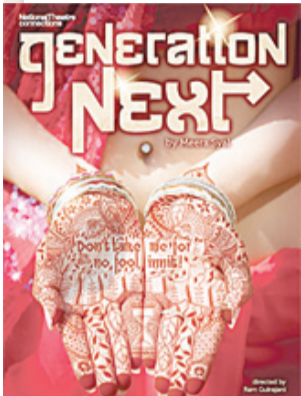


Things to do this week

By Isha Prashar



Enjoy: Look out for exciting new play *Generation Next*, which will be staged at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in London from Friday (3) until Sunday (5). Written by Asian screen icon Meera Syal and directed by Ram Gulrajani, the quirky drama follows a couple and their guests on their explosive wedding day in three different years – 1979, 2005 and 2035. Log onto www.bhavan.net to find out more.

Buy: This Valentine's Day, trade in the regular chocolates, flowers, jewellery and teddy bear for something a little more special. Visit www.redletterdays.co.uk and select an unforgettable experience to share with your loved one this year. There are plenty of original gifts to choose from.

Attend: Join thousands of visitors at one of the biggest exhibitions of the year. On Sunday (5), the Asiana Bridal Show will take over the Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel and is a must-visit for all 2012 brides-to-be. The catwalk shows will feature the latest bridal-wear collections while the stalls will offer food, venue, travel and party ideas. To book your tickets, visit www.asiana.tv

Date: With Valentine's Day right around the corner, you may want to get yourself a love interest before the big day. And what better way to do this than by checking out the Love-Desi Valentine's Party in London on Saturday (4)? The Abbey will play host to a huge singles party with ice-breaking introductions, prizes, optional speed dating and top DJs through the night. Go to www.chillitickets.com to find your special match.

Party: Get ready to let your hair down and feel like a star as you kick off the month with a glammed-up club night in London. The Paparazzi event on Saturday (4) at Club Ten will see a mix of single professionals who are ready to party hard. If this stylish event is up your street, visit www.voodooentertainment.co.uk to find out more.

Dance: The most interesting dance event of the week is happening at The Point in Eastleigh next Thursday (9). Presented by the Sadhana Dance company, *Elixir* combines contemporary choreography, sculpture, digital installation and an original soundtrack to explore our cultural relationship with water. Email onlinetickets@eastleigh.gov.uk for more information.

Laugh: If you are up for some laughs to lift your spirits, The Public Comedy Showcase in West Bromwich is where you need to be on Friday (3). The stand-up comedy night headlined by Mickey Sharma (pictured), features some of the finest talent on the circuit. Log onto www.thepublic.com for details.



My TOP 10

By Parichay

MUSICAL MOMENTS

IIFA Rocks (2011, Canada): This gig will always be special to me, as we got to perform in front of the entire Bollywood industry. And then having stars like Shah Rukh Khan, Anupam Kher, Zayed Khan and others come backstage to congratulate us on the performance felt really surreal.

Holi event in Dubai (2011): The show was one of a kind. To see 20,000 people all wet and coloured up celebrating Holi while jamming to our tunes, was such an awesome experience. I can still feel the energy from that day.

DesiFEST Toronto (2011): It will always be close to my heart. Rocking that stage in my home city for all my T-dot fans will always be special. Like they say, 'there's no place like home'.

Album release party (2009): This event marked the release of my debut album *No Boundaries*. I had my entire crew including friends, family and business team there, along with a whole bunch of people who showed up to support me. Although I performed live that night, it felt like one of those personal jam sessions that I will never forget. Great vibe!

Zee TV's Antakshari (1995): This was my first-ever live performance on television. It was back in 1995 when I was 13 and we won the Children's episode in the series. It was my first taste of the 'big stage' – camera, lights, action and music – at a semi-pro level. There has been no looking back since then, they are memories for life.

Private event in Auckland, New Zealand (2011): It was my first time in New Zealand and I fell in love with the country. I couldn't believe the response we got from the people there at the show. It was one massive party and having rocked the stage with Daler Mehndi made it more special. As a matter of fact, the day after the show he attended my video shoot for *Yamla Pagla Deewana* (remix) with RDB and even complimented us on the song. That trip overall was off the hook!

Zaika Food Festival (Toronto, 2011): This show actually took us from the 1960s all the way to 2011, musically speaking. In the midst

of all the urban songs I performed with my band, I spontaneously decided to do a tribute to the legendary Mohammed Rafi saab after noticing a fairly large number of older folks in the crowd. Although it put my team on the spot, we were blown away by the response. Having 3,000 people sing old school Bollywood tunes along with me was insane. I live for those moments.

Dallas (2010): This was my first-ever performance in Texas and I did not have a clue about what to expect. This gig was special not only because of the response I got but also because I had a ton of people come backstage and compliment me on songs I never thought they would have heard from my first album, such as *Rabba* and *Tere Bin*. That's memorable because it clearly showed me how music touches people in ways you wouldn't expect and that is super motivating.

World Kabaddi Championship (2011): I have loved kabaddi as a sport and believe it or not, I understand it very well, but I never thought I would get a chance to rock this stage to a crowd of close to 50,000. Akshay Kumar and Deepika Padukone were there too. I got a ton of messages from people around the world who watched it on TV – it was really special.

The UK Asian Music Awards (2011): Although I wasn't very pleased with the sound at the gig, performing at the UK Asian Music Awards last year was memorable because being from Canada, I thought it would be a tough one to get on, but the chance came along and I grabbed it. The entire UK Asian music industry were present and to rock the stage amid all those stars, most of whom are friends of mine, was a great experience.



Parichay album *All New Everything* is out now. Log onto www.threerecords.com, www.parichayonline.com and www.facebook.com/parichayonline for details about free downloads.



Restaurant review TIBITS



12-14 Heddon Street, off Regent Street, London, W1B 4DA. T: 020-7758 4110, www.tibits.co.uk



EATING vegetarian food has never felt cooler than at the trendy and hip tibits restaurant.

The Swiss diner, located in London's Heddon Street, has taken the West End by storm. Its colourful interior and patterned wallpaper is perfect for the busy, young and lively crowd who fill up the tables.

The restaurant specialises in healthy but tasty food, inspired by flavours from around the world from Asian to Indian and Mediterranean. The menu is changed regularly and reflects the seasons.

At tibits you are in control, with food priced by weight so you decide what to eat and how much you pay. The self-service system has a choice of over 40

hot and cold dishes from the tibits 'food boat', including soups, homemade salads, hot daily specials and freshly baked snacks with dips.

I started off with a [non-alcoholic] classic iced tea which gave me a pleasant buzz but the drink was diluted too much with water. My partner opted for the tutti fruity, which was light and refreshing in comparison.

We both treated ourselves with onion rings, red pepper hummus, Jerusalem artichoke tarter with butter squash, and wasabi with chickpeas. Some of the foods on offer, like the Jerusalem artichoke, does need getting used to. But putting that aside, it was surprising how filling the tasty food was.

We also had the samosas, potatoes wedges, basmati rice, falafel chickpea balls with sweet chilli sauce with garlic and dill sauce, and salad. The falafel balls were exquisite when dipped in the sauces and the medium-sized samosa had a nice potato filling, which is good for heavier eaters.

For deserts, we had the cheesecake-crème fraiche with Digestive biscuit pieces and walnuts. It was a sweet way to treat ourselves after eating a load of healthy food.

Overall, tibits reinvents vegetarian food for the new generation and makes healthy food more appealing – which only can be a good thing.

Imran Choudhury