

Iram's Café

The café culture in Dhaka over the past decade has seen incredible evolution. There are cafés serving everything from filling savoury dishes to sweets and snacks. There are not very many cafés that actually take the craft of creating and serving seriously, cafes that work to not only maintain the quality of the food but create an ambience wherein people can sit on a rainy day with a hot cup of coffee with or without the company of their laptops or phones.

Iram's Café may soon prove to be an exception to this trend. The aesthetic décor of the place is cosy and welcoming with the smooth aroma of coffee all around. And to add to the inviting feeling of the café, Iram herself, is present there at all times to ensure that top tier service and food is provided and she also ensures that any complaints by the patrons are taken into account and rectified immediately.

No matter how good the service is of an eatery, it is after all the food that makes a name for it. Serving everything from

healthy salads to

heavy desserts,

Iram's has a

wide variety

when it

comes to

the menu

at a very

accom-

modating

price.

There's a

set Chinese

menu available

for lunch, which

includes one of the

best prawns on toasts in

town, and you are also welcome to

order a-la-carte all around the day. This

includes sandwiches, burgers, soups

and chicken and fish dishes. In addition

to a very warm service you get good

food at a reasonable price.

Another specialty of this café is its

variety of desserts, which includes but is

not limited to lemon and chocolate

tarts, profiteroles and Oreo cheese-

cakes, at the price range of Tk160-200.

The desserts are most definitely the

more attractive part of the menu and

the taste does not disappoint.

The coffee arrangement is also rea-

sonably good but not exceptional. It is

the food that adds to the cafés selling

point. So if you're looking for a new

place to hang out with your friends or

to sit alone and have a cup of tea this is

a nice café to try out. Iram's Café also

caters to events.

Contact: 1 Floor, FR Tower, Kemal

Ataturk Avenue, Banani; or follow them

on facebook/iramscafe

By Noshin Nawal

Photo courtesy: Iram's Cafe



Gardenia churrascaria

Not all cuts of meat are created equal. The unique parts of bovine anatomy translate to distinct tastes and there are not many places in Dhaka where you can enjoy the broad range of delicacies under one roof. A churrascaria -- Brazilian barbeque and grill restaurant -- is a genre of eatery that allows you to do just that.

When Mahbub H Khan and his fellow foodies decided to open a restaurant, they wanted to offer something that is uncommon in our city. And eventually, the idea of Brazilian steakhouse popped up.

As you enter the premises of Gardenia, the lush bamboo shoots and fountain set a refreshing mood. Walk into the ground floor of the building -- where the restaurant is located -- and you will see waiters dressed as cowboys walking around with giant skewers and knives.

Like many Brazilian restaurants across the world, Gardenia Brazilian Grill Restaurant follows the 'rodizio' style. The waiters bring food to your table several times, where a portion is cut and served to your plate then and there. You can eat all you can at a certain price.

In the beginning of your meal, you will be given a coloured card with red on one side and green on the other. As long as the green side is up, the waiters will keep bringing more food. Flip to the red side when you want no more servings.

In Gardenia, the huge skewers carry meat cooked in a continuum of doneness, hence providing a great opportunity for steak lovers to relish in meat cooked to rare, medium rare and so on.

And you can relish in the distinct cuts -- hump, rump cap, ribs et al. To let you savour the characteristic tastes of different cuts, the spices and other ingredients are kept to a minimal, so that you can actually enjoy the real flavours of the cuts themselves.

You eat the chunks of meat with a special sauce, made with different capsicums, onions, black pepper, vinegar, olive oil, etc.

Pour some on the meat, and gulp in the delicacy.

Preparing churrasco is not easy. That's why Gardenia has a consultant chef, Valdecir Schneider, who is highly experienced in working in many Brazilian restaurants worldwide.

"The Brazilian chef comes to Dhaka once every four months to train staff, oversee the process and assure that standard is maintained," Mahbub informed.

"Traditionally, Brazilian steakhouses focus



only on meat and salads," he continued. "But to cater to the tastes and preferences of our guests better, we even have a buffet."

The buffet, by itself, is a stand-alone meal. So even if you do not want Brazilian steak or are not a fan of rodizio, Gardenia can still be an attractive eatery for you -- as an upscale dining place offering buffet.

The salad section offers a rich variety, from the spicy 'chana chaat' to the mouth-watering chicken and apple salad (but of course, the menu of the buffet changes

frequently). There are usually two items of appetisers, like dumpling, wonton, etc.

The buffet is of course not limited to meat and vegetables; there are some delectable fish and prawn delicacies too. The buffet table features a wide range of continental delicacies.

Meanwhile, during lunch, Gardenia offers you set menus.

The restaurant also arranges live music to lift up the ambience even further.

Gardenia is also a venue for holding various events. There are two private rooms (with a capacity of 20 people on each) you can book for corporate meetings, workshops, etc.

"The rooms are next to each other. So, if someone wants a bigger room, we open the doors in between and merge the two rooms into one, thus doubling room capacity," Mahbub said. "And for the convenience of the guests, we provide a separate buffet table."

There are also two banquet halls in the same premises, with capacities of 300 and 400 people.

Whether you are throwing a party or love the Brazilian dining experience or simply seek to enjoy a buffet dinner, Gardenia always has something for you.

Price: Tk1400++ for buffet; Tk2000++ for buffet and churrasco. Location: House # 8, Road # 51, Gulshan-2. Contact number: 9885465. Facebook page: Gardenia Brazilian Grill Restaurant; Gardenia Grand Hall. Business hours: 12.30pm to 3.30pm; 6.30pm to 10.30pm (buffet is available for dinner, seven days a week; live music is arranged on Thursdays and Fridays, from 8pm to 10.30pm). For home delivery: Foodpanda.

By M H Haider

Photo courtesy: Gardenia

