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Technological initiatives are helping the brand connect
and engage more closely with its customer base

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Typically around the New Year, a lot of resolutions are made to follow a healthier diet. Over the years, health consciousness has increased and is therefore trending throughout the year. We look at some trends that will likely emerge stronger in the days ahead. The perception of "healthy" varies from person to person and the trick is to identify what reduces the "guilt quotient" and build on that. The point to remember is that people have a great love relationship with their food and thus if it becomes "free" of everything – sugar, salt, artificial items, gluten and so on... then, well, it becomes a medicine. It is crucial to identify the boundaries and draw a line.

A good beginning would be to bring back grandma's recipes... from turmeric in milk, ginger & lime to various millets of yore. All of them will come back with a vengeance. Restaurants and cafés to breakfast cereals to snack food manufacturers, this is a trend that cannot be missed. The nostalgic flavors from our rich cultural past– the lip-smacking street-side delights to our long forgotten grandmas' recipes will all see a huge comeback.

A strong trend emerging is the growing popularity of seeds, which are no longer only for birds. From breads to energy bars to trail mixes and even (believe it or not!) beverages. This trend will sweep across segments. If it can be "seeded", it will be. There is also a growing interest about bacteria in foods. Not the baddies but the good bacteria. Did you manage to incorporate your daily dose of the good ones coming through yoghurt, kombucha, pickles? Should see this trend explode into even desserts like ice-creams, fermented foods, et al. Gut health and probiotics is in. That's not to forget the fact that what's healthy for some will be poison for the other but it has to be addressed.



Amitabh Taneja

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Eating is the New Shopping

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Art of balancing traditions and technology

Chef Ajay Anand, Director, Culinary, Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, speaks to FoodService India about the art of balancing traditions and technology in the kitchen and the ever changing food preferences of the fitness freak generation



I keep a very calibrated contemporary approach amalgamated with technology as my mantra for success.

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

The most distinguishing feature of my work as a Chef is Chef's Garden. I have nurtured it at the hotel. Each and every plant that goes in the garden reflects an emotion, a story and above all; they are the edimentals for my creations at the kitchen.

Which culinary styles have influenced your career?

Cooking is an art mastered with patience and skills. I like to keep it rustic yet balanced in all proportions.

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

Throughout my journey in Culinary Art, I have met many chefs who have taught me at various stages of my journey. But the one who has mentored me throughout is Chef Sanjay Dhall. He was the one who actually transformed me into a professional and successful chef.

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

I try to keep a calibrated approach and balance it out between the contemporary and the technology. I like to work with the traditional ingredients and flavor but there is a lot to do with the technology and innovation when it comes to presentation and plating in the culinary sector.

In your opinion, which are the key trends to watch out for that will likely shape the future of foodservice?

Wellness menus for instance, vegan and gluten-free menus are in demand and in trend. Guests prefer healthy options like fresh salads that are hand plucked salad leaves and freshly made juices.

Tell us about your favourite dishes/ cuisines and the best outlets in India (in your opinion) to enjoy them. Who are the chefs that you consider to be the best practitioners of these dishes and cuisines?

Being a Delhiite, my favorite food is street food. Other than this, I have strong inclination for Mughlai & French Food. Mughlai dishes are a blend of aromatic herbs and spices mixed together to cull out a masterpiece.

French Cuisine is simple yet still alluring, diversified in flavours and balanced in the right proportion.

Some of the best Chefs of these cuisines are Chef Imtiaz Qureshi, who is being honored by Padma Shri Award. Chef Alain Passard is the only Michelin star chef specializing in vegetarian food and runs a Michelin star restaurant in Paris by the name, L'Arpège.

What are some of the most successful and new menu items you introduced in your career so far?

There are many, but two of my favorites are Golgappa Caviar and Trilogy of Lamb.

Chai Point becomes AI friendly

Amuleek Singh, Co-founder and CEO, Chai Point, speaks to FoodService India about millennials and corporates being the target customer base for the brand, its technological initiatives like Shark and BoxC taken for the ease of customers, and the brand's environment-friendly approach through introduction of sustainable concepts like BYOC to associate more actively with the younger generations.



How do you look at the prospects, outlook and opportunities for growth of Chai Point in particular and your cafe foodservice format in general?

Chai is a ritual for Indians. We want to be a part of that ritual as a café in food service space. With over 100+ stores across the country and many more coming up in 2019, the opportunity for growth is immense for the brand. The important thing to keep in mind is that the end game is profitability. The rapid expansion of the F&B sector in India is creating a lot of opportunities for newer brands like us. Brands, which are authentic and omnichannel, will stand out in the market.

What is your value-for-money proposition for guests and which are your key customer demographics?

Chai totals 75% of non-alcoholic beverages. As a brand, we power the core concept of Chai Point – as being a creative, exciting hub for serving the traditional beverage of India. We want to manage this by being present at every touch point for the convenience of consumers and serving them the chai that is best in quality and consistency.

The corporates and the millennials are the target customer base for the brand. This segment of customers wants to associate with the brands that practice their core values. Our target customers are environmentally conscious and focus on quality and freshness. They are also particular about convenience and accessibility. It is in our brand's DNA to be omnichannel and our team continuously strives to live up to these core values.

Over the past six years, we have switched to sustainable alternate options like using bagasse-based cutlery, selling beverages in glass bottles instead of plastic, reducing waste and aligning with supply chains to achieve sustainability. Recently, we also rolled out a new initiative BYOC — Bring Your Own Cup and it received a thundering response from our customers. Now, we are in the process of implementing it across all the stores. Essentially, we are asking our customers to bring their cup to enjoy their favorite chai and help us reduce the usage of paper cups.

What is the catchment you are looking for and what is your location strategy?

Chai Point stores are located in business districts, tech parks with a corporate crowd concentration and on high streets.

CHAI POINT: AT A GLANCE

- Total number of outlets currently: 115
- Pockets/Regions with the maximum concentration of outlets: 8 cities across India
- Total number of employees: 1400
- Average size of an outlet and seating capacity: 400 sq. ft. to 1500 sq. ft.
- Format type: Fast-casual cafe
- Main offerings: Chai; made for chai food; loose-leaf teas.
- Price point (Starting from): F&B starting at Rs. 25.



Franchising as a model for business expansion in foodservice

The Food & Beverage industry dominates India's franchise sector. In India, the foodservice industry has evolved from homegrown, standalone, family-run business ventures to international partnerships with various business models. Specific to Quick Service Restaurants, the Fast Food Franchise model remains one of the most attractive operating models for international brands foraying into India.

Franchise is a business opportunity that can lead to the foundation of a successful business empire. It is a marketing concept adopted by companies for business expansion. When implemented, a franchiser licenses its know-how, procedures, intellectual property, use of its business model, brand and rights to sell its branded products and services to a franchisee. In return the franchisee pays certain fees and agrees to comply with certain obligations, set out in the franchise agreement. A Franchise is generally a person or a company that is given the license to run a

THE CRÈME DE LA CRÈME OF ICE CREAM PARLOURS IN INDIA

Brand Profile: In India, Baskin Robbins started franchising in 1993 with its first store. Franchising has helped the brand to expand rapidly across, almost, 200 towns with over 750 parlors, currently. It operates only two parlors under the COCO model.

Brand's Franchising Journey: Baskin Robbins was started in the year 1945. It was Irv Robbins who opened Snowbird Ice Cream in Glendale, California, featuring 21 flavors, which eventually led to the conceptualization of Baskin Robbins. It was amongst the pioneers in the concept of franchising. The company encouraged entrepreneurship by encouraging women and ex-servicemen to start a business as franchisee. This concept of franchising is the reason for the fast growth of the brand. Baskin Robbins has been known as the flavor innovator and owns a bank of over 1500 flavors, globally.

Prerequisites for Franchising: The brand expects the franchisees to be passionate and enthusiastic toward the brand and to invest their time in working with us to help increase sales, service levels, and brand perception. The brand also evaluates franchisees' financial ability to invest in the business. Besides this, other key metrics include the proposed location of the parlor to ensure the growth of the franchising business of Baskin Robbins.

Franchising Strategy: Several startups are adopting the franchise model for quick expansion. However, it does not help every entrepreneur in increasing their sales. But franchising does help to scale up faster, brings economies of scale and faster brand visibility.

Baskin Robbins maintains strict standards as the production of ice creams is centralized thereby delivering the same taste profile, nationally.

To maintain the brand integrity and experience standards, the brand has strict monitoring of the stores and staff. Consumer complaints are addressed and redressed immediately and then the issue is addressed at the store level.

Baskin Robbins focuses on building franchisee awareness and skills, needed to make a business successful in the long run.



Baskin Robbins India has grown across nearly 200 cities making it one of the largest franchisee businesses in not just the ice cream industry but in the Indian QSR space in general. We attribute this to the commitment of the business to continue single-mindedly on this path and to ensure that franchisees are able to leverage their investment in the business.

– Mohit Khattar
CEO, Baskin Robbins

Challenges of Franchising:

- At level one** – Supplies of all products are controlled and managed by the brand to ensure consistent quality. The brand supply ice creams from factory to all stores in the country. Similarly, it provides ingredients for everything that is prepared in stores like waffles, sundaes, milkshakes, and cones. And provides recipes, also, so that taste across parlours remains unchanged.
- At level two**– Brand's QA teams ensure that all the products are prepared with hygiene. It strictly follows food safety rules and makes sure that these stores also follow them. So that these norms are consistent across parlors. Relevant training and re-training are imparted to the franchise partners and store staff to ensure best in class practices.
- At level three**– Operating teams handhold the Franchisee in their day to day operations.

Business Approach to Franchising:

To be a Baskin Robbins franchisee, one should be customer-centric. The brand lives by its credo "we make people happy." The brand does this through a wide variety of flavors, process stabilization, trained staff, and improved overall experience.

It tries to work in a consultative manner with franchisees by providing them with a thorough knowledge of the target audience, market segmentation, product appeal, support, training, and staff, return on investment, etc. Baskin Robbins believes in building a win-win situation for everyone and long-term partnerships

Advice: Franchising is a great opportunity for young people to become their own boss. By taking up a franchise of a reputed brand, there is assurance of continuous support and promotion to increase revenue and profits. For those looking for a second source of income, a franchise fits their career aspirations of a job while maintaining a steady second source. For young women who do not want to work in the corporate sector, this provides flexibility and an alternate career opportunity.

Roadmap Ahead: Baskin Robbins is looking forward to opening 100-150 parlors, every year. It has a scientific model to determine the ideal number of stores in a city. It assesses the size of the city and its proportion of discerning audience with the ability to spend. Baskin Robbins will use the model to open in new cities as well as expand further in existing key cities in the country.





Madrid's most dynamic trend setter

The young food service enterprise Grupo Larrumba is not just the fastest growing operator in the Spanish capital at the moment, but also one that is innovatively shaping gastronomic change in the 3 million strong metropolis. It has a total of 22 concepts, and its casual dining outlets are each individually designed and open all day. The range of themes includes Mediterranean, Mexican, Japanese and Indian cuisines; the overall turnover is expected to be €55 m at the end of this year.

by Mario Cañizal

By the end of this article, you will not only have a quite complete picture of the Madrid-based Grupo Larrumba, which opened its first restaurant in 2013 and had a portfolio of 18 individual concepts in 18 locations, rather than one single brand, with an average bill of €6 to €40, at the end of 2017. In addition, the article will explain how ambitious casual dining concepts like Larrumba's are really stirring up Madrid's gastronomic scene. The full-service restaurant industry used to be characterised by fine dining restaurants, together with a wide variety of fast food suppliers, including traditional tapas bars and, often American-style, cafés. However, completely new players emerged during and after the 2007-2015 economic crisis, the reason being that customers and their demand profile had dramatically changed. People do still like table service, but now they like it

all to be relaxed and affordable. And there is a desire for informal gastronomy that combines food and drink (comida y copas), i.e. restaurant and bar. These days, the new protagonists include companies such as the Grupo Tragaluz, En Compañía de Lobos, the Grupo Lalala, Grupo La Ancha or Grupo El Paraguas. And the Grupo Larrumba, of course, which makes its dining rooms into a home from home, focusing on dynamic all-day scenarios rather than static tradition, and cultivating contemporary cosiness rather than timeless formality. What is happening at the moment is more than a shaking of traditional gastronomic pillars – it is an innovative erosion.

The common denominator in these young concepts is a fantastic feel for locations. The economic crisis led to premises in highly attractive locations, 'used' by high income clientele,



SHOPPING CENTRES_HAMMERSON

Sarah Fox, Head of Restaurants and Leisure, Hammerson



What are the most significant trends you see in your market foodservice-wise?

We now see restaurants and leisure as anchors in our portfolio - to attract shoppers and extend dwell time just as much as retailers and we have examples of F&B brands that we know are the main reason why some shoppers visit the centre. Customers are far more savvy about food than they were a few years ago and they want food quickly and conveniently at any time of the day. This means we have to offer a considered mix of concepts so it meets this growing demand. One of the most remarkable changes has been consumers are now ready to visit restaurants throughout the day. As cost pressures rise, it becomes important that F&B operators are able to put forward an attractive offer across multiple times of the day. We have also seen a greater demand for new cuisines and concepts. We have found that healthier options are becoming more popular but it has to remain tasty and still feel like a treat.

Our focus is more on delivering a full experience and atmosphere within our venues, as opposed to simply good food and this will become more and more relevant in the years to come. Going to a shopping centre is still an experience and most shoppers are looking to treat themselves. Fast, casual and quick service still remains relevant and continues to do well - particularly for the younger generation who don't have time to wait and don't all want to eat the same thing. In a similar way to retailers, F&B operators are constantly evaluating their estates and moving forward, will probably need fewer restaurants in a single catchment. However, these will be focused on high quality sites that give a large and continuous exposure to footfall in order to build brand equity.

What are your strategies as regards foodservice?

Hammerson spends a lot of time making sure we bring to our schemes brands that are relevant and, very importantly, diverse in what they offer. We do this by keeping a close relationship with our existing tenants to understand how they are continually staying relevant to the consumer, and by bringing in new brands that fit with the catchment. Birmingham, for example, has a distinctively younger catchment than most shopping centres and so bringing emerging and trendy F&B brands to the city for the first time creates a real incentive for Gen Y and Z shoppers to come to Hammerson centres for a new experience.

What is the average surface of f&b facilities inside your shopping malls?

Across the Hammerson portfolio, the floor space dedicated to F&B, as a percentage of total floor space, has grown from 6% in 2010 to c. 15% in 2017. While this is a strong growth, Hammerson has taken a pragmatic and informed approach to growing F&B, keeping a focus on ensuring diversity in type of offers and monitoring the capacity to ensure that tenants have the opportunity to maintain healthy sales and profits. •

HAMMERSON: TOP - FOODSERVICE RETAILERS*-

1	Costa
2	Starbucks
3	Nando's
4	Pizza Express
5	Wagamama
6	Five Guys
7	TGI Fridays
8	Handmade Burger Company
9	Zizzi
10	Frankie and Benny's

* by number of outlets

HAMMERSON: PROFILE

Hammerson owns and manages 21 shopping centres across the UK, Ireland and France, as well as 20 retail parks.

In the UK, the average surface of a Hammerson shopping centre is 870,000 sq ft. The F&B operators represent 10% of floor space with a further 5.2% dedicated to leisure operators. The total space dedicated to F&B operators is 830,000 sq ft. Hammerson in the UK work with 130 different F&B brands, representing 270 tenancies.

The recently proposed takeover of rival INTU will double the size of the Hammerson portfolio in the UK as well as giving Hammerson nationwide coverage.

HAMMERSON: BEST EXAMPLE

Opened in 2002, Hammerson's West Quay shopping centre in Southampton, UK, has a surface of about 93,000 sqm and a footfall of 18 m per year. The restaurant offer includes well-known brands such as Wagamama, Pizza Express, Handmade Burger, Pizza Hut, Nando's, Five Guys.

At the beginning of 2017 Hammerson opened West Quay South, a 17,000 sqm extension that includes a 20+ restaurant development anchored by a cinema, a bowling alley and a public esplanade with dedicated programme of events, thereby creating a dining and leisure destination in its own right. Already, a 12% footfall increase has been registered across the centre since the opening of the extension.



▲ Westquay, Wahacca



We want to make Watsons a national brand

An entrepreneur, F&B consultant and a partner at several F&B properties across India, Amit Roy, started Shilton Hospitality with his friends and partners. Pursuing his passion to be in the hospitality industry, Amit Roy, Partner, Shilton Hospitality, shares his insights.

What compelled you to enter the restaurant industry?

I have always been passionate about food. Right from when I was in school, I was interested in understanding what my mom did in the kitchen.

I did my B. Com and joined the family business – Raj & Roy Agencies – which deals with supplying equipment to the hospitality industry. I think this further excited me to pursue a career in hospitality. I then moved to Australia to pursue masters in hospitality and started my career working in a café, bussing tables. I have never looked back since then.

Give us a brief about your company. What are your growth plans?

Established in 2003, Shilton Partners operates in various industries - construction, business hotels, restaurants and a music festival. Currently, we own & operate 6 resto-bars under the brand

‘WATSON’S – The Grub Pub’. Our vision is to create experiences for consumers – and therefore our business areas are varied – from real estate to music festivals!

We have 300+ member team with hands-on involvement from the leadership in all key areas – Strategy, Business Development, Operations, F&B, Finance and Legal.

We want to grow organically, and are planning to make Watsons a national brand. We’re also venturing into other hospitality spaces, and will be opening a full-service hotel in the near future.

How do you decide the menu in your restaurant? What is Watson’s signature offering that sets it apart from others in this segment?

Our menu is based on the concept of Watson’s – comfort food that pairs well with a drink after work. Apart from this, we make several permutations and combinations which are a product of:

- ▶ Consumer preferences and tastes -
- ▶ Market trends on food and preferences
- ▶ And some unique recipes

Our signature dishes are:

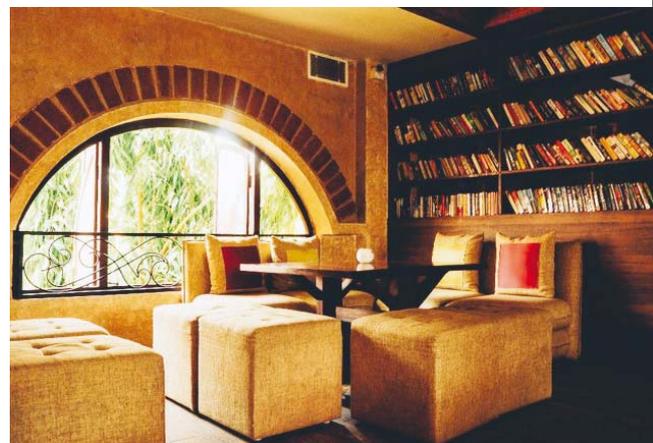
- ▶ Mogo - fried Casava Chips tossed in Ghee and
- ▶ Karepak Vepudu - Curry Leaf Paste tossed Chicken.

They are not available in other bars / pubs. They are comfort dishes and ideal to go as a bar snack.

Watson’s has started its operations in Goa & Chennai as well. How different is the restaurant scene there from that of Bengaluru?

Both are opposites. In Goa it was much easier with the legal department and pretty straightforward laws. Chennai is very strict. Goa is exciting as we have just relocated to Candolim and will be launching this month. It will be in the hub of the tourist zone and we are looking forward to this as it’s a step in a new direction for Watson’s. We are normally the neighbourhood pub.

Bengaluru seems to be getting more challenging every single day to do business. There is very little support from the authorities and way too many “policies”. We are hoping for clarity on business operations in this space, as well as better implementation of laws.





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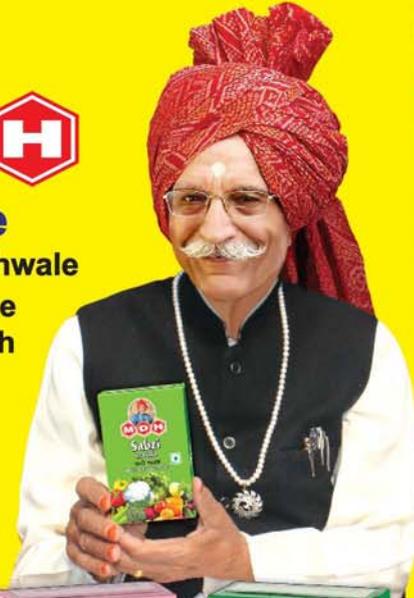
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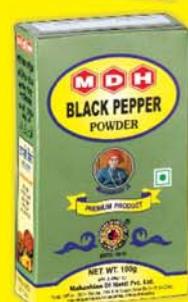
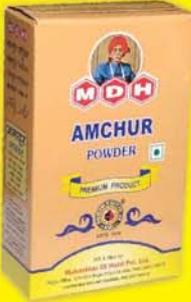
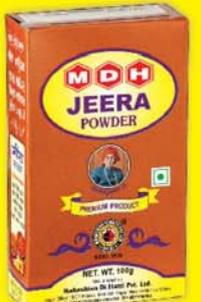
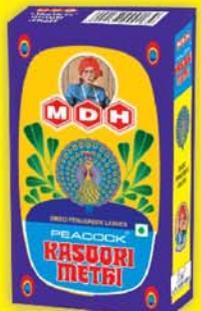
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*"Ek Taange wala Jo Bana,
 Masalon Ka Shenshah"*



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