

SANTAN RESTAURANT AND T&CO CAFE

AIRASIA'S INFLIGHT MEALS LAND IN KL

Low-cost carrier opens 1st fast-food joint at MidValley Megamall, with plan for 100 more within 5 years

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AIRASIA Group yesterday opened its flagship Santan Restaurant and T&CO Cafe — its first fast food outlet in the region — at the MidValley Megamall, here, with the aim of launching another five by end of next year.

Group chief executive officer Tan Sri Tony Fernandes said the low-cost carrier planned to have 100 franchisees in three to five years.

“Food is an important element for Malaysians and our airline food has been successful. We are the first airline to commercialise our food,” said Fernandes at the launch.

Also present were Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Min-

ister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, AirAsia Group Bhd executive chairman Datuk Kamarudin Meranun, AirAsia Group president (RedBeat Ventures) Aireen Omar and Santan Restaurant and T&CO Cafe general manager Catherine Goh.

The restaurant cum cafe will feature an artificial intelligence-equipped smart menu that will recommend popular dishes based on time, past ordering patterns and demographic taste.

Foodies can now indulge in popular favourites such as Pak Nasser's Nasi Lemak and Uncle Chin's Chicken Rice, as well as other Asean cuisines such as Pineapple Fish Noodles from Cambodia and Chicken Inasal with Garlic Rice from the Philippines, from just RM12.

Fernandes said AirAsia had partnered various players to open



Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail (left) with AirAsia Group chief executive officer Tan Sri Tony Fernandes (right) and T&CO Cafe general manager Catherine Goh at the launch of the flagship Santan and T&CO restaurant at the MidValley Megamall in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. PIC BY MOHD YUSNI ARIFFIN

its first restaurant as the airline was a new to the fast-food chain business.

"We want it to be affordable. We have gone directly to suppliers so that we can bring the prices down."

"We are going to be aggressive as we would like to be all over the world, such as in London, New York and other locations in Asean."

"We have received many enquiries relating to the franchise. We expect to open a Santan and T&CO franchise in China soon," he said, adding that the company

would also offer food delivery services.

Fernandes said its venture into the food business would complement, rather than eat into the market share of existing fast food chain players.

"The only difference is that we use big data (of customers) to offer good value. We will source everything locally," he said.

Fernandes said Santan and T&CO might be developed into Santan Food Corp with operations that include airline food, restaurants and franchises.

Goh said there was rising de-

mand for AirAsia's inflight menu offerings beyond its flights in the region.

"We want to extend what started out as inflight menu into new markets and pledge our support for local and Asean producers and suppliers, apart from creating new job opportunities with affordable franchising," she said.

Goh said the restaurant would feature different inflight menu products.

She said the company aimed to have three to four restaurants in the Klang Valley and one in Penang by the end of next year.

AirAsia's inflight meals land in KL



(l-r): Santan Restaurant and T&CO Cafe general manager Catherine Goh; AirAsia Board of Director Datuk Fam Lee Fe, Deputy Secretary General of Domestic Trade Dr. Alauddin Sidai, AirAsia Group chief executive officer Tan Sri Tony Fernandes, Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, AirAsia Group executive chairman Datuk Kamarudin Meranun, AirAsia Board of Director Latuk Aziz Bakar and AirAsia Group president (RedBeat Ventures) Aireen Omar at the Santan and T&CO flagship restaurant launch at Mid Valley, Kuala Lumpur recently.

By Ayisy Yusof
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KUALA LUMPUR: AirAsia Group's in-flight menu brand Santan and T&CO has officially opened its flagship restaurant with the aim of launching another five by end of 2020.

AirAsia Group chief executive officer Tan Sri Tony Fernandes said the low-cost carrier (LCC) expected to have 100 franchisees for its fast-food chain within three to five years.

"Food is a very important element of Malaysians' life and obviously our airline's food has been successful. We are the first airline ever to commercialise our food," Fernandes told reporters at the restaurant launch at MidValley here recently.

The restaurant was launched by Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, AirAsia Group Bhd executive chairman Datuk Kamarudin Meranun, AirAsia Group president (RedBeat Ventures) Aireen Omar and Santan Restaurant and T&CO Cafe general manager Catherine Goh.

Fernandes said AirAsia had partnered with various players to open up its first restaurant as the airline was a novice at the fast-food chain business.

"We want this (food) to be affordable. We are going directly to suppliers to bring the price down," he added.

Fernandes said AirAsia's wholly-owned non-airline digital business RedBeat Ventures' unit Santan and T&CO was going through an expansion.

"We want to be very aggressive as we would like to be all over the world such as in London and New York and definitely across Asean.

"We have received many enquiries related to the franchise. We expect to open a Santan and T&CO franchise in China soon," he said, adding that the company may also offer food delivery services.

Fernandes said its venture into food business would not cannibalise others' market share, but rather complementing existing food chain players.

"The only difference is that we use our big data (of customers), while offering good value. We are also sourcing everything locally," he said.

Fernandes said Santan and T&CO may be developed into Santan Food Corp with operations that include airline food, restaurants and franchise business.

Meanwhile, Goh said there had been a significant appetite for AirAsia's in-flight menu offerings beyond its flights across the region.

"We are very proud to extend what started out as an in-flight menu into new markets and reiterate our support for local and Asean producers, suppliers; apart from creating new job opportunities with affordable franchising," she said.

Goh said the restaurant features different in-flight menu products in terms of pricing, portioning and packaging.

She said the company expected to have three to four restaurants in the Klang Valley and one in Penang by end-2020.

Designed to enhance customers' dining experience through a personalised digital journey, the restaurant and cafe features a smart menu equipped with artificial intelligence and machine learning, which is able to recommend popular dishes based on time, past ordering patterns as well as demographic taste.

Offering Asean delights and popular favourites for only RM12, foodies can now indulge in Pak Nasser's Nasi Lemak and Uncle Chin's Chicken Rice on-ground as well as other dishes inspired by popular Asean cuisines such as Pineapple Fish Noodle from Cambodia, Chicken Inasal with Garlic Rice from the Philippines.