

roasted papad and the rai saan (snacks); depending on the day of the week, you can hope to get some patra (stuffed colocasia leaves), white dhokla-chutney sandwich, and aloo tikki too. Eat sparingly, because the feast is yet to come; again, depending on the



Thali ho The restaurant has a wide array of fare

making a clawing sign, expect to be served some pillow-like phulkas, or small whole wheat rotis.

Another waiter will soon move in to

in ghee, with its natural sweetness enhanced with sugar and cardamom powder. *Karuna John* Second Floor, UB City, Vittal Mallya Road (2213-3400). Daily noon-3.30pm, 7-11pm. All major cards. Meal for two Rs 400.

Terracotta

Broccoli is a plant of the cultivar family, sprouts of which we'd be hard put to stuff down our gullets given the unspectacular nature of the thing. On the other hand, the jalfrezi, a thick, exceedingly spicy curry sauce, commonly fried with green chillies, peppers, onion and tomato, is a delicious proposition at the worst of times.

You'd expect the two things – the green vegetable and the cooking technique – to be poles apart, as far as culinary orientations go. When the green florets meet the frying pan of spices, there's only one thing to expect, you'd think, and that's the brazen result of a kitchen filled with audacious chefs. This is what Terracotta, the restaurant at the Vivanta Taj Hotel attempts.

If their broccoli jalfrezi (Rs 425) doesn't interest you, it's likely that the zucchini grilled with a creamy fill of cottage cheese, herbs and spices, and sautéed with onion and garlic (Rs 550) won't be winding its addled way to your table either. Fortunately, there are

clearer options in this minimal menu (frankly, there's a lot more range on their alcohol menu). If you're up to the fusion fare, you could ask for the spiced grilled tenderloin tournedos served with korma sauce, or the char-grilled and spice-coated rack of Australian lamb (Rs 700 a plate). In the event that experimenting is not your thing, get the nizaami-style lamb shanks, or Lahori chicken (Rs 475 a plate).

There are a few singular fish picks here, like fillets of red snapper (or rane fish) or of white fish griddled with spinach and lemon (Rs 525 a plate), spiced slices of fresh water trout (Rs 600), char-grilled steaks of salmon in a mustard oil marinade, and Indian rock lobsters served with chutney (Rs 1,000 a plate). The best meat pick would be the "on the bone chicken breast" braised with spices, creamed with cashew, wrapped in wheat tortilla and finished in a clay oven (Rs 525). The Indian dishes are what we recommend, and sticking to the

ambrosial, near-jellied galauti kebabs and the unproblematic mutton biryani (never mind that the north-Indian waiters insist on saying "kid lamb"; Rs 400-450 a plate) will prove satisfactory. A helping of the saalan of arbi (a spicy, pasty preparation of the root vegetable also known as taro; Rs 425) is a great idea too.

After the best samplings of the house, we implore you to stay clear of the mouth freshener that

comes complimentary. It's damnable to serve gulkhand, the sweet preserve of rose petals, in little droplets of white chocolate; the aftertaste is revolting. Stick to the last swirls of the curried tartelette dessert (soft cashew nut and chocolate toffee, with ice cream; Rs 300). *Jaideep Sen* Vivanta Taj Hotel, ITPL, Whitefield (6693-3333). Daily noon-3pm, 7-11pm. All major cards. Meal for two Rs 1,300.



Terra kya hoga? It's a long drive to Terracotta