

AKSHAR

RE-SCRIPTING HOSPITALITY

Department of Hotel Management, Christ University, Hosur Road, Bangalore 560029



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REPERTOIRE

Welcome to another edition of Akshar. With a whirlwind of events and activities taking place in the Department of Hotel Management, this month's edition promises to be a fascinating read. We also welcome to our ranks new members eager to take Akshar to greater heights! Join us in our quest to explore culture and gain knowledge from across the globe.

AVIN THALIATH

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

AKSHAR IS PROUD TO WELCOME TO THE TEAM



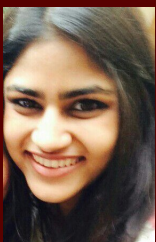
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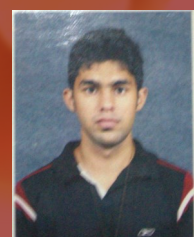
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THE SOUND OF LIGHT

DIWALI

- Sruthi Veeradhi, Mandira Belliappa

The month of November is known to be significant, filled with so much of energy and colour. This is one of the most awaited festive seasons in India. Diwali is certainly the biggest and the brightest of all festivals. Also known as *Deepavali*, it literally means a 'row of lights'. For Hindus, it is one of the most festive, popular and definitely one of the most beautiful festivals ever celebrated. It signifies the triumph of good over bad and celebrates togetherness among loved ones. It is the festival of light, which dispels darkness. The purpose is not about bursting crackers but to glorify the light of God. Diwali does have a very important significance, which is the celebration of light. It symbolises the personal relationship between God and man, marking a fresh start and a new beginning in our life through the worship of Goddess Mahalakshmi.

With exchange of gifts as if it were the Indian Christmas, making small talk and sipping that last bit of *aam panna* or the preparation of sweets, from mothers' special recipes on ghee sweets or simply picking up some *Moti choor Ladoos* from the nearest *Mithai wala*, and putting them into your boxes, this season has a variety of sweets to offer, that never fail to entertain your mouth and weight. A month before Diwali you can see gyms overflowing with people trying to shed that extra bit of fat so they can fit into that new *sherwani* or *ghaghara*.



While families pray to god, chanting *mantras* and *bhajans*, the little ones line up in front of the pooja room, slyly popping in their favourite sweets, hoping that the elders would fail to notice the missing savouries.

While some are fortunate enough to make that big Diwali purchase of a flat screen TV, a washing machine or even a car, the rest have to settle for a gaze at the ever crackling sparkling cracker show in the night sky, sighing and hoping they are lucky enough to come across a decent piece of *laddoo*, let alone a square meal. This is the diversity of India that we often boast about.

When the sun sets and the crackers take over the streets, families get competitive to decorate their houses with diyas, only to make their house look better than Mrs. Sharma's house, who seems to add new diya's to her "collection" every year. The ever increasing shopping lists, the appealing discount rates in supermarkets. The festival of lights calls for this and so much more! Socializing with your distant cousins, family and friends over a scrumptious Diwali feast is most common in the elite families of India,



For Bangaloreans it is an occasion of love, joy and togetherness among our loved ones. A lot of planning is put in into making the perfect dish that is required to make this occasion more special. Mouth-watering items such as *Kaju Barfi*, *Motichoor Ladoos*, *Karachi Halwa* and *Mawa Barfi* are prepared making everything a little more special and delicious. Diwali in Bangalore refers to families getting together as well as exchange of gifts between one and other. It also refers to bringing families together and sharing those special moments. Children running about and screaming their lungs out when see firecrackers, as they can't wait to get their hands on it. It is definitely a festival to embark upon as it marks a new beginning as well as a fresh start to many. There is something special about the festival of lights that sets it apart from the year-long festivals celebrated in India. Amidst the festive frenzy and the smell of crackers in the air, all the evil that has to be dealt with is forgotten and a sense of belongingness and happiness is found in every bright corner of India.



“TO WANT THE RAINBOW, YOU MUST PUT UP WITH THE RAIN”

- Dheepak Khyadi , Brendan Alexander Mawlong

Shristi, the annual theme restaurant set up of the Department of Hotel Management involves the students of the fourth semester in developing and designing a theme, based on which the restaurant is incubated. This year, Shristi was held on the 9th of November, which co- incidentally was the inauguration for Silver Jubilee of the Department. The criteria provided to the students was “Make in India”. Apart from this, a budget of ₹6000 was set within which all eight teams had to successfully complete their task.

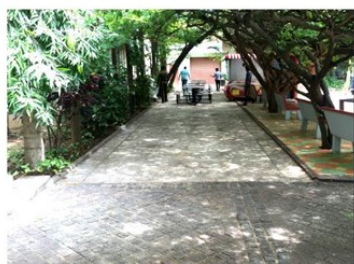
The groundwork began more than a week prior to the competition to ensure a successful outcome. The teams planned the location, layout of their restaurants and worked on their menus and pricing. The interiors were decided upon on a particular budget set by the team. Setting up of the restaurants began a day before on Sunday, the 8th of November. The teams put their ideas into action and it was a sight to behold. After the day’s tiring work, we all headed back home for well deserved rest before D- Day.



We woke to an over cast morning before adding the finishing touches to our restaurants. Having successfully met the deadline, we waited with bated breath for the inauguration of the event and hoped for ray of sunshine amongst the gloomy weather. That ray of hope though, was dampened by the relentless rain. The weather seemed destined to play the devil’s advocate but our foundations stayed strong and battled the rain. While the rain did get the better of some, most stood tall and the event successfully and came through as a stand out experience in our time in Christ University thus far.

Our class was divided in to eight teams and listed below is a small insight in to the concept, working and themes of the restaurants:

Bollywood Shollywood is a Bollywood themed restaurant as the name aptly suggests. It is a shack that serves North Indian food which allows the customers to enjoy their food whilst listening to popular Bollywood song through the ages.



Mehfil Vikas-e-Daawat is a restaurant that stays true to the Make in India theme with the Indian flag as its concept. Divided into three sections based on the tri-colored flag, the restaurant serves indigenous, environment friendly food.

Swara is a restaurant theme that aims to bring back South Indian culture and especially, the lost tradition of Carnatic music and art. It serves healthy, traditional food in a conveniently seated area where the customers listen to Carnatic music.

Salute India is an ode to Freedom fighters across the country. This restaurant aims at glorifying every freedom fighter who laid down their lives in service to our nation..



Our restaurants were marked by judges, both by faculty and external members. Points were awarded on the basis of food, setup, service and knowledge of the menu. Looking back at the event, we take back home memories and valuable experiences. We found our strengths and overcame our fears. The only hope is that Shristi will bring about a change in the dynamics of our class for the better.

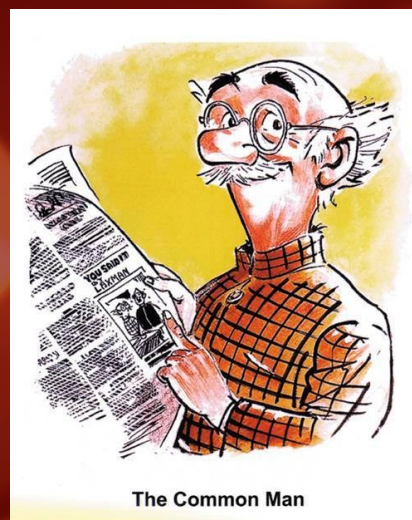


Samruddhi is a restaurant that focuses on recycling, upcycling and use of organic produce. They had an organic garden in the backyard. Their menu was completely organic and eco- friendly.

Dakshin Ruchi is a restaurant dedicated to Indian literature, emphasizing mainly on the works of brothers- R.K. Laxman and R.K. Narayan.

Tyre Patty is a modern concept based on Rider's café. It serves finger foods and refreshing beverages to the tired riders. There is also a service center and an accessory store for these riders.

Kari Maran is a restaurant revolving around the culture,, life and cuisine of Kuruba tribe. It aims to bring out the cultural and culinary aspects of this tribe and create an environment that gives our guests a feel and glimpse into the lives of this unique tribe.



SKÅL WORLD CONGRESS, TORREMOLINOS 2015

- Radhakrishna Pandramajalu



This is my story about representing Christ University, Bangalore and India in a World Conference.

The whole process to go for a world congress as an organizer came in when the General Secretariat of SKÅL International called in applications for candidates who were interested. As it turned out to be I was to go and represent Young SKÅL Bangalore at the world congress that was to be held in Torremolinos, Malaga district of Spain from the 27th of October to the 1st of November. Little did I know that I was going to be part of the 11 member group from the world to be called in to help the Secretariat with the Conference and the first ever Young SKÅL(YS) group from the world to be part of the congress as delegates.

So we have been asked to fly in a day earlier so that we know what we have to do and also so that we meet the other YS members from different cities around the world. So out of the 11 who were there were 7 from Roma (Italy), 1 from Nairobi (Kenya), 1 from Cancun (Mexico), 1 from Malaga (Spain) and me from Bangalore, India. So from the airport we were transferred to the hotel in Torremolinos, and then we got to meet the Secretariat personally who then greeted us and assigned us our duties. So we had to help them with the entire Congress, so we were their support system. We then got to meet the President of SKÅL International, Mr. Sahil Cene. He encouraged us to be part of this whole congress and take back with us some experience and a lot of memories. So with that we were done with our first day.

Second day started off with the registration process and we were helping all the SKÅLleuges from different countries to register for the congress and this took almost the entire day. We were then asked to leave for the Welcoming Ceremony which was to be held at a private car collectors showroom in Malaga. Here we got to meet a people from different counties who then introduced themselves in an informal manner. We had different kinds of folk songs from the Malaga region of Spain.

Day three was an important day as we had to begin the conference and it starts off with the flags being brought out in an alphabetic order. So each country rises when their country flag is being taken on to the stage. Here the conference is officially opened and then we head out for lunch. After this session, we YS member had a meeting with The core committee of SKÅL, which included the President, Ms. Susanna Saari Director of Young SKÅL Worldwide, Mr Nigel Pilkington The new President of SKÅL International and Ms Burcin Turkkan Director Young SKÅL Vision 2020. The sole purpose of this meeting was so to ensure that we YS are engaged with the World Congress and also so that we learn from it. After this meeting we headed dinner where all the members from different country started to introduce themselves.

Day four was the day when Annual General Meeting (AGM) takes place. As an Indian it was an important day for us, as Hyderabad was contesting to become the next destination to host the World Congress, i.e. to host 2017 congress. Its a long meeting where all the policies are discussed and new policies are brought in and members vote to pass these policies. Meanwhile we YS Members had a meeting with the Sub Director of Melia Group of Hotels, Mr. Orlando Perez. He spoke about his organization and how they have cared about their employees and follow the policy of employee first and customer second policy. He spoke how his operations have been converted to being Eco Friendly and has actively participated in the concept of Sustainability. This session lasted for about 3 hours. Then we headed back to the AGM, where the voting was about to being. It was a tense moment as the competing city was Bangkok. It is that true feeling of being an Indian that comes out when you realize that your country has won with a maximum number of votes. It is that moment when you truly get recognized as an Indian. The world starts to look at you and say “Hey, we’re coming to your Country.”

Day five was the last day. Its was day to just relax after a very long AGM. So the Senior SKÅL was busy with their travel and tourism trade and the YS was getting ready for a workshop with Mr. Stephan Phang, Director of Sustainability with Sealed Air and Ms. Cassandra De Pecol, who is on the route around the world to spread peace with tourism. We Spoke about how YS can act to reduce Child Abuse, Disaster Management, active members of Peace Keeping, and how we as youngsters have the capacity to change the whole world. This was an intensive session for 3 hours and then we all got ready to be at the final session of the whole conference, “President’s Gala Dinner.”

Here the outgoing President gives away awards to best performers and then welcomes the New President and hands over the rein. It is a brilliant spectacle as we got to see the best Flamenco dance troupe perform for us. When things come to an end that is when you realize that you have gained something from the whole experience and at the same time you feel sad that you will have to go back to your normal routine. It’s not just the place that makes you feel good, but it’s also about the people who make you feel at home away from home. The 11 who were there for mere 5 days, bonded, shared and became friends.

In this whole experience of mine, I learnt a few things that were simply amazing. Firstly, India isn’t in a bad shape at all. In fact it’s a beautiful country. Whatever maybe the political situation, you get to love your Country and then you try and protect it. You represent a huge Country and the least you could do is respect it and be proud that you are from that country. Secondly, we have the best resources in our country and there is a lot of scope for improvement, its not anyone but Us (not USA) who can change this whole things around. Lastly, Youngsters play a vital role in change and being the Youngest Representative from the World, it all starts with a small phrase “Yes, WE can.”

So I would love to conclude by saying this “ If Not Now, Then When? If Not You, Then Who?.”



AN ODE TO AGAVE

-Mohit Mishra

When life gives you lemons, take a shot. But this time life was generous enough to shower the Department of Hotel Management at Christ University with an array of opportunities. 'Cul-Art', a name that not only brings in a rush of excitement but also a slight buzz takes the first step to educate enthusiasts and industrialists on the art, science and even the commerce of producing alcohol. Cul-Art began its journey in the year 2011 featuring old world wines, succeeding it in 2012 with a workshop on new world wines, followed by an in depth understanding of beer in 2013, and 2014 showcased Single Malt Whiskeys. In the 5th edition of Cul-Art (2015), the 5th semester service specialization students of BHM under the leadership and guidance of Professor Jaykumar organised an Agave appreciation workshop in association with Desmondji Agave.

The well structured session began with Prof. Jaykumar welcoming the guests who included various hoteliers, professionals and of course enthusiasts, and honouring the esteemed speakers, Mr Desmond Nazreth; the founder of Desmondji Agave and Mr Robert; The marketing manager for Desmondji Agave. Professor Sushil Dwarakanath, head of the Department of Hotel Management then inaugurated the event and welcomed the speakers on stage.



This is when the face of Desmondji Agave stepped in, Mr Desmond Nazreth himself! A man who simply craved a margarita would be led to discover a new business opportunity. He began by speaking about the evergreen spirits industry in India, the current trends and how he grasped this opportunity of being the Father of Indian agave. His extensive knowledge about the industry took the audience on an informative rollercoaster. He took this opportunity to take the audience on a 'spirit-ual' journey on how he travelled, learnt and researched about agave and tequila inspiring future entrepreneurs. The most awaited part of the workshop got the crowd even more excited (as though they already weren't enough!); it was the agave appreciation and tasting session. Mr Desmond convinced the audience with his wide range of agave as weapons that Indian spirits are not too far behind on the world stage. Boldly comparing Desmondji Agave with other tequila/agave from around the world, Desmondji proved that it is on par (or even higher!) with other brands in terms of quality, taste and even the aesthetic appeal. As the tasting proceeded, Mr Desmond and Mr Robert simultaneously spoke about the agave and helped provide an in depth understanding of the liquor. The comparisons induced a sense of pride and patriotism in every tongue, some such as the Desmondji orange liqueur with the essence of Nagpur oranges, gave a homely feel to the palette. After the tasting session, the highly spirited Mr Desmond answered every question with ease and motivated aspiring entrepreneurs.

Towards the end of the discussion, it was time for lunch. Little did the guests know that they were in for a treat. Chef Avin Thaliath along with his team had worked up a special menu for this occasion, infusing agave as an element in his dishes. The orders rolled in, the dishes rolled out and jaws dropped.

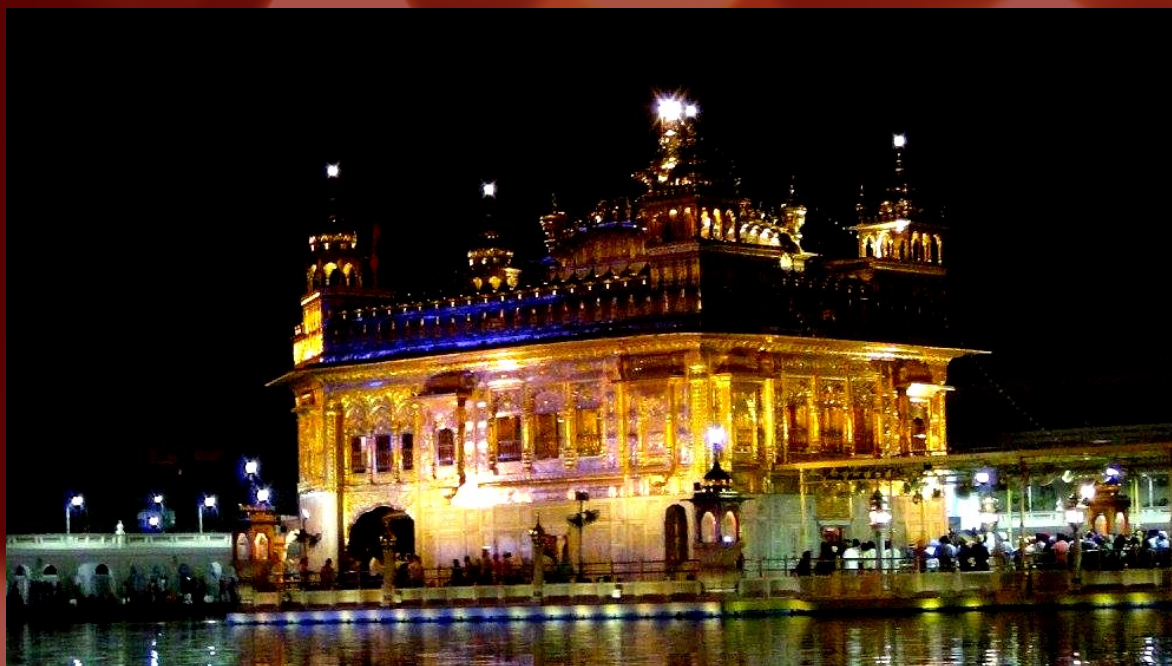
The Compressed Watermelon with Pistachio crumble and Balsamic vinegar dressing was served first as an amuse bouche doing its job of amusing every palette. The starters left the guests in the state of awe; the masterpieces included a choice of; Spiced Asian Tiger Grilled South Shal-lot scampi with tamarind, 51% agave dressing or Barbadian Pancakes served with Curried Blanc Mange and Tellicherry spices. The starters were a feast to the eyes and palette alike. Again spoilt with choice for the main course; Coconut Tanjore chicken layered on Mangalorean Kori Roti Or Rice Caviars, cottage cheese served on Mangalorean Kori Roti. The mains left the guests stuffed, but there's always room for dessert; Pound Cake infused with Orange agave served on Citrus crème Anglaise. This sumptuous lunch concluded the first phase of the workshop.



The second phase of Cul-Art 2015 was held in Vivanta by Taj, MG Road. The participants were welcomed into 'ICE bar' by the head bartender, Mr Sushil. The highlight of the day being agave and tequila, the bartender took this opportunity to experiment with various classical cocktails and infuse it with Desmondji's array of agave. The participants were also given an opportunity to step into the city's most famous bar and experiment with the agave. It was an exciting experience for the participants as well as the bar staff as both sides got to learn, experience and work with a new Indian brand. The participants then proceeded to dine at Graze where Cul-Art 2015 'An ode to Agave' Concluded. On a high note: Cul-Art has once again succeeded in educating, inspiring and empowering professionals of the food, beverage and hospitality industry and will continue to do so in the years to come.

FOOD, FARMS AND FUN-SWAD

- Neil Andre Augustin



On the 21st of October, 2015, thirteen students along with two faculty members of the Department of Hotel Management ventured on a trip to the land of Punjab.

None of us had any expectations for the trip per say. In fact, we started the trip with a very cynical air as we thought that we might not be able to explore Punjab due to the unrest during that period of time. But we needn't have worried as fortunately, our flight to Delhi was hassle-free. Once we reached the capital of India, we took our four hour journey by train to Amritsar. The next morning, we reached our destination. Amritsar is a spectacular place to visit. The streets hold an air of respected culture and fabulous food. We first visited the Golden Temple, or Harmandir Sahib as it is called. We had a brief talk on the history of the place. The Sikhs hold immense respect and pride for their culture. We looked around for a while and soon we ate the popular Langar served there. The meal was simple, yet delicious. The Golden Temple welcomes at least 1.2 Lakh visitors per day. Later during the day, we visited Gurudas Ram, a very popular Jelabi joint in Amritsar. We savoured the delicious Jalebis and went back to witness the fabulous sight of the Golden Temple at night. As the night approached, we received accommodation at one of our students' guest houses.



For breakfast the next morning, we dug in to the most scrumptious Kulchas at Monu Kulcha. After some serious perspective alterations of what a real Kulcha is, we moved on to changing our views on what a real Poori is at Kanha Sweets. Both the meals were delicious. Next, we had Lassi's at Ahuja Lassi Bar to top everything up. For our next destination, we headed to Jalianwala Bagh to pay tribute to the lost souls who were mercilessly shot down. For lunch, we decided to head to Kesar da Dhaba, yet another popular spot to enjoy good food. For our final destination for the day, we visited Wagah Border. Unfortunately for us, we couldn't make it to get the seats where we could have witnessed the march and the gates closing.

In retrospect, the visit to Wagah Border proved to be fun despite the small drawbacks. That night, we headed to Ludhiana. On the way, we had a rather unique experience at Haveli.

We were then back en route Ludhiana. On arriving there, We had some well-deserved rest at accommodation provided by yet another student and were expectant to see what the next day holds for us. The next morning, we headed to the factory of the company Cremica. We witnessed how different types of biscuits are produced and learnt a lot about how many steps and processes are involved in making biscuits. Our next visit was Field Fresh farms; a very large farm of around 210 acres. We explored the different produce at various areas and soon headed to a popular meat joint known as Universal Point. The meat was spectacular in every aspect. We then ended the night with Dinner at an eatery known as Prakash and headed back to the guest house.



The next day, we had breakfast at a pushcart serving chole and kulchas. We then drove to Malerkotla. On our way, we had some great food at a local highway Dhaba. As the evening approached, we headed to Kashmir Honey Farms. For some of us, the visit to the honey farms wasn't exactly fruitful as a few of the bees stung a few of our students. Yet, witnessing the people at the farm showing us the frames of bees and the queen bee was quite a memorable experience. Exhausted, we headed back to University Point to eat more of that delicious fare. Next was Kulfi at Basanth Kulfi and then back to the guest house. To our surprise, our student's family had prepared an amazing spread of Punjabi food. Full yet eager, we dug in to more good food. Satisfied, we called it a night and hit the beds. The next morning was our last morning in Punjab. We had Pooris for breakfast at a local restaurant and headed out to Chandigarh. From there, we took a train to Delhi and then a flight straight to Bangalore.

With a heavy heart, we said our good byes to all our fellow travellers and departed to our respective residences. This trip will be by far one of the most memorable trips to each of us. We hope to explore more of India and their food cultures in the coming years.



GUESS THE DISH

A meat preparation, where certain meats or mixed meats are placed on a spit, and may be grilled for as long as a day. The shavings of this meat can be served either on a plate, inside a sandwich or in a wrap. **Origin:** Levant.

Answer. Shawarma.



A juice that is served cold and is often mislabelled as a soup. This usually has a tomato base and it is made from raw vegetables. **Origin:** Andalusia, Spain.

Answer. Gazpacho.



A round, enclosed pie usually made by baking two disks of puff pastry, with filling stuffed in between. It has the appearance of a hump and is traditionally decorated with spiral lines drawn from the top outwards with the point of a knife and scalloping the edges. **Origin:** France.

Answer. Pithivier.



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