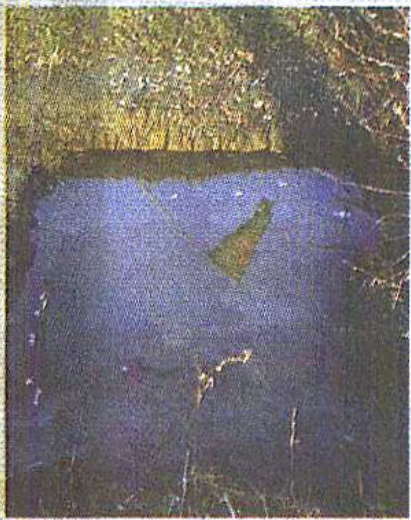


ON THE COVER



Political tension, natural calamities and financial crises marked one of our darker years so far. Flip to page 3 for our thoughts on the year gone by.

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayeed

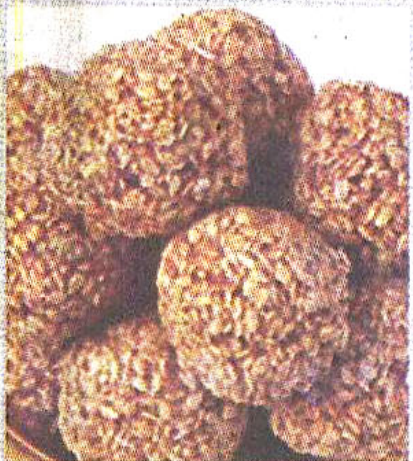
ESSENTIALS

Enjoying tradition

Winter is the time to chill and have a slice of the different pithas available this time of the year. The pithas of winter are totally different from the rest of the seasonal ones and who wouldn't love to gulp a few of them down when freshly made early in the morning and while they are still steaming hot.

Where to find

Since we can hardly make time from our mechanical lives to prepare the pithas, luckily it is now possible for us to find these delicious items in the nearby super stores. They are tightly packed in boxes and also contains the date of expiry and ensures that necessary safety precautions have been taken. There are Patishapta pithas, Pakun pithas, Puli pithas etc.,



which are found in plenty and a good quality is maintained. The price per pack is not high and easily affordable.

Being different

Now that Eid is around the corner, what you can do is arrange a variety of pithas on the table instead of the usual food items. The idea is to be a bit different and who knows? Maybe the pithas will turn out to be a bigger hit than the other items. But do remember to keep the food less complicated so that they can be easily handled. That way you may earn a few extra credits.

The pithas in fact represent a part of our Bangladeshi tradition and we should never forget to hold on to our roots. People nowadays are too much too prone to being westernized, and it is necessary we maintain our trend of signifying our tradition to others. So, this week try out the shops, or get busy preparing the mouthwatering pithas and enjoy to the fullest!

By Yamin Tauseef Jahangir

SHOP SPECIAL

The city of watches

BASHUNDHARA City has always been a huge and utterly complex mystery to me. After all these years I still can't find my way through it, and it is only recently that I stumbled upon the many watch shops that are tucked away in its left hand corner. Nevertheless, my ridiculous sense of direction is still no excuse for not visiting these shops before, because the collection of watches here will simply blow you away.

Esprit & Pierre Cardin

First stop is a collection of these watches, where the Esprit men's collection is quite eye catching. With broad leather bands, large dials in black or silver plus patches of blue, red and other bright colours to jazz it up a bit, these are attractive and affordable, with prices starting at Tk 4500. Esprit watches in cute colours like pink and sky blue are also available for kids, with prices lower at Tk 2500.

Some of the Pierre Cardin watches for men are a bit too glittery for my taste, but the women's displays, with fashionably ornate or slick and silver watches, are definitely worth looking at. These are on sale starting from Tk. 5000 to Tk. 12000.

Titan

Titan's showroom is probably one of the most organized and inviting ones there, and it's new display, named Raga, entirely captured my attention. The same goes for the men's line, where the heavy watches with gold and black and gold and silver combinations would look good on any sophisticated man's hand.



The other single coloured watches were also really classy.

This outlet also displays watches from Fastrack, which are quite different from the other ones. These time-tellers are really funky and its creative dials and multitude of vibrant colours are bound to give you a sporty look.

The watches in Titan start selling at Tk 2000, so this is a place that is within the price range of most people.

Omega and Seiko

The same cannot be said of this shop, where the Omega watches start selling at Tk 90,000! This Swiss line has many diverse designs on display, starting from smooth metal tints to old school gold and modern, trendy styles; Omega has it all. Pierce Brosnan is said to wear an Omega at times, so if James Bond prefers this watch, there is no

need for me to say anything more!

Watches from Seiko as well as Nexxen are also available in this store, with prices of Seiko starting from Tk 5200 and prices of the latter starting from Tk 3500. Though these watches are also very good looking and are more reasonably priced, they look quite pale in comparison to Omega. There were also watches from Roamer and Western on display in this room.

Rado & Tissot

Even though the previous rooms had a few displays of this brand, the shop across it boasted a much wider variety. The Rado watches here are really amazing, with most watches sporting cool, black bands and very innovative dials. Pierce Brosnan may prefer Omegas at parties, but the Rados on display here look like something James Bond might want to wear on a secret mission while breaking into a high security building and disarming fifty men! These beauties cost Tk 25,000 to Tk 200,000.

Though not as ultra-cool as Rado, the Tissot watches are also a great buy, with broad, chunky styles that give it a more masculine feel than all the other watches available. These are priced at Tk 12,500 and above. Alongside these, there was also a display of Longines watches, which cost Tk 35000 and more.

So take a trip to Bashundhara City as soon as possible and splurge all your hard earned cash on these watches! You won't regret it...

By Shuprova Tasneem

Cava

ALTHOUGH all their sandals are essentially flats, for the sake of distinction and comparison, Cava's line of footwear for women can be classified into two types-the sandals that are barely a couple of millimeters off the ground and the slightly more elevated square heeled collection. A tiny little shop tucked away in one of the corners of Sunrise Plaza, Cava is a store that specialises in leather footwear, and not just the usual one-coloured leather chappals either, innovation is at its best with traditional leather well-fused with contemporary colours and embellishments. Aside the marginal difference in heel, both types of sandals are made of the same material, priced along the same maximum and minimum ranges and follow similar design patterns.

Manufactured in their Mirpur # 11 production house, all of their products are made from genuine leather. The input of a professional designer is well evident from small but impressive variety that they house and as aforementioned, their mark lies in the broad colour palette that they work with. Although embellishments such as stone, zari and



chumki are also used on the sandals, their main area of expertise is with beads. With as many different colours as red, pink, white, chocolate, green, blue and yellow on offer, these sandals are apt for people who choose to colour coordinate their outfits with their shoes. The beads are used to create different

patterns on the sandals from flowers to traditional motifs to geometric shapes and designs.

Apart from the fancier line of footwear, Cava also has in stock sandals that would be fit for regular use of an older age group. Simple patterns such as thin leather straps, buckles or narrow belts are prominent in this category and come in the all-purpose colours of black and brown. Their entire women's line is priced between Taka 350 and Taka 540.

Comparatively, the men's section has much less on offer with only a few leather designs in the traditional *choti* style, which go well mostly with panjabis. The men's sandals ask for a slightly ask amount, ranging between Taka 580 and Taka 670.

Having been in operation for more than six years, Cava has a number of branches, namely, in Mirpur # 1, Mirpur # 11, Concord Arcadia, Cezan Point in Farmgate and in Sunrise Plaza. For elegant designs in reasonable prices, stop by any of their branches and check out their collection.

By Subhi Shama Reehu

SHOP TALK

EDT for men

It's all alchemy; cloaked in great secrecy. When revealed it explains its power in the air. Especially those moments when a whiff of musk puts you back in another place and time or warm, sun baked earth to another. And most importantly it rejuvenates the man in you. Call it a luxurious indulgence if you may, but most men justly think of perfume as a sheer necessity.

This week's shoptalk focuses on some of the nuveau eau de toilettes for men available in the local market from big international brands. Though they adorn the shelves of most of the department stores and major cosmetic outlets, the prices mentioned here are exclusively of ETC. You can, of course, shop around to get a better deal but watch out for the cheap cloned products.

Bvlgari Soir by Bvlgari

A luxurious and sensual evening eau de toilette cologne, Bvlgari Soir is the richest and most sophisticated fragrance of the Bvlgari Pour Homme collection. Seductive and precious, it has notes of Darjeeling

Tea, Lifescent, Wood of Paraguay, Amber, and Musk. The sophisticated 100 ml bottle would cost around Tk 3679 but no doubt it pays off, every drop of it.

Joop! Jump by Joop!

Joop! Jump EDT is for the man of the new millennium with a reassuringly masculine twist, a creative inspiration around frozen Vodka, Coriander leaves, Rosemary and



Musk. Joop! Jump is an everyday, modern and easy to wear fragrance. Priced at Tk 3604 (100 ml) this sensual scent would lead you to an intense way of enjoying life anew.

Cool Water by Davidoff

Launched in the US in 1992, Cool Water has become one of the most popular sport scent for men. Cool Water EDT by Davidoff is a fresh and crisp blend of mint and green nuances, spiced with coriander. The unmistakably floral neroli essence and geranium based middle note makes it typically contemporary and masculine. This collection has a price tag of Tk 3153.

Paco Rabanne Cologne

Discovered in 1973 Paco Rabanne still has the aromatic spell on men it had during the 80s. This timeless fine fragrance contains rosemary, lavender, bergamot and is accented with sage, carnation and cedar making Paco Rabanne perfect for casual and formal use. The 100 ml bottle comes for Tk 3003 making it a worthy buy.

By Shakhawat Imam Rajeeb