

AMORE

LIFE & LEISURE

Winter Issue 2023

**SELF-CARE
SECRETS**

**ART OF
THE HOME:
COSY DÉCOR
IDEAS**

**MANY-
SPLENDOURED
WINGS**

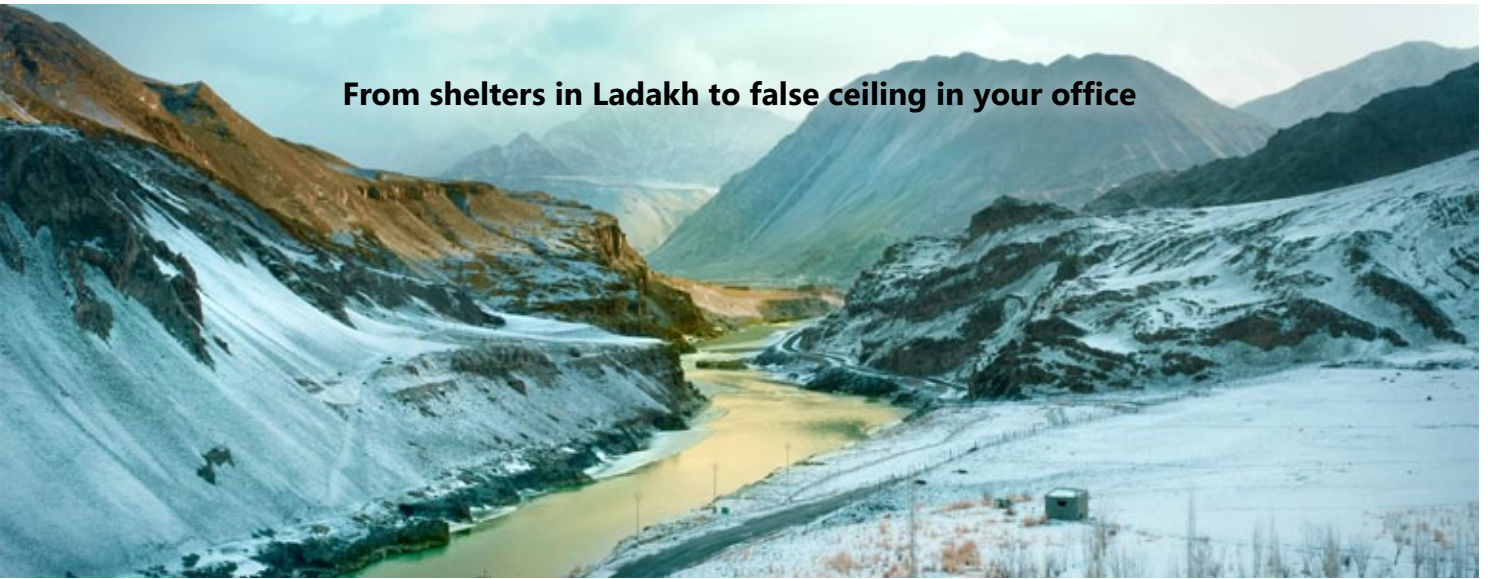
**INDIAN
WEDDING
CUISINE**

**TOP TRAVEL
DESTINATIONS
OF THE YEAR**

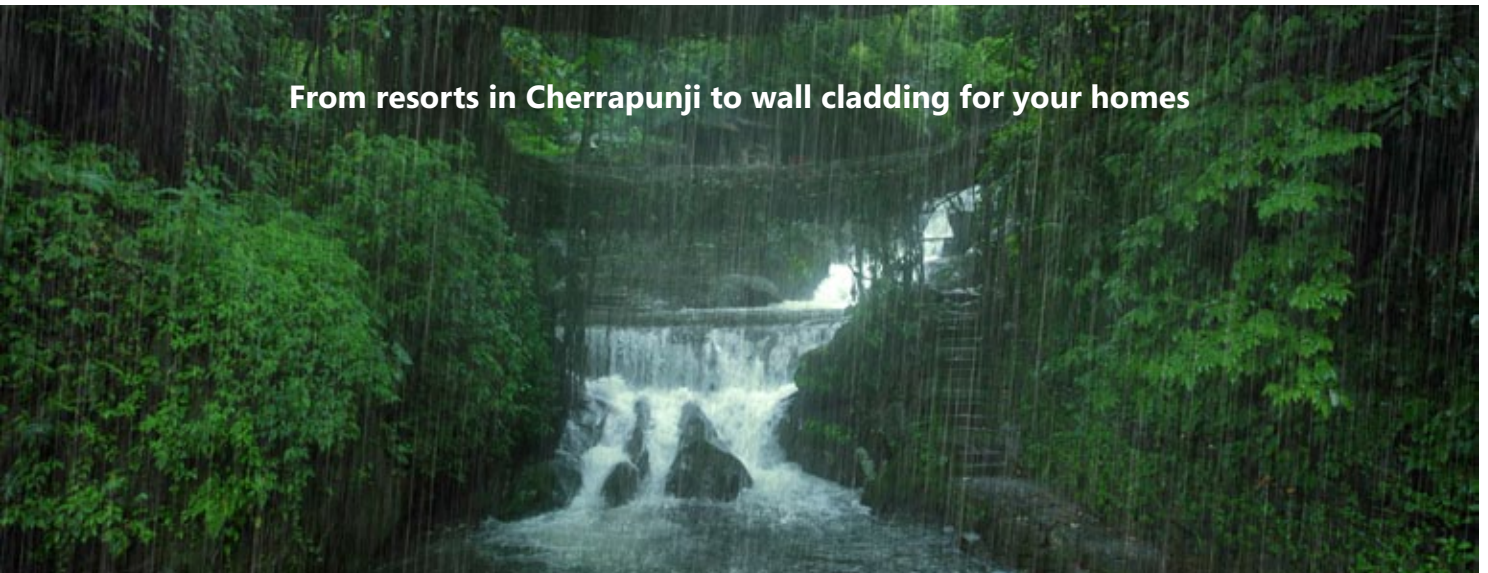
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AMANDA JOY PURAVANKARA
Executive Director
Provident Housing Limited

Dear Readers,

As the cooler winds gently embrace us, I am delighted to present the Winter Edition of Amore—a gift to our cherished community, a reflection of our shared values of elegance, innovation, and a commitment to crafting exceptional lifestyles.

In this season of quiet reflection and cosy indulgence, our magazine is a sanctuary—a place where the warmth of words meets the chill of winter air. You'll discover an eclectic collection of articles spanning the globe, each a unique narrative woven with the threads of diverse themes.

Thank you for being a valued part of our community. May this issue be a source of joy, inspiration, and a reminder of the magic that resides in every snowflake and story.

Amanda Joy

LARGE ENOUGH FOR THE NEW YEAR SOIREE. AND THE AFTER-PARTY.



Representative image

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PURVA MERAKEI

HSR LAYOUT



Artistic impression

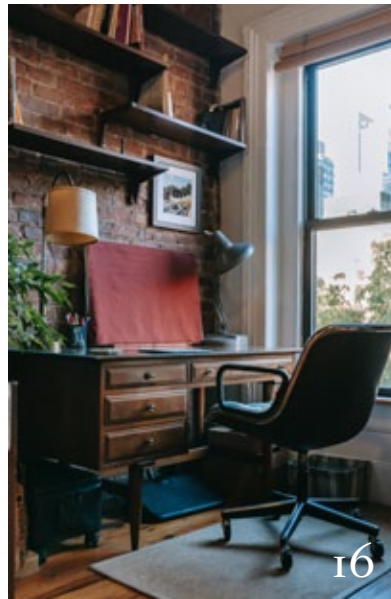
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Stillness. Freedom. Connection.
Embrace Life's Real Luxuries.



Representative image

Award-winning Picture-perfect Villas In The Heart Of South Bengaluru



3 & 4 Bedroom
palatial villas



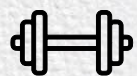
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Artistic impression

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Please Recycle This Paper

editor's note



Dear Readers,

Winter is here, and so is the warmth of our Winter Issue! Snuggle up with your favourite blanket and a cup of cocoa as we take you on a cosy journey through the season.

This issue, I'm especially excited about a few gems. We're diving into the rich tapestry of India's wedding cuisine—a celebration of flavours that will transport you to the heart of joyous festivities. For those looking to keep their winter glow, we've got some fantastic tips on eating right, ensuring your body is as happy as your taste buds.

From tips on staying toasty to a celebration of India's wedding cuisine, we've got you covered. Join us on a virtual trip to New Zealand, explore the art of home decoration in the cosiest hues, and let your taste buds dance with our comfort food recipes.

As always, we invite you to contribute photos, features and personal stories.

Happy reading!

Shubhra

The A List

TRENDING RIGHT NOW



PLANET HANDCRAFTED

A platform for authentic Indian indigenous handcrafted art, with a wide range of tribal and folk paintings, wood carvings, marble art, metal art, luxurious carpets and rugs and much more.



FOSSIL

Fossil is among the world's leading global lifestyle accessories brands, creating timeless, well-crafted leather goods, jewellery and watches. Their latest Made for This campaign reveals an exciting new brand image across all touchpoints.



ARDBERG WHISKEY

Ardbeg Smoketrails Manzanilla Edition, a highly sought-after whiskey offers aficionados the opportunity to own a collectible expression of Ardbeg's legacy. It's now showcased alongside the iconic Ardbeg core range whiskies at Mumbai Duty Free, including Ardbeg An Oa, Ardbeg Uigeadail, and Ardbeg Corryvreckan.





MISS MARGARITA, GOA

Miss Margarita in North Goa launches Slow Smoked BBQ Wednesdays, an exciting culinary soirée. Enjoy a true-blue mid-week Mexican barbecue feast showcasing fresh ingredients, fragrant herbs, succulent meat cuts, and a coal-fired barbecue oven that adds the perfect smoky touch to every dish.



AFFOGATO, MUMBAI

The megacity's sweetest new gelateria will transport you to the cobble streets of Florence. This authentic Italian pâtisserie, gelateria and café features delicious gelatos starring vanilla beans from Madagascar, blueberries from South America, strawberries from Egypt and pistachios from Sicily.



THE GREAT EASTERN HOME

An armchair naturally adds character to the space in a well-furnished living space. The armchairs crafted at The Great Eastern Home feature extended frames and seamlessly integrated arms, providing flexibility to the back while maintaining the collection's strength and simplicity.

Love, Indus

The Freedom of Expression Dual-Purpose Line Limiter from Love, Indus, is a vegan serum designed specifically for expression lines such as lip lines, laugh lines, and face creases. Packed with potent botanicals such as Hibiscus, Kokum, and Mulberry, as well as lab-designed, clean components such as Vegan Collagen, it can also be used as a primer.



7 fun festivals

ACROSS THE WORLD



1 MONKEY BUFFET FESTIVAL, THAILAND
In Lopburi, Thailand, locals offer a massive buffet of fruits and vegetables to thousands of macaque monkeys to thank them for bringing tourism to the area. Usually held on the last Sunday of November.



2 BORYEONG MUD FESTIVAL, SOUTH KOREA
This festival in Boryeong is all about celebrating the health benefits of mud. Participants play in mud pits, get muddy massages, and enjoy various mud-related activities.

3 CHEESE ROLLING, ENGLAND
In Gloucestershire, England, participants chase a wheel of cheese down a steep hill, risking injury as they tumble and roll after it.



4 NIGHT OF THE RADISHES (NOCHE DE RÁBANOS), MEXICO
In Oaxaca, Mexico, artisans create intricate scenes and figures using radishes in a unique Christmas Eve tradition that draws visitors from around the world.



5 HADAKA MATSURI (NAKED FESTIVAL), JAPAN
In Okayama, Japan, men wearing only loincloths compete to grab sacred sticks thrown into the crowd during this ancient festival, which is believed to bring good luck.



7 WIFE-CARRYING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, FINLAND
Held in Sonkajärvi, Finland, this quirky competition requires male participants to carry their wives through an obstacle course, often with humorous costumes and unconventional techniques.



6 DIA DE LOS MUERTOS, MEXICO
This colourful Mexican holiday celebrates the deceased with elaborate sugar skull decorations, vibrant altars, and parades, bringing a festive twist to the concept of honoring the dead.

PURVA

ALWAYS ABOUT YOU

A WINNING PHILOSOPHY, A HIGH-IMPACT CAMPAIGN.



For 48 years, our brand has touched hearts across India. As we aim to be one of India's top 3 developers, we revisited the DNA that has powered our journey: passionate customer focus.

REDISCOVERING CUSTOMER- CENTRICITY

We craft thoughtful blueprints so our customers can redefine their lives. We go the extra mile to find the right location so they're close to what they love. We create elevating experiences so they can achieve work-life balance. We invest every day in making our customers the center of our universe, so their home can be the center of theirs. That led us to our new brand thought: ALWAYS ABOUT YOU.

RETHINKING VISION, RENEWING THE NAME

We rebranded our luxury homes segment as 'Purva' - promising customers an even more contemporary experience. We also unveiled a new vision statement: To create a sustainable world for people to live their dreams. This echoes our focus on sustainability and meaningful communities. In short, everything the brand does inspires customers to reach their goals. Hence, 'Always About You'.

A THOUGHT DRIVEN BY OUR LEADERSHIP

Ashish Puravankara, our MD, says, "With this brand refresh, we are reinforcing our dedication to being an integral part of every homebuyer's journey - from selecting their dream home, through the construction journey, to cherishing every moment of living in the Purva community."

AN EXCITING MARKETING BLITZKRIEG

'ALWAYS ABOUT YOU' came alive via a nationwide digital campaign that included YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, MoneyControl, and InShorts. The campaign also covered print and outdoor. Warm and contemporary, the campaign was well received by our stakeholders and will create even higher brand salience in the coming days. Most of all, the campaign reinforces our purpose - supporting the dreams of those we serve. We can think of no better blueprint to anchor our ambitious journey ahead.

Scan to know more



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THE BEST THINGS ANYONE EVER SAID

About Coffee

“COFFEE IS A LANGUAGE
IN ITSELF.”

.....

- Jackie Chan

“I LIKE MY COFFEE WITH
CREAM AND MY LITERATURE
WITH OPTIMISM.”

.....

- Abigail Reynolds

“COFFEE SMELLS
LIKE MAGIC AND
FAIRYTALES.”

.....

- Unknown

“I’D RATHER TAKE
COFFEE THAN
COMPLIMENTS.”

.....

- Louisa May Alcott,
Little Women

“COFFEE SMELLS
LIKE FRESHLY
GROUND HEAVEN.”

.....

- Jessi Lane Adams

“ADVENTURE IN LIFE IS
GOOD; CONSISTENCY IN
COFFEE EVEN BETTER.”

.....

- Justina Chen

“AS LONG AS THERE WAS
COFFEE IN THE WORLD, HOW
BAD COULD THINGS BE?”

.....

- Cassandra Clare

“I ORCHESTRATE MY
MORNINGS TO THE TUNE
OF COFFEE.”

.....

- Harry Mahtar



DÉCOR

IDEAS & INSPIRATION ON HOW TO MAKE
YOUR HOME A BEAUTIFUL SANCTUARY



BARE BRICKS

The hottest style in home décor today

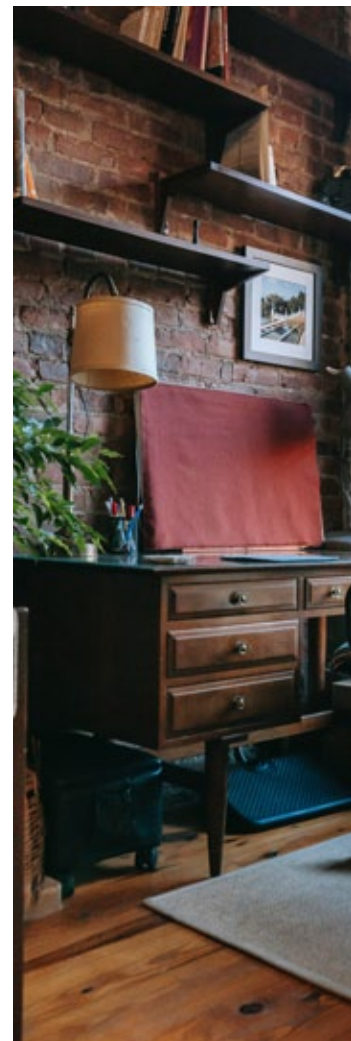
Exposed brick style is a design concept that celebrates the raw, unadorned beauty of brick walls. Unlike the conventional practice of concealing these architectural elements behind layers of paint or plaster, this style embraces their authenticity, allowing the bricks to take centre stage. The result is a space that exudes character, history, and a warm, inviting atmosphere.

THE BEAUTY OF IMPERFECTION

Exposed bricks tell a story. Each brick carries with it a unique texture, colour, and imperfections that hint at the passage of time.

The origin of the exposed brick style can be traced back to the 19th century England. As factories and warehouses sprung up, builders utilised bricks as the primary construction material due to its affordability and durability. Over time, these structures became a hallmark of urban landscapes.

As these industrial buildings were repurposed into residential spaces, the removal of plaster and paint revealed the stunning brickwork underneath. The architects and designers of the time recognised the beauty in these accidental discoveries, and the trend of leaving brick walls exposed began.



HOW TO BEAUTIFY WITH BARE BRICKS

Make them a focal point: Consider creating an accent brick wall in spaces like the living room, kitchen, or bedroom. Smaller rooms can benefit from an exposed brick accent wall.

Lighting Matters: Proper lighting is crucial to showcase the beauty of exposed brick. Use soft, warm lighting to accentuate the texture and colour variations of the bricks.

Create a Theme: Balance the ruggedness of exposed brick with complementary furniture and decor. Draw the look together with cosy textiles, wood elements, and vintage-inspired furnishings.

Coordinate the Colours: Your colour palette should complement the bricks, allowing them to stand out. Neutral tones like whites, greys and earthy hues work well.

BRICK STYLES

Rustic Charm: Exposed brick with wooden beams and leather upholstery can create a cabin-like ambience even in a modern apartment.

Industrial Chic: Embrace the industrial vibe by pairing exposed brick with steel accents, concrete floors, and minimalist furniture. This style works brilliantly in open-plan lofts.

Strike a Contrast: Create a striking contrast by integrating sleek, contemporary furnishings against a backdrop of weathered bricks. This juxtaposition can infuse your space with a sense of urban sophistication.

Go Boho: Layer your exposed brick wall with vibrant textiles, eclectic decor, and an array of plants for a bohemian-inspired oasis.

Work the Vintage Look: Incorporate vintage-inspired fixtures, such as Edison bulb lighting and retro furnishings, to complement the historic charm of exposed brick.

Emulate the Artist: Turn your brick wall into a canvas for artwork and photography. The textured backdrop adds depth and interest to your art collection.

Conjure up Coastal Cool: Contrary to the conventional urban feel, exposed brick can also work in beachside





homes. Combine it with light, airy colors, and nautical decor for a coastal chic look.

BRICKS + BOOKS + PLANTS

1. Brick Bookshelves with Greenery

Transform a brick wall into a stunning bookshelf by adding wooden shelves directly onto the exposed brick. Use reclaimed or rustic wood for a charming, vintage look. Arrange your favourite books in a visually appealing manner, interspersed with potted plants and succulents. The contrast of the weathered brick, the warmth of wood, the vibrancy of greenery, and the colourful spines of your books will create a captivating and harmonious display.

2. Brick Fireplace Book Nook

If your home features a brick fireplace, make it the centerpiece of your reading area. Arrange built-in bookshelves or standalone bookcases on either side of the fireplace, filling them with your literary treasures. Above the mantel, hang a large mirror or artwork to balance the visual weight of the brick. Place a lush, leafy indoor plant or a pair of potted trees on the hearth to bring life and vitality to the space.

3. Brick Wall Niches

Create brick wall niches by recessing sections of the wall to accommodate books and plants. These built-in nooks provide a seamless and customized look. Arrange your books on sturdy floating shelves within the niches, and adorn them with small potted plants, framed artwork, or decorative objects. Adding built-in lighting to illuminate the shelves can further enhance the display.

4. Library Ladder

For a touch of old-world charm, install a rolling library ladder against your brick wall bookshelf. This practical element for accessing high shelves also lends a library-like atmosphere to your space. Add trailing vines or hanging planters for a whimsical touch.

5. Suspended Planters

Hang an assortment of stylish planters directly from the brick wall, creating a vertical garden alongside your book collection. Mix and match plant varieties to create visual interest and texture. Consider using wall-mounted brackets or hooks to secure the planters. Your exposed brick space is now both contemporary and eco-friendly.

A Manchester Inspired Township

Artistic Impression



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F How to Energize Your Space The Feng Shui Way

Hint: It involves changing 27 things

Feng Shui enthusiasts suggest that making changes to 27 items in your living space can usher in fresh energy and stimulate a more harmonious atmosphere. The number 27 holds special significance in Chinese culture, representing positive transformation and renewal. By intentionally altering a variety of elements, you can create a dynamic shift in the energy flow of your home.

CHANGES YOU CAN MAKE:

- **Declutter:** Donate, discard, or repurpose items that no longer serve you. Clearing out the old allows room for new opportunities and positive energy.
- **Rotate:** Swap out artwork, cushions, or decorative items in your home. Changing the visual landscape can refresh your perspective and bring new inspiration.
- **Reposition:** Shift the arrangement of your furniture to encourage better energy flow. Experiment with different layouts until you find one that feels balanced and harmonious.

- **Green Up:** Bring the outdoors in by adding plants to your living space. Not only do they purify the air, but they also symbolize growth and vitality.
- **Update:** A simple change in colour can have a profound impact on the energy of a room. Consider incorporating hues that promote calmness, positivity, and balance.
- **Switch:** Illuminate your space with new lighting fixtures. Opt for fixtures that cast a warm and inviting glow, enhancing the overall ambiance.
- **Refresh:** Upgrade your bed linens and towels. Crisp, clean linens contribute to a sense of renewal and promote a restful environment.

By embracing the Feng Shui principle of changing 27 things in your home, you're taking a proactive step toward inviting positive energy and balance into your life. Remember, it's not just about the physical changes but also the intention behind them. Experiment, trust your instincts, and watch as your revitalised surroundings positively impact your overall well-being. Embrace the transformative power of Feng Shui, and let the energy flow!





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an 'art'iculate HOMIE

Stepping into Seemita Roy's place is like diving headfirst into an art museum, but way cosier. Her Gurugram home isn't just a house; it's a glimpse into an incredibly creative mind.



You aren't likely to see many homes that virtually *explode* with art. The word "wow" forms on your lips the moment you enter, and it takes a while to soak in the stunning, unique vibe of her home. Seamlessly blending quiet luxury with vibrant pops of colour is an art, and this lady has mastered it.

So, what inspires her?

The answers are as unexpected as the sight that greets you when you step in. "The cows of Gurgaon, for one," she says with a smile.









Kolkata dominates her work. It's like a love letter to the city – cars, people, and everything that makes it buzz. And lately, it's the fashion scene that's got her hooked. Models, catwalks, makeup – it is amazing how they come alive on her canvases.

Her painting style? Think contemporary, with a twist of everything that catches her eye during her travels. She's been everywhere – Bangkok, Koh Samui, Helsinki, Bergen – and let's just say, her mind is like a travel scrapbook, filled with beautiful scenery and, of course, amazing houses.

Flowers are her latest muse. Every canvas she touches has a floral vibe to it. None of it is planned, and yet, all of it comes together beautifully. Seemita works with acrylic—she is allergic to oil.

But where does all this creativity come from? Interestingly, her family was all about academics and culture—no artists before her! But once Seemita began painting, there was no hiding or stopping her talent. She went to art school, and had the privilege of being taught by the great Bikash Bhattacharya himself.

Soft-spoken and petite, Seemita says her home is a constant art project. "If you come after six months, none of this will be the same," she says.

From far-flung locales to cherished local finds, her home is a tribute to diversity, offering a glimpse into her evolution as an artist and the captivating narratives of her life's journey. Each piece has a story, like a lamp made from a rice handi in Gujarat or chandeliers from Czechoslovakia she snagged in Dubai. You'll spot Indian silver chairs hosting dinners, and elegant Ethan Allen lamps. And there's more – delicate angel faces, brass hands, and candelabras from all over the globe.

Her current favourite hunting grounds are Beyond Design store in Ghitorni on Delhi's MG Road, and Sharma Farms in Chattarpur, which is a treasure-house of antiques. Khan Market is another favourite, and if you're going to Dubai, check out Petals, where Seemita does a lot of her décor shopping.

Her home's not just where she lives; it's where her art breathes, lives, and evolves.



A Manchester Inspired Township

Where Leisure meets Opulence

Elevating luxury living to unparalleled heights, **Provident Deansgate** embodies the captivating essence of **Manchester** right in the heart of North Bengaluru. Drawing inspiration from the enchanting allure of the English city, these pioneering residences in Bengaluru harmonise flawlessly designed red brick abodes, vintage-themed lampposts, and an exceptionally designed clubhouse crowned by a majestic clock tower. The atmosphere is further enriched by picket fences, English sculptures, and

cobblestone pathways, transporting you to an era of timeless elegance. A mere 15 minutes from Kempegowda International Airport, Provident Deansgate stands amidst the dynamic hub of IT parks and corporations.

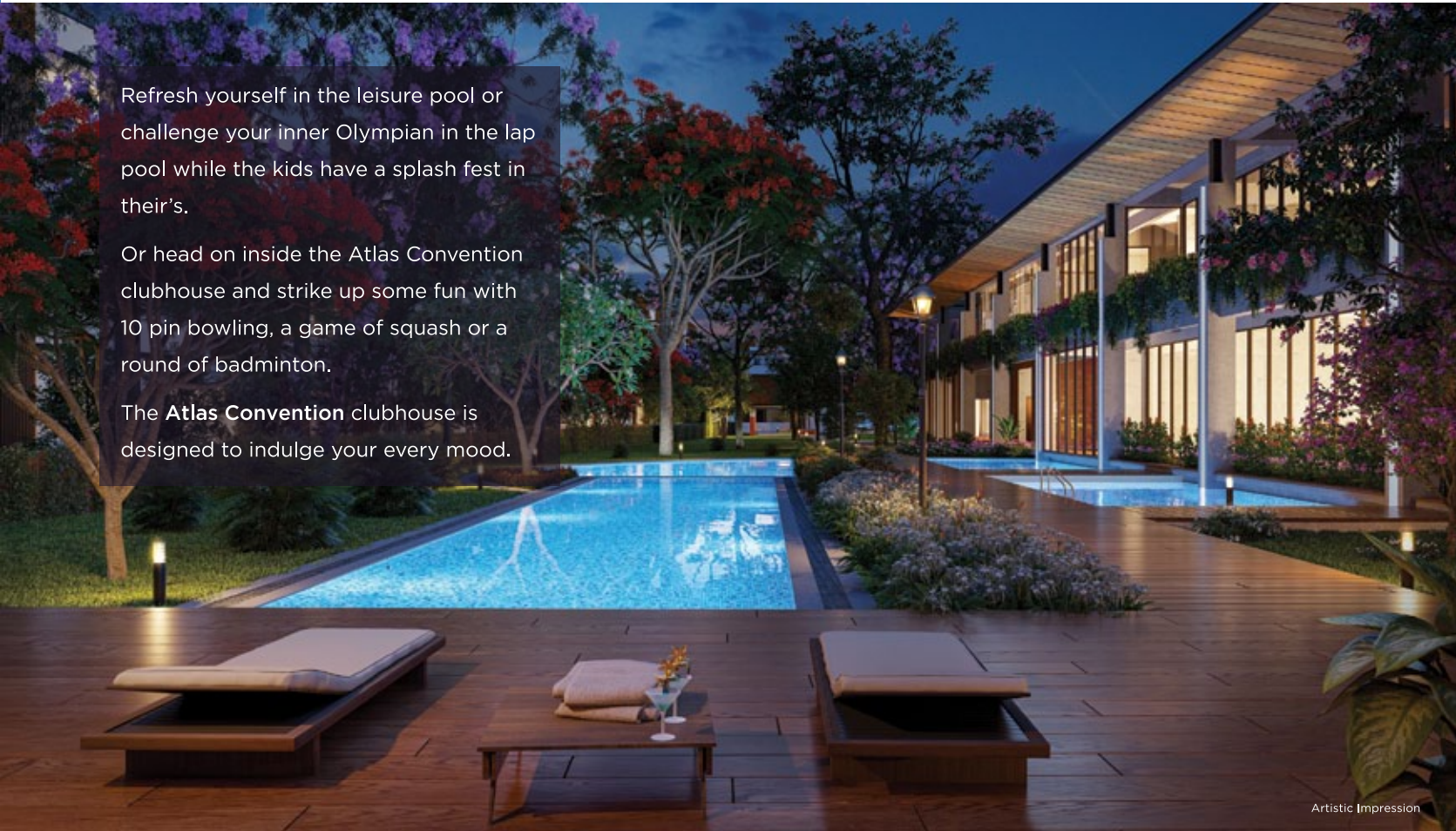
Spread across sprawling ~15 acres of lush greenery with 1500 plus trees, this development comprises meticulously designed 3-BHK townhouse-styled homes that seamlessly blend nature with luxury for 288 discerning families.



Refresh yourself in the leisure pool or challenge your inner Olympian in the lap pool while the kids have a splash fest in their's.

Or head on inside the Atlas Convention clubhouse and strike up some fun with 10 pin bowling, a game of squash or a round of badminton.

The **Atlas Convention** clubhouse is designed to indulge your every mood.



Artistic Impression



Garden Townhouse

Experience unrivaled luxury and serenity in your Garden Townhouse. Unwind, entertain and rejuvenate in your private garden, surrounded by lush foliage offering an oasis of tranquility. An indulgent haven for your precious moments and a canvas for your green thumb.



Artistic Impression

Terrace Townhouse

Enjoy indoor comfort and outdoor beauty in your expansive Duplex Terrace Townhouse. Host soirées under the stars, cultivate your rooftop retreat or relish solitude amidst sky-high beauty. Let the pitter-patter of running feet add music to your every day.



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INTERIOR DESIGNER INSIGHT

When using pink in your home decor, remember that less can often be more. Use pink as an accent colour to create a sense of harmony and balance in your space. Layer it with neutrals or complementary shades to prevent the room from feeling overly

think
PINK

Experiment with different shades, textures, and accessories to create a space that reflects your style while embracing the warmth and versatility of the colour pink.

DECORATE YOUR LIVING SPACE WITH THE MAGIC OF PINK, WHERE CHIC MEETS COSY, AND EVERY CORNER WHISPERS ELEGANCE.



■ **Statement Furnishings:**

Incorporate baby pink towels and pink furnishings strategically. A plush pink rug, throw pillows, or a statement chair can add a soft, inviting touch to any room.

■ **Floral Elegance:** Arrange pink flowers in a vase to infuse freshness and a pop of colour. Peonies, roses, or cherry blossoms can add a vibrant yet calming feel to your space.

■ **Pretty in Pink Crockery:** Display pink crockery or tableware to add a charming touch to your dining experience. Mix and match subtle hues for an eclectic and inviting table setting.

■ **Subtle Accents:** Introduce small accents like pink candles, photo frames, or artwork to tie the room's colour scheme together without overwhelming the space.

■ **Harmonising Shades:** Experiment with various shades of pink. Blending pastel pinks with deeper hues or pairing pink with neutral colours like white, beige, or grey can create a harmonious and balanced aesthetic.

■ **Play with Textures:** Incorporate different textures in pink, such as velvet cushions, satin throws, or even a textured pink wallpaper, to add depth and visual interest.



Make your home winter ready

Nip in the air, hot coffee in hand, that hint of cinnamon and nutmeg, the Christmas celebrations, those bonfires with friends and long conversations; its definitely the best time of the year for me.

BY INDERPREET KAUR



As we ramp our wardrobes and take those woollens out, its equally important to prep your home and make - it winter ready-comfortable, cosy and a snug place.

Make the living rooms more inviting and embrace cosiness, use winter accessories to bring warmth in the space. Its time to take our all those beautiful carpets that you had rolled up and tucked-in during the summers. Carpets in India are often not given their due - they not just enhance the look, they create an inviting layer and give a rich texture to the space.

Add a throw to the sofas and seats- invest in warm throws that not just appeal in aesthetics but provide the necessary piece to snuggle when you throw yourself on a sofa for those long conversations.

Bright cushions are always the hero. Take them out from the closets- throw them on beds, sofas and even on your carpets- velvets and silks for cushions covers add to the richness and cheer up the space. I personally keep 2 separate types of cushion covers- come summers I prefer to have cottons with minimal prints and light colours, and winters are about festivities, bolder colours, golden





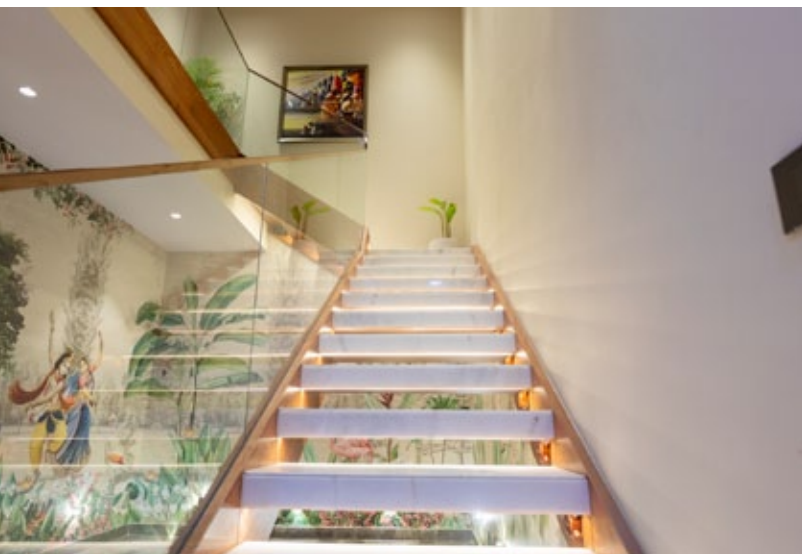
embroideries and rich fabrics. Cushions will brighten up your space without overdoing it.

Winters can get gloomy as the sun may not be bright and days are smaller, so get more outdoors in- those beautiful Palms and other indoor greens are the perfect mood lifter anyone can think of. You may need to show these plants more sunshine and hence shift them out often, but the way greens liven up the space is unparalleled. Add flowers as often and see how they liven up even the dullest days. Get those gorgeous colours in bedrooms and I promise you won't be able to leave your home.

Nature inspired customised wall papers is another way to a bring happy winters.



Wood is my favourite for any season. Nothing to beat the charms of wood, it gives warmth to your space like nothing else. If you already have wooden furniture, or wooden wall panelling, its great. However if you don't- add small accessories- a wooden tray on the coffee table with some pine cones, a few flowers or even a money plant, add wooden bookends, those sculptures or even a few wall decors.





While talking of décor- Brass is another metal I love for winters. Take them all out and shine them on a lazy Sunday to prep your homes for Diwali and winters- be these your sculptures, diyas in the house, candle stands, large trays, surahis or anything you may not be using. Add a few small indoors plants in their vicinity and you'll realise how beautifully they create an old world charm to your space.

Candles - another personal favourite. Use organic and beautiful smelling candles throughout the home- be it living room, bedrooms or just leave one in the bathroom. From Nutmeg to Jasmine- you're spoilt for choice in the market- just select the one that vibes with you and your space and don't hesitate to add them to your homes. You can even use nice distressed wooden candle stands to further enhance the look of your room. Candles also make for the most amazing winter gifts. Let the wine parties begin on long chatters with candles in the background.





While on candles, another very important mention is the lights- your ceiling lights, wall lights and chandeliers. Come winters and we all prefer to have soft glowing lights at home- ensure that any light not working is replaced and use natural whites and warm whites- keep the white light at bay.

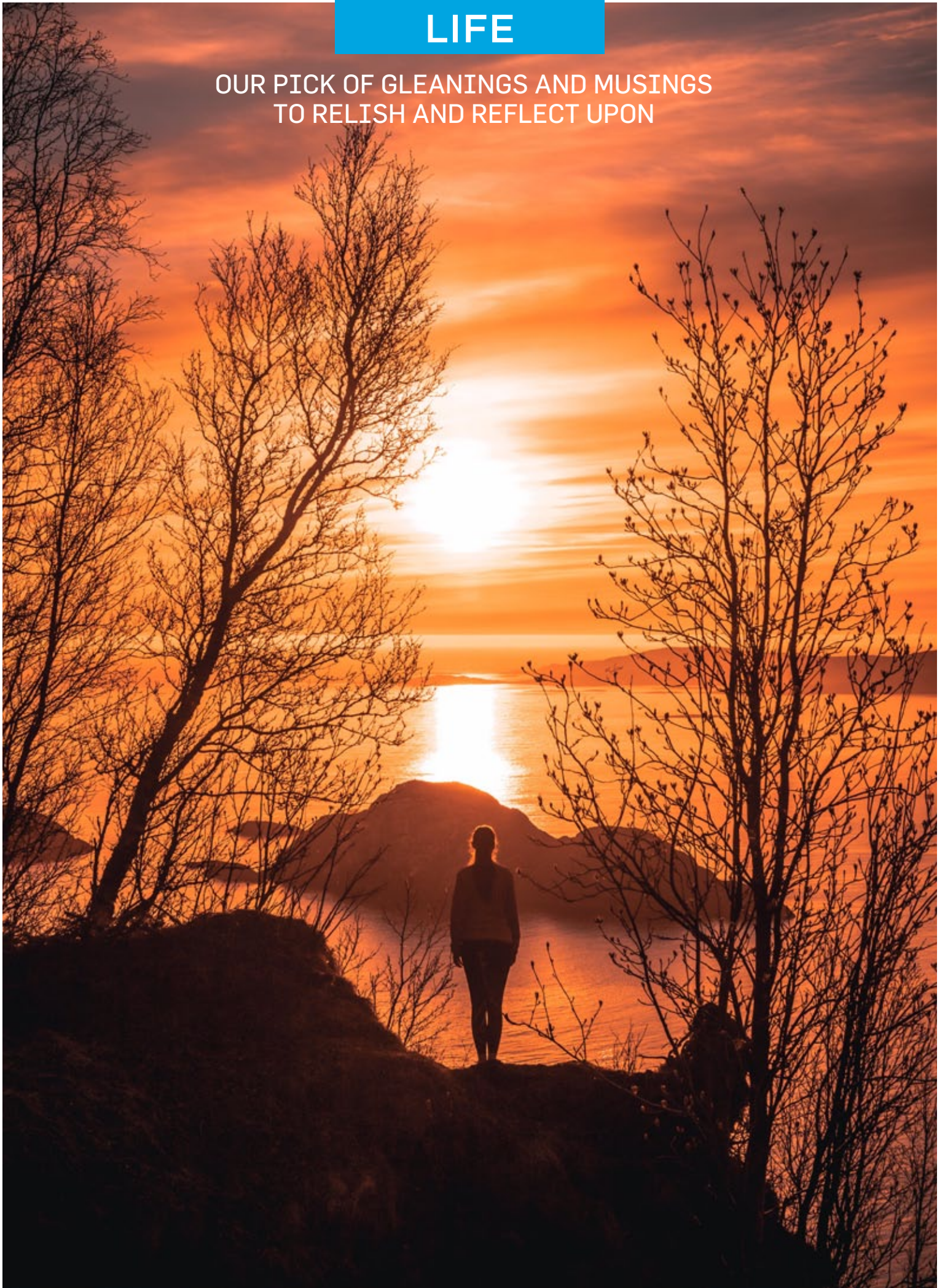
Simple and easy changes to your space and you will invite winters- be it house parties, snuggling at home with your family and watching Netflix or long conversations with friends over cheese and wine- you will fall in love with your home all over again!!

MEET THE WRITER

Inderpreet kaur is the founder and Principal Designer of Purplelane Interiors, a full scale design firm in Gurgaon. She believes that home is your sanctuary and hence every element, be it the use of natural resources, colour palette or the use of natural sunlight, must be integrated well. Rich textures, art and relaxing vibes are her design mantra.

LIFE

OUR PICK OF GLEANINGS AND MUSINGS
TO RELISH AND REFLECT UPON



MANY- SPLENDOURED WINGS

India's skies are a riot of feathers and melodies, hosting over 1,300 vibrant bird species. Rahul Neel Mani takes us on a whistle-stop tour through this avian carnival, where every wingbeat adds a splash of colour to the country's rich natural tapestry.

CRESTED LARK

(Scientific Name: *Galerida Cristata*)

Similar to the Skylark, this bird is brighter and paler with a short tail and longer spikier crest. Found across eastern Europe, west and central Asia, and Africa this bird mostly dwells on the ground (Sambhar Lake Rajasthan)



King-like



CRESTED SERPENT EAGLE

(Scientific name: *Spilornis
Cheela*)

Crested serpent eagles are medium-sized raptors and prefer the edges of forests where they can soar and effectively hunt. These are diurnal and non-migratory birds. (Kanha Tiger Reserve, MP)

Eyeing the prey

INDIAN PARADISE FLYCATCHER FEMALE

(Scientific name: *Terpsiphone
Paradisi*)

This passerine bird native to Asia has a glossy back with black crown and crest. This bird is mostly found in deciduous, evergreen, and bamboo forests where moisture is high. (Bir, Himachal Pradesh)



Am I not the cutest?



Solitude

PLUM-HEADED PARAKEET FEMALE

(Scientific name: *Psittacula Cyanocephala*)

Both male and female are brilliantly-coloured parakeets. Males have a plum-coloured head while females have greyish-blue heads. They thrive in the woodlands and forested areas both in plains and mountains. (Pancheshwar, Champawat, Uttarakhand)

LESSER FLAMINGO JUVENILE

(Scientific name: *Phoeniconaias Minor*)

Smallest flamingos in the world, this bird is found in large flocks near, saline or alkaline water bodies and also coastal lagoons where it finds microscopic blue-green algae to eat. The Juveniles are grey-brown and darker. (Sambhar Lake, Rajasthan)



Separated from the flock



It's time for some sunbathing

ORIENTAL (INDIAN) DARTER

(Scientific name: *Anhinga Melanogaster*)

This waterbird is also called snake bird for its snakelike neck and a long, pointed bill. It finds its prey under water with its long pointed bill, brings it above water and tosses it in the air before swallowing. (Bharatpur, Rajasthan)



Wet, but still charming

INDIAN PEAFOWL

(Scientific name: Pavo Cristatus)

This bird is native to the Indian subcontinent. It is found mainly below an elevation of 1,800 meters. It can adapt to live in cultivated regions and around human habitations. (Ranthambore National Park)



Close, yet so far

INDIAN PITTA

(Scientific name: Pitta Brachayura)

This passerine bird is native to the Indian subcontinent. It breeds in the forests of the Himalayas, hills of central and western India, and migrates to other parts of the peninsula in the winters. It is also known as 'Navrang', which means nine colours. (Bhondsi, Gurugram, Haryana)



Rahul Neel Mani: Rahul is a journalist by profession, a naturist by instinct and an accidental, amateur photographer who wants to pursue it as a passion. He has keen interest in birding, and bird photography.

One Tip on Photography: Follow your instinct. Overt use of technique can make photography boring. Create an imagery in your mind and click pictures.

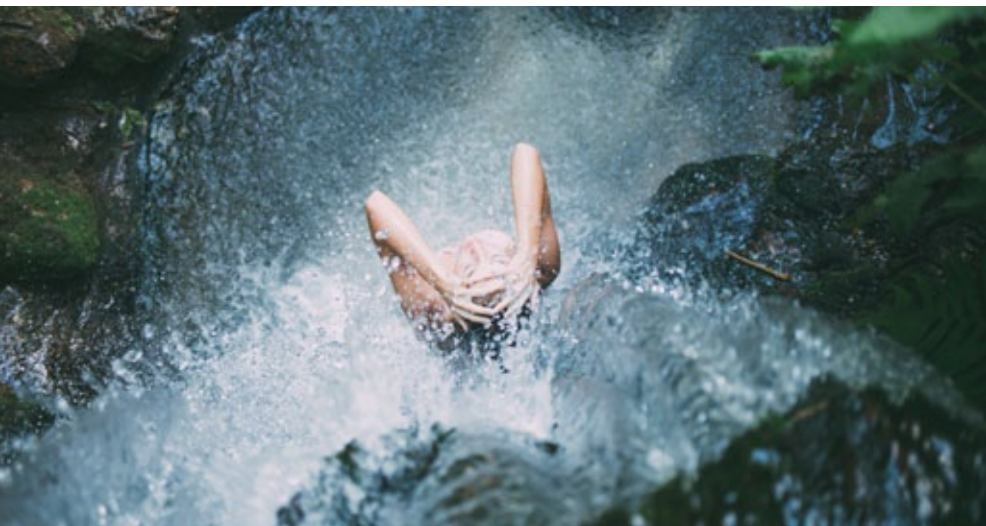
Sweating it Out

The World's Hottest Healing Therapies: Quite Literally!



They harness the power of heat for relaxation, pain relief, and overall well-being, utilising natural sources of heat, such as hot water, steam, or heated objects.

You might already be familiar with saunas, steam baths and Ayurvedic warm oil massage. Here's a round-up of offbeat heat therapies from other parts of the world:



Hot Springs

These are known as Onsen in Japan and Balneotherapy in Europe. Hot springs are natural geothermal pools containing mineral-rich water heated by the Earth's internal heat. The therapy involves soaking in these mineral-rich hot springs to promote relaxation, relieve muscle tension, and improve skin conditions.

Moxibustion

A traditional Chinese therapy in which the dried herb mugwort (moxa) is burned near specific acupuncture points on the body. The heat generated during moxibustion is believed to stimulate the flow of qi (life energy) and alleviate various health issues, including pain and digestive problems.



Sweat Lodges

Native American tribes have long used sweat lodges as a form of heat therapy and purification. Participants sit inside a small, enclosed structure, typically covered with blankets or hides. Heated rocks are placed in a pit, and water is poured over them to create steam. This ceremony is believed to promote physical and spiritual healing.



Russian Banya

A traditional bathhouse that combines aspects of both saunas and steam rooms. It involves alternating between extreme heat and cold water immersion. The heat is believed to stimulate the immune system, improve circulation, and promote detoxification.

Igloos and Ice Baths

In the Arctic regions, people use heat therapy by alternating between extreme cold (ice baths or cold plunges) and the warmth of igloos or heated cabins. This practice is believed to invigorate the body, improve circulation, and provide a unique contrast therapy experience.



Fire Yoga

Fire yoga, or Yogagni, is a yoga practice that incorporates the element of fire. Practitioners perform yoga poses and breathing exercises near an open fire or candlelight. This practice is believed to build inner heat, increase energy, and deepen the mind-body connection.





Those Sweet & Salty Days

BY SHUBHRA KRISHAN

Growing up in rural India was a feast. Quite literally. Our joint family comprised many children of assorted ages, several sets of aunts and uncles, and one ageless grandmother who delighted in cooking for the entire brood.

Today's posh New Delhi neighbourhoods were wild forest areas back then. We lived some 40 miles away from Delhi, in a tiny village-y town called Ballabgarh. Home, large but

crumbly, used to be the palace of an erstwhile local king. So, there were stables, lawns and massive old trees that gave us ample room to play. Our ever-in-motion bodies required regular refuelling, and my grandmother, Nani Amma, was always ready with replenishments.

All we had to do was race into the kitchen, where big glass jars and ceramic martbans sat on shelves helpfully placed at child's-eye level. The goodies were old favourites that we



never tired of— namakpara, shakkarpara, besan ke laddoo, til ki gajjak, gajar pak, methi ki mathri, khasta kachauri and of course, heeng-aam ka achar starring mangoes plucked from an in-house tree.

In our entire gang of mostly gangly children, one stood out for her early love of cooking. Me. I wasn't content with simply wolfing down those treats. Their aftertaste lingered in my mouth—and heart—even as I perched atop the old banyan tree around which our verandah seemed to have sprouted.

Peering down, I would watch Nani's knobby hands coax the dough into shape and sprinkle her magical spices on it while the ghee bubbled briskly in the kadahi on the wood-fired chulha by her side.

In a trice, I would shimmy down by her side, begging her to let me help. Nani did not like children lurking anywhere near fire, so my first efforts were met with an impatient "Shoo! Go, play!" But being that tender—and most child-sensitive—species, a grandmother; she soon relented, and I won my first culinary assignment—repeatedly plunging a fork into mathri disks to prevent them from fluffing up. In all my life since



then, I haven't won a reward greater than the approving smile on Nani's toothless face.

Then on, we were a team. My budding talent was recognised in the form of "shabash" back-pats and satisfied burps. The biggest compliment came when a particularly hard-to-please mausi asked me to make besan laddoos, since those were always in high demand and short supply.

The word "laddoo" comes from the Sanskrit word "ladduka" meaning "small ball." Only, our laddoos were always nice and big. Besan, always ground in a ghar ki chakki, was first cooked in homemade ghee, then sugared and shaped into large balls that held the texture of fine sand. Learning how to tease the hot mass of cooked flour into laddoos without burning my hands was not an easy skill, but I mastered it quickly enough to relieve Nani of that chore. It took time and patience to make those laddoos, but they were gone even before we could fill them into jars.

Now that she had an assistant, Nani was keen to venture into unfamiliar domain, trying out spontaneous versions of what I knew much later to be pasta and pizza. Inspired by Italy? She could have been, had she ever been to school, watched television, or known someone from those parts.

Our "pasta" was made of spiced besan balls cooked in water, then tossed in a tomato sauce, and sprinkled with herbs. I cook it even today—topped with grated parmesan, it's a glorious example of Indo-Italian fusion cuisine. Back then, the only "cheese" we knew was paneer, which we made at home with udder-fresh milk from the cows in our stable. We just never thought of crumbling it over our "pasta!"

Under Nani's expert hands, the humble chapati shed its boring role of daily companion to dal and began playing pizza base to perfection, thanks to our wood-fired oven; the chulha. We topped it with chopped spring onions, fresh tomatoes, even cubes of boiled potato, topped with big knobs of home-churned white butter. I doubt I have had better pizza, ever!

We do cook pizza from scratch even today, but how does one replicate the aroma of the wood burning in that mini-world of a verandah, the sheer lustiness of young tastebuds, and the touch of Nani's hands...

Made in America

Three incredible women whose lives inspire us
to keep calm and soldier on

Grandma MOSES



Anna Mary Robertson Moses, famously known as Grandma Moses, was a remarkable American folk artist whose journey from a simple life in rural New York to worldwide art stardom is nothing short of inspiring.

Born in 1860 in Greenwich, New York, Moses spent most of her early years working on her family's farm and as a housekeeper. It wasn't until her late 70s that she began her artistic career. Her paintings depicted scenes of rural life, often based on her memories of the picturesque landscapes and daily activities she had witnessed throughout her long life.

Grandma Moses's art gained attention when a collector discovered her work in a drugstore window in 1938. She was in her late 70s at the time. Her charming and nostalgic style captured the hearts of many, and her paintings started to sell. She continued to paint well into her 100s, producing more than 1,000 works.

Her work was exhibited in prestigious galleries, and she gained international recognition. Grandma Moses's art remains a testament to the notion that it's never too late to pursue one's passions and achieve greatness. She passed away in 1961 at the age of 101, leaving behind a legacy of art that continues to enchant and inspire people worldwide.

Margaret Mitchell



Margaret Mitchell's journey to writing her novel, "Gone with the Wind," is a story of determination, dedication, and a bit of serendipity. The novel, set against the backdrop of the American Civil War and Reconstruction era, would go on to become one of the most famous and enduring works of American literature.

Margaret Mitchell was born in 1900 in Atlanta, Georgia, and grew up hearing stories of the Civil War from her family. Her fascination with these tales, along with her love for reading and writing, set the stage for her future literary endeavor.

The idea for her novel began to take shape in 1926 when Mitchell was recovering from an ankle injury. During her convalescence, she decided to write a novel as a form of entertainment. She was particularly inspired by her family's own history and the stories she had heard from Civil War veterans.

For years, Mitchell worked in secret, typing her manuscript on an old Remington typewriter. She carefully researched the historical details and the Southern culture that would bring her characters and settings to life.

In 1936, Mitchell's friend and neighbour, Harold Latham, convinced her to share her manuscript with a publisher. The result was an instant success. "Gone with the Wind" was published in 1936 and became a literary sensation. The book won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction in 1937 and was adapted into a hugely successful film in 1939.

Margaret Mitchell's dedication to her craft and her passion for storytelling turned her into a literary icon. Despite never publishing another novel, "Gone with the Wind" remains a timeless classic, a testament to the power of an author's vision and the enduring legacy of a single work of art. Margaret Mitchell's story is a reminder that sometimes, unexpected circumstances and a lifelong passion can lead to the creation of something truly remarkable.

Halle Berry



Halle Berry's rags-to-riches story is a testament to her determination and resilience in the face of adversity. Born on August 14, 1966, in Cleveland, Ohio, Berry faced numerous challenges on her path to stardom.

Berry's early life was marked by financial difficulties and family struggles. Raised by a single mother, she faced the hardships of a broken home and often lived in low-income neighbourhoods. Despite these challenges, Berry remained determined to succeed.

She began pursuing a career in modelling and later transitioned into acting. However, her journey in Hollywood was far from smooth. She faced numerous rejections and racial discrimination in the industry. Many people doubted her potential as an actress, but Berry refused to give up.

Her breakthrough came in the early 1990s when she was cast in the television series "Living Dolls" and later in the film "Jungle Fever," directed by Spike Lee. But it was

her role in the 1992 film "Boomerang" that brought her widespread recognition.

In 2002, Halle Berry made history by becoming the first African American woman to win the Academy Award for Best Actress for her role in "Monster's Ball." This groundbreaking achievement opened doors for other minority actors and highlighted the importance of diversity in the entertainment industry.

Berry's continued success in both film and television, along with her advocacy for various social and humanitarian causes, has solidified her position as one of Hollywood's most respected and influential figures.

Halle Berry's journey from a challenging upbringing to becoming an Academy Award-winning actress is a story of persistence, resilience, and breaking barriers. Her success not only transformed her life but also helped pave the way for greater diversity and representation in the entertainment world.

LEISURE

TAKE TIME TO NURTURE YOURSELF
IN BODY, MIND & SOUL



The Museums of Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh boasts a diverse collection of museums, each offering a unique glimpse into the region's past, art, culture, and natural history. The state is often called the 'heart of India', not only because it is geographically located at the centre of the country but also because it epitomises the historical, culture and natural variety as well as the sheer antiquity of this land. Some of the oldest human and animal fossils in the world have been excavated in the Narmada valley, and the state's many rock art shelters are rich preserves of our ancestor's imaginations.

In historical times, Madhya Pradesh has been ruled by many dynasties, who built temples, forts and palaces across their empires in the state.

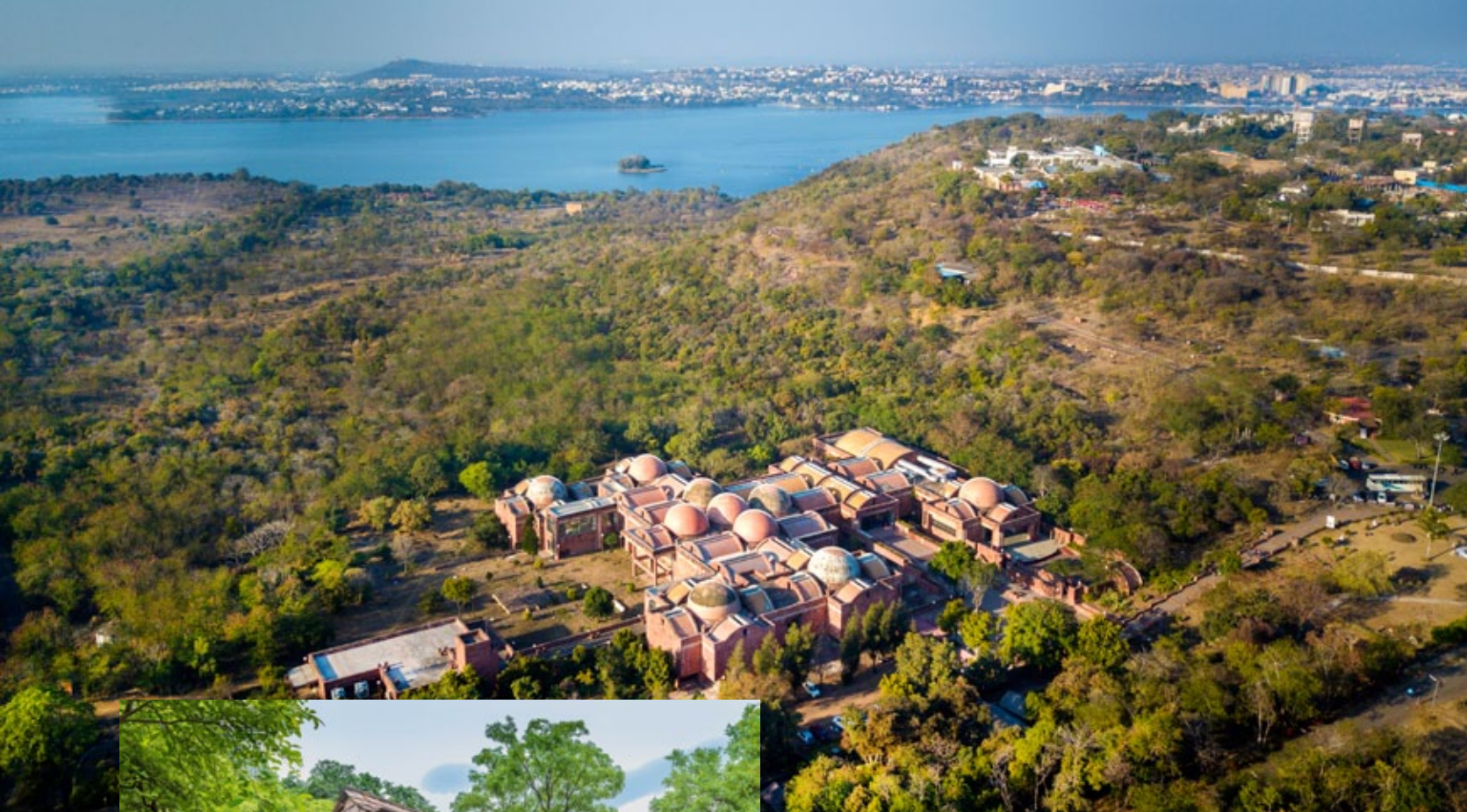
Dozens of museums across the state are aiding the efforts to document and preserve the history of Madhya Pradesh as it has come down to us in art and sculptures, pottery and fossil, jewellery and weapons.

Let's have a look at the most amazing museums of Madhya Pradesh.

MP TRIBAL MUSEUM

The capital of Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, also known as the 'City of Lakes,' has several museums that document the unheard realities of eras bygone. One of the biggest attractions here is the Tribal Museum. The colourful museum is divided into six different galleries showcasing various tribes of Madhya Pradesh. The folklores, lifestyle, rituals and social customs of all seven indigenous tribes of MP- the Gonds, Bhils, Bharias, Sahariya, Korku, Kol, and Baiga are showcased in the museum through a repository of traditional art. In fact, the lives of the region's seven tribes are being celebrated here via their craft. The moment you step into the galleries inside the museum, you feel as if you have entered straight into the lifestyles of the tribes of Madhya Pradesh.



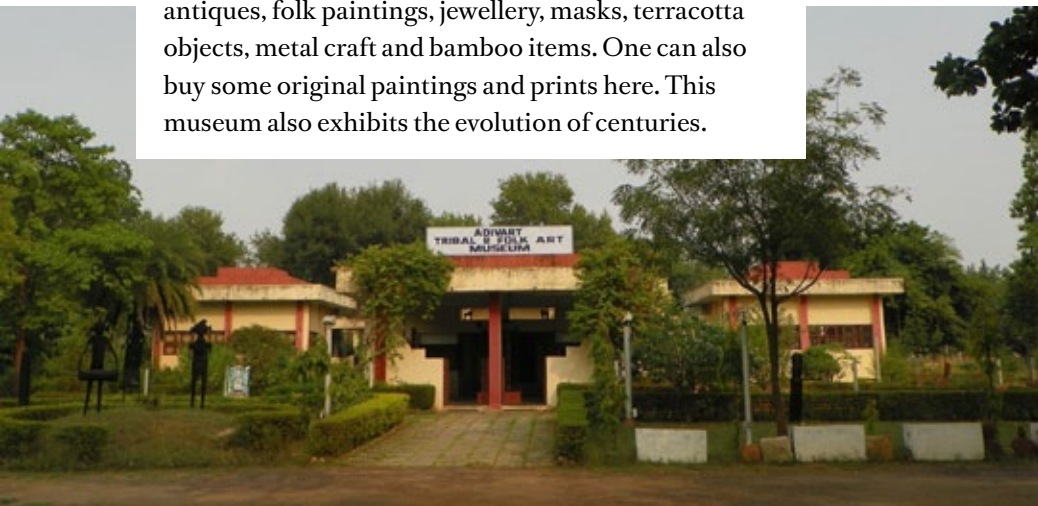


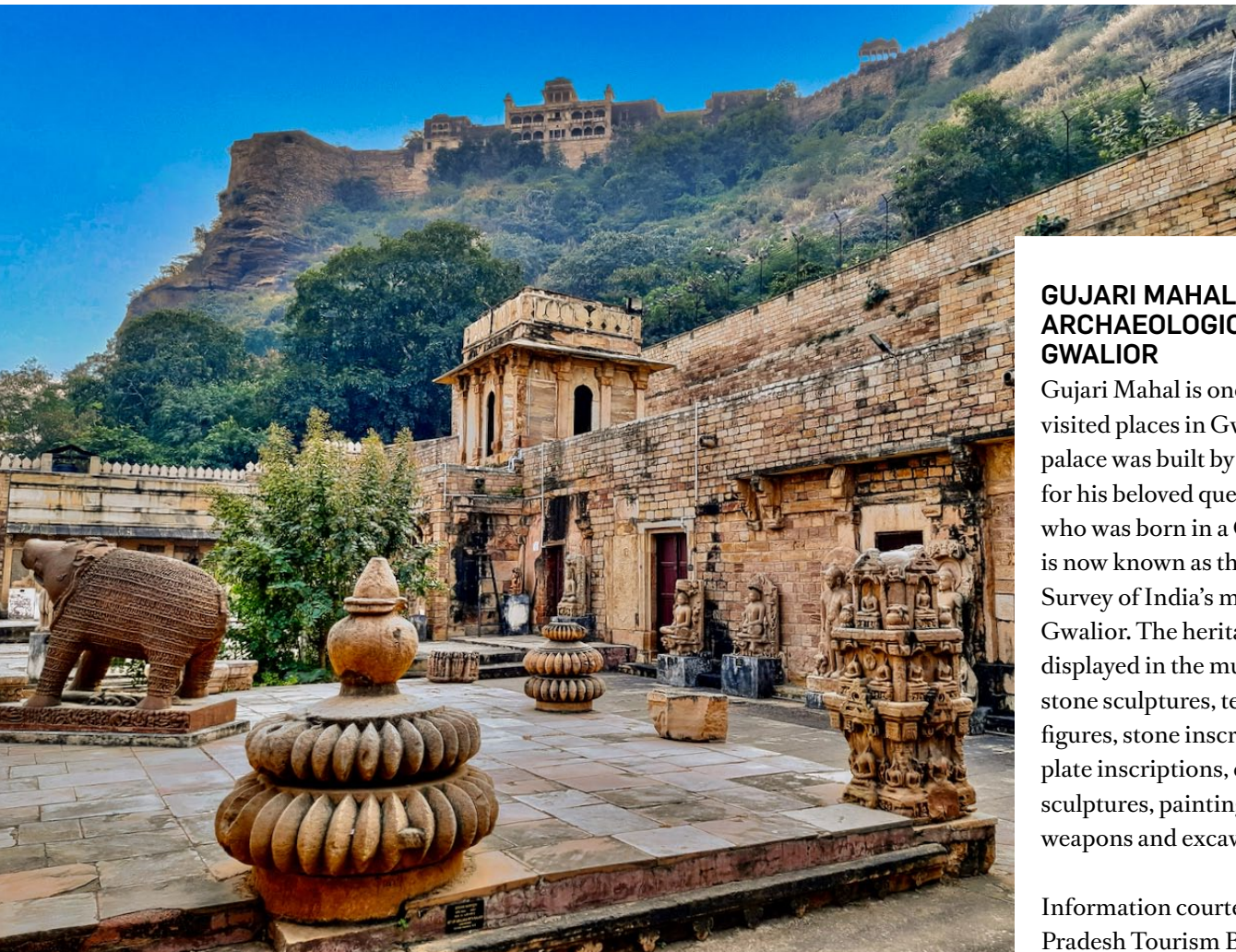
INDIRA GANDHI RASHTRIYA MANAV SANGRAHALAYA (IGRMS)

Any exploration of a museum is incomplete without a visit to the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS), in Bhopal. On a sprawling land of over 200 acres, one can see the open-air exhibition of tribal habitats from all corners of India. These dwellings are made by the tribes themselves using the indigenous raw material that depict the lifestyle of tribals in the villages. The open-air exhibitions include Himalayan Village, Medicinal Trail, Mythological Trails and Desert Village. The Rock-Art Heritage here displays 36 rock shelters with stunning prehistoric paintings. The museum also exhibits a collection of traditional outfits, agricultural and household objects as well as crafts showcasing the skills of the tribes.

ADIVART TRIBAL AND FOLK ART MUSEUM, KHAJURAHO

Situated within the Chandela Cultural Complex in Khajuraho, this museum is an ideal place for history lovers, as it possesses a rich collection of tribal and folk art and artifacts. The museum offers the visitors a peek into the history of customs and rituals of different tribes in Madhya Pradesh. It houses over 500 tribal antiques, folk paintings, jewellery, masks, terracotta objects, metal craft and bamboo items. One can also buy some original paintings and prints here. This museum also exhibits the evolution of centuries.





GUJARI MAHAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM, GWALIOR

Gujari Mahal is one of the most visited places in Gwalior. The palace was built by king Man Singh for his beloved queen Mrignayani who was born in a Gurjar family. It is now known as the Archaeological Survey of India's museum in Gwalior. The heritage collection displayed in the museum includes stone sculptures, terracotta figures, stone inscriptions, copper plate inscriptions, coins, bronze sculptures, paintings, arms & weapons and excavated material.

Information courtesy Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board



MAHARAJA CHHATRASAL MUSEUM, DHUBELA

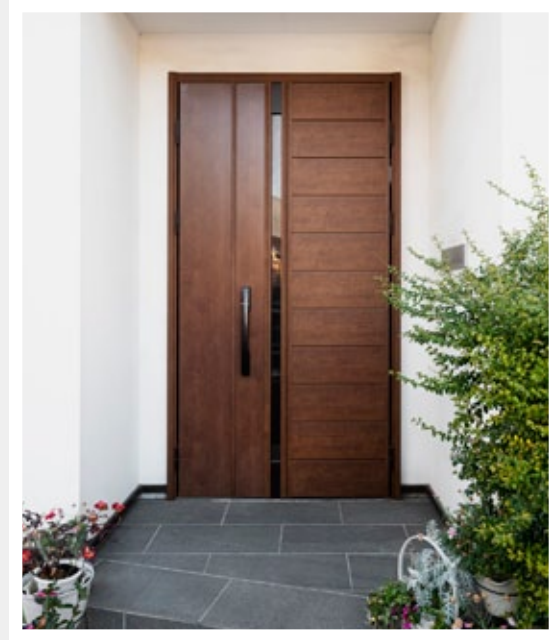
Situated at a distance of 62km from Khajuraho, Maharaja Chhatrasal Museum is located in Dhubela on the Chhatarpur-Nowgaon highway in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh. Popularly known as Dhubela Museum, the palace was built by Maharaja Chhatrasal on the banks of Dhubela Lake. Established in 1955, the museum helps tourist learn the history of the famous Bundela dynasty of Khajuraho. This museum has eight galleries, of which two display inscriptions, copper plates, Sati pillars, lingas and inscribed images of the Gupta and Kalachuri period. The museum houses a wide range of sculptures of the Shakti cult. It has also a significant collection of Jaina images.

Home Interiors



GREATER SPEED WITH MORE
PRECISE MANUFACTURING

Prehung Doors



HIGHER QUALITY
CONTROLS



PURVA STREAKS - HOME INTERIORS FROM PURAVANKARA

DESIGNING SPACES WITH
INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY



BOOK EXTRACT

THE BLOOMSBURY BOOK OF INDIAN CUISINE

EDITED BY COLLEEN TAYLOR SEN, SOURISH BHATTACHARYA & HELEN SABERI

wed



ABOUT THE BOOK

This reference work covers the cuisine and foodways of India in all their diversity and complexity, including regions, personalities, street foods, communities and topics that have been often neglected. Combining facts with history, anecdotes, and legends, the book is a comprehensive resource for cuisine and culture enthusiasts.



dindings

Leaves like the betel (see paan), banana, mango, neem, tulsi (holy basil) and durva grass (*Cynodon dactylon*) are intrinsically woven into the tapestry of Indian weddings. Betel leaves are a recurring motif: a pair of betel leaves with areca nuts is exchanged between the families as a token to confirm a wedding among many Hindu communities and tribes. Hindus distribute invitations for the wedding with an arrangement of betel leaves and areca nuts together with coconut and turmeric forming an important part of the invite. The betel is associated with the Trinity - Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva; Brahma: areca nut, Vishnu: betel leaf, and Shiva: lime. A Bengali bride covers her face with a pair of betel leaves before circumambulating her husband seven times and revealing her face to her husband after this.

Eating paan (betel quid) is another expression of auspiciousness and joy. In Tamil Nadu, the bride's brother gives the ceremonial first betel to the couple to chew. This ritual is called thamboola charvanam. Paan is considered a

sensual food that induces fertility and increases virility and hence wedding ceremonies across religions in India have incorporated it. It finds mention in the Kamasutra as an aphrodisiac for men and women. Offering of betel quid is also very common in Muslim wedding traditions. Christian





communities may choose to do this depending on their denomination.

Turmeric is perhaps the most quintessential food article in Hindu weddings. A paste of turmeric is applied on the bride and groom as part of preparatory celebrations. Turmeric is valued for its antibacterial virtues while its deep, staining yellow colour stands for auspiciousness. A cotton thread stained in turmeric and fingers of turmeric rhizomes are used for the thaali or mangalsutra, the wedding necklace that is tied around the neck of the bride. Subsequently, gold chains with symbolic pendants are worn as the mangalsutra for daily use. Among many Christian communities too, turmeric is applied on the groom and bride to mark the start of the wedding festivities.

Mango leaves are strung as borders on doorways and when in season, the flowers and fruits make an appearance on the wedding feast. In South India, coconut and banana leaves figure prominently in the decorations; the coconut frond is fashioned into decorations for the pandal (the stage where the marriage ceremony takes place) and coconut flowers are a potent symbol of fertility. Coconuts of brass or silver are used as toys in the playful wedding ritual nalangu, where the bride, groom and their families are acquainted with each other. Banana flowers too are important symbols of fertility and plenty in this context.

Rice and puffed rice are used in numerous rituals to symbolize wealth and prosperity for the couple. The couple



offer puffed rice to the sacrificial fire during the wedding ritual as the fire (agni) is personified as a witness to the wedding. The guests bless the couple with turmeric-coated grains of rice. As the bride leaves her maternal home, she throws rice over her head symbolizing her departure to a new home, leaving behind blessings and prosperity to the home that has nourished her. The young bride enters her new home by tipping over a pot filled with rice.

Fish is a very important motif most prominently seen among Bengalis and Parsis. In Bengal, the groom's family take a large rohu fish with them. The fish is decked up as a bride, draped in a beautiful silk saree and decorated with jewellery, vermilion, paan and some turmeric paste just as a bride. Among Parsis, fresh uncooked fish was included as part of a traditional platter called dahi machli ni ses along with the other symbolic items. This has now been replaced with the mawa ni boi, a confectionary trompe l'oeil of boi (Mugil cephalus), which is caught off the coast of Gujarat and is specially enjoyed by Parsis. The decorated fish here signifies good luck and prosperity. Certain foods like bitter gourd are unanimously avoided in weddings across India. Among some Christian denominations, fish and eggs are avoided while Hindu Brahmins avoid bottle gourd, snake gourd, plantains, and rarely, ash gourd.

Special tablescapes and platters are set up to consecrate the wedding stage and these include important foods, articles of silver, flowers and fruits. In Kerala, a barrel of paddy takes centre-stage and a lush bunch of coconut flowers are arranged on it like a fountain. Tamil Brahmins set up a plate called seeru, where a pair of conical moulds called paruppu thenga is filled with a variety of sweets such as manoharam and pottukadalai urundai, typically made of fried chickpea flour soaked in jaggery syrup. In Maharashtra, platters of sweets and savouries like laddu, chiwda, karanjya and anaarse prepared by the bride's family are arranged for all to see. Roman Catholic and Protestant Christians exchange thattu, a tray of fruits, kalakand (crystalline sugar lumps), betel leaves and money at the time of engagement. On the day of the wedding, the bride carries maruveedu neetu, a platter of sweet and savoury foods, including adhirasam and murukku. In Chettinad, the bride's family arranges a grand scene of a variety of sweet and savoury preparations together with fruits in counts of 51 or 101 pieces per item.

Sugar is an important ingredient in wedding display and edibles. In Maharashtra, sugar sculptures are prepared for rukhwat, an elaborate display set up by the bride's family. Similarly, colourful chivukula (lit. birds) are made in Andhra Pradesh with sugar fondant and arranged on plates for display. In Karnataka too, elaborate sakkare acchu,



moulded sugar figurines, are made for weddings. Batasha, a meringue-like sugar crisp, is distributed among Gujaratis and Parsis.

Weddings are important moments to establish the family's heritage in art and craft. In Bengal, nakshi pitha, intricately carved cakes of rice flour deep-fried and dipped in sugar syrup, and goyna bori, sun-dried cakes of black lentils fashioned like pieces of jewellery (goyna meaning jewellery), are artistically made for weddings. In Tamil Nadu, a soft dough of black lentils is made into spiral-shaped savoury snacks called kai murukku, the name borrowing from the small twists (murukku in Tamil) made on the dough by hand. Such murukku made for weddings are elaborate with some reaching up to eleven or sixteen spiral lines. Among the Muslims of Malabar (see mappilas), hard to make foods like

panineer petti (lit. rose box), an assembled sweet of layers of pancake and a filling of cashews, eggs and cardamom; and panjara patta, a delicate pancake made from the froth of the batter, were specially prepared for the groom. In the Marathwada region of Maharashtra, women folk hand roll wheat pastas, valvat or gavhale, in myriad shapes for the bride's trousseau.

Among Banjaras, marriage preliminaries are formally completed with 'gole khayero' (eating jaggery) between the two families, signifying the acceptance of the engagement. The wedding is followed by a feast, called ghot, with meat taking centre-stage. A Tamil engagement is concluded with paal theratti paal, a sweet of reduced milk solids sweetened with sugar.

Food in the days leading to the wedding is usually simple, in preparation for a large feast on the wedding day. Parsis observe khichri no divas (lit. the day to eat khichri) on the third day before the wedding. Malabar Muslims enjoy subtle nei choru (ghee rice).

The Hindu wedding ceremony is done at a pre-ordained time called muhurat which may be chosen in the morning or in the evening depending on the community. Most communities in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka have a morning muhurat followed by a lunch, while most North Indian communities have an evening muhurat followed by dinner. Wedding feasts are usually grandiose affairs where impressing and satisfying the guests are seen as the main purpose. A Parsi lagan nu bhonu starts with the sweet and spicy lagan nu achar, a pickle of carrots, milk solids and spices; includes patra ni machhi, a delicacy of steamed pomfret among others; and ends with lagan nu custard.

In Tamil Nadu, the Hindu wedding feast, kalyana sappadu, is a delicious spread served on a banana leaf and eaten delicately

with one's fingers. Dal and ghee are served first followed by small portions of the various side dishes. Palpayasam, a sweet pudding of milk reduced by caramelization and sugar, is served as a palate cleanser before the final course and is the most important sweet dish of the day. Sadya in Kerala is a similar spread with palada pradhaman, a thick jaggery sweetened porridge with tiny bits of rice pasta, being the most important sweet dish presented on the leaf. For Christians from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, avial, a coconut-based stew of vegetables, is an important preparation. It is a symbol of abundance and prosperity.



The end of the wedding is also marked with food for the guests to take home. Among Chettiars, thavala vadai, small deep-fried dumplings of Bengal gram, are served to signal the end of the ceremony and guests taking the cue, head home. Small bags with sweet and savoury delicacies, betel leaves, areca nuts and coconut are distributed to guests as they take leave. Many communities have a custom of packing food for the groom's family as they leave the bride's home. Known as kattu sadam or kattu choru, lots of food, particularly citrannam, rice dishes flavoured with tamarind, lime or yogurt, are prepared.



Celebrating Books

HEARTWARMING TRADITIONS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD

SOUTH KOREA

During Seollal, the Korean Lunar New Year, there is a tradition known as “sebae,” where younger family members bow to their elders to show respect. As part of this tradition, it’s common to give and receive books as gifts. This practice reflects the value placed on knowledge and education in Korean culture.

VALENCIA, SPAIN

During the celebration of Las Fallas, a traditional pastry called “bunyolada” is prepared. These pastries are often shaped like books and are consumed on March 19th, which is also known as the Day of San Jose, the patron saint of Valencia. This culinary tradition combines the love for literature with the joyous festivities of Las Fallas.

ICELAND

Translated as the “Christmas Book Flood,” Jólábókaflóð is an Icelandic tradition where books are exchanged on Christmas Eve, and the rest of the night is spent reading. It is a cultural phenomenon, and many authors release new books leading up to Christmas to be included in the flood of gift-giving.

NORWAY

Norway has a unique tradition called Bokbåten, where a floating bookstore travels along the country’s coast, visiting remote communities that may not have easy access to bookstores. The Book Boat allows people in these areas to browse, buy, and borrow books, fostering a love for reading in even the most secluded regions.

THE MAKING OF A CLASSIC

PSYCHO (1960)

Director: Alfred Hitchcock

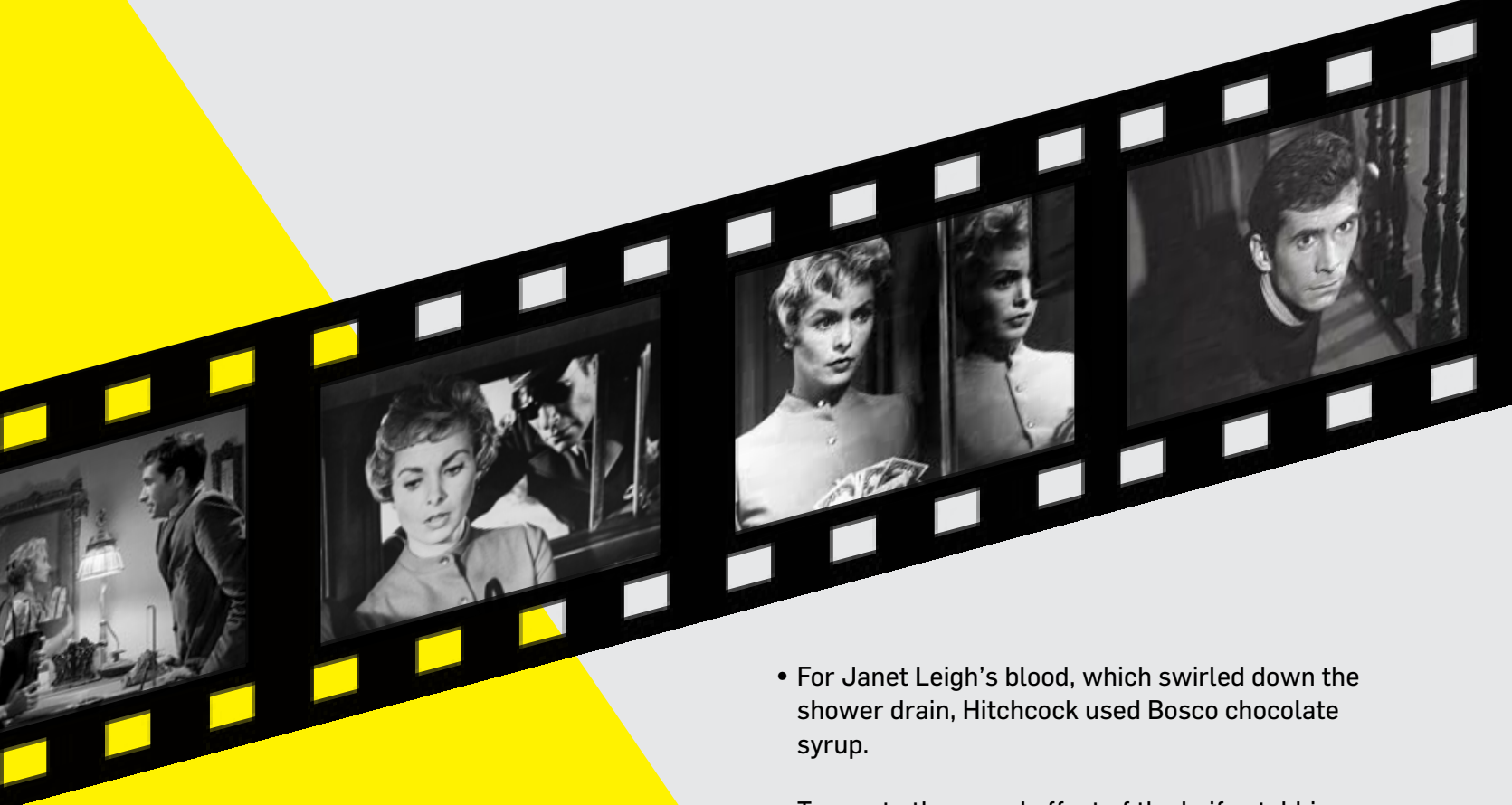
Cast: Anthony Perkins, Vera Miles, Janet Leigh

PARAMOUNT PRESENTA EL FILM DE
¡ALFRED HITCHCOCK!
ANTHONY PERKINS
VERA MILES
JOHN GAVIN
CON MARTIN BALSAM
JOHN McINTIRE
Y JANET LEIGH
EN MARION CRANE
DIRECTOR ALFRED HITCHCOCK
GUION JOSEPH STEFANO
¡EL SUSPENSE LLEVADO A SU PAROXISMO!
Es un Film Paramount

The Story:

Marion Crane is a Phoenix, Arizona working girl who is in love with Sam Loomis, who cannot get married because most of his money goes towards alimony. One Friday, Marion's employer gives her \$40,000 in cash to deposit in a bank. She leaves town with the money, determined to start a new life with Sam in California. It begins to rain heavily. Marion turns off the highway and decides to spend the night at the desolate Bates Motel, run by Norman Bates, a peculiar young man dominated by his invalid mother. After Norman fixes her a light dinner, Marion goes back to her room for a shower.

The Awards: *Psycho* remains Alfred Hitchcock's most successful film to date. It was nominated for four Academy Awards:



Best Director, Best Supporting Actress (Janet Leigh), Best Black-and-White Cinematography, and Best Black-and-White Production Design. It also holds the top spot in the American Film Institute's list of Top 100 thrillers.

Here are 7 fascinating facts about the filming of this horror classic.

- Hitchcock chose to shoot the film in black and white to cut costs and to keep the censors from chopping off the famous shower scene—in those times, showing so much blood on screen was unthinkable.
- Paramount Pictures were reluctant to produce the film, so they allotted it a very low budget. As a result, most of the film had to be shot in the backlot of Universal Studios.
- Hitchcock instructed theatres to not allow anyone in once the film had started. And they did it!
- The shower murder contains at least 70 edits in just 45 seconds. Hitchcock mixed his fast cutting technique with Bernard Herrmann's screeching music, creating a brilliant illusion of gore, violence and nudity – while actually showing very little.

- For Janet Leigh's blood, which swirled down the shower drain, Hitchcock used Bosco chocolate syrup.
- To create the sound effect of the knife stabbing flesh, Hitchcock got his crew to slash melons.
- The shower scene ends with a prolonged shot where the camera is locked on Marion's wide open dead eye. Jennifer Jason Leigh actually pulled it off without blinking, though it took 22 takes to get it right. Hitchcock poured belladonna drops into her eyes to dilate the pupils.
- The film's lead, Marion Crane is shown escaping her town after having stolen \$40,000. You can see Christmas decorations in the scene where she's running away. For that reason, Hitchcock informs the viewer that the film begins on December 11.
- *Psycho* is the first American film to show a toilet on screen. It's also the first American film in which we hear a toilet being flushed.
- *Psycho* marked the fifth and final time that Hitchcock would earn an Oscar nomination for Best Director. Yes, believe it or not: Alfred Hitchcock never won an Oscar for directing!

DIRECTOR'S TAKE

"I once made a movie, rather tongue-in-cheek, called Psycho. The content was, I felt, rather amusing and it was a big joke. I was horrified to find some people took it seriously."

Alfred Hitchcock



Films that made a difference to

VARUNJAI SAHNI



BIO

Varunjai Sahni is the grandson of the legendary actor Balraj Sahni and the son of actor Praikshit Sahni. An abstract artist, sculptor and healer, Varunjai lives and works in Jaipur.

1. DO BIGHA ZAMIN (1953)

It takes you deep within the conscious and subconscious mind of a common man and everything he does to bring his family smiles and food. It showcases a man's zeal to earn his freedom.

2. GARAM HAWA (1974)

I see the post-independence era of India...How simple life was and how spending time with the family was the most beautiful joy. It shows the endless love of a father for his daughter. It shows the hardship people faced for their land. The film taught me the deep meaning of freedom and everyone who has given here lives for it. My utmost gratitude and respect to every soul who laid down their life so that we could live in freedom.

3. WAQT (1965)

The greatest movie that taught me the importance of Time, and how it can break and build foundations. Time is the greatest healer and also the greatest teacher. An unforgettable lesson in the beauty of humility and the awareness that sometimes, destiny can be more powerful than us.

4. PYAASA (1957)

It shows the journey of a genuine but indigent artist who longs for love and

PAINTING DESCRIPTIONS

recognition in a selfish world. It shows the dark side of the masks people wear to hide their selfish selves. It shows the mad love of an artist for his art and the greatest feeling that drives his creativity: Love.

5. SPARSH (1980)

The film is about the blind, in particular about the lives and feelings of blind children and people. It's the sensation and feeling of touch upon which blind people rely in the absence of sight. It shows the depth they feel in every emotion, every feeling and in life. It's a beautiful film.

6. PAVITRA PAPI (1970)

This a very dear film as Dadu and Dad both were in it together creating magic so watching this one gain n again has always been a real pleasure. Every time I see the movie it shows me the bonding between father and son on and off screen. I love the way the simplicity flows with the characters and the moments that are being created in the film. The soul of the film is so alive and awakened it never feels like you are watching a movie.

7. AJOOBA (1990)

It is one movie that I love watching anytime—a superhero movie with a magical world. It teaches a lot of emotions one should have as a human being. But above all that the magic carpet and the magic potions were awesome. The essence of the word Maa and the power it holds within itself is godlike within the movie (the scene where Ajooba calls Maa facing the ocean and a dolphin comes out of the water). The clothing of the characters in the movie is so colourful and vibrant! Shri Amitabh Bachchan is truly a superhero.



1. ETERNAL

Acrylic on canvas
48×60inch

My artwork is a depiction of the eternal world that's around all of us and also outside and inside of us a world so profound and magical that the laws of physics don't work even. It's a multiverse beyond all worlds....a place where the conscious, subconscious and super-subconscious create a Symphony together that enhances the mind body and soul a godlike state of existence.

2. COLORFUL LIFE

Acrylic on canvas
46×46in

My artwork shows the different aspects of our experience on this majestic planet in every stroke and brings out the truth of our lives that we live in a colourful world. A world in every moment. The great colours in life are joy, happiness, silence, peace, love, harmony... And all aspects of life. I bring out the true emotions and feelings of life as I have experienced the dark side, the vibrant side and the light-glowing side of life



3. BREAKING FREE

Acrylic on canvas
30×40inch

My Artwork shows the moments before the creation happens in the world of consciousness of the creator. It's a lot more than just POVs, judgements and constructs that we have all around us. It's the creative process of the creator himself that has healing energy within it that gives life. I show the process of the creator, the process of the true artist in its beginning stages of creation.

10 THINGS NO ONE TOLD YOU ABOUT *Sheep*

1

Sheep were some of the first animals humans ever tamed, about 9,000 years ago.

2

There are more than 1,000 different kinds of sheep around the world.

5

Sheep love to stick together in big groups for safety and company.

8

Sheep can remember familiar places and faces for a long time.

3

Sheep are smarter than you might think. They remember faces, even human ones.

6

They have a four-part stomach that helps them digest tough plants.

9

Sheep have great hearing and can pick up sounds from far away.

4

Sheep are great at eating grass and keeping fields tidy.

7

Sheep talk to each other with different "baa" sounds.

10

Their eyes have rectangular pupils, giving them a unique look.

SELF

TAKE TIME TO NURTURE THE MOST IMPORTANT
PERSON IN YOUR LIFE—YOU!



6 Quick Ways to Rejuvenate

BY CHETNA SRINIVASAN

1

A DAILY 5-MINUTE SELF-MASSAGE

Even five minutes a day can make a dramatic difference to the way your skin feels and ultimately how you feel. Using cold pressed organic oil, massage upward and downward strokes along the limbs and in circular motion around joints. Take a warm shower after about 45 minutes, letting the skin absorb the oil. Massage flushes out toxins and eases stress. It also can fill you with positive energy from doing something to nurture yourself. Especially during the cold months when skin tends to go dry and chalky, massage helps it stay moist and youthful.



2

RUB THE "THIRD EYE"

Ayurvedic healers believe that the centre of your forehead is the "third eye" or the seat of your body's innate intelligence. Skin responds wonderfully when this spot is massaged. Simply place a drop of oil on the ring finger of the right hand and rub it gently onto the third eye point between your brows, using small, clockwise circles. While doing this, deepen and slow down your inhalation and exhalation. Count 11 full breaths. Try this after your shower, and you are sure to feel calmer and more energetic. In scientific words, this spot is also the location of the fundamental endocrine glands (pituitary, pineal and hypothalamus), which regulate all hormonal secretions that govern digestion, breath, elimination, moods and emotional states.



4 MAKE A COLD WATER SPLASH

This takes just a minute or so and leaves your skin feeling incredibly fresh. The ritual has an unseen benefit: it rids the skin of the night's leftover "pitta" or heat energy, letting you face the day with a cool mind. While splashing your face and eyes with unchlorinated water, also swish around some water in your mouth. This relieves the dry heat trapped inside. So refreshing!



3

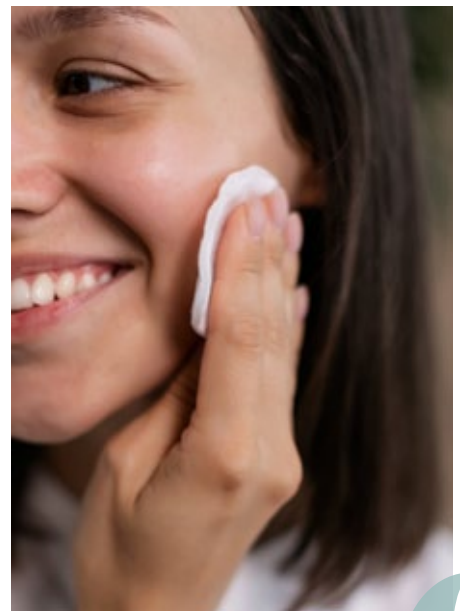
MUNCH ON ALMONDS

Soak 7 almonds overnight in clean water. Upon waking up, discard the skins and eat the almonds. Nuts soaked and skinned this way are easier to digest. Besides, they are considered a warm, unctuous food in Ayurveda, which means they help keep skin nourished and hydrated.



5 REVIVE TIRED EYES

After a long day, flop down in bed and massage the bony rims around your eyes with forefingers, thumbs anchored at the forehead. Do both sides at the same time. These acupressure points bring deep relief from eye strain and ease away the day's pent up stresses. Breathe deep while you do this for an even more relaxing experience.



6 TRY THIS INSTANT MOISTURISER

Soak a cotton pad in cold milk and dab it all over your face and neck. Milk is a natural humectant and helps revive skin in a matter of minutes.

15

BRILLIANT WAYS TO EAT YOUR

Veggies & Enjoy

THEM, TOO

M

ost of us need little convincing that vegetables are essential to good health. Even so, here is a quick recap on their nutritional importance, as stated by the United States Department of Agriculture:

- Vegetables are a rich source of many key nutrients, including potassium, fiber, folate (folic acid) and vitamins A, E and C.
- Studies have shown that eating a diet rich in vegetables may reduce risk for stroke, cancer, heart diseases and type-2 diabetes.
- Most vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories. None have cholesterol. So, unless you pair them with fattening sauces or cook them in too much oil, they are an excellent aid to weight loss and fitness.
- Dietary fiber from vegetables, as part of an overall healthy diet, helps reduce blood cholesterol and may lower risk of heart disease.

Which brings us to the question: are you getting your daily quota of vegetables? Let me quote Harvard School of Public Health here: "If you don't count potatoes—which should be considered a starch rather than a vegetable—the average American gets a total of just three servings of fruits and vegetables a day. The latest dietary guidelines call for five to thirteen servings of fruits and vegetables a day (2 to 6 cups per day), depending on one's caloric intake."

The problem with eating veggies is quite simple: many of us simply don't like them very much. If you are among those who turn up their nose at the sight of broccoli and beans, here are some sneaky ways to have your veggies without having to confront their blandness or simplicity.

Being the mother of a fussy eater, I long ago discovered a happy trick: There's a ridiculously simple way to sneak more veggies into almost anything: chop them fine or grate them. This makes them easy to blend into other foods that you enjoy. So, you could knead them into dough or mix them up in your salad, without thinking, "Ugh, eggplant!"

I am sharing some tried and tasted ideas to help you get your recommended daily servings of vital vegetables. Share your own ideas, too!

- Add plenty of peppers, onions and mushrooms to your omelettes and frittatas. Give a broccoli boost to scrambled eggs. Again, chopping them up real fine makes them unnoticeable. The only way you or your fellow veggie-hater might notice is when the omelettes start tasting way more luscious than they ever did!

- Lightly stir-fry a bunch of diced veggies in olive oil and stir them into cooked oats. This savoury twist on the standard brown-sugar-and-fruit affair is sure to become your new breakfast hit!
- Toss finely chopped vegetables into soup or lentils—you will get more flavour, better texture and of course, all those nutrients. My favorite veggies to add to soups are finely chopped carrots, green beans, celery, and mushrooms. You can try your own combinations.
- When frying olive oil and garlic for your pasta, add a handful of baby spinach. It will wilt and cling to your pasta, lending a lovely twist to ordinary aglio olio.
- Cook rice with fresh peas. Sprinkle cilantro and mint leaves on the rice when done. This is one of the most comforting rice dishes in the world, best enjoyed with plain yogurt and a serving of crunchy salad.
- Think out of the sandwich box. Stuff the bread with more than your routine fillings. How about sliding in slices of cucumber, spinach leaves, kale, swiss chard, roasted zucchini and bell peppers? Wraps love veggies, too
- Double the portions! In almost any recipe that calls for vegetables, you can double the amount without ruining the dish. For example, eggplant parmigiana. You can use twice as much eggplant in it, and the flavor will only be more delicious. If making a casserole, there's even more room for tucking in a variety of veggies.
- Order your pizza with extra bell peppers, eggplant, olives, and mushrooms.
- Add pureed cauliflower to mashed potatoes. No one, including you, will notice—and the spuds will get a boost of both flavor and nutrients.
- White sauce does seem like an unlikely home for vegetables, but guess what: pureed cauliflower blends beautifully into the sea of cream, carrying with it a healing arsenal of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals.
- Making marinara sauce? Add some finely chopped veggies to the tomato and onion base. Peppers, eggplant, squash, beetroot, carrots, mushrooms—once cooked in with the sauce, none of these will make its presence felt in an unwelcome way. In fact, you are likely to be



rewarded with more appreciation from unsuspecting kids!

- Do you bake breads and cake at home? Great! Here's another chance to add vital nutrients to the goodies. Grated carrots and zucchini will enhance almost any bread, cake or biscuit. Corn can be tucked cozily into muffins.
- Pancake batter plays willing host to cooked and pureed carrots, pumpkin, butternut squash and zucchini.
- Dishing up salsa? Think beyond tomatoes and jalapeno. Try finely chopped green, red, and yellow bell peppers, cucumber, zucchini and such. They make a colorful, zesty, and nourishing appetizer to give company to corn chips.
- Almost any juice or smoothie can accommodate grated carrots, acquiring a beautiful pink hue in the process(or)!



HOW TO RECHARGE & REFRESH BEFORE YOU STEP OUT OF BED

How do you replace the lethargy of the night with energy? Try these simple tips to wake up light and lithe:

1 Breathe yourself awake

Keeping your eyes closed, inhale deeply. Feel your lungs fill up, and picture the air as prana, or life force, that will power you through the day. This is not just your imagination at work! Deep breathing stimulates the main nerve in the parasympathetic nervous system—the vagus nerve—slowing down your heart rate, lowering your blood pressure and calming your body and mind. Exhale slowly. This time, imagine you are letting go of the previous day's leftover worries and negative thoughts. Inhale again, and draw positive energy in. In a few minutes, the energy will propel you to throw off the covers!

2 Rub your palms together for about a minute.

Feel them grow warm. Picture the energy coursing through them, readying you to take on the gifts and duties of a brand new day. Now move your energy-charged palms slowly over your face, head, shoulders, arms and legs, gifting each part with positive vibrations. Place a palm over your heart, and feel the rhythmic beat inside. Take a few moments to give thanks for the body that allows you to experience life.

3 Now you are ready to stretch.

There are yoga poses galore you could do, but honestly, no formal instructions are really required. Simply raise your legs both sideways and up-and-down, sit up and touch your toes, wiggle your fingers and basically greet each limb and sinew awake! Then, when you stand on the floor, raise your arms above your head, rise on your toes to your full height and ease yourself back down. This is *tadasana*, or Mountain Pose. It fills the body with fresh air and energy, and gives the entire body an energy-rich stretch.

Now you are ready to begin the day. Good morning, and have a good one ahead!



TASTE

A CORNUCOPIA OF LIGHT & LOVELY FLAVOURS,
CURATED TO SERENADE YOUR SENSES



Café Captures

Explore the 7 Best Insta-Worthy Cafes in India



1. BLAH (MUMBAI, MAHARASHTRA)

Pic credit: Spiro Spero

Blah (Mumbai, Maharashtra) Nestled in the heart of BKC, Mumbai, Blah is a casual all-day bar and cafe that exudes a unique charm. Designed by the ingenious architect Keith Menon and his brilliant team Spiro Spero, this cafe breaks away from the conventional norms of bars and cafes. With its high ceilings and flexible layout, Blah offers a soft and approachable vibe that invites guests to unwind and explore. Divided into four distinct sections, including a trendy bar and lounge area, a cozy private dining space, a delightful high tea setup, and an indoor garden-like oasis, this cafe promises a delightful experience at every turn. Don't forget to marvel at their innovative indoor micro greens and herb setup, which not only adds a touch of greenery but also provides fresh ingredients for their culinary delights. With its captivating interiors adorned with exquisite cane weaving, lush plants, and intricate metalwork, every nook and cranny of Blah is an Instagram-worthy masterpiece waiting to be captured.

Address: Ground Floor, G-4, The Capital, G Block BKC, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400051

Operational Time: 12 pm - 1 am

Cost for two: 2000/- approx.



2. CAFÉ CORRA, MUMBAI

Pic Credit: Café Corra

Café Corra offers a picturesque Bali-themed interior. Drawing inspiration from the serene and upscale cafes of Bali, Corra boasts a vintage wooden and white decor scheme. The cafe's open coffee bar invites you in with its inviting ambiance.

This cafe exudes a socially sober and aesthetically minimal atmosphere, featuring bamboo-based decor elements throughout. From the seating to ceiling lamps and lush greenery strategically placed, Corra creates a tranquil and easy-going environment that transports you to the relaxing vibes of Bali.



3. VIVI ITALIAN BAR & KITCHEN, THANE

Pic credit: Design Alma

Situated within Thane Club, ViVi, designed by Ankita Sharma from Design Alma, offers a picturesque al-fresco dining experience next to an Olympic-size pool.

The interior welcomes you with an enchanting aisle adorned with red flowers, leading to a beautifully decorated space featuring a small chandelier, artificial greenery, and a charming creeper-covered lattice. White-colored surroundings house colorful chairs, marble tables, and poolside cane swings visible through glass walls with elegant curtains.

The interior design also incorporates original plants and intriguing antique replicas, such as typewriters and telephones, while quirky portraits with humorous captions add to the unique and inviting ambiance.



4 SHY CAFÉ, CHEMBUR

Shy, an experiential brand new all-day cafe and bar is an amalgamation of vintage interiors, global modern cuisine, and craft cocktails, this new 4500 sq. ft space specialises in flawlessly combining global cuisines and providing a tantalizing experience. The modern vintage ambience is created by Tejal Mathur, the ace interior designer. Tejal Mathur's Design aesthetic believes in the blend of handcrafted elements and specially sourced pieces to create the comfort of the organic and timelessness to the spaces designed for the way we live today.

Address: 2 & 3, Ground Level, Supreme Headquarters, Near Link Square Mall, 14th & 33rd Road, Linking Road, Bandra West, Mumbai

Operational Time: 12pm - 12am

Cost for two: 1800/- approx



5. HARAJUKU TOKYO CAFÉ, DELHI

Harajuku Tokyo Cafe: A Japanese-inspired QSR located at Select CityWalk, Saket and Ambience Mall, Gurugram. The most instagrammable cafe in town has been winning hearts across NCR with its gastronomical delights straight from the streets of Tokyo and Osaka that have been uniquely curated for the Indian audience.

Address: F40/41, First floor (above zara), Select Citywalk Mall, Saket, New Delhi

Operational Time: 10 am - 11 pm

Cost for two: 1000/- approx.



6. QLA- DELHI

Nestled in the winding lanes of Mehrauli, Qla is sure to turn your frown into a smile when it comes to the best Instagram-worthy Cafe in town. Qla is an exquisite European café offers its guests a truly unique and unforgettable cafe experience with a majestic Qutub view. Every nook and corner of this establishment is carefully thought out, from the exquisite menu to the unique décor.

Address: 4-A, Seven Style Mile, Kalka Das Marg, Near Qutab Minar, Mehrauli, New Delhi

Operational Time: 12pm - 12 am

Cost for two: 1000/- approx.

7. DIONA, JAIPUR

Diona, a never seen before experiential property in Jaipur. A project by Prime Hospitality, it is one of the biggest rooftop lounges of India, spanning over an area of 36,000 sq ft, with expansive indoor and outdoor venues. Diona Jaipur raises the bar -both literally and figuratively. It isn't a place, but a lifestyle. The entire architecture and interiors of the lifestyle destination are reminiscent of a Grecian holiday. It can accommodate multiple private parties at a time with their 5 serving bars at different decks to facilitate the crowd and hosts a beautiful infinity pool on the 12th floor overlooking the city with a 180 degree wide view. The whitewashed walls, rustic open spaces, and the quintessential Santorini blue transport you to the Greek isle while you are in the heart of Jaipur.

Address: The Grand Anukampa, Elevated Ajmer Road Exit, Sodala, Jaipur

Operational Time: 5pm - 11 pm

Cost for two- 1800/- approx.



Showstopper BAKED ORANGE PIE

SHOPPING LIST

- 2 medium-size oranges
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 1/4 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1/4 cup ice-cold water
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 1/2 (8-oz.) package cream cheese, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

TO MAKE

- Grate oranges to make 2 tbsp zest. Peel and thinly slice oranges. Bring sugar, orange slices, zest, and 1 cup water to a boil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 1 hour or until oranges are translucent. Remove from heat; cool completely.
- Meanwhile, pulse flour, butter, and 1 tsp. salt in a food processor just until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add 1/4 cup ice-cold water and pulse till the dough forms a ball. Chill for 1 hour in plastic wrap.
- Preheat oven to 425°. Roll out dough into a 13-inch circle on a lightly floured surface. Lightly grease a 9-inch pie plate with cooking spray. Fit dough into prepared pie plate. Fold edges under, and crimp. Prick bottom and sides of piecrust with a fork. Freeze 20 minutes. Line piecrust with aluminum foil, and fill with pie weights or dried beans.
- Bake at 425° for 15 minutes. Remove weights and foil, and bake 10 minutes.
- Reduce oven temperature to 375°. Beat cream cheese, vanilla, and remaining 1/4 tsp. salt at medium speed with an electric mixer just until smooth. Spread mixture into prepared crust.
- Whisk together eggs, cornstarch and lemon juice until smooth; stir into orange mixture. Pour over cream cheese mixture in piecrust, and arrange oranges evenly. Cover loosely with foil.
- Bake at 375° for 30 minutes. Remove foil, and bake 30 more minutes or until set. Cool on a wire rack for an hour before slicing.





BRITISH VS AMERICAN

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE FOR BREAKFAST?

In the eternal debate over breakfast, the British and Americans each bring a unique flavour to the table. As the sun rises on this culinary clash, let's explore the delightful divergence in morning meals on either side of the Atlantic.

In the UK, breakfast is a hearty affair, designed to fuel the day ahead. The quintessential British breakfast, colloquially known as the "Full English," is a symphony of savoury delights. Picture a plate adorned with eggs, crispy bacon, sausages, grilled tomatoes, mushrooms, and black pudding—a savory blood sausage that adds a distinctive richness. The dish is often accompanied by baked beans and buttered toast, creating a satisfying and robust start to the day.

Crossing the pond to America, breakfast takes on a sweeter note. Pancakes, waffles, and French toast, adorned with a cascade of maple syrup, are emblematic of the American morning ritual.

The fluffy stacks of pancakes, often crowned with blueberries or chocolate chips, are a symbol of indulgence. Add a side of crispy bacon, and

you have the perfect sweet-savoury balance that defines American breakfast.

Hash browns and scrambled eggs are also staples in the American breakfast repertoire, providing a textural contrast to the sweet sensations. The Southern states bring their own flair with biscuits and gravy—a delightful concoction of flaky biscuits smothered in creamy sausage-infused gravy, a dish that embodies comfort and warmth.

As we savour the distinctions between these breakfast traditions, it's evident that the choices on either side of the Atlantic reflect not just culinary preferences but also cultural nuances. The British, with their love for a substantial start, embrace the savoury richness of a Full English. Meanwhile, Americans revel in the sweet symphony of pancakes and waffles, celebrating the morning with a sugary serenade.

So, as you contemplate your morning meal, consider the cultural nuances encapsulated in a plate of eggs and bacon or a stack of pancakes. After all, in this culinary clash, there are no losers—only winners, armed with forks and knives, ready to savour the delicious diversity that breakfast brings to the table. Good morning!

Full English Breakfast

- Eggs (fried, scrambled, or poached)
- Crispy bacon
- Sausages
- Grilled tomatoes
- Mushrooms
- Black pudding
- Baked beans
- Buttered toast
- Greek yogurt parfait with granola and berries
- Avocado toast with a poached egg
- Fruit smoothies

Classic All-American Breakfast

- Buttermilk pancakes with maple syrup drizzle
- Scrambled eggs with cheddar cheese
- Crispy Bacon Strips
- Golden Waffles with whipped cream and fresh berries
- Buttery biscuits and creamy sausage-infused gravy
- Steak and eggs
- Breakfast potatoes with onions and peppers
- Freshly brewed coffee
- Orange juice or grapefruit juice



TOP VEGETARIAN-FRIENDLY MICHELIN STAR RESTAURANTS — IN THAILAND —

Thailand is replete with some of the world's best restaurants, each specialising in a variety of cuisine and styles ranging from traditional to contemporary and innovative. Check out some of the top vegetarian-friendly Michelin Star restaurants based in Bangkok that create unique and flavour-packed courses using ingredients both rare and common.



PRU, PHUKET

Bearing the honour of Thailand's first Michelin Green Star along with the coveted Michelin Star, PRU, short for Plant Raise Understand, crafts a sumptuous culinary journey for guests, that takes inspiration from the diverse ecosystems of Thailand like Khao Yai, Chaing Mai, Krabi, Andaman Sea and more. From amuse-bouche to dessert, all the dishes are founded on western tradition, while using indigenous ingredients and fresh vegetables, herbs, and flowers, from their own organic farm. PRU offers a dynamic six-course vegetarian paired with alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages.

Type: Modern Cuisine

Address: 60/1 Moo 6, Srisoonthorn Road, Cherngtalay, Thalang, Phuket – 83110, Thailand



HAOMA, BANGKOK

Haoma by chef Deepankar Khosla is the world's first Indian restaurant to earn a Michelin Green Star for sustainable gastronomy alongside a Michelin star. This is Thailand's first urban farm and zero-waste restaurant and specialises in neo-Indian cuisine which includes an exceptional vegetarian menu. The 9-course menu touches a wide spectrum of flavours each made from a different combination of ingredients sourced locally. With dishes ranging from Sweet Potato Xacuti, Madras curry and Ponni rice to Jackfruit Curry and Sea Salt Ice cream, the veg course is an absolute treat for taste buds.

Type: Neo-Indian

Address: 231/3 Soi Sukhumvit 31, Khlong Toei Nua, Vadhana, Bangkok – 10110, Thailand

SÜHRING

Inspired by their family recipes, childhood memories and travel experiences, twin Chefs Matthias and Thomas run the family-named restaurant Sühring. The twins have crafted a modern German tasting menu that merited them two Michelin stars. The dishes are masterfully presented and prepared using pure seasonal ingredients, often with traditional German techniques like fermenting, pickling, and curing. To elevate the experience, the restaurant is set in a renovated Thai villa built in the 1970s which creates a relaxing ambience. While largely known for its appetising non-veg menu, Sühring also offers excellent options in vegetarian food which have captivated many palates.

Type: Contemporary European, German

Address: 10 Soi Yen Akat 3, Chong Nonsi, Yan Nawa, Bangkok – 10120, Thailand





J'AIME BY JEAN-MICHEL LORAIN

Owned by Chef Jean-Michel Lorain, J'AIME at U Sathorn Bangkok Hotel, boasts of a menu with authentic French cuisine made from a fusion of the freshest regional produce. Their innovative take on cooking coupled with cossetting ambience and interesting interior choices like an inverted piano hanging from the ceiling make for a great all-around dining experience. The one-Michelin Star J'AIME features numerous mouth watering vegetarian dishes on its menu that create a symphony of different flavours and textures best paired with their fine wines.

Type: Contemporary French

Address: U Sathorn Bangkok, 105, 105/1 Soi Ngam Duphli Thung Maha Mek Sub-district Sathorn District, Bangkok – 10120, Thailand

SIGNATURE BANGKOK

Chef Thierry Drapeau's modern French and floral cuisine is the highlight of one-Michelin Star Signature Bangkok. The restaurant prides itself on creating bespoke and original food, each with a unique flavour, dimension and beauty using edible flowers and herbs that change seasonally. It also serves vegetarian and vegan food courses, albeit on prior notice.

Signature Bangkok also has an Art-Deco dining room that soars above the Bangkok skyline and features an open kitchen. Guests are often encouraged to converse with the expert culinary team and experience the rare ingredients take shape into creative dishes.

Type: French

Address: 11F, VIE Hotel, 117/39-40 Phayathai Road, Thanon Petchburi, Ratchathewi, Bangkok, 10400, Thailand





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7 PASTA SECRETS EVERY COOK SHOULD KNOW!



1 Don't put oil in your water or on your pasta
The oil doesn't let sauce stick to your pasta. And it makes your pasta greasy.

2 Cook in a big pot and fill it properly
Pasta loves to swim! Use enough cold, fresh water that once the pasta begins to cook and expand, there will still be plenty of room for it to move freely. Rule of thumb: three litres of water to every 250g of pasta.

3 Salt your water well.
The water needs to "taste like the sea," in order to season the pasta nicely. Use 1 tbsp salt for 3 litres of water.

4 Always save some cooking water
All your flavour is in the water, so ladle a cup of cooking water into a bowl or measuring cup and reserve for your sauce before you drain off the pasta.

5 Don't let the pasta sit too long
Drained pasta starts drying off. As it cools, the starches will firm up and the pasta will stick together.

6 Add pasta to sauce — not the other way around.
Make your sauce before you cook your pasta. Keep your sauce warm in a large, wide saucepan, big enough to add your pasta to. As soon as the pasta is done, mix it with sauce and toss well.

7 Read the package and follow directions
Long thin noodles tend to be very fast cooking while small denser pasta tend to take much longer. Start testing your pasta about two minutes before the indicated time, just to be safe. You're looking for 'al dente' which means tender but firm to the tooth.

TRAVEL

**WHERE ARE YOUR DREAMS
TAKING YOU THIS SEASON?**



Summer In New Zealand

Beach. Beauty. Bliss.

While we find ways to stay warm through winter, New Zealand celebrates summer. The land of the long white cloud is a paradise of unparalleled natural beauty. While it's captivating year-round, summer

brings a special magic to this Pacific gem. The vibrant landscapes, lush forests, and pristine beaches come alive with the warmth of the sun. With a multitude of activities to enjoy, from horse riding to sailing, diving, and golf, summer in New Zealand is a dream come true for outdoor enthusiasts.

EMBRACING THE OUTDOORS

New Zealand's summer invites you to explore its breath-taking landscapes, indulge in thrilling adventures, and soak up the vibrant culture. Here's a taste of what this land of enchantment has to offer:



HORSE RIDING IN PARADISE

New Zealand boasts a network of equestrian trails that traverse some of the most picturesque landscapes on Earth. The warm summer months are perfect for horse riding adventures. Whether you're a novice or an experienced rider, you can saddle up and explore lush forests, tranquil lakeshores, and rolling hillsides. Don't miss the Waikato region's rolling green farmlands, or the majestic trails of the Southern Alps.



SAILING THROUGH BLISS

With its vast coastline and pristine waters, New Zealand is a sailor's dream. Summer is the ideal season to set sail and explore the hidden coves, dramatic fjords, and sparkling bays. Charter a yacht and cruise through the Bay of Islands, where you can spot dolphins and enjoy secluded anchorages. For the adventurous, the windy waters of Auckland's Hauraki Gulf offer a thrilling experience.



DIVING INTO THE DEEP BLUE

New Zealand is renowned for its underwater wonderland. In summer, the crystal-clear waters beckon divers from around the world. Explore the Poor Knights Islands, a marine reserve teeming with vibrant corals and unique marine life. Or delve into the fiords of Fiordland, where submerged cliffs and waterfalls create a surreal world beneath the surface.





GOLF, A HOLE-IN-ONE PARADISE

Golf aficionados, take note! New Zealand's summer makes the already stunning golf courses even more enticing. Tee off amidst breathtaking vistas of snow-capped mountains, serene lakes, and lush forests. The Jack's Point Golf Course in Queenstown and the Cape Kidnappers Golf Course in Hawke's Bay are just two of the many golfing gems waiting to be discovered.



ADVENTURES BEYOND

Beyond these activities, New Zealand's summer offers a plethora of other thrilling adventures:

Hiking and Tramping:

Explore the world-famous Milford Track, Abel Tasman Coastal Track, or Tongariro Alpine Crossing. These hikes offer varying levels of challenge and immerse you in stunning natural beauty.

Mountain Biking:

New Zealand's extensive network of mountain bike trails provides endless opportunities to ride through diverse landscapes.

Wine Tasting: Visit world-renowned wineries in Marlborough, Hawke's Bay, and Central Otago to savour the finest New Zealand wines.



WILDLIFE ENCOUNTERS



Summer is the best time to spot New Zealand's unique wildlife, from the adorable kiwi bird to fur seals and rare Hector's dolphins.

BEACH ESCAPES



New Zealand offers some of the world's most beautiful beaches. Hot Water Beach, Cathedral Cove, and Piha Beach are among the must-visit coastal destinations.

STAR-GAZING



The Southern Hemisphere's dark skies make New Zealand a stargazer's paradise. Visit the Aoraki Mackenzie International Dark Sky Reserve for an unforgettable celestial experience.

PEA STONE, NORWAY

The official name of the Pea stone is Kjeragbolten. It's a 5 cubic metre boulder that lodged itself between two giant rocks sometime during the Ice Age. Located on the edge of the Kjerag mountain in Lysefjorden, Norway, this risky rock is, believe it or not—supposed to bring you good luck!

You need no equipment other than your courage to walk up and stand here. But while it's a great spot to get your picture taken, just don't look down below! It's a more-than-half-mile drop into the Norwegian fjords. And don't let the sound of pistol shots make your knees buckle...that's just the wind blowing in from the east.

Brrr.

FUN FACT

The name is possibly a compound of kje which means 'kid' and ragg which means 'goat's hair, shag'. The rough surface of the mountainside has been compared with the shaggy hair of a kid goat.

MAYAL LYANG AND THE HIDDEN VALLEY OF LEPCHAS IN DZONGU NORTH SIKKIM

BY ABHIRUP PAUL

The hidden and restricted nature of any land makes it more unique and unspoiled. It also adds a quality of mystery to it. And if that place is generously gifted with nature's bounty, visiting it makes it even more interesting and worthwhile. Among the many lesser-trodden and offbeat places of Sikkim, the Dzongu valley in North Sikkim is perhaps the most beautiful of all. Plucked straight out of a fairytale, the region of Dzongu comprises 30 sparsely populated mountain villages that sit cozily among the deep gorges, lush forested hills, and gorgeous valleys of this area. Nestled in the foothills of the world's third-highest mountain, Kanchenjunga, it is the last piece of land before the mighty Himalayas starts its journey of standing tall. Dzongu is one of those places where Sikkim's culture can be witnessed and experienced in all its glory.

One of the most interesting aspects of Dzongu is that it has been established as an official reserve for the Lepcha tribe. The Lepchas are the oldest tribe of Sikkim and are considered the aboriginal inhabitants of the state. They call themselves "Rong" which means "ravine dwellers" but are referred to by others as the Lepchas. Originally, the tribe was a group of nomadic hunters and food gatherers and later practiced shifting cultivation with primitive technology. They followed animism, meaning that they worshipped natural spirits of land, water and trees.

In the seventeenth century, they came in contact with Tibetans (Bhutias), who came first as monks and traders. Bhutias were powerful in every respect



A long suspension bridge is used by the locals to access remote villages in Dzongu North Sikkim | Photo: Team Eka



Just another evening sight of Local kids of the village helping out their family collecting grass for livestock. | Photo: Team Eka



A Lepcha man in Traditional attire | Photo: Kandell, Alice S (LoC)

and established monarchical rule. They were soon able to dominate these shy and peace-loving people who usually avoided aggression in any form. The Bhutias followed Buddhism and so they built gompas (monasteries) and gradually converted the animistic, nature-worshipping Lepchas to Lamaistic Buddhists.

According to The Gazetteer of Sikkim (1891), Nepalis with 56 percent constituted a majority of the population followed by the Lepchas (19 percent) and Bhutias (16 percent). There were other constituents like the Khambus. More than a hundred years later, the share of the Lepcha population has gone down to 14 -15 percent whereas that of the Nepalis climbed to almost 70 percent with the Bhutias constituting more or less the same proportion.

With the mixing of cultures and later arrival of the Nepalese in droves, the original traditions and beliefs of the tribe were found to be getting eroded. Dzongu was therefore designated as a specially reserved area for the Lepchas. This was formalised in the early sixties by the then rulers (Chogyals) of Sikkim Kingdom. The main aim of the Lepcha reserve was to preserve the social homogeneity of the tribe. The idea was that only 'pure-blooded' Lepchas could live and own land here. To preserve the slowly vanishing tribe's identity, heritage and culture, Dzongu thus became a forbidden land. It is now a restricted paradise that is accessible only with proper permissions.

Lepcha clans claim to have mythical connections with particular mountain peaks which they worship as their guardian deity. Thus, the mountains Simvo, Siniolchu and Kanchenjunga find prominence in the Lepcha culture. Today, the handful of Lepchas

in Dzongu still have strong ties with nature and they believe that life is spent being true to mother nature. They have been living in the area for centuries worshipping the Kanchenjunga Mountain. According to them, the mountain is the protector of all, and almost everything associated with it is sacred to them. In their teachings and folklore, Dzongu North Sikkim is the bridge to Mayal Lyang, a heavenly abode hidden far away. The Mayal Lyang is believed to be where all of them originate from and will finally arrive for a peaceful afterlife. In the Lepcha language, Mayal Lyang means the 'Hidden Land' or 'Land blessed by God'.

The Lepcha people have been a shamanistic society for ages. A Bomthing (male shaman) or Mun (lady shaman) is consulted in case of problems, obstacles, or any issues they face in general. In one of the interesting folk tales of the area, it is believed that Lepchas had cast ancient curses across the Dzongu valley. It is said that some of the Bhutia ancestors had failed to pay for cattle they had taken from their Lepcha neighbours. Hence these curses had been sent by some Lepcha shamans residing in Dzongu. These shamans are referred to as Bomthing outside of Dzongu but as Padims within the reserve area. As per traditions and beliefs, many Bhutias around the area still perform annual rituals so as to counter the curse's effectiveness at the time of their fieldwork.

In the Lepcha culture, the medicine man or the herbalist is known as 'Maon-doak'. The 'Maon-doak' prepares medicine for various health problems of the Lepchas including serious issues like bone fracture and snake bites. The herbalist restricts his medicinal practises and prescriptions only to the Lepcha community. Anyone else is considered a foreigner and he does not share his knowledge with them. If the traditional knowledge of using plants is shared with anyone outside the community, then the 'Maon-doak' believes that the plants under his use would produce adverse effects. And they will encounter ill-fate generated from the rage of the supreme deity of medicinal plants in the



The glacial river Rongyung Chu cutting across the Dzongu Valley. | Photo: Team Eka



A village home in upper dzongu with the Kanchenjunga range in the backdrop | Photo: Team Eka



A Lepcha shaman at the Lho Rum Fat Festival in Dzongu North Sikkim. Photo: Prava Rai (Sikkimproject.org)



The local monastery of Tingvong Village in Upper Dzongu North Sikkim. | Photo: Team Eka

forest. Many experts believe that this attitude of non-sharing of traditional knowledge has gradually led to a decline of ancient herbal practices even within the community.

Dzongu has for a long time remained far away from commercialization. As an unintentional boon to its responsible growth in the sphere of tourism, most tour operators skip this hidden gem of a place. Most standard itineraries ignore the region in their North Sikkim Tour Packages. What can be termed as a blessing in disguise, the isolation and restricted nature of Dzongu has kept it as pristine and untouched as possible. It is one of the most culturally rich places of Sikkim with strong local traditions and costumes in place.

Such delicate environments must be visited and explored responsibly with local community-led tourism being at the forefront. Of late, the region has gained certain popularity among nature lovers, culture buffs, and local experience seekers. As Dzongu comes to the limelight, it is important to bring forth the rich local culture of the Lepchas. We just hope the growth of this region in the ever-expanding map of Sikkim tourism is balanced and planned. And that the growth happens keeping the local communities and its unspoilt biodiversity in mind.

MEET THE AUTHOR

Abhirup Paul is the Founder of Eka Experiences™, an experiential travel company (www.EKAxp.in)

Travel Redefined

Most Sensory Experiences of 2023

In a world saturated with screens and virtual realities, the allure of truly immersive experiences has never been stronger. As globetrotters seek travel that transcends sightseeing, we unveil ideas that will become a feast for all the senses.



REVEL IN THE INDIGENOUS FLAVOURS AND ADVENTURES OF THAILAND

Thailand, an all-year-round destination, is home to the most memorable encounters. A unique way to explore Thailand is to visit the countryside and immerse in the local culture. The Thai province of Mae Hong Son in the northwest is one of the best places to witness and engage with the indigenous tribes of Thailand. Here you can treat your tastebuds to the special delicacies exclusive to these hearty tribes and participate in their daily avocations. Likewise, locals of Phetchabun annually host the “Paddle in the Forest and Look for Freshwater Jellyfish” event where tourists can stimulate their senses of touch, and sight through activities like fish-feeding, shell-seeking, and butterfly sighting.



PARTAKE IN TRADITIONAL JAPANESE LIFESTYLE AND CULTURAL ARTS

From spending a day in a ryokan, a Japanese-style inn to learning Japanese dance and flower arrangements, Japan’s cultural offerings are highly appealing to the senses. A night at a ryokan in Hakone or Kyoto offers a clear glimpse into the traditional Japanese lifestyle. Comprising tatami rooms, futon beds, Japanese-style baths, and local cuisine, ryokans provide indulgences for all your senses. One can also choose to learn the meditative Japanese dance in Tokyo, or the traditional flower arrangement called Ikebana, in Tokyo and Kyoto, which is a unique satisfying form of art and a way to add Japanese charm to your house back in India.





»»» **SPECTATE AND HEAR THE ENIGMATIC FLORA AND FAUNA OF SEYCHELLES**

The islands of Seychelles are dotted with some of the world's rarest flora and fauna, providing room for unique visual and acoustic experiences. The Vallée de Mai, a pristine palm forest popularly described as the "Garden of Eden", is home to the largest population of Coco-de-mer - The world's biggest and heaviest nut. Here you can also witness rare creatures, such as Seychelles black parrots, sheath-tailed bats, palm frogs, Seychelles magpie-robin and scops owl. The giant tortoises of Seychelles, found in Aldabra atoll and the inner islands make for the most delightful sights in Seychelles.



»»» **SOAK IN THE WORLD'S BEST LUBAN WITH OMAN'S ONLY CERTIFIED FRANKINCENSE SOMMELIER**

Oman is home to the finest frankincense globally and it's also one of the most respected exporters of top-quality frankincense. Oman's one and only accredited Frankincense sommelier takes guests of Shangri-La Muscat on a guided tour of the resort's private garden, where one can see, touch, and smell the aromatic resin in its raw form. The team has also developed several recipes and beverages infused with Frankincense, such as the smoked chicken on Frankincense and Shangri-La Spritz infused with gin, lavender syrup, pineapple, pink grapefruit, butterfly pea and sparkling wine.



»»» **EMBARK ON A WILD ADVENTURE AT THE AMBOSELI NATIONAL PARK IN KENYA**

Kenya's Amboseli National Park is one of the greatest wildlife experiences in the world. It is home to hundreds of bird species including pelicans, kingfishers, free-ranging elephants, as well as numerous raptor species. A stay at a premier resort like Ol Tukai Lodge Amboseli allows one to book an offbeat escapade with local guides to interact with the local Maasai tribe and take an unfiltered look into their culture, daily occupations, and rituals. The guests at the resort can also enjoy breathtaking views of the famous Mount Kilimanjaro, with endless luxury and wellness amenities at their disposal.



»»» **ENJOY SNOW SPORTS, SPA AND SCENERY IN ST. MORITZ, SWITZERLAND**

St. Moritz is an elite winter sports destination with its own idyllic charm. Its quaint mountain, Muottas Muragl, a funicular ride away, offers panoramic views of the landscape dominated by lakes and the Bernina Massif. The hotels and restaurants in St. Moritz benefit tremendously from these stunning views, attracting guests from all over the world to savour delicious cuisines on a generous sun terrace. Its luxury spas offer soothing massages, relaxing hot baths, and rejuvenating treatments to pamper your body and soul.



»»» **RE-LIVE THE LEGENDARY VISION OF ARCHITECT GEOFFREY BAWA IN A SYLVAN SRI LANKAN VILLA**

A 10-minute drive from Sri Lanka's resort town, Bentota, the Lunuganga country estate by Teardrop Hotels packs in the legacy of legendary architect Geoffrey Bawa. The hotel is situated on the banks of the Dedduwa Lake and is surrounded by paddy fields, cinnamon estates, and coconut plantations creating a therapeutic atmosphere for all senses. Staying in its timeless villas, one can experience Bawa's genius vision that unfolded over a period of 40 years. The hotel's expansive Gallery Studio with its art-laced ambience, is perfect for honeymooners. The Main House Studio of the hotel sits closest to Bawa's own room and evokes vibes of the colonial era with its elegant interiors.





TASTE THE FLAVOURFUL LOCAL SPICES OF ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar in the Indian Ocean is a painting coming to life with mile-long stretches of white sand, and azure waters lined with palm leaves that filter warm sunlight and air rich with the notes of fragrant spices. At its heart lies The Residence Zanzibar, an exclusive villa retreat in Kizimkazi village. Experience the island's heartbeat on a guided journey through villages and spice plantations, led by the resort's herbalist. Feel the textures and savour the flavours of tropical spices and fruits. Venture to the uninhabited Pungwe and Kwale islands within the Menai Bay Conservation Area, where a chef serves fresh seafood barbecue lunch.



GET YOUR ADRENALINE PUMPING BY KITESURFING IN QATAR

Qatar is surrounded by the Arabian Sea and is blessed with year-round sunny weather, which makes it an ideal location for water sports. The nation's sparkling beaches, waterparks, and marinas invite thrill seekers to try out new adventures, especially during the winter. Kite surfing is a popular water activity in the country that mixes wakeboarding, windsurfing, and surfing, an ideal combination of adventure and pleasure. Adventurers can also try wakeboarding, kayaking or water skiing in the waters of Doha all guided by professional divers and safety equipment.



APPRECIATE THE FINEST ARTWORKS OF VIETNAMESE ARTISANS IN MUI NE

Vietnam's history, culture, cuisine, and native offerings have become a hit among different segments of Indian travellers. A stay at The Anam Mui Ne, amidst classic Vietnamese aesthetics, is a pure sensory indulgence. It is crafted with encaustic mosaic tiles, locally sourced stone from Thanh Hoa and Nghe An, and authentic thatched roofs from Binh Thuan, and decorated with traditional Cham vases and statues. The resort also has 250 oil paintings made by Vietnamese artists Vu Trong Anh and Bui Van Quang designated for specific rooms, suites, the lobby, restaurants, and hallways. You can also learn coconut leaf weaving and traditional Vietnamese cooking.

West Wycombe Park: A Palladian Gem

West Wycombe Park, a stately country house built between 1740 and 1800, encapsulates the entire progression of British 18th-century architecture, from early idiosyncratic Palladian to the Neoclassical. It was conceived as a pleasure palace for the 18th-century libertine and dilettante Sir Francis Dashwood, 2nd Baronet.

BY VISWAPRASAD RAJU



From *Fast & Furious: Hobbs & Shaw* to *Sense and Sensibility*, West Wycombe Estate has been a magnet for filming movies, music videos, web series, and ad films.

Part of a set that was filmed here, the statue (made of fiberglass) of a Roman emperor on a horseback, is now a permanent fixture. Placed high on the ridge lording over the place, it was bought by the late 11th Baronet, Sir Francis Dashwood, from Pinewood Studios for the price of a crate of champagne. Drink to that!

This was the home of the Dashwood family for over 300 years. The surname Dashwood rings a bell, right? The Dashwood sisters in *Sense and Sensibility*! Jane Austen is everywhere. Why, even *Austenland* was filmed here.

CAVE PARTIES AND THE ELITE CLUB

At the foot of West Wycombe Hill sit the Hellfire Caves. Named after Sir Francis's notorious Hellfire Club, members included William Hogarth, John Wilkes, Thomas Potter, John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich, and Benjamin Franklin, among others. The caves were rumoured to have





The Temple of the winds
West Wycombe estate,
England 1977



The flintwork entrance to the
Hell-fire Caves
West Wycombe estate,
England



hosted wild and notorious parties. Ironically, the caves were built by Sir Francis to tackle local unemployment.

Considered to be the largest man-made chalk cavern in the world, the Secret Tunnels have many passages, chambers, a hall, and of course, many secrets. Pss!

There are eight rooms in all: the hall, the dining room, the tapestry room, the yellow saloon, the red drawing room, the study, the blue drawing room, and the music room. There's so much room to learn more about the Dashwood family's history.

Temples, Gardens, and Pillars: The Temple of Apollo, The Round Temple, The Temple of the Winds, The Music Temple, The Cascade, The Temple of Venus, Daphne's Temple and Kitty's Lodge, The Water Garden, and The Britannia Pillar.

In 1943, Sir John Dashwood gifted West Wycombe Park to the National Trust. The 12th Baronet, Sir Edward, and his family live in the Palladian mansion house, which boasts striking interiors and a curious mix of Baroque, Rococo, and classical styles, with Italian marble, painted ceilings, ornate fireplaces, family heirlooms, portraits, chandeliers, classical busts, and tapestries. Add to that, the mansion is attached to one of the finest surviving 18th-century landscape gardens. The legacy of the Dashwoods is still very much alive.

MEET THE WRITER

Viswaprasad Raju is an advertising professional and a travel sketch artist based in Hyderabad.

5 LUXURY RESORTS

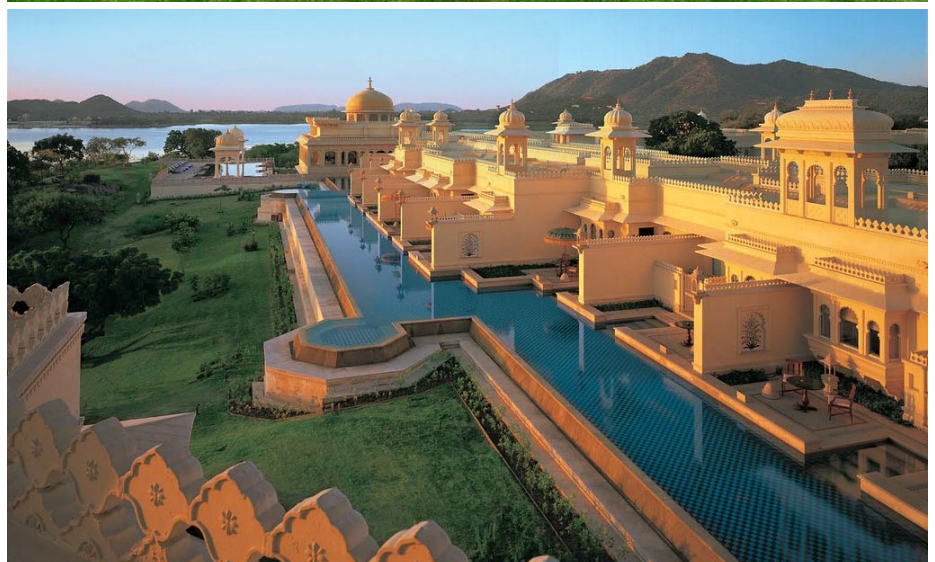
TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR NEXT GETAWAY

India is a land of diverse landscapes, rich culture, and a myriad of experiences waiting to be explored. If you're planning a luxurious getaway during the festive season, there's no shortage of opulent resorts that offer the perfect combination of relaxation, adventure, and impeccable hospitality. Here is a list of some of the best luxury resorts in India to make your stay truly unforgettable.

OBEROI UDAIVILAS, UDAIPUR

Nestled on the banks of Lake Pichola in Udaipur, the Oberoi Udaivilas is often referred to as one of the most luxurious and romantic hotels in the country. This opulent resort seamlessly blends traditional Rajasthani architecture with modern amenities, offering guests an unforgettable experience in the "City of Lakes." The resort offers a range of accommodations, including rooms and suites, all of which are lavishly appointed with a mix of traditional and modern furnishings. Some accommodations even come with private pools, courtyards, and terraces.

The resort offers various recreational activities, including cultural shows, yoga sessions, and even cooking classes. You can also take a dip in the stunning pool or explore the lush gardens.





EVOLVE BACK KAMALAPURA PALACE, HAMPI

Evolve Back's Kamalapura Palace is a magnificent illustration of a place where luxury meets history. Situated in the historic city of Hampi, this resort provides a distinctive fusion of comfort and tradition. This property boasts Indo-Islamic architecture that will leave you spellbound. Known for its stone-paved boulevards, arched hallways, and royal chambers, the resort provides guests with distinct lodging choices of Palace Suites and Private Pool Villas, all equipped with private pools or outdoor showers.



The resort offers its guests an exquisite dining experience at the resort's rooftop restaurant, Tuluva, that offers a mesmerizing view of the resort's infinity pool. Guests can also indulge in a range of activities, including guided walks on Tungabhadra Trek, Virupaksha Trail and Raya Trail, that will transport them to a bygone era of striking monuments and soul-stirring landscapes.



REGENTA KABINI SPRING RESORTS

Within the grounds of Nagarahole National Park, one of India's best locations for wildlife, the Regenta Kabini Springs Resort is the perfect starting point for spending unforgettable vacations surrounded by indigenous fauna, a thick tropical jungle, and a stunning river. The resort provides guests with three distinct lodging choices: Riverfront Rooms, Courtyard Rooms, and River View Suites. Each room or cottage features a blend of luxurious furnishings, modern facilities, and contemporary décor to satisfy the needs of the guests.

While enjoying their stay at the resort, guests can also take up many other activities, including dining under the stars, swimming in the enormous pool's azure waters, camping out at night, going on guided jungle treks, going on wildlife safaris, and much more.



WILDFLOWER HALL, SHIMLA

Wildflower Hall is a luxurious hilltop resort located in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, offering a serene and enchanting retreat amidst the natural beauty of Shimla. Originally the residence of Lord Kitchener, this heritage property is situated at an altitude of 8,250 feet, allowing guests to enjoy panoramic views of the surrounding cedar and pine forests and the green valleys of the Greater Himalayas. The resort offers elegantly appointed rooms, suites, and even private villas, each spacious, well-furnished, and equipped with modern amenities, including a private balcony or terrace.

The property offers a variety of activities, including spa therapies and treatments, nature walks, trekking, mountain biking, and picnics in the woods. During the winter, the resort provides facilities for ice skating, and guests can also enjoy indoor games.



LEELA PALACE, GOA

The Leela Palace is a luxury beachfront resort located in the vibrant and picturesque state of Goa, India. The resort enjoys a privileged location along the pristine sands of Mobor Beach in South Goa, offering stunning views of the Arabian Sea. It is renowned for its opulent accommodations, world-class amenities, and the perfect fusion of Indian and Portuguese influences that reflect the unique cultural heritage of Goa. The property offers a variety of beautifully designed rooms and suites, many of which have private balconies or terraces that provide breathtaking ocean or garden views.

Guests can enjoy an array of recreational activities, including a beautiful pool, sun loungers, and water sports at the private stretch of Mobor Beach. Additionally, the resort is situated adjacent to a golf course, allowing golf enthusiasts to enjoy a challenging round while taking in the scenic surroundings.

THEY SAID

SURPRISING, SPARKLING, SAUCY & SASSY QUOTES
FROM LITERATURE'S LEADING LIGHTS.

**MURIEL
RUKEYSER**

.....
The universe is made
of stories, not of
atoms.



...
**OSCAR
WILDE**

A writer is someone who has
taught his mind to misbehave.



**DAPHNE DU
MAURIER**

.....
Writers should
be read,
but neither seen
nor heard.



**STEPHEN
KING**

Quiet people have the
loudest minds.



**FRANK
LLOYD
WRIGHT**

I'm all in favor of keeping
dangerous weapons out of the
hands of fools. Let's start with
typewriters.



EPICETUS

If you wish to
be a writer, write.



**SUSAN
SONTAG**

A writer,
I think, is someone
who pays attention
to the world.



**ALICE
WALKER**

If you're silent
for a long time,
people just arrive
in your mind.



**GUSTAVE
FLAUBERT**

You don't make
art out of good
intentions.



Get lost
in the jungles of
Central India.




Baghdera
meadows
Wildlife Resorts



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KANHA | TADOBA (Summer of 2023)