



Gauri Devidayal and Jay Yousuf at The Table

GAURI DEVIDAYAL AND JAY YOUSUF

Mix equal parts chartered accountant and computer engineer to get two co-owners of The Table...

HORS D'OEUVRE: Jay had just relocated to Mumbai from San Francisco when a chance meeting with old friends from New York introduced him to Gauri. "I was out with my sister and her husband for a drink at a bar, The Ghetto actually," she says with a laugh about the South Mumbai institution, "and Jay just happened to be there." Having recently moved back from almost nine years in London, Gauri

could relate to the struggle to settle in and jokes about how they found consolation in each other. "I knew I wanted to bring back some of San Francisco to Mumbai and was thinking of opening a restaurant. Gauri worked in Bandra then so I'd schlep all the way there to meet her, find excuses to have dinner," says Jay. Their first dinner together was at Wasabi by Morimoto, at the historic Taj Mahal Palace, a

venue the couple returns to for anniversaries and special occasions.

ENTRÉE: The couple married in December 2010, just a month before The Table opened and it's safe to say that their lives revolve around it. It's rare to walk into the gorgeously-designed space and not find Gauri running the show. "There are no weekends in the business and we spend so much time at the restaurant that when we do go out, it's hard not to turn into a critic. I think most restaurateurs feel that way. It's impossible to switch off, especially

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when we work together," says Jay. His favourite item on the menu is the crab cake – "Each cake is almost a medium-sized crab," he says. Gauri swings between the lobster eggs benedict and the Provençal lamb ragout with pappardelle. "I think it makes such a difference when the pasta is made fresh," she says. "We go out only for the food we don't make over here, like if we want Chinese or Sushi, or the butter garlic crab at Trishna." The couple also used to visit street food haven Swati Snacks quite often but these days it is the vada pav procured by the caretaker of their Alibaug home that most frequently finds its way to their plates. As for cooking at home, "He makes the best pancakes and I make the best eggs, so we are completely breakfast people," says Gauri. "We are at the restaurant so much that we hardly get to eat at home otherwise. But no gourmet cooking happens there, it's mostly dal and rice."

SOMETHING SWEET: Gauri and Jay love travelling together and spent the time before opening the restaurant exploring North India, something Jay had never really experienced before. Gauri endorses him as the best guide to San Francisco and what he calls his 'food pilgrimage'. The couple is expecting their first child later this year. "Jay is a far better cook than me," says Gauri, "he caters to all my morning sickness whims."