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520 FOSTER STREET

Sweet and spicy tastes are huge success

By CAM LUCADOU-WELLS

CHEF Megsingh Yadav is like a veritable 'kid in a candy shop' as he surveys his 30-plus array of authentic Indian sweets on display.

"I like to eat the food," he said with a ready laugh.

"I can't try one, otherwise I can't stop."

For the past nine years, he's been tantalising customers at Bikaner Sweet and Curry Cafe with curries, tandoori and sweets all prepared on the premises.

Their recipes hail from several regions of India.

Before that, he'd plied his trade in India, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Russia and at Punjab Sweets, which trades just around the corner from his store.

Ahead of the lunchtime rush, his

**EAT LOCAL,
DINE GLOBAL**

kitchen is alive with candy syrups being stirred in cavernous pans and chicken kebabs plunged into a clay tandoori oven.

Many of the sweets are milk-based such as the ras malai - a cool soft sweet served in a milk bath with flakes of cardamom, almond and pistachio.

Other popular varieties are the laddu - chickpea flour balls coated in syrup - and the galub jamun - sweet, spicy milk-based balls.

Youngsters go mainly for the iridescent saffron and yellow jalebi - a deep-fried flour pretzel.

The sweets become popular gifts, handed out by hosts at weddings, births, festivals and birthdays.

Bikaner's trade peaks during the Diwali annual festival, when sweets are readily exchanged between friends and relatives.

Customers have ordered up to 200 of the bright pink and orange one-kilogram gift packs of sweets at a time.

As the weather chills, the warm lunch and dinner offerings such as butter chicken, goat masala and lamb curry grow in popularity.

Not to mention the soothing masala chai - a tea of cloves, cardamom and dried ginger.

Bikaner Sweet and Curry Cafe is open seven days from 10am to 10pm at 52b Foster Street, Dandenong.

Take away and lunch specials available. Phone 9792 9246.



Megsingh Yadav and Sushma Chauhan with the jalepi sweets. 137270
Picture: DONNA OATES

BUSINESS — BIKANER SWEET and CURRY CAFE.

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