

A cafe for **DIY** lovers

DYUTY AURONEE

I wasn't sure if I would sit down to review this cafe unless, of course, I instagrammed a photo of this GulabJamun Cheesecake (yes, that's right) that I had tasted there and everyone was madly curious to know what this "fusion" of a dessert was like.

It's getting increasingly difficult to stand out as a cafe in Dhaka. This one, however, does a fantastic job with a specialised menu. The choices for the mains are two: salads and wraps. There are three items that you can choose from as the bases for your salad or wrap. For example, the day we went there, the options were Smoked Chicken, Aloo Tikki and Chittagonian Beef Bhuna. Then there are these assortments that you can pick to go alongside the chicken/beef/veg. Tomato salsa, mushrooms, cheddar, balsamic vinaigrette, Caesar dressing and coleslaw are some of the few.

Once you have had your picks, you can have the mix served either in a salad bowl or inside a tortilla/ruti as a wrap. The meals come in two sizes: Mejo and Boro. The Mejo salad bowl was around Tk. 200 with VAT. Having

finished two hearty bowls of salad and a wrap, we waited a while to decide on the desserts. Brownie-O-Trifle, Key Lime Pie, Caramel Macchiato Cupcake and Carrot Cake were some of the options. What stood out though was the GulabJamun Cheesecake. My friends and I might have cringed at the thought of this bizarre fusion but we decided to live a little and order it anyway.

Meanwhile, the beverage section offers both hot and cold options. We ordered tea that's named very inter-



estingly as Rastar Cha, Peyala Cha, Masala Cha etc. and is served in glasses like they do at the roadside tea stalls. Prices, however, do not match that of tong-er cha; Tk. 50 for a Mejo cup, for example. Being a tea lover, I was extremely disappointed as it was too bland to begin with. That disappointment was washed away as soon as we took our first bite of the

cheesecake! Priced at Tk. 250, it was so smooth that it melted in our mouths right away and was definitely not like usual cheesecakes that have a crumbly and dry texture. The GulabJamun inside satisfactorily complemented the cheesecake.

With most desserts and salads/wraps priced at around Tk. 200, the place serves fresh and light food that is fairly easy on the wallet. Unlike most places, Peyala Cafe has an interesting take on both its savoury and sweet items. Hands down, the DIY salad station happens to be my favourite. It's not only a cool concept but lets you mindfully decide what you want and don't want in your food.

WHERE:
 Gulshan 2 DCC Super Market, Dhaka
Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/peyalabd/?fref=ts>

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Café Society – Charming but disappointing

SARAH ANJUM BARI

Fans of Woody Allen are used to his quirky forays into cultural icons, from a 1970s' "Love Letter to New York" to literary Paris in the Jazz Age. The promise of a 1930s' portrayal of Hollywood starring Jesse Eisenberg, Steve Carell and Blake Lively was naturally exciting news. It's upsetting to say how underwhelming the actual experience was.

Café Society, as the trailers suggest, is a sneak peek into the glamorous Hollywood life that beckons starry-eyed visionaries, wholesome in their innocence and optimism, until all the wealth and duplicity makes sceptics of them. Young Bobby Dorfman (Jesse Eisenberg) moves from New York to Los Angeles to find work – any kind of work – in his Uncle Phil's hotshot Hollywood talent agency. He gets close to Phil (Steve Carell)'s lovely, down-to-earth secretary Vonnie and what follows is a web of confusion, tangled relationships and disappointed dreams.

Although it builds on the premise of a social satire, the movie is more about small, hidden love stories and an inconsequential string of heartbreaks that exist amid all the glitz and glamour of

Hollywood. These people sparkle in their giant movie productions and social celebrations, but face tragedies that would normally be dramatized in any other setting. That's the point it tries to get across - that even the richest are human.

Unfortunately, the message doesn't really get across. The familiar Woody

Allen jazz intro, the golden filter, the gorgeous set-up and the even more gorgeous Blake Lively make the movie aesthetically stunning; but you don't really buy it. Jesse Eisenberg's passion for both Hollywood and his heroines seem flaky and Kristen Stewart's single-expression range of emotions makes it difficult to

understand why everyone is enthralled with her, leaving Steve Carell and Blake Lively as the only characters who seem believable.

The premise of the movie is charming, as is its making, but it leaves you feeling empty; you want to care about it, but you don't.

