

## London's top five curry houses

London has the best curry outside of Asia, but where are the really great places to go? Food blogger **Niamh Shields** picks her favourites, from Stoke Newington to Tooting and Southall

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Needoo Grill, a short stroll from Brick Lane in Whitechapel, London. Photograph: Gary Calton

### Lahore Karahi, Tooting Broadway

If you can get over the strip lighting (and I promise you can), Lahore Karahi offers some of the best Pakistani food in [London](#). There is often a queue but it moves quickly, and service is fast too. Seekh kebabs are some of the best in town and unusually they offer a chicken and fenugreek version, which is fragrant, moist and delicious. The chicken karahi and specials at the weekends are worth a punt, too. As is common for Pakistani [restaurants](#) like this, they won't serve you alcohol but are happy for you to bring your own, with no corkage charge. Approx £30 for a generous meal for two.

- *1 Tooting High Street, SW17, 020-8767 2477. Open Mon-Sun 11am-midnight*

### Needoo Grill, Whitechapel

Most recommendations direct tourists to Brick Lane, and while that is worth a trek for other reasons, I would no longer go there for the best curry in town. However, Needoo Grill, a Pakistani restaurant a short stroll from Brick Lane in Whitechapel (another hot spot for great Pakistani cuisine) is the exception. A relative newcomer, it stands out as one of the best in the area, serving Indian and Pakistani Punjabi food. The offering is similar to the Lahore Karahi, but it is all about the grill here, so start with the mixed grill of lamb chops, seekh kebab and

chicken tikka. Don't be put off by the sound of the dry meat curry to follow – it is outstanding. If you visit on a Sunday, try the nihari (slow-cooked lamb on the bone). Drinks are BYO, as before. Approx £30 for two.

• 87 New Road, E1, 020-7247 0648, [needoogrill.co.uk](http://needoogrill.co.uk). Open Mon-Sun 11.30am-11.30pm

## Dosa 'n' Chutny, Tooting/Croydon

Back to Tooting, or Croydon, for south Indian food at Dosa 'n' Chutny. Try the light fluffy steamed idli to start, like little pillows with bite served with chutney and sambar. You must, of course, try the dosa, a long thin crisp pancake that is rolled and stuffed. Most dosa restaurants serve only vegetarian fillings (traditionally masala dosa – spiced potato), however, here you can get a mutton masala dosa, again served with chutney and sambar. If you are vegetarian, try the onion dosa. A little different is the Indian omelette, two eggs cooked with onion, chilli and coriander in Indian style. A limited wine list is available.

Approximately £20 for two with a glass of wine.

• 68 Tooting High Street, SW17, 020-8767 9200; 466 London Road, Croydon, 020-8683 3297, [dosanchutny.co.uk](http://dosanchutny.co.uk). Mon-Sat 12.30pm-3.30pm, 5.30pm-11.30pm, Sun 12pm-3pm, 5pm-10.30pm

## Brilliant Restaurant, Southall

The Kenyan Asian Anand family weren't shy in naming their restaurant. A visit requires jumping on a commuter train and trekking out to near Heathrow – or take a bus down the Uxbridge Road from Ealing Broadway station. But Southall is unbeatable for Punjabi and south Indian food. Quite old school in its touches, Brilliant is deservedly popular, serving a typically wide ranging menu of Punjabi food. There are the traditional items from the grill – seekh kebabs, etc – but for something different, try the butter chicken, egg curry and biryanis. They are particularly noted for their fresh, vibrant homemade pickles. Expect to pay £60 for two with a glass of wine.

• 72-76 Western Road, UB2, 020-8574 1928, [brilliantrestaurant.com](http://brilliantrestaurant.com). Open Tues-Thurs 12pm-3pm, 6pm-11.30pm, Fri noon-3pm, 6pm-midnight, Sat 6pm-midnight, Sun 6pm-11.30pm

## Rasa Restaurant, Stoke Newington

Head to Stoke Newington for one of London's best south Indian restaurants. Rasa has a small group of restaurants in the capital, each with its own identity. The original vegetarian restaurant on Stoke Newington Church Street is still the best, though the Fitzrovia branch is best for sightseers (5 Charlotte Street, W1T, Goodge Street tube). Critics fell in love with it when it opened, and Jamie Oliver touted it as one of his favourites. It has since relaxed and become a firm favourite with locals. Serving the typical dosa and idli, which are both very good here, they also offer specialities such as a delicious cabbage thoran – shredded cabbage pepped up with mustard, cumin, coconut and curry leaves – and masala vadai, deep-fried patties with fresh curry leaves, ginger and green chillies, served with coconut chutney. The Kerala feast for £16 a head will give you a great overview. Main courses are all under £6.

• 55 Stoke Newington Church Street, N16, 020-7249 0344, [rasarestaurants.com](http://rasarestaurants.com). Open Mon-Thurs 6pm-10.45pm, Fri 6pm-11.30pm, Sat noon-3pm, 6pm-11.30pm, Sun noon-3pm, 6pm-10.45pm

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