

50 Years of Food Reimagined

What: Stone mortar and pestle

Made: With hand carved single blocks of sandstone, and steeped in authenticity

USP: Mixer—grinder—aroma-releaser rolled into one

Evokes: Fragrant memories of mum's kitchen (not a mod-con in sight)

Design: Flawless

Perception: Taken for granted as Ordinary

Reality: Anything But

ANYTHING
BUT ORDINARY™





EPICURE, ANYONE?



At The Park New Delhi, the award winning restaurant Fire's menu is predominantly earth friendly and organic (well before farmer-sourced became a fad), sourcing superlative ingredients from a growing list of trusted suppliers, artisans and farmers' collectives, all of whom practice sustainable techniques. These environmentally conscious foods are used to bring alive authentic recipes, forgotten flavours and contemporary Indian cuisine. In Chennai too, an association with the organic farmers' collective Nalla Keerai introduces local produce into our recipes, like the divine spearmint gelato that will delight you and keep your good karma flowing.

That's not to say our food culture is all about today. It's storied and authentic: our superlative haleem at Aish at The Park Hyderabad is made from a handwritten, masala-splattered recipe book belonging to a descendent of the Nizams. Then there is the blending of local flavours with global culinary trends that pops up in the most unexpected places. Where else can you taste, and immediately adore, fish fingers served with the local pickle narathanga urugai-flavoured tartare sauce, but our food-forward Chennai restaurants?

Food to us, must be an immersive experience. Witness the drama of the open kitchen at Zen at The Park Kolkata that centerstages the delicious food perfectly. Lounge lazily all day on the pool deck or party under the stars at Aqua at The Park Bangalore, where the salubrious climate is perfect for sipping our famous cocktails and nibbling on chorizo and cheese croquettes, or tandoori saffron prawns. Ultimately, we know that time will test every trend, but the quality of our ingredients, the integrity of processes in our kitchens, personal connects, and the surprises of creativity our chefs keep springing on our guests will always bring them back to eat at the Park Hotels.

1 Lotus at The Park Chennai, which was awarded by the Thai government for its exemplary 360 degree Thai experience 2 Re-inventing the ubiquitous classic: Minced Lamb and Coriander Kebab at The Park Hyderabad 3 Fire at The Park New Delhi, a pioneer of organic ingredients and recipes 4 Begum Mumtaz Khan, connoisseur of authentic Hyderabad cuisine and food consultant with The Park Hyderabad 5 Subtle Hyderabad gastronomy and spicy Andhra kicks at Aish at The Park Hyderabad, designed by Tarun Tahiliani 6 Aqua at The Park Bangalore with its modern menu and inventive cocktails 7 Churanwali Bhandi (spice-stuffed okra) from the organic menu at Fire, The Park New Delhi 8 The Chef's 'lean Chinese cuisine' and forgotten country-style recipes can be sampled at Bamboo Bay at the Park Navi Mumbai 9 Liquid Ravioli flavoured with carrot and passion fruit at The Park Chennai

EAT | *Pied* Piper



Sweet Potato and Quinoa Tart with Thyme and Micro Beet Greens

Ingredients:

- 250 ml Vegetable stock
- 100 g Organic quinoa
- 75 g Sweet potato, sliced fine
- 10 g Pearl shallots, chopped
- 15 g Garlic cloves, chopped
- 2 Eggs
- 35 g Ricotta cheese
- 15 g Dijon mustard, the grainy kind
- 10 g Thyme, chopped
- 15 ml Olive oil
- Home grown beetroot and sunflower microgreens to garnish
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 210°C.
2. Cook the organic quinoa in the vegetable broth according to the instructions on the packaging.
3. Meanwhile, in a small pan, sauté shallots and garlic over low heat with 1 tbsp of the olive oil.
4. In a large mixing bowl, whisk the eggs,

- mustard, salt and pepper until well combined. Add ricotta and the sautéed shallot and garlic mixture.
5. Add the chopped thyme and finally the quinoa, using a spatula.
6. Line an 8" tart pan with parchment paper.
7. Arrange the sweet potato slices in concentric circles at the bottom of the pan.
8. Gently spread the quinoa mixture over the potatoes, being careful not to displace the layering.
9. Bake the tart uncovered at 190°C for 40-45 minutes until it begins to acquire a golden brown crust or feels firm to the touch.
10. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5-10 minutes.
11. Carefully flip over the pan onto the serving plate, and then gently remove the pan.
12. Garnish with micro beet and sunflower greens.

This trendy tart is made of everything that's on the hottest food lists of top chefs the world over. Microgreens are haute, and sweet potato is super fashionable, nothing like its humbler, carb-y cousin. A classic like quinoa is paired with the newest super herbs to walk the ramp of food fashion. Unlike couture though, these ingredients aren't short-lived in their goodness: they are the manna of a far healthier future.

MEET | *Human* Interest



She writes about buying cows on Bangalore streets with the same ease as she does the virtues of New World wines. Her books have won awards, and her columns have conquered the hearts of India's reading, thinking public. **Shobha Narayan** writes about food, fashion, art and culture for the best international and Indian magazines. She writes about moving back to India from the West, and fitting in. Her writing is riveting because it observes lives, relationships and conversations in an innately human and quirky way.

- Dream Destination:** The Galapagos Islands
- Book on Bedside:** The Ministry of Utmost Happiness by Arundhati Roy
- Design to Die for:** Crystal light bulb by Lee Broom
- Song on Repeat:** Maruvarthai Pesathe by Sid Sriram
- Art du Jour:** Ranjani Shettar's Seven Ponds and a few Raindrops, showing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York
- Fashion Accessory:** Jahnvi Nandan's perfumes
- Food Fetish:** Cheese
- Idle Pleasure:** Bird watching
- Go-to Place for Inspiration:** The Ganga at Rishikesh; failing that, my balcony
- Aha Moment:** In the shower. When I wake up. Current 'aha' is that I love Indian saris
- 1 Reason I Love The Park:** Because it celebrates design at a global level.

SPOT | *Nature's* Nurturer



It's not everyday that you find a plant geneticist selling you your weekly veggies. **Sneh Yadav** bags not only the freshest seasonal produce for you, she also passes on her future-forward vision of responsible farming; of food and living that is pure, completely untouched by chemicals. Obsessed with biodiversity and sustainability, she runs the **Tijara Organic Farm** partnering with farmers and primary producers. It's not just an organic farm — it's a biodynamic farm. Solar and biogas energy, lunar cycles, ancient practices and eco-friendly modern technology all work to create a fertile and abundant space where indigenous, regional crops are grown and harvested the way nature intended. A few years ago, to address the big gap between customers (whom she calls 'supporters') and producers, Sneh began the Delhi Organic Farmers' Market, which is managed by the farmers and producers themselves. Here you'll find vegetables, fruit, lentils, rice and millets, dairy products, artisanal cheese, snacks and ready-to-eat food, all organic. So shop for your beets and bananas, and carry a little of Sneh's passion home with you. And pass it on.

The Delhi Organic Farmers' Market takes place at The Park New Delhi every Sunday. Call 011 23743000

EXPLORE

Chennai

Through the Eyes of..



For 17 years, **Chef Ashutosh Nerlekar** has been cooking in hotels located in exotic places, from St Lucia to Goa, Curacao to Tobago. Now ensconced as Executive Chef at The Park Chennai, he brings some of that tropical dash to curating global/local fare for our guests.

As the holy month of Ramzan closes in, the foodie in me really gets excited. Every year, The Park Hotels curate an 'Anything but Ordinary' evening during Ramzan. An indigenous culinary tour led by The Park's Executive Chefs gives guests in Chennai, Hyderabad, Delhi and Bangalore a taste of the heavenly and authentic food served by legendary local eateries. The Executive Chefs weave in a brief history of Ramzan, and insights on the cuisines prepared especially during Iftar and Sehri, satiating the guests' hunger for food, stories and culture.

"This year, in Chennai we curated a walk around Triplicane, rich with history and delicious fast-breaking local street cuisine. Guests were ferried to the Big Mosque for evening prayers

and to sample the *nombu kanji*, a porridge of rice and dal, *biryani masala*, bits of meat, chopped ginger, green chillies and tomato. We then moved on to Firdaus Café, which sells about 250-300 chicken *shawarmas*, and about 50 kilos of beef skewers every day. The next stop was Pista House (a franchise of the Hyderabad original) for their silken *haleem*. The tour then moved to Charminar Biryani, a simple shop where 120 kilos of *mutton biryani*, cooked and served from large handis vanish in 3 hours flat! For dessert, we headed to the 90-year old Baasha Halwawala for the *dum ka roat halwa*. We ended with *badam paal* or hot, sweet almond milk, a traditional Chennai drink to wash down the hearty fare. For many, it was an experience of a lifetime."

Rewind

Travelling Back in Time...



International pop musician Ricky Martin cooking up a storm with children from the Sabera Foundation at The Park Kolkata

He brought Latin pop onto the world stage. He made you shake your bonbon and live the *vida loca*. But to the orphaned children of the Sabera Foundation in Kolkata, this poster boy of the 90s can't-stop-dancing hits is a veritable angel of charity. Through that decade, we grew used to seeing him flit in and out of The Park Kolkata in various disguises to avoid being mobbed by delirious fans, so he could carry out his humanitarian work. Beside financial aid, other fun activities like cooking in our kitchens with the kids from the orphanage were on this superstar's agenda.

Rewind is a cheeky wink at the years of party-creatures, rule-makers and trend-setters that have shimmied through our doors. Everything else changes, but The Park has, and always will be host to the world's most unique people. Here we feature photographs and stories that capture some memorable times.

SCOOP

Cuisine by Design

New ideas, fresh concepts, exciting design conversations: India Design ID is both a showcase and catalyst of all these. For 6 years, The Park Hotels have been Strategic Design Partners for this definitive design event where international icons mingle with local designers, and signature collections in architecture, interiors and décor are exhibited for everyone to see.

This year, The Park Hotels and Design Temple conflated their complementary design sensibilities to create the pop-up restaurant, India Luxe Café at India Design ID. Both brands offer a sensory experience in their own spheres, and the Café emerged as a delicious confluence of design and global cuisine. It reflected perfectly the state of mind of the 'new Indian' — discerning, well travelled — an amalgamation of diverse influences and cultures. India Luxe Café became a talking point as well as a place where conversations about cutting edge design ripened over a blissful blend of Oriental and Italian food, of quick nibbles and fulsome platters.

