

SEEMA

JULY 2021

INSIDE
THE SEEMA
SUMMER
HOLIDAY
GUIDE

**A DESI
PICNIC FEAST**

PLUS
MICROGREEN
MANIA

**THE
PROMISE OF
COTTAGECORE**

SUSTAINABLE
Chic

Caring for the skin – and the community



Founders Pooja Karegoudar and Tanushree Ishani Das

BodyCafé embodies the spirit of sustainability, with its range of cruelty-free and vegan skin care products

BINDU GOPAL RAO

BodyCafé is a women-led business run by Pooja Karegoudar and Tanushree Ishani Das, who have come up with skin care products infused with all-natural fragrances – relying on

Ayurveda, healing aromatherapy, and 100% essential oils.

Chance Encounter

Karegoudar, who took on a 9 to 5 job after earning her B.Tech in instrumentation technology, soon

realized that she relied more on her creativity than her corporate chops. She started CircleTheDate.in, an event management company, and Ovenly.in, a boutique home-baking venture.

Das did a stint with Goldman

Sachs before she moved to London to earn a master's degree in organizational psychiatry and psychology at King's College, London. She moved back to India, to become country head at a leading startup. Karegoudar was Das's wedding planner – and that is where things really got going.

According to the duo, people are all stuck in an endless battle of us versus stress, dealing with simmering to-do lists through the day – all until something gives. They concluded that people wanted healthy lifestyles, and could do with a little support to help them invest in themselves. Their idea was to provide that help with BodyCafé.

Au Natural

The duo realized most people are price-sensitive and do not have access to off-the-shelf products that offer them labor-intensive ancient remedies.

They said that people dedicate a 'self-care Sunday' to make these combinations at home – which is not sustainable. At BodyCafé, these products carefully but provided in an affordable packed product.

The current product range is

PEOPLE DEDICATE A 'SELF-CARE SUNDAY' TO MAKE THESE COMBINATIONS AT HOME – WHICH IS NOT SUSTAINABLE

extensive, with products for daily grooming, wellness, home care, child care and pet care available. Under the daily grooming section there are products for facial care, body care and hair care. These products are further subclassified as the lifestyle range for everyday use, and the spa and luxury range to let people themselves to a revitalizing spa experience.

They also provide bespoke hampers and traveling kits of their products.

Making a Difference

The BodyCafé USP is that the

products infused with aromas give a sense of emotional well-being and ensure the highest standards of personal grooming.

They aim to empower Indian farmers – the real growers and strongly focus on community-grown products. For instance, they get Lakadong Turmeric from Padma Shri winner Trinity Saioo, the "Turmeric Lady of India," who is credited with spearheading women-led turmeric farming in the Indian northeast, empowering over 800 women farmers. BodyCafé has bespoke hampers for festivals like Diwali, New Year and Christmas.

Once the partners decided to pay homage to Indian spices and introduced Star Anise Cinnamon and Peppermint & Patchouli bathing bars. Another season, they launched a spa range based on evergreen cocktail flavors such as Pina Colada and Watermelon Margarita. The Christmas collection had a Pumpkin Spice body wash, a Cotton Candy Bath Cream, and a Gingerbread face and body scrub, among other things.

Overcoming Challenges

While Karegoudar and Das have a lot of support from their families, even buying the products at the full selling price, the duo admits that they have faced multiple challenges.

They point out that working with a risk-averse population and the narrowness of their financial bandwidth keeps the business on the edge. They admit there is a constant threat to work-life balance, as they defy social expectations as women entrepreneurs to thrive without any launchpads or godfathers.

They are looking ahead at having a robust online presence and, later, an offline presence in India. They are also launching in the Middle East and have plans to expand to other countries.



Product range from BodyCafé