

MasterChef SA winner Kamini Pather launches healthy food-delivery service

 By Ruth Cooper

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MasterChef SA season two winner and all-around local foodie celebrity Kamini Panther launched her new chef-inspired, healthy food delivery service FÜDY through Uber Eats at the beginning of this month. Aiming to supply healthy, ethically sourced and primarily plant-based meals to Capetonians, Pather aims to take the hassle out of creating or sourcing healthy meals.

The initial launch caused some confusion and general backlash from the vegan community as the concept was promoted as plant-based via various platforms, however, chicken and fish meals are also offered. Pather quickly and graciously rectified this misconception and hopes to slowly introduce consumers to a more plant-based diet, we chat to her for #EntrepreneurMonth to find out more.



■ What inspired you to start your plant-based food delivery service?

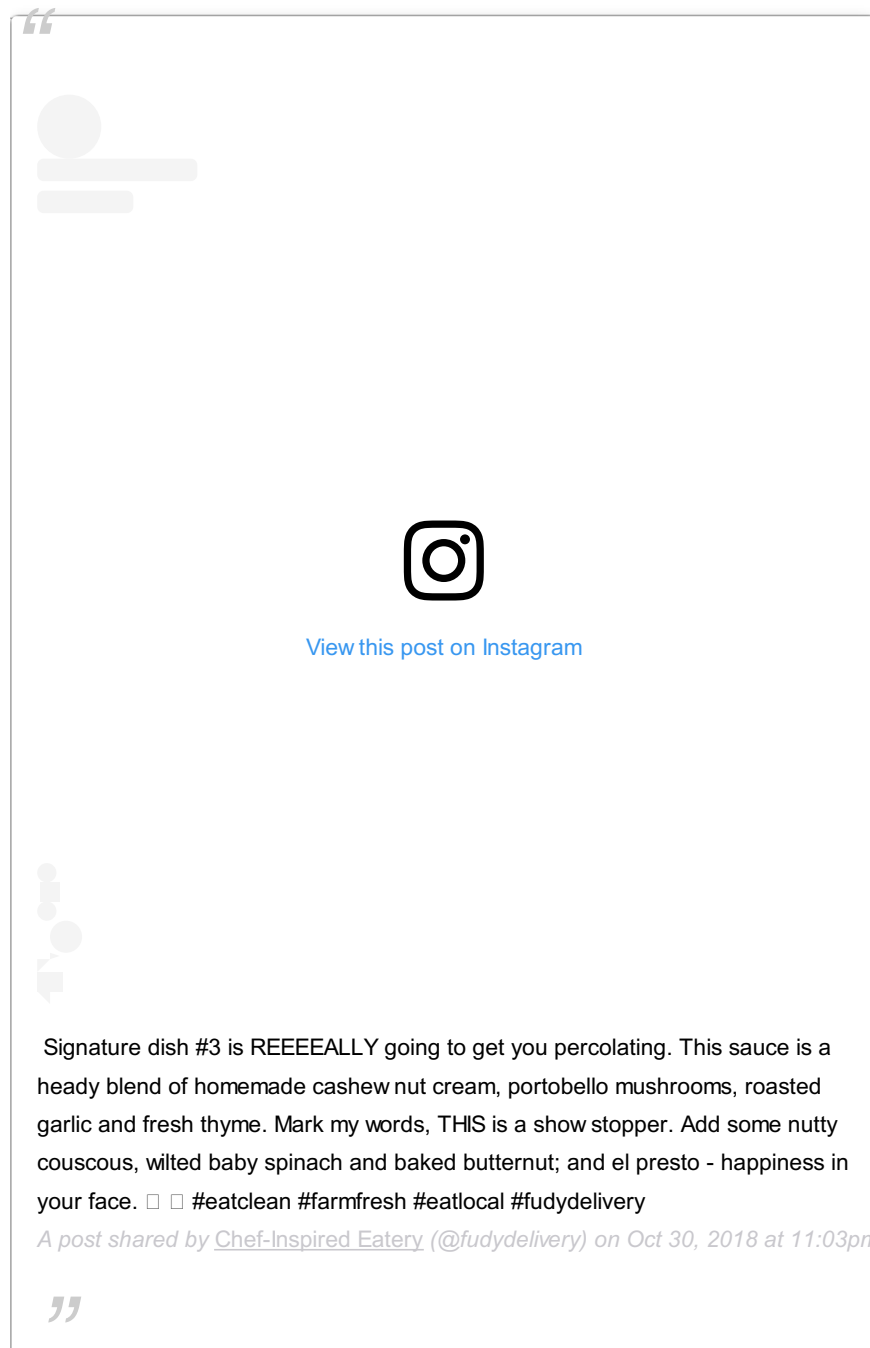
It isn't a plant-based service, but there are plant-based menu items. The idea for FÜDY came about through a real personal need. I wanted a food delivery service that catered to my want for healthy, convenient meals. Since winning *MasterChef*, my food experiences were insanely indulgent. My life changed when I was invited to be one of the ambassadors for the Cape Town Marathon three years ago. It was when I started training to run a full marathon, 42.2km, that my need from my food changed. I have run two marathons since and many half marathons, including the Berlin Half, so my diet has stayed with the macronutrient focus.

■ Why the name FÜDY?

This brand was made for people who understand subtle flavours in food, which would make them a "foodie". It's a play on that word.

❏ ***There seems to be some confusion around the marketing of the brand, why state that it is plant-based if meat is still offered, it just seems a bit misleading.***

The confusion lay in the phrasing and usage of the term “plant-based”. This menu was designed with plant-based eaters in mind because I see that plant-based eaters get a raw meal with food that lacks real flavour and innovation. The bases, sauces, and vegetables are all 100% plant-based but a person can change that direction when choosing a protein. There are five proteins, two of which are animal-proteins - free range chicken and sustainably sourced trout are the animal-proteins with the others being black beans and quinoa falafels, chickpea and nigella seed smash and crispy tofu.



❏ ***Why not create a purely vegan plant-based food-delivery service? I would imagine there is a serious gap in the market for this?***

While this is a major global trend, the trend hasn't reached mass levels here in SA. This service is also personal and I am not vegan. I eat a 70-80% plant-based diet but I do eat locally and consciously sourced animal-based proteins.

❏ ***How do you source your suppliers and ingredients?***

I work closely with suppliers who are leaders within their categories - fresh produce, free range chicken and sustainably sourced fish. They are mindful about how their produce is farmed; a mindfulness that is passed onto FÜDY.

Can you explain how the ghost kitchen concept will work?

The ghost kitchen/dark kitchen/digital kitchen is a concept that is big internationally and refers to a kitchen which only caters for delivery service. There are multiple brands that share the space, overheads and staff. Without the retail aspect of the business, it means that the operating costs are much lower. For someone like me, it means that the start capital needed to start my business were more attainable.



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Füdy was designed as my way to service a community of healthy eaters who are toying with the idea of a plant-based lifestyle but ultimately, be as inclusive of as many dietary choices as possible, within reason. I have toiled with the comments from the previous post and thank the community for drawing my attention to the meaning of “plant-based”. The confusion lay in that Füdy has many plant-based offerings but isn’t a plant-based service. I apologise to anyone who posted the articles to their vegan groups, the headlines were misleading without delving into the full article. Not I, nor Füdy, will be using the term plant-based in such a flippant manner going forward. The previous post mentions “gym bunnies” and animal protein. I am aware that using animal protein is not the only way to increase muscle mass. The comment was to address that even still, there are many people who use animal-based proteins. I believe that the plant-derived proteins (black bean and quinoa bombs, crispy tofu or the chickpea and Nigella seed smash) on the FüDY menu give people alternate ideas for protein sources. 95% of the FüDY menu is plant-based, except for the free range chicken and sustainably sourced trout. The bases, the vegetables and all the sauces adhere to strict vegan principles - they do not use any animal by-product. I acknowledge that plant-based diners get a raw deal with limited menu options and dishes that simply don’t deliver on flavour. Füdy was designed to service a market of vegetable-friendly minds who are not 100% plant-based - people like me. My journey has been about being mindful about the provenance of my food -

whether it is animal or plant based; as well as to mindfully reduce the amount of animal produce in my diet. That is what I offer with FÜDY. We go live tomorrow with something on this menu for everyone. Whether the vegan Alfredo sauce, zoodles, brinjal and charred cucumber with the planet-protein (chickpea and Nigella seed smash) or animal protein (seared trout) - each component is designed to be mindful, flavourful and clean. My Best, @kaminipather

A post shared by [Chef-Inspired Eatery \(@fudydelivery\)](#) on Oct 31, 2018 at 11:45am PDT

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📌 **How do you plan to take FÜDY international?**

International is a still long while away. The idea is to set up multiple hubs in SA. Once we have the national market serviced adequately, we can start to think about expanding into other developing nations where this type of service isn't available just yet.

📌 **How do you personally and professionally live a more eco-conscious way of life?**

Personally, I try to walk around Cape Town as much as possible and not use my car. My building separates our garbage making it easier to recycle. I save water by keeping my showers to a minimum and collecting the water while the water temperature is heating up. I always have a reusable carrier bag for my grocery shopping.

Professionally, FÜDY uses compostable packaging. We minimise wastage by trying to use all by-products e.g. the butternut seeds are popped and used as a garnish.

📌 **Can you tell us more about your Bagasse food containers?**

Bagasse is a waste product from the sugar cane industry. It is the pulpy waste collected from extracting the juice from sugar cane. It was once used as a biofuel but now forms a major component in the packaging industry. From my experience, they tend to retain heat well.

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I just don't want to look back and think "I could've eaten that". #eatclean
#fudydelivery #farmfresh #capetown

A post shared by Chef-Inspired Eatery (@fudydelivery) on Nov 3, 2018 at 9:05am PDT



🍷 **What did you learn from competing in MasterChef SA?**

Always keep a cool head in sticky situations. The *MasterChef* kitchen is as stressful as it is portrayed on TV. In those moments of high pressure, the only way to survive is to keep your wits about you and power through with quick thinking and measured thinking.

🍷 **How has winning it changed your life?**

Winning has completely changed my life. I was the host and producer on a food-travel show, *Girl Eat World*, that was broadcast to the Food Network and Discovery World globally, as well as Netflix North America. It allowed me to do the things that I love to do - travel, taste amazing food, and meet fellow bloggers.

Winning *Masterchef* increased my public profile and gave me a voice within the industry making it easier to collaborate with brands and create my own opportunities. One of those opportunities is FÜDY.

🍷 **Your ultimate guilty pleasure when it comes to food?**

Gelato. I am obsessed with Moro Gelato's tiramisu and marchese flavours.

🍷 **Your favourite food memory?**

My grandmother has been a major inspiration in my food journey and one of my best memories is sitting on her porch with my brother and cousin, eating orange segments. After we had eaten the flesh, she cut teeth into the peel which we wore as our orange smiles.



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This is the plant based satay sauce. It's coconut milk infused with turmeric root, raw peanut butter and fresh lemongrass. Some have said that they would stake

their life on this sauce. Others have been inclined to believe “them”. This signature dish is paired with flash fried zoodles (zucchini noodles), charred snap peas, baked aubergine and a FÜdy exclusive, black bean and quinoa bombs held together with tahini. □ □ Available exclusively on @ubereats_za from 1 Nov. □ □ Come on, let’s get saucy. Lick. □ □ □ #vegan #eatclean #macronutrient #capetown #fudydelivery #eatlocal □ □ ♦♦: @KlompCeramics

A post shared by Chef-Inspired Eatery (@fudydelivery) on Oct 29, 2018 at 5:22am PDT

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🍷 **What advice would you give to aspiring local entrepreneurs?**

The food industry is notoriously challenging. A cliché is to “follow your passions and dreams”, however, in this industry, often that is a given. What is often neglected by many aspiring foodie entrepreneurs, is the many moving parts and financial savviness required for longevity. Financial models need to be rock solid, daily moving input costs need to be tracked continuously and fair margins need to be maintained. Lastly, it is vital that adequate cash flow has been allowed for, to survive the infamous first 12 months and beyond.

🍷 **What major food trends do you predict for 2019?**

Fermentation, which has been on the rise for a while will continue to be popular. I’m thrilled by more kimchi and sauerkraut, as a starter.

Plant-based and veganism will continue to increase in popularity.

Insects will make their way to your plate.

Learn more about FÜDY by following @FudyDelivery on Instagram and visit fudydelivery.co.za.

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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