

Diwan's New Chef Serves up a Sociable Feast for the Senses

Chef Shen Ousmand of the McEwan Group cooks up a family-style sharing menu at the Aga Khan Museum's fine dining restaurant



Diwan at the Aga Khan Museum; photo by Jiali Ou.

Toronto, June 25, 2018 — Just in time for the summer social season, the Aga Khan Museum's restaurant, [Diwan](#), launches a new menu focused on sharing dishes designed for contemporary family-style dining and inspired by the passion and experience of the restaurant's new chef, Sri-Lankan born Shen Ousmand of the McEwan Group.

The McEwan Group, led by Chef Mark McEwan, has been at the helm of the Museum's food services since 2016. McEwan, whose other Toronto landmark restaurants include One Restaurant, Fabbrica, North 44 and ByMark and the grocery emporium McEwan, ranks the creation of Diwan as a high point in his stellar career. Trained in classical French cuisine and North American techniques, Shen Ousmand has been with McEwan since he was a young cook and comes to his new post at Diwan having most recently served as Executive Chef at McEwan, running the grocery store's kitchen and overseeing the catering division.



Diwan Executive Chef Shen Ousmand; photo by Jiali Ou.

Chef Shen delved into his formative years growing up in Sri Lanka coupled with two years catering the Museum's private events, to shape his new menu for Diwan. As a restaurant within a museum dedicated to connecting cultures through art, Diwan offers innovative approaches to Middle Eastern, North African, and South Asian culinary traditions. Chef Shen has built on that foundation with his new dishes, which are infused with the flavours of Colombo – one of South Asia's most diverse cities – and are served up in a style that encourages the multisensorial and sociable dining experience Chef Shen recalls from his youth.

"In Sri Lanka, we always eat family style, with everything on the table and everyone sharing and getting a bit of each dish," says Chef Shen. "It fosters that social interaction you want when you're at table, even when you're an invited guest rather than a family member."

Highlights of the new menu include:

- Sizzling Tikka Platter with chicken breast (\$20) or shrimp (\$22) with yellow, green, and red peppers, onions, cilantro, and ginger lemon juice.
"The sizzle and aromas when this comes to the table really whet the appetite," says Chef Shen.
- Braised Lamb Shank with hummus, eggplant relish, lamb reduction, and coconut kale sambol (\$24).
"One of the most popular dishes on the new menu, with my signature fusion sambol."
- Whole Boneless Mediterranean Sea Bass with tomato chraimeh and mint lemon tapenade (\$28).
"A great dish for family-style dining, and you can mop up every drop of the sauces."
- Chef Fatoush Salad with Ontario grapes, Colombo carrots, cilantro cucumber, mint yogurt, and tamarind reduction (\$17).
"The garnish is inspired by a carrot curry my mother makes."



Chef Fatoush Salad, Braised Lamb Shank and Whole Mediterranean Sea Bass at Diwan; photos by Jiali Ou.

In addition to the new standard lunch menu, Diwan is also introducing prix fixe menus that can be ordered in advance.

Diwan is open this summer Tuesday to Thursday, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm, with extended hours on select Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 11:30 am – 5:00 pm, allowing diners to enjoy the long days of summer on Diwan’s patio overlooking the Aga Khan Park. Visit the Museum’s [Ticket and Hours](#) web page for the latest schedule.

Find downloadable hi-res imagery [here](#)

Social Media

Handle: @agakhanmuseum

Hashtags: #DiwanToronto, #DiwanPatio #AgaKhanMuseum

The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, Canada, has been established and developed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), which is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The Museum’s mission is to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the contribution that Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage while often reflecting, through both its permanent and temporary exhibitions, how cultures connect with one another. Designed by architect Fumihiko Maki, the Museum shares a 6.8-hectare site with Toronto’s Ismaili Centre, which was designed by architect Charles Correa. The surrounding landscaped park was designed by landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic.

– 30 –

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

Nicole Amiel, Holmes PR
namiel@holmespr.com
416.628.5612

press@agakhanmuseum.org
416.858.8735