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Vermillion in Chicago, by John Zich, USA TODAY

**Ethnic food is tasty, trendy**  
Popular restaurants across USA offering upscale international fare ■ 1, 6D

## Cover story



By John Zich, USA TODAY

**At Chicago's Vermillion:** Rohini Dey, left, and chef Maneet Chauhan with a selection of Indian tapas.

# Multilateral menus

In trendy U.S. restaurants, cultures mingle on the plate

By Jerry Shriver  
USA TODAY

## Entrees to the world

If it seems as though the USA is at odds with most of the world, you just haven't sampled an upscale restaurant menu lately. In the kitchen, at least, we're in the throes of an unprecedented multinational love affair.

For those keeping tabs, India with a Latin twist is the most chic coupling in Chicago at a new place called Vermillion. In Denver, Asia and Mexico cohabitate in the same stylish room at recently opened Zengo.

Elsewhere, Japan commands unheard-of dollars in New York and Los Angeles, Vietnam just won a James Beard award for San Francisco, and Spain, with its tiny, tasty tapas, is teaching diners in every major city the art of sharing.

Say howdy to the age of gustatory glansnost. For the first time on a nationwide scale, first-class ambience, smart service, well-traveled customers and adventurous and authentic cooking are intersecting in foreign-themed restaurants whose names don't begin with "Chez." Whether the fare is advertised as "fusion," "global," "regional" or simply "ethnic," diners are welcoming it with open arms, minds and wallets.

## Vermillion

"Authenticity" is the mantra for most chefs at modern ethnic restaurants, but some focus on creating something completely new by fusing elements of two or more cuisines. At Vermillion in Chicago, executive chef Maneet Chauhan borrows from Indian and Latin American traditions. "You find a lot of the same ingredients in both cuisines, but they are cooked in a very different way. And in both instances, the sky is the limit as far as spices are concerned."

Six cuisines and the chefs who make them special, 6D-7D



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