

Masala Zone

Even when we travel, Kuwaitis long for our traditional food, and Indian cuisine remains the closest to ours. With the varieties of rice, spices, hot peppers, yogurt, and stacks of delicious naan, even our children get bored with burgers and pizza. Personally, I love to experience the cuisines of different countries, like Chinese, Korean, and Thai, or Greek and Spanish. One rainy day in London we passed by an Indian restaurant by chance. It seemed quite neat and lovely so my daughter suggested we give the place a try and hoped my grandchildren would like it. So we entered, and I looked around.

What caught my eye was a table with an Indian family of more than twenty people, with an elder sitting at the head of the table. I have a deep admiration for the expatriate Indian communities all over the world because it is generally a peaceful community that integrates with the society it lives in, yet it maintains its traditions and religion, whatever their religion may be. For instance, you don't typically find people in the West looking with suspicion at a woman wearing her traditional *sari* or *punjabi*. There's a certain amount of respect and acceptance from the society she lives in. Moreover, this elder and his family are evidence of three or four generations who have lived in Britain, yet the importance of being connected to family and culture has not been lost. The Indian community has succeeded in striking a balance between integrating as citizens in British society while preserving its own heritage and culture.

From that table we turn to another, where I admired another Kuwaiti family consisting of a husband, his wife, and their four children. Their shoes and clothing are comfortable and appropriate for a vacation. The most important thing is that there are no maids, the father and the mother work hand in hand to care for their