

Rani Indian Restaurant

2 Queen Street, Quayside, Newcastle.

Tel: 0191 231 2202
Disabled: Some steps



MY nephew and his new wife had just returned from their honeymoon and were staying a couple of nights at ours.

Having enjoyed their wedding so much we wanted to give them a good night out to end their time away together.

Obviously Newcastle is awash with good restaurants and we were pretty spoilt for choice.

But I had been recommended Rani – to which neither Fusspot nor I had been before – and we decided to throw caution to the wind and give it a go.

What a find!

The name Rani translates to Queen, and the restaurant was named after the street it is on – Queen Street.

Its premises have played host to an array of restaurants over the years, but on my experience here I am sure this is the one to make a success of it.

It is ideally situated on the quayside – you cannot miss it as you walk down the hill from Dean Street, situated as it is at the crossroads leading beneath the Tyne Bridge.

You are immediately made to feel at home.

In fact my nephew commented that the waiting area was like sitting in your living room, and it was here that we perused the menu and helped ourselves to some nibbles.

The head chef has nearly 20 years experience and, as we discovered, that is evident in the dishes served up.

The restaurant offers food for both vegetarian and non-vegetarians, and dishes from Bangladesh and India.

Its website states: “The words of Albert Einstein: ‘Try not to become a man of success but a man of value’ were a big influence on us. Like him we believe that to have success is great, but to have value is even greater.”

Well, you certainly do get value for money here.

There is an extensive list of starters to choose from and it took us all quite some time to decide what to have.

We didn't mind as we were loving

A night at Rani is fit for a queen



PRIME SPOT Rani restaurant



lamb, I opted for the latter, the pieces of meat marinated in chilli, mint and garlic sauce then cooked in a mixture of home ground spices.

The lamb could not have been more tender and the variety of flavours from the spices were spot on.

The chicken lanka masalla brought a smile to the face too. Fried onions, chilli, garlic and fresh coriander in a hot sauce, it was flavoursome to say the least.

As was the roshun curry – which was akin to a bhuna, with perhaps just a tad more garlic.

The harliali chicken also proved popular – lean chicken breast marinated and barbecued in the tandoor and cooked again with fresh crushed garlic, ginger, green chilli, coriander, cream and spinach – which gave the dish a unique colour.

It also gives it something of a unique flavour – and one that we all had a taste of.

No Indian meal is complete for us without some Tarka Dhall.

This lentil, garlic and ghee dish differs from restaurant to restaurant but both Fusspot and myself agreed it was one of the best we had tasted.

It had a roasted yet not burnt taste to it that was divine.

The peshwari naan breads were terrific too – slightly thinner than in most places and all the better for it.

No complaints with the rice either – in fact no complaints whatsoever regarding Rani.

It was a perfect end-of-honeymoon treat for the newlyweds and a perfect meal all round.

With two bottles of wine, other drinks and coffees, the bill for four came to under £130.

Great value considering the quality of the food and service.

GORDON BARR

our surroundings and enjoying the fragrance that was sifting through the air.

After much deliberating, it was the mussels that swayed me and it was a great choice – already minus their shells, they were prepared in a sweet, sour and hot sauce cooked with lentils. They were something out of the ordin-

ary and delicious.

The chicken pakora, chicken tikka and chicken tikka paneer all proved to be hits too. An array of poppadoms and sauces beforehand – both spicy and mild – had got our tastebuds racing, and the starters all went down a treat.

Main course proved an even tougher

choice, there was so much on offer.

I decided to ask the staff what they would recommend as I simply could not decide.

I had thought I would like the podina jhal and when it was suggested likewise, who was I to argue?

With a choice of chicken breast or

Ali takes top chef award

A HEAD chef from East Boldon has been presented with a national Curry Chef Award in a high-profile ceremony in London's West End.

Chef Ali Hussain from Cafe Bangla travelled to the Cumberland Hotel near Marble Arch, to receive the prize at the awards ceremony.

Ali has worked in Indian restaurants for many years and this experience has led him to receive a number of industry accolades.

He has been awarded the title of South Tyneside Curry Chef of the Year, and has received a Taste of Britain Curry Chef Award.

The awards showcase the country's leading curry restaurants and pay tribute to the chefs for their hard work.

Ali, pictured right receiving his award, said: “When I was first informed that I was receiving an award, I was absolutely delighted. At Café Bangla we take pride in our food; we make our



dishes using freshly ground spices and ingredients of the finest quality. It is a great honour to be named the best curry chef in my area and I am grateful to our customers for their support.”

More than 300 guests attended the ceremony presented by Syed Ahmed, a prominent member of the Bangladeshi community, who is known for his appearance on the BBC reality show The Apprentice.

Bitesize

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