

20 June 75  
Time Out.

# Food: Eating Out

Indian food is often thought to cover only dishes like lamb curry, pilau rice, pappadams, chapatis and tandoori chicken. This is far from the truth; as the English are confirmed meat eaters the Indian restaurant owners have produced what they think will be acceptable. It's a pity as the non-meat areas of Indian food are, I think, the most unusual and interesting. The combination of a country that is often short of food and vegetarian has produced a very interesting type of cookery. It's based on vegetables, breads, savoury pancakes, and amazing very sticky sweets. For anyone interested in Indian food either meat or vegetarian, meals, snacks, groceries, fruit and vegetables then Drummond St, NW1 is a must.

## Drummond Street, NW1



PAUL McNICHOLLS

*Ambala, Quality Sweet Makers.*

★ **J. & D. Shan & Co, Indian Grocers** 117 Drummond St, NW1. Open 9.30-6, closed Sun. They sell Indian cooking pots, sarees, jewellery, hair dye and spices. They also make a few hot snacks to take away.

★ **Palak (Spices) Ltd** 134 Drummond St, NW1. Open 9.30-6.30, closed Sun. This shop specialises in spices, there are dozens of different ones in tins and small packs. The people in the shop are helpful and will explain what everything is. They also have hot samosas (these are triangular pastries filled with a spicy mixture of either vegetables or meat. They are deep-fried and eaten warm). Their ones are vegetable and cost 8p each.

★ **The Universal Halal Butchers and Grocers** 122a Drummond St, NW1. Open 9.30-7, closed Sun. This is a small shop with a long counter on the pavement displaying fruit, vegetables and herbs. They have an amazing range of unusual and unknown (to me) vegetables; tiny bright orange peppers, gourds, inch-long cucumbers, marrows as well as the more familiar mangos, coconuts, aubergines and citric fruit. They specialise in fresh-water fish and very good lamb and mutton. Again the assistants are helpful and will explain everything.

★ **Halal Butchers and Grocers** 128 Drummond St, NW1. Open 9.30-6, closed Sun. Small grocers-cum-butchers with very good meat and they sell many different kinds of pulses and beans. Either ground into flour; lentil flour or unusual kinds like toor dhall-oily 25p per lb, urad dal (very small lentils). Ground

peas and beans are made into flour to use in making different kinds of bread, pastries and pancakes.

★ **Nimontron Sweet Centre** 125 Drummond St, NW1. Open 10-10.30 every day. This is a large cafe-type place. One side they have trays of amazing-looking Indian sweets; these are sold by weight, average price 45p a lb. Try the ones called laddu (balls of gram flour with honey and nuts that are fried and covered in a sweet syrup) they're a beautiful orange gold colour; or the gulab jaman (milk balls in rosewater syrup). The other side has savoury dishes like chicken curry for 50p, kebab 30p, samosa 10p. Good plain cheap place to eat.

★ **Eurasian Foods** 123 Drummond St, NW1. Open 10-10, closed Sun. This is a very small, very simple cafe, rather like a fish and chip shop. They have very good chicken tikka (pieces of chicken marinated and baked in a clay oven) 55p, fried fish, £1, good samosa, 8p. You can eat there or take the food away.

★ **Ambala, The Quality Sweet Makers** 112 Drummond St, NW1. Open 10-6 every day. This is an amazing place painted white with racks of sensational-looking sweets. Particularly good is the pakura, 40p per lb. They are egg-sized pieces of slightly flakey very sweet cakes. There is an old man sitting in the back beside huge vats of hot oil or butter cooking the sweets and pastries. They also sell small pieces of potato covered in batter made with green spices and deep-fried. This is eaten warm and is delicious.

★ **Diwana Bhel Poori House** 121 Drummond St, NW1. Open Tue-Fri 12-3.30, 5.30-10; Sat and Sun 12-10pm, closed Mon. This place specialises in various kinds of puri (these are small very light thin puffed fried bread). You can have a pile of them on their own, or with savoury yoghurt, or stuffed. Also try the dosa (spicy pancakes, eaten at breakfast in India). They are soft and tasty and very filling. Their samosas are the tastiest and everything is freshly cooked. Allow about 50-75p for quite a lot of food.

If you are interested in the types of food available in this area and want to try cooking this kind of Indian food I would recommend buying *Indian Vegetarian Cookery* by Jack Santa Maria, published by Rider and Company, cost £1.45. It covers many areas like spices, utensils, history as well as recipes. (Sue Miles).



*Nimontron Sweet Centre.*