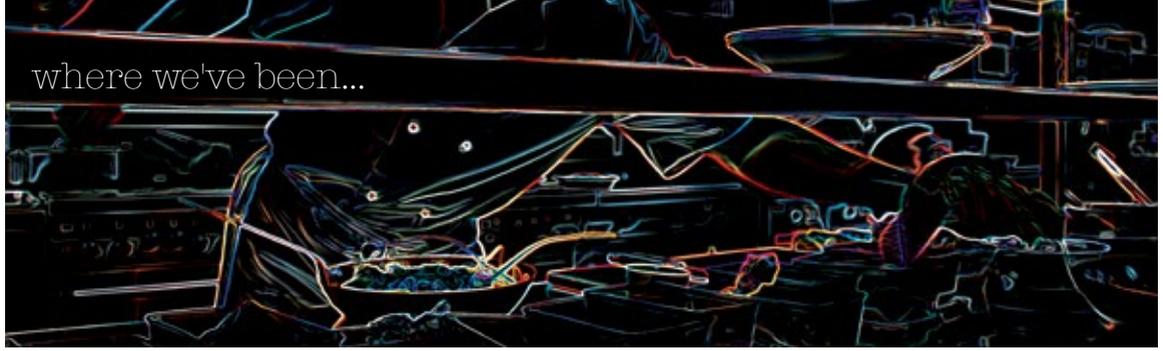


where we've been...



ROYAL CURRY HOUSE Narellan

Dining out is almost exclusively enjoyable. That can be dependant on your company though. I love having dinner with Sophia Loren. We've been good friends for quite a while. Our catch up dinners are always full of laughs.

I was a bit dubious about the Italian diva's thoughts on Indian food when I invited her to sample Royal Curry House at Narellan via text message. Her reply was uncharacteristically quick and very positive. She was moving an appointment to make sure she could join me. Indian food is obviously a winner.

We met outside Royal Curry House a little early. Sophia looked as effortlessly gorgeous as ever. We went straight in to the restaurant, which is the old Lexie's cottage in Stewart Street Narellan for longtime locals. If you're not a longtime local, google it.

The staff were lovely from the time we arrived until the time we left. Maybe even sweet. Besides bursting with politeness, they were both efficient and helpful.

Our obligatory papadums arrived and two wine glasses for our Henschke Henrys Seven Shiraz, Grenache, Viogner. But Sophia was hungry and no amount of papadums was going to fix that.

We shared an entree serving of Tandoori Prawns. There was just enough zing in these little beauties to have your taste buds dancing, but this was just a tasting size and Sophia

wanted more food.

We ordered Chicken Tikka Masala and Lamb Korma for mains. Not very adventurous I know but I judge all Indian restaurants by Chicken Tikka Masala. You need to have a constant. "And naan," Sophia insisted. "Plain naan," I insisted back. "Of course," Sophia replied. "It's not a bloody pizza!"

We got back to our chatter. It must have been at least six months since we had spoken and lots had happened. Somehow it ended up at small edible fish. "I don't eat sardines or anchovies," she revealed. "That's not very Italian of you," I smiled. "I know - don't tell my Nonna."

Our mains were delicious, full of typical Indian layers of flavour. The Lamb Korma was Sophia's menu choice but she was switching camps. "I think I like that one better," she said pointing to the glowing orange Tikka dish. "How's your hangry going? I queried. "Gone - thanks for asking."

Our waitress returned and asked if we were finished, as we had not entirely cleared the bowls. "Yes it was lovely, we're just very comfortable thank you," Sophia smiled. "Should I bring the dessert menu then?" We looked at each other and silently decided, why not! "Yes please, we will have a look."

I wasn't all that keen but as soon as I saw Galub Jamun on the menu, again I thought, "Why not!" Khoya dumplings served with an irresistible sugary, cinnamon and cardamom sauce, they are a treat. "Would you like a

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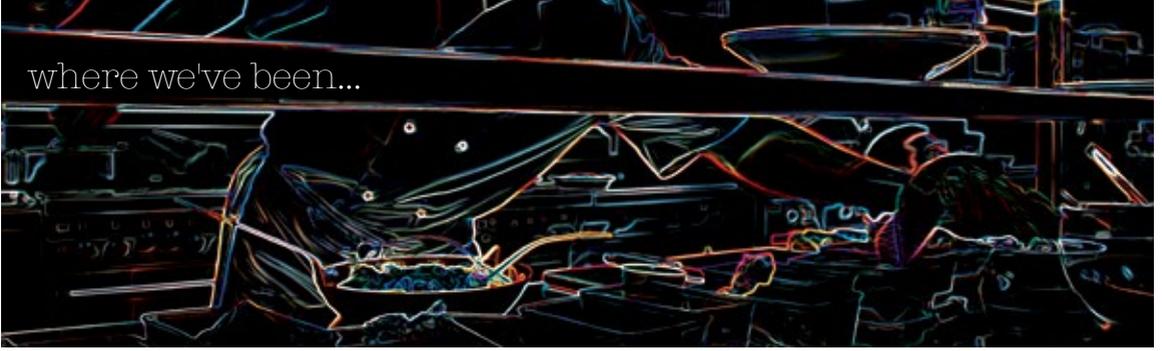
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scoop of ice cream?" Our answer was predictable and chorused. "YES!"

We shared one serving, which was conveniently two dumplings. There was however only one scoop of ice cream and Sophia won that battle. The sauce is what makes this dish so make sure you utilise every last skerrick.

There is atmosphere in the old cottage and as I said, our service staff were just lovely. Royal Curry House is a great addition to Narellan's burgeoning food scene.