

Kevin Pietersen becomes the new brand ambassador for Whyte & Mackay Chronicles cricket notes for his scotch and single malt favorites from the W & M portfolio, paired with culinary delights from the award winning cuisine of Kebabs & Kurries at ITC Royal Gardenia

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April 19, 2010 : Whiskey tasting sessions have been in vogue for some time now and celebrated master blenders across the world have made our olfactory senses aware of the palate and the notes that distinguish a particular whisky from the other. It is when an iconic cricketer compares his favourite drink to the best cricketing shots in his repertoire and the aromas and textures of traditional Indian food that remind him of his trotternama through India, that the concept of tasting sessions takes a whole new meaning. **Kevin Pietersen, the new brand ambassador for Whyte & Mackay, did precisely this.**

To mark his association with Whyte & Mackay and to raise a toast to this new beginning, Kevin decided to do a little extra and bring in that third elusive element to this whole scotch tasting session. A comparison between the different portfolio brands of Whyte & Mackay, the earthy longing of Indian food from Kebabs&Kurries at ITC Royal Gardenia and those crafty caresses on the cricket field which has seen Kevin notch up 5000 test runs in the fastest time earlier this year.

So what is common between Whyte & Mackay Special, the lofted straight drive and straight of the *Murgh Barrah* at Kebabs&Kurries?

“The lofted straight drive is a shot that I often use when I play. This shot needs timing, the right amount of caress and technique and a lot of grace to make it effortless. The Whyte and Mackay Special sports the same charisma. Firm, mellow and full, its elegance rises gently to reveal its long age in wood giving it a distinguished graceful smoothness,” said Kevin.

And when it comes to India, can there be a better connect of this than with the quintessential and entirely palatable *Murgh Barrah*, “Chicken breast and drumstick soaked in malt vinegar marinated with yoghurt, *masala* and cooked in

traditional Indian clay oven will enhance the experience manifolds. It has so many commonalities with the silky overtones of the Whyte & Mackay Special.” Madhu Krishnan, Executive Chef, ITC Royal Gardenia suggests, “And if you like lamb, *Pathar ka Gosht*, Lamb escallops marinated with Native Deccan spices smoked with charcoal and cooked on traditional stone that aristocratic heritage which speaks of refined luxury which will be the perfect accompaniment.”

If this was a precursor to what was coming, Kevin had completely warmed up to his role to take on the Whyte & Mackay 13. W&M 13 with its round and mellow silky overtones is known for its excellence in blend that displays balance between the grain and the malt: an old age Victorian charm of refined luxury. “W&M 13 for me exudes charisma and luxury and on the cricketing field there no other shot than the delicacy of a fine leg glance that can compare more to this. Effortless and elegant to watch this is a shot for the connoisseurs, steeped in the history of the Don Bradman’s of lore,” recounted Kevin Chef Madhu adds on, ““And what better way to complement it but with some kakori kebabs , a traditional, irresistible mouth melting kebab cooked on traditional *kakori grill*. For the vegetarians, Chef Madhu recommended another one of her specialties, *Kehkeshan*, “A mélange of vegetable cooked together in sweet and tangy tomato gravy with pomegranate seeds has an unforgettable taste which remains far after the dinner is over.”

Kevin “KP” swiftly moved into the realm of Whyte & Mackay 19, known for its rich, fleshy full flavor appealing with a lingering drift of the blended malt within. “For me the Whyte & Mackay 19 represents the flesh and muscle associated with power. Its full body flavor and lingering drift talk about a presence that cannot be ignored; a presence that has to be acknowledged for the sheer personality it brings to the table. In cricket for me the one shot that represents the same characteristic in my game would be the quintessential slog sweep. It’s a shot that I have perfected over the years and which today I use with impunity to stamp my dominance in a game. This shot is more about muscle power and intimidation, a shot that cannot be ignored because of its style and attitude.”

Chef Madhu adds on, “When we compare that kind of a cricketing shot to a palate of Indian cuisine, the only one name that comes to my mind is the *Murgh Bemisal*, smoked chicken legs simmered in dill flavored velvety tomato gravy with hint of dried fenugreek leaves, because no other Indian cuisine wears its Indian ethnicity and attitude up its sleeve as well as the *Murgh Bemisal* does, especially when I think about the kind of Indian food which is popular globally.” The other dish, from Chef Madhu’s kitchen to complement Whyte and Mackay 19 is the *Burrhani Gosht*, “Cuts from the lamb leg cooked with onions, spiced with whole *Garam masalas*, served with dollop of garlic curd, it just can’t get any better than that.”

Weaving the entire W&M scotch trail together with the exotic cuisine prepared under the supervision of Chef Madhu, Anant Iyer, Business Head- Luxury, United Spirits Limited, said, “Kevin is a well known name today- known as much for his on field flamboyance as for his prodigious talent. Few know that within Kevin lies a connoisseur of scotch and single malts. And it is indeed that little extra from Kevin to let his fans and Whyte & Mackay patrons in on his scotch experience and culinary delights. Never before probably has any sporting icon compared notes between a spirit, a gourmet cuisine and the game itself. It is this little bit extra that separates Kevin from others. As a brand ambassador for Whyte & Mackay, the passion he had for the brand he was endorsing came out in his effort of comparing his game with the delicate nuances of the scotch he savoured.”

Executive Chef Madhu Krishnan said "Indian cuisine is a melting pot of culinary influences & harmoniously accentuate the intrinsic flavors. The award winning cuisine of ITC's Indian restaurant 'kebabs & Kurries' make their way forth from the armoury of clay ovens, iron tandoors, charcoal & 'Pathar' stone grills along with rustic 'angethis' & 'tawas' which seamlessly blends, compliments & enriches the Scotch experience for even the most fastidious gourmet like Kevin Pietersen.

So there it was. A tasting session with a difference at the city's best address for the finest whiskey bar 'Highland Nectar' at ITC Royal Gardenia. A master cricketer with that little bit extra taking on cricket, malt and Indian cuisine in the same platform. Everyone knew about Kevin's pedigree with the cricket bat, but with this what came through was an ambassador of a brand, whose passion for the scotch and single malts could only be compared to a welcome swig of the Whyte & Mackay 19, with a resounding "Cheers mate, its swell whisky, innit?"