



**Success  
stories**



**Ataur Rahman Lyak**

**Rajdoot Tandoori**

220 London Road

Guildford, GU4 7JS

Ataur Rahman Lyak is far from your average restaurateur. He's a passionate chef, a savvy entrepreneur, and a devoted foodie. With over three decades of experience in the restaurant industry, Ataur has carved out a legacy built on dedication, innovation, and a deep love for food.

His journey began in 1992 with the opening of his first restaurant, Rajdoot. But the spark ignited earlier—in 1988—when he first worked in a restaurant and discovered the potential of the food business. “I realised the restaurant industry had high profit margins and low management hassle. I knew I could make a success of it,” he recalls.

And succeed he did. Ataur's favourite part of the business is being on the restaurant floor, engaging with customers, listening to their feedback, and turning their ideas into action. His commitment to creating a unique dining experience is evident in his carefully curated menu, featuring signature dishes like Tandoori Mushrooms Dupiaza, Murg Malai Sag, and Handi Lamb. These offerings are not only customer favourites but also deliver flavours that are truly one-of-a-kind.

His guiding principle is simple: “Buy fresh, sell fresh.” Ataur believes that freshness is the cornerstone of great food and a successful restaurant. This philosophy extends beyond ingredients to his entire business model, which prioritises simplicity, quality, and consistency.

One of the biggest challenges in the restaurant industry is maintaining high service standards. Ataur tackles this by investing in modern technology and high-tech kitchen equipment, making operations smoother and more efficient for his staff. From Epos systems for order management to remote access tools and tablet-based ordering, his embrace of digital solutions has streamlined service and enhanced customer convenience.

Marketing, for Ataur, is rooted in community engagement. He sponsors local football clubs, provides charity meals for schools, organises fundraising events for churches, and actively participates in social initiatives. His online presence is equally strong, using platforms like Facebook, Google, and TripAdvisor to promote his restaurant and connect with customers.

Despite his success, Ataur acknowledges the challenges of sourcing quality food and energy supplies at competitive prices. Yet, he remains optimistic, believing that with hard work and smart management, these hurdles can be overcome.

When asked about the secret to his success, Ataur offers timeless advice: “Buy fresh, sell fresh, and have fewer items on your menu. Your customers will love the taste of freshness. Be humble and friendly with everyone. Word of mouth takes it a long way.”

Looking ahead, Ataur is cautiously optimistic. He's waiting for the economic climate to improve before launching his next venture, recognising that rising living costs have impacted consumer spending. He believes timing is crucial and is prepared to act when conditions are right.

Ataur Rahman Lyak's story is a powerful example of what passion, perseverance, and community spirit can achieve. His commitment to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction has made him a respected figure in the restaurant world. His journey reminds us that success in hospitality isn't just about great food—it's about building relationships, embracing technology, and staying true to your values.

As Ataur wisely says, “Word of mouth takes it a long way”—and his thriving business is proof of that.