

FOOD FUSIONS

**Yummy
or yucky?**

It's a debate
Dhaka's foodies
can't settle!



friends who are polar opposites on this topic, and then write about it.

To keep this debate civil — worried that a clash was waiting to happen between my friends — I began with the so-called, 'Thai soup thick.' It's safe. Because theoretically 'Thai' or not, it does not matter, it falls under the broad category of Bangla Chinese, a subgenre of fusion cuisine that we have all come to accept and love. I watched my friends peacefully slurp up the spicy, tangy, pink-orange soup on a winter evening without any arguments whatsoever. That's a good start, I thought!

It got us thinking, fusion has always been around in our country and around the world, such as Tex-Mex. Fusion is inevitable. The attempt to make something suitable to the palate of a culture or community is bound to happen.

How many of us even like authentic Chinese or Thai? I secretly do, although I love deshi Chinese equally.

After starting on a positive note, I served kalabhuna potstickers from Dumplings of Fury. So, let the debate begin...

My open-minded friend chewed away with delight. "Dumplings and potstickers can have meat. That's normal. Now, who has ever made a definitive list of meats that one can and cannot use in dumplings? I have a deshi palate and I love this," he advocated. Meanwhile, my cynical friend asked me, "What do you think?"

I just shrugged, not willing to spark an argument. I love some delicacies of Dumplings of Fury, but when it came to this particular item, I felt that the kalabhuna effect overwhelmed the dumpling effect: it was as if I was taking in morsels or lokmas of kalabhuna. But that's the purist in me talking.

I moved on to shingaras from Love Triangle. Clever name, right?

When it comes to shingara, the usual aloo shingara and kolija shingara are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 29

#FOOD & RECIPES

Would you eat shorisha pizza? How about kalabhuna dumpling? Bolognese fuchka? Yes? No? Well that's where the debate starts. First respectfully, then passionately, and then, in no time, things get out of hand! The food scene in Dhaka over the past few years has boomed. Boom away all it may want, but not all changes have been taken in good spirit by everyone. That's where the debates break into brawls, mostly verbal though. The case of food experimentation and innovation — fusion cuisine — gets fans and haters stirred up equally passionately.

This has not gone unnoticed by me, neither a fan nor a hater, but a resident foodie at my office.

Now, as someone being hailed as a serious foodie, I have certain responsibilities towards others, mostly in the form of answering all their questions:



But what if the creators of foods such as shorisha pizza or green chilli rosogolla (yes, you read it right), are the Elon Musks of the culinary industry?

"Where do I take my wife out for our first anniversary? Is this new place any good? Is so-and-so restaurant budget-friendly? Is that real Hajir Biryani or a fake? Did Nando's really shut down?"

I answer such questions coolly and confidently. I know my stuff, but when some of my colleagues brought to me the debate of the newer fusion foods, I was in a fix.

You see, I am more of a purist. I'm all in for change and new things, but when it comes to food — and many things in life — while creativity is great, one should also know when to stop.

Unless you are Elon Musk! But what if the creators of foods such as shorisha pizza or green chilli rosogolla (yes, you read it right), are the Elon Musks of the culinary industry?

And so I entertained this debate: got myself a bunch of fusion food items to try them out with an open mind, with two



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