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Dear Esteemed Members,

Despite many odds in the Hotel & Restaurant Industry AHAR made many inroads such as recently won a big battle

with the power supply company BEST in which one single Hotelier Mr. Guruprasad Shetty who got the rule set right for the industry, which means the authorities are listening to the pleas made by the industry and justice been delivered to the deserved. Such that the industry collectively can get much deserved pat for delivering food services without fail.

The festive season is knocking the door with much opportunity to the Hotel industry and can be benefitted in terms of better business as the eating habit is changing for ready to eat and pre cooked foods than cooking at home.

send your feedback at info@forevernews.in

S. Suchithra





From Managing Editor's Desk...

At a time when festive season is around the corner and all the goodness and overall industry perspective is fast changing with the Indian economy gaining momentum with considerable inflows of FIIs and FDIs pouring the Hospitality industry also sounding the big bang. The overall feel good factor is echoing and bringing some kudos to our industry.

The recent report by the Ministry of Finance pointing to the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth to 5.3% it is directing towards a better days ahead.

India stands to be the third largest economy globally on the basis of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP). This growth is being driven by the large and burgeoning middle class that is young and will continue to be so for a long time.

As far as AHAR is concerned there is a huge momentum gained by our Association by achieving various landmark court verdicts. Which draws the attention of policy makers and lawmakers as the Hospitality industry is always at the receiving end and due corrective measures been vetted out.

I am sure our members are in receipt of our group publications such as AHAR Hospitality, AHAR Connect and the regular update of AHAR website and social media Facebook and Twitter.

In this edition we have covered some must read articles for the benefit of our fellow Hotel & Restaurant owners. The article on issues and challenges by Restaurant is well articulated piece of information which is very practical and must do type of article which carry some real lessons one must implement.

The beautifully laid centre spread carrying the news pertaining to the Hospitality industry published in various newspapers and AHAR's action and the reaction from various bodies with whom we are demanding / fighting for our due rights.

The article on how healthy is our Restaurant industry is very apt for the time as the youth who consume most in an eatery is largely the pillar of the future hence at this fast changing food habit it is indeed to have a practical check on food quality.

Story on what makes North Indian food popular is conveying the changing food habit and system of Indian Panorama which opens new dimension to food consumption.

Healthy trends in cooking talks about how important is Innovation in Cooking. Even though youths are craving for junk foods still the Restaurants need to keep an eye on innovation and healthy foods. Article on juice it up takes new area of selecting the right fruit and the calorie conscious which will help address the sugar consumption.

At this juncture we are spearheading to the AGM and the annual AHAR Hospitality Expo which is an iconic and a prestigious event in the annals of AHAR.

I draw your attention and support in whatever ways possible to make this event as most remarkable one. This year too AGM Chairman Mr. Sudhakar T. Shetty is driving the team to reach out to the best possible deals and take to the next level of accomplishment.

I am sure you will support this venture with full dedication and fervour.

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Bhaskar K. Shetty Managing Editor bhaskarshetty007@gmail.com

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From the President's desk

The Writ Petition on Minimum Wages was finally admitted by the Hon'ble Nagpur High Court together with an interim relief purely on the merits of the case as provided by our counsel advocate Vivek Thakur

Our sustained campaign against the exorbitant Excise License Fee hike resulted in a committee being formed under the Chairmanship of Shri Amit Deshmukh, Minister of State Excise to conduct a study of the impact due to the above hike over the liquor Industry in the State.

A meeting with Dr Nitin Kareer, Sales Tax Commissioner of Maharashtra was undertaken to apprise him about our problems due to the incidence of Double Taxation especially since the levy of Service Tax in air-conditioned restaurants. We also met Dr. Sanjay Mukherjee, Excise Commissioner and requested him to address our long standing plea on simplification of license conditions. Our delegation presented а detailed memorandum to Shri Gopal Shetty, M.P, Shri Rahul Shewale, M.P and Smt. Smriti Irani, Union HRD Minister and apprised them about the various issues pertaining to the Hotel and Restaurant Industry.

We have also provided the Union Ministry of Commerce and finance, a detailed report of international practices being followed by developed countries during implementation of Indirect Taxes in the hospitality industry.

We were very upset with the new Government for ignoring our demand to abolish the Service Tax being levied over and above the VAT in the Union Budget.

We met the newly appointed Shri P. Bhapkar, FDA Commissioner, Shri H.K Jawale, Labour Commissioner, Shri Dhananjay Kamlakar, Jt. Commissioner of Police and Dr. (Smt) P.Keskar, E.H.O and apprised them about the issues affecting our members during operation.

We are very thankful to the Mumbai Police Commissioner Shri Rakesh Maria for issuing the order to all the Police Stations and Social Service Branch (SSB) not to disturb Permit Rooms and Restaurants before the official closure time of 1.30 am. We had earlier made the representation and complained to him regarding the harassment by Police before the closure time. *

I would like to compliment our member Shri Guruprasad Shetty for relentlessly following the BEST monopoly case and being successful. MERC has granted license to TATA Power Company to distribute power to the consumers of the island city for the next 25 years. Now the power consumers have a choice to select the Electricity Service Provider ending the monopoly of BEST.*

Members are requested to get themselves updated about the new ceiling of EPF. The government has notified enhancement of wage ceiling to Rs 15,000.00 per month, fixed minimum monthly pension at Rs 1,000.00 under EPS-95 and enhanced the maximum sum assured under the Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance (EDLI) Scheme to Rs 3.00 lakh. The member advised to confer with their consultant about the said implications and abide by the new notification.*

We are pleased to inform that the 35th A.G.M will be held on 16th December 2014 in Buntara Bhavan. Members are requested to participate in full strength and make this event a grand success.

Arvind Shetty President arvind_shetty605@yahoo.co.in

* Please visit www.ahar.in for details

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From Hon. Gen. Secretary's Desk

The Happy news is that TATA power Company has got renewal of their license to supply electricity for next 25 years by MERC but with condition of submitting revised plan based on our demand of having sufficient sub stations in South Mumbai to have uninterrupted Power Supply.

Our Meeting with the Sales Tax Commissioner Shri Nitin Karee was very positive and he assured our demand of charging Service Tax only on Service component and not on the entire bill based on High Court Judgment of Uttarkhand.In our meeting with the State Excise Commissioner we requested for expediting the process of simplification of Excise rules and regulations of 6 decades old.

Our 35th AGM will be held on 16.12.2014 at Bunts Sangha Auditorium, We seek the support of each and every member through participation and make this event a grand success.

We are happy that our representation to the Central Government is being heard and considered. For a small Association like ours whose jurisdiction is restricted to Greater Mumbai, it is a matter of pride.

Our delegation has met the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra and stressed him the need of modification of decades old police and excise Rules and also about the 50% hike in FL-III license fees which is affecting the Permit room Hotels very badly.

The Service tax matter is coming up for hearing in Supreme Court soon. We hope of some relief to the partly and fully air-conditioned Hoteliers.

We met the Labour Commissioner, the Commissioner FDA and EOH and briefed about the various grievances of the Industry with them.

With the State election round the corner, a hope for a stable and pro industry Government will come into force and our decades old grievances are being addressed.

With regards,

Sukesh Shetty Hon. Gen. Secretary sukesh2205@gmail.com

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Indian F&B industry needs new laws, licensing and taxation policies urgently

by G. Subramanian & Bhaskar K. Shetty

The food and beverage industry of India remains plagued with a plethora of problems, despite the nation having attained independence from foreign rule in 1947. Unrealistic licensing policies, unchecked inflation, law and order problems, high taxation and a host of other adverse factors continue to stunt the industry that should have risen as one of the most profitable in India.

In this article, AHAR takes a look at some of the major issues afflicting and stunting the growth of the Indian food and beverage industry in general, with a special focus on Mumbai.

Food price inflation:

The years 2012 to 2014 witnessed an unprecedented inflation in cost of food across India. This in turn has adversely affected the local food and beverage industry- particularly Udupi and other ethnic Indian restaurants and bars. While incomes remained more or less stagnant, the average Indian found his or her monthly earnings depleting fast due to increased cost of basic groceries, leaving less disposable income for enjoying an evening or weekend out. This in turn adversely impacted the food and beverage service providers, causing an overall slowdown in the growth of this sector.

According to experts, the year 2010 witnessed the peak of inflation in food prices across India with costs rising by around 20 per cent. This inflation adversely impacted profit margins enjoyed by restaurants since the cost of raw materials had risen exponentially. Consequently, restaurateurs across India witnessed customers searching their pockets before deciding to dine out. Hundreds of restaurants, bars, permit rooms, dhabas and the likes had to cut costs by reducing the number of staff or downsizing portions served to customers.

Increased competition:

The last few years also witnessed the entry of multi-national food service providers into India. Propelled with huge advertising budgets and sufficient funds to buffer any losses caused during the gestation period, these foreign chains quickly gobbled up restaurant space available in metros such as Mumbai, uprooting traditional restaurants. MNCs also offered value based meal options across India which could not be matched by the largely unorganized food and beverage sector in India. For example, a foreign chain was offering burger sandwiches for as low as Rs. 25 each while a regular 'vada pav' from a street-side stall in Mumbai cost Rs. 12 each or as much as Rs. 20 if ordered at a restaurant. The 'phoren' hungry Indian obviously chose the MNCs. It is indeed shocking to note that despite offering a wholesome meal (Thali) for a paltry Rs. 65 to Rs. 150 with many value additions. The Indian small, medium or large restaurant chains have been unable to come up with a survival package. Organizations including The Indian Hotel and Restaurant Association (AHAR) by putting their best effort were hardly able to unite on a common platform to provide a befitting response to offerings by MNCs.

Manpower shortage:

Any person who has dined at a typical Udupi or ethnic Indian restaurant will have subtly observed that the industry is extremely labor intensive: The casual and regular Indian diner ensures that the person who cleans the table does not handle food and drink. Further, Indian restaurants are also service based: meaning, the client expects to be served at the table and pampered by the service crew- in sharp contrast to foreign food chains in India which operate on a "self service" basis meaning the customer waits in a queue, pays for the food in advance, collects the voucher and hands it over for the food to be delivered, carries the tray to his or her table and after dining, places the tray and dumps the leftovers in appropriate bins.

While unskilled manpower is easy to find, a major concern among Indian restaurateurs remains the health of staff. No restaurateur worth his name will hire any staff suspected of



being afflicted by an infectious disease for the fear of penalties imposed by concerned local authorities. Among healthy staff too, restaurateurs have to ensure they hire persons who are not chronic alcoholics or drug users since no Indian customer will tolerate a waiter or cleaner reeking of booze or walking in a daze caused by narcotics and drugs.

Skilled personnel such as quality chefs and honest managers are also difficult to find, a recent survey conducted by India's tourism ministry found. According to available statistics, Indian colleges turn out only about nine to ten per cent of the total manpower required by the industry. And graduates are quickly absorbed by five-star and foreign chains who can afford high salaries, leaving the largely unorganized restaurant sector starved of much needed staff. Migration of labor is also an issue: most restaurants now hire staff who have at least basic credentials of their identity and proof of address such as an 'Aadhar card', due to law and order concerns. Migrant labor who do not possess such credentials often find themselves shunned by operators in cities like Mumbai, despite possessing the required skills as service crew or traditional chefs. The survey also discovered that Indian restaurants have a staff attrition rate of around 30 per cent- meaning most operators find it difficult to retain trained and skilled personnel as they are quickly offered attractive salaries by newer employers, given the manpower shortage.

Unrealistic real-estate prices:

Mumbai, the financial hub of India, is witnessing a real estate boom since the last decade. This has sent prices of real estate- on sale and lease- skyrocketing to unprecedented levels. This has put prospective new entrants at a disadvantage since they are unable to raise sufficient funds to buy or rent a new premises, especially in prime locations. With scores of buildings in suburban Mumbai under redevelopment, many long-time operators were forced to move out and seek new premises, which cost prohibitively high. Interestingly, MNCs do not find real estate prices to be an impediment since they have high budgets for launching operations in India. The low exchange rate of the Indian Rupee to the US Dollar, UK Pound Sterling or EU's Euro also work in favor of MNCs when it comes to acquiring commercial premises for opening new businesses. A walk around any major mall in Mumbai will bear testimony to this disturbing fact.

As a result, Indian restaurateurs are forced to cough up high rents, pay huge taxes and other levies once again adversely affecting profitability, opening of new restaurants and relocation/ operation of existing ones.

Unrealistic laws governing operation of restaurants, permit rooms and bars is also a factor hindering growth of the Indian food and beverage sector. In several cities, a moratorium on opening new restaurants, bars, permit rooms and beer bars in densely populated residential areas or residential buildings is enforced. This leaves the Indian food and beverage sector in a quandary, once again, stunting its growth.

Unreliable logistics and supply chains:

India's logistical and supply chains are largely unorganized with food wholesalers having to depend upon individual truck owners to supply the end user- especially restaurants. The chain is further complicated by the unnecessary presence of several players such as commission agents who procure the produce, sell it to wholesalers at a premium who in turn add profits before supplying it to a restaurant. Thanks to frequent increases in fuel prices and cost of maintenance of trucks, the supply chain has also become expensive. Add to these strikes and other agitations keep popping from time to time, albeit peaceful, undertaken by various unions. This renders the Indian restaurateur prone to unpredictable market conditions and other vagaries in the supply chain. To keep businesses operational, restaurants are forced to depend upon multiple suppliers while paying a premium to ensure their services are not affected regardless of the ups and downs in the supply and logistics chains.

Sufficient warehousing facilities and cold storages which can provide a seamless supply of raw material to the food and beverage industry are currently unavailable. This not only leads to a wastage of raw material due to natural causes but also increases the costs to the end users as suppliers buffer the waste by hiking prices.

"Protection" money:

In metros such as Mumbai, it is common for any industry the protection money issue plays a key element of wastefull investment especially for restaurants, bars and permit rooms to pay large amounts to certain entities as "protection money." The topic is never discussed openly at any forum due to fear of retribution. However, "protection money" paid by restaurateurs eats into the profitability of these businesses. Despite being a major law and order problem, no Indian association has dared rake up the issue of "protection money" with law enforcement agencies.

Liquor Laws:

The Indian liquor laws are complex and at best, incomprehensible to any ordinary restaurateur or prospective new entrant. For any food and beverage outlet to serve liquor on its premises, a series of licenses and permits from various authorities are required from the local municipality, state Government and the central Government. Applicants for liquor permits are often forced to wait several months before being granted one. Added to these woes are the facts that some conservative Indian families, especially with growing up kids tend to shun restaurants with bars and permit rooms, thus limiting their client base to adult males only. A few posh pubs are frequented by women from the younger generation but the operational costs of such outlets are horrifyingly high. The cost of procuring licenses for serving Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) are high while the price of a permit to serve imported booze is unimaginable and can deter any new entrant. Restaurants serving liquor are also subjected to pay higher taxes and other levies imposed by the Government while their operational hours are severely restricted. Bars and permit rooms also have to maneuver themselves through a swamp of "dry days" on which sale of liquor is banned, forcing the outlet to remain closed. Moreover, one needs to get a permit to consume liquor with a recommendation of Medical practitioner.

India is caught in a maze of archaic and complex regulations at both the central and state level when it comes to sourcing liquor. Every player offering alcoholic beverages has to obtain a series of licenses to sell alcohol, and also adhere to the



prescribed permitted hours, eligible age limit, etc. This situation is further intensified by the following challenges.

Red Tape:

Indian restaurateurs are required to obtain a plethora of licenses before they commence operations and renew them periodically. Failing to procure any of the prescribed licenses/ permits can lead to authorities shutting down the outlet under various provisions of the Indian law.

An example of the number of licenses and permits required by any restaurateur to operate is listed in the following chart:

TYPE OF LICENSE	ISSUING AUTHORTY	Mandatory/ Optional
FSSAI License	FDA	Mandatory
Health/Trade Eating House License for serving Food	Heath Dept., Municipal Corporation of the City	Mandatory
Health License for serving Liquor (Madira License)	Heath Dept., Municipal Corporation of the City	Mandatory
Shop & Establishment License	Shop & Est. Dept., Municipal Corporation of the City	Mandatory

List of licenses and permits required by restaurants/ bars in India



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Environment Clearance for Grease Trap/ETP (Water Pollution Act)	State Pollution Control Board	Mandatory
Weights & Measures Approval	Controller of Legal Metrology Dept.	Mandatory
Police Registration License (RC)	Asst. Commissioner of Police	Mandatory
Place of Public Entertainment License (PPEL) for serving liquor	Commissioner of Police	Mandatory
Liquor License FL-III for serving Liquor	Commissioner of Excise, State Excise Dept.	Mandatory
Tourism Approval	Tourism Dept. Of Govt. of India/ State Govt.	Optional
Lift Licence (if Lift is installed)	Inspector of License, PWD	Mandatory
Insurance required to be taken for Public Liability, Product Liability, Fire Policy, Building & Assets etc.	Any Insurance Company	Optional

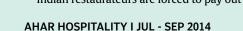
The Licenses required to start a Restaurant is almost same throughout India except in some cities like Mumbai where one has to obtain about 38 different types of Licenses, Permits, NOCs, Certificates and Registrations.

The Maharashtra Govt. has recently appointed 'Accenture', an International Consultant to suggest ways to reduce these Licenses from 38 to 19 after a representation made by AHAR.

Note: The above List is not exhaustive but indicative. Other Licenses required are Weather Frame License, Hoarding License for Advertisement, Rolling Shutter License, Health Grade Certificate from Municipal Corporation. Permission also needs to be taken from Electricity Service Providers for operating heavy duty machineries like electric Grinding Stones, Water Pumps, Air-Conditioners, Cooling Plants etc. Apart from the above requirements one has to fulfil other statutory obligations like ESIC, PF, Professional Tax for Employees, & Employers.

Exorbitant Taxation:

Indian restaurateurs are forced to pay out large sums of their





revenues as taxes and other levies imposed by the government. These taxes are invariable charged to the client who views it as an unnecessary expense on dining at a restaurant. The list of taxes enforced in India is as follows:

Taxation in Food Services Outlets

Type of Tax	Tax (%)
VAT- Food and Non-alcoholic Beverages	12.50%
VAT- Alcoholic Beverages	5% Flat
Service Tax	4.94% (40% of 12.36%)

Population pockets :

A common problem across India and especially Mumbai, some areas are predominantly resided in by one or more ethnic community. Thus restaurateurs have to be extra cautious in selecting the area they wish to operate in or tailor their menu offerings to suit tastes and needs of the local populace. In Mumbai, for example, some suburbs are predominantly resided in by persons who come from a strictly vegetarian dietary background. Opening a bar offering non-vegetarian dishes in such areas is frowned upon and can attract ire from local residents and authorities. In other areas, people may be predominantly meat eaters. This forces a restaurateur to tailor his menu accordingly or face losses.

Solutions:

Organizations such as AHAR have to lobby with the local municipal, state and central government for an overall amendment in Indian hotel and restaurant laws. A panel of experts on laws needs to review existing laws and draft new ones to be presented to the government. The new draft laws need to take into consideration the various requirements of all categories of operators.

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Application i Suburban Area under Chene

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Mumbai: Police stations as well as the social service branch (SSB) will no longer disturb permit rooms and ho-tels before their official clo-

tels before their official clo-sure time of 1.30am. Toclear the confusion over the closing time to serve li-quor in permit rooms and ho-tels, police commissioner Ra-kesh Maria has now asked all police stations as well the SSB to ensure they shut shop only by 1.30am.

by 1.30am. Sources said that last nonth, a few hoteliers met daria and complained that policemen were making cases t over 1.150m gran though t even 1.15am even though eclosing timing was 1.30am. laria has now given instruc-ons to all police officers that

■he Mumbai police on Friday issued the Maharashtra

the new Act, which came into existence on June 14 this year, even prohibits any kind of dance in four and five-star hotels. "Earlier, four and five-star

they should not bother hote-liers and bar owners till 1.30am. "Despite clear orders of the countror with of the court as well the government, the policemen were ha rassing us and even making cases at 1am. Hence, we met

Issued the Maharashtra government's Gazette notification regarding the amended Maharashtra Police amended Maharashtra Police Act of 2014 which prohibits any kind of dance in eating houses and permit rooms. Sources said the new Act, which came into existence on line 14 this war.

Amended Act bans dance in star hotels

hotels were exempted. Last year, the state lost its case in the Supreme Court to ban dance bars in the state. After its appeal was dismissed, the state decided to bring a law banning dance

was dismissed, the state decided to bring a law banning dance bar, "said a senior police officer. The SC had has also pulled up the state as to why they were dif-ferentiating between beer bars and four and five-star hotels, prompting the state government to bring in the law. TNN

Maria and complained," said Arvind Shetty, president of As-sociation of Hotels And Res-taurants (AHAD) taurants (AHAR).

"Maria has rightly inter-vened and brought some re-lief," said an bar owner

a's Leopold Café and many other eateries, the Bombay nigh court has restrained a copyright administrator from issuing in its name public performance licences to play music, saying it can act only as an agent of the copyright owner. Novex Communications

Pvt Ltd manages copyrights for Yashraj Films, Shemaroo Entertainment and UTV Software Communications. Leopold had moved the HC after Novex demanded separate licence fees for telecasting World Cup soccer match-Novex thereafter undertook not to represent, unless authorized, owners of the channel which telecast

the matches. Leopold also challenged Novex's right to demand that it obtain a public performance licence (PPL) from it to play music, saying Novex



Leopold had challenged the right of Novex to demand that it obtain a licence from it

was not a registered copy right society under the Copy-

right Act to issue licences. Leopold said it had obtained a PPL from the Phonographic Performance Ltd, a registered society, for soundtracks.

Leopold's advocates Virendra Tulzapurkar and Ra-mesh Soni showed docu-

cences, saying that in every case it acted as an agent and disclosed name right-holders. tel said these

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the Centre for ignoring their de-mand to abolish the service tax being levied over and above the VAT, in the Union Budget. cive acti that the i prevent

imposed [all partly rants, whi of the tota 12.5% is c bill amour The K held levy

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"Restaurant owners across India, including those in Mumbai, are protesting against the service tax being levied on them Parliamen nal after l over and above the VAT as it hits business and also consumers. We had urged the NDA governhoteliersci tutional va on restaura ment to remove the double taxaliquor-a p

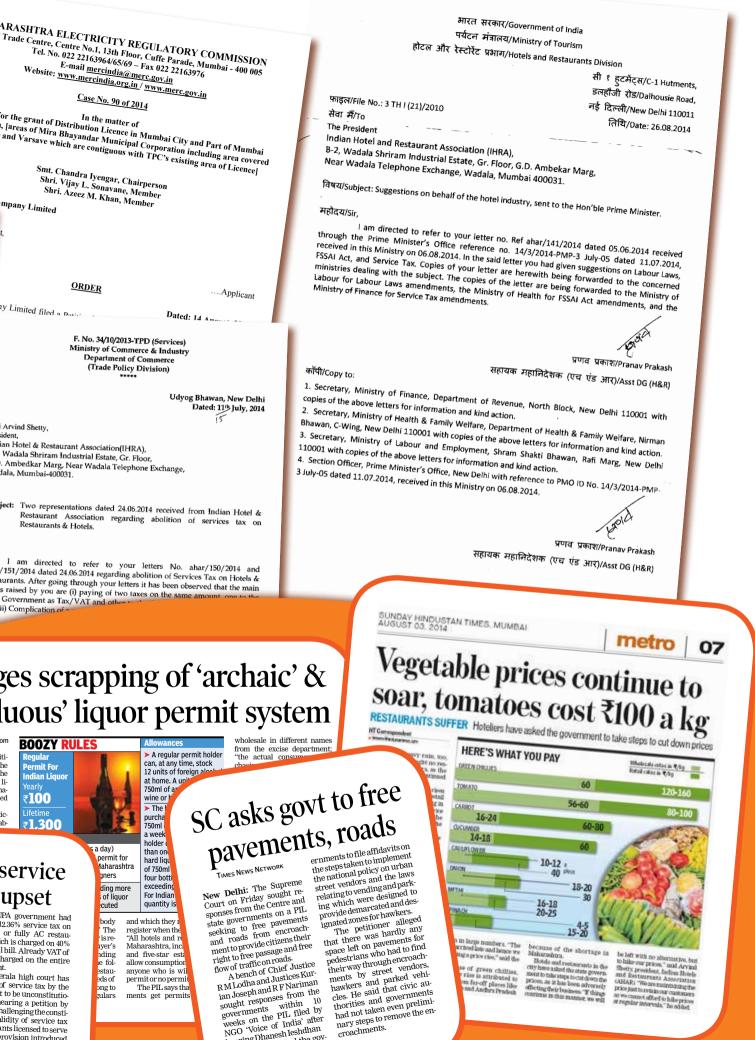
No rollback of

Mumbai: The city's hospitality

industry, including bars, restau-

rants and hotels, are upset with

tax, hoteliers





E ating is not only an art, cooking and choosing food are sciences that are very vital for the proper functioning of your body. What is life without spice, and what is wealth without health?

Remember that your mind is directly connected to the food you eat. So in order to have a fit body, you must also have a fit mind, and that can be possible only if you strive to eat well.

The food that we eat is a very important tool in our aspirations for a fit body, mind and intellect equipment. What you eat literally adds or subtracts from your health quotient. So, be mindful of what you ingest, as it affects even the way you think. In Vedic times, food was considered an important facet of the daily grind of each human being. Traditionally, India has kept up with the trend to eat healthy food, so everything an Indian eats, he does so with the most important issue of health in his mind.

Good food not only needs to look good, it should also taste good. A healthy meal is one that balances out all the different minerals, foods, proteins and fats that the body needs to function well. We also tend to give up fats totally from our diet. But the truth is that certain fats are very necessary for the proper functioning of the body.

Vitamins and minerals are very important, and you get them in good measure from vegetables and fruits. For the protein in your diet, you can eat the whites of an egg, but it has been proven that animal protein is not necessary for the protein content required in our bodies. Since our intestines are not that long, humans have been trained to be vegetarian since a very long historical time.

You can get your protein in-take from sprouts, lentils and pulses, which are very healthy if sprouted. You can make salads and curries with sprouts in mind. It is noteworthy that they also taste very good. You should also remember to use spices which have proven to be very useful in all types of bodily infections.

Turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, basil, thyme, the list is endless. Spices increase the metabolism of your body and most of them are highly useful against inflammations of any kind.

Fruits are also important, and you should have a bowlful of various fruits everyday. The importance of cereals is also worth mentioning. While whole wheat cereals are ideal for virtually any body type, certain processed cereals do have plenty of reasons to be avoided. Processed food, inorganic food, food with labels, organically modified foods, and foods with a lot of pesticides are very bad for health.

Brown rice, or rice with a partial husk is also very god for your body. It not only fills you up, but it also provides all the nutrition value your body requires. So eat well and work well. That should be your goal as you add on the years. Welcome, Ahmad Fahad... Select your region to full the restaura

PIZZAEXPRESS



Mobile Apps and on-line ordering can help Indian restaurant industry grow

by G. Subramanian

or hotels to expand their customer I base, they need to now increasingly depend upon social media and use mobile apps to reach consumers. The mobile telecom boom in India is an ideal opportunity for the hotel industry to increase contact with customers, which aids in brand development based on decisions made according to demand and feedback. While almost all hotels now have websites and at least one social media channel, many have yet to adopt mobile technology. This puts them at risk for being left behind as customers seek lodging sites they can access while on the go. Ensuring that hotel businesses are not only optimized for search engines but also have mobile apps for android and nonandroid devices is important for brands to remain competitive.

For several years, about half of all local searches have been conducted using mobile technology. In the first quarter of 2014, searches on mobile devices surpassed desktop internet searches. This suggests that mobile apps are not just a convenience anymore, they are necessary for hotels to remain in business. Customers now expect to find the information for which they search whenever they have to urge to access it. This generation is all about spontaneity and obtaining desired information immediately, on the spot. As far as the internet is concerned, they do not generally believe in the notion of delayed gratification.

Remaining competitive means pleasing all segments of the population. Research shows that many people searching for lodging often wait until they are already traveling before looking for hotels. Therefore, mobile apps are critical for attracting new business. Additionally, consumers today expect to remain in a relationship with the businesses they use most. This means they can continue interacting with businesses sites from anywhere, on any device, at any time. Hotels that do not meet the needs will find themselves struggling to maintain customer loyalty and to attract new consumers.

Another important function of mobile apps is obtaining feedback. Most consumers who provide information about their satisfaction with a hotel, do so using mobile devices immediately after checking out. Many people also use mobile apps to complete what they consider noncrucial tasks while moving around. While they may not take the time to provide detailed information about their satisfaction with their stay after returning home, they will do so while on the run.

Restaurants and Hotels need a comprehensive social media strategy which includes mobile apps in order to ensure repeat business, to attract new customers and to receive feedback regarding customer's response to their stay. Establishments that don't provide the impetus for the public to access their social media sites and ensure continuous customer engagement will quickly find their bottom line negatively affected. While it may be necessary to hire a technology consultant to construct a mobile platform, the results will justify the costs.

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North Indian, Mughlai and Indian-Chinese surging ahead

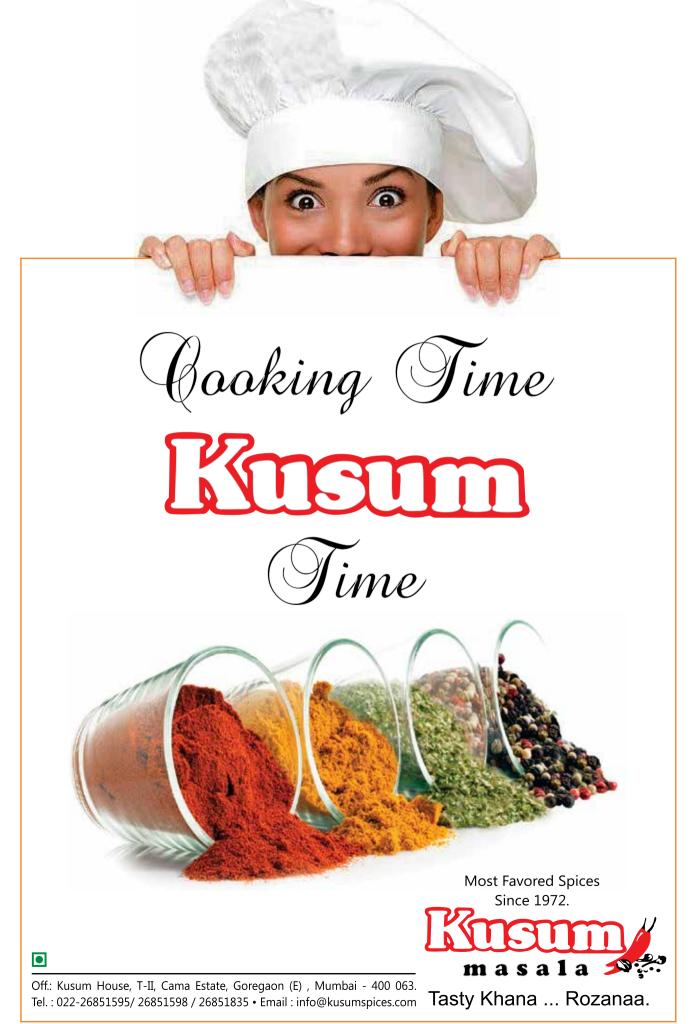
by S. Suchithra

A survey of Indian diners some months ago proved Chinese, Mughlai and North Indian delicacies to top the tastes of casual and frequent Indian diners. The reason is simple: Mughlai and North Indian dishes are available for both, vegetarians and non-vegetarians and can mostly be eaten with a variety of Indian breads such as roti, naan, paratha, kulcha and others.

North Indian food itself is a fusion of various cuisinesfrom deep valleys and slopes of the Himalayas to sandy deserts of Rajasthan, lush green fields of Uttar Pradesh and robust landscapes of Punjab. It also draws shades from the Mughlai cuisine which was introduced into India by the Mughal rulers around 600 years ago. The Mughals trace back their origin to parts of the erstwhile Soviet Union and their diet was based on the large selection of grains, meats, spices and fruits available through the empire. Iranians, Turks, Arabs and Afghans also influenced North Indian cuisine. Arriving in ancient India as traders or invaders, settlers from these countries brought in their rich culinary styles and adapted them to make best use of indigenously available produce such as basmati rice.

The same can be said for what popularly sells in India as Chinese food. Though original, ethnic Chinese food is rather bland albeit healthy, the stuff sold in India is barely Chinese and draws little or no influence from the land of the dragon. The Indian-Chinese food is a fusion of what settlers from the Far East made with indigenous produce of the country. The hard working Chinese community in cities such as Kolkata prepared original Chinese food for their compatriots. However, with rapid urbanization, these Chinese settlers spread their businesses to other parts of India going as far as deep down south. To adapt to local tastes and palates, they adapted the ethnic Chinese cuisine to offer a more pungent, spicy flavor preferred by Indians. Over the years, Indian-Chinese food became a cuisine in its own right. While original Chinese cuisine does not consist of breads, those in India prepared dishes with gravy that can be eaten with an assortment of Indian bread.

The reasons these three cuisines remain popular among Indian diners are simple to understand. Most Udipi style restaurants feature Indian-Chinese, Mughlai and North Indian dishes on their menu. A large number of these dishes come with richly prepared curries and gravies or sauces. They can be easily consumed with bread. North Indians also spread their cuisine to other parts of the world by opening traditional 'dhabas' in places as distant as the US and Australia. With the younger population continuing to remain large spenders on eating out, these trends in food are set to continue.



Health trends force industry to innovate

by S. Suchithra

nationwide movement toward healthier eating is forcing restaurants to mix in new ingredients, panelists said.

As guests evolve and adopt different eating habits, restaurant operators are best served to monitor trends closely and then innovate their offerings to meet consumer needs.

A nationwide movement toward healthier eating is forcing restaurants and their suppliers to tweak their strategies and mix in new ingredients, according to experts on a panel at the recent show titled, "Winning Through Food: How Food Innovation Has Become Top Restaurant Companies' Weapon Of Choice."

"Innovation is doing something you haven't seen before or doing something that hasn't been done that way before," said Greg Dollarhyde, CEO of Veggie Grill, a chain of fast-casual restaurants based in Santa Monica, CA, that offers a 100 percent plant-based menu. "Imagine trying to make craveable food 100 percent out of plants—no mayonnaise, no eggs, nothing."

Before Veggie Grill, Dollarhyde worked with T.G.I. Friday's, where he said the chain began serving potato skins before any other restaurant was doing potato skins. Friday's also added fajitas early on, which Dollarhyde said led to a Tex-Mex trend nationwide.

"Innovation can start whole industries," he said. "For example, yogurt recently was re-innovated. Was the yogurt that much better? Sort of, but the innovation came from doing it fresher."

At Donatos Pizza, innovation is used to ensure the 150-unit company stays consistent with its product. Jane Grote Abell, chairwoman of the board at Donatos, said her father invented a device to ensure pepperoni is cut at the exact same thickness each time.

"How do you keep the quality the same so the customer has same experience again and again?" Abell asked. how far out to look when measuring trends. While it's important to stay nimble and tweak menus to adapt, it's also critical for restaurants to have a long-term strategy of between five and 10 years, Abell said.

For example, Donatos is latching on to the current bacon craze by promoting bacon as a topping and including it in more menu items. But at the same time they are acknowledging the overall healthy eating trend and are serving a gluten-free "take and bake" pizza as well as setting a goal to reduce the amount of sodium in Donatos products.

"Our five-year strategic plan is to make sure we are doing things to make our products healthier for consumers," Abell said. "I want my kids to eat our pizza and feel healthy about it."

At Jamba Juice, innovation goes past the food menu and into all areas of the 800-unit company, according to chief innovation officer Susan Shields. Jamba Juice recently held a company-wide innovation challenge fair where each department presented ways to meet customer needs better, faster or more completely.

Shields said Jamba Juice typically looks out about two years when monitoring trends. Recently, the company noticed a rising popularity of coconut water and a general trend toward healthy "mocktails." So it introduced a pina colada coconut fruit refresher "that is taking off," Shields said.

"We had to order more coconut water," she said. "We were listening to the consumer and were nimble enough to adapt."

Dollarhyde suggested restaurant operators extend their innovation to their supply partners and allow partners to do some of the improving as well.

"There is a lot of innovation going on in plant-based foods," he said, including "an amazing almond milk-based brie."

"Let your manufacturer do your innovating for you," Dollarhyde advised.

A big challenge the panelist said the industry faces is determining

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India emerging fast as Ready To Eat, Ready To Cook food market

ndia is fast emerging globally as one of the largest market for Ready to Eat and Ready to Cook foods. A glance at the shelves or any superstore or the neighborhood grocer will bear ample testimony to this fact: the number of brands offering Ready To Cook noodles, soups, rice preparations, curries, spices and other stuff has grown exponentially. And so has the number of Ready to Eat food including plain, stuffed, spiced 'parathas', 'samosas' and other traditional Indian curries and gravies.

The country is no stranger to Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook foods. The story dates back to

BOMBAY BAD BOY

by S. Suchithra

1970s when the Maharashtra **Agriculture and Food Corporation, commonly known** as Mafco, launched an array of sausages, salami, ham and other products on a large scale in metros such as Mumbai and Pune. Also available in those years were Ready To Eat products such as Chicken-**Tomato Paste which made** vummie sandwiches. Earlier. these categories of foods were offered by smaller, lone operators with outlets in specific areas of Mumbai and other cities.

Though Mafco can be considered a pioneer in India's Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook food business, the nation, with

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ne Dining

its diverse heritage has several dishes, especially sweets and savories that can be conjured up in a ziffy.

Mafco's success was followed by many others across India. In mid 1980s, Nestle, a global giant launched Maggie noodles. This was fiercely competed by other brands, with some of them offering noodles in Styrofoam cups. While Maggie noodles required some basic preparation, the cup noodles came with sachets of flavor. All one had to do was pour boiling water into the cup containing noodles and the flavor mix. wait a couple of minutes and relish the hot, spicy, soup and noodle. Soon, more and more brands followed as India opened its economy to Multi **National Companies (MNCs)** who introduced a wide range of **Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook** foods.

Statistics reveal that the Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook food market currently stands at around Rs 3,000 Crore. However,

EN ĺIX this figure is highly debatable and could be much higher since several local operators have emerged in the market offering products such as Ready To Cook dosa and idli mixtures, puffed rice, bhel-puri and other traditional dishes.

There are several reasons why the Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook food segment is witnessing a strong growth. One of them is migration. With rural pockets of India producing a large number of highly qualified persons, India has witnessed a migration of younger people from rural areas to urban and semi-urban localities for employment or business. Left with a choice of dining out daily or cooking themselves, these young people prefer Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook foods often supplemented by some fresh preparations.

Higher literacy rates among women and the dependence on extra income caused by scorching prices of living in cities has caused both spouses to work. In such a scenario, Ready To Cook and Ready To Eat foods provide the easiest solution to feed a family and meet its nutritional demands. The exposure to foreign brands has also influenced Indian tastebuds as more and more people try and get taste of 'phoren' foods.

With these trends continuing to flourish, the Ready To Eat and Ready To Cook food business will witness an unprecedented boom in coming years. Whether the small and medium restaurateurs are ready to deal with this boom by offering fresh food at competitive prices remains a big question.

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Marriott International Launches CANVAS, A Global Concept Lab for Food and Beverage industry

by Staff Reporter

In a move to harness the passion of a generation of food and drink entrepreneurs, Marriott International is launching CANVAS. The first-of-its-kind hotel industry program is a global incubator that will help hungry entrepreneurs realize their vision for amazing food and drink concepts in the company's hotels. The program builds on Marriott's entrepreneurial heritage dating back to 1927 when the company's founder J. Willard Marriott opened a nine seat A&W root beer stand in Washington, DC.

In a recent announcement, the company is inviting entrepreneurs, chefs, bartenders and artisans around the world to visit www.canvas-startup.com and pitch a food or drink concept for a select group of Marriott hotels, beginning with the JW Marriott Shenzhen (China) and Renaissance Phoenix Downtown. During the next six months, the number of locations will grow to approximately a dozen hotels across the globe. Committees of local restaurateurs, foodies, hotel owners and restaurant/bar experts will determine which entrepreneurs demonstrate the creativity, savvy and sound business plans to benefit most from this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Marriott will kick start the winning restaurant and bar concepts with resources, space, and expert support needed to flourish, while maintaining the autonomy of each winner to fully realize their vision. Upon six months of operations, each concept will be evaluated for success based on popularity and return on investment.

By taking a nimble, bottom-up approach, these proofs of concept are the first step in a renewed strategy to position Marriott as the premier platform for launching locally relevant, distinctive food and beverage experiences. As the program expands, Marriott will be able to attract, motivate and retain more talent, therefore creating a robust food and beverage idea pipeline. The goal of CANVAS is to deliver new and exciting restaurant concepts more quickly than the current hotel industry model.

In addition, CANVAS furthers Marriott's focus on the next generation of customers for whom discovering local culture and cuisine play a pivotal role, both in everyday life and in travel. It is estimated that Millennials will comprise half of business travel spending by the year 2020, according to Forbes.

"We believe the key ingredient of CANVAS is to marry



the best ideas of local entrepreneurs with Marriott's resources, space and capital that will transform ambition into action right inside our hotels," said Wolfgang Lindlbauer, global leader, Food & Beverage. "Just like travel, food and drink experiences today are about indulgence and discovery for modern travelers and local clientele alike, to savor, enjoy and share."

In a nod to the wildly successful Project Greenlight, Marriott will chronicle the dramatic journeys many of the individual winners face as they take their idea from a dream to reality in a series of documentary- style webisodes. From the determination to craft and submit a business plan, to the elation of being chosen a winner, to the challenges the winners face as they build and design their restaurant concept in partnership with Marriott, to the crescendo of opening night and welcoming the first guests.

Many people may not realize but Marriott's roots are in entrepreneurial food and beverage. With the advent of cold weather that year, Mr. Marriott and his wife Alice, who had learned how to make tamales and chili con carne from a cook at the nearby Mexican Embassy, began selling hot food that would later inspire a name change. The newly minted Hot Shoppes rapidly grew in popularity throughout the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. well before the company opened its first hotel in 1957.

ie Beer Cale by Staff Reporter

Beer chain \'The Beer Cafe\' plans to open 75 more outlets, taking the number of shops to 100 in next two years, as parts of its plans to expand reach across the country.

The Beer Cafe' to open 75 more outlets in next 2 years Beer chain \'The Beer Cafe\' plans to open 75 more outlets, taking the number of shops to 100 in next two years, as parts of its plans to expand reach across the country.

Beer chain 'The Beer Cafe' plans to open 75 more outlets, taking the number of shops to 100 in next two years, as parts of its plans to expand reach across the country.

At present, The Beer Cafe has 25 outlets in Delhi, NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Chandigarh, among other places.

"In next two years time, the number of our outlets will cross 100 mark," said The Beer Cafe, Founder and CEO Rahul Singh.

Asked how much investment will be required to open new outlets, Singh said on an average, an outlet requires capital expenditure of Rs 70 to Rs 90 lakh depending upon location for

opening.

"This fiscal, we will be opening 15 new outlets," he said.

The beer chain will focus on opening its new shops at Delhi, NCR, Punjab, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai, he said.

"In Punjab, we will add new outlets in Ludhiana, Mohali, Jalandhar and Khanna," he said.

Asked about size of the market, Singh said the size of Pubs, Bars, Clubs and Lounges (PBCL) segment, under which beer business falls, stood at about Rs 8,000 crore last year and it was expected to grow to Rs 13,500 crore in next five years.

Post expansion, the company eyes a topline of Rs 250 crore including 25-30 per cent sales from food.

"In the current fiscal, our sales are expected to reach Rs 65 crore," he said.

"It will be the only cafe in India with a range of 50 different varieties of beer from across 17 countries in the world," he said.



ndia is currently witnessing a beverage revolution of sorts. While all-time favorites, tea and coffee continue to dominate the industry, the trend towards better health has encouraged consumption of nutrient loaded drinks such as 'lassi' and 'chaas', fruit juices, milk shakes and health drinks, malted beverages and grain meal based drinks.

Consequently, most restaurants now have broadened the spectrum of beverages they serve. Most restaurants in metros including Mumbai now feature a juice stall where diners can order a fresh cocktail of various fruit juices or of the fruit or vegetable of their choice. Those who have their breakfast at restaurants prefer malted beverages and milk shakes due to their nutritional values. Trends indicate, a bulk of diners prefer beverages during their meals hence, shifting the trend in favor of fresh juices, 'lassi' and 'chaas'.

The trend is expected to continue over the years thanks to higher literacy rates and increased awareness of health among Indians. The surge in Indian economy has led people towards sedentary lifestyles. Use of own vehicles has increased and online shopping has made life more comfortable. As a result, the overall effort



by Staff Reporter

exerted by Indians in urban centers has dropped drastically. With less free time to spend on exercising or jogging, the urban folk are increasingly seen controlling their diet by replacing fattening foods with healthy ones such as fruit juices. With bumper harvests of fruits, juices have come within easy reach of the working class.

The Indian diner has also developed refined tastes while dining out. With social taboos related to alcohol vanishing over the years, women too are consuming specially made beverages that are a mix of liquor and fruit juice.

This in turn has led to

more and more chic bars and restaurants opening in cities and semi-urban areas. Restaurateurs have responded to this demand with equal gusto. Several seedy neighborhood bars have invested heavily in refurbishment and facelift of their premises to make them more appealing to families and the younger generation to enjoy alcoholic drinks in the company of friends. This, in turn has led to a surge in advertising of liquor brands across the board. Though liquor ads are banned in India, manufacturers advertize their products using proxies such as mineral water and the likes.

The opening of the

liquor segment has seen most major foreign brands make deep inroads into the Indian market. The discerning diner is now aware of various types of wines, flavors of alcoholic drinks and choices available, forcing restaurateurs and bar owners to offer a wider choice. Major imported brands can be seen vving with their Indian counterparts at any upscale bar and restaurant.

With a large number of youngsters migrating to cities and urban centers for employment or business, these trends in beverages are expected to continue for several years to come.



by G. Subramanian

ider exposure to international cuisines has led Indian to be more experimenting with food. Food habits, in general are culture specific. But in the last few decades dynamic changes have occurred due to the fast growing economy, a shift from traditional to modern technologies, globalisation, industrialisation, constant travels across the world, evolving tastes and increased demands for "fast" and processed foods throughout our country.

Planning exotic meals, offering food under various unique discount schemes and making special menus for every occasion has become a culture in the country. In fact some believe Indian cuisine has contributed a lot in shaping international relations.

Indians have become adventurous with their culinary choices, being well travelled and having had the chance to savour myriad cuisines. Indian cuisine too has been taking on modern flavors and 'modern Indian' cuisine is the new buzzword in food connoisseurs.

Indians have always been much acquainted with food and by each passing day their love for food has become stronger and the research shows that the reason why India is getting more than a dozen restaurants daily is simple. Food business today has become a good area for the investors to invest. Be it a recession or growth period- the demand for good food will never go down.

The Indian cuisine is almost as diverse as the entire European cuisine, because of the four different main regional styles: the North Indian cuisine (the regions Benaras, Kashmir, Mughlai, Punjab and Rajasthan), the South Indian cuisine (regions Andhra, Kannada, Kerala and Tamil), East Indian cuisine (regions Assamese and Bengali) and Western India cuisine (regions Gujarat, Maharashtrian and Malwani). The northern part of India is mostly rural, although it contains large cities such as Delhi and Calcutta, thus its cuisine is more agricultural than anything, wheat being a primary constituent of this region's dishes. Southern regions however trend to be more exotic, spicier in their dishes and rice is a constant ingredient in their food. To give the taste of their main dishes, North Indians use onions and coriander whilst southerners use a more exotic coconut base for their dishes."

Indian food and its taste changes with each passing demography and its differences derive from various local cultures, geographical locations and economies. Indian cuisine is also seasonal and utilises fresh produce. In fact, food from one region may actually be totally alien to a person from another region.

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