

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Issue: APRIL, 2026

Bon appetit Pune



PUNE'S VIP PASS TO ICONIC EATS, LUXE STAYS, TRENDSETTING BARS

- A deep dive into Pune's luxury dining
- Perfect summer getaways
- The trendsetting nightlife
- Sustainable hospitality
- What's brewing in Pune's cafés?
- Legendary eats

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PUNE ON A PLATTER



The bug for curiosity and love of exploring food, restaurants, cuisines, and recipes came to me through my parents. Growing up in Pune was a treat—as kids, we explored a new city restaurant every Sunday. I've literally watched Pune's food and restaurant scene grow since childhood.

Pune perfectly blends tradition and experimentation. What began with khanavals and upahar grahas in the old city, plus bakeries and Irani cafés in Camp, has blossomed into a dynamic culinary hotspot. It's one of India's best cities for food critics!

Purist Pune-kars cherish old thali spots where quality endures. Students flock to pocket-friendly street eats. IT pros and migrants savour regional Indian fare. Expats dive into global cuisines.

This melting pot fuels a café boom: artisanal bakeries and international spots now dot suburbs like Kothrud alongside Viman Nagar hubs. Sourdough pizzas mingle with misal, heritage thalis with modern menus.

Pune's calendar pops with festivals, markets, pop-ups, and farm-to-table delights. Now, ET Bon Appétit magazine's maiden edition unlocks it all — your essential passport to the city's top hangouts, must-visit restaurants, and iconic gems. Curated insights, insider tips, and vivid features make it indispensable; one must grab a copy to navigate and savor Pune like a local!

Whether queuing at a 100-year-old legend or sipping matcha at a hip café, every bite reveals a city rooted in heritage yet boldly reinventing itself.

— Jayesh Paranjape,
food critic, TOI, Pune

A LOVE LETTER TO PUNE'S GASTRONOMY

Anyone who has ever lived or visited Pune, will know that Pune has its own culture of hospitality. Especially the vibrant food and nightlife landscape, which has evolved into one of the most experimental in the country. Offering everything from refined luxury dining spaces to beloved iconic restaurants, vibrant cafés, stylish bars, and an ever-growing nightlife culture, Pune has something to offer everyone.

Keeping this ecosystem in mind, for the first time ever, The Times Food and Nightlife Pune team brings to print: ET Bon Appétit Pune, a magazine dedicated entirely to the world of food and hospitality. This premier edition celebrates the diversity, creativity, and passion that defines Pune's hospitality.

ET Bon Appétit aims to be a Bible for anyone looking to explore the city's F&B scene. Within these pages, readers will discover the finest restaurants, buzzing nightlife destinations, charming cafés, and noteworthy bars that make Pune such an exciting culinary destination. Not to forget the small and cute bistro cafes, the speciality restaurants that can only be found in bylanes of our Punya Nagri!

The magazine also offers an insider's perspective on the people, stories, and ideas that shape the hospitality industry. Whether you are a seasoned foodie, an industry insider, or simply someone who enjoys discovering great places to eat and unwind, ET Bon Appétit Pune promises a comprehensive glimpse into the Pune hospitality experience.

— Vidhya Tiwari, food critic, TOI, Pune

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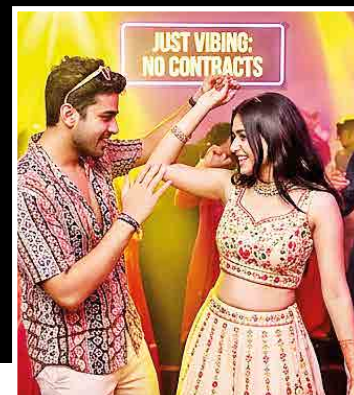
Indulge in a curated collection of Pune's finest culinary gems. From serene alfresco settings to opulent indoor grandeur, Amanora Mall brings together the world's most sought-after flavors under one roof. Refined. Exquisite. Unforgettable.



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PUNE'S WEDDING SCENES: NIGHTLIFE & CLUBBING TURN INTO DESI SHAADI RAVES



Pune's nightlife erupted into a riot of matrimonial make-believe as the city rang in 2026, swapping drinks toasts for chaotic fake shaadis. Nightclubs across Koregaon Park and Baner transformed into makeshift mandaps, with DJs spinning Bollywood wedding anthems amid swirling dhol beats and confetti barrages. Revellers donned lehengas and sherwanis rented on the spot, staging mock pheras and varmala exchanges that blurred the line between party and ceremony — no actual pheras or 'I do' required.

Gen Z led the charge, turning New Year's Eve into a viral shaadi circus. "It's peak desi chaos but zero family drama," laughed 22-year-old college student Riya, who crowdsourced her "bridal look" via Instagram stories before joining a faux baarat procession. Groups paraded with rented brass bands, blaring "London Thumakda," while bar counters doubled as dessert stalls overflowing with rasgullas and jalebis. "Real weddings are stressful; this is just fun therapy," added 25-year-old techie Arjun, hoisting a faux dulhan on a decorated auto-rickshaw for the ultimate reel moment.

Experts hail this as the ultimate evolution of experiential nightlife. "Pune's scene is leaning hard into cultural nostalgia with a Gen Z twist — immersive, Instagrammable, and affordable," says nightlife curator, who's tracked the trend since post-pandemic pop-ups. "Fake shaadis fill the void left by subdued real events; they're low-commitment highs that pack emotional punch without the logistics." A hospitality analyst agrees: "Night venues are gamifying traditions — baarat entries with LED

lights, no baraatis means no crashes. It's smart business; covers spike around 40% on themed nights like these." Data from local event trackers shows close to 60% jump in such "shaadi-raves" since Diwali, fueled by under-30 crowds craving community vibes over bottle service.

Looking ahead, the trend is solidifying as a staple for Pune's 2026 nightlife calendar, with venues booking brass bands and decorators months in advance for weekend "mini-shaadis" and festival tie-ins like Holi baraats. Operators predict themed nights every fortnight, blending with food truck pop-ups for extended revenue streams. F&B outlets have reaped windfalls—sweet stalls and fusion mithai carts saw near to 50% sales surges from reveler pit stops, while bars innovated with "pheta punches" and mock jalebi shots, boosting beverage volumes by about 35% without heavy promotions. "It's reshaping menus toward desi fusion; profitability is through the roof," notes Singh. Venues report repeat footfall from viral reels, turning one-off events into loyal ecosystems.

By 4 AM, the mandaps morphed back into dance floors, with exhausted "newlyweds" trading garlands for glow sticks. This fake-shaadi frenzy isn't just a one-night gimmick; it's Pune's nightlife manifesto — playful, participatory, and profoundly unserious. As Riya summed it up: "Who needs a real rishta when the party's this lit?"

FOOD & DINE-IN

Pune's food and dine-in scene pulses with vibrant energy, blending Marathi home-style comforts like spicy misal pav and sabudana vada with global flair from trendy fusion spots and rooftop bars. Gen Z flocks to buzzing hangouts in FC Road and Baner, where upgraded misal pavs and cheese-loaded vada pavs get Instagram-worthy twists alongside bubble tea and craft cocktails. The city's millennial crowd fuels a constant evolution, where pop-up eateries in Koregaon Park dish out Korean BBQ tacos one week and artisanal Neapolitan pizzas the next. From sustainable farm-to-table cafes in Viman Nagar to late-night dessert labs experimenting with liquid nitrogen kulfi, Pune keeps reinventing itself as Maharashtra's ultimate culinary playground.



NOSTALGIA IN EVERY BITE, SERVING WITH LOVE SINCE 75 YEARS

For 75 years, Vaishal Hotel on Fergusson Road has been Pune's emotional anchor — a nostalgic haven evoking the late Jaggannath Shetty's enduring legacy. The visionary founder innovated beyond indoor tables with quaint, greenery-filled backyards at both outposts, where customers wait hours for serene alfresco vibes.

Today, hundreds flock daily — trickling in from 7 am, sustaining crowds till late evening. Must-haves like addictive filter coffee, Mysore masala dosa, fluffy idlis, and mouthwatering vegetable cutlets draw them. Popularity has surged with college students from neighbouring Fergusson College, BMCC, and Modern College, blending youthful energy with generational loyalty.

It wouldn't be incorrect to say that Vaishali is a generational 'home' where families return not for trends, but for authentic taste comfort. "The only aspect that brings people back here is obviously the emotion," shares proprietor Nikita Shetty, who is taking her father's legacy forward. "It is like a family... they've been coming here since they've been going to school and college, for generations."

Even as Gen Z chases café raves and matcha, they flock back for Vaishal's unbeatable filter coffee. "I think it is the South Indian coffee that once you have it you get addicted to it," Nikita laughs. Her father crafted the recipe down south, blending Maharashtra-relatable flavours — not purely authentic South Indian, but irresistible with SPDP, sandwiches, Mysore Dosa, and sambar that hits just right.

Running this legacy isn't easy. "Keeping it the same way with the same aura, same taste is very difficult," Nikita admits, praising her "trustable and loyal" staff — chefs who've served 30-40 years. No family secrets, just inherited perfection.

MUST-TRY

- Filter coffee
- Mysore Masala Dosa
- Veg Cutlet
- SPDP



For so many decades, customers have been coming here. They don't see it as just a restaurant or hotel; it's more like going home. They know the whole staff, having come since their school and college days. It's like a family.

— Nikita Shetty, proprietor,

FUTURE PLANS?

Menu tweaks like chocolate dosa for kids, new ice creams, and a Mumbai outpost. Nikita's mantra for women entrepreneurs? "Believing in yourself. Keep your people happy — that's the main key... if they are happy it reflects in the food and service," she suggests. At Vaishali, every bite tastes like home.



Vaishali Hotel, Fergusson College Road, Ganeshwadi, Shivajinagar, Pune

PUNE'S ULTIMATE SERENE DINING ESCAPE BY THE LAKE

Nestled by a private lake in Amanora Park Town, The Lake House transforms every meal into a serene ritual, day or night. "The Lakehouse was always envisioned as a place where the setting naturally shapes the experience," says Aditya Deshpande, CMO, Amanora Park Town. Daylight brings open, relaxed vibes with water-reflecting light ideal for long lunches on alfresco decks. Evenings soften into intimacy, the lake a quiet backdrop framed by lime-plastered walls, reclaimed wood, brass accents, and large windows that keep the views central.

This 250-cover space balances grandeur and intimacy through zoned seating: expansive alfresco for families, cosy indoor corners for business meets. Design restraint — textured fabrics, shifting lighting — invites guests to linger. The menu spans Indian, Asian, and Continental with contemporary flair. The bar programme has been built to reflect the natural surroundings of the restaurant.

Much of the magic lies in The Lake House's perfect balance. Families revel in the lake-front openness yet feel right at home in the cozy space. "The atmosphere remains relaxed and welcoming rather than overly formal. That combination of setting, food and ease of dining is often what guests remember most about their evenings here, he adds.

Recent reviews rave about memorable family evenings: a welcoming atmosphere, diverse tastes, and that rare urban pause. "The aim has always been to create a place where guests feel comfortable spending time," Deshpande adds. Unlike Pune's bustle, The Lake House offers distinctive value through its lake-framing magic.

The Lake House stands apart largely because of its setting and the way the experience has been designed around it. Being surrounded by a private lake creates a sense of pause that is rare in a city dining environment. At the same time, the menu offers a wide range of cuisines without losing focus on quality or thoughtful preparation.

— Aditya Deshpande, CMO, Amanora Park Town



MUST-TRY

- Roasted Burrata with White Truffle Oil
- Cream Cheese-Stuffed Crispy Chillies
- Luxury Butter Chicken
- Miso-Glazed Sea Bass
- Litchi Rabri Panna Cotta
 - Burnt Basque Cheesecake
- Ripples by the Lake
 - Shoreline

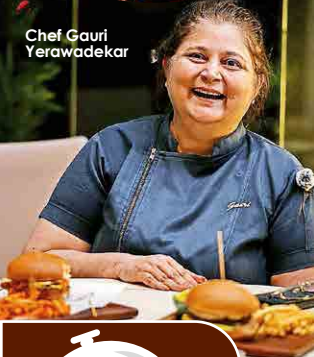


The Lake House, AMANORA THE FERN HOTELS & CLUB, Amanora Park Town, Hadapsar

GLOBAL BITES SERVED WITH LOVE



Chef Gauri Yerawadekar



In Warje's bustling scene, one spot rises above the rest—not just for its passport-stamping menu, but for a hygiene pledge that's as flawless as its flavors. Meet Mystic Flavours, the brainchild of dynamic duo chef Gauri Yerawadekar and chef Rukhmini Yerawadekar, where every bite promises thrill and tranquility. You push open the doors to Mystic Flavours, and an aura of polished perfection envelops you. Soft glows from ambient lights dance across immaculate surfaces, whispering tales of devotion. Here, hygiene isn't an afterthought—it's the soul of the place.

Mystic Flavours is a flavour fiesta born from the mother-daughter dream in the neighbourhood. Rukhmini and her mom helm this multi-cuisine gem, blending global tastes with fresh, local ingredients. Their triumph at the Times Food & Nightlife Awards Pune year on year seals their stardom. Step in, and sophisticated warmth wraps around you. The menu globetrots through fusion delights, but signatures steal the show: think innovative plates bursting with authenticity. The in-house bakery, Pretiola, dazzles with artisanal breads and patisserie gems, aromas swirling like a sweet spell.

Mystic Flavours also takes pride in its in-house patisserie, Pretiola, which is known for its cakes, cookies and myriad bakery items.

The multi-cuisine menu at the restaurant showcases a mix of global inspirations and local ingredients, with each dish thoughtfully plated. From signature starters to the main course and the decadent desserts to conclude your culinary experience, the establishment caters to palates of all kinds. The restaurant's cosy yet contemporary interiors add to the allure, making it an ideal spot for intimate dinners or lively gatherings.

The real magic? Rukhmini and Gauri's unbreakable bond. They co-craft every dish, infusing personal warmth and bold innovation. Rukhmini, the hands-on captain, dives into daily ops — ensuring flawless plates and a vibe that's more experience than meal.

Warm, trained service elevates it all, drawing celebs like Bhushan Pradhan, Gashmeer Mahajani, and Dhvani Bhanushali for discreet escapes. Mystic Flavours isn't dining; it's a legacy savoured bite by bite.

For us, Mystic Flavours isn't just food on a plate — it's our story, our roots, and our wildest dreams, served one dish at a time.

— Chef Rukhmini Yerawadekar, co-founder, Mystic Flavours



MUST-TRY

- Sour Dough Pizzas
- Burgers
- Ramen Bowls
- Gellatos
- Pastries
- In-house Baked Breads
- Panna cotta



Spandan, Popular Nagar, Girdhar Nagar, Warje, Pune

PUNE'S SOULFUL MEDITERRANEAN ESCAPE AT THE CORINTHIANS RESORT



The Corinthians Resort, spread across 25 acres of lush landscape with a swimming pool and 181 designer rooms, is a perfect getaway within the city. Boasting five restaurants serving different cuisines, this iconic haven — known for its Greco-Egyptian architecture and premium leisure — now shines brighter with Medora, its evocative new Mediterranean-inspired dining destination. Fresh off winning the Best Mediterranean Restaurant award at the Times Food & Nightlife Awards 2026, Medora adds a soulful layer to the resort's diverse culinary legacy.

Nestled amid tranquil greenery, Medora's 3,000 sq. ft. space channels serene coastal towns through lime-washed walls, earthy tones, shimmering blues, warm woods, textured surfaces, and soft, organic forms — like a cave embracing the sea. Curated lighting and a dedicated bar create an ambience where Pune's bustle dissolves into effortless elegance. Medora—derived from "Mediterranean Aura"—captures not only the region's geography but its essence: effortless elegance, warm hospitality, and the gentle rhythm of coastal living.

The menu celebrates Mediterranean diversity: Lebanese Cold Mezze with hot pita and falafel, Italian Arancini layered in pesto and sundried tomatoes, crisp Fattoush, Greek, or Caesar salads. Grills feature Turkish Shish Tawook, Rubian Hara, and Lamb Koftas; live kitchens yield ravioli and flatbreads. Indulge in Tiramisu, Baklava Cheesecake, or warm Ummali. Signature cocktails like fiery Tomatina, silky Enchanté, crisp Ciao Bella, bright Opa, and sultry Ti Amo elevate the vibe.

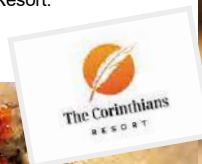
"Medora captures the radiant warmth of Mediterranean coastlines and the artistry of timeless coastal flavours," shares the culinary team, inspired by sunlit fields from South of France to Egypt.

"The pricing at Medora has been curated after extensive research into Pune's evolving dining preferences, ensuring that refined Mediterranean flavours remain accessible while upholding a premium experience," says Noorbasha Shaikh, General Manager, The Corinthians Resort.

By blending high-quality global ingredients with an understanding of local palate trends, Medora offers exceptional value designed for Pune's well-travelled and discerning diners.

— Noorbasha Shaikh,
general manager, The Corinthians Resort, Pune

MEDORA



MUST-TRY

- Lebanese Cold Mezze served with hot pita and falafel
- Italian Arancini layered with fresh pesto and sundried tomatoes
- Mediterranean salads such as Fattoush, Greek, and Caesar
 - Turkish favourites -Shish Tawook, Rubian Hara, and Lamb Koftas Shish Tawook, Rubian
 - Tiramisu
- Coffee Chocolate Mousse
- Pistachio Pull-Me-Up
- Baklava Cheesecake
- Umm Ali



📍 Medora, The Corinthians Resort, Nyati County, NIBM, Pune

CRUMBS OF PUNE'S HEART



Paurushasp Firdous
Kayani, partner,
Kayani Bakery

The Shrewsbury biscuit itself is a story of adaptation and respect. Traditionally, it is a classic English shortbread biscuit, believed to have originated in the town of Shrewsbury in England. It is known for its delicate crumble and rich buttery flavour, and today one can find countless recipes and variations.

— Rustom Kayani, partner, Kayani Bakery



The aroma of melting butter and spiced mawa wafts from East Street, Camp, Pune — a time machine to 1955.

There, brothers Khodayar, Hormazdiar, and Rustom Kayani forged their legacy. “My grandfather, Khodayar Noshirwan Kayani, came to India from Iran as a teenager in the 1920s,” shares Rustom Kayani, Partner, Kayani Bakery. “He was very young, far from home. Those early years were not easy.” From gritty restaurant gigs in Pune (then Poona), they honed resilience, launching a no-frills spot with puffs, breads, cookies, and Rich Fruit Cake — its Persian-infused buttery sweetness melding seamlessly with local cravings.

Shrewsbury biscuits and mawa cake? Icons of adaptation. “We reformulated our Shrewsbury biscuit to be completely vegetarian, without eggs,” Rustom explains, adding, “Preserving the same light texture required patience.” Yet their magic lies deeper: “We often hear stories of grandparents bringing children, and those children returning years later with families of their own. That continuity and affection mean everything,” he chuckles.

Firewood ovens persist amid modern shifts, demanding “attentiveness, patience, and experience” for sourdough’s soulful rise. Past 70 years, space crunches and scams challenge, but Zomato delivery bridges gaps. “Our location, methods, and continuity are inseparable from our identity,” insists Rustom

Like Shaniwarwada, Rustomi evokes nostalgia: “Over the decades, Kayani Bakery has quietly become a part of Pune’s everyday life... countless personal stories and memories.” As custodian since 1985, Rustom upholds grandpa’s creed — “under these roofs, before your eyes, with your own hands” — scaling to 800kg biscuits daily without franchising trust. In every crumble, Pune’s forever home.



MUST-TRY

- Shrewsbury biscuits
- Mawa cake
- Ginger Biscuits
- Choco-Walnut
- Cream Rolls
- Khari

📍 Kayani Bakery, 6, East St, Hulshur, Camp, Pune



WHERE PASSION MEETS PERFECT SHAWARMAS



Don't try to be everything for everyone. Focus on what you genuinely love and execute it with honesty and consistency.
— Gaurav Gite, founder, Marrakesh



◆ Outlets across Pune

When it comes to Lebanese cuisine in Pune, Marrakesh, founded in 2007, is a name that instantly springs to mind. Since its founding in 2007, the brand has expanded from a modest-sized café in Kalyani Nagar into a prominent player in the city's culinary scene. It stands out for both its popularity and for the clarity of its vision: to introduce the authentic flavours to Pune in a way that feels both authentic and accessible.

There is also a certain charm in the way the story of Marrakesh begins. The founder, Gaurav Gite, was inspired by the homeliness of a small neighborhood eatery in Goa where he noticed people met as much for the atmosphere as they did for the food. Later, his time in New Zealand working with established hospitality brands, influenced Marrakesh's philosophy of treating global cuisines with traditional integrity and care.

"Marrakesh was always a brand whose appeal was its simplistic consistency," adds Gite. Even though the company now serves more than a lakh shawarmas each month, it continues to prioritize quality, a strong food culture, and adhering to the same principles that helped it gain popularity. The menu has also successfully changed with time, going beyond well-known favorites to offer more authentic items for Indian taste palettes.

Recently, Marrakesh has been recognised for its milestones at the Times Food & Nightlife Awards 2026. But, its journey has just begun. Looking ahead, Marrakesh aims to expand while staying true to its core identity.



Chicken Shawarma
Muhammara
Shish Taouk

FAMOUS FOR THE FOOD, KNOWN FOR THE NAME

In an age where restaurants open and shut with the blink of an eye, Dorabjee & Sons in Pune has quietly outlived trends, fads and crises. "Consistency. You have to have consistency," says Darius Dorabjee, the fourth-generation owner, explaining why the restaurant still holds a place in people's hearts. The menu, almost entirely unchanged for close to five decades, sticks to its core Parsi identity with around 43–45 dishes, focusing on classics like Mutton Biryani, Salli Ghosht and Dhansak that "sell themselves," he says.

For Dallas Dorabjee, now the fifth generation, joining the family business two years ago has been less about pressure and more about continuity. "I don't feel pressured as such," he says, "because my dad is teaching me every day — about the business, the food, the flavours." What keeps Dorabjee & Sons alive, they agree, is the bond they share with their guests. Regulars arrive with specific requests — spicier, less masala, no garnish — and staff remember them, weaving a personal touch into every meal.

The restaurant has also weathered major disruptions, from the pandemic to industry upheavals. During Covid, Darius ensured his entire team received full salaries, even when the doors were closed, and helped with education and housing. That loyalty, he says, is reciprocated in turn. Despite frequent offers to expand, the Dorabjees have chosen to stay small, valuing reputation over franchises. "Being exclusive is always better," Dallas explains, "otherwise the quality is completely compromised." For them, Dorabjee & Sons is not just a restaurant; it is a home, a memory, and a flavoursome heirloom that needs no reinvention — only careful guardianship.



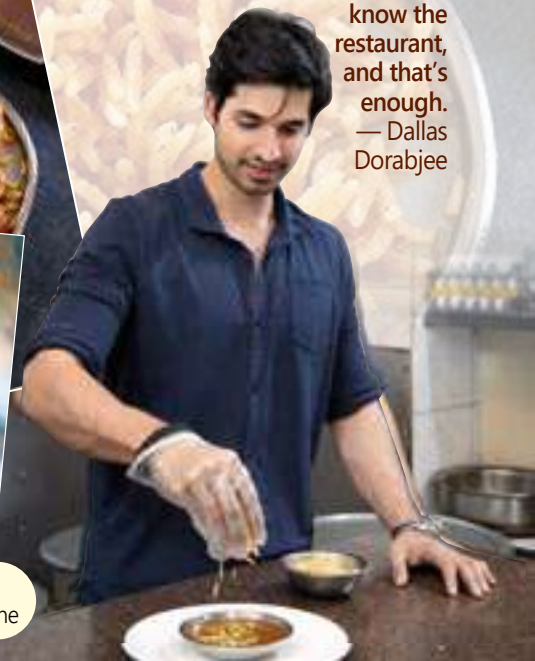
MUST-TRY

- Mutton Biryani
- Salli Ghosht
- Dhansak
- Mutton Ghost
- Farcha
- Custard



People walk in and say, 'Your grandfather did my wedding, my father's wedding, we were children then — but we still remember the food, we still remember this dish.' That's when I realise how deeply it's impacted them. Today, social media spreads awareness even further. I'm satisfied with the reputation. Wherever I go, people recognise me as 'the guy from Dorabjee & Sons' — they may not know my name, but they know the restaurant, and that's enough.

— Dallas Dorabjee



◆ Dorabjee & Sons, 845/846, Dastur Meher Rd, Camp, Pune

Made & served with love the MAHARASHTRIAN WAY!

Long before Maratha Samrat became a well-known name in Pune, it started with a much humbler beginning: a modest 40-seat restaurant in Kothrud that opened almost 15 years ago. That first branch laid the foundation for what would steadily grow into three outlets across the city, expanding to Baner in 2016 and Camp in 2017. Over the years, Maratha Samrat has built its name by serving Maharashtrian food that feels consistently rooted, regional, and comforting. Over all these years, this brand has earned several awards, including prestigious Times Food Awards for multiple years.

The most important part of its identity is its thalis and wide spread of à la carte offerings. The menu features dishes from all over the state of Maharashtra, but it focuses primarily on the essence of a few select regions. Kolhapur, coastal, and central Maharashtrian influences shine through in every dish served here. Keeping any restaurant fresh is no easy task, but Maratha Samrat does it exceptionally well. The team makes everything in-house with strong SOPs for each recipe — no central kitchen model. This ensures each outlet delivers consistent, high-quality, and authentic flavors.

The menu offers a wide variety of non-veg thalis, which you can enjoy with accompaniments such as pandhra rassa, tambda rassa, fry dishes, kheema, chapati or bhakri, Indrayani rice, or aalni bhaat. Fish lovers can relish the Seafood Thali, which comes with surmai fry, pomfret curry, prawns fry, sukka chutney, chapati or bhakri, and Indrayani rice. Veggie lovers can enjoy the daily special Veg Thali. On top of these set menus, the restaurant offers a wide selection of à la carte options. One is spoiled for choice when they enter Maratha Samrat.

The restaurant's personality comes from the attention to detail throughout the whole experience: regional music, a cozy atmosphere, thoughtful side dishes, and an unusually large selection of desserts for a non-vegetarian Maharashtrian restaurant. Its appeal lies in that perfect balance of tradition, detail, and the comfort of a meal that feels handmade with love.

Sagar Deshmukh, owner of Maratha Samrat, adds, "We stand out with 8-10 premium desserts, unlike many non-veg spots in the city that focus on thalis or Maharashtrian fare but skimp on sweets. Highlights include rose kharwas, fresh jaggery kharwas, Ratnagiri Hapus ice cream, ukdiche modak ice cream that nails the authentic steamed modak taste, caramel custard, a selection of kulfis, and seasonal delights like mango, strawberry, or sitafal."

We have kept it very simple and basic, but we try to deliver that with perfection.
— Sagar Deshmukh, brand owner, Maratha Samrat Restaurants



- MUST-TRY**
- Chicken Kharda Fry
 - Kaala Mutton
 - Surmai Rawa Fry
 - Prawns Thecha Fry
 - Pomfret Curry
 - Mutton Thali
 - Chicken Masala
 - Veg Maratha
 - Paneer Methi
 - Ukdiche Modak Ice Cream
 - Kharvas



◆ **Kothrud Outlet:** Rohan Chambers, Beside Jalsampatti Bhavan, Karve Statue Square, Kothrud, Pune - 38 / For booking or queries, call: 9960714362 / 9960901157

◆ **Baner Outlet:** Modi Square Building, Beside Syngenta IT Park, Laxman Nagar Road, Baner, Pune- 45 / For booking or queries, call: 9860499947 / 9860199932

◆ **Camp Outlet:** Atur House Bld., Near National Institute of Virology, Beside BMW Showroom, Camp, PUNE - 01, For queries, call: 9960179667/9960179573

PACKING A HEALTHY PUNCH

Pune's health menu revolution is in full swing, with salad bars sprouting across the city like fresh greens in monsoon soil.

Fitness enthusiasts, office-goers, and mindful eaters are fueling a boom in demand for nutrient-packed meals that marry bold flavors with clean nutrition. From smoothie bowls brimming with vibrant fruits to millet-based power plates and plant-based feasts, these spots are redefining "fast food" for a health-conscious crowd.

The surge aligns perfectly with Pune's evolving lifestyle. Post-pandemic, gym memberships have skyrocketed, and hybrid work culture has busy professionals craving quick, guilt-free bites. "I grab a loaded salad bowl every lunch—it's my energy reset without the crash," shares Priya Sharma, a techie from Hinjewadi. Data from local food delivery apps shows salad orders up 40% year-on-year, while millet meals—celebrating Maharashtra's ancient grains—have jumped 60%, blending tradition with superfood status.

Smoothie bowls, topped with nuts, seeds, and seasonal berries, are the Instagram darlings, offering photogenic fuel for morning rushes. Plant-based plates, featuring quinoa-stuffed veggies or lentil patties, cater to vegans and flexitarians alike, spiking amid rising awareness of sustainable eating. Local sourcing is the secret sauce: vendors highlight farm-fresh produce from nearby Nashik orchards and organic millets from rural co-ops, tying into Pune's farm-to-fork ethos.

"I switched to these millet bowls after my trainer recommended them — tasty, filling, and my digestion has never been better," enthuses Rohan Patel, a gym regular from Koregaon Park. Another fan, Neha Desai, an office-goer, adds, "The smoothie bowls feel like dessert but pack protein and probiotics. Perfect for my 9-to-5 grind."

This trend underscores mindful eating: portion-controlled, customizable meals that prioritize balance over indulgence. Experts predict more pop-ups in malls and co-working hubs, as Puneites vote with their forks for wellness. With fitness challenges and wellness retreats booming, the city's salad bar scene isn't just a fad — it's the new normal, one crisp bite at a time.



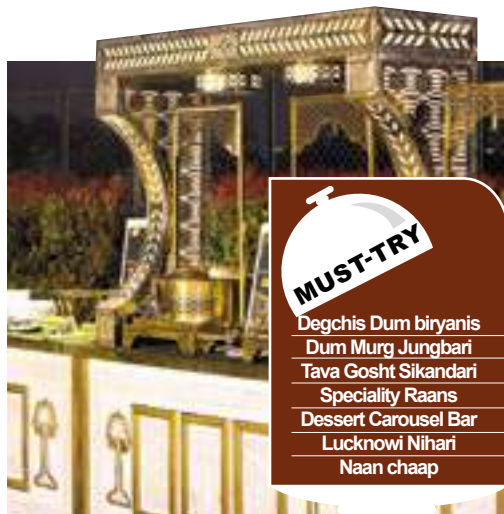
FROM HUMBLE KILO BIRYANIS TO FEEDING LAKHS ACROSS INDIA – A LEGACY OF FLAVOUR & SCALE

Picture this: 1979, a modest Mumbai kitchen steaming with the aroma of fresh biryani, parceled out kilo by kilo to eager homes. That was the spark of Degchi's Catering Services, founded by Ali Engineer's father. Today, congratulating them on their Times Food Awards win feels right — this is a story of grit, innovation, and unrelenting passion. "Degchi's catering started as custom caterers in 1979. My father started it and that time it was just kilo-wise biryani deliveries. Over the years, we have reached a level where we are catering to a lakh people a day also, across India," recalls Ali Engineer vividly.

Their reach is epic. From snow-capped Kashmir weddings (they're heading back in October) to sun-soaked Chennai feasts, Gir Forest retreats, Pachmarhi hills, and destination extravaganzas in Lonavala or Mahabaleshwar. In peak wedding season, they juggle 6-7 events daily, deploying trucks loaded with chefs, crockery, cutlery, and custom setups.

Memories linger from a colossal challenge 10 years ago: Feeding two lakh guests in a single day for a community event. "That was a very big thing," Engineer notes, crediting teamwork and precision.

Weddings and mega-celebrations — birthdays, anniversaries — are their playground, thriving on "the larger the crowd, the better." Menus? Fluid masterpieces. Classic Mughlai and North Indian anchors like Dum Biryani, Nihari, Murgh Jungbari, Tawa Gosht Sikandari, plus biryani riffs (Andhra, Mastani, Karachi). They've mastered live stations — steaming Vietnamese dim sums, sushi rolls, Korean grills, Italian pastas, even Khow Suey — blending Indian staples with global flair. "Now, over the years we have developed catering but our core has always been Mughlai known for our Biryanis forever," says Engineer. Creativity scales like a well-oiled factory: trials ensure perfection from 1 kilo to 100.



MUST-TRY

- Degchis Dum biryanis
- Dum Murg Jungbari
- Tawa Gosht Sikandari
- Speciality Raans
- Dessert Carousel Bar
- Lucknowi Nihari
- Naan chaap

I think maintaining quality at large scale is easier than in restaurants, where one dish might turn salty or watery. Our food is ready an hour before events, allowing a tasting session with 3-4 hosts. Any tweaks? We make them on the spot.

— Ali Engineer, owner, Degchi's Catering Services



◆ Rose Avenue, 15, Salunke Vihar Rd, Mayfair Eleganza Phase II, Kondhwa, Pune

ADDING THE CULINARY MAGIC TO YOUR WEDDINGS



TASTE BEFORE YOU BOOK

Before committing to Abi'z Kitchen for your special event, you have the opportunity to experience their culinary artistry firsthand. Their tasting sessions allow you to sample a variety of dishes from their menu, giving you a true sense of their flavours and quality.



In Pune's wedding landscape, Abizer Harnesswala's Abi'z Kitchen has emerged as a game-changer since 2019. "After graduating from MSIHMCT in 2014, I explored restaurants, catered abroad — including 2.5 years in the US — and even worked at a Michelin-star spot in Bangkok," says Abizer, founder of the catering service. A friend's wedding request back home sparked it all. "It wasn't planned, but the rave reviews led to inquiries. Abi'z Kitchen was born from love — that's our core ingredient," he adds.

With a hotel management foundation, Abizer embraced early trends like farm-to-table dining. "My training gave me confidence to experiment boldly with fresh ingredients and innovative flavors," he shares. Now, Abi'z Kitchen specialises in bespoke menus for diverse cultures and faiths, shattering stereotypes of luxury weddings with affordable extravagance.

"Taste is critical — ideas are easy, but flawless execution builds trust," Abizer emphasises. Their USP? The "Taste Before You Book" service, letting clients sample and refine dishes pre-event. Menus prioritize the client and audience, blending trending and unique elements. "We introduce unseen items, setting market trends repeatedly," he adds.

As a full-service partner, Abi'z handles everything: setups with tables, linens, and décor coordination, plus spotless cleanup. From corporate gigs to grand weddings, they deliver seamless celebrations without gimmicks — just creativity and precision.

Abizer's philosophy shines: Meet expectations, impress with innovation. "Clients know their crowd; we ensure every bite exceeds it." In Pune's competitive catering world, Abi'z Kitchen proves passion-fuelled food turns events into unforgettable feasts.

FROM SETUP TO CLEANUP

Setup: Professionals will arrive early to set up the tables, chairs, linens, and any other necessary equipment.

Serving: The friendly and professional staff will ensure that your guests are served promptly and efficiently.

Cleanup: After the event, the team takes care of the cleanup, leaving your venue spotless.



While curating dishes and menus, we focus on two key elements — the client and the audience. By understanding the client's requirements, we design menus that are both trending and unique, ensuring a distinct experience at every event we undertake.

— Abizer Harnesswala, founder, Abi'z Kitchen



AUNDH'S WELL-POURED SECRET

Quench was founded by partners Harshul Paryani and Vidur Mehmi on an arrangement that seems straightforward enough, i.e. "great food, economical drinks and a great vibe," as Paryani puts it. But, they also understand the importance of paying attention to the finer details, which truly complete the 'Quench' experience. They have successfully kept things familiar, without making them too predictable. Mehmi says the team has taken "the classics and added a modern twist to them," which shows up in both the drinks and the food, catering to the diverse needs of the different crowds that come here.

The bar's individualism comes through most clearly in what it serves: its carefully-curated menu. Quench offers unique delicacies such as the Rajasthani Lal Maas Lamb Shank and Bayou Shrimp Fritters, in addition to creatively tasty drinks including Cherry Poppins, Pomerry, and the Elderflower Gin Smash. Its charm lies in feeling effortless, even when it clearly is not, and customers' have continually positive reactions to the menu.

But, their journey has not been one without obstacles. The bar has had to carefully balance being lively without being boisterous and noisy in a residential area, where nightlife and neighborhood life norms continually collide. In a city where nightlife establishments are being scrutinised more than ever, particularly in light of the Porsche case, that delicate balancing act has become even more important. If anything, Quench has shown that a bar in a residential pocket can still find its own rhythm.



Harshul Paryani and Vidur Mehmi

It's not just the creatives anymore that works. You have to have a whole story behind everything and that's most important. We're focusing on storytelling now. Storytelling matters in your food, cocktails, and everything.
— Vidur Mehmi, partner, Quench Bar & Eatery



MUST-TRY

- Cherry Poppins
- Elderflower Gin Smash
- Rajasthani Lal Maas
- Lamb Shank



◆ 4th, Astral Court - Building A, B Wing, Seasons Road, Aundh, Pune

BUFFET BONANZA AN ULTIMATE INDULGENCE @ FIVE STARS

A glittering expanse of 100+ dishes under crystal chandeliers at Koregaon Park hotel, aromas of truffle-infused risottos clashing with spicy Kolhapuri misal, and the electric hum of laughter as IT families and influencers dive into the chaos. Welcome to the five-star buffet — a gastronomic gladiatorial arena that's stormed Pune's dining scene, turning Sunday brunches into sold-out spectacles. But why are these all-you-can-eat extravaganzas such a rage? Buckle up; it's not just food, it's a full-throttle thrill ride.

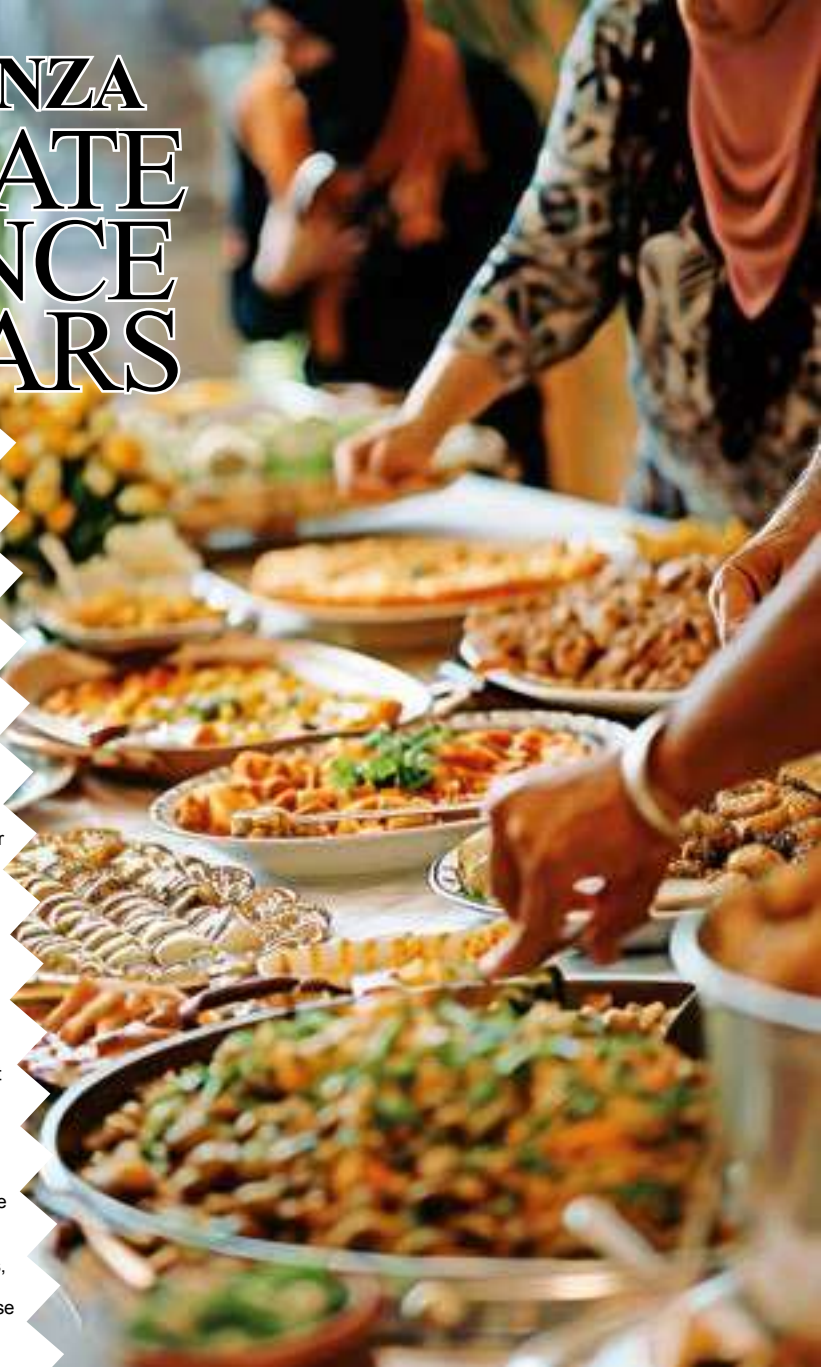
First, the sheer variety explosion. In a city where taste buds crave chaos amid the Osho calm, buffets deliver democracy on a plate. Crave sushi rolls one minute? Flip to dim sum or a live vada pav station the next. "I went from sushi to sabudana khichdi in 10 minutes — pure heaven!" raves IT pro Priya Sharma at JW Marriott. Chefs at Pune's five star hotels whip up global showdowns — Japanese teppanyaki battling Maharashtrian thalis, with vegan keto options for wellness warriors. No FOMO here; you sample it all.

Then there's the value of adrenaline. For ₹2,500-4,500, you're feasting like royalty with unlimited drinks (endless mimosas!). "Better than ordering three courses at home — total steal for the family," says dad Ajinkya Patil. Post-pandemic, Pune-kars ditched fine dining for these communal carnivals.

Social media supercharges the hype. Instagram reels of towering dessert towers — chocolate fountains over puran poli sweets — go viral. "My buffet reel got 10K likes; it's my new weekend ritual!" beams an influencer.

Yet, it's the experiential high that seals it. Live jazz, kids' corners, and chef demos create mini-festivals. "Feels like a party, not just brunch," gushes retiree Sunita Jadhav. In Pune's hustle from Hinjewadi to FC Road, these oases deliver escape — pure indulgence.

The rage? Buffets are moods, memories, mayhem. Five-star hotels nailed it because abundance meets aspiration





SAVOURING HYDERABAD'S SOUL



At Zeeshan Restaurant, and the air thickens with the heady fragrance of slow-cooked biryani — Hyderabad's royal legacy, now Pune's daily craving. Asgar Hussain and Prity Singh reveal how they've masterfully blended authenticity with local flair at Zeeshan - Apna Hyderabad Food, in this vibrant city.

"Pune is a melting pot of cultures," says Asgar Hussain, adding "Our philosophy has always been to bring 'Apna Hyderabad Food' to the people. To appeal to the local palate, we have carefully adjusted our masala and spice levels to suit the taste of Pune-kars. However, we never compromise on authenticity"

Hinjewadi and Viman Nagar's frantic IT crowd finds comfort in Dum Biryani Family and Jumbo Packs. "Prepared in bulk, it allows us to serve them fast and piping hot," Prity shares, adding, "When served alongside our traditional salan and raita, it forms a complete, satisfying meal that feels like a warm hug after a long work-day." Meanwhile, Baner locals linger on traditional chowki (floor) seating, forks swapped for hands in true desi style. "We package [our roots] in a way that suits Pune's dynamic lifestyle, ensuring everyone from a solo corporate diner to a massive family gathering feels right at home," she emphasises.

The Hyderabad Dum Biryani is an absolute favourite. "Its unique fragrance and taste come from the authentic dum style — slow-cooked to give the meat a melt-in-the-mouth tenderness," Asgar explains. Flexible sizes — from small to Jumbo — fit every budget. They brought Arabian Mandi to Pune in 2018, aiming to outshine even the street-side gems of Hyderabad.. "Understanding that Pune-kars don't prefer dry rice dishes, we modified the preparation to make it richer and more flavourful. By adding variations like our Juicy Mandi and Ghee Roast Mandi, it has quickly become a local favorite," he adds.

Prity stresses that they make absolutely no compromises with quality which also means they're not chasing trends. "We have no plans to simply chase trends or start serving the same dishes that are popular at other local restaurants. Instead, our aim is to introduce authentic Hyderabad specialties and make them Pune's new favorites, just as we have successfully done with our Dum Biryani and Arabian Mandi," she shares.

The brand is very excited to soon introduce iconic Hyderabad delicacies to their existing menu, including Mutton Nalli Nihari, Mutton Paya, Mutton Marag with Sheermal, and Bagara Dalcha. "We will be launching these exclusive dishes first at our Baner branch, and will soon start serving them at our Viman Nagar and Hinjewadi locations as well," Prity adds. At Zeeshan, every bite bridges worlds.

While we are proudly specialised in authentic Hyderabad cuisine, and our Biryani, Kebabs, and Mandi remain our absolute forte, we understand the diverse palates of Pune's diners. To cater to everyone, our chefs are also highly skilled experts in preparing a fantastic range of multi-cuisine dishes.

— Prity Singh, owner of Zeeshan Apna Hyderabad Food Pune branches



MUST-TRY

Hyderabad Dum Biryani

Arabian Mandi

Paneer 65

Veg Manchurian

Veg Jaipuri

Chicken Chandani

Dum Ka Chicken

Cream Fruit

Apricot Delight

Shahi Tukda

Rabdi Malai



PUNE OUTLETS: ♦ Padambhusan Chowk, Opposite Chroma, Phase 1 Road Hinjewadi
♦ New Baner - Pashan Link Road, Someshwarwadi, Baner ♦ Plot 84, Building 2, Peshwa Complex, East Lane, Near Joggers Park, Viman Nagar

Misal Memories & Zero plastic



ShriKrishna Bhuvan in Pune evokes the soul of old-world India, a pre-independence gem where generations have gathered for fiery misal pav amid the aroma of simmering rassa. Started in 1941 by Yashwant Joshi, this Budhwar Peth legend carries a legacy of resilience, innovation, and eco-stewardship now upheld by third-generation owner Atul Joshi.

Picture 1940s Tulsibaug: Yashwant Joshi sets up a humble snack stall amid bustling shoppers, dishing out puri bhaji and steaming chai from a tiny kitchen. Tragically gone by 1945, he left behind widow Sushila, who woke up before dawn to grind spices by hand, feeding Pune's working class through post-war hardships with unyielding grit.

Her son Sudhakar inherited the flame, inventing the iconic 'misal-slice' in 1966 — crisp bakery bread swapping soggy pav, a nod to Pune's vanishing bakery era. Today, Atul Joshi channels this pioneering bloodline, serving 400 plates daily while honouring the family's risk-taking roots.

Step inside, and time slows: the sizzle of potato bhaji on tawas, yellow pohe crunching under chivda and sev, onions adding bite, all crowned by coconut-laced 'kat' gravy that burns just right. It's the taste of childhood street corners, evoking Pune's Peshwa-era vibrancy minus modern frills — no AC, just wooden benches worn smooth by decades of loyal elbows.

Atul's zero-plastic vow since 2010 feels like a natural extension of his grandparents' thrift — parcels in customer tiffins stamped with his quotes like "Plastic harms; choose earth." It echoes Sushila's resourcefulness, turning potential loss into a badge of honour amid Pune's plastic flood. This legacy of quiet revolution keeps ShriKrishna Bhuvan not just surviving, but thriving as Pune's green sentinel, where every spicy serving whispers of endurance.

From my grandmother's steel tiffins in rationing days to our zero-plastic parcels today — sustainability isn't new; it's our family's timeless way of honoring Pune and the planet.

— Atul Joshi, ShriKrishna Bhuvan



Misal Pav
Pohe
Bhaji
Kharwas
Sheera



YOUR CIRCLE OF HAPPINESS COMBINED WITH FLAVOURS



The concept at Thali Circle is as much about people as it is about food. The restaurant centers its identity on the idea of getting together with one's 'circle' — friends, family, or coworkers — for a reasonably priced, satisfying, and enjoyable lunch. The idea was to connect the circular thali with one's social circle, creating a space where "happiness revolves, where the flavours revolve." Everything from the circular thali format to the friendly, youthful vibe of the area is shaped with this approach.

In a busy area like Baner, people want set meals that is fresh, filling and practical at an affordable rates, served in hygienic settings that is exactly the gap we wanted to address.
— Team Thali Circle

Because of this combination, the menu feels both familiar and consistent, and the smaller-format thalis save waste and keep servings reasonable. The restaurant presents itself as a more diverse and affordable choice at a time when a single fast-food meal can cost just as much. Specially crafted Veg, Non-Veg, and Seafood Thalis deliver the unparalleled taste of Maratha delicacies, made using top-quality ingredients, traditional recipes, and a whole lot of love. It's where the joy of dining meets the comfort of home — a place where happiness comes full circle.

Likewise, the space reflects its target audience. Thali Circle aims to make the traditional thali feel less outdated and more in line with Baner's younger clientele: with rustic décor, whimsical Ghibli-inspired artwork, and youthful branding. The core of that commitment continues to be marked by their fresh cooking, attentive service, and affordability.

Here the formula is straightforward: "You just have to ensure that you are making a fresh product and delivering fresh vibes at an affordable pricing"



Kaala Mutton Fry Thali
Surmai Thali
Egg Curry Thali
VegThali
Pithla Bhakri Thali



Thali CIRCLE, Opposite Mauli Garden, next to Chitale Bandhu, Baner, Pune – 45 / For queries, call: 9156033227 / 9156033236

60 YEARS OF SANDWICHES AND MEMORIES

Where Camp's lively lanes in Pune breathe memories of the past, Marz-o-Rin has winged Pune's Timeless Treasure: 60 Years of Sandwiches and Memories

Where Camp's lively lanes in Pune breathe memories of the past, Marz-o-Rin has winged through 61 years like an ancient flame-born bird, Phoenix, Marzorin's logo depicts it. Founded by Sheriyar J Sheriyarji and his wife, Vijay Sheriyarji, this café, born in February 1965, started with just chutney, cheese, and chicken sandwiches plus cold coffee as a small one-room café. "My father-in-law came up with the name," recalls Shelley Jamshed Banerjee daughter-in-law and now a key force at Marz-o-Rin. "It's a proper noun meaning coral precious stone in Persian language."

It was Sheriyarji's wife, Vijay, who truly soared it skyward. For 51 years, she adapted to Pune's pulse, introducing whole wheat brown bread and multigrain options amid health trends. "She saw people wanting healthy food," Shelley shares, adding, "Our brown bread is whole wheat, no maida at all." Signature chutney sandwiches remain her father-in-law's legacy, made fresh in-house for quality that defies fast-food norms. "We make everything from scratch," Shelley stresses, adding, "That's how we control quality."

Nostalgia peaks in tales of three generations converging. "Grandpa, father, and son came separately with friends, stunned to reunite here," Shelley recounts, eyes misty. "We feel blessed." The old-world interiors, recently renovated yet charmingly intact, draw loyalists for consistent taste over Instagram gloss.

Must-tries? Chutney sandwich, prime burger for the young, and new Barista brews. As Pune grows, so does Marz-o-Rin — with Viman Nagar's Express, NIBM branch and more branches brewing. The secret behind their success and love? "Consistency and patience," Shelley replies, expressing her gratitude towards the city. "We love Pune, without Pune, we would not have been what we are today," she concludes.



If you want to enter the food industry, patience and consistency are key. In the first three years, don't expect profits — you need the tenacity to hold on for at least 3-4 years to see if it's working.

— Shelley Jamshed Banerjee



MUST-TRY

Chutney Sandwich
Chicken Sandwich
Cheese Sandwich
Cold coffee



◆ Bakhtiar Plaza, 6, MG Road, Opposite Bombay Store, Camp

Not your regular SOUTH INDIAN RESTAURANT

Yumma Swami's vision is straightforward yet unique: rather than concentrating on the cuisine of a single South Indian state, it brings together flavours from five different states. From Kerala and Tamil Nadu to Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the restaurant's menu is designed specifically to give Pune patrons a more comprehensive, all-encompassing experience of South Indian cuisine under one roof. Yumma Swami has outlets in Camp, Mukund Nagar, Chinchwad and Aundh.

Minal Shah, owner of Yumma Swami, was inspired to bring the idea to life through her travels, curiosity, and desire to serve familiar dishes in a more contemporary setting. Together with Chef Shailendra Kekade, the team developed a menu that introduces Pune to a more refined, fusion-style South Indian dining experience. The result is thus carefully curated: from pizza-style uttappam and the Filter Coffee Brownie, to crisp dosas, appam and stew, Bisi Bele Rice, and Chettinad-style dishes.

Many of its primary ingredients come straight from South India, helping the branch maintain the original character of its food and simultaneously appeal to younger audiences and Pune's shifting tastes.

Yumma Swami, which has stores all over Pune, keeps expanding thanks to that equilibrium.



Our goal is to build Yumma Swami into a household name for authentic yet contemporary South Indian food.

— Minal Shah, owner, Yumma Swami



MUST-TRY

Ghee Masala Dosa
Veg Chettinad with
Appam
Filter Coffee Brownie



- ◆ 2, Moledina Road, Cantonment, Camp, Pune
- ◆ Nakshtram L-3, SH/FL 29165/2; 166, Premlok Park, Chinchwad, Pimpri-Chinchwad
- ◆ Opposite Ratna Building, Mukund Nagar, Pune ITI Road Aundh, Pune

PACKING A PUNCH AND PROTEIN IN SNACKING



In a nation snacking its way to health crises, two brothers from Pune are rewriting the rules — one crunchy, protein-packed edamame at a time.

Shreyans Jeevan Lalwani and Samkit Subhash Bedmutha, co-founders of Pune Protein Company, didn't chase trends. Raised in Jain families with farming roots, they lived clean, vegetarian lives amid India's preservative-laden shelves. "Fitness was our lifestyle, but meeting protein needs felt unnecessarily hard," says Shreyans, a BBA LLB grad with a lawyer's precision. Samkit, with an MSc from Cranfield University, UK, adds the global strategy: "We saw obesity and fatigue becoming normal, even among the young. India was snacking wrong."

The spark ignited in 2024 during Japan and China expos, where edamame — a Ming Dynasty staple sustaining armies — shone as clean, functional fuel. Back home, with zero FMCG experience, they dove in. Completing MSME India's New Product Development course, they self-manufactured roasted edamame snacks, sourcing from Asia and perfecting every roast. Self-manufacturing ensured clean quality after sourcing Asian edamame and perfecting roasts. Debut flavours? Smokey BBQ, Sea Salt, Tomato Mexicano — crunchy, guilt-free bites.

Launched in December 2025, success exploded. Within eight weeks, they hit 40+ premium Pune outlets, e-commerce, pan-India D2C, B2B deals, premier specialty stores, and a rare airline in-flight partnership. In 45 days, they clinched First Place at Pune Startup Fest 2026's Health and Lifestyle category, winning over athletes and influencers.

"Healthy snacking should be a daily luxury you're proud to choose," Shreyans declares. Echoing similar sentiments, Samkit adds, "From Pune to the globe, this is just the opening chapter. We are planning to come up with multiple SKUs in the near future." Their revolution? Turning everyday munching into mindful strength.

While traveling through Japan and China at top food and wellness expos, we spotted what set longevity cultures apart: intentional eating, even in snacks — clean, functional, tradition-rooted. Edamame stole the show — a protein powerhouse with centuries of history, fueling populations and Ming Dynasty armies.

— Shreyans Jeevan Lalwani and Samkit Subhash Bedmutha, co-founders, Pune Protein Company



MUST-TRY

- Smokey Barbeque
- Sea Salt
- Tomato Mexicano

WEAVING INDIA'S FLAVOURS INTO FINE DINING



- MUST-TRY**
- Black Channa hummus
 - Tellichery Prawns
 - Paneer and Water Chestnut Ghee Roast
 - Bhutte ka Kees
 - Miso Truffle Ramen
 - Narrative Special Pizza
 - Nutty Aristocrat
 - Chardonnay Seas
 - Neapolitan Pizzas

In the heart of Pune's vibrant F&B scene, Narrative stands as a beacon of innovation, where owner Narendra Thakur reimagines Indian cuisine as living history. "Food is the most ancient form of storytelling," Thakur explains, shaping the bar's core concept around India's diverse local culinary tales. Ditching generic menus, Narrative invites guests to "read" regional cultures through bold flavors in a premium casual cocktails and dining space.

Challenging the notion that traditional recipes can't evolve, Thakur curates a menu that transforms generational dishes into a "symphony of flavours," honoring heritage while embracing the future. Signature plates like the Narrative Misal—Maharashtra's fiery breakfast staple refined into a sophisticated small plate—elevate hyper-local ingredients with contemporary techniques. Pahari Chausa Daal brings Uttarakhand's rustic black gram to life with white butter and slow-cooking; Prawn Rasam turns Southern coastal soup into a charred seafood broth; Manipuri Black Rice Crisps modernize Northeast "Kavuni" rice into nutty snacks; and Salmon Kokam Ceviche fuses Konkan tang with South American curing.

Thakur's all-day concoctions amplify these narratives, blending international spirits like gin or Japanese whiskey with local heroes — curry leaves, Gondhoraj lemons, Tellicherry peppercorns — evoking monsoons in Bengal or Kerala's spice markets. This sensory dialogue redefines fine dining in Pune's boom, prioritizing "experience-first" over white tablecloths, with transparent ingredients and creative depth.

Recent additions like the Golden Circle lounge signal bold evolutions. "Our menu will evolve with time and the readership," Thakur shares, planning unheard recipes from India's vast regions, collabs with established brands, mixologist bar takeovers, malts-and-meats pairings, and cigar lounge experiences with premium single malts. Narrative isn't just dining — it's Pune's premier storyteller for 2026.



We intend to introduce unheard recipes and ingredients across the vast and diverse regions of India. We are also exploring collaborations with other established brands to bring their culinary experiences for the Pune-kars.

— Narendra Thakur, owner, Narrative



◆ Narrative, 6, Koregaon Park Annexe, Mundhwa, Pune

THAT PLACE -
THE CAFE



PUNE'S HIDDEN GEM WHERE MASTERCHEF MAGIC MEETS MOMO MASTERY

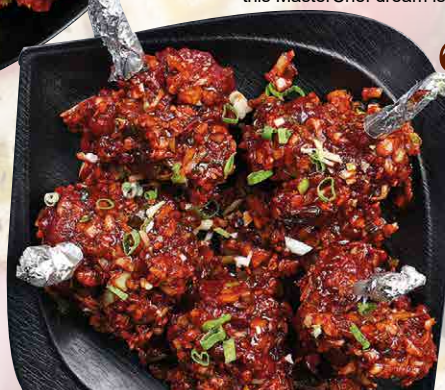
Nestled in Bavdhan's vibrant corners, Pune, That Place - The Cafe has quietly captured hearts as the ultimate neighbourhood escape. Founded by MasterChef India alumna Ashmita Banerjee, it weaves her TV-honed expertise into every plate, delivering not just coffee and bites, but a soulful mix of culinary artistry and warm hospitality that keeps locals hooked.

The menu is a delightful fusion: steaming Himalayan comfort foods, zesty Kolkata-style Chinese, and timeless Continental classics. But the star? The Himalayan-style momos — soft, intricately folded dumplings dunked in house-made chutneys that pack bold, authentic flavours. No wonder they clinched the Best Momo title at the prestigious Times Food & Nightlife Awards 2026 Pune, drawing foodies from across the city.

"It's all about honest ingredients and memories from my journey," shares Banerjee, whose MasterChef stint honed her edge. Beyond bites, the cafe's vibe seals the deal — warm lighting, plush seating, and a pet-friendly policy invite you to unwind. Live music nights, community events, and casual meetups transform it into Pune's cultural heartbeat.

In a trend-chasing cafe scene, That Place stands tall with sincerity. Flavours that comfort, energy that welcomes, and a belonging that lingers — reason enough for repeat visits. Swing by Bavdhan and discover why this MasterChef dream is Pune's next obsession.

What makes That Place - The Cafe stand out is its sincerity. In an era when many cafés chase trends, this one focuses on honest flavours, welcoming energy, and a genuine sense of belonging — qualities that keep people coming back again and again.
— Ashmita Banerjee, founder, That Place - The Cafe



- MUST-TRY**
- Hibiscus Iced Tea
 - Matcha lemonade
 - Pizza
 - Kolkata style hakka
 - Noodles
 - Thukpa
 - Sandwiches
 - Brownie

That Place - The Cafe, Shagun Nisarg Cooperative Housing Society, Shop No. 6 & 7, Hilltop Market Place 53/8, Bavdhan, Pune

PUNE'S SLICE OF ITALY



Da Nonna's Pizzeria in Deccan Gymkhana has grown its clientele by serving pizza that is based on authenticity rather than ever-changing trends. For owner Kailesh Kelkar, that means consistently choosing premium ingredients, some of them even sourced straight from Italy. The end product is a crisp and incredibly light pizza made with long-fermented dough, carefully balanced hydration, premium flour, San Marzano tomatoes and Fior di Latte.

With terracotta tones, communal tables, and the friendly comfort of a neighborhood trattoria, the restaurant's interiors reflect that same philosophy. According to Kelkar, the idea was to recreate the feeling of Sunday lunch at one's grandmother's home – Nonna, in Italian. It is a vision which sits naturally in a locality like Deccan Gymkhana because of its crowd, consisting of a mix of students, working professionals, and families.

Its menu offers a balance between more unique Italian flavors and existing classics. They have cultivated a loyal customer base for newer dishes like Buffalo Chicken, Rosatella, Mango Ravioli, Lasagne Roulade, and Tiramisu, in addition to commonly-found staples like the Margherita Pizza.

Fresh off a Times Food & Nightlife Award win, Da Nonna's is now looking ahead to add handcrafted pastas, summer specials and seasonal desserts to the menu. For Kelkar, the award is more than simply recognition, "it tells us that Pune values authenticity" and reminds the team that "craftsmanship still matters."



Our goal is simple: build profitably, scale responsibly, and never compromise on quality.
— Kailash Kelkar, owner, Da Nonna's Pizzeria

MUST-TRY

Recommendations
by Chef Harsh
@ Da Nonna's Pizzeria

- Rosatella
- Buffalo Chicken
- Tiramisu
- Mango ravioli
- Lasagne Roulade
- Margherita



◆ Da Nonna's Pizzeria, Dr Joshi Hospital Lane, Shreeman Society, Shivaji Nagar, Deccan Gymkhana, Pune

PAWS & LATTES

INSIDE PUNE'S FURRY CAFE TAKEOVER



Sunlight filters through the glass walls of a Koregaon Park cafe, glinting off a sea of floppy ears and twitching whiskers. A tabby cat lounges on a velvet cushion, batting at a feather toy, while a pack of pugs tussles playfully in a fenced playpen nearby. Baristas weave between tables, balancing trays of frothy cappuccinos and puppuccinos, as laughter mingles with joyful barks. Welcome to Pune's pet cafe revolution—where lattes meet leashes in a whirlwind of fur and fun.

In the bustling lanes of Koregaon Park and the leafy bylanes of Viman Nagar, these cozy havens are exploding. Blending caffeine kicks with canine cuddles, they've become must-visits for a city embracing its inner pet parents. With Pune's millennial boom—swapping babies for buddies—these spots redefine weekend vibes.

Picture this: A golden retriever named Bruno sprawls under a table, eyeing a puppuccino, while his owner scrolls Instagram. "It's not just coffee; it's therapy," says Priya Sharma, a 28-year-old IT professional and devoted dog mom. "In these cafes, my labradoodle socialises like never before. Post-pandemic, we all craved connection — pets included."

Cafe owners are quick to bark up the trend. "We saw the gap — pet lovers missing out on outings," shares the owner of a pet-friendly spot in Baner. "Hygiene protocols, vaccination checks, and separate zones keep it safe. Now, 60% of our crowd brings pets. It's community over commerce." These venues double as grooming hubs and adoption drives, fostering a paw-sitive ecosystem. Vegan treats for pets, playpens with toys, and even 'yappy hours' draw crowds, turning strangers into pack mates.

But it's not all fetch. Challenges like allergy concerns and space crunch persist. "We train staff on pet first-aid and enforce rules strictly," adds another owner from Aundh. "Pet parents love the vibe — it's like a dog park with Wi-Fi," he adds. For parents like Vikram Singh, a marketing exec, it's gold: "My husky gets exercise. I get my brekkie. Win-win in this hectic city."

Pune's pet cafe scene is more than a fad; it's a tail-wagging testament to evolving urban life. As these spots multiply — from quiet corners to Instagram-famous nooks — they're paw-ing the way for a furrer, friendlier future. Who's ready to leash up and latte?





PUNE'S SPICY GATHERING OF FLAVORS



Balewadi High Street buzzes with F&B spots, but Masala Mehfil, carves its niche with pure North Indian and Maharashtrian fare — no continental mixes, no exotic sauces and dips, its purely regional Indian. “We blend regional starters like Surmai Tawa Fry and Kaala Mutton Fry with tandoor kebabs and tikkas,” says the creator. The name evokes a lively ‘Masala Mehfil’—spiced gatherings with good music, Bollywood songs, and live sports screening.

At Masala Mehfil, every dish tells a story. Menu features an exquisite selection of succulent kebabs, flavorful biryanis, delicious curries, crafted using high-quality ingredients. For those seeking refreshing sips, for them bar offers an impressive array of handcrafted cocktails, mocktails, and premium beverages designed to complement every palate.

Whether it's the rich, coastal flavors of our Seafood Fry, the smoky perfection of our specialty Tikkas, the bold spices of traditional Maharashtrian Curries, every bite promises a memorable culinary experience. Embracing a warm, earthy design inspired by India's cultural heritage, this place is ideal for family get-togethers, festive occasions, corporate dinners, special celebrations, or relaxed evenings. With spacious seating, attentive service, and a welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere, Masala Mehfil delivers a vibrant and memorable dining experience from start to finish.

What lingers? “Fresh local flavors, cleanliness, humble staff — flexible a la carte or buffet menu for events, In Pune's dining scene, Masala Mehfil is loved for its homely magic.



MUST-TRY

- Mutton Tawa Fry
- Chicken Tikka Salad
- Shevga Fry
- Chicken Malvani Handi
- Veg Diwani Handi
- Chicken Tikka Biryani

WHAT LINGERS?
 “Fresh local flavors, cleanliness, humble staff — flexible a la carte or buffet menu for events, In Pune's dining scene, Masala Mehfil is loved for its homely magic.”

It is the simple things, the local and regional cuisine paired with great freshness, the vibes, the cleanliness of the place, and humility of the staff that makes Masala Mehfil stand out. The mantra is keeping it simple, keeping it perfect and keeping it homely.
 — Team Masala Mehfil



UPCOMING:
 Kebab Festival 2026 and Seafood Fest, plus seasonal dessert fare.



◆ Masala Mehfil, Solitaire Business Hub, Balewadi High Street, Beside Louis Philippe, Baner, Pune – 45. For queries, call: 8956740494 / 8956740495.

PUNE'S

GRAND F&B AND ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION

Gourmet Village at Phoenix Mall of the Millennium Wakad is Pune's new social heartbeat, proving malls can pulse with life's best flavours



Amid Wakad's ever-energetic landscape, Phoenix Mall of the Millennium introduces Gourmet Village, a dynamic alfresco dining destination that is steadily reshaping Pune's culinary narrative. The space has evolved into what is widely regarded as the city's finest dining street within a mall setting—an ambitious blend of global gastronomy, social energy, and immersive experiences.

Designed as a vibrant culinary hub, Gourmet Village brings together a curated mix of large-format restaurants, each offering distinct international cuisines. Drawing inspiration from bustling food districts in cities like Bangkok and Singapore, the concept adapts the essence of open-air dining—where food, music, and social interaction coexist—into a format tailored for Pune's urban audience. The result is not just a place to eat, but a space to gather, unwind,

and engage.

The alfresco format plays a central role in defining the experience. Open seating, ambient lighting, and a layout encouraging leisurely dining, complemented by menus built around shareable, flavour-forward dishes. At Eight Asian Restobar, sushi platters and dim sum baskets reflect the light, social nature of alfresco dining, while Caffè Allora pairs handcrafted cocktails with pizzas and pastas in a relaxed yet refined setting. The Irish House adds a familiar pub-style warmth, making it equally suited for casual evenings. Barbeque Nation enhances the offering with its popular unlimited buffet format, bringing interactive dining and indulgent spreads into the mix.

A key strength of Gourmet Village lies in its diversity. Daytime visitors gravitate toward cafés like Aromas Café and YouMee for quick bites, coffee meetings, and sushi cravings, while evenings

transition seamlessly into a more vibrant dining and nightlife atmosphere. Premium outlets such as Eight Asian Restobar and The Fusion Lounge take center stage after sunset, ensuring a fluid shift from laid-back afternoons to lively nights.

Entertainment further elevates the experience, positioning Gourmet Village as more than just a dining precinct. Live music performances, DJ sets, and cultural showcases—such as street acts and traditional performances—add an immersive layer that draws consistent footfall, particularly over weekends. The presence of local musicians and independent artists contributes to an authentic, community-driven vibe.

Extending beyond dining, the mall strengthens its experiential appeal with attractions like P52 Ice Skating Arena, Maharashtra's largest indoor ice-skating rink, offering visitors a unique recreational escape alongside the culinary offerings. This integration of food and entertainment reinforces the destination's all-day, all-ages appeal.

The destination also reflects evolving dining preferences. Health-conscious menus featuring high-protein, low-carb, and clean-eating options are becoming increasingly prominent at outlets like Ishaara and Punjab Grill.

The rhythm of Gourmet Village varies through the week. Weekdays see a steady mix of professionals, families, and small groups moving between cafés and casual dining spots, while weekends bring a surge in footfall, transforming the space into a lively social hotspot. A typical evening might begin with cocktails at PopTates, move on to Asian grills and sushi at Eight Asian Restobar, and conclude with desserts or coffee at PizzaExpress—an effortless progression that captures the spirit of the destination.

Beyond its immediate appeal, Gourmet Village signals a broader shift in Pune's retail and dining ecosystem. These spaces prioritize openness, community interaction, and multi-cuisine offerings over conventional food courts.

In essence, Gourmet Village is not merely an addition to Pune's dining map but a reflection of its evolving lifestyle—where food, atmosphere, and experience converge into one cohesive urban escape.



Representative AI image



WEEKDAYS ARE THE NEW WEEKENDS AT GOURMET VILLAGE

Gourmet Village buzzes every night of the week, not just weekends — friends, families, and young professionals hop seamlessly between cafés, restaurants, and live entertainment zones. Evenings draw strong footfall, swelling to several thousand across the mall, with the alfresco street stealing the spotlight.



NIGHT OUT AT A MALL? YES, YOU HEARD IT RIGHT!

Kick off your night with cocktails at PopTates, dive into sushi and Asian grills at Eight Asian Restobar, then sweeten the deal with coffee or dessert from Aromas Cafe — a flawless flow for Pune's ultimate night out.



Pair gourmet dishes with great concoctions



GOURMET VILLAGE: 1LAC SQ FT DINING DESTINATION INSIDE A MALL

Perched across the 3rd and 4th floors of Phoenix Mall of the Millennium in Wakad, Pune, Gourmet Village (formerly known as Eclectic Village) spans a massive 1 Lac sq ft as the ultimate premium dining and nightlife haven. This two-level gem curates an exciting lineup of restaurants, cafés, and bars—think Eight, YouMee, Asia Kitchen, and Punjab Grill — serving everything from bold Pan-Asian flavours to authentic Indian and Mediterranean delights.



Phoenix Mall of the Millennium, Shankar Kalat Nagar, Wakad, Pimpri-Chinchwad

BONDING OVER BOLD BITES AND BANTER



Cafe Kallol is a wave of flavour, fun, and fellowship. Picture the electric buzz of friends clinking glasses, laughter rippling like waves — that's 'Kallol,' the joyous sound of connection captured in this bold new cafe's name. Let the laughter echo. Let the conversations flow, its tagline invites.

Launched as a premium evolution after 18 years and nearly 100 branches under their prior brand, Cafe Kallol targets discerning diners with refined multi-cuisine delights. "We decided to introduce a premium concept to cater to customers with a higher spending capacity, offering a more refined and elevated dining experience," shares founder Shashank Mengade.

Signature sandwiches, panini, pizzas, pasta, and beverages shine through meticulous R&D, blending Maharashtrian classics with Italian and Chinese flair. Standouts like mushroom pot rice, Indianised pizzas, and fusion sandwiches deliver bold flavours and Instagram-worthy presentations using fresh ingredients. "What makes them unique is the extensive research and effort put into enhancing both taste and presentation," Mengade notes. Balancing affordability in the 'affordable premium' space, these value-for-money innovations nod to 2026 trends like vegan options, paired with live music and match screenings.

MUST-TRY

- Sandwiches
- Panini Sandwiches
- Pizzas
- Pasta
- Mushroom pot rice

With three formats — Kallol Prime (1500+ sq. ft.), Kallol Express (500-1500 sq. ft.), and Kallol Campus kiosks — the brand boasts seven thriving outlets across Pune, PCMC, Bengaluru, Kolhapur, and Navi Mumbai. Expansion to Chennai and Delhi is next on their minds.

A franchisee-friendly investor model sets Kallol apart. Strict, standard operating procedure (SOPs) ensure standardisation, while the team handles marketing, trained staff, and end-to-end operations. "This builds trust among investors," Mengade affirms, fueling pan-India growth.



Operating in a competitive environment means we constantly need to evolve. We have our own methods of marketing the brand, products, and outlets. It is a continuous process driven by strong focus on R&D and marketing strategies.

—Shashank Mengade, founder, Cafe Kallol



BREWING AN INDIAN COLD COFFEE REVOLUTION



In 2006, as India's coffee scene buzzed with pricey chains, a group of young visionaries dreamed up Café Durga — a no-frills haven for affordable, flavourful brews. "As youngsters back then, around 2006, we wanted an affordable alternative to expensive coffee chains like CCD," recalls Shashank Mengade, owner and co-founder and the brand's driving force. "The aim was to offer tastier options while creating a strong Indian coffee shop culture," he adds. Café Durga proves: Great coffee doesn't need hype — it needs heart.

What started as a single outlet has ballooned into 130+ strong outlets across 18 cities, built "brick by brick." Mengade credits relentless standardisation: "Strict SOPs are followed everywhere, and fully trained staff are provided to every franchise. From marketing and staff setup to complete operational systems, everything is handled by the team, making it a complete end-to-end solution for franchise partners." This investor-friendly model fosters trust, with many opening multiple outlets drawn by strong ROI.

At its heart, Café Durga's hero is its cold coffee. "We position ourselves as pioneers in this category, emphasising that our cold coffee is made using fresh milk, unlike others who use canned or powdered alternatives," Mengade says. Premium ingredients ensure top-grade taste, value, and consistency — whether for families or Gen Z crowds — in cosy, uniform ambiances.

Eighteen years on, relevance endures through quality and affordability. With eyes now turning towards a global audience, Mengade shares, "Looking ahead to 2026, Café Durga is planning international expansion. With growing demand from people abroad who are already familiar with the brand, the company aims to enter global markets once geopolitical conditions are favourable."

Our aim was to offer tastier options while creating a strong Indian coffee shop culture. From there, the brand grew steadily — brick by brick — expanding to 18 cities with over 130 running outlets.

— Shashank Mengade, owner and co-founder



Present in 130 running outlets across 18 cities

MATCHA MADE IN HEAVEN



MATCHA DESSERT & DRINKS DELIGHT PUNEITES

Matcha Mochi Ice Cream
Matcha Lava Cakes
Chocolate Matcha Truffles
Matcha Latte
Iced Matcha Tea
Rose Matcha Oat



Pune's Gen Z is matcha-mad, and the internet can't stop trolling. "Boomers called it 'swamp water,' millennials mocked the hype — but scroll Instagram, and #PuneMatcha boasts millions of neon-green lattes and desserts," laughs a content creator from Koregaon Park. This powdered green tea powerhouse, bursting with antioxidants and umami grassiness, has skyrocketed in city cafes, turning skeptics into converts amid wellness waves. From serene Japanese rituals to Pune's buzzing Koregaon Park cafes, matcha green tea has exploded onto the scene — and how!

Pune chefs rave about its magic. "Matcha transforms mundane into mesmerizing—think frothy lattes or ethereal cheesecakes that dance on the palate," says a celebrated patissier, whose Koregaon Park outpost features neon-swirled matcha tiramisu. A nutritionist based in Aundh, explains, "Its L-theanine delivers calm focus and catechins rev metabolism — ideal for Pune's high-octane professionals ditching coffee crashes."

Trolls aside, desserts rule: oozing matcha lava cakes, velvety ice creams, and charred basque cheesecakes. "Ditched cutting chai for Viman Nagar matcha latte—creamy rocket fuel pre-gym," raves IT whiz Neha Kapoor. Kalyani Nagar mixologist twists it: "Matcha martini? Herbal punch in glowing green—Pune nights leveled up." FC Road fan Arjun Mehta adds, "Those brownies? Fudgy with tea zing — addictively guilt-free." Social reels fuel the frenzy; #PuneMatcha trends with smoothie bowls and pancake stacks.

Mixologist Vikram Singh at a Kalyani Nagar bar innovates: "Matcha martini offers herbal depth and that stunning green hue — elevating Pune's nightlife." Food enthusiast Arjun Mehta concurs: "Matcha brownies from my FC Road haunt? Fudgy bliss with a fresh tea zing—no sugar overload."

From shade-grown leaves packing chlorophyll punch, matcha vibes with Pune's Osho-to-Olympics ethos. Instagram's algorithm loves it—viral affogatos and pancake towers prove the hype's here to stay. Trolls? Just jealous. Green is Pune's unstoppable glow-up.

Sourced from shade-grown leaves for peak chlorophyll, matcha fits Pune's health hub vibe — Osho retreats to gym culture. As cafes like those in Baner push affogatos and cocktails, it's reshaping palates. Green isn't just trending; it's Pune's new daily ritual.

Gen Z is obsessed with matcha tea because it's the ultimate vibe check — creamy lattes that taste like fresh grass meadows, minus coffee's crash, plus that Insta-green glow for my Reel. Trolls call it 'swamp water,' but one sip of iced matcha with oat milk? Pure zen energy for late-night scrolls and gym sesh — health hack disguised as aesthetic heaven.

— Sneha Gaikwad, 22, student at Fergusson College



THE TASTE OF PUNE'S SWEET SUMMERS

Few names are as deeply woven into Pune's culinary memory as Sujata Mastani. Founded in 1967, it began with a simple idea: to create something exceptional for the residents of the city, at a time when stepping out for dessert was an occasion in itself. Now, decades later, the establishment continues to pass on that same sense of tradition and joy to newer generations, one glass at a time.

The family behind the brand emphasizes the importance of "never chasing new trends" and instead concentrating on "just doing one thing exceptionally well, that is, maintaining taste and consistency". The best example of this philosophy is their best-selling Mango Mastani. Made entirely from fresh Alphonso mangoes from Konkan, it's that drink which perfectly embodies the spirit of Pune's summer, something which the team describes as "purity, indulgence, and consistency".

As Pune evolves, Sujata Mastani does too. They have successfully maintained the same emotional connection it has had with generations of clients for years, whilst simultaneously boosting operations, standardising the business and categorically prioritizing hygiene. The family's philosophy is that continuity is the true test of success, they believe, "If families who visited us decades ago now bring the next generation to Sujata Mastani, that is our biggest achievement". This is precisely the reason why it remains at the heart of the city's dessert culture.



MUST-TRY

- Mango Mastani
- Sitaphal Mastani
- Strawberry Mastani



Our biggest challenge was not just growing with the city, but doing so without losing the essence of what made us special.
— Team Sujata Mastani

📍 Outlets across Pune



PUNERI MISAL PAV GOES GLOBAL

Remember the misty Pune mornings, bicycle bells chiming as you queued at the corner stall? That first fiery spoonful of misal pav — sprouts swimming in pungent gravy, farsan crunch yielding to pillowy pav—transports every Puneekar back to simpler days. Pune’s iconic misal pav recently has stormed global stages, securing the 18th spot on TasteAtlas’s list of the world’s 50 best breakfasts. This quintessential Maharashtrian street food—ranked among the top 100 street foods worldwide — marks a proud milestone for Pune, thrusting its spicy legacy into international spotlights.

PUNE’S HEARTBEAT

Hailing from the heart of Maharashtra, misal pav embodies bold flavours: a pungent curry of moth beans, spiced with ginger-garlic, chili, and kokum, topped with sev, onions, tomatoes, and coriander. Devoured with buttered pav, it’s fuel for Pune’s bustling mornings. “Misal pav is Pune’s heartbeat—spicy, unapologetic, and utterly addictive,” beams a veteran vendor from Fergusson College Road.

Pune’s misal scene thrives on authenticity amid innovation. Century-old haunts draw purists with rustic usal and ghee-drizzled pav, while modern joints experiment with vegan twists or milder spice levels for diverse palates. Delivery apps report spike in order spikes post-ranking, fueled by viral challenges and influencer hunts.

“First bite in Pune, and I was hooked—the heat builds like a monsoon storm,” raves expat food blogger. Locals like IT pro Karan Joshi add, “It’s my daily ritual; now the world’s waking up to our secret.”

NOSTALGIA ON A PLATE

“It’s surreal seeing my childhood staple on a world list. Now, my London-based kids crave it weekly,” shares expat homemaker Sunita Kulkarni. Chefs credit authenticity: no shortcuts on the usal base or ratalu farsan. Local festivals now feature “global misal” twists, pairing it with quinoa for health-conscious twists.

For lifelong Puneekars and migrants who’ve made Pune home — from Delhiites in Hinjewadi to Bengalis in Koregaon Park — misal pav is an emotional anchor. “It takes me to grandma’s kitchen in Kolhapur, where Sundays meant endless refills,” reminisces Rita Naik, a retiree. Its magic lies in nostalgia: the spice symphony of ginger, garlic, chili, and kokum evokes childhood adventures, college canteen banter, and rainy-day warmth. Outsiders fall hard too—“As a Mumbaikar, it hooked me with its bold chaos; Pune feels like family now,” shares transplant Aditya Rao.



MISAL AND ITS VARIANTS

- Puneri misal
- Kolhapuri misal
- Nashik misal
- Khandeshi /
- Ahmednagar-style misal
- Dahi (curd) misal

COME FOR THE VIBE, STAY FOR THE VIEW



Perched high above the bustle of NIBM, Velora - Rooftop Restaurant is a vibe. "Velora means a good vibe, a certain brightness," says owner Sahil Aftab Shaikh, who envisioned a space where time slows down and the evening breeze becomes part of the experience.

What began as a purely continental concept soon evolved into a more inclusive menu. A candid remark from his grandmother — missing the comfort of dal-roti — led to the addition of Indian cuisine, while the growing popularity of Asian fare brought sushi and baos into the mix. Today, crowd favourites range from Pepper Cheese Pops to Truffle Mushroom Baos, reflecting a menu that balances comfort with trend. "The way to the heart goes through the stomach," he asserts.

Behind the scenes, sourcing quality ingredients and building reliable vendor relationships took persistence. "If you give time to something,

it gives back," Shaikh reflects. At just 24, and a first-generation restaurateur inspired by Sanjeev Kapoor, he credits his team for maintaining consistency during peak hours.

Looking ahead, Shaikh dreams of positioning Velora as a premium, experience-driven brand — where food, like music, flows in harmony, leaving diners with more than just a meal, but a memory.



I aim to position Velora as a premium brand in Pune — one that people perceive differently. We don't just serve food; we serve experiences, something still rare in the city, and that's what I want every guest to take away.

— Sahil Aftab Shaikh,
owner, Velora - Rooftop Restaurant



Truffle Mushroom Bao
Pepper Cheese Pops
Cream of Coconut



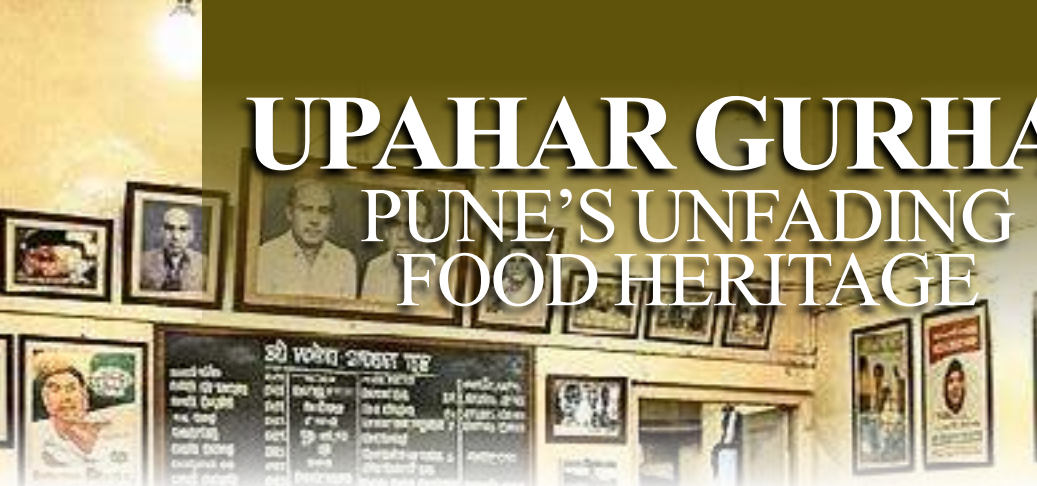
Pair cooling mocktails with your favourite dishes



4th Floor, Prime Landmark Building,
Nanak Society, Salunkhe, Kondhwa, Pune

UPAHAR GURHAS

PUNE'S UNFADING FOOD HERITAGE



WHAT DEFINES A TRADITIONAL UPAHAR GRUHA?



The Menu: The focus is on Swayampak (home-style cooking). You will rarely find fusion food here. The staples include Misal Pav, Thalipeeth, Sabudana Khichadi, Kothimbir Vadi, and Batata Vada.

The Ambiance: Expect simple wooden benches or marble-top tables, often in heritage buildings with high ceilings and whirring fans.

The "Puneri" Culture: In many older spots, there is a sense of disciplined efficiency. They are famous for serving "limited" portions that are nutritionally balanced.

The Beverages: No meal is complete without a hot "Cutting" Chai or a glass of chilled, spiced Taak (buttermilk).

Whether you're drawn to the iconic 'hole in the wall' eateries that have been captivating foodies for decades, the trendy cafes that are a favourite hangout spot for Gen Z, or the traditional thali joints, Pune offers a diverse and delightful culinary experience. Alongside its rich heritage in art and culture, the city boasts a range of gastronomical delights. No matter how many new cafes and restaurants — which keep up with global trends like avocado toast and bubble teas — Puneers cannot stop loving age-old eateries, which are nothing short of heritage places in the city.

Pune's upahar gruha are the heartbeat of the city's culinary identity, blending humble eateries and age-old recipes in a symphony of spice and simplicity. Upahar gruha — those no-frills "meal houses" — are timeless sentinels, often century-old spots dishing out misal pav, sabudana khichdi, and thalipeeth with recipes unchanged for generations.

These timeless upahar gruha embody Pune's unshakeable culinary soul, where the clock seems to pause amid the clatter of steel plates and the steam of pressure cookers. Tucked into narrow lanes or bustling market corners, these modest establishments have fed generations with unwavering rituals: fluffy puris dunked in fiery kala masala bhaji at dawn, or heaping thalis brimming

with bhakri, usal, and solkadhi under whirring fans. They're more than meal spots—they're time capsules, where families mark birthdays, students cram for exams, and weary workers find solace in a familiar sabji.

What makes upahar gruha eternal? Their simplicity defies trends. No glossy menus or fusion experiments; just honest, seasonal Maharashtrian fare honed over decades. "My father brought me here as a boy; now I bring my son—same table, same taste," muses a regular at a FC Road staple, savouring matki usal. These haunts resist the pull of air-conditioned chains, their walls etched with faded photos of smiling owners and loyal patrons. In Koregaon Park's hip shadows or Deccan Gymkhana's quiet nooks, they stand as anchors, whispering that true flavor needs no filter.

Pune's food scene thrives on this duality: global gloss meets gritty roots. Yet, upahar gruha remind us — heritage isn't preserved in museums; it's relished bite by bite, generation after generation.

The term Upahar Gruha () is a Marathi phrase that literally translates to "House of Refreshments." In Maharashtra, and particularly in cities like Pune and Mumbai, these establishments are cultural institutions rather than just restaurants.

They are characterized by their focus on traditional Maharashtra snacks, quick service, and a distinct, no-frills "old-world" charm.

ICONIC UPAHAR GRUHAS OF PUNE

Vaidya Upahar Gruha (Budhwar Peth): One of the oldest in the city (est. 1910), famous for its unique green-chili-based Misal.

Shree Upahar Gruha (Sadashiv Peth): A go-to for many locals for its authentic Sabudana Khichadi and Misal.

New Poona Guest House (Laxmi Road): Known for traditional Maharashtrian Thalipeeth and sweet Puran Poli.





CLASSY VIBES MATCHES KILLER BITES

Pune's nightlife just got a shiny new badge of honour at the Times Food & Nightlife Awards, with Aniket Atram's Highland NIBM snagging Best Casual Night Out Bar and Neighbourhud | All Day Bistro, Baner, claiming Best All Day Casual Dining. The man behind these buzzing spots? A former engineer who swapped spreadsheets for spice blends and shaker tins. Aniket, a food-cocktail obsessive who founded both these brands, shares the highs, hurdles, and horizon. "It feels very good, but it also feels like a responsibility to keep the momentum going. We're so motivated," says Aniket, explaining the most exciting part of being a restaurateur, "Every day brings a new challenge and learning. It was exciting and pressurising, but I thrive under pressure, so it worked out in my favour."

Highland launched in 2021 as a NIBM side project, evolving from a taken-over café into a renovated vibe haven after four buzzing years. "Touchwood, people have loved it—we finally shaped it to our vision: pocket-friendly yet classy," the 33-year-old says. It's the go-to for everyday unwinds, now primed for Pune expansions and beyond, even international whispers. Neighbourhud, two years in, amps the energy. It's for everyone — corporate crowds, families, youth — with a dance floor fostering real community in a 'hood.'

Signature bites no one should miss? Highland's Chicken Bakarwadi and Shevpav Burger—unique curations you won't find elsewhere, despite copycats. At Neighbourhud, Coorgi Mushroom and Not-so Aloo Tikki, both massive hits. Concoctions elevate without overshadowing. Highland's The Legends menu suits every palate. "Try Utha Le Re Baba inspired by Baburao's iconic line," Aniket recommends. Bars are now 'no-gos' near homes, but we're resto-bars with stellar food. Our signatures keep people coming back," he adds.



Pune's regulated nightlife is long overdue—better than flouting rules.

But F&B deserves respect. We're not 'servants' — it should be happy vibes, no fights. Safety's everything: if guests are too drunk to drive, our valet takes them home or we book a cab — they wait safe.

— Aniket Atram, founder, Highland NIBM & Neighbourhud | All Day Bistro, Baner

MUST-TRY

at Highland

- Chicken Bakarwadi
- Shevpav Burger
- Utha Le Re Baba

- Must-try Neighbourhud
- Coorgi Mushroom
 - Not-so Aloo Tikki



- ◆ Highland NIBM, Elina Living Rd, Mohammed Wadi, Pune
- ◆ Neighbourhud | All Day Bistro, Baner, Shop No. 9-10, Athashri Society, Pancard Club Rd, Baner, Pune

PUNE'S LOVE AFFAIR WITH RASSA

Pune masterfully blends tradition and modernity, its streets alive with the sizzle of spices and the soul-stirring aroma of rassa — a fiery broth that's more than food; its communal warmth and culinary heritage. From roadside stalls to lively eateries, this simmering elixir pulses through the city, embodying Pune's unquenchable passion. Rassa is a dish that continues to evolve and adapt, reflecting the changing tastes and preferences of Pune's while remaining true to its roots.

Translating simply to 'juice' or 'broth,' rassa delivers a complex symphony of roasted spices, slow-cooked proteins, and regional twists. Meat lovers rave about mutton rassa: tender chunks in a dark, tamarind-kissed gravy. "It's a bold hug from the spices — comforting yet electrifying," shares one chef. Tambada rassa's deep red hue, from fiery chilies, contrasts pandhara rassa's creamy white allure of coconut milk and cashews. "The white version soothes like a gentle monsoon after the heat," notes a gastronome. Kolhapuri variants amp up the lavangi mirchi intensity, drawing crowds citywide.

Vegetarian renditions shine too. Katachi amti, tangy with chana dal and kokum, proves rassa's versatility. "Even without meat, it sings with layered flavors," enthuses a foodie.

MARATHA INFLUENCE

Maratha history forged rassa's hearty profile for warriors and workers.

The Peshwa era elevated everyday fare into refined delights.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS

While meat-based rassa holds a special place in Pune's heart, vegetarian versions are equally cherished. Katachi Amti, a tangy and spicy broth made from chana dal and kokum, is a staple in many Maharashtrian households and restaurants. It's a testament to the city's ability to create flavourful and satisfying vegetarian dishes.

SPICE BLENDS

Rassa's soul is its masala — roasted coriander, cumin, and chilies tailored by region or home cook, crafting aromatic depth.

RASSA ON THE GO

Pune's vibrant street food scene also embraces rassa. From roadside stalls serving steaming bowls of mutton rassa with bhakri to small eateries offering quick and affordable misal pav with a spicy rassa, the city offers a multitude of options for rassa enthusiasts. Joints at Shivajinagar, serve a misal with a unique rassa that has a dedicated following. The balance of spices and the generous use of farsan make it a truly memorable experience.

BEYOND THE PLATE

Rassa is a cultural symbol that embodies the city's warmth, hospitality, and love for good food. It's a dish that brings people together, fostering a sense of community and shared experience. Whether it's a family gathering, a celebration, or a casual meal with friends, rassa is always a welcome presence, adding a touch of spice and warmth to the occasion.

PUNE'S VIBRANT GATEWAY TO MIDDLE EASTERN FLAVOURS

Step into Souk by Cafe Arabia in Kondhwa, Pune, and you're whisked away to a bustling Middle Eastern souk — vibrant, aromatic, and pulsing with bold tastes. Director Kunal Jagwani, inspired by frequent Dubai sojourns, birthed this modern quick-service gem. "The word 'Souk' refers to traditional marketplaces, bringing different Middle Eastern dishes together under one roof," he explains. Back then, shawarma and hummus dotted Pune's scene, but a full authentic menu? Elusive. Therefore, he unveiled a lineup and experience far beyond hummus and pita — a flavorful odyssey.

Bold Mediterranean spices marry effortlessly with Indian palates: smoky grilled meats, pillowy fresh breads, zesty herbs dancing on the tongue. "We keep our recipes authentic but make small adjustments so the flavours feel comfortable," Jagwani shares. The ambience? A warm, lively embrace — ideal for swift bites, family feasts, or lingering chats with friends.

Sourcing marries local vibrancy (veggies, meats) with imported treasures like za'atar and sumac for uncompromised purity. Along with the traditional version, it also serves hummus with toppings like grilled chicken, mushrooms, or roasted vegetables. These combinations make the dish more filling while still keeping the original flavour of hummus.

The hurdle? Acquainting Pune with these novelties — yet shared flavours convert skeptics. Seasonal delights, like Ramzan and winter specials, infuse novelty without fanfare, ensuring daily bliss.

"We will continue improving the menu, exploring new ideas, and hopefully expanding to more locations in the future. At the end of the day, our focus will always remain the same — serving fresh and flavourful Middle Eastern food that people can enjoy regularly," Jagwani affirms.

The idea was to create a place where people can come in for a quick bite, enjoy a relaxed meal with family, or simply spend time with friends. We wanted the space to feel comfortable and easygoing so people can enjoy the food without it feeling too formal.

— Kunal Jagwani,
director, Souk by Cafe Arabia



MUST-TRY

- Mezze platter
- Fattoush Shawarma
- Shish taouk
- Mixed grill platter.
- Kabasa rice
- Baklava

Shop No.05, Brij Bhavan Society, Salunke Vihar Road, near ABC Farms, Kondhwa, Pune.



ESCAPE WITHIN REACH

For Pune's weekend-weary urbanites, a staycation no longer means a crowded hotel in town. It's a quiet farmhouse, a bamboo treehouse, or a centuries-old fort that swaps traffic horns for birdsong and city lights for starlit skies. These escapes, all within a two-hour drive, offer the perfect blend of comfort and countryside calm. Each of these properties offers a different flavour of escape — farm, forest, river, heritage — but all deliver the same promise: a break that feels like a holiday, without the long haul.

OLEANDER FARMS LUXURY RESORT

Nestled in the lap of greenery, Oleander Farms is a picture-perfect farmhouse retreat that feels like a family compound. Long verandas, open lawns and bonfire nights make it ideal for groups looking for space to unwind and play.

Location: Karjat

THE MACHAN - A TREEHOUSE RESORT

Perched among trees, Machan turns a staycation into a forest-meets-luxury experience. The treehouse-style rooms and river-side setting invite guests to slow down and soak in the enveloping stillness.

Location: Lonavala

FORT JADHAVGARH

Jadhavgarh Fort, approximately 316 years old and built in 1710 by Pilaji Jadhavrao, has found a new life as a staycation escape near Pune. Perched on a hilltop, the fort blends heritage grandeur with contemporary comfort, turning a weekend into a mini-historical retreat rather than just a hotel stay. Guests can spend a lazy staycation exploring ramparts at sunset, unwinding in heritage-style rooms and soaking in the quiet drama of surrounding valleys. Away from city noise but still within reach, Fort Jadhavgarh offers short-break travellers a dose of old-world charm with the ease of modern amenities.

Location: Jadhavwadi

MALHAR MACHI MOUNTAIN RESORT

Set along the banks of a river, Malhar Macchi offers a serene, back-to-nature escape. The property's open design and simple elegance make it perfect for couples and small families seeking quiet time.

Location: Mulshi

PROJECT KARJAT - FOREST LIVING

A curated weekend escape in Karjat, Project Karjat blends rustic charm with modern hospitality. With curated experiences, farm-to-table meals and curated camps, it suits those who want a bit of adventure without roughing it.

Location: Wavarle

JALSRUSHTI ISLAND RESORT

An eco-conscious retreat, Jal Shrusti focuses on sustainability and harmony with the surroundings. From organic touches in the food to the natural materials in the architecture, it speaks to conscious travellers.

Location: Mulshi

WHERE CAMP GOES TO UNWIND



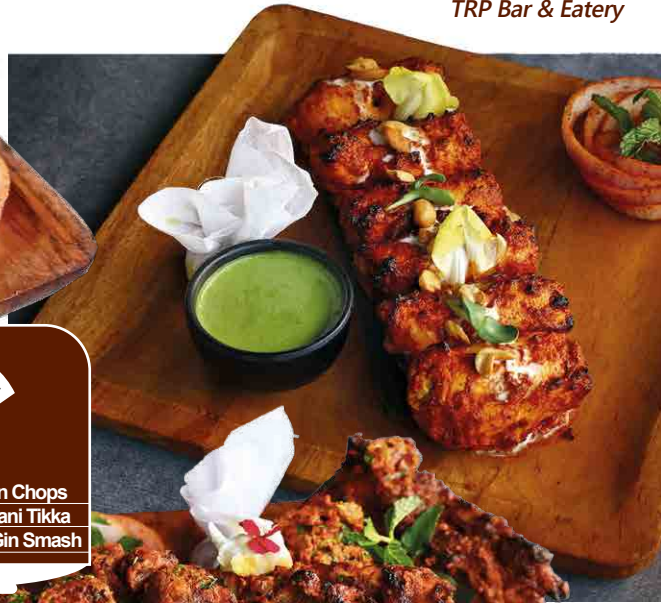
TRP Bar & Eatery is a contemporary-styled addition to Camp's existing dining scene, offering a contrast to the area's usual old-school charm. TRP Bar & Eatery has two different moods at the same time: one is of a quieter, cozier, and more family-friendly vibe, while the other is more social and upbeat. "The duality here is part of what makes this place so appealing, as it can easily go from a relaxed lunch to even a wild night out with friends," says Harshul Paryani, partner at the TRP.

TRP was founded with the idea of creating a space which was capable of catering to the needs of very different crowds of people. "It is the ideal hangout spot for families who have lived in the area for a long time, students from nearby schools and colleges, couples, and younger diners looking for a lively place to eat that isn't too busy," adds Anshul Garg who founded TRP with Paryani. The restaurant's open rooftop setting makes it especially attractive for people looking for a perfectly laid-back scene.

The food, though, is what makes the TRP experience real and unique. Instead of relying on marketing and presentational gimmicks, its menu is based entirely on good quality, authentically strong flavors and familiar comfort foods, like the Bara Mutton Chops, the Paneer Zafrani Tikka, and cocktails like the Elderflower Gin Smash. It's exactly the type of food for which people will want to keep coming back for.



People actually come here to eat. We keep our basics right, flavours right, and food simple.
— Harshul Paryani and Anshul Garg, partners, TRP Bar & Eatery



MUST-TRY
Bara Mutton Chops
Paneer Zafrani Tikka
Elderflower Gin Smash



◆ TRP Bar & Eatery, 6th floor, Tej House, 5, MG Road



'HOPPY' HIGH ON MRP

Pune's nightlife is evolving with the surge of quarter bars, where drinks are served in affordable quarter-bottles, making evenings out accessible for everyone. This trend reflects the city's booming IT sector and young crowd seeking budget-friendly unwinding spots.

Pune has seen a sharp rise in bar licenses, with approximately 125 new ones issued in early 2024 alone, fueling the quarter bar phenomenon. These no-frills venues, often called "uncle bars," offer drinks at MRP or near it, paired with simple snacks like chakli and peanuts, drawing crowds from Hinjewadi and beyond. Post-Covid IT growth has amplified demand, turning areas like Baner, Viman Nagar, and Koregaon Park into hotspots for these pocket-friendly haunts.

Patrons rave about the value. "Nothing can

beat the old-school quarter system—cheap drinks and that classic vibe," shares a nostalgic regular. Another IT professional says, "Beverages at INR 99 during happy hours? Perfect for de-stressing without burning a hole in my pocket." A visitor adds, "Huge space, cheap beverages, and street-style food — ideal for groups on a budget"

Quarter bars thrive on affordability, with meals for two averaging INR 1,200-1,400, versus pricier establishments. They cater to Pune's urban millennials craving casual hangs minus dance floors or cover charges. This shift democratizes nightlife, blending tradition with modern hustle.

As Pune's social scene matures, quarter bars signal a vibrant, inclusive era — proof that good times needn't cost a fortune.



BAKING JOY INTO EVERY BITE

When chef Shruti Kapre traded her cubicle in IT for the oven of a home-based bakery, she didn't know it would lead to a full-fledged European-inspired café in the heart of Pune. What began as Midnight Kakerly — a small, late-night bakery run from her kitchen — eventually grew into Felice, a space that blends French pastry training from Le Cordon Bleu, London with the warmth of an Indian family table. "Felice started as a way to put my bakery education to good use," says Shruti, "and to move from just cakes to French pastry, breads and an all-day dining menu."

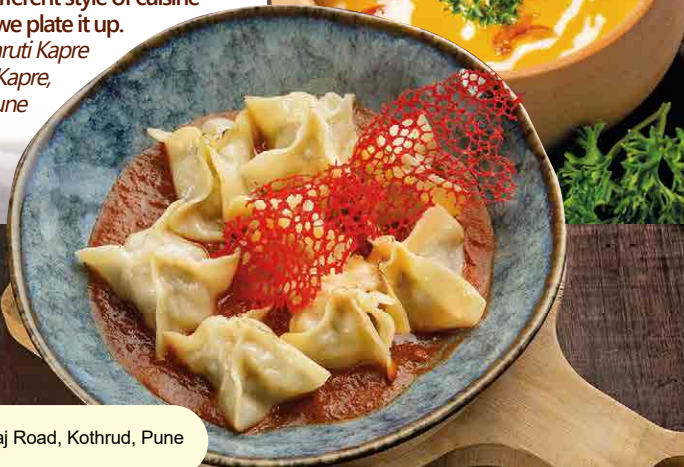
Standing alongside her every step of the way is her husband, Prasad Kapre, who has quietly knit the logistics of expansion into the emotional core of the brand. The move to the new location was driven by a simple idea: share this joy with more people. "We wanted a larger audience, more space, a bigger menu and that all-day-dining feel," Shruti explains, "but never at the cost of our ethos — the joy of serving delicious food."

Felice stakes its place in Pune's crowded food scene on authenticity, not gimmicks. "Authentic for us means great ingredients, time-tested techniques and serving with love," she says. Imported butter, chocolate and berries, paired with Italian-inspired interiors that echo Santorini and Rome, help diners feel transported. Signature dishes — like the Thecha and Creamy Corn Croissant Sandwich or coconut-raspberry-salted-caramel-brownie ice cream — marry Maharashtra staples with European technique.

"We're not just a restaurant," Prasad adds. "We're a moment that people remember." And for Pune's evolving gourmet palate, Felice has become exactly that — intimate, adventurous, and always warm. "We are a European inspired restaurant, but have successfully managed to amalgamate the Indian flavours into it. Our menu eases the customer into the gourmet culture and exposes them to a variety of options. We hope for Felice to become this trailblazer that introduces people to the dining," he



Pune, as a city, has opened up to gourmet and fine dining restaurants over the last few years. The market is filling up with fancy places and cuisines from across the world. What Felice adds to the scene is a different style of cuisine and how we plate it up.
— Chef Shruti Kapre and Prasad Kapre, Felice Pune



- MUST-TRY**
- Thecha and Creamy Corn Croissant Sandwich
 - Coconut-raspberry-salted-caramel-brownie ice cream
 - In-house Sourdough Breads

📍 Gulawani Maharaj Road, Kothrud, Pune

BREAKIES ARE THE NEW DATES



In the misty mornings of Pune, where the aroma of filter coffee mingles with the sizzle of dosas, a quiet revolution is brewing. Forget candlelit dinners and late-night cocktails — breakfast dates are stealing the spotlight in the city's food and beverage scene. Young couples, millennials, and even Gen Z foodies are swapping sunset soirées for sunrise rendezvous, turning early hours into the hottest ticket in town.

Why the shift? It's all about the vibe. "Mornings feel fresh and unhurried, like starting the day with someone special instead of squeezing romance into exhausted evenings," says Aisha, a 28-year-old marketing exec who frequents weekend brunch spots with her partner. Mornings offer golden-hour light, fewer crowds, and that rare luxury: time to linger over conversations without the rush of nightlife deadlines.

Chefs in Pune's kitchens are leaning in hard. "Breakfast lets us play with bold flavours — think fluffy pancakes with chilli-infused syrup or avocado toasts spiked with local herbs — without the dinner pressure," shares Chef Rohan, who's revamped his menu to spotlight dawn delights. "Guests arrive energized, experiment more, and tip better too." His peers agree: the breakfast boom taps into health-conscious trends, with smoothie bowls, egg-white scrambles, and gluten-free parathas drawing crowds who want romance minus the guilt.

Restaurant owners see it as a smart pivot. "Post-pandemic, people crave

low-key connections. Breakfast slots fill up faster than dinners now—it's 30% more bookings on weekends," reveals the owner of a cosy café in Koregaon Park. "We're extending hours, adding live acoustic sets at 9 AM, and creating 'couple nests' with window seats for that Instagram-worthy glow." Another owner, Vikram, nods to the economics: "Lower ingredient costs in the morning mean better margins, and it turns one-time diners into regulars."

Data backs the buzz — Pune's F&B spots report a 40% spike in morning reservations over the last year, fueled by social media reels of heart-shaped waffles and shared platters. "It's intimate yet public; you bond over food without the formality," quips Sameer, a 32-year-old techie on his third breakfast date of the month. For women like Nisha, a freelance designer, it's empowering: "No awkward goodbyes at midnight — end with coffee and plans for the day ahead."

As Pune's sun rises higher, breakfast dates aren't just a trend; they're the new language of love — crispy, comforting, and full of promise. Who knew the most romantic meal was the first one?



We have been making poha chiwda since pre-independence, and it still sells the most today. In fact, there's so much demand that people don't even need to call it poha chiwda—they just say Laxminarayan chiwda. Its generic name is poha, but it's referred to by the brand name, Laxminarayan chiwda, of course with love.

— Prashant Data,
managing director, Babus
Laxminarayan Best Chiwda

80 YEARS OF CRUNCHY, PACKET-WRAPPED MEMORIES

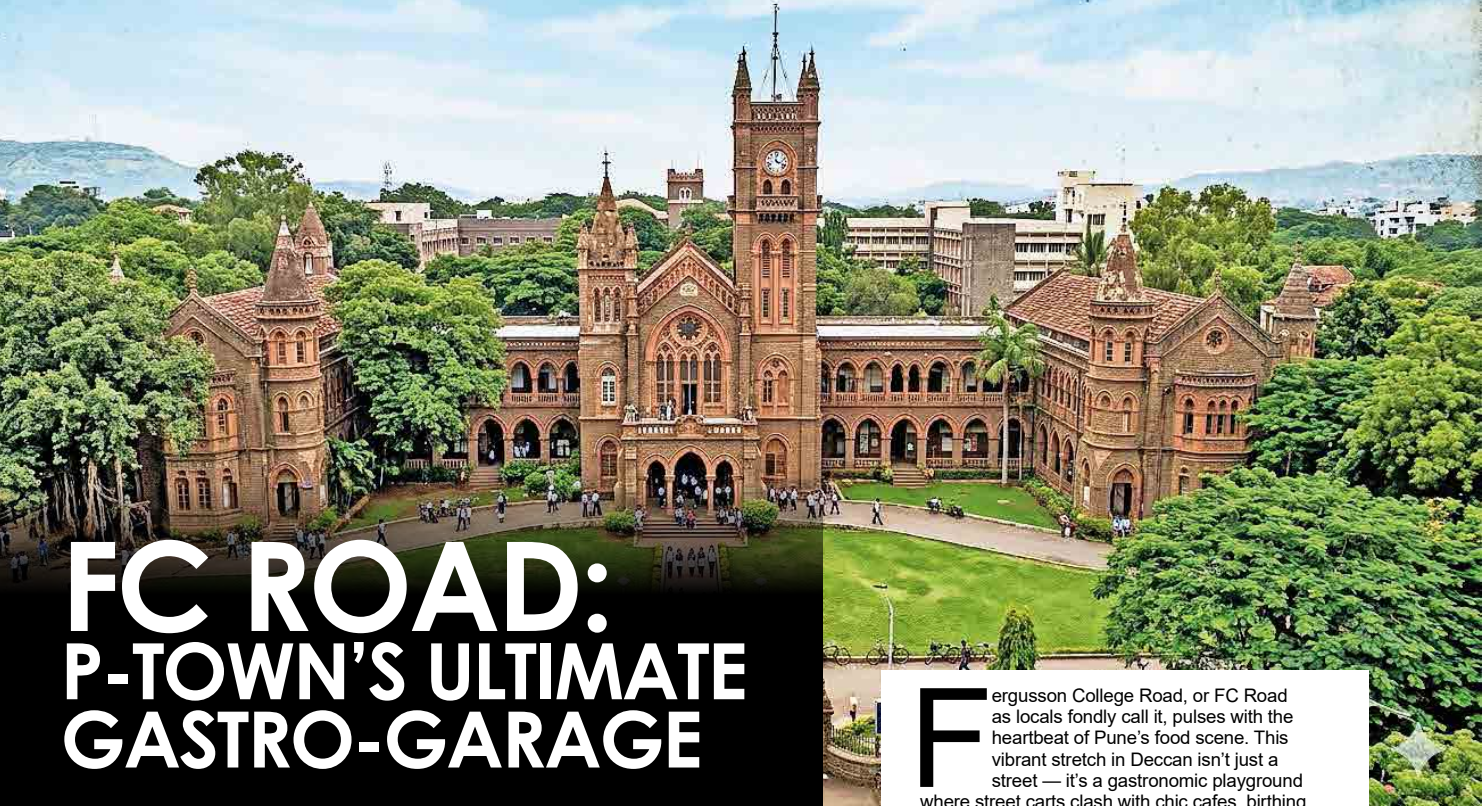
In Pune's bustling snack scene, Babus Laxminarayan Best Chiwda stands as a timeless icon, its red packets evoking nostalgia across generations. Founded over 80 years ago by Laxminarayan Ganeshmal Data — who hand-pushed carts selling chiwda on Deccan Queen trains after struggles in Kabul and Rangoon (Yangon) — the brand registered its trademark pre-1947 through savvy sampling.

After Data's passing in 1973, 17-year-old son, Babulalji Data modernised it with machines like coconut slicers and SOPs inspired by Japanese methods, ensuring unchanged taste amid mechanisation. Prashant Data, current managing director, grew up amid the factory-home-shop synergy. "My entire childhood... up to 8th-9th standard, my factory and home were one," he recalls, learning chiwda-making from grinding peanuts to full mixing.

Pune's evolution hasn't dimmed its appeal. "Laxminarayan Chiwda is widely used for gifting... people have been connected to it since ancient times," says Prashant, citing tales of elders bringing grandkids for poha chiwda, now generically called by the brand name. He adds that those visiting Pune from overseas — or travelers heading abroad — never forget to carry packets of Laxminarayan Chiwda for snacking or gifting to relatives and friends.

Adapting yet rooted, they've cut oil for health norms, added millet flakes like jowar, and eye WhatsApp bots. With fourth-generation entry, Prashant muses, "This has been running for 80 years, now think how to run it for another 80." Every festival season — from Diwali faral to travel snacks — blending tradition with tech.





FC ROAD: P-TOWN'S ULTIMATE GASTRO-GARAGE

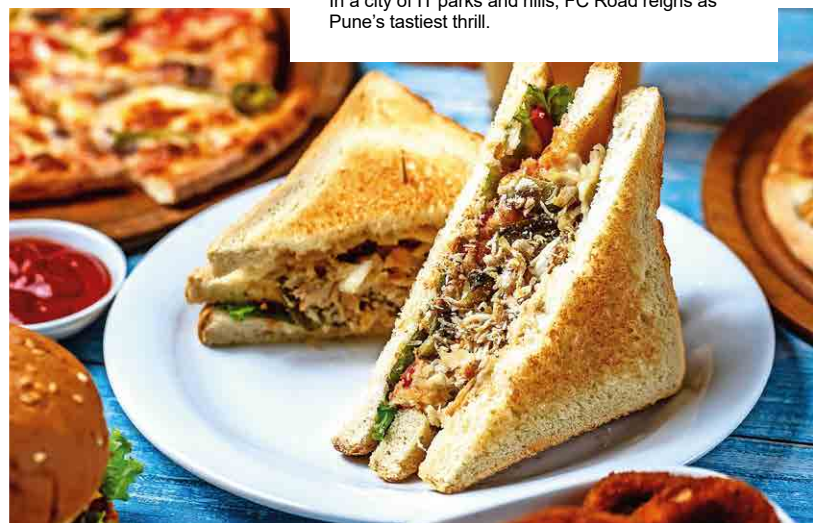
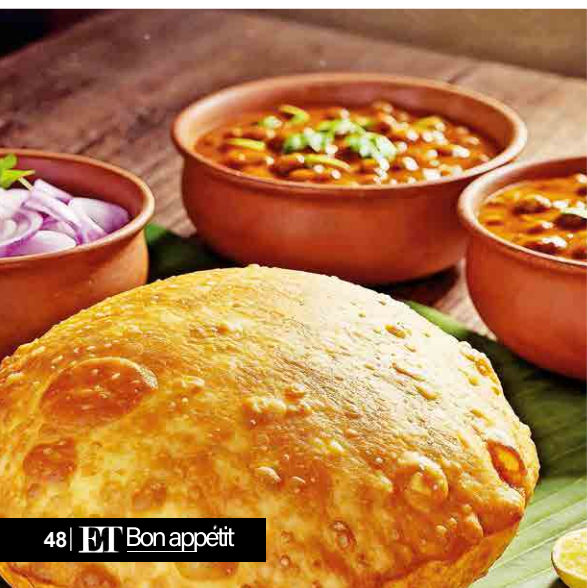
Fergusson College Road, or FC Road as locals fondly call it, pulses with the heartbeat of Pune's food scene. This vibrant stretch in Deccan isn't just a street — it's a gastronomic playground where street carts clash with chic cafes, birthing flavors that hook students, techies, and travellers alike. Why the best in Pune? It's the sheer variety, affordability, and that unbeatable vibe of chaos-meets-comfort.

Picture this: Crispy vada pavs stuffed with spicy potato bhaji, dunked in fiery chutneys for ₹20. Then, misal pav bowls overflowing with sprouted moth beans, drowned in tangy gravy and topped with crunchy farsan. Dive into fluffy idlis swimming in sambar or vegan delights like avocado toasts paired with millet bowls. Evenings bring truffle fries, craft cocktails, Korean BBQ skewers sizzling with gochujang heat, or Turkish kebabs wrapped in warm pita. Cap it with buttery Shrewsbury biscuits that melt into sweet nostalgia.

"It's the diversity in a one-km radius — no other Pune spot matches it," says Chef Abhijit Saha, a local culinary expert, adds, "From Maharashtra staples to fusion experiments, FC Road evolves daily."

Students rave: "As an SC kid, it's my budget heaven—late-night rolls after exams," shares Priya Sharma, a Fergusson College undergrad. Traveller Rajiv Mehta from Delhi adds, "Bengaluru has malls, but FC Road feels alive — like Mumbai's street food with Pune's chill."

What seals it? The energy — rickshaws honking past laughing crowds under fairy lights. In a city of IT parks and hills, FC Road reigns as Pune's tastiest thrill.



LUXURY HOSPITALITY

Pune's luxury hospitality scene captivates with seamless blends of heritage grandeur and cutting-edge indulgence, attracting discerning travellers seeking refined escapes. Lavish properties in upscale enclaves boast expansive suites with panoramic city or hill vistas, infinity-edge pools, and world-class spas offering organic therapies rooted in ancient wellness traditions. These luxe havens feature multi-cuisine dining venues helmed by acclaimed chefs, serving farm-fresh global fusion alongside regional delicacies like saffron-infused Maharashtrian thalis. Rooftop lounges shimmer under starlit skies, crafting artisanal cocktails paired with live jazz, while private villas in verdant outskirts provide plunge pools and butler-attended serenity amid Sahyadri foothills. Catering to Pune's elite, these retreats emphasise bespoke experiences — from sunrise yoga pavilions and truffle-scented private dinners to sustainable zero-waste kitchens and EV valets. Ballrooms gleam for high-society galas, and helipads welcome VIP arrivals. This evolving luxury landscape redefines opulence, merging eco-conscious design with personalized extravagance for unforgettable stays.



MARRIOTT
SUITES PUNE



SENSES
RESTAURANT AND LOUNGE



THE RITZ-CARLTON

hotel irada

Le **MERIDIEN**
MAHABALESHWAR
RESORT & SPA



MOVE OVER WORKATIONS BECAUSE 'BLEISURE' IS HERE TO STAY!



Imagine firing off emails from a sun-drenched balcony in Koregaon Park, then swapping laptop for lakeside paddleboarding at Pawna. Welcome to Pune's bleisure revolution — where remote work meets endless play, fueling a surge in long-stay "workations." Millennials and Gen Z nomads are ditching short trips for month-long escapes, transforming Pune's hip neighborhoods into hybrid havens.

Koregaon Park's boho cafes and nearby resorts' green expanses draw digital hustlers seeking balance. "I extended my three-day trip to 30—co-working by day, Osho meditations by night," shares Aarohi Mehta, a Mumbai-based content creator on her Viman Nagar stay. "Pune's vibe is perfect: fast Wi-Fi, farm-to-table eats, and treks just an hour away." Data backs her: Long-stay bookings in Pune spiked 40% post-pandemic, per travel experts.

Hospitality professionals are adapting fast. "Guests want kitchens, ergonomic desks, and EV charging — not just beds," says a long-stay host in Baner. "We're seeing families and solos booking 15-90 days, blending boardrooms with biodiversity." Hinjewadi's tech parks fuel the fire, with bleisure seekers crashing nearby in Wakad for quick commutes to Lonavala hill escapes.

Experts hail Pune's edge. "It's India's bleisure sweet spot — affordable, connected, yet nature-rich," notes travel analyst Neha Kapoor. "Think high-speed fiber in Kalyani Nagar, then sunset yoga in Aundh parks." Challenges? Peak-season crowds and erratic rains. "We offer flexible check-ins and local hacks — like monsoon treks to Tamhini Ghat," adds host Patel.

For nomad Vishal Rao, a Bengaluru dev, it's transformative: "Pune recharged my burnout. Code by morning, beverages in a mall in the evening. "As co-living spaces sprout in Bavdhan and Undri, Pune's long-stay scene promises more. Bleisure isn't a trend — it's the new normal, where deadlines dissolve into dawns over the Sahyadris. Ready to unplug and level up?," he adds.

'WHAT IS A BLEISURE?'

Bleisure is a portmanteau of 'business' and 'leisure,' describing travel that blends work obligations with personal relaxation or vacation time. Travellers on bleisure trips often extend business journeys by adding extra days for sightseeing, adventure, or family time, maximising their time away from home. This trend exploded post-pandemic with remote work's rise, letting professionals swap stiff hotel stays for 'workations' in vibrant spots.

NOT JUST WORKATIONS!

- Hybrid itineraries: Work meetings by day, beach or hikes by evening—think boardrooms to sunsets.
- Longer stays: Demand for equipped rooms with desks, kitchens, and fast Wi-Fi in versatile spaces.
- Who does it?: Millennials, Gen Zs, digital nomads, and families turning trips into recharges.



A CULINARY ODYSSEY IN NATURE

Le MERIDIEN
MAHABALESHWAR
RESORT & SPA

Perched amid Mahabaleshwar's misty hills, Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa transforms dining into unforgettable journeys, fusing heritage, nature, and innovation.

At its restaurant Chingari, North Indian, Awadhi, Rajasthani, and Gujarati flavours from royal kitchens' slow-cooking traditions and fragrant spices. "Our show kitchen is a stage for culinary artistry," says Reshma Godbole, director of sales and marketing at the resort.

Signature kebabs and dum-style dishes shine, but the Dal Baati Churma — a Rajasthani trio of ghee-finished baked dumplings, spiced lentils, and sweet crushed wheat — best captures this precision and patience.

The haveli-inspired ambiance, with warm lighting and traditional décor, elevates romantic dinners or family meals during peak season. "It offers an intimate retreat amid the town's buzz," Godbole notes. Guests love vegetarian thalis fusing Gujarati sweetness with North Indian boldness, while the team's flexibility for off-menu requests adds personalized warmth.

For a nature-infused contrast, Woods delivers forest dining under starlit skies. Amid 10,000 trees and open-air wooden decor, Asian tapas and authentic Japanese dishes harmonise perfectly. "Candlelit tables, rustling leaves, and mountain breezes make evenings magical," Godbole shares. A la carte stars like delicate dim sums and comforting soups enhance the romance.

Woods' smart-casual vibe and scenic allure make it a fusion escape for culinary brilliance — ideal for couples or groups seeking refined yet relaxed global flavours.

Together, Chingari's regal traditions and Woods' innovative natural poetry create a dynamic duo. "In Mahabaleshwar's embrace, every meal becomes a cherished story," Godbole concludes.

Chingari and Woods at Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar, one can experience rich, slow cooked delicacies of royal India as well as the delicate artistry of Asian cuisine under the stars. Here, every dining experience is thoughtfully designed to leave a lasting impression.

— Reshma Godbole, director of sales and marketing, Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa



MUST-TRY

Dal Baati Churma
Ker Sangri
Ulta Tawa Ka Paratha
Malai Ghewar



WHERE HILLS, HERBS & HEALING MEET

Today's retreats are less about generic spa time and more about structured, science-backed programmes: from yoga and meditation residencies to Ayurvedic Panchakarma, naturopathy, sleep-optimisation camps, and even "bio-hacking" micro-retreats that blend diagnostics with personalised nutrition and movement. A major trend is the rise of digital-detox and "sleep-tourism" retreats, where guests are encouraged to surrender phones and laptops in favour of unplugged walks, offline conversations, and tech-free evenings. Pune and its surrounding hills are home to a growing cluster of wellness retreats that cater to everything from spa-driven rejuvenation to deep-rooted Ayurvedic healing. Each property offers a distinct blend of therapies, food, and environment, making the region a top choice for weekend resets or longer detox journeys.



SWASTIK LUXURY WELLBEING SANCTUARY, KHADAKWASLA

Wellness travel is evolving from indulgent getaways into more intentional, purpose-driven experiences, and retreats like Swastik Wellbeing in Pune embody this shift. Nestled across 51 acres overlooking the Khadakwasla waters, Swastik weaves together ancient healing traditions with contemporary wellbeing practices to create a deeply restorative environment. The retreat now offers targeted Healing and Wellness programmes that address a range of lifestyle concerns, including weight management, gut health, diabetes care, sleep optimisation, cardiac wellness, women's health, fertility, stress management, digital detox, longevity, Panchakarma, and babyworn support. Alongside these structured programmes, Swastik has introduced a Wellness Holiday — a more fluid, unhurried stay crafted for guests who want simple living, nourishing food, deeper rest, restful sleep, and plenty of time in nature, without rigid schedules or intensive therapies.

TOYAM BY ORCHID, KHED SHIVAPUR

While lighter on Ayurvedic depth than the others, Toyam by Orchid in Pune blends wellness with conferencing and leisure, making it a good option for professionals seeking a short, activity-based retreat. Its setting amid greenery supports yoga, walks, and light spa experiences, but it is more oriented towards comfort and corporate-style downtime than intensive medical-style wellness programmes.



FAZLANI'S NATURE'S NEST, LONAVALA

Fazlani's Nature's Nest, between Mumbai and Pune near Lonavala, is an NABH-accredited Ayurvedic and naturopathy retreat known for its structured, doctor-led programmes. It specialises in classical Panchakarma, pain-relief regimens, yoga, breathwork, and therapeutic nutrition, with an option for animal-assisted therapies and a lakeside setting that adds to its calming ambience.



DEHAM NATURECURE, MULSHI

Deham Naturecure is a boutique wellness retreat nestled in the Sahyadris just about an hour's drive from Pune. Spread over six acres, it focuses on naturopathy, Ayurveda, Satvik farm-fresh food, yoga, and guided meditation, offering a compact yet immersive immersion in natural healing within easy reach of the city.

ATMANTAN WELLNESS RETREAT, MULSHI

Truly transformative, Atmantan Wellness Resort rests atop a unique crystal hill believed to emit a healing frequency. Spread across 42 acres of lush Sahyadri greenery overlooking pristine Mulshi Lake near Pune, Atmantan embodies the union of Atma (soul), mana (mind), and tann (body). This internationally acclaimed wellness destination is known for life-altering transformations, where guests follow personalised, doctor-prescribed wellness programmes. Combining Indian traditional sciences like Ayurveda and Naturopathy with Chinese medicine and other alternative therapies, Atmantan offers integrated, research-informed wellbeing.



THE PERFECT SUITE LIFE WHERE LUXURY MEETS CULINARY ELEGANCE



As an all-suite property, Marriott Suites Pune is designed around longer stays and residential comfort, which naturally shapes our F&B experience. With in-room kitchens/kitchenettes, 24-hour room service, and spacious suite layouts, we can extend dining beyond the restaurant into a more private, flexible in-suite format, especially relevant for families, business travellers, and extended-stay guests who value convenience without compromising on quality.

— Shrikant Patro, director of food and beverage, Marriott Suites Punehabaleshwar Resort & Spa, Mahabaleshwar

Pune's culinary landscape is buzzing with a fresh vibe — blending hearty Maharashtrian roots with worldly twists. At Marriott Suites Pune, Director of Food and Beverage Shrikant Patro shares how the property captures this evolution through innovative F&B concepts. "Our philosophy mirrors Pune's increasingly global palate while staying rooted in regional familiarity," says Patro. Sen5es delivers multi-cuisine all-day dining with seasonal international fare, while Sorriso offers refined Italian in an open-kitchen haven, satisfying the city's craving for comfort and adventure.

The all-suite design takes this further, prioritising longer stays and home-like ease. Every suite boasts kitchenettes, 24-hour room service, and spacious layouts, letting families and business travelers enjoy flexible in-suite dining without skimping on quality. "We extend dining beyond restaurants into private, convenient formats," Patro explains.

At Sen5es, versatility shines — no fixed signatures, but evolving menus balance Indian favourites with global classics, responding to guest vibes and seasons. Sorriso steals the show for Italian artistry. Sunday brunches adapt smartly to post-pandemic Pune: interactive live stations, curated plates, and managed buffets ensure abundance with hygiene and personalization front and center. "Pune diners want choice with reassurance," notes Patro.

Sustainability is woven in via Marriott's responsible ops — thoughtful sourcing, waste-reducing kitchens, and conscious menus for eco-savvy guests. No flashy 'zero-waste' tags without certification, but real progress toward smarter practices.

Looking to 2026, Patro buzzes about experience-led dining: chef collabs, curated brunches, and intimate specialties. "We're tuning into Pune's luxury lifestyle," he says, promising launches that feel distinctive and connected.

In a city that's all about balanced indulgence, Marriott Suites Pune makes every bite a wholesome celebration of flavour, comfort, and tomorrow's tastes.



LUXURY ROOTED IN PERSONALIZATION AND EMOTIONS

Amid Pune's vibrant mix of business and culture, The Ritz-Carlton Pune shines as a haven of intuitive luxury, seamlessly blending global standards with local traveler appeal. "We bring Ritz-Carlton service to life through a distinctly local lens," says Shrikant Patro, director of food and beverage. Business guests enjoy seamless access to commercial hubs and personalised stays, while cultural visitors savour culinary nods to Pune's refined character — from design to warm, anticipatory service.

A recent "wow" moment exemplifies this magic. From February 13 to March 5, two long-staying guests from Scotland bonded over Sweet Roasted Sweet Potato at Alta Vida Bar & Grill. Noticing

Our luxury marketing is built on relevance, exclusivity, and emotional connection. We focus on high-impact storytelling around suites, dining, weddings, wellness, and bespoke experiences rather than transactional promotion. Through precision-led digital targeting, curated partnerships, and leveraging Marriott Bonvoy's luxury ecosystem, we position The Ritz-Carlton, Pune as a destination of choice for affluent travellers in Pune and key feeder markets beyond.

—Shrikant Patro, director of food and beverage

their love for nature and reading, Patro's team orchestrated a farewell surprise: personalised aprons, a hands-on kitchen session to prepare the dish, a vintage recipe keepsake, spice boxes with garam masala, the book *Metamorphosis*, and a Gaelic farewell cake saying "Turas Math Dhut" (happy journey). "Wearing chef caps, they joined the culinary team to prepare their favourite Spit Roasted Sweet Potatoes themselves. They were emotional, promising to return," Patro shares, crediting the team's service values.

This year, F&B trends emphasise sustainable, ingredient-led dining. "Guests crave authenticity," Patro notes. Three Kitchens' Savour Series reinterprets regional cuisines immersively, while Ukiyo's Peruvian Edition offers contemporary global flair. Personalisation thrives via pre-arrival insights and empowered teams — efficiency for executives, emotional orchestration for weddings. "We rely on guest insights, strong interdepartmental coordination, and empowered teams to tailor each stay with precision. For business guests, that often means efficiency and discretion, for wedding parties, it means emotional understanding, flexibility, and flawless orchestration. The common thread is making every guest feel the experience was designed around them," he adds.

Overcoming Pune's layered market challenges, Patro's rigorous training ensures consistency. Marketing targets high-net-worth clients through exclusive storytelling on suites, dining, and Marriott Bonvoy perks, positioning the hotel at Golf Course Square, Yerawada, as Pune's luxury pinnacle.



Ritz-Carlton Pune, Golf Course Square, Airport Rd, Jayprakash Nagar, Yerawada, Pune

To enroll for free or for more information about the Marriott Bonvoy program, visit marriottbonvoy.com. For more details, visit www.ritzcarlton.com/pune

WHERE CULTURE BLOOMS INTO HOSPITALITY



Irada is built to feel like an instant classic. Its language comes from across eras, from mid-century modern to old-world European details, so it evolves without losing its core.

— Yash Malhotra, founder, Hotel Irada

Hotel Irada commands a bold presence in India's dynamic hospitality scene, pulsing with unapologetic originality. "In many ways, Irada is the only original thought I can claim—the name came to me years before the hotel did, and it has stayed ever since," shares Yash Malhotra, founder, Hotel Irada. Inspired by his US days amid independent hotels that doubled as cultural hubs, Malhotra envisioned Irada as a vibrant cross-pollination of design, art, wellness, food, and media. What sets it apart? He answers, "It's a platform for young, creative voices to express themselves fully. That openness is what makes it feel different and why it's resonating so strongly, both locally and globally."

Launched with 32 keys in October, Irada swiftly expanded to 59 with the West Wing addition. Future plans tease residences, inviting guests to "own a piece of their own Irada."

Design-wise, midcentury modern aesthetics meet local craft: sourced woods, tactile textures, and over 150 curated pieces from Paris's Le Puces mingle with Mumbai galleries and Kerala's Kala works. Lighting and sustainable materials craft an ambiance of timeless elegance laced with contemporary play.

Irada tailors stay with intent. Estate manager Craig preps personalised touches — kids' robes for families, vineyard picnics for groups, serene rhythms for wellness seekers. "We don't segment guests; we shape the experience around them," Malhotra explains.

Looking ahead, amid trends toward grounded wellness and outdoor escapes, Irada stays true to its "instant classic" ethos. "We're not ones to chase trends," says Malhotra, he adds, "The next chapter is about bringing that young, creative, city energy closer to urban hearts, while holding onto the estate's spirit."

Irada isn't just a stay — it's a living canvas.



Hotel Irada, G. No. 37, Baramati Tal
Daund, Roti, Hinganigada

IN PUNE'S OUTSKIRTS, ZERO-WASTE STAYS RESTORE NATURE



Step into a sunlit courtyard where terracotta floors gleam under recycled chandeliers, and guests sip herbal chai from clay cups. No plastic in sight, just upcycled furniture breathing new life into old restored bungalows. Pune's outskirts — within 100 km—are birthing zero-waste sustainable stays, reviving rustic heritage into eco-retreats. Nestled amid Sahyadri hills, a restored stone farmhouse glows under solar lanterns, its garden blooming with native herbs. Guests wander bamboo trails, composting peels in on-site pits, far from urban hum.

This green wave ties perfectly to Pune's roots. Koregaon Park's restored British-era mansions and Baner's adaptive-reuse farmhouses now prioritize circular living — composting kitchen scraps, rainwater harvesting, and solar-powered bliss. "We're reviving history without harming tomorrow," says an eco-host from Lonavala who converted a haveli into an eco-stay. "Guests love the authenticity: handwoven linens, farm-fresh meals, zero single-use plastics. Bookings doubled since we went fully zero-waste," he adds.

The trend surges with conscious millennials ditching cookie-cutter hotels and Gen Zs chasing a 'green' life. Bhor, Mulshi, Pawna, Khadakwasla, Lonavla properties now feature edible gardens and biogas digesters, slashing landfill waste by 80%. "It's luxury with a conscience," shares traveller Shivani Joshi, a Pune-based designer on her Kalyani Nagar stay. "Waking to birdsong, not AC hum — pure recharge." Nationally, sustainable tourism saw a massive jump last year, but Pune is known to blend heritage charm and green innovation.

Lonavala steals the spotlight, with eco-villas like those near Bhushi Dam featuring upcycled retreats perched 30-45 feet in treetops, rainwater harvesting, and plastic-free policies. "Our treehouses run on solar and forest-sourced biogas — no waste leaves the site," says the host about Malavali spot. "Hike Tiger's Point by day, stargaze with clay-mug chai at night. Families book months ahead for this off-grid bliss," she adds.

Mulshi's lakeside farmhouses and Pawna's glamping tents join in, boasting vermicompost systems and reed-bed filters. Karjat's green resorts add balconies overlooking valleys, powered by wind and waste-to-energy. "We revived this 1800s zamindar bungalow with bamboo crafts and edible gardens," shares an eco-host from his Mahalunge haven. "Mulshi's mist fuels 70% less emissions — guests rave about the pottery workshops.

Sustainability gurus applaud. "Lonavala's adaptive spots preserve biodiversity, drawing Pune escapees," notes green an architect, adding, "Treehouses cut concrete use, boosting local weavers." Traveler Karan Desai echoes: "Pawna's zero-waste camp recharged me — hikes, bonfires, no trash guilt.

Challenges like remote access persist, but EV shuttles from Hinjewadi help. A travel advisor adds, "We've trained villagers in composting; it's community-led revival." From Lohagad's fort-edge nooks to Tamhini Ghat trails, Pune's green frontier thrives 100 km out — restoring nature, one solar beam at a time.



ECO-STAYS AROUND PUNE

- One Earth Retreat, Mushli
- Inodaya Retreat, Mulshi
- Avanti Kalagram, Mulshi
- Kerbachhi Wadi The Farm Resort, Nandagaon
- Nature Trails Durshet, Khopoli





CELEBRATING TWO DECADES OF CULINARY GLORY NATIONWIDE



In vibrant cities across India, where innovative eats, bold gastronomy, and electric nightlife redefine connections and festivities, food transcends mere meals – it's a cultural heartbeat. For over two decades, Optimal Media Solutions – A division of Times Internet Limited has championed this energy through the prestigious Times Food & Nightlife Awards, evolving since 2003 from a Delhi launch into the nation's 'Oscars of gastronomy.'

More than two decades later, the awards travel coast-to-coast across 16 dynamic cities, capturing India's diverse F&B boom. They spotlight neighbourhood favourites, iconic eateries, edgy bars, cafés, pubs, bakeries, and clubs, fueled by thousands of entries and millions of public votes. Glamorous galas at luxury 5-star venues draw celebrities and influencers, turning recognition into industry-defining moments that amplify chefs, restaurateurs, and food enthusiasts via dynamic digital platforms.

Times Food & Nightlife Awards 2026 surges ahead in full force, journeying nationwide as a coast-to-coast tribute to F&B pioneers crafting magic in every flavour, pour, and vibe. Restaurants, bars, cafés, nightclubs, lounges, bakeries, and chefs vie in city-specific categories, judged by expert critics on taste, creativity, and atmosphere – layered with public passion and an elite jury's verdict.

At the helm: Advisory council chair Harsh Goenka (RPG Group), blending business savvy with gourmet zeal; Michelin-starred Garima Arora, pioneering sustainable Indian fine dining; and Ranveer Brar, fusing heritage with daring twists. Their vision elevates regional innovations, eco-conscious staples, and immersive dining-party experiences.

Rigorous integrity reigns, with Ernst & Young (EY) auditing votes, critic scores, and jury inputs for balanced, trustworthy results. Expect starlit ceremonies at top 5-star spots – true 'Oscars' saluting hospitality's heroes, poised to reshape India's F&B landscape.

Join the frenzy:
Register or nominate at
www.timesfoodawards.com





For more details on The Economic Times Bon Appétit Pune, write to info.oms@timesofindia.com

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