

EATING OUT

Little Asia: Asia's greatest hits

There is nothing that brings people close like food, and the Asian cuisine can boast perhaps the largest variety of goodies; spicy, savoury, and scrumptious.

Little Asia, a cozy and invitingly lit space tucked into one of the floors of a Dhanmondi building stacked with eateries, is true to its name. The menu is vast, and the items as varied in cuisine as Asia in terms of countries and cultures.

It is perhaps a good reflection of the young entrepreneurs behind this somewhat fresh initiative. Farhan Naveed Chowdhury, Syed Junayedul Haque, Akib Arafat Hossain, and Taposhi Rabeya Trisha, are all young people from backgrounds as different as BBA-MBA's and BSC, except Akib, who has a Professional Chef Diploma from Victoria University in Malaysia. The love for good food is what brought them all together. While working together for the food and



beverage sector of a leading Bangladeshi conglomerate, the three male partners saw the scope in the burgeoning food industry, and discovered their passion for good food while travelling abroad, says Farhan, who has since quit his corporate job to be at the restaurant full time. Taposhi, Farhan's spouse, is in-charge of the Halal Bar, an in-house section catering to a range of delicious drinks.

The menu at Little Asia offers something for every mood, and there are some quirky fusion and cutesy items, like the Kala Bhuna

Pizza, and the Memory Drink. The pizza, true to its name, has the famous kala bhuna adapted as the cheesy topping. The Memory Drink is quite a delightful concept, where you can print any picture or writing on top of a drink! Can you imagine the romantic possibilities for all those young love-struck couples out there?

The Halal Bar also has this delicious Blueberry Yoghurt smoothie, along with Red Velvet shake, Salted Peanut Butter shake, and lighter items like Virgin Mojito, Mint Crush and even Salted Lassi and fresh fruit

juices. The options are pretty much endless.

One of my highlights at Little Asia was the delicious and succulent chicken Joojeh kabab, of Iranian origin. The Pineapple fried rice is very well balanced in flavours, served in a hollowed-out half of a pineapple, with little pieces of the fruit incorporated into the rice as well.

On the menu, there are also well-known items like Nasi Goreng, Pad Thai noodles, Kabuli Biryani, Arabic Shish Tawook, Beef Chelow, and even Maki Roll. Despite the diversity of cuisines, the quality is not compromised as there are trained chefs, and also an open kitchen for patrons to view the cooking.

There is a touch of youth's enthusiasm for good causes in the interior concept of Little Asia, as much of the décor was personally done by the entrepreneurs themselves, and most of the furniture is reclaimed ship items—although nothing looks out of place.

Little Asia is perfect for a family outing or a friends' hangout, with something for everyone, so next time you cannot decide which cuisine you want, just opt for a lot of them altogether.

By Sania Aiman
Photo: Little Asia

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**NEW IN TOWN**

The ISHO way to décor

For truly comfortable homes and efficient office workspaces, the right furniture is key. Modern living demands a certain balance, which is difficult but vital to strike.

The ISHO brand was developed as a means to bridge the gap between what is desired for modern living in Bangladesh versus what is available in the market. There is a very big disconnect in not only functionality, but also design of furniture. ISHO addresses both these issues while keeping the price in mind.

One of the main things ISHO tackled was understanding how people interact with their furniture on a daily basis. One and a half years of proper R&D, rigorous focus group sessions and trials to develop each furniture design, made each ISHO item a stand-out. The aim was to make furniture efficient and durable. Within the design team, the products have been broken down into three different design styles.

Traditional, as the name suggests, was developed for people who still prefer classical ornamentation — inspirations from historically prevalent architectural and furniture features were the inspirations here, and redefined in a minimalist style to suit the ISHO aesthetic.

Modern is for people who are up to date with global styles and design trends. It's for the internet savvy and Pinterest loving



audience who want their surroundings to reflect their lifestyle.

Finally, the *Functional* style tries to address the use of space, which is limited in the modern day home. In this case, ISHO focused on efficiency and multipurpose pieces, for example, adjustable sofa, sofa bed, modular tables etc.

Additionally, ISHO's office furniture follows the same philosophy.

The use of solid wood and engineered wood, along with simple construction, makes the furniture at ISHO physically

strong and durable. This also allows young people just starting out, or a new family to find things in an affordable price bracket.

ISHO has already launched their e-commerce site and will be launching their app next month. Since customers usually like to see and test before buying, ISHO has a team of personnel well trained in customer service, and familiar with every piece of furniture at ISHO. They will go to a home or office, assemble and set up the ordered furniture up for the buyer. That's not all though! ISHO allows the customer

to feel the new furniture in their space for an hour, before letting them decide whether they want to keep it or return it. If they like it, it stays; but is a customer has second thoughts, it is packed up and taken away.

ISHO's also has plans to launch an app with an augmented reality feature soon, which will allow patrons to virtually see the furniture in their desired space before buying it.

LS Desk
Photo: ISHO

Special thanks to Rayana Hossain, Director, Dekko Isho Group

For more information, visit <https://isho.com.bd> or www.facebook.com/ishobd

