

FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD
BY KANISKA CHAKRABORTY



Chowzter magic – III

THE second night of Chowzter Asia gathering took us to the birthplace of an iconic Singapore dish – Roland. Where Singapore chilli crab was invented. The country has a fairly recent history compared to our part of the world.

Chilli crab, by all accounts, has been in existence since



1956. Born in a pushcart, today it is sold from a very comfortable restaurant in East Singapore. The two sons of the lady who first cooked this dish are the current owners of the eatery.

Chowzters went there for a proper taste of chilli crab. When Chowzters eat, they eat well. So it was not only chilli

KNOWLEDGE SPEAKS
BY ISHRAT AMEEN



Look up! The sky's not the limit

IT is sometimes extremely difficult to justify one's absence from the world of being a 'columnist'. It is even more difficult to convince myself why this interesting aspect of challenging and respectful existence was evading me as if I wanted to disown my destiny. Many a night I lay awake thinking whether my readers were missing my writings at all.

Today, I had to listen to life and did not want this treasure to be lost. I had a strong urge to bond with my readers once again with a strict promise to build a stronger relationship from today onwards. Surprisingly, I could see the brilliant rays of the sun this morning; a new day can rekindle a spark to perform effectively... only if you think positively.

Soon after lunch, I was no longer a desperate case, not feeling sorry for myself and taking no chances to invite any silly excuses in my thought process. Oh yes! Zakeerin, my guide from heaven gave me only an hour's time to complete this article. "Dream, Design and Deliver" were the three strict words she uttered and I knew that there was no turning back after this.

crab that was on show. This is the menu that we devoured that night.

Lobsters, octopus, fish, scallops and calamari made up the very comforting appetiser. The stunning centrepiece of lobster shell made the dish look all the more appetising. The eponymous shark fin soup was next. Not the most ethically correct item, but a delicacy nonetheless. Fishy, briny yet warm and filling with crunchy bits of you-know-what. Yes, shark fin!

The black pomfret two ways was a revelation. We Indians are very blasé about pomfret.

Especially for us Bengalis, it started off as a poor man's fish, slowly graduating into one of the most expensive fish in the market thanks to the story of omega 3.

This pomfret blew me away. One large fish, one side scooped out and steamed and put back on the fish. The other half was deep fried. Lovely contrast of texture. Pillowy soft and crunchy goodness. Rarely does it get better.

There was a duck that apparently is famous. I am not too fond of duck so was not able to appreciate. The duck was moist looking and varnished nicely with an Asian sauce.

We moved onto the raison d'être. Chilli crabs. One large pot with huge crabs swimming in a curry looking sauce. Learnt a secret. The crabs come from Sri Lanka. And the main ingredient apart from the crab is ketchup.

What can I say? I was underwhelmed with the taste. Sure, the crab was succulent under the shell. But the sauce was a letdown for me. Very one dimensional. But what came next was a surprise.

We skipped the abalone from the menu and added something that delighted all of us.

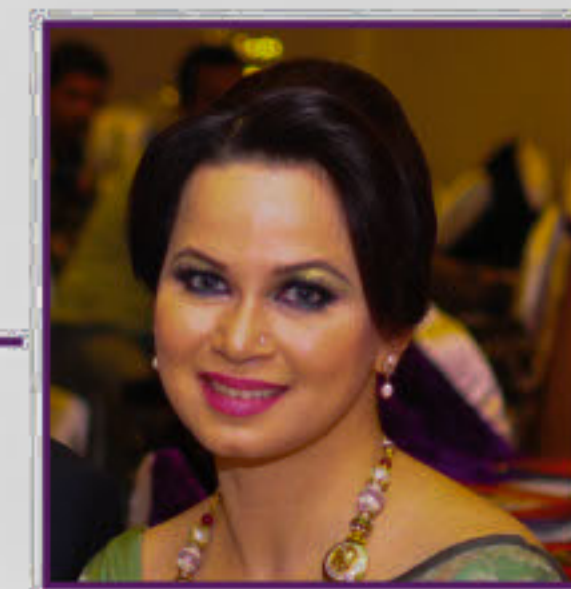
Salted egg yolk crabs with yam chips. Brilliantly salty, super crunchy, heavy with roe, matchsticks of crisp yams all over. Now we were talking!

This was definitely the highlight as far as I was concerned. I think most Chowzters also preferred this version over the classic. There was seafood studded rice steamed on lotus leaf that I could not taste as I was too full from the crab.

The meal ended with a warm yam paste with ginkgo nuts that did not work for me.

But when you get crab of that quality, who cares?

Photo: Kaniska Chakraborty



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UNDERSTANDING HAIR TRANSPLANT

**NATURAL RESULT
WITH LIFETIME
GROWTH OF
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