The mango with a beak

Looking back at a lifelong love affair with the totapuri or kilimooka, which revels in chutney, gravies and desserts alike.

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Come summer and drawing rooms are ablaze with mango talk: pedigree, quality, quantity and price. The arrival of exotic varieties is awaited with bated breath, but this kind of consciousness, the most ordinary variety has been my favorite – the kilimooka mango or totapuri or anchalpur mango.

This year, my "Valentine’s Day" gift was the first bunch of kilimooka that I had seen, plucked from our farm. The first mango chain of the season was prepared that night, and eaten with gargantuan slices, without a care for calories or any notion of restraint.

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Another unforgettable experience was my first ever puri, a crawling wheeled drink made from raw mangoes. On that day, I found a mobile cart started by women making mango rasam with green raw mango, sugar, and rice flour. We were so impressed that we bought three!

That was the day I decided to make my own mango rasam. Like kilimooka mangoes, there are not many of them, but we do get a few dozens every year, some years more than others. The trees are not too tall and easy to climb and pick the mangoes.

I had been watching Honda bikes regularly and wanted to try something new.

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Indian kitchens are going through a silent shift in attitude, and the Internet is playing a pivotal role in that transformation. From tree-lined lanes to railway stations, this idea is to celebrate regional varieties of mango, with a beak.

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