



### LS SPECIAL

One could say that the art of making sweets is etched deep into our traditions, and by extension, our very existence. The mothers and grandmothers of yesteryears spent countless hours perfecting this art, and to ensure their hard work would not go to waste, passed down the fruits of their labour to the next generation.

# Sweets for Shab-e-barat

Fast forward to today, and you will see that love for traditional Bengali sweets is still going strong. Unfortunately, the only thing that seems to have changed is that we now have literally no time to dabble into the wizardry of sweet-making as the city life has its own set rules, which mostly do not include making desserts at home. Yet, this need to make and have sweets comes alive especially during special occasions like the fast approaching Shab-e-barat, when sweetmeats play an integral role on the dining table.

Thankfully, to tend to those sweet cravings you will eventually have, there are now plenty of shops across the city, constantly innovating and coming up with unique sweets, so that you do not have to.

Expect to find exquisite types and collections of laddus, barfis and malai sweets made with only the best ingredients to cater to just about anyone's sweet tooth.

### HALWA

Considered a staple of the whole Shab-e-barat experience, halwa is a must-have for any household. However, do not stick to just

the standard run of the mill daal-halwas. Sweetmeat shops have taken many classic recipes and added their own unique touches to ensure a whole new experience for the palate.

With chewy textures and succulent flavours, the halwas of Meena Sweets are a must-have this Shab-e-barat. Generously cooked with ghee, these are flavoursome, leaving a lasting aftertaste. While the small chunks of cashew nuts add a bit of crunch to the toffee-like cashew-nut halwa, the generous pieces of anjir added to the anjir halwa are like a treat to the fruit-lovers out there.

Pop a few of the bold green pesta halwas on your table, and you will end up with the colours of summer on a platter!

Other than Meena Sweets, the maskat halwa of Premium Sweets is also ideal for the occasion. The glossy maskat halwas have a chewy buttery texture with generous amounts of cashew nuts and raisins. Alternatively, try the almond halwa!

With the pureed almond prepared with sweet cream, ghee, sugar, and saffron, this sweet is ideal for celebrations!

If you want something that scores a 10 on the unique meter however, give Hotel Sarina's Restaurant Amrit a try. Their one-of-a-kind Ata-khejur halwa is simply to die for. Cooked with copious amounts of ghee, and served hot, this thing is guaranteed

to take any sweet-tooth straight to nirvana.

### MILKY DELIGHTS

If milk flavoured delights are your thing, Premium offers a large range of signature sweetmeats that are sure to have you salivating. For the discerning sweet connoisseur, try the kheer toast, which contains a dense inner layer of kheer surrounded by a sweet velvety outer layer. For those with sugar restrictions, have no fear as they also have a sugar free version of the famed kheer toast.

With the blend of saffron and milk being a regal favourite of the subcontinent, it should come as no surprise that the best sweetmeats are milk-based and generously topped with saffron. Premium's Saffron bhog, which consists of a creamy inner layer to complement the outer chhana with just a hint of saffron and almond, is sure to be the show-stealers for those who enjoy creamy sweetmeats.

Alternatively, a bite of the malaikari chhana from Khazana Mithai is bound to keep you coming back for more.

If you like nuts, the Creamy Nuts at Premium is the perfect sweetmeat with its succulent spongy texture and a flavour that gets you hooked even at the first bite. Alternatively, those with a love for gur should definitely try Sweet Persia; one of their signature sweets, the thick inner kheer combined with the outer sponge is topped with the goodness of gur and almond.

### BARFI

Another category of sweetmeat without which celebrations feel incomplete is the barfi. The apparent rock hard texture that delicately melts in the mouth is what makes barfis so flavoursome. From the classic carrot barfi, which contains the goodness of carrots, saffron and almonds to more specific signature sweetmeats, Khazana Mithai contains an array of barfis that is bound to thrill your taste buds.

A favourite among the little ones, the

chocolate barfi is made of a mixture of mawa and chocolate, and then it is generously topped with even more chocolate. Once again, those of you who love a nutty texture in your sweetmeat, the cashew nut is now carefully crafted into the mouth-watering cashew nut barfi, which you can find both at Khazana Mithai and Meena Sweets. Another notable entry in the barfi segment comes straight from the kitchen of Restaurant Amrit with their Chhana-daal er barfi. What will shock you about their barfi is how light it is once you eat it, leading you to eat more than you thought you could.

### SANDESH

To add a bit of colour to your serving dish, the colourful apple sandesh from Khazana Mithai, which are intricately carved to resemble apples, are ideal for the little ones. For the rest of us, the familiar taste of the gur sandesh, topped with a little bit of chocolate, adds that final touch of excellence.

You could also try the sandesh from Meena Sweets or the kheer sandesh with its creamy taste that practically melts into your mouth. For big families, the fish shaped sandesh from Meena Sweets is a mouth-watering delicacy that is bound to bring the family together!

### LADDU

Other than the popular moti laddus and mihidana laddus, the variety of laddus available is enough to make your head spin! From the goodness of carrots to the elegant Zafrani laddus, the choices are many. You could try the Jorda laddu or the shemai laddu from Rosh too.

Premium Sweets on the other hand offers laddus, deep fried in ghee. From the soft Gwalior laddu with its sensational assorted nuts and dried fruits to the orange motinut laddus with its almond aftertaste, the laddu-lovers are surely in for a treat this season!

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