



# Versatility in Hospitality Industry around the Globe-A Case Study Cuisine and Culture of Egypt

Esha Wadhwa<sup>1</sup> and Ashish J Nevgi<sup>2</sup>

Student, Thakur Institute of Hotel Management, Thakur Shyamnarayan Degree College, Mumbai, India<sup>1</sup>  
Coordinator, Thakur Institute of Hotel Management, Thakur Shyamnarayan Degree College, Mumbai, India<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** My topic of research is the culture and cuisine of Egypt. I have chosen this topic to explore the cultural and cuisine aspects of the country EGYPT. EGYPT is a country located in NORTH AFRICA. Egypt is one of the countries facing great challenges due to its limited water resources represented mainly by its fixed share of the Nile water and its aridity as a general characteristic. Egyptians are friendly, open to other cultures and known for their good hospitality, so do not be surprised if people invite you to their homes and insist that you accept the invitation. Egyptians also like to help people. Ancient Egyptian art must be seen from the viewpoint of the ancient Egyptians, not from ours. The somewhat static, formal, abstract, and often blocky nature of much of Egyptian imagery has led to it being compared unfavourably with more 'naturalistic,' Greek or Renaissance art. Egyptians have strong family values and are expected to be faithful to members of their nuclear and extended families. Most businesses are closed on Fridays, the Muslim holy day, with some also closed on Thursdays. Egyptian Muslims fast during the month of Ramadan and are only allowed to work for six hours each day.



**Keywords:** Product, Industry, Service, Guest.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Egypt is a country in North Africa that borders the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. Neighbouring countries include Libya, the Gaza Strip, and Sudan. Egypt includes parts of the Sahara Desert, Libyan Desert, and the Nile River, which runs from south to north. The government system is a republic; the chief of state is the president, and the head of government is the prime minister. Egypt has a mixed economic system which includes a variety of private freedom, combined with centralized economic planning and government regulation. Egypt has one of the longest histories of any country, tracing its heritage along the Nile Delta back to the 6th–4th millennia BCE. Cairo is the capital and largest city of Egypt. The city's metropolitan area is the largest in the Middle East and the Arab world, and 15th-largest in the world, and is associated with ancient Egypt, as the famous Giza pyramid complex and the ancient city of Memphis are located in its geographical area. Considered a cradle of civilisation, Ancient Egypt saw some of the earliest developments of writing, agriculture, urbanisation, organised religion and central government. Iconic monuments such as the Giza Necropolis and its Great Sphinx, as well the ruins of Memphis, Thebes, Karnak, and the Valley of the Kings, reflect this legacy and remain a significant focus of scientific and popular interest. Egypt's long and rich cultural heritage is an integral part of its national identity, which reflects its unique transcontinental location being simultaneously Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and North African. Egypt was an early and important centre of



Christianity, but was largely Islamised in the seventh century and remains a predominantly Sunni Muslim country, albeit with a significant Christian minority, along with other lesser practiced faiths. Egypt is considered to be a regional power in North Africa, the Middle East and the Muslim world, and a middle power worldwide. It is a developing country, ranking 116th on the Human Development Index. It has a diversified economy, which is the third-largest in Africa, the 33rd-largest economy by nominal GDP, and the 20th-largest globally by PPP. Egypt is a founding member of the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Arab League, the African Union, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the World Youth Forum. While Egyptian cuisine shares characteristics with the mainstays of beloved Mediterranean cuisine — hummus, falafel, shawarma, kabob, stuffed grape leaves — the Egyptian diet is rooted in its sense of place, the rich Nile River Valley and Delta. This fertile ground was the nexus of the ancient Egyptian civilization, which we know about largely from illustrated depictions of daily life on tomb walls. While the drawings capture livestock, the bulk of the images demonstrate farmers harvesting ingredients from the ground, a practice that lives on in Egypt's food traditions. I don't know how much you already know about food in Egypt, but what I can tell you is that there's a whole lot more to it than shawarma and kofta. Dig a little deeper and you are bound to discover a food culture that has been influenced throughout history going all the way back to ancient Egypt. Today, I will tell you everything you need to know about Egyptian food. [1]

## **II. CULTURE OF EGYPT**

At first, relatively little cultural contact came by way of the Mediterranean Sea, but from an early date Egypt maintained trading relations with the Lebanese port of Byblos (present-day Jbail). Egypt needed few imports to maintain basic standards of living, but good timber was essential and not available within the country, so it usually was obtained from Lebanon. Minerals such as obsidian and lapis lazuli were imported from as far afield as Anatolia and Afghanistan. Agriculture centred on the cultivation of cereal crops, chiefly emmer wheat (*Triticum dicoccum*) and barley. The fertility of the land and general predictability of the inundation ensured very high productivity from a single annual crop. This productivity made it possible to store large surpluses against crop failures and also formed the chief basis of Egyptian wealth, which was, until the creation of the large empires of the 1st millennium BCE, the greatest of any state in the ancient Middle East. About 85-95% percent of Egypt's population is Muslim, with a Sunni majority. About 5- 15% percent of the population is Coptic Christian; other religions and other forms of Christianity comprise the remaining three percent. Sunni Islam sees Egypt as an important part of its religion due to not only Quranic verses mentioning the country, but also due to the Al-Azhar University, one of the earliest of the world universities. It was created as a school for religion studies and works. In the early 20th century as the British authorities discouraged it and as women sought to gain modern positions of power. The hijab became more popular in the 1970s, with women choosing to adopt it due to the surge of pan-Arabism (especially its islamically-rooted side) and Wahabbism as a result of the returning Egyptian migrants from Gulf Arab countries who got influenced by their beliefs & cultural set during their stay there. The hijab became more unpopular with educated women, including devout Muslims. Egypt has a rich history and culture dating back thousands of years, starting with the Pharaonic culture, then Christianity and Islam. Egypt is among the earliest civilizations. Its culture has been affected by many other cultures and ethnic groups who either lived in or invaded the country, creating a melting pot. The way the cultures blended together might be difficult for foreigners to understand, but once you do understand and appreciate the traditions, the experience in Egypt will be like none other. Egypt has amazing natural, historical and cultural attractions, so tourism is one of the main sources of income, especially before the revolution. Egyptians are friendly, open to other cultures and known for their good hospitality, so do not be surprised if people invite you to their homes and insist that you accept the invitation. [1]

Egyptians also like to help people. It is very common if you ask someone for help or directions, they will call others to also help and make sure you get what you need or where you need to go. The ancient Egyptians believed that their kings were descended from the sun god Ra. They believed that they could communicate with the gods through their king, known as a pharaoh. The pharaoh had absolute power but was required to perform several important duties. They were responsible for the harvest and irrigation of crops. They directed the government, trade, and foreign policy. They enforced the laws and led the army. During the New Kingdom, the pharaohs usually commanded their armies in the field. Reporting directly to the pharaoh were two viziers, one for Lower Egypt based in Memphis and one for Upper



Egypt based in Thebes. Below the viziers were rural districts controlled by governors and towns run by mayors. These officials carried out the pharaoh's orders and collected taxes. Scribes kept the records. The Egyptians had no coinage until Alexander the Great conquered them. All workers paid taxes by turning over a percentage of their production, whether it was fish, grain, trade goods, pottery, or other goods. In addition, each household had to provide a laborer for several weeks each year for mining or public works. Laborers fulfilling their annual service dues probably helped build the pyramids. The ancient Egyptians are remembered for the quality and quantity of cultural objects that have survived to the present, including the Pyramids, the Sphinx, the treasures of Tutankhamen's tomb, the other monuments and temples of the Nile Valley, hieroglyphics, mummies, and papyrus. They are also remembered in the West because of their prominent role in the history of ancient Israel, as recounted in the Old Testament.[1]

### III. CUISINE OF EGYPT

A traditional Egyptian meal is a soul sister of the Mediterranean style of cooking. Reliant on vegetables and pulses, the Egyptian cuisine is a beautiful treat to the eyes, nose, and stomach. Fresher and simple in appeal, Egyptian food is the food of the masses. Here pulses, legumes, and bread are the star of the meal and served in almost every meal. They love their proteins in the form of meat and fresh fishes caught from the Mediterranean Sea and the Nile. Tea is the national drink of Egypt and is a very important part of the local culture. Locals love their hot beverage and enjoy having them during any time of the day. A popular welcome drink, it is customary to offer warm brew to guests in the local households. In Egypt, Koshary tea and Saiidi tea are regional variants of the beverage found in North and South respectively. While Koshary tea is lighter, Saiidi is stronger and sweeter. Apart from these variants, herbal teas are popular among the locals for its health benefits. Egyptian food is one of the most authentic and delicious foods in the world. Within a combination of elements from across the Middle East and North Africa, as well as Greece and France, reflecting the diverse influences that Egyptian have had throughout its history, Egyptian chefs often put their own spin on their version of the most beloved foods in Egypt. Egypt is proud to produce one of the best-tasting bread in the whole world, with a mix of flour and special manufacturing which started in ancient Egypt. The Baladi Bread, Aish Baladi, is one of Egypt's best treasures and is enjoyed by most of those who live in Egypt or by visitors who travel to Egypt. Egyptian cuisine is characterized by dishes such as ful medames, mashed fava beans; kushari, a mixture of lentils, rice, pasta, and other ingredients; molokhia, chopped and cooked bush okra with garlic and coriander sauce; and feteer meshaltet.[2]

Egyptian cuisine shares similarities with food of the Eastern Mediterranean region, such as rice-stuffed vegetables, grape leaves, shawerma, kebab and kofta, with some variation and differences in preparation. Egyptian desserts resemble other Eastern Mediterranean desserts. Basbousa is a dessert made from semolina and soaked in syrup. It is usually topped with almonds and traditionally cut vertically into pieces so that each piece has a diamond shape. Baklava is a sweet dish made from many layers of phyllo pastry, an assortment of nuts, and soaked in a sweet syrup. Ghorayeba is a sweet biscuit made with sugar, flour and liberal quantities of butter, similar to shortbread. It can be topped with roasted almonds or black cardamom pods. In Egypt, sugar cane juice is called 'aseer asab and is an incredibly popular drink served by almost all fruit juice vendors, who can be found abundantly in most cities.

Licorice teas and carob juice drinks are traditionally enjoyed during the Islamic month of Ramadan, as is amar al-din, a thick drink made by reconstituting sheets of dried apricot with water. The sheets themselves are often consumed as candy. Sobia is another beverage traditionally served during Ramadan. It is a sweet coconut milk drink, usually sold by street vendors.

A sour, chilled drink made from tamarind is popular during the summer called tamr hindi. It literally translates to "Indian dates", which is the Arabic name for tamarind. Coffee is considered a part of the traditional welcome in Egypt. It is usually prepared in a small coffee pot, which is called dalla or kanakah in Egypt. It is served in a small cup made for coffee called fengan. The coffee is usually strong and sweetened with sugar to various degrees; 'al riha, mazbout and ziyada respectively. Unsweetened coffee is known as sada, or plain.





**IV. CUISINE OF EGYPT**



**V. ART OF EGYPT**



**VI. TRADITIONAL CLOTHING OF EGYPT**



**VII. CONCLUSION**

Through this research I have got to know a lot about Egypt not only about their culture and cuisine also how different Ancient Egypt and modern day people are I found a few similarities and differences in their every day lifestyles. Things like religion, government, social class, writing, and their job specializations. It was surprising to me to find out that the ancient Egyptians way of leaving was somewhat like ours. Of course there are heavier differences, but still they were very modern for their times. Also I am in strong belief that we learned many things that are in our culture today from Ancient Egypt. In the category of job specialization the Egyptians had no real big corporations like we do today, but much simpler jobs. Some examples of their jobs are: artisans who were skilled craft workers, brick layers who built monuments and city walls, soldiers who defended the community, merchants who sold goods at there market place, and their entertainers were singers, dancers, and storytellers. In their society these were their jobs because they worked under a king and the making of individual profiting came later. So basically all the money was worked through there king. Some similarities of their civilization and ours is pretty much all the jobs listed above are the same ones we still have today, but instead of kings we work under bosses of individual corporations. We have also advanced our jobs a bit



since then but the roots of our jobs come from those of the ancient Egyptians. The Ancient Egyptians religious beliefs were very different then that of our own. They were Polytheistic, meaning that believed in their religion that there were many gods and not one supreme god. They had separate gods for things like war, the sun, embalming and they also believed that the pharaohs were gods. The entire civilization believed in the same thing, unlike America where we have many types of religions spread through the states. Also their priests and high religious figures were favoured by the gods more than the average person. Without the Egyptians, we would not be the people we are today. The amount of knowledge that has been provided from Ancient Egyptian times has shaped our modern day world inside and out.



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