

If you're a fan of all things Indian then a visit to De Thali at Madinat Zayed is an absolute must – it's the most fun we've had with food in ages

Perched in the corner of Madinat Zayed's busy food court, De Thali invites customers inside before they have even stepped off the escalator. Rows of tables line the entrance and each chair has been decorated with a funny misspelled advertisement or sign from India.

Step inside and the fun continues as a stream of Bollywood classics from the 60s, 70s and 80s fill your ears and your eyes adjust to the explosion of colour. The décor is bright and inviting in shades of deep orange, copper and yellow. Tables are big, with private booths and cushioned sofas.

We begin with a delicious Meethi Lassi, flavoured with cardamom while our guest samples the restaurant's famous Aam Ka Lassi. Refreshed, we explore the menu.

We decide on the Jhinga Til Tinka or tempura prawns and Gol Gappa or puff pastry parcels to start. They quickly arrive and we're delighted to find that the prawns are huge and juicy coated in crunchy batter. We dip them in the delicious chutney and pop them whole into our mouths until they've quickly disappeared. Next we're told that the Gol Gappa should be consumed in one mouthful. Sadly we had to take two bites, but our dinner guest managed the whole mouthful – and what a mouthful it was! Filled with diced potatoes, onion and chickpeas and loaded with tamarind and cumin water, these pastry parcels are a delight.

Next it was on to the Pav Bhaji – our favourite dish of the whole meal. Consisting of baby potatoes, tomatoes and fresh green peas that have been cooked together with fresh herbs and ghee, this was simply delicious. It's served with a healthy helping of toasted mini buns and **MUST** be eaten with your fingers.

Amazed that we had room to continue we opted to try something from the Cabab Korner: the Lamb Seekh Kebab and the Murgh Angaarey. The lamb was so finely chopped that the kebab literally melted in the mouth while the spicy bread this was served with provided the perfect accompaniment. The Murgh Angaarey or spicy chicken tandoori was the real triumph though.

Feast of flavours

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Marinated for hours and hours and then slowly cooked, the chicken was impossibly tender and super firey; a real explosion of flavours.

During Ramadan De Thali are offering complimentary dates and traditional rose milk for the iftar opening, followed by Biryani Thali with Lucnowi or Hydrabadi lamb or chicken biryani, a side of raita yogurt, dal, pappad, roti and desserts for AED 23, excluding drinks.

Megan Wynes

What? De Thali

Where: Madinat Zayed

We say: You simply MUST try this place

Cost: Around AED 40 per head

Contact: 02 627 8644