

Lifestyle

A Christchurch Mail Advertising Feature



Aromatic cuisine for all kinds of tastes

Just when you thought you had experienced every type of international cuisine, a restaurant emerges that offers something decidedly different.

Nobanno, in Armagh Street, which opened in August, offers a banquet of traditional Bangladeshi cuisine with modern flair and graceful service.

At Nobanno, the most wary of taste buds will be willingly tempted.

Founder Christopher Palma says this is the only Bangladeshi restaurant in New Zealand and possibly Australia - and those who actively avoid anything hot and spicy might be pleasantly surprised.

Although he had a background in banking and marketing, his dream for nine years was to own a restaurant.

Christopher now employs three chefs and creates culinary creations that evolved from watching his mother cook in Bangladesh.

Traditional recipes now have a contemporary twist. Wild mountain goat, for instance, has been replaced with Kiwi alternatives such as succulent honey mustard lamb, slow-cooked in the charcoal oven.

Quite different to fiery Indian curries, Bangladeshi fare incorporates an abundance of aromatic herbs and a delicate combination

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Christopher Palma
Nobanno

of spices to impart a taste extravaganza that melts in the mouth without setting it alight.

"Meals are low fat and fresh with no preservative or MSG," he says.

"We use traditional herbs and spices instead of lacing the lot with chilli.

"This way, you can really taste and identify individual flavours. Even infants really enjoy our food."

However, spicy options also add a spark to the menu keeping every type of foodie happy.

Nobanno means "new rice" — from the first harvest of the season.

A side dish of special basmati rice with fruit, nuts saffron and spices can complement the extensive menu as does the mango lassi — a refreshing drink of mango pulp, yoghurt and spices.



Customers first: Nobanno's team, Christopher Palma, left, Foyisal Ahmed, Nasir Khan, Cat Yao, Reshmi Roy, KR Sharma, Sandip Bhowmick and Netai Paul, provides superb service.

Christopher's mission is to provide unparalleled customer service and obliging staff can recommend the perfect wine to match a chosen meal.

He is also a whisky connoisseur and ensures there is a fine selection.

"There is nothing like a good whisky with delicious aromatic food on a cold night in a great atmosphere," he says.

Nobanno's modern, streamlined but inviting interior attracts corporate diners, couples and families alike to savour the well-priced dishes - from fresh, light but filling lunchtime rolls, to healthy, hearty dishes which also include vegetarian options.

Most meals are gluten-free and chickpea

bread is made for those who have to bypass the tasty naan bread, which is lighter (less fattening!) than most Indian versions.

Nobanno is on to its second visitors' book graced with comments of gratitude.

"I have had 100 per cent satisfaction from customers since we started and the majority return for more - with a few extra friends."

Many of Nobanno's exciting dishes and coffee are also available to takeaway.

■ Nobanno, on the corner of Colombo and Armagh streets, is open 11.30am to 2.30pm and 5pm till late seven days a week. Phone 943 1616.