

# Venue check

## Punjab Grill by Jiggs Kalra

Add spice to your meeting or product launch with lunch or dinner in a cool and elegant Indian restaurant that has opened at Marina Bay Sands. By **Raini Hamdi**



Even when it was in wraps, the name 'Punjab Grill by Jiggs Kalra' – in a stylish gold font on a black drape – suggested a classy and elegant Indian restaurant inside. The restaurant's designer, BLINK, a firm with studios in Singapore, Bangkok and New Delhi which specialises in bespoke hospitality concepts, did not disappoint.

A modern and elegant Indian it is, joining a very short list in town that is ideal for corporate entertainment.

### MICE application

Why is it ideal? To me, firstly, it is because of its simple, straightforward and open layout. Many Indian restaurants I know have alcoves, dividers, partitions, walls and so on that help to separate rather than bring people together. This is great for privacy if you are dining individually, but not so ideal if you want to hold a team together and get them to mingle on a level-playing field.

Punjab Grill has just one open, rectangular-shape indoor area which can be booked for groups of 50 pax to 90 pax, with only one slightly raised area for a VIP table that can seat 16 pax.

It also has an outdoor area which can be booked for groups of 20 pax to 50 pax.

Planners can use the entire venue (outdoor and indoor) for a sit-down meal for 110 pax max (more for standing buffets).

Projectors can be placed in the restaurant, which has worked with a number of companies including Standard Chartered, OCBC, Barclays, Keppel and Groove in Singapore.

### Service and ambience

The restaurant is ideal for groups because of its intimate ambience and modern take on Indian restaurant design, which makes it suitable for any product launch, presentation or meeting, and not necessarily because the event at hand is related to an Indian theme or team.

I love the ceiling, which has a single light fixture that drips small pearls of light – that's the kind of 'cool' you can expect of the design.

BLINK's creative director Alan Baar told me the firm had just 14 weeks to turn the 232m<sup>2</sup> space into a "classical-inspired modern Indian restaurant that is elegant and has soft edges". Thus, while a Punjab Grill outlet in

India has photos of maharajahs on the wall, in the Singapore outlet, BLINK had come up with beautiful frames of Indian spices instead, which adds a contemporary touch to the ambience.

There are eight Punjab Grills in India, and the Singapore branch is the first outside India.

Service is helmed by a charming manager from Punjab Grill in New Delhi, who is training several other staff from India to achieve high standards. He is getting there.

### F&B concept

I never heard of Jiggs Kalra until now. He is, as Punjab Grill's literature said, "the czar of Indian cuisine", and his dream is to take you on a culinary journey of an undivided Punjab – "the rich streams of Hindu, Sikh, Pathan and Punjabi cuisine". I don't claim to understand that statement, but it sure sounds good to me. The aromas from the kitchen in the outlet in Singapore smell heavenly and on the menu are my favourite dishes like Murgh Tikka, Chicken Tikka Masala and Daal Panjratani, along with a plethora of kebabs. The food was delicious, making up for its priciness – the dhal, comprising five types of lentils, costs S\$30 (US\$24), while the other two dishes are S\$38 each.

Yet another reason why Punjab Grill is ideal for corporates with a decent budget is its impressive wine list, which boasts good to great wines at decent prices.

Now that I know it, I will be sure to take my team to the outlet in New Delhi or Mumbai the next time we are there.

### Fact file

#### Address

B1-01A The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands  
Singapore  
Tel: (65) 66887395  
Email: info@punjabgrill.com.sg

#### Reservations

Recommended

#### Opening hours

Open for lunch and dinner

#### Seating capacity

110 pax maximum for a sit-down meal

#### Dress code

Smart casual