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Cantonment's very own meeting place



The ambience at Koshy's is as great as its food.

FOR FINE dining, there were not many choices in the City in the early '60s. Vegetarians chose Woodlands and non-vegetarians went to Koshy's.

It was Koshy's that looked after the needs of the Hollywood film crew which was in the City to shoot for the film *Harry Black and the Tiger* those days at Bandipur. And the handsome Stewart Granger was all praises for the food that was served at Koshy's during his days in the City.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru would always ask for pomfret, stuffed with mushrooms, whenever he visited Koshy's.

Then Koshy's also had a jazz band, led by Fred Hitchcock, and couples danced to his music.

Today, Koshy's is the closest thing in the City to a literary salon. It is a popular hangout for lawyers, journalists, artists, theatrepersons, and students. The place, with its laidback ambience under a high ceiling with imposing wooden pillars and the friendly wait-staff is still the same.

It was common to see theatre thespians — young and old — visit Koshy's after their rehearsals, and relax for an hour or two. The speciality about this place is that one can order a cup of tea and linger over it for an hour, and yet not be hustled. If a meeting venue is required with an out of town visitor, Koshy's often seems to be the choice. There are quite a few food innovations, thanks to Prem Koshy, himself a theatre person and a foodie.

Many make a beeline to this place on Sunday mornings for the stew and appam, and Mr. Koshy comes up with new stuff such as Korean food. He is often seen at a table or two, busy playing the host.

The menu has a footnote: "All dishes are prepared fresh to order, requires 25 to 39 minutes' time." This clearly indicates there is no

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hurrying here. The Western style fare includes mutton/chicken broth (Rs. 32), its popular fish and chips (Rs. 120), and items such as roast chicken with stuffing and roast potato (Rs. 325). One could also tuck into sausages and eggs, pineapple steak and onion, or vegetable cutlet with salad.

There are 84 north Indian dishes to choose from. It includes tandoori chicken murg masala, chicken pakoda masala, palak mutton, kheema curry, shami kabab, sheek kabab, prawn curry... The rice and Indian breads include chicken biriyani, peshawari naan, tandoori paratha, bhatura and so on.

A favourite dish among the regulars is the Kerala special kozhi curry and rice (Rs. 110).

Koshy's has an "extra menu" to accommodate its new innovative delicacies. This list features gobi manchurian, baked special chicken, pork vindaloo, and paneer shashlik among others.

Vegetarians too have plenty of choice with favourites such as malai kofta, navratan korma, and cream palak to name a few.

The Chinese fare extends to many soups and a hundred main dishes, which include ham fried rice (Rs. 75), ginger fish (Rs. 115), and its own special chilli turkey (Rs. 130) besides sliced pork mushroom (Rs. 115) which is not often seen elsewhere.

You could, of course, order American chopsuey, egg fooyong, *et al.*

The desserts include ice creams, fruit melbas, caramel custard, and its popular hot chocolate fudge. In fact, groans are heard on occasions when it runs out of chocolate fudge.

For decades it has been a favourite haunt of Bangaloreans. And its affordable wholesome fare keeps people coming back for more.

Koshy's Bar and Restaurant, on St. Marks Road, can be contacted on 2213793.

ARUN BHATIA

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