

SECRET ALLEYS

BY SALEH UZ ZAMAN
Food Enthusiast

A delight in its own

I believe khichuri to be the best food in the whole wide world. If possible, I would eat khichuri all day, every day, all throughout the year. In fact, rather than being considered food, it should be considered an experience.

Imagine having a plate full of khichuri in front of you, steaming hot. The amount of turmeric in it is just perfect, not overwhelming at all. To savour each quarter of it, the side dishes are — one classic deshi styled omelette, two pieces of begun bhaja, tomato bharta, and a small bowl of spicy beef gravy. Did I forget to mention about the spicy mango pickle? Well, you get that too. As dessert, you either have an option of having mishti doi or chilled roshmalai. Now if that is not an experience, then nothing can be!

This scenario is not imaginary but something I first encountered a few years ago in Bhoj. Favourite among the local residents and office goers, Bhoj is in Segun Bagicha, east of Shilpakala Academy.

Sadly, khichuri, the restaurant's best offering, is only served during lunch time. Other lunch options are chicken biriyani, kachchi biriyani and plain rice. Usually they have an assortment of bhortas, each of them a tongue pleaser. The fish fries are quite delectable.

The best part of eating out at Bhoj is that whenever you go there, they have plenty of tasty food ready to

serve. They have a four-part menu, each unique for a specific time of the day.

Number of items are significantly higher during dinner. Options during that time is dominated by Indian foods. The combination of Aloo Parata, Mutton Rogan Josh and Sweet Lassi for dinner can make your Thursday nights extremely pleasing.

The evening snacks are however kept light. Rolls, samosas and other fried food appear to be almost oil-free.

The main reason I personally prefer Bhoj is for its service. The wait staff are extremely cordial with a smile.



Plates and utensils are clean. Its minimalistic approach of a décor is always kept spick and span. The food presentation is nothing fancy but very organised.

A big deviant from the crowded and noisy Indian eateries in Gulshan, Banani and Dhanmondi, Bhoj is somewhere people can go for a quiet munch. No wonder it's a sheer favourite!

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

READER'S CHIT

Coffee: a lifestyle or just another alternative to tea?

The millennials have the credit for truly bringing the coffee culture to Bangladesh, more specifically to Dhaka. Coffee culture, the idea of coffee as a social stimulant, means that going out for a coffee has more social implications than the physical need of caffeine. A remnant of the years of colonization left the nation addicted to tea, diffused into the everyday food habits. A Bengali, rich or poor, started his day with a cup of tea. The variety ranged from the divine Darjeeling tea to the "Rastar Cha" found at your corner stall, specifically set up for catering tea.

But with globalisation, the youth is acquiring consistently more global tastes, and coffee is just one of those elements adopted with fervour. The globetrotting Bangladeshis quickly introduced their not so well travelled friends to the cappuccinos, macchiatos and lattes of the world, and then the piping hot drinks were followed by their chilled counterparts who quickly became cult favourites—not surprising given the Tropic of Cancer influenced summers. Double shot espressos are now a common phenomenon amongst the morning coffee addicts, closely followed by cold coffees in various flavours, changing with seasons and the midnight hangouts vary between cappuccinos and mochas, or chillers, depending of the temperatures outside.

A development of taste aside, there seems to be another element at play towards making coffee as popular as it is in the capital. We as a soci-

ety are slowly losing all our sources of entertainment, and the pervasive coffee shops with their easy access seems to boost the drink's inclusion into the cultural fabric. It is part of the phenomenon of food being the binding agent for most celebration and festivities in the Bangladeshi culture, and hence the scene is starkly different from the west.

Coffee is majorly made up of caffeine, a pharmacologically active compound that is a mild stimulant. Caffeine also increases the release of catecholamines like adrenaline, which among other things can make the heart beat faster, increase blood flow to the muscles, and help release sugar into the bloodstream for energy. For these, it is widely consumed during the earlier hours of the day to get an energy boost, particularly in the western world, where it also has a last call. Popular coffee giants like Starbucks would close shop after 5pm. However, in Bangladesh, people go to coffee shops not only to drink coffee but as a source of entertainment. There are only few coffee patrons who focus on the consumption of coffee as it was meant to be, as a boost to dull mornings. The regulars at Dhaka's coffee shops go there to spend some good time. Coffee shops are chameleons—a place to go and study, a place to celebrate a friend's new job, a place for a first date, and more often the perfect place to just relax with friends. The coffee addicts of the city appreciate the coffee houses.

The new coffee culture is not restricted to the coffee shops either, having made its way into the homes of the upper middleclass Bangladeshis. Young Bangladesh, with increased disposable incomes and a penchant for coffee, feel the need to be able to access coffee at the most convenient of places—their homes, evidenced by the increasing availability of types of coffee machines. Coffee lovers are educating themselves and demanding newer blends of coffee, and the previously dominant Robusta blend is competing for attention with the Arabica in Dhaka.

With tea being a major livelihood source for the Bangladeshi people, this new coffee culture may seem to be a threat. It does appear however, that as a nation Bangladesh will remain pre-tea for the near future, consuming and producing more tea than coffee. Though the coffee culture has seeped into the lives of the upper middleclass, the availability and acceptance of coffee is still low in the other strata of society. The coffee drinkers more often than not still begin their day with a cup of tea. One will still be offered tea when visiting someone's house, and tea will be the go to drink during office meetings. And tea will definitely find its way on the menu cards of coffee shops. For all the glamour that is coffee, tea is still the star beverage for an average Bangladeshi.

By Suki Amatya, Tamanna Mahin, Bushra Humaira Sadaaf and Supriti Sarkar

Dr. Jhumu Khan's Laser Medical



ENJOY 14% DISCOUNT*

DEFY YOUR Age

Aging is inevitable and usually the effects of gravity become more noticeable on our face as the

FACE LIFT WITHOUT SURGERY

supporting tissue of the cheeks weakens, facial fat is lost, the jawline that used to be firm and tight forms jowls, the edges of the mouth drift down towards the chin, and the lower face and neck sags. Power Thread Lift can help you enhance

your confidence and give you a naturally beautiful appearance that is true to who you are.

POWER CELL | THREAD LIFT

◆ Lifting ◆ Contouring ◆ Volumizing
◆ Stimulating Collagen Production

"Power lifting threads" is the newest innovation of skin rejuvenation, firming and tightening, wrinkle reduction and non-surgical minimal invasive face lift. Suitable candidates for a thread lift procedure are those who are in their mid-thirties to fifties and experiencing mild to moderate sagging of facial tissues. It is done by PDO thread, a bio-absorbable suture, which gradually stimulate collagen and elastin production until it is completely absorbed by your body within 6 months. This space age technology is successfully done in Laser Medical Center in Bangladesh.

*Till 31 December 2017



Dr. Jhumu Khan

MBBS (DMC), DCD (UK), MSc(Germany) Board Member WOCPM, Diplomat (WOSAAM) Dermatologist, Anti aging & Regenerative Medicine Specialist

NEW LOOK NEW LIFE

Gulshan 01711660938 | Dhanmondi 01727001199 | Uttara 01954333888

f/lasermedicalcenter | lasermedicalbd.com