

Eating out

Tasty matters

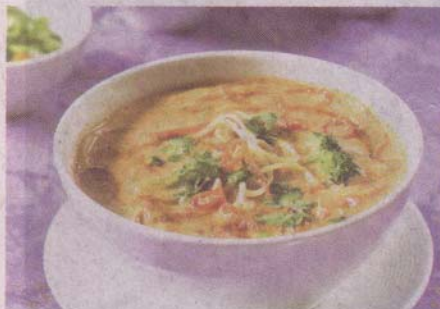
Take your pick from any of the Oriental and Indian signature dishes Naya offers and you are not likely to be disappointed

OSAMA JALALI

In today's world where many chefs go abroad to learn avant-garde cooking techniques, somehow old school chefs with strong Indian roots end up impressing me more. Recently I dined at the all-day dining restaurant Naya at Anya Gurgaon which is hardly a month old. Though the restaurant is new, it has a chef who has almost two decades of experience. Chef Anuj Kapoor has grown up in Old Delhi's Chawri Bazaar area and cherished its vegetarian delicacies throughout. Later he moved to Awadh to fine tune his culinary skills at IHM.

Naya was not exactly teeming with customers when I visited but I am sure with the kind of food they are offering, it will pick up soon. The menu is intelligently designed with signature dishes from Oriental and Indian cuisine. A couple of pastas, burgers and wraps add to the variety. As a habit I started with a soup and this time it was seafood and chicken laksa served with seven odd condiments. I had a spoon without the condiments and still found the flavours near perfection. Being from Old Delhi I always relate to a laksa or a khao suey with haleem as the condiments remind me of the master delicacy. A bowl of Caesar salad before the sizzling appetizers was refreshing. The use of capers and the herbed crouton made all the difference to the salad.

From the Indian section, the chef did a chicken tikka, shaami kabab and tandoori prawns for me. I loved the tikka for its flavour and tenderness but it was the shaami that really held its own. It had the typical Awadhi aroma and the texture of a kabab made in the bylanes of Aminabad.



ON A PROMISING NOTE Some dishes from the Naya menu

Chef Anuj gave me a reason to come back to Naya for that succulent kabab. While I was enjoying my starters, the chef completely changed the flavours and served me a papperdella with lamb ragout and I enjoyed it even more. Loved the way ragout had been prepared.

The only weak dish of the day was the Thai curry which was way too sweet for me. Impressed by the chef's Awadhi flavours I ordered

nalli gosht and sufiani biryani as my main course. Its salan was sticky as it should be and went really well with the mirch ki roti. After a long time I enjoyed my nalli gosht in a fine dining set up. I wanted to leave with the aftertaste of the salan but chef served me a brownie which was not that good and needed much more gooeyness.

Meal for two – Rs. 2500 plus taxes