

## EATING OUT

British restaurants love American customers. This is because the customary tip in the U.S. is around twice what it is in the U.K. This in turn is because Americans are used to paying for a truly exemplary level of service from restaurant employees who have seen the actual menu before, can remember a list of more than two things and do not hate everyone. Americans dining in the U.K. must console themselves with this financial saving while they stand at the bar waiting to order food, try to find someone who will explain where the loo is or wander aimlessly around the back of the restaurant wondering from where it was they were supposed to collect their own goddamned cutlery.

### British Food

British food is world famous. It's well known throughout the modern world for being bland, uninspiring and poorly prepared. Traditional British dishes consist of a lump of meat, a dollop of potatoes, perhaps some gravy and a carrot. British food is the subsistence food of the fourteenth century, and therefore not so appealing to people who want a romantic expensive meal on Valentine's day that they are not intending keeping in salt over the winter and sharing with the cows.

This isn't to say that there isn't good food in the U.K. Of course there is, just like there is anywhere. There is a lot of excellent French and Italian food in the U.K. There's also a great deal of what the Brits lovingly call "Indian" or "Chinese" food. These are essentially British versions of the food that people eat in India and China, and bear several mixed levels of resemblance to the cuisine of those countries. One very popular British Indian curry, the "Balti," was actually invented in the U.K. and never existed in India. No doubt somebody will open a "British restaurant" in Bangalore selling them.