The Crab Factory

Posted on

The spicy and aromatic Tandoori Crab served with naan

Spicy flavours enhanced by taste bud tingling aromas, the succulent crab dishes served at the Crab Factory, Taj Samudra will definitely make you crave for more!

Words Udeshi Amarasinghe
Photographs Menaka Aravinda and Vishwathan Tharmakulasingham

The timber walled interior has a warm and welcoming feel. Your attention is drawn to the bright crab paintings on the wall, after all it is the crabs that you have come to relish and there is much to anticipate. The menu is extensive and the unique aspect of this restaurant is that it offers authentic Indian preparations of Sri Lankan Crab.

All crabs are fresh and not frozen, and are sourced mainly from Negombo. The crabs are prepared using various cooking methods and are either made into a curry, grilled, braised, fried or baked to create mouth-watering dishes. Freshly ground spices, herbs and other ingredients are combined in different proportions to give diverse authentic Asian flavours.

The appetizers set the mood for the meal, with crisp salads and crunchy refreshing bites. The Mud Crab cakes, which are flavoursome crab meat coated in fresh coconut and bread crumbs served with a curry dip, as well as the delicious Crab Cocktail, a salad mix of avocado, soft egg, olives, corn and steamed crab meat flakes are two of the popular appetizers on offer. There are many more to select from with Indian varieties such as crab pakoras and crab tikkies. Following appetizers the diner can either opt for a warm steaming soup or dive straight into the main course.

Mud crabs and lagoon crabs are available on the menu for selection for the main course. Once the size of the crab is determined, the method of preparation can be selected.

The timber walled interior of the restaurant provides a laid-back setting

The Indian variations of crab include Kerala Crab Curry as well as Tandoori Crab, which are some of the favourites. Indian cuisine being a speciality at the Taj Samudra, the crabs are prepared using authentic ingredients and methods. There are other varieties such as the Chettinad and Goa Crab dishes as well. In terms of the Tandoori Crab dish, the crab is first marinated in spicy Indian herbs and then cooked to perfection in the tandoori oven.

All crabs are served as the full crab unless requested separated. The dishes are served with roast paan, pol sambol and kiri hodhi but the diner can request for any other item they require, the staff at the Crab Factory are only too happy to oblige. Garlic naan or plain naan, garlic bread or string hoppers and rice are options too, but many diners prefer to soak the spicy gravy of the crab in traditionally baked bread, which are freshly made at the hotel. The Indian dishes are served with a cooling mint chutney.

Sri Lankan favourites such as the Sri Lankan Crab Curry with Murunga leaves as well as Black Pepper Coconut Crab are available. The spicy aromas from these freshly made curries wafted through the air making the experience a multi sensory one. The Black Pepper Coconut Crab is also served with lime pickle, lunu miris, fresh coconut and fresh onions and green chillies.

Prawns, cuttlefish, lobster (seasonal) are also options if one wants to add a different dimension to the meal. If you wish to share, then the Crab Factory Signature Hot Pot would be ideal as it serves two. The crab is prepared with a blend of black pepper, Kashmir chilli, Sri Lankan spices, murunga leaves to a thick curry that is served with bread or rice and salad.There is great choice at the Crab Factory and if the menu does not suffice, then diners can request for their own recipe to be prepared. Soft crab cuisine and dishes prepared with meat crab are offered. Diners also have the option of requesting the crab to be served without the shell or the claws.

Complete the dining experience with some sweet desserts that include both Sri Lankan and Indian favourites such as Watalappan, Fruit Salad, Kulfi and Rasmalai.

The restaurant can accommodate 40 diners at a sitting and is open for both lunch and dinner. Outdoor seating is also available. The Crab Factory can be reserved for private parties as well.

Enjoy delicious crabs at the Crab Factory for an authentic experience and you are bound to come back for more.

Opening hours:
Lunch 12 – 3.30 pm daily
Dinner 7- 11 pm daily
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