



CURRY HOUSE: Jaffrey in the kitchen. **Below:** Jaffrey's latest book, *Climbing the Mango Trees*.

Spice Girl

Cooking legend and SBW&FF headliner Madhur Jaffrey talks wine, Indian food and stone crabs

Although she first earned fame as an actress, Madhur Jaffrey is best known for her thorough yet accessible Indian, Asian and world-cuisine cookbooks. At this year's South Beach Wine & Food Festival, Jaffrey presents "Passage to India," an Indian feast with wines paired by master sommelier Alpana Singh, also of Indian descent. Jaffrey sat down with *Miami* for a chat that will whet your appetites. —*Margit Bizstray*

Tell us about teaming with Alpana Singh. I've never worked with her before, but I'm a firm believer in serving good wine with Indian food. That's how I entertain. People often say to serve beer with Indian, which isn't true. You serve water. But this trend is changing.

How so? We are developing a new drinking culture in India, beyond our British tradition of whisky before a meal. My grandfather used to bring Shiraz grapes from Afghanistan and make wine in the cellar when it wasn't legal. Today India produces many great wines, including sparkling.

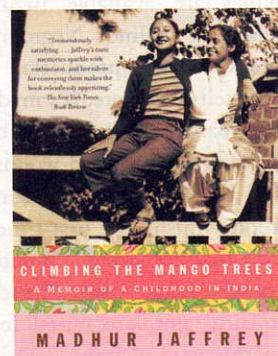
What can people learn about Indian cuisine? Most people don't know what Indian food is. It's both sophisticated and delicious, but it can be easy, too. Today there are many ready-made foods like pickles, papadums, dosas.

How do you always discover new foods, ingredients and recipes? When I travel, I seek local sources. In Barbados, I enjoyed flying fish; in Australia, the aboriginal ingredients; and in Shanghai, all sorts of new mushrooms and vegetables. Things unique to a certain place—that's what to try. At home, local is best. I grow my own Indian garden with potatoes, garlic, onions, kale and kohlrabi.

What about in Miami? In New York, we can get plenty of expensive seafood from everywhere, but in Miami it's right there. I love seafood, so I will definitely eat stone crabs.

What do you think of the celebrity chef phenomenon? When Julia Child was cooking on TV, it was serious food. We were learning and eating well. Now much of it is like a game show. There are so many people starving in the world today, so something about the balance of celebrity cooking makes me uncomfortable.... On the other hand, I also enjoy it. **M**

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[CELEB SPOTTING] POLITICOS, PREMIERES AND PRIME ONE TWELVE

FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS, **SARAH PALIN** WAS IN TOWN FOR THE REPUBLICAN GOVERNORS' CONVENTION. SHE STAYED AT THE MANDARIN ORIENTAL; PERHAPS THEY WHIPPED UP A DISH THAT WAS ON PAR WITH HER OWN MOOSE STEW. >> **WILL SMITH** AND **ROSARIO DAWSON** PREMIERED *SEVEN POUNDS* AT AMC SUNSET PLACE, AND SMITH LATER DISTRIBUTED 300 THANKSGIVING TURKEYS TO NEEDY FAMILIES. >> THE PRETERNATURALLY SLIM **HEIDI KLUM** WAS SPOTTED ENJOYING SUSHI AND ICE CREAM AT NOBU JUST DAYS BEFORE WALKING THE VICTORIA'S SECRET RUNWAY. >> FORMER SOVIET PRESIDENT **MIKHAIL GORBACHEV** ORDERED PASTA AT PRIME ONE TWELVE. EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO PASTA ON THE MENU—BECAUSE, AHEM, IT'S A STEAKHOUSE—THE STAFF PREPARED SOME ANYWAY.