

# NEWS



THE RITZ-CARLTON

LAGUNA NIGUEL

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## The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel Appoints Chef Sanjay Rawat to Spearhead New Culinary Program Dedicated to Indian Weddings

*Rawat draws on his Northern Indian roots, decade of culinary experience in international kitchens, and modern artistry to offer an authentic, yet contemporary approach to regional Indian cuisine*



L-R: Chef de Cuisine Sanjay Rawat and Rawat's Multi-Coursed Plated Meal mixed with Family-Style Options  
(credit: Katrina Frederick)

DANA POINT, Calif. – March 2, 2022 – [The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel](#) is thrilled to announce Chef Sanjay Rawat as the chef de cuisine of a new, chef-driven culinary program dedicated to Indian weddings. The New Delhi-native brings a decade of international cooking experience with a nuanced understanding of India's multi-faceted culinary landscape. Rawat's program balances tradition with edge, from authentic dishes like New Delhi Gol Gappa to twists on classics with modern flare such as Tandoori Scallops and a Masala Leg of Lamb carving station. Distinctive to Rawat's culinary approach is his imaginative presentation and artistic, multi-coursed plating that allows each dish to beautifully showcase independently. Continuing to strike a balance, guests can enjoy an exquisite plated meal combined with family-style selections as to not take away from the full culinary experience essential to Indian weddings.

Guests can expect multiple menu choices with varied color and rich flavor, including vegetarian and non-vegetarian buffets, family style, and multi-course plated meals. Committed to making every couple's experience personal with thought and care, Rawat can also adapt and create a fully customized menu according to the guests' regional preferences as well as religious and dietary restrictions. Further honing in on his culinary-driven approach, he creates the entire menu from scratch, including spice blends like garam masala, chutneys, fresh beverages like Masala Chai, paneer, and pastries and desserts such as Gujrab Jamun Cake. The menu will include modern dishes and fun takes on Southern California influences like a Masala Nacho Bar, Chennai Crab Cake, and Coconut Seabass with squid ink toile. The action stations pay homage to Indian street food, including Tandoor to Plate with various proteins and vegetarian selections, a build-your-own Paan Bar, and North to South Griddle with aloo and paneer paratha, dosa, and chila.

Continuing to focus on an authentic and informed perspective to Indian cuisine, the resort is also hosting paid culinary interns from India to help prepare the hotel's Indian wedding specialties.

“Over the years, we’ve seen an increase in Indian weddings at The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel given our reputation, service commitment, and expansive location with a variety of indoor and outdoor oceanfront venues. Food is a central component of these beautiful ceremonies and it is important to us that we cater to our guests’ needs with care and creative attention.” says Karen Chastain, General Manager of The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel.

Rawat was born in Uttarakhand, India, a state in Northern India, and grew up in New Delhi. Cooking was a central part of his family life, which ultimately inspired his pursuit for a culinary degree in Malaysia. Over the course of 10-years, Rawat honed in on his craft and mastered regional Indian cuisine, working in kitchens across the world, from the 5-star Taj Hotel in New Delhi to a prominent restaurant group in Bermuda, before moving to Southern California. Stateside, Rawat cooked at Clay Oven, where he started to become inspired by his peers and the West Coast’s diverse culinary scene. He later moved on to the Hyatt Regency Newport Beach, cooking in the banquet kitchen, before taking on his new role at The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel. Regardless of the restaurant’s cuisine, Rawat found a way to tie in his roots into dishes that introduced Indian flavors and ingredients in creative ways. Rawat is fluent in Hindi, Gadwali (his province language), and can understand Punjabi and Bengali.

“I am honored to have the cuisine of my heritage become a central focus of The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel’s culinary programming. Food is an important part of Indian weddings and the resort’s thoughtful approach in allowing me to create a dedicated culinary program with unique elements parallels my own commitment to authenticity and quality,” says Chef de Cuisine Sanjay Rawat.

For couples looking to plan their wedding at The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel and to inquire for more information, please call 949-240-50504 or visit [www.ritzcarlton.com/lagunaweddings](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/lagunaweddings).

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#### **About The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel**

[The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel](#) opened in August 1984 as the first Ritz-Carlton resort perched above Salt Creek Beach with panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and direct access to more than three miles of sandy beach. Presented against an extraordinary backdrop, the re-imagined surfside retreat redefines the guest experience by creating distinctive and unforgettable moments that embrace its oceanfront setting – from sea-inspired spa treatments and locally sourced restaurant menus to ocean view accommodations, family-friendly eco-adventure excursions, and unique surfboard displays. The seaside property offers 396 guestrooms and suites with personal patios or balconies, along with six distinctive dining outlets, an intimate Ritz-Carlton Spa, a dedicated Eco-Adventure Center, and unrivaled activities that embrace the surroundings. The iconic resort emphasizes unparalleled Ritz-Carlton service while delivering a genuine experience with a playful approach to luxury. Follow The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), or [Facebook](#).