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An Evaluation of Medicinal and Aromatic Herbs in Filled Milk Paneer

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ABSTRACT

The incorporation of medicinal and aromatic herbs into filled milk paneer presents a novel approach to enhancing both its nutritional value and therapeutic potential. Filled milk paneer, typically made by blending reconstituted milk with vegetable fat, serves as a cost-effective dairy product. However, its nutritional and functional properties can be significantly enriched through the addition of herbs such as tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), and mint (*Mentha* spp.). These herbs are known for their antioxidant, antimicrobial, and anti-inflammatory properties, which not only improve the health benefits of paneer but also contribute to extended shelf life by reducing microbial spoilage. Organoleptic evaluation indicates that moderate levels of herb incorporation enhance the flavor, aroma, and overall acceptability of paneer among consumers. Additionally, biochemical analysis reveals improved phenolic content, antioxidant activity, and protein digestibility in herb-fortified paneer samples. Such fortification aligns with current trends in functional foods, catering to the growing consumer demand for health-oriented dietary choices. This evaluation underscores the potential of combining traditional herbal wisdom with modern dairy technology to produce value-added products that offer both taste and health benefits, particularly in nutritionally vulnerable populations.