

Versatile Hospitality Industry around the Globe -A Case Study on Cuisine and Culture In Hospitality Industry - Madagascar

Suhaib Kazi¹, Nandini Roy², Ashish Nevgi³

Student, Thakur Institute of Hotel Management, Thakur Shyamnarayan Degree College, Mumbai, India¹

Assistant Professor, Thakur Institute of Hotel Management, Thakur Shyamnarayan Degree College, Mumbai, India²

Coordinator, Thakur Institute of Hotel Management, Thakur Shyamnarayan Degree College, Mumbai, India³

Abstract: *Madagascar is an Island with people from different cultures like Indonesia, Africa, China, Arab, and India descent settled here. Mostly rice is consumed here. Madagascan dishes do not use a lot of seasoning. Pepper, saffron and herbs are most often used for flavouring, as well as ginger, clove and nutmeg. Salt is not used in Madagascan cooking. Culture is diverse in Madagascar because of tribal heritage and customs. Music and dance originating from Indonesia and Africa are vital parts of ceremonies and celebrations. Family is a very important part of Madagascar. Many laws have improved the status of women's rights in Malagasy society as well as in the workplace, although rural women still engage in petty commerce to supplement the husband's earnings. Most of Malagasy people live in rural area where they follow their tradition strictly and most of the decisions are made by the head of council of male elders. In Madagascar, a traditional meal is typically eaten on the floor. Food items are generally served on a single plate and eaten with a spoon. Meals are served when they are steaming hot. No drinks accompany the meal, nor do any type of starters or appetizers. The typical form of dress in Madagascar varies depending on location and socioeconomic status. Rural and poorer urban residents tend to wear traditional attire: for men, this consists of a large shirt and shorts or long pants, while women may wear dresses with gathered skirts. In the country's coastal regions, women can often be seen in a wrapped skirt with a top; a rectangular shawl, known as a lamb, is also worn, particularly during ceremonial occasions. People of the middle class frequently wear Western clothes, with blue jeans being the favourite among the youth. A traditional meal in Madagascar usually contains one main dish of meat, poultry or fish with a side dish of vegetables, accompanied by a bowl of ro (a mix of herbs, leaves and rice). Malagasy cuisine is known for being quite flavourful despite being prepared in a simple manner without much spice.*

Keywords: Socioeconomic, Urban resident, Supplements

I. INTRODUCTION

Situated off the coast of Africa, Madagascar, nicknamed “La Grande Ile”, is the largest of the islands in the south-west Indian Ocean and the fifth-largest in the world, with an area of 592,000 km². [1] This vast territory offers a wide array of resources, the most famous of which is rice. Rice-growing only dates as far back as the 19th century and in the capital of Antananarivo, five types of rice are available on the market, distinguished by colour, size and origin. Traditionally, Madagascans mainly consumed yams, as well as manioc and sweet potato. Thanks to the temperate climate in the highland areas, almost all fruits and vegetables are grown there, including carrots, cabbage, tomatoes, green beans and asparagus. In addition to tropical fruits, apples, pears, peaches, apricots and even strawberries can be found in season between December and January. Cattle farming is very common, particularly that of zebu, although their milk is rarely consumed. Sea fishing and freshwater fishing are also an important source of food.



Diverse Cuisine

Madagascan cuisine reflects the island's population, with differences between coastal regions and highland areas. Each of the eighteen ethnic groups has taken care to preserve particular traditions, not to mention foreign influences such as those of France, India or China. Initially discovered by the Portuguese in 1500, the island was inhabited by the French from the 17th century onwards, and did not gain independence until 1960. An Indonesian community settled in the centre of the island, with Africans and Arabs from Yemen on the coasts. Part of the population is also made up of those with Chinese and Indian descent.

A typical Madagascan dish consists of a plate of rice (*vary*), served with an accompaniment (*laoka*). The two "national" accompanying dishes are *romazava*, a meat stew with green leafy vegetables that have a very distinctive taste (*brèdes*) and *ravitoto*, stewed pork with shredded manioc leaves. [2] Other specialities include eel with pork, pork with butter beans and *kitoza* (dried and smoked meat or fish). In general, Madagascan dishes do not use a lot of seasoning. Pepper, saffron and herbs are most often used for flavouring, as well as ginger, clove and nutmeg. Salt is not used in Madagascan cooking, and neither are sauces – the general preference is instead to serve *sakay* (a chilli-based paste) or *lasary* (pickled mango, lemon or carrot steeped in vinegar or curry oil).

Desserts mostly consist of fruit. Fresh sugar cane is also very popular. Rice water (*ranopango*) is the most affordable drink, and is traditionally prepared by boiling water over a layer of browned (burned) rice, before straining. Served warm, the amber-coloured water is a healthy refreshment, but may taste bitter if the rice has been burned for too long.

Meals in Madagascar

Farming families currently consume three meals a day, whereas previously it was only two. In the home, meals are served in a simple fashion, with mats placed on the ground in the absence of tables. Large plates of rice are accompanied by various salad bowls containing the accompaniments for that day. Soup spoons are used for cutlery, while Madagascans of Indian and Yemeni origin tend to eat with their fingers. Snacks are sold at all hours in the streets of towns, including kebabs (*masikita*), meat and vegetable fritters (*sambo*), grilled manioc and rice cakes (*mofo gasy*)



CULTURE

The culture of Madagascar is rooted in diverse tribal heritages and customs, with ancestor respect and traditional festivals at its heart. Although Islam and Christianity are the dominant religions, most villages defer to a soothsayer and healer to predict the future and cure illness. Traditional music and dance originating from Indonesia and Africa are a vital part of all ceremonies and festivals, and reinforce the links to the archipelago's long history.

Family is all-important, and male circumcision is still performed, although nowadays it's done at the local hospital whilst family and friends celebrate at home. Recent laws have improved the status of women's rights in Malagasy society as well as in the workplace, although rural women still engage in petty commerce to supplement the husband's earnings. The *fady*, taboos are still respected in many regions and govern daily lives, while visitors planning to tour the country should ask a local about traditions to avoid being accidentally offensive.

[3] Most of the Malagasy (people of Madagascar) live in rural areas, where their lifestyle and the politic arena remain highly traditional, and where most decisions are still made by a council of male elders. Bucking these traditions are a growing number of young people in Madagascar. Seeing little economic future in their rural home villages, these youth have become the primary source of the rural-to-urban migration into the country's larger cities.

For people who remain in the countryside, traditional ceremonies and travelling orators and musicians are a major source of entertainment. In urban areas, on the other hand, the opportunities for entertainment and enjoyment vary. Some Malagasy people take part in video clubs, where movies are rented and projected. Action films are extremely popular in Madagascar, particularly since the films are rarely dubbed or subtitled in Malagasy. Poorer urban inhabitants, however, have reduced access to this type of entertainment.

The typical form of dress in Madagascar varies depending on location and socioeconomic status. Rural and poorer urban residents tend to wear traditional attire: for men, this consists of a large shirt and shorts or long pants, while women may wear dresses with gathered skirts. In the country's coastal regions, women can often be seen in a wrapped skirt with a top; a rectangular shawl, known as a *lamba*, is also worn, particularly during ceremonial occasions. People of the middle class frequently wear Western clothes, with blue jeans being the favourite among the youth.

Most citizens of Madagascar, regardless of status, continue to observe most of the traditional customs, especially those related to the family tomb and those ceremonies that demonstrate respect for family ancestors. The most common of these traditions is the *Famadihana*, in which the bones of the ancestors are removed from the family tomb, wrapped in a specially-designed *lamba*, and placed again in the tomb after the delivery of a *kabary*, a traditional speech for special occasions. The *kabary* is also delivered at other special occasions, including weddings and business grand openings. Those who deliver these speeches are very well paid, particularly those who employ the use of traditional proverbs.

The cuisine of Madagascar reflects the gastronomic interests of people belonging to a variety of cultures and ethnicities, including the Indonesians, Africans, French and Arabs. Long-standing traditions in Madagascar have also played a major role in the evolution of Malagasy cuisine.

In Madagascar, a traditional meal is typically eaten on the floor. Food items are generally served on a single plate and eaten with a spoon. Meals are served when they are steaming hot. No drinks accompany the meal, nor do any type of starters or appetizers. The traditional meal is made up of three or four dishes, followed by a dessert of some kind, usually made from local fruits and vanilla.

Madagascar's cuisine consists of many popular specialties, with Ro and Ravitoto ranking high on the list. Ro, which is considered the staple of the Malagasy diet, is a dish made by mixing rice with herbs and fragrant leaves. Ravitoto is a type of meat dish, usually beef or pork, which is deep fried in oil and spices and mixed with herbs. Popular beverages, which as we mentioned are not served with meals, include *toaka*, *gasy*, *betsa*, *litchel* and *Rononapango*, a beverage made from burning rice.

To prepare meals, the people of Madagascar use a variety of locally-grown ingredients. Fruits and vegetables are very popular, as are many of the local plants which are used as spices and herbs. Fish and poultry are also prominently featured as ingredients in Madagascar cuisine, and are often used in the creation of soups and curries. The food is quite simple and prepared using very basic techniques that have sustained the people of Madagascar for centuries.

The musical scene in Madagascar is highly diverse and influenced by the various cultures that shaped the history of the country. The music of the country belongs to one of the three categories of traditional, popular, and contemporary music. The traditional music scene exhibits local variations. Rock, hip-hop, folk rock, jazz are some of the popular

music styles that gained popularity in Madagascar towards the second half of the 20th century. Contemporary-style music involves a fusion of traditional music with modern instruments. Music is not only played as a source of entertainment but also has an important role to play in spiritual, cultural, and historical events and ceremonies. The *valiha*, a musical instrument made of bamboo reflects the Southeast Asian origin of a section of the Malagasy people and bears similarities with instruments used in the Philippines and Indonesia today.

Traditional Madagascar Food and Dishes

[4] Zebu

If you enjoy meat, you'll find yourself in good stead in Madagascar. *Zebu*, the local breed of humped cow, is everywhere across the landscape and in restaurants. For the most part, its meat is tasty and tender when served. You can find it served as a filet, grilled (aka, brochettes or skewers), or stewed for hours in one of the traditional dishes below, or in the French-inspired favourites further along in this piece.

Romazava

Romazava is the over-the-top national dish of meat (typically made of beef, but it can also feature different types of meat) turned in a sauce of tomato, garlic, ginger and stewed mixed greens. The meat is typically braised for hours so that it is tender and falls apart.

Ravitoto

While the name *ravitoto* suggests something complicated and exotic, it's essentially mashed cassava (manioc) leaves. This dark-green spinach-like dish of greens can be served straight-up vegetarian, as it is when turned with coconut milk and some spices.

However, it is traditionally stewed together with meat, as in *ravitoto* with pork, which offers a very tasty, balanced contrast between the slightly bitter cassava greens and the richness of the meat.

Laoka

Laoka is any side dish which is technically to be served alongside rice. Oftentimes, laoka are vegetarian. However, vegetarians be aware and diligent that they may often contain meat or salted fish. You'll just have to ask.

Laoka are typically sauced or stewed with a traditional blend of Madagascar flavour staples such as tomato, ginger, turmeric, garlic, onion, or even vanilla



II. SUMMARY

Madagascar culture is a curious, colourful fusion of influences drawn from seafaring Borneans and Bantu Africans, Arabic and Tamil traders, and French colonisation. There are 18 distinct subcultures here, each with their own traditions and beliefs and although the Malagasy language is spoken across the island, there are numerous dialects too. The food, also, reflects Madagascar's diverse heritage, with elements of East Asian, Chinese, Indian, European and African cuisine, and rice (*vary*) with everything. The cuisine of Madagascar reflects the gastronomic interests of people belonging to a variety of cultures and ethnicities, including the Indonesians, Africans, French and Arabs. Long-standing traditions in Madagascar have also played a major role in the evolution of Malagasy cuisine. The typical form of dress

in Madagascar varies depending on location and socioeconomic status. Rural and poorer urban residents tend to wear traditional attire: for men, this consists of a large shirt and shorts or long pants, while women may wear dresses with gathered skirts. In the country's coastal regions, women can often be seen in a wrapped skirt with a top; a rectangular shawl, known as a *lamba*, is also worn, particularly during ceremonial occasions. People of the middle class frequently wear Western clothes, with blue jeans being the favourite among the youth

Mostly Rice is consumed and available. Traditionally yams, sweet potato, and manioc. Cattle farming is common here. Sea fishing and freshwater fishing are important sources of food. Islam and Christianity are dominant religion villages defer to a soothsayer and healer to predict the future and cure illness Traditional music and dance originating from Indonesia and Africa are a vital part of all ceremonies and festivals. Family is all very important here and urban or rural people strictly follow their traditions. Recent laws have improved the status of women's rights in Malagasy society as well as in the workplace, although rural women still engage in petty commerce to supplement the husband's earnings. The musical scene in Madagascar is highly diverse and influenced by the various cultures that shaped the history of the country. The music of the country belongs to one of the three categories of traditional, popular, and contemporary music

III. CONCLUSION

Madagascar's food reflects the country's cultural diversity. It is influenced by France via its colonial history, by Austronesia (e.g., Indonesia and Malaysia region) through its origins, and East Asia, the Middle East, and the Bantu countries of East Africa through centuries of migration and trading.

These influences show themselves in terraced rice fields, spices like vanilla and pepper, and roots and tubers. Toss in copious fruits and vegetables and a sprawling coastline of the world's fourth largest island and you have the makings of a culinary surprise.

Madagascar is best known for its diversity when it comes to its cuisine. The country is proud to be one that features some of the world's most delicious dishes. Rice is the staple of the local people and you will notice that it is rice that dominates much of the cuisine. The local dishes also feature a variety of vegetables along with seafood and meat. This completes the meal that one would eat in Madagascar. Food is generally flavourful and it consists of some basic ingredients like onions, tomatoes, garlic and ginger. Traditional dish of Madagascar are Romazava, Zeba, Ravitoto, Laoka etc.

To prepare meals, the people of Madagascar use a variety of locally-grown ingredients. Fruits and vegetables are very popular, as are many of the local plants which are used as spices and herbs. Fish and poultry are also prominently featured as ingredients in Madagascar cuisine, and are often used in the creation of soups and curries. The food is quite simple and prepared using very basic techniques that have sustained the people of Madagascar for centuries. Fresh sugar cane is also very popular. Rice water (*ranopango*) is the most affordable drink, and is traditionally prepared by boiling water over a layer of browned (burned) rice, before straining. Served warm, the amber-coloured water is a healthy refreshment, but may taste bitter if the rice has been burned for too long. In Madagascar, a traditional meal is typically eaten on the floor. Food items are generally served on a single plate and eaten with a spoon. Meals are served when they are steaming hot. No drinks accompany the meal, nor do any type of starters or appetizers. The traditional meal is made up of three or four dishes, followed by a dessert of some kind, usually made from local fruits and vanilla. Rural and poorer urban residents tend to wear traditional attire: for men, this consists of a large shirt and shorts or long pants, while women may wear dresses with gathered skirts. In the country's coastal regions, women can often be seen in a wrapped skirt with a top; a rectangular shawl, known as a *lamba*, is also worn, particularly during ceremonial occasions. People of the middle class frequently wear Western clothes, with blue jeans being the favourite among the youth.

REFERENCES

- [1]. COVID-19 Travel Resource Page
- [2]. MADAGASCAR TOURS & MADAGASCAR HOLIDAYS IN 2022 & 2023
- [3]. The delights of Madagascar cuisine
- [4]. The Culture Of Madagascar