



Raj & Bina
SHARMA
RESTAURATEURS

*“30 years of business,
raising a family, &
showcasing our culture
in Maine”*

Raj & Bina Sharma never imagined the state of Maine would ever be a place they both call home. Now half a world away from their homelands, the couple has established long reaching roots in the Maine community. *“30 years have passed & our three boys are grown, & American university educated”* said the couple with a very proud smile.

Like many immigrants to the United States, both Raj & Bina bring with them a story, a story of curiosity to experience what the world outside their homelands had to offer.

Raj was born in the northwestern Indian state of Punjab. Punjab is famous for its agriculture, hospitality & hard working people Raj stated. Upon concluding his culinary studies, Raj was eager to leave India & explore the world. He borrowed roughly \$500 from his parents agricultural business & started a journey working across the world.

From landing work in kitchens across The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, France & Canada, he was exposed to an entirely new world of cuisine, culture and hospitality.

Bina spent her youth growing up in the East African city of Mombasa, Kenya. Her ancestors left India due to the English occupation several generations prior and landed in Tanzania where her mother was born and later relocated to Kenya.

Providing better opportunity & growing political pressure in Africa, the family moved once more to the United Kingdom.

The couple tied the knot in a traditional arranged marriage in London, and shortly after moved to Cologne, Germany where they resided for nearly a decade until the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Around this time they had two sons who were born in London and had a family relative move to New England. Not long after the young family found themselves vacationing in Maine where they fell in love with the beauty of Acadia National Park & the coastal charm of Portland.

The couple opened their first Indian restaurant in 1990 with immense success called Taste of India in Bangor, ME, followed by Bombay Mahal in the quintessential New England college town of Brunswick, ME, & Tandoor in Portland's historic Old Port.

Since then they have sold their other two establishments & focused exclusively on building Bombay Mahal on Maine Street. The couple said, *“Brunswick & Maine's citizens have responded extremely positively to Indian cuisine as the market for ethnic fare has continued to expand since they first arrived in the state”*.

“Back then there wasn't much diversity in Maine's food & dining scene. We were one of the very few restaurateurs running businesses in Maine from abroad” stated Bina. The couple resides in Portland where they raised their three children since the inception of Bombay Mahal.

The past 30 years have brought tremendous joy to the couple seeing their three sons graduate from top U.S. universities.

Vikash the eldest completed a Doctorate degree from George Washington University in D.C, & launched his own physical therapy practice 8 years ago in New York City's Union Square neighborhood.

Vanit completed his Masters & Bachelors degree from Northeastern University in International Relations & Political Science, & has lived & worked in London the past 7 years.

The youngest Sumit completed his undergrad degree at Boston University Questrom School of Business where he focused on entrepreneurship, spent time living in Latin America & is now planning a move to Melbourne, Australia.

Both Raj & Bina are grateful for the warmth their guests have provided them over the past three decades, as well as the success Bombay Mahal has had as an establishment in Maine.

They both say that *“no matter where life brings you, life is not what you search for and can't find; life is what you make of it together in good & bad times, in sickness & in health”*.

Bombay Mahal has won an Americas Best Business Award, consecutively been voted Best Indian & International Restaurant in Maine, & awarded Four Stars by the Portland Press Herald. It was nationally featured as the only Indian restaurant from New England in USA Today, as well as numerous other regional publications such as Maine Magazine, Maine Eater, The Times Record, The Coastal Journal, & Maine Sunday Telegram. Today it is the longest running Indian restaurant in Maine.