



Interiors

Game on!

With 125 games to pick from, Pair A Dice Café is for avid boardgamers if they are willing to overlook the long wait for all-veggie eats

REVIEW

FOOD Decent

SERVICE Slow

AMBIENCE Lively

COST Reasonable

VERDICT

PHORUM DALAL

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'GOGO naam hai mera...' Sure, most fans of the 1990s hit Andaz Apna Apna will be able to complete this phrase by Shakti Kapoor. We are greeted with its tweaked version: 'Aaya hoon toh kuch toh khelke hi jaunga' mouthed by his caricature at the entrance of Pair A Dice Café in Oshiwara.

Four black-and-white checkered Sunmica tables and a sit-down divan make for a cosy atmosphere, or a war zone if a game gets too intense. From Catan, Battleship, Terra to award-winning games like Eclipse, Small City, Tokaido and Linkee, you can choose from 125 options that cover party games, strategy, abstract, word building, team building as well as role-play.

In a corner, a giant shelf is filled with board games for age groups starting five. Owner Garima Bagrecha quit her finance job to start the month-old board game café because she wasn't happy

that her four-year-old daughter was hooked to the iPad. "People have stopped rolling a dice. They only click," she rues.

Settling at a table, we browse through the all-veggie menu. Each dish here has been given a name twist based on a game. We order a Mexican Bhel! Utter Nonsense (₹150) and Flux Out with Hummus (₹150). Prabhat, our steward and game guide, sets us up to play Splendour, a strategy game for two players or more. It takes him two minutes to explain the game and leave us excited to try it out. We munch on a buttery, toasted pita and cold hummus, both tangy and creamy. The Mexican Bhel has the crunch of tortilla chips, but the chilli sauce induces a coughing fit, making us lose round one.

We order the Godfather Nutella for some energy. We like the fact that it is not overly heavy like a freakshake, but certainly wish it was served chilled.



A caricature of Crime Master Gogo at the entrance of the café

To take us through the next round of play, we order a Garlicky Green Veggie Pizza (₹250) and Costa Rica Rice with Chilly Paneer (₹150). Prabhat introduces us to the next game: Pylos, where each player attempts to be the one who places the final ball on top of a pyramid. It's a fun game. We cheat, we fight, we scream, we laugh.

After four rounds of play, there's still no sign of our pizza. When it does arrive, it isn't the one we ordered. There's no garlic or pesto, but a cheesy bell pepper one. We don't mind — it is piping hot, juicy and has a crisp base.

Out last order takes over 40 minutes to arrive, and the rice is too sour with vinegar. Extra points for the fact that a non-hospitality team has conceived an offbeat concept.

AT Pair A Dice Café, 53, Oshiwara Link Plaza, next to Woodside Inn, Andheri (W). **TIMING** 12 pm to 10 pm, 12 pm to 11 pm (Friday to Sunday) **CALL** 26300345 **LOG ON TO** Cafepairadice on Facebook **COST** ₹100 per hour per head, ₹200 for two hours and ₹350 for the whole day; cover charge of ₹150



For restaurant reviews, log on to www.mid-day.com

Pair a Dice Café didn't know we were there. The Guide reviews anonymously and pays for meals. Exceptional ★★★★★ Excellent ★★★★ Very Good ★★★ Good ★★ Average ★

Do the dough

Learn how to create ice creams, egg-free desserts, brunch staples, and sourdough at an upcoming baking tour

SIGN UP

JOANNA LOBO

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BAKING never sounded this good. Date, Almond and Coconut Energy Balls, Black Bread Roll, Rosemary and Charcoal Crackers, and Brioche French Toast — learn all this and more at chef Shaheen Peerbhai's upcoming baking tour.

The three-city tour begins this weekend in Mumbai, where Peerbhai wants to show people that there's more to pastry than red velvet cupcakes and brownies. "I hope to push students out of their comfort zone by challenging them with new flavours and textures," she says.

The classes are divided into sections called Dessert Fix, Ice Creams, Easy Bakes, Chocolat, Creative Pastry, and the new Breads and Brunch Time. "Each year, I have my students request new things they want to learn. They've been chasing me to teach sourdough

Bombay Sourdough

bread, so I've brought my trusty little blob of levain (sourdough starter) from London. As for brunch — I do sweets all the time so thought it'd be nice to mix up a bit of savoury too."

Caramel Ice cream

The classes are demo-based because Peerbhai believes that people tend to learn more when they are focussed on what she is doing, rather than getting distracted with things like why their neighbour's dough looks different from theirs. "The students are an active part of the process and get a hands-on look, touch and taste at every step of the dish," she says.

Deconstructed Cheesecake

ON March 25, 26; April 15 to May 7 **TIME** 11 am and 4 pm **AT** Eighth Studio, off Carter Road, Bandra (W). **LOG ON TO** classes.purplefoodie.com **COST** ₹3,500 to ₹6,000



Vanilla and Praline Mousse; (top right) Shaheen Peerbhai. PICS/SHAHEEN PEERBHAH

NEW ON THE MENU

Dig into fresh and healthy Bento boxes

11.30 AM TO 12 AM Sample some fresh and healthy, unwrapped bento boxes, which offer a different menu every day. Offerings include satay, stir-frys, dim sums, salads, curries, gyoza, and dumplings.

ON Monday to Friday **AT** Mamgato outlets in Kala Ghoda and Bandra.

CALL 33999610 (Bandra) **COST** ₹499 plus taxes (veg), ₹599 plus taxes (non veg)

