



Vineet Bhatia has carved a space for himself in the Indian food world with his modern touch on the c

Vineet Bhatia once observed in an interview, "In London, there are only two addresses: 10 Downing Street and 10 Lincoln Street." And he's not far off the mark: Bhatia's famous restaurant Rasoi is located at 10 Lincoln Street in Chelsea. Rasoi has been serving unique dishes noted for their delicate spices and balanced flavors since 2004, with a bulging award shelf, plush décor, and some truly gourmet Indian food served in an intimate environment. Bhatia's ability and technique in the kitchen can be seen in dishes like tandoori spice smoked salmon and tamarind and cumin glazed quails. Perhaps this is why he received two Michelin stars: one for Rasoi in London (2006) and the other for Rasoi in Geneva, Switzerland (2009), making Bhatia the first Indian chef to receive the prestigious culinary distinction.

The acclaimed **Indian chef** has established himself as one of the UK's most interesting, inventive, and accomplished Indian chefs, with menus that combine traditional and modern elements. His cooking is never overly spicy, and has unique flavor combinations, and a hint of Bhatia flair. Bhatia has since launched 11 more highly successful restaurants around the world, including locations in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Mauritius, Los Angeles, Russia, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, to name a few. He's also a judge on MasterChef India and the author of two volumes, Rasoi: New Indian Kitchen and My Sweet Kitchen. But did you know that Bhatia wanted to be a pilot at first?

From Mumbai to London to the world

Bhatia was born in 1967 in Bombay, and his upbringing was shaped by the city's many sights, sounds, and smell. Bhatia and his family resided in a neighborhood near the airport. "I didn't have an alarm clock when I was a little child," Bhatia stated in an interview with Haute Living. "I did not need one. The booming engines of the DC-10 that took off from the airfield near our house woke me up every morning at 6:30 a.m." His first love was aviation, and he aspired to be a pilot since he was a child. At the age of 17, he passed the NDA exam but failed the physical, putting his dream of joining the Indian Air Force on hold.

Bhatia is never discouraged and moved on to his next passion: cooking, which he had inherited from his mother. So, on his parents' recommendation, he enrolled in a catering college in Bombay in 1985 while also studying Economics. By 1988, he was hired as a trainee

at The Oberoi Hotel, where he learned all areas of Indian cookery over the course of three years. "One of the best things about growing up in Bombay was the rich culture that surrounded you. It's a melting pot of culinary delights from throughout India's many regions." At the age of 24, he traveled to London to work as Executive Chef at Star of Indian in South Kensington. However, the Indian cuisine he tried in London in the 1990s left him very unsatisfied.

The Bhatia panache

Bhatia believes in constantly evolving his craft and his progressive attitude to Indian food has made him the face of Indian cuisine and [Indian lifestyle](#). Authenticity for him comes through the ingredients he uses. His menus include dishes like spice seared foie gras with wild mushroom naan and fennel-mango chutney salad, grilled sea bass with crisp okra fingers, coconut rice, and dhal sauce. home-smoked lamb rack with lamb jus, apricot-walnut couscous, and blue cheese-lamb tikki, rosemary chicken tikka, chili pipette, and black olive khichdi.

Over the years, he has spread his culinary wings by opening restaurants like Indya by Vineet, Indego, Urban Turban, Safran, and KAMA among others. His wife Rashima works alongside him as co-director at Rasoi and oversees the consultancies abroad, while the family lives in West London.

With their two sons, the pair enjoys traveling. "As a family, we like traveling. We spin the globe once a year to see where we're going. We backpack, in little towns, and in remote corners of countries, whether it's Japan or Mexico. We're not concerned with luxury; I can acquire that whenever I want," he told Time Out Dubai.

Giving back

Through his work, the world-renowned chef also believes in giving back to the community. He climbed the Everest base camp with spatulas and woks in hand to conduct a 3-day pop-up in 2018. It was a fundraiser with the Heart for India Foundation to benefit the girl child and earthquake victims in Nepal.

Bhatia has been bringing Indian food to the attention of the world through his efforts and travels. Bhatia's melange of technique and creativity has been educating the West on the complexities involved in truly authentic Indian flavors for those who thought Indian food was solely about curry or tikka masala. He has certainly put Indian cuisine on the map and that too in a big way.