



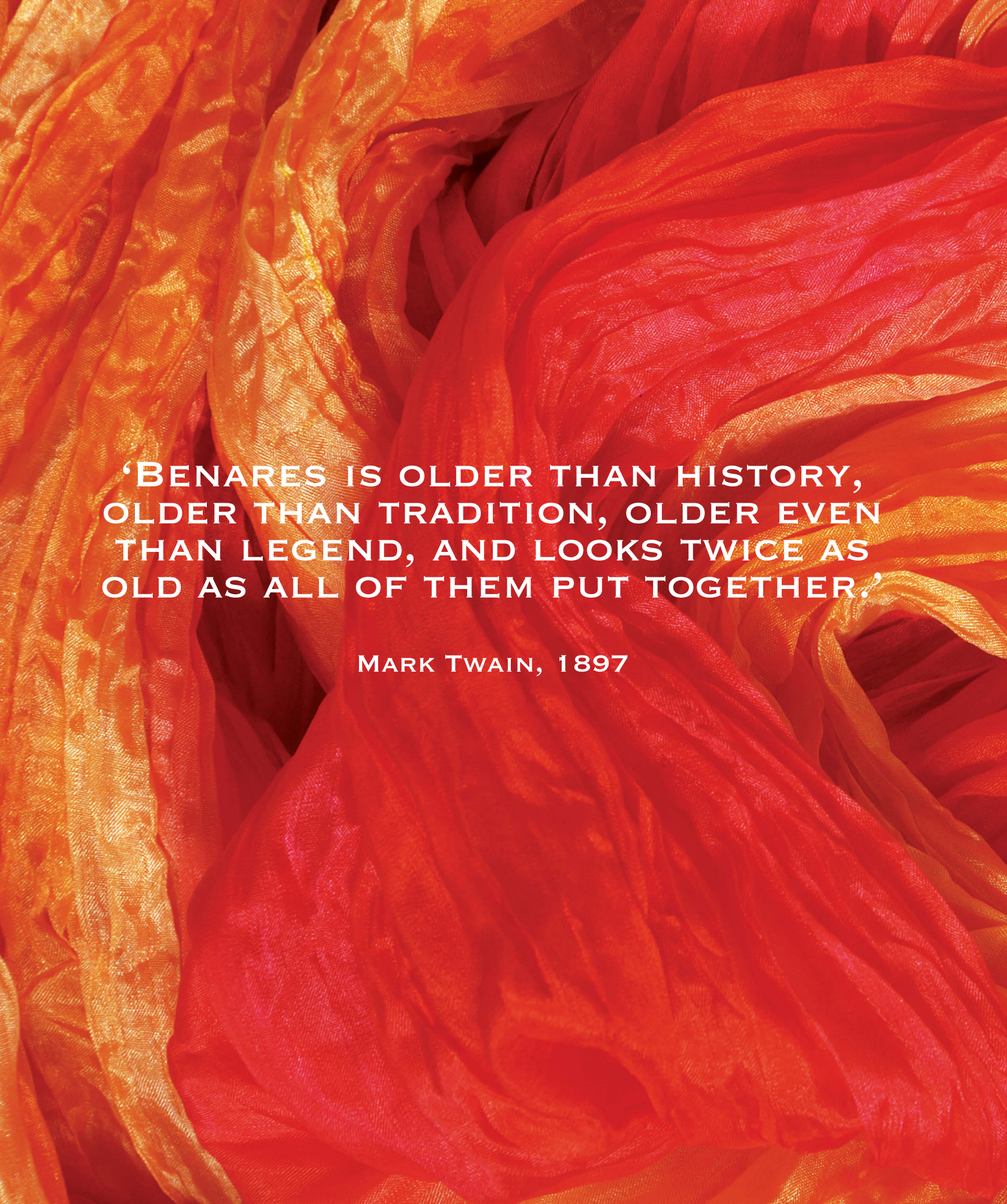
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BENARES

MICHELIN STARRED COOKING

ATUL KOCHHAR



BENARES



**‘BENARES IS OLDER THAN HISTORY,
OLDER THAN TRADITION, OLDER EVEN
THAN LEGEND, AND LOOKS TWICE AS
OLD AS ALL OF THEM PUT TOGETHER.’**

MARK TWAIN, 1897



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BENARES

ATUL KOCHHAR

A.

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Notes for cooks:

Use medium eggs, unless otherwise specified.

All herbs, including curry leaves, should be fresh, unless otherwise specified.



I WOULD LIKE TO DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO MY BELOVED
WIFE, DEEPTI.

DEEPTI IS THE ROCK-SOLID FOUNDATION OF MY WORK
AND LIFE. WITHOUT HER SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT,
I WOULDN'T HAVE MADE IT SO FAR. SHE TAKES FAR TOO
MUCH UPON HERSELF MANAGING OUR HOUSEHOLD, ALL
SO I CAN HAVE MORE TIME FOR MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE.
HER DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO OUR FAMILY IS
INSPIRATIONAL. IN SPITE OF THE MASSIVE PERSONAL LOSS
OF LOSING HER DAD SUDDENLY AFTER A BRIEF BATTLE
WITH CANCER IN 2014, HER DETERMINATION ISN'T SHAKEN.
WITHOUT HER, THIS BOOK WOULDN'T HAVE SEEN THE
DAYLIGHT.

DEEPTI, I LOVE YOU AND FEEL VERY PRIVILEGED TO BE
YOUR LIFE PARTNER.



→ M.N. महेन्द्र ←
1962 साध
P.V.S.

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	8
INTRODUCTION	10
SAVOURY	16
SWEET	200
COCKTAILS	236
BASICS, GLOSSARY & SUPPLIERS	248
INDEX	272
THANK YOU	279



FOREWORD

A stunning book from not only one of London's finest restaurants, but also from the very soul of its great chef and my dear friend.

Atul's recipes are easy to follow with the perfect balance of spices, which takes the home cooking of Indian food to a whole new level, and showcases why Benares remains one of the top Michelin-starred restaurants in the capital. Each dish is captured beautifully and interspersed with imagery of his greatest influence – the vibrancy and colours of India. This is a jewel of a book that will be treasured in every home.

Sat Bains
October 2014





Nothing sings better music to my ears than mesmerizing food and a good book to complement the same ... and Atul Kochhar does just that, following up on his highly acclaimed and recognized kitchen at Benares, with this beautiful book of eighty of his most acclaimed recipes.

It has been my belief that soulful cooking stems from happiness, serenity and joyful living, and that mindfully prepared and esthetically presented food is an emotion that defines us as chefs. Good food, well prepared with love and compassion, has always been something that has stood taller than any aphrodisiac for me ... an orgasm I call 'gratitude of feeding the soul'.

Atul is not only a great chef but is known to share his wealth of knowledge with budding young professionals. He is known back home for his generous charities, and that is what defines him not only as a great chef but as an exceptional human being.

After forty years on the stove and having been part of the journey of Indian food finding international recognition, nothing gives me more pleasure than seeing the explosion of individual brilliance in the arena.

A culinary salutation and toast to Atul and to years of happy and joyful cooking!

Chef Manjit S. Gill
Corporate Chef, ITC Hotels

INTRODUCTION

THE BEGINNING

By the end of 2001, I had a desire to break free from working for others and be my own boss. Not a bad thing – but the task was daunting. I had started putting some money aside for a possible new venture, even without having any idea of how much it was going to cost! I was soon about to find out.

One day, while chatting to the manger of the next-door restaurant, which used to be the Zen Central, he mentioned that his company was trying to sell a property on Berkeley Square, in the heart of London's Mayfair. It was on the first floor, above the Bentley showroom. All I knew of the area was that it was a beautiful square full of offices and no late nightlife. Hesitantly, I mentioned the opportunity to my potential investors, with whom I had already looked around at least 40 other properties. They liked the idea, and we wanted to take a look, and once we saw the restaurant we decided to move on it. It took almost a year to refurbish the place and we opened the doors for business in April 2003, when Benares came to life! It was one of the happiest moments of my life.

CHEF/BUSINESSMAN

My hero, Danny Meyer, a well-known restaurateur from New York City, once said that restaurants are like having children – they are fun to conceive, challenging to bring into the world and they generally reward you with abundant triumph and occasional hardship as the years progress. Danny has said many more beautiful things about the restaurant business – just like lovely poetry – but it's also true that it isn't everyone's cup of tea either.

One thing I promised myself from the outset was that I wasn't going to lose my shirt on this venture just for the accolades. So, I put a businessman's hat on and got on with the job of running a restaurant. I had a good team in the kitchen, but I noticed very early on that my front-of-house team didn't quite match the brilliance of the kitchen team, and I was going to have a bumpy ride. So, as a team, we had to take some tough decisions and modify the offerings on the menu. I took a safer route to guide the ship Benares through tides of tough times until we accumulated a good overall team. Slowly but surely, I brought some really good people onboard. It took almost three years to get it right – but, as I promised myself, we never lost money.

MICHELIN STAR AND CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Another fabulous moment was when Benares achieved its own Michelin star in January 2007. I was ecstatic – it is an amazing feeling to win a star in your own restaurant. But from here on in, even more serious responsibilities were to follow as carrying this star is a pretty heavy load; people build expectations for you, and you need to consistently deliver the Michelin quality in every dish.

The cuisine at Benares has always been applauded by notable critics. A. A. Gill, Jan Moir and Fay Maschler, along with many others, have been huge supporters of my cooking at Benares. We started with a classical menu and slowly we have negotiated the path to become a modern Indian restaurant.

THE COOKING

My cooking ethos is driven from classics, but influences can, and have, come from anywhere across the globe. When I left my home at the age of seventeen to study hotel management, I had no idea about the diverse, rich culture of my own country. Born and brought up in east India, I was sent to south India to study. The path was already carved – it was for me to pick and choose and make it better. In some ways I think I have done well, but I also wish I had pushed for more time and knowledge while in India.

I have always cooked from my heart. In some ways, cooking Indian food in India was quite restrictive; there were things you simply could or could not do. Twenty some years ago, modern Indian food was a taboo – you just didn't do it. Migrating to the UK has been one of the best things that happened to my cooking, and the freedom of cooking in the UK has helped me shape the menu I proudly cook today.

'Fusion – confusion' is a term commonly used when you try to cook cross-culture cuisine. One can get stuck for it, but with the right knowledge and ingredients, your creations can garner praise, too. Indian food from across India is the biggest testament to the fact that over time food develops with the mixing of cultures. India was populated by Hindus, then Arab Muslims came along and influenced

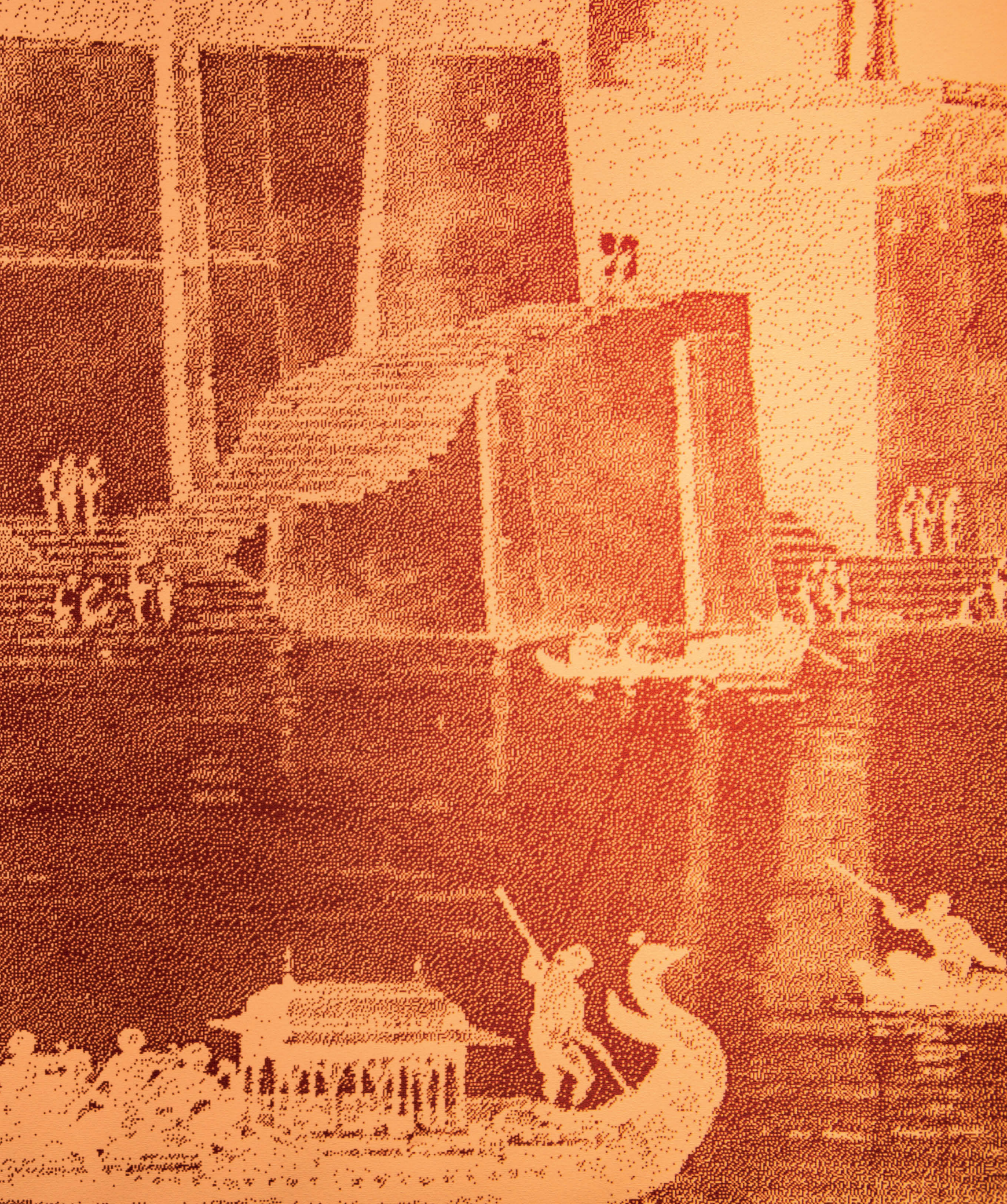
our way of thinking, living and eating. So, too, did Christians, Jews, Mongols, Turks, Iranians, Zoroastrians, Afghans, Dutch, French and finally the English – they all have left their imprints on Hindu India to make it a strong secular and multicultural society. Armed with these influences one can only look to expand their culinary repertoire. As a result, my heritage has guided me to look deeper into these influences to extract inspirations.

At Benares, our ethos is to respect the seasons, nurture the ingredients through understanding and only use the most suitable techniques. For me, the most important thing is to follow the seasons with ingredients, and I continue to look religiously for UK-sourced produce to form the heart of Benares.

Atul Kochhar, January 2015









ANCIENT VARANASI

‘Benares is older than history, older than tradition, older even than legend, and looks twice as old as all of them put together’, wrote the American author Mark Twain, who visited Varanasi (or Benares, to give the name by which it was known under the Raj) in 1897. He was right. Varanasi is older than the very oldest historical sources.

Wandering through its ancient heart, you can almost feel the weight of centuries bearing down on you. Despite the festoons of electricity cables draped over every building and the clattering *bajaj* scooter-trishaws, this is palpably an age-old city – perhaps the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world. And it’s probably the only city that claims it was founded by a god. Devout Hindus say it was founded by Lord Shiva, god of destruction and creation, and – along with Brahma and Vishnu – one of the three major deities. His phallic lingam can be seen in every one of Varanasi’s hundreds of temples.

The city is mentioned in early texts such as the Hindu *Rig Veda* and the Buddhist *Digha Nikaya*, which says the city was founded by a Brahmin prince, Govindsutta.

Archaeological evidence shows that the site on which Varanasi now stands may have been occupied as long ago as 1800 BC. It was certainly settled as early as the 12th century BC by Indo-Aryan people, who had, over previous centuries, drifted into northern India from central Asia. They were originally nomadic pastoralists, but iron tools helped them to clear the jungles of the Ganges plain, where they built some of

India’s earliest cities, and where their Vedic religion – named after its oldest texts, the Vedas – evolved into Hinduism.

Over centuries, great Hindu empires rose and fell across northern India, bringing Varanasi under their sway. The Magadha realm gave way to the Nanda dynasty, which in turn yielded to the greatest of all, the Maurya Empire, which in its heyday (322–185 BC) embraced almost all of the sub-continent except the far south.

Varanasi flourished. Chandragupta, the first Mauryan emperor, embraced Jainism, the ultra-pacifist offshoot of Hinduism. One of his successors, Ashoka (whose name is still revered in India), became a protector of the new Buddhist philosophy, another offshoot of the old Hindu religion. Followers of all these faiths were drawn irresistibly to the city on the holy river. Hundreds of temples to all three faiths soared above the Ganges.

The mists of history descend on Varanasi after the eclipse of the Maurya, until the rise of a new imperium, the Gupta Empire. For more than two centuries, between AD 320 and 550, the Guptas presided over a golden age of art, science and scholarship. From that golden time emerged the kingdom of Kashi, founded by the Somavansa prince Khsetravridha. His successors ruled until a new wave of conquerors swept into India from the north. In 1194, the kingdom of Kashi was absorbed into the new Muslim empire of the Mughals.



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SAVOURY



NILGIRI MACHCHI KORMA

COD IN NILGIRI KORMA GRAVY

SERVES 4

2 teaspoons very mild red chilli powder or sweet paprika
½ teaspoon Chettinad Spice Powder (page 258)
4 x 200g thick-cut cod fillets, skinned and patted dry
3 tablespoons sunflower oil
4 curry leaves
30g unsalted butter
juice of ½ lemon
sea salt
micro amaranth cress, to garnish
coriander cress, to garnish

For the raw mango pickle

200g unpeeled mango, diced
1 tablespoon sea salt
3 tablespoons sunflower oil
1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
½ teaspoon fenugreek seeds
10 curry leaves
2 teaspoons mild red chilli powder
4 tablespoons white wine vinegar

For the Nilgiri korma gravy

50ml sunflower oil, plus 3 tablespoons
200g onions, chopped
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
1 teaspoon chopped green chilli
1 tablespoon ground coriander
a pinch of ground white pepper
200ml coconut milk (page 268)
30g palm sugar or jaggery
¼ teaspoon garam masala
2 large bunches of coriander, about 150g total
– use the leaves and a few stalks but not the roots
100g baby spinach leaves

2 green chillies, roughly chopped
50g fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
50ml sunflower oil
juice of 2 limes

For the yogurt rice

100g basmati rice, washed
150ml plain yogurt
1 tablespoon sunflower oil
a pinch of asafoetida
½ teaspoon black mustard seeds
10 curry leaves, finely chopped
1 green chilli, finely chopped
1 tablespoon finely chopped coriander leaves

I have a great affinity to south Indian food due to my time in Chennai. Since then, I have always played with the flavours of the south when developing my menus. This recipe was a great team effort a couple of years ago with lots of tastings and commenting, and I absolutely adore the result! The yogurt rice and mango pickle combination is a big tradition in south Indian culture.

First make the raw mango pickle. Put the mango and salt in a non-metallic bowl and set aside. Heat the oil in a saucepan, add the mustard and fenugreek seeds and sauté over a medium heat until they crackle. Add the curry leaves and chilli powder and stir for 30 seconds. Add the salted mangoes and vinegar and stir for 2–3 minutes until they soften. Set aside and leave to cool completely. If not using immediately, transfer to a covered container and keep in the fridge for up to 2 weeks.

For the yogurt rice, bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the rice and boil for 5–7 minutes until tender. Drain well, then spread out on a baking tray in a thin layer and leave to cool completely.

To make the gravy, heat 3 tablespoons sunflower oil in a saucepan, add the onions and sauté over a medium heat for 3–5 minutes until they are translucent. Add the ginger and green chilli and stir for 1 minute, then add the ground coriander and white pepper and continue sautéing for a further minute. Add the coconut milk, palm sugar, garam masala and salt to taste, and stir to heat through. Put the mixture in a blender or food processor and blitz until a fine paste forms, then remove and set aside.

continued from page 19

- □ □ Put the fresh coriander, spinach, chillies, ginger, 50ml sunflower oil and lime juice in the same blender or food processor, and blend until smooth. Add the green paste to the white paste and set aside.

Just before you are ready to cook the fish, preheat the oven to 180°C/Fan 160°C/Gas 4 and make the yogurt rice. Put the yogurt in a saucepan and whisk until smooth. Add the cooled rice and stir well, mashing the rice a little, then set aside. Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the asafoetida. When it foams, add the mustard seeds and sauté over a medium heat just until they crackle. Stir in the curry leaves and green chilli. Add the rice and warm through, then set aside and keep.

Mix the chilli powder and spice powder together with salt to taste, then use to dust the cod fillets. Heat the oil in a large non-stick ovenproof frying pan over a medium heat. Add the fillets and fry for 2 minutes. Add the curry leaves, butter and lemon juice and baste the fish with the pan juices. Turn the fillets over and transfer the pan to the oven for 4 minutes, or until a skewer inserted into the flesh meets no resistance.

Meanwhile, gently reheat the green gravy without boiling. You want to retain the lovely green colour. Reheat the rice, if necessary.

Divide the green gravy among 4 plates, then add a cod fillet to each and top with a portion of the yogurt rice. Garnish and serve with the raw mango pickle alongside.

PYAZ KI MACHCHI

COD AND A MIX OF ONIONS

SERVES 4

4 x 200g cod fillets, skin on and patted dry
2 tablespoons sunflower oil
30g butter
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
300ml Onion Masala Gravy (page 254),
blitzed with 1 tablespoon lemon juice, to
serve

For the onion chutney

1 tablespoon sunflower oil
1 tablespoon nigella seeds
2 red onions, finely chopped
1 fresh red chilli, finely chopped
4 tablespoons white wine vinegar
4 tablespoons dark brown sugar

For the onion crumbs

2 tablespoons sunflower oil
2 shallots, finely chopped
200g fresh breadcrumbs
1 garlic clove, finely chopped

For the onion bhajis

5 tablespoons gram flour
½ teaspoon coriander seeds, toasted and
coarsely ground
½ teaspoon dried mango powder
¼ teaspoon red chilli powder
¼ teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and coarsely
ground
¼ teaspoon turmeric
sunflower oil for deep-frying
1 onion, thinly sliced
1 tablespoon finely chopped coriander leaves
chaat masala, to sprinkle

For the onion stir-fry

1 tablespoon sunflower oil
1 teaspoon peeled and finely chopped fresh
ginger
1 small red onion, sliced
2 spring onions, white and green parts, thinly
sliced
a pinch of sugar
2 teaspoons soy sauce

To garnish

Mint and Coriander Chutney (page 263)
baby samphire pieces, cleaned
edible flowers, such as violets
micro coriander cress
2 shallots, thinly sliced and deep-fried until
crisp

Without fail, onion bhajis put a smile on diners' faces – but for me, this recipe is a bit of nostalgia for Jamshedpur. The bhajis in my town were always a round, crisp disc. And to emulate that in the restaurant, we shape the mixture into patties before frying and then neaten the shape with a small biscuit cutter after frying. There is a lot of last-minute cooking with this dish. It's important to have all the ingredients prepped and ready to cook before you start, so everything is hot when you serve.

First make the onion chutney. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the nigella seeds and sauté over a medium heat until they crackle. Add the red onions and fry over a high heat, stirring, until they are softened and lightly browned. Reduce the heat and add the chilli, vinegar and sugar, stirring until all the liquid evaporates and the mixture has thickened. Remove from the heat and set aside to serve at room temperature.

To make the onion crumbs, heat the oil in the wiped-out pan, add the shallots and sauté over a medium heat for 8–10 minutes until light brown. Add the breadcrumbs and garlic and continue sautéing until they are crisp. Transfer to a tray lined with kitchen paper and leave to cool.

Put the mint and coriander chutney for garnishing in a piping bag fitted with a plain tip and set aside.

To make the onion bhajis batter, put the gram flour into a bowl with all the ground and pounded spices and salt to taste. Slowly add just enough water to make a smooth and thick batter, whisking constantly. Set aside until required.

Just before you cook the fish, stir-fry the onions. Heat the oil in a wok or a frying pan. Add the ginger and stir-fry over a high heat for 2 minutes. Add the red onion, spring onions and sugar, and stir-fry until they are translucent. Add the soy sauce, give a quick stir and remove from the heat and keep hot.

continued from page 21

□ □ □ Season each piece of fish liberally with salt. Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Add the cod fillets, skin side down, and fry for 2–3 minutes until the skins are lightly browned and crispy. Turn them over, add the butter and cook for a further 2–3 minutes until a cocktail stick pushed into the flesh meets no resistance. Remove from the heat, baste well with the pan juices and keep hot.

To fry the bhajis, heat enough oil for deep-frying to 190°C. Whisk the batter, then add the onions and coriander at the last minute – if you add the onions sooner they will release too much liquid into the batter. Use your fingers to drop small dumplings, a few at a time, into the oil and fry for 2–3 minutes until light golden brown and crisp. Drain well on kitchen paper to remove the excess oil and sprinkle with the chaat masala. Keep hot until all the bhajis are fried.

To serve, cut each cod fillet into 3 pieces. For each portion, place 3 pieces of cod on a plate and top 2 of them with the onion chutney. Add an onion bhaji to each plate and pipe mint and coriander chutney on top. Add a spoonful of the onion stir-fry and a small mound of the onion crumbs to each plate. Garnish and serve immediately.



MACHCHI AMRITSARI

FRIED SPICY JOHN DORY WITH GURKHA CHUTNEY

SERVES 4

4 x 150g John Dory fillets, skinned and each cut into 3 strips
1 tablespoon Ginger–Garlic Paste (page 252)
juice of ½ lime
sea salt
sunflower oil for deep-frying
chaat masala for sprinkling
micro coriander cress, to garnish
edible flowers, to garnish

For the Gurkha chutney

4 tomatoes, halved
2 garlic cloves, peeled and left whole
1 small green chilli, finely chopped
3 tablespoons finely chopped coriander leaves
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger
½ teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and crushed
juice of ½ lime

For the crushed peas

100g shelled fresh peas
15g unsalted butter
2 teaspoons sunflower oil
a pinch of asafoetida
¼ teaspoon cumin seeds
½ teaspoon red chilli flakes
1 tablespoon vegetable stock or water
1 tablespoon single cream

For the batter

100g gram flour
1 tablespoon cornflour
½ teaspoon red chilli powder or crushed black peppercorns
½ teaspoon dried mango powder
½ teaspoon turmeric

¼ teaspoon ajowan seeds
¼ teaspoon garam masala
120ml sparkling water

For the bok choy masala

1 teaspoon sunflower oil
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
4 tablespoons Onion Masala Gravy (page 254)
3 bok choy, sliced

This is the Benares version of fish and chips. I cooked this recipe for the second series of *Great British Menu*, and it was a winner with all my chef mates. It has featured on the restaurant menu ever since when John Dory is in season. I was given this recipe for golbedo ko achar, or, more simply, grilled tomato chutney, by a Gurkha soldier serving in the British Army. Hence, I've called it Gurkha chutney ever since.

First make the chutney. Preheat the grill to high. Place the tomatoes in a roasting tray, cut side up, add the garlic cloves and grill for 7–10 minutes, turning once, until lightly charred. Remove and set aside to cool.

Transfer the tomatoes and garlic to a large chopping board with the remaining ingredients and salt to taste, then use a large knife to finely chop everything together to a chutney consistency. Store in the fridge until required, and use within a day

Meanwhile, mix the ginger–garlic paste, lime juice and salt to taste together. Brush the fish pieces with this mixture and set aside to marinate for 20 minutes in the fridge.

To make the crushed peas, bring a saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the peas and blanch until they are just tender, then immediately drain and refresh with cold water to stop the cooking and set the colour. Set aside. Melt the butter with the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat and add the asafoetida. When it foams, add the cumin seeds and sauté until they crackle. Add the chilli flakes and blanched peas and sauté for a further 3–4 minutes. Add the stock and cream and season with salt to taste. Remove the pan from heat and use a wooden spoon to crush the peas. Set aside and keep hot until required.

To make the batter, mix all the dry ingredients together in a large bowl, then whisk in the sparkling water. Pat the fish dry with kitchen paper to remove the excess moisture, then add the pieces to the batter and leave for 10 minutes at room temperature.

Meanwhile, prepare the bok choy. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the cumin seeds and ginger and sauté over a medium heat until the seeds crackle. Add the onion gravy and stir for 2 minutes, then add a few tablespoons of water to loosen the gravy. Add the bok choy and sauté for 2–3 minutes until it is tender. Remove from the heat and keep hot.

Heat enough oil for deep-frying to 190°C. Lift each piece of fish out of the batter, letting any excess drain back into the bowl, then deep-fry for 3–4 minutes until golden and crisp. Drain well on kitchen paper to remove the excess oil and sprinkle with chaat masala.

To serve, place 3 pieces of fried fish on each plate, along with the bok choy masala, crushed peas and the chutney. Garnish and serve immediately.





KARARA KEKDA

CRISPY SOFT-SHELL CRAB WITH AVOCADO PANNA COTTAS

SERVES 4

4 jumbo soft-shelled crabs, cleaned and patted dry
sunflower oil for deep-frying
sea salt
seeds from ½ passion fruit, to garnish
very finely chopped chives, to garnish
about 100g cooked fresh white crab meat, flaked, to serve
8 mini poppadoms, deep-fried, to serve

For the avocado panna cottas

1 silverleaf gelatine leaf
50ml milk
100g avocado flesh (about ¾ avocado)
60ml double cream
¼ teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and finely ground, plus extra for dusting

For the marinade

2 teaspoons white rice flour
1 teaspoon cornflour
1 teaspoon Ginger–Garlic Paste (see page 252)
½ teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon ground coriander
¼ teaspoon red chilli powder
1 tablespoon mustard oil
1 teaspoon chopped coriander leaves
½ teaspoon peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger
1 teaspoon lime juice

For the passion fruit and chilli sauce

4 tablespoons of fresh passion fruit pulp
50g caster sugar
½ teaspoon red chilli flakes
1 teaspoon cornflour mixed with 2 tablespoons water to make a smooth paste

For the salad

½ small red apple
½ small green apple
1 tablespoon chives, cut into 5cm lengths
1 tablespoon flaked almonds, toasted
1 teaspoon very finely chopped chives
2 tablespoons Benares Vinaigrette (page 257)
freshly grated zest of 1 lime

We have featured soft-shell crab on the Benares menu pretty much since we opened the doors in 2003. Soft-shell crab is a culinary name for the crabs that have shed their hard shell and are still soft. They can then be eaten whole, after the mouth parts, gills and abdomen have been removed – the rest of the body is edible. The flavours of the sea are quite evident in the meaty, plump crab, so I pair it with avocado, spices and tangy fruits like kumquat, mango, plum and passion fruit. In the UK soft-shell crabs are usually sold frozen. A good fishmonger should be able to order some for you, and they are quite reasonably priced.

Making the panna cottas is the tricky bit in this recipe. We make them in small silicone moulds and then put them in the freezer for a very short time just before the service so they easily pop out. If you don't have the specialist moulds, use a tray that gives you a 2.5cm layer and then cut out round panna cottas with a 2.5cm biscuit cutter.

First make the avocado panna cottas. Soak the gelatine leaf in a bowl of water to soften for about 5 minutes. Heat the milk in a small saucepan. When the milk simmers, remove the pan from the heat. Squeeze the excess water from the gelatine leaf and add the gelatine to the pan, stirring to dissolve. Set aside to cool.

Place the avocado flesh in a mini food processor and blitz until smooth. Add the cream and cooled milk mixture, ground cumin and salt to taste and blitz again to combine. Divide this mixture among twelve 2.5cm silicon moulds and place in the fridge for at least 2 hours to set.

Whisk all the ingredients for the marinade together in a non-metallic bowl and rub all over the crabs. Leave to marinate in the fridge for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the sauce. Place all the ingredients, except the diluted cornflour, into a small saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Reduce the heat and simmer for 15–20 minutes. Add the cornflour mixture and continue simmering for 3–5 minutes until the sauce thickens. Season with salt to taste and set aside to cool.