

Eat It Up

Food and Wine

BEYOND INDIA

by Karyn Foster

ADDRESS: 170 O'Connell St, North Adelaide (and 108 Kelly Rd, Modbury North)

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HOURS: Lunch and dinner, seven days

FOOD: Indian!

VEGETARIAN: Absolutely!

BEVERAGES: Local and imported beers including KingFisher and Taj Mahal. Wines from McLaren Vale, Adelaide Hills, Barossa, Coonawarra and Clare with the odd wine from Mornington Peninsula, Margaret River and NZ

BYO: Yes, corkage weekdays \$10, weekends \$12

MANAGEMENT: George, Robby and Benita

CHEF: Param (Kapil)

ATMOSPHERE: Subtly Indian

ACCOUNT: Entrees from \$7.90, mains from \$16.50, condiments from \$2.50, desserts from \$8.90, beers from \$4.80 a glass, wines from \$5.50 a glass or \$22 a bottle

OVERVIEW: Fabulous!



I'm in love! With George, not really my type - and, I'm sure, nor am I his - but god is he good!

George welcomes Lara and I with open arms, fresh from the cricket pitch at Adelaide Oval during the Australia v West Indies match. Where else to get away from the maddening cricket crowds than the new, super hip Indian eatery on O'Connell Street?

Let me go back to the beginning. Post match - we need good food, in a smart spot. We hit seven sixes from the hallowed ground and land in Beyond India, Adelaide's new Indian heaven.

George greets us and tells us to make ourselves at home, wherever we feel comfortable. I notice during the course of the evening this is the custom, regulars just stroll in and claim their spot.

Superstar Lara is perfectly at home with the Indian artefacts and the bats from obvious cricket fans. Offered the menu, we give over to George and enjoy a veritable banquet.

First a Nepenthe sauvignon blanc and compliments of the house, a "taste tempter" - Rassam, a lentil-based soup flavoured with mustard seed, tumeric and curry leaf served in an espresso coffee cup. A spicy mouthful.

Fully prepared by the aperitif, Lara and I are presented with the mixed entrée for two. WOW! Two pieces of varanasi (vegetable) samosa, paneer (goats' cheese) tikka, fish tikka and jhinga (prawn) tandoori. Each morsel is perfectly cooked, and served with tamarind chutney

and mint.

We are hardly prepared for what happens next, but we rise to the occasion and demolish the lot! Butter chicken with flavour like I've never had before. Tandoori smoked chicken, folded through a creamy tomato and roast capsicum sauce with a hint of cardamom and (I think) almonds, divine. Delicious prawn marsala, featuring tiger prawn-smothered coconut milk spiked with ginger, garlic, cardamom and curry leaf with timbale of pilau rice. Beef vindaloo. Hot! Hot! Hot! Just how Lara likes it, but not so hot you can't eat it. Tender beef in a richly flavoured tomato and vinegar based sauce.

This array of dishes is served with condiments and accompaniments, pappadams and chutney. Badami, roasted almond and cheese-filled naan. Saag Aloo, a potato and spinach dish flavoured with tumeric and mustard seed. And finally, eggplant raita, all the better for being prepared with home-made organic yoghurt.

I love Indian food, however, I can never quite get my head around the desserts. I'm converted. George orders Lara and I the mango kulfi, a traditional ice cream blended with spices and crushed cardamom. Just beautiful. I'm having the badami or almond next time. And believe me there, will be a next time!

Beyond India - jewel in the crown of Adelaide's Indian restaurants!

