

# Dhaka's lively bakery scene



As a city, Dhaka is rich in terms of culture and tradition, and what forms a big part of our heritage is the food we have carried down from generation to generation. Apart from the usual Bengali cuisine that we have, with various renditions in the many regions of our country and some holding their unique specialty, Dhaka reigns in the bakery scene. From the gems of the old town to the now trending and

much-hyped fusion food as an offshoot of globalisation, the bakery scene of Dhaka has come a long way.

#### A hit of nostalgia

If we are to historically track down the bakery scene of Dhaka, bakarkhani is a good place to start. The story of the bakarkhani dates back to the Mughal period when it was widely popular among the merchants and citizens of

Dhaka. Now, bakarkhani is a food that has received recognition globally.

Fasttrack to some hundred years later, the bakery scene in the old town is still vibrant and we have now been introduced to the world of biscuits and cookies in various shapes, sizes, and flavours. Some of the oldest bakeries of Dhaka are Prince of Wales Bakery & Confectionery, Olympia Bakery & Confectionery, Ananda

Confectionery, and Yousuf Bakery & Confectionery.

"Patties, biscuits, and vanilla cakes were the prominent items back then. With minimal offerings, hot patties sold in tin boxes by hawkers would get us children excited!" said Taskin Rahman, Founder of The Food Talk, which is a Facebook community for food enthusiasts.

The '90s saw the advent of cake shops

and bakeries that revved up the baking scene. With Sausly's Foods bringing in new items like sugar puffs, Swiss Bakery with their plain cake, and Shumi's Hot Cake Ltd. stunning everyone with their marvellous creations, it was a time when the bakery scene of Dhaka was abuzz, and we had something to look



forward to apart from white bread and biscuits.

Nevertheless, no matter how much the scene evolves in Dhaka, bakarkhani, biscuits, and patties will always be remembered as the original baked goods of Dhaka. They may be simple, humble food, but are crafted with the essence of culture and a hit of nostalgia.

#### Foreign influence

History may be etched but change is constant, and foreign influence in our local cuisine was the next big thing. Owing to the increase in travel worldwide, coupled with globalisation, we were introduced to a host of other cuisines globally from the 2000s. This not only gave us an assortment of options to satiate our taste buds but also made a gateway for a slew of bakery stores to open up.

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