

Let This Summer Pop, With Popsicles

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Since the time we were toothless, the first ice cream most of us got a taste of were the orange and lemon-flavoured popsicles, popularly known as "Lolly" in Bangladesh. This frozen summer dessert made its debut even before the 90s kids were born and has been popular ever since.

When it comes to cooling off in the summer heat, there's nothing better than indulging with an ice-cold popsicle. Heaven on a stick, they are easy to make at home, too. All you need are some fruits, chocolates, some more ingredients, wooden sticks, and a bit of patience.

The only difficult part? Figuring out which of the amazing popsicle recipes to make. Let's try a few.

Watermelon Ice Pops: Cool and refreshing, with no artificial colours or flavours.

You will need: Half cup water; 1½ cups watermelon, seeded and diced; 1 tbsp honey; 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice; and 1 tbsp white sugar.

Blend all the ingredients until smooth. Pour mixture into ice pop moulds and freeze until solid, for about six hours.

Run warm water over ice pop moulds for a few seconds to unmould if needed.

Banana Choco Chip: The ripe bananas have a wonderful creamy consistency when frozen, and the rich chocolate coating is delicious.

You will need: Ripe bananas (peeled and halved across); 1 pack of semisweet chocolate chips; butter; and coconut (or any other flakes) as desired.

Insert a stick into the end of each banana and freeze for two to three hours. Melt the chocolate and butter, stirring it well. Dip the frozen bananas into the melted chocolate. Roll in coconut and place the dipped bananas on the wax paper-covered baking sheet, and freeze until the chocolate is firm.

Green Mango Pops: This raw mango popsicle has a lot of benefits and is also a refreshing summer treat.

You will need: Two raw mangoes (chopped); half a cup mint leaves; 1 cup powdered sugar; 1 tsp cumin powder; and 1 tsp rock salt, to taste.

Blend all the ingredients together. Pour the mixture into ice pops moulds with sticks, freeze overnight or for hours. You can also add a pinch of red chilli powder for some heat.

Double Chocolate Frozen Fudge: Make frozen fudge pops without a packaged pudding mix.

You will need: White sugar; corn starch; cocoa powder; milk; vanilla extract; butter; and semisweet chocolate chips. Take the ingredients as needed.

Combine the sugar, corn starch, cocoa powder and milk in a small saucepan over medium heat. Bring to a simmer, add vanilla and butter. Refrigerate until cool. Stir the chocolate chips into the cooled chocolate mixture. Pour into moulds and freeze until firm, for about four to six hours.

Dreamy Creamy Mango Pops: They have a softer "bite-able" texture rather than a hard, icy texture, bursting with fresh mango flavour.

You will need: Mangoes, peeled and chopped; almond milk; a pinch of honey; and naturally sweetened vanilla yogurt.

Blend it all together and pour into the moulds with sticks and freeze overnight.

Blueberry Yogurt Pops: Protein-filled blueberry yogurt pops that are great for summer.

You will need: One container Greek yogurt; fresh blueberries as needed; and honey.

Blend yogurt, blueberries, and honey together in a blender until smooth. Pour into small plastic cups with wooden sticks added at the end. Freeze until pops are solid, for about four to five hours.

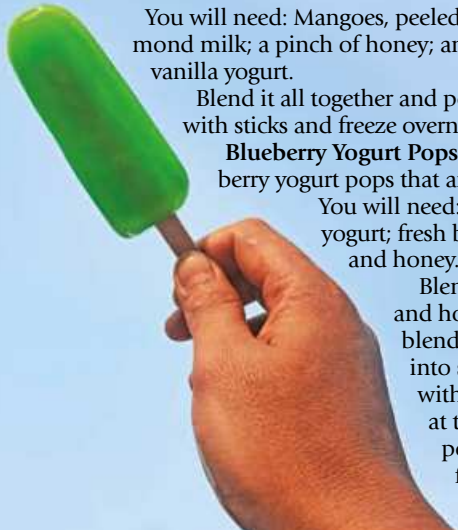


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AS WE GREW UP, SO DID BANANI ROAD 11

RASHA JAMEEL

Banani's Road 11 wasn't always the hustling and bustling social hotspot that it is today. As a part of the Banani from the bygone days, the iconic "Road 11" was initially intended to serve as a residential area. However, despite being billed as such, the street didn't exactly garner the kind of popularity it was supposed to, at first.

A limited number of houses dotted the 1.3 km long street, which ended at the lake separating Gulshan from Banani. Road 11, sometime in the 90s, was a pretty ideal location for a nice afternoon walk or perhaps an evening stroll. There was a strong sense of community spirit there, just about everyone on the street knew everyone. Members from each building would gather every now and then to either celebrate a special occasion, or to just pass the time with some good old-fashioned gossip. A pretty tight-knit community, it was.

The year 2008 brought a rather unexpected change to Road 11. A bridge was being constructed across the Gulshan Lake, finally easing transport between the two areas. This set in motion a chain of events which saw Banani's Road 11 take on a new form quite drastically, going from a seemingly quiet residential street to a heavily sought-after commercial location. Some people began moving out, relocating to a less-busy environment suitable for a home. The others began to rent out their spaces in their residential buildings to accommodate small businesses.

In the words of Fauzia Sultana Mahbub, a long-time resident of the street, Road 11 had gradually lost its community spirit over time. "It started with the construction of the bridge," Mahbub says, "Road 11 very soon became

devoid of that wholesomeness. There was a time when my friends and I would play around the neighbourhood and befriend members of the adjoining WAPDA colony. Now I don't even know much about the neighbours next door."

Gradually, larger businesses moved in with their offices. Within a decade, Banani Road 11 had fully transformed into a commercial hub. There was now a pharmacy every two minutes along the street, and countless eateries and fashion stores, you name it.

According to Samiha Khan, who frequents Road 11, Banani's most iconic street has evolved into a more diverse location, boasting a wide range of lifestyle stores catering to people from various different backgrounds, instead of just Banani locals. She says, "I like how much variety the shops have there. There are *deshi* stores, and there are ones offering more Americanised clothing options; 500 eateries with different cuisines, and whatnot. There are people of all ages having a good time at Road 11 these days."

Banani's Road 11 in present day doesn't look anything like how I remember it from my childhood. It doesn't look anything like how my mother remembers it either. During her time, a shop of any kind was hard to come across on Road 11. And now her own daughter is spoiled for choice amongst Aarong, Puma, Noir, Tarka, Burger King, and Pizza Hut. God knows what my nieces and nephews will come to witness on Banani's Road 11. One thing remains certain, though: the street continues to be as iconic as ever.

Rasha Jameel is your neighbourhood feminist-apu-who-writes-big-essays. Remind her to also finish writing her bioinformatics research paper at rasha.jameel@outlook.com