



## THE SOUP PIONEER

*"Homely comfort moments would accurately describe what The Soup Spoon is about", said its owner and cofounder, Andrew Chan.*

Andrew are joined by 2 other business partners, Benedict Leow and Anna Lim (SouperChef Anna). All the recipes are the results of SouperChef Anna's inspirations from her travels all over the world. In fact, the very idea of opening a soup eatery in Singapore stemmed from their stints in the western countries.

"We were careful not to get overly excited and fixated on our idea. We were open to suggestions and did a 'market survey' by selling our soups to church and doing deliveries to offices. From the feedback, we continuously improved our idea and recipes so that we would be ready once an opportunity presented itself."

In 2002, the golden opportunity came, their first store opened at Raffles City Shopping Centre and was a huge success. This gave them confidence to start a second outlet a year later at United Square, which unfortunately did not work out due to a mix of poor planning and the sudden outbreak of SARS.

"There were people telling us that the soup concept will not work in Singapore. We listened, but giving up was never a consideration. While it is essential to accept feedbacks, it is also vital that you do not be paralyzed nor frightened by comments that



impeded the progress of the business."

After the closure of the United Square outlet, the trio did extensive market research and planning before investing in their next outlet. Today, The Soup Spoon has six brands and a total of 22 stores.

"There is no secret nor shortcut to success in the F&B industry. On top of having the passion to keep the momentum going even when things are not looking too rosy, it is even more vital to start the business right and ensure the profitability is there to keep the business afloat."

When asked if he wasn't already in the F&B business, will he still enter the industry given today's business landscape, Andrew's reply was "hard to say".

**"It has become a lot more expensive to start and manage an F&B business today. The risk of failure has also increased due to intense competition, manpower shortage and a change in levels of demand.** However, that being said, there are still many pockets of opportunities in the foodservice business in Singapore, just whether are you able to find them".

**Andrew Chan**  
Managing Director and  
Co-Founder of The Soup Spoon