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—DANEESH DAVAR

DOUBLES

## Fit together

In the daily lives of marketing consultant **DANEESH DAVAR** and lawyer-turned-fitness expert **SOHRAB KHUSHRUSHAHI**, food and fitness collide and co-exist, finds **PRIYANKA KHANNA**

Believe it or not, but banoffee pie, that sticky, creamy, buttery, rich English dessert, plays the buffer between the opposing ideologies that govern marketing consultant 34-year-old Daneesh Davar and her 35-year-old lawyer-turned-fitness trainer husband Sohrab Khushrushahi's lives. The pie in question—the signature dessert of Davar's mother Zarine—also led the former to pursue her love for food and launch a homegrown confectionery brand, Mama Z's, that celebrates her mum's baking skills. Khushrushahi, on the other hand, is known for his love for fitness, but the pie remains his Achilles heel. When you meet this husband-wife duo, they stay true to their distinct selves—Khushrushahi is calm and composed, while Davar is the more extroverted of the two; her closest friends (full disclosure: I'm one of them) often tease her on her proclivity towards the dramatic.

### EASY AS PIE

"My mum's food is so good, I just felt the world needed to taste a bit of her talent," says Davar, who also consults for fields as diverse as real estate and fashion. Following the birth of her son, when friends and family would visit, they would often ask for a slice of the famed pie. "I looked across at my mum one day and said we should make this a business," says Davar. That

epiphany led to Mama Z's, a from-home catering service offered on Mumbai-based app Scootsy, which has gained quite the following in the city especially for their pies. At about the same time, Khushrushahi decided to seriously consider a career in fitness.

"I started playing cricket at the age of nine, and that's when I realised what I wanted to do. But my turning point was more recent, when I met with our now business advisor. I was also glad to know I had Daneesh's complete support." What followed is Sohfit, a holistic wellness approach that includes bootcamps, personal consultations and corporate wellness. In just a few months, the response has been overwhelming. "I would eventually like to be in a place where I can work with athletes. As a country, we need better representation in every sport and I'd like to help achieve it."

### THE FAMILY WAY

In many ways, their two-year-old son Zahan brought about these changes. For Khushrushahi, starting out on his own has given him the freedom to spend more time with his family. And for Davar, who had never stepped into a gym, finding a new common interest with her husband, and also working on getting back to her pre-baby shape, were both catalysts to get fit.

"When he was a lawyer working



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Mama Z's, run by Daneesh Davar's mother, is set to launch a line of healthy treats

HAIR & MAKE-UP: TANU CHANDAN

“My basic premise is that I want my clients to enjoy themselves and use this time to de-stress”

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those crazy hours, the only time we got to spend together was in the gym, and his fitness obsession has slowly rubbed off on me,” she says. “I was addicted after the first week and the fact that I am now stronger, and fit into my pre-pregnancy clothes, is a huge motivator. My workouts have become an important part of my day.”

She is also his toughest client. “Daneesh gets bored easily, so it really makes me think about how to structure my workouts. My basic premise is that I want my clients to enjoy themselves and use this time to de-stress, and with Daneesh especially, it’s something I’ve really had to work around,” he says.

**NEW GOALS**

Anyone who knows the Davar family knows that food is a big part of their lives. Their dinner table is far from low-carb, low-sugar or low-fat—laden with Mama Zarine’s decadent food that features hits like a luscious roast chicken or a gooey chocolate cake. So, when the couple started dating, Khushrushahi had a unique solution to family events. “I would always say I had just eaten,” he says, laughing, as Davar rolls her eyes. But slowly, to give into the changing demands of her fitness-conscious family, Zarine has started experimenting. In fact, Mama Z’s X Sohfit is soon launching its healthy treats line,

which will include granola bars and healthy cakes. “We really didn’t like what was in the market, so Sohrab and my mum have worked on something quite delicious. It’s the perfect fit-food on-the-go,” says Davar.

After watching the recent Netflix documentary *What The Health* (2017), Khushrushahi has turned vegetarian—and increasingly vegan—much to Davar’s consternation. “I really don’t know what to make for dinner anymore,” she complains. She isn’t convinced about turning vegetarian but has become a lot more mindful about what she eats: “Fish curry-rice and French fries were my staples, but now I really can’t eat unhealthy every single day.”

Khushrushahi, though, is enjoying his wife’s new avatar though he won’t take credit for it. “I never really told her how to eat. I think she just found it easier to eat what I ate. But we go all out when we cheat and that’s really fun.” Topping his indulgence list is ice cream and Mama Z’s chocolate and caramel pie, along with the aforementioned banoffee, while for Davar it’s good old Parsi comfort food—dhansak and rice.

“Who would have thought I would become a health freak? My family is still in shock!” Davar says, laughing. ■

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The 35-year-old fitness expert only has one cheat meal a month

