

The MORNING STANDARD

SHANTANU DAVID

MUCH like her products, Tanaya Sharma's plans for her nearly-one-year-old brand, Over The Top (OTT) — The Good Stuff, were very organic. Sharma, 37, who had made significant dietary changes around three years ago due to health concerns, and thereafter started making goodies for herself and her family sans preservatives, additives, and refined sugar, was cooped up during 2020 lockdown.

"My sister kept saying I should sell my spreads, vegan butters and other experiments. So, I gave it a try during the lockdown and started sending out samplers to friends and influencers," recalls Sharma. Word spread quickly and now, less than a year later, OTT is delivering its products pan-India, with demand coming in from everywhere — from wedding hampers in Srinagar to large orders in small cities like Bhopal and Indore. The spreads are only available via OTT's Instagram page (OTT_thegoodstuff), though Sharma does sell them at various farmer and artisanal markets in Delhi-NCR.

Even the brand name came about naturally, when Sharma was trying to explain her nascent business plan to her friend. "I remember saying, basically you can put it on top of everything, and then it just hit me — Over The Top."

OTT's products use all-natural ingredients, only sweetened with organic jaggery. From lashing them on to toast or pancakes, to muddling it with your caffeinated beverage of choice, to anything else your heart and palate desire, there's something for everyone. And because these do not contain any chemical preservatives or refined sugar (itself a preserving agent), Sharma recommends consuming



Spreads, vegan butters and other experiments from Over The Top (OTT)

the spreads and toppings within six weeks, though, "You could stretch it to eight weeks if you keep it refrigerated very carefully, meaning no wet or dirty spoons in the jars." It is for this reason that OTT takes order 48 hours in advance as Sharma doesn't like to keep products lying around, choosing to make each order from scratch.

Her first big order, which came from a director friend in Mumbai who wanted to distribute it among her film fraternity peers, was to travel from New Delhi to Mumbai in an already turbulent 2020's summer heat. Sharma sent them straddling ice packs (that had been solidly frozen for two days) in Thermocol boxes. "It worked like a dream."

Sharma eschews plastic as much as she can, as she wants OTT to be as eco-friendly as possible. "I do each label by hand, all the packaging is

made using Amazon, Nykaa and other delivery boxes, and the bags are upcycled from spare fabric and other materials," she says.

At the moment, OTT is a one-woman show, but will soon have two more people ("who actually have a culinary background as opposed to me, a complete novice") on board. "That's when we'll scale up and be able to retail it through online and offline stores. With a new team, we can do all that and a lot more that I have wanted to, starting with our website which goes live by the end of the month," she signs off.

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Tanaya Sharma,
Founder of OTT

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