

August 17, 2016

## DINING + OUT

Here are the new spots to know

BY MEREDITH DELISO  
meredithdeliso@amny.com

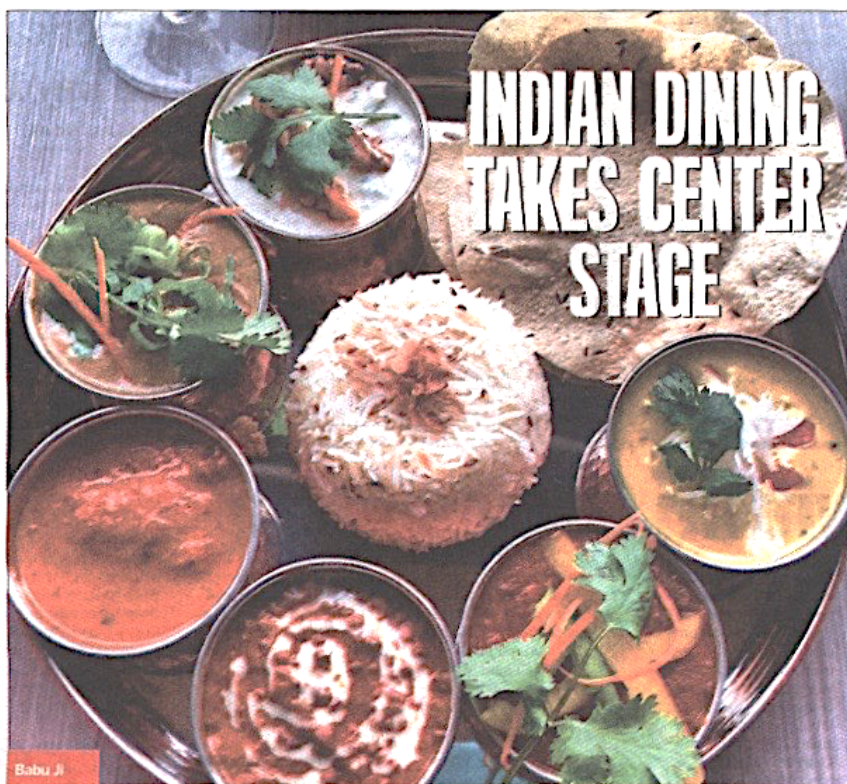
**N**aan, anyone? Fans of chutney, curry and chaat may have noticed a rise in notable Indian options in the city as of late. The cuisine has been in the spotlight thanks to new restaurants from big-name chefs, spinoffs from existing favorites and critical darlings that have earned heaps of praise.

This may just be the year of Indian cuisine in NYC. Here are the restaurants to know.

### CHEF CRED

**Pondicheri** Anita Jaisinghani earned a James Beard Award nomination for her upscale Indian restaurant, Indika, in Houston. Last month, she opened a New York outpost of her more casual Indian spot, there, Pondicheri. The breakfast and lunch menus feature Indian street-food inspired fare, such as frankies (Mumbai-style stuffed roti and egg-washed wraps) and samosas, plus muffins and kolaches to go from the bakery. Dinner launches Aug. 22 and will offer shareable plates and thalis (sampler platters) that pull from across India. • 15 W. 27th St., 646-878-4375

**Paowalla** Floyd Cardoz, formerly of Danny Meyer's acclaimed Indian restaurant Tabla, is back with this month-old SoHo eatery, which is particularly interested in bread (the name "paowalla" translates essentially to "a person employed at or concerned with bread"). The restaurant makes use of two tandoor ovens, as well as a wood-burning oven left over from the previous tenants to make Goan breads. Beyond rosemary, garlic and bacon naans, whole wheat roti and cheddar cheese kulcha, the menu features shareable plates such as a Hyderabad goat roast and pork ribs vindaloo. It's just open for dinner now, with brunch and lunch slated to follow. • Closed Sunday; 195 Spring St., 212-235-1058



Babu Ji

**Tapestry** Indian chef Swir Saran left an impression on New York at the now-closed Indian restaurant Devi. He's back in the city as chef and co-owner of Tapestry, which opened in May featuring a global-inspired menu with Indian flavor (think masala fried chicken, pictured, and foie gras with kumquat). • 60 Greenwich Ave., 212-373-8900



**Indian Accent** A New Delhi star came to New York when the team behind Indian Accent opened a New York outpost of the restaurant earlier this year at Le Parker Meridien. The original chef, Manish Mehrotra, is at the helm here, too, bringing his inventive take on traditional Indian cuisine to the city.



from dosas, pictured, to its trademark kulchas stuffed with such fillings as saag paneer and — in a special nod to New York — pastrami. • Closed Sundays; 123 W. 56th St., 212-842-8070

**Soho Tiffin Junction** This 2-year-old fast-casual Indian eatery is getting attention thanks to a unique collaboration. Last year, owner Jawahar Chinnar teamed up with acclaimed modernist chef Wylie Dufresne (behind the cutting-edge wd-50) to reboot the menu. One of the results of that marriage is the popular curry burgers (pictured), which launched in June and are available with paneer, salmon, veggie and chicken patties. Other highlights include the



Indian fried chicken tenders marinated in curry spices and served with spicy and mango chutneys and the cheese dosa with melted Gruyere. • 42 E. Eighth St., 917-514-8409

### SPINOFFS, EXPANSIONS & REBOOTS

**Graffiti Earth** India native and chef Jehangir Mehta debuted a sister spot to his first restaurant, Graffiti Food & Wine Bar, this spring when Graffiti Earth opened inside the Duane Street Hotel (formerly home to his Asian fusion spot Mehtaphor). The menu features flavors and ingredients from India and beyond, with an emphasis on sustainability and reducing food waste. Dishes include braised pork buns with apricot chutney, a scallop brulee with cauliflower wasabi yogurt and curry rice eggplant sushi. • Closed Sundays and Mondays; 190 Church St., 212-542-9440

**Desi Galli** Curry Hill destination Desi Galli expanded to the East Village this spring, with a second location offering owners Priya Vanda and Vishal Chouhan's Indian street food, including gluten-free kathi rolls and an Indian take on poutine (pictured), with fries, tikka sauce and grated paneer. This likely isn't the last Desi Galli, either; eventually the pair looks to have four locations in NYC. • 172 Ave. B, 212-475-3374

**Royal Monkey** The team behind The Drunken Monkey pays homage to "Old Bombay" with this sister spot, inspired by the bistros and supper clubs of colonial India. Servers sport traditional outfits from India, while the Anglo-Indian menu features such dishes as a railway chicken curry — inspired by the railway lines of the mid-1800s — and Goan pork vindaloo, as well as

bar-friendly chili cheese toast. • 438 Second Ave., 646-863-2249

**Lala Sahab** Chef Lala Sharma rebooted his former Savoury space for a smaller menu that focuses more on modern Indian cuisine. Lala Sahab is slated to open today with new offerings such as chicken tikka sliders, dahi batata poori and tikka-wale samosa. • 489 Columbus Ave., 212-875-1400

### THE CRITICS' DARLINGS

**Babu Ji** Since opening last summer, this casual, dinner-only spot (there's a self-serve beer fridge), has won praise and buzz for chef Jessi Singh's elevated takes on Indian classics, from street food apps to various shareable curry and tandoori dishes. And since reservations are only accepted for the chef's table menu, there tend to be waits. • 175 Ave. B, 212-951-1082

**Chaiwalli** This restaurant is known as much for its food as its interesting back story — chef Anita Trehan converted the first two stories of her Harlem brownstone into the teahouse and restaurant. The menu is inspired by the home-cooked meals Trehan grew up eating, with a global flair. For instance, the black pepper chicken is served with red quinoa instead of rice. • Closed Mondays; 274 Lenox Ave., 646-688-5414

### FUSION FARE

**Chinese Club** Chinese may be in the name, but this Brooklyn spot, which opened this past spring, also draws on Indian cuisine. Husband-and-wife Salil Mehta and Stacey Lo modeled their new restaurant after Lo's great-grandfather's own Chinese Club in Darjeeling, India. The spicy menu is also inspired by her Halka-Chinese and Indian-Chinese household, resulting in such dishes as tandoori kung pao chicken and Darjeeling Halka lo mein. • 208 Grand St., Williamsburg, 718-487-4576

### + EXTRA

New York City restaurant openings to check out at [amny.com/eat](http://amny.com/eat)