



In time of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow your anger and your energy into something positive.

Lee Lacocca

Best known for the development of Mustang

Above is one of the motivational line I follow since long and go lot of synergy with our this month edition. After lot of discussions and thought process last month we added "The Insiders" and happy to receive many compliments from our readers. Our this month coverage Smoke Vodka is equally heartwarming and motivating, speaking loud about #vocalforlocal. An interesting reality pertaining to how the dream travels from one generation to another and finally shape up in the form of SMOKE. In our this month edition of The Insiders we covered another real story of COVID-19, "Hospitality Locked Down" by a young food and beverage professional Arnav Das of Leela Resort, Goa. Enjoy reading and keep inspiring us... Cheers.



From the Editor's Desk
Cheers - Malay Kumar

NV Group - The determination to explore new areas and to take it to greater heights.

The cornerstone for one of India's largest distilleries and breweries, NV Group, has always been towards making conscious choices while creating and developing new products. SMOKE LAB was born out of such a vision. Varun Jain, the founder and CEO of SMOKE LAB and heir to NV Group, has embraced the ethos of Live Responsibly within all the initiatives at SMOKE LAB. With the respect towards the environment, an acute sense of social responsibility and an unwavering agenda to reach consumers with products that resonate these ideals is what the vision stands for.

Founded in 2020, and headquartered in New Delhi, India, SMOKE LAB operates out of the NV Group's 10 state-of-art distilleries (in Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Goa and Maharashtra) with an overall production capacity of 1 lac bottles per day. The Rajpura distillery where SMOKE LAB is produced works on a zero waste facility and zero carbon footprint. Carbon neutrality is when there is net zero carbon dioxide emissions. This is achieved either by carbon removal through carbon offsetting or simply eliminating such emissions altogether.



The production facilities at SMOKE LAB have achieved this feat by transforming the distilleries' carbon footprint to zero. The hi-tech facility in Rajpura also houses a dry ice manufacturing unit that supplies dry ice to a spectrum of industries whilst offsetting any carbon emissions. Based on the ethos of #LiveResponsibly, their production facilities have created a unique process to ensure that no water is wasted. Since SMOKE LAB distillery produce their own energy, they use the steam generated from the plants for the purpose of production work, converting steam back to water whenever required and again back to the energy plant for creating steam. This cycle ensures the water is always reused and never wasted. Zero discharge manufacturing facility in Rajpura is a testament of the commitment towards sustainability and effective eco-friendly practices.

SMOKE LAB is made with the finest grains of Basmati rice. Once the rice is used to convert into the base spirit, its leftover, the rice husk is reused rather than discarding it as waste leading to zero wastage of raw materials. The distillery adds extra value to this by-product by converting it to biofuels and the rest to animal fodder. With such sustainable measures, distillery generates renewable energy at a capacity of 10 MW.

Using such innovative techniques, NV Distilleries and Breweries has also become the largest manufacturers and suppliers of distillers dried grain with soluble which is used as livestock feed in domestic and international markets. The new, upcoming headquarters for SMOKE LAB in India is being designed completely with recycled elements to reduce overuse and waste of resources.



SMOKE LAB was launched in the USA, in New York and New Jersey, in October 2020. The response received from retailers has been extremely positive. In mid-December, they sent 100 cases to California to introduce to retailers. They were sold out in 5 days and have received pre-orders for much more. Due to the high demand, they had to change their production plan to meet California's requirements. In Jan 2021, they entered Florida and kick started their ecommerce platform. "Our strategy for the US is to build a world-class team that will drive growth through strong distribution and follow up with trade and consumer programs. We will start our brand campaigns in the summer of 2021.", said Varun Jain. SMOKE LAB is also available in Singapore and expected to expand to other Southeast Asian markets. Preparations are being made for launch in Europe as well.

One of the other initiatives by SMOKE LAB is SMOKE WEAR, an eco-conscious brand, with Sanya V Jain as the creative director, creating forms and aesthetics that pushes the ideas of non-conformity, gender identity and fashion functionality. Based on such ethos, the brand has so far collaborated with Delhi based design houses Khanijo and Lovebirds, and is now launching several programmes keeping upcycling and zero fashion waste at its core. Another is SMOKE WATER, the first of its kind in India that is focused on being sustainable and responsible with packaged drinking water. It is Himalayan natural spring water, bottled at source in the foothills and packaged in recyclable aluminum cans for consumption. The aim is to reduce the dependency on plastic containers and achieve a wide-scale distribution at high consumption touch points replacing the non-biodegradable plastic packaged drinking water.



Varun Jain, Founder and CEO at SMOKE LAB VODKA

"I wanted to put India on the global spirits map. With this thought in mind we launched India's first premium homegrown vodka - SMOKE LAB VODKA. Imbibing the ethos of 'Live Responsibly' in all our initiatives, we have achieved zero carbon footprint while producing the vodka. Even our upcoming headquarters are designed with recycled elements to reduce overuse and waste of resources. Smoke Lab Vodka will lead the charge in revolutionising the homegrown premium alcohol sector in India."

Mr. SK Sinha, Head Sales and Marketing

"Our intention of creating a top of the line vodka product that could take on any other premium brand in taste, quality and story resulted in India's first premium homegrown vodka, SMOKE LAB VODKA. Using only premium quality ingredients from basmati rice grains to aniseeds our master brewers and spirits strategists have lovingly created Smoke Lab. Available in Classic and Aniseed flavours, our vodka will delight in cocktails and or shots alike."



Arijit Bose, Drinks Strategy and New product Development Consultant for NV group

It's been a pleasure to work on product that though inherently Indian has an international appeal and plays on its strength which go beyond branding, and pays homage to the importance of quality raw material and production process which yields a quality 'juice' in the bottle, made while being socially conscious at a carbon neutral facility. A great spirit that can not only be enjoyed straight up but in cocktails crafted by fine bartenders at great bars.

