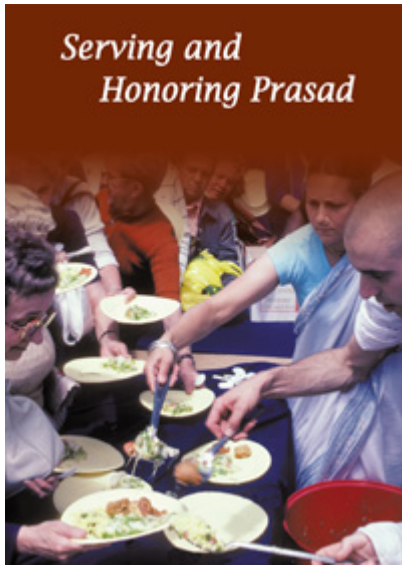


Serving and Honoring Prasad



I like this idea very much. Our chanting is the medicine and our prasadam is the diet for curing material disease.

SP letter to Dayananda (October 17, 1968)

How to Honor Prasad

When a devotee distributes prasada, remnants of food offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in order to maintain our spirit of devotional service we must accept this prasada as the Lord's grace received through the pure devotees.

Nectar of Instruction (Text 4 Purport)

01. Remember that Krsna prasadam is non-different from Krsna. Recite the sarira avidya-jal prayer to remember that.



02. Use the right hand to eat and drink.



03. Meditate on how Krsna tasted the offering. (One can also meditate on Krsna's mercy in providing prasadam and the prasadam pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Krsna.)

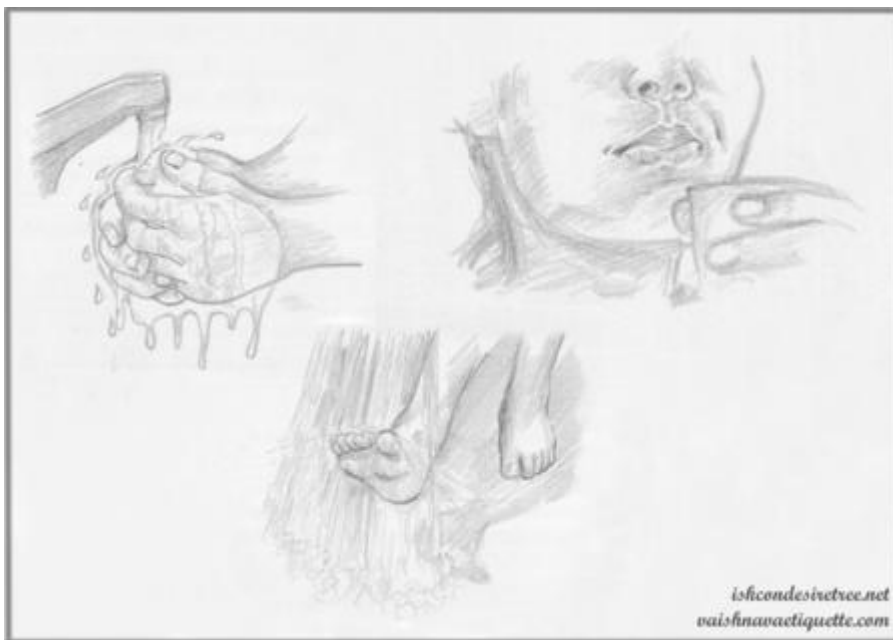


04. Do not talk while honoring prasadam (besides glorifying Krsna and His prasadam.)

05. Do not throw prasadam. Never touch prasadam with your feet.



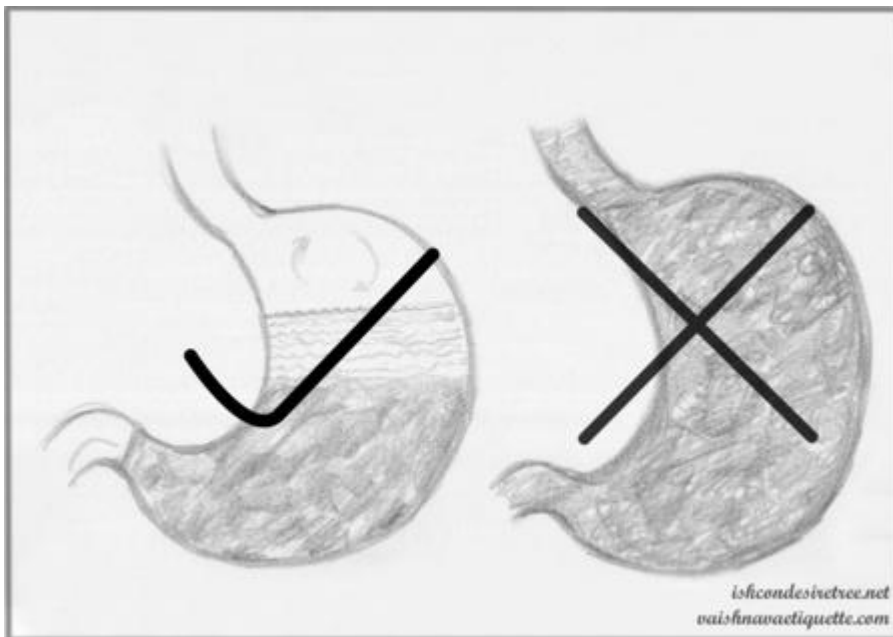
06. Wash hands, feet and mouth before and after eating.



07. Drink a glass of water one hour before eating. For some time after eating, don't drink; if you at all have to drink, drink something hot.



08. Srila Prabhupada said: Fill 1/4 of your stomach with water, 1/2 with food and the other 1/4 with air. DO NOT OVEREAT!



How to Serve Prasadam

We should never waste Krishna prasadam. Best thing is to cook only what is required and then give each person what he wants. That is the Vedic system, that the people sit in rows behind their plates and servers pass down the rows and put a very small portion of each foodstuff on each plate, unless there is some objection by a person. Then nothing is given. Then if anyone wants more, the servers pass up and down the rows continually and give more if anyone requests. In this way nothing is wasted and everyone is satisfied.

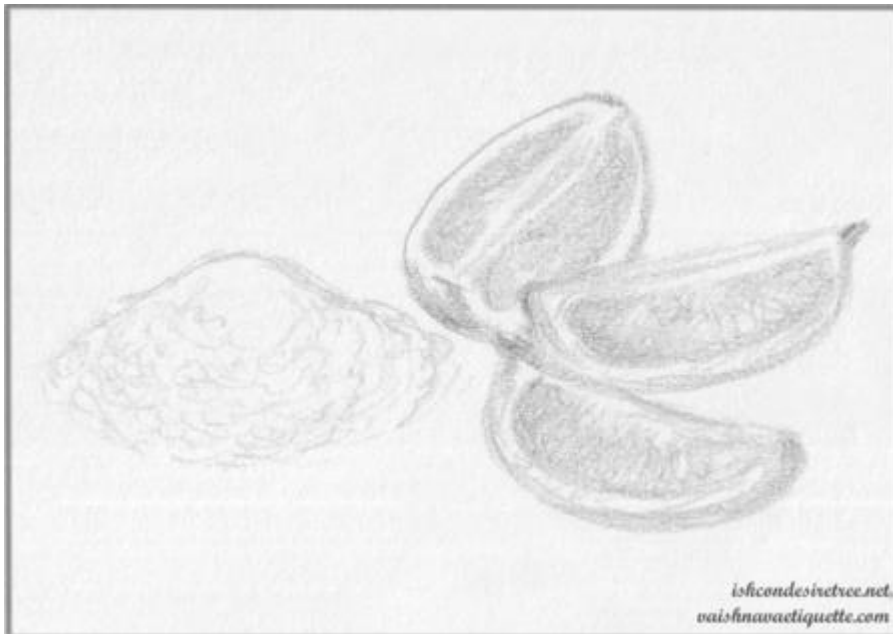
SP letter to Kirtiraja (November 27, 1971)

01. All to be served should be invited to sit on the floor, and prasadam should be served by qualified devotees.

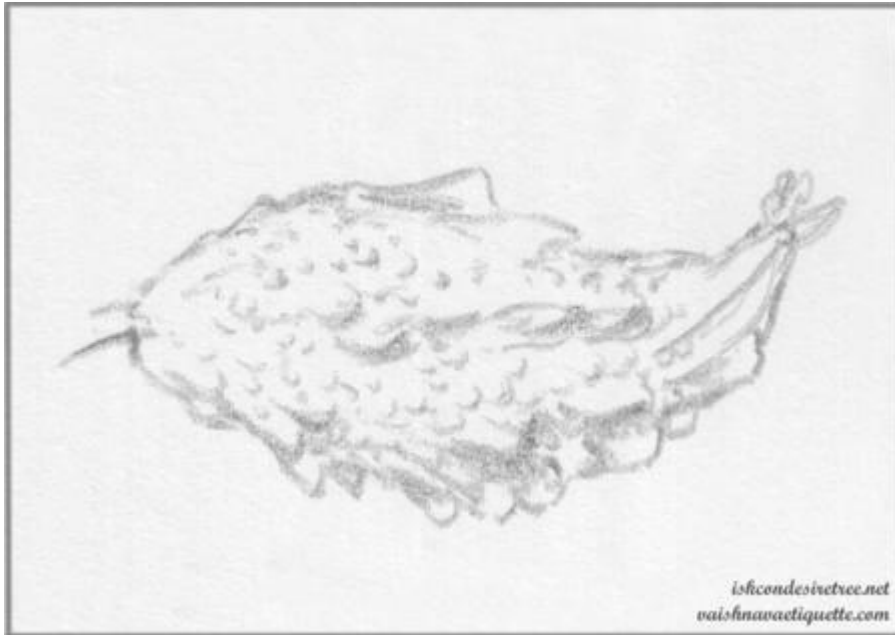
- 02.** Those who are served should be very clean, peaceful, and satisfied. They should eat before serving, if necessary. They should try not to speak while serving.
- 03.** Serve just the right amount so that nothing is wasted.
- 04.** Seniors should be served first. Householders should serve the guests. Old people and children should be served first.



- 05.** Place salt and lemon on each plate before those to be served are seated.



- 06.** Always serve water first.
- 07.** Prasadam should be served in the following order:
- a) First bitter preparations like sukta and bitter melon



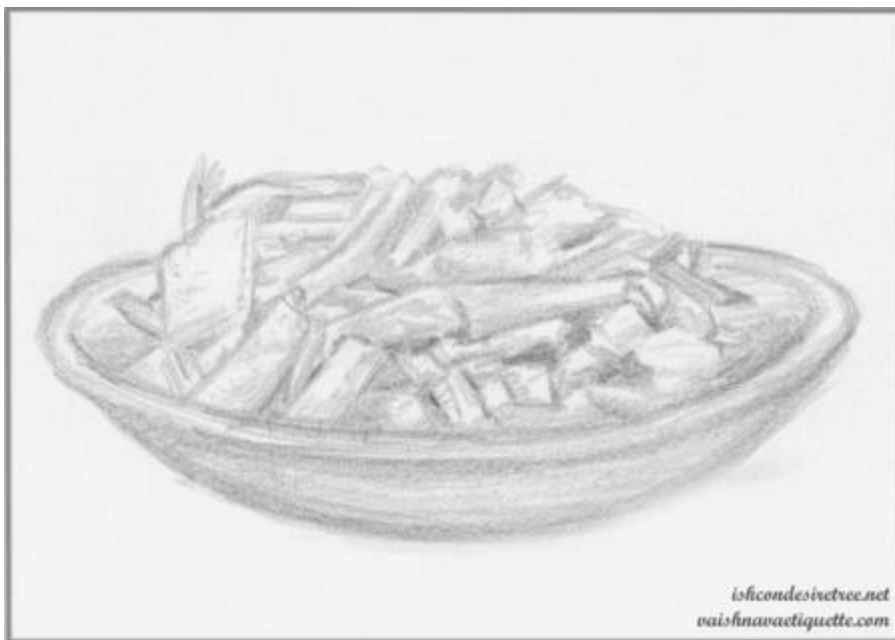
b) Then spinach and other astringent items



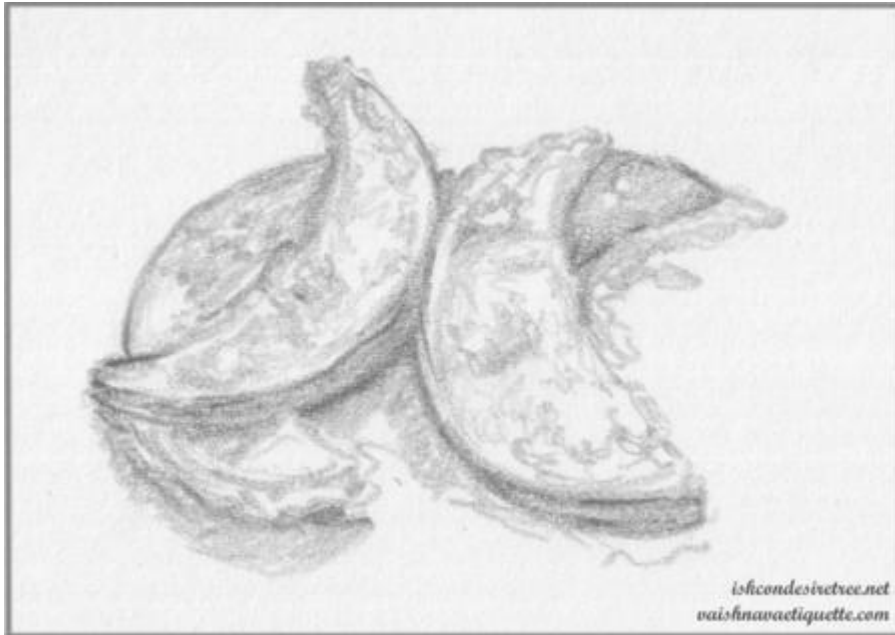
c) Fried preparations and dahl



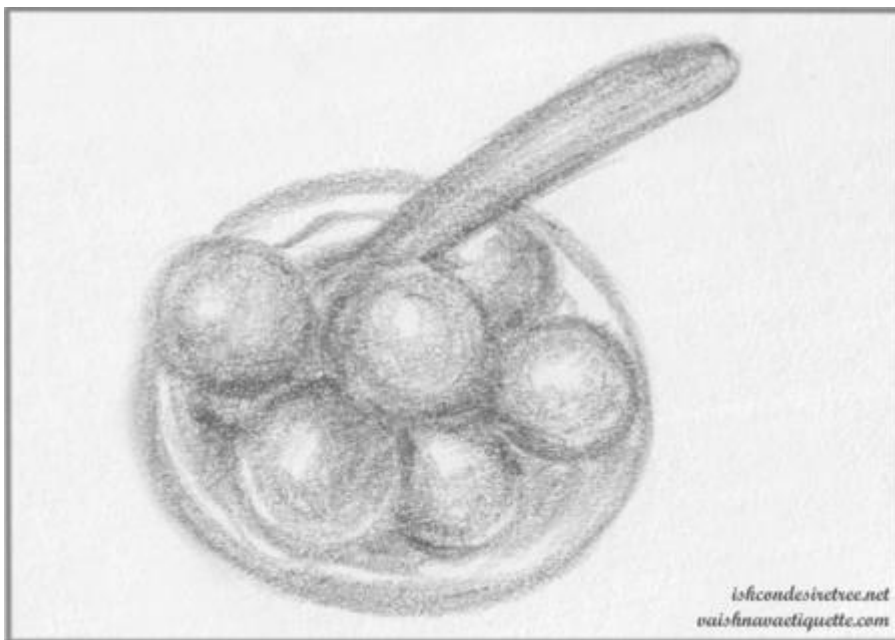
d) Various spicy vegetables



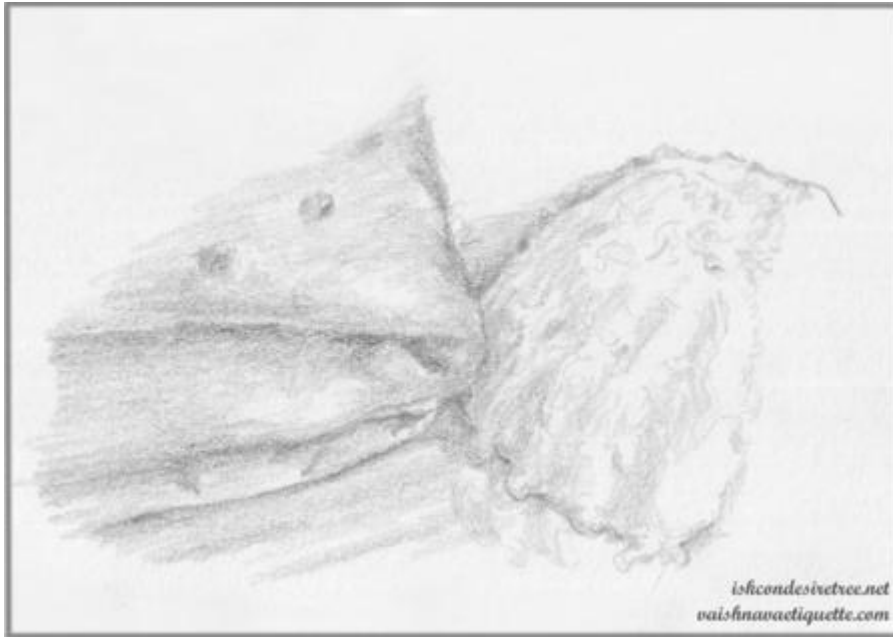
e) Sour items



f) Sweet preparations



g) Rice and capatis are staple foods and should be on the plate



08. Go around serving seconds until everyone is satisfied. Don't be stingy, don't hold anything back because you want to take it later. Prasadam is meant for distribution.
09. Do not touch plates with the serving spoon. Touching the plate contaminates the spoon. If a spoon becomes contaminated, you should wash it.
10. Don't let your fingers touch any of the preparations, even water. Salt should never be served by hand, use a spoon.
11. Never touch prasadam with your feet or step over it.
12. Serve the prasadam from serving buckets.
13. Don't drag buckets along the floor or make clanging noises with pot handles or utensils. Serve quietly.
14. After everyone is finished honoring prasadam, clean the place immediately.

Quotes from Srila Prabhupada

Story of Prabhupada's Visit (along with some of his disciples) at the Asrama of Puri Maharaja in Visakhapatnam (SP Lil V, pg 66-67):

Prabhupada's godbrother Ananda was eager to cook and serve not only Srila Prabhupada, but all his disciples. Ananda was elderly, yet he took the position of always offering menial service. Although he spoke very little English, Prabhupada's disciples could perceive the affection of Ananda and Srila Prabhupada for each other. Ananda's communication with Srila Prabhupada's disciples was particularly manifest through his cooking and serving of prasadam...

[A wonderful description is then given on how Ananda would serve all the devotees prasadam.]

Each morning everyone would gather on the veranda outside Prabhupada's quarters, the men sitting on one side, the ladies on the other. Down the center aisle, Ananda would walk briskly, distributing prasadam, while Prabhupada sat at one end in a wooden chair, fingering his japa beads and observing the devotees take prasadam. Prabhupada had supplied money to the asrama and Ananda was regularly cooking sumptuous feasts: deep-fried chunks of potatoes in powdered spices, rice, yogurt, dal, three different types of sabjis, french fries, chutney, malpura, rajkeli, sandesa, ksira-and everything cooked to a nectarean standard of excellence.

Prabhupada would sit at the head of the two rows and encourage them to take prasadam: "Give him more!" Prabhupada would praise Ananda's cooking, smiling with pleasure to see

his disciples accept prasadam. The devotees would finish, having been induced to eat as much as they possibly could, and Srila Prabhupada would say aloud the prema-dhvani. Then all the devotees would shout in response, "Jaya!"

*After one such feast, Prabhupada called the devotees into his room and remarked, "See how he is cooking. He cooks everything, he serves it, and then he doesn't eat until everyone is fully satisfied. This is Vaisnava, how he should act. He is more satisfied to serve than to enjoy himself." **Lilamrta V, pp. 66-67***