

# A RESTAURANT IN A BOX

NECESSITY, AS THEY SAY, IS THE MOTHER OF INVENTION. IT'S ALSO THE PUSH BEHIND A SURGE IN RECIPE BOXES ACROSS THE UK. CHOOSE YOUR CUISINE, DON YOUR APRON, AND GET READY TO DISH UP A RESTAURANT-QUALITY MEAL AT HOME. GISELLE WHITEAKER TASTE TESTS SPICEBOX.



It's with no small amount of excitement that I carve open the box delivered to my door on a rainy Friday evening. Inside is a treasure trove of ingredients, everything I need to whip up a meal that will transport my boyfriend and I to North East London's favourite neighbourhood curry house, SpiceBox.

SpiceBox only recently launched nationwide deliveries of their family curry night recipe boxes, filled with all of the ingredients needed to make a tikka masala or cashew and coconut korma family feast. Friday-night curry is on the cards at my house. It's a much-needed treat. It's 100% plant-based, too, so it comes without the guilt.

A plethora of fresh vegetables is neatly nestled inside the box. There's an entire cauliflower, two vibrant-green peppers, two red onions, a fistful of green beans, a lemon and a bunch of fresh coriander. A plastic cup with a lid holds the organic basmati rice and there's a small bag with some bay leaves. There are two tins: coconut milk and kidney beans. Inside a large brown-paper bag there are two SpiceBox naans, just waiting to be warmed. One pouch contains tarka dhal, another houses the tikka masala sauce. I dip my finger into the date and tamarind chutney, pleased with its piquancy. It's to go with the pea kachori and samosas. This feels a bit like Christmas.





Compared with the weight of the goods inside the box, the recipe card looks deceptively simple. There are only six steps until these disparate ingredients become a meal. Admittedly, each step contains a few directions, but they're simple enough that even I might not mess this up.

The rice is first to go on and then the cauliflower goes into the oven, with the samosas and kachori following shortly afterwards. From here, it's a matter of progressing through each of the steps, flitting back and forth between the pans on the go. Before long, I have fluffy rice in a pan, ready to be served, a rich tikka masala sauce bubbling on the burner, waiting for the addition of the roasted cauliflower and green beans, and a pot of yellow dhal simmering away.

As I pop the naans in the oven to warm, I find I'm humming to myself. Cooking has never been this easy. I stir the coconut milk through the tikka masala and squeeze in some lemon juice, before emptying it into a casserole dish for serving. A quick taste test of the dhal leaves me wanting more, so I transfer it into a bowl, ready to go. The still-warm rice goes into another bowl and then it's time for the naan, samosas and kachori to make their way to the table.

My boyfriend has been working upstairs. When he sees the feast laid out, his eyes bulge. "Welcome to my restaurant," I say, directing him to take a seat.

At the end of our feast, there is food to spare – it feeds from four to six people after all. We eat the

leftovers for the remainder of the week, never tiring of the intense flavours.

Even when the restaurants have reopened, SpiceBox will be on our home-cooking menu. Gazing into a crystal ball, I see a Friday-night korma in my future. ■

#### INFO

Each SpiceBox @ Home curry night box generously feeds four people and is priced at £39.75 per box. £2.50 from all boxes sold is given straight to SpiceBox's charity partner, The Woodland Trust. To order, see [www.eatspicebox.co.uk](http://www.eatspicebox.co.uk)

# OTHER HOME DELIVERY BOXES TO TRY:

## CHEFLY



**C**hefly Founder James Howland is the owner of Brixton, London restaurant Tiger & Pig, so he knows a thing or two about food. Chefly delivers restaurant-quality, 'real' ready meals to doorsteps nationwide and is focused on changing the perception that a quick and easy meal can't be tasty and healthy. Each of the chef-curated 15+ ready-to-eat dishes is made with real ingredients and the ever-changing menu offers a balanced source of protein, grains and greens, including favourites like flame-grilled tandoori chicken, oven-baked miso salmon and grilled Angus steak. Best of all, they are ready to eat in just three minutes. ■

[www.eatchefly.com](http://www.eatchefly.com)



## WRIGHT BROTHERS AT HOME



**W**right Brothers has five seafood restaurants across London and is a trusted wholesaler to many of the capital's top chefs. In response to restaurants closing and fishermen seeing their livelihoods threatened, Wright Brothers is now offering home delivery. The Wright Brothers At Home range comprises fresh, smoked and cured fish; oven-ready whole fish to share; cooked crab and lobster; oysters; and frozen prawns and seafood. Items can be ordered individually or in set boxes, which are also available by subscription. Everything is delivered either ready-to-eat or ready-to-cook, and there are plenty of inspiring recipes from Wright Bros' restaurant chefs on the website. ■

[shop.thewrightbrothers.co.uk](http://shop.thewrightbrothers.co.uk)



## NONNA TONDA



**A**nother restaurant turning to delivery boxes is Nonna Tonda. Having to close their pasta restaurant in London, owners James and Rebecca decided to deliver their pasta to homes across the country instead. Made each morning and delivered the same day, their pasta is the freshest around. Each box includes fresh pasta, a sauce and fresh parmesan and can be prepared and ready to eat in under five minutes. That's five minutes well spent – the fresh pasta is delectable. You do not want to pass up the beef shin and savoy cabbage ravioli, although the fusilli with rocket pesto, green beans and Cornish new potatoes is also a delight. ■

[nonnatonda.co.uk](http://nonnatonda.co.uk)

