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The future for foodservice in India gets curiouser and curiouser by the day. In addition to influences ranging from edible flowers to Middle-eastern ingredients, we are also simultaneously riding a strong digital wave.

Almost everything in our lives is now affected – and often altered by – by technology. Savvy QSRs are beginning to capitalise on this fact to better connect with consumers, most of whom are under the age of 40; enter, mobile ordering (and paying) via apps, as we discovered at our annual business show India Food Forum in January.

Yet another strong trend is that of health. Although I believe Indian consumers are still not as stringent about healthy dining as those in some other parts of the world, the leaning is certainly getting sharper in terms of choosing a restaurant. Therefore, customisation is becoming more important than ever.

With dining out increasing becoming an entertainment outlet, much like going to the movies or shopping, the future for the industry in India is extremely bright. There is room for incredible innovation – on every level from menu to ordering channels. Such is the promise that supermarkets and hypermarkets are now being pushed to incorporate some form of differentiated foodservice formats on their premises.

Foodservice is one of the retail verticals I personally am extremely gung-ho about. Quite frankly, I don't see many challenges to the sector as a whole, though the strong optimism about its potential may attract many fly-by-night operators. But, if you have the right mix of differentiation in concept, some really smart and responsive marketing, and a drive to continuously re-invent, there is really nothing to stop the march.

Amitabh Taneja

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The Democracy of Foodservice

Replete with a mega Conference, sprawling exhibition zone, the who's who of India's food retail and service businesses, a Live Kitchen and Drinks Theatre and an elegant Awards ceremony, the 8th edition of India Food Forum was hosted in grand style in Mumbai. Here are some snapshots of the immense knowledge imparted at the show

peaking at the India Food Forum 2015, Rachna Nath, Executive Director, PwC, said, "The biggest disruption in food consumption will happen when we undertake ordering with Quick Service Restaurants, using digital tools.

Stating that investor interest is also seen very high in Quick Service Restaurants, Nath said, "The biggest trend is taking food to the customer rather than customer walking into a restaurant. Hence customer connect is extremely vital along with advocacy much beyond engagement and loyalty."

Speaking at the Inaugural and keynote address on The Food Retail Leap 2020, Anjan Chatterjee, Founder, Speciality Restaurants noted that food has become a kind of entertainment for modern Indian consumers. Citing examples of Mainland China and Mainland China Asia Kitchen, which were launched 21 years ago in 1994 and comparing the changes, Chatterjee said, "There has been a huge change in food and beverages category. Now, we have knowledgeable and aware consumers."

"People can learn and know about new recipes through browsing in the You Tube. People are travelling within India and also abroad, getting to know more about various different cuisines, different tastes and more varieties are known with the help of digital media and Zomato kind of a website, Nature's Basket, Food Bazaars and supermarkets," he added.

According to Chatterjee, the three trends that will redefine India's foodservice sector over the next five years are:

- Restaurant point of view, format innovation.
- Fine dining to fun dining; younger generationcare of their sensitivities.
- Consistency in Brand refresh; beverages-cafes, bars. There is a huge revolution.

Referring to regulatory challenges and rationalisation at a session specifically designed to address FSSAI guidelines, Jitendra Nautiyal, Regional Audit Manger, NSF International said, "Codex standards were applied for harmonisation globally of food safety and regulating standards; QSR companies had their own suppliers as per these standards to assure quality and food safety."

He highlighted the challenges of the Street Food codex standard, which were Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), RA Module (Risk Analysis) and Risk Mitigation.

The Technology Leveller

One of the main discussion themes through the conference was the rapid emergence of Quick Service Restaurants, which have literally transformed Indian eating habits. Also, the explosion of digital media is driving a rapid rise of online order placements, which is growing faster than conventional routes, experts noted.

On the one hand, quick service restaurants in India are overcoming the diversity in Indian food habits, while on the other, they are now reaching out to customers much more intensely on digital media compared to conventional formats. Hence, many of the brick and mortar restaurant formats are taking a back-seat with online apps emerging at the forefront.

One of the main discussion themes through the conference was the rapid emergence of Quick Service Restaurants













HAMBURG HAFENCITY

Hotel Elements and materials from docks and shipyards interpreted with a wink and kept together with a bit of seaman's rope; 170 rooms ('cabins'), meeting space for up to 200 persons.

Catering: Heimat Kitchen + Bar Simple dishes of regional ingredients, seating for 89 (+15 outside); guest breakfasts per day Ø 135, guests rest of day Ø 280. Catering staff 35, total F&B share of revenue 27%, total annual F&B sales (target 2015) €2.7 m

Home for the Guest

Individual, imaginative, full of loving detail, playful: those are just some of the attributes which a guest thinks of when he enters one of the hotels — there are currently seven of them in Hamburg (2), Frankfurt (2), Berlin (1), Zurich (1) and Vienna (1) — in the 25hours brand. The clientele of urban nomads will find here a hospitality which, leaving star ratings aside, creates a bridge between budget and deluxe. The same applies to the total of 13 catering units in the hotels. With restaurant concepts such as Neni, Heimat and 1500 Foodmakers, its creators are explicitly — and successfully — addressing an outside public, too. www.25hours-hotels.com

The 25hours Hotel Company is breaking new and creative paths in catering. Thus, at the Bikini Hotel in Berlin, the hotel's own wood-oven bakery has, without further ado, been put in the lobby – if you don't want or don't have time for a full breakfast in the Neni restaurant, you can enjoy a freshly baked snack here

otel catering often has a hard time of it in major European cities. Great is the public competition which draws the hotel guests out onto the street or into the entertainment districts. Just as great is the inhibition threshold of the city dwellers which, in view of numerous exciting alternatives, stops them making their way through the lobby and past the reception desk in order to eat.

25hours, founded in 2003 as a "young and affordable" design hotel, with its Number One Hotel in Hamburg, intended to be different from the very start. Its catering policy reflects the international 5-star hotel industry with its manysided and constantly changing F&B range – "but more relaxed, with a fair price-performance ratio," explains Christoph Hoffmann, one of the four partners and in charge of expansion and development at the lifestyle brand. "Catering is an essential component of our concept, the place for sociability and communication – not just for hotel guests, but for everyone."

Since each 25hours hotel is tailored in design and story individually to its particular location, the catering too gets a different face each time. "At the beginning always comes the story which we intend to convey," explains Hoffmann. "It is the central theme which imbues the building, keeps us on track, and is articulated again and again in hundreds of small details."

This love of detail is obvious, for instance, at 25hours HafenCity in Hamburg: opened in 2011, in the newly developed overseas district located in the former dock area, it self-confidently counteracts the wasteland of its still unbuilt surroundings with the motto 'Heimat' – 'Home' – inspired by seafarers' stories of wanderlust and homesickness, seaports and seas. The design unites elements of warehouses and container terminals from the rough world of the seaport with lovingly designed rooms, called 'cabins'.

With this in mind, the strikingly named 'Heimat' restaurant, with its broad glass façade on the ground floor, is intended as the "living room of the district." The seaport theme receives a thoroughgoing treatment here, too: shelves, floor markings, piles of eastern rugs for sitting on, and an eclectic selection of maritime objects provide a sense of unpretentious homeliness. On the menu: fresh, regional dishes, with constantly new, international accents.























Feeding Millions ...

A city of 1.3 m inhabitants and another 7 m living in its greater metropolitan area, Milan is considered the economic capital of Italy, with a high concentration of banks and financial services, as well as of important industries such as fashion, design and the media. With 4.5 m tourists in 2013, it scores the second highest number of visitors among Italian cities after Rome, business and shopping being the main draws. And this year, Milan may even get to the top: from 1 May to 31 October, the city hosts Expo 2015, which is expected to attract more than 20 m visitors. In our city guide, Flavia Fresia delivers a snapshot of what Milan has to offer them in terms of foodservice

1. Fine dining at the airport

Milan foodservice industry has been gearing for welcoming visitors to Expo 2015 for some time. And nowhere is this more apparent than in the city's three airports, where travellers now also have gourmet restaurants to resort to. In October 2013 the **Michelangelo restaurant** opened in the Linate airport terminal. Located before airport security, it has huge panoramic windows on the tarmac and is decorated so as to be a showcase of iconic design. But the focus is on the food: tasting menus and à la carte dishes, with traditional and creative recipes prepared with fresh ingredients. And as in airports time is often tight, Michelangelo has three timed menus, allowing people to eat in 8, 12 or 40 minutes. www.michelangelorestaurant.it

See also: **Vicook Bistrot**, in Bergamo Orio al Serio airport, is the offshoot of Da Vittorio restaurant, 3-Michelin stars. www.davittorio.com

2. Haute cuisine goes casual

Milan has a number of traditional fine dining restaurants, but the idea of haute cuisine has been evolving in the last few years. The prolonged downturn in the Italian economy has slashed, among other things, the once lucrative business lunch market, and even affluent people look for less ostentatious forms of consumption. This partly explains why top chefs have been sidelining into more casual formats, such as bistrots and cafés. The forerunner

















of this trend is Claudio Sadler, chef owner of the eponymous Sadler restaurant, 2 Michelin stars, who in 2008 opened the easier and cheaper Chic'n Quick, a "modern trattoria". Carlo Cracco, chef owner of Cracco restaurant, 2 Michelin stars, is a household name thanks to his TV appearances as a MasterChef's judge. In 2014 he opened the bizarrely named Carlo e Camilla in segheria (Charles and Camilla in the sawmill), a casual restaurant and cocktail bar, in a bleak postindustrial ambience. Andrea Berton is another firstrank chef who has both a fine-dining establishment (his new Ristorante Berton has recently garnered its first Michelin star) and has tried his hand at more casual eateries, namely Dry, a format mixing gourmet pizza and cocktails, and Pisacco, a restaurant bar. www.sadler.it, www.ristorantecracco.it, www.pisacco.it, www.carloecamillainsegheria.it, www.ristoranteberton.com, www.drymilano.it

See also: Davide Oldani, chef owner of **D'0**, is a forerunner in his own right in that as early as 2003 he choose to open a popular fine cuisine restaurant, "mixing no frills and great care, good and accessible": a 1 Michelin star "osteria" where a fixed lunch comes at □11 and people can dine for €40-50 (six months advance booking are the norm). www.cucinapop.do

3. The fashion link

Milan is the capital of Italian fashion and design, where major haute couture labels have their headquarters and showcase stores. No wonder that the city boasts half a dozen or so of hotels, restaurants, bars and cafés operated by fashion firms - Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Trussardi, Prada and Bulgari among them - as tangible examples of the lifestyle they identify with their respective brands. But perhaps the most glamourous new addition to the Milan restaurant-scape is Ceresio 7, opened in September 2013 on the top floor of the D-Squared2 building, the Milan-based label of Canadian twin brothers Dean and Dan Caten. The rooftop hosts a restaurant and cocktail bar wrapped by an all-around panoramic terrace with views on Milan's new soaring skyline. The real eye-catching features, though, are the two outdoor-pools, surrounded by easy chairs and cabanas. A first in Milan. Strong as the novelty of the rooftop pools is, people come here for the authentic Italian food of chef Elio Sironi (previously at the Bulgari Hotel), simply cooked and served at moderate prices, the cocktails of Luca Pardini, the sleek contemporary interiors and the casual atmosphere.

www.ceresio7.com

The most glamourous new addition to the Milan restaurant-scape is Ceresio 7



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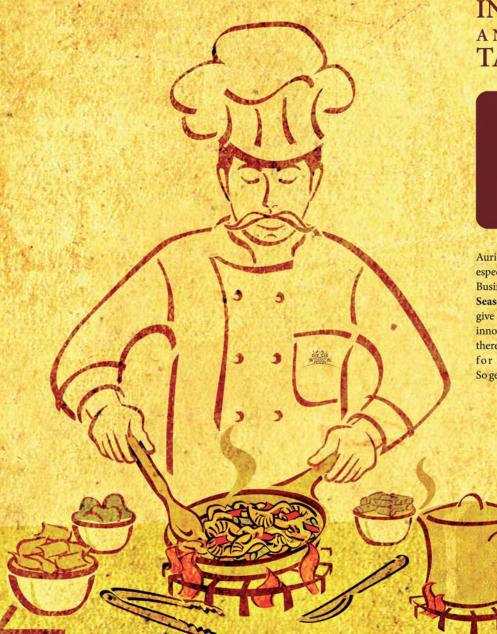
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