



Asked what dishes they would recommend, all of them answer excitedly, almost all at the same time. Amidst the din, the dishes that get the most mention are the Palak Paneer, Chicken Tandoori (or Murgh, on the menu), the Raan-E-Taj (leg of mutton) and Baingan Ke Tikka, an eggplant casserole.

When the dishes arrive, Debbie encourages me to try the Palak Paneer, a satisfying spinach and cheese dish. "It's one of my favourites, along with Dahl, or lentils," she says. Kashmir serves lentils in four ways, all equally tempting. In fact, Kamla says, around 30 per cent of the dishes at Kashmir are vegetarian.

Sigalit's eyes light up when the chicken tandoori arrives. Unlike the other women in the group, Sigalit has liked Kashmir ever since she arrived in the country 11 years ago. "My brother-in-law introduced it to me; he used to come here all the time," she says in her charming Israeli accent, modified by her fluency in French. Just like Sigalit said, the bright, orange-coloured chicken was delicious, and the ladies relished the spiciness of the dish. While all this was going on, Carol (who was delighted to see her daughter, Trinchy Floro, featured in the magazine) admonishes me to stop taking notes, lest the food vanish before my eyes. "Don't underestimate the power of our appetites!" she jokes.

When the ladies found some of the dishes becoming too spicy, Sharmila recommended taking some of the yoghurt dishes, like Dahi or Bundi Raita. True enough, the creamy coolness of the yoghurt helped soothed the palate, enabling the group to try even more dishes. Winning their approval was the eggplant casserole, a vegetarian dish, flavoured with spices and different cheeses. It merited second-helpings, even from me, an avowed meat-lover.

Unfortunately we ate too much, no room was left for dessert. I had been told of the Faluda, a delicious homemade ice cream-based dish, with pistachios and other nuts. Maybe next time, since I'll definitely be coming back. Besides trying out the other dishes, I'll have dessert on my mind.