

# foodService

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The Indian foodservice industry offers a fantastic growth opportunity unmatched anywhere else in the world. Foodservice, with a value of USD 48 billion at current prices, is emerging as a key driver of growth for the Indian economy, which was estimated to be worth USD 2.3 trillion in 2016. Already, the foodservice industry is larger than the pharmaceuticals and FMCG sector in India and its potential growth will be powered by the changing consumer dynamics and increasing market proliferation by brands in the space.

The one way to take the industry forward is to encourage more Indians to eat out more often. Consumer spending on eating out can get a boost if restaurants can attract more people to have breakfast. This is one day-part that is largely untapped by the industry, mainly because most Indians are culturally habituated to have the day's first meal at home. But if foodservice players can unlock the key to selling breakfasts in India, it will prove to be a goldmine for them. In the West, a substantial chunk of sales in restaurants occur before 11 am, while in India they are just about stirring to life at that hour.

The other avenue for growth available to the industry is geographical expansion. The major portion of the foodservice industry of India is still largely concentrated in the northern and western parts of the country. Players need to renew their focus on the south as well as make inroads into the largely untapped eastern India. Also, the QSR format – growing at an annual rate of 16% – is proving to be popular with Indian diners. New and local players need to tap this segment and come up with unique and innovative formats.

Going ahead, it is expected that we will get to see more interesting formats and concepts. Along with the incumbents, the newer players can lead the charge to the lesser penetrated markets and geographies and drive the industry toward a more elevated growth path.



**Amitabh Taneja**

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# In Love with Chicken



Poultry has been gaining ground in the restaurant business for many years. While it is a standard dish on the menus of almost all popular foodservice concepts from burger bars to burrito shops, there are still only relatively few restaurant chains specialising in chicken & co. World-market leader KFC is the number one in Europe with almost 2,400 outlets in 2015. Here, as in most QSR systems, the classic cooking methods – rotisserie and pressure frying – still dominate, while modern, fast-casual concepts often offer flame-grilled meat to attract urban, health-conscious guests, more and more of whom see chicken as a welcome alternative to red meat. A pan-European survey on chicken concepts.

Chickenisation' has become one of the UK's most popular food trends since 2014, and research by Allegra Foodservice has found that chicken has become the number one dish across the dining sector. Furthermore, Allegra's statistics show that chicken is the number one dish for both lunch and dinner at casual-dining restaurants, and is ordered on a fifth of visits. According to Mintel, between 2013 and 2014 fried chicken restaurants saw the highest percentage increase in sales (+6.7%) in the eating out market compared to all other fast food types.

Forbes named chicken as one of the hottest food trends in 2015, continuing on from its resurgence in 2014. This popularity can in part be attributed to the rise in beef prices, which were at an all-time high, making chicken the most desirable meat for restaurateurs to offer customers. Allegra Foodservice state that two-thirds of well-known casual-dining brands, including Chiquito and Pizza Hut, are increasing their chicken dishes year-on-year, and believe 31% of all mains offerings in the UK are now chicken-based. In 2015, chicken restaurants showed a combined annual turnover of £552 m.

Perhaps the most popular chicken restaurant in the UK, Nando's opened its first site in the country in 1992, in Ealing. Nando's can arguably be called the brand that made everyone fall in love with chicken again. Data from MORAR shows that it outperforms all other casual-dining restaurants on the level of positive 'buzz' surrounding the brand (26.5%), and the loyalty card at Nando's outperforms all other casual-dining loyalty cards by at least 7.3%. When thinking of a casual-dining restaurant to visit, more customers think of Nando's (33.8%) than any other casual-dining restaurant brand. [www.nandos.co.uk](http://www.nandos.co.uk)

Of course, it is impossible to talk about chicken without mentioning KFC, which was founded in 1930 by Harland Sanders in Kentucky. It is now owned by Yum! Brands, and now has 15,000 stores in 120 countries, with 838 in the UK. The brand reached £1 bn annual sales in UK and Ireland in 2014, and plans to have hit £1.5 bn by 2020, with 1,000 stores. [www.kfc.co.uk](http://www.kfc.co.uk)

Appealing to more of a fashionable audience, Whyte and Brown is a trendy warehouse-style London restaurant celebrating the versatility of the chicken and egg, located in Soho's Kingly Court. Since opening in 2013 chicken has been the 'hero' ingredient on the menu, with food offerings including a chicken and pork scotch egg and pulled barbecue chicken. Sales at Kingly Court are believed to hit £50,000 a week.

<http://whyteandbrown.com>

A further example of operators responding to the chicken trend is Randy's Wing Bar, which was founded by best friends Richard Thacker and Andy Watts, whose obsession with creating the perfect chicken wing began over three years ago. Randy's Wing Bar has been popular on the pop-up scene over the past few years, also appearing at festivals and events across London. The first permanent site, a 70 cover restaurant, was opened on 21st May 2016 at the new Hare East development, close to the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in Hackney.



1

focusing on the dark meat of chicken, Chick 'n' Sours only offers one white meat chicken dish with the dark meat offerings 'Guest Fry' (drumstick and thigh, Malay curry laksa, cashews, crispy shallots, Thai basil & coriander) and 'House Fry' (drumstick and thigh, seaweed crack, pickled watermelon) key favourites. <http://chicknsours.co.uk>

Yard and Coop is one of the newest concepts to hit the chicken scene, and opened in August 2015 in the Northern Quarter, Manchester, as the first operation in the area. Founded by Carl Morris and Laura Morris, both who have large amounts of industry experience, gained from their years at Revolution Bars Group PLC, Yard and Coop offers a new branded experience focusing on buttermilk fried chicken. Having seen a 50% increase in sales since November 2015, it is living up to its brand statement as 'The Home of Buttermilk Chicken'.

Yard and Coop has three main focuses; chicken, alcohol and music, with chicken taking 50% of its



2



3



4

Showcasing a variety of cooking techniques and global flavours, Randy's takes its customers around the world with five styles of wings; from the traditional North American Buffalo (fried chicken tossed in spicy Buffalo sauce with truffle blue cheese) to Bombay (oven baked, robata grilled and marinated in Indian spices, served with raita).

[www.randyswingbar.co.uk](http://www.randyswingbar.co.uk)

Meanwhile, Chick 'n' Sours was founded by pop-up veteran, Carl Clarke. He settled in Dalston in April 2015 with his aptly named fried chicken and sour cocktails restaurant. In its short twelve months of trading, food lovers from all over London and top chefs have visited, including Pierre Koffmann. Chick 'n' Sours will open its second site in Seven Dials, in mid-September 2016. Unusually

total sales, and 78% of its food sales. The Yard and Coop customer ranges from young children to pensioners. The majority of customers are women (55%) and the majority age group is 25-34 (26%). Customers can choose between thigh and breast to be fried into buttermilk chicken, served with their choice of homemade sauce, with options including Bourbon BBQ and Buffalo. Following on from the popularity of the first site, and demonstrating the rise in popularity of the chicken restaurant, Yard and Coop will be opening its second site in Liverpool in autumn 2016.

<http://yardandcoop.com>

The chicken market in the UK has clearly seen incredible growth over the past two years, and its many fans are waiting to see where it will go next.

## BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

- Poultry is – in distinction to pork or beef – compatible with practically all cultures and religions of the world. The result: high consumption figures in many countries.
- Thanks mainly to mass production, chicken and turkey are now significantly cheaper than other animal proteins. Hence, they are also considered to be more of an everyday meal than a speciality.
- But awareness of the negative aspects of industrial livestock farming has grown over recent years. Transparency with regard to origins and fair breeding are keys to a positive ecological profile.
- Chicken is relatively neutral in terms of taste and can easily be processed in a wide variety of ethnic and culinary directions.
- Thanks to the associated attributes 'healthy' and 'light', chicken is profiting from the growing demand for wellness food in Europe.

1. Whyte and Brown
2. Randy's Wing Bar
3. Randy's Wing Bar
4. Yard and Coop

# Fusion is the best way to showcase your creative culinary skills



*Chef Rakhee Vaswani*

"Food for me is simply two words: love and passion," says the Cordon Bleu Certified chef from Tante Marie London who is also a PME Masters in Sugarcraft and has done a Bakery course from Sophia College, Mumbai. Apart from being a celebrity chef and a culinary expert, Rakhee Vaswani is also a food consultant and cookery show host. She runs the Palate Culinary Studio in Mumbai where she trains budding chefs, amateurs and food enthusiasts.

In a chat with FoodService India, Rakhee talks of her culinary style, her favourite recipes and cuisines, her professional mentors and her career – all with a disarming freshness and candour.

by Sanjay Kumar —————

## **How would you describe your approach to cooking and the food service business?**

I feel cooking is a game of learning and it involves a lot of passion. I am spreading the art by imparting knowledge, creating entrepreneurs and bridging the gap in the culinary traditions between East and West. This is how I want to serve my industry and my country – by teaching and creating more food entrepreneurs like myself. I strongly believe in cultivating young, passionate minds rather than venturing into the restaurant business. I feel that fusion is the best way to use your creative juices as it not only connects various cuisines but also helps you increase and expand food varieties.

## **Which culinary styles have influenced your career?**

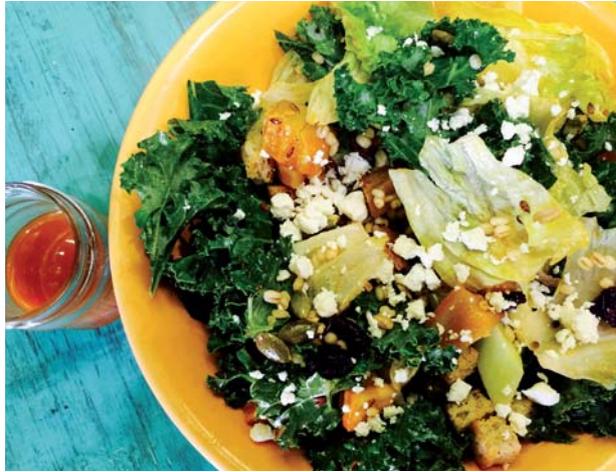
The British way of working as well as baking has influenced my style a lot. English desserts are my favorite and so are their preparation standards. I've also trained in London, so it reflects in my work. But I always make sure that I give an Indian touch through my fusion dishes. Besides, I believe in sticking to my roots. I play with Indian as well as international ingredients but only after knowing its true benefits before merging them into exotic concoctions.

## **Tell us about your favourite dishes/ cuisines and the restaurants you best enjoy going to?**

My favorite cuisine is undoubtedly Asian. I love the flavours and spices that go with it. Being a foodie it is difficult for me to choose my favorite dish but dumplings and Cheung Fun are the ones I cannot resist. The places I enjoy the most for eating out are Yauatcha (Mumbai) and Ming Yang (Chinese restaurant in Taj Lands End Mumbai).

## **Who have been your career mentors and which chefs do you admire most?**

I have had the opportunity to train under lots of chefs and I hold them in very high regard. My aunt taught me a lot and that is how my training started at a very young age. She has had a strong influence on my cooking methods and that's when I knew I wanted to become a chef.



**I like using local attas such as jowar, bajra, barley, amaranth and all such local grains as I believe health is as important as the taste.**

Among the chefs I admire most are Nigella Lawson for her aura and style and Gordon Ramsey for his work ethic and intolerance for imperfection. Then there's Heston Blumenthal who is in a class of his own and among the world's best.

**What is your approach to introducing healthier ingredients in your food preparations?**

My approach is to use more local produce and organic ingredients like coconut oil and coconut sugar in baking. I would suggest nut paste flour for gluten intolerant people. I like using local attas such as jowar, bajra, barley, amaranth and all such local grains as I believe health is as important as the taste. I also feel you can substitute sugar with natural sweeteners and use almond milk or soy milk instead of the regular milk.

**What are the other examples of healthy food substitutions that you employ?**

I believe in using good quality ingredients and if they are not available due to the seasonal factor I use something that relates to it as closely as possible. For example, I'd use local produce like amaranth if there is a supply issue with the regular grains since it is not only cost effective but also local and nutritious. Another superfood and a wonderful substitute is daliya. You can use it instead of quinoa to retain the nutrition and keep your supplies cost effective.

**From your experience, which ingredients are rising in popularity and witnessing a growing demand in the Horeca sector?**

In my opinion rice bran oil and quinoa have seen a drastic rise in the demand among consumers as well as in the Horeca sector.

**What is your approach to cutting down on food costs without sacrificing quality?**

Two words exemplify my approach to cutting down on food costs – avoid wastage! That helps the most in reducing food costs and helps you innovate while recycling without sacrificing on the quality. Also, give utmost importance to the quality rather than quantity. Quantity is almost irrelevant if quality has to be compromised with. Hence, give more importance to quality and understand its importance. The use of appropriate proportions is important to avoiding wastage.

**Which are the new dishes you have introduced successfully so far?**

Baked Boondi Gulab Jamun Cheesecake is my signature dish. I have gone knee-deep into fusion recipe creations. To name a few, I've made Deconstructed Dabeli Falalel Chaat and even a pull-apart Dabeli bread. Some other fusions include appetizers n desserts of which my signatures are Rabri & Gulab Jamun baked dish with oats crumble, Rose Rasmalai Panna cotta, Sev Barfi English tarts, Paan Parfait, Aachari Paneer Taco, etc.

**How do you handle challenges when it comes to customization of recipes and dishes?**

I love such challenges because they bring out my innovative juices and creativity. You have



# Making Customers Investors

Crowdfunding and crowd-investing, as an alternative form of finance for start-up companies, is taking off particularly in the service sector in Europe. In 2015 the Europe-wide volume grew by 92% to €5.4 bn, as documented by a report from the University of Cambridge and the accountancy firm KPMG. By far the greatest proportion of this crowdfunding volume comes from the UK (→ €4,412 m), followed by France (€319 m), and Germany in third place (€249 m). The benefits which this alternative financing tool can bring to the catering sector are shown by the example of the new British-Mexican food chain Chilango, London.



*Eric Partaker and Dan Houghton*



*Chancery Lane, London*

“How to raise £5,500,000 from your on-line friends and family and why I think crowdfunding is a fantastic alternative source of financing,” co-founder Eric Partaker spoke about this exciting chapter in the growth of his fast-casual formula Chilango at the last European Foodservice Summit hosted by FSE & ME and GDI in autumn 2016 in Zurich.

Strong and rapid expansion thanks to ‘burrito bonds’: with this catch line the two founders of Chilango, Eric Partaker and Dan Houghton, sketch their vision of growth for the UK and beyond. In the short term their strategy is to double in size. They were running twelve outlets under their own management last autumn – eleven in London and one in Manchester. “Several more in major UK cities are in the pipeline,” says Partaker.

Chilango is also looking at international sites. Partaker and Houghton have trademarked the brand in thirty markets throughout the world now. “Long term we believe that what we are creating is a multi-billion-pound global power brand,” is how Partaker puts it casually. The first steps on this track: by 2020 alone they intend to be running around 50 restaurants under their own management in 20 UK towns and cities, plus further outlets to be opened via franchising in other national markets are on the agenda. The quickservice formula intends to attain these ambitious expansion goals by using the capital which it has amassed through successful crowdfunding campaigns: a total of £5.5 m of investment cash was garnered through two ‘back-to-back record-



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# HOW TO DESIGN A MENU, DECONSTRUCT ITS COMPONENTS AND PUT THEM ALL TOGETHER TO CREATE THE PERFECT ONE.

by SANJAY KUMAR

**C**omparisons can be unfair but they can be interesting as well and even apt in some cases. Comparing a menu with a bikini might not evoke similarities at first, but the analogy is not entirely out of place. Like a bikini, a menu reveals more than it hides. Just as a bikini on a blonde sends your hormones racing and your imagination into the stratosphere, a well-designed menu is certain to titillate your taste buds and tantalize your gustatory instincts. And like the costume that celebrates skimpiness, a menu is at its most elegant when shorn of unnecessary contrivances.

The comparison, casual and fleeting as it may be, doesn't stretch any further. In fact, a menu is a serious document and the very antithesis of the flimsiness associated with beachwear. "A menu is the face of a restaurant and its primary means of representation. It informs the customer about the offerings and helps them to ascertain their selection. It helps the customers identify the specialties on offer and simplify the ordering process," points out **Chef Vishal Atreya, Executive Chef, JW Marriott Mumbai, Juhu.**

In any food service operations, the most important elements are the concept of the F&B outlet, food offerings and service. "Theme, environment, music, uniform, crockery, cutlery, tables, seating arrangement, décor, all play an important role in the food and beverage experience. But it is only when they all come together that a guest enjoys a fulfilling dining experience. The glue holding all these elements together is the menu, which helps to narrate the story of the restaurant and be the document that reflects the brand's vision," states **Chef Amitesh Viridi, Executive Sous Chef, JW Marriott Mumbai, Sahar.** When one talks of a menu being identified with a restaurant, it can be region or cuisine specific, which is what makes the restaurant stand out. Unfortunately, a lack of skilled labour and a penchant for biblical menus make it harder for the staff to give out their best.

The menu and its application to food go back almost a millennium when the Song Dynasty in China had restaurants listing the items being served. A Latin word, 'menu' indicates a resume of sorts that was and still is listed on blackboards with chalk to this day and age in several restaurants across the globe. Even though menu art as well as the way one looks at the menu has changed over the years, the old style of chalk on a board for specials still exists. All the chefs spoken to for this story say that a menu must always be identified

with the restaurant and chef, as one is paying for both the food experience and ambience. "At the most basic, a menu is indicative of the cuisines available, food preparations offered and their corresponding prices in a restaurant," says **Chef Rahul Kaushik, Executive Chef, The Westin Pune, Koregaon Park.**

As foodservice is a diverse industry, food retail outlets have much to offer. It is, therefore, important that customers know what's on offer and the choices available. Take, for example, the menu at Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel, which carefully describes, in detail, the cuisines and offerings at its restaurants. "We have theme dinners at Feast – our three meal restaurant – and our menu helps the guests to choose a dish of his/her choice. For instance, on every Wednesday, we serve oriental specialties including a variety of sushi and tempuras. On Fridays, we offer Mexican delicacies and, on Saturdays, we have Lebanese food on the floor," informs Executive Chef Nader Sheikh. "Apart from serving its main purpose of informing the guests about the cuisines and food preparations in a restaurant, creating a menu is the first step in stimulating the taste and preparing a guest to make an informed decision before placing an order. The menu provides information on food preparations with descriptions, flavors, spice levels and pricing," says **Chef Shashidhar Roka, Executive Chef, Eastin Residences, Vadodara.**

## Key components of a menu

A menu is the first thing a guest sees on entering a restaurant and it has the potential to give the diner a full culinary experience. But a badly written menu and a deficient staff can lead to a dining disaster. "The important thing to keep in mind is that the design of the menu should mimic the dining experience. The language, font and content should resonate with the target audience. Fancy words do not render a dish more saleable. The descriptions should be concise and clear. The courses should be mentioned in the same



**“ A menu is the face of a restaurant and the primary means of representation in any food service establishment. It informs the customer about the offerings and helps them to ascertain their selection ”**

**Chef Vishal Atreya**  
Executive Chef, JW  
Marriott Mumbai, Juhu



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