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BRAND'S FOCUS

Cover Shot By- Madhur Sirohi, Gurgaon

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...explore, experience & enrich

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NAGGAR

Birthdays are always special and when its a Milestone Birthday, it's even more special.

I wanted to do something different so that it remains memorable throughout our lives, but I had no clue on how to celebrate. Only thought was to celebrate in the hills with very few close people.

My cousin suggested a place and at first, I thought what fun it will be to go 500kms driving and staying in a resort with 4-5 people. But then, she asked me to open my laptop and browse through their website and as soon as I saw the architecture of the property, I just wanted to go there.

Tree of life, Eila Resort (Himachal Pradesh)

It was a group decision that we wouldn't stretch ourselves much and instead of being bone tired by the constant travel, we would take a halt enroute. We quickly looked up couple of websites and apps and halted at a resort in Mandi. As we all know, the first thing which charms you and soothes your senses is the crisp morning air of the hills and the temperature drop in the evenings. We were most eager to reach our destination, The Elia- Tree of Life resort for we had been

waiting for the same for over a month. All of us were really touched by the warm welcome that the staff of Tree of Life, Naggar had planned for us.

The indigenous elements make it extra special, apart from the tilak ritual and welcome drink- 'apple toddy', it was the 'Himachali topi' that we kept carefully as a souvenir, to share with family, when back. Post the warmth extended to us, it was

time for the show round and soak in the beauty of the meticulously designed resort, crafted with intrinsic detail. Seemed like a sculpted art museum, every corner of the hotel was custom tailored. Instead of the conventional rooms, you enter into an abstract geo structure that is so unique and exclusive.

Tea Time, lounge area mesmerized the guests with artistic walls with colored stones carved and

natural elements interwoven giving it a unique rustic appeal. The winding staircase led us to the hall comprising of SH Raza paintings which was oh-so-insta worthy for the city dwellers.

One could choose to relax by the pool, or embark on an adventure through the surrounding natural beauty. Since it had been a long drive for us, we decided to soak in the environment and relax and enjoy the scenic views.



By Samikshaa V Baaliyan, Gurgaon
Anchal Singhal, Gurgaon





Dinner at Dusk

As the sun begins its descent, one can savour a sumptuous barbeque dinner next to the bonfire. at the resort's lawn area. The resort's culinary team is committed to creating dishes that delight the senses. We had briefed the staff that we had planned the trip on a special occasion- milestone birthday and they indeed made the dinner set up and courses into a culinary journey we wouldn't soon forget.

That 'Top of the World' feeling-

Celebrating a milestone birthday at a luxurious resort, with its stunning aesthetics was what we had envisaged, and we were very content with all the services and amenities that Tree of Life Naggarg offered. Little did we know the chief



highlight of our trip was yet to come- private breakfast in the meadows, and world-class service including a private butler, is an experience that will leave an indelible mark on your memory. Comes at an added cost but it's worth every penny. The staff has to be briefed the evening prior so that they prepare breakfast items and carry the baskets and all the picnic amenities in their car. The pictures clearly show the regal affair that this brunch turned out to be.

The town offers a range of activities to suit every preference, from yoga and hiking to trout fish farm visit. Since, we all hadn't seen the famous Atal Tunnel, we thought of going to the Sissu waterfall. So, if you're looking to commemorate your special day in style and luxury, there's no better way than to do it on a hilltop where you can feel on top of the world. Cheers to a milestone birthday that we would treasure forever!

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Editor's Note

We are dedicated to "Transforming your world" in various ways, from guiding you on where to travel, to suggesting great dining experiences and ways to find great travel stories. In our travel section, we have tried to showcase travel from old delhi to Andhra to Kochi. In our people section, we tell you inspiring stories from people across professions and their will to achieve their goals and passion.

Women have been an integral part in shaping our world and in every issue we will be having a section dedicated to women and the great work that inspiring women around the world are doing. We are also building our community and doing events that can help spread the social messages that help bring a difference in peoples lives. We have introduced a book review section which gives you an opportunity to peak inside a book and motivate you to read more. In this current world, where gadgets rule the roost. Reading has taken a back seat and it is very important for us to inculcate reading habit amongst us all and that is why we have a section dedicated to the young talent who also contribute to the magazine regularly. We hope you join us in this movement and connect with us by sharing your stories and helping us spread the word.

Before I sign off, let me wish you all a very Happy New Year and as we move ahead to the New Year 2024, we promise we will bring you stories from all over the world and connect with the Indian diaspora and inspire them to make journeys that you might never have considered making if you hadn't read about it.

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IN VOGUE LIFE

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Launched in 2022, Lone Wolf has already become a brand to reckon with when it comes to experiential premium drinking. With its fine taste, unique flavours and amazing smoothness, the brand is breaking conventions to carve a niche for itself as a free-spirited, self-expressive drink.

Launched two new variants in 2023- Lone Wolf Alpha and the Lone Wolf Mavrick. While Lone Wolf Mavrick is a light and crisp, all-day 100% malt lager, Lone Wolf Alpha is a Belgian Witbier with a refreshing twist.

The brand recently won the Ambrosia Startup of the Year Award and Brewer World Conclave Startup of the Year Award among many others.



Archiving Living Residue of a Lost World

"Guzara to ho jata hai, par judta nahin hai..."

By Dr. Uzma Azhar Ali, Delhi



Bishti

"We are able to sustain ourselves (barely) but, not able to save (for future)", Mohammad Shakeel, the metal engraver who sits on the pavements of Lal Kuan, Shahjahanabad aptly describes the conditions of many such skilled traditional occupation practitioners at Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi.

Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi is known mostly for its food and architecture but it also has a big population of skilled crafts people who are struggling to make a living in present times. The pandemic and the subsequent lockdown dealt a big blow to many occupations which were already facing a crisis. The informal economy employs majority of the population at Shahjahanabad as many are self-employed and work with the principles of faith- **sabr** **patience**, shukr **gratitude** and tahammul **endurance**.

Modern cities promote homogeneity of ideas, architecture, standard occupations and lifestyles. The 17th century city of Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi has diversity of people, communities and cultures who are still engaged in occupations which can be termed as 'traditional' belonging to the pre-industrial or pre-modern era.

The traditional Occupations

Traditional occupations are usually dependent on physical labor, use minimal technology and their relationships with their kinsfolk, employers and others around them are based on old world social and emotional networks, solidarity and care. Technology has played a substantial part in the loss of livelihood and business for them as most of these occupations are labor intensive and almost on the brink of disappearance today. Very few of them want their family traditions to be passed on to their children as for most survival is a struggle.

Many artisans like the **zardozi embroiderers**, the **jewellery maker** and the **calligrapher** talked about the golden period of their craft and how most people left these occupations due to the financial issues. The cost does not justify the work hours/labour and raw materials being used in making the product.

The **Qalaigar** cousins Faizan and Faisal (brass/copper utensil polishers) spoke on how theirs is the last generation working as Qalaigars' in a long family tradition' and they would not like their children to join this profession due to the involvement of hard physical labor, heat and smoke. The hands get rough and sometimes even get holes in them due to the use of chemicals in the process of qalai'.

Some of the older occupations are obsolete now, like **Bhishtis** the water carriers in animal skin from the pre-piped supply era (now living at the Dargah of Hare Bhare Shah/Sufi Sarmad). They philosophically described the water economy and how it has changed since those days. Similarly, Sheikh Farooqis or Gadhe/ Ghode walas of Shahjahanabad performed an important role for the city till a decade back. .

Wahid a third generation **reti maker**, the last and the only one at Shahjahanabad, runs a hundred-year-old shop. Reti or File (rasp) is a hand tool which comes in various shapes rectangular, round and half-round and vary in coarseness as per the need and metal.

It is used by carpenters, jewelers, horse hoof-makers, and as per Wahid even by surgeons and few others. His language was extremely colourful and carried the pride he had for his livelihood.

Women Kite Makers

Patangbaazi or the game (baazi) of flying kites (patang) is an integral part of life at Shahjahanabad. Not just kite flying but kite-making and selling is a big activity in the narrow streets of Lal Kuan. Kite makers and sellers work for around 10-12 hours a day during the kite flying season of Delhi around Independence Day in August. While talking to the male kite-makers, we were told women wrap up work earlier and were denied access to interview them.

The toughest interview was with the **women kite makers**, as men around them acted like gatekeepers made it difficult to get access to women, as some men thought it goes against traditions to have women speak on camera. But, women themselves wanted to talk and share their life-stories and their daily work schedules. Women kite-makers work throughout the day to make minimum 1000 kites per day along with household chores. The details on how they combine work with domestic chores and also take care of children is fascinating as well as awe-inspiring.



Zardozi



Reti Making



Saaz Making



Diversification

There were some occupations which due to the ingenuity of their professionals were doing well. They have opened new avenues for themselves, they use social media for expanding their business. The oldest ittar shop Gulab Chand Johri Mal at Shahjahanabad has diversified into all kinds of scent related products.

They innovated with time and technology and now offer online home deliveries for people and have been successfully selling ittar (pure and chemical based) to their patrons since 1816 at Dariba Kalan, Shahjahanabad. Indian Classical Music Instruments are still handmade and have not gone through much change over the years. J P Singh and his father Avtar Singh have been carrying forward the legacy of making Indian classical musical instruments for Bina Musical Stores at Nai Sarak. They have been selling musical instruments since independence.

Different instruments are cut, polished, assembled, tuned, and packed at their premises. They are known for their harmoniums which are made and exported all over the world. At Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi their shop is one of the oldest in the business. It was quite a big set-up where the instruments were being handmade on one floor, to the showroom on the first floor where they were being sold.

Last Generation

The physical labour, dust, injuries involved in some of these crafts acts as a barrier for people to learn them as the new generation wants to pursue 'clean' work. The tedious and long working hours weaken the eyes, the work posture gives back pain problems.

Mohammad Naved and his brothers in his small shop are still carrying on with their family's traditional occupation of carpentry. They have a shop at Ballimaran which they say was a known market for wood. He discusses the challenges of working with wood, the environmental issues, the changes in wooden products, problems of working with sharp machines Mohammad Yusuf Khan's son has converted his father's carpenter's shop to selling spectacles and frames for glasses. He still sits outside the shop selling some readymade wooden things and is proud of the many injuries he has had in his working life. Most of the bakeries' have shifted to electric ovens except for two-three bakeries who still continue with traditional wood-based ovens at Shahjahanabad.

The history and the relevance of some of these time-honored professions are also found in the folk tales and oral traditions that were passed on as genealogical heritage along with the skills of these occupations'. The last generations of these people are talented and often even guard their crafts' knowledge with zealousness and often even displayed caste, class, sexist behaviour. The professions are intrinsic to the old city of Shahjahanabad as it is provides the environment for their being, sustenance and existence.



Woodsmith

The travel photographer in you



By Sanjeev Verma, Singapore

Everybody loves to travel to all the exotic places in the world. In the same breath, everybody loves to capture those memories for a future bout of nostalgia as well. We buy expensive phones, even cameras and watch endless photography videos to pick up tips on photography. We even take workshops from experts, whose photographs leave us gasping for breath, in the hope of picking some magic tricks that will help us click our masterpieces in our next outing. But something always seems missing, as we return with hundreds and thousands of pictures that we do not even have patience to scan through.

And when we do get to flip through them, the cropped heads, the missed expressions, the unexpected photo bombers, too bright or too dark photos or missing to capture the dome at the top of that monument, discourages us even more. Always wondering what is it that we are missing, as we start to stock our cameras at the back of our cupboards, forgetting to even take it with us in our next trip. The clue is not in the camera settings though. The clue is in the stuff behind our eyes **Our mindset.**

It is impossible to click great pictures without having the appropriate mindset for it. Happy mindset equals happy pictures. Frustrated mindset equals frustrating pictures. I would highly recommend the following five guidelines for anyone interested in improving their travel photography.

Time of the day

Experts rave about the golden hour (an hour just after sunrise) and blue hour (an hour before the sunset) being the best time to take outdoor pictures and that advice is spot on. The color quality and the deep blue skies you get during the golden and the blue hour are unparalleled. As a bonus, the places of interest are less crowded around these times and you get the place to yourself.

Scan a space

One of the biggest challenges as a travel photographer is dealing with the inner mental chatter. The pressure to click unique angles and better views than the ones you have seen on the internet takes the center stage in your mind. And in an attempt to get "better" pictures, you might miss some other fantastic photo opportunities. There might be a tea vendor dressed in traditional

colorful clothes right next to the arch you are so desperately trying to click. During my last trip to the historic renaissance city of Florence, I did not click a single picture of the gorgeous monuments there. All my pictures, which have featured in many magazines and exhibitions, were clicked in back alleys of that town. And to top it all, all the people involved in that trip have happy memories of every photo we clicked.

Imagine you are heading to a very important meeting one day and you happen to take a look at a great shot you took six months ago during your vacation. The brilliance of that shot and how you took it, can lift you up and inspire you to give your best in that meeting. Isn't that what our hobbies are for? Aren't our hobbies meant to enrich the life we live on a day to day basis or during our vacations? Such pursuits will keep pushing us to perfect our craft day after day.

Physics for Deep Blue Skies

Ever wondered how do expert photographers get deep saturated blue skies in the middle of the day? Yes, some of them use filters. But you can get a similar effect by just pointing your camera in a different direction. This effect is called polarization of the light.

All you have to do is to point your camera towards north or south perpendicular to the direction of travel for Sun and you will immediately see the colors of sky changing to deep blue, especially if you are clicking with your phone camera. That does mean, that we have to be creative in our efforts to capture the points of interest from North and South direction only, but the results are worth the effort.



People vs Place relationship

One of the common pattern i see in many travel photographs is that the people posing for the photographs stand too close to the walls of a monument. Common tendency for people visiting monuments is to touch or lean on walls or even hug them. But that produces a dilemma for the photographer.

The most balanced approach is to shoot wide to capture the entire length and breadth of the monument and have your friend stand closer to the camera somewhere near the middle of the frame. Keeping distance between the people and the monument yields the best results of getting both the people and the place in the same frame.

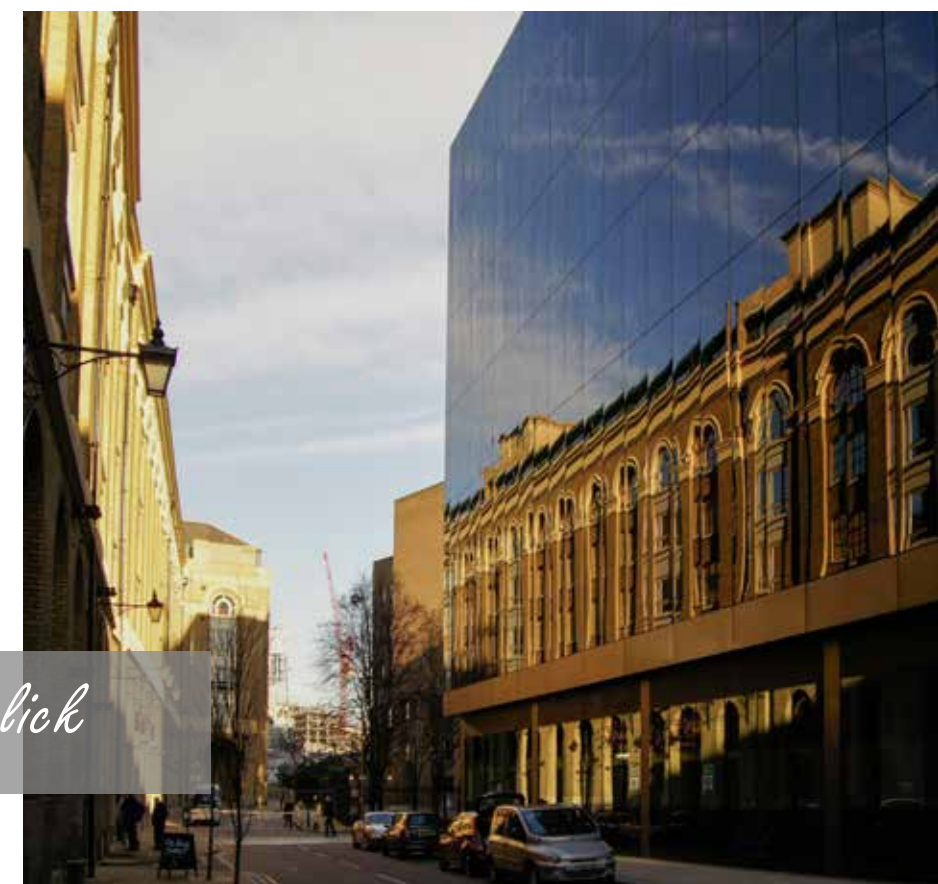


A photograph is an x-ray of the mind of the PHOTOGRAPHER

The key is to start observing activities and anticipating that precise magic moment around you. Some of the observations i have made in my photography journey in pursuit of anticipating those moments are as follows

- When taking picture of someone smoking a cigarette, the magic moment is 2 seconds after they have puffed out
- The mouth watering pictures of food is at the instance of it being served
- The most flattering moment for capturing someone laughing out loud, is towards the end of their laughter.

Timing of the click



Banker Boxer

By Shashank Verma, Lucknow, UP



Shashank Verma, a banker by profession and a skilled boxer, hails from the vibrant city Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh. Currently serving as a Product Manager at ICICI Bank, he seamlessly juggles the corporate world with his fervent pursuit of becoming a formidable Martial art fighter is truly inspiring.

Losing 42 kgs in the last 20 months showcases his commitment to personal growth and well-being. It's evident that he has embraced numerous challenges both inside and outside the ring. In the last one year itself, he has bagged numerous accolades, be it the National Thai Boxing Championship, being a national player of Wushu and establishing a record of 2-2 in Amateur MMA.

Click Here to watch Podcast Link - https://youtu.be/tZmnJfMij-s?si=wPCNB_QqHpKurGdZ



He emphasizes the importance of maths in astrology and psychology and exhibits it through his magical skills on stage.



Rahul Singh, Uttar Pradesh

Rahul Singh is a budding talent in gig economy. Rahul Singh is a Math Mentalist who is adept at astonishing people with his math-magical and mind reading skills. When asked about his magical skills, he demurely terms it as **"psychological influencing"**.

Mr. Rahul Singh was born and brought up in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. He completed his schooling from St. Joseph's College in Allahabad. At an early age of 16 years, financial vulnerabilities forced him to take up part time work of tutoring children at home. By the time he was 20, he had to leave home for Delhi to work at a call center in order to earn a living for his family. Soon he got bored and began teaching students again, realizing that teaching was indeed his passion. For the past 12 years, he has earned a great reputation as a teacher at the most prestigious schools in Delhi and Gurgaon. To make studies interesting for children, he combined the art of magic with Maths.

His innovative teaching techniques is what makes him popular among his students. He loves to experiment with numbers and this has led to a truly outstanding journey of sorts as a Maths teacher. He has built a curriculum in **"Math Magic"** which is being implemented in various schools from grade 5 to grade 8. But it does not end here.

Rahul is now planning to launch a book on **"Astrological Meditation"** which will be released by next year around April 2024. He believes that meditation if woven around math and mentalism has the power to nurture humanity for achievement of success, prosperity and happiness.

His Instagram following of **107K followers** is just a glimpse of his growing popularity. He recently performed in **"Kukdookoo Fest"** and has also performed on national television. His live performances are sure to leave the audiences in shock. Rahul is presently involved in corporate tie-ups and is also working with a few schools for mentoring students in maths and mentalism. To know more about what he can do to trick your mind and soul, you can follow him on **"the math Mentalist"** Instagram Handle **@the-math-mentalist**.

Ink Collector

By Kinshuk Hora, New Delhi

My interest in tattoos goes way back when I used to look at people with tattoos (especially when traveling abroad). Those days tattoos were not that common and there were not many tattoo studios around. Also, the knowledge regarding the same was not there. I am talking 15 years back - when there was no Instagram of the world to refer to.

Also, there was this misconception that to get tattoos you should have a muscular body - I was always with a slim build (still I am). So, my wife became the "guinea pig" and I convinced her to get tattoos - she got 5 of them.

Fast forward to September 2019- I was traveling in Thailand with my daughter and she wanted a tattoo of her dog who had passed away. So, we found out a tattoo studio and got her tattooed. She forced me to have a tattoo and that is how I got my first tattoo at the age of 53 (age is just a number).

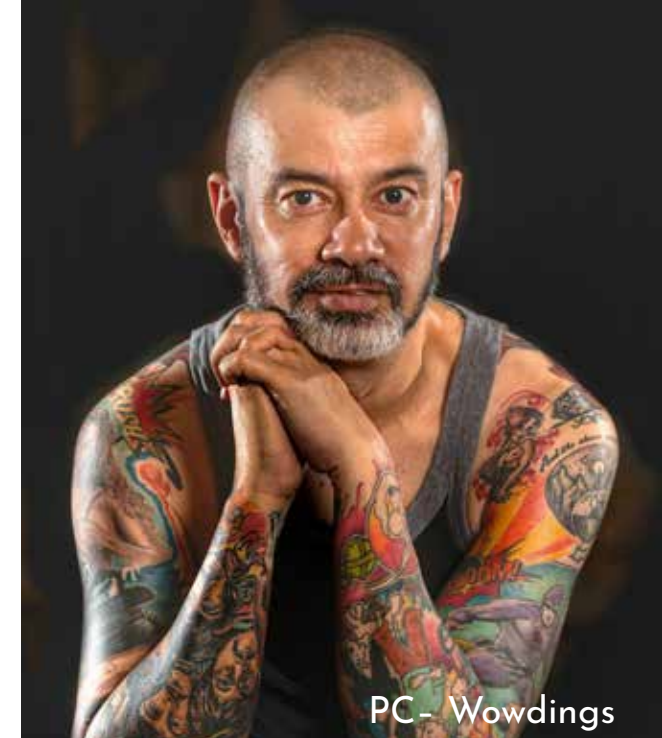
PC- Wowdings

After that I decided to know more about the art and the industry and started my research. I was very clear from the start as to what I wanted inked on my body and the artists who would ink me.

As of today - my both the arms and whole back is inked. I have officially become an "Ink Collector" term that is used for tattoo enthusiasts.

Today, I am a part of the Indian tattoo community and I visit all the tattoo conventions that happen in India. I also try and disperse knowledge related to tattoos through my Instagram.

"Art meets skin-
Empower your skin,
Electrify your soul"



PC- Wowdings



PC- Pargat Dhillon



PC- Saunak Roy

The Statue of Unity

By Bhavna Chauhan, Gujrat

A tempting weekend holiday in October presented the opportunity to visit this famous tourist attraction. Early morning, we took off from Gandhinagar by road and three hours later, landed in Kevadia. The Statue of Unity is one of the major attractions planned in the City of Ekta nagar(Kevadia). The city also offers tour to the Sardar Sarovar Dam, Valley of flowers, boating facilities, a zoo, safari, aviary and an impressive glow garden. A quick breakfast and we headed to the SOU complex armed with tickets. All ticket bookings are done online. There are no tickets you can buy upfront. Bookings are sold out weeks in advance given that it's the biggest tourist attraction in Gujarat now.

From the minute we entered the complex, the beauty of the colossal monument and excellently managed system captivated us. The towering statue against the green hills and the Narmada river in the foreground is a sight to behold. Well managed crowds and queues, prominent signage, airport style travelators, escalators and shaded walkways everywhere are well thought of features. The SOU complex boasts of 3-star hotels, shopping centers and a research center. The statue itself houses an auditorium, photo gallery, viewing deck lifts, escalators par excellence.

An outreach programme was instituted by the government asking Indian farmers to donate their used farming equipment to collect Iron for the statue of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel. An agricultural tool each from 7,00,000 villages of India was collected. Eventually, 5000 tonnes of Iron was amassed , melted and incorporated into the colossal statue of Sardar Patel. A befitting ode to the theme of unity and integration indeed.

As an architect, I was blown away by the architectural detailing and the engineering prowess that went into the construction of this monument. It is a beautifully designed and built structure, totally befitting a world class monument. It is designed by renowned Indian sculptor Ram V. Sutar, a Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri awardee. He studied 2000 photographs of Sardar Patel to create the face. The statue captures the likeness of Sardar Vallabh bhai Patel to a tee. 5,700 tonnes of structural steel and 90,000 tonnes cement have been used in the statue. 1850 tonnes of bronze cladding was also consumed. It is an earthquake and wind resistant structure.

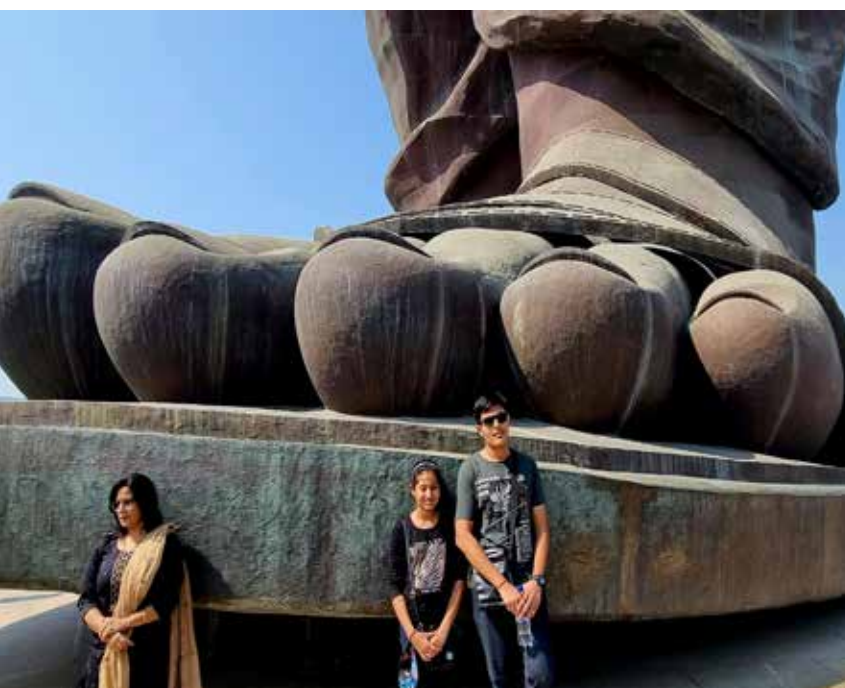
After viewing the Statue from outside, we headed to the museum located in the base of the statue. The Museum in the SOU complex showcases the

history that made the dream of united India possible.

It has related documents, artefacts, latest 3D mapping projection and audio video holographic attractions. A movie on the independence struggle was showing in the auditorium . After the museum, we made our way to the entry queue for the viewing gallery. The observation deck is at a height of 135 metres on the chest of Sardar Patel statue, accessible by high speed elevators. Since it accommodates only 200 people at a time, one has to book time slots(two hours each). Tickets to the viewing gallery are extra at Rs. 350 and are totally worth the price.

Few tips:

- Book your tickets online. It's a huge tourist attraction and tends to get crowded on weekends and public holidays. Viewing gallery tickets are sold separately.
- Carry hats, caps, umbrella. Most of the year round, Kevadia is hot.
- There is a lot of walking involved, so carry sensible shoes. It's a day trip from Ahmedabad , Gandhinagar and Vadodara.
- But if you want to experience all the facilities at SOU-the glow garden, valley of flowers, Sardar Sarovar dam, you may want to make it a two day stay.



MINIMALISM

I am caught up owning things I do not need, nobody ever told me that this is called 'greed'. Those 30 shoes that my feet adorn, do I just need four or do I need them all? I swear I didn't know how they were born. Do they come from animals? I wasn't informed. Scores of notebooks lie half used on the shelf, yet I buy new ones since the old ones don't feel quite fresh. I didn't know how many trees that accounts for.

The fragrance of those perfumes that fill up my home, no it can't be strong enough to widen the ozone hole. Those cars that line up my house and fill me with pride, do I use them in a manner that is wise? I really didn't know the carbon they emit.

I've been happy and content in my cocoon but everything changed one afternoon. While I was marching with pride at one of those save the trees protests, nature whispered something that put my mind to unrest. I am happy that you love me dear, but it is your future that you should fear. What use of this sleepwalking battalion if you abuse the environment in all your overwhelming mirage.

That whisper was like a blow in my head!

A tiny little voice inside me said 'It's time to rethink this access, stop, breathe, think and own this mess.' Should I make that extra purchase for those material possessions that I don't even need? Do I need those plastic bags that I hardly use? Do I even need those compatible substances? It's our resources which are deployed to even recycle and reduce. I must detach my self worth from things that I own.

I must treat this earth well. My footprint should be tiny, as tiny as it can get. Perhaps even nectar is poisonous if taken to excess. We must care for the environment. Let's build knowledge to meet climate change. Let's build our future together.

Don't count till ten, it is too late now. When nature has a way of telling us that we were on a path of self destruction, and has stopped us in our tracks. Did she want us to see what we would have never seen otherwise? The clear blue skies, minimum pollution levels, clear rivers, here in India, the air has never been so clean, the yamuna has never looked so blue. during covid 19 we are discovering minimalism by chance. Post crisis, let this be a habit taken up by choice.

This can be a time of reflection and understanding where we learn from our mistakes or it can be the start of a new cycle which will continue until we finally learn the lesson that we are meant to.

By Vanya Nanda, Student of Modern School, New Delhi



Ambar Das (born 10 March 1974) is a music composer, producer, drummer and guitarist of repute from Guwahati, Assam. He has worked in several musical bands and composed background scores for some serials, documentaries and Hindi as well as other regional language films. He also composed jingles for advertisement industry.

Ambar Das did his schooling from Nichols English School Guwahati, Chatribari and Happy Child High school, in Rehabari, Guwahati. He attended Cotton College in Guwahati and did Masters in English Literature. Ambar studied Music and

Compositions with Late Jiten Baruah, who was a musician of national repute, and one of the pioneers in initiating western orchestration into Assamese music. He learnt the drums and other Percussions from elder brother Late Bhaskar Das, one of the foremost drummers in the north-east region in the early 80's. He later studied jazz drumming under Mr Jurgen Busse a respected Jazz drummer and music teacher from Hamburg, Germany. He learnt Guitar and the nuances of music arrangements from Late Rana Roy, a musical giant and the lead guitarist of the Fusion Band 'Karma' of Kolkata.

Q&A

Q. Your recent work “Hazy Days” is winning hearts across the country. Tell us more about it.

Ans. As I mentioned earlier, this song happened because of the lyricist and dear friend Pritisha Borthakur. She came up with the lyrics which resonated with me and the song just flowed spontaneously. There were very minor changes in the lyrics from the initial draft. We just added the bridge portion later since we felt the song needed that.

I really need to thank the people who made this song what it is. Dishankan Baruah for the lovely guitars, Abhinav Borah for the groovy bass, Aslam Khan and Benvin Fernandes of Headroom Studios, and visual artist Anuradha Duarah. I can't thank them enough for their wholehearted contribution.

Q. A singer-songwriter, composer, percussionist, and producer- when did you first realise your passion for music? Are you a trained musician?

Ans. I am lucky that I was born into a very musical family from my mother's side. My mother, Lt Sailabala Das, was a talented songwriter, singer, and composer. She even penned a few songs for the legendary Bhupen Hazarika. Additionally, my late brother Bhaskar Das was a well-respected singer and multi-instrumentalist. It seems that musicality runs in the family genes. I began my musical journey by playing percussion instruments around the age of 7 or 8. Over time, I progressed to drums, guitar, and various other instruments. While I didn't receive formal training, being constantly surrounded by exceptional musicians allowed me to learn quickly and absorb their expertise. My brother and cousins were a continual source of inspiration, as they formed one of the earliest rock bands in Assam. Later, I had the privilege of crossing paths with Mr. Jurgen Busse, a highly regarded jazz drummer and music educator from Hamburg, Germany. His guidance pointed me in the right direction and greatly influenced my musical development. Additionally, I honed my guitar skills and learned the intricacies of music arrangement from the late Rana Roy, a towering figure in the musical landscape of Assam.

Q. How do you navigate working with other musicians, directors, or clients to achieve a common artistic vision? Can you share any specific challenges you have faced?

Ans. Music is mostly a collaborative process and even more so when you do it professionally. As I mentioned, professional artists are like service providers and it's more about coming up with a successful product rather than immersing yourself into creativity and madness. That is something you do with your own music. It's paramount to get on the same page with the clients and directors and help them enhance their vision sonically. I have done ad films where I just play a couple of notes, and the whole story is driven by visuals and sound design, and it's perfect. It's always easier to work with people who know precisely what they want or people who are clueless and will listen to what I say. The in-betweens are the problem. They have some vision of their own but they can't explain it properly. They often try to describe something and what you understand is totally different. Sometimes you get them, but sometimes you don't. It's difficult to pick out a specific challenge out of so many. I can say I've produced music for music composers who didn't know what a chord or a scale is. They have no idea about musical instruments and their

use, and yet they are under the delusion that they know music. That's quite challenging.

Q. Can you highlight some of your significant achievements and milestones?

Ans. Later, during my teenage years, I was the drummer for a rock band, and a notable incident occurred when my brother Bhaskar Das attended one of my performances. Coincidentally, he arrived just as I was in the midst of my drum solo. Upon returning home, I later learned that he was moved to tears in front of our mother. To this day, it remains one of the most significant moments in my life.

There are too many milestones as such to recount, and I embarrassingly admit that I don't exactly remember a lot of my professional milestones.

- Touring with the band Soulmate was a great experience. I learnt a lot about the blues from the great Rudy Wallang.
- Playing in Independence Rock Mumbai as a drummer for the band Faith was another noteworthy moment.
- Furthermore, composing music for the web series "The Final Call" featuring Arjun Rampal, and creating the background music for "Rangbaaz," another web series for Zee5, were both memorable projects.

AMBAR DAS

Q. Who is your musical icon and influence?

Ans. There are just too many. One of my all-time favourites is Bobby McFerrin. The Beatles, Deep Purple, Led Zepp, Iron Maiden, Frank Zappa, Yanni, Mark Knopfler, Eagles, Bob Dylan, Sting, Pink Floyd, Queen, Jayanta Hazarika, Rd Burman, Ilaiyaraaja, Handel, Hans Zimmer, Steven Wilson, Dave Weckl, Toto, Rush, Zakir Hussain, Trilok Gurtu, Nitin Sawhney, Jai Uttal, AR Rehman, Salim Sulaiman, Papon, Joi Barua, Zubeen Garg...the list is endless. These are more popular names, but there are so many other great artists who have had a tremendous and direct influence on my music and my life. Apart from my family, late Rosty Ahmed, Aniruddha Baruah, Dhruva Sharma, Ralf Kamphuis, and so many others have shaped the way I think and perceive.

Q. What defines your music style? How do you approach each kind of music?

Ans. I don't really believe in genres anymore, there are far

too many. I come from a very Rock background, so the element of Rock and Blues will always be there. Over the years I have done almost all kinds of music, Metal, Blues, Rock, RnB, Bhajans, Ghazals, Folk, EDM, Bollywood, and everything in between. The approach depends on the kind of music. When doing music professionally, we should keep in mind that it's a job that needs to be done professionally to the best of our abilities. As for musical approaches, when I'm doing a jingle it's a different mindset. You have to do a master which is probably a 30 to 60-second, but also have edits that are shorter. And you have to do it all in a day, in the presence of clients, agency and production people and of course the director. It's fun and challenging in the beginning. While movies are quite different. You have more time, and it also more work. Sometimes you end up making so many different versions of the same song until you hit the target. Especially with a director who's unsure. BGMs are more in the neutral zone. Daily soaps are a whole different ball game. My favourite is my own music where I'm the boss and can do whatever I please and there are no specific deadlines.

Q. Can you share any upcoming projects or ventures that you are currently working on or planning for the future?

Ans. As always, there are quite a few projects in the pipeline. Apart from my usual jingles, there are a few other commercial projects I can't name yet. But I can promise some interesting music. Besides our Assamese movie "Jiya" has some lovely songs sung by the likes of Papon, Shankuraj Konwar, Maitrayee Patar, and of course Sarmistha. I am also planning to release a few of my songs which are near completion. One is an anti casteism song title "Ekolobyo" it about the prejudice and discrimination, brilliantly written by Rahul Gautam Sarma. I'm also going to complete and release some of my other songs such as; "Tabla Blues", "Beggar on a Beach of Gold" (a somewhat philosophical progressive rock), "Dinobondhu Baruah" (written by Chandana Pathak, it's about old people abandoned by their children), "The Flood Song" (about the recurrent floods of Assam), and there are many others in the pipeline.

Q. How do you inspire yourself while composing?

Ans. The process differs according to different requirements. In making my own songs, I mostly go with the flow initially, then come back to it later. I am very critical of my own work so I take a lot of time, until someone literally forces me to release it. Mostly the people involved or otherwise my wife. My first Hindi song "Suna Hai" happened because of the lyricist and my dear friend Pinky Poonawala. Similarly Pritisha Borthakur is responsible for "Hazy Days".

But when working for very corporate clients I am very fast, and it's often more about understanding the requirements of the project and giving the best for the project. I learnt the hard way that my best might not always be suitable for the project. I have composed some songs for the biggest brands, sung by the most renowned singers in the country, one of those compositions was done in about 20 minutes and was instantly approved. And later got a lot of appreciation.

My Journey as a First-Time Beagle Parent



PC- Anchal Singhal

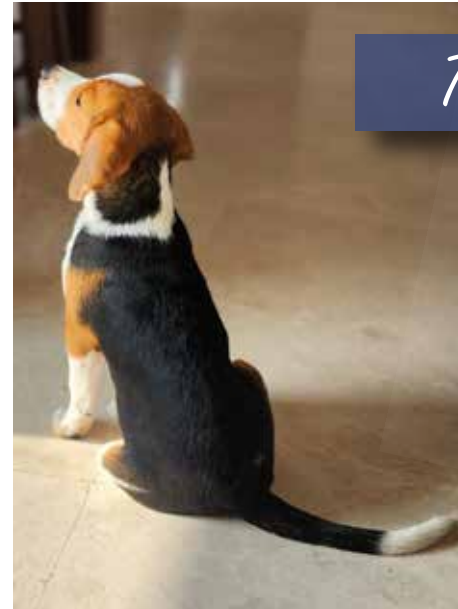
Becoming a pet parent is a life-altering experience, and when that pet happens to be a charming, floppy-eared beagle puppy, it's a journey filled with endless surprises, laughter, and love. As a first-time beagle parent, I embarked on this adventure with both excitement and trepidation, not knowing what to expect but eager to embrace the joys and challenges that come with raising a pup. Here's my story of the delightful rollercoaster ride that is my life with my beagle buddy.

Love at First Sight

I remember the day I first laid eyes on my beagle pup. Those soulful eyes, the velvety ears, and the wagging tail immediately melted my heart. I knew right then and there that this pup was meant to be a part of my life. Most of my life, I have been afraid of dogs and never could stroke and pet most so I began mentally preparing myself on how to hold him in the car. As a new pet parent, the first lesson I learned was that love at first sight with a puppy is real and magical.



The Beagle Charm



Beagles are renowned for their friendly and sociable nature, and my pup was no exception. His enthusiasm for life and people was infectious. I quickly realized that being a beagle parent means embracing the constant tail-wagging, barking (especially when it's meal time), and the irresistible puppy-dog eyes that can make you give in to anything.

Navigating the Puppy Stages

From the early days of potty training to the teething phase, raising a beagle pup came with its set of challenges. I found myself researching training tips, consulting with experienced pet owners, and watching countless YouTube videos on puppy care. Patience, consistency, and a sense of humor became my best allies during these times. I also embraced the fact that no one-rule-fits-all so while others gave tips, eventually we did what suited us most.



Adventures and Exploration



One of the most delightful aspects of being a beagle parent is exploring the world together. October is a very special time for us as both, me and my husband's birthday fall in this month. I began searching for pet friendly properties as we wanted our very first vacation to be an affair to remember. As a first-time beagle parent, my life has been enriched in countless ways by my four-legged friend. From the early mornings to late-night cuddles, the journey of raising a beagle pup has been a whirlwind of love, laughter, and learning. It's taught me the importance of patience, the joy of simplicity, and the immeasurable happiness that a furry companion can bring. While there have been challenges along the way, the rewards of being a beagle parent far outweigh them. My beagle and I have forged an unbreakable bond, and I wouldn't trade this experience for anything in the world. Here's to many more years of wagging tails, wet noses, and beagle adventures.

By Samikshaa V Baaliyan, Gurgaon

Healthy by Himani

By Himani Pasricha, Singapore

I am Himani, Singapore-based health coach certified by the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN), NY. I want to share my journey from being a corporate girl to moving towards becoming a health coach. Being a corporate person, I worked in the financial service industry for 11 years and hold a Master of Business Administration degree in Marketing and Human Resources.

Growing up, I was an obese child, an unhealthy teenager, and always an overweight person, heaviest at 95kg. I would have tried a lot of diets and consulted multiple nutritionists, and dieticians. Nothing was working for me, in my mind I was working very hard and doing all the right things but I was seeing minimum results. I decided to take some radical decisions towards my health and well-being - I Signed

up at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, NY. I truly believe in the concept of Bio-individuality - the fact that there is no "one size fits all" diet. Diets don't work. You cannot be on a diet for lifelong.

I have studied a variety of dietary theories and practical lifestyle coaching methods. With my knowledge, we co-create completely personalized actions based on your goals to move you toward your ideal vision of health within your unique body, lifestyle, preferences, and resources.

I will guide you to undertake step-by-step changes to food habits and lifestyle, so you can permanently reach your health goals.

How did I achieve this!

- It is simply 80:20 rule - 80% is diet and 20% is workouts. So, I religiously followed this old-age fitness Mantra - eat clean and lift heavy. Really, it was not as tough as I thought.

- I kept my food simple. Homecooked meals. I quantified my meals so I exactly knew what I was eating. I let go of all the fancy and fad food, and focused on simple whole foods.

- Another thing that really helped me was increasing my NEAT "Non exercise activity Thermogenesis". "NEAT" is energy expenditure during activities that are not part of a structured exercise program. It includes physical activity at the work-place, hobbies, standing instead of sitting, walking around, climbing stairs, and doing chores.

Again, it can be as simple as walking during calls or in the house. Any kind of movement helps us keep our body active and burn calories.

- And lastly. The most important thing is consistency. One week of good eating and exercising will not make you achieve your goals. You need to be consistent and do it over a period of time to see the changes.





By Sundeep Bhatia and
Bebabrata Chakraborty

Explore Kochi

First things first - are Kochi and Cochin the same?

Kochi is the official name of Cochin in Kerala. The locals would call the city Kochi but the Britishers called it Cochin. In the year 1996, the name of the city was formally changed to Kochi, a more accurate resemblance to the Malayalam transcription. However, both the names - Kochi and Cochin are still used.

Tourists in Kerala target the houseboats at Alleppey or the tea gardens at Munnar. They treat Kochi as a base to explore the rest of Kerala. But Kochi has a lot to offer and you could easily spend a couple of days here. You can enjoy the old-world charm of Fort Kochi, check out the centuries-old colonial churches, take pictures at the Chinese fishing net and visit Jew Town immensely popular for its antique stores.

Sailing through serenity: Kochi's charming island escape

Kochi comprises a number of islands - both big and small. These islands not only give the city a verdant look but also a unique character marked with water and waterways. Close to the Folklore Museum is Willingdon Island, the largest artificial island in India. Willingdon Island was created in the middle of 1930s. It is covered with a variety of greenery while the pristine waters of the Vembanadu Lake follow you on one side. The Port of Kochi is situated on this island. It is now a base of the Indian Navy as well. The Kochi campus of Indian Maritime University is also located here. You can visit the Cochin Shipyard and the Maritime Heritage Museum here.

Kochi's Sadya Lunch: a symphony of colours and flavours

Speaking of lunch, you should not miss Sadya, the traditional Kerala feast. Sadya is prepared during festivals such as Onam and Vishu. However, some restaurants in Kochi serve Sadya for daily lunch at the most affordable rates. You might have tasted Sadya elsewhere but you must try it in Kochi. This multicourse meal is served on a banana leaf, one item at a time. Sadya is a feast of flavours where every element balances taste and nutrition. The meal may be served with reddish warm herbal water.

Infused with the herb Pathimugam, this drink is an antidote for waterborne diseases.

Brews and Brushstrokes: Kochi's Art Cafes

Fort Kochi area has a host of art galleries nestled in the colonial buildings. You get continental, Chinese or Indian cuisines with fantastic coffee. In all likelihood, you would have visited cafes but these cafes offer an eclectic fusion of contemporary art in a heritage setting. Trying seafood at shacks is a popular activity at beaches near Fort Kochi. But try the art cafés of Fort Kochi. The experience is uplifting.



Sadya

Time-Travel into the past through Kerala's Folklore Museum

Kochi is an old city with regional as well as colonial influences. The many museums of the city take people back in time through the streets of Cochin. Among those, the museum that stands apart is the Kerala Folklore Museum, a private collection by the late George Thalaith. Prominently located at Ernakulam, the exhibits give a peak into South Indian art and culture, especially Kerala. This captivating museum houses wood and stone carvings from temples and palaces, intricate altars and statues from old churches, murals and glass paintings, clothes and ornaments worn by people of this region and a dedicated section highlighting Kerala's classical music and dance forms. The three storied architecture is a fusion of Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore architecture and the fascinating paintings on the ceilings are not to be missed.

Flames of Skill: Kalaripayattu, a spectacle of fire and precision

The classical dance Kathakali is another gem in Kerala's culture. Kathakali is widely popular not only in its home state but all over India. For a different experience, you can watch Kalaripayattu, an Indian martial art that developed in Kerala. Kalaripayattu developed in or about the 12th century out of war practices. No wonder this art form involves a variety of knives, swords, spears and war cries. Unlike other art forms, Kalaripayattu is not performed on a stage, but in an arena called Kalari that is built as per Vastu Shastra specifications. Some performances also

have jumping through fire as the finale.

Kochi-Muziris Biennale: The biggest celebration of contemporary art.

The exhibition is sprinkled all across the city. Artwork including installations is displayed in galleries, halls, heritage buildings and empty spaces. The whole city becomes an art gallery and the festival has participation from India as well as overseas. This event starts at the end of December and continues till March.

Waves and Wheels: The Unique Experience of Ferrying across Kochi's water highways.

A ferry ride would not only add to your adventure but you can also make new friends by striking up a conversation with the friendly co-passengers. You can spot the occasional dolphin if you are lucky. Kochi is very green for a city with an inherent feel-good factor.



Humayun Tomb



Safdarjang Tomb



Qutub Minar

Monumental Delhi

Monuments

Keeping the winters in Delhi mind it's the time of the year to travel and see the different places in Delhi. Hence this Photo story on Monumental Delhi. The famous and not so famous monuments of Delhi.

By Shampa Moitra, Gurgaon



Humayun Tomb



Safdarjang Tomb



Safdarjang Tomb



Qutub Minar



Humayun Tomb

Ode to the Hills: Foraged Food Tales in Gushaini



Before I embark on the tale of why a quaint small town based in and around the Falachen river became my go to destination, every summer, its important I take you back to how I developed an ever lasting love for the hills. Back in the days, where parents didn't have to snatch smartphones from kid's hands, when the terms Facebook, Insta even Orkut didn't exist; yes, that unfiltered period was our teens. Summer vacations meant mother would pack us off to maasi's (aunt's) house in Himachal and we had our 'Secret Seven Moments'. Teenage memories often carry a special charm, and trekking through hills can indeed be a transformative and memorable experience. Exploring Nature, Creating Memories, and Unleashing the Spirit of Adventure became our way of life every summer. The only gadget available being an old set of video game with remotes on which Mario and Contra championships were held." In the age of screens and digital distractions,

there's a growing need to reconnect with the great outdoors. A group of spirited corporate folks recently embarked on an exhilarating adventure to the hills, breaking away from the monotony of everyday life. The adventure commenced with a convoy of excited corporates from diverse fields boarded a Volvo for overnight journey to Banjar- Gushaini.

The destination? A picturesque hill range that promised breathtaking views and the promise of untamed wilderness. As the wheels rolled and laughter echoed within the vehicle, the anticipation of what lay ahead electrified the atmosphere.

Only after reaching the belt did I learn about the multiple small trekking points there- Chhui Waterfalls, Seroulser Lake trek, Sainjh Valley. The beauty of the landscape is such that apart from these tourist points that locals guide you to, there are also options to hike around in an apple orchard which belongs to the homestay owners.



Gushaini Village, Himachal Pradesh
By Anchal Singhal, Gurgaon



We navigated through rocky terrains, and winding paths. Each step was a triumph, and every pause offered an opportunity to appreciate the natural beauty of peach and apricot trees surrounding us. Now, coming to that one distinct experience which makes me revisit the belt every year. One can go on higher altitudes and pick morel mushrooms, buransh flowers (rhododendron) and lingad also known as lingda. The first time I had the insanely delish morel mushrooms was in a French restaurant in Delhi wherein the owner had quoted that in big stores in the metros, this is one of the most highly priced vegetable. To put it colloquially, it gave me a kick, something for which other folks are

shelling out 1300/- a kg, we are picking it up from under trees and making vegetable of it in the homestay. Same with rhododendron, these huge beauties when up on the trees are a feast for the eyes and when you pluck a bunch and bring them home, used as welcome drink and chutneys. Lingad, a unique fern is used as a vegetable dish or for pickle making. Largely, this non plastic life led by the locals is so admirable- pure milk of cows being reared in one's backyard and fresh eggs coming from their pet hens; almost all day to day products. This unfiltered, far-from-chaos lifestyle enriched with the flora fauna makes the Tirthan valley a must-do experience for all.

A rare combination of numbers, poetry and colours, Minisha Bhardwaj, is an award winning self taught international Artist, artist activist and an art curator, currently based in India. Her media of choice vary between charcoal, ink, watercolor and even photography or poetry as each provides it's own artistic pleasures. To her, paintings bring alive the inherent quest to express something personal playing the part of a communicative tool in an ardently appealing way to help someone express otherwise veiled feelings. Since Minisha is a lady of emotions, she took art as a vehicle for expression and hence she enjoys portraits the most. Even a well established CA career could not resist an artist in her and she switched over to pursue her passion of Arts.

Despite being awarded nationally and internationally for her charcoal techniques and innovative creations, Painting to her is not a taught art, rather an evolved art through life inspirations. She has to her credit over 200 exhibitions globally through several reputed art galleries and major of it being in Dubai, Italy and India.

Minisha draws her inspiration from the life situations and focuses more on natural sensibilities, portraying the complexities of human emotions and expressions. Her speciality is in Charcoal domain watercolors and finger painting though some of her artwork are a mix media masterpieces of charcoal with ink. She got selected for international watercolors festivals in Budapest, Malaysia and Europe. Being selected in the top ten water colorists in UAE is yet another feather in her cap along with getting chosen on International women's day for prestigious emerging artist award. During her stay in Dubai she got chosen as charcoal Artists for live demonstration on dubai international day celebration.

World renowned photographer Sir Steve McCurry has presented her a letter of appreciation for her work on arts. Minisha is the only finalist chosen from UAE in world contemporary art contest and got a letter of appreciation from Dubai care a government ngo. She also got selected for fabriano and mentioned as certified international watercolorists. Been appreciated and interviewed on several media platforms including Dubai radio, Dubai royal tv, prominent magazine Khaleej times of dubai as a charcoal artist and interviewed at Zee TV.

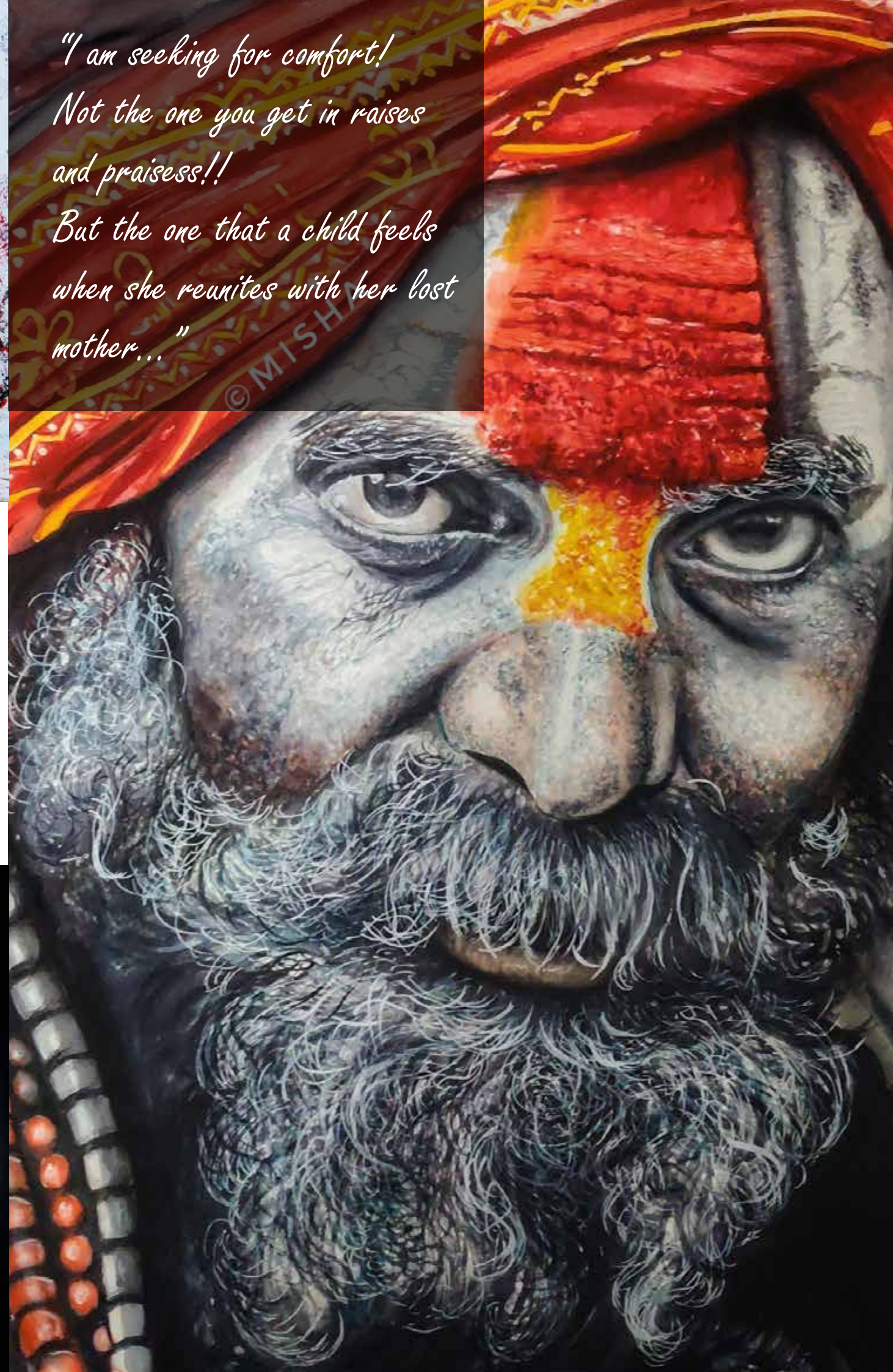
Minisha hold a world record for largest collaborative watercolor painting. A clyde & CO award winner with certificate of excellence in Charcoal techniques she has co-curated an international women exhibition too. She also conducts art talks and workshops at various institutions sharing the importance, beauty and secrets of art. She loves to share her love of art with differently abled students and tries to instil and encourage artistic abilities in the younger generation. She has been actively engaged with organizations that reach out to underprivileged communities thereby giving purpose and inspiration to her art. Illustration done by her is officially being used by Jaago foundation of Bangladesh.



*"I am seeking for comfort!
Not the one you get in raises
and praisess!!
But the one that a child feels
when she reunites with her lost
mother..."*

Indian Artist

By Minisha Bhardwaj, Dubai



Saree Not Sorry Look



The chic pick

Look : 1

This look can be apt for upcoming winter wedding cocktail party or reception. I ditched the conventional matching blouse and got a designer velvet short kurti style blouse stitched. Used the original blouse lace for blouse detailing and the blouse turned out gorgeous and going so well with this saree. Best part is this is now perfect for winter occasions! Since the saree is heavy so minimal Jewellery and makeup. Well we can play with makeup depending on the occasion & time, but Jewellery with a heavy saree is best to be minimal!

Indian Jugaad

Look : 2

Picked up this heavy silk from my mom-in-law's collection for Diwali Puja look, but I didn't have a matching blouse, hence Indian Jugaad comes in use.. picked up a basic T-shirt and layered with junk Jewellery, the pallu is super gorgeous hence did front palla. And voila beautiful look created in no time!



Casual Carefree

Look : 4

A casual smart and carefree look can be created with saree and shirt. This is more apt for those who are not great at doing pleats or have a great collection of blouse. I teamed up my white shirt with different sarees on different occasions - casual meet up with friends to a birthday party. It took me 5-7 minutes to drape this way. When I have no time for pleats and neat palla and I want to do a casual look. This is my go to style.

Crop shop chic

Look : 3

Crop-tops are great replacement for blouses, shop and invest in good crop tops and team up your saree with them. I have used here crop top and belt to create a casual chic look. It goes well for day events. And depending on the saree even for formal office wear to evening parties. This style is my favourite as it looks smart and the belt helps me to stay carefree. Adding a collage for your reference of the different looks you can use that too.



By Shampa Moitra, Delhi

WOMEN WHO ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Ruhani Singh Mann, Delhi

"When the going gets tough, the tough get going", a quote that very aptly describes the journey of Ruhani Singh Mann, an Economic Times 40 under 40 award winner under the category F&B Leaders 2022. A full-service agency dedicated to creating innovative and effective brand marketing and public relations solutions to help businesses grow at the age of only 26 years in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Brand Talk has recently been awarded as Iconic PR Agency of the Year (Hospitality) - Delhi under Times Hospitality Icons 2022. As a foundation, she completed her master's in science from Imperial College London and returned to India in 2019 to begin working in the communications industry, after gaining ample experience and owing to her entrepreneurial nature she took a leap of faith and launched her own venture.

In a short span of 1 year the agency has worked with over 60+ clients from over 10+ industries building globally recognized campaigns that blend commercialism with creativity. Some of the notable clients the agency has worked with include Shangri-La Eros, Courtyard By Marriott, Aravali Resort, Westin GOA, Nykaa Fashion, The Collective by Aditya Birla Fashion Retail Limited and First Fiddle Restaurants with Priyank Sukhija: Full portfolio including Noche at One Golden Mile, Bougie, Miso Sexy, Tickled Pink, WOLF etc., Budweiser, Adrift Kaya at JW Marriott, People of Tomorrow, Kikoba, Dadel, Gola Sizzlers, Café Delhi Heights and many more.



Rekha Raghavan, Kerala

A corporate Woman turned into a passionate chef. Worked with companies like GE, Fidelity, PwC etc. Started her own venture by the name "Magic with Spices" in 2018.

She brings a fusion of spices from her kitchen, from the traditional Kerala Sadya to the varied burst of flavors, be it the delightful Chicken 65 or Kottayam fish curry or Malabar biryani.

She does pop-ups time to time with different menus in association with brands like Le Meridien, Westin etc. which are crafted keeping in mind the season and pallet both

Magic with Spices is a culinary venture dedicated to promoting and preserving the diverse flavors of regional Indian food. The venture aims to take diners on a flavorful journey through the authentic tastes of India.

From curated menus to immersive events, Magic with Spices is a celebration of the culinary heritage that makes India a gastronomic paradise.

She has catered to many celebrity events including the wedding of Movie Star Raj Kumar Rao at Oberoi, Sukh Vilas, Chandigarh.



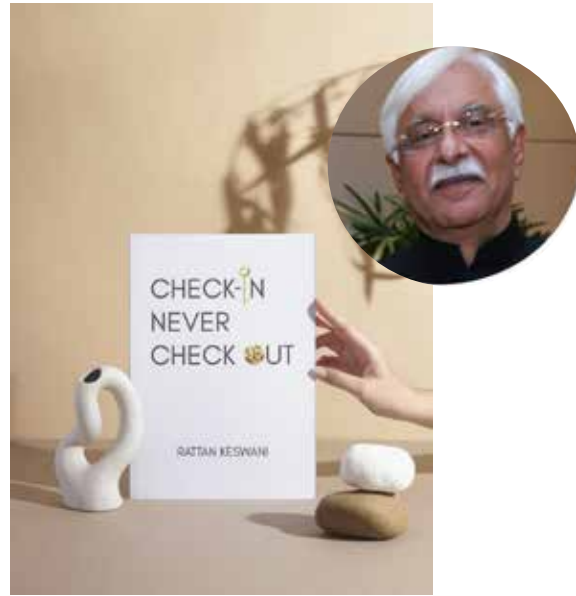
Pranita, Sikkim

Pranita was a regular graduate in psychology however her path of education did not lie in just academics. She was always intrigued with helping the society and had a zeal to become an guide for little children which led her to become a child counsellor professionally today in the reputed school that's affiliated to Amravati Vidyalaya - Amravati Toddlers Montessori. Her journey started as a customer service executive in a call center in Kolkata while pursuing her graduation alongside a diploma in an air hostess training academy.

She had already traveled to more than 15 countries around the globe, trained in understanding multiple languages, observed & absorbed so many cultures from around the world. Her mother had given refuge to the refugees from Bhutan and Nepal and helped their children get education and she did that on her own will without govt or any NGO's support. Hence, she took inspiration from her and started the journey to learn more about human behavior and dig deeper into the field of psychology. While working in aviation she took up online courses in child psychology, EYFS, and understanding the human brain.

After a few years of marriage, she decided to join the Toddlers school and now after more than a year she has brought the school its glory by increasing the strength to double the capacity. The school is fully equipped with all the facilities needed by children aged 5 and below.

BOOK REVIEW



"Check-In, Never Check Out"

By Rattan Keswani

The hospitality industry was the most impacted during pandemic. There is an evident paradigm shift in consumer behavior. The desire to travel is still very much prevalent and domestic tourism is here to stay. The author shares his life's lesson and gives us an insight into the world of hospitality from an insiders perspective. It is a captivating and invaluable book that chronicles the extraordinary life of Rattan Keswani, a revered luminary in the hospitality industry. The book is divided into 14 chapters, each focusing on a different aspect of (Mr. K's as he is fondly known) illustrious career. Each chapter is titled an edition with a number that stands unique.

'Check-In, Never Check Out' is a captivating and invaluable book that chronicles the extraordinary life of Mr. Rattan Keswani, a revered luminary in the hospitality industry. Seamlessly blending personal triumphs and challenges, this opus offers readers an intimate window into the inner workings of a hotelier's existence. Beyond a mere account of his exploits, this literary masterpiece serves as an indispensable handbook, providing sagacious counsel for aspiring hoteliers and seasoned professionals alike. Check-In Never Check Out is not only informative but also entertaining and inspiring. Would recommend book lovers to grab a hard copy online or from your nearest bookstore.



"English Hinglish"

By Ritu Soni Bhagat

Bhagat's "English Hinglish" is a stunning illustration of how languages and cultures interact dynamically in our fast-changing global environment. More than just a language experiment, this blending of traditional English idioms with modern Hinglish terms captures the larger phenomenon of how language and culture interact and change in our society. The "English Hinglish" phenomenon demonstrates the extraordinary adaptability of language. It provides as a striking instance of how language, as opposed to remaining static and unchangeable, is a living, dynamic thing that develops with the civilizations it interacts with.

In this way, Bhagat's writing acts as a mirror, showing how rapidly our society is changing. Languages develop in tandem with cultural interaction and idea exchange, weaving a rich tapestry of phrases and meanings. Moreover, "English Hinglish" represents the globalization and cross-cultural contact that characterize our contemporary day. Technology has made global communication easier. Bhagat's work perfectly expresses the core of this language and cultural fusion, emphasizing how we are no longer restricted by the limitations of our mother tongue. Instead, we have access to a wide range of language influences that deepen our comprehension of the world and its people.

Nutty Bliss Bites



ENJOY!!

Chocolate-Dipped Harmony

By Maneet Bhalla, Chandigarh

Ingredients

- 150g almonds
- 150g walnuts
- 100g cashews
- 200g dates
- 50g peanuts, roasted but unsalted
- 50g oats
- 2 tbsp peanut butter (creamy or crunchy)
- 200g dark chocolate

Recipe

- Roast cashews, almonds, and walnuts separately. Let them cool down. Grind oats, cashews, walnuts, peanuts, and almonds separately. In another grinder, make a paste of dates.
- Combine cashews, peanuts, walnuts, oats, almonds, peanut butter, and dates. Mix all the ingredients together until you get a cohesive mixture. Shape the mixture into small balls and set aside.
- Melt the chocolate and dip the balls into the chocolate mixture, ensuring they are coated thoroughly. Set the coated balls aside and let them cool in the refrigerator. Ready to eat.

Hosa x Comorin

ByKaran Puri, Gurgaon

HOSA which launched in Goa in November 2022, has created quite a niche for itself with its take on South Indian cuisine. Times Food & Nightlife Awards 2023 awarded HOSA, 'Best Modern Indian' and 'Best Resto bar' in Goa. Also, it has been awarded the 'Debutant Restaurant of the Year' and 'Resto bar of the Year', both for the West Region at the ET Hospitality World Restaurants & Nightlife Awards 2023. To celebrate its first anniversary, HOSA just completed its first pop-up at Gurugram at its sister restaurant, Comorin, which features comfort dishes and unusual food combinations from across the country.

Celebrating 5 years of Comorin, Brand Chef Dhiraj Dargan of Comorin had joined HOSA's Brand Chef Suresh DC to present an exclusive 8-course Celebration Menu featuring signature dishes from both the award-winning restaurants. Rohit Khattar,

Founder Chairman EHV International says, "We were delighted with the response that Hosa, the younger sibling got at our busiest restaurant, Comorin. We have been most grateful for the huge success that Comorin has seen over the last few years. Our guests can look forward to many such collaborations between our own restaurants. We look forward to welcoming guests from the NCR to Goa, for the full-on HOSA experience on their next trip." Showcasing Comorin's unique twist on regional Indian comfort food and HOSA's modern South Indian cuisine,

the four-hands experience featured signatures like Methi Murgh, Rajasthani Ghee Mirch Gosht from Comorin, Almond 65, Mutton Pepper Roast, Trumpet Mushroom Varuval from HOSA, and much more. We will continue the anniversary celebrations in Goa, with Comorin making its debut on the Goa market next week, on the 4th & 5th of December, with the same four-hands menu. We look forward to seeing you there. About EHV (www.ehvinternational.com) EHV International, a part of the Old-World Hospitality Group, owns and operates several pathbreaking restaurants that are market leaders in their respective cuisines. HOSA which launched in Goa in December 2022, has created quite a niche for itself with its take on South Indian cuisine.

Indian Accent, New Delhi has been on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants list for 9 years and was on TIME Magazine's 100 Greatest Places in the World. It was also voted the No. 1 Restaurant in India by Condé Nast Traveller 2023. It opened a successful outpost in New York in 2016 and has recently opened a hugely popular Mumbai outpost at the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre. Koloman, a contemporary French restaurant, opened in Fall 2022 in New York to great success and received the coveted 3 stars from the New York Times. It is the company's second restaurant in New York after Indian Accent, with a third one, a Bar, expected to open in early 2024. EHV International is poised to open several new restaurants in 2024-25 in India, as well as in other world cities.



Hosa 75: Sous Vide beefeater infused with peach, Lychee and Hibiscus, Green Apple Liqueur, Jacob's Creek, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir

Gun Fizz Powder: Beefeater, Vanilla, Gun powder mix, mango and Fig Botanical Water

Holy Bee: Malfy Limone, Lavender, Honey Comb, fresh green apple



First Course: Almond 65, almond fritters, curd rice, pomelo

Second Course: Masala Nimbu Chilli Avocado, aloo papad, coriander

Third Course: Dal Pakwan, jalapeno & red onion, kachumber

Fourth Course: Wild Mushroom Sukka, mini appam, curry leaf crema

Fifth Course: Kathal Champaran, Sattu parantha, ole ki chutney

Sixth Course: Trumpet Mushroom Varuval, Mushroom Pongal, black pepper rub, herb oil

Seventh Course: Gur Meva Roti, Rabdi, Tal Mishri

Eighth Course: Coconut Ice cream, almond crumble, Jasmine sorbet

#foodlover #hosatravels

Ordinary people have the most extraordinary stories

SAMIKSHAA V BAALIYAN

An Interior Designer , founder at In Vogue Design Studio (an Interior Design & Build firm) has an extensive experience spanning over 18 years in the design & service industry.

She believes in following her dreams and moving towards creating multiple ventures and providing different platforms to people who have the potential to follow their dreams but have limitations to reach their goals.

Our objective is to give individuals a platform where they present their 'extraordinary' story to the world.

A unique concept which captures original and unique stories from around the world on any topic.. be it travel, food, tech, photography, architecture, interiors, and life in general...

We aspire to reach every corner of the world to explore the unique talent, stories, and experiences which may enrich other people's journey of life.

On a lighter note:

There are many people who are already writing so much about famous people and making them even more famous and increasing the gap between the rest of the world. We, however, believe in making ordinary people famous for their talents and bridge this gap.