

International Day Of Awesomeness

International Day Of Awesomeness is a day that we can definitely get behind! It is a celebration of everything that is awesome, including yourself! After all, people are awesome every single day, yet they don't recognize it. On this day, awesomeness in all forms should be appreciated. "No one's perfect, but everyone can be awesome." This is the tagline for the day, which has replaced the old tagline: "Because everyone needs an excuse to be awesome." The first tagline was created by Dan Lurie. The second tagline was created by the daughter of Kevin Lawler, who invented the day.



#WORKOUT

Boost Your Leg Strength & Balance

You should strive to have relatively equal strength in both legs and equal joint mobility in both of your hips, knees, and ankles.



The fastest way to improve your lower body strength and balance is by adding single-leg exercises into your routine. If you've been solely relying on double-leg exercises, such as traditional squats or calf raises, you may be favouring your dominant side without realizing it. Incorporating single-leg exercises can help you identify and address any muscle imbalances.

Benefits of single-leg exercises

Single-leg (unilateral) exercises are those exercises that require you to stand on 'one leg.' Traditional double-leg exercises should have a place in your exercise routine, but there are some unique benefits of single-leg exercises. If you notice that you're favouring one leg more than the other, during a double-leg exercise, such as squats or deadlifts, you'll want to incorporate single-leg exercises into your workouts. Here are some major benefits of single-leg exercises.

They prevent muscle imbalances

When only performing double-leg exercises, it's common to create strength imbalances in one leg versus the other. Single-leg exercises are effective for improving 'strength differences and imbalances' in one leg versus the other. Performing single-leg exercises forces your dominant leg to work just as hard as your non-dominant leg. You may not even realize how much your dominant side takes over until you try these exercises.

They ward off injuries

Single-leg exercises stave off injuries by preventing muscle imbalances that can lead to overtraining or repetitive injuries on the dominant side. Having equal muscle strength on both sides also ensures that your body moves in a coordinated way, which can also prevent injuries.

They improve balance

Standing on one leg forces your stabilizing muscles, including your core and glutes, to activate. The more you work on single-leg exercises, the stronger these stabilizing muscles become. This helps improve your balance and stability, which can help prevent injuries and falls.

They strengthen your core

When standing on one leg, your core muscles must work hard to keep you 'stable and secure.' Even though, these exercises mostly strengthen your legs, they are also working your abdominals at the same time.

They're great for post-injury rehab

Single-leg exercises are ideal for strengthening and regaining mobility in your leg after an injury. They're important to ensure that muscle imbalances don't develop. They also help prevent and reverse muscle atrophy that may have occurred, especially if your lower extremity was immobilized in a cast for some time. You may be surprised to learn that standing on one leg also helps to strengthen the opposite leg, in a phenomenon called *cross-education of the muscles*. For example, doing a single-leg calf raise, on your right side, helps strengthen your left calf. Researchers say that it has to do with the neural pathways being connected to both sides of the body.

They help improve sports performance

Many sports require you to be able to quickly shift your weight from one leg to the other, with speed, balance, and agility. Some sports also require you to push off or jump on one leg. Single-leg strengthening helps to improve the transfer of power from one leg to the other, quickly change directions, and also improves unilateral foot strength.



The 'Smell' Of Good Food

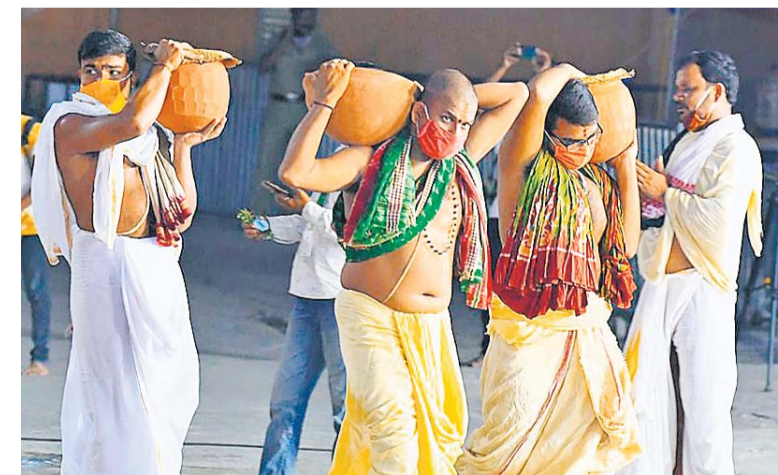


Priyadarshini Chatterjee
Food and culture writer based in Kolkata

In any gustatory experience, aroma is as important as flavour. Few have appreciated this truism over the centuries as much as the Mughals. In their obsession with creating fragrant food, the storied epicureans would go to the extent of growing vegetables on plots irrigated with rose- and musk-infused water. Hens were raised on breadcrumbs soaked in saffron and rosewater, and massaged with musk and sandalwood. Rare flowers were grown in the royal gardens and their fragrance distilled into luxurious perfumes, some of which would find their way into the matbakh (royal kitchen).

When the royals ate, the dining halls were perfumed with aloe wood- or camphor-scented incense. Adding to the heady experience would be the aromas wafting from the flatware. In their food, the khansamas would add a delicate but complex balance of aromatic ingredients, ranging from saffron, dill and mint to basil, rose water, orange blossom water and musk.

When the Mughals and other Muslim dynasties of the subcontinent inherited their fixation with fragrant food from the culinary traditions of the Islamicate, especially Turkish, Persian and Arabic gastronomy. Cookbooks from the region - Ibn Sayyar Al Waraq's 10th century Kitab al-tabikh and Al-Baghdadi's 13th century Kitab al-tabikh, among them - emphasise scent while expounding on the aesthetics of cuisines. Recipes in these books demand a variety of aromatics, but especially rose water, which is typically added at the end. Readers are advised to scent cooking vessels with ingredients



like musk, ambergris (cetacean waste derived from sperm whales) and spikenard (an aromatic herb that grows in the Himalayas).

A similar preoccupation with olfactory rapture characterises the *Nimatnama*. A quirky book of recipes compiled in the late 15th century, the *Nimatnama* is studied with recipes perfumed with ingredients ranging from fragrant flowers and herbs to asafoetida, musk, ambergris, aloe wood and spikenard. A recipe for *kufra* (meatballs) demands musk, camphor, rose water and white ambergris. In another recipe, skewered meat is rubbed with a mix of saffron, ambergris and rosewater. And in yet another, meat is roasted in pits, the walls of which have been rubbed with fragrant flowers.

From these elaborations, it might appear that the Mughals and the Arab world were the only

#COOKING

A few communities have, over the years, devised ingenious hacks to infuse 'fragrance' into food. One such technique is *dhuni* or *dhungar*. In it, a bowl with a small piece of hot charcoal, is placed in the cooking pot with the preparation. Ghee is poured on top, and once smoke starts whirling out, the pot is lidded to trap the smoke inside.

celebrants of fragrant food. Far from it. Cuisines across the world have for millennia used aromatic ingredients - from herbs and spices to the complex compounds of exotic spices - integral to their cuisine and continue to be a part of it. Like mortals, gods too like their food fragrant. In Hindu tradition, gods are offered food of the mortals as *bhog* or *naivedya*, some of which has been enriched with the herbal, cool and spicy notes of edible camphor. At Shreenathji Temple in Nathdwara, Rajasthan, devotees can offer a camphor-smoked sweet pastry called *thor*.

Nose for good food

In the subcontinent, the Mughals' passion for fragrant food was matched by the nawabs' zeal for it. Known for their refinement and sophistication, the Nawabs of Awadh would require their khansamas to use pure aromatic extracts and complex blends that are a hallmark of Awadhi food," said Mohsin Qureshi, executive chef of Lebus Lucknow, Saraca Estate, who specialises in Awadhi food. Among these ingredients are paan ki jad or betel roots, khus ki jad or vetiver roots and jarakush or lemon grass. "These aromatics also have several health benefits and typically aid in digestion," Qureshi maintained.

Sophisticated techniques of aromatising food exist outside the royal kitchens too. Food writer Saeed Koranne-Khandekar, for instance, talks about Guravali, an intricate recipe archived in Kamlabai Ogale's iconic Marathi cookbook *Ruchira*. In this dish, jasmine buds are painstakingly inserted at night into deep-fried dough balls with sweet stuffing. The next morning, the pastry is served once the buds bloom inside, infusing it with fragrance.

#COOKING



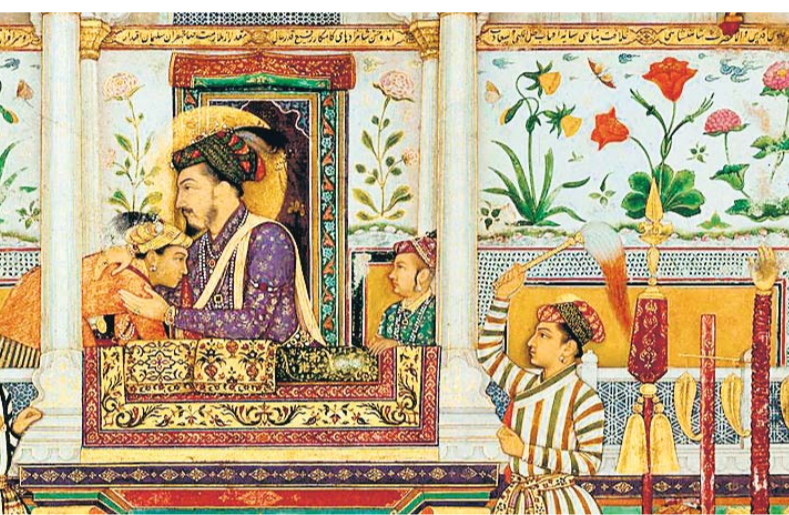
phor, an aromatic terpenoid derived from the bark of the camphor tree, is often added to desserts, especially *payasam*. Another summer favourite in the south is *panangam* - jaggery-infused water made fragrant with camphor, basil and dried ginger. Moving east, in Odisha, *pana* - a mix of jaggery, milk, yogurt, chhana (fresh cheese curds), coconut scrapings, bananas, flavoured with aromatics like cardamom, nutmeg and edible camphor - is a ritualistic offering to the deities on Pana Sankranti that falls in April.

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"In addition to attar, there are a host of herbs, roots and spices used in the complex spice blends that are a hallmark of Awadhi food," said Mohsin Qureshi, executive chef of Lebus Lucknow, Saraca Estate, who specialises in Awadhi food. Among these ingredients are paan ki jad or betel roots, khus ki jad or vetiver roots and jarakush or lemon grass. "These aromatics also have several health benefits and typically aid in digestion," Qureshi maintained.

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familiar in daily life in medicine, perfume and cookery," writes scholar Anya H King in *Scent from the Garden of Paradise: Musk and the Medieval Islamic World* (2017).

Still, aromatic ingredients were often rare, expensive and exotic, and the preoccupation with olfactory aesthetics was often a signature of affluence and connoisseurship. A number of Indian texts, primarily composed by kings or courtiers, feature recipes enhanced with a panoply of aromatics.

Paka Darpanam, a text on ancient Indian cookery attributed to King Nala of the Nishadha kingdom from the epic Mahabharata, features a number of recipes with aromatics such as camphor, musk, screw pine and nagakesara or ironwood flowers in addition to fragrant spices. Among these recipes is a rice and meat dish

cooked in ghee with coconut milk perfumed with the fragrant flowers of Ketaki, camphor and musk. Another dish in it is a *supa*, a lentil number flavoured with asafoetida, camphor and aromatic flowers along with ghee that itself has been flavoured with spices.

Medieval texts such as *Supa Shastra*, written by King Mangarasa III, and the 14th century *Lokopakara*, written by poet Chavundaryaya II, also feature recipes with aromatics. *Manasollasa* (1129), a Sanskrit text written by King Someswara II of the Kalyani

Ancient Indian texts and medical treatises mention numerous aromats used in perfumery and curative concoctions (such as medicated oils) that possess potent medicinal virtues. The *Charaka Samhita*, for instance, lists a class of aromatic drugs - *Sarvagandhata* - that includes white sandalwood, aloe wood, cubeb, cassia leaves along with spices like cloves, cardamom and cinnamon. Aromats also appear in recipes for aphrodisiacs and love potions documented in ancient texts and treatises like *Vatsyana's Kama Sutra* and *Kokka's Rati Rahasya*.

Over time these spices and aromatic plants "transcended the obscurity of the pharmacopoeias by their renown and became

Chalukya dynasty, mentions *gandha churna*, an aromatic mix of spices and herbs including black pepper, cardamom, cloves, camphor and saffron, which is mixed with honey, jaggery and yogurt to make *Shikharini*, perhaps a predecessor of the present-day *shrikhand*. "The most common spice to appear in the *Manasollasa* is asafoetida, often dissolved in water - a practice still followed in Maharashtra and Gujarat," writes food historian Colleen Taylor Sen in *Feasts and Fasts: A History of Food in India* (2014).

Living traditions

Centuries later, asafoetida is still a pantry staple in kitchens across the subcontinent, used extensively in vegetarian cuisines and often as a substitute for alliums. Many of the spices yoked under the label *Sarvagandha* - in ancient Ayurvedic treatises are contained in the ubiquitous *garam masala*, synonymous with Indian cuisines in Western discourse.

Across the country, there's still a thriving tradition of wrapping food in aromatic leaves that not only act as a vessel but also add their aroma to the dish. Karnataka's *moode idli*, for instance, is steamed in screw pine leaves. In Uttarakhand, there's *Singauri*, an iconic Kumaoni sweetmeat made of *khoya* and coconut that is wrapped in tender *Maalu* leaves to give it a peculiar, camphor-like scent.

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#LIFESTYLE

Wall Painting Ideas

Here are selected wall painting ideas that you can try at your home!

You want an accent wall that adds more than just a pop of colour. You can paint a design that invites conversation, works as a piece of art and is different from anything that you've seen before. Here are selected wall painting ideas that you'll want to try in your home.

Ombre Walls

An *ombre wall* adds a gradient colour that can make your accent wall look like a sunrise, water or even animal fur. Perhaps this is why *ombre effects* have gained such popularity, infiltrating the design world, popping up on everything from walls, to clothing, furnishings and art pieces. After you clean and prep your wall, you'll need to determine how many colours you'll use.



Polka Dots

When it comes to accent wall painting ideas, *polka dots* can make a room playful and cheery. Go for a subtle look with small dots in a single colour, or be bold with large *polka dots* in a mix of colours.



Water colour

A *watercolour design* on an accent wall will certainly invite conversation as it transforms the wall into a 'work of art.' It's trendy and unique like a *wall mural*, but the effect is more soothing and subtle.

Solid Colour Block

While using a colour on one wall that is different from the rest of the room is an easy accent wall painting idea, you can also paint a *bold block of colour* in the middle of a wall as a 'dimensional accent.'



Chalkboard Wall

Try using *chalkboard paint* to create an accent wall. This will give you and your family the option of giving the space a 'new look' as often as you want, with different chalk drawings.



Patterned Wall Painting

For a wall painting idea that looks difficult but can be done quite easily, go for a pattern such as *chevron* or *herringbone*.



Bold Half Colour

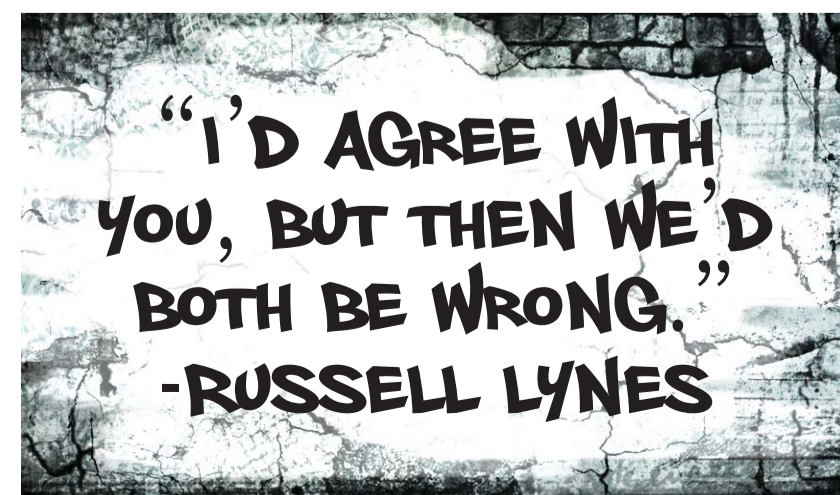
Here's a *bold paint look!* Use a colour on just half of the wall. This may not be the right look for you, but it certainly creates an accent wall that 'stands out.'



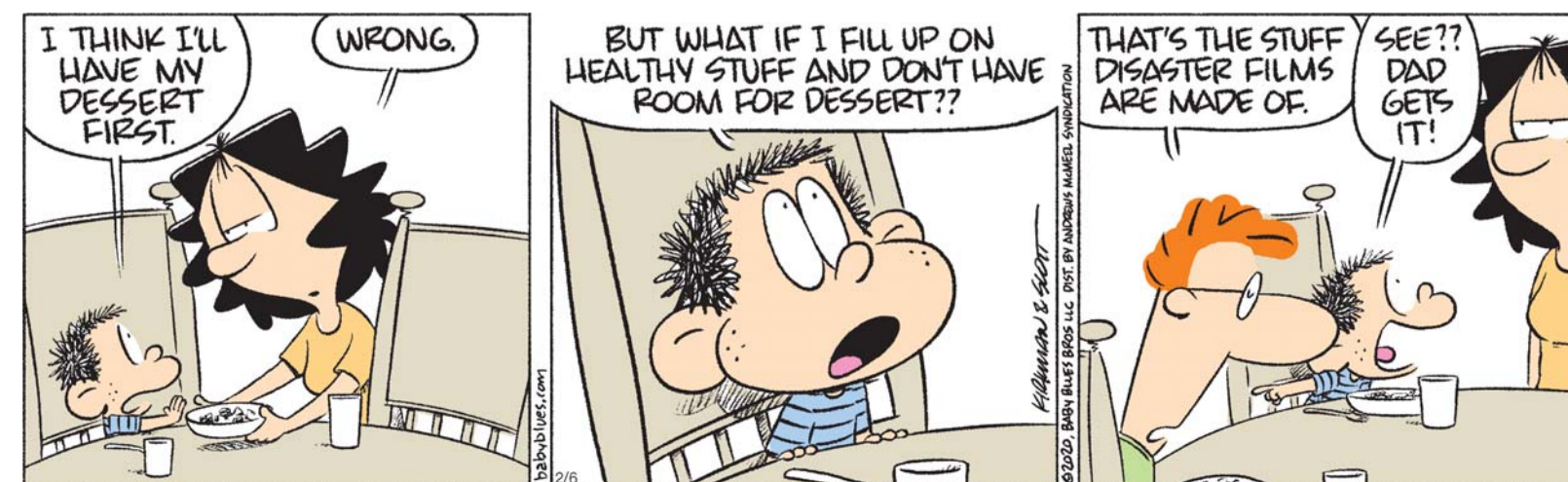
Texture and Colour

If you have just one textured wall in a room, try painting it a different colour, to make it stand out even more.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott

ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman