

LS PICK

A Healthy Guide to Deshi Iftar

Admit it. We all just adore an elaborate spread of chhola, peyaju, beguni and kebabs galore, the top traditional items that we simply cannot imagine having an iftar without. But before you prepare to feast upon all these foods in all their delectable oily glory, here's some food for thought:

A long day of fasting causes your body to lose water. Your body needs to rehydrate fast and gain energy from the food and drinks you are about to consume. So it's a good idea to not only eat and drink enough, but also to do that right.

KNOW THY FOOD

Oily and deep fried foods will slow down your metabolism and may make you feel constipated after the meal. Going overboard with creamy and sugary delights will also be likely to increase your weight. On the other hand, foods that contain too much salt tend to stimulate thirst so it will be wise to avoid them.

The best iftar menu to set for this summer would be one filled with low-fat, fluid-rich and fibre-rich items such as fresh fruits, veggies, soups/stews and drinks.

While there's no topping a bowlful of 'doi-chira' as a nutritious side dish to your daily iftar, here are a few traditional soups and drinks with a healthy twist for this Ramadan.

SOUPS OF SALVATION

Soups, as we know them, are traditionally based on broths and/or contain pulses or

starchy foods. In many Arabian countries, they are served a light fluidic dish that helps to rehydrate the body quickly. Most soups are not only easy and affordable to make, but they also taste delicious and make you feel full easily.

Haleem, for instance, is a deshi and homely lentil soup that we love to break our fast with. Lowering the proportion of meat in it and toning down on the spices can give it the right balance of proteins, carbs, vitamins and fibres. Oats and chicken haleem (which is cooked by replacing the usual ingredients with oats and chicken) is another slick and healthy alternative to the traditional haleem. Other common soups include clear chicken, vegetable and corn soups. Besides this, fresh tomato soup is very beneficial for those who have diabetes or cardiac problems.

In addition to soups, a plateful of fresh salad is also an excellent and healthy side dish for iftar. Besides regular salads, you can make a tasty 'fruit chaat' out of fresh fruits (apples, kiwis, oranges, papayas, etc.) with a hint of garam masala and lime juice in it. It will help to reactivate your taste buds and

enhance your appetite.

DRINKS TO (NOT) DIE FOR

There are a number of ways to revamp most traditional drinks to make them healthier (and tastier). Dates are well-known to be rich in sugars, vitamins, iron and fibers and also help digestion. Blend some milk with a handful of dates with bananas and add a dash of powdered cinnamon to have a chilled banana-date smoothie.

You can try making a similar date smoothie with pomegranate pearls too.

Summer is the prime season for 'kaacha aam' (raw/green mangoes). A simple green mango-mint juice will cool down your stomach and make you feel refreshed instantly! While the green mango acts as a catalyst to speed up digestion, the mint juice reduces fatigue and fights various common ailments.

Now that you have the food guidelines in mind, make sure to get some light exercise or go for a short walk to balance your food intake with your daily activities throughout Ramadan.

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Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Food and styling: RBR



Ramadan is here, and wouldn't you know it, its smack dab in the middle of summer. Observing Ramadan during the scorching heat of a Bangladeshi summer calls for a pure stomach cleansing alongside spiritual cleansing.

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