

Nature's natural seasonal coolants

With the mercury rising, it is time to look at traditional drinks across India that are a summer staple for their cooling properties. Some of these preparations are also immunity boosters, much needed in today's times

BINDU GOPAL RAO

WITH its diverse culinary geography, India's rich history of traditional foods and drinks is unparalleled. As the temperatures peak, try some of these seasonal health drinks.

RAGI AMBLI

Ragi Ambli is a healthy drink, popular in Karnataka during summers. Pavithra Raj, a Bengaluru-based dietician, says, "Ragi or finger millet is a rich source of fibre and helps in lowering cholesterol and controls weight. This is good for diabetes and is a good source of carbohydrates, proteins, micronutrients, vitamins and minerals. The phytochemicals present in ragi help slow down digestion and aid in controlling blood sugar levels."

Ingredients

- Water 1 glass
- Ragi powder 2tbsp
- Butter milk ½ glass
- Salt to taste

Method: Boil water and add ragi powder to it. Cook on a low flame till the ragi powder gets cooked completely. Once the mixture cools down, add buttermilk and salt as required.

SATTU SHERBET

Sattu is a staple of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and has many cooling benefits and a high nutritional value. "There are two variants — one made from roasted *chama dal* and the other from roasted *jau* (barley). Both contain insoluble fibre that address *Vata* issues," says Roopashree Sharma, founder, Atharvanlife.com.

Ingredients

- Roasted sattu powder 250gm
- Jaggery/coconut sugar/palm sugar 50gm
- Jeera powder 2tbsp
- Himalayan salt 2tsp
- Lemon juice ½ tsp

Method: Blend all ingredients to make the *sattu* mix powder. In a glass of water; add 2 tbsp of this powder with ½ tsp lime juice. Stir well and serve.

NANNARI SHERBET

Popular in South India, Nannari has cooling medicinal properties. The herb sarsaparilla, called Nannari in Tamil or Naruneendi in Malayalam "helps keep the body cool, reduces urinary infections, arthritis and constipation and is a blood purifier. Drink this in morning on an empty stomach," says Chef Raji, Beyond Dining Co.



SATTU SHERBET

Ingredients

- Nannari root powder 100gm
- Water 1 litre
- Jaggery 200gm (optional)
- Lime juice 1tbsp

Method: Boil water and Nannari powder. Leave it overnight. Add to it jaggery and some lime juice. Strain and serve chilled. This powder is available online.

JIGARTHANDA

Jigarthanda, a popular drink from Madurai, is known for its cooling properties. Himanshu Rai, chief dietician and nutritionist, Think You, says, "This is helpful in easing different body pains and good to counter acidity."

Ingredients

- Full fat milk 1 cup
- Condensed milk 1tbsp
- Nannari syrup (available online) 1tsp
- *Badam pisin* or almond gum or *katira gond* 1tsp
- Ice-cream of any flavour 1 scoop

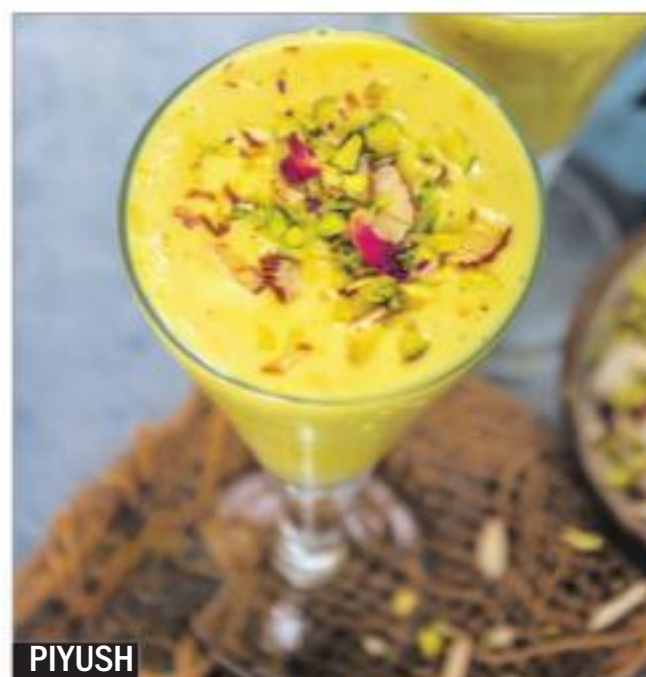
Method: Soak *badam pisin* overnight. Next morning, discard water and refrigerate. In a pan, add milk and condensed milk, mix well and keep aside. In a glass, add *badam pisin*, Nannari syrup, mixed milk and a scoop of ice cream. Blend all ingredients together. Add chopped almonds or cashew nuts. Serve chilled.

PIYUSH

Piyush, popular in Maharashtra and Gujarat, is made with *shrikhand*. "Rich in probiotics, it helps with digestion, has protein and calcium and keeps the body cool and develops immunity," says Neha Mathur, founder, WhiskAffair.

Ingredients

- Plain *shrikhand* (chilled) 2 cups
- Yogurt (chilled) 1 cup
- Milk (chilled) 2 cups
- Cardamom powder 1tsp
- Nutmeg powder ½ tsp



PIYUSH

- Saffron (soaked in 2tbsp milk) 10-15 strands
- Almond and pistachio slivers for garnishing

Method: Add all ingredients in a blender and blend. Add sugar if needed. Serve chilled with almond and pistachio slivers.

TAAL/NONGU SHERBET

Palmyra fruit or *nongu* or *tadgola* is seasonal and local fruit but is available across the country. The British called it 'ice apple' for its cooling and hydrating effects. "A rich source of electrolytes, calcium, phosphorus, vitamins C and B, it is anti-inflammatory and has healing powers to soothe the digestive tract, inflamed skin, acidity and nausea," says Manasa Rajan, a holistic health coach.

Ingredients

- Tender *nongu*/palm fruit (chilled) 5
- Liquid palm jaggery 1.5tbsp
- Pulp of passion fruits 2

Method: Peel and scoop out gel-like pulp. Mash with a spoon. Add liquid



NANNARI SHERBET



JIGARTHANDA



IMLI KA AMALANA

palm jaggery and passion fruit pulp. Mix and serve with mint leaves.

IMLI KA AMALANA

Imli ka amalana, a popular drink in Rajasthan, is ideal for summers. It aids in digestion and helps in checking bloating. It's also a natural painkiller for stomachache. *Imli* or tamarind is also good for skin and boosts immunity, says home chef Swati Mane.

Ingredients

- *Imli* 50gm
- Jaggery 50gm
- Ginger 2-inch piece
- Cinnamon powder 2tsp
- Cardamom powder 1tsp
- Black pepper 1tsp
- Water 0.5 litre
- Salt to taste
- Mint leaves for garnishing

Method: Soak *imli* for 30 minutes and boil in hot water. Add all ingredients and boil for 20 minutes more till the jaggery is melted. Cool, strain. Add to water and serve chilled with mint leaves.



MANGO LASSI

GREEN DELIGHT

Kamalika De, a Mumbai-based food blogger, says, "*Khus khus* is known for its soothing effects, checks inflammation and boosts immunity. Cucumber contains antioxidants and lemon is a good source of vitamin C."

Ingredients

- *Khus* sherbet (available in supermarkets and online) 2tbsp
- Cucumber juice 1tsp
- Lemon juice 1tsp
- Mint leaves 1 sprig
- Sugar syrup 1tsp
- Water 1 ½ cup

Method: In a glass add all ingredients to water. Add ice cubes and serve.

MANGO LASSI

Mango is rich in vitamin C and fibre, while yoghurt is rich in calcium and is good for bone health.

Ingredients

- Mangoes (chopped) 2 cups
- Yoghurt 2 cups
- Sugar 2 tsp (optional)

Method: Blend mangoes and yoghurt in a blender. Add sugar if needed. Garnish with chopped mango and mint leaves.

PYAR MOHABBAT KA SHERBET

It is Old Delhi's popular summer drink. Godhuli Sengupta, a fitness and nutrition coach, says, "I use *falooda*-flavoured whey protein as it's low in calories."

Ingredients

- Milk 1 cup
- Sugar 1tsp
- Watermelon cubes ¼ cup
- Watermelon juice ¼ cup
- Rooh Afza sherbet 1tbsp

Method: Add sugar, Rooh Afza, ice to milk and blend. Add watermelon cubes and juice and mix. Serve chilled.

How to make a lazy summer meal



FOOD TALK

PUSHPESH PANT

IT may have been possible for the Bard to compare his beloved to a summer day in England perpetually blighted by depressing winter. However, we in India live in a different climate. When the sun shines in summers, it scorches, taking away our appetite and draining out all the energy. In such conditions, who would want to cook in the kitchen? This is the time when our mind turns to one-dish meals that are tasty, nourishing, different, and above all easy to prepare. Many takeaway services have started offering bowl meals prepared according to Indian and foreign recipes. Such meals not only cut down the cooking time but also reduce the number of dishes to be washed. Let's not get carried away. What we are sharing with you is not necessarily a one-dish meal or meal in a bowl, but does have many features to rival these.

Indians are habituated to eat steamed rice with lentils or other gravies. So powerful is the conditioning that some of our friends ruin a perfect *biryani* or *pulav* by drowning it in *shorba* or *salan*. But we digress. Our Asian brethren enjoy rice with dry dishes — vegetarian and non-vegetarian. This is what has inspired us to improvise this lazy lunch or dinner for the summers.

ONE-DISH MEAL

Ingredients:

Rice	250gm
Chicken (boneless from thighs, cut in small pieces)	250gm
Or tofu/ <i>paneer</i> (vegetarians can use these, cut in cubes)	150gm
Broccoli	100gm
Sweet bell peppers (small, red or yellow)	1/2
Carrots (yellow)	100gm
Button mushrooms	50gm
Baby corn	50gm
Onion (medium-sized)	1
Spring onions (retain the green leaves)	50gm
Garlic cloves	4
Soy sauce	2tbsp or to taste
Chilli sauce	1tsp
Black bean sauce	1tsp
Sugar	1/4tsp
Salt	To taste
Corn flour	1tsp
Sesame oil	2-3tbsp

Method: Boil rice and fluff it with a fork. Wash chicken well and marinate in soy and all other sauces for an hour. Sprinkle corn flour over it evenly. Peel and cut the onion into thick slices. Break broccoli into small florets and wash well. Wipe clean the mushrooms to remove all grit and slice finely. Scrape and wash carrots and cut in thin discs. Cut baby corns in preferred shape. Cut spring onion bulbs after cutting roots and washing well. Chop green leaves. Wash and cut the pepper in small pieces. Heat oil in a pan and pan-fry the chicken pieces on medium heat for two minutes on each side. Add vegetables (along with any remaining marinade, sugar and salt). Add onions, then carrots and baby corns, followed by mushrooms. Add bell pepper and spring onions and their chopped leaves in the end. Stir gently. Add two table spoons of water, cover and steam on low flame for 2-3 minutes. Uncover, check seasoning and remove from gas. Remember, you aren't cooking a gravy dish or even a sauce. Some moisture should remain, but just.

Put boiled and fluffed rice in a bowl or plate, top with vegetables cooked with chicken or tofu/*paneer*. You can reduce rice quantity and increase chicken and/or veggies as per taste.



CAPTION CONTEST 1303



Entries are invited to suggest a caption for the above photograph. The caption should only be in English, witty and not exceeding 10 words, and reach Spectrum, The Tribune, Chandigarh, 160030, by Thursday. The best five captions will be published and

awarded ₹300, ₹250, ₹200, ₹150 and ₹100, respectively. Each caption must be accompanied by a clipping of the caption contest and its number. Photocopies of the caption photo will not be accepted. Please mention the pin code in your address.

You have a camera or a phone camera? Click and send us a picture for the caption contest. The selected picture will be used for Caption Contest. Mail the high resolution picture (.jpg format) at captionpics@tribunemail.com

Selected entries for Caption Contest 1302

- April 25 issue (see photo)
- **God boy** — Neeraj Kumar Gupta, Chandigarh
- **Dyeing to be recognised** — Amarinder Singh Brar, Chandigarh
- **Rare view mirror** — Pankaj Goyal, Ambala city
- **Colourful facelift** — Narinder Sharma, Panchkula
- **Cosmetics for the ascetic** — Alisha Chandra, Chandigarh

