

## Food

415,000!!!! — the foodie footfall at biryani & kebab festival 2014, presented by t2 and city centre

“Royal is Royal. Period.” — Sudeshna Sinha, 55, Thakurpukur “I just love Aminia biryani. No one can beat them!” — Tiyasha, 23, Gariahat “I am a vegetarian but I couldn’t resist the Chicken Chaanp from New Aliah Hotel. This is heavenly!” — a 25-year-old girl who didn’t want to be named The first-timer, the loyalist, the experimenter, the enthusiast....

The Biryani & Kebab Festival 2014, presented by t2 and City Centre, had all kinds of biryani buffs queuing up for a lot more than a morsel at City Centre Salt Lake and New Town from January 31 to February 2.

Twelve popular biryani stops from across town served up biryani, kebab, chaanp and firni as foodies gathered with their friends and families to sample, savour and fight over their favourite dish.

The best part of the festival? “You get all kinds of biryani in one place. So we got to try Oudh 1590, Krazy Kebab and Mezban, places that we had heard about but never managed to check out,” said Salt Lake resident Swarnali Chaudhuri. At the end of three days, the two City Centre venues had jointly clocked 415,000 footfalls.



In her own words, she’s a biryani connoisseur and there’s no way (right) Rai Sarkar would have missed this festival. “Biryani is my life and Calcuttans are born to eat biryani,” said Rai, a student at KPC Medical College and Hospital. With her at City Centre New Town were school buddies Alakananda Maitra and Patralekha Das. “I study medicine in Karnataka and I only get to eat curd rice. There was no way I was going to miss it,” said Patralekha (left).

Kachchi Biryani from India Restaurant Kidderpore for her, kebabs from Aminia for him. For Siddharth and Nilanjana Roy, who got married last month, the biryani

festival turned out to be the best place for some us-time. “We also got discounts for being Club Solitaire members,” said Siddharth, at City Centre Salt Lake.



Mother-daughter duo Sheryl and Ira from Barrackpore lapped up Chicken Afghani Kebabs from Krazy Kebab at City Centre New Town. “This is really tasty, you should try it too. In fact you can have anything from any stall. They all taste damn good!” smiled Class III student Ira.

Four school friends now studying in different colleges had a lip-smacking reunion at City Centre New Town. “We love biryani and kebab, and we are planning to hog as much as we can! It is a lovely start to our day. It is the first time I tried Oudh 1590 and loved every bit of it,” said Pritha Saha (second from left), a third-year student of multimedia at St.



Xavier’s College.



(L-R) Cousins Chhandosee Ganguly, Kinkini Ghoshal, Nilakhi Mukherjee and Shreyasi Mukherjee had a hearty lunch at their mamabari but there can always be room for some biryani-kebab. The gang of girls hit City Centre New Town. “We always have biryani, so today we thought of trying some paratha and Mutton Chaanp from Mezban,” said Shreyasi.

Ridhima is just nine months old but has already become a fan of Calcutta biryani. "We got Ilish Biryani from Dawat and Ridhima is also enjoying the soft biryani rice," said proud daddy Rajib Mullick.

