



#FOOD & RECIPES

Is Mirpur's Kallu and Shawkat kabab worth the hype? Here's what I found

Did you know 87 new kebab shops open in Dhaka daily? Yeah, that's a lie, but for a second, you believed it because there's no getting around the fact that the number of *insert name* Kabab Ghors in the city is astounding these days. That was not the case in the past, with kebab places few and far between.

My overdue visit to Selim Kabab Ghor at Mohammadpur caused quite a stir amongst my known associates. While I tend to ignore the uninformative "I have had better," or "They aren't the same anymore," there were some who came up with actual recommendations for places that they maintain taste better than the popular Mohammadpur store.

And so, it was time to push the proverbial boat back out and embark on another fact-finding mission. The destination this time? Mirpur's own Kallu Kabab Ghor and Shawkat Kabab Ghor.

In the heart of Benaroshi Polli: Shawkat Kabab Ghor

Just off the Mirpur 10 Metro Rail station and a Tk 30 rickshaw ride away lies this 56-year-old establishment. The shop's atmosphere and seating arrangement can be best described as "gloomy," so maybe do not go there dressed to your nines. Also, the store is always crowded, so be prepared to share tables with other diners.

I was told that the two "musts" I have to try are their chaaps and something called "brain chop." So, that's what we ordered, along with the beef sheekh kebabs, which were basically boti kebabs. I was slightly



disappointed, but regardless, I went in with an open mind.

Sorry friend, and whoever else recommended this place, but the kindest thing I can say is it's average. The chaaps

lack the spice kick, the addictive aroma, or the finely fried texture of the meat. And I already knew the boti kebab/sheekh kebab hybrid thing would not hold up, and it did not, so no surprises there. Even the unique brain chop did not hold up, according to my friend (Disclaimer: I don't eat offal).

Well, that "average" was not an experience I took the long trip to Mirpur for, but let's see if it's 2 for 2.

Generational Fryer: Kallu Kabab Ghor
Let's quickly dispel some misinformation

busy, they barely even registered my order.

In any case, I am sure you care more about the food than the owner's name, so let's get to that. Their menu almost completely consists of chaaps and offal, the latter being unavailable when we were there.

After an insanely long wait (35 minutes between finding a seat, and getting my order), the food was served, and there was an immediate problem. Both the chaaps were oily. And I mean oily enough to dribble out like a slowly leaking faucet. As for the taste, if you can brave through the sheer oiliness of the chaap, the chicken chaap is passable, but the beef chaap was not really up to the mark. I'd say it was a bit undercooked. As sacrilegious as it sounds, I gave up eating halfway, paid the bill, and left.

On the way home, I started to wonder whether something was wrong with me. For a sanity check, I ordered from the two decent outlets that are in my area, Kababwala and Kabab Station, because as it happened, I had guests visiting, so I just ordered extra for myself. After coming home and trying their kebabs and chaaps, I was left stunned, because A. There was nothing wrong with me, and B. These taste way better than what I went to Mirpur for.

I had hoped for a better outcome, but to summarise, no, Mirpur's bests do not pull ahead of Mohammadpur's best, and so, my prejudice remains intact. My memorable highlight for that night, it seems, was my first experience with the Metro Rail. Mirpur may have Metro Rails and Flyovers, but mind-bending kebabs and chaaps, it does not.

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