

Startups

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Why Durga Menon led whole-wheat bakery Lluvia is a social enterprise

Vinay Dhwani, ET Bureau | Oct 27, 2014, 08:03AM IST

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After 12 years in the US, Durga Menon decided to come back to India. The software engineer's move to return to her roots in Bangalore was prompted by a desire to be close to her family and do something socially meaningful. However, she hadn't identified the route she would take. It wasn't until her husband, Srihari Reddy, suggested that she open a bakery that things began to fall in place.



Menon, 41, had always cooked for family and friends, and had even done a bakery course on breads in the US. So, with the aim of promoting healthy eating in Bangalore, she decided to open a whole-wheat bakery. "The idea was borne of a desire to bake healthy. We didn't eat out much, but on the rare occasion we did, we realised that we had exhausted all bakery options in the vicinity," says Menon. So, with an initial investment of Rs 40,000, she started Lluvia bakery from her home kitchen.

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Lluvia
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After 12 years in the US, Durga Menon decided to come back to India. The software engineer's move to return to her roots in Bangalore was prompted by a desire to be close to her family and do something socially meaningful. However, she hadn't identified the route she would take. It wasn't until her husband, Srihari Reddy, suggested that she open a bakery that things began to fall in place.

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Currently, Lluvia has a staff of 10 and the unique thing is that all bakers are single mothers. Lluvia's first-year revenue stood at a meagre Rs 60,000. This was a steep fall in earnings for Menon compared to that from her cushy job in the US. Now, however, the increasing demand has seen a healthy topline growth for her social enterprise. In 2013, the bakery notched up a revenue of close to Rs 12 lakh.

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