TALLI QUEEN, A NEW PUB AND DINING ROOM FROM AVINASH SHASHIDHARA, NOW OPEN IN SHEPHERD'S BUSH





Talli Queen, a new neighbourhood pub and dining room from chef-owner Avi Shashidhara, officially opened its doors in Shepherd's Bush on 27 October, bringing together the spirit of a London local with India's diverse drinking and dining traditions. Occupying the former Queen Adelaide on Uxbridge Road, the 120-year-old building accommodates around 120 guests across a wraparound central bar, open kitchen, dining room and terrace.

For Shashidhara, whose Fitzrovia restaurant Pahli Hill was awarded a Michelin Bib Gourmand within its first year of trading and who won the starter course on Great British Menu in 2023, Talli Queen is a deeply personal project. Having spent almost two decades cooking in London, including ten years at The River Cafe, he continues to travel regularly across India. These trips have shaped both his cooking and the vision for Talli Queen, taking inspiration from Kerala's toddy shops, Bangalore's neighbourhood pubs and bars, the military canteens of southern India and the chai stalls and kebab joints of Lucknow, where eating and drinking have always gone hand in hand. The pub's name reflects that same idea, combining the Hindi word talli, meaning tipsy, with the Queen Adelaide, known simply as 'The Queen' by generations of Shepherd's Bush locals. Together, they capture everything the pub sets out to be. Working alongside Shashidhara is

Operations Director James McLean, who brings extensive experience from award-winning British pubs, including The Oarsman in Marlow.

Centred around a custom charcoal grill and tandoor, the menu is designed to be ordered freely rather than in courses, it opens with bar snacks including *Spicy Goat Sausages* with onion salad, mint and chutney; *Military Canteen Fried Chicken Kebab* with ginger, garlic & chilli and *Toddy Shop Fried Fish* with crispy curry leaf. Small plates include Shashidhara's Great British Menu award winning *Papadi chaat* alongside *Mangalore Buns with Scottish Crab Sukkah* and offal forward *Calf's Liver & Mushroom Pepper Fry*.

Then the tandoor and grill takes over with main courses including *Military Canteen Beef Meatballs* with coriander, bird eye chilli, stone flower & cassia bark; *Kerala Duck Curry* with coconut, pearl onions, fennel seeds & coconut and slow cooked fragrant *Lucknowi Goat Biryani* with whole spices, khewda, saffron basmati rice & cucumber raita. All served alongside a selection of sides including a *Dal Of The Day*, *Avi's Nool Parotta* and *Steamed Jeera Sambar Rice.*

The Sunday lunch menu sees an Indian take on the great British pub tradition, with *Slow Cooked Mutton Biryani* and large cuts from the charcoal grill and tandoor served at the table to share, including *Pork Tomahawk with naga chilli and ginger sauce* and *Kerala Syrian Christian Beef Rib* on the bone. Billecart Salmon poured from magnums will add a sense of occasion, while a *Lime Pickle Bloody Mahua* and *Avi's Hangover Chicken Soup*, a slow cooked chicken broth with lentils, black pepper, toasted cumin, coriander stalks, tamarind and curry leaves, will help soothe any lingering sore heads. Seasonal British produce and carefully sourced Indian ingredients will underpin the menu, which will evolve throughout the year.

The drinks offering is equally central to Talli Queen, with 18 draught lines, including cask ales and stout, alongside approachable wines from around the world curated by Master of Wine John Hoskins. A concise cocktail list complements a selection of Indian spirits, including the rarely seen Mahua, distilled from the flower of the same name. This celebration of drinking culture is reflected in the pub's logo, which depicts Varuni, the Hindu goddess of alcoholic beverages and intoxication, rising from the water clutching a goblet of wine.

The interiors celebrate the building's long history through a sympathetic restoration of its original wood panelling, fireplaces, skylights and large arched windows, interspersed with influences from across India. A striking obsidian green bar contrasts with warm pink panelled walls inspired by southern India, while bronze taps, Red Levanto marble from Rajasthan and 'Cognac Old English Leather' banquettes add to the rich palette. Reclaimed British pub furniture sits alongside pieces sourced from Jodhpur and long drinking benches from Rajasthan. Large wooden doors allow the space to be divided into private dining areas, while the arched windows bring in ample natural light and a real fireplace provides warmth in the colder months. Outside, a south facing terrace framed by jasmine offers space for drinking and dining throughout the day.

The team have been documenting the restoration on their YouTube channel, alongside dish development and local tours of Shepherd's Bush Market.

"The inspiration for Talli Queen comes from the places I love spending time in across India," says Shashidhara. *"Toddy shops, military canteens and neighbourhood bars are where eating and drinking naturally go hand in hand, and where some of the country's most memorable food is found. We've taken that spirit and brought it into a proper London pub. Somewhere people can drop in for a pint, stay for dinner, bring the family on a Sunday or simply spend an afternoon with friends. That's exactly the sort of place I've always wanted to create."*

Address: 412 Uxbridge Road, London W12 0NR
Nearest Station: Shepherd's Bush Market (Circle and Hammersmith & City)
Opening Hours

Food: Tuesday-Saturday, 12pm-3pm & 5pm-10pm | Sunday, 11:30am-9pm | Closed Monday
Drinks: Tuesday-Saturday, 12pm-11pm | Sunday, 12pm-9pm | Closed Monday

Instagram: @thetalliqueen | @avishashidhara
Website: https://thetalliqueen.co.uk/

For more information or assets please contact talliqueen@crabcommunications.com

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About Avinash Shashidhara

London-based chef Avinash (Avi) Shashidhara is the co-founder and chef behind Talli Queen. His career has included time at Claude Bosi's two Michelin-starred Hibiscus before spending ten years at the iconic River Cafe. He later went on to lead the kitchen at Fitzrovia's Pahli Hill, earning the restaurant a Michelin Bib Gourmand, before winning the starter course on BBC's Great British Menu in 2023. Drawing on regular travels across India, where much of his family live, Avi's cooking celebrates regional Indian traditions through exceptional British produce and contemporary techniques.