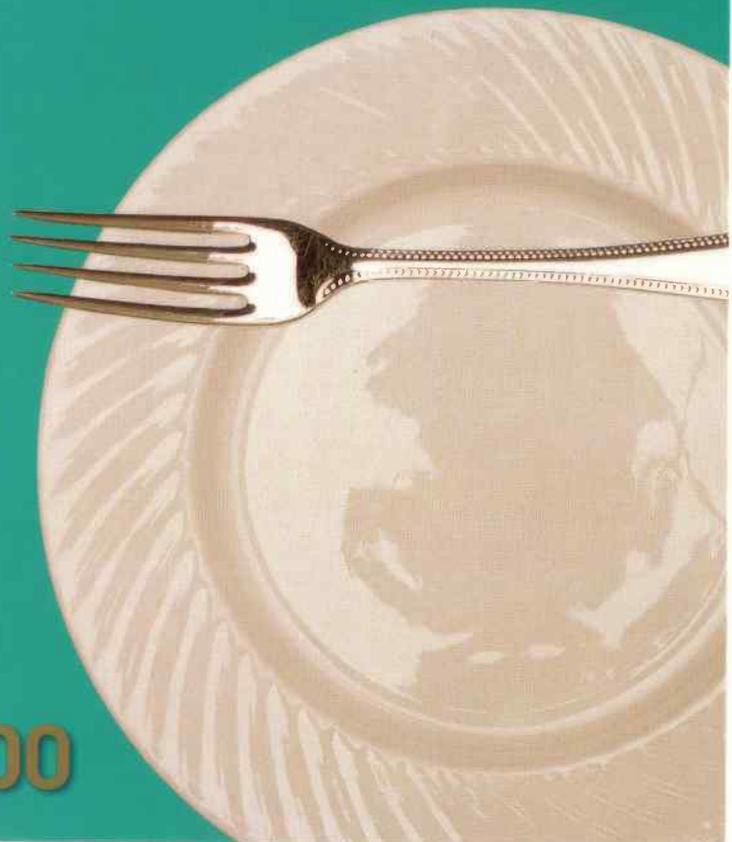


WINE  
magazine's

top 100  
restaurants  
IN SOUTH AFRICA



2000

CAPE TOWN AND ENVIRONS



Bukhara

33 CHURCH STREET,  
CAPE TOWN.  
Lunch Mon-Sat,  
dinner Mon-Sun.  
Tel (021) 424-0000;  
fax (021) 424-0080;  
email:  
bukhara@iafrica.com

 BYO at R20 corkage.  
Access from a pedestri-  
an mall, parking at near-  
by Riebeeck Square.

B/C

NORTH INDIAN CUISINE

 Well-chosen eight-page winelist and excel-  
lent house wines. With some 50 dishes on the  
menu, the choice of 168 wines is well beyond  
the norm – and the reason given for the high  
corkage charge.

FOOD	★★★★☆
WINELIST	★★★★☆
AMBIENCE	★★★
SERVICE	★★★
VALUE	★★★★

No need for sensitive palates to crave an asbestos coating. Dishes are enticingly spicy, with flavours that delight without searing. Go in a party, for the menu offers a selection that begs to be shared, and the dishes that stream out of the open-plan kitchen in individual copper-bright bowls, call for experimentation.

You'll find your cutlery on your side plate, wrapped in a practical bib-style napkin that allows executives to mop up their food with nan bread without splattering designer ties or blouses. Chat to your waiter about the menu options, for staff are fully conversant with the range of dishes. Lamb vindaloo will take you to meltdown. Lamb *rogan josh*, redolent of cloves and cardamom, is milder, the spices cooled with yoghurt. Classic *murgh makhani* (butter chicken) with Basmati rice, fried with jeera and onions. Tandoori lamb chops, marinated with yoghurt and spices; *sheekh kabab* (minced lamb with fresh coriander) or tandoor leg of lamb (allow 30 minutes). Soothing side dishes like home-

made yoghurt with cucumber, or garlic and mint.

End the meal with a cooling *kulfi* – a tall, conical-ly shaped ice-cream subtly coloured with cardamom and saffron.

# WINE

*good living*

JUNE 1999 

RSA R12,95 (incl VAT)

Lesotho & Swaziland R11,40

Namibia \$12,95 (tax incl)

Zimbabwe \$91,00

## Ross Gower

winemaker chef

**Decadent Desserts**

**Romancing the cork**

**Riesling back in vogue?**

**CHANCE TO WIN**  
**Lautrec Bordeaux**  
**and a wine course**



## eat beat

surroundings, and braising with excellent service and good wine), service is a little gauche, the winelist limited, and wine knowledge lacking.

Our waitress promised that the winelist – which includes well-priced Mystery labels – was about to be extended. Meanwhile, I suggest that a basic lesson in wine service should be implemented: don't kill the flavour of white wines by over-chilling, and on sweltering summer evenings, offer an ice bucket for reds. "Room temperature" does not mean lukewarm.

By Jos Baker

*A venue to watch, which in my view has yet to reach its full potential. Take an open mind and adventurous palate and travel the world from your table.*

60 Lower Main Road, Observatory. Dinner Mon-Sat. Tel (021) 448-0851. BYO R5. Street parking (if you can find it). The parking area round the block appears to have been taken over by squatters.

### RATING IN ETHNIC MIDDLE-EASTERN CATEGORY

FOOD .....	★★★
WINELIST .....	★
AMBIENCE .....	★★☆
SERVICE .....	★
VALUE .....	★★☆

## Bukhara

Cape Town

At Bukhara, sensitive palates have no need to crave an asbestos coating, for dishes are enticingly spicy, with flavours that delight without searing. As a fan of milder North Indian food – at home we enjoy reproducing recipes from sources such as Gaylord's, New York, and Camellia Panjabi, marketing director of India's Taj hotel group – it was a pleasure to find this traditional cuisine in the city centre.

Go in a party, for the menu offers a selection that begs to be ordered and shared. And the dishes that stream out of the open-plan kitchen in individual copper-bright bowls, call for experimentation. I was saddened to hear a table order their "usual" despite the waiter's plea to try something new. But it was certainly testimony to on-going satisfaction.

Regulars can be assured of a personal welcome from host Sabi Sawahal, who has run restaurants in Delhi and Amsterdam. Fortunately for Cape Town patrons, he lost his heart to an Afrikaans girl he met in Italy and followed her home. His professionalism is apparent in the smoothly flowing operation, even when Bukhara's popularity demands two sittings at night – and the restaurant seats 180.

The upstairs location overlooks the trees lining the Church Street pedestrian mall, a wall of windows

providing a light, airy contrast to warm terracotta decor and solid wooden tables and chairs, brought in from India.

You'll find your cutlery on your side plate, wrapped in a practical bib-style napkin that allows executives to mop up their food with *nan* bread without splattering designer ties or blouses. The *nan*, freshly made to order, is a must, whether plain or with garlic and butter. I can recommend the *pudina parantha* (R8), made with wholewheat bread, butter and dried mint, though I'd have preferred the mint fresh and finely chopped.

Chat to your waiter about the menu options: staff are fully conversant with the range of dishes. If you like your curry hot, order the lamb *vindaloo* (R47) to take you to meltdown. The intensely flavoured lamb *rogan josh*, redolent of cloves and cardamom, is milder, the spices cooled with yoghurt (R47).

In tune with customer demand in Indian restaurants world-wide, the most popular dish is the classic *murgh makhani* (R42) (butter chicken), that originated at the Moti Mashal restaurant in Delhi, where the sauce was made by adding butter and tomato to the leftover chicken juices in the marinade trays. It's delicious with Basmati rice, fried with jeera and onions (R15).

## eat beat



The tandoori section of the menu offers a rich variety of classic chicken dishes at R28-R40: chicken tikka; *mehr ul nisa* (minced chicken breasts with cashew nuts and coriander); plus a mild and delicate chicken cheese *kabab*. Tandoori lamb chops (cutlets marinated with yoghurt and spices) are much in demand at R38; there's also *sheekh kabab* (minced lamb with fresh coriander) at R30; or tandoori leg of lamb (allow 30 minutes preparation time) at R125.

Prawns in a tandoori or chick-pea marinade (R92 each) feature among the seafoods and the three tasty vegetarian dishes include *paneer tikka* (tandoori home-made cheese) at R29.

You will pay R15 for soothing

side dishes such as home-made yoghurt with cucumber, or garlic and mint, and *kuchumber* salad (diced cucumber, tomato and onion with an Indian salad dressing).

End the meal with a cooling *hulfi* (R14) a tall, conical-shaped ice-cream subtly flavoured with cardamom and saffron.

We matched our chicken and lamb dishes to a bottle of Klein Constantia Rhine Riesling (R50), its fragrance and fruit perfectly partnering the spices. It's rare to find an eight-page winelist at an Indian restaurant, particularly one as well chosen. With some 50 dishes on the menu, the choice of 168 wines is well beyond the norm – and the reason given for the high corkage charge. Apart from a

few Nederburg wines, all are from smaller farms and even the house specials (from R7 a glass and R28 a bottle) include top labels.

Mark-ups are not shy, some obviously directed at executives out to impress their clients. Under Sauvignon Blancs, it's interesting to see that Springfield Special Cuvée is R81, just R1 less than Thelema. Annoyingly, no vintages are given. When I'm asked to part with R210 for Stellenzicht Syrah I'd like to know the year. And I'm not sure just what I'd pair it with on the menu.

By Jos Baker

*A professional, welcoming venue where authentic North Indian food and consistency draw the crowds. One visit is not enough to sample the range of traditional dishes on offer.*

**33 Church Street, Cape Town. Lunch Mon-Sat; Dinner Mon-Sun. Tel (021) 240-000. BYO R20. Access from a pedestrian mall; parking at nearby Riebeeck Square.**

### RATING IN ETHNIC MIDDLE-EASTERN CATEGORY

FOOD .....	★★★★☆
WINELIST .....	★★★★☆
AMBIENCE .....	★★★
SERVICE .....	★★★
VALUE .....	★★★