

## Press Reviews

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{slide=Click here to watch Saturday Hungama - Vancouver}{flv}saturday-hungama{/flv}{/slide}

Toronto Sun - Lesley Annett. October 23, 2009

Congratulations!

You have won a top spot in the Toronto SUN's 16th Annual Readers' Choice Awards. We asked our readers to choose their favourites in a number of popular categories, and you are a winner.

Saravanaa Bhavan, Bronze in the category of Vegetarian Restaurant

Our readers are discriminating individuals, so it was no surprise that your company got a resounding number of votes.

\$10 buffet will make a Tamil food lover out of you (Globe & Mail - Vancouver)

Vegetarians rejoice! The same goes for lovers of India's unsung regional cuisines and anyone tired of plain old butter chicken. Saravanaa Bhavan has arrived in Vancouver to entice us with the spicy, entirely meatless Tamil delicacies of southern India. [Click here](#) to read more... (requires registration)

Line up at Bhavan equals good food, great price (The Vancouver Sun)

At Saravanaa Bhavan, the lineup on weekends is for the good food. Not fantastic food, mind you, but decent, very well-priced South Indian vegetarian food. The doses (the melodramatic diva of South Indian dishes) are especially good and there are a lot to choose from. The baseball bat-sized crispy south Indian crepes, with a filling in the mid-portion are light, crispy and delicate – a meal for under \$10.

And if you're wondering what the name of the restaurant is about, Sarvanaa is one of the Hindu god Shiva's sons, a name often used in businesses. Bhavan can be translated as house or store.

## Subtle spice route leads to Saravanaa Bhavan (The Georgia Straight)

Back to the onion bajjis, which are brought to the table, like all dishes here, on a stainless-steel thali. The chickpea batter is brown and crunchy, the onions inside very slightly crisp and moist – it's a textural high. On the side is a coconut chutney specked with mustard seeds, and a sambar for dipping or dripping over the four little deep-fried cakes (one of the few South Indian dishes that aren't steamed or roasted). Flavours are like having an orchestra in your mouth. Just as you identify one taste, another moves in. The heat level is medium – enough to leave an impact, though the testosterone crowd may complain. Other appetizers include the small steamed rice-and-lentil idly and various vada- lentil doughnuts. Served in a spiced broth with a fresh mint chutney, rasa vada looked like dumplings but were so light they almost melted on the tongue. Appetizers are large enough to share.

### The garden of earthy delights

With dishes and spices like these, it would be easy.  
Mark Laba, The Province

It's a long and winding road through an edible landscape not common on these shores. Idli (cakes of black lentil and rice), doughnut-shaped vada, vatral kozhambu (a Tamil soupy curry), rava kichadi (roasted sooji or semolina cooked with onion, tomato, green chilies, carrots and green peas) or pachadi (chopped veggies cooked up with coconut, chilies, mustard seed and ginger and is a tasty side dish for savoury lentil curry).

"Mmm. It's like my tastebuds have just read the Upanishads," Boris commented. [Click here to read more...](#)

### THE BOTTOM LINE: Meditations on a veggie way of living

### Saravanaa not your average Indian buffet

Tim Pawsey, Vancouver Courier

"The buffet is clean, well organized, clearly labelled and frequently replenished. And, if asked, the staff will guide you personally through, explaining every dish and suitable pairings of starch and sauces.

Highlights? More than a few of note include the gently spiced rasam lentil soup--which my Tamil friend tells me is a variation on Mulligatawny, a Tamil word, meaning "black pepper water." Sambar soaked rice and lentil "doughnuts" are another hit. Likewise the variety of rices and extraordinarily sweet desserts such as the rasamalai, made from steamed and poached cheese with saffron milk..." [Click here to read more](#)

However, what makes the experience is the constant parade from the kitchen of fresh naan and dosa, brought right to your table. The wafer thin paper masala packed with potato and onion is alone worth a visit.

### National Post

"Saravanaa Bhavan's South Indian menu offers something every diner craves -- a diversion from the expected... Saravanaa Bhavan serves up myriad flavourful stews and curries in a variety of forms. There's so much going on here taste-wise..." [Click here to read more](#)

## Globe & Mail

"In India, they line up for the vegetarian delicacies at Saravana Bhavan. Now Toronto-area Indian-food lovers are doing the same."

## Toronto Star

"Saravana Bhavan cooks some of the best South India food I've ever had. This is vegetarian cuisine, richly varied. Dosas are a highlight. They are the easiest-to-like foods and HSB lends them a disarmingly home style flavour. There's lots more goodness here – the extensive menu begs serious exploration. The best way to get acquainted with Saravana Bhavan is via a combination meal. The staff of this large, regal dining room is kindly and sincere almost to a fault and will go to any length to explain things. And yes, the menu is startlingly inexpensive."

## Toronto Life

"HSB is dazzlingly clean and graciously run. Few images adorn the peach-coloured walls; the floor is tiled under tables of blond wood and Formica, and the lights are as bright as a Dairy Queen. Glance into the kitchen behind the brightly lit, smartly utilitarian restaurant – the gleaming steel reflects serious investment by the famous chain. Into this pristine environment comes some of the best South Indian cooking I've ever tasted."

## Toronto Vegetarian Association

"One step into HSB and you're greeted with the aroma of South India. It is a real treat for vegetarians especially Dosa lovers. But hey, wait a minute; it is not about Dosa alone. HSB offers many other excellent lunch and diner items. The Saravanaa meal is a feast and a treat. For people with a sweet tooth, there is a whole variety to choose from. Dining at HSB is not just eating – it is an experience. The restaurant is very clean, and the service is excellent. For example, the servers just love to demonstrate how to mix the special Madras Coffee. Service with a smile, authentic good quality food and a virtual tour of South India – that's the experience"

## India Journal

"This phrase, 'home away from home' is not a cliché. Diners now have a new destination to halt for a quick bite. Chefs for this restaurant have come from Chennai, India to maintain the same taste like back home. And it is this taste that pulls diners from far and near to have their fill of authentic South Indian food"