

# Restaurant Review:

## *Spice*

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A new restaurant has come to Newtown Square and it is well worth the trip from Swarthmore.

Spice is a warm, inviting Indian/Thai fusion restaurant, offering patrons a choice of comfortable booths and tables. The noise level does not intrude upon conversation or comfort — even when busy, as it was on a recent Saturday night. Fabric-covered walls and wood partitions contribute to its attractive environment, and the service is attentive and knowledgeable.

We enjoyed all of our selections from the Indian portion of the menu. There were familiar favorite dishes, but many new tastes to discover as well. Appetizers were a highlight of the meal and included *tangi*, a delectable fried eggplant dish seasoned with tamarind and cilantro; delicious vegetarian *samosas* that were crisp and not greasy; and *ragara*, fried potato patties with chick peas that were very tasty. *Som tum* salad, our only Thai dish, was a refreshing departure from the more intense Indian flavors. We so thoroughly enjoyed our appetizers, we had high hopes for our entrees.

Each one was uniquely spiced and well presented. The traditional copper dishes sat on attractive rectangular plates and were accompanied by a pyramid of white rice and shredded carrot garnish. The chicken *chettinadu*, topped with fresh curry leaves, was mild and fragrant. The *chennai erra kozhanbu* featured shrimp in a fiery blend of tomato, curry and chilies and was voted the favorite by our party of four. The vegetable *biryani*, one

of the most flavorful and spicy we have encountered, was accompanied by an excellent rendition of *raita* [a mild yogurt/cucumber mixture]. Lamb *pasanda*, small chunks of marinated lamb in a creamy cashew sauce, met with slightly mixed reviews due to its sweetness. The bread basket was plentiful and delicious. Portions were ample, and the dinner was conducive to sharing (with leftovers).

In an effort to provide a full-service review, we selflessly tried two desserts recommended by our waiter. *Khulfi*, an Indian ice cream, was creamy, almond- and cardamom-flavored, and a universal favorite. The fresh mango slices, on the other hand, were complemented by the chewy texture of sweet, sticky rice that appealed to some of us and not to others.

Spice is conveniently located adjacent to the Regal Edgmont movie theater. The management told us that when a new film premieres, the restaurant is thronged with pre- and post-movie diners. However, Spice seems to be bustling on other nights as well. We recommend that on weekend nights, you make a reservation. By the way, Spice is BYOB.

This restaurant is a winner, offering classic dishes with a twist, and a large, innovative menu that invites return visits.

*Spice, located at 4843 West Chester Pike in Newtown Square (610) 356-5262, is not affiliated in any way with the Indian restaurant of the same name in Philadelphia.*