Culture, cuisine and conviviality

Posted on
Exterior of Agra

Enjoy an amalgam of Mughul culture, North Indian cuisine and British conviviality all in one location, at Agra and pub Manchester.

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In India Agra is known as the city of the iconic Taj Mahal, but here in Sri Lanka, the name has another meaning: a popular North Indian restaurant offering a unique concept found nowhere else in Colombo.

Situated next door to the Royal College Sports Complex, Agra is understated at first glance but grand once inside. The heavy-looking doors open up to a dim restaurant with kaleidoscopic walls, rich décor and delicious food. Embracing the majesty of the Mughul Empire, Agra strives to give its clientele an authentic experience, with interior, ambience and cuisine all playing their parts.

The Mughul Empire that ruled most of Northern India from the 16th to the 19th century influenced the lifestyle of the natives in many ways. Mughul architecture and culture made itself unique by creating beauty with ponds, palanquins, music

and entertainment. This is the exact ambience you'll find at Agra.

The tailormade palanquins that operate as dining areas at Agra are subtly lit yet customers are still able to see each other, and the delicious food they indulge in. The restaurant as a whole, in fact, speaks of space, comfort and grandeur. It also boasts two private rooms for intimate dinners, and hosts parties and other occasions.

With chefs from India, and a Sri Lankan staff to assist, Agra offers the best North Indian food.The extensive halal menu includes salads, soups, biriyani, naan, roti and succulent kebabs. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian biriyanis are available with options such as chicken tikka, seafood and mutton.

The intimate dining area

For dessert toothsome delicacies such as gulab jamun – dumplings made from reduced milk with cardamom served warm in a pool of rose-flavoured syrup – are offered. Also available is kulfi – traditional Indian ice cream – rasmalai and many more sweet dishes that will have you coming back again and again.

Sweet or savoury, it's all beautifully presented while soothing oriental music plays throughout the night evoking the regal feel of the Mughal period. The wine list features a collection from countries including France, Argentina, Italy, South Africa and Chile, complementing the dishes and appealing to a wide range of palates.

Another special aspect of the restaurant is The Manchester, its onsite pub. Loved by locals, the pub has a loyal following from people in their twenties, thirties, fourties and fifties. Its amiable atmosphere is ideal for an informal, easygoing evening.

With an impressive range of imported spirits, tempting cocktails and food from the restaurant served alongside the bar snacks, Manchester stays true to itself and unboastful of its repute. A busy events calendar ensures that there's always something going on, from open mic nights and quiz evenings to live music. Occasionally you'll find a DJ spinning tunes too.

With its sofas and outdoor smoking area, The Manchester is a popular spot for the after-work crowd. They screen football matches and other sports events, apt given the location next to the Royal College Sports Complex. With the manager always around, at Manchester the atmosphere is safe and secure.

Agra and The Manchester are very different propositions – one historical and elegant, the other laidback and up-to-the-minute. However, they combine to offer a unique experience that is both traditonally Eastern yet modern and Western.

Agra and The Manchester
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