



Bombay Lures Top International Chefs



Reflecting the cultural *mélange* that is Bombay, comes a salacious spread with flavours from all across the globe, served by top brass in the international culinary dome. Chefs, Sergio Millet Corbera, John Paul Carmona, Stefan Czapalay, Vivek Singh, Alain Coumont, Kobi Mizrahi and Adam D'Sylva displayed gastronomic genius when they touched upon our shores... which *UpperCrust* was delighted to experience. Take a look at what they left behind, as we present to you the 'seven-course' International Chef Special

Text: **Lyle Michael** Photographs: **Farzana Contractor, Prashant Jadhav**



Chef Vivek Singh

Executive Chef and CEO,
Cinnamon Club, UK

There is very little London's acclaimed Indian chef has not accomplished on the culinary front. Best in Britain since its establishment in 2001 would define the success that *Cinnamon Club (CC)* has sustained under the seasoned hands of Chef Vivek Singh, who began as Director and Head Chef, going on to emerge as owner, setting up several establishments under the *Cinnamon* umbrella. With his flair for haute Indian cuisine, Chef Vivek serves up a mean spread which interestingly tempts the European diner more than the Indian one.

Growing up in Calcutta with a passion and skill for cooking, the young chef knew what he wanted to do, taking a step in the desired direction with a degree from *IHM Delhi* in 1993 followed by a specialisation in Indian cooking from the *Kitchen School of Oberoi*. The sky was the limit; literally, as Chef Vivek went on to serve 2000 meals a day for various airlines as Kitchen Executive for Bombay and Delhi's flight kitchens from 1995. Though he had a stable grounding in French-European and Oriental cooking while in Delhi, the Punjabi boy knew where his heart belonged and he spent the next six



years within the Indian kitchens of some of the finest establishments: The Oberoi Grand, Calcutta called him back home while the luxurious Oberoi Rajvilas, Jaipur took him northward. Fate was waiting to knock at the right time and 2000 provided a plum opportunity to set up an Indian restaurant in London; to be grand above all else. Thus began the upward journey of *CC*, with its historical feel from the transformation of the Westminster Library, and its vibrant energy and constant evolution. So you have

a mouth-watering blend of Indian spices and techniques with fresh British produce bursting forth in say, a Scottish Halibut in *tandoori* marinade and Bengali *do pyaza* with lemon rice or Oisin red deer in Raj pickling sauce. The crowd loved it; leading to several cookbooks inclusive of the *Cinnamon Club Cookbook* (2003) and *Gourmand* (2006) award-winning *Cinnamon Club Seafood Book*, co-authored with OBE Iqbal Wahhab – the man who offered Chef Vivek that plum opportunity in 2000 – and restaurants,

Cinnamon Kitchen with bar, *Anise* (2008) followed by *Cinnamon Sobo* (2012).

With the abundance that *CC* puts forth – master classes, a progressive menu with wines and desserts galore, and more treasured cookbooks to come – free time is a luxury for Chef Vivek. Which is why he makes the most of it; cooking with his wife, playing with his son and daughter, relaxing with a good book and indulging in a nice Japanese meal. Perhaps even a creamy *kulfi*; with a twist, undoubtedly!



Grilled Aubergine with Peanut, Tamarind and Chilli

- 4 firm Japanese or Bengali aubergines, cut into halves, lengthways
- 1 tbsp vegetable or corn oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
- 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
- 1/4 tsp carom seeds
- 1/4 tsp black onion seeds
- 1/4 tsp fennel seeds

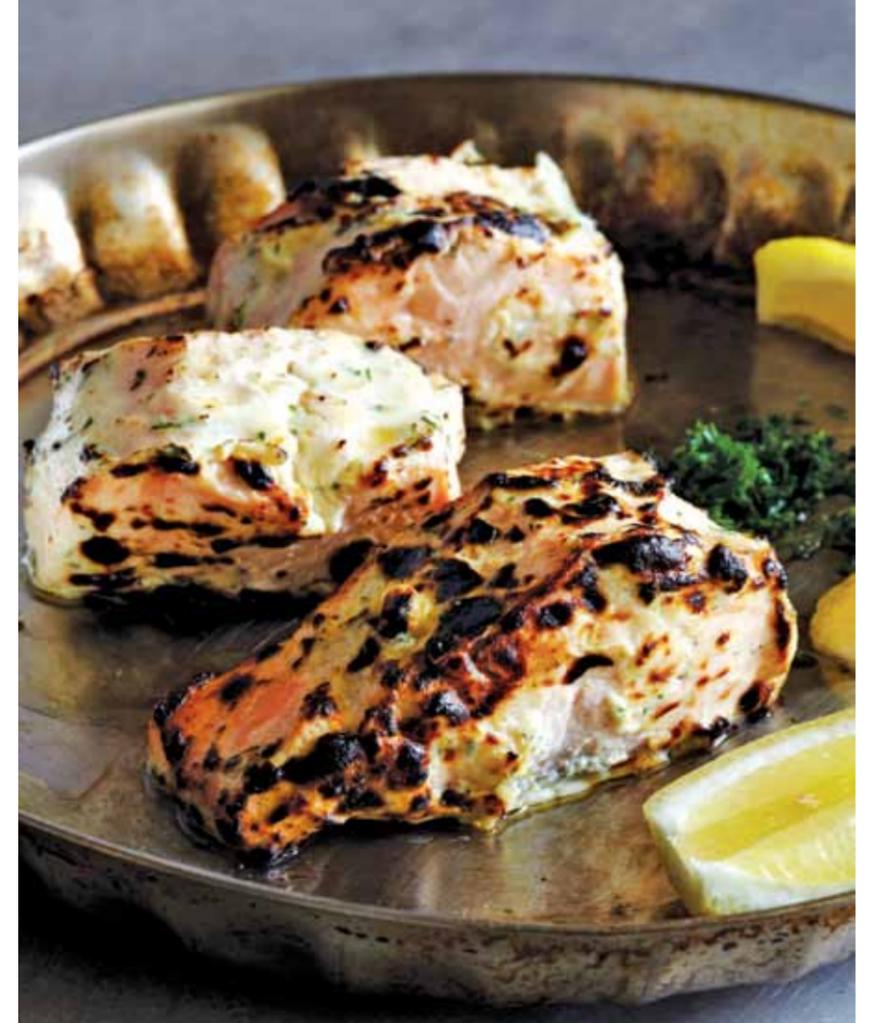
For the tamarind smear:

- 6 tbsp tamarind pulp
- pinch of ground red chilli
- 2 tbsp jaggery or molasses
- 1/2 cup of water

For the spice crust:

- 50 g peanut, roasted or fried, cooled and coarsely crushed
- 1 tbsp white sesame seeds, lightly roasted
- 5 g jaggery
- 1 tsp garlic (or dried granules), chopped, fried crisp
- 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
- 1/2 tsp fenugreek leaves, dried, crushed
- 1 tsp *chaat masala*

Score and marinate the aubergine with oil, salt, red chilli powder, turmeric, carom seeds, onion seeds, fennel seeds and keep aside for 3-4 minutes. In the meanwhile, combine all the ingredients for the spice crust to obtain a spicy nut mix. Check seasoning and keep aside. Place the flat side of the aubergine on a hot grill/pan and sear for 2 minutes. Repeat the same on the other side by brushing it with butter/oil and cooking for about 3 minutes to cook thoroughly. Alternatively you could do this on a very hot grill or barbecue too. Place them on a plate with the flat side facing upwards. Apply a smear of tamarind *chutney* on the aubergines, sprinkle spicy peanut crust and serve hot with green salad.



Grilled Salmon with Dill and Mustard, Green Pea Relish

4 salmon fillets (about 150 g each), cut into 75 g chunks

For the first marinade:

- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp salt
- juice of 1/2 a lemon

For the second marinade:

- 2.5 cm piece of fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 2 green chillies, finely chopped
- 50 g Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp horseradish, grated
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 tsp dill, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh coriander leaves and stalks, chopped
- 1 tsp white pepper, finely ground
- 1/2 tsp sugar

Wash and pat dry the salmon fillets.

For the first marinade:

Mix together all the ingredients and then rub them all over the salmon fillets, and leave to marinate for 15 minutes.

For the second marinade:

Mix together all the ingredients, then rub them over the salmon and leave to marinate for an additional 15 minutes. Use long metal skewers to skewer the fish chunks and place, skin side down, on a baking tray. Roast the salmon in an oven pre-heated to 200° C for 7 minutes, then place under a hot grill for 2 minutes. Alternatively, place the fish skin side down, on a hot barbecue and cook for 10-12 minutes, turning them over every 3-4 minutes, until the skins are crisp and well-coloured. Serve with lemon wedges and *chutneys* of your choice.

Welsh Lamb Saddle with Saffron Sauce

- 2 lamb saddles, cleaned and trimmed
- 1 tbsp vegetable or corn oil

For the marinade:

- 2 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tbsp vegetable or corn oil
- 1 tsp salt
- juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tbsp Greek yogurt
- 1/2 tsp *garam masala*

For the *masala* mash:

- 200 g potatoes, peeled, washed and diced
- 1 gm turmeric powder
- 1 gm salt
- 1 tsp *kadhai masala*
- 1 tsp fresh coriander, chopped
- 1 tsp cold butter

For the sauce:

- 1 tbsp oil
- 400 g tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 large brown onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- A few whole *garam masalas*
- 2 tsp mild red chilli powder
- 2 cups chicken stock or water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp *garam masala*
- 1 tbsp cold butter
- 2 tbsp single cream
- small pinch of saffron strands

For the spiced cashew nuts:

- 2 tbsp crushed cashew
- 1/2 tsp cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp dried garlic granules
- a pinch each of salt and sugar
- a few sheets of absorbent paper
- a pinch of *chaat masala*

Mix together the ingredients for the marinade and rub them over the lamb. Set aside for 30 minutes.

For the sauce:

Heat the oil in a large sauce pan. Add the whole spices and allow crackling, then mix the tomatoes, onions with ginger, garlic and chilli powder. Cook for 4-5 minutes, then add the stock and simmer a further 15 minutes. Puree in a blender and strain through a fine sieve into a clean pan. Bring back to a boil and simmer until the sauce thickens. Add the seasoning and *garam masala*, and then sprinkle the saffron and keep warm. Just before serving, stir in the cream and finally finish the sauce with cold butter.

In a large heavy-based frying pan, heat the oil and sear the lamb racks over a high heat until browned all over. Transfer to a roasting tray and place in an oven preheated to 200° C and roast for 6-8 minutes depending on the preferred doneness. Remove and leave to rest in a warm place for 5 minutes.

For the *masala* mash:

Boil the potatoes with the salt and the turmeric till soft. Drain them and mash them up with a potato masher. Heat the oil in a pan, add the chopped garlic and fry till golden brown. Now add in the mashed potatoes and the rest of the ingredients, mix well and hold hot.

For the *masala* cashew nuts:

Heat the oil in a pan over a low flame and add in the cumin seeds. When they crackle, add in the garlic granules and the cashew nuts. Fry till golden and add in the rest of the ingredients, toss quickly and transfer onto the absorbent paper to drain the excess oil.

Divide the sauce between for serving, spoon in the mash and place the lamb saddle on top.

Sprinkle with the *masala* cashew nuts to garnish. Serve immediately.



Shrikhand Cheesecake with Fennel and Coriander Strawberries

For the cheesecake:

- 250 g strained Greek yogurt (500 g yogurt that is left to drain overnight)
- 100 g *Mascarpone* cheese
- 100 ml double cream, whipped to soft peaks
- 50 g castor sugar
- 1/2 tsp ground cardamom

For the crumble base:

- 250 g plain white flour
- 250 g castor sugar
- 180 g ground almonds
- 250 g cold salted butter, diced

For the fennel and coriander-flavoured strawberries:

- 250 g strawberries, hulled and some sliced and some left whole (or use any other berries in season)
- grated zest and juice of half a lime
- 2 mint leaves, finely shredded
- 1 tsp fennel seeds, roasted and crushed
- 1 tsp coriander seeds, roasted and crushed

- a pinch of salt
- a pinch of sugar

For the crumble base:

Mix together flour, sugar and ground almonds, then rub in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Spread on a baking tray lined with greaseproof paper and bake in an oven pre-heated to 180° C for 10-12 minutes, until golden brown. Remove from the pan and leave to cool, then use your fingertips to break into fine crumbs.

For the cheesecake:

Gently fold together all the ingredients and chill for 20 minutes.

To assemble the cheesecake, press a layer of the crumble about 1.5 cm thick in a 1 cm spring form cake tin. Add the cheesecake mixture, smooth the surface and place in the fridge to chill for at least 2 hours.

Meanwhile, prepare the strawberries. Put the strawberries in a non-metallic bowl, add the remaining ingredients and toss gently. Leave to macerate for 10-15 minutes.

Slice or scoop the cheesecake onto serving plates and serve with the strawberries dotted around. You could serve it with strawberry caramel *tuile*, like we do at our restaurants.

