

## Syrian Christians Community

### Regional Specials - Syrian Christians' December 2024

#### STARTER

##### Sea Bass Varuthathu - £11(n)

Fresh fish fillet marinated with ginger, garlic, turmeric, Tellicherry pepper, panfried and served with a coconut and cashew nut chutney

#### MAINS

##### Chicken Mappas - £14.50

Diced chicken breast and leg meat simmered in a creamy aromatic coconut sauce, with ginger, curry leaves, spices and tomatoes

##### Lamb Shank Oletherachi - £18.50

Diced Welsh lamb shank braised with freshly ground roasted spices, sliced coconut, shallots and green chillies

##### Toor Dal - £8 (V,m)

Yellow dal made with, mustard seeds, curry leaves tamarind and pearl onions

#### DESSERT

##### Kerala Christmas Cake - £6 (v,n,d)

Made with nuts, dry fruits, cinnamon, nutmeg and served with cinnamon custard

V – Vegan, v – vegetarian, n – nuts, m-mustard, d-dairy

All prices inclusive of VAT and exclusive of 12.5% optional service charge. All dishes may contain traces of nuts.

Please inform your server of any food allergies or intolerances

The Christian Community of Kerala (in Southern India) traces back its origin to the advent of St. Thomas, the Apostle to India, who reached the Cranganore Port in AD 52. This community started to grow with the arrival of East Syrian settlers and Persian missionaries in 3rd century AD. It is said that the Christianity flourished here much before it was taken up by Europe.

Coconuts grow in abundance in Kerala and consequently it is widely used in the cooking. Kerala is also one of the major producers of spices such as black pepper, cardamom, cloves and cinnamon. Fish and seafood dishes are very popular because of the region's long coastline, numerous rivers and backwater networks and a strong fishing industry.

Syrian Christians rarely consume dairy products like milk or curd with fish and meats. Instead, they use coconut milk as a substitute in preparations.

They are also expert wine makers and widely consume wine in contrast to their neighbours of other faiths.

Wine is generally prepared weeks in advance for festivals such as Christmas and Easter.

A favourite dish of Kerala Christians is "mappas", or chicken stew. Other dishes include Istu (chicken/any meat stew made with vegetables and potatoes), Fish Fry, Meen Vevichathu (fish in fiery red chili sauce), Meat Thoran (dry curry with shredded coconut) and Oletherachi (dry and spicy beef dish).

