

A taste of Odia food in Singapore

Arunika Mohapatra
@timesofindia.com

Bhubaneswar: Indians and other communities living in Singapore recently got a first-hand experience to savour Odia food.

The spread was readied by chefs Sambit Suman, head of department, IHM, Bhubaneswar, and Bijaya Kumar Pradhan of OTDC Nimantran, Sambalpur, who were specially flown to Singapore for the three-day Odia food festival. The dishes included 'oria', 'moong dali', 'kanika', 'sada besara', 'saga bhaja', 'chhena tarkari', 'chingudi aloo baigana jhola', 'kukuda kasa', 'tamata khajarakhata', 'nadiya pachedi', 'ghanta', 'santula', 'chingudi nadia jhola' and 'Odia kheeri', among others. The chefs carried 'badi' (for 'badi chura'), 'liya', 'sago' and 'rasi' papad, which were served during the event.



The food festival was organised over three days

The event was organised at Global Indian International School by the Indian High Commission and the Odia Society of Singapore (OSS) with support from Odisha tourism. "The main aim of the festival was to promote Odia food among non-Indians and non-Odias," said Subrat Nayak, president of OSS,

which decided the menu.

Japanese banker Sayaka Minami found a similarity between Odia and Japanese food as in both cases rice is a staple. "Mild spice in Odia food allowing natural taste of ingredients to shine is the winner,"

she said.

"Sago papad' is very similar to 'osenbei', a

Japanese snack made of rice," she said.

"Diversity of Odia food is its hallmark. In food festivals, you get to taste many dishes that would otherwise be difficult to make at home all at the same time," said Sarat Mohanty, senior adviser to OSS.

Banker Rahul Saxena, who was one of the guests, said, "It was a great opportunity to taste traditional dishes rarely found outside

Odisha. Focus on rice and fermented dishes was new and refreshing. Also, the spices were very balanced."

School staff also savoured the food. "The food stood out for its distinct taste.

Odisha being a coastal state, there were sea elements in the food which were enjoyable," said Rajeev Katal,

CEO, Global Schools Group.

"The best way to showcase food is to cook it for people to eat. Until they taste, they won't know its speciality and what sets it apart from other Indian cuisine," said chef Suman.

On the sidelines of the event, a workshop was held on preparing food in 15 minutes. The chefs made 'chuda chakta', among other items.

GLOBAL
ODIA