

Mexican trend steps up a notch

BY PAULA TOWERS

One of the latest culinary offers aligned with the experiential trend is IndiMex.

Owned by international chef, GJ Singh, this Brisbane cafe and restaurant features fusion fare described as ‘funky Indian with a Mexican twist’.

Burritos, enchiladas, nachos, and chimichangas are combined with Indian flavours.

“We all use flat breads, lots of chillies, lots of spices, lentils, beans,” Singh said.

A specially created coffee blend features Indian and Mexican beans.

Appreciating that Indian cuisine shouldn’t be limited to one region, Singh has concentrated on doing something unique; and Indian and Mexican cuisines have natural synergies, Singh believes.

“There are many herbs, spices, and flavours that are equally at home on the Indian palate as the Mexican palate. Also, the breads and rice accompaniments, and the convivial, communal atmosphere of sharing a meal in India or Mexico are in common,” he said.

“Here in Australia, the dining public adores both cuisines so to combine them simply made perfect sense.”

The investment in brand creation and brand building has paid off in its popularity, Singh believes, having had a knock on effect in word





of mouth and resulting in only below the line advertising being required.

Email broadcasts and a customer loyalty program are also proving to be useful marketing tools.

“We are collecting the data to engage with customers,” said Singh.

“I’m very passionate about creating a brand, it is not a product that I am selling. I want to give

a more experiential feel so when customers come in, they enjoy not only the product but also the entire experience.”

The concept is now looking at expansion.

“I have had a number of customers ask if it is franchise – I take it as a huge compliment.

“We are putting in the building blocks. You need passion. That comes from the right people and the right training.” ■



Blast from the Past

Inside Retail
Issue #192: September 15, 1975

Another major cost for retail stores

The shops assistants' union believes retailers have an equal responsibility with unions to look after the health and welfare of shop assistants and plans to ask them to contribute to a fund for that purpose, federal secretary, Barry Egan, told Inside Retailing last week.

He said the union's welfare and financial advisors could not handle the workload and it was about time employers realised that they had equal responsibilities in this area.

Last week, the union revealed another piece of information from its Government-sponsored survey into the health of shop assistants. It showed that half of Australia's 500,000 shop workers use valium, triptonol, alcohol, or other means of support to cope with the pressures of work.

Are coupon promotions here to stay?

Retailers are closely watching the results of the coupon promotion launched by the Sydney Sun newspaper last week.

Eight of the paper's advertisers, Tandy Electronics, Norman Ross Discounts, Eric Andersons, Jean Junction, House of London, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Cem-mart, and Winns agreed to take part in a coupon offer.

Only one of the retailers, Tandy Electronics, offered a flat \$1 off any purchase. House of London offered 15% off any purchase, and the others offered certain amounts off specific purchases.

Tandy uses coupons regularly in its catalogues, and in its store launch offers, bring in coupon and get a free torch etc).

Advertising manager Robert Morris said the only problem with coupons is that some people abuse them. One man came in 12 times for 12 free torches. Others have used the \$1 discount to buy five 20 cent batteries.