

## A Baker from Goa – Important Questions

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**Q. What do the elders in Goa still love to remember? OR What are the elders in Goa nostalgic about?**

**Ans.** The elders in Goa are nostalgic about the good old Portuguese days and the Portuguese loaves of bread. The Portuguese were very famous for their bread.

**Q. What did the bakers wear when the author was young?**

**Ans.** The bakers in the Portuguese days wore a peculiar dress called the 'Kabai'. It was a long single piece of frock reaching down to the knees. During the years when the author was young, they wore a shirt and a trouser that used to be longer than a half pant and shorter than a full pant.

**Q. How did the baker attract the children?**

**Ans.** The baker attracted the children not by his jingle or by the loaves of bread he sold but attracted the children by the bread bangles or the special sweet bread he sold, especially made for children.

**Q. Baking was considered essential in a traditional Goan village. What reasons does the writer give to support his point?**

**Ans.** No festival in Goa is complete without bakery products—be it marriages, engagements or any other ceremony. Traditional sweet bread, known as 'bol' is to be given with marriage gifts. At Christmas 'bolinhas' and cakes are a must. Any party or feast without bread is considered incomplete.

**Q. Even today any person with a jackfruit-like physical appearance is easily compared to a baker. Explain.**

**Ans.** Bread-making is a prosperous business in Goa. The physique of the baker, i.e., his plump and round body are testimony to that. Therefore, anyone who is fat and plump just like a jackfruit is compared to a baker.

**Q. Is bread an important part of Goan life? How do you know this?**

**Ans.** Yes, bread is an important part of Goan life even today. This we can definitely say because bread is not only a part of their daily life but also of important occasions like Christmas, festivals, weddings and engagements. These occasions are incomplete without a special preparation for each event, made from bread.

**Q. Comment on the significance of a bread baker in a traditional Goan village?**

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**Ans.** Bread is a permanent item of a Goan meal and the baker is an important member of the Goan community. Besides, sweet bread 'bol' is a special delicacy, served at festivals and cakes and bolinhas are a special charm at Christmas. A baker's furnace is therefore indispensable in a traditional Goan village.

**Q. Rodrigues describes his childhood and the bakers of Goa. What does he remember so fondly about those bakers?**

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**Ans.** Rodrigues describes his childhood. Those were good old Portuguese days, the Portuguese and their famous loaves of bread. The eaters of loaves might have vanished but the makers are still there. We still have amongst us mixers, the moulders and those who bake the loaves. Those time tested furnaces still exist. It is their traditional family work. Those bakers are known as paders in Goa. The writer remembers a baker fondly. He used to be their friend. He used to visit their house twice a day. In the morning the jingling sound of the bamboo woke them from sleep. The maid servants purchased the loaves. The bakers also sold bread bangles, sweet bread of special make, cakes and bolinhas. He collected the bill at the end of the month.

**Q. Describe the childhood memories of the author's time in Goa and his fondness for breads and cakes?**

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**Ans.** The author tells us that bread is an indispensable part of the life of the Goan people since the time of the Portuguese. Bread is a part of not only everyday life but also of festive occasions and events. For each occasion there was a special kind of bread. He also tells us that the baker had leading role in the society was so important in the life of the Goans that they got up with the jingling sound of his bamboo. He also tells us that the baker wore either a Kabai, i.e., a long frock or a shirt and a half pant like trousers. The author seems to be very observant because not only does he know all this but also knows the profit-making in it as he says that in those days, the baker was very prosperous and never starved. He also knew that they maintained monthly bills on the walls. Such strong observation powers would definitely be beneficial for children as they would become aware of the citizens of their neighbourhood.

**Q. How is a baker synonymous with Goan village?**

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**Ans.** Although the Portuguese had left left the shores of Goa long back the tradition and practices still remain. This also includes the baker and his bread. The baker still moves around the roads making a certain noise which announces his arrival. The noise not only pleased the ears but was also liked by the children who would rush to buy his sweet bread. The would literally only start with the arrival of the baker and the lady to the house would come out to buy his bread.

**Q. Baking was considered an essential and a profitable profession in a traditional Goan village. What reasons does the writer give to support his point?**

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**Ans.** Goa is very much influenced by the Portuguese. Baking was considered an essential and a profitable profession in a traditional Goan village. The Portuguese are famous for preparing the loaves of bread. We can come across the bakers of bread. It is their traditional family work. The villagers were much fond of the sweet bread known as 'bol'. The marriage gifts were meaningless without it. So the baker's furnaces were the essential. 'Cakes' and 'bolinhas' formed an important item on various occasions like Christmas and other festivals. The baker would collect the bill at the end of month. They recorded their accounts on the wall in pencil. Baking was a profitable business in old days. The baker and his family never starved and they looked happy and prosperous.