

# **Pataka – highly-recommended and had to be tested**

**Author Ian Rankin is said to be a regular customer of Pataka and the restaurant is featured in two of his books, Set In Darkness and Standing In Another Man's Grave.**

I enjoy visiting the Oxford Bar, another of Rankin's Edinburgh haunts, and adding to the attraction was the claim that the Scotland on Sunday newspaper rates Pataka in the top ten of Indian restaurants in Scotland.

The promotional blurb claims the restaurant has been reviewed and highly-recommended by many of the local media and food guides.

These are claims which had to be tested. The restaurant says that they use only the freshest and finest ingredients, and they claim to make authentic Indian cuisine. In we went.

Pataka is situated on Causewayside, only yards from the National Library, that awful building at the traffic lights after motoring down Grange Road from Marchmont.

A divergence from the average from the moment you step over the threshold is, however, a tad overstated.

However, the Charles Rennie Mackintosh interior (a Glasgow-born architect, designer, water colourist and artist) comes as a bit of a shock and makes for a unique appearance.

The carved private wooden booths in the front part of the restaurant are a feature but we had a table in the adjacent

room, The White Room (pictured), with is available for functions. Once again it had Rennie Mackintosh-inspired décor.

We indulged in a selection of tasty starters including chicken and vegetable which included cauliflower and aubergine.

On to the mains. Tamatar Wali Josh was described as a wonderful dish. And you know what, it was.

Tomato, garlic, onions, fennel and mustard seeds was carefully combined with a selection of herbs and spices to make a mouth-watering sauce.

The fusion was the key. Nothing was overpowering and the sweetness of the lamb was allowed to come through. You can also have this dish with chicken or king prawn.

My colleagues also loved their dishes which included lamb pasanda and chicken biryani, a dish with a delicate blend of herbs and spices and served with a vegetable curry.

Diet considerations are catered for and the portion size will satisfy most. My garlic nan was light and delicate and with just the right amount of garlic and coriander.

Others plumped for pilau rice and all enjoyed their meal. So, to the claims. Well, give this one a try. The food is good but not sure about the Rennie Mackintosh décor.

And we visited on a wet and windy, February night, when there were only a handful of other diners. Atmosphere was lacking.

Service was slick, however, and the waiters accommodating. By the way, the restaurant does takeaway with free delivery for orders over £12 within a two-mile radius.

Recommended dishes include mangsho roti (a hot and spicy lamb dish with garlic, ginger, chillies, bay leaves, coriander plus fresh herbs and spices), royal murgha (half spring chicken marinated and roasted in a clay oven and served with a buttery

sauce with onions, garlic, ginger and coriander) and badshahi borisa (king prawns cooked in a spicy sauce with cubed red peppers, onions, chillies, fresh ginger and coriander).

The restaurant is open every day from 5.30pm to 11.30pm and parking is on-street in busy Causewayside.

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