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POPULAR ARTICLE



## Mappillai Samba- A traditional rice having wealth of Health benefits

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### Introduction

Antioxidant potentials of native indigenous landraces of rice have been of great interest in the last decade, since a positive correlation of reduced chronic diseases due to consumption of rice has been established. Mapillai Samba or “**Bride Groom Rice**” is a native variety of rice, which is red in colour and is grown predominantly in Tamil Nadu. It's well suited to organic farming because it is hardy and demands little or no fertilizers or pesticides. It is a 160 days crop. Unfortunately, along with other native varieties of rice, Mapillai samba has all but disappeared from our farms and markets, making way instead for highly processed, nutritionally inferior white rice. Very few passionate traditional farmers still grow such rice now. This rice comes from Thiruvannamalai in Tamil Nadu.

### Vernacular Names

- In Tamil- *mappillai samba*
- In English – *Bridegroom's rice*

### Origin of its Name

The origins of its name can be found in Tamil folklore. In olden days, it is essential for a man to show his bravery through many traditional sports. These sports are conducted to



test their physical as well as their mental strength. One such game was to lift a heavy rock, in which, the newlywed bridegroom is asked to lift the rock in front of everyone to display his physical power. In order to boost the energy and power of son-in-law to lift the rock successfully, mother in law wanted to cook and serve a rice which is high in nutritional value. Mappillai samba is one such native rice which has got a high nutritional value that will help him to stay focused while lifting the rock as well as gives him the power to lift. Hence, this red thick rice got its name as “Mappillai Samba” and was often cooked and served to newlywed bridegrooms. Even though the name of the

rice is “Bride Groom's Rice”, it is meant for all who wants to get good energy and strength. Apart from reducing out hunger and reducing obesity, it has many more hearty health-giving benefits.

### Health Benefits of Mapillai samba

- The high fibre content present in the rice eases digestion.
- The vitamin B1 present in the rice aids in healing stomach and mouth ulcers.
- Improves immunity and stamina
- Strengthens muscles and nerves
- Makes the blood flow faster so that our body gets instant energy
- Increases hemoglobin content
- Good for diabetics since it is has a low Glycemic Index.
- *Little ones will achieve better growth*

### India – A Hub of Traditional rice varieties

There were around 22,292 traditional rice varieties in India alone. But only 100 to 150 varieties of paddy are currently in circulation. The traditional rice variety is the rice that is now back in the limelight. Samba rice was grown extensively in the South Indian states. The rice was grown from August to January particularly referred to as the samba season. Unfortunately, along with the native varieties of traditional rice, Mappillai Samba rice had become forgotten among the youngsters in modern world. It is well suited for organic farming because it is hard in nature and does not need the the utilization of pesticides and fertilizers. Samba rice have a distinct taste and more of a starchy and corny flavour. It is an acquired taste. The raw samba rice is more hard than many other rice varieties and cooked rice is less fluffy which gives a fast fulfilling flavour.



### **Nutrition facts of Mappillai samba**

The recipe is rich in iron (8.872 mg) and zinc (3.58 mg) that helps to maintain a healthy nervous system as the **rice** itself is rich in these micronutrients Vitamins like vitamin C (61.8 mg), niacin (2.06 mg), and riboflavin (1.48 mg) present in the recipes make the recipe nutritious.

### **Conclusion**

Traditional rice varieties were found to be rich in antioxidant, phytochemical, and nutritional properties than white rice. Mapillai Samba and Navara varieties were consumed in many parts of India for its nutritional significance. Traditional rice varieties can be efficiently processed into products like tart, cosmetics, red koji, colored noodles, cake, and preparation of yeast due to its medicinal values to cure stomach problems, bruised muscles, promote blood circulation, indigestion, and lower cholesterol level. Thus, traditional rice varieties can be incorporated along with the white rice varieties in new product development to enhance the nutritional status of the growing population to combat lifestyle disorders. Hence, the traditional rice landraces can be used as a source of phyto-nutrients and it warrants conservation to preserve its precious genome information.

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