

# Noted Restaurateur Sanjeev Sethi Passes Away

Sanjeev Sethi, the legend behind the famous Host Restaurant brand, died peacefully at the Hill House Hospice in Richmond Hill, Ontario on February 28, 2019 at 9:45 a.m., at the age of 56.

He was with his family when he passed on. After a two-day snowstorm, the sun appeared to light his way.

Sanjeev was a gifted chef and successful businessman who was known for his boundless energy, his infectious enthusiasm and his selfless love. He reached his greatest heights as a devoted son, a loving husband, father and brother. He was a loyal friend whose generosity touched everyone he met.

Sanjeev moved to Toronto in 1987, a young and ambitious man who learned the restaurant trade under his uncle. In 1995, he started The Host restaurant. Fortune smiled on him, and the business blossomed.

Today, The Host and its many offshoots rank as the best Indian restaurants in the country. Sanjeev's heart was big enough to encompass everyone he met. He was a dynamo and we were all nourished by his energy, whether at the center of the dance floor, driving 240 km/hr on the Autobahn, or climbing Mount Kailash on a pilgrimage.

Though we will never fill the void his absence leaves, we will always carry his beautiful spirit

with us. Sanjeev will be greatly missed by his parents, Sham Sunder Sethi and Sudershan Sethi, wife Anita, children Ashish and Pooja, brother Jetender (Archana), nephews Krishna and Aaryan, uncle Kashmiri Lal Monga (Nirmala Devi), aunt Kamlesh Kumar (Vijay), and a circle of extended family and friends too many to count.

The family would like to thank his doctors at St. Joseph's Hospital and nurses at the Hill House hospice for providing Sanjeev and his family with peace during his last days. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be sent to Hill House Hospice in Richmond Hill. <http://hillhouse-hospice.com/donate/>



## The Host Began With Sanjeev's Dream



Sanjeev Sethi, along with his brother Jay Sethi, are pioneers of fine Indian dining in Toronto. Together, they owned The Host restaurant serving food that combines the richness of Indian spices and the artistry of Indian culture. "Sanjeev was the chef in the family, he used to take care of the kitchen", says younger brother Jay, who manages the business side of things.

Born and raised in India, the two brothers immigrated to Canada in 1989 with the dream of owning a restaurant.

Sanjeev started, like many entrepreneurs do, with a vision and no more than a little pocket change to his name. His professional restaurant experience began as a server at Sangam Restaurant, the premier Indian restaurant in Toronto at the time. It was here that he learned the skills of a professional kitchen but had made it a point to keep the lessons that his mother had taught him about food in his mind all

along. In 1995, they opened their first restaurant at Bay and Charles. "Starting out at this location was a challenge for us. It was an expensive location to maintain. But we were relentless and went against all odds", explains Jay. Soon after, they opened a second branch at the prestigious Yorkville location.

The brothers went on to expand in areas where the demand for Indian cuisine was more. They opened branches at Mississauga, Richmond Hill, and Wellington St. "It is interesting how we have learnt more about the diversity of our Indian culture, from living outside of it, in Toronto.

"This is why we moved to Toronto and why we will celebrate 20 years of service in 2015", concludes Jay. Sanjeev's reputation had earned him a clientele of Hollywood A-Listers like Harrison Ford, Michael J. Fox and Richard Gere. He also enjoyed the regular patronage of Canadian



ex-Premier Dalton McGuinty. In 2014, he was recognized by the Indo-Canadian Chamber of Commerce, as the Male Entrepreneur of the Year.

Canada Post released a pic-

ture postage stamp of him, honouring his career and charitable support for the Trillium Foundation, The Ripple Effect Wellness Organization and the William Osler Health Founda-

tion. His appearances on Breakfast Television, CBC's Chef in the City among others, have only fortified The Host as a gastronomic empire that it deserves to be.

## 'Host Is All About Love'

With four locations in the GTA, The Host prides itself in creating dishes that have taken the experience of traditional Indian cuisine to a new level of creativity and service. Chef Sanjeev's recipes are a culmination of 30 years of experience in the culinary world.

"Indian food has a rich and complicated history, the secret to mastering it is very simple. At The Host it is all about love, patience and passion", Chef Sanjeev used to say.

The hospitality of the friendly staff stays true to its name, and is representational of the centuries old saying and practice in India

- "Atithi Devo Bhavah", which means that "The Guest is equivalent to God".

Their values are reflected in the excellence of their food and service. And this is what Sanjeev always insisted upon.

The Host's menu is as fusion as it gets. It offers an array of Indian gourmet and street food - true to the richness of Indian traditions, while adhering to a non-traditional presentation.

While one can expect chicken tikka masala to be on the menu, what's unusual is the five different flavours of chicken tikka masala, all developed by Sanjeev.

## A Great Legacy

*It is with great sorrow that we share the sad news of our co-founder Sanjeev Sethi's passing last week.*

*The Host has lost a visionary and talented leader, and we will always miss the presence of this inspiring chef, teacher and friend. He built a tremendous legacy on the foundation of quality, dedication and generosity that will forever remain at*

*the core of everything we do.*

*We cannot put our grief into words, but we are forever grateful for Sanjeev's guidance and his leadership. The team he personally trained and mentored is dedicated to building on his legacy with the same commitment to quality and service that guided his every action.*

**- Jay Sethi**



Shanti Paath in honour of Sanjeev Sethi - 'May He Rest in Eternal Peace' - a religious ritual to bring solace to the family and friends of the deceased was held at the Vishnu Mandir in Toronto on Tuesday.