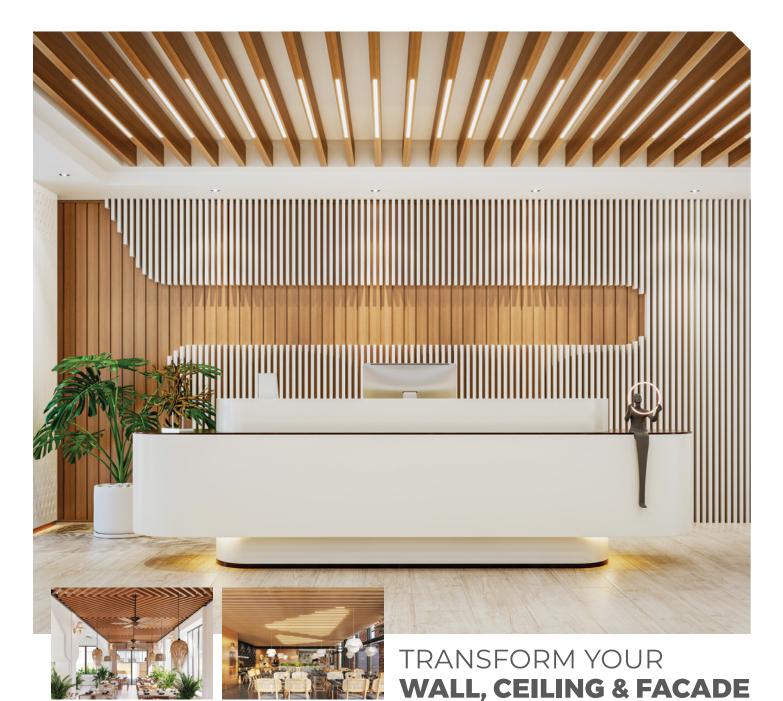
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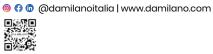
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PZI

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EDITOR'S NOTE



p 26

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's not tangible, you can't touch it; it's not visible, you can't see it. But deep in our hearts, we can feel it. There is definitely an air about India!

It's the way we're surging ahead confidently, boldly walking new paths and forging collaborations, yet continuing to draw inspiration from our vast heritage. It's this blend of our rich traditions and modern aspirations coupled with the quintessential warmth of Indian hospitality that has left an indelible mark on the world.

This is echoed in our Cover Story, as one of our contributors, celebrity designer Gaurav Gupta aptly says, "India is having a moment". And what a glorious moment it is! He is joined by Michelin star Chef Vikas Khanna who reveals that Indian chefs now are proud of their cuisine. Olympian PV Sindhu says India has always been very encouraging of her athletes—and the results are showing. Actor Nimrat Kaur believes we are producing incredible work and telling authentic stories. From food to sports, from fashion to films, India is soaring and making global strides.

What makes us special? Perhaps it is our age-old crafts like Blue Pottery, still thriving in Rajasthan's bylanes, where we take you in our Mind section. Or our rootedness to our practices, like in Ladakh, where we travel to glean lessons in sustainability. Maybe it's our love for family, a sentiment beautifully penned by celebrity chef Matt Preston, who says family recipes are like precious heirlooms. That's in Soul. Perhaps, it's our ability to stay attached to the soil, nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar tells us in Body.

Through our stories, we've tried to distil this magic for you, and we're sure you'll agree—India is on a high.

On that note, we hope you keep flying with us and reading *Namaste.ai*!

- Namaste.ai Editorial Team



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CONTENTS JUNE 2025



EATING RIGHT Nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar on achieving a common-sense die





86

WANDERLUST Take a road trip through the scenic Araku Valley in Andhra Pradesh

YOUR AI 90

THE TRANSFORMATION Author Shalaka Kulkarni is impressed by the new Premium Economy experience

94 **VIA INDIA**

Don't miss Gurugram's food hubs, when visiting Delhi

98

FLEET Our magnificent machines

99 ROUTES Our connectivity

MIND 15

PV SINDHU The badminton star talks about how the country's sporting future is bright

18

GAURAV GUPTA India is a developing force in fashion, says the designer who's a global favourite

21

NIMRAT KAUR

From international shows to regional films. the Indian film industry is going great guns, says the actor

26

CONSCIOUS TRAVELLER Life lessons from an

extended stay in Ladakh



CHECKLIST 36

FOOD **Discover Puducherry** through eight dishes-from the savoury to the sweet

42

EVENTS A list of global festivities to attend this month

44

WATCHES The latest releases strike a fine balance between style and substance

50

ON THE CLOCK From shopping to dim sums, Hong Kong's street life has much to offer

Kal Penn on the wonders

of West Cork, Ireland

56

IN FOCUS Watch indie artistes perform at the Bir Music Festival, Himachal Pradesh

62

NAVIGATE Embark on a beer trail through Central and Western Europe

BODY 68

WELLNESS Sauna and sea bathing—an age-old healing practice

SOUL 80

FAMILY TIES Why Chef Matt Preston cherishes his family cookbooks and recipes

> **On The Cover** Air India's 'There is an air about India' campaign celebrates the spirit of a confident and vibrant India.

*All pages marked as Special Feature are paid advertorials

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Born in Scotland and a Hong Kong resident for 38 years, Jon has worked on publications devoted to culture, travel, and lifestyle since the late 1970s. He loves travel, literature, jazz, champagne, aircraft, bicycles, and motor cars, and has been known to whip up a reasonably edible meal from scratch.

(Jon offers a curated guide of exploring Hong Kong in one day) page 50

🔁 Veidehi Gite @@thekrazybutterfly

Globetrotter by trade and storyteller by passion, Veidehi chases sunrises, coffee, and stories. Her suitcase is always half-packed, her passport is suspiciously full, and her inbox is mostly airline confirmations.

(Veidehi writes on the artistic thread that ties Persia with Rajasthan-the craft of Blue Pottery)

page 30





🕒 Lulu Aspinall

🖸 @ luluaspinall An integrative therapist, coach, and author, Lulu is devoted to empowering individuals to live with greater presence. purpose, and peace of mind. She is the founder of New Brave You, a mind health and wellness platform. She teaches mindfulness and meditation.

(Lulu delves into the therapeutic properties of sauna and sea bathing) page 68

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Based in Australia, Matt is a food critic, food journalist, and television and radio presenter. He was one of the three original judges of MasterChef Australia, is a senior editor for delicious.com, and has eight cookbooks to his name.

(Matt writes about the importance of family cookbooks) page 80



🕒 Insia Lacewalla @indiawithinsia

A Goa-based food and travel writer, Insia is the founder of India With Insia, an insider's guide to destinations across India and beyond. She also leads W.E., a women's community in Goa, and curates bespoke culinary and travel experiences for brands. (Insia writes about eight delectable dishes of Puducherry and where to eat them) page 36



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YEARS OF MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE

Simplifying lives





Purple Martini is a much-loved destination among locals, tourists, and celebrities. Founded by Saarthak Gupta, the restaurant began as a passion project and has since ascended to the pinnacle of Goa's dining scene. Purple Martini is not merely a dining experience, it

is a symphony of flavours, an embodiment of luxury, and a testament to Saarthak's unwavering commitment to gastronomic innovation. With its stunning sunset views, eclectic menu, impeccable service, and an ambience that fuses sophistication with a relaxed Mykonos-style vibe, Purple Martini, a gem along the Anjuna coast, remains a place where unforgettable memories are crafted. Whether you're seeking culinary delight or a brush with stardom, this lively restobar offers an experience that transcends expectations, making it an enduring icon of Goa's culinary landscape.

A RAINBOW OF SENSATIONAL OFFERINGS AT PURPLE MARTINI

Nestled in Goa's tropical landscape, Purple Martini serves up delicious cuisine and cocktails amid chilled-out afternoons, gorgeous sundowners, and star-studded nights

like Banana Wrapped Snapper with fiery chillies and tamarind, the menu has something that tantalises every taste-bud.

Purple Martini's crown jewel, however, is its breathtaking sunset views. With its beachfront location, guests can enjoy a front-row seat to the spectacular hues of orange,

pink, and purple that light up the sky during sunset-the perfect backdrop for a romantic dinner, a lively get-together with friends, or a relaxing evening alone. No wonder it's the top restobar in Goa.

ABOUT THE FOUNDER

Saarthak Gupta, an alumnus of The Doon School and the University of Leeds, has been recognised as a leading entrepreneur in the hospitality industry. With his passion for hospitality, astute leadership, marketing prowess, and an eye for detail, he has transformed Purple Martini into one of the most popular restobars in Goa. His commitment to excellence has been recognised by various institutions, and he

> has received several prestigious awards for his contributions to the hospitality industry, as well as being named amongst the Times 50 Most Influential Personalities.

> Purple Martini has won several accolades, including the Times Nightlife Award for the Best Sundowner Bar and The Most Popular Restaurant four years in a row. The restaurant has also been featured in various publications, including Conde Nast Traveller, Vogue India, and The Economic Times. And we expect many more under Saarthak's leadership in the coming years!

DELICIOUS BLISS

Be transported into a world of relaxation and indulgence as soon as you walk in. The bar features a wide selection of signature cocktails, including the famous Purple Martini, Stylish Turkey, Red Decor, and the Floral Whiskey Sour. The menu also boasts an impressive selection of wines, beers, and spirits from across the globe.

But it's not just the drinks that make Purple Martini a must-visit spot in Goa. The kitchen also offers a delectable cuisine selection that blends Indian and international flavours. From appetisers like Peri-Peri Chicken Skewers and Recheado Prawns to entrées



CEO/Founder, Purple Martini

Shifting perspectives 26 © CONSCIOUS TRAVELLER 30 © TRULY INDIA











TAKING OVER THE WORLD

Indian chefs, and the cuisine, have been seeing a phenomenal growth in interest from customers, investors and the media

words by Vikas Khanna

Chef Vikas Khanna at his NYC restaurant Bungalow, which earned a Michelin Bib Gourmand award in 2024

TOP AND BOTTOM Chef Khanna says collaborations between chefs from different countries is important

countries is important to expand the platform; He feels regional Indian cuisines like Maharashtrian food are set to take centre stage.

VIKAS KHANNA

(@vikaskhannagroup) is an acclaimed Indian-American chef, filumaker, author, and philanthropist. A James Beard nominee and one of the first Indian chefs to be awarded a Michelin Star for his restaurant in the USA, his newest restaurant, Bungalow, in New York, is one of the most sought after in America. present a new face of hospitality.

Another aspect of restaurant dining that has come to the fore is the new generation of chefs. They have more understanding of global platforms; they understand the need to create modern cuisine yet continue with tradition. I feel that the awareness of Indian cuisine has expanded, markets have opened up, and even diners have become more attuned to experimentation. Dining has become an experience, not just a necessity. Indian chefs now, from Himanshu Saini [of Trèsind Studio in Dubai, which just won three Michelin stars] to Vijay Kumar from Semma, are taking Indian food to new heights while reflecting the country's rich heritage.

hen it

comes to

the global

culinary

landscape, I feel the post-

one of the turning points for

pandemic shift has been

restaurants. At that time,

that we started valuing

going out and visiting

we all felt so disconnected

restaurants more. That has

now is creating experiences,

competing with the comfort

because restaurateurs are

of in-house deliveries, so

now, we need to go the

extra mile to become a

standout destination and

trained the human mind.

What is necessary right

I feel that the word we were missing in our generation was pride—in Indian cuisine. Very few

of us ventured into that category, but chefs like Prateek Sadhu and Varun Totlani-they are an extension of their culture, representative of who they are. They understand how to make food engaging and accepting. I understand the global appeal of such chefs now. It was wonderful to see Asma Khan come to New York to launch her new book [Monsoon] and see how the mainstream media in the USA gave it so much of coverage.

I also see collaborations happening with European and American chefs and I feel that such engagement is necessary to create a bigger platform. It also opens a pathway for chefs to understand Indians and their spending power.

Regarding the potential of Indian food in the future, I would say that because of the engagement that Indian chefs are enjoying, Chef Vikas Khanna still feels a strong emotional connect with his hometown, Amritsar

MY CITY: AMRITSAR

What do you love most about Amritsar?

My everything is in Amritsar. I have so much work-related anxiety and insomnia in NYC but the minute I enter my mom's home, I feel like a baby. Once I was so relaxed, I slept for 12 hours straight.

Name some favourite restaurants in the city...

Kanha Puri on Lawrence Road, the aam papad chaatwala outside DAV college; Sharma Sweets Shop, Maqbool Road's Amritsari kulchas, Durga's fruit cream, and the langar at the Golden Temple.

Any lesser-known spots you recommend?

Sarhad restaurant near the Attari-Wagah border.

they have begun to take centre stage in so many places: in digital marketing, chef platforms, Michelin platforms, etc. I feel our regional cuisines will now come into the limelight; I met some chefs recently and they were discussing how to put Maharashtrian and Gujarati food on the global map. What is most satisfying is to see that investors are willing to put in the money to help develop experiences that are about more than butter chicken or dal makhani.

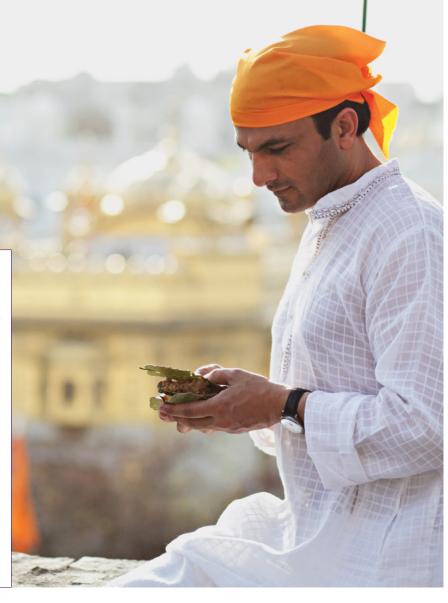
I would not claim to be an ambassador of Indian food, but having spent 26 years in NYC, I am proud of my long journey. Bungalow is a rare experience where we see two to three generations at the same table, and though the menu is rooted in street foods and interpretations of local cuisines, at the same time, we are in NYC and are competing with other world-class chefs for reservations. The restaurant gives me a platform to talk about Indian culture, boost new artistes, and represent

India's diversity. I have also been very fortunate to have been based here but also become a household name in India.

In my 41 years in the industry, the differences I have seen are phenomenal. New voices and investors are creating brands that are not falling into the trap of clone restaurants. The respect for chefs and the opportunities for Indian chefs—it's mind-blowing. May the tribe forever grow! —As told to

Veenu Singh

GETTING THERE Air India flies non-stop to Amritsar from Delhi and Mumbai.



SERVING

The future of Indian sports, especially badminton, looks more promising than ever

words by PV Sindhu

PV Sindhu

ndia has always been very encouraging of her athletes and there is a really good number of them in the country. not only in badminton but in any sport. Initially, it was iust cricket, but I think now badminton is a discipline in which the country is really doing well. Badminton has received unparalleled recognition in India, with Guwahati, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad being national centres. A part of the credit must be given to training academies, a lot of which offer scholarships and other supportive facilities to promising athletes too. But, at the end. it's the athletes who need to work hard, irrespective of any academy or government support.

The government has actually been very helpful in terms of sponsorships and supporting badminton athletes from even the grassroots level. Some cases in point would be Prime Minister Narendra Modi's numerous sportsrelated schemes and platforms, like 'Khelo India'. He has been instrumental in enforcing a lot of policies and building infrastructure to bring out the fields that were kind of operating on their own for the longest time. He has really pushed everything to the forefront. From funding and necessary gear to



But India is a land

of achievers and over achievers. We are not easily content or satisfied with what we have achieved; we strive for bigger laurels. So, while we have already established Indian sporting prowess on the international stage, we continue to emerge and push our boundaries. And I can say that in the next couple of years, there will PV Sindhu is a two-time Olympic winner. She bagged a silver at Rio 2016 and a bronze at Tokyo 2020





Memories of the city?

Growing up, school, badminton practice the city has seen me through it all. I would travel 27km to and fro for training every day.

Reccos for visitors?

I am a proud Hyderabadi so, if someone is coming for the first time, a visit to the Charminar is a must, followed by the Golconda Fort.

What about the food?

The iconic Irani chai-Osmania biscuit combination is best savoured in the market area surrounding the Charminar. And meat lovers would love the haleem that's served at Shah Ghouse.



medals to India's name—be it javelin throw, wrestling or badminton. And there are a few bright and upcoming talents in the badminton circuit that India is already proud of-Lakshya Sen, Chirag Shetty, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy. Then, after me, there's Malvika Bansod, Anupama Upadhyaya, and a few more girls who hold real promise. At the same time, it is also important that they stay physically and mentally fit, and be prepared for anything. You see, for an athlete, reaching a level is one thing, but maintaining it is very hard.

be a lot more Olympic

Looking back, things have changed from the time l stepped into professional badminton. Earlier, most parents were sceptical about allowing their kids to pursue a career in sports. Studies used to come first. Now, that viewpoint has changed; sports is being seen and encouraged as a viable career option. Today, it is heartening to see kids even nine-year-olds—taking to sports with seriousness.

Going ahead, I see a lot of players who will do well, especially in badminton, and I can guarantee there will be a lot of medals in the coming years. Irrespective, they need to keep up by working hard. Deterrents—physical or mental—are part and parcel of life, even that of an athlete. And there will be bad days and defeats too, along the way. But couple hard work with a smart outlook to life, self-belief, and the quintessential sportsmanship spirit, and success is never far off.

LEFT AND RIGHT PV Sindhu feels Lakshya Sen is a name Indians are already proud of; She says Satwiksairaj Rankireddy is another bright talent.

— As told to **Shrabasti** Anindita Mallik



GIVING FASHION AN INDIAN TWIST

The world is realising that India is having a moment right now, globally—and I'm very fortunate to be a part of it

words by Gaurav Gupta



ashion is nothing less than art for me—it's a

way of life! Despite the fact that I come from a family where everyone only talked about iron and steel, I always had a creative bent of mind. When I was 15, I had decided that the only profession I ever want to be in is fashion.

I'm always challenging norms and have managed to make conceptual fashion commercial. I think people understood avant-garde or experimental fashion through my designs and I invented the saree gown, which is an integral part of the brand's DNA today. I'm always inspired by different things—today it's Paris, tomorrow I'm inspired by *kundalini*, and the next day by Gothic creatures. And as I gear up to celebrate 20 years of my brand next year, all I can say is that this journey has been amazing.

As far as the industry goes, I think it's a very exciting time for India. There is an inflow and outflow happening. Inflow meaning that there are lots of international brands investing in India. Dior did a huge show at the Gateway of India and then there was one by Vivienne Westwood. But it's also that the world around us is realising that India is really having a moment right now, globally. And I'm very lucky to be a part of it. India is a huge market and that exposure to the country is going to be culturally profound.

I think if you see the speed at which malls are opening in cities like Nagpur, Ahmedabad or Indore, amongst others, it makes you realise the pace of this urbanisation. And I think in the next few decades we'll end up seeing a few Indian brands going global as well, as there's no dearth of talent in India, and many of them are doing a great job.

Personally, I feel I'm in a very lucky position as far as international collaborations go. We are in 30 of the best stores in the world from eight locations of Neiman Marcus (USA) to Harrods (London), Antonia (Italy), Bloomingdales (Dubai), and Alothman (Kuwait), amongst others. The brand is also present in Oslo and Munich, and many other locations. We also tie up with global talents from Beyoncé and Cardi B to Mindy Kaling for all kinds of international platforms. The brand has

LEFT TO RIGHT

Alia Bhatt in custom Gaurav Gupta Couture at the L'Oréal Paris - Le Defilé show in 2024; Kareena Kapoor Khan was the showstopper for Gupta's LFW 2021 Finale; Kiara Advani debuted at the Met Gala 2025 in a dress Gupta called 'Bravehearts'



GAURAV GUPTA

(@gauravguptaofficial) An alumnus of Central Saint Martins, Gupta has created a niche for his label as a progressive couturier. Over 19 years of merging indigenous Indian construction and embellishing techniques with his idea of the future. he has emerged as one of the strongest voices in couture and fashion from India.



a lot of expandability in various areas and I'm excited for what lies ahead.

The Met Gala saw us debuting last year with Mindy Kaling. Her look—'Melting Flower of Time'—was featured in many places as one of the best looks of the Gala. This year, we dressed Kiara Advani for her Met debut. We wanted to celebrate her pregnancy and the theme 'Black Dandyism' was so emotional and personal, and that's why I wanted to celebrate her outfit by naming it 'Bravehearts'. That was the thought behind my concept because what happens in one generation has a profound effect on the coming ones.

In this industry, 'Americanisation' is at the forefront of everything because there's been a lot of money put behind that machinery here through Hollywood

movies, capitalisation, and consumerism, which has resulted in these American concepts spreading in the world. But, there's so much more to take from 'Indianisation'. which is beautiful—like slow living, higher thinking, Art of Living, and yoga, among other things. There's so much the world can adopt from India. I consider myself very lucky to be born in this beautiful country. I always like thinking out of the box and love how cultures evolve with a large Indian diaspora all over the world, and India being home to people from different backgrounds. The artist in me is excited to see newer global cultures being born from this.

India is so profound in terms of heritage; yes, our palaces and monuments are beautiful, but for me, the real wealth of India is math and the spiritual sciences, and ancestral values along

LEFT AND RIGHT

Adele in a Cosmic Black Saturn Orbit Gown at the opening of Weekends with Adele at Las Vegas; Beyoncé rocks the Neon Green Athena Saree Gown at the iconic Renaissance World Tour in Atlanta.

MY CITY: DELHI



Where do you go to unwind?

I love going to the D'Monde members club; I love their avm. I also like the Jahapanah Forestwe have these secret spots where we see the sunsets from.

Favourite spots for sundowners.

I think Olive is great you know you're going to get quality and have the best time.

Secret spots for the best fashion?

I like clothes from Kanika Goyal and Antar Agni.

with spiritual depth. That's why, my first collection at the Paris Fashion Week was called 'Shunya'. My collections have featured references to the chakras or the Gyan Mudra and it gives me immense happiness to celebrate India through this spiritual symbolism and remind the world of it.

> — As told to Veenu Singh

words by Nimrat Kaur



NIMRAT KAUR

(@nimratofficial) Nimrat Kaur shot to fame in the criticallyacclaimed drama *The Lunchbox* in 2013. Some of her other popular films are *Airlift* and *Dasvi*. She has also appeared in two American TV series—Homeland, and Wayward Pines.



TOP AND BOTTOM Nimrat Kaur's stellar role in The Lunchbox (2013) brought her into the limelight; Diljit Dosanjh broke out from the Punjabi film industry to become a major presence on the world stage.

e have always had the largest film industry in the world and have firmly held this position for a long time. But now, with the OTT explosion around us and content in the form of films and sitcoms, it's incredible that we are witnessing so much new talent, whether it's in front of or behind the camera. It's all there for us to enjoy.

Having worked internationally, I know that everyone is always looking for a world that is representative on screen of the actual world we live in, which is diverse and features different kinds of faces and talents. So, when we ourselves are producing incredible work and telling our stories that are original to us and authentic to our motherland, only the best will come out. It is a fabulous time for our talent and content.

The Indian film industry is also pushing its boundaries, experimenting with new genres of films in every way. Look at the kind of genres that are doing supremely well, whether it is horror comedies, and the films that are representing the heartland, like *Laapataa Ladies*. The more we come in touch with ourselves

and don't look outside to replicate something, the better we will be and the more justice we'll be able to do to our stories and content. And this phenomenal growth is not just restricted to the Hindi language. We can all see how, in the last few years, films from the South have done better business than even mainstream Hindi films. That really says a lot. in terms of the different kinds of success stories around us.

Internationally, too, there has been much movement. Take Diljit Dosanjh from the Punjabi film industry, who has taken such a firm place on the world stage. We have superstars from Telugu cinema, like SS Rajamouli, coming up with movies that everyone throngs to the theatres to watch. Movies from the Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada film industries, and even Marathi cinema for

MY CITY: MUMBAI

WIT VOMMENTARY I Section of a

What's your favourite spot in the city?

Girgaum Chowpatty, extending on to Marine Drive. It's that little space where you'll see people from all walks of life. It embodies the spirit of Mumbai in its true sense.

Some cafés you frequent?

I love going to Boojee Cafe and Veronica's in Bandra.

Where do you shop in Mumbai?

Colaba Causeway for earrings, ethnic wear, eclectic T-shirts, and knick-knacks. It's the best place to buy souvenirs for people abroad. There is an old silver shop where I pick up jewellery from. Also, I love the beautiful boutique stores at Kala Ghoda.



TOP AND LEFT A still from Kaur's show, Wayward Pines; The actor feels regional films (like RRR) have come to the national stage.



that matter, have come on to the national stage. This truly proves that people only want to watch great cinema and great content.

Looking to the future, I see that the one advantage Indian artistes have is that we are adaptive people. We are extremely friendly. Indians easily embrace a new culture and a new identity in no time. Our warmth is a major win. Which is why, when you are working in a creative field anywhere else in the world, apart from your own homeland, it's a great asset to have, as it allows you to adjust yourself and to blend in yet stand out.

Worldwide, now, people want to consume more content. It's a beautiful time for this kind of cross-pollination to happen, where people from different countries like each other's work. There's so much demand and hence, there is that much supply of newer formats for actors to be working in different countries and people being cast in all kinds of work across the world.

India has so much untapped potential and so much to look forward to. We have a long way to go and are really just getting warmed up.

> — As told to **Deepika Nandal**



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LESSONS I LEARNED IN LADAKH

A five-month sojourn in this mountainous landscape came with a bag full of life lessons

words by Vagisha Anant

ften, I find myself reeling back in time to a land that offered me an experience, quite literally, of a lifetime. In retrospect, what made my time in Leh and Ladakh as impactful as it was, is what I carry back—morsels of juicy wisdom on how to be curious and a better traveller, evidence on how deeply (modern) anthropology affects a place, and how we all have a role to play in this.

FEEL ONE WITH THE SURROUNDINGS

The grand desert mountains speak a language of their own. I tirelessly enjoyed gazing into infinity, staring back at the brazen mountains, the sky and the stars, the poplar and willow trees, and being dumbfounded by the theatrics of it all. What seemed like monochromatic monolithic mountains turned VIBGYOR the more I traversed deeper into Ladakh, while maintaining the staring competition—a perk of having no network! My handy tool to open myself to the place I visit is to feel one with the surroundings first, as if prepping a foundation for the experiences ahead.

HAVE REAL CONVERSATIONS

Julley with a smile is a good way to get started with befriending locals. I enquired about traditional foods and authentic places I should dine at, festivals or events I could participate in, and at other times, we would just exchange a warm greeting to go. When I had Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), the butter tea they insisted I try made me feel so much better; I sampled traditional Ladakhi cuisine in their homes, and thanks to their recommendations, found little shopping gems in the Leh Old Market, I munched on dried apricots from women shopkeepers in the Market, and drank apricot and sea-buckthorn juice almost every day. Daily interactions taught me about the uniqueness of the region and culture, and I picked up a lot about the spirit of the people,

recognising the challenges the region grapples with. It broke my heart to learn about the growing landfill crisis in Leh, and the real issue with managing waste at such high altitudes.

LEARN FROM THE LOCALS

While the weather outside would juggle between snowy, sunny, and windy, I stayed in a cozy sun-house that was warmer by up to 10-15 degrees just by harnessing solar energy. The rammed earth architecture (using natural, raw materials) and double glass windows are a lesson in science and societyfrom where and how to position the entrance, to making the kitchen central to the house, there was something to learn everywhere. This includes dry toilets, integral to the area, It's genius how they save litres of water and convert human waste into manure! When you visit Ladakh, I beseech you to stay in traditional homes. On one interaction with the locals, I learned that Ladakhis are traditionally frugal out of

> The author never got tired of gazing into the infinite expanse of the desert mountains

R EEP RANA A

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The writer spent five months exploring Ladakh; When visiting monasteries, she was often invited to prayer sessions; Butter tea helped her cope with AMS.

respect for resources and nature. Inhabiting a cold desert where land transportation is cut off for about half the year, they store their food and mindfully utilise every drop of water. In yesteryears, their traditional attire—goncha—that wraps perfectly to also form a pouch, was used to carry cutlery (for reuse) and edibles like dried fruits while people walked long distances. While I cannot wear a goncha, I make sure to carry a warm smile and basic cutlery so as not to burden our fragile surroundings while I'm travelling. This realisation has come as an invitation for me to better understand the places I visit, through the unique ways in which people live across regions.

CONSERVATION REQUIRES CURIOSITY

I ditched an itinerary on most days, and this became a lesson for life, because the days I had nothing predetermined allowed me to welcome unplanned experiences. I would rent a Scooty with the aim of heading in a certain direction but then let the day unfold by itself. I walked into monasteries with curiosity and chatted endlessly with the monks; they would invite me to their meditative prayers or for lunch later. On other occasions, I would take detours en route to famous sights, only to find cosy corners by the Indus and Zanskar rivers. Some of these were apricot farms where I got to speak with the people working there and found out the problems they have faced over the years. Once, while meandering through the winding, narrow lanes within Leh, I stumbled upon a beautiful building, Choskar House, and discovered that it was restored and now serves as a centre for conservation of Ladakhi art and *thankas*.

To be truly mindful means opening yourself up to the place and its people, and letting it show you its experiences in its own unique way. This understanding gives you the wisdom to help in ways that are actually needed or perhaps leads to the realisation that sometimes leaving a place as it is, is best.





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30 AIR INDIA

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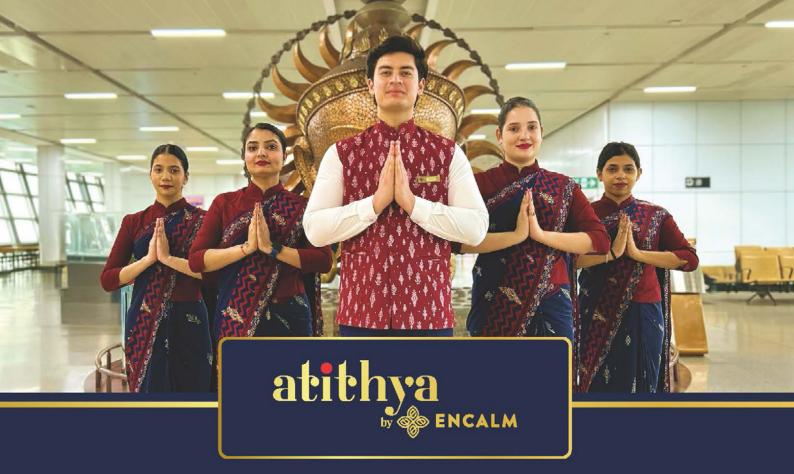
A common thread ties Persia to Rajasthan: the traditional art of stunning Blue Pottery

ZAF

words by **Veidehi Gite**

was frozen in place, my departure gate forgotten. There, in Istanbul Airport's bustling terminal, stood pottery of such dynamic blue that it seemed to emit its own light rather than reflect it. The same awestruck display that gripped merchants on the Silk Road, now captivated me as I stood before the dazzling Iznik pottery. Standing amid announcements in languages I couldn't understand, surrounded by aromas of spices and coffee that would forever transport me back to this terminal, this moment-this first taste of Turkey—became a seed that bloomed years later in a tiny Rajasthani village. There, in Kot Jewar, just about 40km beyond Jaipur's rush, the air held something richer-dust, dye, and the unshaken spirit of kumhars or 'Prajapatis', the traditional pottery makers of Rajasthan.

A blue floral trivet, Turkey



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This unassuming settlement has become the torchbearer for an art form that defies conventional ceramics: Jaipur's Blue Pottery. "My grandfather was a farmer who could barely feed his family," says 25-year-old Vimal Prajapat, as his skilled hands delicately paint intricate floral patterns on a bowl at Ramnarayan Blue Art Potteries, founded by his father in 1980. Belonging to one of the families that keeps this art alive, Prajapat says, "Now our name travels to homes across the world." The pottery that transfixed me in Turkey and the treasures emerging from Prajapat's kiln shared a common ancestry-Persian techniques that travelled along ancient trade routes, eventually finding a fertile ground in Rajasthan. The craft subsequently gained prominence under Mughal patronage.

Mughal royalty employed Blue Pottery as a safeguard against poisoning, as the glaze would change colour if food was contaminated. The craft later flourished in Jaipur under Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II, who established an art school and invited skilled artisans to the city. By the late 1800s, Jaipur had become the hub of Blue Pottery, adapting Persian designs catering to an evolving, sophisticated clientele. "Our One of the most popular objects of Jaipur's famed Blue Pottery is plates, crafted in myriad colours and boasting floral motifs

craft has evolved beyond traditional vases, urns, and jars to include tea sets, jugs, ashtrays, and napkin rings—preserving this ancient tradition as part of India's artistic heritage," says Prajapat. Today, unique Blue Pottery traditions exist in Jaipur, Delhi, Rampur, and Khurja. Potters in Jaipur and Delhi first create forms, then apply paint and a ground glass coating before firing, while Khurja and Rampur potters use red clay as base.

Prajapat shares, 'Blue Pottery' derives its name from the blue dye used in its early days. Made with a faience-like frit material, it is glazed and fired at low temperatures, giving it a delicate finish. While both Persian and Jaipur pottery share a cobalt blue-on-white aesthetic, they differ in style. Persian pottery blends various blue, turquoise, and emerald shades with Islamic geometric patterns and calligraphy, whereas Jaipur pottery uses copper oxide for bold cobalt hues, featuring Indian motifs like peacocks and native flowers. Despite their common quartz-based foundation, each retains a distinct artistic identity.

Jaipur's creations stand apart due to their composition. "Unlike traditional pottery methods, our craft shuns clay entirely," explains Prajapat. "We use a special mixture of ground quartz stone, glass, edible gum, water,

CHECK IT OUT

Defying the challenges that this ancient craft faces, there are a few establishments in Jaipur that continue to keep the craft alive. Chief among them are Jaipur Blue Pottery Art Centre (Amer Road), Shiv Kripa Blue Art Pottery (New Sanganer Road), Kripal Kumbh (Shiv Marg Circle). Aurea Blue Potterv (Mirza Ismail Road), and Ram Gopal Blue Pottery (near Jaipur airport). Note: Don't use these pieces for hot food-the glazes are unstable and potentially toxic.



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WHERE TO STAY

Samode Haveli, a 225-year-old heritage palace in Jaipur's walled city, offers a royal experience with frescoed suites and regal dining.

Rambagh Palace, a former royal residence, is now a property run by the Taj Group. Boutique stays include Alila Fort Bishangarh, a restored warrior

fort with stunning Aravalli views, and **Dera Mandawa**, a luxurious property known for its intimate Rajasthani hospitality.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Vimal Prajapat at his workshop in Kot Jewar; A Jaipur Blue Pottery vase; The craft has evolved to include cups and other items.



fuller's earth, and soda bicarbonate." He first creates a mouldable dough from these ingredients, which is then rolled into a 5mmthick sheet before setting it into fine stones and wood ash. Following this shaping process, each piece undergoes a meticulous firing using locally-harvested Khezadi wood—a process requiring several hours with precise temperature regulation to avoid damage. In recent years, the craft has evolved toward more environmentally-conscious practices, particularly the adoption of lead-free glazes.

The journey from raw clay to finished masterpiece is fraught with challenges, chief among them fragility. Artisans can salvage materials when breakage occurs pre-firing, but post-firing fractures mean beginning anew. After removing the mould, the pieces are set out to dry. They are then cleaned, shaped, and polished with sandpaper before being immersed in a solution of powdered glass, flour, quartz powder, and water.

"We apply a mixture of cobalt oxide and edible gum, then introduce additional colours derived from various metal oxides. Each oxide is carefully crushed on stone before being delicately brushed onto the pottery's surface." The result is a stunning palette-deep cobalt blue, ethereal light blue, vibrant green, sunny yellow, and rich brown. From conception to completion, each piece demands some 15 days of dedicated craftsmanship.

In Kot Jewar, I've seen how Blue Pottery sustains

hundreds, including women once excluded from the craft. Watching Prajapat work, his hands moving with centuries-old precision, is deeply moving. Each piece survives high breakage rates, monsoon disruptions, and modernisation pressures, yet artisans adapt through sustainable innovations.

Despite the challenges, this GI-tagged art form, being brought to life in the sun-baked terraces of Kot Jewar, remains highly coveted.



Everything worth checking out

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8 DISHES TO TRY IN PUDUCHERRY

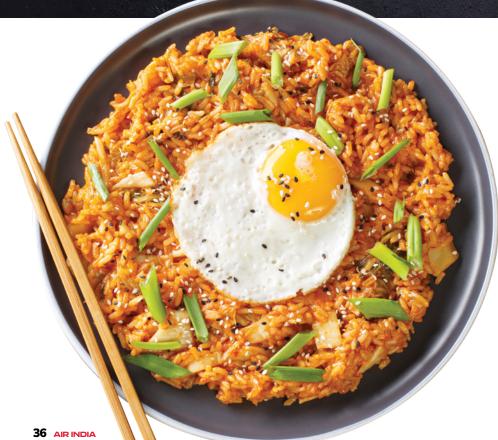
From Franco-Tamil thalis and Vietnamese spring rolls to wafer-thin crêpes, the city's culinary identity is layered and nuanced

words by Insia Lacewalla

CROISSANTS

These are more than just a pastry in Puducherrythey're a daily reminder of the town's French heritage. The buttery, flaky croissant became a breakfast staple among the French and Franco-Tamil communities, and that tradition has endured. Whether enjoyed plain, filled with almond cream or paired with a strong cup of coffee, the croissant feels both luxurious and familiar in the city's café culture.

Where to try it: Bread & Chocolate, 6, Marine Street, White Town



KIMCHI BOKKEUMBAP

Korean cuisine has found an unexpected but growing place in Puducherry's evolving culinary landscape, courtesy its history of colonialism, spiritual tourism, and the international community around Auroville. The rise of a few minimalist. authentic Korean eateries have generated a broader curiosity. Kimchi bokkeumbap, a deceptively simple fried rice dish, is made with well-aged kimchi, gochujang, and kissed with smokiness from the wok, topped with a golden fried egg, and served alongside ssamjang—a bold, earthy blend of fermented soya bean and chilli paste, and a mildly sweetsalty dipping sauce. Where to try it: Nowana, Auroville, Kuilapalayam



G SALADE CRÉOLE

Also known as 'Pondicherry Salad' or 'Salade Russe', this reflects the city's French-Tamil culinary heritage. Introduced during the colonial period, it features beetroot, carrots, beans, and potatoes—steamed, cooled, and tossed with onions, tomatoes, vinegar, pepper, salt, and, sometimes, boiled eggs. Variations exist across families. Traditionally served with mutton biryani and chutneys—and in some places, on a banana leaf—it acts as a tangy, refreshing counterpoint to the spiced mains.

Where to try it: Chez Pushpa, Gandhiji Nagar, Ariyankuppam



This became part of local life through Puducherry-natives who once worked in Vietnam under French colonial rule. I tried the ones at a breezy café owned by Ashvin Van Rijswijk, whose great-grandfather returned from Vietnam with a Vietnamese family. Here, *chả gi*ò is made the traditional way—golden, crispy, filled with minced pork and glass noodles, and served with *nước chấm*. The dish can be found across a few contemporary restaurants. **Where to try it:** Bel-Ami Café & Bistro, La Bourdonnais St

G CRÊPES

As part of French India for nearly three centuries, Puducherry inherited not just architecture and language, but also a taste for French patisserie and café culture. Crêpes, thin, delicate pancakes from Brittany, are symbolic of this legacy. This delectable fare feels right at home in the tree-lined cafés that dot White Town, where European influences meet South Indian warmth.

Where to try it: Crêpe in Touch, Needarajapaiyer St, MG Road Area







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SAPPADU

Typically eaten at lunch, *sappadu* is a multi-course, balanced meal served on a banana leaf and includes steamed rice served with sambar, rasam, *kootu*, *poriyal*, *thogayal* or chutney, *appalams*, pickles, curd, and a sweet dish. In nonvegetarian versions, you might also find fried fish, prawn masala or fish curry. Each dish is served in a particular order to create a harmonious sequence of flavours and textures. More than just nourishment, *sappadu* is a cultural ritual, one that celebrates generosity, seasonality, and the quiet rhythm of Tamil home cooking.

Where to try it: Maison Perumal, CGH Earth, Perumal Kovil Street

GELATO

This may be Italian in origin but Puducherry, with its sultry coastal climate and cosmopolitan population, offers the perfect conditions for this slow-churned, intensely-flavoured frozen treat to thrive. Flavours like pistachio, *stracciatella*, mango, and chilli-chocolate sit comfortably next to local fruits like tender coconut.

Where to try it: Gelateria Montecatini Terme, opposite Duplex Statue, White Town



MBUR BIRYANI

Originating from Ambur in Tamil Nadu, once a key military outpost of the Nawabs of Arcot, this style of biryani travelled across the region through trade, migration, and cultural exchange. As a coastal town with strong Tamil connections, Puducherry naturally embraced it. What sets Ambur biryani apart is its use of *seeraga samba* rice, a short-grained variety that soaks up the flavours of all the spices without turning mushy.

Where to try it: Hotel Sri Kamatchi, Labourdonnais Street, Near Old Law College, White Town



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Held at the Vintage Village Resort, expect an immersive experience with food, art, craft, music, and more. The festivities include an orchard visit as well as sessions on cooking with mangoes.



From 1711, this equestrian event has grown to be one of the most famous in the world and is indelibly associated with British royalty. Each enclosure at the event still requires dress codes (including a hat for ladies) and the ambience is at once traditional and modern. ascot.com





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DESIGNED TO IMPRESS

From indie upstarts to legacy icons, these latest timepieces boast both style and substance

words by Mohak

O A. LANGE & SÖHNE ODYSSEUS HONEYGOLD

This 100-piece limited edition redefines sport-luxury with style and charm. Crafted entirely from the brand's proprietary 18-carat Honeygold alloy, the 40.5mm case—waterresistant to around 120m—and integrated bracelet are tastefully brushed and polished. It continues to impress with a finely-textured brown dial featuring the iconic outsized date and day displays. Inside ticks the L155.1 Datomatic automatic movement, offering a 50-hour power reserve. With a clever fineadjustment clasp, this Odysseus is both technically sound and visually expressive.

Why buy: Chic and sporty Price: On request

MING 37.02 GHOST

This is one of those indie watchmakers that is defined by minimalist design codes. To testify to this, the 37.02 Ghost is the latest creation that is primarily focused on everyday wearability, but with ample panache. It wasn't created to break records in the first place, yet it surprises with a weight of just 35gm and water resistance rated at 260m; so light and functional that you cannot ask for more. The two-part dial boasts radial and circular-brushed finishes, finding its home inside a 38mm case crafted in titanium. A limited edition of 250 watches, it is flanked on either side by a grey goat leather strap and finds its power in an automatic movement, achieving a 50-hr power reserve.

Why buy: Visual depth and simplified timekeeping Price: Approximately ₹3.60 lakh

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BLANCPAIN FIFTY FATHOMS AUTOMATIQUE

This pays homage to the legendary Fifty Fathoms of 1953. A purposebuilt dive watch, it comes in a polished steel case that frames a black dial. With 300m water resistance, it features a black unidirectional bezel with a domed sapphire insert, and luminescent markers. Powered by the Caliber 1315 automatic movement, this high-performance watch boasts a five-day power reserve and anti-magnetic protection. Offered on a stainless-steel bracelet or textured rubber strap, it becomes a standout addition to Blancpain's iconic collection—or yours.

Why buy: Purpose-driven performance Price: Approximately ₹16 lakh

GRAND SEIKO 'ICE FOREST' UFA SPRING DRIVE SLGB003

This watch redefines Grand Seiko's pursuit of high-precision timekeeping. Its crisp dial design imitates the tips of frost-covered trees in the highlands east of the Shinshu Watch Studio. where these watches are crafted with much care and attention. The 37mm high-intensity titanium case encloses a dial in a silver-tinged blue hue. With the size of the watch and the newly-developed three-step micro-adjustment clasp, wearing the 'Ice Forest' is incredibly comfortable. What makes it even more special is the latest and greatest Caliber 9RB2 movement with U.F.A designation, which stands for 'Ultra Fine Accuracy'. This new-generation, in-house automatic movement offers an approximate 70-hr power reserve, staying precise with barely any adjustment needed through the year. Water-resistant up to 100m, the watch boasts an anti-reflective coating on the inner surface.

Why buy: Ultra-light titanium case with year-round precision Price: Approximately ₹9.5 lakh

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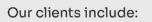


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● ■ BREGUET CLASSIQUE SOUSCRIPTION 2025

This luxury brand celebrates its 250th anniversary with this model. The timepiece pays homage to the brand's 18th-century Souscription pocket watches. A 40mm case is crafted from a proprietary gold alloy, housing a white enamel dial with a steel, open-tipped Breguet hand, which has been flame-blued and curved entirely by hand. Powering this timepiece is the Calibre VS00, modelled after the movement of the 1796 Souscription pocket watch. This achieves an impressive four-day power reserve and is offered on a navy blue alligator leather strap with an 18-carat Breguet gold pin buckle.

Why buy: Handcrafted and timeless Price: Approximately ₹44.8 lakh



A complete head-turner for sportychic enthusiasts, this Swiss luxury watchmaker's Cubitus collection was the most anticipated launch of last year. Now, with a material range from steel to precious metals, this family of date-andtime watches expands with the Cubitus 7128/1G, packed in a white gold case that is offered on a matching bracelet. This 40mm square-shaped watch features rounded edges and finds contrast with vertical satin and polished finishes. While its design is further refined by the sunburst blue-grey dial, the automatic 26-330 SC movement offers a stop-seconds function that enables time setting to the exact second.

Why buy: Simple and elegant with a classic blue dial Price: On request

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VIEW FROM THE TOP

Bold, beautiful, and forever bustling, Hong Kong inimitably occupies the intersection of East and West, past and present

Ø 08:00AM

Rise and shine Ø Bakehouse

A Hong Kong phenomenon, this Wan Chai bakery-cum-café on Tai Wong Street is best visited early—well before the crowds start to arrive. Start the day right with the full Bakehouse Breakfast, accompanied by your favourite jolt of caffeine.

words by **Jon Wall**

O9:00AM
From high up
♥ The Peak

Jump on a number 15 bus in Central for a 25-minute ride to one of the world's greatest vistas. If there's a better urban panorama than the skyscrapers of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, ever-busy Victoria Harbour, and the surrounding hills from The Peak, we can't think of it. Take a stroll around the Peak Circle Walk.

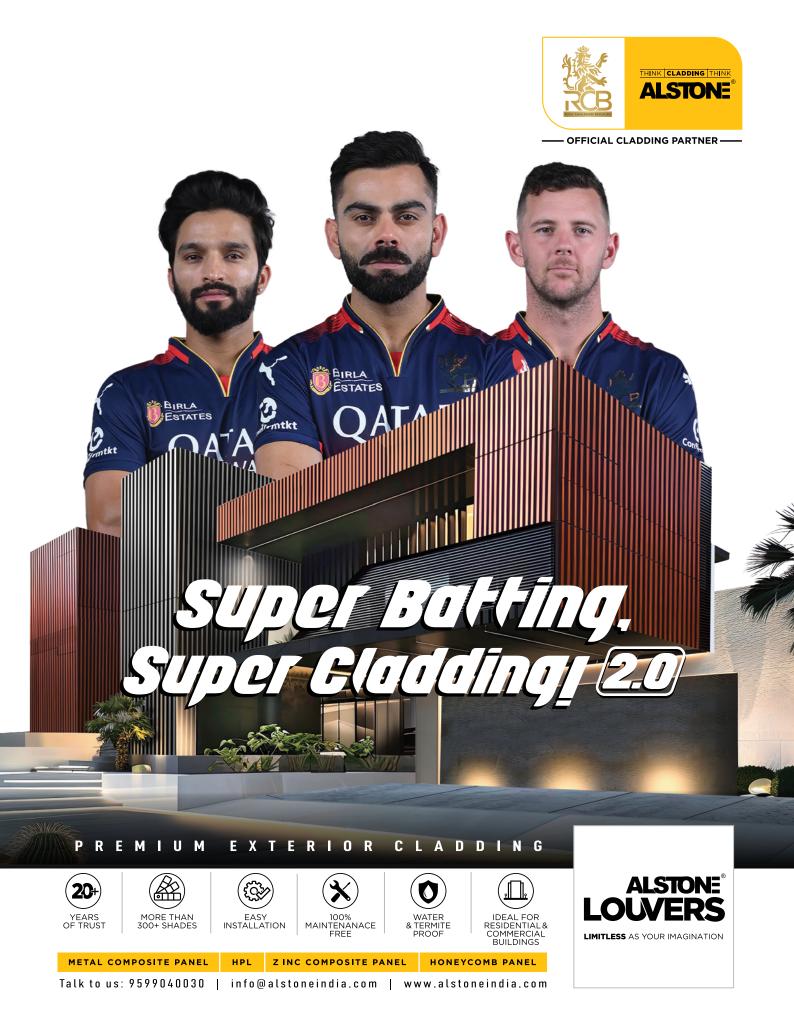
11:00AM Heart of the city Central District

Ride the Peak Tram funicular down, take a breather among the greenery of Hong Kong Park, then walk to Central, home to top hotels, shopping malls and restaurants. In these streets at lunchtime you'll experience the city's vibrating energy.

• 01:00PM Delicious eats

Vellington Street

No visit to Hong Kong is complete without a traditional Chinese fast-food lunch—and Wellington Street in Central is the place. Here, Wang Fu (Peking dumplings) and Tsim Chai Kee (noodles) are Michelin-recommended, though a no-reservations policy means there's probably a queue.









CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT A former prison, Tai Kwun is now a cultural hub; The Bruce Lee statue graces The Avenue of Stars; The Peak Tram funicular is a must-do; Wellington Street has many Chinese fast food options.

🕑 02:00pm

Market value Mong Kok

Take the MTR (subway) across the harbour to Mong Kok in deepest Kowloon, where by now the Ladies' Market on Tung Choi Street should be in full swing. From curios and handbags to luggage—plus plenty of photo-ops—you'll find them all on this kilometre-long stretch lined with stalls.



In a prominent spot in Tsum Sha Tsui, by the waterfront, the city's main public art museum is home to a collection of 18,000 pieces, ranging from Chinese antiquities to modern art. After, walk along The Avenue of Stars promenade, Hong Kong's answer to the Hollywood Walk of Fame, catch the Star Ferry to go back to the main island.

Step on to the Central— Mid-Levels Escalator for the short ride to SoHo, the city's happening area. Start at Tai Kwun, a former colonial police station and prison that's now a cultural hub, then wander the streets for award-winning cocktail hangouts like Bar Leone, Courtroom, The Old Man, and The Opposites.



STYLISH STAYS 1/ Rosewood Hong Kong

has arguably the greatest wow factor of any city hotel. Located in Tsim Sha Tsui, the luxurious 65-storey property features sumptuous guestrooms with sensational views, as well as 11 restaurants and a vast spa. Only problem? You may never want to leave.

2/ The Hari Hong Kong is an elegant bolthole conveniently equidistant from the Causeway Bay and Wan Chai MTR stations. Rooms are stylish yet cosy and the hotel's two restaurants are highly recommended.

3/ AKI Hotel Hong Kong is a sleek sanctuary in busy Wan Chai, whose rooms combine comfort with a cool vibe. Dine on French cuisine at TANGRAM Bistro and Bar, then indulge in a tipple at Uncle Ming's bar.

08:00pm Dinner is served Yung Kee Restaurant

End your day of exploration with an authentic taste of classic Cantonese cuisine in appropriately august surrounds at Yung Kee Restaurant on Central's Stanley Street. Charcoalroasted goose is the restaurant's signature, but the menu also features a wide choice of seafood. fish. meat and—often rare in local dining rooms—an array of vegetarian choices.



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A festival of unity and devotion





I n a world that rarely slows down, Rath Yatra in Puri brings a moment of pause, joy, and shared celebration. Once a year, Lord Jagannatha, along with his brother Balabhadra and sister Subhadra, leaves the sanctity of the Sri Jagannatha Temple and takes to the streets of Puri. He doesn't stay hidden behind temple walls—he comes out to meet his people. He walks, sways, and smiles, as if soaking in the love that fills the air.

This is a festival you don't just watch—you become part of it. People pull the chariots, walk alongside the deities, and chant with strangers who feel like family for the day. The chariots are massive, hand-built, and move slowly through Bada Danda, the wide grand road that becomes a river of devotion.

The story begins after Snana Purnima, when the deities are said to fall ill after their ceremonial bath. They rest for a few days—like anyone would after catching a fever—and when they feel better, they step out for a change of scene. The journey to Gundicha Temple, their aunt's home, feels familiar. It's a joyful break, a family trip that many look forward to all year.

Rath Yatra feels deeply human. It speaks of rest, renewal, celebration, and the warmth of stepping out with your loved ones after recovery. It connects with anyone who values family, shared joy, and traditions that feel like home.

When we crave connection and meaning in the middle of busy lives, this festivaloffers both—with chariots, chants, and a smile from the Lord himself.

Where the Divine Leads, DISCOVERY FOLLOWS

Blue flag Beach: Puri's Golden Beach, holds the Blue Flag certification—an emblem of cleanliness, safety, and eco-conscious coastal living.

Konark: Just 35 km from Puri, the majestic Sun Temple at Konark stands as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a timeless tribute to the Sun God.

Bhubaneswar: The "Temple City of India" blends ancient shrines like the Lingaraj Temple with a vibrant urban culture and rich culinary offerings.

Bites YOU'LL LOVE

You'll relish every morsel of Abhada - A sacred, pure vegetarian meal from Jagannatha Temple with rice, dal, veggies, and desserts—offered as Mahaprasad. While Kanika is a sweetened aromatic rice flavoured with ghee, cardamom, and raisins—often served during festive meals.

- Deba Snana Purnima 11 June 2025 Rath Yatra - 27 June 2025 Sandhya Darshana - 04 July 2025 Bahuda Yatra - 05 July 2025 Suna Besha - 06 July 2025 Adharapana - 07 July 2025 Niladri Bije - 08 July 2025
- Bhubaneswar (BBI) well connected to all major Indian cities.



NOTES FROM THE HILLS

The Bir Music Festival promises a range of activities and a fun experience for everyone

residential music, art, and literature event in the Himalayan foothills—that sums up the Bir Music Festival. While enjoying the cool climes, visitors can soak up the cultural vibe of this bi-annual celebration that focuses on promoting indie artistes. Attendees get to stay in camps in a spectacular venue surrounded by the mountains and streams, and enjoy every moment to the fullest.

This year's line-up will feature *qawwali* musicians from the Hazrat Nizamuddin dargah in New Delhi as well as Himachali singer Rajeev Raja, and other acts. There will be a Startup market, where over 50 start-ups will conduct seminars and other activities. The organisers also expect to host some international delegates. Do not miss the food court that will promote the local cuisine.

On a final note, the fest will be as green as possible—making use of eco-friendly glasses and boasting recycled and upcycled décor.

14th and 15th June, Bir village, Himachal Pradesh



TOP AND BOTTOM Over 100 artistes are expected to perform at the festival; When in Bir, one can also go paragliding.







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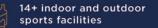


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The International Day of Yoga, celebrated in June, is the perfect time to celebrate this ancient discipline

> he International Day of Yoga is a chance for India and the world to honour this deeprooted wellness practice—and 2025 is no exception. Countless events have been planned around the country to mark the day around this year's theme: 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health'.

> One such celebration is being held in Visakhapatnam, with the city aiming to set a new national record. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to grace the occasion that is anticipated to see five lakh participants gather to practice yoga across Andhra Pradesh.

The Ministry of Ayush has announced 10 signature events that will mark this year's celebrations. It has set up a Yoga Sangam portal to coordinate events around the country. Over 1,000 organisations are said to have already registered to conduct demonstrations in line with the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP), a 45-minute sequence of poses. Separately, the Ministry has also launched the Yoga Unplugged initiative, in coordination with institutions like Kaivalyadhama to redefine yoga's role in the modern wellness space.

21st June; yoga.ayush.gov.in



AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR FY25







FY25 vs FY24

ALE IS WELL

A beer trail through Central and Western Europe allows one to sample not just the brews but also experience the continent's drinking culture

> words by Henna Shah

hat chai is to the heart of India, beer is to the soul of Europe. For centuries, it has been intricately woven into the culture, brewed in taverns, monasteries, and perfected in breweries where traditions are handed down through the generations.

As I embarked on a beer trail through Central and Western Europe, my journey began with Edelstoff beer at **Augustiner-Keller**, a traditional Bavarian *biergarten* in Munich. Here, beer flows from wooden oak barrels, crafted with water, barley, and hops—true to the German Purity Law, a 500-year-old food regulation ensuring quality. The brew, delightfully refreshing, was perfect for a summer evening. I paired it with a pretzel sprinkled with sesame seeds and a salad of couscous, leafy greens, and lemon vinaigrette.

While Oktoberfest may position Munich as the ultimate beer mecca, I journeyed further into Germany's **Black Forest**, where I discovered Alpirsbacher beer. This light, golden lager seemed perfectly suited to the untamed beauty of the Schwarzwald region. Sipping it by Lake Titisee, I indulged in a



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comforting bowl of mac and cheese, finishing with a classic Black Forest pastry. The brewery also offers immersive tours that share its legendary history and background.

After savouring Germany's rich lagers, I travelled to Prague for Bohemian-style Pilsner brews. Seeking a unique experience, I visited the **Original Beer Spa**, where I soaked in a barrel-like tub filled with barley, hops, brewer's yeast, and hot water. For centuries, brewer's yeast has been revered for its supposed medicinal benefits, and here, wellness intertwined seamlessly with indulgence.

Tasting **Krušovice**'s light and dark lagers on tap, alongside homemade beer bread, I let the soothing warmth of the beer-infused bath revitalise me. After a 30-minute soak, I stepped into a sauna and lay on a hay bed. To preserve the benefits, I was advised to only wipe off my body, avoiding a shower after this indulgent session.

As I ventured into Austria, a country known for the world's second-highest beer consumption per capita, I found its presence on the global beer stage to be understated. Austria boasts exceptional local hops and a brewing tradition that dates to the medieval era. My first tryst was with the Ottakringer Vienna Lager, a deep, rich brew with nutty undertones. It paired beautifully with pasta tossed in olive oil and herbs.

Amsterdam The Netherlands

> Bruges Belgium

During a day trip to the car-free town of Hallstatt, about an hour from Salzburg, I stumbled upon another gem— Hallstatt Das Bier. This darker lager was perfect for leisurely swigging while strolling through the quaint and interesting streets.

Heading west to Belgium, I encountered a nation known for its

WHERE TO STAY

Hallstatt Austria

SIP ON BREWS ACROSS THE CONTINENT

Brussels Belgium

Black Fores Germany

Munich

Germany

Prague

The Czech Republic

Ventana Hotel Prague is an Art Nouveaustyle boutique hotel overlooking the Old Town and offering skyloft rooms and suites.

Vienna

Austria

The Augustin Brussels is a boutique hotel and a short walk away from the historic city centre.

Sheraton Grand

Salzburg is a luxury hotel situated adjacent to the Mirabell Gardens.

WHERE TO EAT

Mona Lisa, Titisee-Neustadt, for Italian food in the Black Forest region in Germany.

Agave Restaurant for modern Mexican cuisine in Prague.

Patatak in Brussels and **FritBar** in Bruges for *frites* (fries).



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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Visitors can explore the 18th-century brewing rooms at the Heineken brewery in Amsterdam; When travelling, give the local brews a try; Beer is an intrinsic part of European culture.



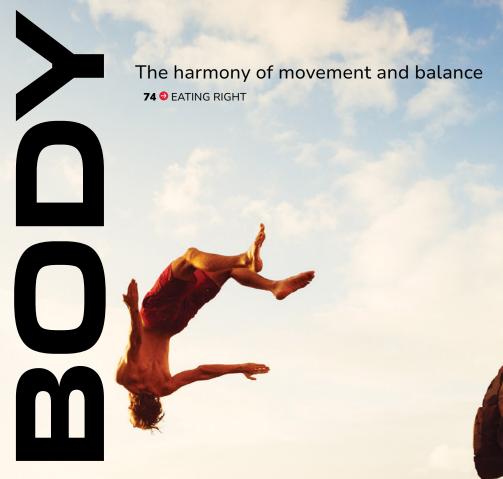


diverse beer offerings. Belgian beers, with an average alcohol content of six per cent, exceed the global average of four per cent. Among them, Lambic-style beers like Oude Geuze—wheat beer aged in oak barrels paired best with the local *frites*. At **Scott's Bar & Kitchen** in Brussels, I sampled many distinctive brews, including fruitinfused lambics. One memorable indulgence was the Cherry Chouffe, which I savoured again while seated al fresco in Bruges, paired with a veggie-loaded pizza at the Otomat pizzeria.

Belgium is also known for its Trappist beers that offer a deeper connection to monastic traditions, with six of the world's eleven Trappist breweries. Brewed in Cistercian abbeys under the eyes of monks, proceeds from the sales of these beers go towards charitable causes. "Always look for the International Trappist Association mark on vour bottle," advised our tour guide in Brussels. At Le Trappiste in Bruges, a historic 800-year-old cellar, now serving as a bar, I indulged in the Westmalle Duo, another classic Trappist brew.

Culminating my journey, I found myself at **Heineken**'s interactive brewery in Amsterdam. The experience allowed me to see, smell, and touch the ingredients that go into the iconic brew.

As the tour concluded, I left with a strong desire to return and dive deeper into Europe's rich beer culture and heritage.

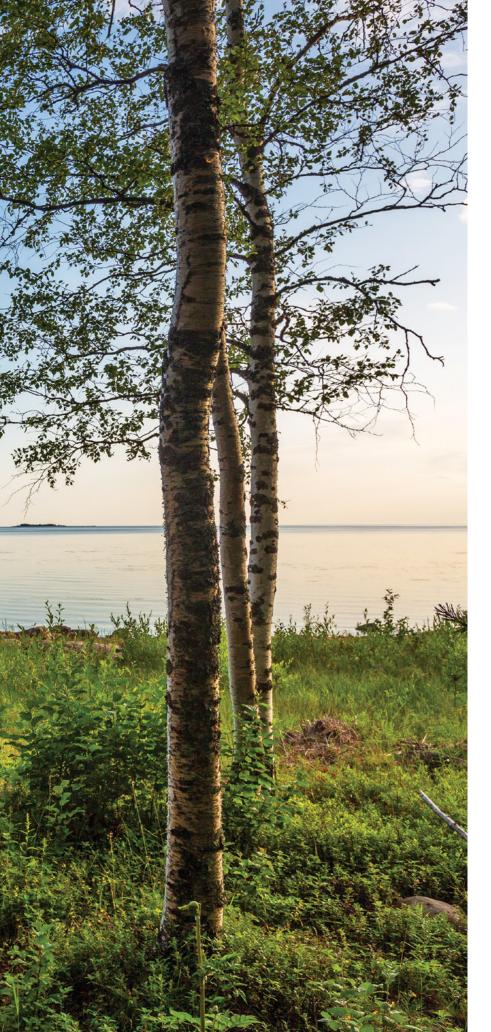


THE POWER OF HEALING

The age-old pairing of sauna heat and cold-water immersion has been shown to deliver remarkable health benefits

words by Lulu Aspinall

AUNA



auna and sea bathing isn't just a fleeting fad, it's now a global wellness movement and revival of an ancient tradition, one that champions resilience, deep presence, and powerful personal transformation. My own journey into this elemental ritual revealed that the most profound wellness practices are often the simplest: heat, cold, breath, and nature. There's something alchemical about that contrast: stepping out of the searing heat of the sauna into the icy grip of the sea, it awakens you to the present moment. It's raw, cleansing, and utterly life affirming.

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

After the loss of my father, a dear friend gifted me a voucher for a session. Initially, I hesitated, but as I sat enveloped in the steamy warmth of the sauna and then dashed across the pebbles into the cold, salty sea, something shifted. That ritual of heat and cold, breath and stillness, and body and nature brought me back to myself. I experienced this awakening at Nomadic Sauna & Sea Bathing in Southwick, a charming spot on England's south coast, just outside Brighton. The wood-fired sauna sits directly on the beach and its panoramic windows, looking out over the beach, offer the best view I've ever experienced in a sauna.

The ritual was simple yet profound: 15 minutes in the sauna, followed by a plunge into the cold sea. I repeated this cycle three times, but you can choose when you want to come out of the sauna and take your first dip, and how many cycles you'd like to experience. But be prepared: it's a total jolt. My breath caught, my heart pounded but then came the rush of calm. My repeated cycle felt right for me instinctively over the hour, resting between rounds under the open sky, in my dry robe, skin tingling, heart open.



A LEGACY OF ITS OWN

Brighton, my hometown, has long embraced sea bathing as a means of well-being. In the 1700s, it was the upper echelons of British society who led the charge, flocking to the coast in search of "curative waters." Doctors prescribed sea air and cold dips as remedies for everything, from melancholy to poor circulation. The town's rise as a fashionable seaside resort was rooted in this elegant blend of leisure and health, where sea bathing was as much about social standing as it was about well-being.

The sauna tradition, meanwhile, traces its roots further north. In Finland and Sweden, it has long been a sacred ritual, woven into daily life as a space for healing, socialising, and even spiritual renewal. It's the cornerstone of a wellness culture built on ritual, community, and serenity. Today, these traditions are being reimagined and reclaimed by seekers of balance, connection, and vitality.

WHY CONTRASTS WORK

The rhythm of hot and cold does more than invigorate; it activates the body's ability for natural healing and offers a cascade of benefits:

• Immunity boost: Cold water increases white blood cell production, thereby strengthening the immune system.

• Cardiovascular health: The body's response to heat and cold improves blood circulation and heart function.

• Detoxification: Sweating helps flush out heavy metals and toxins.

• Inflammation and pain relief: Reduces joint pain and soothes sore muscles.

• Mental clarity: Cold immersion releases endorphins; sharpens focus.

• Skin radiance: Icy plunges tighten pores, while heat

promotes renewal.
Metabolism boost: Cold exposure instructs the body to burn fat for warmth.

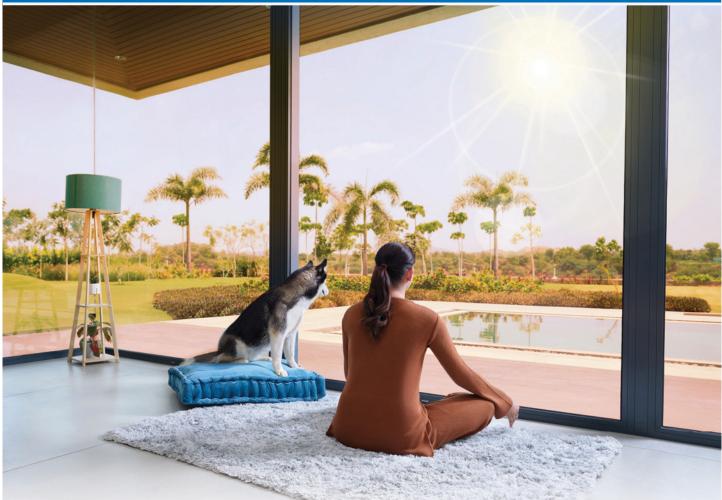
• Mood enhancement: The physical shock gives way to an euphoric sense of calm.





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body wellness

TRY IT HERE

Whether you're in Scandinavia or enjoying India's coastline, here are some standout sauna and sea bathing destinations:

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Nomadic Sauna, Southwick: Rustic, seafacing, and soul-soothing.
Beach Box Sauna Spa, Brighton: Iconic views and a vibrant local crowd to boot.
C Bay Spa, Cornwall: Wild cliffs, sea air, and serene pools.

FINLAND

• Löyly Sauna, Helsinki: Cutting-edge, modern design meets tradition.

SWEDEN

• Frihamnen Sauna, Gothenburg: A striking public sauna—on the water.

INDIA

• SwaSwara, Gokarna: A holistic retreat uniting the powers of Ayurveda, yoga, and water therapy.

USA

Asha Urban Baths, Sacramento: A tranquil bathhouse for modern city dwellers.
Fire & Ice Wellness Lounge, New York: A sleek blend of heat and cold in the heart of Manhattan.

> **GETTING THERE** Air India flies to London from Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Amritsar, and Goa (Mopa).





• Social connection: Shared experience encourages openness and community.

During my visit, I spoke with fellow saunasea bathing goers. One marathon runner swore by it for her post-race recovery. Another came weekly, saying it was "the only thing that clears my mind." Everyone came for different reasons, but I noted that all left jolly and glowing.

PURSUIT OF WELLNESS

Across coastal towns in the UK and beyond, beach saunas are blossoming. In places like Brighton, colourful dry-robed bathers can be seen gathering at dawn or dusk, breathing deeply, and braving the cold. I think the benefits extend further than purely body and mind—there's something intoxicating about returning to nature, to rhythm, and to community. In a fast-moving, techsaturated world, it offers an experience that's beautifully slow and real.

A RITUAL FOR THE SOUL

There's a deeply spiritual dimension to this practice, too. Clad in my bobble hat and neoprene booties, I may have looked a little quirky but I felt grounded, truly present. With no screens, no distractions, and just the wild elements—I felt a very deep sense of stillness. A rare, beautiful 'wow' kind of moment. This experience is a return to something older and wiser, a practice that connects us to the earth, to ourselves, and to each other.

Whether you're visiting Helsinki, stretching out in Goa or exploring a coastal English town, now is the perfect time to try it. Let the sea heal and cleanse, the sauna soothe and restore, and the ritual of sauna and sea bathing combined remind you: you are alive.

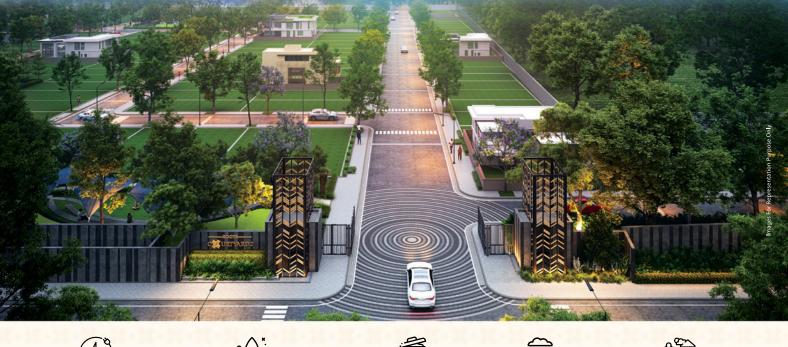




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A DIET SHOULD BE LIKE A MARRIAGE

Nutritionist Rujuta Diwekar says the diet that works is one that is long-term, like a marriage, and not a one-time coffee date

words by Mignonne Dsouza

A common-sense diet is one you can sustain for 3 or 30 years, without running out of patience, bandwidth, and fuel Shutterstock



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There is so much confusion and fear about food, nutrition, and health these days. What advice do you offer in your new book The Commonsense Diet? There is so much confusion only because there is an overload of information. Most of the information about cures, transformations, and healings that reach you through algorithms and forwards are fake. Common sense is about re-establishing your link with the soil, by buying local and seasonal from bazaars, and by cooking time-tested recipes via methods that have delivered taste, texture, and tenacity to your body and health. Common sense is about shutting out the noise and tuning

in to the silence of the wisdom of eating in sync with climate, culture and cuisine. Like love, it is at once as easy or as complicated as you would like it to be.

How can one tell if something is a food fad?

A fad is hollow, so it makes a lot of noise. It is a promise of a cure for a problem that you never had to begin with. If a food or a practice is popular for longevity, antioxidants, polyphenols, immunity, and such, it's a fad. If it's to be had the first thing in the morning in the form of a shot, seed or squeeze, it's a fad. It's a fad if it was always a part of your kitchen or rituals, like haldi or fasting, but is now getting LEFT AND RIGHT Diwekar says it's always healthier to carry your own food to work; A common-sense diet helps to re-establish one's link with the soil.

dressed up as 'science' to help your inflammation, regulate your sugars or has turned into a weight loss tool. Basically, anything taken out of context is propaganda and dangerous for long-term and wholesome health.

What's a good way to figure out which diet can work for me?

The key is to ask yourself, 'why would you like to go on a diet to begin with?' When I ask my clients this question, most will say it's for good health. I

FIVE FORGOTTEN FOOD PRACTICES THAT WE SHOULD BE FOLLOWING

- Not watching screens while eating meals
- Being grateful for the food on our plates
- Sharing our love, joy, and food with our neighbours
- Carrying a *dabba* to school and work
- Eating slowly and chewing well

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Clients tell Diwekar they want to diet in order to be able to go on treks; The author with her new book; You must enjoy food with family—that is 'healthy'.

then ask them to define what that means for them. For some it's deeper sleep, better moods or painfree periods. For others, it's better HbA1c, improved digestion or improved performance on a trek or marathon. The key is to identify the top three areas that you would like to improve in your health and to do basic home fitness tests for waist to hip ratio, stamina, and strength, and then to track progress on all key areas once every quarter. And the trick here is to look for trends and not get lost in absolute numbers. If you are improving, you are getting close to the goal. If you start on a HbA1c of 8.6 and get to 8.2 in three months, that's success; if you go from 100kg to 97kg; reduce from 36 inches to 34 inches in three months. that's all success.

The question is, can you do what you did for the last three months

for the next 3 or 30 years, without running out of patience, bandwidth, and fuel? Because ultimately, sustainability is success. Health is a moving goal post. After a 8.2 of HbA1c you want to be at 6 and then under 6, and that's a good thing. But if you are getting there feeling exhausted, constipated, and irritated, then it's a terrible thing. So, a diet that works is the one that is long-term—a marriage and not a one-time coffee date.

What are some of the tips to keep in mind when you're trying to eat healthy?

Adapt, adjust, accommodate that's what good health means. If being on a certain diet, exercise ANY FOOD THAT HAS A NAME IN YOUR MOTHER TONGUE OR CAN BE COOKED IN A KITCHEN IS A SUPER FOOD.

or lifestyle regimen means you cannot travel, work, or enjoy time with friends and family, then that's not healthy. 'Healthy' is accommodating of all the vagueness of life and it also helps you rise to the occasion when life throws you a curve ball and you are caught off-guard.

Do super foods exist? Are they good for us?

Any food that has a name in the language of your region or mother tongue, can be cooked in your kitchen and shared with your family and friends, is a super food. They don't exist in isolation, in pills, powders, or shakes, but as regular meals. They are a part of the whole.

Stories that inspire and enrich 86 © WANDERLUST

TIMELESS FLAVOURS

Old recipes that are handed down through the generations as well as ones found in legendary cookbooks, connect us to our past and create future memories

words by Matt Preston

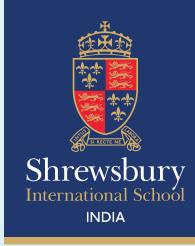
'm not sure whether it was luck or just the strange magnetism of food lovers that sees things they will love gravitating towards them, but one of my proudest possessions is my collection of old family cookbooks. Some are heavily-foxed (covered in rust and yellow spots) editions of Emily Futter and Eliza Acton that I've stumbled across in antiquarian booksellers or junk shops; others are the more treasured tomes handed down through generations of family.

These range from an early edition of Mrs Beeton and a complete set of a 19th-century culinary encyclopedia all complete with 'notes to cook' written in a neat pencil hand in the margins of favoured recipes—the voice of a matriarchal ancestor strong in the terse instructions. Here, there are firm instructions to cook the pudding a little less than instructed in the recipe, or to add a nifty, additional, ingredient like lemon zest to coriander cookies. This is the strongest of connections to past generations as it is more visceral than a portrait or a piece of jewellery.

The survival of these books says much about my family, which seems to boast a long line of keen cooks and gentlemen food writers. One, a distant uncle, even penned his own guide to the art of keeping a good table in 1865. You can still find copies and reproductions of his Host and Guest: A Book About Dinners, Dinner-Giving, Wines, and Desserts, which is full of advice that still resonates today on everything from roasting coffee beans to keeping happy hens for your eggs.

This isn't the oldest food book in my collection—that honour belongs to a small leather-bound volume Begin Your Transformative Journey With Scholarships At Shrewsbury India

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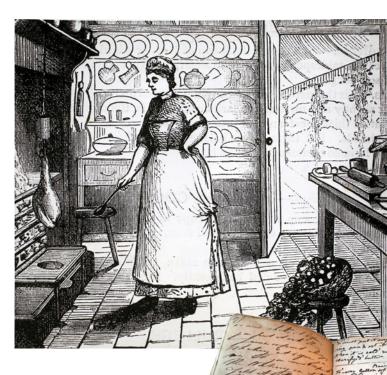
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Host And Guest: A Book About Dinners, Wines, And Desserts

ANDREW VALENTINE KIRWAN, KATHERINE GOLDEN BITTING COLLECTION ON GASTRONOMY (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)

written in a flowing cursive script that has turned rustred with age. It is dated 1765. The recipes still resonate. At a food festival in Kuala Lumpur, I demonstrated the 'macherony', which differs little from the macaroni cheese my mother used to make for us growing up, other than in offering the choice of Parmesan or double Gloucester cheese. The recipe here for beef à la mode reached millions of viewers when I interpreted it as a video on taste.com.au.

I'm not sure that some of the other 'receipts' of toothpowder or a cure for worms would enjoy such popularity today, for this recipe book dates to that era when details on measurement and cooking techniques were scant and assumed a certain level of kitchen knowledge; and a time when there was no delineation over different concoctions, whether edible or medicinal, in the family recipe repertoire.

Now that I am the proud author of eight cookbooks of my own, I am most proud of the fact that it is my mother's impeccable recipe for Spaghetti Bolognese that has become part of more families' repertoires than any other. My motherin-law's self-saucing chocolate pudding is the most popular to download at *delicious.com.au*.

Corrota

These were both favourites of my three kids growing up and now they've graduated to cooking their own versions, for the baton has been passed along

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

A page from Mrs Beeton's legendary cookbook; One of Matt Preston's distant uncles wrote a guide in 1865 on the art of keeping a good table; Pages from the author's collection of treasured family recipes.

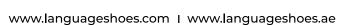


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with recipes for fruit cake, spaghetti puttanesca, and the feather-light gnocchi that I've always cited as one of the three reasons why I fell so hard for the woman who would eventually be my wife. I love the way how family recipes are a way of binding generations as well as a way of remembering them in the most visceral manner possible when they are gone. I still can't make a roast chicken without comparing it to the one my mother made most Sunday

lunches—is it as golden and juicy? Is the gravy as silky and deeply rich? To make this without the traditional family accompaniment of bread sauce—breadcrumbs cooked down with milk flavoured with bay leaf and a clove-studded small onion until satiny—would be to break generations of tradition. Bread sauce has been part of the English table for poultry since the Middle Ages.

Of course, there were some missteps and

mousse that was renamed behind on it after storing in her rodent-infest pantry. Or the fish pie that was part of our Easter tradition. We'd joke that eating this was the perfect penance to endure during Lent; such was our distaste for the faint whiff of ammonia from the ageing grey fish under the mash crust. In my last cookbook, World of Flavour, I tried to distance myself from the horror-show memories and re-invented it as a fish pie that my children would happily eat. Only time, and the views of the generation yet to be born, will tell.

amazon.com Matt Preston was a guest speaker at Jaipur Literature Festival 2025



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STEP INTO THE UNKNOWN

SE 220 2

is why a road trip through the untouched Araku Valley can really soothe the spirit

words by Deeksha Sharma

Araku Valley's green hills are home to dense forests and waterfalls

hadn't planned on visiting the Araku Valley. It just happened, like most good things in life. A friend had mentioned it in passing, saying, "Come to this area in Andhra Pradesh; you'll be greeted by lush green hills, tribal villages, scenic roads, and coffee plantations." That intrigued me enough to set out on a road trip, to discover this unexplored corner of South India.

My first impression of this hill station was of entering a world that was almost hidden. As the landscape unfolded in layers upon layers of dense forest, terraced fields, lush hills, and hidden waterfalls, 1 felt my heartbeat slowing down and all my stress melting. This region, often referred to as the 'Ooty of Andhra Pradesh', is a great escape with its pleasant climate, dense forests, and sprawling coffee plantations, and is home to indigenous communities. However, it is still far from being a tourist hotspot, which makes it a very desirable destination.

I began my journey in the Ananthagiri Hills, where each turn revealed glimpses of mist-kissed forests and endless stretches of coffee plantations. The first thing I noticed was the silence. It's not about emptiness, but the kind that makes you feel alive. Further ahead was the Galikonda Viewpoint, one of the highest peaks in the Eastern Ghats. This commanding vantage spot rewarded me with spectacular views, a refreshing breeze, and encouraged me to reflect on the beauty I was witnessing. Later, I stopped at a roadside stall to enjoy a fresh cup of coffee, as well as relish the popular bamboo chicken, a speciality of the area.

My journey continued on to the Borra Caves, said to be the deepest limestone caves in India, spreading over an area of 2sgkm and plunging to a depth of 80m. These limestone formations are believed to be around 150 million years old. A welllit 1.2km pathway extends into the caves, which then opens into a massive chamber embellished with stalactites and stalagmites. I descended around 440

WHERE TO STAY

The Royal Resort & Restaurant: With both suites and tents, it is set amidst lush mountains and offers stunning views.

Mirror Hotels & Resorts: Close to major attractions, it also boasts a campfire area.

APTDC hotels: The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) offers a choice of four hotels in the area.





recently been classified as organic. There were also more botanical marvels to wander through at the beautifully-landscaped Padmapuram Gardens. According to local lore, the garden was laid out during World War II to grow vegetables for soldiers. Today, with its wellmaintained plants, playful areas for children, and a toy train. this is one of the best places to relax with friends and family.

The next stop, Lambasingi, was a further delight. Known as the 'Kashmir of Andhra Pradesh' and often wrapped in a gentle chill from December to early February, Lambasingi is surrounded by strawberry farms, scenic waterfalls, and dense forests. This calm village is a perfect resting point if you're seeking peace and natural beauty.

On my trip, I measured time by the dipping sun behind the hills. As my journey came to an end, it felt clear that India's strength lies not just in its big cities or famous landmarks but in these lesser-known places that carry stories of living traditions, cultures, communities, and nature in all her glory.

Caves: Shutterstock; Rest: Deeksha Sharma



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The Borra Caves are said to be the deepest limestone caves in India; Bamboo chicken is a local speciality of the area; The Tribal Museum aims to conserve and display the tribal culture of the region.



88 AIR INDIA

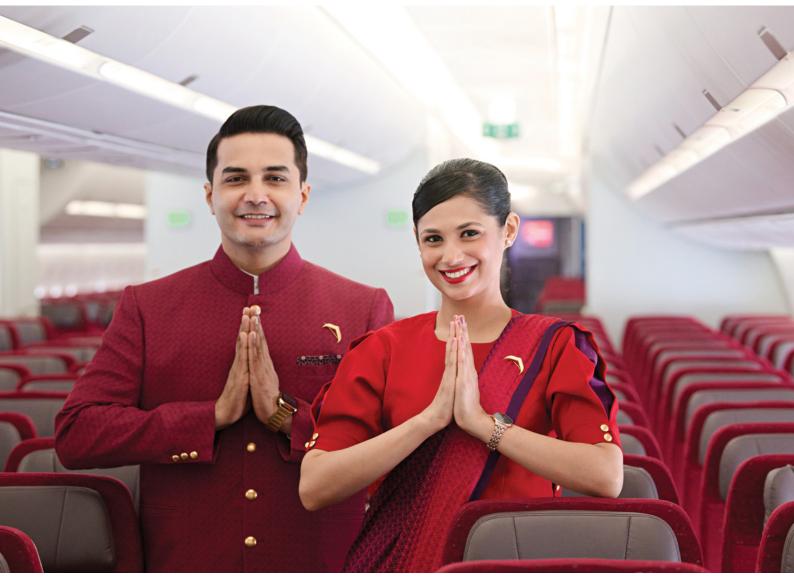
steps to witness the natural rock formations. Though it's not very difficult to navigate the caves, the dripping water from the walls makes the stairs slippery, so one needs to tread carefully and with caution.

The Valley is a treat for coffee lovers as well. Araku Valley Arabica Coffee received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag in 2019 for its distinct flavour, featuring notes of chocolate and caramel, and boasting a delightful aroma. Noticing how I was enjoying the flavours, the café owner I had bought a cup from smiled and said, "This coffee comes from my plantation. Everything here is farm to fork. We eat what we grow." With further exploration

came the realisation that the Valley's culture is virtually unknown. A visit to the Tribal Museum confirmed that. It showcased art, handicrafts, ornaments, along with food and textiles used by the tribes of the area. I decided to watch a programme of Dhimsa dance, performed by the Poria tribe to honour resident deities and pray for peace and welfare. When I asked to take a photo with the dancers, draped in yellow sarees and wearing traditional jewellery, I found myself being roped into the dance. A truly memorable night.

The next morning, I walked through the coffee plantations, eager to learn more about the local brew and its cultivation. Grown using sustainable agricultural practices like avoiding synthetic fertilisers and other harmful chemicals, Araku Coffee has

AIR INDIA



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р 90 🕜

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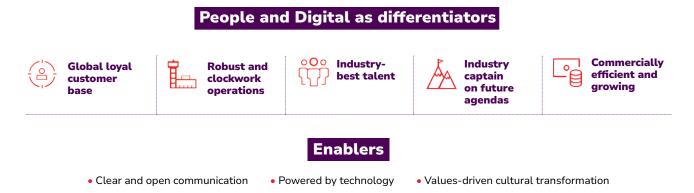


Phase 2: April 2023 – March 2024 Build for excellence



Phase 3: April 2024 – March 2027 Scale and grow

TRANSFORMATION PILLARS



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SCRIPTING A NEW NARRATIVE

Stylish seats, ample leg space, and heartfelt warmth aboard Air India's new Premium Economy left me at a loss for words

124

words by Shalaka Kulkarni

and ho Air Ind





CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT

Enjoy inflight entertainment on your personal device; Savour delectable meals at 35,000 feet; The author was on a book tour for Tadow; The inflight food menu boasts Indian flavours.



hey say stories happen to those who are willing to listen. I'd add: they also happen to those who choose the window seat in Air India's new Premium Economy. As I gazed out into the blue sky, I reflected on how stories and books are synonymous with travel. For me, movement fuels creativity. Airports, lounges, departure gates, and the soft anonymity of mid-air stillness—these were the liminal spaces where I conceived some of my latest book, *Tadow*'s, most interesting characters.

SEAMLESS FROM THE START

While planning my book tour, I made a conscious decision to fly Air India, to get that required space and unmatched comfort with Premium Economy. From the moment check-in began, the Premium Economy experience whispered its intent: ease without excess, comfort without complication. Priority boarding meant I skipped the chaos and slipped straight into a calmer rhythm. The baggage allowance (25kg) is a boon.

On board, it was the legroom that first caught my attention—generous in its stretch. Then the seat. Oh, the seat! Spacious, plush, kind. Yes, kind. Because a good design feels like good writing: invisible, seamless, emotionally attuned. But more than the physical space, it was the 'emotional elbow room' that moved me.

The meal was a delightful surprise. A *chana* chaat that tasted like it had been made with monsoon nostalgia and some 'Dilli' love. It was vibrant, textured, and unexpectedly grounding.

NARRATIVES IN THE AISLE

I sparked a spontaneous chat with a fellow traveller that spiralled into something beautiful, something wholesome. We spoke of books and belonging, of India's restless pulse. I told him about my latest book, of stories that reflect a country in the midst of retelling itself. In many ways, Air India seems to be doing the same—rewriting its narrative with grace and grit.

But the truest luxury was the intangible one: warmth. That sanguine Indian warmth that knows how to soothe without smothering. From the check-in counters to the cabin crew, the experience hummed with sincerity.

TO WRITING AND SKYWRITING

As the aircraft began its descent, I paused mid-thought to realise that I wasn't ready to land. That rarely happens, right?

Next up on my book tour, I fly Air India's A350-900—the direct flight to New Delhi from JFK, New York. A new aircraft, a new sky. I already know, I'll be coming home in more ways than one.

You see, to be a writer, is to observe. To be a traveller, is to feel. And to fly with Air India, is to do both, at 35,000ft, with style and stories.

Here's to skywriting together literally and literary!

CULINARY HOTSPOTS

Time to spare in Gurugram? Hop over to any of these food hubs that offer gastronomic excellence with innovation and variety

words by Team Namaste.ai



LEFT TO RIGHT Kioki at 32nd Avenue is an elevated izakaya experience; Pastiche offers European-inspired fare.

THE KITCHENS

The latest addition to Gurugram's culinary landscape, The Kitchens brings together 10 restaurants at one destination. At Miss Margarita, which boasts one of the largest selections of tequilabased drinks in India, try The Holy Guacamole, which pairs tequila with avocado, paying tribute to the latter's Mexican roots. Or sample a signature margarita like the Pineapple Ginger Jalapeno.

At Niko, bold Asian flavours come together in innovative dishes that define contemporary dining, while EVOO is a showcase of authentic Italian fare. End at Mjöl, a bakehouse that takes inspiration from Norse heritage. The evenings are lovely, with the area all lit up and abuzz with outdoor seating and an easy but elevated vibe. *Global Gateway Towers, MG Road*

DLF ONE HORIZON CENTRE

The most stylish food hub on Golf Course Road, the restaurants here are set amidst tall, shiny skyscrapers. Comorin, an old favourite, is still going strong, with its innovative, regional menu. Hugely awarded, the restaurant has some popular, bestselling dishes like the Bombay Pao Bhaji with caramelised onion pao.



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Another no-brainer is Delhi Club House, with a menu that culls from the best clubs across the country. Try the Dak Bungalow Chicken Roast or the Railway Mutton Curry with Saffron Onion Rice (in a tamarind and coconut base) or the Yam Galouti Kebabs. New addition Banng brings authentic Bangkok flavours to Gurugram, with the promise of fresh ingredients and traditional recipes, sans cliches. So, no Pad Thai here! *Golf Course Road*

32ND AVENUE

Originally established in 1990, this revamped consortium boasts more than 20 restaurants and cafés, including Olive Bar & Kitchen, The Grammar Room, Carnatic Café, Greenr, and Gurugram's favourite, The Monk. True to its core, it offers Asian flavours reflected in comfort food like noodle bowls and an assortment of dimsums.

Or try Pastiche, a brand new European-inspired café experience, where classics are given a fresh twist. Try the Mushroom Cappuccino Soup, a creamy starter accompanied with black garlic brioche or the delectable Pressed Pork Belly with port sauce.

Kioki is new, too; this *izakaya* is elevated by its homage to Japanese craft and authenticity, bringing forth authentic ingredients (the seafood arrives fresh, flown in from Japan's renowned Toyosu Market). Try the bespoke cocktails—laced with yuzu, *shiso*, and rare Japanese botanicals—or sample something from the curated sake and whisky programme. *NH 48, Sector 15 Part 2*

WORLDMARK

What's not to like about a swishy mall with an Instagrammable water body, plus shopping, dining options, and a movie theatre? Spread across seven acres, Worldmark is one of Golf

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP

Chatuchak Champa is a tangy drink at Banng; Samosa Soup at Burma Burma is a new experience; Andhra chicken with murukku at Comorin; Miss Margarita has a contemporary Mexican vibe; Soldado at Miss Margarita; Fennel Paloma at Comorin.

Course Extension's most popular hangouts. Try a Berry Blast or Mint Julep at Bahce, a Turkish-inspired café with al fresco seating amid lush plants. If you're craving a good old North Indian meal, your best bet is Dhaba. The Mutton Balti and the Dal Dhaba both satiate—literally and figuratively. *Maidawas Road, Sector 65*

CYBER HUB

Just off the NH 8, closest to the airport, sits this swanky courtyard with more than 60 dining options. Pop by the United Coffee House Rewind, a modern rendition of a Delhi stalwart, and get access to dishes inspired by every nook and cranny of India. Try Changezi Murg, a recipe that draws from the streets of Old Delhi, or Nargis Ke Kofte, a minced lamb and egg curry popular from the days of the Raj. Vegetarians can consider Burma Burma; a must-try is the Tea Leaf Salad. Want to try something new here? The Samosa Soup (a Burmese lentil soup topped with samosa and other toppings) is a fun pick.

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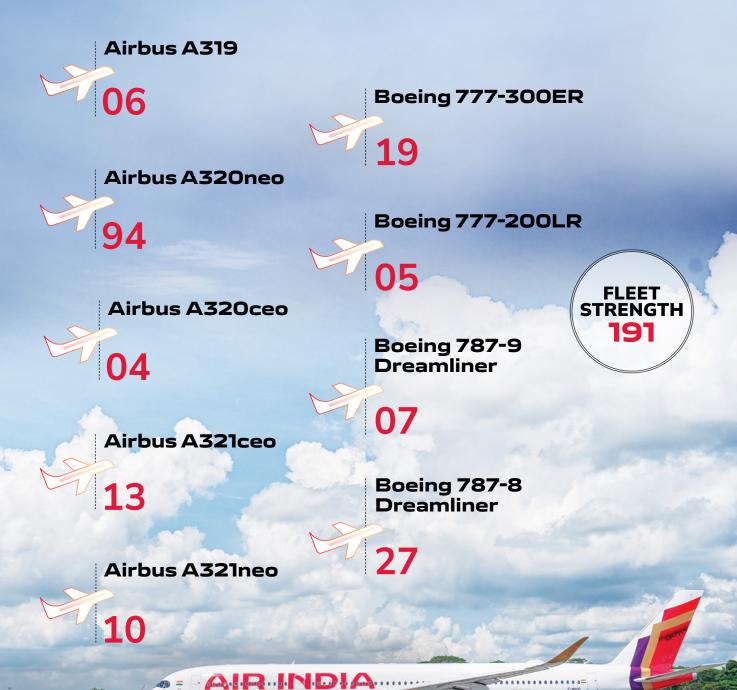
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A look at the aircraft in Air India's fleet*

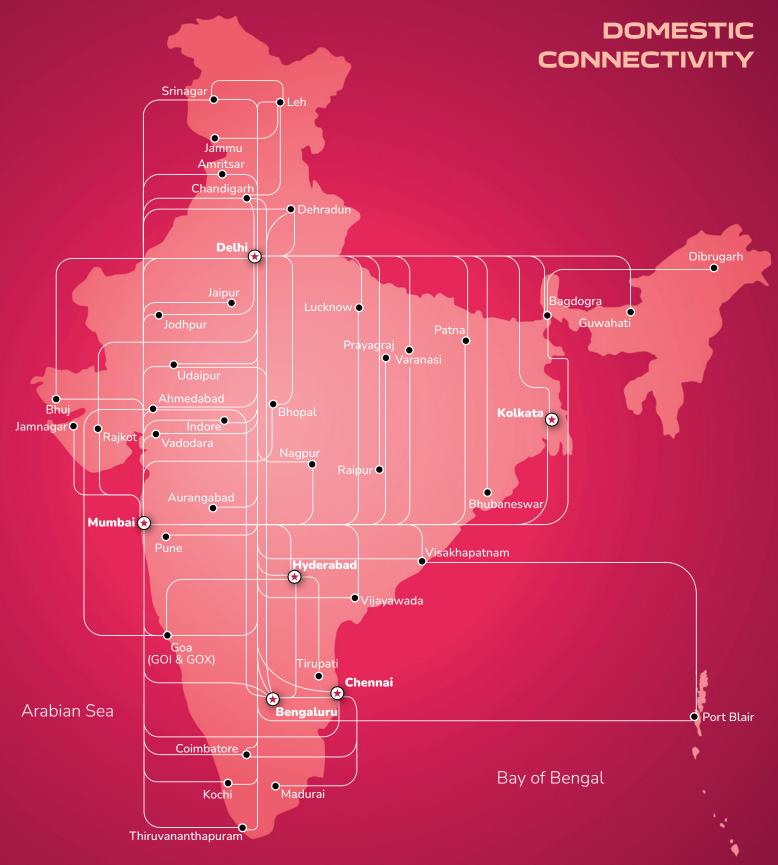


Airbus A350-900

06

*Total number as on 23rd May 2025; This fleet count is exclusive of Air India Express (Air India Group's low-cost carrier)





*Map not to scale. The depiction and use of routes and boundaries are for informative purposes only. *This route map pertains only to destinations served by Air India. *Route map as on 19th May 2025.

Indian Ocean

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Air India flies non-stop to 41 destinations across five continents from multiple Indian cities (pinned on the map of India)

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	Amsterdam (AMS) <>	DEL	
	Copenhagen (CPH) <>	DEL	
	Frankfurt (FRA) <	DEL	вом
	Milan (MXP) <>	DEL	
	Paris (CDG) <>	DEL	
	Vienna (VIE) <>	DEL	
	Zurich (ZRH) <>	DEL	
	Tel Aviv (TLV) <>	DEL	

UK

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North America

4

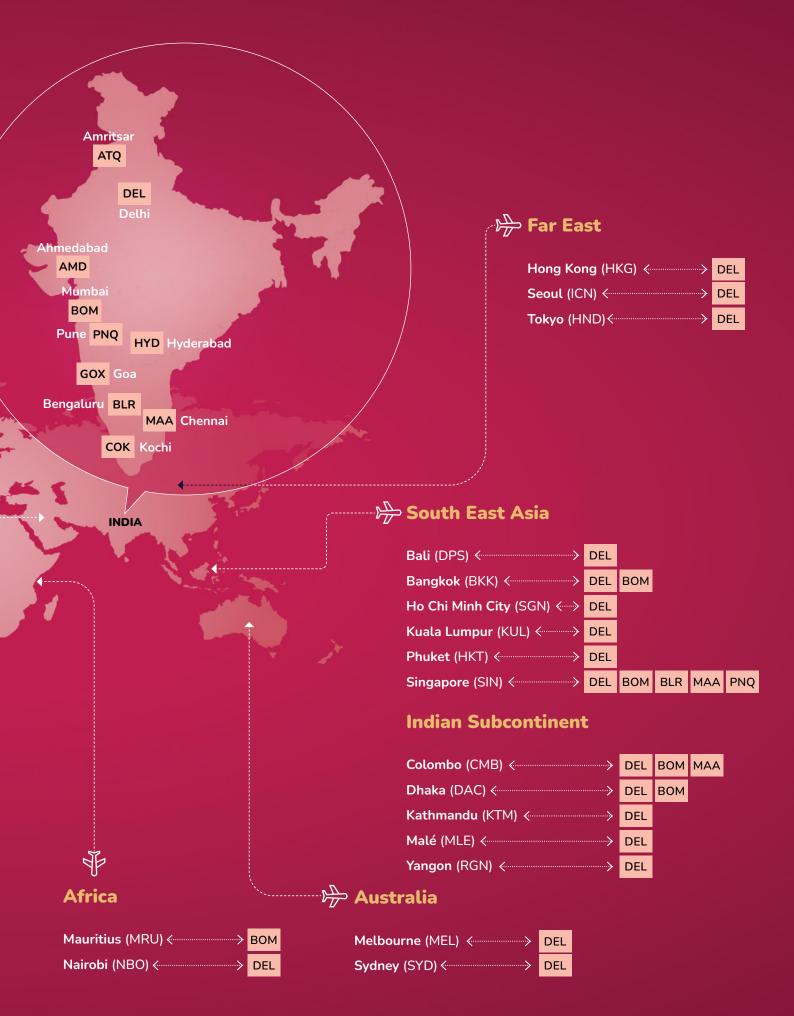
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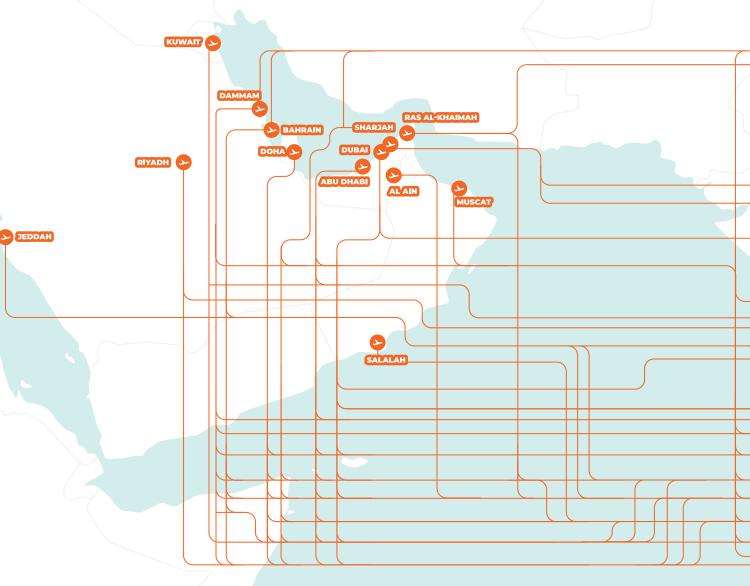
*Flights to Tel Aviv are temporarily suspended

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- *Route map as on 19th May 2025



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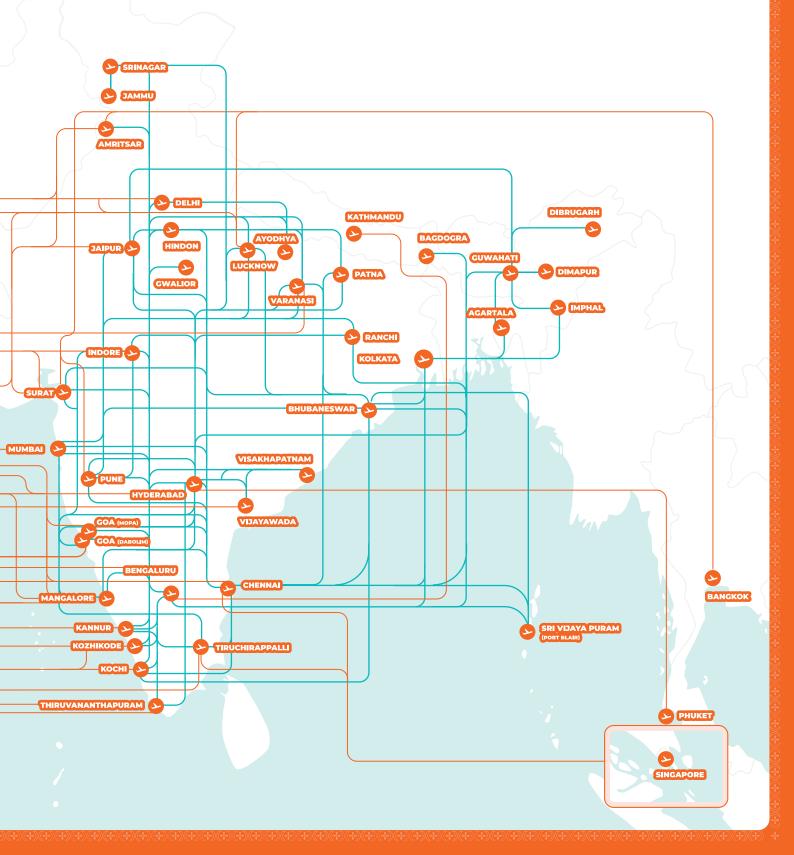


International Flights

Domestic Flights

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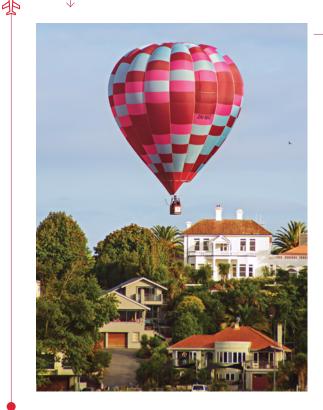
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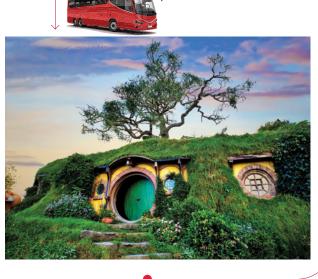
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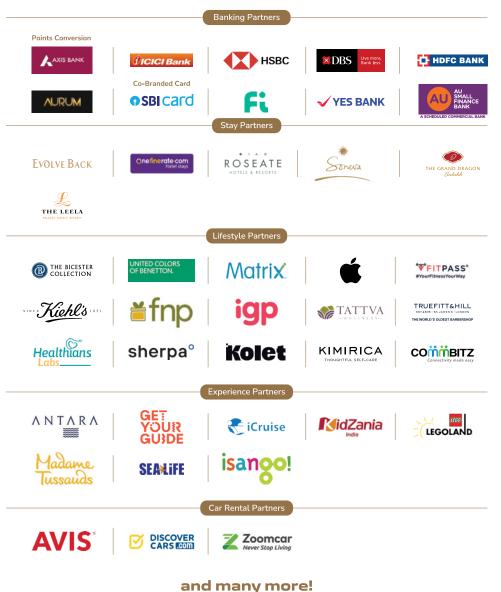


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November 26, 1949, marks the historic adoption of the Constitution of India, which came into effect on 26th January 1950. It is a cornerstone of democracy, equality, and justice for all Indians.

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MISSION LIFE

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नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने अपने एयर-सेवा पोर्टल को अपग्रेड किया है जो उपयोगकर्ताओं को ऑनलाइन शिकायतें जमा करने, ट्रैक करने और भारत में हवाई यात्रा के बारे में जानकारी प्राप्त करने की अनुमती देता है। सेवा संबंधी किसी और जानकारी के लिए, आप airsewa.gov.in पर लॉगिन कर सकते हैं। The Ministry of Civil Aviation has upgraded its Air Sewa portal that allows users to submit and track grievances/complaints online and get information about air travel in India. For any further service-related information, you can login to airsewa.gov.in

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नागर विमानन मंत्रालय द्वारा 13 airports -दिल्ली, बेंगलूरु, वाराणसी, पुणे, कोलकाता, विजयवाड़ा, हैदराबाद, अहमदाबाद, मुंबई, जयपुर, लखनऊ, गुवाहाटी और कोचीन के लिए, डिजी यात्रा की सुविधा का शुभारंभ किया गया है। डिजी यात्रा ऐप को डाउनलोड करके खुद को नामांकित करें, और इन एयरपोर्ट्स पर बिना रुकावट के, यात्रा का अनुभव करें।

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has launched Digi Yatra facilities at 13 airports, namely Delhi, Bengaluru, Varanasi, Pune, Kolkata, Vijayawada, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Jaipur, Lucknow, Guwahati, and Cochin. You can avail of it yourself and have a hassle-free experience at these airports. To avail the facility, download Digi Yatra app and register yourself on it.



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COAST TO COAST

Actor-author **Kal Penn** keeps going back to Ireland's West Cork for its serene embrace

AN UNFORGETTABLE MEMORY

My visits to West Cork, Ireland. I have been there a few times because of how incredible it is—clean air, friendly people, and the freezing water.

MY LOCAL EXPERIENCE

There's a lake called Lough Hyne, which is bioluminescent and you can go kayaking there.

A FARE TO REMEMBER

There is plenty of seafood and traditional Irish fare. The oysters here are amazing. You must go to JC's Takeaway; it serves the best chicken nuggets.

I RECOMMEND

Take a ferry to a small island off the coast of West Cork called Cape Clear. Do not miss this as it's a beautiful place. Walk around the island and try their artisanal sheep milk ice cream. The place will make you feel like you're in a novel.

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