

# Soul food

*Rachel Read* checks out three independent restaurants that serve food straight from the heart.



being spice bombs. Their signature vegetarian Sindhi curry is a perfect example of this; made by continuously stirring roasted besan (gram flour) to create a real depth in flavour, you get a true taste of sour, sweet and heat all in one bite. However, Dining At Home's biggest crowd-pleaser has to be Puja's homemade samosas served with her "ultimate" mint chutney – and trust me, it's called "ultimate" for a reason. Completely addictive, it's impossible to leave without requesting several more jars of the stuff to slather on everything in sight once you're back home!

**Call 9700 4474 or email [puja@diningathome.biz](mailto:puja@diningathome.biz) to book. [www.diningathome.biz](http://www.diningathome.biz)**

## Caribbean cuisine

Having run the ever-popular Mandy's Private Kitchen for eight years, Mandy Kaur recently took the plunge and opened her very own restaurant in Sai Kung, Mandy's Caribbean. British-born and of Punjabi Indian descent, Mandy learned Caribbean cooking after moving to her husband's family home in Trinidad, resulting in the melting pot of culinary influences that go into her food – namely Caribbean and West-Indian cuisine with a hint of fusion thrown in, too. Using traditional recipes from back home, specially imported ingredients and secret spice blends, Mandy's regulars can't get enough of her famous Trinidad goat curry, barbecue jerk chicken skewers, and black rum and fruit cake... plus a cheeky rum cocktail on the side, too.

**24 See Chung Street, Sai Kung. Call 2791 2088 or email [info@caribbeanhk.com](mailto:info@caribbeanhk.com) to book. [www.caribbeanhk.com](http://www.caribbeanhk.com)**

**W**hat comes to mind when you think of the term "soul food"? For me, it means delicious family recipes passed down the generations, cooked with love, care and passion in an atmosphere that feels like home... in short, a world away from the mass-produced chain restaurants we're all so familiar with! So here are a few of my top picks for an authentic eating experience that will nourish your soul.

## Big easy eats

Magnolia was one of the first Hong Kong private kitchens to become everyone's favourite foodie secret back in 2005 (opening in trendy Poho before it became cool!) – and it's still going strong today. Founded by New Orleans born-and-bred Lori Granito after a client from her old restaurant tracked her down desperate to eat her food again, it's one of the only places in Hong Kong where you can feast on authentic New Orleans-style Cajun and Creole cuisine. Lori's recipes have been finely honed over the years and include

some passed down from her mother, like her famous seafood gumbo; other Magnolia favourites include melt-in-your-mouth Cajun barbecue ribs, freshly baked cornbread and homemade Louisiana honey pecan pie, all served family-style. Make sure you bring one hell of an appetite, as this is definite belt-loosening comfort food at its best.

**Shop 5, G/F, 17 Po Yan Street, Sheung Wan. Call 2530 9880 or email [info@go-gourmet.com](mailto:info@go-gourmet.com) to book. [www.magnoliahk.com](http://www.magnoliahk.com).**

## Full of flavour

If you're looking for delicious home-cooked Indian food, Dining At Home should definitely be your next stop. Owner Puja Rajwani serves up traditional Sindhi cuisine (from Sindh in Pakistan, where her family is from) in a cosy and comfortable environment in the Mid-Levels, with the emphasis on flavour rather than heat – meaning all the dishes here are fully-rounded on the taste front rather than just