



The Manor



Photos: Dinesh Bhat

WITH A DESI TWIST

The trend of the future is undoubtedly modern Indian food. While there will always be takers for Dal Makhni and Butter Chicken, there is now a community of international travelers who enjoy cuisine and who want a glass of good wine with their food, and one way of making sure that that happens is by tweaking *desi khana* to bring it in line with international dining trends. As the concept of modern Indian food is so new in India, each player in the field has interpreted it in individual ways.

In the last one year, a dozen places have appeared in the capital. Perhaps the finest is Indian Accent. To do the cuisine successfully, you have to be prepared to master the rules of a number of regional cuisines. It would be extremely eccentric to base an entire menu only on Punjabi food! I admit, much of the appeal of Indian Accent is the surroundings. The Manor

is the most elegant hotel in the city, bar none and Indian Accent fits

like a glove. Trendy presentations, un-Indian ingredients and unexpected yet inspired combinations work like magic.

Atta and Semolina Puchkas with Five Waters (Rs 225) is what catapulted the restaurant to fame originally. Each of the waters is different, and as they are presented in shot glasses, you can enjoy their visual effect before tasting them. Raw mango and mint, ripe mango and rose are the most unusual but it's fun trying all of them.

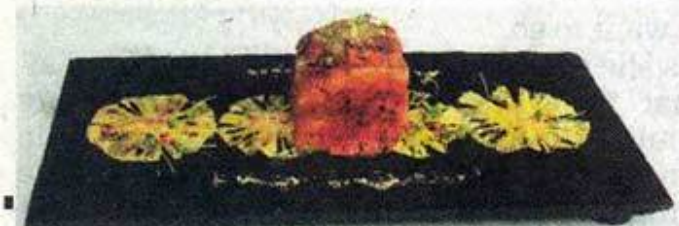
Ash Roasted Sweet Potato with Ganth Gobhi



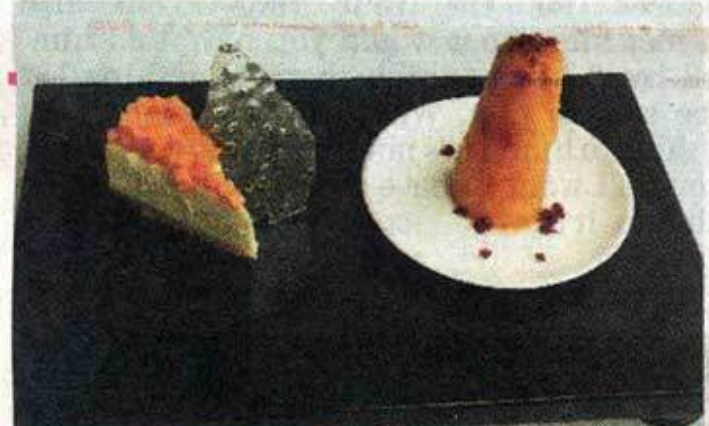
Ash Roasted Sweet Potato

TIMES FOOD GUIDE

Marryam H Reshii



Tandoori Foie Gras, Amla Murabba, Paprika Pineapple



Mango and Cranberry Kulfi

Carpaccio (Rs 325) is a dish that glorifies vegetables; it has two types of chutneys that work as a salad dressing. The sweet potatoes really are roasted; simply boiling them would have saved time in the kitchen. Indian Accent sweats the small stuff: the preparation for each dish is incredibly minute.

Take the Tandoori Foie Gras, Amla Murabba, Paprika Pineapple (Rs 1295 for a 125 gm portion size) for example. Blade thin slices of pineapple have been cut and oven-dried till they become as crisp as chips. These are the garnish of this particular dish. The foie gras has actually been marinated with tandoori spices – the faint yet unmistakable whiff of ginger and garlic paste does indeed lurk in the background. By the time of the tandoor, it is meltingly tender. It is customary, worldwide, to pair rich, buttery foie gras with a crisp ingredient as well as a sharp, tangy one as a counterpoint for flavour and texture. That's where the *amla* and the pineapple chips come in. Brilliant or what!

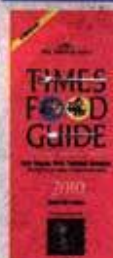
Main courses include a vegetarian one that is irresistible to all: Masala Wild Mushrooms with Water Chestnut (Rs 910). It's a sort of five-star stir fry in which morels, sinji mushrooms, ceps and oyster mushrooms vie for space in a rich, flavourful sauce with the merest hint of sweetness. Contrasted with the crunch of water chestnuts and topped with a dosa, you can think of it as a deconstructed fricassee.

Pan-Fried Australian John Dory with Mooli (Rs 925) is perhaps the most inspired dish on the menu. The iconic mooli from Kerala matches the fried fillet of fish while the poriyal with an international touch – pinenuts – lifts it out of the ordinary.

All the desserts follow the pattern of the main courses: they are western (Crème Brulee) with Indian ingredients (coconut and jaggery Rs 395) or Indian (*kulfi*) with western ingredients (cranberry Rs 495).

INDIAN ACCENT

The Manor, 77 Friends Colony (West)
Tel: 26925151
Open from 12.30 pm to 3 pm and 7 pm to 11.30 pm
Alcohol served; credit cards accepted
Meal for two: Rs 4,000



RATING:

Food: 4.50
Ambience: 4.00
Service: 4.00

(5) Excellent (4) Very good
(3) Good (2) Average (1) Poor

AGREE? DISAGREE?

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