

## GENERAL TERMS

**chaat** snacks that are usually sweet, salty, spicy, and sour all at once; from a Hindi word meaning "to lick"  
**dhaba** roadside restaurant, common in North India, that serves quick meals; also any Punjabi restaurant  
**pure veg** a restaurant classification meaning that no meat or eggs are served  
**non-veg** restaurants serving meat (and vegetarian) dishes  
**subzi** vegetables  
**wallah** suffix that means "man" or "seller," as in *kulfi-wallah* (ice cream seller)

**dhanyawad** thank you  
**tiffin** a snack; also lunch  
**dry** a dish served without sauce  
**gravy** the sauce of any dish  
**thali** a large platter; also the vegetarian meal served in a *thali*, with many dishes around a large bowl of rice  
**katori** the small bowls that hold the dishes in a *thali*  
**lal** red (in the case of food, it's often red from the addition of chili powder)  
**masala** spicy  
**garam** spicy hot, or strong  
**tandoor** a clay oven

## DRINKS AND DESSERTS

**chai** tea  
**masala chai** tea with whole spices and milk  
**dhud** milk  
**pani** water  
**nariyal pani** coconut water drunk from an unripe coconut  
**nimbu pani** lime juice, water, and sugar and/or salt  
**lassi** a drink of yogurt and sometimes other flavorings  
**feni** Goan liquor made from cashews or coconut  
**cold drink** a soft drink  
**mithai** sweets  
**barfi** fudge made by cooking down milk and sugar

**gulab jamun** cooked-down milk balls fried in ghee and then soaked in syrup  
**kheer** a thin, rich rice pudding  
**halwa** fruit or vegetables fried to make a chewy sweet  
**jalebis** a pretzel-shaped snack made of fried sugar syrup  
**kulfi** a frozen dessert similar to but denser than ice cream  
**laddoo** sweets made of ghee and flour and rolled in nuts  
**rasgulla** balls of whey soaked through with sugar syrup  
**paan** a mild stimulant made of betel nuts, lime paste, spices, and sometimes tobacco

## STAPLES

**aloo** potato  
**anda** egg  
**badam** almond  
**baingan/brinjal** eggplant, a.k.a. aubergine  
**bhindi** okra, a.k.a. ladyfingers  
**chatni/chutney** various condiments that can be sweet, salty, or sour  
**bund gobi** cabbage  
**dahi** whole-milk yogurt, a.k.a. curd

**dal** lentils and other legumes or beans; also a thick spicy soup served at most meals  
**ghee** butter with the milk solids removed  
**gobi** cauliflower  
**gosht** meat, usually goat or lamb  
**cheeni** sugar  
**kala mirch** black pepper  
**namak** salt

**garam masala** a mix of "hot" spices  
**dhania** coriander  
**haldi** turmeric  
**elaichi** cardamom  
**jeera** cumin  
**methi** fenugreek  
**mirch** pepper, especially chile powder  
**kaju** cashew  
**katchumber** a salad of tomatoes, onions, and cucumbers

**machli** fish  
**matar** or **mutter** green peas  
**murgh** chicken  
**mutton** usually refers to goat  
**nariyal** coconut  
**palak** spinach  
**paneer** a fresh, very mild cheese  
**pickle** a sour, brined condiment  
**raan** a leg or haunch, usually of goat or lamb

**pudina** mint  
**raita** a yogurt-based condiment with spices  
**saag** greens, such as beet greens or spinach  
**simla mirch** green bell pepper, a.k.a. capsicum  
**roti** bread, usually a flatbread  
**chapati** tortilla-like flatbread cooked on a griddle

**naan** slightly chewy bread cooked in a *tandoor*  
**papadam/papads** deep-fried, crunchy cracker made from lentil flour  
**paratha** flatbread cooked on a griddle, thicker than a *chapati* and often stuffed with potatoes (*aloo paratha*)  
**poori** deep-fried, puffed-up flatbread

## POPULAR DISHES

**dosa** South Indian crepe made of rice and lentils; the most common, *masala dosas*, are filled with mashed potatoes and spices  
**pakor** battered deep-fried vegetables  
**pani puri/golgappa** crispy globes of dough filled with tamarind water, potatoes, chickpeas, and onions  
**pav bhaji** toasted, buttered dinner rolls served with a spicy vegetable-filled sauce  
**samosa** a deep-fried savory dumpling filled with potatoes and spices  
**vada/wada** deep-fried savory lentil doughnuts  
**mulligatawny soup** a thin Anglo-Indian soup with pepper and other spices  
**achar gosht** goat or lamb cooked in a sour sauce

**sambar** a stew of lentils and vegetables  
**biryani** a casserole with rice, vegetables, spices, and usually meat  
**chicken lollypops** Indo-Chinese dish of drumsticks marinated in a spicy sauce and deep-fried  
**do piaza** literally "two onions"; meat dishes made with onions that are added at two different times during their preparation  
**dum aloo** fried and then steamed new potatoes  
**gobi Manchurian** Indo-Chinese dish of deep-fried cauliflower in a sweet tomato-based sauce  
**kati roll** (Calcutta roll) meat or other fillings wrapped in a *paratha*  
**kheema** ground meat, usually lamb

**kofta** meat or vegetable balls served in a rich sauce  
**jhalfrezi** any various stirfried dishes with a spicy sauce  
**meen molee** fish cooked in coconut milk, a Kerala specialty  
**murgh korma** chicken in a rich, creamy sauce, usually with ground nuts  
**pulau** a rice-based casserole dish; pilaf  
**sheekh kebab** ground meat put on a skewer and cooked in a *tandoor*  
**roghan josh** goat or lamb cooked in a spicy ghee-based sauce  
**sarson ka saag** spiced mustard greens and spinach  
**tandoori murgh** chicken pieces marinated in yogurt and then baked in a *tandoor*