

Indulgence in Tradition and Taste

Walking through Ahmedabad's one of the most keenly awaited social event, National Traditional Food Festival, Sattvik 2017, one could not but appreciate culinary creativity and conservation institutions of the country. Organic farmer market, innovation exhibition, community food lab and women groups from all over the country left a lasting impression in the mind of 70,000 visitors in three days, Dec. 23-25, 2017. Its richness emanates from diverse agro-biodiversity and related nutritional traditions. As rightly pointed out by Dr. R. A. Mashelkar (Chairperson, Research Advisory Committee, SRISTI), while inaugurating the Sattvik that Indians can get better-off not only economically but also nutritionally by putting these creative traditions to optimal use.



Visitors indulging in the Sattvik ambience

The 15th Traditional Food Festival, Sattvik, organized by SRISTI with Honey Bee Network institutions including GIAN and NIF had many unique features this time. The yearly festival provides assorted traditional delicacies from all over the country to stimulate urban demand. It is hoped that such a demand will help in providing incentives for the growers of millets and other crops

Music instrument made of dried vegetable: Tarpo



and varieties to conserve their diversity. Sattvik also stands for promoting healthy food habits, lifestyles and link cultural, technological, educational and institutional creativity and innovations. It is one of the largest festival of its kind in the country.

Sattvik 2017 experienced a footfall of about 70,000 visitors, which has been increasing every year. A total number of 273 stalls were set up, out of which 92 were serving traditional ready to eat food with minimum two dishes of millets, 80 were dedicated to the 'Khedut haat' having fresh organic farm produce, 50 stalls were sponsored by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, GOI, New Delhi and remaining were for other agri-preneur's serving sustainable products and some civil society groups promoting social causes.

Individuals from different regions had come together to organize these stalls. There were products and local cuisine from different regions within Gujarat like Jamnagar, Kutch, Morbi, Junagarh, Rajkot, Kheda, Panchmahal, and Surendranagar. Also, stalls were organized from other states like Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Jammu & Kashmir, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra and West Bengal. It was a convergence of various



Stalls from Ministry of Women and Child Development



Buyers keen in buying products from the Khedut Haat

cultures and traditions. A very large number of student volunteers from L.J. Institute and other institutions helped fifty women groups in selling their herbal, craft and handloom products. Some of the girl students wore sarees from Assam to act as models to promote their products which left a very deep impression on the women first generation entrepreneurs. Most of them had no idea of how to sell their products to urban market savvy consumers. Apart from one day training before the start of Sattvik, SRISTI also facilitated concurrent training and supported some slow

moving stalls to make faster progress. A few women entrepreneurs were so deeply moved by the support from students that they wanted to take the students volunteers with them to their villages.

Sattvik is known for bringing out recipes/food formulations that are not common and mostly made of rarely used ingredients or some of them using uncultivated plants. These low cost nutrient rich foods provide an alternative model of overcoming rampant malnutrition in society apart from serving urban consumer

willing to pay more for them. These could be forgotten traditional recipes or newly innovated recipes. Some of the much preferred dishes from Sattvik 2017 were *Ghes*, *Ragi ki healthy treat*, *Kodri nu Vadku*, *Litti Chokha* (Manipuri), *Puran Pori* (Marathi), *Ragi nu Laddu*, *Hare Nariyal ka Halwa*, *Dry dates ka achaar*, *Bijora ka achaar*, *Sattu ka Sharbat*, *Moong Dal Soup*, *Hibiscus rosa sinensis tea*, *Marathi Sol Kadhi*, *Umbadiyu*, *Aloe Vera ki Sabzi* etc.

To celebrate the creative spirit of women but also some of the male cooks, a recipe competition was organized on December 21st, 2017 in the premises of SRISTI. Around 100 recipes were presented, out of which three best recipes were chosen. Many participants innovated unique recipes such as sweet dish of bitter gourd. The recipes displayed an exclusive mixture of cultures and traditions such as traditional sizzler, Gujarati hummus or uttappam waffles.

Sattvik not only proposes people to taste these traditional delicacies but also to make them a part of their daily diet. For this purpose, GIAN (Gujarat Grassroots Innovations Augmentation Network) had organized a live kitchen, a kind of a food and nutrition lab at Sattvik. Participants and visitors

Young visitors indulging in fun activities



Bharatbhai Agrawat demonstrating the Innovation





Culture of sharing & learning recipes: GIAN community food lab

were invited to share their unique recipes. A number of individuals came forward and demonstrated live various dishes. These were webcast, recorded and shared with the audience around

the world. As in the previous years, several food formulations generated a lot of positive feedback from the viewers on web.

of cooking food in traditional brass and copper vessels.

The present era of emails and mobile phones has declined the use of postal services. 'Postman ka Samman' was a new initiative taken during Sattvik. It aimed at connecting people to their postman and help in recognizing unrecognised silent grassroots workers who delivered post round the year in rains and heat. A separate stall was set up by the Indian Postal Department. Many children aren't familiar with the concept of the postbox. A Postbox was also displayed for their reference. Not all people have access to email or even can read those, they can read a letter many times unlike a phone call.

National Innovation Foundation (NIF) had organized the display of various innovative prototypes. The visitors were asked to share their views over the same and also suggest ideas for further development. A number of gainful ideas were received.

Khedut Haat, which is the essence of Sattvik received much appreciation from the visitors. There were a number of farmers from different regions with

Children's Activities

Year around, new ways are thought of bringing the youth closer to the forgotten traditions through Sattvik. A number of activities were planned for children. Traditional games such as *Machli Pakad*, Cat race, *Ram Ravan*, *Ubhi Khoo*, *Action Change*, *Railway ka Dabba* etc. were organized. Vishwagram took the responsibility of organizing these besides craft lessons like carpentry, paper work and other hand on skills. GIAN also facilitated a number of activities for the young visitors. They organized snakes and ladders and various educational workshops. The children were taught to make solar cooker and bird feeder from resources easily available in their homes. A workshop on the 3D printer was also conducted.

GIAN also displayed traditional copper and brass vessels. Children took keen interest in them. Parents were spotted teaching their children about the usage and importance of these vessels. Professor Anil Gupta too summarized the health benefits

Winners of the Recipe Competition



Dr. Vibha U. Mehta: *Sabzi, muthiya and juice from leaves of Beetroot (Beta vulgaris)*



Jhanvi V. Rao: *Stuffed rotla with the stuffing of raw banana, jaggery, dried coconut kernels and sing dana*



Niti Uday Bansali: *Rajwadi ausadi Paak, Paniya, Tulsi (Ocimum tenuiflorum) seeds Kheer, Jamphal (Psidium guajava) ber ki Chikki and Green Mineral Soup.*

organic food material, handicrafts, ayurvedic medicines, spices etc. Farmers also shared their views on organic farming, importance of earthworms as a farmer's friends was highlighted as they help make the soil fertile. Unfortunately, chemical pesticides killed these worms.

Various talks by the leading medical and health practitioners of the city were organized to promote healthy lifestyle and promote preventive health practices which are more democratic. They shared healthy diet tips, the importance of exercise and yoga, important do's and don'ts for a healthy living particularly to prevent back and joint pain and also answered queries from the audience. The audience also shared their knowledge and experiences. A student from Jaipur narrated her experience with the Hadjod herb (*Cissus quadrangularis*) to help heal joint pain. The benefits of cactus (*Cactaceae*) were also discussed.

In addition, other activities such as painting, origami and card making, traditional music show, singing and dancing show, puppet show etc., were also organized. Also, a special talk over the science behind superstition was organized to help people develop rational belief system and scientific temper.

Book donation camp was also a part of the festival. Approximately 200 books were collected. These books will be sent to areas such as Gurez valley (Kashmir) and Banaskantha (Gujarat). This was much below expectations.

The festival otherwise served its purpose well, acting as a point of reference on healthy, affordable, nutritious lifestyle while promoting rural producers particularly women. Visitors presented the desire of increasing the frequency of Sattvik to twice a year. Also, they suggested organizing it in different parts of the country. The efforts of the volunteers and well-wishers are much appreciated for making the festival a great success.