



# A Taste of India

S i d n e y M o s s



## **ABOUT THIS BOOK**

*In the absence of common factors such as language and culture, it becomes vital to create connections through other means. At the very basic level, we are all humans, and we all need to eat! I fully believe in the use of food and meals to bridge international divides, forge peace, and cultivate tolerance and understanding. Indian recipes are powerful in flavour and tradition, it was a true pleasure to get to know the beauty of this country one recipe at a time.*





## **Kt's Masala Chai and Sweet Parantha**

The tea culture in India is as strong as the brew served by the chai wallahs. In saying that, the space in which one enjoys the decadently sweet drink is largely dependent on gender. Chai stalls are often occupied by groups of men and do not serve as inclusive spaces for females. The reality of this is slowly changing, especially as a result of advocacy groups within India, an example being the Why Loiter movement out of Mumbai. The recipe that I will be sharing did not come from a chai wallah, in fact, it comes from my housemate and friend, who claims her chai to be better than any wallah's in Rajasthan (I wholeheartedly back this claim up).

My roommate in Ajmer, whom we called 'Kt', is a chai fanatic. Kt's kind and warming spirit is difficult not to melt into. She has a silent strength about her; a nurturing kind of protectiveness that has a way of making you feel safe when in her presence. Kt had moved to Ajmer from her hometown of Jodhpur in order to pursue a career in banking. She was often studying for banking exams, but chai breaks were deeply engrained as a daily ritual. It was during an afternoon chai break with Kt that I discovered another one of Kt's specialties: the sweet parantha. It is a simple variation of the classic piranha, but it is nonetheless a delicious treat, and quickly became a daily regular for our chai breaks.

I admired Kt's sense of self-awareness, and the confidence she had in making decisions for herself that went against the grain. I wanted to share her recipe as a means of acknowledging the women who are standing their ground and creating space.

### **K t ' s C h a i**

1 cup milk

1 cup water

2 tsp black tea

2 tbs sugar

1 tbs freshly ground chai mix (1/2 part cardamom, 1/4 part ginger, and 1/4 black pepper)

Bring the milk, water, and black tea to a boil.

Add the remaining ingredients and let it boil awhile longer while continuously stirring.

Use a hand strainer and pour into your favourite mug.

### **S w e e t P a r a n t h a**

1.5 cup flour

2-3 tbs sugar

Water

Mix the flour and sugar, add the water little bits at a time so as to obtain the right consistency (you want your dough to be thick)  
Roll into 5 balls, fold in half, and then one quarter so they look like triangles. Roll the triangles out and place on greased pan to cook.









## Rajasthani Coconut Chutney

Southern areas of India will often utilize the green coconuts for consumption. However, the dry climate of Rajasthan is sustainable for only the brown coconut, which is what we used in making the chutney.

1 brown coconut  
1 small bowl of curd (or plain yogurt)  
salt, chill powder, grated ginger  
Puree these ingredients with a hand mixer or blender  
Lastly, grind in some garam masala, mint leaves, and black pepper





# Idli and Samble

## Rajasthani Style

Idlis are little rice clouds of heaven that are eaten with a side of savoury curry (samble). This dish is most commonly consumed in the South, where rice grows in abundance. The steamed rice patties and nourishing samble are considered a light dish in comparison to the fried dosa and heavier curries that are extremely popular as breakfast feast items.

My friend and I decided to create an idli samble meal using the resources available in the Rajasthani area. Rajasthan neighbours Pakistan in the North West region of India. The State is made up of desert landscape, and subsequently experiences a dry climate that is not supportive of rice growth. Thus, we decided to substitute a wheat alternative in for rice, and to fill our samble with the abundance of spices produced in Rajasthan.

Idli:

2 cups semolina (made from durum wheat)  
1.5 cup thick curd  
1 tsp baking soda  
1 tsp salt

Mix everything together and place in greased idli holders. Place the idli pan in a pot with approximately 2.5 cups of steaming water at the bottom. Cover the lid and allow idli batter to steam into little heavenly cushions.

Samble:

1 cup of yellow lentils, 2 cups of water  
1 cucumber, 2 tomatos, 1 tsp salt, 1 chili

Bring these ingredients to a boil and let simmer until the lentils are cooked. Blend the lentil mixture.

Fry 2 tsp mustard seeds, 2 tsp garam masala, and 1 tsp chili powder in a generous spoonful of ghee. Cooking the spices brings out the glorious flavours that will take your tastebuds on a trip to the lusty sands of Rajasthan. Throw the fried spices into the lentil mixture and stir.

Consume and enjoy!





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## Pooja's Life Changing Dhal

My roommate and friend, Pooja, spent her last night in Ajmer cooking a meal for us to enjoy together. The dhal that she made for us was almost as beautiful and authentically wonderful as Pooja!

She very kindly shared her masterpiece (or according to her, the ingredients that she just threw together).

Cook 1 cup of yellow lentils in 2 cups water - bring to a boil and simmer until complete.

Grind a few garlic cloves into a paste. Add a spoonful each of chilli powder, coriander, turmeric, and salt (adjust to your taste).

Heat a large pan and add some oil, cook cumin and mustard seeds in the hot oil. Add the paste to a hot pan, along with a little bit of water to prevent the spices from burning.

Add the cooked lentils to the pan of spices and mix everything together. Add some water if needed.

Garnish with cilantro and enjoy!





## Kitcherie

I discovered this healing dish during a week that I was feeling exceptionally ill. My housemates made me kitcherie every evening, explaining to me that this is what their mothers had cooked for them every time they fell ill. It is a mild dish and includes gut healing remedies such as turmeric and ginger.

Using a rice or pressure cooker, fry coriander, mustard seed, and onion powder. Once the aroma is strong, add some ground turmeric.

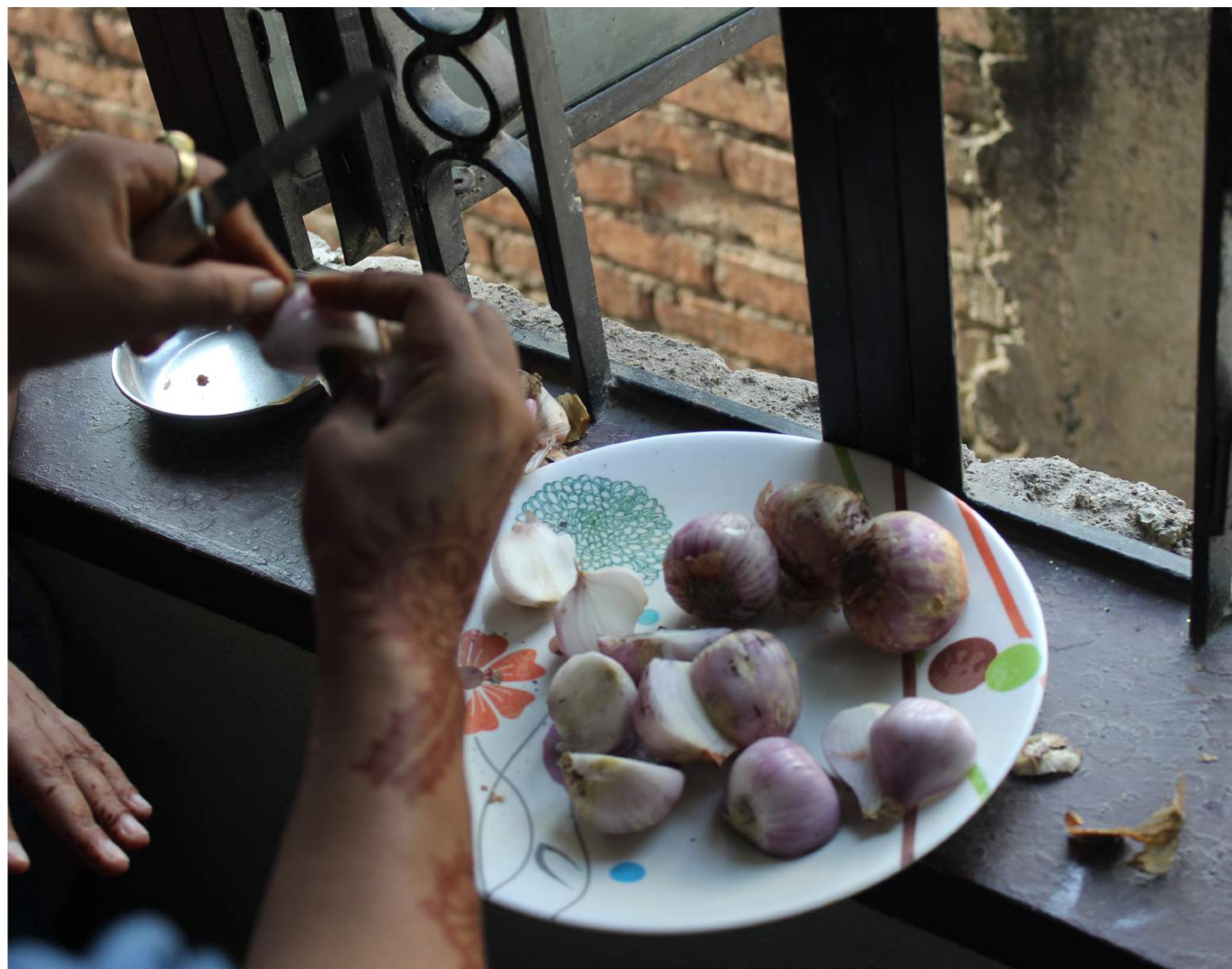
Lastly, add 1 cup rice, 1/2 cup lentils, 3 cup water, chopped potato, onion, tomato, salt, and ginger and garlic paste.

Cook and enjoy! Easy to make and easy on your tummy.











## Teej Pooi and Sabji

Teej is a Hindu festival that is celebrated throughout India, however, the time of year and the traditions involved in the worship vary depending on region. This particular Teej took place in Bihar on the first weekend of September, 2016.

My coworker, Anshu, invited me to celebrate with her family and take part in the rituals of the day.

Anshu spent the day fasting for the health and happiness of her husband and for a long marriage. It is tradition for her to cook a meal consisting of poori, sabji, mixed vegetable, and kheer. Evidently, she spent the majority of the day in the kitchen. Once the food was finished, she prepared the area where the pooja (worship) would take place, which is what is happening in the photo directly to the left.



# Poori and Aloo Sabji

Poori:

3 cups atta (flour)  
salt  
water as needed

Mix the ingredients and knead the dough until it has formed into a stiff ball. Divide the ball and roll out into small circles (approximately 14). Pour enough oil into a deep-frying pan so as to completely cover the poori pieces. Heat the oil and fry the poori one by one, using a slotted spoon to continuously scoop and flip the poori. The poori should eventually turn brown and crisp, and it should puff up, letting you know that it is finished. Set aside and allow to cool.

Aloo Sabji:

2-3 chopped potatoes  
1/2 head - 1 head of chopped cabbage  
Approximately 1/3 cup water  
1/3 cp chopped cilantro  
Oil  
Spices Galore

Using one or two tbs of oil, fry up turmeric, chilli powder, garam masala, onion powder (hing), garlic paste, and dry mango powder. Combining spices and finding the perfect taste is truly an art - play around with it and see what you can do! Add the cabbage and sauté for a couple of minutes. Lastly, add the chopped potatoes and fry until everything is fully cooked and ready to devour!

# K h e e r

Kheer was the first Indian recipe that I learned. I fell in love with the dessert one night in Old Delhi, a few friends and I shared a warm, thick, cardamom spiced bowl of kheer in the midst of a bustling street. Kheer can be made several ways, but the basic description is a creamy rice pudding. I grew up eating a similar dish that has been passed down through my Danish heritage, and although I was eating an Indian sweet on the streets of Delhi, I couldn't help but feel mixed emotions of nostalgia and familiarity.

Kheer is a rice-based dessert, with the additions of full-fat creamy milk, sugar, spices, and garnishes of nuts and dried fruits. From what I was told, kheer is a popular sweet throughout India due to its simplistic and affordable components, however, it is especially popular in the rice rich regions. I noticed that this was often the chosen dessert for large functions such as religious festivals and celebrations, not necessarily because it holds religious significance, but because it is easy to make in large batches, and it is an undeniable favourite... how could it not be?

1/2 L. whole milk (the fattier the better!)

1 c - 2 c of rice depending on how thick you would like your pudding to

The amount of sugar really depends on your preference of sweetness. I enjoy kheer on the less sweet side, so I used approximately 1/2 c. to 2 c. of rice.

Spices: cardamom, cinnamon

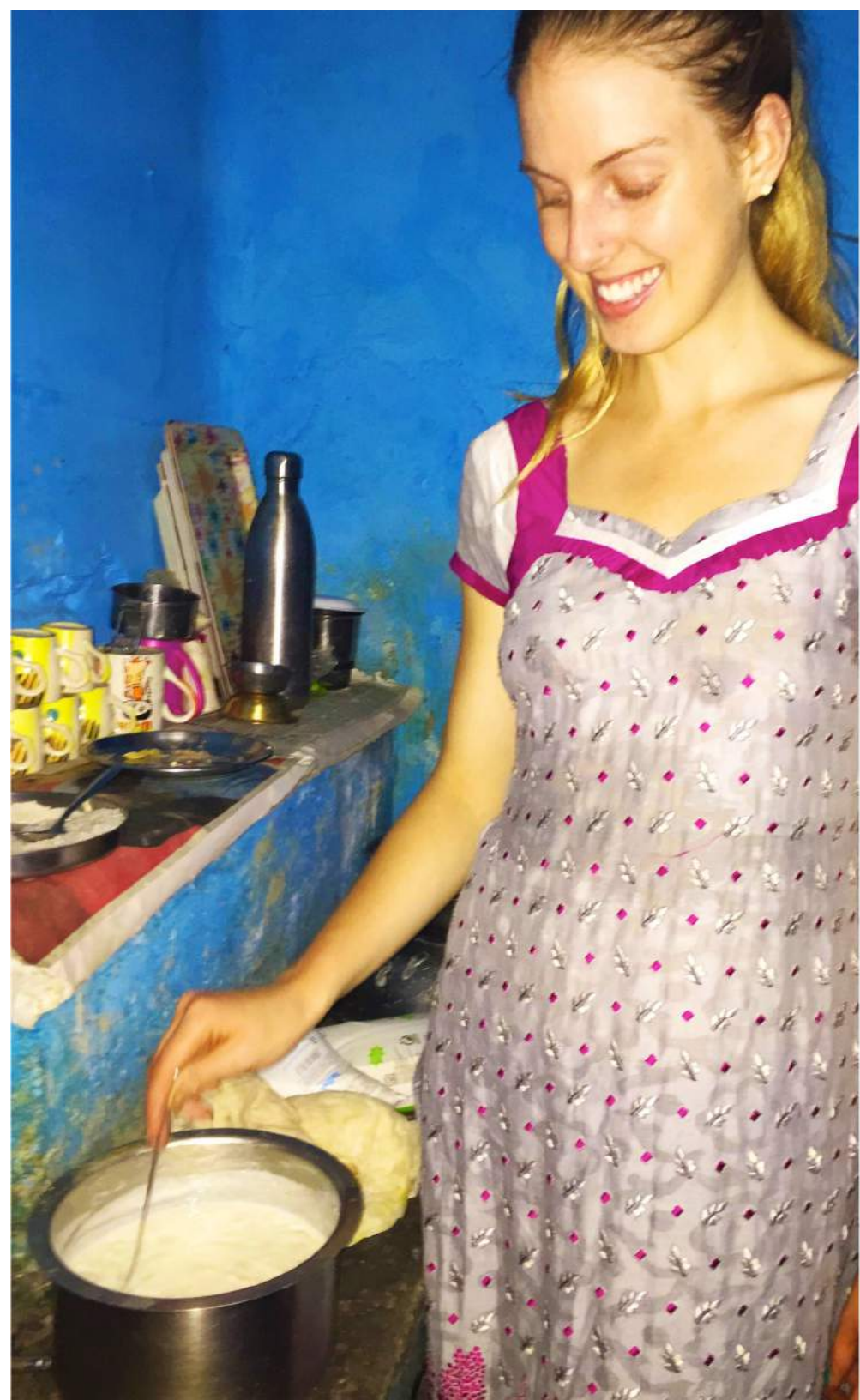
Nuts: pistachios, cashews, almonds, etc.

Dried fruit: raisins, mulberries, etc.

Pour the milk in a large pot and bring to a boil. Add the rice and continuously stir until whole mixture is bubbling. Continue to stir every couple of minute until the rice is cooked and you achieve the consistency you would like. Add the nuts, dried fruit, and spice. Stir and let cool before adding the sugar. I was told to be sure to wait until the rice had cooled before adding the sugar, it will supposedly bring out the taste more. Add the sugar and serve!

Serving note: My friend and kheer instructor emphasized that this dish should always be shared and eaten with others. It is a dish for communal and family gatherings. It is a dish of love.











## **A Taste of India**

“Something as seemingly small as our approach to food can transform the world in ways both small and vast, opening up new paths of understanding between even rivals” - Chef Mark Tafoya