

8 of the Most Exciting Restaurants in America



Indian Accent

Opened: February 2016

Location: New York City

Owner: Chef Manish Mehrotra

Average Check: \$125

Description: A fine-dining establishment in midtown Manhattan introduces guests to a new kind of Indian cuisine.

If you ask Chef Manish Mehrotra, Indian cuisine has stalled—and not just at American restaurants. Even in his native India, flavors and techniques that have long been heralded in the home have not moved beyond residences to restaurants.

In 2009, Mehrotra opened Indian Accent in New Delhi, bringing forth home-cooked flavors in a fine-dining setting. By all metrics it has been an enormous success: Last year it was the only restaurant in India to make The World's 50 Best Restaurants list;

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it has also been named the No. 1 restaurant on the subcontinent by TripAdvisor three years and counting.

“What we did eight years back was completely different—for India itself, it was completely different,” Mehrotra says. While guests in New Delhi had not encountered such foods in restaurants, most diners outside India had never been even exposed to them. “As a chef, I really want to change that, and I really want to tell people that India isn’t all chicken tikka masala. Indian cuisine is quite refined. We have dishes for every palate in the world.”

The second location of Indian Accent (and the first outside of India) opened last February in New York City. As with the original restaurant, it highlights spices and techniques that hitherto were found only at home. Rather than flame-spitting kebabs, Mehrotra opts to braise meats in the oven; his kitchen staff also use a karahi (similar to a wok) to sauté spice mixes. Popular dishes include potato sphere chaat served with pea mash, as well as sweet pickled ribs with sundried mango and onion seeds.

The New York location also has a wider selection of seasonal foods and proteins like beef, lamb, and shellfish. Scallops are not a traditional Indian food, but the chef says they pair well with Indian spices, and when they’re in season, he’ll serve them in a cauliflower and saffron soup. Soft-shell crab is another addition to the Manhattan location. Although the dish (crab claws with a pepper-garlic butter and cauliflower) was inspired by western Indian fare, Mehrotra says it can be more difficult to source in India.

[Read more about Indian Accent here.](#)