



ANYTHING BUT SALADS

Delectable Alternatives

CALISTA GOH's life-changing experience may make Hong Kong a healthier place.

While attending the University of Bristol for law studies, Calista Goh suffered illness and complications from a tumor in her digestive track. The ordeal led her to find that while diet and exercise is important, the composition of a person's daily food uptake has major implications on one's health -- and that a vast majority eats poorly.

Until recently, particularly in Hong Kong, there have been very few truly nutritious options. This is her contribution in the movement towards healthier eating.

Healthy Perspective

"Anything But Salads (ABS) is the only internationally award-winning health foods company in Hong Kong. We specialize in creating unique and delicious, synergistic functional foods," says Calista. "We are on a mission to democratise health food so that everyone can enjoy its benefits. We have conquered stereotypical assumptions that healthy tastes bland and snacks are bad for you."

A more conscious and Internet-savvy public continues to exhibit greater awareness and shifting attitudes in wellness. "The health industry is growing at a steady and increasing rate month on month. Global organic food & beverage is expected to reach US \$211.4 billion by 2020, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 15.7% from 2014 to 2020. Organic frozen and processed food accounted for 28% of total market revenue globally in 2013," says Calista. "In Hong Kong, we see many new health shops and brands coming up, and customers are paying more attention to healthy eating."

However, almost as a rule, the region can be a tricky place to introduce new products and services. "When we began,



the Hong Kong community was foreign to the concept of healthy foods tasting good, and they had little knowledge about what healthy meant. We overcame this by persisting in spreading the word about health, engaging the health community in Hong Kong and by giving samples and sponsoring food at major events (e.g. for H&M).

"Now, we have created a special niche for ourselves by combining Traditional Chinese Medicinal herbs and Ayurvedic herbs in our foods. We realise that people are not used to the concept that food is Nature's medicine. This required us to invest a lot of time and effort into educational marketing. We have given public talks and educational speeches about the benefits of herbs, explained what synergistic nutrition is and educated customers on how to differentiate between truly healthy and 'healthy-but-unhealthy' products."

You Are What You Eat

"ABS goes against the grain of other food companies by never cutting corners in our process and lab-testing our raw materials before use," Calista says. "We choose to cooperate with Mother Nature by enhancing nature's gifts with little or no processing. Our model increases value, lowers risks and eliminates fear. ABS sells more than just products. We sell you peace of mind. Successfully synthesising function with deliciousness, we are paving the way for the future of food and innovation with integrity and respect."

Breaking old dichotomy is a key feature in the ABS formula: Healthy

and tasty, contemporary Western snacks upgraded with ancient Asian herbs. All else is excellence in delivery. Its team consists of specialists and experts in nutrition, superfoods, herbs and bio-hacking. Its products use 100% certified organic ingredients. All nuts and seeds used are soaked and sprouted, rancid ones are removed and composted. As Calista likes to put it, they do not sell air.

Spreading Goodness

ABS is leagues past its early beginnings of R&D; today's task is scaling up to meet opportunity. "We have responded to demand by increasing production, delivering a greater variety of product ranges to our customers based on their needs and wants. We've kept up excellent customer service, maintained strict transparency rules so people know what they're eating, and also focused efforts on getting our products into mainstream supermarkets." Major outlets like Great Food Hall and Park n Shop Fusion currently carry ABS products.

"We are also gearing up for international expansion this year," says Calista. "We are in talks with distributors and resellers in Europe (Spain, UK, Finland, and Switzerland) and are launching in Singapore after Chinese New Year. We have also been approached by Whole Foods USA, and are currently planning our launch in the US by late 2015. We will continue to strengthen and serve our Hong Kong community to the best of our ability, focusing efforts on giving our customers more accessibility to our products by having them in more shops and supermarkets around Hong Kong." ■

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www.anythingbutsalads.com

