

# ion dining out

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## Make it Tandoori Time[s]

Bored with the contents of my fridge (wilted celery and an old jar of mustard), I decided that I could treat myself to dinner at a restaurant. I didn't want anything I was capable of cooking myself. And really: if you're going to go out to eat, shouldn't part of the fun be trying something you normally wouldn't prepare for yourself? So I opted to check out the new Eastern Indian restaurant, Tandoori Times, in Scottsdale.

Don't be fooled by the exterior. The interior is spacious, warm, and inviting. Patrons can sit comfortably inside at a booth or a table or enjoy the afternoon sun on their sizable patio. If you aren't satisfied with your company's conversation, you can take a breather and look at the authentic garments and jewelry offered near the door. An added bonus to this dining set-up is that patrons can observe the chef at work, knowing that he is devoting time and care to each dish prepared.

I started out with plain *naan*, a leavened bread, and sampled their different sauces and lemon-jalapeno chutney. To neutralize this explosion of spice, I buffered each bite with a sip of my sweet Indian tea and a taste of *raita*, a yogurt dish with cucumber, potato, and mint. The *naan* and sauces were so enjoyable, I would have been satisfied eating only that for the remainder of my meal.

I next tried their *Tandoori Paneer Wrap*. Paneer is a homemade cheese, which was cubed and mixed with cucumber, lettuce, tomato, onion, and a mint chutney sauce served on naan bread. A similar dish might be the Greek Gyro, and the option of getting lamb rather than Paneer was available. But I like cheese. A lot. And this dish did not disappoint.



For those of you who like lamb, I tried the *Seekh Kabob Lamb* dish, which is finely minced lamb marinated with a combination of fresh ground herbs and spices, wrapped on a skewer and grilled. I balanced this dish with the vegetarian *Bengun Bhartha*, which is essentially a sauce of baked jumbo eggplant cooked with red onions, ginger, garlic, and vine-ripened tomatoes. Both were pleasant and texturally fascinating.

"What about dessert?" you sugar-fiends are screaming. Tandoori

Times offers two dishes – *kheer*, a rice pudding cooked in milk with sugar, saffron, honey, almonds, and raisins – and *gulab jamun*, soft dumplings made of milk and dipped in cardamom and saffron-based sugar syrup. Both are delicious and a perfect compliment to the meal.

If you're in Scottsdale and your tastebuds are begging you for something other than a cheeseburger or the same tired chicken dish, make sure to drop into Tandoori Times.

*Tandoori Times is currently located at 6810 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Scottsdale on the Northeast corner of 68<sup>th</sup> St & Indian School, just west of Anderson's 5<sup>th</sup> Estate. Open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner. By the middle of February, they will have their liquor license but they currently serve complimentary Indian Tea or your choice of soda or Mango Lassi (which is a mango smoothie). Within the year, they are anticipating opening three additional locations although time and space are not currently known.*

For more information, call 480-794-1404 or check out their website at [www.tandooritimes.com](http://www.tandooritimes.com).