



It's barbecue season

Imagine a cold winter night, with the air heavy with swirling mist punctuated by the fragrance of a huge slab of red meat being grilled to perfection. The chill in your body is only a delicious bite away from disappearing but first the meal must be ready. Fan the flames to speed up the process; hungry mouths hold on to pieces of naan roti waiting to dig in.

The wait is unbearable but when the time comes, you'll know it was all worth it. This is the setting for an ideal barbecue and in recent years it has become almost a tradition for a certain segment of the population. With little to do, a barbecue can offer a great respite especially during this season. And it can be done in any open space; in a garden, your verandah or even your roof.

While it may initially seem a hassle, there isn't really much to it, especially if you have company. Of course, a barbecue alone is a sad affair and it isn't complete without the presence of at least five more people. The company in question can be friends or



family or even a combination of both.

Barbecues are best done like Robin Hood; the more, the merrier. The first step though is to get everything right and this is not hard, really.

Pit grills can be bought off the store, starting from Tk.2,500. If you make the trip to Stadium market, you will have quite a selection at your disposal. Nowadays, there are even better branded options, although they come at a steeper price.

You can try Mustafa Mart or one of the more well-known electronic outlets and you will surely find what you are looking for. To go a little more old-school, you can opt to fashion your own little stove.

Get four bricks and pack them in a square shape and then add the coal. Place your meat on skewers and then you are good to go. If you have never done this before then get some help. Not only is it inexpensive, but nothing beats the taste of

a meal made on an earthen stove.

Coal is readily available in almost every bazaar or woodcutter's block. They are quite cheap and you can buy them in kilograms without making a decipherable dent in your wallet. Many superstores in the country also specifically sell meat cuts for barbecues. You can pick from what is available or go for a piece you like.

Marinate the night before and keep the meat soaking until right before the barbecue. The longer the better for the flavour but don't overdo it. You can also get a few whole chickens straight from the broiler. The problem with chicken is that people are too specific about which piece they eat, like they all taste different. They don't, so it's quite a stupid hassle. Get some potatoes and vegetables too. Nothing complements a great barbecue like grilled vegetables.

The best thing about barbecues though is the primal feeling it invokes. Gathered around

a fire on a cold winter night, slaving over meat that has started to cook, one can't help but think of the first men who discovered fire. This was exactly how they cooked their food. And it was in the warmth of their fire and the security of the light it gave off, that our ancestors actually had the first opportunity to communicate with each other.

Like how nighfall signals sleep for us, so embedded it is in our genes, a meal by fire can actually bring about a feeling of community. By the fire is when many tend to bond the best. With winter almost at its end, get your plans straightened out and make sure to hold an unforgettable barbecue. It is a tradition to not be missed out on and if it is not a part of your tradition, then perhaps it is time to make it so. You won't regret it!

By Osama Rahman
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food: Khazana