



GO DINE
EATERIES

GASTRONOMIC DELIGHTS

Guided by the chef, the diner at Bengaluru's Pink Poppadom is treated to a series of pleasant surprises. By Bindu Gopal Rao

WITH A NAME LIKE PINK POPPADOM for a restaurant, your curiosity is naturally triggered. I must say I was certainly not disappointed. This 84-seater restaurant on the fourth floor of Hyatt Bangalore is done up in shades of solid brown, beige and bright hues of pink. The private dining areas can be found in one corner and are separated by sheer pink curtains that lend an interesting contrast to the décor. Specialising in 'Modern Indian cuisine' conceptualised by Executive Chef Gautam Chaudhry, the restaurant's menu has recently been overhauled to take you on a gastronomical journey like no other.

The best way to enjoy your meal is to explain your needs to the chef, and relax as you are treated to a multi-course meal. We started with an amuse bouche that's served to all – the two-toned Dohra Mulligatawny Soup, an interesting combination of the traditional yellow soup and a pinkish red Pink Poppadom version. The entire menu is an interesting take on Indian food that is interpreted in a modern way and presented in a global fashion. The best part is that you do not know what to expect, which makes the meal interesting in more ways than one.

We were first served a pre-appetiser – a small portion of Ricotta Kabab on a bed of Zucchini Carpaccio that melts in your mouth. This was followed with the signature appetiser Fig & Walnut Seekh made with sautéed artichoke hearts, holy basil yoghurt and spiced mint shots and Bishop's Paneer – cottage cheese envelopes, ajwain, beetroot and fresh pomegranate filling and a Californian grape relish.

Another must-try is the Rare Seared Yellow Fin Tuna that is a special smoky flavoured tuna from Japan, served with roasted cumin avocado raita. The other





Clockwise from top: Fig and Walnut Seekh; Strawberry Phirni; and Lobster Moilee

specialty is the Emu Tikka, a Balsamic marinated emu morsel, glazed in a clay oven and served with beetroot and raw papaya relish. "Emu meat is both fat and cholesterol free and we use a flavourful fruity vinegar that combines beautifully in this dish," says Chaudhry. The main course offers umpteen choices for both vegetarians and non vegetarians. One of the signature dishes that is very popular is Drunkard Chicken, where the chicken is marinated in red wine served in a neer dosa wrap with fresh coconut. The other must-try is the Chettinadu Duck, a classic Southern Indian spiced duck, onion poha and peppered vegetables. Special mention needs to be made of the Croissant Parantha that is a very soft flaky laminated bread griddled on a tawa with saffron and cardamom. The Rosemary Garlic Naan is another good choice and

makes for an excellent combination with the Tofu Mappas, a mélange of tofu, corn and pea in fenugreek and coconut sauce. What sets the food apart are the unusual combinations that are interesting interpretations that add a twist to Indian cuisine. The Sea Bass, for instance, is cooked with Amritsari spices and served inside a Pita roll to make for a unique culinary experience. The menu offers some interesting mocktails and cocktails that pair excellently with the food – the best way to sample them is to ask the chef for his suggestions.

And, to end your meal on a sweet note opt for the Trio of Figs, a combination of a Baklava, Cheesecake and Shooter, which showcases figs in solid, semi-solid and liquid forms. Or, try the Coconut Crème Brûlée – it's an Indian take on the classic French dessert. The sweetness of the coconuts adds to the rich smoky flavours of the cream. Or, the Mango Jamun, where traditional gulab jamuns are treated with a modern twist. Instead of the golden brown dumplings drenched in warm sugar syrup, you feast on a sinful combination of mango mousse and gulab jamuns paired with unusual gulkand chutney.

The finishing touch to the meal comes in the form of a signature Paan Shot, a digestive that has an amazing way of soothing your stomach while leaving you feeling good. As Chef Chaudhry says, "Dining at The Pink Poppadom is like going on a hopping flight, a journey between continents and innovation, and the best part is that you do not know what to expect with just the chef as your guide."