

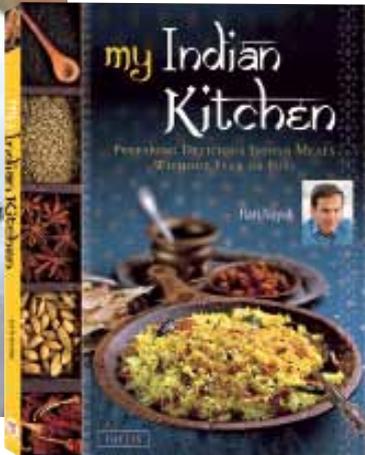


ADVENTURES IN FLAVOR.

MODERN INDIAN CHEF HARI NAYAK SHARES HIS FAVORITE DISHES FROM HIS HOMETLAND. **BY LARA DAY**



SOUTHERN SPICE
Clockwise from below:
My Indian Kitchen,
a new book by chef
Hari Nayak; Hari Nayak;
Indian spices; modern
Indian bistro Orissa, in
Dobbs Ferry, New York.



HARI NAYAK IS A CHEF, AUTHOR and restaurateur. But most of all, perhaps, he is an adventurer. “I have never stopped exploring the many facets of my own native cooking—be it traditional, regional or contemporary,” says the New York-based Indian food expert, renowned for his fresh takes on the flavors of his homeland. “I keep returning to India, traveling extensively and eating my way around its diverse regions, all in the name of research.”

Since leaving his coastal hometown of Udupi, in southwestern India, the Culinary Institute of America-trained Nayak has pioneered Indian cuisine globally. In 2007 he co-authored *Modern Indian Cooking*, a landmark tome that Daniel Boulud described as lending “a new dimension to food.” And, since 2009, he has shone as executive chef of contemporary Indian bistro Orissa, in New York, with dishes like fresh tomato soup spiked with fennel, cumin and chili, and the Orissa bison burger, paired with green-chili chutney and crispy okra. Most recently, his new book, *My Indian Kitchen*, reveals the secrets of his family’s style of Indian cooking as well as recipes from around the country. Read on to find out Nayak’s favorite dishes from south India. **+**

Nayak will cook at the Four Seasons Hotel Bangkok (fourseasons.com/bangkok) during the 12th Annual World Gourmet Festival, September 5 to 11.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: © ELENA MOISEVA/DREAMSTIME.COM; COURTESY OF HARI NAYAK (3)

NAYAK'S SOUTH INDIAN MUST-EATS



MASALA DOSA | BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

"This fermented crepe, a pancake made with rice and black lentils, is a staple in south India," says Nayak. "It's filled with mustard and turmeric potatoes, and is often served with a bowl of *sambar* [lentil and vegetable stew] and coconut chutney."

WHERE TO TRY IT Nayak favors **Kamat Lokaruchi Restaurant** (Unity Bldg., #7, J.C. Rd.; 91-80/2223-5487; breakfast for two Rp200). "It's a crowded place, especially on weekends. The experience is best during breakfast hours."



KERALA KOKUM FISH CURRY | KOCHI, KERALA

"The Kerala-style curry's sour flavor from kokum fruit and coconut milk," Nayak explains. "Eat it with *appam*, a fermented soft bread made of rice batter and cooked on a stone griddle."

WHERE TO TRY IT "The **Grand Hotel Restaurant** [M.G. Rd., Ernakulam; 91-484/238-2061; dinner for two Rp650] is a must-visit. Faultless food in a huge dining hall, filled to the brim with a loyal Indian clientele, make this 20-minute trip from Fort Kochi worth it. Book ahead."



MORE FROM NAYAK

FOR A Q&A WITH HARI NAYAK, VISIT TRAVELANDLEISUREASIA.COM.



MALABAR MUTTON BIRIYANI | MANGALORE, KARNATAKA

"Fragrant steamed rice combine with bone mutton and flavors of saffron, mint, green chilies and whole spices in this dish." **WHERE TO TRY IT** "Mangalore isn't far from my hometown, and whenever I'm home, I always go for one meal of the sumptuous Moghul-style Malabar *biriyani* served at **Royal Darbar** [Bendorewell-Kankanady Rd.; 91-824/243-7588; dinner for two Rp400]," says Nayak. "The meat is cooked to perfection—it falls off the bone—the rice is fragrant and soft, and the spices complement the sweetness of the saffron and the rosewater."



IDLI VADA SAMBAR | MADURAI, TAMIL NADU

"*Idli* are steamed white fluffy fermented rice and black lentil cakes, while *vada* are savory doughnuts made with lentils and spices. They go with *sambar* and chutney." **WHERE TO TRY IT** "I'm huge fan of street-food, and in Madurai I always make a stop at the **Murugan Idli Shop stall** [Madurai Railway Junction, 4th and 5th platform; muruganidlishop.com; 91-452/2342-551; lunch for two Rp100] in the train station. The fluffy, melt-in-your-mouth *idli* come with a choice of four chutneys—it's sometimes difficult to choose which is best!"



PORK SORPOTEL WITH SANNA | GOA, KONKAN

"*Sorpotel*, a spicy and sour pork stew, is a dish of Portuguese origin common in the coastal Konkan region, primarily Goa and Mangalore. It's often accompanied by *sanna*—spongy, white, slightly sweet steamed rice cakes." **WHERE TO TRY IT**

"I discovered **Durigo Bar & Restaurant** [Luta Ferrao Rd., Grande Vanelim, Colva Beach; 91-832/278-8364; lunch for two Rp1,250] almost by accident on one of my frequent trips to Goa—a bus conductor taking me from the beach to my hotel recommended it. The pork *sorpotel* was a blessing to this tired foodie's soul. The place is run by a family, and the honesty shows in the food."



KUNDAPUR CHICKEN GHEE ROAST | BANGALORE, KARNATAKA

"Ghee roast is one of the most popular delicacies of Mangalore, popularized by a community in Kundapur, a small town in coastal Karnataka. Today every Mangalorean restaurant serves ghee roast, a spicy red chicken dish made with red-chili paste, garlic and ghee."

WHERE TO TRY IT **Kanua** (6/2 Kaikondrahalli, Sarjapur Rd.; 91-80/6537-4471; dinner for two Rp2,000), an authentic Mangalorean restaurant. Nayak suggests going in the evening for the best atmosphere and for the "delightful conversation with owner Rajesh Pai."