

HANGOUTS

Grilled: Burgers Tailored to Your Specific Tastes

SALMA MOHAMMAD ALI

I'd been meaning to visit Grilled for a while, waiting for their renovation to finish and eager to confirm if what I'd heard was true – that Grilled is a must-try burger place, with very reasonable prices.

Grilled initially started out as a cart almost two years ago at the same venue. I spoke to the owner, Sadat Rahman, a university student, about why he started Grilled. "Cooking was my passion since I was 10, so when I started the cart, I never really looked at it as a business but as pursuing a hobby," he said. He then decided to renovate Grilled into the full-fledged restaurant, since the cart hype had died down. Grilled has continued to grow in popularity since then.

The restaurant isn't too big. It's slightly narrow but not congested. The potted plants and photo frames hanging on the brick walls made for a homely décor and the lighting was soothing.

Moving on to the main attraction: we ordered a Chicken Steak Burger (190 taka) and a Beef Burger (160 taka). The burgers themselves were mainly patty, lettuce and bun, which may sound a bit bland, which is why they have 7 extra toppings to choose from: (each around 25 taka only) mozzarella cheese, cheddar cheese, pickles, jalapenos, egg, caramelised onions and mushrooms. I was a bit tempted to add them all but



luckily controlled myself just in time and settled for the cheddar cheese and mushrooms. You also have the option of taking extra patties, reasonably priced at 80 taka (beef), and 90 taka (chicken).

I don't believe any burger meal is complete without a side of crispy fries and luckily Grilled has a very sensibly priced French fries side (which most similar places overcharge) at 80 taka and it includes two sauces – garlic and

signature sauce, the latter was just the right kind of spicy. The burger looked a bit small when it arrived (pretty quickly) but by the time I finished – even though I was craving more – my hunger was satiated. The toasted buns were soft and fresh and the chicken steak patty succulent, juicy and flavourful. There were hints of pickle



and some lettuce and the extra toppings complemented the burger nicely. The mushrooms were cooked to perfection. My brother had the Beef Burger with the same toppings and he wasn't disappointed. I took a Beef Burger back home and by the time I had it, it was no longer warm and I learned that this is a burger that tastes great even when it's cold.

I was happy with the service too; the staff was helpful and polite. In total, Grilled has six different burgers and two different sandwiches (which I have my eyes on for my next visit). In my opinion the best part is having the option to add toppings and patties to basically create a burger of your own choice; it pleasantly reminded me of the cooking games we're all familiar with. The next time

you're craving a decent burger, head out for Grilled and definitely try the toppings. Facebook page: fb.com/Grilled.bd Address: House 21/A (In front of IBAIS university), Road 27 (old)/ Road 16 (new), Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

Salma Mohammad Ali fears she is becoming a crazy cat lady and uses writing as a means to grasp on to sanity. Send her your views/hate/love at fb.com/salma.ali209



Why Do We Age?

Darwinian evolution is the game of leaving as many copies of yourself as possible in your lifetime. This task would be a lot easier surely if our lifetime never ended. The organism that could live forever while constantly reproducing would be the ultimate creature, a Darwinian Demon. But then why is it that as time passes, we get weaker? Why does our hair start to fall out and our muscles sag, leaving us to lament a wasted youth? Why, in fact, do we age?

A big stop sign on the road to immortality is the fact that resources are limited. This is true for most organisms, and human beings are no exception. Lipids and proteins that make up our cells, as well as the blueprints for making those proteins, DNA, are inevitably damaged by reactive chemicals. In order to achieve immortality, it is necessary to repair this damage and stop the body from degenerating, but such repairs are highly resource intensive. And the more resources we put into maintenance the less there is to put into reproduction and this where our quest for immortality comes to a halt. Living for longer gives one more time to reproduce but the very act of living longer reduces your reproductive output, and vice versa. These irreconcilable goals lead to most organisms to reach a compromise, and

therefore a mortal life. (See immortal jellyfish for a possible exception)

But biological immortality is a long shot even in a world where resources are unlimited. For, while it is possible to keep renewing your body forever, mortality can



manifest itself through external means. Perhaps you'd be taken by disease, perhaps you'd be killed in war or be taken as food by another species, perhaps you're

very clumsy and would fall off a cliff. The likelihood of being killed by these external sources of mortality cumulatively increases with time to the point that beyond a certain age you are almost certain to be dead. And since being killed

stops you from reproducing anyway, intrinsic decline of the body beyond this age ceases to be a factor. A mutation that leads to bodily degeneration after the vast

UNDER THE FIG TREE BY AADIYAT AHMAD



majority of a population have kicked the bucket is then irrelevant to natural selection.

An extension of this concept is the idea of pleiotropic genes. These genes affect multiple traits at once. Such a gene might improve our reproductive output early in life but lead to deterioration later on. Since it gets more and more likely that we will die through external means as more time passes, it is a good idea to skew lifetime performance towards early life when one is likely to be alive instead of saving up for a time you might not live to see. Therefore those with such a gene will, on average, be more successful than those without it. Through pleiotropy, degeneration of the body over time can be something that natural selection is promoting, rather than trying to get rid of.

Our mortality is a necessary cost of life's ultimate goal: reproduction. When it comes to fitness it might be best to live fast and die young.

Ref: Ricklefs RE. 2008. The evolution of senescence from a comparative perspective. Functional Ecology 22: 379-392

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