

Insects as food

Insects are an important part of complex food webs and is integral to trophic systems of all types. In addition is common in many cultures across Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Insects are abundant, **nutritious, eco-friendly**, and a sustainable alternative to conventional meat.

Some insects that are food for humans

Insect	Nutritional Highlights	Preparation Methods
Crickets	High in protein and iron	Roasted, ground into flour
Mealworms	High in fat and fibre	Fried, baked
Grasshoppers	Lean protein source	Toasted, added to soups or tacos
Silkworm pupae	Rich in protein, eaten in Korea	Boiled, seasoned
Termites	Calcium-rich	Roasted or fried
Ants	Tangy flavour, some high in formic acid	Raw or roasted

Ant Chutney – Traditional Tribal Delicacy from India

Ant chutney, also known as "chaprah" in parts of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Jharkhand, is a traditional tribal delicacy made using red weaver ants (*Oecophylla smaragdina*) and their eggs. This unique dish is not just flavourful but also believed to have medicinal properties. It is popular in Bastar region of Chhattisgarh, Mayurbhanj district of Odisha and tribal areas in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh

Red Ant Chutney from Odisha has received GI (Geographical Indication) status. Specifically, the **Similipal Kai Chutney**, made by tribal people in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, was awarded the GI tag on January 2, 2024. This GI tag recognizes the chutney's unique cultural and regional significance, and highlights its traditional preparation using indigenous red ants.



<https://currentaffairs.adda247.com/red-ant-chutney-of-odisha-receives-geographical-indication-gi-tag/>

Some insect food -based festivals around the world are listed below

Region / Country	Insect(s)	Name of the Festival / Tradition	Culinary Form	Cultural Significance
Japan	Paper wasps (<i>Polistes</i>), giant hornets	Hebo Matsuri (Gifu)	<i>Hebo gohan</i> (rice with larvae), roasted larvae	Rural tradition, protein source, community competition
Ghana	Winged termites (<i>Shiitumu</i>)	Shiitumu Festival (Dagomba people)	Roasted termites, ground into paste	Celebrates start of rainy season, food security
Mexico	Grasshoppers (<i>Chapulines</i>)	Chapulín Festivals (Oaxaca)	Toasted with lime & chili, tacos	Indigenous Zapotec tradition, seasonal delicacy
Thailand	Crickets, grasshoppers, bamboo worms	Local insect food fairs (Chiang Mai, Isaan)	Fried, curried, or roasted	Part of everyday street food; boosts rural income
China	Silkworm pupae, cicadas, bamboo worms	Featured in regional food festivals	Boiled, stir-fried with spices	Traditional medicine and delicacy
South Africa	Mopane worms (<i>Gonimbrasia belina</i>)	Mopane Harvesting Season	Dried, boiled, added to porridge or sauces	Staple food in rural communities; income source
Australia	Witchetty grubs	Aboriginal Dreamtime ceremonies	Raw or roasted	Sacred in indigenous culture; survival food
Laos	Weaver ants, grasshoppers	Seasonal food festivals	Used in soups and salads	Traditional protein, tied to forest ecology