

# Dining with a deity that was once a doorstep - No royal reception invite for me

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"Sri Sri Radha-Kalachandji, The Deity of Dallas! A.C. Bhaktivedenta Swami  
[kalachandji.com](http://kalachandji.com)

## Cooking Demonstration

Rating: ★★★★★

So I didn't actually eat with the deity known as Kalachandji but I did attend a cooking demonstration for Vegan/Indian food at the Kalachandji restaurant located in the compound of the Sri Sri Radha Kalachandji Manjir Hare Krishna Temple – so the deity was close by. Surely though, we should give thanks to Kalachandji the deity for the aromas and flavors we were presented with last night because it was close enough to "pure bliss" than anything I have ever eaten at any Indian restaurant in Dallas.



<http://www.kalachandjis.com/>

As much as I'd love to retell the story of this Hare Krishna temple in Dallas, this review is on the restaurant's wonderful cooking demonstrations presented every Thursday night at 7 PM by Master Chef Master Chef Manjuali Devi. Incidentally, I'd have to apologize that I did not explore this compound further because I'm sure that readers will enjoy visiting this building, viewing the Kalachandji deity and enjoying the Vegan Indian cuisine at their restaurant. They even have a gift shop. We'll save that for another day. For more information, I encourage you to visit their website and learn about the [Hare Krishna in Dallas](#).

### The Cooking Class

For \$25 a session or 8 classes for \$150 during each season you can experience the mastery of Manjuali Devi. She gives a lighthearted approach to her demonstration. Luckily they give you handouts in a handy folder with a glossary of what all the spices mean and where they are derived from. You also get recipe ingredients of that lesson's dishes for the evening. There is also a board that has a listing of popular Indian spices and what they look like, so check out the board.

Last night we had the pleasure of learning how to cook Vegetable Kurma, Kabuli Chana (chickpeas), and Chapatti from scratch and Mango Khir. As I look at my paperwork, I can still smell the spices embedded in my folder – a simple reminder to the culinary delights that I had last night! As a small reminder, she speaks fast so I suggest you be great at taking notes and follow along as she jumps from dish to dish so pay attention. This little lady is surrounded by huge pots over propane/gas stoves, large bowls of premade items and an extensive spice tray. The key take away from the evening: preparation. I've mentioned this in other articles, to save time be prepared so you aren't running from cupboard to cupboard trying to find your spices. In one of the dishes of the evening, the recipe had 10 spices alone.

### The Dishes

*Vegetable Kurma*— a delicious array of any kind of vegetable you want in a creamy coconut milk sauce. Simply divine and for the class, the spiciness is limited for a more moderate mild flavor to suit the crowds. My personal taste is very spicy food, but as a cook, I know how to adjust that flavor. She mentioned you can use any type of vegetable just stay away from sweet vegetables like too many carrots or pumpkin squash. Last night Devi used cauliflower, bell peppers, and a package of frozen mixed veggies. Two things stood out with this dish, a spice called hing. Made from the sap of the fennel tree, this resin is dried and grounded and typically mixed with turmeric and other spices. It's the key ingredient in [Beano](#), which counteracts gas. Also the adding of mint leaves to the dish – which doesn't leave the dish minty at all but helps to balance out the flavors. One of the things that Devi mentions about mint leaves is that they are good for digestion, which may explain why Indian food has so many spices that do a lot for the digestive tract.

*Kabuli Chana*— this dish comprised of chickpeas is sautéed with Ghee. Ghee is the oil from clarified butter when you separate the milk from the clear butterfat. Ghee is valued in Ayurveda or alternative medicine as a rejuvenating elixir and tonic with a cooling effect on the body. Ghee is not truly Vegan, however and if you want a true Vegan experience you can cook with cold pressed coconut oil or olive oil. Other key spices in this dish are turmeric which is known as a blood purifier, a cough suppressant when mixed with honey and a good exfoliator for the skin. What I liked about this dish was the tomato puree which tomatoes are a good source of antioxidants like Vitamin A & E. Devi loves tomatoes; she mentions if she could not have tomatoes, she would die.

*Chapatti*— Chapatti's are very thin unleavened flat bread also known as Roti. It was wonderful seeing how this was made from scratch and I want to go home and try this myself. Made of chapatti or whole grain common wheat type of flour and water, these are light as a feather. They are rolled out very thin with very slim rolling pins into discs, then dredged in flour, cooked on a griddle, then turned. Then they are placed on an open flame until they puff up. Puffing up is the key – if it doesn't puff up, it doesn't remain light. As Devi points out, eating a chapatti right after is has been puffed up is "pure bliss." She also mentioned that if a mother in law wanted to know if her future daughter in law was a good cook – have her make chapatti. If the chapatti once placed over the open flame and puffed up, had brown or burn spots – the girl still has a lot to learn.

*Mango Khir*— the last dish was a dessert drink kind of like Lassi, but it has cooked rice in it. This dish reminds me of spring/summer especially cooled down; it would probably taste wonderful as a sherbert. Just bring heavy cream and milk to a boil, cook the rice in the milk, then add sugar and cool down. Once cooled you add the mango puree and vanilla. It's an exquisite and a wonderful accompaniment to the meal.

### After the cooking demonstration

So after the demo after getting up from our folding chairs, we all line up buffet style and serve ourselves on paper plates. I hope these plates and utensils are recyclable and earth friendly, but anyhow, I guess to be truly earth friendly, bring your own plate. If you are looking to be served in a sit down style dinner that is not the case since you serve yourself. Nor do you do any cooking preparation, which I didn't have a problem with. However, they are more than willing to refill your iced tea glasses heartily.

### Kalachandji

Is located at 5430 Gurley Ave, Dallas, TX 75223. Call them at: (214) 827-6333 or email them at [info@radkalachandji.com](mailto:info@radkalachandji.com)

**SUGGESTED LINKS**

- [Spring cooking classes at Kalachandji's start Thursday](#)
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Dallas Culture & Events Examiner

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