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All prepped up for iftar!

A month-long journey of fasting and spirituality is upon us. We also look forward to the much-cherished iftar meals, a time to get together as a family, and share delicious food. Flip through the pages to explore the wide plethora of healthy and delectable iftar delicacies.

PHOTO: **SAZZAD IBNE SAYED** FOOD AND STYLING: **RBR**

DAN CAKE
Radhuni
Chopstick Instant Noodles
meena bazar bringing freshness to your life
অল টাইম
ZEROCAL

THINSPIRED

SIMRA KHAN
Fitness and Nutrition Coach, Mentor/ Guide at ThinspiredbySimra, Managing Director Fit Food Culinary Artist- Specialized in Healthy Cooking

Changing your food habits and lifestyle for a healthy body

The food you put in your system will have an impact on your organs, bones, brain, and cells. Scientific research states that on average an adult loses over 300 billion cells every day and the only way to replace those cells is through the food we eat, which acts as fuel for us to replenish those lost cells.

When we eat toxic, less nutritional food our bodies stop manufacturing new healthy cells. Also, regular indulgence in processed food fills our system with chemicals and toxins that affect our organ's resilience. When we eat healthy it replenishes our body internally and we see the results of having more energy, and more spontaneity in our daily life.

A healthy body is built with good lifestyle choices and motivation to eat healthily.

Lifestyle choices

Every human is unique and so are their structure, genetic makeup, and metabolic rates. There is no 'one size fits all' in any diet. One diet plan suited to a few might not be well suited to you.

Healthy lifestyle changes on the other hand can be done by everyone that can promote healthy eating as well. Adopting a healthy lifestyle will adversely improve your mood, relax your anxieties, make you feel lighter plus it will help you fight chronic diseases.

The three most essential healthy habits you can adopt in your daily life prompt —

Fix your sleep schedule

Getting enough sleep can reduce stress and give you the energy for the next day. Sleeping late and waking up late is a vicious cycle for your healthy lifestyle. 7 to 9 hours of sleep is recommended to reap health benefits and even aid your weight management.

Make time for exercise

Come up with realistic goals for your workouts. You can find 20-30 minutes every day to work out if you commit to it. Walk-at-home exercise videos from YouTube or simply walking around your office premises can help you alter your lifestyle.

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#FOOD & RECIPES

Healthy Ramadan recipes with All Time Milk Bread

The holy month of Ramadan is almost here and brings with it blessings and peace. We find ourselves getting busy preparing meals for iftar and sehri during Ramadan, but often, these meals are not as healthy as they should be.

With All Time Milk Bread, you can make your meals quickly while keeping your health in check, as it is made with milk, eggs, and other wholesome ingredients. All Time Milk Bread is prepared fresh with quality ingredients, making it the perfect pick to complete your iftar and sehri spread. Its softness elevates the flavour of any recipe making your meals healthy and delicious.

GRILLED CLUB SANDWICH

Ingredients

15 slices All Time Milk Bread
2 medium-sized tomatoes
100g button mushrooms
5 eggs
10 slices chicken salami
A bunch of lettuce
1 large cucumber
A pinch of salt
A pinch of black pepper
½ tsp chilli powder
1 tbsp oil
2 avocadoes
For the sauce –
3 tbsp mayonnaise
2 tsp tomato ketchup
2 tsp chilli sauce
1 tsp pickle relish
A pinch of salt
A pinch of black pepper

Method

To prepare the sandwiches, slice the tomatoes and mushrooms. Grill them over a pan with some oil and sprinkle salt, pepper, and chilli powder while grilling them. Once done, remove from heat and grill slices of All Time Milk Bread. In a separate frying pan, fry the eggs sunny side up, one at a time.

To make the sauce, mix mayonnaise, tomato ketchup, pickle relish, and chilli sauce. Add a little bit of salt and pepper to this. For assembling, place a slice of All Time Milk Bread. Over this, spread the sauce evenly and then place some lettuce leaves. Add tomato slices on top of the lettuce followed by cucumber slices. Finally, place two pieces of folded salami atop.

Place another piece of All Time Milk Bread and close this layer. On top of that slice, place one fried egg followed by some grilled mushrooms. Finally, layer avocado slices on top and smear some dressing on the last slice of All Time Milk Bread before topping it. Slice the sandwich into half diagonally and these are ready to serve.

BREAD PINWHEEL

Ingredients

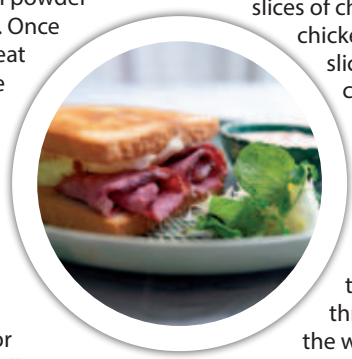
10 slices All Time Milk Bread
5 tsp cheese spread
10 slices chicken rasher
10 slices smoked chicken slices
10 cheese slices (room temperature)
3 large tomatoes

2 carrots
A bunch of lettuce leaves
1 cup pitted black or green olives
For the dressing –
2 tbsp mayonnaise
1 tsp tomato ketchup
1 tsp chilli sauce
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper

Method

Take one slice of All Time Milk Bread and remove the edges. Using a rolling pin, make the slice of bread as flat as it can get. Slice the tomatoes and carrots as thinly as possible. For the dressing, mix mayonnaise, tomato ketchup, chilli sauce, salt, and black pepper.

Smear the base of a bread slice generously with a cheese spread. On top of this, place lettuce leaves and then put over slices of chicken rasher and smoked chicken. Over this, place cheese slices, tomatoes, and slices of carrots. Once everything is layered, smother over some dressing.



Start with one edge of the slice and roll it, wrapping it as tightly as you can. Once wrapped, take a toothpick and poke it through the centre, enclosing the whole thing. Put a piece of olive through the toothpick poking at the top. These bread pinwheels made with All Time Milk Bread can be served both warm and cold.

By Fariha Amber
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food & Styling: RBR

#FOOD & RECIPES

Easy & Healthy Iftar with Dan Cake Tortilla Roti

Ramadan is one of the busiest times of the year and with this auspicious month comes the routine task of preparing iftar and sehri meals. Preparing such meals everyday can be a hassle but with Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti, you can prepare a multitude of items easily.

This ready-to-eat tortilla is healthy and convenient. It tastes just like our traditional ruti so you can also enjoy it with vegetable and curries. Apart from that, you can use it to quickly prepare iftar or sehri items. Here are a few recipes for you to try with Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti.

CHICKEN WRAP

Ingredients

10 pieces Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti
2 chicken breasts
½ tsp paprika powder
½ tsp coriander powder
½ tsp cumin powder
½ tsp black pepper
A pinch of salt
Drizzle of oil
1 cup shredded cabbage
1 medium-sized carrot
A bunch of lettuce
½ cup curd

Method

Cut the chicken breast into strips and heat oil in a pan. Add in the chicken followed by spices and condiments – salt, pepper, cumin, coriander, and paprika. Cook the chicken until tender and remove from heat. Mix shredded cabbage, sliced carrots, and chopped lettuce with the chicken. Finally, add in curd and mix well. Place sufficient mixture towards one edge on a piece of Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti and fold it to wrap the filling completely, and it is ready to serve.

VEGETABLE ROLL

Ingredients

10 pieces Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti
1 cup shredded cabbage
1 medium-sized carrot
1 bell pepper
½ cup corn kernels
1 large tomato
1 cup button mushrooms
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
1 tsp vegetable stock powder
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp onion powder
1 tbsp oil

Method

Prepare the vegetables by cutting carrot, bell pepper, and tomato into slices of similar length and slice the mushrooms. In a pan, add oil and drop the chopped vegetables along with corn and shredded cabbage. Then sprinkle over the spices and condiments including salt, pepper, vegetable stock powder, garlic and onion powder. Cook this on medium flame until the vegetables are tender.

Once cooked, remove from heat and let it cool slightly. Then, place a spoonful of the mixture towards the edge of Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti and roll it. This can also be enjoyed with sauces of your choice.

CHICKEN SHAWARMA

Ingredients

10 pieces Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti
For the chicken –
400g chicken fillets
1 garlic clove
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp paprika powder
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
1 tbsp lime juice
2 tbsp olive oil
For the yoghurt sauce –
1 cup curd
1 tsp cumin powder
½ tsp paprika powder
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
½ tbsp lime juice

Method

Begin by marinating the chicken – make slashes on the fillets and massage with spices including salt, pepper, coriander, cumin, chilli, and paprika powder, along with crushed garlic cloves, a squeeze of lime juice, and drizzle of oil. Cover the chicken pieces and let them marinate for 30 minutes. After that, add the remaining oil to a pan and grill the chicken until they are nicely charred on both sides.

Once cooked, remove from heat and let the chicken rest while you prepare the yoghurt sauce. To the curd, add cumin powder, paprika powder, lime juice, salt, pepper, and mix. To assemble, slightly warm the pieces of Dan Cake Tortilla Ruti, place chicken slices atop and drizzle over some yoghurt sauce before rolling it.

By Fariha Amber
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food & Styling: RBR

#CHECK IT OUT

Ramadan delights and curries

When food is correctly seasoned, it always tastes better. After you have mastered the fundamentals of herbs and spices, you will love cooking a lot more. However, a question always arises in today's market when it comes to buying the right spices that promises quality and freshness. Such requirements are almost always never met when loose spices are bought in the open from markets. Which is why Radhuni Basic Spice offers all the solutions to the issues mentioned above! Not only does the top spice brand of Bangladesh, Radhuni Basic Spice, ensures impeccable hygiene, quality, and taste but also encourages a healthy lifestyle surrounding healthy food!

The following recipes use spice at the heart of the dishes. They leave a strong flavour profile.

BEEF KUNNA

Beef kunna recipe, known as Kunna Gosht, is very popular in Asian cuisine. Traditionally, Kunna Gosht is cooked with a few spices in a round clay pot for 2-3 hours.

Ingredients

½ cup oil
1 kg beef shank, chops (50-60 grams each piece)
1 large onion, chopped
1 tbsp ginger paste
1 tbsp garlic paste
1½ tbsp Radhuni chilli powder
1 tsp Radhuni turmeric powder
1 tbsp Radhuni coriander powder
1 tbsp Radhuni cumin seeds powder
½ tsp garam masala powder
½ cup wheat flour mixed water
Salt to taste

Method

Heat oil in a clay cooking pan and cook the meat for a few minutes on high heat until it changes colour. Turn the heat to medium and add onions, chilli powder, turmeric powder, ginger-garlic paste, coriander powder, and salt. Mix well and cook for 5-6 minutes or until the oil separates. Add 5-6 cups of water and cook for 1 hour with the lid on. When the meat is tender, add the wheat flour mixed water, and roasted cumin seeds powder. Mix well and cook for another 15 minutes on low heat. Turn off the heat. Leave for 4-5 minutes and serve hot.

KULCHA

Kulcha is a leavened Indian flatbread made from wheat flour. It is especially popular in North India and Pakistan. There are many variations of it like paneer kulcha, aloo kulcha, matar kulcha, etc. Unlike paratha or naan, kulcha remains soft even they become cold. So, they can be made in advance and stacked up, and stored in the fridge. When serving they can be reheated on a griddle or in the microwave until slightly warm.

Ingredients

2 cups all-purpose flour
½ tsp salt
¾ tsp sugar
¼ tsp baking soda

1 tbsp ghee
1 tbsp yoghurt
Milk as required, to make the dough

For the potato filling —

100g grated boiled potato
1 tsp Radhuni chilli powder
¼ tsp Radhuni cumin powder
½ tsp Radhuni garam masala powder
1 tbsp coriander leaves, chopped
Salt to taste

Method

For the dough —

Mix all the dry ingredients and add enough milk and knead into a smooth dough. Cover the dough with a damp towel and keep it aside.

For the filling —

Mix all the ingredients. Divide into 5 portions and shape into smooth balls.

Making the kulcha —

Divide the 5 portions of the dough and shape them into smooth balls. Starting with one, roll into a thick puri size shape. Keep the potato filling in the middle and close the sides carefully, making sure the filling is covered from all sides. Shape them into round discs and rest them for 10-15 minutes. Repeat the procedure with the remaining filling. Flatten the balls into thin kulcha using flour to dust, without giving much pressure, so that the filling inside stays intact.

Heat a tawa and cook the kulcha until golden brown on both sides adding enough ghee/oil/butter to taste. The kulcha will puff up beautifully. When it is done serve it hot with beef curry.

MIXED LENTILS FRITTERS

Ingredients

¼ cup red lentils, masoor dal
¼ cup yellow lentils, moong dal
¼ cup yellow lentils, khesari dal
½ cup grated onions
½ cup grated cabbage
¼ cup carrot
4 green chillies, chopped
1 tsp Radhuni chilli powder
½ tsp Radhuni turmeric powder
¼ cup chopped coriander leaves
1 tbsp chopped mint leaves
Salt to taste
Oil for deep fry

Method

Soak the lentils in water for 5-6 hours or until softened. Then wash and drain the water. Put the lentils in a food processor and blend them into a semi-coarse mixture. Pour the mixture into a bowl with the rest of the ingredients. Mix until well combined. Heat oil in a pan, and fry the fritters in small batches until golden brown. Remove and place them on kitchen paper to absorb the oil. Serve warm!

By Salina Parvin
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food & Styling: RBR

For the love of HALEEM

With Ramadan on its way, it's time to dig into a piping-hot bowl of haleem. It is said that once you have tasted a delicious haleem, you will never be able to forget it. Its roots can be found in Arabia, where it is known as harees. The savoury Mughlai mutton-lentil wheat stew is a filling meal in and of itself. The mixture is as wholesome as it comes because it was slow-cooked with love and labour.

Faizal Zaman, an engineer and fan of the dish shares his memories, "My first haleem experience was in Bara Moghbazar almost two decades ago. My father used to pick it up from a restaurant in the centre of the junction of the area. Back then, I only knew that it was a close relative of khichuri, but its pasty texture really stuck to me, and ever since, I have enjoyed it time and again, especially during Ramadan."

Haleem is a dish that takes some time to prepare, as was already stated above. Its preparation is considered an art because it takes hours to slowly prepare over firewood. The spices are cooked with beef, mutton, or poultry. It is then shredded and added to the pounded wheat and barley combination and cooked for hours.

However, with everyone's fast-tracked life and never-ending hustle, can we really capture the flavour of our childhood? What we once savoured and cherished from different streets of Dhaka, standing in line just to have a bowl of succulent haleem.

Keeping that in mind, Radhuni is the answer for the older millennials of Bangladesh. Using Radhuni's Haleem Mix at your home is not only tasty but is also easy to prepare and not to mention healthy.

If you have read this far, a question might come to your head, "How do you prepare Haleem with the Radhuni Haleem Mix?" Wait no further; here are the ingredients as well as methods for preparing everyone's favourite mutton haleem.

Ingredients
(Serves 6-8)
300g mutton (with or without bone)
9 tbsp edible oil
1 pack Radhuni Haleem mix
½ cup (250ml) chopped onions
Green chilli, as required
Ginger
Coriander leaves
Cucumber
Lemon

Method
Soak, for 15 minutes, cereals and pulses from Radhuni Haleem Mix in 2 cups (250 ml-sized cups) of warm water. In a pot, heat the oil and fry chopped onions until they turn golden brown. Pick two-thirds of the fried onions up. Add the meat chunks and season with Radhuni Haleem's powdered spices. Cook for 3-4 minutes. Pour water and cook until the meat is properly boiled.

After the mixture reaches a boil, reduce the heat and simmer the dish while stirring it occasionally with a wooden spatula. To create a thickened gravy, cook the ingredients until all the water has evaporated. Taste-wise, add salt if necessary.

Serve hot with sliced ginger, lemon juice, cucumber chips, chopped green chili, coriander leaves, and fried onions.

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food & Styling: RBR

Tasty and healthy noodles for RAMADAN

In the month of Ramadan, prepping food for iftar or sehri is a challenge on its own. Especially when you have to keep in mind that you are preparing food that promotes a healthy diet for children. Why go for intricate and complex recipes when Instant noodles are the answer for adults and children alike? An easy, tasty, and healthy snack which can be prepared for all age groups. Free of tasting salt (MSG), Chopstick Instant Noodles of Square Food and Beverage Limited comes in three varieties — Yummy Masala, Deshi Masala, and Masala Delight, which is their latest addition.

These instant noodles are best for children as the seasoning packs are full of healthy ingredients making it perfect to have during iftar or sehri!

A variety of food can be prepared using noodles. They are often easy to cook and saves time. The following are some recipes that uses Chopstick Instant Noodles.

CHEESY NOODLES NUGGETS
Ingredients
1 cup boiled Chopstick Instant Noodles (Masala Delight)
½ cup grated processed cheese
½ cup boiled and coarsely crushed sweet corn kernels
¼ cup finely chopped spring onions
¼ cup finely chopped onions
2 tsp finely chopped green chilli
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
Salt to taste
Bread crumbs, for rolling
Oil for deep frying

Method
Combine all the ingredients in a deep bowl and mix well. Divide the mixture into 10 equal portions and shape each portion into a flat round nugget. Roll each nugget in bread crumbs until it is evenly coated from all the sides. Heat oil in a pan, deep fry a few nuggets at a time until they turn golden brown in colour from all the sides. Drain on an absorbent paper. Serve hot with sauce.

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP
Ingredients
250g chicken breast
800ml chicken stock
1 cup Chopstick Instant Noodles (Masala Delight)
1 tsp chopped fresh ginger
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
2 tbsp sweet corn
2-3 mushrooms, thinly sliced
2 spring onions, shredded
2 tsp soy sauce, plus extra for serving
Mint or basil leaves and a little shredded chilli, to serve
½ tsp kosher salt
10 whole black pepper corn

Method
Pour the stock into a pan and add chicken, ginger, garlic, and pepper corn. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat, partly cover and simmer for 20 minutes until the chicken is tender. Remove the chicken to a board and shred into bite-size pieces using a couple of forks. Return the chicken to the stock with the noodles, corn, mushrooms, kosher salt, half the spring onions, and soy sauce. Simmer for 3-4 minutes until the noodles are tender. Ladle into two bowls and scatter over the remaining spring onions, herbs, and chilli shreds if using. Serve with extra soy sauce for sprinkling.

SHRIMP WRAPPED IN NOODLES
Ingredients
5 king shrimps
¼ cup lemon juice
2 clove garlic mashed
¼ finely chopped onions
Some coriander leaves, chopped
A pinch of salt
Red chilli powder, according to taste
A pinch of pepper
For the sauce —
¼ cup lime juice
2 tsp fish sauce
½ tsp garlic
1 tsp chopped coriander
½ tsp chilli
¼ tsp pepper
Salt and sugar to taste
For wrapping —
1 packet Chopstick Instant Noodles (Masala Delight), boiled
Satay sticks
Oil for frying

Method
Marinate the shrimps in lemon juice, red chilli, salt, pepper, coriander, onions, and garlic. Let it marinate for a couple of minutes. Now, make the sauce, mixing all the sauce ingredients. Dip the boiled noodles into the sauces. Pierce the shrimps with the satay sticks through the back of its tail. Wrap these with the noodle strands. Heat oil in a pan, deep fry them until brown.

By Salina Parvin
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food & Styling: RBR

Prepare delicious iftar desserts with Radhuni

The holy month of Ramadan brings with it lots of blessings and auspicious occasions, and along with these arrives the festivity of food. Food is a fundamental part of Ramadan without which the essence of the holy month cannot be felt. Iftar is not only a meal but an occasion where memories are made, happiness is shared, and the true joy of the month is experienced.

And with Ramadan knocking on our door, every household is busy shopping and planning for iftar. As we look forward to the array of food that is presented on the iftar table, we cannot help but reserve ideas for desserts.

Sweet cravings post iftar is a common phenomenon and it can be difficult to make desserts amidst all the other preparations but with Radhuni's dessert range, you can prepare various desserts that are ready-to-make and hassle-free.

Radhuni Falooda Mix and Radhuni Custard Powder are two items that can be made quickly and easily.

FALOODA

Falooda is undoubtedly one of the go-to desserts for iftar. It has a refreshing taste with various textures and replenishes the stomach. Rather than gathering the numerous ingredients needed for falooda separately, using Radhuni Falooda Mix, you can easily prepare falooda using ingredients from just one box.

Radhuni Falooda Mix is available in two flavours – mango and vanilla. Most of the ingredients required are provided within the box but you can make it more fulfilling by adding fruits and ice cream.

Ingredients

The box contains –
Jelly powder
Radhuni Falooda Mix (this includes tapioca pearls, noodles, raisins, and basil seeds)
Additional ingredients required –
One cup water
1 litre milk
1 apple
10 strawberries
1 cup grapes
2 kiwis
Scoops of ice cream

Method

To prepare Radhuni Falooda Mix, firstly form the jelly. Add the jelly powder to one cup of water and mix. Put this mixture over heat and boil for 4 – 5 minutes on medium flame while stirring. After that, pour the hot jelly liquid into a shallow bowl and let it come to room temperature. Once there, put it in the refrigerator to solidify.

Meanwhile, slice the grapes into halves and cut kiwis, strawberries, and apples into cubes. Bring the milk to a boil and pour all the contents of Radhuni Falooda Mix in it and stir. Using a whisk, stir the mixture frequently over medium-high heat until all the ingredients are boiling. Then, remove it from the heat and let it cool.

Cut the jelly into little cubes and add them along with chopped fruits to the falooda mixture. To assemble, first place some jelly cubes and then pour the falooda and fruits mixture. Lastly, top with scoops of ice cream.

FRUIT CUSTARD

Custard is another item that is fulfilling and refreshing to have during and after iftar. A plethora of things that can be added to a fruit custard and its versatile nature enables it to be used in various other dessert recipes, such as trifles, tarts, pies, and cup desserts.

With Radhuni Custard Powder, you can easily make custard by just mixing a couple of elements. To this, you can add fruits and nuts of your choice to make it even better tasting.

Ingredients

2½ tbsp Radhuni Custard Powder
¼ cup water
500ml milk
4 tbsp sugar
1 apple
1 cup grapes
½ cup pomegranate arils
1 cup diced strawberries
2 tbsp slithered almonds
2 tbsp pistachios
2 tbsp raisins

Method

To prepare the custard, mix water and Radhuni Custard Powder until it is a smooth, lump-free mixture. In a saucepan, pour milk and add sugar; put this over medium-heat and bring to a boil. Once boiling, turn down the flame and gradually pour in the Radhuni Custard Powder mixture and stir while pouring in a steady stream.

Stir continuously until all the custard mixture is incorporated and it becomes thick. Remove this from heat and let it cool; this will thicken as it cools. Once at room temperature, add chopped fruits, nuts, and raisins. Before serving, garnish with raisins and sliced nuts.

By Fariha Amber
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Food & Styling: RBR

#GUIDES

Things to remember on your IFTAR GROCERY SHOPPING

While the month of Ramadan arrives as a time for salvation and peace for Muslims all over, it also comes bearing with it a month of Ramadan food staples and groceries for better preparation of everyone's favourite iftar items.

We have all experienced discomfort after consuming foods that do not hit the mark in a haste without planning our iftars properly. To avoid such complications, ensure proper nutrition, and stock up on iftar essentials throughout the holy month, we should eat healthy, and easily digestible food.

Below are a few suggestions for your next iftar grocery store trip!

Hydrating foods

During a period of fasting, the consumption of just water is insufficient to meet the caloric requirements of the body, particularly given the impending arrival of warmer days. You should make it a point to incorporate additional items that are high in water content into your iftar shopping list.

You may increase the amount of water you consume after breaking the fast by eating hydrating items such as watermelon after iftar. Similarly, you can opt to make the classic Arabic salad 'fattoush' in iftar with cucumbers and lettuce, both of which help the body retain water.

The nourishing and soothing elements of green tea, rich in natural stimulants, also come into major help after an iftar meal. It not only makes your body feel more refreshed but is also an excellent option for maintaining good skin and preventing constipation.

Healthy snacks and proteins

Put on your iftar shopping list nutritious foods such as almonds, walnuts, dates, puffed rice, and flattened rice as well as sources of protein such as yoghurt, semolina, and milk. You may want to break your fast with some *doi chira*, *muri*, or dates.

Doi chira and *muri* help appease the digestive system and freshen the gut. Furthermore, choose semolina and milk to get a healthy amount of protein after fasting for hours as they help strengthen muscles and bones.

Storing on staples

Prepare for the possibility that you may need to rush through some last-minute cooking to make it in time for iftar by stocking your kitchen with easy-to-prepare items and necessary staples. Some of the foods that you can always keep in your pantry during the month of Ramadan for iftar meals are rice, chickpeas, mustard oil, bread, potatoes, and refreshing powdered drinks. Especially, chickpeas cooked with little amounts of spices in mustard oil help give your palette some taste, and you will find the meal more delicious to consume. It also boosts your energy to stay active after iftar.

Besides, juices or *shorbot* such as different flavours of TANG, enhance your body with Vitamin A, B, C, and iron and so are an essential part of iftar meals. Do not forget to keep them in mind if you are up for a quick but good iftar!

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy

Photo Courtesy: Meena Bazar

Zerocal: Indulge in sweetness, not sugar!

Iftar is a special family event we all cherish. And so, it is no surprise that it is an elaborate affair, complete with our favourite delicacies. However, many of our favourite dishes often are very sweet and require high amounts of sugar.

Worry no more, though, as Zerocal offers you an alternative. Whether you crave that cold glass of shorbot to rejuvenate after a day of fasting, or want to indulge in the myriad desserts, you can do so without being concerned about high sugar intake.

If you are aiming to cut down sugar consumption, be it for weight issues, diabetes, etc., Zerocal can be your answer. Why compromise on delightful sweet delights when you have a sugar alternative?

Following are some examples of iftar recipes one can try out using Zerocal.

COCONUT BLEND
Ingredients
Green coconut water
Coconut malai or the soft coconut meat

A slice of coconut kernel
Zerocal
Method
In a blender pour the coconut water, the soft coconut meat, and a sachet of Zerocal. Blend and serve in a tall glass with ice and kernels on the side.

LEMON-CUMIN DRINK
Ingredients
Toasted and grounded cumin powder
Mint leaves
Lemon juice
Salt
Water
Ice
Zerocal
Method
First, toast the whole cumin seeds and grind them.

In a mixer, put 2 teaspoons of cumin powder, 8 g mint leaves, 3 tsp lemon juice, a pinch of salt, and a sachet of Zerocal. Blend the mix and pour it in a glass. Garnish with ice and mint leaves.

MAHALABIA
Ingredients
Cornflower
Crushed almonds
Milk
Cream cheese
Vanilla essence
Zerocal
Method
Mix half-cup of corn flour with milk. Heat 1 litre of milk in a pot on the stove until it reaches a thick consistency. Now mix 2-3 sachets of Zerocal. Now slowly mix the corn flour, stirring for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and let it cool. Mix 200g of cream cheese. Pour in into small glasses. Sprinkle crushed almonds and serve cold.

DIMER HALUA (EGG HALUA)
Ingredients
Eggs
Milk
Mixed nuts
Dry Fruits
Ghee
Cardamoms
Cinnamon
Bay leaves
Vanilla essence
Zerocal
Method
First, beat 4 eggs in a bowl. Mix 1 cup of liquid milk, 2-3 drops of vanilla essence, and 2-3 sachets of Zerocal. Then take 3-4 spoons of ghee in a bowl and lightly fry cardamoms, cinnamon and bay leaves in it. Slowly pour the milk-egg mixture into the bowl and whisk until thickened. Mix in the ground nuts. Garnish with dry fruits and serve.

BREAD PUDDING
Ingredients
Eggs
Milk
Bread
Vanilla Essence
Zerocal
Method
First, heat 1/4 cup zerocal and make caramel. Once browned, pour the caramel

into the pudding pan while it's still hot. Let it cool. Then in a bowl, blend 2 cups of liquid milk, 3 pieces of bread cut into small pieces, 1/4 cup of powdered milk, 4-5 sachets of Zerocal, 4 eggs, and 2-3 drops of vanilla essence.

Once blended, pour the mixture over the set caramel and close the lid. Then put the pudding pot in a large vessel on the stove with 1.5 cups of water; and cover the vessel too. Steam on medium low flame for 40 minutes. Remove from heat.

When the pudding pot has cooled, open the lid, and pour the contents upside down on a plate. Serve chilled.

Translation: LS Desk
Photo Courtesy: Zerocal

Changing your food habits and lifestyle for a healthy body

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Drink more water
Hydration is important for overall health, weight loss, skin elasticity, and mood balance! Drinking 2-3 litres of water is recommended for a healthy body if that person does not have any other health issues.

Eating habits
First and foremost, making up your mind and committing to healthy eating is the key to building a healthy you. Buying healthier ingredients will make it easier to change your diet. Sticking to a healthy eating plan and timetable can help. Healthy eating does not have to be expensive or complicated by keeping count of micro/macro calories.

Here are some of the tips which can help you.

Be realistic
Eating healthy does not have to be those extravagant images we have in our minds from Instagram. It does not have to be expensive items and can simply be Bengali fish curry, daal, and vegetables with some whole grains cooked at home.

Plan your meals
Plan your meals ahead of time. Making time to list down the weekly grocery with essential items means sticking to the plan with focus. Do groceries on a Saturday and use that day as your meal prep day.

Homecooked meals are better than take-aways
Cooking at home is cheaper than eating out. Plus, the ingredients we use at home are healthier and more hygienic than in restaurants. Prepping meals ahead and even making them ahead for a week can help you save time and money.

Replace bad fat with good fat
We can use oils such as sunflower, canola, or olive oil. Having fatty fish or unsaturated butter in our diet can help with omega fatty acids. Snacking on nuts such as almonds, walnuts, and sunflower seeds instead of biscuits, cakes, or deep-fried foods is better. Changing your cooking method and shifting to shallow fry, baking, grilling, or steaming can help you consume less oil which is economical too.

Eat local vegetable
A healthy diet is not about kale and broccoli. You can eat plenty of spinach varieties found locally also. Buy local vegetables which are readily available and use them in your diet plans.

Eating in moderation
There is a Chinese saying, "Eat only till you are 70 per cent full". We should opt for eating a meal in moderation and on time. No food in excess is healthy, everything should be in moderation and a balance must be maintained.

Together with exercise and eating healthy, you will see great results as your body will start taking in the nutrients and detoxing the system. You shall soon start feeling great from inside and that will reflect in your daily activities and uplift your mood.

Photo: Simra Khan

HOROSCOPE

ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Reach out to find a solution. Your stubbornness could alienate loved ones. Relatives could give you a hard time. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Travel may bring changes to your philosophy. Communication will be your best bet. Put your plans into motion. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Don't push your partner away. Think whether you wish to commit. Financial difficulties may be worrying you. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.

CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Take care of issues at hand. Clear up any misunderstandings. Avoid too much discourse with colleagues this week. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Anger might lead to carelessness. Family members may be difficult to deal with. Don't get involved in conflicts. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.

VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

Financial gains are possible with wise investments. Socialise this week. Arrange pleasure trips with your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Deal with problems promptly. Changes at home are evident. Your partner will infuriate you. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Reflect on your past actions and experiences. Negligence will be costly. Put your time into home improvement projects. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.

SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Minor health problems can arise. You may miss your deadlines this week. Try not to be too harsh with your partner. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Make good use of your talents. Sudden romantic connections may be short-lived. Your ability to relate will close the gap. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.

AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

Partnerships could be tense. Payoff all your debts. Don't go looking for change. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.

PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Catch up on pending correspondence. Too much talk will lead to disputes. Be honest if you wish to solve the problem. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

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#HEALTH & FITNESS

12 foods that unclog arteries

Clogged arteries are the first step towards coronary diseases. A poor diet, a sedentary lifestyle, obesity and smoking, among plenty of other factors, can all cause poor heart health. A healthy heart ensures a long, healthy life and here are 12 foods to incorporate into your life that can help with achieving that.

Berries
Berries have flavonoid antioxidants, known to reduce inflammation and improve heart health. They are also packed with fibre, vitamins, minerals, and plant compounds that improve artery function, and protect against cellular damage.

Beans
Beans have plenty of fibre and are one of the best ways to prevent high cholesterol levels. Those with heart problems would be benefitted eating at least one serving of beans per day. Beans also reduce blood pressure and decrease the risk of Type 2 diabetes.

Fish
Fish is loaded with good fats, especially Omega 3, which is known to boost heart health and reduce the release of cellular adhesion molecules — a prime culprit for clogged arteries.

Tomatoes
Tomatoes contain plant compounds such as carotenoid pigment lycopene, which have impressive heart health benefits. Lycopene rich tomato products can help reduce blood vessel inflammation and boost good cholesterol.

Onions
Part of the Allium genus, these vegetables are a treasure trove of beneficial nutrients. Minerals such as sulphur compounds can also help with blood vessel inflammation and lower the chances of platelets clumping together in the blood, keeping arteries unobstructed.

Citrus fruits
Clementines, oranges, and limes don't just pack a strong flavour profile, they also contain flavonoids that prevent free radicals in the body from oxidizing bad cholesterol. This increases heart health and lowers chances of a stroke.

Spices
Ginger, pepper, chilli, and cinnamon are all anti-inflammatory spices and help in improving blood lipid levels and keeping arteries clear.

Flax seeds
Small but mighty, flax seeds are a powerhouse of beneficial nutrients. Full of fibre, good fats, vitamins and minerals, these seeds help lower cholesterol and counter instances of arterial blockage.

Cruciferous Vegetables

Veggies like broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage have been credited for reducing arterial calcification and lowering the CIMT (Carotid Intima-Media Thickness), a measurement that assesses a person's likelihood of getting clogged arteries.

Beets
Blood vessel inflammation can lead to decreased levels of nitric oxide production, which beets, a rich source of nitrates, can restore. Nitric acid has been known to play active roles in improving blood vessel function and reducing risks associated with the heart.

Oats
A great source of anti-inflammatory antioxidants called avenanthramides that help break down high levels of total and bad cholesterol and reduce inflammatory markers, oats and oat bran are excellent choices for those who wish to prioritise their heart.

Nuts and Seeds
Time and again, research has proven the benefits of nuts and seeds in the prevention of diseases related to clogged arteries, improve blood vessel function, and lower bad cholesterol and blood pressure.

By Munira Fidai
Photo: LS Archives/Sazzad Ibne Sayed