

# This Jai Ho is victorious

OCEAN Road in South Shields is the "curry mile" of the North East.

It is synonymous with Indian restaurants offering value for money meal deals and has been something of a regional institution for many a year.

It takes guts to open a new one on this strip in the currently financial climate, but all credit to Khamal and Mo – the pair behind Jai Ho – for doing just that.

Emphasis here is not on cheap deals, rather good quality food in very pleasant surroundings and offering something that little bit different.

For the quality of the meals served up, Jai Ho is actually extremely good value for money.

It has an extensive menu, while the pebble-effect walls (Ocean Road, you see), calming blue lighting with its 3D effect, and well-spaced-out tables make for a terrific all-round experience.

Jai Ho means "may you be victorious" and, on the back of our experience here, we hope that is every bit the case for Khamal and Mo.

After tucking into some lovely papadoms with their

## Jai Ho

118 Ocean Road  
South Shields  
Tel: 0191 454 8702



mixture of condiments, we enjoyed a varied selection of starters.

The kakra (£4.50) crab meat was lightly spiced with a very delicate taste, while the onion bhaji (£1.80) had the most perfect texture.

The Apna-style tikka (£4.50) is marinated chicken cubes cooked with green pepper, onions, tomatoes and spices and is described as fairly hot. Certain mouthfuls certainly had my tastebuds tingling somewhat!

As for the Jai Ho mixed kebab (£4.50), well, let's just say there were enough flavours and selection of meats here to have made a main course proud.

The toughest part of the meal for us was deciding what to choose for our mains.

While the traditional favourites are all there, it only seemed right to check out the

alternatives, which provide the backbone of the menu.

Sections include modern Indian, tandoori specialities and chef's signature dishes.

The sabka maza (£8.50) caught my eye. I opted for chicken and the dish is cooked with garlic, ginger, onions, tomatoes, green chilli and hot spices.

Fusion counts for a lot at Jai Ho, and this is one of the dishes highly recommended by the chef.

On tasting it, I could see why. The chicken was a beautiful cut and the sauce a melting pot of flavours. I had nut pilau (£2.40) with it, which was packed with cashews.

Venison does not appear on many Indian menus, but friend Richard chose the jhal jhool horrin manshoor (£14.95) – gorgeous slices of meat in a spicy, hot sauce with fresh coriander.

While it had a vindaloo

strength, the richness of the meat still oozed through.

Another friend, Jak, likes her king prawns, but she has never had them quite as big as in the Delight (£8.70), so much so she could not finish the course, despite it being delicious and served in a ground almond, fresh cream and saffron sauce.

Partner Callum's nawabi (£7.90) boasted tender pieces of chicken breast, marinated and barbecued on flaming charcoal, then cooked again in a mild to medium creamy sauce. It was exquisite.

We also had both mushroom and garlic pilau rice, chappati, and two versions of peshwari nan – normal, and thin and crispy – and finished off with palate-cleansing desserts.

Everything about Jai Ho speaks quality – a fine and very welcome addition to Ocean Road.

GORDON BARR



**VARIED** – Jai Ho turn out top-quality Indian favourites, as well as a few surprises



## Double the taste

DINERS in Northumberland can now enjoy two different culinary tastes under one restaurant roof. From this weekend, December 5 and 6, The Thai Royal Orchid at Priestpopple, Hexham, will be offering a new range of Indian cuisine alongside its existing Thai food menu. The menu expansion follows the success of the Thai Royal Orchid's sister restaurant, Siam Bay, which has offered a dual menu since opening in Whitley Bay earlier this year. Like its counterpart, the 100-seat Thai Royal Orchid will now serve a wide range of authentic Indian dishes including a variety of tandooris, curries from the mild korma to the hot vindaloo, and house specials such as garlic tikka masala and tilapia fish cooked with chillies, coriander and lemon. This will be in addition to its popular Thai menu, which already includes a range of starters such as steamed green mussels with Thai herbs cooked in a clay pot, main courses of seafood, duck, beef and chicken, including hor mok gong – king prawn soufflé baked with thick curry, coconut milk and kaffir leaves – and a selection of Thai salads, soups and curries.

The restaurant's owner, Kaddus Miah of the Miah Hospitality Group, also hopes to create a new kitchen area and recruit a team of additional chefs who will specialise in cooking the Indian food. Call (01434) 600585 to book.

## Food for thought

ARE you opening a new restaurant or bar in the region? Do you know of a new place that has opened that you think is worth reviewing? Is your venue changing its menu, running special offers, hosting themed nights? Let Entertainment Editor Gordon Barr know what's happening on the North East food and drink scene. This page is for you, complemented by our whatsonne.co.uk website. It's the region's most-read eating out page – and Gordon wants to hear from you to keep up to date with anything that's happening out there.

Email [gordon.barr@ncjmedia.co.uk](mailto:gordon.barr@ncjmedia.co.uk)  
If it's going on, it should be in What's On!

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