

Preparation of local food-recipes of Hamirpur District of Himachal Pradesh, India

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(Received 05 December, 2018, Accepted 02 March, 2019)

(Published by Research Trend, Website: www.researchtrend.net)

ABSTRACT: India is one of the leading nations around the world, blessed with rich and diverse legacy of social customs and wealth of traditional knowledge related to utilization of plants species. Himachal Pradesh is a part of Western Himalayas. Apart from natural beauty, Himachal Pradesh is also known for dishing out one of the most delicious traditional cuisines of India. Ethnic food is rich and varied, while relying heavily on local ingredients. Traditional foods are based on cereals based viz; *Seera, Chilre, Bhaturu, Babroo* as well as pulses based viz; *Bhalle* and *Beduan* respectively. The ethnic food of the district not only exhibit a treasure of food heritage but it is an integral component of the state as some of the food are specially prepared during marriages, local festivals and special occasions. Ethnic food also served as nutritional supplement. But due to modernization in food habit, old traditional preparations are on the verge of disappearance. Thus an effort had been made to explore some of the recipes from endless list of dishes prepared in the district by organizing camps at panchayat levels well as interacting with schools and colleges students to promote the food commercially available.

Keywords: Customs, ethnic, heritage, traditional knowledge, commercial.

I. INTRODUCTION

Diversity can be found in India's culture, geography as well as its climate and same is true with its food also. Fermented recipes, *bhaturu, marchu, siddu, babru, seera*, and others like *ambua, khatti bhuji, khoru, redu* are some of the famous traditional dishes of Himachal Pradesh. India is one of the leading nations around the world, blessed with rich and diverse legacy of social customs and wealth of traditional knowledge related to utilization of plants species. Himachal Pradesh is a part of Western Himalayas [1]. Apart from natural beauty, Himachal Pradesh is also known for dishing out one of the most delicious traditional cuisines of India. Ethnic food is rich and varied, while relying heavily on local ingredients [2]. Hamirpur, one of the most beautiful and high literate region of Himachal Pradesh, was saved by the mighty Shivalik range from the successive waves Gurkha invasion. Traditional foods are based on cereals based viz; *Seera, Chilre, Bhaturu, Babroo* as well as pulses based viz; *Bhalle* and *Beduan* respectively. The ethnic food of the district not only exhibit a treasure of food heritage but it is an integral component of the state as some of the food are specially prepared during marriages, local festivals and special occasions. Ethnic food also served as nutritional supplement. But due to modernization in food habit, old traditional preparations are on the verge of disappearance. Besides source of nutrition, the fermented food, *bhaturu* constitute staple food in larger part of rural areas of Kangra Kullu, Mandi and Lahaul & Spiti districts of the state, while others are consumed during local festivals, marriages and special occasions. The everyday meal in Himachal Pradesh is usually rice, lentil broth, dish of vegetables and *chapati*, and special dishes are cooked during festive occasions. In areas with a pastoral tradition, milk and its products are liberally used in cooking. It is rightly said that each cook stirs the cook pot in his/her manner. The traditional cook was and is mother and her knowledge and capabilities are handed down to the next female generation. Earlier, when hilly state did not have well developed communication and transport means, people were more or less dependent on food materials grown/available locally as well as seasonally thus preparing traditional recipes [3].

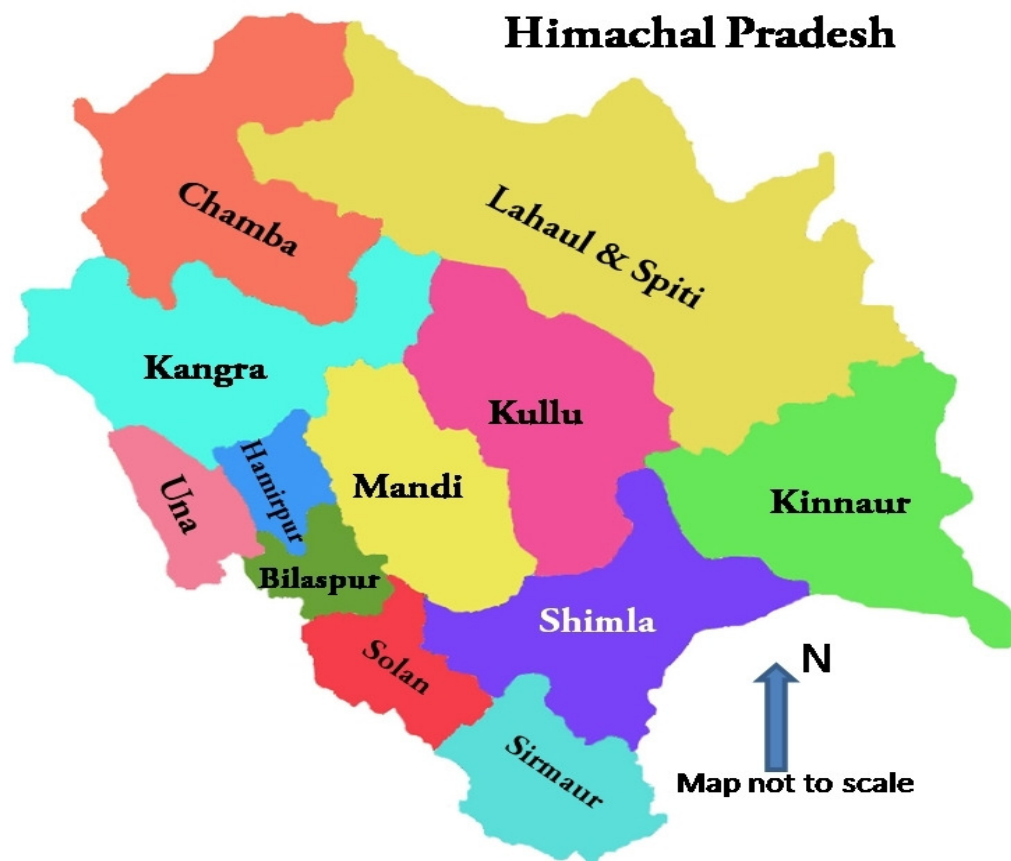
Madra is cooked in ghee/oil, and the uniqueness of this dish lies in its taste, wherein it is possible to perceive all the unique flavors individually, without the overwhelming flavors of onions and tomatoes. Legends have it that the now famous Hamirpuri-madra was brought by the brides of Chamba to Kangra. However, owing to the local unavailability of rajmah, it underwent a transformation and kabuli chana/chhole (chickpea), instead of rajmah, is now used to prepare the now famous Hamirpuri- madra. In fact, the madra has become a cuisine technique. Almost every district of Himachal Pradesh has its own unique madra being served in dhams from time immemorial. The traditional meal of Himachal Pradesh is the usual boiled rice, *roti/chapati*, dish of vegetable (*sabzi*) and a *dal* (lentil broth). Special food preparations have been developed for ceremonial occasions as well as for paediatric and other dietary purposes. The local inhabitants are consuming these dishes since centuries and these form a part of socio-cultural life of the hill people. But due to modernization in food habits these age-old traditional preparations are on the verge of disappearance [4]. Thus, an effort has been made to elaborate some of the recipes from the endless list

of dishes prepared in the selected study area. The main objectives of the research study are to aware the youngsters at panchayat level by organizing camps, Interacting with schools/colleges students, by preparing traditional dishes in home science practical at school levels and to make traditionally food commercially available [5].

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

A. Study Area

Himachal Pradesh is endowed with four agro-climatic zones with district Hamirpur located in subtropical climatic zone of Shivalik hills (North-Western Himalaya). The total geographical area of district Hamirpur is 1, 10,070 hectares. Cultivated area constitutes 33.09% of the total geographical area. The area under forest form 18.4% of total geographical area. The cultivable waste land occupies 5.21% and uncultivable waste land covers 19.2. The total cropped area is 65.08%. The sweet snacks of the state comprises of *Rot* made from dough of wheat flour and jaggery especially in the different areas of Hamirpur. It is used for *puja*/religious purpose. While in this district, fermented wheat flour slurry is used to make oval shape balls called *Gulgulae* (sweet fritters). The method of cooking *gulgulae* commences with preparation of a viscous slurry by mixing raw sugar, wheat flour, luke water and previously fermented left over dough followed by deep frying of small oval shaped balls. These are specially prepared during birthday ceremony. Traditional foods are based on cereals based viz; *Seera*, *Chilre*, *Bhaturu*, *Babroo* as well as pulses based viz; *Bhalle*, *Baddiyan* and *Beduan* respectively. *Seera* is cereal based preparation which is famous in Hamirpur. There is a tradition of gifting *seera* to the bride from her parent's during her marriage. It is a starchy white dried solid prepared from wheat grains. The grains are soaked in water for 4-5 days so as to allow fermentation. The fermented grains are ground and steeped so as to allow the starch grains to settle down. The surface water is discarded and the remains (starch grains) at the bottom are collected and sundried in the form of small balls. These balls are stored in airtight containers for use throughout the year. When required the dried balls are soaked in water with addition of equal amount of sugar. The prepared slurry is then poured in hot *ghee* and is cooked by continuous stirring till it becomes brown in colour and leaves the sides/surface of skillet. All these sweet snacks are prepared during religious, birthday, festive or marriage ceremonies. The map of district Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh is given below in Fig. 1.



III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A number of selected food materials viz; *Seera*, *Chilre*, *Bhaturu*, *Babroo*, *Bhalle*, *Baddiyan* and *Beduan* respectively have been prepared from local cereals and pulses available seasonally. These plant and plant's parts were identified and the traditional methods of preparing them were documented. The traditional recipes prepared by the local village ladies as well as shelf help group are generally associated either with festivals and with the season. Local seasonal recipes have been explained in this systematic study. The systematic method of making nutritious food items value of the main ingredients used in the recipes is also reported. Names of traditional recipes along with part of the plant used as well as time of availability of the plant/part of the plant are given. The preparation of traditional recipes include not only fruit or leaves of the plant but buds, flowers, stem and roots also. The availability of raw material for maximum traditional recipes is for one to one and a half months and for few ones it is for 3-4 months. Plant names and families of the ingredients used in various recipes are also given [2]. The nutritive value of selected plants/parts of plants per 100 gm of fresh material used in various traditional recipes has been discussed. It was observed from the table that in general Java fig and leaves of plants, viz. colocasia, fig, basil, pigweed, buckwheat and watercress used for preparing various [6].

Table 1: Formulation and preparation of Indigenous *Seera* dish @ 1 kg.

S. No.	Ingredients	Composition
1.	Wheat grains	950gm
2.	Tap water	2.5 Lt.
3.	<i>Escherichia coli</i> (inoculums)	1.5 mg



Fig. 2. *Seera*.

Table 2: Formulation and preparation of Indigenous *Chilre* dish @ 1 kg.

S. No.	Ingredients	Composition
1.	Rice flour	700gm
2.	Water	3.5 Lt.



Fig. 3. *Chilre*.

Table 3: Formulation and preparation of Indigenous *Beduan* dish @ 1 kg.

S. No.	Ingradients	Composition
1.	Wheat Flour	700 gm
2.	Water	500 ml
3.	<i>Turmeric</i>	10 g
4.	<i>Chilies</i>	15 g
5.	<i>Iodised Salt</i>	10 g
6.	<i>Black gram flour</i>	250 gm



Fig. 4. Beduan.

Table 4: Formulation and preparation of Indigenous *Bhale* dish @ 1 kg.

S. No.	Ingradients	Composition
1.	<i>Black gram Flour</i>	600 gm
2.	Water	1.2 Lt
3.	<i>Turmeric</i>	15 gm
4.	<i>Chilies</i>	20 gm
5.	<i>Iodized Salt</i>	15 gm
6.	<i>Black piper</i>	25 gm
7.	<i>Coriander</i>	15 gm
8.	<i>Nigella sativa (Black Zera)</i>	10 gm



Fig. 5. Bhalle.

Table 5: Formulation and preparation of Indigenous *Babru* dish @ 1 kg.

S. No.	Ingradients	Composition
1.	Wheat Flour	950 gm
2.	Luke water	750 ml
3.	Raw sugar	500 gm
4.	<i>Escherichia coli</i> (inoculums)	2.0 mg



Fig. 6. Babru.

A. Health conscious and other Benefits of Traditional dishes

The various benefits of traditional recipes of district Hamirpur are viz., cost- effective, healthy and strong, high nutritional value, homemade so less chance of contamination respectively. These local recipes are easy to prepare and available locally less calories-helpful for weight control pea is an excellent source of protein (28.2%), minerals (2.3%), iron (6.3mg) and phosphorus (317mg.). As it is associated with the disease lathyrus, so it must be processed properly to reduce the antioxidant factors present in it. *Seera*, which is prepared from whole wheat is considered to be very nutritious. Hundred gram of fresh wheat contains 11.8%, 1.5%, 71.2% and 306mg of proteins, minerals, carbohydrates and phosphorous, respectively.

IV. CONCLUSION

The food habits of the people have changed these days but those who have their roots in the villages, still relish the traditional recipes prepared from seasonal plant materials. These recipes are losing its sheen in the fast food culture. So there is a need to conserve our traditional food habits and recipes. The plant material used for preparing these recipes is seasonal and completely organic. It is both nutritious and safe to eat thus healthy. The tapping of Traditional knowledge in cooking and the preparation of food in combination with modern techniques may also very well be utilized to prevent the junk food traditional recipes are very good source of calcium, phosphorous and iron.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors are thankful to the traditional knowledge holders, Smt. Prem Lata Devi, Smt Maya Jaswal, Smt Rekha Dogra, Smt Anita Thakur, and Smt Santosh Kumari, who have provided valuable information on the traditional recipes of the Hamirpur district in Himachal Pradesh.

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