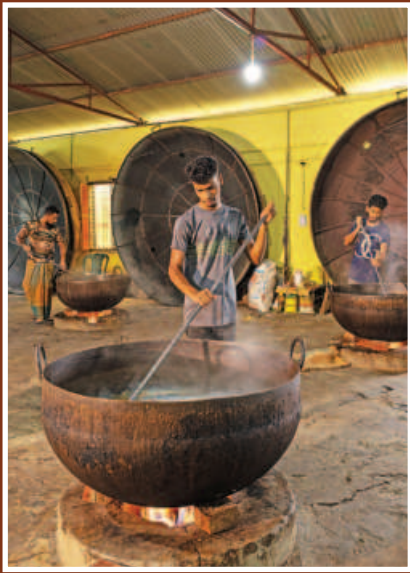


Once a quaint little town, Bogura is now an expanding metropolis that simultaneously nurtures tradition and heritage and rapid commercialisation. One thing, however, remains unchanged in this “tradition meets modernity” scenario — the legendary curd. To this day, Bogura’s doi is not just a gustatory delight, but also a symbol of the town’s lasting legacies.

CULTURAL HERITAGE IN A BOWL

The taste of Bogura’s doi



“What makes Bogura’s doi such a gourmet delight?” one may ask. “Well, it is a blend of age-old recipes and the finest local ingredients,” says Md Mostafiz Al-Mamun, owner of “Chinipata Doi,” one of the more renowned outlets in Bogura city that sells the famous curd.

According to Al-Mamun, “Starting from the fodder of the cattle to the “seed” of the curd — the bacterial culture that initiates fermentation, the tests that ensure that only the finest quality of the milk is used in each batch of production, the earthen bowl used to sell the product; in fact, every little detail contributes to the special taste of the famous Bogura curd.”

While the exact date and origins of the technique of production are debated, it can be said that the art of curd-making in this region has been preserved by artisans for generations. The craftsmen take pride in their work, often starting their day before sunrise to ensure that every bowl

of curd is made with the utmost care and attention.

“The process starts with fresh cow’s milk, which is first boiled in large quantities and then simmered and reduced to almost half. Sugar is poured at a stage and the milk is then allowed to cool to a lukewarm temperature. A small amount of curd from a previous batch — the seed — is added for fermentation to take place. This mixture is then poured into clay pots that are traditionally used to help maintain the ideal temperature for the microorganisms to act. The pots are covered and left undisturbed for several hours, allowing the curd to set,” Al-Mamun says.

This, of course, is an oversimplification of the processes. Traditionally, all the stages and processes are regulated manually. The result is a curd that is rich and smooth, with a texture that is both creamy and firm.

“Dadkhani chaal, mushurir daal, chini-pata doi...” — our childhoods were coloured bright with poems and stories. Rhymes like this reflect our deep affection for our traditional cuisines — Cumilla’s roshmalai, Porabari’s chomchom, Bogura’s doi — they all evoke a special feeling within us as these desserts are not merely about taste, they carry an essence of our cultural roots and traditions.

Be it celebrations like Pahela Baishakh or occasions of religious significance like Eid or puja, curd is a must-have. While the culinary map of Bangladesh continues to evolve, Bogura-curd holds a special place in it and remains a staple. Cherished by both locals and visitors who seek a taste of authenticity in every spoonful, it remains a classic!

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel

