

A tale of tea - from Bangladesh for the World

FROM PAGE 3

When the tea garden that the Ahmeds had started was far enough along for export, Dr Anis and his younger brother Inam came to the U.S. to exhibit at the World Tea Expo. Encouraged by the response, they decided to focus on the U.S. market. Concurrently, Lipsius was in the process of selling Orange Glo (a natural cleaning product manufactured by Lipsius' family), so when they were looking for a market analysis, she offered her services.

In Lipsius' own words, "What started as 'helping out a friend' has turned into my life's work in the span of 10 years. As I learned more about what the Ahmeds had done – challenging an entire industry to do things better by improving thousands of lives in northern Bangladesh through regenerative, 100 percent organic agriculture and with fair and empowering treatment of their workforce – I realised that if I could tell that story to the American consumer, we could have a business.

Furthermore, the good work that had been done at the garden had to be communicated to the end user. We do that through innovative minimal waste, compostable packaging and bold marketing – online and on-location."

Sitting with Asma ul Roxana, Chief



Operating Officer (COO) of Kazi & Kazi Tea, we get an exclusive insight into this ever immersive story.

Roxana picks up the story from 2010 when Dr Anis and his brother took their valuable output to a tea expo in the USA to get a feel of what the international market was like.

The brand itself currently has an offering of 30-40 varieties, available throughout the year. Roxana emphasises on their focus on

improvement based on international demand as well as gradual change in local taste. Green tea, which was one of Kazi & Kazi tea's first introductions to the domestic market, is now a daily supplement for many health-conscious households. Since people are travelling more than ever, they too are picking up new tastes.

"I particularly like to experiment with the packaging. After all, tea is a great gift to have and share," Roxana says. Both Kazi & Kazi Tea and Teatulia come in attractive packaging, with biodegradable outer containers and bags, to stand out from the crowd.

Ultimately, it is the betterment of the community that helps the brand. Initially, the barren land relied on cow dung to enrich the soil, requiring a lot of cows. Now that the land is fertile enough with a steady supply of organic fertiliser, the community is being encouraged to sell the additional milk. Panchagarh, known as a "Monga" area, has seen many changes and this particular tea estate certainly played a vital role.

The COO of KK Tea jovially mentions that soon, they may very well be able to start exporting to China, the very birth place of tea! This optimism is not all that farfetched as Teatulia, being a premium product, is sold in the finest retail and food service

outlets in America – Whole Foods, Wegmans, Harvard, Yale, The Kitchen, Tokyo Joe's & Garbanzo. The brand has also been recognised for their leadership by Fortune/Food & Wine Magazine, Newsweek, Forbes and Specialty Food Association. Moreover, they continue to win awards for the quality of their tea and push the limits of responsible business practices with their recent Fair-Trade Certification, Rainforest Alliance Certification and 3rd round of B Corp Certification.

"We have our vision firmly in sight, and have not wavered from it. We are now trying to ensure that tea gets a firm position as a lifestyle product," says Roxana as she talks about what's in store for the local and the international brand. What started out as a local company, managed to ensure their tea as a premium product rather than a community, in a very short time. "You don't have to compromise quality if you have a vision," she adds.

Needless to say, this local brand, with its international counterpart, has its sights set with a dedicated team to place Bangladesh on the map successfully as a premium tea producer.

By Iris Farina

Photo courtesy: Kazi & Kazi Tea/Teatulia

CHECK IT OUT

Street Food Market returns

Foodies rejoice as the "Street Food Market" is once again being held at Four Points by Sheraton Dhaka's signature restaurant "The Eatery."

Enticing food items are waiting for the people of Dhaka, specially prepared by Chef Kaique, who has come all the way from Brazil to make it a big bash. With the experience of working in different world class hotels like Brazil Hospitality Group (BHG), Bab Al Qasar Hotel-Abu Dhabi, BU Trinity –United Arab Emirates, JW Marriot Marquis Hotel Dubai, Chef Kaique is now here to show his culinary expertise and present the guests the global map of food from America, Mexico, Italy, Japan, China, Thailand to India through the "Street Food Market".

In the Street Food Market you will find Italian pizza, live pasta, risotto, cheese bread, carbonara live cooking, beef salami, freshly backed focaccia, lentils and many more. Burritos, tacos bar, grilled corn with lime and parmesan, beef and chicken nachos are all waiting for you in the Mexican station.

Taste the authentic Thai cuisine with Pad Thai, sang choi bao of Sichuan lamb with smoked eggplant nahmprik, whole grilled snapper with coriander soy.

If you are in love with Japanese food, you can have sushi, sashimi, Tasmanian salmon tempura, chicken teriyaki, fried rice, chicken gyoza, prawn ceviche, silken tofu with wasabi pepper sauce, grilled prawns with kombu butter.

From the special Sea Food ice station, you can have lobster, prawns, crab, squid and tuna.

Last, but not least, American hot dog, Indian dosa, Chinese Sichuan steak, tartar with shaved fried garlic, black pepper mud crab, salt and pepper squid, sweet and sour lamb ribs, fresh juice bar candy bar and everyone's favourite Dessert station where you can find deep fried ice cream with butterscotch sauce, banana tempura, pecan pie, key west lemon pie, butterscotch pots de crème with salted caramel, strawberry and apple polenta rumble, sticky rice with mango will serve your appetite at its best.

Visit this season's first "Street Food Market", and give your taste bud the treat it deserves. All of these are priced at Tk 3,922 net per person. You can also avail Buy one Get One offer with selected cards. The festival will be held till 15 September, 2018

For more information, please visit www.fb.me/fourpointsdhakagulshan



Zoan Ash at Jessica Minh Anh's 7th "Catwalk on Water"

On 4 September, 2018, the Seine River in Paris was stunningly lit up by an artistic celebration of fashion, beauty, and women empowerment at the 7th anniversary of Jessica Minh Anh's "Catwalk on water" series.

Adding drama and sophistication to the grand catwalk, Bangladeshi haute couturier Zoan Ash by Asma Sultana showcased a heavily embellished and hand-beaded collection inspired by royal warriors. Mixing deep red and black with royal blue and beige, the creator brought out a sense of confidence and individuality in each

design. The signature look, worn by Jessica Minh Anh, included one half of a military velvet jacket and another half of an elegant royal gown completed with a distinctive jewel crown and sword. Bold and daring expression was combined with feminine motifs, which effectively triggered the allure.

Premiering seven innovative fashion collections, Jessica Minh Anh's Autumn Fashion Show 2018 successfully promoted a new wave of entrepreneurial fashionable women who are taking the world by storm.