

Tapori Tiffins

www.taporitiffins.se

Tapori means,
"One who is at ones peak"



I have long been a researcher for foods that help soothe the Soul and bring a balance to our own unique rhythm and spirit. I am also in search of food tasting and looking fabulous, I, like everyone else, loves food to be tasty and fills me with Ooh and Ahh at the delights I am eating.

I was excited, whilst searching for those special places I am always looking for, when I found Tapori Tiffins an Ecological, Ayurvedic, Vegan restaurant in Sweden.

Tapori Tiffins is placed in Malmo Sweden, inside the Mitt Mollan galleria in Malmo's cosmopolitan quarter and was opened in July 2013.

I asked Zeenath the creator behind Tapori Tiffins about how the idea became a reality and what drives her Ayurvedic vision...

Veganism has had a lot of press in recent year or two and increasing all over the world. Is this the case with more plant based foods and veganism in Sweden

There has been a steady growth of media-based initiatives focussing on the vegan food and lifestyle in Sweden.

With the proliferation of digitally networked media, new veg-exclusive blogs, online TV shows and webzines have popped up every year for the last decade or so.

The media platform to audience ratio is delicately balanced so that it is not yet too crowded a party on the content production side. For instance, vegoriket.se, which won the 2013 best veg-blog award at Scandinavia's largest veg-fair, Vegomässan attained favourable reception within a year of its launch.

Based on mere personal observation however, I would unabashedly stake the claim that there is still a long way to go for veganism to be part of popular discourse and lifestyle.

Veganism as an ethical choice remains within an exclusive, albeit growing, circle. It is not uncommon to greet the occasional, 'Oh! You serve vegan foods only! How do you survive as a business?' comment at my kitchen, located at a food court where of the 5 restaurants, 2 of us feature vegan and vegetarian items on our menu exclusively. Granted that if anything, the normalisation of veganism would blunt its activist edge.

The motivation to normalise is indeed fuel enough for initiatives to expand the consumerist mindset of what good food can be for the body, the senses and the eco-system. Some veg-exclusive media initiatives claim their intention is





to enhance veg-food and lifestyle within the mainstream milieu without putting on the activist hat.

For instance, Björn Gadd, of the blog Vegankrubb.se initiated along with wife Hanna, launched the online veg-food show, 'Mat I Munnen' (Food in the Mouth) in late 2013 with the aim to enhance appreciation of food, rather than 'beat the veg-drum'. To sum up, there still remains a big gap in the making of a veggie dominant discourse. Pioneers, come stake your claim!

Tell us more about Ayurveda and Raw combinations and how this is balanced throughout the seasons

Ayurveda provides a holistic perspective on the intake of food by focussing on the body, the ecosystem and seasonal change. Vitality (prana) in our foods is not only a matter of freshness and preservation of vitality in the foods but also of local and seasonal availability.

Awareness of the constitution of our body (prakruti) is a matter of making conscious choices by being attentive to the changes our body is going through (vikruti).

Here are some classical habits and routines to adopt when partaking of a warm and raw vegan diet with an ayurvedic perspective,

Sip warm water with a lemon as the first food item in the morning and also between meals to aid elimination (agni)

Indulge in self-massage to trigger healing energy. For your first attempt, start by massaging your ears. Surround yourself with aroma of essential oils. For instance, orange for vata, lavender for pitta, rosemary for kapha.

Include cardio-vascular exercises as part of your daily routine to, among other benefits, improve the quality

of your sleep. Eat cooked foods when the weather is cold and at dinnertime. Eat cold foods, like salads, at lunchtime when digestion (agni) is at its peak.

Chew ginger before meals to improve digestion. Chew fennel seeds after meals or drink fennel tea to prevent gas or bloating. Include vegetables and add a higher amount of greens in your juices, to decrease dryness.

Include all six tastes in your food plate for a balanced and satisfying meal. Salty, sweet, sour, pungent, bitter and astringent. Example, salt from shoyu to enhance taste and appetite; sweet from grains in moderate portions to prompt satisfaction; sour from berries to stimulate appetite; pungent from garlic to clear sinus passages; bitter from green leafy vegetables to detoxify; and astringent from cauliflower or teas to bring about a balance.

Choose foods as per your dosha. Adopt a self-learning route to knowing your mind-body constitution and its changing dietary needs. Eat with awareness. Do not rush while and after eating.

You will know to bring in changes to your habits and routines when you are experiencing food cravings, insomnia, weak digestion, constipation, diarrhea and a general lack of vitality.

Can you explain what Ayurveda in your food represents and how you prepare this for your customers

Ayurveda, as with any other knowledge and practice related to foods, has become specialised, exclusivist and, in parts, purist.

Those who seek a conscious path to nutrition within the ayurvedic fold tend to reach for expert advice and

increasingly rely less on self-awareness as a guiding path, thus creating oneself as a consumer and not a practitioner of conscious eating routines.

My upbringing in India included meals at the dining tables of relatives, neighbours and friends where conscious eating guidelines, indeed ayurvedic eating guidelines, hovered in the form of grandmothers' tales, example set by uncles and admonishments by aunts. This living mode of guidance to conscious food habits is what I hope to encourage through my restaurant kitchen.

Discussing with guests, indeed debating with them as a way to persuade ayurvedic knowledge in one another; featuring menus with smoothies for dosha types, tridoshic warm and raw meals are some ways in which I set a departure point for encouraging visitors to take an interest and curiosity in their own eating habits and routines.

Tell us more about your cooking classes Zeenath, what could people expect to learn on your courses

My cooking is an evocation of memory from the dining tables of my childhood. Being of pan-Asian descent and being part of an active social circle, my family dining table, as indeed the dining tables of my relatives and friends featured a variety of regional cuisine influences.

I continue to exchange recipes and photos of home meals via WhatsApp with my school buddies!

Brought up in India, and currently residing in Sweden, I share cooking techniques like tempering, fermenting, pressure cooking using locally available, seasonal and gluten free ingredients. All items on my menu are the result of experiments pushing at increasing the ecological quotient.

For instance, my current successful attempt has been raising the ecological quotient of the dosa or south Indian pancakes made from fermented rice and lentil batter.

I have been using ecological green mung beans, and brown basmati rice as an alternative to hulled black lentil (urad) and ground white rice I share these recipes and some favourites from my childhood through my cooking lessons.

Which is your most favourite season to cook in and what would this be

I quite enjoy exploring the locally grown, seasonal fare during the Swedish winter. This previous winter, apples and green kale were main ingredients for my recipe explorations.

Green kale rubbed with sea salt and olive oil dehydrated to a lip-smacking crispness at 42°C for about 6 hours. Apple chutney with ginger and five



spice combination from Bengal. Green kale masala buckwheat chapatis. Apple and pumpkin rice paper potstickers with sunflower seeds. Green kale – strawberry smoothies with cardamom.

Finally what tips do you have for the Spring season

Jerusalem artichokes. Buy them pre-washed and eco to minimize prep time. You can keep the peel on if you have chosen eco. High in fiber and easily digestible by diabetics sunchokes, or Jerusalem Artichokes, are a good root vegetable alternative for kapha and pairs fashionably with vata and pitta.

Blend up a Creamy Vegan Spiced Sunchoke Soup. Pressure cook (or boil) 2:1 parts of sunchokes to potatoes with a couple of garlic cloves and bay leaves in just enough water to aid the disintegration. When cooked, remove bayleaf and keep aside. In a pan, heat oil, add cumin seeds. When seeds are fragrant add onions.

When onions are translucent, add minced ginger, a pinch or two of turmeric, a teaspoon of ground coriander, a pinch of fresh or ground chilli.

Pour out spices hot and sizzling onto the boiled sunchokes. Blend while adding salt to taste.

Soups up!

Soft gluten free pancakes

Soft gluten free pancakes made from fermented rice and lentil batter. A breakfast and snack-time favorite in South India. The fermentation process increases nutrients and aids digestion. Fermenting foods also reduces cooking time.

Makes 12 to 14 dosas.

Preparation time: 2 to 3 days

Cooking time: 5 min

Equipment required:

A very good blender

Non-stick or cast iron skillet

Ingredients:

- a. 1 cup Urad dal / Split, hulled black lentils
- b. 2 cups Basmati rice
- c. 2 Tsp Chana dal / Bengal gram dal (optional)
- d. 1/2 teaspoon Fenugreek seeds
- e. 1 tsp Salt
- f. Oil
- g. 1 Onion

Preparation for Day 1:

Rinse ingredients **a.** to **c.** in cold water. Leave to soak for



6 hours or overnight in a container with thrice the amount of fresh water.

Drain excess water, leaving enough to aid the grinding. Blend to a smooth consistency with ingredients d and e.

Preparation for Day 2:

Keep slightly covered overnight to 36 hours. The fermentation is complete when a sour smell pervades and there are bubbles on the surface of the batter. In cooler climates, aid the fermentation by placing in an oven preheated to 100°C with the heat turned off, but the oven light left on overnight. Place the container on an easily cleanable surface in case the batter attempts to run out of the container!

Preparation for Day 3:

You can now store the batter in the refrigerator for upto 6 days. When you want dosas, start by letting the batter reach room temperature. Smear a few drops of oil on a medium heated skillet with the cut side of half an onion. Pour the batter on to the middle of the skillet and spread the batter gently and quickly in outward circles. When bubbles form on the surface, flip over. Try making a spongy version and a crispy version by working with the thinness of the batter spread on the skillet.

Try variations by adding chopped cilantro or onions or cumin seeds to the batter before spreading it on the skillet.

Coconut Chutney

Makes enough to accompany 12 dosas.

SET A

2 cups of either Coconut flakes / fresh, grated Coconut or Coconut milk
1 inch Ginger, grated
Juice of half a Lime
Salt to taste
1 Tbsp Channa dal / Bengal gram dal (optional)
Handful of fresh, chopped Cilantro (optional)

SET B

1 tsp Mustard seeds
4 to 5 Kadi patta / Curry leaves
1 tsp Oil of mild flavor

If using chana dal, dry roast it until slightly browned. Dry grind to a fine powder. Blend with the rest of the ingredients in **Set A**. At this stage you have a quickly prepared coconut chutney that is ready to eat. You can add fresh chopped Cilantro. If you want to bring on the bells and whistles, then drop the cilantro and move on to **Set B**. Heat the oil and add mustard seeds. When the seeds start to crackle remove from heat and add curry leaves. Dunk this flavour bomb into the mix from **Set A**. This cooking technique is called tempering or 'tadka', a way to extract flavour by heating whole spices in oil.

The coconut chutney keeps in the fridge for upto 6 days. You can also make a big batch of Set A and freeze it airtight for upto 3 months.

Apple Chutney

Inspiration for variations in accompaniments to the dosa can be sought in South Indian regional chutney recipes incorporating vegetables, nuts and lentils. Our restaurant is located in the south of Sweden and we tried the locally grown apple called Ingrid Marie for a tart chutney accompaniment to the dosa.

Makes enough to accompany 12 dosas

1 tsp Cumin
1 tsp Mustard Seeds
1 tsp Oil
8 cups Apple for cooking, peeled, cored, sliced
1/2 cup Sugar
1 Green chilli, chopped
1/2 cup water

Heat oil. Add cumin and mustard seeds until they crackle. Add the remaining ingredients. Boil for about 40 minutes or until the mix has softened.

