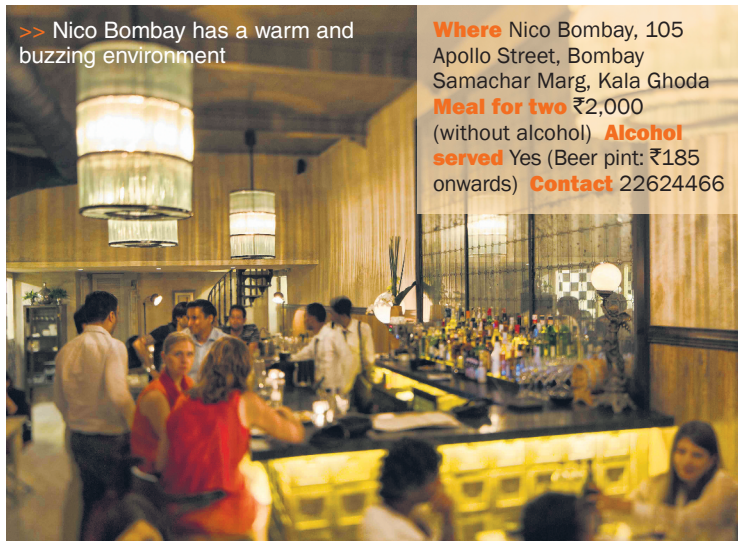


Holding its own

With a quaint charm and delicious food, **Rhea Dhanbhoora** sees how **Nico Bombay** fares in Kala Ghoda which is already peppered with great restaurants

>> Nico Bombay has a warm and buzzing environment

Where Nico Bombay, 105 Apollo Street, Bombay Samachar Marg, Kala Ghoda
Meal for two ₹2,000 (without alcohol) **Alcohol served** Yes (Beer pint: ₹185 onwards) **Contact** 22624466



>> Caramelised Apples, Crème Anglaise, Apple Cinnamon Parfait, Candied Star Fruit



>> Balsamic Baby Beets, Caramelised Walnuts, Burrata

Bombay seems to have a new obsession with the Jazz Age, what with 20s movies, jazz festivals and a sudden foray of jazz bar-esque restaurants in the city. Nico Bombay is the latest entrant, complete with warm lights, low slung chairs (very uncomfortable for shorter people), bar stools, pretty candles and suited up staff. It's chic and modern with a heady antique vibe and the menu, though just a single page, looks appetising.

Ladies, head to Nico before 8pm and you'll be served a glass of wine in a crystal wine glass. There's also a chance you'll run into Nico, enjoying a meal with his friendly family and playful son, all contributing to a bubbly restaurant feel, complete with the chatter of a crowd, glasses clinking and knives scraping.

GET YOUR GOAT ON: If you're a fan of goat cheese, you should try the first two dishes that we did. First was a highly recommended Goat Cheese, Caramelised Onion, Sour Cream Puff (₹325). The buttery puff was deliciously chewy and the tomato sauce had a delectable tang. The messy Pulled Goat Meat, Red Onion, Micro Greens (₹275) will remind you of mini falafels, with delicious, tender pulled goat served in little pita pockets.

Prawn lovers will appreciate the Kadaifi Wrapped Prawns, Citrus Mousseline (₹450). These are huge prawns, wrapped in a crispy, shredded phyllo pastry, accompanied by a delightful mixture of egg, butter, lemon and cream. The health conscious must not miss out on the Balsamic Baby Beets, Caramelised Walnuts, Burrata (₹350). The beetroot was tender but crunchy and the walnuts add a much-needed crunch. The best part about this is that the original Italian burrata (mozzarella and cream cheese) is made locally,

especially for the restaurant, making the yummy soft centered cheese even more impressive. The Wild Arugula, Baby Artichokes, Pomegranate Vinaigrette, Parmesan Shavings Salad (₹365) was also delicious, but the vinaigrette can be a bit much for those who prefer a lighter dressing.

PIZZA PERFECT: We'd heard a lot about their Neopolitan Flat Breads and the base of the pizzas did not disappoint us. The Gorus (₹645) was well-flavoured, though the bitter honey will not sit well with anyone who doesn't like honey in their meals. The Ajijul's Duck (₹925) was our favourite — duck drizzled with oil and yummy cheese. Don't miss out on the Beef Fillet, Pomme Purée, Baby Carrots, Pearl Onions (₹600). The slow cooked beef is tender, delightfully pink on the inside and served with pomme purée (waxy potato mash that's thick and smooth on your tongue) instead of the usual mash.

DREAMY DESSERTS: After such lovely food, we weren't sure if any run-off-the-mill desserts could wow us, but we were proved wrong when we sampled the Chocolate Fondant, Strawberry Granita (₹450). The chocolate fondant was expectantly tasty, but the strawberry granita took our breath away! The semi-frozen dessert tasted like a field of fresh strawberries and was so refreshing that we polished it off, edible bowl included!

Although Nico Bombay isn't spectacularly different, it's a great place for a couple of drinks (they have a range of fun cocktails) and unquestionably good food made with fresh ingredients.

Him, Her & Shots!

Delhi's shot bar **He Said She Said** opened its first Mumbai outlet in Andheri. **Priyanka Singh** survived their shots to tell you her tale

>> The alfresco section of He Said She Said will make you feel like you're sitting in a park (because of the AstroTurf flooring) that also has shots on offer! (inset) Don't miss trying their Coco Chanel shot



He Said She Said. But why not *She Said He Said*? That's because the pickup line is mostly dropped by a man at a bar, so placing 'him' first and then 'her' seemed logical. Or at least to me. However, my complex back-story was ruined by Harshvardan Samor, one of the three owners, when he said that this shot bar was supposed to be a café meant for conversations, thus, He Said She Said. Why a shot bar then? The loop of this question ties back to Harsh visiting New York and realising that the most raucous but unadulterated fun takes place at shot bars.

Delhi's shot bar He Said She Said opened its doors in Mumbai in the form of a large alfresco section and a relatively constricted inner quarter. We loved the spacious open-air area with two bars and décor dominated by white seating arrangements (high rise chairs and tables, park benches) and colourful upholstery. Most park benches come with a speech bubble that can be written upon — a unique and apt addition to the bar. Early evening, there's soft rock/pop music playing in the background, trying not to disturb you, the volume of which steadily increases with the ink in the skies as it takes a turn towards EDM.

Specially curated for He Said She Said, the alcohol menu quite obviously has an extensive list of shots divided in eight categories: Layered, Chocolatey/Creamy, Fruity, Spicy, Balls of Steel, Its Different, Ice-cream shots and Mumbai Special. We tried six shots in all. The first two were from the Mumbai Special section and are called Maja Ma Che (₹120), which is vodka with strawberry syrup and Cha Maila (₹150), a combination of caramel and whiskey. While we could hardly taste the strawberry syrup, Maja Ma Che proved to be a potent shot, going quite well with its name. However, Cha Maila was a little too sweet for us. Coco Chanel (₹199, Chocolatey section) has a delectable pairing of dark rum with chocolate, accompanied with a stick of Kit Kat. Melon Water (₹149, Fruity section) was a refreshing shot that included vodka and watermelon juice. We also braced ourselves to sample two items from the Spicy section — Aam Panna (₹149) and Red Hot Chilli Pepper (₹199). Aam Panna is a vodka based shot with masala and a hint of mango (a slice of raw mango to go with it

would have been nice). But, our favourite was the Red Hot Chilli Pepper — green chillies muddled with sugar and pepper vodka — spicy, sour and so much fun! Most shots come with a piece of fruit or something which acts as a palate cleanser, making things even better.

Finger food dominates the multi-cuisine menu and we ordered for Pepper & Olive Cheesy Parcels (₹300), Lemon Chilli Meatballs (₹255) and Murgh Malai Tikka (₹204). Though disappointed by the quantity (two pieces), these little parcels of deliciousness, stuffed with cream cheese and topped by tomato and balsamic sauce, will make you order a second one (we did!). The meatballs were spicy as promised and well-cooked — we'd say, wash down the spiciness with a Melon Water shot! The Tikka was a bland for me, but my companion enjoyed every bit of the soft chunks.

There will also be a fine dine/studio (where still shoots will be arranged) opening on the first floor by the end of this month. When you come for a regular drink here, don't forget to sample their shots, which are undoubtedly the highlight of this bar and are priced reasonably, starting at just ₹120. With its warm ambience and youthful vibe, He Said She Said can indeed be an ideal hotspot for your shot induced drunken conversations.

Where Remi BizCourt, Behind Yash Raj Studios, Off link road, Veera Desai Road, Andheri(W)
Meal for two Approximately ₹1,200 (with alcohol)
Alcohol served Yes (pint of beer: ₹145 onwards; shots: ₹120 onwards) **Contact** 30932030 ext:356

WHAT'S COOKING?

Ironmaiden inspired beer at Jamjar Diner

Jamjar Diner will now stock Old Tom and Trooper — a brew by the metal band Iron Maiden! The typical British pale ale by Iron Maiden has finally made its appearance in India, inspired by Iron Maiden and handcrafted at Robinsons Brewery. The beer is being introduced in India by Yeast India Company along with the ale Old Tom, which is also from Robinsons Brewery. Both are priced at ₹496, plus taxes. **Where** Jamjar Diner, Aram Nagar, Versova **Contact** 26368880

