



## Dinner and a Movie

Two reviews to help you choose your full evening of entertainment



Scott Barnett/Emerald

Diners enjoy the Indian cuisine at Taste of India, located on 25th Avenue and Hilyard Street. The restaurant opened over Thanksgiving.

## Dinner: Taste of India offers much

By Jack Clifford  
Oregon Daily Emerald

If your taste buds ache for a change after too many nights of ramen noodles, let Taste of India satisfy the craving. Open just four months, the eatery boasts authentic Indian fare at prices that are far from exotic.

Owner Palwinder Singh moved to Eugene from Ashland in late October and opened Taste of India on Thanksgiving weekend. His father owns a similar restaurant in the southern Oregon town, and patrons visiting from this area encouraged the Singhs to launch a new venture.

There's a lot to appreciate. First and foremost, Taste of India adds to Eugene's international offerings; competition among the various imported flavors should give us delicious cuisine.

On its own, however, Taste of India pleases the palate. Singh employs two main chefs and one second-chef, all with more than 10 years of culinary experience in India.

For the meat crowd, customers can choose between chicken, lamb, prawns and shrimp, each cooked either tandoori-style or with curry seasoning. Tandoori, for the novice, is a style of cooking, not a spice. Clay ovens are

### Taste of India

25th Avenue and Hilyard Street

Cuisine: Indian

Hours: Monday through Saturday  
dinner 5-10 p.m., lunch buffet 11  
a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sunday buffet  
dinner 5-10 p.m.

Food: ★★★★★  
Atmosphere: ★★★★★  
Service: ★★★★★  
Prices: ★★★★★

used to roast the marinated meats, creating a unique zing. The curry dishes, with their jalapeno pepper base, can be ordered mild, medium, hot or spicy. If you're trying Indian food for the first time, mild or medium is recommended.

Vegetarians aren't left out of the mix at Taste of India. Saffron seasoning punches up the biryani rice dishes, and vegetable dishes come with a curry flavor. Dhum aloo, potatoes cooked in a spicy, onion gravy, is a not-to-be-missed specialty.

Since the menu offers so many choices a la carte, an easy way to experience the full range of meals is to order one of the three "feast" combinations. The Chef and Taste of India specials are heavy on the chicken and lamb, although they

are balanced with sides of rice and mattar paneer, green peas mixed with homemade cottage cheese. The Pure Vegetarian Thali offers a savory medley, including spinach, garbanzo bean and vegetable samosa — patties stuffed with spiced potatoes, peas and fresh coriander — among other selections.

In addition to the main courses, appetizer lovers can fill up on lentil soup, vegetable fritters and one of 14 styles of fresh baked breads. Desserts include kheer, kulfi, gulab jamun or, for the less adventuresome, mango ice cream.

Dinner prices start at \$5.95 for some of the vegetable dishes and run all the way to \$12.95 for tandoori prawns and the mixed grill, a tandoori assortment. The feasts are \$13.95 for the vegetarian, \$14.95 for the Taste of India and \$15.95 for the Chef Special.

If those prices bust your budget, don't despair. Taste of India offers a daily lunch buffet for \$6.50, a bill University graduate student Bryan Smith gladly paid earlier this week.

"I'm mostly a vegetarian, and there're a lot of vegetarian dishes offered," says Smith, a creative writing major on break from class. "It's a good mix, because you don't have to stay with their spicier food, you can go with the milder choices."

## Movie: Yes, 'EDtv' differs from 'Truman'

By Jack Clifford  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Pop artist Andy Warhol once mused that everyone will have at least 15 minutes of fame. The new flick "EDtv" shows what might happen if you don't say "pass" when your turn comes around.

Matthew McConaughey plays Ed in this sly look — thanks to subtle inferences from scriptwriters Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel — at human behavior and cultural degradation. In addition, director Ron Howard takes our society's talk-show mentality and gives it a pretty good work-over. He takes jabs at our seemingly endless obsession with fame and at people wanting to join the larger-than-life world.

Some critics charge that the idea behind "EDtv" is just a rip-off of last year's big hit "The Truman Show," starring Jim Carrey. If those critics have now seen the former film, they'll see how it differs from the latter flick.

### EDtv

Director: Ron Howard  
Starring: Matthew McConaughey  
Score: ★★★★★

The more recent offering is not about some hapless boob who is unknowingly duped into becoming a national celebrity, a la Truman. Instead, Ed is a hapless boob who wittingly allows his mug to grace the screen. McConaughey does a fine job in the lead spot, using just enough Southern charm to come across as likable.

Ed is a simple man recruited to perform what at first is a simple task. He's asked to go about his daily routine, except he must let three or four guys with cameras record his every move, all of which is shown live to a cable audience.

Several performances besides McConaughey's make "EDtv" a hit. Jenna Elfman, from TV's Dharma & Greg, makes a solid transi-

tion to the big screen as Ed's romantic interest. His sexual attraction, however, is to Elizabeth Hurley, and the model-turned-actress shines as a self-serving vixen.

Woody Harrelson is hilarious as Ed's brother, Ray, while Martin Landau, Dennis Hopper and Sally Kirkland all contribute solid screen time.

But the real star here is the script, or actually the underlying sociological theme. Our culture has moved from an era of revering icons to a time when we toss out last week's idols with this week's trash, and "EDtv" captures perfectly this shallowness. In one short clip, DeGeneres' character sums up this phenomenon by defining Ed's success: "It's like he's a Beatle. Well, maybe a Spice Girl. Kind of a Beanie Baby, I guess. Okay, so he's Menudo."

A few bits don't work, and the ending is too trite and clean. But director Howard knows how to make a viewer-friendly movie, and once again, he has accomplished his objective.

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