

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** Promoting US Ingredients Through Indian Fusion Cuisine

**Country:** India

**Post:** New Delhi

**Report Category:** Export Accomplishments - Marketing, Trade Events and Shows, Tree Nuts, Dried Fruit, Poultry and Products

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**Report Highlights:**

From September 24 to October 16, 2022, FAS New Delhi (Post) organized a nationwide “Taste of America Fusion Food” campaign at “Social,” (Social Ltd.) a chain of contemporary bistro restaurants. The three-week Taste of America promotion, held in eight, Social Ltd. outlets across five cities, highlighted the versatility, flavor, and wholesomeness of select U.S. food ingredients that can be utilized in India’s rapidly growing restaurant industry. The carefully refined menu incorporated U.S. ingredients into traditional Indian recipes marketed to the consumer as “U.S.-Indian Fusion.” Through the promotion, Social Ltd. procured ten specific U.S. food ingredients for the fusion food menu, selling 990 fusion dishes across eight restaurants, and reached nearly 12 million end consumers through digital marketing.

## Report Overview

The blending of culinary traditions from different regions to create innovative dishes has gained popularity worldwide, especially over the last decade. With its diverse set of cultures and cuisines, India is a hotbed for the “fusion food” global trend.<sup>1</sup> India’s fusion food interests gained momentum in the 1990s when trade and travel to and from India significantly increased, and Indian chefs began to explore creative dishes to showcase to a growing consumer base.<sup>2</sup> More recently, with India’s increased bilateral agricultural trade and exposure to western cultures, local consumers have increased their demand for U.S. food products, including vegetarian and plant-based foods to adopt healthy eating habits. Contemporary fusion foods, which incorporate distinct “western” ingredients into Indian cuisines, represent a growing trend. Recently, Indian chefs have expanded their offerings by creating fusion barbeque dishes, mithai (sweets), and other savory foods. To align with this trend, the campaign focused on the wide range of American food ingredients for sale that can be used in preparing traditional Indian dishes.

Figure 1. Social Ltd. Taste of America Menu



To align with this trend, FAS New Delhi, in partnership with Social Ltd. organized a “Taste of America Fusion Food Menu” from September 24 to October 16, 2022. The limited-edition menu was launched in Social’s eight outlets in five cities including Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune, Chennai, and New Delhi over the course of a three-week period. With a profound emphasis on U.S.-origin ingredients, the campaign showcased traditional Indian dishes with an “American” variation (Figure 1). Social Ltd.’s featured menu demonstrated fusion food dishes such as a California almond *tikki chaat* with U.S. cranberry chutney, smoked Washington Apple Waldorf salad with walnuts and blueberries, duck pepper fry, and

<sup>1</sup> Fusion food is defined as the combined elements of different culinary traditions that originate from different countries, regions, or cultures.

<sup>2</sup> See: [Medium](#); “Evolution of Fusion Food in India,” published on October 10, 2019.

pecan nut pie with kulfi ice cream, among others (Figure 2). These dishes were made using U.S. origin ingredients including tree nuts, dried fruits, beans, apples, and poultry in the Indian style of cooking.

**Figure 2. Showcased Taste of America Dishes as Promoted on Social Media**



### Sales Performance

To increase awareness about U.S. ingredients through India’s rapidly growing restaurant sector, FAS New Delhi launched the seven-dish menu in eight Social Ltd. restaurants across five cities. The fusion food campaign increased product sales and satisfied consumers. To execute the promotion, Social Ltd. procured a combined 463 kg of various U.S.-origin ingredients, including tree nuts (almonds, walnuts, pistachios, and pecans), Washington apples, dried fruits (cranberries and blueberries) and duck (Table 1), among others. The fusion menu performed particularly well in New Delhi and Bangalore, with customers ordering 350 and 304 dishes respectively, from the fusion menu in just a two-week period. At the same time, Social Ltd.’s Mumbai outlet sold 146 dishes, and Pune and Chennai sold 126 and 64 dishes, respectively. Owing to the popularity of the campaign, Social Ltd. extended the availability of the fusion menu for an additional week in its outlets in New Delhi and Bangalore, and permanently added its Washington Apple Waldorf salad and pecan pie/pistachio ice cream dessert in its primary menu.

**Table 1. Procurement of U.S. Ingredients**

U.S. Ingredients Showcased	Volume Used (kg)
Walnuts	30
Almonds	30
Pecans	30
Blueberries	30
Pistachios	30
Cranberries	30
Duck	36
Washington Apples	147
Red Kidney Beans (Canned)	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>463</b>

**Power of Social Media**

Both FAS New Delhi and Social Ltd. utilized various social media platforms to build consumer awareness for the campaign. With a combined reach of over 150,000 followers on various platforms, Social Ltd. produced four static posts, four reels (videos) and more than 150 stories on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, which reached more than 12 million end-consumers. During the promotional period, Instagram was the most impactful platform and maintained the highest level of consumer interaction (Table 2). Additionally, Social Ltd. advertised the campaign on WhatsApp, push notifications, and online browser advertisements (Figures 2-3). To further publicize the campaign, five media events were held in Mumbai, Bangalore, Pune, Chennai, and New Delhi, which were attended by a combined 140 bloggers, media personnel, and content creators through a sit-down menu tasting.

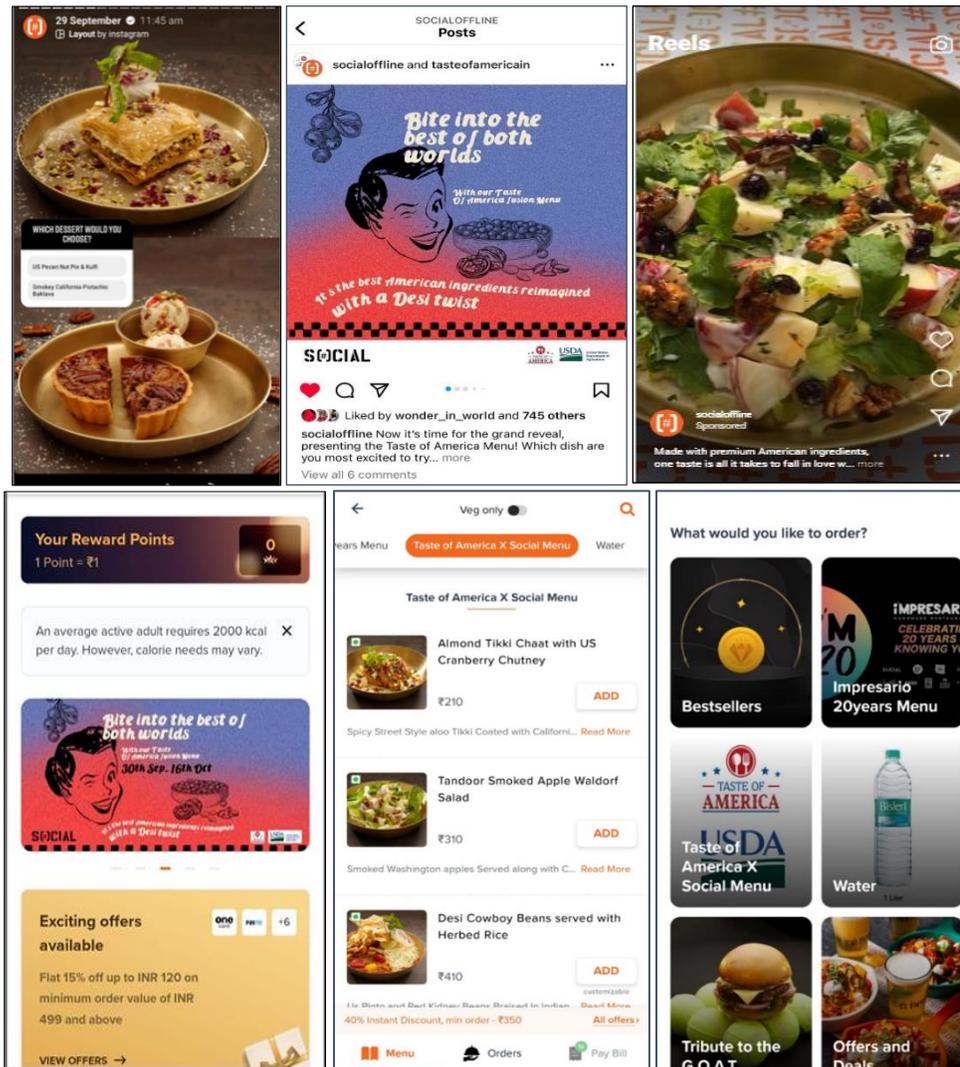
**Table 2. Top Performing Instagram Posts**

Post Title	Type	Likes	Account reached	Impressions
<i>Bite into best of both worlds</i>	<u>Post</u>	743	1,241,575	2,005,282
<i>You're running out of time to try the Taste of America Menu</i>	<u>Reel</u>	1145	859,628	1,236,808
<i>Try something red, white, and new with our mouth-watering Taste of America Menu</i>	<u>Reel</u>	261	8020	7,804
<i>One taste is all it takes to fall in love with the Taste of America Menu</i>	<u>Reel</u>	466	932,365	1,341,523
<i>Create a fusion dish and stand to win ₹2,000 SOCIAL vouchers! We'll go first, Cranberry Rasgulla!</i>	<u>Contest post</u>	171	625,152	794,778

## Next Steps

The Indian restaurant sector continues to experiment with high quality imported ingredients and combining them with contemporary local cooking techniques. Restaurants are routinely changing their menus to attract a greater customer base, emphasizing the well-traveled, young working professional demographic by offering a relatable and versatile fusion food experience. This trend will continue to give opportunities for U.S. consumer-oriented product exports, including tree nuts, fruits, and packaged/processed foods, among others. Post plans to conduct more of these kinds of activities to take advantage of this growing sector and showcase U.S. ingredients on a larger scale.

**Figure 3. Social media content and Figure Integration**



**Attachments:**

No Attachments.