

Indian



BENARES

AMAYA

**Halkin Arcade,
Motcomb Street, SW1X
8JT (020 7823 1166)**

Amaya is glamour central, a Belgravia-located Indian restaurant (albeit in a modern precinct) that seems to be floating on a sea of candles. Different service stations are dotted around the room, so dinner might come from either the sigri grill, a tawa skillet or perhaps the tandoor clay oven. The service does occasionally slacken a little and there can sometimes be long (or too short) intervals between one course and the next but, overall, Amaya is a winner that has attracted a strong A-list following, including Gwyneth Paltrow and the William J Clintons. **£££** *Lunch and dinner daily.*

BENARES

**12a Berkeley Square
House, W1J 6BS
(020 7629 8886)**

Saturday night at Benares can be something of a strappy-sandals affair – even in midwinter – and is therefore best avoided, but otherwise this is a terrific spot. You enter via a staircase fit for a Mughul; upstairs, the lighting is subdued and the mood very sexy. A white, wave-like textured wall relaxes you while the sheer inventiveness of Atul Kochhar's cooking and freshness of the produce distinguish his cuisine and have earned a Michelin star for the celeb chef. In July of last year, Kochhar opened his second restaurant, Vatika, at Wickham Vineyard in Hampshire. **££££** *Lunch and dinner daily.*

CHUTNEY MARY

**535 King's Road, SW10
0SZ (020 7351 3113)**

What do Shakira Caine, Gordon Ramsay and George Michael have in common? OK, don't answer that. The answer we're after is Chutney Mary – they're all fans. It claims to be London's most romantic Indian restaurant and it isn't far off the mark. Coruscating crystals and candles light the dining room and conservatory and the food is extremely refined ('No more brown food on the plate,' is the mantra of co-owner Namita Panjabi). Chutney Mary is a very swish, smart restaurant that has for a long time been upping the ante for Indian food in London. **£££** *Lunch Sat–Sun; dinner daily.*

£ = under £25

££ = £25–£50

£££ = £50–£75

££££ = £75–£100

£££££ = £100+



**Champagne
Louis Roederer
served here**