

# Culinary

## Entrepreneurs

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A magazine for the food, hospitality  
and tourism entrepreneurs by



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experiences**

Foraging  
tourism

**Sustainable  
groceries**

Urban  
farmers

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Sustainable Cereals

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Farm and foraging tours can contribute to the awards about conservation efforts, biodiversity preservation and sustainable practices.

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Mushroom cultivation requires less land and resources than many other forms of agriculture to produce high-levels of nutrition. Entrepreneurs are launching mushroom farming projects in India to make the most of the growing demand.

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Urban farms grow vegetables and other produce within residential and commercial areas. They can have positive environmental and food security impacts in urban areas.

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# Editorial

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Earth Day is an annual event celebrated on 22nd April to raise awareness about the environment.

In this edition, we look at various case studies of sustainable enterprises. Farm-to-table is a growing concept that is fuelling the growth of agri-tourism retreats and farm tours. Another form of sustainable tourism entails foraging with chefs and experts to find edible wild vegetables and forest produce.

In this issue, you can read about urban farming, mushroom cultivation and grocery brands that embrace the circular economy.

The recipes in this issue use legumes and pulses, which are high-protein plant-based foods.



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# PRODUCE TO PLATE

We discover the farm-to-table culinary experience offered by eco-retreats.

Cover photo: Maria Missaglia



# THREE BLUE DUCKS BYRON FARM

By Darren Robertson

**T**hree Blue Ducks at Byron Bay, Australia is a restaurant in a farm.

It was started by Chris Sorrel, Jeff Benett, Sam Reid, Mark LaBrooy and Darren, the last two being chefs.

‘The Ducks’, as we are fondly known, are five mates who are passionate about nourishing the community with ethical, authentic, quality food and hospitality.

We endeavour to source as much of the ingredients as possible from The Farm at Bryon Bay and then we venture afield to find other sustainable produce. We embrace produce that is organic or spray-free and sustainably farmed to make all the meals on our menu. We get almost everything from the local area when the product is in season. Our dishes are a



reflection of our shared ethos for creating honest, seasonal dishes that are packed with nutrients and full of flavour. We call it ‘real food’.

The interiors are designed to be understated but comfortable. The undercover outdoor patio offers sweeping views from Byron’s hinterland in the west, north to Mt Warning and east to Cape Byron Lighthouse. The terrace is home to our very own 12 metre outdoor kitchen, including a double spit, a wood fire pizza oven and an Argentinian grill that we love to fire up on weekends and for private events. Our bar offers 56 taps of all Australian craft beers, wines and ciders and a selection of unique cocktails to cater to all tastes.



We ran a café restaurant in Bronte, Sydney with a little kitchen garden. We had chickens, bees, a little veggie patch, and a compost bin. We talked of one day running a working farm.

As it happened we were approached to open a restaurant on an 86 acre working farm in Byron Bay. We are pretty good cooks but at the time we are very average gardeners, so to have the opportunity to work alongside farmers onsite to run a



pretty substantial food operation was super exciting.

We faced many challenges when we first opened, the usual, staff and operations curve of course but also navigating the logistics of the size and scale of what we set about to do was very daunting at first. We overcame most, simply by good communication. We had so many great people onboard to help out where needed, from



farmers, producers, our staff and locals to make things happen.

Our signatures have really become showcasing anything that comes off the farm from the pigs and poultry to the fruits and vegetables. We have some incredible local producers too, from Byron Bay Mozerella, fair game venison, Deb Allard cheeses, and Bay seafoods. We currently have a dish using venison, pickled blueberries and



macadamia miso which is very popular..

Besides the Bryon Bay Farm, our other locations are also very interesting. We have a huge city ware house in Sydney, a surf park at Melbourne and a beautiful country location in Bellingen. Each menu talks to that particular location, showcasing local ethically sourced produce. The food is simple, thoughtful cooking, utilising the whole ingredient to minimize waste.

With regards to promoting sustainable restaurant practices, we have a set of guidelines that are important to us and that we uphold throughout the company. The term sustainability is often used so frivolously. It's become a buzzword so it's important to have real standards that can be upheld, measured and communicated.







We are always looking at ways to improve our practices, whether it's waste management or customer experiences. We have been around for over a decade now but are all still learning. We still love the industry despite overcoming some tough times. We do want to continue to grow. We are looking at the possibility of opening overseas too.

I think restaurants play an important role with regards to regional culture and socio-economy. This became very apparent when many of us had to close during the pandemic: The knock-on effect that took place with jobs and the local supply chain. Cafes and restaurants are important social pillars in society, for the community to come together, share stories, problems, and laughs over food and drinks.

# SON BLANC FARMHOUSE

Benoît Pellegrini,

Photos:

Maria Missaglia, Karel Balas

**S**on Blanc is an Eco-friendly Agri-Tourism Retreat in Menorca started by Benedicta Linares Pierce and Benoît Pellegrini. This unique hospitality concept is set over an expansive natural reserve and working farmstead on the island of Menorca. The retreat is a 130-hectare reserve in a preserved and wild corner of the island, creating a rare feeling



of near total independence. This agri-tourism project is the embodiment of a family journey, a way to give shape to Benedicta's and my own ambitions and dreams and, at the same time, a medium through which we can share our environmental and social values with our children and other people around us. At our own small scale, we would like to do





something to help with the huge shifts the world needs to undertake.

Unpretentiously chic, Son Blanc's mission is to create a new approach to hospitality, a utopian retreat, founded on the principles of sustainability, regenerative agriculture, collaboration with the natural environment as well as social

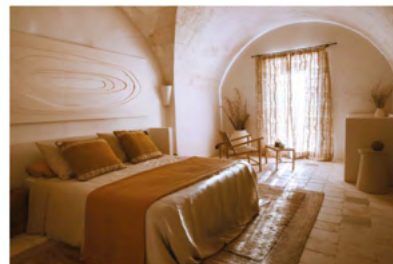


connection. Administrative hurdles have been the biggest challenge. Menorca, the most eastern Balearic Island in the Mediterranean is part of the Menorca Biosphere Reserve since 1993. Therefore, many areas are protected on the island and building permission, even for an eco-friendly hotel of the archipelago, can be very cumbersome. Both my wife and



I were already quite persistent and determined people, but this life changing project taught us how to be patient, very patient. You need both skills to achieve such a dream and it took over seven years to complete. In hindsight, this process was a valuable lesson in life. This traditional Menorcan farmhouse has been restored by integrating principles of





bioclimatic architecture. Passive processes such as using stone and cork for insulation, and traditional processes such as white-washing, are completed by sustainable systems such as the use of cooling ceilings and geothermal heat pumps. Through the synergy of these different devices, the farmstead was converted into a 14 room hideaway, designed with appreciation of the essential beauty of pure Menorcan architecture paired with modern comforts, yet utilising sustainable and efficient technologies throughout. With our architects, Atelier du Pont, we have painstakingly considered every

detail from conception to each finishing to prioritise local, natural, and sustainable materials, ultra-efficient energy use and natural temperature control. Design and artisanal work take paramount roles in the finished product.

Agricultural land is also fundamental to the project. By implementing a so-called "regenerative" agriculture, an entire ecosystem is preserved and renewed, boosting biodiversity, soil fertility and resilience as well as offering enough produce to feed the estate at any time of the year.

The produce of the farm defines

what is on the menu, as a foundation of Son Blanc's focus on holistic health and wellbeing. We adapt consistently to the seasons and to what our land has to offer. Our chefs and Laura, the culinary director, work hands in hands with our farmers. The menus focus on a primitive, earthy and generous cuisine shaped by the force of charcoal fire and based on locally fresh and wild ingredients. Enjoy sharing plates of charcoal-grilled vegetables, wood-smoked and homemade cured meats, pickles and more around the convivial curved dining table of the farmhouse restaurant.

The exploration of ideas is





inspired through regular social dinners held at communal tables. Drinks are shared around the fire pit and occasionally held parties are part of the experience at Son Blanc. Artists, creative professionals, healers, and collaborators visit in periods of residence to share knowledge with the guests and integrate with the community.

The project stands out for its overall ecological conception. The island's climate and natural resources allow the

farmstead to produce its own energy and food in a conscious effort to balance its carbon footprint and to move towards a model of self-sufficiency over the years. In this way the property is constantly evolving towards a new way of consuming, developing all these fields of action at once, and reducing carbon emissions through careful onsite management. An example of this is the limited outdoor lighting or the holistic approach to food

production with zero waste as one of its founding pillars. Producing its energy and managing its own resources, Son Blanc aims to achieve full energy, hydraulic and food self-sufficiency by 2030.

# SHINTA WILD

General Manager David Steyn

**S**hinta Mani Wild – A Bensley Collection is Cambodia’s most unique all-inclusive tented camp designer, landscape architect and conservationist Bill Bensley, it all started with a sale of government land designated for logging. Sokoun Chanpreda (founder of the Shinta Mani Foundation and its group of boutique hotels dedicated to empowering Cambodians) and





Bensley purchased some 875,000 trees, four-and-half kilometers of wild river and three magnificent waterfalls over 865 acres, saving it from becoming a titanium mine. After seeing the beauty of the land and its rivers they knew they needed to preserve it. Although they didn't know for sure how. It was buy first, think later. They didn't know what they were going to do with it, just knew to protect it. In order to protect this corridor of rainforest

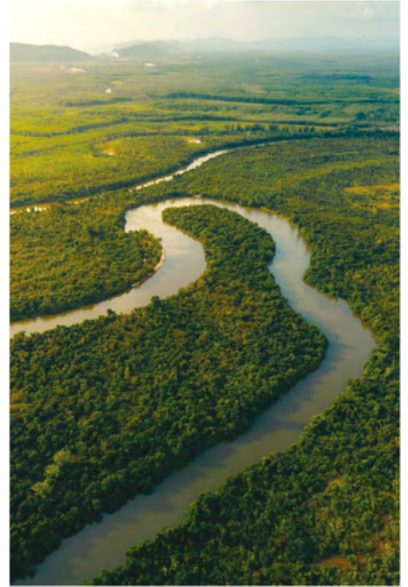
the size of Central Park from poaching and logging, in what is now one of the remaining great forests in Southeast Asia, a high yield low impact camp was created, with the main mission being a sustainable way to protect the forest and its wildlife inhabitants through a collaboration with the Shinta Mani Foundation and the Wildlife Alliance NGO.

The remote building location in

a jungle posed challenges like the weather but the tenacious work ethic of the local villagers helped us to construct the property.

Our biggest distinguishing feature would be our arrival experience for sure. The only hotel in the world where you enter via a 400m zip line: you fly 380 m on the first leg over the forest canopy and then a short 20m over the river and





waterfalls to the appropriately named Landing Zone bar where we and the Bensley Butlers greet you.

We partner with Wildlife Alliance in efforts to protect the forest from poaching and logging activities. Sustainability efforts include zero single use plastic on

property. Zero food goes into landfills as we utilise all food waste on property through and black soldier flies. Education initiatives at the local school on farming, conservation and English classes

Every afternoon, a gardener or chef leaves his apron or kitchen

whites behind and sets out on one of Shinto Wild's winding gravel paths on a foraging trip. He will comb the jungle and streams for the edible treasures from the forest floor. We have found many delicious ingredients, like the red tree ants!!! A beautiful crunch with a tart finish Small yam beans,





exclusive to our foraging trails, are abundant in antioxidants, beneficial for gut health, and serve as a delightful snack. Enjoy them freshly picked, washed, and peeled for a wholesome experience.

The foraging trails yield herbs and other delights: shoots of



bamboo, sour leaves, wild potatoes, figs, waterlily, wild flowers, etc, it is the local way to source food in the forest. This job of foraging brings work for yet more local community members, including former loggers from surrounding villagers.



The dining possibilities are endless, whether you're eating at the dining hall called Headquarters, on the lawn, at the Cistern, or having a waterfall picnic. The dining experience is just as spontaneous, with local fare inspiring the rotating menu boards which change daily, whether guests are exploring





local Khmer cuisine, a five course tasting menu, or participating in a camp favourite: 25KM dinner, our most sustainable menu, where all ingredients are sourced within 25kms of the camp.

We will continue to push our sustainability efforts by improving our onset growing capabilities through hydroponics, and then utilising biodigester to process organic waste from the property into bio, gas and compost.

### The menu:

As a chef at Shinta Mani Wild, I don't have a signature dish because I am a fearless foodie always ready to dive into new flavors. However, my heart beats for Asian cuisine, so expect a sprinkle of those vibrant flavors on our menu. Drawing from my Cape Malay heritage, we'll also serve up hearty meals, roasts, stews, pickles, and baked treats bursting with

aromatic spices that not only elevate the taste but also bring a heap of health benefits to the table

A few crowd-pleasers from our 4-day menu rotation include Phnom Penh Noodle Soup, Char Kadao, Num Banh Chok, Brohet Trey (Cambodian fish cakes), Lok Lak, and Amok Bonle.

**Executive Chef Bernard Hartzenberg**





# AGRICOLA FORE PORTA

Silvia Amatruda

**O**ur family run Agricola Fore Porta is an Agriturismo situated in the Valle delle Ferriere of Amalfi, a beautiful valley with old paper mills and wonderful waterfalls.

We have established our agriturismo using a medieval ruin present in the farm and which was refurbished in respect of the traditional rural architecture of the age. The building and its position close to the papermills was probably used as a deposit for equipment and



storage of paper. We have named the new activity “Fore Porta” using the name given to this area in the middle ages. During the centuries the name in the medieval language “FoerPort” became “Felepport” and some of residents still call the area so. Literally “Fore Porta” means “out of door” (in that case “out of the door of Amalfi. Maybe in the past there was a door that separated the area from the center



of Amalfi. Actually, the path where we are, in the past was an access to the town of Amalfi). We are a very small family run activity. My mum Mena is the cook; My father Gino takes care of our animals (we have pigs, chickens, rabbits, goose, ducks, dogs, cats...) and our land, Gerardo helps my mum in the kitchen and take care of guests and I (Silvia) welcome and take care of our guests.





We mainly use products from our garden, so our menu changes every day on the basis of the harvest and the season.

Our aim is to satisfy Guests by giving preference to the taste and the essence of fruits, produced with organic growing.

The farm began in the early 1970s, Nonno Luigi returned from a long emigration experience in England, aiming to live with his family, surrounded by nature in his birthplace. He decided to buy the farm, Petralata .

It took him some years but many efforts and hard work to make Petralata start producing again. Nonno Luigi dedicated his life to grow genuine products, and to the passion of the flavors and the scent of fruits of the land which



he recalled from his childhood days

This passion and the respect for nature passed on by Nonno Luigi are the polar star for Mena and Gino , who along with me and boyfriend Gerardo in 2014 started this adventure with the intention to avoid the risk of abandonment of the farm which my grandfather had keenly taken care of.

We are located far away from the centre of Amalfi and starting a new business was a gamble. We took a mortgage for renovating the old building where the farm restaurant is located. We are accessible only on foot and construction works costs three times more than the center of Amalfi for the transport



that occurs by mules

To carry on a family-run activity like our small reality certainly brings a lot of work and sacrifices, but it is possible if you run it with love and passion. We love hosting people at Fore Porta and showing them our farm. It is like they are coming at our home as guests. We love speaking with our guests, sharing with them our passion for the land and our activities.

The main cultivation is lemons of the cultivar “Sfusato Amalfitano IGP” which along with other products of the farm are sold and can be tasted at zero km.

We offer a daily menu which includes traditional courses prepared exclusively with seasonal zero-km produce picked

freshly every morning. Besides the dishes of our culinary tradition, visitors can taste other wonderful products. Our "granita" prepared with juice of our daily picked lemons, fresh fruit of the season, limoncello and other homemade liqueurs, and our homemade cakes. Using products from our garden, we mostly propose vegetable dishes. Some of our signatures made using our lemons are lemon risotto, spaghetti al limone, torta Fore Porta (a cake with almonds, lemon, limoncello and honey), semifreddo with limoncello (a cold dessert with mascarpone cheese, caramelized almonds and biscuits wet in limoncello), scamorza (smoked cheese cooked in lemon leaves), etc

Vegetable dishes like spaghetti with pumpkin, sausage and "tarallo"; spaghetti with cream of zucchini flower and sundried tomatoes; pasta with cream of broccoli; pasta with pesto of wild fennel, anchovies preserved under salt and almonds; basil pesto; grilled seasonal vegetables and eggplant parmigiana are on offer. Some of our top items include pumpkin parmigiana, sausage cooked in lemon leaves, meatballs in tomato sauce, and

antipasti of the house (a selection of local salami and cheese and vegetables of the day).

Breakfast at Fore Porta is prepared every day using simple ingredients and unsophisticated food. In the morning people can start the day with home baked cakes and biscuits, fresh fruit of the season and marmalades made with fruit from our farm. All is seasoned with the courtesy and the friendliness of our family who will greet people with a warm good beginning.

### Cooking Workshops

My mother proposes Mediterranean cooking lessons where guests learn how to prepare local recipes. At the end of the lesson guests will taste the delicious dishes prepared with my mamma, Mena. Normally during our cooking class my mum, Mena teach to our guests how to make Cavatelli in a seasonal sauce. Cavatelli is typical homemade pasta of the Campania. The shape looks like "gnocchi", but

Cavatelli are made without eggs and potatoes. We only use water and semolina flour: very easy but very tasty!

For the second course, my mum teaches guests how to make chicken breast in lemon sauce.

For dessert, she teaches our guests how to make semifreddo with limoncello (cold dessert with mascarpone cheese, caramelized almonds and biscuits wet in limoncello (homemade lemon liqueur) Of course, our guests take part actively in cooking with us. They have their own apron and their own workstation.

At the end of the cooking lesson, guests can taste the dishes prepared with my mother a and a typical antipasti that Gerardo prepares for them using local cheese, vegetables and salami.

During the dinner people can taste "il vino di papà", the homemade wine prepared by my father Gino and homemade liqueurs.



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# Foraging Trails

Farm and Forage expeditions see travellers seeking out enriching travel and culinary experiences together with food education.



# Totally Wild UK

James Wood

**T**otally Wild UK runs deeply engaging foraging experiences

and supply the UK's top restaurants with freshly foraged wild ingredients. On our food and foraging courses, participants head out into the countryside to discover the vast array of wild, edible species that lie all around us, with tips on how to identify the vast array of edible plants that are available.

Our main goal is to excite people with the amazing flavours to be found in the wild.

On our Foraging Courses you will see that wild food is everywhere, when foraging in London, you will find a unique range, compared to foraging in Cheshire with its relaxing countryside, when foraging in Scotland the



deep woods offer bounty of mushrooms and foraging in Wales gives us amazing access to rural coastlines. Our team is constantly exploring and developing our range of foraging courses so we can make your learning experience as fun and valuable as possible.

I have always had a deep connection with nature and a passion for exploring the bounties it offers. Growing up in the countryside, I developed a

profound appreciation for the diverse array of wild edible plants and mushrooms. This appreciation, coupled with the growing interest in sustainable and locally sourced foods, inspired me to start a foraging enterprise. I wanted to share my knowledge and experiences with others, while also promoting the sustainable and ethical gathering of wild foods. At the same time I wanted to support other foragers in being able to do the same.



Starting up Totally Wild presented several challenges, including obtaining necessary permits, building a network of foragers, and establishing credibility for foraging and teaching within the wider industry. To overcome these obstacles, I actively engaged with local authorities to navigate the permit process, fostered relationships with landowners and farmers to responsibly run our courses, and invested in education and certifications to build trust and credibility within the culinary community. We developed the UK's first L3 Wild Food and foraging Accreditation.

Some of the most exciting finds while foraging in the UK include

the vibrant and versatile wild garlic, the delicate and flavorful chanterelle mushrooms, and the unique and nutritious sea buckthorn berries. These ingredients not only add a distinctive touch to culinary creations but also showcase the diverse flavors and textures that nature offers. They're also really bold flavours which we just really don't expect to have sitting on our doorstep. The wild ingredient I cook most often is actually the humble stinging nettle, as it's so versatile (like a spinach substitute)

We offer a range of courses tailored to different skill levels, including introductory foraging walks, in-depth plant identification workshops, and advanced wild cooking classes.

Our courses cover topics such as plant identification, sustainable foraging practices, ethical harvesting, and culinary applications of wild ingredients. Participants can expect to gain a comprehensive understanding of foraging ethics, safety, and the diverse uses of wild edibles in cooking.

Professionals, hobbyists, tourists, and students are often



excited by the opportunity to connect with nature, learn about sustainable food sourcing, and discover unique ingredients firsthand. The hands-on experience of foraging, coupled with the opportunity to learn about the culinary and medicinal properties of wild plants, generates a sense of exploration and appreciation for the natural world.

## Promoting foraging tourism

### James Wood

**Environmental:** Foraging promotes biodiversity, reduces the need for intensive agricultural practices, and fosters a deeper understanding of ecosystems.

**Social:** It encourages community engagement, reconnects individuals with nature, and preserves traditional knowledge of wild foods.

**Culinary:** Wild ingredients offer unique flavors and textures, adding diversity to culinary creations and

promoting creativity in the kitchen.

**Economic:** Foraging supports local economies, reduces reliance on industrial food systems, and contributes to sustainable food practices.

### The responsibilities of a foraging chef:

#### Species Identification:

Thoroughly learn to identify edible plants and fungi to avoid accidental ingestion of toxic species.

**Ethical Harvesting:** Practice sustainable harvesting techniques to ensure the regeneration of wild populations.

**Responsible Access:** Obtain necessary permits and permissions before foraging on private or protected lands.

#### Environmental Impact:

Minimise trampling and disturbance of natural habitats during foraging activities.

We're actually doing some research of our own this year as a company with the aim

to quantify the best practices for harvesting a handful of key species to show which harvesting technique is least damaging on regrowth of the plant & which disrupts the biodiversity the least. We all have our thoughts of which is best but it will be great to actually test them out so we can know for certain and share our findings with other

### Some interesting produce:

**Wild Garlic Pesto:** Combine foraged wild garlic, pine nuts, Parmesan cheese, olive oil, and a pinch of salt for a vibrant and aromatic pesto.

**Chanterelle Risotto:** Infuse the delicate flavors of foraged chanterelle mushrooms into a creamy risotto for a luxurious and earthy dish.

### Sea Buckthorn Sorbet:

Harness the tangy sweetness of sea buckthorn berries to create a refreshing and bright sorbet, perfect for palate-cleansing desserts.



# Outstanding In The Field

Jim Denevan

kitchen and the fresh, seasonal produce grown at surrounding local farms. He set his first communal table at his brother's

Outstanding in the Field is a roving restaurant without walls.

**T**raditional restaurants source ingredients for their menus; we bring our kitchen right to the source - setting our long table in fields, orchards and along the seashores where the meal's ingredients were harvested. Our aim is to reconnect diners to the land while celebrating the hardworking hands that feed us.

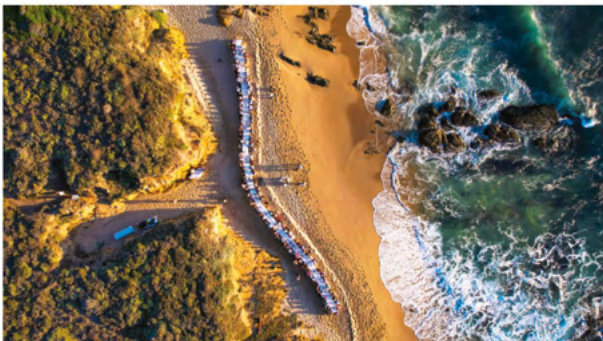


I grew up helping out at his

brother's organic apple farm in the Santa Cruz mountains and gained an appreciation for farmers and the work that goes into producing the food we eat. Working later as a chef, I recognized a disconnect between the ingredients used in the

apple orchard in 1999, radically reconceptualizing the dining experience and cementing a position at the forefront of the sustainability movement that has evolved into a cult phenomenon.

We seek out growers with the





most sustainable and quality ingredients and we often find these people and locations through referrals. The premise of the tour is to bring people to the source of their meals ingredients, therefore ingredients dictate where we go.

Each menu is simply designed on parchment paper, typically the day of a dinner to ensure the farm's freshest ingredients are used. The menus are crafted by

guest chefs who revel in the opportunity to showcase dedicated farmers and ingredients grown with intent. Menus are curated according to each farm or location with ingredients sourced directly from the land you are dining on.

### Menus

On January 13, 2023, Outstanding in the Field set their table in Nassau, Bahamas for the first time at

Lighthouse Beach on Paradise Island with host fisherwoman Shacara Lightbourne of Island Foodology and guest chef Simeon Hall Jr. of Simeon Hall Restaurant Group. Chef Simeon shared flavors from his Bahamian and Gullah Geechee heritage with a colorful and fragrant feast featuring fresh catch from our host fisherwoman Shacara Lightbourne, the





islands' bounty of tropical coconut and guava, and all sorts of local delicacies from the surrounding lands and sea.

### Welcome Canapes

Ashley's coconut-jelly ceviche  
 pickled backyard watermelon  
 Kirk's guava-rum jam,  
 housemade farmer's cheese  
 & molasses vinegar  
 Yellow's conch plantain cake  
 with ginger-lime aioli  
 Tony's Andros crab & dough  
 with crab ghee

### First Course

Cold-smoked and cured  
 dayboat fish crushed Bahama  
 Island Farms vegetables,  
 quick-pickled shoreline  
 purslane, grilled flatbread &

smoked butter  
 Second Course  
 Green Leaf Farms salad with  
 flowers & blossoms, fire-  
 scorched Bahama Island  
 Farms vegetables & charred  
 Island Foodology sour orange  
 dressing

### Third Course

Island Foodology seafood &  
 peas guinea corn grits pelau,  
 Sunday steam gravy

### Fourth Course

Yellow's spatchcock mutton  
 snapper  
 lobster fat emulsion, Green  
 Leaf Farms herbs & greens,  
 wild pink peppercorn  
 vinaigrette & spicy pickled  
 Exuma onions west-end  
 panny cakes

roasted Bahama Island Farms  
 banana chutney, brown  
 butter powder & Island  
 Foodology goat pepper honey  
 3 rock stove steamed-down  
 provisions

### Dessert

skillet-caramelized guava duff  
 rum raisin gelato, Kirk's  
 guava-rum sauce

On February 11, 2023,  
 Outstanding in the Field set  
 their table in Tepoztlán,  
 Mexico in the star fruit  
 orchards of Vivero Yautepec  
 with host Inés Maghdal.  
 Guest chef Andrea Blanco of  
 Pixca Reforma created a  
 menu inspired by the orchards  
 radiant star fruit and vast  
 variety of other exotic fruit  
 trees.



### Menus

Tártara de salmón , en chip de camote enchilado y plátano con guacamole

Tostadita de verdolaga, rábanos y mayonesa de cacahuete

Verdolaga tostada, radish and peanut aioli

Brocheta de betabel con queso fresco y carambolo con vinagreta de hierbas frescas

Penca y Piedra Mezcal

Espadín - Cocktail

2022 Vinos Barrigón, Rosado, Tempranillo & Garnacha, QRO

Pan de masa madre

Dip de pepitas yucateco, pumpkin seed dip style

Hummus de camote con pepitas especiadas, pumpkin

hummus and spiced pumpkin seeds

Hips de camotes, platanos , taro de portisano

Ceviche verde de nopales, camarones, rábanos, cebolla morada, queso de cabra artesanal, grano de elote, coliflor tatemada, zanahoria baby al escabeche, servido con guacamole

2022 Vinos Barrigón, Blanco, Muscatel, QRO

Pollo orgánico especiado a las brasas, camote horneado, haricot vert con crema de tahini y aceite de perejil y coliflores tatemadas con curry y polvo de chiles

2022 Vinos Barrigón, Blanco,

Charelo & Macabeo, QRO

Facos de cecina, queso parmesano crujiente, rábanos, verdolagas, salsa

borracha, cebolla morada

encurtida Cecina tacos, crispy parmesan cheese, radish, verdolagas and mexican sauce, red onion

2022 Octagono Vino

Ancestral, Vino Tinto, Malbec, Vergel de la Sierra GTO

Cheesecake de mamey con

chicozapote Plátano macho con helado de coco , piloncillo y canela

Pannacotta de guayaba con coulis de carambolo y maracuyá o zapote con mamey

Penca y Piedra Mezcal Espadín

# Rentio Toor Dal to Tea, The Journey of a Brand



included other village industries so as to make each village self-sufficient and self-reliant.

In those days, the Chokhawala family was involved in the daily ritual of spinning yarn. When Shri Mangaldas Chokhawala decided to start the Toor Dal manufacturing plant at Navapur Maharashtra, there was a question of brand name for the product, it was a unanimous family decision that 'RENTIO' should be the brand name as Rentio is the Gujarati word for the charkha.

The family says their journey began with a simple vision, providing the finest, most nutritious, and flavourful Toor dal to every household across the country. Rentio was a pioneer brand in India that sold packaged goods in the Commodity Market. This not only gained the trust of customers but also gave confidence to retailers in selling quality products. Within a short period, RENTIO Foods became the pioneer of manufacturing pulses in fixed-weight packages,

**I**n the 1930s, the Swadeshi Movement for self-sufficiency of India was its peak. Mahatma Gandhi described it as the soul of swaraj (self-rule). The movement

took its vast size and shape after rich Indians donated money and land dedicated to Khadi and Gramodyog societies which started cloth production in every household. It also





assuring customers adulteration-free, healthy and pure pulses.

Today, Rentio is one of India's leading toor dal manufacturing companies. Rentio's CEO, Sheetal Vani Chokhawala states, "Taking the legacy ahead with technology and innovation in the world of millennials, Rentio has forayed into e-commerce and modern trade."



Having established itself as an iconic brand of toor dal and rice over eight decades, Rentio Foods Pvt Ltd, has now entered the highly competitive tea market, where regional and national brands have long held sway, especially in chai-loving Gujarat.

**The main products:**

Rentio Royal Tea: Fit for connoisseurs, this blend promises a regal experience with every sip.

Rentio Premium Tea: Elevating tea drinking to new heights, this premium blend caters to those with a taste for the finer things.

**Rentio Daily Tea:** A perfect



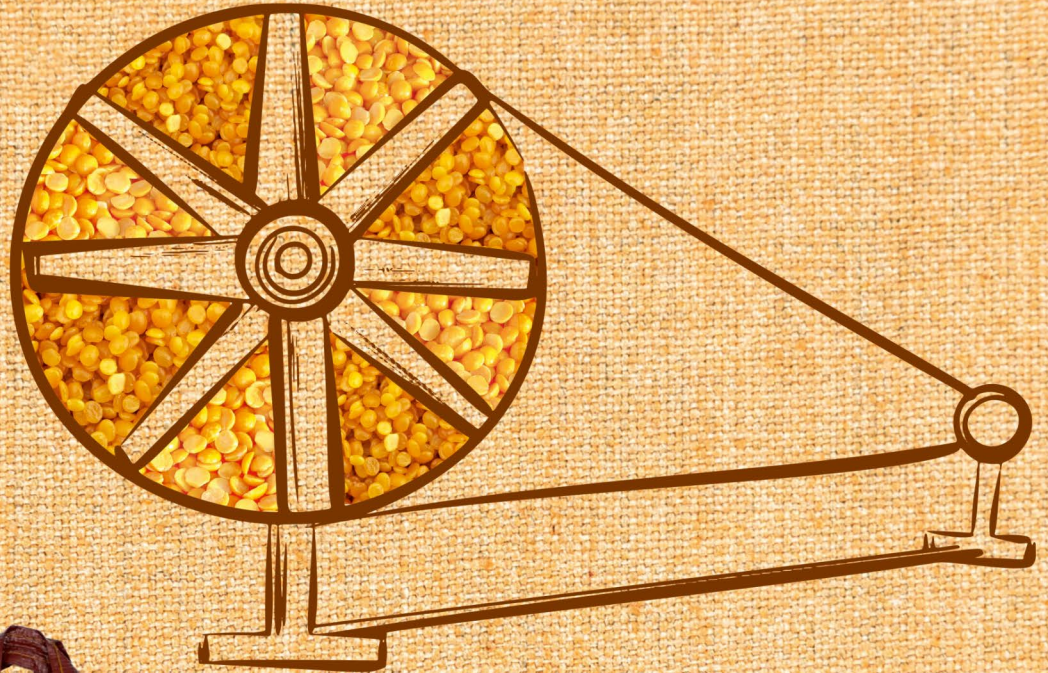
companion for everyday moments, offering a refreshing and consistent brew.

Rentio Classic Dust Tea: Embracing the classics, this variant is a nod to the traditionalists who seek the timeless essence of tea.

The state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities, adhering to international standards, ensure that every cup of Rentio Tea preserves the natural goodness of the finest tea leaves sourced from across the country. As Rentio goes ahead on this new chapter, it's not merely about entering a market; it's about weaving the threads of tradition and innovation into every tea leaf, creating a tapestry of taste that resonates with the discerning consumer.

*Asal Desi,  
Asal Swadeshi*  
**RENTIO** *Toor Dal*

Since 1935  
**RENTIO**<sup>®</sup>  
PREMIUM DESI TOOR DAL  
(OILED)



**Faster Cooking...  
Tastier...**

**RENTIO Means Desi Dal**



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PROMSERVE/010324

# Betting Big On Mushrooms

*Mushroom cultivation can be a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly way of farming as it requires less land, water, and energy compared to traditional crops. Mushroom farming can also repurpose organic waste for growing nutritious mushrooms. Two mushroom entrepreneurs share their experiences.*





# Green Apron

Namrata Goenka



Mushrooms are good for health and for the planet. Looking at the numerous health benefits and also their sustainability advantages, I decided back in 2016 to understand and learn more about mushrooms. I watched a TED Talk on how mushrooms can save the world and was super impressed by the work being done outside the country on mushrooms. I have always aspired to be an entrepreneur and I had a

dream of starting my own venture that can not only help me contribute to my family's finances and well being, but also would be full-filling and could have a positive influence on society and the planet. I was working as a lawyer (patent attorney to be more specific) at that time. I took a short course on mushroom cultivation and read a lot of books and blogs. I learned about different varieties of mushrooms that were being imported into India and I decided to learn how to grow them locally. I bought some second hand equipment and set up a mushroom grow room on my home terrace in 2017. My first harvest was of Shiitake in 2018 from my home terrace.

I also did some market research alongside. According to my findings and research,

there was a steady increase in the annual global demand for mushrooms but India had a contribution of barely 1 percent to it. In addition, most of the production was of button mushrooms. That drew me to mushrooms. I wanted to grow and supply different varieties that were not available in the market in India or were being imported and were not very fresh because of the time spent during transit to India.

So to cut a long story short, my interest in mushrooms was sparked by its health and sustainability advantages. It further got fueled by the global market demand on mushrooms and the lack of contribution in India towards this demand. I aspired to learn how to grow these varieties and to supply fresh, locally-grown varieties





that were either absent or lacked freshness due to long transit times from overseas.

The first few harvests on my terrace turned out to be of very good quality and matched the quality available worldwide. I took them to Chefs and connoisseurs and read a lot about mushroom quality and



mushroom grades and realized that I have the potential and ability to grow mushrooms of international quality and standard in India.

This made me leave my career path of a patent attorney and get onto the path of an agri-entrepreneur and I started building my brand-Green Apron.



## A Sustainable Crop

Mushrooms are a sustainable crop. If some day, the human race gets wiped out, just like how dinosaurs did, mushrooms will still be there. They were always there and they will continue being there. Acting as nature's recyclers, mushrooms play a crucial role in returning organic matter back to the soil, completing the cycle of life.

When I started my indoor mushroom terrace garden, I also planted other greens and vegetables on my terrace, in the outdoors. While mushrooms were growing indoors and the greens outdoors, I learned a lot about how both the gardens interacted with each other and one reason why both my gardens flourished was because



they were both cultivated alongside. I would use the spent substrate of my mushroom unit, and compost it and grow greens using the compost. The greens were grown organically and were of superior quality and were very healthy. I am working on setting up a much bigger farm than I currently run, in which both plants and fungi will be integrated together into the ecosystem.

Mushroom farming can be carried out in compact spaces, requiring minimal water and utilizing agricultural byproducts

and materials often overlooked by other industries. In fact, the protein and nutrient yield per square foot surpasses that of many other farmed foods, making mushrooms sustainable.

## The challenges of mushroom farming

Mushroom is a capital-intensive crop. Particularly, the varieties I am trying to grow. To have a good, consistent yield, the environment in which they are growing has to be monitored and maintained which requires skill, capital and time. The returns take time as the investment on the setup needs

to be made before one can start seeing profits. So the biggest challenge I face is to ensure consistent production, ensuring quality to my customers, and at the same time managing the rising costs of production. I am always learning and trying to adopt efficient practices to reduce my costs, which is not easy as the solutions are not so easily available.

## Products

Mushrooms in a very simple way, can be classified into mushrooms that grow in nature on wood, or on compost or in





grass. Our facility has an environment that supports mushrooms found in wood. We grow- King oyster Mushrooms, Elm Oyster Mushrooms, Pink Oyster Mushrooms, White Oyster Mushrooms, Shiitake, Shimeji, Pioppino, Lionsmane, Maitake, Reishi. Maitake is the toughest and we are still learning how to grow Maitake. We have a harvest of maitake



once in a blue moon. All our mushrooms are grown without use of any pesticides or chemicals and are completely chemical free.

We are also composting our substrate and trying to grow portobello using this compost in a completely organic way. The experiments on this are ongoing. We are also working



alongside a group in Kashmir and we are bringing some dried morels to our customers from Kashmir.

My top product is our assorted mushroom box. Each box is different and has an assortment of the different mushrooms we harvest in a day. Another product that is very fast moving is our umami seasoning which is a mushroom based





to scale it up and to supply to more hotels, restaurants and to have more direct customers. I also wish to export our dried mushrooms and seasonings alongside supplying them locally. We need more products of International standard to come out of India and be made available to people around the world.



seasoning we make in house using top quality ingredients. This seasoning can be used to be stock or can be added to any dish to add umami. I started growing varieties of mushrooms that were unheard of in India. They were not available in the market and we have introduced some of these for the first time to many in the Country. That itself is a big step towards mushroom promotion. The fact that now there are many people who have tried these varieties for the first time and have come back to us for more shows that the market is slowly growing in India.

## Expansion plans

We are working on setting up a much bigger farm than we currently operate. Our plan is

## TIPS FOR CHEFS

-*Namrata Goenka*

While I see a lot of restaurants using imported dried shiitake, imported fresh shimeji and locally grown button, I would love to encourage chefs to use other varieties of mushrooms as well. Very often mushroom is not the hero of the dish and is either a side item or a topping. King Oyster Mushrooms can be scored and grilled and can easily be used as the main course.

Lion's Mane Mushroom which is my current favorite is so good for health and is very tasty. It can be made into a vegan or a vegetarian steak. Imagine a sizzling plate with some chargrilled mushrooms, complimented by a savory sauce and some seasonal farm-fresh vegetables on the side. For those who crave for more carbs, some steamed noodles or herbed rice can be added to the plate.

Mushrooms also lend themselves well to vegetarian and vegan tempura. Additionally, chefs can introduce healthy functional mushroom teas and coffees to their menus.

At breakfast, guests can enjoy a customizable experience by selecting their preferred mushrooms to accompany their eggs. So for a change they get to choose not only if they want their egg fried or a sunny side up or scrambled or poached but also get to select a mushroom of their choice. This can add some excitement to one's morning meal!



# NUVEDO

*Jashid Hameed and Prithvi Kini*

**W**e started Nuvedo because we were really awestruck by the nutritional and medicinal benefits of mushrooms and wanted to share it with the Indian audience.

Both of us started using mushroom supplements from the US and it really changed



our health and wellbeing without any side effects- it helped us a lot with our energy levels and post covid brain fog, helped soothe allergies and

even improved our sleep quality. During the pandemic we were unable to source these supplements due to supply issues from the USA and then

went on a search for Indian brands which finally ended up as a realization that the functional mushroom segment in India was largely untapped. This inspired us to build a brand surrounding mushroom wellness with a focus on extracts using functional mushrooms, to bring the healing benefits of mushrooms to more Indians in a way that they can relate with.

We wanted to create awareness surrounding mushrooms, and enable people to grow them and eat them fresh in their homes so they would have a stronger affinity towards the mushroom in general. We were also positioning some unique exotic varieties of mushrooms that would otherwise not be available in the markets due to low shelf life, and inorganic produce. The Kits served as an educational tool to introduce mushrooms as a functional food to Indian households. It helped us combat a lot of misconceptions surrounding mushrooms such as- they are unhygienic and grow in dirty environments, that they're non-vegetarian etc. Once people had the chance to nurture them at home, they developed a totally different outlook towards mushrooms and became

ambassadors for them in their family and friends circles.

## Challenges

One of the challenges we faced was Mycophobia, a fear of mushrooms and lack of awareness surrounding different mushroom species and their health benefits was the first challenge. Most folks were under the impression that mushrooms had to be cultivated in filthy and unhygienic environments and also felt that you could fall terribly ill if you consumed or even touched mushrooms (all mushrooms are perfectly safe to touch BTW). People only knew about white button mushrooms and were unaware of any of the other exotic varieties like lions mane, cordyceps or reishi mushrooms. We had to do spend a lot of time in building a community and doing various events and workshops surrounding mushrooms- such as mushroom cultivation, mushroom foraging, mushroom extract tasting events so that we could educate people about the benefits of consuming mushrooms in a manner that was fun and non-intimidating.

The second biggest challenge was that most of the literature surrounding mushrooms were from the west and in scientific journals which were full of jargon that would not appeal to most people. We had to work a lot on content to make mushrooms more fun and interesting so that we could make the information less intimidating and easier for our community members to relate with and understand.

Since the mushroom industry in India is in its infancy, the ecosystem for mushroom growers is not developed. This meant that sourcing good quality mushroom genetics was





a big task. The imported genetics would not do well in Indian weather and on locally available growing media. This led us to conduct various expeditions to different forests across the country where we sourced wild genetics from and then trained them to grow on locally sourced materials. This process of sourcing, screening and developing our own culture library took us close to 2 years. Testing our final products for bioactive compounds unique to mushrooms such as Beta Glucans and Triterpenes was a challenge because labs lacked experience working with mushrooms. We had to work closely with testing labs and establish protocols for testing our products and sometimes even had to import test kits from overseas. We were quite

clear that our products needed third party testing to prove that they're safe for consumption. This whole process was quite time consuming and challenging.

## Products

Our top highest selling products are our mushroom liquid extracts. Our liquid extracts help you get the benefits of the mushrooms without having to consume them. You can just add them to any beverage or food.

**1- CLARITY- Lion's Mane Mushroom Liquid Extract:** Lion's Mane is a powerhouse for your brain! Packed with the potent benefits of Lion's Mane mushroom, this elixir is like a shot of vitality for your mind. Experience improved memory, heightened creativity, and a

brighter mood as you unlock your cognitive potential. Elevate your focus and productivity with ease, and embrace a sharper, more vibrant mindset.

**2- PERFORM- Cordyceps Mushroom Liquid Extract:** Have you ever experienced the unpleasant side effects of coffee – the jitters, acidity, and inevitable afternoon crash? Cordyceps offers a refreshing alternative. This functional mushroom delivers a clean, sustained energy boost without the drawbacks. Say goodbye to sugary snacks and drinks – Cordyceps provides a quick, healthy burst of energy that keeps you going throughout the day, without the jitters or crashes.

**3- UNWIND- Reishi Mushroom Liquid Extract:** Seeking a solution to fall asleep peacefully and wake up revitalized? Look no further than our Reishi Calm





liquid extract. Designed to melt away tension like butter in a pan, this soothing formula offers a natural pathway to deeper, more restful sleep without the grogginess. Whether administered under the tongue or blended into your evening beverage of choice, a few squeezes can support a tranquil transition into sleep, leaving you feeling grounded and refreshed come morning. Our calm liquid extract is a trusted remedy for those navigating occasional stress and exhaustion, aiding in the restoration of balance and well-being. If the weight of occasional stress leaves you feeling overwhelmed and drained, it's time to reclaim your vitality. Unwind with our formula and experience the rejuvenating sleep your body and mind deserve.



## The key differentiator

We are not just a mushroom farm, we're heavily focused on R&D and new product development. Our approach is to have the best quality mushrooms with the highest potency of beneficial

compounds and then use the best available technology to make those compounds accessible. We have a state-of-the-art facility which complies with ISO & HACCP standards for food safety and quality. Apart from this we have received multiple awards and recognitions including the prestigious ELEVATE Grants by the Karnataka Startup-Cell for startups in the agri-space who are doing cutting edge work. We have even applied for a patent for our industry leading extraction process which uses ultrasonic sound waves to extract the beneficial compounds. Nuvedo is also end-to-end, we call it spore-to-extract which means that starting from the strains we use till the final product, we control everything.

### Unique features:

- We are end to end- starting from the pure culture and strain till the final extraction we control the full process.
- Our product is 100% made in India using Indian grown mushrooms which are organic



and chemical free.

- We use a patent pending Ultrasound Assisted Extraction technology which is unique to us and ensures a more potent final product.
- Our extracts are dual extracted using both water and alcohol to ensure you get the full spectrum of medicinal compounds.
- Each batch is tested for safety and efficacy by 3rd party labs to ensure you get the best quality product.
- Our extracts are alcohol free, making it suitable for consumption by users who don't want alcohol in their products. We use vegetable glycerin instead.

- Our extracts are FSSAI, ISO & HACCP certified for quality

### The mushroom start-up highlights of the journey:

- Winners of Elevate Grant by Karnataka Startup Cell in 2023 for doing innovative work in Mushroom Extraction
- We featured on Shark Tank India Season 3
- Prithvi Kini is the founding member and program lead for global Fungi NGO- Fungi Foundation, India chapter
- We have an active community of over 25,000 mushroom lovers – both online and offline
- We manufactured India's only Dual Extracted Reishi Herbal Infusion with Ashwagandha and



Lavender, specifically formulated for stress relief

- We have trained over 3000 aspiring mushroom farmers in Organic and Zero Waste methods of mushroom farming
- A first-of-its-kind in the world growing kit for King Tuber Oyster or Pleurotus tuber regium which is one of the only edible mushroom which can grow at temperatures over 40 degrees
- Co-hosted Shroom Sabha 2023- Indias first mushroom festival, along with other popular brands in mushroom space in India. It had a participation of around 200 mycophiles from India and abroad
- Co-created an art piece with



artist Maria Joseph- Mycobloc Chair which is now being exhibited in Science Gallery Bangalore's latest exhibition, CARBON

Striving for Sustainability

- We use only locally sourced Ragi straw in our growing kits. These are purchased from local Ragi farmers around bangalore.
- Spent substrate which has been used to grow mushrooms are composted and distributed to local nurseries. This makes our process circular.
- In 2022 we helped NGO Sandesh setup a mushroom farm which would provide income and vocational training to adults with learning disabilities.

- Annual mushroom training

program for students of St Josephs School & Garden City University which see over 400 participants each.

- Regular mushroom identification walks in and around Bangalore for documenting the fungal diversity and also educating the public on the ecological importance of fungi.

## The path forward

We plan to add more mushroom liquid extracts to our D2C range including Turkey Tail mushrooms which are good for gut health. Apart from this we will be launching our range of extract powders and capsules as well. We will be collaborating with various other brands to co-develop products



which have mushrooms in them as the active ingredient- mushroom chocolate, mushroom coffee, mushroom kombucha etc. Apart from this we plan to work in B2B segment by acting as a mushroom based ingredient manufacturer. We plan to explore foreign markets of US and EU where these products are being used and are also popular and establish India as a strong global player in the functional mushroom segment. We hope to position ourselves as the #1 mushroom wellness brand in India over the coming years by doing pioneering work

with even more newer varieties of mushrooms. We want to work closely with health and wellness industry and healthcare practitioners to develop novel formulations and move towards doing randomized controlled trials using mushrooms for different health conditions

### Tips For Chefs

*Jashid Hameed and Prithvi Kini*

- Don't be scared to experiment with unfamiliar varieties of mushrooms. There are over 2000 species of edible mushrooms but we limit ourselves to a handful. Imagine the diverse range of textures and flavors these beautiful gifts

of nature can open up?

- Rather than sticking to tried and tested Italian or Asian mushroom recipes, why not go for new Indian ones? Imagine an Lions Mane mushroom Ghee Roast or other Indian recipes using mushrooms.

- Elevate the nutritional value of your recipes by using mushroom liquid extracts or extract powders- Just adding 2ml of a mushroom liquid extract can elevate the nutritional and medicinal value of a regular beverage by 10 folds.

# Cooking

## With Legumes And Lentils

- Sandra Melwani



**“Beans, chickpeas, lentils, peas, peanuts, etc are excellent sources of protein. We look at some recipes using plant-based protein foods like legumes and lentils.”**

**T**he legume and pulses family covers a variety of foods like dal, black beans, kidney

beans, butter beans, chickpeas, and even peanuts. All pulses and beans are a good source of plant-based protein, fibres and other nutrients.

One of the advantages of legumes is that they can be grown in a variety of climates and soil types, and they require less water and fertilizer than other crops, making them a sustainable option for farmers.

Thus, legume and lentil farming has a much lower environmental footprint than many other foods.



# Indo- African Peanut Sauce

This dish is a vegan fusion of the popular West African peanut sauce or stew called Mafe and Indian flavours. Traditionally, Mafe is also gluten-free, keto-friendly, and dairy-free.

**Time: 45 mins**

**Yield: Six portions**

## Ingredients

- 1 medium red onion, diced
- 6 cloves garlic, grated
- 1-inch piece of ginger, grated
- Pinch of pink Salt
- 100 g skinned unsalted peanuts. Set aside a few, for garnish
- A few curry leaves
- 2 tbsp fresh coriander, roughly chopped
- 2 medium-sized red country tomatoes, cubed
- Juice of 1 lime
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 6 tbsp vegetable oil
- 170g tomato purée
- 1 cup smooth peanut butter
- 1/2- 1 cup vegetable stock

## Method

1. In a pan fry the peanuts and set aside.
2. Fry the curry leaves and set aside.
3. Saute the chopped onion and set aside.
4. Saute the garlic and ginger.
5. Add the onions back to the pan with ginger and garlic. Stir in the tomato purée and continue cooking for 3 minutes over a medium heat
6. Pour in the vegetable stock and stir into the tomato mixture.
7. Add the peanut butter to the pot and stir in till it is completely melted. Once melted add the chopped tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes.
8. While simmering add the lime juice, cayenne pepper and salt.
9. Once cooked, add in the fried peanuts.

10. Garnish with fresh coriander and fried curry leaves

## To Serve

Serve accompanied by flat breads, assorted fresh vegetables like cucubers, carrots and bell peppers.

One of the top health benefits of peas is that it has high protein content, and is one of the best sources of plant protein at 8g per cup.



# Chunky Pea Spread

**Time: 45 mins**

**Yield: Approximately 500 gm**

## Ingredients

- 350 g fresh or frozen peas (if using fresh, reserve the washed pods to use in vegetable stock)
- 2 tbsp neutral oil, for frying (rice bran or canola are good)
- 1 large garlic clove, crushed
- 2 medium-sized spring onion bulbs, finely chopped; if desired, reserve the stems for another recipe \*freshly squeezed juice of 1 ripe lime
- 1 tsp lime rind, finely grated (of yellow skinned lime)
- 1/2 tsp cumin powder
  - 1tbsp fresh parsley, roughly chopped + extra, for garnish
- 1 small red country tomato, finely chopped; for garnish
- a pinch of pink salt
- a dash of regular Tabasco sauce
- a dash of red OR green jalapeno sauce (optional)
- 1 red OR green fresh jalapeno chilli ,

seeds removed and roughly chopped (optional)

- 1 tbsp. low-fat vegan mayonnaise  
OR 2 tbsp. cold pressed avocado oil

## Method

1. For frozen peas: defrost the peas. Place them in a steel colander and pour hot water to refresh them and allow the water to drain well. Pat the peas completely dry
2. Heat the oil in the pan and fry the onions lightly. Allow the onions to cool.
3. To a food processor add the peas, garlic, fried onions, cumin and blend briefly.
4. Add the lime juice, lime rind, salt, sauces and blend briefly.
5. Finally add the mayonnaise or oil, parsley and chopped jalapeno to the pea mixture. Blend till all ingredients are well incorporated, but leaving a rough and chunky consistency.

## Tips For Chefs

**Suggestion 1:** Pile the pea mixture into glass bowls and garnish with chopped parsley. Served accompanied with jalapeno, garlic OR cumin flavoured breadsticks; potato crisps; nachos.

**Suggestion 2:** fill the pea mixture in cocktail- sized taco shells. Garnish with parsley and finely chopped tomato

Rich in protein, among other nutrients, a cup of the ancient superfood quinoa contains twice more of the health-sustaining substance than white rice. Even though it is widely termed a grain, quinoa is actually a seed. Of all the 3 coloured varieties-red, white and black, black quinoa is believed to have to the highest protein content.



## Lebanese Style

## Savoury Quinoa

## Bombs

These unusual no-bake, easy-to-prepare quinoa energy bombs make a good and healthy addition to a breakfast or brunch buffet spread. They are packed with protein from the quinoa and beans, and also flavour. They are a good source of plant protein. Also, as a further boost they are customizable and offer a well-rounded experience, taste and health-wise

**Time: 3 hours**

**Yield: 12 pieces**

### Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked tricolour quinoa + 1 cup extra, set aside in a wide bowl
- ½ cup cooked white beans, or cooked mixed sprouts
- 1.5 tbsp tahini OR cashew butter OR pistachio butter
- 1tbsp red OR green harissa paste + extra for accompaniment
- 1/4 tsp pink salt
- 2 tbsp toasted black and white sesame seeds
- 1 tbsp za'atar spice
- A few sprigs of fresh coriander, for garnish
- 2 tbsp dried rose petals

### Method

1. In a food processor add the cooked quinoa and beans. Blend them briefly till they form a soft chunky mass.
2. Add the tahini or one of the butters to the quinoa mixture and blend briefly, till well incorporated.
3. Divide the mixture into 2 portions.
4. To one portion of the mixture, add the red or green harissa paste and salt, and again blend briefly.
5. Remove the harissa quinoa mixture from the processor. Set aside
6. Roll the 2 portions of the mixture into balls and place on a baking tray or in a steel container. Chill the balls in the freezer for about 1 hour until firm.
7. Into the extra quinoa which has been set aside, toss in both quinoa

portions of the balls till they are coated with the grains.

8. Fill a bowl with the sesame seeds and toss in the harissa balls till seeds stick to the surface.
9. On a flat plate or to a bowl add the za'atar powder. Toss in the second portion of the quinoa balls till well but lightly coated.

### To Serve

1. In a platter place the fresh coriander sprigs, or scatter the dried rose petals.
2. Place the assorted quinoa bombs over the coriander or rose petals.
3. Serve the extra harissa in a bowl alongside, as accompaniment or for dipping.



Urban Agriculture:

# Unlocking the Potential

- Aditi Mali

**“ With the rapid growth of urbanization, urban farming can repurpose open space in a hotel, restaurant, residence, park or housing colony to grow food. Aditi Mali tells us about the different methods of urban farming that can be an answer to food security in overpopulated cities and towns. ”**

In recent years, India's rapid urbanization has brought about significant challenges including resource depletion, heightened pollution, and diminishing green spaces. Amidst these concerns, urban agriculture emerges as a promising solution, offering diverse benefits for sustainable development. Primarily, it addresses the pressing issue of food security in burgeoning cities. With urban populations expected to soar in the coming years, localized food production within city limits reduces dependence on long-distance transportation and minimizes the vulnerability to supply chain disruptions.

Furthermore, urban agriculture contributes to environmental sustainability by fostering green practices and mitigating the adverse effects of urbanization. Urban farms act as natural carbon sinks, offsetting greenhouse gas emissions and ameliorating the urban heat island effect. They also utilize organic waste and wastewater for irrigation, reducing strain on freshwater sources and mitigating pollution. Additionally, urban agriculture promotes biodiversity, enhances air quality, and aids in combating climate change.



Beyond environmental and food security benefits, urban agriculture also serves as a catalyst for economic empowerment and social cohesion. In a country where a substantial population resides in informal settlements, urban farming offers livelihood opportunities for marginalized communities. By equipping individuals with the skills and resources for food cultivation, it fosters self-sufficiency and

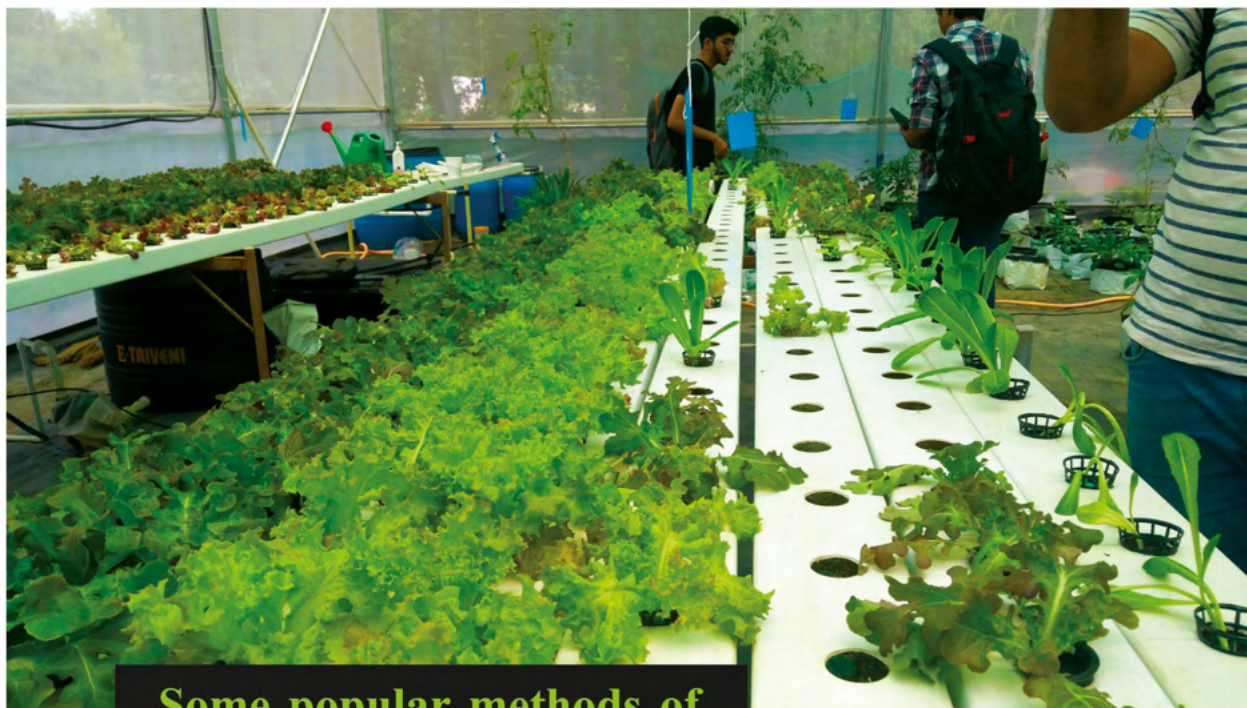
resilience. Moreover, community gardens and urban farms provide inclusive spaces for social interaction, knowledge exchange, and cultural enrichment, strengthening social bonds and promoting collective well-being.

As India grapples with the encroachment of agricultural land due to rapid urbanization, urban agriculture presents a viable solution to reconcile urban development with agricultural sustainability. By repurposing vacant lots, rooftops, and unused spaces for farming, cities can preserve agricultural heritage, protect biodiversity, and reclaim lost greenery. Through innovative practices such as vertical farming and hydroponics, urban agriculture maximizes land use efficiency while minimizing environmental impact.

As India endeavours towards sustainable urban development, integrating agriculture into urban planning becomes imperative. Embracing urban agriculture as a cornerstone of resilience and sustainability can pave the way for healthier, more liveable cities in the 21st century. With concerted efforts from policymakers, urban planners, and communities, urban agriculture has the potential to revolutionize India's urban landscape, ensuring a greener, more equitable future for generations to come.

### **Creating Edible Gardens**

Urbanization has brought about significant changes in our cities, emphasizing the importance of green spaces and sustainable practices. Urban agriculture has emerged as a solution, allowing individuals to cultivate plants, fruits, and vegetables even within the confines of limited urban areas. From rooftop gardens to community plots, a variety of methods exist, each presenting its own unique advantages and challenges. Urban agriculture is mainly practiced through container gardening, vertical gardening, community gardens, rooftop farming, soil less farming like hydroponics and aquaponics.



## Some popular methods of urban farming:

### Container Gardening

Container gardening is a versatile solution that can be done using little or no garden space, using a balcony, small yard, or only a patch of sun on a driveway to produce a wide variety of vegetable crops in containers. These plants can be grown in containers such as pots, planters, or even repurposed items like buckets or crates.

The portability of a container garden allows for easy optimization of sunlight exposure, providing better control over soil quality and moisture levels while minimizing the risk of soil-borne diseases.

However, the limited root space may hinder plant growth, requiring regular watering and fertilizing. Additionally, extreme temperatures can impact plant health.

### Vertical Gardening

Vertical gardening utilizes vertical spaces such as walls or trellises to grow plants vertically. This maximizes space efficiency and is ideal for areas with limited horizontal space as it utilizes vertical structures like walls, trellises, or hooks for hanging planters. It enhances the aesthetic appeal of urban landscapes and allows for easy accessibility and maintenance.

However, the limited soil depth may restrict plant selection, and sturdy support structures are needed to withstand the weight of plants and soil. Furthermore, rapid drying out during hot weather necessitates additional irrigation and fertilization.

### Community gardening

Community gardens are shared spaces where



individuals or groups collectively cultivate and maintain a plot of land. They promote and foster community engagement and social interaction, food security, and education about gardening and nutrition by promoting resource sharing and environmental stewardship. It provides access to larger gardening spaces for individuals with limited home space.

However, coordination among society members is crucial, and conflicts over resource allocation may arise. Sustainability relies on community support and



participation, and securing long-term land tenure can be challenging.

### **Rooftop gardening**

Rooftop farming involves utilizing the rooftops of buildings for agriculture. Rooftop farms can range from small-scale gardens to larger commercial operations, providing opportunities to grow fresh produce in urban areas. Rooftop Gardening utilizes underutilized urban spaces to create green oases, improving building insulation and reducing stormwater runoff. It offers opportunities for urban agriculture and food production. However, structural considerations and weight limitations may restrict garden size and design. Waterproofing and drainage

systems are necessary to prevent water damage, and exposure to environmental elements can affect plant growth and maintenance costs.

### **Hydroponic and aquaponic farming**

Hydroponic and aquaponic systems grow plants without soil by using nutrient-rich water solutions. Hydroponics involves directly exposing plant roots to the nutrient solution, while aquaponics integrates fish tanks to provide nutrients through fish waste. Hydroponic Gardening enables year-round cultivation in controlled environments, maximizing water efficiency and minimizing soil-borne diseases. High-density planting and faster growth rates are possible. However, specialized



equipment and technical knowledge are required, and vulnerability to power outages and equipment failures exists. Initial setup costs can be significant, and ongoing monitoring of nutrient solutions and pH levels is essential for plant health.

## Tips for Kitchen Gardens

Kitchen gardens can be created in any kind of building typology like apartment, bungalows, tenement or have a commercial set up like an office, café, hotel or restaurant.

**Choose the Right Location:**  
Select a spot in your home

that receives ample sunlight for at least 6-8 hours a day. Most vegetables and herbs thrive in full sunlight, so choose a sunny balcony, terrace, or windowsill for your kitchen garden.

**Opt for Container Gardening:** In urban settings where space is limited, container gardening is an ideal solution. Use containers such as pots, planters, or grow bags to grow your plants. Ensure that your containers have drainage holes to prevent waterlogging.

**Select Suitable Plants:**  
Choose plants that are well-suited to the Indian climate

and can thrive in the prevailing weather conditions. Some popular choices for kitchen gardening in India include tomatoes, chilies, mint, coriander, spinach, and curry leaves.

**Use Quality Soil and Compost:** Invest in good quality potting mix or soil for your kitchen garden. Mix in organic compost or vermicompost to enrich the soil with nutrients and improve its fertility. Regularly replenish the soil with compost to ensure healthy plant growth.

**Water Wisely:** Proper watering is essential for the success of your kitchen garden, especially during the hot and dry months. Water your plants deeply and thoroughly, ensuring that the soil is evenly moist but not waterlogged. Avoid watering in the heat of the day to minimize water loss due to evaporation.

**Practice Companion Planting:** Companion planting involves growing different plants together that

benefit each other in some way. For example, planting marigolds alongside vegetables can help repel pests, while growing basil near tomatoes can improve their flavour and deter pests.

**Implement Natural Pest Control:** Insect pests can be a common problem in kitchen gardens, but there are natural methods to control them without resorting to harmful chemicals. Use neem oil spray, garlic spray, or companion planting to repel pests and protect your plants.

**Mulch to Conserve Moisture:** Mulching is an effective way to conserve soil moisture, suppress weed growth, and regulate soil temperature. Use organic mulches such as straw, dried leaves, or grass clippings to cover the soil surface around your plants.

**Regular Maintenance:** Stay proactive with regular maintenance tasks such as pruning, fertilizing, and pest control. Remove dead or diseased foliage, feed your plants with organic fertilizers, and keep an eye

out for signs of pest infestations or diseases.

**Enjoy the Harvest:** There's nothing quite as satisfying as harvesting your own homegrown produce. Harvest your fruits, vegetables, and herbs when they are ripe and ready to enjoy. Use them fresh in your favourite recipes or preserve them for future use.

## The benefits of urban agriculture

In conclusion, urban gardening offers numerous opportunities for individuals to reconnect with nature and promote sustainable living. Understanding the various methods, along with their respective pros and cons, empowers aspiring urban gardeners to make informed decisions. Whether it's container gardening on a small balcony or rooftop gardening atop a high-rise building, there's a gardening method suited for every urban dweller to enjoy the benefits of cultivating greenery in the urban jungle.

From container gardening on

apartment balconies to rooftop farms atop commercial buildings, the possibilities are as diverse as the urban fabric itself. Each method brings its own set of advantages and challenges, yet all share a common thread: the potential to nurture a greener, more sustainable future. As we embark on this journey, let us remember that the power of urban agriculture lies not just in the fruits and vegetables it yields, but in the connections it cultivates—between people, between communities, and between humanity and the natural world. It is a reminder that even in the midst of concrete jungles, the seeds of change can take root and flourish. So let us embrace urban agriculture as more than just a gardening trend, but as a profound expression of our commitment to building healthier, more resilient cities. By working together—policymakers, planners, communities, and individuals alike—we can sow the seeds of a brighter tomorrow, where every rooftop, balcony, and vacant lot becomes a thriving oasis of greenery in the urban landscape. Grow Local, Eat Local!

# The journey of a micro- greens entrepreneur

- Aditi Mali, Mali Greens

“ Driven by a desire to lead I embarked on establishing Mali Greens—an urban farm aimed at addressing the growing demand for fresh, nutritious produce in urban areas. ”

As the founder of Mali Greens, I bring a unique blend of expertise in urban planning and sustainable agriculture to the forefront of our mission. My journey began with a Bachelor's degree in Urban Planning from the Center for Environment Planning & Technology (CEPT) in Ahmedabad, India, followed by a Master's in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security from the Royal Agriculture University (RAU) in Cirencester, UK.

Upon returning from the UK, I recognized the crucial intersection between agriculture and urban planning in shaping sustainable and liveable cities. This realization propelled me to share my insights as a visiting faculty member at Nirma University, where I pioneered courses on Urban Agriculture, a novel concept in India. These courses, offered at esteemed institutions like CEPT University and NID, emphasized hands-on learning, with students cultivating microgreens in their classrooms. Witnessing their enthusiasm and engagement, I was inspired to take my teachings beyond theory and into practice.

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Driven by a desire to lead by example, I embarked on establishing Mali Greens—an



urban farm aimed at addressing the growing demand for fresh, nutritious produce in urban areas. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic underscored the urgency of local food production, motivating me to transform my vision into reality. With microgreens emerging as the superfood of the 21st century, I seized the opportunity to launch Mali Greens from the confines of my guest room, turning adversity into innovation.

I began on a modest scale, growing microgreens at home for personal enjoyment and with my students as part of their coursework. However, when the idea of commercializing this venture took root, I quickly realized the vast disparity between personal and commercial-scale production.

Transitioning from a hobbyist to a business owner required a significant shift in mindset and approach. We have become known for our unwavering commitment to consistency and quality with every harvest. In a region like





Gujarat, where the climate poses unique challenges, I faced the daunting task of pioneering a successful microgreen business on a scale previously unseen in India.

With no blueprint to follow, I turned to online resources and sought guidance from fellow growers on platforms like YouTube. While these sources provided a foundational understanding of commercial growing, the journey to establishing Mali Greens was marked by relentless experimentation and innovation.

In the initial stages, trial and error became my steadfast companions as I navigated the intricacies of year-round cultivation in a dynamic climate. Faced with the absence of tailored systems and equipment in the Indian market, I took it upon myself to design custom trays, racks, and growing spaces optimized for our local context.

Yet, the journey didn't end there. Even today, Mali Greens remains a testament to our unwavering commitment to innovation. We continually push boundaries, experimenting with new techniques and technologies to meet the



evolving needs of our discerning clientele, including renowned chefs who demand nothing short of perfection.

Currently, Mali Greens proudly collaborates with over 100 chefs in Ahmedabad, supplying them with premium microgreens that elevate their culinary creations to new heights. Our dedication to excellence and relentless pursuit of innovation underscores our mission to revolutionize the urban agriculture landscape, one vibrant green at a time.

Throughout our journey, we encountered diverse challenges that demanded innovative solutions to overcome. Initially, our primary hurdle lay in building awareness and generating market demand for

microgreens—a niche yet promising segment. To tackle this, we engaged in various outreach efforts, from participating in farmers markets and food festivals to connecting with cooking groups and establishing pop-up stalls. These initiatives enabled us to forge connections with the community, both online and offline, and cultivate a growing interest in our offerings among the residents of Ahmedabad.

As demand surged, scaling our operations became imperative. Balancing supply and demand while upholding the premium quality standards that Mali Greens is renowned for posed a significant challenge. To navigate this, I implemented streamlined systems to optimize every aspect of our

production process, from cultivation and sorting to packing and delivery. This ensured consistency in both supply and quality, even as we expanded our reach to meet the city's burgeoning demand.

Logistics presented another obstacle, given our commitment to delivering farm-fresh produce promptly. To address this challenge, we innovated by developing in-house logistics management systems, leveraging software solutions to streamline delivery operations. By implementing area-wise delivery schedules, we enhanced efficiency and planning, ensuring timely and cost-effective delivery of our products.

Furthermore, navigating the dynamics of a predominantly male-dominated industry posed its own set of challenges. As a female founder and CEO, I often encountered gender biases, with many assuming a male presence at the helm of our organization. However, I refused to let gender be a barrier to our success. Instead, I prioritized building strong relationships with our partners in the hospitality sector, fostering an environment of

mutual respect and collaboration. In doing so, I discovered that the food and beverage industry proved more welcoming to female leaders than others—a testament to the strides we've made in promoting diversity and inclusivity.

In fact, our commitment to empowering women extends beyond mere rhetoric. Currently, 80% of our staff comprises talented females from diverse backgrounds, whom we actively train and support. Through their dedication and hard work, they not only contribute to the success of Mali Greens but also serve as role models for aspiring female entrepreneurs in the industry.

We prioritize excellence by conducting sorting directly at our farm, ensuring that only the finest, premium-quality produce reaches our customers' tables. Renowned chefs throughout the city vouch by the exceptional quality of our offerings, forging lasting connections with us over the past three years. Once they experience Mali Greens, they trust us implicitly to meet their culinary needs.

Our dedication to freshness is unparalleled. We supply freshly

harvested farm produce delivered within hours, offering hassle-free replacements if needed. With no minimum delivery requirements and complimentary delivery services, we cater to establishments of all sizes, from the coziest cafes to the grandest hotels.

Microgreens, with their unparalleled nutritional density, became the cornerstone of Mali Greens. These tiny greens pack a powerful punch, offering up to 40 times more nutrients than their mature counterparts. Recognizing their potential to alleviate nutrition insecurity during the lockdown, I dedicated myself to scaling up production, transforming Mali Greens into the largest producer of microgreens in Ahmedabad and Gujarat.

As the Microgreen Queens, we boast an extensive array of microgreen varieties, offering endless possibilities for culinary creativity. Beyond mere produce, we specialize in custom edible decor setups for hotels and cafes, including live lettuce for salad bars, live microgreens for buffets, and microgreens mini-bars for direct table service—an embodiment of our Farm to Table ethos.



As the founder of Mali Greens, our flagship products revolve around our innovative subscription model, tailored for home use, ensuring a consistent supply of fresh produce conveniently delivered to our customers' doorsteps. Harvested from our state-of-the-art urban farms, our greens are swiftly dispatched within hours of harvesting, guaranteeing unparalleled freshness.

Our subscription offerings include the Exotic Microgreens box, Harvest box featuring a variety of lettuces, kale, baby spinach, and an array of fresh herbs such as oregano, thyme, rosemary, mint, basil, cherry tomatoes and more, with combo subscriptions available for enhanced savings. Every product is freshly harvested, free from chemical residues, and



promptly delivered within hours of harvest, ensuring optimal flavour and nutritional value.

For hotels, restaurants, and cafes, our most sought-after products include microgreens, live microgreen trays, edible flowers, lettuces, basil, herbs, and exotic leafy greens. Endorsed by chefs and esteemed peers in the industry, Mali Greens has thrived through word of mouth, fuelled by the unwavering trust our clients have placed in our brand. Our microgreens, in particular, stand out for their exceptional longevity, boasting a shelf life of over two weeks without the need for chemicals—an achievement made possible by the innovative cultivation methods we've pioneered.

At Mali Greens, our dedication to quality, freshness, and innovation sets us apart in the industry, ensuring that every customer, from home enthusiasts to culinary professionals, experiences the finest in urban-grown produce.

Mali Greens has become synonymous with quality and consistency in the industry. Our unwavering commitment to supplying superior products year-round underscores our dedication to serving our customers with the finest, freshest produce available.

My efforts didn't go unnoticed. In 2021, I was honoured with the Young Development Agriculturist 2021 (overseas) award by the Tropical Agriculture Association (TAA Org) in the UK, recognizing

Mali Greens' pioneering work in urban agriculture. In 2023, we were also featured in Divya Bhaskar, and well received by the Minister of Agricultural and horticulture department of Gujarat. A cherry on top was the spotlight by RJ Krutarth in Radio Mirchi. These accolade serves as a testament to our commitment to revolutionize urban food systems and promote sustainability.

Our vision for the future is expansive, as we aim to broaden our reach across multiple states and cities in India. Our journey has already begun, with successful ventures into markets in Bhavnagar, Surat, Baroda, Udaipur, and beyond. We aspire to emerge as the foremost microgreen farmers in India, steadily advancing our goal one city at a time.

Central to our mission is the unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest standards of quality and consistency in supplying premium, fresh produce to both chefs and home cooks alike. As we continue to grow and expand, this dedication will remain at the core of our operations, ensuring that Mali Greens continues to be synonymous with excellence in the industry.

# Making the most of microgreens: Tips for Chefs

Aditi Mali

Our expertise lies in microgreens and edible flowers, such as red sorrel leaves and pea shoots, providing chefs with fresh and natural options to elevate the visual appeal of their dishes.

Our microgreens are grown with meticulous care, ensuring maximum freshness and flavour. From our popular exotic mix box to specialty varieties like Pink & Purple Radish and Sunflower microgreens, we offer a wide selection to enhance culinary creations. We understand that every chef has unique preferences, which is why we offer 100% customization, allowing chefs to tailor their orders according to their specific requirements.

In addition to our microgreens, we offer custom edible decor setups for hotels and cafes, adding a touch of freshness and creativity to salad bars, buffets, and table service. From live lettuce for salad bars to live microgreen trays for buffets and fresh serving, we provide innovative solutions to elevate dining experiences.

At Mali Greens, we take the farm-to-table philosophy seriously, ensuring that our microgreens are delivered directly from our farms to the dining table. Whether it's enhancing the flavour of dishes or adding visual appeal to dining spaces, Mali Greens is dedicated to providing hotels and restaurants with the finest microgreens and custom decor solutions, helping chefs create unforgettable culinary experiences for their patrons.

**Flavour Enhancement:** Microgreens are packed with intense flavours, making them perfect for enhancing the taste of dishes. Experiment with different varieties to add a burst of freshness and complexity to your culinary creations.

**Garnishing:** Use microgreens as a beautiful and flavourful garnish to add a pop of colour and texture to your dishes. Their delicate appearance makes them perfect for adding a finishing touch to plates, soups, salads, and appetizers.

**Texture Contrast:** Incorporate microgreens to create contrast in texture. Their tender leaves and crunchy stems can provide a delightful contrast to the softness of other ingredients, adding

depth to your dishes.

**Salad Enhancement:** Elevate your salads by incorporating microgreens for added flavour, texture, and visual appeal. Mix and match different varieties to create unique flavour profiles and interesting combinations.

**Sandwich and Wrap Fillings:** Use microgreens as a nutritious and flavourful filling for sandwiches, wraps, and rolls. Their vibrant colours and fresh flavours will enhance the overall taste and presentation of your creations.

**Soup and Stew Toppings:** Sprinkle microgreens on top of soups, stews, and curries just before serving to add a burst of freshness and colour. This simple addition can elevate the presentation and flavour of your dishes.

**Infused Oils and Vinegars:** Create infused oils and vinegars using microgreens to add a unique flavour twist to dressings, sauces, and marinades. Simply blend microgreens with oil or vinegar and strain for a flavourful infusion.

**Microgreen Pesto:** Use microgreens, such as basil or arugula, to make a vibrant and flavourful pesto sauce. Combine microgreens with garlic, nuts, cheese, and olive oil for a fresh and aromatic sauce that pairs well with pasta, grilled meats, and vegetables.

**Edible Decor:** Get creative with microgreens by using them as edible decor for your dishes. Arrange them in intricate patterns or clusters to add visual interest and artistic flair to your plates.

**Experimentation:** Don't be afraid to experiment with different varieties and combinations of microgreens. Mix and match flavours, textures, and colours to create unique and innovative dishes that showcase the versatility of microgreens.

By incorporating these tips into your culinary repertoire, you can harness the full potential of microgreens to create unforgettable dishes that delight the senses and impress your diners.

Urban Farm to Table:

# An urban farming entrepreneur

- CA Arpita Prajapati & Chintan Prajapati,  
Tatva Greens

“ The  
commitment to  
providing meals  
that are both  
nutritious and  
enjoyable,  
rather than just  
salads,  
distinguishes  
Tatva Greens in  
the market ”

Three years ago, nestled among the rapidly expanding cityscape of Ahmedabad, an idea took root on an unlikely patch of land: a concrete rooftop. This idea blossomed into 'Tatva Greens', a venture born out of a simple desire to reintroduce a touch of green to our urban environment and to offer a healthier, sustainable way of living amidst the concrete and chaos. The initiative aimed to reintroduce the community to the benefits of fresh, pesticide-free produce grown locally on unused urban spaces like rooftops.

The expertise for the project was developed through a combination of local consultants, an abundance of online resources, and interactions with peers in India who had ventured into hydroponics. This collective knowledge pool helped navigate the initial setup and ongoing management of the hydroponic farming system.

The journey began with hydroponics, a method that felt almost magical in its ability to grow lush, leafy greens and herbs without a speck of soil. It was our way of making a small but meaningful difference, using rooftops that once stood barren to cultivate crops like kale, spinach, and various lettuces, as well as fresh herbs such as basil and thyme.

The goal was modest: to bring fresh, pesticide-free produce directly from our rooftop farm to the forks of our community.

However, we soon faced a reality check. Despite the enthusiasm for our farm-to-fork initiative, we realized that the everyday diets of our community members seldom included the leafy greens we were growing. It was a challenge that called for creativity, and the cultivation of a strong customer base that appreciates the unique value of the produce and meal offerings. The commitment to providing meals that are nutritious and enjoyable, rather than just salads, distinguishes Tatva Greens in the market.

The meal bowls, though often referred to as salads, are designed



as complete meals with balanced macros, thanks to Arpita Prajapati's passion for food and innovation. The subscription model was developed through trials and customer feedback, allowing for better demand forecasting and logistics management to ensure freshness.

Thus, the Buddha Meal Bowls were born. These bowls were our humble attempt to bridge the gap between our produce and the dining tables of Ahmedabad. Each

bowl was carefully crafted to balance nutrition and taste, incorporating healthy carbs, fibers, proteins, and healthy fats, all seasoned with our freshly harvested greens. The idea was simple: to make healthy eating not just accessible but also enjoyable.

To our delight, these bowls were met with warmth and appreciation. It was a gentle nudge that encouraged us to continue on our path, experimenting with growing more varieties of vegetables and



collaborating with local suppliers who shared our vision for freshness and sustainability.

Initially, the business model was B2B, aiming to supply directly to restaurants and cafes. However, the lack of demand led to a strategic pivot to a D2C model. This shift, though challenging, proved to be a blessing, building a community of over 2,000 loyal customers who appreciate and enjoy the products. The challenge was overcome by creating a demand for the unique product offerings and building a direct relationship with consumers. Tatva Greens is a testament to what can be achieved with a bit of innovation and a lot of heart. It's not just a business to us; it's a reflection of our commitment to our community and our planet. As

we look to the future, we're excited about the possibilities that lie ahead, always remembering that every small step we take is a step towards a greener, healthier world.

The future includes opening a physical space for customers to experience the offerings in person and expanding the menu to include new items aligned with the brand's values. The approach is deliberate and unhurried, focusing



on maintaining quality and customer satisfaction.

## Recipes and Tips for Chefs

CA Arpita Prajapati

A valuable tip is the concept of reverse-engineering dishes to make them healthier without compromising taste. By modifying cooking methods and ingredients, dishes like Chinese Manchurian can be transformed into nutritious meals. This approach is a cornerstone of Tatva Greens' philosophy and can be a useful strategy for anyone looking to make healthier food choices without sacrificing flavor.



# Sustainable Cereals

Climate Change is putting a strain on food systems and vice-versa. A few grocery brands tell us about what it takes for them to put environment-friendly cereals on your table.

## The World's First Organic Cereal Company

Alex Smith

**A**lara Wholefoods is a British company that began in 1975 when I found a couple of notes which I used to start selling discarded fruit and veg from New Covent Garden market. We wanted to produce really healthy food, and there were no cereals on the market that had no added sugar, salts or fats at that time, so we started making muesli. We have come a long way from then to have a zero waste, renewable



energy-powered factory in Camley Street, King's Cross. We planted lots of trees near the

factory, we have an orchard, and the people who work here live close by, too.



Our focus is on creating a healthy product with high nutritional value. As well as keeping our muesli free from sugar, salt and fat, we use superfoods such as goji berries and linseeds, and we have developed a complex database that we use to develop blends with specific requirements - such as high selenium, or vitamin C - that will still taste great.

Alara was the first cereal company in the world to be certified organic, and now our factory produces about half of all the organic muesli sold in the UK. We are also the first company to be licensed by the Coeliac Society.

What inspired us is that on one hand, we are doomed. On the other hand, food sustainability should lead to a sustainable society and a sustainable society will be an amazing place to live. We are now at the bifurcation point where we have to choose which of these options we prefer and have decided to do what work we are able to do to achieve it.

In Alara, we claim to be the most sustainable food manufacturer on earth, we optimise a coherent balance between the four foundations of sustainability (economic, environmental, governance, and social). The major challenge we have is

operating in a society that still seeks to maximise the financial with no benefit going or flowing through to us for these elements. The only way we have found to overcome this is by increasing efficiency and lean production methods. Our mission was to sequester more carbon than the carbon we create in making our products, and all our products are now Net Zero Carbon.

Our best-sellers include Scottish Oats GF Organic Porridge, Organic Fruits and Seeds Muesli, and Organic Crispy Fruit Muesli. Additionally, we're excited to announce the launch of two new organic products, Oat Bran and Wheat Bran, expanding our offerings to promote gut health.

# Purposing Spent Grains

Elizabeth Yorke



The circular economy is built on waste reduction and the reuse of by-products that become inputs in other processes and food products. Spent grain is a valuable by-product of industries like breweries that is rich in nutrients. At Saving Grains we upcycle brewers spent grain to make some good things. I am a chef by training and love

working with bread. On an internship in the Bay Area with bread historian William Rubel, I came across an interesting piece of history. Bakers and brewers worked in close proximity, and shared common ingredients - Grain, Yeast, Water. And what was more exciting was that the baker would share the stale or leftover bread with the brewer that would be used to brew beer

and the brewer would share the leftover spent grains and spent yeast with the baker that would be used in breads.

This model was really great. When I returned, to Bengaluru and saw microbreweries were blossoming and sourdough baking on the rise, I started experimenting with spent grain, while I worked with a restaurant that prided itself on innovation.

My curiosities on building better food systems took me to the Future Food Institute in Italy where I was part of a cohort of 15 researchers from around the world. Here my focus was on circularity and sustainability in the food system. We spoke to around 160 people in food to





understand what sustainability meant to them and explored different models that organizations and cities adopted for circular food systems. This research gave me a great foundation and inspiration to prototype the SAVING GRAINS model.

The pandemic provoked thought on our intensive dependencies on rural-agricultural systems. There was this delicious nutritious product that was being discarded right here, in our cities: SPENT GRAIN!

One of the primary hurdles with spent grain is its limited shelf life, leading to rapid spoilage if

not swiftly processed or utilized. As chefs, we've tackled this challenge adeptly by employing preservation techniques such as drying and promptly incorporating the wet grain into our culinary creations. Establishing a low-investment micro-upcycling kitchen has facilitated this process seamlessly.

Additionally, the variable generation of spent grain across different microbreweries and their locations posed another obstacle. However, through robust collaboration with breweries like Geist Brewing Co., we've streamlined the process of spent grain pickups, ensuring a consistent supply for our operations.

Yet, our most significant challenge remains generating ample demand for upcycled products derived from spent grain. Consumer perceptions and awareness regarding the nutritional and environmental benefits of these products present ongoing hurdles that we are actively addressing through education and outreach efforts. Repurposing spent grain reduces the volume of organic waste sent to landfills, mitigating environmental pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. By diverting spent grain from disposal, valuable resources such as water, energy, and agricultural land are conserved, contributing to a more sustainable food system. Utilizing spent grain as a raw material for food production can lower production costs for businesses, particularly in the brewing and food industries. Upcycling spent grain into value-added products creates new revenue streams for breweries and food producers, enhancing economic sustainability.



At Saving Grains, we take pride in crafting delicious and nutritious products from upcycled brewers' spent grain, offering a unique culinary experience while promoting sustainability. Our key products include Laddoo, Granola and Muesli, we aim to redefine the concept of sustainable snacking, offering innovative products that not only taste

great but also contribute to a healthier planet. Join us in our mission to transform food waste into culinary delights and make a positive impact on the environment, one delicious bite at a time.

Our future at Saving Grains revolves around scaling our operations, expanding our product line, and forging new collaborations to promote sustainability. We're committed to research and development, exploring innovative ways to upcycle spent grain and engage with our community through events and educational initiatives. By fostering partnerships and investing in growth, we aim to create a brighter, more



sustainable future for all. Together, we'll continue to advocate for environmental stewardship and empower individuals to make conscious choices that benefit both people and the planet. Join us on this journey towards a more sustainable food system. Join us in Saving Grains!

## An Organic Food Supply Chain

Rohan Grover

**W**e have been for long in agriculture and agri-products. The idea to set up an organic subsidiary came due

to the growing demand for organic food in Western countries. We were anyway working with the farmers on the sustainability front, and since we

had the strength we thought we should start an organic company. And that's how Nature Bio Foods was born and setup in 1997 as a subsidiary of LT Foods, known for



its basmati rice.

However, starting out as an organic food company in India came with its share of challenges. There is a shortage of pesticide-free land. There is also the work needed to ensure that the supply chain doesn't get contaminated. Above all, there is a need for awareness among farmers to adapt to organic farming. We need to protect the supply chain to avoid cross-contamination.

Farmers face economic challenges and are therefore attracted to the use of pesticides. We explain to them the

importance of growing organic food and the premiums they can get on their organic produce.

USA and Europe have always been one of the keys of the organic movement and market.

In Europe and the USA, people want to know where the products are coming from and their authenticity. We know that we must give the consumers the complete traceability and so we connect with the farmers. We now offer the supply chain of several organic products.

Marketing under the Eco Life brand in India, we offer ancient grains, beans, pulses and rice.

Our quick-cook Brown Basmati Rice hails from the rural farms of Punjab in the regions near the Himalayan foothills, it cooks in just 12 minutes without losing nutritional value, taste or texture.



# Contributors

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## **Aditi Mali**

Academician, Farmer and Founder of Mali Greens, an Urban Farm in Ahmedabad, Aditi Mali was awarded the Young Development Agriculturalist 2021 (overseas based) Award by The Tropical Agricultural Association (TAA), United Kingdom (UK). She earned her Bachelors of Urban Planning (B.Plan) from Center for Environment Planning & Technology (CEPT) Ahmedabad, India and her MSc in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security from Royal Agriculture University (RAU) Cirencester, UK. She has been teaching planning and urban agriculture at institutes like NID Paldi, CEPT Ahmedabad and Nirma University.



## **Sandra Melwani**

Sandra Melwani is a qualified baker. She is certified in Child Nutrition and Cooking. Sandra is a vegan culinary enthusiast whose passion first translated over 20 years ago with an eclectic catering menu that featured gourmet vegan pates - an unfamiliar item to most at the time. Since then, her path has led to food styling, cooking classes and workshops for young and older, talks, and writing. Her articles and stories have been featured in several publications including domestic and international in-flight magazines, lifestyle magazines and newspapers including The Times of India wherein her food-based contributions were a regular feature of the Sunday edition.

# Vadilal Hangout's

## New outlet in Surat

Vadilal is a heritage brand of ice cream with about a century of history from the 1920s when Vadilal Gandhi started his soda fountain in the walled city of Ahmedabad.

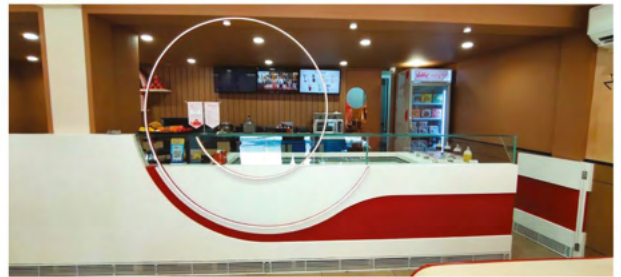
Now targeting the Generation Z, the Vadilal Hangout chain offers trendy stores with a range of new flavours encompassing 35 concoctions, 27 scoop flavors and 80 retail products. The menu includes Scoops, Ice Cream Shakes, Sundaes, Sizzlers, Freak Shakes, etc.

Vadilal Hangout is present in several locations of Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Delhi, and other cities. They are now in 3 locations in Surat.

Vadilal Hangout's Freakshakes are a true spectacle,

towering with toppings. These are not just shakes but dessert masterpieces. The Ice Cream Sizzlers are a must-try. Hot Fudge Sundae has creamy ice cream crowned with a river of warm, velvety fudge.

Vadilal Hangout will expand nationwide through franchising, adding yet another remarkable achievement to the illustrious journey of the Gandhi family's heritage brand.







# PUBLICATIONS



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