

Golden Eye Chef at ChefEx India 2026

Connecting with the Hospitality Industry



ChefEx India 2026, held from **18–20 September 2026 in Chandigarh**, brought together chefs, hospitality professionals, businesses, food entrepreneurs, Hotel Management students and other stakeholders from the food and hospitality industry for a three-day exhibition.

Organised by the **PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI)**, ChefEx is a B2B platform covering catering, hospitality essentials, food processing and food retail. The exhibition provided opportunities for industry professionals to discover products and solutions, exchange knowledge, build connections and explore potential partnerships.

Alongside the exhibition, the event featured cooking competitions for Hotel Management students, live culinary demonstrations by professional chefs, and interactive classes that gave participants an opportunity to learn directly from experienced chefs and industry professionals.

For **Golden Eye Chef**, being part of this gathering was an opportunity to connect directly with the professional culinary and hospitality industry and bring greater visibility to the skills and potential of blind and visually impaired chefs and cooks.

Golden Eye Chef Takes the Kitchen

Golden Eye Chef is an international culinary platform created to provide blind and visually impaired chefs and cooks with opportunities to showcase their cooking skills, share their stories and cultures, gain recognition, and explore greater possibilities within the culinary and hospitality industry.

Since its beginning in **2019 in Agra, India**, Golden Eye Chef has grown from a local cooking initiative into an international platform connecting blind and visually impaired culinary talent from different countries.

At its heart is a simple idea: **blindness should not prevent a person from being recognised for their skills, creativity and ability to contribute to the world of food.**

Representing Golden Eye Chef at ChefEx were **Annpurna and Pinky Mangal**, two chefs who have been an important part of the Golden Eye Chef journey.



Annpurna is a partially blind food enthusiast from Delhi and the **Golden Eye Chef 2023 winner in the Partially Blind Category**. She has been associated with Golden Eye Chef since its beginning in 2019 and has participated across multiple editions.

Her passion for food also led her to start **Krafty Momo**, a small food venture in Delhi, which she ran for nearly two years. She continues to remain deeply connected to cooking and the culinary world.

Through her own experiences, Annpurna hopes to contribute towards creating stronger support systems and opportunities for blind and visually impaired people who want to build careers and businesses in the food and hospitality sector.

Pinky Mangal is a totally blind home chef from Indore and one of the most consistent participants in the journey of Golden Eye Chef. She has participated in the competition **seven times** and has won several editions in the Totally Blind Category.

Her passion for cooking also took her to the national stage as a participant in **MasterChef India**, where she was featured in the show's first promotional campaign. Her journey has encouraged many blind and visually impaired people to pursue cooking and participate confidently in the culinary world.



Cooking at ChefEx

At ChefEx, **Pinky Mangal and Annpurna** were given the opportunity to showcase their cooking skills in front of chefs, hospitality professionals and other participants.

As Pinky comes from **Indore**, they chose to prepare **Indore's famous Usal Poha**, giving professional chefs and participants an opportunity to experience a dish closely connected with Pinky's home city.



Chef Manjit Singh Gill, who had invited Golden Eye Chef to the programme, personally tasted the Poha and appreciated their efforts.



Chef Nand Lal Sharma, Chef Izzat Husain, and Chef Neelu Kaura, who are already associated with Golden Eye Chef, also supported and encouraged the team during the event and tasted the dish prepared by Pinky and Annpurna.

For Pinky and Annpurna, the opportunity was more than simply preparing a dish. It gave them the chance to demonstrate their cooking skills directly in front of professional chefs and engage with people from the wider culinary industry.

For Golden Eye Chef, such opportunities are an important part of its larger vision. A cooking platform can provide a starting point, but meaningful inclusion also requires creating opportunities for blind and visually impaired culinary talent to connect with the professional world.

Meeting the Hospitality Industry



On the following day, the **ChefEx Award Function** was held at **Hotel Park Plaza**, where restaurants, chefs and professionals from the hospitality industry were honoured for their contributions.

Several renowned chefs were also present, including **Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi, Chef M.S. Gupta, and Chef Manjit Singh Gill**.

The award function provided Golden Eye Chef with an opportunity to interact with a wider group of chefs and hospitality professionals. Conversations around **Golden Eye Chef and the inclusion of blind and visually impaired people in the food and hospitality industry** received encouraging responses.

Several professionals expressed interest in staying connected with Golden Eye Chef, supporting its efforts, and exploring opportunities to help create a more inclusive food and hospitality industry.

These conversations were particularly meaningful because Golden Eye Chef goes beyond simply organising a cooking competition. The platform aims to create opportunities for blind and visually impaired people to showcase their culinary skills, share their stories and cultures, gain recognition, and explore possibilities within the wider food and hospitality sector.

From Visibility to Opportunity

For Golden Eye Chef, connecting with the professional food industry is an important part of its journey.

When blind and visually impaired chefs are given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, it allows chefs, hospitality professionals and the wider public to see their abilities directly.

Such visibility can create conversations, and conversations can lead to new connections and opportunities, including employment, entrepreneurship, culinary collaborations, demonstrations, training and mentorship.

The interactions at ChefEx India 2026 were therefore an encouraging step towards building stronger connections between **blind culinary talent and the professional food industry**.

For Golden Eye Chef, the aim is not only to give blind and visually impaired chefs a platform to compete, but also to help create a wider ecosystem where their skills can be recognised and where opportunities can emerge from those skills.

A Note of Gratitude

Golden Eye Chef sincerely thanks all the chefs and hospitality professionals who welcomed the team, encouraged the participants, tasted the food, and took the time to learn about the vision of Golden Eye Chef.



Our special thanks to **Chef Manjit Singh Gill** for inviting Golden Eye Chef to ChefEx and providing the opportunity to showcase our cooking skills.

We are also grateful to **Chef Nand Lal Sharma, Chef Izzat Husain, Chef Neelu Kaura, Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi, Chef M.S. Gupta, Chef Manpreet, Chef Sumit, and Chef Tushar Negi** for their encouragement, appreciation and valuable interactions.

Every conversation and expression of support strengthens our belief that the culinary and hospitality industry can play an important role in creating meaningful opportunities for blind and visually impaired people.

We are equally grateful to the **ChefEx team and PHDCCI** for creating a platform that brought together professionals and businesses from across the food and hospitality ecosystem.

A Personal Note from Annpurna and Pinky Mangal

We would like to personally thank all the chefs, professionals and the ChefEx team for welcoming us, giving us the opportunity to cook and share our food, and for the encouraging conversations around the participation of blind and visually impaired people in the food and hospitality industry.

The warmth, appreciation and support we received throughout the event made the experience truly meaningful for us. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to interact with us, taste our food and encourage us to continue pursuing our passion for cooking.

Looking Ahead

The three-day **ChefEx India 2026** experience was valuable for Golden Eye Chef not only because it provided an opportunity to showcase cooking skills, but also because it opened doors to meaningful conversations with professionals from the hospitality industry.

For Golden Eye Chef, such connections are an important step towards building greater awareness about the abilities of blind and visually impaired people and exploring pathways for their inclusion in the food and hospitality sector.

The experience reinforced an important belief at the heart of Golden Eye Chef: **talent deserves an opportunity to be seen, skills deserve an opportunity to be recognised, and blindness should not be a barrier to participation in the professional world.**

We look forward to staying connected with the chefs and professionals we met at ChefEx and exploring meaningful opportunities to take this vision forward.



Golden Eye Chef

Cooking Beyond Seeing

Worlds First and Only Global Culinary Contest
for The Blind

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