

RAW MILK IN MUMBAI

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I've been reading about concepts like raw milk, milk from grass fed cows, [unpasteurized milk](#), grass fed dairy for so long that I've gotten quite carried away with the whole thing.

The thing is, like a lot of stuff written about in the real food - paleosphere, most of the issues are pretty much America or first world centric. The hormones injected in their livestock or the mass produced cattle feed, or heavily packaged, or processed industry is not so much of an issue in a country, which is 60% rural.

Having said that, processing and packaging is catching up here in a big way too. For instance, a couple of decades ago most homes in urban Mumbai used to have milk delivered by the *doodhwala* (or milkman) from a local dairy to their doorstep. Today the general perception is that Nestle milk in tetra packs, or slim milk is a '[healthier](#)' option.

India is the largest producer of buffalo milk and this is not present in Western countries. Many countries in Asia are big producers of buffalo milk.

Buffalo milk has 100% more fat than cows milk as well as more proteins and more solids and is far creamier and dare I say it – more primal.

In Mumbai, there are plenty of large dairies, which house buffalos. For example, there is Kapoor dairy, which is behind VT station is dead in the center of South Bombay and supplies buffalo milk to various dairies in South and Central Mumbai.

My *doodhwala* who comes from a dairy in Colaba tells me that the animals eat grass. Of course they are not animals that freely roam countryside's grazing, but they do eat grass and not corn meal and grains, though they are tied.

Whether they are treated humanely remains to be seen and I plan to make a trip to Kapoor dairy soon (since it's in my back yard), but I am pretty sure the animals will be treated fairly well in this cow worshipping country.

Raw milk is milk directly from the animal, which is what I get at home. **Whole fat, grass fed buffalo milk. HURRAH!**

But ever since industrialization [raw milk](#) has been done away with and pasteurization has been believed to be better. What [pasteurization](#) is supposed to do is remove unwanted pathogens so that they don't cause disease. But when the cow/buffalo is healthy, raw milk advocates say, there are practically no unwanted pathogens and once pasteurized milk is [more or less dead](#).

Pre-industrialization when milk was mostly from the animal to home and most homes had access to the animals, pasteurization was not required. But today I am pretty wary of the milk coming into contact with feces of the animal and I prefer to bring my milk to a boil before consuming it. So I suppose what I eventually consume is pasteurized milk, something I am going to have to look into and change soon!

My sister in law got married last week and because of the number of wedding celebrations we had, I ran out of my store of frozen breast milk and in the last function I did not get a chance to express milk for N.

Since he has never had formula, I did not feel 8 months was the right time to start so **I gave him 3-part buffalo milk mixed with 1 part water (as the amounts of solids in buffalo milk is a lot due to high fat and protein content), even though they say whole milk is to be given to a baby only after a year. But since I'm not one to follow the rules I gave it to him anyway.** Anyhow when they say whole milk they talk primarily about cow milk.

I [read this](#) study and took a call to supplement N with buffalo milk.

He LOVED the milk. Which is great for me whenever I do turn my thoughts towards weaning.

For those interested, I get my milk home delivered (yes that's my milk man in the picture) from Sita Ram dairy in Colaba. 022 22188958. But I'm pretty sure you will find a local dairy right by you in the city.

I recently came across this dairy : <http://www.sardafarms.com/> which supplies raw milk directly to home. This is sold at a premium and they boast of hygienic conditions for milking. Read more [here](#). The cows are fed a mix of grass, greens, oil seeds, hay, and water. On probing further I found out that the greens and grass also seems to be a mixture of grains and roughage. The they are nowhere near the grass fed cows we long for, the only advantage being the milk is supposed to be from the cow to your home with zero tampering. The cows are not injected or fed hormones either.

The purpose of this article is that we read so much about real food, farm to table, grass fed, local produce etc. all the time. But it's all from American blogger perspectives and they have a really different set of issues than we do. If you look closer to home the answer is far simpler!

Its important though to ask questions, know where your food is coming from, look beyond the rules and mumbo jumbo, and buy local, fresh produce.

Read my take on whether or not we and our children should be [consuming milk](#) at all.

Thanks for reading. Where do you get your milk from, and do you think you'll be searching for your local *doodhwala* soon?

