

AirAsia's Santan as main market for local products



Tuesday, December 3rd, 2019 at , Business | News

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by AZALEA AZUAR/ pic by MUHD AMIN NAHARUL

AIRASIA Group Bhd's inflight menu brand Santan and T&Co, which is already the main marketplace for Malaysian-made products, introduced its first flagship restaurant at Mid Valley Megamall in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Saifuddin Nasution Ismail, who attended the opening of the restaurant, said the outlet could be a boost to more local products.

As it is, 90% of the items sold at Santan are Malaysian products.

The opening of this flagship restaurant is also spurred by the demand and appetite for AirAsia's inflight menu offerings.

Saifuddin Nasution said the restaurant is also an extension of the ministry's initiative with AirAsia in making homegrown food products available and viable on a reputable international platform.

“(Tan Sri Dr Tony) Fernandes came to my office to discuss on how Malaysia’s products could be marketed by AirAsia. He was excited in sharing his ideas about starting up a restaurant that serves airline food,” Saifuddin Nasution said.

By the end of 2020, the brand is expected to have five restaurants, and 100 franchisee-operated restaurants and cafes within the next three to five years, with expansions in global markets.

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

Customers can also order directly from *santan.com.my* and T&CO mobile app.

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, in addition to Aseansourced coffee and tea, snacks and desserts inspired by local flavours such as the nasi lemak quinoa wrap and onde-onde cake.

The launch was also attended by AirAsia executive chairman Datuk Kamarudin Meranun, CEO Fernandes, AirAsia president (RedBeat Ventures) Aireen Omar and Santan GM Catherine Goh.

“This is part of our continued efforts in promoting the Shared Prosperity Vision. And we assure that growth of Santan restaurants will foster stronger economic growth, generally more employment,” Goh said.

