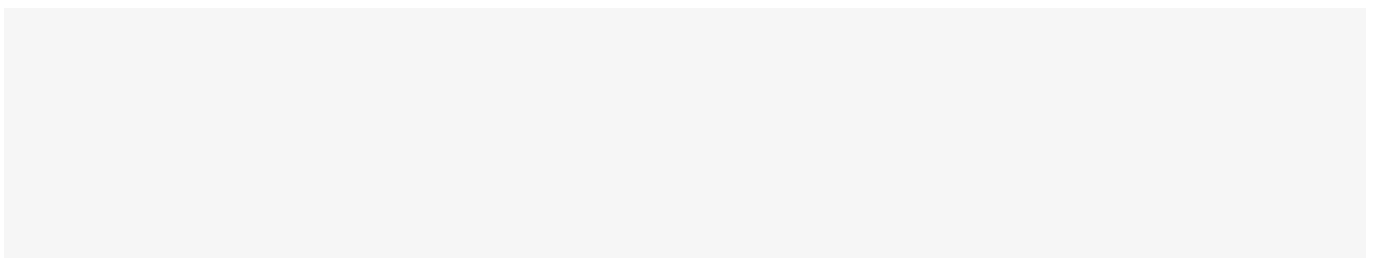


# Leading lights of the curry industry honoured at British Curry Awards

The unsung heroes behind Britain's favourite cuisine were honoured once again at the 12th Annual British Curry Awards on 28th November 2016 at Battersea Evolution, London. Often referred to as the curry industry's 'Oscars', the British Curry Awards 2016 were hosted by comedian and impressionist, Alistair McGowan and welcomed Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York; Chris Grayling, Secretary of State for Transport; celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal; footballer David Seaman; Dancing on Ice star, Frankie Poultney; The Apprentice contestant, Karthik Nagesan; singer Patti Boulaye; actor Colin Salmon; broadcaster and journalist Rageh Omar; TV personalities Lizzie Cundy, Tim Vincent, Saira Khan and Pat Sharp; Members of Parliament, Ann Main, Sharon Hodgson, James Cleverly, Lord Kamlesh Patel and Alex Chalk; and Bangladeshi High Commissioner, MD, Nazmul Quanine, among others.

Recognising the value of the curry industry on life in Britain, Prime Minister, Theresa May said via video message, *"this evening is a showcase for the talent, hard work and entrepreneurial spirit of Britain's curry houses. Today, there are around 10,000 restaurants employing 100,000 staff, with an annual turnover of £4.3 billion. This represents a Great British success story, a terrific industry which creates jobs, promotes growth, contributes to the UK economy and raises monies for charities across Britain and around the world."*





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As the foremost celebration of the UK curry industry's achievements, the British Curry Awards have become a key fixture on the hospitality industry's calendar. This year, 206,371 public nominations were received via post, app and online, resulting in the nomination of 2,153 restaurants eligible for entry into the competition. As well as recognising industry talent and quality, the British Curry Awards highlighted the growing challenges faced by the curry business. It is estimated that 90 per cent of UK curry restaurants are currently affected by a crippling shortage of chefs, which is causing an average of two curry restaurant closures each week.

Addressing the challenges the curry industry is facing, British Curry Awards founder, restaurateur and editor of trade publication, Spice Business, Enam Ali MBE, said at the event, *"So much has happened since last year and it is difficult to know where to start. I think most of the people in this country agree that the greatest concern has been Brexit. For us, the unfair difference in UK immigration policy between*

*Europeans and British Commonwealth citizens is why the Curry Industry supported Brexit. The industry had to support vote Leave because we needed a fairer system assured for Britain by people like Boris Johnson, Priti Patel and others. If "Brexit means Brexit", we must work together to make Britain stronger and more open for business with the rest of the world."*

*"Now, I hope the present government will rectify this situation by making Britain an example of fairness through equality. This may sound very pro-immigration but, in fact, I believe that the control of immigration for any country is very important. At least I am privileged that the present government seems willing to help us find a pragmatic solution to the current industry crisis."*

## **British Curry Awards 2016 winners**

Newcomer of the Year: Darbaar, London

Best Spice Restaurant in London Outer & Suburbs: Shampam Welling, Kent

Best Spice Restaurant in South West: Prithvi, Cheltenham

Best Spice Restaurant in North East: Aakash Restaurant, Cleckheaton

Best Spice Restaurant in Central London & City: Cinnamon Club, Westminster

Best Spice Restaurant in Scotland: Karma, Whitburn

Best Spice Restaurant in South East: Maliks, Gerrards Cross

Best Spice Restaurant in North West: Blue Tiffin, Oldham

Best Casual Dining: Dishoom, Covent Garden

Best Spice Restaurant in Midlands: Asha's Indian Bar & Restaurant, Birmingham

Best Spice Restaurant in Wales: Sheesh Mahal, Llanelli

Best Takeaway: Chillie Pickle, Brighton

Additionally, the Special Recognition Award honoured the late Lord Ghulam Noon