

FARE

Proprieties and Peculiarities from the World of Food, plus One Good Bottle, Agenda, and More

AGENDA

JUNE

1-3

OKMULGEE PECAN FESTIVAL

Okmulgee, Oklahoma

Since 1981 the town of Okmulgee has thrown a bash for Oklahoma's native nut the pecan, with three days of live music, carnival rides, and the obligatory ten-foot-wide pecan pie. In 1989, Okmulgee set the record for the largest pecan pie ever baked, with a dessert measuring 40 feet in diameter, weighing 14 tons, and requiring 3,044 pounds of pecans. The town lost the title in 1999 to El Paso, Texas, but the citizens have designs to win it back in 2007. No matter how big it is, there should be plenty to feed the people who eagerly line up for a \$3 slice. Information: 918/756-6172.

JUNE

9-11

ROSY RHUBARB FESTIVAL

Shedden, Ontario, Canada

In 1993 the 250 residents of Shedden decided to hold a rhubarb festival to raise money for a new community center. The idea took off, and now the town plays host to as many as 12,000 visitors who come to celebrate the area's most famous vegetable and its mascot, Rosy the Rhubarb. You can buy fresh rhubarb pies and rhubarb muffins or enjoy ice cream with rhubarb sauce. Between dessert samplings you may bid on a handmade quilt, grab your partner for some square dancing, or bop to the beat of local bands. Information: 519/764-2600.

Rule, Britannia!

Iran meets India in the heart of Mumbai

OFFICE WORKERS enter Mumbai's Britannia & Co. in packs, as if they were tigers converging on a fresh kill. Plates of food arrive in heaps within "ten minutes"—a span of time that is both part of a mission statement and a feat of efficiency matched only by the efforts of the city's roadside snack vendors. One of a dying breed of eateries called Irani cafés—for the homeland from which the Zoroastrians of India fled—Britannia has been a fixture in Mumbai's Ballard Estate district since 1923, when, after signing a 99-year lease, Rashid Kohinoor opened his doors to British officers who were stationed in what was then called Bombay.

It is doubtful that the décor has changed much since. Open only for lunch, Britannia is lit mostly by the tree-filtered afternoon sun and cooled by a battalion of fans mounted high above the customers, who sit in imported Polish chairs and dine at tables swathed in red-checked cloths. Kohinoor's son and the current proprietor, Boman, is the place's most prominent fixture, usually stationed near the entrance manning the diner's hulking, old cash counter or eating with his brother or son at one of the back tables.

Boman Kohinoor, proprietor of Britannia & Co., in Mumbai, right.

The junior Kohinoor admits that, in colonial times, Britannia served "bland food" in order to appeal to unadventurous taste buds. During World War II, the Brits even occupied the restau-

rant, turning it into a military headquarters before returning it to the elder Kohinoor's brother in 1947. When the Kohinoor family decided to return to Iran in the 1970s, they sublet the space to an-



