

Taste of authentic Thai at Thai Xpress

All of this happened when a talented 22 year old studying in Canada came to Bangladesh for his vacation. Thai Xpress, the brainchild of Alif Hasan is a brand new restaurant which debuted as he fostered the idea of sharing his fascination of Thai food with the people of Bangladesh.

While talking about his venture into the culinary industry, Alif said, "I had some time on my hands and I was looking for a challenge. I have been to Thai Xpress in Canada, Singapore and Malaysia and I absolutely love their food. Since they have no plans of branching out here in Bangladesh, I decided to bring that taste into something very similar. My intention is to offer the quintessential taste of authentic Thai food in a very reasonable price range."

Situated at the bustling heart of central Gulshan, Badda and Niketon, Thai Xpress is located at a corner of the 5th floor of Police

Concord Plaza. And since its inauguration which was held on 26 December, 2016, this place has already won the hearts of many people.

The very first thing about this place that catches the eye is its themed decor. As you enter the restaurant, you can see a live kitchen where the chef is preparing the dishes right in front of everyone. With excellent lighting, fine seating arrangements and the innovative wall painting along with the colorful lanterns hanging across the rooms, the places gives off the essence of the streets of Thailand.

Of authentic Thai cuisine, their menu includes a myriad scrumptious dishes like Thai curry and dishes in delectable variations of chicken, prawn and beef, delicious appetisers including papaya prawn, chicken wings, soups, salads and dumplings, and of course Pad Thai. The flavoursome dump-

lings with a zesty dip was definitely one of their best dishes.

The assortment of fresh vegetables incorporated in their fried rice says a lot about the quality of their food. But the highlight of their menu is the Holy Basil which is also a personal favourite of the owner himself. Commenting about the food, Alif said, "Our chef has 18 years of expertise in Thai cuisine. He has experience working at many Thai restaurants. And in order to maintain the authenticity, a lot of ingredients that we use are imported from Thailand."

The greatest thing about this place is the accessibility of the world famous cuisine in such reasonable prices. Their excellent service is also worth mentioning as they tend to each customer with ample care and patience.

When asked about the future plans

regarding this place, Alif said, "I have high hopes regarding my restaurant and I wish to create a brand that sells quality food. In a lot of cases, emerging restaurants often fail to maintain their quality. We don't want to profit much, we just want to provide great service."

Very soon they will be available on Foodpanda and Hungrynaki services.

For anyone eager to taste great food with friends and family, Thai Xpress provides the best Thai food experience. For the undeniable taste of their world famous cuisine provides absolute value for money.

Thai Xpress is located at Police Concord Plaza, Gulshan 1. Working hours: 11 a.m. - 11 p.m.

For reservations call +88 01612007727 or visit their Facebook page:

[facebook.com/thaixpressbd](https://www.facebook.com/thaixpressbd)

By Mormee Mahtab

READER'S RECIPE

For those with a sweet-tooth

CHOCO JAMUN

Ingredients

300g khoya/mawa
50g cottage cheese (channa)
A pinch of baking powder
4 tbsp flour, 2 tbsp cocoa powder
1 tbsp drinking chocolate, 5 cups sugar
3 tbsp chocolate chips (optional)

GHEE TO DEEP FRY

Method

Grate fresh khoya and chhana into a bowl. Dissolve baking soda in one tablespoon of water. Sieve together refined flour, cocoa powder and drinking chocolate. Add sieved flour, cocoa powder, drinking chocolate, and dissolved baking soda to the grated khoya and chhana and mix gently to make a dough. Heat together sugar and two and a half cups of water to make into thin syrup and keep it warm. Make small soft balls of even size of the khoya mixture. If you wish you can stuff these balls with chocolate chips. Heat sufficient ghee in a wok and deep fry the balls, a few at a time, till golden, on low heat. While frying, stir the ghee occasionally over the balls, using a perforated spoon very carefully, without touching the balls. Drain and soak them in the sugar syrup. Serve hot.

CHOCOLATE ALMOND BARFI

Ingredients

500g khoya/mawa
½ cup almond, ½ cup sugar
3 tbsp milk, Oil for greasing
300g dark chocolate

Method

Grate khoya into a bowl and keep aside. Chop almonds roughly, keeping a few aside for garnishing. Heat a pan, add grated khoya and roast for 4 to 5 minutes. Add sugar, chopped almond and milk and cook till it thickens. Melt dark chocolate in a



double boiler. Pass it through a sieve to remove any lumps. Bring melted chocolate to room temperature. Divide the cooked khoya mixture into three equal parts. To one part add one-third of the melted chocolate. Mix well.

Grease a tray with oil. Pour one part of plain khoya mixture onto it and spread evenly. Shake the tray so that mixture spreads evenly. Now spread the chocolate khoya mixture over and finally top with the remaining plain khoya mixture. Let it cool for forty-five minutes to one hour.

When completely cooled, cut into square or diamond shaped pieces. Holding the barfi pieces by their edges dip into the remaining melted chocolate so that only the top side of the burfi is covered with the melted chocolate.

Garnish with almond pieces and keep it in the refrigerator for thirty minutes before serving.

STRAWBERRY FIRNI

Ingredients

4 tbsp rice

12-15 pieces fresh strawberries
8-9 pieces pistachios, 6-8 pieces almonds
5 cups milk, ¾ cup sugar
½ tsp green cardamom powder

Method

Clean, wash and soak rice in sufficient water for half an hour. Drain and grind soaked rice to a coarse paste. Dilute rice paste with half a cup of water. Wash, hull and slice two strawberries and chop the remaining finely. Soak pistachios and almonds in hot water for five minutes, drain, peel and finely slice. Heat milk and bring to a boil. Gradually stir in the rice paste, and reduce heat and simmer for three to four minutes, stirring continuously or till the milk is well thickened.

Add sugar, cardamom powder and continue to simmer till sugar dissolves completely. Remove from heat, cool to room temperature and stir in the chopped strawberries. Pour this mixture into earthenware or ceramic bowls, garnish with sliced pistachios, almonds and sliced strawberries and serve chilled.



CHOCOLATE BARFI

Ingredients

2 cups khoya/mawa, 2 tsp oil, 1/3 cup sugar
3 tbsp cocoa powder
Silver warq as required

Method

Crumble khoya into fine granules. Grease a tray with oil and keep aside. Cook khoya in milk in a thick-bottomed pan, stirring continuously till it is completely melted and has a thick sauce like consistency. Do not let it change colour. Stir in sugar till it dissolves completely and khoya is cooked. Remove half of this mixture and pour onto the greased tray. For spreading the khoya evenly on the tray, hold it from two sides and tap it on hard surface two or three times. Let it cool.

Keep the remaining half on low heat. Add cocoa powder and mix well. Pour the cocoa mixture over the earlier mixture. Let it cool completely. Cut into pieces and serve coated with silver warq if desired.

By Elora Hossain

Photo courtesy: Elora Hossain