

## Topics

- Awadhi cuisine
- Gujarati cuisine
- Maharashtra cuisine

## Awadhi Cuisine

Awadhi Cuisine is from the city of Lucknow is the capital of the state of Uttar Pradesh in Central-South Asia and Northern India.

The cuisine consists of both vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes.

Awadh has been greatly influenced by Mughal cooking techniques.

The cuisine of Lucknow bears similarities to those of Persia, Kashmir, Punjab and Hyderabad.

The city is famous for its 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.

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.

Dastarkhwan, a Persian term, literally means a laid-out ceremonial dining spread. It is customary in Awadh to sit around and share the Dastarkhwan.

The Chefs of Awadhi transformed the traditional dastarkhwan with elaborate dishes like kababs, kormas, kaliya, nahari-kulchas, zarda, sheermal, roomali rotis and parathas.

During Ramzan, the month of fasting, the cooks and the ladies of the house are busy throughout the day preparing the iftari (the meal eaten at the end of the day's fast), not only for the family but for the friends and the poor.

Id is celebrated with varieties of siwaiyan (vermicelli) - Muzzaffar is a favourite in Lucknow.

Sheermals were invented by mamdoo bawarchi more than one and a half century ago. They are saffron covered parathas made from a dough of flour mixed with milk and ghee and baked in iron tandoors.

**The Awadhi/Lucknow dastarkhwan would not be complete unless it had the following dishes.**

- Qorma (braised meat in thick gravy),
- Salan (a gravy dish of meat or vegetable),

- Qeema (minced meat),
- Kababs (pounded meat fried or roasted over a charcoal fire)
- Pasinda (fried slivers of very tender meat, usually kid, in gravy)
- Rice is cooked with meat in the form of a
  - Pulao,
  - Chulao (fried rice) or
  - Served plain.
- There would also be a variety of rotis.
- Desserts comprise
  - Kheer (milk sweetened and boiled with whole rice to a thick consistency),
  - Halwa,
  - Phirni

## **Kebab**

Lucknow is proud of its Kebabs. The Kakori Kebabs, Galawat ke Kebabs, Shami Kebabs, Boti Kebabs, Patili-ke-Kebabs, Ghutwa Kebabs and Seekh Kebabs are among the known varieties.

**Seekh Kebab** : It was originally prepared from beef mince on skewers and cooked on charcoal fire. Now lamb mince is preferred for its soft texture.

**Kakori kabab** : The mince for the kabab is to be obtained from no other part but the raan ki machhli (tendon of the leg of mutton) other ingredients include khoya, white pepper and a mix of powdered spices which remains a closely guarded secret adds to the perfect blend.

**Shami Kabab** : Made from mince meat, with chopped onion and coriander and green chillies usually added to the mixture, the kebabs are round patties filled with spicy surprises and the tangy raw green mango.

**Galawat kabab** : A variant made without any admixture or binding agents and comprising just the minced meat and the spices is the **Galawat kabab**.

**Pasanda Kebab** : Piccata (thin flattened chunk) of lamb marinated (red chili powder, ginger & garlic paste, papaya and garam masala) and then sautéed on a griddle.

**Boti kebab** : **Boti kebab** is lamb marinated in yoghurt and skewered, then well cooked. Traditionally, Boti Kebab (Lamb) is cooked in a clay oven called a tandoor.

**Vegetarian kebabs** include Dalcha Kebab, Kathal ke Kebab, Arbi ke Kebab, Rajma Galoti Kebab (kidney bean kebab cooked with aromatic herbs), Zamikand ke Kebab (Lucknowi yam kebabs), etc.

### Curry preparations

Korma is actually the Indian name for the technique of braising meat. It originated in the lavish Moghul cuisine wherein lamb or chicken was braised in velvety, spiced sauces, enriched with ground nuts, cream and butter. While kormas are rich, they are also mild, containing little or no cayenne or chillies.

There are both vegetarian (navratan korma) and non-vegetarian (chicken, lamb, beef & fish korma) varieties of korma. Murgh Awadhi Korma is a classic from Lucknow.

Kaliya is a mutton preparation with gravy along with the compulsory inclusion of turmeric or saffron.

### **Rice preparations**

Biryani derived from the Persian word 'Biryan', which means 'roasted before cooking', biryani is a mixture of rice (basmati), meat/vegetables, yogurt and spices.

Lucknow Biryani or Awadh Biryani is a form of *Pukki Biryani*. Pukki means 'cooked'. Both the meat and rice are cooked separately and then layered and baked. The process also lives up to the name Biryani in Persian meaning 'fry before cooking'

It basically has three steps. First, the meat is seared in ghee and cooked in water with warm aromatic spices till meat is tender. The meat broth is drained out. Second, the rice is lightly fried in Ghee, and cooked in the meat broth from the previous step. Third, cooked meat and cooked rice are layered in a Handi. Sweet flavors are added. The Handi is sealed and cooked over low heat. The result is a perfectly cooked meat, rice, and a homogenous flavor of aromatic meat broth, aromatic spices and sweet flavors.

The difference between biryani and pullao is that while pullao is made by cooking the meat in ghee with warm aromatic spices and cooking it in water till the meat is tender, then adding the rice in the meat broth along with meat which is then sealed and cooked over low heat till it's done, whereas biryani, the rice is boiled or parboiled separately in spiced water and then layered with meat curry or marinade, depending on the type of biryani being cooked, which is then sealed and cooked over low heat till it's done.

## **Bread preparations**

As wheat is the staple food of the state, breads are very significant. Breads are generally flat breads; only a few varieties are raised breads. Tawa roti is bread made on crude iron pans.

**Chapati:** It is the most popular roti in India which is eaten for breakfast, lunch or dinner.

**Puri:** It is small and are deep fried so they puff like balloons.

**Paratha:** A very common variant of roti is the celebrated and immensely popular, cooked in the same way as a regular roti, stuffed with fillings of vegetables, pulses, cottage cheese, and even mince meat and fried in ghee or clarified butter. This obviously heavy and scrumptious round bread finds its way to the breakfast tables of millions.

**Rumali Roti:** An elaborately and dexterously prepared ultra thin bread made on a huge and hot convex metal pan from finely ground wheat flour. It is a treat to watch one of these being prepared with great flourish by skilled cooks. The Urdu word rumaali literally means a kerchief.

**Tandoori Roti:** A relatively thick bread ranging from an elastic to a crispy consistency, baked in a cylindrical earthen oven at a sometimes amazing speed by aggressively fast cooks at roadside restaurants and eateries. The Urdu word tandoor means an oven.

**Naan:** This is a thick bread, softer and richer in texture and consistency than the tandoori roti. It is made from finely ground wheat flour kneaded into a very elastic mass. The roghni is a special treat for lovers of awadhi cuisine. This extraordinary bread is prepared with a rich mixture of cream, sugar, wheat flour, butter, and essence. The taste is rich and elegant— just perfect for the curries of the awadhi cuisine.

**Sheermaal:** It is sweet bread that accompany the rich and filling aromatic quorma (gravied chicken or mutton). Sheermal is a sweetened Naan made out of Maida (All-purpose flour), leavened with yeast, baked in Tandoor or oven. In the olden days, it was made just like Roti. The warm water in the recipe for Roti was replaced with warm milk sweetened with sugar and flavored with saffron. Nowadays, the restaurants make it like a Naan and the final product resembles Danish pastry.

**Baqarkhani:** It is a naan which is an elaborate variation of the sheer-maal except that it is fried on a griddle rather than baked in a tandoor.

## Desserts

The special halwa or halwa sohan which has four varieties, viz Papadi, Jauzi, Habshi and Dudhiya is prepared especially well in Lucknow.

ANANAS KA MUZAFFAR : Electric yellow rice with sugar syrup, pineapple chunks and ghee.

Shahi Tukra : Shahi means " Grand" Tukra means " Pieces " Here the grand refers to the richness of the dish. Fried breads dip in sugar syrup simmer in balai / rabari. Traditionally cooked or served from Mahi Tawa.

## Culinary terms

### **Dhungar**

This is a quick smoke procedure used to flavour a meat dish, daIs or even raita. The smoke very effectively permeates every grain of the ingredients and imparts a subtle aroma, which enhances the quality of the dish. The procedure may be carried out either at the intermediate or the final stage of cooking. This is a common technique employed while making kababs. The method is as follows. In a shallow utensil or a lagan in which the meat or mince has been marinated, a small bay is made in the center and a katori or onion skin or even a betel leaf (depending on the dish) is placed. In it a piece of live coal is placed and hot ghee, sometimes mixed with aromatic herbs or spices, is poured over it and covered immediately with a lid to prevent the smoke from escaping. The lid is not removed till about 15 minutes, so as to allow the smoke to work on the ingredients inside. The coal is then removed from the utensil and the meat put through further cooking processes.

### **Dum dena**

This is a frequently method used in Awadh cooking. 'Dum' literally means 'breath' and the process involves placing the semi-cooked ingredients in a pot or deg, sealing the utensil with flour dough and applying very slow charcoal fire from top, by placing some live charcoal on the lid, and some below. The Persian influence is most evident in this method though in Awadh it has acquired its own distinct character. The magic of dum' is the excellent aroma, flavor and texture which results from slow cooking. This method is followed for a number of delicacies such as the Shabdeg, Pulao and Biryani. Any dish cooked by this method is 'Dum Pukht' or 'Dum Bakht'.

### **Galavat**

Refers to the use of softening agents such as papain (from raw papaya) or kalmi shora to tenderise meat.

## **Baghar**

This is a method of tempering a dish with hot oil / ghee and spices. It may be done either at the beginning of the cooking as in curries, or at the end as for (pulses). In the former, the fat is heated in a vessel to a smoking point and after reducing the flame, spices are added to it. When they begin to crackle. the same process is carried out in a ladle which is immersed in the cooked dish and immediately covered with a lid, so that the essence and the aroma of the spices, drawn out by the hot ghee are retained in the dish giving it their flavour.

## **Gile hikmat**

Talking of Persian influence on Awadh cuisine one cannot ignore this interesting method adopted for cooking. 'Gil' in Persian is earth or mud and 'Hikmat' implies the procedure of the Hakims. This method is generally followed to prepare 'Kushtas' which are the ash-like residue of substances which cannot be consumed in their natural form as they are toxic, for instance gems or metals. But when adopted for cooking purposes the method is as follows. The meat or vegetable to be cooked is generally taken whole and stuffed with nuts and spices, It is then wrapped in a banana leaf or cloth and covered completely with clay or 'Multani Mitti' (Fuller's Earth) so as to seal it. It is thereafter buried about 4-6 inches deep. A slow fire is then placed on top for 6-8 hours after which the food is dug out and is ready to be served!

## **Loab**

This is a term which refers to the final stage in cooking when the oil used during cooking, rises to the surface. giving the dish a finished appearance, This occurs mostly when slow

## **Moin**

It is the shortening of dough. In this process fat is rubbed into the flour and made into a dough for kachoris or pooris or parathas. This makes the final product crisp, flaky and crumbly.

## **Ittr (Perfumes)**

The use of perfumes play an important role in Awadh cuisine they are used to enhance the aroma of the dish and make it delicate. Most commonly they are made from musk deer, hunting of which is now banned worldwide.

## **Yakhni cuts (Mutton)**

The cuts for Yakhni are generally bony pieces with flesh on them. These cuts are usually taken from the joints and the ribs of the animal. The basic purpose

of meat in preparing Yakhni is to derive the juice and flavour and hence the shape of the meat does not count much.

### **Chandi warq**

This is the process in which small pieces of silver are placed between two sheets of paper and then patted continuously with a hammer till it becomes papery thin. These are used in decorating the dishes before presentations, e.g. Chandi kaliya, Moti pulao.

### **Zamin doz**

This is a style of cooking in which a hole is dug in the ground and the ingredients are placed and covered with mud. Then burning charcoal is placed over it. The cooking process takes about 6 hours.

### **Utensils used**

#### **Bhagona**

Or the patili is generally of brass with a lid. It is used when a great deal of 'bhunna' or saute is required, or even for boiling and simmering. It is also used for preparing Yakhni or Salan, Korma or Kaliya.

#### **Deg/Degchi**

This is a pear-shaped pot with a lid of either brass, copper or aluminium. The shape of this utensil is ideally suited for the 'dum' method and is used for cooking Pulao, Biryani, Nehari or Shab Deg.

#### **Kadhai**

Kadhai is a deep, concave utensil made of brass, iron or aluminium and is used for deep frying paoris puri and the like.

#### **Lagan**

Lagan is a Tradition round and shallow copper utensil with a slightly concave bottom. Used for cooking whole or big cuts of meat or poultry especially when heat is applied from both the top and bottom.

#### **Lohe ka tandoor**

Is typically an iron tandoor, distinct from the clay tandoor which is more common in Delhi. It is a dome-shaped iron oven covered with iron sheet, used for cooking a variety of Breads like - Sheermal, Taftan, Bakarkhani etc.



## **Mahi tawa**

Mahi tawa is the Awadh version of the griddle shaped like a big round, flat bottomed tray with raised edges. used for cooking kababs. Also used for dishes where heat is applied from both ends. when covered.

## **Seeni**

Seeni is a big thali (round tray) usually used as a lid for the lagan or mahi tawa when heat is to be applied from the top. Live charcoal is placed on it and the heat is transmitted through it to the food. Thus the indirect heat has the desired effect of browning and cooking the ingredients. All the copper and brass utensils are almost always used after 'kalai' or tin plating the insides.

# GUJARATI CUISINE

Gujarati food is vegetarian- ancient, traditional foods with astounding flavours and textures, all based on sound nutritional principles. Part of this state which runs along Indian's upper west coast is desert and part is semi-desert, making water valuable. Most of this valuable water has been used to grow staples – grains and pulses. It is with these staples and a smattering of fresh vegetables or fruits and nutritious seasonings such as sesame seeds and peanuts that most vegetarian Gujaratis make their delicacies.

Western Gujarat that is Saurashtra is dry and green vegetables, hard to come by. But the peninsula's mixed farming provides abundant dairy produce. The food is simple and nutritious and wholesome. The scarcity of greens has also encouraged pickling and preparing foods from dehydrated vegetables. Saurashtra also prepares an all – important spice mixture – lehsan masala or garlic red chillies and salt pounded together used in a lot of its food.

Central Gujarat – Ahmedabad and Kheda is the granary of Gujarat. A majority of the people are farmers and the food grains they grow are often stored at home. Grains broken during cleaning is never sold but used in the home to prepare dhokla, vada, etc.

In the South is Surat, the rainfall is heavier here and there are plenty of green vegetables and fruits – mangoes, bananas, kchickoos. The people are connoisseurs of good food, enjoy eating and equal care is lavished on appearance and presentation.

Gujarat has a variety of savoury dishes and a tradition of making and storing snacks. In a Gujarati home, sweets and snacks are always waiting to be offered to a welcome guest.

1. Shaak – general term for a dry, stir fried vegetable preparation such as batata nu shaak, (potatoes cooked with tomatoes); kobi vatana nu shaak (cabbage and green peas); tuvar ringan nu shaak (brinjal and fresh tuvar beans).
2. Vagharelu Bhaat – rice fried along with a ‘Vegar’ or ‘baghar’ tempering of mustard seeds, red chillies, curry leaves and turmeric.
3. Kitchi – a moist, soft cooked mixture of rice and moongdal.
4. Poories – deep fried puffy breads
5. Khakra – very thin, crisp wheat bread
6. Theplas – thin, crisp wheat flour and gram flour, bread flavoured with methi leaves or spinach.
7. Bajra –no-rotlo- bread made from millet dough.

Kdada dhokla – made with a batter of ground rice and urad dal, fermented overnight, steamed with coarsely crushed black pepper.

Khandvi – gram flour batter, cooked spread out by hand until it is paper thin, cooked and rolled up tightly, topped with a tampering and coconut and green coriander.

1. Kadhi – curd and gram flour curry

Savouries generally termed as ‘Farsan’ include Cheewra – a spicy mixture of puffed rice, nuts split gram, dried fruit.

Papri – crinkled ribbons made by pushing gram flour dough through any slitted griddle. Pafra – long, flat ribbons made by dragging from flour dough by the reel of a practiced hand. Sev – crisp, fried noodles prepared from gram flour.

2. Chhundo – sweet chutney made with green mangoes, cardamom and cloves.
3. Anthanu (pickles, made from raw mangoes and lime.
4. Basundi and Shrikhand are the most common sweets besides doodh

Pak and doodhi halwa: sheera made from wheat flour, jaggery and ghee is common on festive occasions. Other sweets include sweet sev and boondi, crisp poories coated with sugar syrup – mewa wadi.

## KUTCH

The Kutch region is covered by the desert. Because of scanty rainfall the people of Kutch are hardy, industrious and lead an austere life. Their food is simple and so is their art of cooking. Milk and milk products abound. A simple Kutch breakfast consists of bajra roti and milk along with Khakharas – which are paper thin, crisp roasted chappaties with home made butter and curds. Lunch consists of bajra roti or double roti commonly known as ‘Dabeli’ a vegetable usually potato, curds, onions while dinner is the main meal comprising of Kitchedi with kadhi.

- Kutch Dabeli – pav (breads cut into half; apply sweet chutney and garlic chutney; stuff with a potato mixture spiced and sautéed with salt, sugar, garam masala and, pan fried and served.
- Kitchdi – made of equal parts of rice and moongdal flavoured with salt and turmeric.
- Godia Ladoos usually prepared in winter with wheat flour, semolina, jaggery, ghee, dry ginger powder and eating gum.
- Gud papdi – made from wheat flour, roasted in ghee to a golden brown colour, mixed with jaggery; flattened in a thali, sprinkled with poppy seeds, cut into square pieces and served.
- Khajoor pak – mixture of dates; dry fruits cooked together in little ghee, flattened in a thali, cut into squares, garnished.

## **BHORI CUISINE**

One of the oldest Muslim communities in Gujarat is that of the Bohris. They are known for their works of charity, their social awareness. They are staunch followers of Islam and most of them are businessmen involved in the business of perfumes and utensils.

One of the unique characteristics of this community is their food. Whatever be the occasion, be it a birthday party or a wedding, the function is dominated by rich, lavish, mouth watering food.

- Bohris are usually non-vegetarians who love rich but not very spicy and oily food.
- Meat would include – lamb, poultry, beef, pork is strictly forbidden. Bohri cuisine is a very fine blend of exotic spices and herbs.
- Some of the most commonly used spices and herbs are cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, bay leaf, peppercorn, mace, nutmeg, saffron, mint, coriander.
- Food is traditionally prepared in copper vessels. Lunch is served on a common metal plate – a thal; large enough to seat eight people around it; set upon a stool.
- Diners sit on the floor. All food is placed in the centre of the thal for the family to share.

The meal begins by uttering the word “Bismillah” which means starting in the name of God and tasting a pinch of salt. This marks the beginning of the courses; the first to come is usually an ice cream, a pudding or custard, which is then followed by dry meat preparations such as sheikh kabab boti kabab mutton cutlet.

Next would be served another sweet preparation usually different types of halwas such as badam or mixed day fruit or thuli - made out of wheat and jaggery.

The sweet is again followed by a savoury item and then a sweet again. Finally the main course which usually consists of Mutton or chicken Biryani accompanied by raita or mutton or chicken soup is served.

The meal ends by tasting a pinch of salt again and thanking god. Apart from the meat, the food includes all types of vegetables cooked in rich gravies; there is an extensive use of day fruits in the cuisine.

## Maharashtrian cuisine

Maharashtra meals (mainly lunch and dinner) are served on a plate called thali. Each food item served on the thali has a specific place. The bhaaji is served in the plate on the right hand side while the chutney, koshimbir are served from left going up the periphery of the circular plate. The papad, bhaji are served below the koshimbir with the rice and poli served at the bottom of the circle closed to the diner's hand. The puran is served at the top in the inner concentric circle. The amti, rassa is served in separate bowls placed on right hand side of the diner. Water is placed on the left hand side. It is considered ill mannered to use left hand while eating.

The staple dishes of Maharashtra cuisine are based on bread and rice:

- *Ghadichi Poli* or *chapati* - unleavened flat bread made of wheat, more common in urban areas.
- *Bhakri* - bread made from millets like *jowar* and *bajra*, form part of daily food in rural areas.

The *bhaajis* are vegetable dishes made with a particular vegetable or a combination of vegetables and requires the use of *Goda masala*, essentially consisting of some combination of onion, garlic, ginger, red chilli powder, green chillies and mustard.

Depending on the caste or specific religious tradition of a family, onion and garlic may not be used in cooking. For example, a number of Hindu communities in Maharashtra and other parts of India refrain from eating onion and garlic during Chaturmas (broadly equates to the rainy monsoon season).

Vegetarians prepare *rassa* or *curry* of potatoes and or cauliflower with tomatoes or fresh coconut kernel and plenty of water to produce a soup like preparation than *bhaaji*.

*Varan* is nothing but plain dal, a common Indian lentil stew.

*Aamti* is variant of the curry, typically consisting of a lentil (*tur*) stock, flavored with goda masala, tamarind or amshul, jaggery (*gul*) and in some cases coconut as well.

One of the *masalas* that gives Maharashtrian cuisine its authentic flavor is the *goda* (*sweet*) *masala* or *kalaa* (*black*) masala.

Non-vegetarian dishes mainly use chicken, mutton (mainly goat), fish and other seafood. The Kolhapuri *taambda rassa* (red curry) and *pandhra rassa* (white

curry) of chicken and mutton from the southern city of Kolhapur and the *varhadi rassa* or (*varhadi chicken curry*) from the Vidarbha region are especially well known throughout Maharashtra. The coastal regions of Konkan are more famous for the fish and seafood dishes.

A typical Maharashtrian lunch or dinner usually starts with *Poli* (chapati), accompanied by one or more *bhaaji(s)* (*cooked vegetables*) and a *koshimbir*(vegetable salad) along with some sides(usually pickles, Chutneys, or papad (Poppadom)). This is usually followed by a second course of *varan*(lightly or unspiced Daal preparation), *aamti* (*spicy Daal preparation*) or *rassa* with rice.

Koshimbir is very common and healthy addition to the plate. Typically made from raw vegetables mixed with yogurt and ground roasted peanuts (*Danyache Kut*). Raitas made with different types of vegetables such as cucumber or carrots are variants of koshimbir.

**There are lots of snack and side dishes in Maharashtrian cuisine. Some quintessentially Maharashtrian dishes are:**

- **Chivda**: Spiced flattened rice
- **Pohay**: *pohay* or *pohe* is a snack made from flattened rice. It is most likely served with tea and is probably the most likely dish that a Maharashtrian will offer his guest.
- **Upma or *sanja* or *upeeth***: This snack is similar to the south Indian *upma*. It is a thick porridge made of semolina perked up with green chillies, onions and other spices.
- **Surali Wadi**: Chick pea flour rolls with a garnishing of coconut, coriander leaves and mustard.
- **Vada pav**: Popular Maharashtrian dish consisting of fried mashed-potato dumpling (*vada*), eaten sandwiched in a bun (*pav*). This is referred to as Indian version of burger and is almost always accompanied with the famous red chutney made from garlic and chillies, and fried green chilles.
- **Matar-usal- pav**: It is a dish made of green peas in a curry with onions, green chillies and sometimes garlic. Its eaten with a western style leavened bun or *pav*.
- **Misal Pav**: This is made from a mix of curried sprouted lentils, topped with *batata-bhaji*, *pohay*, Chivda, *farsaan*, raw chopped onions and tomato. Also some times eaten with yogurt. Bread is a must.
- **Pav bhaji**: This speciality dish from lanes of Mumbai has mashed steamed mixed vegetables (mainly potatoes, peas, tomatoes, onions and green pepper) cooked in spices and table butter. The vegetable mix is served with soft bun shallow fried in table butter and chopped onion. Sometimes cheese, paneer (cottage cheese) are added.
- **Thalipeeth**: A type of pancake. Usually spicy and is eaten with curd.
- **Sabudana Khichadi**: Sauted sabudana (Pearls of sago palm), a dish commonly eaten on days of religious fasting.



- **Khichdi**: Made up of rice and dal with mustard seeds and onions to add flavor.
- **Bakarwadi**: This spicy fried pastry is eaten as a tea time snack. Especially popular is that from Chitale Bandhu Mithaiwale in Pune.

## Sweets

- **Puran Poli**: It is made from jaggery (molasses or *gur*), yellow gram (*chana dal*), plain flour, cardamom powder and ghee (clarified butter). It is made at almost all festivals. A meal containing puran poli is considered "heavy" by Marathi people.
- **Modak**: *Modak* is prepared during the *Ganesh* festival around August, when it is often given as an offering to lord *Ganesh*, as it is reportedly his favorite sweet.
- **Karanji**: is a deep fried dumpling with a filling of grated coconut sweetened with jaggery and flavoured with powdered cardamom seeds. It is also known as *Kanavale*. It is one of the popular sweets prepared for *Diwali* celebrations.
- **Shevaya chi Kheer**: is prepared by cooking *shevaya* (vermicelli) in milk. The preparation is sweetened with jaggery or sugar, flavoured with powdered cardamom seeds and finally garnished with chopped nuts. *Kheer* is also made of Rice, Semolina, and Dudhi (white gourd).
- **Jilbi**: Sweetened chick-pea flour deep fried in spiral shapes, then coated in sugar syrup.
- **Shankarpale**: Sweetened flour deep fried in small square/diamond shapes.
- **Basundi**: Sweetened dense milk dessert.
- **Ambaacha ras**: Pulp/Thick Juice made of mangoes, with a bit of sugar if needed and milk at times.
- **Shrikhand**: Sweetened yogurt flavoured with saffron, cardamom and charoli nuts.
- **Laadu**: It is famous sweet snack in Maharashtra mainly prepared for *Diwali*

## Festival Delicacies

### **Diwali**

Diwali inspires a variety mouth-watering preparations like *karanji*, *chakli*, *kadboli*, *anarasa*, *shankarpali*, *chirota*, *shev*, *chivda* and varieties of *ladoos* like *Dink ladoo*, *Besan ladoo*, *shingdana ladoo*, *Rava ladoo*, and so on are consumed in Maharashtrian households by children and adults alike. Diwali is considered one of the most auspicious festivals in Maharashtra.

## **Ganesh Chaturthi**

The most delectable offerings during Ganesh Chaturthi are *modak*, small rice or wheat flour dumplings stuffed with coconut and jaggery. They are best when served with ghee.

## **Mahashivratri**

Marathi Hindu people hold a fast on this day. The fasting food on this day includes chutney prepared with pulp of the kavath fruit (*Limonia*).

## **Holi**

On this spring festival day, people enjoy a puran poli, a sweet, stuffed chappati made of channa dal and refined flour (maida), served warm with clarified butter or a bowl of milk or sweetened coconut milk.

Other delicacies prepared exclusively for festival days are shrikand, motichur ladoo, basundi and kheer.