

CUISINE

AN AUTHENTIC TASTE OF INDIA

Laziz Indian Cuisine

By Aaron R. Fodiman and Margaret Word Burnside
Photography by Noraa

THERE WAS A time when ethnic restaurants were frequented primarily by those who shared their heritage or had visited the far-away lands where that particular style of cooking developed. Fortunately, most people have expanded their dining options to include the wonderful tastes and aromas that originated in what is often considered to be one of the most exotic corners of the world. One of the many cuisines that has captured the imagination of the dining public is Indian, with its tandoori, chutney and curry.

Whether or not you are already a fan of this special style of cooking, you will want to try Laziz in the Countryside area of Clearwater. This intimate establishment is refined and filled with the authentic sensations of this ancient civilization that has remained true to its origins and principles of peace.

Laziz serves vegetarian and non-vegetarian items that will satisfy any diet. To begin, you'll want to try deep-fried patties that are stuffed with potatoes, peas and Indian spices called *samosas*. There are other appetizers, as well, and the best way to try them is on one of their combination platters.

Tandoori specials include chicken, lamb, shrimp and fish items and a combination of these dishes, all of which are served with *Basmati* rice. There are fourteen



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vegetable entrées that range from a classic *Baingan Bharta* of a whole baked eggplant to an *Aloo Gobi* potato and cauliflower dish with cumin seeds and spices. The twelve chicken selections range from a traditional Curry to a *Mughlai* with a touch of yogurt, seasonings, nuts and spices. We particularly enjoyed the Chicken *Madras* that was cooked South Indian style with coconut, roasted ground spices and curry leaves.

If lamb delights your taste buds, you will want to have Lamb *Saag*, which is prepared with spinach in a delicate blend of spices. Each of the six lamb dishes is exciting and different for those who are not familiar with Indian cuisine. The Lamb *Roganjosh* is cooked in a sauce of tomatoes, cream and spices, that is then garnished with cashew nuts and raisins. Or, you may want to try the *Kadahi* Lamb that is done in a cast iron skillet with onions and bell peppers.

They also offer four seafood dishes that can be made with either fish or shrimp, as well as four rice specialties that include chicken, lamb, shrimp or vegetable that are cooked and then tossed with *Basmati* rice.

One of the special treats Indian cuisine offers is their breads. Laziz features nine varieties that vary from the plain *Naan* that is made in a clay oven to *Poori*, which is deep fried, fluffy, whole-wheat bread.

We personally enjoy the *Aloo Paratha* with spiced potatoes baked in and the *Naan* that is made with that wonder of all cuisines - garlic. You will also want to try some of their Mango Chutney, Cucumber *Raita* or a *Kachumber* Salad of chopped tomatoes, cucumbers and onions.

The service is attentive and the décor relaxing. There is a small, but more than adequate wine list, and they offer Indian drinks and desserts as well. Dining here is a treat to both your senses and psyche. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Laziz Authentic Indian Cuisine is located near the intersection of McMullen Booth Road and Enterprise Road in the Countryside area of Clearwater at 2475-J McMullen Booth Road, (727) 797-7541.