



Food Lovers Verdict

Go for... a really tasty, healthy and wholesome meal.

Don't go... if heavily spiced and non-vegetarian is all you eat.

Thumbs up: breads, Kakori Seekh Kabab, Elaneer Karaisal, Kothu Parota, and the place mat!

Needs work: a bit noisy at times; sofas could do with a bit more comfort.

method of cooking. Almost all of them sounded too tempting, so I let him provide a sampling. We started with the Inji Vadai, which was the usual *dal vada*, but fried to perfection; Kavipoo Varuval and Palkatti Varuval, which were cauliflower, and *paneer bhajia*; Tiranga Paneer Tikka, which comprised of grilled cubes of *paneer* which had been marinated in three kinds of *masalas*. But the most delicious of the starters was the Kakori Seekh Kabab, which was soft in texture and was deliciously spicy. To go with it, I had Kesar Shikanji (the menu has a selection of mocktails, including the Radha Rani Favourite, a blend of litchi, strawberry and cranberries) which was light and refreshing. Sattvic was really growing on me!

For my next course, I tasted two soups: Nallikai Charu, a kind of tangy *rasam* made with gooseberries, was novel; Makai ka Shorba was golden corn soup, with a piquant taste that gave the usual sweet corn soup an interesting twist. Palate suitably cleansed, I moved on to the main course, which comprised a range of curries. Of these, two were made with an unusual ingredient – tender coconut flesh: Mohana Kalavai made with *tur dal*

was akin to a kind of yellow *dal* while Elaneer Karaisal was creamy, light green and spicy. There was also Bukhare ki Dal, a bit like *dal makhni* but flavourful in a different way since there was no garlic or onion. Sabz-e-Khansama was a nod to global times:

traditional masala combined with exotic veggies like broccoli. Vazhipoo Murungai Kolambu was *sambar* made with banana flowers and drumsticks, a combination that was unusual, though the flavours combined superbly. With these I had Chilli Cheese Naan, which was very deceptive: it was soft to the first chew, but kicked such a punch later on due to the green chillies. I also had the Rajshahi Naan, a thin crusty bread made with saffron and cashew nuts. These were followed by Thakkali Kothu Parota, flaky parota minced and tossed with tomatoes which had a unique zing in the mouth, as well as the Kaikari Idiappam, which was string hoppers tossed and seasoned with spices.

To end, I tasted Elaneer Payasam, a watery dish generously flooded with finely minced pieces of tender coconut flesh, and the Nendrapazham Dosai, tiny *dosas* made with bananas and cashewnuts, which was not very sweet. For some reason, the *payasam* refreshed the mouth rather than coating it, which I thought was unusual.

As my meal ended, I felt an unusual lightness that is never the hallmark after such an elaborate meal. (That's the real purpose of Sattvic food, I was told). But my initial dilemma was back. Would it be blasphemy to say I had a sinful meal? And was indulgence a taboo? I hope not on both counts, for I intended to repeat it.

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Average spend for two – Rs. 850, excluding taxes

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