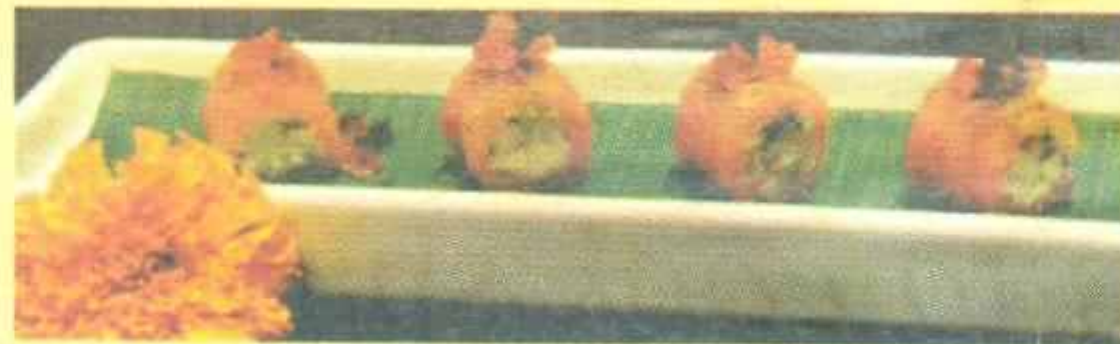


Indian exotic food gets tuned and fused

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NEW DELHI

Ever heard of South Indian curd rice wrapped in smoked salmon? Or you might want to start with a curious combination of *paneer* wrapped in Japanese rice paper. Either way these small plates are melt-in-the-mouth textures invented by Chef Manish Mehrotra of Tamarai London. Now here, to wave off The Manor's "Indian Accent", he revs up the menu with types and textures of seafood, meats and vegetable scented dishes tuned and



fused to boast a brandishing of an Asian-Indian confluence.

"Food is about reinventing and balancing flavours and textures," says Chef Manish who sends in a Foie Gras stuffed Galawat that's cotton soft.

Paired with a Villa Maria New Zealand 2007, Sauvignon Blanc, it trims the heady haunts of the palate with panache.

Seafood lovers can satiate their hunger with the Roast Scallops Balchao, served with a thin dispersing of *kokum* powder in its gorgeous shell.

A bite of the scallop, with balchao just about brings Goan and oceanic realms together with a dab of haute cuisine mantra. The main course articulates

itself to broader stretches of culinary artistry. Choose between the Tamarind glazed lamb shank or a terrifically rare Pan fried pork belly. While the Lamb shank is soft and tender, the tamarind seems a wee bit too sweet and takes away from the flavour of the lamb. However, what is divine and sumptuous in its marbled fat and classic flavouring is the pork belly served on a bed of red rice favoured by coastal Konkan and Kerala.

Tantalising and terrific is the pairing of the Peter Lehman 2005 Shiraz, which seals in the flavours and adds a robust resonance to the tender pork.

Seafood lovers can also vic for the rice coated red snapper *Moily* served with local greens

and pinenut *Poriyal*.

The chef confesses that his understanding of South Indian cuisine comes from his connection with Tamil Nadu in matrimony. The coconut gravy of the *Moily* is a heady dense concoction that invites greed, long after the snapper is over.

Prawn lovers can devour the black tiger prawns served with button onions and Tellicherry pepper sauce. The Jeera gnocchi anardana tossed up and topped with a drizzle of organic mustard oil is a classic side dish. The wild mushroom *kulcha* with truffle oil is tasty too.

Any chef who plays with proportions and culinary details is serious about his ingredients. At Indian Accent it's a small touch, but one that's telling.



PHOTOS: Sondeep Shanker