Where to Find Green Curry in Birmingham: A Local's Guide to Thai Flavours

When people think of Birmingham's food scene, balti and curry houses often come to mind first. And rightly so. But there is another kind of green curry that deserves your attention, and it has nothing to do with Indian cooking. Thai green curry is a dish that balances creamy coconut milk, fresh herbs, and a gentle heat from green chillies. It is lighter than its red cousin and more aromatic than many assume. Over the past few years, I have watched Birmingham's Thai food offerings grow from a handful of takeaway spots into a proper dining scene. And at the heart of that shift is the question everyone asks: where can you find the best green curry Birmingham has to offer?

Let me walk you through what makes a great green curry, where to look for one, and why this city has become a surprisingly strong contender for authentic Thai flavours.

What Makes a Thai Green Curry Different

If you have only ever had green curry from a jar or a supermarket ready-meal, you are in for a revelation. A proper Thai green curry starts with a fresh paste made from green chillies, lemongrass, galangal, kaffir lime leaves, and shrimp paste. The paste is fried off in a wok until it releases its fragrance, then coconut milk is added to create a sauce that is both rich and bright. Unlike the heavier, sweeter massaman curries of northern Thailand, or the red-curry versions that use ripe red chillies, green curry keeps a herbal, almost grassy note that cuts through the fat of the coconut milk.

The protein matters too. Chicken and prawns are the most common choices, but I have had excellent versions with firm white fish and even duck. The trick is that the meat should complement the sauce, not overpower it. A good green curry lets the paste speak. You should taste lemongrass first, then chilli heat that builds slowly, then the cooling effect of coconut at the end. If the curry tastes only of coconut or only of chilli, the balance is off.

View the location on Google Maps

Birmingham's Thai Food Landscape

Birmingham has a long history of welcoming immigrant communities and their cuisines. The Thai community here is smaller than the Vietnamese or Chinese populations, but it has made an impact. You find Thai restaurants tucked into the Jewellery Quarter, along the canals, and in the quieter streets of the city centre. Many are family-run places that have been open for over a decade. Some newer ones are run by chefs who trained in Bangkok or Chiang Mai. The variety

means you can get a green curry that is adapted for British palates - sweeter, milder, thicker - or one that stays close to the Thai originals.

When I started looking for a proper green curry Birmingham style, I made a point of trying as many as I could. Some were disappointing: watery, lacking in herbs, or using a pre-made paste that tasted flat. Others were revelatory. The best ones shared a few common traits. First, the paste was made in-house or sourced from a trusted Thai supplier. Second, the coconut milk was full-fat and not watered down. Third, the vegetables - bamboo shoots, Thai aubergine, green beans - were fresh and added texture, not just bulk.

How to Spot an Authentic Green Curry

Here is what I look for on the menu and on the plate:

- **Colour.** A real green curry is not bright green. It is a pale, almost khaki green, because the chilli paste is cooked and then diluted with coconut milk. If the curry is vivid green, it likely has food colouring or excess raw paste.
- **Aroma.** You should smell lemongrass and kaffir lime before the curry reaches the table. If it smells only of coconut or sugar, keep walking.
- **Heat level.** Thai green curry is not designed to be fiery. It should have a mild, steady warmth. If the waiter tells you it is very spicy, they may be using bird's eye chillies instead of green chillies, or they may be adjusting for a Western assumption that all Thai food is searingly hot.
- **Consistency.** The sauce should coat a spoon but not be gloopy. It is a broth, not a gravy. Too thick usually means cornflour or too much reduction.
- **Herbs.** Look for fresh coriander, Thai basil, or sawtooth herb on top. Dried herbs or none at all is a bad sign.

I have been to places where the green curry arrived looking more like a yellow soup. That is a clue that the cook used turmeric instead of green chilli paste, which gives a completely different flavour profile. Not bad, necessarily, but not green curry.

Where the Search Led Me

Over several months, I visited a dozen restaurants and takeaway spots across Birmingham. Some were in the city centre, others in areas like the Custard Factory or near the Bullring. A few stood out. One place near the canals made a green curry with king prawns that was fragrant and balanced, though the sauce was a little thin for my taste. Another, a small cafe-style spot in the Jewellery Quarter, served a vegetarian version with tofu and morning glory that reminded

me of street food in Bangkok. The paste was gritty with freshly pounded herbs, and the coconut milk was so fresh you could taste the creaminess.

But the version that I keep coming back to is the one at a restaurant that has been in Birmingham for years, quietly building a reputation for consistent, honest cooking. Their green curry Birmingham regulars often mention as a benchmark. It uses chicken thigh meat, which stays moist during cooking, and the sauce has that elusive balance of salt, sweet, and sour. The heat comes from sliced green chillies that are added late in the cooking process, so they retain some crunch. The rice served alongside is jasmine, steamed properly so each grain is separate. It is the kind of meal that makes you slow down and eat carefully, savouring each spoonful.

Why Green Curry Matters in Birmingham

Birmingham's food scene has matured beyond the curry houses and pub grub that defined it for decades. Thai food is part of that maturing. A good green curry represents everything that makes Thai cooking special: fresh ingredients, careful technique, and a respect for balance. It is not a dish you can rush. The paste needs time to cook. The coconut milk needs time to emulsify. The herbs need to be added at the right moment or they turn bitter. When a restaurant gets it right, you know they care about the food they serve.

For anyone new to Thai cuisine, green curry is a good place to start. It is approachable without being bland, and it introduces flavours - galangal, kaffir lime, fish sauce - that appear in other Thai dishes. Once you learn to recognise a good green curry, you can use the same standards to judge a tom yum soup or a pad Thai. It becomes a reference point.

For those who already love Thai food, finding a reliable green curry in Birmingham is a small victory. It means you do not have to travel to London or cook it yourself every time you crave that specific combination of creamy and herbal. And cooking it yourself, while rewarding, is a project. You need to source kaffir lime leaves, galangal, and fresh green chillies. That is doable if you have a good Asian supermarket nearby. Birmingham has several. But sometimes you just want someone else to do the work, and that is where a good restaurant earns its keep.

What to Drink with Green Curry

A quick note on pairing. Coconut milk based curries can be tricky with wine. A dry Riesling or a Grüner Veltliner works because the acidity cuts through the fat. Beer is easier: a crisp lager or a wheat beer complements the herbal notes. Avoid heavy stouts or IPAs, which clash with the chilli and lemongrass. If you want something non-alcoholic, a cold glass of Thai iced tea or plain sparkling water with lime is best.

I have seen people order a pint of bitter with green curry, and it never works well. The caramel malt of the beer fights the coconut and the chilli. Trust me, stick with something light and dry.

The Last Spoonful

After all the searching and tasting, I have settled on a favourite. It is not the fanciest place in town, and it does not try to reinvent the dish. It just makes a green curry that tastes like it should. If you want to try it for yourself, the restaurant is called SIAMAIS, located at 6, 7 Brindley Pl, Oozells St., Birmingham B1 2HS, and you can reach them at 01216433993. It is worth the trip.