



Religious emblem

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**The One God is our father.  
We are all children of the One God. (SGGS 611)**



Religious flag

## **Significance of Langar (Community Kitchen) in Sikhism**

The institution of langar has been around since the time of Guru Nanak and is an integral part of the Sikh religion. Langar was started by Guru Nanak when people came to listen to him and made offerings to him. He took these offerings and gave them to the poor and needy. He gave all these offerings as a free mess, known as langar. Langar is a Sikh institution in which all can come and eat without any regard to race, religion, creed, caste or social status. Langar was created to remove all prejudices among everyone.

Langar has become a Sikh institution and it is available at all gurdwaras, or Sikh houses of worship. Langar is a free communal kitchen designed to promote equality and that we are children of one God. Any person who enters a gurdwara is invited to eat langar regardless of who that person may be, where they come from, or from anything else that separates people. As stated above, anyone and everyone is allowed to eat langar and take part in the communal meal.

Langar was created for many reasons, the main of which was because Guru Nanak wanted equality for all and a removal of caste barriers among all people. He did this because in the Hindu caste system, higher class people would not eat with lower caste people and they would not eat anything that was touched by a member of the lower caste because it would be considered impure or polluted.

Since langar is a part of the gurdwara and the Sikh faith, everyone participates in langar. In gurdwaras, langar is made, served and produced by the sangat, or the congregation. People donate money to buy food supplies, they donate food, like flour and milk, they donate their time to produce the langar, they serve the langar, and they clean up the kitchen and the dining area afterwards. Anyone can help with making langar just as anyone can eat it. There are very few limitations on what can and cannot be produced for langar. When making langar, no meat from any animal nor any animal fat can be used in the langar. Eggs are also prohibited. Langar is like this because many people, like Muslims and Hindus, do not eat certain types of meat or eggs. Langar was designed to be universally available to all. As a result of this, langar is only vegetarian since many groups reject meat and eggs for various reasons. In respect of this, all ingredients used in langar are those which most people will eat or have no problem eating.

In conclusion, Sikhs use langar to practice the Sikh doctrine of service, known as *vaand chakho*. All Sikhs are required to make community service of some sort part of their lives whether donating money to the gurdwara or to a charity, donating their time, or doing langar. Sikhs believe that doing your fellow man service shows how much you love God. It also helps cultivate humility by doing service to your fellow humans. Every person is invited to come to a gurdwara regardless of their religion or background to have a meal.