

ANDHRA PRADESH

Andhra Pradesh, a state in the southern part of India, is best known for its spicy hot pickles and its equally hot summers. With its rich cultural heritage and love for food, Andhra Pradesh is a food lover's paradise. The cuisine of the state itself is divided into three regions - Coastal Andhra, Telangana and Rayalaseema. Also, not to mention the wonderful and rich Hyderabad cuisine. 'Biryani' the hallmark of Hyderabad cuisine is popular the world over.

Andhra Pradesh has had a long lineage. Different dynasties have ruled over the region leaving an indelible mark on the culture and traditions. The people of Andhra Pradesh are a conglomeration of different cultures, traditions and rituals. One of the main influences on Andhra Pradesh history is that of the Mughals.

The Mughal influence on Andhra Pradesh is mostly realized in the Cuisine of Andhra Pradesh. The food of Andhra Pradesh is identified with that among the Mughals. Over the ages, along with the Mughal influence the cuisine of Andhra Pradesh has been well known as a fusion of original Andhra ingredients and Hyderabad cuisine.

From Spicy pickles like Avakaaya, Gongura, Usirikaaya to the bland yet delicious Maamidikaaya Pappu, Beerakaaya Pappu and Dosakaaya Paapu. Don't forget the Chicken and Mutton Biryani, the chepala pulusu and the kheema currys. And the innumerable curry based dishes such as Bagara Baingan, Mirchi ka salan and Phool Makana Curry to the Vepudu's such as Bendakaaya Jeedipappu, Vankay Pakodi and the Dondkaaya Fry! All this and more.

Cuisine of Andhra Pradesh is extremely popular among locals and tourists. The hot and spicy dishes are a speciality of the region. Mainly vegetarian dishes are served as part of the cuisine of the region. The uniqueness of Cuisine of Andhra Pradesh is that it is a blend of both Hindu as well as Muslim styles of cooking.

Rice is the staple food of the region. Sambar is a special kind of dal prepared in Andhra Pradesh. A traditional Andhra meal comprises five kinds of dishes. To cool the stomach after a spicy meal, curd is served at the end. This is evident from the delicious rice preparations of Andhra such as Pulihora, Biryani, Pulav, Pulagam etc. Apart from this, rice is served with a variety of spiced powders such as kandi podi, papulla podi, karvepaaku podi etc. Rice is also the main entrée that is served with several side dishes such as Pappu, Pulusu's, Chauru, Kooru's and many pickles. Not to mention the cooling daddojanam which is rice mixed with yogurt and seasoned to give it a delicious flavor.

Snacks and Sweets are another arena of foods that can entice the innocent onlooker. Pakodis to Khaajjas this state has a lot of variety to offer in terms of food.

Andhra Pradesh is a land of many beauties. One of the most popular tourist destinations in south India, Andhra Pradesh finds mention in the Indian epics, Mahabharata, Ramayana, the Jataka tales and the Puranas.

A traditional Andhra Pradesh meal is served on a banana leaf. Pickles and chutney are important parts of a meal in Andhra Pradesh.

Special Dishes in Andhra Pradesh - Andhra Pradesh is famous for its hot and spicy cuisine which includes both the original Andhra cuisine and the Hyderabad cuisine, having a Mughlai influence. Out of these two cuisines, the former one is more hot and spicy. The traditional delicacies of Andhra are absolutely mouthwatering having a liberal use of spices. Every meal has its own specialty, being snacks, lunch or dinner. The food habits are quite assorted as there is a blend of both Hindu and Muslim styles. The Andhra cuisine is mainly vegetarian and only in the coastal areas seafood is preferred.

The famous Hyderabad cuisine is dominated by rich and perfumed quality. Biryani, one of India's most popular foods, is flavored rice with meat or vegetables. It is an important part of Hyderabad cuisine. Hyderabad cuisine is stimulated by the Mughlai cuisine. This style of cooking is here since the Asaf Jahi period. Thus, the Hyderabad cuisine is a perfect combination of the typical Mughlai flavors with a blend of rich spices. Non vegetarian food is the essence of Hyderabad cuisine, Along with biryanis; kababs of different qualities such as 'Boti Jhammi', 'Kalmi', 'Shikampur', 'Sheek', 'Lagan-ke-Kababs', 'Dum-ke-kababs' are very popular.

The Hyderabad cuisine also offers a lot of mouthwatering dishes for vegetarians. There is 'Bagara Baingan', a rich spicy preparation of brinjals and Mirch-ka-salan, a preparation of chilies in creamy gravy. Apart from these; the 'Tomato Qoot' is a fragrant puree of tomato with flavorings and 'Shahi Dahi Vadas' which are lentil dumplings in Yoghurt sauce.

The Hyderabad desserts are equally famous. The most renowned is 'Double-ka-Meetha', a bread and cashew nut pudding. Another popular sweet dish is the 'Qubani-ka-Meetha' which is a stewed apricot dessert. Then, the 'ande-ka-Piyosi' made with eggs, almonds and purified butter, 'Badam-ki-Jhab', a candy and 'Dil-e-Firdaus', a rich, milk-based sweet are the widely consumed desserts.

The Chowki dinner of Andhra Pradesh is very famous. It is offered by the tourism department of the State. The typical Chowki dinner is served on a low table (Chowki) around which 8 people can sit. This is served in typical Nawabi style, where authentic Hyderabad food is served course by course. Along with the exotic dinner, the majestic Deccan ambiance accompanied by traditional entertainment like Ghazals, add to the taste and enjoyment.

REGULAR MEAL (*BHOJANAMU*)

A full Andhra meal generally consists of some or all of the following

- ? Cooked Rice
- ? Pappu, the Telugu word for cooked Redgram / Pigeonpea seeds.
- ? For vegetable entrees/curries a wide variety of vegetables are used which also includes green leafy vegetables. Non-vegetarian curries include "*Kodikoora*" (Chicken), "*Vetamamsam*" (goat mutton), "*Chepakooru*" (Fish) and "*Royyakoora*" (Prawn). Pork is also consumed, although not widely.
- ? *Vepudu* - Fried vegetable curry made of *Bendakaaya* (lady fingers), *Dondakaya* (like cucumber), *Guthivankaya* (clustered brinjal), *Sorakaaya* (bottle gourd), *Potlakaaya* (snake gourd) etc.
- ? *Patchadi* (Pickles), e.g., *Uragaaya*, *Aavakaaya* (spicy mango pickle) and one made of a leafy vegetable called *Gongura*. Pickles, fresh as well as preserved, are made from all kinds of fruits and vegetables.
- ? *Vulavacharu* (cooked Horsegram soup) with cream is fast becoming an international recipe.
- ? *Pappucharu* - (Lentil / Redgram based vegetable soup)
- ? *Pulusu* - A vegetable broth resembling sambar, but very different in preparation and taste
- ? *Charu* - A lighter version of Sambaar without vegetables
- ? *Perugu* (Yoghurt) or *Majjiga* (Buttermilk)
- ? *Appadam* (Papadums) usually eaten with pulusu or sambar.
- ? A sweet dish or two.
- ? Bananas
- ? *Tambooram* (Also called *Killi*, *Beeda* or Paan) made of fresh Betel leaves and Arecanut pieces and Lime.

(Among the above mentioned items either *Pappucharu* or *Pulusu* and either Buttermilk or Yoghurt are consumed. Tamarind rice is consumed on special occasions or during travel because it can be preserved for one to two days). Andhra Pradesh is also the largest producer of chilli pepper and the local cuisine tends to use it a lot. Hyderabad, the capital city of Andhra Pradesh is famous for its Hyderabad *Biryani*.

BREAKFAST FOODS

Idlis are commonly eaten as breakfast item or as a full meal along with *Kobbari Patchadi* (Chutney) in Telugu, and/or sambar. The most common *Patchadi* is made from coconut. Most places also serve 'Allam Pachadi'(The Red stuff in the Picture on the side made from Ginger and Red chilli) and some times with Kaaramodi and Ghee for Spicy touch.

Minapattu (Dosa) is also commonly eaten for breakfast or the evening snack. There are several varieties eaten such as the *Masala Dosa*, *Rava Dosa*, *Sada Dosa*, and *Rava Masala Dosa*. Generally, Andhra-style versions of these Dosas are spicier and crispier than those of its other South Indian counterparts.

Pesarattu is also a key item in Andhra cuisine, it is more similar to Dosa but the batter is made of green mung beans, the taste is unique. It is usually thin and crispy, with onions, green chillies, ginger pieces and coriander chopped and filled. It is accompanied by Chutney mainly made of ginger. *MLA Pesarattu* is more popular variety of *pesarattus* which has Upma as filling.

Uppu Pindi or *Uppidi Pindi* is equivalent to Upma, commonly consumed as breakfast item or as a full meal along with *Patchadi* (Chutney) in Telugu. This dish is prepared with one cup Rice Ravva (split/broken rice), half cup mung dal (split green gram), three Table spoons of freshly grated coconut, fresh green chillies, curry leaves and cooked with three cups of water. Seasoning: Add to 1 Tbsp hot oil, 1 Tbsp each urad dal and mustard seeds. Add seasoning, salt to taste, cover and cook for 30 minutes or until broken rice/dal is cooked.

EVENING SNACK (PHALAHAARAMU)

At home, many savory snacks that make appearance during evenings they are:

<i>Kaarappoosa</i>	<i>Chekkalu</i>	<i>Sakinalu</i> or <i>Chakkiralu</i>
<i>Chuppulu</i>	<i>Chegodilu</i>	<i>Guggillu</i>
<i>Pakodi</i>	<i>Boondi</i>	<i>Mixture'</i> (<i>Boondi mixed with onions and lemon</i>)
<i>Ponganalu</i>	<i>Punukulu</i>	<i>Upma</i>

Bondaalu or *Punukulu*'with *Spicy touchings*(*allam pachadi*)

Another item which is a favourite of Telugu people is *Mirapakaya Bajji* (a local variety of chillies stuffed with spices and dipped in chick pea batter and fried). Similar items are *Punukulu* (balls of fermented rice and urad dahl batter), and other snacks like *Ullipakodi* (fritters made with sliced onion and spices in chickpea batter).

Finally, Andhra cuisine also has Gaare (like Vada). Gaares are deep fried and spiced dough. They are sometimes marinated in a yoghurt-like sauce and are called Perugu Gaare (Also Called 'AAVADALU').

SWEETS

- ? Laddu
- ? Boorelu
- ? Bobbatlu
- ? Ariselu
- ? Pootha rekulu
- ? Undalu
- ? Polelu
- ? Garjelu
- ? Kakinada Khaja
- ? kajjikayalu
- ? Payasam
- ? Sunnundalu
- ? Ravva Laddu
- ? Appaalu
- ? Gavvalu
- ? Kajji Kaayalu
- ? chakkerapongali(sugar pongal)
- ? laskora(coconut laddu)
- ? Boondi
- ? Palathalikalu

REGIONAL VARIATIONS

There are regional variations in Andhra cuisine. Telangana, the western region of Andhra Pradesh has some unique dishes in its cuisine. Dishes like *Jonna Rotte* (Sorghum), *Sajja Rotte* (Penisetum), *Uppudi Pindi* (broken rice) are common. Telangana cuisine is influenced by Persian and Afghan cuisine as Telangana was under the control of Muslim kings for a long time. In northern Telangana districts the cuisine has dishes similar to those found in Maharashtra such as *Kadi*.