

# AMORE

LIFE & LEISURE

Summer Issue 2023

## Living in Style

20 Pages of Expert Advice

Treasure Islands

**Crete. Maldives.**

Exclusive

**John Abraham**

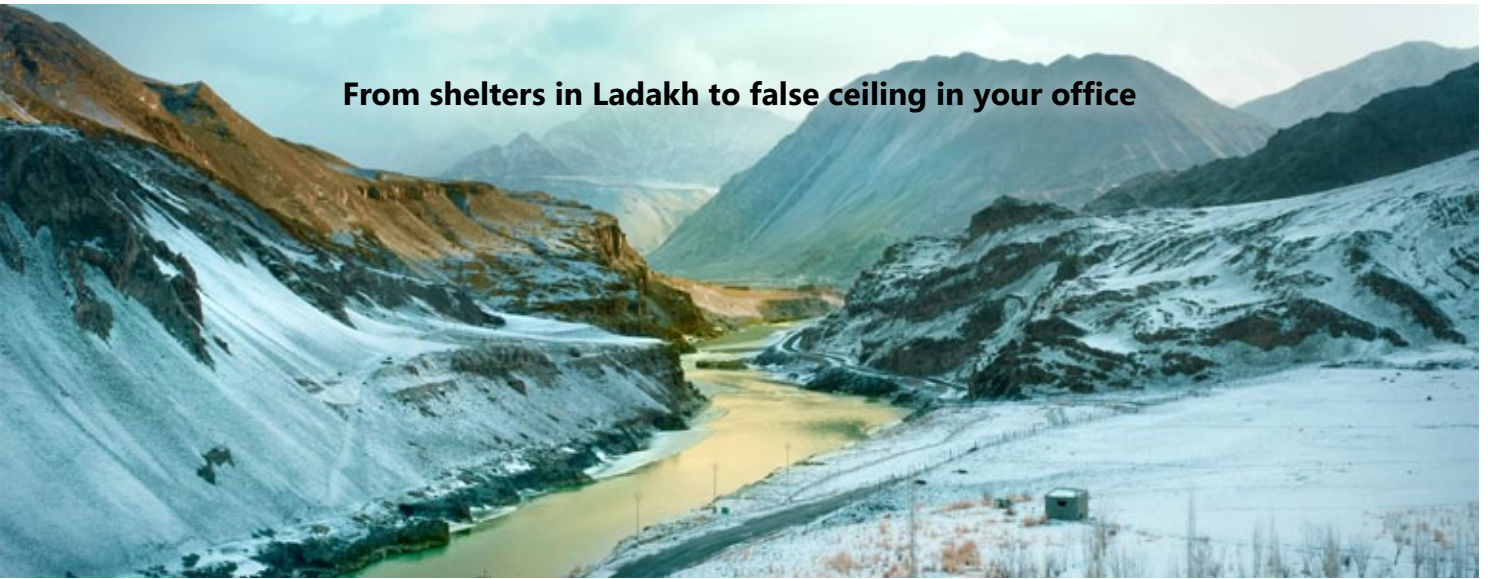
Dishes Up a Vegan Delight

The **Art** of  
**Ahimsa Silk**

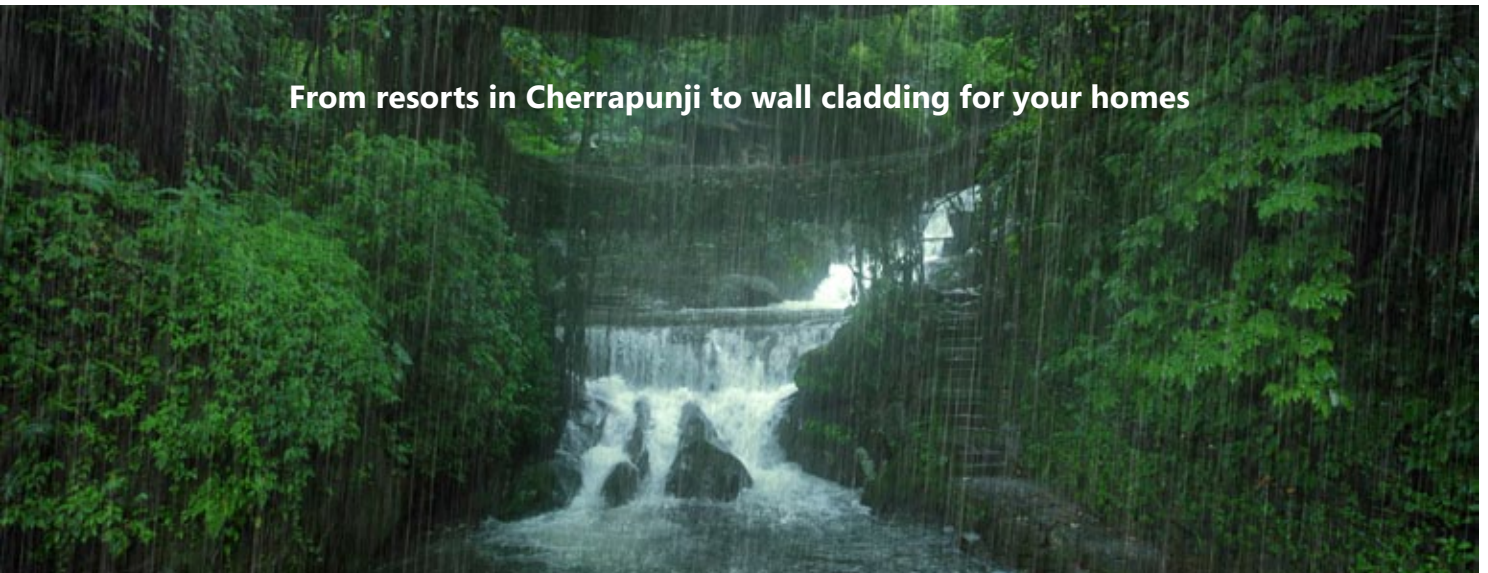
**From houseboats in Kerala to cabinets in your home**



**From shelters in Ladakh to false ceiling in your office**



**From resorts in Cherrapunji to wall cladding for your homes**



One board. Infinite uses.

[www.bisonpanel.com](http://www.bisonpanel.com)  [NCLBisonPanel](#)  [BisonPanel](#)



**AMANDA JOY PURAVANKARA**  
Executive Director  
Provident Housing Limited

Dear Readers,

I am delighted to see the enthusiastic response to our premier issue of *Amore*. To all our residents and readers in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kochi, Coimbatore, Mangaluru, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Goa and the GCC –a big thank you!

Summer is the time when life takes on a lighter, carefree rhythm—a time to bask in the sunshine and savour the simple pleasures life offers us. We've curated a vibrant tapestry of stories, trends, and inspiration that celebrate the essence of this beautiful season.

Puravankara continues to redefine lifestyle by creating spaces that transcend the ordinary and elevate the everyday living experience. In addition to our commitment to quality, we place a strong emphasis on environmental consciousness. This issue of *Amore* brings you a bouquet of ideas on how to design your home using sustainable elements from nature.

We encourage you to take the time to pause, breathe, and appreciate the beauty that surrounds you.

*Amanda Joy*

# PURVA

## ALWAYS ABOUT YOU



### REALISING DREAMS SINCE 1975

AT PURVA, WE DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO CREATE MAGIC FOR YOU.  
WE SPEND HOURS CRAFTING BLUEPRINTS, SO YOU HAVE HOMES TO ADMIRE  
FOR A LIFETIME.

WE GO THE EXTRA MILE TO FIND THE RIGHT LOCATION. SO, YOU LIVE  
IN PROXIMITY TO EVERYTHING YOU LOVE.

WE EMPLOY CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY, SO YOUR LIFESTYLE IS A CUT  
ABOVE THE REST. AND OUR ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS AND SALES TEAM FIND  
THEIR IKIGAI BY DOING WHAT THEY'RE MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT - CREATING BEAUTIFUL  
SPACES. WE INVEST EVERY SINGLE DAY IN MAKING YOU THE  
CENTRE OF OUR UNIVERSE  
SO, YOUR HOME CAN BE THE CENTRE OF YOURS.





- BENGALURU
- CHENNAI
- COIMBATORE
- GOA
- HYDERABAD
- KOCHI
- MANGALORE
- MUMBAI
- PUNE

**BUILDING THE FINEST, SMARTEST, HAPPIEST HOMES  
FOR FAMILIES ACROSS INDIA.**



A LEGACY OF DELIGHTING  
CUSTOMERS



42,500+  
HOMES DELIVERED



1.7 LAC+  
HAPPY RESIDENTS



LARGE OPEN SPACES  
AND OUTDOOR AMENITIES  
FOR YOU AND YOURS



THOUGHTFULLY  
DESIGNED CELEBRATION  
SPACES



HIGHER QUALITY OF  
MATERIALS FOR  
A WORLD-CLASS LIFESTYLE



STRINGENT  
QUALITY  
CONTROL

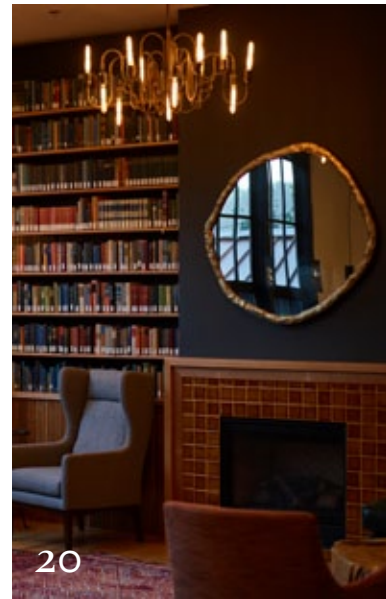
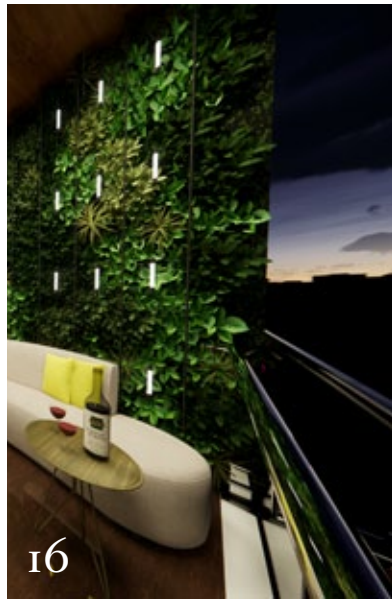


SUSTAINABLE DESIGN  
FOR A GREENER  
TOMORROW

TO SCHEDULE A PURVA HOME BUYING TOUR, CALL **080 44 555 555** OR VISIT [WWW.PURVA.COM](http://WWW.PURVA.COM)

# Summer Issue 2023

# contents



## DÉCOR

House of Openings: Less is more.  
And green is in..... 10

Beautiful Balconies..... 16

Four Ways With Wallpaper ..... 18

MIRROR-MIRROR: Let the  
mirrors in your home be a reflection  
of your personal style .....20

Home sweet-scented home ..... 24

The Purple Turtles:  
A Unique Home Décor Store .....28

Keepsakes: Where Art Meets Furniture ..... 30



40



52



60

## TASTE

Taste Notes: Your across-the-globe guide to good food and great spirits ..... 58

One for the Vegan: Exotic Vegetables with Almonds.....60

7 Indian Restaurants Serving Authentic Bengali Food..... 62

A Berry Good Morning .....64

And then there is French Toast..... 65

Sundae Served in Style .....66

Lemony Cream Cheese Pancakes...68

5 Things You Didn't Know About Muesli ..... 70

Mangoes: A Fruity Love Affair ..... 72

Sage & Walnut Gnocchi.....75

## TRAVEL

CRETE Greece: Those Dreamy Summer Blues..... 78

Island Therapy: Maldives ..... 84

Mae Hong Son: A Hidden Gem in Thailand ..... 88

My Core Four .....91

Longding: Land of Guns & Roses..... 92

They Said .....98

10 Things: No One Told You About Wine.....99



88

## LIFE

The A List - Trending right now ..... 34

Give Peace (Silk) A Chance..... 36

The Power of the Will ..... 38

Love & Fresh Air .....40

A Marvel Long Lost: Kolkata's Magen David Synagogue.....44

The new 5 to 9 in Bengaluru: A look at the vibrant communities thriving in the city.....46

Mulling over Manuscripts.....48

## LEISURE

Book Extract: The Rosary of Latitudes .....52

Films that made a difference to Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri ..... 54

All Aglow ..... 56



#### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Amanda Joy Puravankara

#### CEO & PUBLISHER

Abhishek Kapoor

#### MANAGING EDITOR

Abhinav Kanchan

#### EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Shubhra Krishan

#### ASSISTANT EDITOR

Chetna Srinivasan

#### EDITORIAL TEAM

Avinash Bhat, Nikunj Joshi,  
Nikita Harindranath

#### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Shruti Kothari Tomar, Shantanu Ray  
Chaudhuri, Ronjinee Chattopadhyay,  
Ananya Vats, Subhasish Chakraborty

#### DESIGN DIRECTOR

Vijay Rana

#### ASSOCIATE DESIGNER

Amit Singh

#### ADVERTISING CONSULTANT

Viswaprasad Raju  
viswaprasadraju@gmail.com  
+919396895105

#### FOR FEEDBACK / QUERIES & SUGGESTIONS

amore@puravankara.com

The views expressed in the articles reflect the author(s) opinions and are not necessarily the views of the publisher and editor. The published material, adverts, editorials and all other content is published in a good faith. Amore Magazine cannot guarantee and accepts no liability for any loss or damage of any kind caused by any errors and for the accuracy of claims made by the advertisers.

All rights reserved and nothing can be partially or in whole be reprinted or reproduced without a written consent.



Published by **PURAVANKARA LTD.**  
#130/1, Ulsoor Road, Bengaluru,  
Karnataka - 560 042



Please Recycle This Paper

# editor's note



Dear Readers,

Here is the summer issue of *Amore* magazine, filled with an eclectic mix of articles for your reading pleasure.

From a wallpaper maker to architecture experts, we got a range of experts to share their ideas for creating beautiful homes. Taste the sweet fruits of summer in our colourful food section, and travel with us to the blue isles of Maldives and Crete.

I'm sure you'll love veteran editor Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri's selection of seven superb films. Do send us your own list of favourites.

A special mention to Subhasish Chakraborty, whose piece on the Wancho tribals of Longding will make you proud of our country's incredible diversity. We salute how Unmana Rynjah of Assam is doing her bit to promote cruelty-free silk while providing employment to the artisans of the North-East.

For the next issue, we invite you to contribute photos, features and personal stories that you feel might be of interest to other readers. Please write to us with your feedback and story ideas.

Happy reading!

*Shubhra*

# DÉCOR

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



# house of openings

Less is more. And green is in.

BY SHRUTI KOTHARI TOMAR

Stay close to nature. Bring the great outdoors in. Concepts that are taking centre stage in home décor today. Think Swedish design. Think Japanese Modernism. The “white palette” in both is linked to layers of neutral tones and soft mellowed natural wood surfaces, mixed in with sparkling chemistry between the great outdoors and indoor spaces.

## HOUSE OF OPENINGS

AREA: 4BHK, 4500 sqft in 800 sqyds.

LOCATION: Hyderabad

TYPE: Private residence

DESIGN TEAM: Praveen Architects

PHOTOGRAPHER: Ricken Desai





## DÉCOR

**N**ature-inspired interior design is on point these days, using organic materials, earthy colour palettes and other natural elements. Mature trees and plush landscaping give that curb appeal everyone loves coming home to after a long day. You want to extend that warm welcome from the walkway, sidewalk or corridor to the entry point, thereby enriching your everyday life while celebrating the outside world.

For example, our homes today, inside and out; Are we designing them with the outdoors in mind?

Architect Praveen Kumar Jangid, founder & chief at Praveen Architects, a seven-year-old firm based in Secunderabad, Telangana tells us, “Sustainable design is the core principle for us as a young design studio. However, for us, sustainability goes beyond the usage of certain materials and techniques. It’s a lifestyle we develop for our clients. Today, we can proudly say that in



## TRENDS IN DESIGN

1. Seamless indoor and outdoor connect
2. Reduced boundaries between living and landscape spaces
3. Use of neutral colours and monotone spaces with lots of greens

any of our residential projects, there is no need to switch on any light or even a fan for most of the year.”

In a quiet lush green corner of Secunderabad lies Sainikpuri, a verdant hub smattered with beautiful homes and peppy restaurants. Nestled amidst thick tree coverings is one such home, The House of Openings.

It is a fabulously planned residence surrounded by awnings of lush green trees. This cosy home designed for Varun, Pooja & their two lovely children along with their darling pets, oozes nothing but love and warmth. The design lead on the House of Openings, Praveen Kumar from Praveen Architects takes us on a tour of this villa.

This 800 sqyds property features a 200 feet long lush green passage starting from the gate. Walking along this corridor, one effortlessly tunes out from the mayhem of the busy city at the periphery and slowly builds anticipation and curiosity about what’s awaiting you at the other end. And voila! Just at the bend and end of this passageway, the house reveals itself in all its glory! An intricate colonial-inspired facade with multiple vernacular details on it.

Praveen tells us that the initial walk with the family on site was all about creating a warm and inviting space, a seamless indoor-outdoor living experience. The ground floor is an open plan connecting living, dining, kitchen and bar spaces which are directly connected to the outdoor landscaped area via a veranda that boasts of multiple tall door openings in louver and glass format. There’s a room for the elderly on the ground floor whenever they’re visiting.





An open kitchen with a central island done in naturally finished wood planks creates a fabulous and cosy hang-out and cooking space for friends and loved ones. Cantilevered RCC stairs are the focal point of the living space. At the mid landing of this beautiful stairway going up is a 20 feet tall panoramic window that brings in an abundance of natural light flooding the ground and first levels. In the monsoons, this panoramic window creates a spectacular waterfall effect lending a surreal feeling to this space.

On the first level is the family's TV lounge that connects to the master bedroom, kids' room and guest room. This lounge opens into a balcony on the first floor with bi-fold glass doors that takes you straight into the thick green cover outdoors. The master bedroom is a light-filled

space interconnected to the kids' room through wooden collapsible doors. The master washroom is a spectacular space with panoramic windows giving an outdoor-like shower experience. Panoramic windows on the roof of the kids' room allows the universe in and lets them indulge in some constellation and sky gazing. The attic space in their room is converted into a cosy activity corner. As the night falls, the light-filled spaces turn into warm cocoons of love and warmth all over this house.

A seamless connect between indoor and outdoor spaces, something you see in majority of Praveen's projects is a deliberate attempt to create a holistic living experience. One should be able to walk out and connect to nature with absolute ease as it's supposed to be.

**PRAVEEN ARCHITECTS** are based out of Hyderabad, with projects spanning India. Praveen has been designing a wide spectrum of spaces, from private residences, jewellery stores, and F & B projects, experimenting and creating sustainable and stylish spaces lending an enriching end-user experience.

# LUXURY HAS A BOLD NEW FACE

PRESENTING ICONIC RESIDENCES FROM OUR WORLDHOME COLLECTION



## PURVA ORIENT GRAND

3 & 4 Bed Residences. ₹5.5 Cr. onwards\*  
PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/210907/004299



## PURVA ATMOSPHERE

2 & 3 Bed Residences. ₹1.42 Cr. onwards\*  
PRM/KA/RERA/1251/472/PR/190204/002350



## PURVA SOMERSET HOUSE

3-4-5 BHK Homes & Penthouses starting ₹3.46 Cr.\*  
RERA No: TN/29/BUILDING/13/2019

Designed by international consultants and featuring global experiences, our WorldHome collection is a class apart. These ultra-luxurious residences are the ultimate signature spaces for today's global connoisseurs.

OUR WORLDHOME COLLECTION REDEFINES LUXURY



**Thoughtful luxury**  
*Integrated plans*



**Diverse luxury**  
*Global architects*



**Superlative luxury**  
*Elite fittings & finish*



**Experiential luxury**  
*Oxygenated clubhouse*



**Green luxury**  
*Rooftop gardens*



**Intelligent luxury**  
*BluNex smart homes*



## LEAFY BLISS

This balcony is a comfortable and inviting space that feels like an extension of home. It's a place where one can relax, unwind and enjoy the outdoors in a peaceful and tranquil setting.

It is decorated with warm and inviting materials, soft cushions and natural elements like wood, rug for a cosy texture underfoot and soft ambient lighting, adding warmth and a sense of intimacy to the balcony. The most striking feature is, of course, the beautiful tall, green plants.

Two different types of seating are incorporated for different moods providing an intimate and relaxing retreat from the hustle and bustle of daily life.

- By Aman



## GREEN. SERENE.

One of the most striking features of this balcony is its size. Despite being a small space, I have utilized it to the fullest.

The colour scheme I have chosen is also a standout feature. The muted tones of white and beige create a calming effect, making the balcony an ideal spot to unwind after a long day. The combination of wood, PVC and metal elements in the furniture, walls and planters add a modern touch to the balcony.

The seating area on this balcony is a highlight. The comfortable chairs and the small pouf table are perfect for enjoying a cup of tea or coffee while taking in the view.

The choice of plants is also noteworthy. The different shades of green in the plants complement the neutral tones of the furniture and flooring, creating a cohesive look. The plants also add a natural element to the balcony, making it feel like a little oasis in the midst of the city.

A swing is a great addition to a balcony, providing a comfortable and relaxing place to sit and to add a touch of uniqueness to the balcony. I decided to incorporate the couple's love for music by placing a guitar beside the chair.

Overall, the balcony I have made is an inspiration to others looking to create their own balcony oasis. This balcony is a testament to how a small space can be transformed into a beautiful and functional area with the right design choices.

- By Monisha

## SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Surprise. That's the first word that comes to mind when you step out into a small balcony and discover how lovely it is. With its luminous green backdrop, this is the perfect nook to spend a laid-back evening with your partner or solo. Just add wine.

- By Bhavya



## WORLD UNIVERSITY OF DESIGN

World University of Design (WUD) is a young university (established 2018), offering a myriad of programmes at undergraduate, post graduate and doctoral levels across disciplines like Architecture, Design, Fashion, Communication, Visual Arts, Performing Arts & Management. Equipped with the largest portfolio of design courses in India, the university offers a number of cutting edge programs in computers & design, transportation design, animation & game design, UI/UX, film & video, built environment & habitat studies, design management, art education, curatorial practice etc. It is India's first and only university dedicated to education in the creative domain.

It has been recognized by ASSOCHAM India as the 'Most Emerging University 2019' and has been ranked 2nd among the 'Top 10 Private Universities' offering Professional Education. CSR Times Awards 2019 have ranked the university as the 'Best Startup in Education Category' accolades to its credit, including the 'Most Emerging Higher Education Institute' title at the IDA Design Education Awards in 2019 and 'Excellence in Design Education Award' at the 17th World Education Summit in 2019/2020, World University of Design is dedicated to providing world class design education here in India.



# FOUR WAYS WITH WALLPAPER

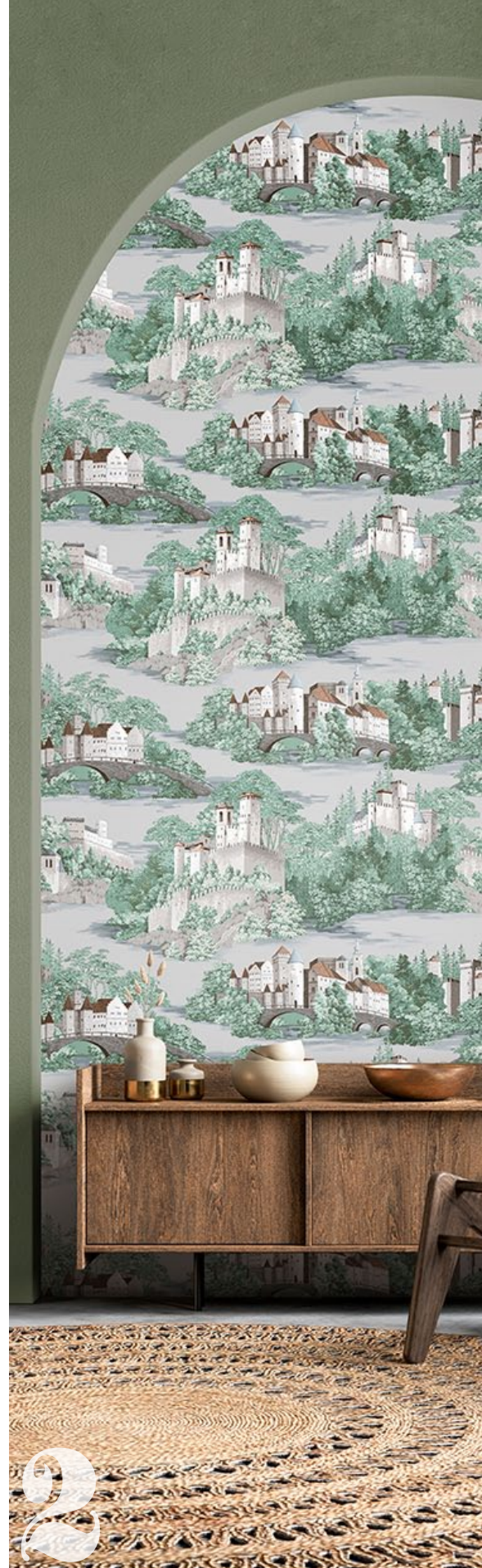
India is finally waking up to the amazing benefits of wallpaper. Wallpaper can be a versatile and creative tool to enhance the aesthetic appeal of your home. Plus, it has many advantages over paint. It's faster and less messy to install, so you can use the room the same day. There is no lingering smell.

PVC-coated wallpaper is also washable (you can wipe away stains!). And the best part is that it can last 5+ years, as long as paint if not more!

Wallpaper is especially popular for living rooms, creating the perfect finish to your favourite room for socialising and entertainment. The living room is one that is given a lot of design attention.

Here are four creative ways you can use wallpaper in your living room:

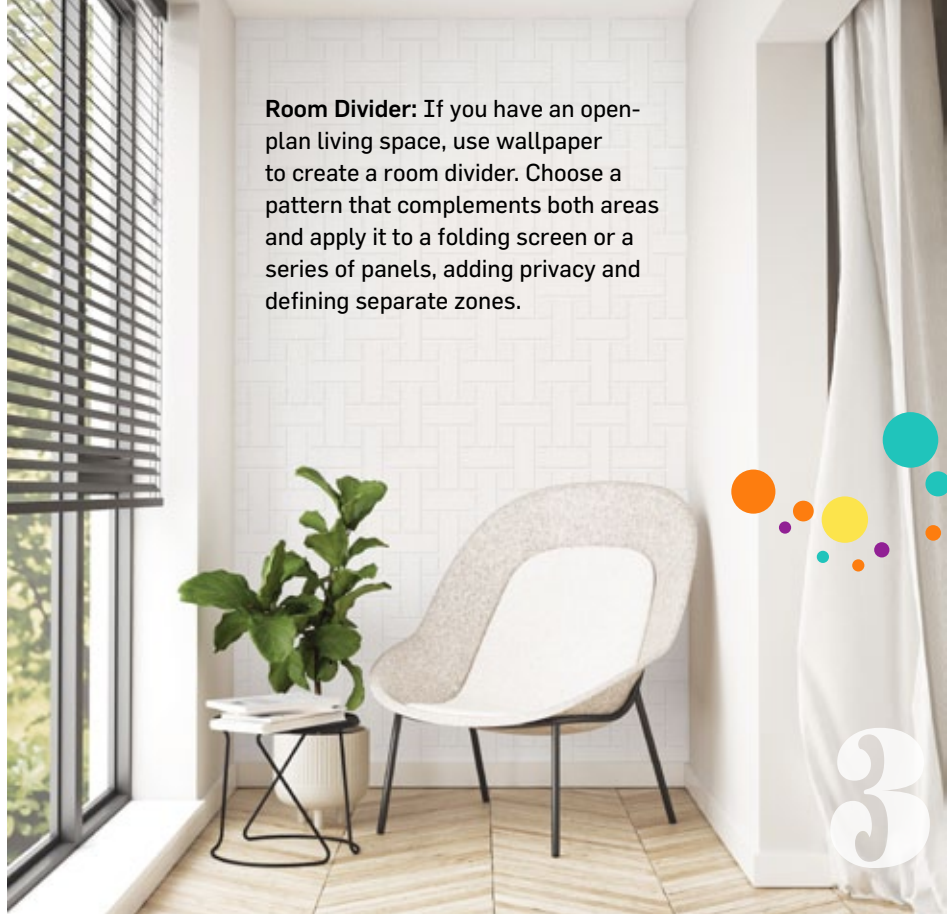
**Accent Wall:** Select a bold and eye-catching wallpaper design to create an accent wall in a room. Choose a wall that naturally draws attention, such as the one behind the TV or dining area. The wallpaper can have a pattern, texture, or vibrant color to make a statement.



**Framed Art:** If you have a striking wallpaper pattern that you adore but don't want to cover an entire wall, consider framing a section of it as artwork. Cut out a portion of the wallpaper that showcases the design or pattern you love



the most and frame it using wall structures or an actual frame. This approach allows you to display the wallpaper as a piece of art, adding a unique and personalized touch to your home décor.



**Room Divider:** If you have an open-plan living space, use wallpaper to create a room divider. Choose a pattern that complements both areas and apply it to a folding screen or a series of panels, adding privacy and defining separate zones.



3



**Window Nook:** If you have a window nook or a built-in seating area, use wallpaper to line the walls of this cozy space. This adds a sense of depth and makes the nook feel like a separate, intimate area within the living room.

It's time for India to start taking advantage of the power of wallpaper. It's affordable, clean, quick to install and easy to switch whenever you want. Let's get creative!

4

*Medhavi Gupta is a director of Fedora Wallpapers, one of India's top wallpaper brands. She has a background in business, management consultancy, and data-driven research methodology. Medhavi has a passion for helping people to transform their spaces using unique concepts, affordable materials, and fuss-free methods.*



# MIRROR MIRROR

Let the mirrors in your home be a reflection of your personal style

**W**e collected a bunch of interesting ideas to help you pick the right mirror for the right mood and space.

## PLAY WITH SHAPES

Move over, boring rectangles and circles. The unexpected shapes of asymmetric mirrors are an easy way to create visual interest and draw attention. They break the monotony of straight lines and predictable patterns, adding an element of surprise and intrigue. The unconventional shapes can become a focal point, sparking conversation and becoming a source of visual stimulation.

Whether it's a mirror with a wavy edge, asymmetrical angles, or a combination of geometric forms, these mirrors can inject a fun and light-hearted vibe into your décor.



## GO BIG ON YELLOW

A large yellow mirror will undoubtedly grab attention and become a statement piece in any room. The bright and vivid color draws the eye and instantly adds energy and warmth to the space. It can become a conversation starter and bring a sense of cheerfulness and positivity to your space. Bonus: a yellow mirror in the dining room ignites appetite.

A big yellow mirror might seem like a bold buy, but it can work well with various design styles, depending on its shape, frame, and overall aesthetic. It can complement contemporary, mid-century modern, bohemian, or eclectic interiors, bringing a touch of vibrancy and personality to the space.



### CREATE A COSY BOOK NOOK

Create a dedicated reading space in your home by setting up a cosy nook or corner filled with books and a comfortable chair or a plush reading nook. Place a mirror nearby to reflect natural light and make the space feel brighter and more open. Arrange your favorite books on shelves or in a nearby bookcase for easy access and a visually appealing display.

If you have a fireplace, consider placing a mirror above the mantle. The mirror will reflect the cosy glow of the fire, making the room feel warmer and more inviting. Arrange a stack of books nearby or use bookends to display your favorite reads.



### TRUST THE BEAUTY OF TIMELESS ELEGANCE

Antique mirrors showcase exquisite craftsmanship and intricate details that reflect the design aesthetics of the era in which they were created. Whether it's a Baroque, Victorian, or Art Deco style, these mirrors exude a timeless elegance that adds character and sophistication to any space.

Before the advent of modern mass production techniques, mirrors were painstakingly crafted by skilled artisans. Antique mirrors showcase the artistry and mastery of these craftsmen, with their hand-polished glass and intricate detailing. The attention to detail and the use of high-quality materials ensure a level of craftsmanship that is often unmatched by contemporary mirrors.

# THE PURPLE TURTLES

## A UNIQUE HOME DÉCOR STORE

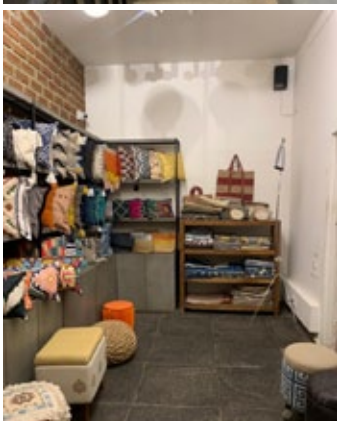
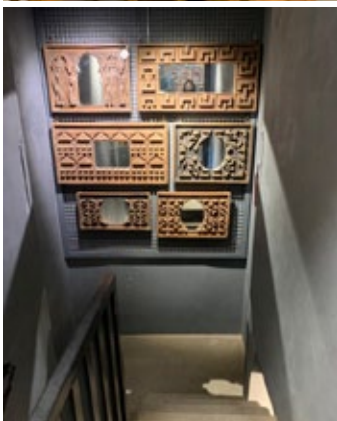
A store that houses infinite ideas and items for your home.  
The Purple Turtles is one of a kind!

BY PRIYAANKA SINHA

It's not often that you come across a home décor store that has not only fabulous products but also some fantastic décor ideas. Purple Turtles in Bengaluru is one of those. Frames on your walls, hanging lamps, creative corners—step in and be awestruck at this three-storey store.

### WHAT'S IN STORE AT THE PURPLE TURTLES?

Find everything you need for the perfect home aesthetics. This can include Shibori linen, block-printed cushions, soft bed coverings, printed rugs, and patterned carpets, as well as a variety of outdoor and patio décor. The team scours ancient bazaars, crumbling havelis, offbeat studios to curate their collection, which includes handpicked limited-edition goods from around the world.

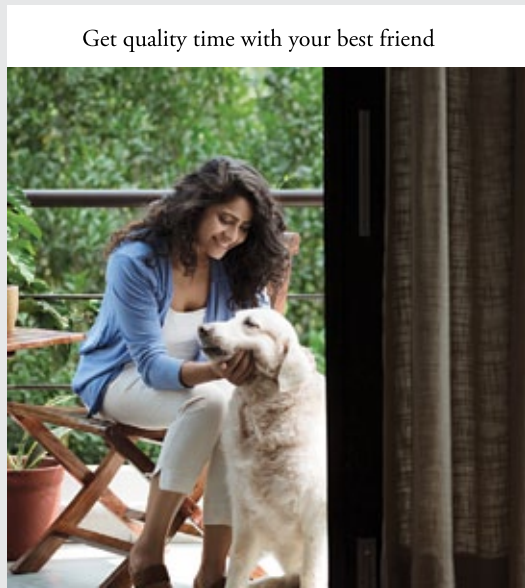


The Purple Turtle has two outlets in Bengaluru and one in Chennai.  
Instagram: @thepurpleturtles

# WITH 4 BALCONIES IN EVERY HOME, WELCOME TO THE 1% CLUB.



Kickstart the day with yoga



Get quality time with your best friend



Create your garden in the sky



Open up the party

Explore your many facets in over 400 sq. ft. of balcony space. All-day sunlight, fresh air, and happy vibes combine in these ultra-luxury residences.



44 Limited edition, palatial residences



Single tower in 1 acre with 75% open space



Curated experiences like Rooftop Infinity Pool



Lush landscaping & serene lake views

3 & 4 Bed Residences  
₹3.65 Cr.\* onwards

Scan to know more



# PURVA MERAKI

HSR LAYOUT



Artistic impression

# Home sweet-scented home

BY STEPHANIE D'SA

As the summer months unfold, the gentle caress of sunlight, streaming through the windows, resurrects memories of bygone balmy days filled with laughter and play. How my sibling and I revelled in the joy of carefree summer holidays! The taste of thirst-quenching lemonade and the delectable delights crafted from succulent mangoes linger in my mind, invoking nostalgic delight. But it is the sweet lingering fragrance of jasmine blossoms, floating through the air, that truly transports me back to the cherished haven of my childhood home, where my mother adorned her hair with these delicate blooms. In the realm of scents, memories awaken, bridging the gap between past and present, and revealing the transformative power that fragrances possess.



In the realm of home décor, fragrances play a vital role in shaping the ambience and setting the mood. They have the remarkable ability to evoke emotions, trigger memories, and create a comforting and inviting atmosphere. Harnessing the power of scents in our living spaces allows us to elevate our home décor to new heights, transforming it into a sanctuary that nurtures our senses and uplifts our spirits.

The connection between fragrances and home décor is a subtle yet powerful one. Just as colours, textures, and furniture choices define the personality of a space, fragrances have the ability to add depth, character, and emotional resonance. They infuse our homes with a distinct

identity, reflecting our personal style and creating a sensorial journey that leaves a lasting impression on ourselves and our guests.

#### CHOOSING THE RIGHT FRAGRANCES

Each room in our home has a unique purpose and atmosphere, and selecting fragrances that align with these qualities can enhance the overall experience. For instance, in the living room, where we gather with friends and family, warm and inviting scents like vanilla or cinnamon can create a cosy and convivial atmosphere. In the bedroom, soothing scents like lavender or chamomile promote relaxation and restful sleep. By matching scents to the desired mood and ambience of each room, we can curate an environment that caters to our specific needs and preferences.

#### Scented Candles and Diffusers:

Scented candles and diffusers have always been my go-to choice when it comes to infusing my living spaces with delightful fragrances. Whether it's a soft floral scent or a refreshing citrus aroma, these elegant and functional pieces not only provide fragrance but also serve as decorative accents.

#### Fragrant Fresh Flowers and Plants:

There's something truly magical about nature's own perfumery. The sweet aroma of blossoming roses, jasmine, or lilies fills the air, bringing the beauty of the outdoors inside. I also enjoy having indoor plants like lavender or eucalyptus, not only for their visual appeal but also for the soothing and invigorating fragrances they exude.



## DÉCOR

**Linen and Fabric Sprays:** Linen and fabric sprays offer an easy and effective way to add fragrance to our upholstery, curtains, and bedding. Whether I want my surroundings to evoke a crisp ocean breeze or a delicate floral bouquet, a few spritzes of these fragrant mists enliven the fabrics and envelop me in a comforting embrace. It's amazing how such a simple touch can transform the ambiance of a room and create a more inviting atmosphere.

**Potpourri and Sachets:** Potpourri and sachets have long been cherished for their ability to emit gentle and continuous fragrance. These decorative arrangements of dried flowers, herbs, and spices add a touch of elegance to our spaces while releasing a subtle scent that lingers in the air. Placed in bowls or sachets tucked into drawers, they infuse our homes with a lasting and captivating aroma.

**Scented Wall Art and Decorative Accessories:** Why limit the power of fragrance to traditional methods? I've discovered a whole new world of scented wall art and decorative accessories that offer a unique and innovative way to make my home smell great. From scented artwork with embedded fragrance capsules to decorative pieces infused with essential oils, these unique items serve as both visual and olfactory delights,





leaving a lasting impression on anyone who enters our spaces.

### **CREATING SIGNATURE SCENTS FOR YOUR HOME**

#### ***Mixing and layering different scents to create a unique fragrance experience***

Just as I curate my home décor with a mix of colours, textures, and patterns, I love creating unique fragrance experiences by mixing and layering scents. It's a wonderful way to tailor the aroma to my preferences and craft a signature fragrance that truly reflects my personal style. Whether I blend floral with citrus for a refreshing twist or combine woody and spicy notes for a warm and inviting ambiance, experimenting with different combinations is a delight.

#### ***Experimenting with seasonal and themed fragrance combinations***

The changing seasons offer an excellent opportunity to explore fragrance combinations that complement the time of year. In summer, I embrace invigorating scents like citrus and tropical fruits, while in winter, I indulge in cosy and comforting aromas like cinnamon or vanilla. I also enjoy themed fragrance combinations for special occasions or to set a specific atmosphere. For a seaside-themed gathering, scents like coconut or sea breeze transport me to a coastal paradise.

#### ***Create Signature Scent Blends***

By combining scents that resonate with me on a deeper level, such as floral and musky notes or fresh herbs and citrus, I establish an olfactory signature that becomes synonymous with my home. It's a wonderful way to add a touch of identity and make my living spaces truly my own.

# MAKE EVERYDAY A VACATION

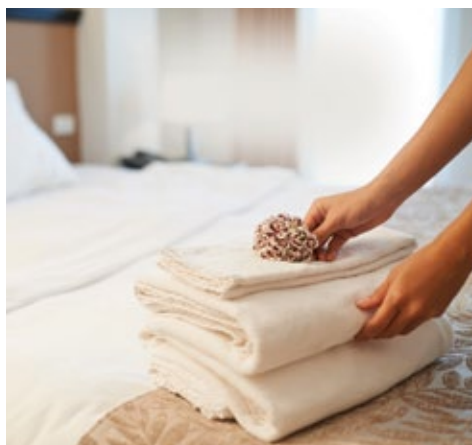
*Provident has thoughtfully conceptualised and designed the perfect vacation homes at Adora de Goa to provide you and your family a blend of luxury and comfort. Spread over an expansive 34 acres, Adora de Goa brings you a home that is nestled amidst the peace and tranquillity of the sea breeze that encapsulates the true essence of Goa.*



## A Splendid Lifestyle

Provident Adora de Goa gives you access to a magnificent and luxurious lifestyle with its myriad amenities. A nearly 1 acre water zone - 'The Blu' comprises of multiple pools, sunken bar, jacuzzi, signature drenching fountain, and much more. There are endless indulgences including a Clubhouse, poolside restaurants, private cabanas and decks around The Blu, where you can unwind after a stressful day, relax and rejuvenate.

To fill your life with utmost comfort and to ensure a smooth and convenient lifestyle, Adora de Goa also comes with Concierge services and subscription-based housekeeping services.



## Homes built with Global Brands

To ensure a safe living and lavish lifestyle for you and your family, the homes are fitted with top-notch products from recognized brands. Main door locks from Yale are used to ensure enhanced safety. Living and bedroom floor tiles are from Kajaria and to give your home an attractive look, premium home wall paint from Berger Paints is used. Bathroom and CP fittings by Grohe and American Standard bathroom sanitary ware are used to make every corner stylish. Last but not the least, Schneider stylish electric switches are used for maximized safety.



Choose Adora de Goa and experience a hassle-free and comfortable lifestyle. Adora de Goa is ideally situated in Dabolim, Central Goa, just 10 mins drive from the International Airport and 5 mins from NH 66 which connects Mumbai to Kochi. Travel time to Dona Paula, Calangute, Baga & Anjuna beaches is expected to reduce significantly due to the construction of new elevated multi-lane bridges across Zuari & Mandovi rivers.

Adora de Goa also provides you seamless connectivity for every day life - Educational Institutes like MES College and BITS Pilani are within a 3 km radius and SMRC Hospital is just 4.5 km away.

Come and explore Goa like never before at these beautifully crafted vacation homes.

 **PROVIDENT**  
**ADORA DE GOA**  
DABOLIM@CENTRAL GOA

**3 BHK Homes from ₹89 L\***

RERA Regn. No.: PROG007180577, PROG007180578  
For details, <https://rera.goa.gov.in> | \*T & C apply  
Images are used only for representational purpose only



# Keepsakes

## Where Art Meets Furniture

It took artist Manisha Gawade many years of experimentation to conceptualise, design and paint these art-furniture pieces, designed to energise living spaces.

## THE IDEA

These are pieces that you would love to own and pass on to the next generation, which makes them a keepsake forever. The strength of the works is also the high quality of materials used including wood, fittings, polishes and of course art material.

“I have often wondered why something we have to live with day in and day out, should be in boring brown colours,” says Manisha Gawade. “The area that furniture occupies in our living spaces is so large yet it is completely untouched by art. And why should art be restricted to only the walls? So, I started drawing various unconventional designs that one could make as tables, chairs, bars, wall units, cupboards, which would incorporate some of my paintings.”

## THE PIECES

### Doting Delhi

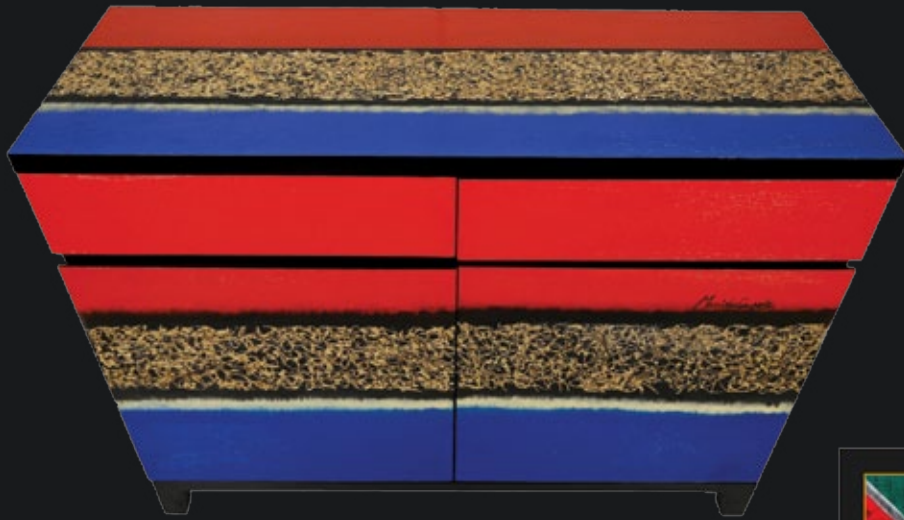
Delhi, the seat of many dynasties, has seen many a changing skyline and created spaces where a plethora of cultures and times co-exist. Saluting the warmth that is Delhi, is a loveseat that signifies love as much as it is symbolic of the throne of power that has been as eternal as the city itself. Recreated from the painting *A Tale of Two Cities I*.



### Living Next Door to Alice

The piece 'Living Next Door to Alice' - is an ode to the once ubiquitous cassette that revolutionised how music was experienced. It liberated us from the shackles of the pre-recorded long playing vinyl records. You could now record your personal choice of music and mixing and matching and having it all together on a single cassette format and the liberation of being able to hear your selection of music in the car or any other space.

The piece is inspired from my painting series - *Threads of Life*.



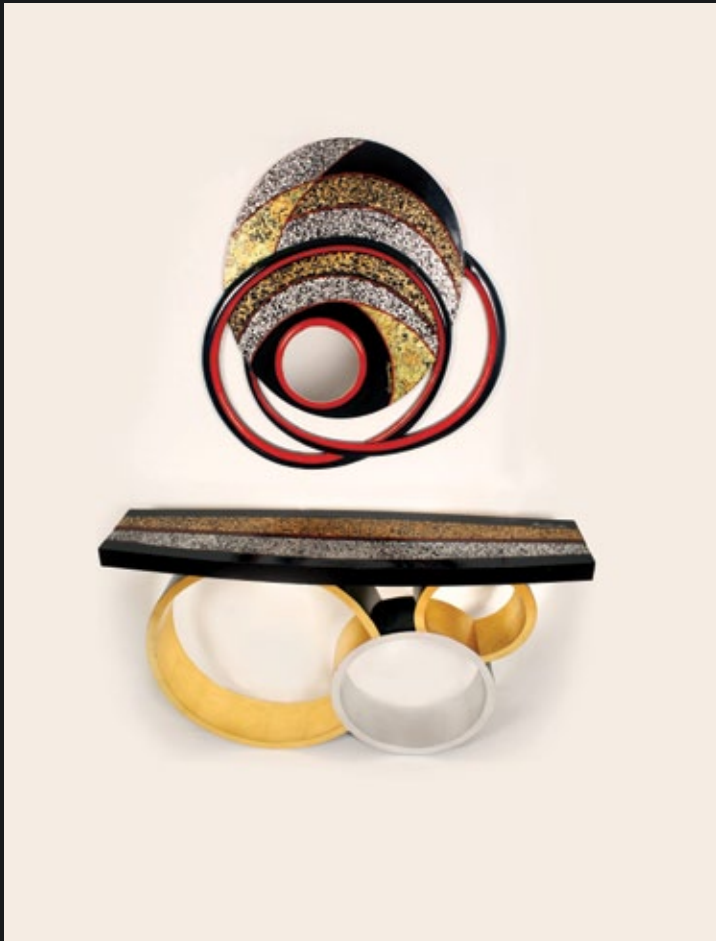
**Your Highness**

When hues of royalty take centre-stage, they hold within them the glorious moments of lives well spent and many more wonderful moments that await.



**Post It**

The 'Post It' table is just 2 feet x 2 feet. embellished with various symbolic wood cuts and line drawing in pigment inks, it depicts multiple 'post-in' like memories of my travels – line drawings of the monuments visited, hot air balloons, pizzas I ate on the way, calls I made to friends from there, churches and gardens seen on the way...



**The Lord of the Rings**

The console Lord of the Rings is replete with the magic and the power of the golden rings inspired by my painting - *The Indelible Tracks of Time*. The piece also talks about the balance of Yin and Yang energies in every human's journey. This conversation piece can lord over the rest of the furniture.



**MANISHA GAWADE**

Curator and artist Manisha Gawade is the first Indian Artist to have received the patronage of His Highness Shiekh Mohammed Bin Rashid ALMAKTOUM, the ruler and Prime Minister of Dubai and Dubai Art and Culture Authority.

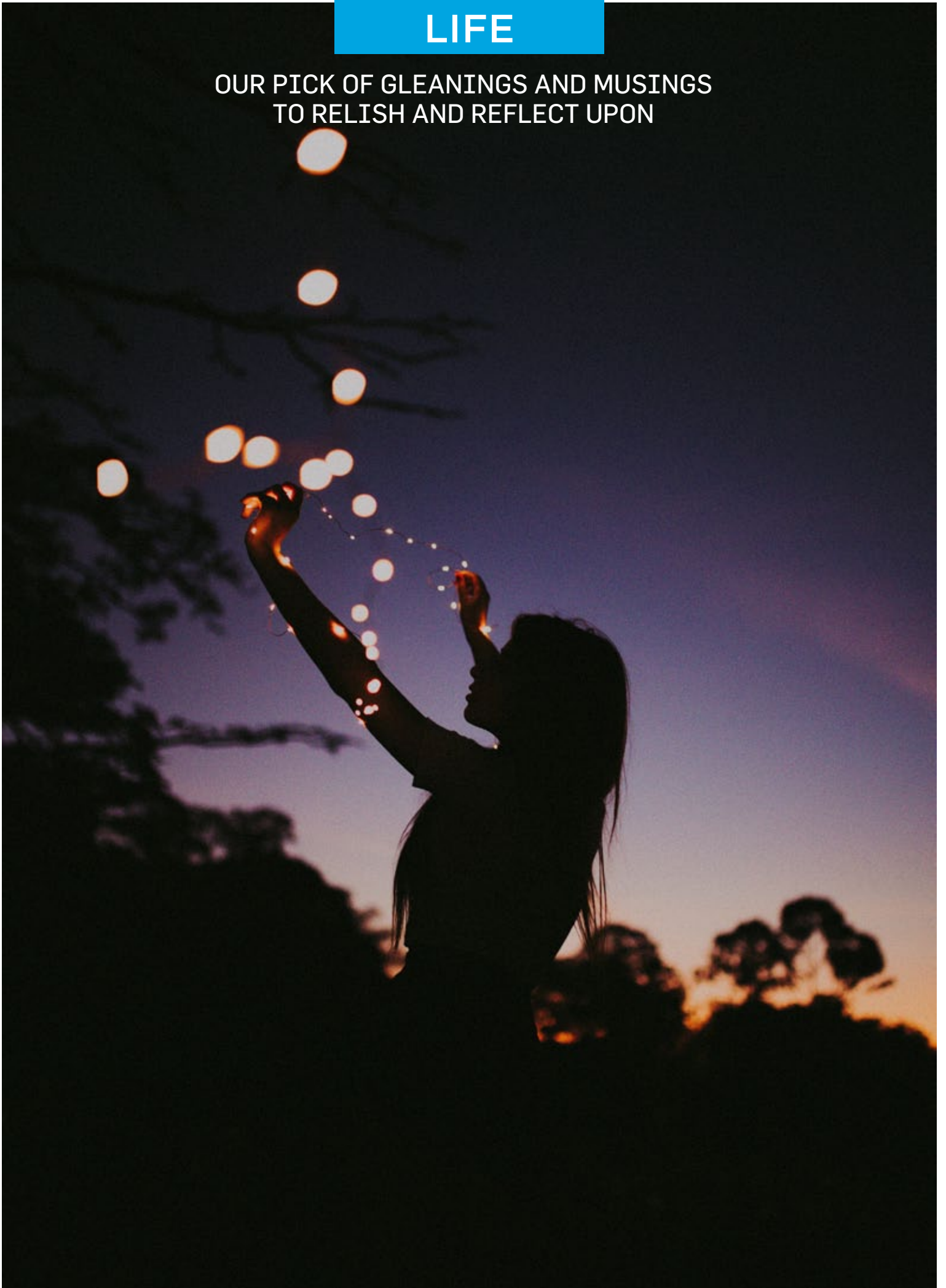
Her work is a fusion of the Indian as well as Western and Arabic culturescape. She has exhibited her creations in Dubai, Hungary, Amsterdam, Bahrain and Muscat.

Some of her work forms a part of The National Museum of Contemporary Art in Argentina. Her genre forms a part of some intrinsic art collections in India, France, UK, U.S, UAE, Qatar, Oman and Argentina.

She is working with the handloom weavers to bring to light new age designs in traditional handwoven 6 yard sarees and recently had a very successful show online.

# LIFE

OUR PICK OF GLEANINGS AND MUSINGS  
TO RELISH AND REFLECT UPON



# The **A** List

TRENDING RIGHT NOW

## Thai Blueberry Wine

With its distinct flavour — a pleasant commingling of sweetness and tartness inherited from the Mak Mao fruit, this delectable wine is one of the many compelling reasons to visit or re-experience Thailand.



## FILA Disruptor Collection

A bold and contemporary interpretation of FILA's classic heritage. These Sneakers effortlessly blend fashion and function, making them a must-have for trendsetters and sneaker enthusiasts alike.



## EZ LIFE

Glazed Rising Red Ceramic Plates: According to Eastern philosophy, red expresses joy and wards off negative energy. It looks striking, too!





## Magnificent 101

Love, light, and positive energy goes into these natural soy wax candles. These lovely floral creations transport you from stress to bliss.



## Bottega Veneta

From the luxury brand's pre-Fall 2023 collection: the Solstice bag. Designed to sit over the shoulder or hang daintily from fingertips, this slouchy iteration embodies subtle femininity – while also showcasing the brand's signature Intrecciato weave.

## Zighrana

Developed in collaboration with celebrity Michelin Star chef, Vikas Khanna, perfume veteran Zighrana's signature scents pay homage to the essence of India. Available in 10 ml and 3 ml bottles on Zighrana.com, Amazon, in and leading online and offline stores across the country.



## Faces Canada

The 6 in 1 Eyeshadow Palette by Faces Canada ensures there is a perfect color for every occasion. The easily blendable formula allows you to create a subtle daytime look or a bold and dramatic evening look with ease.



## Hazelnut Stout

South Bangalore microbrewery BLR Brewing Co. and cold brew company Bonomi, have brewed up Hazelnut Stout. Combining the robust characteristics of an American Stout and starring coffee, hazelnut, and chocolate. With an ABV content of 6.3%, this craft beer balances bitterness and smoothness.

# Give Peace (Silk) A Chance

Arras: a sustainable clothing venture, is spinning an earth-friendly story; one beautiful garment at a time.



## P EACE SILK

Eri silk is the local name of a non-violent silk that can only be found in the North East Region. Unlike other types of silk, such as Mulberry and Tussar, where the cocoons are boiled with the silkworms still inside, Eri silk is derived from cocoons after the silkworms have emerged. This cruelty-free process has given it the names of Peace silk or Ahimsa silk.

The cocoons are usually spun by hand into yarn, which gives it a linen-like texture with a slight sheen. The silk is comfortable to wear, becomes softer with use and is ideal for day or night wear in any weather. But like any other silk it requires careful usage and maintenance.

Handspun, handwoven and naturally dyed Eri silk sarees are a 100% sustainable option with a timeless quality that can be worn by anyone, anywhere.





India's handloom industry is skilled in the development of dyes obtained from natural sources. Peace silk weavers use dyes extracted from indigo, turmeric, lac, madder, onion skins, along with many other indigenous plants to produce a palette of colours. This ensures a clothing line that has a significantly lower carbon footprint, while ensuring the protection of finite water resources.

#### WEAVING A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD

Almost half of the weavers in India (~2.2 million) belong to the North East region. The absence of jobs in rural India leads to mass scale migration to urban cities that offer low paying, hand-to-mouth jobs. With disproportionate load on its finite resources, a clear path to sustainable cities and thriving rural communities is keeping alive our traditional crafts and respecting its value.

Development of a unique silk industry: A cruelty-free silk, that has not gotten its due standing among fabrics, deserves recognition in a world that currently runs 60% of the textile industry on synthetics.

#### MEET UNMANA RYNJAH

Born in the state of Assam, in India's pristine northeast region, Unmana Rynjah rediscovered the beauty of her native land in 2018, when she took a break from almost a decade of working in the corporate world. Unmana, who loved wearing her mother's elegant *mekhala* sadors and sarees, was curious as to why the rich handicrafts of the region were not as well known in other parts of the country.



Without any formal education or experience in the textile and fashion industry, Unmana spent months journeying across the state and building relationships with artisans. Giving shape to her convictions and self-determination, she set up Arras - a platform led by a tribal woman, creating greener livelihoods for the skilled but underserved communities in India and promoting ethically made, cruelty-free clothing.

# THE POWER OF THE WILL

Excerpted from iconic editor, author and journalist Sathya Saran's book "Me to You," a compilation of her much-loved editorial notes in *Femina* magazine

I have heard it often that if one has enough strength of will, one can do just about anything. My mother would tell me so often enough, especially when I complained of a pain in the head or stomach, which distracted me from my homework in my school going days. Her advice would always be, 'ignore it and it will go away, think of something else.' I would do just that, in spite of myself. And the pain would actually diminish and slink away!

I have prided myself over my will power and its ability to tackle pain or discomfort. But recently, I realised how powerful the will can really be. Two women, both coincidentally named Shubada gave me a glimpse of the miracles that the exerting of mind over matter can achieve.

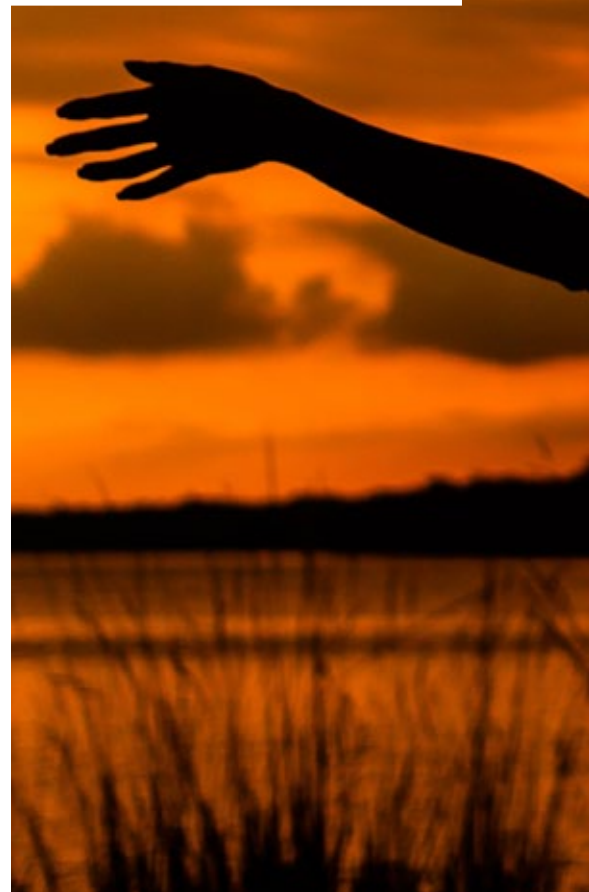
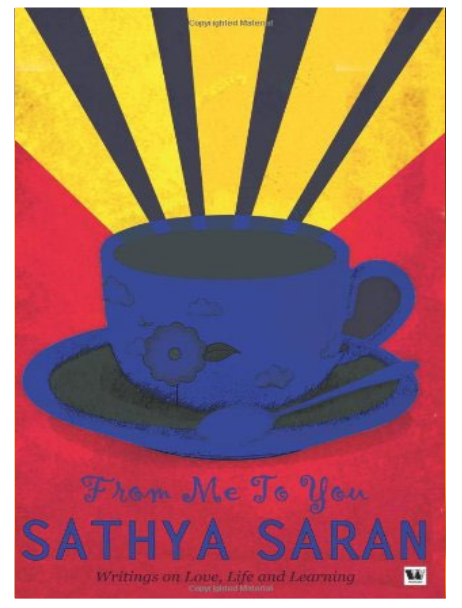
Shubada who lives in Pune came to meet me to discuss the biography of a classical singer that she is writing. She came accompanied by a colleague, who drove down with her as she was unable to walk without help. As we talked about her book, I realised she was a singer herself, and had earned a doctorate by writing a thesis on Women Musicians of India, after interviewing 150 singers and instrumentalists across the country. 'I had to give up singing for 15 years after my marriage,' she said, 'but once my children were grown up enough, I went back to it'.

The singing and research went hand in hand, and she was content. Then, catastrophe struck. She was practising,

and hitting the really high notes with ease, when like a silent assassin, something cut into her brain, and she suffered a stroke. 'I was singing so well that my son came out to gesture to me that it was wonderful, and then I dropped into a heap, immobile and helpless,' she said. She recovered slowly, but the stroke left her unable to walk, and the woman who had toured India on her own for her research was confined to her home. But the music remained. She started singing again, and teaching music, added therapy lessons for those who needed it, using her own learnings from her journey of recovery. 'It keeps me in touch with the world, through my students,' she said. And with the remaining time, she has continued her writing, with the biography of the almost forgotten but legendary, Hirabai, as her latest project.

The other Shubabda is a dancer. A student of Odissi, who was among the last batch of students to live in the Gurukul of the legendary Kelucharan Mahapatra and learn from him. I was listening to her tell her story at a thinly attended event at a bookstore. She interspersed her talk with small demonstrations and despite the fact that she was possibly in her late forties, her grace and expressive features created the magic.

She spoke of and demonstrated the result of her explorations into adapting Dr. Dharmaveer Bharati's Kanupriya and Swami Vivekanada's



Vedanta into classical Odissi. I was impressed. But it was her personal journey that struck me like a bolt of lightning. When operated for a 10 pound tumour discovered in her stomach, she refused to let it hold her back from a commitment to a performance, and a fortnight after she left the operation theatre, she was at the Nehru Centre, on stage, dancing. When the tumour was proved malignant, she subjected

# Mind over Matter



herself to chemo, but in secret, and took on programmes every three weeks after a session, so she could 'dance back to health.' She hid her baldness under a wig created by her mother, which she tied to her ears. 'Dancing gave me the energy, the spirit to heal myself,' she said. And when she realised that not everybody struck by cancer had the same ability to bounce back, she volunteered for counselling those recovering from chemo and

surgery to help them find meaning in life again. It was another amazing story!

Both women shone with some spiritual grace. And the strength of their passion for their chosen art.

I could not help, as I thought back on them, bowing my head in respect, before the unmatched power of their will!



Sathya Saran

# LOVE & FRESH AIR

Inspiring concepts from across the world that teach you  
how to live in tune with Nature

Culturally, the Netherlands, Japan and China might seem like chalk and cheese, but they have one key element in common—their deep love of nature. Far from being mere admirers of Nature's beauty, they go out and spend as much time with her as they can. And being the universal Mother, she rewards them with incredible health benefits.

Let's take a leaf out of their wholesome books.





## UITWAAIEN: THE NETHERLANDS

This Dutch word translates to “to blow away” or “to get some fresh air”. Uitwaaien is seen as a way to relax, unwind, and rejuvenate both physically and mentally.

The Dutch practice uitwaaien by engaging in outdoor activities, such as these:

**Cycling:** The Netherlands is famous for its love of cycling. Thanks to their fantastic cycling infrastructure, the Dutch are privileged to enjoy seamless bike rides across the countryside. What could be a better way to enjoy uitwaaien!

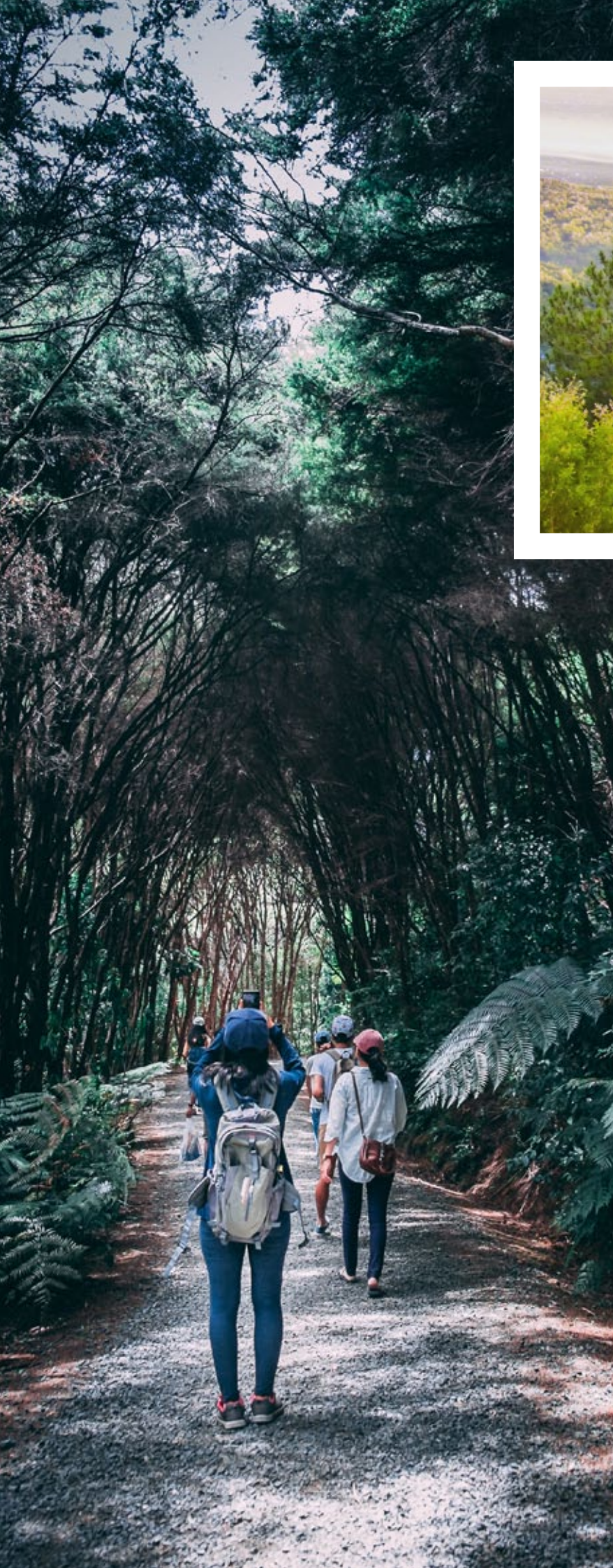
**Walking and Hiking:** Taking leisurely walks or engaging in longer hikes in parks, forests, or along coastal areas is a delight in the Netherlands. Their beautiful landscapes, including dunes, woodlands, and picturesque trails make it a perfect experience.

**Beach Time:** With a long coastline, the Dutch often visit the beach to engage in uitwaaien. Walking along the shoreline, breathing in the salty air, and feeling the wind is an immensely soothing and refreshing experience.

**Sailing and Watersports:** The Dutch also enjoy uitwaaien on the water. Sailing, windsurfing, kayaking, or simply being on a boat are popular activities that allow them to embrace the wind and enjoy the natural surroundings.

For the Dutch, Uitwaaien is more than an occasional interlude. It is a way of life that emphasises the importance of taking a break from the daily routine and finding solace in the natural world. Worth emulating!





## FOREST BATHING: JAPAN

The term emerged in Japan in the 1980s. It is a physiological and psychological exercise called *shinrin-yoku* (taking in the forest atmosphere). The purpose was to offer an eco-antidote to tech-boom burnout. As a side benefit, it inspired people to reconnect with themselves and think about protecting the country's forests.

In daily life, this is how Japanese soak in Nature:

**Mindful Immersion:** Forest bathing involves fully immersing oneself in the forest environment with all the senses. It's about being present and mindful while surrounded by nature. People engage in slow, deliberate movements and take the time to observe and appreciate their surroundings.

**Relaxation and Meditation:** This involves finding a quiet spot in the forest, sitting or lying down, and practising meditation or deep breathing exercises. This helps to quiet the mind and reduce stress.

**Observing Nature:** Forest bathing reminds you to stop and smell the flowers. People take the time to notice the details of the forest—whether it's the sound of rustling leaves, the scent of the trees, the texture of the bark, or the sight of sunlight filtering through the leaves. This focussed observation helps to cultivate a deeper appreciation for the natural environment.

**Slow Movement and Mindful Walking:** When forest bathing, the Japanese take care to walk slowly and deliberately, paying attention to each step. This is an excellent way to feel the ground beneath the feet, and get in tune with the body's natural rhythms.

**Unplugging from Technology:** Forest bathing encourages disconnecting from electronic devices and immersing oneself in the natural world, without distractions. Shutting off the screen is in itself a great opportunity to breathe and just be! Add to that, a walk in nature and the experience grows more profound.



## WŪ WÈI: CHINA

Wū wèi, which means “non-action” or “effortless action,” is a concept from Taoism. It encourages individuals to harmonise with nature and embrace a state of natural flow and simplicity in the following ways:

**Mindful Awareness:** Being fully present in the moment, while engaging in daily tasks, interacting with others, or simply experiencing the environment.

**Simplicity and Naturalness:** Wū wèi encourages people to reduce clutter, minimizing material possessions, and focus on what truly matters. It is a call to embrace natural elements, such as natural foods, natural fabrics, and natural remedies, to foster a sense of connection with the natural world.

**Cultivating Stillness:** Wū wèi practitioners incorporate moments of meditation, breathing exercises, or simply quiet contemplation to let go of distractions and cultivate a sense of inner peace.

**Bringing Nature In:** Connecting with nature by spending time outdoors, tending to plants or gardens, or even having indoor plants to bring a sense of nature indoors.

**Balancing Yin and Yang:** Wū wèi teaches you to maintain a balance between rest and activity, work and leisure, solitude and social interaction, and other opposing forces.



# A Marvel Long Lost: Kolkata's Magen David Synagogue

BY RONJINEE CHATTOPADHYAY

“Blessed are those who are able to seek this place out, child... hardly anyone comes to visit nowadays.” These were the words with which I was greeted once we crossed the threshold of the Magen David Synagogue, one of the three major synagogues in the city of Kolkata.

While it was a simple Google search that led me and my friends to the place in a bid to make the best of our holidays, I realized soon that we had stumbled upon a gem. Walking our way through the busy streets of central Kolkata in the sweltering heat seemed entirely worth the trouble once we approached the majestic building.

**TIP**  
DO REMEMBER  
TO CARRY A SCARF  
OR HANDKERCHIEF  
TO COVER YOUR  
HEAD BEFORE YOU  
ENTER!



## A PAST TO BE TREASURED

The Magen David Synagogue is located right at the intersection of Brabourne Road and Canning Street, near the bustling Barabazar known to be one of the largest wholesale markets in the country. Built by a Baghdadi Jewish merchant in the 19th century, the place is one of the few remnants of the once-vibrant Jewish culture of the city. Today, it is taken care of by locals - a responsibility that has been passed down for generations to some of them.

The synagogue's resplendent architecture is sure to take you back in time, aided by the caretaker recollecting bits and pieces of the rich history associated with it. "This place once used to be brimming with people, back when my grandfather worked here. Now it is only during prayers that you'll find a crowd."

## AN ARCHITECTURAL WONDER

What catches the eye at the very moment you enter the synagogue is the magnificent stained glass on the windows which magically light up the interior.

At the center of the complex is a raised platform, called the bimah, where the torah is read and other religious services are delivered. The torah refers to the religious texts of the Jews, which includes the Talmud and the Hebrew Bible, and is kept securely in the ark at the very front of the synagogue.

The ark, one of the most important structures in any synagogue, has among other things a light that should never go out. A bright red electric light in the Magen David shines on as a symbol of the eternal light that holds immense spiritual significance for the Jewish. Between the ark and the bimah, guarded by glass walls, lies an exhibit of a few pages from the religious scriptures for visitors to glance at.

Further, on either side are two sets of winding stairs which lead you to the upper gallery which was originally meant to seat only women during the prayer service. Making my way to the gallery, I was awestruck by the architectural beauty of the place, reflected in even the ornate staircases.

## A CITY BRIMMING WITH DIVERSITY

The center of the city is also a symbol of the confluence of cultures it is known for. Adding to the cultural vibrance of the locality, lie the Armenian Church and the Nakhoda Mosque, not too far from the Synagogue.

As our visit came to an end, I peered down from the upper gallery to take in the serenity the place offered. The sound of the afternoon prayer (azaan) from the nearby mosque filtered into the premises. Perhaps it is true: blessed are those who are able to witness the diversity of cultures alive and thriving in the City of Joy.

## THE VISITOR'S GUIDE

Planning to visit the stunning synagogue the next time you're in the city? Treat yourself to a lavish meal in Zakaria Street afterwards - a place in Kolkata known for its delectable biryani and sinful kebabs. You could also pay a visit to the Beth El synagogue only a few minutes away from Magen David, or splurge on some streetside goods in the lanes of Barabazar.

The visiting hours of the synagogue are from 11 AM to 4:30 PM, except for Fridays and Saturdays.

# The new 5 to 9 in Bengaluru

---



A look at the vibrant communities thriving in the city

“How was your weekend?” “Oh, I went to this coffee brewing class on Saturday and watched an open-air movie with my family on Sunday, it was great. What about you?” “Nothing much, we went for this night trek on Friday, I was so exhausted that I missed my book club meetup.”

If this sounds like a conversation between two social butterflies, you might be mistaken. It is the average Bengalurean these days, across the range of introvert-extrovert spectrum, picking freely from the vast variety of activities doled out every week. The garden city always had a great party culture with abundant breweries and distinguished restaurants. But a recent change has been in the number of communities mushrooming in the different corners of the city. People are spoilt for choices.

Here are some of the interesting communities filling out the weekends beyond Netflix and Chill :

Cubbon Reads is a silent-reading community started by Shruti Sah and Harsh Snehahanshu a few months back. And now they have branched into Lalbagh, HSR and Whitefield chapters too. The idea is gaining momentum. There's even has a “Cubbon





Paints” group that sits and paints in a park. Sounds like a lovely, slow way to spend a day.

There’s an HSRishome community on Twitter and Whatsapp for people residing in the area. They have a book club, a Poha-Jalebi club and founders who conduct walk events among others. Might consider relocating for the vibes!

New ventures like Storyzone (Lippan art, macrame, Tie and Dye, Decoupage and more) and Smallworld (Chai dates, speed dating, Acroplay and pottery) are beefing up more creativity and connections.

If you want to get daily updates on art, music and other fun offbeat activities happening in the city, there’s a brilliant Whatsapp group “Putting Scenes” curated by Mannan. The list is well researched and you are often spoilt for choice on what to do on a given day.

Exploring on foot is one of the best ways to know a city and a number of good walking tours are conducting regular walks peppered with interesting stories over dosa and filter coffee. benbyfoot, gully tours, Bengaluru Prayana being some of the active ones.

Some old favorites have recently opened up again such as Atta Galatta and Dialogues Cafe. They are hosting events every week, with communities for movie and book lovers, workshops, meetups etc. Some new spaces have also cropped up with a wide range of fun activities.

For travel enthusiasts, there are Couchsurfing events, Bengaluru outdoor groups on Facebook and Whatsapp with trips almost every weekend. There are birdwatching walks and wine clubs, urban sketching sessions and dance recitals, you name it and you will surely find a bunch of cool Bangaloreans indulging in it.

The best part about these communities is that they are almost always free to join in, what you need is a curious and open mind and an interest to know newer perspectives. I am heading for a shuffle dance workshop this weekend, what about you?

*Ananya is a poet and product manager, spending her days brewing chai and gushing over Bengaluru skies. She has poems published in two anthologies - Unread 2.0 and The Lamplit parchments and few online magazines. She loves trying out new experiences and would often be found engrossed in books, traveling or penning in her travel blog Ambling Annie.*



# Mulling over Manuscripts

Palm leaf manuscripts have many stories from the past and Mysore has an entire research center dedicated to them.

BY BINDU GOPAL RAO



**A**s I drive into the lawns of the 132-year-old Oriental Research Institute (ORI), University of Mysore, I am struck by the magnificence of ochre-hued architecture. Despite it being a rainy day, the building stands tall, belying its age.

A curvy stairway leads me to the office of the director, Dr. K.V.

Ramapriya, Director who assigns a colleague to show me around the place. I am here to find out more about the work the Institute does with ancient palm-leaf manuscripts.

For the uninitiated, these are manuscripts made from dried palm leaves that were used as writing materials in India (prior to 5th century BCE). Typically, the palms of *Borassus*

species (*Palmyra palm*) and *Ola leaf* (*Corypha umbraculifera* or the talipot palm) were used to write.

At ORI there are over a whopping 40,000 rare palm leaf manuscripts and paper manuscripts. This institute was established in Mysore by Sri Chamarajaendra Wadiyar, who was the ruler of the princely state at that time. The foundation stone of Jubilee Hall



(that houses ORI) was laid in 1887 and commemorates the Golden Jubilee of Queen Victoria's accession to the British throne.

The main purpose of the Institute is to translate these manuscripts and publish a set of rare, previously unpublished books. These manuscripts have been collected across South India after a lot of research. There have also been some donations of manuscripts.

Currently, the Institute only has Sanskrit manuscripts and it has the distinction of publishing Kautilya's Arthashastra. Kautilya, also called Chanakya, lived in 350-275 BCE) and was the Prime Minister of King Chandragupta Maurya, founder of the Mauryan Empire (322-185 BCE).

One of the other important publications is Sritattvanidhi, a scholarly work of Krishnaraja Wadiyar III, that has nine volumes spanning several aspects of Indian traditional knowledge. This book has some fine examples of traditional paintings and illustrations that make this an excellent collection.

The manuscripts span a variety of topics including science, medicine, vedas, poems, Ayurveda and the like. These have been divided by subject and a study of the author and whether it is complete, or incomplete has been documented. Some manuscripts are available in duplicate as well.

The writing has been done using an iron stylus and the writing is all essentially carved and carbon rubbed inside to blacken the text. The 20-member staff includes 7-8 research scholars who also analyze the manuscripts.

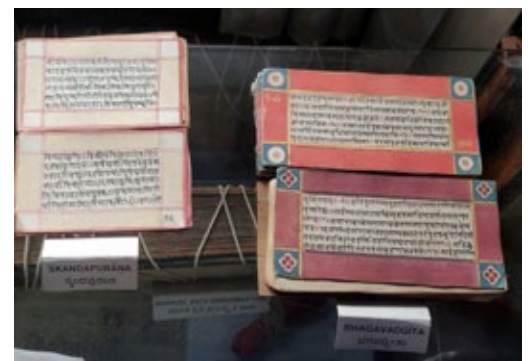


One of the largest manuscripts here is 30 cm long and the precision of the writing, without a pen and without any errors is nothing short of amazing. The large collection of paper manuscripts here are also over 500 years old. Some paper manuscripts also have some fine artwork that must not be missed.

Interestingly, the same manuscript can be found in different scripts and the team compares between them, to find out which is original. Likewise, if one manuscript is damaged, it is possible to check the other one, provided the sentences are identical. It is a task that needs much precision and effort.

The manuscripts are bound together tightly using thick cotton thread and wrapped in red cloth as these are said to make them resistant to pest attacks. Citronella oil and lemon grass oil are used to protect the palm leaf manuscripts. A fumigation chamber is used to dry the fabrics. They also use neem leaves stored in polythene bags to help with pest control.

The in-house library has over 40,000 books in Sanskrit, English, Kannada and other languages. It is thronged by teachers, students, research scholars and scholars. Within the library is a display of instruments, raw materials and more that give you an insight into the creation of the manuscripts.



The Institute has taken up the mammoth task of digitising the manuscripts available in the library. The descriptive catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts I saw had the minutest of details: serial number & subject, manuscript number, title of work, name of the author, name of the commentator, material (palm or paper manuscript), size in centimeters, number of folios, lines per page, letters per line, condition and age and additional particulars (if damaged, complete and the like).

I spent several hours at the Institute both intrigued and amazed at the way people documented their thoughts in the past. Also, it is the work done to preserve the manuscripts and make them accessible to the larger public that deserves appreciation of the highest order. As I bade goodbye, all I could do was be grateful to be able to write by simply using my laptop's keys so easily and vowed never to complain that writing was hard!

#TheCityOfMore

**PROVIDENT**  
More For Sure

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/190529/002585

# FOUNDING THE CITY OF YOUR DREAMS

## 60-ACRE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Presenting Provident Sunworth City, a project spread across a mammoth 60 acres, brimming with massive open spaces and 50+ thoughtfully developed amenities, ensuring there's more of everything, for everyone.

**HOMES | SCHOOL | CLINIC | SHOPS | METRO | OFFICES**

**2 & 3 BHK Homes starting from ₹54.99 L\***

**PROVIDENT  
SUNWORTH CITY**

NEAR MYSORE ROAD-NICE JUNCTION, BENGALURU

Scan to know more

**080 4455 5520**



Provident Sunworth City=Provident Equinox II | For more information visit <https://rera.karnataka.gov.in/>  
Images are used for representation purpose only | \*T&C Apply



# THE ROSARY OF LATITUDES

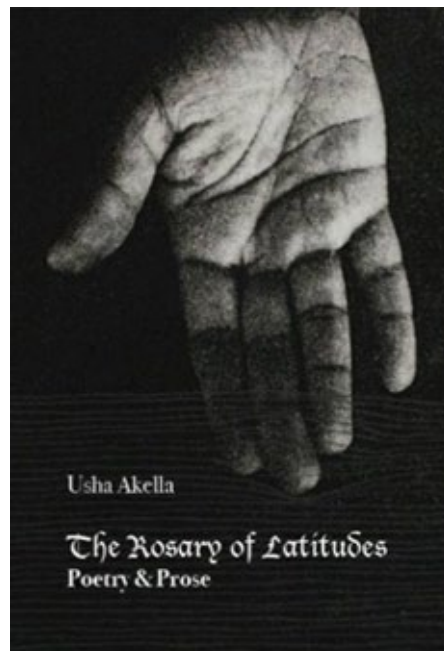
BY USHA AKELLA

## VENICE, ITALY

### Do they play Vivaldi?

Venice holds an image of charm and mystery. The too familiar gondolas glided around the city, sleek as black cobras or the arch of an eyebrow. I will honestly say that I may have not done justice to the city, not walked long enough in its streets to absorb its ambience and have its spirit speak to me. What came to me of Venice was in bits and pieces.

We visited Piazza San Marco or St. Mark's square, the Basilica in the background. The buildings were alight with a setting sun and children walked through huddles of gray and white pigeons. They materialized from the buildings as if the building dissolved into flying rocks. Feathers fluttered from the sky and the glass glinted as flaming



jewels. Do they play Vivaldi?, I thought as I heard music in the air. The arches of the church seemed like cupped palms holding doorways to eternity.

The Clock Tower (Torre dell'Orologio), loomed above a high archway and we walked through the Merceria (main thoroughfare of the city) to the shopping streets to the Rialto.

We enjoyed shopping at the local street markets colorful with plump aubergines and tomatoes. The trip to experience the Murano glass workshops by the waterbuses (vaporetti) which navigate along the Grand Canal and between the city's islands was remarkable.

The visit to Museum Cà Pesaro is what I recollect most. It is there that I





caught a sculpture exhibit of Matisse that was surprising as he is mostly known for his paintings suffused with color. With some cities, you pass right into visual impressions already created.

## PARIS, FRANCE

### Untroubled by Paris, I roamed Paris free

It was one of the first cities I visited after my marriage in 1993. What it meant to be in Paris, I had no idea, so it was not a dream come true. Untroubled by the burden of Paris, I roamed Paris free.

I was just beginning to learn that the world had things to be known. The ride to the top of the Eiffel tower, the view from it — how a city from a height is a grid of houses laid out like pieces on a monopoly board. I had no idea that someone far away could be drawing the Eiffel tower in a journal, and dream of going up its elevators, already, its curves and straining neck ingrained in his heart. I did not know that people came here for love and did not find it so I was not lonely in Paris.

The street art, the performers, the French enthusiasm to create art from

junk, Montmartre, Picasso, the Louvre... I thought it was all lovely... to walk in streets so unknown to what I knew...to become aware that I did not know how to respond... did not know how to weigh a city, pit one country against another or weigh the continent of my heart against a city. I didn't know that I looked for one city within all cities... the one in which I could feel a citizen...all that would come later...

But the Mona Lisa — she arrested me in my steps, and I understood then that genius does not grow old.



**Usha Akella**, the editor of this collection, has authored six books of poetry, one chapbook, and scripted/produced two musical dramas. She earned an MSt in Creative Writing from the University of Cambridge, UK. She is the founder of Matwaala ([www.matwaala.com](http://www.matwaala.com)) and hosts [www.the-pov.com](http://www.the-pov.com), a curated interview and conversation forum. She has been published in numerous Literary journals world over with her poetry translated in many languages. Usha's work ranges from feminist/activist to spiritual and all things in-between.

# Films that made a difference to Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri

I have often heard it said that films provide an escape from our humdrum existence. For me that was literally the case. My love affair with cinema began in my sixteenth year as, saddled with an academic stream I had no interest in (finance and accounts), I found an escape from profit and loss accounts and balance sheets in the dark interiors of the theatre. For those three hours, it was possible for me to forget the trauma of my academic pursuits and lose myself in the alternative world films created for me. In the 1980s, when my love affair with films began, the cinematic landscape was entirely different. Theatres screened Hindi films primarily and most of these were of dubious quality. But it did not matter. The world they conjured had more to offer than the one I lived in.

It is impossible to pick six films that shaped you when you have watched thousands. And most of the ones I list here are not classics that would make the best-of lists of scholars and critics. That would be an altogether different list, shaped by one's understanding of the art and craft of filmmaking. However, our experiences and memories of watching a film (or for that matter reading a book) are often the product of the time when we engage in the activity. And these films played an important role in shaping and influencing the world as it existed for me when I watched these. There are better films, sure. But for what they meant to me at an intrinsically personal level, these are unbeatable.



## SHANTANU RAY CHAUDHURI

Shantanu Ray Chaudhuri is either an 'accidental' editor who strayed into publishing from a career in finance and accounts or an 'accidental' finance person who found his calling in publishing. In 2017, he was named Editor of the Year by the apex publishing body, Publishing Next. He writes regularly on books, films and music for a number of platforms. He is also a published author, with two books to his credit: *Whims – A Book of Poems* (published by Writers Workshop) and *Icons from Bollywood* (published by Penguin/Puffin).

## THE GUNS OF NAVARONE

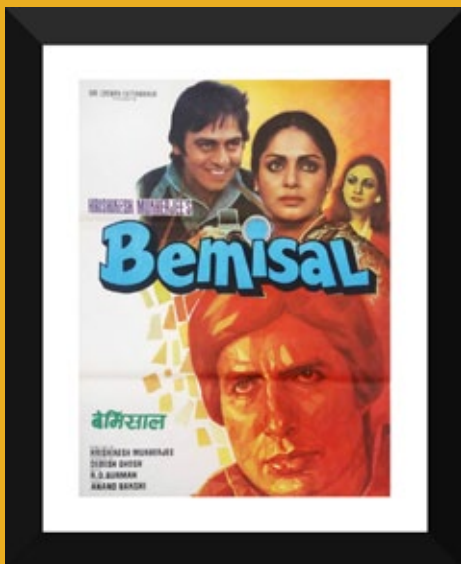
There are films that change your film-viewing experience and habits for all time to come. At the age of seventeen, I was a die-hard Amitabh Bachchan and Hindi film fan (and in the 1980s that meant some unwatchable ones). Till one day, on the way to a screening of Bachchan's *Geraftaar*, our parents changed their mind and we found ourselves watching *The Guns of Navarone*. Life would never be the same again. The scale and the adventure, the mission and the stars who were part of it (Gregory Peck, Anthony Quinn, David Niven) – I had no inkling that films could be like this too. As a voracious reader of Alistair MacLean thrillers, this film was also an introduction to what a visual adaptation of a book could be.



## SONAR KELLA

One of my abiding memories of adolescence is Dad reading us, my brother and me, Satyajit Ray's Feluda stories. They fuelled our imagination and watching *Sonar Kella* in a theatre sometime later brought alive all those bedtime readings. There are better Satyajit Ray films, and indeed better Bengali films. I would come to admire the *Pather Panchali*-s and *Meghe Dhaka Tara*-s in time, but that first viewing of *Sonar Kella* remains an indelible part of my memories. The joy of watching Feluda onscreen, the fun with Jatayu and his attempts at spouting Hindi, the sheer sense of adventure that still evokes memories of long-lost puja vacations, the film was an adrenalin rush like none. And watching it again in a theatre a few years ago, I realized how the magic had not dimmed one bit.





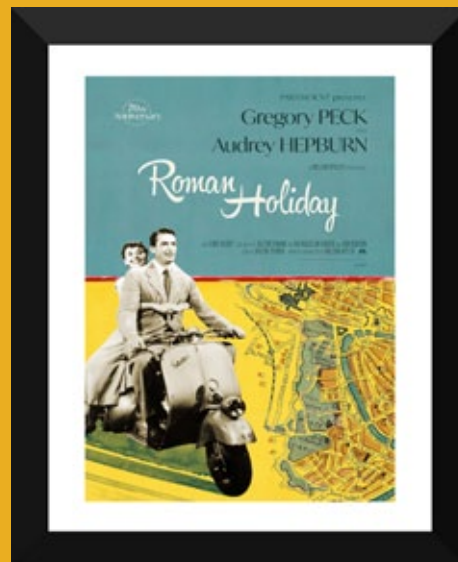
### BEMISAAL

What? Not *Sholay*? *Deewaar*? *Amar Akbar Anthony*? Who remembers *Bemisaal*? Well, I do. It is the one Amitabh Bachchan, and Hindi film I have watched the maximum number of times. Maybe because I watched this first in my late teens, the film went a long way in shaping my idea of the 'ideal' love. As Bachchan called out 'sakhi' to Rakhee in an unforgettable intonation, he launched my own adolescent search for someone I could call by the name. Along with Larry Darrell of *Razor's Edge* and Meursault of *The Outsider*, Sudhir in *Bemisaal* remains my favourite fictional character. Normally, you outgrow films in time – and sure, *Bemisaal* is no technical or artistic masterpiece – but even over thirty years later, and having watched it over thirty times, the film, and the feelings it first engendered in me continue to mesmerize.



### BUTCH CASSIDY AND THE SUNDANCE KID

We Indians have little aptitude for drifting or for characters who are drifters, 'losers'. We are suckers for 'heroes' who overcome all odds. At a particular phase of my life, given to drifting and possessing no ambition whatsoever (a traumatic experience given the peer pressure to be seen doing something in life, settling down), I encountered this film and found kindred spirits in its two charismatic leads. Sure they go down in a hail of bullets in the end, but their spirited approach to life with all its vagaries comforted and inspired me at a difficult time in life. And in '*Raindrops keep falling on my head*' the film provided me with the anthem to take on whatever fate and life have to offer.



### ROMAN HOLIDAY

'Rome. By all means, Rome. I will cherish my visit here in memory as long as I live.' As Audrey Hepburn utters this line to the members of the press and then walks away casting one final look at Gregory Peck, her eyes shining with unshed tears, in the film's closing sequences, I fell in love for the first time in my life. And it's an affair that has endured all these years. If Sudhir and Sakhi in *Bemisaal* epitomized one kind of love, princess Ann and Joe Bradley in *Roman Holiday* did another – impossible, unattainable, the only kind that matters. A princess having her day out, incognito, the press reporter who is out to have the scoop of the year, till he falls in love with her, the crazy ride through the streets of Rome on a scooter (making the Vespa an icon) – the film and its two charismatic leads are the epitome of charm and portray a way of loving that is now forever lost. Along with *Casablanca* (is there any other film with as many quotable dialogues as this?), this remains my favourite love story of all times.



### BICYCLE THIEF

The one true-blue cinematic classic on this list, I watched this at a film-appreciation course and was blown. If *Guns of Navarone* introduced me to the adrenalin-pumping joys of big-budget Hollywood entertainers, De Sica's neo-realist masterpiece was an introduction to the best of international cinema. The simplicity of the story, its telling, the real-life locations, the amateur cast (with two brilliant performances by Lamberto Maggiorani as Antonio and Enzo Stalio as his son Bruno), *Bicycle Thief* is a film that has inspired countless other legendary filmmakers. For me it remains, among many other things, the definitive depiction of the father-son relationship on screen, with a finale that is as heart-rending today as it was when I first watched it.



# All Aglow

A hydrating mask is a weekly essential for dry skin. Try this easy-to-make recipe to lock in essential moisture, shed dead cells and feel refreshed within minutes. The avocado in this mask provides natural oils and vitamins, while honey acts as a humectant, attracting and retaining moisture. Yogurt helps to exfoliate and soothe dryness, and olive oil adds extra hydration and nourishment.

## DIY It

### WHAT YOU NEED

- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon plain yogurt
- 1 teaspoon olive oil (optional)

### WHAT YOU DO

- Cut, pit and scoop out the avocado into a bowl. Mash into a smooth paste.
- Add honey, plain yogurt, and olive oil to the mashed avocado.
- Mix all the ingredients together until well combined.
- Apply the mask to your face using clean fingers or a soft brush, avoiding the eye area.
- Leave the mask on for 15-20 minutes, then rinse off with lukewarm water.
- Pat your face dry with a clean towel and follow up with a moisturizer to lock in the hydration.

# TASTE

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



# Taste Notes



YOUR ACROSS-THE-GLOBE GUIDE TO  
GOOD FOOD AND GREAT SPIRITS

## IN IRELAND

### HAVE A ZEBRA BURGER @ SAWERS

Game for some rattlesnake? A slice of camel, perhaps? If exotic dishes titillate your taste buds, walk into Sawers, a wildly popular gourmet store in the heart of Belfast. The menu features zebra, rattlesnakes, camel, bison, kangaroo burgers, steaks and more. Adventurous diners have savoured this stuff at Sawers for over 116 years now. Not into exotica? There's caviar and foie gras on the go. Try the tapenades, sample some cheese—the award-winning Sawers makes them in-house, too. For about Rs 2500, you can get a hamper for the folks back home. A side of crocodile steak for me! ([www.sawersbelfast.com](http://www.sawersbelfast.com))

- Shubhra Krishan



## IN POLAND

### PICK A PIEROGI

Widely billed Poland's National Dish, this doughy delight can be enjoyed on the streets and in "pierogarnia" restaurants that specialise in making it. Unleavened wheat flour is kneaded into a dough, rolled out thinly, and filled with something savoury or sweet. So far, so simple. But it is in the choice of fillings that the petite Pierogi blows you away! Meat, potatoes, strawberries, onions, spinach, cherries, cheese, sauerkraut, blueberries—take your pick! Chefs like to serve pierogi with sour cream or butter, and garnish it with small pieces of bacon, onions or mushrooms. Fast fact: the word 'pierogi' is plural, indicating that you are never meant to eat only one at a time. Smaczne! (That's Polish for 'bon appetit').

-Megha Uppal



## IN MAHARASHTRA

### DELVE INTO A DABELI

Looks like a bun, and tastes like one too. But methinks the humble dabeli scores over its more popular cousin, the vada pav, in the flavour department. It's got the crunch of peanuts, the tang of tamarind, a citrusy burst of pomegranate, the sweetness of dates and much else in between. Dabeli originated in Kutch, Gujarat. In honour of that fact, it is often called 'Kutchi Dabeli,' but with its genius for sandwichcraft, the Mumbai street vendor has given it new, exciting dimensions. (If you are lucky, you might stumble upon a stall that serves cheese dabeli or sev dabeli).



- Megha Uppal



## IN ASSAM

## FEAST ON SOUR FISH CURRY

Masor Tenga or Sour Fish Curry is a traditional Assamese fish curry enjoyed both as a daily meal and during hearty feasts. It gets its sourness from either tomatoes or lemon or both. Fish harvested from the region's lakes and rivers is cooked in mustard oil and turmeric. It is usually served with steamed rice and aloo pitika or seasoned mashed potato, often on the side of duck or pork curry. This fuss-free fish dish is best enjoyed in summer for its refreshing taste. In the capital city Guwahati, make sure you order a Parampara Thali at Paradise restaurant. At Rs.450, the thali features Maser Tenga and sundry other local specialties. And if you can't wait till you are there, the same chain of restaurants also runs Jakoi, popularly known as Assam Bhawan in Delhi.

- Sarita Santoshini

## IN Bengaluru

## ROOT FOR THE BHOCHAKRA GADDA

I have often spotted carts selling something long and thick, like a tree trunk, here and there, in Bengaluru. Curious passersby stop their vehicles for a closer look, and some even ask the vendor what it was. A few can be spotted relishing thin slices of the trunk-like thing, while a few others just nod their heads politely and walk away. I was curious about it, too, but I never asked or tasted it.

I spotted a push cart selling it a few days ago, and dared to stop for a taste. The vendor sawed off a couple of extremely thin slices of the thing, cut them into large-ish pieces, doused them liberally with sugar and lemon juice, and handed them to me wrapped in a bit of newspaper. I took a hesitant first bite out of one piece, and.... it was just beautiful. It was sweet, woody, lemon-y – all in one. It tasted like a cross between a water chestnut and tender coconut pulp. Needless to say, I slurped it all up, and even got some for the people at home to taste.

The vendor told me that it is a root, and that they call it 'bhoochakra gadda' ('bhoochakra' means 'the cycle of the earth' and 'gadda' is 'root'). Vendors in Bengaluru typically get it from the foothills of Baba Budangiri in Chikkamagalooru. A quick internet search showed me that the root belongs to a small bush with strongly scented flowers, which goes by the scientific name of 'Maerua Oblongifolia'. The root is edible, and is supposed to have medicinal properties. It helps in quenching thirst, is used as a stimulant, and is also helpful in healing snake bites and scorpion stings! I suspect it would have a cooling effect on the body as well.

I am so not going to hesitate before getting myself a few more slices, whenever I spot a 'bhoochakra gadda' guy the next time.

Have you tried this out?

- The Girl Next Door (Blog) <http://thegalnxtdoor.wordpress.com/>



## IN MUMBAI

## GO TO AYAZ'S FOR KEBABS

Ayaz's in West Bandra serves you perfectly grilled delicacies in Mumbai. Huddled amongst several restaurants and clubs in Bandra West, its Chicken Reshmi Kebabs are reason enough for you to ignore the more fancy competitors. Pick a plate of Mutton Seekh Kebabs with it, and team them with Ayaz's signature Baida Roti—a delicious, filling dinner is ready. Owner Ishtiyaq Mansuri runs this hot-selling stall with three cooks who efficiently cater to ravenous club-goers and other foodies till midnight. Vegetarians can dig into the Paneer Tikka, served with roasted capsicum and onions. Also, make sure to try their Hyderabad Dum Biryani, prepared and served only during weekends. A veritable feast for just between Rs.90-130!

- Sarita Santoshini



# ONE FOR THE VEGAN

## EXOTIC VEGETABLES WITH ALMONDS

RECIPE BY JOHN ABRAHAM



(Excerpted from **Anuradha Sawhney's book: The Vegan Kitchen: Bollywood Style!**)

<b>BREAKFAST FOODS</b> ALOO PAKHITRA BAKLAVI WITH MANGOES AND FRESH FRUIT TOMATO SALAD BANANA BREAD PUFFS BUTTER SANDWICHES PANCAKES	<b>SOUPS AND STOCKS</b> CARROT AND RADISH CORN SOUP CUCUMBER POTATO AND CARRA OTEA SOUP SPINACH AND BART CORN SOUP AUBERGINE BROTHAGE, CORN AND CARROT SOUP	<b>The Vegan Kitchen: Bollywood Style!</b> <b>Anuradha Sawhney</b>
<b>STARTERS</b> CRISPY BANANA BREAD WITH BAKLAVI MANGOES AND LENTILS, BROADBEAN AND POTATO SALAD WITH DALS NEW STYLE MANGOES PACHANDESI	<b>RICE AND SIDE DISHES</b> CUCUMBER AND SPINACH BROWN RICE MINTY RICE NEW STYLE VEGETABLES WITH CHICKPEA	<b>TOFU DISHES</b> CUCUMBER AND POTATO LENTILS TOFU STEAKS MINTY TOFU SALAD
<b>DIPS AND SPREADS</b> AVOCADO AND TOMATO CUCUMBER AND CARROT SOUP MANGO MISOGLASS MATE	<b>VEGETABLE DISHES</b> ALOO PAKHITRA BANANAS BREAD BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES CORN ON THE TOP WITH TOMATO BUTTER NEW STYLE VEGETABLES WITH ALMOND BREAD MANGOES BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES	<b>STEWES AND DALS</b> BANANA BREAD BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES
<b>SALADS</b> BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES	<b>DESSERTS</b> BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES	<b>DESSERTS</b> BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES BANANA BREAD WITH ALMOND CREAM ON THE TOP WITH MANGOES

2-3 servings

### Ingredients

- 1 packet (200 gms) mushrooms
- 1 head broccoli
- 1 zucchini
- 3 to 4 leaves of bok choy
- 6-8 garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp slivered almonds
- 1 tsp oil (optional)
- 2 to 3 tsp light soy sauce
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Salt to taste

### Method

- Wash all the vegetables.
- Cut the mushrooms into quarters.
- Break or cut the broccoli into bite-sized florets.
- Do not peel the zucchini. Cut it into 2 lengthwise, then cut into 1" pieces.
- Break the bok choy into 3 pieces each.

- Peel the garlic and crush it lightly using a mortar and pestle.
- Blanch the almonds, till the skins are wrinkled. Peel and cut them into fine slivers. You should have about 1 tbsp of slivered almonds.
- Put a non-stick pan over moderate heat and add the oil (optional).
- When hot, add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute.
- Add the mushrooms, broccoli and zucchini. Raise the heat to high, stir well and cover the pan. Let the vegetables steam for about 2-3 minutes. The mushrooms will release water in which they will cook. Be careful not to overcook the vegetables.
- Open the pan and continue to cook, till the water starts to evaporate.
- Add the bok choy, almonds and soy sauce. Stir-fry for 1 minute.
- Remove from heat and add the pepper.
- Taste and add salt only if needed as the soy sauce is salty.
- Serve hot with steamed brown rice.

### WHO ARE VEGANS?

Vegans are people who don't eat meat. Or eggs. Or cheese. Or mayonnaise. Or honey. Or whey. Or gelatin. Or anything that comes from or includes an animal.

Veganism is an extreme form of vegetarianism. Though the term was coined in 1944, the concept of flesh-avoidance can be traced back to ancient Indian and eastern Mediterranean societies. Vegetarianism is first mentioned by the Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras of Samos around 500 BCE. In addition to his theorem about right triangles, Pythagoras promoted benevolence among all species, including humans.

Source: Time magazine



# 7 INDIAN RESTAURANTS SERVING AUTHENTIC BENGALI FOOD

It is more than just Maach (fish) and Mishti (sweets)  
at these restaurants.

BY PRATYASHA SARKAR

**W**hether you are a Bengali living far away from Kolkata or just a newbie trying Bengali cuisine, these restaurants will transport you straight to the City of Joy.

## 1. OH! CALCUTTA

Royal Nawabi meets Colonial British aesthetic abounds here. The neo-vintage décor reflects the age-old beauty of North Kolkata. The aromatic “Calcutta Biryani”, along with the velvety “Chicken Chaap” (chicken curry) and “Grand Trunk Chicken”, are enough to make you fall in love with this place. Also, the Kolkata-themed illustrations on the walls and even on the plates are one of those many things that make ‘Oh! Calcutta’ oh, so amazing!

**Located in** Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Gurgaon, and Kolkata



## 2. BHOJOHORI-MANNA



“Bhojohori-Manna” was a collective effort by a group of four friends, after one of them failed twice at owning a restaurant. The restaurant, named after a 70s Manna Dey song about an imaginary chef named “Bhojohori Manna”, scaled the heights of success in no time. Their signature dishes include “Daak Bangla Chicken” and “Goalando Steamer Curry” (mutton dish).

**Located in** Mumbai, Bengaluru, Siliguri, Kolkata, Puri

## 3. 6 BALLYGUNGE PLACE

Just recall a scene from the movie “Lootera”. I am sure that a few sequences of the majestic ‘Boned-Bari’ must be lingering somewhere in your mind by now. If this is the ambiance you want to experience, then 6 Ballygunge Place is the restaurant you should visit. The restaurant, named after its address, started in a renovated age-old mansion in one of the lanes of Ballygunge, Kolkata. The well-curated menu reflects the style of food that was served in the renowned family of Tagore. The crispy, mouthwatering “prawn cutlet”



and the “baked hilsa”, wrapped in a mustard sauce known as “Ilish Paturi”, are must-tries and you ought not to skip the dessert, because the Nolen-Gur ice cream is just too good to be missed!

Located in Kolkata.

#### 4. BIJOLI GRILL



Right after two years of partition, when the situation was still turbulent in Kolkata, their journey started behind the ‘Bijoli Cinema’ at Jatin Das Park, Kolkata. It was a small eatery, frequented by the students of “Ashutosh College”, for their quintessential “adda” (casual chat) sessions over several cups of “chaa” (tea). Cut to the present, “Bijoli Grill” is now a true heritage eatery of Kolkata. Its association with the Eden Gardens since 1972, has earned it much appreciation from the cricketers and the cricketing community. Among the several mouthwatering delicacies available here, are the delicious “Kosha Mangsho”, made with luscious pieces of mutton in a rich, dark brown curry, and the “Bhetki Paturi”, consisting of bhetki fish in a bed of a coconut and mustard paste, wrapped and baked in a banana leaf, are the bestsellers.

Located in Mumbai, New Delhi and Kolkata

#### 5. BAYLEAF (CHENNAI)

You might be someone born and brought up in Chennai and tired of the regular Dosa and Idli, or a Bengali who recently shifted to Chennai and is missing home food. Bayleaf is the solution for you. It embodies the crux of the north for the dear people of Chennai through a palatable spread of menus. Besides the “Kolkata rolls” and the “Kosha Mangsho” (mutton curry), a vegan dish comprising of lentil cakes soaked and cooked in a rich gravy called “Dhokar Dalna” is a must-try.



Located in Chennai

#### 6. THE CALCUTTA CLUB (MUMBAI)

For the people living in Mumbai, the constant rain and hustle bustle, that engulfs the city gets to you at times, then there are other times, when you fall in love with the very same traits of the city. One fine evening, while getting back from work, you are stuck in the Mumbai traffic. You are watching



the rain drops pelting down from your car window, and you feel happy—happy about everything the city has to offer. A great accompaniment for such a feeling would definitely be some heartwarming Bengali food. If you think the same, just find your way to The Calcutta Club. Situated in the heart of Mumbai, it has been providing the city’s cosmopolitan crowd, a pleasing solution for their cravings for food from the lanes of Kolkata, since 2005. Some of their worthy specialities are, “Daab Chingri”, which is prawns cooked in a mustard sauce mixed with coconut cream and green chillies, “Aloo Posto”, made with spiced potatoes cooked in a paste of chillies, turmeric and poppy seeds. Sweet lovers must try the “Patishapta”, which is rice crepes stuffed with a coconut and jaggery mixture and the “Nolen-Gur Payesh”, a decadent pudding made with fresh date palm jaggery and rice.

Located in Mumbai

#### 7. TAFTOON BAR AND KITCHEN (MUMBAI)



On hearing the word “Bengali”, if you can only visualise North Kolkata architecture, yellow taxis and women in red and white sarees with a red bindi, then you definitely need to visit the “Taftoon Bar and Kitchen”. Known for serving regional cuisine from Bengal, Awadh, and Kashmir, it presents a sublime amalgamation of the age-old Bengali and regional traditions with the contemporary, and definitely goes far beyond the stereotypes. The restaurant’s ample space is complemented by chic and modern décor and accompanied by Turkish music. All this makes the place very Instagram-worthy. If you want to try Bengali cuisine with a modern twist, then this is your best bet!

Located in Mumbai

TASTE

# A BERRY GOOD MORNING

Do delicious things to your breakfast platter with **colourful berries**. Here's a sprinkling of ideas to inspire you

Yogurt parfait is perfect for the season. It's incredibly good-looking, yummy and super-healthy, too! Simply alternate layers of honey-sweetened Greek yogurt with sliced strawberries. Add blueberries, muesli or chia seeds on top for a power boost.



Decorate your pancakes with berries. Add a swirl of sweet cream. Dust with icing sugar. Enjoy warm with maple syrup.



Wake up your sleepy oatmeal bowl with a sprinkling of colourful berries. Tastes great both hot and cold.



# AND THEN THERE IS FRENCH TOAST

Of which we can never get enough.  
Try this easy and amazing version!

## Shopping List

- 1 loaf thick bread, approximately 8-10 slices
- 8 ounce cream cheese softened
- 1/3 cup strawberry jam
- 2/3 cup strawberries sliced into small pieces
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh lemon zest
- 1 cup whole milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 teaspoons Vanilla Essence
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 5 tablespoons butter for pan

## Toppings

- Fresh or thawed blueberries, blackberries and strawberries
- Powdered Sugar
- Real Maple Syrup
- Fresh Whipped Cream

## To Make

- Beat together cream cheese, jam, and lemon zest. Fold in fresh strawberries. Spoon mixture on piece of bread and top with another piece of bread.
- In a shallow dish, whisk together milk, eggs, vanilla and brown sugar.
- Heat skillet on medium low heat and add 1 tablespoon of butter per French toast.
- Working in batches, dip each piece of French toast into custard batter. Let each side soak for about 10 seconds. Add the soaked slices to the sizzling butter in the skillet.
- Cook until golden brown — about 4 minutes per side.
- Serve with fresh berries, powdered sugar, whipped cream and real maple syrup.



SUNDAE  
*Served*  
IN STYLE

→ Scooped out pineapple plays double role as an ice-cream bowl. Try this simple idea with coconut, mango and melons too.

And here's a no-fail recipe, easy as 1-2-3:

### OREO ICE CREAM

#### SHOPPING LIST

- 1 cup cold whole milk
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 cups cold heavy cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 18 Oreo cookies



#### TO MAKE

- Whisk milk and sugar in a bowl until sugar is dissolved. Add heavy cream and vanilla. Mix well.
- Transfer mixture to bowl of an electric ice cream maker. Freeze according to manufacturer's instructions.
- Place 10 cookies in a ziplock bag, and crush them fine, using a rolling pin.
- With ice cream machine running, add crushed cookies to ice cream.
- Remove bowl from ice cream maker; transfer ice cream to a 9- x 5-inch loaf pan.
- Roughly chop remaining 8 cookies; sprinkle over ice cream in loaf pan, and fold gently to incorporate.
- Cover with plastic wrap and freeze for 2 hours. Scoop and serve.

# 8 Great Upgrades For Your Sundaes



Add colourful sprinkles



Try a crunchy rice crispie topping



Top with crushed caramel popcorn



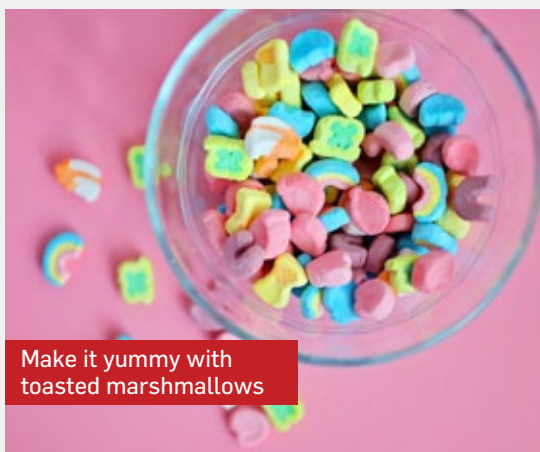
Drizzle maple syrup



Slice up some berries and bananas



Oomph it up with grilled peaches or pineapples



Make it yummy with toasted marshmallows



Pour over with melted chocolate

# LEMONY CREAM CHEESE PANCAKES



### Shopping List

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 large eggs, separated
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 cup cream cheese, cut up
- 3 teaspoons melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lemon zest  
(approximately the zest from one large lemon)

### To Make

- In a bowl, mix together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together egg yolks, buttermilk. Add cream cheese and mix well. Stir in melted butter, vanilla, lemon juice and lemon zest.
- Add the dry ingredients to wet, then stir to combine.
- Whisk two egg whites until stiff but not dry; fold gently into batter.
- Heat a griddle over medium high heat. Lower heat and add butter. Drop batter into pan by 1/3 cupfuls.
- Serve with honey or maple syrup or jam.

Recipe adapted from: *Food52.com*

### MAKE THEM MORE DELICIOUS:

Thaw frozen berries and sprinkle them on top of the pancakes. Cover and cook for a bit, until the berries release their juice.

### MAKE THEM HEALTHIER:

Use half wholegrain flour and half plain flour

### ADD A CREATIVE TOUCH:

Sprinkle golden toasted coconut shavings on top of your pancakes.

# Let's Get Quizzical

Test your cheese IQ. Match the cheese with its country of origin:

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| a) Feta       | a) France      |
| b) Gruyere    | b) Italy       |
| c) Gouda      | c) Spain       |
| d) Manchego   | d) Greece      |
| e) Mozzarella | e) Holland     |
| f) Camembert  | f) Switzerland |

Answers: A: Greece, B: Switzerland, C: Holland, D: Spain, E: Italy, F: France

# 5 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT MUESLI

# 5

# 1

Developed around 1900 by Swiss physician Maximilian Bircher-Benner for patients in his hospital, muesli was inspired by a similar “strange dish” that he and his wife had been served on a hike in the Swiss Alps.

# 2

Originally known in Swiss German as Birchermüesli or simply Müesli, the word is derived from Mus which means “mush” or “purée.”

# 3

Muesli was not originally intended as a breakfast food, but as an appetiser similar to bread and butter.

# 4

The original recipe was more about apples than grains. Bircher recommended “two or three small apples or one large one.” The whole apple was to be used, including skin, core, and pits.



The first commercial muesli also originated in Switzerland, with a struggling baby food company called Somalon. In 1954, they contacted the Bircher family and received permission to manufacture a product called Birchermüesli.



# AN EXCEPTIONAL LIFESTYLE BECKONS

Homes in the heart of Kochi

**2.5 BHK HOMES STARTING ₹ 82.99 L\***

16 acre residential community at Edappally

**PROVIDENT  
WINWORTH**

AT PURVA CITY, NEAR LULU MALL

Scan to know more



 **080 4455 5520**

\*T & C Apply

A photograph of a woven basket filled with ripe, yellow mangoes. Some mangoes are still attached to their green leaves. The basket is placed on a burlap sack. The background is a dark, textured surface.

# MANGOES

## A FRUITY LOVE AFFAIR

BY STEPHANIE D'SA

**I**n the Mumbai suburbs of my youth, mangoes were the undisputed rulers of summer. Their tantalizing aroma danced on the breeze, an enchanting herald of the season's advent. My family had a heart-warming tradition of capturing the first taste of mango for our little ones. We would seat them in a high chair or cradle them on our laps and offer them a slice of succulent delight. Their eager hands would grasp the fruit, and soon their innocent faces would be stained with yellow juice, a testament to their first mango encounter. These endearing sights were immortalized in treasured photographs, preserving memories for each child in our family. For my family and many others, mangoes served as the conduit that united us during summer, forging unbreakable bonds and etching unforgettable experiences in our hearts.

In the vibrant tapestry of Indian culture and cuisine, few fruits command as much reverence and adoration as the mango. With its luscious sweetness and tantalizing aroma, the mango holds a hallowed place in the hearts of the Indian people. Considered the "King of Fruits," this golden treasure symbolizes not only the arrival of summer but also abundance, joy, and a deep connection to the land.

# MANGO

India's mango orchards are a kaleidoscope of flavours and aromas, showcasing a wide range of mango varieties that thrive in different regions of the country. In many parts of India, specific mango varieties are associated with specific cultural celebrations or traditions.

For example, the Himsagar mango is a popular choice during the Bengali New Year festivities. Its vibrant golden hue and intoxicating aroma are said to bring good luck and prosperity in the new year.

Similarly, the Neelam mango is a staple of the Telugu festival of Ugadi. Its vibrant orange flesh and rich sweetness are believed to bring good health and happiness in the coming year.

The cultural significance of mangoes in India is not limited to specific festivals or traditions. Many mango varieties are also named after historical

figures or events. For example, the Chausa mango is named after the Battle of Chausa, which was fought between Sher Shah Suri and Humayun in 1539. Sher Shah Suri named his favourite mango after the battle, and it quickly became a popular variety throughout India.

The legacy of mangoes in India extends beyond its borders. The Alphonso mango, which is renowned for its unparalleled taste and sweetness, is named after Afonso de Albuquerque, the second governor of Portuguese India. The Portuguese were so enamoured with this tropical fruit that they experimented with mango grafting using European methods. Through their voyages between colonies, they took mango saplings to Brazil, where a perfect fruit was obtained from one of the grafts. The mango variety, originally known as "Affonse," embarked on its journey back to India in the 16th century. However, as it traversed the regions from Goa to Maharashtra and Gujarat, a delightful linguistic transformation occurred. Locals, in their affectionate embrace of the fruit, mispronounced its name as "Aphoos" in the Konkani language. And so, with time and endearment, this beloved mango variety came to be known as "Hapoos," a name that carries the echoes of its cultural assimilation and the warmth of its place in the hearts of the Indian people.

The Portuguese were not the only ones who played a role in the development of mango varieties in India. Emperor Akbar also encouraged mango grafting experiments in his Lakhi Bagh, which gave rise to varieties such as Rataul, Langra, Dasher, Totapuri, and Chausa, among others.

Interestingly, despite Akbar's experimental grafting efforts that included the Langra variety of mangoes, it wasn't until the 1800s that this particular variety gained widespread fame. Several intriguing origin stories surround the Langra ("lame" in Hindi) mango, each carrying a hint of mystique. According to one tale, a wandering monk planted a tree in a revered Shiva temple, and the fruits it bore were offered to Lord Shiva and the lame priest who faithfully served at the temple. Another narrative suggests that a disabled farmer, determined to create something extraordinary, successfully grafted the Langra mango. While the exact origins of the Langra mango remain shrouded in mystery, all these fascinating tales trace their roots back to the city of Varanasi, also known as Banaras, as the primary birthplace of this remarkable mango variety.





## HOW DO YOU SPELL SUMMER?

# M-A-N-G-O

**I**n the sweltering embrace of summer across the Indian subcontinent, mangoes transcend their role as mere fruit to embody the very essence of the season. Mangoes find their place in the realms of Indian art, literature, and folklore, representing the vibrant energy and abundance of summertime. Paintings adorned with mango motifs, whether in traditional Madhubani or Rajasthani styles, capture the fruit's allure, showcasing its rich colours and enticing form. In intricate mehndi designs, mango patterns adorn hands, symbolizing fertility, growth, and the celebration of life.

Hindu mythology further weaves mangoes into its tapestry, with the mango tree itself being linked to Kamadeva, the god of love and desire. This connection underscores the fruit's association with romance, passion, and the intoxicating sweetness of love.

The paisley design, with its undulating curves resembling teardrops or lotus petals, is a ubiquitous motif in Indian art, textiles, and jewellery. Originating from the Indian subcontinent, the paisley design became intrinsically linked with the mango fruit. Its name pays homage to the Scottish town of Paisley, where the design was first mass-produced in the 17th century, having been brought back from India by the British. Today, paisley designs grace a wide array of Indian textiles, including the luxurious Kashmiri pashminas, the intricate Andhra kalamkari, the regal Maharashtrian Paithanis, the resplendent South Indian Kanjeevarams, and the delicate Lucknow Chikankari, reminding us of the mango's enduring influence on Indian culture.

Beyond being a delectable fruit, mangoes symbolize abundance, joy, and the arrival of summer in this diverse and enchanting land. Today, India is the world's largest producer of mangoes, with over 1,500 varieties grown across the country. These mangoes are not only enjoyed by Indians, but they are also exported to countries all over the world. The fruity love affair shared by Indians for centuries is a testament to the deep-rooted connections between people and their traditions.

# SAGE & WALNUT GNOCCCHI

## Try it Tonight

### Shopping List

- 300g gnocchi
- 2 tbsp salted butter
- 12-16 sage leaves
- 40g walnut pieces
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan or vegetarian alternative

### To Make

- Bring a pan of boiling water to a simmer with a pinch of salt. Lower in the gnocchi and cook for 3 minutes or until they float to the surface. Strain, then leave to drain in a colander while you make the sauce.
- Heat the butter in a large frying pan and cook over a medium heat until foaming and lightly golden. Add the sage and walnuts, and cook for 2-3 minutes until the sage is crisping up and the nuts are toasted; don't allow the butter to darken too much.
- Remove the sage and nuts with a draining spoon, leaving the butter behind.
- Add the drained gnocchi to the pan and toss until they start to turn golden and crisp, and the butter is nut-brown. Season well.
- Transfer to a shallow bowl and top with the walnuts, sage and grated Parmesan.
- Serve with a mixed leaf salad.

### 5 KNOCKOUT GNOCCCHI FACTS

- Gnocchi is the Italian word for dumplings.
- Gnocchi with tomato sauce is known as strangolapreti, meaning priest stranglers, because a local priest liked them so much, and ate them so fast, that he choked on them.
- Superstar Russell Crowe is crazy about gnocchi.
- In Argentina, gnocchi is traditionally cooked on the 29th of March—it is considered to bring good luck!
- Germans love gnocchi too. In fact, they have an entire Potato Dumpling Museum in the town of Heichelheim



# TURNING YOUR DREAM HOME INTO REALITY IN JUST 119 DAYS

Unmatched Speed, Uncompromised Quality



[starhomes@starworthinfra.com](mailto:starhomes@starworthinfra.com)



7795666707



7795666808

# TRAVEL

WHERE ARE YOUR DREAMS  
TAKING YOU THIS SEASON?

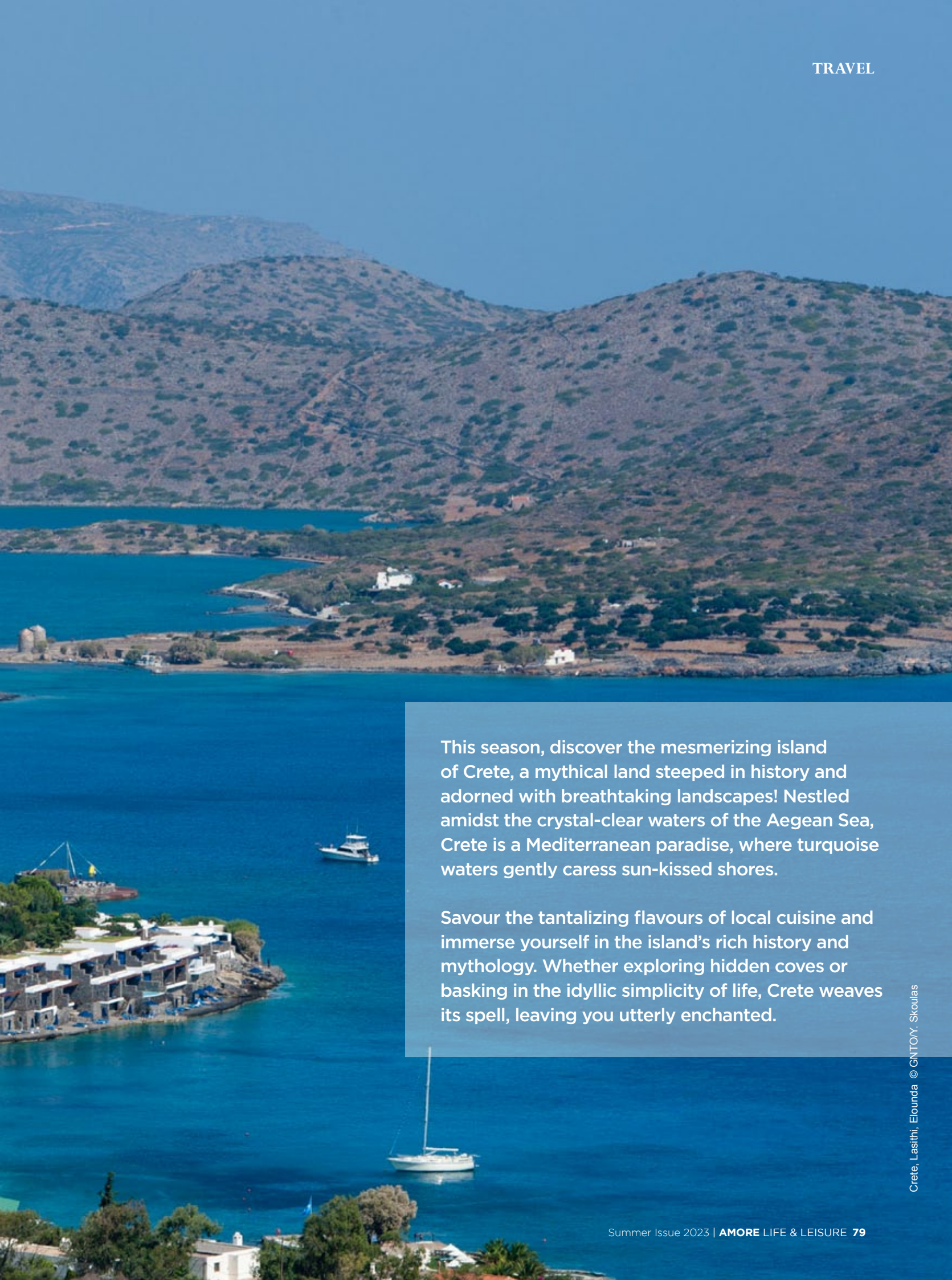


An aerial photograph of a coastal town in Crete, Greece. The foreground shows a mix of green trees and white buildings. A large, multi-story white resort building with a curved facade is prominent. The turquoise sea is visible, along with a small island and a peninsula in the background. Wind turbines are visible on the distant hills under a clear blue sky.

# CRETE

# *Greece*

THOSE DREAMY SUMMER BLUES



This season, discover the mesmerizing island of Crete, a mythical land steeped in history and adorned with breathtaking landscapes! Nestled amidst the crystal-clear waters of the Aegean Sea, Crete is a Mediterranean paradise, where turquoise waters gently caress sun-kissed shores.

Savour the tantalizing flavours of local cuisine and immerse yourself in the island's rich history and mythology. Whether exploring hidden coves or basking in the idyllic simplicity of life, Crete weaves its spell, leaving you utterly enchanted.

Rich in mythology, this mythical birthplace of Zeus is a living testament to the wonders of antiquity, with archaeological treasures scattered throughout its lush valleys and dramatic mountains. From the sun-kissed beaches that stretch as far as the eye can see, inviting you to bask in their warm embrace, to the dramatic gorges and rugged peaks of the White Mountains and Psiloritis, where thrill-seekers can embark on epic hiking expeditions.





Ancient ruins and quaint villages imbue the island with an undeniable old-world charm. Lose yourself in enchanting olive groves and wander through captivating coastal towns, where whitewashed buildings glimmer under the warm embrace of the sun.





For history buffs, the island's storied past comes alive in the ruins of the ancient Minoan civilization at Knossos, echoing whispers of a once-great empire. The Venetian and Ottoman influences further paint the island's tapestry with charming old towns, vibrant markets, and imposing fortresses that stand as sentinels of a bygone era.



ISLAND  
THERAPY

# Maldives

BY VISWAPRASAD RAJU



A

thousand islands, hundreds of uninhabited islands, hundreds of resorts, many an atoll. And finally, Maldives distills into two options: beach villa and overwater villa. Who wants a garden view (though some resorts offer that as well) when the place is 99% water and 1% land?

To get to paradise, you need a speedboat or a seaplane, or a short-haul flight from the airport, in the first place. In our case, it's a speedboat that deposits us in a hurry, and from then on we discover an unhurried approach



to living. You see the difference. Speed breaks, slow takes over. The greys fade away, a new colour palette emerges out of the blue. It's unreal blue, it's unreal green. The colours put on quite a show and mesmerise you all the way, while you get to decipher the true meaning of stillness, solitude, mindfulness, peace, idleness - words that often go missing from our collective imagination. All this is within 15 minutes from the airport. Unreal.

In today's world of Artificial Intelligence, we, sometimes, need a reality check. We check into





## Quick (slow) guide



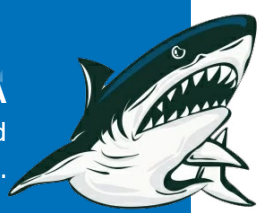
**SUNSCREEN IS A MUST:** 27 to 30 degrees, average temperatures

**GO, ANYTIME:** December to February is peak season; May to November is off-peak



**QUIET, PLEASE:** Don't expect nightclubs or party pubs in the Maldives.

**NOT SHARK TANK, MALDIVES IS A SHARK SANCTUARY:** The import and export of shark fins is banned too.



**Reader's Delight:** Stock up on books or load up your Kindle

**Flat, Flatter, Flattest:** The flattest country on earth, the average height of the islands is just 1.8m above sea level.





Saii Maldives  
Curio by  
Hilton

Viswajay

CROSSROADS, the Maldives first multi-island, fully integrated leisure destination.

Why stick to one island? Why stick to one resort? Why stick to one view? Why stick to one or two restaurants? Spoil them - it's the DNA of the brand, from what we gathered in the way they reimagined Maldives during our stay at CROSSROADS' Saii Maldives Lagoon, Curio Collection by Hilton. There's the iconic Hard Rock Hotel and The Marina with fine retail stores, a beach club, discovery centres, wide dining options (a dozen restaurants to choose from), and more - all connected by bridges. We are now in an archipelago of endless fun and seamless joy. Happily placed amongst the Kaafu Atoll and Emboodhoo Lagoon, this unique multi-island destination makes it a multi-sensory experience.

We settled for two days at a Beach Villa and two days at an Overwater Villa. Both didn't disappoint. While at Beach Villa, you walk your way to the beach and feel the powdery white sands, and crashing of waves; you ladder into the sometimes-calm and sometimes-swirling inky turquoise sea with dazzling fish keeping you company at the Overwater Villa. Both draw heavily from the Maldivian style of barefoot chic, and showcase distinctive local art that soaks you in the maritime heritage of the island, cute 'creature comfort' pillows are something that catch your attention, too. Both invite you to find calm, needless to say. In many coves in your mini sanctuary.

No site-seeing as such (the very reason one chooses Maldives), the sights are played before you as you draw the

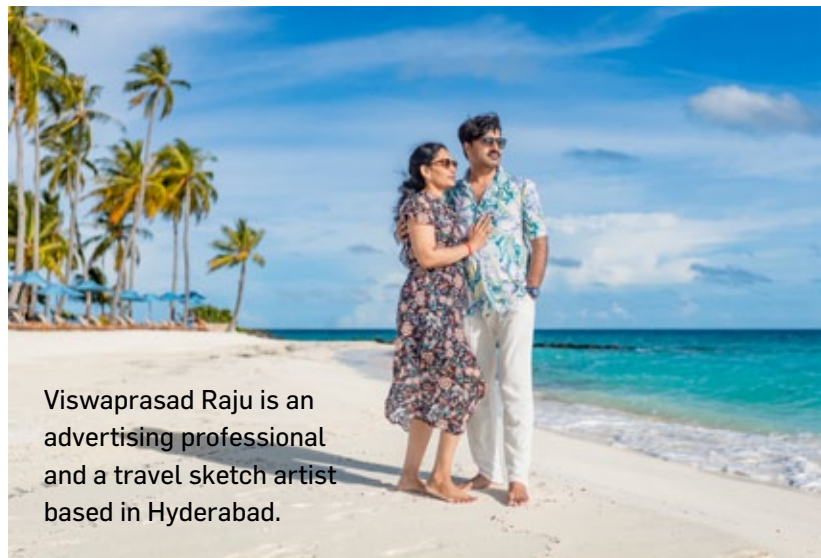


curtains to unveil a new day of 'doing nothing' and, for some, a day of adventure in the water and the skies. We are the more grounded kind, you see. Stay on terra firma, in other words. Keeping ourselves busy with: beach walks, sweet nothings, lazy lunches, book reads, the Grey Heron struts, star counts, minibar raids, pillow fights, sunsets, sunrises, watercolors, and many such new normals.

Why step out? Not to play beach volleyball, not to groove to the DJ's playlist at the club, not to swim in the pool, not for a spa treatment, but to discover the many restaurants. Our staple was Kebab & Kurry and Ministry of Crab.

It's June. It rains, never pours. Just a romantic wet, a little nudge, to rekindle the romance. Happy songs play on our lips.

Sea you soon, Maldives. Designed for modern-day Robinson Crusoes, crafted for privacy-seeking celebs, programmed for Instagram reeling every one of us!



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

# Mae Hong Son

A Hidden Gem in

# Thailand

**N**estled in the far northwest of Thailand and sharing borders with Myanmar, Mae Hong Son is one of the most spellbinding locations in the kingdom and for many reasons, an ideal spot for an offbeat summer sojourn. Despite a wealth of unspoiled attractions, tourists are seldom aware of this paradise, partly due to its remote location, as it is located over 900 km from Bangkok. However, this only adds to its mystique, as it remains unspoiled by mass tourism.

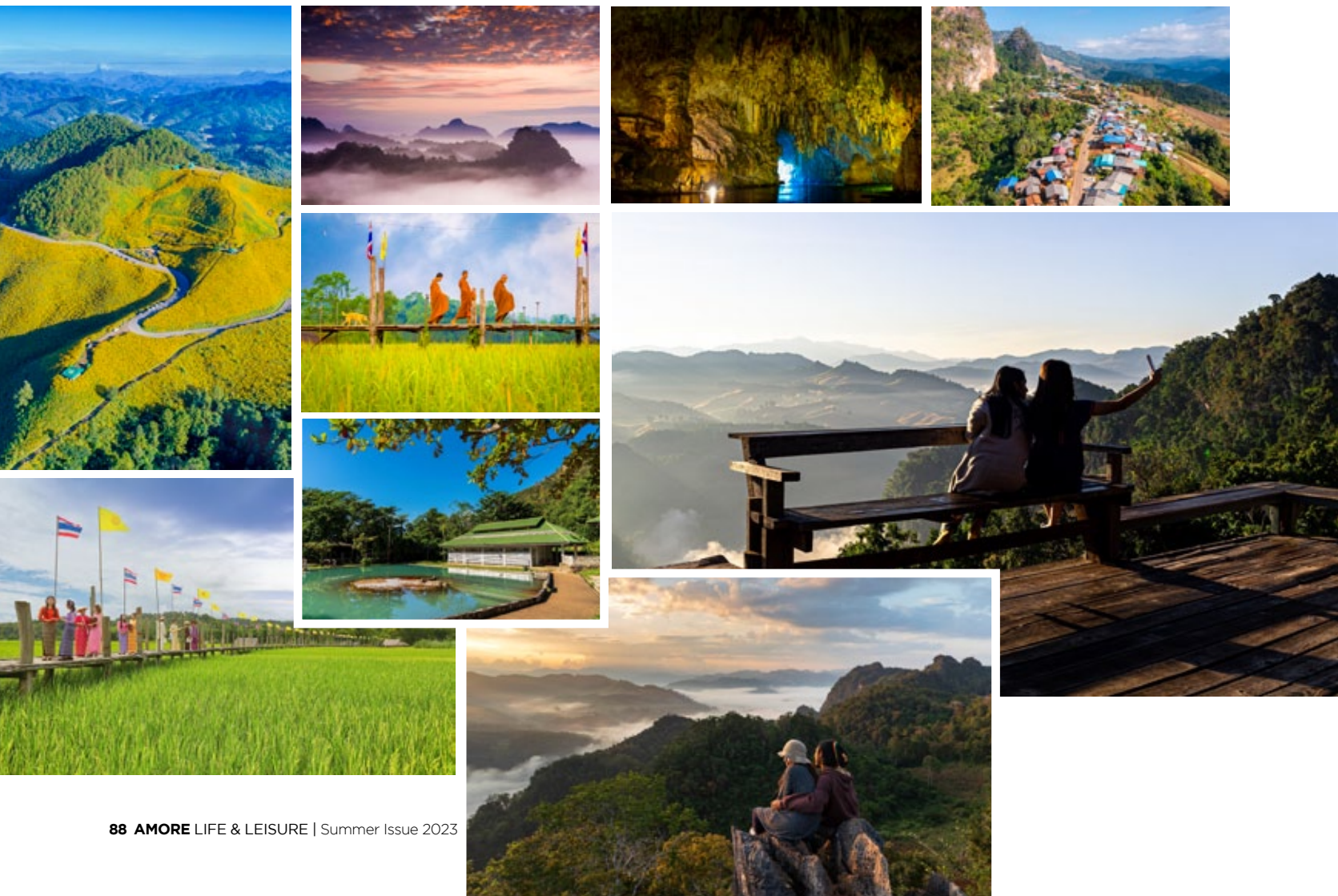
Being Thailand's most forested province, Mae Hong Son provides some of the most authentic and satisfying experiences that will lure you away from the pandemonium of city life to unwind in nature's embrace. The region is mostly covered in mist and surrounded by rolling mountain ranges, pristine forests, lakes, rivers, breezy grasslands, and other countless viewpoints that will leave you in awe.

Visitors stepping into these lands can engage in many refreshing activities such as hiking through forests and hills, healing in the hot

springs, visiting waterfalls, exploring the majestic Buddhist temples, taking a boat ride along the scenic Pai River, or interacting with the friendly and hospitable local tribes.

As a melting pot of different cultures and traditions, Mae Hong Son is an unmissable destination for vacationers and travellers eagerly looking for an unfiltered and organic adventure. This region has so many things to offer that it would require at least a week to unravel all its charms.

Places one must visit when in Mae Hong Son, include:





### BAN RAK THAI

Ban Rak Thai is often described as Thailand's most beautiful village, and why not? This highland village is surrounded by beautiful hills and tea plantations which make it a highly picturesque tourist spot. The view of sunrise here is perfected by the solemn mist rising off the lake. Perched in the heart of Mae Hong Song, it is a pristine tourist destination perfect for an offbeat trip.



### THAM PLA NATIONAL PARK

Tham Pla is perfect for a relaxing vacation as it is surrounded by cool hilly forests and streams with a heavenly view. One of the main reasons to visit Tham Pla is a cave that is filled with numerous freshwater fish known as Pla Mung or Pla Khang, which are of the same family as the carp. These fishes are believed to be sacred by the natives.



### PANG OUNG

Pang Oung should be at the top of your bucket list if you're seeking for a stress-free romantic getaway. Due to its exotic scenery, Pang Oung, which includes a small alpine lake and a hill tribe village tucked away in the mountains, has been called the most romantic destination in Thailand. The area is made up of a lush pine forest that surrounds a sizable irrigation reservoir and provides a stunning view all year long.



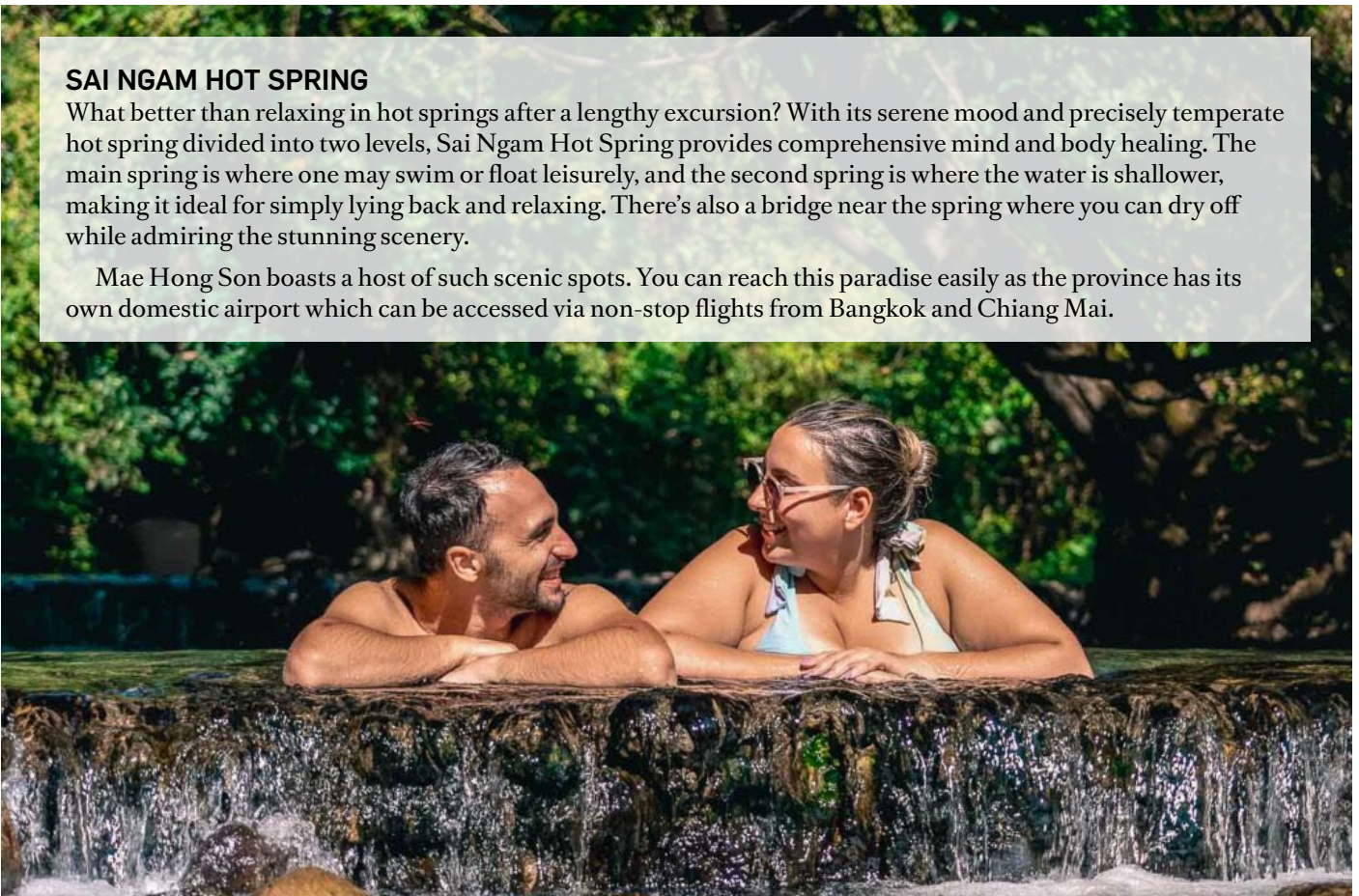
### **PHU PHA MOK**

Phu Pha Mok is probably one of the most underrated yet amazing viewpoints in Thailand. Here you can get a panoramic view of the vast, beautiful, and green Mae Hong Son province after a 30-minute walk from the southern village. The best time to visit this spot is early morning when the mist coalesces with the backdrop of a majestic sunrise.

### **SAI NGAM HOT SPRING**

What better than relaxing in hot springs after a lengthy excursion? With its serene mood and precisely temperate hot spring divided into two levels, Sai Ngam Hot Spring provides comprehensive mind and body healing. The main spring is where one may swim or float leisurely, and the second spring is where the water is shallower, making it ideal for simply lying back and relaxing. There's also a bridge near the spring where you can dry off while admiring the stunning scenery.

Mae Hong Son boasts a host of such scenic spots. You can reach this paradise easily as the province has its own domestic airport which can be accessed via non-stop flights from Bangkok and Chiang Mai.



*Information courtesy: Tourism Authority of Thailand*

# MY CORE FOUR



## SIMRAN SAINI

Simran Saini is a Nutrition and Weight loss Consultant. A graduate in Dietary Counselling from The Institute of Health Sciences in Dublin, Ireland, she is also a spiritual healer, certified past life regression therapist, and transpersonal hypnotherapist.

### 1 HEALING WITH THE ANGELS

Although I have won many awards, such as the most Popular Dietitian in Delhi and the best weight loss consultant in Delhi, I deeply cherish being a spiritual healer. Enlightening a soul and bringing a smile to someone's face can be the best healing one can actually gift to themselves. I often indulge myself with a 15 min session of Angel healing and de-stress under the wings of my Guardian Angel to fill myself with love and gratitude. After all I can only pour from a full cup.



### 2 FOOD SETS THE MOOD

I have conducted a few workshops describing how food has an impact on our physical, mental and emotional health. Eat fresh and you think fresh. Eat colorful food, and you feed yourself all vitamins and nutrients. Eat more organic and stay organic. I try to eat a rich mix of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and grains to keep both my diet and my health balanced. I believe what you put on your plate daily is the best investment in your health and life.



### 3

### SELF HYPNOSIS: THE BEST

We all want our day to be productive and make the most of it. I truly feel that refreshing sleep and peaceful retirement at the end of the day, are equally important for the rejuvenation of our mind and body. I learnt hypnosis during my training as a past life regression therapist. I practise self hypnosis to put myself in a meditative sleep form and wake up all energized and recharged each morning. As Thomas Dekker said, "Sleep is the golden chain that ties health and our body together."



### 4 WALK WITH NATURE

I often get queries related to the kind of workout one can pursue for weight loss and stamina gain. Something that's easy and practical. And my answer has always been the same: Walking. And if possible walk in a park, walk with nature. It's easy and practical and can be done anywhere in the world. The best part is that it's a zero cost way to de-stress yourself. I go for a daily brisk walk anytime of the day to feel energized and connect with nature. John Muir said, "In every walk, one receives far more than he seeks."



# Longding

Land of Guns & Roses

BY SUBHASISH CHAKRABORTY



**A**s a one-time native of India's remote North East, a few impressions are still fresh in my mental database, even after two decades of living in metropolitan India. For instance, those endless stretches of tea gardens in Assam, the world-famous Kaziranga National Park, exotic tribals dressed in their finery, ancient Buddhist

monasteries and gompas perched on hilltops, high mountain passes ...

How about a rendezvous with the last gun-makers of India - The fearsome Wanchos? Live amid tribals practicing "Animism," while being experts in hunting. They flaunt earrings made of deer antler, use "*Mithun/Bos frontalis*" skin as a bulletproof guard, embed goat hairs on hats, tattoo their faces, and worship Mother Nature! Sounds incredible, does it not?

There has never been a better time to explore destinations that are eco-friendly, carbon Neutral, and indigenous. India's North East is the

world's Anthropology Capital - 150+ tribes that account for 12 % of the nation's total tribal population.

Ever heard of Longding? Probably not. It is remote and tucked away nicely in one corner of India's North East, literally at the edge of Myanmar to the East. No five-star hotels or resorts, bumpy roads, basic wayside amenities, and sparse population - just about 56,000 people residing in an area of approximately 1192 Sq. Km.

A lot has happened since the time my father was posted as an agronomist by the Govt. of Assam in India's tea town of Dibrugarh. Those



## TRAVEL

childhood jaunts to Longding—a 3.5-hour drive away—remain etched in my memory. We stayed in double-storied British era Dak Bungalows, went on soft treks and chased those elusive butterflies. And yes, those desperate dashes to be in my mother's protective

lap, at the first sight of the fearsome and scantily clad Wancho men seems straight out of a fairytale now.

Fairytale stuff indeed, but Longding is for real. This place exudes raw energy. It is the bastion of the fearsome Wancho Nagas. In the days

of yore, this warrior tribe fought pitched battles with marauding British soldiers and is believed to have slaughtered close to 500 of them at one go. Legend has it that to tame these ferocious Wancho fighters, the British introduced opium as an instrument to calm their nerves; a practice which is still followed by the tribal Wanchos.

Longding is India's very own "Guns & Roses" county where both gun-making and the use of opium are perfectly legal. Film Director Avlok Langer was so moved by the distinctive lifestyle of the Wanchos that he decided to make a film - "*The Last Gun Maker of Longding*," which depicts the fascinating lifestyle of the Wancho Nagas.

Although the government has been encouraging civilians and tourists to visit border regions, it isn't all that easy to visit Longding. Both foreigners, as well as Indian visitors,

**Longding is India's very own "Guns & Roses" county and both gun making and use of opium are perfectly legal.**





need to obtain an Inner Line Permit (ILP) from the Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh.

With the gradual advent of modern civilisation, the Wanchos too have changed and culturally adapted to be more acceptable. There was a time when the Wanchos society was engrossed in superstitious beliefs and rituals like head-hunting. However, the good thing about contemporary Wanchos is their abiding faith in the time-tested tradition of Chieftainship, wherein the “Wangam” or King works in close cooperation with several Village Elders referred to as “Wangsu” and “Wangsa” to maintain a peaceful village life.

They follow an ancient dormitory system, which in the local parlance is referred to as “Murung.” Under this system, young boys are educated and trained to be future citizens by upholding the

community values that are inculcated in them.

Apart from gun making, another characteristic feature of the Wanchos tribe is their unique blend of tattooing, which has been passed on from generation to generation. A trademark feature of an adult Wanchos man is the tattoos on their limbs. They also sport facial tattoos, leaving only the lips tattoo-free! Wanchos women on the other hand are more at ease with their unique brand of jewellery designs. Their necklaces, in particular, are divine.

By far, the best time to visit Longding would be in March-April, coinciding with the festival of Oriah. This one-week festival brings out the very best of the Wanchos Naga spirit- Pork skin offerings to the village chieftain, ceremonial sowing of paddy, buffalo offerings to appease the gods (Jowan), feasting in the “Morungs,” accompanied by celestial

**Wanchos Naga spirit- Pork skin offerings to the village chieftain, ceremonial sowing of paddy, Buffalo offerings to appease the gods (Jowan), feasting in the “Morungs” accompanied by celestial tribal dancing.**

tribal dancing. Visitors from outside are treated royally and the customary gesture of offering rice beer (Ju) in specially crafted bamboo glasses is every bit inviting.

The village council—Ngo-Wang in local parlance, makes the first official announcement of the festival date and thereafter you witness a seamless division of labour, with the men folk taking charge of marketing while the women busy themselves with decorating the main festival venue.

The quintessential facet of this one-of-a-kind tribal festival is the process of assembling the holiest podium - “Zangvaan,” which is crafted meticulously with bamboo and has



seven distinctive branches. This holy zone where the “Zangvaan” is erected, is ceremonially sanctified by a saintly man from the community. The Wanchos have this traditional belief that all prayers for peace, prosperity, and a good harvest reach out to the ultimate God or “Juwan” through the “Zangvaan.”

As a mark of respect, the elderly Wanchos aren’t given any menial tasks. They find fulfillment in supervising the festival from their makeshift raised wood and bamboo pavilion. It is heartening to see them engrossed in deep contemplation of the divine (Juwan) with the primary motive of securing the wellbeing of the village and a bumper harvest.

Wancho Nagas are an endangered lot and their unique tribal folklore is on the verge of extinction. It was only a few years back that the Wanchos got their official script and a native author named Losu published the first book in the Wancho language.

On my last trip to Longding a year back, with the pandemic playing havoc, I witnessed a silent revolution taking place, away from the humdrum of contemporary life. On one of my late afternoon soft treks around the town, my eyes fell on a small hut, and on further inquiry, I learned it was some kind of an institution.

Well then, once inside the hut, I had an elaborate conversation with an elderly Wancho who looks after this one-of-a-kind Folk Art Institute. It is run and administered by UK-based folklore researcher Tara Douglas, who through her path-breaking project - ‘Stories of Our Ancestors’ is attempting to document and conserve the rich tradition and art forms of the Wancho tribe through animation to showcase it to the world.

Tara’s efforts to revive, preserve and promote the fast-vanishing indigenous tribal heritage of India’s North East are beginning to pay rich dividends. Her ambitious

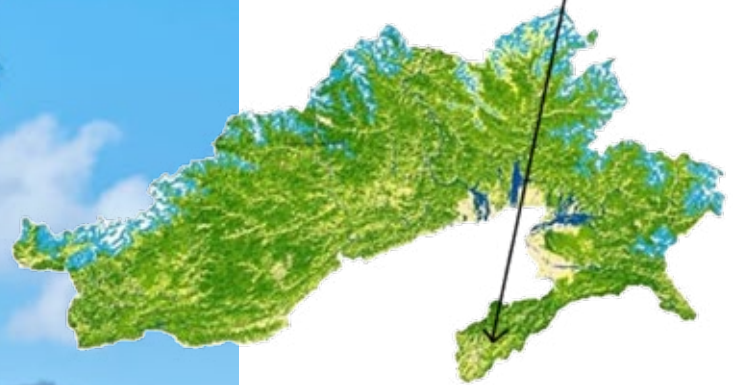
project is funded by North Eastern Hill University in Shillong – the capital of Meghalaya.

The vicissitudes of North East tribal people are best summed up by Tara herself – “There are so many different tribal communities in Northeast India and they all have fascinating stories that have been passed down from generation to generation. Some of these are creation myths; others are vivid historical accounts of conflict over land and habitat. People from outside don’t know about them, and even the younger generations in the villages are losing touch with their oral heritage. We are planning to work together to interpret this material into a contemporary presentation so that audiences worldwide will see the wisdom that they have in these village communities.”

It is absurd to think that the government alone can fulfill the task of tribal heritage preservation. The need of the hour is to have many more Taras if we are to come anywhere close to the mammoth task.



Tribal chieftains of India's North East still have enormous clout. Their decisions for the overall collective wellbeing of their tribes do receive an acknowledgment from the masses. It is time for anthropologists to shed some light on the "Cultural Balance" – how much of the Western lifestyle is adequate for tribals to assimilate, so that they do not lose their own ancient culture and heritage.



#### Traveler's Fact File:

##### BY AIR

The nearest airport to Longding is Dibrugarh, 178 km away. There are routine domestic flights from Delhi and Kolkata that connects to Dibrugarh.

##### BY ROAD

Hired cabs are readily available from Dibrugarh in Assam.

#### LOGISTICAL ADVICE

Since Longding is located in the extreme North Eastern part of India bordering Myanmar, the terrain is difficult and apart from government-run accommodation (Dak Bungalow), the place doesn't have the tourist infrastructure to cater to discerning travellers.

# THEY SAID

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

**SOPHIA  
LOREN**

.....  
If you haven't cried,  
your eyes can't be  
beautiful.



...  
**THE  
AVIATOR**

Don't tell me I can't do it;  
don't tell me it can't be done!



**JANE  
FONDA**

.....  
It's never too late –  
never too late to start  
over, never too late to  
be happy.



**EMMA  
STONE**

You live once and life is  
wonderful, so eat the damned  
red velvet cupcake.



**ALFRED  
HITCHCOCK**

Luck is everything. My good luck  
in life was to be a really frightened  
person. I'm fortunate to be a coward,  
to have a low threshold of fear,  
because a hero couldn't  
make a good  
suspense film.



**MATT  
DAMON**

-----  
All you have in the end is to be  
able to look back and like the  
choices you made.



**CLINT  
EASTWOOD**

-----  
Self-respect leads to self-  
discipline. When you have both  
firmly under your belt, that's  
real power.



**JIM  
CARREY**

I really believe in the  
philosophy that you create  
your own universe. I'm just  
trying to create a good one  
for myself



**ROBIN  
WILLIAMS**

Sometimes you  
can have a whole  
lifetime in a day and  
never notice that  
this is as beautiful  
as it gets.



# 10 THINGS

## NO ONE TOLD YOU ABOUT WINE

**1** Wine is fat-free and cholesterol-free.

**2** In Japan there is a spa where you can swim in tea, coffee, and wine.

**3** The wreck of the Titanic holds the oldest wine cellar in the world.

**4** The oldest preserved bottle of wine is nearly 1700 years old.

**5** White wine can be made from both red & white grapes.

**7** One bottle of wine contains about 600 grapes.

**6** Poor quality soil tends to produce better wine.

**8** Intense fear or hatred of wine is called Oenophobia.

**9** There is more alcohol in mouthwash than wine.

**10** Wine bottles should be kept lying down. Standing them dries the cork and lets air in, spoiling them faster.

Source: Newsweek.com

Get lost  
in the jungles of  
Central India.



  
**Baghdera**  
meadows  
Wildlife Resorts



baghderaMeadows



baghderameadows

KANHA | TADOBA (Summer of 2023)