
RAWRING TO GO!

She's famously known for her raw desserts, like dairy-free Banoffee Cheesecake and Orange & Raw Cacao ice-cream.

Raveena Taurani of Yogisattva tells *Hi! Blitz* about the challenges in starting an organic food company and why there is no one rule book for eating right.



What led you to start your raw and plant-based food company Yogisattva and how did you get into this?

Yogisattva literally translates into 'Yoga Being'. Asana, which is the physical practice of yoga, is only the third limb. Yoga is an eight-fold path towards enlightenment. Every individual on earth is at some stage or the other on this eight-fold path during their time on earth and hence, every individual is a Yogisattva. We started out primarily as a merchandising brand with a focus on yoga-inspired merchandise, and we now focus primarily on making raw and plant-based food. I was introduced to this lifestyle when I visited an Ashtanga Yoga Retreat at Purple Valley in Goa last year.

Practicing yoga every morning, and eating 70 per cent raw and 30 per cent cooked food, I gained a lot of muscle strength in a very short amount of time. I was always vegetarian but I was continuously asked to eat eggs or cottage cheese, or drink whey protein for my protein requirements. However, being into

this lifestyle, I began looking at nutrition as a whole as opposed to selective nutrients. I am not vegan—I eat honey, but I don't eat any meat, dairy, gluten or refined sugar. Prior to this I was assisting in films and television commercials.

You have dishes like No Cheese Pumpkin Risotto and Vegan Pizza—what was the very first dish you made? Also, are all the dishes your own recipes?

The very first dish I made was Zucchini Noodles in a Marinara Sauce topped with vegan cheese. The recipes that are currently on my menu are a combination of my professional chef training, personal research and working with seasonal organic produce in Mumbai. My family and friends have always been my go-to for honest feedback.

You're famously known for your dairy-free raw desserts like Banoffee Cheesecake, Double Chocolate Cheesecake and ice-creams with flavours like Orange & Raw Cacao. How do you

make desserts delicious and 'healthy'?

Raw desserts largely comprise of good quality raw cacao and organic dry fruits. We don't use any gluten or refined sugars in any of our food. Our desserts are healthy because they promote nourishment. Even if you choose to eat dessert—let it be an indulgence that provides fuel to the body.

Tell us about some of the challenges you've faced in setting up your own business...

The main challenge we face is availability of good quality produce. India is a seasonal country and during the monsoon especially, it's very difficult to get any good quality organic leaves such as spinach, basil, etc. We cancel orders if we don't get good quality produce delivered to us. The other main challenge we face is explaining to customers that while most of our products are vegan—we don't call ourselves a vegan brand as we do use honey in a lot of our food. There is also a major challenge in explaining the difference between 'cocoa' and 'cacao'



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“There is also a major challenge in explaining the difference between ‘cocoa’ and ‘cacao’ to all our potentially new consumers. Cocoa powder usually has milk fat and hydrogenated oils, whereas cacao powder is a superfood. It is the number one source of naturally available magnesium on our planet. Cacao powder comes from a bean grown on a tree whereas cocoa powder largely comes from mass production in factories.”
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Nowadays there are so many theories and 'rules' about eating right...

Everyone needs to listen to their own body. I believe your lifestyle should be a combination of your genetic make-up, your current environment and your fitness goals. It's important to eat the foods you grew up eating along with keeping track of what is available to you in terms of produce based on where you live. Exercising is key for a healthy body and mind.

What do you personally eat and how do you stay fit?

My lifestyle is a combination of raw and cooked plant-based foods. I avoid all

Your visiting card can be planted as a sapling...

"I try and do my best. Our thank you cards as well as envelopes are also made of seed paper. Our hampers are given out in baskets made out of recycled newspapers. For private orders, all our food is given in cloth bags that can be re-used as a carry bag. Personally, I have begun using bags/wallets made out of recycled plastic or cork."

dairy, gluten and refined sugars because it makes me feel good and I function better. I eat six meals a day at regular intervals and have my dinner by 7pm. My food is a combination of complex carbs, lots of vegetables, protein and fruits/nuts. I do my best to avoid eating food that come out of a package. You will rarely find me snacking on a biscuit—I would rather have nuts/some avocado with salt and lime, etc. I stay fit by exercising six days a week. I do pilates three times a week with my trainer Namrata Purohit, cardio twice a week with my trainer Nyela Saeed and I practice yoga on my own once a week.

You're very conscious of the environment and your visiting card can be planted as a sapling...

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