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PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED AND FARIHA AMBER



#FASHION & BEAUTY

An evening of celebrating fashion with Zurhem

The fashion industry of Bangladesh is always buzzing with excitement and our designers know how to keep us on the edge of our seats awaiting their new line of work. However, the latest news this time is particularly thrilling. Renowned fashion house Zurhem hosted the launch of its new line of Summer Spring collection, Zurhem SS23, on Saturday, 18 February, 2023, at an exclusive private viewing and it's unlike anything we have seen from them before.

The new collection features light and airy, ready-to-wear fits highlighting minimal designs. Diverting further away from their traditional line of work, the focus this time has been on casual shirts, dresses, jumpsuits, shorts, and more in white, silver, and duo chrome colours. This departure from their traditional aesthetic by Zurhem shows their willingness to try new things and embrace change which is always refreshing in the world of fashion.

A perfect mix of simple yet chic and

elegant with just the right amount of fit and flair, this time Zurhem is all about keeping it minimal but making a statement at the same time. Be it a formal event or a night out in the town, these fits can be paired effortlessly for various occasions, making them a great addition to your wardrobe.

This time Zurhem hosted their first solo show after a two-year-long break due to the pandemic, and they have brought in all the right elements for a rather grand evening. Curiosity was piqued when guests received

a beautiful bonsai as part of their invitation to the show.

Knowing Zurhem, this was obviously no random component. The big reveal came with 'Equality, Social Justice & Freedom' as the theme for the evening. With incredible choreography by Azra Mahmood, dance drama and theatrical performances took to the runway to explain the inspiration behind this collection. Mother Nature played a crucial part in all of it, shades of white being used to explain serenity and

harmony.

Mehrur Munir has always made his presence known through his designs but this show somehow made us reconsider his versatility as a designer. Never backing down from a challenge, this designer is definitely at the top of his game at all times, always bringing something unique and setting the bar at a new high every time.

By Nusrath Jahan
Photo: Zurhem



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Favour fusion fashion: Styling kurtis



The best thing to have emerged from globalisation is the fusion style of dressing that brings the best of East and West together. A very modern way to embrace a blending of two separate cultures, fusion dressing is cool and stylish.

A shirt-style kurta, which has the collar and sleeves of a shirt but the length and cut of a traditional kurta is incredibly fashionable as well as comfortable. Pair it with tights, jeans, jeggings, or straight-cut pants; the shirt-style kurta is versatile in more ways than one. Wear it to work, to run errands, to meet friends for coffee, or later at night to dinner — this style will see you through life's many different situations while keeping you fashionable!

A duster jacket is typically fashioned from flowing materials such as georgette, crepe, silk, or heavy chiffon. It is yet another versatile garment that can be worn in many different ways in different situations.

Worn on top of a tank top and jeans you will be all set for your trip to the supermarket. Wear it with a chic blouse and flared pants and your outfit for lunch with friends is sorted. Throw it on top of a maxi dress and attending lectures at university will be a breeze.

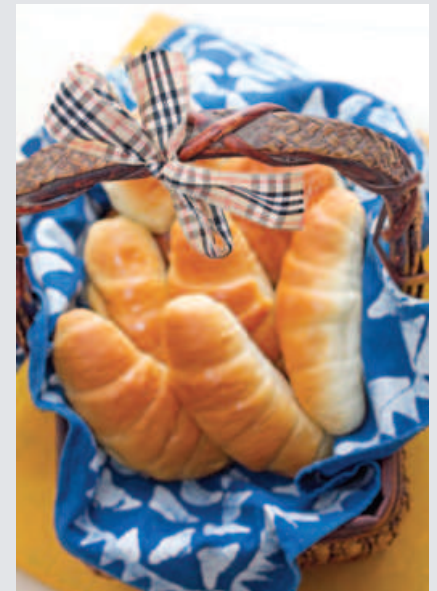
Need another really cool way to style it? Wear it on top of a neatly tucked sari too to stand out in a crowd with élan!

A kaftan top is perhaps the greatest gift of fusion fashion! A loose-fitting silhouette that can be easily bound with a drawstring, it gives the illusion of a slimmer waistline while keeping the wearer comfortable.

There really is no limit to the ways a kaftan can be styled or the fabrics it

could be made from. From handloom materials to flowing ones like chiffon and crepe kaftans bring any fabric to life. Add embellishments or go bare, kaftans will see you through every situation like a good, trustworthy friend!

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel
Model: Shanila Mehjabin
Styling: Saki Kazi & Shezami Khalil
Makeup: Shababa Rashid
Hair: Mia Bella Salon
Wardrobe: NOBO Dhaka Collection
– Bangladesh Heshel handpainted
by Ayesha Afros and digitally printed
100 count Egyptian cotton kota



#FOOD & RECIPES

Top 5 places to buy bread FOR SHAB-E-BARAT

Shab-e-Barat brings with it not only auspiciousness and blessings but also festive vibes and sociable exchanges. While devout Muslims engage themselves in acts of worship, households also get busy getting the best bread for their family and relatives, and distributing it among the needy. Among the hundreds of places that are available to buy bread, here are the top 5 in the city.

Ananda Confectionery

Ananda Confectionery is a classic bakery that has been in existence for generations. Although there are several branches throughout the city, the



for city dwellers to get hold of their delicious bread for Shab-e-Barat.

Lucknow

Although the old town is known for the customary celebration of Shab-e-Barat, you do not need to rush there if you do not have the time. Lucknow in Banani has one of the best rumali rotis in town; you can also choose between Lucknowi paratha and lachha paratha. Besides, they also serve regular, Kabuli, and butter naan that can be paired with

your special halwas on the occasion for a delectable taste.

Koyla Restaurant Ltd

Koyla is another heritage restaurant that has been a family favourite for a while. If you are on the hunt for some great naan, rumali roti, or paratha instead of bread, then this is where you should head. Their special sheermal naan which is mildly sweet and infused with saffron is a true tribute to the lavish Mughal era. It tastes amazing with ghee and even better with halwa. Their naan and rumali roti are light and fluffy and shall pair well with sweet and savoury dishes.

By Fariha Amber

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



recipe for these has remained a secret for generations.

Olympia Bakery

It is safe to say that the old town celebrates the occasion of Shab-e-Barat with the most enthusiasm and festivity, and has carried down this tradition for generations. Olympia Bakery is another popular hotspot to buy bread during Shab-e-Barat, and although there are many branches all over town now, the most historic one remains in Rankin Street, Wari. Apart from intricately designed bread, Olympia Bakery also flaunts an array of halwas.

Yousuf Bakery & Confectionery

Yousuf Bakery & Confectionery is a renowned name in the food scene of Dhaka. It has shown people from past generations what good biscuits and bread taste like, and they continue to do so with their delicious array of breads. One great thing about the place is their consistency in quality. Having several stores all over Dhaka makes it convenient

most iconic branch remains the one in Satrouja, Old Dhaka. Their elaborately prepared bread with ornate designs on top known as "nokshi bread" is a crowd-favourite. Despite their massive size, the taste is not compromised and the



THE MILLENNIAL COOK
FARIHA AMBER



Recipes for Shab-e-Barat

Over time, the practice of cooking and distributing halwa and roti have etched themselves as part of our tradition and now, Shab-e-Barat is synonymous to having halwa and bread in the house. On this note, here are a few bread and roti recipes for you try out.

DAL ROTI

Ingredients

2½ cups water
1 tsp salt
3 cups rice powder
For the filling –
250g split pea lentil (motor dal)
1 cup water
1 thumb ginger
1 tsp turmeric
1 tsp coriander powder
4-6 green chillies
1 tsp salt
A handful of coriander leaves

Method

To make the filling, soak lentils in water for 3-4 hours. Then, boil them using a cup of water along with sliced ginger, turmeric powder, coriander powder, salt, and four split green chillies.

In another saucepan, pour in 2½ cups water along with salt and wait for it to come to a boil. Once boiling, add in rice powder and do not stir. Cover this with a lid and wait for 3-4 minutes. After that, remove the lid and the rice powder should have mixed nicely with the water and formed a sticky consistency. Remove this from heat and knead it until it forms a smooth dough and let this rest.

Within this time, your lentils should also be fully cooked. Remove the lentils from heat and add in sliced green chillies and fresh coriander. Mix everything well so that it forms a smooth, solid mixture. Then, take sufficient amount of dough to form a disc and spread it out using your palm and fingers — do not use a rolling pin in this case.

Take a teaspoon of the lentil mixture and encase it within the dough, sealing all the sides. Very gently, make it flat ensuring that the edges do not crack. Once done, cook these in a pan on low heat until both sides have a brown tint and serve warm.



NOKSHI BREAD

Ingredients

4 cups flour
1 egg
3 tbsp sugar
½ cup lukewarm milk
1½ tsp yeast
1 tbsp sesame seeds
1 tbsp butter
3 tbsp oil
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup candied fruits

Water as required

A pinch of salt

Method

Add in flour, salt, sugar, and yeast to a bowl and mix. Crack in one egg and then pour in warm milk and oil. Mix these together to form a dough and add warm water as needed to make the dough smooth. Once the dough is formed, place it in a bowl coated with oil and leave it covered in warm place for 25-30 minutes.

After that, the dough should have risen. Punch the dough to eliminate all the air and form little discs from it. At the bottom of the disc, place some candied fruits, and then fold it to form a semi-circle. Then, place raisins on one side and fold again to resemble a petal. Place a raisin on top of

each piece of dough.

Take a round baking dish and brush it with oil. Start placing the pieces of dough from the edge and move towards the centre to make a complete flower. Then, let this rest for 20 minutes and brush the top with milk. After that sprinkle sesame seeds on top and let this bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for 40-45 minutes. Once done, while the bread is still warm, brush with butter on top and enjoy!

STUFFED CARROT HALWA BUNS

Ingredients

For the bread –

3 cups flour
½ tsp salt
1½ tsp sugar
2½ tsp yeast
1 egg
¼ cup lukewarm milk
1½ tbsp lukewarm water
1 tbsp oil

Water as required

For the filling —

500g carrots
1 cup milk
2-3 cardamom pods
¼ cup sugar
2 tbsp ghee
¼ cup mawa
¼ cup nuts

Method

In a bowl, add and mix the dry ingredients together — flour, salt, sugar, and yeast. Then, pour in the egg and milk and add sufficient water to form a dough. When the dough has a very sticky consistency, add in oil and make the dough smooth. Give it a final coating of oil and let it rest, covered in a warm place for a couple of hours.

To make the carrot halwa, peel and grate the carrots. Pour milk in a pan and add in the carrots and cardamom and mix – wait for the milk to come to a boil. When it starts to boil, cover with a lid and let it cook for 20 minutes on medium-low heat, stirring occasionally. Then, pour in ghee.

Once fully cooked, set the flame to medium-high and add sugar. The sugar will release juices so stir and cook until all the liquid evaporates. After that add mawa and mix. Finally, add in chopped nuts and stir, and then remove from heat.

Once the dough is done, punch out all the air and form balls. Spread out the balls and place sufficient carrot halwa in the centre. Seal the edges to make a crescent shape and let these rest for 10 minutes. Then bake in a preheated oven at 170°C for 20-25 minutes and they will be ready to serve!

Food & Photo: Fariha Amber





A DELIGHTFUL MIX Shab-e-Barat Recipes



Both savoury and sweet foods were served on Shab-e-barat. The tradition is still kept alive in many households. Here are some easy recipes for great halwas and some savoury dishes.

COCONUT AND SEMOLINA HALWA (Narkel-shujir halwa)

Ingredients

1 cup semolina, *shuji*
2 cups coconut, desiccated
2 cups sugar
¼ cup ghee
½ cup full cream milk
½ tsp cardamom powder

Method

Grease a square baking tray with ghee. Heat ghee in a heavy bottom pan and add semolina. Roast the semolina until slightly golden and fragrant. Once semolina is done remove it.

In the same pan, add the desiccated coconut. Dry roast for 3-4 minutes. Remove from pan and keep aside. Into the same pan add sugar and milk and boil it for 5-7 minutes, or until it starts thickening. Add cardamom powder, semolina, and coconut. Mix well and stir continuously.

Cook for a few minutes until the mixture starts thickening and forms a solid mass. Transfer the mixture to the greased tray. Let it set and cool for about an hour. Cut desired shape pieces and serve.

SWEET POTATO HALWA (Mishthy alu halwa)

Ingredients

2 cups grated sweet potato
1 cup full cream milk powder
¼ tsp cardamom powder
¼ cup ghee
¼ cup mixed nuts, chopped
1½ cup sugar or as per taste

Method

Heat ghee in a non-stick pan. Add grated potatoes. Fry on low heat until it turns slightly golden in colour. Add milk, sugar, and cardamom powder and mix well. There should not be any lumps. Stir continuously until the halwa turns dry. Add mixed nut and mix well. Cook for another 2 minutes. Garnish with nuts and rose petals and serve.

POPPY SEEDS HALWA (Posto halwa)

Ingredients

1 cup poppy seeds, soaked overnight
¼ cup ghee
2 cups milk
¼ cup cashew nuts
¼ cup almonds
¼ cup pistachios
¼ cup sugar

Method

Drain poppy seeds and grind with very little water to a thick paste. Heat ghee in a non-stick pan. Fry the nuts until brown. Remove from pan.

In the same pan, add the poppy seeds paste and sauté for about 12-15 minutes or until it turns a light brown. Reduce the heat

and add milk. Cook and stirring continuously, until it begins to thicken. Add fried nuts and sugar. Mix well and cook for another few minutes. Transfer into a serving bowl, garnish with fried nuts and serve hot.

KHEER ER PUTLI

Ingredients

2 litre milk
4 tsp semolina
¼ cup mawa

1 pinch of nutmeg powder
2 cup flour
2 tbsp ghee
2 cup sugar
2 cup water
Oil for deep frying

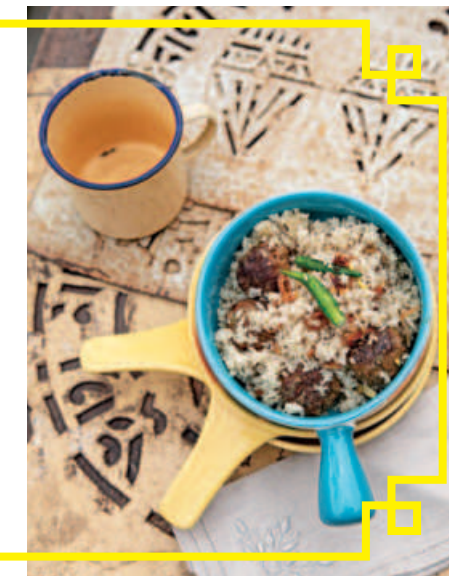


Dry fruits for garnish

Method

Boil the milk in a pan. Add 2 tablespoons of sugar and 2 teaspoons of semolina into it. Cook until milk thickens and is reduced to half. Add remaining semolina and keep stirring. Let the kheer thicken. Finally, add mawa and nutmeg powder. Mix well and remove from heat. Allow it to cool down.

For making a sugar syrup, boil water in a pan and add sugar to it. Continuously stir until the syrup becomes thick. Then remove it from the heat. Now make dough with flour, 2 tablespoons of ghee, and water. Knead well. Divide it into equal portions. Keep it aside for 10 minutes. Take a portion and put some kheer on it. Gently seal the mouth and twist the top. Once it is done heat oil in a deep pan. Deep fry the putli until golden brown. Put the fried putli into the sugar syrup. Sprinkle some chopped dry fruits over it and serve.



salt and rice flour, mix thoroughly and make a dough. Knead well for about 5 minutes. Take part of the dough and roll it out as thick as a tortilla. Cut out circles with a cookie cutter. Place a small amount of coconut filling on each circle. Brush the edges with water and seal tightly to form a crescent shape. Keep aside.

Now boil milk, sugar, cinnamon, and cardamom together in a pan. When the milk is reduced to half, add the pithas and cook for 30 minutes on medium-low heat or until the pithas are cooked. Remove the pan and serve.

KARACHI HALWA

Ingredients

For corn flour mixture —
½ cup corn flour
1½ cup water

Other ingredients —

1½ cup sugar
1 cup water
1 tsp lemon juice

UDH PULI

Ingredients

2 cup grated coconut
½ cup jaggery
½ cup condensed milk
2 cup rice flour

Method

Firstly, in a large mixing bowl take corn flour and water. Mix well without forming any lumps. Keep aside. Now, in a large non-stick pan take sugar and water. Allow the syrup to boil. Pour the cornflour mixture into the boiling sugar syrup, stirring continuously on low-medium flame. Once the cornflour mixture starts to thicken, immediately add lemon juice. Keep stirring until the mixture thickens completely. Now add a tablespoon of ghee and mix well until all the ghee is absorbed. Now, add another tablespoon of ghee and continue to mix till it turns glossy, transparent, and silky.

When the ghee is released from the sides, add food colour, cardamom powder, and chopped cashews. Continue to mix until the mixture will start to form a lump. Later transfer the mixture to a tray and spread well. Sprinkle some chopped almonds and rest for an hour. Finally, cut to a desired shape and serve.

Now, in a large non-stick pan take sugar and water. Allow the syrup to boil. Pour the cornflour mixture into the boiling sugar syrup, stirring continuously on low-medium flame. Once the cornflour mixture starts to thicken, immediately add lemon juice. Keep stirring until the mixture thickens completely. Now add a tablespoon of ghee and mix well until all the ghee is absorbed. Now, add another tablespoon of ghee and continue to mix till it turns glossy, transparent, and silky.

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NIKUTI

Ingredients

1 cup cottage cheese
1 tbsp refined flour
1 tbsp semolina
2 tbsp milk powder
1 tsp ghee
½ tsp baking soda
Oil for frying

1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1-2 cardamoms
1 pinch saffron

Method

In a bowl take cottage cheese, semolina, flour, milk powder, ghee, and baking soda. Mix together and mash them for at least 10 minutes. Now make small balls and shape them into ovals.

Heat oil in a pan. Fry the oval balls until golden brown. Remove from pan and keep aside. Next make sugar syrup. In another pan, add water, sugar and a pinch of saffron. Bring it to a boil and add cardamom and fried sweets. Turn off the heat, cover and allow it to cool. Then remove it from the sugar syrup and serve.

BEEETROOT HALWA

Ingredients

2 tbsp ghee
2 cups grated beetroot

5 tbsp ghee
10 cashews, chopped
¼ tsp cardamom powder
Few drops of orange food colour
5 almonds chopped for garnish

Method

Firstly, in a large mixing bowl take corn flour and water. Mix well without forming any lumps. Keep aside.

Now, in a large non-stick pan take sugar and water. Allow the syrup to boil. Pour the cornflour mixture into the boiling sugar syrup, stirring continuously on low-medium flame. Once the cornflour mixture starts to thicken, immediately add lemon juice. Keep stirring until the mixture thickens completely. Now add a tablespoon of ghee and mix well until all the ghee is absorbed. Now, add another tablespoon of ghee and continue to mix till it turns glossy, transparent, and silky.

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Ingredients

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1 tbsp refined flour
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2 tbsp milk powder
1 tsp ghee
½ tsp baking soda
Oil for frying

1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1-2 cardamoms
1 pinch saffron

Method

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Heat oil in a pan. Fry the oval balls until golden brown. Remove from pan and keep aside. Next make sugar syrup. In another pan, add water, sugar and a pinch of saffron. Bring it to a boil and add cardamom and fried sweets. Turn off the heat, cover and allow it to cool. Then remove it from the sugar syrup and serve.

BEEETROOT HALWA

Ingredients

2 tbsp ghee
2 cups grated beetroot



2 cups milk
½ cup sugar
2 green cardamom
¼ cup mix nuts chopped

Method

Wash and scrub the beetroot well. Peel and discard the skin. Grate it using a grater or a food processor. Heat 1 tablespoon of ghee in a pan and add the grated beetroot. Cook for about 5 minutes or until it starts to soften and shrinks in size. Do stir occasionally; add milk and bring it to a simmer. Continue cooking, stirring often to avoid sticking and burning. As the milk evaporated and starts to become thick, do stir very often and eventually stir continuously. Cook until all the moisture is evaporated. Then add sugar and cardamom powder. Mix well.

Stir and cook until the moisture from the sugar is evaporated and becomes a thick halwa consistency. Lastly, add chopped almonds, cashews, and the remaining 1 tablespoon of ghee. Mix and cook for a minute and then turn off the heat. Sprinkle chopped nuts and serve.

TANDOORI KOFTA BIRIYANI

Ingredients for kofta balls —

500g mincemeat (beef/mutton)
1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
1 tbsp green chillies, finely chopped
2 tbsp coriander leaves, chopped
1 tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp tandoori masala powder
½ tsp roasted cumin powder
1 tsp gram flour, slightly roasted
Salt to taste

Ingredients for the kofta curry —

2 onions, finely sliced
2 tomatoes, chopped
5-6 green chillies
½ cup oil
1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
1 cup yoghurt, beaten
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp black peppercorns
2-3 cloves
2-3 green cardamoms
2 sticks cinnamon
1½ red chilli powder

1 tsp garam masala powder
1 tsp coriander powder
½ tsp nutmeg powder
Salt to taste
2½ cups half-boiled rice

Method

For the kofta balls
Mix all the spices and ingredients with the mincemeat and mix well. Now refrigerate the kofta mixture for 30 minutes. Make equal-

sized kofta balls. Now pour the balls into a pan and shallow fry the kofta balls until golden brown. Keep the balls aside.

For the kofta curry

Heat oil in a pan. Add onions and fry until brown. Now add whole garam masala and stir. Add ginger-garlic paste and fry for a minute. Add all the spices powder, salt and green chillies and mix well. Add tomatoes and mix well until softened. Now add the yoghurt and mix well. Once the oil float on top, add the fried kofta in the curry. Mix well until koftas are well coated in the curry. Add water and let it cook for 5 minutes. Now add the half-boiled rice, sprinkle fried onions, and coriander leaves. Sprinkle some ghee. Cover and let it cook on dum for about 20 minutes. Remove from heat and serve.

KARAHI KABAB

Ingredients

½ kg beef mince
2 onions, chopped
5-6 green chillies
½ cup fresh coriander
½ cup mint leaves
1 egg
1 tbsp cumin powder
1 tbsp roasted and crushed coriander
1 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp garam masala powder
1 tbsp ginger garlic paste
Salt to taste

Ingredients for the gravy —

1 chopped onion
2-3 tomatoes, puréed
1 tsp cumin powder
½ tsp ginger garlic paste
½ tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp garam masala powder
Salt to taste

Method

In a blender, add green chillies, onions, coriander, and mint. Grind them well. Take beef mince in a bowl, add the green chillies mixture to it and mix. Now add egg, crushed and roasted coriander, red chilli powder, ginger garlic paste, garam masala, and salt. Mix well until completely combined.

Shape kababs out of this mixture and fry for 3-4 minutes. For the gravy, heat oil in a pan. Add onion, ginger-garlic paste, tomato purée, red chilli powder, turmeric powder, garam masala powder, salt, and mix well. Add water to the pan and bring it to a boil. Add fried kababs to this gravy and let it cook for 10-15 minutes. Lastly, add green chillies and simmer for a minute or two. Remove from heat and serve.

Culture Club by The Food Talk

The Food Talk, a popular Facebook group that is abuzz with food enthusiasts, restaurateurs, home cooks, and the like recently hosted a culture mixer called "Culture Club" on Saturday, 18 February, 2023. The idea of the event was for epicures from all backgrounds to converse and connect, while the stalls portrayed how a massive part of our culture is defined by food.

"Food is the biggest form of entertainment in Bangladesh, and we want to build conversations around culture and palate, which are reversible — culture can produce palate and vice versa," said Taskin Rahman, founder of The Food Talk.

Seldom do epicures get the chance to interact and mingle with foodies from all spheres such as chefs, restaurateurs, food enthusiasts, and cloud kitchen owners. Culture Club provided just the right platform for people with the same likings to get to know each other and the food they relish. More so, it also gave a chance to cloud kitchens to make a physical appearance and meet their customers in person.

The lineup constituted both local and international cuisines that gave people the opportunity to explore new and diverse palates all under one roof. Tri-State Eatery, Tiffinbox, and Dhaka Metro brought with them meals for all occasions including



tehari, jilapi, khichuri, chaap, and luchi. Complementing these, The Eastern Pickle Company displayed an impressive lineup of pickles.

"In our country, we are more inclined towards Western fast food, but our deshi food is no less, such as our very own shingara and samosa can make up our fast-food culture," shared Ashfaq Rahman Asif, who brought his brands Dhaka Metro and Arax to the event.

For Tripti Catering, it was a first-time appearance and they cooked up halwas of all shapes and colours.

Adding modernity to the event, Basic Kneads served an array of delicacies. As always, they had something completely new on the menu and used the event as their launching pad for a fresh orange crème croissant with caramelised orange slices.

B.B.Q Express gave guests a peek into delicacies from around Bangladesh that are rich parts of our culture, such as their beef and chicken mungdi, which is a staple food of the Marma community.

"Our food culture is still growing, and we are very privileged to have six seasons that



come with seasonal variety of food and colours. This enables us to have a seasonal menu where we use local and fresh ingredients," said Arpon Changma, chef of B.B.Q Express.

For desserts, Banglar Mishti brought with them an array of delectable Bengali sweets and on the other hand, the delicious aroma wafting from Waffle Up invited visitors to try out their waffles on sticks. Other participants in the event were Couch Potato and Picnic.

Our food culture is constantly evolving and it has come a long way in the past decade. "The food scene has changed here massively. Now we have so many more options and cuisines, and an abundance of fusion food and street food!" exclaimed Tina, who visited Bangladesh after a decade.

Our food culture is unique and we take great pride in having a rich history in food. Culture Club provided the platform to explore new food and connect with people in the food industry, to celebrate the food that we all love and enjoy.

By Fariha Amber
Photo: The Food Talk

#PERSPECTIVE

Tea breaks and the rise in productivity at the office

A high-octane, high-pressure, 9-to-5 job, wrought with rivalry and competition can burn employees out sooner rather than later. Unfortunately, that is what most workplaces nowadays look like, and managers and employers must know how to break the tension from time to time and bring some team spirit and warmth into the atmosphere. They do this by luring employees into the pantry with cake, a creamy sugar bomb that gives people an instant spurt of happiness.

Associated with jolly occasions and milestones such as birthdays and weddings, a cake is an important addition to celebrations and get-togethers and can lend a competitive office space some cheer. A study conducted in the UK found that about 83 per cent of office-goers felt that having some cakes in the office pantry from time to time helped cut the tension and bring in employees from different departments in one room for conversation.

Having an informal space in which to reconnect with colleagues can act as a mood booster and enough research has shown that those who eat together show higher levels of co-operation, performance levels, and trust in each other.

Of course, one cannot discount the health negatives associated with the



cake culture at work. Research suggests that a third of all office employees stand to gain weight due to excessive sugar consumption, while for a 59 per cent of the employees, the perk makes it difficult to stick to a diet.

As advocates rally for a healthier



work environment for employees, there is another psychological concern that questions the value of cake in the pantry too many times a month or for too long in the day.

Imagine a situation where there is cake available all day long in the office

pantry, versus one in which the treat is available only for a 30-minute window. In which scenario would the office see its bonds strengthened, and in which, would employees be tempted to seek out their favourite co-workers to grab the dessert at a mutually convenient time?

For a cake to work its magic and bring about feelings of togetherness at work, there need to be more people in at the same time in the pantry. More than that, employees must be given time to look forward to the treat, instead of simply expecting after every few days. This means that the instances need to be surprises, and ones that are given sparingly.

In the end, however, it is important to realise that cake can only make the workplace pleasant, not happy. HR experts emphasise the need for employees to feel engaged and empowered in their jobs at all times in order to put their best foot forward at work. With healthy competition, empathetic leaders and an appropriately rewarding career trajectory, cake need not even be in the picture. On second thought, maybe it does!

By Munira Fidai
Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



#TRAVEL

How to get to Saint Martin's Island

Let me draw you a picture: you are stuck at the office, still grinding away to meet your deadline or to please your boss while the travelling season is nearing its end. Your loved one went uncharacteristically quiet over the course of the last few weeks. What can you make out of this situation? "Things have been quiet and relaxing for some while, she finally understood," or "Something terrible is about to happen; is it the calm before the storm?"

If you want to avoid the situation above and relax simultaneously, plan a trip somewhere with little to no effort. Gone are the days when you have to take a leave and go to your destination just to spend a night and hurry back the very next morning. To put it into a more digestible context, let us assume that you would want to go to Saint Martin's Island because, why not! The island

around this time of the year is pleasant, and the best part is it is not overcrowded due to the end of the tourist season.

So, this is what you do; You can take three options or routes for your trip to the island, directly from Chattogram, Cox's Bazar, or the super-tiring route through Teknaf. The Chattogram route is for you if you want a complete comfort-induced trip with little to no effort! All you have to do is book a ticket to Chattogram that lands before 9 PM, take a literal five-minute drive, and board the biggest passenger ship in Bangladesh, MV Bay One of Karnafuly Cruise Line. Check into their fancy cosy rooms and enjoy the serene scenery for the next two days without a worry in the world.

If you want to make every moment count and enjoy a bit of everything for example, an overnight bus ride with friends, having a bit of a break in the

middle of a highway, and experiencing the city of seafood, then the Cox's Bazar route is for you!

When you get off the bus after you reach the city in the morning, go to the BIWTA Jetty, Airport Rd, Cox's Bazar, and board MV Karnafuly Express, and you are on the island in 5 hours! Do book the tickets prior to your journey for good seats or a cabin!

If none of the above is your cup of tea, and you are more inclined toward the age-old method of reaching the island, which includes a bumpy but fun ride, going through Teknaf is your answer. Sure, the ride to Teknaf can be tiresome; the area lacks proper connectivity, and cross-city transports are only available during specific times of the day.

Despite all that, Teknaf is beautiful thanks to the raw picturesque view. However, the lack of direct road

connectivity means you must first go to Cox's Bazar via a bumpy road and then take a boat or trawler (for adrenaline seekers) to Saint Martin's Island. There are many options in Teknaf for going to the island; Keri Sindbad, The Atlantic, MV Bay Cruise, the latest MV Baro Awlia, etc. But, if speed and time crunch is your concern, then MV Baro Awlia is the ship for you, allowing you to go easy on your wallet!

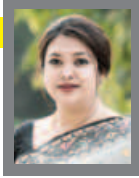
Every traveller is unique and caters to their unique preferences, some love comfort, some seek adventure, and some look for a bit of both. And the tourism sector has reached a point where it can cater to almost anyone!

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Fahyim Tanvir, Abu Sufian Nilove, Ashraful Pranto, K Tanzeel Zaman, Rajvinder Singh, Tanvir Hossain Khan



A NOTE ON NUTRITION

CHOWDHURY TASNEEM HASIN
 Chief Clinical Dietician & HOD, Clinical Dietetics and Nutrition Dept, United Hospital Ltd. She is also the AGS, BNDF.



Health benefits of citrus fruits

Chowdhury Tasneem Hasin Regarded as a nutritional powerhouse, citrus fruits are a rich source of vitamins and minerals. It includes a variety of healthy ingredients, including vitamin C, an antioxidant that guards against cell damage.

Not only does the water-soluble vitamin C reduce inflammation but also aids in iron absorption, which is important for tissue growth and development. Lemons, oranges, grapefruits, and others citrus fruits that are popular in Bangladesh are also abundant in enzymes. These help with the many metabolic processes taking place within our bodies.

Citrus fruits contain a sour substance called citric acid, which is also utilised as a natural preservative. It can change the pH of the urine and stop the development of kidney stones.

Every cell in the body contains DNA, which is prone to damage or mutation when exposed to free radicals; genetic mutations can cause malignant cells to proliferate. Vitamin C can stop this mutation by getting rid of free radicals.



The fruits have a lot of fibre, too. This preserves the digestive system's health and guards against issues including constipation, irritable bowel syndrome, diabetes, obesity, and heart disease. The

fibres control blood sugar levels and lower high cholesterol. It also aids in controlling body weight.

They are also rich in B complex. Fatigue, muscle weakness, mouth ulcers, troubles with eyesight, problems with judgment, memory, and understanding, as well as

depression are symptoms of a B complex deficiency.

Potassium, a mineral that regulates muscular contraction and heartbeat, is found in abundance in sour fruits. They have been shown to reduce blood pressure in people with hypertension.

Citrus fruits are needed for those who desire healthy skin, as it protects it from cellular deterioration. One of the greatest supplements for skin and hair due to its anti-aging properties as well as the advantage of soft, glowing skin.

Direct ingestion of the fruit or juice will provide the aforementioned advantages.

Seeds of citrus fruits are cold-pressed to produce citrus essential oil. The effectiveness of this essential oil in aromatherapy has been demonstrated. Our skin is moisturised and hair growth is improved when a few drops of the oil are mixed with a carrier oil like coconut or olive oil.

Citrus fruits are a nutritious, vitamin-rich diet, but needs to be consumed in moderation. They contain a lot of acid, which can irritate the stomach, particularly in people with gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD).

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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#CHECK IT OUT

ShareTrip presents fan meet of Nadir On The Go

A leading online travel company in Bangladesh, ShareTrip sponsored international travel vlogger Nadir On The Go's first-ever fan meet on 20 February 2023 at Banani, Dhaka. The event was attended by over 1300 travel enthusiasts and fans who gathered to meet Nadir for the first time. The event was presented by ShareTrip and hosted by 'The Marvel-Be You' and was graced by prominent influencers such as Enayet Chowdhury, Amin Hannan Chowdhury, Taufiqul Hasan Nihal, and Enamul Huq, mentioned a press release.

Around 50 other influencers were also present at the event to engage with travel enthusiasts and fans alike. Nadir's fans got the opportunity to ask all their questions and learn from the avid traveller, inspiring them to travel now.

Sadia Haque, co-founder and CEO of ShareTrip, spoke about the event and how it was a meaningful way to engage with younger travellers and spread the love of travel to a new generation.

Haque said "Travel isn't about getting the lowest prices anymore. We are committed

to providing an improved travel experience through better features that align with the modern traveller's expectations. We are dedicated to creating a travel experience



that young travellers will love and care about".

The fan meeting was a massive success and garnered a positive response from travel enthusiasts. ShareTrip would like to thank everyone who attended the event and made it a huge success. The company looks forward to being a part of more such events in the future.

At the end of the event, every fan was given a voucher for Tk 1000 from ShareTrip to help them plan their next travel adventure.

◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Changes at home will be apparent. Business trips will be successful. Someone you work with may be emotional. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Be diplomatic with everyone. Don't offer to pay for others. Your changing philosophies may lead you into new circles. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Consider starting a business venture. Take help from superiors at work. Your emotions will be erratic because of a private matter. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Don't undertake anything risky. Sudden changes at work are apparent. Children may be less than honest with you. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Your personal life may be a source of frustration. Tackle your problems separately. Get involved in physical activities. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

You may find something rare this week. Make drastic career changes soon. Romantic opportunities may not be as they appear. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Entertainment should include your whole family. Be discreet with information. Entertainment could costly. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Do things you enjoy. Your added discipline will help accomplish the impossible. Get involved in self-improvement programs. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

You will be appreciated for your efforts. Look into family outings. Problems can arise during travelling. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Enjoy social events where you a romantic encounter is likely. Don't spend carelessly. Talk to someone you trust if you need advice. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Arguments may flare up at home. House renovations will start paying off. Take time to remember those you love. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Don't be frivolous with your spending. Look into all your options. Try not to hurt your partner's feelings. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

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#DECOR

Explore the aesthetics of a minimalist dining room

A home's dining room is where family and friends gather to enjoy good times and warm spirits over a meal prepared with care. A dining room decorated in a minimalist style makes for an uncluttered setting in which it is more fun to share meals with loved ones. When family mealtimes at home increase, everyone will appreciate the sleek, understated pieces of dining furniture.

The following smooth and modern dining room ideas may guide your redesign – from the selection of contemporary kitchen cabinetry to the placement of ambient lighting.

Choosing tables, saving spaces

Nothing beats a clever and beautiful space-saving table for a contemporary minimalist dining room decor. Choose a dining table with a simple form that fits the room's dimensions and the number of occupants. Selecting one that is excessively large or grand will make the dining room look smaller, so avoid doing so. Reduce the amount of space needed and promote closer family contact by using a circular dining table. Pick one that can expand to suit any visitors and fits well in your little area. Throughout prep and cook time, you can bend or enlarge it as you require. It is a novel and creative design as opposed to conventional dining room furniture.

A splash of colour, a dash of warmth

The key to a well-designed minimalist space necessitates a focus on the essentials, such as proper lighting, wall colours, and ventilation. Walls and floors painted in neutral tones, together with strategically



placed lights, particularly those that make use of natural light, may create an airy and soft space. An easy but practical minimalist dining room concept is to paint the walls a neutral colour. Soothing browns or a gentle beige may create a welcoming and earthy atmosphere. White and various greys will create a calmer vibe. Furthermore, crucial to the dining room's comfort during usage is the provision of adequate ventilation, whether natural or mechanical.

Store and décor

Without storage alternatives, a minimalist dining room would be lacking. Select a contemporary cabinet design that enables you to conveniently organise your storage.

If there are not enough shelves in your cabinets, add wire baskets, and plastic containers to store food, cutlery, and napkins neatly. However, just because you decide on a fashionably simple dining room layout does not mean you cannot add minor details you adore. Use little ornamental pieces that showcase your personality to fill in the blanks. Do not be shy about displaying your houseplants, family photos, or a gorgeous painting on the walls!

Two-in-one

Using a hybrid layout of kitchen/dining room can let you make better use of the beautiful dining room's design. Moving

from the dining area to the kitchen would be more easily and efficiently done, in addition to conserving more space. The best and most adaptable plan for your kitchen should be chosen if you have decided to apply this idea, such as by utilising your countertop as an eating space. You may use white plates as a neutral background and add accents of vibrant cyan with your mugs and plates. Try experimenting with different colour combinations to give your minimalist dining area and kitchen some joy and vitality!

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy

**Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed/
Nazneen Haque Mimi**

