

DIVERSIONS



Sheryl Greenspan

Notes on a Napkin

Indian Kitchen has spices for every taste

THE INDIAN KITCHEN

Location: 7330 Yonge St., Thornhill

Phone: 905-881-0195

Type: Indian

Entrée Selection: Excellent and varied

Price Range: Entrees \$6.95 and up

Hours: Daily lunch buffet 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (\$8.99); dinner Sunday to Thursday 5 to 10 p.m.; Friday to Saturday 5 to 10:30 p.m.

Even though I've been dining in York Region for more than 30 years, I never cease to be amazed by the hidden gems that exist around almost every corner.

The Indian Kitchen is one such gem, tucked into the bottom of a residential/medical building at the corner of Yonge Street and Clark Avenue in Thornhill.

The Indian Kitchen is a well-run, comfortably decorated restaurant offering a unique and delicious selection of specialties from many regions of India.

If you are a novice to Indian dining, you should take advantage of the knowledgeable and professionally attentive staff at The Indian Kitchen. Even if you enjoy Indian food regularly, you are likely to come across some regional delicacy here you haven't seen elsewhere.

Indian food is some of the most interesting and flavourful cuisines anywhere, however, there is a misconception all Indian food is fiery hot.

In fact, Indian food utilizes a vast assortment of spices, including hot, sweet and aromatic ones. To help you find the heat level that works for you,

See DISH, page 17.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Schomberg artist Sharon Eyres sells her folk art on eBay.

eBay shoppers quick on the click

BY ANNE HOWLAND
Staff Writer

Imagine you had a garage sale and 45 million people showed up.

That's what it's like to use eBay, according to York Region residents who frequent the world's largest community of online buyers and sellers.

After a classified ad elicited little interest in a camera and some darkroom equipment, Robert Nichol of Newmarket ventured into the virtual marketplace. He registered himself on eBay and placed two ads.

"I made sure to include photos of the items to attract buyers, then chose the one-week auction format," Mr. Nichol explains. Being cautious, he specified cold, hard cash as payment.

Then he let the fun begin. "The most exciting part was watching the scrum over the items in the last half-hour of the auction, when everyone is trying to get the last bid in."

When the fur stopped flying, Mr. Nichol got less than he want-

ed for the camera but twice the amount he expected for the darkroom equipment.

Just like a neighbourhood garage sale, eBay was started by a small community of Internet users to buy and sell stuff.

But the trust-based system quickly grew into a multibillion-dollar enterprise, selling everything from teacups to timeshares.

TIREKICKERS, SCAM ARTISTS

With size came problems. The growing phenomenon quickly attracted its own tirekickers, hucksters and scam artists.

While eBay estimates only about 1/100th of 1 per cent of transactions are fraudulent, it can be difficult to determine if that teacup was used by Queen Victoria or bought on the weekend at Wal-Mart.

King City's Rebecca MacBride has been cruising eBay for four years and knows a red flag when she sees one.

"One woman listed six small ruby-red liquor glasses as being early 18th-century French glass...

In fact, these were glasses that had been a part of a Texaco gas station promotion in the '60s or '70s," she notes.

While frowning on such gaffes, she admits there is a flipside.

"Many people are selling family possessions but don't really know the actual value of what they have, so prices on smaller items can be very good," confides Ms. MacBride, who scooped up a 1940s necklace of small gold flowers with amethyst centre stones for a "fantastic" price.

Using old-fashioned word-of-mouth, eBay's buyer and seller profiles help run cyber shysters out of town, although there is little to stop them returning under a different name. It's important to ask lots of questions before bidding, Ms. MacBride says, particularly about payment and shipping, which can be costly or even non-existent.

"Don't be disappointed if a seller says they do not ship to Canada. Often, if you contact them, they will review your profile — comments made about you by

others you have done business with — and this is an excellent gauge for a buyer or seller's integrity," she says. "Based on that, they have always told me to go ahead and bid and they will ship after all."

While eBay does not offer appraisal value, it lets you know exactly what people are willing to pay. That's useful for Sharon Eyres, a Schomberg artist who has used eBay to sell her folk art scenes for the past year.

The reason eBay works for me is that my art is available for sale 24/7 to all of Canada and the United States," she says. "Someone can bid or peruse at their leisure. They also have direct access to ask me any questions."

Ms. Eyres pulls in \$130 to \$600 per canvas and has built a following south of the border. She gets artistic inspiration from watching bidders compete for her work and has learned a little-known marketing secret.

"It seems around a new moon

See FRUSTRATION, page 17.

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