

Wagh Bakri Tea Group

It's tea time, folks

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There is nothing better than a soothing cup of tea after a long day. But setting up a tea lounge and running it successfully isn't an easy task in a country where every bylane has half a dozen tea stalls doing brisk business off nondescript holes in the walls. While the number of organised tea bars/lounges — *à la* Barista or a Café Coffee Day — can be counted on the fingers of one's hand, there's hope for cuppa lovers.

Ahmedabad-based Wagh Bakri Tea Group, a brand that projects a tiger and goat sharing a saucer of tea on its logo, has opened its second tea lounge in Delhi over 1,500 sq ft area. (It opened the first one in Mumbai two years ago.) And if the data provided by the company is anything to go by, the Delhi tea lounge has done better in its first month as against its Mumbai counterpart with

50 per cent more footfalls.

The Wagh Bakri tea lounge in Pitampura's D Mall in Delhi brews a selection of 32 types of Indian and international teas including green tea, organic tea and flavoured teas. There are hand-picked varieties from Darjeeling, Nilgiri and Sikkim. Then there is Oolong (a traditional Chinese tea), which compliments the best in Chinese, Sri Lankan and Kenyan tea, aiming to give visitors that high-tea experience. The price range starts from ₹60 and goes all the way up to ₹135 for a cup.

The interiors of the Wagh Bakri tea lounge has been done up to give visitors information about different types of tea leaves. For 66-year-old Piyush Desai, CMD, Wagh Bakri Tea Group,



and the brain behind the concept, the tea lounges aim to offer people a meeting place which is not exorbitantly priced. "People need a meeting place and they can go to five-star restaurants, where one cup of tea will cost them ₹1,000. By spending less than ₹500, one can spend half an hour at the Wagh Bakri tea lounge. We also never ask anyone to vacate."

Parag Desai, executive director, (global sales & marketing), Wagh Bakri Tea Group, wants to take the tea company national with the tea lounges. "We want to reinforce the romance of tea consumption," he says.

WAGH BAKRI TEA LOUNGE IN DELHI BREWS 32 TYPES OF INTERNATIONAL INDIAN AND TEAS INCLUDING GREEN, ORGANIC AND FLAVOURED TEAS

But this won't be an easy market to crack, as many players have found. Retail giant Pantaloon had launched its Chamosa bars in 2005, which sold the hit Indian snack combination of tea and *samosas*. Now the company has converted them into live kitchens in most Big Bazaars outlets and they offer snacks, sweets and value meals. Among others in Delhi the Cha Bar (started in 2004) located at the Oxford Bookstore in Statesman House, New Delhi, is spread over 1,000 sq ft and offers 67 select brews. Then there is Passion My Cup Of Tea at Vasant Vihar. Dolly's Tea is a popular joint in south Kolkata but is nowhere near the others in scale. Infinitea, Bangalore, has spun a success story in the segment. It is running in the city for nine years now. 🐾