

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2025
FALGUN 20, 1431 BS

Star

LIFE

Style

PLUS

E-mail: lifestyleds@yahoo.com
64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. A publication of The Daily Star

Stories from the IFTAR TABLE

PHOTO: LS ARCHIVE/ SAZZAD IBNE SAYED



You deserve better

Introducing
**Salted
CaRAMEL**

Delight
in the sublime symphony of
Salted Caramel
goodness



Sip with delight: Creative iftar drinks to try at home

As the holy month begins to grace our lives, an array of dishes and beverages will start to adorn our tables. After a long day's fast, a rehydrating beverage can soothe the soul and refresh the mind. Powdered drink mixes in flavours such as mango and orange are a simple shortcut to refreshingly flavourful thirst-quenchers. With ISPI Instant Powder Drink, making cool beverages will be easy!

So, explore below some creative iftar drink ideas made with mango and orange-flavoured instant drink mixes, which you and your loved ones can enjoy, to make your Ramadan even more special!

ORANGE MINTY COOLER

Ingredients

3 tsp ISPI Orange
3 cups of water
A sprig of mint leaves
1 tsp honey
Ice cubes (as required)

Method

All that you need to do is mix three teaspoons of the orange drink mix into three cups of cold water each and stir until the powder is fully dissolved. Then, take some fresh mint leaves and crush them with either a spoon or by hand in a bowl. Once you ensure that there are enough mint liquids, toss the leaves and their juices into the mixed drinks. You can then pour one teaspoon of honey if you have a sweet tooth! Finally, garnish with ice and mint leaves.

That will be it! A colourful, cooling drink with an appealing homemade touch that is sure to enhance the

mood of your iftar table!

MANGO LASSI

Ingredients

6 tsp ISPI Mango
3 cups of sweet yoghurt
1½ cups of water
Ice cubes (as required)

Method

Blend six teaspoons of mango powdered drink mix with one-and-a-half cups of cold water first. Then, add three cups of sweet yoghurt in the blender and repeat the blending for two minutes. For a little more frost, toss in a handful of ice cubes, and blend until the mixture turns nice and smooth. Then, pour in a glass, decorate the top with diced mango slices, and enjoy.

You will have a lassi drink that is wonderfully creamy in texture and ideal for iftar, which will give you an amazingly indulgent feeling!

ORANGE MOJITO

Ingredients

3 tsp ISPI Orange

3 cups of water
1½ cups of carbonated water
1 tsp honey
1 lime
1 ginger
A sprig of mint leaves

Ice cubes (as required)

Method

To enjoy this orange mojito, add lime juice, mint leaves, and ginger at the bottom of your glasses and crush them together using a spoon or whisk. Once done, add a few cubes of ice to the glasses.

On another tumbler, put in three teaspoons of the orange drink mix and three cups of water, mixing them until the powder dissolves completely. Then, pour the liquid mix into the glasses halfway and fill the rest with club soda or carbonated water. Finally, decorate it with some mint leaves.

This will be a quick drink with the perfect medley of sweet and tart meant to refresh you after you break your fast!

MIXED FIZZ

Ingredients

½ tsp ISPI Orange
½ tsp ISPI Mango
¼ cup of water
2 cups of sparkling water
1 lime
Ice cubes (as required)

Method

To make it, you should take half a teaspoon of mango and orange powdered drink and mix it with a little water until the powders dissolve completely and form a pasty consistency. Then, pour in two cups of sparkling water and gently stir the mixture. Fill up your serving glasses with ice cubes, squeeze some lime into it, and transfer the juice. Give it the final stir and garnish with slices of mango and orange.

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy
Photo: Adban Rahman /
Collected



The All Time Ramadan shortcut you never knew you needed

As the sun goes down, the call to Maghrib prayers resounds through the air, and for that split second, nothing else matters but the first bite. The spirituality of iftar is significant but the satisfaction of breaking the fast with something familiar and warm also contributes to its sacredness. The mad dash through the kitchen before Iftar, though? Very little.

Cooking complex meals every day is a chore that even the most committed home cooks secretly dread due to juggling work, errands, and last-minute supermarket runs. Bread, an unassuming and underappreciated kitchen staple, steps in to rescue the situation. Not just any bread, mind you; it has to be fresh, tender, and adaptable enough to work its magic in your iftar spread.

During Ramadan, try All Time Bread for the first time if you have not tried it for anything more than a fast buttered toast. Just think about it: it's quick to make, can turn into anything from a savoury treat to a sweet treat, and is light yet full.

A SIMPLE IMPROVEMENT FOR YOUR IFTAR

Quick fixes that don't feel that way are what we're going to discuss. Shahi Tukra is a syrupy, golden treat that has been enjoyed



by Ramadan revellers for many years. The classic recipe calls for rabri cheese spread over slices of deep-fried bread soaked in aromatic sugar syrup. When time is of the essence, who has the luxury of deep-frying? Toasted All Time Bread works just as well as the original, and you won't miss the oil at all in this guilt-free alternative. All it takes is a few toppings, like crushed nuts and condensed milk, to make this dish taste like a throwback without the work.

SHAHI TUKRA

Ingredients

4 slices of All Time Bread
1 cup sugar
¼ cup water
1 cup milk
¾ cup evaporated milk
2½ teaspoons cardamom powder



An assortment of chopped nuts, such as almonds and pistachios
¼ cup clarified butter

Method

Sauté the bread slices in ghee or butter until they get brown and crisp. Simply boil some water with sugar in a saucepan to make sugar syrup. Cook, covered, over low heat for 5 minutes. Simmer the cardamom powder, condensed milk, and milk in a separate saucepan over low heat until the mixture slightly thickens. Place the toasted bread on a serving dish after a brief dip in the sugar syrup. After the milk mixture has warmed, pour it over the toast and top with chopped nuts. Just let it sit a few minutes to sit before serving to let the flavours combine.

Bread pizza, the crowd-pleaser, comes up next. A game-changer for when you're in

need and craving something easy to whip up in a flash or for when unannounced visitors show up right before iftar. Put some oregano, cheese, leftover chicken, tomato sauce, and bread on a baking sheet. How did things turn out? Something beautiful that didn't necessitate nearly as much work as setting the table.

BREAD PIZZA

Ingredients

4 slices All Time Bread
¼ cup sauce, either tomato or pizza
¼ cup shredded chicken, or lean meat of your choosing
½ cup shredded cheese, preferably mozzarella or cheddar
1 tbsp oregano
½ tsp chilli flakes, optional

Method

Bring a covered pan to a temperature of 180°C (350°F) or preheat the oven. Make sure that every slice of bread is coated with tomato sauce. Pile on the shredded chicken or whatever protein you like most. Top with a liberal amount of cheese, then top with oregano and chilli flakes. To melt the cheese, bake for five to seven minutes, or cook covered over low heat. Warm it up and savour the cheesy deliciousness.

Magic happens in bread pudding for people who prefer comfort food. After a long day of fasting, nothing beats a warm, custardy dessert made with bread and a few common ingredients like eggs, milk, sugar, and a pinch of cinnamon.

BREAD PUDDING

Ingredients

4-5 pieces of All Time Bread
2/3 cup of milk

3 eggs
¼ cup sugar
1 tsp vanilla essence
3/8 tsp cinnamon powder
For garnish, you can add chopped nuts or a handful of raisins
Spreadable butter

Method

Start by greasing a baking dish with butter and preheating the oven to 180°C (350°F). Slice the bread into little bits and distribute them equally over the plate. In a bowl, whisk together the milk, cinnamon, sugar, eggs, and vanilla essence. The bread should be soaked before the sauce is poured over it. Allow it to sit for a while so it can absorb. Chopped nuts or raisins make a textural topping. Toast for 30–35 minutes, or until browned and firm. Warm it up and top it with honey or condensed milk, if you like.

Even if we look forward to a lavish Iftar feast every evening, life usually has other ideas. The spread will range from an elaborate one day to a more humble one the next, but it will always taste like home. It makes no difference whether you have a dependable option in your kitchen, nevertheless.

Let us, then, during Ramadan, appreciate the grace of minimalism. Let's reduce the mayhem without sacrificing taste. Above all else, let us not forget that the most delicious meals are often the ones that require the least amount of effort to prepare.

What if, however, a little piece of All Time Bread serves as the foundation for that meal? Even better!

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Courtesy/ Collected





EFFORTLESS RAMADAN FEASTS

Quick and delicious recipes

Playing chef while maintaining composure in the kitchen? Who said it couldn't be done? During the hectic month of Ramadan, Radhuni has a variety of mixes that are revolutionising the way home cooks do their magic.

Imagine this: Radhuni Haleem Mix makes it easy to enjoy a sumptuous delicacy or a tantalising chicken curry for iftar. Finally, picture yourself making a colourful fruit custard or a lovely kheer with ingredients that offer all the flavour without the effort.

With Radhuni's custard and haleem mixes as your culinary navigators, you can whip up decadent spreads that satisfy your hunger and pay homage to the season without putting in a lot of time in the kitchen. For those occasions when you're hankering for something quick, nutritious, and simple, a bowl of Chopsticks Instant Noodles is also the perfect quick remedy.

Apart from the health and budgetary advantages, Ramadan home cooking offers a great chance to spend quality time with loved ones over delicious and basic cuisine with the help of Radhuni. How about we toast simplicity with a spoon? For a colourful and delicious Ramadan, try these recipes!

RADHUNI HALEEM MIX RECIPE

(6-8 persons)

Ingredients

300g mutton (with or without bone)
9 tbsp (135ml) edible oil
1 pack Radhuni Haleem Mix



½ cup (250ml sized cup) chopped onions
Green chilli, as required
Ginger
Coriander leaves
Cucumber
Lemon

Method

Soak the beans and grains of Radhuni Haleem Mix. Stir for 15 minutes after adding 2 cups (250 mL) of hot water. Heat the edible oil in a large saucepan and cook the chopped onions until they turn golden. Two-thirds of the fried onions should be picked up.

On top of the pieces of meat, sprinkle the Radhuni Haleem Mix spice powder. Add the meat and stir. Simmer for 3 to 4 minutes. Cook, adding water as necessary until the meat is done.

Put the soaked grains and pulses in a big pot; add water to cover; cook, stirring regularly, until boiling. Maintaining constant stirring over low heat with a wooden spoon can assist the mixture to simmer; stir until boiling.

Boil the ingredients and simmer until all the water has evaporated for a richer gravy. Make any required salt adjustments based on taste. Garnish with sliced ginger, lemon juice, fried onions, chopped cucumber chips, green chillies, and coriander leaves and serve hot.



CHOLA BHUNA

Ingredients

2 cups black chana (chickpeas; soaked overnight)
1 tbsp Radhuni Shaaadmishali Seasoning Mix
1 medium onion (finely sliced)
1 tbsp garlic paste
1 tbsp ginger paste
2 green chillies (slit in half)
1 tsp cumin seeds
½ tsp turmeric powder
½ tsp red chilli powder (adjust to taste)
2 tbsp oil
½ cup water
Salt to taste
Fresh coriander leaves (chopped, for garnish)
Lemon wedges (for serving)

Method

Once soaked, drain the black chana and boil it in water to soften it without making it mushy. After straining, set aside.

Put the cumin seeds into a pan with some hot oil. Permit them to wheeze. Sauté the chopped onions until they turn a golden brown colour. While cooking, stir in the ginger and garlic paste and cook until aromatic.

Add the Radhuni Shaaadmishali Seasoning Mix, turmeric powder, and red chilli powder. Coat the onions thoroughly with the fragrant mixture by stirring them. Make sure the boiling chickpeas absorb the spices by adding them and mixing well.

Once the flavours have blended, add the water and cook for 5 to 7 minutes. For added heat, toss in green chillies. Adjust the salt according to your taste. Serve immediately with lemon wedges and fresh coriander leaves for garnish.



SESAME SHRIMP NOODLES

Ingredients

2 tbsp oil
½ cup shrimp (washed and drained)
Salt to taste
A pinch of red chilli powder
1 egg
2 onions (chopped)
2 green chillies (chopped)
1 cup tomatoes (chopped)
3 packets of Chopstick Instant Noodles (Masala Delight, Deshi Masala, or Yummy Masala)
1 tbsp sesame seeds (for garnish)

Method

Thoroughly rinse and pat dry the prawns. Combine the turmeric powder and a teaspoon of salt and marinate. Lightly sauté the prawns in oil until they get a golden brown colour. Remove from the heat. Lightly scramble the egg and cook it in the same pan with a touch of salt. Sauté the chopped onions and green chillies until they soften in the pan.

Combine the Chopstick Noodles masala with the chopped tomatoes and stir thoroughly. Blend everything after coating the quick noodles evenly with the spices. After the prawns are cooked, mix them with the scrambled egg. Add a few more minutes of frying time for a little crunchiness. Top with sesame seeds and enjoy while still hot.



DOI BORA

Ingredients

For the bora (lentil balls) —
1 cup lentils (urad dal or mung dal; soaked overnight)
½ tsp salt
½ tsp cumin seeds
1 green chilli (finely chopped)
Oil for deep frying

For the yoghurt mixture —
2 cups thick yoghurt
½ cup cold water
½ tsp sugar
½ tsp salt
½ tsp Radhuni Chaat Masala

For garnishing

1 tbsp Radhuni Chaat Masala
½ tsp red chilli powder
½ tsp roasted cumin powder
Chopped fresh coriander
Tamarind chutney (optional)

Method

Bora (lentil balls) are the first ingredient to prepare. After the

lentils have soaked, drain them and blend them into a paste with some water. Season with salt and stir in the cumin seeds and chopped green chillies. Drop spoonfuls



of the mixture into oil, while it heats in a pan. Fry until brown and crisp, over medium heat. To

make them soft, soak the lentil balls in a basin of hot water for ten minutes.

In the second step, you make the yoghurt combination. Whisk together the yoghurt, chilly water, sugar, salt, and half a teaspoon of Radhuni Chaat Masala in a mixing bowl. Whip until very light and fluffy.

The next step is to put the doi bora. Before adding the balls to the yoghurt mixture, press out any excess water using your fingers. Ten to fifteen minutes is the very minimum to let them soak in the taste.

Prior to serving, garnish with Radhuni Chaat Masala, red chilli powder, and roasted cumin powder. To garnish, mince some coriander and, if preferred, drizzle with tamarind chutney. For a delightfully acidic and expertly spiced iftar treat, serve cold.



Star **LIFE** Style PLUS

FRUIT CUSTARD

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 guarantee the custard is lump free, mix the Radhuni Custard powder with water until a smooth consistency is obtained. Boil the milk and sugar in a pot set over medium heat. While continuously stirring, gradually add the Radhuni Custard powder mixture to the boiling liquid to prevent lumps. Reduce heat to low and continue cooking.

Continuous whisking will cause the custard to coagulate and integrate all of the ingredients. It will thicken in the fridge, so take it off the heat and let it settle. Mix the chopped fruit, almonds, and raisins after they have cooled to room temperature. Add ground nuts and raisins as a garnish just before serving.

By K Tanzeel Zaman

Photo: Courtesy/ Collected



RADHUNI CHICKEN MASALA RECIPE

Ingredients

1 kg chicken (cut into medium-sized pieces)
 2 tbsp Radhuni Chicken Masala Mix
 2 tbsp yoghurt
 2 onions (finely sliced)
 2 tomatoes (chopped)
 ½ cup oil
 2-3 green chillies (optional, for extra spice)
 ½ cup water (adjust as needed)
 Salt to taste
 Fresh coriander (chopped, for garnish)

Method

Combine the chicken with Radhuni Chicken Masala mix, yoghurt, ginger paste, garlic paste, and mix. Set aside for at least 15 to 20 minutes for the spices to fully absorb. Brown the sliced onions in a pan over medium heat. Grind or sauté the chopped tomatoes until they fall apart.

Add the marinated chicken and stir well. Cover and simmer over medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes to allow the spices to come together. Without swirling too much, add water until the gravy reaches the desired consistency.

Add some green chillies to make it spicier. Simmer for another 5 to 10 minutes to get a rich gravy and tender chicken. Taste and adjust the salt, if necessary. Garnish with chopped coriander and serve hot with simple rice, naan, or paratha.



Savouring Sweet Moments: Embracing a Healthier Ramadan with Getfit

We have all been there. The anticipation of the first iftar with the loved ones through sharing the food made with love and care. The aroma of homemade dishes and sweets fills the air from houses to entire neighbourhoods and such phenomena make a subtle change in everyone's heart. When loved ones gather to share stories over a delectable feast during the traditional iftar celebrations, many opt for healthier alternatives to their favourite delights.

The extra calories from sugary delights could be an issue for anyone, whether they are a young, health-conscious person or someone limiting their sugar intake. Getfit, a calorie-free sweetener, offers a reasonable but efficient alternative. In this manner, you can enjoy all the delicious Ramadan delicacies without compromising your



commitment to a healthy lifestyle.

A classic iftar spread usually consists of any or all of the desserts mentioned ahead: kheer, jilapi with malai, lemonade, and many more. These foods bring back pleasant feelings of home and childhood because of their long history of preparation. More and more individuals are adding Getfit to these dishes as they become more conscious of their fitness. This product is perfect for dessert lovers and people watching their sugar as its mild, sucralose-based mix gives you the sweetness you crave without the added calories.

This deliberate selection has an understated allure. In a city where calorie counting is paramount, Getfit provides a balance that is evocative of our cherished culinary traditions. Traditionally, many of our beloved recipes relied on the natural balance of flavours rather than the current fixation on calorie control when they were perfected. Getfit now assists in re-establishing that harmony by fusing the best of traditional practices with cutting-edge nutritional research.

The adaptability of Getfit is one of its main selling points. Any traditional dish calls for it, whether it's a dash in tea, a sprinkle over kheer, or a combination into a refreshing drink of lassi. You may savour every bite without any unseen sacrifices thanks to its subtle yet revolutionary incorporation into regular cooking.

Getfit subtly promotes a lifestyle where health and indulgence may coexist for people who lead active lives or need to carefully regulate their sugar intake.

During this Ramadan, Getfit is leaving its mark — not by ostentatious displays of support, but through its subtle, understated efforts. This is not an attack on the joy of our festivities; rather, it is an invitation to be



more considerate. When you choose Getfit, you may enjoy all of your favourite iftar sweets without sacrificing any of the health benefits they provide.

Making a thoughtful, little adjustment like this is incredibly honest. In the midst of all the commotion of modern life, it's a welcome respite to the basics. Getfit turns every bite of dessert into a little reminder that you can still achieve your

health objectives while enjoying life's little pleasures. This understated innovation is touching the lives of many in Dhaka and beyond as it allows people to maintain their exercise routines and energy levels even during this indulgent season.

Take a moment to reflect on the subtle change that Getfit embodies while you enjoy your iftar meal this Ramadan. It provides a healthy approach, savouring the

mouth-watering flavours of our traditional cuisine. Every spoonful of firni and sip of a refreshing beverage holds the promise of sweetness without compromise — a modest, unassuming modification that significantly enhances our enjoyment of our beloved traditions.

By K Tanzeel Zaman
Photo: Courtesy / Collected

Ramadan is here and we find ourselves planning sehri and iftar much more elaborate than our usual meals. For us, iftar is often a lavish spread, rich in flavours and tradition. However, after a long day of fasting, it is essential to ensure that the body gets the right balance of nutrients without overwhelming your digestive system.



A healthier take on the Bangladeshi IFTAR SPREAD

As tempting as it may be to dive into a spread of rich and flavourful dishes after a long day of fasting, it is important to ease into iftar gradually. Eating too much too quickly can lead to a sudden spike in blood sugar, heart rate, and blood pressure, making one feel sluggish or even dizzy. A slow and mindful approach, starting with light foods before moving on to heavier dishes, helps the body adjust smoothly.

Breaking the fast with a natural drink is always a good idea, as it helps rehydrate and replenish lost electrolytes. Instead of store-bought juices filled with added

sugar, fresh fruit-based options work best. A glass of chilled watermelon juice, naturally sweet and hydrating, is an instant refresher. Aam panna, made with raw mango, offers a tangy kick while providing essential vitamins. Lemon sherbet with a hint of honey or dates blended into milk creates a smooth and nourishing drink. These alternatives provide natural sweetness, keeping the blood sugar stable without the crash that often follows processed sugars.

A simple date and nut mix offers a boost of energy, while a bowl of chilled fruit, perhaps with a drizzle of honey or a sprinkle of chaat masala, adds a refreshing touch.

Yoghurt-based desserts, such as a light mango lassi or a spoonful of homemade mishti doi, strike the perfect balance between taste and health.

No iftar table in Bangladesh feels complete without chhola or chickpeas, and fortunately, this staple is also an excellent source of protein and complex carbohydrates. Mixed with cucumbers, tomatoes, green chillies and a squeeze of lemon, it turns into a flavourful salad that is refreshing, filling, and relatively low-fat. Other light salads can include sprouted moong dal tossed with coriander and a touch of mustard oil, or a combination of seasonal vegetables with curd dressing. These not only aid digestion but also offer fibre, which keeps the stomach full for longer.

Carbohydrates are crucial after fasting. Rice, being a staple in Bangladeshi households, can be included in various ways. A small serving of lightly spiced khichuri offers both protein and warmth. A bowl of pulao with vegetables or even plain rice paired with a light curry works well for those who prefer traditional flavours.

Paratha served with a side of meat curry, egg curry or even simple curd raita, makes for an immensely satisfying yet balanced meal. Stuff with egg fry and salad, parathas make the best of refreshing rolls.

Snacks are an inevitable part of iftar, but make sure the oil is safe and the food is without excessive grease. A wholesome iftar does not mean giving up on tradition — it simply means making small changes that allow the body to recover and stay energised throughout Ramadan.

By Nusrath Jahan
Photo: Collected

SAY NO TO FAT NOT THE PARATHA

INTRODUCING KAZI FARMS KITCHEN **LOW FAT PARATHA**

LOW FAT

SOFT

LAYERED



Prime Bank

LIMITLESS JOURNEY WORRY-FREE BANKING

Life becomes easier both at home and abroad because Prime Bank account holders now have access to **Multi-Currency Debit Card** facility. Enjoy seamless and secure transactions worldwide.

-  Seamless Transactions at Home & Abroad
-  Cashless Convenience: Pay bills and essentials hassle-free
-  Global Access: Withdraw from Mastercard ATMs worldwide
-  International Payments: Use for POS and e-commerce abroad
-  Secure Transactions: Contactless & EMV chip-enabled protection
-  Exclusive Discounts: Enjoy year-round shopping deals

Visit your nearest Prime Bank branch today to get your **Multi-Currency Debit Card**

*Conditions apply

24/7 Helpline
16218
primebank.com.bd



#MUSING

THE GREAT JILAPI DEBATE

Does it belong in “muri makhano”?

Ramadan in Bangladesh is a sensory overload. The call to prayer, the crackle of piyaju frying in bubbling oil, the vendor aggressively shouting “Bhai, gorom jilapi!” — it all comes together in glorious, chaotic harmony. And then there’s muri makhano, the unassuming iftar staple that quietly exists in the background, letting the big shots like alur chop and beguni bask in the limelight. However, within its humble bowl lies a brewing storm, an age-old debate whispered across dining tables and Facebook comment sections: Does jilapi belong in muri makhano?

A bite of context: The origins and the sidekicks

Muri (puffed rice) has been around for centuries, its light and airy form making it an easily digestible, no-fuss snack. In the iftar lineup, it usually mingles with mustard oil, onions, green chillies, a bit of salt, and occasionally some chhola. But the real wildcard? The piece of jilapi some people unapologetically crumble into the mix.

Now, jilapi itself is a relic of the Mughal era, brought to the subcontinent by Persian traders who loved their deep-fried sweets as much as we do. Meanwhile, piyaju and beguni? Straight from the streets of Bengal, where deep-frying anything has long been considered a legitimate sport.

Alur chop has its roots in Portuguese-influenced Indian cuisine (yes, the same Portuguese that gave us vindaloo and bandel cheese). But none of these items spark controversy quite like the jilapi-in-muri combo.

The lovers: “Sweet and savoury is the best combo!”

Shahin is a university student with an addiction to jilapi that borders on



concerning.

“People dip French fries in ice cream, okay? Why can’t I put a jilapi in my muri? It’s called innovation. Also, what do these haters even know about taste? Half of them think tomato sauce is a fine dining condiment.”

His logic? Contrast makes everything better. The crispy puffed rice, the sharpness of mustard oil, the gentle burn of green chillies — all of it needs a counterbalance. And what better than a sticky, sugary jilapi that melts into the mix like a guilty pleasure? He’s got a point — sweet and savoury pairings work. Think salted caramel. Think cheese and honey. Even our beloved doi-mishti thrives on this very principle.

Mukta, a stay-at-home mum with an iftar spread bigger than your monthly grocery list, agrees.

“I spend hours in the kitchen making everything from scratch, and now you’re telling me I need a separate plate for jilapi? No thanks, it’s going in the muri. Also, who made these so-called ‘rules’ anyway? The muri makhano police?”

Her argument? Convenience. There’s already so much to do — so many plates to fill, so many fried things to monitor. Why not simplify life by just tossing that jilapi into the muri and calling it a day?

The haters: “Don’t ruin a classic!”

On the other side, you have Shefali, a service holder who barely makes it home before iftar and doesn’t have the time (or patience) for jilapi-related experiments.

“Muri makhano is supposed to be light. Jilapi is like a sugar bomb. Mixing them is just chaos on the taste buds. If I wanted an

existential crisis with my iftar, I’d just check my bank balance.”

And she has science on her side. The crispy nature of muri relies on staying dry — throwing in something sticky turns the whole thing into a soggy mess within minutes. It’s like putting biscuits in tea for too long; the mushiness is inevitable and borderline tragic.

Then there’s Kashem Dadu, a grandfather of two and a strict traditionalist.

“In my day, muri makhano had nothing but muri, salt, onion, and mustard oil. This new generation has lost its way. What’s next? Adding chocolate syrup? Calling jhalmuri ‘deconstructed puffed rice’ and selling it for 500 taka?”

For him, it’s a matter of principle. The classic muri makhano has survived decades without jilapi — why start now? To him, it’s as absurd as pouring sherbet over biryani. Some things just aren’t meant to mix.

So, does jilapi belong in muri-mix?

The answer is both yes and no because, at the end of the day, food is personal. What makes one person’s iftar plate perfect might be another person’s nightmare. Maybe you are the type who loves the chaotic contrast of sugary-salty flavours, or maybe you prefer keeping things simple and traditional. Either way, we can all agree that Ramadan is as much about food as it is about community and whether you’re pro-jilapi or anti-jilapi, there’s a seat at the iftar table for everyone.

Just, you know, maybe don’t put jilapi in *someone else’s* muri makhano without asking first. Otherwise, prepare for a food fight!

By K Tanzeel Zaman

Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed