

# Hash#tag

INDIA

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February 2022

# 8

UNUSUAL  
TRAVEL  
DESTINATIONS

FASHION  
TRENDS  
2022

**Sibling  
Bond:**  
Shraddha &  
Siddhant  
Kapoor

**Giving back:**  
*Celebrities and  
their charities*

**TACKLING  
MENTAL HEALTH**

Actress and psychologist  
**Dr Aditi Govitrikar**

# MRUNAL THAKUR

"GIRLS IN THE  
INDUSTRY ENVY ME"

READ  
NOW



**TRAILBLAZERS**  
**MURALI YADAMA**

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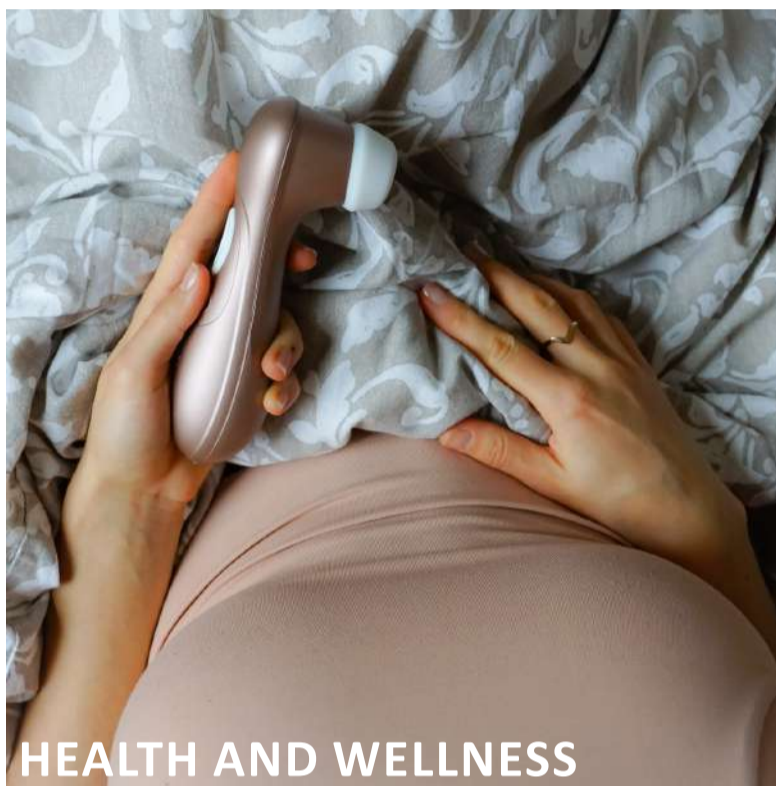
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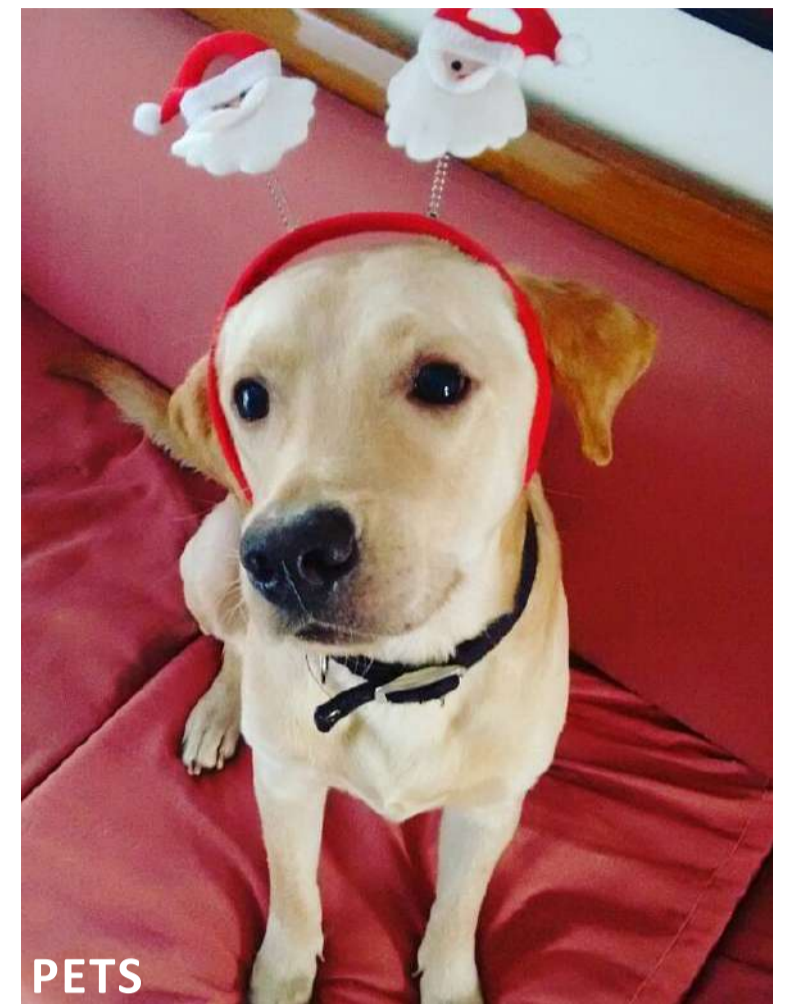
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# From the **E**EDITOR

## No pressure, singles!



In India being single is almost taboo. Reach the age of 18 or, at the most 20, and families are already planning the Big Fat Indian Wedding for their kids. For those from liberal families, you have another 4 to 5 years before the pressure builds up. But, the big debate continues. While many modern-day men and women want to settle down in their careers and lives before finding a partner, the old school advocates the idea of early marriage. The earlier you marry, the easier it is to make compromises, to adjust and settle down – or so they believe.

While the old and new schools continue their debate, the country has seen a slow growth of youngsters procrastinating or completely forgoing marriage in the name of being modern. They do not want to surrender to a life of domestic drudgery. And this change has become easier than ever before. Now, several businesses cater specifically to singles. From super fun dating apps (I am personally envious about this one, I never got to swipe right), to a singles night out, solo dinner experiences to even holidays and travel tours for singles, being single has never felt so good or right before.

It's completely okay to be single, but I believe one must be single for the right reasons. Don't choose to remain single to prove a point to anyone, be it the annoying aunt who is constantly pestering you and your family about finding you a bride/groom before you get too old, or before all the good ones are married away.

Yes, you may be financially independent, but marriage isn't always about financial dependence. It is also about building emotional dependence. Again, a lot of people are worried about losing their identities. You may think of entering a relationship as a sacrifice, believing you'd be losing your sense of independence and freedom. In a good relationship, worlds grow, not shrink. But if you have chosen the path of singlehood, then make sure it's based



on a strong foundation of self-worth and personal development.

Every February, the pressure grows on everyone – singles and couples alike. For the singles, we have great interviews by experts on embracing singlehood the right way. For those in love, do read up on our romantic picks and choices. Gracing the cover we have actress Mrunal Thakur, who is currently the envy of every actress in Bollywood. From her choice of roles to her working relationships, she is currently the reigning queen of the silver screen.

With yet another content-packed issue, we wish all the readers a love-filled month and like I said earlier. Singles, no pressure, please!



Sinduri Vuppala



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HAPPINESS  
CO**



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AND  
CRUNCHY**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## FEBRUARY 2022

### Fiesta Music Festival

Bangalore is calling all the music aficionados to be a part of the Fiesta Music Festival. Gigs, concerts, food, fashion, drinks and entertainment are all guaranteed. This festival commemorates the season's first noon party!

Date: 6 February 2022

Time: 11:30 am – 7:00 pm

Venue: XOOX Brewmill, Koramangala

6

Feb 2022



### Fashion Jalsa Exhibition

11-14  
Feb 2022

Fashion enthusiasts! An opulent event exhibiting all kinds of fashion, bridal couture, jewellery, accessories and decor from all over India is all set to parade at the Fashion Jalsa expo. Come, be a part of this exquisite fair.

Date: 11 February – 14 February 2022

Time: 10 am – 7 pm

Venue: World Trade Center, Mumbai

### DadaSaheb Phalke International Film Festival

Dadasaheb Phalke International Film Festival, India's largest annual film event, is fast approaching, and the magnificent gala is likely to be packed with grandeur, large victories, and unforgettable highlights, as it has been in previous years. The event will honour the magnificence of Indian cinema while also commemorating 75 years of freedom. The annual event has established a precedent by celebrating three major areas of the Indian film world on a single platform.

Date: 21 February 2022

Time: 7:30 am – 12:00 pm

Venue: Taj Land Ends, Mumbai

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Feb 2022



### Bacardi NH7 Weekender

19-20  
Feb 2022

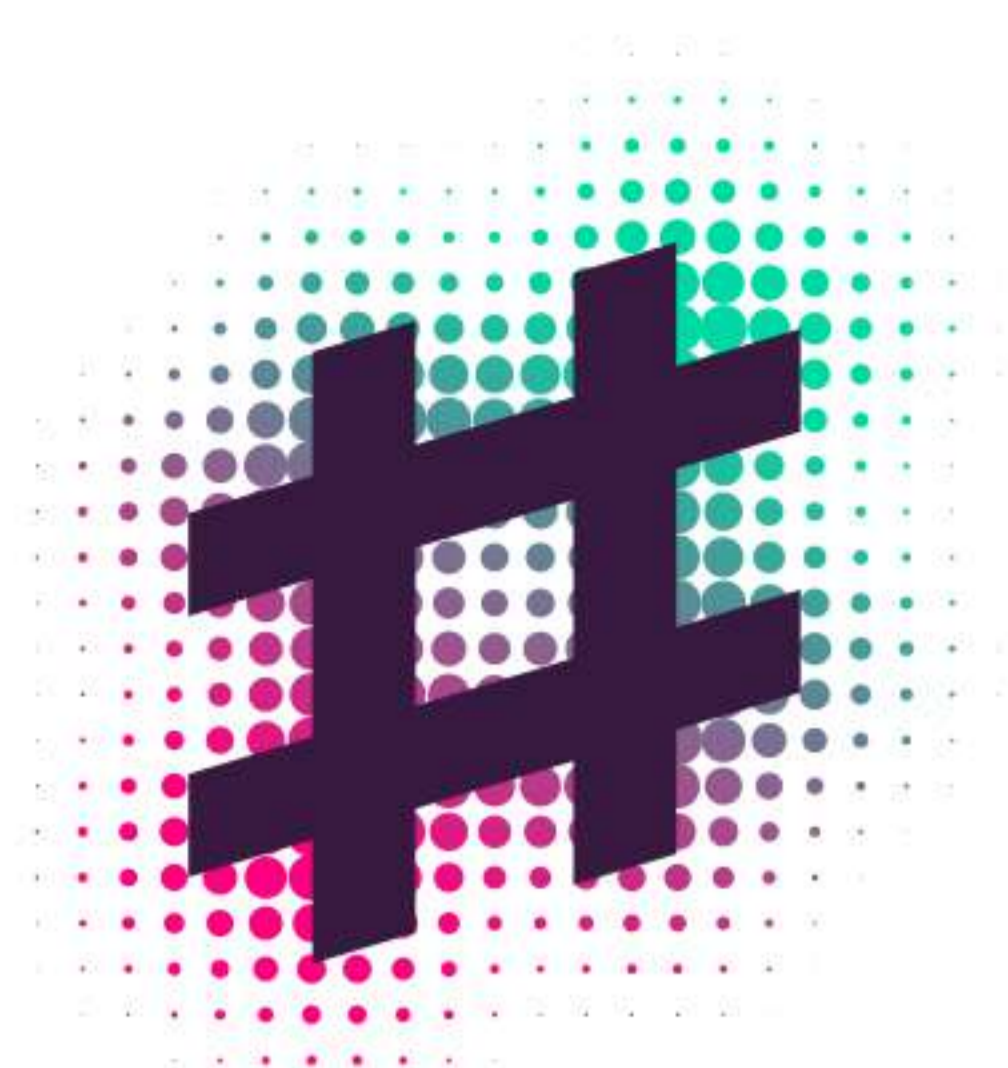
The BACARDI NH7 Weekender is returning to the style city this year. The scenic roads, storytelling ambience, and luscious foliage fill the evening with an enjoyable environment. The BACARDI NH7 Weekender glasses, activities, humour, and unique Bacardi drinks are all making their way to Delhi. The event entails a registration fee.

Date: 19 February – 20 February 2022

Time: 4:00 pm onwards

Venue: Delhi

To get your events featured mail us at [contact@hashtagmagazine.in](mailto:contact@hashtagmagazine.in)



h a s h t a g

TRENDING NOW

TRENDING  
NOW

# MRUNAL THAKUR LANGUAGE, COUNTRY, STATE – DOESN'T MATTER

**Mrunal Thakur** is not an unfamiliar face. The star began her career with shows on Star Plus, and soon found her way to the silver screen, amidst critical acclaim for her television performances. Her film debut, *Love Sonia*, propelled her to fame, her presence heavily lauded. With *Super 30*, this rising star has shown the industry that she chooses scripts with precision. In a free-flowing chat with **Lipika Varma**, Mrunal Thakur speaks of her upcoming projects, her experience in the industry till date, and her relationships within the film fraternity.



**Despite your young career, you have grown to be one of the most wanted actors for directors in both Bollywood and Tollywood, bagging roles with ease.**

The mantra of me bagging roles is very simple – I prefer giving look tests because it allows me and my director to understand if I fit the role. I have worked hard in order to reach where I am today. What does it take to be an actor? I have experienced countless sleepless nights, going from one set to another without a wink in between. We don't eat our lunch on time. Sometimes, in the middle of a scene, you end up breaking your bones. I have broken two teeth. As actors, we miss our personal life and we fail to be in touch with our own family, despite living in the same house. I have to miss meeting my family days at a stretch. They do feel bad when I miss family events, but they always extend their support.

**Are you a religious person? Is there a god you look to for guidance?**

As I am Maharashtrian, for me it is *Ganpati Bappa*. We always start our day offering prayers to him. It's been a regular thing for me, offering daily prayers to *Ganapati Bappa* even on sets, before shooting begins. Needless to state, my heart is all out to *Ganapati Bappa*. My mother would always make it a point that I didn't leave for school without praying to *Ganapati Bappa*.



**You are well loved for your photogenic features.**

I am friends with all the DOP's I have worked with. I have realized that right from my flick *Love Sonia* to *Jersey*, all the DOPs have captured me in a certain way. They have made me look so good that there are no inhibitions for filmmakers to cast me as child or cast me as sister's friend, opening me up for urban or rural roles. I want to thank all my DOPs, from *Love Sonia* to *Jersey*, who have made me look different. The best compliment I have received is when I was told I resembled Smita Patil.



***What does it take to be an actor?  
As actors, we miss our personal life and we fail  
to be in touch with our own family***







***The best compliment I have received is when I was told I resembled Smita Patil.***



**Tell us a little bit about *Jersey*.**

It's a film that will change a lot of relationships. It will impact you from within and ignite your passions, desires, and aspirations. I want this movie to reach the hearts of the audiences, bring out the best in them, and start a conversation about parent-child relationships.

**How has it been working with Shahid Kapoor?**

My favourite movie that I always watch, especially when I have had bad day, is *Haider*. The monologue boosts my energy, peps me up and I feel nice. I have watched it multiple times – Vishal, Tabu, and Irfan as all are my favourites. Having worked with Shahid in *Jersey*, I have realised that he is a wise actor. I think I have become wiser in terms of being an actor by association. It is not just acting; it is choosing the right script. Shahid has good energy, always chooses different scripts, and gives extraordinary performances.

**What are the projects you are working on right now?**

We are almost on the verge of finishing up [untitled film] with Dulquer Salman. It's a period film. It's pretty interesting – the character's names are Ram and Sita. I will leave it for guys to ponder over whether it is based on the actual story of Ram and Sita or...is it something else?





**With all the superstars you have worked with, you sure have had many a woman trembling with jealousy.**

Girls are obviously jealous of me, right from *Super 30*. They envy me. They eye me merely because all men I am working with and have worked with are extremely talented and good looking. I have always been asked this question – ‘How does she manage to get the roles she does?’

**What do you think is a marker of a good film?**

Sensibilities with good content dominating all over the globe! I think the story should be dominating; it does not matter if it is from down South or borrowed from any industry. If you see, there are Marathi movies being remade in Hindi. *Choori* was recently the winner, so the content always dominates. Language, country, state – doesn’t matter. What matters is how impactful the story is and its impact on the audience.



***I have always been asked this question – ‘How does she manage to get the roles she does?’***



# EMBRACE YOUR SINGLE STATUS

Looking around your network of co-workers who are enjoying their romantic-candle-night meals might make you feel alone on Valentine's Day, which can be stressful. Singlehood, on the other hand, is a time for us to explore our space, establish some healthy boundaries, and focus on ourselves. Relationship coach **Hritik (@yourrelationshipschool)**, talks to **Bidisha Barik** on how the path of singlehood is based on building a stronger and healthier foundation of self-worth, which influences all of our good relationships. "All the changes in perspective come from the growing on the path of singlehood," Hritik explains.



**Hritik Relationship Coach**

"It was difficult to accept being single after being in a relationship for half a decade. Accepting myself as an individual maturing in my own space presented hurdles, and establishing a secure border of self-worth and self-respect was difficult. However, embracing singlehood has been a beautiful experience that has taught me to be conscious of the boundaries that must be set and to constantly return to self-analysis."

Hritik is an ICF-accredited relationship coach who has coached over 600 individuals to date. His focus is assisting people who are having difficulties with dating/relationships and examining their self-worth. Hritik feels that when we don't comprehend our value and respect, we allow people to violate harmful boundaries, causing harm to our pleasure and tranquilly, which is ultimately our responsibility. He says, "Because my goal isn't to keep people in relationships, but to help them get into/find/keep the proper relationships, I'm just as glad for the break-ups that have occurred as I am for the partnerships that have formed as a result of my counselling."

We've been conditioned to believe that people in relationships are the happiest, and that being single equals being 'lonely.' Most of this



is conveyed through 'happily ever after' endings in movies, or by seeing our family and friends in perfect relationships, which causes us to stress about finding the perfect one for ourselves before we've taken the time to acknowledge ourselves and our preferences. Hritik goes into further detail about this.

## How can "singlehood" be embraced without feeling depressed?

If I give you a hammer, you can use that hammer to either build a house or hurt someone. A hammer is just a tool. It is neutral in and of itself, how you utilise that tool is entirely dependent on you. The same goes for singlehood. If you view singlehood as a punishment that has been inflicted upon you or as evidence of your unworthiness as a human being, you will be inviting disconnection, loneliness, anxiety, insecurity, and depression. However, if you genuinely

see (and believe) that singlehood is your opportunity for personal development and introspection, you will transform beyond all measures. It's not the event that shapes our reality, it is our perception of the event that does. So, singlehood can either be your opportunity for construction, transformation, and empowerment or it can be a pathway to cynicism, nihilism, and self-destruction. You control the narrative.





### **Why is it that people are so opposed to the notion that single individuals may be really happy? Do they believe that happy singles think of themselves as 'too good to be in a relationship'?**

Firstly, I don't think that mature, conscious, and emotionally intelligent people are opposed to the notion that single individuals can be happy in their own company. People who are opposed to that notion are usually the ones who are immature and naive. They are either influenced by the ideas born out of romanticism/movies or are encouraged by the codependent conditioning that is largely promoted in the name of love and happiness. It is usually a projection on their part. They might feel incapable of being happy alone, and hence, they project that on people who are truly happily single.

I don't think they believe that happy singles think of themselves as 'too good to be in a relationship,' rather they think of themselves as too incapable of being happy without a relationship. Every judgement is a self-judgement.

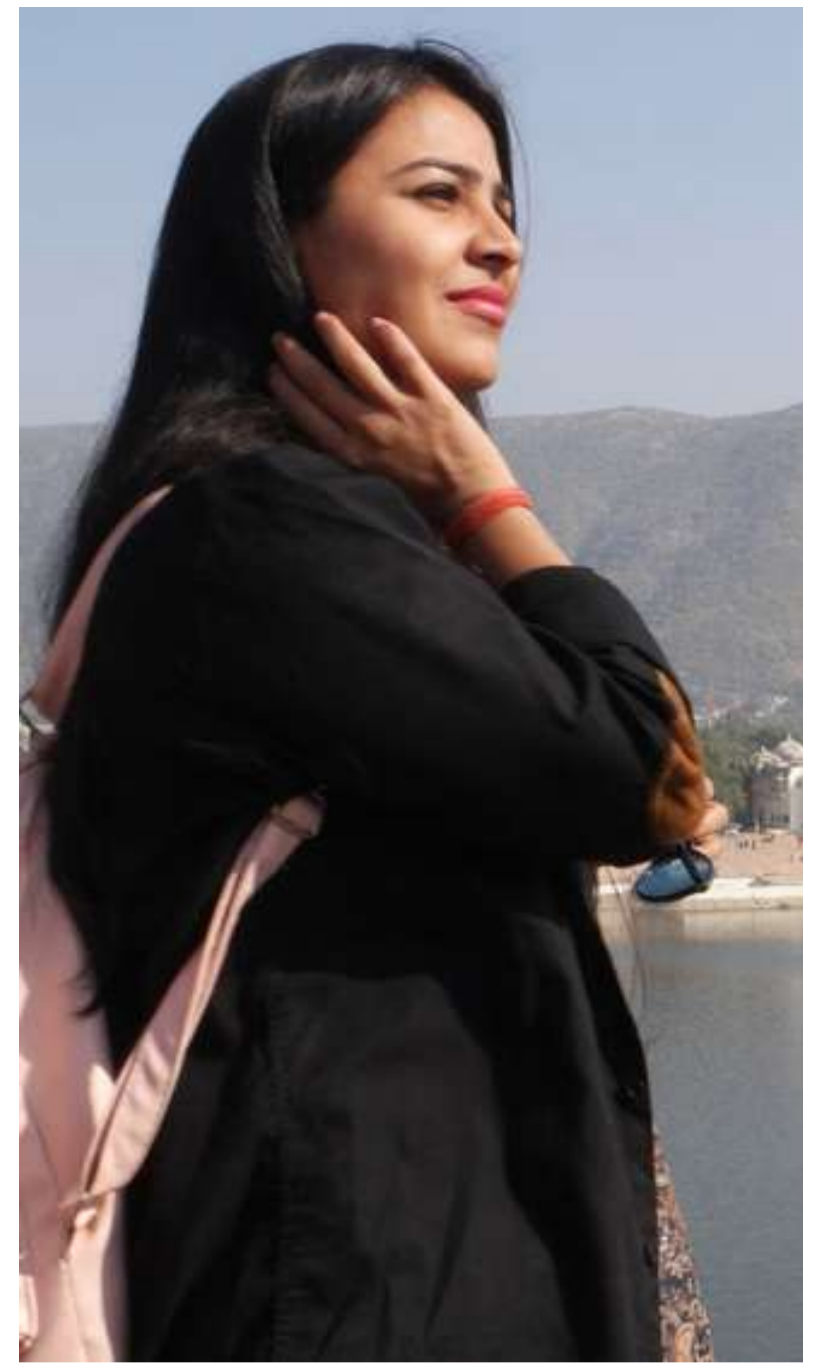
### **When we are single, why does society make us feel awful, inferior, or less?**

Because society equates relationship status (commitment) with competence, happiness, and worthiness. It sees getting into a relationship as an end goal/final destination for achieving happiness. Now, commitment in a healthy romantic relationship is important as it gives meaning to our lives and it is one of the great adventures of our lives. The problem starts when we are willing to accept just about any form

of connection/commitment even at the expense of self-abandonment. That becomes toxic to our self-worth and self-image. Since many people in our society have given in to the notion that relationship = happiness, they force judgements on people who don't comply with their vision. In my opinion, the goal isn't to find a partner, the goal is to CHOOSE happiness, with or without a partner.

### **Do you have any suggestions for those who have recently become single?**

Yes. Take this time to know and grow yourself. Singlehood provides fertile soil for growth. Get to know who you are, what do you want out of life, why do you choose what you choose, what are your dysfunctional traits, how do you mess up in dating/relationships, what do you want in a partner, what are your boundaries, how will you ensure that you make healthy choices in life and love, what is your purpose in life. Singlehood is the time when you go all-in on your personal development. It is the time for cultivating self-esteem and self-respect. But to access the superpower of singlehood, you, firstly, have to fix your mindset about it, and secondly, make the necessary daily choices that create incremental improvement in your self-esteem. Singlehood is the time when you strengthen your identity so that if and when you choose to enter into the dating realm, you can date from a position of power. When you don't have the constant distraction of someone else, you are forced to examine yourself. And through that process, you can develop your relationship with yourself and crush your fear of being alone.



### **What kinds of activities are appropriate for singles who aren't searching for a relationship?**

Everything, as long as you are not hurting yourself (or avoiding yourself) or other people (through unhealthy coping mechanisms). Singlehood is your time to explore the breadth of life and the depth of yourself. Go to new places, get in touch with your old friends, make new friends, discover new hobbies, re-discover your childhood hobbies, pursue your interests, get to know yourself on a deeper level and forge a solid individual identity. All of these things build your self-confidence, enrich your life, and make yourself immensely attractive. The only caveat is, do not use activities to completely escape feeling your uncomfortable emotions/numb yourself.



## How can Valentine's month be enjoyable for singles?

When you are focused on your personal development and grounded in your self-worth, you won't even give a damn whether it is Valentine's month or Christmas month. So, my first advice would be to pursue meaningful goals that you truly value so that you don't have the unnecessary time to stay preoccupied with Valentine's month. Secondly, stay away from social media. You will be bombarded with loads of images from your friends/family who would be celebrating love, so to avoid unnecessary self-doubt or judgement, you should avoid social media during that phase. Thirdly, go out and have fun with your other single friends. Just because it is Valentine's month doesn't mean singles should lock themselves inside their homes. Have fun and do not assign too much weight to Valentine's month.

## What is the most prevalent issue that today's singles face?

Single-shaming. People constantly ask singles questions like, "Why are you still single?" or people assuming that just because someone is single, they must be unhappy/less than. Questions like these can trigger feelings of worthlessness, inferiority, and self-doubt within singles. Having said that, I strongly believe that other people's opinions get to us only when we don't have a strong opinion about ourselves. So, it isn't the shaming that is coming from the outside that hurts us, it is the shaming that is coming from the



inside that devastates us. And that's something that we must control and manage by challenging the meaning that we are assigning to love/relationships/singlehood because we cannot control other people but we can (and should) control our faulty perceptions/unhealthy mindset.



Swati Sahay, 21  
Data Analyst Intern at Myntra, Pune

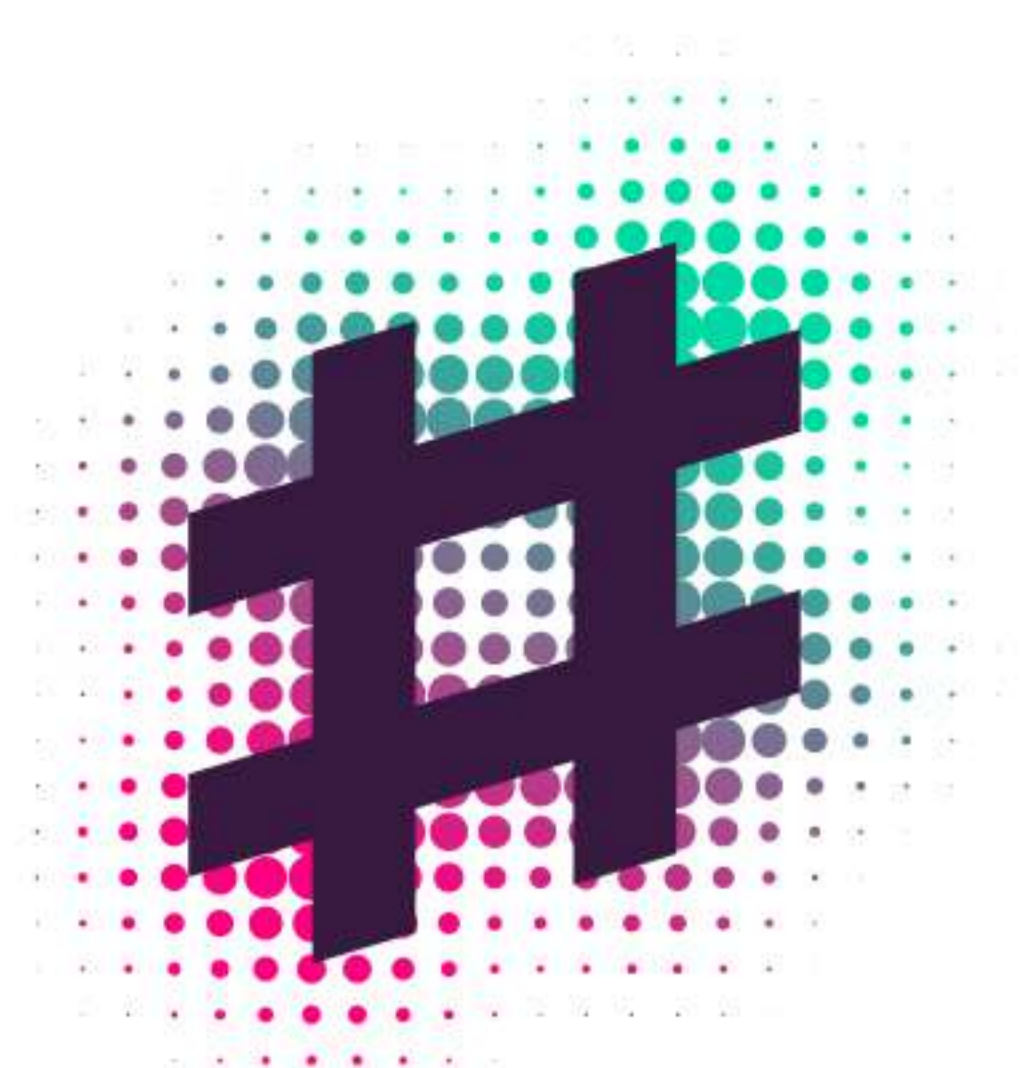
"So, last year, I wanted to get out there and have some nice dates along the way, but after having little luck with men, I decided to just give back. I found a bunch of small businesses that had a Valentine's Day collection and put together a guide for all the couples out there trying to gift something to each other. Aside from that, I recall not wanting to see other people in relationships since it cut me off from my social life almost entirely. That day, I planned a 24-hour hackathon with strangers. It was a lot of fun. I felt so successful after participating in that hackathon, and I met new acquaintances, and I almost enjoyed and embraced my singlehood."

"There's no evidence that those in partnerships are happier than those who are single. I always like to be alone. My pals intend to play an important role in my life. I make the most of my time. I don't think Valentine's Day would have any effect on me because I love everyone and accept love from others. This doesn't imply I have to receive love from one person or even be in a relationship to receive love.

Self-love/care activities include food, sleep, and a healthy lifestyle that includes happiness and physical activities in particular. Trekking and cycling have made me more functional and energetic. Since the beginning, I've never had a romantic relationship. I have no intention of remaining single. Love may strike at any time and with anybody. I'll be waiting for mine as well."



Geetika Malarouthu, 21  
Private Employee, Hyderabad



h a s h t a g

TRAILBLAZERS

# Reaching For *the Stars*



As the Managing Director and first-generation entrepreneur, **Murali Yadama** has started **MYK Laticrete** from scratch and has built it into one of the pioneers in the Indian tile and stone market. In a freewheeling conversation with **Mallik Thatipalli**, the young business whiz shares his journey so far.

**B**ringing contemporary world standards to the tile and stone installation industry, MYK LATICRETE has been a pioneer since its inception! Murali Yadama, MD of the company, has a keen understanding and knowledge of ceramic technology and was uniquely equipped to identify and tap the opportunity to sell building materials in the Indian market. "I started MYK Laticrete in 2000 from scratch with a 5-member team working closely with architects, designers and engineers to provide innovative solutions for the tile and stone market. Today, we have grown into a family of 800+ members, serving the Indian subcontinent as market leaders," he recalls.

## **BUSINESS ICON**

No journey is without its share of challenges. Over the past two decades, Murali underwent many challenges including familiarizing people with the trend of tile adhesives. "People were used to the traditional practices of construction for generations and believed those were the most reliable methods," notes Murali and adds, "They wanted to continue with the tried and tested methods, and no one wanted to take risks. We went about educating people about these modern practices. Moreover, they had to be convinced to spend extra money for superior products that met or exceeded the global industry standards."

Though it took a while, with considerable effort the company has managed to impress architects, masons and other people from the industry. Today, from IKEA to the Statue of Unity, they are involved in many prestigious projects. The proud owner points out their recent significant products especially The National War Memorial and says that their company's "world-class proficiency and products sealed the deal."



***"World-class proficiency and products sealed the deal."***

## INNOVATION IS KEY

Innovation is at the heart of the firm and Murali is keen to meet the unmet needs of the market by focusing on increasing their market share. He explains his strategy when he shares, "Increasing digitization and smarter product portfolio management will help the company to achieve robust profitability while continuing to develop and pursue the strategic direction by broadening initiatives for both medium and long term for which groundwork has been laid with a clear vision and solid objectives to meet the goals of the enterprise."

The strength of the firm is to create innovative products that cater to ever-changing customer needs. As a market leader, the company can predict future trends and invest considerably towards continuously improving products in their advanced R&D centre. "We intend to develop and pursue the strategic direction by broadening initiatives for both medium and long terms with a clear vision and solid objectives," Murali notes.

***"Our mission is to make an impact on the society which in turn will make the world around us independent and successful."***



## VALUES AT THE CORE OF THE COMPANY

"People have asked me how I would define my leadership style and my response has been to tell them about the six values I adopted which drive my work ethic even today," says Murali.

He reels them off saying, "The first and foremost is this: one must be able to accept change. No single approach can be adopted as change is constant, and so must solutions be. The second is to role model the desired change. As a leader one is under scrutiny almost all the time, and so to be able to lead the desired change by example. The third is to build a strong team and make leadership – including self – accountable. The fourth is communicating effectively about the change. The fifth is getting personally involved and relentlessly pursuing impact and change. This discipline to follow through on our commitments has resulted in a business that grew from less than 5 to an 800+ strong team of excellent people. The sixth is setting measurable goals and focusing on these goals to drive expected changes."

## LIFE AWAY FROM WORK

The entrepreneur is an avid golfer (who plays it almost every day!) and has introduced the same to his young son, Arjun during the COVID induced lockdowns! He laughs, "I was always good at games, even at an early age. Golf is something that interests me as it can be pursued long term and is an extremely interesting game."

Another facet of the high-flying businessman is the fact that he is extremely interested in using education as a tool to improve society. The company's CSR activities are directed towards the same.

"Our mission is to make an impact on the society which in turn will make the world around us independent and successful. We have taken a pledge to promote academic excellence in our way of achieving this mission while respecting our relationships. We initiated a scholarship program for the children of masons and tile applicators to support their pursuance of higher education and strengthen their academic goal."

The company extends medical facilities to the impoverished. They have joined hands with a few NGOs to improve the medical infrastructure and provided necessary support in building a fully equipped ICU at the Durgabai Deshmukh Hospital in Hyderabad.

Murali is busy creating a long-term future for the brand. "I would like to create a highly professional and transparent organization that everyone, from our customers to shareholders and employees, would like to engage with and cherish the relationship built," he signs off.





**CHANGEMAKERS**



**Bidisha Barik** maintains a list of celebrity-led non-profits that contribute significantly to society. These NGOs and philanthropic activities assist the most disadvantaged members of society by providing employment, education, healthcare, and a friendly hand. It is the responsibility of each individual to support and respect one another in order to build a nation filled with humanity.

# HUMANITARIAN CELEBRITIES

## The world Of Kindness Exists

### Puneeth Rajkumar Foundation

**Puneeth Rajkumar** is one of Kannada cinema's most well-known actors. Puneeth has continued his father Dr Rajkumar's charity work through various humanitarian activities and donated a considerable portion of his music income to charity in addition to his acting profession. This amazing actor, singer, and overall wonderful person has created a legacy that motivates many people throughout the world to work hard to establish a secure society.

In 2015, Puneeth Rajkumar volunteered to serve as the brand ambassador for the Energy Department's campaign to replace traditional light bulbs with energy-efficient LED bulbs in homes – again at no cost. Puneeth has established 45 free schools, 26 orphanages, 19 *goshale*, and 16 old age homes, in addition to continuing his father's projects. He gave more than \$5 million to the CM Relief Fund to aid his native state's struggle against COVID-19 and also donated Rs 5 lakh to the Chief Minister's Natural Calamity Assistance Fund the year prior for flood relief in North Karnataka. Through his social media outlets, he would encourage people to help others.



## Pratyusha Support



Pratyusha Support was founded by **Samantha Ruth Prabhu** and started its services in February 2014. Started by the prominent South Indian film actress, the goal is to provide unrivalled medical assistance to society's underprivileged children and women, as well as fulfilling the wishes of those suffering from life-threatening medical diseases. Samantha's attempt to help the community, out of pure pleasure and love, came at a time when we needed it the most.

They've been collaborating closely with hospitals, mainly in the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Apart from that, their collaborations with the WAP Foundation and Meenakshi Mission Hospital in Bangalore and Chennai respectively has enabled them to organise free medical camps, including an eye surgery camp for 50 senior people. Their core services have included organising free medical check-up campaigns, free child immunisation campaigns, blood donation camps, awareness programmes, and assisting families financially in overcoming difficult conditions and medical crises. The Pratyusha Support team works hard to raise medical awareness in many government schools, institutions, and other organisations.

**Website:** <https://pratyushasupport.org/>

**Address:** Ayyappa Society Hyderabad - 500 068  
Telangana | India.

## LiveLoveLaugh Foundation

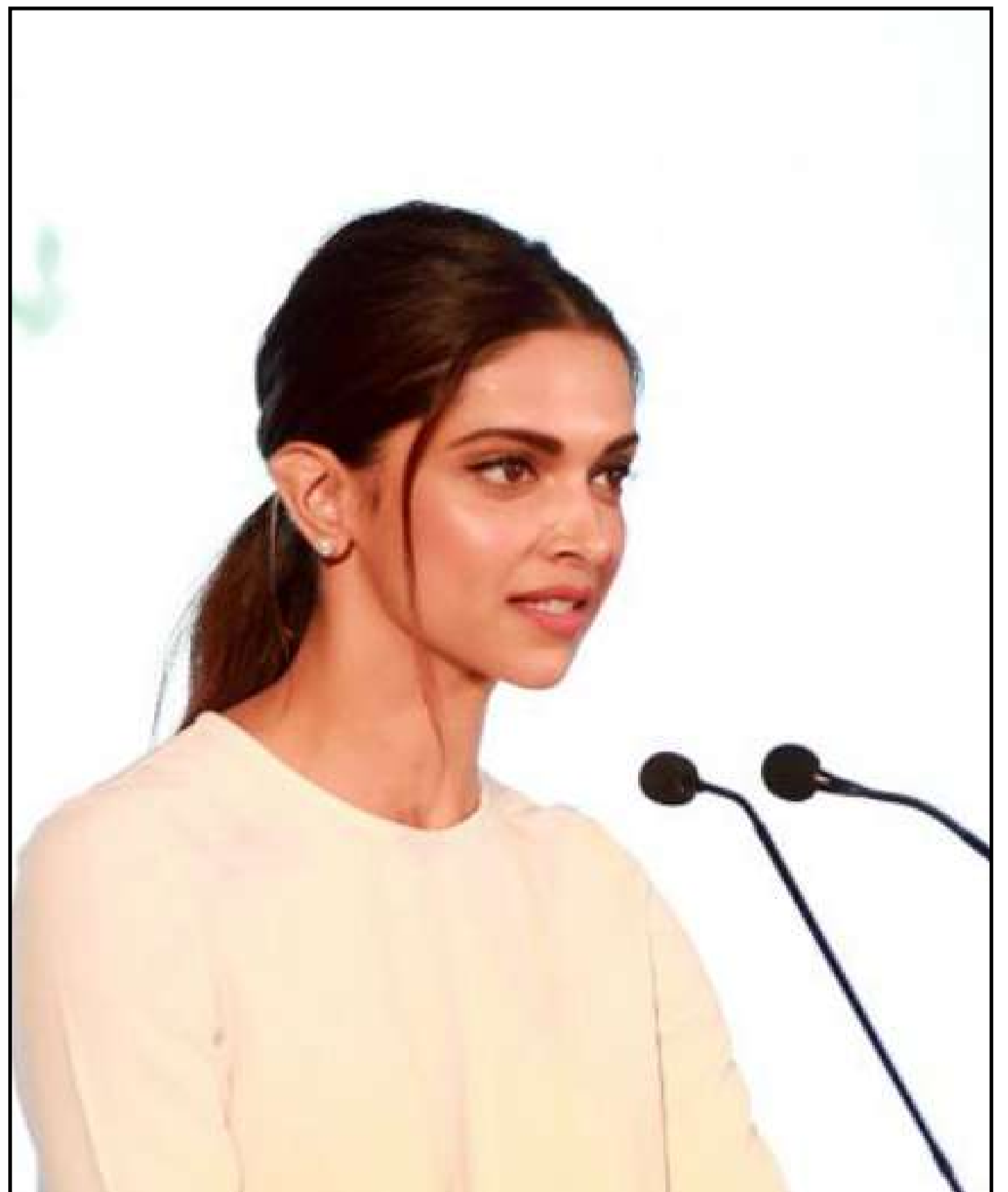
**Deepika Padukone** founded the LiveLoveLaugh Foundation in 2015 as a result of her own experience with mental illness. The LLL Foundation is dedicated to helping those who are suffering from anxiety, depression, and other mental illnesses. The LLL Foundation has launched a number of projects, including the Rural Program, in which mental health specialists reach out to the less fortunate members of society for a free consultation on any mental illness and spread awareness. Free psychiatric care, frequent support group meetings, access to government-funded programmes, and rehabilitation are all part of this programme.

Deepika Padukone, a well-known Bollywood actress who suffered from depression and anxiety, saw a lack of awareness and stigma around mental health issues in India and decided to start this initiative with the goal of saving at least one life.

One can contribute or participate in the activities by sharing their mental illness experience or through volunteering.

**Website:** [www.thelivelovelaughfoundation.org/](http://www.thelivelovelaughfoundation.org/)

**Address:** #703, 1st cross, 9th A Main,  
Indiranagar 1st Stage, Bangalore - 560038



## Being Human Foundation



The Mumbai-based organisation Being Human, founded in 2007 by Bollywood actor **Salman Khan**, offers healthcare and education to India's underprivileged.

The foundation supports a variety of causes. The Akshara High School (ICSE) was founded in 2007 with the goal of providing a welcoming atmosphere for pupils to learn in close proximity to their families. They have effectively flourished as a 'Neighbourhood School' in Kandivali, Mumbai, during the last few years. The school's mission is to promote social inclusion for educational and economic advancement, as well as to eliminate inequities caused by prejudice based on gender, caste, economic status, or religion. Being Human - The Salman Khan Foundation contributes to the education of around 200 Akshara High School students.

Being Human has been associated with Aseema since June 2011. Aseema is a Mumbai-based non-profit organisation that provides comprehensive and relevant education to the city's most vulnerable children, including those living on the streets, in slums, and in horrific circumstances. In total, the Salman Khan Foundation supports nearly 300 children. The VEER Initiative, a programme that trains challenged persons, is also supported by the foundation.

Donations can be made by mailing a cheque or demand draft in Indian rupees.

**Website:** <http://beinghumanonline.com/give.html>

## Mijwan Welfare Society (MWS)

The late Kaifi Azmi, a notable Urdu poet, lived in Mijwan. After 40 years, he returned to the hamlet that gave him his surname, which had been frozen in time, and fought relentlessly to bring it out of its gloom. His choice to leave his comfortable life in order to make development in the little village of Azamgarh, Uttar Pradesh, was based on his belief that economic growth could only be effective if it touched 80 per cent of the rural people.

Shabana Azmi, the foundation's president and daughter, continues to lead the organisation for the marginalised that was founded by her father, the late Kaifi Azmi.

Mijwan Welfare Society was established in 1993 with the goal of improving the lives of rural Indian women and girls. By establishing the Mijwan Welfare Society, he revolutionised the village's socio-cultural characteristics (MWS). Kaifi Azmi High School for Girls, Kaifi Azmi Inter College for Girls, Kaifi Azmi Computer Centre, and Kaifi Azmi Sewing and Tailoring Centre are presently operated by MWS.

Mijwan women are now financially self-sufficient as a result of carving out their own space inside their households. For the last 10 years, the Mijwan Fashion Show has been a yearly event, with celebrities like Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone walking the runways and exhibiting Mijwan's created expertise.



Mijwan women have set a goal of producing 1 million cloth masks and distributing them to ten thousand villages or one million people. To make it happen, MWS is looking for help from a variety of organisations and individuals.

**Website:** <https://www.mijwan.org>

**Address:** Mijwan Welfare Society, 702, Sagar Samrat, Greenfields, Juhu, Mumbai – 400049.

## Meer Foundation



Acid assaults are one of the most heinous crimes against women; the violence is one factor, but the long-term emotional and physical consequences are equally devastating. The Meer Foundation was established in 2013 as **Shah Rukh Khan's** initiative to assist acid attack survivors. The organisation has provided financial help to acid attack survivors such as Gulnaaz, Mamta, Anupama, and other heroic survivors, as well as offering support to all survivors by allowing them to voice their stories across different platforms. The #ToGETherTransformed campaign was started by the Meer Foundation to help survivors who are undergoing corrective surgery.

The Meer Foundation was founded as a result of the superstar's father's approach to women, which was founded on respect and kindness. Shah Rukh Khan has taken this approach further, aiming to make a difference in the lives of women who are oppressed in society.

Despite the fact that the foundation does not accept financial contributions from outside sources, anybody interested in future partnerships can contact them through their website.

**Website:** <https://www.meerfoundation.org/>

**Address:** BackStage, Plot No. 612, 15th Road, Junction of Ramkrishna Mission Road, Santacruz West, Mumbai, 400054

## The Foundation

**Rahul Bose**, the multi-talented man who has contributed the most to the Indian film industry, has also been a part of projects to promote the society and bring discriminatory concerns to the forefront.

Rahul Bose's The Foundation, founded in 2007, focuses on various projects such as REACH (Restoring Equality through Education and Advancement of Children), which was launched in 2006 as an educational initiative that provides bright students with full scholarships to lower-income families. The objective is to educate hundreds of children from all parts of the nation with the best, most comprehensive education India has to offer; it is these children who will return to their home countries as thinking and action leaders, providing a link between their homes and the rest of the globe. Another project is HEAL (Help Eradicate Abuse through Learning), which works to "lift the veil of silence and shame" that is embedded in the culture by victim-blaming, silence, and shame.

Applying for a position or giving to the REACH programme are two ways to help. Reaching out to the authorities as a volunteer will be welcomed.

**Website:** [www.thefoundation.in/index.html](http://www.thefoundation.in/index.html)

**Address:** 21-D, 3rd Floor, Film Center Building, 68, Tardeo Road, Tardeo, Mumbai 400034



## Chiranjeevi Charitable Trust



On October 2, 1998, Telugu Megastar **Chiranjeevi** launched the CCT. It began as a blood bank, then grew to an eye bank, and in more recent years, it has grown to offer oxygen through the establishment of oxygen banks. Chiranjeevi Charitable Trust has collected about 9,30,000 units of blood throughout the years. 79 per cent of these blood donations were given out for free to the underprivileged, with the remaining units going to corporate hospitals for a small price. 4,580 pairs of eyeballs were gathered over this time span, and 9,060 blind persons benefited from cornea transplants at CCT. Since 2002, CCT has also received the renowned "Best Voluntary Blood Bank" award from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for five years in a row.

To help this worthy cause, individuals can give blood or sign up for a donation commitment form.

**Website:** [www.chiranjeevicharitabletrust.com/](http://www.chiranjeevicharitabletrust.com/)

**Address:** 8-2-293/82/A/C, Rd Number 1, Jawahar Colony, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana 500033

**Phone no:** 9888895678, 9888896789

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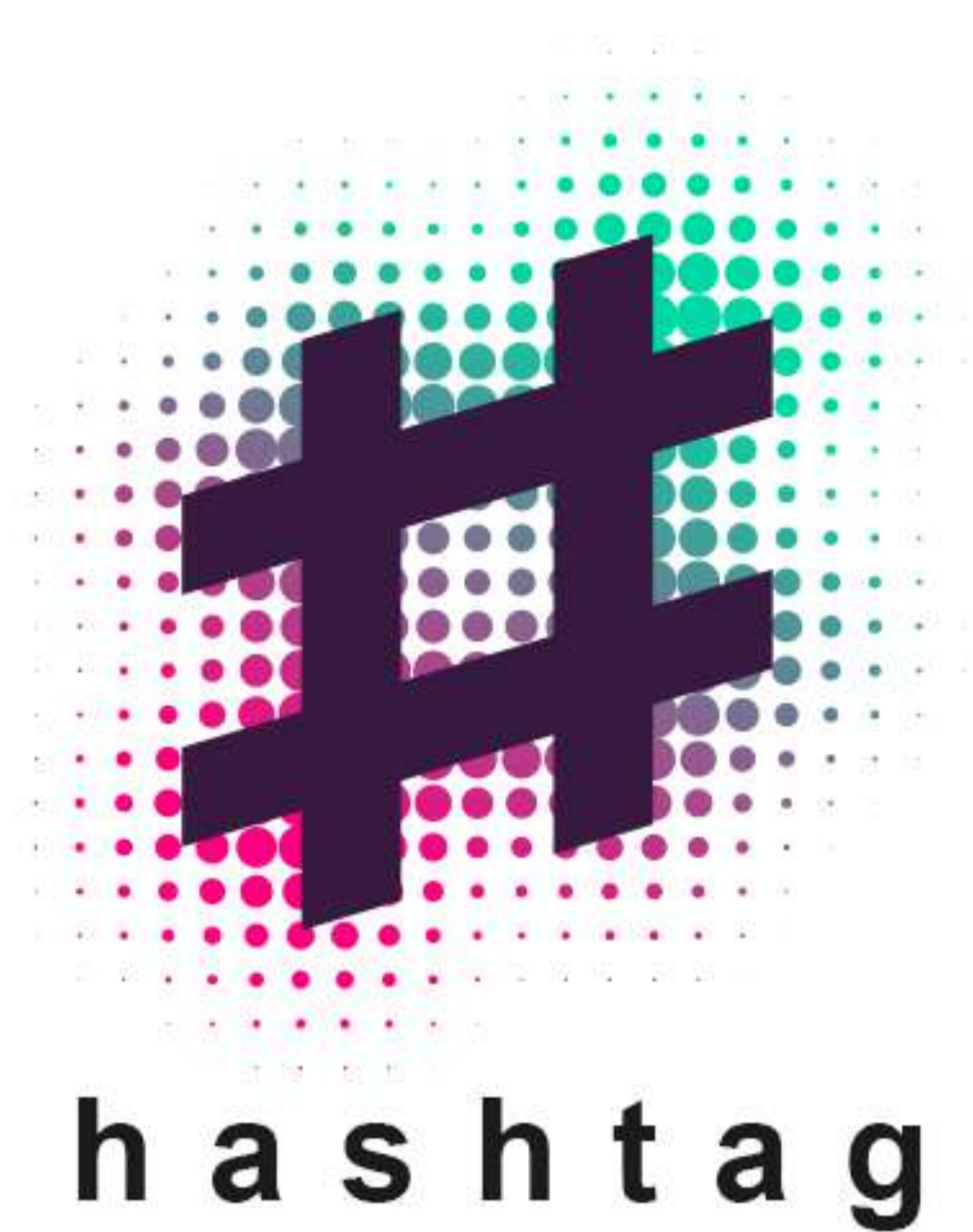
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DUSK TO DAWN





# THE FINEST PREMIX COCKTAILS

TO HIGH-TEN YOUR SPIRITS



The party season should be about having fun without waiting. Backyard parties are no longer a stressful task for the host; everything becomes easier when the top cocktail premix brands are brought to the bar counter. **Bidisha Barik** has some amazing premix cocktail brands that only require a few components to get you on the dance floor. **Vaishali Mehta, Co-Founder of SWA Artisanal Syrups**, spills the beans on the challenges that came with being a seven-month pregnant woman starting a cocktail company and how there is still a deep-rooted prejudice against women owning a start-up in the cocktail sector.

**F**ood and flavour have been the principal topics of conversation for Vaishali Mehta both at and away from the dinner table. A Gujarati born and raised in Calcutta, her employment led her to New York, where she was astounded by the freshness of the ingredients utilised in their drinks. Despite India's abundance of natural produce, she was astonished to find artificial, imported, and preservative-filled concentrates peddled in the name of taste and unique flavours. She was adamant about giving Indian fruits and products the respect they deserved. SWA was created when she combined this with her desire to work for women's skill development.

### How did the idea of working in the cocktail sector strike you?

I've always wanted to start a business in the food & beverage industry, but my determination strengthened after I was let off from a promising job after being pregnant. I noticed that women are replaced in the workplace once they become pregnant or are on maternity leave. Becoming a mother and the desire to create something unique, to convey via my acts that women are far more powerful and capable than society portrays got me here. When I was seven months pregnant, I began my SWA journey. I'm grateful for the traumatic experience I had to go through while still enjoying the most beautiful moments of parenting; the tragedy let me realise my mission more clearly.



Co-Founder of SWA Artisanal Syrups  
– Vaishali Mehta



SWA women-crew

### There are taboos deeply rooted against women. Do you agree?

Women are still laid back about marking financial independence on their own. It is important to understand that to break the deeply rooted taboos, we those taboos through our actions. Our grannies fought to undo parda and ghonghat, our moms fought to take charge of their education and ours. We take it to next level and claim the board rooms.

There is a way of life that many educated women, including myself, fall back on from time to time. Believe it or not, I didn't have a credit card until around 6 months ago. When I spoke with someone, they claimed that 85 percent of their clientele (basically credit card holders) are men.

Referring to the social stigma of labelling women as “socially-conditioning” she says, “Sub-consciously we have wired ourselves to be a certain way.”

### What makes SWA Artisanal Syrups stand out?

Most of us have used artificial, imported, and preservative-filled concentrates in the name of taste and exotic flavours. Living in a country filled with a rich variety of natural produce, it is surprising that we've had to rely heavily on artificial flavours so far. SWA Artisanal Syrups are 100% natural, free of any added preservatives, colours, or artificial flavours. They make delicious cocktails, mocktails, iced teas and craft coffees. We are a woman-owned and run company. Each SWA bottle is hand-crafted in small batches by women trained under a skill upliftment program.



### SWA Signature Ready-To-Mix Blends:

- Hibiscus Tea
- Jamun Kalakhatta
- Lemon Ginger Naariyal Paani
- Summer Berries
- Passionfruit Tea
- Tamarind Shikanji

### Find SWA at:

HORECA places pan-India –

- BlueTokai
- Third Wave Coffee Roasters
- Toit
- Druid Garden
- Carnatic Café

Online Retail –

- drinks.com
- Amazon
- Big Basket

## Quick Takes!

**Her cocktail recommendations are a resounding yes!**

### What's your go-to cocktail for a party?

With some SWA Hibiscus Tea, make a gin and tonic.

### What was the one recipe that made your spirits high?

45 ml gin, 10 ml lemon juice, 20 ml SWA Hibiscus Tea or SWA Mango Passion, tonic water, or soda on the rocks, and plenty of ice. Anywhere and anytime you want to feel like you're in the tropics.

### Flavour premixes that you can't go wrong with?

For Indians who live in a tropical nation that is hot most of the year, fruity, sweet, and zesty flavours are our favourites, and adding a hint of spice is the icing on the cake. We may not appreciate particularly powerful classic cocktails as a culture. SWA Guava Chilli and SWA Jamun Kalakhatta are two of my favourite beverages. We also enjoy experimenting, and SWA pre-mixes enable us to do so. Make a drink, either a cocktail or a mocktail. Everyone is happy.



### &Stirred:

This is all it takes for a fantastic Sunday brunch to suit your distinctive Bloody Mary flavour. Tomato purée, lemon, pepper, celery, and various spices make up this ready-to-drink mix. In &Stirred, you'll find a broad variety of cocktail premixes that won't let you down.



### Jimmy's Cocktails:

The Cosmopolitan from Jimmy's Cocktails is made with Danish cranberries, Persian limes, orange, and a touch of triple sec. The low-calorie premixes are made with high-quality natural ingredients and no artificial sweeteners by some of India's greatest mixologists. They come in vibrant, eye-catching bottles, and each bottle makes two beverages.



We're all ready to ace the new season now, without having to rush through mixing ingredients or being confused about drinks. Simply combine your favourite flavours from these top premix cocktail brands.

### The best premix brands that will spice up your glass are here!

#### Svami Drinks:

As an alternative to spirits, this company just released ready-to-drink non-alcoholic drinks. Their non-alcoholic Rum & Cola, non-alcoholic Gin & Tonic, and non-alcoholic Pink Gin & Tonic are the first three items in this category.

The Svami Light Tonic, Svami Grapefruit Tonic, Svami Cucumber Tonic, and Svami Original Tonic, among others, are among Svami Drinks' mixers that combine nicely with gins, whiskeys, coffee, or any other inventive combination.



RETAIL THERAPY

# Modern Traditions

## *Kalamkari* by RÉBAH by Inaya

The objective of developing enormous things that are profoundly founded on culture and old customs makes it a unique and difficult process when an idea comes from a burning passion in today's digitalised environment. Inaya Fatima was motivated to explore her passion for painting after spending eight years in the corporate world. Bidisha Barik talks with Inaya, the artist and founder of RÉBAH by Inaya, about her path of making masterpieces that stem from her early interest in experimenting with colours and infusing her work with a touch of culture.



The ancient method of *kalamkari*, or block painting, is used to create hand-painted clothes. The advent of hand-painted apparel in the fast-fashion market has gotten a lot of attention. Even though it's not widely produced in the market by designers, it sticks out because of its elegance and sophistication.

'RÉBAH by Inaya' is a hand-painted clothing line that uses classic techniques to produce stunning creations. "I always knew I aim to be an artist, create an impact, touch people's souls with my work and inspire as many people as I can. My motive is to retain traditional art," says Inaya. Though India is famed for its exquisite traditional art, artists in the fast-paced world have a challenge in monetizing their passion for art. This puts 'RÉBAH by Inaya' at the forefront for fusing traditional art with fashion in 2019. *Potli* bags, tropical *kaftan* collection, all-silk suits, blooming scarf collection, flower masks, cushions, eco-bags, *sarees*, *dupattas*, and accessories like scrunchies, pendants, and earrings are some of RÉBAH by Inaya's classics.



Inaya Fatima - Founder of RÉBAH by Inaya

“We want to create a beautiful consumer experience. Hence, every order comes with handpainted packing with a handwritten letter, beautiful message and plastic-free packing,” says the founder. During the pandemic, face masks become a new fashion statement, and RÉBAH by Inaya released 100+ hand-painted masks, breaking the previous record of the hand-painted bow scrunchies and resin pop sockets.

“Why should only one gender have all the fun?” the self-taught artist wonders, as she designs a unisex apparel collection with ‘no gender tags.’ “As an artist, I don’t believe in gender colour coding, distinguishing any design pattern based on gender, or any other gender prejudices,” she continues.



RÉBAH by Inaya aspires to become a go-to internet destination for blending moving fashion with the ideals and emotions of ancient Asian art practises.

Because style is a synonym for individuality, make sure you’re dressed to the nines in a great variety of hand-painted ensembles.



**ee**  
***Why should only one gender have  
all the fun?***

**aa**

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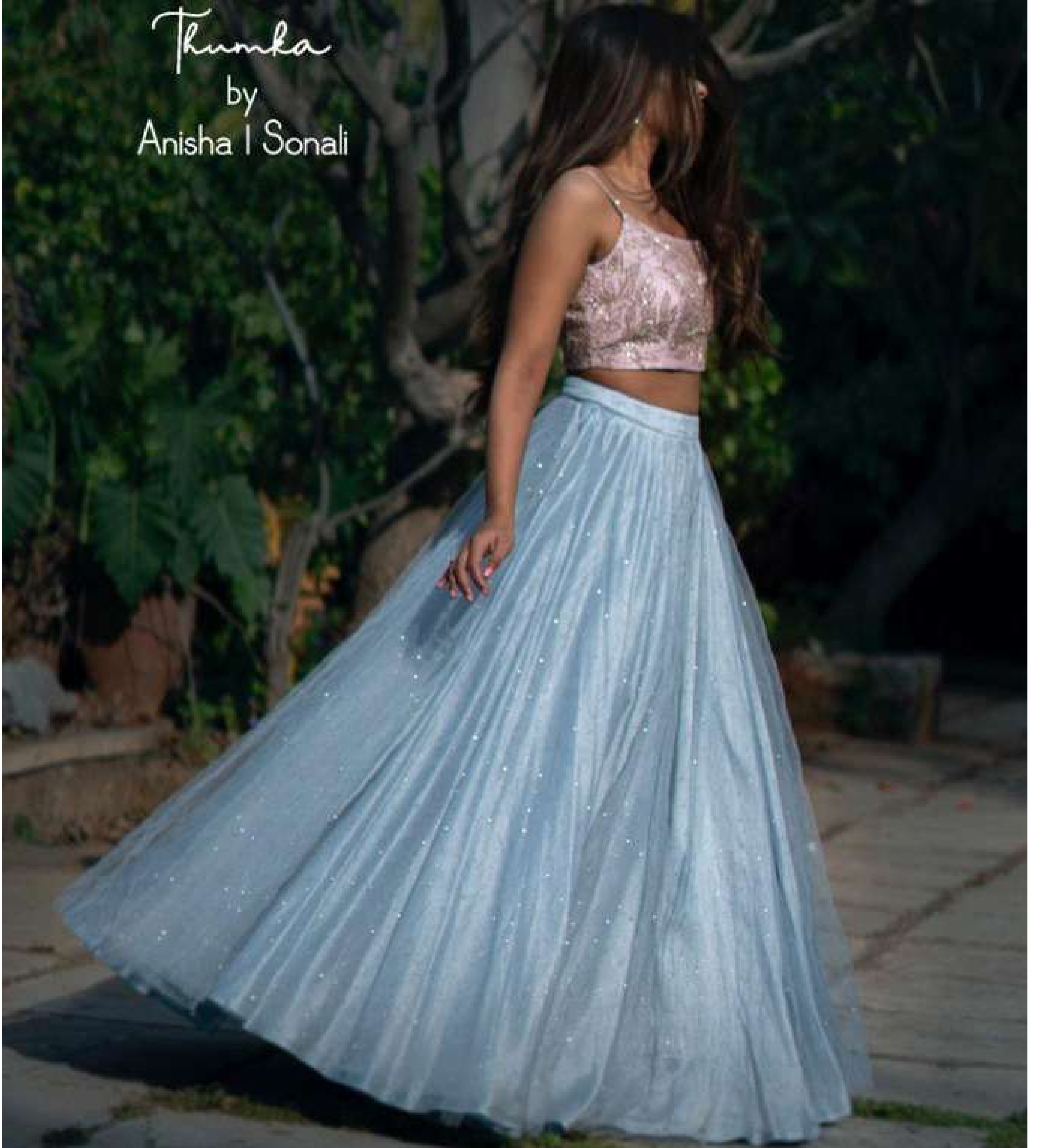
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**FASHION FORWARD**



# FASHION FORECAST 2022

**Mehak Walia, in conversation with experts from the fashion industry, discussed their forecast for the fashion trends of the year 2022.**

While fashion trends tend to move fast, there are a few styles and trends that you can get ahead of now before they take off. These are the anticipated trends that are touted to build up and engulf the entire year in their gorgeous claws. From London to Paris, to New York to Milan, these trends have been seen bursting across ramps everywhere, making them absolute must-haves for your wardrobe.

Industry experts and fashion aficionados speak on what they think will rule the rooster in 2022.

## Meet: Lavanya Aneja

Lavanya Aneja is one of the youngest female entrepreneurs who, in a very short period, has not only adapted but normalized online shopping in the country. She founded Lea in 2021, intending to build a purpose-driven brand that would encourage women to own and embrace their curves

regardless of the shape, size, or colour of their bodies. With its roots in Latin, translating to the lioness, Lea is made to grace the wardrobes of fierce women who aren't afraid to question the status quo and be bold, impactful, and confident in everything they do.



**Lavanya Aneja**

### *Stat-us Quo*

A sustainable fashion brand for the young Indian consumer, Lea has quickly become a favourite and go-to brand for style, comfort and quality in India. With over 61,000 store sessions, 66K followers on social media, and a monthly follower growth rate of 104%, they have managed to grow and create a vast clientele globally.



When asked about the upcoming trends in the world of fashion, she comments, "For far too long, women in India have been shamed for possessing the bodies they naturally do, while being pushed to attain an unrealistic Eurocentric beauty ideal (read: skinny, tall, fair). This year, brands like ours are all set to change these standards. The future of fashion, in our opinion, looks less trend-driven, and more focused on timeless style and innovation. We hope to see more brands adopting sustainable practices, not only in the raw materials employed (recycled fabrics, ethically sourced, etc.) but also in the ethical treatment of labour following the highest industry standards."

## Meet: Shivani Kapoor



Shivani is based out of Jalandhar. She launched her up and coming brand, brand Claraché in 2021 and received a glorious response over the last year.

Claraché is a homegrown Indian label that believes in gender inclusivity & sustainability. Their designs are season-less, colourful and incredibly chic. Inspired by the 60s and 70s fashion trend culture, they create simplistic, elegant looks which are fine-tuned with innocence and audacity.



Shivani Kapoor

She continues, "Further, with the continual growth of social media, re-wearing, recycling, and upcycling are likely to become the norm, especially for younger generations growing up watching their favourite bloggers' style '1 shirt, 7 ways.' As we get an audience that's more aware of who is making their clothes, how they're being treated, and start to demand transparency and hold brands to a higher standard, the hope is that the industry leaders will set the stage for a sustainable future."

## Equal Opportunity

The brand embraces Indian culture and tries to be vocal for the locals by creating employment opportunities in traditional handcrafted embroidery in modern silhouettes.

When being asked about her forecast for the upcoming trends of 2022, she explained, "As the consumers become more and more conscious the need for designers to adapt up-cycling and sustainable approaches will surely have a rise in 2022. Other than that, miniskirts and hi-low trends will surely make a comeback so keep an eye out for that!"

## Meet: Mehak & Pallavi



Mehak and Pallavi created the brand WeAreLabelless. It is a conscious fashion hub based in New Delhi, aiming to create a transparent value chain by giving our behind-the-scenes heroes their due credit.

Founded in late 2019, the idea behind 'We Are Labelless' was not to glorify an individual but to give equal credits to each present in the value chain. The goal is not to just design clothes, but to build a creative space where like-minded people can come on board to make a difference.



Mehak & Pallavi

### All For One

WeAreLabelless rehabilitates women from distressed areas, empowering them by uplifting, rehabilitating and providing fair wages while striving to create a zero-waste cycle of ethical and conscious clothing.

When asked about their fashion forecast for the year, they said, "We feel that 2022 is more about feeling positive in your skin and staying true to what you believe in. Kindness and vigour will be the driving forces. After being confined to our homes for more than we could ever have anticipated, people have been itching to re-emerge, and express themselves in a bolder, more flamboyant way."

## Meet: Kallol Sarkar

Kallol Sarkar is a fashion management post-graduate from NIFT Mumbai. He is the men's buyer for Calvin Klein India and has experience of 5 years in the same domain with the brands like Westside and Tommy Hilfiger India.



Kallol Sarkar

When asked about the upcoming trends for the year, he smiles and responds, "The biggest trend across the globe is the return of oversize clothing and this continues to stay strong in 2022. The pandemic had led to the shift of woven dressing towards knitted dressing. They bring additional comfort and lounging, yet you can always be ready for a work call."

Talking about colours, he says, "Pastels are not going anywhere. However, the new hot palette is the 'Neutrals.' The earthy tones or natural colours such as stone, beige, khaki, olive, military green, brown and other shades are trendy."



### Final tips?

"Layering is a must in today's fashion climate and bombers are trending. They are also known as baseball jackets. Whether it's a date night, a business meeting, clubbing or travel, a bomber jacket will certainly liven up your fashion game."

## Meet: Prashansa Saha

Prashansa Saha founded Aharin in 2011 as an Indian wear label. They slowly started doing bridal as well as western wear. Aharin has mostly been an expression of what inspires her and they look at pieces as art pieces rather than just wearable ensembles.

Their motifs are often a blend of quirky as well as vintage. One unique speciality of this brand is that most of the pieces can be worn as full ensembles or paired with other

outfits and can be worn throughout life without going out of trend. They believe in making classics that can be passed on from one generation to the next. They have had the privilege to dress up over 5000 women in the last 10 years including Bollywood celebrities like Sonakshi Sinha, Karishma Kapoor, Vidya Balan, and Taapsee Pannu to name a few.



When asked about the trends that she believes would take over this year, she responded, "I believe the whole world is moving towards sustainability, especially after the pandemic. Natural and eco-conscious fabrics will be the way forward like organic crepe cotton and anti-bacterial linens as well as good quality silk. Hemp is another fabric that could make an entry into Indian fashion. Fabrics will evolve which are more feminine, wearable and have everyday prettiness. The fabrics could have a subtle lustre, semi-matte and flowy to handle."



Prashansa Saha

## So, what is Aharin looking into this year?

"We are also looking at agro waste fibres for certain collections. Fabrics like satins also are something that will make a comeback in sarees as well as other stitched apparel. In Indian wear, we plan to work with a lot of textured jacquards along with lingerie-style fabrics like lace, mesh, sheer geometric embroideries and laser-cut textures. Since weddings will start and people will also return to their workspaces, we plan to develop dressier styles that can move easily between day and night or every day and occasion wear."



with a paradigm shift in materiality. Technology will also heavily impact fashion manufacturing. With processes like 3D printing, laser cutting, and injection moulding, smart clothing will be the new normal."



Simran Merwah

## Spun Golden

She has also presented her collection at Fashion Tech Week New York 2020 and the Helsinki Fashion Week 2021. She was featured in Vogue's Emerging Talents 2020 as well as Economic Times' 2021 List of Young Investors.

## Meet: Simran Merwah

Simran Merwah started her brand which creates custom made 3D printed garments and accessories. They aim to transcend traditional textiles through technology and innovation to create pieces that lie at the intersection of fashion, art and technology by material exploration and experimentation.

In terms of the trends for the year, she believes that "Fashion trends are cyclical and every 20-30 years we see repetition. 2021 was filled with Y2K trends. So, there will be a fusion of traditional silhouettes like the corset or the Dior skirt along

It's time to put all of this great insight to use. Let's gear up our wallets and get ready to update our closets as the year-open sales are all set to drop very soon. Are you ready to be a true fashionista in 2022?

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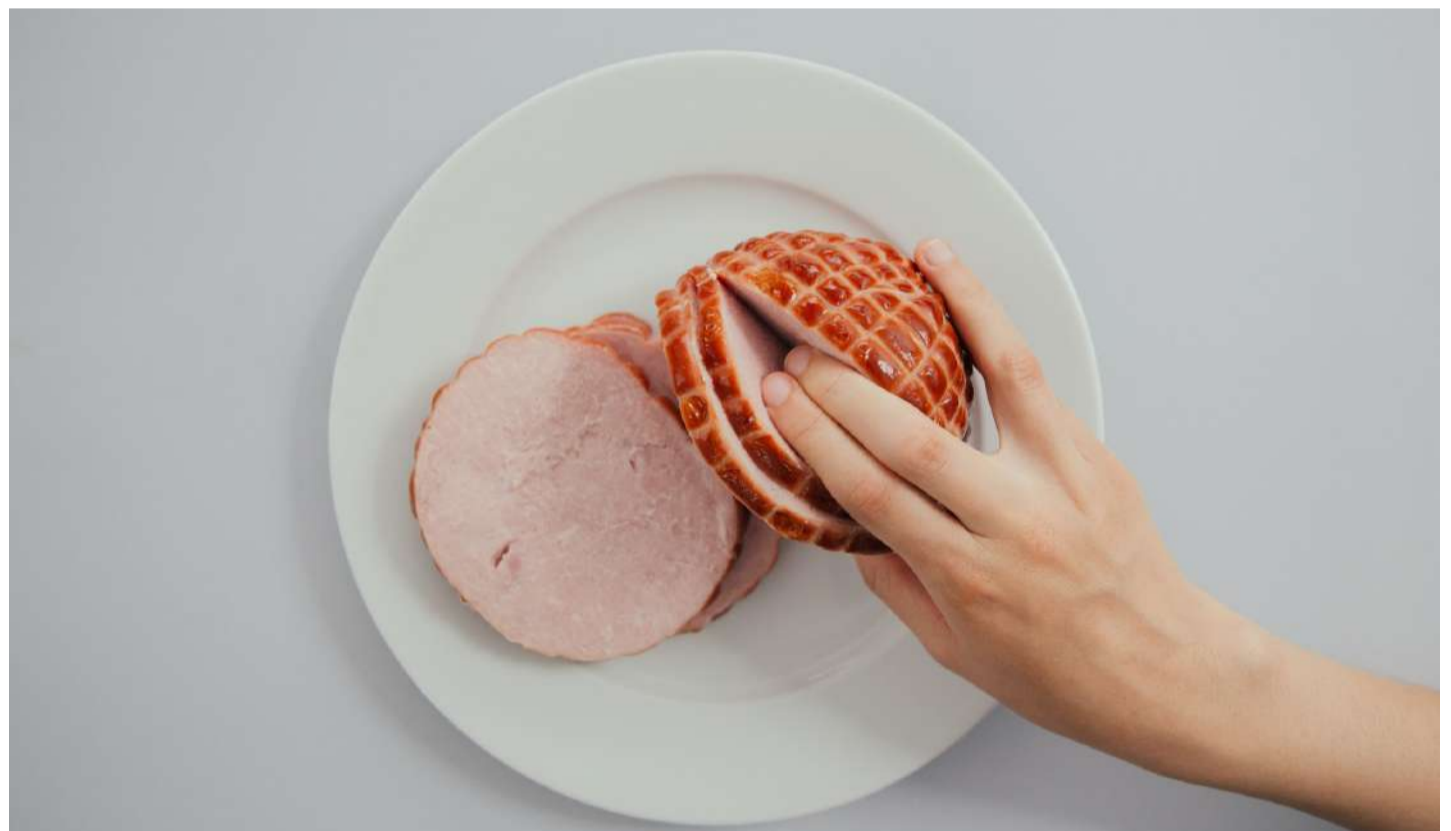


HEALTH & WELLNESS

# Love Yourself: Self-Pleasure and Relationships

Even in the twenty-first century, there are taboos and stigmas around sexual intimacy and self-pleasure. Lack of understanding about sexual intimacy and masturbation leads to emotions of guilt, insecurity, and difficulty conveying our wants. In a talk with **Bidisha Barik, Karishma (@talkyounevergot)**, an internationally experienced Sexuality Educator and Advocate, describes how cultural stigma leads to unanswered questions and guilt among young people with their own bodies. While the notion of masturbation is not restricted to one gender, and the use of sex toys is thrilling and appropriate even in heterosexual relationships, the stigma makes open conversation and spreading knowledge difficult.

People often have strange concerns about self-pleasure that are not addressed by formal sex education in society, and no one takes responsibility for educating one about such physical changes. Karishma encounters similar instances in her role, where individuals come to her with scientifically unfounded questions about masturbation which, she believes, stem from cultural prejudices and misinformation spread on the internet. In a short interview, she sheds light on certain prevalent stigmas surrounding sexual and reproductive health.



***The words ‘masturbation’ and ‘sexual intimacy’ are, to a degree, hidden or are associated with one specific gender, or not at all. What are your views about it?***

There are a lot of taboos, but in my view, we should get rid of them since having taboos surrounding these things causes a lot of shame and an overall negative attitude toward masturbation and sexual intimacy. Just because we don't talk about these things, does not mean people aren't suffering from them or inquisitive about them. It's just that when we don't have an open conversation about them, a lot of misinformation spreads, through random posts on social media or the whisper net, and so forth.

Regardless of gender, having an open discussion about masturbation and sexual intimacy is fundamental. Traditionally, it has been believed that “boys are casual with masturbation or such things.” Any gender other than males expressing or desiring self-pleasure is still considered taboo. Because of societal taboos, there is a prevalent mindset in which males hold the default position.



***Any gender other than males expressing or desiring self-pleasure is still considered taboo***



**Karishma @talkyounevergot**



### **What makes the stigma awfully evident or really present when talking about masturbation?**

The misconception that masturbating is detrimental for individuals, I believe, is what contributes to the stigma. People with penises have a lot of questions regarding masturbation, like does it cause weakness, memory loss, and premature ejaculation. People with vulvas are assumed not to masturbate, thus I receive fewer inquiries about the same. Some of the beliefs internalised by persons with vulvas include a lack of awareness of masturbation narratives, a lack of awareness of self-pleasure, or internalised shame about one's own body, which leads to a lack of exploration of one's own body.

People of all genders wonder things like "Will I get hairy palms?" and "Will I go blind?" These questions reflect all of the stigmas associated with masturbating. Misinformation in the media, internet movements like the 'No Fap Movement,' and other scientifically baseless assertions are why the stigmas surrounding masturbation continue to persist today.



**At the end of the day, one is free to explore their own body in whichever way they see fit!**



### **What's the most concerning issue when talking about "self-pleasure in relationships?" Why is it that it is still taboo?**

People believe that "self-pleasure in a relationship" is something that should not exist. When it comes to heterosexual relationships, there is a belief that if a man buys a vibrator for his girlfriend, or if their partner uses a vibrator independently, he will be replaced. When it comes to self-pleasure in couples, there are a lot of social-cultural scripts at play. Some people assume that self-pleasure is cheating, or that someone who masturbates without involving their partners is doing something wrong. However, it is about the couples' setting of limits in their relationship and open communication about their sexual activities. If a partner feels uncomfortable with the concept of their partner engaging in self-pleasure or exploring their own body, the individual should address the source of their uneasiness or insecurity. At the end of the day, one is free to explore their own body in whichever way they see fit!



### **How can couples communicate comfortably about their sexual preferences and how important is it to do so?**

Couples may convey their sexual preferences in a variety of ways; nonetheless, I believe that communication is the most important factor, despite the fact that this word is overused. However, it is practically hard to appreciate what you or your

partner love in bed if one person does not communicate. Though there is widespread apprehension about discussing sex due to the taboo, it may also seem extremely personal and private, as well as vulnerable. The first thing to remember is that your partner does not have superpowers to know what you like and don't like. As a result, communication reduces the strain that comes with physical closeness. The second point is that being absolutely clear with your action feedback will assist your partner to understand you better. Last but not least, while conversing about such delicate matters, be kind and considerate of people's sentiments, while still being receptive to input.

### **Tips on how one can master self-pleasure activities, with or without sex toys?**

1. *Understanding one's own anatomy is the initial step toward self-pleasure activities, especially for individuals with vulvas. There is a general lack of understanding about clitorises and their significance. As a result, touching oneself while utilising the mirror teaches you how to explore and touch yourself.*
2. *The second stage is to make sure you're cognitively stimulated in ways that allow you to fully immerse yourself in the act, whether or not you're using toys. Turning off items that can disrupt you while you are in the act is part of being psychologically prepared to enjoy pleasure.*
3. *The next stage is to experiment with every potential variation and learn how your body responds to various postures. The idea is to have fun and learn what works and what doesn't work for you.*

While being mindful of our sexual behaviour toward ourselves and our partners is vital, it is crucial to learn how to connect with ourselves and what fits our bodies best. While there is a dearth of understanding, sexual educators are available to answer any questions we may have. Being able to address our concerns in a secure environment allows us to create the relationship we want with ourselves and convey it to our partners.

# Getting Chatty with **Dr Aditi Govitrikar**

Talk about an illustrious career! **Dr Aditi Govitrikar** went from obstetrician/gynaecologist to being a model and then turned to acting! Her most recent qualification is that of a counselling psychologist. In an eye-opening interview, **Bidisha Barik** discusses mental and physical well-being with the 90s star, who has many feathers in her hat as a wellness expert, medical doctor, psychologist, actor, and supermodel. Dr Govitrikar also highlights how mental health continues to be stigmatised in India and how individuals must take initiative to help those who are struggling with the same.



## **What impact has your transformation from actor to wellness expert and psychologist had on you as a person?**

I still perform, and I recently finished two web series for Netflix and Disney+ Hotstar. I do, however, act as a wellness expert, a psychologist, and a counsellor. The effect this has had on me as a person is that I prefer to remain cool in the face of adversity, and I'm a lot better at dealing with hurdles.

I don't fixate on bad ideas or feelings since I can snap out of it pretty fast. As a human being or as a person who lives in the moment, I am acutely aware of my thoughts and feelings. At the same time, I'm conscious of other people's body language and what isn't being spoken, and I'm tremendously at ease in being quiet, not only with myself but also with others' silence. I utilise this to empower individuals who come into touch with me, which is my life's goal: that whoever encounters me should learn, even if they don't advance to the next level, even if it's only a baby step. That is how development is made. It is by this principle that I live now.

## **What are your thoughts on the mental illness taboo that still prevails today? What can be done about it?**

I believe that much more needs to be done in the area of mental illness and its taboo because it is still very prevalent in India. People still regard depression, panic attacks, anxiety, or any other mental illness as a sign of weakness, and this is something that we need to talk about in mainstream media and on social media.

We need influencers to talk about it because that is how people will become aware of it. And people will realise that mental illness is something that can be treated, managed, and is not a sign of weakness. It is not something that can be remedied by going for a stroll, watching a movie, or eating ice cream.



***“Mental illness is something that can be treated, managed, and is not a sign of weakness.”***





## What does a healthy lifestyle means to you?

Consistency and tiny measures made every day are what lead to you being healthy in the end. I can't get up one morning and say, "Today, I'm going to work out for three hours and that will take care of my physical health." It is critical that you exercise for at least 15 minutes or half an hour every day since this will ultimately contribute to physical well-being.

Similarly, when it comes to mental health, it's crucial to consider that we pay a lot of attention to our physical health and pay attention to what we eat, but we don't pay attention to what our brains eat. Detoxing your mind, sitting still and calmly, and paying attention to what your mind consumes are all essential. A healthy lifestyle, in my opinion, is one that strikes a balance between physical and mental well-being.

## What are your healthy behaviours on a daily basis?

I work out five times a week, alternating between strength, endurance, and flexibility. So, I do weight training twice a week and cardio on the other days. I also do flexibility exercises to keep my spine and joints flexible. Aside from that, I undertake intermittent fasting three to four times a week, ranging from 14 to 16 hours. I drink enough water and I am a vegetarian, which is beneficial for my health, and I enjoy eating vegetarian meals. Meditation is an important part of my life, and if something negative occurs, I talk to someone and evaluate the problem; this is how I stay healthy.

## What advice would you give to anybody who struggles to be physically and mentally fit?

Stop struggling is my counsel to everyone who is struggling to be mentally and physically fit. There is no need to put up a fight. I place a high value on language and vocabulary, so instead of saying "I'm battling to get in shape," we could say "I'm going on a path to achieve

a specific level of physical fitness," which is the goal you should set for yourself. In terms of important goals, be extremely explicit in what you say to yourself.

Defining your goals in very concrete words is the start of a fantastic adventure. One thing I will say is that it all comes down to 'Consistency.' You must take action to improve your physical and emotional well-being. Exercising for 15 minutes every day or practising meditation can set you on the road to achieving your goals. Consistently take baby steps and be gentle to yourself.



## Three myths surrounding mental health?

The first of three incredibly widespread mental health misconceptions is that you will be OK on your own or that love will cure it. It's not required that if I have someone in my life who isn't feeling well and they receive soft, caring attention, they will feel better. If a bone fracture occurs, we seek expert assistance with casting and allow time for healing. Similarly, when our minds are troubled, it is crucial to get expert care; love alone will not be enough to repair mental health disorders. Yes, it is important to help someone who is suffering from mental illness; nevertheless, the medicine may be necessary at times, and this does not imply that your love for your spouse, friends, or others is diminished.

The second widespread misconception is that it is a sign of weakness. That is not the case; it is chemical in nature, and biochemistry in the body may change, resulting in a variety of problems. Seeking treatment for mental health issues is a sign of strength.

The third misconception is that children do not experience depression. Panic attacks, despair, and other mental health concerns can affect children. Do not disregard it. Any mental health condition does not differ based on age.

### *Myth-Busting Mental Health*

1. Love alone will not be enough to repair mental health disorders.
2. Seeking treatment for mental health issues is a sign of strength.
3. Mental health concerns can affect children.

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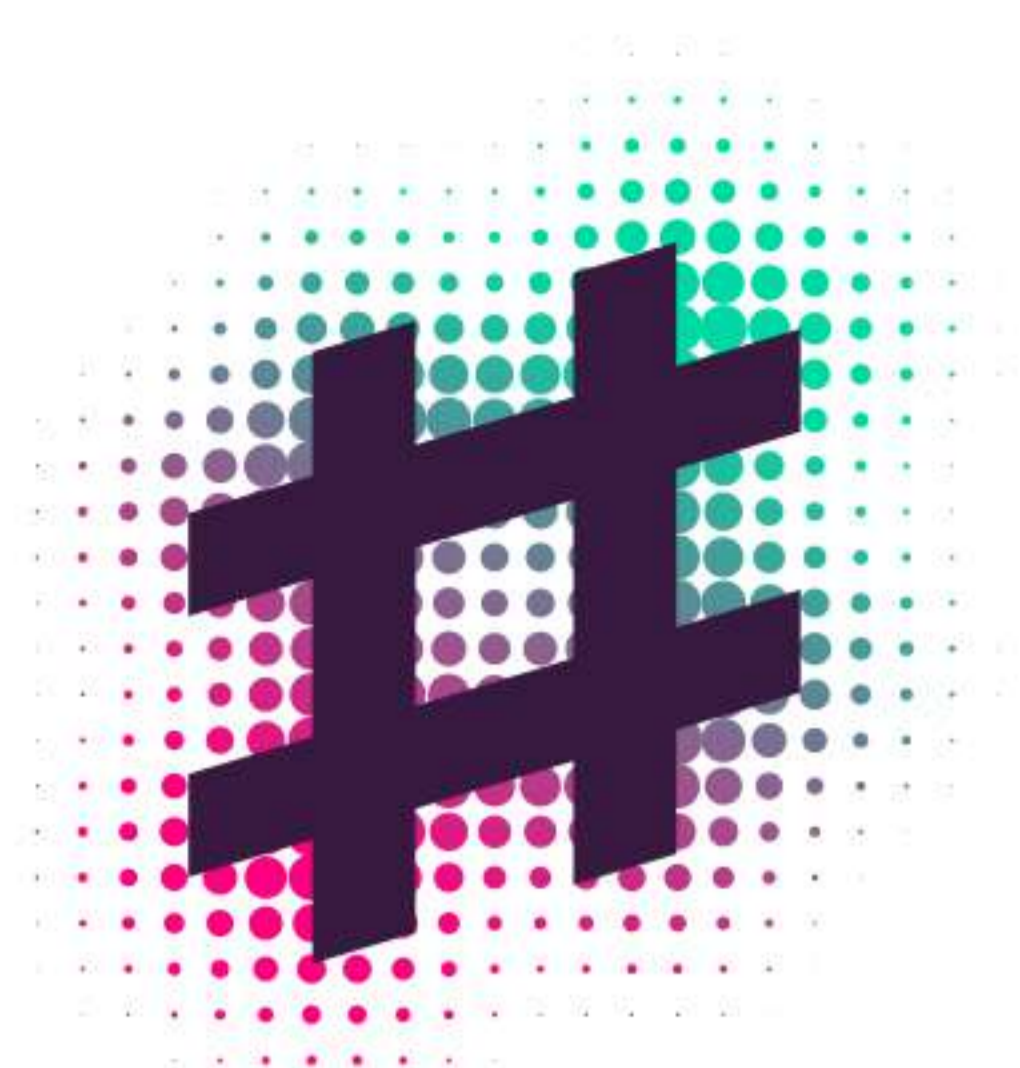


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FOOD INC'

# Romantic Restaurants in *Bangalore*

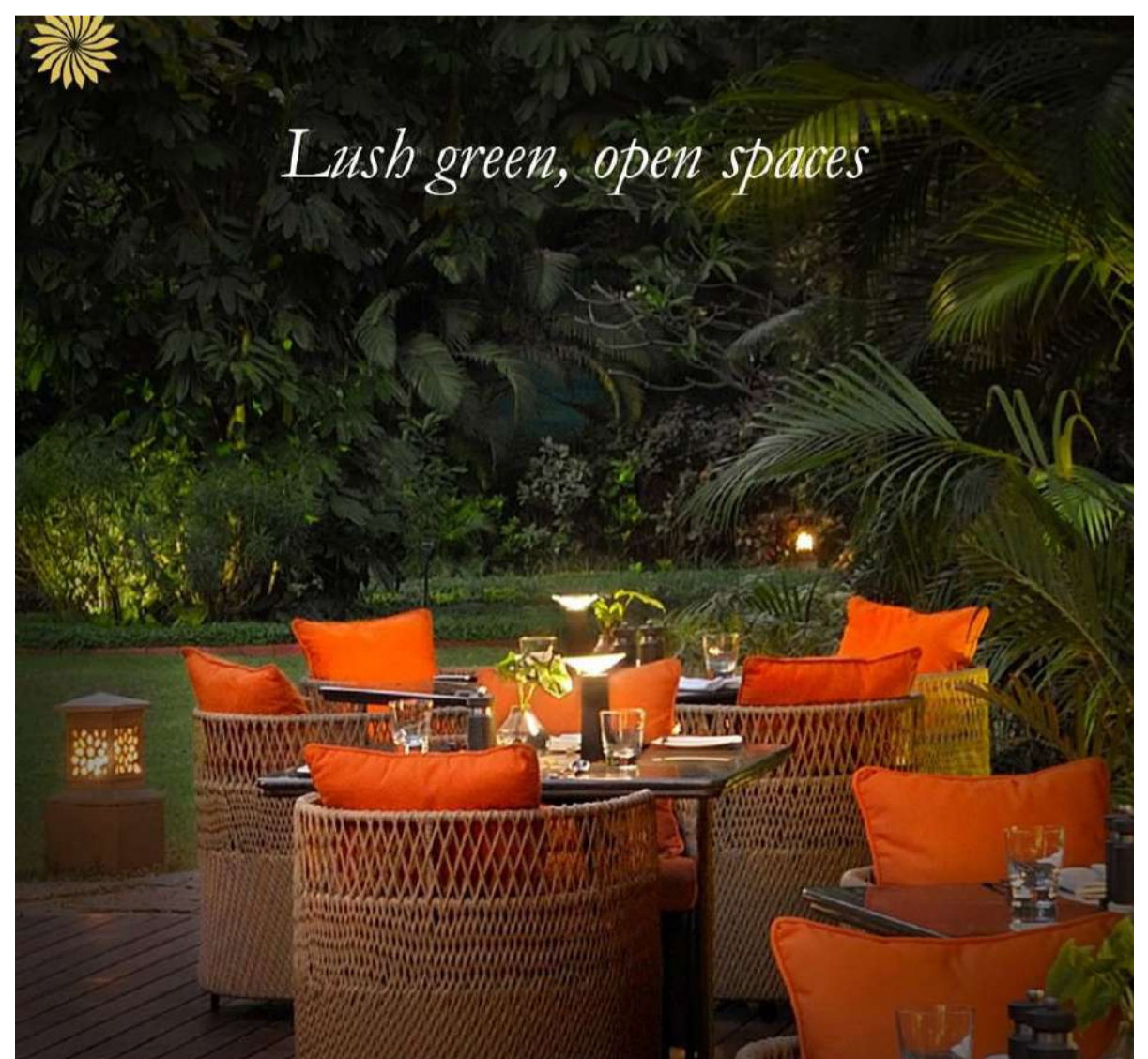


We're nearing the season of love and organising romantic dinners or selecting the ideal romantic restaurant might be challenging. We all know how relaxing a candle-lit meal can be, and we all know how romantic old-fashioned dates like stargazing together or wandering around soaking in the city lights can indeed be. Holding hands, eating your favourite food, and conversing are all great ways to start a romantic date, but picking the appropriate location is the most crucial! **Hashtag** has hand-picked the top romantic restaurants in Bangalore for you, making the task of finding the ideal date spot a breeze!

## Le Jardin – The Oberoi



The Oberoi chain offers some of the most romantic restaurants in Bangalore, and they are one of the oldest treasures among all of Bangalore's hotels. This opulent dining venue is a must-visit for its excellent cuisine and relaxing live music, serving as the perfect place for late-night dinner dates. On MG Road, Le Jardin is one of the best romantic restaurants in Bangalore for a perfect date.



**Location:** The Oberoi, 37-39, MG Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 7 AM to 12:30 AM

## Blue Ginger – Taj West End



One of the best places for couples to spend quality time together is at Blue Ginger, where you can enjoy mouth-watering Vietnamese food and peruse a fine wine selection. With its fine ambience and cuisine quality, this restaurant in Bangalore lives up to the Taj group of hotels' reputation. Blue Ginger is a top romantic restaurant that caters to the requirements of couples on their special date evenings.

**Location:** Taj West End, Race Course Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 12:30 PM to 2:45 PM,  
7:30 PM to 11 PM

## Rural Blues

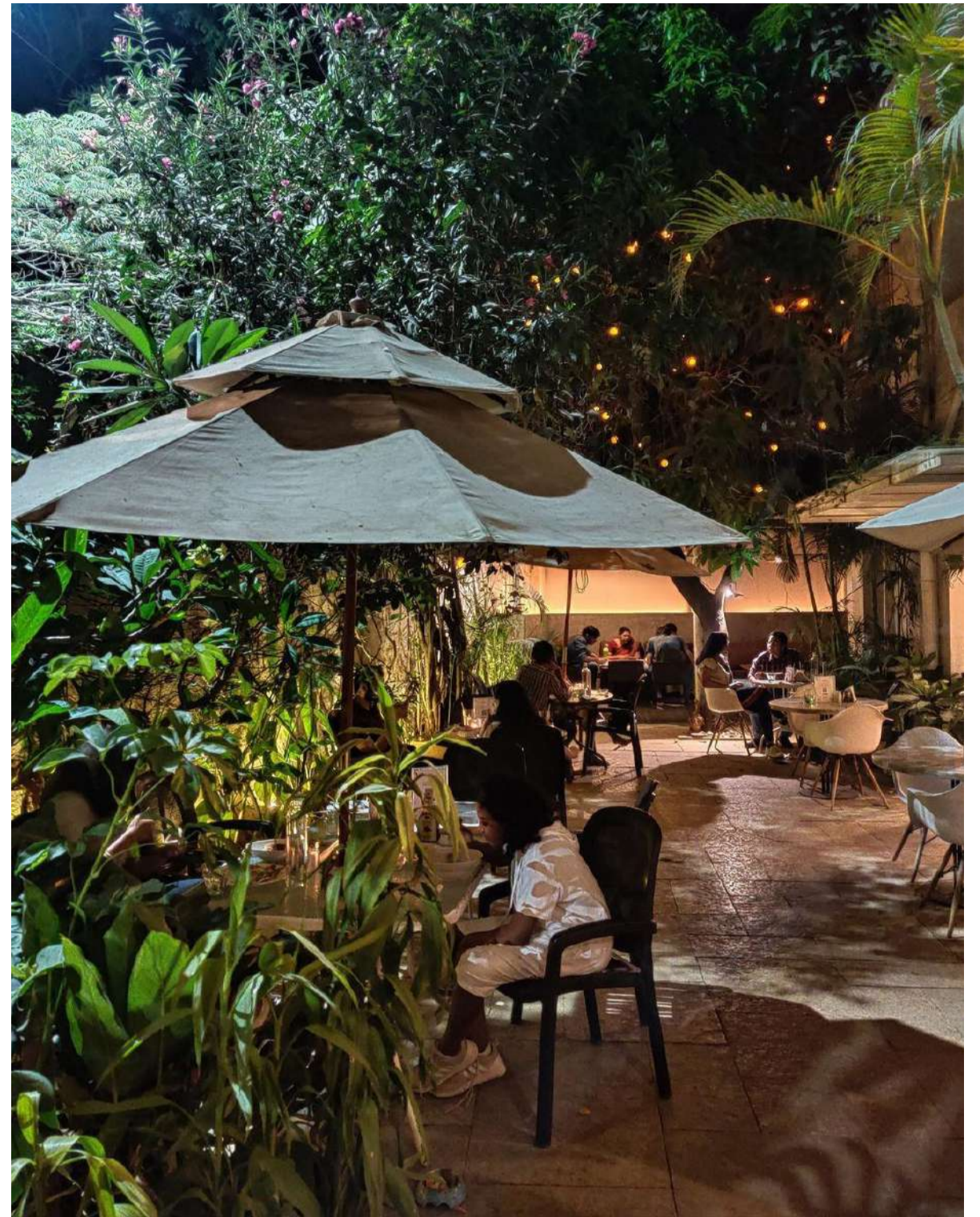


These beautiful blue walls can easily pass for the houses of Santorini in Greece. If you are on the lookout for rustic interiors, great ambience, and wonderful cuisine, this venue will provide an out of this world experience for you and your date.

**Location:** 112, Kodathi Gate, Varthur Hobli, Sarjapur Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Thursday – 12 Noon to 11PM;  
Friday to Saturday – 12 Noon to 1AM; Sunday – 12 Noon to 12 Midnight

## Green Theory



Green Theory is a colonial home turned into a Bohemian-styled restaurant that punches above its weight in every way. Green Theory, one of the greatest vegan restaurants in Bangalore, is the place to go if you're looking for some world-class organic food.



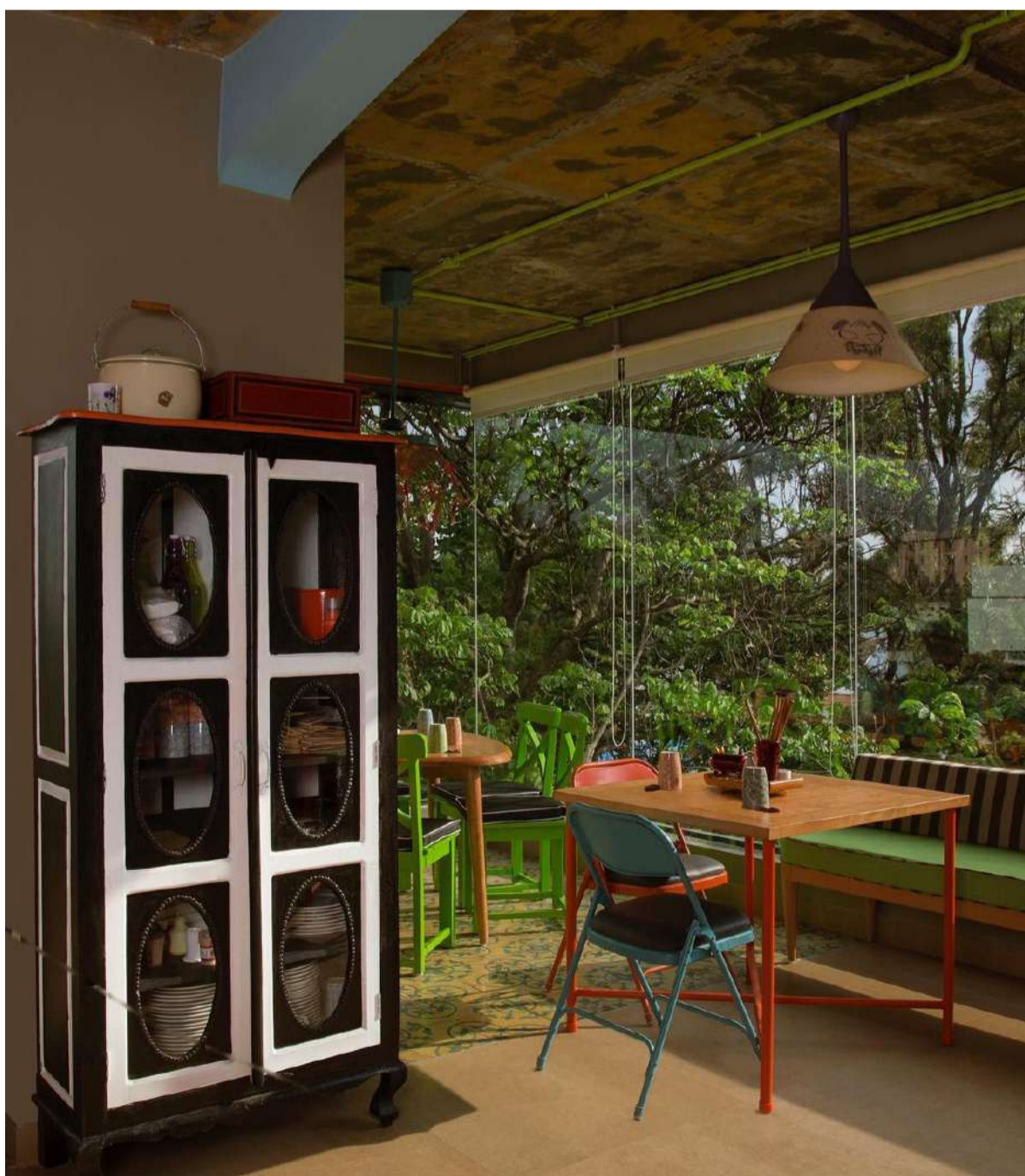
**Location:** 15, Convent Road, Off Residency Road, Residency Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 11AM to 11PM

## The Fatty Bao – Asian Gastro Bar



This wonderful Asian inspired restaurant in Indiranagar is known for its atmosphere and delectable food. Seating is offered both indoors and outdoors at this odd little spot. With great live music and a lovely atmosphere, this venue fills up quickly and may be crowded on weekends. You can reserve the tiny yet secluded outdoor seats for a quiet date night when you make a request.



**Location:** 610, 12th Main Rd, 7th Cross, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560008

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday - 12PM - 3PM, 7PM - 10:30PM

## Toast & Tonic

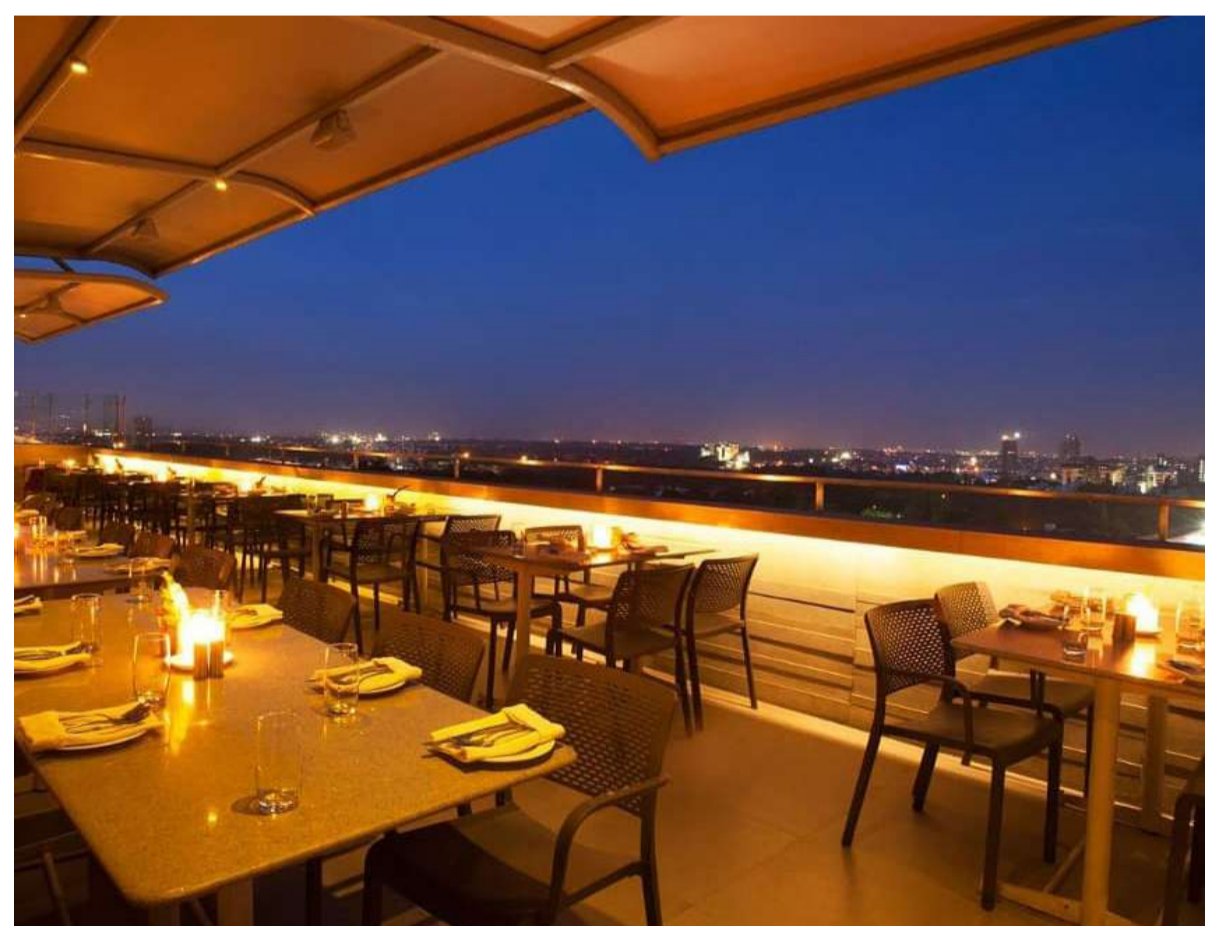


This restaurant, located on Wood Street in Ashok Nagar, serves European, Mediterranean, and Asian cuisines. Toast and Tonic is a location you should definitely visit. It has a great environment suitable for a date, a well-stocked bar, and enough of solitude for your evenings.

**Location:** 14/1, Wood Street, Ashok Nagar, Richmond Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 12 Noon to 3PM, 7PM to 11PM

## Ebony



It's a fantastic sensation to stare at the city skyline with your lover by your side. This beautiful rooftop restaurant in Bangalore is the ideal spot for a scenic-romantic date, with an electrifying combination of Pan Indian cuisine. Ebony is one of the finest romantic restaurants on MG Road, Bangalore, and is located in the heart of the Garden City.

**Location:** Barton Center, 13th Floor, 84 M.G.Road, MG Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday–12:30 PM to 3 PM, 7 PM to 11 PM

## Rim Naam – The Oberoi

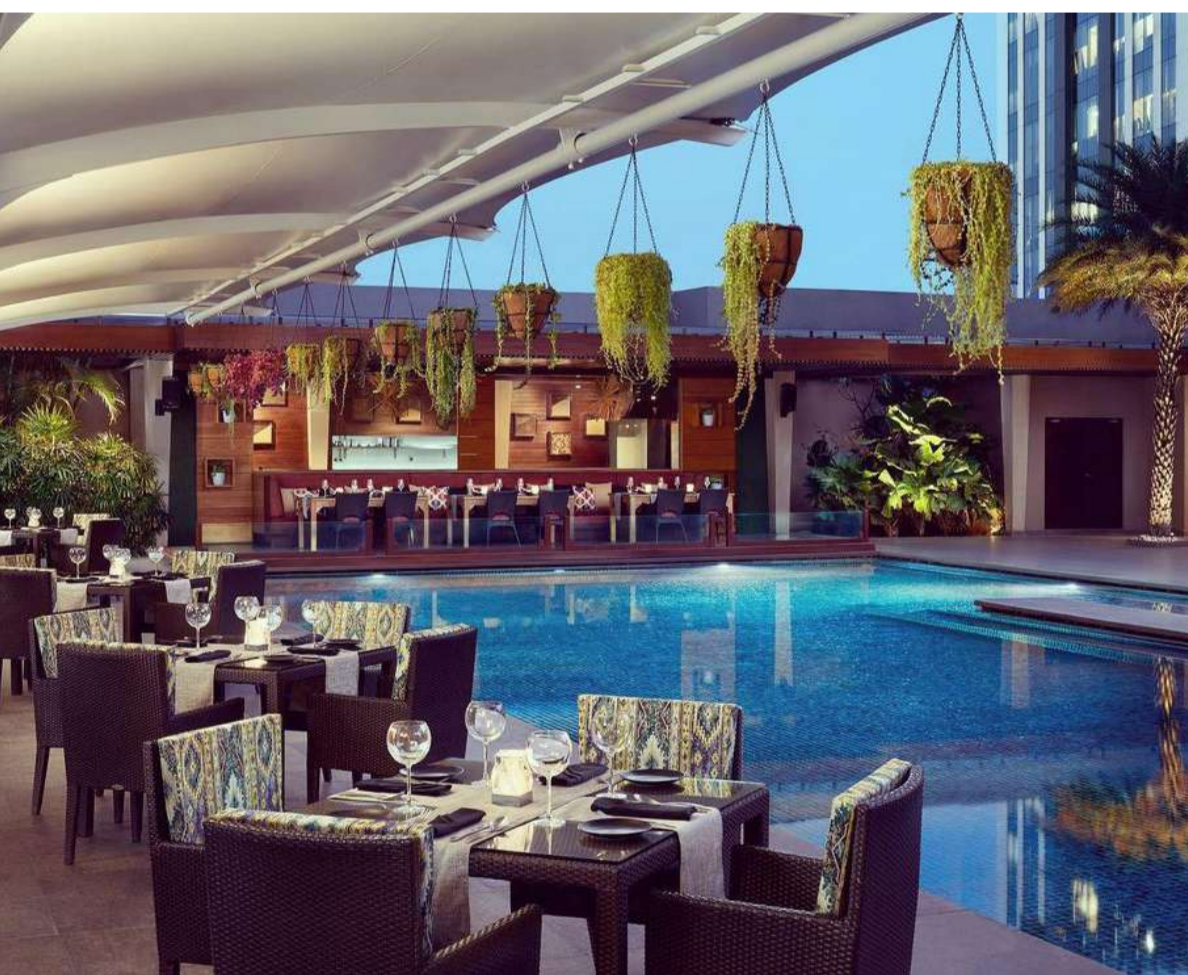


The name literally translates to ‘by the water,’ and that is precisely what it is. The open kitchen and outdoor seats are just what you’re searching for. Rim Naam is an award-winning restaurant in Bangalore that delivers the greatest Thai cuisine. A date at this Bangalore restaurant will rekindle your relationship!

**Location:** The Oberoi, 37-39, MG Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 12:30 PM to 3 PM,  
7 PM to 11 PM

## Spice Terrace



Do you wish to be artsy and eat near the pool? Look no farther than the exquisite JW Marriott's Spice Terrace, which is in the heart of the city. Savour on the finest of ethnic cuisine, delivered with a modern spin, while taking in the spectacular views of the verdant surrounding from the pool. This is one of Bangalore's greatest restaurants for couples.

**Location:** JW Marriott, 24/1, Vittal Mallya Road, Lavelle Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 7PM to 1AM

## Grasshopper



Finding beauty in the simplest of things, such as love? This minimalist restaurant effortlessly enters the list of Bangalore's best romantic restaurants because of its floral and light-filled environment, as well as excellent food.



**Location:** 15, Convent Road, Off Residency Road, Residency Road, Bangalore

**Timings:** Monday to Sunday – 11AM to 11PM

Explore these great restaurants with your loved ones to spice up your relationship and have the most unforgettable moments, while savouring the excellent cuisine and relaxing atmosphere.



VIBRANT 



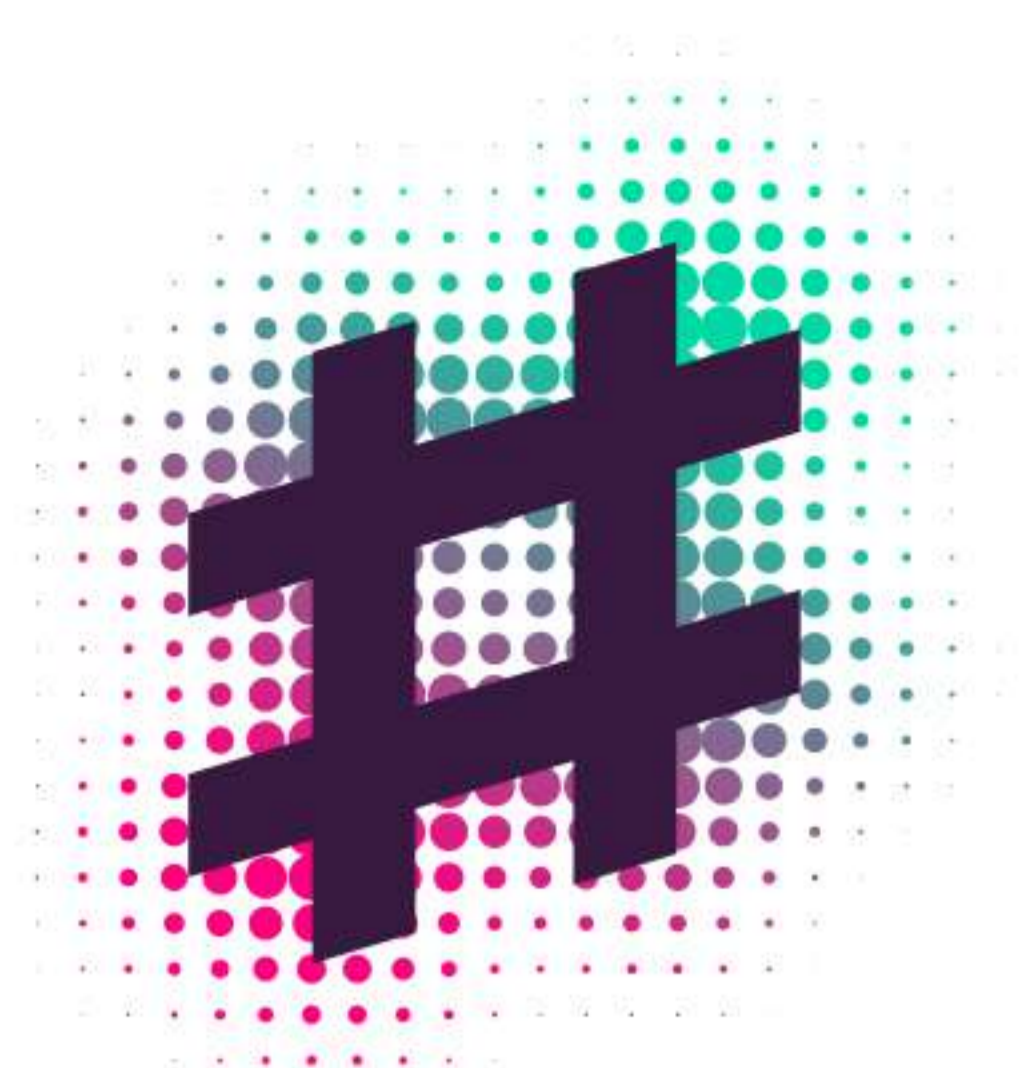
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TRAVEL



Having travelled extensively over the past year, **Nikita Biswas** and **Abhishek Dubey** can confidently say they have seen gems like never before. Their motto? This wasn't a strange place, this was a new one. Discovering new and less-visited spots brings them joy and cheer. The feeling of discovering unusual places is a constant urge within them. Fortunate enough to have completed their bucket list, the two avid travellers give us a first-person account of the 8 most unusual haunts they have traversed and loved, complete with tips and tricks for food, stay and how to get there.

## Top 8 unusual places

# FOR YOUR NEXT VACATION

### Beaches and Beyond - Bohemian Blue Café & Stay, Alibaug

We have been travelling for over a year now and nothing has hit us as much as Bohemian Blue Café & Stay. Situated in a beautiful old-school Portuguese building with an elegant matte-finished combination of colours, this café serves just the right amount of serenity. We remember trying to order some fresh salad and couldn't decide on which one. The host was kind enough to get us a custom-made fresh salad for the day.

While passing through their front yard, we remembered passing through their little jungle safari to reach the luxurious tent by the poolside. Their open kitchen allows for the smell of freshly made food to fill the heart. This is located at Alibaug in Maharashtra. With a low amount of visitors, it offers some of the best, less crowded, and clean beaches in India – just what we needed to get away from the hustle of city life.



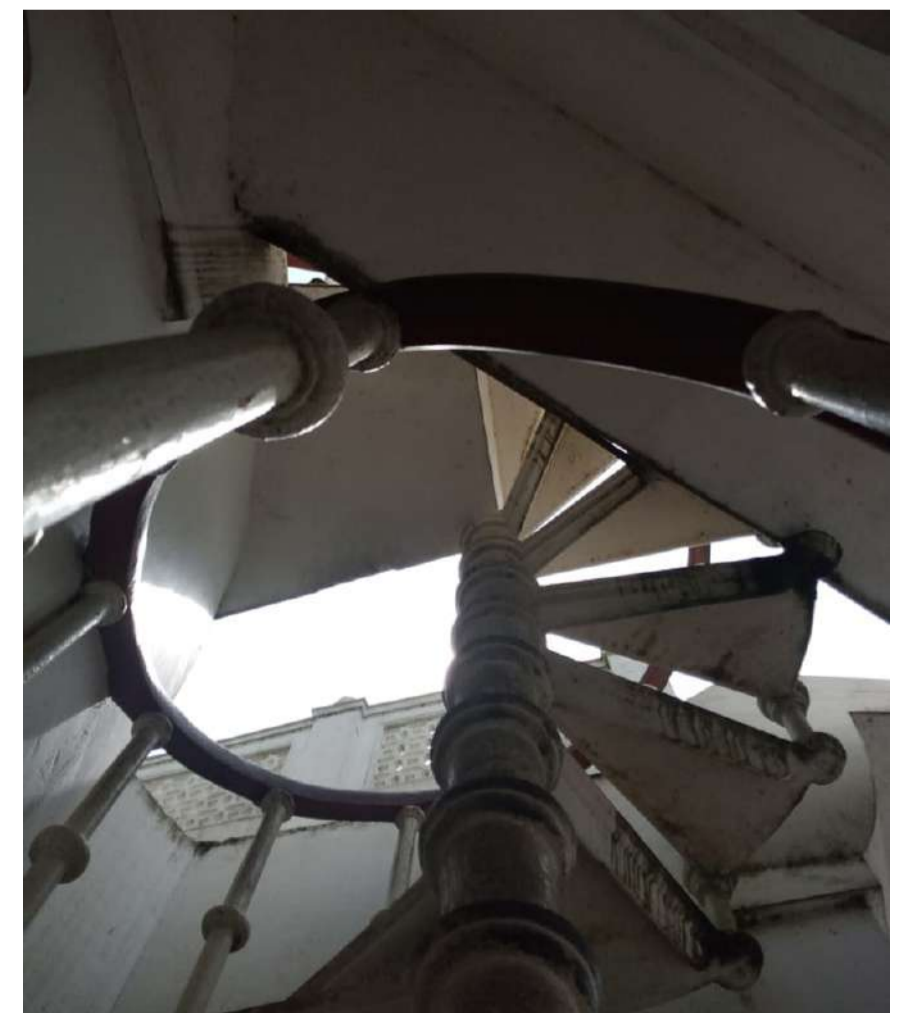
## Pelling - The Wonderland City in The Northeast of India

In one of our sojourns, we remember crossing the borders of West Bengal and finally reaching Sikkim. It was a hectic yet blissful journey; what came after that was the real experience. Pelling, a city in Sikkim, North-East India, delivers the promised view. The greenery alongside the beautiful landscape makes it picture perfect. The fact not many are aware of is that this place is just a few kilometres from Gangtok, yet not many visit this unbelievable patch of beauty. Be it the *momos* or the wide range of lip-smacking street food, Pelling did not fail in making us fall in love with mountains again.



## The Palace On The Lake – Neer Mahal, Tripura

Tripura is one of the less-visited tourist spots in the North-East; however, we thought of visiting the unexplored. Trust us, this place is just so calm yet peaceful to be. Our journey was all worth it when we decided to visit Neer Mahal. Located in the middle of lake Twijilikma, it is rightfully called the lake palace. The fun part here is that after taking a cab from the main city of Agartala, you must then take a machine boat. At least, that was what we thought; however, everything changed when we realized that we can even hire a hand-boat. This might take a little longer, but the experience is worth it; plus, it doesn't hurt your pocket either!



## A Green Music Festival – Echoes of Earth, Bangalore

If you admire a zero-waste policy, this is your chance to have a guilt-free journey! Visit the beautiful musical festival "Echoes of Earth"! Considered as India's 1<sup>st</sup> ecologically crafted music festival, it is held at the outskirts of Bangalore city, which boasts of an amazing landscape. They usually celebrate music every year around the end of the year where musicians from across the globe participate to explore different genres. We loved our experience when an artist played an entire set with just water pipes and water bottles to ensure reusing waste.



## More Than Sand and Surf – Tropical Spice Plantation in Goa

Goa has been loved by many; however, the stereotype is to just visit shacks or sit by the beaches and party hard. In reality, Goa has so much to offer. We lived in Goa for over 4 months, and we discovered so many tropical places that could change your plans of visiting just the beaches. Something that we must talk about is the Tropical Spice Plantation. This is a garden which not just gives you a tour of different spices of India but also offers a delicious buffet after a walk of 30 minutes. The tour also has a mini shopping spree; we bought some dried mango sheets. The bonus was the lavender water directly dropped on the back of our neck after the walk. This is a perfect combo of spices, physical exercise, food, and relaxation.



## Unmissable Landmark – James Prinsep Ghat, Kolkata

Many might know Kolkata to be a very busy metropolitan city; however, there is more to it. We wanted to explore food in Kolkata. Since we spent about 2 weeks there, it almost seemed like a full-fledged exploring. If you love food and want to enjoy it by the river, James Prinsep Ghat cannot be missed. While unusual for many coming from outside the state of West Bengal, this is a very known spot for sunset viewing among college students, friends, and lovers alike. The golden hour is something that cannot be missed. If possible, we would encourage people to try their peaceful boat ride experience. We also indulged in some tasty snacks including *chaats* and a great cup of tea.



## Relaxation Like No Other – Adams Wood House Retreat, Kerala

Imagine the feeling of vacation, with a twist. Our twist was this place – Adams Wood House Retreat in Kerala. A vacation here will leave you with a relaxed body and mind. Yoga sessions and ayurvedic therapies make this a great vacation spot. Kerala is an exotic place to visit but it is often known only for its backwaters. It can truly be called God's Land, given all the relaxation you can experience at Adams. From organic living standards to food, they serve you with great love.



## A Splendid Lunch in Naggar – Jana Waterfall

It took us a while to soak into the beauty of Naggar, a town just 30 minutes from Manali. We thought, *can anything be better than this?* A visit to Jana Waterfall in Naggar changed our minds. Not many visit this place because it is far from the main city. Our host in Naggar insisted we come along with him to Jana Waterfall to have lunch. We can vouch that lunch has never been better than this. A mountain view and a waterfall on the other end; and you sit by the waterfall to have your lunch. To top it off, the food is an absolute traditional spread, served with red rice.



## Bonus!



### 555 Café by the Dhakpo Shedrupling Monastery, Kullu

We wanted to visit the Dhakpo Shedrupling Monastery, but as destiny had it, it wasn't open that day. We were upset at not being able to see the beautiful interiors; however, while we were waiting for our bus in front of the monastery, we noticed a small café by the name of 555. As always, we were hungry and the bus made us wait a bit, so we decided to give this tiny hole-in-the-wall a shot. The Chinese food we had was brilliant and the balcony we sat on had a view of the Beas river and the mountain range together. Pocket-friendly and friendly staff only add to the fresh food. You might have to wait a bit longer than usual for your food, but it's all worth it.





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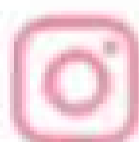



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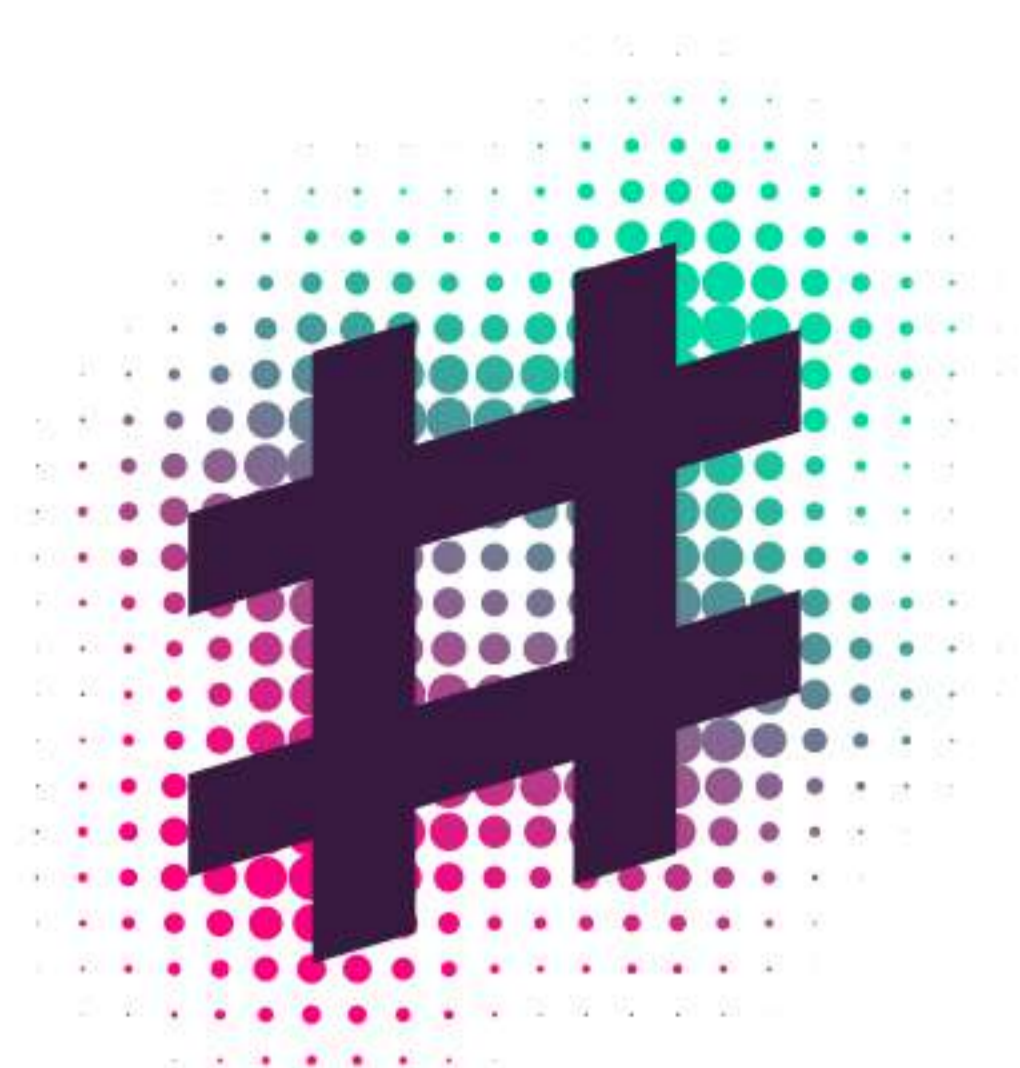
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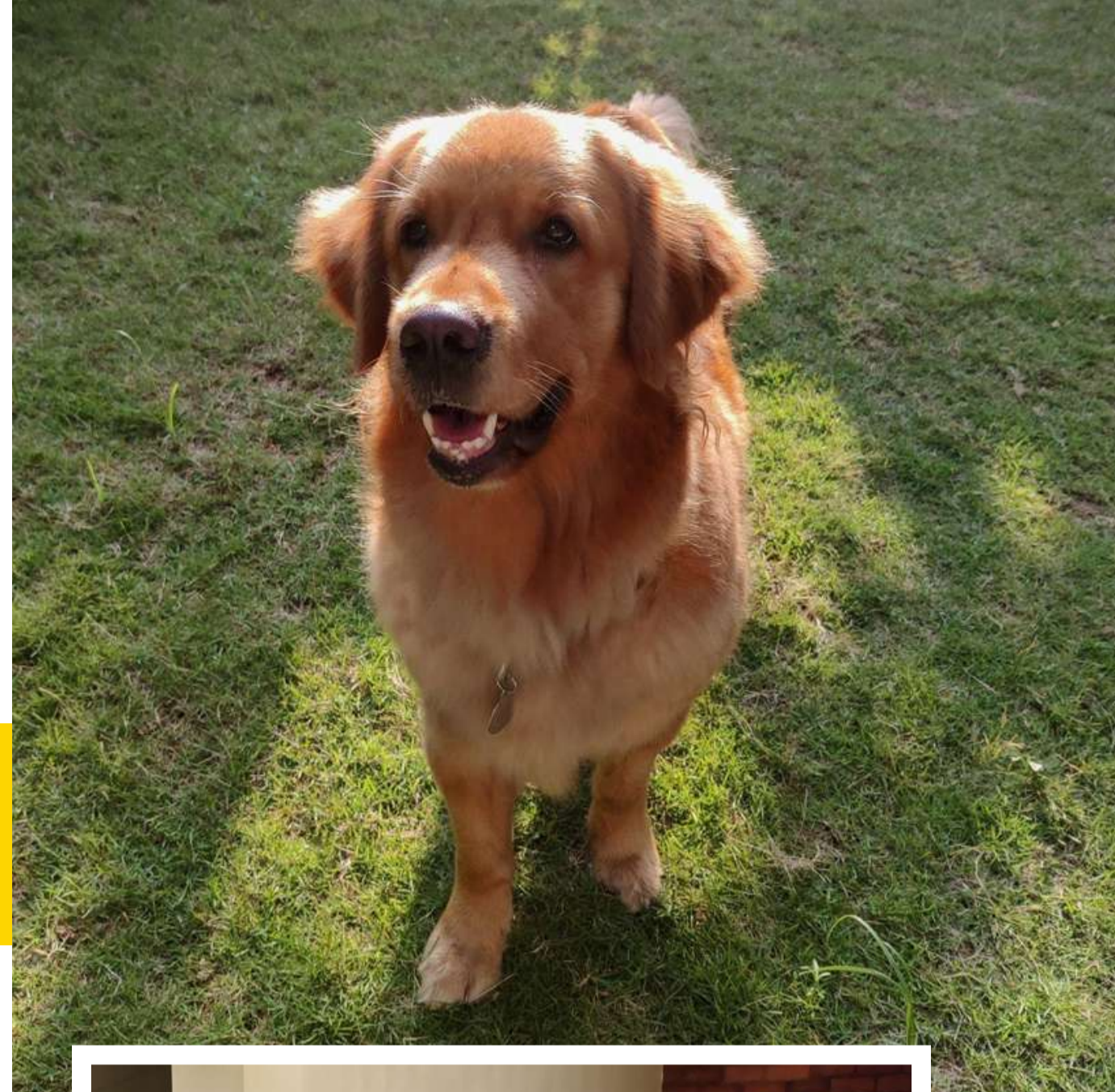
# Your Friendly Neighbourhood

## Pet Sitter

**Deepthi Parthasarathy** converses with **Aditi Naik**, the 27-year-old pet mom of two who is changing the ways of pet sitting!

**A**diti Naik, 27, is a pet mom to two adorable dogs, Soda and Pogo, who had a hard time finding a pet sitter in Bangalore. A B.Com graduate, she decided to make a switch and become a pet-sitter herself.

She started 'She By The Snout', a pet sitting service, in December 2019, for the love of dogs and animals in general. "I'm sure there are people like me who would want the same thing but there aren't many options available. So that's where the idea came from. I connected with someone in the industry and that's how it started," said Aditi over a phone call.



### Misconceptions About Pet Sitting

The first thing that comes to mind when someone hears the word pet-sitter is a pet trainer or a pet boarding centre. Aditi had to work around these misconceptions initially. "A lot of people fail to understand what pet sitting is," said Aditi.

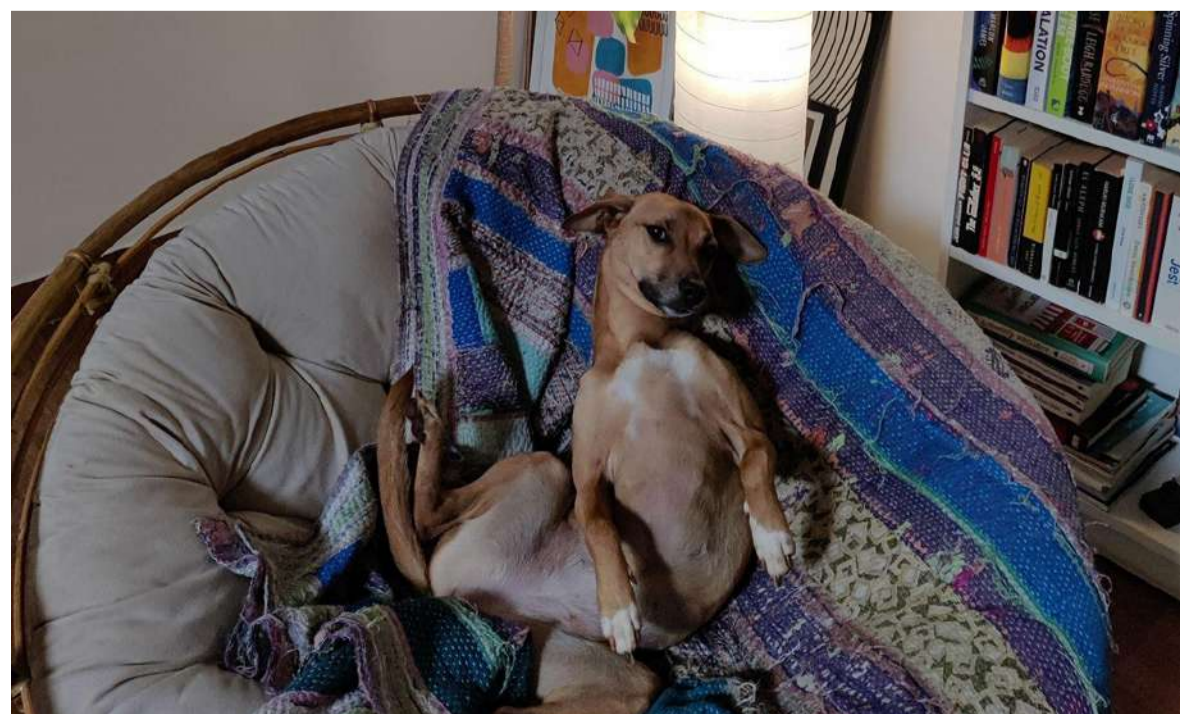
"It is not seen as a service you pay for. While youngsters are open to this idea, I have faced this with a few older clients. I wouldn't generalize though. But, people need to understand that it is not about someone sitting with a dog. It is about someone qualified and experienced enough to care for the dog in the way the dog needs," she added.



### Qualifications To Become A Pet Sitter

Aditi took up two courses to understand the basics of canine behaviour. They helped her understand the subtle signs that are usually missed.

"Dogs are greatly misunderstood. The regular sayings and terms used are not right a lot of times. The courses were useful in breaking the misconceptions in that way. It helped me have better introductions with dogs that are nervous and anxious," she explained.





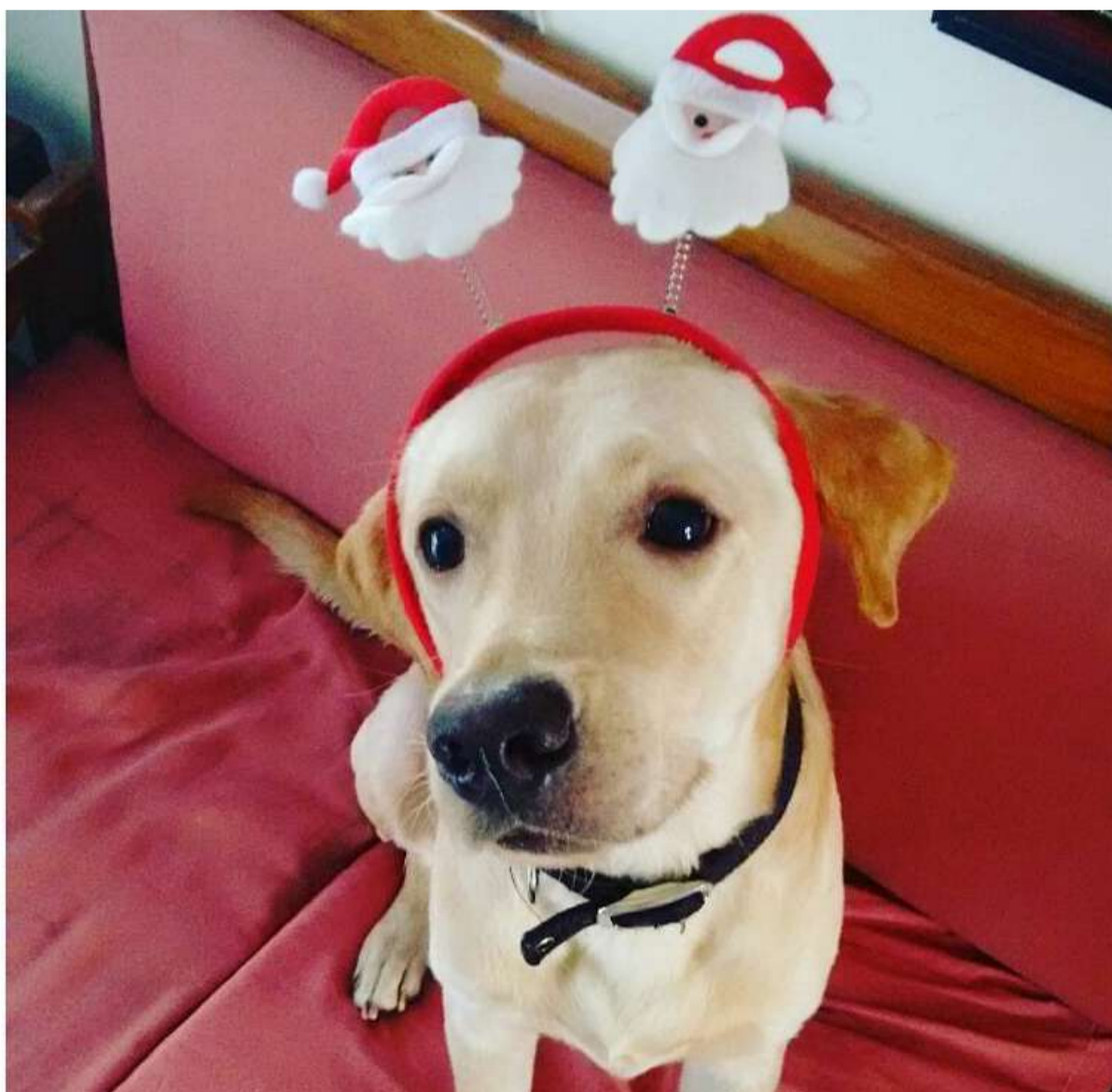
## The Process

The process is quite simple. Aditi gets on an introduction call with her clients to find out about their pet's needs. It includes any medical requirements for their pet and any specific expectations from the client. If time permits, she goes to meet the pet in the presence of the client.

"I'm introduced to the dog in the presence of the family as a friend. The second time they see me, I am familiar. So, the dogs do not associate me with the family's absence. I'm insistent on the fact that it happens," said Aditi. As a pet sitter who is mindful of the client's needs, she is aware that every dog's requirements are different.

## Cons of Pet Sitting

Aditi caters to a radius of 30km. Thus her fee sometimes also includes the conveyance fare. The job involves stepping out of her house and takes a physical toll on her sometimes. "If I am booked for 8 hours, I am technically out for 10 or 11 hours including the journey," she explained. A major con of the job is that it cannot be remote. Her business thus took a hit during the pandemic.



## Impact of the Pandemic

"It hit me directly because it requires you to step out and go to someone else's house. It was not just the lockdown, I was staying away from taking up appointments for a bit, to be cautious. Even though there is slight freedom of movement during this lockdown, I'm still not taking up appointments just to be safe. There is not much I can do about it honestly," she admitted.

She took up freelance projects as well. She is currently working with Ink Bucket, run by an artist, apart from being a pet-sitter. Aditi's clientele has grown due to word of mouth and she is grateful for it. She plans to step up her marketing game this year.

## A Sense of Community

Aditi is in awe of the animal-loving community she is a part of. "I could go endlessly about each dog that I meet. I love animals in general, so I just take a deeper interest in understanding them. I love noticing them," she explained.

Interacting with the community, connecting with them has been fruitful. "I think sitting and discussing the various quirks our dogs can have and the various things we can do to help, breaking misconceptions, all of that has been an important and amazing part of the job," she added.



## The Best Part

Her favourite part is that she gets to meet many animals. "My understanding of dogs keeps increasing as I meet more dogs; they are so dynamic in personality. I love that about the job. You're spending most of your time doing something that you love. That's like a big pro," she said.

"Know that there is definitely a need for pet sitting," said Aditi. Her piece of advice to those interested in taking up pet-sitting professionally is to go for it. The flexibility the job provides is a big pro.

"It is important to stick to your rules. A good client understands these rules and should not have an issue with them. Be polite and firm about it." Not feeling guilty about having rules in place is something she is working on as well.

## The Future of Pet Sitting

"I am glad that there are a lot more resources and information available on pet care in general. People are becoming more aware of it. They are taking more actions to sort of better the lives of their dogs. We have a long way to go, but this is a start and I'm grateful for that," Aditi ended our conversation on a positive note.

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# 10 Little Fingers

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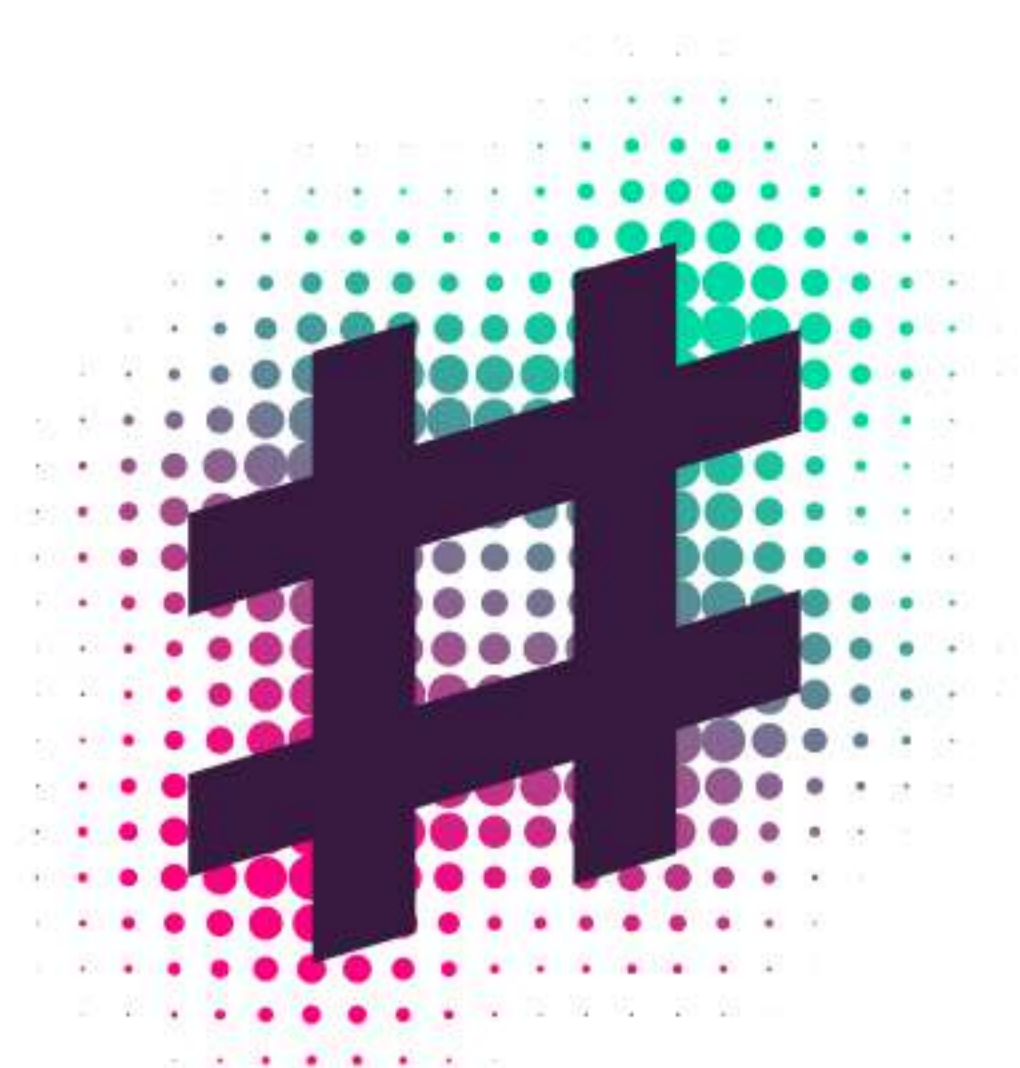


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INTERIORS

# Sprucing Up Home Sweet Home: 4 Home Decor Brands That You Need To Check Out

For all the home décor fanatics out there, **Shraddha Reddy** curates an exclusive list of Indian brands that mix fun with style.

One's home is truly a reflection of their personality. It's no wonder that people spend so much time, effort, and money to create the perfect environment that they long to come home to. The vibe of a home and the pieces that fill it up can influence everything, from mood to productivity, and even confidence. Picking the right furniture, decor, and artifacts for a home is a process that takes years of patience and persistence.

That's why, when you do find those pieces that bring you joy or have a styling element that you love, grab it! From furniture and home textiles and home decor, here are four interesting Indian brands, each with their own unique USP, that have carved out a niche for themselves in the market.

## Ghar Ghar

Ghar Ghar is a bohemian-inspired home décor company originating from Bhadohi, a small district in Uttar Pradesh that is hailed as the carpet city of the world. Home to generations of carpet makers *karigars*, Bhadohi is currently one of India's biggest hubs for home décor manufacturing. Ghar Ghar was started to provide everyone with the opportunity to create comfortable, vibrant spaces at home affordably and practically. Their rugs, runners, and cushion covers boast an eclectic mix

of colours, patterns, and textures that give them a fun, laid-back vibe.

"The name 'Ghar Ghar' is inspired by the traditional childhood game where we created make-belief homes," says Anushka Ahuja, co-founder of Ghar Ghar. She believes that this imaginative side doesn't need to stop as people grow up because everybody deserves the chance to create their dream home. "That's why Ghar Ghar is all about providing you with playful products which will suit your style, give you the home of your dreams, and ensure that going back to your home brings you the comfort you need," says Anushka.



Kautilaya Mewawala and Anushka Ahuja



## Little Miss Arty

Little Miss Arty offers a range of handmade concrete home decor products and was started in 2018 out of Mansi and Harshit Jholapara's architecture design studio. What started out as a passion project due to Mansi's experimental DIY journey with arts and crafts turned into an official brand mid-2020. "I am an interior designer by profession and my husband is an architect. Creating handmade goods is what we've always been passionate about," says Mansi.

Little Miss Arty specializes in making every day utilitarian objects look beautiful and bespoke. Their lovely trinket trays, paperweights, coasters, soap dishes, photo holders, and fridge magnets not only serve a purpose but also work to beautify a space. Some of their multipurpose products, like their mini planters, can be used as pen holders, paperweights, desk organizers, candle or pen holders, and more. The products can be completely customized to suit each customer's choice of colours and patterns (like marbling or hand painting). Since the products are handmade, no two products come out looking the same! This further adds to the exclusivity of the products, making them even more unique. Coupled with the affordable rates, these products make for a great gifting option as well.



Mansi and Harshit Jholapara

Having an architectural background, the couple was naturally drawn towards concrete to create one-of-a-kind, handmade products for home and office decor. Mansi and Harshit use locally available white or grey cement to make their products and manually make their concrete mixtures with concrete colour pigments. They use acrylic paint for the hand-painted art while the gilded artwork is done using craft gold, copper, and silver leaf sheets. As for their moulds, "We've been picking up interesting-looking moulds over the last few years on our travels abroad," Mansi mentions.



## Shrila Home

Shrila Home is a custom handcrafted luxury décor brand that specializes in intricate furniture carving and design. "The brand is inspired by French Baroque and Italian Renaissance styles and shaped by Indian craftsmen," says Anurag Tikku, founder of Shrila Home. With only the finest quality raw materials and resources being used, the price points for these stunning pieces are on the higher side. For those looking to invest in quality furniture that can potentially become a family heirloom someday, Shrila Home offers a wide variety of grand designs to choose from.

They have an in-house design team of experienced craftsmen from across the country, each an expert in their domain. "Our approach to design is customer-centric. The client's imagination is put on paper and brought to reality by us," says Anurag. "From the first sketch of the piece to creating a mood board, and the final finishing touches, the entire process is created taking input from the client," he adds.



## Borderline PLAY

Borderline PLAY is a Delhi-based furniture brand born during the pandemic out of a sheer need for architects to design while their projects had come to a standstill. "The aim was to reimagine objects that we're usually surrounded by at home, make them 'fun'ctional, and add our architectural spin to them," says Shruti Gupta, co-founder of the brand. The products are custom designed by her partner and co-founder Anica Kochhar and go through R&D with different vendors to develop prototypes.

Borderline PLAY's products are functional art, designed by architects. The products have a very distinct 3-dimensional, volumetric aesthetic associated with them that instantly draws the eye. These unique art deco pieces with strong geometric shapes and patterns are bold, out there, and make a statement. If you're looking to experiment with home decor and add interesting accents around your home or office, Borderline PLAY's eccentric-looking products are sure to impress.





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# For The Love of Family

## Siddhanth Kapoor

In an enchanting interview, **Siddhanth Kapoor** talks to **Lipika Varma** on work, family, and marriage.

**A**ctor, singer, and writer Siddhanth Kapoor is not an unfamiliar face. Son of veteran actor Shakti Kapoor and brother to actress Shraddha Kapoor, he is known to have donned many hats in his career. The assistant director has most recently collaborated with his family, lending his voice to the song "Hum Hindustani", launched by aunt Padmini Kolhapure under her banner Dhamaka Records. The track also features sister Shraddha! This is however, not their first collaboration. Previously, we have seen the brother-sister duo in Haseena Parkar, bringing their real-life siblingship to the screen. In an interview with the actor, we learn more about the special bond this sibling pair holds, and how they navigate working in the same industry together.



## The Journey So Far

**How do you look at your journey? Are you happy with the projects you have done till date?**

My journey has been nice, not very hectic! I am not someone who constantly says, 'I don't want to do this or do that.' Being a professional musician, a poker player, and an actor means I am doing a lot of things together. I just finished shooting in Lucknow for *Bhaukaal*, the MX Player series, where I am playing the negative lead. It has received over a 100 million views! *Chehre* has received good reviews as well. I am very content and happy with my journey.

**How is your bond with Shraddha?**

She is very sweet, and we are best friends. We share a very good rapport as brother-sister and as besties.

**Any hiccups in your childhood, which you would like to share with your readers?**

I was naughty, and I am still very naughty. But there were no hiccups! We never carried any problems home.

**Any plans for vacations or travel?**

Nothing yet, as the borders have not opened up. We don't pay for our holidays...just joking. I had to travel to Poland, Europe last year to shoot for *Chehre*; it was excellent.



**Any plans to work with Shraddha again? You were last seen together in *Haseena Parkar*.**

Nothing yet. If there is a script, why not?

***“She is very sweet, and we are best friends. We share a very good rapport as brother-sister and as besties.”***



## **A Strong Siblingship**

**Between you and Shraddha, who handled or saved things when it went haywire?**

We never went on to the point where we had to save anything. I am the older one, so I used to take the blame, or she used to. Both of us would stand up for each other.

**It is well-known that between you and Shraddha, there is no sibling rivalry.**

I don't think there's anything in this world like sibling rivalry. Instead of rivalry, your brother is surely going to feel happy because along with seeing you reach places, they also see the amount of hard work you do. These terms like sibling rivalry and nepotism are bullshit. It has no meaning; it just adds to controversy for no reason.

**What is the latest advice you've given her?**

We both give advice to each other. If I feel low, I'll speak to her. If I am confused, I'll speak to her. More than anyone, I will speak to my sister when it comes to decisions or support. We have a very strong bond, so we always reach out to each other whenever we are stuck somewhere. Our bond is very strong, so we speak to each other 10 times a day.

**If Shraddha is embroiled in a controversy, how does the family react now?**

The media makes controversy as news. We don't really care. We know where we stand. Neither did we then, nor do we do now.

**Does Shraddha recommend you?**

No. We have our own lives, and we take care of our respective careers. No one recommends each other.

## **Marriage On The Cards?**

**Who will get married first, the elder brother or the younger sister?**

We don't know. We don't think it's a good time to get married.

**As a brother, are you worried about her marriage?**

No, it is her life. If she wants to get married, she will get married; if she doesn't, she won't. She is an adult and has her own brain. Who are we to decide that? Why are we worried whether she wants to get married or not?

**Shraddha recently said that she would want her husband to be a *ghar jamai*. What's your take?**

*(Laughs)* I am sure she was joking. *Ghar jamai*...she must have said it in a joking way.



# AN INTERVIEW WITH *poet* RAYWA RAVIPATI

**Raywa Ravipati**, author of the anthology of poems, *Mirages of the Past*, speaks with **Mallik Thatipalli** about her debut book and her inspiration for her work which deal with the themes of Life, Self-Reflection and Love and Friendship.

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## How did *Mirages of the Past* come about?

I have written these poems over five years but was able to take the step to submit them for publishing a poetry book during the lockdown time.

## What prompted you to write about poetry? Were you always interested in it?

Yes, I have been writing poetry since I was a child. Fortunately, it evolved from childhood poems of dragons and crayons to life experiences and emotions with age. Poetry is my way of expression and will always be. It is the form of writing for me when something, bad or good, is too hard for me to say

## What is the inspiration for your poems?

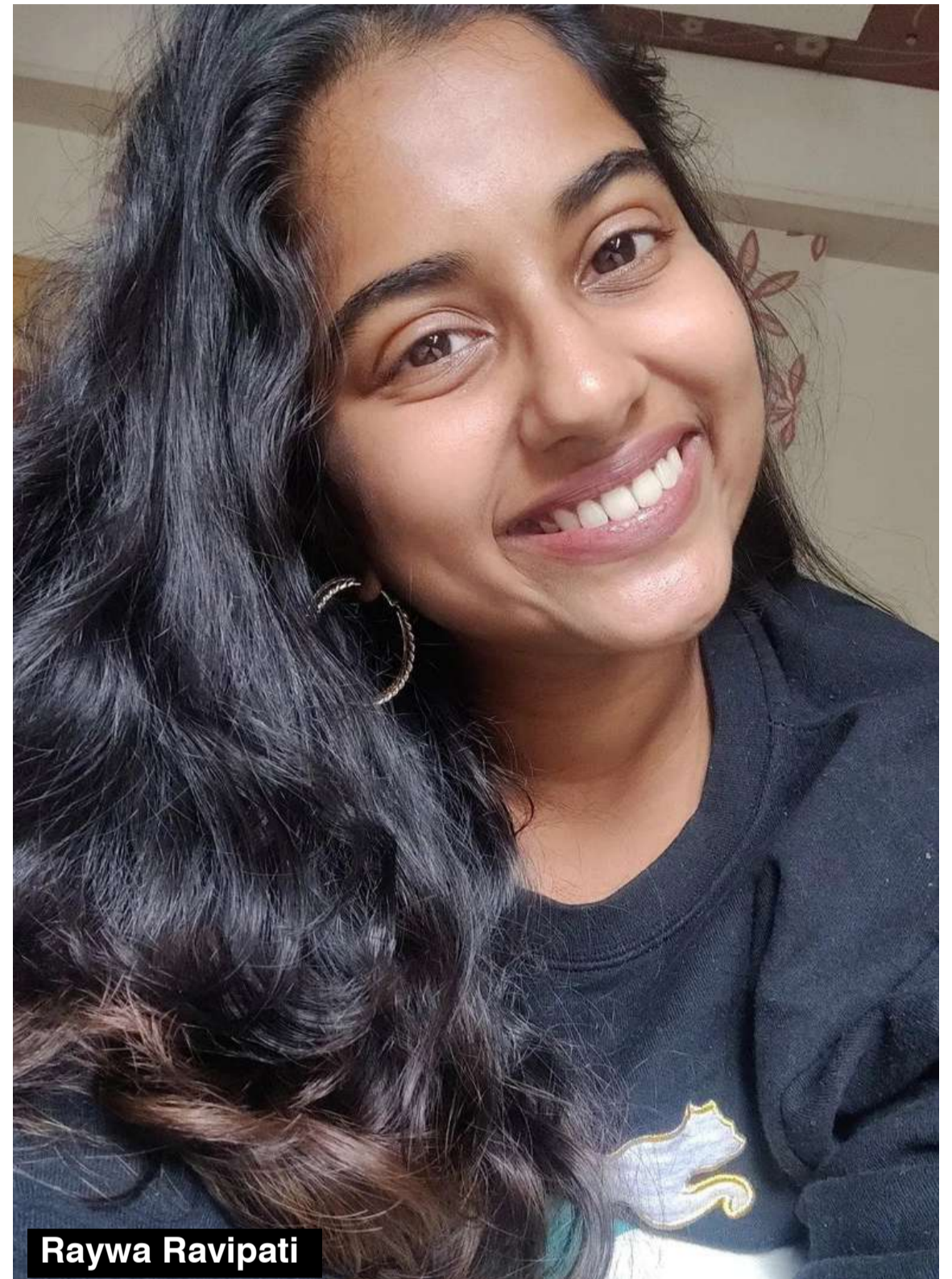
My inspiration comes from everything around. From things to people. Nothing in specific. My environment by itself.

## What are the challenges faced by you in writing the book and how did you overcome them?

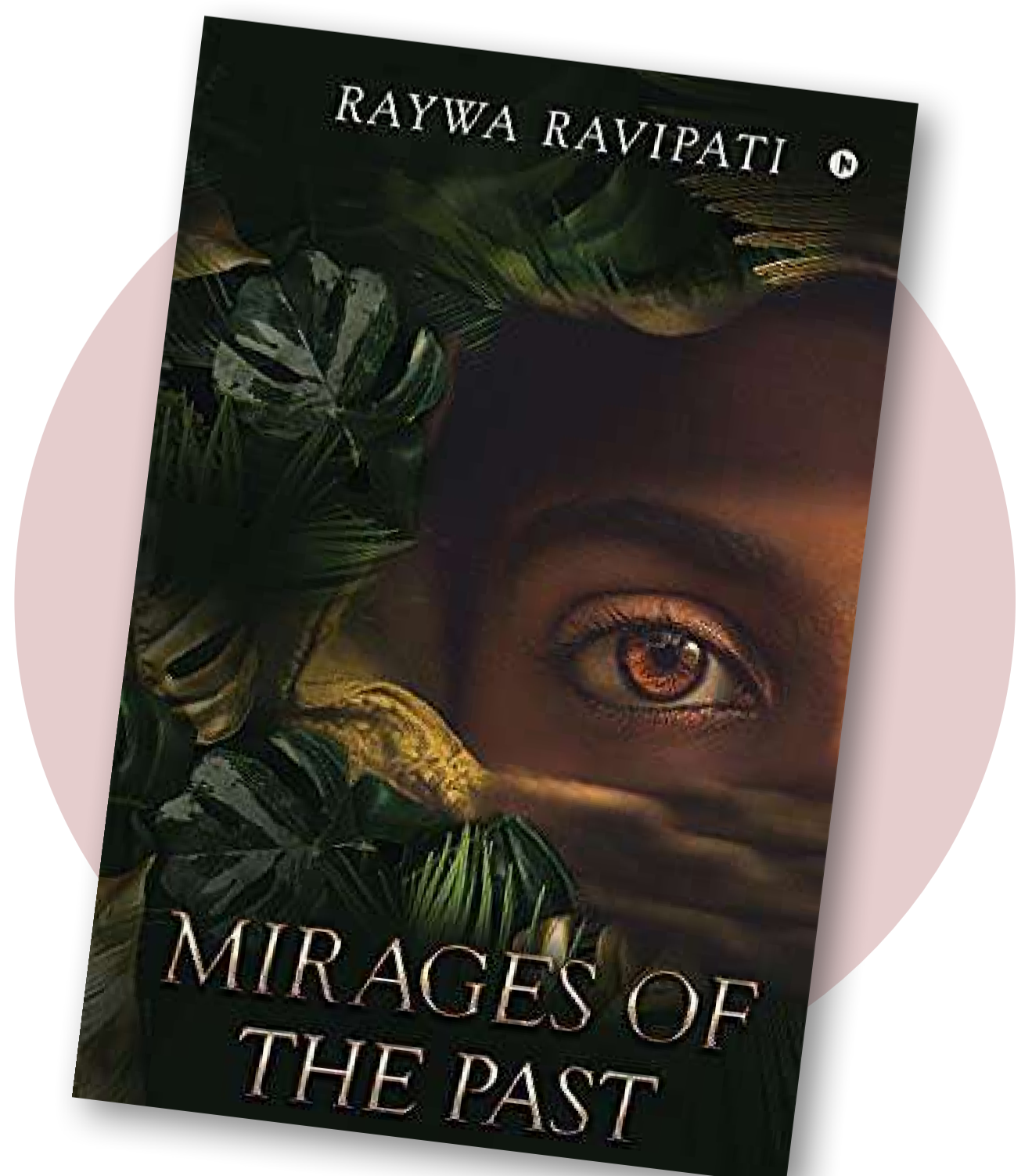
Yes, I have been writing poetry since I was a child. Fortunately, The editing part was quite challenging as we need to keep the essence and pattern of the poem even while making changes. Another main challenge was accepting that people would be reading it because I'm an extremely private person.

## What are you currently working on?

Yes, I have been writing poetry since I was a child. Fortunately, I'm writing poetry as my life moves forward about new experiences. But it'll be quite some time before the second book is considered.



Raywa Ravipati



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