



NAWABI TREATS

In Lucknow, there's a certain *tehzeeb* reserved even for meals. In this City of Nawabs, rushed takeaway affairs aren't tolerated. Instead, one is required to sit down and savour each bite. Here are five must-visit spots in the city that serve meals fit for kings.

Text | **ANANYA BAHL**



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Legend has it that the Galauti Kebab was first prepared by the head chef of a Lucknowi Nawab who could eat only soft foods because of his tooth ailments. These soft, melt-in-your-mouth, and lightly-spiced meat patties did not require the Nawab to exert any effort in chewing them. Such were the indulgences of the Nawabs of Lucknow—those that we relish even to this day! Of late, the city has seen a spurt in the number of modern restaurants and concept cafes. While you're deciding which one to pick, rest assured that all of Lucknow's eateries hearken back to the principle behind the famed Galauti Kebab: the only effort you have to put in is to show up and enjoy!

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: At L-14, an array of dishes like stir-fried noodles, desi kebabs, fragrant Lucknowi biryani, and dumplings offers much gastronomic delight. Inset: The galauti kebab-Eggs Benedict makes for a tasty fusion of Indian and English influences.



L-14

Perched on the 14th floor of the Renaissance Lucknow Hotel, L-14 is a contemporary all-day dining restaurant that exudes a chic and easy-going vibe. Full-length glass windows ensure you're treated to not just the food on your plate but also sweeping views of the River Gomti. This is one of the few spots in the city that consistently serves up buffets on weekdays. Salads, continental dishes, kebabs, pan-Asian fare, live counters, and an array of desserts from around the world vie for your attention. What's more: there are thematic brunches organized every now and then, which will suit families.

Come here for: Check out Executive Chef Balvinder's version of the *warqi paratha*. Doused in honey and his secret blend of flavoursome toppings, it is multiple layers of goodness. Also, the creative Eggs Benedict with Galauti Kebab—who would imagine that *desi masalas* and *Hollandaise Sauce* were a match made in Heaven?



CAPPUCCINO BLAST

At the upmarket Mall Avenue in Lucknow, you've entered a picture-perfect complex comprising multiple establishments: Cappuccino Blast (the café), Ultraviolet (meant for gourmet dining), Buttercup Bungalow (a cake and tea room), and Dreams (the gift store). If you want to mingle with Lucknow's young hipster crowd, then this is the place to be. Enchiladas, quesadillas, cheesy fries, chicken wings, brownies, fruit trifle puddings, juices, fresh coffee and lots more await you at this spot. Make sure to sit outside like the rest of the cool gang.

Come here for: In addition to bite-sized tea-time treats, the place offers several Instagram-worthy spots that are sure to grab you many likes and followers.



Neeti Malik; Karan Lakhmani



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: At Cappuccino Blast, waffles are a speciality; the decor of the place is highly Instagram-worthy; strawberry iced tea sprinkled with mint leaves; the ice cafe mocha. At The Deli, blueberry cupcakes, dark chocolate ganache-topped chocolate cupcakes and the baba au rum make for sweet treats. Inset: The white chocolate pistachio pudding is pure nirvana.

THE DELI

Planning a date at a fancy coffee place? Look no further than The Deli, which is located in the Novotel Lucknow Gomti Nagar Hotel. It is famous for its wide collection of bakery items that address your cravings for both sweet and savoury stuff. Cakes, pastries, breads, cookies, and croissants leave you spoiled for choice. When you visit, make sure to sample the various teas that are sourced from different estates around the world.

Come here for: Whether a relaxed office meeting or a first date, The Deli has you sorted.



Images courtesy The Deli



ROYAL CAFÉ

In Lucknow, even chaat is served with panache. Case in point: the city's fabled Basket Chaat. Royal Café in Hazratganj is unmissable for anyone who wants to sample true-blue street-style food in the city. It's just that instead of actually being on the street, you will be seated in a cozy restaurant. Several celebrities have sampled its tasty charms. The Basket Chaat, a combination of yogurt, potatoes, dahi vadas, and sweet-sour sauces in a basket made of fried potato, is too large a serving for one, so make sure to take a partner along.

Come here for: Do not miss the masala chai that's served in a traditional kulhad.



Images by Karan Lakhmani



SKY BAR

Being on top of the tallest hotel in Lucknow has its perks. The Sky Bar, located on the 16th floor of the Renaissance Lucknow Hotel, is a swanky outlet. This place offers live music; grab a drink with appetizers and kebabs, and you're set for an evening under the sky. Who knows, you may encounter an old soul, who decodes the ethos of this culturally and historically rich city.

Come here for: If you're going to pop the question to your significant other in Lucknow, there's no other place to do it than right here!



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
At Royal Cafe, the basket chaat, loaded with yoghurt, potatoes and chutneys, is served in a 'basket' made of fried potatoes.
At Sky Bar, the rooftop overlooks Lucknow city, piping-hot paneer tikka; seekh kebabs; chicken tandoori.

Images by Karan Lakhmani