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Many flavours of life at Vayu Retreat

Rishabh Raj | TIMESOFINDIA.COM
Updated : Apr 13, 2022, 10:50 IST



Nestled in Myora village of Nathuakhan, Uttarakhand (a 7-hour journey from Delhi), is a beautiful 5-room homestay called Vayu Retreat. Surrounded by lush greenery, [Vayu Retreat](#) is more of a passion project and a home away from home for two ambitious professionals- Aparupa Ganguly and Abhijit Ganguly, who are also true

foodies at heart and that's why a major portion of the property is dedicated to seasonal fruits and vegetables, which one gets to enjoy during the stay.



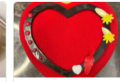
Aesthetically built with stones and seasoned wood, and detailed with handpicked bedspreads, cushions, lamps, chandeliers, and even crockeries, the retreat offers epitome of flavours and comfort with a pinch of personal touch. A slice of it was served to us within 20 minutes of arrival with a table full of Indian comfort food (Masala Gobhi, Cashew Paneer Gravy, Dal, Rice, and Roti), of which some of the ingredients were sourced from the plantation area of the retreat.



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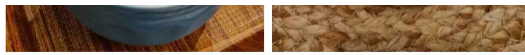
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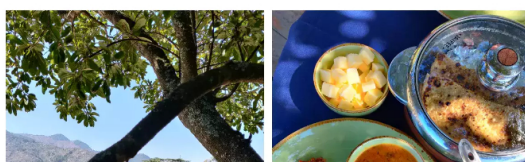


The magic man behind all the flavours at Vayu Retreat is Chef Gajendra Prasad, a self-taught localite, who has learnt the art of preparing 4-6 cuisines through YouTube in just 2 years and is now a pro at making Chinese and even Italian at a short notice too. We experienced a glimpse of it during our stay, when he prepared Chilli Paneer and Spring Onion Fried Rice in a jiffy, which we thoroughly enjoyed with Coke. If you are a dessert lover, then Gajendra and Aparupa will surely spoil you with options, as we were during the stay with Fruit Cream and Chocolate Pot de Creme. While the former had a blast of whipped cream along with diced fruits, the latter was prepared to perfection in ceramic mugs by Aparupa using heavy cream, cocoa, coffee powder, dark chocolate, rum, and vanilla extract. It was a melt-in-the-mouth treat with a velvety texture that helped us unwind the fatigue of travelling on the day of arrival.

Also Read: [Travelling to Uttarakhand? Don't miss trying these local foods](#)



On day 2, we stepped out to explore the beauty and bounty of nature and witness the Kashiyaekh stream that flows about a kilometre downhill from the property. And while the scrumptious and healthy breakfast of Masala Omelette and Vermicelli Poha were waiting for us at the dining table, we decided to stop for 'Char wali chai', at Pusha ji's house (a localite), who lives in a nearly 100-year-old mud house and her kitchen enjoys best of both worlds- gas stove and mud chulha. While the former is used for making regular food, the latter is used for making bhog and special delicacies on occasions and festivals.





Also Read: [Home away from home at the Birdcage](#)

For those who love to dine-in open, the retreat has a gazebo and a deck, which offers a clear view of the natural beauty and hills of Kumaon. We enjoyed the sunset here with a hot cup of masala tea along with mixed pakoras (which were crunchy outside and soft inside, thanks to the magic man Gajendra). And post the heavy dose of Chole Bhature, Kandalee Ka Saag and Mandua ki Roti as lunch on day 2, we had green tea with locally sourced honey in the gazebo, while embracing the calming sunset in the company of pahadi dogs, who are no less than the lifeline of the retreat. And the last meal of Aloo Paratha, Curd, and Pickle by the deck overseeing the lush green Kumaon valley was surely a treat to the senses.

With an à la carte menu spread in the categories of breakfast, lunch, non-veg, beverages, snacks, soups, and desserts, the retreat serves more than 150 varieties of delicacies that one can enjoy during the stay between 8.30 am-10.30 pm daily.



The 48 hours of brief visit to this enchanting and tranquil homestay surely managed to capture our heart and stomach (with simple yet delicious food) and filled us with a longing that we never had before – to take a sojourn beyond the luxury of high-end restaurants and hotels and enjoy the local flavours and meet self-made professionals and a humble set of people who live in harmony with nature. It often happens that when you venture off the beaten track, you are truly rewarded with memories that you will cherish for a lifetime!

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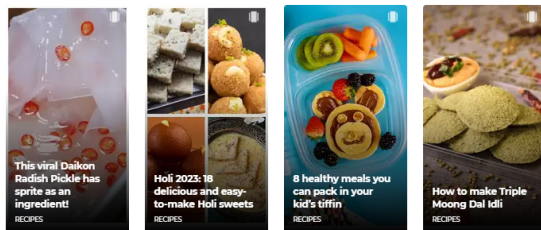
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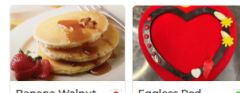
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Cashew Harvest Tour at Novotel Goa Resort & Spa

Smita Mishra | TIMESOFINDIA.COM
Apr 11, 2022, 18:14 IST

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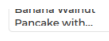
Summers are here and almost every other person is making a beeline for the hills. It is during these months that travelling to the first love of North Indians-Goa takes a backseat. We don't want to experience blazing heat and sun burns. But this time a work trip took me to Goa in April and I was so glad to rediscover it again-in its full

summer glory. I realized it was THE best time to visit the state as this is the time for cashew harvest. One can actually enjoy the complete harvest tour and take back the experience of a lifetime!




I stayed at Novotel Goa Resort & Spa which is a mere 10-minutes walk from the Candolim beach. This Bali-styled resort by the Accor group overlooks Candolim's lush paddy fields and hills. With a huge expanse, it has 121 rooms and suites surrounded by Asian style water bodies, lily ponds and a zen inspired tranquility zone. There are private cabanas around the vitality pool with an outdoor jacuzzi. The place is ideal for summers as the proximity with sea and lush greenery around keeps away the heat. There is a lot to do within the premises, so for those who plan to venture out in the evening-the days can be lazily spent here with good food and delectable drinks.







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


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Novotel Goa Resort & Spa is a food lover's paradise. The buffet breakfast has some unusual delicacies like Green Dhokla, the Goan Poi bread and Tender Coconut Milk Shake, along with an array of local, regional and international delicacies. The dinner and lunches are artfully curated by the chefs using locally available ingredients. The Xacuti and the Prawns have a mesmerizing impact on the palate. Tezab Saha, the Outlet Manager is ready with some unique cocktail suggestions to pair with your food and he doles out a few special drinks for the guests which are definitely different from the regular ones that are commonly available. What is not to be missed here is their month-long harvest tour which gives a deep insight into the Goan culture, tradition along with a memorable gastronomical experience. It begins at 8 am from the hotel and you embark on a 2-hour journey that takes you for a lovely drive through lush greenery on way to the farm. The whole day is spent participating and witnessing the traditional method involving harvesting of the cashew fruit, removing the nut from the apple, crushing these apples and then tying them up till you extract the last bit of juice called Niro. The distillation process, to get the urrak and then the potent feni which has medicinal use which is later explained to the guests. One not just gets to relish fresh drinks like Niro and cocktail with urrak, but also can indulge in delicious local food like Goan Pav Bhaji, local fish, prawns and vegetarian dishes along with several helpings of freshly roasted cashew. And all this costs merely Rs 1600 per person!



What else to do?

You can also buy cashews directly from the farm at very affordable prices.

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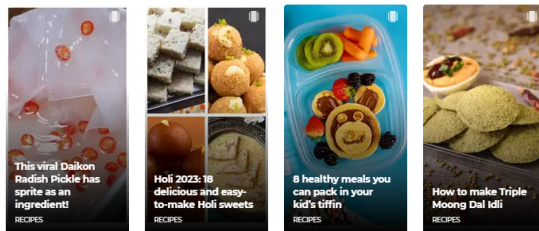
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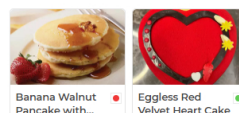
Best places in Delhi-NCR that offer special Navratri food

TIMESOFINDIA.COM
Apr 8, 2022, 09:04 IST



Navratri is not just the time to

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fast, but also to indulge in delicious fasting food. With the change in season, it is the right time to consume food that is light and delicious and is prepared with special ingredients. Here is a list of some amazing foods offered by hotels in Delhi/ NCR.



Gulati's, Pandara Road

Gulati, Pandara road remains the king of good food and when it comes to Navratri, the place known for its Butter Chicken and Non-Veg delicacies transforms into a heaven of Sattvik food. The [Navratri Thali](#) is mesmerising and has items that taste unique and delicious! Samyak Poori, Kuttu ka Paratha, Dahi Bhalla, Paneer and Makhane ki Subzee, Chhach, Kadhi, Fruit Cream - the place spoils you for choice. The must-not-miss is their Chaat Platter and Sabudana Tikki. And for those who get it delivered- the smart packaging ensures the freshness of products.



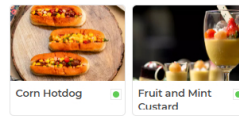
Sana-di-Ge, New Delhi

For those who want to taste South Indian flavours while observing Navratri fast, Sana-di-Ge food is a must-try. Quench your thirst with Fresh Tender Coconut Water and relish delicacies like Arbi Pakoda, Sweet Potato Chat, Peanut Butter Paneer Tikka, Jeera Aloo, Kadu Sabzi, Khatta Meetha Kadu, Aloo Tamatar Sabzi with a variety of hearty accompaniments like Kuttu Puri, Samak Pundi, Sabudana Papad, Anar Raita, Samak Rice & Sabudana Khichdi.



The Ashok, New Delhi

The Ashok Hotel is offering a special Saatvik thali for its guest which features vegetarian menu items such as Jeera Lassi, Makhni Paneer, Sitafal ki Sabzi, Aloo Tamatar Tari, Bhuni Shakarkandi, Aloo Chaat, Kuttu Ki poori, Sama ke Chawal, Sabudana Papad, Cucumber Raita and sama kay chawal ki phirni. The thali has been specially curated by the Chefs of The Ashok using



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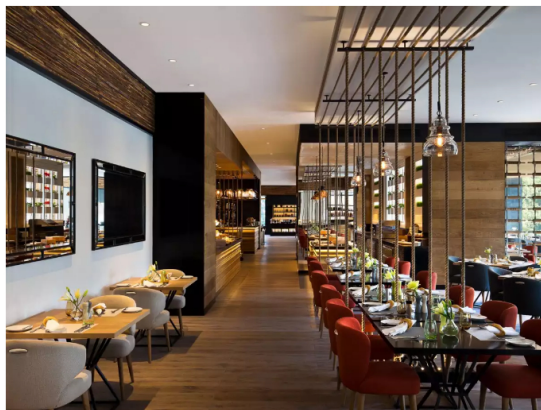
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ingredients carefully selected to give the guests a balanced meal while they are on fast. The meal is prepared with utmost caution following proper hygiene and sanitation protocols.



Shangri-La Eros Central Delhi

Navratri Utsav is being celebrated at Tamra, the international cuisine restaurant at Shangri-La Eros New Delhi. The assorted list of dishes includes the delicious Phool Makhaney ki Tikki, Shakarkandi ki Chaat, Arbi ki Tikki along with nutritious fruits and choice of namkeen. The main course is exclusively prepared considering the traditionally light and healthy vegetarian diet that people prefer having during this time of the year. The delicacies include Dal Chironji, Phaldhari Mewa Kofta, Sitaphal ki Subji, Dahi wale Arbi, Mewa Samak pulao, Sabudana khichadi and Kuttu Ki Poori in breads.



The Claridges, Central Delhi

Dhaba at The Claridges has created a particularly nutritious Navratri thali with a festive atmosphere for its guests with no compromise to their taste buds.

The Special Navratri Thali brings an extensive menu with Mewa Mave ki tikki, Malaikar Paneer, Sookhi Chatpati Arbi Katha-Meetha seetaphal, Chironji ki daal, Kuttu ki poori, Anar Raita, Sabudana papad, refreshing meethi lassi, Fresh fruit Salad to the table along with Rasmalai for dessert. These delicacies have been handcrafted by expert chefs keeping in mind the purity of the occasion and giving guests a true Navratri experience.



The Roseate Hotels and Resorts, New Delhi

Roseate Hotels & Resorts is offering a specially curated saatvik Navratri Thali amidst a luxurious setting. The Chef special Navratri thali will be offered at the two properties of Roseate Hotels & Resorts in the capital – at DEL, world cuisine bistro & Kheer, Indian cuisine par excellence at Roseate House New Delhi, and Kiyan, world cuisine all-day dining at The Roseate New Delhi. These delectable dishes are meticulously handcrafted by our expert chefs, prepared using desi ghee and seasoned with Himalayan rock salt, keeping in mind the preferences on these 'nine divine days'.

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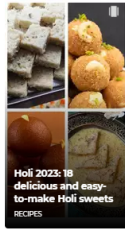
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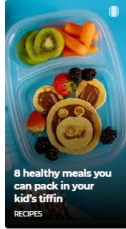
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Nomad-The place that serves pizza from 11 countries

Smita Mishra | TIMESOFINDIA.COM
Apr 5, 2022, 17:32 IST



Pizzas are bae! It is difficult to imagine life without these lovely discs of joy that are a source of pure, unadulterated satisfaction. But with so many options available in the market, it has mostly become a trial and error game for us. And quite often this experimentation ends up in major disappointment. Pizza is not just a wheat flour base

with some toppings. It is an experience in itself.

Those who have been eating Italian-style pizzas all their life, the menu of Nomad is an eye-opener. It offers a range of pizza experiences from across the world. Just like our own versions of pizzas like Butter Chicken Pizza and Paneer Pizza, variations from various countries find their place on the menu of Nomad.

A few months before the pandemic Nomad was launched in Delhi with the view to provide a global pizza experience to Delhiites. And within four months they became the fastest-growing pizza delivery startup in India and opened their second restaurant in Gurgaon. Nomad now has 10 outlets spread over Delhi NCR and Chandigarh and has just launched its Mumbai operations with a plan to launch another 5 outlets in the next 2 months to cover the city.



Must try from the menu

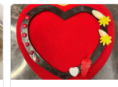
The pizzas are larger than usual, reasonably priced as compared to their size, and loaded with fresh toppings. The sides are unique too. The must-try from the menu includes-Chicago Deep Dish Chicken Pizza, Naples Pesto Potato Pizza as it is hard to find this unique combination on a pizza, Georgia- Meat And Feta Khachapuri With Egg which is another unique combination, NY - Pepperoni Pizza, Turkey-Chicken Doner Pizza, Korea -Tofu Bulgogi, Polish Corn and Pepper Pizza, Cheese and Garlic Pizza Sticks, Pizza Bombs and Chocolate Chip And S'mores Pizookie.

From the US to Korea. Nomad serves pizza variants from 11 countries.

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