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LIFE

Style

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HERITAGE

tours

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PROMOTING HERITAGE TOURISM

PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

Ready for a journey through time?

Ours is a land rich in history and traditions. This locality has witnessed political shifts and societal changes that have left footprints in our lives. Tracing these steps, we can go back in time for over millennia. We have ancient universities and cities, religious establishments, colonial establishments and so much more.

In recent times, heritage tourism is gaining popularity in Bangladesh. People are now keen on exploring the past and visiting places that are important from a historical, cultural, and architectural point of view. It is about connecting people to the stories, traditions, and legacies of the past.

However, we have not explored the full potential of Bangladesh as a major destination of heritage tourism. Although food is an essential aspect of all our travels, we are yet to think out of the box in presenting "food" as the reason for travel. Our riverine communities, when exposed to the world, can also form a framework for tourism.

This week, Star Lifestyle takes a peek at some of the most significant remnants of our glorious architecture. We look at Paharpur, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, once a site of great learning and Buddhist spirituality. We look at Idrakpur Fort — a Mughal establishment that stands at Munshiganj and a reminder of our Muslim heritage. We also stroll along the curved roads of Old Town, where each turn is a revelation of the cultural confluence and is still visible.

This is our humble effort to invite you to rediscover Bangladesh. We hope to spark a renewed appreciation for our rich heritage and inspire people to cherish and protect the legacies that continue to shape our identity in the 21st century!

LS Desk

Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel



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নতুনরূপে

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Transform your LIVING SPACE with Aarong's latest home décor collection



Aarong, a brand renowned for its fine craftsmanship and classic elegance, encourages us to do precisely that with its latest line of home décor items, which includes three different bedroom looks, stylish accents for the living room, and dining basics that instantly update any area.

Aarong's Ethnic Bedroom Collection provides rich textures, elaborate patterns, and designs influenced by ethnic history for individuals inclined to tradition. This collection, which includes elaborate handwoven bedspreads, honours the workmanship that is fundamental to Bengali design. It's ideal for people who value their heritage but still desire a sophisticated and cosy setting.

In contrast, Aarong's High-End Bedroom Collection is all about luxury. With clean lines, neutral tones, and subtle richness, this provides a stylish refuge. It provides residents with a tranquil escape from Dhaka's hectic streets, allowing them to enjoy exquisite comfort.

The Casual Bedroom Collection values simplicity and comfort to create a more relaxed atmosphere. This collection is great for everyday life because of its soft textiles and simple, mild tones. It's intended for folks who appreciate convenience, offering a peaceful respite of the city.

Beyond the bedroom, Aarong's latest campaign focuses on living and dining areas. Living room elements, such as stylish

pillows, and statement items complement any décor, providing a harmonious combination of comfort and elegance. These elements assist in making the living room a pleasant area for family and guests.

Aarong's carefully picked dining basics offer modest beauty to any table. Whether it's an intimate gathering or a family feast, these products enrich every meal with their beautifully crafted tableware and eye-catching centrepieces.

The main objective of Aarong's newest home décor range is to assist you in making your place a reflection of your unique style. Each piece is carefully constructed with the goal of providing warmth, comfort, and a sense of belonging in addition to beauty. In a vibrant city like Dhaka, it serves as a reminder that home is where we may find calm and express ourselves.

It's about creating a unique haven that evolves with you, not simply about choosing furniture and décor. If you want to give your room a modern makeover or a dash of heritage, Aarong's home décor range is the perfect place to start.

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Courtesy

We naturally feel drawn to revamp our homes as the new season brings fresh life to Dhaka.



#HOBBIES

THE CAREFREE GARDENER'S GUIDE

Low-maintenance plants for a life in bloom

Craving the beauty of nature without the burden of constant care? Low-maintenance plants offer the perfect solution. These dauntless greens thrive with less attention, making them the best for those with busy lifestyles, or who simply prefer a more relaxed approach to gardening. From hardy succulents to vibrant foliage, discover a world of low-maintenance plants that will bring a touch of nature to your space without demanding too much of your time.

Pothos

This herb is one of the easiest houseplants to grow and tend to. It only requires very little light indoors with no direct sun, ideal for your room if it can't avail too much natural light. Tolerant to almost any indoor condition, the plant can take its place in any container, be it a hanging basket or a pot. If needed, it can be placed outdoors during warm weather.

This plant can grow in both soil and water. If grown in soil, make sure the container has a drainage hole and also that you water it once a week to let the beautiful vine grow. The mature plant extends as far as 12 feet. The plant can beautify your home at a price between Tk 150 and Tk 200.

Aloe Vera

Aloe vera is mostly known as the skin-healing sap. The spiky-looking succulent holds more merit than just being used for cosmetic use. The aloe leaves remove formaldehyde from the air you breathe, on top of bringing a tinge of western vibes to your space. The plant requires six hours of direct sunlight a day to fortify itself.

The container for aloe vera must be chosen carefully, so opt for wooden or plastic



ones and avoid metal pots. The plant must be watered only when it is dried completely. It is priced affordably, between Tk 60 and Tk 200.

Fairy Castle Cactus

This endearing species, shaped like a towering castle, are for those plant parents who forget that they are one. All they need is a sunny window to enjoy the light and retain their green hue and water every few weeks.

The cactus is a prickly being, so while you handle the watering, try using gloves or tongs to hold onto them carefully. This small plant only costs between Tk 180 and Tk 230.

Spider Plant

The name is quite self-explanatory — it actually looks like a spider! Spider plant is a very popular houseplant since it's nearly impossible to kill, even if you forget to

nurture it at regular intervals. The mature

two-foot-long herb appears grass-like, with long arching leaves and trailing baby plants. It's best that you put it in a hanging planter, but it would look good anywhere, regardless of its position.

Though it can handle ranges of sunlight, from partial sun to shade and periods of drought, you should keep the soil lightly moist. Overwatering is a common pitfall, so let the soil dry out before watering again. The plant can be had for around Tk 100 to Tk 450.

ZZ Plant

Also known as Zanzibar Gem or Eternity Plant, this popular houseplant is sure to bring a touch of perennial tropics into your space. The herb boasts shiny, oval-shaped, deep green or purple leaves that need cleaning from time to time. Its sun exposure ranges from low to bright indirect light to ensure optimum growth, even thriving in complete shade.

It is drought-tolerant, so underwatering is better than overwatering. You should water it every few weeks to ensure it lives. The plant's full height stands at two to four feet, so pots between four to 14 inches in diameter should do, depending on its size. The sap can be yours for Tk 220 to Tk 550.

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#TRAVEL

5 reasons Old Dhaka will ruin your love for the rest of the city

As soon as you step into Old Dhaka, you'll feel like you've entered a living, breathing museum — one that's overflowing with history, culture, and irresistible flavours. Here, every street brim with life, every corner holds a story, and every building is a remnant of the past. Whether you're a curious traveller or a local looking to rediscover your roots, certain experiences in Old Dhaka simply can't be missed.

So, here are 5 quintessential Old Dhaka experiences that will make you fall in love with this part of the city all over again.

A stroll through Hrishikesh Das Road

Your adventure in Old Dhaka should start on Hrishikesh Das Road, a picturesque street lined with British period buildings dating back about a century.

As you walk down this road, you will encounter residences adorned with semi-circular arches, colourful glasswork, and decorative pediments. The elegant balconies, supported by metal and wooden posts, offer a visual narrative of the area's rich historical tapestry. This road perfectly encapsulates the architectural charm and historical depth of Old Dhaka.

Enjoying paneer-flavoured tea with Bakarkhani

While exploring, indulge in a local culinary delight — Bakarkhani, a flaky, sweetened bread that is a staple in Old Dhaka. Pair it



with a cup of paneer-flavoured tea, a unique twist on the traditional *chaa* that adds a cheesy fragrance and a slight sweetness, enhancing the overall flavour.

This combination is not just a treat for the palate, but also a deep dive into the everyday culinary traditions that make Old Dhaka special.

Joys of Baldah Garden

Escape the urban hustle and visit Baldah Garden, an underrated oasis in Old Dhaka. This serene garden is home to the historic

Joy House, where Rabindranath Tagore penned his "Camellia" poem. Wander among rare and exotic plants like the Amazon lily, Bhojpatra, and various cacti and succulents. A visit here offers not only a peaceful retreat, but also a touch of literary and botanical history.

Exploring Beauty Boarding

Beauty Boarding, located on Shirish Das Lane, serves as a vibrant cultural hub. Initially established as a simple boarding house, it has evolved into a heritage building that now functions as a motel and eatery.

Beauty Boarding has long been a gathering spot for the city's intellectuals, artists, and writers. Stepping into this

establishment is like walking into a living museum, rich with the cultural and intellectual history of Old Dhaka.

Savouring matha of Old Dhaka

Conclude your journey with a taste of matha, a traditional spiced yoghurt drink that is especially popular in Old Dhaka. This refreshing beverage is perfect for cooling down after a day of exploration. The matha here is known for its distinctive flavour, which is enriched with a mix of spices and sometimes, fruit, making it a must-try for anyone seeking the authentic taste of Old Dhaka.

Each of these experiences in Old Dhaka offers a unique perspective on the city's soul. From the architectural splendours and botanical beauties to the rich culinary



heritage and vibrant local life, Old Dhaka is truly a mosaic of delightful encounters waiting to be explored.

By Ayman Anika
Photo: Ayman Anika

#TRAVEL



Star **LIFE** Style

For most people living in Bangladesh, or those flying in from abroad on a holiday, you will probably be excited about visiting Lalbagh Fort, a “popular” Mughal heritage and an iconic landmark of the country’s capital, Dhaka. However, not far from the city — less than a three-hour drive from its international airport — lies Idrakpur Fort, which is a peaceful and less explored spot for tourists, a gem for curious history buffs, a small but awe-inspiring piece of architecture.

IDRAKPUR FORT A must-visit Mughal site many tourists do not know of!

Located in Munshiganj, the 17th century river fort is beyond the hustle and bustle of the more common tourist spots, and gives a rather different experience compared to the grander Mughal edifices that are spread all over the Indian subcontinent.

That’s why you should have this on your itinerary if you are exploring Bangladesh!

THE MAN AND THE MONUMENT

Let’s first travel back in time and set a context. Historians believe that Idrakpur Fort was most likely built by Mir Jumla, a Mughal subahdar (viceroys/governor) of Bengal, possibly around 1660 AD. He ruled under Emperor Aurangzeb.

The self-made man of Persian origin had a glorious career. Mir Jumla assisted Aurangzeb in solidifying his throne and continued military campaigns even when he was the governor of Bengal.

During his tenure in Bengal, attacks and raids by pirates was

a huge concern. Hence, this river fort was built to counter the advance of the pirates or to keep them away. Idrakpur Fort is in fact a part of a larger system of river forts that collectively formed a defence mechanism against pirates — protecting water routes and safeguarding Dhaka.

If you delve into its geographic history, it will not come as a surprise that the fort originally stood on the bank of a river.

A PICTURESQUE RIVER FORT

The first glimpses of the beautiful brick fort as seen from the street are enough to set a feeling of antiquity: a circular raised platform, bastions, and a simple, but elegant entry gate are some of the first features you see that put you in the mood to explore the compound.

As you step inside, you will quickly notice that the overall compound is rather serene — a small pond surrounded by trees; scrubs and plants dotted around, and although there are many visitors, it is not

overcrowded.

You will soon come across a set of stairs, which leads to a graceful-looking gate. This will essentially take you on to the top of the large, round platform, a watchtower of sorts. There, you are surrounded by circular battlements marking off the circular platform; basically, parapets or walls with holes for weapons.

This is where you let your imagination soar, as you may picture soldiers or guards of olden times looking out onto the waters — monitoring ships, or even launching attacks at enemies.

There is a narrow flight of stairs on one side of the round structure. Within the compound there is also a tiny museum that has been annexed.

Idrakpur Fort is neither a large, grand fort, nor is it a common tourist spot. In that sense, it is “far from the madding crowd,” and its beauty lies in the tranquillity, elegant architecture without being presumptuous, and the notion of being a Mughal outpost.

These make Idrakpur Fort so special and memorable!

A LITTLE OFF THE TRACK

If you are planning to visit this fort, we recommend exploring two other spots that are in close vicinity:

- *Baba Adam’s Mosque* pre-dates Idrakpur Fort by almost two centuries! The pre-Mughal structure was built in 1483 and belongs to the Sultanate era of Bengal. Baba Adam, the saint after whom the mosque takes its name, lies buried in a mausoleum in front of it.

- *Mirkadim Bridge* is a beautiful Mughal-era bridge, and if Idrakpur Fort has sparked an interest in Mughal architecture, visiting this structure will be worthwhile. A great way to view the bridge is to take a boat at the creek and sail under the arched gateway-like structure.

By M H Haider
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel

Scan this QR code for a detailed travel itinerary for interested travellers in the digital edition of this article.



PAHARPUR

A peek at Bangladesh's Buddhist past

Somapura Mahavihara — “the Great Monastery situated in the locality of the moon” — is one of the oldest monuments in the country, and a UNESCO heritage site. Located to the northwest of Bangladesh in the district of Naogaon, the ruins of the Buddhist vihara at Paharpur are a reminder of the country's pre-Islamic glory, and to this day, serves as a cue to what was once a flourishing Buddhist culture.

Legend has it that it was Buddha himself who introduced his teachings on this plain, and later, direct disciples of Siddhartha Gautama spread the knowledge far and wide. Historians credit the Pala Empire for playing an important role in spreading the religion in this part of the subcontinent.

Based on an inscription found on a clay tablet, the Mahavihara — colloquially termed “Paharpur” — was established during the reign of Raja Dharmapala (781-821 CE), the second, and greatest, Pala ruler. Subsequent monarchs undertook major reconstructions at least twice, solidifying the status of Paharpur as a seat of great religious learning and practice.

Renowned sage and reformist, Atish Dipankar Srijnan, once taught the Mahayana form of Buddhism at this very site and between the 8 and 12 century CE, the monastery enjoyed an unsurpassed reputation in the Buddhist world.



The reason for Paharpur's slow decline is unclear and before excavation work began in the early 20th century, the structure had been buried for about 500 years! Restoration work spanning almost a century has revealed its architectural magnificence.

The ancient complex is quadrangular, 180 m by 181 m, in plan — typical of Mahaviharas of that time. In the centre of the open courtyard of the monastery, there stands

the trace of a grand four-faced temple rising about 70 feet above ground level.

Rows of cells facing inward toward the main shrine in the middle of the courtyard compose the monastery's outside walls. These cells, which made up the exterior wall of the monastery during its final construction stages, numbered 177.

The peripheral walls feature terracotta plaques depicting dancing nymphs, fish, elephants, and other motifs. The

images currently seen are later-day additions, as the original plaques have been removed for their preservation.

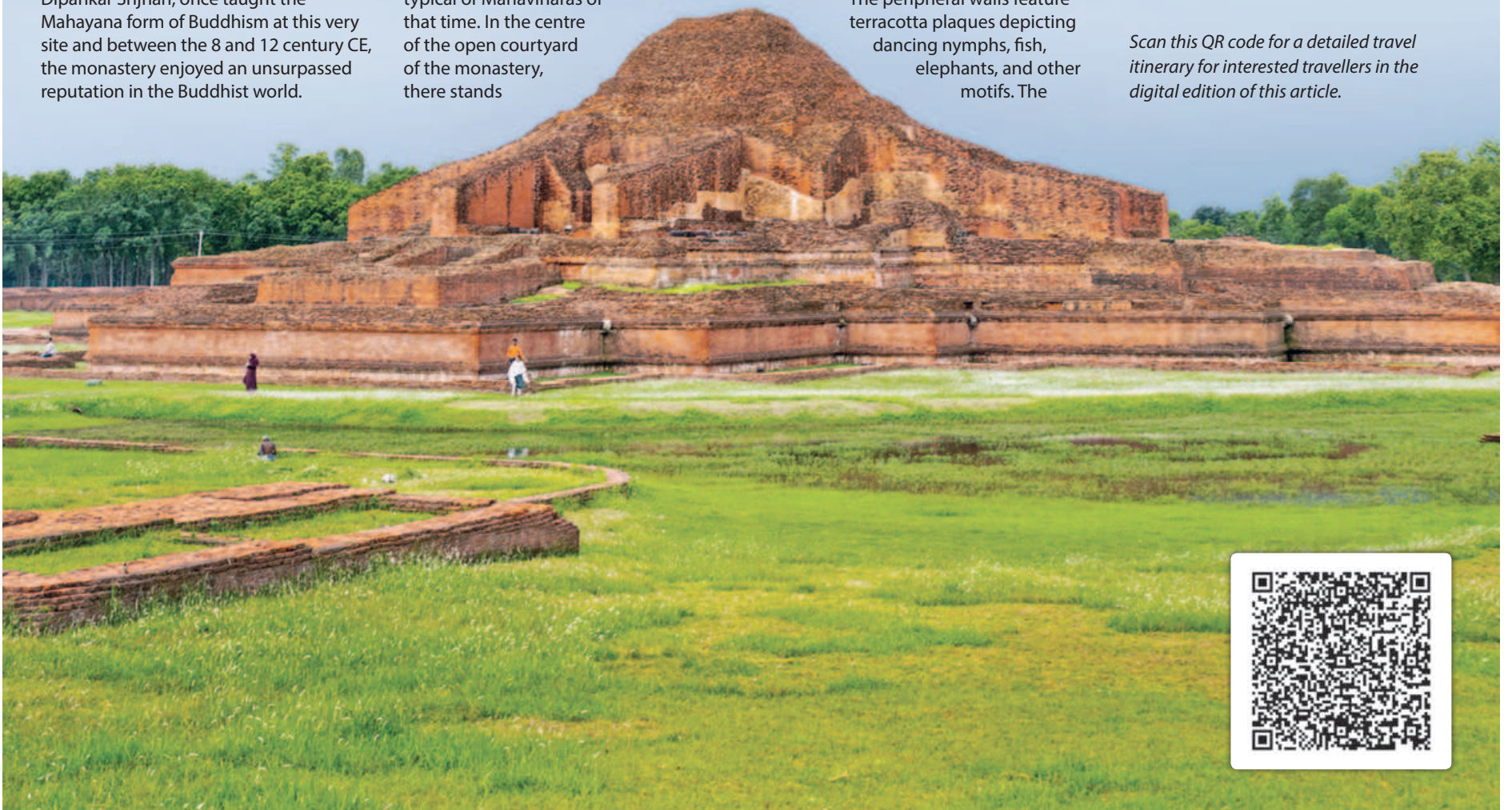
The grandeur of Paharpur, at the time of its completion, was unlike any other vihara in Asia and to this day, stands as the second largest single Buddhist monastery south of the Himalayas! The architecture of this site had a profound influence on the later-day construction of Buddhist temples that we now see in Myanmar, Central Java...as far away as Cambodia!

Artefacts found at the site and the surrounding places are now on display at the Paharpur Museum, located within the complex featuring the ruins of the monastery, enriching visitors' understanding of the site's cultural and historical importance.

As the night breaks into dawn, the first light reflected on the central temple creates an ethereal experience. Winter is perhaps the best season to travel, as summer days in Northwest Bangladesh are hot and humid.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel

Scan this QR code for a detailed travel itinerary for interested travellers in the digital edition of this article.





#FOOD & RECIPES

Up for a feast? Here's how to get started with these easy recipes

Get ready to elevate your culinary game with these delicacies, each with a unique twist! Whether you are cooking for a special occasion or simply indulging in a comforting meal, these dishes will impress with their delightful textures and bold flavours.

So, let's dive into the details and start cooking up a storm!

CRACKLING SPINACH

Ingredients

- 45-50 spinach leaves
- 2 tbsp corn-starch
- Oil for deep frying
- 1 tsp powdered sugar
- Salt to taste
- 1 tbsp chilli flakes
- 1 tbsp roasted sesame seeds

Method

Wash the

spinach leaves and pat them dry. If the leaves are damp, they will clump together when cornstarch is added, and your crackling spinach will be slightly greasy. Take 8 to 10 leaves at a time, lay one over the other, roll, and chop into fine strips/ ribbons. Do this with all the leaves. Separate the spinach strips/ ribbons with your fingers.

Sprinkle the cornstarch over the spinach and then toss well so the spinach is evenly and well coated. Make sure the spinach is well separated and not clumped together.

Heat the oil in a wok. Fry the spinach in about 4 or 5 batches. When it is about smoking hot, drop the coated spinach and fry till crisp but not brown. This should not take more than 2 or 3

minutes.

Drain on paper towels. While still hot, sprinkle red chilli flakes, salt, powdered sugar and toasted sesame seeds. Toss lightly to mix well. Serve immediately.

NARKEL-CHINGRI

Ingredients

- 250g prawns (chingri)
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- Salt to taste
- 1 tsp poppy seeds (posto)
- 2 tsp mustard seeds (shorshe)
- 2 tsp grated coconut or young coconut flesh of the tender coconut
- 6 green chillies, as per taste
- 1 cup coconut water
- 3 tbsp coconut milk

Method

Cut and devein the prawns; marinate with a pinch of salt and turmeric powder and keep them aside for 10 minutes. Pour the coconut water, and scrape out the tender flesh in the mixer; add mustard seeds, poppy seeds and green chilli and pulse it to a paste.

Now, lightly stir fry the prawns in mustard oil, be careful to not over-fry — that would make it rubbery. Place it in a bowl, add the masala paste, coconut milk, coconut water, and salt, and mix it well. Fill the whole content carefully inside the coconut shell but leave a little space inside. Take a large pan and add water to it. Place the coconut carefully into the pan. The water level should be 1/3 of the height of the coconut. Cook for 30 minutes on medium heat.

BONELESS ILISH

Ingredients

- 6 pieces ilish
- ¼ cup yoghurt
- 1 tbsp white vinegar
- 1 tsp red chilli powder
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 2 tsp mustard oil
- 1 cup thinly sliced onions
- 2 tsp fried onions
- 5-6 green onions
- Salt to taste

Method

In a bowl, add yoghurt, vinegar, red chilli powder, and sugar, and mix well. Add salt and turmeric powder and mix well until a smooth paste is formed. Place the ilish pieces into the yoghurt mixture and mix well until the fish pieces have been fully covered with the mixture.

Add mustard oil and mix well. Add a layer of onions into a pressure cooker, then place the fish on top. Repeating this pattern, add another layer of onions then fish on top. Place the excess yoghurt mixture and water.

Cover with lid tightly and cook for 10 minutes on high heat. After 10 minutes lower the heat and cook for 90 minutes.

Afterwards, carefully open the lid. Sprinkle fried onions and green chillies. Cook on high heat until the gravy thickens.

Boneless ilish is ready to serve.



Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel
Recipe: Star Lifestyle Archives

Special Thanks to Amari Dhaka for Food Preparation and Styling

Tired of sucking in your belly? Try these yoga moves to shrink it for real

With time, our lifestyle has become increasingly sedentary. The result? An accumulation of belly fat due to a lack of physical activity. Yoga, with its holistic approach to physical and mental health, offers a pathway to not only reduce belly fat but also improve overall well-being. Eliza Chowdhury, a seasoned yoga instructor with certifications from India and Thailand, shares 5 yoga poses that are particularly effective for targeting and reducing belly fat.

Boat Pose (Naukasana)

The pose gets its name from the way the body resembles a boat while performing it. Eliza explains, "Naukasana is excellent for firing up the core and is great for burning abdominal fat. It reduces belly fat, strengthens abdominal muscles, improves digestion, and aids in managing stress."



gynaecological disorders.

How to do it —

Lie on your back with arms by your sides. Lift your legs and lower body off the floor, bringing your feet over your head, trying to touch the floor with your toes. Hold the position for 10 to 15 seconds, then gently return to the starting position. Rest for ten seconds and repeat three to five times.

Seated Forward Bend (Paschimottanasana)

Paschimottanasana calming forward bend is perfect for stimulating the abdominal area. "This yoga pose that taps into the deep reservoirs of your body's potential for flexibility and relaxation. The benefits include strengthened abdominal muscles and improved digestion," points out Eliza.

This pose is also noted for its potential to stimulate the

Manipura chakra, which governs self-confidence and power, aligning physical posture with emotional balance and energy flow.

How to do it —

Sit with your legs extended straight in front of you. Pull your feet towards your body, straighten your spine, and inhale deeply. Lift both arms over your head and slowly bend forward as you exhale. Reach for your ankles, holding one wrist with the other, and bring your forehead to your knees. Keep the spine stretched forward as you breathe in. Then slowly release your hands and return to the starting position.

Bridge Pose (Setu Bandhasana)

This gentle backbend works wonders on the abdominal muscles while reducing stress. Eliza Chowdhury emphasises the comprehensive benefits of the Bridge Pose,

management of anxiety, and restoring emotional balance.

How to do it —

Lie on your back, bending your knees and keeping your feet hip-width apart. Try to hold your ankles or place your hands beside your heels. Lift your hips upward, forming a bridge with your body, and hold the position for thirty seconds.

Lower your hips back down, stretch your legs, and relax. Repeat three to five times, gradually increasing the duration.

Head-to-Knee Pose (Janu Sirsasana)

The Head-to-Knee Pose, or Janu Sirsasana, is a seated yoga posture that brings noticeable benefits to both body and mind by emphasising flexibility, calming the nervous system, and stimulating the digestive organs.

Eliza describes the myriad benefits of



noting, "Setu Bandhasana strengthens the back, buttocks, and hamstrings, while also opening the chest, hips, and spine."

It stimulates abdominal organs and thyroid glands, which helps improve digestion and regulate metabolism. The pose also helps alleviate stress and mild depression by calming the brain, improving the

the pose: "This pose helps calm the mind, reducing anxiety and fatigue. It stretches the spine, shoulders, hamstrings, and groins."

How to do it —

Sit with both legs extended in front of you. Bend the right knee and place the heel close to the pelvic region, with the sole of the foot against the left thigh. Reach forward to hold the left big toe with both hands, bending from the waist, and try to touch your forehead to your knee. Hold the position for twenty to thirty seconds, then slowly return to the starting position.

Repeat the same steps on the other side. Practise this pose four to six times, resting in Shavasana as needed.

By Ayman Anika

Photo: Eliza Chowdhury



How to do it —

Lie flat on your back. Tighten your abdominal muscles and draw your stomach inward. Slowly lift your upper body and legs, balancing on your hips to form a V shape. Stretch your arms forward, parallel to the floor.

Plow Pose (Halasana)

Known for its effectiveness in reducing fat around the waist and hips, Halasana is a go-to for those targeting belly fat. According to Eliza, the pose is highly effective in reducing fat around the waist, hips, and abdomen. Moreover, with regular practice, Halasana can prevent diabetes, arthritis, and

The carefree gardener's guide: Low-maintenance plants for a life in bloom

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Peace Lily

If your home has no way of getting natural light, Peace Lily might be the plant baby you were looking for. This perennial is a lily by name, not by its appearance. It may live in artificial light, but when natural light is available, it comes in full bloom. One amazing fact of the herb is that it filters toxins from the air, wherever it's placed.

Peace Lily loves moderately moist soil, so you have to water it every one week and spritz it often. They don't grow fast, reaching a mature height of one to four feet in three years. This beauty can be yours for anywhere between Tk 100 and Tk 300.

Philodendron Rio

This tropical evergreen is a perfect collector's item for ones with a black thumb. The seemingly bushy-palm foliage is a sight for sore eyes with streaks of red, yellow, pink, and green in it. The variegation patterns of Rio are

dependent on the presence of light, so it needs bright indirect light if you want to see the colours remain in its leaves.

The plant isn't a heavy water user, so you must water them when the soil is dry, by one or two inches from the top. The mature plant extends to a height of up to eight feet. The price of the plant ranges between Tk 130 and Tk 350.



By Tasneem Azim

Disclaimer: The price range is inclusive of size/variation, and exclusive of complementary items.

◆ HOROSCOPE ◆



ARIES (MAR. 21-APR. 20)

You may have difficulties while traveling. Don't make large purchases unless discussed with your partner. Any difficulties with peers could be unnerving. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



TAURUS (APR. 21-MAY 21)

Your compassion will be appreciated. Don't lead someone on if you have no interest. Difficulties with appliances may arise. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.



GEMINI (MAY 22-JUN. 21)

Rely on yourself. Emotions may get the better of you. Your partner may not accommodate you. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



CANCER (JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

Be careful disclosing information. Romantic opportunities are evident. Your emotions are soaring; if you don't get your way, look out. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



LEO (JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Social activity should be on your agenda. Channel your energy wisely. Avoid arguments with relatives. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VRIGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

You could make extra cash through creative hobbies. Travel could be more exciting than imagined. Your home environment can get hostile. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LIBRA (SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

Make changes at home. Take time to decide what you want. Look into ways to better yourself. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



SCORPIO (OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

New relationships could arise in social events. Don't count your chickens before they hatch. You might need to travel for work. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.



SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Inviting friends over is a good idea. Avoid complicated situations. Get together with those you find mentally stimulating. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Visitors dropping by unexpectedly can ease tension with your partner. Be patient this week. Make plans with family this week. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



AQUARIUS (JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

You will have to deal with any financial issues yourself. Look into a healthier diet. Avoid drastic decisions. Your lucky day this week will be Wednesday.



PISCES (FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Take the family out somewhere. You can meet new romantic opportunities at social events. Loved ones may be difficult to reason with. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



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Left Right
Left Right



#DECOR

Golden rules to follow when designing a minimalistic dining room

Dining room designs are ever-evolving and never out of the conversation. A flexible, yet stylish dining room — that serves as an intimate family setting, while combining casual gatherings — has become a modern-day requirement. By embracing minimalistic design, we can harness a compact space to create a gourmet experience for our loved ones and guests.



Go through these golden rules to help you style your desired dining room!

Moods that suit the size

To set the tone of the space, explore the options first. Minimalistic design moods can be in industrial, or modern themes. Select the theme by keeping the scale and proportion of your dining room in mind.

Grand dining halls suit well with industrial themes, where exposed materials like metal, brick or concrete play the key role. Mid-sized to small dining rooms nicely merge with modern minimalism, where warm-toned wooden furniture, bold, geometric shapes create a clean and uncluttered look.

Go au naturel

If your dining room is compact, you can go with an open kitchen plan or integrate the living room with the dining room. This will help declutter and unfold a harmonious free-flowing space, excellent for hosting large get-togethers.

For aesthetics, go all-natural and avoid packing the room with theatrical décor. Choose a neutral colour palette of white, grey, and beige to set a tranquil mood. Pop some bright colours to accentuate some details. Brown tones like sienna and mahogany, paired with cream or ivory create a sense of softness and uniformity, which is the essence of minimalism.

Let the sunshine in

The windows and balconies should be



opened up for ample air and daylight. Use subtle textured curtains to create a sunny and spacious vibe in the room.

In terms of artificial lighting — make a statement with a striking, angular pendant light over the dining table. Decorative ceiling or LED lights can add depth and soft ambience to the room. Layering the lights will allow you to control the illumination of the room according to your mood.

Focus on comfort and function

Gone are the days when dining rooms used to be stuffed with hefty ornamented furniture. Going with the theme of minimalist living, opt for chairs with comfy upholstery. Look out for slim-legged, multipurpose furniture pieces that streamline the look of the room.

Bench dining chairs can be a savvy alternative to traditional chairs, they are ideal space-savers. Built-in storage cabinets with clean lines blend seamlessly into the room. You may add a sidebar and place an indoor plant atop. Trim off the unnecessary and keep the empty spaces as they are to create a sense of calmness.

Minimal, sleek details

Spread out a muted-premium rug under the sleekly silhouetted dining table. A sofa can be used for informal sitting. Pair it with textured pillows to add playfulness. Crown your dining tabletop with an edgy flower vase. Opt for slim-cut dinnerware for an elegant tablescape. Honing the details is the key to curating a fine dining experience.

Styling your dining space is a journey towards self-expression. The process should not drain your budget. An efficient financial option may be to purchase items from furniture and décor brands that offer payment plans like EMI (Equated Monthly Instalment), which will make this procedure smooth for you.

By Tasmiah Rahman
 Photo: Courtesy



A perfect combination of comfort and cohesion

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