

Feel the passion and heat of India

SOL SIMEON

TO make the shortlist for the Best New Restaurant in Australia you have to be doing something right.

Beyond India does everything right.

The O'Connell St bistro is all about premium service, food with a difference, food that is plentiful and positively delicious. But what maybe sets this restaurant aside as something special is ... *passion*.

Having reviewed the food at Beyond India more than a year ago, a return visit after it made the short list for American Express's major award was a must.

The other drawcard was a change in menu. And here there was a surprise — the Indian cuisine now includes western food Indian-style. (Beyond India, got it now?)

There is the usual criteria for a good dining experience: service, quality, punctuality and prices that won't make you choke on your Visa card.

But to get to the top you need more and at this establishment you feel the food has been prepared just for you. That is a unique experience.

All the kitchen staff are from India, with one chef from Pakistan.

The man up the front is not Indian, this is George Papatolis, who is as convivial, knowledgeable and warm as he is a shrewd businessman.

George also knows Indian food (he admits he has never been to India, but he's getting there — and with Indian chef extraordinaire Robby Gupta in the kitchen, George needs never set foot on the sub-continent).

On the night for the new menu try-out we decided to go for it ... try the lot. That was a decision which would bring tears to the eyes,



Indian and beyond: Restaurant managers Robby Gupta (left) and George Papatolis

WHAT THE BILL CAME TO

■ **WHERE:** Beyond India 143 O'Connell St, North Adelaide. Ph 8267 3820.

■ **WHEN:** Dinner seven days from 5pm. Lunch Wednesday-Friday; Sunday lunch to dinner.

■ **WHAT:** Entree - fish tikka \$10.90, entree for two \$16.90. Main course - beef chennai \$12.90, lamb shanks \$16.90, saag paneer \$10.90, vindaloo naan \$2.50, paneer kulcha \$3, cucumber salad \$3.90. Soft drinks \$5. Total: \$80.90

■ **ACCESS:** Street parking only. Wheelchair access.

through both the beauty of the meal and the "stuffed chook" feeling afterwards.

For entree fish tikka — barramundi fillet marinated in yoghurt served with Indian chutney. That came with a mixed entree of onion bhajia sheekh kebab and pieces of samosa.

The main course — ensure there's a timely break here

— was my favourite, beef chennai and lamb shanks lucknow (one of the Indianised western dishes and positively superb).

Alongside the shanks sat home-made cottage cheese dumplings in a gravy of spinach and roasted mustard seed.

Not satisfied yet? Next came vindaloo naan and

paneer kulcha, more cheese and herbed potato.

Imagine struggling with all this splendour while being assailed by Indian cooking aromas from the kitchen. Beautiful.

Enough, said Ms Sol, as we started to tackle an inviting cool-us-down cucumber salad with onion and tomato.

By the time we had finished a sampling of Beyond India's new menu we sat stunned and sipped lemon, lime and bitters.

Yes, indeed, we had been spoiled silly.

This was a try-out and we would suggest when you book in to go for the banquet — it would, I think, provide a good cross-section of the marvellous array of food at a reasonable \$25-\$30.