Dragons' Den Winners Vini & Bal Secure £50,000 Investment

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-Authentic and healthy curry bases from husband and wife secures £50,000 investment-

Vini & Bal's rustic Indian curry sauces (http://www.viniandbals.com/) are an award-winning range of fresh, chilled Punjabi spice blend bases that allow food lovers to easily create intensely-flavoured, authentic Indian cuisine from scratch in the comfort of their own kitchen.

Following an appearance on Dragons' Den, founders Vini and Bal Aujla have become the first British Asian couple to secure investment on BBC2's Dragons' Den, receiving a £50,000 investment for a share in their chilled Indian cook-in curry sauce brand Vini & Bal's.

The episode aired on Sunday 9th February with the deal arriving after a three hour pitch from the husband and wife team, both of Punjabi heritage. New Dragon and accomplished businessman Piers Linney provided £50,000 in funds for a 30% equity share in the business.

As a result of the investment, Vini & Bal's has secured a nationwide listing in Sainsbury's and is now available at 300 stores in the fresh meat aisle, with three varieties from the range: Fiery Mirchi, Jeera and Shahi. From mild to flaming hot, each variety provides a different level of heat so they can be enjoyed by everyone, whether they're a curry connoisseur or trying Indian cooking for the first time.

Inspired by the traditional recipes that have been passed down their families through the generations, the pair created the range to allow British households to experience real Indian cooking; the very same that they enjoyed growing up and now prepare for their children.

Forget the gloopy, bland, preservative-packed jars of ready-made curry sauces which currently saturate the supermarkets: Vini & Bal's promises to revolutionise this category with nutritious, healthy sauces, chilled to keep their fresh and powerful flavour intact.

Each sauce provides a deeply flavoured, richly spiced foundation for classic curry recipes. They are also a versatile base for global culinary inspiration: whether stirred into soups, used as a seasoning for stews or casseroles, a marinade for meat, an accompaniment to meatballs, a topping for toast or a sandwich filling.

In 2013, the brand was awarded two Great Taste Awards; two stars for the Jeera and one for the Tharka.

Available in resealable tubs, each sauce can be used across a number of days, in a variety of recipes and always delivers a full and punchy, authentic Punjabi flavour.

All four sauces are vegetarian and gluten-free with absolutely no artificial colours, flavours or preservatives, incorporating ingredients such as rapeseed oil, which is traditionally used throughout India and contains healthy Omegas 3, 6 & 9 and essential fatty acids.

The range includes four mouth-watering cook-in sauce varieties (£2.79 RRP per 300g pot):

Shahi
Meaning "royal", Shahi is the most decadent and creamy of the range: mildly spiced, indulgent and sophisticated. Subtle, fragrant spices including coriander, cardamoms and paprika combine in a gentle, silky sauce perfect for marinating salmon steaks or a classic Palak Paneer with cubes of paneer cheese and baby spinach.

Jeera - awarded a Great Taste Award 2013
Jeera, or "cumin", is integral to Punjabi cooking with its distinctive aroma and warm, earthy, smoky taste. The sauce is a celebration of cumin, expertly toasted and spiced with medium hotness. Wonderful with lamb or to jazz up a chicken & mushroom pie.

Tharka - awarded a Great Taste Award 2013
Meaning "seasoned", Tharka is the traditional base for many classic North Indian dishes. A tomato based sauce, it has medium levels of heat, allowing the heady flavours of ginger, cinnamon and spinach to come through. Excellent with seafood or in a classic Tharka Daal with lentils.

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Fiery Mirchi
Mirchi means "chilli" and this is the most potent of the range, guaranteed to stimulate the palate. Heated by three types of chilli, this complex blend of fragrant spices is unapologetically fiery. It makes a brilliant Butter Chicken and can give an interesting edge to lasagne.

Notes to the Editor

About Vini & Bal Aujla

Co-Founder Vini started young in the kitchen, helping her mother and grandmother grind fresh spices with a pestle and mortar.

Soon after marrying, Vini and Bal realised that the delicious Punjabi food that they grew up enjoying was not readily available in UK supermarkets.

Despite working in a comfortable City job (Vini worked on private investments at RIT Capital), they decided to take the plunge and create a range of spice bases to allow everyone to enjoy authentic, home cooked flavours - without spending hours in the kitchen.

Vini says: "The inspiration for Vini & Bal's came when we first realised how different the perception of Indian food was to the reality. It was impossible to find anything resembling authentic, fresh Punjabi home cooking in restaurants or shops.

"We began cooking our families' beloved recipes in large batches to share with friends and colleagues and had a phenomenal response, which inspired us to take the leap of faith and create our range."
Bal says: "Vini and I never take any shortcuts when we prepare our sauces from scratch, just like our mothers and grandmothers. This means when it gets to shoppers' kitchens, all the hard work is done and just final flourishes are needed to create a delicious meal."

Additional information about Vini & Bal's

Vini & Bal's Indian sauces use fresh, natural ingredients and have a shelf life of 21days.

Stockists

Vini & Bal's is available nationwide at 300 Sainbury's stores in the fresh meat aisle, with three flavours from their range - Fiery Mirchi, Jeera and Shahi.
The same three varieties are available at Ocado: www.ocado.com
The same three varieties are available at all Booths stores in the fresh meat aisle

Find Vini & Bal's Online

Website (www.viniandbals.com)
Facebook (www.facebook.com/ViniandBals)
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