

INR 3816.26 billion: Projected size of India's cookies market by 2027, up from INR 2623.19 billion in 2020.

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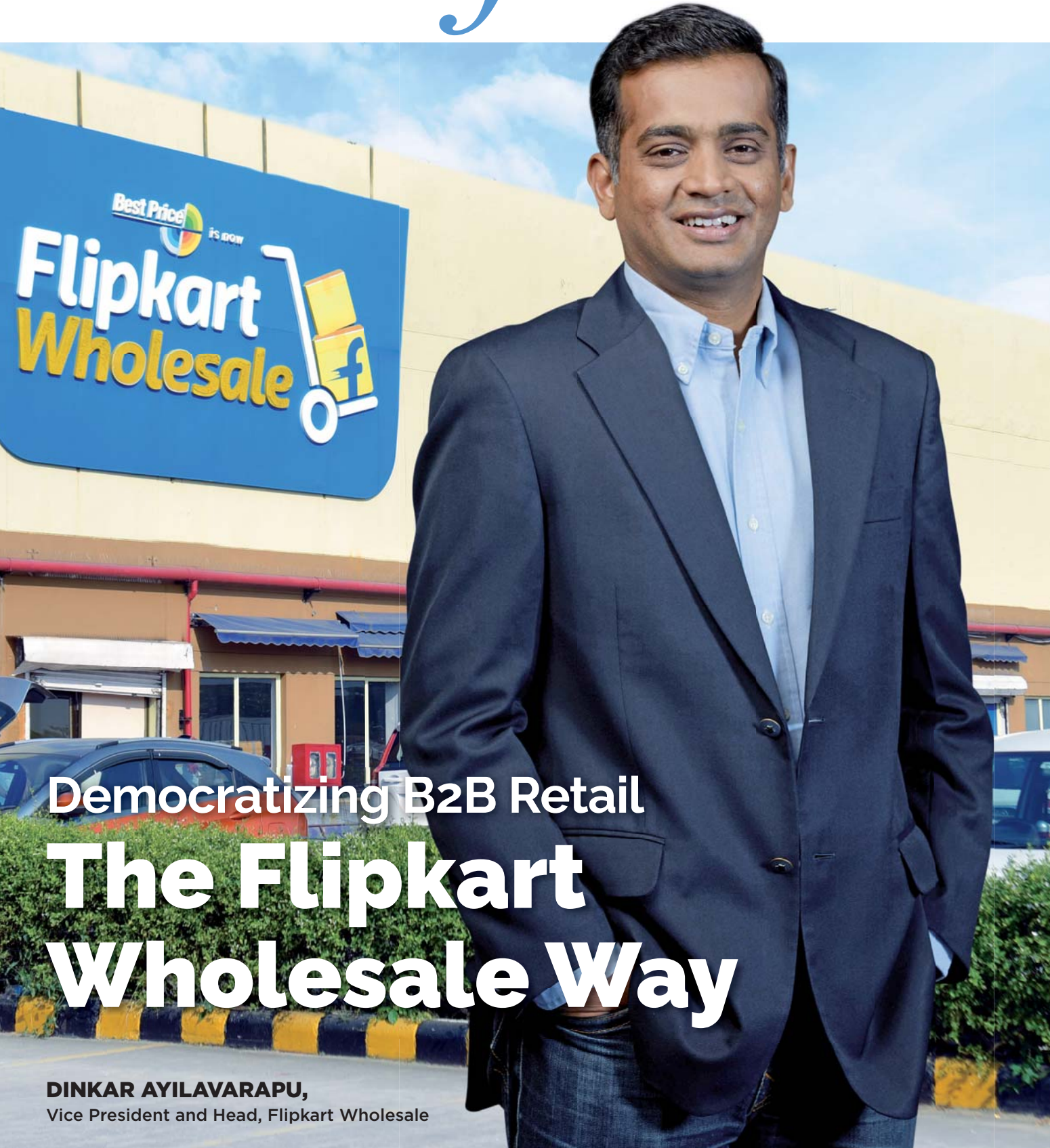
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SPECIAL FEATURE

How Festive Gifting Powers India's Food Economy.

FOOD SERVICE

McDonald's Pivot to Snacking, Coffee, and Value Combos.



Democratizing B2B Retail

The Flipkart Wholesale Way

DINKAR AYILAVARAPU,

Vice President and Head, Flipkart Wholesale

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Editor's Note



Every year, India's festive calendar unfurls like a carnival of color, emotion, and commerce. From Rakhi and Janmashtami in August to Diwali, Christmas, and New Year, these months remain the single biggest consumption cycle for food and grocery. Categories from chocolates and sweets to staples and spices surge, making this the sharpest churn of the retail year.

Once defined by mithai boxes, festive gifting today—read our feature on *pages 18-27*—has transformed into a \$44 billion marketplace of gourmet hampers, wellness assortments, and digitally curated indulgences. For retailers, the season means double or triple category volumes, 20–30% higher footfalls, and weeks of meticulous supply-chain preparation. Simply put, gifting has become the centerpiece of strategy, sentiment, and sales.

Equally, India's food story is being reshaped by processing. As one of the world's largest producers of grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy, the country still loses significant output to wastage. Food processing—supported by government schemes, new technologies, and entrepreneurial energy—has emerged as the bridge to higher farmer incomes, reduced waste, and nutrition-rich brands that can compete globally (*pages 39-40*).

Yet, even amid this transformation, India's retail backbone remains its kiranas, which still drive over 80% of FMCG sales. That's why our cover story on *pages 32-37* traces Flipkart Wholesale's five-year journey. Launched in 2020 on the legacy of Walmart India's cash-and-carry business, Flipkart Wholesale today empowers 1.2 million kiranas across 2,900 pin codes with credit, loyalty, and technology—reimagining how small retailers can thrive in a digital economy.

Rounding off, turn to *pages 42-44* for our foodservice story on McDonald's India. Once synonymous with "burgers and fries," it has pivoted into snacking, coffee, and value combos—embedding itself in more mealtimes and more conversations. The lesson is clear: in India's food story, evolution is survival.

Amitabh Taneja | Editor-in-Chief

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Special Feature Festive Gifting

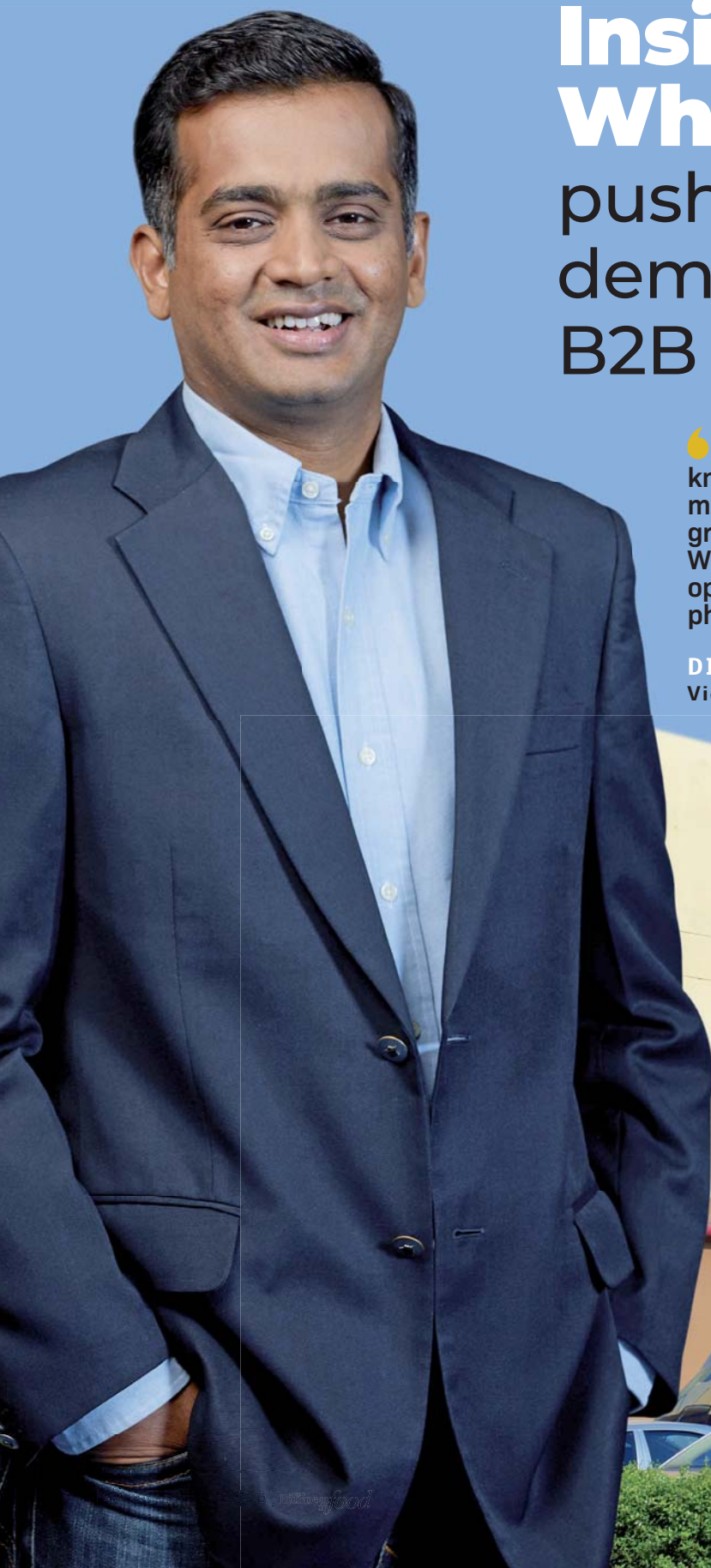
How FESTIVE GIFTING Powers India's Food Economy



Inside Flipkart Wholesale's push to digitize and democratize India's B2B retail

“By combining tech, credit, and regional knowledge, we are helping kiranas digitize, modernize, and thrive. As digital penetration grows and supply chains mature, Flipkart Wholesale is poised to become the trusted operating system for Indian retail's next phase of transformation.”

DINKAR AYILAVARAPU,
Vice President and Head, Flipkart Wholesale

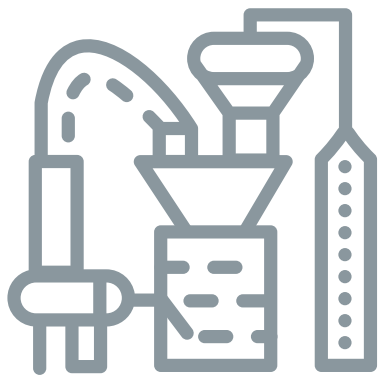


The Future of Indian Food Processing: What Startups Should Know



Explore trends, challenges & opportunities in India's food processing industry. A must-read guide for food startups and agribusiness entrepreneurs.

By Agribusiness Academy



India stands at a pivotal moment in its agri-food journey. As one of the world's largest producers of food grains, fruits, vegetables, and dairy, the country has immense potential to lead the global food market. Yet, a significant portion of our agricultural output still gets wasted due to insufficient processing, storage, and value addition.

Food processing is no longer just about extending shelf life—it's about transforming farmer incomes, reducing waste, creating jobs, improving nutrition, and building brands that represent India's rich culinary heritage. For agribusiness professionals and startups, this is more than a sector—it's a mission full of opportunity and responsibility.

Why Food Processing Is Gaining Momentum

The Indian food processing industry is witnessing a confluence of tailwinds that make it an exciting space for entrepreneurs:

Evolving Consumer Preferences: There's a rising appetite for convenient, healthy, and packaged foods, especially among urban millennials and Gen Z. Functional foods, ready-to-cook kits, and clean-label products are all gaining traction.

Export Demand: The global market is showing growing interest in Indian-origin products—from frozen vegetables and traditional snacks to millets, ghee, and spice mixes.

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India's leading food intelligence portal www.businessoffood.in is launching a first-of-its-kind Special Report to unveil India's top food, grocery and FMCG distributors — and we want you to star in it.

WHAT'S IN THE SPECIAL REPORT?

Your business journey and industry expertise will be showcased extensively on www.businessoffood.in, reaching top food, grocery and FMCG manufacturers, brands and retailers across India.

WHY SHOULD YOU BE IN IT?

- Get seen by top food brands and retailers actively seeking distributor partners.
- Get heard by top decision makers on distribution challenges and solutions.
- Open doors to new business opportunities, regional tie-ups, and supply chain alliances



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More Than Just Burgers: McDonald's Pivot to Snacking, Coffee, and Value Combos

In a country where eating out was once reserved for weekends or special occasions, McDonald's quietly changed the rules of the game. By making value the centerpiece of its strategy, the brand turned burgers and fries into everyday choices, accessible to everyone. What began with affordable meal bundles soon expanded into coffee rituals, snack-time favorites, and limited-time menus that kept the excitement alive. Over the years, the golden arches have shaped habits, influenced lifestyles, and carved out a permanent place in India's dining culture.

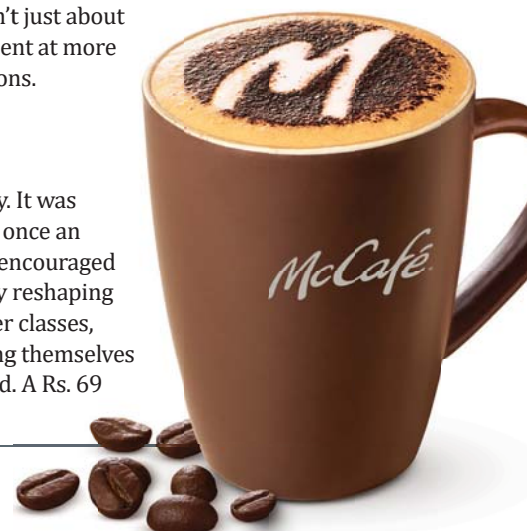
By Jigyasa Aggarwal

Ask anyone to picture McDonald's and the first image that springs to mind is likely a burger with fries on the side. But in India, the story has been much bigger — and much smarter. When McDonald's entered India in 1996, it wasn't enough to simply replicate its global burger-first model. Eating out was rare, wallets were cautious, and the idea of grabbing a quick snack outside home was far from mainstream. Research at the time revealed a telling figure: out of 100 meals Indians ate in a month, only 3-4 happened outside the home. If McDonald's wanted to thrive, it couldn't rely on being just a "burger brand."

That's how the idea of value-driven meals was born. First came the Happy Price Menu in the early 2000s, offering familiar favorites at pocket-friendly prices. Then came snacking options, coffee, and bundled meals that spoke directly to India's eating culture. Suddenly, McDonald's wasn't just about burgers anymore. Rather, it was about being present at more mealtimes, more occasions, and more conversations.

The Power of Value

The genius of value meals wasn't just affordability. It was how they multiplied visits. Where eating out was once an occasional indulgence, McDonald's value pricing encouraged consumers to dine 8-10 times a month, effectively reshaping urban food habits. With students stopping by after classes, office-goers grabbing a quick bite, families treating themselves over the weekend, the idea of eating out expanded. A Rs. 69



How Global Influences are Shaping **Dessert Preferences**

As cultural boundaries blur in our interconnected world, the dessert industry is experiencing a transformative shift. From fusion flavors that blend Eastern and Western tastes to a renewed appreciation for traditional confections, global influences are reshaping how we experience sweets. The rise of health-conscious alternatives, Instagram-worthy designs, and sustainability-driven choices are just some of the trends redefining the future of desserts.

By Ahmed Farid



The world of confectionery is a vibrant tapestry woven from diverse cultural threads, reflecting a rich history of culinary traditions and global influences. As the boundaries between cultures become increasingly blurred in today's interconnected world, dessert preferences are evolving to embrace a fusion of flavors and techniques from across the globe. This intersection of culture and confectionery is reshaping how people experience and enjoy sweets, leading to innovative and exciting trends in the dessert industry. Here's an exploration of how global influences are shaping dessert preferences and the emerging trends that are defining the future of confectionery.

Globalization and Fusion Flavors

Globalization has played a significant role in the evolution of dessert preferences, bringing together flavors, ingredients, and techniques from different cultures. This cross-cultural exchange has given rise to fusion desserts that blend traditional elements with modern twists. For example, the combination of Eastern and Western flavors has led to the creation of unique confections such as matcha-flavored macarons, chai-spiced ice cream, and black sesame cheesecakes. These fusion desserts reflect a growing trend towards experimentation and novelty in the confectionery world. Consumers are increasingly open to trying new and unconventional flavor combinations, driven by curiosity and a desire for unique culinary experiences. This trend is particularly prevalent

among millennials and Gen Z, who are more adventurous in their taste preferences and seek out desserts that offer both novelty and authenticity.

Revival of Traditional Desserts

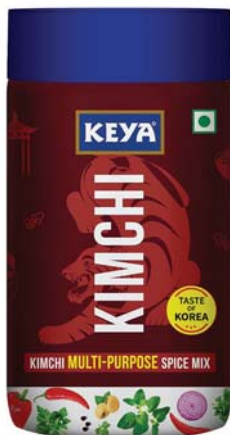
While fusion desserts capture the excitement of blending cultures, there is also a renewed appreciation for traditional desserts from various cultures. As people become more interested in exploring the origins of their favorite sweets, there is a growing demand for authentic and artisanal versions of classic confections. This revival of traditional desserts often involves preserving and honoring the time-honored recipes and techniques passed down through generations. For instance, Turkish Baklava has gained

Kimchi Masala – Redefining Global Fusion from an Indian Kitchen



In a culinary era defined by bold experimentation and cultural mashups, a humble spice blend is making a statement that goes far beyond taste. Kimchi Masala, an Indo-Korean fusion seasoning, is fast becoming the new flavour hero in Indian kitchens—one that packs history, health, and Hallyu into a single spoonful.

By Adesh Kumar



In the ever-evolving world of culinary experimentation, few ingredients manage to bridge cultures while retaining their authenticity. Enter Kimchi Masala—a bold, flavour-packed innovation that brings Korea's beloved fermented staple to Indian households with just a spoonful of spice. Blending Korean chili flakes, garlic, ginger, and the unmistakable zing of kimchi with Indian masala traditions, this spice mix is not just a seasoning—it's a cultural crossover.

As Korean food culture (Hallyu) gains fans across the globe, Indian kitchens are welcoming this global flavor with a desi twist. Brands like Keya Foods have taken the lead by bottling this hybrid magic, making it easy for the average Indian consumer to recreate the umami-rich magic of kimchi without needing Napa cabbage or fermentation jars.

How Indians are Using Kimchi Masala

Unlike traditional kimchi, which requires days of fermentation, Kimchi Masala democratizes the taste. Its utility lies in its instant flavor impact and versatility:

- **Kimchi Fried Rice:** Transform leftover rice into a spicy, tangy dish with a pinch of masala.
- **Kimchi Soup:** A warming Korean-inspired broth, spiked with chili, garlic, and fermented notes.
- **Kimchi Noodles:** Street-style noodles get a K-flavored makeover with minimal effort.

This masala is quickly becoming a pantry staple, serving both the flavor-curious millennial and the health-conscious Gen Z with its probiotic connotations and zingy punch.

Fueled by growing disposable incomes, digital connectivity, and a taste for global trends, India's alco-bev market is undergoing a major transformation. The rise of premium spirits—ranging from craft gins to single malts—reflects a generational shift, with millennials and Gen Z leading the charge in prioritizing authenticity and innovation.

By **Abhishek Modi**

India's Rising Middle Class is Shaping Consumer Preferences in the Alco-Bev Industry



A decade ago, celebrations in Indian households typically featured standard whisky or rum, with premium labels reserved for only the most special occasions. Today, a new narrative is unfolding—one driven by a discerning consumer base that values experience over mere consumption. The Indian middle class, once defined by frugality, is now rewriting the rules of indulgence, fueling a premiumisation wave in the alco-bev market. From single malts and small-batch gins to crafted cocktails, upscale bars across metros and even tier-two cities reflect this transformation. The preference for quality and craftsmanship over affordability is no longer a niche trend but a broader cultural shift, signaling a fundamental evolution in consumer preferences.

By 2030, nearly 75 million Indians will belong to the middle-class segment, with disposable incomes projected to rise at a CAGR of 12%. This expanding financial confidence is turning premiumisation from a luxury into an expectation, with the premium spirits market in India already growing at a staggering 7.7% CAGR—far outpacing the mass segment. Exposure to global trends through travel, digital connectivity, and aspirational lifestyles has further refined tastes, fostering a preference for high-quality spirits, craft beers, and premium imports. The willingness to pay for exclusivity is no longer restricted to the elite but is increasingly evident among urban



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FESTIVE GIFTING

A SPECIAL ISSUE ON FINE FOODS
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Categories Covered

- ❶ Chocolates and Confectionery
- ❷ Premium and Gourmet Snacks
- ❸ Mithais and Desserts
- ❹ Specialty Coffees and Teas
- ❺ Premium Honey
- ❻ Imported Foods
- ❼ Exotic Spices, Seasonings and Condiments
- ❽ Premium Olive Oils and Vinegars
- ❾ Fine Cheeses
- ❿ Jams and Preserves
- ⓫ Nuts and Dried Fruits
- ⓬ Baked Goods
- ⓭ Vegan and Organic Specialities



What's in the Issue?

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- New Brands and Product Innovation
- Packaging Innovation
- In-store Merchandising and Promotions
- Marketing and Distribution Strategies
- Leading Brands in Food Gifting
- Category Insights from Leading Retailers



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