



LIVE WELL

Kerala takes root in Bengaluru's Koramangala with Kappa Chakka Kandhari

By [Sushmita Sundaram](#)
8 January 2020

This 'hood just got so much hotter (and it isn't just because of all the brooding chettans)



Achieve full Sunday family dinner feels, when you gather loved ones close and frog-march (just like old times!) them to Koramangala, Bengaluru's latest offering, Kappa Chakka Kandhari.

This is not just comfort food for homesick chetas riddled with cough and cold thanks to nippy weather. Instead, we find context free comfort - soothe whatever ails you with the world's most effective medicine, a truly good [meal](#).

We begin our wholesome escapade with a refreshing round of Amma-approved drinks (KCK's wine licence is still stuck in Bengaluru's famed traffic) - a nostalgic lemon goli soda pops and fizzes familiarly and the morum vellam (spiced buttermilk) receives our Punjabi pal's stamp of approval. A burgeoning debate on the subject of repurposing Malayali washing machines for culinary purposes is shelved for the star of the show - Absolute Kandhari arrives, an innocent brew in an unassuming glass. But a sip in, the kandhari (bird's eye chilli) in it blooms in our throats, hitting that perfect sweet-spicy note.



Our appetites whetted, we dig into the kakka erachi - dry roasted Kerala clams, a toddy shop specialty - with gusto. These almost half moon morsels are consumed fast, just in time for the kannan khozi, a fried country chicken whose crisp skin shatters pleasingly on the tongue, revealing the tender meat within.

But this is no time to tarry, as small plate after small plate appears bearing dainty kappa vadas with a homemade beetroot sauce we immediately want three bottles of, fragrant Ramaserry idlis fashioned by a man from Ramaserry brought in for this express purpose, and steamed banana leaf bags of prawns so succulent they seem plucked straight from Kerala's famously serene waters mere moments ago.



The table heaves as our stomachs groan. It's a good thing the ambience is decidedly in the vein of expansive Kerala homes, all dark wood, inviting seating, and sepia toned photos of wiry fishermen casting a wide net for their day's catch.

We hardly have room for the entrees, but we soldier on in service of you, gentle reader. A succulent duck curry waits to be sopped up with perfectly steamed vattayappams. These fermented rice cakes offset the richness of the bird, but the [calorie conscious](#) can indulge in Kerala's answer to the humble chapati - soft, slender roti-like discs made of rice flour that we want in our lunchbox everyday. These valiant breads face off against an assortment of curries - from a meen curry cooked in an earthen pot that takes the fish to a treat for our veg only friends, a pineapple and nendram curry that will make you question the persistent popularity of paneer in the lives of our leaf eater friends.

We question the necessity of leaf eater friends at all as the next treat that appears: a mutton putturi biriyani we want to take home and make an honest woman out of. Perfectly pounded rice sits side by side chunks of mouthwatering mutton, spicy and soothing simultaneously. Before we reach Defcon 5 in our existential crises, a reassuring bowl of payaru kanji is placed before us. It is just the soothing balm we need after the feedy frenzy this course has been.



It would be sheer madness to order dessert at this stage, but who said we were sensible? Our resident Malayali missing home exclaims at the sight of an unnakai, her small hand reaching out to break open the steaming flesh of the nendram banana to reveal coconut, jaggery, and a hefty dose of childhood nostalgia nestled within.

For the less traditionally minded, a kandhari ice-cream is called for. Much like its liquid counterpart from the first course, this is a sweet that surprises. It is the palate cleanser we needed for the marquee act of this magical evening.

Spooning into the soft skin of a tender coconut pudding we find ourselves in Kerala, watching its tranquil tides lap gently at her banks. We're in a rainy evening when we can ignore the humidity for once, and just watch the fronds of the coconut trees nod in the breeze. The sweet cloud of this pudding slips down our gullets and blooms inside us, making us feel lighter than being young and sweet.

Opening Hours: Lunch (12-3:30 pm) and dinner (7-11 pm) service.

Average Cost: ₹1,500 for two people (approx.)

Address: 438, 18th Main Road, Koramangala 6th Block, Bengaluru