

Second helpings

The Big Chill

With two branches in Khan Market, The Big Chill is Delhi's favourite comfort food hang-out for expats, teeny-boppers and college students alike. It's been around for six years and is still popular. On Saturday nights, the crowd waiting to get in to the establishment, which doesn't take reservations, forms a snaky line through Khan Market's middle lane.

There are two really good things about the restaurant. The first is its colourful, laid-back ambience with eye-catching movie posters and inoffensive pop music. The other is its home-made ice cream, which comes in an array of flavours from vanilla kit-kat to banana walnut chocolate chip. What's even better is that the ice creams are crafted into an extensive list of calorie-rich desserts or can be enjoyed atop warm waffles.

However, laid-back can be taken too far, and this is the case with The Big Chill's wait staff. Though it's refreshing that waiters aren't constantly sucking up to customers, service can be irritatingly slow for simple things like taking food orders and bringing beverages. A couple of yells across the restau-



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rant usually does the trick, though. Be warned, however, that take-away orders can go awry.

The salads and starters are fresh and tasty. We tried the Lebanese Mezze platter (Rs 180) with hummus, baba ganoush, pitta and a crisp salad with plenty of lemon and paprika. The antipasti platter is

also decent, though the vegetables look like they came out of a can.

Yet the pastas and pizzas, which should be the cream of The Big Chill's Italian fare, are increasingly plagued by excessive oiliness – perhaps due to the use of substandard cheese. The ham and black olive pizza (Rs 190) was a little spongy

and overly orange, and the baked penne pepperoni (Rs 200) was drowning in grease. Even the spaghetti Bolognese (Rs 180) suffers from oil overdose. Other main dishes and sides are simple, hearty and generously portioned and – as long as they don't involve too much cheese – eminently edible. Of course, hot, greasy, carbohydrate-filled American-Italian cuisine is not always a bad thing. In that case, order a ginger fizz along with your food – it will go down easier. We got a sweet ice cream sundae and the sinful Mississippi mud pie to help it all down even

more smoothly. Happily, at The Big Chill's new Khan Market branch, you can even enjoy a post-gluttony smoke on the upstairs balcony. *SS 68 Khan Market, opposite Salim's (4175-7588/99). Daily noon-11.30pm. No alcohol served. Mastercard and Visa accepted. Meal for two Rs 700.*