

CULINARY TOURISM IN INDIA

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Abstract: *The tourism industry has emerged as one of the biggest foreign exchange earners for our country. It has a great significance because of its impact on economy, environment and society. It provides direct and indirect employment opportunities as well as infrastructural facilities, which form a base and stimulus for diversification of the economy and for the development of other industries. Tourism is an important development activity, which acts as a catalyst for overall socio-economic development. There are variety of ways in which one can look at tourism and socio-economic development. The development of the tourist product is inextricably linked to the contribution that tourism development can make to general economic development. Present paper examines the scope of culinary tourism in India.*

INTRODUCTION

Tourism with multi-dimensional activity has evolved one of the largest and lucrative industries of globe. Despite varied and rich cultural heritage, India's share in world tourism has been reported to be low. It has been estimated that India's travel and tourism potentials can provide its economy substantial resources in the coming years. The tourism has potential to provide 7 million new jobs, provided that potential of tourism resources is effectively exploited. The potential of tourism in India can be viewed against the global scenarios. Thus, India has to evolve the strategies of tourism development to make a respectable position in the global tourism industry. India has the potential of becoming a major player in the world tourism league, endowed as it is with unrivalled resources ranging from its millennia old heritage, kaleidoscopic landscape, a wide variety of delectable cuisine and a rich mosaic of culture and people's traditions. Tourism industry being the labour intensive has potential to solve the problem of unemployment and reducing poverty. Moreover, tourism is most effective instrument for national integration, harmony and thus leading towards social transformation and upliftment of rural poor. It has already proved that the return on investment in tourism from the point of view of employment generation is much higher to agriculture and manufacturing sector. The tourism policy and action plan has also pointed out that multi-dimensional efforts are needed to exploit the tourism potential and managing tourism resources. Tourism has many advantages over other industries.

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Cuisine tourism is no longer just about giving a taste of Indian food to the food lovers. Now, the world is getting a glimpse into the Indian kitchen and also getting to learn the basics of foodie delights from the local people. Indian kitchens are transforming into perfect hubs for cuisine tourism, offering tourists with an option to learn the specialty dishes of the region while staying with the locals.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

Present paper purports to examine the scope culinary tourism in India. The paper is based on secondary data and pertinent literature compiled from published and documented sources including websites.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Tourists from across continents have been thronging India to learn traditional cuisine of the land (Nambiar, 2012). Culinary tourism is strongly affected by socio-cultural, economic, technological and political impacts in various tourism sectors. The enormous growth and multifaceted nature of tourism industry, will call for strengthened research, education and training to establish and promote new culinary products and to meet rising demand for skilled human resource. For these initiatives, tourism industry definitely need source of funding, especially from government. The industry will establish extended strategies to encourage funding from government as well as private partnerships (Hall,2005; County, 2005).] As Yeoman (2008) indicated, people aged above 50 will be the most populous age group by 2015. This will increase the demand for package holidays, second homes, health facilities and organic healthy food which will influence the destination development strategies (Hall, 2005). The survey conducted by the North American Lifestyles journal is a proof that older population prefer to travel as they have more leisure time and hold a good amount of disposable wealth. A specialised tourism sector focused on health oriented holidays has emerged at end of 2015 in response to the increasing market size of the above said age group.

Terrorism would affect the industry significantly. The world political scenario would further worsen due to the US acting as a world police (Hall,2005). Tensions rising in terrorism affected countries such as India, Pakistan, England and US would be critical to the industry. The research carried out by Future Foundation (2008) indicates that the ratio of working married woman has increased from a quarter in 1950s to 75% at present. This will tend to increase by 5% in another 10 years, which indicates a beginning of shift in eating out trends. Food travellers spend around \$1,200 per trip on an average, with over one-third of their travel budget going towards food-related activities. Those considered to be “deliberate” food travellers (i.e. where culinary activities are the key reason for the trip) tend to spend a significantly higher amount of their overall travel budget (around 50%) on food-related activities (International Culinary Tourism Association, 2012). The governments across the globe would understand the value of culinary tourism and additional funds would be allocated to this industry. Countries across the globe

would work together to fight against terrorism. Globalization would increase migration along with the cross cultural experience in terms of food tastes and preferences. Fusion cuisine would finally be a success. All these studies indicate that culinary tourism will be a boon for the developing nations, if they gear up to face the challenges.

In the literature where one sees the interface between food and tourism, food tourism as a form of tourism makes its appearance as gastronomic tourism (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Zelinsky, 1985), culinary tourism (Long, 1998) and food tourism (Hall & Mitchell, 2001; Hall, Sharples, Mitchell, Macionis, & Cambourne, 2003). Long (1998) uses an anthropological perspective and defines culinary tourism as "...an intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an 'Other,' participation including the consumption or preparation and presentation for consumption of a food item, cuisine, meal system, or eating style considered as belonging to a culinary system not one's own". According to Hall and Sharples (2003), food tourism is "visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production region are the primary motivating factor for travel" (Hall & Mitchell, 2001). Thus, they narrow the scope of food tourism by stating that food tourism occurs only when the food of a place acts as a primary motivator to travel to the destination.

Shenoy, S. Sajna (2005) redefines food tourism as a tourist's food related activities at the destination, such as consuming ethnic and distinctive cuisines, visiting primary and secondary food producers, purchasing local food products or food pertinent products, and experiencing the characteristics of a unique food producing region. Thus, although all tourists may participate in food tourism, it is the degree of participation which determines where the tourist stands along the 'tourism interest continuum' (Brotherton & Himmetoglu, 1997), with high participation indicating special interest tourism. *Culinary tourism or food tourism is experiencing the food of the country, region or area, and is now considered a vital component of the tourism experience. Dining out is common among tourists and "food is believed to rank alongside climate, accommodation, and scenery" in importance to tourists. Local food holds much potential to enhance sustainability in tourism; contribute to the authenticity of the destination; strengthen the local economy; and provide for the environment friendly infrastructure. Destination marketing campaigns around the world show that there is a strong connection between tourism and food.* Culinary or food tourism is defined as the pursuit of unique and memorable eating and drinking experiences (WFTA, 2013). Culinary tourism, also referred to as gastronomic or wine and food tourism, is a niche area of tourism studies that has grown rapidly in recent years in terms of tourism research and education (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). The trend of culinary tourism rose to particular prominence in 2001, but many tourists participated in it before this time. A culinary tour may include different activities like visiting restaurants, street food stalls, food festivals and attending cooking classes. Any country with a rich local cuisine

is a possible culinary tourism destination. China, for example, has numerous different styles of cooking popular in different provinces across the country. Countries particularly popular for culinary tourism include Thailand, Japan, France, Italy, China, Vietnam, the United States, and India. India is famous for its cuisine as it is acumination of different flavours and textures from different regions (Travel tips-USA Today, 2012). The market for culinary tourism to India is growing as the country's culinary traditions continue to garner increasing international attention. Cooking classes, both formal and included in home stays, are favourite among foreign visitors. India's broad culinary culture reflects influences of Persian, Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Southeast Asian cuisines. India is home to a multi dimensional and eclectic mix of cultures resulting in a variety of food traditions. There is no single dish that represents the country; rather, Indian culinary traditions vary greatly from region to region (Nazimiec, 2013). Tourists savour curries and chutneys, relish the flavours, and breathe in the aroma of subtle spices, while travelling through various destinations in India.

Food plays a key role in attracting tourists to a certain destination because of its reflection of a region's culture and lifestyle. Cuisines have a great impact on traveller's decisions when choosing their destination. A diverse range of businesses including farms, restaurants, or specialty food stores, cooking school, tour operators, breweries, wineries, historical attractions and many other businesses across the country have capitalized on their regions culturally unique cuisines to attract visitors. Culinary of a destination are also categorized as a part of cultural tourism. It is not only a basic need for tourist but also a cultural element that can positively present a destination. Food consumption can be used in the development of a destination image. In addition culinary tourism is not only appealing to tourist, but also contributes to the social, economic and environmental development of a destination. Food tourism represents a multifaceted research area rising prominence from the outer fringe of academic research to the forefront of geographical theory. Food has an important role for food tourism in strengthening a region's identity, sustaining cultural heritage. Off late food tourism forms a part of special interest tourism (Douglas *et al.* 2001). Its potential role has started attracting government policies, media focus, marketing strategies, even food festivals. There have been few empirical studies into food-related tourism, particularly from a socio-cultural perspective (Boniface, 2003; Hjalager & Richards, 2002). The definition that will guide the current study will be of Hall and Sharpley (2003). "Vsitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations .it is the desire to experience a particular type of food or the produce of a specific region . The tourist feel that food is more than sustenance; it is a cultural artefact with a myriad of facets that can be enjoyed in many locations and through many activities some suggestive being food trails, events, festivals and visitor attractions.

The growth of special interest tourism is seen as a reflection of the increasing diversity of leisure interests of the early twenty-first century leisure society (Douglas, Douglas, & Derret, 2001). Post-modern tourism is slowly moving away from the

'Four S's of Tourism' (sun, sand, sex, and surf), to being a part of an overall lifestyle that corresponds to people's daily lives and activities (Hobson & Dietrich, 1994). The growth of culinary tourism is seen as an outcome of a trend where people spend much less time cooking, but choose to pursue their interest in food as a part of a leisure experience such as watching cooking shows, dining out and the like (Sharples, 2003). Leisure researchers have studied special interest tourism like ecotourism (Acott, Trobe, & Howard, 1998) and wine tourism (Charters & Ali-Knight, 2002) to show how tourists may be segmented based on their activities along the 'tourism interest continuum' (Brotherton & Himmetoglu, 1997). The culinary tourist is thus a special interest tourist whose interest in food is the primary reason influencing his travel behavior and falls on the upper end of the food tourism interest continuum. At the same time, eating and drinking being ultimately cultural affairs (Murcott, 1986), the culinary tourist is also a cultural tourist. Thus, the obvious overlap of food as a special interest component as well as a cultural component makes the culinary tourist possibly both a special interest tourist and a cultural tourist

A survey of Special Interest Tours on the internet demonstrates that there are numerous tour operators conducting culinary tours as well as the more popular wine tours. An examination of these websites reveals that the culinary tours can be roughly classified into three types. These are: (1) the cooking school holidays, (2) dining at restaurants famous for their local cuisines or their celebrity chefs and visiting food markets, and (3) visiting food producers with tours specifically related to just one product (e.g. coffee plantation tours, tea plantation tours, chocolate lovers tours, the ubiquitous wine tours, and the like). Most culinary tours include a combination of all three types. The cost of a normal six day cooking school tour can range from US\$ 1500 for the more popular destinations like France (Provence), Italy (Piedmont, the Italian Riviera, Sicily, Tuscany, and Venice), and Spain, to US\$ 5000 for South Africa and Australia, which have recently entered the international wine tourism market. These tours usually include demonstrations by celebrity chefs (where the tourist may be a participant), wine tasting at vineyards, and visits to places known for its art, history, and culture. Thus, the cooking school holiday spectrum covers a wide range from rural to urban, field-based to school-based, single commodity to multi-commodity, residential to non-residential, and total holiday to a part of holiday experience (Sharples, 2003).

The second type of culinary tours is one where the itineraries chiefly include visiting restaurants, local food producers, and food markets. Though the Californian Napa and Sonoma Valleys and the wine country have recently become extremely popular, other popular destinations for such tours are Spain, Portugal, France, Oaxaca (Mexico), Morocco and Canada. Other than eating at restaurants known for their distinctive local cuisines, a customized tour, for example, might include olive oil tasting in Italy, cheese tasting in France, and the popular *Tapas* Tours in Spain. Variations of such culinary tours, for the more adventurous, may include cycling and walkabout gourmet explorations throughout the gourmet regions. For

the less adventurous or for the traveler with a lower budget, cities like San Francisco and New York with their ethnic communities such as Little Italy and China Town, offer such experiences within one's own country or city. In addition, events like Taste of Chicago, where almost a hundred restaurants come together to display their best chefs and the food associated with the city's ethnic diversity, present a wonderful opportunity for culinary tourism experience. The third type of culinary tours is the extremely specialized tour pertinent to just one product alone. Examples of these are the Coffee Tours to Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Peru, Panama, Peru, Brazil, and Ethiopia. Here, the culinary tourists indulge in coffee tasting, or on-site experiences such as coffee picking and sorting, or learn about the history of coffee through guided tours in coffee museums. Similarly, Tea Tours in Sri Lanka and Japan offer tea plantations as attractions with tea museums dedicated to exhibiting the details of tea cultivation, production and manufacturing, along with tours of tea plantations, demonstrations of tea ceremonies, and tearooms. Another popular product-related tour is the Chocolate Tours of Belgium and Switzerland that offer similar experiences for chocolate lovers. Thus, culinary tourism satisfies the motive of combining love for food and travel.

Indian cuisine consists of a wide variety of regional cuisines. In view of the wide range of diversity in soil type, climate and occupations, these cuisines vary from each other as locally available spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits are being used in cuisines. Indian cuisines are also heavily influenced by religious and cultural choices. The development of these cuisines has been also influenced by Hindu and Jain beliefs, as they are mainly vegetarian. There has been Islamic influence from the Mughal Rule and Persian interactions on North Indian and Deccan cuisines. Staple foods of Indian cuisine include Jowar, rice, wheat, and a variety of lentils, especially masoor, toor, urad and moong. Lentils may be used whole, or split. Split lentils, or dal, are used extensively. Some pulses, such as channa, Rajma or kidney beans, lobiya are very common, especially in the northern regions. Many Indian dishes of different regions are cooked in different oil mediums. Peanut oil is used in Andhra and Maharashtra regions. Mustard oil is more commonly used in north and north-eastern part of India. Coconut oil is used widely along the western coast, especially in Kerala. While gingerly oil is common in the south as it imparts a fragrant nutty aroma to food. In recent decades, sunflower and soybean oils have become popular across India. Hydrogenated vegetable oil, known as Vanaspati ghee, is another popular cooking medium. Desi ghee, is used frequently, though less than in the past.

Traditional Kashmiri cooking is called Wazawan and comprises mostly non-vegetarian dishes. It is rich and aromatic with a wonderful unique flavour. Most Kashmiris including Kashmiri pandits are non-vegetarians. The Kashmiri Cuisine is mainly divided between two main communities i.e. Kashmiri Pandit and Kashmiri Muslims. Kashmiri Pandits are non-vegetarian, but they do not use onion and garlic in their traditional dishes. An unavoidable ingredient of Kashmiri Cuisine is curd and Asafetida (hing). Kashmiris use curd in almost all dishes except certain kebabs.

Curd helps to reduce the spiciness, imparts tartness and also gives smooth creamy consistency. Locally grown varieties of rice are sweetly fragrant and very light. All the dishes are built around the main course of rice. The delicious saag is made from a thick-leafed green leafy vegetable called hak that grows throughout the year. Lotus stem is also an important produce for boat-dwelling people and makes a very good substitute for meat. Morel mushrooms called gucchi are harvested and consumed fresh in summer. They are expensive, therefore used only for specific religious occasions and wedding feasts. Corn bread is an alternative for rice. Streams and lakes have influenced the Kashmiri cuisine. Fresh fish is a favourite. Smoked meat, dried fish and vegetables are stored for use in winter.

Punjabi food is wholesome and very rich in taste and texture. In Punjab, the tandoor is much more than versatile kitchen equipment. The tandoor is used for cooking roties, paranthas, naan, kuicha and for cooking non-veg. dishes like tandoori chicken, tandoori jhinga. The food of Punjab usually has a thick creamy consistency. They use desi-ghee and white butter in almost all dishes. Milk and milk products are available in abundance like, paneer, curd, cream etc. Mustard or sarson and Maize flour based dishes are very common and famous in all over the country. It is used to make the famous dish of Punjab i.e. Makki ki roti and Sarson ka Saag, roti is prepared with maize flour. Traditionally, meat dishes are prepared by menfolk, mostly on holidays, with a great deal of flair. The women are, by and large, vegetarian though they are not averse to cooking meat. Other holiday favourites include stuffed paratha with yoghurt, lentils (dal or red kidney beans) with pulao and, occasionally poori aloo.

Mughlai cuisine is a style of cooking developed in the Indian subcontinent by the imperial kitchens of the Mughal Empire. It represents the cooking styles used in North India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Indian city of Hyderabad. The cuisine is strongly influenced by the Persian cuisine of Iran, and has influenced the regional cuisines of Kashmir and the Punjab region. The taste of Mughlai cuisine vary from extremely mild to spicy, and is often associated with a distinctive aroma and the taste of ground and whole spices. Awadhi cuisine consists of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes. Awadh has been greatly influenced by Mughal cooking techniques, and the cuisine of Lucknow bears similarities to those of Persia, Kashmir, Punjab and Hyderabad while the city is known for Nawabi foods. The bawarchis and rakabdars of Awadh gave birth to the dum style of cooking or the art of cooking over a slow fire which has become synonymous with Lucknow today. Their spread consisted of elaborate dishes like kebabs, kormas, biryani, kaliya, naharikulchas, zarda, sheermal, roomali rotis, and warqi parathas. The richness of Awadh cuisine lies not only in the variety of cuisine but also in the ingredients used like mutton, paneer, and rich spices including cardamom and saffron. The richness of Awadhi cuisine lies not only in the variety of cuisine but also is the ingredients used in creating such a variety. The Chefs of Awadhi transformed the traditional dastarkhwan with elaborate dishes like kababs, kormas, kaliya, naharikulchas, zarda, sheermal, roomali rotis, and parathas.

Rajasthan is the land of forts, fairs and festivals. In the Royal Kitchens of Rajasthan. In Rajasthan a professional Brahmin cook was called Maharaj. He is the only person who is responsible for whole kitchen and is only one who is allowed to enter into the kitchen. Rajasthan cuisine was influenced by its climate, availability of raw material and also by the life styles of Maharajas. Maheshwaries do not use garlic and onion for their dishes. There are a number of grains which are grown in Rajasthan-like bajra, makkai, jawar and wheat, dried lentils and beans are also very popular. Gram flour is used to make gatte and pakodi. Jewar, Bajra and Makkai are used to make rotis and wheat is used to make Bati (dal-bati churma). The staple diet of locals is very simple, like bajre ki roti with lasoon ki chutney as they think that garlic helps to safeguard against the winds. In Maheswari Cooking, Mango Powder and Asafoetida are an integral part of cuisine, both ingredients act as a major substitute of tomatoes, garlic and onions. In Rajasthani cuisine, people use lot of pure ghee is the medium of cooking, due to the scarcity of water, they use milk or butter milk.

Gujarat is a land of all the religions like Jainism, Islam, Buddhism and Parsees. Population of Gujarat are mainly vegetarian, due to the influence of Jains and Buddhists except Parsees and Bohras, the Muslim Community. Bohras are very famous for their beef preparations. In Gujarat, the staple food is millet. Geographically, Gujarat is divided into three main regions i.e. Kathiawari and Kutch and Saurashtra. Kathiawari and Kutch foods are very famous for their spicyness they use red chilli powder and people of Southern Gujarat also like spicy food but they prefer green chillies. People from Surat use gur (jaggery) in their cooking and this gives a sweet tangy flavour to their dishes. Southern part of Gujarat i.e. Surat has a plenty of green vegetables and fruits and this all is because of proper rainfall in Southern Gujarat. In Saurashtra, sugarcane, wheat, millet, pulses, vegetables are available in abundance. The use of jaggery is because of the abundantly grown sugar-cane. The food of Saurashtra is mainly dominated by pulses and accompanied by sweets. For a taste of traditional Gujarati cuisine, one has to try the typical Gujarati thali that consists of a variety of dat, kadhi, two or three vegetables and pulses, salad savouries, sweets, pun or chappati, rice, chutneys, pickles and papad. Marathi food uses lots of fish and coconut. As in all other parts of India, there is an enormous variety of vegetables in their regular diet. Grated coconuts spice many kinds of dishes, but coconut oil is not very widely used as a cooking medium. Peanut and cashew nut are widely used in vegetables. Peanut oil is the main cooking medium. Maharashtrians eat both wheat and rice, but rice is given a place of prominence. It is used in every form imaginable, from steamed rice, flour dumplings (modaks) served on feast days to the delicate rice flour biscuits (cookies) called anarsa that served on Diwali. Ratnagiri, a district of Maharashtra, has the distinction of producing the best mango in the entire world, called the Apus or Aiphonso. The Maharashtrian meal is eaten in large metal plates. Most of the food is already on the plate, neatly laid out in a very special order, all vegetarian. Each item has its designated place on the plate, like the numbers on a clock. The

left side is for seasonings, relishes and savouries, the right for vegetables, split peas and sweets. While the foods of certain Brahmin communities may be classified as restrained and vegetarian, one has only to look at the extravagance and richness of the diet of the Marathas headquartered in Kohiapur or the spicy ebullience of that of the coastal fisherfolk to realise that in meat, even within the state of Maharashtra, there is a lot of diversity. Maharashtra is divided into 5 main regions:

Goan cuisine is a fusion of Christians, Hindus and Portuguese Cuisine, Goan is mainly non-vegetarian. Goa being a coastal region, Goans prefer to eat fish and seafoods like prawns, lobster, crabs, pomfrets etc. Goans prefer rice instead of wheat and they also use coconut milk in plenty, due to the abundance of coconut. Coconut is an essential ingredient of Goan Cuisine. The other meats which are preferred by Goans are Pork, Lamb and Chicken. The main features of Goan Cuisine are: they use a lot of small red chillies in their dishes, which make dishes too spicy. Kokum is another important ingredient, it is sour, deep red colour fruit which has a sharp and sour flavour, kokum is mainly used by Hindus. Christians prefer vinegar instead of kokum in their dishes. Goans do not have a sweet tooth, but some of the most famous Goan Sweets are Bibinica and Dod. Bibinica is a sweet dish which is made by pancakes baked one over another, traditionally it should have 16 layers. These pancakes are made up of coconut milk, flour, sugar, egg and nutmeg. Dodol is jaggery flavoured fudge made from palm, jaggery, rice flour and coconut milk. Feni is an integral part of every Goan, Feni is a locally brewed wine. Goans make Feni with cashew nut and every Goan enjoys it with their meal.

The people of Hyderabad are predominantly Muslim and Hindu, therefore their habits show a clear distinction, although similar in many ways. The Hyderabadis Muslims got their food habits from the Moghuls while the Hindus had their own distinctive style, as can be seen from a number of preparations like Bagare Baigan, Biryani, etc. The cuisine of Andhra Pradesh is reputedly the spiciest and hottest of all Indian cuisines. The cuisine includes both the original Andhra cooking and the Hyderabad cuisine with its Mughlai influence. It is the former which is red hot. The Hyderabad Muslim community prefers a liberal use of red meats and almost all their gravies are made up of rich ingredients. One of the most characteristic features of the Hyderabad cuisine is the use of tamarind as a souring agent, unlike lime used by the Moghuls. Early mornings begin with Nahari a lamb stew made from lamb trotters seasoned with cassia buds, cardamom and potli ka masala (which includes sandal wood, khas roots and dried roses). This is eaten with sheermal, a Hyderabad bread. The richly flavoured Kacchi Biryani is prepared with tender, marinated lamb and rice cooked together. The Andhra food is very spicy because of the abundant cultivation of chillies in the state. Guntur being the largest producer of chillies in the state, the Guntur chillies are reputed all over the country for their pungency and colour. The cuisine is largely vegetarian, with only the coastal areas showing a marked preference for seafood. Fish and prawn are curried in sesame and coconut oils, and flavoured with freshly ground pepper and eaten with rice. Traditionally, the Andhra meal is served on a clean banana leaf or a stainless steel

thali. The people eat sitting down on the floor or on low wooden stools. The main course must include rice, dal, vegetables like yam, ladyfinger, brinjal and bitter gourd. Pulusu and Charu are two thick and thin clear liquids respectively which are eaten with rice. Like Southern foods, the typical dosa, etc., can be found in many restaurants, but the favourite remains pesarattu, a dosa which has the filling of upma and onions. Rasam, fire-hot, is a typical favourite of the Southern region. Lamb is a great favourite, not to be missed. The spicy chutneys and pickles of Andhra, especially mango and shrimp, are simply superb and count among hot favourites. The last course of an Andhra meal comprises thick set curd which is a must in every Andhra meal. Otherwise a meal would be incomplete. During the summer season buttermilk or Majjiga is taken with the meal or as a refreshing drink throughout the day.

The four distinct groups in the state of Kerala are the Syrian Christians, the Muslims called Moflas, the Nairs finally the Namboodri. Yellow banana chips fried in coconut oil and lightly salted are eaten by all. The rice appam, a pancake also called vellappam, is common to all Keralites and is eaten with a meat stew by the Syrian Christian and with aviyal by the Namboodris and Nairs. The idiappam, a dish of cooked rice noodles, the puttu consisting of rice rawa, grated coconut and jackfruit cooked with jaggery and cardamom are among the other common items. The Syrian Christian eats beef. Most of the curries are prepared using coconut milk. For Christmas the specialty is wild duck with mappas. Among the Muslims the use of rice, coconut and jaggery is pronounced. There is also a strong Arab influence as is seen in their biryani, ground wheat and meat porridge aleesa. Several flavoured soups are made from both rice and wheat with added coconut or coconut milk and spices. A distinctive and unusual sweet is muttamala, chain-like strings of egg yolk cooked in sugar syrup. A wedding feast of the Nairs includes several types of pachadies, pickels, chips and payasams based on milk, coconut milk, rice, dal and bananas; however, no meat is served. The Namboodris who are the Brahmins are strict vegetarians who favour the idli, dosa and puttu for breakfast with a coconut or curd accompaniment and eat their rice with koottu, kalan and olan. The use of garlic in their cooking is avoided Kerala cuisine is very hot and spicy. Like most places in India, food is traditionally eaten by hand and served on a banana leaf. Another interesting feature is the abundant use of coconut oil, mustard seeds, curry leaves and coconut milk.

Bengalis are one of the greatest food lovers in the Indian subcontinent. Their passion for fish is so that no meal is considered complete without it; A variety of fish is available in the river Ganges: perch, mullet, crab, carp, prawn, crayfish, lobster all are loved, but it is the seasonal hilsa that is priced above all. For Bengalis the staple food is rice. Though coconut and its oil is available, pure golden mustard oil is mostly used as a cooking medium. As in all of India, Bengalis eat everything with their fingers. Whether you have five dishes or sixty, the most important part of eating in Bengal is having each dish separately with a little rice in order to savour its individual taste. The more delicate tastes always come first, graduating

to stronger ones. Vegetables, especially the bitter ones, are the first item, followed by dal, perhaps accompanied by fritters or fries of fish or vegetable. After this come any of the complex vegetable dishes like ghanto or chachchari, followed by the important fish jhol as well as other fish preparations. Meat will always follow fish, and chutneys and ambals will provide the refreshing touch.

CONCLUSION

The above analysis and description demonstrate that India has large potential of tourism and the phenomenon growth in this sector also indicates that India may be emerged as one of the largest tourism markets of Asia, however, strategic planning and management of tourism resources may provide avenues to avail the benefits of tourism industry in future. The culinary tourism has vast scope to attract international and domestic tourists in India. Various regions and parts of the country have varied and rich food and cuisines which may be promoted as tourist products through proper planning, integration with Food Plaza, hotels and restaurants and food traditions along with tourist festivals and fairs.

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