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## Barbecue joint has an appetite for growth

**Abdul Basit**

DUBAI — Absolute Barbecues, better known as AB's, a newly opened restaurant in Dubai Media City, plans to expand in shopping malls, the City Walk and the remaining emirates in the UAE before diversifying to other Gulf countries.

The India-based brand selected Dubai for its international foray and opened its flagship outlet in the city last month. AB's entry into Dubai is part of an expansion strategy that will see the chain take the number of its outlets to 15 by the end of 2015, including branches in Hyderabad, Mumbai and other Indian cities.

"We have invested around Dh4 million on our first outlet in Dubai and have earmarked another Dh10 million for further expansion here," Shajeer Paramabath, director of Mayfair Restaurants, told *Khaleej Times*.

The company is primarily focused on Dubai, Paramabath said, adding: "We are planning at least two more outlets in Dubai before going to other emirates in the UAE. We are looking at spots in the City Walk extension and in malls."

On why AB's chose to make its international debut in Dubai, he said: "This is the best market in the Middle East."

AB's offers a 'do-it-yourself' grilling experience which features a live charcoal grill at each table and a central live grill station. Spread over 6,300 square feet, AB's can accommodate upto 174 diners, making it one of the largest buffet dining options in Dubai. Thirty staff are at hand to assist and advise customers on grilling suggestions and provide information on each dish served.

Prosenjit Roy Choudhury, the owner and chief executive officer of AB's, said that the chain's restaurants in India are doing very well. The brand, which originated in Hyderabad, is just one-and-half years old but already ranks among the top restaurants in Indian cities Hyderabad, Chennai and Bengaluru, he said. "We are opening one branch each in these three cities in 2015," he added.

"AB's in Dubai raises the buffet experience to the next level through personalised service and a personalised grilling experience, far superior to run-of-the-mill buffet places in the Gulf," said Razeen Parambil, general manager of AB's. "This is because AB's was created by people who pioneered the high quality buffet concept in India and are now ready to take on the world. We are driven by passion, and not just by money motives, and this is reflected in every aspect of our operations and service."

The USP of AB's is that it offers a large selection of meat, seafood and vegetables that customers can grill to their own preference. The restaurant's accompanying sauces, salads and side dishes are prepared in-house, with many featuring signature recipes and ingredients exclusive to the brand. AB's spices and marinades are prepared in-house by chefs who often visit diners at their tables for recommendations and suggestions.

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