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Rich and famous clientele at area's food stalls

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FOOD stalls in Bangsar Baru are no different from the food stalls you find elsewhere. However, one striking feature is its regular upmarket middle and upper middle class clientele which include politicians, celebrities and expatriates.

One finds, for instance, MP of Lembah Pantai, Datuk Sharizat Abdul Jalil frequenting the Ravi Tandoori stall behind the Jolly Green Giant (an indoor hawker centre).

On the occasional evening, you catch a glimpse of singer-musician Amir Yusoff, ravishing model cum TV compere Paula Malai Ali, actor-comedian Harith Iskander and Imuda, and TV personalities such as Kelvin Ong, Suhaimi Sulaiman and Jeffrey Ong. I even saw Sheila Majid there once.

(It is also around the stalls that one sees the eccentric drunk giving public sermons on the role of the Government, the Doc Marten-clad blindman asking for donations, and the husky-voiced, Malaysian busker singing Hotel California!)

Mahadzir Lokman, TV personality and managing director of Dale Lokman Communications, says he goes to the Bangsar Baru food stalls because this is where he finds his favourite sup lidah.

"The stall I go to prepares it very well," he says.

For sup lidah, or a chat with old friends in slightly more upmarket surroundings like The Zest, Mahathir drives to Bangsar almost every other night from Petaling Jaya where he lives.

Also, he says, the area "has an aura of closeness, uniqueness and an `overseas' feel to it." He adds that Bangsar also resembles a pedestrian mall, which is the best feature of the so-called suburb. He also believes that some of the city's best restaurants are located in Bangsar, and obviously, he has found his favourite one there.

Another regular customer, banker Mohamad Safri Shahul Hamid bills Bangsar as "the most famous place in the city." He travels regularly from his home in Kampung Pandan to the Bangsar Baru stalls just to have dinner with his friends there.

Claiming that the food in Bangsar Baru is "the best" compared to other places, Mohd Safri says he also loves the area because all shops are within walking distance to one another.

"I come here between three and four times a week," he says, adding that his favourite food at the stalls is black pepper steak.

"The atmosphere is very different from other places. Maybe it's because of its proximity to the city centre," says Mohamad Safri.

"I've seen many celebrities and models here too," he says, admitting that the opportunity to rub shoulders with celebrities is a strong reason for him to dine in the area.

"Not to forget the chance to view exotic cars here, as there are a lot of rich people who hang out in Bangsar," he says.

A tourist from London, Simon Tweedy loves the place. He says the blend of cultures in the area and the superb food attracts him to Bangsar Baru. He lives nearby in Pusat Bandar Damansara.

"I love the naan and the other food I get here is excellent," he says, adding that the higher food prices at the Bangsar Baru stalls do not bother him at all.

"After a beer at nearby pub, it is good to come here for food," he explains, giving the impression that putting pubs and food stalls in a

residential area is the formula for a commercially-viable, upmarket place.  
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