

METRO PLUS

Casting a spell



SHILPA SEBASTIAN R.

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Chills and thrills Feast on mocktails and food, decorated with edible flowers, at The Druid Garden

Do you want to be spoilt for choice with great ambience, mouth-watering delicacies and good music? Then The Druid Garden will be just right for you

Off we drive to Sahakaranagar to dine at The Druid Garden. The name evokes images of Getafix from *Asterix* comics and we wonder if the restaurant too would cast a spell on us by serving us some magic potion.

We are instantly bowled over by the interiors.

The huge open dining area has various levels, each with its own distinct lighting style. You can choose to lounge in front of the bar counter, in a cosy corner for privacy, or at a large table for your family to gather over drinks and food.

Started by Amit Gowda, The Druid Garden is stylishly done up. It has an open roof, which offers a beautiful view of the night sky as you nurse your drink; giving the place an outdoorsy feel. What happens when it rains? "We have a remote-controlled glass panelled roof that will cover the open area," explains Amit Nayak, manager.

The roof, decorated with plants, makes you forget you are in the middle of a bustling city. Amit reiterates that the restaurant's name is inspired by Getafix as "we believe our chefs and bartenders create magic with their skills and cast a spell with aromatic flavours on our diners."

The dining area has an open grill and pizza counter, so you can watch your meat being grilled or pizza being baked to perfection.

Coming to the food, instead of choosing a few large portions, we opt for bite-sized ones of as many dishes as possible. The druid's tonic with plum puree infused with spices and gin makes for a good start. Some of the mocktails like prancing poodle, passion potion and smoking pistol, with dollops of crushed ice, give us a brain freeze. Cocktails, such as the enchanted forest with basil infused gin topped with egg white foam, leaves us in high spirits.

We progress to the starters. Beetroot shammi kebab (served with lotus seed and mint chutney), campagna burrata with heirloom tomatoes and blood orange dressing, crab meat with melon carpaccio and the stuffed mushrooms; which was a clear winner with a burst of molten cheese and spinach.

For the main course, we choose the grilled lamb – crisp on the outside and soft and juicy inside. Followed by some pineapple fried rice, accompanied by cashew chicken. The rice, with zingy pineapples and chicken with roasted cashews is a perfect medley of flavours and textures.

The pasta carbonara is redolent with cheese and is the ideal comfort food.

For desserts (most of them made in-house), we opt for the

unbeliever's dessert (black sesame cake and kaffir lime coconut sorbet with lemon, mixed ice cream platter with pumpkin ice cream and salted ice cream), and the hazelnut torte. With its layers of dark chocolate torte, hazelnut ganache and salted caramel jelly topped with almond and white chocolate is the perfect way to end the meal.