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# LIFE

Style

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## As bright as YELLOW!

Secretly, everyone called her yellow.  
For she knew how to turn heartbreak into compassion;  
Searching for love in the pits of the ocean,  
Pinnacles of the mountain,  
And in the depths of the forest.  
When she couldn't find any  
She rose above all, and became love herself,  
Bright and yellow as the sun.

THE GAMCHA REVOLUTION C  
SUSTAINABLE FASHION  
FALGUN FLAVOURS P9  
RECIPES FOR SPRING  
STYLE FRONTIERS P12  
ZUBAIDA FASHION

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED  
MODEL: BORNO  
MAKE-UP: MD HOSEN  
WARDROBE: BIBI PRODUCTIONS  
STYLING: ZABIN IQBAL  
LOCATION: BENGAL CARPET MILL, FORD NAGAR, DHAMRAI



### সুরক্ষিত দেয়াল নিরাপদ পরিবার

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# Valentine's Day gift guide

February 14 — a day to celebrate love. Being in love is a beautiful feeling and this date is a reminder to express our emotions, to show our significant other how much they truly mean. Making an effort is a precious gesture; which is why we want you to find a gift that will translate your affection to the one you love so dearly.

Although picking a gift can often be tricky, it really is the thought that counts. Consider your budget, your partners' likes/dislikes, their wish-list, hobbies and evaluate to form an idea on what would make them feel appreciated. If you're still lost on what to get your beloved this Valentine's Day, we're here with a quick gift guide, for both him and her, that will assist you in making them feel the most special.

## FOR HIM

### Watch

If you're planning to spoil your man with something fancy, nothing is more befitting than a wristwatch. Most men appreciate a nice watch, making it an excellent gift-choice. While selecting one, it's a good idea to keep your partner's brand, colour, style and size preferences in mind.

### Perfume

Just like watches, men love perfumes. A good fragrance is sure to make them ecstatic. Usually, men are quite particular about their perfume, so, it's safer to pick



one with notes that your partner typically wears.

Pro-tip: Gift one that he's known to love or has been eyeing for a while!

### Gadgets

Some of the best gifts for men are gadgets and accessories. Most men are into tech-gadgets. If you have a solid budget, you may consider splurging on a smartphone, PS5 (once the price becomes normal of course), laptop or any other device that he'd find useful and enjoyable. If the budget's tighter, don't sweat, because there are still some great choices out there. Wireless earbuds, smart bands, speakers are just a few of the many options available, depending on what your partner would be delighted to have.

### Grooming sets

Gift sets are a saviour when you cannot

seem to wrap your head around what to get. For men, brands typically offer sets which include a handful of items, such as shaving foams, aftershaves, hair gels, body sprays and more, which are perfect for your man's daily grooming sessions.

## FOR HER

### Chocolates and flowers

The simplest yet most special thing to do is to just shower your lady with flowers and



chocolates. Easy on your wallet as well, this is the quintessential V-Day present! Not to mention girls love the little things that express your effort. You cannot go wrong with getting your partner's favourite chocolates and a pleasing flower bouquet to make her day!

### Jewellery

When they say 'diamonds are a girl's best

friend,' they're not wrong! If you're in the place to splurge on your lady, a beautiful adornment is an impeccable choice. It, of course, does not necessarily have to be embedded with diamonds; any fine piece of jewellery is sure to make your lady's eyes sparkle.

### Handbag

Handbags are adored by women. From purses to totes, there's so many to choose from! Notice the style of bags your partner usually carries, the brands she admires, the colours she prefers and select one which ticks off her criteria. A beautiful bag is definitely a lovely gift!

### Makeup products

Ladies love their makeup, making it an exciting present for your lady-love. You can purchase individual items (such as eyeshadow palettes, lipsticks etc.) or pick a gift set that includes a few things in one. Makeup products vary in price-range too, so you're sure to find one that'll match your budget.

Pro Tip: Buying makeup can be confusing. Take her sister's/friends' help to know what she'd like best!

### Lastly, be thoughtful —

The best gifts are the ones that are thoughtful. No one knows your partner better than you; a gift that conveys how much you're aware of their interests, the effort you're willing give for them and how much you care is something you cannot put a price on. Anything you make with love — whether it's cooking for them, painting an artwork, preparing a box with little things they enjoy — will forever be cherished by your special someone. It's all about making them feel loved.

By Zohaina Amreen

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

us on /Sandalina

ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা  
ঠিক যেমন ঝপচাঁয় আভিজাত্য মানেই

# অ্যান্ডালিনা

## সোপ

ঝপচাঁয় আভিজাত্য...

#FASHION

# Own the streets this spring



Fashion crowds take to the streets this spring to zigzag around the city in cool juxtapositions of pragmatism and personality! With the pandemic still halting runway shows, it's also come to influence style trends this season, making easier, personal fashion one of its silver linings. And what can get more personal than street style?



Evolving raw from the streets, as opposed to ramps and vogue, street style is the standout blend of basic casual clothes and a few fashion it-pieces to make running errands in the streets of urban centres look as striking as an editorial shoot!

With spring in tow with more forgiving temperatures, the best time to make a fashion statement as personal as street style, without layers of jumpers on, of course, is now! And helping this transition is TAAGA's

latest line for Spring-Valentine, 2021, a youthful celebration of everything street.

Choose from a myriad of artful options from TAAGA's new range and step out in style, whether it's to get groceries or to have coffee with friends on Tuesdays. Take their cornerstone shirt dresses, for example. Subdued in neutral blue and touched up with intricate patchworks of bouquets that's just bold enough to merely catch the eye without claiming all the attention for itself, TAAGA's line features shirt dresses that can act as basic staples in every wardrobe. This causal piece of clothing can be styled up

with a brazen fringed handbag with tassels dangling down to the ground for maximum drama! Slip on a pair of kitten heel mules to round up the look and own every street you walk on this spring!

If shirt dresses aren't your thing, we've still got you covered. Picture this: a vibrant, rainbow neckline preceding a smooth surface of black ruffles in a classic but delightfully ethnic sundress that can easily be styled with the hottest accessory this season, a canary baguette handbag. Yellow is the perfect accent on black and this style is sure to label you as a fashionista on the high streets!

Stand out rather than blend in with TAAGA's ankle-length, fusion dresses that is just the perfect thing to don anytime. Stay appropriately on trend during anxious times by throwing on sleek, black face masks, a protective pick to remain chic and a trending accessory too.

More to choose from their range are straight-cut white pants, destined to clean up any look it's styled with, modish high-low shirts with epic central prints and classic horizontal stripes revived with a refreshing energy in sorbet pastel hues. Pair them with effortless denim or travel back in time to the '60s by throwing on floral headscarves to finish an ensemble that is both elegant and street.

Concocting your own unfussy style with confidence to spare is the norm this season. Capture your best street style moment and own SS21 with TAAGA in check.



**By Ramisa Haque**  
Photos and wardrobe courtesy: TAAGA



# Surprise, Surprise!

A special day is right around the corner; a day solely designated to show our loved one how much s/he means to us. To express our appreciation for their love, we often want to walk the extra mile to make this day memorable. And what's sweeter than a sweet surprise date? Given the pandemic, it can be tough to plan something both safe and special. Which is why we're here to suggest a few intimate date-ideas that'll make it anything but ordinary! This Valentine's Day, surprise your love with an unforgettable affair, while maintaining social distancing codes.

### Candle-lit at-home dinner

Stay in for the day and still make it special. With a little effort and affection, you can turn the evening blissful, even at the comfort of your own home. Create a restaurant-like ambience; a full course meal with entrée, main course, and desserts, prepared with love is sure to be precious to your beloved. Light up a few scented candles to set the mood; get creative with the décor or simply garnish with flowers. This dinner-date will keep you safe at home while sharing an intimate time together.

### A 'home theatre'

Another at-home date-idea is to surprise your love with a movie night! Turn out the lights, have some of his/her favourite

snacks ready and watch a movie together. It's quite a lowkey way to celebrate this day, yet makes it just as romantic. Relish each other's company as you cosy-up to cuddle. To make the night magical, surround yourselves with twinkling (fairy) lights and live in the moment.

### Go for a picnic

Picnics are forever romantic; a lovely afternoon with your beau at a nice, quiet place can sum up to a beautiful date. Disconnect from the world for a while as you surprise him with a picnic. Find a peaceful spot at a park or by a lake. Take a bed-sheet and a basket with food and drinks you both like. Spread the sheet, lay back. It's a terrific way to unwind and spend quality time with each other. Listen to music together; read a book to him/her. Appreciate the serenity by each other's side.

### Have a spa-day

Book yourselves a day at the spa for a calming getaway. A spa is a great place to get pampered and you both deserve it! Surprise him with this date filled with massages, relaxation and of course, your company. Doing anything together strengthens the bond, getting to share this relaxing experience is no different. Pick a spa destination of choice and head over; anyone would be happy to have this unconventional surprise-date!

### A romantic cruise

River-cruises can be an exhilarating date plan. It's a way to take a break from the chaotic city with the love of your life. Enjoy the calming waves as you two experience this romantic escapade. Book a small ship/boat ahead of time to stay socially distanced

and safe. Have a lovely lunch/dinner by the water and cherish every second with each other. It's definitely a dreamy date to remember!

By **Zohaina Amreen**

Photo: **LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed**

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## HOROSCOPE



### ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Understand their point of view. Get involved in projects. Romance will develop through work related activities. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



### TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

A lot is about to change. Finish up pending work at home. Proceed with caution this week. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



### GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Deception from family is likely. Your work will be perfect. Problems with your partner are likely. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



### CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Don't let anyone guilt trip you. Travel for business or pleasure. Be prepared to tell the truth. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



### LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

It's time to face the truth. Don't be too distracted. Time to make professional changes. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



### VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Avoid trouble with your partner. Don't spoil anyone. Limitations at home will be frustrating. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



### LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

New job opportunities will come knocking. Avoid overspending on luxury. Anger could lead to problems. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



### SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Be discreet about your whereabouts. Romantic opportunities will present itself this week. Meet your deadlines. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



### SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Real estate investments will be profitable. Travel will be exciting. Find time for yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



### CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

You need excitement in your life. You could be unstable emotionally. Clear up domestic chores. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



### AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Home improvement projects will help with bonding. Don't forget those who love you. Get involved in groups. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



### PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Group activities could bring about new friends. Make aesthetic enhancements at home. Don't let your anger consume you. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

# Bibi's dreams



One such graceful person is Bibi Russell, who is in awe with her land and draws inspiration from its people. Everyday villagers are her muse; people toiling in the fields and rubbing off their sweat with the mundane *gamcha*, which is a multi-chequered piece of cloth with whimsical colour combination that grabbed her attention. And she has successfully taken *gamcha* to unbelievable heights, where even a film star like Antonio Banderas flaunts it at a red-carpet event. People in fashion cities like London, Paris, Spain adore her *gamcha* accessories, scarves, bags and now even masks.

"Bangladesh helped me to dream, nurtured my curiosity from my childhood and allowed my dreams to grow with me. After completing my graduate degree in fashion from

London College of Fashion in 1975 and working as an international model, I decided I was ready to come back to my roots in Bangladesh and work with our artisans and crafts to etch a name for Bangladesh in the international fashion scene," says Bibi Russell, designer, Bibi Productions, a fashion house which fused distinctive Bengali cultural elements to her designs.

Bibi's collection has always been based on the love of nature with people at its core. A global innovative and ecological brand in which harmony and humanism come together. "Through art and design it is my intention to showcase the immense talents of local artisans, and provide employment opportunities to empower them, this is my commitment," Russell feels.

Bangladesh is a colourful inspiration; you just need to look around mindfully to discover it. The green paddy pastures, the yellow mustard fields, the red shimul blooms, the village peddler with his paper toys and whirligigs merrily spinning and whirling in the air, the pink cotton candy man, the women in colour saris selling sparkly glass bangles; the fairs, the festivals — inspiration is all around for any imaginative person who wishes to pick up the cues and work with them.



For the very amicable, humble yet classy designer, whose working motto is to 'save the crafts people and help revive their dreams,' she feels that the *gamcha* is the most affordable, ready to wear, eco-friendly, 100 percent cotton and pollution-free fabric.

Self-funded, she closed her shop during the pandemic and has shifted the outlet to her work station in Motijheel, Rahman Building, the space being a gift from her father. A decision she believes she has taken wisely because, till date, she has no dues and is able to pay her workers full salary on time.

"I have evolved myself to survive the pandemic, I have recycled and upcycled my *gamcha* and produced backpacks, fancy bags, purses, wallets, glass holders, masks and other accessories, which were great gift items during Christmas. I had to do something for my workers, as I would not just lay them off," she explains.

Tops, blouses, sari with crochet is another locally sourced working material from Saidpur, with which Russell works. In Saidpur, there are over 500 ultra-poor women working on crochet for Bibi productions. Her designed crochet collars and tops and dresses are exported to Spain and each product has a fine finished look to it. She is also doing some raw silk work with crochet.

"I strongly believe the Bangladesh fashion industry has lot of potential, and designers need not to copy from one another. Each designer must have his or her own signature handwriting all over their work. Paris has so many designers, but you can distinguish Armani from Versace. You can distinguish Lata Mangeshkar from Ferdousi Rahman. Similarly, you should be able to differentiate one designer from the other. There is no need for any identity crisis. Yet, we copy from India or Pakistan for survival. All I want to say is that true designers should evolve along with

"I have evolved myself to survive the pandemic, I have recycled and upcycled my *gamcha* and produced backpacks, fancy bags, purses, wallets, glass holders, masks and other accessories, which were great gift items during Christmas. I had to do something for my workers, as I would not just lay them off,"

the crafts to get going during rough times," she states.

"Moreover, I recently found out that there is a market for designer wears in Bangladesh, why would people save to buy Sabyasachi for their weddings when clearly, our designers can cater to their needs. Our consumers too should learn to buy local designers for weddings and festivals to support the industry," she explains, adding that though that upscale market is not her target, yet young people do place orders with her for their holiday ceremonies.

Bibi Russell is one such person who would go vegetarian in order to sponsor girl's education with her saved grocery money. She doesn't go back on her promise. On the work front, we will be seeing Bibi Russell doing a fashion show after a 20-year hiatus, in collaboration with House of Ahmed, in March.

"I am extremely happy in Bangladesh, and currently, I am immensely enjoying my work. I love positive criticism as it helps me to grow. I can honestly say 50 percent of the villagers love me dearly just as much as I do. In these uncertain and extremely difficult times, it is our collective responsibility to support the vulnerable people and also protect our exceptional heritage. We can help build the industry by buying locally sourced, locally woven and locally made designer wear," she says.

From *gamcha* to Jamdani we must save our age-old handloom industries, so this Falgun, buy from our local designers. Remember, deshi first, deshi always!

— RBR  
**Photo:** Sazzad Ibne Sayed  
**Model:** Borno, Arpita, Noble, Antora, Efa, Simmi  
**Make-up:** Md Hossen  
**Wardrobe:** Bibi Productions  
**Styling:** Zabin Iqbal  
**Location:** Bengal Carpet Mill, Ford Nagar, Dhamrai



#FASHION

# Fusion for Falgun

Pahela Falgun calls for a celebration as we embark on the charming season of Spring (*boshonto*). It bears a tradition of festivity, further brought to life by Bengali women. Their mesmerising beauty and graceful ensemble truly radiate the spirit of Spring, making Pahela Falgun beloved by all.

Women dress-up to look their best. Some even get creative with their attire. A fusion of western and traditional is quite in vogue and so, it is an interesting style to try for the occasion. This can easily be sorted with existing pieces in your closet, saving you from buying something new.

## Sari with a top

Instead of a traditional blouse-piece, how about you drape your sari over a western top?

Tops are similar to regular blouses, making this style an easy one to pull off. However, to look your best, an

appropriate pairing is a must. Crop tops are the best option as they typically come with a good fit. A top of any length can be worn, as long as it complements the sari and looks flattering.

Make the materials work; a silk sari can look stunning with a satin top, just as cotton would complement cotton.

In terms of colour, wear one that matches the hues on your sari or strays to the contrast.

Don't look overdone by staying minimal. Style the rest with traditional jewellery, tie your hair into a soft bun and look breath-taking for the day!

## Kurti and skirt

An uncommon choice — pairing a kurti and a skirt!

A definite fusion that looks anything but boring; it's fun to style and comfortable to wear. All you need to do is coordinate the pieces fashionably.

A kurti consists of elements that define Bengali-wear; combined with a western skirt, it translates into a beautiful bond. Make sure the pairing has a fine blend of colours and patterns that complement each other.

Feel free to embrace spring with bright colours! Unless you're going for a boho-chic, keep it classy with subtle designs. For a contemporary feel, add some trendy earrings, a purse, even matching sunglasses. For a 'desi' look, put on some traditional accessories, pair with 'khussas' or 'nagra' and carry a 'potli.' Lastly, own the style with your confidence!

## Dress with dupatta

Add a hint of culture to any western dress (or gown) just by carrying a beautiful dupatta (*orna*). A simple, long dress worn with a dupatta looks transformative yet elegant. Stoles with beautiful, ethnic designs are perfect

for Falgun. The duo, without a doubt, makes a gorgeous attire that is sure to turn heads.

Choose from pretty shades to celebrate the joyous occasion. Carry the stole in a manner that reflects your personal style. You can wear it on one side, wrap it around or carry it on your arm. You can even take it a step further and wear it with a belt. We encourage you to play with your style and play with it. Lastly, accessorise with stunning traditional pieces to complete this fusion get-up!

**By Zohaina Amreen**

**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**

**Model: Simmi**

**Make-up: Md Hossen**

**Wardrobe: Bibi Productions**

**Styling: Zabin Iqbal**

**Location: Bengal Carpet Mill, Ford Nagar, Dhamrai**

**DESHI MIX**  
SALINA PARVIN



# Falgun flavours

As the chilly winter days meld into the more comfortable spring weather, people prepare themselves to celebrate its arrival with the spring festival. Bashanta, the Bangla edition of spring, is associated with freshness and new beginnings in all spheres of life. It is the symbol of colours and rejuvenation, often glorified in prose and poetry, and serves as the muse for many an artist. It is the symbol of life and its resilience. It comes with the message of hope and joy.

Nature seems to burst with joy at the arrival of the new season; the trees and plants adorned with leaves anew, with buds blossoming into blooms. The skies are a happy blue, inviting to the soul. The cool and refreshing south west wind begins to blow.

Changing seasons call for a change in food habits. It is necessary to modify our palate according to the climate. Enjoy these few delicious items on the occasion of the coming of the new season.

## SUNSET GLORY

### Ingredients

1 cup pineapple juice  
2 cups sprite  
2 tbsp rose syrup  
1 cup crushed ice  
2 pineapple wedges for decoration  
2 small sprigs mint leaves

### Method

Take two tall glasses. In order to get a nice colour gradient, first put crushed ice in the glasses. Pour pineapple juice. Then add sprite. Over this add rose syrup. Stir the mixture a little bit so that the contents get slightly mixed, but still they can be seen separately. Decorate the glasses with pineapple wedges and mint leaves or with decorative straw of your choice.

## ALMOND AND RAW BANANA GALAWAT

### Ingredients

100g almond slivers, peeled  
250g raw banana, boiled  
1 tbsp almond paste  
2 tbsp oil  
¼ tsp cardamom powder  
1 tsp ginger garlic paste  
¼ tsp garam masala powder  
½ tsp red chilli powder  
½ cup tempura powder  
Salt to taste

### Method

Finely grate the boiled raw banana. Heat oil in a pan and add ginger garlic paste and fry it well, to a light brown colour. Then add the garam masala and red chilli powder and sauté. Now add almond paste and sauté for a minute. Add the grated raw banana and cook till the mixture leaves the sides of the pan. Adjust the seasoning and finish it with cardamom

powder. Cool the mixture and divide them into small equal dumplings. Give them a patty shape, coat with tempura batter and crumb with almond slivers. Grill the patties on a non-stick pan till golden brown. Serve hot.

## MURGH MALAI TIKKA WITH MINT CHUTNEY

### Ingredients

250g chicken breast  
1 tbsp ginger paste  
1 tbsp garlic paste  
2 green chillies  
1 tsp coriander powder  
1 tbsp cream  
1 tbsp yoghurt  
4 tbsp lemon juice  
½ cup mint leaves  
½ cup coriander leaves  
1 tsp chat masala  
½ tsp sugar  
1 raw mango  
1 tbsp ghee  
Salt to taste

### Method

*For the marinade —*

Marinate the chicken in the lemon juice, ginger-garlic paste for 30 minutes. In a separate bowl mix together the yoghurt and cream and whisk well to eliminate all lumps. Now add the mixture to the chicken and marinate for a few hours. Thread the chicken pieces onto the skewers. Heat ghee in a pan. Cook the chicken until cooked through and slightly charred around the edges. Take the chicken off the skewers, sprinkle with chaat masala and serve with chutney.

*To prepare the chutney —*

Take garlic, green chilli, ginger, sugar, salt in a small jar of a grinder. Grind them until medium coarse consistency. Add coriander leaves, mint leaves, lemon juice and 1 tbsp of water. Grind until smooth.

## BADAM PAK

Badam pak is one of the most delicious sweet dishes that is made with lots of nuts and ghee. The best part of this delicacy is that is not very sweet, just enough to satisfy your cravings.

### Ingredients

1 cup almonds, crushed  
1 cup mawa  
1 cup sugar  
½ cup ghee  
½ tsp cardamom powder  
¼ tsp nutmeg powder  
½ cup water

### Method

Mix water and sugar in a pan. Bring to a

boil. Add mawa and make it smooth. Put almond and ghee. Cook over medium heat till the mixture leaves the sides of the pan. Mix cardamom and nutmeg powder. Remove from heat and spread the mixture on the tray. Keep it for cooling. Cut into squares. Badam pak is ready!

## PATRANI MACHI

Patrani machi is a Parsi recipe where the fish is braised in spices and then wrapped in banana leaf before cooking it. The fish, which absorbs all the flavours while being slow cooked, is relished during the festive occasion of spring.

### Ingredients

6 fish fillets  
½ cup grated coconut  
1 bunch mint leaves  
1 bunch coriander leaves  
10 green chillies  
10 cloves garlic  
1 tsp sugar  
1 large onion  
1 tsp cumin seeds  
2 lemon  
2 tbsp ghee  
Salt to taste

### Method

In the mixing jar, add mint, coriander leaves, grated coconut, green chillies, cumin, garlic, onion, sugar and salt. Grind it until it turns into a fine paste. Apply the above mixture to the fish pieces and sprinkle lemon juice over it. Now cut the banana leaves in such a way that it is big enough to wrap each fish pieces properly. Heat the leaves on both the sides and wrap around the fish, then tie off with a string. Now, grease the baking tin and place the fish in it. Pour some ghee over each fish pieces and bake it for 15 minutes. Your Patrani machi is ready to be served.

## BATASHA

### Ingredients

250g sugar  
75ml water

### Method

Keep a pan on a stove and add in sugar and water. Mix well and let it boil. Keep stirring till the mixture resembles a thick paste. Scoop out small portions of the paste on a sheet or plate. Allow it to cool completely and serve.

## SHAKKARPARA

### Ingredients

1 cup whole wheat flour  
1 cup refined flour  
4 tbsp ghee  
Salt to taste  
Oil for deep fry  
1 cup water  
1 cup sugar

### Method

Mix whole wheat flour, refined flour, ghee, sugar, and salt with a little water and knead into a tight dough, keep it covered with a damp cloth for half an hour. Divide the dough into five to six equal balls. Roll out each ball into a flat chapatti of three millimetre thickness. Cut into diamond shaped pieces with a pastry cutter or knife. Heat oil in a pan and deep fry over medium heat till brown and crisp. Drain onto an absorbent paper and cool.

*Making the sugar syrup —*

In a pan, add sugar and water and bring it to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and keep stirring this mixture until sugar dissolves. Check for sugar consistency between fingers. As soon as the sugar syrup thickens, turn off the heat and add all the cooked *shakkarpara* in it. Start mixing the syrup and *shakkarpara* together to evenly coat them all over the *shakkarpara*. You will see the syrup sticking to the *shakkarpara*. Now the *shakkarpara* is ready to be served or packed in an airtight container once completely cooled.

## MALAI LADDU

Malai laddu is a mildly sweet dessert that is very soft and melt in the mouth with the hints of kewra and cardamom. It is made up of cottage cheese and condensed milk. With few ingredients and very little time, a scrumptious dessert comes into being.

### Ingredients

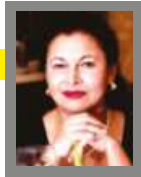
250g cottage cheese  
½ cup condensed milk  
2-3 drops of kewra essence  
¼ tsp cardamom powder  
Pistachios for garnishing

### Method

Churn cottage cheese. Put cheese in a mixer. Pulse it once. In a pan, add cheese and condensed milk. Cook on low flame. Add kewra and cardamom powder. Stir and mix well. Remove pan from the heat. Take out the mixture in a plate. Once it cools down, take a portion and make laddu with it. Garnish with chopped pistachios. Refrigerate for half an hour and serve.

**THOUGHT CRAFT**

**NASRIN SOBHAN**  
Freelance Writer



# Inner light

I was delighted when cooler weather arrived last November. I had been looking forward to carrying my cup of hot, sweet tea up to the roof to sit there and dream in the fresh cool breeze.

At 26 degrees, though, it is just more summer without the humidity.

As my foreign friends like to say, it is what it is. Reconciled to the reality of what it is, and since there are no forests in Dhaka for forest bathing, I go up to the roof with a glass of cool lemonade instead of hot tea, sit among the myriad plants that I have collected, and do plant bathing, while taking deep breaths of what I like to imagine is pure oxygen.

Face turned to the sky, I lean back and enjoy the feeling of just being alive. The birds chirp, parrots fly past and a breeze

stirs gently in the palms.

The hours pass peacefully, while the mind has time to wander its streets of memory. The by-lanes and alleyways of the heart are filled with colourful images from both past and present, which have a life of their own. As many writers have demonstrated already, the past, experienced in retrospect, takes on extra beauty.

Proust wrote of the power of past joy and memory in five volumes. I remember clearly even today, among his beautiful pages, his eloquent and beautiful description of great arcades of pink hawthorn near his local church; every image made all the more vivid for him because he wrote his master work (Remembrance of Things Past) many years later.

While thinking of Proust, and admiring the subtle tints of light moving gently from morning to evening, as the white of noon shifts to blue, lavender, coral and rose, another memory comes to mind: that of Lawrence Durrell writing in his Alexandria Quartet not only of the bustle and red dust of his beloved city, but also of the "light filtered through the essence of lemons".

We all dream of expressing with facility the light and stars hiding in our hearts: for example, I wish I could have written these long-gone poignant words of T E Lawrence: "I loved you, so I drew these tides of Men into my hands, and wrote my will across the sky and stars to earn you freedom, the seven-pillared worthy house."

Although we cannot all be a Monet, a

Keats, a Kibria, or a Kalidas Karmakar, our appreciation of beauty and our own small creative contributions to that world have value, not least because they have been shaped by events that are particular to us. Love, loss, joy, and sadness have helped form us, and have given our personae the unique dimension that makes each one of us so special.

We each of us carry within ourselves a hidden trove of artistic, emotional and spiritual feeling. We too live our days in vivid colour through the lens of our own perceptions. We lack only the ability to shape our visions into tangible forms.

When we experience great art in all its forms, we rejoice because it is a reflection of our own inner light, the essence of what is purest and most beautiful inside ourselves.

**#GUIDES**

## Being happily single on Valentine's Day!



With romance being everywhere on Valentine's Day, it is natural for us singles to feel a little left out. Romantic relationships sure can make some happy, but it's never a necessity.

The spirit of V-Day calls for us to celebrate 'love.' So, we ask you to take this opportunity and acknowledge the ones who are always there for you.

Make this day special by showing appreciation to those who are constantly lifting you up with their relentless love and support. It can be your family, friends and even *you!*

Instead of being hard on yourself, enjoy the day with loads of self-pampering fun activities.

Here's a few ways to stay happily single on the day of 'love'!

**Take your family out for a nice dinner**

The unconditional love of your family should never go unnoticed. So, how about you celebrate the day with the ones closest to your heart? Spend a wholesome evening with your family by taking them out for dinner. A fine feast and quality time together is sure to make you feel blessed.

**Have a movie/game night with friends**

Your friends are there to make you smile through life. And a sleepover with them can turn V-Day into a fun-day (get it?)!

Invite them over and enjoy a night of entertainment. Watch a good movie together or play your favourite games, anything is amusing with friends by your side!

**Set a date with your bestie**

Who said you can't take your best friend on a date? Spoil her just as you would spoil your man. Get your bestie out on a girly-date; have fun together with your usual gossip, yummy food and Instagramable selfies. Treat her with a nice gift. After all, life is so much better, so don't miss this chance to let her know!

**Host a one-dish party**

Get all your single gal-pals together by hosting a one-dish party. Ask each of them to cook an item while you take care of the hosting-duties. As they come over, enjoy dining together, tasting each other's dish and sharing the love. It's such a grown-up way to party and a beautiful way to appreciate each other!

**Give yourself some attention**

It is important to love yourself before you

love anyone else. So, take this day to give yourself the love, attention, and affection you deserve.

Take yourself out. Buy yourself a thing you desire. Engage in self-care; lose yourself in your favourite book. Make the day all about you because at the end, you're all you truly need.

**By Zohaina Amreen**

**Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed**

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#PRESS RELEASE

# Reassuring walls in home and office

When there is a pandemic all-around, it is imperative that we ensure the safety of our surroundings everywhere. Be it our house or our workplace, as long as we are fighting an enemy we cannot see — constantly disinfecting our usable items is the only way to ensure personal safety. We need to ensure that everything from our home appliances to office workstations and everything in-between is free of malicious microbes.

COVID-19 still has the whole world in its lethal grasp, causing fatal losses and heartbreaks. It has been almost a year since we have been confined to stay homebound. As the lockdowns increase our time spent inside the cosy interiors, it also increases the need for our houses to be safe and free of malicious microorganisms.

Thus, it has been advised that our clothes, food, and all other daily usable



items that have the possibility of being exposed to germs be washed and disinfected on a regular basis.

But what if the germs start to build inside our house? There still remain many portions, many unreachable and unnoticed corners in our house and workspace, which remain untouched for days. One such portion are the walls. We often forget to consider the health of our walls and leave it unattended once the painting is complete.

But studies show that many kinds of germs can start to form and grow on our walls due to pollution and humidity.

Damp and badly painted walls that never see sunlight are often seen to be developing odour, crinkles, and algae. This eventually leads to an uncomfortable environment, and the unhygienic living space causes the residents to be more prone to diseases.

Many of us live with our elderly parents or have children in the house. For those who have a weaker immune system, COVID-19 and other virus/bacteria-borne diseases pose an even more alarming threat. Besides, people spend time in offices and industries, which exposes them to the threat of COVID-19.

Many industries are already suffering in various ways due to a lack of manpower and financial insufficiencies. Hence,

office interiors are also another crucial part where regular disinfection shall be obligatory.

Berger has recently launched its unique new product, 'Breathe Easy ViraCare,' which aims to end such complications. The water-based interior emulsion paint kills 99 percent of the infection-causing viruses and bacteria on the painted surface within 2 hours of exposure, providing a germ-free and hygienic environment. Its Silver Ion Technology and Low VOC component guarantees a safe and comfortable interior while protecting the residents at all times.

When the situation is dire, we must obtain the best methods available for our wellbeing. The 'Breathe Easy ViraCare' might be a golden solution for those who are now looking for a paint-solution and are conscious regarding their environment at the same time.

# Celebrate Valentine's Day at the InterContinental Dhaka

February is a month to celebrate and strengthen more than just your romantic relationships. This year, InterContinental Dhaka is offering special room packages at Tk 12,999 inclusive of tax and service charge throughout the entire month of February. Our valentines room package, featuring a luxurious one night stay along with Buffet breakfast at 'Elements' for a couple, special chocolate box in room, 25 percent discount on food and beverage (all outlets) and laundry service.

Early check-in and late check-out will be available upon request.

'Elements' — the all-day dining restaurant is offering luxuriant Valentine buffet dinner set up 'Flavours of Love' on 14 February. Their food and beverage team have prepared a range of romantic

surprises not only on the plate, but also in the form of elegant decorations, sweet boxes and many more. The romantic atmosphere of the 'Elements' will serve you with an array of food varieties. You can enjoy this spectacular buffet at Tk 5,500 inclusive of tax and service charge per person.

For couples craving private cosy environments under the stars, the "Private Gazebos" and "Aqua Deck" will be the perfect date night for them to celebrate. They can enjoy Couple Set Menu, Welcome Drinks and Rose Sticks as well at Tk 11,111 inclusive tax and service charge per couple.

Their chef specially designed two different four course meal for dinner, including Spiced Lamb Cutlet with



Smoked Aubergine, Stuffed Salmon with Leak Potato & Asparagus, Rib Eye Steak, Grilled Prawn, Tuna Tataki, Heart Shape Red Velvet Cake, Romantic Chesses Cake and many more.

The specialty restaurant 'The Amber

Room' is offering five course couple set menu including Crispy Duck Breast, Surf & Turf, Salmon, Baby Rack of Lamb, Romantic Chesses Cake, Heart Shape Red Velvet Cake and so many on the eve of Valentine's Day at Tk 14,500 inclusive of tax and service charge per couple at the Love Nest. Couples will also enjoy Welcome Valentine Drink on arrival.

On Valentine's Day, guests will find Heart Shape Special Cake Box and Heart Shape Special Cake at the hotel's signature restaurant Café Social. Crafted coffee to French bakeries, evening snacks, light lunch or dinner anything you can order as well.

Choose the perfect offer for to treat your loved one and do the reservations at +880 2 55663030.



## আদার আর এক নাম

# ফাস্ট ওয়াশ





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# INSIDE LOOK at Smoke Music Cafe



*In conversation  
 with  
 Khandakar Omar  
 Farhan &  
 Kayes Siddiqui*

### What inspired you to become a restaurateur? Where did it all begin?

When the construction of this building was on-going, one of my little brother in my friend circle who is currently a famous architect, came to me saying how he loved the positioning and roof of the building and how it could be turned into a great restaurant. We saw that there weren't many places for people from all walks of life sitting down and having a good meal, whilst getting the view of the city. There were a handful of place, which were mostly reserved towards the rich & the corporates. We wanted to construct a place where people from all ages and groups come and enjoy themselves with great food. That's when Kayes Bhai and his brothers, one of his brothers being a celebrity chef from Finland, came and said that they would give me full kitchen support & developed the entire menu and recipe from



scratch. We started to assemble a Multi-Cuisine menu where you will find Mexican, Italian & Western Style food. Music plays a big part in our ambiance as well, since we are passionate about music ourselves. That's why you see a lot of Great musicians from the late 70's in our Menu as well.



### What challenges did you face initially?

We have a menu that is built up with a variety of different cuisines. Initially, Finding Vegetables were not a problem, but the spices were a different story. Mexican & Italian food are very much build with a pallet of different spices such as rosemary, Cajun spice, thyme and cheeses like mozzarella, cheddar, parmesan were not available in our country. So we had to outsource them from outside our country, which was a bit of a hassle. We always had to bring in inventory of spices for 2-3 months, which was a bit of a risk itself. Nevertheless, the situation is great now, we are easily being able to procure these items, which was not possible 10 years back. If we talk about meat, Bengal Meat is the main source for us nowadays and they are exceptional.



### We know you have other interesting businesses as well, how do you manage all together and what drives you?

It's all because of our love & passion towards food. We came in with conclusion that since we have entered in the Service Industry, we have to satisfy the people who comes through those doors expecting great service. From the very beginning, we wanted to focus on creating a well-tuned and cohesive team, which will help us make our services even greater and stupendous towards our guests. Another core element in our mind was that whatever we will do, we'll do with love & affection towards our customers. And food industry is such a place, that if you do not make the food with love &



care, people will generally not like it. We always wanted our guests to feel like the money & time they spent here was worth it. We also focused on making sure the customers that comes through doors become repeated customers and spread the word of our restaurants throughout their circles.

### What are the steps you have taken for your restaurants to adopt to the new normal?

We have the safety of our guests and employees in mind whilst running our restaurant. We are following the necessary guidelines that have been provided by the Government. We have spread out our seating arrangement, to maintain the social distancing guidelines that has been provided. Our employees & we are very careful about maintaining these guideline in every step of the way, while handling food or communicating with our customers. We also encourage our customers to follow and maintain the guidelines as well, for their safety & ours.

### We have seen a lot of people trying their hands in different cuisine during the lockdown. Any advice for the aspiring Chefs/home cooks of Dhaka?

We really admire the ingenuity amongst all the aspiring



home chefs. Especially now, because they are making use of the time that is available to them and self-teaching themselves various cuisines. Just make your food with love. It's the secret ingredient that makes everything great. Also, take the opportunities that are coming your way with passion and energy. Surely, passion and hark work will definitely be worth it.



### What surprise may Dhaka expect from you in future? Any upcoming new project?

We didn't have much Fish food in our menu. So, we are going to unveil a wide range of dishes related to food. We are incorporating fish into our menu to make it more diverse and refined. We are also looking into establishing a culinary institution that will help chefs gain valuable and essential skills for those who don't have the opportunity to go to culinary schools. That would help them in establishing their own restaurants and run them smoothly.

*The interview was taken by Foysal Mahmud Niloy.  
 Photo: SK ENAMUL HAQ*