



FOR THE LOVE OF FOOD

BY KANISKA CHAKRABORTY

Café Sienna

Tucked on a quiet lane, near bustling Gariahat, is Café Sienna.

Part of the growing café culture of Calcutta.

That area has quite a few cafes and eateries that cater to the young and chic.

There is Mrs Magpie, Delices, Byloom just to name a few.

Café Sienna is in the same mould as Byloom in the sense that it is inside a very chic handloom shop that sells ethically sourced fabric, ready to wear dresses and knick-knacks.

While Byloom café does a lot of classic Bangali food, like mutton chop and luchi and mutton ghugni, Café Sienna is firmly in the esoteric territory, selling bistro food like sandwiches, wraps, pasta, salads and a selection of desserts.

What really impressed me were the quirky décor and the eclectic group of people who seem to be regulars. Students,

foreigners, audiovisual professionals, couples from the locality, group of elderly friends. The place was buzzing.

On our first visit, we ordered coffee and tea. Nothing remarkable. Fairly watery coffee, iced green tea made with tea bag.

My next visit was with a dear friend. She had a cappuccino, I a macchiato. The macchiato took forever to arrive. But was a good one once it did. Loved the madeleine and the muffin that we ordered. The cakes are supplied by Shuktara, an NGO that works with differently abled boys and trains them in baking.

On my third visit, I took my mother, who is very fond of cafes and loves a simple teacake, or a nice cheese sandwich, which she did order, along with a masala chai. I ordered a ham roll with plum and star anise sauce from the special seasonal menu as that sounded nice. And also a macchiato.

The macchiato and masala chai came

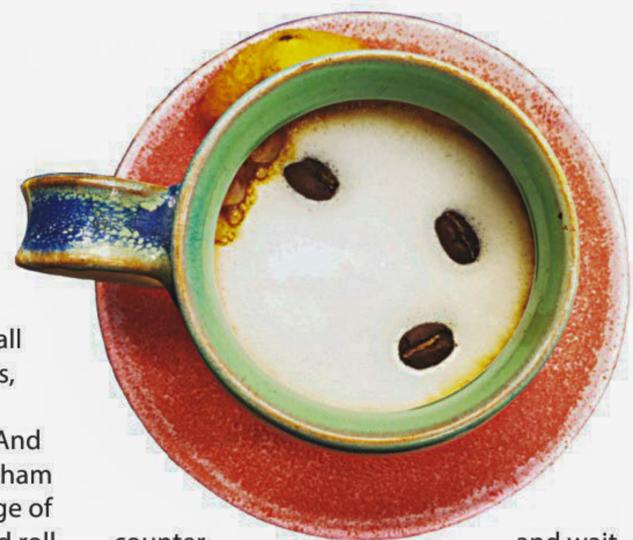
pronto. And continued to get cold as we kept on waiting for the food.

Her grilled cheese sandwich came, all golden with great looking potato chips, oozing cheese. So far so good.

My ham roll took some more time. And they were not kidding when they said ham roll. Usually, a roll conjures up the image of a bakery product, a croissant or a bread roll. I thought the same will be with ham inside. What came were literally two rolled up slices of ham. Kind of like the rollmops that are so common in Scandinavian cuisine.

Two rolled up ham slices that have spent more than sufficient time under a hot grill. They were stuffed with the plum sauce. Every bite was an exercise in patience, as I had to chew through the well, chewy ham to get to the overpowering sauce. Cannot say it was the most pleasant of experiences.

Café Sienna is supposedly a self-serve place where you place the order at the



counter and wait forever for food. But unlike most self serve places, there are waiters serving food and collecting bills. So why not go the extra yard and let people order at the table? It would make life so much simpler, especially now that the special menu is on the tables.

A lovely place in the middle of an extremely busy part of Calcutta. It would be so nice if the service and the food were a little better.

Photo: Kaniska Chakraborty

LS PICK

COLD COFFEE CHILLS FOR THIS DHAKA SUMMER



The end of winter is received by the caffeine addicts with a sad groan - no more sipping on cups of various flavours of steaming coffee! And thus, resorting to a more spring-y way to celebrate your favourite drink becomes a necessity. Enter the cold coffee!

Whether you need a midday mug to keep yourself awake after the fifth meeting on a row or just need a break to hang out with your friends and shed some of that exam stress, plenty of cafés around town offer a wide range of freshly brewed cold coffees that are sure to make you crave for more!

NORTH-END COFFEE ROASTERS

Literally a piece of heaven for every coffee fanatic, no other café understands the need for perfect coffee as much as North-End does. With an extensive collection of iced coffee and blended frozen drinks, North-End offers something for everyone. You could order your favourite hot coffee drink and have it iced with Tk 25 extra or opt for the coffee freddos which

are only served cold. A must-have at North-End is the raspberry mocha at Tk 300 for a regular cup and Tk 400 for a large cup. Precise in terms of consistency, this drink leaves you with a slightly fruity after-taste from the raspberry that perfectly complements the initial burst caffeine.

GEORGE'S CAFÉ

With three outlets in Uttara, Banani and Dhanmondi, George's Cafe prides itself in being a slice of New York in Dhaka, and has been consistent in providing top-quality coffee to everyone. The flavoured cappuccinos and lattes at only Tk 225 come in four variations - vanilla, caramel, mint and cinnamon. However, it is their java drinks that make the consumers go back to the cafe.

What is better than a frothy

coffee shake that's easy on your wallet and your palate at only Tk 170! For those with a sweet tooth, opt for the vanilla or caramel java, costing around Tk 220, and you sure will not be disappointed.

CRIMSON CUP

An absolute delight when it comes to coffee drinks, Crimson Cup has been rather popular among the youth. Most of Crimson Cup's frozen drinks revolve around a variation of lattes - iced café latte, peppermint latte, vanilla latte and so on. For the tea-lovers, crimson cup brings a twist with the chai latte, blending the goodness of tea and coffee at once. The Crimson Cup mocha which is a specialty at Tk 350 for a regular cup, is also a must-have for anyone with a soft corner for mocha.

COFFEE WORLD

Starting in 2005, Coffee World

has lived up to its name being one of the pioneer coffee shops around town. From the classic iced coffees - espresso, cappuccino, mocha, latte - to more complicated cold coffee drinks, they have it all!

With the regulars starting from Tk 180, their iced coffee can go up to Tk 220. While mocha and cappuccino frappes are the usual favourite drinks, Coffee World has something in store for those who enjoy their coffee bitter and stronger. Yes, that's right! Coffee World even has an espresso cookie frappe at Tk 345 for a regular cup and Tk 365 for a large one.

So next time, you decide to indulge in your favourite drink, do remember to give these a try!

By Adiba Mahbub Prama

Photo: Collected