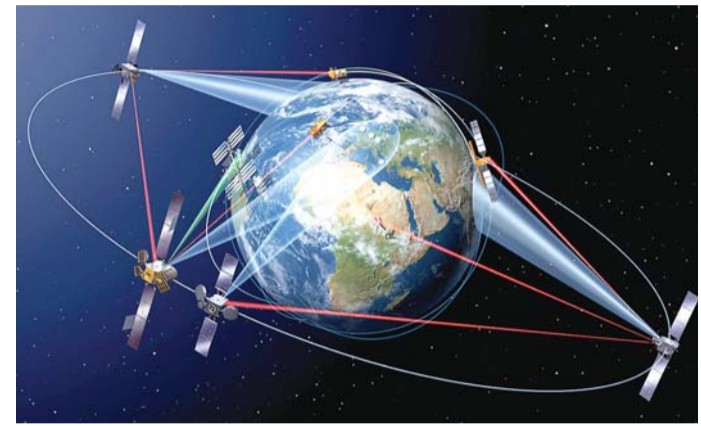


#PLANETARY HEALTH

Uses of Earth Observation Data

Earth observation generates actionable insights that benefit industries and the environment.



satellite-based Earth observation technology is unlocking new opportunities for businesses to grow and thrive while addressing global environmental challenges. Earth observation generates actionable insights to benefit industries and the environment, by processing information from sensors that capture visible light, thermal radiation, radar signals, and more. Here are five transformative ways in which this technology can deliver measurable economic benefits while advancing planetary health.

Monitoring deforestation for sustainable supply chains

- For industries dependent on natural resources, like timber, cocoa, or palm oil, reliably demonstrating the sustainability of their supply chains is increasingly critical to meeting expectations from regulators and consumers alike. Satellite data enables businesses to track deforestation in a timely manner, providing visibility into land-use changes across supply sources.
- Transparent monitoring helps avoid reputational risks by demonstrating a commitment to sustainability, which enhances consumer trust and brand value.

Optimizing renewable energy site selection

- Renewable energy projects, such as solar and wind farms, require precise planning to maximize efficiency, reduce costs and minimize environmental and social impacts. Historically, site selection involved costly and time-intensive on-site assessments, often hindered by uncertainties.
- Earth observation transforms this process by providing critical insights into variables like solar exposure, wind patterns, proximity to infrastructure, local ecosystems, and land use capability. This enables companies to analyze potential sites remotely and efficiently.

Managing water resources efficiently in agriculture

- Effective water resource management is critical for the agriculture industry. Over-irrigation wastes water, drives up costs, and harms the environment.
- Earth observation technologies empower farmers to make data-driven irrigation decisions.
- By optimizing irrigation schedules, Earth observation ensures efficient water management, which can reduce operational costs by 23%.

Urban planning for climate-resilient cities

- Satellite data is transforming how cities prepare for climate risks like flooding, heat waves, and poor air quality.
- Radar-based flood mapping is crucial for designing infrastructure that mitigates flooding risks.
- Climate-resilient infrastructure reduces costs from damage and disruptions, attracts investments, and promotes long-term economic stability for urban centres.

Enhancing disaster response and recovery

- When environmental events like hurricanes, wildfires, or earthquakes strike, satellite data provides rapid, large-scale assessments of affected areas.
- Optical imagery highlights structural damage, while radar and thermal data reveal flood zones or active fire fronts. These insights enable governments and humanitarian organizations to assess damage, allocate resources, prioritize areas in need, and coordinate relief efforts more effectively during natural disasters.
- Improved disaster response saves lives and mitigates environmental damage from extreme events.



The meal itself, however, was never simple. A set of bowls with olives, salad, jam and pickles would remain on the table for the duration of the meal, while other dishes were served and removed in quick succession. Visitors from the West noted that (at major events) more than 100 dishes could be served at a single feast!

Eating Royally



hopping for a *mithai* gift for my sister-in-law's anniversary, and time to spare over an indulgent checking out at the *mithai* shop, was a lip licking exercise, reminding me of those days of my childhood, when I had the beautiful chance to go and select my favourites for any occasion whatsoever with my father. I find myself thinking about the palaces of times past. I live within walking distance of the Topkapi Palace, the administrative centre and home of *sultans* during much of the Ottoman era. Today, it's a museum that's well worth a visit, if for nothing else, to contemplate and imagine the drama and history that has taken place on the exact steps you're walking.

The Topkapi palace kitchens, first built in the 1400s, and later redesigned by the legendary architect Mimar Sinan, after a great fire, destroyed the original structure, and formed an integral part of the building stock. While other parts may be of more historic importance, none of them would function without the kitchens. As recounted in the brilliantly researched book *500 years of Ottoman Cuisine* by Marianna Yerasimos, the palace served around 5,000 meals a day, a number which doubled or tripled on feast days, and it employed nearly 1,000 kitchen staff. A huge operation by any measure!

But what did they actually cook and serve in these kitchens? And what is its place within Turkish cuisine today? The palace kitchen was, in fact, not one kitchen, but a number

of kitchens. They were mainly split by speciality, with separate kitchens (and staff) for pastries, breads, rice, kebabs, vegetables and sweets. The sultan, of course, had his own kitchen with his own staff, as did his close female relatives. Another kitchen cooked for palace employees, yet another for those living there. This set-up would go on to have a bigger influence on Turkish cuisine than the vast majority of dishes they served. Despite menus suitably rich for a sultan, with plenty of meat, rice, oil and desserts, the eating habits of the Ottomans were surprisingly simple.

Yerasimos notes the simple eating habits of the Ottomans. They ate from low tables, with no chairs, table cloths, plates or cutlery, using their fingers to grab food from serving plates in the middle of the table. Only for dishes such as soups and stewed fruits would they use a spoon.

The meal itself, however, was never simple. A set of bowls with olives, salad, jam and pickles would remain on the table for the duration of the meal, while other dishes were served and removed in quick succession. Visitors from the West noted that (at major events) more than 100 dishes could be served at a single feast!

Each meal would include a variety of savoury and sweet dishes which, unusually for us, appear to have been dispersed throughout the meal. A 17th century menu retrieved by Yerasimos shows mackerel and red mullet followed by a dessert, then, tripe soup and more dessert. Imagine!

Indeed, the mixing of sweet and savoury is, perhaps, what most clearly distinguishes Ottoman cuisine. Stews and rice dishes would be sweetened by honey, dried fruits and fresh fruits, no doubt, inspired by the neighbouring Persian imperial kitchens.

As would be expected of a trading city of Istanbul's stature, spices were in high demand

#BOUNTIFUL EMPIRE



among the elites. The Eastern influence was evident, with one or more of black pepper, saffron, coriander (cilantro), cumin and cinnamon appearing in most dishes. Ginger, cardamom and cloves were also utilised, though not as often. While some recipes would make use of parsley or mint, herbs weren't widely used.

What do Turks think of Ottoman cuisine today?

However grand it might have been at its peak, the food of the palace largely didn't spill over to the rest of Turkish society. It's a telling sign that the few restaurants, specialising in Ottoman palace cuisine today, almost exclusively serve tourists.

What's this? Why did you put something sweet in it?

Basically, any Turk being presented with a sweet and savoury food would say that. Ask any Turk today about adding fruit or honey to meats, and they'll no doubt shudder before telling you that they despise any mixing of sweet and savoury, the most recognisable trait of Ottoman palace food. They only make a couple of exceptions, such as *ic pilav*, a



Observe the Weather Day

though it can be as simple as simply walking out of the door and looking up to see what the sky looks like, observing the weather has developed into a very important science. Using measurements and tools, weather people take note of all sorts of patterns and make their predictions about what might happen in the future. And, although the weather forecast might not be 100% correct, it has certainly gotten better and more accurate over the past several decades.



A cooking stove at the Topkapi Palace kitchens, now a Museum.

Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, Turkey.

Directions:

- In a medium-sized bowl, soak the rice and currants in hot salted water for 30 minutes. Then, rinse under cold water, drain and set aside.
- Meanwhile, peel the eggplant in alternate vertical stripes from the stem to the base. Cut off the stalk. Submerge and soak the eggplant in salted water for 30 minutes, drain and squeeze dry. (This step helps to remove the bitterness from the eggplant.) Cut into small cubes about 1/2-inch wide.
- Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Sauté the eggplant, with a pinch of salt and sugar, until they are softened. Remove the eggplant with a slotted spoon, and set aside on a paper towel to absorb any extra oil.
- In the same pan, sauté the pine nuts and the onion has softened. Add the drained rice and currants, stirring to ensure that the grains are evenly coated. Add the salt, sugar, spices, tomato and 2 cups of hot water.
- Bring the rice to a boil, stirring once, and cover with a lid. Cook on medium heat for about 10 minutes or until the water is absorbed. Do not stir! Turn down the heat to lowest setting and cook for 35 more minutes.
- Remove the saucepan from the heat. Add the eggplant and cover the top of the pan with a kitchen towel or paper towels and replace the lid. The rice will continue cooking in the steam and the towels will help absorb any extra moisture. Let stand, covered, for 20 minutes before serving. Then, season the pilaf with salt and pepper; add the chopped herbs and stir to incorporate all the ingredients. Fluff the rice with a fork.
- Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Sauté the eggplant, with a pinch of salt and sugar, until they are softened. Remove the eggplant with a slotted spoon, and set aside on a paper towel to absorb any extra oil.

A few recipes to try

I realise that I haven't presented the dishes I've mentioned in the way that's so common today, littered with superlatives, in an attempt to get you to read the recipe. That doesn't mean they aren't tasty or worth a try. Quite the opposite!

- Baklava with pistachios
- Iç pilav (Turkish rice with currants)
- Lentil meatballs
- Turkish tray börek with cheese

Kadınbuda köfte is an interesting and very tasty way of making meatballs, mixing meat with boiled rice, then coating the meatballs in flour and egg before deep frying. This makes for uniquely flavourful and juicy meatballs. The dish is also notable for its name, meaning 'ladies thighs'!

Iç pilav

- Ingredients:**
- 1 c. (190 g.) long-grain rice (Baldo pilav)
 - 1 T. dried currants (kuzümü)
 - 3-4 small long aubergines or eggplant
 - 4 T. olive oil
 - 2 T. pine nuts (cam fistigi)
 - 1 ea. medium onion, finely chopped
 - 1 tsp. salt
 - 1/2 tsp. sugar
 - 1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
 - 1/2 tsp. ground allspice
 - 1 ea. large tomato, seeds removed and chopped
 - 2 c. (475 ml.) hot water
 - 1/2 c. fresh parsley, mint and dill, combined together and roughly chopped
 - To taste, salt and freshly ground black pepper

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

#BREW-EATERIES

Beautiful Coffee Shops in India

These coffee shops in India serve scrumptious dishes and delightful brews in a charming setting.

ust good coffee isn't enough anymore. With the popularity of social media, coffee shops in India have had to conceptualise unique interiors to attract people. From coffee shops with arresting interiors that transport visitors to magnificent international destinations to cafes housed in ancient buildings, these are the most picturesque coffee shops in India.

MAAI

Nestled in a 123-year-old Portuguese villa, *MAAI* is a picturesque eatery and coffee shop. Its interiors are inspired by trendy summer holiday destinations from around the world. *MAAI* offers alfresco seating under the stars or inside the mansion that it is located in. The welcoming space features warm yellow lights, walls with black and white photographs of Goa, and rustic decor accessories. *MAAI*'s food and drinks menu is a celebration of Goa's rich culinary heritage. The welcoming menu features traditional Goan and Portuguese inspired dishes, and coffee made using beans roasted in-house.



Milee Droog Cafe & Bistro

Located in the bylanes of South Kolkata, *Milee Droog Cafe & Bistro* is spread over three floors. The ground floor is dedicated to coffee aficionados, who can choose from an extensive menu. The first floor houses the mocktail bar, an outdoor balcony, and a glass-enclosed private dining area. The cafe showcases art deco architecture and modern interiors, featuring checkerboard floors, white floral motifs, and a pastel colour palette. *Milee Droog Coffee & Bistro* offers progressive food items from around the world. The Vietnamese Latte, Almond Toffee Milk Latte, Orange Cold Brew, Classic Hot Chocolate, Matcha Frappe, Tuscan Grilled Polenta, Greek-style Soufflé, Lasagna, Chettinad Chicken Keema, and Bengal's Bhappa are crowd-favourites.



Donna Deli

Designed by interior designer Tejal Mathur, *Donna Deli* is reminiscent of Roman bistros. Located in the heart of Bandra, this chic restaurant and coffee shop features a quaint alfresco section, adorned with striking decor pieces, planters, and opulent furniture. The indoor seating features a monochromatic colour palette, ornate chandeliers, and arresting art works. We recommend their *iced latte*, which is a delightful blend of iced-coffee milk and rich, strong coffee.

Banyan Tree Cafe

Located in the centre of South Mumbai, *Banyan Tree Cafe* pays homage to the age-old colonial architecture of the city. It is situated inside a 140-year-old former ice factory, which is now the experimental art space *IBFE*. At the cafe, guests are greeted by expansive windows, overhead skylights, an industrial design aesthetic, and a view of a majestic banyan tree. *Banyan Tree Cafe's* food offerings are a mix of nutritious plates and comfort food, and the coffee is from Dope Coffee. Try the eatery's delectable sandwiches, wraps, and salads that are made using the freshest local ingredients.

Machan

The re-imagined *Machan* features awe-inspiring interiors. Custom-designed wall coverings, recreating scenes of the jungle, depict the beauty of nature and magnificence of the Indian tiger. The arresting cane tree canopies, a series of terracotta animal masks, specially created by local artists, contemporary lanterns, and elegant banquet seating set the backdrop for a wonderful dining experience. Most of the materials used at *Machan* have been sourced locally and created by artists from neighbouring states. Order their refreshing beverages and snacks inspired by the rich heritage of the Indian forests, and you will not be disappointed!

The Bhawanipur House

Showing colonial architecture, *The Bhawanipur House* transports visitors back in time. The bistro's owners hope people slow down and spend hours at their establishment. The outdoor seating area houses an imposing mango tree that towers over the compound and a serene lotus pond. The cafe offers delicious multi-cuisine plates and steaming hot pots of coffee and tea. Our favourites from their menu are the Chicken Tetrazzini, Moussaka, Spaghetti Bolognese, Lahme, Egg Quattro Formaggio, Tuscan Potato, and the Mediterranean Buddha Bowl.

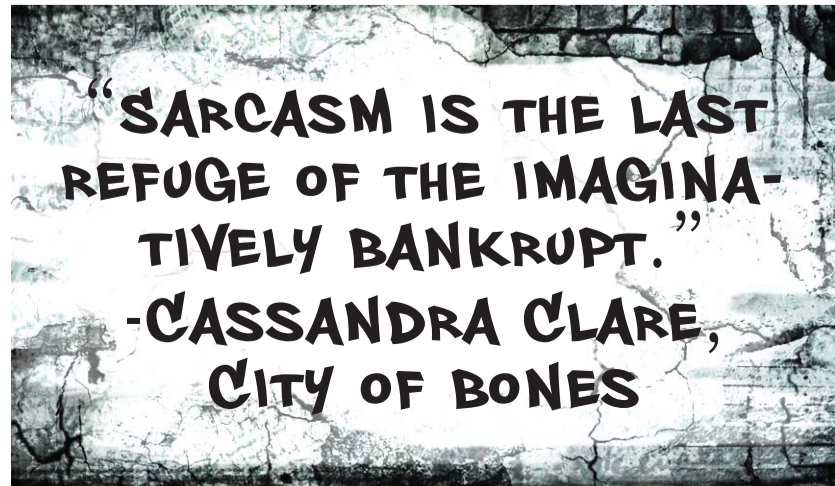
Elgin Cafe

Conceptualised by architect Renesa, *Elgin Cafe* is a bistro by day and a restaurant and wine bar by night. The eatery's interiors are evocative of dining in nature and is awash in emerald green granite from Udaipur. The eatery features green granite wall paneling and tabletops, gold furnishings, tan leather seats, wicker chairs, and plenty of plants. *Elgin Cafe's* multi-cuisine small plates and cocktails are worth ordering.

Justbe Resto Cafe

Founded by nutritionist and health coach Nidhi Nahata, *Justbe Resto Cafe* is a well-loved, plant-based eatery. Located in a 90-year-old heritage building, this pet-friendly cafe comprises separate sections like the Living Room, Private Dining Room, Court Yard, and Studio. The eatery aims to make guests feel like they are dining at a close friend's home. The Studio, in particular, is an insta-worthy space with blue-hued bookshelves, floor-to-ceiling glass windows, and quirky furnishings. We suggest ordering *Justbe Resto Cafe's* whole wheat pizzas, superfood bowls, open sandwiches, soups, cold-press juices, and smoothies.

THE WALL

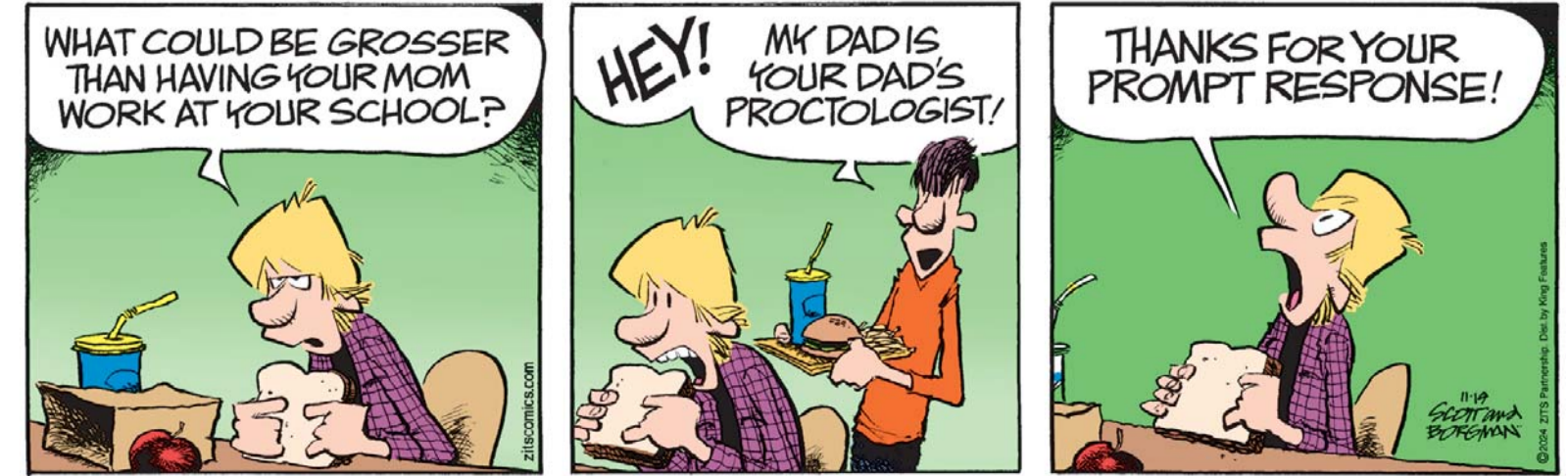


BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

