

Carrots Vegan Restaurants, Veganism, Vegan Food, Susmitha Subbaraju, Workshops, Vegetarian

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A quote that says, "Flavourful in every bite, yet healthy, wholesome and light", greets me as I enter the ground floor of Carrots. Rightly said, as I was visiting Bangalore's first vegan restaurant.

Susmitha Subbaraju is the host and the manager/partner of this famous restaurant in Koramangala. A vegan since 2003, she has

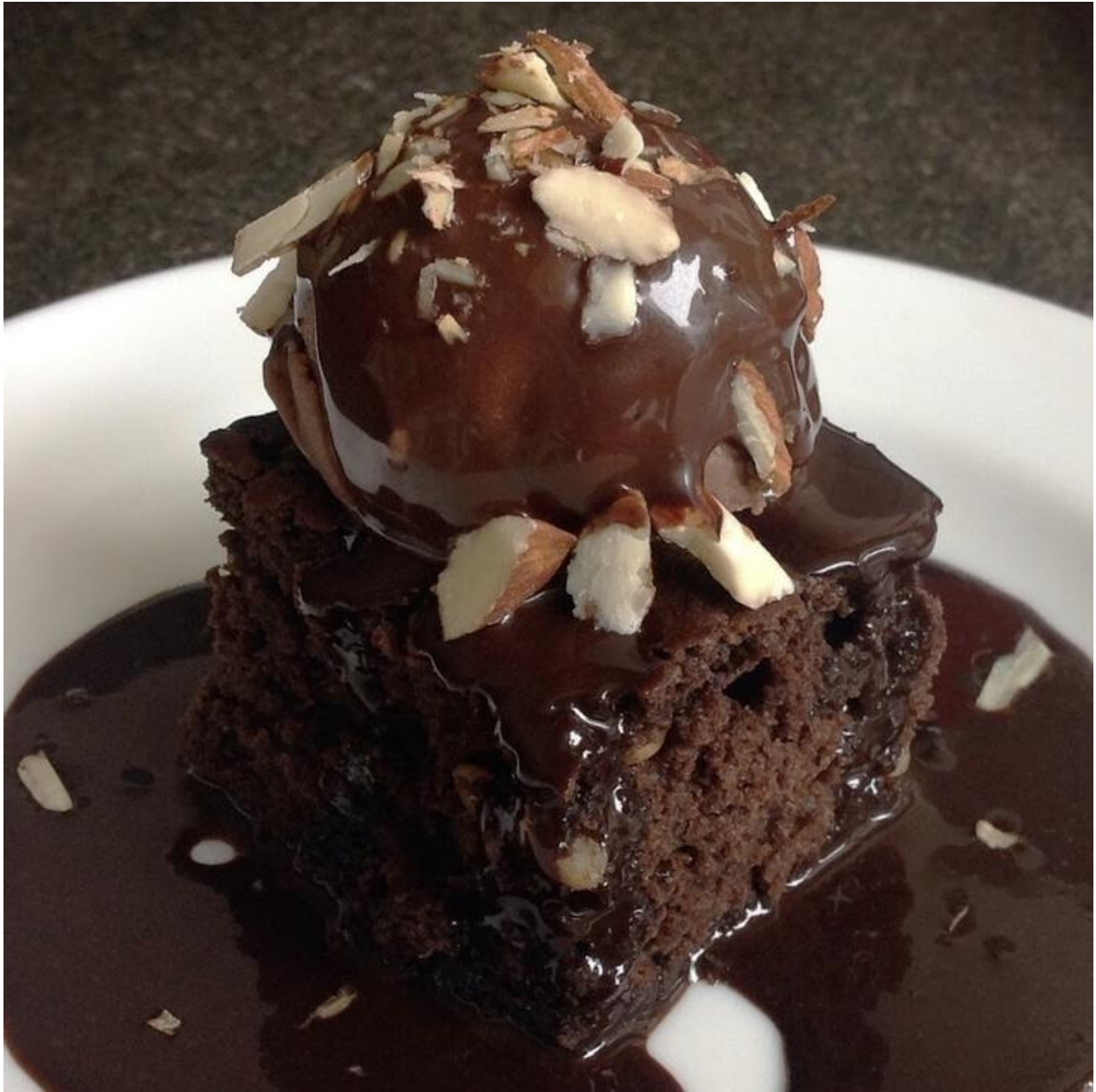
been working with Carrots for over three years now. She tells us about the workshops they run and her journey to turning vegan.

Tell us about Carrots?

Carrots is Bangalore's first fine dining vegan restaurant. The ideology behind the restaurant is to serve vegan food to people and show them what a huge variety of items can be made. Show them that vegan food is not boring. It was started in 2013, by Krishna Shastry (Subbaraju, who runs the cafe now joined in the business a little later as a partner).

Why the name Carrots?

We were looking for a name that represents the menu in some way. All our dishes are vegetable heavy, and most places the food is grain heavy, but apart from being vegan, we like to serve really healthy food and nothing spells healthy like vegetables. We thought carrots was an apt name when it comes to representing what we serve. Two carrots can also make a 'V' for vegan.



What was the idea behind starting this restaurant?

Carrots started with the idea of opening people's mind about vegan food and spoil them with choices. Our menu is divided into health levels: H1, H2 and H3. So if you want to eat super healthy you choose H1, if you want to indulge a bit, then you can choose H3. Our menu has grown exponentially. We also like to use this place as a platform to help other vegan businesses.



What's the best dish on your menu?

That's like asking a mother who is her favourite child. Our desserts are phenomenal and are a must-try. Vegan desserts aren't easily available. People wonder how desserts can be made without eggs or dairy, but it's simple to make delicious vegan desserts. The obsessive chocolative disorder is what I would recommend you try. If you aren't fond of chocolate, then I would suggest the Tiramisu.

In the main course, our fusion menu is unique and are all chef specials. We have staples like pizzas, pasta, burgers and some Indian dishes. I would recommend you try the mashed potato pie, Aubergine mushroom platter and the Carrots special healthy plate.

We prepare a lot of smoothies and salads, too. The carrots-oats smoothie is something I would recommend. I also recommend the

signature hot chocolate.

You've been around for a few years, how do people respond to your restaurant?

We turn five next year! The response has been great since the last two years. People weren't aware of vegan food and have a misconception that it's not tasty food. Bangaloreans weren't into conscious dining, but that has been changing. The mindset is changing. I'm glad we've played a small part in changing people's mindsets. Vegans are a small part of our customer base. We have vegetarians and non-vegetarians coming in for a meal, too. They come here because the menu is so interesting and word of mouth travels.



Do you see more people turning vegan? What are your thoughts

on it?

In the past 4-5 years, people are becoming more conscious about animal cruelty. They are hesitating to buy animal products. They are opting the vegan way. The older generation seemed to be opting the vegan way for health reasons. You can reverse so many lifestyle diseases by going vegan. A lot of environmentalists have also opted to go vegan. The growth has been good in the last 5 years.



Tell me about the workshops you conduct at Carrots.

Apart from providing vegan food to people, we also have workshops

where you can prepare your own food. We want to help people make their own vegan alternatives as well. We are enthusiastic about conducting workshops. Teaching is something I enjoy and combining it with vegan food is a lovely way to reach out to people.

We have a variety of workshops, both online and offline. Some of the workshops we have ongoing are: [Dairy Alternatives Ninja Experience Online](#), [Refreshing Raw Foods Online](#), [Super Healthy Indian Meal](#). We also have a Youtube channel where we do live videos. People can watch from home and comment with questions and we answer them. We do free recipe demonstrations at the restaurant, which is open to all. We conduct group workshops as well for corporates or for other restaurants who want to include vegan dishes on their menu. Recently, we went to Pune to conduct a vegan cooking workshop at a vegan cafe there. We also conduct one-on-one workshops. This is for people who want to learn about making vegan food in-depth. We do have another workshop happening at the Arts Village next week. We're focusing on taking our workshops out, so it's easier to spread the word.



Tell us about your vegan journey.

I turned vegan 14 years ago. That's in 2003. It wasn't a known concept. One of my friends had turned vegan. It was the curiosity at first. But when I made myself aware of what happens with animals, the cruelty in the dairy industry, you realise that your taste buds aren't worth this. There are so many alternatives to meat and dairy and we're thoroughly spoilt for choice. When this was a new concept, there weren't too many choices, but when you think about the food you eat versus someone else's life, it becomes easy to choose. That's why I turned vegan. I started a blog called Veganosaurus and I started posting recipes that vegans can use. I started experimenting a lot with cooking and baking, something I didn't like earlier.



What about your family? Is everyone at home vegan?

Not everyone in my family is vegan. My husband is and so are my parents. In fact, my husband turned vegan first and I followed. It took some time to convince my parents and it's for health reasons that they decided to turn vegan.



Who cooks the food at the restaurant?

We have a team of chefs. None of them have vegan backgrounds,

but we've taught them to veganise what they cook. They are very creative and the menu has grown over the years, thanks to them.

What do you have in the pipeline for the next year?

Apart from creating awareness, we want to work on introducing products out into the market. We are constantly working on vegan dips and different kinds of vegan milk. We are working on shelving these in the long run at grocery stores. We also want to conduct a lot of workshops, so that people understand vegan food better. We also will have more restaurant consultations taking place. These are the focus areas for the upcoming year.

Have you been to Carrots? Have you tried their workshops on vegan cooking? Do tell us about your experience, in the comments below.