



SAMSARA OPENING PARTY

Located to the far west of the London Borough of Sutton, the picturesque village of Cheam is a designated conservation area with an abundance of history. On 14th July Spice Times visited the village to attend the opening party of Samsara, a new fine dining Indian restaurant.

Situated on Cheam High Street, the building which Samsara (which means "reincarnation" in the classical Indian language of Sanskrit) occupies was once a very successful Italian eatery, Luna Rossa. After being purchased by four men who have had vast experience and great success in the South Asian restaurant industry however, the building has been born again and is ready to offer the discerning restaurant-goer in and around Surrey a gourmet taste of India.

Shaf Rahman, Shamin Miah, Riaz Ali and Manik Miah are four restaurateurs who have made names for themselves through their various establishments in the South-East and who have joined together their expertise to create Samsara. When I enquired about what made Cheam a desirable place in which to open a restaurant Shaf Rahman replied with an old adage; "Location, Location, Location!". Cheam is fast becoming a hub for fine dining and provides an ideal place for an upmarket Indian eatery, what with its pleasant, relaxed atmosphere and excellent transport links to Surrey and London.

What the owners are sure will set Samsara apart from other Indian restaurants and take-aways nearby is the unique, high end menu, which

will specialise in fish and seafood dishes. As we mentioned in the last issue of Spice Times, seafood is fast becoming a popular and important part of Anglo-Indian cuisine and the fusion of fish and spices is currently inspiring chefs around the world. The emphasis on seafood dishes gives an indication of Samsara's progressive and contemporary attitude towards Indian food and displays keen awareness of where Indian cuisine in Britain is heading. Delectable meals are created under the guidance of head-chef Abdul, who has over ten years experience in restaurants around the world and who has the quite rare ability to cook in a variety of Indian regional styles.

The décor similarly sets Samsara apart from traditional Indian restaurant fare and is understated and stylish, lending to a relaxing and comfortable yet contemporary ambience. The atmosphere of the opening night however was definitely one of jubilation, with people getting into the party spirit thanks to music from renowned percussionist Ameet Jugnauth and his band Taala, and entertainment from dancers who have starred in the hugely successful Bombay Dreams musical.

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