



Kerala

Summer 2024

Enter Via Laundry

For Summer 2024, we invite you on a culinary journey to Kerala. In local language "Kera" means coconut, and hence the name Kerala translates to the land of coconuts.

Apart from coconuts, Kerala is blessed with fertile land that produces a variety of spices. The spice plantations here grow pepper, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves, nutmeg, turmeric, and more. Tea and coffee also thrive abundantly, along with variety of exotic fruits.

These exquisite spices and produce are incorporated into local cuisine in various ways. With its rich cultural diversity, Kerala stands out as one of the most exciting places for culinary enthusiasts. In my research and travels, I recognized three major food cultures: Mappila cuisine, Syrian Christian cuisine, and native/Brahmin cuisine. Each of these culinary styles is unique in its own way. Although they all use similar produce that is available to them, their food differs in technique.

Our goal in creating this menu was to encompass all three major types of cuisine, with a focus on Malabar and some other special dishes deeply embedded in the current food culture. My team and I have endeavored to present lesser-known dishes to you, offering our interpretation that utilizes seasonal produce as well as Australian Native produce.

We believe that using seasonal and native produce lies at the core of Indian food philosophy, and we aim to carry forward this ethos through our menu.

We hope you enjoy this meal.

Team Enter Via Laundry



Rasam

At Grand Hotel Kochi

Rasam is enjoyed not only in Kerala but also in most of South India. It is a warm, spicy, and sour broth that is typically consumed with rice or on its own. Various spices like pepper, cumin seeds, coriander seeds, fenugreek seeds, mustard seeds, hing, red chilies, and turmeric are added. For acidity, ingredients such as tamarind, lime, and tomatoes are used. The dish is refreshed with curry leaves and coriander.

In an effort to retain the spicy and sour elements of the traditional dish while adapting it for Melbourne's summer, our version features honeydew, cucumber, lemon myrtle, pepper, green chilies, and coriander. We serve this refreshing cold broth with young coconut, summer fruits and soaked almonds.



Syrian Christian Pork Roast

At Sebastian's Family Home in Nellimattom

A Syrian Christian pork specialty pork roast is a smokey lightly spiced snack that is enjoyed midday along with some steamed tapioca on special occasions. The Sebastian family tells me that each house has a wood fire stove that is built with clay and the pork is cooked overnight for for 12 hours.

Everyone in family takes turns to replace the wood and scrape the pot resulting in a beautifully tender meat.

Our version for this snack is pork lightly smoked with paperbark and dressed with passion fruit skin jam and dusted with podi (a blend of roasted lentils and spices)



Kallumakai Fry

From a snack shop in Kannur

Kannur in Kerala is situated in the Malabar region, the northern part of Kerala. Due to its strategic location, it boasts several ports and has been a magnet for traders for centuries. One community that came for trade and settled here were the Arabs in the 3rd century BCE. This is the origin of Mappila cuisine. The Arabs brought their own techniques, and Indian spices enriched the recipes.

One such dish from Mappila cuisine is Kallumakai, made from mussels. Kallumakai translates to "fruits of stone." Mussels are stuffed with spiced rice flour, steamed, and then lightly fried in red chili, which is what we have done here. We are serving this with mussel mouse and saltbush.



Karimeen Pollichattu

The Grand Hotel Kochi

Yes, you guessed it right! The Grand Hotel in Kochi is an institution and offers some of the best food in Kerala. I highly recommend this place. We had Karimeen (Pearl Spot fish) Pollichattu, fish here, wrapped in banana leaf with spices, curry leaf, onion, and tomatoes, fried in coconut oil. "Pollichattu" means grilled. This is a very popular dish in Kerala, while north enjoys this dish with chicken the south prefers fish Pollichattu.

Scampi Pollichattu

For our version we are using green lip abalone that is cooked in a banana leaf and dressed with a sauce made of grilled tomatoes, mountain pepper, aniseed myrtle, finger lime and curry leaf.



Thayir Pachadi

At Sebastian's Family Home in Nellimattom

"Thayir" means yogurt, and "Pachadi" refers to a condiment, akin to pickle or raita. Here, it is prepared by Roshini Sebastian, whose family grows their own produce, including the pumpkin and coconut used in this dish. The Sebastian family is part of the Syrian Christian community in Kerala. According to belief, Thomas the Apostle came to Muziris on the coast of Kerala in AD 52 and converted the native population to Christianity. I discovered subtle differences in the cuisine of this community, particularly in the use of a variety of vegetables in traditional dishes. In this creation, we've made a salad using seasonal vegetables, macadamia milk yogurt, mustard seeds, ghee, lemon gum, and green chilies.



Toddy Shop

Netoor Kallu Shop, Ernakulam

A Toddy shop in Kerala serves as an eatery for working men and women seeking an inexpensive meal accompanied by toddy. Everything here is prepared on a wood-fired stove, imparting a light smokiness to the food. Toddy is the sap collected overnight from coconut trees in a terracotta pot, fermenting as the day progresses. The food at the Toddy shop is intensely spicy, and the preferred carbohydrate to accompany the fiery fish is cassava. The combination of spicy fish, cassava, and the lightly fizzy toddy is addictive.

For our version we have lightly smoked scallops, dressed with a spicy sauce made with cherries, Kashmiri chilies, elderflower, and bell pepper, served with bunya nut and Geraldton wax mash.



Sadhya

BTH Sadhya Kochi City

Sadhya is eaten during Onam, the harvest festival. There are several types of Sadhyas, Hindu community prefers a vegetarian Sadhya, though you will also find one with meat and fish. Sadhya is almost always served on banana leaf with rice in center. Our version brings you

Red rice, mango pickle (Mango with spices), puli inji (Tamarind and ginger chutney), Avial (Coconut with seasonal vegetables and curry leaf), Idichakka Thoran (jack fruit stir fry with shredded coconut), Errisery (Pumpkin, coconut and black gram), Pulliserry (Yogurt, turmeric and mustard), Sambar (Lentils, spices with carrots and ash gourd), Aplam (cracker), Uperi (banana chips).



Chatti pathiri

Zains Hotel, Kozhikode

Another one of the Malabari dishes is pathiri. While Brahmins and Christians refer to rice preparations as appams, Mappila cuisine calls them pathiri. These are rice flour sheets shaped and rolled in various forms with different thicknesses. One such pathiri is chatti (pot) pathiri, where rice flatbread are layered with a filling of shredded chicken with spices, coconut, and curry leaves.

Our version features rice and wheat flour pathiri layered with duck spiced with star anise, cinnamon, and pepper, served with a sauce made from Davidson plum, black garlic, amaranth and desert lime



Kunji Pathiri

Sameera Mehaboob's family home, Kannur

Sameera and her sister Muneera have a wealth of knowledge when it comes to Mappila cuisine. Sameera teaches ethnic cuisine to culinary students, equipping them to preserve their unique heritage.

The sisters showed me how to make Kunji Pathiri. "Kunji" means tiny, and these delicious little pathiri are flavored with fennel and coconut, mixed with a spicy sauce made with chicken or beef flavored with tomatoes, coconut, curry leaf, and Kerala garam masala.

In our version, we've prepared kunji pathiri with kangaroo tail, Kerala spices, tomatoes, curry leaf, puffed rice, preserved gooseberries, and fennel cream.



Muttamala

Sameera Mehaboob's family home, Kannur

Muneera took charge of the desserts at the Mehaboob residence, making muttamala. The story behind this dessert goes that during Portuguese colonization, Christian nuns, who accompanied the Portuguese, used a lot of egg whites to starch uniforms for higher officials and the church. As a result, they were left with too many egg yolks. Hence, several egg yolk recipes were created in the south of India and areas where the Portuguese invaded.

Muttamala is a Fios de ovos-like preparation flavored with cardamom and served with steamed egg whites. In our version, we've chocolate meringue, passion fruit and muttamala, cream and sunrise lime.



Kannur Cocktail

Juice Corner Cocktail, Kannur

Islam being the major religion in Kannur alcohol is not consumed much in the region. A fruit cocktail (without alcohol) though is favorite among locals as a choice of beverage. A blend of red papaya, boiled carrots, cantaloupe and some frozen milk is blended into a smoothie and garnished with toasted cashew, sultanas and pomegranate resulting in a refreshing luscious orange drinks fit for any time of the day.

For our main dessert we have a cashew sponge with carrot, red papaya and cantaloupe sorbet, fig leaf caramel and pomogranet.



Vattayappam

At Sebastian's Family Home in Nellimattom

Seema Sebastian the grandmother at Sebastian family house made us Vattayappam after a stroll in spice and veg farm in their massive backyard. This Syrian christian specialty cake is made by making a paste out of rice and fermented overnight and folded with coconut cream. It is then mixed with sugar or jaggery and steamed to form a sponge.

Here we are serving Vattayappam with, sesame, coconut, peanuts and leatherwood honey.



Javvarisi Payasam

BTH Sadhya Kochi City

Payasam has been mentioned in some of the oldest texts in Indian literature. There has been several ways of making payasam, original being rice and milk, the more modern version is with tapioca pearls and coconut milk. Tapioca was brought in by Maharaja of Travancore, Vishakham Thirunal Rama Varma after a great famine hit the kingdom. The tapioca came from Africa and spread in Kerala as a popular and inexpensive option to rice.

Some recipes created then are still popular as this payasam that is served for Sadhya.

Here we have made tapioca Payasam with coconut milk, rose and lemon verbena



Wild Plums Leather

From Metung

Just before I headed to India we went away to Metung where we found bushes full of wild plums which we could not resist but pick.

We have made leather out of these sour plums and are serving with some cookies, cream and quandong.

In Kerala too they make fruit leather out of guava eaten as a snack or at the end of the meal.

Our version is with a cookie, cream flavored strawberry gum and wild plum leather.

People who made this menu possible - Mehaboob Family, Fiona Arakal, Sebastian Family, Oneal Sabu, Muhammed Shihad, Hezu, Thank you for sharing your knowledge, time and culture!

