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Star

LIFE

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Gearing up for EID

GET YOUR TRINKETS ON
ULTIMATE JEWELLERY SHOPPING GUIDE P6
A SLICE OF OLD ENGLAND CHARM
HIGH TEA GET-TOGETHERS AT SPAGHETTI JAZZ P8-9
REDEFINING CHIC
SARAH KARIM'S ENCHANTING COUTURE P10-11

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED
MODEL: AZRA MAHMOOD
WARDROBE: SARAH KARIM
STYLING: SONIA YEASMIN ISHA
MAKE-UP: SUMON RAHAT
LOCATION: PAN PACIFIC SONARGAON, DHAKA



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The spirit of Ramadan, and preparing for a blessed Eid

It is already half-way through Ramadan and our bodies have adjusted to the rigours of fasting and overall abstinence that is the very essence of the holy month. Our souls have attuned to the spirit of Ramadan that encourages us to be social, and devout in our religious

acts. Thus, we find people sharing a modest meal with complete strangers at the mosque on a mundane weekday, or an elaborate menu at grand family banquet on weekends. People diligently gather to perform taraweeh, in an effort to make their lives more aligned with

the spiritual.

Sharing gifts ahead of Eid is also one of the most cherished traditions. Engaging in the last minute shopping frenzy for getting gifts for our loved ones is also a special feeling of Ramadan.

This week, Star Lifestyle presents

myriad topics that touches our lives in this holy month. We hope our effort to make your lives a little easier for the rest of the month and ahead of Eid, is successful.

LS Desk



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#FASHION & BEAUTY

Find the right footwear to complement your Panjabi on Eid

Footwear is one of the very few accessories which gives men a plethora of options to experiment with. It gives them a personality, a chance to stand out. Be it a boy or a man, they all want a reliable pair of shoes to carry their masculine steps in style. So, if you are wondering how to flaunt your feet this Eid, here are some trendy footwear ideas you can try to complement your panjabi.

Colourise with ease

Loafers are the most fashionable item of footwear to go with a panjabi. Since you all need to pray on the morning of Eid, you want a pair of shoes which you can slip on and off with ease. Loafers will do just the job. Hence, not only do they look dapper, the functionality of loafers is quite high as well.

Nowadays, loafers with commando soles seem to be in high demand as their chunky and rugged design give the feet a robust vibe. Along with the browns, coloured loafers are earning fans as well. Just imagine how classy one would look with an all-white panjabi and bright blue loafers!

Casual but complete

Talking about slip-ons, mules are another type of debonair slip-ons to go with panjabis. The key difference being that mules have no constraint at the back. Mules prove how fashion and comfort can go hand in hand. Without the constraint at



the back, your feet can feel airier and freer. These casual shoes loosen you up and bring about a more candid version of yourself. Going on a hangout with friends? Slip on a pair of leather mules and your outfit is casual but complete.

Sporty slides

Highly popular among the youths, slides also speak of comfort looking hip at the

same time. They are super casual and with an athletic feel that make you look naturally cool, like you have not tried too hard but ended up looking cool anyways. Besides athletic brands, slides are also being made by many designers nowadays to bring a more sophisticated look in them. Hence, if you are not a sporty person, you can look into them as well.



The one with the shoes that fit every outfit

May it be formal or informal, western or ethnic, sneakers are the most versatile item of footwear out there which goes with almost anything and everything. Therefore, sneakers and Panjabi is a great combo to try out this Eid. If you are opting for something different, something daring, a pair of sneakers with your Eid Panjabi is a big yes. There are sure to make you look extremely stylish, younger and not to mention à la mode.

Old is gold

Last but of course not least, nothing can go wrong with a classic pair of Oxfords. Known as the most elegant dress shoe of all time, Oxfords have the power to make your panjabi look soigné. The higher chunky heeled ones are especially suited well with ethnic wears. They add a sense of heft and rogue to your appearance elevating masculinity. So, if you are looking for a footwear to wear at a formal Eid party with your colleagues, give these chunky heeled Oxfords a go.

So, this Eid, do not shy away from exploring your footwear options and find the shoe that fits you because as Jimmy Choo says, 'The right shoe can make everything different.'

By **Tanzila Kamal Protyasha**

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

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APEX

Beautify your home with decor from Barakah



We all lead very busy lives, chasing after a million things every day. This maybe all the more reason why we often find ourselves saying, 'There is no place like home.' Barakah by Abida Rahman and Ayesha Sultana, takes this very idea and works on creating amazing home décor pieces to help us enhance the beauty of our homes. Interestingly enough, Barakah has quite the story behind its creation.

It is sometimes the toughest situations in life that lead us to discover a side of us which was either hidden or long-forgotten. Abida Rahman always had a knack for adding a touch of elegance to regular essentials such as cutlery, tissue holders, etc. Her creativity often got displayed in many corners of her and her loved ones' homes, but not beyond that.

However, this hobby took the form of work only last year in 2021 when the pandemic seemed to be at its worst. Someone in desperate need of income had come knocking at Abida's door and instead of offering temporary help, she thought of a more permanent arrangement. This eventually led to the creation of Barakah.

Abida took up the creativity department while her sister Ayesha took charge of logistics and finances, and their business had one employee.

They began very small, delivering two tea boxes for their first order. A year later, today Barakah has succeeded in providing an income source to 10 families in need and help them live with a sense of fulfilment.

Barakah started their journey on a small-scale but with a broad vision; their work quality never compromised. Keeping environmental safety in mind, Barakah relies entirely on recycled wood for their wooden work.

"Sustainability is about people, planet and profit. It is about safety while we produce, and while our clients use our products," says Abida.

Their wooden products range among decorative cheeseboards, cake stands, easels, wooden frames, etc.

For tea lovers and collectors, Barakah has a rather unique tea box consisting of six compartments inside. Intricate design adorns the corners of its square form while the top portion comes in with handwork or clear glass. It's elegant, classy, and a perfect piece to place on dining table or a tea corner.

Their Nawar cutlery box honours the age-old Bangladeshi tradition of dawats with a selection of classic patterns and colours.

The hand block table linens, napkins, and bed sheets come in vibrant colour combination with a soft-to-touch texture. These are made using a solution from the globally renowned colour solution provider,

Archroma. Barakah uses solutions which minimise the use of water and energy while ensuring top-notch quality of the fabric.

When discussing the fabric, Rahman further added, "We chose the weave to be satin so that it has a smooth and silky texture, having the nostalgic effect of Dhakai Muslin."

Barakah looks like a one-stop solution if you are looking to beautify the special corners of your home. Why not get a piece of 'blessing' for your home now?

By Nusrath Jahan
Photo: Barakah

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TRINKET SHOPPING IN DHAKA: The perfect jewellery shopping guide



We have an unapologetic love affair with jewellery, alongside a heavy appreciation for the art, craftsmanship and the stories involved with each piece. Whether you are a connoisseur or simply an enthusiast, there is no end to our fascination with jewellery.

Navigating the online market for high-end jewellery

With the rise of online shopping and F-commerce in Bangladesh, tonnes of online jewellery stores have also popped up and are slowly becoming everyone's favourite. From high-end jewellery to affordable trinkets, they have everyone covered.

6 Yards story is one of the most popular jewellery store on Bangladeshi social media space. Their pieces are donned by almost all your favourite Instagram influencers and models, and rightfully so.

Not only are they experts at traditional classic designs, but they also add their own flair and imagination to redefine the traditional *deshi* jewellery designs. Their latest drop has featured a necklace, *sitahar*, earring and rings inspired by the Jamdani motif. Their products are made of brass, with either gold or silver plating. Smaller trinkets like nose pin and jewellery can range from Tk 300 to Tk 800 while necklaces, bangles and earrings start from Tk 1000 and can go up to Tk 3000 to Tk 4000.

If you want jewellery that has more bling to it, then look no further than at Anzum's. Featuring heavier jewellery sets, more appropriate for party and bridal wear, you can get opulent and gorgeous jewellery sets from here. Their pieces are made of imitation metals, stones, and pearls. Their repertoire features Indian, Pakistani as well as *deshi* designs and different kinds of sets like *katai* sets, imitation diamond-cut sets, *kundan* sets, Jaipuri jewellery, Multani jhumkas etc. Prices for these sets can range from Tk 1500 to Tk 4000 with heavy necklaces sometimes going up to Tk 6000 and jhumkas around Tk 1400 to Tk 3000.

Araaz Exclusive is a popular name for jewellery. They sell quality pieces, crafted by the most skilled jewellers from Lahore and Karachi. They boast a unique collection

inspired by the finery for Indian and Pakistani craftsmanship, imbued with regal extravagance from Jaipur to Sabyasachi. Their jewellery is lined by real gold and is perfect for the most extravagant and elegant parties and events of your life including weddings. Whatever the occasion may be, Araaz has something for you. You can get Multani earrings, regal necklaces and sets, *sitahaars*, *kundan* jewellery and many more. You can get earrings within a budget of Tk 200 to Tk 5000, and expect a price tag of Tk 10,000 for a necklace set. That price can go up to Tk 45,000 for bridal jewellery.

The affordable space for trinkets online

Before you get intimidated by the high-end price tags, let me stop right here and tell you that there are countless options for affordable jewellery online. One of those destinations is Ray by Laiju. They house jewellery that are very much in line with the global jewellery trends. Their jewellery has an aura of simplistic sophistication and subtle statement-making power. Featuring geometric designs, super trendy chain link neckpieces, rings inspired by the design of zippers and simple gold washed drop earrings studs with imitation pearls, you can rely on Ray by Laiju to be the trendiest person in the room. You can get most of their trinkets within Tk 150 to Tk 500, with exclusive neckpieces sometimes going up to Tk 800. Purple Box has some great original and inspired pieces too.

For terracotta jewellery, look no further than Clayomatic — the poster child for

creativity with clay in jewellery. Their designs are simple, cute and perfect for hippy youngsters. Featuring artworks of flowers, cloud-shaped earrings with imitation pearls and bright colours, their dainty trinkets will cost you about Tk 250 to Tk 900.

Elan Lifestyle imports trendy pieces from China. Made from different kinds of metals like zinc alloy, titanium and others you can find really stylish affordable trinkets. Some other notable stores include Mrinmoyee, Borno, Shoilee for antique pieces, Topaz Jewels, Opal Fashion Wear and many more.

An opportune marriage between online and in-person trinket shopping

The boutique houses in Dhaka boast artistic and traditional designs inspired by our artists, our culture, history and most importantly the rural population. Notable houses include Aarong, Jatra, Aranya, Chondon, Bibiana, etc.

At Aarong, you can get some of the most beautiful handcrafted jewellery made of silver, studded with the most unconventional pearls and stones. Their oxidised antique pieces of jewellery instantly make you look more artistic and classier. From simple earrings and thread neckpieces ranging from Tk 150 to gold jewellery with a price tag of more than Tk 1 lac, you can get everything at Aarong.

If you want more artistic options, then definitely check out boutique houses like Jatra, Deshal, Chondon, Aranya, Bibiana. They have pieces made of wood, terracotta,

brass and other metals, imbued with traditional motifs and fusion designs that pair well with almost any outfit of your choice.

The true one-stop shopping destination for all kinds of trinkets and jewellery

It is no secret that everything is available at New Market, Gausia and Chandni Chawk. So of course, to no one's surprise, you can also shop for jewellery in these places as well. In fact, Gausia, New Market and Chandni Chawk are the most popular jewellery shopping places in the city, attracting customers from all backgrounds and all budgets.

The question is not "What can I get there?", the question is what can't you. These roadside stalls cater to people of all tastes and budgets. From gold and silver coloured imitation jewellery that can give the real ones a run for their money for their exquisite designs, to antique jewellery to satisfy the most artistic of the crowd to simple understated pieces trending globally to bridal jewellery, they have it all at the most affordable price points. The pieces are made of brass, zinc alloy and other kinds of affordable metals, encrusted with imitation stones like imitation ruby, emerald, pearl, diamonds, amethyst, etc. You can get trinkets from as little as Tk 100 taka to Tk 3000-4000. If you can bargain and haggle well, you can purchase for even lower prices.

Whatever design you prefer, one thing is for sure, Dhaka has no dearth of trinket shopping places. These shops cater to even the pickiest ones among the bunch and have something to offer to anyone. So, with Eid around the corner, go exploring both online and in physical spaces. Happy shopping!

By Maliha Arosha Hasan
Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed/Chondon



#REVIEW

“Darjeeling or an Earl Grey?”, asks the server in a crisp white apron. Answer: “Darjeeling please, with a dash of lemon in it!”



The best afternoon tea in Dhaka at **SPAGHETTI JAZZ!**

Summertime is synonymous to high-tea, get-togethers with friends, elaborate dressing and ripples of laughter. Stellar afternoons can be experienced sipping lavish tea, sitting under colourful umbrellas spread out in the open, or inside chic restaurants, while relaxing on tapestried chairs and getting lost in discussions of sweet nothings.

Soon enough, a luxurious cake trolley is brought to you, on which rests an assortment of delicacies skilfully placed on decorative china. The bottom tier of the serving tower, is usually salty and it gets sweeter as it goes up. Tiny triangles cut to near perfection, get your attention first.

You know that these mini triangles include the scrumptious smoked salmon and cream cheese fillings, which you have been craving all day. On the top tier lies a freshly baked assortment of pastries, including scones chock-full of strawberry jam and clotted cream, satiating your gastronomic senses some more.

But what's a girl to do when her finances are tied and she cannot cross continents to indulge in one of the oldest English traditions — the high-tea?

Does it mean she has to sulk and contemplate what could have been?

Not at all! Because on a busy street in Gulshan Circle 2, lies one of Dhaka's best kept secrets— Spaghetti Jazz.

The best part? They also serve high-tea.

"I always wanted to initiate the English Tea culture in Bangladesh. Because we don't have much to do during that time, 3 PM to 6 PM, even restaurants are closed and people are usually 'at a loss' for ideas,



during the odd hours, and English tea with friends seemed a great alternative to doing nothing!"

Step inside the restaurant and you will definitely agree with her, since you would be immediately transported back to the 1920s, an era predominant of Jazz Music. Once there, take time to look around and settle in the comfortable antique chairs, while soft jazz plays in the background.

Grab a pack of playing cards, if you are in the mood for some light fun.

Joseph 'King' Oliver, a legendary jazz artist, would have approved, had he been alive.

That late afternoon boredom, not feeling good about anything, craving a savoury dish or something sweet is almost always dealt with putting the kettle on the stove and reaching for the nearest snacks cabinet.

While we have been thinking about this 'exclusive longing' as a solo affair, this 'odd hour craving' and its celebration has existed for centuries. In fact, previously it used to be an elaborate affair, which thankfully has returned into our lives.

As much as high-teas are loved for the ambience, the decor and the illustrious food, it's also an occasion on its own, where the companions matter 'more' than the content. Rule number one: You must be able to enjoy the occasion with like-minded people.

Finally, all being said let's go back to discussing scones again, which are the non-negotiable part in any high-tea gathering. If there are no scones in your tea-trolley, then you are definitely in the wrong party. The only debate that should emerge from scones is whether you are a Cornwall fan or a purebred Devon supporter.

Need some enlightening?

The Cornwall style prefers cream on jam whilst the Devon style prefers it the other way around.

I don't know about the rest, I prefer it Cornwall, with the sweetness of the strawberry jam oozing out and overpowering any leftover creamy flavour.

I am already counting my days to the next high-tea on my calendar.

May – July, I am eagerly waiting.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Models: Efa and Suhi

Wardrobe: ANOKHI by Humaira Khan

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

Makeup: Sumon Rahat

Location: Spaghetti Jazz



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SPELLBOUND

by Sarah Karim couture

Synonymous with sophistication, Sarah Karim's creations are in a league of their own. Wearing one of her outfits is bound to elevate anyone's style quotient to the next level. Elegant and stylish, Sarah Karim outfits are timeless, investment pieces that will always make the wearer feel stunning!



Festive season this year is more special than ever before, for it arrives after the dreadful two years we spent in isolation. The spirit of Eid, which is celebrated in company of friends and family was lost completely. God has been kind to us and COVID has finally eased its deadly clasp on our lives. There is a palpable excitement in the air and we could not be happier!

It's only natural that we are pulling out all stops when it comes to celebrating Eid this year and Sarah Karim is indulging our fancies in the most wonderful way.

Karim's collection is equal parts versatile and stunning; there's something for everyone. Resplendent *shararas* in soothing pastel shades adorned with subtle embroidery and embellishments are perfect for Eid mornings and afternoons when cosy tête-à-tête are all your heart desires.

Luscious thread work has been further enhanced with sequins, small mirrors and *cutdana* work to bring magnificence to your mornings and afternoons.

A splendid range of luxurious formal outfits are on offer for those glamorous evening soirées and parties that demand you up the ante! Stylish net capes in juicy sorbet hues of rose, mango, pistachio and navy embellished with overwhelming paillettes, sequins and stones will have all eyes on you wherever you go. For the tradition lovers beautiful *anarkalis* are on offer with heavily embroidered dupattas in bright red, ivory and ebony that are sure to bring decadence and panache to your Eid look.

Karim's fusion range is an all-time favourite with women across the board. Want a sari with pants? Or a pre-draped sari with a unique blouse and unusual style? This is where all your sartorial dreams will come true! Rendered in diaphanous tulle, muslin, chiffon and georgette these unique works of art are embellished with crystals, pearls, sequins and stones in the most interesting motifs that elevates every outfit to the next level.

And if Eid was not festive enough there's also the much-awaited summer wedding season knocking on the doors! Karim very brilliantly has come up with an incredible festive collection that has brought together the best of both worlds and we are here for it.

Luscious reds are a true bridal favourite and Karim has designed a stunning plethora of *ghararas*, *shararas*, *lehengas* and saris, which are perfect for brides as well as others. Sweet cornflower yellow, baby blue, pistachio and lilac are the hues of choice on the opposite end of the spectrum that are perfect for bridesmaids, guests and anyone desiring a fancy outfit for her wardrobe.

According to Karim, clients can repurpose outfits from the festive bridal collection for Eid as well as for weddings. With an extensive range that offers something for everyone, Sarah Karim is a true one stop shop for every fashionista in Dhaka and beyond, and her store is a must-visit this Eid!

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Azra Mahmood

Wardrobe: Sarah Karim

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

Make-up: Sumon Rahat

Location: Pan Pacific Sonargaon, Dhaka



Stylish and comfortable shoes from Bata this

Eid!

For many decades now, Bata has been our go-to store for comfortable shoes, and this Eid is no different. Celebrating the festival of Eid, Bata brings to you over 600 new stunning designs to choose from, which perfectly combine style and comfort.



These designs have been created keeping the wearer's comfort in mind, so that you can comfortably move around in Bata shoes for hours without facing any sort of distress. Taking this aspect up a notch, Bata shoes come geared with technological advances that create the perfect comfortable wear.

hours comfortably.

Bata also understands the woes of people with foot problem, such as flat foot syndrome. To combat this issue, Bata gears their shoes with Ortholite cushioning. With this feature, strain that arises from having flatfoot is reduced vastly, providing absolute ease.

One problem that arises with wearing shoes for long periods is the growth of bacteria. As our feet create moist environments, it becomes the breeding ground for bacteria. Luckily, Bata takes this into consideration and has introduced life technology which has anti-bacterial properties. So, you may stroll around worry-free knowing that your feet are as hygienic as they can be.

All these features that are incorporated make the shoes remarkably comfortable, without compromising style. Walk into a Bata store and you will find something for every member of the family, whether it is for children, elderly, men or women. Walk around town in glamorous shoes from Bata as an urban fashionista this Eid.

Anyone can choose from a wide array of sandals, heels, sports shoes, casual and formal shoes in a variety of colours and designs.

Alongside having over 230 physical stores across the country, the newly launched 600+ designs along with shoes from previous collections makes the website of Bata (<https://www.batabd.com/>) the largest online shoe store of the country, which contains over 2000 designs in total from across 16 brands.

The website is functionally organised with sections to choose from men, women, children, and accessories. You can also choose to filter according to your requirements of colour, size, and price. Bata also provides options for gift vouchers that can be redeemed at any Bata outlet.

In celebration of Eid, Bata is also providing some special discounts that are available upon online purchases only. A 25 percent flash deal is available during the weekends

along with up to 60 percent general discounts for Eid. Buyers can also get free home delivery for any purchase above Tk. 400. Furthermore, there is cashback offer for payment via bKash, Nagad, and BRAC Bank for both online and retail outlet purchases.

Despite all these lucrative offers, the range of shoes in Bata are priced very reasonably, in a range that offers something for everyone. Gents can find shoes within a range of Tk 1299 – Tk 12999 and females can choose from a wide range of simple and exclusive shoes within Tk 799 – Tk 7999. Whereas for children, the price range varies from Tk 399 – Tk 2999.



You can choose to shop from any Bata outlet across the country where the Eid collection now stands as the highlight of every store, or you may opt to purchase from their website that offers options for easy online payment along with exclusive discounts, giving you a seamless shopping experience. When you are in a dilemma between style and comfort, Bata is the way to go. Not only are the shoes of Bata trendy and fashionable, they are also budget friendly and geared with technological advancements that shall give you utmost comfort, so that you can enjoy the best of both worlds. This Eid, grab your pair of shoes from Bata and add flair to your overall ensemble.



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By Fariha Amber
Photo: Bata



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5 iconic iftar bazaars around the world

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims gather together to break their fast with a nice and hearty iftar. The meal usually comprises of foods that are not usually eaten any other time of the year. And these specialty items are sold at large iftar bazaars that open during Ramadan.

Little Siirt, Istanbul

Little Siirt is a modest iftar market located in the capital of Turkey. During Ramadan, dozens of people line up near the various stalls scattered around this picturesque Kurdish square.

Out of the various items sold there, the two most popular dishes are the 'biryani kebab' and the 'perde pilavi'. The biryani kebab is salted lamb that is been slow cooked in a pit, resulting in succulent meat encased in a crispy layer of fat. Perde pilavi, on the other hand, is a spicy pilaf made of rice, chicken, almonds and currants, all wrapped in a thin pastry shell and baked in a cup shaped mould.

Mohammad Ali Road, Mumbai

The market started a few decades ago with just a handful of stalls surrounding the Minara Masjid. Now the bazaar has also become a massively popular tourist attraction. During Ramadan, the streets become packed with massive crowds and there have even been reports of Bollywood stars queuing up to enjoy the food. One of the signature dishes here are

the 'malpua' with 'rabri' sold at Suleiman Usman Mithaiwala. Another iconic delicacy is the Sanju Baba chicken sold at Noor Mohammedi Hotel. Named after Sanjay Dutt, this spicy chicken curry is actually the famous actor's own recipe!

Tajrish Bazaar, Tehran

There is a surprising variety of street food and dishes sold in Tajrish Bazaar. One of the most common iftar snacks sold there is 'ash reshteh,' which is a lentil and noodle herb stew. Another equally



as popular snack is haleem. The Persian variant of haleem is actually a sweet wheat and beef stew that's been topped with brown sugar and sesame seeds. But if one ventures deeper into the winding walkways of the Tajrish Bazaar, they might



find themselves rewarded with the intoxicating smell of sizzling koobideh, minced meat that's been mixed with spices and grilled over hot coals. The grilled meat is then placed in a roll of Persian flatbread and the entire thing is dipped in a pot of a buttery tomato sauce.

Meena Bazaar, Dubai

Meena Bazaar is one of Dubai's oldest shopping districts. Hundreds of people gather in the district hoping to buy some of the delicious and varied iftar dishes. There's a large number of Indian stalls and stores there so it is possible to buy some classic Indian street food like aloo vada, pani puri, and masala dosa. But if you're in the mood for something heavier, there are also separate stores that specialise in kebabs and shawarma.

Benhil Market, Jakarta

Located in the capital of Indonesia, the Benhil Market is famous for selling an assortment of traditional Indonesia dishes all year round. But during the month of Ramadan, the Benhil Market starts selling a much larger variety of traditional snacks. One such snack is the humble kolak, a special dessert stew made from coconut milk, bananas and sweet potatoes. Kolak is usually served with biji salak or 'snakefruit seeds'. These caramel coloured balls are made from sweet potato and drenched in palm sugar syrup. Another popular iftar dish is gorengan or deep fried fritter. A cheap snack that's made by deep-frying battered potato, tofu or banana, gorengan is probably the most popular iftar dish in Indonesia.

Chawk Bazaar, Dhaka

While its popularity as a business hub has diminished over the years, Chawk Bazaar is still the busiest iftar market in the country. One of the most iconic, and often derided, items is the "boro baper polay khay." Even if the name may seem unfamiliar to some, many have actually seen this iconic dish in numerous photographs. It's essentially a heaping pile of puffed rice, chickpeas, potatoes, fried eggplants, yoghurt, chicken, eggs, ghee and 12 different spices.

By Fahim Ahmed Aurko

Photo: Amran Hossain

Need a genie to get groceries? Try pandamart

With Ramadan progressing fast and Eid around the corner, every household in the country has become busier with their



Ramadan rituals and Eid preparations. And what lies at the heart of rituals and celebrations is food. So, the frequency of running to supermarkets and wet markets is higher than ever during this month. However, making time for groceries and running around with bags is cumbersome for many. So, for those seeking a faster and more convenient way to get groceries,

ies, foodpanda's pandamart may be a smart solution.

Since the launch of pandamart by foodpanda in 2020, pandamart has become a one-click grocery shopping destination for customers. Be it your daily or weekly bazaar or just random items, doing groceries no more requires walking with heavy bags. Pandamart has a broad range of products to choose from, and it delivers whatever you need or want in just 30 minutes, 24/7! So, not being able to satisfy your craving for mid-night munchies or ice-cream is a thing of the past. Want to make lemonade or fresh juice to replenish after daylong fasting? Just scroll through pandamart and place an order; your products will arrive within 30 minutes. Unexpected mess? Just scroll through and order

some cleaning supplies. Fussy toddler? There's no shortage of baby food options. Late night hangout? Popcorn, soda, chocolate and all sorts of other snacks are just one tap (and 30 minutes) away! If those scenarios aren't enough to convince you that pandamart is your grocery delivery genie, here are a couple more!

For when you wish you had a personal grocery shopper

Grocery shopping is a chore. There's no nicer way to put it. Prior to online shopping and delivery, there was no choice but to go to stores in person with a long grocery list. Now, you have the option of ordering from wherever you want, whenever you want. With pandamart, you can order your groceries from bed or from your car.

No matter the situation, you can get what you need thanks to pandamart and its large inventory of products, ranging from fresh produce to frozen items, cleaning supplies, baby products and more. All it takes to do your daily, weekly or monthly grocery is 30 minutes. No need to carry heavy bags or haggle with vendors. With pandamart's ability to deliver 24/7 – there's no need to keep shop opening or closing times in mind either.

For when you've forgotten to buy key ingredients

Sometimes, your day takes you by surprise and no amount of planning helps. For instance, you've realised that you have forgotten to buy some ingredients required for dinner. Once again, pandamart has got you covered – there's

no need to send somebody to fetch it. If you are in the middle of hosting a dinner and you realise you are missing something, just tap on pandamart within the foodpanda app. Order some extra tomatoes for your side salad, some soft drinks, and some fresh fruit as a healthy dessert. With pandamart's wide range of offerings, everything you might need is easily available in just minutes.

For anything else you need in a rush

Pandamart offers more than just groceries. You can get skincare, hair care, fragrances, baby care products, cleaning supplies and more on the platform. Imagine you are heading over to celebrate your friend's birthday when you suddenly realise you forgot to buy a gift.

Just order self-care essentials like some perfume, cosmetics and some chocolates. Throw that all together in a nice gift bag and you are good to go in under 30 minutes.

Pandamart is a popular quick commerce service used by millions of people daily across many countries in Asia. Prompt deliveries, pleasant customer service and product availability have made pandamart explode in popularity, with positive reviews indicating customer satisfaction.

Easy exercises for staying fit and managing weight this Ramadan



The holy month of Ramadan presents to us an opportunity to cleanse both our spirits and bodies. Alongside a healthy choice of foods from iftar to sehri, we need to exercise to stay fit and get our weight management plan back on track. Working out in this hot humid environment of ours can be pretty daunting, especially after fasting all day, so we have some easy exercise tips for you to do in Ramadan.

Timing of the workout

Before doing any workout, the most important thing is to pick the appropriate time for exercise. We advise to skip exercise while fasting as the humid environment will have you at risk of dehydration. But that does not mean you should laze around all day! Be active throughout the day, whether you are at office or home, walk a bit if you can, but remember to take rests whenever you are fatigued.

The best time for a workout in Ramadan is an hour or two after you have had your iftar, as by then your body would be rehydrated thanks to drinking water and you will feel energetic if you had a balanced and healthy iftar meal.

Start with some cardio

Before starting with exercise, make sure to warm up and stretch your body properly. After that, start your workout with some cardio, keeping in mind the heat and the fact you have been fasting all day, start lightly. Go for a walk, or light jogging

and check how much you can exercise before you are fatigued as the goal is to have easy enough workouts that will help to maintain your fitness in Ramadan.

Get to strength training

Using dumbbells for weight lifting does not really feel like an 'easy exercise' to do in Ramadan, but strength training can help slowing down the process of muscle loss while fasting. You can scale back your intensity and weight for the training, like using 5 kg dumbbells instead of the 10 kg ones as the priority is to keep your exercises sustainable during the month. Make sure you have a light iftar before strength training and save your biggest meal after the training session.

Be flexible with yoga

Yoga builds flexibility and strength for both body and mind, making it a nice companion to your fasting journey. Basic yoga poses like bridge pose, triangle, tree pose are great workout options if you are looking for something that will calm your mind and maintain your fitness in the process. As it can be done at the comfort of your home, yoga after an hour or two of iftar might just be the exercising cleanser your body needs.

Green tea: a healthy pre or post workout beverage

Because of its health benefits, green tea has

become a popular choice of pre workout fix for many fitness and health enthusiasts. According to a study, it was found catechins in green tea have a role in increasing energy metabolism which leads to weight loss. Lipton Green Tea without sugar, unlike milk tea, has zero calories which help to play a key role in weight management.

If you prefer not drinking anything before workout, then green tea also works as a great post workout drink. Green tea is an ideal post workout hydration option as it contains 99 percent water and according to nutritionists, green tea contains amino acid which works to improve brain function along with antioxidants like EGCG that helps prevent cell damage.

Whether it's the pre workout drink that you need or the post workout fix, a cup of Lipton Green Tea can be your health and wellness partner along with your workout routine. Lipton Green Tea is also available in an exciting Honey Lemon variant, which not only is a healthy beverage option, but also tasty.

Exercises help us attain our goal of fitness, weight management and above all, help us lead a healthy life. So this Ramadan, it's time we make the right choice for our wellbeing and include exercising along with a balanced nutritious diet.

By Feda Al Hossain

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed



Delicious desserts with All Time Bread

Bread is a pantry essential and a highly versatile ingredient too. From making a quick jam sandwich to creating decadent desserts, bread can be used in a multitude of ways. All Time Bread is prepared fresh, and its softness makes it the perfect core ingredient for bread desserts. Here are a couple of desserts that revs up the humble bread to create absolutely lip-smacking delicacies.

BANANA BREAD PUDDING

Ingredients

7-8 All Time Bread slices
5 medium sized bananas
4 eggs
2 tbsp sugar
1 tsp vanilla essence
4 eggs
1½ cup milk
1 tsp cinnamon powder
½ cup cream
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup chopped nuts

Method

Cut the All Time Bread slices into little cubes



and beat the eggs. Mash four bananas and whisk them in with the eggs. Add sugar, vanilla essence, milk and cinnamon powder and mix them together. Pour in cream along with raisins and chopped nuts. You can use a combination of nuts such as cashews, almonds, and pistachios.

Incorporate everything together and finally add in the bread cubes. Slice the remaining banana into wheels and add that in as well. Pour this in a greased baking dish and top with nuts and raisins. Bake this in a preheated oven at 160°C for 30-35 minutes, until the top becomes golden brown. You can serve this warm or chilled, as it is, or paired with ice cream, maple syrup or honey.

MANGO SHAHI TUKRA

Ingredients

7-8 All Time Bread slices
2 cups milk
3 tbsp sugar
½ tsp cardamom powder
½ cup mango puree
A few saffron strands
½ cup ghee for frying
For the sugar syrup –
1 cup sugar

1 cup water
3-4 cardamom pods
For garnish –
½ cup mango cubes
1 tbsp sliced pistachios
A handful of raisins

Method

Heat the milk and add sugar and bring it to a boil. Once boiling, take aside a couple of tablespoons and add saffron to it.

Continue heating the milk until it is reduced to half of its original quantity.

Once there, lower the heat and add cardamom powder along with mango puree and stir to get a homogenous and creamy mixture. Pour back in the saffron infused milk. To make the sugar syrup, add equal amounts of sugar and water in a pan and bring it to a simmer. Throw in cardamom pods and heat it until it reaches a string consistency. Slice the All Time Bread slices diagonally to attain two triangles from each, and shallow fry them on both sides in ghee, until the sides are crisp and golden brown.

Once fried, drop them immediately in the sugar syrup mixture and drench all the sides with this concoction. Finally, drain them and assemble the All Time Bread slices in a deep dish. Pour over the milk

and mango mixture and let it absorb the liquid. Garnish the top with fresh mango cubes, sliced pistachios, and raisins.

By Fariha Amber
Food & Photo: Fariha Amber





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Delicious, healthy sehri recipes

The holy month of Ramadan always brings with it a wave of festive cheer. The pre-dawn meal, sehri, is the most important meal during Ramadan since that is what one's body thrives on all day. It is imperative that you keep yourself hydrated, consume a well-balanced diet and make the right choice of food and drinks throughout the month for a healthier mind and body.

Here's a handy guide on what you should include in your meal that's keep you fuelled until dusk.

High-carb food

Foods like rice, breads and potatoes are high in complex carbohydrates and take longer to digest and help to keep energy levels up. Avoid too much spice as it may cause heartburn and indigestion.

Fruits and whole grains

Fruits like apples, banana, and apricots are high in fibre and so are grains like chickpeas, oats and wheat. Fibre installs a feeling of fullness and helps prevent constipation.

Dairy products and lean meat

Add protein in your diet in the form of milk, eggs, chicken, yoghurt and lentils. This will help strengthen your immunity.

Food with high satiety value and low glycaemic index

Such foods keep you full for longer and act as craving busters. They release energy over a period of time and will help prevent fatigue and lethargy.

Munch on nuts and seeds, eat foods packed with fibre or have broth-based stews or soups. Whole wheat *chapatis* are a great choice along with some vegetables and fruits. It makes for a complete meal which is digested slowly and keeps you satisfied.

Hydrating food and drinks

Avoid having too many cups of tea or coffee as caffeine leads to loss of water which increases thirst. More so, sugary foods or drink get digested very quickly and could leave you feeling hungry sooner than you would expect. Having said that, drinking too much water is also not advisable. It will dilute the stomach acids and lead to bloating and indigestion. Sip water gradually at intervals.

If you have a light headache or feel one coming on, you are probably dehydrated. Fresh fruits, juices and vegetables with high water content will keep you hydrated.

Coconut water is a great source of electrolytes with simple sugar and minerals that replenish water loss. Add cool foods like cucumber, pineapple, tomato, orange, melon and onion which help in reducing body heat. Keep away from salty foods as they increase fluid loss in your body. Most importantly, keep hydrated and chew on a date or two at sehri to keep your energy levels up throughout your fast. The right choice of meals will ensure a healthy lifestyle without affecting your daily regime.

Here is a suggested list of best sehri meals.

LOW FAT WHOLE WHEAT PASTA

This dish lets you add all necessary nutrients to your sehri intake, as whole wheat provides abundant health benefits. Sauté the pasta mixture well with the tangy sauce and serve.

Ingredients

For sauce—

- 1 tsp oil
- ¼ cup chopped onions
- ½ tbsp chopped garlic

- 1 tbsp tomato puree
 - ¼ tsp chilli powder
 - ½ cup low fat milk
 - ½ tsp cornflour mixed in 1 tbsp water
- For pasta—
- 1½ cup boiled whole white pasta
 - 1 tsp chopped garlic
 - ½ cup sweet corn kernels
 - ½ tsp red chilli flakes
 - ½ cup capsicum
 - ½ tsp oil
 - Salt to taste

Method

Heat oil in a pan. Add onion, garlic and sauté for few minutes, add tomato puree, chilli powder and salt, mix and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add milk and cornflour mixture. Boil and keep aside. Heat oil in another pan. Add garlic and capsicum, sauté for 1 minute. Add sweet corn, chilli flakes and pasta. Mix well and add cooked sauce to it. Toss gently and cook for 1 minute more. Remove from heat and serve.

PARATHA SANDWICH

Ingredients

- 500g whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp ghee
- Salt to taste
- 500g chicken mince
- 2 tbsp chopped green chillies
- 1 chopped tomato
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tbsp red chilli flakes
- 1 cup capsicum



- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp coriander powder
- 2 tbsp fresh coriander
- 3 tbsp mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp chilli garlic sauce
- 2 tbsp mustard paste
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- Mozzarella cheese, as required

Method

Heat oil in a pan. Add ginger garlic paste, tomatoes and sauté for a minute. Add minced chicken, salt, red chilli flakes, black pepper powder and cook for 3 to 5 minutes. Then add onions, capsicum, green chillies and chilli garlic sauce. Cook for another 2 minutes. Remove from heat and allow it to cool.

In a bowl add flour, salt, and ghee. Mix properly and add water gradually and knead the dough. Cover and rest for 15 minutes. Now make small balls of dough and roll it out. Heat a flat pan, place rolled paratha on it, cook from one side and set aside.

Now spread mayonnaise on cooked side, sprinkle cheese, coriander leaves and top with cooked chicken. Cover with another half cooked paratha. Pour oil into the pan and fry the paratha from both sides properly until it become golden brown.

Your tasty paratha sandwich is ready to serve.

CHICKEN STEW

Ingredients

- 500g chicken cut into 1½ inch cubes
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 6-8 garlic cloves
- 2 medium potatoes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 5-6 French beans, cut into small pieces
- 2 medium carrots, cubed
- 1 medium onion
- ½ tsp black pepper powder
- 2 tbsp whole wheat flour
- ½ cup milk
- Salt to taste

Method

Slice onion and garlic. Cube the potatoes. Heat oil in a pan, add onion and garlic and sauté for a couple of minutes. Cube the carrots. Add potatoes and carrots to the pan and sauté

for 2-3 minutes. Add chicken and continue to sauté. Add whole wheat flour to the chicken and mix well. Fry for 1 minute. Add chicken stock, salt, pepper powder and mix well. Cover and cook till chicken is almost done. Add French beans and milk and cook for 5-7 minutes. Serve hot with garlic bread.

KHAGINA

Khagina is a South Asian spicy scrambled eggs with onion and tomatoes. It is a simple, easy to cook and protein rich recipe. Khagina was apparently a Mughal delicacy and may have arrived into the courtly cuisines of Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad through Persian influence. It can be served with different kinds of roti, chapati, paratha or naan.

Ingredients

- 5 large eggs
- 3 tbsp butter
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 2 green chillies sliced
- 1 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp red chilli powder
- ¼ tsp turmeric powder
- ¼ tsp garam masala powder
- ½ cup coriander leaves
- Salt to taste

Method

Crack the eggs in a medium sized bowl, whisk with a fork till light and fluffy. Set aside. Heat butter in a medium frying pan on medium heat. Add the sliced onion, and sauté till light golden. Add the chopped tomatoes and cook till soft. Mash the tomatoes. Add green chillies and all the spices. Cook for about 2 minutes or till the raw flavour of the spices dissipates and oil can be seen from the side of the masala.

Now, add the whisked eggs and cook on low heat till the eggs are almost cooked through. They should be soft and resemble soft scrambled custard. Make sure to keep stirring to scramble the eggs. At this stage add salt and chopped coriander. Stir for another 1 to 2 minutes and then take off the heat. Serve right away with bread of choice. Garnish with more coriander leaves.

SOYA MEAT RICE

Soya meat rice is a unique, nutritious take on the traditional biryani. This flavourful and delicious rice dish is one of the easiest and quickest version of rice you can make. Soya rice made with fragrant rice and soya meat is perfect as a healthy meal for sehri.

Ingredients

- 1 cup aromatic rice
- ½ cup soya meat
- 2 tbsp curd
- 2 tbsp oil
- ½ tsp garam masala powder
- ½ tsp turmeric powder
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 star anise
- 2-3 green cardamom
- 3 cloves
- 2 inch-size cinnamon pieces



- 1 strand mace
- ¼ tsp cumin seeds
- 5 black pepper corn
- To grind —
- ½ cup mint leaves
- ¼ cup coriander leaves
- 2 green chillies
- 1 inch-size ginger piece
- 3 garlic cloves
- 2 onion
- Salt to taste

Method

Soak soya meat in warm water until softened. Wash with cold water and squeeze to remove excess water, repeat this twice. Make sure there is no water left in the meat.

Add mint leaves, coriander leaves, onion, ginger, garlic, green chillies to a grinder. Grind to a smooth paste. Marinate the soya meat with this paste and *garam masala*. Set aside for 15 minutes.

Soak rice for 15 minutes and drain off the water and set aside. Heat oil in a pan. Add whole spices and sauté till it releases aroma. Add the marinated soya meat along with the ground paste. Sauté on a low heat until the raw aroma goes away. Add curd, turmeric and mix well.

Cook till the mixture leaves the sides of the pan. Pour water, add salt and bring to a boil on high heat. Reduce heat and add rice, mix well and cover the pan with the lid on low heat. Cook until the rice fully cooked. Remove from pan and serve hot.

OATS AND YOGHURT PORRIDGE PARFAIT

Oats and yoghurt porridge parfait is a protein-packed sehri recipe, and involves very few ingredients and less than half an hour to result in a crunchy parfait packed with refreshing pomegranate, goodness of pistachios, honey and yoghurt.

Ingredients

- 5 tbsp oats
- 3 tbsp yoghurt
- 1 tbsp honey
- 3 tbsp pomegranate
- 3 tbsp pistachio
- 250 ml milk

Method

Soak the oats in milk for 2 hours in a container. For sehri, add layers of pomegranate, yoghurt, honey and pistachio. The parfait is ready to eat.

DATES AND MIXED FRUITS SMOOTHIE

Ingredients

- 10 dates, soaked in hot water for an hour
- 1 cup mixed fruits (apple, banana, orange, papaya, etc.)
- 1 cup yoghurt
- Water as required

Method

Blend the soaked dates with water into a thick paste. Add mixed fruits and yoghurt. Blend everything together into a thick smoothie. Enjoy immediately or with ice cubes.

**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food and Styling: RBR**

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#FOOD & RECIPES

5-Star iftar recipes

Sometimes, traditional iftar items quite fail to tantalise the taste buds. And if that's how you feel too, then here are some recipes from across the globe to try out and spice things up this Ramadan.

ATAIF ASAFERI

Ingredients

For kataif –

(makes around 15 servings)

1 cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup semolina
¼ tsp yeast
½ tsp baking powder
1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp orange blossom water optional
1½ cups of warm water; you may need ¼ to ½ cup more
For simple syrup –
2 cups sugar
1 cup water
2 tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp rose water or orange blossom water optional
Thick cream
Ground pistachios

Method

In a bowl, whisk all the dry ingredients and the oil together. Once it is all incorporated well, start pouring in the orange blossom water, and warm water, and whisk well until you get a homogenous mixture. Let it rest for 10 minutes.

Heat a non-stick fry pan and pour in 2-3 tablespoons of the batter. The kataif should start to bubble from the edges and then spread to the entire surface. Once it's not shiny on the surface and it is fully covered with bubbles, you know it's done. It will take about a minute or so. Do not flip it.

Take the kataif off the heat, place them on a clean kitchen towel and fold the towel over to cover them.

To assemble, once the kataif cools down, fold them into a half circle and seal it only half way. Fill the pocket with the cream, and dip it in ground pistachios or sprinkle the

pistachios over the cream.

To make the simple syrup —

Place the sugar, water and lemon juice in a pot and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Turn off the heat and add the rosewater. Arrange the kataifs on a plate and serve with the simple syrup.

BEEF KOOBIDEH KEBAB

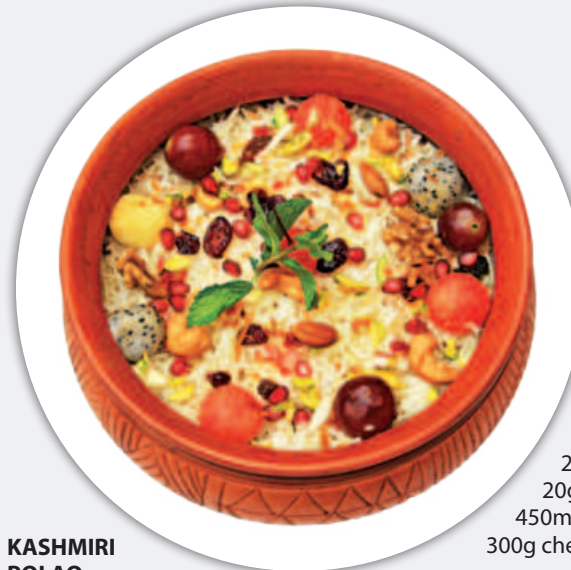
Ingredients



1 kg boneless ground beef
100g onion, grated
10g black pepper ground
10g turmeric powder
5g nutmeg
5g sumac powder
50g green onion, diced
5g baking powder
2 eggs
Salt, to taste
50g butter

Method

In a bowl, add ground beef, green onion, and grated onion and mix until thoroughly combined. Add baking powder, salt, pepper, sumac, turmeric, eggs, nutmeg, and mix thoroughly. Cover the bowl and place in the refrigerator until flavours have melded, at least 30 minutes. Now take out the beef from chiller, and mould meat mixture onto the skewers. Cook properly on the preheated char grill, rotating every minute, until it is a nice brown colour on all sides.



KASHMIRI POLAO

Ingredients

1½ kg basmati rice
50g ginger paste
50g garlic paste
100g green chilli
5g cinnamon sticks
300g onion, sliced
Salt to taste
100g ghee
200g oil
150ml milk
5g bay leaf
150g raisin
10g green cardamom
20g sugar
60g red apples
60g pomegranate arils (seeds)
60g ripe papaya
60g red grapes
60g pineapple
50g cashew nut
50g walnut
1 pinch saffron

Method

Wash Basmati rice in water 2-3 times and then soak in water for 15 minutes. Drain water and keep rice aside. Separately, soak saffron in 1 tablespoon warm milk.

Heat oil and ½ of ghee in a deep pan or pot over medium flame, add bay leaf, cloves, cardamom and cinnamon sticks, sauté for 30 seconds, add ½ of onion, sauté until light golden colour, add green chilli, ginger-garlic paste and sauté for further 30 seconds.

Add rice, and sauté for 1-2 minutes, then add water, milk, saffron and salt. Mix well and bring it to boil over medium flame. When it starts to boil, reduce flame to low and cook covered for 15-20 minutes.

When rice is cooked, turn off the flame and let it stand for 5 minutes. Open the lid, add the remaining ghee and fluff the rice with a fork. Take a shallow pan, heat oil, add remaining onion and fry until it turns brown, keep aside. Cut the fresh fruits into small cubes.

Lightly shallow fry raisin, nuts, and fruits, and mix gently with cooked rice. Cook for another 2-3 minutes, and turn off the flame and transfer to a serving bowl. Garnish with fried onion

and coriander leaves.

KATAYF

Ingredients

300g flour
60g semolina
5g yeast
10g baking powder
20ml oil
20g sugar
450ml water
300g cheese

Method

Mix all ingredients together, except cheese, and let the mixture rest for 1 hour to ferment. Make 20 flat dough patties, fill with cheese, fold into half circles. Deep fry each until crispy and golden in colour.

KUNAFA

Ingredients

150g kunafa dough (shemai)
50g butter
½ tsp orange food colour
250g mozzarella cheese
20g sugar
50g pistachio
For the syrup—
500g sugar
400ml water
5g orange blossom

Method

Mix together shemai, sugar and butter, place it in a 9" cake mould, and bake at 160° Celsius for 15 minutes. Now arrange mozzarella cheese pistachio on top, and bake again for another 15 minutes at 200° Celsius.

Boil the ingredients for the syrup. Once the kunafa is baked, soak it with the syrup.

LAMB ADANA KEBAB

Ingredients

1kg boneless minced lamb
50g ginger paste
50g garlic paste
150g green chili
100g yoghurt
10g cumin powder
5g cinnamon powder
100g chopped onion
15g chopped parsley
Salt to taste
5g crushed black pepper
5g paprika powder
5g red chili flakes
5g sumac powder

Method

Take all ingredients in a food processor, mix very well until it turns smooth, and keep aside for 30 minutes, now take the mixture and mould onto the skewers, and cook on the preheated char grill, rotating every minute, until nicely browned on all sides.

Recipes by Chef Sheikh Abdur Rashid, Executive sous chef, Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden
Photo: Radisson Blu Dhaka Water Garden



PENNY WISE
NASREEN SATTAR

Former CEO, Standard Chartered Bank,
Afghanistan



Financial tips for the holy month of Ramadan

Ramadan Mubarak to all my readers. I apologise for not writing for a long time. It has been a couple of years of distress for many of us, having lost loved ones during the COVID pandemic. May all of us see a glowing light at the end of a dark tunnel.

Ramadan normally is a time where we spend time with family and friends. It is a time to reflect on what our lives have been and how we can be better human beings. This is a time when we tend to dine out more frequently and even donate more than at other times of the year. Naturally, our expenses increase during this month and we might spend more than we had intended.

However, let this Ramadan be a different story. Instead of considering this holy month of fasting and sacrifices as an excuse to overspend, let us manage our finances by saving money. There are many ways in which we can cut down on our expenses and still enjoy Ramadan. Let us look at some of them:

Let it be simple

Ramadan upholds basic human values and simplicity. While we contemplate on our actions in this holy month, let us practice simplicity in our financial expenditures too. Instead of organising lavish iftar banquets, we can break our fast at home with our loved ones or organise small iftars for our friends and family.

We need to stick to our expense budget

We need to remember that we cannot exceed our budgeted expenses.

Of course we will need to make purchases for the month, but we should also remember not to overspend on unnecessary purchases.

Alternately, we can create a separate Ramadan budget that includes all the expenses that we would need to make during the month. That could include the cost of gifts, clothes, entertainment, and food. Once we make a budget, it will be easier for us to follow it if we involve our family in its implementation as well.

Make use of rewards and discounts

During Ramadan, the market is flooded with discounted goods, be it clothes, food, or gifts. We must keep our ears and eyes open for these items; make full use of them,



Travel cheaply

If we are planning to travel during Ramadan or Eid we must purchase tickets in advance to avail of discounted rates. Ticket prices are soaring every day!

Eid gifts to family and friends should not be expensive

Love and happiness are more important than purchasing expensive gifts. Create personalised gifts at your home as per everyone's choice that serve as a sweet gesture.

Looking after those who help us

It is a time to think of the less fortunate among us. Our domestic staff and others who help us in our daily lives deserve special consideration this Ramadan. They also aspire to enjoy the bounties of Eid.

Eid Bonuses are mandatory in formal establishments, but household employees are equally deserving of this benefit. Therefore, Eid gifts and bonus to our staff should be featured in our Ramadan budget.

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



Sharing wisdom with The Daily Star Gift Cards



Gift cards and vouchers are an exquisite way of gift giving, where the receiver can purchase anything to their liking within a said amount. While gift card is a common custom in the retail scene, what if you could do the same in terms of sharing knowledge and information?

The Daily Star now makes it possible to share wisdom in the form of gift giving with their newly launched gift cards.

"The gift cards are a first of its kind in the newspaper industry, which is an excellent means of sharing wisdom and disseminating information with one another," said Shuvashish Roy, Head of Business at The Daily Star.

They are available in three types, being quarterly, half-yearly and annual subscription in varied price ranges with budget saving deals. This means that newspaper subscription would cost you more if you were otherwise to take subscription via traditional means.

The quarterly blue card costs Tk 900, where you can save Tk 160. The half-yearly red card costs Tk 1800, where upon you will be able to save Tk 320. And lastly, the black yearly subscription card costs Tk 3500, which will allow you to save Tk 740.

The activation process is very simple, where you will only have to scratch the unique pin provided at the back of the card. Following this, you can either call at 0171 1623906 for manual activation or you can visit <http://giftcard.thedailystar.net/> and select the redeem card option.

A subscriber shall start receiving newspaper regularly from The Daily Star to their given address one week after activation. These cards can be purchased from <http://giftcard.thedailystar.net/> which is equipped with online payment options. However, the card has to be activated within three months of purchase.

While the gift card is a very thoughtful gift idea for family and friends, it is an even better way of B2B gift giving. Organizations and corporate giants can share this unique gift with their stakeholders, clients, employees, and vendors. A gift as such falls perfectly well within the precinct of business circles and is a great way to strengthen corporate relationships and disseminate up to date information.

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By Fariha Amber
Photo: Star

#PERSPECTIVE

SPIRITUALITY AND THE NEXT GENERATION:

How does spirituality affect your children?

Children are impressionable. They are unsure of their place in this world. In a conservative country like ours, most children are raised to be religious and by extension, hold many spiritual beliefs. Higher power, divine judgement and a "second life" are just some of the core beliefs taught to children via organised religion.

"Religious spirituality is the only spirituality you'll ever need. A true follower of Islam will never feel lost or without purpose," says Khadeza Akter, a devout Muslim and mother of three young boys.

"Youngsters these days are suffering from stress and depression due to their lack of faith. If they had faith in the wisdom and strength of a higher power, then they would realise their true potential."

She also added, "Social media and western ideals have alienated us. We are more alone now than ever before. But faith and spirituality can bring us together. Taking part in religious acts like praying



Spirituality has always been a tough nut to crack. It encompasses a broad range of ideas from the belief in something greater or more divine to the search for our ultimate purpose in life. It also includes the promise of a life beyond our own and a greater connection to the world we inhabit. Needless to say, the impact of spirituality is immense, especially on those still developing their sense of self i.e. children.

and fasting can give people a sense of community and belonging."

In spite of these obvious similarities, religion and spirituality are not the same. Religion is based on believers following a specific set of doctrines and practices alongside a likeminded community. While this may be appealing to many, some people would prefer greater flexibility with their beliefs. They may also be more interested in spiritual practices that exist outside their own culture and norm.

One of the biggest ideas within spirituality is the idea of the afterlife. The concept exists in nearly all of the major religions and it exists as a way to show that the physical world or "first life" is not the end of it all. It also serves the purpose of teaching children that actions have consequences.

This is something Sayedur Rahman, father to a six-year-old, firmly believes. "Children aren't capable of empathising like adults are. It doesn't make as much sense for them. However, the idea of an unavoidable judgment actually motivates them to change their behaviour. If you do bad deeds, you'll get punished. Consequently, if you do good deeds, you'll be rewarded."

When I asked him if only the idea of heaven and hell is adequate to deter children from committing bad deeds, he answered "Yes, it is. Over time, they'll understand things like altruism and empathy. But when they're young, the

fear of hell can push them away from misbehaviour. It's the best way to teach little children to be respectful towards one another. As they grow older, their ideas change but these core values and belief stay the same, more or less."

In a world where corruption runs rampant and deception seems like a skill to be rewarded rather than a sin to be shunned, the idea of divine justice may just be what children need. It inspires hope and positivity. It assures them that no matter what, evil will be punished.

While the idea of an afterlife can act as a way of ensuring justice, it can also act as a salve. Death is a confusing concept for children. Most are incapable of processing the trauma of losing a loved one. Spirituality introduces the idea of an Elysium, a paradise world for the pure of heart. "It gives them joy knowing that their loved ones are still out there, happy and safe," says Rahman.

While a solid majority of parents speak in favour of spirituality, there are some who don't feel strongly about it.

"Spirituality isn't mandatory to have a moral compass. It's far too abstract of a concept and it would just skew their own thinking. If they want to learn it of their own volition, sure but I don't think it's something necessary," says Sameera Khan. A mother of two teenage daughters, Khan believes that spirituality should be explored out of curiosity but not introduced as the only true path in life.

"Children need to have the freedom to learn about the world at their own pace. Forcing them to follow a certain path at such a young age would bring more harm than good. If I see them being swayed to something harmful, I can gently guide them back to the right path. But forcing them to learn of the afterlife, higher powers, and divine justice is far too much."

When asked if the lack of spirituality would lead to children having a weaker moral code, she replied, "No, it won't. Kids don't need to be scared of hell to stop themselves from doing misdeeds. Children understand empathy and human emotions fairly well. Many people underestimate how emotionally intelligent kids can be. They don't need to be frightened with stories of hellfire and eternal torment."

Regardless of your stance on the effectiveness of using spirituality to reinforce a child's moral fibre, there is no denying the role of spirituality in giving people a sense of purpose. Children often struggle with their place in the world. They can't quite figure out who they are and what they should do. Spirituality can offer an answer to this via belief in a higher existence and practices such as meditation or prayer.

While this is a popular solution, many people like Khan are dismissive of spiritual learning, especially for young and impressionable children. She added, "Children hold on to these kinds of spiritual beliefs strongly. Especially if they were introduced to them at a young age. So, when they get older, they're not willing to learn new things or at least be flexible with their ideals."

Childhood is a vulnerable and sensitive stage in one's life. You absorb the most knowledge and experience during this stage. The fear that Khan shares with a large number of likeminded parents is that spiritual learning at a young age will create unhealthy biases and skew their logical thinking.

Regardless of your own stance on this issue, one thing remains clear. Spirituality or lack thereof, is integral to our individuality. Even if you do not consider yourself a spiritual being, you cannot deny its significance in human history and its continued significance in modern society. And while being introduced to spirituality at a young age can grant you peace and purpose, it can also make you put your beliefs on a pedestal and be unwilling to embrace new ideas.

So what's the solution here? Do we introduce spirituality to give our children a sense of higher purpose, peace and belonging? Or do we simply give our children the freedom to figure out who they are and their place in the place in the world? It's hard to say. But like any other complex dilemma sometimes it important to just take a step back and follow your heart.

By Fahim Ahmed Aurko
Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

#PRESS RELEASES

Taaga rolls out “Sehri Under the Stars at Terracotta Tales” event

TAAGA and TAAGA MAN, the sub-brands of Aarong, the most popular fashion and lifestyle retail chain in the country, is organising a special event, “Sehri Under the Stars at Terracotta Tales,” throughout the month of Ramadan.

It is a celebration of togetherness with family and friends during this special month

at Dhaka’s newest dining spot located next to Aarong’s multi-brand outlet in Tejgaon, Dhaka. The event will remain open on Thursdays and Fridays between April 7 to 28, 2022. Anyone can join this event from 10 PM to 4:30 AM on these dates.

At the event, people can enjoy a special Terracotta Tales menu for sehri or enjoy

a variety of snacks and beverages at the Terracotta Snacks and Juice booths all night long. Additionally, several other booths will be set up where participants can make their own crafts, experience Aarong Earth, and also experience the Taaga and Taaga Man brands and enjoy exclusive discounts only at this event. Everyone will have a chance

to join the Club Taaga rewards programme at a special entry offer and enjoy privileges year round.

For more information, please visit aarong.com.

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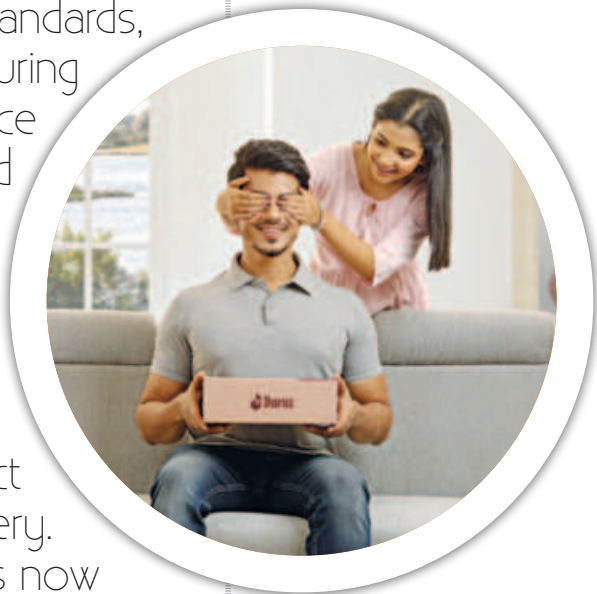
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#FASHION & BEAUTY

FASHION DEMANDS AND THE LATEST TRENDS: Need or occasion, Daraz is the solution!



Daraz's fashion products come from international and local businesses ensuring diversity in style and unmatched quality. Daraz adheres to strict international quality standards, ensuring confidence and reliability in customer service as well as originality in product delivery.



Customers now have access to the best products available in the fashion industry. So, making this Eid stylish and fashionable will be no concern with the vouchers and discounts Daraz is offering!

Every season, Daraz delivers the best deals across all product categories, including fashion. Daraz has all our favourite fashion products under one roof for both men and women. This Eid, Lotto and Bata is the diamond sponsor and Trendz is the gold sponsor. Apart from these brands there are other brands like SSB, Fabrilife, Kay Kraft and Woodland which are offering exclusive discounts and free shipping (Terms and Conditions applied).

Additionally, with special offers and discounts, customers can now find trendy products from formal wear to casual, shoes

customers are offered attractive discounts on their first order!

During Eid, we find ourselves attending various events requiring a good outfit. Daraz is home to a wide selection of attractive and fashionable items inclusive of formal and casual wear. For comfort and convenience, Daraz has gathered all of our favourite fashion goods in one place. In casual wear, t-shirts and trousers are available in different colours and sizes which can come in handy any time of the year. For more formal gatherings, sarees, kurti and salwar kameez for women, shirts,

footwear options.

Daraz also features a wide range of accessories in various aesthetics. Necklaces, pendants, earrings, jewellery sets, and much more are all available at a reasonable cost. A stylish variety of caps, wallets, belts, and backpacks is also available. Not only do these accessories make for a great addition to one's own wardrobe but also make for thoughtful gifts for our loved ones during Eid.

Original products from renowned fashion, beauty, and lifestyle brands are available on DarazMall. If customers want to cancel their



to accessories and everything needed to build our Eid wardrobe. While minding their wallets, customers can choose from the widest selection of stylish products with the best pricing, effective and fast delivery, assurance of authentic products, and an easy return policy.

Customers have access to the best discounts in the market making Daraz the best place to buy fashion products this season. Shopping from Daraz allows customers to take advantage of Flash sales, 10 percent prepayment discount, Bkash cash back, up to Tk 12,000 discount on mega deals, vouchers and other exclusive offers. Daraz is the umbrella under which we can discover any and all fashion essentials and the latest trends, with exclusive bargains and the widest range available online. Additionally, new

pants and shoes for men among many other items of clothing are available.

With an additional collection of cotton and chiffon headscarves and sportswear, there is something fit for everyone's fashion choice. Furthermore, the footwear selection ensures quality with fashionable sneakers, casual and formal shoes, loafers, sandals, and socks are among the many



order, a return request can be applied for on the app or website between 7-14 days of the delivery date, with the assurance of a full refund.

With Daraz's loyalty to international quality standards and array of reliable and popular brands, there is no question that the ecommerce platform is the one-stop needed for all out fashion demands!

By Puja Sarkar
Photo: Daraz