

A 100% vegan kitchen, an array of fresh organic produce at its ready disposal and eco-friendly interiors – this 'Healthy Cooking Workshop' could not have wished for a better setting than Bangalore's 'In The Pink Organic Bazaar & Restaurant'

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IN FULL FORM:
Dr. Shah demonstrates the techniques of cooking vegan food

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In the pink of health

In The Pink, which offers Bangaloreans the unique experience of eating and shopping organic, played the perfect host to SHARAN's latest of vegan food programmes last week. SHARAN (Sanctuary for Health and Reconnection to Animals and Nature) is a non-profit organisation based in Auroville, Puducherry, working to spread holistic health and ecologically sustainable lifestyle awareness through seminars, training programmes and live cooking workshops across the country since the last six years.

On Saturday, the earthy interior of the restaurant – characterised by Athangudi floor tiles, wooden columns and bamboo chick blinds – was abuzz with housewives,

fitness experts, students, professors, writers, entrepreneurs and media professionals with one common interest – healthy, vegan food. In the next three hours, SHARAN's Dr Nandita Shah literally had them eating out of her hands as she served up a sumptuous four-course

bangalore

meal with twelve dishes whose preparations would have knocked the socks out of any meat-eating or fast-food fanatic. The words you are looking for here is 'zero oil and zero animal product' – yes, not even dairy!

And the winners were: three kinds of salads, nut milk, nut cheese, nut butter, Shep-

herd's Pie with mince soya nuggets and nut cheese crust, stuffed lady's fingers, dry beans (poriyal), daal makhni with nut butter, sprouts-and-veggie patty and banana ice cream without the cream. Prepared without a single drop of oil or any animal product, the dishes were baked (not in a microwave), steamed or simply roasted. Assisting Dr Shah along her gastronomic journey was the eager restaurant staff and the participants.

Interspersed with nuggets of information and tips, the interactive workshop made for the perfect induction to new age cooking. A highlight was when Dr Shah passed around her very own substitute for milk cheese – cashew nut cheese. Ground into a paste and fermented over 2-3 days, it smelled like cheese and tasted, well, almost like cheese but nuttier. The amazement was quickly followed by apprehensions on the high calorie content and cholesterol production which was as quickly assuaged: "No plant ever produces cholesterol".

"This workshop is about how to cook food we eat daily in a healthier way, it's all about techniques. You can

eat as much as you want as long as you eat in the right way. We endorse plant-based, whole foods," explained Dr Shah.

A 100% vegan since the last eight years, she took up the cause of healthy eating seriously after she helped a 70-year-old heart patient cut down her medication from a page-full to a quarter of a tablet in two months and later, a 21-year-old diabetic to cut down his insulin intake from thrice a day to none at all in just three days!

"It was beyond my wildest expectations! That's how we got the guts to start our 21-



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HANDS-ON LEARNING: Participants get involved in the process

day reversal programme." One among SHARAN's several offerings, the 21-day residential programme for reversal of illnesses like diabetes and heart diseases is held at Swaswara Resort in Gokarna, just five hours from Goa. The patient is introduced to a healthy food guide while daily blood sugar level and blood pressure tests are conducted. "They can see their achievement with lab reports to vouch for it. A patient cut down 70% of the medication. Of course, there is no real reason that everyone needs a 21-day programme. You attend a cooking class like this, a seminar, try a few recipes from our website and you can do it right at home.

The reason why 21 days is because it is the minimum it takes to change a habit." For SHARAN's amicable host for the day, G Paneesh Rao, MD In The Pink, the experience was in tune with his own mantra in life. "In The Pink was envisaged when I started consuming organic produce myself and felt the difference. I wanted to make such an experience available to other Bangaloreans.

Lots of people ask me why a restaurant and a store together: well, someone who is not familiar with organic food will have lot of questions when he or she walks in. Our solution: taste the food and then buy the produce. Simple."



FEAST FOR MORE THAN THE EYES: The delicious spread after the demonstration

HP ON A FOREST PROTECTION DRIVE

shimla

Himachal Pradesh government has decided to take up the issue of exclusion of populated areas from wildlife sanctuaries with the Centre, Chief Minister P K Dhumal said.

Dhumal, who was hearing public grievances in remote Bara Bhangal village in Kangra district, said areas with population of 13,341 in Bara Bhangal, which have come under demarcated sanctuaries, would also be excluded so that people could enjoy their forest rights.

The state government has taken up the matter of re-demarcation of the wild life sanctuary areas in the state with the Centre and public hearing would soon be held in the respective areas to invite suggestions of the people agitating against inclusion of their villages in sanctuary areas, Dhumal added.

The Chief Minister said the state government had launched 'Bhed Palak Samridhi Yojna' aimed at speedy socio-economic upliftment of the Gaddi community, engaged in sheep rearing and attractive subsidy was being provided to shepherds for purchase of 40 sheep and two best species of rams.

Dhumal said that the state had successfully implemented the ban on use of polythene and plastic to check further degradation of the environment and urged the people to carry forward the campaign with undiminished intensity. He said that a team of medical officers would visit Chhota Bhangal and Bara Bhangal area from September 23 for medical examination of residents of the area and added that the medical check-up would be free and all facilities would be provided to the people. (PTI)

freeze frame

IN THE NAME OF PROGRESS:

Atul Singh, President and CEO of Coca Cola India and South West Asia and Atul Jain, Joint Managing Director of Jain Irrigation System Ltd. during the launch of "Unnati" a high-yield mango cultivation program, in Mumbai



PTI PHOTOS



BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE:

Labourers use a sack to cover themselves as they sleep on a pavement in Old Delhi

Masterchef India changes judges

MUMBAI: Chef Vikas Khanna has replaced actor Akshay Kumar as a judge for the second season of the reality show MasterChef India.

Star Plus, which will air the culinary show shortly, has announced that the show will be hosted and judged by renowned Indian Chef Vikas Khanna. The second season titled as 'Ab Badlo India Apne Khaane ka Andaz' envisages to bring a shift in the conventional paradigm regarding the Indian palate, especially the way food has been cooked and served in the country. The first season of the show was hosted and judged by Akshay.

According to the organisers, chef Vikas's gastronomic philosophy is to deliver innovative and luxurious meals, laying special emphasis on ingredients' taste, flavours and textures, which have won many hearts across the globe. Vikas, who started his own catering business at 17, is the executive chef at Junoon Restaurant in New York. He has made a series of documentary films which explored food sharing practiced by different faiths across the globe.

Vikas had even cooked a special meal based on 'satvik' recipe at the White House on a special occasion in the past. He will be seen as a judge alongside chef Ajay Chopra and chef Kunal Kapoor for the second season of the show. The show will be replete with multiple celebrity guests and glamorous offsite locations, the organisers said. (PTI)

New VC of Vishwa Bharti

NEW DELHI: Sushanta Duttgupta was today appointed as the new vice chancellor of Vishwa Bharti University, Shanti Niketan. The HRD Ministry issued the appointment orders today and he is expected to join shortly, said a ministry official. He succeeds Rajat Kanta Ray who has demitted office. Duttgupta has completed his five-year tenure as director of IISCR, Kolkata and is on a three-month extension at present. (PTI)

Narayan's house declared heritage building

BANGALORE: The house owned by renowned English writer late R K Narayan in Mysore has been declared a heritage building by Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA). The ceiling of the house in Yadavagiri, built by Narayan in the early 50s when he wanted to move away from his residence at Laxmipuram, purchased by a realtor, was partially demolished recently to make way for a multi-storied apartment. However, in the wake of public outcry, MUDA had last week halted demolition of the residence where he penned his masterpieces, conjuring up the fictional town of Malgudi. Narayan, regarded as one of the greatest Indian English novelists, had lived in this 100 x 120 foot structure from 1950 till he moved to Chennai in 1990s due to ill health. The writer penned his masterpieces from the oval-shaped 'bay-room' with massive windows that gave a full view to the inspiring greenery outside.

A group of writers, who had visited the house during a seminar held on his birth centenary in October 2006, suggested it be converted to a museum. MUDA today said in a statement that it has declared the house as a "heritage building". (PTI)

Kasauli wants tourists

SHIMLA: To attract more tourists at Kasauli, a Rs 8.66 crore Tourism Complex and Geo museum would come up in the fascinating hill town besides improving basic infrastructure facilities, Chief Minister P K Dhumal said today.

Laying the foundation of the new complex at Ross Common's at Kasauli, he said that a sum of Rs 10-lakh would be spent on maintenance of four historical churches at Kasauli and National History Museum and Geo Park would also be set up at the same location. He said that with the establishment of Geo Park, Himachal would become the first state in the country where study material of historical importance relating to geology would be available for study and research. The Chief Minister said that Rs 17 crore were being spent on various tourism activities in Solan district which included Rs 4.20 crore on Solan Tourism Circuit, Rs 4.80 crore on Chail Circuit, Rs 7.05 crore on Jubbarhatti-Arki-Nalagarh circuit, and Rs 70 lakh on Rural Tourism Circuit. (PTI)

Khale kaka gets a memorial

THANE: To pay a tribute to the renowned music composer Srinivas Khale, who passed away recently here, a memorial will be constructed in Thane. Announcement to this effect was made by Thane mayor Ashok Vaity at a function. "Thane was proud of Khale Kaka, as one of the gems of the city. Therefore, in his memory, a befitting memorial would be set up in the city," he said.

Thane District Shiv Sena Chief and MLA Eknath Shinde also announced that a museum proposed by Thane Municipal Corporation, will be named after the veteran music composer. "He has given a lot to the film world and general public. It is our duty to do something in return. Therefore, we will name the museum after him," Shinde said.

During the function, held at Ram Ganesh Gadkari Rangayatan, popular compositions by Khale were presented by various artists including Khale's disciple Shankar Mahadevan. The programme held at the prestigious Ram Ganesh Gadkari Rangayatan was attended by thousands of music lovers from the city. (PTI)