



The Ashok Hotel unveils The Oudh experience for the health conscious

Oudh (pronounced: Awadh) is the central Indian region around Lucknow celebrated for its high standards of gastronomic etiquette, which are still preserved by its famous bawarchis (chefs)—mostly from the Qureshi clan—who continue to follow the traditional style of cooking handed down to them by their ancestors.

The Oudh brings to you the true essence of this magnificent cuisine. Its rich ingredients have been adjusted by chef Rajan Loomba to suit the palate of the health-conscious generation and cooking time and methods have been re-engineered for the health-conscious, without affecting the taste and flavour of the dishes –yet preserving the feel of the magnificent times of the Nawabs of Oudh.

What is unique about the menu of The Oudh is that it has been thoughtfully created with vegetarian, non-vegetarian, vegan (no animal products), eggless, and olive oil options to cater to the diverse sensibilities of an international clientele.

All dishes at the restaurants and banquets of The Ashok are now prepared in trans-fat free oils. The Ashok is arguably the first hotel in India to have been certified as having achieved this distinction.

The option of some stevia-based desserts is one more reason for diabetics and the health conscious to head for The Ashok. (Stevia is a 100% natural herbal substitute for sugar.) In its use of stevia and its concern for the health of its guests The Ashok might be the first ever.

The Menu Book, also perhaps for the first time in the world, has been created in all the languages of the United Nations, viz, French, Spanish, Russian and, by next week, Chinese—apart from English and Hindi—given that The Ashok is India's most favoured international conference venue.

The size and type of fonts used in the Menu Book is meant to be easy on the eye and to be read without glasses. Also for the first time in India, host and guest menus have been introduced. The latter discreetly avoids mentioning prices.

Even before its launch, the thoroughly researched Menu Book, with diacritical marks for accuracy, has become a collectors' item. From next week it will be sold in all six languages at a no-profit price of Rs.3,000 a copy.

The Oudh has private dining options.

Ladies often complain about the air conditioning, even in summer. Fresh silk stoles are available for their use on request.

Begin your gastronomic journey with the “Lucknowi Yakhni Shorba” or, if you are a vegetarian or vegan, with the ‘Dal Shorba’. The ‘Jhinga Mehrunnisa’ (prawns flavoured with saffron and roasted in a tandoor) and the ‘Tangri Malihabadi’ (tandoori grilled chicken legs) are kababs which The Oudh has the privilege of introducing to diners outside Lucknow.

The “Murgh Rehana” (barbecued chicken simmered in a gravy of cashew nut, tomato and cream), the “Hussainabadi Gosht” (mutton and potato roundels simmered in spicy masalas) and the “Teh Biryani” are intended to convince even the most fastidious food snobs of Lucknow . On order, the signature dishes of The Oudh can be prepared in the dum pukht style of cooking by Chef Nizamuddin Qureshi.

All restaurants of The Ashok take special care not only of vegetarians but, now, also of vegans, once again becoming the first in India to do so. There is a selection of vegetarian kababs and curries including “Tohfa-e-Noor” (tandoori grilled cottage cheese in a spicy marinade), “Dahi Ke Koftey” (curd balls simmered in a saffron flavoured gravy), “Paneer-e-Hazrat Mahal” (chutney stuffed cottage cheese in a gravy of tomatoes, cashew nuts and almonds) and the “Gulnar Biryani”.

The “Gilafi Kulcha”, “Sheermal” and multi-grain breads are the perfect accompaniments to a royal experience that can best be concluded with a truly heavenly “Muzafar” (vermicelli cooked in saffron with nuts). For the health conscious (and diabetics) the “Shahi Tukre” of The Oudh now come in multi-grain bread and stevia variants.

The Oudh is a truly royal experience.

FACTS : Lunch : Buffet from 1230 to 1500 hours
Dinner: A la carte from 1930 to 2330 hours
Private dining rooms and a well stocked bar.