

FASHION

A few tips to enjoy your Iftar

By The Real Fouz

It's an amazing feeling to quench your thirst and eat all the things you were craving after a long day of fasting, but going from fasting to overeating isn't always the best idea. It's amazing how we practice so much control while fasting, but choose to overeat and overindulge when we break our fast. To help you break these bad habits this Ramadan, I've gathered a few tips to ensure you enjoy your Iftar the right way.

1. Eating right at Suhoor time will help with fasting as well as prevent overeating during Iftar. A balanced Suhoor can keep you going a long way and reduce your feelings of hunger during the day. Try to incorporate a fiber packed meal with a combination of protein, carbs, and good fats.
2. Begin your Iftar with something small like dates or nuts and take a break before starting your meal. This will satisfy your hunger and allow you to avoid overeating from the start. Starting with soup and salad is also a good option because they are low in calories but will still make you feel full.

3. When you do eventually eat, try to eat as slow as you can and enjoy your meal instead of rushing to finish it. Eating slowly will allow your body to effectively send you signals that you are full, which will help you to eat enough but still feel good after your meal. Eating slow will also help to prevent indigestion, which is a problem many people face during Ramadan.
4. When it comes to dessert, we all love to overindulge. This is when you will need the most self-control. Try to go for a selection of fresh fruits or fruit salad instead of Arabic sweets or chocolate. Your body needs the extra nutrition and vitamins after a full day of fasting so fruits are the perfect option.
5. Exercising during Ramadan is also very important, even if this means walking for an hour every day or going to the gym if preferable. Make sure you incorporate some kind of exercise into your daily routine. You will notice that you'll feel so much better and it will also help to burn off the extra calories.
6. Staying hydrated during Ramadan is one of the most important things. Drinking enough water isn't only

crucial to your health, but will also make you less likely to overeat. Drink a full glass of water before starting your meal and make sure to keep staying hydrated throughout the non-fasting hours.

7. Getting enough sleep is also important during this month. People tend to sleep at later hours, so it's important to make sure that you are getting enough sleep during the day to compensate. Eating and sleeping are the two basic human functions, so there is a big connection between the two. When we don't get enough sleep, our body releases hunger hormones, which makes us overeat once we break our fast. Prioritizing your sleep schedule will have a huge effect on the way you feel during Ramadan.

Try to make the most out of this amazing month and don't let your bad habits ruin it for you. Overeating, not getting enough sleep and eating the wrong food will prevent your body from getting the endless health benefits that fasting can give you. Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and blessed Ramadan.



In Africa's fashion capital, Lagos, 'trad is swag'

Leggy dancers in tight shorts, bottles of Moët champagne and flashy cars feature in Nigerian pop icon Wizkid's bling-bling music videos. But the singer himself has now swapped the Versace T-shirts and low-slung jeans that show his underwear for traditional African dress—a new youth trend in fashion hub Lagos. Last year, Vogue voted Wizkid "Nigeria's best-dressed pop singer", a particularly coveted and prestigious title in a country where appearance is all important and competition is fierce.



This file photo shows models displaying their make up to stage managers and designers ahead of the final dressing up at the Africa Fashion Week in Lagos. — AFP photos

Clothing that used to be considered only for the old or for people out in the provinces is setting the trend in fashion, from the Yoruba agbada, a large, triple-layered robe worn in the southwest, to the Igbo "Niger Delta" embroidered collarless shirt from the south, and the northern Hausa babariga, a long tunic worn with an embroidered asymmetrical hat. In recent years, this traditional clothing—or "trad" as it's dubbed—can be seen in offices as well as nightclubs, and at weddings and business meetings.

"It's the in-thing now," Wizkid told Vogue magazine. "When I'm back home, all I wear is African fabrics. I get material from different parts of Nigeria—north, west, south—and I mix it up," said the 26-year-old superstar. Lack of space in Lagos, a sprawling megacity of 20 million inhabitants, has meant there are few shopping centers and ready-to-wear clothing stores are hard to find. Economic recession and the free fall of the naira currency has put paid to wealthy Nigerians' shopping sprees in Dubai, Paris and Milan. Instead, they've had to make do with what's on offer locally, sending the popularity of roadside tailors soaring.

'Trad is swag'

In 2012, Omobolaji Ademosu, known as B.J., left his job in a bank to set up his own line of men's clothing, Pro7ven. In two tiny workshops in Ojodu, on the outskirts of Lagos, his dozen employees cut, sew and iron a series of orders to the sound of a diesel generator. B.J. calls his style "African contemporary". His work includes magnificent made-to-measure agbadas with embroidered collars, which can sell for up to 150,000 naira (\$475, 420 euros) each. "Trad is swag," smiled B.J. "Any day, I can switch from Yoruba to Igbo to Fulani, I'm rocking it! It's the Lagos spirit, there is no barrier, we are one."

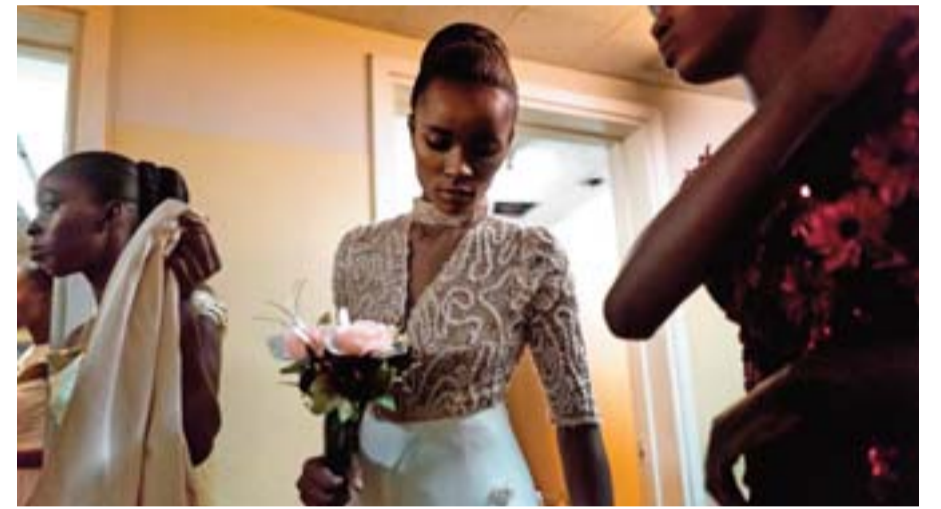
When attending professional meetings in business and politics, dressing in the ethnic outfit of your host is a sign of respect that can really pay off—or at least win big contracts. Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari's election campaign in 2015, for example, featured him in a variety of traditional outfits from across the country. With more than 500 ethnic groups, Nigeria is able to draw from a huge catalogue of fabrics, styles and jewelry. The beauty of each ethnic look is a source of pride, which has begun to extend beyond Nigeria's borders.

In early May, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, a spokesman for South Africa's Economic Freedom Fighters party, posted a picture of himself on Instagram, dressed in a dark "Niger Delta" outfit, complete with wide-brimmed hat and gemstone necklace. His numerous and enthusiastic female fans were quick to comment with emoji hearts, affectionately calling him "Igwe" — an Igbo prince.

Retained 'African pride'

"Even in Paris, young people from the diaspora want to present themselves as African princes now," said Nelly Wandji, owner of MoonLook, an African fashion boutique in the upmarket Rue du Faubourg St-Honore. "Nigeria is clearly the leader in fashion in terms of style, creativity and number of recognized designers," she said on a recent visit to Lagos. "Lagos Fashion Week has dethroned Johannesburg. Nigerians have remained much more authentic, they have retained 'African pride', whereas South Africa is very Europeanized."

Wandji, who is French of Cameroonian heritage, said the fashion trend was due to the African diaspora, of which Nigerians were the main ambassadors by sheer weight of numbers. "Young people from the diaspora are the drivers of African fashion, they have reappropriated their culture and made it trendy because it's seen in Europe or the United States," she said. Gloria Odiaka, a petite woman in her 50s, is the successful owner of a luxury traditional fabric shop in Lekki, a well-heeled Lagos neighborhood. "The young generation are into native wear and they look gorgeous," she said. "My sons study in Canada and when I go visit them they say, 'Please, Mommy, buy us some trads, I'm done with Canadian T-shirts,'" she said with a laugh. — AFP



This file photo shows models in bridal fashion waiting backstage ahead of the Africa Fashion Week in Lagos.



This file photo shows Nigerian traditional fashion designer Omobolaji Ademosu holding a mannequin as he leaves his office in Lagos.



This file photo shows a model in bridal fashion designer Omobolaji Ademosu waiting backstage to enter the catwalk at the Africa Fashion Week in Lagos.



This file photo shows models in bridal fashion waiting backstage ahead of the Africa Fashion Week in Lagos.



In this file photo, fashion designers Stefano Gabbana, left, and Domenico Dolce arrive for the presentation of the book "Milan Fashion, soccer players portraits", in downtown Milan, Italy. — AP

Dolce & Gabbana calls out critics with boycott T-shirts

Italian fashion house Dolce & Gabbana is thumping its nose at critics with a new campaign and apparel urging a boycott of the company. The company is selling T-shirts for \$245 a piece that read #BOYCOTT DOLCE & GABBANA. The shirts are listed on Dolce and Gabbana's website alongside a short film of Italian protesters against the shirts during a demonstration against the company. Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana are among the protesters.

The shirts follow Instagram posts from co-founder Stefano Gabbana last month highlighting first lady Melania Trump's Dolce & Gabbana outfits during her recent overseas trip with President Donald Trump. In one of his posts, Gabbana called out "haters" and urged them to boycott the brand. Dolce & Gabbana didn't immediately respond to a request for comment yesterday. — AP

Beyond the formal corsage: Floral accessories get creative

Want a memorable accessory for that big event? Think beyond the traditional pinned-on boutonniere or corsage, and consider wearing a piece of floral art. "There are those floral artists who are thinking outside the box and are using blooms and botanical elements in new, fresh ways, as in floral jewelry and wearables," said Tobey Nelson, owner of Tobey Nelson Events and Design in Langley, Washington. Wearable flowers have been getting play on fashion runways, and are increasingly popular as necklaces, bracelets and crowns at weddings, proms or other special occasions. Some can even be replanted later.

Nelson describes her flower jewelry as "neck gardens" or "wrist gardens." "I see so many different plant parts - be it a flower or berry or an acorn or curly stem - as a gem of nature," she said. "It is only fitting that I would fashion them into jewelry." Floral designers cajole blooms - often succulents - into jewelry bases that can be worn around a wrist or finger, or used as necklaces, earrings and headpieces. Many of the bases can be used again after the flowers are spent.

Succulents are resilient, simple to grow and don't need to be watered frequently. Sedums, echeverias and sempervivums multiply rapidly. Eventually, they will expand off their bases, sending out roots in search of nutrients. "The life expectancy of a floral wearables piece made from succulents can be three weeks to two months, as long as it is stored in sunlight," Nelson said. "Jewelry made from succulents can be taken apart when the plants begin to out-grow the jewelry piece and then planted."

Susan Mcleary, a floral designer, artist and instructor who operates Passionflower in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has a long list of go-to flowers and foliage



This photo shows a floral tiara at a workshop held near Langley, Wash, and is designed as an accessory to be worn at weddings, proms or other special occasions. — AP photos



This photo shows a floral bracelet at a workshop held near Langley, Wash.

that she uses as wearables. "The best way to form your own list is to test obsessively," Mcleary said. "Anytime I get a new flower in the studio, I snip off a few blooms to test how they fare out of water."

"For floral jewelry, I love using young, tight ranunculus, astrantia blooms, hyacinth pips, delphinium florets, huechera foliage, herbs, berries, pods, miniature orchids - to name a few." Floral pieces appreciate a periodic misting but they are made to last for the duration of a one-day event such as a wedding or party, Mcleary said. Succulents can last up to three weeks without watering.

Mcleary's designs often center around a single

family of colors, adding a variety of shades and textures to boost interest. "Larger blooms and darker shades typically are set down first, and more delicate materials and lighter shades float above," she said. She receives many illustrated thank you notes from former clients - usually brides - for whom she designed succulent jewelry that was successfully re-potted. "A favorite photo came on one couple's first anniversary: a pot of overflowing plants, happily nestled in their new home," she said. — AP