

Singapore's popular Clarke Quay is buzzing as a matter of course, and when you get near the Rupee Room things get a little hotter.

This is where Indian expats, as well as Singaporeans of all ethnicities, go to when they need an Indian music fix. The Rupee Room, which celebrated its first anniversary last month, is known for its star DJ from Udaipur in Rajasthan - Anurag Tiwari, better recognised as DJ Anuraga.

India Se: Your ability to get a party started with good beats is great - were you always musically inclined and when was your first endeavour with music?

DJ Anuraga: I started guitaring at the age of 12 and was always interested in music. I also play the synthesizer (keyboard) and was definitely crazy about it from a very young age, paying less attention to my studies and more to music. My first attempt at being a DJ came at the age of 15 where I would DJ at parties and weddings'; my first major gig was with the Oberoi's in Udaipur at Trident Hotel. I then moved on to work with the Taj Lake Palaces Villas and Devi Garh, one of Liz Hurley's favourite destinations. So I started young and have been in the club scene for 11 years.

IS: Being a DJ is not a conventional Indian profession, so how did your family react to it and did you face any obstacles?

DJA: Well my father is a doctor and my mother is a singer. My father actually wanted me to be a doctor but when he saw my passion for music and how I was so engrossed in it he let me go for it. Being a singer, my mother was quite supportive. It was admittedly a struggle, the money was not that great at the time and I was balancing two jobs at the same time.

IS: How did you know DJing was for you?



Beat that

Music is in his blood - small wonder that Anurag Tiwari is rocking Clarke Quay, writes ROSHNI LAKHIANI.

DJA: In Udaipur at that time no one even knew what a DJ was. I just loved all types of music and I started playing by using a cassette player. There were no fancy gadgets at the time. My friends realised how good I was, and they encouraged me. An older friend introduced me to old school music and I loved it. He in particular suggested I start DJing for weddings and parties. That's how I started, and I didn't stop.

IS: Does being a DJ mean that you have to stay awake till the wee hours? What's your lifestyle like?

DJA: I have a wife and a child and interestingly, my lifestyle is still quite "normal". On weekends however I am at Rupee Room till 4am, so the nights become late. In the day you will usually find me scoping out new music, doing research, trying out different mixes. You have to constantly be on top of the music industry.

IS: With technology and culture having changed, there are many aspiring

young DJs out there, doing it for fun or even professionally. What advice do you have for them?

DJA: Firstly I would say be passionate about what you do, you have to really enjoy it, then you will thrive in it. In this profession you have to know how to read people, know your crowd. You need to be able to handle the people and really feel the pulse of the music. Becoming a good DJ takes a lot of hands-on experience and years of practice. You also have to be able to be a communicator - networking and talking to people is important in this industry and is a skill that you really need. On the console when you're the DJ you have to show "attitude" - but always remember people are coming to party, have a good time and de-stress, so work towards that. It's an entertainment industry, after all.

Finally I would say, you have to play good music but you also have to play with music! **IS**