

[Vegan Bites, The Brand that got Vivek Oberoi Excited about Vegan Meals](#)



By [VeganFirst Daily](#)



When we found out that actor Vivek Oberoi had called up Vegan Bites to find out about their meal delivery service, we just had to get sit down with them. Samir Pasad and Hemali Gala kindly took time off from their busy schedule to give us a glimpse of the brand behind their buzzing business - Vegan Bites.

VF: Tell us about your journey, When did you turn vegan?

It was about 19/20 years back, I had attended a yoga seminar, where we were given a lecture on dairy. Since I was already a vegetarian, after hearing about the talk and about how dairy is bad for the body, it was an overnight decision for me to become a vegan.



VF: Initially how did you manage, as it was not that easy to find vegan products.

We used to cook at home mostly, and our style was to eliminate products that were not vegan. The whole family at that time wasn't vegan, so we had to find our preferences. It was really a process of elimination for all of us, where we found a balance. If there was a raita on the table, then we wouldn't have it, or a dairy dessert, we could skip it. I guess most vegans go through this when we're around others who are not vegan.

VF: What did you do when there were items you couldn't have, in terms of dessert for example?

Actually, there were many desserts we couldn't have, so we'd try to find water based items such as a sorbet or a watermelon ice candy. We would always experiment with different kinds of nut milks for ice creams. Our son used to miss dairy ice creams and we started experimenting with vegan ice creams which were well received. We saw there was such a need for vegan desserts so we decided to introduce many varieties of ice creams from Vanilla flavours to fig and chocochip.



Hemali Gala, Samir Pasad and Dr. Nandita Shah (left to right)

VF: How did Vegan bites begin from just a passion to a business?

The business was started in 2011, before Vegan bites we actually used to run a chain of juice bars. We didn't have a dedicated catering kitchen, we just had these retail juice bars in various locations in Mumbai. It all started when we did the catering for Dr Nandita Shah's programs and events; it was Dr Shah who actually gave us the idea to start this vegan catering business.



VF: Once you began, did you think it would grow into such a big business that would be sustainable?

We were quite confident about it, our food had been appreciated for a long period of time. People wanted something tasty and healthy. After the juice bars, we wanted more of a delivery model than a retail business. The great thing about Bombay was that the logistics were already there, we didn't have to concentrate on the delivery, just producing quality food.



Raw pizza with cashew cheese by Vegan Bites

VF: When you started vegan bites, how did you promote the brand?

The biggest promotions came from doing Dr Nandita Shah's events, where people started noticing the brand. Apart from that, we did social media and a lot of other spiritual events, like yoga camps, meditation camps; it was really through word of mouth though. People like it because it's gluten-free, dairy-free, sugar-free, preservatives-free and we make all ingredients including our masalas from scratch.



VF: Initially did you find you had more vegan or non-vegan clientele?

When we started there were a lot of vegans and people who wanted to eat healthy to reverse their hypertension and diabetes problems. However, over a period of time we noticed that most of our customers are actually non-vegan, they just want to eat food that is healthy and tastes good.



VF: Did you feel that having the word Vegan in your brand name would make it unapproachable for non-vegans?

At the beginning we did feel that the name might be putting off for non-vegans, however, the popularity of veganism has picked up and we find that it's actually an advantage having the word vegan in our brand name. All of us in the family are passionate vegans and wish that veganism and our food spread as much as possible, hence the name.



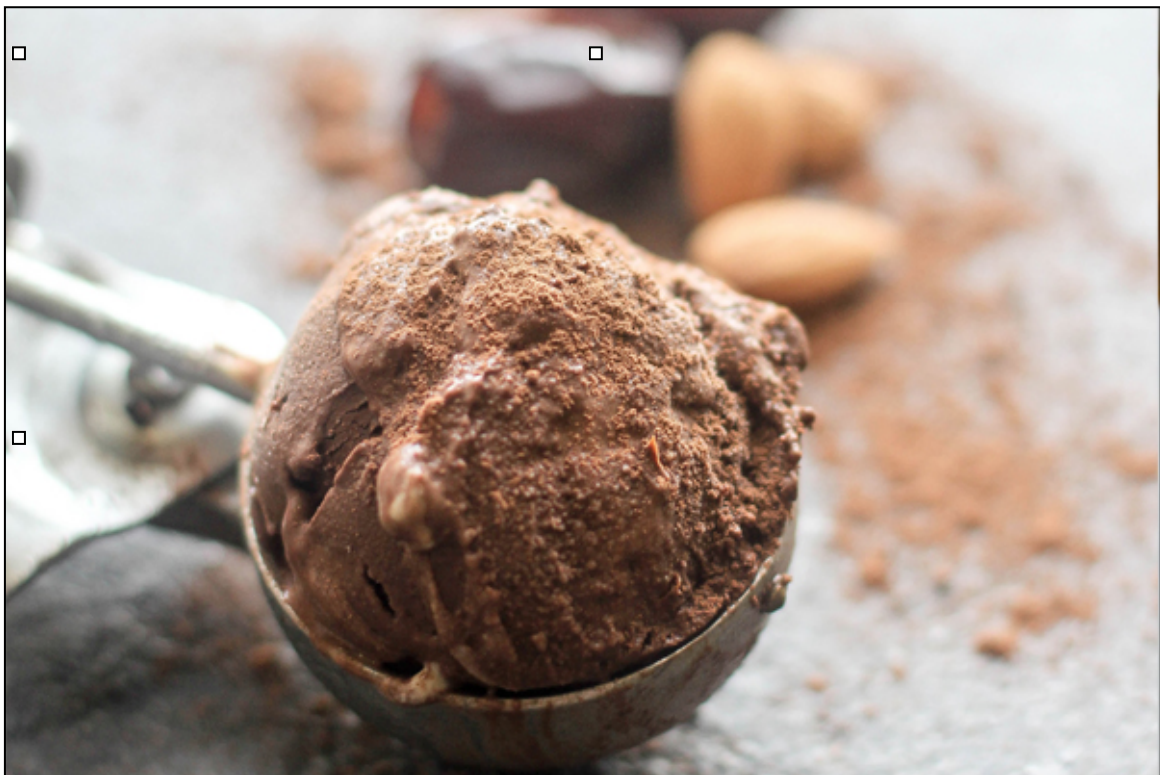
VF: Are most of your customers health conscious?

Since most of our clients initially came from Sharan's programs, a lot of them were health conscious or wanted to reverse their diabetes etc. Now days actually we have a lot of office going clients who really want a light meal. All our meals are gluten-free, sugar-free, oil free and dairy free, which makes it great for everybody.



VF: How balanced and nutritious are the VB meals?

Our meals are pretty balanced we make sure to rotate the grain, for example, if there is a roti and a vegetable, we make sure not put dal, yet the snack will have some protein. So we try to balance out all the elements so it's a complete meal and the nutritious component is covered. Now since it's been five years, more or less our meals have been curated, where we know what works, taste wise and health wise.



VF: What are the long-term goals for Vegan bites

Actually, we want to push our ice creams further, as they are really popular considering they are sugar-free, dairy-free and RAW! Plus, they taste so good that so many people can't believe it's vegan. Apart from that, we would love to open our own café, considering there is so much popularity surrounding veganism; it would be great to have our own place.

We wish Vegan Bites and the incredible duo behind the brand the best of luck on all their future plans, we're also going to be placing some orders for their amazingly creamy ice creams!

Fun Fact: Vegan Bites delivers over 300 tiffins in Mumbai everyday!

