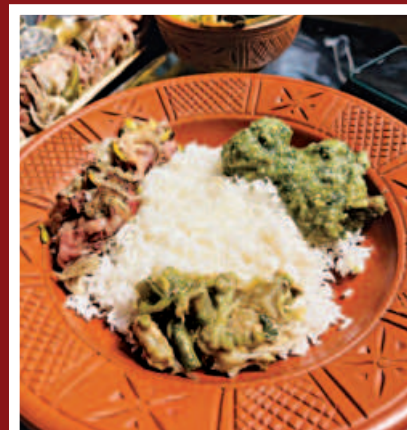


THE TASTE OF BELONGING

Regional cuisines and where to find them in Dhaka



The food scene in the city is as diverse as its people and just as expressive. And by expressive, I mean deeply personal. Food here is not just something we eat — it's something we are! In Dhaka, you don't need to scale hills or cross rivers to taste the country's rich regional delicacies. You just need to be hungry. Why? Because, no matter where you are from, there's probably a corner that smells of your childhood.

This is the metropolis's secret superpower. For a city that's relentlessly fast, loud, and crowded enough to make anyone consider monastic life, it has a surprisingly tender culinary soul. It doesn't just feed you — it reminds you who you are.

Northern Nostalgia: Kalai Ruti

This humble black gram flour (mashkalai-er-aata) flatbread from

Chapainawabganj — usually served with mashed aubergine, garlic chutney, or spicy beef — is not exactly standard restaurant fare. Kalai ruti is rustic, it's intense, and it unapologetically smells like the northern districts. And yet, hidden among the glittering restaurant strips of Dhaka, you will find little joints that specialise in it —

places that know how one bite can teleport a homesick migrant right back to their village rooftop.

At "Kalai Rutir Adda" in Khilgaon, owner Rabiul Islam tells us the same with a smile, "As a business major student, I always knew I wanted to start something — I just didn't know what. Then came 2020. The world hit pause. Travel stopped,

and suddenly, I found myself craving kalai ruti. I'm from Rajshahi — and that taste, that warmth, it's part of who we are.

"Ask anyone from Rajshahi, Dinajpur, or back home — they'll say the same. So, I started making it here, just for a bite of nostalgia. That's how "Kalai Rutir Adda" came to life — from a craving, turned comfort, turned calling."

