

Meet

Bilal

Quality Shift Manager, Kiveton

Bilal shares more on Eid:

"It's a festive month - we invite our friends and families for meals or give them best wishes like at Christmas time. In England, you say Merry Christmas during the holidays, we would say Eid Mubarak - to give best wishes to all Muslims around the world."



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What is Eid and what does it mean to you?

Eid is the ultimate celebration day for us, to celebrate that we were fasting for 30 days non-stop, and we are also celebrating the day that we are closer to God.

One of the reasons for the fasting month is that you get closer to God, you pray more, and you recognise God every day. On Eid day, you recognise this and your sacrifice across the 29 or 30 days; you celebrate that you were able to do more charity work and help others. It's more like a celebration day itself, and if your family and friends can't come to you, then you make the effort to get to them. You go to each other's houses and you prepare food and meals. It means a lot to Muslims, it's an achievement, it's a huge celebration.

How do you break your fast?

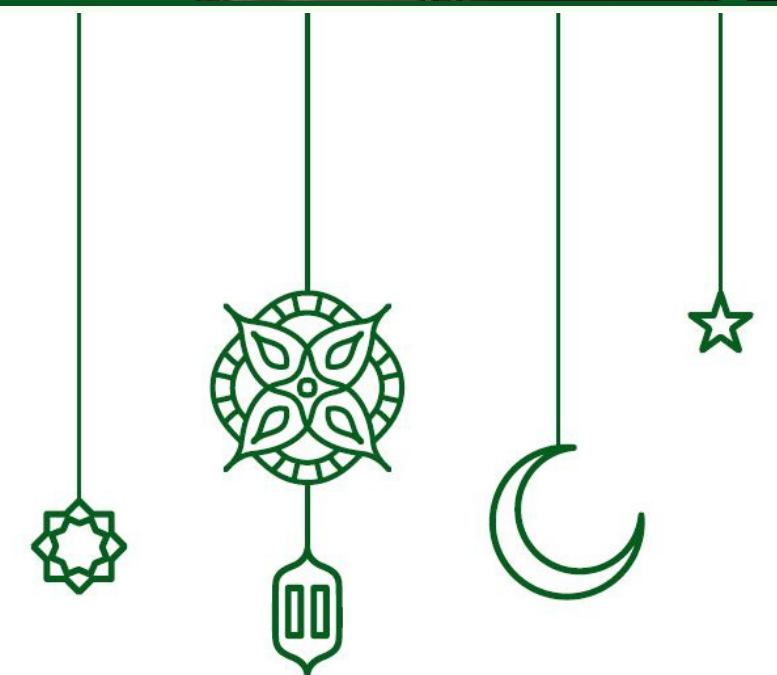
We have big buffet kind of meals, and not just one, we prepare five or six meals each. Its common place to start preparation the day before Eid - we don't want to cook too much on Eid itself. Depending how many people are coming, you might need a lot of food.

Me and my family will decorate the whole house with lights, and we wear new clothes. Of course, we also give gifts to immediate family members and friends. We distribute chocolates to our neighbours - they have nothing to do with fasting or Eid, but we want to give something during our celebration to share our big day with them as well.

How do you celebrate Eid with your family?

Well for Muslims, the first half of Eid is where we go to mosque and offer prayers with our family. In the morning, depending on mosque timings, we pray there, they're large congregational prayers where everyone gathers, this is where Eid starts.

Then we have silent prayer, afterwards we start hugging and kissing and then we start celebrations properly. We tend to celebrate for three days not just one, in the UK it's difficult, but in Muslim countries it's a cultural and religious tradition to celebrate for three days.



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