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E-mail: lifestyleds@yahoo.com
64-65 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215. A p



THE RHYTHM
of **the muse**

PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL • MODEL: MUBASHSHIRA KAMAL ERA • MAKEUP: NUR AZMAIN

#FYI

PROTECTING ELDERS FROM HEATWAVES

Practical cooling solutions



The summer heatwave comes with people drinking water and wearing lighter clothes. For the elderly, however, this is rarely sufficient. Their bodies can have difficulties adjusting to heat, and in more grave cases, present serious health hazards.

If you are worried about protecting your elderly loved ones from the scorching heat that is sweeping over the country, take the necessary steps towards better health now.

COOLING THROUGH REFRIGERATED TOWELS AND SPONGE BATHS

Keeping a towel in the fridge might work wonders. When placed over the shoulders or legs, it cools the skin gently and safely without leaving the person feeling jarringly chilled by ice or freezing packs. In fact,

cooling is not just about AC or fans. Wet cloths can be applied to the different pulse points around the body, including the neck, the wrists, or behind the knees, to help reduce core body temperature.

While full showers sound like heaven in summer, sponge baths with lukewarm water and a soft cloth work best for the elderly. It soaks their body gently, and is

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#MUSING

A tea lover in a city that now loves coffee



My love for tea and anything related to it is boundless, and this new coffee-dominant café culture is surely driving me crazier than my usual self.



Since that history lesson on the Boston Tea Party in junior school till date, the rolling tea gardens with picture-perfect bungalows, the tea houses, the history and politics of tea, the seeping of rolled tea leaves and waiting for it to unfurl in a teapot... Oh yes! Tea kettles and fancy infusers, strainers, the spell-binding tea ceremonies... the list of favourites can go on.

Traditionally, tea has celebrated culture, heritage, and health. Ever since a leaf from *Camellia sinensis*, an evergreen shrub, fell on the Chinese emperor Shen Nung's pot of boiling water and infused it with a refreshing flavour, the business of this cured leaves took its first step.

The drink was introduced here by the British, and we are (or were!) a nation of tea drinkers with a long history associated with the beverage, but all of that feels increasingly distant in a city that's turning its back on its chai roots. I simply cannot wrap my head around the fact that Dhaka now widely serves coffee. The only thing I like about the beverage is the smell of burnt notes while brewing it, and a big full stop after that.

I loathe the fact that we, Dhakaites, now meet only for coffee. We will see men and women carrying a coffee mug to meetings and a to-go coffee cup while driving. From slurping hot, milk tea before getting into the office, our office culture has been upgraded, together with the choice of caffeine that would keep us alert.

When you go to any cafe in Dhaka, the elaborate menu of coffee and coffee-based



drinks is spot on, and at the far end of the menu, they have in offer two or three kinds of imported tea options. That, too, is served in lukewarm water with the teabag on the side — no chance of properly allowing the tea to diffuse. Teabags, by the way, are an insult to tea people; it is made from leftover tea dust from blends that have little flavour.

As a drink, tea still connects people in surprising ways. I once met a Latvian woman who travels the world in search of stories, introduces herself as a freelance tea farmer, a storyteller, and an explorer. China, Japan, Korea, and Sri Lanka — she moves from country to country to understand this invigorating drink ritual that stems from the gardens to a cup.

After having met her in Dhaka, I think in the next life, I want to be a Buddhist monk living in a monastery atop a lush rolling tea garden. But a loved one said, at best, I can be a tea worker plucking tea leaves in Bangladesh. I am game for that life too.

As for my current existence, the blueprint

of an alfresco teashop is ready, and I see myself running this tea place.

The stall is placed slightly off a thicket of tall rain trees with their trunks naturally draped in wild drooping orchids, emerald green fern foliage, and lush undergrowth. There is an improvised swing, made from thrown-away wooden planks, hung down by ropes from the tree branches. The place is surrounded by ochre, sandstone walls and has an informal seating arrangement with chairs and large floor cushions in whites, off-whites, and golden hues.

Tea is served in mixed-matched cups with a dainty design in bright, happy colours, homemade mulberry jam tea sandwiches, dark chocolate pastries, savoury bites. A merry tune of old songs plays on the radio, and the place is filled with happy, chatty customers.

My dream continues... the tea bar will have a tea-tasting corner, a shop selling assorted artisan tea varieties, a front desk arranging visits to tea gardens or daytrips to tea auctions, even arranging masterclasses for making gourmet tea and tea snacks.

Tea Party, the name of this tea stall of my dreams, will be easy going, brewing only happiness and, of course, tea. Alas! This fantasy might never come true, but there is no tax in dreaming about one, right?

In a city that has forgotten its tea tales, I'll keep brewing mine.

By Raffat Binte Rashid
Photo: LS Archive/ Sazzad Ibne Sayed

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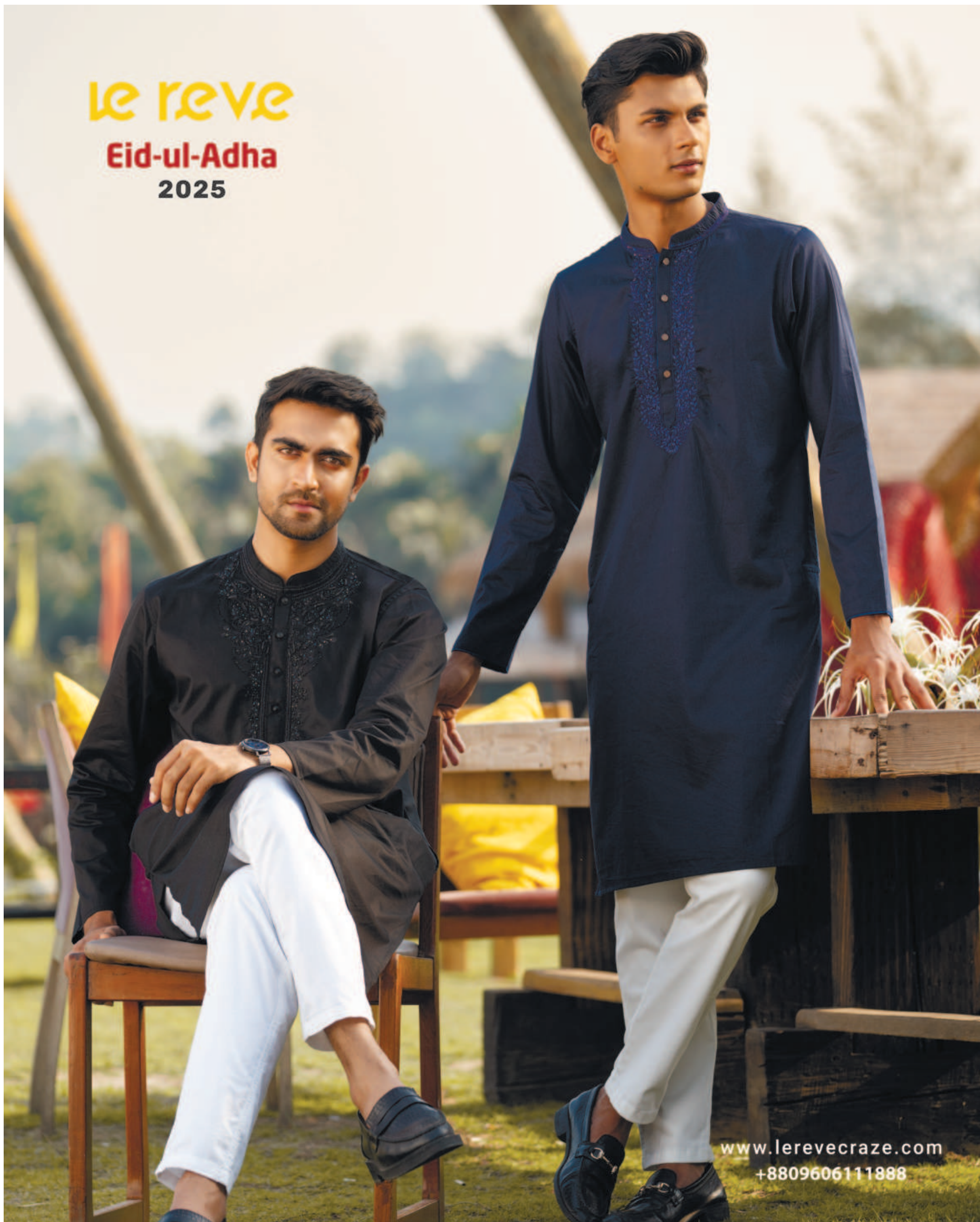


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Eid-ul-Azha feasting, made effortless



Eid-ul-Azha is more than just qurbani — it's about gathering around warm plates, family chatter, and that unmistakable aroma wafting from the kitchen. Whether you are attempting your first beef curry or planning an elaborate biryani feast for the extended family, Radhuni Ready Mix Masala has got your back. From the rich, slow-cooked depth of mejbani beef curry and kala bhuna to creamy korma, comfort-driven khichuri, festive biryani, and even late-night falooda or quick kababs — each mix is crafted to deliver an authentic taste without the hassle.

No extra spices, no guesswork — just follow the pack instructions and let Radhuni do the heavy lifting. It's the one-stop solution for home cooks of all levels, from first-timers to seasoned pros. This Eid, focus less on measuring and more on the moments that matter.

MEJBANI BEEF CURRY

The highlight of anyone's Eid meal may be biryani, but there's no denying the comforting scent of Chittagong's signature dish — mejbani beef curry — simmering away in the background. With **Radhuni Ready Mix Mejbani Beef Curry Masala**, you will not have to go on a wild goose chase for spices to achieve that original taste.

Ingredients

- 1 kg beef (cut into chunks)
- A whole pack of **Radhuni Ready Mix Mejbani Beef Curry Masala**
- 1 tbsp mustard oil
- 1 large onion (sliced)
- 2-3 dried red chillies
- Salt to taste



- ½ cup yoghurt
- ½ cup oil
- Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander (for garnish)
- Fried onions (for garnish)

Method

Heat mustard oil in a deep pan. Fry the sliced onions until golden brown and crispy. Remove half for garnishing later. Mix in **Radhuni Ready Mix Kala Bhuna Masala**, and dried red chillies. Fry the spices well. Add beef chunks and sear on high heat until browned. Add the yoghurt and stir thoroughly to coat the meat. Cook covered over low heat, stir often and add water as needed, for two to three hours. Cook until the meat is caramelised and the oil separates from the sauce. Present hot alongside paratha or plain rice; adjust salt to taste; then garnish with fried onions and fresh coriander.



a celebratory dish that requires no guesswork.

Ingredients

- 1 kg meat (chicken/beef)
- 30g (1 packet) **Radhuni Ready Mix Korma Masala**
- ½ cup sour yoghurt
- 3 tbsp onion paste
- 2 cups chopped onions
- Paste of 15 almonds
- ⅓ cup raisin paste
- 3 tbsp ghee
- 5-6 pcs green chillies
- 6 tbsp powdered milk
- 8 tbsp edible oil
- Salt, as required

Method

Marinate meat with Radhuni Ready Mix Korma Masala, yoghurt, onion paste, almond paste, raisin paste, 1 tbsp ghee and salt. Let it rest for an hour. Dissolve powdered milk in 2 cups water and boil until reduced to 1 cup. Fry onions until crisp, then set aside. In the same oil, add 2 tbsp ghee and the marinated meat along with half the fried onions. Sauté briefly. Add ½ cup water and cook till the meat is tender. Stir in the thickened milk and green chillies. Simmer for 5 minutes. Garnish with remaining fried onions. Serve with polao or paratha.



BEEF CURRY MASALA

(Serves 6-7 people)

A no-fuss classic that hits the spot every time. Rich, aromatic, and full of flavour, this beef curry is your comfort food in a pot, made effortlessly with **Radhuni Ready Mix Beef Curry Masala**.

Ingredients

- 1 kg beef
- 1½ cup chopped onions
- Salt, as required
- 8 tbsp or 120 ml edible oil
- 25g or 12 tsp **Radhuni Ready Mix Beef Curry Masala**

Method

Cut beef into medium chunks and rinse thoroughly. Drain excess water. Heat oil in a heavy pan and fry onions till lightly

golden. Add ½ cup water, **Radhuni Ready Mix Beef Curry Masala**, and salt. Sauté the mixture on medium flame until the oil begins to separate. Add beef pieces and continue cooking for 10-15 minutes. Pour in water as needed, bring to a boil, and cover. Simmer until the meat is tender and the curry reaches your desired thickness. Serve piping hot with rice.

KORMA MASALA

(Serves 5-6 people)

A creamy, regal dish with rich undertones of almond and raisin paste. With **Radhuni Ready Mix Korma Masala**, you get



Method

Heat mustard oil and sauté onions until golden. Toss in **Radhuni Ready Mix Mejbani Beef Curry Masala**, beef chunks, turmeric, and salt. Stir well. Add enough water to cover the meat and let it slow-cook for 2-3 hours. Serve with plain rice and a wedge of lemon.

KALA BHUNA

A dish so legendary that every Bangladeshi festival menu fights for a spot and **Radhuni Ready Mix Kala Bhuna Masala** makes recreating this classic at home a breeze. With

its rich, dark gravy, and deeply caramelised beef, kala bhuna is a slow-cooked masterpiece that pairs beautifully with paratha, naan, or plain rice.

Ingredients

- 1 kg beef (cut into medium chunks)
- A whole pack of **Radhuni Ready Mix Kala Bhuna Masala**
- 1 tbsp mustard oil
- 1 onion (thinly sliced)
- ½ tsp **Radhuni red chilli powder** (adjust to taste)
- 2-3 dried red chillies

KHICHURI MASALA

On a rainy day or at a festive table, khichuri always comforts. **Radhuni Khichuri Masala** makes sure you get that homely flavour without overthinking the spice mix.

Ingredients

2 cups rice
1 cup fried moong dal (yellow lentils)
1 packet (40g) **Radhuni Ready Mix Khichuri Masala**
1 cup chopped onions
8 tbsp mustard oil



10-12 pcs green chillies
6 cups hot water

Method

Soak rice and lentils together for 20-25 minutes, then drain. In a pot, heat mustard oil and sauté onions till light golden. Add rice and lentils and stir for a few minutes. Mix in hot water and **Radhuni Ready Mix Khichuri Masala**. Cook on high heat till water reduces, then top with green chillies. Cover and simmer on low for 15-20 minutes. Drizzle remaining mustard oil or ghee before serving. No additional salt is needed.

RADHUNI FALOODA – MANGO BLISS IN A GLASS!

After all the spices and meats, what better way to wind down than with something creamy, chilled, and mango-filled? **Radhuni Falooda Mix - Mango Flavour** is your go-to dessert for Eid evenings or summer

nights.

Ingredients

1 packet **Radhuni Falooda Mix (Mango Flavour)**
500ml chilled milk
2 tbsp (optional) sugar
½ cup soaked chia seeds
½ cup cooked vermicelli (optional)
1 scoop vanilla or mango ice cream
1 tbsp chopped nuts (almonds and pistachios)
½ cup diced mango (optional)

Method

Mix the falooda powder with chilled milk until fully dissolved. Add sugar to taste. Mix in chia seeds and cooked vermicelli. Chill in the fridge for 15-20 minutes. Serve in glasses with a scoop of ice cream, nuts, and mango chunks on top. Serve immediately.

By K Tanzeel Zaman



BIRYANI MASALA

Nothing spells celebration like a warm, fragrant biryani layered with perfectly cooked meat and spiced rice. **Radhuni Ready Mix Biryani Masala** takes out the guesswork and puts the flavour in.

Ingredients

1 kg meat (beef/mutton/chicken)
500g aromatic rice
1 packet **Radhuni Ready Mix Biryani Masala**
1 cup chopped onions
16 tbsp edible oil
10-12 pcs green chillies
½ kg potatoes
½ cup sour yoghurt
2 cups milk
2 tbsp ghee
1 tsp sugar
20 pcs pistachio nuts
¼ cup raisins
2 tsp rose water
7-8 pcs plums
Cucumber and lemon, for garnish
Salt, as required

Method

Fry onions in 10 tbsp oil till golden; cool and mix sugar with a third of them. In a separate pan, fry meat with yoghurt, 1 cup milk, **Radhuni Ready Mix Biryani Masala**, salt, and remaining onions for 10-15 minutes. Add water and cook till meat forms a thick gravy. Fry

potatoes separately. Sauté rice in oil, then cook with 1 cup milk, 1 litre water, and salt. When dry, layer rice with meat, potatoes, chillies, nuts, raisins, plums, rose water, and ghee. Seal and cook on low for 25-30 minutes, stirring gently twice during cooking.

KABAB MASALA

A protein-packed snack with deep, robust flavours. Perfect for Eid or weekend treats, **Radhuni Ready Mix Kabab Masala** lets you skip the spice grind and get straight to frying.

Ingredients

500g minced meat (chicken/mutton/beef)
100g chickpeas
2 tsp ginger paste
1 tbsp garlic paste
1 cup chopped onions
2 pcs eggs
12g or 4½ tsp **Radhuni Ready Mix Kabab Masala**
4 cups water
Soybean oil and salt, as required
Cucumber, as required

Method

Mix minced meat, soaked chickpeas, onions, ginger, garlic, **Radhuni Ready Mix Kabab Masala**, oil, and salt. Add water and boil the mixture on medium heat till the water evaporates. Blend to a paste. Add egg whites and mix well. Shape into round kababs and deep-fry till golden brown. Serve with cucumber slices on the side.



THE WILD PULSE OF CREATION



The mind is barren at times like nature in harsh summer days. Creativity seems to dry up and like birds in thirst longing for water from the heavens, I desperately search for ideas, look for inspiration, sometimes, even a divine intervention. And then, suddenly a storm begins to gather and ideas start to flow. Like the Baishakhi wind, my mind expands its inner depths, and suddenly, there is beauty in whatever I create and, in that moment, I get a taste of ecstasy.

On days touched by creative madness, everything falls into place. A single line written, a picture drawn, and music hummed. I sense the rhythm in life. But, on days of creative slumber, nothing seems to work. I sit there, staring at the page, the screen, waiting for that very moment when the creative juices, I pray, will begin to flow. Nothing! Not a word.

I look back and remember what it used to feel like. How ideas would just pour in, how my hands could not keep up writing with the racing thoughts in my mind. I try to force it and recreate those moments. The more I try, the more distant it feels. And then, I start questioning everything. Was I ever really creative or was this utter luck, every single time?

The moments of creation are neither obedient nor predictable. When they do come, they teach me to listen more deeply, not just to the world around me but to myself. They remind me that beneath the layers of routine and responsibility, there is wonder. And, creation is often born from this beautiful contradiction. From the tension between what is and what could be.

I have also come to realise that while the act is often born out of calm, it is mostly out of chaos. I have felt it in the

depths of solitude. In the dead end of the night when the world sleeps, yet, the mind moves violently with thoughts. Creation becomes a moment of quiet rebellion against the silence within. And there is something beautiful about those inner turmoil.

Because you see, there is a wildness at the heart of creation. A kind of holy disorder. And within that disorder lies clarity. It tells me: you are more than your limits. You are capable of birth not just biological, but emotional, spiritual, and artistic. You can bring into the world something that did not exist before. Creation has always had a sacred connection with the feminine. Not only in its power to birth but in its depth to feel. To nurture contradiction. In those spells of creative spur, we often find ourselves speaking to that quiet, revered space of femininity, whether in others or within ourselves.

What surprises most me is how the body reacts to all this. Understandably, the mind would reject stillness and rebel, but I taste the ecstasy of creation in my pulse, as it quickens; my hands, as they feel restless; and my senses, as I feel they have sharpened. It's as if every part of me is drawn into this act of becoming. I don't always understand where it comes from but I know, instinctively, that it must be



respected.

Back in the day, I tried to control these feelings. Tried to tame the moments when creativity flowed like a wild horse. But as I have grown older, I believe I have grown wiser too. Over time, I've stopped trying to control these moments, for creation does not care for control. It invites us to gallop wildly into ourselves and find something, ANYTHING, that's real. And now, I've learned to wait for them and to trust those instincts.

Creation, ultimately, is a conversation—with time, with nature, with grief, with beauty, with God. And in that conversation, we become human. We become more ourselves. Perhaps, that is true ecstasy. Not in the finished work but in the moment of its becoming. In that suspended breath, when everything you are flows into something beyond you. It is fleeting. It does not stay. But it leaves a trace. A warmth. A memory. A truth.

By Mannan Mashhur Zarif
Based on the poem, Srishti Shukher Ullashey (In the ecstasy of creation) by Kazi Nazrul Islam.
Photo: Shahrear Kabir Heemel
Model: Mubashshira Kamal Era
Mua: Nur Azmain



#BRANDED CONTENT

A BANK BRANCH

that blends Contemporary with Tradition



If there is one enduring symbol of traditional elegance in Bangladesh, it is Jamdani. As an international bank, HSBC has always valued the unique cultural roots of the countries it operates in – and for Bangladesh, Jamdani becomes an apt expression of Bangladesh's rich cultural heritage. The intricate weaves of Jamdani convey both 'skill' and 'care' – the same combination that the Bank strives to offer its customers.

HSBC Bangladesh has brought this unique vision to life with the opening of its newest branch in Dhaka's North Gulshan, where modern banking excellence meets deep cultural heritage.

Strategically located to provide location convenience to its customers, the branch goes beyond functionality. It stands as a tribute to Bangladesh's cultural legacy, featuring architectural elements inspired by the delicate artistry of Jamdani — the UNESCO-recognised traditional weave. From textures to patterns, every detail within the branch reflects a thoughtful balance of heritage and modernity.

A highlight of the new branch is the exclusive HSBC Select Lounge — a premium space offering a more personalised and elevated banking experience for Select and International customers. Select is HSBC Retail

banking's flagship proposition in Bangladesh, tailored to meet the needs of high-net-worth individuals and globally connected clients. With a dedicated focus on customers having international banking requirements, the branch also offers specialised services for expatriate clients, reflecting HSBC's global reach and local insight.

"It's a pleasure to provide customers an ambiance that balances heritage with modernity," said Tanmi Haque, Head of International Wealth & Premier Banking at HSBC Bangladesh. "We hope the exclusive space will allow our customers to enjoy HSBC's

international standard of services in the backdrop of our country's cultural richness."

HSBC has been operating for more than 160 years globally and in Bangladesh since 1996. Today, it serves customers in more than 58 countries and territories, standing as one of the world's most recognised and respected financial institutions.

As the doors open to this Jamdani-inspired branch, HSBC celebrates not just a new space, but a timeless connection between tradition, innovation, and the future of banking.

Photo: Courtesy



Protecting elders from heatwaves: Practical cooling solutions



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2
especially important for those having heart or blood-pressure issues since abrupt temperature changes can be harmful to them.

COOLING WITH MIST SPRAYS

Another simple yet effective thing would be to keep soothing products in the fridge. This can be anything from lotions to misting sprays. Its cold application can provide relief from skin irritation produced by heat. In particular cases, elderly people can use mist sprays over their arms, legs, or face when they feel that they are suffering from itchy skin. Through evaporation, this is a good cooling option and pairs well



with a fan.

Review medication

At times, medication is also known to influence elderly people with increased sensitivity to heat.

This is because some medicines may interfere with water retention or heat regulation, raising the temperature sensitivity of an individual.

If you are concerned about this, have a doctor go through all prescriptions and see what adjustments can be made to the medication on days of extreme heat.

KEEP COOL WITH BREATHABLE FOOTWEAR

During heatwaves, one should not underestimate the need for breathable

feet. Coax your elders into wearing sandals or perhaps a soft slipper around the house to keep their feet from overheating. That being said, avoid rubber or plastic on hot floors, as they actually trap heat and add to general discomfort.

Prioritise light, water-rich foods

Last but not least, focus on food for elders'

hydration. Heavy, warm meals tend to increase the core temperature of the body. So, water-rich fruits such as watermelon and cucumber are the way to go, along with light alternatives such as smoothies.

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed



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#DECOR

Modern and trendy ways to DESIGN A KITCHEN

It is more than just a place where food is prepared; A kitchen is the heart of any home and should undoubtedly meet your lifestyle and reflect your taste. A custom kitchen space allows for a dynamic approach. From countertops to cabinet hardware, everything can be made to reflect your style, irrespective of whether you like daring colours and warm wood tones, or chilly stone surfaces and minimal designs. The result: a place that looks and feels like you.

Smart storage with style

Custom cabinets are where design meets functionality, maximising every inch of space. You can have pull-out racks for spices, deep drawers for storage, and secret compartments for keeping things out of sight. In addition, you can select the cabinet interiors that suit your cooking style. From integrated dividers to vertical tray storage, there is a custom solution for everything.

A layout that works for you

A well-planned kitchen layout considers your activities, whether you usually throw dinner parties or enjoy meal prep in peace. Custom layouts can use the space, cutting down on all those unnecessary steps and maximising flow so that doing kitchen chores is easier.

Choose the layout process of placing appliances from the most to the least used. Nothing will interrupt the flow of your kitchen with built-in ovens and panel-ready dishwashers alongside fridges that match up to your cabinetry. Just a smooth, classy place where every detail seems intentional in your design choices.

Lighting that adapts and accents

Custom kitchen lighting design lets you layer light sources for function and ambience. Overhead pendant lights serve as a statement while under-cabinet lights brighten prep zones without hampering



the mood. In fact, with dimmers and layered light fixtures, your kitchen becomes a space that adapts happily to your mood or schedule, bringing style and comfort. You can also choose lights that have auto-sensors so that they brighten and dim with the time of the day.

Appliances with a purpose

Pull-out pantries, equipment spaces, and deep drawers bring immense efficiency in a customised kitchen. Here, you can give things an assigned spot while ensuring they look good. Not only that, custom elements such as fine cabinetry and built-in

appliances make your everyday life easier. So, you are not designing the kitchen just for the now. You are building your future lifestyle that gains praise from friends and family.

A customisable kitchen is beyond trend. It provides you with a space that meets your needs in life. When it has the right cabinetry, lighting, layout, and storage, your kitchen can easily turn into your favourite place in the house.

By Samayla Mahjabin Koishy
Photo: Courtesy



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