



INDIAN MERCHANT TO LAUNCH IN UK SHOPS

7th February, 2014 by Lauren May

An Indian wine merchant is set to release its wines, produced in the country's Nashik Valley, in UK supermarkets.



Soul Tree was founded by two Indian entrepreneurs in 2009 with the aim of marketing wines from India's Nashik Valley, the country's biggest wine district, to the UK and France, and is the only Indian wine company to be headquartered in the UK.

Its wines have so far only been available at select Indian restaurants, bars and boutique hotels in Britain.

However according to a report by *The Times of India*, the company is poised to release its range of wines into UK supermarkets later this year.

Speaking to the Indian newspaper Alok Mathur, co-founder, said: "Early research showed that all but a very tiny number of British consumers had never heard of Indian wines, let alone tried them.

"This is now changing rapidly but in the early days marketing Indian wines has simply been about availability and awareness – less strategy, more hard work, grit and determination."

Mathur met fellow co-founder Melvin D'Souza while both were studying for their MBA at University of Oxford's Said Business School, later embarking on a mission to bring the wines from Maharashtra to the international market.

Mathur said: "We spotted a niche during a dinner out that was just begging to be plugged.

"Everyone was drinking Indian beers with their Indian meals, but there was not a single Indian wine in sight.

"What got us into this from those initial thoughts was a love to achieve something that had not truly been done before, an ambition to establish a new global consumer brand, and a desire to see a new Indian industry make it big across the world".

The company now has distribution links in the UK, France and are currently in talks with Canadian markets.

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