The Protocols of Langar



Langar: Means of Social Reform

When preparing food for Langar, the mouth and nose will be covered by a piece of cloth known as a "parna". Also, during the preparation due regard is made to purity, hygiene, and cleanliness and the sevadars (selfless workers) will normally utter Gurbani and refrain from speaking to each other about mundane topics if possible.

When Langar is ready, a small portion of each of the dishes is placed on a plate or a bowl and placed in front of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy scripture, and a prayer called the Ardas is performed. The Ardas is a petition to God; a prayer to thank the Creator for all gifts and blessings. A steel kirpan (small sword) is passed through each item of food, after the "Guru-prashad" has been blessed. The blessing of Langar with Ardas can be done anywhere, in a gurdwara or at home wherever Langar is prepared. Langar is not eaten until the Ardas has been recited. After the Ardas is completed, each item of food is returned and added to its original pot or container. It is said that the blessings of the "holy" food are thus passed to the entire Sangat through the Langar.

When serving the Langar, the servers must observe strict rules of cleanliness and hygiene. Servers should not touch the serving utensils to the plates of those they serve. When serving foods by hand, such as chapattis or fruit, the servers' hands should not touch the hand or plate of those they are serving.



The servers should wait until all others have been completely served before they sit down to eat themselves. It is advisable not to leave any leftovers.