

HAMMER

Food & Beverage

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Business Review

Business magazine for food service & food retail professionals

Cocktails: Art of Mixology

Business

Promoting F&B Outlets

Feature

Breaking Fast

Agri

Nutritious Seeds

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There is now a trend of sophisticated tipples. Just plain alcohol served with water or soda or Cola is no longer the vogue. What surrounds the alcohol in the glass is equally important. Cocktails are becoming the fashion. They can not only make you feel refreshed but you could also regulate the amount of alcohol that you consume. Cover story takes a look at the growing trend of consuming cocktails instead of straight alcoholic drinks.

To attract more guests and for business to return to pre-pandemic days restaurants needs to adopt techniques to attract customers and to imbibe in them a desire to keep visiting the outlets. There is a need to assure guests of their protection and wellbeing at the dine-in place. Business Story finds some of the methods that the restaurants need to embrace to overcome the fear, which is still prevalent in the minds of the customers.

An increase in meeting for breakfast after a morning jog or on the way to the office for business travellers is growing in popularity. For lifestyle travellers catching up with friends for the morning newspaper is sometimes easier at this time of the day, rather than over dinner. Feature story looks at the recent guest demands which call for foodservice institutions to expand their breakfast buffet even more to include hot items and a larger selection.

Chefs are constantly experimenting to come up with something new, lookout for tastier food that also provides for healthy nourishment. Various techniques of cooking are also being adopted to retain the flavour of the food. Focus section discusses how the sous vide cooking not only retains the food flavour, but cooks more tenderly and evenly.

These are only some of the industry-friendly topics covered in the issue, which are complemented by the rich information disseminated through our regular sections along with news and report. We hope our readers would enjoy reading the first issue of the New Year.



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9th International Chefs Conference, 2023

India's largest Culinary Conference

February 11 to 13, 2023 at The Ashok, New Delhi.



The Presidium and Executive Committee of IFCA, the nodal body of prestigious Chefs Associations across India take great pride in announcing its Biennial International Chefs Conference, the largest culinary event that exclusively unites Hospitality Industry professionals. The edition is sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and powered by Welbilt Asia - Convotherm and Merrychef. The event will held on February 11 to 13, 2023 at The Ashok, New Delhi.

The theme for ICC 2023 has been declared as "Co-creating Inclusive Local Organic Food Systems"

The event will be a 3-day affair with a major congregation of Culinarians, the largest gathering of 800+ delegates, comprising corporate and executive

chefs, F&B managers, entrepreneurs, and academicians from the leading hotels and restaurants in the country. The International Chefs Conference features a wide spectrum of topics; International Speakers, Chefs, Hoteliers like Chef Thomas Gugler, Chef Justin Narayan, Chef Rakesh Sethi, T.C. Chatterjee, Krish Ashok and many more will talk on a broad gamut of subjects.

Speaking about the event, IFCA's president, Chef Manjit Gill said, "This event offers participants an opportunity to connect with the best culinary leaders in the country to broaden their professional horizons through sessions that are both highly informative and interactive, delivered by the best speakers and panelists from around the world."

The event will also feature a trade show where food & service exhibitors will showcase their latest offerings and innovations.

On behalf of the Presidium and the members of the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA) has invited delegates for the participation. This International Chefs Conference will address a refreshed and renewed Hospitality sector on the way forward to "Co-creating Inclusive Local Organic Food Systems". Well-managed and healthy life on



Chef Manjit Gill

earth is essential to support people, individually or in communities.

IFCA's International Chefs Conference, 2023 will feature varied and extensive knowledge-sharing sessions, workshops, Masterclasses, and seminars that will herald a new future for the hospitality sector that is shifting towards a new world. The internationally renowned speakers present on the occasion sharing their experiences and perspectives that would add great value in the backdrop of the fast-transforming culinary landscape.

The Delegate Registration Details :

Delegates: Rs.9990/- (inclusive of GST)

Bonafide Students from Culinary and Hotel Management Institutes (Members of Indian Young Chefs Association): Rs.6990/- (inclusive of GST)

Non-Culinary Professionals: for 3 days - Rs. 30,000/- (inclusive of GST)

Register early for participation in the conference as this exceptional 9th IFCA's International Chefs Conference 2023 will be on a First Come-First Serve Basis with priority for those who apply early.

Contact: Master of Events: M. Prabu at congress@ifcaindia.com

Ph: 8939855510/8939855520

EVENT CALENDAR

Gulfood

20-24 February 2023

Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre, Dubai, UAE
www.gulfood.com

Aahar

14-18 March 2023

Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, India
<https://indiatraderfair.com/aahardelhi/>

International Sweets and Biscuits Fair

23-25 April 2023

Messe Cologne, Cologne, Germany
<https://www.ism-cologne.com/>

HOFEX

10-12 May 2023

Hongkong Exhibition centre
Hongkong
www.hofex.com

Thaifex- Anuga Asia

23-27 May 2023

Impact Exhibition and Convention Center
Bangkok, Thailand
<https://thaifex-anuga.com/>

Fispal Food Service

13-16 June, 2023

Expo centre Norte
São Paulo, Brasil
<https://www.fispalfoodservice.com.br/>

TRAFS

13-16 July 2023

Thailand Retail, Food & Hospitality Services
Bangkok International Trade & Exhibition
Centre (BITEC)
Bangkok, Thailand
<https://trafs.net/>

Food & Hotel Indonesia

25-28 July, 2023

Jakarta International Expo
Jakarta, Indonesia
<https://www.foodhotelindonesia.com/>

India International Hospitality Expo

2-5 August 2023

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Greater Noida, UP
<https://www.ihexpo.com/>

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Mainland China Restaurant Boasts New Look

Mainland China, one of Mumbai's popular Chinese restaurants, has undergone a massive revamp! The restaurant has been completely renovated, and now boasts a sleek and modern look. In addition to the new décor, Mainland China has also introduced a brand new menu with a wide variety of dishes to choose from. Whether its dim sum, noodles, rice, or something else entirely, Mainland China's new menu has something for everyone. And of course, the restaurant's signature dishes – are still available.



The new Mainland China will be bringing along a breath of fresh air, Crafted Cocktails that are a recipe to the perfect companion to the food. Dumplings, Sushis, and much more are in offing. The new menu is developed keeping in mind the faith of our loyal patrons and the new generation. All of this and so much more to offer without a change in our price range, with an enhanced experience at this outlet.

Its not just the cuisine but a bar with state of the art cocktails, an open kitchen that leaves aromas into the restaurant & an intimate seating that allows conversations & celebrations. The cocktails are a vision of artfully created masterpieces. Contemporary ideas, unexplored ingredients, remarkable concoctions, everything and more needed is at the bar.



The new, refreshed ambiance that Mainland China is bringing comes with a touch of the young, contemporary along with the traditional essence of China. An evolved bar, for you to explore our innovative cocktails. The ambience, the music, the re-designed bar will uplift your senses and take you on an oriental odyssey.

Avik Chatterjee, Exec. Director of Innovation and New Formats & Whole-Time Director at Speciality Restaurants, "We believe this contemporary change is a remarkable milestone for Mainland China. After being the most beloved destination for over 3 decades, we're now all set to welcome a larger group of patrons, from all age groups because there is something for everyone. The food on the new menu is well-researched, curated, and explored for you to now explore. The classics that were loved by our patrons are also there. The cocktails are crafted into a unique experience in every glass. The ambience is something that fits and celebrates all your moods and reasons to be here in Mainland China. To sum it up, Mainland China: Plates of good food & people full of stories. A culinary treat unlike any other."

Mainland China is an established name in the hospitality industry in India. With a legacy that dates back to 1993, Mainland China has always been known for serving authentic Chinese cuisine. In a bid to offer a unique experience to their patrons, Mainland China launched and revamped their restaurant in Mumbai and with that, also completed 30 years in the industry.



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One8 Commune's New Menu



Bringing the lot together this New Year, one8 Commune launches a brand new menu with sweet, spice and everything nice. This curated menu by Chef Pawan Bisht is set to take people on a sensory journey letting you explore new horizons of the gastronomical world!

The new assortments are for people who are experimental yet want the comfort of the roots is something one can look forward to in this evolved a-la carte menu. One of the main highlights is the accessibility of vegetarian choices which focuses on health without compromising on the flavours. Chef Pawan Bisht's curations see the use of millets, grains, and superfoods, while also introducing options for vegan lovers. The modern touch to the regional cuisines has also been introduced in dishes like Cauliflower 65 Gravy, Signature Black Chicken, Truffle Flavoured Broken Wheat Haleem amongst others.

Expanding on our bestsellers, fans can satiate on Virat Kohli's new favorite Tartar Topped on Avocado. New additions see salads like Baby Bocincinni, Arugula & California Grapes and Oriental Meal Bowls offer a variety of Silken Tofu, Mushroom, Chicken Katsu and Salmon for a healthy yet hearty meal.

Other offerings like Burrata Board, Jamaican Jerk Cauliflower, Spanish Paprika Marinade Chicken amongst other delectable delicacies are part of the small plates, whereas for a larger meal, one can opt for Pan Seared Fish Steak, Middle Eastern Pilaf Rice, or Coastal Chicken Curry and much more.

Speaking on the launch of the new menu, Chef Pawan Bisht says, "A considerable consumer focus has been observed towards vegan and vegetarian food options, which gave us the prospect to begin the New Year with a new menu". He furthermore added, "We also wanted to impel on the use of local and organic produce which can be seen throughout our menu."

McDonald's India - North and East Unveiled 'i'm lovin' it Live'

After a raving success in the UK, McDonald's India – North and East is launching the brand's global flagship music IP - i'm lovin' it Live in India, in partnership with MTV, India's leading youth entertainment brand, from the house of Viacom18, India's leading media and entertainment conglomerate. Superstar and brand ambassador, Kartik Aaryan unveiled i'm lovin' it Live with Sanjeev Agrawal, Chairman, McDonald's India – North and East, Armaan Malik and Anshul Ailawadi – Business Head, Youth, Music and English Entertainment cluster, Viacom18 - at a glittering event in New Delhi.



i'm lovin' it Live offers a unique opportunity for McDonald's India – North and East to establish a deeper connect with its fans through their passion for music and to become a part of their lives by creating feel-good moments that matter the most to them. The concept of i'm lovin' it Live is built on the premise of popular artists coming together and creating unique, never-heard-before compositions, while experimenting with various genres.

Leading this avant-garde musical journey will be 8 artists including Guru Randhawa, Armaan Malik, Arjun Kanungo, Harry Sandhu, Shalmali Kholgade & O.A.F.F.

Sanjeev Agrawal, Chairman, McDonald's India – North and East, said, "McDonald's purpose is feeding and fostering communities and music has the power to transcend barriers and unite people together. i'm lovin' it Live is our attempt to thank our customers and bring out the happy energy of McDonald's through music and strengthen our relationship with our customers."

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Bikano Launches New Crispy 'Crunchy Munchy' Snacks

Bikano, India's favorite snack, and packaged food manufacturing company, has launched a new pack of Crunchy Munchy in 100 gms pack, keeping in mind the expected rise in demand for snacks this winter. With 'Crunchy Munchy'. Packed with unique flavors, the new snack range has ingredients such as potato, rice flour, chickpea flour, moth flour, and spices including garlic powder, cumin powder, onion powder, yellow chili powder, making it a perfect snack any time of the day.

The snacks market in India is already growing and winters trigger a hike in the consumption of snacks as people tend to have them with a cup of hot tea or coffee, or simply to satiate their food cravings in the cold season.



"It is the most in-demand product from our snacks range. We have launched a bigger family pack for get togethers, parties, binge-watch, and hangouts. Crunchy munchy demand has been quite satisfying so far and we are expecting the same exponential growth in sales this winter on the back of this popularity. The reason behind such high demand is that it is consumed by not only kids but adults as well, making it a popular snack for the whole family," says Manish Aggarwal, Director, Bikano, Bikanervala Foods Pvt Ltd.

Manish further says, "considering the demand for small packs, Bikano is expecting the same level of demand for big packs. The bada pack of Crunchy Munchy is available online as well, as we know the potential of online shopping and e-commerce which everyone witnessed after the pandemic. At the same time, our modern trade channel partners, and retail channels will make multiple options for our consumers to buy from. We are looking for 18% growth year-on-year and targeting to achieve 1,500 crores of revenue by this financial year."

As per a report, the snack industry in India is expanding fast, with the snack market in India growing multi-fold year on year. The snacks market size in India is worth Rs. 44,000 crores out of which 20% is contributed by extrudes. The market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 12% during 2022-2027.

"After the lockdown period, consumers are more inclined towards health and hygiene. They prefer snacks that offer better quality and taste. Indian snacks Industry is shifting from unpacked open selling snacks to packed snacks. Even for traditional snacks, people have started preferring packed food. The industry is shifting from uncategorized to categorized category and that is good news," says Mr. Sanjeev Wadhwa, Head of Sales, Bikano, Bikanervala Foods Pvt.

On whether desi snacks have more demand than western snacks, Mr. Aggarwal said that demand for both is the same. Crunchy Munchy has been launched on digital media and is getting promoted on all social media platforms of Bikano. The Bikano director further said that the company is planning on-ground activities, sponsorship programs, and radio activities to reach the targeted audience.

On winter plans, Mr. Aggarwal said that they are coming up with a 'BADA PACK' of a few other snacks ranges as well. "We are working on new SKUs and will be coming up with more options for our customers," he added. SKU refers to the stock-keeping unit.

Bikano has recently incorporated new technology machinery to reduce human hand interference. "Our products go through multiple rounds of quality checks to make sure that the quality of our products remains uncompromised. These machines have made the work easy and quick and have eliminated the chances of human error," says Bikano Director.



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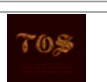
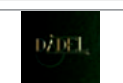
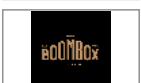
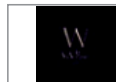
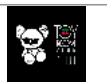


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Tata Consumer Products Strengthens Instant Coffee Portfolio

Tata Consumer Products announces the launch of its premium instant coffee 'Tata Coffee Grand Premium' a 100% coffee blend with flavour locked decoction crystals. The product has been launched keeping in mind the taste preference of consumers in non-South markets who tend to prefer 100% coffee blend over a coffee: chicory blend (which is more preferred in South). Tata Coffee Grand Premium, while being a 100% coffee blend also has the unique flavour locked decoction crystals which locks in taste and aroma and are the key differentiator for the brand as it's a unique product offering over its key competitors.



The new launch is supported by a captivating film, using ASMR (Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response) that showcases the sensory journey of Tata coffee Grand Premium from bean to the cup. The campaign integrated creativity and technology to deliver a film that resonates with brand's core proposition of great sounding coffee. Through this campaign the brand aims to build a strong and memorable connect with consumers.

Commenting on the launch, Puneet Das, President - Packaged Beverages (India and South Asia), Tata Consumer Products said, "Our ambition is to become a significant coffee player and we continue to offer relevant and quality offerings to grow our share in the India coffee market. Indian consumers are embracing a new wave of coffee. Hence, as we continue to expand our presence and reach to consumers across India we are strengthening our portfolio across the country with the launch of Tata Coffee Grand Premium- a 100% coffee blend, with flavour locked decoction crystals that gives consumers a rich and aromatic cup of coffee".

He further said "The differentiation of Tata Coffee Grand is the signature SHIK SHIK SHIK sound of the flavour locked decoction crystals. The new launch will be scaled by leveraging TCPL's network and distribution reach across channels including E-commerce & modern trade"

In 2015, Tata Consumer Products limited made its entry into the branded instant coffee business in India under the brand name Tata Coffee Grand. After leading the Indian tea market under its iconic Tata Tea brand, the company took the strategic step to leverage its product, marketing and retail expertise to enter the branded coffee space in India.

Yummiez Introduces Veg Combo Pack

Godrej Yummiez, a brand of vegetarian and non-vegetarian ready-to-cook products, introduced a special Godrej Yummiez Veg Combo Pack that includes favourite Cheese corn nuggets, Crispy Potato Starz and Paneer Pops; all in a single pack.

Godrej Yummiez Paneer Pops, made with special chef-selected spices, are crunchy on the outside and creamy and juicy on the inside. Made from highest quality processed cheese and American corn, Yummiez Cheese Corn nuggets are a melt-in-mouth treat. Made with the choicest of potatoes and no added preservatives, Crispy Potato Starz are fun star-shaped tasty munchies easily turn snacking time into a playful time.



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Morpheus Brandy Festive Edition Pack

Radico Khaitan Ltd, India's largest IMFL company, launches a Festive Edition pack for Morpheus Brandy, India's largest-selling premium brandy in different parts of the country.

Presented as a year-end gift for its customers, 'Morpheus Brandy's Festive Edition with Goblet In Pack' consists of a premium quality goblet with a 750 ml bottle of Morpheus XO

Brandy. Radico Khaitan Ltd, planned this launch ahead of the festive season, keeping in mind the celebration spirits in people and the trend of gifting around this time of year.

Being the holiday season, this time of year brings a lot of cheer to our lives. As the tagline says, "It is time of the year to fill your goblet with cheer," the brand wants to bring out the party spirits with festive-like packaging in the lives of its customers.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Amar Sinha, Chief Operating Officer, Radico Khaitan Ltd, said, "Morpheus embodies the spirit of celebration, and with the festive pack edition, we have attempted to enhance the experience of celebration by giving a goblet as a gift to our customers around the festive season. As you get into the party spirits, we intend to give you another reason to rejoice with this Festive Pack. It is a gift from us to our loyal consumer base, and I am confident this combination will leave a lasting impression on them."



MONIN Launch Three New Flavours

MONIN, the premium French brand, has announced the launch of a new product category, Le Crush de MONIN, specially curated for the Indian market. It comes in three amazing flavours: Mango, Strawberry and Pineapple.



Through this new addition of flavours to its portfolio, MONIN promises to bring greater choices for bartenders, baristas, pastry chefs, ice-cream makers, culinarians, and at-home mixologists. Now, they have the chance to 'Crush it with MONIN', and embrace the rich and refreshing flavours of every season.

Le Crush de MONIN is a non-GMO, vegan, and gluten-free product range curated specifically to cater to the diverse Indian palette. It contains 35% of Real Fruit Content along with real pieces of fruit. So, whether it is a fresh batch of cupcakes, a scrumptious homemade dessert, a drool-worthy topping for ice cream, or a funky cocktail, Le Crush de MONIN crushes can add a fruity punch to any drinks or dessert session. Each crush is specially made with carefully-picked and freshly-stored mangoes, strawberries, and pineapples, and comes with the assurance of authenticity and quality associated with the MONIN name.

MONIN has been serving quality and innovative products for more than a century, and these latest creations promise to enhance and jazz up the personality of any beverage or culinary recipe they are added to. For those who have never experienced the taste of MONIN, Le Crush de MONIN's three bursting-with-fruitiness flavours will make for the perfect introduction to the brand.

MONIN has always offered endless possibilities, and ease of use, when it comes to preparing that perfect dessert or drink, and with Le Crush de MONIN, you will find that your innovations at the bar and in the kitchen will have no limits.

Sharing his thoughts, Germain Araud, Managing Director of MONIN India Pvt. Ltd, said, "It gives me great delight to introduce to the Indian market these first three Le Crush de MONIN flavours, specially curated for India in an effort to be closer to the local palate. I have no doubt that the Mango, Strawberry and Pineapple Crushes will be savoured by our Indian customers, who in my experience are as discerning connoisseurs as anyone else in the world who enjoys great food and drink. I am also pleased to announce that within this new category we are currently developing more flavours, which will be launched from 2023 onwards."

Altamura Distilleries' Italian Wheat Vodka Coming to India

Altamura Distilleries, a producer of premium spirits made from the unique wheat of Altamura, Italy will introduce its spirits into the Indian market in January 2023 through a partnership with SS Impex, a New Delhi-based spirits importer and distributor.



"We believe the quality and unique smoothness of Altamura vodka will be very well received throughout the Indian market," said Sharat Agarwal, partner at S.S. Impex, "While our initial distribution will be in the northern Indian states, we intend on quickly expanding to the rest of the nation."

"We view India as one of the most important markets in the world for our brand," stated Frank Grillo, managing director of Altamura Distilleries.

"India is the third largest spirits market in the world, with rapidly emerging mixology scene and a strong affinity for Italy and Italian products."

"We will be bringing Mixology Master Classes led by some of the most renowned Italian bartenders to India," Grillo commented. And we look forward to jointly sponsoring some of India's best mixologists to visit Italy and conduct guest shifts at some of the most famed Italian venues."

The Altamura Vodka will be available in the Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand regions beginning in January 2023. In addition, Altamura and SS Impex plan to introduce Altamura's London Dry Gin into the Indian marketplace in early 2023.

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Dabur India's Acquires Stake in Badshah Masala's Spices

Dabur India Limited acquired a 51% equity stake in Badshah Masala, a leading domestic producer, marketer, and exporter of powdered spices and seasonings, in January 2023. Dabur India now gains a foothold in the \$1.5 billion* Indian packaged herbs, spices & seasonings market, while Badshah Masala will be able to expand the domestic and export base for its spices, according to GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Bobby Verghese, Consumer Analyst at GlobalData, comments: "Owing to the extensive use of spices in local cuisine, India is the world's largest consumer and one of the largest producers of herbs, spices, and seasonings. Indians traditionally purchase fresh spices and seasonings in loose form from open markets and local spice shops and grind them at home or local mills. However, the demand for packaged spices and seasonings products is surging, catalyzed by rapid urbanization, booming organized retail sector, and new product launches in convenient formats, supported by intense marketing campaigns."

Despite this, domestic sales of unpackaged spices and seasonings eclipse that of packaged variants. This untapped unorganized market is attracting more local and multinational companies, including domestic CPG heavyweights, Tata Consumer Products with its Tata Sampann brand, and ITC, with its Aashirvaad brand. Additionally, the overseas demand for powdered Indian spices, such as turmeric, and value-added extracts such as curcumin, has surged in light of the pandemic.

The packaged Indian herbs, spices & seasonings market is highly competitive with a plethora of domestic brands and private labels competing for retail shelf space. Companies targeting the cost-sensitive mass retail market, compete on price. At the same time, in light of media reports on adulterated spices, demand is on the rise for authentic and quality powdered spices and seasonings among higher-income urban households.

Food and Grocery Retail to Grow

Indian organised food and grocery (F&G) retailers are expected to witness healthy YoY revenue growth of 15-20% in FY2023, according to ICRA's recent note on the sector. Increased footfalls aided by lifting of restrictions, continued healthy demand for essential products and regular expansion of retail areas under operations are some of the key revenue drivers. The operating profit margin (OPM) is, however, expected to remain range-bound at 5-6% in FY2023, due to inflationary pressures, which has also adversely impacted demand in the non-food category. Given the expectation of healthy revenues and steady earnings, the rating agency's outlook on the sector is Stable.

Commenting on the trends, Ms. Sakshi Suneja, Vice President & Sector Head, ICRA, said: "F&G sector remained resilient during the Covid waves and reverted to pre-Covid level of sales in Q3 FY2021 itself. Revenue growth since then has remained healthy, with entities in ICRA's sample set reporting YoY revenue growth of 21% in FY2022. Demand for essential products remained strong in YTD FY2023 as well, with entities in our sample set expected to surpass their pre-pandemic levels of FY2020 by 36% in FY2023."

Elaborating further, Priyesh Ruparelia, Vice President and Co-Group Head, ICRA said: "We expect brick and mortar stores to account for the majority of the retailers' revenues in the organised F&G sector. This is despite the heightened competition from quick commerce, which largely caters to unplanned or spontaneous purchases, and primarily impacts sales of kirana stores belonging to the unorganised segment."

Notwithstanding the large capex plans, the credit profile of large, listed entities is expected to remain adequately supported by strong balance sheets and healthy liquidity with Rs.1,600 crore of cash and liquid investment balances as on March 31, 2022. Their credit metrics too would remain comfortable with the total debt-to-operating profit ratio expected to remain below 0.5 times for entities in the sample set as on March 31, 2023.

ICRA has not factored in any adverse impact of new covid waves in its base case. While new covid waves are unlikely to materially impact the operations F&G retail entities, any prolonged restrictions on store operating hours or on sale of general merchandise will pose a downside risk to such retailers' financial performance.

Reliance Acquire Stake in Sosyo Hajoori

Reliance Consumer Products, the subsidiary of Reliance Retail Ventures, has agreed to acquire 50% stake in Gujarat-based Sosyo Hajoori Beverages (Sosyo). The acquisition will strengthen Reliance's beverage portfolio, owing to Sosyo's expertise in different flavour formulations and homegrown flavours appealing to Indian consumers. On the other hand, Reliance's strong distribution network and expertise will boost value growth for Sosyo, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Sosyo Hajoori Beverages has been operating in Gujarat since 1923 and is a leading soft drinks manufacturer in the domestic market. The company is involved in selling energy drinks, juices, packaged water, carbonates, and flavoured water under its Sosyo, Runner, Opener, S'Eau, Ginlim, Hajoori Soda, Kashmira, and Lemee brands. Sosyo exports its products to the US, the UK, the UAE, Canada, Switzerland, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Zambia.

Shraddha Shelke, Consumer Analyst at GlobalData, comments: "Among all the categories in which Sosyo operates, energy drinks is in high demand among youth and millennials in India, supported by the on-the-go consumption. Easy accessibility of energy drinks through vending machines and retail shops makes it a favorable option for consumers."

According to GlobalData, the energy drinks market in India is forecast to register a volume compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 40-45% during 2022-26*. Brands such as Red Bull and Mountain Dew have high market share and are popular choices among young consumers.



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The Irish House Launched at Phoenix Palladium in Mumbai

The Quintessential Irish house announced its launch of a new flagship outlet in the Phoenix Palladium Mall in Mumbai. The new location is a 2,000 sq. ft with 130-seater outpost features a cool ambience with exposed brick. The Phoenix Palladium outpost is yet another addition to the Irish House legacy for beer lovers, sports fanatics and gourmands of the city and guarantees a good time.



Commenting on the launch of flagship & partnership with Phoenix Palladium Mall, Karan Kapur, Executive Director at K Hospitality Corp & Owner of Irish House, said, "With the launch of our flagship outlet, our endeavor is to be catalysts to creating a community with a collective conscience. Having over 12 years of collective experience in bringing Irish culture. The brand is in an expansive mode and I would like to give a huge shout out to all the lovely people who made this possible. Without their support, their love for the Irish house, this dream would not have been possible."

At the newest hotspot, the signature vibe has been elevated smartly and features rustic wooden panels with exposed brick, community and private seating spaces and utilitarian industrial lights. An open ceiling suspends a vintage barrel display staged on metal shelves. The star attraction though is the highly Instagrammable barrel wall that will want you to whip out your cameras in the first second.

The brand's outlets at Bandra, BKC, Kala Ghoda, Kurla, Andheri, Malad to Thane till T2 Terminal, all the way to its flagship location in Phoenix Palladium, are constantly buzzing for dine-in.

'Flurys' Now in the 'City of Joy'

Flurys, the iconic Swiss confectionery from Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited (ASPHL) launches a new tearoom in Kolkata. The 95-year-old patisserie now expands to Purna Das Road, the café hub of Kolkata, in one of the heritage buildings of the 1930s.

It is the second biggest tearoom opened after the flagship tearoom at Park Street. Situated at the heart of South Kolkata, it retains the old-world charm and the design grammar of Flurys, while donning a fresh look. With 40 covers, it will offer all-time favourite Flurys signature breakfast dishes, chocolates, coffee, a cosy ambience, beautiful interiors and an amazing experience.

Flurys is legendary for its chocolate cones, rum balls, chicken patty, baba cake and baked beans. The patisserie brand boasts 67 modern retail outlets with multiple formats such as kiosk format, café format and restaurant format across India, 59 in the city of Kolkata (Serampore, Chandan Nagar and Durgapur, with 7 outlets at Kolkata city's airport itself); Delhi, Navi Mumbai and Mumbai.

Speaking on the occasion, Vijay Dewan, Managing Director, Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited said, "We are delighted to launch our second biggest tearoom in Kolkata, a market with a voracious consumption for Flurys. It is a fiercely loved symbol representing five generations of great memories in the hearts of Kolkatans. Having set benchmarks in gourmet bakery and confectionery segments, Flurys is set to see more expansion in FY23, reaching 75 outlets."





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Royal Tulip launch of 'Coast and Toast'

The Royal Tulip hotel, Navi Mumbai commemorates its 10th Anniversary with the launch of 'Coast and Toast', the first and only poolside bar in Kharghar, Navi Mumbai. Coast represents the coast-side of the water body and the Toast represents toasting to good times. Combine the two and we have Coast and Toast, a poolside bar with Al Fresco dining concept that offers unlimited food and beverages at a set price.

'Coast and Toast' features a wide selection of delectable delicacies complimenting the elegantly appointed interiors. Guests will be greeted with a cool, open, and contemporary dining space filled with awe-inspiring vibes. The food menu changes every two weeks considering the freshness and availability of ingredients.

Announcing the launch, Perna Wadhwa, Managing Director, Royal Tulip said, "We are delighted to unveil Coast and Toast which was birthed in celebration of completing 10 years of Royal Tulip. I have traveled across the world in search of good food and it is a joy to bring a global palette to Navi Mumbai. We have renovated our beautiful swimming pool and created an ambiance that can be relished by lovers of fine food and guests on the hunt for a serene night out with their loved ones.

The Vegetarian specialty includes Afghani Paneer Tikka, Kasundi

Broccoli, Mushroom Kundantara, Tandoori Chatpata Aloo, Subz Moti Seekh, Makhmali Soya Chaap, Veg Shaslik Kebab, Awadhi Mushroom, Tandoori Tarkari Seekh, Pahadi Paneer Tikka, Malai Badami Seekh, Tandoori Multani Aloo and Bhatti Soya Chaap, Butter Garlic Mushroom, Malai Broccoli, Bharwa Mirch, Aloo Nazakat, Hyderabad Soya Chaap, Mongolian Paneer Tikka and Bhutte ki Seekh among others.



The selection of Non-Veg includes Murgh Mongolian Kebab, Murgh Adaani Seekh, Lemon Adraki Murgh Tikka, Ajwani Fish Tikka, Prawns Achari, Mutton Kakori Seekh, Peri Peri Fish Tikka, Murgh Shish Taouk, Lahori Murgh Tikka, Kasundi Fish Tikka, Mahi Fish Tikka, Mutton Noorani Seekh,

Zaitoon Prawns, Chicken Gilafi Seekh, Murgh Achari Tikka, Murgh Chakori Tikka, Kalonji Prawns, Pahadi Fish Tikka, Lemon Butter Fish, Mutton Kepsa and Chicken Banjara Kebab.

The Chef's Choice includes Veg/Non-Veg Biryani and a delectable choice of Desserts. The mains are accompanied by mocktails that include Coastal Berry, Ice Tea, Kiwi Smash, Frozen Litchi, Fizzy Summer, Cuddles on the Beach, and Mojito.

'Coast and Toast' serves a spectrum of Indian and Imported Wines, Gin, Beers, Vodka, and Whiskey. The Bar is well-stocked and they do Cocktails Classic & Contemporary as well as In-House Special Mixologist. The house specialty cocktails include Daisy (Gin Based), Cranberry Collins (Vodka Based), Vodka Tonic, Screwdriver (Vodka based), Boston Sour (Whiskey based), Whiskey Rickey, and The Blue Train (Gin Based). The restaurant has a pleasant ambiance that makes the guest feel special.

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Old Delhi Opens in Kanpur

Quick Restaurant Chain Old Delhi has recently inaugurated its franchise-owned restaurant in Kanpur. The store is spread across an area of 450sq. ft. in carpet area. The outlet is situated in Swaroop Nagar, in order to attract a large number of youth, families, students, and anyone who enjoys Pan Asian cuisine in various flavours.

Old Delhi is an Indian home-grown restaurant. Old Delhi is a unique concept serving mouth watering kebabs and other famous Mughlai recipes. It promises to bring a shift back to our heritage in terms of culinary experiences.

The plan aims at opening 50+ new outlets PAN India. The Company will focus on opening company owned + franchise model stores.

The announcement was addressed by Sahaj Chopra and Sahil Arya, Co-Founders and Directors, which is famous for its momos and boba tea, after which's success The Old Delhi was founded said, "We are happy to open a new store in a new city and to steadily expand across the country. We are excited to welcome new customer feedbacks and to witness their experiences relating to our servings."

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Balmy- New Hang-out Spot in Mumbai

If you are looking for a cozy café where you can unleash all your pent-up wanderlust on these pleasant winter days, Balmy is just the place for you. The idea behind the premium all-day café and bar was to create a warm and welcoming space for the guests.

For Balmy, the brief by Sujith Shetty, Owner of Aarya International, was simple- playful, and feminine. Sujith, being an out-of-the-box thinker, is now crossing the beautiful threshold onto the greener side of the F&B sector by extending his expertise and capabilities and building a modern, new age venture- Balmy,

The all-day Café & Bar. Balmy café takes you on a culinary journey of delicious natural flavours and caters to all dietary preferences such as vegan, vegetarian, Jain, and non-vegetarian.

"South Bombay and specifically this belt of Breach Candy, Peddar Road, Nepeansea Road, Altamount Road and Malabar hill till Tardeo lacks a space where one can go from coffee to lunch to dinner and enjoy the food and atmosphere simultaneously. Hence, I decided to come up with a place with a focus on food and great coffee, but to ensure that you feel you have entered a fun, dynamic yet invigorating space where energy and ideas flow as easily as the food and accompanying beverages," said Shetty.

Interiors

Besides a genuinely interesting menu and of course, great service, what is it that makes Balmy so unique? Yes, it's the interior design of the café! Located in Breach Candy, the interior of the place with the glass façade complements the exceedingly comfortable furnishings and upholstery that is sealed with immense natural light and creates an easy-going but vibrant atmosphere suitable for utmost relaxation. The intricate interiors and environment of Balmy café perfectly resonate with its overall chic and cozy surroundings. While the warm sunlight bathes this chic café in a golden glow throughout the day, it also exudes a soothing vibe after sundown.

Built with exquisite materials, the café includes splendid artifacts synonymous with Salonee Kothari, a gifted and artistic interior designer. Balmy café is quintessentially minimalist and wrapped in neutral tones with pared-down seating and a statement roof with



trendy cloth-made umbrella lanterns levitating from the ceiling, and indoor plants that add the perfect touch of coziness. Ambient lights cast their spell in every nook and corner of the space, the illumination of which, leaves the guests mesmerized.

Apart from that, the enlightening bar area complements the intrinsic theme of buttery and humble walls on the inside as well as the welcoming and captivating exterior of the café. The ample spacious aisle between every table elevates the café's overall aesthetic appeal, while the appetizing aroma of the delicacies navigates its way throughout the space and the melodious tempo turns up in the back. "We wanted to create a space that would be ever-lasting and extremely exciting. The coral-colored, PU-finished bar is the focal point. To balance the bright colour we decided to use a neutral and warm palette, textures, and materials," says Salonee Kothari, Interior Designer, at SKO studios."

Cuisine

A quaint and sprightly-styled café, Balmy



accentuates a consoling ambience by offering authentic cuisines. As a culinary journey of scrumptious comfort food and refreshing beverages: Balmy café promises to take you on a lip-smacking gastronomic journey with its versatile menu that includes breakfast dishes, salads, hummus-based-specials, sandwiches, and sliders, Balmy Truffle Cocktail Bites, Dimsum & Bao, Sushi, wafer-thin pizzas, signature kinds of pasta; Continental, Asian & Indian large plates, and desserts. It includes flavoursome and delectable dishes such as Chilli Omelette served with focaccia, fried onions, burnt garlic, parmesan, chili oil & sracha aioli; Burrata Bowl served with burrata cheese, 24-hour marinated baby tomatoes, basil, fresh rocket, and balsamic drizzle; Truffle Mushroom hummus served with fries, marinated olives & lavash chips, and topped with mushrooms; Spicy Crispy Chicken Sandwich with melted cheese, sriracha aioli, and served on a Brioche Bun; Edamame Pods- a bowl of pods steamed with sea salt, and truffle scented; Pink Paneer Tikka- instagrammable pink succulent paneer tikka, with onion pickle & served with coriander chutney; and Jalapeno Poppers Bao. Additionally, the kitchen also doles out eclectic dishes such as The Desi Pizza, Spaghetti Aglio E Olio, Ravioli In Paprika Sauce, Chicken Madeira, Yaki Udon Noodles, and Tikka Biryani. To add a cherry on top of a delightful cake, the dessert menu includes luscious treats like Vegan Chocolate Fudge Cake, Chocolate Chip Cookies, and Vanilla Panna Cotta with fresh berries, amongst others.

Drinks

The elaborate beverage menu exceedingly complements the food menu and includes a wide range of alcoholic as well as non-alcoholic drinks right from hot&cold coffees to craft cocktails. Some of the signature cocktails include Kiss of Summer, a savoury cocktail infused with Elderflower, Gin, Sweet & Sour Syrup, Malta, and Soda; Balmy Street, a signature drink containing Lavender & Yuzu infused gin topped with tonic water; Sweet Lie, a robust cocktail with Lychee & Rose Syrup, and Vodka and Brunch Feels, a tangy cocktail served with Kafir Lime & Lemongrass, Gin, and Lemon, amongst others.



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Cafe Delhi Heights Now in Lucknow

After the successful stint of Cafe Delhi Heights in Delhi, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Pune, Gurgaon, Noida & Ludhiana - the favourite Cafe Delhi Heights has entered the City of Nawabs - Lucknow. Cafe Delhi Heights is all set to bring the diversity of cuisine to Lucknow with its outlet located in the most premium Riverside mall in Gomti Nagar.

One of the most prominent and esteemed entrepreneurs of Lucknow, Rajesh Ladhani has lent his city insights and experience and has taken the plunge to get Cafe Delhi Heights to his city with the conviction that Cafe Delhi heights is going to be a huge success in the city of Lucknow.

Cafe Delhi Heights popularly also known as CDH is a cool, groovy and fun cafe that presents its full of life vibe, delicious food and magnificent ambience for the youth of the city. With fondness



and success in Delhi, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Pune, Gurgaon, Noida, and Ludhiana, Cafe Delhi Heights is surely the favourite of many.

Brainchild of Vikrant Batra (an established stalwart in the Indian food and beverage industry) & Sharad Batra, the all-day casual neighbourhood cafe, Cafe Delhi Heights always manages to bring thrill, love and artistry on a plate resembling the colourful city palate. Café Delhi Heights is the only standalone cafe chain of India that has 33 outlets and many more coming soon. With outlets located at the prime locations, CDH has opened its doors at Riverside mall, Lucknow. The brand is living up to the big-hearted expectations and is overwhelmed with the love received from shoppers and residents around Riverside Mall, Lucknow.

On the launch, Vikrant Batra shared, "We are delighted to see that we have succeeded in winning the hearts of customers by providing consistency of food quality and focusing on a great customer experience. We started our journey from our first outlet at Crosspoint Mall, Gurgaon in 2011 and now we have more than 30 outlets across the country and are planning to open up in more cities."

"I was very confident about Café Delhi Heights as a product and concept both, but winning so much of customers' love,



loyalty and following is the biggest achievement. Surviving and Expanding in the industry and sustaining the essence of the brand with continuous innovations has always been our mission. Food has always been the key focus area for us and we believe in not only understanding the palette of the audience but also innovating and experimenting with it in the most comfortable manner", added Vikrant Batra.

Café Delhi Heights is a result of the attitude and gratitude of my team's consistency and customers love. We started at an era where Café was a new term. We were the pioneers who brought Café culture in the Capital with the most varied menu of those times. This year Cafe Delhi Heights turned 11. We promise to continue to serve our customers with more innovations, outlets, consistency and love always", concluded Vikrant Batra.

Cafe Delhi Heights also became India's first restaurant to serve inside the famous historical heritage monument, The Red Fort. Serving its delectable courses amidst the heritage, it is a great feeling for Cafe Delhi Heights to have completed more than a decade in the industry and also becoming the first restaurant in the country to be situated inside a world-renowned heritage monument.

Gourmands can enjoy the pleasure of relishing from a menu that is a culinary atlas full of toothsome, hearty and mouth-watering delicacies. From hearty breakfasts to palatable lunches and divine dinners, find an array of cuisines, flavours & variety under one roof. As you walk through Riverside Mall, you cannot miss Café Delhi Heights and savour along with our bestsellers and chef specials like the ISBT Makhni Maggi, Wada Pao with a spicy zing, an array of salads and some wholesome pizza's to Delhi highway specials. End your meal on a sweet note with a Motichur laddu cheesecake, chocolate mud-cake sundae & more.

With food ready to win the hearts, the brand also understands the concept of wholesome experience. Hence, Live Music, Game, special menus are always the added attractions of Cafe Delhi Heights. The bar section is equipped with spirits across the globe and Mixologists is surely stirring the best cocktail concoctions at CDH.

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APPOINTMENT

Waris Qureshi



Sofitel Mumbai BKC, introduces Waris Hasan Qureshi as the new Indian Master Chef at Jyran. He specializes in Awadhi, Hyderabad, and Kashmiri cuisines.

Qureshi spent his early years in a quaint village in Lucknow listening to the tales of innovative Indian cuisine from his great grandfather Mohammed Yusuf Qureshi, who was the head Chef to the Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, in 18th century Lucknow.

He first began his culinary journey in 2013 at Tote on the Turf. He then moved on to Blue Waters restaurant, followed by an appointment at Oakwood, now Z-Luxury Residences. He, then, transitioned into the world of hotels over the years and began focusing on specialty menus and cuisines.

His deep knowledge of cooking techniques, coupled with access to secret recipes passed down through generations, make him a formidable force in the kitchen.

Savio Fernandes



Born and raised in Mumbai, Savio completed his Post-Graduate Diploma in Hotel Management from Goa. He started his hospitality career with Goa Marriott, and then moved as

a Guest Service Coordinator in Taj Exotica Goa and over the past two decades worked his way up the ranks as Director of Food & Beverage, with his recent move being to Taj Cidade de Goa.

While not working, Savio enjoys adventure sports and is a keen traveller and loves to explore new destinations and culture. He also enjoys playing cricket, football, Table Tennis and Chess.

In his current role, Savio will be seen overseeing operations of the entire Food & Beverage division of Four Seasons in the Garden City of Bengaluru, setting a new pace in the already dynamic dining landscape.

Trufrost & Butler set up a Experience Centre



Recognising the latent need of its prospective customers to ‘touch & feel’ the equipment before purchase, Trufrost & Butler has set up a Company driven Experience Centre at Jayanagar, Bengaluru. This is its second flagship Experience Centre – the first being already operational at its corporate office in Gurgaon.

At this ‘state of the art’ Experience cum Culinary Centre, you will find the key products of Trufrost and Butler on display in an aesthetic, yet functional manner – in the actual setting of a bar, a coffee shop, a professional kitchen, an ice cream parlour and so on. Here the prospective customers

leading kitchen consultants from Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mumbai, Coimbatore and even states like Gujarat, Punjab and West Bengal. The Experience Centre can be visited on any working day with prior appointment.

Design Support

Neeraj Seth, Managing Director & Co-Founder of Trufrost & Butler says – “Our focus is not merely in selling our equipment but in delivering holistic solutions that work for our customers and help them grow their business. We draw immense satisfaction when our customers turn into



can visualise the use of the various equipment in their eventual environments and also allows them to get store design tips and space saving ideas, ahead of their committing themselves to making an investment and ensuring that it remains judicious. In addition, prospective clients who wish to experiment with their recipes under the guidance of a culinary team can see how they would turn out after cooking.

The Experience Centre at Bengaluru was inaugurated on 5th January, 2023 and was visited by leading entrepreneurs, restaurateurs, hospitality professionals, kitchen equipment fabricators and

repeat clients and refer other customers to us. Our two brands – Trufrost & Butler work in tandem to provide holistic solutions that are contemporary, energy efficient, space saving, technologically advanced, and yet do not burn a hole in your pocket. Whether you are setting up a cafe, a patisserie or a bakery, fine dining or a quick service restaurant, commercial or a cloud kitchen, bar or a pub, an ice cream parlour or a juice bar, supermarket or a convenience store, or planning a walk-in coldroom or a refrigerated warehouse, you can call us for help in offering you the right advice on equipment selection, design as well as culinary support.”



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Fagor Experience Days 2nd Edition



Fagor Professional, a leading provider of professional kitchen equipment, recently held their second Fagor Experience Days edition out of headquarters in Taj Palace in New Delhi. The event followed the successful first summit held in Dubai and brought together top chefs, restaurateurs, and industry professionals to discuss the latest trends and developments with Fagor Professional.

Attendees had the opportunity to see Fagor Professional's latest equipment in action and network with their peers in the industry. The summit also featured a keynote presentation by Denis Llodio, Africa & Asia Pacific Director of Fagor Professional, in which he highlighted the company's vision for 2023 and growth path.

"We were thrilled to have held this event in Delhi," said Harish Bist, Country Head India of Fagor.

The Corporate Chef, Oier Biritxinaga, highlighted features and presented a demo of the iKORE Ovens. He gave cooking demonstrations and tastings.

The Fagor Professional iKORE oven is



a high-end commercial oven designed for use in professional kitchens. It features advanced cooking technology and customizable settings to ensure precise and consistent results. The iKORE oven is suitable for a variety of cooking applications and can be integrated into a larger kitchen system.

As specialists in ovens and refrigeration, Fagor Professional presented the perfect Cook & Chill solution, which combines ovens and blast chillers to optimise the work, performance, effectiveness and productivity of a professional kitchen.

The Fagor Cook-n-Chill range is a versatile and efficient commercial kitchen appliance designed for high-volume cooking.

The oven has a built-in humidification system that helps to maintain the moisture and texture of the food, ensuring that it stays fresh and delicious even after cooling.

It also has a user-friendly digital control

panel that allows for easy operation and programming of cooking and cooling cycles. It has a variety of safety features, including an automatic shut-off if the door is left open, and an alarm to alert the chef if the temperature rises above a certain level.

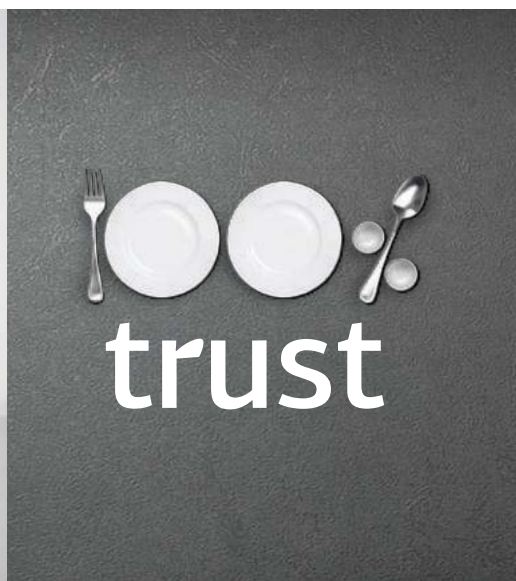
In addition to its cooling and humidification capabilities, this oven also has a powerful convection system that circulates hot air evenly throughout the cooking chamber, ensuring that food is cooked quickly and evenly. It also has a built-in steam generator for added moisture and a combination cooking mode that combines steam and



convection cooking for optimal results.

Overall, the iKORE Oven was a reliable and efficient option for high-volume commercial kitchens, offering a range of advanced features for precise temperature control, cooking, and cooling, and preserving food quality.

The event was a great success, with a fantastic turnout and positive feedback from attendees including Hotel Consultants, Restaurant owners, Chefs and dealers. The summit reinforced Fagor Professional's commitment to innovation and excellence in the culinary industry and further established their position as a leading provider of professional kitchen equipment. The company looked forward to hosting more such summits in the future.



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By Sharmila Chand

It is that time of the year when we look at upcoming Food Trends and here we have chefs sharing their thoughts on the trends that are going to go big in 2023. From plant based food options to locally sourced ingredients and a focus on experimentation in rustling up dishes, chefs will like to step outside their comfort culinary zone and celebrate the New Year after a tough phase of pandemic hiatus. Needless to add that 'Healthy Nutritious Guilt Free Food' will be in for the long haul.

Top key food trends in the coming year

Chef Vaibhav Bhargava, Managing and Brand Partner ABV Hospitality/CHÔ

"More plant-based, local foods will be the highlight of 2023. I have been seeing development requests for more 'authentic' or regional recipes and if I look from the restaurant point of view it's more adaptable and cost-friendly since importing products from different countries is any day steep call, the costs go much higher, and it's not a long term sustainable approach because the consumer doesn't anything that's heavy on the pocket. From a South Indian Chettinad chicken to a Kashmiri pulao, people want to experience the local foods and traditional foods that they aren't quite familiar with. For example, Bihari food is garnering a lot of attention, and it's a magnanimous range of spread that is way beyond the staples."

Chef Manoj Kumar Pandey, Partner Chef at The Piano Man

"People love to eat and experiment with new cuisines and flavours. It's exciting to see the trends each year and work with them to curate something special for our customers. The year 2023 will see products from local farmers

gaining popularity, and this trend will stay for a long time. Additionally, eating environmentally friendly or sustainable food will also see a rise in preference. I also see the acceptance of Indian cuisine worldwide, and it is one of the best developments in the sector."

Chef Amit Kumar Singh, Executive Chef, Renest Jaipur

"Plant based diet will remain the top trend in the coming years as it comes with a host of health benefits, therefore veganism is definitely gaining popularity in India. Farm-to-table is another concept that will continue to rule the food industry in 2023 which would mean sourcing locally grown organic produce directly from the farmers."

Noah Louis Barnes, Co- Founder & Chef at Miss Margarita

"According to me people going to experiment a lot with Spanish Mexican and Latin American flavours. Also, focus will be on Healthy food."

What will be in IN and what will be OUT?

Chef Vaibhav Bhargava, Managing and Brand Partner ABV Hospitality/CHÔ

"Plant-based meat is catching up in India due to its health benefits and a growing consciousness to adopt a lifestyle that's less harmful to the environment. Mock meat is a plant-based meat and many consumers have started enjoying it more than any other given option. So yes that will definitely be in!"

Noah Louis Barnes, Co- Founder & Chef at Miss Margarita

"Single dish driven menus will be IN. Complete meals like Ramen or Tacos

will be high on demand. The idea is to complete the meal in single dish and pack a wholesome meal. There will be a lot of playing around with products and experimenting with fermenting and pickling that allows chefs to create tastier menus."

Chef Manoj Kumar Pandey, Partner Chef at The Piano Man

"Trends keep changing throughout the year. So narrowing it down to what will stay and what will not; is no guarantee. However, locally grown foods, including seasonal vegetables, cereals, and pulses, will be prominently featured."

Your focus in the coming year?

Chef Vaibhav Bhargava, Managing and Brand Partner ABV Hospitality/CHÔ

"Today the trend spirals back towards eating more local, with fewer chemicals, and old-fashioned comfort food. The diner of tomorrow will continue to be health-driven, more local, seasonal options and as people continue to immigrate, traditional food will continue to inspire new cuisines and teach traditions of the past with the technology of today and that will be my focus too!"

Chef Manoj Kumar Pandey, Partner Chef at The Piano Man

"We are currently focusing on cooking with a process-oriented approach, using seasonal products frequently, and utilizing them creatively. However, we are cautious of what we try to achieve with different taste palates since unusual combinations of sweet and salty can create not-so-pleasing flavours. We are considering sourcing ingredients from various cities/states of India as well to add to the flavour palates."

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Chef Amit Kumar Singh, Executive Chef, Renest Jaipur

"Looking at the ongoing and upcoming trends in the food industry, we at Renest Hotels and Resorts are always keen on experimenting and innovating. For me a true culinary expert is someone who is constantly innovating food to meet the guests' needs and yet keeping up with the top trends in the food business."

Noah Louis Barnes, Co- Founder & Chef at Miss Margarita

"I am looking forward to opening a new place in Goa, and adding more things to the menu. The focus of course is always on ingredients and quality and using fresh ingredients that are local and easily available. At the end of the day our customer is the most valued opinion maker when it comes to feedback, so you have to keep all these factors in mind while catering to a different region and audience."

New Year Resolution in Food Planning and Cooking

Chef Amit Kumar Singh, Executive Chef, Renest Jaipur

"As I had mentioned before, I strive to constantly innovate be it food or the newest cooking techniques. In terms of food planning, we will continue to come up with ways that will help reduce food wastage."

Noah Louis Barnes, Co- Founder & Chef at Miss Margarita

"I am very excited about opening Miss Margarita by Arriba in Goa and we are almost ready for the launch. For us adding on a new city and creating a new menu takes a lot of work and effort. At the same time pairing alcohol with food is just as essential. Specialty of miss margarita is that it is Mexican food and tequila bar. So the food always has to compliment the drinks, that is something I'm always looking forward to and creating recipes will give you a memorable meal and at the same time an experience with drinks. Miss margarita is the biggest tequila bar in India, and I hope to add more cities in the near future going forward!"



Shaurya Veer Kapoor

Chef Vaibhav Bhargava, Managing and Brand Partner ABV Hospitality/CHÔ

"Reducing food wastage; storing food under the correct conditions is vital for preserving their quality and preventing pathogenic bacterial growth – both of which can quickly lead to food waste. Most importantly keep a close eye on portion control."

Chef Manoj Kumar Pandey, Partner Chef at The Piano Man

"My goal for the coming year is to include regional and seasonal flavours more thoroughly into our cuisine. Being adventurous, I aim to ensure we cater to all kinds of customer choices by making our food menu more appealing and fascinating. We will also emphasise on cleanliness and sanitization as it shouldn't just be done during pandemic situations but should be a part of our daily ongoing tasks and be prioritized at all times."

Chef Abhay Pratap, Executive Chef, Fazlani Natures Nest

"I wish to focus on nutrient-dense foods – keeping in mind the goodness of the ingredients, it's about satisfaction, and the right mix of health and indulgence. So I will follow Key Principles of food Planning as Balance, Variety, Moderation and Nourishment."

Shaurya Veer Kapoor, Executive Chef, Gola Sizzlers & Cafe Hawkers

"My New Year resolution is to strengthen my upcoming projects and putting the dishes which would give a new twist to our usual offerings and cooking them to the perfection and maintaining the consistency."



USA Duck & Turkey

USAPEEC's is responsible for promoting U.S. poultry around the world. Throughout the world, USAPEEC touts the high quality of American poultry like Turkey & Duck. Food safety is the highest priority among its member companies, enforced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA).

USA Duck

Duck Fat is Only Skin Deep. Despite its rich, succulent taste, a skinless duck breast has fewer calories and less fat than a similar portion of chicken, beef or pork. Duck meat is dark or "red" so it can be prepared to a medium temperature, unlike other common types of poultry. The texture of a properly prepared duck breast resembles a tender beef fillet, and is juicier and more flavourful than chicken or turkey.

While duck is poultry, it is very different from chicken and turkey because it's a red meat. The fat



on a duck breast is located in the skin, so it can be reduced in the cooking method, or if desired, completely removed. Duck is the perfect

starting point for delicious and creative dishes that break from the routine. Duck substitutes easily for beef, chicken or pork in recipes. Consider giving favourites a new twist with Duck: Burgers, Pizza, Quesadillas, Chilli, Tacos or Lasagne.

Rendered duck fat can be used to season and flavour other dishes when frying, sautéing, roasting or baking. Duck's crispy skin is highly desirable, yet optional. Well prepared duck breast eats more like steak than chicken and is slightly pink in the centre when properly cooked to a final internal temperature

of 165 degrees F. Unlike other red meats, however, duck is very lean and low in saturated fat; therefore, better for you.

Duck is a good source of iron, selenium, niacin and vitamin B..

USA Turkey

Turkey is one of the most popular meats due to its high protein content, range of health benefits, and great taste. Turkey meat boasts a versatile range of applications. Traditionally roasted whole Turkey is served but turkey cold cuts are equally popular among delicatessens.

Versatility in dishes, and excellent flavour, turkey meat is a great value in consumer, food service, and commercial applications. USA Turkey is renowned for its high quality, is marketed in more than 90 countries around the world.

High quality turkey meat has several health benefits. Turkey is high in protein and low in cholesterol and saturated fat, which makes for a hearty, healthy meal.

Turkey is also a good source of niacin, tryptophan, and vitamins B6 and B12. Eating turkey has benefits for people of all ages and lifestyles.





Cocktails

Art of Mixology

Cocktails, and spirits comprising these drinks, are becoming popular as they speak to the consumers' soul and respond to their inner tastes. Cocktails are selling in record numbers. Not only are bartenders brewing up these delectable tipples for eager and avid consumers but the demand for these ready to drink (RTDs) beverages is also increasing. Millennials and Gen Z are demanding the RTD tipples which they can consume at home with friends. This category has been growing globally. Many liquor brands too have launched RTD cocktails. [Ashok Malkani](#) takes a look at the growing trend of consuming cocktails instead of straight alcoholic drinks with a dash of water or aerated waters.



As one raises the glass to bring in the New Year and say “cheers”, it is found that the glass does not contain just alcohol or soft drink or even juice but a combination of several ingredients. Yes it’s a Cocktail!

Today, as food has become a hot topic of discussion due to globalization, which has made it easier for chefs to procure high quality ingredients from virtually every corner of the globe, what goes with the food has become equally important. There is now a trend of sophisticated tipples. High end restaurant would serve drinks at that level. Just plain alcohol served with water or soda or Cola is no longer the vogue. What surrounds the alcohol in the glass is equally important.

Cocktails are becoming the fashion. They can not only make you feel refreshed but you could also regulate the amount of alcohol that you consume. Brenda Fiala, Global Vice President of Strategy, Insights & Analytics at Bacardi, is of the view that as cocktail culture flourishes people would seek inspiration from new flavours, sensations and experiences.

But one wonders why it is called a cocktail! Why would your pre-dinner sips have such an animalistic name? Such a name, you feel, would be the last thing that would come to one’s mind when cradling a Crantini. One should not be misled by such a name. The real root of the word doesn’t have anything to do with chickens.

It involves horses.

According to Vicky Bachani, Co-Founder at Farmaash Lounge and Bar, Pune, “The word is derived from something concerning horses with a mixed lineage. These mixed breed horses used to have their tails cropped short to recognize these breeds hence the analogy where spirits that are mixed and are no longer pure spirits are called cocktails.”

He states, “However, there are other versions of the story around the world. One more theory is that during colonial times spirits were stored in casks and casks that were almost empty were called tailing. Such casks of different spirits were later mixed together to sell for a cheaper price and were ultimately called cocktails.”

Alcohol expert David Wondrich says



Vicky Bachani

that ‘cock-tailed’ became a sort of insult for non-pedigree racehorses with mixed lineage. So, people in days of yore gave this name to alcoholic drinks that were blended (rather than pure spirits).

But one wonders whether that is the full story!

Popularity of Cocktails

Coming back to trend of cocktails for the 2023, according to Bacardi Consumer Survey, conducted in October 2022, Daiquiri, Margarita, and Bloody Mary were among the cocktails people most frequently ordered and created globally. It is believed that 2023 will unleash an era where people will redefine with which cocktails and flavours they celebrate.

The demand for cocktails could be said to be due to the increasing demand for these from Millennials and Gen Z who are looking for drinks to enjoy and socialize with friends rather than just to get high. The latest ready-to-drink cocktails contain approximately 5% to 8% alcohol by volume and are ideal for social gatherings at home and house parties.

Cocktail is becoming THE drink not only for the millenials but almost everyone. What is the reason for this popularity?

Vicky Bachani, avers, “Over the years cocktails have gained popularity because of the innovative approach of mixologists across the world. Molecular gastronomy adds to the newness and photo worthiness

of drinks.”

He adds, “When you're out for a quiet dinner, the go-to choice is a cocktail, which is now no longer considered as a women's-only drink. It is loved by men who love to explore and try new flavours.”

Forthcoming Trends

There has been a revitalized interest of the consumer in the background of the drink they are purchasing. Besides the ingredients used in the drink, including the alcohol, they would also be cost conscious, since the cost of living is rising. People also seem to have value for time and are, often reluctant to mix the ingredients according to measurement and at a slow pace.

Vicky brings in a relevant point. He states, “People love their drinks served quickly and pre-batched or ready-to-serve cocktails are something that works well with bartenders who can make their signature mixes at ease and serve them fast when ordered, so these types of cocktails will definitely be a trend this year.”

The ready to drink (RTD) cocktails are also becoming popular with drinkers from home. This has enticed even the alcoholic beverage companies to launch ready-to-drink cocktails in cans. Alcoholic beverage brands like Bacardi, Diageo, Radico Khaitan, Pernod Ricard and Brown-Forman, in keeping with the changing drinking behaviour of consumers during



the pandemic years, have launched their own range of ready-to-drink cocktails, sold in cans. These companies have launched whisky-based cocktails, vodka-based cocktails, canned pre-mixed gin and tonic, among other variants. Not only are established brands jumping on the cocktails trend even startups are launching their range and selling canned cocktails across India.

According to Research and Markets, alcoholic ready-to-drinks market in India is anticipated to surge at a CAGR of 10.29 per cent in revenue over the forecast period 2021-26 and at a CAGR of 12.15 per cent in terms of volume. Ankur Bhatia, Founder & CEO, Jimmy's Cocktails believes that RTD market would touch Rs 7500 crore in India by 2030.

Thibault Cuny, MD & CEO, Pernod Ricard South Asia, is also of the belief that RTDs and ready-to-serve cocktails trend has been developing especially during the pandemic.

The RTDs have become popular as the industry has brought innovation from cans to bottles. One of the major factors that drew consumers' attention to RTD cocktails was their ease of consumption.

Vicky declares, “For home consumption the new trend of bottled-ready cocktails is the way to go. It takes away the hassle of stocking many liqueurs and expensive ingredients.”

Speaking about the most favoured spirit for cocktails, he avers, “Vodka is the most loved cocktail base and will continue to remain so here in India.”

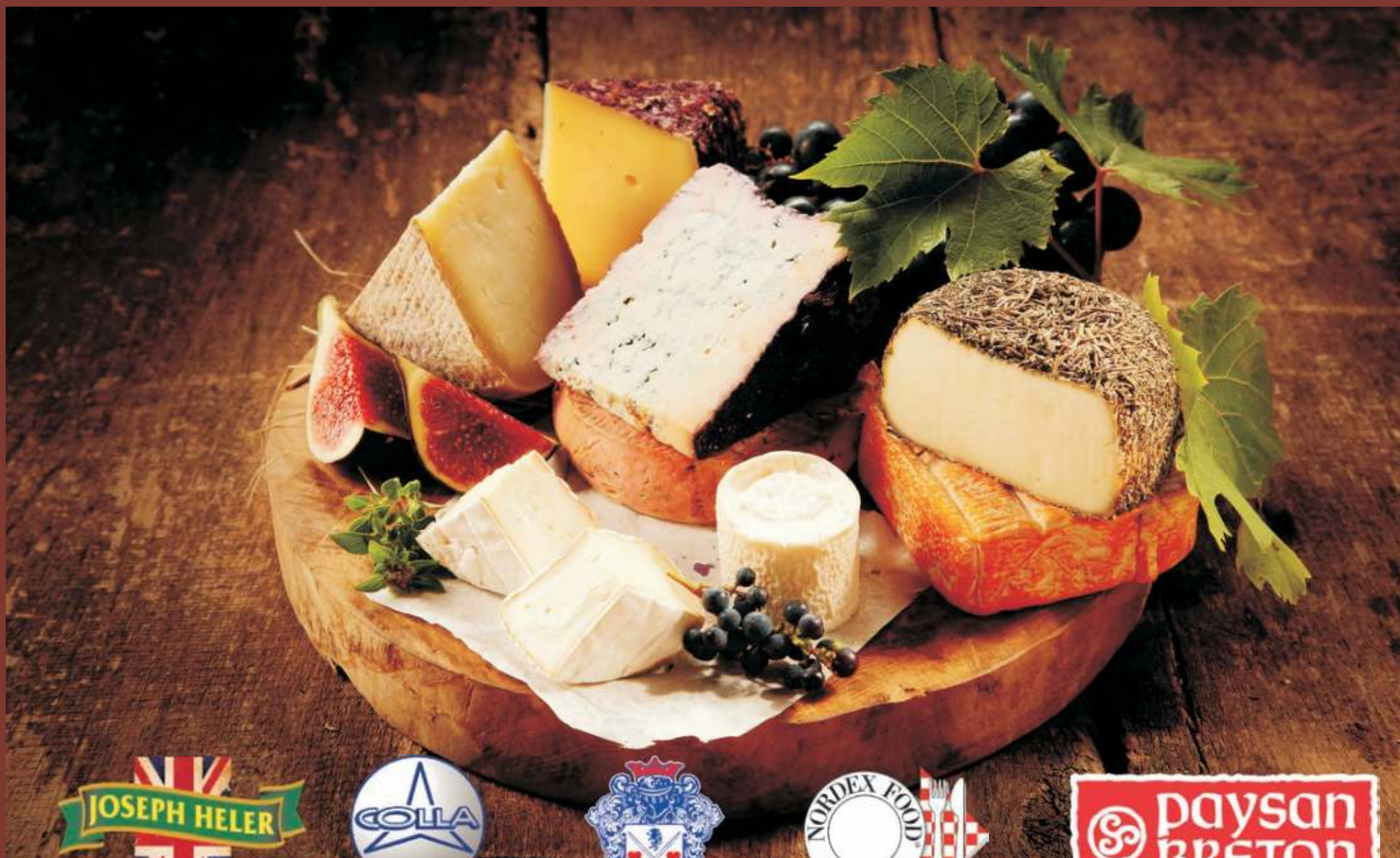
Bacardi predicts that during 2023 consumers will seek out cocktails that transport them back to better times. A Mintel study has revealed that consumers aged 25-44 are most likely to enjoy things that remind them of the past. People will seek cocktails and flavours that transport their memories back in time, enjoying classic sips like the Martini, Negroni, Highball and Old Fashioned, but elevated with a twist.

In premium venues, the general tendency is expected to be minimalism for the forthcoming year. The focus would be on quality ingredients that shine in simpler serves. So, which would be the alcoholic tittle that would be popular for cocktails? 72% of bartenders say they're seeing the most premiumisation within tequila, followed by single malts, aged rum, and mezcal. Premiumisation within





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tequila is also increasing its demand for cocktails. This would, according to experts, be followed by single malts, aged rum, and mezcal. According to Bacardi Global Brand Ambassador Survey 2022, popularity of rum-based cocktails is driving growth and premiumisation across this spirit segment, with 32% of bartenders expecting to see increased premiumisation in aged rums during 2023.

However, Lauren “LP” Paylor O’Brien, proprietor of consultancy LPD Drinks and season one winner of Netflix’s Drink Masters, believes that in the forthcoming years the focus would be on either no or low alcohol by volume (ABV) products.

Popular Cocktails

According to drinks group AG Barr, Britons are drinking cocktails in record numbers at home and in bars and consumers are opting for martini or mojito.

James Bond made the Martini famous with his famous order: Dry Martini, shaken not stirred. Dry Martini or the Vesper Martini was invented by none other than Ian Fleming author of James Bond, through his book “Casino Royale” published in 1953. The cocktail is named for the fictional double agent Vesper Lynd.

Vicky, however, avers, “Margarita most definitely rules any bar.”

Nicholas Bennett, beverage director at Porchlight, New York, discloses that Dirty Shirleys and espresso martinis were making a comeback and 2023 is likely to see resurgence of Harvey Wallbanger,

a modern classic cocktail that was reportedly born in the 1950s.

Vicky reveals that at Farmaish Lounge and Bar, Pune, the most requested cocktail was Cosmopolitan which he believes, is also the favourite at other bars around the country.

Tipped as one of the big drinks’ trends to look out for, hard seltzers (essentially an alcoholic, flavoured sparkling water) have taken the industry by storm as a low-calorie convenience drink. These have relatively low ABV and have an array of different alcohol bases including vodka and gin.

Cocktail History

Cocktails have been around since the 1800s. They were initially inspired by



British punches, which contained spirits, fruit juices, and spices in big bowls. The term ‘cocktail’ was first seen in a newspaper on March 17, 1798.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary the word originated in the U.S. Jerry Thomas, an American bartender, owning saloons in New York published a bartending guide, How to Mix Drinks; or, The Bon Vivant’s Companion which included 10 cocktail recipes, in 1862. In a new article David Wondrich singles out James Ashley, who ran a legendary punch house in London from 1731 to 1776 as the originator of cocktails. The different opinions makes one assume that the origin of cocktail is unclear.

Vicky is of the opinion that Jerry Thomas who is known for his “Professor and The Bartenders Guide” book written in 1862 is the father of American Mixology

As far as the word, Cocktail, is concerned, it is believed to have been derived from the French word “coquetel”, which means “egg cup”.

But with all these differing view about the origins of the word one wonders which is the oldest cocktail .

According to Vicky Bachani the oldest cocktail in the world is Sazerac. “It was made,” he says, “in the 1800s and is a blend of whisky, absinthe, bitters, and sugar.”

Health Aspects

When one raises the glass and says, “Cheers. Here’s to your health”, one wonders how healthy is the drink that is going down your throat?

Alcoholic beverages are generally not recommended as they are believed to be strongly destructive. However, some recent results have shown that if you drink cocktails in moderation, you will get a little unexpected benefit – that of curtailing percentage of alcoholic consumption as well as benefits of fruits and juices in the form of mixers.

David Montgomery, cardiologist at Piedmont Heart Institute, Atlanta, USA, states, “When we look at everything together, it turns out that moderate amounts of alcohol seem to be the best for your health in a number of ways.”

The high level of antioxidants in alcoholic beverages may be beneficial for your cardiovascular system in particular.

We are ready for 2023



Fagor Experience Days in Delhi

Fagor Professional has already launched the new iKORE Oven Ranges in an event that will be taking place in Taj Hotel in New Delhi.

2022 was an amazing year for the Fagor Experience Days: events in which clients from all over the world have had the opportunity to enjoy a great experience getting to know the manufacturer plant, the new showroom and the most important thing: the new iKORE Oven Ranges.

After events in the headquarters located in Spain, India has been honoured to be the first one hosting the event in this 2023.



From 14th till 18th of march

Without any doubt Fagor Professional will be participating on the 37th AAHAR edition.

AAHAR, The international Food&Hospitality Fair will take place from 14th till 18th of march 2023 at Pragati Maidan (New Delhi) and without any doubt. Fagor Professional will be having its stand in to present all the novelties and give the opportunity to see the equipment in action.



“Antioxidants help fight changes to the blood vessel and plaque buildup, help the inside lining fight the effects of blood pressure and high blood sugar, and it also increases good cholesterol,” he explains. “These are some of the ways that alcohol – in moderate amounts – is good for your health.”

There are other health factors too in cocktails. A good old fashioned squeeze and slice of lemon/lime or other citrus

fruits brings a ton of vitamin C in it, which boosts immune support and neutralizes free radicals that damage skin cells and tissues. Freshly made fresh fruit juices packed with vitamin C are also often added to a base spirit to create cocktails.

As far as mixers are concerned, there are often healthy mixers used. Tonic Water contains Quinine (creating the bitterness in tonic) which is a natural remedy that

helps prevent Malaria.

Ginger (found in natural ginger beer or ale) has anti-nausea, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antibacterial, antiviral and many more medicinal properties that can do wonders for your health. It’s also a good source of vitamins A, C, E, and B, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, iron, zinc and calcium...that’s a ton of goodness right there!

Recipes of a Few Enticing Cocktails



Moscow Mule

Ingredients

- Ginger Syrup 3/4-ounce
- Fresh Lime Juice 1-ounce
- Vodka 2 ounces
- Club Soda 2 ounces
- Lime wedge or candied ginger
- crushed ice

Method

- Pour the ginger syrup, lime juice, and vodka into a shaker.
- Add a little handful of crushed ice
- Shake that bad boy *hard* until the ingredients have dissolved. You will know it is ready when you no longer hear the ice chips clinking against the metal of the shaker.
- Pour the club soda into the shaker right away, then yeet that cocktail into a highball glass.
- Garnish the drink with a lime wedge or candied ginger.
- Serve with a straw.

Vicky Bachani, Co-Founder at Farmaish Lounge and Bar, Pune



Traveller's Toddy

Ingredients

- Brandy 60 ml
- Kahlua 15 ml
- Orange And Coffee Reduction (100 ml orange juice, 100 ml water, 5 g instant coffee powder), 60 ml
- Milk 100 ml
- Lemon Juice 10 ml
- Mixed Spices (cloves, star anise, cardamom, cinnamon) 4 g

Method

- Bring orange juice, lemon juice, spices and water to a boil until it’s reduced by half
- Add coffee powder to this mixture to make the reduction
- Combine brandy, Kahlua, and the reduction together
- Add chilled milk and lemon juice to this mixture
- Allow this to curdle and drip clarify the cocktail before flash heating it on a pan
- Strain into a stemmed glass and garnish with flamed star anise

Rojen Singh, Bar Manager, Dock 66 Gastrobar, Bengaluru



Brandy Blazer

Ingredients

- 10 g cloves,
- 3 cinnamon sticks,
- 15 g black pepper,
- 1/2 nutmeg powdered,
- 50 g ginger,
- 2 whole orange peels,
- 100 ml bergamot honey syrup,
- 120 ml lemon juice,
- 10 ml roasted tea bitters,
- 1 l apple juice

Method

- In a saucepan, bring all the ingredients except the brandy to a boil and simmer for two hours.
- Fine strain the mixture into one brandy snifter (glass) and pour brandy into another – placing the former under the latter to let the brandy on top heat up. Combine and serve warm.

Neil Alexander, G.M and Corporate Mixologist, Windmills, (Microbrewery & Indian restaurant) Bengaluru

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Promoting F&B Outlets

The Indian restaurant market which is, according to the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI), expected to reach Rs. 5.99 crore by 22-23, is one of the fastest growing in the world. The Pandemic had affected it adversely, and the possible inflation could also impact the industry. It needs to adopt techniques to attract customers and to imbibe in them a desire to keep visiting the outlets. **Ashok Malkani** takes a look at some of the methods that the restaurants need to embrace to overcome the pandemic fear, which is still prevalent in the minds of the customers.

The food & beverage industry is, after a long span of absence due to the pandemic, seeing the clients returning with family and friends, to dine in at the food & beverage outlets. However, there is still a little hesitancy on their part and the dine-in places have to win back the confidence of their clients, as far as the clients' safety is concerned. To attract more guests and for business to return to pre-pandemic days, it is felt that there is a need to assure them of their protection and wellbeing at the dine-in place.

Priyank Sukhija, MD and CEO First Fiddle Restaurant Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, believes that the necessity to assure customer of his well being is not a phenomenon due to the pandemic. He says, "I think it would be a little unfair to say that continuous effort to attract guests is something that has started only after the pandemic. We, at First Fiddle, have always kept our patrons, current and

prospective, at the centre of our ethos. Since the beginning, we've prided ourselves in offering unique experiences to our guests and constantly upgraded ourselves to ensure that they have something new to look forward to every time. In the hospitality sector, if we don't constantly reinvent ourselves, we'll soon find ourselves irrelevant, with guests moving on to the next best thing."

Anupam Dutta, Director of Operations, Miss Pinto Restaurant, Delhi, informs, "Ever since the ease of covid-19 restrictions, people have returned to F&B outlets. All customers have some pre-conceived expectations about the restaurant before they visit it. Both Food and Service are essential for delivering excellent restaurant service to your valuable customers. The Restaurant's owners, managers, and employees, all share the responsibility for ensuring that the customers are treated professionally. Good restaurant service will help in leaving an overall positive impression of an excellent dining experience"

Shaurya Kapoor, Head Chef of Gola Sizzlers Delhi asserts, "Since things have returned to normal, it is even more important to incorporate the lessons we have learned regarding health and safety from the pandemic. Not only do sanitary practices ensure customer loyalty, but they also keep our staff safe and protected. Continuing sanitary practices are important to attract guests because they make our guests feel safe when dining with us and reassure them that their health is in safe hands with us, a fear that needs to be tended to more than ever post-pandemic."

Inflation

While the pandemic is receding, inflation seems to be on the rise. One also has to tackle inflation. This is one of the most important occurrence of the moment and F&B industry has to tackle this issue along with that of the pandemic fear. The current environment of inflation is posing a problem for the restaurants. The industry feels that food & beverage or eating out is the first thing that consumers cut back on to ensure savings.

The last recession, in 2020, which happened due to Covid-19, was mainly due to the effect it had on supply chain. It is believed that if this occurs, it could pose a major challenge, once again, for the restaurant industry as it would result in price rise which would result in decline of customers.

Customer Service

While inflation is a possibility the fear of pandemic is a reality at the present moment. One needs to adopt different methods to tackle this immediate issue. Customer service was an important element in keeping the guests satisfied so that they become regular clients.

Priyank states, "There are several ways to level up customer service, which may vary from brand to brand, but empathy and understanding should always be the centre of these methods. Our guests step into our establishments with the hope of having an experience different from their everyday lives, and we should aim at doing exactly that for them!"

Manmeet Singh, Director of Operations, Novotel Mumbai



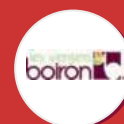
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Anupam Dutta



Priyank Sukhija



Manmeet Singh



Shaurya Kapoor

Juhu Beach maintains, "At first, the absolute basics of F&B shall be a priority before implementing any other practices. Subsequently, strengthening customer service skills, focusing on effective consumer interactions and formulating customer-centric strategies are some key aspects to enhance customer journey. Building a relationship with customers, results in their loyalty to the outlet or brand and the key to nurture this relationship is communication. In turn, it aids the brand in acknowledging and understanding all the needs and expectations of the present day customer."

Shaurya says, "The most important method one needs to incorporate to level up customer service is active listening. Following up with our guests' special requests, addressing grievances and taking feedback are crucial for customer service because we are getting a first-hand review of what we have done and what we can do better. Other methods would be regular staff training to ensure attentiveness and regular health and safety evaluations."

Anupam asserts, "To ensure great customer service, staff training is of utmost importance. Investing in fun learning always gives a fruitful result. Exposures of staff are important, so they see, adapt & implement new things in their day-to-day work life."

One way of customer satisfaction is by personalizing guest experience. Little details like recognition, attentiveness make for a more memorable dining for the customers.

Priyank declares, "Who doesn't like to be treated like they've been looked after personally? I believe it's always the small gestures that count when personalising an experience for our guests. From the ease of adding names to the guest list, to one-on-one interactions by the chef on each table, to customise messages after their meals, the list is endless for things that make guests feel extra-special!"

Shaurya avers, "The food and beverage industry is personalized and tailor-made to a large extent. Asking our guests if they have any special dietary restrictions or allergies helps us cater to them better. Catering to the special needs of our customers ensures they have a

personalized experience."

Anupam, elaborates further by adding, "Key of personalised experience is all about the interaction that the server does along with the guests. It helps to know the expectation of an individual so that can be exceeded through teamwork & chain of communication."

Skilled Staff

Having skilled staff is one way of ensuring customer satisfaction. The staff members – hostesses, wait staff, table bussers, et al. – must work together in a seamless delivery service for ensuring customer satisfaction. Skilled staff is important for this purpose.

Manmeet Singh states, "It is rightly observed that certain people can understand and implement actions more prudently than anyone else. This understanding comes through skilled people and hence, it is important to hire skilled people who can provide best actions while molding the others for better. Pre-learned skills ensure that the basic training has already been covered and makes it easier to transform them into professionals. But I strongly believe that more than the level of skill, the attitude is of high importance. Anyone can work, but the aptitude and eagerness to learn while growing alongside the culture of the workplace is what ensures that growth will thrive and the expected level of service will reach exemplary levels."

Priyank declares, "Experience goes a long way, especially in moments that hold the power to make or break a brand. In today's world of instant connectivity, one wrong step can cause a brand to shutter down. This is where a skilled and experienced team can make a difference since it will know better about how to handle tricky situations tactfully."

Shaurya agrees with this. He states, "Hiring skilled people is imperative because their skill-set is developed with experience, which is crucial when it comes to ideating, problem solving and innovating. A team with a diverse skill-set understands that the sky is the limit when it comes to progress."

Anupam adds, "Hiring skilled people is the priority in all organizations. This enhances your brand reputation &

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customer service. If the staff has good knowledge & skill, they can recommend to the guests, which will enhance to upsell. Also, they can be helpful to train more people in the organization.”

Managing Waiting

Skilled staff would also try and manage to ensure that the customers do not have to wait for a seat for a long time. This could occur as, some of the customers, at times, like to dine at their leisure. These customers take longer to leave your restaurant, which, in turn, results in a long queue.

Skilled staff would ensure that there is less waiting time, which is appreciated by the customers. This would also help in establishing and promoting a brand.

Anupam asserts, “As far as waiting time is concerned, I think, besides trained staff, reservation has to be taken as per the volume of business, considering the availability of tables. One should not take reservation, at one time, beyond the capacity. However, in case you get waiting you may suggest the guest start from the bar so at least they can order drinks & meanwhile offer them a food menu, so the guest can pre-select & place their order with the server.”

Manmeet Singh states, “Today’s customers have been losing out on patience and expect immediate service as soon as they walk-in. A creative fix for this would be waiting for tables by the bar area where guests can have pre-drinks, or groove to the music. Additionally, a

play area for games like card games / Xbox can keep them entertained while they wait.”

He adds, “The most important aspect pertaining with any guest is that the guest is looking out for his value for money, recognition and faster resolution. Complaints are usually based on these three aspects, and so ensuring your staff is trained on recognizing the trait, resolution of the concern can be quicker. Empowerment to ensure guest satisfaction is an imperative aspect in such scenarios.”

Priyank disclosed, “With the new age and tech, we aim at ensuring that available slots and timing are visible to guests on booking portals. We train our staff to ensure an even spread of guests to avoid long waits. However, if there is a long wait during rush hours, we let them lounge by the bar as they wait or simply take their numbers so we can connect with them once a table is free!”

Shaurya adds, “While waiting is unavoidable in the food and beverage industry, there are always small ways to make it less painful without consuming much time. Our staff makes sure to be warm and welcoming to the guests to diffuse any unease before it arises. We have trained our staff to be extra attentive by serving water and other knick-knacks to keep guests busy while they wait. Moreover, explaining the menu to the guests and checking in on their needs every few minutes also go a long way.”

Building your Brand

Skilled staff also helps in building your brand, which is essential in order to get the numbers one requires for sustenance of the business. Brand has a profound impact on the restaurant as it helps in attracting your target market and makes sure that you stand out in the competition. One can build a restaurant brand in several ways like quality and taste of the offerings, customer service, décor of the place, etc.

Anupam affirms, “In today’s digital landscape, your reputation is everything. Guests often look for trusted brands with a track record of providing excellent customer service and delivering good products. Identifying the right channel of communication is important which can be Instagram, websites & Facebook. Building up the storyline, high-quality content & stay active is the key to enhancing brand reputation.”

He adds, “Menu also makes a big difference. Seasonal sourcing & palatable menu composition plays a big role. We should always understand the menu offering which complements the time of a meal. Our Outlet, Miss Pinto, operates from Lunch to Dinner. We have a nice salad which can be well paired with a cup of hot coffee & in the evening, an artisan cheese platter & a nice meal with a glass of wine. The menu should have choices of Vegan & Gluten-free options too as many of the guests look for them.”

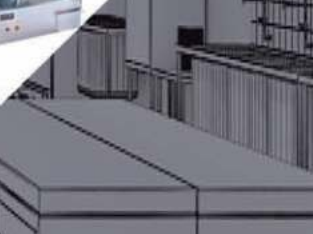
Dealing with customer complaints is also important. For dealing with these he advises, “To deal with any sort of complaint, first, be an active listener, accept the truth & provide the solution.”

Manmeet Singh states, “Hotel brands are proudly recognized by the consistency in their services and the culinary offerings that they extend. It is of utmost importance that diners’ at least meet the guests’ regular expectations, if not better and to achieve this type of consistency, the focus should be on proper training and micro supervision. Once consistency is achieved, the brand would be known for its reliability.”

He is of the opinion that one should also personalise guest experience. For this, he feels guest’ data is the key. He affirmed, “Marketing has now become



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convenient and easy to access tool for both, the hotel and its F&B outlets, and the guests. Digital platforms help the guest to engage with the brand even at a distance. Apart from that, data collection is of utmost importance to understand the needs of the guests. The analytics of this data further leads to creating customise marketing plans conveying the guests' the details that they seek."

Speaking about the importance of menu he says, "In today's market scenario, guests are well traveled and well versed of the variety of food concepts across countries. It is vital that apart from comfort food, the menu should comprise of a wide selection of glocal food. As an example, we could take Chicken Burger where free cage chicken and local organic produce are used in the preparation. Additionally, healthier menu options are necessary and definitely should be incorporated to ensure your menu covers all preferences of diners, especially considering people have become more conscious of the items served on their plate and where it comes from. These options are selected based on ingredients available in the market and whether or not they are value for money."

Priyank Maintains, "When it comes down to it, reputations are simply the audience's general perceptions of the brand and hence, the best way to enhance a brand's reputation is to pay attention to the feedback of the audience and cater to their needs."

Speaking about the food served, he says, "Feedback is super important to

us! We are very receptive to the needs of our guests and will definitely incorporate options in the menu that they would want. The world is slowly moving to healthier eating options and we're happy to evolve with them. We've already introduced meals made with whole foods in some of our brands, while consciously making an effort to add at least a few healthier dishes to each menu."

To help build the brand image, he disclosed, "We take all complaints seriously. We regularly scout all platforms for customer feedback and complaints, whether they come through calls, emails, or even social media. We have a panel of senior management that individually looks into all complaints and take action that is relevant and necessary, as quickly as possible. Depending on the situation, we often reach out to guests for redressal as well."

Shaurya believes, "A brand's reputation is built by how they serve its customers. To enhance our brand's reputation, we primarily focus on enhancing our customers' experience. Word of mouth is the most effective tool for building a robust reputation. Other than that, we also make sure to keep the digital dialogue about our brand as engaging as possible to foster new connections and maintain our reputation."

He adds that the menu also plays an important role. For this, he says, "We try our best to keep up with the latest research in terms of nutrition. Educating ourselves about food allergies, healthy diet options and consumer trends has

helped us curate a vast menu that incorporates everybody's needs. Whether our customer is following the keto diet or requires a vegan option, our menu is well-equipped to cater to a great variety of preferences and accommodate food allergies, thus making their dining experience with us healthier."

Another way of promoting the brand, he averred, was by dealing with customer complaints. He stressed, "There is nothing more important than dealing with consumer grievances in the service industry. It is the only surefire way to improve our quality of service and ensure customer loyalty. No matter what a customer's complaint is, we make sure to follow up with their feedback diligently while trying our best to compensate for their inconvenience in any way feasible such as complimentary dessert or a discount and our sincerest apologies."

Technology to improve F&B Outlets

Gen Z, (comprising of those born between 1995 -2010), is believed to wield an influence on almost all industries, including food & beverage. According to a 2019 Bloomberg report they make up 32% of the world population. In India they account for 472 million.

Technology is one of the main factors which drives this emerging generation. Thus the F&B outlets have to adapt themselves to communicate with them effectively through technology and digitalization. One way of doing this is through social media promotions.

The restaurants would have to adopt digital means to be attractive for this generation.

Manmeet declares, "Technology has paved its way in every sector and has encouraged speedy results. QR codes have gained momentum for digital menus in the recent past. Data collection for digital marketing methods helps to ensure a unique experience for the guest, and lastly an easy mode of payment is of few preferred technologies that can assist to improve guest experiences."

He affirmed, "Marketing has now become convenient and easy to access tool for both, the hotel and its F&B outlets, and the guests. This enables the

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property to portray their varied offerings in different forms such as videos, pictures and engaging displays. Time-bound offers and discounts can be shared on digital platforms luring the guests to pay a visit to the outlet as early as possible. It additionally helps the guest to engage with the brand even at a distance. Apart from that, data collection is of utmost importance to understand the needs of the guests. The analytics of this data further leads to creating customize marketing plans conveying the guests' the details that they seek."

Priyank says, "My go-to digital marketing tip would be for brands to not shy away from investing in this space and using experienced professionals as much as possible. Many in the industry still don't understand the hold that the digital world has on its guests and align the smallest budgets to digital marketing. I'd say that it's time to change that. Digital is the new way to connect with your guests, and jumping onto this bandwagon with both feet will only pay off well in the future!"

He adds, "We've already started integrating technology with our hospitality services to create a more conscious and seamless experience for our guests. From

using Air menus to creating a simple IVR process for guests to get in touch with us, we're using tech to add to our patrons' experience. On the management front too, we use software such as Posist and Romeo for smooth and error-free management."

Shaurya states, "Some digital marketing tips that have really helped us are understanding our customer base and engaging with them as much as possible. Keeping existing customers happy is the best way to attract new customers. Besides this, one also needs create a compelling content that our customers can interact with. Moreover, developing some SEO skills can go a long way towards effective digital marketing."

Elaborating on this, he states, "Digital kitchen boards would be a phenomenal way to improve our outlets. They can assist with streamlining back-of-house operations. Directly linked to the restaurant's point-of-sale system, the screen displays would order automatically according to priority and flag any special dietary requests. Technological solution for tracking meal delivery times and monitoring inventory to signal when a product is out of stock, can ensure

better communication, accuracy, and clearer workflows and – being 100% digital – promises a more sustainable kitchen operation. We are looking towards incorporating something similar in the future."

Speaking about digital marketing tips Anupam avers, "The foremost tip would be to first understanding the target audience and create strategies that are tailored to the target audience instead of the mass market. It's important to understand the need of the audience, and interact with them through new age channels such as social media. A wholistic strategy consisting of SEO efforts, social media marketing, cross collaborations, etc., go a long way."

He believes that technology, from online reservation system QR code ordering to contactless billing, et al. would streamline the back-end operations which is the backbone of any organization.

Adaptability is the need of the hour, at a time when the clients are gaining confidence of returning back to the F&B outlets. The restaurateurs have to develop means of connecting with them and eliminating any of their fears. ■



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Breaking Fast

The role of breakfast in our daily routine cannot be overstated. It is perhaps the most important of all meals; a hearty breakfast can greatly facilitate to give a good and cheerful start to the day. Today, guests not only expect a hotel to lavish upon them a spread consisting of sweet rolls, breads, fruit and juices, but recent demands call for many hotels to expand their breakfast buffet even more to include hot items and a larger selection. And this is not enough; expectations of 'better service' and an 'eye-catching presentation' lead many hotels to redesign their breakfast buffet entirely.

An increase in meeting for breakfast after a morning jog or on the way to the office for business travellers is growing in popularity. For lifestyle travellers catching up with friends for the morning newspaper

is sometimes easier at this time of the day, rather than over dinner. The appeal of the buffet has always been apparent and with the larger hotel establishments it has come into its own.

Breakfast is the beginning meal of a day and it has to be the best. If one can get the breakfast right, rest of things can fall in line easily. With the change in the consumer preferences among Indians, most properties in the country nowadays are not only offering breakfast menu, but some of them are also bringing in innovations in their breakfast menus almost every alternate day.

Chefs are putting a lot of thrust on breakfast concepts. They try to impress guests with wide variety of presentation as they believe every single day has to be different from the previous one when it comes to food and beverage offering.

Thus there is a cyclic menu which is being designed after carefully watching the guest's preference and consumption pattern.

Health Quotient

Guests staying at hotels these days have become more health conscious on an average; they do exercise, go to gym, and prefer to eat healthy, they prefer food which has less calories and more fiber. With the health consciousness and beauty consciousness being at an all time high in our society, there is a growing need not only for sumptuous breakfast but also for healthy breakfast options.

The new-age breakfast trends are reflected in the replacement of aloo paratha with dollops of butter, and of chole bhatura from the breakfast tables with wholegrain breads, idlis, sandwiches,

and healthy cereals and fruit juices. The healthy breakfast trend has already begun to gather momentum in urban India.

Thus there is a strong 'health conscious' angle attached with breakfast buffets at hotels. Guest prefers to eat healthy meal with whole wheat or multi grain breakfast breads along with organic preferences like home made preserves and honey. Gone are the days where they preferred white breads and sugar drenched jams. The breakfast buffet now includes a lot of dishes based on the sprouts, bran on rice conjee, organically grown fresh fruits etc.

An array of homemade yoghurt made with skimmed cow milk and organic soya milk ensures that the guest has enough choice available. A fluffy egg white omelette along with oven roasted potato wedges and whole wheat pancake makes any one feel good and not feeling guilty of eating in excess. Also the potassium rich red tender coconut water gives the day a good start.

Guests spending good amount of time



for breakfast does not mean they are eating heavy. They are now increasingly getting health conscious and are seeking filling food but are strictly avoiding oily stuff

Traditional north Indian food like parantha and puri are not being consumed as much these days, in Indian breakfasts,

as it used to be in the earlier times. Nowadays we are seeing more and more people in India consuming raw fruits, juices, skimmed milk, sprouts, muesli and cornflakes in breakfast. Also breakfasting crowd in restaurants often ask for nuts, yoghurt and honey. Request for normal tea has gone down and people are seen ordering green tea and coffee without milk in breakfasts.

Besides breakfast cereals like cornflakes, oats and muesli, there are other products which have great potential to become very popular in breakfast trend, in the near future. In this regard, bakery and confectionery area plays an important role.

The potential towards the growth in popularity of sandwich is also quite high. The latest breakfast trend has seen the inclusion of waffles and pancakes on tables. In fact, few things compare to starting your day with a warm crispy waffle, doused in maple syrup and butter. And if it is supplemented by pancakes it is still better.



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Being Innovative

There are lot of restaurants which serve traditional breakfast dishes like croissants, idli, dosa, parantha etc. Now the food is blend with the health factor with the traditional dishes to ensure that the guests are feeling comfortable after having the breakfast - not feeling guilty about it and run to the gym. Creating a high guest satisfaction index is first and foremost. By creating a very strong health menu option, it always has the advantage of being the preferred restaurant in the market.

Spa hotels also offer special ayurvedic dishes, innovated and are an option in all the outlets which are open for breakfast. Healthy options like puttu, appam, variety of fresh vegetable juices, egg white fluffy omelets, and glazed tofu are also a part of the breakfast buffet. Imported sugar free preserves, fat free butter, sugar free syrups and 100% natural honey are there for guests to choose.

A salad bar full of sprouts, organic nuts, crisp leaves and an array of fine cold cuts along with preservative free dressings ensure that you are being offered the best.

The Presentation

Even with a greater selection of high quality foods, 'presentation' of the buffet must be appealing to the most discerning eye. Eye appeal is very important and



this tempts you to take a plate. It's very important that the freshness of the buffet be maintained as food if not consumed tends to get dry, will lose its colour and visual appeal.

Appropriate props will add to the overall appearance of the buffet and attract the guests to come and have a closer look at the spread on offer who get tempted to go for the buffet. While doing buffet cooking counters further enhances the look, adds value and opens up an opportunity for guest interaction.

The menu itself has got larger and bigger. Croissants, cereal or a full cooked English breakfast has been extended to incorporate platters of continental ham, cold meats and cheese, croissants and pastries, yoghurts, fruit, hash browns,

muffins and pancakes with syrup. Not to forget a wide variety of North and South Indian dishes like stuffed paranthas, idlis and dosas. Catering for the growing diversity of diners, the buffet line and range has expanded and proven a means to satisfy every palate.

Hence for every hotel 'Breakfast Buffet' has indeed become a significant exercise. 'Bigger Is Better' - bountiful choices to show off the culinary talent.

Creating Brand Image

The various F&B teams and executive chefs feel that offering an impressive full buffet breakfast should be the goal. It goes a long way in building up the brand image. Allowing guests to choose from a large selection sets the ball rolling. It not

only generates better revenue but also strengthens the image of the hotel and ensures guests loyalty.

Revenue is not the only objective for the property but they also look at adding value to the guest stay. The value offers creates a wonderful impression on guests who would return and probably bring in more guests. Offering breakfast buffets is also a way of strengthening the brand. The current trend in hotel packages contains meals as part of offer. The guests have it in the back of their minds that breakfast would be free.

All major properties now offer packages including breakfast, either continental or full service, a kind of mandatory amenity. The breakfast is a part of offer, designed to promote brand recognition. ■

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Sous Vide

Cooking Success Stories



Gourmets are continually on the lookout for tastier food that also provides for healthy nourishment. This is one of the reasons why Chefs are constantly experimenting to come up with something new. Something that will be a gourmet's delight! Various techniques of cooking are also being adopted to retain the flavour of the food. One of them is the Sous Vide cooking. The sous vide cooking not only retains the food flavour, but cooks the meat more tenderly and evenly. This French technique of cooking has been proved popular all over the world and is slowly making inroads into India.

As people all over the world are becoming calorie conscious, healthy food has become the new mantra for the food industry. Not only the young, but even the not so young are trying to be slim and trim. The young generation with high stress levels and long working hours has to be careful about its food intake. The older generation with cardiac and sugar problems also needs to be calorie

conscious.

Several eyebrows may be raised wondering what this sous vide cooking is. Succinctly, it can be said the sous vide cooking involves slow cooking under vacuum, at a precise temperature. Sous vide cooking can also be defined as a technique of cooking in vacuum sealed plastic pouches at low temperatures, for long duration of times. Well, sous vide cooking is being used in India, but many of the people are not aware of this term.

The Science

Sous vide is a French style of cooking which was adopted in the twentieth century by George Pralus in the 1970s. The term sous vide, translates to 'under vacuum.' Sous-vide, the French for under vacuum, is a method of cooking that is intended to maintain the integrity of the ingredients by heating them for an extended period, at relatively low temperatures.

Under this method of cooking, the food

is cooked for a long duration, sometimes well over an entire day of 24 hours. Sous-vide cooking places airtight plastic bags in hot water that is well below the boiling point, generally around 60°C or 140°F. Dishes cooked in the sous vide style are likely to retain more of their original shapes and flavours than do dishes cooked in slow cookers, as a result of the absence of oxygen and less than boiling water temperatures used in the former method of cooking.

This method of cooking, first described by Sir Benjamin Thompson in the fag end of the eighteenth century, was re-discovered by American and French engineers in the mid 1960s, as an industrial food preservation method. The method was extended to cooking in restaurants by Georges Pralus in 1974, for the Restaurant Troisgros in Roanne, France. Nowadays, the sous vide method of cooking is used in several gourmet restaurants around the world. Non-professional cooks are also beginning to

get acquainted with sous vide cooking.

Incidentally, Pralus applied this technique of cooking for preparing the French delicacy foie gras, a food product made of the liver of a duck or goose. Its flavour can be described as rich, buttery, and delicate, which is distinct from that of a regular duck or goose liver. When Pralus attempted the singular cooking style, he soon found the end result was better and tastier than traditionally prepared foie gras. A little fat was lost, but it translated into greater flavour, and better colour of the end product. It also had better texture.

Yes, sous vide cooking also often results in silky and smooth textured food that is impossible to replicate in the oven or pan. Nevertheless, a culinary history was made...and very soon there were a galore of followers of this innovative method of cooking.

Since the early stages of sous vide cooking, there were safety concerns about cooking in bags where botulism might have grown. Dr. Bruno Goussault, Chief Scientist of Cuisine Solutions, thoroughly developed the parameters of cooking times and proved that the long and controlled cooking times managed to decimate the bacteria when temperatures were closely and carefully monitored. Along with Pralus, he can be regarded as one of the pioneers of modern sous vide cooking.

In sous vide cooking thermometers are essential, as the close monitoring of temperatures in this cooking method can prevent any untoward food safety issues from emerging. Water bath machines are used to circulate precisely heated water, which can foster both food safety and taste.

Understanding the Word

Today, with modern day methods of food preparation, and the introduction of science in art of cooking, it is no surprise that sous vide cooking is becoming very popular. In many fine dining establishments across the world, this flavour inducing method of cooking is making an impact on Chefs' creative potential.

Sous vide cooking is not much different from braising, a method in which the ingredients are tightly covered and cooked with a small amount of liquid for a long duration of time. However, there is difference too. In sous vide cooking, the ingredients are sealed in a heat-safe bag with the air being sucked out, and that is its difference from braising. The bags are then placed in heat circulation baths, which maintain specific low temperatures for slowly cooking the ingredients. Because they are sealed, absolutely no moisture or flavour is lost during the cooking process. Whereas in braising, most of the flavour is transferred to the sauce because of the loss of juices. Seasoning added before sealing of the bags, have much deeper penetration in sous vide cooking because of the pressure within the bag.

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Eventually the dish comes out as more tender, much better seasoned, and infused with better flavours than what can be expected from traditional cooking. Here it deserves a mention that the flavours are extremely enhanced within these bags, because there is no route for the flavour or aroma to escape during the cooking process.

Furthermore, no oxidation occurs during the cooking process, which keeps the food fresh for hours after it is cooked. It is also a pretty hassle free way to cook. When a meat is braised in a liquid, generally the flavours leach out into the liquid. It then becomes the cook's or the Chef's duty to take that braising liquid, and reduce it down to coat the meat on the plate. Sous vide eliminates that process, as it keeps the flavour and moisture within the food product.

Tasty and Healthy Cooking

What exactly are the basic techniques involved in sous vide cooking? Sous vide cooking typically involves preparing, seasoning, marinating, tendering and brining, before the actual cooking process commences. We would discuss these steps in brief.

Preparing: In almost all cases, the sous vide cooking medium is either a water bath or a convection steam oven. Convection steam ovens allow large quantities of food to be prepared, but do not heat enough to heat sous vide pouches uniformly, when fully loaded.

In contrast, circulating water baths undergo very uniform heating, and typically have temperature fluctuations of less than 0.1°F (0.05°C). In order to prevent undercooking, it is crucial to ensure that the pouches are completely submerged and are not tightly arranged or overlapping. At higher cooking temperatures, the pouches often balloon (with water vapour) and must be held under water.

Seasoning: The seasoning can be a little tricky while performing sous vide cooking. While many herbs and spices act as expected, others are amplified and can easily overpower a dish. Additionally, aromatics (such as carrots, onions, celery, bell peppers, etc.) will not soften or flavour the dish as they do in



conventional cooking methods, because the temperature is too low to soften the starches and cell walls.

Indeed, most vegetables require much higher temperatures than meats and so they must be cooked separately. Finally, raw garlic emanates an unpleasant smell in sous vide cooking, and should be substituted with powdered garlic, but in very small quantities.

For longer cooking hours (of more than a couple of hours), some people find that using extra virgin olive oil results in an off, metallic, and blood taste. Since the extra virgin olive oil is unheated and unrefined during production, it is reasonable that some of the oil will breakdown even at a low temperature, if given enough time. A simple solution is to use processed oil for longer cooking duration.

Marinating, Tenderising and Brining: Many cooks marinate, tenderise or brine the meat before undertaking vacuum packaging. Most of the marinades are acidic in nature, and comprises either vinegar, wine, fruit juice, buttermilk or yogurt. Among these ingredients, only wine presents any significant problems when cooking with sous vide technique. If the alcohol is not cooked off before



marinating, some of it will transfer from liquid to the vapour state while in the bag, and will cause the meat to cook unevenly. Simply cooking off the alcohol before marinating could offer a solution to this problem.

Mechanical tenderising with a jaccard has also become quite commonplace. A jaccard is a set of thin blades that slice through the meat and cut some of the internal fibres. By and large, the jaccard, which is often used in steak houses, does not leave any obvious mark on the meat. By cutting many of the internal fibres that would typically contract with heat and squeeze out the juices, the amount of moisture lost during cooking can be reduced slightly. In general, the longer a piece of meat is cooked at a given temperature, more liquid weight is lost. However, this additional weight loss is balanced by the increased tenderness from collagen, dissolving into gelatin.

Brining: Brining has become increasingly popular in modern cooking, especially when cooking pork and poultry. Typically the meat is placed in a three to 10 percent (30 to 100 grams per litre) salt solution for a couple of hours, then rinsed and cooked as usual. Brining dissolves some of the support structure of the muscle fibres, which prevent them to coagulate into dense aggregates.

Cooking: There are two schools of thought when cooking sous vide. One school says that the temperature of the water bath should be just above the desired final core temperature of the food, while the second school says that the temperature of the water bath should be significantly higher than the desired final core temperature of the food. While the second option is not far from the traditional cooking methods and is used extensively, the first option does have several significant advantages over the second one.

When cooking in a water bath with a temperature significantly higher than the desired final core temperature of the food, the food must be removed from the bath once it has come up to a temperature that is just enough to keep it from overcooking. This precludes pasteurising in the same water bath that the food is cooked in.

Since there is significant variation in



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the rate at which foods heat, a needle temperature probe must be used to determine when the food come up to that temperature. To prevent air or water from entering the punctured bag, the temperature probe must be inserted through closed cell foam tape. Even when using closed cell foam tape (which is similar to high density foam weather stripping), air will be able to enter the plastic pouch once the temperature probe is removed.

In contrast, cooking in a water bath with a temperature just above the desired final core temperature of the food means the food can remain in the water bath almost indefinitely, without being overcooked. Thus, food can be pasteurised in the same water bath it is cooked in. While cooking times are longer than the traditional cooking methods, the meat through this type of sous vide cooking comes up to the right temperature surprisingly quickly because the thermal conductivity of water is 23 times greater than that of air.

Meats cooked by sous vide method have smooth, melt-in your mouth textures and are cooked evenly from top to bottom at the desired temperature. With the sous vide cooking, you can place the meat in the water bath without any worry about the meat exceeding the temperature of the water bath. This affords you more time to prepare the rest of the meal.

The Reach

Today not only is sous vide cooking popular in many of the four and five star restaurants across the globe, but this technique is increasingly producing tasty food in airplanes, cruise ships, and also in hotel room service. Sous vide food is available even off the shelves, in the super markets.

Any banquet or a function can now be less chaotic by using sous vide cooking techniques, where food cooked in advance doesn't need to be reheated again and again. The dishes only need to be served. Even hours after their cooking, the sous vide meals are fresh as they do not get the exposure to oxidise and they do not lose the flavour.

A great success of sous vide cooking can be showcased in the preparation of short ribs. Generally short ribs are braised for hours or cooked in the oven at low heat. The result is very tender meat that has lost most of its flavour to the sauce. Using sous vide technique, you can cook those ribs perfectly medium-rare, preserve all their moisture and juice, and tenderise them all at the same time. The result is a sheer delight.

Drawback

However, like everything else in the world, sous vide cooking does have its drawbacks. The lack of oxygen and low temperatures in the cooking process can in some cases, facilitate food poisoning and help grow nasty bacterial infection like botulism. In order to avoid these problems, Chefs across the globe have come up with a number of water bath machines that help keep the water circulating around the bagged food.

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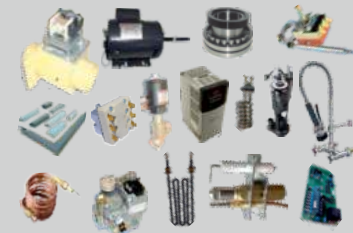


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Amplifying Foods Life

What keeps bread mould-free and salad dressings from separating, helps cake batters rise reliably during baking and keeps cured meats safe to eat? What improves the nutritional value of biscuits and pasta, gives margarine its pleasing yellow colour and prevents salt from becoming lumpy in its shaker? And what magic ingredient allows many foods to be available year-round, in great quantity and the best quality?

The answer is "Food Additives". Often maligned or misunderstood, the role of food additives in today's bountiful and nutritious food supply is vital. Food additives allow consumers to enjoy a variety of safe, wholesome and tasty food all-year-round, and make it possible to keep in our pantry or fridge a vast array of convenience foods without having to shop for them every day.

Although salt, baking powder and vanilla are the most commonly used additives today; many people tend to think of food additives as complex chemical compounds. Government authorities carefully regulate all food additives and various international organizations ensure that food additives are safe for their intended use and food containing them is accurately labelled.

What is a Food Additive?

If a substance is added to a food for a specific technological purpose, and is not a food itself, it is referred to as a food additive. For example, the intense sweetener aspartame, which may be used in beverages,

yogurt, chewing gum and other foods, is considered a food additive. Additives are identified as such in the ingredient list on the label of packaged foods.

A colour additive is any dye, pigment or substance that can impart colour when added or applied to a food. Colour additives may be used in foods, drugs and cosmetics. Colour additives are used in foods for many reasons, including offsetting colour loss due to storage or processing of foods and to accommodate variations in natural food colour.

The names of many substances added to food may seem foreign but the compounds are actually quite familiar. For example, ascorbic acid is another name for vitamin C, alpha-tocopherol is better known as vitamin E, and beta-carotene is a source of vitamin A. Although there are no easy synonyms for all additives, it is helpful to remember that all food is made up of chemicals. Carbon, hydrogen and other chemical elements provide the basic building blocks of everything in life.

Regulating Additives

Our forefathers used salt to preserve meats and fish, added herbs and spices to improve the flavour of foods, preserved fruit with sugar, and pickled cucumbers in vinegar solution.

Over the years, however, improvements have been made in increasing the efficiency and ensuring the safety of all additives. Today food additives are more strictly

regulated than at any other time in history.

The use of additives is carefully monitored and surveys are routinely carried out to make sure that people do not regularly consume more than the Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI). This is the amount of an additive that a person may eat or drink each day for an entire lifetime without causing any known harm to health.

The Food Regulations strictly controls the use of colours in food. Allergic reactions have been associated with some yellow/orange colours added to food. These reactions include urticaria (hives), rhinitis (runny nose), nausea, vomiting and asthma in certain sensitive individuals.

All additives must be listed clearly on food labels, either by name or E number. More than one colour additive can be used to give food products a yellow/orange/red colour. Therefore you can try to avoid a colour additive by avoiding those food products that have it listed on their labels.

However, we are not aware of any reports of adverse reactions to orange flavourings. Most flavourings are complex mixtures of individual ingredients. The overall composition of an orange flavouring varies between manufacturers and from product to product. Each of the flavour ingredients is used in tiny amounts and contributes to the overall flavour.

Utility

Additives in foods perform a variety of useful functions that are often taken for

granted. They help keep food wholesome and appealing while in transit or storage. Additives also improve the nutritional value of certain foods and can make them more appealing by improving their taste, texture, consistency or colour.

Some additives could be eliminated if we were willing to grow our own food, harvest and grind it, spend many hours cooking and canning, or accept increased risks of food spoilage. But most people today have come to rely on the many technological, aesthetic and convenience benefits that additives provide in food. Additives are used in foods mainly for five following reasons:

• **To maintain product consistency**

Emulsifiers give products a consistent texture and prevent oil and water phases from separating. Stabilizers and thickeners give smooth uniform texture. Anti-caking agents help substances such as salt to flow freely. Additives such as alginates, lecithin, mono- and diglycerides, carrageenan, glycerine, pectin, guar gum and sodium aluminosilicate are used in baked goods, cake mixes, salad dressings, ice cream, processed cheese, table salt and chocolate.

• **To improve or maintain nutrition**

Vitamins and minerals are added to many common foods such as flour, cereals and margarine to make up for those nutrients likely to be lacking in a person’s diet or reduced in processing. Such restoration or fortification has helped reduce malnutrition. All products containing added nutrients must be appropriately labelled. Additives such as vitamins and minerals, including folate, thiamine, vitamin C, riboflavin, niacin, calcium and iron are used in breakfast cereals, flour, dairy products, margarine and fruit juice.

• **To maintain taste and goodness**

Preservatives retard product spoilage caused by mold, bacteria, fungi or yeast or exposure to air. Bacterial contamination can cause food-borne illness, including life-threatening botulism. Antioxidants are preservatives that prevent fats and oils in baked goods and other foods from becoming rancid or developing an “off” flavour. They also prevent the surface of fresh fruits such as apples from turning brown when cut and exposed to air. Additives such as propionic acid and its salts, ascorbic acid, butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), benzoates, sodium nitrite, citric acid and erythorbates are used in breads, cheeses, crackers, fats, oils, potato chips, cake mixes, cured meats, soft drinks and cordials.

• **To provide leavening or control acidity/alkalinity**

Leavening acids/agents release acids that react with baking powder when heated to help cakes, biscuits and other goods to rise during baking. Other additives help modify the acidity and alkalinity of foods for proper flavour, taste and colour. Additives such as sodium bicarbonate, citric acid, fumaric acid, phosphoric acid, lactic acid and tartrates are used in cakes, biscuits, breads, crackers and soft drinks.

• **To enhance flavour or impart desired colour**

Many natural and synthetic flavours enhance the taste of foods. Colours, likewise, enhance the appearance of certain foods to meet consumer expectations. Additives such as aspartame, saccharin, allura red, monosodium glutamate, caramel and annatto are used in soft drinks, cordials, soups, confectionery, baked goods and jams. ■



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Nutritious Seeds



Pulses are integral part of Indian diets. In fact, without them our dinner tables do not have a ring of completeness. Pulses are healthy, nutritious and easy to cook. They taste good, if prepared well, and they are nutritious.

But what are pulses? Pulses are the dried seeds of plants in the legume family. There are about hundreds of varieties of pulses grown across the planet. Dry beans, lentils, chickpeas, faba beans, bambara beans, lupins, pigeon peas are only some of them. Pulses are grown almost all over the world; in more than 170 countries. Growing pulses is also eco-friendly as pulses take less water to grow as compared to many other crops. Pulse crops also promote soil health.

If the geographical spread of pulses is abundant, their history is no less rich. The origin of pulses could be traced to pre civilisation days, to almost 11,000 years ago, in Fertile Crescent, located in the Middle-East! Evidence of cultivation of lentil, a type of pulses, can be traced to the days of ancient Egyptian civilisation.

Healthy Option

Pulses are good source of protein, especially for people with modest incomes. About 10 percent of dietary protein consumed in the

world is accounted by pulses. The pulses are endowed with twice the protein content of most cereal grains. They should feature in a healthy balanced diet.

“Consumption of pulses and lentils has been effected by the intrusion of international cuisines, fast foods & QSRs among Indian consumers”, says Ghanshyam Dass Goyal, Chairman Agropure group.

Established in 1970, Agro Pure Group is a leading organization, engaged in importing, supplying, trading of besan, entire range of pulses, different variants of wheat flour like sooji, maida, dalia and poha.

He further adds, “The reason for the popularity of fast food is due to its readily

availability and attractive presentation. Also media has created hype about the international cuisines. The increase in per capita income & urbanization of Indians has resulted in increased buying capacity to afford the cost of international cuisines. Also the working women prefer a ready meal rather home cooking because of the paucity of time. But lately people are becoming more aware of the need for healthy food thus dishes like hummus, falafel, burrito bowl and salads with chickpeas are gaining more popularity.”

Eating pulses also helps prevent the incremental weight gain that often occurs with age. Consuming pulses is potentially an effective strategy for weight loss and management, which nutritionists and dieticians may wish to consider in their work.

Pulses are cholesterol free and very low in saturated fats and have been proven to lower the risk of heart disease, hypertension, and type 2 diabetes. They contain several components that when eaten as a part of balanced diet may help prevent development of chronic diseases. They have a low glycemic index value, making people feel full and less likely to overeat. Also protein in pulses stimulates gastric hormones that cause the feeling of fullness and fibre in pulses increases chewing time and delays gastric emptying, reducing food intake.

Going with Trend

Pulses are now a strategically placed product in the foodservice area, positioned as the primary source for plant protein. With growing consumer interest in plant protein and consumers that are looking to slightly reducing their consumption of animal products, lentils are well positioned to gain a larger share of the plate.

Also the current trend of vegan has led to multiple innovations in plant based meat alternatives. Since pulses and legumes have a meaty texture, they can even stand in for animal-based protein foods in a variety of



Ghanshyam Dass Goyal

preparations.

Also they have a neutral flavour making them versatile to blend well with other ingredients and pair easily with a variety of seasonings. The blend of animal and plant protein creates a food product that serves the needs of the customer base that is interested in reducing their overall meat consumption, but still seeks to enjoy meat as part of a healthy lifestyle.

According to G D Goyal, "Culinary professional can gain from the mixed use of pulses as meat alternatives because of the presence of proteins / vitamins and minerals in the pulses which can very well replace those found in meat, thus making pulses an important part of a meatless diet. Pulses are the perfect meat alternative for vegetarian or vegans and those who are interested in reducing their intake of animal protein. Pulses such as lentils, chickpeas, and beans can be used to make meatless burgers, meatballs, and other dishes that mimic the texture and taste of meat. Companies are developing vegan meat made of white peas, substituted for animal product."

There are possibilities of creating an advanced mix or blend of different pulses or legumes to create much healthier and tastier options. G D Goyal avers, "Mixing grains is a healthy option as each of them has their own unique nutritional value and composition. If a certain nutrient is lacking in one, it can be compensated by adding another. Very often we come across with mixed pulses - combination of different lentils and pulses such as red lentils, black gram, green gram, bengal gram, kabuli chana, etc, pulses with rice, pulses flours which are good example of mix or blended products having healthier & tastier options."

Indian Market

India has a large vegetarian population, which depends on pulses as a source of protein. This makes the Indian branded pulses business a viable proposition. Within a span of 25-30 years, the number of pulse processing units in India has increased significantly. Pulses market is ever growing in India also because it is the essential commodity in average Indian household.

In India, pulses provide the much needed protein to the carbohydrate rich diet. Their nutritive role is especially crucial for the huge numbers of vegetarian population of the country. There are over 60 varieties of pulses found in India. No wonder, India is the largest producer and as well as importer of pulses in the world.

According to APEDA, the regions within India having high productivity of pulses are Punjab, Haryana, western Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal delta region, coastal Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, coastal and eastern Karnataka and some parts of Maharashtra.

The pulses have a plethora of culinary applications, which make them rampantly used items in the Indian food services industry. With the rising young population along with fast paced restaurant industry of India we can see an abundance of growth opportunity for pulses' market in the country.

The Variants

There are organic, polished as well as unpolished pulses in the market, but what is the essential difference between them?

Organic pulses are grown without the use of any chemicals or



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pesticides and are considered to be healthier and good for human consumption. Regular consumption of organic pulses reduces the risk of cardiovascular diseases due to their high fibre content. Pulses also improve heart health by reducing cholesterol levels. Moreover, they contain a high amount of potassium, which helps in lowering blood pressure. Organic Pulses are rich in fibre a low glycemic index, making them particularly beneficial to people with diabetes by helping to maintain healthy blood glucose and insulin levels.

Mostly Polished pulses are sold in the market with their outer layers removed, which reduce their nutritional value. It is processed to make texture shinier which yields better price in the market and improves shelf life and storability of the grain. It also reduces the impact of microbes and other pests.

“There is certain difference between polished and unpolished pulses. Having lost its outer surface, polished pulses become inferior to unpolished pulses in terms of their taste. For the same reason polished dal also takes longer to cook, thus adding to fuel consumption in the long-run. The polishing agents used in polished pulses can be harmful to our health too. The oil coating adds additional fat to the food, the water used comes from unreliable sources and thus can contain any kind of impurities, and marble and soapstone powder are undoubtedly harmful to the intestines,” pointed out G D Goyal.

Moreover, according to him, through the polishing process, pulses lose a lot of nutrients and fibre. This compromises on the polished pulses’ nutritive quotient. “Presently unpolished dal might be costlier than polished dal but that is only because the former’s availability is relatively rare,”



reasoned G D Goyal.

But he didn’t seem to be content with the reason; instead he strived to find a solution to this lacuna. “Presently people are unaware about pulses and prefer polished dal. However if enough awareness is spread among people, the demand for unpolished dal would increase in the future than that of polished dal. As a result, availability of unpolished dal would increase, and this in turn would lower its cost,” elaborated G D Goyal through simple demand-supply economics.

Quality & Branding

The pulses market in India seems to be poised for impressive growth, but amidst this growth, stringent quality control measures are must for the players to stay afloat. Or else they are likely to be get drowned by the deluge of competition, in this age of discerning quality conscious consumers.

“In the present day, consumer is well educated and well informed about the safety

and importance of quality product. So the focus in the Indian pulses market is being shifted to branded pulses offering assured product,” asserted G D Goyal.

He further adds, “We strictly adhere to all major quality check parameters to produce good quality pulses which include: proper cleaning and sorting, no visible or significant damage or discoloration, no visible or significant insect or fungal damage, no visible or significant foreign material such as stones or sand, good texture and aroma, well maintained moisture level, well packed and proper grading.

“We are using best machines including the best colour sorting machines of different grades which lead to accurate detection of defect and foreign matter, thereby facilitating the production of better quality products. All our products go through vigorous quality testing to the international specifications, in our in-house laboratory. Further, for assuring zero impurity, we stringently check the entire range on various parameters. We have multiple units installed with several machines, tools and technology that help us to hygienically process our products.”

Branding is very important in the current retailing formats. Label gives satisfaction to consumers, while farmers are not able to deliver quality products that can create trust. Goodwill and trust with brand is created over the years to ensure superior quality products are delivered. Also pulses can remain in edible condition for longer time if properly packed. Pulses duly packed reduces product damage, food spoilage, protect from external factors, such as oxygen, water vapour or sunlight, so that it can be safely consumed. ■





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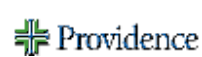
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A Chef who Loves to Create Magical Food

Chef Amit Kumar Singh, Executive Chef, Renest Jaipur



Amit Kumar Singh, the Executive Chef at Renest Jaipur is an experienced culinary professional recognized for his comprehensive knowledge of international and Indian cuisine, and innovative methods to set the stage for a customised dining experience. Chef Amit Kumar Singh with over 15 years of experience, with brands like The Leela group and Ananta Spa and Resorts, in managing the provision of fine dining, believes in refining the art of cooking and developing impressive menus and organising culinary dishes influenced by culturally myriad areas around the world.

As an Executive Chef at Renest Jaipur, he is responsible for developing the hotel's reputation by creating an excellent quality food repertoire and managing a high-quality kitchen brigade, besides bringing in innovation at every stage of food production. His professional approach and ability to thrive in pressure situations are his core competencies. Singh is undoubtedly committed to leaving patrons with a memorable dining experience.

In an interview with [Sharmila Chand](#) he talks about himself and his choices and preferences.

How do you define yourself?

I believe I am a passionate, confident, and creative chef who can skilfully plan menus, prepare lip-smacking delicacies, manage budgets, and lead a team to deliver the required quality of services to my guests and exceed their expectations.

What is your philosophy of cooking?

From the time I have been in this profession, my philosophy has always been to curate recipes that can create magic and makes the guest drool for more.

What is your area of expertise?

Business sense (Budgeting, Management, Supervision, Ordering), Culinary expertise (Ingredient selection, Presentation) and Attention to detail (Measuring, Quality control, Portion sizing).

Had you not been doing this then what?

If I wasn't a chef, I would be doing something with Music, Art, or Fashion. That's the magic of being the creative person that I am.

Your source of inspiration?

I would say my mum has always been a constant source of inspiration for me. She is the sole reason why I am so passionate about cooking.

What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

The most rewarding thing for me has never been materialistic, I feel content to see my guests relishing my food. That feeling, when you can light up someone's soul with something you've created, is honestly a privilege and an honour. I am glad that this reward has always been a constant for me.

How has the journey been so far?

Barring the COVID times, my journey as a professional chef has been quite happening, filled with fun and great learning.

What skills you think are necessary to be a good Chef?

To be a chef you have to be very meticulous in everything you do, from the simplest to the most complex tasks. You have to master culinary techniques, like the exact quantity of the ingredients, the appropriate temperatures, and preparation time. Needless to say, safety and hygiene requirement is needed at all times.

How do you de-stress yourself? What do you like to do in your ME time?

To de-stress, I organise my workstation and brainstorm on creating something new.

While in my ME time, I love to spend time with my son at home.

Favourite Ingredient?

Eggs: Perhaps the most versatile ingredient. There is so much one can cook and create with an egg.

Fav Cuisine?

Now that's a tough question. I would like to stick to North Indian cuisine.

Fav Spice? Why?

Cumin, as it carries an intense flavour, which is why it is used to add a characteristic smoky note to Indian dishes. And because I love cooking Indian food, cumin tops the list of my favourite spices.

Fav Equipment?

I don't think I can say that I have a favourite piece of equipment, all the equipment(s) are important for a chef. However, if I still had to choose one it would be my Knife.

Fav Restaurant/food joint.

I remember I visited this place in Hyderabad. Exotica, is a popular restaurant in Hyderabad that serves Mughlai, North Indian, and Chinese and has an option for outdoor sitting as well. Hyderabad Biryani is my all-

time favourite and this restaurant surpassed my expectations. Kudos to the chef!

Your Fav Diner?

I love to feed everyone when it comes to food. However, my favourite diner is someone who eats with a smile and leaves feedback/compliments behind. When I worked in Leela Gurgaon I remember I had prepared a nice sumptuous meal for Mr Vikram Oberoi. His reaction and his words of appreciation still blow my mind.

Your favourite Culinary Destination? Why?

Udaipur tops the list when it comes to my favourite culinary destination. Foodies can have the best culinary experience in this city which is filled with a hint of spiciness and sweetness all at the same time.

Best Compliment you have received?

"I'm gonna be just like you when I grow up!" from my kid is the best ever compliment that I had gotten or will ever get in my entire life.

What is your philosophy of work?

The key to running a successful kitchen is what I call the '3F's.' Be Firm, Fair, and Friendly with your staff, guests, and yourself.

Lessons learnt in the kitchen?

Though there have been continuous learning throughout my career but the greatest one I feel is, when you run a kitchen, no matter how crazy and chaotic it gets, you have to be calm and composed. The beauty of this kitchen, at Renest Jaipur, is that everybody helps everyone and we all know that we are sailing in the same boat and hence we all try to sail smoothly.

Last meal on earth: What would you choose?

The last meal has to be the authentic Litti Chokha and Champaran-style mutton.

10 years from now?

I would still be working as a chef, learning and excelling in my career.

What are your future plans?

I do want to work as a consultant at some point in my career to help others curate a fantastic menu for their audience.

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

My advice to youngsters would be - there is no best or worst career option, it's all about passion and your own perspective. If cooking and curating recipes is your passion, choose to be a Chef and you will have a very bright future.

Define yourself in one sentence.

I am a self driven, innovative and creative individual who is extremely passionate about his work.



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Liquids for Health



With rising health consciousness in the urban Indian society during the recent years, apparently it seems that the health drinks market in the country is likely to soar impressively. But it is not happening in reality. However, the future for health drinks in India is full of potential, which needs to be creatively explored.

One of the major types of health drinks in India is the malt-based milk drinks. Health food drinks (HFD) in India are primarily malt-based milk drinks that act as taste enhancer along with nutrition fortification of milk. Earlier known as malted food drinks (MFD), the category was introduced in India in 1950s through launch of Horlicks and started strengthening its position in 1960s with the successful launch of

Operation Flood.

Besides the malt-based drinks, supplement nutrition drinks is another important category of health drinks. Today, India's health drinks market is a matured one, with different health drinks catering to different age groups. There are certain products which are specially formulated with nutrients that are known to facilitate cognitive development. It claims to provide the right boost



for children's brain, so that they can continue to satiate their curiosity and thirst for learning.

After the pandemic the consumption of immunity boosting food and beverages has been an added focus in our lifestyle. People are now not only adhering to hygiene norms in more numbers but are becoming much more health conscious in their eating habits.

Role of Foodservice industry

In institutional terms, the health drink giants can also tap food service industry more creatively by coming up with new-age and high-end health drinks (such as protein shakes with organic ingredients, etc.), which could cater to the guests at the fine dining and casual dining restaurants across the country. They can be lapped up by a segment of the health conscious crowd visiting the restaurants, whose numbers are not that negligible, and are likely to increase in the years to come.

The food service industry has also developed its own varieties of health drinks, which are prepared with the combined collaboration of expert Chefs, dieticians and nutritionists. This in turn gives an indirect boost to the retail health drinks segment in the country.

Not only high-end formal restaurants and casual dining restaurants, but also street corner bakery outlets, QSR chains and cafes across India can garner decent revenues by having more and more innovative immunity boosting beverages or even commonly known healthy beverages in their menu. These

additional offerings can help them in develop a new vertical for add-on profits and for future market too. Of course, simply intake of immunity boosting beverages would not guarantee good health and safeguarding from various diseases, but yes their regular intake can facilitate towards such an endeavour.

Healthy & Tasty Options

Sure, water is the smartest drink out there, but if you're craving something more, healthy drinks will give you a boost of nutrition. With so many options, it's easy to be confused about which beverages are best for our health and tasty too. Just as an idea here's few takeaway:

Banana honey smoothie with yogurt and sprinkling of pumpkin seeds can also be a wonderfully healthy beverage that restaurants, QSRs and cafes can promote more and more. This thick beverage can help weight loss and also facilitate in building immunity.

Banana, orange and kiwi smoothie,



with infusion of lemon juice, yogurt and ginger can also be a delightful beverage, which can be delightfully healthy too. The kiwi and orange give you vitamin C, banana gives you potassium and you can also get the benefit of anti-inflammatory property of ginger from

this drink.

Among the smoothies, strawberry and blueberry smoothie with milk and yogurt can be a delightful immunity boosting option. It can be a wonderful accompaniment with a quick service food or can be a refreshing drink for breakfast or with the evening snacks.

Blueberry is enriched with several health benefits but the most commonly known health attribute of blueberry is perhaps that it is extremely rich in antioxidants, which safeguard the human body from free radicals. Free radicals are unstable molecules which can damage your cells and contribute to diseases like cancer.

Strawberries are no less healthy. They are an excellent source of Vitamin C and manganese and they also contain healthy amounts of potassium. Strawberries are also enriched with folate, which is very important for pregnant women. Furthermore, strawberries are low in calories and are spruced with healthy antioxidants.



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Strawberries also help in reducing formation of blood clots which are associated with strokes. What is more, strawberry is spruced with many flavonoids that act as great antioxidants. Together they may act as defense to the invasion of cancer or tumour growth. However, more human research is needed to understand the effect of strawberries on cancer conclusively. Strawberries may also be used to prevent type 2 diabetes.

Another healthy beverage that the food service outlets, QSRs and cafes can offer is our good old almond infused milk. It is always better if the beverage is prepared without added sugar and with a pinch of turmeric and saffron.

Carrot ginger juice with infusions of cucumber, lemon and ginger is also a highly refreshingly healthy beverage, which can be promoted in cafes in a big way, especially as a breakfast option. Carrots are richly endowed with beta-carotene, a compound that the human body changes into vitamin A, which in turn helps in maintaining the health of eyes. Carrots can also lower the risk of cancer and heart disease. Beetroot, carrot and apple juice is another immunity boosting beverage.

Kombucha is a fermented beverage made with water, tea, sugar, bacteria and yeast. It's naturally packed with probiotics, which help restore the balance of friendly bacteria in your gut. When you drink kombucha, you're consuming healthy microbes that support your digestion and overall gut health.



Kefir is another fermented milk drink with a tart, creamy taste and texture similar to a drinkable yogurt. It is richer in probiotics compared to many other fermented dairy products and is a source of key nutrients like vitamin D, calcium and magnesium, all of which support healthy bones and a healthy heart. Given its probiotic-rich nature, kefir has been shown to support a healthy immune system and even modulate the immune system to suppress viral infections.

Green & Herbal Tea

While many know green tea as a healthy drink that hydrates and soothes the soul, this drink does even more good than you may know. Green tea is a commonly known immunity boosting beverage. Many of India's high-end cafes can now also switch to serving green tea, instead of the regular tea. Such an initiative will be appreciated by the guests, especially if it is made known to them that green tea is rich in antioxidants and beneficial polyphenols.

The polyphenols can improve our

immune function. The anti-microbial properties of green tea prevent the growth of bacteria and virus. Green tea can prevent cardiovascular disease, has cancer fighting agents named flavonoids, can help improve our brain function and can also help improve our metabolism. Green tea can also help improve blood flow and facilitates in lowering LDL (harmful cholesterol) levels.

One of the important immunity boosting beverages that could be extensively used by restaurant and cafes can be turmeric tea, with infusion of lemon juice and honey. Turmeric has curcumin, which is endowed with anti-inflammatory effects. Curcumin is also a strong antioxidant.

Hibiscus tea is made from the leaves of the hibiscus flower with its bright pinkish, red colour and tangy, yet refreshing flavour. Rich in antioxidants like vitamin C and flavonoids, this tea can help ward off disease and support immunity. In fact, drinking just one cup every day may lower blood pressure, according to one study.

To make, pick up some dried hibiscus flowers on your next grocery run, pour boiling water over the dried flowers and steep for five minutes. Then, strain, sweeten and enjoy.

Promotion

These and many other healthy immunity boosting beverages can be easily promoted in food service outlets across India through intelligent marketing measures. For example, in every combo meal, the immunity boosting beverages can be introduced at concessional prices. The outlets can adjust the loss in revenues by increasing the prices of other food products slightly. This would not tax the pockets of the guests unduly but would encourage them to try immunity boosting beverages.

Moreover, the renowned nutritionists and dieticians can be hired by restaurants, QSR chains and cafes to endorse their immunity boosting beverages on offer. The extra cost can easily be offset by the increased footfalls as now in the light of the present trying circumstances people are naturally quite keen on boosting their immunity than before. ■





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Flavours of Italy

The mere mention of Italian food conjures up tempting images of cheese dripping pizzas, spaghetti and pastas. However, the authentic Italian cuisine is a lot more than these sumptuous and popular dishes. They represent only a miniscule part of the diverse and multi-regional styles that make up Italy's holistic gastronomic scenario.

The Aromatic History

The culinary legacy of Italy is deeply indebted to cross-cultural influences of people and societies from over three thousand years that slowly defined the Italian peninsula as a geographical, political, and cultural entity. It is said that the Italians had initially absorbed ancient Greek cooking styles into their culinary culture.

The imperialism of the ancient Roman civilisation gave a fillip to the diversity in Italian cooking. As Roman ships brought fine wines, quality wheat, exotic spices and other ingredients from across the then known world, the kitchens of the Italians became more and more cosmopolitan. The Italians got their ingredients from all across the then known world, which also included

the far away oriental land of China.

It is not surprising to note that Italian cuisine actually encompasses an amalgamation of culinary influences of various cultures and civilisations. It has the influence of Greek, the Gallic, Slavic, Arab and Turkish culinary traditions.

Even now many food historians claim that pasta was imported from China, though the contesting claim that it was Italy's local produce which was consumed during Etruscan and Roman times is equally strong. The cuisine of Sicily also has traces of culinary influence of the

Arabs. Overall, due to myriad culinary influences, the tastes of ancient Italians became truly globalised for their times; a tradition which still continues till date.

Hence the geographically defined area recognised today as modern day Italy has a cuisine as diverse and multifaceted as its long, complex history.

Diversity of Rich Tastes

Each region of Italy, like that of India, developed its own distinctive style of cooking and a formalised menu based on the local ingredients and the lifestyle of



the people living there. One finds great discrepancy in the way similar dishes are prepared in different regions of Italy. Its diversity complements its deliciousness.

Each region of Italy has its own specialties. For instance, Tuscan beef is an item belonging to the North whereas the south is credited for producing mozzarella cheese and provolone along with a rich harvest of citrus fruits. So much so that there was great variance even amongst the most commonly consumed items in Italy such as the different types of breads and pastas.

Hence, we find the southern part of Italy was into hard boiled spaghetti whereas the northern regions were more akin to consuming soft egg noodles. We associate Pizza with Naples, tortellini with Bologna and Milan is world famous for its risotto.

The Italian cuisine took its formal structure at the unification of Italy in 1861. Not only the Italian cuisine, with its diverse facets, is regarded among the most popular global cuisines of the planet it is also regarded as one of the most rich and diverse one.

Traditional Food Culture

No cuisine can develop with just the special art in its preparation, it should be complemented with the art of eating as well. Over the course of centuries, the Italians have developed their own culture related to eating their food.

We all know that Italians are very serious about their food and no doubt, eating is among the favourite pastime activity for Italian families. When the Italians sit down for a lunch or dinner they seem to be in no great hurry whatsoever. Unlike other faster paced societies in the world dining time in Italy is a time to unwind and catch up with friends and families. The culture of Italian food is relaxed and slow-paced with families getting the chance to bond with each other across the delectable courses spread on the dinner tables.

The actual eating process on a conventional Italian dinner can easily spread over a couple of hours. The formal Italian dinner where many guests are invited can be easily stretched to three hours during which the diners savour their food in as many as ten courses. Another

prevalent tradition in Italian homes is that each guest brings with herself/himself an interesting homemade dish as well, which adds another shade of taste and flavour to the already exhaustive menu.

Types of Italian Food

With the varied facets in their rich cuisine it is difficult to classify all the typical Italian food items. However, here are some interesting examples.

Pizza is of course the most popular food item to originate from Italy. The city of Naples introduced pizza to the world. Each region of Italy however has its own distinctive style of making this delicacy. As discussed before, the region of Bologna is credited for the discovery of tortellini and the most famous rice dish of Italy, risotto belongs to Milan.

The northern areas of Italy are famous for using polenta, creams, butter and different kinds of cheeses like parmesan and grana padano. The typical food that originates from the north Italy includes lasagna, which has become a rage across the globe. Another commonly found food item from these areas is fresh egg pasta. And of course, the most famous rice dish of Italy known as risotto also originates from northern Italy.

The cuisine of the south Italy has a considerable amount of difference in the ingredients they use and the way that they cook than from their northern counterparts. Hence the kinds of dishes originating from this region are also distinct from those prevalent in the north of Italy. Most of the cooking in the south of Italy focuses around the application of tomatoes and olive oil. The use of mozzarella cheeses and Caciocavallo with dry pasta is also characteristic of the southern style of cooking. The coastal regions of Italy are famous for prosciutto, tortellini and ravioli.

Other renowned Italian dishes include the Gremolata, which is a much loved fish soup in this modern country with an ancient civilisation. Many chicken lovers in Italy and beyond simply admire the Chicken Scarpariello, which is a tangy dish prepared in lemon sauce. The chicken marsala is also another typical Italian dish, which is consumed on a fairly regular basis in the country.

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Flavours from Liguria

History, culture and geography distinguish the cuisine of one region from another. *La semplicità*, i.e. 'simplicity' characterises Italy's famed gastronomy. Simple and fresh ingredients are the key to Italian cuisine. Geographically, the coastal region of Liguria forms a long narrow crescent along the Ligurian Sea towards the northern part of Italy. Here it deserves a mention that Liguria is the only Italian region that borders with the sea to the south, the Alps to the north, and the Apennines to the east. Liguria shares its western border with France, and the eastern and northern side of Liguria are flanked by Italian regions of Piedmont, Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany, which have had influences on the local culinary culture of the region.

A Sumptuous Journey

Liguria's terrain and climatic conditions are suitable for growing mushrooms, pine nuts and chestnuts. The geographical conditions of Liguria are also favourable for growing olives, producing exceptionally light flavoured oil, wine grapes, corn, basil, garlic, chickpeas, zucchini, potatoes, onions and artichokes. Liguria is endowed with a wide coastline, which makes fish and shellfish the main protein sources used in Ligurian cooking.

While wheat is grown in small quantities in the region, pasta is an important element of Liguria's culinary character. It is said that a type of small lasagna noodle owes its origin to Liguria. It is made of chestnut flour, and it is still popular. The people of Liguria are skilled in creatively using locally grown ingredients which include chestnut and chickpea, to produce alternate products to use in their pastas, polentas and breads.

Pesto sauce is widely used in the pastas in Liguria as a topping. Its high consumption in Liguria is attributed to the abundance of basil and pine nuts in the region. Trenette, a flat, thin pasta, and gnocchi feature rampantly in Ligurian menus.

The well-known unleavened bread named focaccia is a specialty of Liguria, which is best savoured when it is fresh and warm from the oven. There are also a great many interesting forms of ravioli in Liguria, such as borage ravioli.

As the readers have guessed, the cuisine of



Liguria indeed has a strong marine influence. Anchovy, the small white bait, white bream, sea bass and many other types of fish spruce the gastronomic flavour of Liguria's cuisine. Like most Italians, the people of Liguria prepare their fish without intricate sauces, with just a dash of local herbs and olive oil.

Olives and olive oil from the region of Liguria are part of Italy's rich culinary legacy. For example, the small taggiasca olives, besides being tasty, produce a wonderful extra virgin olive oil. No wonder that since the last nine



hundred years or so many areas of western Liguria have been dotted with them. They were extensively planted by Benedictine monks during the 12th century, and since then their presence in western Liguria has been quite prevalent.

The Heady Liguria

As far as wine goes, Liguria is renowned for its dry whites like the Vermentino and Pigato, which offer sumptuous heavens if are enjoyed with regional delicacies, which include marinated alici (anchovies) and baked orata fish.

The famous red wines of Liguria include Rossese from Dolceacqua, and the Sangiovese. The latter is derived from the grapes, which are grown in the hills located in the vicinity of the Roman ruins of Luni, in Tuscany. Sciacchetra; the white passito wine made from grapes that is being partially dried to enhance sugar and alcohol content, is another heady delight from the region of Liguria.

Just Desserts

The enticing desserts of Liguria include the chestnut flour castagnaccio pie, the torta limone (lemon pie) and the traditional pan dôçe; a rich sugar-coated, butter-filled unleavened cake spruced with pine nuts, raisins, candied citrus fruits and orange flower extract. The big and surprisingly sweet lemon also presents itself as an ideal energising snack, while walking down the scenic countryside of Liguria.

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Engineering the Menu



“How can I create higher profit items in menus?” It is a perennial question that frequently hovers on the minds of the F&B professionals, be they owners or F&B Managers. The question has also been the topic of discussion in many seminars and conferences. From logical comprehension, one understands the answer lies in the key term, i.e. ‘Menu Engineering.’

What is Menu Engineering?

According to an expert, menu engineering is the study of the profitability and popularity of menu items and how these two factors influence the placement of the food & beverage items on a menu. The goal of menu engineering in food service outlets is simple; to increase profitability per guest.

Several studies have been done to analyse the subject of menu engineering. While the term menu engineering is mostly used with regard to traditional paper restaurant menus, the concept is equally relevant for menus having online presence. For a food service outlet selling items with varying levels of price and profitability, menu engineering can help enhance the profits.

A good menu should be re-worked at least three times a year and have something seasonal going on every now and then. Now here lies the challenge of

understanding what items to be placed in the menu so that they can garner better yields in terms of profits.

The Right Menu

According to most chefs menus which generate profitability without compromising on quality and guest delight are the menus which should be promoted, ideally. Profitability will always come with guest delight. We cannot be profitable without happy guests. On a general level, incorporate dishes which are prepared with locally sourced

ingredients; vegetarian choices should be prepared with vegetables that are in season; avoid dishes which require partly prepared outsourced products like taco shells, sausages, etc.

However, there are challenges in creating such menus which yield higher profits. Usually hosts, especially of social events, look for opportunities to serve dishes that are unique in order to create a lasting memory with their

guests; they want the event to be spoken about positively for many days to come. Thus it takes considerable effort to convince them to go for regional specialties which can be prepared with seasonal ingredients available.

There are other challenges too. Creating a wide variety in menu becomes challenge

while working with set list of ingredients, especially seasonal ones. However, on the positive side, hosts of social events are likely to be happy with the end result when the menu laid out fits within desired pricing and garners positive feedback from guests.

Costing and Personnel

One limitation towards creation of menus which can yield higher profits is the inability to do basic costing right. One needs to keep in mind every aspect, which includes price, processing (yields), cooking loss (shrinkage), spoilage, wastage, garnishing, accompaniments, etc. while crafting the menu. If they are taken into account in the prudent manner while creating the menu there is no way you can go wrong in pricing your dishes, and if the pricing is correct your profit margins tend to be secure.

A menu with high profit potential must also be supplemented with skilled and trained personnel. Make sure that your staff is well trained, motivated and skilled for the job. Too often the implementation of a menu fails, not because of the content of the menu but due to a poor execution of it.

Going Seasonal

There are several advantages of having a

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menu focussed on seasonal ingredients. Major advantage is that an element of freshness gets incorporated in the menu as the base ingredients get changed frequently. Moreover, the costs of seasonal and local ingredients are lower as compared to imported ingredients. There could be setbacks due to fluctuations in the prices of the non-seasonal ingredients as well as the availability.

Have majority of your menu dishes done as per the seasonal availability of ingredients. The guests may also be pleasantly surprised to see a different product on the plate depending on the season and market availability. Procuring seasonal ingredients facilitates towards affordability. Ensure the quality levels of different menu items while using different seasonal ingredients.

The extensive use of seasonal ingredients can be an intelligent step towards profitable menu engineering. However, some guests can raise concern on limited choice or variety when menus are designed only with seasonal ingredients. Moreover, Seasonal ingredients are available for limited periods, so at times sourcing ingredients becomes a challenge when these go off shelf in a period of three months. And there is an additional cost involved when we have to fly down the ingredients from elsewhere.

Other Factors to Heed

While crafting a winning menu, one needs to give careful consideration to procurement, raw material quality, ordering in the right quantities, storage and several other factors. If these factors are not judiciously adhered to, the menu engineering process may receive setbacks.

The food service business should focus on buying the best possible quality of raw materials, which will not only give them a higher yield but will also enhance the overall product appeal and quality of the food & beverage offerings of the outlet. One needs to make an effort to reach the source of the products and buy from there, which will always get you a better procurement price.

Ordering the right quantity comes next. If the quantity ordered is not correct you will either loose out on the sales if ordered less or increase your wastage if the ordering is more than what you need.

There is also need for proper storage facilities for the raw materials. Adequate storage space helps maintain raw materials till they are utilised. If storage is not optimal both spoilage and wastage will be high. There are other factors whose non compliance can mar a winning menu.

The Chef and the F&B Manager need to have a clear idea of the processing and thawing yields of a raw material. If they are not being adhered to the cost of the basic raw material may go high and this would shave the entrepreneur’s profits.



Furthermore, the Chef and her/his team need to be very well-trained in the pre-cooking and cooking processes, kitchen equipments must be in top condition, and the food service outlet must have good standards of food safety.

The Final Advice

Menu engineering demands sound understanding of guests’ aspirations, operational requirements and pricing techniques. The experts gave some useful tips pertaining to the inclusion of the right items in the menu. Tomato soup, makhani preparations can be included when tomatoes are in season and are priced very low in the market. This helps in creating variety within limited costing. Similarly, aam ka panna is a favourite

during the hot summer season. At the same time, since mango is a seasonal fruit, its inclusion in the menu can help realise increased profits.

Food service outlets need to know their customers and their taste profile for including items in the menu. For example, if in the vicinity there is dominant Punjabi community which frequents your restaurant then there is no point introducing flavours from Gujarati cuisine in the menu. You could have a one off dish to showcase but the primary flavour profile should be connected with the target guests’ palate.

Chefs prefer keeping the dishes simple. Complicated dishes call for a number of processes and flavours. This usually pushes the cost of the dish which then becomes difficult to price and eventually sell. Simple recipes on the other hand are consistent and easy to execute. They result in higher table turns hence better profitability.

Having limited dishes on the menu not only reduce your preparation and execution time but is likely to enhance profitability considerably. Also to ensure higher profit from the menu, it is important that you use the ingredient optimally and limit waste as much as possible by generating extra menu items out of the same ingredient.

For example pork belly which can be subjected to a number of culinary applications. Roasted pork belly can be used as a main course. Smaller pieces of pork belly, which cannot be used as a main course can be sliced thin and then served as a starter with a delicious truffle risotto. And the even smaller pieces, which cannot be sliced can be minced and made filling for mouth watering momos. In case of strawberry, which can be used as strawberry risotto, strawberry sauce for fish, and as strawberry tart as dessert.

Costing the recipes correctly, procuring from the source, pricing the dishes correctly, concerted promotion initiative of high profit dishes by the team, organising of regular sampling of high profit dishes, controlling wastage and optimum use of ingredient are some of the key parameters of effective menu engineering. ■

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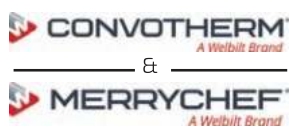
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Unrolling Saucy Terrain

The choice of identifying a good sauce is becoming difficult at a time when new flavours are emerging like Vidalia onion, raspberry, Beaujolais and so on.

In Indian food, we have a rich tradition of accompaniments and there are many things that can be termed as Indian version of Western sauces.

Sauce or ketchup or dip or paste, all, to some extent serve a common purpose and thus are perceived as near cousins in every respect. Their first and foremost aim is to tenderize the food activity; “tenderizing” here refers to enhancement or fortification of food to be gulped.

Understanding the Importance

Sauces are available in varieties but they correspond to food in a typical fashion, and thus its importance. The moment we play too much with its flavour and experiment on our own to suit the palate, it leads to something that chef fraternity remark as “disaster”.

Sauce is a very important ingredient in Italian food, or for that matter any food. In pasta preparations, bigger the size of pasta, more important is the sauce used. Heavy in taste, content of meat or fish or whatever required for the recipe, all needs to be taken care of.

Sauces are made in varying consistency depending upon the need i.e. type of food where sauces play its accompaniment role. The consistency, flavour, spiciness, all matters... All the said features differ for different sauces and simultaneously that makes it suitable for particular kind of dish (food item).

Criteria

Definition for a good sauce is simple: the one that does not overwhelm and masks the main dish but fortify its qualities by gelling well with it.

Many people forget the fact that sauce should be taken on a ratio basis. Chefs understand and explain this to their juniors during food preparation; after all, many food

recipes are based on sauces. The amount of sauce in a dish could either exemplify the food or could mar the whole presentation.

Also, sauce corresponds food in a particular manner thus one needs to be very careful that usage of sauce is not made into a just another task. It is as vital as food itself.

Fusion cuisine has brought in a new perspective where many hit-and-trial are carried out but not made public until connoisseurs of food flag off such innovations.

Indian Habit

Indians, many foreign chefs say, do not know the importance of sauces. Precisely true. Barring the industrial kitchen and food connoisseur, an Indian would experiment too much or would not dare at all to venture into unknown territory.

People ask for sauce 3-4 times more in particular Italian dishes where it should not be like that but I give in to their request. This is ridiculous; one cannot imagine that in Italy.

Here in India a tomato sauce/ketchup would ease many worries of a kitchen (not industrial), as it would go with almost everything. Indians are grown on the idea where sauces are treated as supplements and not necessarily a part of a dish. So there is always scope for innovation where try-&-test is a marked feature.

Taste Matters

One would often find that sometimes ingredients are also played with during its preparation in commercial arena. This fact is protected with the saying that taste variation becomes important to make sauces a successful product here. Meeting the requirement of the Indian palate is necessary. Also, sauces primarily come from outside, the origin. India itself is not known for sauces and thus, it becomes necessary to modulate the taste.

Sauces get its flavour from many herbs, spices, and sometimes even vegetables are used like onions for tomato sauce! Ingredients viz. bay leaf, chili peppers,

cinnamon, coriander/cilantro, lemon grass, mustard, pepper, sea salt, sesame, turmeric, vanilla, etc. are used for flavouring sauces and are quite common as ingredients everywhere. Some changes are made according to the liking in kitchens where chef prepares sauces as dressing, accompaniment, etc. and individual style develops and even the most common “mayonnaise” is said to be not an ideal sauce which can be prepared in hotel kitchens but prepared nonetheless.

Changing Patterns

In the processed food segment of sauces extreme flavour, aroma, texture are seen to have a far-reaching effect on food. Apart from the place of origin, sauces tend to acquire some qualities that may not be at all qualities by native definition.

The globe is shrinking and along the path of discovering regional ethnic cuisines, sauces are being invented based on the food style. Mexican, mustard, barbecue sauces have been developed over a period of time understanding the need to provide that extra zing to particular food, or cuisine, or style, and thereby it stood out as another dimension of culinary art.

New flavours are emerging such as Vidalia onion, peppercorn, raspberry, hibiscus, Beaujolais and so on. Sauces are used as dressing so more and more dressings are being made with the incorporation of rice-wine and white-wine, vinegars as well as denatured wines and liquors. The choice is becoming difficult and at the same time to understand what a good sauce should be like as variations means not only shifting gears but also, the tracks.

Gourmet mustards and horseradish are being mixed into mayonnaise or yogurt and are being used as key ingredients in crusts on meat and fish (fried snacks).

Chutneys – which come nearest to phoren sauces – are any spicy, relish-like condiment that contains fruit or sometimes a vegetable, vinegar, sugar and spices, and serve both as a dip as well as a topping for many relishes as a sweet-and-sour flavour enhancer.

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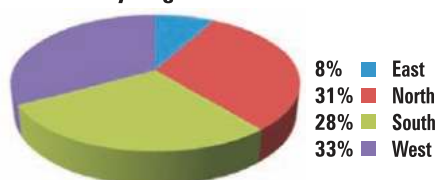
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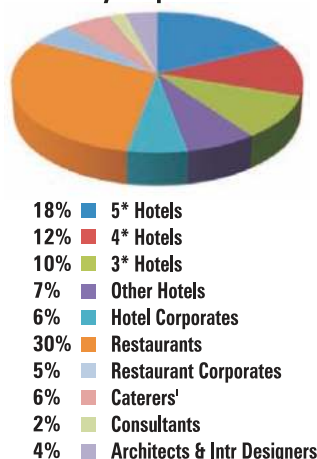
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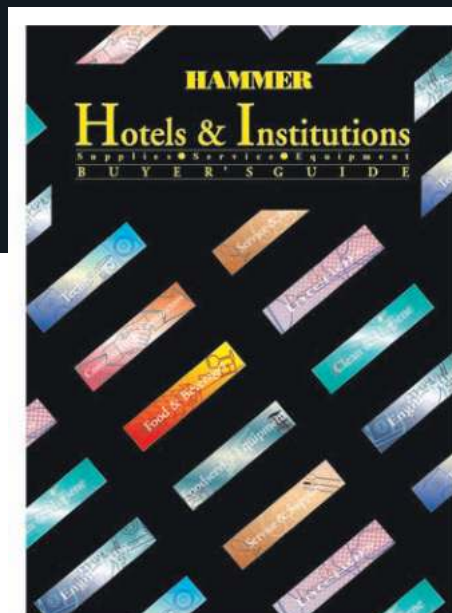
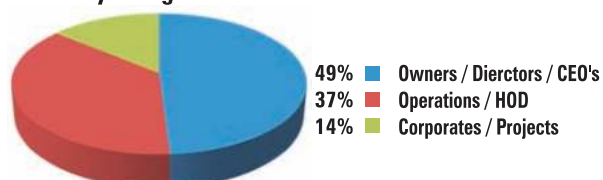
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Gadgets for Professional Kitchen



Fixing daily meals for an audience that can number in the thousands is no easy task. For non-commercial chefs, fancy gadgets and tools are nice, but when it comes to preparing menu items in mass quantities, the clear favourites are big players.

Asking a chef to choose a favourite tool is almost like asking a parent to name a favourite child, arriving at a decision is nearly impossible. Although ingredient quality plays a critical role in any meal, chefs are highly dependent upon the tools they use to prepare those foods.

For most of the chef's paring knife is not only their favourite tool, it's a constant companion. The chef uses knife for everything, from boning fish to peeling potatoes. It's the versatility of the tool that the paring knife fits right in the hand so it lets use skills as a chef. When chef looks at all the other tools that float around kitchen, the knife is the one they always go back to. The knife is built for speed and to make a good clean cut.

The chef uses a double-handled, twin-blade mezzaluna to prepare condiments for some of the most popular dishes. In addition to the cut the mezzaluna produces, there are other fringe benefits.

The combination of the tool's smooth rocking motion plus a double blade covers twice the area of a standard knife. With its compact body and adjustable blades, the mandoline is an important tool in chef's arsenal. The mandoline is critical in terms of timing and labour and they give nice, consistent slice every time. The mandolin

adds to mezzaluna and paring knives as one of three essential tools for chef in the kitchen.

No matter how menus change, the mandoline is in use daily. Its adjustable, razor-sharp blade across which vegetables or other foods are carefully pushed, produces slices with an ease, versatility and consistency that can't be matched by knives. Interchangeable blades produce flat, rippled or latticed slices, matchsticks, juliennes or shreds. Although mandolines are equipped with a carriage to hold food and keep fingers safe, the tool has a danger factor. But as long you respect it, there won't be problems.

As with knives, mastering the mandoline is a training issue. You have to be aware of what you're doing and appreciate that the end of a potato is not as important as your fingertip. Slicing is a fundamental task in any foodservice kitchen and the mandoline is only one of several tools chefs employs to slice, dice, chop or grate in quantity.

Some chefs prefer a chinois nearly every day. Chinois is used to strain custards, purees, soups, and sauces, producing a very smooth texture. It's expensive for a strainer but in the end it's a beautiful thing. Using it is one of the most soulful things a chef can do.

The more functional the tool, the better it is. The favourite piece of equipment for the chef is the food processor. It's straightforward, but does anything they need it to. It's about ensuring quality and saving time. Chefs are introduced to new equipment all the time but certain tools

are the things that always go with them and that just doesn't change.

Slicing doesn't always cut it, however. There are times when a chef needs to get rough, and when that's called for, a wide variety of all-purpose and specialty slicers, graters, choppers and cutters are available. The electric food processor has usurped the role of many gadgets in some operations, but traditionalists who prefer hand-operated cutting and chopping equipment haven't abandoned box or plane graters, finding these provide more control. Processors are fast but not the tool of choice for gently zesting a lime. Grater/shredder attachments for mandolines also provide slower, more controlled cuts.

Volume separates professional from home kitchens. When salads or slaw need to be made quickly and in quantity, equipment suppliers offer a variety of countertop cutters to transform heads of lettuce into piles of wedges or thin strips. Gadgets that can do the same gentle but firm trick for tomatoes, producing uniform slices for salad bars, also are available.

Weary prep cooks may lobby for wall-mount versions of tabletop cutters. These heavy-duty helpers can ease dicing bags of onions for soup or slicing potatoes for house-made french fries in wedges or shoestrings. And the popularity of sliced, battered and fried onion appetizers has spurred marketing of cutters that can produce a shift's worth of "onion flowers" in minutes.

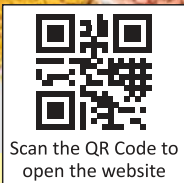
No gadget is better than a sharp knife in a trained hand, but chefs are not abandoning their slicers.

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