

May'19



Hospi  
QR

# Hospitality Lexis

RNI-MPENG/2018/74957

INR 100 Vol 04 Year 02



"The tourism industry has the most growth potential, but we are not doing much on it."



**Padma Vibhushan  
Ratan.N.Tata**

Most awaited personality  
at HICSA 2019

**HB**  
HOSPIBUZ



May'19

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HOTEL OPERATIONS SERVICE INSTITUTE

RNI-MPENG/2018/74957

# Hospitality Lexis

INR 100 Vol 04 Year 02



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## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



Elevating the  
industry.  
HICSA 2019

The Catering  
Saga

Interviews :  
Sonal Holland &  
Puneet Gulati



**HOSPIBUZ**

FROM THE HOUSE OF

# HB HOSPIBUZ



**Hotels | Restaurants | Pubs | Cafes | Travel | Tourism  
Mixology | Foods | Beverages | Chefs | Decorators**

## Chairperson's Note



I am really elated to see the excitement of the entire nation towards the general elections of 2019. The increasing voting percentage is reflecting that everyone is taking part in the biggest exercise of democracy. Every industry, professional and citizen have expectations from the government. Throughout the year I have interacted with various prominent personalities and professionals of the Indian hospitality industry. One of the major concern which I found among the professionals of the industry is regarding the demand for a single window for the industry. Many pioneers of the industry thought there should be a particular ministry for the industry as the Indian hospitality industry is amongst one of the major contributors to the nation's economy. Soon we are going to have new and the 17th parliament of our country. Let's see what changes we are going to witness in the industry in the upcoming future.

- Rekha Hora  
Chairperson

“Your single **vote** can make hospitality more fine and detailed.”



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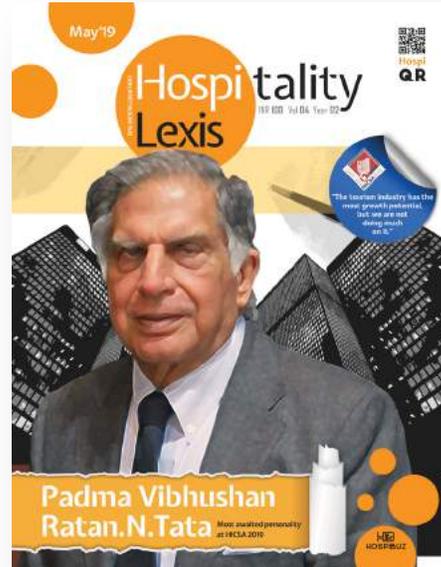
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## CMO Note



**Nikita Hora**  
Legal & Marketing Head

### 4 C's of Marketing and Advertisement for present Industry.

The whole nation has witnessed an enormous digital transformation in the last few years, which is advantageous for the young country. Digital transformation has changed the whole marketing and advertisement scenario of the industry. It has increased the reach of the companies but on the same hand, it has also increased their competition. In earlier days it was assured that if you are pumping huge fund in advertisement and marketing then it is going to be successful. In the present millennial and digitalized era there are 4C's which are playing a key role in marketing and advertisement apart from the fund. Credibility, Creativity, Connection, Conciseness. Customers nowadays have good spending power compared to earlier days and they even choose quality over cost. People have money but no time, so everything which is new, connect with them, concise and credible attracts them.

This is something beneficial for the promoters or companies with low marketing fund to give equal competition to the giants of the industry.

### *Warning! Bright future of hospitality ahead.*

Indian hospitality and tourism industry has boundless potential but we need to prioritize the things accordingly to get the finest outcome. The recent trends and statistics of the industry as well as improving domestic macroeconomic data are indicating the bright road for the industry. According to the studies, hotels will generate higher room revenues and profit margins in the country.

Tourism is the large employment generator besides being a significant source of foreign exchange for the country. During 2018, FEEs from tourism increased by 4.70 percent year-on-year to US\$ 28.59 billion.

During 2018, foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in India stood at 10.56 million, achieving a growth rate of 5.20 percent year-on-year. FTAs in January 2019 stood at 1.10 million, up 5.30 percent compared to 1.05 million year-on-year.

High growth in the industry is attracting international chains to invest more in India. International hotel chains are increasing their presence in the country, as it will account for around 47 percent share in the Tourism & Hospitality sector of India by 2020 & 50 percent by 2022.

Preeminent personalities of the industry have the same concern regarding the potential of the industry and it has clearly reflected during the various discussions at HICSA 2019.

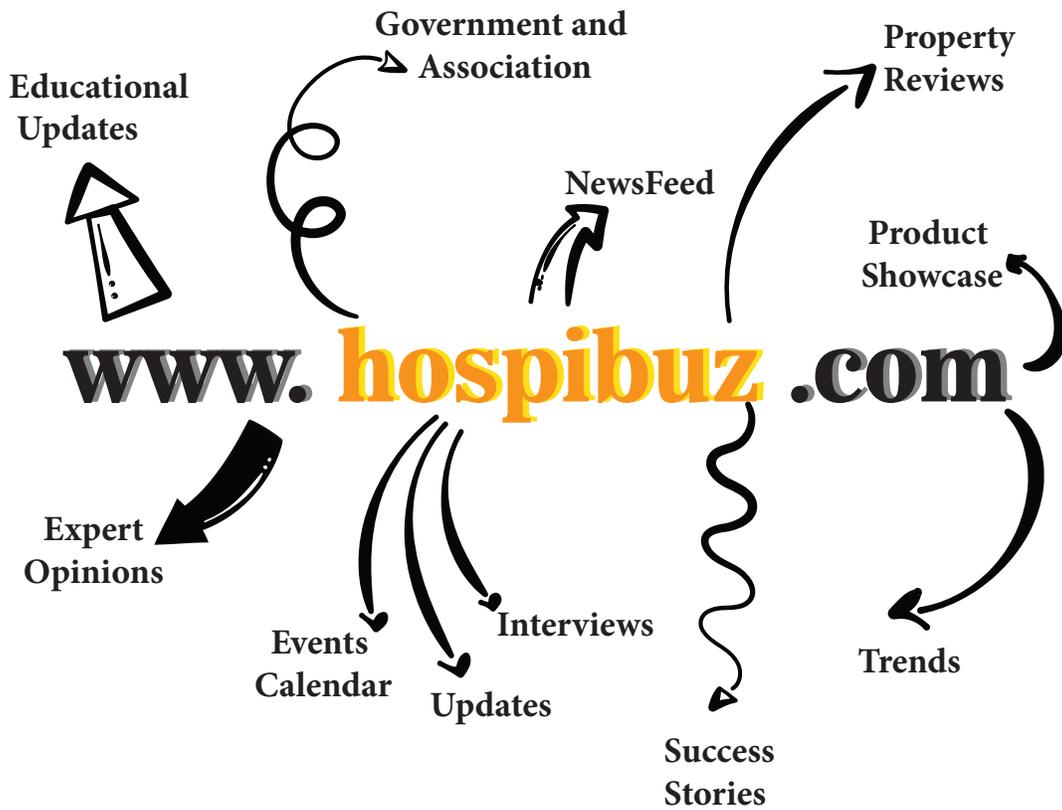
According to the Indian Hotel Industry Survey 2016-17, compiled by Hotelivate in association with the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), the Indian hotel industry is estimated to witness the expansion to be at 13 billion U.S. dollars by 2020. Certainly, the future shows good weather sign for the industry.

To utilize this opportunity, industry and the government need to reframe various guidelines to make the way smooth for the hoteliers. In India, Hoteliers face regulatory constraint at every step in the process of development of hotels. From land acquisition stage to approval by various ministries & association on various matters. A company requires a number of clearances for setting up an upscale category hotel in India.

Apart from these, there are more challenges in the industry like lack of institutions related to hospitality, unskilled manpower which needs to be simplified before the time passes by.

*Stats credit: IBEF and Care.*

**Komal Hora**  
CEO  
Hospisphere



**HB**  
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Catering  
Saga





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## WHITE PEACOCK KITCHEN AND BAR OPENS IN KHAR MUMBAI

White Peacock Kitchen and Bar is a multi-cuisine restaurant which was co-founded by Sagar Kadam and Aniket Mayekar. This restaurant offers various dishes of different cuisines like North India, Tandoori, Malvani and Goan.

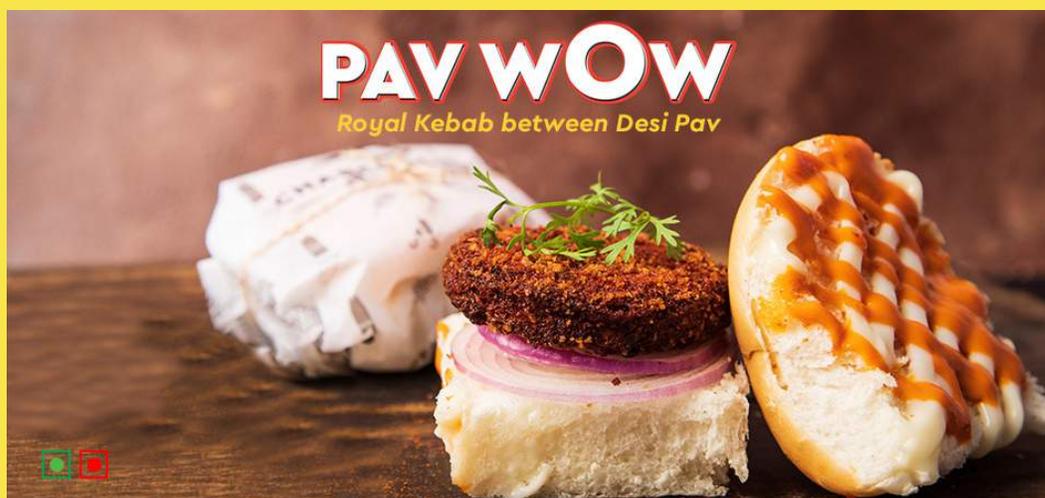


## THE NEW SURPRISES OF BURGER SINGH

Burger Singh has come up with its new exciting flavors in Burger. The new burgers include both vegetarian and non-vegetarian. It has options like Shahi Paneer, Mac and Cheese, Andewalla, Udda Punjab 2.0 with cheese filled patty and 377 pack. Adding to the excitement they have added few new beverages including Tony Pappah Di Anar Shikanji, Tony Pappah Da Raw Mango and Tony Pappah Di Jamun Shikanji. The range has been especially inspired by Indian flavours for vegetarians and non-vegetarians.

## The new add ons of Charcoal Eats

The QSR start-up Charcoal Eats has added two new things in their menu- Pav Wows and Rice Bowls. The restaurant has innovated the Mumbai's Pav with smokey veg and non-veg starters. Pav Wows offer a wholesome all-day option at an affordable price of Rs 39. The Rice Bowl option is for the office goers. These rice bowls are inspired by traditional Indian recipes.





## Goa plans on sustaining Tourism

The Election Commission of India has imposed a ban on serving alcohol after 11 pm. This has decreased the interest of tourists. Concerned with the downfall in their economy, hoteliers in Goa submitted a representation to the Director, Department of Tourism seeking relief from the ECI on the same. The representation focused on relaxation in the timings due to the tourism season.

## The Green Tea Range of Marico

Marico Limited has unveiled a range of super beverages including Superfood Moringa Green Tea and Green Coffee Instant Beverage Mix, as a part of its Saffola Fittify Gourmet range. The newly launched range has been carefully crafted by nutritionists and curated by Chef Kunal Kapur for combining the best taste and health for a slimmer and fitter life.



# ADTOI to open up in MP and Tamil Nadu



The Association of Domestic Tour Operators (ADTOI) has recently opened its Northeast Chapter in Guwahati. Rajesh Arya, Vice President, ADTOI, says, "Recently we opened our 10th chapter in the Northeast. Further, we are likely to open two more chapters shortly after the elections- Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The timeline we are looking at is, July-August. Also, the convention is due this year, which we will conduct in August or September, most likely".

## Fresca enters CFD Category



Fresca Juices is one of the fastest growing packaged fruit juices brands in India. It has launched a range of new fruit juices and with that, it has entered the category of CFD. They have launched Fresca Fruzo which has four flavors including Apple, Mojito, Jeera and Nimbu Masala. With this launch, Fresca has become India's first company to provide multiple flavoured- fizz options to its consumers.





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Sarovar Hotels will soon be opening Nirvana Sarovar Portico in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh. It is the 5th city of Uttar Pradesh that Sarovar is laying its hand on. Before this Sarovar has its roots in Agra, Jhansi, Lucknow, Vaishali and Vrindavan.

# Nirvana Sarovar Portico in Gorakhpur

# Engineless Train in Indian Railways



After the success of the Vande Bharat Express, Indian Railways is now planning a sleeper version of an engine-less train for long distance purpose. This train will replace the Rajdhani Express trains for Indian Railways.



# A better journey with Indian Railways

Indian Railways are planning on giving more comfortable train journeys to their passengers. They are all set to introduce new Humsafar Express as well as Antyodaya Express trains which were introduced in 2016 and 2017. 20 new Humsafar trains and 10 new Antyodaya trains are expected to arrive this year.



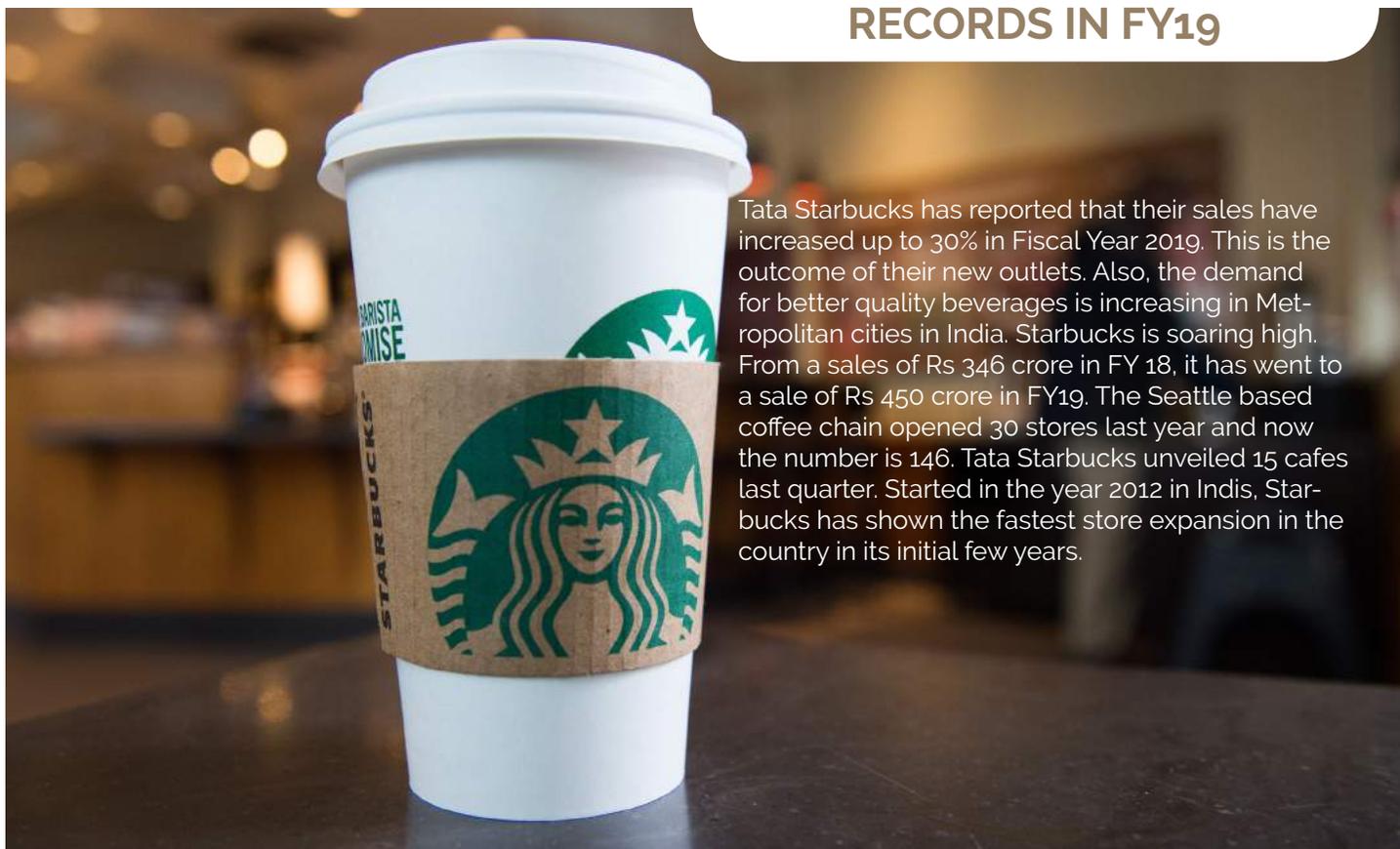
# RITAZZA

## SSP GROUP OPENS CAFFE RITAZZA

SSP Group has launched new Caffe Ritazza in Bandra, Mumbai. The group plans to invest Rs 250 crores and open 75 new outlets in the next 5 years. SSP operates an extensive portfolio of more than 400 international and national brands. Its three most popular brands are Caffe Ritazza, Upper Crust bakery, and Millie's Cookies.

### STARBUCKS BREAKING RECORDS IN FY19

Tata Starbucks has reported that their sales have increased up to 30% in Fiscal Year 2019. This is the outcome of their new outlets. Also, the demand for better quality beverages is increasing in Metropolitan cities in India. Starbucks is soaring high. From a sales of Rs 346 crore in FY 18, it has went to a sale of Rs 450 crore in FY19. The Seattle based coffee chain opened 30 stores last year and now the number is 146. Tata Starbucks unveiled 15 cafes last quarter. Started in the year 2012 in Indis, Starbucks has shown the fastest store expansion in the country in its initial few years.

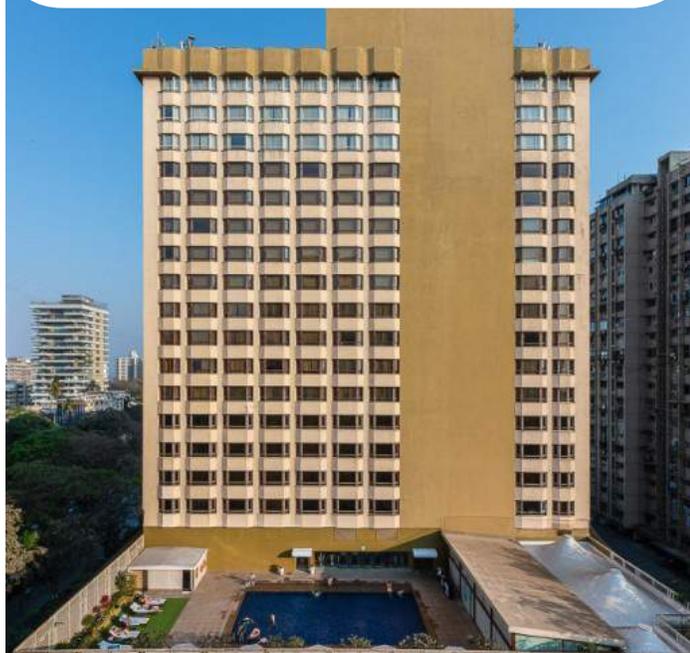




## MALDIVES ITHAFUSHI OPENING SOON

Hilton's Luxury brand, Waldorf Astoria Hotels and Resorts is soon opening on 1st July 2019. This property will be Hilton's fifth largest property in Asia. It takes a span of 3 unique islands. The resort offers a retreat just 30 minutes away from the Male International Airport. One will reach the resort via its private yacht. The resort has 122 luxurious villas which are equipped with a pool. Each villa opens into an indoor and outdoor deck featuring a swinging daybed, dining gazebo, an infinity pool, in water lounge and an outdoor shower.

## IHCL MAKING NEW OPENINGS



IHCL has launched a new hotel brand called SeleQtions. It has introduced 12 hotels across India. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of IHCL, said, "SeleQtions will allow IHCL to cater to a broader audience of travelers who prefer staying in hotels with a distinctive character. SeleQtions also includes hotels that have a slice of history, defining the location or a differentiated theme. We believe the brand has immense potential to grow."

## PRAANGAN BY MARRIOTT, OPENING SOON IN INDORE.



Indore Marriott Hotel is opening its new open-air restaurant called Praangan on April 27th, 2019. It is an open garden restaurant with a live interactive kitchen. The restaurant justifies its name as Praangan is a Sanskrit word for 'Aangan' which means open area. Praangan will be the only restaurant of Indore to provide undivided Punjabi, Awadhi and Kashmiri cuisines from the live kitchens curated by the expert chefs.

# 15th

edition  
of HICSA has  
successfully conducted at  
Grand Hyatt Mumbai on  
3rd and  
4th April 2019.



More than

**530**

delegates  
from over

**13**

countries  
and across

**10**

major  
industries  
had marked  
their presence  
in the event  
and made this  
event a grand  
success.

Presence of global personalities like **Ratan N Tata, Raymond Bickson** had made this event an inimitable event of the industry. HICSA 2019 featured a series of keynotes by the field experts, interviews of the preminent personalities of the industry and number of interactive panel discussions.

**HYATT**<sup>®</sup>

Renowned as the best conference hotel of the business capital city of India, Grand Hyatt Mumbai was the host of the HICSA 2019. Combination of the world-class infrastructure and the best professionals of the industry make this property ideal for events, meetings, and conferences. Acres of greenery and extensive leisure facilities make Grand Hyatt a class apart.



## Ratan.N.Tata

Chairman, Tata Trusts

He was the most awaited person in the HICSA 2019. He is the man who is known for his extraordinary intelligence and simplicity. He is an industrialist who played a key role in the growth of the nation and society. Raymond Bickson, Principal & CEO, Bickson hospitality, interviewed Mr.Tata, which was a sincere discussion on various issues related to the hospitality industry and tata's personal experiences. During the interview, he threw lights on his passions and the sectors which he enjoyed working the most. Aviation and Cars are the sectors which he enjoyed working the most. He mentioned Apple and Google as his favorite. Earlier Bose used to be on the top of his list. While discussing the potential of the tourism industry he said " Tourism industry has immense potential, however, we are not doing much about it. Ratan Tata shared his experience that how Tata group has managed to turn around some of the poorly-performing businesses successfully did and not give up on them. "***We have managed to turn them around. Deep down inside it is very difficult to give up an enterprise and people. While many will not agree with my view, there are ways to make a business successful rather than giving up,***" said Tata.





## Raymond.N.Bickson

Principal and C.E.O, Bickson Hospitality Group

HICSA Lifetime Achievement Award' has been awarded to Raymond Bickson for his outstanding contribution to the hospitality sector during his time as the Managing Director and CEO of IHCL from January 2003 to 2015. He is the man with a splendid 40 years of global hospitality industry experience. In the interview with Mr.Manav Thadani, Founder Chairman at Hotelivate; Co-Founder & Director at SAMHI, he discussed various issues related to the industry. When asked by Mr.Thadani that "how did you choose to be in the hotel business?" He answered that 'When he was in his teenage, his father's friends was in the hotel business, used to attract him as they seem more exciting and happening. So, from there he chose

to be in this line and entered into the hospitality at the age of 17' ***Mentor plays the most important role in one's life as they bring you through your career and that what I found in the Taj, that's was deeply embedded in the DNA of the company.***





## Manav Thadani

Founder Chairman at Hotelivate;  
Co-Founder & Director at SAMHI

During the season of general elections, his appearance was astonishing and his elegant white kurta and pajama with a dark gray waistcoat had attracted everyone's attention. During addressing the delegates and audiences he said "***I promised Acche Din with Hotelivate and I wanted you to be assured that the next two days are going to be really good.***" Then he explained the entire scenario of the industry and highlighted the various key players of the industry.



# Awards



Luxury/Upper Upscale  
Hotel Segment  
WINNER



Upscale Hotels  
Segment  
WINNER



Upper Mid Market  
Hotels Segment  
WINNER



Mid Market Hotels  
Segment  
WINNER



Budget/Economy Hotels  
Segment  
WINNER



Conversion Hotels  
Segment  
WINNER





**Ms. Lisa Suwal,**  
CEO, Prasuma

# Indian F&B Retail Industry

**G**lobalization has significantly influenced various aspects of Indian society, including the change in the food habits of Indian Consumers over the last two decades. Aided by several economic developments, increasing spending power, and openness to new diets & lifestyle habit, the development of production, processing, distribution and marketing of the FMCG and F&B Industry has seen tremendous growth in India.

One of the major shifts in the food industry is the increasing number of Indians shifting to a non-vegetarian diet despite India having a reputation as a vegetarian nation. According to the sample registration system (SRS) baseline survey 2014 released by the registrar general of India, 71 percent of Indians over the age of 15 are non-vegetarian. India consumes close to US\$30 billion meat annually where 90% is handled by the unorganized market.

In this fast-growing industry, a prodigious shift has been seen towards consumption of fresh & chilled ready to eat meats including Sausages and Cold Cuts. The Indian Market for non-vegetarian products has been primarily dominated by frozen ready to eat meat products, unlike International Markets where fresh & chilled ready to eat non-vegetarian products are more prevalent with decreasing frozen sales. Fresh ready to eat products (including sausages & cold cuts) are superior in taste, nutritional value and texture. Due to these reasons, globally, in most developed countries, the

focus is on fresh with very few brands available in the frozen range.

However, a shift towards consuming fresh sausages, deli products, ready to eat products are increasing with consumers in their 20s and 30s, in particular, are driving the changes in frozen food as they grew up in an era of heightened awareness about nutrition, intense scrutiny of the food industry and the advent of the Internet and social media to fuel that fire. Consumers are becoming more aware of the food ingredients and look for "better-for-you" high-quality ingredients. TV shows like "Master Chef", easy cook recipe books and columns appealing viewers for pre-chopped vegetables/meat or other prepared meal components aid them to cook fresh meals quickly.

The changing consumer demand is leading to major changes in the Retail Industry to tap into this demand and diminishing frozen sales. Even globally, Kroger Co. (the 2nd largest food retailer after Wal-Mart Stores Inc. in the US) said frozen sales have weakened over the past few years. At the center of the supermarket and the heart of kitchen convenience, freezer-aisle items are struggling today as consumers shift their tastes to fresh food that they see as healthier. Retail stores have sought to capitalize

on the desire for fresh meats, ready to eat products and deli products by sprucing up the perimeter of the store with investment in Chillers and infrastructure as this is critical differentiator against competition.

On the supply side, the challenge also remains given the complex nature of managing chilled temperatures unlike Frozen Meats & ready to eat products and supply chain proves to be the hindrance in providing high quality fresh food. With very few manufacturers having the expertise and technical know-how in the fresh meat & fresh ready to eat products - creating high barriers for entry, leading to limited choices in brands to choose from. Also, the focus on infrastructure for fresh & chilled meats & deli products remains a major roadblock. Thankfully retailers now understand the change and are moving towards Fresh meats.

The cold-cut retail/e-tail sector has experienced positive growth in Indian markets, yet there is considerable untapped marketing potential. The meat market is expected to reach US\$65 billion by 2022. This reflects the appetite and high interest level of meat lovers. It will be interesting to see what 2020 has in store needless to say more players are expected to join the race.

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BHUCH BHAIJI

# One in a Billion

**Sonal Holland** was a wine enthusiast but becoming a Master of Wine (MW) was another ballgame altogether. It is said that nothing can stop you if you have grit and determination. Sonal despite being a wife and a mother, with very little access to wine knowledge in our country, she embarked on a journey of immense hard-work and sacrifices. To gain a deeper understanding of the wine world and sharpen her palate, she travelled relentlessly to different winemaking countries, met winemakers and tasted scores of wines. Earning the title MW, the highest accolade in the world of wines is not an easy feat. You have to study the depth and breadth of the wine world, and pass 5 theory papers. To pass the practical exam, you taste 36 wines, blind. To succeed at this notoriously difficult exam, you are required to identify the grape varieties, country and region of origin, winemaking, style, quality and commercial potential of a wine. The last leg involves submission of a thoroughly researched paper in 10,000 words on a relevant topic in the wine world. Her hard work and sacrifices paid off and In September 2016, she became India's first Master of Wine and joined an elite group of 382 MW's spread across 30 countries. Today, Sonal Holland MW is undisputedly India's most accomplished wine professional. Sonal is a sought-after wine communicator, educator, entrepreneur and a consultant. Sonal is passionate about sharing her understanding of wine with others and is often seen dazzling her audiences about the fascinating world of wines. She is regularly invited to judge at various international wine competitions.



**CNN** - *"the indomitable force that is determined to make India love Wine"*

**HospiBuz.com** - *"Sonal is determined to increase the wine lovers in the land of whiskey lovers"*

**India Wine Insider** - Sonal Holland entered into a partnership with Wine Intelligence, a global research leader to launch Vinitrac India, a survey of Indian Wine Consumers.

**Sonal Holland Wine Academy**- leaders in providing world-class wine & spirits education to hospitality schools and professionals working in hotels, restaurants, airlines. In collaboration with London-based WSET wine school.

**India Wine Awards** - These Awards were powered by Sonal Holland MW, this is the most authoritative wine competition in the nation led by the country's most qualified wine professionals.

**SoHo Wine Club** - with the aim of uncorking new adventures in wine, this Club curates events, tastings and dinners for the most discerning wine palates of the country.

# HER VENTURES



## First Wine Store in Food Hall

Sonal Holland MW recently forayed into wine retail through the opening of her first wine store at Foodhall, Linking Road. The store features high quality premium as well as delicious everyday-drinking international wines along with a carefully curated selection of Indian wines.

**LUCARIS**<sup>®</sup>  
Crystal of Modern Asia



## Brand Ambassador of Lucaris

Sonal Holland is the new face of Lucaris in India. She has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Lucaris Crystal. As a MW, she epitomises mastery, luxury, charisma and aspiration and she is the perfect person to represent the high-end luxury glassware brand. Through this association, Sonal is keen to encourage discerning wine consumers to elevate their lifestyle around wine.

**HL :** Congratulation for being India's only Master of Wine and India's most powerful woman in wine! You are the amongst very few Indians who would have studied about wines. When you would have started your venture, you would have faced immense challenges explaining your work. Please tell us how did you face hurdles when you started your venture and where do you see yourself in the next 10 years?

**SH :** Thank you for your kind words. When I entered the nascent wine industry as a rank outsider, I saw tremendous opportunities, but there were multiple challenges too. At the time there were no established wine institutions so I had to embark on my wine studies at the WSET School in London. Lack of well-stored wines and a dearth of tasting opportunities meant I had to travel around the world visiting wineries, meeting winemakers, tasting wines to hone my knowledge and tasting skills. Even today, despite India, being one of the fastest growing economies in the world, with the GDP expected to grow at 7.3% in 2019-20, and a thriving middle-class population, its current wine consumption is low. Wine also plays second fiddle to whisky and rum in our country, where alcohol has traditionally been shackled under taboos and male-led consumption. People are still amazed that as a woman I have made unconventional choices in my career. Also, beyond the barriers of tariff and red tape, there is another intangible frontier to cross: the lack of knowledge about varietals, regions and countries of origin.

But I view the future with rosé-tinted glasses. As India's quintessential voice of wine, I am attempting to change perceptions about the drink, dispelling myths, while stimulating conversations around it and instilling enthusiasm in a nascent market. It is an ongoing commitment to making meaningful contributions to shape India's wine industry. One of the initiatives is the Sonal Holland Wine Academy, which is in association with the London based WSET. We have completed

a decade-long innings in providing world-class wine education to luxury hotels and the trade, and are grooming the current beverage staff and future management professionals of this industry. Our consumer-based drive, The SoHo Wine Club is an enthusiasts-only club that encourages the appreciation of wine through invigorating activities and events. Just recently we entered the wine retail space with an entrepreneurial venture, Vine2Wine, with our flagship store in Food Hall at Bandra, Mumbai, where we have curated a fabulous collection of imported and domestic wines, and premium beers in India, promoting a positive culture of vino, which puts the consumer first.

**HL :** The hospitality sector definition is incomplete without wine. Wine is one of the most luxurious and elite drinks. Please tell us how important is wine expertise for the Indian hospitality sector? Why one should be Master of Wine? How do they help to upgrade the Bar in the luxurious hotels?

**SH :** India's F&B industry has a strong concentration on food, with a very low focus on beverages. Having said that, I believe the situation is better now from what it was five years ago, though I still believe the focus towards beverages needs to gain momentum and that too, in a sustained manner. There's a lot of unawareness amongst the top management on how to tackle challenges in the sector, be it lack of knowledge among staff members about wine and spirits, or establishing competent service standards. Proper training is the solution. Global surveys on the subject have shown that companies which invest in training their employees have manifold benefits, such as increased employee satisfaction, better employee retention, increased revenue in bar sales, and enhanced customer experience.



It may be seen as an intangible, but it is directly correlated to an upward swing.

A Master of Wine has a finger on the pulse of the global wine world and can impart proper training because they understand the context of wine both within the world of consumers and the trade, thanks to their wider perspective. Exposure to the international market, several years of in-depth studies and an unbiased worldview on the world of wines helps us at the Sonal Holland Wine Academy to impart the most sought-after wine certification in the world of wine, helping create global professionals who are experts on the subject.

**HL :** It is believed that India is known as the land of whiskey lovers. Is it because Indians are unaware of the variety of wines available across the world?

**SH :** As India's ambassador for wine, I am attempting to change perceptions about the drink, dispelling myths, while stimulating conversations around it and instilling enthusiasm in a nascent market. We do face challenges.

Last year, we released the first edition of the "India Wine Insider" the first-ever comprehensive survey of the urban Indian wine consumer. What we discovered was that the Indian wine drinker's understanding of wine is limited. Other than colour, there is very little awareness about other wine styles-names of regions and grape varieties remain under-developed cues. Another key finding of the report was that price remains the most important choice cue for consumers. The other criteria employed for choosing a wine are the familiarity of the brand name, country of origin and the colour of the wine. But, as awareness grows, so does consumption. This all points to the nascence of the wine market in India, and the scope for educating and involving the consumer. What is heartening there is great enthusiasm surrounding wine, there are curiosity and a deep thirst for knowledge.

**HL :** We are aware of the facts that you have maximum knowledge



**about wines in India please tell us how hotels and restaurants chose wine for their customers?**

**SH :** Currently, the methodology is mostly random and is deeply influenced by the relationship between the F&B Manager/ Restaurateur and the importer/supplier. The relationship with a particular importer determines the labels which will be stocked, and in return, the restaurateur/F&B manager will have to rely on the former's expertise for tastings, training etc. This results in a very skewed representation of wine which doesn't put the customer first. What a consumer wants is access to a broad and diverse representation of styles of wines from across different regions at all price points. The right approach is to draw up a list of all the wines available in India and draw up the best value wines across various suppliers to construct a thrilling wine list. Again, I reiterate, the employees need to be trained through globally accredited wine programmes which eliminate any biases that might exist, and build staff competence and confidence with wine.

**HL : You have been giving consultancy to FoodHall in India. Please tell us how do you select wines for FoodHall?**

**SH :** I am very excited to have expanded from the role of a consultant to a full-fledged entrepreneur. One of our new exciting initiatives is the retail venture, Vine2Wine, where we have curated some of the most exciting international and domestic wines, premium beers and fine wines available in India. This is an 'inclusive' initiative that gives an equal opportunity to deserving producers and importers of the country to showcase their exemplary portfolio of wines. Vine2Wine puts the customer at the heart of everything. He gains access to a great variety of wine across styles, regions and price-points. We will also showcase some winners of India Wine Awards, a platform conceived as an independent, authoritative and transparent awards that recognise meritorious wines to enable informed consumer choices. What puts us apart from other wine retail

ventures is that we have conceptualised Vine2Wine as an experiential store, rather than a mere transactional one, where wine is a mere commodity. Our trained and certified staff will be guiding customers through the buying processes.

**This is my commitment as a Master of Wine, a promise to promote the positive culture of wine, make important contributions to the wine trade and ensure that India finds a voice at wine tables around the world.**

**HL : What attracted you most about the Wine Industry and what motivated you to start SoHo Wine Club in India? Please tell us who should subscribe to SoHo Wine Club and how are they benefitting from it?**

**SH :** It was my passion for wine which made me evolve from an oenophile to a seasoned wine professional. SoHo Wine Club is an enthusiasts-only club that encourages the appreciation of wine through invigorating activities and events. My resolve, since I first stepped into the country's Alcobev industry, has been to educate, enthuse and entertain consumers about drinking wine responsibly - demystifying it for a larger audience, whom might perceive wines as esoteric and intimidating. With the Soho Wine Club, I want to bring more consumers to try and enjoy wines through dinners and events, appreciate them and ask questions about it, because through this only one can truly know vino.

**HL : What role do you think wine plays when it comes to fine dine and how much do you think the consumption of wine has evolved in the Hospitality Industry?**

**SH :** For the urban Indian, wine is a cultural disruptor. Wine has sparked conversations beyond what we could have ever imagined. It is perceived as a 'family

drink,' a sophisticated, socially acceptable beverage. An equal number of women are purchasing wine today as are men. And no beverage pairs with food the way that wine does. The diner today is experimental and is craving novel experiences in F&B, as evident with global Michelin Star chefs putting the country on their maps for culinary pop-ups, curated beverage experiences offered by premium spirit brands and the gustatory innovations offered by restaurants across India. This discerning customer expects nothing less than a well-articulated dining experience that surprises his visual and olfactory senses while pleasing his palate.

**Wine has seen astounding growth of 14-15% year on year in India.**

And the growth of imported wine has surpassed that of domestic wines, showing that customers want to experiment with a diverse variety of wines, with a high propensity to spend. What I advise is for customers to drop the familiarity with known brands that weigh down the experience and instead enjoy experimenting with different brands and styles of wines.

**HL : Sonal Holland Wine Academy is one of the most reputed institutes in India and has collaborated with Wine & Spirits Education Trust, London. Please tell us what are you teaching students at Sonal Holland Wine Academy and where can they work after completing their course?**

**SH :** The Sonal Holland Wine Academy has had a decade-long inning in providing world-class wine education to luxury hotels and the trade. We are a licensed collaborator with Wine & Spirits Education Trust (WSET) headquartered in London, recognised across 70 countries, offering the most sought-after wine qual

ifications across India. After completing the course, you can find employment across the hospitality, airline and Alcobev industry and become a wine entrepreneur, producer, an educator, a writer too. There are many hats you can do. And having this certification makes you globally employable.

**HL :** *Wine Insider is something new for India and hardly people would have heard about it. Please tell us more about it and other interesting research you have been doing on wines?*

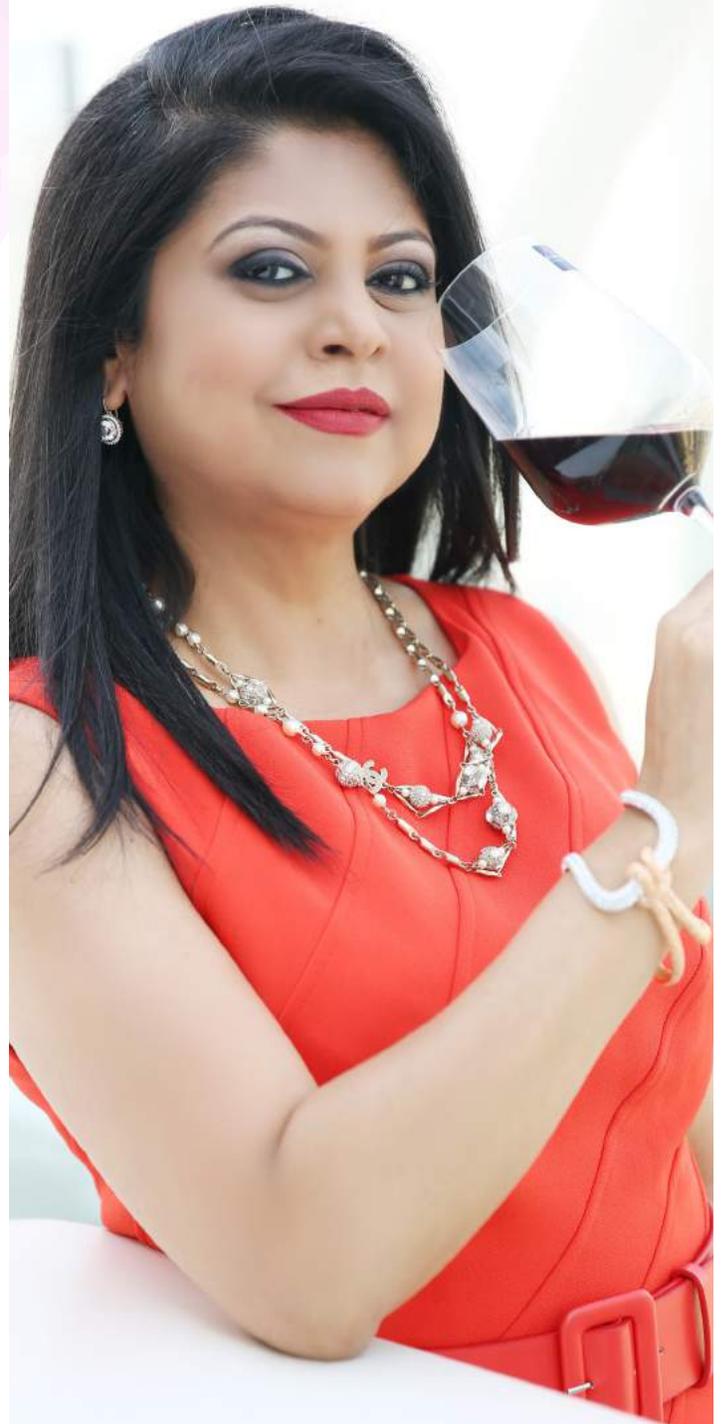
**SH :** Last year, in collaboration with Wine Intelligence, a global consumer research leader, we launched the second edition of the India Wine Insider, a report of the urban Indian wine drinker to track their attitudes, behaviour and relationships with wine. This is a first-of-its-kind report on the country's wine industry that highlights consumer trends and market opportunities for growth. India Wine Insider 2018 gives an in-depth insight into the psyche of the wine drinker and the comprehensive 90-page report is available for purchase.

The report has several exciting findings. In a first for India's AlcoBev industry, the female wine drinker in India is on par with her male counterpart, on consumption frequency, propensity to spend on a bottle and attitudes towards wine drinking. Wine is perceived to be healthier than other alcoholic beverages. Lack of knowledge about varietals and regions and countries of origin that makes wine drinkers turn to well-known brands, which are a reassuring signal of quality. And finally, wine occupies a definitive place in a young millennial's overall drinking repertoire. They are keen to try new and different styles of wines on a regular basis and view wine as a classy and sophisticated beverage.

**HL :** *You have been amongst the panel of judges at various wine competitions at the global level. Please tell us more about wine competitions that should also be conducted in India? How will these wine competition help the hospitality sector enhance itself in the area of serving wine to its customers?*

**SH :** One of our key initiatives is the India Wine Awards, which has established itself as the country's apex wine competition, built on the four pillars of integrity, authenticity, credibility and relevance. It is our commitment to developing India's wine industry, rewarding excellence and serves as a consumer guide as a seal of quality. The India Wine Awards 2018 showcased the depth and versatility of Indian wines to the globe while offering a platform for international labels to reach out to the domestic market. Last year was the second edition of the India Wine Awards, which saw 184 medal winners being crowned from a total of 353 nominations. While guiding the customers on what wines to purchase, the hospitality sector too can publish a list about the award winners which they stock, so that the consumer can draw confidence in selecting wines, enabling them to make the right choice.

**“It is perceived as a  
'family drink,' a  
sophisticated, socially  
acceptable beverage.”**





A conversation with  
**Veeranuch Trangtrakul**  
 Head of Marketing  
 (Lucaris & Ocean Brands)

**HL :** Lucaris has been selling its glassware for more than 35 years in 90 different countries of the world. Mam, please tell us, what was the inspiration behind Lucaris and what makes it different from other brands?

**VT :** In Lucaris we are actually inspired by the passion of the modern lifestyle. As we all know that Asian lifestyle is changing and Asians have become more sophisticated. The first example is that the growth of our consumption in Asia has increased from the past 10 years and it would be continued to grow for the following years. So Lucaris Crystal Ware cater needs of this lifestyle changing by delivering the beautiful crystal-like glasses in different designs. The style of our glass has been carefully developed aiming to enhance the aroma and taste of wine to its fullest. We have also educated how crystal wine glass can enhance the pairing between Asian food and wine through our masters and partners across Asia in the past 6 years. Apart from the wine we also capture the upcoming beverage trend like cocktails and we recently have launched the new cocktail barware in collaboration with a famous hospitality consultant in Asia. His name is Thomas Anostam. We will have it launched in India very soon as well. So I think, Lucaris has been well accepted in five-star hospitality across Asia and we are the partner of Marriott International and Jeldwen in the Asia Pacific as well as the minor hotel group as well.

**HL :** Lucaris, as we all know, aspires to make standards of wining and dining better. Please tell us what made you choose MW Sonal Holland to be the Brand Ambassador of Lucaris Glassware and how was your experience with her?

**VT :** Sonal Holland, the Master of Wine is very well accepted across the nation of India and as mentioned earlier we have a plan from the past 6 years to have our spokesperson as a Master of Wine which is our key communication strategies of Lucaris which is to include aspiration and education. So Sonal Holland basically brings in freshness and energy to Lucaris brand. Her personality definitely defines the attributes of Lucaris which includes the mastery, charisma, and aspirations. In 2019, we actually plan to master classes with Sonal Holland targeting food and beverage professionals in the top management levels. One just happened, a Master Sommelier's competition in Mumbai, in March with the sommeliers across the nation. We are working to perform master classes for the rest of the year. One will be the highlights in the India Wine Awards which are hosted by Sonal Holland.

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# Aloo Tikki Sub

## Ingredients:

- 2 tsp Olive Oil
- 2 Aloo Tikki, frozen
- 60 gm Dr. Oetker FunFoods Zero Fat Honey Mustard Dressing
- 2 no. Lettuce Leaf
- 1 small Tomato, sliced
- 1 small Onion, sliced
- ¼ Cucumber, sliced
- 3-4 no Jalapeno slices
- 1 Loaf Garlic Bread (6 inch) sliced in half lengthwise

## Directions:

Heat oil in a non-stick pan (medium flame). Place tikkis on the pan and grill them from both sides until light brown. For assembling- On lower half of the bread place lettuce, tomato, onion, cucumber and jalapenos. Top it up with tikkis, drizzle dressing and serve.

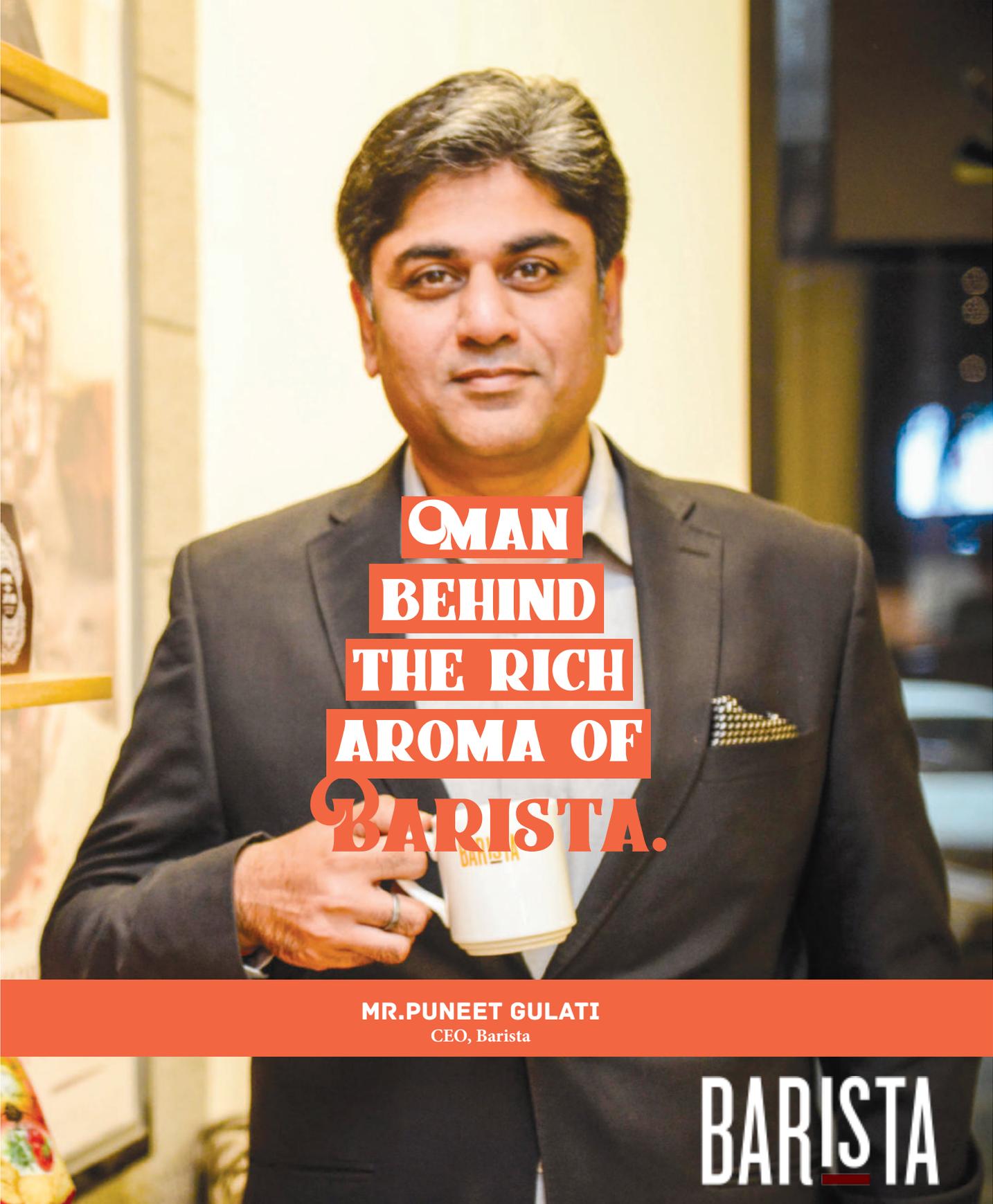
Servings : 2

Level : Beginner

Preparation Time : 10 Minutes

Cooking Time : 1-2 Minutes





**MAN  
BEHIND  
THE RICH  
AROMA OF  
BARISTA.**

**MR. PUNEET GULATI**  
CEO, Barista

**BARISTA**

A talk with  
**PUNEET GULATI**

**HL : Barista is all about serving delectable coffee. Please tells us how has food menu and ambience helped Barista grow?**

**PG :** Innovation is the key to Barista's flourishing clientele, we make sure that if someone comes once to our outlet should be offered with something new from the last time. This very well can be seen in our products, we keep on doing product oriented festivals and campaigns across India like Latte festival, sweetness campaign, winter treat collection etc were some of the latest campaigns we have concluded with and there are more in pipeline. The ambience has been upgraded to give our patrons a feel of a premium lounge which makes them come visit us time and again.

**HL : India is the country with the most youth population hence there is always change in trend? How does Barista make sure to upgrade itself with the changing trend?**

**PG :** As I said, innovation is the key to everything for a small coffee shop. Unlike restaurants, coffee shops are frequented

more by individuals on a monthly basis so, to keep the curiosity alive we keep innovating our menu. As far as the trend is concerned, we as pioneers of coffee culture in India are the one's who start the trend in our domain.

**HL : According to the various studies, Coffee consumption in India has grown by 40% over the past decade, how much growth in sales cafe chain like Barista is looking forward in the upcoming years?**

**PG :** The trend in coffee consumption is upward but if we compare it with European markets we are just witnessing the tip of the iceberg. In India, coffee consumption is around 85-110gm per capita as opposed to 8-10kg in European and US market. We are expanding at a rapid pace and would like to reach a tally of 500 outlets in next 3 years maintaining a healthy growth rate of 10% .

**HL : What motivated Barista to expand in Merchandising? How does Merchandising help the company**

**grow?**

**PG :** Over the past few years we have seen a healthy 15% sales of merchandises off our counter. This sales pattern made us promote Barista branded stuff at our outlets. Merchandising helps us to create and sustain a connection with our consumers even after the sales or the outlet visit.

**HL : Barista is famous for introducing new dishes in their menu. Recently Barista has introduced wide range of dessert like dessert kebab. Please tell us how do you strategize that when should any new product be launched in the market?**

**PG :** The clientele of ours consists of repeat customers and to delight them we try to ensure that we offer them something new every time they walk in, our every campaign have multiple new offerings for a season which stretches from 1-2 months and during that period patrons can enjoy the whole range and can find something new happening at the store to keep the





vibrancy of the brand alive. So for winters, we had Latte festival, winter treat and coming summers we are going to introduce Quenchers season 2 which will see 6 new drinks added to the quenchers portfolio, in April we are already finalizing new campaign which will be enthralling for our audiences.

**HL : Barista has come up with Barista Dinner wherein breakfast, lunch and dinner is also served. Please tell us what is unique about Barista Dinner?**

**PG :** We are having a live kitchen and all the excitement of a coffee shop is already there. The muffins, the coffee is already there. Apart from that, we have 3 or 4 cuisines of the various segments like we have Mexican, Italian, Indian and American (pizzas, pasta, burgers). 2-3 key marquee dishes, most of the dishes which are light for Indians. This product is unique because we are actively looking at creating and developing breakfast habits for Indians outside, we want it to be a very active breakfast area, so these meals are wholesome meals and they are all day diner kind of a thing. You will have a keema and bread, so if we have Indian palate there will be butter

chicken as well in a very fusion format as our focus is also towards fusion foods e.g. as we speak there is a fish festival we are doing for a couple of weeks and we are calling it "Something Fishy".

**HL : How different is customer's approach of Tier 1 cities as compared to Tier 2 and Tier 3? Does Barista serves differently or operates differently in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities?**

**PG :** We have a single standard offering across India.

**HL : What makes Barista coffee different from the other cafes that are well - known for serving coffee?**

**PG :** We are very much stringent when it comes to our coffee, we have been using original Arabica beans to brew our coffee. The taste of the coffee has remained the same from the day it was launched until today. The Arabica beans are the premium beans which have a distinct flavor to it and it takes utmost care to preserve it.

Apart from it, we are not a go-to coffee shop for anyone or everyone, it's not that people can not afford it but it's the positioning that we have created for ourselves

over the years. People with higher intellect, serious crowds prefer to visit us, it would be a rare scenario where we may see groups of brash individuals creating a ruckus at our place.

**HL : Work delegation and trust are an essential part of running any cafe chain. Please tell us how does Barista works and have become so successful?**

**PG :** We have dedicated teams with their roles defined, even our franchise partners are chosen after much of internal deliberation. There are a few reasons for our success like constant innovation and preservation of taste and standards.

**HL : What made Barista start Quenchers?**

**PG :** We have good sales throughout the year and winters are always better because of the hot beverages and delicacies. We have seen cold coffee, smoothies go off the shelf like hot cakes but there was nothing new of offer in beverages. Last year we launched Quenchers which are soda based smoothies and it was a hit. Going by the wonderful experience of last year, we are now coming with 6 different flavors.



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# 60 YEARS OF TASTE AND TRUST

**HL : Himadri Foods Ltd. has been Successful for so many years. How does your company manage to maintain the quality and purity of spices?**

**SK :** Since 60 years we are into this business and we have a very strong supplier base, also we did some reverse integration as well. Also we follow a vendor registration form having strict criteria's, so that genuine and authentic vendor only gets eligible. Also our in house lab checks samples before procuring.

**HL : You have experience of 25 years in this industry. What according to you is the importance of Indian Spices? What makes them different?**

**SK :** Indian spices command a formidable position in world spice market. India produces about ~75 of the 109 varieties of

spices listed by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The varying climatic conditions in India provide ample scope for the cultivation of a variety of spices. Almost all Indian states produce spices. Indian spices are not just restricted to taste but goes beyond and adds aroma, flavor, color, texture and various health benefits to the dish. Indian spices become exotic as we Indians know the secret of right blend that too in proper form and quantity, which makes Indian food so novel and so delicious.

**HL : You have lot of competitors in the market. How are you planning to be ahead from them in the current market?**

**SK :** We are not into the rat race for market share but definitely we created the niche for our clients/customers by complementing their business/food by providing new blend of spices, helps them to conveniently

make the dish taste delicious. Some of them are Tacos masala, kadhi masala, range under oriental mix and many more.

**HL : Himadri was established in 1960 and currently, it is one of the most successful company. Please tell us how the market has evolved and how can the company kept itself upgrade with the changing generation?**

**SK :** Over the years, Himadri foods has evolved and matured itself as a technology-based, quality conscious, customer centric, market driven company. This has led to it commanding a formidable position in spice market with significant additions in manufacturing of value added products. With evolution of big brands in Food business and important role played by prominent Chefs, consumers are exposed to variety of cuisine from Chinese

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to continental. They also love to prepare this dish in-house itself. So Himadri Foods is constantly in touch with the new trends and regularly upgrade blends, which offer consumers the convenience as well as authenticity in taste of their choice. Himadri has distinctive advantage over other players as our in house NABL accredited lab follows strict chemical and biological quality parameters. Our company has ISO 22000, HACCP and BRC certificates, amongst many others to ensure quality. We also offer customized packaging services on bulk orders.

**HL : Your company has a wide variety of blended spices. Please tell us which spices/masala is used the most in the hotels and restaurants?**

**SK :** As everyone has unique taste similarly hotels & restaurants require specific flavors from the spices they use. Commonly used are Garam Masala, Chaat Masala, Biryani, Chole, Chicken/Mutton and Kitchen magic.

**HL : In the era of Social media, your company has seen any growth in the sales via social media platform?**

**SK :** Social media plays a vital role as it helps to engage with your target audience, communicate your innovations, positioning your brand and differentiating your offer, amidst high competition. We are prominent in social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc., still we believe lot of scope is there for us to explore.

**HL : How do you think that platform like Hospitality Lexis can help in a better showcase of your products?**

**HF :** We are very excited to collaborate with HL as it focusly caters to Hospitality and F&B industry. We have the experience and expertise, through HL. We will be better placed to respond quickly and accurately the demands of the market and Chefs in special.



**Mr. Sanjay Karani**  
Managing Director,  
Himadri Food Ltd

# TIRED



# The Catering Saga



Once upon a time in India, catering for social gatherings was not so complicated. The members of the family usually cooked for the guests. Time soon changed and they started hiring caterers. The menu of 4 things now turned to 8. The food now had 5 to 6 delectables and 2 desserts of that particular region. Some time passed and people grew tired of eating the same food. The caterers found a solution and hired cooks from different regions. Now a person attending a wedding in Punjab was able to enjoy the South Indian Cuisine. Is it a happy ending?

No! It's not. There is much more to explore in the story of catering. The catering industry in India has seen major changes in the last few decades. Now the story is no more of 8 to 10 delicacies. The stakes are higher and the demand is in hundreds. The guests are no more interested in the food of different regions. Their palates and taste buds aspire for cuisines of different countries. ( A current scenario of weddings)

Catering Industry has seen rapid evolution. Be it a wedding or a corporate event, food should be the star of the evening. From the last few years, we have seen people demanding different cuisines in the events. More cuisines entered India and a new trend was set up. Soon experiments started with these cuisines and fusion cuisines entered the Catering Industry. Now the food was all about innovation and creativity.

People need a fantasy land to be happy and so they use social media. Instagram became their

Utopia. Each and everything is posted on social media. Same happened with the food. Now the food was asked to be a treat both for the eyes and for the palate. Food styling and presentation started playing a major role in the wedding and events. The Banquet now has had to be Insta-Perfect.

Catering at weddings is not just a matter of food these days. It is an experience of luxury which each and every wedding demands. Catering and decorations of the wedding have gone to an unbelievable level. The big fat weddings in India are actually getting the dresses of their waiters and waitresses designed by famous designers. The dresses of catering girls are turned into tables from where you can pick your drinks and food.

The wedding cards are gold plated these days while some have LED screens. The tissue papers are designed by designers. The sacred incantations of the wedding are inscribed on the venue walls.

The venue decorations these days is not less than a dream. You get actually get your wedding done in the way you have ever imagined in your dreams. You can host your wedding in a garden which is impregnated with flower showers. You can host your wedding under the stars with illuminations all around. You can host a grand ballroom wedding with dim lights and candles all around. You can conduct your wedding in the most lavish way possible.

The waiters serving in the wedding display live counters. Food can be seen in the form of artworks and towers. Food



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presentation is at its apex these days in weddings.

The juggling of cocktails has gone to another level. You actually need to get your flute of champagne filled from a champagne fountain. The waitresses wear huge gowns which have drinks glasses attached to it.

With the increase in Globalization, people are becoming smarter. They know what's right for them. Health again started becoming a major wealth for people and demands grew higher for healthy food. Diet-specific, gluten-free, allergy-specific, oil-free even vegan food entered the weddings.



The food fitting the plates squeezed and trend of bite-size food entered the catering industry. Snacks which can be eaten quickly are on high demand for weddings and events. DIY Stalls or Do it yourself stalls will soon be seen in the catering industry. And this is also not the end much more trends are soon coming in the catering industry.



"If we continue to do the right thing we will see great successes in the future".

## Xo catering by design



**Catered for Shahid Kapoor, Vikram Chatwal and Amitabh Bachchan**

Xo catering by design is among the top catering companies in India. They are famous for their specially crafted menu. Their menu is inspired by the traditional Indian and Global Cuisine. They have successfully catered for renowned personalities. The man behind the success of this catering company is Mr Arjun Puri. Let's take a look at his conversation with Hospitality Lexis.

**HL : XO Catering By Design has been working for more than 2 decades. Please tell us how much the Catering Industry has evolved in these years?**

**AP :** The Catering Industry has seen remarkable growth over the years, almost like an incredible festival of creativity. From sticking to cultural cuisines in the start, the industry now consists of experimentation - making innovative blends between different cuisines, fusing flavours & finding different ways to make dishes as visually appealing as possible. We believe that the world of food is exciting & evergrowing. One will thrive if they are able to achieve a beautiful balance between flavour, creativity & hospitality.

**HL : What is your vision behind XO Catering, what made you start it?**

**AP :** We started our journey into the Catering Industry with the Chatwal wedding in Udaipur. Shortly after the first function, we knew that serving people food that tingles their tastebuds and leaves them wanting

more is what we love to do. I have always been extremely passionate about food and channelling that passion into each dish, each catering, is why XO Catering by Design has pioneered the industry.

**HL : XO Catering by design offers various western cuisines. Please tell us what is in demands these days, the Indian food or other cuisine and why?**

**AP :** We offer a variety of cuisines including Mediterranean, Spanish, Thai, Oriental, Vietnamese, Modern Indian (Indian Fusion) and Regional Indian amongst others. Each wedding is different, hence demands differ depending on the client's requirements. Since there has been a marked evolution in the industry over the years, individuals' palettes have also adapted, craving creativity along with flavour.

**HL : You have done caterings for some famous weddings. Naming a few Mira Rajpoot & Shahid Kapoor's wedding and Shweta Bachchan & Nikhil Nanda's wedding. How big is this achievement for you and what more do you see is coming for XO Catering?**

**AP :** I am extremely grateful for all the opportunities that have come my way, be it big or small. We don't believe in advertising. We have based our business on word of mouth. We believe if we continue doing the right thing we will see great successes in the future.

**HL : XO is famous for the luxury it provides in the events. Please give us a glimpse of what goes on behind the curtains. How do you manage to make such big events a success?**

**AP :** That is what XO Catering is famous for!

**HL : XO is soaring high in the catering industry? Please tell us what are the challenges that you have faced in making XO as successful as it is today?**

**AP :** Just like various other industries innovation & competition are always a constant battle. Each catering is a challenge for us but

as the name suggests at Catering By Design we ensure that each event, menu and client requirement is personalised.

**HL : You have been catering to big fat weddings. Please tell us how do you avoid the food wastage?**

**AP :** We try and avoid food wastage to the best of our abilities. Firstly, while preparing food for the event we keep the number of guests in mind. From our years of experience, we have realised that cooked for 10% more is advisable. This also depends on the type of gathering & age group. However, for food left over from our caterings, XO Catering by Design has tied up with Mother Teresa, Missionaries of Charity that comes to the venue and picks the food up.

**HL : Food Logistics is a big challenge for caterers. Please tell us how do you manage the raw material and cooked food transported to the venue. What all are the challenges you face in doing so?**

**AP :** Bulk cooking logistics can be tricky but when it comes to the freshness, sanitation, hygiene and temperature control we ensure that all the right channels are used to make sure that happens. For instance, fresh raw fish for sushi & sashimi is kept with dry ice to ensure temperature control while it is being transported to the venue. On-site we then shift it to our Sushi Bar Refrigerator where they are served live to our guests. In our base kitchen, we have a walk-in freezer, storage rooms & refrigerators where we store all ingredients. For cooked food, we have our permanent kitchen where items are half done or full done depending on the dishes requirements. Then they are transported in a cool van to the venue ensuring no bacteria growth can take place. This helps us to later heat the dishes to their requirements on the kitchen.

**HL : The kitchen space provided by the clients in the venue area is generally small. How challenging it is for you to cook everything in a small area and provide it in the venue on time?**

**AP :** Kitchen spaces on site on the venue are always decided beforehand. We ensure that space has been inspected by our team

to ensure that we have the right space for the cooking and service of our food runs smoothly. However, there are instances where we've had to work in small spaces but we manage according to the area given to us.

**HL : How do you manage your food on the venue when the gathering exceeds the guest list. How do you overcome food shortage?**

**AP :** When it is a big gathering there are times that the gathering exceeds the guest list. For times like that, we always carry back up of ingredients from fish, poultry meat, dairy & vegetables.



"We stay connected to our India roots and present it internationally"

## Tandoori Nights

*Catered for Pataudi Family*



Tandoori Nights is catering in India for more than 20 years. They have catered for big events including the Royal Pataudi Wedding. Chef Lalit and Mrs Sakshi Tuli are the magicians behind this rocking catering company. Their catering is famous for the luxury they provide in the events. In their conversation with Hospitality Lexis, they have disclosed what more they aspire for Tandoori Nights.

**HL : Tandoori Nights is in existence for more than 20 years, so please tell us how much has the catering industry evolved in all these years?**

In the early years, catering had only to do with food. Now fresh, organic, locally sourced food is in high demand. Gluten free is not just a buzz word anymore. Gluten-free is a dietary necessity for some and a preference for many clients. Clients are knowledgeable; many of them are excellent cooks so the bar is high for us, both in preparation of the food and presentation. There is a high demand for interactive food stations, live cooking stations, and cooking demos.

We at Tandoori Nights differentiate ourselves from the rest by offering something unique, which is, we aim to always stay connected with our Indian roots with our regional cuisines and yet add panache with an international presentation.

**HL : Chef Lalit, you have successfully catered for many big events including the royal marriage at Pataudi Palace. Tandoori nights is famous for the luxury which you provide in such big events, so please tell us how difficult it is to manage such big events and provide authenticity and luxury in cuisines?**

As a celebrity caterer, it is imperative that the food we prepare is hygienic. We always curate a team of expert chefs from different regions of India. From food trails to flavours, we work towards bringing the synergy between authenticity and royalty. Special attention is paid to bring in the stewards, and butler services. We work extremely hard in terms of the expertise to satisfy each taste bud.

**HL : Congratulations to Tandoori Nights on being awarded as the best catering service by ICWF Great Indian Awards. Please tell us what more dreams do you see are still to be achieved by Tandoori Nights?**

We already have an international presence, but a few years down the line we would like to explore more international events and weddings. As the name suggests, we

plan to take our Indian traditional flavours and presentation abroad. We would like to represent India internationally through each flavour and taste.

**HL : Trends are changing and demands are increasing. Please tell us what all is in trend when it comes to weddings and parties and how do you manage to fulfil the demands of your clients?**

Food and wedding trends have immensely transformed every year. Previously people weren't very experimental with food. They used to stick to the basics. Nowadays, clients are more experimental and are willing to try fusion menus. Another big wedding food trend that we will be seeing at weddings is the do-it-yourself counters. We saw the rise of deconstructed food menus two years back which was then taken over by the bite-sized wedding food menu last year. This year, however, the trend will again shift. There will be a lot of DIY salad bars, chaat counters and waffle carts that will make simple wedding food menu much better.

**HL : Mrs Sakshi, it is said that you love doing experiments with cuisines and you suggest organic food. Please tell us how challenging it is to cater to organic food in the events?**

We have gotten wise to the growing demand, and offer locally-sourced menu items as a result. We aim to always balance the flavour with its nutritive value.

**HL : How do you manage your food on the venue when the gathering exceeds the guest list. How do you overcome food shortage?**

We make sure to do a proper R & D with all our clients. We also have a team of professional chefs on site to handle any sort of shortage. To avoid any sort of complications, we make sure to ask the client about the final number of guests in advance.

**HL : Mrs Sakshi, you say that Food is first eaten with eyes. Please tell us how important is food presentation nowadays and how do you make it more creative?**

Food presentation is just as essential to the success of a dish as its taste and flavour. The way the food looks on the plate is what tempts our eyes and makes you want to taste it. It is just as true with food presentation and how the elements are arranged on the plate. Food presentation is all about timing. There is no point in offering the guests a fancy dish if it is served cold when it was supposed to be served hot. So spend just enough time plating your dish. Another important rule of food presentation is balancing variety and contrast. It is good to have a variety of textures on the plate, but how these textures are combined is just as important.

**HL : When presenting a live kitchen, you need to carry some half cooked food and some raw materials at the venue. Please tell us how do you manage these food logistics?**

We are equipped at maintaining the temperature, different techniques of cooking, half done the cooking, and also have AC vans to store the food. We aim to always use natural flavours, minimum preservatives.

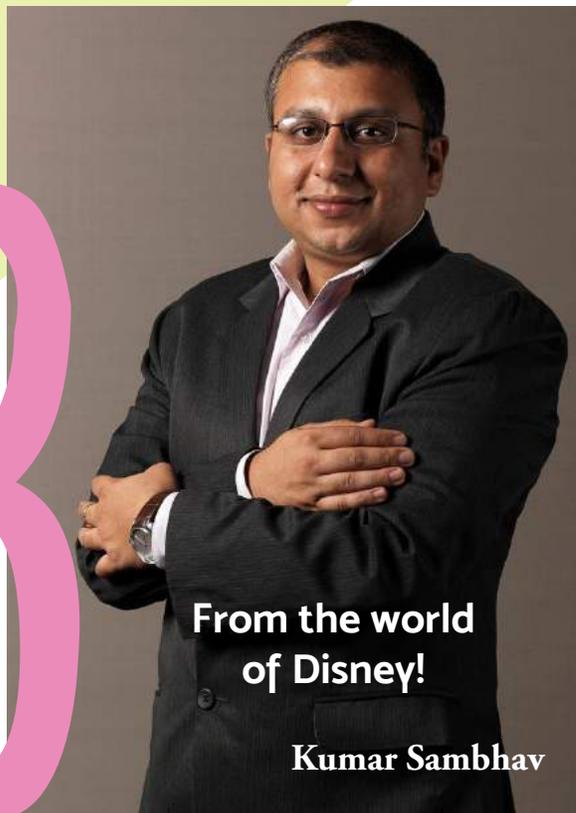
**HL : How do you avoid the Food wastage in your catering?**

We believe in a zero waste policy. We also get half cooked raw materials at the venue. We always make sure to keep backup raw material to cater to any shortfall of food. Also, each chef at the venue is provided with a requisition sheet so that there is minimum food wastage.

**HL : People say that food should be picture perfect. What role do you think social media is playing in the Catering Industry?**

Nowadays catering companies have a keen understanding of how to deliver their messages via social media websites if they are to compete in today's business environment. Many companies in the hospitality industry have begun to offer promotions and special deals to customers via social media channels. One of the most significant impacts that social media has had is the growing importance and abundance of customer reviews.

03



**From the world of Disney!**

**Kumar Sambhav**

"My goal is to deliver a seamless wedding Experience"

**Gourmet Aura**



**Worked for Disney Venice**

Kumar Sambhav is a person with an experience of more than 18 years in the F&B Industry. He has expertise in working both in India and overseas. His talent is visible in the management of his catering company Gourmet Aura. This company caters for many big events. They provide diversity in their lavish menu and are famous for the quality they deliver. In his conversation with Hospitality Lexis, he revealed about his growth ambitions regarding Gourmet Aura.

**HL : Mr Sambhav, you have had a successful career in the F&B Industry. Please tell us what urged you to start Gourmet Aura?**

**KS :** I always wanted to do something of my own where I could show my F&B skills to everyone (Hotels had a limited scope). I always thought Luxury Wedding Catering is the best platform where I would have budgets to deliver a world-class F&B experience for my clients. This motivated me to start this venture with a goal to deliver a Seamless Wedding experience.

**HL : We congratulate you on successfully serving for high dignitaries like Mr George Bush, Mr Jimmy Carter and Mr Bill Clinton. It is a big achievement in your career. Please tell us what big dreams do you see with Gourmet Aura?**

**KS :** I would love to see Gourmet Aura as a leading catering company in India known for its Quality & Delivery

**HL : You have worked with Disney Venice for more than 7 years. Please tell us if**

**anything in Gourmet Aura is inspired by your experience in Venice?**

**KS :** The entire culture & customer service of Gourmet Aura is inspired by my learning from Disney. We have taken a lot of ideas for Food Presentation & Cocktails from Disney. Our menus have a lot of dishes which were a speciality of Disney. Also, the company culture is inspired by Disney.

**HL : Gourmet Aura has a combined experience of over 40 years in event caterings, Please tell us how much the Catering Industry has evolved in all these years?**

**KS :** Past 4 to 5 years has seen the Catering Industry changing rapidly. Customers are more exposed & well travelled now. Buffet Concept has moved to sit down restaurant concept. Guests want new age food & presentation. Healthy counters, low carb diet etc. I think next 4 to 5 years will see this industry evolve further. Wedding catering will take over any restaurant in the quality & presentation.

**HL : Congratulations for being awarded as "Best Bartender" in Churchill. Please tell us how important is the bar set-up at the corporate catering as well as at the wedding?**

**KS :** Bar & Beverage experience plays a very vital role in any event; Corporate or Weddings. This experience has evolved a lot now. From Molecular cocktails to fusion Mocktail to Healthy juices to Smoky drinks to Infused liquor cocktails. I think no party is complete without world-class beverage experience.

**HL : Mr Sambhav, please tell us are there any other brands which you are planning to launch in future? How do you plan to expand Gourmet Aura?**

**KS :** Gourmet Aura plans to venture into Deli Shop business, Cafe Outlets & Fixed Banqueting. We have a very aggressive growth ambitions. Presently for the next couple of years, we want to focus only on our catering business. We are also looking at opening offices in Thailand & UAE.

**HL : You have catered for many high profile weddings. Please tell us how does your team manage to provide luxury in such big events and make it a success?**

**KS :** Gourmet Aura team is very focused delivering a world-class experience. To deliver that a lot of planning is required before D Day. Gourmet Aura team buys the best produce & ingredients available in the market. We import a lot of ingredients to maintain the authenticity of the food. We buy the best presentation equipment. We team up with international Chefs for our events. We leave no stone unturned to deliver a wow experience.

**HL : You believe that a happy customer is your biggest award. Please tell us how important is customer satisfaction for you and how do you manage to fulfil the trendy demands of your customer?**

**KS :** Customer satisfaction is the most important DNA of Gourmet Aura. We have a 95% repeat clientele. Our customers blindly recommend us to their friends & family. We keep innovating our menus & presentation so they are always excited. We keep innovating our menus & delivery.

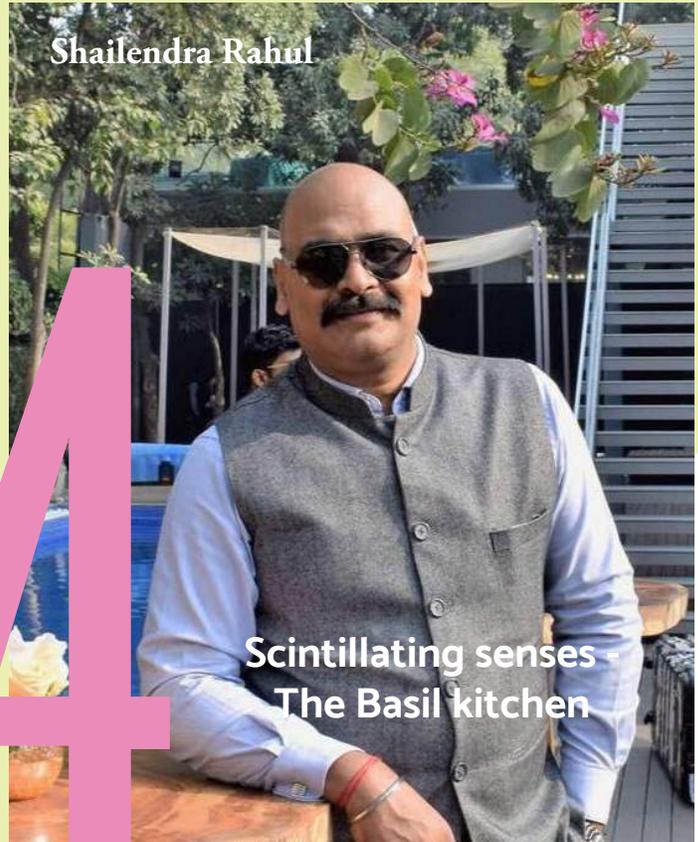
**HL : It is difficult to manage raw material and half cook food and the transportation of machinery to the venue. Please tell us how to you cope-up with the food logistics?**

**KS :** Logistics is the most difficult part of our business. We used refrigerated trucks & Vans to maintain food temperature. Summers are very challenging. Our Chefs have to be extra careful. Winters life becomes a little easy.

**HL : You have worked with the most luxurious hotel brands before starting Gourmet Aura please tell us how different is it to serve food at the wedding at the hotel as compared to the wedding where food is catered in lawns?**

**KS :** There is a huge difference between both. In hotels, Guests have limited expectations. In Wedding venues our clients have huge expectations because they end

up spending 3 times more then they would in a hotel. Good venues in Delhi/NCR would charge a rental of 30 lacs plus. Catering would be additional. In hotels maximum, they would spend 20-25 Lacs which included venue + food. Our presentation, service, quality etc is far superior than the hotel. For us, we can deliver what a client wants & from any part of the world. But incase of hotels they have their limitations.



Shailendra Rahul

Scintillating senses -  
The Basil kitchen

04

"Good food is the one which satisfies all the 5 senses"

### The Basil Kitchen



**Catered for Madhuri Dixit, Rahul Dev**

The Basil Kitchen is famous for making the event a grand success. They are famous for their exceptional food. Mr Shailendra Rahul, the founder of Basil Kitchen is a highly accomplished F&B professional. His experience and hard work say it all. A luxurious event and satisfied guests are what they aspire for. Let's take a look at his conversation with Hospitality Lexis.

**HL : Mr Shailendra, you have had a wonderful career as A F&B professional. What made you start a catering company?**

**SR :** Passion for food, customer centricity and excellence in execution have always been drivers in my daily work. All of these came together when I decided to start my own company! I love to experiment with different ingredients, techniques and types of cuisine. It also gives me flexibility and freedom to experiment with both food and the way it's being present and served. I like meeting people, socializing with them and serving their guests. Putting together a great show gives me a high. It involves precise planning from logistics to execution. It gives me immense pleasure to make customer's greatest day, truly spectacular.

**HL : The Basil Kitchen is famous for its on-spot cooking. How do you manage the raw material and cooked food taken on the venue? What all challenges you face in Food logistics.?**

**SR :** First and foremost is following basic food safety and storage techniques. We carry lots of raw food as we cook at the venue, hence, precision in handling is the key. We store them in airtight containers mostly at the temperature below 5 degrees to avoid any spoilage and ensure quality.

**HL : A party is incomplete without tasty food. How do you make sure that the guests enjoy the richness and aroma of the delicacies that you serve?**

**SR :** We use only fresh herbs and whole spices. The idea is to serve as fresh as it can be, for example, all Salads are made at the last minute. Most of the food, which has long cooking time, is cooked at base kitchen but finished at the venue, right before it is served. We marinate meat, dairy and vegetables for at least 12 hours before they are cooked. Temperature and cooking techniques play a big role.

**HL : You adopt new ideas for the betterment of the services you provide, be it your food or the decor. Please tell us what new changes the Catering Industry will see in the coming years.**

**SR :** I can say that industry is on a fast track to become an innovation-based industry. Catering has always been a customer-centric industry and nowadays, clients expect a lot of creativity when it comes to food.

As a result, we must work innovatively to deliver best results every time. From cooking techniques to the presentation, everything is evolving at a fast pace.

**HL : Along with Indian, you provide Oriental, Modern European, Middle Eastern and American. Which of these cuisines is overpowering the Indian Cuisine and why?**

**SR :** Every cuisine is unique. Their cooking techniques, textures and flavours are different. However, I don't think any cuisine can overpower Indian cuisine. Not only is Indian food diverse, but also changes every 10 kilometres. Since Indian cuisine comprises of many sub-cuisines and cooking styles, it is always possible to find the right flavour to soothe everyone's taste buds. Indian spices have very strong flavours, yet we use at least 12 to 15 different spices in most of the dish, (for example Garam masala itself is the blend of 10 to 14 spices), to create the right blend! You won't come across such complex flavours in any other cuisine so frequently.

**HL : We congratulate Basil Kitchen on successfully catering for stars like Madhuri Dixit, Rahul Dev, Sonam Kapoor and many others at such a young age. What more opportunities do you think are still to come for the Basil Kitchen?**

**SR :** We will be very soon starting to cater out of India, for destination events.

**HL : The competition in the catering industry is high. Trends are changing, and demands are increasing. Please tell us how do you manage to provide both luxury and delicacies in an event?**

**SR :** An eye for detail and precise planning are the keys here. The main challenge in large scale events is ensuring that all the staff working for the event are well trained and follow the standard operating procedures. Having a communication and responsibility matrix set prior to the event, and training

given to The Basil Kitchen team to ensure that a proper channel of communication is adhered to during the event goes a long way in ensuring full compliance.

**HL : Social media is ruling the entire marketing world. How impactful is social media in the catering business?**

**SR :** Today one can find hundreds of options online when it comes to catering. Social media certainly has made the image presentation and marketing easier. However, we still believe that clients entrust a caterer based on their personal experiences. Consistency in quality, taste and services always go a long way in our business.

**HL : How do you manage your food on the venue when the gathering exceeds the guest list? How do you overcome food shortage?**

**SR :** As a rule of thumb, we always prepare a certain quantity of extra food. However, sometimes the number of guests exceed everyone's expectation. In such situations, we sometimes have to prepare extra food at last minute. However, this cannot be done every time and the taste of the food might not be exactly the same. This is the reason we always advise our guests to be careful while planning the party and give us an accurate estimation of the number of guests.

**HL : How important is to create an ambience at an outdoor catering event?**

**SR :** We are firm believers of the fact that - Good food is the one which satisfies all the 5 senses. We start to prepare well in advance, before the "Big Day", to make sure that everything is in perfect order. When it comes to food, not only taste but, presentation, texture and temperature also play a major role in how a dish is perceived. This is the reason that we always try to come up with innovative presentations and setups. Our staff also plays an important role in creating that perfect ambience. We always follow a polite code of conduct and exhibit courtesy towards our guests, thereby providing "Elegant Catering& creating Memorable Experiences"



Unorthodox of catering Industry

Ankit Duggal

Savar Duggal

“Our priority is to ensure delicious and beautiful food”

### The Supper Club



**Catered for Jaya Bachan, Adidas, Embassy of Sri Lanka**

No matter if it is a small wedding or a lavish one. The supper club has a perfectly curated menu for all kinds of weddings. This catering company is running successfully under the young talent. Mr Ankit and Mr Savar Duggal are the backbones of this company. The Supper club has wonderfully catered for many big events and made it a success. They have unveiled their talent in conversation with Hospitality Lexis.

**HL : The Supper Club is a catering company of young generation. Please tell us what is innovations has Supper Club brought in the traditional was of Indian Catering?**

**TSC :** We apply a wide variety of culinary skills from France and Italy in the preparation of our food. We have ensured that we try and create items that are unique as well as satisfying. We adhere to international health and hygiene standards. We also decided to disrupt the “minimum guarantee” policy's of other catered by having a minimum order of 2 people.

**HL : What is your vision behind The Supper Club? What made you start this catering company?**

**TSC :** As a chef my goal was to feed as many people as possible while exposing them to new and interesting techniques and flavours. Our name derives from Supper Clubs, a concept wherein a chef invites you into his home and prepares a meal for you. We wanted people to receive a more personal touch to their events.

**HL : Mr Savar you are a professional**

**chef, please tell us how your skills help you in your catering venture?**

**TSC :** As a chef and founder of a catering company, my priority is to ensure delicious and beautiful food. I think this sets us apart from most caterers as our focus is on the food.

**HL : Mr Ankit along with event and artist manager you have expertise in film making, graphic designing and you are also a music producer. How do these skills help you to enhance your catering venture?**

**TSC :** I think each of these professions taught me similar skills. Artist and event management taught me the ins and outs of creating an event from idea to execution, while film making, graphic design and music production taught me to think more creatively. Both skills are essential for any forward thinking business.

**HL : You have your own farm where you grow vegetables for your catering. Please tell us how much these fresh vegetables add to the taste of your food and how this concept can be utilized by others?**

**TSC :** We utilize space near our kitchen for organic farming. Being able to control the process of farm to table ensures freshness and taste.

**HL : A party is incomplete without tasty food. How do you make sure that the guests enjoy the richness and aroma of the delicacies that you serve?**

**TSC :** We create bespoke menus for our clients, ensuring that their preferences of flavour profile, texture and theme are taken care of. We host tastings at our farm to help tweak dishes to our clients exact preferences.

**HL : Trends are changing and demands are increasing. Please tell us what all is in trend when it comes to weddings and parties and how do you manage to fulfil the demands of your clients?**

**TSC :** I would say the biggest trend is “being different” . Many clients are looking for new flavours and more modern fare when it comes to their food. Many people are tired

of the standard wedding fare. Our company motto is “something different”, we strive to create menus that are innovative.

**HL : Food Logistics is a big challenge for caterers. Please tell us how do you manage the raw material & their logistics to the venue. What all the challenges you face in doing so?**

**TSC :** We have suppliers that deliver our raw materials, these vendors have been vetted by us. For any raw meat purchase we procure and transport the meat ourselves to ensure quality and hygiene. We use trucks and tempos for logistical purposes and food is stored in refrigeration in our kitchen and in cool boxes for transport to events. The biggest challenge is ensuring proper storage and delivery of products from vendors. The lack of tempering controlled transport and quality control poses quite a challenge.

**HL : How do you avoid the Food wastage in your catering?**

**TSC :** We get final confirmation on numbers for every party beforehand and prepare the quantities accordingly. At the end of most events we try and distribute the food to staff present at each event. We try and minimize our food waste.

**HL : When we talk about the decorations of the events, trends for that are changing as well. People prefer themes these days. Please enlighten us how can a right theme be decided for an event?**

**TSC :** In my opinion themes should be kept simple. One idea with one direction. Too many themes and the events can start to look confusing and guests often can't associate with the theme. Therefore keep the theme simple and straightforward.

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A conversation with  
**NARAYANAN  
KRISHNAN**

# RESCUING HUMANITY



(Right)  
Narayanan Krishnan

In a peaceful city of Tamil Nadu, Madurai, a personality like Narayanan Krishnan was born and brought up. A man full of sacrament reached the point of his life where he always wished to be- A Chef. In the year of 2002 young passionate Krishnan was an award-winning chef working with the renowned restaurant for the prestigious Taj

Hotels and nearer to secure a job with another 5-star hotel in Switzerland. Before heading to a new vibrant future calling country. Narayan decides to see his parents in Madhurai.

Krishnan and his family were elated by his progress and success, but everything was okay not to be okay! Narayan faced the cruel brutal reality of the world that day when he saw an old man eating his own faeces out of sheer hunger and starvation, Krishnan couldn't believe what he witnessed, he rushed to a food station nearby and

brought some idlis, the old mal-nutrition man ate the idlis without taking a breath. The old man tears were flowing out of happiness for the food he received from Narayan. This day in Krishnan's life changed him to a better person and a definition of humans on earth. Krishnan instead of sheltering the mouth with antipathy & disgust and passing by the old man just like others. Krishnan showed human values inherited in him. At that very moment of self-realization Krishnan takes the hardest decision to quit his job and serve the nation, which he never regrets.

Narayan is a real star, founded Akshaya Trust, a non-profit organization through which he has served over one and a half million meals to Indian homeless. He enthusiastically wakes up at 4 am, with his team he covers 125 miles in a donated van, abrading every nook and cranny of Madurai in search of homeless people in need of a hot meal. Narayan is a real star. In Hindu mythology, Lord Krishna took birth to kill the satan from the earth and save Humans. Krishnan exemplifies his name "Krishnan" and maybe he wasn't destined to feed the rich and powerful but the poor and needy.

## A chat with Narayanan Krishnan

**HL :** *Humanity is above all and you have demonstrated this by denying the golden opportunity to have a lucrative career in Switzerland. At that time how difficult it was to take the decision?*

**NK :** The sight of a very old man eating his own human waste to satisfy his hunger left me in shock. This incident made me stop and take stock of the poverty and the pain that my fellow human beings were experiencing in my own home town of Madurai.

On seeing this sight I had purchased some idlis from a nearby restaurant and saw the old man eating the idli within seconds.

The satisfaction I saw on the old man's face upon consuming food was the single most important event that transformed my life and made me decide to take up "Helping the helpless" as my mission. "It was a silent revolution of self realization which made me to think who am I? and what am I doing". (which was so powerful question and still that question is driving me towards this journey and joy of giving )

**HL :** *Any message you want to convey to the youth through our publication?*

**NK :** Today's youth have compassion and try to do what little you can to help others. Even if it is a gentle touch to help heal someone, or just lending an ear to hear someone's troubles. Use any spare time you have to volunteer with some organizations that are helping others.



**“My only request for all the youngsters is that they all should definitely donate atleast 10 % of whatever they earn towards charity and spend their time with any organization they live nearer to.”**



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**HL : Bayroute is all about introducing genuine flavors from the ancient culinary of Morocco, Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, and Egypt, please let us know how food menu and ambiance helped Bayroute grow?**

Today Consumers are constantly in search for something new. With Bay route we have introduced the Middle East's impeccable culinary legacy in India. Our aim was to bring on the authentic flavors of Mediterranean food in the market.

To keep the authenticity at Bay route we source some of our ingredients from the bazaars of Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Morocco, and Greece. The food menu of Bay route has the most exotic dishes which are prepared with generation-old kept family secrets from the deepest corner of Middle East region. Our food menu comprises of Baharatli Hummus, Quwarmah, Quinoa Tabbouleh, Shorbets to legendary main courses such as Fatteh, Koshari, and Rotisserie Chicken. I guess, our unique offerings, sincere hospitality and service are what has worked for us and helped us grow in a such short span of time.

**HL : Congratulation for being India's one of the youngest restaurateurs please tell us the most unique things about Hitchki & Bay route? Please tell us why and how did you plan to start Hitchki & Bay route?**

Hitchki and Bay route have completely different offerings from each other. They both target different masses. These days specially in India we have lost that authentic Indian taste in food. Indian dishes are now replaced by newer and bolder dishes and that's how we thought of bringing Hitchki to existence. With Hitchki, we strived to bring back the Indian classic flavors and dishes with a modern twist to connect with the Millennials. Hitchki means hiccup in Hindi and it was built on the thought of Nostalgia evoked by food and music which is sure to make you travel back in time to the 'days of joy. The economically priced menu incorporates regional & traditional flavors from across

# ALCHEMIST OF THE GENUINE FLAVOURS.

India & offers classic favourites with Bollywood twists. After years of research, we introduced a unique and quirky Bollywood themed menu with a modern touch that suits the palate of the current trends and generation. The menu, presentation, uniform and accessories are all inspired from a deep sense of childhood nostalgia when everything was a dream. The food is a fusion of India's multitude of local cultures and cuisines, and also influenced by the favourite international picks.

Bay route was born after years of extensive research, travel, and training. While traveling extensively through the Middle East, we realized that in India we have been deprived of their best-kept culinary secrets. Hence, we decided to get the authentic flavors of Middle East to India. At Bay route, the menu aims purely at middle eastern cuisines. The food largely draws inspiration from the bustling streets of Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Morocco, and Greece. The restaurant adopts the classic bread-fermentation process and cooking techniques such as flat stone atop burning ember, spinning rotisserie and open fire roasted skewers that were discovered in the middle eastern lands. further incorporates their most frequently used and savour-able ingredients such as chickpeas, olives, za'atar, saffron, sumac and dates to create a range of mouth-watering delicacies. With a plethora of delicacies patrons

get to savour a few hidden gems like chicken falafel, Baba Ganoush, Muhammara, Za'atar Chicken, Baklava and Gold Souk which are among the popular menus at Bay route.

**HL : In this sector, the trend keeps on changing, how do keep your restaurant headway with the changing trend?**

To keep up with the changing trends, we try to be as innovative as we can for our consumers. We have been unique with our approach in every segment and always introduced unique and innovative dishes for our patrons. We have interesting themes at both our restaurants which are quite different from one another. With Bay route we have tried to bring something very unique and exotic for the consumers. We have broken the stereotypes with our adaptation to Middle East food by maintaining the authenticity of their delicacies. We firmly believe authentic ingredients play a pivotal role while preparing a dish. Each ingredient is procured from authentic sources, parts of which even go back all the way to Greece, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey, and Lebanon. Our specially trained chefs have perfected traditional recipes that make way to your bright plates. We source some of our ingredients straight from the bazaars of the region – that's how

· HITCHKI ·



**Mr. Arjun Raj Kher**  
Brand Head,  
Hitchki and Bayroute

BAYROUTE

authentic Bay route is! From Baharatli Hummus, Quwarmah, Quinoa Tabbouleh, Shorbets to legendary main courses such as Fatteh, Koshari, and Rotisserie Chicken, Bay route brings alive a cuisine that's as flavorful as it's delicious! we also keep introducing new and quirky dishes like Charcoal Hummus etc, which is also one of the reasons that it draws many food lovers to this restaurant.

Whereas, Hitchki is one of the hippest resto-bars in Mumbai with the most creative and quirky menu. HITCHKI's menu focuses more on regional cuisine with innovative plating and serving options. We serve our desserts in a very theatrical way that is not only mouth-watering but also a visual treat to our patrons. Hitchki is as popular for its ambience, music and service as it is for the cuisine. Its large, spacious interiors are splattered with colours of nostalgia – film posters, utensils and quotes that bring back happy memories of childhood. That's not all, Hitchki has very quirky dishes names which gains a lot of traction amongst our consumers. Bollywood buffs will be amazed to pick from names like HassiTohPhasee, Bas Kar Pagle Rulayega Kya, Amrish Puri and Zhingat Tacos among others. Also, Hitchki organizes Bollywood Nights every Friday, which are said to be one of Mumbai's most in-demand weekend parties.

**HL : Bay route has seen potential growth and expansion in Mumbai. Please tell us about the strategy behind restaurants expansion and how many outlets has the brand thinking to expand in the upcoming year?**

It has been one year since we started our journey with Bay route and we have been fortunate that people have appreciated our efforts. In a year we managed to start three outlets across Mumbai in Cuffe parade, Powai and Juhu. The acceptance has given us the zest to open two more outlets. The outlet will be in Lower Parel and BKC which is the hub for the youth in Mumbai. We are hoping for more positive response and hopefully expand more in the future.

**Weekends and evening hours are**

**the peak timings and busy hours for the restaurants please tell us how do the restaurants provide the best services for each of its customers?**

Training for the hospitality industry is diverse. The hospitality industry has its own special ways of doing their bit for the consumers. There are a lot of components that are designed to enhance the consumer experience at our outlets. Our staffs are well trained and their great service has given our costumers amazing experiences. The staff is often viewed by the costumers as one unit and they can make or break our image in the hospitality industry. Weekends are hectic and our staff is well trained and they have over the years successfully managed our consumers and that is the one of the reasons they come back to the outlet.

**HL : What motivated you to introduce you Egyptian, Turkish, Lebanese, Moroccan and Greek cuisine at Bay route? How much competition do you face in the market and how do you make sure to be ahead of them?**

The main motivation behind Bay route was to transform the city's food segment. After extensive research we thought that people need to be introduced to the world of Middle Eastern food in India. At Bay route every detail has been meticulously taken care of and all you have to do is soak in the flavors and unparalleled aromas. We have kept the authenticity of the Middle Eastern food alive. The recipes are digged from the old days of middle east. We have a rich amalgamation of unique flavors served under one roof. It is a never seen concept before in India and the recipes at Bay route traces all the way to Greece, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey and Lebanon. Coming to the competition, there is healthy competition everywhere and we can see newer brands entering the city. But what matters the most is authenticity and innovation, which keeps one ahead of the race. We have defined the word 'Experience' as uniqueness of five attributes – Food, Drink, Music, Service and Ambience and we assure that we never let any of

these attributes go below our defined standards. At both our brands, patrons get to experience the most exotic and authentic dishes from its quirky menu at very affordable price along with astounding music, Instagram-worthy ambience, unmatched service, and sincere hospitality.

**HL : What is the target audience of your restaurants and how do you make sure that they come back to Hitchki and Bay route again?**

The target audience for both our restaurants is completely different. Hitchki and Bay route have different offerings from each other. Our focus is to give a good experience to our customers who are looking to shake a leg on good music and food. Hitchki is fun and quirky and focuses on reminiscing on good old times. It focuses on regional cuisines and elements of nostalgia to the dining experience, the food and the bar offerings. We have ladies night on the first Sunday of the month. We organize Bollywood night for all the Bollywood lovers. These are the events that people look forward to every weekend and these are the things that bring them back to our restaurants. Now a day's digital usage is booming and people refer to apps before going to any restaurants, hence we do keep a close tap at the reviews and make sure to provide them with the best of experience. We try to be as interactive as we can with our costumers so the process becomes more fruitful from both the ends. Bay route is a fine dining restaurant known for its impeccable middle eastern culinary, brings the world's most exotic, sophisticated, and delicious cuisines. Bay-route's menu aims purely at Middle Eastern cuisines and the essence & vibrancy of the food will make you feel like you are enjoying it in the bustling streets of Egypt, Turkey, Lebanon, Morocco, and Greece. It focuses on giving you the perfect Middle Eastern cuisines on budget. The menu is designed keeping costumers' preferences in mind and even when the dishes are exotic, they are affordable.

**HL : How different is Hitchki from any other restaurant serving modern food?**

The menu at HITCHKI is quirky and we have Bollywood as a theme for our menu. Each dish is named with a touch of old Bollywood famous dialogue or song. It will surely take you back in time and remind you of 'good old days'. Hitchki has a unique menu which comprises of dishes like Ulta Punjab, All Izz Bhel, Mona Ko, Andas Apna Apna and many more that will take you back in time.

**HL : How important is staff attitude and plating of the dishes in the restaurant along with the taste of the food?**

In the hospitality business everything matters right from the food to the behavior of the staff. With new apps these days people have the minute things to comment about and one wrong comment can spoil the game in the business. We focus on giving the right service to our customer's. Excellent customer service is vitally important and it's the first thing that the customers recall about a restaurant. So right from the staff attitude to the presentation of the food each of the factors plays a very important role in maintaining a good name of your brand.

**HL : Dedication, Trust, and Loyalty is indeed needed to run a restaurant how do Hitchki and Bay route works and have become so successful?**

I think for any business all the mentioned factors are important. I think we work with like-minded people who have the same drive that keeps them going every day. So, it becomes a very smooth and easy going process for us at Hitchki and Bay route. Customer is the king and that is the policy that we follow for all our outlets. Over the years their reviews have helped us grow and we have made sure to make possible changes and give the best dining experience to them.

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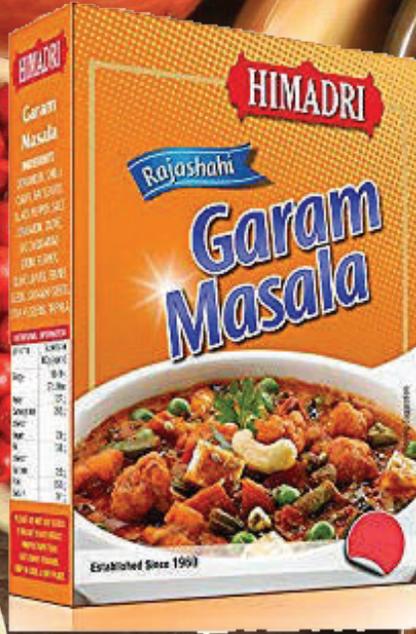
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# Whisky and smoke



**Chef Ajay Chopra**  
Mentor  
The Empresa Hotel

## MOUSSE

Chocolate  
15gm

Fresh  
Cream  
15gm

Whip  
Cream  
5gm

Whiskey  
5ml

## METHOD

Heat cream on double boiler & melt chocolate in that.

Give smoke to mousse

Refrigerate.

## CIGAR

Chocolate  
30gm

## METHOD

Melt chocolate and spread like a sheet.

Roll the sheet in cigar shape.

Refrigerate.

## SOIL

White  
Chocolate  
5gm

Sugar  
5gm

## METHOD

Melt sugar to soft ball stage.

Add melted white chocolate & mix it will .

Remove from fire & crumble the mixture in grains.

## ASSEMBLING

Mix refrigerated mouse with whip cream.

Pipe the mousse in cigar.

Arrange as shown with soil on plate.

**Serve cold !!**

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