

CHINESE FOOD IN KARACHI, PAKISTAN IS POPULAR AMONG TOURISTS



You'd be forgiven for thinking that if you went to Karachi in Pakistan you'd be eating Pakistani-style food, hot-hot curries and more. However, Chinese food in Karachi is on the up, with a different style of curry adorning the fringes of the city, along with noodles and more. One such example is the Ginsoy Restaurant, in Main Khayaban, which has Wonton noodle soup, 'Dynamite' Prawns, Kung Pao chicken, beef chow mein and lots of other Chinese dishes for its customers. Chinese in Pakistan is big: Karachians like Chinese food, much like the English like their Indian food.

Lip-smacking flavours of coriander, turmeric and cumin are something that defines Karachians and sets them apart from the rest, so the Chinese restaurants really need to do something special to appeal. The word of the day in Pakistan is 'Indo-Chinese' and is really a fusion of Indian food and Chinese food together. Many households are now beginning to cook Chinese food as part of their weekly food planning, alongside traditional Pakistani food, and it's becoming more likely for families to eat it regularly.

However, the Chinese food that Karachians eat is not "authentic Chinese food" as such - what the city has is more like 'Hakka' Chinese - from Chinese people who lived in other parts of the world besides China (particularly Chinese people who lived in Kolkata, West Bengal) and developed Chinese food to suit the Indian/Pakistani taste.

Mohammed Nadeem, who runs Nadeem Plaza where there are many Pakistani restaurants in the UK in Luton, Bedfordshire, and whose family hail from Karachi said: "Fish is cooked fresh in the many Chinese restaurants in Karachi. If you want a fish, you go and pick it from the tank and it is cooked with all the flavours and toppings you choose. The tastes are delicious and you call tell the fish is fresh because it just tastes so good. The main difference between UK Chinese food and Karachi's Chinese food is that the food cooked is Halal meat. Other than that, it's all about the flavour and seasonings of Indo-Chinese cooking."

Karachi is a large city with lots of Chinese restaurants along almost every food street, mall or bazaar. The Hakka style of Chinese cooking also encapsulates Cantonese and Mandarin recipes as well, so the choice is wide. In the daytime, Dim Sum is what the Cantonese choose to eat - prepared as little portions of food served in small steam baskets or on smaller plates. Dim Sum dishes are most often served with tea, and form a full 'tea-brunch' and you can find these restaurants too in Karachi.

Many of the latest eateries across the city offer delivery of their foods now as well, and you can opt to eat at home, with tasteful wares from around the world. The Karachian way is becoming much like the American or British way - fast food to go. Gone are the days of slaving over the stove for hours on end, as Pakistanis move into a world that's more filled with a fancy-free attitude and full of delightfully flavoured dinners for families.

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