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VOLUME EIGHT • ISSUE THREE

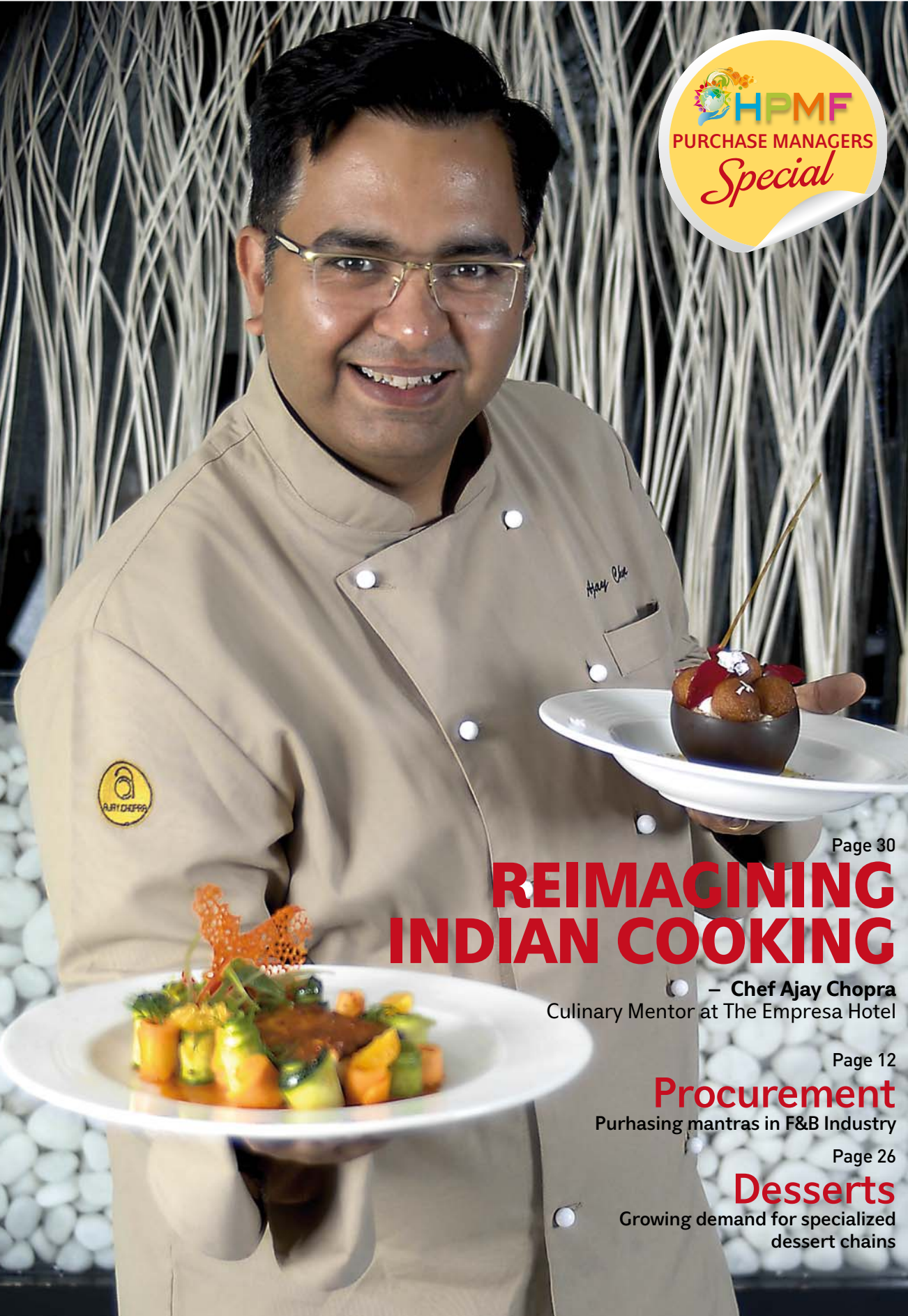
Trade Journal for the Hotel, Restaurant and Catering Industry

MAY-JUNE 2018 • ₹100 India Edition

Featured inside:



↑ Top to bottom:
Nitin Shankar Nagrale
Chef Michelle Karen
Shatbhi Basu
Rohit Malhotra
Chef Vaibhav Bhargava



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At the top multinational offices in the bustling metros of India, bottles of Coke, bags of Doritos, pre-wrapped granola bars, cans of Red Bull tumbling out of vending machines are slowly but gradually disappearing. Companies are going for their own in-house kitchen and a team of chefs to make healthy and wholesome food and beverage for the employees. Along with the daily changing meals in the kitchen, the offices now exclusively offer house-made beverages and snacks—including sodas, cold brew coffee on tap, snack bars made with puffed quinoa—to keep their employees productive and healthy, and minimize waste and environmental impact.

If you work full time, at least one in four meals is likely consumed at the office or during work hours. For example, if you're a young engineer in Bangalore or Gurgaon, you might even eat all your meals at work! Unfortunately, foods eaten away from home tend to be less healthy than foods prepared at home. And each year we are cooking less and eating more premade convenience meals. This, in part, is contributing to the unsustainable obesity epidemic.

In-house corporate kitchens fulfil a fruitful opportunity to promote health, while also earning a vibrant return on investment. The trend started with tech and Internet companies like Google and Facebook, but has now really caught on. Companies are making a shift from third-party catering services to ambitious, creative in-house food programs that serve up their core values in bite-sized pieces. While most restaurants' efforts are directed towards mindful farm-to-table practices, these companies can be said to touch off the farm-to-cafeteria practice. It is expected that many more companies will take up such programs for providing high-quality, portion-controlled food to employees by investing in sustainability-minded corporate kitchens of their own.



Amitabh Taneja

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Unique Concepts & Equipment

Focused on offering commercial refrigeration food-service solution for hotels, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, ice cream & beverage, food retail and the healthcare segments, Elanpro brings innovative, state-of art products for the hospitality and retail industry. In a tête-à-tête with FoodService India, Sanjay Jain, Director, Elanpro, talks about new products, the brand's USP and the company's vision.

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Organised sector of hospitality industry in India, at this point, is quite vulnerable, says Kabir Suri of Azure Hospitality.



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Hospitality Stars of North India felicitated on third International Hospitality Day

On the occasion of the 3rd International Hospitality Day on 24th April, 28 most promising employees of some of the top hospitality brands of North India were felicitated with the 'Best Hospitality Personality 2018 Award'. The glittering awards ceremony was organized by the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM), in association with the London-headquartered International

A major highlight of the event was the announcement of Ritesh Agarwal, Founder and CEO of OYO Rooms, as the recipient of the Best Entrepreneur of the Year Award 2018, a prestigious award that is given every year to one of the most distinguished hospitality business leaders. Ritesh Agarwal today has a network of over 2,200 hotels in 154 cities of India and is widely recognized as the man who is



Hospitality Council (IHC), at The Roseate House in Delhi, the hospitality partner for the event. Dr Suborno Bose, Chief Mentor of IIHM, in association with the International Hospitality Council (IHC), instituted the International Hospitality Day on this day two years ago as a unique initiative for recognizing, celebrating, promoting and educating the best of hospitality. Today, International Hospitality Day is celebrated by over 50 countries and participated over by the world's premier hospitality institutions. In India, this day is celebrated by IIHM at its seven campuses in Delhi, Kolkata, Pune, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Bengaluru, in partnership with the hospitality stalwarts of the respective city.

Leading hospitality brands like The Leela Palace New Delhi, ITC Hotels, Roseate Hotels and Resorts, The Lalit Group, Accor Group of Hotels, IHG Hotels, The Park New Delhi, Radisson Hotels and many more top chains, identified one hardworking and dedicated staff who has contributed outstandingly to the hotel and to the industry in keeping with the principle of 'Service with a Smile'.

changing the hotel business paradigm of India. Moreover, a panel discussion on the topic 'Gen X and Gen Y... Are we ready for the business and the future of Hospitality' was also held as part of the event. Abdullah Ahmed (Director, IIHM Delhi) was the Moderator for the panel discussion. The panelists included Zubin Songadwala (GM, ITC Maurya), Maulina Gupta (GM-Hyatt Place, Gurugram) and Vikas Kapoor (VP-Operations, Radisson Hotels Shimla and Khajuraho). These industry veterans highlighted the need for the hospitality brands to keep pace with the constant change in technology and preferences of the youth in order to stay relevant in future.

IIHM also flagged off a Hospitality Goodwill tour from Pune to London whereby three cars will carry the message of Hospitality by road. This convoy will move from India to the United Kingdom, crossing 13 countries enroute in around two months. The countries that these cars will cover during the journey include Nepal, China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Turkey, Greece, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, France and UK.

Olives From Spain reaches out to a broader audience

Since launching its first campaign in India in 2014, Olives from Spain has been undertaking different activities to catch a larger base of potential consumers for highlighting the nutritional, sensorial and emotional aspects of consuming the Spanish cured fruit. India is one of the key markets for Spanish olives producers



and offers a substantial capacity to grow. To celebrate its 4th year of activities in India, the promotional campaign by Olives from Spain started the current edition by hosting a kitty party to interact with a group of ladies, food bloggers and journalists so as to show them how olives can play an important role in their cooking and snacking. While continuing with its print media campaign, Olives from Spain has also reconceptualized the way of approaching Indian consumers with messages for young and adult audiences. In the last two editions of the campaign, Olives from Spain has chosen the food festival format to interact directly with consumers and make them taste and enjoy marinated Spanish olives or offer them the chance to attend Masterclasses with the Chef Brand Ambassador Saransh Goila to learn about Indian inspired recipes that can have a different twist when incorporating Spanish olives.

One of the innovations introduced this year in the campaign has been a promotional spot that has been particularly active on social media such as YouTube and Indian cinemas in main Indian metros. The spot highlights the emotional aspect of consuming a product like olives from Spain, the world leader in table olive production. It exports olives to more than 120 countries, representing 40% of the global market. The main markets for Spanish olives are the USA, Italy, Germany and France.

Anurag Katriar to helm NRAI's Mumbai Chapter

Anurag Katriar, Executive Director & CEO, deGustibus Hospitality, took over as Chapter Head for Mumbai region of National Restaurant Association (NRAI) of India today. His appointment was made following the election of Amit Jatia, Vice Chairman – Westlife Development Ltd. as Honorary Secretary of the NRAI. Welcoming Katriar, Rahul Singh, President, NRAI said, "I am proud to announce appointment of Anurag Katriar as the Head for NRAI's Mumbai Chapter. Anurag has shown immense commitment for the work NRAI is undertaking in Maharashtra. I am sure, with excellent business acumen and result focused approach, Anurag will bring unprecedented success to the Chapter by leading and resolving pressing issues of the restaurant sector."

Commenting on his new role as Head of NRAI's Mumbai Chapter, Anurag Katriar said, "I am extremely honored to take on the responsibilities that come with my existing role at NRAI. The hospitality industry has gone through a very challenging year in 2017 but I see this year being a much better one. Our primary agenda is to actively engage with government authorities to ensure smoother regulations for the industry going forward. Supporting newer restaurateurs of the city with the right guidance is something that's also high on my agenda for NRAI's Mumbai Chapter this year."

Anurag has been part of the industry for over a quarter of a century. He has been with deGustibus Hospitality since 2004 and as the Executive Director & CEO of the Company, he has been spearheading the growth of the Company with successful brands such as Indigo, Indigo Deli, Neel, D:OHI, Tote on theTurf and Moveable Feast. Katriar also recently led the foray of deGustibus Hospitality into the QSR segment with exciting brands such as Indigo Burger Project and Dakshin Rasoi, apart from curating an exciting & upmarket food court called "Eleven Kitchens" at Nariman Point in Mumbai. He was earlier a part of the Management Board of Mars Restaurants Pvt. Ltd., where he played a key role curating and expanding their brand portfolio with Dosa Diner and Roti.

Anurag Katriar was recently appointed as Managing Committee Member at NRAI's 35th AGM held in September 2017 and now officially takes office as the new Head of NRAI Mumbai Chapter. Jatia spearheaded the NRAI Mumbai Chapter since 2007. He will continue serving on the managing committee as an office bearer.



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Role of Uniform in the QSR Industry

Restaurant's today are the throbbing pulse of 21st century Indian social life. Today's busy lifestyle and the availability of an assorted range of food at local restaurants tantalize us to indulge in new culinary experiments every other time. This has led the QSR (Quick Service Restaurant) industry scale rapid growth, which will only accelerate further in the coming years.

by Anupam Chakrabarty

Importance of Uniforms in the QSR Industry

The major events of life; whether personal or professional, are celebrated in restaurants. Therefore, first impressions make a big difference, when it comes to appearances. In a restaurant, whether small or large, it is essential to have a standard uniform as it plays a vital role in many ways when it comes to the safety of workers in the kitchen, as well as the health of the consumers to whom the food is served. Any negligence or irresponsible behavior while preparing food may affect the health of consumers e.g., food poisoning or stomach infection and could even result in a serious ailment. We all know that in today's social media driven world, one bad experience for a customer is enough to spread bad word of mouth for your restaurant. Unhappy customers do not hesitate to pick up their phones & post the pictures of contaminants in their food, thus leading to a major downfall of an establishment in the market.

Restaurants all over India, are now adopting best health & safety practices as they are tying up with global manufacturers. The concept of having uniforms is one of the modern developments, and all PAN India QSR companies today, are not only ensuring the utmost safety & protection of their employees through good quality workwear, but also the protection of their food products against contamination through proper maintenance. The growing awareness amongst companies about the benefits of well-planned & organized workwear is driving the growth of workwear acceptance across all the industry verticals.

IMPACT OF WORKWEAR UNIFORMS ON CUSTOMERS

Talking about the customers, staff wearing smart, neat & clean uniform helps in developing a brand image and wins customers' trust. Wearing recognizable uniform makes the staff look very professional. Plus, it serves as a strong brand recall factor. We recognize a delivery boy through his uniform and the first thing that we notice is the brand name on the uniform. This also helps in increasing the sales to a great extent, because people remember your brand name while ordering food online and offline.

The QSR industry has dominated the Indian market and is worth over Rs. 10,000 crore (approximately) in value and is expected to see a compounded annual growth rate of 22% in the next four years. The massive acceptance for this industry has triggered the growth of an increasing number of restaurants across the nation. With the ever-growing number of restaurants, the safety standards of this industry are also gaining huge importance. The most critical responsibility of a restaurant is to set the benchmark of maintaining the highest standards of hygiene and safety during the food preparation and serving. By following this, a restaurant can ensure the health & safety of their customers.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has recently enforced 12 golden hygiene rules for restaurants where the 7th rule focuses on the staff wearing clean uniforms during preparing & serving food to the customers.

The fitting of a uniform is also a factor to be considered. An ill-fitting garment can lead to serious accidents especially when one is working around the stove in high degree temperatures. A uniform workwear promotes a sense of belonging and boosts the team spirit enabling all the workers work in harmony. Furthermore, it makes the staff feel valued & respected.

Considerations for designing workwear for a company

Uniforms for every industry differ from one another. Uniforms are customized keeping in mind the level of hygiene and safety factors required for a particular industry and the company’s requirements to provide them the best quality product in their structured budget, while still adhering to hygiene and safety guidelines.

We, at Lindstrom, take on the entire responsibility of putting together a workwear collection for our clients based on their needs, with the regular service and maintenance of the garments to ensure safety and hygiene at all times. Whilst, it is quite easy to create a fancy product, we also need to think about the long-term availability of the product so that the brand can retain its image over a long period of time and we also focus on quality and look and feel during the entire life-cycle of the garment. A holistic 360 Degree workwear service takes care of multiple processes to ensure safe, clean and hygienic workwear at each phase – through its effective procurement, sizing, washing and servicing, repair



and maintenance, stocking for future or urgent requirements, distribution, locker service, as well as suitably taking care of the environment through proper disposal of effluents and longer life of the garments.

Opportunities and challenges

By teaming up with workwear services, companies can focus on their core competencies & bottom-line goals without worrying about the arrangement of uniforms for their staff. However, the penetration level of workwear service industry in the Indian market is still very low and there is a need to raise an awareness about the importance of workwear from stakeholders to the workers/ staff. One of the biggest challenges faced by this industry is that many of the brands are not aware about the importance of the right workwear for their staff and also the workers are not aware of the adverse effects of wearing the same clothes at work as well as at home. •



About the author: Anupam Chakrabarty is Senior Vice President, Sales and Markets, and Managing Director, Lindström India, the only organized rental workwear service company in India that plays a pivotal role in generating awareness about the importance of workwear.



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Mantras for successful F&B Procurement Professionals

Procurement managers in the Food & Beverage industry have onerous responsibilities to fulfil at the best of times. The difficulty in maintaining a stable supply, aligning procurement strategy across multiple geographical locations, reducing costs and achieving savings are some of the major challenges they have to face. However, the biggest challenge is searching for the right material at the right price point. The sheer size of information that they have to sift through to reach the right company, brand and products is quite complex. They need to dedicate endless hours to studying the sales records, evaluating inventory levels, projecting demand, researching foreign and domestic suppliers, staying abreast of financial and political changes that could affect the supply of, and demand for, materials. Since managers have little control over the unpredictable trends, the best they can do is use the available data and plan their inventory supply accordingly.

Considering the daunting and complex nature of the functions that they have to perform, FoodService India spoke to a cross-section of procurement professionals in the Hotel and Restaurant industry to glean valuable insights on the key facets of their multifarious roles and functions, the top trends and challenges in their way as well as about the professional hoops they need to master to power their career growth.

Processes for ensuring cost-efficient record keeping of all F&B consumables and their transfers

C. Rajendiran
Materials Manager, Novotel & IBIS Chennai OMR

An efficient record keeping of F&B consumables involves inventory, purchasing, receiving, storing and issuing. Let me elaborate on each of these Heads for better clarity on how they play an important role in maintaining efficiency of F&B operations and in keeping a check on the costs.

Inventory: (Source document – Inventory Report)
It is the amount of goods available for sale. Most operational hotels have inventories such as alcoholic, non-alcoholic, cutlery & crockery, food items, cleaning material and office supplies.

The two basic systems used to manage inventory are physical and perpetual inventory. Physical inventory refers to the physical count of stored products on a periodic basis. Perpetual inventory refers to monitoring the running balance of stored products on a random basis.

These systems play a vital role in minimizing the investment, cash flow, storage, handling, theft, pilferage and spoilage cost. Accurate inventory records allow the management to know how much money is being invested in non-productive inventory. They also help in reducing stock-out situations, which can be caused by inaccurate record keeping. Besides, they provide the necessary information for the financial accounting system.

Purchasing: (Source document – Purchase Order)
It determines what to buy, how much to buy and when to buy. It facilitates decision making based on the minimum order for quantity and in the anticipated increase or decrease of price, promotions and lead time.

It has an impact on the details of products ordered and the frequency of order and pricing.

Receiving: (Source document – Daily Receiving Report)
It ensures that the products delivered are in line with the quantity, quality and price as indicated in the purchase order.

The impact is that it helps to maintain the product cost through stringent checks on quantity, quality and brand. It ensures no short count and short weight, receipt of poor quality product than those ordered and helps to know the lead time for delivery.

Storing: (Source document – Goods Received Note, Purchase Requisition, Non-moving/ Slow Moving, Spoilage Report and Inventory Variation Report)

It helps to keep products secure from spoilage, theft, breakage, pilferage and in retaining product quality.

The impact is that it allows uninterrupted flow of goods to operations and also in avoiding stock-out situations. Besides, it minimizes cash purchases and checks any excess spend on last minute requirements and ensures that no dual payment is made for the same invoice.

Issuing: (Source document – Purchase Requisition)

It refers to written record, which helps to know the flow of goods and the person to whom the goods is handed over.

The impact is that it helps to know the type of product and the quantity removed from the inventory and to calculate the cost of sale.

All these above-mentioned documents help to focus on controlling the total cost through competitive analysis. They also help to maintain the actual cost in line with the pre-determined cost. In addition, the techniques used in cost control are standard costing, budgetary control, inventory



control, ratio analysis and variance analysis. They help in analyzing the causes for variances that have a control on wastage of material, in detecting any embezzlement and in tracking many other factors.

By applying these methods and techniques to one's F&B operations, one can derive the benefits of cost control – lower expenses, increase in returns on capital, improvement in credit worthiness, reputation enhancement of the company, gains in operational efficiency and the elimination of unnecessary costs.



Importance of conducting market survey

P. Boominathan

Commercial Manager with Fortune Select Grand, Chennai

The prices of commodities are ever changing and we need to keep ourselves abreast with the latest trends or be in a position to understand the causes of such fluctuations. Since we are not functioning in isolation, these changes will have a definite bearing on our financial outflow.

Market survey refers to our efforts or activities undertaken to find out the prevailing market conditions. It might also throw light on the future trends or be able to predict the probable changes in the market situation. The prices of commodities are ever changing and we need to keep ourselves abreast with the latest trends or be in a position to understand the causes of such fluctuations. Since we are

not functioning in isolation, these changes will have a definite bearing on our financial outflow.

Of late, we have been noticing that the prices of vegetables, pulses, grains, poultry, etc., have been highly volatile and the annually contracted vendors are finding it difficult to keep up with their commitments, resulting in the supply of inferior quality products, delay in daily deliveries of supplies, non-supplies or supplies in late hours, not supplying the ordered quantities or supplying part quantities etc. These are some of the essential items without which it would be impossible to manage the regular operations.

It is advisable for the materials management team to visit the markets on regular intervals to collect and analyze the prevailing rates. They should visit the wholesale markets during the business or trading hours of the market. We all know the vegetable markets operate during the early morning hours of the day, the pulses or grains market operate during the normal office hours. For fish market, we have to reach the fishing port at the time when the fishermen normally return to the shore from sea.

We should check the local vernacular dailies on a daily basis as they publish the poultry rates, vegetable and the pulses rates on a day-to-day basis as per the wholesale markets. Newspapers print articles on the current market situation. We should cut such writings and file them as they provide vital information. The internet provides up to date information, which should also be tapped. The wholesale price

index (WPI) and the Inflation Reports published by the Reserve Bank also throws light on the prevailing conditions.

Benefits of conducting Market Survey:

- Provides information on the latest trends.
- Provides clues to future changes. Though the market may be stable in the present situation but we can gauge any future changes with either upward or downward trends.
- Alternative or new vendors can be developed. When we interact with them during our routine visits to the marketplace, we can exchange our contacts and invite them to our premises for further discussions.
- Alternative brands may be tapped. We may be stuck with one available brand, but during such visits we may come across other alternative brands, which may come at a lower price also.
- The inputs would help us in putting forward our recommendations to the management on certain pressing issues. In cases, when the incumbent supplier requests for a price escalation, we can put forward our scientific and systematic recommendations to the management based on these inputs and datum gathered over a period of time.
- While conducting the survey, the concerned departmental representative or the HOD should also be taken along, so that firsthand experience is imparted to them.
- We should keep our regular vendors on their toes, so that they feel they cannot provide improper information.
- Pricing of our products as per future trends. If we come to know that the prices are going to fall, we can pass on the reduction to our customers and win over the competitors.
- Seasonal availability or non-availability of raw materials can be assessed. Hence, menu planning can be done accordingly.
- It would help at the time of annual contract negotiation if we can arrive at the average cost of the product prevailing throughout the financial year.

Preparation for conducting Market Survey:

- It should be done during the working hours of the respective markets. Vegetable and fruit markets operate in the early hours of the morning. If you visit the market in the afternoon, the information gathered would of no use.
- Putting pen to paper: Whatever information is gathered should be noted down at that instant as too much information tends to clutter our memory. We should prepare a questionnaire before embarking on such a mission.
- Should always conduct a market survey with a team. Never do it singularly.
- Market survey should be done at frequent intervals, not only in times of crisis.
- It should be a systematic gathering of required information and not a haphazard or random collection. It should then be tabulated, analyzed, inference be drawn and then forwarded to all the concerned stakeholders.

Thus, market surveys provide vital information that would help us in arriving at important decisions. It should be done on a scientific manner and recorded and saved for posterity.



Ensuring the authenticity of ingredients at a competitive price

Ashok Bhat

Head Materials, Radisson Blu MBD Hotel, Noida

With international cuisines finding widespread acceptance and growing in popularity, how do procurement professionals keep track of and ensure the authenticity of the ingredients at a competitive price?

The procurement function of a hotel is quite multifaceted considering the unique nature of the business. Efficient procurement is integral to achieving the short and long term goals of the organization. A sound procurement professional procures ingredients from reputed suppliers only and keeps due diligence on the overall procurement process to ensure the authenticity and the quality. Secondly, they are well-versed about the changes happening in the industry and adopt themselves to the evolving business dynamics.

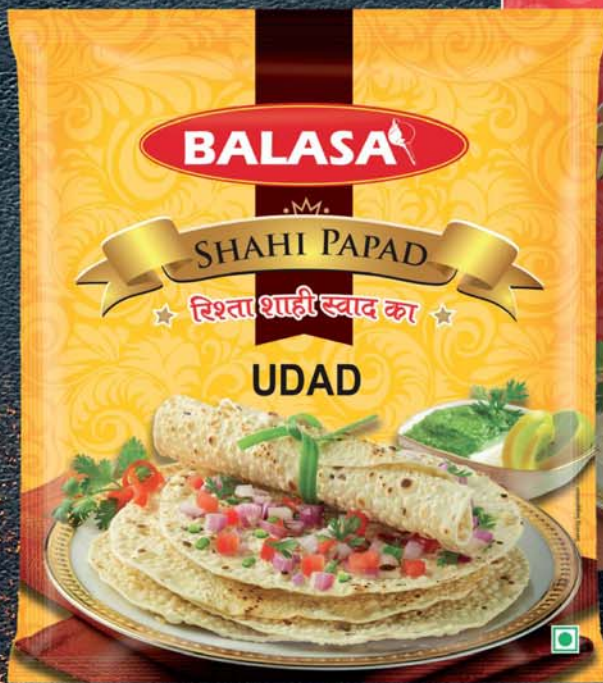
How has the procurement strategies evolved? Has technology played any role in the changing face of procurement industry?

The hospitality industry is leveraging technology in a big way to improve the efficiency of the procurement process. Some of the technologies being used in the hotels nowadays are spend analytics, e-sourcing, supplier and contract management, e-workflow, spot buying, saving tracking and budget management, to name a few. Procurement, which was hitherto transactional in nature, has taken a more strategic role to provide value to the organization and increase the efficiency. Also, stock taking and order placing have evolved to become more proactive and efficient in nature.



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How do you ensure efficient record keeping of all F&B consumables and their transfers? What impact does this process have on ensuring that the cost controls are in place?

There are some material management software that enables us to capture, store and organize vast amounts of data at the click of a mouse. It also helps us in maintaining the desired stock, which later helps us to maintain cost under check by facilitating procurement of the right amount of goods at the right time and in accordance with the actual requirement.

What are the latest procurement strategies deployed in searching for the right ingredient at the right price point



Knowing the procurements hoops in F&B trade

Sunil Kuttan

Deputy General Manager – Supply Chain, Gourmet Investments Pvt. Ltd (PizzaExpress India, The Project, Typhoon Shelter)

How do procurement professionals keep track of and ensure the authenticity of food ingredients at a competitive price?

Sunil Kuttan: As procurement professionals, one of their prime objectives is to keep themselves updated on the current supply chain trends to enable them to support/ add value to their business. Developing a strong product knowledge on what to buy is key to sourcing the right product. Visiting food exhibitions, trade shows, including international food exhibitions, factories, product source, and conducting market surveys and meeting new suppliers helps procurement professionals to keep themselves updated on the latest innovations in food supplies and the category as a whole. While on the one hand, there has been stringent laws implemented by FSSAI on food imports and food handling recently, the regulator has also allowed and urged importers/ suppliers to be more vigilant and precise in complying with food standards that eventually enable suppliers to supply the right product and quality.

The reason I have emphasized the above points is that with such simple steps and with the ongoing improvements in procurement, sourcing and maintaining consistency becomes simple. As of today, there are many professional importers in the country and almost all major cuisines' ingredients have to be imported to make them available to various hotels and restaurants. When it comes to some ingredients that are specifically required for a cuisine but one that has never been made available by any importer in the past, then a thorough study of the product has to be conducted before importing it and one also needs to look into issues of compliance, etc.

Although competitive pricing and consistency can be achieved by conventional ways – sharing the forecast with suppliers, through bulk buying confirmation, conducting annual tenders/ contracts, by efficient negotiations – we must also focus on developing the substitutes for imported ingredients with local produce. Many vendors have ventured

and how do you address the challenges of reducing costs, achieving savings and dealing with multiple contract suppliers to ensure timely supply of the required quantities?

E-procurement is a new age strategy that helps in maintaining the cost, ensure timely supply of the ingredients and in reducing wastage. It also streamlines the contract-based procurement and improves supplier management and compliance. Going digital in procurement can deliver huge benefits for the industry as it can lead to more transparency in the deals compared to the conventional methods and creates a level playing ground for all sorts of vendors irrespective of their brand visibility, size, stature, etc.

and upgraded themselves to manufacturing products that match the quality of imported ingredients, and there are quite a few of them in the country. We, as procurement professionals, should identify such partners and engage with them – this is also one of the methods applied in our strategy for optimizing cost, maintaining/ controlling quality and achieving consistency on products.

How have procurement strategies evolved over the years? Has technology played any role in changing the face of the procurement industry?

Indeed, technology has played a key role in enhancing the entire supply chain strategy. The response time has been drastically reduced with the introduction and usage of instant messaging applications, enhancing overall productivity. Technology is playing a critical role in online GPS tracking of vehicles, temperature tracking, and in establishing best practices on cold chain and quality control fronts. The practice of E-procurement and E-tendering by organizations allows them to maximize time efficiency and the precision level in the overall procurement processes. HPMF (Hospitality



Purchasing Managers Forum) is also playing a key role in improving the procurement industry's standards and benchmarks. It has created a platform for purchasing managers from various businesses and sectors to come together and share their experiences and challenges faced in their organizations. The Forum facilitates sharing of the latest trends and information on products, suppliers and the entire supply chain, thereby helping to come up with rapid procurement solutions. The Forum's initiatives are supporting the procurement functions in a big way!

How do you ensure efficient record keeping of all F&B consumables and their transfers? What impact does this process have on ensuring that the cost controls are in place.

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Understanding the competitors and alternative labels

Sameer C. Pednekar

Purchase Manager, Copper Chimney Restaurants, India

How do procurement professionals keep track of and ensure the authenticity of the ingredients?

Sameer Pednekar: As the passion of the food makers and cuisine creators grow every year and as foodies travel across the globe to explore the local tastes of the region, chefs try to give their best shot to their creations. It is important for restaurants and hotels that their culinary and procurement team works closely to ensure that their guests leave with foodie memories and come back for more.

Ideally, chefs need to plan their menus, food promotions and festivals well, to ensure availability of the products that round the year. They need to plan for something exotic or seasonal, which they can play around with to create their dishes. Once the year-long calendar has been prepared by the chef, any new ingredients need to be carefully selected basis their availability and commercial viability. Other considerations that have to be factored in includes the lead time and the mode through which the product shall be transported across. In this context, it is important to understand if the product can be imported as per local laws and regulations. Once confirmed, the same may be ordered in minimal volumes for the trials so as to understand the

and proper accounting of all procurement is the basic requirement for any business and the primary responsibility of procurement professionals. Establishing concrete Materials Management SOPs and aligning them with Information Technology (software), ensuring precise item masters, recipe linking, MIS reporting, having maker-checker policies and authorization levels in place are the established procurement standards for avoiding possible pilferage and wastage, thus controlling costs in a major way.

What are the latest procurement strategies deployed in searching for the right ingredient at the right price point and how do you address the challenges of reducing costs, achieving savings and dealing with multiple contract supplier to ensure timely supply of the required quantities?

Generally, an exercise called Annual Tendering is conducted once in a year, which allows us to achieve all of the above requirements. The prime objective of conducting annual tenders is to perform an overall evaluation of ingredients, price and suppliers. During this process, the first thing is to generate the master list of ingredients with quality/ specs required for the business along with the existing purchase price. A master sheet of existing and future potential new vendors is first prepared. A performance study of the previous year's suppliers is also done, listing down key performance metrics with regard to the criteria of quality and service rendered and based on which the tenders are released. Post

quality, preferred specs, and shelf life of the product/s. Once the product is tested and approved by the chef and his team, the procurement department can try to procure the product from the source or its origin as much as possible by importing the product directly and taking into consideration the volumes that may be required. Local body certifications on the labels can be checked for along with the production capacities and the shipment frequency to guarantee that the product is available as per the requirement. It is also important to understand the clients or the organization/s that the produce is for in order to gauge the size of the business volumes and the credit terms that the manufacturers and growers can offer to get the maximum commercial benefit. Chefs and Procurement Heads can actually visit the local source or the market to understand the competitors or alternative labels as well as the produce available to get the best competitive



deal closed. All the relevant handlers such as the Receivers and Store teams need to be categorically briefed regarding the specific storage conditions to ensure the product is served as fresh as possible when it actually lands on to the guest's table. The tenderness, texture and the ultimate presentation adds life to the dish and to the overall gourmet experience.

the tender receipts, a meeting with each vendor along with the chef and other relevant stakeholders is scheduled in which the issues of quality, delivery and timely supply commitments, pricing and substitution are discussed and evaluated.

At the end of the tendering process, we are able to decide on sourcing the right product at the right price with the right supplier. It also gives us an understanding of the overall market condition for that period. Cost negotiations are a part of the exercise. Though cost reductions are always targeted, however, increase or decrease in costs could depend on various others factors such as price variations with regard to fuel, duties, purchase volume, climatic conditions, inflation, etc. A holistic approach towards achieving 'quality' in everything that we do should be the key driver for every supply chain professional to accomplish efficient procurement!





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**Selvam Krishnan**

Purchase Manager, Shangri-La Hotel, Bangalore

Regional level consolidation is the best purchase strategy to achieve price advantage.

**Manish Kumar Jha**

Procurement Manager (Functional Head), Pullman & Novotel, New Delhi Aerocity (Accor Hotels India)

Pricing is based on the costing of the product at its origin and the other overheads

How do procurement professionals ensure that the quality, consistency, price of ingredients is the best-in-class?

Selvam Krishnan: Japanese cuisine would be a fine example of an international cuisine gaining popularity in India. We work closely with expat chefs who help us understand their requirement and through local market visits, we together explore local ingredients that they can work well with. Authenticity of products and ingredients can also be ensured by looking at the country of manufacturing. Japanese ingredients are widely manufactured in China, Thailand, etc. but when it comes to authentic taste and flavors, weightage is always given to products that are manufactured in Japan. We further maintain consistency by using the same brand and also educate the staff that handles the product at all the levels, i.e., from receiving, storing and to preparation.

ManishJha: It is of course challenging to identify the authenticity of the product and also to benchmark the pricing proposed by the importers. Purchase Managers have thus started communicating with the overseas representatives of the required products. In many cases, they have started direct import through the representatives of the original suppliers. Pricing is benchmarked based on the costing of the product at its origin and the other overheads that have to be taken into account in order to bring the product to India, along with the profit margins of the representative.

How have procurement strategies evolved and what impact is technology having on the procurement process?

Selvam Krishnan: Regional level consolidation is the best purchase strategy to achieve price advantage. This helps consolidate similar products that are used in that region. For example, India, Indian Ocean and Sri Lanka is viewed as a single region, which broadly uses similar types of ingredients and raw material for food production. The strategy for this region would be to work with a single vendor who can supply common products to all hotels based in these countries. This further strengthens consistency in quality and price effectiveness. Technology has enhanced procurement by enabling the professionals to cross verify the pricing through the internet and mobile applications like HOPCOM.

Manish Jha: Today, procurement is more of a strategic facilitator than one working on a reactive model as it was earlier. The procurement team not only caters to the routine requirements but also contributes in enhancing the guest experiences by adding new products/ services in the hotel's basket of offerings. In this endeavor, technology has helped to upgrade the procurement function from a clerical to a strategic level. ERPs, CRMs and allied software have added more analytical aspects into the procurement process and help to manage the categories and also offer more tactical cost saving options. In recent times, E-sourcing has assumed a high importance as a number of e-commerce organizations in various sectors has come up with one-stop solutions, which bring down the time frame for the sourcing and saves the hassle of sourcing a range of products from different brands.

What cost-control processes are relied upon by procurement professionals in F&B industry?

Selvam Krishnan: These days, every ERP-based Materials Management software supports each department to buy the products as and when required. We have recently converted the centralized procurement and distribution of Cleaning Chemicals and Consumables for F&B to decentralized indenting and periodic procurement, depending upon the requirement. This system removes the hassles of distributing the cost and related documentation to divide the expenses between various outlets.



Manish Jha: Irrespective of the departments, record keeping of all products being procured for the hotel is done through ERPs / CRMs with cost centers pre-defined (cost posted to individual departments P&L). Periodically, we keep on reviewing the cost as well as carrying out an analysis on the available alternatives. Periodic checks on the spends act as a cost-control measure. This also helps to develop better strategies and in introducing alternative products, which can offer real value for the money for both the hotel and the guest.

How do you procure the right ingredient at the right price point, achieve savings and deal with multiple suppliers?

Selvam Krishnan: Some of the latest procurement strategies that we use to achieve the above-mentioned outcomes are: Farm to Table; Back-of-the-House Garden Production; Sourcing from Original Producers; Green Procurement; Vendor Relationship Management and Recognition Program. All of these strategies help in reducing the cost, getting supplies in time and also in the required quantities.

Manish Jha: We focus on keeping only the required level of inventory, thus ensuring that the supplier has a supply chain mechanism in place in accordance with our requirement and consumption pattern. We keep alternate sources ready for a range of products. This has helped us reduce the chances of non-availability of the required products as alternate sources are available.

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Procurement: Trends and Challenges



Sanjay Goyal

President at Pro Partners.In



Rajesh Pillai

Materials Manager,
Grand Hyatt Goa



Nitin Shankar Nagrale

Founder & General Secretary
HPMF



Meena Jain

Director (Purchase),
Pride Group of Hotels

Trends

Sanjay Goyal:

Research on cost transparency is emerging as a field of growing interest and is found to be associated with better



profitability. This has important implications for those managing strategically important relationships and the implementation of an ideal pricing policy. Similarly, vendor managed inventory is a new model of inventory management in the hotel industry. Today's Purchase Manager needs to be well-versed with a range of supply management software, including database management, financial analysis, inventory, management, point of sale, procurement and project management programs, as well as common office software. Procurement leaders will need to have a two dimensional approach in the future. Not only will they need to be analyzers who know what's happening in the places where they work, but they will also need to be able to delve around and bring issues to the fore in a business.

Trends

Rajesh Pillai:

E-procurement systems is one of the top trends that allow suppliers and procurement professionals to be in contact and share and manage information such as purchase orders, catalogues and contracts online. This streamlines the entire global procurement process, and use records to quickly and easily hold suppliers accountable, gain accurate supplier information, and better plan global transactions. With this trend comes the rise of the Cloud. Procurement has had a great opportunity to leverage Cloud software in a number of ways, including as part of supplier collaboration.



The Cloud allows ordering to be streamlined, increase visibility across the supply chain and allows for changes to be made more easily, even when goods are in transit.

Challenges

Nitin Shankar Nagrale:

Purchasing functions seems to focus majorly on market engagement: tendering, negotiating and contracting. However, a large amount of value can be made from both upstream and downstream purchase decisions.



Purchasing functions should lean towards spending more time on upfront planning, including strategy and spends and on category analysis. Furthermore, a greater focus should be placed on post contract award, including contract and supplier relationship management, to ensure that the expected benefits are realized.

The other challenges include lack of relationship management tactics, lack of training and development, procurement plan not aligned with business plan, missed opportunities from immature spend analysis, incomplete implementation of category management, failure to implement the foundations for contract management, and neglecting strategic purchasing activities.

Challenges

Meena Jain:

Controlling F&B inventory is the greatest challenge that every purchasing manager faces. The F&B purchase and revenue percentage should be maintained regularly by us. There is a need for always keeping a check on fluctuations on this percentage and whenever there is a huge fluctuation, the focus should be on wastage. The challenge is to control the consumables and their cost. Purchase managers face the challenge of analyzing price proposals, financial reports and other information to determine reasonable prices.



Evaluating suppliers is also one of the most critical functions for a purchasing manager.



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How **pastry** can find prominence as a popular dessert

by Chef Michelle Karen Peris

People across generations are fond of bakery products. The appetizing aroma of freshly baked goods entices people, and the sweet scent can enliven their salivary glands. Desserts have always been known to trigger a good mood and activate taste buds. Celebrating any special moment without a dessert seems incomplete, be it a cake, an exquisite fresh fruit tart, freshly baked cookies, or delectable chocolates.



Q&A with **Chef Alisha Faleiro**, Pastry Chef, Academy of Pastry Arts

What inspired you to become a professional pastry chef?

My love for food inspires me a lot. I love exploring new food and enjoy cooking too. That is what got me into the kitchen and into pastry making.

How is a pastry chef different from chefs specializing in other cuisines?

A pastry chef focuses on desserts and breads. It is a specialized skill and is just as creative if not more than cooking.

As a pastry chef, what do you enjoy most?

I love being in the kitchen making sweet delights the entire day. It is one thing that pushes me to wake up in the morning and go ahead.

Which are the best known pastry destinations in India?

Pastry is just beginning to grow in India and most metro cities have a huge array of pastry shops. I think Mumbai and Delhi for me are at the top at the moment.

Which are the important techniques that go into the preparation of pastry?

The list is endless. There is more than meets the eyes. It's not as simple as it seems. Whether it's making a croissant that requires well-laminated dough to making crumbly cookie, all requires technique.

What are the hot trends in the pastry market these days?

The trend is towards more healthy delights or low sugar options.

What are your favorite desserts and flavor combinations?

I love the flavor pairing of orange and chocolate. And a nutty flavor like hazelnut is also something I like personally.

What do you consider your achievements as a pastry chef?

I started out at the bottom of the hierarchy and have grown at each step. Representing the country at an International competition (Asia Pastry Cup) has been my latest achievement.

Prominence of pastry as a popular dessert

Baking involves plenty of passion, time and perseverance. One of the important aspects to make a dessert more tempting is the presentation. It is rightly said that pastry as a dish is sold visually. When something looks good, it automatically draws a crowd towards it.

However, the field of pastry making requires a good set of skills, which when combined with culinary ability and creativity in decorating, adds more flavor to it. It requires proper dedication and the right mix of ingredients to ensure the product is superior when compared to other desserts.

Pastry chefs are also responsible for creating new recipes, and adding it to the menu. The use of fresh ingredients, right temperature while working and proper hygiene are crucial factors that one must adhere to while working in this field. These factors make a huge change in the appearance, as well as in the taste.

Potential for generating more revenue for restaurants

Bringing exposure to the restaurants and competing with other restaurants is a tough challenge for business owners. Restaurant owners always need to keep innovating and discover unique ideas to run the business according to the changing taste of the customers. There are certain factors, which helps the restaurant to generate more revenues. Having a "specialty pastry" is one of the essential factors, which keeps the restaurant's reputation on the rise. Baking a special and unique pastry will help differentiate your restaurant from others.

Also, with the growing importance for health, it is important to ensure one offers healthy options

in pastry. Pastries with low calorie and sugar offer a nutritious aspect to it. Gluten-free pastries allow health conscious and celiac customers to indulge guilt-free. Quality is one of the major aspect for generating more revenue for any restaurant. Ensuring fresh quality desserts and baked goods to the customers creates a loyalty base. Always "bake on time" or bake fresh to order. Ingredients should always be fresh and should be of superior quality. Taste also plays a vital role in attracting a customer base. Quality and taste should never be compromised, instead it should be given more importance and priority. One should have varieties of signature pastry in the menu to attract customers. It is a great idea to change and bring new products on the menu in a timely manner. After the purchase, customers can provide feedback on the quality of the pastry. This helps to improvise on their current dishes and bring innovation into them. Providing samples of a new pastry before introducing any special item in a menu boosts the revenue of the restaurant. Social Media marketing helps in creating an awareness and boost the revenue numbers by reaching out to a larger target audience.

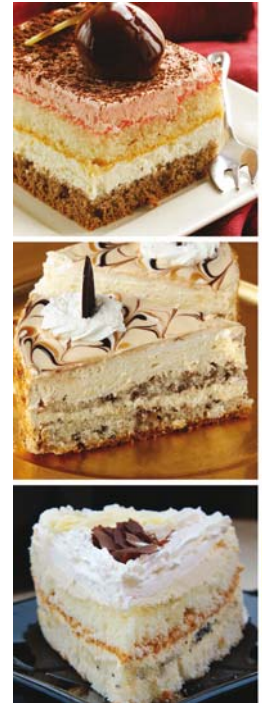
To promote it as a main dish

Desserts from a particular brand simply have to traverse the extra mile to lure customers by promoting their brand. Having a package offer

on pastry and savory products can definitely help promote it as a main dish. Restaurants can send e-mails and messages to customers informing them of new and lucrative offers. Customers can rack up loyalty cards or coupons, for each visit, which will later allow them to buy pastries, with some special benefit and offer. By rewarding customers with certain points for purchasing pastry each time, it helps in promotion too. Baking competitions can also be organized where couples or single men and women participate to convert their passion into reality.

Conclusion

Since dessert is the last course, it should always be luscious and special. Pastry can find prominence as a popular dessert by innovating with flavors and having a unique taste to it. Working on business and marketing strategies to promote the sale of pastry goods will help to position pastry as a main dish in restaurants. Adding a unique and special touch to the pastry can generate good revenue for restaurants. One must always remember to ensure the quality of the ingredients should be the priority. Pastries are delectable and loved by all. By ensuring that skills and strategies are in place, and with constant innovation and upgradation, it can be used to generate high revenue for a restaurant. •



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Indulging the sweet tooth of India

by Jayesh Mirchandani

Super specialised dessert chains have successfully carved a niche for themselves in the desserts market by keeping the quality of products and customer satisfaction as their top priorities.



India is an established market for ice-creams and desserts, especially concentrated in the urban cities, but at the same time the country is an emerging market as well. The trends from West slowly settle themselves into the psyche of the population after they have been altered enough to suit the Indian tastes. This has been seen again and again in the food industry, from the Masala Maggi to McAlloo Tikki burgers – traditionally foreign items which have found immense favour with our desi population. This exposure has created an appreciation for cuisines from different countries, with a rising demand for authentic flavours. In the dessert industry, this has been true for some time now. With the rise in awareness, people are opting for

freshly prepared desserts leading to a remarkable expansion of this niche market.

In fact, today there are many successful specialised dessert chains that are based on the realisation that people would prefer delectable freshly prepared desserts from a small scale bakery, instead of the ones bursting with preservatives from large outlets. Indians have a famous sweet tooth and it is this love for all things sugary which has supported the evolution of super specialized dessert chains all over the country, with predictably more concentration in big cities. Of course, the rise in the disposable income of citizens in these regions has also contributed to this phenomenon. Super specialised dessert chains often have one champion dish, which is



The story of a sweet success

While desserts in the market today rely heavily on artificial flavours and preservatives, Oh! Fudge has steered clear of this route, offering only vegetarian handmade yet professionally prepared fresh fudge and various other dishes, but with fudge at the heart of each of them. In a conversation with FoodService India, Prateek Vaid, Co-founder, Oh! Fudge, shares his views on the brand's success story and its vision for the future ahead.

Tell us something about your brand.

Oh! Fudge is a gourmet dessert chain, which offers fudge, a classic dessert, in different contemporary flavours to suit the tastes of a wide range of customers. While desserts in the market today rely heavily on artificial flavours and preservatives, Oh! Fudge has steered clear of this route, offering only vegetarian handmade yet professionally prepared fresh fudge and various other dishes, but with fudge at the heart of each of them.

What are your signature items?

Oh! Fudge has many signature food items with their own unique selling propositions. Our Classic Chocolate Walnut Fudge is a crowd favourite and never fails to delight the customers, having received rave reviews on all platforms. The best quality chocolate and walnuts are sourced from across the country to use in the recipe, which has been tested to perfection. A variant



L - R: Jayesh Mirchandani and Prateek Vaid

promoted above all else. Some of them claim to make the best fudge in the country, while others would swear by their cupcakes. The main products of these chains can be anything from pancakes to ice-creams. The market leader in this segment would be the company whose name comes to your mind as soon as their flagship product is mentioned. With their main merchandise, a slew of other supplementary items are also offered to complete the wholesome picture.

But is not just enough to offer an exquisite dish to generate loyal customers and keep them coming back for more. Health consciousness is gaining more and more mind-space with people actively looking to replace their unhealthy dietary additions with alternative healthier options. This



preference for cleaner eating, more so in the metro cities, means that dessert chains have had to adapt to this new trend and offer products that don't have added artificial flavours or preservatives. And for this, people are willing to shell out more money if they get the option to avail their favourite desserts and snacks from a place offering premium higher quality products in Quick Serve Retail. No wonder, traditional retail-based food items are getting fewer customers every day. When was the last time you bought cheap quality chocolates for your own consumption?

It is no secret that this era of super-specialisation has made customer the king (and queen). And as the ruler demands, so they shall get! This has created immense potential for growth in the standalone category, and if you are innovative and ambitious enough, you can create a standalone category by yourself! Today, customers are not wanting for choices, which is



of this dish is Chocolate Roasted Almond, with a generous load of chunky and crunchy almonds to complement the sweet and soft chocolate. For the hazelnut fans, Chocolate Hazelnut Fudge is the one which the company swears by. After more than 20 batches of trial and error, the perfect technique to roast hazelnuts was found, offering fudge with a flavour to match the heavens! Dark Chocolate Mint Fudge is one its kind offering, as mint and chocolate are not really considered complementary to each other in the immense dessert marketplace of India. Even if there is a demand, there are not many options to choose from, making it a unique arrow in the company's quiver! Chocolate Peanut and Caramel Fudge, with its rich salty caramel and finely ground peanuts, has been inspired from a childhood love of peanut butter cups. The last one is in high demand and yet is an acquired taste. Dark Chocolate Fudge does justice to the promise of providing best quality dark chocolate, which lingers at the back of the tongue even hours after the fudge has been eaten. One bite of any of these dishes is like a rush of pleasure, which only creates a craving for more.

How many number of stores are you currently operating?

Presently, there are six stores of Oh!Fudge in Mumbai, out of which two are company owned and four are franchises. Two more company-owned stores are slotted for launch in February, 2018. We started off just trying to create a product that people love. At the same time, we wanted to provide a healthier option to satisfy dessert cravings, as a counter to all the products full of artificial flavours and preservatives, which are flooding the market today. We want to be an all natural food company that specialises in desserts. Slowly, we'll expand to other verticals in the food space.



THE JOURNEY

Oh! Fudge is an accidental brain child of founders Jayesh Mirchandani and Prateek Vaid who officially launched it in December 2016. They are not food manufacturers by profession, which makes the story of Oh! Fudge's inception quite unique. Seeking a break from their corporate jobs, Jayesh and Prateek set out to develop their own website. Though within a year, due to allocation of most of the resources towards the website, their funds quickly got depleted. So they had to look for an alternative source for earning money.

Selling fudge was not their first idea of business. But if they were going to do it, then they were determined to be the best. They got the recipe of fudge from Prateek's mother who had been making delectable fudges for 25 years as gifts for family and friends. After sourcing the recipe, they started to work on how to take it to the next level of perfection. "In the end, the recipe we mastered was so good that it would have been a crime not to share it with the world," says Jayesh Mirchandani.



unsurprisingly, unprofessional behaviour is rampant. This creates a huge problem, especially when the business needs to be expanded. If one wants to shift to automation, then cost becomes a burden because good quality machinery is, more often than not, not available domestically. So either one has to sacrifice on the product consistency, which suffers to a certain extent, or empty the pockets, which is not always possible in the case of start-ups.

Super specialised dessert chains often have one champion dish, which is promoted above all else. The main product/s of these chains can be anything from pancakes to ice-creams.

another factor in the favour of the consumer. So if your product is not up to par, then the unhappy customer will go to someone who has what he/she demands. So, the only way to keep your head above water is to be the best in what you offer. This makes constant innovation and release of new upcoming products a critical requirement for growth of the business, especially when servicing only a single category.

Our world is a fast-paced one. Today, what is trending may not be the same tomorrow, literally. For now, charcoal flavoured desserts (like ice creams, waffle cones, etc.) have seen a huge uptake, creating more demand. If you have been on social media these past few months, you would have noticed a surge in attraction for rainbow-coloured products especially cakes. Salted caramel and Hazelnuts always work in the Indian market, as they are distinctive flavours that complement all desserts. There is also a rise in high quality coffee-based desserts. Yes, people now want coffee even in their baked foods. In all this, the one trend that has remained steadfast and is gaining more favour is a shift towards fresh desserts made of more natural ingredients.

Since this is a pretty much unregulated industry, there are a few key problems that need to be addressed. Compliances and licenses are yet to be completely digitized, which makes them expensive to procure and the processes tedious. While fresh products are in huge demand, unreliable supply of specialty products makes it hard to maintain availability due to unsteady logistics as many times sourcing of fresh top quality ingredient can be very expensive. There is surprisingly a lack of skilled labour and,



The customers living in the metro cities want the same quality of their desserts that they get when they go abroad and taste traditional flavours of breads, biscuits and cakes. Customers in the smaller cities want the same level of customer service and excellence in their products that their counterparts in big cities enjoy. And there is always the immensity of rural market to tap into, which requires imaginative methods.

Super specialised dessert chains have successfully carved a niche for themselves in the desserts market by keeping the quality of products and customer satisfaction as their top priorities. There are similar success stories, which have inspired many people to leave their traditional jobs and give the dream of owning their own bakery a chance. Right now, there is a mom/young executive/college student/etc. who is gazing at the oven, watching their first official order cook to perfection. And it is a sight to behold! •

The author Jayesh Mirchandani is the Co-founder at Oh! Fudge and is responsible for Design, Marketing, and Packaging at Oh! Fudge.



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Reimagining **Indian cooking** and taking it to greater heights



Technology plays an important role for a chef in evolving the cuisine to a finer version, in delivering consistent product, improving the shelf life and in reducing the cost to a great extent. It helps a chef to reimagine his processes, cut off lengthy prep methods and look at increasing the productivity. Chef Ajay Chopra, in a tête-à-tête with FoodService, shares his thoughts about the changing culinary paradigms in India.

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

The restaurant and food service industry is going through a major transformation. It is thus very important for all of us industry stakeholders to reinvent our approach towards how we engage with food and beverage. My baseline approach is and will always be that flavour is king. But with the introduction of newer food techniques and innovation in food, our style of cooking does take a shift. I believe in simple chef-crafted food with the emphasis on local ingredients and relevant food presentation.

What do you consider the most distinguishing features of your work as a chef?

I would say that it is my reimagination of local flavours, re-thinking and rekindling of regional flavours using modern techniques. I totally believe that Indian food, in its vastness and greatness, is

still so unexplored. I want to bring glamour to local flavours.

Which culinary styles have influenced your career?

French classical cooking, imaginative European cooking & modern Indian cooking. I would like believe that as a chef I want to take Indian cooking to new dimensions.

What is your approach to slipping in healthier ingredients in your menu items?

Healthy food is the need of the hour and, also in the whole reimagination of Indian food, it is imperative that we think healthy across our menu, for e.g: slow cooked sous vide Nihari.

Who have been the people in the culinary profession and foodservice business to have shaped your professional philosophy and career?

- Chef Barnidharan, who was my professor at





CULINARY JOURNEY

Ajay began his career with the Cecil Oberoi in Shimla. He then joined the Oberoi Center for Learning and Development (OCLD) from where he completed the culinary and management training program, graduating as a gold medallist. His first assignment as a chef was at Kandahar, the Indian specialty restaurant at the Oberoi New Delhi. In addition to Kandahar, he was also responsible for the hotel's banqueting operations as well as the coffee shop. After his stint in Delhi, Ajay moved to the J.W. Marriott in Mumbai as the chef de cuisine of Lotus Cafe, the busiest and the largest coffee shop of Mumbai. Ajay then headed to Saffron at the JW as the chef de cuisine, which is a hub of 'A' listed Bollywood celebrities like Amitabh Bachchan, Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgn, Saif Ali Khan and many more. After about a ten year stint in India, Ajay decided to venture West and reached London. In London, Ajay took up the position of Executive Head Chef of the acclaimed Mint Leaf chain of restaurants. Already regarded as the benchmark for modern and Indian fine dining, the chain, under his stewardship, rose to new culinary heights in Indian cuisine. Over the last seven years, Mint Leaf has enjoyed critical acclaim for its ability to re-interpret classic Indian dishes in a contemporary fashion. During his culinary sojourn in the UK, Ajay was voted one of the eight best Indian chefs of London. In his stint at Mayfair, he brushed shoulders with Gordon Ramsay and Angela Hartnett. On returning to India, he took up the position of Executive Chef of The Westin Mumbai Garden City. Having worked in London and with his knowledge of the international restaurant trends, chef Ajay Chopra brings a refreshing approach to the food scene in India. Ajay is greatly committed to taking Indian cuisine into new and uncharted areas and constantly experiments with new ingredients and flavours. Apart from being a passionate chef, Ajay also hosted two food shows on television. Besides, he is also a passionate singer and has a knack for photography. He is greatly committed to taking Indian cuisine into the progressive domain and constantly experiments with new ingredients.



OCLD, taught us that being a chef is the most fulfilling profession but it will extract great pains of you to become an accomplished chef.

- Chef Rajeev Sing Gulshan, who taught me to focus on wholesome dishes and ingredients.
- Chef Elton Hurtis, who taught me all about the business of being a chef.

Who are the Indian and International chefs you have the highest admiration for and what are those qualities that you admire in them the most?

- Chef Imtiaz Quershi for his flavours.
- Chef Sanjeev Kapoor for his entrepreneurial skills.
- Chef Gaggan Anand for his outstanding thought process.
- Chef Jamie Oliver for his quirkiness in food.
- Chef Grant Achatz for his thoughts on culinary styles, which are beyond compare.

Which are the career milestones you most cherish and what are you currently engaged in?

Passing the OCLD for me was the biggest milestone and every job from there on was a milestone achieved. Right from being the prep cook at TGI Fridays to being the Executive Chef of the Westin Mumbai, each place had its challenges and crossing them was indeed a milestone. Obviously, being on television gave a great boost to the skills as the spectrum grew much wider. Now, the whole perspective to food service is changing. I am enjoying this space. Apart from the endorsements, I am consulting nine restaurants pan-India and in Abu Dhabi. I am also involved with a boutique hotel called The Empressa by Adamo Hospitality and a few food service brands.

With all these years of experience in the culinary field, how do you feel about your life and career in this vocation.

Initially I used to feel quite burdened as everything demanded perfection. But over time, perfection has become my pursuit. Now, I realize that the quest is unending and the journey too long. So, I try to balance it out by giving a fair share to my

Going global is the way forward. People are travelling around the world and food is becoming more evolved. The trend is for using local ingredients rather than going for fancy stuff from abroad. We are going back to the basics with different cooking techniques.





India's food service industry is set to grow by 10% to a whopping Rs.5,52,000 crore in the next five years. With such humongous growth, the need for newer ideas and concepts is essential.

family and to my work. Fresh creativity always needs you to pause and rethink. Now my career is taking a fresh turn and I am ready to take all the challenges as they come.

From your experience, can you tell us about the ingredients that have seen a dramatic rise in popularity in the HoReCa sector?

Matcha tea, because of its health benefit and taste. Another is proprietary international sauces like LP and HP sauces. People today are well travelled and very much aware of western ingredients, which are now easily available in Indian stores.

What do you feel are the major factors that impact and determine the success or failure of a food outlet?

The sensory experience of the place along with its value for money proposition, location of the place and consistency of product are the major factors.

Which are the key trends to watch out for that will likely shape the future of foodservice?

Going global is the way forward. People are travelling around the world. Food is becoming more evolved. A notable trend is the use of local ingredients rather than going for fancy stuff from abroad. We are going back to the basics with

different cooking techniques and the culinary trend of farm to fork is on the rise.

How would you describe the part that technology has come to play in the foodservice business and which of these technologies will have the maximum impact on the foodservice business?

Technology has played an important role for a chef in evolving the cuisine to its finer version, to deliver consistent product, to improve shelf life, and to reduce the cost great extent. It helps a chef to reimagine his processes, cut off lengthy prep methods and look at increasing the productivity. Increased manpower costs are affecting bottom lines and to assure a healthy business, smarter and swifter ways of doing business must be looked at, often with the help of technology. For example, in the fine dine arena, it has helped chefs to think differently. Soups could be served in powder form, ice-cream as pearls, and food degenerated and then regenerated on the table are all the gifts of technology to the culinary world.

Which are the new concepts that will upend the existing conventions in the food service domain?

India is a dynamic emerging market and the food service industry is set to grow by 10% to a whopping Rs. 5,52,000 crore in the next five years. With such humongous growth, the need for newer ideas and concepts is essential. Apart from the core banners of farm to fork, glocal and chef-crafted food, a lot of newer concepts are breeding. Modern regional, unapologetic food, quirky small bites, bazaar or market style cafés are quite in the vogue and have a good chance to become widely popular. •

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South African restaurant chain Barcelos to add up to 20 more outlets in India by end 2019

Known for its flame-grilled menu with peri peri sauces, Rohit Malhotra, Business Head- India Operations, Barcelos India, says that the brand has been able to create a distinct positioning and is looking to expand through the franchise route by partnering with enthusiastic individuals that can drive the Barcelos brand.



Rohit Malhotra



What is the customer and value proposition of your brand?

As the Indian unit of the South African casual dining restaurant chain, the Barcelos brand brings to the Indian customer a world-class casual dining experience with a great option for the health-conscious Indian youth to look at healthy and nutritious food sans saturated fats like oils and butter, with virtually no adverse effect on taste.

What is the market positioning that your brand has created over the years?

Barcelos is a household name for its flame-grilled menu with peri peri sauces, which brings the 'best in class' spicy fare that would naturally tickle the Indian taste buds. It has created its own unique following by introducing to the discerning Indian

foodie its own brand of innovation. The Black Burger is the best selling product of Barcelos F&B offerings in India. From revolutionizing the concept of 'burger' in India by presenting it in different colors to introducing India's first Sangria Bar offering 21 flavors of Sangria, we have been able to create a distinct positioning for the brand and our products. Barcelos has won many people's heart with its very own gourmet innovations.

Tell us about your establishment's menu offerings, price, format, and amenities on offer.

The menu at Barcelos offers a mix of five different cuisines – Portuguese, Mexican, Italian, Spanish, and American. The food is reasonably priced and the tab for two people dining at our restaurant will come to about Rs. 1,600 with non alcoholic drinks. We entered the Indian market through the company-owned outlet route and, last year, we appointed a master franchisee for India. Currently, we are also expanding through franchise network by partnering with enthusiastic individuals who can drive the Barcelos brand. We are not considering any investor model as of now.

Barcelos is determined to find the perfect balance between the traditional, healthy, home-style cuisines and the fast-lane demands of the modern world. The Barcelos brand is famous for its flame-grilled peri peri menu and has carved a niche for itself by introducing it to the discerning foodies with our own brand of innovation.

What are your other offerings and novel products? With the trend in vegetarian and healthy eating picking up, how are you bringing these trends to reflect in your menu offerings?

The company recently introduced a new menu that has a better choice of mouth watering dishes with a unique mix of signature and innovative international dishes. The menu focuses on authentic Portuguese flavors, catering to a



ON AN EXPANSION SPREE

With a single operation founded in Pretoria, South Africa in 1993, Barcelos has grown exponentially which led it to start franchising in 1998. It has been expanding continuously and became a household name the world over ever since. Barcelos enjoys its presence in 20 countries with above 150 outlets. To ensure continuity and excellence throughout the brand the founders of the brand, namely Costa Mazzis, Johan van Eyk and Beverley Vaskys, are all still actively involved in the operations of the company. The company has a service office in London with its group offices in Centurion, South Africa as well as national distribution centers in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and in Gaborone, Botswana. The company currently employs in excess of 2000 staff and instills ongoing high standards and expectations from all staff at head office and stores alike.

Barcelos Flame Grilled Chicken is a market leading brand with a well established identity. Tracing its origins with a relative humble beginning in 1993, with just a single outlet in Pretoria, South Africa, Barcelos has grown exponentially and today enjoys a global footprint with over 120 outlets in 17 countries, spanning the African continent, Canada, UK, Singapore, the Middle East and Asia. In India too, the company is growing exponentially and has chains in cities like New Delhi, Jaipur, and recently opened its doors in Hyderabad. As part of the expansion plan in India, the company is looking to set up 5-6 outlets in 2017-18 in Tier 1 cities and is targeting to reach 20+ restaurants in the next three years with a projected turnover of Rs 200 crore. The brand is also eyeing Mumbai, Chennai, Kochi, Pune and Delhi NCR for more outlets. The company is also looking to open up to 12 smaller outlets in food courts in the country.

Besides these expansion plans, Barcelos is all set to bring two new exclusive models into the Indian market which lets a CDR to enter into the QSR market. It will be having a retail counter with sauces, nuts and wafers being retailed at select Barcelos outlets. Barcelos is targeted at younger consumers, from the 14 to 40 age group. Barcelos is also looking to add franchise restaurants in 3 star and 4 stars hotels and resorts.

predominantly vegetarian segment that accounts for about 40% of our footfall. We offer grilled food without oil and butter, healthy breads for our burgers, and a variety of salads and soups. Guests can enjoy offerings like Chicken Parmesan, Espetada, Quesadilla, Fajitas, Mexican Burritos to Italian Pasta, Sizzlers and many more exciting dishes from our new and expanded menu, designed to take the guests on a culinary world tour with international dishes inspired from South Africa, Italy, Spain and Mexico. Our new menu offers great options for the health-conscious Indian youth though the focus is on international cuisine.

What do you think of the market potential for the kind of cuisine your chain specializes in?

It's certainly not one of the most preferred cuisines but Indian consumers seem to be patronizing South African cuisine and it's the fastest growing industry due to the rising disposable income, a greater population of younger people, growth of consumers in smaller towns and the widening exposure to new cultures and cuisines besides an increased propensity for eating out of home.

What marketing and sales tools are you using to promote the brand?

Barcelos' target age group is 4 to 40 years. We are active on social media, provide offers like special lunch offer, 1+1 on drinks & appetizer, pizza 1+1 on Monday & Tuesday, which attract different age group at different times and days. We also run contests from time to time and have special menu for different occasions. We are using both ATL & BTL methods for brand promotion.

How are you bringing technology to bear on your logistics, supply chain and innovation?

We have tie ups with many table booking and food delivery apps and we are in the process of launching a new digital wallet, which will be part of our loyalty program.

What are your plans and targets for the future?

Barcelos is planning to add up to 20 more outlets in India by the end of 2019 as part of its expansion plans. The current focus is on metros and Tier I cities and, only after that, the company would focus on Tier II cities. The new outlets will be a mix of company-owned and franchises. The company is also looking to open up to 12 smaller outlets in food courts in the country. •

FACT BOX

Parent company:

Barcelos

Brand name:

Barcelos India

Headquarters:

New Delhi

Launch date:

26th February 2015

Retail format:

Franchise

Total retail area under operation: **2000-3000 sq.ft.**

Average ticket size of bills: **Rs. 1,600 for two people**

Average footfalls per day: **100 plus**

F&B specialty:

International cuisine offers a mix of five different cuisines:

- Portuguese
- Mexican
- Italian
- Spanish
- American

Seats/ cover size:

70-110

Total number of employees:

28-36

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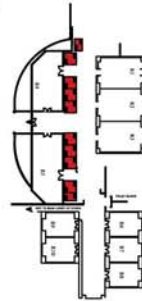
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Constant change is the need of the hour

Social media is continually altering the face of the dining industry. While the reputation of restaurants used to lie solely in the hands of publicists and critics, the responsibility of reviewing is now shifting to the consumers. Chef Vaibhav Bhargava, Executive Sous Chef, ITC Maurya, New Delhi, shares his thoughts on emerging dining trends with FoodService India.



Chef Vaibhav Bhargava

KNOW THE CHEF

I wanted to become a chef because of the respect this profession held and the mysterious image of the person cooking your food while you were in a restaurant. As a child, I used to go to five star hotels with my uncle on various occasions like Christmas and New Year and the kind of display laid out was unparalleled. So, later, when I joined hotel management, it was during my training that I decided to become a chef. I wanted to showcase our cuisine culture to the world. I love food, I love entertaining and I feel that food is the only art form or medium that impacts all the senses. There are few things more personal than feeding people. You feel happy when you make other people happy. And the best part is that you don't have to say anything, your food will do all the talking because the magic of good food always work.

Which are your most inspirational dishes that you love to cook?

Being a chef, every dish that you create is always close to your heart. But sometimes we create dishes that are liked by our guests to an extent that they want to have the same thing again and again when they visit the restaurant. So, there are many popular dishes I love to cook like prawn ceviche sushi roll (favourite of Sachin Tendulkar), textures of mango (cooked for Sunil Bharti Mittal) and many more.

Tell us something about your favourite fusion recipes.

Recipes are standard and you really can't change much about it. So, I personally do the fusion with cuisines like ICTM Ravioli (chicken tikka ravioli with makhani gravy), mutton rolls royace (mutton seekh kebab in tortilla bread with beetroot hummus and mango achari mayo) and many more. One has to keep the basics right and not change the basics of the recipe.

More than the food, today's generation is hungry for social networking posts and they try to find an opportunity to click their pictures with a good backdrop. So, are an aesthetically done ambience, furnishings, lighting, music, props, spacing, fragrance, paintings, décor, colours become more vital elements for a pleasant and memorable restaurant experience than the quality of food itself?

Yes, these days social media has become an imperative part of our changing times and the youth specially want to share information amongst their friends as to where they are partying out. So, just good food cannot be a solution for a successful restaurant as you need a good ambience, music, etc, to create an experience. But in the end, people come to restaurants for food; so food quality has to be the best and creative. Also, food has to be presented beautifully so that people can take pictures and put it on social media, which is a great platform for restaurants because consumers are promoting the brands without the cost, and it is important for the restaurants to keep a tab of these reviews. The results show that social media has a positive impact on restaurants' business. Social media is





continually altering the face of the dining industry. Earlier, while the reputation of restaurants used to lie solely in the hands of publicists and critics, the responsibility of reviewing is shifting to the consumers today. Instead of the opinion of a few, you get the benefit of opinions from many.

Which is a better approach to menu planning – having 100 dishes on the menu or just a few compelling ones. From the perception of customers, do restaurants with more number of menus score higher than a place has a lesser number of dishes?

Menu planning depends upon many factors, including what kind of a restaurant you are. Effective menu planning is rewarding in terms of time and money, especially given how little effort it takes. If the restaurant is a specialty restaurant, then you can have a lesser number of dishes on the menu. But if the restaurant serves multi-cuisine, then you have to give choices to customers and the menus are bigger. So, in my opinion, menu size depends on the nature of the restaurant. Also, it majorly depends on the consumer choice – if the guest is looking for a family dinner then he will choose a restaurant that serves many menus. But if a couple is going out for a dinner, they would want to go for good food in a specialty restaurant, which serves less number of dishes as compared to a multi-cuisine. So it all depends upon the situation.

Which F&B ideas you've implemented of late.

The F&B ideas that we have implemented are all about introducing vegetarian menu along with the main menu. Serving local produce dishes in the menu, which are further incorporated with superfoods, is another thing that we have introduced along with 'dine in the dark' concept that I launched on the day of Earth hour, in which people are blindfolded while they are dining.

For a successfully run F&B department of a hotel, what is the profit it should make from its F&B operations?

Profit varies from hotel to hotel. For 5-star hotels, it could vary from 20 to 25 per cent of the total revenue. For 3 or 4-star hotels, the profit share can vary from 40 to 50 per cent.

What constitutes food service innovation in your opinion?

Innovation in food service technology offers differentiation and cost leadership in strategic terms. A majority of food service business do not have research and development laboratories at

present. So innovations in equipment design and layout, packaging and service techniques are of a defensive or reactive nature. Examples of defensive innovation include faster and better preparations methods, improved temperature control, even heating, energy and labour savings, less waste, better sanitation, faster service and flexibility. In contrast, developments in offensive or pro-active innovation can radically change current practices, but those are rare.

Tell us about the star attractions and offerings at your F&B outlets?

We have various offerings at our outlets, which are merged with various dine-out options like nearby, dine-out or gourmet passport where one can avail 50 per cent discount or free starters or complimentary drinks, among others things.

What do you feel are the constant challenges as a chef?

- Maintain the quality food against the pricing being offered because of competition.
- To create a good team for the company where people work for long years to get consistent results.
- To maintain brand name in this competitive world.
- Customer satisfaction is the most difficult task to achieve as every customer has different needs.
- In today's world, chefs have become the face of restaurants and because of that responsibility a chef is more than what s/he used to be and they are expected to deliver more than only cooking.
- To keep oneself updated with new trends and technology is important.
- Cooks and chefs are under constant pressure to perform, so mental stress level goes very high sometimes, so it needs to be balanced out.

With the constant changes in the food trend, how do you ensure that food offerings at your F&B outlets remain relevant with the times?

Constant change is the need of the hour, so chefs have to be on their toes to compete with other restaurants. Chefs need to travel and update themselves with the latest trends so that they can incorporate the latest changes in the menus from time to time. Innovation is the key to success and that's why chefs keep experimenting in the kitchen everyday to create something new. In the current scenario, good restaurants hire chefs for R&D to develop new dishes for the menu. •



Innovation in food service technology offers differentiation and cost leadership in strategic terms. The majority of food service business do not have research and development laboratories at present.

The art of mixing

Shatbhi Basu, Bar Consultant at The Empressa Hotel, and Head of a bartending academy, talks about her journey as a mixologist, and new trends and developments in the field with FoodService India.



Shatbhi Basu



How did you become a mixologist?

I started out wanting to be a Chinese chef. But professional kitchens then were not very happy with women invading their domain. And so I quit to work in restaurant operations. That's when I discovered that knowing a recipe was quite different from actually making a drink. It was also a time when bartenders already in business were not happy about sharing information or skills and so, learning was difficult. Hence, it became a mission to find out as much as possible and be the best I could be. In fact, I learned to be a bartender, then a mixologist, after I was already a manager!

What is it about being a mixologist that gives you the greatest professional satisfaction?

It's the ability to think out of the box, and use my knowledge of flavour nuances to create incredibly exciting and delicious drinks.

What skills and learnings are needed for becoming an accomplished mixologist?

Doing a good course in bartending certainly helps get your basics right. Then it's constant evolution, learning and a passion to get better at what you do. Understanding flavour nuances, history and heritage of the elements that we use and using that knowledge to go beyond customer expectations.

What did it take to establish your reputation?

Building my knowledge and skills was the most important part of it. Then some real hard work, commitment, patience, persistence and belief in myself. Finally, the ability to listen to the client and translate his wish into reality.

AN ACHIEVER

- Completed 38 years in the industry and still wanting to do more.
- Named the first American Whiskey Ambassador for India 2013 – 2016.
- Presented with the first gold "Friend of the Industry" award by Spiritz Magazine for outstanding contributions to the alcohol industry.
- The recognition and award by the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, and felicitation by President Ramnath Kovind for being the first woman bartender in India and her contribution to the profession.

Which new concepts, innovations and experiments you have tried out?

A whole lot of eclectic and simple flavour combinations in cocktails that many have followed and adopted. I love working with Indian flavours. My unorthodox whiskey and tapas dinners have been very successful. Also my wide range of options for the non-drinker have been much appreciated.

Do you have a certain philosophy when it comes to what you put in your drinks?

My philosophy is very simple. Whatever you use must have flavour and balance. And it should sing in the mouth. Delight the senses. Think of how different parts of an orchestra are brought to perfect harmony by its conductor. The cocktail is the symphony that you have created by bringing together various elements that are a part of it.

What is the most challenging part of your job?

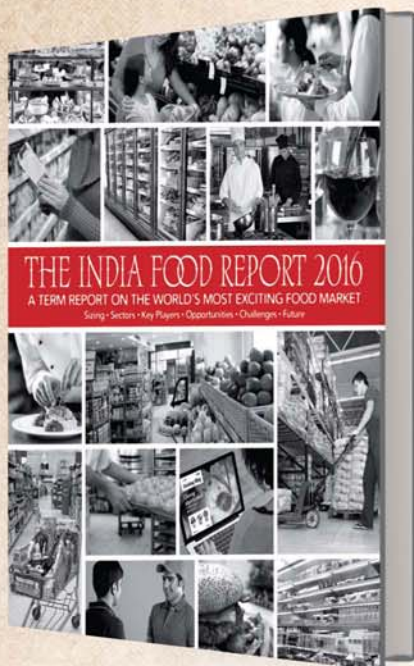
To be able to constantly create new flavours that work with the ideology of individual outlets, themes or cuisines.

Who are your role models in this profession?

Victor Bergeron – the man behind Trader Vic's.

Which new trends would you like to highlight?

I'm glad to see young bartenders taking the job seriously and representing India well across the globe. I'd like to see them not just copying the West but learning from the vast collection of flavours India has to offer to the world. •



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Unique Concepts and Equipment

are transforming the commercial refrigeration industry

Focused on offering commercial refrigeration food-service solution for hotels, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, ice cream & beverage, food retail and the healthcare segments, Elanpro strives to bring innovative, state-of-art products for the hospitality and retail industry. In a tête-à-tête with FoodService India, Sanjay Jain, Director, Elanpro, talks about new products, the brand's USP and the company's vision.



Sanjay Jain

Give a brief description of your company and its operations in India?

Elanpro is focused on offering commercial refrigeration food-service solution for hotels, restaurants, bars, coffee shops, ice cream & beverage, food retail and the health care segments. Registered in 2009 as a private limited company, it has its headquarters in New Delhi. A 100% marketing company, Elanpro strives to bring innovative, state-of-art products for the hospitality and retail industry. In a short period of time, the company has built a network of almost 300 channel partners and an extensive infrastructure to sell and service the company's product range.

Which are your top selling and most popular products in India and which are your key markets in India volume-wise?

Changing lifestyle and rapid urbanization has led to an increase in consumption of perishable items in India. The F&B share of retail industry is growing substantially, directly affecting the demand for innovative refrigeration solutions. Keeping the same in mind, we have introduced a wide range of products catering to organized retail industry and FMCG sector. Elanpro's Upright freezers are quite a hit in the retail sector. The range is fitted with best-in-class compressor, which not only ensures high performance but also low power consumption. The range comprises models offering maximum choice based on the

requirement of the outlet extending from 50 lts Counter Top to 200 lts, 400 lts, 450 lts and Double Door in 1000 lts.

Our Bakeshop DC Series is also gaining popularity amongst our customers. An innovative solution for the bakery products, the product is a perfect blend of high performance and sinuous design.

The growing demand for refrigeration solutions is a strong motivation for us. We have managed to create a market for us in most parts of India apart from the North-east. We will be putting our energies in that region now.

Who are your top clients in India?

Established in 2009, we are slowly becoming a known and trusted organization by some of the biggest names in the industry. Our growth in the past decade is a testament to the trust shown by our customers. Vadilal, Havmore, Naturals, London Dairy, Baskin Robbins, Amul, Arun, Dairy Classic, Cream Bell, Pepsi, Coke, SABMiller and Inbev are some of our top clients.

In terms of your sales contribution, what is the share from your different customer segments – hotels, quick serving restaurants, industrial & educational canteens, hospital canteens, caterers, etc.?

About 50% of our business comes from the Retail Industry, including supermarkets, hypermarkets, etc. Hotels and QSR segments constitute about 35% of the sales contribution. As of now, our bar refrigeration range sums up 15% of our sales.

What has been the response of your Indian clients using your appliances with regard to major concerns such as energy efficiency, functionality, environment-friendliness, storage and technology level?

A wave of innovative trends has energized the commercial refrigeration industry. With increased





What are the incentives that you offer to your dealers and distributors?

In order to maximize the engagement of our distribution channel, we have introduced multiple dealer incentive programs, apart from a regular fixed commission. We have quarterly and annual schemes and foreign trips for our top dealers. Elanpro also provide extensive support to dealers, enabling them to achieve mutually agreed goals and objectives.

What awareness and promotional activities do you undertake to create better knowledge for the products?

We are a product-oriented company that believes in providing quality solutions to customer. During the introduction phase, we rely on the product to speak for itself. We regularly participate at all major exhibitions to showcase our new launches and technical know-how to our target customers.

What are the challenges in the way of deeper penetration of your products?

In order to have an impact on the local markets, a company should be familiar with the cultures and trends prevalent in that particular region. India is a geographically diverse country with dynamic regions. For a company like ours, a lot depends on the infrastructure in the semi-urban and rural areas. But, finding and sustaining a good service infrastructure is still a challenge. Professional handling of logistics remains a challenge as well.

What are your plans for the future?

Emphasizing on providing innovative products, we will be bringing a perfect mix of technologically-advanced, user-friendly products this year.

The company has recently launched a new range of countertop refrigerator. Available in four variants, the range is equipped with LED lighting and colorful displays, which will also help increase impulse sales.

We have a new range of Flexi

Undercounters – a professional range of integrated refrigeration drawers with variable temperature option.

These fridge-freezer models fits underneath a countertop in place of a cabinet. We have also added variants to our Bakeshop Series. No matter the foodservice application, we aim at delivering a variety of new solutions to fit operators’ needs.

How do you see the market for your products in India?

We believe that customer loyalty always has the potential to translate into long-term profitability. We are anticipating the benefits of GST, going ahead. •

FEATURES AND CONCEPTS

Elanpro as a company has been committed to progressive and dynamic offerings. Its unique concepts and equipment are transforming the commercial refrigeration industry. Its USP is performance-pumping refrigeration equipment. The products are equipped with features and compact designs that ensure optimal utilization of critical space in any bar, kitchen or supermarket. The company believes in working closely with customers to eliminate installation problems and space issues and to ensure peak performance for its equipment.



global warming, use of eco-sensitive refrigerants has bucked up as the latest trend in India. The use of natural refrigerants like Hydrocarbons R290 is becoming a standard. There is also a demand for HFC-free refrigerants. Accompanied with the demands for reduced energy usage and utility expenses, sustainability and enhanced productivity, I feel Green solution is sought by most hotels these days.

User-friendly products are also seeing a surge in demand in the hospitality sector. Digital control is a key trend in the Indian commercial refrigeration market. Varied features like automated defrost, anti-short cycling and temperature and operation control can be easily managed with these products.



ORGANISED SECTOR OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN INDIA, AT THIS POINT, IS QUITE VULNERABLE.

– Kabir Suri

His professional career began in commercial real estate finance but his personal interests in food and hospitality led him to focus on the hospitality sector. In 2009, he co-founded Azure Hospitality. Focussing on importance of simplifying food, Kabir Suri, Co-Founder & Director, Azure Hospitality, shares his insights.

Please take us through your journey. Tell us about your restaurants.

I started my career in commercial real estate finance in New York and always took a special interest in investment strategy and finance research in banking and hospitality segments. This interest led me to focus to hospitality and I spent three years with internationally acclaimed restaurants Zuma and Roka in London. Shortly, I found myself moving from operations to brand strategy and business development and in charge of spearheading their global expansion. Azure happened by chance as I moved to India to explore the hospitality industry here. And given the limited dining options back in 2009 and along with the increasing demand and an ever-evolving customer segment, my partner Rahul and I saw a tremendous potential and started Mamagoto to make Asian dining fun. In eight years, we grew to 14 outlets, launched QSR brands Roll Maal and Speedy Chow, and acquired Dhaba Estd 1986 Delhi from the Claridges for retail expansion. Our focus at Azure now will be boutique restaurant chains after launching the new brand Sly Storys that started in Bangalore last year. We have gone in for an extension of Mamagoto with Mr Mamagoto serving posh hawker cuisine, and the April 2018 launch of 'Foxtrot' under Sly, which is a subculture brand catering to a varied segment by stressing on the underground music scene in India. We have introduced an organic café with a movement studio within, a book exchange library and a restaurant in the student/ corporate hub 'Koramangala' in Bangalore. And, of course, we are going for further expansion in the cities of Pune, Delhi and more!

What are your growth and expansion plans? Are you planning to expand overseas?

Azure has about 40 restaurants & kitchens at this point, and we aim to expand Sly Storys to other cities in India in 2018-19 after a successful run in Bangalore. Each Sly is an intense project, hence while most of our energies will be focused here, Azure will drive JV and franchise-based expansion within India, and also expand in London, Dubai and Cape Town this financial year.

Azure Hospitality was the first to introduce a pan-Asian café format – Mamagoto. What prompted you to introduce such a concept?

Back in the day, authentic Asian cuisine was a luxury, only meant to be enjoyed at hotels in fine dine formats. Consumers enjoyed good disposable incomes yet were limited to either spending at local Chinese restaurants or splurge at



star properties; they were more exposed, better travelled and much more experimental. Hence, came the idea of Mamagoto, to make Asian dining casual, fun and affordable!

Now that you have entered the fine dining format with Dhaba Estd 1986 Delhi, how different is it to manage it as compared to casual dining formats?

Well, Dhaba is also more fun dining than fine dine what with a team of singers springing to a dance routine in the middle of your meal, singing Bollywood and Punjabi numbers. That said, the basics of running any restaurant – fine, casual or fun, remain the same in today's competitive market; one has to prioritize on delighting the customers, have a motivated staff that enhances the customer's dining experience and serves quality offerings. Mastering the basics is the rule of the game!

You have introduced a non-restaurant concept called Sly Granny. How did you come up with the idea? Tell us more about it.

We were working on new project ideas, and hit a dead-end when we realised how easily restaurants are labelled these

days. From cafes to pizzerias to pubs or resto-lounges, we couldn't settle over an idea, and wanted to create a space that is different for each kind of customer that walks in. A multi-dimensional space that is a restaurant, a cafe, a favourite bar, a venue for live music, a space to meet like-minded individuals to share opinions over topics people don't discuss in public anymore – there's really no 'one name' for the space. And given Sly Stories (the parent brand) is all about unique stories told via each outlet, the concept just fit right in. Today, we are running Sly Granny as a successful restaurant and a

bar by the evening. We're soon going to start a breakfast club and regularly host Mind Manifesto (Sunday philosophy club) events, art & wine evenings, perfume-making/coffee brewing workshops, malt tastings, invite-only personalized table dinners – there's really no barriers to collaborations!

You are an industry stalwart. How do you keep yourself ahead in this competitive time?

I keep learning, keep going back to the basics. Traveling is the most enriching experience and helps one learn new traditions and cultures; hence, I naturally end up reviewing our current practices, thereby innovating constantly.

Can you brief us on your major learnings as a restaurateur?

Always keep customers first, WOW them, listen to them and they'll become your advocates forever.

How do you keep a balance between your personal and professional life? What do you do to unwind yourself?

Knowing me, one wouldn't believe so! But I always take time out to spend time with my children, being there for them for all their important moments. Golf is my stress-buster, I love a good game on weekends.

You have recently been elected as the Delhi Chapter Head of the NRAI. How do you plan to strengthen the restaurant sector in the region? Please elaborate.

The organised sector of hospitality industry in India, at this point, is quite vulnerable, more so for the lack of representation. I hope to be able to bring the community of restaurateurs together in unison for the cause of the industry.



Court dismisses Novex Communication's claims against the NRAI



Novex Communication Pvt. Ltd. had filed a case against the NRAI asking the Association to withdraw its letters to them. These letters stated that Novex could not carry on the business of granting music licences without being registered as a copyright society. A similar communication was circulated to members by the Association.

In addition to the withdrawal of letters, Novex had also pressed for claims of Rs. 1 crore towards damages to its business. The Hon'ble Delhi High Court rejected their case stating that the suit is "misconceived and not maintainable in law." To read complete order, log on to: www.nrai.org/downloads/circular-notice/

Delivery Bikes

The restaurant industry had been facing challenges in operating delivery two wheelers, since fitment of boxes on bikes was not included in the motor vehicles act/rules. NRAI had taken up this matter with the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, and the Ministry has agreed to its suggestion to include fitment of boxes on two wheelers in the relevant rules. The same was done as per notification GSR 473(E) dated 02nd May 2016.

However, the issue of these bikes falling under the Commercial/ Non Commercial category remained pending. NRAI is happy to inform that its consistent efforts have been successful and these bikes have now been included under the 'Non Transport Category'.



NRAI conducts Food Safety Supervisors' (TOT) Training Programme



Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has mandated the requirement of having at least one trained and certified Food Safety Supervisor in each Food Service Establishment. The Food Safety Supervisor will have the responsibility of ensuring hygiene and food safety implementation in their respective establishments.

NRAI is a training partner with FSSAI for the training of these supervisors. In continuation of the three training sessions conducted in Delhi, Mumbai & Bengaluru last year, NRAI has recommenced the training programme.

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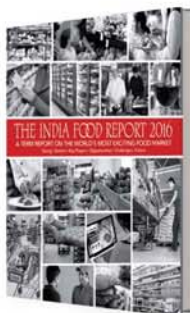
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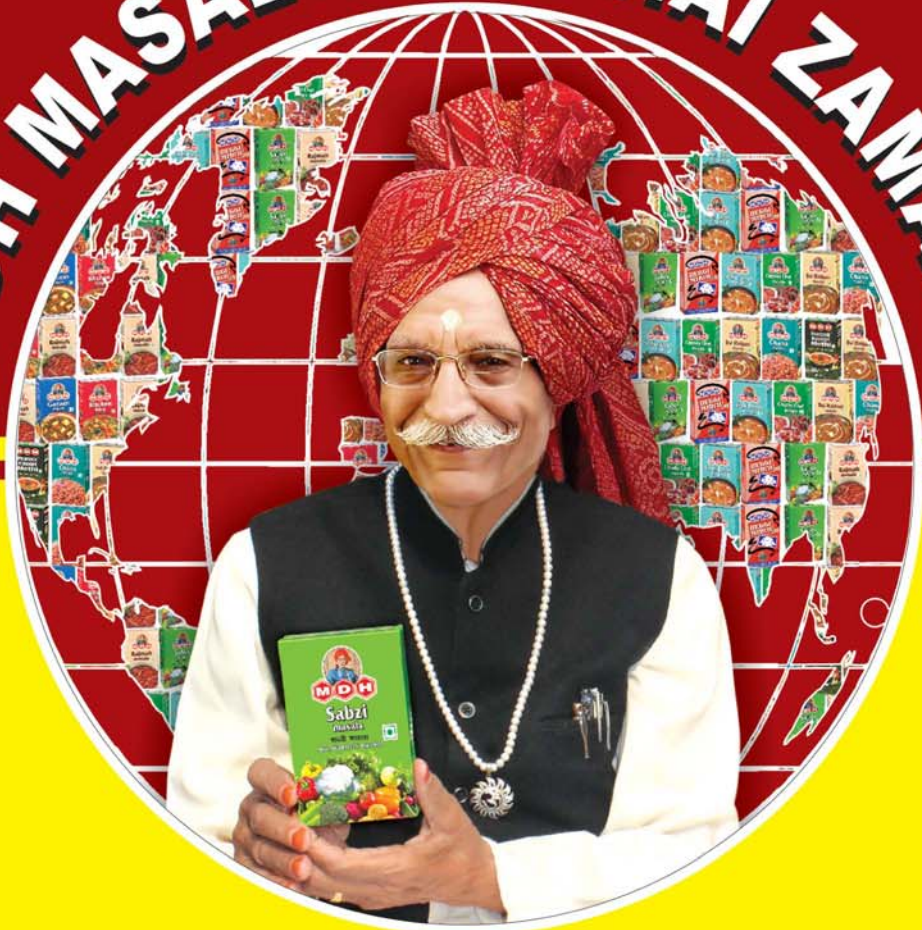
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