

Peace



MUSIC OF JOY: Sahaja Meditation in Vietnam

MB RATNANNAVAR takes a musical sojourn to beautiful Vietnam.

Music of Joy, an orchestra team from Australia, in association with Vietnam Sahaja Meditation Collective recently organised several programs in cities Da Lat, Danang, Hanoi, Nha Trang and Ho Chi Minh.

The MOJ Group of 40 members consisted 8 singers, four guitar players, three drum players (table, dholak & djembe), saxophone, flute with group leader John Smiley playing Harmonium and also singing and others for supporting roles. All the members with different backgrounds, practising Sahaja meditation, with the blend of music in their veins join the MOJ tours every year, spending their own money. Three members from India, one from Mumbai and two from Indore were also part of the team to enjoy the MOJ. The group enthralled the audience with their music at all the programs.

Vietnam is a beautiful agro-based country with greenery everywhere. Gardens with greenery can be seen at every nook and corner of roads and also along highways. One cannot miss this green scenery with trees and flowers in Vietnam. The Group enjoyed the beauty of Vietnam by visiting tourist attractions at all the cities.

John Smiley, a professional Music Teacher in Sydney Australia and Sahaja Meditation practitioner, leads the 'Music of Joy' (MOJ). He said, "This is the fifth time that we have come to Vietnam. This is a country with loving people and interesting tourist sites, we selected for MOJ. Earlier we had MOJ programs in major cities of China, Taiwan, Japan, Philippines, Malaysia, India, Nepal, New Caledonia and New Zealand", and continued "Our tour covers either one country with several cities or major cities of different countries. This is our sixth MOJ tour".

The Sahaja Meditation for Self-Realisation

founded by Her Holiness Mataji Shri Nirmala Devi, appears to be seriously taken up by Australian practitioners. One of the Singers Ms Pauline (54) said that she received self-realisation while studying for Arts and Painting in the University. She was drawn into singing fo MOJ by coincidence after self-realisation.

The Group organised several programs that included three in Ho Chi Minh, one in Da Lat,



one in Danang, two in Nha Trang and two in Hanoi. The programs at FPT University and city's popular Trong Dong Palace Convention Centre at Hanoi and ISchools at Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi, were a grand success. Every program received positive response with audience dancing the tunes of music.

The songs in Hindi, Marathi, Sanskrit, English and Vietnamese with sound of music from instruments not only attracted the audience to dance but also made them to enjoy their self-

where we could see various flowers, various rides for children as also for adults. Some of us had fish massage (cost 30,000 Dong each) there. Other visits included Cable car ride and Buddhist Temple, Museum and waterfalls at Khu Du Lich Thau Datnala. Here one has to go deep walk down to reach bottom of the water falls or use the roller coaster ride to go down and come up cost 40,000 Dong each).

Danang is in the centre of Vietnam where all the Sahaja meditation practitioners from Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh gathered to perform Guru Puja to worship H H Mataji Nirmala Devi. All the yogis enjoyed the flow of vibrations.

At Hanoi visit by boat to the UNESCO declared World Natural Heritage site Ha Long Bay (300 km) and lunch on the boat and shopping.

Nha Trang, an island with white sandy beaches around, the group enjoyed the Mud Bath at Cong Vein Khoang Mineral Water Park, where one has to bath in warm muddy water, followed by in mineral water fountain, warm water pond, also if



realisation. When asked by John Smiley whether any one experienced the flow of cool or warmth in the limbic area, most of the audience raised their hands to express their positive response. This happened in almost all the programs.

The group Invoking Ganesha with Ganesha Ganesha song, and English song "You are in heart of Universe", and other songs made the listeners to clap continuously with drum hits. With the Marathi song Jogwa, Udhay ga Ambe Udhay, they started to dance with actions for inner energy awakening.

Some of the students at the FPT University at Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh were in a mood to understand more on the inner energy awakening to get cool vibrations. At the iSchool programs, the Principal and Vice-Principal were present to enjoy the MOJ and seen clapping to the music tunes.

At Da Lat, it took a few minute walk from our Doi Mong Mo resort to reach Valley of Love,

necessary under the waterfalls. Without shopping how can the visit to Vietnam be complete. The group enjoyed shopping too in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh cities purchasing hand-made artefacts of Vietnam.

Hung Lee (25) said that he is completely transformed now with Sahaja meditation. He was one of the youth addicted to heavy smoking, drugs and in this state I met with a major accident, I don't know how I survived. But it gave me second life to understand inner energy and inner peace through Sahaja meditation. I am very happy now."

"We have a few people (around 50) here in Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi practicing Sahaja Meditation and we meet once a week for collective meditation. This has benefited us immensely," said Ms Van Giang, coordinator in Vietnam.

On the next Tour of MOJ, John Smiley said, "Our next tour will be in India. We are in talk with Indian Coordinators. Our plan to visit New Delhi, Nirmal Dham, NOIDA Prem Ashram, Nagpur, Chindwara, Indore, Pune, Jambut and Mumbai."



Authenticity or experimentation?

Is the spurt in fusion foods and molecular gastronomy leading to authentic, fine dining restaurants losing their charm? **MISBAAH MANSURI** takes a sneak peek at fine dining restaurants which still reign on hearts and minds of customers despite not adopting hyped trends.

Ingenuity in crafting a gourmet experience could sometimes take away from the authenticity of a palate. On the contrary, it might help transcend borders facilitating a unique culinary excitement. While a plethora of restaurants have adopted the 'fusion fashion' and molecular gastronomy trends, there are few others which believe that beauty lies in embracing culinary ethos and living upto the true charm.



the food too here is finger-licking good. A hidden gem, the food at this restaurant will make you go weak in the knees. Starters like the Lasooni Jhinga and Pahadi Kebab are a melt-in-the-mouth affair however it is the

Nalli Nihari which is its crowning glory. Robust Indian flavours will tantalize your tastebuds. The undisputed Yakhni Pulao is another delight. "At Gallops we believe in good wholesome food, prepared using traditional recipes and we've been doing it that way for 29 years. We use the finest ingredients and source our spices from across the country to bring an authentic, fulfilling experience to the table," explains Chef Yajush Malik, Head Chef at Gallops. A regal dining experience at restaurant conveys a tale of culinary originality in its most pure form.

Address: Mahalaxmi Race Course, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai
Phone: 022 30151130

Sahib Room and Kipling Bar
Although this restaurant isn't too old, its colonial charm and unmistakable Indian cuisine doesn't seem to strike a chord then we don't know what



MARITIME BY SAN LORENZO:

Chef Alessandro Bechini whips magic with the exotic flavours and delicate aromas that elevate the dining experience. Spaghetti Portofino and pan seared pomfret fillets will win you over and so will the warm hospitality. The mélange of traditional recipes and fresh preparations make this a must-visit for a splendid fine dining experience.



Address: Taj Lands End, Bandstand, Bandra West
Phone number: 022 66681234



else will! The British Raj inspired setting with a monochrome glinting on the signboard, ornate canelabras and an old-fashioned telephone will transport you back in time. The Gilawati Kebab and Rajma ki Tikki apart from the Kacche Gosht ki Biryani can tug over the most cynical heartstrings, making you appreciate the magic simple food can do. "If a customer wants

Chanaa Masala, we prepare it for him even if it's not on the menu and prefer cooking it how it is meant to be rather than transforming it," explains Chef Vinod who spearheads the operations for the restaurant.
Address: The St. Regis Mumbai, 462, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai
Phone: 022 6162 8422

Punjab Grill

Honesty in culinary preparation can enthrall you more than anything else! That's exactly why Punjab Grill comes into the picture. An establishment owned by Lite Bite Foods, this restaurant scores high with its plush setting and good ambience. The velvety kebab platter, Murgh Lababdar and the ravishing Dal Makhni will make you



swoon at our country's culinary repository. In multiple outlets, the restaurant is definitely a must visit for ardent fans of traditional food. The culinary delights make unaltered Indian food a complete pleasure to gorge on.
Address: Ground Floor, Morya Landmark - II, Opposite Infinity Mall, Off Andheri New Link Road, Andheri West, Mumbai

Culture on our palate

Fusion and experimentation could be a make or break and informed caution is imperative so as to not sacrifice on the culi-

nary heritage of food in a quest for instant fame. However, as we know exclusivity is the pull. It is essential to break monotony and make these experiences into a culinary adventure. "Molecular gastronomy has endless possibilities. We get to explore and experiment with a wide range of ingredients and techniques. In the process we create something uniquely creative. To keep up with the increasing competition in the industry, creativity is what sets us apart. It's appealing and appetising at the same time," says Aditya Gupta, owner of Spiceklub and vegetarian Quattro Ristorante chain.



Masala Kraft

The home of legendary gourmards, the Masala Kraft never fails to attract customers to keep walking through their doors. The elite class interiors make you feel like you are sitting in the Land of the Giants. From the succulent Tandoori pomfret to the prawns biryani, everything entices you about the place. "We prefer sticking to the originality of the cuisine which is paramount rather than playing with its essence," explains Chef Apurva Panchal.
Address: The Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, Apollo Bunder, Mumbai
Phone: 022 6665 3278

LE CIRQUE:

A beautifully crafted plate and satisfied palate is what Le Cirque at the Leela delivers. Be it the Pumpkin Tortelli with butternut squash or the Mille Foglie, a white chocolate mousse served with caramelised eggplant discs, everything defines exquisite fine dining. Brace yourself to devour the best French fare in the city!



Address: The Leela, Andheri-Kurla Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai 400059
Phone: 022 66911344