

LONDON'S BEST BITS



By Salma Haidrani
Who's a sweet lassie but
sometimes gets salty.



IF YOU ONLY DO ONE THING...

Come for a spinach and paneer dosa at **Ravi Shankar**, and stay for the famous South Indian-inspired Sunday buffet. Nearby Chutneys may get the glory but this veggie gem is a must-visit.

Drummond Street Euston, NW1

→ ⇨ Euston.

EUSTON ISN'T EXACTLY the first place you'd associate with chicken korma. But Drummond Street, just a few minutes' stroll from the station, is home to what is probably the capital's most diverse range of South Asian food. Why travel the breadth of the Indian subcontinent when you've got everything from Kerala-inspired, vegetarian street food to Lahore-style kebabs at your fingertips? And unlike Brick Lane, which the street often draws unfair comparisons to, there's not a tourist trap in sight.

But it's not all kebabs and karahi gosht here: there's enough on Drummond Street to suit even the most spice-averse of palates. With a mosque, a Catholic school and several pubs nestled side-by-side, this place is unapologetically multicultural and all the better for it.

Don't get too used to it, though. Drummond Street is set to be a casualty of the HS2 railway linking London to Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester. Half the street could be used as a temporary taxi rank and local businesses face demolition from January 2018, despite the efforts of the Save Drummond Street group. The campaign continues, but the best time to drop in and try London's best mango lassis is now, before noise, dust and uncertainty sweep the street.

Goat curry at West African eatery **African Kitchen**. With traditional masks, sculptures and ornaments decorating every available wall space, it doubles as an eccentric, intimate art gallery.

A full English at **Speedy's Sandwich Bar & Cafe** just south of the street (bonus points for visiting when the BBC is filming 'Sherlock' next door).

The spicy deep-fried chicken burger at no-frills **Simply Fried Chicken** is worth crossing the city for.

Do this

Unleash your competitive streak at the Tuesday pub quiz at **The Exmouth Arms**, nearby. Then nurse your ignorance with crab fries and a craft beer (or two).

Catch a show at *Come as You Are*, a three-week festival exploring gender identity at **Camden People's Theatre**. This grassroots arts venue has been going strong for 23 years.

Sharpen your Scrabble skills at **The Crown & Anchor** pub on a Sunday afternoon.

Discover the secrets of the trade at **The Magic Circle** museum and theatre, two minutes away.

Buy this

Cardamom and chilli powder from the **Indian Spice Shop**, a family-run institution that's traded on Drummond Street for 21 years.

Pretty much any Indian dessert you can think of at the street's two sweet emporia: **Ambala** or the 38-year-old **Gupta**. These places get seriously crowded every year before Eid and Diwali. ■

Drink this

A mango lassi at **Diwana Bhel Poori House**. If only all decisions were as easy as 'salty or sweet?'.

A pint of one of **The Bree Louise's** 23 award-winning real ales. This old-school boozer, located just off the street, is the undisputed hub of the local community. In 2016, it scooped Camra Pub of the Year for the third time.

Eat this

The award-winning steak-and-kidney pie after your pint at **The Bree Louise**.

Sizzling seekh kebabs at traditional tandoori grill house **Raavi Kebab**: a fave among Pakistani expats.



RAVI SHANKAR/AMBALA-ANDY PABSONS

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