

Ghee-licious!

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**100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment**  
**Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances**  
**Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!**

**Ghee-licious!**

**By Shubhra Krishan**

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Chhhannnggg....

The sound is familiar— like a curtain of raindrops descending on a tin roof. I am about to part the curtain and look out of the window, when the aroma floats in. Conjuring images of twilight, soft breeze, the cows coming home— the bells jingling around their necks... dinner laid out on a chatai (straw mat) on the kitchen floor—light yellow rice peppered with mustard seeds and soaked in home-made ghee...

I am led by the nose...into the kitchen in vaidya Ramakant Mishra's home. A symphony of flavour is playing there. The big round wok on the stove, with curry leaves and cumin seeds crackling inside the clear golden ghee, sending out the sound that I mistook for rain. And the aroma. Again the aroma.

I don't mean to sound dramatic. But don't blame me if I do. There are smells that send you crazy. The first whiff of rain that rises off the earth. The fresh scent of water-sprinkled cilantro. Ocean-mist. Daffodils. And ghee.

"Almost everything I like is either sinful, illegal or fattening" said Oscar Wilde. And isn't that true of most things in life—chocolate, fries and streaking on the beach, to name a few. Happily, ghee isn't among them. It's delicious and it's actually good for you.

Ghee is everywhere in Indian life. For centuries, Indian women have used carbon from ghee-lamps as a protective eyeliner. Mothers massage their newborns with it, to make their skin supple. The no-fail Indian remedy for an upset stomach is ghee-bhaat (boiled rice) with a pinch of salt. Because ghee can transport particles into cells, many Ayurvedic formulations use it as a base. Ghee is the fat that lights the lamps of temples—no other fat is considered more auspicious.

But superstition is not just why the Indians love ghee. Renowned vaidya Dr Ramakant Mishra, who heads product research at Maharishi Ayurveda International, says Ayurveda discovered the role of ghee in well-being centuries ago. So beneficial is this fat that vaidyas have given it the status of a "rasayana", or pre-eminent healing food.

## Ghee–licious!

Ghee is:

**Light:** That rich, creamy look. You would imagine ghee is a heavy fat. It's not. What is ghee, you may ask. Dehydrated milk–butter without its solids. To make ghee, technologists heat milk butter on a slow fire. All the water slowly evaporates. What's left of the butter is a clear golden liquid, with the solids settled at the bottom. The liquid is ghee. Bonus: ghee is so flavorful that just a teaspoon will do more than four tablespoons of any other cooking oil.

**Luscious:** Brush a layer on corn–on–the–cob or drop a dollop into hot lentils. Pour into the hollow of a freshly baked potato or saute with salmon. Stir–fry, bake, saute or spread—any which way you use it, ghee will find flavour with you. What's more, it won't smoke or burn during cooking.

**Lasting:** Keep ghee and butter at room temperature. Butter will eventually turn rancid; ghee will not. It's the moisture in butter that promotes decay. Virtually moisture–free, ghee has no such problem. It will retain its original freshness and flavour for months, even without refrigeration.

**Energising:** Some foods dissolve in water, and some in fat. Ghee in your diet will carry fat–soluble foods quickly and easily inside cells. Such foods will reach where they are supposed to reach, to work the way they are supposed to work. Sometimes, it's just packaging that makes the difference.

**An Anti–oxidant:** Ghee has beta–carotene and vitamin E, both known anti–oxidants that counter the effects of free radicals. Science has been able to establish that free radicals cause nearly 90 percent of all degenerative diseases. Ghee in your diet, then, could give Father Time a run for his money.

**A Sharpener:** The goodness of ghee not only powers your cells, but also penetrates the corners of your mind. Result—quicker leaning, better recall, wiser decisions. Cow ghee in particular is supposed to be extremely good for your brain.

**A Healer:** Ghee repairs the mucus lining of the stomach and evens out the acid balance in there. An ancient Indian fable says King Akbar the Great once challenged a citizen to eat and digest limestone. The man accepted—and won. His secret? Just before he had the limsetone, he downed a huge bowlful of ghee to arm his stomach against the assault.

So stir–fry the garlic in a teaspoon of ghee, and drizzle over piping hot bread. It's aromatherapy of the most intoxicating kind. Then feel the flavour do ghee–licious things to your taste–buds. Indulge.

Shubhra Krishan is a journalist from India, now based in Colorado Springs. She specializes in writing about Ayurveda—a system of healing that originated in India more than 5000 years ago. Her articles on Ayurveda can be found at [www.mapi.com](http://www.mapi.com) and <http://ayurvedix.tripod.com>

**The Punjab is situated in eastern India**

**By Liz Canham**

## Ghee-licious!

The Punjab is situated in eastern India and is divided by the Indian/Pakistani border. It is very fertile because of the rivers that cross here and as a consequence, agriculture is central to the economy. Wheat accounts for a large proportion of the crops, along with corn, mustard greens, sugar cane and rice.

Buffalo milk which is 3% higher in fat than cows milk, is also important to the Punjabis, who are not prey to worries about cholesterol. Every bit of the buffalo milk is used in some way or other. Some is used in tea or evaporated into a much thicker richer milk known as bhadoli, which in turn is set into yoghurt. The thick cream will be removed from the top of the yoghurt and churned into butter. Some of the butter will be saved as is and the rest will be warmed slowly and turned into ghee (clarified butter) by pouring off the clear butter and discarding the solid sediment. Yet more of the milk will be made into paneer, the Indian equivalent of cottage cheese. The milk is boiled then curdled by adding lime juice then strained of whey, leaving the curds which can be shaped into solid rounds.

The Punjab is predominantly Sikh, being the home of the Golden Temple at Amritsar, central to the Sikh religion, thus more than half of all Punjabis are vegetarian. No one goes hungry here and Sikh temples always offer simple free meals of bread and vegetable curry to all who turn up.

Bread is the most important part of the Punjabi diet. Rotis are made from wholewheat flour and water, formed into balls and flattened into discs which are then slapped onto the side of a tandoor or onto a tava (a flat griddle pan like a flat frying pan). Rotis are commonly eaten for breakfast with butter, fresh yoghurt and pickles, while for lunch or dinner there will be parathas which are much richer, being brushed with ghee, folded and rolled again before being cooked and brushed with more ghee.

Unlike most of the rest of India, rice in the Punjab is for special occasions only or for making rice pudding.

Lunch in the fields will often consist of paratha and a curry made from onions fried with garlic, ginger, green chillies, cayenne, garam masala, tomatoes, turmeric and salt. Potatoes are stirred in and coated with the spices before adding water and cooking slowly.

Breads may also be served for dinner with small black beans and kidney beans cooked with onions, ginger, garlic and tomatoes and garnished with butter. Another favourite is paneer bhaji – tomatoes, chillies and ginger quickly fried with crumbled paneer added – or the same basic mixture with pureéd spinach and cubes of paneer added. Paneer can also be dipped in chick pea flour batter and deep fried, making pakora. Mustard greens may be cooked very slowly with green chillies then when soft, pureéd, thickened with cornmeal flour and added to fried onion, tomato and ginger and garnished with white butter.

For the non-vegetarians, there is tandoori chicken – whole chicken marinated in yoghurt and spices, cut into pieces and cooked in a tandoor – or tikkas (kebabs) of chicken or cubed or minced meat mixed with spices, garlic and ginger.

Cheap fast food restaurants called dhabas are common in the Punjab and often have their own

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specialities – one may concentrate on paneer bhaji and another, tandoori chicken – but you can be sure that wherever you eat in the Punjab, you will be filled with nourishing, tasty food.

Liz Canham: As well as a love of Asian cooking and travel as you can see in her

Asian Food and

Cookery

and

Travellers' Tales

websites, Liz seeks to help newcomers to the world of internet

marketing with tools, tips and training from her

Liz-e-Biz.com

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