

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the second edition of 'More than Food' newsletter, where we offer a glimpse into fine-dining ideas that will thrill food-lovers and anyone in the business or trade of foods and beverages.

Over the years, there has been growing interest among Indian consumers to celebrate special occasions by either creating or enjoying new experiences in travel and food. More Indians are traveling abroad on vacations than ever before, and Europe is one of the preferred long-haul destinations. Our tastes in food are also changing; there is a noticeable influence of global culture on the Indian palate; with more urbanites savouring international cuisines at fine-dine restaurants, and many expanding their culinary skills at home.

Grazing boards are emerging as a favourite among contemporary urban Indians who love to entertain guests and host dinners or parties. Beautifully crafted charcuterie boards are a great idea for such get-togethers, presenting assortments of different meats, cheeses, fruits, breads, crackers, dips, spreads, and nuts. Usually served as appetizers, these boards cater to a wide range of tastes and allow you to get creative with your culinary skills.

The European Union (EU) is a source of some of the finest varieties of ingredients that go into these colourful platters. In this newsletter, we will delve into the origins of charcuterie boards and suggest ideas on how to assemble them using Europe's delectable cheeses and meats.

Bon Appétit!

HISTORY OF CHARCUTERIE, AND POPULARITY IN INDIA

Charcuterie derives from the French phrase chair cuit, meaning 'cooked meat', but it is not restricted to France; many European and other countries have their own, rich charcuterie traditions. In olden times, Greeks and Romans preserved meat for the winter months and long journeys by salt-curing the meat, and then smoking or drying it. Today, charcuterie has evolved into a culinary art, and in recent years has seen a huge resurgence in popularity. There is a strong emphasis on quality, with many chefs using sustainably sourced ingredients as they experiment with new flavours and combinations. The traditional charcuterie board has come a long way and now finds its place on modern fine-dining restaurant menus.

Chicken is possibly the most widely consumed non-vegetarian item in India, used in a diverse range of preparations. Consumers are loving making this 'common' ingredient special by going beyond indigenous chicken breeds and, for a change, selecting from among Europe's finest. These could include Spanish Penedesenca chicken. Italy's Padovana chicken, which is known for its exceptional meat quality, or the Deutsche Sperber from Germany, or Poulet du Périgord PGI from France.

Pork is yet another good meat option for a charcuterie board. Although perhaps not on the same scale as chicken, pork has been eaten in India for centuries. There are many pork-loving Indians who will appreciate good-quality, flavourful pork meat. Surprise them with Spain's Jamón Ibérico de bellota, or Portugal's fine-grained Carne de Porco Alentejano, or indeed, serve them Swabian-Hall Swine PDO from Germany. This meat is known for its exceptional quality and strong, distinctive flavour. If roasting or grilling is more to one's liking, you may choose to go with Viande de Porc de la Marque Nationale Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, and pair it with a dry wine or beer.

Charcuterie boards can also be elevated to new heights with a symphony of European cheeses. One may pair the creamy and mildly tangy notes of Queijo de Azeitão PDO from Portugal and creamy textures of Dutch Edam with the smoothness of Danish Danablu PGI and the boldness of German Limburger. In recent years, Burrata di Andria PGI from Italy has gained a lot of popularity in India. It is often used in sandwiches, salads, and pizzas. Spanish Manchego Cheese PDO, with its robust flavour, is another popular cheese widely used in fine dining restaurants across India. The savoury allure of Halloumi PDO from Cyprus and the rich tradition of Feta PDO from Greece, too, are gaining popularity in Indian kitchens.

POPULAR EU MEATS AND CHEESES HAVE FOUND A PLACE ON INDIAN GRAZING PLATTERS



Talking about the EU pork and poultry, and her recommendations for a delicious charcuterie board, Claire Geroudet, Export Manager at the Federation of Processed Meat and Deli-Meat Companies, said,



"With its 450 specialties, charcuteries embody a centuries-old art of living dedicated to simple pleasures, sharing, and conviviality. When choosing a product for your charcuterie from the EU, you can be sure that quality is paramount in all the meat/poultry products; suppliers are rigorously chosen, and independent inspections ensure the safety and authenticity of each product throughout its lifecycle. They not only reflect high-calibre creativity but also top-level craftsmanship. Personally, for my own charcuterie, I prefer adding meats like pâté, terrines, or rillettes as they come in cans or glass boxes, offering convenience and flavour. You just have to open the box and spread it on a good and crunchy piece of bread. You can also add snacking dry sausages, which come in various enticing flavours like hazelnuts, nuts, cheese, and chili and can add a delightful touch to your charcuterie board."

TIPS TO ASSEMBLE A GREAT CHARCUTERIE BOARD



There are no fixed rules for building a charcuterie board, but you can follow the 3-3-3 approach: three meats, three cheeses, three starch options, and three accompaniments, such as fruit, nuts, or veggies. Here are some simple steps to assemble your own charcuterie board.

Pick your cheeses and meats. Select at least three different types of cheese, with varying flavours and textures – one soft, one hard, and one 'funky' or highly flavourful cheese, like French Roquefort. Meat may or may not be an element on the board. If your guests all love non-vegetarian food, you can delight them with some great European meats. Whether it's Tiroler Speck PGI from Austria, Presunto de Vinhais / Presunto Bísaro de Vinhais PGI from Portugal, or Schwarzwälder Schinken PGI from Germany, there is a wide variety of pork and poultry to choose from. If the diners are vegetarian, you can skip the meats entirely and create a vegetarian grazing board instead.

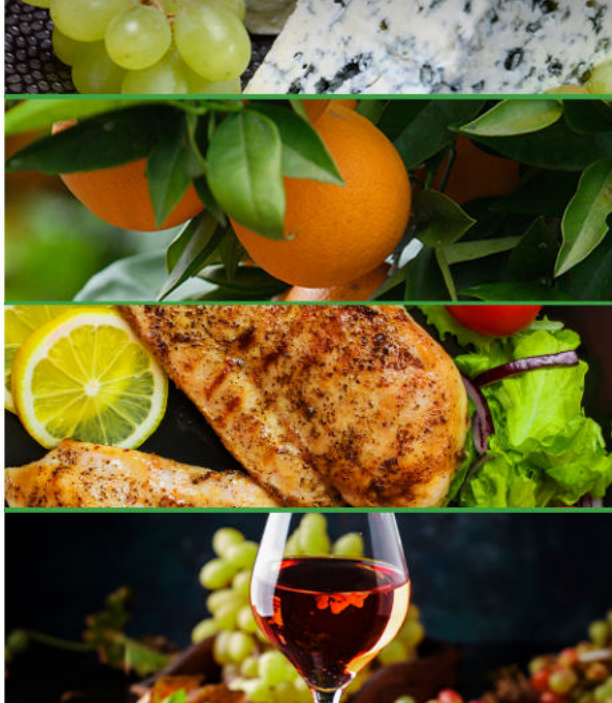
Decide on the accoutrements. Think about what flavours you would like to pair with your cheeses – fresh or dried fruit, mustards or jams, salty nuts, briny cornichons, and so on. Crispy apples from Poland and ripe berries from Netherlands can be a great addition, if you want fresh fruits. You can also choose to use crackers with some Azeite de Trás-os-Montes PDO olive oil for dipping.

Make it visually appealing. Start by laying out your cheeses, then add in ramekins of jams or jellies. Bunches of grapes from Belgium are great for adding visual interest. Arrange the rest of your accoutrements to fill the gaps.

When pairing the cheeses, meats, fruits, and condiments, remember that opposites attract. Sweet goes well with salty, mild with spicy, rich with plain. For instance, salty meats such as prosciutto crudo go well with chilled, sparkling wines. Spicier meats go well with dessert wines like Tokaj/Tokaji PDO from Hungary, as the sugar in the wine counteracts the spice. If the board includes a creamy cheese, Liver pâté, or Jamón Ibérico, you will do well to pair them with acidic white wine such as Mosel PDO which is made with Riesling grapes in Germany. Traditionally, charcuterie boards were paired with full-bodied red wines like Bordeaux PDO of the Cabernet Sauvignon or Merlot varieties from France.

As far as fruit-cheese pairings go, sweet grapes pair beautifully with the rich buttery flavour of Liliputas PGI from Lithuania and Bovški Sir from Slovenia. The sweet and grainy texture of pears contrasts beautifully with pungent and creamy Gorgonzola PDO from Italy. Similarly, blackberries pair well with Havarti cheese from Denmark or Aged Cheddar from Ireland; cranberries with Italian Mozzarella di Bufala Campana PDO or Fromage de Herve PDO from Belgium; raspberries with Cream Cheese from Austria; figs with Smoked Gouda from the Netherlands; peaches with Halloumi PDO from Cyprus; strawberries with Fontina or Ricotta; apricots with Goat Cheese; and cherries with Asiago Cheese.

HOW TO PAIR CHEESES, MEATS, FRUITS, AND WINES



DID YOU KNOW?

- The EU is India's third largest trade and investment partner and sixth largest supplier of agricultural and agri-food products.
- Gouda cheese accounts for 50-60 percent of the world's consumption of Dutch cheese.
- The EU is the world's second biggest producer of pork and the biggest exporter of pork and pork products.

WHAT'S BEEN COOKING?



EU Pavilion at SIAL VinExpo (7-9 December 2023)

Together with VinExpo, India's largest food innovation exhibition, SIAL India, held from 7th to 9th December, is a trendsetter that offers a platform for showcasing and exploring global culinary innovations. In 2023, the EU's 54 business delegates, representing 19 Member States, showcased over 200 products from the EU, including alcoholic beverages, confectionery, dairy, fruit and vegetables, olive oil, and more. Read all about it [here](#).

Masterclass with Chef Ajay Chopra at Guru Nanak Institute of Hotel Management, Kolkata (27 February 2024)

More than Food campaign ambassador Chef Ajay Chopra will conduct a masterclass for the students of Guru Nanak Institute of Hotel Management (Kolkata). The masterclass will give the students the opportunity to learn about the traditions and narratives of EU Food and beverages, while interacting with the culinary maestro. Read all about it [here](#).

EU Pavilion at AAHAR: The International Food & Hospitality Fair in collaboration with Chef Ajay Chopra (7 - 11 March 2024)

AAHAR is an international food and hospitality fair to be organised by the India Trade Promotion Organization in New Delhi in March 2024. There will be an EU Pavilion at the fair, where celebrity chef Ajay Chopra, the ambassador for the More Than Food campaign in India, will be on hand to discuss an array of exquisite ingredients sourced from EU Member States. Furthermore, he will showcase and offer the audience an opportunity to taste delectable dishes personally prepared by him, providing the experience of the exceptional quality inherent in European Union foods and beverages. [Save the date](#) to visit the European Union Pavilion at AAHAR 2024.