

Evening Standard.



An oldie but a goodie: Veeraswamy on Regent Street
REVIEW

Veeraswamy: A true original

• [BEN NORUM](#)

Our rating:

Price range:

£ £ £

Victory House 99-101 Regent Street

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veeraswamy.com

Our guide to the London restaurants with big reputations. This time we visit Veeraswamy, the oldest Indian restaurant in London.

The backstory Veeraswamy was opened in 1926 — the same year that the Queen was born — by the grandson of an English army general and an Indian princess. When it launched it truly was the first of its kind, offering authentic Indian dishes from across the country, the likes of which London had never experienced before, and boasting lavish Raj-inspired decor.

As such, it almost instantly became a firm favourite with celebrities, dignitaries and London's moneyed upper classes — not to mention expats — making it one of the city's most fashionable restaurants.

However its crown slipped somewhat over the decades that followed, and it was in need of a serious overhaul by the time it was bought in 1997 by the group behind [Amaya](#), [Chutney Mary](#) and the [Masala Zone](#) chain.



Special starter: Raj kachori

The new owners modernised it a little too much at first, detracting from the very history that makes it so special, but following a more recent refurb in the mid-noughties, Veeraswamy is back on track and can once again be considered among the capital's best Indian restaurants.

What's on the menu? Part of the beauty of Veeraswamy is its diversity. Although it adheres strictly to traditional recipes from different regional Indian cuisines, it is happy to place dishes from across the country side by side on its menu.

Highlights of the starters selection includes an exemplary chicken tikka, a rich venison kebab and the rather splendid raj kachori — an oversized large wheat puri filled with crispy snacks, yoghurt, tamarind chutney, herbs and more.

Mains include patiala shahi raan, a slow-cooked lamb shoulder with seductively flavoured bone marrow sauce; roast duck vindaloo; and a light and bright, coconut milk-laced Keralan-style prawn curry.



One of the main attractions: Duck vindaloo

Syrup-drenched gulab jamun, which has been on the dessert menu since the very start, is a perfect final flourish for those with a sweet tooth.

A selection of cocktails — both classics and those with an Indian twist — join wines as the drinks list mainstays.

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The atmosphere Above all else, opulence is what hits you upon entering. The restaurant is smart, but not overly formal; the service high-end but not suffocating.

Who goes there? You'll find a lot of Indian expats who frequent this restaurant for a taste of home, while local Londoners, Brits and tourists alike also come for its food and history.

Cheque out Starters range from £10-13, mains from £20-29. For Sunday lunch diners can get two courses for £30 or three courses for £34.