

# foodService

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## A PLUMAZING AFFAIR

Priyank Sukhija and  
Natasha Jain on  
what makes Plum By  
Bentchair the 'it' place  
for instagrammers

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## HEALTHY WINTER MENU

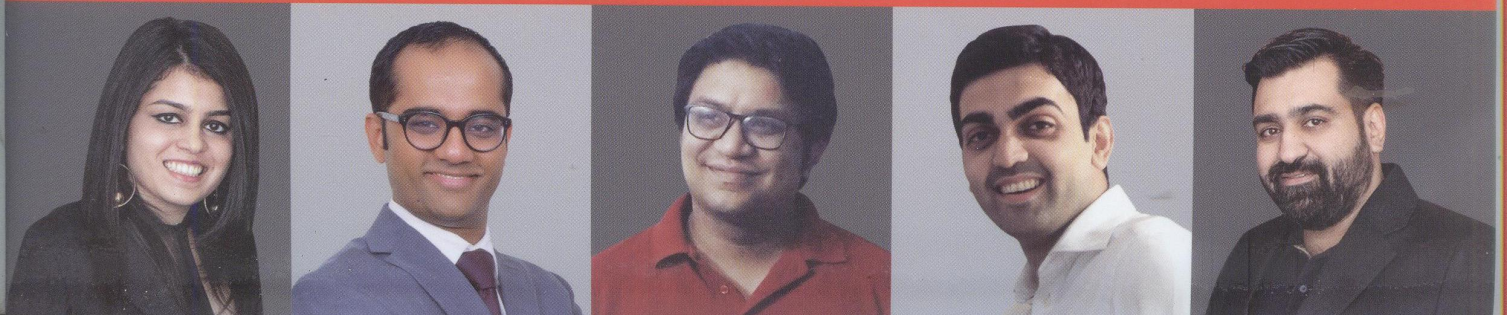
How do restaurants make sure that their patrons get all the nutrition and immunity to stay fit and healthy during the winter season

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## HOW MILLENNIALS ARE CHANGING FOOD SERVICE

Gen Y act differently  
in the matter of  
selecting restaurants

Featured inside: Natasha Jain | Anuj Arora | Indrajeet Roy | Karan Kapur | Priyank Sukhija





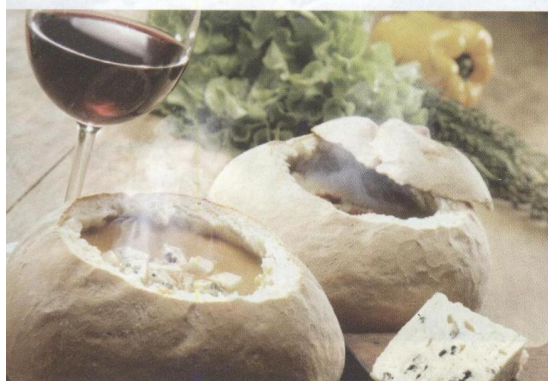
and preparing their menu for the season. Though it would be difficult to pinpoint winter-specific cuisines and dishes, there are some that are more popular during these cooler months. "Of course, there are some dishes with specific traits that are surely more popular during winters," says **Sudhir Nair, Executive Chef, Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru ORR**, pointing out that the chilly season brings with it a good choice of fresh ingredients and flavors to cook with – lots of healthy greens, fruits and seeds. "Western dishes with smoky flavors, and roasts; Asian dishes with higher spice levels; and Indian dishes with more fat/ ghee are examples of dishes that more popular in the winter months. Generally, the consumption of sweet dishes also goes up during the season," he adds.

By and large, chefs agree that different seasons place their own particular cuisine requirements. "During winters, we emphasize more on seasonal vegetables and try to create new and different dishes out of them. In the northern parts of the country where the chill factor during the winter months is more pronounced, the demand for barbecue dishes goes up. Dishes that contain lots of vitamins, minerals, and are high in protein are mostly preferred in the cold weather. Keeping this demand in mind, we serve grilled food like spicy grilled snapper fish, grilled chicken breast,

So, while there's nothing wrong with a little indulgence over food during the winter months, how do restaurants make sure that their patrons and guests get all the nutrition and immunity the body needs to stay fit and healthy during and beyond the winter season, which is also associated with cold and flu, chapped skin, and weight gain? Today, with health consciousness growing among all consumer segments, food habits are more inclined towards conscious indulgence. "When people go eating out, they want to eat healthy food and they are mindful of what they eat. So, they select the dining outlets after a thorough consideration of the healthy eating options available. This trend has, in turn, created a need among chefs and food retail establishments to experiment with the various ingredients and to also constantly innovate with their recipes over time," opines **Sudip Misra, Executive Chef, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield**.

As consumers and diners have begun to incorporate health-related values into their purchase and eating decisions, it has become increasingly important for marketers and restaurateurs to understand how these belief systems affect the consumption experience. Not only have they become more conscious of the food they eat, both at home and away from home, they

**The months between November and February are the best time to tuck in delicious food in your favourite dive or restaurant.**



barbecued vegetables and grilled lamb chops. Going beyond barbecue, Asian cuisine is highly in demand with dishes like hot & sour soup, khow suey soup and kung pao chicken attracting greater consumer appeal and popularity," says Nair.

"The winter months are often associated with some of the best dishes in Indian cuisine. To satiate the increased hunger pangs during winters, we need a good intake of healthy ingredients in the food dishes. Some of the popular winter dishes at our Ummrao restaurant are haak saag, ambada jhinga, subz ruhani biryani seasonal, tamatar ananas ka shorba, santra scallop, bhavnagri tamatar kut, trilogy broccoli, and jaituni khumb," says **Mukhtar Qureshi, Master Chef, Ummrao, Courtyard by Marriott, Mumbai**. According to **Narayan Dutt Sharma, Deputy General Manager, Culinary, Barbeque Nation**, "People are looking for nutritious and comforting food during winters and there is nothing better to offer than grills, tandoori food and singri during these months."

also seek a number of specific production- and -nutrient-based food characteristics, including locally and/ or organically grown, low calorie, low sodium, fresh, organic, non-GMO, etc.

However, while the production and nutrition option variations are numerous, the overriding motivation for the consumption of such products is health concern. Health-conscious consumers value personal health and are sensitive to the effects of food consumption decisions on their physical appearance as well as on their general sense of well-being. Accordingly, these consumers are more likely to make consumption decisions that align with this value system.

The increasing concern for health in the marketplace has not gone unnoticed by restaurateurs and restaurant companies. In acknowledgement of the value of the health-conscious consumer, organizations from fast food franchises to fine-dining establishments have introduced new products and, in some



**Dishes that contain lots of vitamins, minerals, and are high in protein are mostly preferred in the cold weather.**

cases, entire menus that feature health-focused menu items. "We have observed that more people (especially the young generation) are leaning towards vegetarian and healthy diet. Keeping this factor in mind, we have started experimenting and creating new delicacies by using more of soya, bean curd and pulses instead of chicken and eggs to fulfil the protein needs. We have also recently introduced a variety of salads in the menu and there is a huge "make you own salad" live counter in the buffet section at our hotel's dining outlet," reveals **Vikas Pant, Executive Chef, Pride Plaza Hotel Aerocity, New Delhi**. He adds that during the winter months, chefs start adding more of winter greens like fresh spinach, fresh fenugreek, coriander and chenopodium album (bathua) in dishes like palak paneer, palak mutton, palak halwa, chenopodium raita, and many more. "We use more of ginger and garlic for flavour in most of the dishes and use more of honey for sweetening in desserts."

"Ten years ago, my menu had a lot of poultry, sea food and game. But nowadays, 60% of our diners are vegetarians and so we give an equal emphasis on the vegetarian dishes," says Mukhtar Qureshi of Courtyard by Marriott, Mumbai. According to **Sushil Chug of Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, East Delhi**, "we are continuously researching to develop vegetarian versions of the popular non-vegetarian recipes. Some examples of such creations are kathal roganjosh, veg sushi and sabut gahun ka haleem (whole wheat haleem with vegetables). To increase the acceptance of our veggie creations, we ensure that the taste, flavor and texture appeal even to the people who are used to non-vegetarian foods."

But while vegetarianism is spreading fast, non-vegetarian delicacies including curries, stews and gravies as well as grilled and barbecue fares continue to be the crowd favorites. Nihari, rogan josh, kebab, chicken hazarvi and achari fish tikka, spicy grilled snapper fish, grilled chicken breast, grilled lamb chops, grilled seafood platter are some of the more in-demand non-veg dishes during the winter season. In what has now become an established health inspired approach to non-vegetarian cooking, chefs are using lots of herbs and new spices to ramp up the dishes' healthy features. "In the winter season, if I am cooking chicken as protein, I like to use herbs like thyme, rosemary, basil and marjoram, which add flavor to the dish and push up its nutritional values. On the vegetarian side, lentils are a high source of protein and I like to mix it with green vegetables like fenugreek leaves and spinach along with a teaspoon of desi ghee to make a perfect dish," says **Machindra Kasture, Executive Chef, The Ashok Hotel (ITDC)**.

Irrespective of the food trends in vogue, which at times may be influenced or powered by industrial food giants, it pays for foodservice establishments to follow the trends as they have commercial consequences. "Acting on the food trends can determine the commercial fortunes of foodservice establishments and these trends may not always

be right thing to follow. But on the issue of health, as a food serving establishment, we believe that we have a bigger goal of bringing a healthy lifestyle to our patrons and the community we serve. We believe that the right way to a healthier future is to get back to the basics. Our teams are continuously in touch with farmers and we travel extensively to look around for newer and better ingredients being grown. We have introduced Kadaknath chicken, unpolished lentils, grains, millets-finger millet, pearl millet, etc, desi jaggery (non-bleached), microgreens, salads, rice varieties, etc. in our a la carte menu," states **Amitesh Virdi, Executive Chef at Punjab Grill, Pune**.

Recognizing the value of the health-conscious consumer for health-oriented dishes that are organic, natural, fresh and/or primarily prepared with health in mind, food establishments have come to increasingly use microgreens, quinoa, soy products, corn oil, etc, in their menus as part of the healthy food trend. And thankfully, it has become more convenient and easier for restaurants to address the health concerns in terms of the availability and variety of healthier options that they can access. "That is because



procuring healthy raw materials is now easier than ever before, and it has become easy for us as restaurants to use and convert them into healthy dishes in our menus," says **Rohan D' Souza, Culinary Director, Silver Beach Hospitality**.

"Nowadays, even smaller manufacturers and suppliers are willing to contribute towards better nutrition and health. Vendors are continuously re-evaluating the product range to make them healthier by reducing the levels of salt, fats, sugars, preservatives and other artificial ingredients. In turn, there's a continuous improvement process as manufacturers are now adding fibre, fruit and micronutrients wherever possible in their products," says Sudip Misra of Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield.

Echoing similar sentiments is **David Ansted, Executive Chef at Grand Hyatt Goa**. He says: "I am very excited to see smaller companies coming forward and offering more of organic and sustainable products, which include non-processed breakfast cereals and healthy grab and go snacks. Traditional suppliers of coconut sugars





### \\ CUISINE OFFERING A RANGE OF SOUPS & CURRIES IS PREFERRED IN WINTERS \\

#### **Cuisines and dishes popular in winter months:**

TYGR is a Pan-Asian restaurant with the focus on Pan-Asian cuisine. For the winter months, our cuisine offers a variety of soups and curries and they are generally preferred by the guests during the season.

#### **Your favourite recipes and signature dishes for winter season:**

During winters, I personally prefer something hot and spicy like the Massaman curry or Tom Yum soup.

#### **Your approach to making the winter menu healthy and wholesome:**

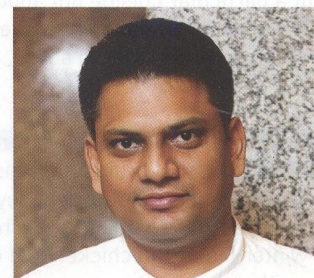
Certain ingredients, which can be extensively used for healthy winter menu, are: cabbage, raw papaya, broccoli, bok choy, coconut, etc. They are healthy and go well with my Pan-Asian dishes. About 45-50 percent of the dishes on our menu are vegetarian and we promote vegetarian and healthy eating. Some healthy vegetarian dishes in our menu are stir fried vegetables with yellow bean sauce, and Som Tam or pomelo salad. We also use an extensive variety of greens in our menu to pump up the nutritional value.

#### **Any healthy menu experiments or F&B innovation on the mind for this winter season:**

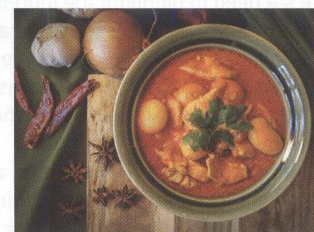
We are always experimenting with menus and keep changing the dishes. Recently, we have introduced a new menu at TYGR, which is exhaustive and has been designed keeping in mind the current food trends and preferences. The menu features a range of soups besides focusing on vegetables and proteins.

#### **Ways of addressing health and nutrition concerns:**

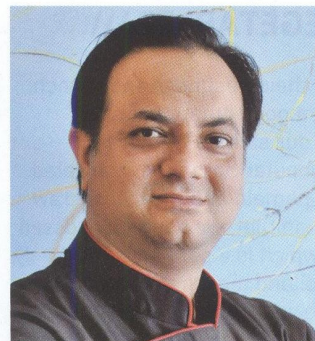
The concept of small farm to table and organic ingredients is catching up big with the restaurants. This concept is especially good and useful for the small establishments but restaurants with a huge turnover will have to rely on dedicated suppliers of fresh and healthy raw material.



– Sahil Singh  
Executive Chef, TYGR



### \\ THE DEMAND FOR BARBECUE DISHES GOES UP DURING WINTERS \\



– Vikas Pant  
Executive Chef, Pride Plaza  
Hotel Aerocity, New Delhi

#### **Cuisines and dishes popular in winter:**

Cuisines play an important role in meeting the particular requirement of the seasons. During winters, we emphasize more on seasonal vegetables and try to create new and different dishes out of them. As our hotel is located in Delhi, the demand for barbecue dishes goes up during winters. Dishes that contain lots of vitamins, minerals, and are high in protein are mostly preferred in the cold weather. Keeping this demand in mind, we operate a seasonal restaurant called Aqua Grill, which only serves grilled food like spicy grilled snapper fish, grilled chicken breast, barbecued vegetables and grilled lamb chops. Going beyond barbecue, Asian cuisine is highly demanded. Dishes like hot & sour soup, khow suey soup and kung pao chicken are in high demand in winters.

#### **Favourite recipes for winter:**

Being from the northern part of India, my favourite dishes are sarson ka saag aur makki ki roti; gajar ka halwa; piping hot jalebi with hot kadhai milk; nihari; rogan josh; roast Chicken; steamed dim sum; and panjiri.

#### **Making the winter menu healthy and wholesome:**

In winters, we use more of honey for sweetening in desserts and ginger & garlic for flavour in most of the dishes. More items in the menu are greens as we start adding winter greens like fresh spinach, fresh fenugreek, coriander and chenopodium album (bathua) in

dishes like palak paneer, palak mutton, palak halwa, chenopodium raita, and more. We have observed that more people (especially the young generation) are leaning towards vegetarian and healthy diet. Keeping this factor in mind, we have started experimenting and creating new delicacies by using more of soya, bean curd and pulses instead of chicken and eggs to fulfil the protein needs. We have also recently introduced a variety of salads in the menu and there is a huge "Make you own Salad" live counter in the buffet section. We have plans for having our own chef's garden at the hotel from where we can serve fresh and organic herbs and vegetables directly to our guests. With this, it shall be easier for us to promote healthy dishes as everything would be made and served from a live kitchen.

**Ingredients popular in winter season:** Recently, the demand for organic vegetables, herb and fruits, quinoa, flax seeds, basil seed and hydroponic vegetables has gone up. I personally like saffron, nuts, organic honey, spinach, carrot, desi ghee and butter in winters.

**Addressing health and nutrition concerns:** The vendors have to meet the standards or else the supplies are rejected. For fruits and vegetables, we only accept locally and organically grown items. The spices, sauces, cooking oil and other cooking products are outsourced from reputed brands known for their consumer health products.

