

Project Profile For Devbhoomi Millet Café Chain In Uttarakhand

1. Introduction

Uttarakhand, known for its spiritual tourism and rich agro-biodiversity, has long been a reservoir of traditional grains like Mandua (finger millet), Jhangora (barnyard millet), and Ramdana (amaranth). These millets, once staples of the hill diet, are now being recognized globally for their superior nutrition, gluten-free nature, and climate-resilient cultivation. The Devbhoomi Millet Café Chain aims to bring these forgotten grains back to everyday consumption by establishing a chain of millet-themed cafés across pilgrimage circuits, tourist towns, and district headquarters in Uttarakhand. These cafés will serve local and innovative millet-based dishes while simultaneously creating awareness about health, sustainability, and local farming heritage.

The café concept is designed to be both a gastronomic and cultural experience. Visitors—whether local residents, tourists, or pilgrims—can enjoy traditional Uttarakhandi millet recipes with a modern presentation and hygienic preparation. The café will serve items like millet dosa, mandua pancakes, jhangora kheer, millet khichdi, ramdana laddus, and millet smoothies, thereby bridging ancestral food traditions with contemporary dietary needs. Each outlet will also act as a showcase for packaged millet products, promoting local farmer collectives and women-led SHGs involved in millet processing.

The project thus serves multiple goals: reviving millet consumption, creating sustainable livelihoods in the food service sector, supporting women's entrepreneurship, and building a health-conscious food brand rooted in Uttarakhand's spiritual and ecological identity. It aligns with the goals of the International Year of Millets declared by the UN, and complements government schemes promoting local grains, such as ODOP (One District One Product) and PMFME.



2. Industry Overview

India's millet food service industry is gradually gaining traction, especially as urban consumers grow increasingly health-conscious. The market for millet-based products, currently valued at around ₹500 crore, is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 15–20% over the next five years. This includes packaged flours, ready-to-cook meals, and millet-based fast foods. While most of this growth is concentrated in metro cities, smaller urban and tourism-rich regions like Uttarakhand are beginning to adopt this trend through boutique cafés, organic stores, and millet food festivals. The increasing footfall of domestic wellness tourists and foreign travelers adds momentum to this trend.

In Uttarakhand, millets have strong regional and cultural significance, but their culinary usage has reduced due to urbanization and changing food habits. The café model provides a way to reintroduce millets as aspirational, convenient, and tasty. Millets are not only nutritious but also suited to the state's agro-climatic zones, requiring minimal inputs and thriving in rain-fed hill regions. This makes them ideal candidates for inclusion in both farming policy and food retail ventures. Cafés can act as a bridge between small millet farmers and urban markets, providing consistent demand and value addition.

Recent government policies such as the National Millet Mission, Millet Startup Challenge, and various state-level agro-tourism initiatives further support such models. Also, millet cafes and carts have already shown success in states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana. A café chain in Uttarakhand—especially in high-footfall areas—can showcase the regional application of millets while enabling local sourcing, processing, and branding. As millet adoption becomes part of national policy and urban lifestyle, such cafés will occupy a key role in food system transformation.

3. Products and Application

The Devbhoomi Millet Café will serve a diverse menu curated around traditional grains with modern sensibilities. Dishes will include both savory and sweet options to cater to all meal times and dietary preferences. Popular dishes include mandua-based thali meals (chapati, sabzi, daal, raita), jhangora kheer, millet parathas, millet dosa and idli, khichdi with seasonal vegetables, millet momos, mandua brownies, ramdana laddus, and millet-based beverages like



smoothies and cold shakes. Gluten-free bakery items such as cookies, cakes, and energy bars will also be introduced.

The café will cater to a broad clientele including tourists, health enthusiasts, students, office-goers, and families. Millet-based meals are suitable for people with gluten intolerance, diabetes, or lifestyle diseases, and can also be customized for fasting and sattvic diets, especially for pilgrims. Items like ramdana chikki and roasted millet puffs will be available as takeaway snacks or gift boxes. Cafés will also retail packaged products such as mandua atta, jhangora packets, millet namkeen, and laddus made by local SHGs and FPOs.

This multi-functional model—serving fresh food and selling packaged goods—will allow each café to function as a local food innovation hub. Seasonal dishes will be rotated based on regional festivals and harvests, connecting the menu with Uttarakhand’s culture. Cooking workshops, millet awareness camps, and recipe contests will be organized periodically to create customer engagement and education, making each café a vibrant community and wellness center rather than just a commercial eatery.

4. Desired Qualification

The promoter of a Devbhoomi Millet Café outlet need not have formal degrees in hotel management or nutrition, but practical experience in food preparation, café management, or entrepreneurship is highly desirable. A strong understanding of millet-based cooking, local cuisines, and hygiene standards is essential. Those with prior experience in SHG-run kitchens, food trucks, community canteens, or even home-based food businesses will find this model accessible and scalable.

Promoters should also possess basic knowledge of accounting, inventory tracking, and staff coordination. Since the café will deal with both fresh meals and packaged products, familiarity with FSSAI standards, labelling, and food safety practices is necessary. Training in millet processing, food presentation, and customer service can be accessed through food innovation centres, KVKs, or DUY-affiliated training partners. Promoters supported under DUY, PMFME, or Startup Uttarakhand may also access capacity-building modules related to café design, branding, and menu diversification.



Beyond technical skills, the promoter must have a vision for creating a sustainable food brand rooted in Uttarakhandi identity. Strong communication skills, marketing intuition, and a willingness to engage customers in conversation about nutrition and millet heritage will be key differentiators. Women entrepreneurs, SHG collectives, and youth with culinary passion can successfully run café outlets with the right handholding and support ecosystem.

5. Business Outlook and Trends

The outlook for millet-based cafés is highly favorable, especially in the context of the increasing consumer demand for healthy, traditional, and locally sourced foods. With millets being promoted as "nutri-cereals" by the Government of India and international organizations, their mainstreaming into daily diets is no longer limited to niche markets. The rising trend of functional foods, plant-based diets, and slow-cooked meals is creating space for millet cafés to position themselves as both healthful and cultural experiences.

Tourism and pilgrimage are major growth drivers in Uttarakhand, with lakhs of visitors passing through the state's towns every year. The café chain can tap into this footfall by offering nutritious meals that are easy to digest and aligned with spiritual or fasting preferences. Furthermore, the trend of supporting local businesses, choosing organic or indigenous products, and food-based gifting is growing steadily, especially in urban areas. A millet café that combines the storytelling of Devbhoomi's agricultural legacy with high-quality taste and hygiene has strong branding potential.

Additionally, the café model is future-ready in terms of replication and scalability. Once a few successful pilot outlets are established and optimized, franchise models or SHG-operated satellite units can be deployed across districts. Food delivery, catering for events, millet-themed lunchboxes for offices, and millet thalis at weddings are emerging trends that the café can explore as extensions. Integration with online ordering, tourism apps, and health food aggregators can also be implemented gradually.

6. Market Potential and Market Issues

The target market includes tourists, daily commuters, students, health-focused consumers, and residents looking for traditional yet innovative food options. Local families increasingly seek



hygienic food options that are both nutritious and locally meaningful. The rising prevalence of lifestyle disorders like diabetes and obesity has led to a shift towards coarse grains, making millets a logical and attractive dietary inclusion. Educational institutions, yoga retreats, homestays, and government guesthouses also represent institutional market opportunities.

Despite this opportunity, certain challenges remain. Millets still suffer from perception issues—many consumers associate them with poverty or rural hardship diets. Effective branding and taste innovation are required to reframe millets as aspirational and gourmet. Another constraint is the need for consistent supply of high-quality millet grains. Local aggregation, storage, and milling infrastructure must be strengthened to ensure raw material consistency. Weather-dependent farming and traditional processing methods can affect quality and quantity.

Moreover, trained culinary staff capable of preparing millet dishes consistently is in short supply. To mitigate this, the project must invest in training cooks and kitchen assistants, standardizing recipes, and setting up supply protocols. Awareness campaigns, sampling stalls, millet recipe fests, and collaborations with local influencers can gradually build demand and dismantle myths. Government and community partnership is essential to ensure millet adoption is driven both by culture and commerce.

7. Raw Material and Infrastructure

The primary raw materials for the millet café include regionally available millets such as Mandua (finger millet), Jhangora (barnyard millet), Ramdana (amaranth), and other minor millets depending on season and district. Secondary raw materials include locally grown pulses, seasonal vegetables, ghee, jaggery, rock salt, herbs, spices, and condiments. Millet flour, flakes, and processed products (like ready-to-cook mixes) may be sourced from SHGs, FPOs, or local mandis. Packaged water, eco-friendly cutlery, and organic oils should be procured in bulk to ensure hygiene and sustainability.

The infrastructure required includes a kitchen-cum-dining space of 700–1,000 sq ft, depending on the seating capacity. A well-ventilated cooking area with gas and induction support, food prep counters, storage racks, washbasins, cold storage units, and serving counters is essential. Dining should include 4–6 tables, water stations, a billing desk, and display racks for packaged



millet products. Outdoor seating or takeaway counters may be added in tourist towns. Signage must reflect a locally inspired aesthetic, using traditional motifs and Garhwali/Kumaoni text to create visual identity.

The café should also include a designated space for packaging and storing millet-based retail items such as laddus, cookies, or gift boxes. Depending on the location, a solar backup or inverter may be required. Hygiene infrastructure, including water filters, exhaust hoods, and foot-operated bins, ensures food safety compliance. For quality assurance, food samples should be periodically tested for freshness, moisture, and contamination at a local NABL-accredited lab or KVK.

Table 1: Raw Material and Infrastructure Requirements

Component	Specification/Quantity	Remarks
Mandua, Jhangora, Ramdana	500–1,000 kg/month	Locally sourced from SHGs/FPOs
Ghee, jaggery, spices	200–300 kg/month	For sweets and flavoring
Fresh vegetables and pulses	As per daily menu	Procured from local markets
Café space	700–1,000 sq ft	Includes kitchen, dining, billing, and storage
Kitchen equipment	Gas burners, griddle, tandoor	For millet-based fast meals and snacks
Cold storage	200–300 L refrigerator	For perishables and sweets
Display racks	3–4 units	For millet products and local handicrafts
Power backup	Inverter or 2kW solar setup	For uninterrupted operations



8. Operational Flow

Each Devbhoomi Millet Café will follow a standardized operational process beginning with raw material procurement, food preparation, serving, and retail sales. The café will maintain both dine-in and takeaway functions, while also managing an inventory of packaged products. The operations must ensure food safety, consistency in taste, and adherence to menu standardization.

Flow Chart of Operational Process:

1. Sourcing and Inventory Check
└─▶ Quality Control & Storage of Grains and Ingredients
2. Kitchen Preparation
└─▶ Millet Washing, Soaking, Flour Preparation
└─▶ Meal and Snack Cooking (Thali, Beverages, Bakery, etc.)
3. Customer Service
└─▶ Order Taking, Billing, Dine-in/Takeaway Service
└─▶ Feedback Collection and Hygiene Management
4. Packaged Sales and Restocking
└─▶ Display Monitoring and Supplier Coordination
└─▶ Festival Hampers / Bulk Orders Handling

9. Target Beneficiaries

The project is designed to benefit a wide cross-section of society, starting with rural millet farmers and SHGs engaged in cultivation, processing, and packaging. By creating demand for their produce, the café chain ensures better price realization and regular income. Women's



groups engaged in food processing, baking, and laddu making are integrated into the value chain through product supply, cooking roles, or franchise opportunities.

Youth from semi-urban areas will find employment as café managers, chefs, kitchen helpers, or customer service executives. The café also offers internship or part-time opportunities for hospitality students, promoting local talent development. Consumers benefit by gaining access to safe, traditional, and healthy food in an accessible and affordable format. Institutions such as schools, tourism circuits, and retreats benefit by integrating millet meals into their offerings.

On a broader level, the project contributes to public health, biodiversity conservation, and food heritage revival. By popularizing millet dishes, the café chain enhances nutritional literacy and reduces dependency on industrially processed grains. This creates ripple effects in community diet patterns, especially in regions witnessing rapid urban dietary transitions.

10. Suitable Locations in Uttarakhand

The café outlets should be strategically placed in towns and tourism hubs where customer footfall is high and millet sourcing is feasible. Priority should be given to locations that lie on pilgrimage, educational, or ecotourism routes. Government offices, universities, and health resorts may also serve as anchor clients or partners.

Ideal café locations include:

- Haridwar, Rishikesh (pilgrimage zones)
- Almora, Nainital, Mussoorie (tourist towns)
- Dehradun, Haldwani, Rudrapur (urban centres with youth population)
- Joshimath, Guptkashi, Kedarnath Valley (trekker/pilgrim base camps)
- Pauri, Bageshwar, Pithoragarh (low-rent towns with millet supply proximity)

Satellite kiosks can be added later in places like fairs, yatri niwas complexes, and food courts in district hospitals or panchayat bhawans. The pilot phase should begin with 2–3 high-visibility cafés to build brand recognition.



11. Manpower Requirement

Each café unit will require a dedicated team for food preparation, customer service, cleaning, and management. At full scale, the café will operate in two shifts to cover breakfast through dinner hours. Staff should be locally recruited and trained in millet-based cooking, hygiene practices, and hospitality basics. For SHG-led cafés, rotational kitchen teams may be adopted with a central café coordinator overseeing daily operations and stock.

The kitchen will be headed by a trained millet chef or cook, supported by an assistant who manages raw material preparation and cooking. A service staff will handle dine-in and takeaway customers, including order taking, billing, and customer interaction. A housekeeping and cleaning person ensures hygiene and cleanliness in the kitchen and dining area. For outlets with higher footfall or retail sales, a dedicated store associate can manage the packaged product shelf.

Table 2: Manpower Requirement and Annual Cost

Position	No. of Staff	Monthly Salary (₹)	Duration	Annual Cost (₹)	Responsibilities
Millet Chef / Cook	1	₹18,000	12 months	₹2,16,000	Preparing meals and managing kitchen
Kitchen Assistant	1	₹12,000	12 months	₹1,44,000	Ingredient prep, washing, helping in cooking
Customer Service / Cashier	1	₹10,000	12 months	₹1,20,000	Order taking, billing, dine-in support
Cleaning and Housekeeping	1 (Part-time)	₹6,000	12 months	₹72,000	Dishwashing, cleaning tables, waste management
Store Associate (optional)	1	₹8,000	12 months	₹96,000	Packaged product sale, restocking, record keeping
Total	—	—	—	₹6,48,000	Based on mid-size café with retail unit



12. Implementation Schedule

The Devbhoomi Millet Café project can be launched within 10–12 months, including time for location setup, training, and branding. The timeline begins with DPR finalization, fund mobilization, and café space identification. Menu trials and kitchen equipment setup follow, along with soft launch events and media coverage.

Table 3: Implementation Schedule

Timeline (Months)	Key Activities
Months 1–2	DPR finalization, location survey, loan/subsidy application, vendor tie-ups
Months 3–4	Civil work or interior design, equipment procurement, signage and branding
Month 5	Staff recruitment, millet chef training, trial runs, menu planning
Month 6	Opening of first café outlet with local media engagement and sampling drive
Months 7–8	Procurement and stock planning for packaged goods shelf
Months 9–10	Launch of second unit, feedback incorporation, millet awareness events
Months 11–12	Evaluation, FSSAI certification, scaling plan, satellite kiosk testing

13. Estimated Project Cost

The total cost of setting up one café unit with full operations including kitchen setup, branding, staffing, and working capital is estimated between ₹12–₹15 lakh. The cost varies based on café location, rent, and level of interior furnishing. A modular design approach using local materials (e.g., pinewood, stone, bamboo) can reduce initial investment and reflect regional aesthetics.

Table 4: Project Cost Estimate



Component	Estimated Cost (₹)	Remarks
Kitchen Equipment & Tools	₹2,00,000 – ₹2,50,000	Griddles, gas stoves, fridges, utensils
Café Infrastructure & Design	₹3,00,000 – ₹4,00,000	Tables, racks, signage, billing desk
Working Capital (6 months)	₹4,00,000 – ₹4,50,000	Salaries, raw material, electricity, marketing
Branding & Launch Events	₹80,000 – ₹1,00,000	Menu cards, banners, packaging design
Miscellaneous & FSSAI	₹50,000	Licenses, hygiene kits, staff uniforms
Total Project Cost	₹12,30,000 – ₹14,50,000	Can be optimized with co-located kitchens

14. Means of Finance

The café chain can be financed through a combination of promoter equity, institutional credit, and government support. Promoters may contribute a portion of the fixed cost, with the rest financed through MUDRA, DUY, or PMEGP schemes. Women-run SHGs may receive support under NRLM or DAY schemes, and subsidy may be available under ODOP for millet districts.

Sources of Finance:

- Promoter's Equity: ₹2–3 lakh
- Bank Loan (MUDRA/PMEGP): ₹6–8 lakh (collateral-free under ₹10 lakh)
- Government Subsidy (DUY/PMFME): ₹3–5 lakh (30–50% of fixed capital)
- CSR Partnerships (optional): Product display, kiosk sponsorship, training

DUY handholding agencies can assist with DPR preparation, café branding, and staff skilling programs.



15. Revenue Streams

Multiple revenue streams will support the café's financial sustainability. These include meal and snack sales, packaged product retail, event catering, millet cooking workshops, and millet gift hampers. Additionally, institutional orders from yoga centres, retreats, and homestays can be secured during tourist seasons.

Table 5: Revenue Streams Estimate

Revenue Source	Avg. Price (₹)	Annual Sales (Units)	Annual Revenue (₹)	Remarks
Café Meals and Snacks	₹120/meal	25,000 meals	₹30,00,000	Breakfast, lunch, and dinner service
Packaged Millet Products	₹80/pack	10,000 units	₹8,00,000	Cookies, laddus, atta, puffed snacks
Festival Hampers and Gifting	₹350/box	1,000 boxes	₹3,50,000	Bulk sales during Holi, Diwali, Char Dham
Workshop Registrations	₹200/person	500 persons	₹1,00,000	Millet cooking demo events
Event Catering Orders	₹1,500/order	200 orders	₹3,00,000	School, NGO, tourist group contracts
Estimated Total Revenue	—	—	₹45,00,000 – ₹50,00,000	From 1 café unit with active outreach

16. Profitability Streams

The café chain becomes profitable by ensuring a strong markup on millet meals, value addition in packaging, and multi-channel engagement. The cost of raw millets is relatively low, and when converted into innovative food items, the margin can range from 60% to 150%, especially



on snacks and beverages. Seasonal menu rotation and combo meal offerings can increase average ticket size while optimizing kitchen resource utilization. Profitability improves as brand awareness grows and footfall becomes consistent.

Retail of packaged millet products further enhances margins, particularly when sourced directly from SHGs or processed in-house. Millet laddus, cookies, and puffed snacks have long shelf lives and fetch strong repeat orders during festivals and health-focused gifting seasons. Catering for yoga camps, school functions, or spiritual gatherings brings in high-value bulk orders at low incremental cost. Additionally, millet food workshops or tasting events can be monetized to engage niche health and culinary audiences.

By the second year, after brand establishment and menu stabilization, profit margins of 25%–30% on operations are achievable. The café's profitability is reinforced by low food waste, high return customer base, and a growing online reputation that draws footfall. Once more units are opened, supply chain integration and marketing efficiencies further increase margins.

17. Break-even Analysis

The café is expected to break even within 15–18 months if managed professionally and promoted strategically. The key to early break-even lies in controlling fixed overheads, maximizing footfall during peak tourist seasons, and promoting festival-driven product sales. The pricing strategy must ensure affordability while maintaining quality and consistency.

Table 6: Break-even Estimate



Parameter	Value	Remarks
Fixed Annual Costs	₹6 – ₹7 lakh	Salaries, rent, utilities, maintenance
Average Customer Bill	₹130	Includes food, beverage, and packaged item
Monthly Footfall Needed	~1,300–1,500 customers	Equals 40–50 customers/day
Break-even Revenue Target	₹13 – ₹14 lakh	Covers fixed and variable costs
Estimated Time to Break-even	15–18 months	Faster with bulk orders and visibility events

18. Marketing Strategies

Marketing for the millet café must blend tradition with health appeal. At the local level, the café can use posters, banners, and signboards designed with regional art and millet symbolism. Free tasting kiosks outside temples, bus stations, or health clinics can attract walk-in customers. Local events such as Mela, Panchayat Haats, and Sankalp Shivirs provide visibility and sampling platforms.

Online presence is essential—social media pages, WhatsApp groups, Google Maps listings, and tie-ups with food aggregators help drive footfall. Cafés can collaborate with influencers, yoga trainers, nutritionists, and eco-travel bloggers to spread the millet café story. Branded millet thali photos, behind-the-scenes chef clips, and customer testimonials should be posted regularly.

Institutional marketing can include proposals to school canteens, district-level tourism boards, and CSR partners. Millet Café Clubs for school children, millet birthday kits, and millet corporate hampers can expand customer base. Co-branding with state millet programs (ODOP, PMFME) and millet farmer federations can bring both credibility and additional revenue.



19. Machinery Required and Vendors in Uttarakhand

A Devbhoomi Millet Café requires standard kitchen equipment along with small millet-specific processing tools. Most items are available in Uttarakhand's regional markets or can be sourced from food service suppliers in cities like Dehradun, Haldwani, and Rudrapur.

Table 7: Machinery & Equipment Requirements

Equipment	Specification	Estimated Cost (₹)	Local Vendor Suggestions
Commercial Gas Stove	3–4 burners with grill	₹15,000 – ₹18,000	Sharma Gas Equipment, Dehradun
Commercial Refrigerator	300–400 litre capacity	₹25,000 – ₹30,000	Everest Electronics, Haldwani
Mixer Grinder	Heavy duty, 750–1000W	₹5,000 – ₹7,000	Local electrical shops, Rudrapur
Induction Plate	2000W commercial model	₹4,000 – ₹5,000	Usha/Suryaflame outlets in all towns
Baking Oven (optional)	20–40 litre electric	₹10,000 – ₹15,000	Bajaj, Prestige stores, Amazon/Flipkart
Steel Cookware	Bulk vessels, trays, ladles	₹10,000 – ₹12,000	Wholesale utensil dealers, Haridwar
Furniture & Display Racks	Dining tables, wall shelves	₹40,000 – ₹50,000	Local carpenters, Pauri/Bageshwar
Branding & Signage	Painted wood/LED board	₹8,000 – ₹12,000	Local print shops and artisans
Total Cost Estimate	—	₹1,20,000 – ₹1,50,000	May vary based on café size and furnishing



20. Environmental Benefits

Millets are climate-resilient crops requiring low water, no chemical inputs, and shorter growing cycles. Their promotion directly supports sustainable agriculture, reduces carbon footprints, and enhances soil health in hilly terrains. By encouraging millet consumption, the café contributes to agro-ecological resilience and biodiversity conservation.

The café also reduces food packaging waste by using biodegradable or reusable containers, encourages local procurement to minimize transportation emissions, and promotes zero food waste policies. Millet processing and kitchen water use is minimal compared to rice or wheat-based kitchens. Solar cooking and composting kitchen waste can be introduced in advanced phases.

Furthermore, millets contribute to dietary sustainability. By shifting consumer preferences from refined to coarse grains, the café reduces demand for resource-intensive crops like wheat and paddy, helping to conserve water and reduce methane emissions. Educational materials in the café can share these insights with customers, fostering an environmentally conscious food culture.

21. Future Opportunities

After successful implementation in key districts, the café chain can expand via social franchising or SHG-run satellite units in smaller blocks. Millet food trucks or mobile cafés can be introduced in seasonal markets or Char Dham routes. Special millet breakfast counters at government offices, railway stations, or schools can be piloted.

In the long term, the brand can diversify into millet-based ready-to-eat snacks, cloud kitchens, millet thali catering services, millet sweet shops, or millet baking classes. Collaborations with wellness resorts, hotels, and heritage homestays can offer millet cuisine packages. Millet trails and millet festivals can be organized annually to celebrate local grain cultures.

Export of packaged millet laddus, cookies, or grain mixes to health stores in metros and abroad is also viable with FSSAI and MSME certification. The café chain thus holds strong potential for food entrepreneurship, rural-urban market linkage, and cultural food diplomacy.



Disclaimer

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