



## Best Casual Dining Restaurant - South East London

Est. India is a fashionable and inviting Indian restaurant situated in London. We invited Shafiu Alom to talk us through this enticing establishment to explore the secrets behind its success.

At Est. India, traditional Indian street cuisine meets fine urban Indian dining, with the restaurant's central location, varied menu and relaxed atmosphere ensuring that guests always enjoy their meal. Shafiu discusses the restaurant and its innovative approach to Indian dining.

"Est. India invites you to experience real Indian food culture. At the beginning of our journey our vision was to recreate the true tastes of India right here in the very heart of the beautiful city of London. We wanted everyone to be able to enjoy the tastes, flavours and aromas found in the streets and kitchens of India – home-style, rustic cooking enjoyed by both rich and poor, but served in an informal and modern London restaurant.

"Whether indulging in a relaxed dining date with friends and family, a quick express lunch between meetings, or a slow refreshing chai at our bar on a hot day, we promise you an Indian experience of such delicious authenticity that it will leave you with your own fond memories of the rich and ancient culture of India."

Located in the upcoming and growing culinary area of Bankside, Est. India is nothing like the curry houses of old, instead offering a modern, yet comfortable establishment serving diners authentic food of India, taking inspiration from street food, old school café, and urban homes.

In order to offer guests the very finest experience possible, the approachable staff are always willing to help anyone spoiled for choice by the rich and diverse menu, and Shafiu is keen to outline their vast

contribution to the restaurant's success.

"At Est. Indian, we like to refer to our team as a family rather than colleagues working together. Most of the team have been at Est. India since we first opened the doors and these relationships have formed into family relationships with each other. Our team is made up of diversity, experience, knowledge and culinary experience and it is these skills and qualities of everyone that has enabled us to provide excellent hospitality to our diners. Each member of staff at Est. India has a pivotal role in the running of the restaurant. Our Chefs are trained at the famous Taj Hotel where they have honed their skills.

"As health and safety are of paramount importance to everyone here, we regularly conduct internal training with staff to ensure everyone is familiar with regulations, allergen compliance and hygiene."

For those seeking a quick bite, the restaurant offers an Express Tiffin Lunch, which allows diners to choose from a selection of favourites including Kerala Chicken roasted in spices, star anise, cloves, red chillies, curry leaf and Chana Palak, a wholesome dish of chick peas and baby spinach cooked with onion, garlic and red chilli. Anyone looking to stay within their comfort zone will be deeply impressed by the Desi Burger, a pulled lamb slider adorned with spicy slaw, green chutney and served with massala wedges and green chutney, making the perfect combination of Indian flavours and western tastes.

Similarly, diners watching their waists can enjoy a selection of salads, including the Achari chicken tikka salad which comes with red onions, crispy salad

leaves, pomegranate, fresh coriander, green chilli, green chutney dressing, or the paneer tikka salad with mangoes, which comprises cubes of tandoori Paneer with mangoes, crispy salad, coriander, tomatoes, cucumber and onions.

Finally, anyone looking to indulge their passion for authentic Indian cuisine need look no further than the restaurant's renowned Dosa, a thin rice and lentil crepe filled with choice of chicken, lamb or light masala veg, served with vegetables ambar and coconut chutney.

Overall, Est. India is the perfect setting for an unforgettable Indian dining experience, and guests can do no better than sample the delicious dishes and exquisite hospitality of this relaxed but refined London eatery. Although various challenges look set to befall the eatery over the coming months and years, Shafiu believes that the Est. India's focus on excellence will allow it to survive and thrive despite the tough industry it operates in.

"Looking ahead, due to tight regulation on bringing staff from abroad, there is further constraints on the Indian restaurant industry. To deal with this shortage, we have a big emphasis on staff training and staff retention. With the ongoing Brexit negotiations, the staff shortage will affect the entire catering industry and prices of imported good have also gone up, adding to the challenges we as an Indian restaurant, face. Despite this, we are determined to continue providing our clients with the very highest standards of service and quality, authentic dishes that tantalise their taste buds."