



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For:**  
**ARKA RESTAURANT**  
725 S. Fair Oaks Ave.  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
(408) 733-2752  
[www.arkarestaurant.com](http://www.arkarestaurant.com)

**Contact:**  
**CITY DISH** or **ELLIPSES PR**  
Kevin Blum Tami von Isakovics  
[kevin@sfcitydish.com](mailto:kevin@sfcitydish.com) [tami@ellipsespr.com](mailto:tami@ellipsespr.com)  
(415) 290-2767 (415) 834-5492

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### **ARKA RESTAURANT, BAR & LOUNGE NOW OPEN, BRINGING THE AUTHENTIC FLAVORS OF INDIA TO SILICON VALLEY IN A SULTRY NEW ENVIRONMENT**

SUNNYVALE, CALIF.—January 5, 2012—Arka Restaurant, Bar & Lounge is now open, blending authentic Indian cooking with modern styles and presentation, creating a sensory experience unlike any other in the Bay Area. Located in the heart of Silicon Valley and named after the sun, which gives energy and nutrients to all life, Arka is the embodiment of innovative Indian cooking in a sleek and sophisticated environment, giving guests a culinary escape that soothes the soul.

Arka's cuisine highlights the many corners of India with traditional dishes, modern interpretations of classics and innovative flavor combinations suitable for every palate. Led by Owner Sreeni Battu, Consulting Chef Sachin Chopra and Executive Chef Surbeer Rawat, Arka seamlessly blends the traditional with the new on the seasonal menu that derives influence from the Northern flatlands and Southern coastal regions of India. Recently named as one of the "Top U. S. Chefs to Watch" by *Esquire* magazine, Chopra is also currently the Executive Chef and Owner of All Spice in San Mateo, Calif.

Arka's specialties include a selection of Tandoori kebabs, Biryanis, Curries, Dosas and Uthappams, along with an extensive side dish selection, breads and vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free dishes. The restaurant also follows the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch guidelines for sustainable seafood.

Many appetizers are offered, including the *Kaccha Kele Aur Palak Pakora*, fried fritters of raw plantains and spinach served with assorted chutneys (\$5.95), and the *Blue Ginger Gobhi*, florets of cauliflower tossed with galangal, tomatoes and scallions (\$6.95). Soups and salads are also available with seasonal selections such as the refreshing *Watermelon Salad* with fresh watermelon cubes, ripe tomatoes, basil, roasted almonds and achar oil vinaigrette (\$6.95).

Any proper Indian restaurant is certain to have traditional Tandoori dishes, and Arka features a generous selection of kebabs from the classic, *Organic Tandoori Chicken*, whole-roasted Cornish hen marinated with fenugreek, garam masala and other spices (\$13.95), to

a twist on a traditionally lamb-based dish with the vegetarian *Tandoori Subz Kebab*, an assortment of house special vegetarian kebabs including chetti gobhi, chakunder (beet), galouti kebab and lotus root shammi kebab (\$12.95), and the unique *Tandoori Mahi Mahi*, marinated Mahi Mahi with lemongrass and kaffir lime served with roasted Portobello mushroom fritters (\$17.95).

Biryanis are another specialty of the house, with a rotating selection of options on a daily basis and special regional Biryanis on the weekend. Selections could include the *Hyderabadi Dum Biryani*, a special house recipe of aromatic aged rice and chicken cooked on dum (steamed in a casserole dish), \$12.95. Highlighting the southern coastal regions of India, a generous selection of Dosas are available and include the *Eggplant Dosa*, stuffed with smoky eggplant and peppers flavored with tamarind, coconut and peanuts (\$7.95), and the *Pumpkin Dosa*, a house specialty filled with sweet and tangy pumpkin (\$7.95). Also on the menu is a selection of Uthappam, including the *Shrimp Vindaloo Uthappam*, topped with shrimp in a spicy vindaloo sauce and red onions (\$10.95). Other traditional entrée options include the *Butter Chicken*, roasted and shredded chicken in fenugreek-flavored creamy tomato sauce (\$13.95), and the *Konkan Fish Curry*, cubes of fish stir-fried with onions and peppers in a tangy mustard tomato sauce (\$15.95). Unique twists on the traditional include *Doodhiya Gosht*, a mild curry of lamb accented with ricotta cheese and kewra (essence of Screw Pine), and edible silver vark (\$15.95).

Vegetarian and vegan guests will delight in the plethora of dish options at Arka that will leave them romanced by the cacophony of bold flavors and satisfied with a delicious meal. From the generous bread selection of house-made naans and rotis to entrees such as the *Bharwan Chandi Kofta*, paneer and dried cherry-stuffed kofta in a mild cashew and onion sauce accented with kewra and silver vark (\$13.95), and the *Bhindi La Jwaab*, stir-fried okra with onions, pomegranate seeds and raw mango (\$12.95), guests are sure to be delighted. Arka also offers *Roomali Roti* – a light airy, hankerchief like special house-made bread (\$3.95).

On the sweet side, Arka offers a selection of classic desserts such as *Kulfi* and original creations including the *Carrot Payasam*, stewed carrots with ghee, nuts and a hint of green chilies (\$5.95) and *Lemongrass Brûlée*, lemongrass custard with sweet lemon pickle and burnt sugar crust (\$6.95).

Lunchtime brings about an extensive selection of many of these dishes with a fresh daily buffet available for guests who want to sample a little bit of everything (\$10.95 Monday-Thursday; \$11.95 Friday-Sunday).

With close to 200 seats, Arka's design allows for a variety of different dining environments, fit for any mood. The space's warm atmosphere was designed by Sanjeev Malhotra of Studio SM2, who has been designing hospitality, civic and public projects for the past 20 years in the San Francisco Bay Area, Japan, Europe and India. At Arka guests can cozy up to one of the stools at the sleek, glass tile-backed bar, enjoy a cocktail and a bite from the bar menu in the lounge with charcoal-colored ceramic tile underfoot, or gather in the main dining room, with its picture windows to the outside and access to the lunchtime buffet. Guests in the unique "sunroom" alcove enjoy one of two semi-circular booths, flanked by windows on three sides, making a perfect setting for sharing a meal and jovial

conversation. Larger parties may also enjoy the private dining room, fit for seating up to 50 guests and/or the main dining room, which seats 100. In addition to in-house private banquets, Arka also offers off-site catering for large parties. Beautiful hardwood tables are simply adorned with modern placemats, European silverware, crystal glasses and clean-lined plateware, chosen to allow each dish to show itself off to the diner. Banquet, booth and individual table seating offers a variety of environments in which to enjoy Arka any time of day or night. Contemporary Indian-inspired artwork and large graphic prints and subtle plants accent the space. In the summer, Arka plans to open an exterior patio space to enjoy al fresco dining.

Arka offers a Bar Menu of small plate options as well, the perfect complement to the nightly happy hour in the bar and lounge from 3 to 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. to close. Bites include popular *His Majesty's Chili* Chicken, spicy boneless chicken cubes stir-fried with green chilies, curry leaves and cashews (\$6), Madurai *Fried Idli*, flash fried rice cakes tossed in sweet chili garlic sauce (\$4), and *Karari Calamari*, flash fried calamari with semolina, onions and curry leaf served with a mustard dipping sauce (\$6).

Overseeing the guest experience and bar program is the talented General Manager Michael Agnel. Using his versatile palate, Agnel created a selection of seasonal and classic cocktails that best complement the bold flavors of the Indian menu. Original selections on the "South of the Border" cocktail menu, named for its propensity to include the many Mexican and Latin American spirits that pair well with Arka's cuisine, include the *Pisco Amigo*, pisco, muddled lemon, brown sugar and a lemon slice (\$8), and the *Smokey Bandit*, mezcal, muddled pineapple, brown sugar and a lemon slice (\$8). A seasonally-changing *Farmer's Market Cocktail* showcases the Bay Area's abundant produce. Arka also offers a generous selection of spirits, tap and bottle beers, beer blends, beer flights and the "Half Yard Special" of Kingfisher Indian Ale.

The wine program at Arka focuses on organic, sustainable and biodynamic wines in line with the restaurant's "drink local" philosophy that reduces carbon footprints. The wine list, with options available by the glass, bottle and flight, focuses primarily on selections from California, Oregon and Washington State, with a hand-picked list of additional wines from around the world, all chosen by Agnel to pair with the vibrant dishes at Arka.

Open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Arka offers casual yet sophisticated dining in a beautiful space created to enliven the spirit and nourish the body. No matter the occasion or company, Arka is sure to offer a stunning and memorable dining experience to any guest year-round.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Photos available upon request