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PLUS

'Jayaflava', packed with diverse local flavours

By Dilushi Wijesinghe
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Tasha Marikkar launched her debut cookbook 'Jayaflava' on December 20 at the Stables at Park Street Mews describing it as "a mouthwatering culinary tour of Sri Lanka."

Inspired by the diversity of Lankan cuisine, Tasha referred to herself as "a real achcharu" referring to her mixed ethnic background – her father is a Ceylon Moor and her mother is both Colombo Chetty and Sinhalese.

"I spent four to five years researching this book, and I try to represent every community. I put their roots in every dish in the book," Tasha says. "It's really important that people should learn the diversity of Sri Lanka through its food," she adds.



A treat for the tastebuds: A feast of local dishes



A section of the audience at the launch

Said Tasha's mother Neela Marikkar, Chairperson of Dentsu Grant Group, "It's a proud moment for me to see this come out because she's very passionate about food and Sri Lankan culture."

Explaining what led her to publish a cookbook, Tasha said that when she was in advertising, working till about 3 a.m., "the only thing I'd look forward to is coming home and cooking myself a meal."

Upon discovering her culinary talent, Tasha took the initiative to pen down 80 recipes featured in her book, including her favourite Jaggery Beef and Red Chicken curries.

"We have what we call a verbal history rather than a written history," she says, explaining that her biggest challenge was to find accurate flavour profiles through



research.

"My hope is Jayaflava will spark a Sri Lankan food revolution, where people will learn to cook authentic Sri Lankan dishes and help make our food a home-cooked staple around the world."

"The meaning of 'Jayaflava' is a hybrid of the words 'Jayawewa' and 'Flava' – I coined the term to celebrate my two homes, Colombo and London," she writes in her book.

Published by HarperCollins Publishers India, 'Jayaflava' priced at Rs. 7500 is available at Sarasavi and Vijitha Yapa Bookshops as well as on Amazon.



Tasha Marikkar speaking at the launch. Pix by Akila Jayawardena

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