

Riverside rendezvous

Relections, Fort Raichak's round-the-clock coffee shop, has been given a makeover. With two al fresco areas being included in the previous 10 seater, the seating capacity is now more than double, the menu is new and even the river view call 240 feet ft 10 is improved.

Up the wooden stairs at the bar hotel, the air-conditioned space of Reflections welcomes you. Hoisted in this 300-cover area are a two-tier buffet station (they say it can house 40 dishes as opposed to the regular 20) and a counter where live kitchen action takes place. A round table of 16 forms the private dining space.

The feel of the interiors is organic and relaxed and that was the primary idea, says designer Vivek Mathew. "Even the chairs are made of wicker and larger than normal cramped coffee shop chairs. Everything had to be easy," explains Vivek.

If the indoor is easy, outdoor is even easier and that is where the real change has taken place. The adjoining terraces have been con-



A view of the al fresco section at Reflections. Photos by Kishibhat Dha

verted into al fresco areas perfectly lined before the Calcutta chill (takes an entry exit). The section (30 covers) overlooking the river on one side and a water body with a boat decked up with seasonal blooms on the other is perfect for romantic diners.

The other al fresco section is for families or larger groups (80 covers). A wrought-iron installation sets the backdrop for a performance stage.

"We didn't want to do too much. In Reflections, we want people to sit back and enjoy the river while watching its changing lights from dawn to dusk," adds Vivek.

An empty stomach may not be ideal for this glass and this is where we need to turn to the elaborate menu. From a five-page breakfast menu to a range of cheese products along with Indian and international

staples, variety clearly wins. The F&B team has studied the ordering patterns of the last two years. "This menu reflects customer feedback and is demand-driven," says Manish Pandey, resident manager, Raichak in Gurgaon.

The illustration on the menu card shows a villager rowing a boat, presumably on the Houghly, and this sort of reflects the strong focus of local flavours on offer. "We have a section called Tribute to Kolkata's Street Food," says executive chef Subashish Saha. The other interesting page in The Lazy River By The Ganges that shows everything from dim sums to grubs and cottage cheese buns follows. There's Melon Arugula Sun Dried Tomato & Feta Cheese Salad (recipe below) needs special mention. It was outstanding.

Shradha Agarwal



SEASON'S SPECIAL

- Welcome drink (a tangy rambu paneer or a frothy coffee/tea)
- Half-hour head-shoulder-neck massage at Annapa Spa
- Lunch at Reflections (buffet or à la carte, choose from a variety of cuisines)
- Laze in the Flirt pool, chill out in the sports bar. Poolside or take a boat ride down the Houghly
- Evening chat and cocktails
- The package is priced at Rs. 1,599 per person

MELON ARUGULA SUN-DRIED TOMATO & FETA CHEESE SALAD

(Serves 4)

INGREDIENTS

Watermelon (1 big bowl), Arugula lettuce (1kg), Feta cheese (1kg, crumbled), beans (1 whole), roasted pine nuts (1kg), sun-dried tomatoes (1kg), mustard paste (1kg), salt and pepper as per taste and olive oil.

PREPARATION

Make a dressing of feta, mustard paste, salt, pepper, lemon juice and olive oil. Coat the slices of watermelon, black bean slices and put lettuce in between and mix tog. Divide with pine nuts, feta cheese and sun-dried tomatoes. Serve cold.