

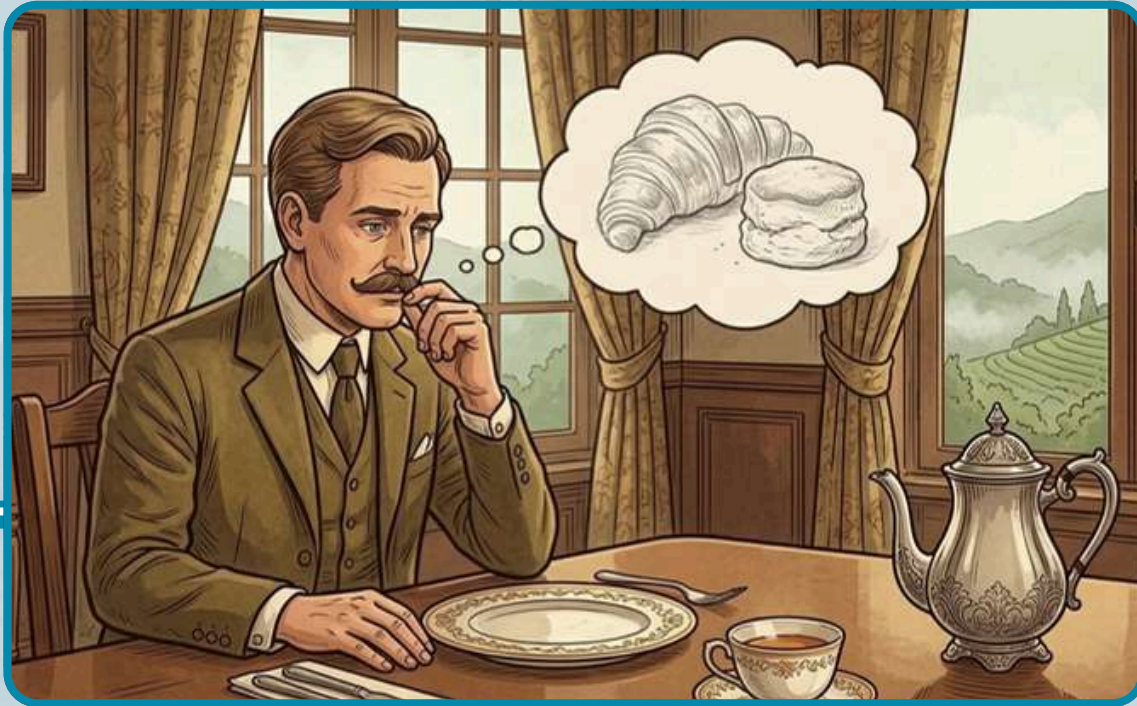


## How "Variety" Turned Varkey: The Story of Ooty's Famous Biscuit

## BEYOND THE BISCUIT

The Ooty Varkey is not a mere biscuit; it is a geographic anomaly and a cultural monument. Born from colonial necessity and preserved through generations of local craftsmanship, this flaky, smoky pastry serves as the culinary heartbeat of the Nilgiri hills.





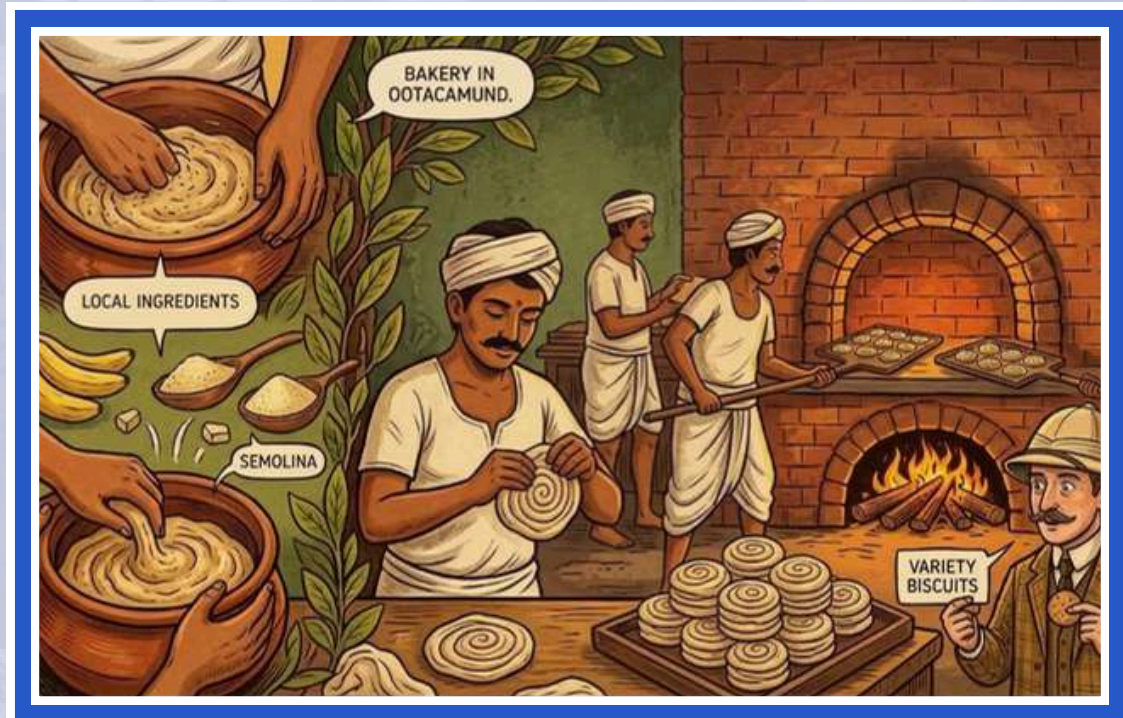
## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

During the British Raj, the misty hills of Ootacamund (Ooty) served as the summer escape for the Madras Presidency. Longing for a taste of home, British officials deeply craved traditional European baked goods.

To satisfy this demand, local bakers rose to the challenge. By collaborating with migrant laborers from Kerala, they artfully transformed the classic French puff pastry into a unique, crispy local treasure: the **Ooty Varkey**.

## NECESSITY LED TO INVENTION

Locals did not have access to standard yeast, commercial ovens, or proper European fats. Resourceful local bakers decided to improvise.



Instead of yeast, they created a fermentation starter using local bananas, sugar, and semolina. They hand-molded the dough, layered it with fat to create flakes, and baked it in crude, wood-fired brick ovens.

The result was a rustic, rugged, deeply browned creation. The British called it a "variety" biscuit. Over time, the local Tamil pronunciation transformed "**variety**" into "**Varkey**."



## THE MAGIC OF THE NILGIRIS

**What makes Ooty Varkey truly unique is its unmistakable sense of place.**

**Hill Temperature (<25°C):** Cool climate prevents the fats from melting.

**Spring Water:** Mineral-rich mountain water creates a tighter & crispier gluten.

**Mountain Microbes:** Slow yeast fermentation, adding subtle tang and depth of flavor.

## Heritage Over Factory Food



### ARTISAN VARKEY

- Natural Banana Starter
- 12-Hour Wood-Fired Bake
- Clean, 20-Day Shelf Life
- Delicate, Crispy Flakes



### MASS FACTORY FAKE

- Industrial Chemical Yeast
- Quick Gas-Oven Conveyor
- 6-Month Preservative Load
- Hard, Greasy, Dense Texture



## **GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION (GI) RECOGNITION**

The Government of India officially awarded the snack a Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2022 to protect the livelihoods of authentic artisans and preserve their heritage. Under this strict legal protection, it is completely illegal to market or sell any biscuit as an "Ooty Varkey" unless it is fully handcrafted within the specific geographic boundaries of the Nilgiris using certified, traditional methods.



## About RIPA

RIPA (Reinforce Intellectual Property Association) is a dedicated notfor-profit organization focused on the promotion and advancement of indigenous Intellectual Property (IP) in India, with outreach that extends to the international stage.

Our mission centers on addressing both current and future needs for the growth and development of indigenous IP, actively supporting the country's unique innovation landscape through local research and development initiatives. RIPA's commitment to the IP community spans every stage of the IP lifecycle—from idea generation to the successful commercialization of inventions.

Join us to supports indigenous crafts across the country.

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