

**SECRET ALLEYS**BY SALEH UZ ZAMAN  
Food Enthusiast

# Kallu is king!

Stray away from the confines of a fancy menu, eye pleasing décor and cosy environment. Only then you will be able to savour the spiciest kababs from Kallu Kabab Ghar. Located within the deep underbelly of Mirpur Bihari Camp, the taste of its kabab will undoubtedly surprise you. Enter the road beside Mirpur Sector 11 bus stop and you will reach this al fresco marvel within a few hundred yards.

I do not know when Kallu Kabab Ghar started making their wonders but what I do remember is nibbling away on the killer combo of luchi and beef chaap at least 20 years ago. I can personally vouch that the taste has not deteriorated a bit even after all these years.

The establishment has two divisions. One is for the regular sheek kabab, chicken chap and beef chap. Another one is for khiri kabab, gurda kabab and brain masala. Each of the items will cost around Tk 80-120. Each luchi will cost 2 Taka. The food orders will have to be separate. The bills will be separate too.

Each of the food items are spicier in comparison to what we get in the fancy cafes and restaurants. They are nothing like you have ever experienced before, this I can guarantee.



I personally recommend the beef chap over its chicken counterpart. Gurda kabab is a must because not only will it make your tastebuds drool, you will never know that it was accompanied by sliced potatoes, further spiced up with a mouth-watering gravy of tangy coriander leaves.

The potatoes are also available with khiri kabab.

The only downside of eating here is the crazy hustle and bustle of the Bihari camp. And if you are a bit too concerned with the cleanliness of the place, I suggest you get the food to take away. The food hygiene has been good enough for thousands of loyal customers from all walks of life for decades. That should not be a problem.

Living in Dhaka and not trying out the meaty delights of Kallu Kabab Ghar is a sin. There are hundreds of marvels like this one all around the city, still undiscovered by the mass. This is a good place to start from.

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



EATING OUT

## Food bonanza in the camp

Having heard so many stories and growing up so close to the place itself, it was time for me to explore it on my own. With a lot of excitement and a bit of apprehension, a couple of friends and I decided to work on an assignment and also look at the transitions and narratives of history that affected the lives of so many people.

We met in front of a landmark that absolutely anyone would recognise – Mustakim -- which is actually situated right outside the premises of the Bihari Camp. Looking through the long narrow buildings shooting upwards for a lack of space on the ground itself, we see a growing population of budding generations of children.

Looking at the preparations of all the stores, which only start operation at dusk, we decided to venture inside the camp before absolute darkness. We were immediately dazzled by the lights and the gleaming saris that lined the shelves on either side of the narrow street. This led us to the next lane that showcased daily wear, school bags and utensils, besides other essentials. Walking further in, the aroma of biriyani was difficult to miss and that led us to one of everyone's favourite place, as I learned later, Bobar Biryani.

The unique name has its roots in the fact that the chef himself is mute.

Even though we already had lunch, we were not going to be foolish enough to miss a plate. We were glad of our decision because we had some of the best kachchi there.

Bellies full to the brim, we finally got to work. However, this was not without

having the occasional snack every now and then, and to be honest, we tried everything we saw.

From the small puri brimming with steaming spicy potato and dal filling, to the crispy round vegetable pakoras, nothing missed our sinfully gluttonous stares.

We even shared crispy luchi over a plate of chicken chaap made to order right in front of us. The flavours so devilishly tantalising, with hot bits of crunchy spicy chicken melting in the mouth followed by mouthfuls of luchi wrapped

inquiring what the small sheeks were pierced onto, and we found to our glee, that he made khiri kabab, chicken and beef kababs and kolija.

Again, the sheeks were made to order and we could see the colour of the cubed bits of meat transforming from light and dark pinks to dark browns and then almost black from the heat and the char. The vendor kept the kababs moist by brushing on a mix of wet spices and oil which sizzled into smoke as drops of it fell onto the small bed of red hot burning coal underneath the mesh net which was bedding for the small meat cubes.

Ready in about five minutes, a final dusting of rock salt and a spice mix, the sheeks disappeared in quick succession, and following this we learnt that the bill was not even half as generous as the food was, paying only ten or fifteen takas per sheek.

A few steps away, we found yet another man selling sweets out of a sky-blue tub, arranging the sweets on an aluminium tray lined with a red cloth, and of course, we took our favourite kinds

since, surprisingly, this man boasted a wide variety of choices — laddus, chana misti, kalo jaam, pantua, kacha golla and even baked and sliced cakes, all at about five to ten taka a piece. The day had been largely dominated by our gastronomical ventures and we ended the night with just another sweet item which had taken over our social media feeds – the fire paan, which to say the least, is more fun than flare.

By Ayesha Rahman Chowdhury  
Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



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and the juicy chicken meat and cool cucumber salad dressed in a green chutney to contrast the texture -- I am tempted to go back in time.

Having said so, the chaap was not even the best part of that evening, as we were walking back, we spotted a red-haired man with a bald spot and a heavy moustache vigorously fanning at his small portable grill.

It was not long before we followed the smoke rising into the air and were quickly