

# Magic of microgreens

Tiny versions of their adult counterparts, these greens pack a punch of good health and crunch

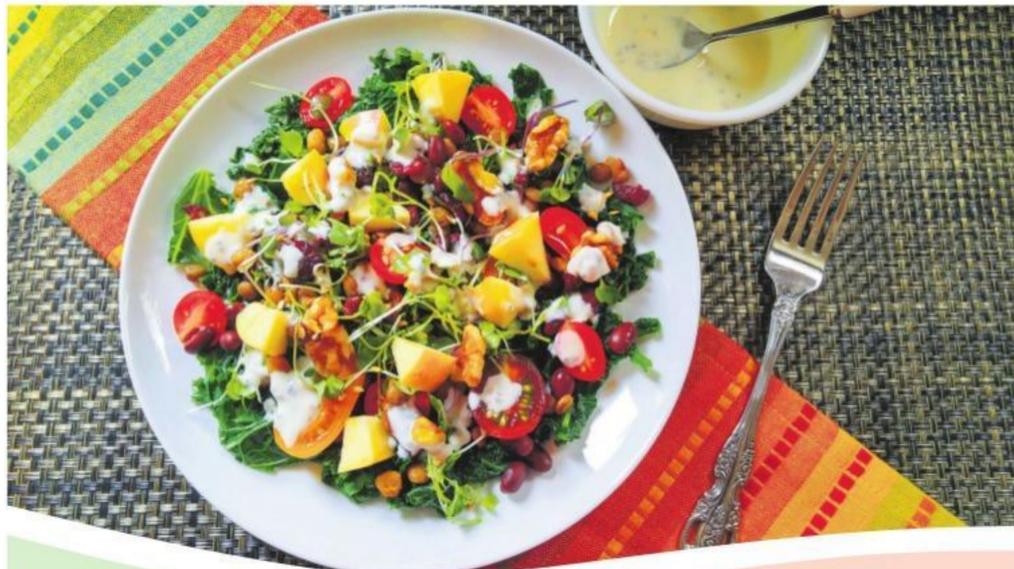
BINDU GOPAL RAO

THEY are making the salads crunchier. They are tasty and they are healthy. Microgreens are in. These young vegetable greens are smaller than baby greens and are harvested later than sprouts. They are typically used for garnishing, but can also be eaten as salads due to their crunchy, tasty flavours that can range from sweet to spicy!

## Myriad uses

There are many things one can do with microgreens. "A salad of these little plants is wonderful. They can add both beautiful colour and delicate flavour to your dishes. Microgreens also offer an easy way to augment simple dishes like egg or potato. They work very well as a stuffing for *chapattis* and *paranthas*," says Chef Mukhtar Qureshi from Courtyard by Marriott, Mumbai. One could add these to pizza, pasta or sandwich too. "You can also simply blend them to make dips, dressings and sauces. They are rated highly for their nutrient value, but can be used to serve as culinary eye candy too by putting them on a canapé, for example! But you have to remember to wash them thoroughly and keep in chilled water to maintain the freshness," says Sheriyar Dotivala, executive chef at The Resort, Mumbai.

Microgreens may be eaten raw, juiced or blended, and can be fused into a variety of cold and warm dishes. "They can be combined into a variety of dishes, including sandwiches, wraps and salads. Microgreens may also be mixed into smoothies or juiced. Wheatgrass juice is a common example of a juiced microgreen," says chef Naved Patel, food stylist and restaurant consultant.



## GREEK SALAD RECIPE

### INGREDIENTS

- 2-3 medium cucumbers, removed the seeds
- 3 tomatoes
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ½ cup green olives
- 1tsp olive oil
- A bunch of microgreens
- ½ oregano
- ½ tsp salt and pepper
- 6-7 walnuts

### METHOD

- Toss the tomatoes, feta cheese, cucumbers and olives together in a deep medium bowl.
- Also add olive oil, oregano, salt and pepper and toss well.
- Now add your crumbled feta cheese and toss very gently.
- Cover this bowl with a plastic wrap and refrigerate it for at least 2 hours.
- Before serving add some fresh and healthy microgreens into the salad.
- And at the end, add some walnuts for a crunchy bite.

Courtesy: Shaurvya Veer Kapoor | Corporate Chef, Café Hawker's

## AVOCADO TOAST

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 toasts
- 2 tbsp avocado paste
- 2 tsp feta cheese
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Red radish for garnishing
- 2 tsp pomegranate seeds
- Microgreens
- Lemon zest, a pinch

### METHOD

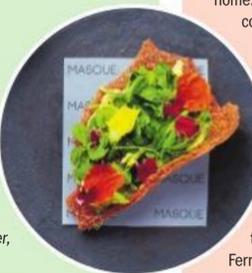
- Spread avocado paste on toast.
- In a piping bag, put feta cheese and put on the toast.
- Sprinkle black pepper.
- Add the lemon zest.
- Garnish with red radish, pomegranate and microgreens.

Courtesy: Chef Tarun Sibal | Cofounder, One Fine Meal



## DIY

Microgreens can be conveniently grown at home. All you need is soil or cotton, a container, sunlight (ideally for 6-8 hours a day) and a few good quality seeds. "I use moist cotton as a base instead of mud and ensure that the cotton stays moist all the time by spraying it with water. The seeds sprout in a week and have to be kept in a cool and dry place. Avoid excessive watering the soil as this will not allow them to grow well," says Chef Jerson Fernandes. Chef Aanal Kotak adds, "Microgreens are very easy to grow on a small scale and can also be grown indoors where less of sunlight is available. It usually takes two to three weeks to harvest the microgreens. While growing this, you have to take care to keep the soil moist as much as possible which will give good results." Seems worth a try, doesn't it?



Chef Anahita N. Dhondy says there is a common misconception that they can only be used as garnishes.

"I have made an Asian salad with sunflower crisp, which is basically sunflower leaves. They have a beautiful texture — velvety and nutty. One can make full-fledged salads and dishes with pesto or even make sautéed greens with it," she says.

## The health angle

Microgreens have higher levels of nutrients than mature vegetables and undergo more photosynthesis than sprouts, thus developing more nutrients, up to 40 times more than their fully-grown counterparts.

The growing popularity has ensured there are a variety of microgreens at our disposal today. These include Swiss chard, arugula, alfalfa, nasturtium, purple kohlrabi, sango radish, sunflower, pink radish and kale. "Arugula microgreens are one of the best for boosting immunity and maintaining cholesterol levels. They are also an excellent source of Vitamin C and other nutrients such as sulfuraphane, which has multiple health benefits," says Keya Salot, founder of Farm2Fam.

Chef Prateek Sadhu says what's best is that they are easy to grow and can be harvested much sooner than their elderly counterparts.

# Ode to environment The year that was...

"How was Rishikesh?" my friend Arpana asked me. I had recently returned from a short visit to the land of Gods and was meeting her at a new café for the morning caffeine (and catch up) kick.

"Very spiritually and mentally rejuvenating, I must say. Rishikesh is always a refreshing cultural, gastronomic and spiritual experience, not to mention the cheap shopping at the *ghats*. Great fun!" I smiled.

"I've always wanted to go there but never got down to it," Arpana said blowing on the frothy cappuccino. "What's it like?"

"Well... it's a happy amalgamation of *sadhuis*, *gurus*, *yoga ashrams*, chirping birds, monkeys, wandering cows, sounds of clanging bells and chants emanating from splendid temples, *dhayas* and *havans*, legends, myths and Gods and thousands of milling people. And through all of this flows the mighty Ganga."

"And did you go for the Ganga *aarti* at the Parmarth *ashram*? I've heard it is quite an experience," she said.

"I never miss it!" I responded. "The

beauty of the sun's last rays reflecting off the infinite waters of the Ganga, the holy chants, songs, prayer and the ritual of the *dhayas* offered by the young orange robed acolytes to the holy river, generates a profound sense of divinity and eternity."

"Sounds lovely!"

"Yes, and this year it was even more special," I responded. "This time Swami Chidanand Saraswati himself gave the pravachan. And his speech was so relevant to today's time."

"How?"

"Well, he drew everyone's attention to the water crisis the world is facing and warned of the impending calamity that the environment is exposed to. He said that the increasing pollution, population and thoughtless environmental degeneration are wreaking havoc on earth and told everyone to act."

"It is wonderful when *gurus*, *swamis* and people who have religious and spiritual influence call attention of their followers to meaningful issues," Arpana observed.

"Oh yes! He said that instead of Ganga *aarti* by doing our bit for saving the environment, like reducing the garbage we produce, stopping the use of single-use plastic and planting trees."

"It's very good when leaders play a positive role in encouraging collective, service-oriented action, isn't it? Restores the faith that's sorely tried by the fraud *babas*. The truth is that the time to sacrifice trees has long passed. Now is the time to sacrifice for trees, only then can we preserve natural wealth for ourselves and our generations."

"True. *Vaise*, I saw awareness notices about keeping the river clean in many of the *ghats* in Rishikesh. People's love for Ganga *maiyya* binds people together into one large community that keeps a watchful eye on people who try to soil her."

"How nice!" Arpana said.

"And I've even decided on my New Year resolution," I said smugly. "Let me guess," she laughed. "It's to sing the *pariyavaran aarti*, right?" I grinned and clinked my coffee cup with hers!

Not much changed on our roads, but they certainly made news



## GOOD MOTORING

H. KISHIE SINGH

LOTS of things happened this past year. We have to learn some lessons on what to do and just as important, what not to do. Living in a highly scientific world everything is explained by laws, rules or principles. There was one law that intrigued me but I could not get a proper answer. It is called The Law of Unintended Consequences.

Finally, I think what I got is the correct answer. ABC7 News from Nebraska, US, had the most interesting news item, especially for me! If you read the last Good Motoring you will know that I am a die-hard anti-pothole person. The news item in question concerned a pothole. It read, "Pothole saves a man's life!"

A man was being rushed to hospital on a snow covered street with a heartbeat of 200 beats per minute. The ambulance hit a snow-covered pothole at high speed and suddenly the man's pulse returned to normal!

Explained the doctor, "It's a rare case but it can happen. It's like a shot when electric paddles are applied to the chest, it gives a jolt. That is what happened with the pothole!" That is The Law of Unintended Consequences!

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Under the New MV Act, the maximum challans were issued to helmetless riders. Here is a very good reason to wear a helmet. It was brought to the attention of the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) by the National Green Tribunal. The DGCA has passed an order to all airlines operating in Indian airspace. What is the order? That airlines may not jettison the excreta from their toilets while in the air!

A resident of Vasant Kunj, which is on



As our roads and road habits continued to take lives, the new Motor Vehicles Act passed this year tried to enforce stricter rules for ensuring safety. Will it change things in the coming year, time will tell, but at least a start has been made

the approach path of one of the runways to IGI airport, filed a petition with the NGT that aircraft coming into land had dumped poop on his house! So much for 'Swachh Bharat'. Free home delivery! The fine is ₹50,000. People with sunroofs please take note.

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Drivers rolling down their windows or even opening doors to spit *paans* have cost many a person their lives. It is happening with alarming frequency on the Noida Expressway. That is *paan*-chewing country. Invest in a throw-up bag which the airlines supply in the cabin. It may cost a few bucks but could prevent a major disaster.

Now, just how spoiled is spoiled? This must be the most perfect *'kaka'*. A man bought his son a BMW. The *kaka* was so upset that he drove the brand new Beemer into the river in disgust. He had wanted a Jaguar!

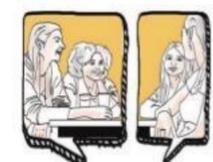
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Delhi's air has been severe post Diwali. Residents insisted on bursting crackers. This severe air was self-inflicted. Thankfully Diwali is over, but the cars continue to pollute. The odd-even did not work last time, so there is no reason to expect it will work now. It is explained clearly by the late Henry Ford, "If you always do, what you always did, you'll always get what you always got!"

Another way to make a contribution. At the PM's swearing ceremony, Mansukh Mandaviya, a BJP leader, came riding a bike, doing his own bit.

Truckers are generally thought to be unsophisticated. Here is an example of one's wit and wisdom. Written on the back of his truck was: "Start early, drive slowly, reach safely!"

Excellent advice for the New Year. Happy New Year! Happy Motoring!



## Girls@gupshup

ARADHIKA SHARMA

