

# Unleash Your Inner Chef - A New Career Trend in Hospitality as a HOME CHEF!

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## Abstract

The recent trend in eating out is welcomed by a few energetic bunch of amateur chefs by opening up their homes to anybody who is willing to experiment the food cooked and served by them making authentic regional Indian food easily accessible than ever before. Not only women but even men are introducing these customary recipes to the real food lovers. More than just a meal, these experiences are becoming a real time educational fair of culture and cuisine. There is a good scope for hospitality students to make Home chef as a career. As mostly housewives are seen in this role, there is a bright opportunity for hospitality students to venture into this niche career in hospitality. The study shows that people already in this business are from varied backgrounds other than hospitality. Thus, home chef can prove to be a trending career for hospitality students as a foodpreneur.

The aim of the research is to understand the concept of Home chefs, its pros, factors that help gain popularity and how to effectively brand oneself as home chef.

**Keywords:** Amateur Chefs, Customary Recipes, Foodpreneur, Hospitality

## INTRODUCTION

As per the age old Indian tradition, the woman in the house has to necessarily know the cooking techniques and has to take charge of the families cooking needs. It starts from the childhood times for the girls and by the time of marriage cooking food becomes a pre requisite skill. Today, the women is getting more and more empowered and is entering into all the fields of work shouldering equal responsibilities as the men in the house. In this race of career goals and achievements, women today are seen to be juggling with both family and work. This at times

does bring stress and pressure which leads to frustration managing both ends. And here comes to her rescue the concept of new breed of Home chefs who are eager to cater with the variety of lip smacking starters, spiced up curries, breads, desserts along with healthy meal options too! These chefs are skilled and passionate to serve the people as per their requirements.

Only a few decades ago, eating out in India was a rare pleasure for families. Today, it has become a daily affair or the need of the hour. With various food apps taking the internet by storm and restaurants opening and closing their doors almost every week, eating out is becoming a hobby now!

## WHO ARE FOODPRENEURS?

Studies state that “home chefs are cooking their way to riches, making a profit between 50-60% of every transaction on websites that offer home-cooked food”.

Everyone loves to eat good food and people are eager to try out with their taste buds more and more options of various cuisines. And now the latest entry of Foodpreneurs is making their mark in this wide world of food industry to cater to the needs of such food lovers.

Today, Home chefs have found the right kind of market to showcase their cooking skills for the really eager customers craving for authentic food, thus making good money at the same time preserving the age old cuisines from various parts of India. And to give a boost to these Home chefs, social media (Facebook, instagram and twitter) and the online delivery apps are equally gearing up. Some of them tie-up with the online food services apps like Masalabox, MealTango, authenticcook, Holachefs, Tiny Owl, Bite club, Potato lab, Zupermeal, Cyberchef etc. to deliver the food to customers. These Home chefs have

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to undergo a stringent process conducted by the food service apps while getting on their board. It takes approximately 6 weeks for these Home chefs to get enrolled on these sites at some cost. They have to be essentially internet savvy, create their own profile obtain various food licenses from FSSAI, get their house and culinary preparations video graphed, get a lot of internal quality check done etc.

Home chefs are a new and fast-growing category in the Indian food service industry, pegged at ₹2,47,680 crore by the National Restaurant Association of India. It is projected to grow at 11 per cent to reach ₹4,08,040 crore by 2018 as reported by The Hindu Businessline

As per Grant Thornton, the combined F&B service market in India is worth R2,04,438 crore, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 23-24% and is expected to touch R3.8 lakh crore by 2017. QSR and casual dining are the two most popular formats that form 45% and 32% of the overall market, respectively.

Home chefs have set themselves apart from the Restaurant chefs in many criteria's. They are free to decide their own pace of work and may be specialized in specific cuisines or cater to general need of people. Home chefs can host pop-ups in their own houses based on a regional theme or in a common community space, custom curated sit-down meals or various catering events, food exhibitions, shows or even hold a theme lunch or dinner for the specialty restaurants in the city. They can also home deliver the food via various home delivery apps. These gastronomically inclined individuals are definitely going to storm the food market in the near future by bringing in different regional food in lime light serving it authentically. The remarkable difference of these efforts of cooking and serving authentic food combined with passion is what going to set them apart from the local existing caterers. Working out from their home kitchens and dining rooms, they are catering to variety of culinary needs that are healthy, nutritious and hygienically cooked offering breakfast, lunch, dinner or party food options.

Currently, the Home chef trend is gaining so much of popularity in metro cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru that an event like Chefs Mela was held at Westin – Mumbai curated by a food blogger Mini Riberio giving a platform to the elite Goan, Sindhi and Maharashtrian home chefs who want to make it to the mainstream.

The latest study the ILO in South East Asia states, “There are quiet a substantial proportion of women generally

involved in domestic chores in India have shown their willingness to accept work or jobs if it were made available at their household premises.”

In a city like Pune there are approximately 170 home chefs who are available on various food service apps like Meal Tango, Authenticook, Pune eat outs, Star of Service, Hauzkhas etc who are mostly housewives turned into chefs due to passion for food or to use their free time effectively or to be their own boss.

## OBJECTIVES

- To understand the concept of Home Chefs.
- To review the factors that help gain popularity as Home Chefs.
- To explore and discuss the pros of becoming a Home Chef.

## WHY THE HOME CHEFS ARE GAINING POPULARITY?

- Being a home chef itself is an entrepreneurial skill facilitating self-earning. One can show his/her creativity and invent every time something different. You can become your own Boss! For those who are not keen to work under someone, needs to be creative and passionate and get started. So, it reminds the old saying – my kitchen, my rules!
- One can satisfy the growing demands of students and tourist staying in the city craving for authentic home cooked regional cuisine. Thus, the food connects people worldwide enabling the market to grow.
- The digital market comprising of social media and online delivery apps are proving a great help to these Home chefs to get recognition of their work and grow their business.
- People are getting to eat, learn and explore various regional cuisines authentically cooked and presented in there vicinity.
- Home chefs are offering cuisines that are getting extinct or fast disappearing from the dining tables or are time consuming to make at home.
- The food cooked and served is authentic, hygienic and nutritious.

Becoming foodpreneur is easy but for the business to grow, one needs to experiment with dishes to make it unique.

## PROS OF BECOMING HOME CHEF

1. Low start up cost with regards to space, equipments, manpower, rent etc. Due to low cost of initial investments, venturing into such start-ups is quite feasible.
2. Not much licences and permissions are required to start the business. No facing corruptions or any illegal actions to be taken.
3. One can revive lost recipes by passionately working on them and introducing them to people differently.
4. One can preserve the traditional values of recipes by cooking them and serving it to people and making them aware of the culture and food.
5. One can cook and deliver order as per the convenient timings or in free time as it allows flexibility. Thus, one can become their own boss.
6. Food wastage at the time of procuring ingredients and during cooking process or during storage is minimal, thus avoiding increase in the food cost.
7. One can take his/her own decision of the expansion of the scale at which the business has to be grown.
8. One can keep control on the quality of ingredients, nutritional value of food, taste, authenticity and freshness of the food under him.
9. The costing and pricing of the recipes is at the discretion of the home chef. Thus, the profit percentage can be adjusted as per the customer's status.
10. Women chefs specially can strike a good work life balance in such start ups at the same time earn money in the area of their passion.
11. Some chefs can consider this as a source of income for their post retirement plans.
12. Home chefs can really enjoy the healthy and long lasting relationships they build with the customers through word of mouth publicity or their work speaks.
13. One can utilize his/her own creativity in hand crafting the menus for special occasions and requirements of the customers and get a good recognition.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Bohri Kitchen was invited at the Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre and Hotel, to showcase their culinary delight during Ramzan; whereas JW Marriott invited Bawi Bride for the Parsi food festival. Stephen D'Souza, Director- F&B at JW Marriott states that they have got a great feedback and had increase number of guests.

Nafisa Kapadia the owner of BOHRI kitchen (TBK) served 15 guests on Saturday for lunch-a pop up at Kapadias house in Mumbai's colaba area. The menu includes typical Bohri dishes such as smoked *kheema samosas* and *patvelia*.

Sumitra Kalapatapu from Bengaluru cooks complete veg Andhra Brahmin meals with dishes like *podis*, *chillibajjis*, and *vankayi* stuffed with *kottimeerakaaram* (aubergines stuffed with coriander masala). People crowd to dine at her place which has become the most popular venue for various functions.

Gitika Saikia is taking all pains to popularize the tribal food of the north-east. She states that north east mainland food is quiet popular but the tribal food over there requires to be promotes essentially for the kind of ingredients it has.

Sanjay Raina a celebrity Wazwan chef and singer, gets raw materials for his kashmiri food meals straight from the valley. Ingredients like saffron, various masalas and even the famous *haaksaag* is flown down from Kashmir. Raina delivers food to people in NCR on prior requests, and as per his convenience. And this he states as an advantage over other business of being your own boss.

Saikia resigned her corporate job and turned into a home chef but has chosen to stay away from being a restaurant owner. She further states that Home chefs can acquire raw material from the local markets or hypermarkets. But for larger operations, one needs a supplier, various licenses and people to work. She further states that the staff requires an extensive training to handle these operations and quality.

Reetha Balsavar a Home Chef and owner of Tossed and Dressed, says that it's a real win-win industry for people who need a second chance in life. For her it was a post-retirement plan that helped her to understand more about the organic culture in the farms.

Harsha Thachery of Masalabox opines that the two biggest advantage they offer are visibility of people and last mile connect of home cooks with the customers. Generally these corporate giants give all sort of support to these home chefs which they cannot afford on their own.

## CONCLUSION

Now is going to be the era of Home chefs and Personal Chefs. They not only satisfy the customers need of home cooked food but also get empowered to earn money. At the same time the traditional recipes are experimented and served cooked authentically. The information sourced from the secondary data, shows that overall these home chefs have not obtained any formal degree in cooking techniques neither have any catering backgrounds. Most of them have entered in this field out of passion or to try out something new to earn as well as use their time efficiently.

It's a readily available platform for the young budding chefs who have a formal education of catering to venture out in this niche area of hospitality and try out new recipes, serve them differently, and introduce fusion as well as global cuisines to the customers thus taking this profession to newer heights. The competition is getting tougher day by day due to a daily addition of Chefs in the market. Hospitality students can definitely make a mark in this field by working under experienced chefs and applying their knowledge appropriately to serve the customers the best of it. And now the trend growing ahead is to hire personal chefs who brings home the ingredients and cook and serves food as per the

dietary requirements and choice of the customer on daily or weekly basis in their homes. Such specialized home cooking services are raking a good moolah and are a great opportunity for people to work for limited period of time with a decent remuneration.

People today are globetrotting and are well versed with various world cuisines. They are ready to pay for quality and explore innovative fusion food, as eating out is now becoming a hobby, lifestyle or status more than a change required in daily life.

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