

CRUNCH

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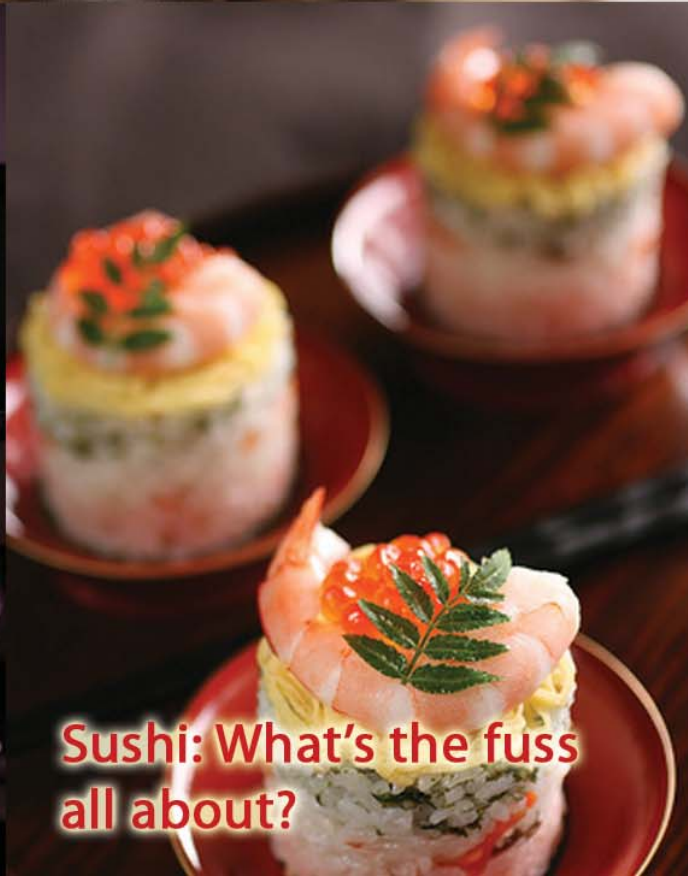
Feature:
the yummiest cakes in town

foodaholics



**Indian Cuisine: A heaven's
delight for Foodies**

Restaurant Reviews:
Kayalan, Saket
Oh! Calcutta, Nehru Place
Taste of China, CP



**Sushi: What's the fuss
all about?**

[the best cakes in town]
[delivered]



If you're a chocoholic or simply like your desserts, Foodaholics should be of interest to you. A venture by Chef Kishi Arora, Foodaholics is a must-try for anyone who has even an iffy sweet tooth.

I first met Kishi in person at Mad Over Donuts. Did you know most or all the lovely creations at Mad Over Donuts are the brainchild of Kishi? Probably not. I loved the donuts and sneak a few whenever possible.

A little while back Kishi announced she's going to go public. No, she isn't having an IPO or anything, though knowing her, that day isn't very far away. She simply meant her creations are now going to be available to all of us out there, who are sick of the staid, cliched offerings of the bakeries Delhi has no dearth of.

While the offerings at Foodaholics aren't exactly cheap, they're probably one of the best in town. This is evident from the ingredients used. For example, locally available Indian chocolate tends to leave a rather cloying texture on the tongue and also has a tendency to give the indulger a sugar rush. Not so with the French and Belgian chocolates used by Foodaholics, which tend to refresh rather than weigh down your palate. The other differentiator is the type of fat used in the chocolate. Locally supplied chocolate tends to have high percentages of vegetable fat, whereas the French variety use pure cocoa butter – makes all the difference to the final taste. Enough about the chocolate; lets talk flavor now. None of the vulgar synthetic stuff in little plastic bottles for Foodaholics customers! No sir - only the best Tahitian Vanilla and perhaps a dollop of honest to goodness Belgian orange among other authentic ingredients find their way into the cakes and desserts here.

Hmm... this is beginning to sound like marketing spiel now. Nuff said.

Foodaholics has quite a tempting range of cakes and desserts that are quite unlike those found in bakeries and I'll say they're better than most starred hotels too. With home deliveries all over the Delhi/NCR region and the high levels of customisation built into the product, I'll say Kishi has a winner in Foodaholics Cakes and Desserts.

You can reach Kishi at kishi@foodaholics.in or at +91 . 98731 64293.

By the Chef at Large – Sid Khullar (www.chefatlarge.in)

Restaurant Reviews!

1. Authentic blend of South Asian Cuisine: Kayalan



The Friedman bloke is right, the world is indeed getting flatter and undoubtedly much more delicious. With the Malaysian-born and Delhi-bred Kula Naidu bringing food of the three cultures- South Indian, Cantonese and Malay, creating a "tri-fusion" style, the above fact is much evident. The newly set up home delivery, Kayalan at Neb Sarai in Saket is churning out delicious mix of some great Southeast Asian food for the taste buds of snooping people of Delhi.

Now, the young entrepreneur, Mr. Naidu has certainly put his degree in economics from Michigan to good use. With a very sleek and impressive website he makes a mark in the mind of the potential customer. He's devoted sumptuously to quality of delivery raising the aesthetic value of the food quite high. We don't find the usual tinfoil boxes with cardboard, turning the dish squelchy and smelly by the time it reaches us. The delivery boy who has the first and only face-to-face encounter with the customer is an all-black attired, wearing a bandana-like head scarf conveying the message of reliability and genuineness. He hands us the state-of the art hot-cases, confined in thermo-coal packs to retain the heat. The wood like boxes, neatly-packaged salads, labeled and lined with fresh banana-leaf leave you delighted if not dumbfounded. Ordering at Kayalan is an experience in itself. The order-takers are conversant, well versed and would even give the most apt descriptions of the meals while suggesting which one would suit your liking. They accept check payments as well.

One can choose from rice or noodle boxes. The beginners could pick from Kayalan chicken salad (Rs 200), it brings in a bowlful of shredded chicken with lettuce and veggies in a spicy sesame dressing; Chicken Satay (360 for eight sticks); Pandan Chicken (Rs 250 for six pieces) offering marinated chicken wrapped in fragrant pandan leaves; or Otak Otak (Rs 280 for four pieces) that brings in steamed fish in banana packets. Among the entrées, you can also go for Malaysian chilli chicken (Rs 320), a sumptuous blend of chicken slices in oriental spices. The portions are good for one.

The main course comes in the form of complete meals – either in a rice or noodle combo. The Chicken Redang (Rs 320) – Redang being the typical coconut-kaffir lime Malaysian and Indonesian fused dish that is traditionally served on the Hari Raya festival. It comes served with a kind of fried rice. The ones not very familiar with such cuisine could start with Char Kway Teow (Rs 400), flat rice noodles accompanied with chicken, prawns and crab done in Chinese style or the Malaysian Chilli Chicken (Rs 320), a sumptuous blend of chicken slices in oriental spices.

The menu is found to be bent more towards the non-vegetarians nonetheless the vegetarians could also feast on a rather lovely dish of chilli-basil eggplant or maybe the delectable Nyonya-style sayur lemak (veg curry in a light coconut broth). Most of the

ingredients are obtained locally like the pandanus leaves from south India however the more exquisite ones such as béchamel paste (chillies and shrimp) and various varieties of noodles are imported.

Kayalan is one of the much needed home delivery restaurants, Delhi's been waiting for. Not only does it set an example in terms of presentation and delivery but also none of its operations compromise on quality or authenticity.

Address: 56 Main Road, Neb Sarai, Sainik Farms, Near Saket, New Delhi

Phone Number: 9310219192

Overall Rating: 4/5

Food: 4/5

Service/Courtesy: 4/5

Presentation: 3.5/5

By Udit Joshi, Editor -  foodiebay.com

2. Oh Calcutta, Nehru Place, New Delhi

The urge to eat fish was strong last evening. Conveying my craving to Sameer produced the desired results. He immediately called and made reservations at "Oh Calcutta!". It took us 30 mins to reach Nehru Place, from Dwarka. Rajeev smirked in satisfaction to see that they had valet parking and he wouldn't have to peel off to park.

The spacious dining hall was a welcome sight compared with the cramped spaces which are the norm these days. The décor though distinctly male is neat and comforting. A book cupboard in the corner housed some leather bound volumes which added to the intellectual ambience of the restaurant. We were lead to a table and immediately attended to though the dining room was full of people. An aspect that struck me was that most of the people seemed very comfortable and the sound of conversations in spate ruled the air.

Rajeev and Sameer ordered the drinks - A Pina Colada for me and a Kahlua on ice for Navnita whereas Sameer and Rajeev opted for Beer. I began to scan the menu for starters. By the time I had gone through the first few pages I was drooling for the food described therein. In consultation with Navnita, I quickly ordered Kakra Chingri Bhapa – Crabmeat and Shrimps combined with mustard, chillies and coconut, wrapped in banana leaves and steamed to produce a soft, melt in the mouth cake in which one could savor the flavors of mustard and chillies without having to bear the heat of the two spices. Very subtle indeed!

Before this dish arrived we were served with our drinks The Pina Colada though a trifle too creamy was the perfect combination of white rum, coconut cream and pineapple juice. However it did not arrive with the dramatics that normally accompany this cocktail. No umbrellas or flowers just a sensible slice of pineapple hooked to the edge of the glass. Do I see a Virgo male behind the concept here? The Kahlua arrived in a shot glass accompanied by a Martini glass full of chipped ice. The concoction was delicious. The beer of course bears no description.

We had also ordered a plate of Chicken Pantheras as a starter. Spiced minced chicken had been wrapped in soft pancakes and crumb fried. Once again the taste of mustard and spices were subtle and thoroughly enjoyable against their crisp covering. The chutneys and sauces accompanying these starters were equally delicious. A sweet mint and tamarind chutney came along with the Kakra Chingri and a Kashundi with the Chicken pantheras. Besides, the waiter had also placed a bowl of Bodi Bhaja with some roasted tomato chutney. Mmmm very good!

Our main course consisted of large slices of Betki in a thick sauce of mustard and chilies. Since we had a choice of gravy we had chosen Shorsher Bhata over Kalia or Tomatoer Jhal. The Steamed Rice with Betki Shorsher Bata was simply the best I have ever tasted. The Kosha Mangsho, Curried Meat in a dry sauce of onions was however not the best I have tasted and I would go so far as to suggest it was a mistake. The whole wheat nan however was a healthy, happy choice and improved the taste of the mutton. I would have liked to see a little more fanfare in the presentation of the food which was homestyle and lacking in imagination. However all in all it was a dining experience I would love to repeat over and over again until I have exhausted the vast cuisine they have on offer.

The cost of the meal including the drinks, the service tax and service charge was Rs 3500.

Address: International Trade Tower, Nehru Place, New Delhi

Phone Number: 011 – 2646 4180

Overall Rating: 4/5

Food: 4/5

Service: 4/5

Ambience: 4/5

By the Chef at Large

www.chefatlarge.in



3. Taste of China, Connaught Place

Looking for a comfortable place for our evening meal, we came across Taste of China. Our main criteria was that it should be close to New Delhi Railway station and it did satisfy that condition.

Located on the first floor, just above Blues, Taste of China has a fairly large, sparsely done, low ceilinged dining room. For some reason, it has a noisy television with noisy pictures hung on the wall, not playing anything specific. The service is desi... rustic, non refined but friendly and efficient. The kind of place where you would pop in for a quick meal, definitely not take your out of town friends... that is if sophistication is what you're looking for. The ambience is closer to a college canteen than a restaurant. Most diners seemed to be people who've just left their workplaces and have dropped in for a beer and 'Drums of Heaven'. The music, if you can hear it, is low and local.

Surprisingly, Taste of China was 70% full on a Wednesday evening, which I believe speaks volumes.

The Taste of China menu is pleasantly full of variety and I was able to find dishes I liked without difficulty. Most menus don't really have me looking forward to the meal - all of them are quite predictable, right from the Sweet Corn Chicken Soup to the Shredded Lamb in Hot Garlic Sauce. Not so at Taste of China. Their menu has enough choices for even the most die hard foodie. I'm not saying the flavors are completely new or even that the food is authentic. No sir, I'm not. What I'm saying is that they have so many combinations that you'll look forward to the meal. Having waxed eloquent on their menu, we didn't get too adventurous.

We ordered Sechuan Double Fried Pork, Mongolian Lamb, Braised Mushroom Bamboo Shoots & Greens, Vegetable Sweet and Sour, Vegetables with Almonds, Vegetable Rice and Vegetable Noodles. As you may have guessed, my friends were vegetarians. We ended up with another portion of Vegetable Noodles and 3 bottles of beer.

The food was nice. The double fried pork was especially good and the Vegetables with Almonds were quite well done with the vegetables done just crunchy. Nothing exceeded our expectations and at the same time, nothing went below par either. What perhaps may have exceeded our expectations was finding the food to be quite palatable, without a single exception. I *will* be going there again when next in that part of town.

The other surprise was our bill - a scant INR 1,600! Though they're not probably vying for the same customers, I'd say places like Mandarin Trail need to watch out. While Taste of China doesn't hold a candle to the finesse (food and service) at Mandarin Trail, they definitely do provide a very affordable alternative.

Address: N18, Connaught Circus, Opposite Scindia House, Connaught Place, New Delhi

Phone Number: 011 – 4152 3489

Overall Rating: 3/5

Food: 3/5

Service: 2.5/5

Ambience: 3/5

By the Chef at Large

www.chefatlarge.in



Indian Cuisine: A Heaven's delight for foodies...

Are you in Love with Indian food or are you just curious about it? This is the place to be no matter what your degree of interest or experience is. Keep glued to our blog as we explore the delectable depths of Indian cuisines and the best places where you could find it!

Several lifetimes are not enough to discover and sample all the delights of Indian cuisine! One literally has thousands of options to choose from. Such exquisite delicacies are the result of thousands of years of evolution and assimilation. Like all Indian things, its food factory too has absorbed various influences from other cultures. However, with time it has managed to make them uniquely its own. It is exotic, sometimes complex, nevertheless always delicious!

A trip in the past and we'd see that, The Aryans concentrated on the fine aspects of food and to understand its essence and how it contributed to the development of mind, body and spirit. After their period the cuisine underwent many influences. These were a result of the several conquests and trade relations from other countries and cultures. Mongolians brought to India their hot cooking pot. Yet, the most notable culinary influence in India was the influence of Persian rulers who established the Mughal Rule in India. They introduced their love for elegant dining and rich food with dry fruit and nuts. The neighboring Chinese introduced stir fries to Indian along with adding the sweet taste to food. Their influence is mostly felt in Beneras, Gujarat and Bengal. The 17th and the 18th centuries brought the Portuguese to the Indian shores and along with them came the tomato, chilli, and potato, which are staple components of today's Indian cuisine. It left its mark on parts of India in the form of dishes like the world-renowned Vindaloo and Xacuti. With the coming of the British, ketchup and tea got popular in India. British Food did not become popular in India and the British while in India mainly described Indian food as pungent, chili spiked curries and rice and rotis that were a food for uncivilized pagans but ironically today Indian food forms a staple diet of British food.



Keeping in mind its diversity the Indian food culture is unique in its traditions and very importantly, its food. The fact is that food from one region may actually be totally alien to a person from another region!! The common thread that runs through most Indian food nonetheless, is the use of numerous spices to create aroma and flavor.

We the Indians, take our food very seriously. Cooking is considered to be an art which keeps passing down from one generation to another, one family to another. Till recent past and maybe still in a lot of rural Indian homes, meals are made from scratch with fresh ingredients. Families buy their favorite wheat, wash it, dry it in the sun and then take it in to a flourmill to have it grounded into flour the way they like it, as opposed to buying flour from a store. Sadly, this diligent practice is changing in bigger cities where people have increasingly hectic lives and are contented to use ready-to-eat, pre-made ingredients and

majorly eat outside. With this the need of making a right selection has also arisen. Where to eat, what to eat and at what cost are the questions which boggle the minds of the conscious urban customers. The mushroom growth of restaurants all around has made the choice making all the more complicated.

The flyers and ads in the papers, the bill boards here and there only create a sense of skepticism. The restaurants get noticed and subsequently popular largely by word of mouth, the lack of which could spoil a special evening. At times one wished if there was some magic lamp which could lay all the options out in the open. Well if not the ancient lamp, in our age we could certainly use the internet. And our website 'Foodiebay.com' aims just to help its visitors make an informed decision, keeping in mind their tastes, pockets and convenience. I guess with foodiebay.com around all would celebrate food, the way our forefathers did in the past.

By Udit Joshi, Editor - 

Say ssssSushi

What's the fuss all about?



Over the past year or so, we have all come across features, articles, stories, reviews et al in every possible newspaper and magazine we subscribe to, or that are scattered innocuously all across our office cafeteria. At some point, we've all been fed theories about how the Japanese food and especially Sushi is making inroads deep into Indian palate scene.

Just what is this noise all about? What exactly IS Sushi and why did any other cuisine not find as much newsprint paper available to it, as Sushi? Let me attempt to answer this for you.



Sushi, by its literal definition, means "Its Sour"

In ancient times, Japanese used to preserve fish in fermented rice. The fermentation allowed for preserving the texture and aroma of fish for longer durations and also lent a sour flavor to the Rice. This is what basically started off as Sushi. Over the centuries, however, it has undergone total transformation, and has evolved in a completely distinct class of cuisine by itself. Sushi is no longer a synonym for raw fish, in any language of the world. For the uninitiated, Sashimi is Raw Fish.

Sushi is a culinary delight prepared with a vast choice of ingredients, very few of them being raw. Two of the most basic, and most times necessary, ingredients that go into making Sushi are Sushi rice (produced by fermenting Japanese short grain rice with rice wine vinegar) and Nori Sheet (a nutrient rich semi-toasted sheet of Japanese seaweed) Nori is also a vegetarian product.

Once Nori & Sushi Rice are spread on the bamboo mat (used for rolling sushi), you have a world of options open for you. You can choose from well cooked seafood like tiger prawns, boiled fish, cold cuts like chicken salami & ham to vegetarian options like pickled radish, steamed carrots & Japanese shitake mushrooms.

Of course, there are some raw fish varieties that can be used with Sushi, but for most popular and most widely eaten (California roll is a typical example) forms of Sushi worldwide, cooked meat is the way to go. You can't store raw fish in pre-packaged boxes for more than a few hours, so most supermarkets that sell Sushi-to-go have pre-cooked variety, which has a capacity to be stored for longer duration at storage temperature without drying the rice and Nori.

You do not need to worry about eating raw fish if you want to enjoy delectable Sushi, you don't even have to be a sea food lover to enjoy Sushi, simply choose from a vast range of other options, and join the Sushi revolution.

Say sssSushi to that!

Some fun facts about Sushi:

- New York is the world's second largest sushi market after Japan. Together they consume more than \$36,000,000 worth of seaweed alone.
- Approximately 80% of the world's blue fin tuna catch is used for sushi.
- According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Nearly half the fish consumed as food worldwide is raised on fish farms rather than caught in the wild.
- Chefs in some Japanese restaurants had to undergo nearly ten years of training before starting work in a restaurant. Nowadays they can begin work after only two years of training.
- Vinegar when added to sushi rice acts as an anti septic and sterilising agent. It facilitates the absorption of calcium, hastens recovery from fatigue and stimulates the appetite.
- Nigirizushi earliest patrons were the theatre goers who found the convenient bite size form best suited for a lunch box that could last a long day spent at the theatre.
- The highest price ever paid for a sushi grade Bluefin Tuna was \$173,600 for a 444 pound fish (\$319/lb) on January 5th , 2001 in Tokyo.

Some good Sushi Places in Delhi NCR:

Sushi King, DLF Cyber City, Gurgaon

FoodieBay Rating: 4/5

At the brand new Sushi King restaurant in DLF Cyber City Gurgaon, the menu features over 60 different types of Sushi, most of which are with totally cooked ingredients with a lot of vegetarian options. Of course, for the avid Sushi lover, there's the Salmon, Tuna & Yellowtail to choose from.

Konomi, The Trident, Gurgaon

FoodieBay Rating: 4/5

Sakura, Time Tower, Main MG Road, Gurgaon

FoodieBay Rating: 4/5

Sushiya, Ghitorni, MG Road, New Delhi (delivery only!)

FoodieBay Rating: 3.5/5

Sushi (by Moets), Defence Colony

FoodieBay Rating: 3/5