

Mrs  
Mr & Mistress Alan Tam  
He secretly marries No. 2?

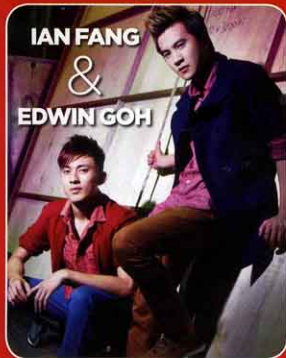


Can I help  
**Chew?**  
'Auntie Lucy'  
takes orders...  
& serves her/his  
famous friends



8  
DAYS

Arrested  
*development*



IAN FANG  
&  
EDWIN GOH

If we told you these  
On the Fringe **bad boys**  
have **been in jail**,  
would you still  
love them?

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✈ LONDON EXCLUSIVE!

DOUBLE  
OH NO

English, Johnny English,  
is back to (gulp)  
save the world

PPS 1284/06/2012 (022761)



\$2.00 (INCL. GST) RM4.90

N° 1091  
SEPT 15, 2011

# Zigzag Chow

They both share similar-sounding names, but **ZAFFRON** offers toothsome Indian bites in a chic setting while **ZEFFIR** serves bucolic Russian eats in a garish dining room.



## Zaffron Kitchen

135/137 EAST COAST RD. TEL: 6440-6786. CLOSED MON

**WHAT:** Steel chairs in bright orange, a Mooool Dear Ingo spider lamp and raw cement floor accented with retro-chic tiles. If this is *Japantify* and your guess is a French restaurant housed in a hip hotel in Little India, you are wrong. This is a six-week old Indian restaurant in Katong — Zaffron Kitchen. The 96-seater, operated by the people behind the Prata Wala chain, is probably the hippest Indian eatery



TANDOORI MIXED GRILL

we've come across (think waitresses in aprons that say "The devil eats prata"). It oozes an irresistible, almost-Melburnian casual cool.

**THE FOOD:** Thankfully, it's not all style and no substance. Head chef Sheikh Asabullah from Kolkata and his team — all from different parts of India — fires up the open kitchen to create an expansive spread ranging from local favourites like murtabak, to South and North Indian classics, including a few vegan options. There is also a selection of modern cafe-style fare such as an enjoyable fish tikka naan wrap with fries. The traditional dishes here as well. Hits include a platter of **Tandoori Mixed Grill** (\$22),

comprising moist, well-marinated chunks of chicken, dory and seekh mutton kebab. While the dory was a little on the soft side, we were taken by the creamy, well-balanced flavours of the malai chicken tikka, marinated with yoghurt, paneer and coriander. The health-conscious will be glad that the chefs here don't douse their food with ghee — you won't see a pool of oil on your plate post-meal. So while the **Dum Chicken Biryani** (\$10) is tasty enough, a could do with a bigger hit of, um, ghee. Alternatively, opt for a chewy, lightly flavoured **Dhania Paratha** (\$4) made from wheat flour. To calm your tummy, end off with a **Moong Dal Halwa** (\$9), milky, warm lentil pudding served with a generous dollop of Ben & Jerry's vanilla ice cream.

**VERDICT:** ★★★★★. Homely flavours served with a touch of style. Easy on the palate — and on the eyes.

DUM CHICKEN BIRYANI



## Zeffir

70 DUNLOP ST. TEL: 6396-0818. OPEN FOR DINNER ONLY TUE. TO FRI & LUNCH & DINNER ON WEEKENDS. CLOSED MON.

Russia is famous for its spices and vodka, but its food remains a mystery to many in Singapore. One-month-old Zeffir, a tiny, family-run Russian-Uzbek diner on Dunlop Street, hopes to educate us a bit. Stepping into this eatery is like stepping back in time to the psychedelic '70s — or a restaurant in Bora's village. Cue

garish red-and-white motif wallpaper, Russian soap operas on the telly and a grumpy Russian uncle reading the newspaper on the couch. Zeffir is set up by a Singaporean former pub owner, Patrick Wang, 40, whose wife is Russian. "We don't cook to suit local tastes; the food here is 100 per cent Russian. You either like it, or don't like it. But it's very authentic; lah," he says. Warning: the Russian chef and waitress don't speak much English, so be prepared to get by with sign language. Here's what we tried.

### ↗ VARENIKI, \$12.50

Cold Russian-style dumplings served with sour cream. Under the dim lighting, the dough looked grey. Thankfully, it tastes a lot better than it looks. Soft and chewy, the dumpling skins envelope parcels of mashed potato, which went nicely with the tart cream.

### CHICKEN ZEFFIR, \$11.80

Tough, dry chicken breast wrapped around layers of spinach and cheese and doused in a tomato-based sauce. Not good.

### MIMOZA SALAD, \$9.50

The egg mayo is comfastically chilled and creamy... until the fishy taste of sardine hits you. And lingers.



**VERDICT:** ★★★★★. The folks here are warm and friendly, but let's just say the food in this Russian eatery is an acquired taste. **B**