

heavenly spread

SUPERSPREAD OF BAISAKHI

This *Poila Baisakh*, visit Polo Floatel to try out an authentic Bengali buffet spread



The wholesome *Poila Baisakh* special spread

Mangsho Keemar Doi Bora

NO BENGALI CELEBRATION is complete without a hearty spread and especially so, in the case of *Poila Baisakh* or Bengali New Year. Marking the arrival of new crop (rice), *Poila Baisakh* sees celebrations in city diners with authentic Bengali dishes and we checked out one such glorious spread at Polo Floatel overlooking the mighty Hoogly river.

The buffet spread, *Esho Hey Baisakh*, *Esho Esho* has a menu full of interesting anecdotes. The executive chef of the property, Zaved ul Islam Sekh, tells us that it was a chance encounter with a regular patron, Shyamnagar's Kanika Mitra that led to a culinary collaboration with her for the New Year festival. "She had told me one day that something was amiss in a particular dish

and suggested a little tweak in the recipe. I tried it out, and that addition lent it a unique flavour. We have curated the menu after a year-long trial and error process using pestle-ground whole spices," Chef Zaved recalls.

"Our age-old cooking processes are being adopted by western countries, while we are discarding them due to lack of time. So, we thought of showcasing the same in our buffet. Depending upon the feedback, we might add a few permanently to our regular menu as well."

The buffet spread starts with *Thanda Paniyo* with *Paniyo Poros*, *Sital Jol Gondhoraj Lebu Diye* and *Pran Sukher Mouri Michri Sharbat*—all traditional Bengali summer drinks to cool your body. For starters, there's a sumptuous spread of vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes like *Pora Mishti Lal Aloo Mochar Chop* (a delectable banana flower and sweet potato chop), *Chanar Anguri*, *Mangsho Keemar Doi Bora*, *Pata Mora Murgi* and such, moving on to *Shil Nora Batas* and *Bhartas* (famed spiced pastes) like *Kalonji* and *Rasun Bata* (black cumin seeds and garlic paste), *Kucho Mach Bharta* and so on.

"Every year we try to make and serve something special, but

this time we tried to change the point of view and curated a menu which is not just food, but talks a lot about emotions too," adds general manager Soumen Halder.

Honestly, the main course comprising *sada bhaat* and *luchi* along with a range of veg and non-veg options like *Lal Bagh Phulcopi Rezala*, *Enchor Kalia*, *Doi Begun*, to *Saja Mach*, *Chital Macher Muiha*, *Birbhumi Murgir Rosholla* and many more is bound to take you on an emotional trip. We simply devoured the jackfruit curry and *Chital Macher Muiha* with plain rice and you can also choose to have *Khichuri* and *bhaja-bhuji* if you miss this comfort dish. It's heresy if you don't give a chance to the three types of chutney and *papad*, a must-appear on any quintessential Bengali plate.

To end your scrumptious meal on a sweet note, you can choose desserts like *Monohora*, *Sitabhog*, *Apple Jalebi*, and so on. We loved the *Apple Jalebi* simply for its unusual notes.

Price: Rs 1,699 per person
Available on April 15 & 16 for lunch and dinner
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review

New Year, New Menu

The Irish Brewery has added a host of lip-smacking continental delicacies ahead of *Poila Boishakh*

BENGLIS SWEAR BY the idiom *Baro Mashe Tero Parbon* which translates to, 'thirteen festivals across twelve months.' With *Poila Boishakh* just around the corner, Bengalis surely need no excuse to indulge in a variety of lip-smacking delicacies. The Irish Brewery, one of the popular cafes on Raja Basanta Roy Road has laid out a host of new introductions with a twist. For those who are bored with the pure Bengali spread, celebrate the New Year here tasting a few continental specialties with a touch of Bengali flavour notes.

"Fusion continental food has always been welcomed in Kolkata, and what better occasion than *Poila Boishakh* to present our exclusive menu that merges our expertise with traditional palettes," shares Sujata Singh, owner of the 34-seater bistro.



Fish cutlet



Poila Boishakh curations

We found ourselves indulging in the limited edition spread recently and were absolutely thrilled with the array of introductions to their usual bill of fare. While some recipes such as the *Crispy calamari*, *Chicken cordon bleu*, *Scotch eggs*, *Italian market salad* and

Lamb hotpot have been left untempered, small plates such as the *Fish cutlet*, *Anglo-Indian style chicken cutlet* and *Grilled bhetki* with *Gondhoraj lemon butter* add a homely touch to the special menu. If you feel grilled fish might not

be your choice of protein, you can also opt for the chicken variant named *Cilantro grilled chicken*. Wash the spices down with their house-special *Frosteezers* such as *Cool blue* and *Strauberry slush*, or opt for mocktails such as *Lavender soda* or the *Elder flower* variant.

The cafe also has a repete for its handcrafted desserts and you just can't miss out on their *Baileys cheese cake*, *Irish apple cake* with *Custard sauce* and *Crepe brulee* with *Apple compote*.

Price for two: Rs 1,000 approx
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Pics: Pritam Sarkar



Chicken cordon bleu

Lamb hotpot

Kiwi and Pineapple milkshake