

# Maharaja fare

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Chocolate paan, tamarind kulfis and flower shaped paneer. Air India's in-flight food will get your appetite soaring.

## **EXPRESS FEATURES SERVICE**

Stone cold Paneer Makhani in grainy gravy with an overpowering taste of turmeric might have been your most vivid in-flight memory of food. But now that could be a thing of the past, now that India's national carrier has decided to focus on its customers' palates.

"People have a lot of time to scrutinise the food when they're flying, than when they're socializing at a restaurant, so we get our best feedback on flights," says Mehernosh Kapadia, Managing Director of Taj SATS Air Catering Services. And Kapadia assures us that he's been taking feedback very seriously.

Hence the birth of Gourmet Flight. All this month, Air India will serve a special menu created by chef Satish Arora and his team, on select flights at select timings.

Jet Airways and Air Sahara have also experimented with food festivals in the past. But it's still a concept which is being explored.

## **WHEN AND WHERE**

All this month, eight morning flights on the Mumbai-London route, every Thursday and Saturday.

"We've spent four months researching various combinations and concoctions of ingredients," says Arora. "When at a restaurant one can serve a dish within two hours of preparing it, we have to store our food for almost 10 hours before serving. So we avoid ingredients that discolour the food when stored for long," says Arora.

While research has thrown up technicalities to repair these errors, Arora's team is out to add touches of exotica in the menu. Instead of a Malai Kulfi, expect a Tamarind or Black Pepper Kulfi and instead of the usual mouth freshener, they offer you Chocolate paans.

"We make no compromise on quality across the various classes, though the menu differs marginally. So if we serve the leg of lamb in the Executive class, we'll probably serve chops in the Economy class." offers Kapadia. Bon appetit!