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IT'S A FROZEN FASCINATION

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There is no denying that all our childhood memories now hold deeper significance in our lives. Perhaps the most important one

has been the one right in front of us all this time.

Most of us have at least once heard the infamous phrase, "You scream, I scream, we all scream for... Ice cream!" Until very recently, the impact of this little phrase did not altogether hit me. Yet, as I craved for a few particular flavours of ice cream, cringed at the thought of other meddlesome flavours, realisation meanwhile did a pretty little walk and sat down in front of me, eyes fluttering and lips pouting, with her hands folded in patient anticipation.

This is when I realised that ice cream is really just our own embodiment of love. It sounds absurd. Laughable, too. But rings absolutely true as a fact. Think about it; do you really love the same flavours now, that you did when you were 12? Or has your taste palette evolved, so to speak? **ICE, ICE, BABY** One word—ice lolly. Wait no, that's two words actually. You see? Just the word(s) itself messes with your mind, much like your childhood puppy love. Everything about ice lollies is summer in a box, where *Accidentally In Love* is being played on repeat in the background. Ice lollies are almost always the first-ever ice cream item that you taste as a child, so that brain freeze is naturally inevitable. As you grow older though, it is not that you start to dislike the lolly, you just overcome the fascination from it.

CORNELLI CRUSHES

The same waffle cone topped with different flavoured scoops. Sound familiar? For those of you who ride fast in the crush lane, you are well affiliated with the idea of enjoying that waffle cone in varied doses. Some days, it is a caramel scoop and on other days it is vanilla with that crusty chocolate bit. It is also no surprise that the ending is always the same; a tiny, chocolate portion at the pointy end of the cone, waiting to be consumed fast. Soon enough, the cone is gone, and so is your crush.

DOUBLE CHOCOLATE FUDGE

Did you feel that guilty yearning stir inside you? Don't worry, we have all been

there. Lollies and cones may be great, but it holds no weight in front of a double chocolate fudge scoop, just like your first love. The best part is realising that the deeper you dig into the scoop, the more you love it. Sure, you may be wary of the intensity initially but soon enough, all that rationality goes out the window. So what if it could potentially lead to diabetes, or even worse health issues? In the grand scheme of things, it is always worth it.

DOUBLE SCOOPS

Oh dear, this is a tricky phase of life. Anybody who is ordering double scoops of different flavoured ice cream is going through some heavy confusion. In hindsight, it sounds like such a great idea—Swiss chocolate and stracciatella, yummy in my tummy! We get so swept up in the moment and the idea that we forget how, sooner or later, the flavours will begin to melt and merge, creating a weird confusing taste altogether. Remember this for always: one is better than two.

VANILLA DREAMS

Ah, you have finally reached the end game. You are surprised, but in the most pleasant way possible. After all the years spent on endless flavour tasting, you have somehow unexpectedly landed on vanilla. It suddenly now feels like you never really looked at the vanilla section before. Silently sitting, it always seemed muted, keeping itself in a private corner. Under-rated as a flavour, you always figured this isn't your match. Today, though, it hits you differently. There is no giddiness and maybe also no screaming sparks, but it has settled deeply in your heart anyway. It feels cold and warm at the same time, and you feel you have finally found home.

All this ice cream talk has probably left you craving for some of your own preferred flavour now. However, the question remains, are you ready to settle down for vanilla?

Roshni believes as long as you love ice cream, who cares what your flavour is? Meanwhile, let her know your final chosen flavours at roshni.shamim@gmail.com



PHOTO: KAZI AKIB BIN ASAD

ALL ABOUT CAKES



PHOTO: SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

SYEDA AFRIN TARANNUM

You know why cakes are perfect? Cakes can be anything you want them to be. Whatever shape, size, design, flavour or colour.

The first cake that one needs to make if they want to start baking is the classic and simple vanilla cake. It is sweet, soft and just indulgent enough. If you can make the perfect vanilla cake, there's a really good shot that you can bake most other cakes with some guidance.

As a kid and even now, I love cakes. So much that I would write about all of my birthday cakes in my journal. I still remember the vanilla cake with blue flowers I had for my 11th birthday. Cakes seem to bring everyone together. As I grew up, I realised it wasn't just the taste I enjoyed, it was the art that cakes are. It might sound funny or even dramatic to someone who doesn't understand the art that it is and the beauty it holds.

Start with arranging all necessary ingredients, measuring them out and laying them ahead of you. This might seem unnecessary, but will make your work at least ten times easier. Moreover, laying them out will allow all the ingredients to reach room temperature which is always a good thing unless the recipe states otherwise.

I'm absolutely convinced that people who say they're not cake people have just not found the right cake yet. I'm sorry if I come off as rude, believe me, I respect people's choices. However, being someone who watches at least a hundred cake making and decorating videos every day (not even exaggerating... okay, maybe just a little), and has been making cakes for a while, I can tell you there's a cake for everyone.

Once you've gotten the ingredients in order, start preparing the wet and dry ingredients separately. Whisk three and two-thirds of a cup of flour, a pinch of salt, a teaspoon of baking powder and three-quarters of a teaspoon of baking soda together in a bowl and set aside.

There's carrot cake for the health conscious, there's chocolate cake for the ones young at heart, there's red velvet for those who like something extra, there's caramel for the ones who know how to truly enjoy life and then there's vanilla for the timeless lovers. You need a truly mature palette to be able to appreciate vanilla, don't come at me.

In a separate bowl, cream one and a half cups of butter and two cups of regular sugar together. "Creaming" is just a fancy term for whisking butter and sugar together for a fluffy, cream-like structure. Once you've achieved that, add in three eggs one by one, completely incorporating each one completely to the butter-sugar mixture before adding in another. Once all the eggs have been added, add in a tablespoon of vanilla extract and stir until smooth.

The world of cakes is a bright one. Like art, it sometimes expresses through replication and sometimes through its strokes and representation. You would be surprised by how many types of decoration techniques there are and how closely they resemble art done on paper. Pointillism, for example, a technique that uses a collection of carefully constructed and placed dots to cover a canvas is often used to adorn cakes.

Do not freak out if it looks curdled, it's supposed to look like that. Add the buttermilk (one teaspoon vinegar in about a cup of milk to make up exactly one cup) and whisk away. Sift in the dry ingredients and no matter how much you want to give up and dump it all in, don't. Trust me. Don't sift it all in at once, alternately fold the ingredients and sift again. This aerates and uniformly mixes the batter.

You may have seen cakes with life-size flowers, often real ones to garnish cakes; they are very popular on Instagram. What you may not know, however, is that many of these extremely life-like roses may just have been made out of sugar. Oh, the things sugar can do. Rock candy, isomalt, gumpaste are all names for different forms of sugar, and they can be moulded to make some of the most breathtaking and delicate structures.

In a clean, separate bowl, whisk two egg whites. Emphasise on "clean"; the bowl must have never been tainted with anything even slightly savoury let alone spicy. The egg whites can tell, and you will be left with a droopy sloppy mess.

Making cakes is probably one of my favourite things in the world. The clarity, the uniformity, the need for rules, the



space to make your own, are just a few reasons why I'll always find myself going back to baking at the end of a very rough day. I'd choose it over sleep. You can feel the stress leaving you with each step and each fold. You can picture stress and let it go with each pour of the batter.

Assuming you haven't disappointed the egg whites, you should have nice and foamy goodness in a bowl that will elevate your cake from a regular dry, dense and chewy bar to a fluffy, smooth and uniform piece of heaven once you have folded it in. Line cake pans and divide the batter between three 8-inch cake pans and bake for about half an hour in an oven preheated to 350 F or 175 °C for happiness.

Being able to bake and find this whole world has been a revelation to me. It is a secret that I've let very few people in on, until now. Cakes can be pure magic, just as long as you treat them well.

Syeda Afrin Tarannum would choose 'The Script' over 'G-Eazy' any day. Continue ignoring her taste in music on afrintara@gmail.com