

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.

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Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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