

THE NEXT WAVE OF CHANGE IN THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY

– By Charu Lamba

Now, diners can explore more than just menus in restaurants that come complete with little shops attached to them. They can take home the original taste of dishes and can also buy signature accessories that help define the identity of a restaurant...



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The retail industry is expanding, the fastest growing industry in the world. Technological and in-store innovations to attract the evolving consumer are fast becoming the main disrupters of the industry. The food

service industry, which makes up a major chunk of the Indian retail sector, is also innovating to stay ahead of the game. While technology gives it a leading edge, many restaurants have remodeled themselves to include separate retail sections in a bid to attract more and more Millennials. Now, diners can explore

more than just menus in restaurants that come complete with little shops attached to them. They can take home the original taste of the dishes served at the restaurants in the form of sauces or other condiments. They can also buy signature accessories that help define the identity of a restaurant.



WHAT YOU CAN BUY IN BEEROSPHERE

- The Sonic Foamer uses ultrasonic vibrations to create the perfect head. As a result, it ensures consistent taste throughout and delivers the ultimate aromatic experience.
- Chill Puck (patented) is like a cooling coaster. It is a plastic ice pack moulded to match the bottom of all standard cans. This mould maximises the amount of surface area connecting the freezing cold ice pack and the can, actually chilling your beverage while you drink.
- The USB Can Cooler is a tiny refrigerator which can be plugged into a laptop with a USB cable. As soon as it is switched on, the tray in the fridge begins to cool. This keeps a drink chilled for longer hours. The downside: it can only fit one can at a time.
- Another gadget is the Beer SealLED — a cork-shaped super bright LED that recharges via USB and gives a strong glow for up to three hours in one single charge.
- The Sonic foamer costs ₹3,750, the Spin Chill is available for ₹2,990, Beer SealLED is priced at ₹390 and the USB Can Cooler can be purchased for ₹1,950 from select Beer Café outlets.

Collecting Souvenirs

According to Rahul Singh, President, NRAI and CEO, The Beer Café, “We have introduced merchandise across categories such as gaming, gadgets, décor, glassware, personal and office products. Christened Beerosphere, it is an extension of The Beer Café

that patrons can take home, to work, use as gifts or collect as souvenirs. Targeted at the brand's loyal clientele, this line aims to carve a niche in the retail space."

Beerosphere, The Beer Café's new range of quirky and utilitarian products, offers various unique gadgets like Spin Chill, Chill Puck and USB Can Cooler, besides other merchandise.

The battery-operated Spin Chill (patented) helps to chill your beer in two minutes. All one needs to do is to fix the beer bottle in the cavity and spin it for a minute in an ice bucket. Remove it and serve the beer chilled.

Another interesting gadget is the Sonic Foamer (patented). It comes in handy when you leave your carbonated beverage out for too long and it loses its froth. Pour two teaspoons of water in the cavity, switch it on, place your drink on the plate and you can see the bubbles rise up. The drink gets its froth back.

A number of other gifting products such as cushion covers, playing cards, glassware, candles, laptop sleeves, etc are also available.

Restaurant Standard Dishes at Home

South African restaurant chain, Nando's has recently introduced its sauces in India with the idea of letting customers replicate restaurant taste at home.

Sumeet Yadav, CEO, Nando's Restaurant India said, "Globally, we have something called the grocery division which specialises in FMCG business. So, our job in that sense is that we project the brand as it is, and sauces fill the big gap. We also retail them online."

The six Peri Peri sauce



flavours which Nando's sells in India are priced at ₹390 for 250 ml and ₹250 for 125 ml.

Engaging Customers

Ciclo Café, a haven for cycling enthusiasts and already a popular name within hospitality and cycling circuits, is also retailing high-end cycles, along with delectable food.

Ashish Thadani, CEO, Ciclo Café, revealed, "Apart from just attracting customers with merchandise retailing, the idea is also to engage with the dine in customers. While they are waiting for a meal or while walking through the outlet, the merchandise creates curiosity and engages the customers further."

"The concept of Ciclo Café is not just to have a cycling-inspired cafe adorned with furniture, lights and other artefacts inspired by bicycle parts but also to bring bicycle culture and a lifestyle centered around cycling. We aim to give Indian cyclists world class equipment to enable them to improve their skills and eventually do well nationally and internationally in this sport," he stated.

The café is a one-stop-shop for the sales and service of premium bicycles, cycling merchandise and accessories, expert advice on cycling, and customized cycle rides – all accompanied with world-class hospitality in the form of

premium F&B services with multiple cuisines on offer.

Making the Whole Restaurant Profitable

Retail stores in restaurants not just attract consumers, but also helps restaurants make every nook and cranny profitable. Take for example Too Indian, which has tied-up with organic farmers, home chefs and small-scale entrepreneurs like Little Farm, Home Bakery, Miss Sue for an uninterrupted supply of retail products.

"The basic reason of introducing food retailing at my restaurant 'Too Indian' is that we are paying rent for every bit of space of the restaurant. We are paying equal rent for the floor as well as walls. So, we thought of utilising the walls and introducing a modern-day shopping area within the restaurant," said Varun Puri, Owner, Viva Hospitality.

"Apart from tableware, glassware and cutlery, the walls showcase more than 500 products including organic quinoa, savouries, organic matthis, pickles, jams, marmalades and spices – to name just a few – which customers can buy when they come in to dine," he added.

Additional Revenue

Retail outlets at restaurants also bring in extra revenue for owners. "Our retail



section contributes around 10-15 percent of the actual restaurant sales," revealed Puri. Resonating the same, Singh said, "We see the retail business in restaurants growing in the coming years. Five years from now, the product retailing business branded Beerosphere is expected to generate ₹150 crore. We have around 1500 SKU's at the moment and will add 100 more products soon this year."

Similarly, the retailing business contributes between 5-10 percent of the overall sales at Ciclo Café.

Sameer Lamba, Managing Director, Kwal's Group is also of the same opinion. "Retailing at restaurants is just going to grow and soon at IHOP and Potbelly we are planning to launch our merchandise as it helps us earn extra revenue," he said.

"The things we will be retailing include IHOP Pancake Mix, Potbelly Chilli and Mustard Sauce. We are looking forward to drive brand home and get traffic to our restaurants," he concluded. 