

AKRAM Express

In this issue, a new series of
Aaloo and Chilly's
adventures begins...





Holidays... Are... Fun...

Editorial

Summer holidays can be enjoyed in many ways such as going on excursions, hanging out with friends, dedicating time for hobbies, engaging in other fun activities, and so on. However, if we each created a list of our top five favourite things, we would all surely have one thing in common. Do you know what that is? Eating delicious food!

You might be thinking, 'That's not just a summer holidays thing, I would love to eat my favourite food all year round!' In this edition, let us understand the various points related to food from the Gnani's perspective. We can also try some healthy and tasty recipes shared by Theo and friends. We will also find out what happened in Tarang's kitchen. And yes, Chilly, especially, has a lot to share with you. So, make sure not to miss meeting Aaloo and Chilly.

- Dimple Mehta

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Menu Card

As soon as the schools in Didima Jungle started their summer vacation, there was a party every day. Sometimes at the lake, or at Theo's house, at a park, or at a restaurant. Ice cream is a must after a meal on a hot day, right? But it is not just ice cream; Didima Jungle parties also offered a variety of desserts like fruity cassata, malai kulfi (a frozen cardamom-flavoured dairy dessert), popsicles, and sorbets.

Everyone had a great time, but inevitably, after every party, someone would get sick. Not only that, but because of all the junk food being eaten at the parties, everyone began feeling a slump in their energy levels. This resulted in everyone feeling sleepy during the early evening, which was meant to be the time for playing games.

One day while walking, Theo became out of breath. This made Rizo a little worried. He asked, "Theo, are you alright?"

"Yes... I... am... fine. It's just that... lately... I have been getting... tired... very quickly," replied Theo, huffing and puffing.

"I know the reason for that," said Zoey. "We are eating so much junk food every day, so how do you expect to stay energised?"

Giffy got worried about Theo, so he started crying. "Crying will not solve the problem. Let's think of a solution," Zoey comforted Giffy.



They arrived at Theo's dad's café. Rizo opened the menu. He was about to order french fries when he suddenly noticed a twinkle in Theo's eyes, which made him pause.

"What happened? Why are you suddenly so happy?" asked Rizo.

"I have just had a superb idea to solve this problem. Let us change the menu of this cafe. We will create a menu featuring healthy items only - no junk food," said Theo enthusiastically.

"Oh, wow! What a great idea! Let us get started right away with our research for fresh and healthy recipes," exclaimed Rizo.

Theo, Rizo, Giffy, and Zoey researched healthy and tasty ideas for new dishes. The recipes were finalised after numerous attempts to perfect them, and a new menu was established for the café.

Soon after, the food for every Didima Jungle party was ordered from Theo's dad's café. Every single item on the menu was a hit, but the ones which became exceptionally popular have been shared with us by Theo and friends. So, let us try Theo's dad's healthy and tasty recipes to energise ourselves during this summer vacation!



Granola Bar



In the evening, Theo and friends pack home-made energy bars for everyone when they go out to play. The unique feature of this recipe is that after eating one bar, you can play games with twice the energy. Not only did one's energy double, but the sales of the granola bars in the café also doubled! So, let us go make some healthy and tasty granola bars!

Ingredients:

- 20 pitted dates finely chopped and mashed with one teaspoon ghee
- 1 teaspoon of sesame seeds
- 5 tablespoons of muesli (rolled oats)
- 10 finely chopped almonds
- 3 finely chopped walnuts
- 1 teaspoon of dark chocolate chips

Instructions:

Mix all the ingredients together. Shape into small bars. Your tasty and healthy energy bars are ready to eat!

Fresh Mocktail

Sweat was dripping from Theo's forehead. He was experimenting with a new recipe in the kitchen. This was his fifth attempt.

"I have had enough. If this attempt does not work, I give up," he thought to himself. Just then, Zoey came in carrying a cool and colourful mocktail. After drinking it, Theo felt amazingly refreshed. "Zoey, after drinking this, I feel so refreshed that I think my experiment might actually work now." And that is what indeed happened. The snack mix Theo made, after drinking the mocktail, was so tasty that even to this day, just remembering its taste brings a smile to everyone's face. So, let us learn the recipe of this refreshing mocktail.



Instructions:

Blend the cucumber, mint, ice, and sugar in a mixer. Then add the lemon juice. Pour into a glass and top up with plain soda. You can add a few extra cucumber slices on top for decoration.

This refreshing cucumber mocktail is best served chilled.



Theo's Special

Mexican Mix



Ingredients:

- 1 bowl of cooked sweetcorn
- 1 small chopped onion
- 1 bowl of chopped tomatoes
- ½ bowl of chopped capsicums
- 1 bowl of diced cucumber
- 4-5 olives
- ½ bowl of pre-cooked kidney beans
- 1 teaspoon of chili flakes
- ½ teaspoon of oregano
- 1 teaspoon of ketchup
- 1 bowl of tortilla chips
- A pinch of salt

Instructions:

- Combine the sweetcorn, onions, tomatoes, capsicums, cucumber and olives in a bowl.
- Then add the cooked red kidney beans followed by all the spices and seasoning.
- Finally garnish the mix with crushed tortilla chips.



Just remembering the taste of this dish makes Giffy smile, and it's now ready for you to enjoy: Theo's Special Mexican Bhel!



Eating While Watching TV



Do you remember what you ate the day before yesterday? If not, then one reason could be that you may have been watching TV while eating. Do you think you should watch TV while eating? Let us see what our Gnani has to say about this...



Gnanis Say...

You should not watch TV while eating. If you watch TV while eating, then you will develop heart problems as you get older. You should not eat in the absence of the *chit* (internal component of every human being which takes 'photos' within and sees previously registered scenes). We should spend around ten to fifteen minutes eating each meal mindfully. How do we provide nourishment to our entire body? It is through the intake of food. You should eat calmly, and slowly, chewing each bite very well while savouring all the different tastes and textures.

So, make it a rule not to watch TV while eating. Set a fixed time for watching TV, and ensure you eat either before or after that time, but not during.





Food-Related Obstructions

Have you ever wanted to eat something in particular, but you did not get to? Why would that happen? Let us get the answer from our Gnani...



Gnanis Say...



What happens if you scornfully reject food that is served to you? It creates obstructions for food. So, in future, when others are eating delicious food, we might coincidentally fall sick at that time and end up having to eat simple food like bread and milk. We are verily the ones to cause these obstructions for ourselves. If you are served food you do not like, then eat at least a little, and do not grumble.

People say, "I have this allergy and that allergy." Why is that? Due to comments in the past life such as, "What is the point of eating this food? You shouldn't eat this." This causes food-related obstructions to arise. Thus in the next life, the body has a bad reaction even by just touching that food item.

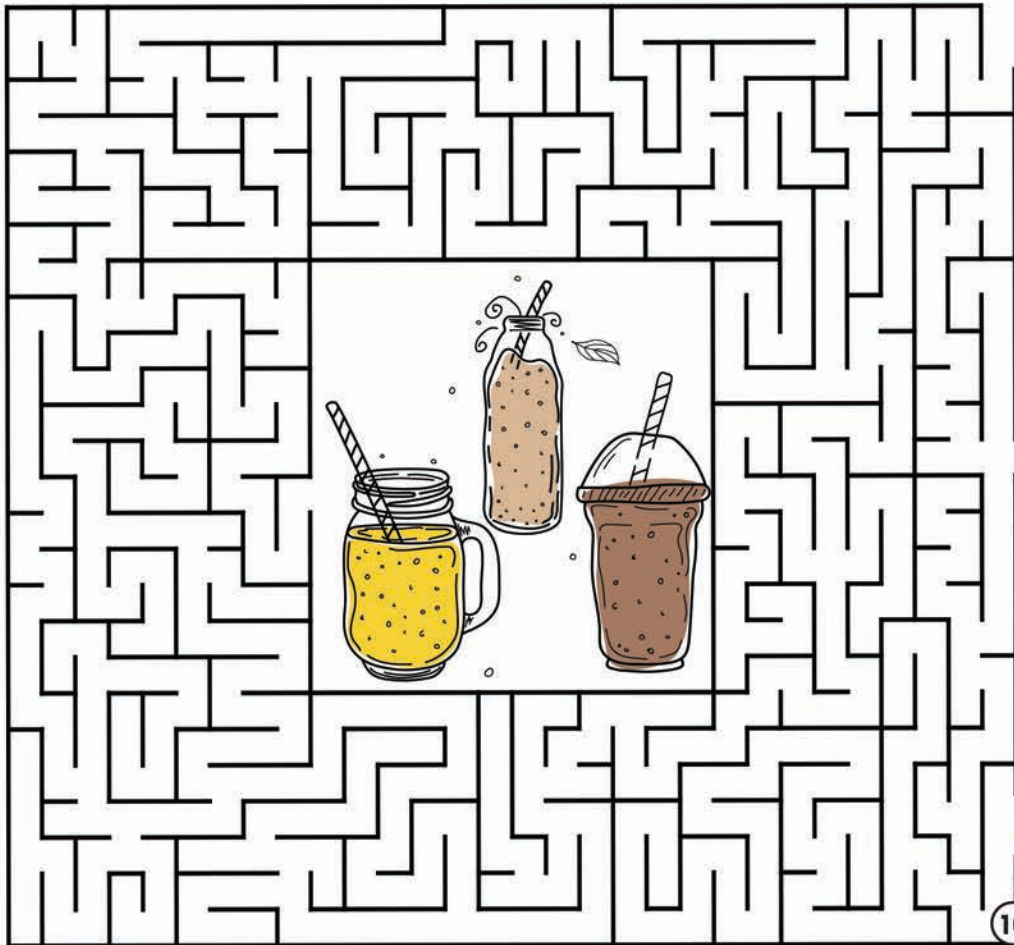


Let's play...



Vinny always used to say, "Yuck! How can anyone like bananas?" However, ever since she had the banana pineapple smoothie at Mister Bean's Café, she cannot forget the taste.

Today, Taru, Vinny, and Sunny are going out to enjoy their favourite drinks: Cookies and Cream milkshake, banana pineapple smoothie, and French vanilla cold coffee. From the maze below, determine who faced obstructions and who did not.



Taru



Sunny



Vinny

**I Like It a Lot,
I Like It a Lot!**

Did you know that it is possible to transform a disliked food into a liked food? Let us get this key from our Gnani.

Gnani's Say...



When you are not served food that you like, should you get angry with your mother? For the sake of satisfying our two-and-a-half-inch tongue, we end up hurting our mother. We should do *pratikraman* (to confess, apologise, and resolve not to repeat a mistake) for the hurt caused to her. If we get food that we do not like, then we should say to ourselves, 'I like it a lot, I like it a lot,' and eat it. Once it is swallowed, then understand that the body has accepted it. 'I do not like it' is just a mental effect.

If you want to change the psychology of the mind, then you should say, 'I like it, I like it,' and eat it. Then you will get to like it. You should eat at least a small amount to make your mother happy. Foods that you do not like are often beneficial to the body and help keep you healthy.

Dada did not like eating fritters of *galka* (a vegetable also known as sponge gourd, used in Indian cuisine). Nevertheless, he ate them for seven years without letting anyone know! If someone forgot to add sugar to Dada's tea, then he would say, 'It is sweet. It is very sweet,' and proceed to drink it.

What Is the Meaning of Samrasi Food?

Samrasi means six tastes: sour, salty, spicy, sweet, astringent, and bitter. *Samras* is when there is a balance of all six tastes. The body requires all these tastes, though not necessarily in equal proportions.

We may say, "I do not want spicy food" or "I never eat anything sweet." But rejecting some tastes all the time can lead to imbalances in the body and give rise to diseases.

Eat at least a few bites, if not a full portion. Even if you do not like a particular food, such as bitter gourd, you should have at least one or two bites.



A Fight in the Kitchen

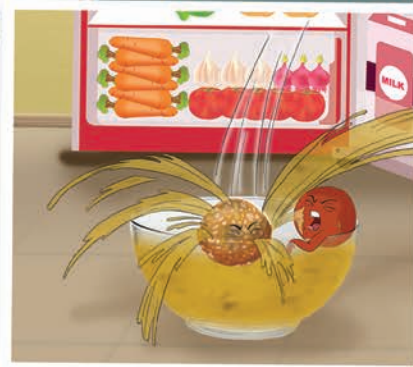


It was nighttime, and Tarang was getting ready for bed. As he headed to his bedroom after drinking some water, he thought he heard voices coming from the kitchen.

He went into the kitchen, and switched on the light. His eyes widened in surprise at what he saw.

The fridge door was open and a turmeric stem, lemon, and green chilies had jumped out of it. The salt jar was open.

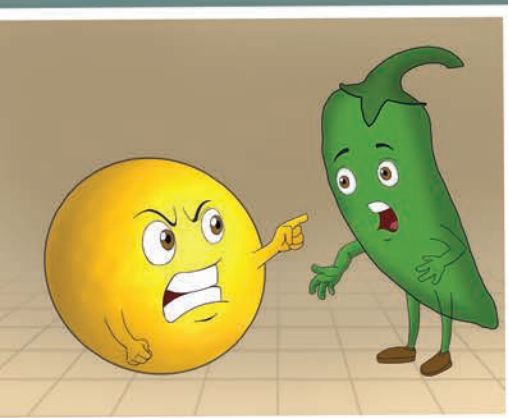
A *methi ladoo* (sweet made from fenugreek seeds shaped into a ball) rolled out of a jar and fell straight into a bowl of *gulab jamuns* (a popular donut-like sweet soaked in sticky sugar syrup). The sugar syrup from the *gulab jamun* bowl splashed everywhere. The *gulab jamun* yelled, “I had said right from the beginning that fenugreek should not be allowed in the kitchen at all. Too much ghee and dried fruits in the *ladoo* has inflated its ego and now it is rolling around with so much pride! Hey, Ladoo, no matter what rich ingredients you are made of, no one likes you.”



Hearing this, the turmeric stem said, “Very true. Fenugreek, you are so bitter that nobody can even stand your smell. Marvel at the wonder of my fragrance and beauty! Everyone finds me appealing!”

“As if!” sneered the chilli, “You may not be bitter, but you are astringent! And you are a close relative of Fenugreek, are you not? So, who will like you? People hesitate to even touch you, fearing their hands and clothes might get stained. Whereas, look at me, such a delicate little spice! A dinner plate is incomplete without my spicy fritters.”





A lemon came tumbling next to the chilli pod. "Be quiet! With a little squeeze of my juice, I can make your spiciness disappear. Without me, lentils, curries, pickles, and jams would all taste bland," boasted the lemon as it gave the chilli a shove.



In the tussle between the lemon and chilli, the jar of salt got knocked over, causing some to spill out. Salt spoke out, but no one was listening.

Everyone was fighting amongst themselves. Just then, the *gulab jamun* saw Tarang and gasped, "Oh, sugar!"



Upon seeing Tarang, everyone fell silent for a couple of minutes. Then, the *gulab jamun* asked Tarang, "Did you hear everything?"

Tarang nodded. Then the *gulab jamun* said, "Good, now decide which one of us is the most important. Which taste reigns supreme among us: sweet, spicy, salty, astringent, bitter or sour?"

"Yes, you decide," everyone said in unison as they surrounded Tarang. After thinking about it for a moment, Tarang replied, "Of course, the sweet taste. Everyone loves sweetness! Nobody can do without it. It does not matter if the other tastes are present or not. But the sweet taste... yum, yum, yum!" Tarang's mouth started to water.



Upon hearing Tarang, the gulab jamun doubled in size, while the other tastes were left feeling upset.

"If you can manage without us, then we can certainly manage without you. From now on, we will not come near you." Saying this, the rest of the tastes left the kitchen.



Tarang was very happy. He thought to himself, 'Now, I will get to eat sweets every day. My mother will not make me take bitter medicine, and my grandmother will not ask me to eat astringent turmeric. My grandfather will not force me to eat the sour lemon pickle, and my father will not ask to cook anything spicy. And what's more, no food will be salty.'

A few days went by happily, but then Tarang became bored with eating sweets every single day.





One day, he asked his mother...

Tarang: Mummy, can you please make me some salty puri (puffed bread)?

Mummy: But we do not have any salt.

Tarang: Please, can you make spicy mathiya (crispy, spicy crackers)?

Mummy: But the chilli pod has disappeared.

Tarang: Then please make some lemon sharbat.

Mummy: But the lemon has run away.

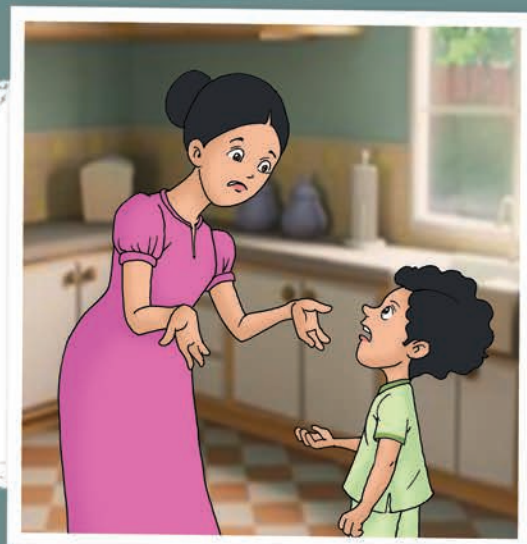


Tarang: I have a sore throat. Please, give me some turmeric.

Mummy: I have not seen the turmeric stem for many days.

Tarang: Mummy, eating all these sweets is making me ill with fever. Now, please do not refuse to give me some bitter medicine.

Mummy: But, Son, I am unable to find anything with a bitter taste in the house.



Tarang became very upset. The gulab jamun was about to say something to him, but before it could, Tarang said, "I will not listen to what you have to say. I like you, but that does not mean that I should ignore all the other tastes. I need all the different tastes. I am going to call them back." As he was leaving, he said to his mother, "Mummy, from now on, I will eat all the tastes in balance." His mother gave him a sweet smile.



Vacation Project

The first thing we do when we go to a restaurant is open the menu. If the menu design and the items listed are to our liking, then the enjoyment begins right there, even before we eat anything. So come, let us do a fun project!

Unleash your creativity this summer and design a unique menu. You can also come up with your own special names for the food items on the menu. Be sure to share photos of your colourful and creative menu with us!

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AALOO CHILLY



Summer vacation signals the start of Sports Week, and this time, it is very special to me because Aaloo is participating in the Skating Champions League! The semi-finals are over and the final is tomorrow. Do you know who Aaloo defeated in the semi-final? Last year's silver medal winner, Momo the Fox!

In tomorrow's final, Aaloo will be competing with Kulfi the Rabbit. Kulfi has been the reigning champion for the last five years. But so what? Aaloo has put in a tremendous amount of preparation. But honestly speaking, I have had to prepare more than Aaloo. I have made banners for him.

Who is everyone's favourite vegetable? It's Aaloo!
The samosa is incomplete without whom? It's Aaloo!
Who will win today's competition? It's everyone's favourite, Aaloo!



Kulfi, like ice cream, will melt in the heat!
Kulfi, get ready for your final defeat!



Parsley, my younger brother, says that the rhymes on my posters do not sound like poems. Hearing this, I want to hit him, but I know that if he goes crying to my mother, she will scold me. Whenever Parsley complains about me, I end up being punished, regardless of whether I am at fault or not. This has happened before.


Parsley (crying) : Mummy, he bit me...

Mummy: Chilly, you're not allowed to go out to play for a week.

Remembering this, I stopped myself from hitting Parsley.

Tomorrow, at the final, when Parsley and I fly the banners above the skating rink, everyone will acknowledge what a great poet I am! However, I have not yet obtained permission to fly the banners over the rink. But who will refuse me after reading my amazing poems?

And, on top of that, when Aaloo gives his winning speech, he will say, "Chilly is my biggest supporter. He has always supported me, even all throughout the 800 times I must have fallen down while skating." Everyone's eyes will be filled with tears when they hear this.



Chilly, I am a little scared.

You have already defeated Momo; What more is there to Kulfi?! Kulfi will melt just by seeing my banners!

Friends, Chilly is very excited about Aaloo's finals. What do you think? Will Aaloo win?

Come, today let us become scientists for a little bit while eating. What does it mean to be a scientist? A scientist neither accepts nor rejects anything without understanding it first. They will always test it.

Let us also test something by conducting an experiment. You may have heard many times that food should be chewed properly. But have you ever heard that if you chew a piece of chapatti 40 times, its taste transforms to be as sweet as sugar? Today, let us conduct an experiment: let us chew a piece of chapatti 40 times and see how it tastes.

If it tastes sweet, then keep doing this pleasant experiment every few days.

**Give it
a try...**

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