

International Palette: Panna II Food Critique

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BUF 4300 – E065

February 28, 2020

A. How were you addressed when you entered into the restaurant? Did you need to make reservations? How long was the wait before you were seated?

When arrived, two hostesses from the restaurant downstairs were luring us in, but the restaurant that we made reservations for was upstairs. Ali, the hostess, greeted us politely said “we will be ready for you in five mins”. We came back in five mins and the same two hostesses from the restaurant downstairs attempted to change our decision. We kindly refused and proceeded upstairs, and Ali said, “downstairs is no good tonight, come upstairs”.

B. What are the cultural differences you noticed? Using your five senses of taste, touch, sight, smell & sound describe some of the cultural differences that you are not accustomed to in comparison to All-American restaurant or restaurant chains. For example, one can describe but not limited to the sights in the restaurant decor, odors from unusual foods, and sounds from music. One should use all five-senses in this cultural experience.

When walking to our table, we saw lots of chili pepper/pinecone/Christmas lights hanging all over the restaurant’s low ceiling (as a 5’11” American, I had to duck my head to avoid hitting all the lights). I smelled a faint pleasant curry aroma in the atmosphere, heard Indian music playing in the background at a good volume, and tasted delicious Papdi with three different condiments (Green Chutney, Tamarind Chutney, and Red Pepper sauce).

C. Look at the menu. What are the types of foods they offer? What are some unusual items? Do they describe the ingredients in the food? List various food items from the menu. What menu items did you order? Is there more than one language used to describe the foods on the menu?

While browsing the Panna II menu (n.d.), I saw lots of Indian terminology that I was unfamiliar with such as Mulligatawny, Poori, Bahji, etc. (There was too many to name). They offered chicken, beef, lamb, seafood in a variety of sauces. Five different types of soups, nothing struck out to me as unusual and I would have loved to try everything on the menu! There were descriptions on most of the items, but I decided to go with the items that had “#1 Seller”. For the appetizer we ordered 1 Chicken Samosa, 1 Vegetable Samosa, and 1 Mixed Appetizer that included Papadum, Plazi, Samosa, and Banana Fritter. For my main course, I again order a “#1 Seller”, Beef Makhani.

D. Is a traditional salad offered? If not, describe what is offered. What types of breads are offered? (flat, pita, tortilla chips)? What type of desserts (cheesecake, fortune cookie, coffee)? What are they like?

Unlike an American restaurant, the traditional salad is not offered. The bread that was offered is called Papdi (A crunchy somewhat flat biscuit-like bread that is supposed to be eaten with the three condiments provided). Other bread that are offered are Naan (multiple types), Poori, Paratha (Multiple types), and Chapati. Naan is a pita bread, Poori is deep-fried fluffy bread, Paratha is thick Indian bread with butter, and Chapati is thick and soft bread. Only three desserts were offered, Firni (rice pudding), Mango Ice Cream, and Birthday Cake.

E. What types of beverages are offered? Do they have an alcohol menu? What is not typically offered in an American chain restaurant?

No alcohol is served at the restaurant, but the restaurant allows patrons to bring their own alcohol. The beverage menu is quite small has the standard soft drinks, tea, juices, and coffee. However,

they have special drinks called Lassi that you will not find in any American restaurant. Lassi is yogurt drink that can be mixed with fruit flavors such as mango, banana, or strawberry, it can also be either sweet or salty. I ordered the Mango Lassi and personally it tasted like sweet mango yogurt with a subtle banana/papaya blend flavor.

- F. How is the food reflective of the cultural geography and the economics geography? (i.e. spices are abundant in India which is rich in spices & fish (sushi) is popular in Japan & it is part of the G8). Describe approximately where in the world (continent & location) and from country this culture's food is best known.**

The origin of the foods that I had consumed comes from India, South Asia. The foods included lots of spices, herbs, and curry and they are best known in India. The Vegetarian Samosa, however, is a popular appetizer that originated in Uttar Pradesh, a state in Northern India.

- G. Describe the dress? (Dress is inclusive of all five senses — you smell perfume, hear jewelry, see make-up, etc...) What are the employees, such as hostesses or wait staff wearing?**

There were only two servers and one hostess that were visible in the restaurant. They did not have a scent, nor were they wearing any jewelry or make-up. The hostess was wearing a suit and tie, the servers were wearing a white dress shirt with a suit vest.

- H. Rate your experience as a food critic (as in the LA Times or Houston Chronicle). Rating should be dependent on taste, service, decor, cleanliness, authenticity, quality and price and should range from A-F ("A" being the best). Explain why you chose this rating, Be thorough and detailed in your explanation.**

The food was absolutely delicious! There was not a single thing I ate that gave me even the slightest bit of dissatisfaction. Inside was very clean and the décor was unique and iconic as Netflix Original Series Daredevil filmed a scene inside the restaurant. It was my first time having Indian food, so I do not know the level of authenticity. But, I hope it was it is close to the traditional food in India. The quality was excellent and the prices were fair as the bill came out to \$146.00 for five people. The service was the only thing that bothered me. We were waiting for Refa to arrive and Babu, our server, was being rude. He kept rushing us order everything at once, instead of letting us order the appetizers first until Refa arrived. He only backed off when Carmen told him that it was Refa's birthday dinner, and then he allowed us to order only the appetizers first. Overall, I would give Panna II a B because the service was not that great in the beginning, but everything else was excellent.

- I. What did you learn from this experience that you could contribute to a multi-cultural experience in a class discussion?**

This experience has taught me that Indian food has lots of spices, herbs, and curry. Everything entrée comes with rice, and they use three main condiments on a lot of their foods. Nothing is unusual on the menu other than there not being a pork, though it might be because of religious reasons. And 90 percent of their foods have a pleasant aroma.

References

Panna II Indian Restaurant. (n.d.). *Panna II*.

KITCHEN CHECK

Date	Table	Guests	Server	80658
	24	4		

APPT-SOUP/SAL-ENTREI-VEG/POT-DESSERT-BEV

~~max apt 600~~
~~ch. soup 995~~
~~v. soup 950~~

2 ch. mappis 140
 B. mappis 140
 ch. Brinn 300
 Q. CAIN 70
 Bunch 150
 m. 200 300

\$ 146.00