

London's first plastic-free takeaway business

- 1 Like so many of us, Anshu Ahuja used to get home from work on a Friday night, collapse in front of the television and order a takeaway. Every time, though, it would come with a hefty helping of guilt. 'It would arrive on a noisy scooter in a puff of smoke, packaged in a pile of plastic,' she says. 'The damage to the planet was so obvious.'
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- 2 During her childhood in Mumbai, the dabbawalas system delivered food by bicycle in reusable tiffin tins known as dabbas. 'I thought, there must be a way of taking this centuries-old system and using technology to modernise it for London,' she says. The result is DabbaDrop, London's first plastic-free and emissions-free takeaway service, which delivers South Asian food including dals and vibrant curries to Londoners in dabba tins, with sides such as ginger jam and roti packaged in compostable pots and paper bags.
 - 3 DabbaDrop works on a subscription basis, allowing customers the option to book one regularly changing menu each week. 'All our meals are cooked according to how many people we'll be feeding that week, which means nothing goes to waste,' says Anshu. 'We also try to use as much of the ingredients as possible, so if we're doing a pumpkin curry we'll include the skin, for example. Any waste we do have we compost.'
 - 4 The company uses its own fleet of cyclists, as well as low-impact delivery companies such as Ecofleet and Pedal Me. The DabbaDrop team has calculated that on average each of their mains (a curry, salad and dal) has a 75 per cent lower carbon footprint than a standard Indian takeaway. 3 The business has expanded rapidly from its east London origins, spreading to parts of north London and recently starting to deliver in south-east London, too. 'There's definitely a growing audience of people who want a delicious takeaway without feeling guilty,' says Anshu.

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