARKE
14	SAMUDRI	MRS. TRIPTI CHAUHAN

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PHONE NO: 0832- 2585294 / 9405429817

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SR NO	DESIGNATION	NAME
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## GROUP COORDINATORS

15	SANCHAR	MRS. AMINA M AZAD
16	SANKALP	DR (MRS) SHWETA VARSHNEY
17	SAUNDARYA	MRS. JYOTHI SRIDHAR
18	SPARSH	MRS. PAYAL SWARUP
19	UDYOGIKA	MRS. JAYATI PURI
20	NWWA COUNSELLOR	MRS. BABITA NAIR

## SUB COMMITTEE - VARUNAPURI

21	WELFARE CENTRE - INCHARGE	MRS. SAPNA MALAPE
22	ASHIRWAD	MRS. RADHA
		MRS. SUREKHA KADAM
		MRS. ASHWINI PATIL
23	PRAKRITI	MRS. MAHI MANJUNATH
		MRS. NISHA SHINDE
		MRS. RUKHSANA AKHTAR
		MRS. M DHANALAKSHMI



# Fauj & Food

TIES THAT BIND

**Food** has unique way of getting people together, comforting them, and of course binding them for life. Life in the navy is certainly no bed of roses, there is enough excitement to keep us all on the edge, most of the times. However, no matter how edgy, or stressed we may be, food always comes to the rescue. It's become part of our coping mechanisms without us even realising it. In this article Amrisha speaks about how her kitchen is source for midnight '**Bouncings**' – a time honoured tradition to strengthen bonhomie and camaraderie. Aishwarya talks about how overstretched naval wives rely on their girlfriends (other naval wives) for just letting their hair down at '**Potluck**' parties. And Amina explores the quiet solace and support that '**Hansa Mess**' offers an uprooted family when they arrive new into the Station.

## Tales of fauji life from different prisms – Amrisha Lamba Chauhan



**As an army officer's daughter**, life was full of energy and socialising, even before the age of social media hit us. Bachelors and young officers showing up at unearthly hours for a meal was the norm. Mom would be quick to whip some eggs for Anda bhurji and tear open those packets of Maggi, for a simple yet satisfying midnight meal. This tradition wasn't trouble, it was bonding of another kind, the knitting of a bond with a new family when your actual homes were hundreds of miles away. With the passage of time, the clock has come full circle, I am host to similar untimely visits by a group of boisterous youngsters. Maggi remains a loyal companion but there's added options of frozen cutlets and snacks. There are frozen parathas that help in serving up 2-minute kathi rolls, which are quite a hit. The years have passed and my role and the menus to serve have changed, but this home away from home is still as close knit. There are times when this life is demanding and challenging but on reflection, I can't imagine any other way of life that would give me such beautiful memories, bonds, and emotions!! Grateful.

# Fauj & Food

TIES THAT BIND

## Living the potluck life! - Aishwarya Harish

**All work and no play** makes Jack... oops Jill a dull girl! Especially when you have so much to handle! Home, kids, in-laws, depressing thoughts, and MAIDS etc... and all this while the 'Mr' is hardly ever around. It's this time in one's life that girl power comes in handy. Be it sticky situations, hospital trips, vehicles going kaput, and other regular disasters in our lives... the list can go on and on. Life for a fauji wife can get lonely and daunting but thankfully we are a tribe that sticks together and pitches in for each other. The best part is when all of us get together for the all-important party time. Not an easy job though, right from the word go coordination is a pain! Some people are available on this day, some on that, some have to make their abs, and some bums!



Finally, once most of the group agrees on a particular day and time it's time to rock it! First of all, the idea of getting together, then deciding on a theme! It involves a bit of planning and lot of doing but yes, we do have a solution to that as well! The doing part can be shared and here come the 'potluck parties' where everybody has the liberty to get what they feel like (edible stuff only) and this helps the host during and after the party as well as everybody takes their pot and leftovers so there is less to clean around the next day and voila everybody is happy!

Parties do make us feel a couple of years younger with some girl talks, music, dance, and games. It gets more exciting as the night progresses and ladies photo shoots take over! Oh, how could we miss those boomerang videos! Ultimately, Potlucks are the best way to come together, enjoy a bit of innocent fun in the company of fellow hens and make merry till we can, for who knows, the milk man may not turn up tomorrow!

# Fauj & Food

TIES THAT BIND

## Just Messing Around – Amina M Azad

**Anyone who comes into a new station** invariably heads to the transit mess accommodation and holds fort there until the house allotments, welcome maintenance etc are sorted out. For years now we have been doing our own little 'here we go round the mulberry bush' and landing right back where we started - Goa. Every couple of years we have moved in and out of INS Hansa only to return and start the process of settling down. And it all begins in the Mess. Good old reliable Hansa Mess!



What I've always looked forward to when it comes to staying in Hansa Mess is the comfort of familiar scenic rooms, the reassuring sound of jet engines, the dazzling flyboys and girls, and of course delectable Mess food!

Over the years Hansa Mess has expertly catered to the appetites of its inmates and the menu here is the talk of town. Thanks to our pre house allotment stint of a few weeks we have savoured the delicacies served here and genuinely enjoyed the time off from kitchen and cooking. What I love most about Hansa Mess is the special cuisine nights they have for the base where we are invited to enjoy and partake with the in-living folks there.



The bar, Flight Deck, is the perfect escape from the ordinary with its glittering cocktails and sumptuous hot snacks! Catering to such a wide crowd of young people must surely be a challenge and kudos to the team at Hansa Mess who keep adapting the menu to the times serving us all gourmet delights.

With Coronavirus playing havoc with our social lives trips to the Mess are not possible now, but I'm sure the day is not far when we shall visit again. Soon... I hope!



# CAKES & I

Words & Images: Preeti Jacob

**My first bake was at the age of 14**, which was a recipe of a chocolate cake that we would make as a tray bake with some basic frosting. We would make this cake in bulk and sell them at church food sales. This got us a lot of appreciation and attention. Many years later this 'go to', easy recipe was well appreciated amongst naval friends too. My friend Yaman took a huge leap of faith and asked me to bake an Angry Birds cake for her son's second birthday. After a lot of hesitation, I reluctantly accepted not knowing that this would be a start of many more to come. After procuring many more baking essentials, speaking to my big sister (who had by then mastered the art of making novelty cakes), researching on fondant, buttercream, weight I delivered a 5 kg, 2 tier cake instead of a 3 kg one! Soon I got hold of my first set of Wilton gel colors from the US, which I was excited to use in my cakes. Diwali was around the corner and another good friend, Saba entrusted me with one of my first bulk orders which comprised of Diwali themed cupcake gift boxes. This was the start of an unexpected journey.



A hobby of baking just about anything namely bread, buns, cookies, brownies, dinner items, whole chicken, puff pastry, éclairs turned into a something I enjoyed doing from the comfort of my home for others. A newspaper article, Easter baking class baking demo at Grand Hyatt, Facebook page, and name for the business were the highlights of my first few years as a home baker.





Then many aspects like working with humidity for the icing and design, researching new trends on cake designs (because some clients don't have any specifications and I want pretty looking cakes too), learning to take better pictures, editing them a little, sourcing ingredients locally (trips to Panjim) were the many things that were needed to be thought about before delivery of a cake. I have even gotten an opportunity to collaborate NWWA committee for brownies and even baked a retirement cake for an Admiral.

Many thanks to my loyal clientele, I have enjoyed baking for you over these 6 years (most of them in Goa). We never know when it'll be time to pack (6 cartons of baking stuff included) and relocate and hopefully settle in soon to start baking again.



# Pairing Indian foods & wines



Author, Ashwini Avate, has done her Vintage Masters from Ecole Superieure d'Agriculture D'Angers, France (2 years programme from France/Spain/Italy) and has and Masters in French Literature.

**Indian food and wine pairings are like marriages** made on earth (and not heaven!). Indian food with its robust character needs some working, to be paired up with another strong partner (wine). In the traditional wine drinking countries of the West (like Europe), wine has always been a part of their religion and customs. Every Church there had its own little vineyard and fermented their own wine as wine is used for communions and baptism. Over the centuries the style and taste of wines has evolved and from the very tannic to a very floral fruity smoother one today. Marrying Indian cuisine with Indian wine is a good place to start, French with French and Italian food with Italian wines as these have evolved together.

India is a recent entrant to the wine scene with over 30 odd years of history. Though as per old scriptures there is mention of fermented grape juice. Today we have some incredibly good Indian wines in the market and its worth exploring. But I would like to mention here that what we get in our CSD Canteens is not their entire range of wines. So do make the effort to find their best.



Earlier it was said that we need to pair white wines with white meat and reds with red meat, while this is true to some extent but due to the fusion of our kitchens, we have a mix of flavours like "Indian-Chinese, or Indianized Pastas" so one general rule does not fit! In my experience, to counter the "heat" of the food and land, a good chilled white wine with a hint of residual sugar always works wonders. German Riesling and the Alsace Gewürztraminer are two varietals with a reputation of marrying well with our spicy cuisine. An Alsatian Pinot Gris with delicate creaminess also compliments well with the textures of the Indian cuisine. White wines which are dry and off dry (with some residual sugars) provide most matches with our food especially foods rich in lemon and tamarind where acidity plays an important role. With Reds it is a bit tricky, sometimes the high tannins in wine can make the food seem more spicy and bitter, that is something to be avoided. But there are a lot of light bodied red wines that compliment Indian food.

Listed below are some wines that are known to be the flagship wines of the various wine houses, I have tried to mention the food pair as well (often what is mentioned on the back label of the bottle). It is also important to note that wine and food pairing is an absolutely subjective process and what pleases you might not be palatable for someone else. The prices are just for your reference, they will vary depending on the state you buy them in and also the latest taxes, as that keeps changing all the time! But as you all know in Goa the alcohol is cheaper! Like a pizza and a cola seem inseparable likewise we need to open many bottles of wines before we find our own match! It eventually remains a matter of taste! Cheers!

## SPARKLING WINES

Zampa Soirée Brut - Rs 1,200 Pairs well with strawberries. Good with a nice salad or you're your fish and chips. The acidity in the wine cuts the oiliness of the food.

Chandon Rosé Brut - Rs 1,500 Tried and tested raj kachori is a daring but divine match for the rosè. The sweet and savoury notes in the chaat compliments the wine well and the extra pomegranate toppings play beautifully with the wine's flavour profile.



## RED WINES

Sula Vineyards Dindori Reserve (red) - Rs 890 A fragrant Biryani would pair scrumptiously with the wine. The smoky, spicy rice dish merges perfectly with the boldness and rich feel of the Shiraz.

Fratelli M/S Sangiovese (red) - Rs 1,170 The wine matches effortlessly with tomato-based curries- butter chicken, vindaloo etc

## WHITE WINES

Grover Zampa Sauvignon Blanc Art Collection - Rs 780 It marries well with the herbal, savoury character that's present in the wine like a saag.

Sula Riesling and Viognier are also two very approachable wines with a huge aromatic profile. Worth serving just as an aperitif as well.



# Your guide to 'desi' superfoods

Words: Harpreet Pasricha



**Super foods are definitely one of today's biggest trends** so let's get to know a little more about these nutritional powerhouses!

So, what exactly is a super food? The technical term super foods refer to any foods that is jam packed with antioxidants, powerful bio-flavonoid compounds, and doses of health boosting micronutrients such a vitamin, minerals and yes even fibre. The most common misconception in India's wellness scene today are that 'Super foods are Super Expensive!' which isn't necessarily true if you focus on the right super foods, or rather- those that are home grown and indigenous to our little part of the world.

**Here are a few notable desi mentions...**



**Green tea:** Loaded in catechins is made up of 30% antioxidants by weight! Making it one of the most power packed super foods out there today. India being the 2nd largest producer in tea also has no shortage of organically grown good quality teas.

**Turmeric:** Rightly called the king of spices- this sunshine yellow powder boasts a range of properties from anti-inflammatory to anti-viral, anti-fungal and even antibacterial making it the go-to spice for healing and infections thanks to the bioactive compound curcumin that has even become the centre of cutting edge cancer research.



**Desi Ghee:** Not only is this wholesome super food super tasty but it also easy to digest and contains all 4 fat soluble vitamins and anti-inflammatory properties.

**Chia seeds:** The smaller better known cousin of our Indian sabja (aka falooda or basil seeds) being virtually tasteless and combing the benefits of fibre 9 thanks to the mucilage) and anti-inflammatory effects of omega 3's and 9's. little known fact is that is even a complete protein ( meaning it contains all essential amino acids)





Words: Jyothi Sridhar  
Images: Amina Azad

# HOW I AM SURVIVING WITH MY SWEET TOOTH

## *"Abs are good.... but have you tried cake?"*

That home-made laddu is calling my name. Oh yes, it is! It is so sweet and full of ghee. I long to taste those delicious sweet tidbits melting in my mouth, giving me a rush of pleasure and energy, and making everything okay even when it isn't. How many of us have had this feeling around mid-afternoon on a particularly grey and miserable day, when nothing seems to be going our way. I know I have!

Yes... I have an insatiable sweet tooth. I simply cannot go through the day without hankering for sugary treats. Frankly, the fault is in my genes. My family lives the adage "Life is short.... eat the dessert first". Even as I critically watch my waistline, I often feel powerless to the allure of sweets. No surprise that I find myself giving into sugar cravings. Be that as it may, I have seldom felt the guilt of treating myself to some 'sweet' happiness.

For some people, the scariest part of starting off on a new, healthier way of eating is the idea of giving up their favorite sweet treats -- forever! If you are a cookie-and-chocolate-crafter, do not despair. Sweets can be part of a healthy, lifelong eating pattern. But for the least harm and -- do not forget this -- the fullest enjoyment, they should be eaten in moderation. That means in small amounts, or only a couple of times a week. But if one thinks eating too many treats can increase the dependency, constant self-denial can also lead to dietary defiance and end up derailing all the good intentions. It takes a week to lose a kilo, yet you can easily gain that much in much less than a week. If you keep telling yourself not to eat something, you will just get in a cycle of hopelessness and eat things you do not need.

But is sugar really that bad for us? Well, yes and no. It all depends what sugar we are talking about. The best and purest sugar is in fruit (I consume 2-3 pieces a day), and it is good especially if you remember to eat the fruit rather than drink the juice. Quasi-pure sugar is also found in honey or jam. We love sugar, particularly when it is associated with good fat like dark chocolate, something we women crave as it provides an appealing sensation, comfort food par excellence. But learn to enjoy the first three bites: that is all you need. Eat slowly and savor. Twenty minutes is required for the stomach to feel full, and since most people gulp down the sweets much faster...it wastes calories and makes you fat.

The reason we love sweets is that we are programmed to love sugar, it is a question of survival. We even have a gene that pushes us to consume sweet and fat foods. It is energy that is easy to use and our body loves it. Today, with an abundance of sweets around us, we tend to look for them even more as if we were going to miss them! Trying to eliminate sugar altogether is useless but we can develop a system to eat less.

Most of the time, we crave sugar for the wrong reasons (we are tired, stressed, unhappy, overworked, etc.) and we are not hungry. No wonder 'Stressed' read in reverse is 'Desserts'. Develop and use tricks like drinking a large glass of water and waiting 15 minutes to see if you are still "hungry", trying a fruit or a fruit with a little protein (like cheese, nuts or yogurt) or distracting yourself by going for a walk, listening to music, talking to a friend, anything that will take your mind away from the craving. On the other hand, don't fool yourself and believe you can do totally without (most people can't) or replace with artificial sweeteners (they just make it worse, as they temporarily mislead our body but contribute to making us even more addicted to sugar). Cutting back on sugar slowly is a more effective way to reduce calories while helping you build up a greater sensitivity to sweetness.

# Flavours of Food

**"My never-failing friends are they,  
With whom I converse night and day,  
With them I take delight in weal,  
And seek relief in woe."**

These are lines from Robert Southey's poem -  
"My Days among the dead are past"

These lines refer to books, but I feel, if we refer it to FOOD, it would fit well equally. Food is truly man's good friend. It acts like a punching bag and at the same time a stress buster too. Food comforts us and consoles us. Food gives us company when we feel lonely. Whether in a conference hall in the form of coffee or in a movie hall in the form of coke or popcorn, it does good to the body, mind, and soul. Sipping tea or coffee during stressful meetings does help us in buying time before we jump to discussions, arguments, and conclusions. Sipping coke and enjoying popcorn during a Bollywood block buster helps us go deep in the character and we enjoy the movie more, beside boosting the economy of multiplexes. Popping of chatpata chana while on a stroll has its own sweet effect. The pollution and the traffic woes take a back seat as the taste buds engulf our stroll.

Even the school tiffin forms an integral part of a child's growing up years. Parathas and pickles have of course become history...Today, colour and creativity also play an important role. Novelty, not only in the kind of food but in presentation also matters. Mother's culinary skills not only boost the child's appetite but also adds to the prestige of a child in school. The office lunch boxes have their own tales to tell. To sit and share food with colleagues helps in bonding well. Sharing food with friends and colleagues fosters healthy growth and teamwork. Whether it's the bitter gourd or sweet and sour crispy veg, the bitterness and the sourness among colleagues vanishes and only sweetness prevails. This in turn creates a healthy working environment.



Words: Monisha Rastogi

Today, life is a mixture of health and convenience. Home cooked food, though reigns supreme in the health market but concept of dabbas and home deliveries have also found a place of pride in the lifestyle of many families. Sitting in the comforts of your home or workplace, one can don the role of a celebrated gourmet and soak the pleasures of family dinners without sweating in the kitchen. When traffic snarls and late working hours take a toll, services of Swiggy and Zomato come to our rescue and no matter how unhealthy or oily the food is, it does give us a warm respite.

Foods have situational value too. 'Mummy Ka Khana' becomes boring to a school going kid but when that kid becomes a hustler, the same Mummy Ka boring Khana becomes ...the thing to die for! Besides having situational value, food also has religious and cultural connotation attached to it. Sewaiya, rum cake, gujiyas, puranpohli, Onam sadhya, are some of the foods that are a mirror to our festivities and celebrations. The very name of such foods helps us relate them to our culture.

Food is the umbilical cord of our life! And all we have to remember is that 'Man is what He eats', so let's practise eating healthy and living a healthy and beautiful life. We need to keep in mind that, "good food choices are good investments."

So, let's invest in a healthy diet so that later we don't end up eating medicines like food.



# The Bengolee Journey

**Having grown up in a Bengali household**, food has always been a noticeably big part of our lives. We celebrate food in Bengal. Every festival, function, social gathering is incomplete without good food. We, the Bengalis are also known to be 'khaddyo roshik', meaning food lover. So, I was exposed to the culinary world pretty early in life.

As I grew older, I saw my mother cook food with love and share it with others. Any guest who came home unannounced wouldn't be allowed to leave without eating either. Then I started looking at food as an expression of love. It was only during my mid-twenties that I started exploring food. I tried out different cuisines and was very fascinated with the wide variety of cuisines in India. I would come home and try out a dish I liked particularly. I would do my take on an original. If it came out right, I would invite my friends over. I enjoyed cooking food as much as I enjoyed eating it and gradually, sharing food with friends became a form of expression.

Marriage happened next and I moved to Goa. I was in food heaven. The sea food and goan flavours literally pop in your mouth. It was around this time that I started watching MasterChef Australia and was hooked. I have followed every season of the show without fail. I learnt a lot of techniques and would experiment with them. The husband was the guinea pig, quite obviously and a few close friends. We would throw frequent parties and friends would love the food I cooked. This one, close friend suggested I take up catering. I was hesitant at first. Cooking for yourself and the ones you love is one thing but doing it commercially? I wasn't sure. But then I pushed aside the self-doubt and took the plunge.

The first time I cooked, I cooked for her. I had shaky hands. I felt the pressure, but I managed to pull it off. That is how my catering business, Bengolee was conceived. More orders started pouring in. And with every cook, I learnt. I learnt to handle more pressure, I learnt about large scale production, meeting deadlines, and working with perishables. I am still learning on the job. I have since done a few pop-up events with restaurants in Goa and looking forward to more such events. I try and add as many cuisines I can to my menu and have been working on perfecting them. As of now, Bengolee is taking baby steps towards establishing itself and every step of the journey has been amazing!

Words & Images: Sreshthaa Paul



# The Bunker Galley



Words: Jayati Puri

Images: Bunker Galley WhatsApp



**Food always fascinated me** since childhood and I always loved trying out different kinds of cuisines and street food. My favourite pastime had always been about readings recipes and watching pictures of colourful food in magazines subscribed by my mother and grandmother. After marriage I learnt even more recipes from mom in law, who is an excellent Home Chef. Marrying a Naval Aviator and being a Fauji wife exposed me to rich culinary culture of naval messes and galleys and this further added to my gourmet experience. Meeting so many talented ladies along my food journey and learning new recipes enriched my experience. Having got posted in Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern, and far Eastern parts of India while travelling with my husband and kids gave me ample opportunity in fulfilling my dream of trying new cuisines and traditional recipes of India.

I remember sipping a hot cup of tea while relaxing on the terrace on a chilly winter morning in Delhi, when idea struck me about harnessing the immense experience of the integrated defence community. How about providing a platform to the combined talent of home managers from Army, Navy, Air force and Coast guard and showcasing their rich traditional experience in cooking. Thus, empowering them to earn from their Home kitchens. Why not sell what they cook in kitchen and let everyone in the community enjoy their excellent culinary skills. And so came about 'The Bunker' - a platform, where pre-packed food items prepared by home chefs from the defence community would be showcased, ready to be picked up by customers from our take-away counter.





'The Bunker' got off to a great start in Defense Officer's Enclave, SP Marg and soon we opened out to other locations as well. I created a WhatsApp Group that would function as one-point contact for all things. We had a fabulous run in Delhi, and I enjoyed every bit of it.

As we moved from Delhi to Goa, we got yet another opportunity to open Bunker Galley in NOFRA, Goa. The menace of Covid virus had forced entire community to the confines of their homes. Health became the prime priority. When everyone was weary of venturing out for food, this venture came as breath of fresh air, providing home made fresh food from hygienic kitchens of home chefs. With my rich experience of running Bunker at Delhi I applied the same concept at Goa.

We launched our new venture \*Bunker Galley\* with nearly 40 Home Chefs in the middle of lockdown and instantly it was a hit. From evening snacks, to morning breakfasts, to Sunday Biryani lunches, and crowd favorite desserts - Bunker Galley in Goa has served it all! So far it has been a beautiful journey and I look forward to serving the community here with sumptuous treats prepared by their own peers.





Words & Images: Yaman Roy

# Shami Kebabs

## Ingredients

Mutton/Chicken minced finely-1 Kg  
Chana dal- 250 gms  
For the minced meat marination:  
Medium onions finely chopped- 2  
Ginger chopped coarsely- 50 gms  
Garlic chopped coarsely-30 gms  
Black pepper-25 gms  
Shah zeera- 1 tbsp  
Green Cardamom-3-4 pieces  
Black Cardamom-2-3 pieces  
Cinnamon- 1 stick  
Eggs-2  
Salt to taste

## For the filling:

Mint leaves- 15-20 sprigs  
Green chillies-6-7  
Finely chopped onions-2 large  
Lemon juice-2 large  
Salt to taste

## Method

Mix all the filling ingredients together and set it aside.

Mix all the kabab ingredients and cook it in a pressure cooker until the mixture softens.

Allow the kabab mixture to cool. Grind the kabab mixture to a fine paste ensuring there is no water remaining.

Mix two eggs into the kabab mixture.

Make small balls.

Flatten the balls and stuff them with the filling. Flatten them into thick round shapes.

Deep fry them for best results .You can also shallow fry on medium flame.

Your drool worthy evening snacks are ready!!!

# "मां के हाथ का खाना"

"मां के हाथ का खाना" एक ऐसा विषय है, जिसकी व्याख्या करना थोड़ा जटिल है, क्योंकि मां अर्थात "संसार", जीवन का सार। दुनिया में सबसे प्यारा और विश्वास का रिश्ता मां का होता है। अक्सर हम सब पढ़ने या फिर नौकरी के लिए जब घर से दूर जाते हैं तो सबसे ज्यादा हम मां के हाथों बना खाना याद करते हैं। माँ के हाथों बने खाने में मां का नाम जुड़ते ही उसका स्वाद खुद ही बढ़ जाता है। बाहरी खाना हो या किसी और के हाथों बना खाना, उसकी तुलना मां के हाथों से बने खाने से नहीं की जा सकती, यह बात बिल्कुल सच्ची है। क्योंकि मां के हाथों बनाए गए खाने में एक चीज जो उसे स्वादिष्ट बनाती है, वो होता है उसमें शामिल उनका प्यार।

मां अपने बच्चों के लिए प्यार भरे मन से खाना बनाती है। भारतीय संस्कृति पूरे विश्व में अपनी छवि, प्यार तथा करुणा के लिए प्रसिद्ध है। हमारे देश में मां को ईश्वर का दूसरा रूप माना जाता है। मां अपने बच्चे का सर्वांगीण विकास करती है और उसकी पसंद और ना पसंद को ध्यान में रखते हुए खाने को सभी पोषक तत्वों से भरपूर बनाती है। मां और बच्चों का संबंध ना केवल मानव जाति में अपितु पशुओं में भी पाया जाता है। एक पशु मां भी अपने बच्चों के भोजन की तलाश में इधर उधर कई कई घंटों तक भटकती रहती है और भोजन की प्राप्ति होते ही सबसे पहले अपने शिशु का पेट भरती है। एक पुरानी कहावत है "जैसा अन्न वैसा मन" के अनुसार मां अपने बच्चों की पसंद को ध्यान में रखते हुए खाना बनाती है ताकि बच्चों को खाना पसंद आ सके ताकि जिससे वो खुश रह सकें और अपने काम को पूरे ध्यान तथा पूरी लगन के साथ कर सकें। सच ही तो कहा है "मेरी मां आज भी अनपढ़ है, मांगता हूं एक रोटी, लाके दो देती है"। एक मां ही तो है जो अपने बच्चे को कभी भूखा नहीं देख सकती, वो मां ही तो है जो खुद भूखी सो सकती है पर अपने बच्चे को कभी भूखा नी सुला सकती।



लक्षिता बक्शी

## माँ की वो रसोई



बिना कुमारी

**मेरी माँ की वो रसोई...**  
जिसको हम किचन नहीं  
चौका कहते थे  
माँ बनाती थी खाना  
और हम उसके आस पास रहते थे

माँ ने  
उस 4x4 के कोने को  
बड़े सलीके से सजाया था  
कुछ पत्थर और कुछ तख्ते जुगाड़ कर  
एक माँडुलर किचन बनाया था

माँ की उस रसोई में  
खाने के साथ प्यार भी पकता था  
कोई नहीं जाता था दर से खाली  
वो चूल्हा सबका पेट भरता था

माँ कभी भी बिन नहाये  
रसोई में ना जाती थी  
कितनी भी सर्दी हो गहरी  
माँ सबसे पहले उठ जाती थी  
जो भी पकता था रसोई में  
माँ भगवान् का भोग लगाती थी  
फिर कही जाकर  
हमारी बारी आती थी

उस सादे खाने में  
प्रसाद सा स्वाद होता था  
पकता था जो भी  
बहुत ज्यादा, उसमें प्यार होता था

पहली रोटी गाय की  
दूसरी कुत्ते के नाम की बनती थी  
कंही कोई औचक आ गया द्वारे  
ये सोच  
कुछ रोटियाँ बेनाम भी पकती थीं

रसोई के उन चन्द डिब्बों और थैलों में  
ना जाने कितनी जगह होती थी  
भरे रहते थे सारे डिब्बे  
चाहे कोई भी मंदी होती थी

कुछ डिब्बे चौके के  
मेहमानों के आने पर ही खुलते थे  
और हम सारे के सारे  
रोज उन डिब्बों के इर्द गिर्द ही मिलते थे

हर त्यौहार करता था इन्तेजार  
हर बात कुछ खास होती थी  
कभी मट्टी कभी गुंजिया  
कभी घेबर की मिठास होती थी

माँ सबको गर्म गर्म खिलाकर  
खुद सारा काम कर  
आखिर में अक्सर खाती थी  
सबको परोसती थी ताज़ा खाना वो  
उसके हिस्से अक्सर बासी रोटी ही आती थी

बहुत कुछ बदला माँ के उस चौके में  
चूल्हा स्टोव और फिर गैस आ गयी  
ढिबरी लालटेन हट गयीं सारी  
और फिर रोशन करने वाली ट्यूबलाइट आ गयी

नहीं बदला तो माँ के हाथों का वो अनमोल स्वाद  
जो अब भी उतना ही बेहिसाब होता है  
कोई नहीं दूर तक मुकाबले में उस स्वाद के  
वो संसार में सबसे अनोखा और लाजवाब होता है

अब भी अक्सर  
माँ का वो पुराना चौका  
बहुत याद आता है  
अजीब सा सुकूं भरा एहसास होता है  
मुँह और आँख दोनों में पानी आ जाता है!!

मेरी माँ की वो रसोई..  
जिसको हम किचन नहीं  
चौका कहते थे  
माँ बनाती थी खाना  
और हम उसके आस पास रहते थे !

# THINGS WE LEARNT IN *Lockdown*

*Banana Bread... is a global obsession*

**Work from Home = Work at Home**

**Social Distancing = Social Media Addiction**

**New Normal = Old school fun**

**Dalgona Coffee... is just fancy for 'beat coffee'**

**Waxing is overrated**

**Domestic help = Domestic bliss**

**We are always ready for a challenge -**

**#Saree, #B&W, #MeAt20**

**Bring it on!**