

# Meet JULIENNE BRUNO, innovators of original and naturally plant-based food

As part of our quick fire questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Axel Katalan, founder of JULIENNE BRUNO about naturally plant-based food, solving production issues, the importance of getting the right team and the launch of collection 02.

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## What was the catalyst for launching JULIENNE BRUNO?

The dream of creating products that are a good product first and vegan second. As a vegan myself, I too often heard friends and family comment “that’s nice for a”vegan dish”, as if vegan was a separate category beyond the wider world of “food”. So we set out to create something familiar but new.

## Tell me about the business?

We create original food products that are naturally plant-based. We distribute these products that come in the form of “collections”, through our online shop, wholesalers, and directly through restaurants and retailers. We are building out product innovations that cover the entire range of the supermarket, from frozen, to chilled, to ambient and everything in between.

# How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

We soft launched to market in April 2022, with collection 01 only being available online. Soon after, we started distribution through early partners such as Panzers and from there our community started exponentially growing. Today, we are stocked with Selfridges, Whole Foods Market, Holland & Barret and many awesome smaller retailers such as Harmless Store, Panzers and more.

# Tell us about the working culture at JULIENNE BRUNO

Small team with all hands on deck. We value input, initiative as well as taking responsibility. We also value mental health and physical well being. There are days we work till late, and there are days we take it easy to recover.

# How are you funded?

Venture Capital and Angel Investors. We've completed two rounds of investment. A pre-seed of £1M and a seed of £5M.

# What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

Starting from scratch everything has had a bit of a challenge. In particular, sourcing equipment. There is a global shortage of equipment and equipment pieces, which mean things that usually would have taken a few weeks now take months. When you are in the physical business of production, that can be a problem. We've been able to swiftly find alternative equipment from international suppliers to resolve this issue.

# How does JULIENNE BRUNO answer an unmet need?

A product that is actually liked by foodies.

# What's in store for the future?

Collection 02 – it will not be in the dairy free space, but always plant-based.

## What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Especially in the early days, take extra time to hire the right team and get the culture right, it makes all the difference when you scale.

## And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

Everyday is quite different, but I generally try to make a few hours of the day where I am not reading emails or reacting to something, but actually thinking and planning. Whatever the day that may be, always make time to reach out to family and friends to keep in touch.

Axel Katalan is the founder of *JULIENNE BRUNO*.

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Article by AXEL KATALAN