



# CHUTNEY MARY

*The Story*





## CULINARY HISTORY

Chutney Mary opened in the summer of 1990 on the Kings Road. It was a leap of faith to open an upscale Indian at the far end of Chelsea, even though Chelsea had an interesting residential profile, ready to be experimental about a more sophisticated interpretation of Indian food.

The restaurant scene in London at the time had just a couple of glamorous restaurants with Asian cuisines, such as The Bombay Brasserie and Blue Elephant. Chelsea & Fulham were very much dominated by trendy Italian restaurants such as Le Famiglia, San Frediano and Mario's at Brompton Cross. Bibenum opened in 1987 and so did River Café, and Gordon Ramsay hadn't yet headed Aubergine which came 3 years later in 1993.

Indian restaurants were the place to go for a sharing meal with a group of family and friends. Lots of dishes were ordered for the table and everyone partook of little or many dishes. If you didn't like spicy food you avoided going for an Indian.

Chutney Mary was new at many levels. It had an exotic and luxurious tropical atmosphere -comfortable cane chairs, an intimate colourful inside and a plant filled conservatory. The food when it started, was the **Anglo-Indian food** of the Raj which hadn't appeared in restaurants in the UK before, a contemporary styled way of serving plated Indian food by courses, enabling people who didn't want to share enjoy their own choices, and a first time well-chosen wine list to match the intonations of spicy food. Neville Abraham who started Les Ames du Vin was one of the investors and directors of the venture. The original menus are attached.

Chutney Mary struck a chord with the sophisticated and adventurous diners of the area, and soon acquired a formidable following among Indophiles and a well-travelled client base. It slowly became a destination restaurant and had people coming from far and wide. It was a 100 seater, but often did between 150 and 200 covers an evening.

Soon, it also spurred the publication of many cookbooks in Britain of Anglo Indian and other cuisine in the first half of the 20th century colonial India.

However, evoking nostalgia among those who had spent their childhoods in India, the clamour from the guests was that they wanted to see on the menu more food from the different regions of India and so the menus began to reflect a large selection of regional Indian dishes, changing from time to time. This was the first time that an Indian restaurant in India or overseas had a pan-Indian menu. Sample menus attached.

Restaurant critic's reviews of the period attached.

Chutney Mary was awarded the Curry Clubs Best Indian Restaurant in the country, which featured in the BBC television evening news which proved a turning point.



After 5 years- in 1995, the Anglo Indian specialities were dropped from the menu, as the patrons asked instead for a wider range of authentic regional cuisine.

The 25 years old lease for the restaurant premises came to a close, and since the milieu of Chelsea and its profile of residents had undergone a change and it was logical for Chutney Mary to be relocated closer to the present and future customers interested in Indian fine dining and a search for a new site began. The objective was for an equivalent site of 100 seats or more, at one ground floor level, in an area where well-travelled people could easily converge.

In 2000 the restaurant was renovated, luckily such an opportunity arose at St. James's Street. It was the location of the original Madame Prunier which opened in 1932, a favourite haunt of the then Edward Prince of Wales, which in 1976 was replaced by Suntory and then was bought by Marco Pierre White in 2002 for a Wheelers.

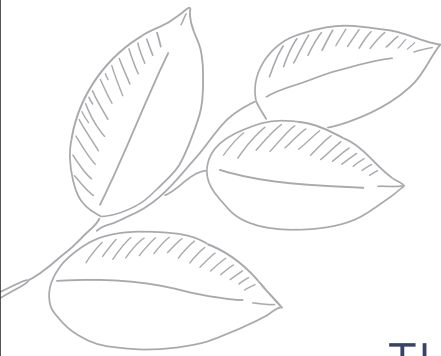
Chutney Mary opened in St. James in June 2015 in this new stylish St. James's location. And the decor modernised, with lots of shimmering candles. It had been redefined successfully with a glamorous new personality into a luxurious and eclectic restaurant with an adjacent cocktail and dining bar, known as the Pukka Bar. This is a bespoke handsome bar where London's cool elite can enjoy exotic cocktails and champagne and either graze or eat a full meal.

### **The key features of Chutney Mary's pioneering food now includes:**

- Retaining a few of the most loved dishes which were on the original menu, and for which customers come and seek them out-these include the Tokri or basket Chaat, an usual Indian street food dish, the Goan style crab cakes consisting of only fresh flaked English crab meat, the calamari chilli fry, the unusual Goan Green Chicken Curry, and from time to time the Anglo-Indian bread and butter pudding.
- In keeping with modern eating, incorporating into an Indian menu a variety of lighter eating dishes such as an Indian soup, small plate options, exotic salads and a variety of grilled, tandoori and barbecue items, particularly a wide range of seafood.
- Exceptional and unusual recipes from all over India are refined and adapted with a contemporary twist
- The restaurant redefines quintessential Indian cuisine, bringing together authentic flavours, reinterpreting traditional recipes applying innovative techniques
- Using highly accomplished chefs who are trained within the region of their Indian birthplace, giving the menu authenticity and complexity
- Fusion innovative desserts combined with traditional Indian sweet dishes with contemporary sophistication
- Food presentation refined in keeping with evolution of customer sensibilities, using glamorous tableware and glassware.

A carefully chosen eclectic wine list by a widely travelled wine consultant to pair with a cuisine containing spices.

The restaurant also has two private dining rooms which cater to upscale luncheon meetings and dinner parties.



## THE ESSENCE OF CHUTNEY MARY

To become a London institution, restaurants must walk a tightrope. Building too high on old foundations can come across as straying from the loyalties that made a place great. Resting on those foundations as if they are laurels can lead to a complacent energy, with the dining room atrophying like Miss Havisham's quarters in *Great Expectations*.

Chutney Mary has walked that tightrope for its 35 years in London. Always adjusting to taste – not just in its dishes, but in its location, décor, amenities, and atmosphere – it has mastered the art of balancing past and present to meet the changing London restaurant culture and the tastes of its diners. But this has come at a cost, as the city's relentless focus on newness rushes past this keystone of Indian dining, despite it constantly being ahead of trends that are otherwise so breathlessly chased.

Up until very recently, “authenticity” has ruled the day, not just in London, but in “metropolitan” food culture around the world. This extremely complicated term is most often applied overly simply, basically translating to, “food that tastes like I assume it would taste in its origin country.” A reaction against – in London – versions of foreign cuisines perceived as Anglicised or bastardised, it may have protected diners from some disappointing dinners, but also doesn't even begin to do justice to the complexity of cooking a given cuisine in a place not its own. This is especially true of Indian cuisine, given its variance along regional, religious, and caste lines, so the fact that Chutney Mary was cooking multi-regionally as early as the start of the 1990s makes it a true pioneer not just in Indian food in London, but in the city's understanding of restaurant culture as a whole.

More recently, however, the limitation of the term have begun to enter the popular imagination. Not just in London's Indian restaurants, but in the cuisines of Thailand, France, Italy, fashions have moved from national to regional identity, with diners now wishing to be shown the distinctions between different areas, cities, and populations not just on a given menu, but in restaurants dedicated to single regions.

It's true that this transition from a rigorous but limited notion of “authenticity” to a taste for regionality has improved the recognition of Indian restaurants in London devoted to specific cuisines, but many of these have quietly long existed in residential areas like Harrow, Southall, and East Ham. Chutney Mary, meanwhile, was ahead of this by thirty years, opening with an Anglo-Indian menu before evolving into its Pan-Indian guise, which, to the fullness of the term, means a forensic dedication to individual regions, rather than a broad brush approach which washes over the fine lines of regional cooking.



Today, its focus on India's multiplicity has evolved further, with gentler, innovative nods to dishes that demonstrate differences without feeling like slavish recreations. The Goan crab cake from the original menu have a contemporary referent in the gratinated balchao, while the direct call-outs of regional specialities on the former "Celebration of the Great Curries of India" have now mellowed, as more diners understand what to expect from regional Indian cuisines. The fact that, in 2023, more restaurants are focusing on sourcing and regional call-outs than ever before, shows how Chutney Mary was both ahead of its time and is currently at the top of the tree in London still.

This comes from chefs recruited from India's many regions expressing what their region's food means to them, right now; this is the balance between foundation and innovation that has kept it at the top of Indian dining in London over three decades, reflected through the city's 2025 tastes. To be able to do this across two very different locations – Chelsea, and St. James's – and several renovations is all the more remarkable. Of its early contemporaries, the likes of Italian quartet La Famiglia, San Frediano, Meridian and Mario's; Hilaire the original Ivy and the original Hakkasan, few have moved forward like it, and many have not survived at all.

There are also lesser-seen dishes from those regions of India, like a Goan green curry based on the cafreal marinade introduced during Portuguese colonization, and surprising presentations that reframe what a "traditional" dish can be. A broodingly fragrant venison samosa comes not wrapped in thick pastry, but in a gossamer pastry cone, completely changing the ratio of filling to pastry while nodding to the form that inspired it.

Accordingly, Chutney Mary is both a food scholar's paradise and an unintrusive backdrop for a meeting, celebration, or romantic date. The dining room is one of the most elegant in London, and its menu is just as suited to a special meal of shared dishes as it is an individually course meal. Those who seek to understand the complexity of India's cuisines will be left sated; those who just want the food to underpin the rhythm of conversation like a bassline will be delighted. Another tightrope, consummately balanced.

This is the heart of Chutney Mary: a supple, luxurious, and generous hospitality allied to a deep understanding of not just India's cuisines, but of what different diners – from day to day and decade to decade – want when experiencing them. The foundations are strong, but always ready to be built on, walking the tightrope of a London restaurant institution with consummate aplomb.





## THE FOUNDERS

INDIAMAIL *U.K. News* Wednesday July 18 1990



**T**he forgotten foods of India are brought alive in London at the first Anglo-Indian restaurant, Chutney Mary, at 535 King's Road, SW10.

The menu offers a variety of cross-cultural flavours like Bombay Bangers (fresh pork sausages made with ginger, green chilli, spices and tamarind) and appam from Kerala with mutton stew, to name a few.

Launched under the direction of Namita Panjabi from Bom-

bay, the sister of Camellia Panjabi, who set up the Bombay Brasserie in London, six years ago, five chefs from India at Chutney Mary will be offering cuisine from all areas of India.

The name Chutney Mary is derived from the term used by conservative Indians to describe an Indian woman who was more westernised in her dress, style and manners.

Also within the restaurant is the Verandah Bar, serving colo-

nial beers and Indian snacks. It will be open for lunch and dinner seven days a week.

The group who runs Chutney Mary is headed by Ranjit Mathrani, Namita's husband; Neville Abraham and Laurence Issacson.

Seen above is the team behind Chutney Mary — seated behind (from left to right) Laurence Issacson, Ranjit Mathrani and Neville Abrahams. In front is Namita Panjabi (left).

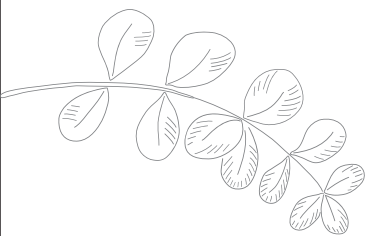




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1990







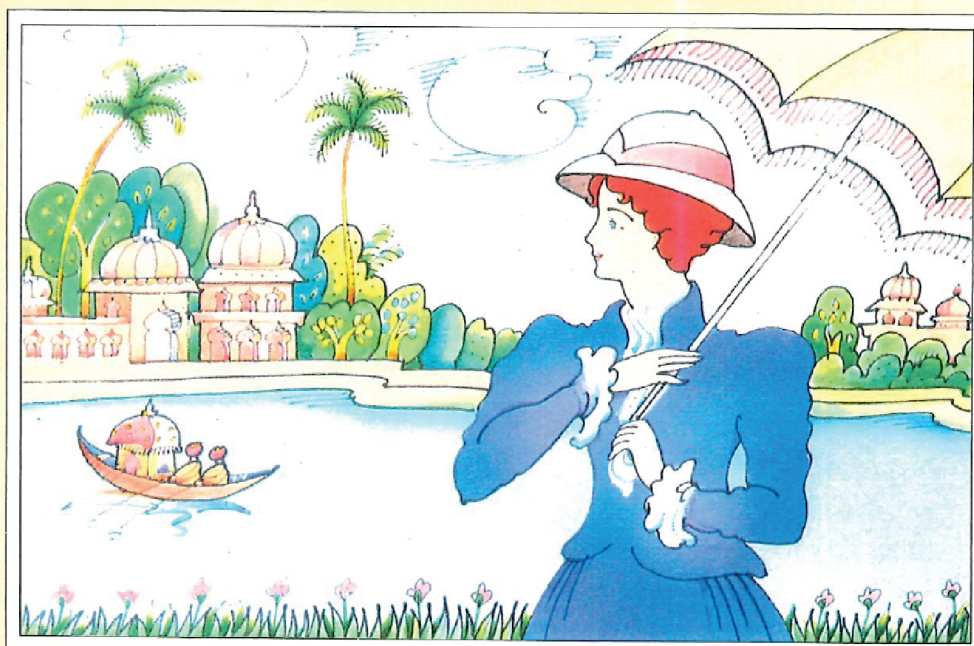
CHUTNEY  
MARY

MENU  
1990

Great Cakes

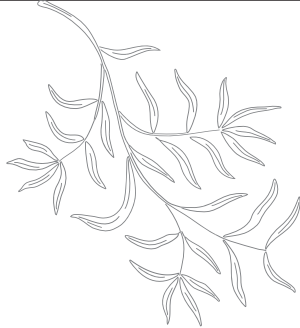
Menu Cover  
1990 - 1995

# CHUTNEY ♦ MARY ♦



THE WORLD'S FIRST  
ANGLO-INDIAN  
RESTAURANT





MENU  
1990

*Starters*

1990

**Curried Mango and Yoghurt Soup**

Unique spicy and sour soup inspired by the fresh mango curries of Western India £2.95


**Yoghurt Medley**

Small dumplings (*Kachoris*), chickpeas and potatoes in beaten yoghurt, drizzled with three chutneys – tamarind, red chilli and fresh coriander with herbs. £3.95

**Vegetarian Kebabs**

Assorted vegetarian *Kebabs* made with lentils, cottage cheese, spinach and crushed vegetables. £3.95

**"Burra Hazri" Liver**

 Served as Anglo Indian elevenses. Lambs liver sautéed in a sauce of pepper, cumin and onions on toast. £3.95

**Kakori Kebabs**

The legendary melt-in-the-mouth *Seekh Kebabs* of Lucknow. £4.50

**Memsahibs Lacy Cutless**

Cutlets in India are patties made from anything minced, in our case lamb, and were popular dishes that Indian cooks made for their European masters. The cooks, unable to pronounce "cutlets" called them "cutless" and so they are called to this day. They have become a part of India's bourgeois cuisine. £4.25

**Spicy Crab Cakes**

A traditional recipe from Goa. Served with fresh coriander and mint Chutney. £4.95


**Noodles Mandalay**

Noodles with shredded chicken in a spiced coconut sauce. A national dish of Burma, which was part of India in the earlier part of this century. Known in Burma as *Kowswe* (pronounced "cowsway"). £4.95

**A Salad of Cashew Encrusted Goat's Cheese**

Served on a bed of mixed leaves, roasted peppers and Mary's Chutney dressing. £4.95

**Madras Prawns**

 Two large prawns marinated in red chilli, spices and lime, and pan fried. £5.25

*Cuisine of the Christian  
Communities in India*

The main Christian communities in India are comprised of the Anglo-Indians of mixed descent who live all over the country; the East Indians from near Bombay; the Goans, Mangaloreans and the Syrian Christians of Kerala on the West coast; and the Madras Christians. Each of these communities are culturally different, and so are their cuisines.

**Lamb Lonvas (or East Indian "bottle masala curry")  
served with lemon rice**

A signature dish of the East Indians, so called because they got permission from Queen Victoria's government to call themselves this, in view of their long and devoted service to the East India Company.


Every year at the close of the spice harvest season, they pound 21 different sun dried spices (each family has its own recipe for the blend), and store this *masala* in long green bottles to use for the rest of the year.

This curry is mild, aromatic and made with coconut milk. £8.95


**Kerala Lamb Stew with Hoppers**


Hoppers (appams) are rice flour pancakes, soft in the centre, crispy on the outside, called Indian crumpets by the English in India. The stew combination is the result of the Irish priests who settled in Kerala, where it is a very popular dish. £8.95

**Mangalore Prawn Curry**

 A fiery curry made with rare spices, reminiscent of Goa, cooked in an earthenware pot. Served with steamed aromatic rice. £9.50

**Green Chicken Curry from Goa**

 Boneless pieces made with freshly pureed coriander, tamarind, mint, green chilli and other herbs. Served with steamed aromatic rice. £8.50

 particularly spicy

Papadums and Special Chutneys are included in the cover charge of £1.00



MENU  
1990



1990

## Anglo-Indian Specialities

### Bangalore Bangers and Mash

Bangalore is a town in Southern India where the English retired, and where many Anglo Indians now live. Masala sausages are popular even today. Ours are made from pork with green chilli, ginger and other spices, and are free of preservatives.


£7.25

### Potato Chops

Pan fried lean lamb chops coated with mint chutney and mashed potato. Served with wilted greens.

£9.50

### Country Captain

 Pieces of chicken breast braised with red chillies, almonds, raisins and spices, served with lemon rice. Named after the dish prepared for British Army Captains when staying overnight at the Indian Country (dak) bungalows.

£8.95

### Salmon and Chutney Khitchri

Layers of salmon and three types of rice – herb, tomato and spiced – a forerunner of the Kedgeree as you know it.

£8.50

### Grilled Lobster

Fresh lobster marinated in chilli, ginger and lime and then grilled.

£14.50


### Stuffed Fish

Fresh whole trout boned and stuffed with shrimps and spices.

£8.25

## Unabashedly Indian (presented unconventionally by Chutney Mary)

### Lamb Narangi

 Boneless lamb in an orange flavoured curry sauce. Nizam Azam Jah created a recipe of lamb with fresh orange juice. Since then this dish, served with steamed rice, has appeared on many a Maharajah's table in India.

£8.95

### Roghan Josh

Made to a classic recipe. Pieces of lamb simmered with onions and spices. A North Indian speciality served with aromatic rice.

£8.95

### Chicken Purdah

Boned tandoori *poussin*, stuffed with chicken mince pilau and served *en crouste*.

£9.50

### Tandoori Salmon

Fresh salmon steak marinated in yoghurt, dill and spices and grilled in a Tandoor. Served with chargrilled peppers.

£9.25

### Ginger Lamb Chops

Tandoori grilled lamb chops marinated in ginger juice and herbs.

£9.50





CHUTNEY  
MARY

1994

MENU CHANGES AFTER  
ANGLO-INDIAN DISHES REMOVED  
AND MORE REGIONAL CURRIES  
INCORPORATED



## MENU 1994

### Starters

1994



**Calamari Chilli Fry**  
Calamari stir fried with Kerala Spices and served with rocket salad

£4.95

#### **Prawn Balchao**



One of the most famous of Goan specialities, it has a very full flavoured and hot sauce. The sour and slightly sweet (with Goan *Jaggery*) flavours are balanced with aromatic spices. Served with garlic bread.

£6.25

#### **Spicy Crab Cake**

Made with fresh flaked crab. A traditional recipe from Goa. Served with fresh coriander and mint chutney.

£5.50

#### **Salmon Samosas**

Bite size fresh salmon crispy *Bori* samosas. *Boris* are a Muslim community from Bombay and their samosas are a speciality.

£4.95

#### **Moong Bhel Puri**

Our version of Bombay's most popular street food made with sprouted beans, freshly made chutneys. Garnished with fresh mango and yoghurt dressing.

£4.25

#### **Vegetarian Kebabs**

Assorted vegetarian *Kebabs* made with lentils, cottage cheese, spinach and crushed vegetables. Served with a small *Sheermal* bread.

£4.50

#### **A Salad of Cashew Encrusted Goat's Cheese**

Served on a bed of mixed leaves, roasted peppers and Mary's spicy chutney dressing

£5.25

#### **Memsahib's Lacy Cutless**

Cutlets in India are patties made from anything minced, in our case lamb, and were popular dishes that Indian cooks made for their European masters. The cooks, unable to pronounce "cutlets" called them "cutless" and so they are called to this day. They have become a part of India's bourgeois cuisine.

£4.95

#### **Speciality Kebabs**

Two assorted kebabs. The famous *Shikampuri kebab* of Hyderabad - made with lean minced lamb and *Reshmi kebab* - delicately spiced minced chicken grilled on a skewer in a clay oven. Served with a small *sheermal* bread.

£5.25

#### **Noodles Mandalay**



Noodles with shredded chicken in a spiced coconut soup. A national dish of Burma, which was part of India in the earlier part of this century. Known in Burma as Kowswe (pronounced "cowswe").

£5.25

### *Vegetarian Main Dishes*

#### **Mushroom Dossa**

Light, crispy rice pancakes, known as *Dossa* in southern India, filled with delicately spiced mushrooms. Served with fresh coconut chutney and the traditional lentil curry called *Sambhar*

£8.50

#### **Kadai Paneer with Mixed Vegetables**



Cubes of freshly made Indian cottage cheese, mushrooms, capsicums, courgettes and asparagus tossed lightly in spices. Served with aromatic *basmati* rice.

£8.00

#### **Cauliflower and Potato Curry**

From the western coast of India, where it is popularly called *Gashi*, this dish has large pieces of potato cooked with cauliflower, flavoured with coriander, mustard and fenugreek seeds. Served with *basmati* rice.

£7.50

### *Degustation of Mary's Specialities*

A large grazing platter to enable you to taste a cross selection of our most popular dishes.

**Non Vegetarian**  
**Vegetarian**

£17.50

£15.50



**Particularly spicy**



**Medium spice**





## MENU 1994



1994

### *A Celebration of The Great Curries of India*

A selection of glorious curry dishes from the recipes of the much acclaimed book, *50 Great Curries of India* by Camellia Panjabi, arguably India's foremost gourmet and food expert, who has been advising Chutney Mary from its inception. Our menu also features highlights from our à la carte menu so as not to disappoint our regular guests.

Wine suggestions by Neville Abraham

#### **Lamb Shank Korma from Lucknow**

An aromatic curry, rich and thick with the flavour of cardamom, mace, saffron and the essence of *Kewra*, the screwpine flower. Served with aromatic *basmati* rice

£9.75

Wine: Felszer Zinfandel 1991/2

#### **Rogan Josh from Kashmir**

The hallmark of this dish, as cooked in Kashmir is the liberal use of the mild flavoured Kashmiri red chilli, fennel powder and the water from soaking the cockscomb flower, which gives it a bright red colour. Served with *saffron* rice.

£9.75

Wine: Rioja Reserva 1986/7 (Berberana)

#### **Lamb Chops with Apricots Jardaloo Boti from Bombay**

A popular Parsee dish, influenced by Persian cooking, using the flavourful Hunza apricots. The use of chillis, jaggery and vinegar give it an interesting balance of flavours.

£12.50

Served with straw potatoes and *saffron* rice.

Wine: Old Dry Oloroso (Don Zolito)

#### **Lamb in Pickling Spices Aachar Gosht from Bhopal**

This dish has its origins in the courtly families of Bhopal. *Aachar* means pickle in India and it is made with a special blend of spices - as used in this dish. It has a tangy taste with green chillis which are mellowed by braising in yoghurt. Served with aromatic *basmati* rice.

£9.95

Wine: Brown Brothers Late Picked Muscat 1982/3

#### **Lamb Curry from the Coromandel Coast**

The standard Madras curry in restaurants here is not to be found anywhere in India. This curry is from a fishing village near Madras. It is red and fiery with fresh grated coconut as its base.

£9.95

Wine: Sercial Madeira Old Custom House Dry NV

#### **Prawn Patia from Bombay**

Patia is a Parsee dish from Bombay and is served on auspicious occasions. It has an interesting balance between hot, sweet and sour flavours. Served with lentils and *saffron* rice.

£11.50

Wine: Royal Ruby NV

#### **Lobster Curry from the Konkan Coast**

A rich and spicy curry from Western India, it is made with hot and aromatic spices, mellowed with coconut milk. Served with aromatic *basmati* rice.

£14.50

Wine: Gewurztraminer 1992 (Leon Beyer)

#### **White Chicken Korma**

A supreme of chicken in a mild and delicately aromatic white curry inspired by the banquet tables of the Emperor Shahjahan, who used to host white moonlight banquets, where the food served was all white. Served with aromatic *basmati* rice.

£9.75

Wine: Viognier de L'Ardeche 1993

#### **Chicken Dopiazza from Bengal**

A highly recommended dish by the author, this recipe is from the home of one of the gourmet families of Calcutta. Dopiazza literally means onions used twice in the cooking process. Served with aromatic *basmati* rice.

£9.25

Wine: Verdelho Madeira 5 year old Reserva

#### **Chicken and Cashew Nuts in Black Spices from Bombay**

An interesting flavourful sauce where the whole spices, coconut and onions are first roasted and then ground to a paste. Served with *lemon* rice.

£9.75

Wine: Foppiano Petite Sirah 1990

#### **Chicken Chettinad from near Madras**

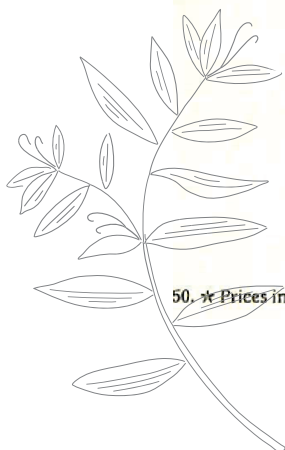
A full flavoured curry with poppy seeds, fennel, coconut and also star anise which is unusual in Indian food. It is used in this cuisine because of the Chettiar community's age old trading links with South East Asia. Served with *lemon* rice.

£9.50

Wine: Rioja Reserva 1986/7 (Berberana)

★ Thank you for not smoking pipes and cigars ★

50. ★ Prices include VAT. Service is discretionary but a recommended 12.5% will be added to your bill. ★ Cheques up to £500 only accepted if accompanied by a v





This lunch was hosted at  
Chutney Mary in Chelsea



## Letters from Diana sell for £82,000

A letter in which Princess Diana referred to the Queen as "the boss" has sold for £8,700.

It was among 36 letters that sold at auction for a combined £82,000.

They belonged to Roger Bramble whom Diana sought for support and advice during some of the most difficult years of her life.

The letters included a thank you note for being taken her out to lunch which she found a "much welcome distraction" from her impending divorce to Prince Charles in August 1996. It sold for more than £7,800.

In another letter in October 1996 she referred to her new title: "It is the first time Diana, Princess of Wales has actually been taken out to lunch since August 28 — I am very selective."

A 1992 note in which she described her "ghastly week" after the publication of Andrew Morton's biography, which revealed she had attempted suicide, sold for £1,350.

On October 19, 1995, she wrote a letter in which she feared she had made Bramble, the Lord High Sheriff of Westminster, late for an appointment with the Queen.

She thanked him for lunch and joked: "I just hope your arrival at Westminster Abbey was before the Boss and if not, I expect to have been mentioned in the excuses!"

The letters, which date from 1990 to 1997, were sold by David Lay Auctions of Penzance, Cornwall. The proceeds of the sale, which attracted bidders from all over the world, will go towards four charities with which Diana was associated.



Evening Standard - Inside Guide -  
24 January 1997



## inside guide chutney mary

**This Chutney Mary bird... is she by any chance related to Ruby Murray?** Up to a point. Chutney Mary is a term which came into use in Bombay towards the end of the Raj and was applied to any Indian woman who aspired to a Westernised way of life. Ruby Murray was a singer who achieved immortality by entering the lexicon of Cockney Rhyming slang (as in 'popping out for a Ruby' - Ruby Murray - curry). As both women have now become indelibly associated with Indian food one could argue that they are related.

**So Chutney Mary is a Chelsea curry house?** In as much as the Connaught is a well-located B&B.

**Appearance** A ground-floor entrance with bar area and large basement restaurant in a modern block of antique shops on the New King's Road, between Lots Road and the railway bridge. The interior has all the apurtenances of the post-flocked-wallpaper Indian restaurant, ie rattan chairs, engravings depicting scenes from the Raj, large potted ferns and neocolonial ceiling fans. Among the most amusing decorative bits and pieces are the large cobra standard lamps on the ground floor which rear out of the lush potted greenery. Down in the basement, the walls are dominated by large murals depicting scenes of Indian life in the days of the Empire - swaggering subalterns, alluring women, etc. One mirrored wall carries shelves of Indian antiques, including a small silver chair. Ardent royalists should check out the print of George V at the Imperial Delhi Durbar. Light floods in from a huge conservatory.

**Food** Chutney Mary made its name as an Anglo-Indian restaurant and more particularly as a showcase for recondite regional Indian food. Anglo-Indian specialties include country captain (£9.95), braised supreme of chicken with spices, coconut, vinegar, almonds and raisins, a dish originally prepared for British army officers on tour, and memsahib's Lacy Cutless (£4.95), lean minced lamb cutlets with spices in lacy egg batter.

with rare spices in an earthenware pot (£11.95).

**Key pudding** Hill station bread-and-butter pudding, £4.95.

**Set menu** Sunday brunch, £15 for three courses, with live jazz thrown in.

**Look out for** Food festivals; these are a feature of Chutney Mary and the ingredients are air-freighted from India.

**Who does the cooking** Messrs Bhatti and Manoj from Bombay head up a large kitchen brigade where the half-dozen senior chefs all come from India. Co-owner, Cambridge-educated former merchant banker Namita Panjabi is also director of cuisine.

**Man to know** Eddie Khoo, the comeback kid of the London restaurant trade. Eddie has bounced back more

times than the arch screen pugilist Rocky. He has worked at the Savoy, Blakes, achieved fame with Ménage à Trois, went belly up with Beauchamp Place, did a stint running the Café Royal and now manages Chutney Mary. Eddie is the oenophile's oenophile and must be the only man in London who will recommend a 1982 claret to accompany a curry and be right to do so. Such is his enthusiasm that even if you don't like curry but love wine, Chutney Mary is worth a visit. Don't bother to look at the wine list, just ask Eddie what he recommends - you are unlikely to be disappointed.

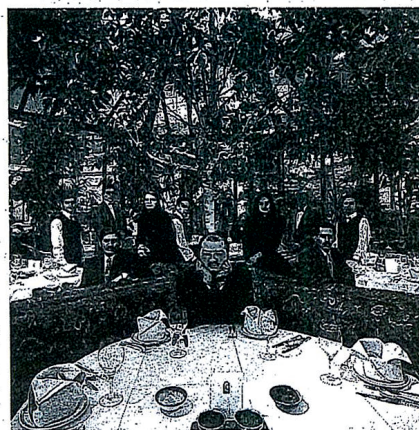
**Can I get a pale ale?** Yes, Ushers India Pale Ale is £2.95 a bottle.

**What about a mango daiquiri?** André the barman the best mango daiquiri in town, while vodka drit might be tempted by a Goa on the rocks (fr crushed Brazilian limes on ice with vodka and su Bloody Marys are made with freshly squeezed juice and vodka spiced with red chillies).

**Best tables** Conservatory tables are the most sought after and are numbers 29 to 36. Most dis tables are 30 and 32. The restaurant seats about 120.

**Customers** Affluent curry lovers including Liz H and Hugh Grant (she likes mild curry, he spicy - arrive and leave early), the Duke of Edinburgh - likes the champagne flutes), Richard Branson, Cl Turlington, Linda Evangelista, Pamela Anderson numerous MPs.

**Do they do take-aways?** Only for Tina Turner stays at the nearby Conrad Hotel in Chelsea Har and eats lunch at 5.30pm.



Hail Mary: (from left) waiter Akhtar Miah,







CHUTNEY  
MARY

2002

INTERIORS CHANGED TO  
BECOME MORE TODAY WITH  
LOTS OF CANDLELIGHT

CHUTNEY  
MARY



INTERIOR OF  
RENOVATED RESTAURANT





Reviews in 2002 when  
interiors were changed



*'Critically acclaimed  
Indian cuisine  
beautifully plated  
and presented'*



'A look that is shimmering and seductive. Spices are roasted and stocks are made on a daily basis, a detail readily discernable in the final dishes and one that makes comparison with sophisticated western food a real possibility. The staff are charming and anxious to please. Not so much 'Bollywood as jolly, jolly good'.

Fay Maschler Evening Standard

'This is a fine (wine) list, packed with interesting and unusual choices. Wine list scores four out of five'.

Andrew Jefford Evening Standard

Its menu delivers flavours of remarkable complexity and intensity, drawn from cities across India'.

RW Apple Jr The New York Times

'Dishes taste fab, and are classically Indian in flavour. Service is also spot-on, as smooth as Indian silk'.

Roopa Gulati Time Out

Chutney Mary's extensive list of great wines at moderate prices has been carefully selected to complement the complex flavours of Indian food.

'The place is decorated like the sophisticated palace of a thoroughly modern maharajah - lots of bold colours and glass. Vegetable dishes and breads are worth making room for. The wine list is sensational'.

Paul Levy The Wall Street Journal

'A sexy new interior of wood panelling and warm sari colours will only serve to confirm Chutney Mary's status as one of London's top Indian restaurants. Presentation is as artistic as ever while the menu rewards diners with an adventurous palate. Creative desserts make a triumphant end'.

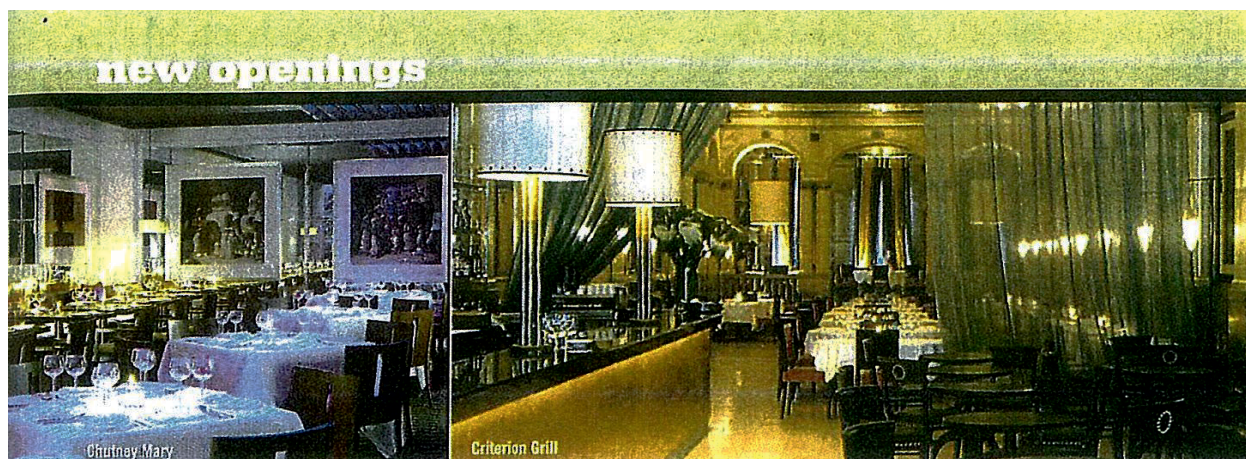
Square Meal







## Square Meal Review 2002



## Post Honeymoon

### Chutney Mary ★

535 King's Road, SW10  
Tel: 7351 3113 Price: £42

It wasn't broke but they fixed it anyway and, while we're usually not in favour of messing with good things, the stunning results of a three-month makeover will only serve to confirm Chutney Mary's status as one of London's top Indian restaurants. The colonial style of old has given way to a sexy new interior of wood panelling and warm sari colours, enhanced by the flickering light from a myriad of candles and high-tech lamps in the popular conservatory.

Menus, too, have been brought up to date, combining heritage food and the odd established favourite, with cooking inspired by the latest Indian culinary trends. Kebabs are all the rage on the sub-continent, apparently, so Chutney Mary now serves its very own sharer plate of tender, tandoori meats. Bombay's latest fad, crab with pepper, garlic and butter, also gets a look-in, but it's the rather modestly described tokri chaat that's the winner among starters. Artistically presented under a dome of fried potato, this is the ultimate sampler plate, combining flavour-packed veggie canapés – potato cakes, chickpeas and lentil dumplings – with delicious chutneys for dunking.

Likewise, among mains, it's not the obvious choices that come out trumps. The premium-priced lobster makhani, though generously portioned with perfectly cooked chunks of sweet lobster meat, came in a rich, tomato-based brandy sauce that was less exciting than anticipated. The unexpected winner was a dish of guinea fowl. Stuffed with dried fruit and sitting atop a pool of delicately spiced almond sauce, the moist and ten-

der breast fillet made for immensely satisfying eating, balancing sweet and savoury flavours beautifully.

But it's pudding that's the surprise here. Unlike so many other Indians, Chutney Mary has put great effort into getting desserts just right – head chef Nagarajan Rubinath has even got a pastry man in his team of specialists – and the results are triumphant. A light touch of garam masala and large chunks of strawberry add wow-factor to what would otherwise have been a standard strawberry crème brûlée, while dark chocolate fondant comes appropriately gooey-centred with a side of fresh orange lassi. Indeed, there are so many features to this new incarnation of the King's Road classic (a snappy new Matthew Jukes wine list among them) that to stop us going on about them, you'll just have to discover them for yourselves. (See owner profile, page 46.)

### Criterion Grill

224 Piccadilly, W1  
Tel: 7930 0488 Price: £35

Two words of advice when visiting the Criterion Grill: be hungry. Following proprietor Marco Pierre White's revamp of the menu and simplification of dishes, portion sizes are absolutely enormous. A major work-out and one day's fasting beforehand is the sort of preparation required to do justice to it all.

Not that dishes aren't well executed – they are. The old favourite of eggs benedict to start is as good a rendition of the dish as you could ever hope to find – beautifully runny-yolked eggs sat atop a pile of ham, covered by lashings of hollandaise sauce. Similarly, a main of roast suckling pig garnished with apple sauce and jus à la marjolaine is full of flavour,

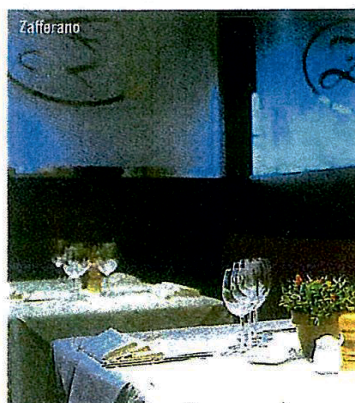
the meat wonderfully moist and tender. And vegetable side dishes keep up the high standard – White makes sure his chefs know how to execute the basics, such as mashed potato, to perfection.

On top of the delights of the hearty fare, the Criterion also remains one of the capital's most beautiful dining rooms, furnished with mosaics, pillars, paintings and drapes. And every evening, Wednesday to Saturday, a transvestite magician moves from table to table entertaining diners. This is not as naff as it sounds: his/her tricks were brilliant on our visit and the room was filled with the contagious sound of belly laughter.

### Zafferano ★

15 Lowndes St, SW1  
Tel: 7235 5800 Price: £45

After all the hullabaloo surrounding the opening of Locanda Locatelli early this spring – the new restaurant of Italian superchef Giorgio Locatelli, who first came to fame and won the following of serious foodies in the mid-Nineties at Zafferano – we thought it was time to revisit his old stomping ground to see how it was faring without him.







## PRESS RELEASE

17 March 2003

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The prestigious Tio Pepe Carlton Restaurant Awards are amongst the most important in the London restaurant calendar. There are several award categories, of which the Indian Restaurant of the Year is one of the major categories.

## CHUTNEY MARY WINS COVETED AWARD OF INDIAN RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

10 months after re-opening its doors after a major interior transformation, 13 year old Chutney Mary has won the prestigious **Tio Pepe Carlton Award for Indian Restaurant of the Year 2003** at a celebrity studded ceremony earlier this week.

The Award citation said:

- "From the start, Chutney Mary has been at the forefront of upscale Indian restaurants, earning innumerable accolades, and gaining a reputation as one of the finest restaurants of its style in the capital."
- "The new look is colourful and stylish"
- "Chutney Mary has remained at the forefront, combining style, with the all-important content - top-class cooking"

Chutney Mary's previous awards include: twice-winning the award of Best Indian restaurant in Britain from the Curry Club of Great Britain, and twice winner of The Evening Standard Eros Award as one of London's top 20 restaurants.

CHUTNEY  
MARY



masala  
zone





## Chutney Mary- Indian Restaurant of the Year 2003



### INDIAN RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

#### Chutney Mary



**W**hen Chutney Mary opened its doors 13 years ago, it specialised in serving Anglo-Indian cuisine. Anglo-Indian cooking is, in modern parlance, a style of 'fusion' cooking, the product of the melding of Indian and British cooking techniques and styles from the period when Britain ruled India. The term 'chutney mary' was used to describe a young Indian woman who wanted to be like the British memsahibs.

From the start, Chutney Mary has been at the forefront of upscale Indian restaurants, earning innumerable accolades and gaining a reputation as one of the finest restaurants of its style in the capital. In February 2002, Chutney Mary closed for a major interior transformation, reopening in May of the same year. The new look is colourful and stylish, with teak panelling and furniture, sexy lighting and a profusion of colour; thanks to a vivid collection of Indian fabrics.

The menu has also changed through the years, widening from its Anglo-Indian base to embrace authentic regional Indian cooking. Namita Panjabi (pictured right), along with co-directors Camellia Panjabi and Ranjit Mathrani, have brought over a

number of highly trained chefs from India. Head chef Nagarajan Rubinath has been joined by chefs who are experts in the cooking styles and techniques of their own regions.

On the new menu are dishes from throughout India, from Portuguese-influenced Goa (Loch Fyne oysters with lime and chilli salsa), to Hyderabad (poussin stuffed with mint pullao, tomato and poppy seed, with a sesame seed sauce) and the North (almond-based guinea fowl korma). A selection of tandoori dishes and appealing side dishes (fresh mustard leaves with lotus root, broad beans in fenugreek sauce) round out the menu. Desserts hark back to the Anglo-Indian theme, with gingerbread and butter pudding with orange and strawberry brûlée with garam masala.

London supports a rich mix of restaurants serving foods from throughout the Indian subcontinent, from Sri Lankan cafés, to Pakistani kebab houses, to chic upmarket establishments. In recent years, the move has been toward authentic regional cooking: Chutney Mary has remained at the forefront, combining style with the all-important content – top-class cooking.

### AWARD WINNERS

#### SUCCESS STORY

**Restaurant**  
Chutney Mary

**Address**  
535 King's Road  
London SW10 0SZ

**Tel:** 020 7351 3113

**Head chef**  
Nagarajan Rubinath, supported by a team of regional chefs

**Opened**  
1991

**Directors**  
Namita Panjabi, Camellia Panjabi and Ranjit Mathrani

**Design**  
Jeffrey Wilkes

**Sample dishes**  
Nihari lamb soup

Cod roasted with yogurt, poppy seeds, herbs and saffron

Duck with apricots

Dark chocolate fondant with orange blossom lassi



TIO PEPE CARLTON LONDON RESTAURANT  
**awards special**  
2003



## Good Curry Guide- Chutney Mary 2009

LONDON SW8 -SW10

119

Guide. We love them at any level so long as they deliver. *'Pat, everyone is raving about it. And when you find it don't give up because it looks so drab - go in, but not before you've stocked up at the office next door. It's BYO.'* JGS. Owner, waiter (and for all I know chief bottle washer too) is Raj Dawood. Let him guide you to your meal. Whatever he suggests is good. I had bhajis for starters, £1.50, followed by hot chilli chicken and Raj told me to have the Magic Mushroom Rice with it. What a trip! Here it's hard to spend a tenner for good gutsy Pakistani food. In between his multitasking Raj is a raconteur too. He'll tell you that 'My Beautiful Launderette' was filmed nearby, implying that the crew all ate there. It is packed at times. Hours: 12-10 Mon-Fri, 3-10 Sat

### London SW10 Chelsea, West Brompton

#### CHUTNEY MARY

##### OUTSTANDING RESTAURANT

535 Kings Road, SW10 020 7351 3113

Chutney Mary opened in 1990. From the beginning they had a brigade of six chefs each from a different region of India, each dispensing their own speciality dishes. This was not the first to do this, but Chutney Mary did it rather well. We are proud of the fact that we gave Chutney Mary the first ever Best Restaurant Award back in 1992. And we did it again in 1999. Owners Camellia and Namita Panjabi and Ranjit Mathrani have since become well-established in the restaurant industry and have become renowned for their high quality Indian restaurants. They next bought Veeraswamy (W1) then opened one after another revolutionary Masala Zones (See W1), and more recently, the stunning Amaya, SW1 - all Award winners in this Guide. Amaya won the ITV Tio Pepe Best Restaurant of the Year Award and in 2007 it was awarded a Michelin star. Such awards are not given lightly, and it's time Chutney Mary was similarly recognised. Upstairs there is a bright and airy private dining room. The stair wall is made of sparkling Indian mosaics (a glass ball is made, and then smashed, the pieces are then gathered to make the mosaics) and it takes you down to the main restaurant. This is decorated with works of modern Indian art, concealed spot lights, and masses of candles held in clear crystal glass, specially designed Indian glass candelabra which effectively create a romantic ambience similar to the twinkling of a moti mahal. Hi-tech lighting gives a moonlit effect to the legendary conservatory, decorated with its forest of Indian greenery, its tree and sparkling fairy lights. A sumptuous, thickly woven carpet and dark wood furniture swathed in silk cushions helps to create a luxurious yet relaxed atmosphere. The wine list by wine writer Mathew Jukes is definitive, and would do justice in any restaurant. It features over 100 wines, kept in a glassed-in, temperature-controlled wine room in the

restaurant where customers can see the ideal conditions in which their wine has been kept. Jukes promises relatively low mark-ups on the more expensive wines - 'to encourage experimentation'. Taj-trained Chef Nagarajan Rubinath has taken the mantle from Hardeep Singh, who is now at the Group's Masala Zone. The menu constantly changes, although some old favourites remain constant. Some years ago, Mathrani asked me how presentation could be improved at Indian restaurants. I recall blubbing some inconsequential answer. I know now that the Panjabis already had the issue in hand. Food presentation at Chutney Mary is revolutionary and it is still unique in the Indian market. Each dish has its own bespoke high-quality white platter or handmade glass plate chosen for shape and utility, on which it is plated with its own food-layout by the chefs. Nothing illustrates this better than the starters. For example, the magnificent Tokri Chaat (see overleaf); a potato-lattice basket exudes home-made imli and yoghurt-based 'street-food' studded with fresh green coriander and red pomegranate seeds.

It not only looks good, it tastes good too, and this alone could be my last dish on earth. The Kebab Platter is equally elegant. There are other favourites: Chandini Tikka (cornfed chicken breast tikka using white spices) or Konkan Prawns with asparagus. Starters (£6.25 to £10). Main courses (£16-£22) include four different Chicken Tikkas, Duck with Apricots (a Parsee favourite - Jardaloo), fanned slices of pink duck breast, drizzled with a spicy minced sauce with halved apricots, a fab Tandoori Crab, and other modern crab dishes that are all the rage in Bombay seafood restaurants. Wild Sea bass Alleppey (pan-grilled in a coconut and coriander sauce with green tomato salsa) or Mangalore prawn curry (with chilli hot sauce with tamarind and coconut). Vegetarians have a choice of two platters - one is a traditional North Indian platter of vegetables and dhal. The other comprises unusual vegetarian dishes such as stir-fried banana flower with coconut, baby courgette masala, okra and water chestnut in a selection of 7 items. Desserts from c£6 include the legendary Dark Chocolate Fondant with orange blossom lassi. Mains come plated, which some don't like because it makes sharing hard. There is a good selection of sides and breads, including Black Urid Dal (Maharani) - [DBAC's



Chutney Mary's Tikka Selection



## Hardens Guide 2014

FSA

**Christopher's WC2** £70 ③③②  
18 Wellington St 7240 4222 4-3D  
The recent refit "has added glamour and a sense of space" to this "delightful" (and business-friendly) Covent Garden townhouse; early reports suggest that, as ever, it's "not cheap", but that realisation of the surf 'n' turf cuisine has improved since the re-launch. / WC2E 7DD; www.christophersgrill.com; @christopherswc2; 11.30 pm, Sun 10.30 pm; booking: max 14; set pre theatre £39 (FP).

**Chuen Cheng Ku WI** £37 ③④④  
17 Wardour St 7437 1398 4-3A  
"Ever-circling" dim sum trolleys are the key feature of a "cracking-value" lunchtime visit to this "old Chinatown warhorse" – a particularly good experience "with kids"; à la carte, however, the food is "very average". / W1D 6D; www.chuenchengkku.co.uk; 11.45 pm.

**Churchill Arms W8** £34 ③②①  
119 Kensington Church St 7792 1246 6-2B  
"At the back of a truly original, quirky pub, off Notting Hill Gate", a "really fun", "plant-filled" conservatory, where the Thai dishes on offer are "the very definition of cheap and cheerful". / W8 7LN; 10 pm, 9.30 pm.

**Chutney SW18** £31 ②③③  
11 Alma Rd 8870 4588 10-2B  
"A great local Indian with its own unique style of cooking and some fantastic deals" – the worst thing any reporter has to say about this "friendly" Wandsworth fixture! / SW18 1AA; www.chutneyrestaurant.co.uk; 11.30 pm; D only.

**Chutney Mary SW10** £55 ②①②  
535 King's Rd 7351 3113 5-4B  
"A real aristocrat of the Indian restaurant world" – this "long-term favourite", at the far end of Chelsea, boasts a "very atmospheric conservatory", and is a "totally charming" destination, offering "wonderfully aromatic" dishes, and "tip top" service too. / SW10 0SZ; www.realindianfood.com; 11.45 pm, Sun 10.45 pm; closed weekday L; booking: max 8.

**Chutneys NW1** £30 ④③④  
124 Drummond St 7388 0604 8-4C  
"The lunchtime and weekend buffet is very tasty and truly excellent value", say fans of this "airy" café – long a "cheap 'n' cheerful" staple of the Little India, near Euston; you can BYO too. / NW1 2PA; www.chutneyseuston.co.uk; 11 pm; no Amex; need 5+ to book.

**Ciao Bella WC1** £41 ④②②  
86-90 Lamb's Conduit St 7242 4119 2-1D  
It's not just the "back-to-the-70s" time warp experience that wins fans for this "buzzy", "no-frills" family-run Bloomsbury Italian – its "solid" scoff comes at "value-for-money" prices. / WC1N 3LZ; www.ciaobellarestaurant.co.uk; 11.30 pm, Sun 10.30 pm.

**Cibo WI4** £51 ②①②  
3 Russell Gdns 7371 6271 7-1D  
"The forgotten star of west London" – this "marvellous local Italian", on the Kensington/Olympia border, is an "authentic" and "unassuming" stalwart, where the cooking is still often "superb". / W14 8EZ; www.ciborestaurant.net; 11 pm; closed Sat L & Sun D.

**Cigala WC1** £49 ③③④  
54 Lamb's Conduit St 7405 1717 2-1D  
With its "genuine" Spanish food (plus "a very good wine list"), this "bustling" operation, on a quiet Bloomsbury street, impresses many reporters; the decor is a touch "sterile", though, and service can be erratic. / WC1N 3LW; www.cigala.co.uk; 10.45 pm, Sun 9.45 pm.

**Le Cigalon WC2** £47 ③②②  
115 Chancery Ln 7242 8373 2-2D  
Built as a Victorian auction house, these "very bright and airy" premises, now specialising in the cuisine of Provence, are "something of an oasis in the restaurant-starved legal district" – "great for a business lunch", obviously, but equally suited to "dinner with friends". / WC2A 1PP; www.lecigalon.co.uk; 10 pm; closed Sat & Sun.

**THE CINNAMON CLUB SW1** £69 ②③②  
Old Westminster Library, Great Smith St 72 2555 2-4C  
In the "beautiful" setting of Westminster's former library, near the Abbey, Iqbal Wahhab's "outstanding" venture is one of London's most impressive destinations; its "haute take" on Indian cuisine often achieves an "absolutely sublime" standard. / SW1P 3BU; www.cinnamonclub.com; @CinnamonClub; 10.30 pm; closed Sun; no trainers; set weekday L & pre-theatre £ (FP); SRA-68%.

**Cinnamon Kitchen EC2** £55 ②①①  
9 Devonshire Sq 7626 5000 9-2D  
"Exciting" Indian fusion cuisine combines with "attentive" service and an "elegant" setting (with airy seating in the atrium) to make the Cinnamon Club's "business-like" spin-off a top Ci destination – it even offers a "good-value set lunch". / EC2M 4YL; www.cinnamon-kitchen.com; @cinnamonkitchen; 11 pm; closed Sat L & Sun; set weekday L £34 (FP); SRA-61%.

**Cinnamon Soho WI** £43 ④④①  
5 Kingly St 7437 1664 3-2D  
Soho's "stripped-down version of the Cinnamon Club" pleases most reporters with its "small menu of well-spiced Indian dishes" (and its "fantastic-value" set lunch deals too); for a voluble minority though, the whole performance is "a bit lacklustre". / W1B 5PE; www.cinnamon-kitchen.com/soho-home;





CHUTNEY  
MARY

2015

MOVED LOCATION  
FROM KING'S ROAD  
TO ST JAMES'S



CHUTNEY  
MARY

## CHUTNEY MARY

INTERIORS & AMBIENCE IN CURRENT ST JAMES'S LOCATION

Chutney Mary showcases an eclectic mix of authentic Indian design and contemporary style in a glamorous yet timeless setting.



The Restaurant



## PRIVATE DINING ROOMS



Private Dining - Club Room  
for up to 32 guests



Pukka Bar at Chutney Mary -  
a dining bar



Private Dining - Crystal Room  
for up to 16 seated guests



## CHUTNEY MARY REVIEWS IN 2015 BASED ON RELOCATION IN ST. JAMES'S

### **The Sunday Times, AA Gill - Maximum 5" Stars for Food**

"It is, by far and away, the nicest dining room in St James's... A comfortable, modern and elegant dining room blissfully free of the tired and threadbare clichés of Anglo-Indian restaurants."

"really interesting, regional and varied dishes that use a brilliant cornucopia of masalas, seasonings and outré ingredients. The spicing is subtle and assured... The Hyderabad lamb shank was lustrous."

Chutney Mary's great success is its constant investigation of the enormous variety and ingenuity of south Asian cuisine... This restaurant is a testament to a lifetime of forensic appetite and experience."

"...But if there is better pan-Indian restaurant in London than Chutney Mary, I haven't eaten in it."

### **Time Out, Roopa Gulati gave the maximum 5 Stars**

"When Chutney Mary opened in Chelsea 25 years ago, it put refined Indian dining on London's culinary map..."

...the cooking is exemplary, offering classic dishes alongside lighter flavours.

A dainty pale of chicken wings - is there such a thing? These were... A soupy rendition of Nihari soup was also top-drawer...

Grills go far beyond regular offerings... A seared, pink-cooked duck breast was splendidly matched with caramelised onions, apricots (jardaloo) and jaggery (palm sugar), sharpened with ginger and vinegar, and topped with a tangle of potato straws....

The hit parade continued with the lal maas from Rajasthan...

If you're having dessert, try the hot carrot halwa soufflé. Fudgy, milk-simmered cardamom carrots were transformed from a traditional winter warming Punjabi pud into an elegant finale.

Service, as expected, doesn't miss a beat."





### **The Evening Standard, Grace Dent**

"Many of the Chelsea-era Mary's signature dishes, including the green curry, have remained, but there are new temptations, such as sautéed Cornish crab in chilli butter and lobster biryani. The kid biryani is comfortingly devourable.....

Inside, the dining room is irrefutably stunning. It's rare in London that I feel even vaguely underdressed-more is more being my mantra-but the all-new Chutney Mary is just the right mix of capacious, candle-bedazzled, art-strewn and Bentley-visited to make one suddenly regret not slinging on better diamonds"

### **Squaremeal Lifestyle Award**

Chutney Mary wins Square Meal Lifestyle BMW Best New Restaurant Award in December 2015

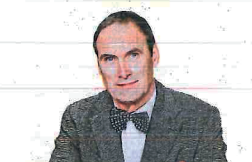
"For a restaurant to reach the 25-year mark is unusual; for it to mark that anniversary by moving to a totally different part of the city is unheard of."



## The Sunday Times Magazine - Table Talk - AA Gill 2015

### Table Talk

Chutney Mary  
St James's Street  
London SW1  
ATMOSPHERE ★★★★★  
FOOD ★★★★★



AA GILL

What, pray, is the defining distinction between a pickle, a relish and a chutney? I can't discover or even invent one. You can get yourself into a pickle. You can relish a thing. But chutney isn't a verb or an adjective. Maybe we should make one up. "He was all over me like chutney, officer." "Cat got your chutney?" "It's the dog's chutnies." "One chutney doesn't make a summer." "It's a red card, he was chutnied."

Coincidentally, these are three words that are equally delicious to say. They are a trio of the most gobtastic words in all gastronomy. There is, of course, Chutney Mary, a sniggering, dismissively racist term for mixed-race Anglo-Indian women during the Raj. At this moment of hypersensitivity about the naming of everything and everyone who feels degraded or marginalised, it says something for the good nature of Indians and their forgiving relationship with us that nobody complains about this as a name for a restaurant. You can't imagine a Latin-American diner called Mestizo Molly's or New Lato Monica's, or a Vietnamese takeaway called Budai Barry's.

Chutney Mary has been a staple of the Fulham end of the King's Road for years: a basement with a tree growing through it that has a sentimentally loyal following. Now it's picked up its poppadom and moved east to St James's, leaving behind an incarnation called Masala Grill, owned and run by the same company. I'm not entirely sure why it was thought efficacious to move the name to St James's, but it has. And now it sits among all those hideous men-only clubs, with the smug, braying sons of Empire, who would eagerly take Asian

girls as mistresses, then snigger at the result as being chichi or Chutney Mary. There is a pleasing mockery in having this derogatory name sit among the purple-jowled squiffy denizens of Boodle's, White's and Pratt's.

The restaurant is set in a room vacated by Marco Pierre White. It was once the most prestigious and famous West End restaurant, Prunier's. It is, by far and away, the nicest dining room in St James's. Its bar serves Indian street food and cocktails, and behind it, a comfortable, modern and elegant dining room is blissfully free of the tired and threadbare clichés of Anglo-Indian restaurants: the simpering nostalgia of colonialism and the tropes of Indian culture, where Bollywood and Hinduism are interchangeable decorative motifs.

Whenever you travel to Mumbai or Delhi, or to any other Indian city, it's always a shock to see how much more cosmopolitan and modern Indian restaurants in India are than Indian restaurants in London. Chutney Mary is owned by the Panjabi sisters, who are based here and in Mumbai, and are responsible for bringing the very best subcontinental food to London — from the Masala Zone chain to Veeraswamy and Amaya.

We started with a collection of chaat (small plates and grills), including a Cornish crab in butter that

**"The owner, Camellia Punjabi, is a culinary Clouseau. This restaurant is a testament to a lifetime of forensic appetite and experience"**

#### FROM THE MENU

**STARTERS**  
Baked venison samosa with tamarind and date chutney £11

Afghan chicken tikka with fennel, cardamom and Himalayan mint £8.50

**MAINS**  
Calcutta wild prawn curry £25

Butter chicken methi masala £18.50

**SIDES**  
Puneri alao £5.50

**DESSERTS**  
Salted caramel kulfi £6.50

for two, inc 12.5% service, £84.40

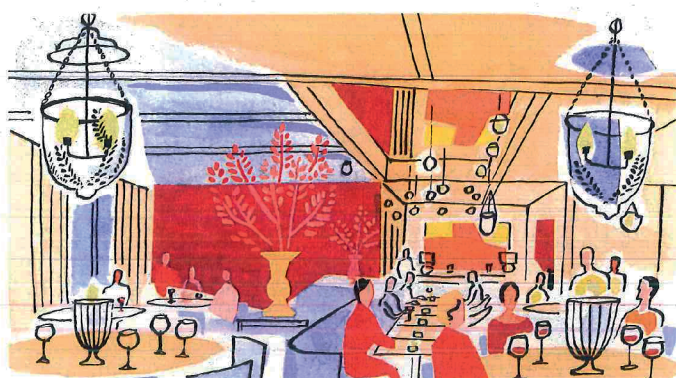
is reminiscent of the star dish from the original Trishna restaurant. There was venison samosa with tamarind and date chutney; Afghan chicken wings with fennel, cardamom and Himalayan mint (which is a small bush I can't find any other culinary reference for, but turned out to be perfectly edible); and lamb chops with ginger, cinnamon and chilli. The menu is not as exhaustingly repetitious as you'd expect to find, nor as predictable.

A lot of the main courses and starters from Balti houses are missing, and you can be grateful for that because what's left is really interesting: regional and varied dishes that use a brilliant cornucopia of masalas, seasonings and outré ingredients. The spicing is subtle and assured. We had a wild prawn curry that originated in Calcutta, made from coconut and red chilli that is softened to being quite mild, and a butter chicken made with thigh meat, strong-flavoured fenugreek and reduced tomato.

The Hyderabad lamb shank was lustrous. Hyderabad is famous for slow cooking and the sophistication of its spicing. It was one of the richest Mogul cities, but also absorbed the older Hindu tradition.

We had a biryani made with kid and flavoured with screwpine, which is also known as pandan. I'm particularly fond of biryanis — the baked rice carries flavour more dexterously, subtly and individually than the ghee- or oil-stewed curries. Almost all the Indian dishes that we know as mutton were originally made with goat. The English didn't like the idea of eating goat as much as the more homely sheep, so the cooks just told them everything was mutton. In truth, goats are harder >>>

#### THE DISH



and better at fending for themselves than sheep on the subcontinent. And it's hard to tell them apart. If in doubt as to whether it's a sheep or a goat that's being slaughtered for your dinner, look behind: goats' tails go up, sheep's hang down.

Vegetarian options are as good as the meat ones — a collection of potato chaat, a good paneer, and aloo cooked with peanut and raisins. Pudding was moreish salted-caramel kulfi. I drank the best lassi I've been offered outside India.

Chutney Mary's great success is its constant investigation of the enormous variety and ingenuity of south Asian cuisine, and Camellia Panjabi has spent decades being a culinary Clouseau, questing for recipes and questioning cooks. There are surprisingly few homegrown Indian cookbooks: families and restaurants tend to see recipes as trade secrets, to be guarded, sometimes with murder. And not much about India, let alone Indian food, is straightforward. This restaurant is a testament to a lifetime of forensic appetite and experience.

The one restaurant staple I did miss from this menu was gulab jamun — an incredibly sweet sweet, made from milk that has been reduced to a sort of pastry, then soaked in an infused sugar syrup. It's a very old dish that originally came from Persia, and was eaten by Muslims at Eid and Hindus at Diwali — and by me whenever there's a vowel in the day.

I once spoke to Camellia about my love for it, and she said: "Oh, well, there is only one place we must go," and immediately she took me, for 1½ hours, through the darkened streets of Mumbai. We were already in Mumbai; we didn't start off in St James's. We arrived at a tiny shop where men were making the most divine pudding ever conceived. This, she said, with the particular pride of someone sharing a secret that involves food, is the third generation of a family that has done nothing but make gulab — and they've grown very good at it.

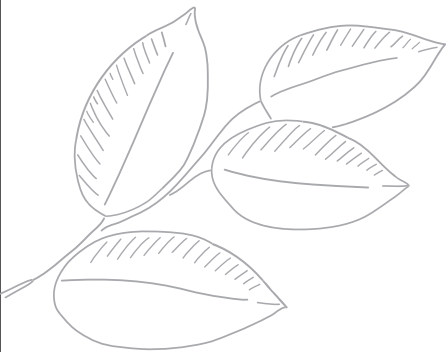
Definitively, sucking best rosettes on restaurants is a coarse and reductive business that is unbefitting of the hard work and endless variables

of the hospitality industry. But if there is a better pan-Indian restaurant in London than Chutney Mary, I haven't eaten it in ■

#### Chutney Mary

73 St James's Street, London SW1A 1PH  
020 7629 6688, chutneymary.com

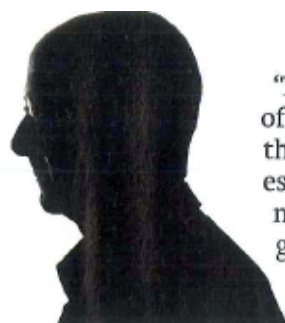




FT Magazine - Nicholas Lander -  
The Warmth of India 2015



## Nicholas Lander



"The reincarnation of Chutney Mary in this space, once the esteemed Prunier's, may be Mathrani's greatest challenge"

### The warmth of India

#### Chutney Mary, London

I ought to have known better than to stop right in the middle of the dining room at Chutney Mary, the Indian restaurant that has just moved from its longtime Chelsea home into St James's Street. Within seconds, a human traffic jam comprising a maître d', several hungry customers and waiters carrying trays of food had backed up behind me.

It was not entirely my fault. I was talking with our guest, a former high commissioner for India, and as we crossed paths with restaurateur Ranjit Mathrani, each recognised the other and stopped. As we are all of an age when our memories require additional hard drive space to work swiftly, it took a few seconds for them to realise that they had met during their careers in Delhi, where Mathrani once worked as a merchant banker.

For the past 25 years Mathrani, with his wife Namita and sister-in-law Camellia Punjabi, has built up an Indian restaurant empire in London. Alongside Chutney Mary they run Veeraswamy, off Regent Street, and the more expensive Amaya in Knightsbridge. In the middle they have created Masala Grill in the space Chutney Mary used to occupy, while several branches of Masala Zone represent their most affordable offer.

Despite all this experience, the reincarnation of Chutney Mary in this space, once the esteemed Prunier's but for several years now an unsuccessful setting for Marco Pierre White, may prove to be Mathrani's greatest challenge.

Mathrani was quick to admit that at 72 he had just done something that he would advise any restaurateur half his age never even to contemplate. "We have just opened two restaurants at the same time," he explained, his face



The new home of Chutney Mary; (below) nimbu tart

**CHUTNEY MARY**  
73 St James's Street  
London SW1A 1PH  
020 7629 6688;  
chutneymary.com  
Closed Sundays



almost draining of colour, "and one, I realise now, is more than enough. They are like children on which one needs to lavish huge amounts of time and love equally."

Mathrani was on the lookout for a new home for Chutney Mary when his agent rang him one Monday morning to tell him that this site was available; the deal was signed within the week. The building's charms are obvious. It is a large corner site in a part of town increasingly popular with wealthy Indians and not that far from Gymkhana, the Indian restaurant that has made such a name for itself in Albemarle Street. And as it's long been occupied by restaurants, the building has the requisite infrastructure in place.

But it is made up of two large rooms that do not lend themselves easily to how we enjoy restaurants today. The first room is light and by far the more inviting of the two, a

cocktail bar in the evening and a setting for more casual lunchtime food and afternoon tea by day. The dining room, down a small flight of stairs, is the darker, less exciting room; it has to remain the principal eating area because of its connection, via dumbwaiter, to the basement kitchen (there are also a couple of good-sized private dining rooms). By throwing a lot of colour at this space, the warmth of India has been replicated. But a low ceiling and the hard surfaces of the wooden dining tables not only made discussion around the table difficult but also resulted in something I had never witnessed before – the maître d' having to bend down to make sure he had heard the order properly.

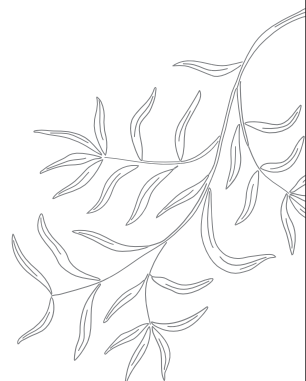
Some pleasures that I closely associate with India – heat, the aroma of ground spices, those overtones of dry, fragrant curry – were present in three of our four first courses: a guinea fowl kebab, squid bhajias and fried Bengal prawns to be dipped in a spicy sauce. But the most impressive dish was the most restrained, an elegant rendition of Cornish crab, flaked and served with garlic butter in a shallow china bowl.

Our main courses – quail mussalam, tandoori prawns with turmeric and curry leaf, and a vast duck breast roasted with apricot, jiggery, chilli and vinegar – were far more powerful than the first courses. Just as impressive was a kid gosht biryani with saffron served in a copper dish, one of those serving vessels that, as it develops a patina with age, imparts greater flavour. A nimbu (lime) tart provided the cool finale; a salted caramel kulfi considerable sweetness; and a bottle of Palacios 2012 Petalos Bierzo (£52) the liquid refreshment. **BT**

[nicholas.lander@ft.com](mailto:nicholas.lander@ft.com)  
More columns at [ft.com/lander](http://ft.com/lander)



Evening Standard-  
Grace Dent, 2015



## RESTAURANTS

### GRACE AND FLAVOUR

Grace Dent has an early Indian summer at a relocated *Chutney Mary*



**D**espite Chutney Mary sounding much like the rude nickname of an amorous Branston Pickle production-line employee, it is also the appellation of one of London's most genteel and respected Indian restaurants. It will, however, always make grown people giggle. Chutney Mary is up there with the Oxo Tower and Dirty Dicks as 'venues it is literally impossible to invite a person to and get a straight answer the first time'.

For the past 25 years, Chutney Mary has been the pride of New King's Road, but now it's upped sticks to St James's Street near Green Park. The move has no doubt displeased the SW10 set. It must have been glorious, after two samosas, one Afghani chicken tikka, a naan, a salted caramel kulfi and an amble through the wine list, to have been within waddling distance of one's chaise longue. But now Chutney Mary has taken its high-end Indian offerings to a bigger, grander setting.

Many of the Chelsea-era Mary's signature dishes, including the green curry, have remained, but there are new temptations, such as sautéed Cornish crab in chilli butter and lobster biryani. The kid biryani is comfortingly devourable, albeit fiercely spiced.

**The Saturday night St James's-era Chutney Mary set were mainly letting their chauffeurs worry about how they came and went.**

As I arrived, smart families, chic tourists and no riffraff were warmly greeted by a handsome bloke in a feathered turban manning the door. Inside, the dining room is irrefutably stunning. It's rare in London that I feel even vaguely underdressed – more is more being my mantra – but the all-new Chutney Mary is just the right mix of capacious, candle-bedazzled, art-strewn and Bentley-visited to make one suddenly regret not slinging on better diamonds.

Still, I'm glad I toughed out these insecurities, as Chutney Mary was worth adding to the little black book. The problem with fellow high-end Indian dining haven Gymkhana on Albemarle Street is, quite plainly, that there are no bloody problems with Gymkhana on Albemarle Street. This is why it won a Michelin star and now there are never any tables left.

I walk past Gymkhana often, my eyes drilling furiously on the merry,



*It's rare that I feel underdressed, but the new Chutney Mary is just the right mix of candle-bedazzled and art-strewn to make one regret not slinging on better diamonds*

forward-planning guzzlers sat in its window eating Chettinad duck dosas and tandoori guinea fowl. Hell – for the restaurant nerd – is other people with more finely tuned iCals. Don't even start me off about the queue at Taiwanese steamed milk bun emporium Bao on Lexington Street, which is hectic by 5pm. Who are these people? Why do they torment me?

So hooray for Chutney Mary, now in the West End, sporting a dainty cocktail list featuring Rangpur Gimlets and Mango Mojitos. It's cavernous enough to try for a walk-in, there are two large private dining rooms in the

basement and large tables in the main restaurant to cater for family gatherings, client dinners or other things where someone else will pay.

**Obviously, all these imported paintings and sumptuous antique tables filled with glassware and altar candles don't come cheap.**

We managed to spend over £150 in under 90 minutes, ordering abstemiously, which is sinful I know. The venison samosas in their wafer-thin cones were unforgettable. A side of Bombay aloo wasn't much to write home about, but I'll overlook this as the butter chicken was remarkable. The sweet carrot and cardamom soufflé with pistachio ice cream was the stuff of dreams.

Service is a little full-on, but that's to be expected. And at dinner time the restaurant is completely non-child-friendly – under-tens aren't allowed in after 8pm – which is favourable because although yours are beautifully mannered, all the others are savages. But this clientele won't have trouble funding childcare. I treated myself to an Uber Lux home. It was exactly that sort of night.



#### CHUTNEY MARY

73 St James's Street, W1  
(020 7629 6688; [chutneymary.com](http://chutneymary.com))

2 cocktails	£25
1 guinea fowl kebab	£11
1 venison samosa	£11
1 butter chicken masala	£18.50
1 kid gosht biryani	£26
1 Bombay aloo	£5.50
1 kachumber raita	£4
1 Grüner Peter Unger	£39
1 carrot soufflé	£8
TOTAL	£157





Time Out 2015  
Top 50 restaurants in London



# The Top 50 restaurants in London

We've put together a definitive 100-strong list of the very best places to eat in the capital, including classics and newbies, Michelin-starred celeb pits and great local places. Here's the top 50: for the full 100 go to [www.timeout.com/top100restaurants](http://www.timeout.com/top100restaurants)

**1 The Ledbury** £££

World-class cooking and a laidback local vibe. 127 Ledbury Rd, W11 2AQ.

**2 Chiltern Firehouse** ££££

Razzle-dazzle cooking at one of the hottest tickets in town. 1 Chiltern St, W1U 7PA.

**3 Dabbous** £££

Vegetables hog the limelight with wit and invention. 39 Whitfield St, W1T 2SF.

**4 The Manor** £££

Modernist mastery in cool, casual Clapham. 148 Clapham Manor St, SW4 6BX.

**5 Chutney Mary** ££££

Indian cooking as good as it gets. 73 Little St James's St, SW1A 1PH.

**6 Sushi Tetsu** £££

Tiny in size, but a shrine to sushi. 12 Jerusalem Passage, EC1V 4JP.

**7 St John** £££

Class, consistency and commitment to the best of British produce. 26 St John St, EC1M 4AY.

**8 Dinings** £££

Raw-fish magic in a Marylebone mini-basement. 22 Harcourt St, W1H 4HH.

**9 Palomar** £££

Modern Israeli cooking sets Soho alight. 34 Rupert St, W1D 6DN.

**10 Social Eating House** £££

The best of Jason Atherton's restaurants? We think so. 58 Poland St, W1F 7NS.

**11 Hawksmoor Seven Dials** ££££

Often imitated, never surpassed – star steak in plush surroundings. 11 Langley St, WC2H 9JG.

**12 Medlar** ££

Unexpected assemblies that always work, and all made in Chelsea. 438 King's Rd, SW10 0LJ.

**13 Amaya** £££

Gorgeous Asian tapas, and a sleek cocktail bar. Halkin Arcade, Motcomb St, SW1X 8JT.

A meal for

28 Read more reviews and listings and

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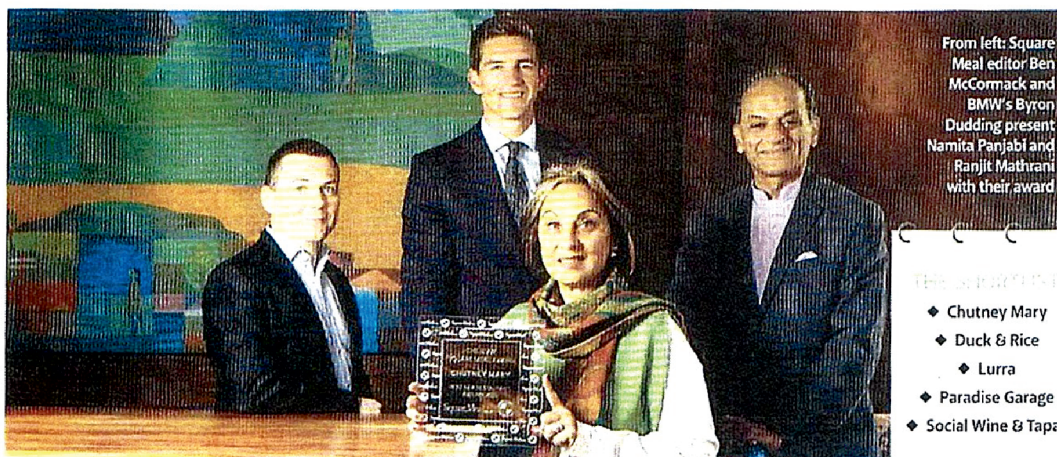
AUGUST 11–17 2015 No. 2341  
TIMEOUT.COM/LONDON



## Square Meal Best New Restaurant



restaurant news



From left: Square Meal editor Ben McCormack and BMW's Byron Dudding present Namita Panjabi and Ranjit Mathrani with their award

### THE SHORTLIST

- ◆ Chutney Mary
- ◆ Duck & Rice
- ◆ Lurra
- ◆ Paradise Garage
- ◆ Social Wine & Tapas



The shortlist for our **BMW Best New Restaurant** award shows what's so great about London's restaurant scene. Some of the names have been sources of innovation throughout Square Meal's 26-year history; others are recent arrivals.

Alan Yau's **Duck & Rice** came close. This visionary restaurateur's return to Chinese food is a failsafe venue to impress guests, whether drinking or dining, not least because you can eat on a modest budget or go for a blow-out.

We love everything Jason Atherton does and the fact that his latest, **Social Wine & Tapas**, comes with a much smaller bill made us love it even more. Could Robin Gill be shaping up to be a neighbourhood Atherton? His two

Clapham restaurants, the Manor and Dairy, have won plaudits and his third, **Paradise Garage** in east London, brings a Nordic approach to homegrown ingredients. It's challenging cooking at the cutting edge.

And then there's **Lurra**, from the team behind Donostia. Might this Basque grill persuade Londoners there's more to Spanish cooking than tapas? One bite of the signature Galician rib-eye will leave you wanting more.

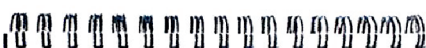
But for our winner, we turned to the team we've known the longest. For a restaurant to reach the 25-year mark is unusual; for it to mark that anniversary by moving to a totally different part of the city is unheard of. But the all-new **Chutney Mary** has been worth the upheaval.

The spacious bar ticks many boxes: as a

breakfast venue, for a light meal, or evening drinks. And the dining room hums with class, from the refined food to the slick service and wines chosen to match spice levels. With two private rooms, it offers the complete restaurant package this award seeks to celebrate.

"Moving Chutney Mary to St James's has been a complex undertaking," said chairman and co-owner Ranjit Mathrani. "We have created a new restaurant, but one which assimilates and builds on Chutney Mary's core brand values: bringing together interesting food from the many regions of India with quality ingredients and cutting-edge presentation. It is very gratifying to receive this highly prized accolade."

To read more about the shortlisted restaurants turn to p.46



### DIARY DATE

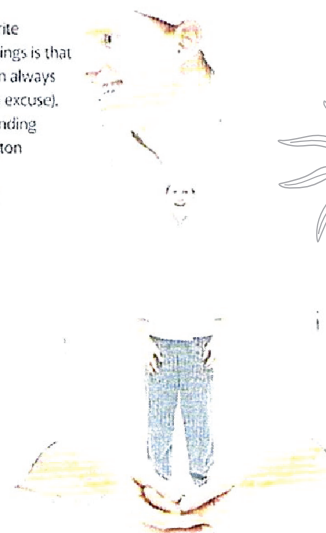
16 Nov - The Shangri-La Hotels

TING restaurant welcomes Ip Chi Cheung, executive chef at Hong Kong's two-Michelin-

On top of the imminent opening of sites in Kensington and Marylebone, we hear that The Ivy is to sprout three more branches. Stay posted.

### Big Chef Little Chef

The best thing about some of our favourite restaurants spawning more laidback siblings is that these newcomers are cheaper, so we can always afford to eat out (not that we needed an excuse). First came the news that **The Ivy** is extending its tendrils into Marylebone and Kensington with café-style outposts, then Bocca di Lupo birthed **Vico**, an Italian street food mecca at Cambridge Circus. Next up, Russell Norman (of Polpo) announced **The Bowler**, a meatball restaurant which opened in Covent Garden this month (and we hear he has plans for up to eight more Polpo offshoots), and last but not least, the team behind Gyrnkhana, our current BMW Restaurant of the Year, is bringing a casual Indian called **Hoppers** to Soho as we go to press. Will this prove the firstborn isn't always the favourite?







Selected quotes from reviews & articles  
on Chutney Mary in St. James's location



June 14, 2018

**Chutney Mary - Best Indian restaurants in London ( Chutney Mary Veeraswamy) Conde Nast Traveler June 2018**

[download pdf](#)

August 11, 2015

**Chutney Mary - Time Out Top 50 restaurants in London**

[download pdf](#)

July 19, 2015

**Chutney Mary – The Sunday Times Magazine 5\* review**

AA Gill concludes "if there is a better pan-Indian restaurant in London than Chutney Mary, I haven't eaten in it"

[download pdf](#)

August 11, 2015

**Chutney Mary – Time Out Top 50 restaurants in London – No 5**

"Indian cooking as good as it gets."

[download pdf](#)

October 28, 2015

**Chutney Mary – Winner of Square Meal Lifestyle BMW Best New Restaurant Award**

"For a restaurant to reach the 25-year mark is unusual; for it to mark that anniversary by moving to a totally different part of the city is unheard of."

[download pdf](#)

June 18, 2015

**Chutney Mary – Evening Standard Review**

"Just the right mix of capacious, candle-bedazzled, art-strewn and Bentley-visited"

[download pdf](#)

June 06, 2015

**Chutney Mary – The Time Out 5\* Review**

"Astonishing Quality & wonderful service" Roopa Gulati

[download pdf](#)

July 18, 2015

**Chutney Mary – FT Weekend Magazine Review**

"Nicholas Lander visits the impressive Indian restaurant at its new home in Green Park"

[download pdf](#)

June 15, 2015

**Chutney Mary – The Telegraph Review**

"This is food that is as enjoyable as it is eye-opening"

[download pdf](#)

October 10, 2017

**Chutney Mary - GQ - The best Indian restaurants and take aways in London**

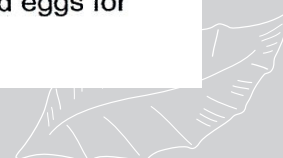
Here, the food is paramount – and draws on the entire nation for its menu, rather than specialising on one particular region – but so too is the experience (service is beyond excellent), environment (you'll never visit a smarter-looking dining room, regardless of the kitchen's output), and experience.

[download pdf](#)

October 03, 2017

**Chutney Mary - Conde Nast Traveller listing - The best Indian restaurants in London**

"... a completely new set of menus, with fluffy Akoori-Indian style scrambled eggs for







## Chutney Mary 30th Birthday- 2020 posted by Simon Carter

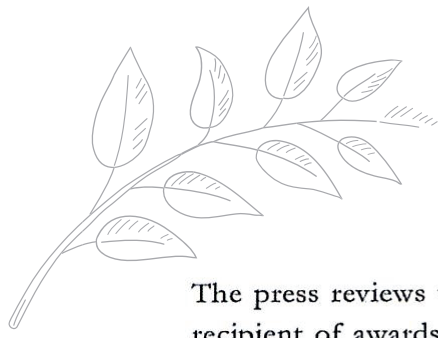


*Chutney Mary Interior, King's Road, 1990*

So, looking back, it is harder than one might first imagine to step into the shoes of Namita Panjabi and Ranjit Mathrani as they considered their options. To appreciate the landscape of that time, somewhere between Bibendum (for size) and Bombay Brasserie (for cuisine) was about the only semblance of an example business model. How brave and visionary those restaurateurs were in seeing a successful upscale, top-end, Indian restaurant. Furthermore, one that was situated on the sophisticated, thriving and fashionable, King's Road in Chelsea. In 1989 Namita Panjabi and Ranjit Mathrani formed Chelsea Plaza Restaurants which was later renamed Masala World. The company was formed to create Chutney Mary.

Chutney Mary was born in the summer of 1990. The calculated risk paid off almost immediately, as it transpired that the new concept struck a chord with the adventurous local residential gentry, who were ready to experiment with a more sophisticated interpretation of Indian food. A formidable following developed, not just locally, but also from a broad destination spectrum. From the well-travelled, particularly Indophiles, to the curious local diner, Chutney Mary would regularly satisfy 150-200 guests per evening service within its one hundred-seater space.





The press reviews were united in their praise and admiration. The restaurant was also the recipient of awards from The Evening Standard (Eros Award), Harden's, Square Meal and Tio Pepe Carlton. Further, Curry Clubs Best Indian Restaurant in the UK award made The BBC Evening News. From Fay Maschler to Zagat and from Tatler to The NY Times, journalists and critics commented on the ever evolving and consistent quality of the food, alongside "a look that is shimmering and seductive."

Camellia Panjabi, Namita's sister, would later join as a director of the company, which was to become the broader MWEat Group. Camellia was a pioneer herself, with an Economics degree from Cambridge, working for Tata Group, she was tasked with making a success of the marketing of the Taj Group of Hotels. Her passion was food and she worked on a project to bring the diverse cuisines of the continent into the Hotel Group in a luxury Indian cultural setting. As well as enjoying success across India, one such outpost of The Taj Group was the 1982 launch of the aforementioned Bombay Brasserie in London.

Overall, her food project was a daunting challenge, as India constituted a country with around 1.2 billion people, 14 different languages, 29 States, 7 Union Territories, not to mention various cultures – thereby demonstrating contrasts in cuisine type at least as wide as those found between countries across Europe. Furthermore, recipes from the south had to be eked out from families or private cooks across the country. A by-product of this work was Camellia's best-selling recipe book '50 Great Curries of India' which has sold around two million copies world-wide. In 2013, Camellia was awarded an MBE.







*Chutney Mary Interior, King's Road, 1990*

As Chutney Mary's success expanded it garnered a global reputation and provided a blueprint for the influx of other Indian master chefs to feed the market that they had created. One might argue that they enabled the space in which Atul Kochhar, Vineet Bhatia and Sriram Ayur were to flourish. The latter coming to London at Quilon a decade after launching Karavali restaurant in Bangalore under the then strategy remit of Camellia Panjabi at Taj Hotels. Where trailblazers go, others will follow and this is an important aspect of the Chutney Mary legacy as it celebrates 30 years.

By 2015 the lease on the King's Road premises had run its course. This provided the ideal opportunity to review the best location to suit the past, present and future of the Chutney Mary client base. After an extensive search the current site on St James' Street was found, although it was not love at first sight for the owners. An inspired interior designer, along with their Feng Shui consultant put their mind at ease and made them excited about the potential of the new premises. A potential that has more than been fulfilled. Certain aspects needed tweaking, including where to place a private dining room, the cloakrooms as well as stripping back all the décor.

There is a plush, upmarket long bar called Pukka Bar, serving cocktails, vintage champagne, artisanal gins and malts as well as small plates to casual visitors. The recent restaurant menu has seen starters replaced by small plates and a move toward lighter eating, principally to attract the lunch trade. A grilled section is complemented by slow cooked curries, vegetarian dishes, sides and grains. The restaurant has always been busy and continues to attract a crowd even in these challenging times. The dining room may be seen variously as one for special occasions, a discreet business meeting venue or a social meeting place for friends. The charming, friendly and informative service ably matches the quality of the food, while measuring and meeting their guests needs with care and attention.

All this while remaining true to its principles; being innovative in so many ways. It was the first to bring Anglo-Indian food of the Raj, including plated courses rather than sharing dishes. It was the first to bring highlights of pan-Indian food, which was globally ground breaking. The recipes are cleverly adapted, using the latest techniques by master chefs, bringing a modern twist to the interpretation of dishes, that enhance flavour to the sensibilities of a London palate.





*Chutney Mary, St James', 2020*

There is a subtle evolution that retains old favourites, while forever encouraging the new and exciting to the menu. Authenticity and complexity of the menu is provided by chefs trained and recruited as masters from their region of origin.

Indeed, the painstaking and expensive recruitment process, is made even more complex by the need for a relatively flat kitchen management structure. This is because the expert chef of one region will not work the 'section' of another expert chef's region. There is also often an under appreciation of the extent of cooking processes that go into Indian cuisine at these heights. Uncompromising sourcing of produce of the highest quality is matched by detailed multi-stage cooking, with impeccable timing as an absolute necessity for consistency. All are in abundance over the life of Chutney Mary and as such an ongoing requirement of the diligent and focused owners who regularly taste and review the menu for the benefit of their customers.

Prime Ministers past and present have been patrons of the restaurant, along with the obligatory smattering of celebrity to complement the loyal regulars. The critic AA Gill was a notable friend of the house, quoted as saying "If there is a better pan-Indian restaurant in London than Chutney Mary I haven't eaten in it." A sentiment wholeheartedly echoed by



AA GUIDE AWARD  
2024



20

## Chutney Mary London



This highly-acclaimed Indian restaurant opened in Chelsea in 1990. In 2015, it moved to St James's, and offers some of the best Indian cooking in the UK.

The stylish interiors showcase an eclectic mix of authentic Indian design and contemporary style in a glamorous, yet timeless setting, combining ambient lighting with comfortable furniture.

Chutney Mary continues to reinvent exceptional and unusual recipes from many different cuisines of India, cooked in contemporary cutting-edge style and providing exceptional dining experiences.

The Pukka Bar is a vibrant environment with its splendid stone and leather-topped bar counter and leather chairs and sofas. It serves drinks and food including cocktails, champagnes, an à la carte menu, snacks and grazing food.

Service is attentive, warm and polished. Overall, it's a memorable experience.







AA Guide



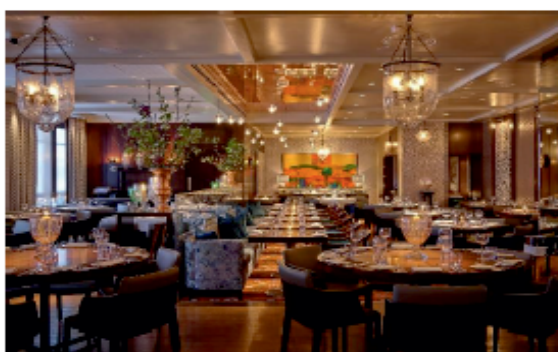
## PRESS RELEASE

The India Collection

London

Amaya | Chutney Mary | Veeraswamy

### CHUTNEY MARY AWARDED PRESTIGIOUS 'RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR LONDON'



27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Chutney Mary, the highly acclaimed Indian restaurant in St. James's in London, was awarded **AA Restaurant of the Year London (2024)** at a glittering function of over 900 hospitality industry professionals at the Grosvenor House Hotel. The well-respected AA Restaurant Guide will mark its 30<sup>th</sup> edition with the 2024 book, although joint hotel and restaurant guides were established in the UK in 1967, and their awards of Rosettes were introduced even earlier in 1956, as the first nationwide scheme of recognition of excellence of restaurants and hotels. Each year, special Award winners in several categories are chosen as best in class following professional inspections, and verified by the AA's Hospitality Awards Panel, with the results representing the very finest dining experiences.

Commenting on Chutney Mary's accolade, Simon Numphud, Managing Director of the AA Media Group, explained: "Chutney Mary is one of London's finest restaurants and a class act. It combines a wonderful stylish location and interiors, accomplished cooking, and delivering exceptional dishes with fantastic hospitality and service. Such a great restaurant, loved by so many, is so deserving to be our AA Restaurant of the Year for London."

Camellia Panjabi, Group Director of MW Eat, the owning company of Chutney Mary, said: "This award is completely unexpected, but greatly appreciated by my fellow Directors and the committed long-serving team at Chutney Mary. It is particularly noteworthy since Chutney Mary is a 33-year-old restaurant - to be acknowledged now for this significant and esteemed achievement is especially touching, considering the focus among media is so often on the newest restaurants, food trends and rising star chefs."

To become a London institution, a restaurant must walk a tightrope between acknowledging its original foundation, while avoiding complacency, to embracing the very present, in order to meet the constantly evolving tastes and appreciation of its diners. Chutney Mary has made this journey effectively over the last three decades by concentrating on its cuisine's originality, regionality and innovation alongside exceptional hospitality.

**Chutney Mary** – 73 St James's Street, London SW1A 1PH

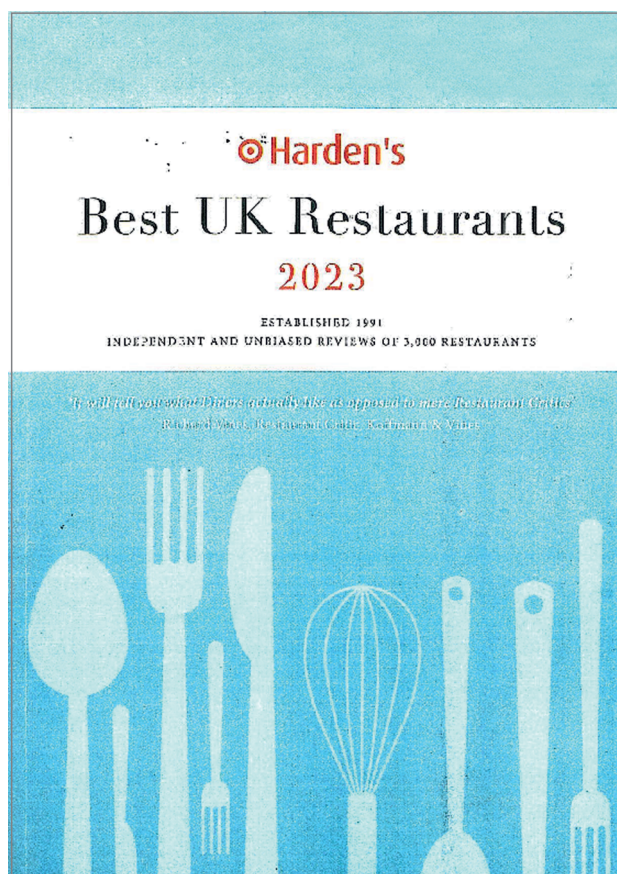
E: [info@chutneymary.com](mailto:info@chutneymary.com) ; [www.chutneymary.com](http://www.chutneymary.com) Instagram: @chutneymary.london

#### About Chutney Mary

After 25 years in Chelsea, the restaurant relocated to the more central location in St James's in 2015. Its glamorous interior design is matched by its contemporary Indian cuisine, carefully curated drinks offering, and superb front-of-house service. It is open daily for lunch and dinner, including weekend brunch. There are two distinctive private dining rooms (for up to 32 guests) and the Pukka Bar not only serves cocktails but is also a dining bar with individual and small group capacity. Chutney Mary is part of the MW Eat group which also owns Amaya in Belgravia and Veeraswamy in Mayfair (both with Michelin stars), as well as four Masala Zone restaurants, including the recently opened Masala Zone Piccadilly Circus.

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2023

## ◉ Harden's Best UK Restaurants 2024

ESTABLISHED 1991  
INDEPENDENT AND UNBIASED REVIEWS OF 3,000 RESTAURANTS**CHUTNEY MARY  
SW1****£91 4/4/4****73 ST JAMES'S STREET  
020 7629 6688 3-4D**

"Always a good experience" – this "upmarket Indian" in St James's is the original venture of Ranjit & Namita Mathrani, plus the latter's sister, Camellia Panjabi (who run other top Indians and the Masala Zone chain). One of London's first 'nouvelle Indians' (when it opened, on its former site, in SW10), its "complex and well-balanced" dishes are "done well enough to let them off the high prices" and served in a great space, whose "wonderful décor gives it character". Rishi's a regular apparently. / SW1A 1PH; [www.chutneymary.com](http://www.chutneymary.com); [chutneymary.london](mailto:chutneymary.london); Mon-Sat 10 pm, Sun 9.15 pm.

2024

**Christopher's WC2** £70 000  
18 Wellington St 7240 4222 4-3D  
The recent refit "has added glamour and a sense of space" to this "delightful" (and business-friendly) Covent Garden townhouse; early reports suggest that, as ever, it's "not cheap", but that realisation of the surf 'n' turf cuisine has improved since the re-launch. / WC2E 7DD; [www.christophersgrill.com](http://www.christophersgrill.com); @christopherswc2; 11.30 pm, Sun 10.30 pm; booking: max 14; set pre theatre £39 (FF).

**Chuen Cheng Ku W1** £37 000  
17 Wardour St 7437 1398 4-3A  
"Ever-circling" dim sum trolleys are the key feature of a "cracking-value" lunchtime visit to this "old Chinatown warhorse" – a particularly good experience "with kids"; à la carte, however, the food is "very average". / W1D 6D; [www.chuenchengku.co.uk](http://www.chuenchengku.co.uk); 11.45 pm.

**Churchill Arms W8** £34 000  
119 Kensington Church St 7792 1246 6-2B  
"At the back of a truly original, quirky pub, off Notting Hill Gate", a "really fun", "plant-filled" conservatory, where the Thai dishes on offer are "the very definition of cheap and cheerful". / W8 7LN; 10 pm, 9.30 pm.

**Chutney SW18** £31 000  
11 Alma Rd 8870 4588 10-2B  
"A great local Indian with its own unique style of cooking and some fantastic deals" – the worst thing any reporter has to say about this "friendly" Wandsworth fixture / SW18 1AA; [www.chutneyrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.chutneyrestaurant.co.uk); 11.30 pm; D only.

**Chutney Mary SW10** £55 000  
535 King's Rd 7351 3113 5-4B  
"A real aristocrat of the Indian restaurant world" – this "long-term favourite", at the far end of Chelsea, boasts a "very atmospheric conservatory", and is a "totally charming" destination, offering "wonderfully aromatic" dishes, and "tip top" service too. / SW10 0SZ; [www.realindianfood.com](http://www.realindianfood.com); 11.45 pm, Sun 10.45 pm; closed weekday L; booking: max 8.

**Chutneys NW1** £30 000  
124 Drummond St 7388 0604 8-4C  
"The lunchtime and weekend buffet is very tasty and truly excellent value", say fans of this "airy" café – long a "cheap 'n' cheerful" staple of the Little India, near Euston; you can BYO too. / NW1 2PA; [www.chutneysrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.chutneysrestaurant.co.uk); 11 pm; no Amex; need 5+ to book.

**Ciao Bella WC1** £41 000  
86-90 Lamb's Conduit St 7242 4119 2-1D  
It's not just the "back-to-the-70s" time warp experience that wins fans for this "buzzy", "no-frills" family-run Bloomsbury Italian – its "solid" scoff comes at "value-for-money" prices. / WC1N 3LZ; [www.ciaobellarestaurant.co.uk](http://www.ciaobellarestaurant.co.uk); 11.30 pm, Sun 10.30 pm.

**Cibo W14** £51 000  
3 Russell Gdns 7371 6271 7-1D  
"The forgotten star of west London" – this "marvellous local Italian", on the Kensington/Olympia border, is an "authentic" and "unassuming" stalwart, where the cooking is still often "superb". / W14 8EZ; [www.ciborestaurant.net](http://www.ciborestaurant.net); 11 pm; closed Sat L & Sun D.

**Cigala WC1** £49 000  
54 Lamb's Conduit St 7405 1717 2-1D  
With its "genuine" Spanish food (plus "a very good wine list"), this "bustling" operation, on a quiet Bloomsbury street, impresses many reporters; the decor is a touch "sterile", though, and service can be erratic. / WC1N 3LW; [www.cigala.co.uk](http://www.cigala.co.uk); 10.45 pm, Sun 9.45 pm.

**Le Cigalon WC2** £47 000  
115 Chancery Ln 7242 8373 2-2D  
Built as a Victorian auction house, these "very bright and airy" premises, now specialising in the cuisine of Provence, are "something of an oasis in the restaurant-starved legal district" – "great for a business lunch", obviously, but equally suited to "dinner with friends". / WC2A 1PP; [www.cigalon.co.uk](http://www.cigalon.co.uk); 10 pm; closed Sat & Sun.

**THE CINNAMON CLUB SW1** £69 000  
Old Westminster Library, Great Smith St 72 2555 2-4C  
In the "beautiful" setting of Westminster's former library, near the Abbey, Jugal Wadhwa's "outstanding" venture is one of London's most impressive destinations; its "haute take" on Indian cuisine often achieves an "absolutely sublime" standard. / SW1P 3BU; [www.cinnamonclub.com](http://www.cinnamonclub.com); @CinnamonClub; 10.30 pm; closed Sun; no trainers; set weekday L & pre-theatre L (FF); SRA-68%.

**Cinnamon Kitchen EC2** £55 000  
9 Devonshire Sq 7626 5000 9-2D  
"Exciting" Indian fusion cuisine combines with "attentive" service and an "elegant" setting (with airy seating in the atrium) to make the Cinnamon Club's "business-like" spin-off a top destination – it even offers a "good-value set lunch". / EC2M 4TL; [www.cinnamon-kitchen.com](http://www.cinnamon-kitchen.com); @cinnamonkitchen; 11 pm; closed Sat L & Sun; set weekday L £34 (FF); SRA-61%.

**Cinnamon Soho W1** £43 000  
5 Kingly St 7437 1664 3-2D  
Soho's "stripped-down version of the Cinnamon Club" pleases most reporters with its "small mix of well-spiced Indian dishes" (and its "fantastic-value" set lunch deals too); for a valuable minority though, the whole performance is "a bit lacklustre". / W1B 5PE; [www.cinnamon-kitchen.com/soho-home](http://www.cinnamon-kitchen.com/soho-home);

2014





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Pursuits

Food & Drinks

## Five Top Tables: The Best Restaurants in London Right Now

A new monthly column highlights the city's essential dining spots, from business meals to cheap eats.



The power dining room at Chutney Mary. Source: Chutney Mary

### Business meal: Chutney Mary, Mayfair

At this sophisticated Indian restaurant on St. James's Place, Mayfair's hedge fund central, the commanding dining room has well-spaced tables. Does your business deal require a bit more discretion? Semiprivate alcoves accommodate high-level discussions and even guests with a security detail, including former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, who often made the short trip from Downing Street, and Business Secretary Jonathan Reynolds.

Among the most popular dishes are tandoori artichoke hearts (£17), Andhra lobster chili stir-fry (£31) and Afghani chicken tikka (£33), a favorite of another former PM, Boris Johnson. The martinis range from the classic vesper to a golden saffron-infused option (£20). There's also a selection of Indian craft gins to sip straight and a heavy-hitting wine list stocked with plenty of Bordeaux and Burgundies, including a 2017 Domaine de Montille Chevalier-Montrachet Grand Cru (£700) to uncork once the ink has dried.





## ABOUT US

### **Background:**

Following 25 trendsetting years in Chelsea (1990-2025), Chutney Mary moved to St. James's Street in Mayfair at the intersection of an effervescent financial district, club land and the best of London's masculine shopping. It now features a completely new level of Indian cuisine befitting current tastes and style.

### **Ambience:**

Chutney Mary with its large space showcases an eclectic combination of stylish Indian design and contemporary style in a glamorous yet timeless setting. It has a 50-seater dining bar, known as Pukka Bar, perfect for pre-dinner cocktails or less formal dining.

### **Cuisine:**

Contemporary Indian. Extensive menu encompassing great seafood, grills and a few slow-cooked meats, unusual curries, biryanis and an interesting variety of vegetables and breads.

### **Signature Dishes:**

Tokri Chaat, Afghani Chicken Tikka, Baked Venison Samosa, Tandoori Dover Sole, Masala Roast Duck, Tandoori Lobster, Hyderabadi Lamb Shank, Kid Gosht Biryani.

### **Lunch & Dinner Weekend Lunch:**

The menu on Saturday & Sunday features additional brunch specials, Bloody Mary & Pimms by the jug.

### **Pukka Bar:**

Adjacent to the restaurant, the Pukka Bar is a dining bar with its own unique atmosphere serving exotic cocktails, many with botanicals, as well as non-alcoholic drinks including fresh coconut water in the shell. The varied drinks list includes craft beers and artisanal gins & malts. The full restaurant menu is also available at the bar.

### **Drinks at the Restaurant:**

The wine list features over 100 bins with unusual wines from around the world; including a range of fine wines, and also wine from England and India. Many are available by the glass. Selection of special martinis, special gin-based cocktails, artisanal beers, and non-alcoholic drinks.

### **Private Dining:**

The Club Room seats up to 32 guests; the Crystal Room seats up to 16 guests. Both are available for business meetings preceding or following the meal.





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Facebook: IndianFineDining  
Instagram: @chutneymary.london

**Owning Company:**

MW Eat

**Directors:**

Ranjit Mathrani, Camellia Panjabi, Namita Panjabi

March 2024



## CURRENT REVIEWS IN GUIDES CHUTNEY MARY RESTAURANT

### **AA Guide -**

New meets old at this stylish St James's restaurant with its hybrid of classical and modern decor. A visit to this classy venue begins at the glittering Pukka Bar for cocktails. But its main dining room is the real jewel in the crown complete with mirrored columns and soft lighting. The creative Indian cuisine runs to inspiring combinations with luxurious touches and well-dressed presentation. Goa crab cakes with chilli raita and punchy tamarind chutney fire up the tastebuds before an authentic Toddy shop cod Kerala fish curry richly flavoured with coconut, tamarind and fresh curry leaves. Almond halwa apple tart with cinnamon ice cream is a storming dessert.

### **Squaremeal -**

"The best in its category" insists a fan of this opulently appointed Indian restaurant and cocktail bar – a sumptuous amalgam of antiques, beautiful textiles, screens and satin banquettes, where the magical lighting (candles in glass bowls) makes everyone look gorgeous.

The menu is a collection of authentic recipes developed for modern tastes by sisters Camellia Panjabi and Namita Mathrani who spend many hours working with their chefs. The result is stupendously good cooking: "10/10, the best Indian food I've ever eaten" admits one reader; "fabulous, mouth-watering and steeped in the deepest spices", says another.







## GOOGLE AND TRIPADVISOR REVIEWS



Amazing restaurant, very tasty Indian food. Highly recommend.

**Nasreen Redha on Google**

**28 April 2025**

We recently tried this Indian restaurant and had a really enjoyable experience. The food was delicious, full of authentic flavors, and the variety on the menu was impressive. There's something for everyone! From rich curries to flavorful biryanis and fresh naan, each dish was well prepared and tasty. The service was friendly too, which made the meal even better. Overall, a great spot for Indian food lovers. Would definitely go back!

**Ahmad Alshehhi on Google**

**3 April 2025**

Must must try on your visit to London, beautifully done restaurant with top notch service and the food is unmatched. Highly impressed.

**Kannupriya Garg on Google**

**1 April 2025**

This was a wonderful dining experience. The service was excellent and the food was absolutely terrific! As was the Himalayan Gin cocktail that I enjoyed to kick off the meal.

**R701WUmichaeld on Trip Advisor**

**29 March 2025**

In search of great Indian food on our trip to London, this place was fantastic. Incredible mix of flavors and creativity. Staff is amazing. Highly recommend.

**Christopher Rhodes on Google**

**29 March 2025**

Top notch food, vibey atmosphere. An experience worth the price.

**Greg Durst on Google**

**28 March 2025**

Great food, some new concepts of how Indian food is put together and presented. Every single person who worked there was super helpful and courteous this just made the occasion that much more enjoyable.. The Mrs loved the bruleed mango, highly recommend. Starters were amazing.

**Dru M on Google**

**21 March 2025**

Lovely and beloved place with adapted, but still original and super tasty Indian cuisine, with its elegant and romantic interiors, attentive personnel and nice drinks list.. I would outline venison samosa & lamb small plate and baby gosht biryani for main, as well as any other dish, both peculiar and tasty.

**Ilya Gulin on Google**

**February 26, 2025**

It was a treat to return to this super restaurant. Beautifully spiced dishes that tingle and tickle your taste buds rather than stun them. Fourth time here but I'll return again for sure.

**Neil Dennis on Google**

**23 February 2025**



**CHUTNEY  
MARY**

5 Stars. An unforgettable culinary experience. A must visit for refined Indian cuisine in London. Chutney Mary is not just a restaurant. It's a journey into the heart of sophisticated Indian dining. From the moment you walk in, the ambience is warm, elegant, and perfectly curated. The interiors strike the right balance between modern luxury and traditional Indian motifs, making it ideal for both intimate dinners and formal gatherings. Now, onto the food. Every single dish we tried was a work of art. The menu is carefully crafted with unique regional inspirations, and each plate was a burst of authentic flavor, elevated with finesse. The Tandoori Prawns were a standout: plump, juicy, and perfectly charred with just the right hint of smoky spice. The Lobster Nihari was another highlight: rich, aromatic, and cooked to perfection, offering a delicate balance between bold North Indian spices and subtle coastal notes. What truly impressed me was the attention to detail. Even the papad and chutneys were exquisite: fresh, tangy, and clearly homemade. For mains, the Hyderabadi Lamb Biryani was fragrant and beautifully layered, and the Black Dal was creamy, comforting, and cooked for hours - just as it should be. We paired our meal with a bottle of wine recommended by the sommelier, and it complemented the spices brilliantly. The service deserves a special mention: polished, warm, and attentive without being intrusive. The staff were knowledgeable, happy to explain each dish, and made our evening feel truly special. To end, we had the Gulab Jamun Brulee, which was a clever twist on a classic: light, indulgent, and absolutely divine. Chutney Mary is not your typical Indian restaurant, it's a celebration of Indian heritage with a contemporary flair. I left not just satisfied, but genuinely impressed. Highly recommended for those who appreciate fine dining.

**Sana Khan on Google**  
**25 March 2025**

Absolutely love this restaurant. Food is amazing as well as the service and decor. The staff extremely attentive and welcoming. Highly recommend. We will be returning in the near future.

**Lisa Pepperrell on Google**  
**18 February 2025**

Fantastic Indian food. Must visit.  
**Marco on Google**  
**11 February 2025**

Excellent service and food in a smart setting.  
**geoff pearce on Google**  
**10 February 2025**

Fabulous food. Perfect portion sizes. Great cocktails.  
**Mark McGrail on Google**  
**10 February 2025**

You walk in and the welcome along with the ambience is warm. I had been there once before and the staff remembered what I'd had the last time, what a way to make you feel like you're returning home! The food is absolutely fantastic & the staff are knowledgeable. Everything about this place is designed to make it feel grand and beautiful without it feeling intimidating. Recommend for drinks, dinner and special occasions.

**Olivia James on google**  
**4 February 2025**



