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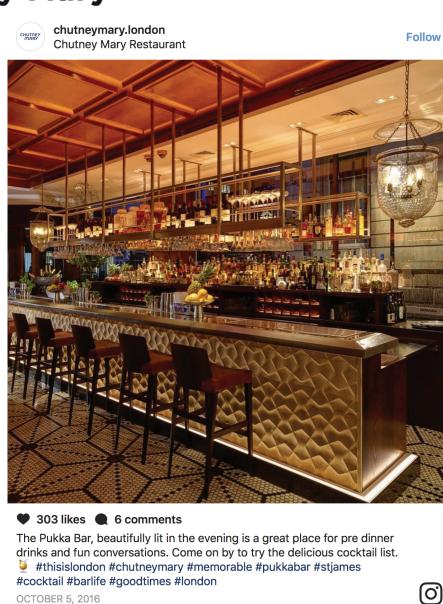


Food & Drink

The best Indian restaurants and take-aways in London

Do yourself a favour and try one of our best Indian restaurants. After asking our team of spice girls and boys, the results are in: some like it hot, some are born to be mild, but everyone loves a decent curry. So what are you waiting for, dhal'ings?

Chutney Mary



Why you'll phall in love... The world will forever be divided along strict culinary lines when it comes to the perfect curry house. There are those who believe Indian cuisine isn't real unless the ghee is running down your forearms and dripping from your elbows onto clean Formica or, if celebrating, a paper table cloth. For the rest of us, there's Chutney Mary, lately re-planted from the nether regions of Chelsea to the beating heart of St James. 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. Here, the move to St James has provided a lively bar scene (with all-day dining and, of course, a spectacular gin and tonic), where it's quite probable big deals in International trade (and intrigue) are taking place; but beyond lies the slightly sunken dining area, where meals are more leisurely affairs. And it pays to spend time here as the cooking truly is breath-taking (and not in the traditional curry-house sense of a nuclear serving of phall).

Tikka chance on... Kid Gosht Biryani (served in its own copper pot). *Bill Prince*