



SHOBA NARAYAN

AN AUTHENTIC, ALBEIT EARLY, INDIAN LUNCH

08.17.07

In my eternal quest for simple authentic Indian restaurants serving regional cuisine, I sought out an 80-year-old place in a crowded narrow street in Balepet, Bangalore, that old-timers told me had food to die for. It took a while for my auto-rickshaw to navigate the narrow roads and find [Udupi Sri Krishna Bhavan](#). The name itself is a throwback. Modern Indian restaurants don't have four-word names. They call themselves "Sunny's" or something equally snappy. Inside, waiters in blue shirts and sarongs served steaming dishes ordered from a painted menu that hasn't changed in 80 years. The regulars came in, sat down, and waited for the servers, who wordlessly plonked down a dish in front of them. As I watched my neighbors wolf down dish after dish, I felt like the character in *When Harry Met Sally*. "I'll have what she's having," I told the waiter. "Oh, and what he is having, as well...and him and her." There were five types of dosas and a few fluffy idlis (steamed rice cakes). All were excellent and served with chili-spiked coconut chutney. The batter and the chutney were ground in giant blenders at the back of the restaurant. By noon, the giant vessels were empty and the restaurant had closed. So go early to get the choicest pickings, as early as 7:30, when the place opens.

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