

HAMMER

Food & Beverage

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Business Review

Business magazine for food service & food retail professionals

Business

Cloud Kitchens Riding On Cloud Nine

Feature

Make Your Buffet Attractive & Revenue Generating

Agri

Summer Salads

Meat

Where Lamb Matters...

Dairy

Cream Cheese

Beverage

Energy Drinks Real or Myth

Processed Food

Tasting Mustard

Getting into the Summer "Spirit"

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The pandemic brought about many new and sometimes unexpected trends in the food business. To further sustain the recent rise in growth rates, future success will depend on plans to improve operations, innovate and control price increases. The summer brings new hope and inspiration for the food business as consumers are once again ready to experiment. The cover story look at the people's preference for cocktails, which is the preferred spirit for cocktails and the new innovations that the bartenders have come up with for concocting cocktails with a difference.

Consumers have adapted to at-home eating and formed new habits that we expect to sustain well beyond the current conditions. While people are starting to leave their homes more frequently, they are still choosing to eat at home. They, even after slowing down of pandemic, are not expected to change their habits and stay committed to healthy products. With the rise of cloud kitchens, restaurant operators need to be aware of what customers like and don't like and anticipate what items they are likely to order during different times. Business story examines various aspects of cloud kitchens which ensure them success in the future.

Buffet is the back bone of the foodservice industry, ensuring higher revenue generation. But they have to be attractive and offer value for money. Feature story dwells on the best ways to create Buffet USPs for its success.

The Agri section discusses how the summer salads have changed for the better in last few years. In the Meat section the discussion is on Lamb matters. Beverage section finds reality behind the success of energy drinks. Mustard sauce is in vogue at many fast food joints for spice lovers, Processed Food section finds how Mustard sauce has found stable feet in many cuisines. Also find some interesting tête-à-tête with chefs in the current issue.



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NRAI's First Cloud Kitchen Convention

The National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI)'s Mumbai Chapter held India's biggest Cloud Kitchen Convention powered by PetPooja. Established in the year 1982, NRAI is the voice of the Indian Restaurant Industry that has successfully provided opportunities to educate various hospitality chains on the avenues of technology, marketing, operations and more by keeping up with the trends. The Cloud Kitchen Convention, spearheaded by Pranav Rungta, NRAI Mumbai Chapter Head; Director of Mint Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. and Ms. Rachel Goenka, NRAI Mumbai Chapter Head; Founder & CEO of The Chocolate Spoon Company was an exclusive and first-of-its kind event by the industry, for the industry, where prominent stakeholders from the cloud kitchen space got together and shared extensive information, knowledge and cutting edge insights on the subject.

The convention commenced by Ms. Pritee Chaudhary, IRS - Regional Director of FSSAI, West Region followed by a welcome address by Kabir Suri, NRAI President; Director of Azure Hospitality. The opening keynote address by Kallol Banerjee, Co-Founder of Rebel Foods showcased the importance of incorporating cloud kitchens into the Indian Restaurant Industry with the example of Faasos's journey to achieving success.

The first panel moderated by Anurag Katriar, Founder & MD of Indigo Hospitality spoke about 'Creating a profitable Cloud Kitchen Business' with insights from Anshul Gupta, Co-Founder of Box8, Kabir Bose, Co-Founder & CEO of Burgerama and Banshi Kotecha of Founder of Kytchens, highlighting the importance of product differentiation in securing customer loyalty, Anurag Mehrotra, Co-Founder & CEO of Charcoal Eats and Raymond Andrews, Founder of Biryani Blues delving deeper into Single Cuisine vs Horizontal play in Cuisines and Mohit Gupta, Co-Founder of Zomato commenting on aggregators and the question of them being a boon or bane for cloud kitchen businesses among more.

Discussed in the second panel with Sagar Daryani, NRAI Vice President; CEO & Co-Founder of Wow! Momo Foods as the moderator was the 'Roadmap to Raise Money and Scale the Business'. While the investors, Ms. Rochelle Dsouze, MD of Lighthouse Funds, Ashvin Chadha, Co-Founder of Anicut Capital, Angel Investor, Hari Balasubramanian and Vikram Gupta, Founder & Managing Partner of IvyCap



Venture Advisors, elaborated on the perception of cloud kitchens, evaluation criteria, red flags, and more within the investor community. The investees, Raghav Joshi, Co-Founder of Rebel Foods and Vishal Jindal, Founder & Co-CEO of Biryani BY Kilo spoke about what makes an ideal investor and their learnings so far.

On the third panel was the 'Role of Technology in Cloud Kitchen Efficiency'. Moderated by Rahul Singh, CEO & Founder of The Beer Cafe, the discussion focused around the future roadmap of technology and food interplay. The operators such as Raghav Verma, Co-Founder of Chaayos, Vedant Pasari, Founder of Edabba and Abhimanyu Maheshwari, Founder & CEO of Zing Restaurants, debated on technology being a support system or lead, its role in generating higher revenue, margins, expansions and overall user-experience based processes. The tech company representatives, Eshwar K Vikar, Co-Founder & CEO of Mukunda Foods, Shaival Desai, VP, Growth of PetPooja and Dhruv Dewan, Co-Founder of Thrive Now, discussed the areas where technology plays an important role, measurable impact of automating processes and the 5 year plan for kitchens.

Panel 4 on 'Winning Strategies and Possible Pitfalls', moderated by Riyaz Amlani, CEO & MD of Impresario Entertainment & Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. was an interesting conversation between panellists Gaurav Gite, Founder & Director of Marrakesh Hospitality Pvt. Ltd., Zorawar Kalra, Founder & Managing Director of Massive Restaurants Pvt. Ltd., Tarak Bhattacharya, Executive Director of Mad Over Donuts, Jasper Reid, Founder of International Market Management, Ms. Rashmi Daga, CEO of Freshmenu and Ajay Mariwala, MD of Food Service India. They shared insights into what makes a cloud kitchen business tick, and at

times fail including the learnings, stumbles, anecdotes and all.

The final panel on 'Cloud Kitchen Marketing - How to stand out amongst the crowd?' was moderated by Ms. Gauri Devidayal, Co-Founder & Director of Food Matters India with the panellists each sharing their experience. Murali Krishnan, Co-Founder & CMO of Wow! Momo Foods Pvt. Ltd. spoke about the role of branding and FMCG style marketing strategies, Dheeraj Gupta, Founder & MD of Jumboking on creating top of mind recall and the importance of a physical presence, Swapnil Bajpai, AVP of Sales for Swiggy on digital marketing strategies that work well for Swiggy partners, Ms. Shailee Chatrath Tyagi, Director of Organised Trade Channels for Pepsico India Beverages on partnering with cloud kitchens in marketing and brand building and Rahul Khanna, Director of Azure Hospitality and Celebrity Chef Ranveer Brar on the importance of word of mouth marketing and difference in marketing strategies - Restaurants vs Cloud Kitchens.

This mega convention concluded with a closing ceremony by Pranav Rungta and Ms. Rachel Goenka, NRAI Mumbai Chapter Heads followed by an evening of networking and cocktails with guests indulging in insightful conversations.

Pranav Rungta & Rachel Goenka, NRAI Mumbai Chapter Heads - "With the paradigm shift in consumer ordering behaviour, cloud kitchens have emerged as a lucrative business model in the industry. The success of this first convention has reinforced our plans to curate conversations like these each year in order to cover all aspects of the F&B sector like the cloud kitchen segment."

"Building a strong brand with quality, consistency and differentiation is a must in order to reduce the dependence on platforms, to ensure repeat purchase leading to scalability. As a dark kitchen operator you should either be niche and small or broad and very large." - Ajay Mariwala, Food Service India Pvt. Ltd.

"With the proliferation of cloud kitchens all over the country, we at Petpooja believe that technology will play a key role in their growth and sustainability. We are really happy that NRAI has provided such an amazing stage for all stakeholders to come together and share their insights." - Parthiv Patel, Co-founder & CEO of Petpooja

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The 36th AAHAR- The International Food & Hospitality Fair, a leading Food And Hospitality Fair, organised by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), concluded after slight glitches on the opening day of the show. The show was well represented by the industry, supported by leading associations like HOTREMAI & ARCHII, and Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MOFPI), Agricultural and Processed Food Products Development Authority (APEDA) and apex industry associations and trade bodies.

With over 1200 participants from across India along with reasonable presence of foreign companies from UK, Australia, USA, South Africa, Canada, Spain, Indonesia, Estonia and France, mostly through their representatives in India. The products displayed were in the categories of food and beverages products, hospitality services, Foodservice equipment along with allied sectors.

Apart from the display of quality products, technologies & services to national and international buyers, the event offered avenues for networking with the industry and establishing business contacts, launching new products, appointing agents & distributors, promoting company products, brand building, market research and gauge market trends. Over 10,000 visitors came to visit the show from various parts of India. The show was visited by hoteliers (HOD's), restaurant owners, technocrats, chefs, influencers and Institutions.

Significantly, this year, Aahar also proved successful in attracting marquee



companies and big brands. Apart from the regular display, the fair featured new verticals i.e. nutraceuticals, aquamarine and dairy products. Aahar 2022 was also meaningful in terms of providing the interface with the companies to resolve food processing and supply chain solutions including the latest AI/IOT systems and plastic-free and environment-friendly, next-generation packing material. Special focus was on FPOs (Partnered through World Bank), GI Tag products, Millet & lost cereals of India.

Visits of 100 overseas buyers from 30 countries in the first ever Hosted Buyers Program are the attestation of the growing interest of foreign buyers in the emerging Indian market. They evinced tremendous interest in not only a wide range of food and processed food products but also in the investment opportunities in the hospitality sector in India. Overseas delegation of buyers visited AAHAR from countries like Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Nigeria, UK, UAE, Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Nepal, and Canada among others. The buyers had an interest in various food-related companies and have initiated business for products like coffee, honey, bakery machines and confectionary items.

The business visitors were delighted to see dedicated stalls for exporters from North -East region and the Himalayan States and UTs like Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, Women Entrepreneurs, Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs), Start-Ups and exports of millets and millets products.





Association of Resource Companies for the Hospitality Industry of India

Association of Resource Companies for the Hospitality Industry of India (ARCHII) was formed in 1986 to promote co-operation among persons, companies and institutions connected with Hospitality trade and industry, producing equipment, machinery & supplies. It offer its services to various Hotels & Restaurant & manufacturers, importers, exporters, wholesalers or retail dealers or person interested in this trade. ARCHII adopts a common policy and collectively takes such steps as may be deemed necessary or expedient to further safeguard the interest of its members, pertaining to the trade & industry.

Today ARCHII, is a well recognized platform to discuss contracts, for interaction between members, to look after the interest of members, to regulate and standardize and as far as possible to adopt ethical business practice in the Hospitality trade. ARCHII sponsors and support various conferences, exhibitions and seminars. It also provides market information to its members by disseminating data generated through research, information collection from various sources and statistics related to the Hospitality trade. It also educates its members and industry by all suitable means about the benefits and utilities of environmental technology from the hygienic point of view.

Being a democratic body and having gone into regular elections of its executive committee, it helps in settlement of disputes by reconciliation among the members and Hospitality institutions. ARCHII has been active to represent officially the view of its members on any matter either technically or commercially affecting the interest of its member in Hospitality trade to the Government of India, Local Government, Chamber of Commerce and any other public or private authority.

ARCHII also held various seminars on the topics directly affecting the members in conjunction with the industry leaders and HOD's from the various properties. It also directly promotes members interests by arranging buyer-seller meetings and having one to one discussions with various high profile visitors and guests, invited specifically in their periodical meetings. It also circulates among the members the information on various new upcoming projects on hotels, restaurants and resorts for their business benefits.

ARCHII is also the co- sponsored of the AAHAR exhibition being held at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi every year for the past 36 years. This year the association held a Gala Dinner during Aahar'22, where they once again ensured the integrity of the group. During the event ARCHII facilitated its associated bodies like IHE, Indian Culinary Federation, Stewarding Association and people & chefs associated with them.

At the gala networking dinner, Rajat Pandhi welcomed the members after almost 2 years, post-pandemic, to once again ensure the normal business environment in the near future. He also informed the members that there will be many other interactive sessions with the hospitality industry stalwarts with one on one meeting, to further increase their businesses in the coming months.





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Soy x Neung Roi wins Best Thai Restaurant

Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport celebrates another accomplishment. Soy x Neung Roi has been awarded the 'Best Thai Restaurant' in Premium Dining category by the Times Food and Nightlife Awards. In a brand-new avatar of the award-winning Thai restaurant Neung Roi, it now boasts an extravagant variety of the progressive Asian fares particularly curated from the clandestine ingredients of China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia.



Neung Roi, which means 100 in Thai, has been named after the 100o East Longitude that runs through Thailand. Winning awards since its inception for the most authentic Thai cuisine in India, Neung Roi's menu is inspired by all four regions of Thailand.

The menu curated by Director of Culinary Chef Sreenivasan for Soy X Neung Roi excelled in artfully blending the traditional cooking techniques to achieve the perfect harmony of authentic Asian flavours, some of which included meticulously handcrafted dimsums; exquisite sushi; and other specialties along with decadent desserts imbuing a sense of serenity and delight to the senses. Soy x Neung Roi offers authentic Thai and new age Pan-Asian delicacies like Shrimp Tempura Rolls, curried chicken Gyoza, PlaNeungManao to name a few.

Woods At Sasan Launches Sattvic Meal Plan

Woods At Sasan, the country's first biophilic and sustainable wellness luxury retreat, has innovated a sattvic nutritional meal plan making it India's 1st nutritional retreat based on sattvic principles. The Sattvic Meal Plan draws from ancient Ayurvedic principles of 'the right food and the right lifestyle' to present an innovative and structured nutritional meal plan that is complemented by the experiences of a mindful stay at the retreat - natural immersions and outdoor escapes with a team of naturalists, and best-in-class wellbeing programming at SOM, their holistic wellbeing center.



Boldly breaking from conventional 3-meals-a-day buffet plans in vogue in the hospitality sector, the pioneering Sattvic Meal Plan offers a carefully curated, 5 balanced meals a day plan that's positioned around the natural circadian rhythms of the body – food served when your body needs it. Wholesome, bountiful and life-enhancing, each dish on the plant-based Sattvic Meal Plan is made from fresh, seasonal, locally sourced and organic produce, with a majority of it grown in-house in their Edible Garden. Working on the Sattvic idea that the act of eating is not just what you eat but how you eat, the plan offers Pre-breakfast Juices, a Nutritional Breakfast, the Celebratory Slow Lunch, a SomSundowner and the immersive Silent Dinner, all perfectly cooked and ideally portioned.

"At Woods At Sasan, the flagship retreat of 1000 Island Hotels & Resorts, we innovate products and services that further our idea of a sustainable wellbeing lifestyle. With this in mind, we made a conscious decision to shift from a resort to a wellbeing retreat. During this transition, we realised the need for a comprehensive nutritional plan that aligns with our philosophy of holistic well-being, and that's how the Sattvic Meal Plan evolved – as a healthy and experiential meal plan that's offered during the full length of your stay. Developed over the past year with inputs from nutritionists and subject experts, The Sattvic Meal Plan approaches wellbeing from a holistic point of view," says Maulik Bhagat, Founder, Woods At Sasan.

Blending the best of traditional nutritional knowledge with modern culinary techniques the Sattvic Meal Plan at Woods At Sasan follows 4 core principles - living and wholesome food, mindful food choices that are light on seasoning, a multi-sensorial experience of eating, and meals prepared and served in accordance with the circadian rhythm.

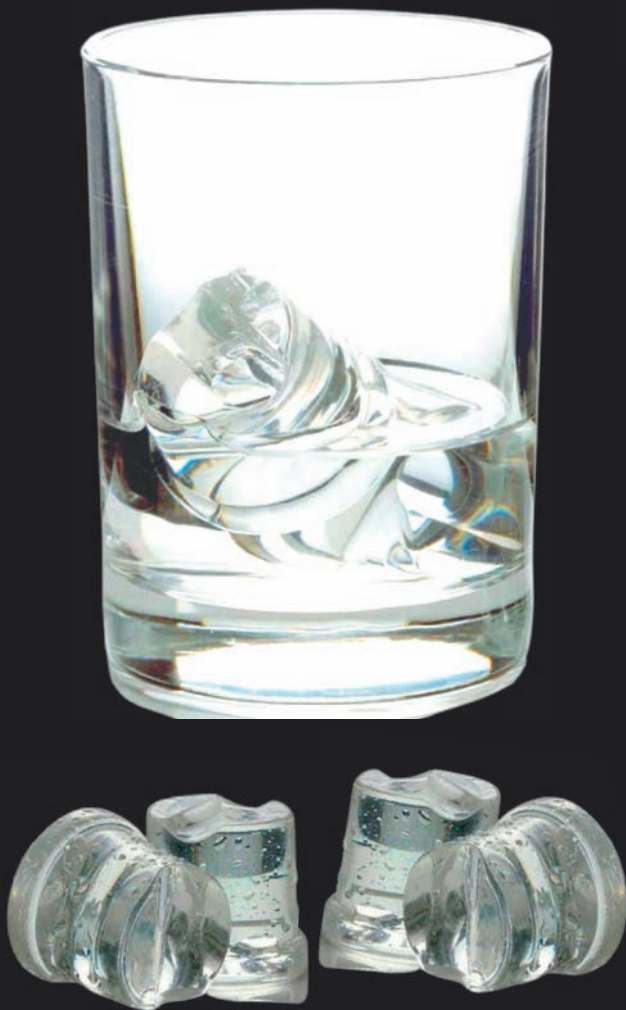
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'Art of Dum' Second Cloud Kitchen



Foodlink, has launched 'Art of Dum' in Chembur, Mumbai. It has launched its second cloud kitchen in the city to offer an authentic flavour of slow-cooked Dum Pukht cuisine. It promises handpicked ingredients, delectable food, and adherence to the highest standards of quality and safety. The traditional methods of cooking, and the attention to detail in the packaging, all add to the experience of enjoying food that is fit for royalty.

The brand will offer a wide range of authentic flavours cooked in the traditional 'Dum Pukht' style of slow cooking. Its food menu includes different styles of Biryani, Kebabs, delicately spiced gravies, wholesome rolls, and mouth-watering sweet dishes. All the flavours will be wrapped in an elegant and sustainable packaging that is unparallel and provides a luxurious at-home dining experience to Mumbai's food enthusiasts.

While talking about the 'Art of Dum' launch in Chembur, Sanjay Vazirani, CEO, Foodlink said, "Our aim is to ensure that our 'Art of Dum' food reaches to each and everyone's doorstep. Hence, we have strategically chosen Chembur as one of our next locations here in Mumbai. We have also recently entered the Bengaluru and Hyderabad markets and aim to bring the royal and traditional Dum Pukht dining experience to other parts of India, as well."

Beam Suntory Brings to India 'Sipsmith'

Beam Suntory, a world leader in premium spirits, announces the launch of Sipsmith in India. Treading strongly towards premiumization, the launch of Sipsmith, the quintessential London Dry Gin, is yet another addition to its world class portfolio, this time taking inspiration from two hundred years of London's Gin distilling history.

Sipsmith was founded in 2009 by three friends, Fairfax Hall, Jared Brown and Sam Galsworthy, who embarked on a journey to bring London Dry Gin of uncompromising quality and character back to the city where it first earned its name. It is one of the few gins that are hand-distilled and hand-crafted in a unique three-step process – lending a distinct taste and character that has appealed to gin aficionados internationally over many years. The beauty of the process is how it is first distilled in copper stills, then infused with ten botanicals - cherry picked from various parts of the world - through a one-shot method that provides Sipsmith with its incredible flavor. As the gin distills, only the purest 'heart cut' of each distillation is bottled. The result is a London Dry Gin of an unmatched character making it one of the bartender's favorites given its robust, versatile base to create all types of cocktails.

Sipsmith is the first gin to acquire a license for small-batch gin distilling in the UK in almost 200 years. This also includes reversing an excise law which was effective since 1823 in the UK that didn't allow distillers to obtain a license for any still under 1,800 litres. A combination of 'sip', or drink slowly, savor and enjoy, and 'smith', that represents the skill and passion for craftsmanship, the name Sipsmith derives inspiration from Fairfax's father, a silversmith.



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Zenzi Launches 'Just Soda'

Zenzi brings its calorie-free soda that's crisp and bubbly. Zenzi India's first flavored sparkling water infused with botanicals and fruits introduces this exciting drink for all the new age sober curious drink aficionados. Zenzi's addition of all-natural Zenzi soda is a perfect guilt-free mixer for cocktails and mocktails. It's brilliantly crafted with 0 calories, sugar, and sodium for those who center health as a prime aspect of their lives.

Zenzi's avant-garde addition of all-natural soda to its sparkling water family aligns with the brand's mantra of "growing together". As today's consumers are mindful of their lifestyle this is Zenzi's sustainable approach toward quality over quantity where products are good for us as well as for the planet. Hence, their bottles are curated through 100% recyclable PET bottles. This beverage is not just your other soda rather it is strictly "Just Soda".



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Club Yazu Launches New Menu with Chef Vadim Shin



The quaintly cosy ambience of Yazu, in the midst of Mumbai's hustle and bustle, is cutting edge and exciting in several ways. All things aesthetic - everything about Yazu sets the tone for a fantastic time with friends or family - right from the entry to the beautiful outdoor section to the dining area, and the music to the quaint décor. The inspiration behind the decor was to ensure a fun, casual dining experience, but also giving it an upscale vibe at the same time. It is comforting, it is homely, it is luxe and it is in fact an ideal location to unwind after a long day and rejuvenate with a Spring Onion Martini, or two.

Asia is an experience. Rich, deep, varied. Explore the essence through the exotic flavours that rise from its land and find their rightful place at Mumbai's favourite Pan Asian Supper Club Yazu. The thought behind Yazu was to create a place that resonates with the present times and its demands, be it the global look and feel of the place, the food or the service. The focus is heavy on the cocktails as well which is why the trio Ranbir Nagpal, Gurmeet Arora, and Atul Chopra went with pan-Asian cuisine.

"Engross yourself in the by experiencing harmony of tradition and modernity of Asian Cuisine. Allow your taste buds to sense the magic of authentic ingredients skillfully combined with delightful veggies and tender meats to create gastronomic bliss.

At Yazu, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of quality, service, and produce. Built on the principles of high-quality consistency, the choicest of preparations will please the voluptuary in you, one dish at a time! Chef Vadim, the head chef at Yazu has been working in the hospitality industry since 22 years and started his culinary journey in Russia where he was born he is a mix of Korean and Japanese. He started his own Japanese cuisine and brings his A grade sushi techniques to Yazu,

with whom he launches an all new menu.' Said Ranbir Nagpal, Founder at Yazu

"Being a new player in this area it's very important to understand your customers first... pallet, preferences, as well knowledge about the food. The choice that we have in my new menu is basically to understand how guests would react to something that they heard but haven't tried. That will help me a lot to understand how to introduce more options in different flavours with more exotic products that we use in Korean and Japanese culture. Caring for those memories with love from my grandmother and my mom's preparation, always keeps me tuned and reminds me to not forget our traditional way of cooking and flavour, and pass on from generation to generation... A few must-haves on the new Yazu menu are the Poke bowl which comes in 4 different varieties. Poke is one of the main dishes of Native Hawaiian cuisine. Beautiful combination of ingredients selected by Head Chef Vadim will bring a new experience. The Avocado Poke bowl consists of Avocado mixed with Teriyaki sauce, Truffle oil, sesame seeds, Cucumber, Tempura Flakes, Edamame seeds, Crispy fried onion, Garlic Chips, Crispy Wonton, Sushi Rice, Wasabi and Ginger) while the Ahi Tuna Poke bowl is Yellow Fin Tuna mixed with Teriyaki sauce, Sriracha sauce, Shichimi Togarashi, Sesame oil, sesame seeds, Cucumber, Tamago (Japanese omelette) Tempura Flakes, Edamame seeds, Crispy fried onion, Garlic Chips, Crispy Wonton, Sushi Rice, Wasabi and Ginger). For the salmon lovers, there is the Spicy Salmon Poke Bowl- Norwegian Salmon mixed with Teriyaki sauce, Sriracha sauce, Shichimi Togarashi, Sesame oil, sesame seeds, Cucumber, Tamago (Japanese omelette) Tempura Flakes, Edamame seeds, Crispy fried onion, Garlic Chips, Crispy Wonton, Sushi Rice, Wasabi and Ginger) and KaniKamaboko Poke Bowl is Imitation Crab

meat, Sesame oil, sesame seeds, Cucumber, Tamago (Japanese omelette) Tempura Flakes, Edamame seeds, Crispy fried onion, Garlic Chips, Crispy Wonton, Sushi Rice, Wasabi and Ginger. Other than that the Hibachi fried rice is japanese steamed rice fried on hot surface (Teppanyaki) with Shitake mushroom and chopped spring onion, and finishing with Hibachi sauce) and the Spicy Chicken Teriyaki is Chicken Thigh marinated in chilli garlic and grilled in Teppanyaki, finishing with Teriyaki glaze and sesame seeds. The Rock Shrimp Tempura is Shrimp, Deep fried in Corn flour and Tempura mix butter, mixed with Spicy Dynamite sauce." Said head Chef, Vadim Shin

"The aim is to indulge the foodies and culinary enthusiasts on the lookout for an out-of-the-ordinary gastronomical experience. Traditionally Asian at heart but globally experimentative in spirit, the Yazu menu seeks to amaze and delight your palate" says Gurmeet Arora, Partner at Yazu.

'Yazu is a progressive dinning Pan Asian Supper Club serving world class pan asian food. Yazu was designed & conceptualized with the thoughts of giving the perfect all round experience to a customer making it a perfect destination for every occasion. It caters for all pan asian pallet including a larger section for vegetarian food but it also accommodates to specialize & specific food requirements such as jain and ketto," said Atul Chopra, partner at Yazu.

All in all, Yazu food is high on flavours and quality. So, immerse yourself in the Pan-Asian culture and allow your taste buds to sense the magic of authentic ingredients skillfully combining fresh appetizers and cocktails while creating gastronomic bliss on a plate. And what is more? The boys have not only expanded the Yazu brand to Goa but are also planning the launch of yet another in Mumbai itself.



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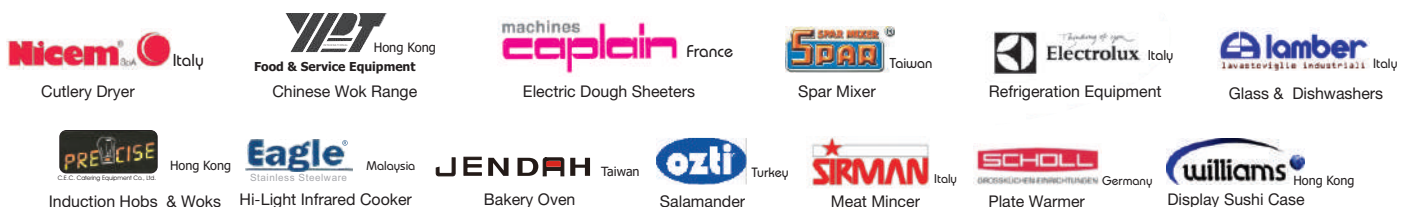
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Goa's New Restaurant MAAI



The sunshine state of Goa has seen a wave of fine-dining restaurants in the last couple of years. Traditional beach shacks continue to entice visitors, but one of the better reasons to visit this sunshine state is Maai. The first thing that draws you towards it is the attractive bungalow that houses Maai while the food is inspired by the spices from the motherland. Maai in Goa is a perfect example of creating a dream decor in a comfortable cozy old bungalow with its historic heritage and Portuguese inspired design.

"Maai is our humble tribute to all the mothers of Goa who have carried this cultural uniqueness of the home-made masala blend stemming from the time the Portuguese were in Goa. Our chefs have done a very in-depth study of these flavours and tried our best to blend it into the current customer palette and expectations for modern dinners," says Ranbir Nagpal, Director and Co-founder.

The food and beverage are inspired from the travels and conquests of the Portuguese and the ingredients discovered and carried along with them like the tomatoes, pineapple, cashew nuts & guavas are brought from Brazil to Goa and are subsequently spread around India, chillies and pepper being one of the most important ingredients which became immensely popular for wider Indian cuisine. Maai meaning motherland is inspired from the artisanal flavours of the motherland and its menu – a delectable mix of the Goan and Portuguese flavours on a plate reflect the same.

"The concept behind Maai was created specially by the team because of the location we found. The team restored the old villa, from the walls to the antique furniture, and from it

reignited the taste of the Portuguese heritage. With the goal of complementing the old Goan Portuguese house, we worked on a cuisine based on Portuguese expeditions around the world. We wish to give visitors a taste of home by stimulating all of their senses with cuisine, drinks, and ambiance," says Columbus Marquis-Director and Founder.

The food menu at Maai is a delicious mix of small plates and curries each of which celebrate the delicate flavours of Goa and every dish is well thought-out and curated, keeping the heritage in mind, and thereby forming a masterpiece on your plate.

"Perfection always stems from passion, that's personally what I believe in. Everything at Maai is a reflection of our convergence on that point - love for good food and cocktails. My focus at Maai has been on bringing alive Goan recipes by delicately balancing tradition & modernity. The menu at Maai goa may be extensive, but attention to detail is visible in all dishes right from presentation to optimal use of quality ingredients," says Atul Chopra, Director and Co-Founder.

The Chefs at Maai swear by the Signature Raw Banana Cutlets and use this powerhouse of vitamins and expertly transform the boring looking produce into an interesting cutlet. The Vegan Beetroot Gallettees is packed with essential nutrients, fiber, folate (vitamin B9), manganese, potassium, iron, and vitamin C. The chefs at Maai create a small plate to start the meal on a healthy note. The Chef's Signature Chorizo Hummus is a creamy edamame hummus married with a chorizo mix cured at the villages in South Goa. While the Pepper Spiced Mutton is the Mutton Slow Cooked with

an Amalgamation of fresh and dried Peppers which were brought into India in 1498 by the explorer Vasco-da-Gama. Another best seller addition to the list is the Braised PiriPiri Clams.

"Peri-Peri is an important part of Mozambique's history after which it was brought to India by the Portuguese. The recipe is inspired by tossing the spice mix along with locally sourced clams from the waters of Goa. Like this dish, all our dishes show that less is more so our creative inventions on a plate consist of inspirations from the colonies that the Portuguese built during their conquests," says Chef Balaji Srinivasan, who's background hails from Oberoi, Le Meridien, Hyatt, Taj group etc.

Once you enter Maai, the food and ambience is not the only enticing thing. You cannot miss the cocktails. Starting with the "Whole lotta soul" which is an inspiration from Goan cuisine and with the use of kokum through this cocktail, Maai brings the soul of Goa into a glass of Gin. The "Casa de Maai" is a futuristic approach with advanced techniques with the use of cashew feni as a base spirit bringing in a fresh and clean fragrance. Coffee is enjoyed by all, thus another fantastic addition to the menu is the Robustly Roasted, a Vanilla with coffee which is definitely a match made in heaven and Goan culture is also deeply engraved by having a coffee Vodka. The "Feels like home" is a symbol of the marriage between Goan and Portuguese culture and this cocktail is inspired to be a better and homely version of old fashioned with a smokey and intense flavor whiskey. The "Maai Sage" will bring in the nostalgic moments of our childhood of eating a guava sprinkled with red pepper and salt - Maai's take on a Sage infused Tequila Based Cocktail with a homemade guava, & Home-grown pepper Liqueur.

"Maai will leave you with a true taste of Goa and we guarantee a gastronomical experience as well as a fun time for those who visit and we have worked hard to create an ambience that will make you feel at home," said Gurmeet Singh Arora, Director and Co-Founder.

Standing tall in the bylanes of Assagao, MAAI promises to wow you with its Portuguese minimalism yet enigmatic and enticing décor, the food and beverage and overall ambience which will leave you wanting more.

From awe-inspiring interiors that transport guests to spectacular international locales to breathtaking views of the Sea, Maai is the ideal place to be while in Goa.

Grill and Tonic- at Thane



The Mumbai Suburbs just caught a new vibe- a rustic Mediterranean rooftop bar & bistro, right in the heart of Thane city, facing the scenic mountains of Sanjay Gandhi National Park –talk about food with a view! Serving a plethora of grills not just from India but around the world, right from the tikkas of India, Adana from Turkey to the yakitori from Japan- talk about mouth-watering food with a view!

The serene, well-lit open-roof ambience is the perfect place to spend evening. The décor is inspired from vintage Mediterranean era. G&T's menu delivers delightful delicacies with rejuvenating drinks from the bar menu. Be it an old-fashioned, a negroni, a bloody mary, a martini you name it... there's something for everyone!

Get a taste of magic with some of signature dishes like gourmet kulcha basket including sundried tomato & olive kulcha, cheddar cheese chili kulcha, truffle wild mushroom kulcha, aloo & paneer kulcha served with black dal, imli chutney, aachar & sirkepyaaz, turkish lamb adana -hand pressed aromatic lamb minced skewers, garlic butter served with mint tahini sauce and the exquisite G&T platter with parsley & garlic fish, lamb adana, shish tawook, cheese & chicken adana served with hummus, carrot tartare, muhammara, and tahini, spinach yoghurt served with turkish bread.

Pair these dishes with exotic cocktails, the original Margarita, orange liqueur and fresh lime juice or cosmopolitan with disputed origins made with a blend of citrus vodka, orange liqueur and cranberry juice. Try something Zen in-house specials -Mexican Trippera delightful blend of tequila, Cointreau, fresh melon pulp, hibiscus shrub and fresh rosemary or Rose, whiskey infused with dried rose and mixed well with pineapple and rose water. Try the tree of life dessert made with crunchy muesli, passion fruit coulis & freshest mangoes of the season.

"At Grill & Tonic we are not aiming to be just good in Thane but amongst the best in the country. We are benchmarking ourselves to deliver to you the flavorful food, the finest wine & memorable experiences. Everything's better at Grill & Tonic. That's a promise we give to the people of Thane." - PurveshSarnaik Founder Grill & Tonic

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Getting into the Summer “Spirit”



Summer is here. It's time to serve delicious cocktails that not only protect you from heat stroke but will make you stir, shake and muddle. Summer drink – or cocktail – usually involves some kind of fruit blended with vodka, rum, gin or tequila. Though the BevAlc industry experienced a decrease in demand due to the onset of COVID-19 it has slowly recovered. **Ashok Malkani** takes a look at the people's preference for cocktails, which is the preferred spirit for cocktails and the new innovations that the bartenders have come up with for concocting cocktails with a difference.



With Covid-19 restrictions being lifted from almost all parts of the country the F&B industry is finally seeing light at the end of a long tunnel. The food and beverage outlets, which suffered unprecedented losses over the last two years are now expecting to march ahead on the recovery path at a fast pace.

Most of the States and UTs have now relaxed the restrictions on timings and bars are now open as per their usual timings. Recently the Delhi Government took a policy decision to allow bars to serve liquor till 3 AM. Leading bars-cum-restaurants and clubs were jubilant following the announcement.

With the gradual relaxation in restrictions the dine-in restaurants and bars are slowly and steadily recovering.

Sonali Mullick, Head of Operations and Mixologist at - Hitchki Restro Bar and Bayroute, Mumbai, discloses, "Post the relaxation in the 1st lockdown we witnessed a gradual rise in footfalls but it was not very promising keeping in mind all the time restrictions. However, this completely changed post the 2nd lockdown relaxations. There has been no turning back and footfalls have increased drastically."

She adds, "Each one of us needed to come out of this "lockdown phase" and get back to our normal lives – that's exactly what every one of us did and the result is right before us. Now there is a waiting period of about 40 minutes at our outlets."

Sunny Kumar, Mixologist at Farmaash Rooftop Lounge and Bar, Vimannagar, Pune too states that the footfall is increasing. He says, "We are now looking at 90% of the pre-covid levels in terms of business. We are seeing better spending pattern across all age groups."

Tapan Baghel Mixologist at QORA-Cocktail Bar and Kitchen, Pune declares, "I would say that bars have regained about 70% relaxations- it's not complete yet as some parts of the country are yet facing time restraints. I would say though, that as the relaxations have increased, more and more people are flocking to bars and doing what they love best - drinking and socializing. Yes

normalcy is returning, slowly but steadily."

Shubho Haldar, Bar Manager, Esora Wine and Bistro, Mumbai is happy with the relaxations and says "Our organization is doing great now and definitely we'll do much better in future, fingers crossed!!

Preference for Cocktails

So while the restaurateurs celebrate the relaxation of restrictions the guests are keen to celebrate in the relaxing ambience of the F&B outlets with cool cocktails to beat the heat of the summer months.

Everyone's got a favourite alcoholic beverage in the summer and it's definitely not a 'Hot Toddy'. More likely it is a cool cocktail.

Cocktails are loved by people as they are soothing and refreshing. The combination of different ingredients in one drink also makes it an enticing drink. The fruity flavour, attractive looks and presentation makes them eye-catching and alluring.

There is a lot that goes into really appreciating a carefully crafted cocktail. Most bartenders will create a cocktail and serve it in the way they think is best. Classic cocktails and custom mixology creations are a work of art. That is the reason why they are enjoyed by sipping them slowly. This way one notices the smells and flavours and makes the experience of having a cocktail more enjoyable.

What is more, cocktails are also believed to be good for the health. The health





Sonali Mullick



Tapan Baghel



Shubho Halдар



benefits are:

Low calorie options: You get fifty times more flavour from a vodka cocktail for a small handful of calories.

Vitamin C: The old fashioned squeeze and slice of lemon/lime bring a ton of vitamin C

Medicinal properties in Mixers: If one talks about mixers. It may be mentioned that some of them are also healthy. Tonic water contains quinine which helps prevent malaria.

Medicinal properties in Spirits: There are also medicinal properties in different spirits used in the cocktail. The most oft used Gin – made with juniper berries, angelica root, rosemary, citrus peel, nutmeg, sage, lemon-grass etc – is packed with herbal goodness.

Medicinal properties in Bitters: Angostura Bitters, used in most cocktails has restorative properties as they include ingredients like orange peel and quinine. It is reported to be a remedy for hiccups and also can be used as a cure for an upset stomach.

Mixed with fruits, people prefer to drink cocktails in summer not only due to health benefits but also cooling effects.

Sonali claims in India, mainly there are 2 reasons why Cocktails are preferred during summer season,

Due to the heat, hard alcoholic drinks get bypassed & guests switch to Beers & Cocktails. Cocktails get the upper hand as they are usually zesty, fun, colourful and easy to digest.

Summer market gets filled with tropical fruits, best being the Mango. Bars across the country create drinks with these fun flavours and promote them. This gives the consumers a chance to experiment and enjoy the flavourful Cocktails.

Sunny avers, “The preferred choice in alcoholic drinks during the summer is definitely cocktails (when it is not beer) because it is fruitier, lighter and the colours are soothing to the eyes.”

Shubho says, “Cocktails are very refreshing and delicious too which, I think, is the reason for people preferring cocktails during summer!”

Tapan disclosed, “Cocktails in the form of spritzers, sangrias and flavoured G&T are doing well. People enjoy refreshing drinks in the summer with light and fresh flavors.”

Preferred Spirit

Though to a proficient bartender there are no sacred cows, Gin, rum and vodka are said to be the preferred alcoholic drinks used for cocktails.

Tapan states, “Gin has been trending since a while now and vodka comes close as well. Vodka and Gin are preferred as these spirits easily mix with a lot of different flavours. They are perfect for any weather as they are light and easily drinkable and mixable.”

Sonali is of the view that any neutral spirit can create the magic as they gel well with most ingredients.

She adds, “Last season the in-thing was Gin & now trending are Tequila’s & Agave’s internationally.”

Shubho prefers using rum.

Sunny states, “The most preferred base is Vodka and White Rum. Cocktails that need no second guessing like cosmopolitan and Mojito are made with these alcohols as base.”

Experimenting with New Cocktails

Globally, mixology is getting more and more sophisticated. People not only want to experiment with new cocktails but they even make suggestions to bartenders for concocting cocktails as per their whims. But there are others who want to stick to tried and tested ones.

Shubho disclosed, “Though classic cocktails are like ‘forever love’, still we see

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people experimenting with their drinks. An example is: instead of having a classic Negroni, some of our guest is ready to have white Negroni (Signature Cocktail). And, yes they love it!"

He adds, "Nowadays, people are more into cocktails. We can see the whole drinking culture is changing & we also experience our guest's sharing their own cocktail recipes which is very interesting to see."

Tapan claims, "Guest interactivity is imperative! The more you interact with your guests and impart knowledge about the different flavours, methods and concoctions, the more involved they feel with your brand, their understanding of your brand and product increases and they are more willing to try new things. Minimal guest interaction leads to them ordering the same cocktails they are used to."

He adds, "People love to make suggestions. A few guests who are cocktail enthusiasts and have read about different flavours will come and ask us if we can make an XYZ concoction having some specific ingredients! The experiments that couldn't take place at their home bars, are happening at ours."

Sonali avers, "The best part about Cocktail drinkers is that they are always ready to experiment as long as their base liquor is as per their choice. We have observed a 50:40:10 ratios in our brands since our Cocktail mix is 38% of the total Bar sales. She breaks them thus:

- 55% guests are very enthusiastic about experimenting new concoctions with their base alcohol as per their choice.
- 37% guests do not hesitate to experiment & are okay with any base liquor.
- 8% guests do not wish for a change and keep to their regular mixes."



Sunny Kumar

As far as people making suggestions for concocting new cocktails is concerned, she says "Sometimes our regular guests come up with suggestions as per their individual liking and tastes. At times we end up using the ingredients and come up with new Cocktails."

Sunny disclosed, "Most people start with a new cocktail or signature cocktails specific to a bar. This way they have a favourite at each bar. While visiting a new place, people prefer a previously tasted cocktail."

He adds, "The most popular suggestion is mixing their childhood favorites that bring nostalgia, Examples are Kala khatta mixed with vodka or Aampanha with rum. The common suggestion about changes to our existing recipes is about adjustments to the level of bitterness, sweetness or sourness of the mix."

Spicy Cocktails

Cocktails are now taking a new turn. Beyond Bloody Marys, Micheladas, a whole new

world of spicy cocktails is being explored by bartenders globally. They are playing with the delicate balance between sweet and heat to refresh consumers while they still feel the burn.

Sunny says, "Spicy cocktails have a special place in the Indian palate. Spiced Guava juice topped with ice is refreshing and lasts longer. Cocktails with spices are great for long conversations over drinks since it retains flavour till the last sip and adds an edge to the fruitiness."

Sonali avers, "Spices in summer are best avoided but a little spicy effect derived from seedless green chilli, jalapeno, tangy hot sauce etc will not do any harm and will add to the zing in any Cocktail."

She adds, "Summer comes with a lot of healthy fruit options and bartenders maximize this opportunity by infusing or creating Cocktails with fruits like Mango, Watermelon, Muskmelon, Star Fruit, Berries etc."

RTD Cocktails

Several alcoholic beverage brands have launched their own ready to drink (RTD) cocktails in cans. These cocktails (whisky-based, vodka-based, rum or gin-based) have been trending in bars globally for over a decade. In 2019, the RTD cocktails contributed over Rs 2500 crores to Indian bars' revenue.

So are RTD cocktails preferred over cocktails mixed by the bartenders?

Sonali asserted, "None of our brands serve RTD Cocktails and we have faith only in cocktails freshly made by our bartenders. And we serve only these cocktails. I'm sure our guests also prefer Cocktails made by bartenders as the taste will always be better since all fresh ingredients are being used."

She affirmed, "RTD Cocktails are mainly for guests who are unable to reach out to a bar."

Tapan too agrees with the view that freshly made cocktails by bartenders are more preferable. He says, "Nothing beats a perfected mixed drink by the bartender and served to you with a smile and a nice chat, in an appropriate glass. The special glasses in which cocktails are served elevate the cocktail experience and take it many notches higher."

Sunny states, "Every cocktail is a piece of art, right from the choice of glassware to the garnish. People choose a bartender's mix almost every time, people love the colours and the suspense that every concoction has to offer."

So this summer enjoy yourself with cooling cocktails made with fresh ingredients and filled with fascinating flavours!



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Cocktail Recipes

Spiced Kokumihto

Ingredients:

Bacardi White Rum	60 ml
Kokum syrup	60 ml

Soda

Simple Syrup	30 ml
--------------	-------

Mint leaves

Freshly Squeezed Lemon Juice	45 ml
Ice cubes/crushed ice	
Black salt (optional)	
1 fresh mildly spicy green chili	

Simple syrup:

Pour equal parts water and sugar in a saucepan.
Heat the ingredients until dissolved, cool before using.
Preserve it in the refrigerator.

Procedure:

Take a tall glass
Add 8 to 10 mint leaves depending upon the size of the leaves and the green chili sliced in 2 parts
Add the freshly squeezed lemon Juice
Add the prepared and cooled SIMPLE SYRUP to it
Muddle all of these ingredients till they are mixed well and a strong aroma of mint leaves & lemon juice start developing.
Top the glass with crushed ice
Add the Kokum Syrup
Add about 1 tsp of black salt
Then pour in the soda to the rim
Stir the mocktail thoroughly with a bar spoon
Garnish it with mint leaves and you can also add lime slice to the rim.

Sunny Kumar, Mixologist at Farmaash Rooftop Lounge and Bar, Pune

Raw Mango & Jaljira Daiquiri

Ingredients :

Bacardi Rum	60ml
Raw mango	3-4chunks
Jaljira Powder	1tbl spoon
Sweet & Sour	
Salt& chilly rimmed glass	

Procedure:

Put all the ingredients in a mixer blender and blend it until its give a slushy texture.
Pour the drink into a salt & chilly rimmed Martini glass.
Garnish it with a slice of raw mango and mint with some Jaljira sprinkled on it!

Pickled Mangorita

Ingredients:

Bacardi rum	60ml
Fresh mango pulp	90ml
Mango pickle	1tspoon

Sweet and citrus

Chilly Corriander Garlic-Salt rimmed glass

Procedure:

Take fresh mango pulp, Bacardi rum and mango pickle accordingly into a shaker. Add some simple syrup and lime juice to balance.

Shake it with ice vigorously.

Pour it into a Chilly-corriander-Garlic salt rimmed Margarita glass

Shubho Haldar, Mixologist at Esora Wine and Bistro

Mango Chilli Masti

Ingredients:

Dark Rum	45 ml
Aamras	25 ml
Half Green Chilli	
Ice	100 gms
Sugar Syrup	10 ml

Procedure:

Muddle, shake and fine strain

Garnish

Coupe Glass Half Scoop Of Mango Ice Cream + Chilli Powder
Dust + Mint Sprig

Sonali Mullick, Mixologist at - Hitchki Restro Bar and Bayroute

Halo

Vodka	50ml
Yuzu	20ml
Galangal	3 chunks
Kaffir lime	1 nos
Caramel syrup	5 ML
Tonic water	top up
Red wine	20ml

Procedure:

Shake the ingredients and put them in a Highball glass. I
Garnish with foam

Third Eye

Ingredients:

Whisky	40ml
Jager	10ml
Rosso	10ml
Fig cordial	10ml
Aromatic bitter	2 dash

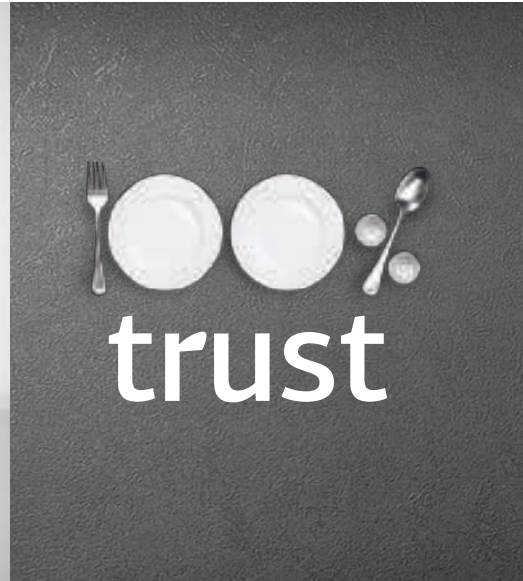
Procedure:

Stir the ingredients well.

Pour in a rock glass

Garnish with chocolate stroke

Tapan Baghel of Qora, Pune



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Pandemic has caused a paradigm shift in consumer ordering behavior. It has made the diners hesitate not only in mingling among themselves, but also in the food that they partake. The meal must not only be healthy but also cooked hygienically. To avoid crowding, the diners are keen to order from home. This has given rise to cloud kitchens. But for the cloud kitchens to succeed they have to understand their customers as well as the unit economics of the partnership with the delivery apps and the cost of procurement of menu items. Restaurant operators need to be aware of what customers like and don't like and anticipate what items they are likely to order during different times. **Ashok Malkani** examines various aspects of cloud kitchens and tries to fathom whether – and how – they can make a success of themselves

Popular folklore states that farmers in the yesteryears believed that food came from heaven. Well, they could said to be not very far from the truth as food these days comes from the 'cloud'. One may thus say that the concept is, perhaps, as monumental as the discovery of fire.

Over the past two years, since the arrival of Covid-19, digitization has become a norm, particularly in the F&B industry. The pandemic forced several dine-in restaurants to shut shop. Over the last couple of years the way we eat from restaurants has undergone a sea-change. While in the pre-pandemic days most restaurants witnessed only a small

part of their business coming from delivery, today most of the established restaurants are seeing an increasingly higher share – in some cases a majority of the share – coming from customers ordering home delivery. In the new norm, according to a report by Motilal Oswal Financial Services, the Indian food service delivery market is expected to grow at over 30 per cent CAGR between 2021 and 2026 and be worth \$ 13 billion by 2025, growing much faster than the overall industry, including dine-in.

According to a report by RedSeer Management Consulting the 'cloud kitchens' in India are expected to be worth \$2 billion by

2024, up from \$400 million in 2019.

The food ordering market of India is expanding at a CAGR of 16% to reach \$17 billion by 2023 as per DataLabs by Inc42. It is no wonder that with one foot firmly in the food delivery business, food aggregators are aggressively moving towards cloud kitchens to cash in on the frenzy.

So what exactly are cloud kitchens and how did the term originate?

It may be mentioned that these days we store our photos, stream our movies, and even run our businesses in the cloud. This concept has developed in the food business too.

Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), explains, “Like any other business, hospitality business is also evolving with time to cater to the modern day needs of the customers. Cloud Kitchen is one such concept that has made rapid in-roads in the food industry, in a very short time. Typically, a cloud kitchen is a commercial kitchen space that provides food businesses necessary facilities to prepare menu items for delivery and takeout orders. Unlike physical restaurants, cloud kitchens allow food businesses to create and deliver food products with minimal overhead and logistics costs.”

“The Cloud Kitchen concept is a revolution in the food business. The concept really took off over the last 24 months, since COVID led lockdowns and restrictions meant people had no option but to order food at home. Even after the restrictions were lifted, as everyone became more hygiene and safety conscious, customers preferred ordering food from home and such a scenario was ideal for Cloud Kitchens to penetrate the market. According to a market report, the projected market size of cloud kitchens is expected to reach \$1.05 billion by 2023.”

He adds, “The concept of Cloud Kitchens



is loosely based on the very basic forms of food business; ‘The Food Trucks’, wherein the food business catered to the needs of take-away orders. Over a period of time, the food truck business evolved to become cloud kitchen business. The concept garnered much popularity and ordering food through digital channels gathered momentum. Soon many companies with only food delivery service started operating cloud kitchens.”

Jaibir Singh Kohli, Director - Pritam Group of Hotels & Restaurants disclosed, “A cloud kitchen or dark kitchen is an F&B concept that functions on only deliveries - without a physical dine in space. It aims to capitalise on the delivery markets without the CapEx

required for a fully functional restaurant. The tremendous growth potential & low capital expenditure which was a big plus during the pandemic and lack of space in the city were certainly factors for the growth of the Cloud kitchen segment. With restaurants being shut, people began to crave dining experiences at home, and hence began the boom of dark kitchens coming to the rescue. I can’t really say how or when the cloud kitchens started, but food delivery has been a concept as old as time.”

History of Cloud Kitchens

If one traces the history of cloud kitchens, it can be said that they originated as food



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trucks. Mobile canteens in the form of food trucks have been in existence for a long time. The financial crisis of 2008 could be regarded as the evolution concept of food trucks to home delivery to cloud kitchens.

In the years post-recession, the expensive and high-end restaurants were not doing well and many of them closed their shutters. An alternative to these restaurants emerged in the form of food trucks, an opportunity that was capitalized by the entrepreneurs of that era.

The trucks were not only cheap, as compared to accommodation needed for starting a dine-in restaurant, but since they were mobile they could move around to serve customers at different locations. These mobile canteens popularized the concept of on-demand food delivery. Orders made using phone calls or messages were fulfilled by contractual cheap labor

The advancement of technology over the past few years has led to the era of prepared food being ordered through online mediums. Modern restaurants initially started taking orders through social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

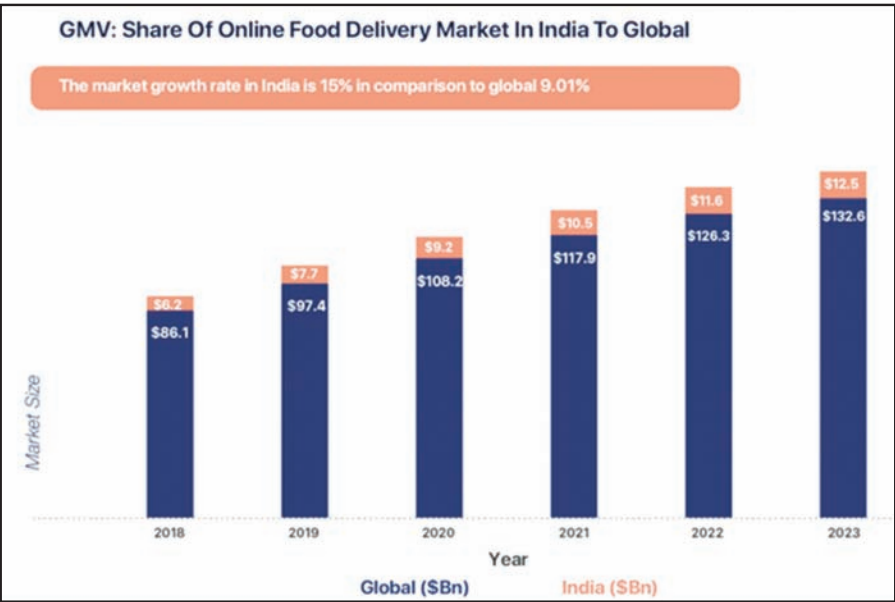
Success of Cloud Kitchens

With the adoption of smartphones, the power of one-tap food delivery has landed directly in the hands of millions of consumers. The global size of the food delivery market is estimated to reach \$164.5 billion by 2023. Cloud Kitchens are believed to be the answer to meet the ever-increasing consumer demand for quick delivery and a greater variety.

Automation in the restaurant industry is still very much in its infancy, but the landscape seems to be changing rapidly, with several prototypes already in operation.

Jaibir Singh states, "Since the cost of operating a restaurant is removed, cloud kitchens can focus and direct that money towards R&D for food as well as packaging, marketing etc. They can also price themselves significantly lower than most restaurants offering a takeaway due to lower fixed costs."

Gurbaxish Singh revealed, "One of the most important reasons behind the success of a cloud kitchen is cost effectiveness. A Cloud Kitchen model significantly reduces the capital investment, compared to a brick and mortar restaurant. Also, the requirement of manpower in cloud kitchens is far lower compared to a dine-in restaurant, which means reduced overheads in salaries and wages.



"Cloud kitchens also allow an establishment to curate a variety of food, dishes and cuisines which result in more elaborate menus."

One may add that seeing the success of cloud kitchens, existing restaurants are now trying to launch multiple cloud kitchens from existing restaurants, taking advantage of central locations, and keeping staff engaged through the lull of lockdown.

Effect of Cloud Kitchens on Restaurants

One sector that has been impacted by the constant new waves of Covid is the restaurant/fine-dining. While nothing can replace the experience of sitting in a plush restaurant and eating your favourite food, the constant fear in the minds of the people has made them opt for ordering the identical meal in the comfort of their homes. The ambience seems to have taken a secondary place.

Gurbaxish Singh declares, "An increase in the food delivery business, especially in the last two years, has been responsible for cloud kitchens gaining a significant position in the food industry. The industry was going through a tough time dealing COVID restrictions including curfews, curtailed timings, and stricter norms, among other hurdles. In this context, cloud kitchens have significantly impacted the brick and mortar restaurants business, since a cloud kitchen business is a more viable option to meet the existing trends. A restaurant has to obtain multiple approvals and licenses to start. It needs huge capital investment to commence operations. A huge investment is involved in acquiring space on rent or ownership, skilled labor, creating ambience, etc."

"However," Gurbaxish Singh revealed, "a large number of illegal Cloud Kitchens have

also mushroomed during this period. Many such kitchens are operating without valid licenses from local and/or State authorities and quite a few of them are being hosted on online apps by the FSAs as well. Such indiscriminate hosting, primarily to populate the FSAs' platform encourages illegal activities, non-compliance of statutory rules and regulations, and compromises product quality and costs the exchequer a sizable share of revenue. Encouragement of illegal Cloud Kitchens is an affront to the organized sector and it creates an unhealthy business environment that is non-conducive for the growth of the sector."

He adds, "Running a restaurant business is capital-intensive, which thrives on 'dine-in' experience. While a majority of restaurants have evolved to meet the requirements of the new-normal, it is also heartening to see that patrons are returning to the dine-in culture, which certainly brings back cheers for the restaurateurs."

Jaibir Singh avers, "I would not say they have disrupted the restaurant space. Cloud kitchens have affected restaurant takeaway sales for sure, but they are a totally different entity when it comes to people wanting to go to a physical space and dine there."

Food Delivery

Cloud kitchens have to depend on delivery aggregators. With the arrival of online food delivery platforms like Swiggy, Zomato, Uber Eats, et al. the demand for online food delivery has increased. According to DataLabs by Inc42, the food ordering market of India is expanding at a CAGR of 16% and is expected to reach \$ 17 billion by 2023.

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cloud kitchens.

As Jaibir Singh says, "Cloud kitchens focus only on delivery - and since it is their main business model; they need to ensure it's perfect. Hence the R&D for the right type of packaging, keeping food fresh when it travels, and the low costs of operation help them deliver food at cheaper rates."

Gurbaxish Singh disclosed, "A cloud kitchen is a very cost-effective business proposition which requires minimal capital, overheads and manpower. The cost incurred on food by a cloud kitchen is definitely lower than a brick and mortar restaurant model. Hence, a cloud kitchen can maintain relatively economical charges for the food offered to customers.

"Most cloud kitchens have tie-ups with popular food aggregator platforms which provide the platform and technology to reach out to a wider audience. These food aggregators also take the responsibility of ensuring timely delivery of food through their delivery partners. So a cloud kitchen essentially has to only maintain the quality of food and timely preparation of the same."

Offering guest experience of a fine-dine even when ordering food at home will become imperative for restaurants in a competitive market.

Back to Dine-in?

With the customers getting frustrated of being locked indoors over the past two years, and the easing of restrictions, they prefer to dine-out. There is a pent up desire to venture out and visit dine-in restaurants.

As much of the country recovers from the pandemic, restaurant goers are eager to eat out more than ever. There are numerous reasons for the recent surge in people returning to restaurants, including higher vaccination rates, lower COVID-19 case counts, local jurisdictions lifting capacity requirements, et.al.

But the return of guests to dine-in facilities cloud kitchens could be adversely affected. However, industry stalwarts do not believe that it will have any adverse effect on cloud kitchens

It is believed that the restaurant owners will face many challenges to normalize things after the pandemic. The positive trend in the industry will on how restaurants of all sizes will now embrace technology. Though much of the technology, such as apps, third-party ordering, and direct online ordering, has been used for several years it took Covid 19 to force the industry to exploit its use to a fuller extent.



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli

Jaibir Singh is of the opinion that cloud kitchens will continue to flourish, as they are now cheaper and easier alternatives to order from when hosting people at home. He adds, "They also make for economic options to order from at work or in the office. So they will continue to grow and flourish for sure. It's the 21st century, we live in the age of digital marketing and targeted advertisements. Everything from our Instagram feed to our Swiggy home pages are specifically curated by algorithms for us. I think tapping into those platforms and using them to extract the most value is how we reach our audiences."

Gurbaxish Singh maintains that times have changed over the last two years and cloud kitchens have made their presence felt and strengthened their position in the food business.

He further adds, "Both businesses serve differently. One is mostly about delivery and the other is about experience. Cloud kitchens cannot replace the experience of 'dine-in' ambience and customers continue to prefer eating out at their favorite restaurants."



Jaibir Singh Kohli

There is a place for every concept in the food business ecosystem and I believe that physical restaurants and cloud kitchens would have to coexist in the times to come."

Looking ahead

The reasons for the success of cloud kitchens are numerous. The amount of risks is comparatively lower. The monetary constraints can easily be dealt with as the demand for the digital platform lowers the operational cost.

So is cloud kitchen the future and if so are even the restaurants planning on cloud kitchens?

Gurbaxish Singh disclosed, "There is an increase in number of customers who now prefer ordering food at their homes. However, there is also a section of diners who prefer eating at restaurants. While cloud kitchens have penetrated into the business of physical restaurants, on the back of the mass vaccination drive in the country people are more confident about eating out at restaurants again. This trend has become clearly visible over the last few months. Restaurants footfalls are almost back to the pre-COVID levels and the signs are only encouraging. There will be a healthy balance on both concepts of food experience."

He continues, "Cloud kitchen business has a huge untapped potential. There is a lot of scope for investment and for also evolving the concept further. While technology will take its due time and effect, investment is something that can be contemplated in the current scenario. I believe most of the go-to restaurants have already adapted to and upgraded themselves to meet the current demand of the customers."

Jaibir Singh asserts that cloud kitchens definitely have a future.

He adds "As far as restaurants' planning on starting cloud kitchens is concerned, I would say that there are some chains that are opening cloud kitchens as well, as test runs to see how the food is received by audiences, before thinking about putting the capital in to open a restaurant. Restaurants and cloud kitchens don't affect each other much, as they cater to completely different groups of people. "

Tips to Start a Cloud Kitchen

So how does one start a cloud kitchen?

Gurbaxish Singh states, "Knowing and identifying customers is one of the primary steps to opening a cloud kitchen. It also includes knowing customer's preferences and order patterns.

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“Choosing the type of cloud kitchen model is another important step. There are several types of cloud kitchens like standalone or single-brand cloud kitchen, multi-brand cloud kitchen, shared kitchen spaces and virtual restaurants, among others.

“The location and property could be the differentiators between a traditional dine-in and a takeaway restaurant and a cloud kitchen. A cloud kitchen does not require a location with a high footfall and prime property. Rather, it can very easily be set up in a 250-300 sq. ft. space.

“It is most important to acquire food licenses from Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Acquiring clearance from State Shop and Establishments Department and clearances from other important departments would also be crucial.”

Jaibir Singh adds, “Opening a cloud kitchen requires a lot of research. You need to understand your target market, who you’re catering to, and have a solid concept in mind. A name, a logo, and a good product is essential. Next you need to acquire license for selling food and find a space. Kitchen equipment, lighting, gas, staffing, menu engineering, onboarding with aggregators like Swiggy and Zomato, are other requirements. It involves a lot of work and a lot of marketing for a cloud kitchen to get noticed.”

Licenses for Cloud Kitchen

It may be mentioned, for those desirous of entering the business of cloud kitchens, that licenses are needed to operate a cloud kitchen.

The licenses needed are:

FSSAI Food Safety And Standards Authority License (Mandatory): For this license you have to get all the documents (i.e. Id Proof and Address Proof, Valid Email Id, Phone Number, Affidavit, Declaration of Food Safety Management Plan, Kitchen Layout Plan, List of Food Category, Water Testing Report from ISI approved Facility, No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the owner or the partner, Medical Certificates of Employees and process the application by login to the FSSAI website. Submit the printout of the filled up online application form to the Regional/State Authority with all the supportive documents within 15 days from the date of making the online submission, to ensure that your application is considered.

GST Registration (Mandatory): To register for this you need photo of the restaurant owner. If you own the property, then you will

Types of Business Models of Cloud Kitchens

There are several types of cloud kitchens. Each of them serves its own purpose. A few of the Models are:

Ghost or Hybrid Cloud Kitchen: It prepares food for delivery via third-party app, with the food prepared in a dedicated facility.

Shared Cloud Kitchen: This involves multiple food operators working alongside each other in the same property.

Aggregator cloud kitchen: This is run by the delivery service provider, with orders handled by its own proprietary online order and delivery platform. Restaurant brands prepare orders within a shared kitchen space.

Hybrid Cloud Kitchen: This has a physical location that is accessible to the public, where food preparation can be seen by visitors, and meals can either be delivered or picked up by customers as takeaway.

Full Outsource Cloud Kitchen: collects online customer orders and delivers them to other kitchens for preparation, then picks up the prepared meals and readies them for delivery.

Brand-owned Cloud Kitchen: This is a delivery-only operation, with no takeaway and no dine-in.

Dine-in With a Separate In-Location Delivery Production Line: In this cloud kitchen model, an existing dine-in restaurant creates a side-hustle dedicated to delivery/takeout.

need ownership documents like electricity bill, tax receipt/property tax receipt, or registry documents of that place. If you are on rent, then you need a copy of rent agreement/lease agreement with the electricity bill in the name of the owner. Besides this you also need documents related to bank bare-Scanned copy of bank statement/bank passbook or scan copy of cancelled cheque containing Name, bank account no., MICR, IFSC, and Branch details including code.

Health/Trade License (Mandatory): This requires the following documents:

- (1) Sanction and Completion (Includes Ownership proof, Rent Agreement or NOC from landlord).
- (2) Indemnity bond of Rs. 100.
- (3) Letter from local police.
- (4) Structural Stability Certificate signed by Structural Engineer.
- (5) Power and Water paid Bill.
- (6) Water Testing Reports.
- (7) Medical Certificates of Employees.
- (8) Proof of Property Tax.
- (9) Lal Dora Certificate (Only in Delhi)
- (10) Medical Fitness Certificate of Workers

One can apply for Health/Trade License either at CSB or online. Simply collect the application form from the State’s Municipal Corporation website or Zonal Citizen’s Service Bureaus. Generally, the license is issued within 60 days of submitting the application form.

Fire and Safety License: This is not mandatory. However it is an important part of the law. Fire and human health agreements are needed for this license. This license helps to save yourself from future troubles.

Shop and Establishment Act License: This is needed to run any food business (be it food truck, cloud kitchen or restaurant). This license is city specific. For this you require Pan Card, Identity Proof, Address proof and Details of the employees. You have to submit these documents along with the application form. Your form should indicate the name of the shop, the postal address, and the proof of ownership, such as the Rent Agreement or Lease Papers in front of the Local Chief Inspector of the shop or other Inspectors. Once the government officials verify all the documents, they register the Establishment and issue a registration certificate.

A Word of Warning

But before recklessly jumping into the fray of cloud kitchen ownership one must look at all the pros and cons. Though theoretically, the cloud kitchen model seems flawless, it does have its own set of challenges. While the setting up costs is less, so are the revenues.

A cloud kitchen is a place where food is prepared and delivered to the doorstep while orders are placed via calls or online platforms. This means they rely on third-party delivery platforms for demand and delivery generation and pay heavy commissions to them.

Moreover, a delayed pick-up or damaged delivery incident can tarnish the image of the cloud kitchen which, coupled with a lack of a physical storefront, makes it difficult for them to build a loyal fan base. Also, with no ambiance, the prices must be modulated accordingly, with discount offerings, to attract customers. ■



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Make Your Buffet Attractive & Revenue Generating

By Sharmila Chand

It is not easy to plan, design and execute a buffet that is visually appealing as well as revenue generating. A lot of effort and planning goes behind the scenes in implementing a perfect menu. Here we talk to experts in the industry and understand how best they create their Buffet USPs and also give tips to present a successful buffet.

USP of your Buffet Dining

Pradipt Sinha, Director of Food and Beverage, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla

At Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla, we serve breakfast, lunch & dinner buffet at our multi-cuisine restaurant Edesia. The guests can literally experience 'World on a plate' as our menu boasts diverse cuisines, right from international selection to regional delicacies. The buzzing LIVE kitchen experience and interactive food stations make it a wholesome experience for our guests.

Exploring the regional cuisines: We host regional cuisine based 'Theme Nights'



"It's always best to take customer reviews about the dining experience as it helps in enhancing the guest experience generating more revenue."

Sajid Patel, Executive Chef, Courtyard & Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road

and 'Food Festivals' every month for our guests to savour the incredible cuisines our country has to offer. We collaborate with the 'khansamas' and 'karigars' of these regions to ensure the authenticity of the taste and food fables.

Go Local, Go Sustainable: While designing our menus, we focus on seasonal and local produces and ingredients to curate our recipes. We believe in the core ideology of 'zero waste cooking' and have moved towards 'Pan to Plate Concept' to ensure fresh and customized taste for the guests.

Going the healthy way: We host an array of healthy food options, dishes made with alternate grains, immunity pro dishes, owing to the evolving guest choices with respect to their food habits.

Sajid Patel, Executive Chef, Courtyard & Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road

Fresh produce sourced locally: Most of the clients we receive at our restaurant

are not from the state and would like to experience the local cuisine and the ingredients which it upholds. The buffet which is put up tries to include original flavours from Karnataka (as per our restaurant) like authentic “Kannadiga” dishes varying from Bisibilebath to Raggi Mudde, among all the favorites.

Sagar Kulkarni, Director of Food & Beverage at Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore

At Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore, Limelight is our all-day dining place which serves Indian, Asian & Continental cuisine. Set against lush green lawns with alfresco and indoor seating options is what makes Limelight a favourite for many. Our Sunday Brunches are popular in town with an indoor, alfresco and open-air seating featuring an extensive menu using fresh local produce.

Gurneet Singh Grover, Executive Chef, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore

At Sheraton Grand palace Indore, we serve pure vegetarian food. All of the buffet spread is vegetarian, even all our dessert and pastries are made eggless. We give the original flavour of our region as the taste



“The layout and display should be neat and not confusing giving a simple and attractive look to the buffet with a colour and coordinated theme so as to create a visual appeal”

Sagar Kulkarni, Director of Food & Beverage at Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore

of the local cuisine of Indore is a blend of sweet, spicy and sour! We have a multi-cuisine buffet restaurant ‘S Cafe’ where we

have food festivals as per different festivals and cuisines of India.

Pramod Naithani, General Manager, Anuraga Palace, Ranthambore

We at Anuraga Palace believe in the service ‘Dil Se’. We strive to make our guest’s dining experience memorable. We offer an organic, assorted, and traditional dining experience to our diners. The food that we serve is prepared using vegetables sourced directly from our in-house organic farm- Shabri farms. We offer a variety of traditional Rajasthani cuisines both - vegetarian and non- vegetarian dishes. This helps our guests experience an authentic taste of Rajasthani food culture.

What makes a Buffet Complete and Outstanding?

Pradipt Sinha, Director of Food and Beverage, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla

First and foremost the basics- proper lining of the food as per the temperature and maintaining it is extremely important. Secondly, the food is the ultimate star of the show and the taste will make or break the guest experience. A perfect buffet is

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“While curating a buffet, it is extremely important to keep guest’s journey in mind right from the point he picks up the welcome drink until his last bite of dessert. Periodic menu engineering should also be done to understand cost implications viz-a-viz popularity of the dish.”

Pradipt Sinha, Director of Food and Beverage, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla



“People are emotionally connected to their food; hence if you give them their comfort food it brings out a lot of memories in their mind and enhances the value of your buffet even more”

Gurneet Singh Grover, Executive Chef, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore



a mix of traditional dishes as well as innovative options.

Placement at varying heights creates a visual spectacle and makes the dish more appetizing. Investing on right kind of crockery and stands can help us create beautiful buffet layouts. However, one must not elevate complex dishes to avoid any chance of spillage.

Since buffets are self-service in nature, food spillage could be a big issue. Hence, it is very important to make sure that food area is cleaned at regular intervals. It is advisable to keep beverage stations away from food ones.

Buffet tags with proper labelling are an integral part of setting up the buffet. This includes options such as Gluten Free, Eggs, Vegan, Healthy & more.

Strategic utilization of place is extremely important to ensure there is no overcrowding across the food area and there is an easy server access. Especially during a group event, the guests tend to explore the buffet in groups.

Get creative- be it grouping similar flavours and dishes together or creating thematic bases/backgrounds to make the display more beautiful.

Concept such as ‘Dish of the day’ work wonders for long staying guests in order to surprise their palates with something new every time.

Sajid Patel, Executive Chef, Courtyard & Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road

Making the guest feel welcome through amuse bouchées and drinks to having the first impression of the buffet through eye appeal. Buffets can be considered as so convenient and yet prone to common shortcomings. If a dish is not refilled at

particular intervals or if the food is not at its appropriate temperature, it would make a bad impression upon the guest.

Sagar Kulkarni, Director of Food & Beverage at Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore

I feel the trend for the buffet food has drastically changed. Now guests are more attracted towards the healthy options at the buffet. Chefs across the globe do a fabulous job by accommodating Gluten free, keto, vegan options at the buffet which makes the buffet complete. There should be something for everyone. I always believe that food is a sensory experience and the buffet is best judged not only on how it tastes but also how it looks and smells. Good food when accompanied with great presentation and ambience makes all the difference.

Tips on how best to plan a Buffet and keep it revenue generating

Pradipt Sinha, Director of Food and Beverage, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla

Menu Planning- The recipes must be curated with locally sourced and seasonal produce for enhanced taste and cost



effectiveness.

Live Stations- Live stations give an opportunity for individual portioning. This not only curbs food wastage but also ensures that dishes are absolutely fresh while they are served. Similarly, instead of composite salads, concept such as 'make your own salad' is a better idea.

Marketing- Offering special offers over online food discovery platforms, curating thematic buffet and dining experiences on occasions such as Christmas, Teacher's Day, Mother's Day etc. is a good way to attract footfalls which eventually helps in business generation.

Up selling - Innovative Cocktails, Mocktails and other beverage options are great way to generate additional revenue when a guest visits the restaurant. The outlet can also kick-start special discount via bounce back cards to encourage guests for a second visit.

Sajid Patel, Executive Chef, Courtyard & Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road

Presentation of a wide array of desserts with interactive Live Counters is always a good idea to engage with the guests.



"It is always good to train staff to cross-sell & upsell products as it helps in revenue generation. Upsell is offering high-margin products as add-ons. For instance, offering drinks alongside or offering sample wines"

Pramod Naithani, General Manager, Anuraga Palace, Ranthambore

Themes oriented buffets are great crowd pullers like Hearty and Seasonal; Traditional Lost Recipes; Balance of Innovation and Authentic and Emphasis on Soul food."

Sagar Kulkarni, Director of Food & Beverage at Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore

Buffet Presentation – Less is more is the idea behind successful buffet presentation. Art elements always look nice at the buffet.

Vary the height- It is more appealing to the eye and will add dimension to your set-up.

Position Strategically- As per the Number of Guests dining at the venue Position the buffet. Give it a starting point, an ending point, and make sure there is a lot of extra space at both beginning and end for people.

Gurneet Singh Grover, Executive Chef, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore

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Summer Salads

Few years back, when foreigners landed in India, especially Delhi, they use to bring an instruction sheet that forbade them to eat salads, in fact anything that was uncooked including fruits unless they peeled it themselves. Delhi Belly was not a myth they were repeatedly told. Even at buffets mostly salads used to be dubious looking green leaves that were either burnt or limp, hardly ever enticing. Slowly but surely it has all changed for the better.

Local Availability

Delhi due to its extreme heat always was dependent on other cities for supply of salads during summer. However, during the winter certain outlets did brisk business with coloured peppers, various greens and then came the lure of baby corn, small cherry tomatoes. Today, the profile of the local availability has changed once again - for the five stars, small restaurants and households

alike. Supply of fancy greens does not end even during the crippling summer heat. Yes, they become more expensive and sometimes one has to chase the elusive crisp lettuce but they are all there.

In winters the supply to foodservice outlets comes from the local farms nearby but in summer Delhi's supply vanishes and then sometime they depend on farms like in south India. Normally there are five kinds of different greens apart from other cold meats and ready salads. The list of the greens to be found at the tables of the hotels are Iceberg, Lolo Rosso, Rocket, Endives, Radicchio, Oak leaf, Frissee among other regulars as the plain lettuce, Chinese greens etc. The moment a salad starts looking even a wee bit tired it must be changed. Raw vegetables are very delicate and process to handle them must be taken very seriously.

Hygiene is paramount and a regular checkup must be done to ascertain that all

procedures are being followed and hygiene levels are never compromised. It is a tough standard to maintain and even a surprise check can be done. With their Chef uniforms of three-quarter sleeve length even the exposed arm has to be clean as a 'Swab for test' can be taken at any time. It might not sound appealing but it is very reassuring that such a stringent check is being kept in the kitchen.

Dressing

Russian salads used to be the most popular when only mayonnaise was the touchstone of taste for most of us in Delhi. Slowly the world of salad dressings opened up and we learnt that there is a lot more to mixing of oils and a few herbs with vinegar or even wines to create culinary magic. It could even be done healthy with reduced sugar or next to no oil, without compromising the taste factor.

The salad dressings for fancy greens are mostly made from olive oil base, cream base and mayonnaise base. Sometimes there could be another one that is yoghurt base. These are made on a daily basis and as most of the quantity is not that much, never re-cycle.

Presentation

For presentation purpose we have to be creative. A good chef will make a salad look enticing. Don't make it too much in advance and just before bringing it out pour the dressing. A delicate single and often colourful portion with asparagus balanced with other vegetable or with a prawn in a single glass always looks enticing and appealing. Abundance in a bowl of the material or even a lavish quantity of deliciously pink cold prawns can be inviting but the charm of a single goblet or plate with a perfectly balanced portion is always irresistible.

Most Chefs also like to mix the fruits with meats in a flavoursome dressing that is visually appealing and a culinary delight. Mangoes, melons, sweet potatoes and all kinds of green vegetables, especially the crunchy snowpeas work wonders. The magic word is 'crunchy'. Limp or tired vegetables never make for appealing salads however good the dressing might be.

Cold Cuts & Meats

For the diehard carnivore a salad is not worth consuming unless accompanied with cold cuts of different meats and poultry. Yes, it is true, for there is something about those German salamis, the smoked salmon, and all the other pickled fish that is truly summer. The quality of Parma Ham is always reason enough to opt for the buffet.

Sunday Specials

For the domestic consumer, Sundays are the days of leisurely lunches where the woman of the house has not had too much work forced upon her. That is also the day when most hotels come in their own during the summer months when sometimes the hotel's occupancy is not so demanding. You can look forward to wild rice salads, more dressing variety or more colourful and an increased number of salads.

Some high end properties even do the Caviar and Champagne combination, which takes the level of salad to the naughty level of taste. Indulgence is the keyword here. The wide variety of cold cuts, fancy fruits and delicious greens, the possibility of even getting a bespoke salad dressing and it is an experience worth sharing with good company to make a great experience. Beats the heat anytime!

A Secret Recipe

Cold soups to accompany a salad is what summer lunch dreams are made of. The best part of cold soups is that you don't need to stand over a hot stove. But that doesn't mean you can get away with stale stock! To make the perfect fish base stock that could be used to make delicately flavoured cold soups, put bones of seafood in a large pot. Add bay leaf, a few vegetables of choice and fill it up with ice. Fill it up with ice and then put it on slow fire. Give it an hour and what you get would have no scum or cloudy look. It would be clear, delicious stock. Add your vegetables of choice here and make a soup to go with salads. Alternatively, go for the classic cold cucumber soup that is always so refreshing in summer.



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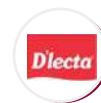


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Art of Cutting Salads

Festive fruit and vegetable garnishes are fun to make and can spruce up any meal, say the entire chef fraternity. No wonder, they use them to add a burst of colour to any plate – from side salads to main courses.

Have fun, take your time and be creative!

See what you get, curls and roses and umbrellas!

Carrot Curls

Using a vegetable peeler, cut thin lengthwise strips of carrot. Roll each carrot strip up and secure with a wooden pick. Place in ice water for several hours to curl. Just before garnishing, remove wooden picks. Use to add a burst of colour to grilled fish or chicken.

Cherry Tomato Roses

Score an X on the blossom end of each



cherry tomato. Using a sharp knife, carefully peel back the skin partway down the side of the tomato to make four petals.

Radish Rose

Select firm radishes and wash. If leaves are present, trim the stem so that just the most tender green leaves remain. Trim off the root. Using a paring knife, cut “petals” around the radish, from root end to the stem. Do not attempt to pry the petals open; they will break. Place the radishes in cold water and refrigerate until they “bloom”; drain.

Radish Pompoms

Remove a thin slice from each end of the radish. Starting at either end, cut each radish lengthwise into thin slices, cutting to, but not through the other end. At right angles to the first cuts, make a similar series of parallel cuts to the same depth. Place in cold water;



refrigerate until crisp.

Fluted Cucumbers or Zucchini

Draw the tines of a fork lengthwise down a cucumber or zucchini; repeat all around vegetable. Cut crosswise into slices.

Green Onion Brushes

Slice off the roots and most of the top portions from green onions. Make slashes at both ends to produce a fringe. Place the green onions in ice water, and the ends will curl back to resemble brushes.

Lemon Twists

Cut 1/8-inch-thick slices from a lemon. Cut halfway across each slice, stopping at the center, and twist the ends of the slice in opposite directions.

Strawberry Fans

Use fresh strawberries with the green tops still attached. Slice each berry from the tip almost all the way to the stem end; carefully fan out the berry slices. ■



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Where Lamb Matters...

Mutton is a popular meat product and the name is used both for meat of goat and sheep but 'lamb', the specific term that describes a young sheep is used for young goat's too in India.

There is huge confusion about the distinct meanings of lamb, meat, mutton, kid, etc., but one can easily confirm the usage, if not well aware about it, by visiting the markets or by spending some time learning about these topics from the people engaged in the business of supplying raw meat.

Lamb and mutton are commonly used generic terms. However, if Australian lamb is used which is known for its peculiar aroma, then it is specifically mentioned as it is more expensive and has certain taste, which is sometimes not acceptable locally.

The term lamb is used to refer the meat of young sheep. The word mutton is used for the grown ups of both sheep and goat, usually after they achieve the age of one year or so. On the other hand, meat is used as a generally for the flesh of cattle, sheep, pig and goat, which are specifically reared

for consumption. Some of the popular Indian dishes where lamb finds its place prominently along with goat meat are biryanis and quormas.

All kinds of meat are rich sources of protein and variable amounts of fats, iron and thiamine. Meat of lamb contains less fat because of its tender age and tastes much better than an older one. The demand for consumption of lamb and mutton is highest



in England, almost five times as compared to other countries in the world. In India, Rajasthan tops the production of lamb.

Availability

Sheep are reared all over the world. Most lamb meat production is somewhat seasonal. This is mostly due to the fact that lambs exhibit seasonal reproduction, meaning that most of the rearing sheep will breed during a particular season of the year. There are some breeds, however that biologically exhibit different breeding patterns and may be able to breed in some other season too, like in spring. International slaughter markets thus show a prominent seasonal shift in the availability of lamb meat. In India, the demand for lamb increases during the winter months, tells Shahid who works in a butcher shop of a south Delhi meat market.

Price for lamb usually follows a seasonal pattern from year to year and somewhat hovers on the same figure as that of goat's meat. Producers' supply and consumers' demands are the primary reasons for price



fluctuation. Also, religious customs and cultural festivals highly drive the production of lamb and its intake in countries like India.

The conversion factor from live animal to usable parts determines the cost of the lamb. The boneless form of any meat is always costlier than 'with bone' meat. According to American standards it takes about 3.3 pounds of live lamb to produce 1 pound of boneless, trimmed retail cuts.

Grades and Standards

Lamb and mutton (older sheep) are graded by two grading systems: quality grading and yield grading. The purpose of the grading is to aid in ranking of the lambs both as live animals and as meat products. Using the grading systems, products can be more easily priced and marketed according to given values.

Quality Grades help in distinguishing the predicted palatability of the meat product.

Yield Grades determine differences amongst carcasses between the amount of proportional trimmed meat in comparison to fat and bone in the carcass. There are five yield grades between 1 and 5. The lower the yield grade, the better as this means that the carcass most likely exhibits more of meat as compared to waste (fat, bone, unused by-products).

Storage and Preservation

Any form of meat should be stored at its appropriate temperature, usually 1– 5 degree C (34 – 41 degree F). Raw meat should be stored separately from cooked meat or meat products. Chilled meat must be used by the 'use by' date, unless written permission to use it later has been given by the supplier.

Temperature of chillers and freezers should be measured regularly. Chilled cooked meat must generally be stored below 8 degree C (46.4 degree F) but if it has been prepared for consumption without further cooking or reheating, the temperature must be at or below 5 degree C (41 degree F). Cut or sliced, smoked or cured meats must be stored at or below 5 degree C.

There are different methods known for preserving varieties of meat e.g. salting, chilling, freezing and canning. For the carcass of young meat (often soft because of the tender age) like that of lamb and mutton, freezing process is generally used where temperature is maintained just below the freezing point. The quality of the meat is not affected by freezing process. The meat can be preserved for long in the frozen form until required and then thawed before being used. Meats though, should not be stored beyond a week if proper forecasting is carried out.



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Lamb Processing

The situation of the meat market has now changed with consumer's demands. In the west, new developments have taken place in processing of lamb products. They are carried out in the slaughter plants where the carcass is cut into specific cuts and then vacuum-sealed and shipped to stores. This process has shown to be more economical as labour costs have been reduced. Also, with this method, the amount of fat and bone that is packaged has been reduced and therefore, more overall pounds of lamb product can be packaged and sold directly to stores. This process is economical and provides opportunity for the buyers to buy only those specific cuts of lamb that they will utilize.

If meat is processed and blast frozen, the quality gets affected only marginally; however, constant thawing and freezing would spoil the meat.

Tendering Facts

In the process of aging, the chemical composition of the meat changes slowly and the texture becomes more tender. After the slaughtering of lamb, the lactic acid accumulation begins in the tissues due to breakdown of the walls of lysosomes, the cell bodies that store protein-attacking enzymes. As a result of this these enzymes digest the proteins indiscriminately. The flavour change takes place due to

degradation of proteins into individual amino acids, though the tenderness of the meat (breaking up of the actin-myosin complex) has not been confirmed to be the resultant of these enzymes.

A carbohydrate, glycogen, gets converted into lactic acid in the animal and is the most important agent in the aging process. Protein muscle fibers are partly digested and as a result of these changes, the meat tenderizes.

Consumption Pattern

Indians prefer goat meat to sheep, as there is a certain degree of negative variance about the quality of sheep meat that can be felt on tasting so. This becomes evident when people immersed in this business, give their opinion about sheep meat. Says Shakeel, employee of a meat supplier that the quality of sheep meat is of far inferior to that of goat. He goes on to say that the use of lamb is extensive because it is superior quality meat that is used in various cuisine, both Indian and international. But as the lamb grows into an adult sheep, the quality of the meat deteriorates. Goat meat is also redder as compared to sheep meat.

Sheep are also reared because they are a source of wool to us. The locals of the regions of Himachal Pradesh and J&K prefer the meat of sheep to goat and similar trends could be found in the regions of northeast India. But, in the plains, goat is preferred to lamb (sheep's young).

Thus the domestic demand for lamb and sheep is not as high and it is primarily meant for export. Due to social reasons, the per capita consumption of meat, fish and poultry in India is far below that of developed countries. "Indian and mid eastern dishes have extensive usage of lamb preparations.

"People are not ready for the sheep meat yet, the consumption is restricted to only lamb for delicacies like kebabs and other roasted meat preparations primarily snacks," says an employee of the Karim's at Delhi's famous Jama Masjid, who insisted on anonymity.



Thus, the buying pattern could turn out to be erratic. It is quite surprising that the young one of the goat is also called lamb where linguistically it should be called kid. "We call the meat of a young goat as lamb and people insist on having lamb of goat," he informed.

Confusion Characteristics

According to the textbook style of cookery, the types of cuts from the carcass of lamb are shoulders, legs, breasts, middle neck, scrag end, best end and saddle. In a single carcass the shoulder, leg and breast cuts contain two pieces each.

When we go to a butcher's shop, we usually see the hanging carcasses of dead animals. "The features of a goat and that of a sheep's meat are almost similar and are not readily identifiable, from a layman's point of view.

Butchers of neighborhood meat shops in residential colonies say that there are many, who sell sheep meat claiming it to be goat meat. But, they cannot fool the cooking professionals; they can easily identify the difference.

The most important aspect of raw meat is its tenderness, flavour and moistness. These factors are responsible for making the dishes good and for justifying the recipes that are used. A recipe can be only good when the primary ingredient stands out for correct specifications standard desired for them.

Lamb is a popular meat product in most parts of the world but in India the demand and popularity remains confined to a smaller section amongst the non-vegetarian. Our taste is different and only few states of the north are used to it. The demand in hotels for lamb is found to be erratic and many times, foreign chefs prefer meat of sheep rather than goat, which is preferred by the Indian chefs, for mutton dishes.

The question arises, what about the taste factor after preparation? It totally depends on how it is cooked. Though goat meat is ideally suited for Indian preparations, traditional styles of cooking like roasting the leg of lamb or a rack of lamb would taste great if cooked with imported lamb.

The fat content of sheep meat imparts it with a particular taste for which it is savoured all across the world. However, the quality and source of meat is a debatable topic in Indian cookery, depends entirely on personal preferences of an individual. ■

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Tasting Mustard

A zesty all purpose grainy mustard sauce is in vogue at many fast food joints for spice lovers, mainly used to zip up the flavours of poached salmon, broiled or poached chicken, grilled meats, sliced tomatoes, etc..

At present, the markets for sauces, spices and condiments are soaring to its prime. The credit goes to all hotels and restaurants, which constantly hanker for zesty flavours and seasonings agents to offer distinct taste to their customers. Mustard sauce falls in the same category that has found stable feet in many cuisines as well as in most of the fast food outlets.

Earlier, fast food lovers used to quench their palates by mere accompanying typical tomato ketchup, now this sector look for a number of tangy sauces that are served to relish the savouries. Of late, a creamy and tangy mustard sauce has become the most demanded accompaniment with fast foods and found stable feet in the sauceboats at

every fast food joint.

This unique tangy and pungent mustard sauce is prepared from the finest quality of mustard seeds, by using a traditional



cold process to retain its special flavour. It is an ideal accompaniment that adds joy to devour many spicy dishes and snacks including pizzas, footlongs, burgers and hotdogs.

Cut the Mustard

Mustard seeds are the key ingredient in mustard sauce, which come in three varieties: dark ones, which are either black or brown called *Brassica nigra*, white ones called *Sinapsis alba*, and the yellow, Indian variety known as *Brassica Juncea*. The strongest is the dark type of mustard seed and white ones are the mildest ones. These seeds have unique characteristic pungent flavour, released when the powdered seeds come in contact with water, which is preferably be used cold in order to promote a good mustard products especially mustard sauce. Owing to the fact that warm water would give the substance a bitter taste as well as would

not have long shelf life, so this piquant sauce is made with cold water.

While mustard sauce is not a new creation in the sauce industry, rather it is an age-old recipe that has been prepared instantly for seasoning various dishes in almost every Indian kitchen. The present commercially prepared mustard sauces are used for seasoning meat or fish, flavouring for other sauces and served as accompaniment with savouries.

More than Seasoning Agent

Since the ancient period, people from India to Rome munched on the crushed mustard seeds mainly used as a seasoning for meat and fish. Native varieties of the Mediterranean region come in white and yellow mustard, which are larger in size and mild in flavour. Other two varieties, brown and black mustard seeds are much stronger in taste and smaller in size than white and yellow ones. Brown seeds are used for pickling and seasoning, and are more frequently used in European and Asian cuisines. Black mustard seeds paste is prized for their distinctive taste in many Indian cuisines.

In its whole granule form, mustard seeds by themselves are relatively odourless. The



strong flavour and odour are only released when crushed seeds are mixed with water activating an enzyme in the seeds.

When mustard seeds are crushed and left to sit in a liquid like grape juice, wine, vinegar, cider, water or cream, they react with it and turn into yellow or mustard colour. Then, these seeds are ground into a fine paste to make mustard sauce. By nature, mustard seeds owe a strong pungent flavour, so the prepared mustard paste and sauce promptly start to deteriorate the moment it comes in

contact with air. So, it needs to be packed in an airtight jar. In addition, the flavour of mustard sauce can be obtained in both mild and strong taste by varying the type and proportion of mustard seeds.

Mustard is very tricky spice, which can change its taste dramatically just by varying temperature while preparation. The industry need to make the product that can be sustained up till four months at room temperature even at extreme seasons. The product should satisfy the Indian palate, by using mild mustards and less pungent.



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Although preparing process of mustard sauce is identical for all mustard varieties, but hull of mild mustard seeds is left partially on seeds and cannot be separated from it, so one can notice hull in mild mustard sauce products. Whereas, strong mustard seeds hull can be sifted out makes fine paste of mustard. A strong variety of mustard sauce is prepared from 'Dijon' mustards that make sharp and flavoursome sauce.

A strong tart flavoured mustard sauce is prepared from 'Dijon' mustards added with spices, herbs or other flavourings. Herbs such as basil, tarragon, chives, parsley etc. and other seasonings such as garlic, chilies, ginger, green peppercorns, or fruits such as lemon, lime or berries can be added to mustard for great spreads on meats and vegetables. For making sweet flavoured mustard sauce, mustard is blended with honey, malt whiskey, or ale with sugar. Mixing flavoured mustard with yogurt or sour cream makes a delicious all-purpose sauce for steamed vegetables or poached fish.

Locally manufactured mustard sauce comes in many varieties suited to regional tastes. Most mustard pastes and sauces provide an endless array of the products used for seasoning as well as accompaniment with evening snacks.

Varieties

There are few popular variations comes in mustard sauce that can be prepared through minute changes in the basic ingredients. It is available for different uses primarily for seasoning as well as for all-purpose table sauce.

Basically, there is an identical process for making any variety of mustard sauce. For preparing normal all purpose mustard



sauce, one ingredients like fine powder of dry mustard seeds, Dijon mustard powder, thickened sour cream, butter, flour, white wine vinegar, pepper and salt.

First of all, in a saucepan melt the butter over moderate heat. And stir in the flour to mix it thoroughly. Then, whisk the sour cream, white wine vinegar, pepper and salt to form a smooth mixture and add the grounded mustard. Then, make into a thick mixture, which is ready to be served instantly.

In another simple recipe for all purpose mustard sauce, blend all ingredients like two cups of sour cream, half cup of plain mayonnaise, cold mustard paste, fresh lemon juice or white vinegar, together and then season the mixture with salt and pepper according to taste. If the mixture is getting into hard texture then add some milk to it for getting smooth creamy texture. Then, chill the mustard sauce at least for an hour in an airtight jar before serving.

Mustard sauce product are made from the best quality mustard powder and

prepared by using cold process to maintain the sharpness and pungency of mustard in sauce.

Mustard sauce sometimes acts as mother sauce, which can be used for preparing other popular dressings such as Thousand Island Dressing, Remoulade Sauce, Tartar Sauce, etc. Moreover, same sauce can be used in most recipes, substituting dry grounded mustard just by doubling the quantity required.

A zesty all purpose grainy mustard sauce is in vogue at many fast food joints for spice lovers, mainly used to zip up the flavours of poached salmon, broiled or poached chicken, grilled meats, sliced tomatoes, celery sticks and for seasoning or dressing salads. The grainy texture is acquired by replacing smooth mustard powder with un-hulled coarse mustard seeds in the same ingredients.

Yet, many manufactures showed concerned for diet conscious segment by preparing low fat mustard sauce. In which, they non-fat yogurt is used by substituting sour cream and add finely beaten egg yolk with mustard powder in warm water bowl and mixed in less-fat mayonnaise.

Another variety of sweet mustard sauce, gives a palatable flavour to pizzas, hotdogs, burgers, cooked fish and meat. It is usually sweetened with honey and fresh cream instead of sour cream. This is a true sauce, not just thinned down mustard, and the delightful flavour comes with no penalty in salt or fat.

Market Presence

Mustard sauce has added a contemporary tang to many dishes. As the demand of unusual condiments and sauces is growing the mustard sauce has received welcome place in sauce shelves. The demand of mustard sauce is growing at fast pace.

With rising popularity of mustard sauce in fast foods outlet, now it has entered in many starred hotels and deluxe restaurants as well. The mustard sauce product can be used as table sauce as well as seasoning gravies. There is substantial demand for mustard sauce in institutional sector.

Now, it has become a fashion to serve mustard sauce with every type of fast food, Chinese cuisines, and Oriental cuisines including all seafood. Since, Indian do not prefer sharp and pungent flavour thus manufacturers must reduced pungency in our mustard sauce products. Also incorporate certain other flavours in the mustard sauce to make it more appealing. ■



Cream Cheese

Cream cheese occupies a relatively small but important place among the many varieties of cheeses, in India, specially in bakery segment. We all are quite familiar with cheese cake, a popular variety among cakes. Many companies in India are now manufacturing cream cheese, contributing to the development of the product. Some of their names are established, but many others are still trying to make a mark. There are few international brands also present in Indian market.

Most of us using cream cheese know little what makes it so creamy. Mostly everyone know about Cheddar, Mozzarella, Parmesan but why cream cheese is considered cheese, when it is not comparable to other cheeses? Cheeses similar in taste and texture to cream cheese include mascarpone, an Italian soft cheese, and Boursin, a creamy cheese that originated in Normandy.

Cream cheese is a soft, neutral-tasting cheese made from milk and cream. Its subtle sweetness, mild tanginess, and silky smooth texture make it extremely versatile: Spread it on a bagel, mix it into cookie dough or cake batter, or use it as a base for creamy frosting. Cream cheese is a popular spread and filling for sandwiches; it is also used in baking, for cheesecake, and is a component of some pastries and frostings.

Cream cheese is nearly white in colour and has a mild but rich taste. It's soft, smooth and mild. It is highly nutritious being rich in fat and milk proteins. Cream cheese is similar to cottage cheese but is higher in fat content, cottage cheese being made from skim or nonfat milk.

Cream cheese is a fresh cheese containing at least 33 percent fat with a moisture content of 55 percent or less. It also contains protein in the range of 8-9% which has the ability to retain a large amount of water. Thus high moisture content in cheese is due to the presence of high protein. The cheese is comparable in flavour and texture to mascarpone cheese.

Making Cream Cheese

Lactic acid is added to pasteurized milk and cream, which lowers the mixture's pH and causes it to form curds. To put it simply, it becomes separated into curds and whey. Then the whey is drained off, the curds are heated, stabilizers are added, and cream cheese is formed. Cream cheese does not require aging



and is meant to be used relatively quickly.

The best way to soften cream cheese is to allow it to come to room temperature on the counter. This will take an hour or two. You can also soften cream cheese by beating it with a hand mixer or in the bowl of a stand mixer for about a minute. You can use microwave to soften cream cheese. Heat it in 10-second intervals to make sure it doesn't cook.

Homemade Cream Cheese

It is quite easy and simple to make cream cheese at home. The recipes require a starter culture, the only ingredients you need are cream, milk, an acid (like lemon juice or vinegar) and salt. The acid makes the dairy curdle, and then the curds are strained from the whey and processed in a food processor until nice and creamy.

Also cream cheese recipe starts with yogurt, so there's no need for any additional acids. The result is "more flavourful and tangier than regular cream cheese. The method also helps in further customization by to adding herbs, spices, fruits, vegetables etc. This type of homemade cream cheese can last up to two weeks in the refrigerator, while most of store-bought packs should be used within 10 days of opening.

Mostly unless cheesecake is on the menu, most chefs don't have cream cheese in store. Fresh cheese is used in different types of dishes like sweet and savoury dishes. The versatile nature of cream cheese and its genius add rich flavour and creamy texture to a huge variety of dishes—soufflés, risotto, and warm potato salad to name a few. It can also be used in different types of sauces. It helps smooth out sauces and other dishes. You can use cream cheese to create all kinds of savoury dips, spreads and cheese balls.

Industrial Cream Cheese

There are two main kinds of cream cheese based on fat contents in the initial and final

composition. One is single cream cheese and other is double cream cheese. Double-cream cheese having at least 9-11% fat content in the initial mix, while single-cream cheese having 4.5-5% fat content in the initial mix. One type of cream cheese is triple cream cheese that has 75% fat in dry matter contents.

Cream cheese is also categorized on the basis of packing type. One is cold pack cream cheese and other is hot pack cream cheese. It is used as a spread on bagels, as a salad dressing, and it can also be used as an ingredient for making many types of desserts, such as cheese cake.

The keeping quality of cold pack cream cheese is about 3 weeks or less, depending upon the efficiency of the plant and the methods of distribution. Manufacturers using the cold pack method are primarily concerned about the taste, flavour, body, and texture of their cheese. The taste and flavour, or aroma, depend upon the raw material and the quality of the starter used.

Dairy fat spread started to become popular due to its unique flavour therefore the cream cheese can be further processed to make cream cheese spread to meet the daily requirement.

Whether you make your own or stick to the grocery store option, it's a good idea to keep some cream cheese on hand at all times. You never know when an urge for that tangy, smooth dairy delight will strike.

Storing Cream Cheese

Though one can freeze cream cheese, but freezing and thawing can change the cheese on a chemical level – what was once creamy and smooth will turn grainy. It's totally fine to use frozen cream cheese in baking, but one probably won't spread it on bagel or mix it into frosting.

Unopened cream cheese can go straight into the fridge. The foil wrapping and cardboard packaging will work together to protect against freezer burn. Transfer opened cream cheese to an airtight container before freezing. Thaw frozen cream cheese by letting it sit in the fridge overnight, or for at least a few hours.

If you've already used some of the product, place it in an airtight container before returning it to the refrigerator and use it within 10 days. Never leave cream cheese at room temperature for more than three hours, as it can spoil and make you seriously sick. ■

Energy Drinks Real or Myth



What do a modern day multi-tasking woman, heavily overworked man, and above all the youngster who has to study and party with impossible vigour need the most? To have more than twenty-four hours in a day is the first wish to be soon followed by 'more energy to deal with the leftover tasks'. If advertisements are to be believed when you feel completely drained of energy and find that you are dragging your feet, unable to meet deadlines or do anything as per schedule, all you have to do is opt for an energy drink. Voila! It will all come rushing back to normal; no better than normal – you will be rejuvenated.

These energy drinks are now being stocked by the friendly paanwalla, though they are not cheap. Of course they are available at fancy outlets and even the bars and restaurants of five star hotels where the price goes up accordingly. Red Bull, the world's largest energy drink company, still dominates the market, having entered two decades ago, enjoying a 75 per cent share.

But it is being increasingly challenged by the likes of Tzinga, MountainDew, Monster, sting, few to name. Recently Budweiser Beats enter the market with a target to capture 10% of share.

There is a smaller percentage being wooed by drinks such as V1Power or even the healthier version without caffeine in powder form by makers such as Herbalife. The powder of Herbalife might be more tiresome as you have to mix it in water, but then you have the option of having it cold or hot and it has far reduced caffeine as compared to ready drinks. Even the taste of sugar can be controlled and at the end of the day, it is all herbal so healthier!

The Ingredients

Red Bull is from Austria, have the necessary ingredients of water, sucrose, Glucose, Sodium Citrate and the kick providing Caffeine which is listed by Red Bull as 0.03% of the drink. They list the various vitamins included in the drink and have their own slight difference of taste.



Eventually it comes down to personal taste and preference but effective advertising and brand promotions help.

Their leaflet simply informs you that 'Taurine and glucuronolactone are two important transmitters of the metabolism which the body can lack, especially with increased exertion, stress or even pollution. Red Bull replaces these substances and quickly reduces the harmful substances that may develop. Red Bull also stimulates the metabolism, blood circulation and central nervous system. Taurine contributes toward restoring muscle tone affected by a disturbed electrolyte count.' In other ways, their claim is that their energy drink makes you more alert, increases physical performances, improves your state of mind and concentration and reaction time.

It is also increasingly so that athletes and sportsmen are opting for these energy drinks. A sport-medical test led by University of Frankfurt and University of Paderborn show that the Red Bull drink positively affects the heart circulation parameters and duration of highest level of intensity can be maintained up to 25% longer. Now who can resist pushing that claim to their favour!

Taurine is an amino acid, which regulates the heart beat and helps in detoxifying function. Glucuronolactone is a carbohydrate and eliminates toxins from the body. Glucose is a fast-burning sugar providing instant boost of energy. Sucrose is a slow-burning sugar providing lasting effect of energy. Finally, Caffeine is a stimulant, which helps in fat burning and eliminates the sense of tiredness and helps to preserve the body's glycogen stores. Inositol affects nerve transmission and aids in the breakdown of fats. Vitamins (B2, B6, B12, Pantothenic acid and Niacin). They act as co-enzymes in metabolic reactions that build up and break down protein, fat and

carbohydrates to convert food into energy; and to maintain bodily functions. Niacin helps against hangover. Pantothenic acid is an energy conversion extract.'

Dietary Precautions

The producers of energy drinks ensure that here is no risk in having energy drink. WHO (World Health Organisation) has certified it as fit for human consumption. Doctors recommend pregnant women and children to avoid tea or coffee as intake of caffeine increases anxiety and makes you hyper active. But children who regularly consume tea or coffee can consume effect energy drink as it has caffeine equivalent to a cup of filter coffee.

Yes, it does dehydrate you so whether you consume the energy drink on its own or as a mixer with alcohol, it is advisable to take precaution and continue to consume water in addition. The energy drink, just like the Colas and other aerated drinks in the market cannot be used to combat the need for plain and simple Aqua.

The Cool Dude Factor

Any drink in Austria gains momentum when used as a mixer with Vodka and Red Bull succeeded in doing just that at the Ski

circuits. Apparently the first sale of their product was only at the petrol pumps as bars declined to stock it because it was categorised as 'medicinal' product. The cool dude factor was born with their astute advertising. I remember noticing the open jeep with a larger than life can painted in their distinctive colours at the back whizzing past in markets of South Delhi. The image stayed and the next time I saw the can I tried it. Their cartoons catch the imagination of any child and adult alike and their slogans make you laugh. It is the first step to checking it out the next time you see it. The Cool Dude factor is also provided by a unique name which signifies the functionality of the drink which stimulates and electrifies senses, hence, creating an effect.

Identifying the Market

When any of the drinks – energy or otherwise – is launched, identification of the market is the first hurdle. The right target means quicker results. Energy drink has to be popular with the bars and clubs. Apart from that, it is to be supplied to all the up market places including super markets and coffee houses. All major retail channels of modern trade are the key to

the success of the category.

Red Bull has done the identification by going on with music performances, logo emblazoned T shirts, free distribution of cans in the beginning wherever the youngsters congregated. With their international sponsoring of extreme sports, including racing and others they have a fan following.

Future of the Market

Best form of compliment, it is said, is imitation. There are multiple drinks available in the market already. With a still unexplored market it is even more so. The energy drinks market in India is relatively experienced now, with the first energy drink being launched more than two decades back. The Indian market is growing by approximately 16% CAGR. The market in India is growing steadily. With the emerging trend of a 16-hour working day, the work hard, party harder phenomena, changing lifestyles, people are beginning to demand something that can boost energy levels. Demand always dictates supply and cheaper versions, imitations with lesser ingredients and lower overheads will find a way. Yet, as is the case with other products the giants will still rule the top segment. ■



Disseminate the Right Sound

While music and dining seem ideally matched, many of the audio systems in restaurants deliver uneven sound coverage. The result is music that may be inaudible at one table and uncomfortably loud at another. Thus it is important to understand the nuances of sound system and follow guidelines how to treat your guests with melodic delicacy.

The sound system is one of the prominent components in the hospitality industry. A restaurant serves a mood and not just food. It is the atmosphere in the form of cogent ambience, which drives customers to visit a place again and again.

Time and again it has been recognized that ambience of a venue is a strong marketing tool.

Sound makes an Atmosphere

When it comes to sound, tempo and loudness have historically been the key dimensions.

These atmospheric dimensions need to be carefully designed to match with moods of the targeted customer. One would not have linoleum on the floor of an exotic restaurant. The discriminating customer

would expect carpeting or perhaps marble.

By the same token an exclusive restaurant would not have the same lighting as a fast food joint. Similarly, choice of music at a pub would not be same as a restaurant offering oriental cuisine.

In short, atmospherics are designed to convey a specific image and set a definite mood. The key is to have all the senses – sound, vision, smell and touch in sync.

The Value of Music

Various researches reveal that one of the key senses the customer relates to, is hearing. It greatly affects the time customer will spend in the restaurant. Research concludes that customers equate the presence of music with better service. On the other hand behavioural scientists have studied the effects of music on worker productivity. They have found that high tempo music can serve as a strong stimulus to overcome low biorhythmic period that all humans experience all through the day. As a result, companies that offer music programming can provide a package that not only matches the ambience of a restaurant but also help employees remain

alert. The owners can use music as a tool to increase both customer comfort and customer stay time.

Quality Aspects

While the importance of music in restaurants and retail outlets is a recognized fact today, quality of sound is not what the guest encounters often when he is eating out. At most outlets one can hear music but it does not usually sound clear and natural. Traditionally, music is judged on content and tempo, often ignoring the critically important aspect of quality of sound.

In order to understand why quality of sound is often absent in a large number of outlets, it is helpful to examine the elements of a commercial music system.

- The first link of this chain is the programming content – the material that is played.
- The second link is the storage medium – source for where the sound is generated.
- The third link is the transmission medium – FM.
- The fourth link is the system electronics, primarily the amplifier other than that would include the source controller and

system controller.

- The last and critical link is the loudspeaker.

The sound signal travels through these links sequentially, so if one is inferior the final signal will be inferior. The chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

Over the last couple of decades the quality of consumer hi-fi equipment has steadily improved to a point where systems manufactured now reproduced high quality, natural sound. It is no longer necessary for you to be an audiophile to have a high quality sound system.

The result is that people everywhere – even your customers – are used to high quality sound. The hospitality industry unfortunately has not kept pace with the modern advances. Yet the various links in the audio chain have seen improvements.

Better Scheduling

The music programming business has evolved dramatically since the early days. Today there is an entire range of original artist recordings encompassing classical, folk, indipop, rock, Jazz, Pop, blues, country and western. That’s not all there’s a whole range of occasion specific programming available.

Better Amplifiers and System Electronics

The amplifiers used to reinforce sound in large public places have seen a major shift in its designs. What began as a suitcase size, today, comes on a small printed circuit board. To the benefit of the user and the application these systems have become modular and can be extended as per the need and number of speakers and areas. All this now happens without a change in the backbone or a need for a shutdown. Increase in areas means more speakers but at the amplifier end all that is needed to do is add a card and the system is up and running. From the maintenance point of view these are a blessing in disguise as even if one amp fails all one needs to do is replace that card the overall system keeps performing without interruption.

Loudspeakers a Key Factor

Without better loudspeakers, dramatic improvements in the other critical elements in the audio chain would result in little or no overall improvement in the quality of sound the customer hears.

How does one tell the difference between a good and a bad speaker? One

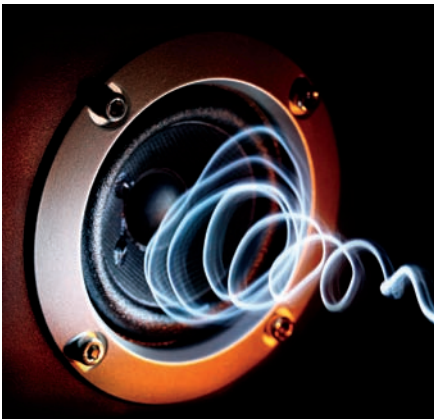


might look at a list of specifications, but unless he is an engineer, the ohms, Watts and other data won’t mean much.

You might take a look at these speakers themselves. Maybe the bigger the better. Don’t be fooled; its not necessarily true. When you go to buy car you drive it. If one is buying speakers he should listen to them and compare the sound. Particularly useful is an A-B demonstration where you directly compare speakers playing the same music from the same system side by side.

You need not be an audio expert to recognize good sound quality. Research shows that three out of four listeners can tell the difference between poor sound and quality sound and will consistently choose the better sounding loudspeaker.

To help people understand sound quality sound engineers have established a standard set of simple definitions that allow all of us to characterize audio performance in common terms rather than engineering jargon.



Unfolding Quality sound

The descriptive terms are: “Clarity,” “Fullness,” “Brightness,” “Fidelity” and “Pleasantness”. Understanding these terms gives you the reference you need to make judgments about what you hear. These definitions will help evaluate sound quality:

- Clarity means that sound reproduction is distinct, pure and clear. You can clearly hear and distinguish between different instruments and voices. The opposite is an unclear, distinct, muddy sound.
- Fullness means the quality of the bass (low frequency) sounds is balanced with mid-range and treble (high frequency) sounds so that the entire range is included without imitations. The opposite is a thin sound. Good sound is neither too full or too thin.
- Brightness means the quantity of the treble sounds is balanced with the mid-range and bass sounds. The opposite is a dull sound. Good sound is neither too bright or too dull.
- Fidelity refers to how faithful or similar the reproduction is compared to the original sound. Perfect fidelity means the music sounds exactly as it would if you were present in the room where it was originally performed.
- Pleasantness is an overall rating that concentrates on the lack of aggravations and annoyances in the reproduction.

The End Result

The bottom line is that if using this simple vocabulary, you can describe your own experience with sound, you can easily identify good and poor sound. If you can tell the difference so can your customers.

With evolution of better programming, and electronics and now better loudspeakers, there’s no reason to have inferior quality of sound in the outlet. For a reasonable cost, today one have a system that makes a Steinway grand Piano sound as rich and full as an original instrument.

A good sound system can be the audio equivalent of clear panes of glass, allowing true sound reproduction to convey the image you intend, or they can act as filters that distort and convey something unintended to the customers.

Business managers are faced with increasing competition from a variety of sources and it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish your outlet from the competition. One way to gain an edge is to create a unique and exciting environment. And what better way to do it than getting quality sound. ■

Growing Indian QSR Market

India's Quick Service Restaurants (QSRs) market has shown major growth in a significantly shorter period. It is expected to grow at CAGR 23% till 2025. The major contributors to this growth are large food services chains such as McDonald's, Burger King, Domino's, as per the recent report by Edelweiss Securities. These companies have now penetrated deep into India's smaller cities, and benefited from a younger market segment.

Lockdown during Covid dealt a major blow to the food services industry. But during pandemic major players in QSR segment were preferred brands, boosting its sales. Large players were quick to remedy the impact on business by scaling their existing delivery capabilities. The more recent popularity of online food ordering and food delivery platforms have enabled QSRs reach more consumers.

"QSRs took a heavy knock from covid-19, especially the store/non-delivery focused players. Fortunately, these chains had the infrastructure and process for delivery services in place long before the spread of the pandemic, which enabled them to adapt swiftly to government regulations," the report said.

The report pegged the QSR chain market to be the highest growing sub-segment in the food services market over the next five years. "Over FY20-25, the QSR chain market is estimated to be the highest growing sub-segment--23% CAGR--of not just the chain market, but also the entire foodservice market," the report said.

Fast-food chains are still less than 5% of India's food services market--the global average rests at 20%. The QSR industry in India primarily dominated by Domino's, McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, and Taco Bell. The market also includes many regional chains and standalone restaurants.

Edelweiss estimates that while the entire food services market plunged 82% year-on-year in the first half of FY21, the contraction that organized QSR chains was restricted to 45%; which has already



recovered at 85% of pre-covid levels. Most QSRs, except Dominos, are still tweaking their business models even as they keep expanding. QSR brands will also need to work towards favorable store economics and continue to localize their menu," the report said. Future growth in the segment will be driven by chains in QSR market, which accounted for 54% of the total QSR sub-segment in FY20 and are estimated to reach 64% of the QSR sales by FY25, it said.

In the past few months, burgers became a major part of food orders. It gained popularity as quick service restaurants (QSRs), cloud kitchens offered burgers as safe& hygienic, orders. The fast delivery eat-at-home orders or the ever-consuming smart eating millennials, burgers became a major meal. India's growing appetite for fast food has taken the comfort meal to a level where gourmet products and fresh



ingredients have underlined new and niche offerings.

The QSR segment is experiencing growth as a result of technological innovations. The extreme health hazard has also made people more aware of their well-being, and a keen eye is kept on the hygiene and its maintenance in various food serving entities. The QSRs are adopting new technologies to enhance their product quality and consistency.

Recently, Daniel Schmidt, Managing Director of International Business, Antunes USA, made a visit to India to access the QSR growth in India and the possibilities of further expansion of Antunes in India. The company has already made its products available in India, through D K G Sales, importers & distributors of Antunes range of products.

Antunes is a prominent USA manufacturing company that distributes commercial countertop cooking equipment all over the world. Manufacturing for the foodservice industry since 1955, its worldwide customers include McDonalds and Burger King, Wendys, Taco Bell, KFC, plus many smaller chains and independent operators using their technology to streamline operations.

Antunes is family-owned and operated company, with its headquarters at Carol Stream, Illinois, They have grown to become a leading custom solutions provider of countertop cooking equipment and water filtration systems for the global foodservice market. Antunes offer innovative products of the highest quality, which includes equipments for Toasting, Steaming, Grilling, Cup Dispensers, Kitchen Timers, Water treatment, Cabinets and Automated& Integrated Solutions.

During a chat Daniel was quite optimistic about the future growth of QSRs in India. He explained about the manufacturing of Antunes range of products at a Chennai manufacturing facility, where they will be developing innovative products to suit Indian market needs.

How you look at Indian QSR market and perceive its growth?

It is exciting to be in the Indian QSR market during such a tremendous growth period. We believe that the QSR market is at an inflection point and that there are excellent opportunities with existing brands, new emerging brands and the varieties of menus and tastes. During my recent trip, I experienced a strong entrepreneurial energy to create new menu items and dishes.

You see any change in trends in current QSR market in India?

Some of the trends that we see include an emergence of new, local brands and concepts, new store openings and expanding menus to meet the demands of customers.

What according to you are the benchmarks for the success of a QSR?

In my opinion, a successful QSR must deliver on its brand promise. I consider speed of service, consistent food quality and convenience as key benchmarks.

Do you provide turnkey solutions to the Operators?

Antunes' unique competitive competency is to provide custom equipment solutions to the commercial restaurant industry. We have a long history of partnering and collaborating with our customers to develop custom equipment solutions for new kitchen configurations, menu items and throughput requirements. For example, our sales, product management and engineering teams engage with our customers in their restaurants on a regular basis to understand the operational challenges they face and to design customer-specific solutions to address these.

Does your products suits Indian QSR market, offering local variants (Indianisation)?

We have tested numerous traditional Indian menu items such as idli, dim sum, noodles, biryani and rice dishes in our steamers and confirmed that they are excellent options for local variants. We continue to refine our products, including develop specific accessories existing platforms and new platforms according to the needs of the local market.

India is a price cautious market. How you believe you can break



Daniel Schmidt

their traditional way of operations?

The key is our hands-on consultative approach. We work with our customers to understand their goals, opportunities and operational challenges. We offer a wide variety of products that suit any number of operations and budgets. Our products have been proven by multinational QSR brands globally to provide consistent and reliable results. For example, operators are always looking for ways to simplify their operational processes and improve the quality of the menu items they serve. A key benefit of our flash steamers is that they are specifically designed to be simple, easy to use and maintain. Steam, in and of itself, is an excellent method to preserve product quality and freshness.

What are your future plans for further growth of Antunes in India?

In 2018, we formed a joint venture partnership with Mr. and Mrs. Kamdar in Chennai to assemble water filtration systems for the NGO, Splash International. Splash works to improve water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and menstrual health conditions for the urban poor, especially kids. Antunes has been working together with Splash for over 15 years and supplies water treatment systems to support their mission.

We've recently expanded our water filtration operations to assemble our cooking equipment products. In the second quarter of this year, we will begin assembling our vertical contact toasters, VCT models and some of our flash steamers, models Miracle Steamer (MS) and Deluxe Food Warmer (DFW). We are also working with our global development team to create products specifically for the region.

In the coming years, we will continue to invest in our capabilities in India with

expanded operations, localization of components and local product development capabilities and enhanced customer support.

How you plan to increase the penetration of your products in Indian market? What channels you are adopting for maximum reach?

Our product solutions are predominantly designed to improve speed of service, consistency and simplify operations. QSR and Fast Casual concepts are our primary targets and we believe we have ample room to grow within these market segments in India.

Which verticals beside QSRs you are planning to reach?

While we see opportunities with other segments such as Traditional Restaurants, Hotels, Catering and Convenience stores, at this time, our primary market focus is QSR and Fast Casual. We are keeping our eyes and minds open to evolving our strategy as our experience in the market grows.

Are you planning to export Indian manufactured products to other countries?

We've strategically decided to expand our operational footprint and capabilities in India based on its geographic location, workforce and business climate. We plan to serve other markets from our India operations including the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Africa.

How is your experience in the India market till now?

Our experience has been overwhelmingly positive. We are so honored to feel welcomed by our customers, business partners and team members. During the pandemic, we strategically continued to invest in our local operations, hired Mr. Vipul Kapoor as International Sales Manager focused on India and the Middle East and expanded our distribution and service networks. Through these efforts, we've acquired new customers and expanded our product offering to current customers.

Would like to add anything further?

We are approaching our journey in India with an open-mind and learning attitude. We are eager to build long-term relationships with customers, business partners and the local community for mutual success.

Multi Skilled Chef with Willingness to Learn

**Chef Saurabh Singh, Corporate Chef,
Currynama and Seven Seas Hotel/Catering**



An alumnus of IISM Ranchi, Chef Saurabh Singh has efficiently handled diverse range of operations entailing kitchen functions, costing and budgeting, food promotions, training and recruitment across cities like Goa, Chennai, Srinagar, Jodhpur and Mumbai thereby raising the region's gastronomy to new heights of gourmet achievement. In his present position as the Corporate Chef of Currynama and Seven seas hotel/catering, he continues to showcase his unfazed culinary expertise.

Chef Saurabh's undeterred leadership paired with a flair for attention to details has earned him great respect in the industry. With his signature style of infusing innovation to traditional recipes, he enjoys presenting recipes that find their roots in local ingredients and seasonal produce of the region. With over 17 years of expertise largely in curating Mediterranean, Italian and Continental cuisine, Chef Saurabh has donned several 'toques blanches' at some of country's iconic restaurants including Grand Trunk, The Chinese Room (Taj Swarna, Amritsar), Kefi, Beyond Indus (Taj Club House Chennai), Latitude, Jade Dragon (Vivanta by Taj - Dal View, Srinagar), Beach House, Banyan Tree (Vivanta by Taj – Holiday Village, Goa), to name a few.

In an exclusive interview with **Sharmila Chand**, he talks about his philosophy of cooking and more...

How do you define yourself?

A chef who continues to learn and understand various nuances of cooking and love pairing flavours from different parts of the world.

What is your philosophy of cooking?

I believe that authenticity is a key ingredient to fine food and that's what we are following in our food menu at Currynama and Seven Seas Hotel.

What is your area of expertise?

Indian and Mediterranean food.

Had you not been doing this then what?

Engineer.

What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

When I served our Prime Minister, Mr Narendra Modi. He specially called me after the meal to appreciate everything we served! That was definitely one the most rewarding moments in my career.

What is your source of inspiration?

My mother is my inspiration and my mom and dad are culinary pros who taught me that a great meal can be more than just good food.

How has the journey been so far?

My journey has been very satisfying and I hope I continue to create culinary memories as Cooking is my life, love and passion. It makes me very happy when I serve food to our guests.

What skills are necessary to be a good chef?

Willingness to learn and always take criticism positively.

How do you de-stress yourself?

I take a deep breath and count to 10. Repeat the exercise of breathe in and breathe out slowly and deeply. Deep breathing can help oxygenate your blood and clear your mind.

In my Me time, I keep on learning about new techniques that I can add to my skills.

Favourite Ingredient ?

Spinach- because it is healthy and a versatile veggie that can be made into many delicious delicacies.

Fav cuisine?

Indian

Fav spice?

Chilly – it changes the taste of any dish and very important for the dishes.

Fav equipment?

Combi Oven – my soul companion, can be used in all the cooking processes.

Fav restaurant/food joint, anywhere in the world.

Makhan Fish Corner in Amritsar because how can you miss the Amritsari Fish Tikka. No food place in Amritsar list is complete without Makhan Fish Corner as it serves a variety of fish preparations – Fish Fried Sangara, Fish Fried Sohal, Fish Tandoori Sangara, Fish Tandoori Sohal, Fish Masala, Fish Chilli and Fish Tomato.

They source the fresh fish daily from local markets which is tender and juicy then they marinate in their special Amritsari masala overnight. They grill it for hours in earthen tandoor and this gives a very flavourful taste to the fish. The Fish Tandoori and Fish Masala are my favourites. Also, not just the tandoori preparation but the Fried Fish is equally delicious.

Your fav diner ?

I still remember the guest name Sashi at Taj Swarna, Amritsar and she was from Denmark. She loves seafood and green vegetables so when she dined with us for the first time I made a seafood platter for her. She was amazed with the food experience and loved what I made for her. After that whenever she comes to India, she stays in our hotel to enjoy the food.

You favourite Culinary Destination?

Kerala- best food in the world

What is your philosophy of work?

Cooking best food is my philosophy.

Last meal on earth: What would you choose?

Litti chokha.

What is the career advice you would like to give to youngsters aspiring to be chefs?

If you don't like cooking, you will never become a good chef. Ask yourself: "Do I like to cook?" If the honest answer is "No", then don't even try.



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Innovative Solutions

Mangharam, a leading name in chocolate processing machines have introduced range of new products for Chocolatiers and Bakers.

ChocoMan 30 and ChocoMan 15 – New Deluxe Model for both of its popular machines - ChocoMan 30 and ChocoMan 15 with new feature - Night Heat Mode, wherein Chocolate slabs, broken into smaller pieces, can be put in the machine overnight and by morning, the chocolate is melted to the desired temperature and ready for production. This is a great time saving device. They have also added a Motor Protection feature, wherein the machine’s motor will only activate if the Chocolate in the tub is in semi-liquid or liquid condition, thus keeping the Motor safe.

In addition, ChocoMan 15 and ChocoMan 30 machines are equipped with a Lower Arm, which imitates our hand movement. This helps to melt chocolate quickly, keep the liquid chocolate in constant motion and prevent it from solidifying.

ChocoMan Melt 12 and Melt 6 - They have also introduced new, high - quality Chocolate Melter/ Warmers - ChocoMan Melt 12 and Melt 6. These are heavy-duty machines, equipped with Day and Night Heat mode. Heat transfer can be done by air or water as desired by the user. International quality heaters and insulation have been used to make them more efficient. They are equipped with accurate Temperature Controllers, ensuring the best chocolate is made in them. They are also available in 2 and 3 Pan options, to melt different types and colours of Chocolate/compound at one time.

Cocoa Butter Substitute Colours (CBS colours) - are a boon for Bakers and Chocolatiers as tempering is not required to use these colours. This makes it easier to use to colour chocolates, make chocolate decorations, use in spray-guns, etc. They cost a fraction of the price of imported Cocoa Butter Colours, making them even more user-friendly.

Metallic Colour Starter Kit - includes 10 fabulous metallic food-grade colour shades at a very affordable price. This is an ideal pack for students, starter-ups, small trial runs, etc.

Mangharam Chocolate Solutions
info@makechocolates.com



Wood Fire Ovens

Wood-fire ovens are a traditional method, still used to impart perfect flavour to food. Besides being used for making authentic Pizza’s they are a true alternative to a convection oven for braising, roasting, baking, etc.

Wood fired ovens don’t only provide exquisite delight to the chefs while cooking, they also provide the customers with the experience of having flavourful food prepared in front of them.

Having mastered the art of ancient wood burning technology and modern engineering, Wood Fire Co. has developed aesthetically engineered and durable wood burning ovens, built for commercial, semi commercial and residential use. As the leading manufacturer of such ovens in India, they offer both the ‘traditional fixed’ and ‘portable ovens’, which can be designed to complement the aesthetics of any space. These ovens are available in a wide range of colours, patterns, textures, and facade finishes.

A common feature of these ovens is a large opening that accommodates all sizes of roasting pans, trays, etc., providing the flexibility to cook multiple dishes at the same time. The ovens have a triple layer insulation to minimize radiant heat loss and therefore, reducing the amount of wood or gas needed to maintain the right temperature for cooking. The firebrick dome gives the best cooking experience because of its ability to reflect and retain heat along with the advantage of making these the most long lasting ovens.

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SIMBA

To all the health enthusiasts out there, Confiance Beverage have introduce a health potion with flourishing goodness and up to scratch, health-giving nutrients which will do wonders in increasing the immunity. SIMBA The Super Juice is a 100% natural Sugarcane juice with no added sugar, colours or preservatives at all. It is made up of all natural ingredients such as sugarcane juice, lemon, mint and blacksalt. Overall, its a wholesome tonic bottled up in a glass bottle which is reusable and Eco friendly with a shelf life of 6 months.

The most startling thing about SIMBA is that, it can be blended with alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks as well which is absolutely astounding. The strong suit of Simba is that it prevents cancer as it is alkaline in nature with high concentration of calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron and manganese which acts as a soldier against cancer (prostate and breast cancer).

Simba is legit flavoursome, it just satisfies taste palate as it is infused with different ingredients and medicinal properties plus it is really good for liver and gut health.

Simba the super juice is the best way to keep one hydrated and refreshed this Summer. Also, it satisfies taste buds & packed with numerous health benefits.

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Striving to Create an Indelible Impact on Guest Experiences!

Yaman Rai, Food & Beverage Manager, Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach



Yaman Rai brings with him more than a decade's experience in his present position as the Food & Beverage Manager at Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach. As a proficient hospitality professional with extensive knowledge, Rai is a skilled professional in the F&B domain having worked with well known hospitality brands across India including Pullman, Fairfield, Grand Mercure. Prior to joining Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach, he was the food and beverage manager at Radisson Noida.

He holds great understanding of F&B operations, guest servicing, communication skills, and quality compliance. In his enriching career, Yaman is known to be resourceful at developing procedures, service standards and operational policies with proven ability to reduce revenue costs by planning and implementing effective control measures. In addition, he firmly believes in achieving customer satisfaction, maintaining food quality, earning profit for the outlets, maintaining

hygiene practices and building cohesion in a culturally diverse environment.

Yaman strives to create an indelible impact on guest experiences and his team members by raising their spirit of camaraderie. Yaman has completed his bachelor's degree in hotel management and tourism from S.A.MS IHM Varanasi.

In an exclusive interview with **Sharmila Chand**, he talks about his working philosophy and more

What do you enjoy most being a Food & Beverage manager?

Being a food and beverage manager is a very exciting role in itself. What I enjoy most being in this role is that how it allows me to challenge myself to become a better version of myself from yesterday as this position demands constant innovation in everything we do.

How challenging is your job?

Every job is challenging if you are not enjoying it, but once you start enjoying it your passion drives it. Similarly in my case, there are challenges around setting the budget, table covers, planning & execution along with introducing constant innovations, but I strive to overcome them because of my passion towards the F&B industry.

What kind of pressures have you encountered at work?

In my opinion, there is only one constant pressure that remains which is to improvise on a daily basis. One of the major challenges is how to satisfy the guests re-visiting our outlets quite often with fresh sets of experiences.

Any tips or insights you exercise to strengthen your team?

I personally believe in the inclusion

of various team building exercises like ensuring regular departmental townhalls, attending briefings for associates, ensuring to have breakfast with one associate every day, monthly departmental parties and conducting regular set of brain storming sessions.

How is your experience at the present job?

It's a great honour to be a part of the Novotel family and to especially work at an iconic hotel like Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach. The amount of love that we received from the local audience and the buzzing operations at all our outlets is overwhelming. The city has many opportunities and offerings which are yet to be explored. I feel the challenge is only sourcing out right audience for right offerings as city currently lacks adequate channels.

What is the USP of F&B outlets at your property?

The unique experience offered around all the five F&B outlets at Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach under one roof is where we see medley of cultures finding its true meaning.

All our dining outlets (The Square, Infinity, Zaffran, HarbourVue and Sugarr) are sea view facing.

All Global cuisine under one roof:

The Square - The hotel's all day multi-cuisine dining which serves local and international delicacies.

Zaffran - Indian cuisine restaurant serving exotic vegetarian and non-vegetarian thali for lunches, to succulent Kebabs & Biryani

Sugarr - Cafe that serves fresh bakes, tea, coffee, desserts and homemade Gourmet chocolates

HarbourVue - Lounge Bar that serves national and international beverages

Infinity - Rooftop Bar & restaurant which serves exotic kebabs, grills and sizzlers along with beverages

Entertainment centric Food and Beverage, where we serve food with live entertainment on a regular basis.

What is your working philosophy?

I just love to work in a free atmosphere as I believe that brings the best out of me. I follow the same philosophy towards my team.

What is your take on how best to cope with challenges of the present pandemic times?

Firstly, mask up and stay safe. In this difficult time of crisis, my take is to stay afloat, with that I mean taking proper care of yourself and your loved ones.



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