



“ Sea food is approximately 25% of the order in a fine-dining restaurant. The potential of seafood can be assessed by the sheer number of seafood specialty restaurants mushrooming ”

– Sangram Sawant
CEO, Pescafresh



that, yet, people want value-for-money seafood. Chef Amit Puri quips. “There is a strong sense of value for money, at the same time, consumers are willing to pay the price for high end seafood (salmon, blue fin tuna, lobster, tiger prawns, red snapper, caviar).”

Shetty agrees. “We find that customers are willing to pay more as long as you keep their tastebuds entertained and provide value for money. Of course they indulge in the expensive fish every once in a while and stay within their budget with other varieties such as Pomfret, Rawas, Surmai and Mackerel on a more regular basis.”

Typically in the retail market, in Mumbai, Surmai is priced at 399/Kg, Rawas at 445/Kg, Pomfret 1295/Kg. At Drums of Heaven, New Delhi, all fish dishes are priced at Rs 455. The All Sliced River Sole dishes are for Rs 455, whereas, Whole Red Snapper is priced at Rs 825. Jumbo Prawns come for Rs 985 for 6 large pieces and one can savour Lobster for Rs 1395, Crabs for Rs 575.

Puri adds, “To ensure there is no wastage, we buy only enough according to our usage as we want to serve only fresh seafood to our customers.”

Seasonal

Fish consumption is seasonal in India, especially during monsoons. But this is not so much to do with the fact that people do not want to eat fish. It is the availability that is affected. “The quality of the product goes down because of the sheer time lag to get to the market and lack of perennial suppliers who believe in quality and are equipped with the technology to maintain the quality and hence we typically see frozen, then thawed, past their expiry dates products in the market,” laments Sangram Sawant, Pescafresh.

Chef Elridge Vaz agrees. “Yes, to some extent it is seasonal, because most seafood is available during a particular season. So the demand for that

particular seafood is high. This is in respect to the availability of the actual product, but in general the demand for seafood is very high during the peak tourist season.”

But things are changing. With suppliers like Pescafresh now in the market one doesn't need to curb their Sea food cravings during any season, especially monsoons. Sangram informs, “During the monsoon, we source from Andhra Pradesh on the East Coast, which has already completed its monsoons and hence is open for fishing. When fishing is not allowed on the East Coast, we supply from the West Coast.”

Puri of Drums of Heaven relies on Southern India, whereas Jayaram Banan, Chairman & MD, Sagar Ratna Hotels Pvt Ltd / Swagath sources his fish from Calcutta, Gujarat and crabs from Chennai in Kerala.

Pescafresh is India's 1st organized seafood retailing and distribution company, working across 28 outlets. Apart from Pescafresh, the other players are Pro Chef, Sai Krupa, Genex Marketing, Cambay etc. Pescafresh is launching the HORECA channel with limited products and SKU's that will be available all year round. “We are dedicated to serving every one with high quality fresh seafood that will tantalize their taste buds with procedures that are FSSAI approved and follow HACCP principles,” Sawant adds.

An uncertain and unpredictable nature of fresh seafood due to seasonality is the greatest peeve of the Hotel industry. Availability, quality issues, varieties, customer service, are currently the problems plaguing the domestic seafood industry. And this is what players like Pescafresh are trying to take care of. The seafood market is growing. With abundance of options, soon, the demand for local and sustainable seafood will be fulfilled and the supply chain between the ocean and the customer's plate will be shortened. ●●



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Director, Pebbles