

PEDIকON2026

63rd Annual Conference of Indian Academy of Pediatrics
16TH JANUARY - 20TH JANUARY, 2026 | KOLKATA



West Bengal
Academy of Pediatrics



16th - 20th January, 2026



Venue: Biswa Bangla Convention Centre, Kolkata, India

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Kolkata on a Plate – Tradition with Every Bite....





16th – 20th January, 2026



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PEDICON 2026 Newsletter — Issue 6

Theme: A Taste of Bengal: Where Every Bite Tells a Story

Welcome to this latest edition of the **PEDICON 2026 Newsletter**, where we invite you on a mouthwatering journey through Bengal's culinary paradise— a land where food is not just for the hunger or taste, but a celebration. From temple courtyards to bustling street corners, from zamindari feasts to lazy afternoon addas, Bengal's culinary heritage is as layered and versatile as its culture.

In this issue, we dive into the rich, diverse world of Bengali cuisine — exploring the stories behind its iconic dishes, the irresistible street food that fuels its cities, and the rituals and rhythms that shape everyday eating. Whether it's the subtle bitterness of shukto or the golden indulgence of mishti doi, each flavour holds a memory, a tradition, and a piece of Bengal's soul.

Let this newsletter be your guide to the kitchens, cafés, sweet shops, and street stalls that make this state a true culinary paradise.

In this issue, you will discover:

- **How our food evolved** through dynasties, trade, and colonial encounters
- **The irresistible street snacks** that fuel our city's heartbeat
- **Time honoured recipes** passed down through generations
- **The sweets and desserts** that have earned Bengal its reputation as India's sweet tooth
- **The art of adda** in cafes that stir ideas as readily as they pour tea
- **Your personal guide** to the best places across Bengal to taste these delights

So loosen your belts, open your senses, and prepare to savour the flavours that make Bengal a true **culinary paradise**.

Warmly,

– Team PEDICON 2026 Newsletter

A Brief History of Bengali Cuisine: From Riverbanks to Royal Tables

Long before there were cafés on Park Street or sweet shops on College Square, Bengal's story was being written in the fields and rivers that cradle this land. Ancient texts (**Charyapadas, 11th c.**) describe rice farming and fishing, reflecting how rice and river fish became staple foods. By the **15th century**, the rising devotional **Vaishnava culture** popularized lentils (dal) and vegetarian fare. Later, from the **13th to 18th centuries**, **Islamic and Mughal rulers** introduced meat dishes, biryanis and aromatic curries, enriching Bengali palates. **European contact** also left its mark: 17th and 18th centuries, **Portuguese missionaries** noted Bengal's variety of milk-based sweets, and later the **Dutch/Portuguese** brought new cheesemaking techniques (curdling milk into chhana), enabling the soft paneer sweets like rosogolla. Under colonial rule, teas, breads and global flavours blended

Devotional Feasts and Royal Kitchens

In medieval Bengal, the rise of **Vaishnava bhakti** brought simple, soul nourishing dishes into temple halls—think spiced lentils, zesty chutneys, and steaming rice shared in acts of devotion. Fast forward a few centuries, and the grand courts of the **Mughal and Nawabi rulers** in Murshidabad and Dhaka turned cooking into high art. Here, chefs perfected fragrant biryanis layered with marinated meat and rice, simmered velvety kormas, and silky kheer soaked in saffron.

A Feast for an Envoy

In the mid 18th century, legend says, the Nawab of Bengal invited a young British envoy—none other than Robert Clive—to dine at Murshidabad. The centrepiece was a simple fish curry: fresh hilsa simmered in a fiery mustard paste. Clive, sceptical at first, tasted one morsel...and reportedly reached for a second, then a third. He was so bewitched by the pungent tang that he demanded the recipe on the spot. From that day on, "Hilsa in mustard" sailed far beyond Bengal's rivers, quickly becoming a signature dish at both Indian courts and colonial tables alike—a testament to how a single meal can bridge worlds.

The Irresistible Street Snacks That Fuel Our City's Heartbeat

Walk down any bustling lane of Kolkata or

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and your nose will know before your eyes – you're in snack heaven. Bengal's street food is more than just a quick bite; it's an everyday celebration, a shared language of flavour that unites strangers under the same umbrella during a sudden drizzle or sparks friendly arguments over who makes the best puchkas in town.



Puchka

Puchka

The queen of Kolkata's street food – crisp semolina (Suji) shells filled with spicy tamarind water, mashed potatoes, and black chickpeas. But don't mistake them for panipuri or golgappa – puchkas are sassier, spicier, and strictly Bengali. Every locality has its puchkawala with a loyal fan base. Never forget to ask for free dry Puchka as the last.



Telebhaja

Telebhaja

Literally meaning “fried in oil,” telebhaja is Bengal's answer to comfort food – crisp, golden fritters sizzling their way from roadside stalls straight into our hearts. But don't let the simplicity of the term fool you

– telebhaja is not just anything fried in oil. KFC chicken wings? Fried, yes – but not telebhaja. A fancy fish fillet with tartar sauce? Delicious perhaps, but it doesn't qualify either. Telebhaja is a deeply Bengali institution, a monsoon ritual, and an everyday indulgence all rolled into one. From **beguni** (batter-fried eggplant slices) to **peyajji** (onion fritters), **alu'r chop** (mashed potato patties), **mochar chop** (banana flower cutlets), **kacha kolar chop** (raw banana patties), and **machher chop** (spiced minced fish fritters) – each variety is a humble work of art.

And it doesn't stop there. You'll also find **posto'r bora** (poppy seed fritters), **dhonepata'r bora** (coriander-leaf fritters), and **chhena r chop** (paneer-stuffed patties) popping up in stalls during specific seasons or festivals. A plate of telebhaja is never just food – it's an experience. Imagine standing under a shared umbrella on a drizzly afternoon, biting into the crunchy warmth of a beguni as the vendor drops the next batch into bubbling oil, releasing that irresistible aroma. Telebhaja – a flavor unmatched, a feeling unmistakably Bengali.



Jhalmuri

Jhalmuri – The Crunchy Companion of Conversations

No street corner in Bengal is truly complete without a jhalmuri-wallah rattling his tin canisters. This snack—a mix of puffed rice, chopped onions, green chilies, peanuts, boiled potatoes, tangy mustard oil, and a sprinkle of chaat masala—is stirred and shaken.

Jhalmuri is the snack of train journeys, football matches, political rallies, and lazy riverside evenings. Some say that the best ideas in Kolkata were born not in boardrooms, but over shared packets of jhalmuri under banyan trees. It's crunchy, spicy – a recipe that needs no plate, just people.



Alu Kabli

Alu Kabli – The Zesty, Tangy Treat from the By-lanes

Alu Kabli is a story of contrasts—soft boiled potatoes meet crunchy chickpeas; the sweetness of tamarind plays against the sharpness of green chilies and lemon juice. Tossed together with raw onions and a dusting of secret masalas, it's a sensory explosion packed into a paper bowl.

Often sold by smiling aunties or nimble-fingered youths with a flair for



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flavor, Alu Kabli is childhood, college life, and evening strolls — all rolled into one. Whether eaten near Victoria Memorial or beside the lake at Rabindra Sarobar, one bite takes you back to a simpler, spicier time.

Kathi Roll

Invented in Kolkata's iconic Nizam's restaurant, the kathi roll started as a skewer-grilled kebab wrapped in a paratha for British officers on the go. Today, it's a street-side staple across Bengal. Whether stuffed with egg, paneer, chicken, or spicy mutton, each roll is a complete meal folded into a flaky paratha.



Kathi Roll

Ghoti Gorom

A true heritage snack, ghoti gorom is a mix of puffed rice, chopped onions, chillies, peanuts, and a mystery masala blend, all tossed together in a paper cone. The vendor shakes the cone with flair and an elbow tilt – that's half the recipe. Perfect with an adda session or while waiting for the next local train.



Ghoti Gorom

Time Honoured Recipes Passed Down Through Generations

Where heirlooms aren't always jewels, sometimes they simmer on the stove.

In Bengal, family legacies are not always stored in velvet-lined boxes. Often, they reside in yellowing notebooks tucked behind spice jars or whispered through the steam rising from a grandmother's kitchen. Recipes are our inheritance—passed from hand to hand, heart to heart—each with a pinch of memory and a spoonful of love.



Shorshe Ilish

Take the iconic **Shorshe Ilish—Hilsa** fish steamed with mustard paste, green chilies, and mustard oil. The recipe may seem deceptively simple but ask any two families and you'll get three different versions. Some swear by white mustard, others insist on black; a few add a dash of yogurt, while others consider that useless. The beauty lies in these variations, passed down like treasured family lore. Or the slow-cooked **Kosha Mangsho**, where chunks of mutton are sautéed for hours in a masala. Every family having a different recipe with a different taste. This dish is marked as the traditional Sunday lunch for Bengalis, the showstopper of weddings and other get togethers.



Kosha Mangsho

Then there's **Chingri Malai Curry**, whose roots lie somewhere between Bengal and the colonial kitchens of British Calcutta. The coconut-milk gravy, delicately spiced and filled with prawns, was once the centerpiece of elite Bengali dinners—and today still finds pride of place on festive menus.

And yet, the Bengali culinary story is incomplete without the indelible influence of those who came from across the Padma. When the partition of 1947 split Bengal, it also divided its culinary heart—but instead of separating, the food fused in marvellous ways.



Chingri Malai Curry

From East Bengal came **Shutki Maach** (fermented dried fish), whose bold aroma and spiced preparation can divide rooms—but win hearts. **Chitol Maachher Muitha**, a labor-intensive delicacy made of fish dumplings in gravy, reveals the ingenuity of cooks who made the most of riverine abundance. **Panta Bhaat**—fermented rice served cold with mustard oil, green chilies, and onions—is a rustic comfort food in East Bengal homes, less common in the West but deeply rooted in agrarian traditions.



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Chital Macher Muitha

West Bengal's cuisine, meanwhile, evolved under the influences of zamindari opulence, colonial Calcutta, and the thriving markets of urban life. Its flavours are subtler, leaning into the richness of dishes like **Chingri Malai Curry** or the festive **Pulao with Chicken Rezala**—the latter blending Mughlai richness with Bengali restraint.

East Bengal vs West Bengal – A Tale of Two Palates

- **Texture & Technique:** East Bengali food is often spicier, with an affinity for mustard oil and garlic. The techniques emphasize robust flavours and strong aromas—think **shutki**, fiery **maacher jhol**, or bold pickles. West Bengal's palette is more balanced, preferring smoother textures and layered spices.
- **Fish Focus:** While both regions adore fish, East Bengal leans heavily on river fish like **Chitol**, **Pabda**, and **Boal**, often prepared with minimal ingredients and maximum flavour. West Bengal favours **Rohu**, **Katla**, and of course, **Ilish**, cooked in diverse styles—steamed, fried, curried, or even smoked.
- **Staples & Subtleties:** West Bengal celebrates dishes like **Labra** (mixed vegetable curry), **Mochar Ghonto** (banana blossom stir-fry), and **Paturi** (fish wrapped in banana leaf). East Bengal kitchens, by contrast, are rich with **Alu Bharta**, **Begun Pora**, and **Kacha Aam Diye Maachher Jhol** — simple yet profoundly satisfying.

A Bengali Breakfast to Remember

Breakfast in Bengal means flavor, leisure, and tradition on one plate. Picture a plate of **fluffy Luchis**, warm and golden, paired with the rich, sweet-spiced comfort of **chholar dal** studded with coconut bits, or the fiery punch of **alur dom**. Then there's the iconic **hinger kachuri**, its aroma of asafoetida awakening the appetite. In local eateries, you'll also find the hearty **triangular parota**, crisped on the edges, soft at the centre, teamed with **alu bhaja** or even a tangy chutney. Each item tells a story of leisurely Sundays, pujo mornings, or a lazy walk to the nearest mishtir dokan. More than just the first meal of the day, this breakfast is Bengal's edible embrace.

Shaak Bhaja / Shaak Bhate (Greens)

- **Palong Shaak Bhaja (Spinach) or Pui Shaak (Malabar spinach)** with pumpkin. Sometimes served with
- **Lau (bottle gourd) Ghonto** – Bottle gourd cooked with dal bori (dried lentil dumplings) or shrimp.
- **Shaak Bhate** – Mashed leafy greens with mustard oil and salt.



Maacher Jhol

Maacher Jhol / Jhal (Fish Curry)

- **Rui Maacher Jhol** – Light fish curry with potatoes, flavoured with turmeric and nigella seeds.
- **Shorshe Ilish** – Hilsa fish in mustard paste, for a festive lunch.

Mangsho (Meat Course – Optional on Weekends or Festive Days)

- **Kosha Mangsho** – Slow-cooked spicy mutton curry, served with fragrant rice or luchi (on special occasions).



Shukto

Typical Bengali Lunch Menu

Beginning

- **Shukto** – A gently bitter medley of vegetables like bitter gourd, raw banana, sweet potato, drumsticks, and brinjal, cooked in a mildly spiced mustard and milk-based gravy. Cleanses the palate and awakens the appetite.



Palong Shaak Bhaja



Tomato-Khejur Amsotto Chutney

Chutney O Papad

- **Tomato-Khejur Amsotto Chutney** – A sweet-sour relish made with tomatoes, dates, and dried mango pulp.
- **Papad Bhaja** – Crisp, roasted or fried papad.



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Mishti (Dessert)

- **Payesh** – Sweet rice pudding made with gobindobhog rice, milk, and nolen gur (date palm jaggery).
- **Rosogolla / Sandesh / Mishti Doi** – Depending on season and preference.

Optional After-Lunch Digestif:

- A small glass of **Ghol** (lightly spiced buttermilk) or **Paan** with a sliver of areca nut and sweet stuffing.

The Sweets and Desserts That Have Earned Bengal Its Reputation as India's Sweet Tooth

No celebration here—be it a wedding, a homecoming, or just a good result in school—is complete without **Mishti** (sweet). From the humblest corner mishtir dokan (sweet shop) to century-old sweet shops with marble counters and slow-turning fans, Bengal's love affair with desserts is eternal, almost sacred.



Rosogolla

Rosogolla – The Icon

Let's begin with the soft, spongy legend—**Rosogolla**. Born in the 19th century in Kolkata (or some argue, in Puri!), these chhana balls cooked in light sugar syrup are more than dessert—they're diplomacy. So fierce is the pride around rosogolla that both West Bengal and Odisha once went to the GI court to claim it as their own. But when it sits gently melting on your tongue—you realise it belongs to joy, not geography.

Pantua of Ranaghat

Everyone knows about **Pantua**. It comes in the second place only after Rosogolla. Birthplace of Pantua is in Ranaghat. It's the first of its kind, i.e Kshira & cottage cheese fried sweets. Pantua is primarily made from frying cottage cheese and there should be a hole inside of Pantua filled with sugar syrup inside.



Pantua

Sandesh

Minimalist and magical, **Sandesh** is made from fresh chhana and just a whisper of sugar. It is a favourite during festivals. Some are shaped like betel leaves, others are adorned with a silver foil, but each bite is delightful.



Sandesh

Mishti Doi – Fermented Bliss

Served in earthen bowls that cool the curd naturally, **Mishti Doi** is Bengal's answer to crème brûlée—only older and, some would say, better. Sweetened with caramelized sugar or nolen gur (Date Palm Jaggery or Liquid Date Palm Jaggery,) in winter. Often the last item on the plate after a grand feast.

Nolen Gurer Magic

Come winter, and the air smells different—smoky, warm, and sweet. That's nolen gur (date palm jaggery) season. With it comes a burst of seasonal treats:

- **Patishapta** – delicate crepes filled with coconut and jaggery
- **Gurer Sandesh**
- **Gurer Payesh** – rice pudding

Ask any Bengali, and they'll tell you: *"Winter isn't winter without a spoonful of nolen gur melting into warm rice or a bite of sandesh that crumbles and then blossoms on your tongue."*



Mihidana

Mihidana of Bardhaman

It was created in 1904 by Bhairab Chandra Nag from the order of then Bardhaman Raja. **Mihidana** itself has become inseparable from Bengali cuisine ever since. It's no less popular than Rosogolla here. Primary ingredient of Mihidana is a mixture of Basmati & Gobindabhog rice powder mixed with powder of Bengal gram. Mihidana got the GI tag on April, 2017.



Sitabhog

Sitabhog of Bardhaman

Sitabhog is the twin sweet of Mihidana & it occupies the same elite place in the Bengali cuisine. It was created with

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Mihidana. Primary ingredient of Sitabhog is a special type of Gobindabhog rice known as **Sitasar** which grows in Bardhaman only. Also needed are Cottage cheese & milk. For garnishment one either uses small Pantuas or Cashew nuts. Sitabhog got the GI tag in 2017.



Lyangcha

Lyangcha of Shaktigarh

It is made from mixing flour and milk powder together, then frying it and dipping it into sugar syrup for a long time. There are several stories related to its origin. One credits the local sweet maker Lyangcha Dutta, another credits a sweet maker of Krishnanagar of Nadia as the first maker who was then brought to Bardhaman by the king. It's more than 200 years old.

Jalbhora Sandesh of Chandannagar

This variety of Sandesh completed its 200th birthday just two years ago. It is a special type of Sandesh where the sugar syrup resides separately inside a hollow in the body of the Sandesh. The rose water/nalen gur inside will remain intact as it is and cottage cheese won't soak it up at all. That's a very complex process. If you are not careful with the first bite, the syrup inside will come out to soak you.



Jalbhora Sandesh

Kalojam

It's not Gulabjamun actually. It must be made from mixture of cottage cheese & Kshira. Amount of Kshira will have to be in larger proportion and this portion will be inside of the sweet. After mixing and making a ball you have to fry it. A black hardish cover wraps the soft Ksira inside.



Kalojam

Jilapi of Chhana

A decadent twist on the classic jalebi, Chhanar Jilipi is made from chhana (fresh cottage cheese) instead of the usual flour batter. The chhana dough is lightly sweetened, shaped into spiral coils, and then deep-fried until crisp on the outside yet tender within. Finally, each swirl is soaked in a fragrant sugar syrup, sometimes scented with saffron or rose water.



Jilapi of Chhana

Khsirer Singara :

Singara deep fried in the sugar syrup, inside there's a filling of Kshira Delicious to say the least.

Makha Sandesh of Kalna

The simplest kind of sandesh in Bengal is the makha sandesh (makha = kneaded). It is prepared by tossing the cottage cheese lightly with sugar over low heat. The sandesh is essentially hot, sweetened chhana. When shaped into balls, it is

called Kanchagolla (kancha = raw; golla = ball).



Makha Sandesh

Chana Bora of Baharampur

This sweet took birth somewhere in the second half of 19th century. Its main ingredient is Chana, i.e Cottage cheese. You need to fry the ball of cottage cheese in ghee, first in low heat and then in high temperature. Sometime sweet makers of Murshidabad fry it in the ghee for even 2-3 days in special occasion. After frying is complete one has to keep it inside sugar syrup for 24 hours.



Chana Bora

Jhuri pata doi of Murshidabad

A special type of **Mishti Doi (Sweet Yogurt)** made in Murshidabad. Usually doi is settled in earthen pots but here it's settled in Bamboo made pot or Jhuri. The holes are covered & inside smeared with kheer or dried milk. Then the curd is put there to settle. The doi is super thick and yellow-ish in color. It's less sweet in taste and tastes like kheer. A speciality of Murshidabad.

Lal doi of Nawadwip

It's one of the most famous variety of Doi in the Bengal region. Though sweet curd



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is usually white, this one comes in red colour. It can also be stored for ten days. The quality of the curd is judged on its stickiness. To test it, it is also seen by turning down the pot. Even a Chakku or a knife is inserted inside the pot to check the thickness. Thus the name of Chakku yogurt came from that.



Lal doi of Nawadwip

Bankura – Mecha Sandesh and Pera

The famous sweet of Bankura district, West Bengal is Mecha Sandesh. It's a unique sweet made from chhatu (powdered Bengal gram). You can find Mecha Sandesh in Bankura town, Bishnupur, and Beliatore. Another popular sweet from Bankura is the Pera, particularly the one from Chhatna village.

Moa of Jaynagar

Made from parched rice of Kanak chur, pure ghee and Nalen gur. Also, Ksira, Cashew nuts, Raisin, pista are used for garnishment.



Moa of Jaynagar

Malda – Aam Sandesh

The land of luscious mangoes contributes uniquely to Bengal's mishti map with Aam

Sandesh, where sweet mango pulp meets chhana in a summer romance of flavor.



Malda – Aam Sandesh

Chom Chom of Belakoba (North Bengal)

Chom Chom is a traditional Bengali sweet. Its origin can be traced back to Jasorath Haloi (and Ghosh & Paul clan later) of Porabari village of Tangail region in the undivided Mymensingh district about two hundred years ago. It comes in a variety of colors, mainly light pink, light yellow, and white. Porabari Chom Chom comes in reddish shade with mawa (milk made) flakes as garnish.



Chom Chom of Belakoba

Lalmohan of Fulbari

Lalmohan is a bit different from Pantua. This sweet originated in the Dhaka-Mymensingh region. After partition, Manindranath Ghosh from Dhaka came in Fulbari and started making this sweet here. Lalmohan is still popular in Bangladesh but Hindus don't use egg, flour etc. thus BD ones look blackish while original lalmohan is deep red (thus the name lalmohan, in Bengali lal means red). Only components are cottage cheese & Ksira unlike Pantua

which is made of cottage Cheese. Also, lalmohan is supposed to melt when you put it in your mouth otherwise it's not lalmohan to begin with.



Lalmohan of Fulbari

Culinary Trails of Kolkata: Where to Eat During PEDICON 2026

Whether you're a curious first-timer or a returning admirer of Kolkata's charm, **your PEDICON visit will be incomplete without exploring the city's incredible foodscape.** From elegant heritage restaurants to bustling street corners, Kolkata offers a culinary journey that is as rich as its history and as diverse as its people.

For a Taste of Authentic Bengali Cuisine

1. 6 Ballygunge Place (Ballygunge)

A go-to destination for an indulgent Bengali thali. Expect shukto, mochar ghonto, kosha mangsho, luchi, and mishti doi in a home-style but regal setup.

2. Bhojohori Manna (Multiple Locations)

Named after a famous Bengali song, this chain offers soulful, nostalgic meals like doi ilish, chingri malai curry, and patishapta.

3. Saptapadi (Gariahat & Salt Lake)

A perfect place to taste classic dishes with a slightly modern touch, served in a décor inspired by Uttam-Suchitra's iconic movie.

4. Aaheli – The Peerless Inn (Esplanade)

A premium experience in traditional Bengali dining with opulent interiors and a royal thali showcasing both East and West Bengal cuisines.

5. Kasturi (New Market & Ballygunge)

An East Bengali (Bangal) food haven. Try the shutki maachh, chitol muitha, and shorshe ilish.



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For Indian and Mughlai Flavours

1. Arsalan & Royal Indian Hotel (Park Circus & Chitpur)

Mouthwatering biryanis, chaap, rezala, and kebabs. The Kolkata Biryani with its signature potato is a must-have.

2. Oudh 1590 (Deshapriya Park, Salt Lake)

Step into a nawabi darbar. Enjoy slow-cooked galawati kebabs, mutton raan, and lucknowi biryani in vintage Awadhi ambience.

For Continental, European & Café Culture

1. Flurys (Park Street)

A legendary tearoom since 1927, known for English breakfast, rum balls, cream éclairs, and Darjeeling tea. A Park Street institution.

2. Peter Cat (Park Street)

An iconic restaurant that's been serving its signature Chelo Kebab platter—a sizzling combination of saffron rice, meat, and butter—for decades.

3. Mocambo (Park Street)

Retro Continental dishes like Chicken à la Kiev, Devilled Crab, and Fish Florentine served under old chandeliers—pure nostalgia.

For Street Food Lovers – The Real Taste of Kolkata

1. Vivekananda Park & Gariahat Phuchka Stalls

Sample Kolkata's best phuchka (pani puri)—filled with tangy tamarind water, mashed potato and black salt. Don't forget the sweet one at the end!

2. Dacre Lane (Office Para near Esplanade)

Called Kolkata's 'Snack Street'. Grab egg rolls, fish fingers, chowmein, Mughlai paratha, and even piping hot stew—all under ₹100!

3. College Street (Near Presidency & Coffee House)

A student's paradise with telebhaja, singara, muri makha, and ancient

bakeries serving melt-in-your-mouth patties and cream rolls.

For a Slice of the Orient – Kolkata's Chinatown

Tangra (East Kolkata)

The only Chinatown in India, **Tangra** is the birthplace of Indian-Chinese cuisine. Think chilli chicken, hakka noodles, Manchow soup, and golden fried prawns—served in bustling family-run eateries like:

- **Beijing**
- **Kim Fa**
- **China White**
- **Golden Joy**

The flavours are smoky, spicy, and utterly addictive. **Don't forget to ask for the house-made chilli vinegar!**

The Art of Adda in Cafes That Stir Ideas as Readily as They Pour Tea

In Bengal, cafés are not just about caffeine—they are **crucibles of conversation**, corners of comfort, and cathedrals of thought. Here, ideas bubble over like the frothy top of a clay cup of cha. Arguments are brewed stronger than espresso, and the laughter sometimes louder than the clink of teacups. This is the **art of adda**—that untranslatable Bengali ritual of heartfelt, unhurried conversation. Walk into **Indian Coffee House on College Street**, and you're not just walking into a café—you're entering history. Once a second home to thinkers like Satyajit Ray, Amartya Sen, and Manna Dey, its faded walls have listened to debates on Tagore, Marxism, cinema, cricket, and love—often all in the same sitting.

Cafés in Kolkata, from the nostalgic **Paramount Sherbet House** to the artsy corners of **8th Day Café**, carry forward this legacy of **stimulating minds along with taste buds**. Adda thrives over cream rolls at Flury's, momos in Gariahat lanes, or

even in newer joints buzzing with youth and Wi-Fi.

Unlike the quick coffee-to-go of other cities, here time slows down. You might come in for one cup and leave four hours later, your soul stirred and your notebook scribbled.

Adda is where friendships are born, movements are sparked, songs are written, and silence is shared. It's not a meeting—it's a moment. A culture. A cuisine of the intellect, served hot and open-ended.

So next time you hear a lively hum coming from a corner table, pull up a chair. You don't need an invitation. Just an opinion, and maybe a second round of cha.

Conclusion – A Journey Served on a Plate

Our culinary heritage is a living, breathing story—rich with history, layered with migration, and spiced with innovation. We've wandered through the lanes of Kolkata tasting puchkas and telebhaja, sat down to homely spreads of shukto and shorshe ilish, indulged in sweets that carry the soul of towns and villages, and sipped tea over adda where ideas simmer alongside kettles.

Food here is never just food—it's memory, emotion, and identity served together. Every bite tells of farmers and fishermen, poets and painters, nawabs and refugees, each leaving a flavour behind. As you explore Bengal during **PEDICON**, let your curiosity be your compass and your taste buds your guide. Step into that crowded street stall, wander into the old café, taste something you can't pronounce yet. Because here in Bengal, the best way to understand us... is to eat with us.

So till our next edition, keep your heart open, your mind curious, and your plate full.

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With warm regards,

– The Editorial Team

– Team PEDICON 2026 Newsletter

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