



Welcome.

Cardamom seeks to bring together East and West, old and new, familiar and unfamiliar, through food, culture and relationships. I chose the name “Cardamom” for my restaurant because cardamom is an important native Indian spice. Known as “the queen of spices”—second only to the “king,” black pepper—it is one of the most expensive spices in the world by weight (topped only by saffron and vanilla). Cardamom is used in a wide range of Indian foods and nearly all food from our kitchen—both savory and sweet. It’s an essential ingredient in *garam masala*, which is a basic spice mix that forms the foundation of many Indian dishes. It is used together with cinnamon and cloves in *chai* (spiced tea), and often used alone in desserts. So, cardamom, while quite precious, is both common and versatile.

Cardamom seeks to explore what Indian food and culture have done for centuries—take the best from outside influences and create something new, but distinctly Indian. Indian cuisine has been influenced over the centuries by a host of cultures—the Persians in the north, the Chinese in the east, the Portuguese, the British. Indian chefs and home cooks have a long history of taking outside flavors and cooking techniques, and combining them with their native spices. India is a vast country and very diverse. We designed our menu to reflect this diversity, and then to take it a step further by adding our own Western-influenced dishes.

Why Fresh Indian?

fresh ingredients—like locally grown produce, freshly roasted & ground spices

fresh cooking—our chefs are cooking your food to order—really!

more fresh produce on your plate—from fresh green salads to fresh-squeezed juice

fresh new dishes—East-meets-West creations

Please enjoy this journey with me,

Rimol



Atithi devo bhava

A guest is equal to god.

—ancient Sanskrit saying





About allergies & special diets

Our son Ravi has a host of life-threatening food allergies, including dairy, egg and tree nuts, so we know about the importance of special diets firsthand. We do use all major food allergens in our kitchen—nuts, peanuts, fish, shellfish, eggs, dairy, wheat, soy—but we have chosen to cook with pure vegetable oil and not add dairy to dishes that can be made without. Therefore, we offer a wide selection of vegan items, and many of our meat dishes are actually dairy-free. India has a long tradition of vegetarianism, and these items are fully delicious!

We cannot guarantee that any dish is *completely* allergen-free. Please speak to your server if you have special restrictions. We provide the following keys for your reference.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| ● = vegetarian | ▲ = contains nuts/peanuts (coconut is not included in this label) |
| • = vegan | ■ = contains gluten
(note, if you do NOT see a red square, it's no-gluten!) |
| (•) = can be made vegan, please ask | (■) = can be made no-gluten, please ask |

80% of our menu items are made *without* gluten in their traditional preparation, so we code only the items that *do* have gluten. Everything on the menu *without* a code is no-gluten except for trace amounts, since we do use wheat flour in our kitchen.



starters



VEGETABLE SAMOSA (2)

Popular North Indian street food

Spiced potatoes + peas inside a crispy turnover.

Housemade tamarind + cilantro-mint chutneys.

4



MOMOS

Nepali steamed dumplings

Choose spiced ground chicken or (vegan) vegetable (cabbage, potato, cauliflower, green onion).

Roasted tomato–Szechwan pepper chutney.

Chicken Momos ■

Vegetable Momos ●●■

Sunil (appetizer size) 5

Ravi (double order) 9

VEGETABLE PAKORA

Potatoes, onion, cauliflower, and spinach fried in chickpea-flour batter. Served with housemade tamarind + cilantro-mint chutneys.

4



STIR-FRIED SHRIMP

Shrimp stir-fried with bell peppers and a touch of chili-soy sauce.

7

BHARAWAN ALOO TIKKI

Crispy potato patties, stuffed with green peas, sultanas, ginger, spices. Served with housemade tamarind + cilantro-mint chutneys.

5



PAPRI CHAT

Ubiquitous Indian street snack with great variation from city to city—great to share for the table.

Homemade white flour crisps (*papri*), potatoes, chickpeas, onion, cucumber, tomato with yogurt-tamarind-mint sauce.

6



CHICKEN TIKKA

Melt-in-your-mouth tender

Boneless chicken breast marinated in yogurt + spices, cooked in the tandoor with onions + green peppers.

Cilantro-mint chutney.

7

ONION BHAJI

Spiced chopped onion, fried in chickpea-flour batter. Served with housemade tamarind + cilantro-mint chutneys.

4



PAPADUM

Crisp lentil-flour chips with black pepper. Served with housemade tamarind + cilantro-mint chutneys.

2



SOUP OF THE DAY

bowl 6 cup 3

*cilantro-mint chutney (served on side) is not vegan

more about momos

Nearly every culture has its version of the steamed dumpling—and for good reason! *Momos* are popular in Nepal, Tibet, Darjeeling, Sikkim, Bhutan and northeast India. The variety we offer are those of my birthplace in Nepal. I make these at my Ann Arbor home for my children every week, and they still can't get enough...you'll see that we've named the large plate "Ravi" and the small plate "Sunil" after my sons to pay homage to their endless appetite for this popular Nepali street food.

breads

NAAN

Soft Indian bread. Real butter.

2  

ROTI

Whole wheat flatbread.

2   

PRANTHA

Whole wheat bread layered with real butter, ground carom seeds, salt.

2.50  

GARLIC NAAN

2.50  

ALOO PRANTHA

Prantha stuffed with spiced potatoes.

3  

ONION KULCHA

Naan stuffed with fresh chopped onion.

2.50  

KASHMIRI NAAN

Naan stuffed with almonds, cashews, pistachios, raisins and mango chutney.

4   

BREAD BASKET

One each: naan, garlic naan, onion kulcha, aloo prantha.

8  

tandoori entrées

All served with steamed basmati rice & vegetable of the day.

TANDOORI CHICKEN

Four pieces.

10

CHICKEN KALI MIRCH

Boneless chicken breast marinated in yogurt, cream cheese, spices, cooked in the tandoor. Covered with a generous dose of black peppercorn (*kali mirch*).

12

CHICKEN TIKKA

Boneless chicken breast marinated in yogurt + spices, cooked in the tandoor with onion + bell pepper.

12

SEEKH KABAB

Minced lamb, fresh ginger, garlic, bell pepper, onion, cumin, coriander and garam masala. Cooked on a skewer in the tandoor.

13

ANGAAREY SHRIMP

Angaarey means “burning” or “fire,” referring to the manner of cooking.

Shrimp marinated in yogurt, ginger, garlic, cilantro and spinach paste, and cooked in the tandoor.

19

ACHARI PANEER TIKKA

Homemade cheese cubes marinated in Indian pickle spices and cooked in the tandoor with bell pepper, onion, tomato.

12 

sides

MANGO CHUTNEY

2  

CUCUMBER RAITA

Traditionally served with the main meal to cool the effects of spicy curry.

Yogurt sauce with cumin, cucumber, carrot.

2.50 

ACHAR (INDIAN PICKLE)

Intrinsic to any Indian meal, there are thousands of varieties of pickle.

Spicy mixed pickle.

1.50  

the tandoor oven

The *tandoor* is a clay oven used in India as well as in central and west Asia. The heat was traditionally generated by a wood or charcoal fire inside the clay oven, while the modern restaurant tandoor is now heated with gas. The gas heats both the clay pot and stones at the bottom, thus exposing the food to radiant heat, convection cooking, and smoking. Foods are marinated, placed on a skewer and lowered into the tandoor. Because the tandoor bakes and grills at the same time, tender and flavorful dishes result.

hyderabadi biryani

Hyderabad is the capital and largest city of the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Its food and culture have much Islamic influence, giving rise to this fragrant rice dish. Basmati rice is cooked with cinnamon, cloves, star anise, green cardamom, cumin and black pepper, then baked with onions, raisins, cashews, fresh mint, and either chicken, goat or vegetables. Served with raita and hardboiled egg, as is traditional.

CHICKEN BIRYANI

13



GOAT BIRYANI

16



VEGETABLE BIRYANI

12



cardamom plates

Served with rice pulao, vegetables and chutney.
All are medium spice level. May be ordered spicy hot.

BAPU'S GOAT CHOPS

Find out why goat is my father-in-law's favorite dish!
Meaty flavor like lamb, but leaner and so tender.
Center loin chops marinated overnight.
22

BIHARI KABAB

Boneless lamb pieces marinated in yogurt, ginger, garlic, onion and papaya paste with garam masala.
Cooked in the tandoor.
18

GRILLED MASALA SALMON

India boasts hundreds of native fish species, including salmon.
Marinated in ginger, garlic and freshly roasted spices.
Cooked in the tandoor.
18

entrée salads

Made with local, farm-fresh greens grown year-round.
Served with *nimki* (flour chips with toasted onion seeds).

Housemade dressing choices:

Lime Vinaigrette • • Yogurt Cumin • Tamarind-Chili Vinaigrette • •

CHICKEN TIKKA SALAD

Chicken tikka (marinated boneless chicken breast), greens, cilantro, cucumber, tomato, red onion, carrot and toasted almonds.
10



TANDOORI-ROASTED VEGETABLE SALAD

A whole skewer full of grilled veggies + *paneer* (Indian cheese) on farm-fresh greens.
10
add chicken tikka 2



GRILLED SALMON SALAD

Indian-spiced marinated grilled salmon, fresh greens, red onion, cilantro, cucumber, tomato, carrot, seasonal fruit.
12



SIDE SALAD

Mixed greens salad.
4



what is curry?

“Curry” is a term that is used broadly to refer to nearly any spiced, sauce-based dish; it is thought to be derived from the word *kari* in Classical Tamil, which means “sauce.” There are as many variations on the meaning of “curry” and the sauces as there are cooks of Indian cuisine. “Curry leaf” is a spice used in some Indian dishes, but this is a separate meaning of the word “curry.” Cardamom’s curries span a range of popular traditional Indian dishes and Anglo adaptations. If you don’t see your favorite curry, just ask us—we may be able to whip it up!

chicken curries

Served with basmati rice. Order mild, medium or hot spice level.

CHICKEN CURRY

Boneless chicken breast, tomato-based curry sauce.

11

CHICKEN TIKKA MASALA

This famous English adaptation of tandoori chicken has been called the “national dish of Britain.”

Chicken tikka (tender, tandoori-roasted, marinated boneless breast), creamy tomato curry sauce.

13

CHICKEN MAKHNI

If Tikka Masala is Britain’s favorite, then this is America’s.

Chicken tikka, creamy tomato + cashew paste curry sauce.

13

CHICKEN KORMA

Boneless chicken breast, creamy yogurt + almond sauce.

13

CHICKEN HYDERABADI

Boneless chicken breast, creamy cashew + poppy seed curry sauce.

13

KARAHI CHICKEN

Karahi means “wok”—this dish is between a curry and a stir-fry.

Boneless chicken cooked with fresh onion, tomato, fresh mint, bell pepper, ginger, garlic, whole cardamom and cloves.

13

goat & lamb curries

Served with basmati rice. Order mild, medium or hot spice level.

KARAHI GOAT

Find out why goat is my father-in-law’s favorite dish! Meaty flavor like lamb, but leaner and very tender.

Braised goat meat pieces cooked with fresh onion, tomato, bell pepper, fresh mint, ginger, garlic, whole cardamom and cloves.

16

GOAT DHANSAK

Dhansak combines elements of Persian and Gujarati cuisine.

Braised goat meat pieces, yellow lentils, butternut squash, fresh tomato and cilantro.

16

LAMB VINDALOO

Vindaloo is derived from the Portuguese *Vinha De Alhos* (a meat dish with “wine and garlic” brought to Goa by colonists). Anglo and Indian adaptations added potatoes (*aloo* means “potato” in Hindi).

Boneless lamb + potatoes, onion-tomato-vinegar sauce.

14

LAMB SAAG

Made with local, farm-fresh spinach year-round.

Braised boneless lamb + fresh spinach, tomato curry sauce with a touch of yogurt.

14

ROGAN JOSH

The deep red color comes from Kashmiri chilis.

Braised boneless lamb, yogurt tomato curry sauce with aromatic spices.

14

CHETTINAD LAMB

The Chettinad region of Tamil Nadu (South Indian state) is known for using a particularly wide range of aromatic spices in its cooking.

Braised boneless lamb, coconut + ground chickpea + poppy seed curry sauce.

14



seafood curries



Served with basmati rice. Order mild, medium or hot spice level.

SHRIMP MASALA

Shrimp, tomato-based curry sauce.

13

BENGALI FISH CURRY

Bengal's countless rivers and lakes assure that nearly everyone eats fish at least once a day.

Mahi mahi, tomato-mustard-onion sauce.

13

KERALA SHRIMP CURRY

Seafood together with coconut is typical of Kerala, a southwest coastal and tropical state.

Shrimp in a coconut curry sauce made with tomato, mustard seed, onion and curry leaves.

13

SEAFOOD KORMA

Shrimp, scallops and fish, creamy almond + cashew sauce.

14



vegetarian curries



Served with basmati rice. Order mild, medium or hot spice level.

PALAK PANEER

Housemade cheese + spinach, creamy curry sauce with distinctive fenugreek leaves.

11



MATAR PANEER

Housemade cheese + peas, creamy tomato curry sauce with fenugreek.

11



BAIGAN BARTHA

Fresh eggplant, roasted, finely chopped and cooked with green peas in a tomato-based curry sauce.

11



BHINDI MASALA

If you think you don't like okra, think again.

Okra with fresh ginger, garlic, onion and tomato.

11



ALOO GOBI

Potatoes + cauliflower, tomato-based curry sauce.

10



DAL TARKA

Yellow lentils cooked with onion, tomato, ginger, garlic, whole red chilis, mustard seed, curry leaves.

10



CHANA PINDI

Chickpeas, tomato-onion-based curry sauce.

10



VEGETABLE KORMA

Carrot, potato, zucchini, cauliflower, green beans, peas, creamy almond + cashew sauce.

11



PANEER MAKHNI

Homemade cheese, creamy tomato + cashew curry sauce.

11



KARAH PANEER

Homemade cheese cooked with fresh onion, tomato, spices.

12



MALAI KOFTA

Kofta patties (ground cheese, carrot, zucchini, potatoes, cauliflower, bread crumbs), creamy tomato + cashew paste curry sauce.

12



VARANASI ALOO

Potatoes stuffed with cheese, almonds, raisins, onion and fresh cilantro, in tomato-fennel-yogurt-cashew-poppy-seed sauce.

12






drinks



NIMBU PANI

Freshly squeezed lemon-gingerade, pinch of clove, cardamom.

3  


AAMA'S MANGO LASSI / SWEET LASSI

Indian-style yogurt smoothie. Mango or sweet (plain).

3.50 

TROPICAL JUICE


Mango, guava or lychee fruit.

2.50  

COCONUT WATER

2.50  

ICED TEA

2.50  

PREMIUM GINGER BEER

Fever-Tree brand award-winning ginger beer made from Indian and African gingers and cane sugar.

3  

THUMS UP

India's own original #1 selling cola, introduced in 1977.

3  

CARDAMOM CHAI

We roast and grind our own *chai masala* (tea spice mix), then combine with India's ubiquitous "Red Label" tea and milk.

3 

SINGLE ESTATE INDIAN COFFEE

Indian-grown coffee from Zingerman's Coffee Company. Or Zingerman's Decaf.

2.50  

FINE LOOSE TEA

Individual infusion teapot

Ceylon Single Estate (Sri Lanka, organic)

Darjeeling (India, fair trade, organic)



Coconut Oolong

Moroccan Mint (green tea + peppermint, organic)

White Tea with Rose Blossoms (organic)

Lime Ginger Rooibos (herbal, organic)

Hibiscus Berry (herbal, organic)

Turmeric Ginger (herbal, organic)  

2.50

FOUNTAIN SODA

Coke, diet coke, sprite.  

2



desserts



CARDAMOM RICE PUDDING

Cardamom-scented, creamy basmati rice pudding with toasted almonds and sultanas.

3.50  

CARROT HALWA

Spiced ground carrot cooked in milk & sugar. Served warm.

3.50  

RAS MALAI

Ricotta-like cheese poached in thick cardamom-scented milk syrup. Sprinkled with pistachios.

3.50  

PISTA KULFI

Thick, Indian-style pistachio ice cream made in our kitchen.

3.50   

CARDAMOM CHEESECAKE

A West-meets-East dessert made just for us by a local pastry chef.

American-style cheesecake scented with cardamom, and a touch of almond in the crust.

6   

GULAB JAMUN

Small spheres of milky dough are lightly fried and soaked in cardamom-scented syrup. Served warm.

3.50   

MANGO ICE CREAM

4 

CHOCOLATE COCONUT CAKE

Not Indian at all, but very good! Made locally.

Dark chocolate cake, layered with coconut-white chocolate ganache, toasted coconut flakes.

6  

chai

Most of the Indian populace were not tea drinkers prior to British colonization. When Indians did take on the British custom of tea drinking, they made it distinctly their own by adding spices and plenty of milk and sugar. Forget what you've had at the coffee houses. Ours is what *chai* should taste like (although every family makes their own version). We roast and grind our own *chai masala* (spice mix), then combine it with India's ubiquitous "Red Label" brand tea and milk.

GLOSSARY

ACHAR pickle
ACHARI with pickle
AAMA mother (Nepali)
ANGAAREY fire, burning
ALOO potato

BAPU father
BAIGAN eggplant
BARTHA mashed
BENGAL historic and geographical area that is now Bangladesh and the eastern Indian state of West Bengal
BHAJI fritter, fried vegetable
BHARAWAN stuffed
BHINDI okra
BIRHAR a state in northern India just south of Nepal
BIRYANI rice-based dish believed to have been invented in the kitchens of Mughal Emperors, based on a Persian word that means "baked"

CHETTINAD region of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu
CHAI tea
CHANA chickpea
CHAT snack, literally means "lick"

DAL lentil

GOA India's smallest state, located in west India; was a Portuguese territory for about 450 years until it was annexed by India in 1961.

GOBI cauliflower

GULAB rose

HALWA dense, sweet confection
HYDERABAD capital city of the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh

JAMUN Indian fruit with similar size and shape to *Gulab Jamun* balls

JOSH heat, hot

KALI MIRCH black peppercorn

KARAHÍ wok

KERALA southern state of India on the western coast

KOFTA dumpling, patty, or ball

KORMA creamy yogurt + almond-paste sauce

KULFI similar to ice cream, but denser and creamier

KULCHA leavened flatbread

LASSI yogurt drink

MALAI cream

MAKHNI creamy, tomato cashew-paste sauce

MATAR green pea

MASALA spice blend

METHI fenugreek (herb)

MOMOS steamed stuffed dumplings

NIMBU lemon

PAKORA fritter, fried snack

PALAK spinach, greens

PANEER cheese

PANI water

PAPRI puffed wheat-flour crackers

PAPADUM chips made of lentil flour

PINDI short for Rawalpindi, a city in Pakistan

PISTA pistachio

PULAO Indian-style rice pilaf. Ours is fairly simple: basmati rice cooked with turmeric, onions, green peas. Not to be confused with *biryani*, which has more spices and is baked with raisins, nuts and more vegetables.

RAITA yogurt-based condiment

RAS MALAI *ras*="juicy," *malai*="cream"

ROGAN oil

SAAG spinach, greens

SAMOSA popular north Indian street food

TAMARIND tropical fruit

TANDOOR clay oven

TANDOORI (*adj.*) of the clay oven

THALI plate (note that the "th" represents an aspirated "t," not the English "th" sound)

TIKKI small cutlet or croquette

VARANASI city on the banks of the Ganges in Uttar Pradesh