



Shah Shahid Hussain

Entouraj Indian Kitchen & Bar
Kidderminster WR9 0PW



Shah Shahid Hussain has always been passionate about food, and perhaps that drives him to open a restaurant over 30 years ago. He says when restaurants are too focused on profits they make sacrifices to quality that will not provide customer satisfaction.

The menu, according to him, reflects more into seasonal availability and local produce, which, he believes, is the key element of restaurant trade. Regarding the ingredients, he says, "I always use the good quality product and don't believe in cutting corners."

He adds, "As mentioned before my menu is more seasonal, I change it every 4 months, keeping the popular one and replacing the less popular." He takes a special care about the healthy option without compromising the flavour. His menu is created by his award-winning head chef Sudha Saha. Recognised by both the Michelin and Hardens Guides, Sudha has created a menu that celebrates the most exquisite Indian flavours. Regarding signature dishes, Shah says, "This is always the USP of our business, which showcases the creativity, innovative ideas and technically accomplished cooking."

They use the EPOS system for the Front of House and menu engineering for obtaining a very healthy Gross Profit (GP). In kitchen, they use Rational Combi Oven, Blast Chiller, Thermomix, Blow Torch, dough mixing machine and robot coupe. This modern kitchen technology, says Shah, "greatly enhance the process of efficiency, making it easier, safer and more efficient to cook meals and keep our food fresh." The appliances allow his staff to serve the food more quickly and professionally. "If you are planning to join food service business or to enhance productivity in your business, you will need the right equipment and utensils and a plethora of knowledge how a catering business works actually."

When it comes to a professionally designed commercial kitchen, according to Shah, it should have kitchen equipment that perfectly fits in the available space. Nowadays, he says, the manufacturers are introducing an innovative range of kitchen equipment to cope with the space problems faced by restaurant owners. These modern appliances are specially designed while keeping in mind limited space availability and are

a perfect choice for restaurateurs. "The modern equipment offers time management, comfortable work space while reduces the chance of accidents, injuries and fatigue. Such equipment increases the overall efficiency and productivity of your restaurant workers and also keeps them healthy."

As to the marketing and advertising initiatives, "Use of social media, for example, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, newsletter through our website, regular interval of using PR, inviting the food blogger helped us a lot," says Shah. "I think giving adverts on newspapers and local magazines does not give much impact," he adds.

To keep the business floating, Shah introduces innovative ideas and marketing gimmicks, and he has to push the boundaries extra hard. Then staffing is another big issue as it is hard to get good staff. He says, due to market inflation the operating cost is going high, which gives him tough times to keep the good GP level.

Also, people management skill is the hardest part of his business, says Shah. The management in his restaurant sets goals to the staff, providing training and personality development programme, and gives incentives once the goal has been achieved. All this motivates his staff to excel. "But fundamentally our performance is about keeping the enthusiasm and drive of the team – and it's held up remarkably."

For success, according to Shah, "Questions to ask yourself are; how will my restaurant connect with people? Why does my restaurant exist? What type of people am I looking to attract? What do they read or watch? How do they spend their spare time? What is the best way to reach them? Knowing why and for whom your restaurant exists is crucial to success." He says, "Keeping the standard consistent - in both food and services, never cutting corners, continuous marketing plan and well trained staff are key ingredients to your restaurant success."

Shah is thinking of expanding his business across the UK in the next five years. As for the next few years, he is clear about the major trends that will dominate the British Bangladeshi restaurant scene. "Value is going to remain key, and the quality and provenance of food will become more important. I'd like to expand my brand throughout the country with good food and excellent services."