

\$360 Mn: Projected size of India's Bottled Water Market by 2029.

IMAGES Business *OF food*

October 2025 • VOL 2 • No. 12 • ₹100

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FOOD AS GIFTS
India's Sweetest
Tradition, Reimagined
in Festive 2025.

ORGANIC FOOD
India's Next
Rs.75,000-Crore
Revolution.

Zorawar Kalra

Reinventing Indian
Cuisine for the World.

Founder & Managing Director,
Massive Restaurants Pvt. Ltd

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Editor's Note



In today's restaurant economy, technology has amplified visibility but also reshaped power. Food delivery aggregators have helped restaurants reach new customers and scale faster than ever. Yet, this convenience comes at a steep cost: commissions of 20–30%, discount-driven promotions that drain margins, and an ecosystem increasingly tilted toward customer acquisition over restaurant sustainability. Our feature on *page 50* explores how a smarter hybrid of physical and digital touchpoints is emerging as the restaurant world's counter-narrative. The solution isn't to reject digital but to reclaim it—on the restaurant's own terms—by balancing aggregator visibility with owned digital channels and loyal walk-ins.

This month's cover story (*pages 18–29*) spotlights Zorawar Kalra, son of the late Jiggs Kalra, the revered "Czar of Indian Cuisine." Zorawar has built his own empire of innovation through Massive Restaurants—home to Masala Library, Farzi Café, Pa Pa Ya, Made in Punjab, Swan, Bao Tai, and cloud kitchen formats like Louis Burger and Sliced Pizza. Over the past decade, his philosophy of "progressive Indian cuisine" has redefined what Indian dining can be—authentic yet experimental, rooted yet global. With over 40 outlets across India, the UK, the US, Canada, and the Middle East, Zorawar represents the new face of Indian gastronomy—an entrepreneur blending art, analytics, and audacity to make Indian food a world conversation.

And as India steps into its most vibrant quarter, our special feature (*pages 30–38*) delves into how Food as Gifts continues to embody India's sweetest sentiment—now reimaged through the lenses of health, speed, and sustainability. From mithai to millets, and from heritage boxes to ten-minute deliveries, festive gifting has become both an emotional and economic engine. In 2025, food gifting captures India's changing aspirations—where conscious indulgence meets instant gratification, and where every box exchanged carries a flavour of progress as much as affection.

Amitabh Taneja | Editor-in-Chief

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Printed & published by S P Taneja on behalf of Images Multimedia Pvt. Ltd. Printed at Modest Print Pack (P) Ltd. C-52, D.D.A. Shed Okhla Industrial Area Phase-I, New Delhi-110020 and published by S P Taneja from S-61 A, Okhla Industrial Area Phase - II, New Delhi. 110020 Editor : Amitabh Taneja

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Heir to a Legend, Architect of a Modern Food Empire

With Massive Restaurants, Zorawar Kalra has turned heritage into a living, scalable experience for a global, digital-first diner. His journey as a restaurateur exemplifies how vision, discipline, and invention can keep a legacy alive.



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ONDC VS. SWIGGY & ZOMATO

Who's Giving Merchants A Better Deal?

FOOD COST

Rs. 400CUSTOMER PAYS
AFTER THE DISCOUNT**Rs. 365**

COMMISSION

Rs. 32 (8%)

FOOD COST

Rs. 400CUSTOMER PAYS
AFTER THE DISCOUNT**Rs. 385**

COMMISSION

Rs. 72 (18%)

Rs. 60 (15%)	MERCHANTS' FUNDED DISCOUNT	Rs. 20 (5%)
None	MERCHANTS' FUNDED MARKETING SPEND	Rs. 20 (5%)
None	PAYMENT GATEWAY	Rs. 8 (2%)
Rs. 92	MERCHANTS' FUNDED TOTAL DISCOUNTS	Rs. 120 (2%)
Rs. 308	MERCHANTS' TAKEAWAY	Rs. 280

Nando's debuts in Pune with its first Casa

Nando's made its debut in Pune with its very first Casa (the name affectionately given to Nando's restaurants, which means "home" in Portuguese) in Phoenix Marketcity Mall in Viman Nagar. Known worldwide for its signature PERi-PERi flavors, this South African brand is bringing its fiery flair to Pune. "Pune is a city rich in culture, creativity, and a serious love for food," said **Sameer Bhasin, CEO, Nando's India**. "We've felt the excitement from Pune-kars, who have been visiting us in other cities in India and other countries for a long time, and now we're ready to serve the bold, unforgettable flavors they've been waiting for. We're proud to bring our PERi-PERi experience to Pune, and Phoenix Marketcity is the perfect place to begin."

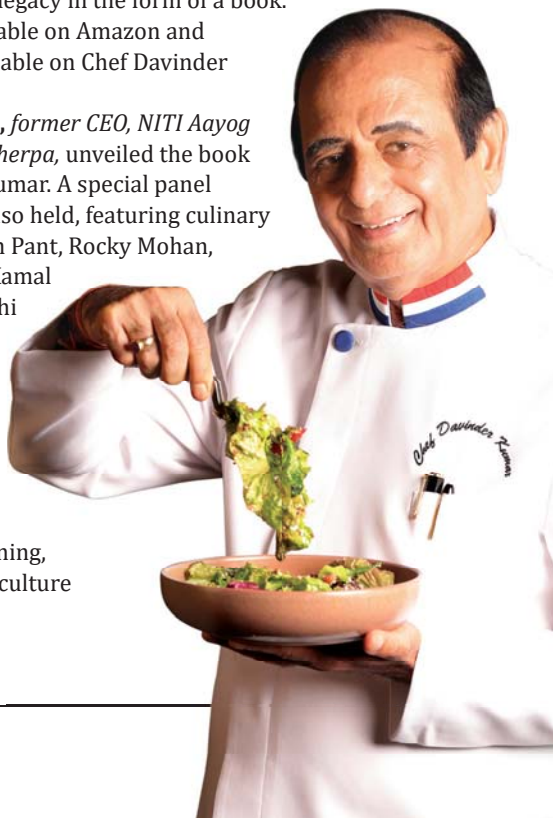


Chef Davinder Kumar launches "Romance of the Indian Curry – 365 Flavours for the Year"

Chef Davinder Kumar, Vice President, F&B, Le Méridien New Delhi, and President, Indian Culinary Forum, launched his book "Romance of the Indian Curry – 365 Flavours for the Year" at an exclusive event hosted at Le Méridien, New Delhi, which was graced by an esteemed gathering of industry stalwarts and leading voices from gastronomy, hospitality, and culture.

Speaking about his inspiration, Chef Davinder Kumar said, "This book is my way of honouring India's extraordinary culinary traditions. It reflects my passion for preserving our heritage while inspiring the next generation of chefs to innovate and carry our flavours to the global stage, by leaving behind a legacy in the form of a book." The book is available on Amazon and will soon be available on Chef Davinder Kumar's website.

Amitabh Kant, former CEO, NITI Aayog and India's G20 Sherpa, unveiled the book alongside Chef Kumar. A special panel discussion was also held, featuring culinary experts Pushpesh Pant, Rocky Mohan, Gautam Anand, Kamal Kant Pant, Anoothi Vishal, and Chef Vinit Manocha, who shared fascinating insights on India's food heritage, contemporary dining, and the evolving culture of gastronomy.



Sanjay Ghodawat Group names Suraj Kalra as new Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Sanjay Ghodawat Group (SGG) has appointed Suraj Kalra as its Group Chief Financial Officer (Group CFO). With his global expertise, he will spearhead global finance operations, drive fundraising initiatives, strengthen stakeholder relations, and shape the Group's long-term financial strategy. With over 24 years of global leadership experience, Suraj brings a proven track record in corporate finance, mergers and acquisitions, capital raising, and strategic transformation.

Shrenik Ghodawat, Managing Director, Sanjay Ghodawat Group (SGG), said, "We are delighted to welcome Suraj Kalra to the SGG. His extensive international experience and leadership in finance and strategy aligns perfectly with our vision of becoming a truly global enterprise. With Suraj on board, we are confident of building a stronger financial foundation and accelerating our growth trajectory worldwide."

Suraj previously served as CEO at EPIC Group in Hong Kong, where he led global operations and strategic growth. He has also held senior leadership roles at Vodafone Group, UK, and Vodafone India, driving M&A, corporate development, business development, and governance initiatives. His early career included investment banking at Axis Capital (formerly Enam) and corporate finance advisory at Deloitte.



Zorawar Kalra:

Heir to a Legend, Architect of a Modern Food Empire

With Massive Restaurants—home to Masala Library, Farzi Café, Pa Pa Ya, Made in Punjab, and a fast-scaling cloud portfolio—Zorawar Kalra has turned heritage into a living, scalable experience for a global, digital-first diner. His journey as a restaurateur exemplifies how vision, discipline, and invention can keep a legacy alive while building something entirely new.

By Sanjay Kumar

In the world of Indian gastronomy, the name Kalra is etched in permanence. For decades, the late Jiggs Kalra—the revered “Czar of Indian Cuisine”—chronicled, documented, and elevated Indian food like no one else, bringing forgotten recipes back into conversation and placing India firmly on the global culinary map. His landmark book “Prashad—Cooking with Indian Masters” became the Bible of Indian cuisine. He was a teacher, a television host, a food historian, and, above all, a relentless advocate for India’s vast culinary traditions.

Carrying such a legacy can be daunting. But for his son, **Zorawar Kalra**, it became both a responsibility and an opportunity. Unlike many second-generation entrepreneurs who remain confined to preserving what was built before them, Zorawar has sought to extend the Kalra name into uncharted territories of dining innovation. “My job is to take his legacy forward and not let it falter. Every waking hour, that’s my goal,” he says with conviction.

What makes Zorawar’s journey striking is not just that he inherited a famous surname, but that he has chosen to reinterpret it for a new era. Where Jiggs was the chronicler, Zorawar is the creator. Where his father revived heritage dishes, Zorawar reinvents them through theatrical plating, modern techniques, and scalable formats that appeal to a younger, globally connected audience. In doing so, he has bridged two worlds—the scholarship of culinary history and the energy of contemporary entrepreneurship.

IMAGES Business OF *food*

STORIES OF FLAVOUR

A SPECIAL ISSUE ON SAUCES,
SPREADS & RELISHES THAT TURN
MEALS INTO MEMORIES



Categories Covered

- ⊕ Tomato & soy-based sauces
- ⊕ Ketchups
- ⊕ Hot sauces
- ⊕ Gravies and pan sauces
- ⊕ Salsas and chutneys
- ⊕ Green sauces
- ⊕ Barbecue dips
- ⊕ Emulsified sauces and dressings
- ⊕ Nut and seed sauces & spreads
- ⊕ Yogurt- and dairy-based sauces
- ⊕ Meat-based sauces



What's in the Issue?

- ⊕ Top Trends in the Category
- ⊕ New Brands and Product Innovation
- ⊕ Packaging Innovation
- ⊕ In-store Merchandising and Promotions
- ⊕ Marketing and Distribution Strategies
- ⊕ Leading Brands in Sauces, Spreads & Relishes Category
- ⊕ Category Insights from Leading Retailers

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ON RETAILERS' SHELVES THIS YEAR.**

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Tradition Reimagined with Health, Speed, and Sustainability

From mithai to millets, from store queues to ten-minute deliveries—festive gifting has been rewired. E-commerce is set for a record season, instant networks are powering premium hampers, and food & grocery lead the charge as India swaps empty calories for thoughtful, label-clear indulgence. In festive 2025, food is still the language of love—only now it's fluent in health, speed, and sustainability.

By Business Of Food Bureau





Special Feature Food as Gifts



At Bombay Gourmet Market, festive gifting goes beyond just products—it's about crafting experiences. We curate hampers that blend global flavors with local favorites, presented in ways that feel both indulgent and personal."

— **AKSHAY KUMAR**, Founder and Director, Bombay Gourmet Market



Festive gifting is big in Gujarat and Goa. With Krafte, we are not only selling from stores but also reaching out to corporates and institutions. This year we expect to double our gifting business."

— **NIRAV CHOUDHRY**, Director, Buying & Merchandising, MagSonn Retail & Distribution

Festivals in India have always been more than occasions of ritual and prayer—they are economic engines that fuel commerce, employment, and innovation. Beginning with Raksha Bandhan in August, flowing through Ganesh Chaturthi and Durga Puja, gathering momentum during Dussehra and Diwali in October–November, and carrying into Christmas and New Year in December, the festive season is an extended calendar of celebrations that simultaneously reflects India's cultural diversity and its commercial vitality. For retailers, brands, and consumers alike, these months represent the high point of the economic year. Streets glow with lights, homes bustle with preparations, and increasingly, digital storefronts hum with traffic as consumers log in to shop for gifts, gadgets, apparel, and food. What was once a largely offline ritual of exchanging mithai (sweets), dry fruits, or apparel has now become a hybrid ecosystem of brick-and-mortar, e-commerce, and quick-commerce platforms.

Festivals as Economic Engines

The scale of festive consumption in India is staggering. In 2024, Diwali alone generated Rs.3.7 lakh crore in sales across categories ranging from jewellery and electronics to real estate, automobiles, apparel, and gifting. It is by far the single largest consumption

peak in India's calendar, equivalent to the GDP of small countries compressed into just a few weeks of celebratory spending.

Other festivals too contribute meaningfully to the economy. Eid, driven by apparel, food, and gifting, contributes upwards of Rs. 1.2 lakh crore annually. The demand for gold and jewellery alone surges by 25–30% during Eid, while community gifting and celebratory feasts make it a period of high FMCG and foodservice activity.

Meanwhile, Durga Puja in West Bengal has a uniquely regional but equally powerful impact, contributing Rs.45,000 crore to the state economy. From idol-making and pandal construction to apparel, décor, and food stalls, it generates seasonal employment for millions of artisans, craftsmen, and service providers. Similarly, Navratri in Gujarat boosts the apparel, décor, and tourism industries, creating localized consumption peaks.

Festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi in Maharashtra (worth Rs.20,000+ crore annually in Mumbai alone), Onam in Kerala (Rs.20,000 crore retail sales), and Christmas

HOW TIER 2 & 3 CITIES ARE REWIRING INDIA'S FESTIVE E-COMMERCE

India's festive e-commerce boom is no longer a metro-only story. From Lucknow to Coimbatore, smaller towns are driving record order volumes, experimenting with premium categories, and shaping the very way brands build festive strategies. Tier 2 and 3 cities have shifted from being peripheral markets to becoming the beating heart of India's digital shopping surge.

By Swati Bhargava



The festive season marks the peak of retail activity in India. It is a time when consumer aspirations translate into spending, and brands are tested on their ability to capture attention and loyalty in a high-stakes period. This year, the stakes are higher than ever. Urban households are expected to increase spending by 115%, with over a third planning purchases above Rs.20,000. These figures are significant, but they tell only part of the story.

Beyond volume and value, the defining shift lies in who is driving this growth and how brands must rethink strategies to stay ahead. For years, metro cities set the benchmark for festive e-commerce, shaping trends and driving sales. That dominance is now being challenged. Tier 2 and 3 cities are emerging as the new engines of growth, recording a 21% rise in sales and contributing an 8% increase in overall e-commerce volume this year. This shift reflects a deeper change in consumer behaviour, redefining how shoppers in these smaller cities discover, evaluate, and make purchases during the festive season.

Organic India: The Promise, the Pitfalls, and the Path Ahead

The global organic food and beverages industry is on course to touch US\$ 620 billion by 2026, fuelled by consumer demand for clean, sustainable, and chemical-free living. India, with its 1.93 million hectares under organic cultivation and millions of farmer-producers, stands at a decisive moment. The opportunities are vast—from a Rs.25,000 crore domestic market potential to global leadership in value-added exports. But so are the challenges: fragmented certification, fake organics, pricing hurdles, and policy confusion.

By Sunil Kumar

The global organic food and beverages market is no longer a niche—it is a juggernaut. Valued at about US\$ 220 billion in 2019, it is projected to touch US\$ 620 billion by 2026, growing at a steady CAGR of 16%. Demand is fuelled by rising consumer awareness, environmental consciousness, and a preference for chemical-free living. At the same time, global organic farmland has nearly doubled from 36 million hectares in 2010 to 72 million hectares today. Oceania dominates, accounting for 50% of this land, followed by Europe at 22%, while Asia lags at 9%.

Interestingly, while the U.S. remains the single largest market, commanding 42% of global retail organic sales, India has emerged as the country with the largest number of organic farmer producers—a paradox that highlights the gap between India's production strength and its limited domestic consumption.

The Indian Market: Small Base, High Potential

India's organic food and healthy foods sector currently stands at a modest US\$ 1.5 billion, but is expected to double to US\$ 3 billion by 2026. The real potential, however, is far larger. Rising incomes, rapid urbanisation, the spread of e-commerce and quick commerce, and a growing burden of lifestyle diseases are reshaping consumer choices.

With 1.75 crore Indians earning between Rs.75 lakh and Rs.100 crore annually, the addressable market for authentic organic products could exceed Rs.25,000 crore, if even half of these consumers adopted organic staples as part of their daily diets. Future

demand is likely to concentrate around organic ghee, khaand, millet-based cookies, desi wheat atta, honey, rice, and cold-pressed oils.

India's Organic Story: Driven by Exports

Much of India's organic story has, so far, been written for foreign shores. India has about 1.93 million hectares under organic cultivation, which is roughly 1.1% of its total agricultural land and 3% of global organic land. The market, estimated at US\$ 830 million in FY20, is largely driven by exports, particularly oilseeds (48%), cereals and millets (10%), tea and coffee (9%), dry fruits (9%), and spices (8%).

The United States absorbs nearly 57% of India's organic exports, followed by the EU at 29%. Domestically, the demand is skewed towards

