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Food Review: Monster Curry by [Robert Collins](#)

Article published on July 16th 2012 | [Cooking](#)

The battle for choose-your-spice-level Japanese curry heats up with this new player in the Singapore market, the second of such dining concept after Coco Ichibanya.

Monster Curry, the latest venture by En Holdings Group, which also runs the successful En Japanese Dining Bar on Mohammed Sultan Road, opened its first outlet at Ion Orchard on May 21. This will be their third and biggest outlet to date.

Much like Coco Ichibanya, there are five levels of spiciness that customers can choose from, these range from Normal Hot to Monster Hot. However, unlike Coco Ichibanya, Monster Curry has no customisation option available.

Ambience: Located within the cluster of Japanese dining spots on the third floor of Parco Millenia Walk and tucked in at the back, it is clear that this restaurant prides itself more on the food than the ambience – like most of the other Japanese restaurants around it.

The restaurant seats 48 diners comfortably, while a telescreen on one wall tells customers of latest promotions and more information about Monster Curry. A wide glass window also allows diners to see into the kitchen and watch the chefs in action, meticulously preparing your food.

Must tries:

Monster Curry prides itself on its curry gravy; the curry is made up of 14 different spices and vegetables - caramel is one of the ingredients - and left to simmer on the stove for five hours.

The whole process however, requires up to two days, such is Monster Curry's executive chef, Chef Uto Kazuto's dedication to crafting the best Japanese curry. And it shows. The curry is smooth, rich and full-bodied, and is accompanied by a hint of roasted caramel, a delight for the palette even without any spice in it.

Spice is added in the form of a special hot sauce made from chili padi, garlic, ginger and celery and the level of spice you choose determines the number of "hot sauce swirls" drizzled in the center of the curry. Patrons are expected to stir the hot sauce into the curry before they eat, which means diners with a lower tolerance for spiciness can choose to stir in less of the hot sauce if they prefer.

At Coco Ichibanya, we reviewed that the curry texture gets progressively chunkier and grittier as the spice levels increase. At Monster Curry however, the curry stays smooth throughout. The level five curry at Monster Curry is also much more palatable, and those who have a higher than average tolerance for spiciness should be able to enjoy this level sufficiently.

Try the Beef Shabu-Shabu Omelette Curry, \$13, a refreshing take on curry with the addition of the Shabu-Shabu beef. This isn't a common association with curry but it works; the pleasantly thin slices of beef are tasteless in itself but perfect when consumed together with the full-bodied curry. Level up on the spiciness when you go for this, everything will balance out nicely.

If you're looking for something more traditional, go for the Shrimp Tempura Curry, \$12. The shrimp tempura is a Monster Curry special, having been deep-fried to perfection by their tempura chef so that the exterior remains golden-brown and crispy, while the prawn inside stays wonderfully crunchy.

Monster Curry's other claim to fame is their huge portion sizes, hence the name Monster Curry. The Monster Combo Curry, \$21, weighs in at a whopping 5kg, and consists of pork katsu, fried fish, beef shabu-shabu and tempura prawns layered over a mountain of rice and curry.

These "Monster"- sized curries are big enough for two people to share comfortably. The pork katsu was nothing to shout about, as it was only mediocre at best. One piece I had was particularly tough and dry, so I skipped it in favour of more beef shabu-shabu and tempura prawns.

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Article Keywords:

delicious dishes, Monster Curry, Food Review

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