Indian Summer Diwali Celebration To Benefit Curry Tree Project

Tuesday 23 September, 2014

Brighton's award-winning Indian Summer restaurant is to host a Diwali celebration on Brighton on Sunday 2nd November, with a percentage of proceeds being donated to the Curry Tree charitable project.

There will be a sitar player from 7pm, with annual Diwali quiz with prizes, vivid rangoli patterned paintings, beautifully dressed staff and a special Diwali menu alongside the usual Indian Summer a la carte offerings. The Diwali menu comprises a trio of street snacks as starters are: Paneer Aloo Chat, Bhand Gobhi Ke Ghughare and Tilwale Makaiwada, with a Royal indian Summer Thali main course followed by a Trio of Desserts showcasing Indian sweetmeats and ice cream.

The 3-couse menu costs £25.95, of which £2 will be donated to Curry Tree, which raises funds to help alleviate the plight of the malnourished, starving and poor of South East Asia and the world.

Diwali, often referred to as 'The Festival of Lights', is a five-day Hindu festival, which occurs on the fifteenth day of Kartika – the lunar month in the Hindu calendar which begins with the new moon in November.

During Diwali, houses are thoroughly cleaned and windows are opened to welcome Laksmi, Goddess of wealth, in to people's homes. The festival is probably the largest South Asian festival on the calendar and represents to Hindus roughly to what Christmas and New Year does to Christians.

The annual festivities have become something of an institution at the Brighton restaurant and the evening usually sells out well in advance.

Whereas food in Christian churches is largely confined to mince pies and a glass of sherry at Christmas or hot cross bun or seminal cake at Easter, year round communal dining in temples is central to Hindus. Some temples sell food farmed on their own land, whilst others provide free meals cooked by volunteers. Hindu practices vary widely within its three main sects - Vishnavs, Shivaites, and Shaktas. Temples in Nepal even serve pork.

Blessed foods, usually dried fruits, nuts and sweets including Jaggery (sweet rock) are eaten according to specific Hindu sects' religious customs and practices.

In North India most Vaishnav sects prefer nuts, dried fruits, Laddoos (sweet snacks) and Payasam (sweeten rice). Temples dedicated for Lord Shiva in Eastern India, typically have Ganja or Bhang (cannabis) laced dishes, whereas temples dedicated to goddess Shakti (Kali or Durga) may prepare the meat from sacrificial goat and buffalo.

Indian Summer is one of four restaurants chosen to represent Brighton in this year's Curry Capital of Britain Awards alongside Chilli Pickle, Indian Summer, Bombay and Ashoka.

Curry lovers can vote for their favourite city by email to votecity@fedrest.com.

Polling closes 26th September. The winner will be announced following National Curry Week on 20th October. www.nationalcurryweek.co.uk

Editors' Notes: Menus, recipes and hi res photos available.

Widely accepted as being in the vanguard of the new wave of modern Indian restaurants, Indian Summer has been pioneering authentic regional food from the sub continent for over a decade. The Brighton favourite is listed in the 'Top 100' restaurants in the UK by the Cobra Good Curry Guide. The consistency of Indian Summer's high culinary standards has been recognised with the award of a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence. It is has also been named among the best Indian restaurants in the country, alongside London Michelin-starred eateries in the Best in Britain Awards (BIBA), organised by the Federation of Specialist Restaurants and judged by Mood Food magazine. Other recent awards: Brighton & Hove Food Awards, AA Rosette, Harden's Food Guide, Open table Best Restaurant.

Vegetarian, vegan and gluten free versions are available on request

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Indian Summer was founded in 2001 by Minesh Agnihotri (who gave up a career making medical prosthetics) and Byron Swales (whose family was forced to flee Burma in a wooden plane), with a mission to bring authentic cooking to Brighton and recruited Indian Head Chef Parth Shukla, who heads a team who have worked in many of India's leading restaurants including Bukhara, Delhi, Delhi and Karvalli, Bangalore. Chef Shukla has assembled a brigade of talented chefs drawn from across the regions to offer truly pan-Indian fine dining.

The Curry Tree is a charitable fund which raises money for specified causes and onward transmission of funds raised to appropriate charities and NGOs helping alleviate the plight of the malnourished, starving and poor of South East Asia and the world. . Founded by Federation of Specialist Restaurants chairman Peter Grove, trustees include TV chef Cyrus Todiwala OBE, award-winning cookery writer Mridula Baljekar and leading restaurateurs. Recent beneficiaries have included Restaurants Against Hunger and Oxfam. **www.thecurrytree.com**

Outside Catering: For weddings, parties, music festivals and intimate dinner parties, with prix fixé and original menus created to specific requirements.

Cookery Classes: 2 to 3 hour workshops in the comfort of your own kitchen; £120 for 3 courses four up to 4 people including all ingredients and spices.

Private Hire: For cocktail receptions, dinner and buffets.

Opening Times: Monday 6pm – 10.30pm; Tuesday to Saturday 12 noon – 3pm, 6pm – 10.30pm; Sunday 12.30pm – 3pm, 6pm – 10pm.

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