

'Dates with butter' trend stirs health debate

KUALA LUMPUR: Every Ramadan, traders concoct various food innovations to attract customers, and this is no exception for dates that are often eaten during iftar (breaking of fast).

Apart from being coated in chocolate, the fruit favoured by Prophet Muhammad SAW has also been reinvented in various styles – including being filled with a variety of nuts such as almonds and cashews.

Social media is also flooded with views of netizens who recently tried out butter-filled dates.

Some combine them with almonds to entice those not fond of eating dates during iftar, especially the younger generation

and children.

“I never used to eat dates, but after trying it with butter and almonds, I plan to make it a simple dish for sahur,” marketing officer Adela Roslan, 33, told Bernama.

The trend has also caught the attention of former Federal Territories mufti Datuk Seri Dr Zulkifli Mohamad Al-Bakri and celebrity preacher Ustaz Don Daniyal Don Biyajid.

“Halal and creative ideas can encourage people to love eating dates; you are helping to spread the sunnah of the Prophet SAW, so enjoy it!” said Ustaz Don in a video.

However, some have questioned the trend, saying eating dates with butter is

detrimental to health, similar to eating chocolate-coated dates.

Whether dates are eaten with butter or chocolate, it all goes back to eating habits, which should not be excessive.

This was reiterated by Zulkifli, a former minister in the Prime Minister's Department, on social media platform X.

He said the eating style favoured by Prophet Muhammad SAW is suitable for replenishing energy after a day of fasting, but it should be done in moderation and using real butter.

Dietitian Jazlina Syahrul from Universiti Putra Malaysia also suggested using pure butter, due to its healthier fat content.