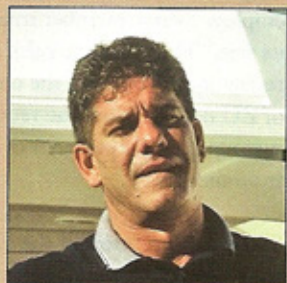




# SOME LIKE IT HOT!

## CPT. MARTYN WALKER'S SEARCH FOR THE WORLD'S BEST CURRY!



**A**long with the vast sums of money paid to us, massive perks, easy life of a yacht captain, unfortunately sometimes comes the occasional apparent minor responsibility such as answering a simple question asked by your Boss. If the said captain should at the time be off guard, maybe as after sipping a few pints with his yacht insurance pals in a dodgy drinking establishment in London, the consequences can be quite dramatic. Such an event happened to me whilst the Montigne visited London.

As all Brits believe the best curry in the world is in the UK. When the Owner expresses his wish to dine out for curry five nights in a row and with superior back up from the

'shoreside' support of friends close by (you know who you are), what could be easier than getting a top class 'Ruby Murray' for the Boss. Alas best laid plans go to waste and after five disasters the responsibility of being a captain was brutally thrust in my face as to why London no longer has good curry houses. On the run and stalling for some salvation out of a grave situation the only reply I felt would calm the troubled waters was to say 'if you want a decent curry we should go to Bombay!'

There started another trip back toward the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. As if King Neptune himself was mocking me for not coming up with a better answer we proceeded for three weeks with the wind and sea as close to the bow as possible and never below force 5. Destination Bombay.

To my knowledge not many yachts have travelled to Bombay but that is probably because they could not find it for smog. It would appear that India some years ago bought from the British half our Royal Navy and the famous smog from London that you see in Jack the Ripper films. Visibility is about half a mile!

Having made it to the anchorage at the Gateway of India my agent Ashim started to learn that there were maritime laws being introduced by the hour for a yacht. Leaving him as he weaved his way through this and being told he would give me a 'tinkle' if he needed me, myself and my hearty crew set off on a mission of our own, to find the best curry house in Bombay for the Boss. As any curry lover knows the essential part of enjoying a curry is to consume copious amounts of alcohol first. Sadly, lesser members of the crew were unable to complete the mission and fell by the wayside but undeterred the rest of us batted on for Boat and Owner.

First the Royal Bombay Yacht Club, then the Taj Mahal hotel, one up a side street that I choose to



forget and a very posh restaurant where they were none too impressed by the appearance of only the three of us remaining having booked for seventeen people. Curry in India is not like in the UK or USA. This realised, a chef had to be found that was corruptible. No joy with that in Bombay so with heavy hearts and major ribbing from the Boss we sailed south to the port of Goa made famous for its cultural beach parties and I believe where Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds was first spotted.

This was a place where, what you want, you get. Within hours we had the executive chef of the best place in town on board discussing the menu of the night. All was agreed that there was no law in India against having rice at the same time as your curry and that hot spices do exist. That said and done we set off after cocktails with the Owner's party to gloat over what was to be our

glorious victory of finally getting the curry of the century. Transport included, probably the most expensive also!

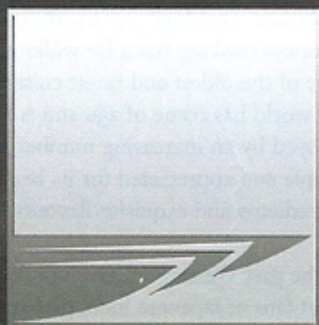
In a location second to none overlooking the beach, the balmy evening air seduced by the smells of spice and the allure of the Indian dancing, the chef and I patted ourselves quietly on the shoulder and awaited the praise that would now surely be poured upon us after dinner and mark the end of a valiant marathon curry search.

Our contentment lasted very briefly. Not spicy enough on a starter even I could eat it. Then behold, the main event. The spice level would not even have fazed my daughter at her young age so to think that this would even get a grading higher than the worst in London set me sweating and vowing to never answer before thinking again. With a well founded excuse of needing a

bathroom it was off to the kitchen to find the chef. A brief explanation of the pending doom and laughter from all the other chefs around it was agreed, 'OK we will make it very spicy'. On my return to the table the waiters were clearing everyone's plates, half eaten, and within a short time returned with the full compliment of waiters with a 'real curry'.

The lessons learnt here became really simple. Don't be tempted to take a drink with yacht insurance brokers while the Owner is on board in case you get asked a question after the event and never ask an Indian to spice up the curry!

All said it is a great trip to make, taking you through the Maldives and when that far East it's just a hop, skip and a jump to the paradise of Thailand where we are now leaving after another superb three months.



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