

INSIDE LOOK

at 3 Dragons at Pearl



In conversation with Farzana Chowdhury

What inspired you to become a restaurateur? Where did it all begin?

If I were to start from the beginning, I & my husband are big foodies. We used to eat delicacies from different countries while travelling abroad. When my husband was in a foreign bank, he was transferred to Hong Kong and there we were exposed to the authentic Sichuan food that you don't find in our parts of the country. And quite quickly we got enamored with their style of cooking and use of different spices. We noticed that Sichuan food was jam packed with flavors and had loads of condiments that it could incorporate itself with. We knew at that time that there were no authentic Sichuan restaurants in Bangladesh. We wanted to bring this amazing cuisine to the people of our country who are not able to go abroad to get a taste of it. Hence, we pondered on the idea of opening up a restaurant in Dhaka that would focus on Authentic Sichuan

Food. And so, our love of food, travelling and seeing a gap in the market was the inspiration behind 3 Dragons at Pearl.



What challenges did you face initially?

The initial difficulties that we faced at first were the ingredients. Not all the ingredients of authentic Sichuan food is available in Bangladesh. So, procuring them, looking for suppliers and setting up a block-chain took us a bit time to establish. But we were fortunate enough to get that ball rolling. Then came the interior, which is



an integral part of any restaurant. This restaurant is our passion project. Hence, we were involved in every part of the interior structuring process. From the walls, to the furniture's, cutleries and everything else that makes 3 Dragons at Pearl stand out from other restaurants, we were involved from the scratch.

You have other major businesses and despite 3 Dragons at Pearl starting off as a passion project of yours, What's your secret in sustaining so well over the years, while others have not done as well enough?

It's all about the foundation. If you have strong business foundation, it helps you in sustaining well during the ups and downs that the restaurant faces. We had a partner who was Singaporean and he has 2-3 restaurants in Singapore. His vast experience helped us set up the foundation of our restaurant in the very beginning. We also brought trainers from Hong Kong to train our employees as to how they will manage and communi-



cate with their customers and how to properly serve our food. The most important thing in a restaurant is the food quality and taste. We provide premium quality product and a lot of it is hand made. Our pastas and noodles are handmade in our kitchen and you get that authentic flavor when you bite into it. We also have a foreign chefs, who are expert in cooking authentic Sichuan food. All this has helped us put out consistently authentic and premium food for the past 5 years and helped us sustaining ourselves.

What are the steps you have taken for your restaurants to adopt to the new normal?

Most important thing for us at the moment is the health safety for our customer and employees. In the beginning of the pandemic, we brought is Doctors from Square Hospital to train our employees as to how to maintain

the health safety measures during the pandemic. When restaurants began to open up after the lockdown, we started off with our takeaway services. Anyone outside the building must wear a mask to enter and we have set up fumigation system at the entrance of the building as well. You need to have a reservation to dine in the restaurant because we want to maintain minimum capacity that adheres to the safety protocols set up by the Health Officials. Hand Sanitizers are stationed in every table. For takeaways, we have implemented a Triple-Layer Protective system for the safety of our customer. First, we are putting the food in a foil container. Second, we are placing the foil container inside a box. Lastly, we are setting it down within our carrier bag. We are also placing a note within the bags, where the temperature of the chef who cooked the food, the employee who packaged the food and the delivery personnel's temperature is noted down.

We have seen a lot of people trying their hands in different cuisines during the lockdown. Any advice for the aspiring chefs/home-cooks of Dhaka?

Yes, I have noticed that. That is very amazing that people are trying their hands on different stuff during the pandemic and being productive. My advice for them will be to



maintain hygiene within their food or kitchen. They should also look closely into how they deliver their food to their customers and see if it is not risking any customer's health by breaking the safety measures. So, they need to be a bit careful about these things and I'm sure they will do fine. It is very nice to see that a lot of women are stepping up and showcasing their skills as well.

3 Dragons shows your love and passion for oriental cuisine. Are there any upcoming exciting news for the fans of this cuisine any time soon?

We introduced 2 new cuisines during the lockdown. Korean and Fast food, which have their different titles. We are just providing these on a delivery basis as of now. But we want to bring the Korean Cuisine in our dine-in restau-



rant as well. Because we are getting a lot of positive feedback from our customer about the Korean food and a lot of them are requesting us to provide this cuisine in our Dine-in menu as well. That is basically our next upcoming project to incorporate Korean cuisine in our Dine-in menu and adhere to our customer's expectation of exceptional food.

The interview was taken by Foyzal Mahmud Niloy.
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