

Sankranti tales



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Over the years, the night of Chaitra Sankranti for Dhakaites has become a time of celebrations and excitement. Traditionally this is the day when most businesses close their account books and prepare to open a new one but many are unaware that this day is also considered to be an auspicious one.

Like all other things in Bengali traditions and culture, the food consumed during this day is also very particular. According to working mom Srabonti Dutta, "the ideology is to consume a lot of green, bitter and leafy vegetables and also turmeric (high in antioxidants) in order to prepare for the coming days' celebration and feasts. Dishes consisting of various kinds of shakh, neem and korolla is cooked. Neem is consumed

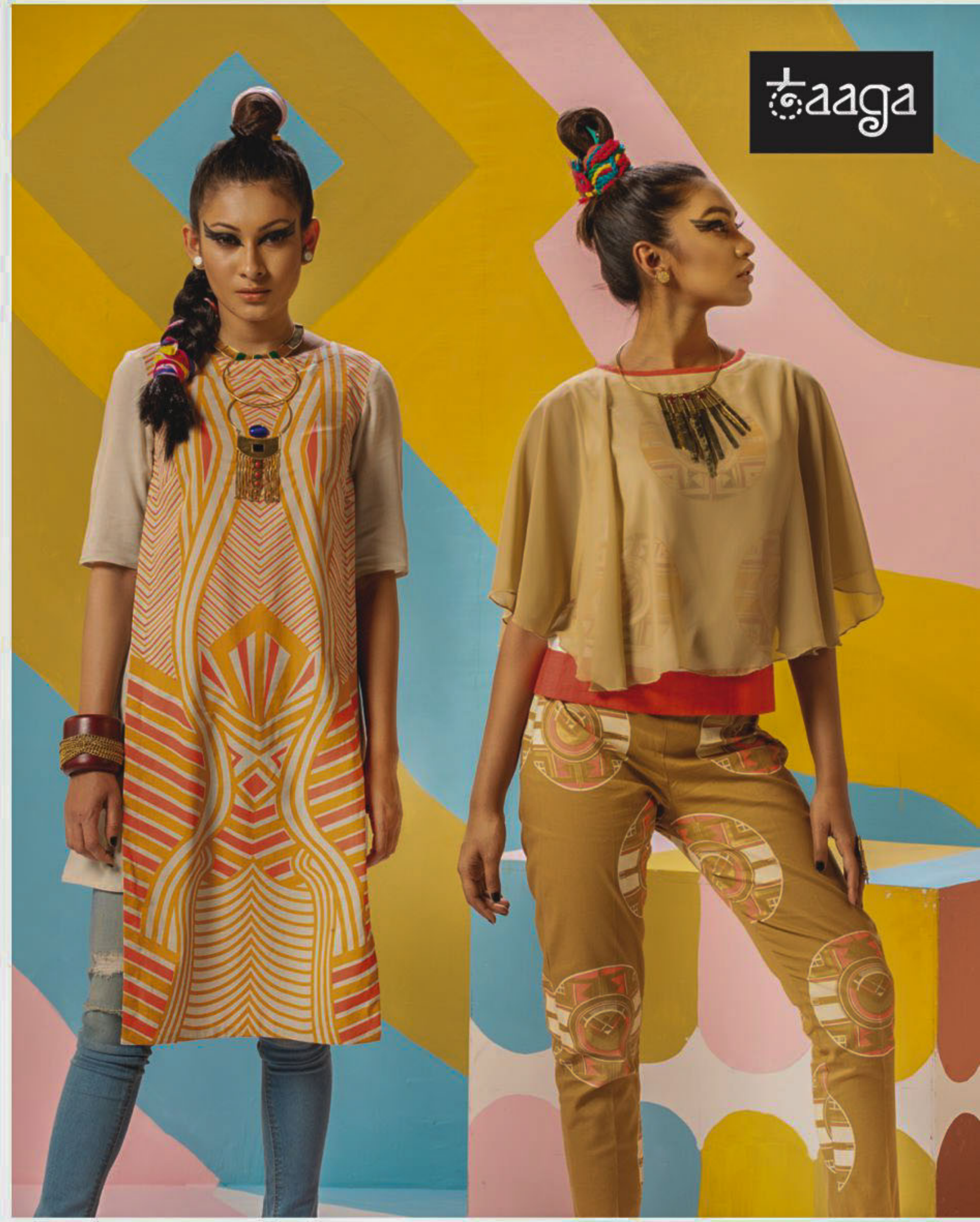
for two reasons; tender neem leaves are available during this time and taste really good when fried and it also is believed to be a good antiseptic to pox germs. Kacha aamer tok is also a very popular dish."

For Hindus, the celebrations include a Charak Puja and the preparation of delicacies such as chhatu and khoi-er murki.

Pahela Baishakh is synonymous to our Bengali identity. A day when people from all walks unite to ring in the new year. Naturally the eve to follow the new dawn, deserves a celebratory bidding to wash away the good, bad and all things in between of the past year. Until the next Baishakh... here's to Chaitra Sankranti 1424.

By Supriti Sarkar

Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel



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