TASTE OF NEPAL

Special Nepali Times Holiday Edition celebrates Nepal’s culinary heritage. Our reporters fan out across the country to sample well-known and obscure delicacies that are the ingredients of a rich and diverse food culture.

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Dasain Once More

It is once more that time of year when Nepalis eat, drink, and make merry in family reunions. Dasain is what binds the Nepali world, together with our shared history and culture. The festival has transcended religion to become a time for society and the nation to unite in common celebration, and revive our collective hopes for the future.

Dasain is said to have its origins in a proto-Hindu festival. The myths about the victory of good over evil and the goddess holding up a water buffalo came much later. With the monsoon over, pretty fields turn from green to gold, the clouds start swirling from west to east again, there is a nip in the air, and the hills are deep green. The snow mountains come out, snow with new snow.

It is once more that time of year when Nepalis travel overseas for work, study or to emigrate, the diaspora Dasain is a stark reminder of how family members endure prolonged periods of separation. More than 11% of Nepal’s population living and working abroad. Flights into Kathmandu are full of Nepalis coming home for the festival. Kathmandu itself swells out as people go home to their ancestral villages.

Dasain has always had an auspicious character. It is a time when people can forget their daily struggle against unemployment, inflation, shortage of supplies and the lack of basic services. These problems can wait, while we re-establish family ties, and perhaps even restart a hope for the future, holding out in the belief that things will get better. However dark the clouds are, the sun will come out - Dasain gives us a booster shot of optimism.

The year has gone by, the weeks leading up to Dasain this year did not give us much reason to hope. Ruling party parties attacked and beat up assistant renderer Gyenasini Shrestha for having ridiculed Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism Yasmin Khadka. Police stood by. Minendra Rijal of the Nepali Congress was rouged up by NC supporters in Tundhiki. NCP co-chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal regularly threatens the opposition in his public speeches, while Information Minister Gokul Banskota does not even try to hide his disdain for the free press.

But perhaps nothing indicates the state of impudence and lawlessness in this country more than the rape charges against House Speaker Krishna Bahadur Mahara this week. Prime Minister Oli and Dahal probably realized how seriously this would affect the NCP’s public image, and acted swiftly to instruct Mahara to tender a written resignation, which he did reluctantly and in ambivalent language. Predictably, the woman who accused the speaker of unjustifiable crime has been “persuaded” to retract her complaint.

The Prime Minister seems to be truly aware of the level of disillusionment among Nepalis about the party to which they gave a two-thirds majority in Parliament. Oli himself is having serious health issues, the government has failed in service delivery, it has a dismal record of non-performance, and Nepalis every day negotiate infrastructure that is in a dangerous state of disrepair.

None of that had particularly sparked Oli for claiming the party’s minister’s office, but the Mahara scandal appears to have seriously rattled the NCP, and forced it into crisis mode. By taking prompt action to force the Speaker out, Oli is demonstrating his calculated decisiveness. The government’s shutting down of hospitals will provide Oli with an opportunity to pounce, and ultimately the prime minister will be tempted to bung it in his cabinet – an age-old method for Nepal’s rulers to buy time to defuse a crisis.

This time, things may have gone a bit too far for a reckoning. The rot goes to the top. When tycoons have access to GDI’s parlour at Bakhuwari or his hospital bed in Singhatal, one has to wonder about the collusion between contractors and the government in building the country. Roads never get repaired, bridges never get built, national pride projects are a national sham.

Nearly half-way through its tenure in office, Prime Minister Oli will have some serious thinking over the holidays. How is he going to make up for last time and get the government machinery cranked up? If he has not been able to govern and perform in the past two years, it is unlikely he can get anything done.

Oli is probably banking on the visit to Kathmandu by Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang to last this month to lift his stature and nationalist credentials. There will probably some good news, said government spokesmen, perhaps of the trans-Himalayan railway. But with the wily politization that he, Oli will not have to be told that people are looking for immediate and tangible hope that tomorrow will be better than today. This Dasain, most Nepalis will be trying not to think about tomorrow.

As the crisis deepens, the prime minister will be tempted to reshuffle his cabinet – an age-old method for Nepal’s rulers to buy time.

Online Packages

What’s Trending

Jung Bahadur’s destitute descendants

For a Nepali kid born in 1976, Gopal Gautam, 41, is not the average man. He is a destitute descendant of one of the 10 praise-worthy kings - Shubhasharma Rana. Jung Bahadur, Gopal’s great-great-grandfather, was a king and the great-great-grandfather of his wife, Queen Namjyong. Violent Nepalis.com/erita and its affiliate @theleathaholabs discuss.

Everest fights back (against garbage and bad press)

By Alistereds

For a Nepali kid born in 1976, Gopal Gautam, 41, is not the average man. He is a destitute descendant of one of the 10 praise-worthy kings - Shubhasharma Rana. Jung Bahadur, Gopal’s great-great-grandfather, was a king and the great-great-grandfather of his wife, Queen Namjyong. Violent Nepalis.com/erita and its affiliate @theleathaholabs discuss.

Gourmet Tending

Trending - The utmost non-boring way to make a great impression. Watch the video now and take notes. The video isn’t too long and it works after the next shindig. Story page 5.

Jung’s descendants

Your story (Jung Bahadur’s destitute descendants), Gopal Gautama, (93%) the worst ‘destitute’ is used incorrectly. This is a middle class family, and it is an insult to them and to other Nepalis who work hard and live modestly. We respectfully call them ‘descendants.’ The article implies that 40 years after Jung Bahadur’s demise, we expect his descendants to have quaint lifestyles. Should all Ranas be affluent by default? Sophia Shrestha

Nepal Times TWEETS

Nepal Times (@NepalTimes)

The 19th generation descendant of Jung Bahadur Rana, 41-year-old Yami Pratap has tied a simple rakhi on his forehead, with his wife Gunraj. But the couple are not able to make ends meet.

Anup Magar (@anupmagar)

A lot about but meaningless article introducing new History through the lenses of contemporary @Nepal_Times

Mark Piccket (@MarkPicket)

How much of the descendants of those from whom 28 ornaments passed?

Nepal Times (@NepalTimes)

Almowla has been named ‘The World’s Highest Garbage Dump’ by environmental media. This has raised the good name. Sagarmatha National Park is closed for fear of the mountain. Every visitor will be asked to cover 25% of the garbage charge.

Jangalnay (@Jangalnay)

Only the poor are fighting by the media. What’s happened is Nepal’s reputation is negatively spreading among the people.

Nepal Times (@NepalTimes)

@NepalTimes

10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Total votes: 122

10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

In his column, San of the Sen, ten years ago in June 4/7 of 15 September, 2010, it is a study of the evolution of the Nepali society.

Interestingly, those who gave Dasain pan-Nepali status by the priests of the major Pan-Nepali, were both adherents. While the British and Indian Government, the two kept them through their own secular celebration of religious activities, such as Vishow and Thakali.

That they went in hand with the idea of Nepali and Nepali rather than their own distinctiveness. As long as three separate linguistic fragments are there, Dasain religious traditions will mean their secular character. It may not be politically useful to say at this time, but Dasai is not the historical entity in Nepal, and thus an extra-sacred/
WE WISH YOU A PROSPEROUS
VIJAYADASHAMI
AND A HAPPY
TIHAR,
FILLED WITH HAPPINESS,
PEACE AND PROSPERITY.
We live in a country where food is regarded as sustenance, and not a luxury. We eat to live. We eat when we arrive at a place where food is being served, not necessarily when we are hungry.

Nepal is synonymous with the Himalayas, and more recently the world has woken up to the fact that we also have points in the south and a plateau to the north. It is our unique location the gives Nepal its ethnic and cultural diversity. Which is why we must position our food as a product, service and a true lifestyle experience.

We have so much more than dal bhat – why have we kept all these dishes hidden from the world? Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Thai and Vietnamese food are now served all over the world why have we not branded Nepali cuisines? Thaikali and Newari restaurants are doing well, others should follow.

At Lakeside in Pokhara, there is a restaurant called Fresh Elements that sources local ingredients to create world-class meals. At Dukhuwe House in Butan visitors prepare, cook and enjoy a great meal as part of the homestay package. Bhajan Githa in Dillibhan has been serving Nepali food with local music and folk dances for many years now.

At the award-winning Dwarika’s Hotel, the Kathmandu 18-course dinner (pictures above) is now a global brand and a lifetime experience. The yogurt of Bhaktapur, the srimo (nettle) soup on trek routes, millet, buckwheat and Tibetan bread, are all part of many menus now.

We need to involve creative chefs who will help transform these many more local ingredients into world-class dining experiences. We could explore our own Nepali version of Masterchef Australia.

We want to see Nepal’s globally unique culinary heritage featured as a separate and stand-alone tourism offering. It can be done with a bit of creativity and entrepreneurial skills from tour operators, such as the growing trend of cooking classes for tourists. Dal bhat is all well and good but Nepal can offer so much more. We have the most unique spices and ingredients found nowhere else in the world. In Ilam, for example, you can walk a whole morning across a meadow where rhynus grows as far as the eye can see. Jhumu gives Nepali dal a warm hue and taste that Indian lensil cannot match. Mustang potatoes and Japal are now much sought-after. Global and domestic visitors travel to experiment, learn, have new and unique experiences, take photos, show off to friends and family back home, and then tell stories for the rest of their lives. A few may even write articles, or even a book, depending on how the experience impacts them. Let us make Nepali food one of their ‘unforgettables’.

Branding Nepal as a culinary destination will create new jobs, help our farmers grow high-value ingredients, keep tourism here longer and spend more. It will also give Chaipuar and Palpa brass dishes a boost, along with dhakka napkins and traditional offices. Many local ingredients will find their way to the global marketplace along with the handcrafted serving plates and pans, mashing from clay to silverware. Everyone has to eat, why not make it truly Nepali experience?

Anil Chitrakar is the President of Sobaarthik

Turkish Sports Awards

Turkish Airlines and United Nations 46 Games of Cultures created a joint platform Sport for Peace Awards, signing the collaboration on 24 September at the United Nations Headquarters, New York. Both parties agree to encourage and support sports since it encourages peace, tolerance, mutual understanding and empathy that helps to reach the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Shampoo from Marico

Marico is introducing Lavasham’s hair and body care range called Lavasham. The first time in South Asia. Now available in Nepal. Jonu features a combination of coconut oil and amla acid instead of sulphate.

New Himalaya Airlines

Himalya Airlines refocuses its brand identity with a new logo sporting a soaring eagle amidst Himalayan peaks. The airline launched its new corporate logo during a press meet held at Hotel Royal Sing on 29 September.

Highway Assurance

Highway Assurance program with free Hyundai while Check-up Camps at various points, free Highway is being organized to facilitate Nepali owners driving back home to celebrate Dasain. This free check up camp is a part of scheduled for 16 October (Nepalgunj).

Golf Tournament

Prince Bhandari won the title of World Tourism Day Cup Golf Tournament at Golfer Golf Club, Playing with 18 handicap, Bhandari scored 40 Stableford points to win the trophy and a trip to Thailand with accommodation courtesy of Thai Airways. Arranged by Himalaya Club, Team with the best gross score of 25 Stableford points, Shankar won the gross, scoring 19 in the back nine. 

TASTE OF NEPAL

Much more than Dal Bhat

Time for Masterchef Nepal to spotlight the country’s diverse, delicious food culture
GOURMET TREKKING

Trekking doesn’t have to mean bad food. Most trekkers have to settle for dal bhat tarkari, which is rather bland and not very nutritious. Mahinda Nepal, however, offers a different experience. They have started their own kitchen and serve delicious, healthy meals to their trekkers.

Mahinda Nepal collects fresh forest and farm produce from their farms and from local farmers around the Kathmandu Valley. They also bring in fresh fish from Lakes Phewa and Fewa, and fresh vegetables from their farms. Mahinda Nepal’s kitchen chefs have worked with some of the best chefs in the world, so they can prepare some really delicious and healthy meals.

One of the most popular dishes is the “Tibetan Style Tasty Tapioca.” It’s a savory dish made with tapioca, vegetables, and spices. Another popular dish is the “Spicy White Vegetable Soup,” which is a light and healthy soup made with a variety of white vegetables.

Mahinda Nepal also offers a variety of other dishes, including “Grilled Chicken with Rice,” “Spicy Chicken with Rice,” and “Grilled Fish with Rice.” These dishes are all prepared with fresh, local ingredients and are guaranteed to be delicious and healthy.

If you’re planning a trek in the Himalayas, consider giving Mahinda Nepal a try. They offer a unique and delicious dining experience that will make your trekking adventure even more enjoyable.

Set the Roads on Fire: Mahinda Nepal presents the XUV300

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Best-in-Segment Performance

- 300 Nm
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Taste of Nepal

NEPAL WHEREVER YOU ARE.

Satisfying trekker appetite for adventure

Sanghamitra Subba

A n assortment of French cheeses, appetisers and salads sit elegantly adorned with a purple tablecloth against the backdrop of snow-capped Himalayas and clear blue skies.

For the locals and trekkers nearby more than just the dal bhat trek staple, this is a sight to behold. Thakali bread and simple dishes dominate meals above 3,500m, but for an increasing number of trekkers, eating well goes with walking well.

One of the agencies responsible for this trend is Responsible Adventures, which since 2007 has been a pioneer of gourmet trekking, elevating hiking cuisine from modest meals to epicurean delights.

Owner and chef foodie Raj Tamang wanted to give a new dimension to his job while on a bike trip when he moved to Nepal from Singapore in 1998. He had a passion for trekking that involved delicious and nutritious food.

Despite having no professional culinary education, he learned from people he met from around the world, experimented with continental flavors, improvising with ingredients and creating palatable dishes with local foods.

All the trekking chefs at Responsible Adventures are trained by Tamang himself, and they have learned to make the best of what they have. These local ingredients, herbs, with what Tamang calls “a sense of humor and a bit of humility”.

Trekking has learnt to always expect the unexpected in Nepal, but one aspect of the experience that remains constant is the piping hot ayurvedic drink that is given to trekkers every morning.

According to Tamang, this elixir of water, turmeric, honey, apple cider vinegar and lemon has anti-inflammatory and energizing properties that power trekkers throughout the day.

Besides this magic concoction, every meal is a surprise and trekkers only know what they will be eating when it is served. Breakfast might be cereal and porridge sprinkled with chia or flax seeds, nuts and honey, and roll or chapati with organic peanut butter.

And while other trekkers have the option of mostly hard boiled eggs and a cup of warmed down tea, clients of Responsible Adventures get eggs to order and hot cups of freshly brewed coffee.

The smell of ground coffee beans at the break of dawn on the banks of Phewa Lake (picture) above beckons even the heartiest of sleepers towards the French press. Then come waffles with goji berries at 4:00am, which is probably a world altitude record.

For lunch and dinner, menus may get cold mush with avocado and topped with sweet potato, which could easily be mistaken for salmon. Other menus include mac n cheese, pasta, pizza, Thai curry, falafel, soup and even desserts like apple pie or cake.

A cheese platter featuring Danish blue, camembert and brie, and cold meats, olives, local cheeses dressed with cream and mustard sauce, and salad packed with super foods are also served.

“We work hard to provide our clients with a Rolle Royce experience at the price of a Toyota Corolla,” says Tamang.

Responsible Adventures’ boutique treks are customised according to the trekkers’ fitness levels and preference, but each one, despite having the same route, offers a completely different experience.

Tamang also takes hikers to a hidden gem in eastern Nepal that is off the beaten track. Although he wished to keep the location a secret, sharing the arrival of hordes of trekkers, he reveals, “That place is real Nepal, a Nepal that existed before trekking.”

Tamang calls his treks glamping (glamorous camping) which means that even in remote areas, there are showers, toilet tents, kitchen and sleeping tents. Other memorable treks include paragliding from Mardi Himal to Pokhara, jamming with Polish trekkers in Upper Dolpo, and arranging traditional Gurung dancing for a group of Singaporean girls.

Such luxuries do not come without challenge. Responsible Adventures faced an egg mishap when a man carrying a trekkers’ load of eggs fell into the Shret River. A client’s unexpected allergy was thankfully discovered on time.

Each trek is a discovery, and although there is no gain without pain, Tamang promises it as memorable as possible: “All the trekkers have to do is walk and enjoy the scenery, observe and absorb the beautiful environment around them.”

Dasain Delicious Taste of Nepal

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NEPAL WHEREVER YOU ARE.

Taste of Nepal

NEPAL WHEREVER YOU ARE.

Times

4 - 10 October 2019 #9980
The superfoods of the Andes and the Himalaya

Sonia Awale

The nutritious grains that mountain peoples of the Americas and high Asia cultivated were displaced by wheat and rice, but they are staging a comeback thanks to growing public consciousness about health.

Food items like pickled potato, roasted corn, tomato in curry and chilli paste are as Nepali as you can get. But few know that these staples of our food heritage have their roots in the Andes, and were actually brought to Europe and Asia only in the last 500 years.

Now, there is growing demand for other lost crops of the Incas like amaranth and quinoa among urban Nepalis. These grains are high in protein, low in carbohydrates, gluten-free and rich in micronutrients and minerals.

In fact, amaranth and quinoa are healthier alternatives to rice, particularly for diabetes and hypertension patients. Another South American fruit, the passionberry, is much sought after for its fibrous and antioxidant properties.

“A hinny comes to a limited market, but there is a growing demand for superfoods. In fact more and more of our customers prefer to eat quinoa instead of rice,” said Rosetta Raymabah of Fresh Shelf and Beverage in Bhaluwatar that has been supplying quinoa for two years.

The Incas grew a variety of crops and vegetables, exotic fruits, beans and tubers. But with the Spanish conquest, native crops were replaced with European foods and many were lost. However with better understanding of their nutritional value, some of the lost crops of the Incas are being rediscovered.

Amaranth is now also cultivated in Nepal’s Humla and Hひ words districts (pictures above), where the Andes mountains have a similar soil and climate to the Andes.

Iron-rich amaranth leaves (latta ko sagi) are eaten as a vegetable, and large-scale amaranth cultivation in Dolakha and Arghakhanchi districts cater to a rising demand in India.

“Many mountain crops like amaranth had been neglected but these are climate-smart superfoods and that is where the future is,” explained Rita Gurung of NL-BIRD, the Pokhara-based agro-biodiversity research organisation.

She says the crops need commercial-scale promotion and an campaign to promote their nutritional value by recipe generation so that Nepalis will make them a regular part of their diet.

Just like the Andes, the Himalayas has its own superfoods like chiloe (Psora millet) and Arugano (Foxtail millet) which have similar nutritional value to quinoa, but very few know of their existence.

“We have so many highly nutritious foods, but we have abandoned them for processed and packaged food stuff and vitamin capsules,” lamented public health expert Aruna Upadhyay.

It has been over four years since Source Bhakal started Green Growth, an online shopping portal for organic produce in Kathmandu. He has seen gradual increase in demand for locally grown organic and nutrient-rich produce, but says farmers have to be first convinced that there is a market for them.

“There are traditional recipes to all of our superfoods that we have to reclaim and propagate,” Bhakal says.

This Dasain, let us replace rice with made major (millet), piping (buckwheat), jau (barley), utt (bassam), aaloo (flax seed) so that we eat, drink and make merry, we also become healthier.
Nepali Rana dynasty ruled for just over 100 years, building ornate neo-classical palaces with vast manicured gardens copied from Victorian England, while the aristocrats wore magnificent jewellery.

What the Ranas are less well known for is a cuisine that is a unique fusion of Nepali and Mughal dishes from northern India. The recipes date back to influences of the Ahabsana brought in from Lucknow by Jung Bahadur Rana after the Indian Mutiny in 1857. These Muslim chefs worked with the bhati and bhati in the Rana palace (although strictly not in the same kitchen), perfecting the fusion cuisine that evolved into the unique Rana flavour.

The recipes will soon be out in a new cookbook by Rohini Rana, who was born in Agra to the Indian royal house of Aweaghat and married to Ganga Rana, who went on to become Nepal’s army chief from 2012 to 2016.

“Growing up as the youngest sibling in one of the most beautiful hill stations in northern India I had an idyllic childhood. I was loved and, I admit, slightly pampered,” recalls Rohini Rana, whom friends and relatives all call Dolly. “Summer in Nainital were endless lunches and dinners with tables piled high with food.”

Breakfasts were spent discussing the day’s menu, with each member of the family picking a dish to cook. After coming to Kathmandu, Dolly adjusted quickly to the new Rana household, also bonding with the kitchen staff.

Her husband, Gen Gaurav Rana, is the great grandson of Prime Minister Chandra Shumsher Rana and is the seventh generation of the family serving in the Nepal Army. Dolly accompanied her husband on various military postings internationally, and to remote regions of Nepal.

Dolly Rana wrote the first draft for her Rana cookbook while her husband was posted in Suhantar Army Base in Hetauda nearly 30 years ago, where they lived in an old Rana house in the middle of the forest. Many of the recipes in her book were perfected by her husbands’ nanny, Chhina Champa Bhatti, who started working at age 15 in the Babet Mahal palace, where her father was a retainer. Though her job was to raise the young Gaurav Rana, she was interested in cooking and learnt the dishes from other maids and cooks.

Rana cuisine incorporates and builds on the basic dal bhat staple of rice, lentil soup, meat and vegetables, adding a unique aroma and taste from the simuru and tarum that differentiate the Nepali rice dishes from Indian food. While north Indian cuisine is noted for its rich and thick gravy, Nepali food comes with lighter fled, dry Akbari and Jeera.

Dolly collected and documented recipes from Rana princess minister families, with each having a slightly different twist and taste to the basic dishes. The book will soon be published by Penguin Random House.

“It is very important to preserve the dishes for posterity because the cuisine is part of our heritage, and it is in danger of disappearing with the passing of generations,” says Dolly Rana, refusing to divulge the exact recipes.

“You will have to wait for the book,” she smiles.
RSxT breaks through genre barriers by seamlessly blending jazz, electronic music, soul, pop and hip-hop. The term ‘RSxT’ (Random Sequence of Things) stands for ‘unknown and the extraordinary’ and for the crossing of boundaries and directions. As it constantly reinvents its own music, you will never truly know what to expect but you can always look forward to an exciting and dynamic performance.

“Jazz for us is not only a genre, but more the permission to be free while expressing ourselves. I love combining the lyrical power of the piano with grooving beats. Hip Hop, Soul and Electronic are styles that have this groove, and also have the space for keyboard sounds of all kinds. I love all these styles and that is why I want to play them, bring them together and mix genres. I’m not afraid to break boundaries.”

“Although we are all educated jazz musicians, Jazz for us is not only a genre, but more the permission to be free while expressing ourselves. I love combining the lyrical power of the piano with grooving beats. Hip Hop, Soul and Electronic are styles that have this groove, and also have the space for keyboard sounds of all kinds. To most simply answer this: I love all these styles and that’s why I want to play them, bring them together and mix genres. I’m not afraid to break boundaries.”

For me, jazz is an incredible innovation and gift given to the world primarily by Black Americans. Now, people all over the world are innovating in jazz, it’s happening right here right now in Kathmandu and has been for a while by Nepalis too!

Jazz musicians are unashamed borrowers -- there is no single element that is uniquely jazz. Jazz borrows harmonies, rhythms and the element of improvisation from all global genres. It is this universal richness, where no single performance of a tune is alike that is recognized as being jazz.”

Jazz returns to ‘Maan’

Sanghamitra Subba

It is October, it must be Dasain in Kathmandu. And it must be time for Jazzmandu. This year, the 17th edition of the Kathmandu Jazz Festival returns with artists from all over the globe performing in the city.

International bands like Tropic Green, RSxT, Adrian Crookston & Paluso Forro, Paul Tynan and Jake Hanlon and Faby Montana as well as The Blue First, Cadena Colletives and Jonn from Nepal will be performing from 17-23 October in different venues in Kathmandu Valley.

Jazz has come a long way from the African American communities on the cobblestone streets of New Orleans in the late 19th century to different corners of the globe. It has evolved into Latin jazz, gypsy jazz, Afro-Cuban jazz, and even Nepali jazz. But even through the blues and swing inspired art form has branched out, improvisation -- the essence of jazz -- is still its heart and soul.

In Nepal, jazz has influenced and inspired lot of Nepalis into listening, learning and playing jazz. Jazzmandu has promoted jazz in Nepal and has brought renowned world class musicians to audiences in Kathmandu,” says Samit Chetri.
Jazzmandu 2019

CONCERT FOR YOUNG STUDENTS
1-3:30pm, 17 October
Alliance Française, Jhamsikhel
By invitation only

Jazzmandu kicks off with a free concert playing great music for young minds. The Concert for School Students continues Jazzmandu’s long tradition of promoting music education and cross-cultural understanding. Interested schools and individual students can request invitations by writing to info@jazzmandu.org

Seating is limited. Gates open at 11:30 am, please be seated by 11:50 am.

GROOVIN AT UPSTAIRS
7-9pm, 17 October
Jazz Upstairs, Lazimpat
Ticket: Rs100

Cadena Collective gather new and old friends for an explosive jam at the heart of Jazz in Nepal. Jazz Upstairs Gates open at 5 pm. Seating is limited.

VALLEY JAMS
7-9pm, 18 October
Ticket: Rs60
Moksha, Jhamsikhel – Tropic Green
Jazz Upstairs, Lazimpat – Paul Tynan & Jake Harden / Pauleux Forza
House of Music, Thamel – Baju
Manny’s Eatery and Tapas Bar, Jawalakhel – Buddy Medina
Gates open at 6 and close at 7 pm. Seating is limited.

JAZZ BAZAAR
20-30 October
Gokarna Forest Resort
Ticket: Rs1400

Get away from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu and be surrounded by the lush, serene Gokarna Forest Resort and great music. Gates open at 1:30 pm and close at 7 pm. Seating is limited. A deficient does not guarantee a seat. All outside food & beverages allowed. A free shuttle service to Gokarna will depart every hour from 1 pm to 6 pm from outside Hotel Manma Pabu in Kothal Pokhara, and will stop for pick-ups outside the Night Regency G Australia. Return shuttles will be available between 10 pm and 11 pm, with drop-offs at Bahu and Kunj Pokhara.

SOUNDS OF LATIN JAZZ
7-9pm, 20 October
Dhulikhel, Patan
Ticket: Rs1500

Experience the sounds of authentic Afro-Caribbean and Brazilian Jazz. Gates open at 6 pm and close at 11 pm. Seating is limited.

JAZZMANDU MASTERCLASS
11am-1pm, 22 October
Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamsikhel – Vocal & Instrumental Workshop
Free Entry

The Jazzmandu master classes are an opportunity for music students & jazz enthusiasts to interact with visiting musicians, share their experiences and studies and learn techniques and tips on various instruments and vocals. Seating is limited and not guaranteed.

JAZZ AT THE TEMPLE HOUSE
6-30 till 9:30pm, 22 October
Kantipur Temple House, Thamel
Ticket: Rs1600

An evening of Nepali classical music fused with Jazz in a rich and soulful ambiance. International musicians share their musical ideas and energies with Nepal’s top classical musicians and Cadena Collective at the fabulous Kantipur Temple House. Gates open at 6:30 pm and close at 7 pm. Please be seated by 5:45 pm. Seating is limited.

JAZZMANDU FINALE
5-30pm, 23 October
Hotel Yak & Yeti, Durbar Marg
Ticket: Rs1400

The finale BIG JAM! Musicians from different bands come together on one stage to light up the heavens creating a high-energy, improvised music event. Gates open at 5:30 pm and close at 8 pm. Seating is limited.
Events

Comics Launch
Wariyapa Comic Anthology: Issue 1 is a collection of comic shorts by 6 female Nepali artists about self love. Join the artists at the launch and engage in drawing and discussion sessions.
4 October, 4pm onwards, Alliance Française de Kathmandu (01) 5885237

Art Exhibition
Veil Sujal Kami’s exhibition of paintings, poetry and performances before 4 oct. LAMA blends the three seamlessly to provide a show you can’t miss.
4 October, 10am-6pm, The Tangauge Museum, Kathmandu (01) 5718107

Open Air Cinema
Enjoy a movie night at an open air cinema at the heart of Kathmandu. Call in to ask what movie is being screened that evening. Every Monday and Thursday, 6.30pm onwards.
LAMA, Residence, Kathmandu (01) 5889996/33

Boat Game Night
Bring your friends for a fun night of board games. Games will be provided but you can bring your own too.
10 October, 6pm-9pm, Boudha, Kathmandu

Divine Debris
Menna Kayathara’s “Shine Divine” features paintings of Hindu gods and goddesses on canvases made out of the cable from the 2015 earthquake. The exhibition opens 2 October 5 pm onwards.
2-30 October, Nomad, Gallery in Air Space, Kathmandu (01) 4831428

Dassain Rendezvous
Enjoy a dynamic performance by the elements B & BLACK. Their upbeat and energetic songs will have you up and dancing in no time.
4 October, 4pm onwards, The Bottleneck – Me in the Sky, Hotel Group, Kathmandu

Getaway

Mr. Gimbap
Korean Gimbap is a dish made from steamed rice filled with veggies or meat and wrapped in seaweed. It is a combination of sweet, salty and umami flavors that will keep you wanting more.
1-5g, Katmandu School, 591829538

Fryday’s
Fryday’s Fish and chips are the closest and most perfectly seasoned fish dish you can find in Kathmandu. Their homemade sauces and house wine are deserving of an award.
Shop, Nomad, Residence, Kathmandu

Dassain Beer Fest
The hard by Olga’s Garden is hosting a Hokkaido Wind with live, Chef-made barbecue and unlimited beer.
5 October, 12.30pm-6pm, The Yard, Sukhpa (01) 5224935

Groovin’ at Upstairs
Kick off your Dassain with an explosive performance by Alk-5 Funk, Nepali indie and jazz band Cotton Collection.
17 October, 6pm onwards, Ticket 9500N, Jazz Upstairs, Pankhui, Kathmandu (01) 4844476

Jazz After Dark
Jazzmela, 2019 just around the corner and in preparation, get into the groove of Jazz at Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory’s “Jazz After Dark”, a nightly musical event by Nepali jazz artists. Every night until 24 October, 7pm onwards.
Mellow, Juice, Kathmandu (01) 5228362

Changaj Chait
Enjoy the festivities of Dassain with classical Nepali music and folk songs by local artists.
5 October, 12pm, Jom, Jackie A Wonderful Village, Gokarna

Dassain Beer Fest
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Himalayan Deurali
Just 10km off of a dirt road from the majestic Machhapuchhre Hills, you’ll feel like you can just grab the statue from your room at Himalayan Deurali. The expansive property offers everything from a relaxing spa to continental food.
Agalloch, Kirti, 9818640250

Mowa Khola Hill Resort
If you’re in town for a hike to Kathmandu or a visit to the holy Pashupatinath Temple, Mowa Khola Hill Resort is the best place to stay. With clean and comfortable rooms, attentive service and breathtaking views, there is no better place to spend the night.
Adekup, 9818926509

Marriott Hotel
Celebrate the re-opening of the sun and take a dip in Marriott’s refreshing infinity pool. And if you’re there for the food, the shrimp cocktail is a must.
Kirti (01) 4463061
Nibha Shah: Nepali poet, ‘manarsa’

Born in 1971 into an aristocratic Kala Shah family in Kathmandu, Nibha Shah spent her early life surrounded by flowers and trees, and under an Ahimsa, a Tara woman named Nibha. "We used to dig up soil and moon to" she says, winking. "I was doomed to nature."  

But Muna Gurung is like creating a child. You have to keep the baby inside you for a while before it comes out into the world. ‘Manarsa’ alone took me nine months to write. I had already come out of the jungle then, and I was in Mangalpui in April 1979, when the U.S. Peace Corps opened its first office in Nepal. At that time, Hilla did, who had just been recruited as a Peace Corps volunteer, had asked me to join her on a trip to Australia. I still did not have a child, and I was always busy. I was in the process of making my own journey and I knew I could not leave. I had blood, blood, blood on my mind—my mother’s blood, my grandmother’s blood—and I knew I had to stay at all costs. I had to keep off shouting through words and thoughts, examine them, put them together. If a poem is a visual, then you can be sure that it has taken the poet a long time to put it together. In the case of nature, a poem needs time.

Muna Gurung: How did you take on this identity of being a Marxist? Nibha: When I was 12, my mother was always a rebel. Growing up in Ashram, I lived a joint family with my younger aunt and my grandmother. I was the only child of my grandmother and I made sure they knew it. [Laughter]. For instance, in Ashram, we had to be careful not to mention anything about ‘manarsa’ or ‘manas’ never mixed. Once, I was alone in my room. The friend I thought was coming did not come and I spent the entire night crying because the old man door was newly decorated, and I was certain his cross would move to the other side of the bed. Crossed my fingers, even though I was convinced of nothing. When I woke up, my grandmother was standing near my bed. I was scared to talk to her, but I knew she would not be there when I went to the toilet. I was always scared of two things. One was being alone and the other was having to do things that were new to me.

LIGHTRoom CONVERSATION

The narrative of a ‘manarsa’ single is a Maldivian, and her life is a journey. In the beginning, we were not quite sure what we were doing. But even now, we are still-beginning and looking ahead. And even now, all of her work that we could dig up—simply not quite the same way. ‘Nibha’ has not published three books of poetry, ‘Manarsa’ (individual) all live in the Revolution, 2011. She is a doctoral student in the School of Management (MPhil), and working on a new project. She also writes run-of-the-mill poetry for the daily papers. Her poetry is free—silent and gentle. And the her poems are built on a spit, pop, close, and lin. At that time, she went on to write a book on her own research, the importance of teaching and learning how to one.

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Moti Bagh

Vidyadutt Sharma, 68, stands in front of his blue-tinted two-storey home, looking out into a 360 panorama of the Himalayan mountains. This is Moti Bagh, Sharma’s farm in Pauri district of the Indian state of Uttarakhand, which are ‘ghost villages’ from where inhabitants have migrated permanently.

“The mountains are dying,” says Sharma, who ploughs his land with oxen, plants seeds, tends his own water and chop sticks. Cooking a vegetable dal over a wood fire he says ‘upper’ caste people have left the village and abandoned farming. The ‘lower’ castes do all the work. With the demise of farming, producers are now consumers, people want to work with the mind, not hands, scared of physical labour, he says.

“It’s easy to write books, but the challenging is to make a tomato seed grow,” Sharma adds.

With locals having migrated, most farmhands here are from Nepal. Helping Sharma on his farm is Ram Singh, who came here from western Nepal 18 years ago and never left. He is happy the children get to go to school, he has savings to send back to the larger family back home.

“Locals are jealous of me,” Ram Singh says with a toothy smile. When his first came, he and his family were called names and told to go back to Nepal. Now, he says, he is accepted. “I will have to return to Nepal one day or, maybe we will be made to go back,” he says.

Pauri town is 35 kilometres from Moti Bagh and built up in concrete like most hill towns. Tribhuvan Uniyal, Sharma’s journalist son, lives here with his wife and two children. Will they farm? His daughter wants to do fashion design.

Director Nirmal Chander Dandiyal is himself from Uttarakhand and his sensitivity to his protagonists shines through the film. He was born in Chmna, but began travelling to Uttarakhand more frequently around 2011. Seeing migration as a central theme, he decided to make a documentary. Migration was not a new issue. But while it is seasonal in other states, in Uttarakhand it is permanent.

Motih Bagh became the location, a microcosm to the big picture. The story unfolds through the characters, without backstories, lecturing or a voice over of gloom and doom. The characters in the film are fresh and rooted in the environment, and Chander was able to shoot in different seasons, various stages of cultivation, and events such as marriages and funerals.

Moti Bagh has been nominated for the awards and will be screened at the South Asian Documentary Film Festival in November in Kathmandu.

Anita Anand
Moti Bagh, 2013
60 min

nepalities.com

LONG DISTANCE GOVERNANCE: PM KP Oli inaugurates Nepal Telecommunications 6G Services in all seven provinces by speaking to chief ministers of all seven provinces at once from Kathmandu on Wednesday.

RAGE AGAINST RAPE: Artist’s protest in Kathmandu on Tuesday, demanding the arrest of Krishna Bahadur Mahara who resigned as Speaker of Parliament following an allegation of rape. The victim later retracted her complaint.

EYE OPENING: The biography of noted ophthalmologist Sanduk Ruit was launched on Saturday by educator Tapesh Subharti Sharma, whose eyesight was restored by Ruit after 11 years of blindness.

CELEBRATIONS: Thai Embassy organised a festival of Thai food, food and products at Indra Shing-Lux on Saturday. The Thai and German embassies are in the city.

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MERANTILTE

AMRITTA...
Manju Chaudhary sinks her hand into a little pond and brings up a tiny, conch-shaped shell. Inside it is an even tinier water snail. When she has collected a handful she goes to the kitchen, where she boils them and cuts away the inedible tails. The rest she fries with her favourite spices and eats it with rice, succing the flesh out of the shell.

Many in Nepal would look askance at this dish, but among the Tharus ghouchi snails are a delicacy. The indigenous Tharu people live along the southern plains, and despite different customs and costumes among subgroups, they share a love for snails. In fact, the Tharu are fond of eating all aquatic life — from fish and fresh-water shrimp to exotic tiny crabs and clams.

“We harvest them ourselves from rivers and ponds,” says Chaudhary, who is from Sunar. “We had a pond near our home, and brought handfuls of snails from the river and put them in. They multiply fast, and there is enough ghouchi to last a year.”

Snails are eaten as a hors d'oeuvre or with the main rice meal, and has a slightly slippery texture, tasting like creamy mushrooms. In general, Tharu cuisine is known to be very healthy as it includes fresh leafy greens which are boiled and not fried, very little oil is used.

Full of proteins, snails are said to heal wounds and broken bones faster. However, ghouchi is not well known outside the Tharu community and many Nepalis are not even aware that snails are edible.

Now living in Kathmandu, Manju Chaudhary (pictured above) misses her childhood delicacy, and relies on travelling relations to deliver snails. A few enteries in Kathmandu are now trying to cater to people like Chaudhary by serving Tharu dishes, like Beugle restaurant in Kirtipur.

“The only time you get to enjoy Tharu food in Kathmandu is during the Maghi festival, when locals provide this food in Yandikhaal. But we want to offer it year round,” says Sitaram Chaudhary, one of the founders.

Through the restaurant serves arias, crab, and even clams, Sitaram notes that snails are the most popular item on the menu.

Sewa Bhattarai

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Exploring Nepal’s culinary diversity

I n a land where food is eaten first with the eyes, the vibrant sights of Nepali cuisine are a feast for the senses. The rich colors, textures, and aromas of the dishes not only tantalize the taste buds but also transport one to the diverse regions of Nepal, each with its unique flavors and culinary traditions.

**Dal Bhat**

One of the most iconic dishes in Nepali cuisine is *dal bhat*, which translates to lentil and rice. It is the staple dish and a significant part of the daily diet. *Dal* refers to lentils, while *bhat* is rice. The *bhat* is often served with a variety of *dal* (lentil soup), which can be made from different types of lentils or pulses. The dish is completed with a side of *roti* (flatbread) or *chapati* (a type of unleavened bread), and sometimes *sama*, a type of barley bread.

**Rai/Limbu**

The Rai/Limbu community in eastern Nepal is known for their distinctive culinary style. **Sagambo** (pork sausage) is a popular dish in this region, made by stuffing blood and seasonings into pig intestines, then cured and dried before being eaten. The dish is often enjoyed with rice and lentil soup, making it a hearty and flavorful meal.

**Nepal Bhojan Khana**

For those interested in experiencing the authentic flavors of Nepali cuisine, a visit to Nepal Bhojan Khana, established in 1975, is a must. Located in Raktakali, this restaurant is known for its traditional Nepali dishes and serves a variety of dishes that reflect the rich culinary heritage of Nepal. Whether you're a food lover or simply looking for a unique dining experience, Nepal Bhojan Khana offers a taste of Nepal that is as authentic as it gets.

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**Kedar Sharma** and **Kiran Sharma**

TASTE OF NEPAL

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**Dal bhat**? There is more to Nepali cuisine than meets the eye.
Whether it is kitten-shaped in pull blood or tea brewed with salt and butter, our reporters have captured it all on video. Follow them to ethnic kitchens for mouth-watering Nepali delicacies and learn how to prepare them.

EXOTIC ETHNIC EATS

Dasain

Tharu

Tharu cuisine is rich and varied. A staple dish is the traditional midday snack and also a festival delicacy, where beaten rice is eaten with many vegetables and condiments. Spicy potato salad, pork and mushroom bread, beans, soybeans, and marinated buffalo meat are popular accompaniments. Almost every little village in Kathmandu contains a Newari restaurant, serving dahi, Ama, or churut, a popular bread, and other dishes. The choices range from street-side stalls to high-end outlets like Dwaraka’s Hotel in Batatkanai.

Newa

Sherpa

Sherpa cuisine is derived from Tibet, and is designed for the cold weather of the high mountains. A staple is a potato and buckwheat bread, and rice with garlic chips. A soup made of lentils, pork, and vegetables is also a popular dish. Sherpa tea is a popular drink, made by boiling grains like buckwheat, millet, wheat, or a combination of them, and mixed with milk and honey.

Raithane Dashain Bhoj

(October 5-13, 2019)
Dasain Go-Slow

The news that China has closed the border and denied transit visas to 10,000 mountain goats and sheep from Tibet to enter the Federal Republic of Nepal this year has been greeted with dismay in some quarters. This is understandable given the irreversible setback this will create for national efforts to celebrate Nepal’s national festival, with the gaiety it deserves.

As we all know, goats from the northern and southern neighbours have sacrificed their lives to safeguard Nepal’s martial tradition that allowed us to fight off invaders and preserve our independence throughout history.

Fried goat guts washed down with beer are an important guarantee of inebriation over the coming weeks, and without adequate ungulate supplies, Nepal may actually end up doing something useful and important in the national interest.

This is why the semi-government National Institute for Lethargy and Inertia has moved swiftly to identify alternate sources of goat protein so that there is sufficient indolence and lassitude to go around this Dasain. Even so, we need special Vigilance Squads to patrol the corridors of power to carry out spot checks to make sure that no civil servants and politicians are sneaking into their offices to actually get some work done during Dasain. (If they are sneaking to their parliamentary chambers to indulge in other hanky panky, that’s fine.)

Senior ministers, secretaries, MPs, and ambassadors plenipotentiaries are not exempt from this crackdown. It has come to our notice, for instance, that the Home-away-from-Home Minister and the Health Hazard Minister are both busy catching up with a backlog of pending work in their official quarters. They were spotted during their commutes poring over piles of files. They will get a severe reprimand from the Crime Minister for spoiling ruling party unity by being workaholics.

Unless all members of the cabinet show strict discipline and consensus, the Chief Whip will be compelled to give them all a tongue-lashing for working overtime. And it will not just be lip service, you can be sure of that. We on such spoil sports, we hamper our efforts to bring the country to a standstill.

It’s not that we are less lazy the rest of the year, but Dasain is when we can really wallow in sloth. Even though we know this, we sometimes lapse into exertion and toil. Vigilance, that is what is required. Vigilance against hard work. We have always underestimated the role laziness plays in non-violence and in ending wars. Making people too lazy to go to the opposition with beer bottles should be the aim of all peace-building endeavours.

Having said that, it has just come to my notice that I am now too lazy to complete this column. May you all attain nirvana this Dasain: that state of perfect immobility and bliss.