



Thursday, Jan. 6, 2011

## Tiffin travels north and south to fill your lunchbox

Indian Kitchen combines best of both cuisines in Prince George's, Montgomery

| Stacy Hope Alleyne



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Remember when you were in grade school, and classmates would ask what was in your lunchbox? Well, it probably wasn't authentic southern or northern Indian food like you'll find at Tiffin, The Indian Kitchen.

Tiffin, which means "lunchbox" in Hindi, now serves up both types of Indian

fare in one place.

Before, Tiffin — in Takoma Park, just over the line between Prince George's and Montgomery counties from Langley Park — served mainly northern Indian food while its sister restaurant, Udopi's — also on University Boulevard, in the same complex — served mainly vegetarian items native to southern India.

Because Udopi's lease wasn't renewed, that restaurant closed — but its menu is continued at Tiffin.

Tiffin manager Ganesh Ghimire says the combination of both southern and northern dishes into one has actually increased his customer base. Customers such as Karl Reis of Rockville, who used to frequent Udopi's, still come to Tiffin to get traditional Indian food.

"I'm from Rockville," said Reis, who when asked what he thought about the food replied, "Well, I'm here."

According to Ghimire, some customer favorites from southern India are the masala dosai (\$8), a rice and lentil crepe filled with potato; iddly (\$4), a lentil patty; and medhu vada (\$4), doughnuts made from lentils.

But if you feel like something from northern India, the chicken makhahi (\$14) or the chicken tandoori



Photos by Raphael Talisman/The Gazette  
Tiffin, The Indian Kitchen, waiter Dilli Bhattarai of Silver Spring (left) holds a dosai while owner Kanu Sajani of Silver Spring holds chicken tikka masala (center) and tandoori chicken (right).



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(\$13 for a half-serving; \$19 for a full) are items customers also enjoy.

"My wife and I love the dosai," said Reis, who noted that Tiffin was one of the few places his wife could safely get a meal; she has allergies to many of the spices and herbs used by different restaurants.

Tiffin has a dining area with ornate wall decorations and a back wall lined with mirrors, but the lighting gives the space a warm and intimate feel.

An all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., and customers can choose from a variety of Indian fare.

Ghimire said his favorite dish is the fish masala.

"It's not a strong fish, and there's no fishy smell," he said. "We use rockfish that has a rich flavor but [is] mild."

So, north or south, vegetarian or not, it really doesn't really matter what's in your lunchbox, as long as it's Tiffin.

Tiffin, The Indian Kitchen

1341 University Blvd., Takoma Park

Phone: 301-434-9200

Hours: 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

and 5 to 10 p.m. Mondays

to Sundays

Website: www.tiffinrestaurant.com

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