

## Southall: London's Little India [B2]

Visitare Southall è come viaggiare all'estero. Questo quartiere a ovest di Londra si è guadagnato il nomignolo di 'Piccola India'. La sua affiatata comunità indiana ha trasformato la zona in un'attrazione molto amata dai visitatori della capitale.



Southall in West London is known as Little India or, more specifically, Little Punjab. Located in the [borough](#) of Ealing, it has the largest Sikh community in London, as well as the largest Sikh temple, the Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha. While Sikhism is the dominant religion, there are also many of Hindu and Muslim faith. Southall's population includes people from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and East Africa. In the town centre, some three quarters of its 70,000 residents are of Asian origin. Their influence has led to a rich cultural landscape. The sounds, smells and colours of Southall gives the whole area a vibrant, exotic atmosphere.

### COMMERCIAL HUB

Indian fashion and [jewellery](#) is sold in shops and on [street stalls](#), while [grocery stores](#) offer Indian food. [Scores](#) of restaurants

offer [mouth-watering](#) Asian food. From fast-food kebab [outlets](#), through Pakistani [diners](#) like Gifto's Lahore Karahi, to the iconic Brilliant restaurant, the distinctive aromas of Indian spices [permeate](#) the air. Mosques and temples [abound](#) in Southall. There are ten gurdwaras, six [mosques](#) and two mandirs in and around the area, as well as numerous Christian churches. The Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha, built in 2003, is the crown jewel of Southall. One of the biggest outside of India, it attracts over 15,000 [worshippers](#) a week and runs a free kitchen which provides vegetarian [meals](#) for all who come, Sikh or not.

## **AFFORDABLE AREA**

Asian people started arriving in Southall in the 1950s. Partition of the Punjab by the British in 1947 — placing half in Pakistan and half in India — led many people to move to Britain. Southall was an [affordable](#) area, close to work opportunities at the newly-opened Heathrow airport and the R. Woolf [rubber](#) factory. The factory's manager had served with Sikh soldiers in World War Two and was happy [to employ](#) them. Among the first Punjabi residents was Pritam Singh Sangha. He opened the first Asian [cornershop](#) in the UK in 1954, starting a [retail](#) concept that continues today.

## **AFRICA AND ASIA**

The next influx of Indian immigrants came from Kenya and Uganda in the 1960s, after the [former](#) colonies gained independence from Britain. Ugandan Indians were [forcibly expelled](#) in 1972 by Idi Amin, who had [seized](#) power in a [coup](#). Many of these people [settled](#) in Southall. The boom of the Asian population unfortunately led to acts of racism. The first [uprising](#) was the murder of Sikh teenager Gurdip Singh Chaggar in 1976. Later, [clashes](#) after a meeting of the British fascist party National Front caused the death of protester Blair Peach in 1979. In 1981, a [full-scale riot broke out](#) at the Ham [borough](#) Tavern, resulting in multiple injured and seventy arrests.

## VIBRANT SPIRIT

Racism in Southall is not quite as prevalent today and the area is more [affluent](#). Wealthy Indians are moving out to the suburbs, replaced by other minority groups such as Somalis and Afghan Sikhs. Its Little India reputation continues to attract new residents and visitors [alike](#). Easy connections to London make it a popular destination for those who love South Asian culture. Several generations on from its first Indian immigrants, it is still the best place in London for an authentic curry. Southall: Brilliant Food

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# Glossary

- **alike** = nello stesso modo
- **abound** = abbondare
- **expelled** = espellere
- **coup** = colpo di Stato
- **broke out** = scoppiare
- **affluent** = affluente
- **borough** = quartiere
- **mouth-watering** = che fanno venire l'acquolina in bocca
- **settled** = sistemarsi, stabilirsi
- **uprising** = rivolta
- **jewellery** = gioielli
- **grocery stores** = negozi di alimentari, supermercati
- **Scores** = decine
- **cornershop** = negozietto
- **clashes** = scontri
- **street stalls** = bancarelle di strada
- **diners** = ristoranti
- **former** = prime
- **forcibly** = forzatamente
- **worshippers** = fedeli
- **seized** = prendere con la forza
- **outlets** = negozi
- **permeate** = permeare, impregnare
- **rubber** = gomma
- **retail** = negozio
- **mosques** = moschee
- **full-scale riot** = disordini su larga scala
- **meals** = piatti
- **affordable** = conveniente
- **to employ** = impiegare