

BEVERAGES ETC

RECIPE NO. 187.

1. 'MOĀḠAEL CHĀY', or 'QAHVĀ'. (E-Beverage of Green Tea)(H-'Sabz Chāy').

'Moāḡael Chāy' or 'Qahvā' of Kashmirīs is quite different from the Beverage made from roasted Coffee Beans, which is called 'Qahwāh' in some countries. Kashmirī 'Qahvā' is an infusion of 'Green Tea'. This tea is manufactured from whole Green Tea leaves. Both the Green Tea and Black Tea, are made of leaves, buds and internodes got from the Tea plant, a bush Botanically called *Camellia sinensis*, but the process of manufacturing differs. In the case of Green Tea, the freshly plucked leaves are withered by immediately subjecting these to high temperature, by exposing to steam. In Moroccan type of manufacture, leaves are put in hot ovens. High temperature kills all enzymes in the cells. So, that no fermentation takes place & the leaves retain a greenish colour. Again due to non-fermentation, the chemical products, such as Tannin & Caffeine, are not formed. Then it is dried by passing hot air through it for preservation. In the manufacture of Black Tea, the green leaves are withered by passing air through these and when the leaves become pliant, these are rolled in a Rolling Table, which results in rupturing of cells and release of enzymes. On exposure to oxygen in the air fermentation takes place. The leaves turn copper red in colour after the correct fermentation time. Then these are exposed to very hot and dry air, which arrests further fermentation and preserves these, now turned to blackish colour. Thus, the Green Tea is more healthy than the Black Tea.

Formely in Kashmir, 'Green Tea' used to be imported also from Chinā via Laḡākh. That came pressed in the form of 'Bricks'. Now that 'Green Tea' is very rarely available. Some Tibēṭians settled in

Dārjeeling, Ḍehrā Dūn and Himāchal Praḍēsh, also manufacture 'Green Tea' nowadays, but mostly some Black Tea manufacturers, manufacture it now. The infusion is taken always without Milk, but it is Comdimented. 'Green Tea' is added to cold water in a 'Samāvār' usually. After boiling in it for a few minutes, Sugar to taste, is added. Green crushed Cardamoms in pods, broken Cinnamon bark pieces, and thin shavings of Almond Kernels, are added before serving. Sometimes crushed tablets of 'Gulāb Chrechi', are also added. These contain Cloves, Musk, Cinnamon, Green Cardamom Seeds, Green Ginger, Black Pepper Corns, Saffron and Sugar etc. This 'Green Tea beverage' is then called 'Zarī Qahvā'. 'Qahvā' or 'Sabz Chāy' is generally taken in Bronze Cups (K-'Khāes') by Kashmirī Pandīts, and in handle-less Chinware shallow bowls (K-'Chīn Pyālā') by Muslims of Kashmir. It is a very agreeable drink taken before, as well as, after a meal, and is served frequently in Feasts and Wedding Dinners.

A 'Samāvār' is a portable metallic boiler to brew Green Tea. It is an ingenious device of a kettle and stove combined. It mainly consists of a tube surrounded by a jacket. In the tube live charcoals, usually from a 'Kāḡgī', are fed by means of a tongs, (K. 'Chumtā') to boil the tea in the jacket. The tube gets air through many perforations at the bottom. The tube along with the jacket stands on a round pedestal, which is beautifully embossed with floral designs. The cutout interspaces of these designs ventilate the fire in the tube. This pedestal, which is closed at the bottom, also serves as an ashpit. The jacket has a spout for pouring tea, and a decorated handle to hold the kettle. Both the jacket and the fire tube have separate lids. The jacket lid covers the tea, while boiling, in order to stop free escape of steam and aroma, and the lid of the tube serves to extinguish the fire when it is closed to stop the boiling. The

'Samāvār' is a very beautiful ornamental kettle independent of a separate stove. The Pandits use brass 'Samāvārs'. The Muslim 'Samāvārs' are made of copper and tinned, and mostly their jackets are also embossed with cute designs. Aristocrats have even 'Samāvārs' made of Silver. Nawadays small polished 'Samāvārs' are seen decorating the mantel pieces of many Drawing Rooms in Indian homes outside Kashmir.

The above mentioned 'Kāngrī' is a portable firepot used by Kashmiris, mainly during winter to keep the body warm. It consists of a baked clay bowl shaped pot (K. 'Koandul'), usually of about 6" diameter mouth, encased in a wicker work jacket around it for insulation. The jacket has a wickerwork base to serve as a stand, and a cage like top as a handle to carry the firepot. A spatula shaped wooden or metallic fire stirrer (K. 'Chālan') hangs by a cord on the backside of the cage which is open in the front, to fill the lighted charcoals, which are covered by a layer of ashes to keep these burning slowly. It is a wonderful utilitarian 'brazier', which acts as a central heating apparatus when kept inside the 'Pheran', a closed gown like garment worn by Kashmiris.

RECIPE NO. 188.

2. 'Gulāb Chrechi' (E-Tablets of Condiments for 'Zarī Qahvā') (H-'Gulāb Tikyā Zarī Qahvā kē liye').

Ingredients :-

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| 1. Fragrant fresh Rose Petals, - | 100 gm. |
| 2. Sugar, - | 100 gm. |
| 3. Green Cardamom Seeds, - | 5 gm. |
| 4. Cinnamon, - | 10 gm. |
| 5. Green Ginger, - | 10 gm. or |
| Ginger Powder, - | 5 gm. |
| 6. Cloves, - | 5 gm. |
| 7. Saffron, - | 1/2 gm. |
| 8. Musk (Optional), - | 1/4 gm. |

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| 9. Black Pepper, - | 5 gm. |
| 10. Nutmeg, - | 1. |

Method of Preparing :-

Pound all ingredients together by means of a Pestle and Mortar. Make into coat button size tablets, and let these dry up in shade. A crushed tablet is sufficient for 8 cups of 'Qahvā', in addition to other Condiments used.

RECIPE NO. 189.

3. Shier Chāy' (E-Salted Tea) (H-'Namkīn Chāy').

'Shier Chāy' is the popular form of beverage, prepared by Kashmiris, especially Muslims. Like 'Green Tea', the Tea for preparing this, is also imported from outside Kashmir and is called 'Pahār Chāy'. This is also a form of 'Green Tea', made from somewhat mature Tea leaves. It is also processed like 'Green Tea' for 'Qahvā'. 'Sabz Chāy' for 'Qahvā' comes in the form of rolled greenish granules or Bricks, while, 'Pahār Chay' is rolled into small strings of blackish colour. For almost all Kashmiri Muslims, 'Shier Chāy' or 'Chāy', as they call it, is a must at breakfast and in the afternoon. 'Shīr' in persian means Milk. 'Qahvā' is a Sweet Condimented infusion of Tea, taken without milk, while Tea to which Milk and Salt is added, is called 'Shier Chāy' or 'Milk Tea'. Its main Ingredients are, 'Pahār' Tea leaves, Soda bi Carb, Salt, water and Milk. Kashmiri Pandits, who drink it only occasionally, especially after Meals, Condiment it, and make it rich, usually by adding Green Cardamoms, Poppy Seeds, 'Malāyī' (Skim of boiled Milk), and crushed Almond Kernels etc. They believe that it helps digestion after a hearty Meal.

Oolong tea, made from partially fermented tea leaves is also used for 'Shier Chāy'.

Ingredients :- (for a dozen of Cups).

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| 1. Pahār Tea Leaves, - | 2 tsps. |
| 2. Soda bi Carb, - | a pinch or two. |

3. Salt, - 1 tsp. or to taste.
4. Milk, - 1/2 litre.
5. Cream or 'Malāyī', - 250 gm.
6. Green Cardamoms, - 6 nos.
7. Almond Kernels, - 6 nos.
8. Poppy Seeds, - 1 tsp.
9. Black Pepper Corns, - 2 nos.
10. Cinnamon, - 2 pieces.
11. Green Ginger or Dry Ginger, - a piece.

(Items 5 to 11 optional and are added by Pandits mainly).

Method of Preparation :-

In a steel or tinned, copper or brass 'Paṭīlā', of about 3 litre capacity, boil on medium heat, 1/2 litre of water to which 2 teaspoons of 'Pahānī' Tea Leaves, and a pinch or two of a Soda bi Carb (H-'Mīhā Sōdā') have been added. When, after about 15 minutes, the infusion boils down, to one thirds of its original volume, to a concentrated reddish liquor, add about a litre of water, and the half litre of Milk. The Tea will now be of 'Peach flower colour', the colour it is desired to be. Add the Dry Ginger piece after crushing it a bit or sliced Green Ginger, the Cinnamon bark chips, crushed Almond Kernels, along with 'Malāyī' or the Cream. Stir after boiling for a few minutes more, and the 'Shier Chāy' is ready. It used to be served in Bronze Cups by Pandits or handle-less porcelain Bowls, (K.Chīn Pyālā'.) by Muslims. Nowadays modern crockery is used for service.

A 'Ṭēlāvoer', 'Kaṭālamā', or a 'Kuelchā' is generally served with the 'Shier Chāy', especially at Breakfast or at Afternoon Tea. These are small 'Bun' shaped Cakes of about 3" to 4" in diameter, baked in a 'Ṭanḍūr' (Oven) by a 'Nānvāyī' or 'Kāṇḍur' (Baker), as he is called in Kashmīr. 'Ṭēlāvoer' are made from well fermented dough of whole wheat flour, and their tops are sprinkled with Sesame Seeds (K-'Ṭēl'), before baking. 'Kaṭālamā', are made from sifted flour (H-'Maiḍā') with 'Ghī' rubbed in, while kneading by hand, and are baked like patties having many crisp, layers. 'Kuelchā' are made from fermented 'Maiḍā' and baked crisp and sometimes their tops are sprinkled with Poppy Seeds. These are also sometimes Sweetened or Salted, and Condimented with Cardamom Seeds or Aniseeds respectively. 'Malāyī', mentioned above, is the skimmed top of Milk boiled and then cooled. It is rich in Fats and Proteins.

The 'Nānvāyīs' or 'Kāṇḍar', bake the 'Ṭēlāvoer', 'Kaṭālamā' and 'Kuelchā', along with breads called 'Ḍhoechi', 'Girḍā' and 'Bāgirkhānī' (flat rounds with raised rims, of leavened wheat dough), every day early in the morning or in the afternoon, to supply these baked, hot from the oven breads, for Breakfast and Evening Teas, of Kashmīrīs.

'Kaṭlam' or 'Kuelchā', and also 'Khaṭāy Kuelchī', (Sweet or Salted), are usually eaten with 'Qahvā'.

At Breakfast freshly baked 'Ḍhoechi' and 'Girḍā' are commonly eaten with 'Qahvā' or 'Shier Chāy' in Kashmīr.