



For Saints & Sinners

VISHAL ANAND

Both **Saints and Sinners** are welcomed to the place named after both. Here Aditi from team **TMM** strikes an interesting conversation with **Mr. Vishal Anand, Founder & Owner of Saints & Sinners** to learn about brand and the hospitality industry.



You transitioned from economics to food-economics in hospitality industry. What inspired you to glide through the platter-highway?

The narrative of Saints & Sinners is simple yet weird. Being an additional foodie in my gang of food-o-holics, we would try a variety of dishes at home and outside. During one of our evening out, the DJ did not play the retro music from 70 and 80s' as we liked. Genuinely, sheer out of my love for music we decided to have a place where people enjoy the best of music along with good food and fine drinks. Thus, we crafted a place for those who love music of the times they cherish. It has been over six months that we have received tremendous love, appreciation and choice from the evolved crowd. I am glad not only our name, but 'us' have been able to create a space for self in hearts of our clients. Touchwood! things have been good so far. For every person who walks in, it is for them to have a meaningful conversation along with some great music.

The place truly sounds an epitome of surprise for foodie-music lovers. What do you suggest should not be missed for a first timer?

It goes without saying, everything at Saint& Sinners revolves around music. Every week we have three to four gigs by the best bands from Delhi-NCR performing LIVE. We never play a *Hindi* or *punjabi track*. In fact, every single track that is played from 12 noon till 7 in the evening is carefully hand-picked by me. Till the time DJ arrives in the evening, we have various sets of music playing in the background. The menu is an assortment of Indian-Asian-European and other cuisines. Food is something you keep coming back for. Thus, good food served with great music and fine drinks create an

impeccable setting for our clients to enjoy their dining experience. Our dedicated focus on food-finesse make every experience special. We recently launched signature cocktails named after legendary songs. We try doing a lot of tribute nights for performers like Bryan Adams, Shakira, R.D. Burman and more. We are now curating an evening dedicated to Kishore Da very soon. Unlike other resto-pubs with focus on alcohol, which fixate on alcohol; we are doing unique for people in their mid-life. Seeing people in their mid-40s enjoying like the younger generation makes me feel happy. We are soon going to launch loyalty programmes for people in their 40s.

The brand Saints & Sinners relate more to people in 30s to senior generation. Addressing to people from different age groups is a task for industries. How did you prepare your staff to attend people from differentiated age group?

Our entire training program lies on foundation of 'being courteous' to everyone. Irrespective of the level of success, I have learnt to be humble and have tried to bestow the same with my team too. The moment you entire the premise, the staff would ask if you would want to hang your coat or jacket. Every single table has power banks kept with wires. We get people from 25 to 70 years of age, our learned staff modestly welcome different age groups in varied manner. For instance, the way a 50 year old would like to be welcomed contradicts from that of a 25 year old. Younger the crowd, more space they demand. However, someone in their 50s might ask for recommendations and hand holding on choosing their menu. Once in a while, the chef walks out of the kitchen and ask for inputs from the visitors. This makes a first-timer feel special. This is what we have been training our staff on. We pay attention to every small little things in life which we observe and try inculcating in the same in our work. Soon, we are keen to launch Sunday brunch with a LIVE band

performance where people are interested to spend time with their family. Otherwise, we do not allow kids inside the premises on generic evenings where alcohol is being served.

Do you think we have given too much space to social media in our lives that we have closed ourselves from enjoying food or company of those who matter?

I am a firm believer of the fact that we are 'over-using' social media. A personal recommendation about a place matters more to our brand than an online 'star-rating' or review. It is because all our efforts are void if someone who walks into the restaurant but walks back un-happy. When you come to us, all what matters is the company of your near ones that you enjoy than people who come to post.

A lot has changed for the hospitality industry as a whole in last 20 years. From eating out once in a blue moon, to eating at leisure. How do you further see it change over a period of time?

I strongly believe change as 'inevitable'. As a restaurant, one must keep innovating to be more 'inviting' for people to walk in for something new. Maintaining standards, quality and being compliant towards the set beliefs is how the brands shall gradually grow. I aspire to be recognised as the most 'compliant restapreneur' than just being a successful entrepreneur. It is disheartening to see how people ignore it at their disposal. For example, at Saints & Sinners you are asked to show your ID proof if you are below 22 years of age. Secondly, 'retention of good people' is going to make the brand. Here, we do not pay our staff in the cash and the staff appreciates it. They appreciate our efforts to provide them with ESI which is for their long term benefits. If we ought to retain good people, he have to take good care of them. Obviously, 'guest is supreme'.

TMM