

AMORE

LIFE & LEISURE

Spring-Summer Issue 2025

THAT'S UNIQUE
DINING IN
THE DARK

HOME
SET A
PRETTY
TABLE

ECO VENTURE
THREADS
WITH SOUL

SUMMER QUENCHER
WATERMELON

CARIBBEAN QUEEN
JAMAICA

DECOR
IT'S ALL
WHITE

DELICIOUS!
AN ARTIST
SERVES UP
A VISUAL
FEAST

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Representative image

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AMANDA JOY PURAVANKARA
Executive Director
Provident Housing Limited

Dear Readers,

Every home begins as a blank canvas. Silent walls, empty rooms, and spaces waiting to be filled. Then, life moves in. Footsteps echo for the first time, a name is scribbled on a fogged-up mirror, and the scent of morning coffee lingers just a little longer. And slowly, brick and mortar transform into something far greater—a place that holds not just people, but memories.

At Puravankara, we don't just build homes; we build the quiet corners where dreams take shape, the doorways where new chapters begin, and the rooftops where laughter rises into the evening air. Every design and each detail is crafted with one thought in mind—you. Your moments, your memories, your life in motion.

And just as homes evolve with time, so do we. With every passing season, we are reminded that change is inevitable, but the essence of home remains. As spring turns to summer, light lingers a little longer, the air hums with possibility, and life, as always, finds new ways to flourish.

Welcome to this issue—one that celebrates not just the spaces we live in, but the life we create within them.

Amanda Joy

Since
1992



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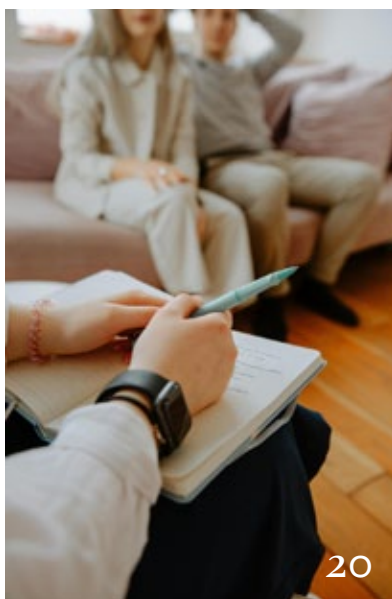
Opening Soon At **HUBBALLI, GULBARGA & BIJAPUR**
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Spring-Summer Issue 2025

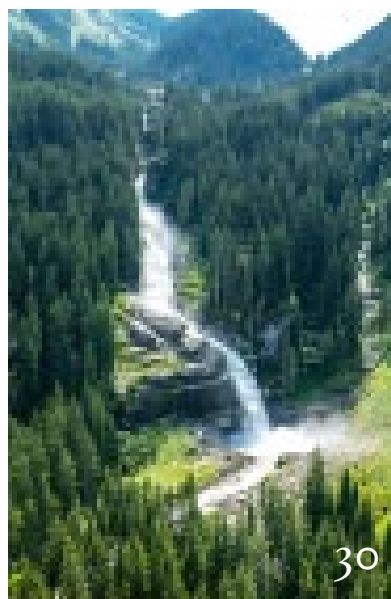
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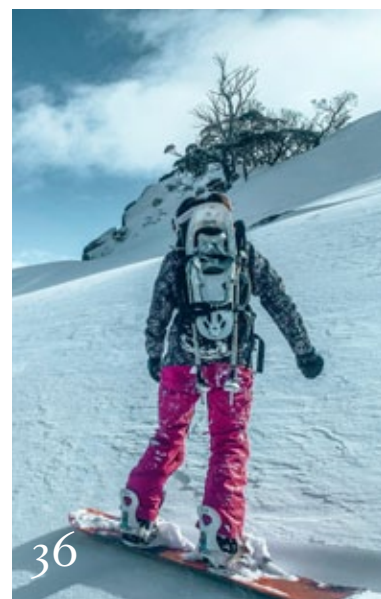
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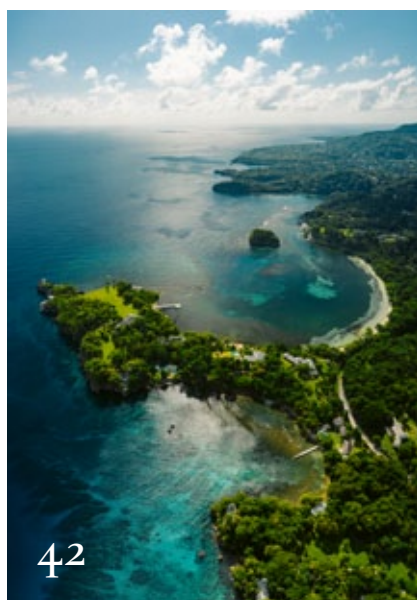
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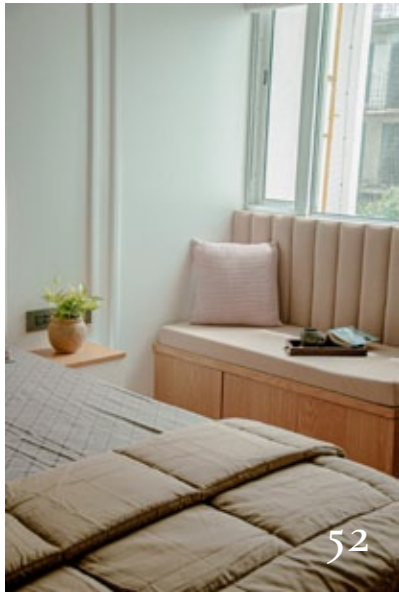
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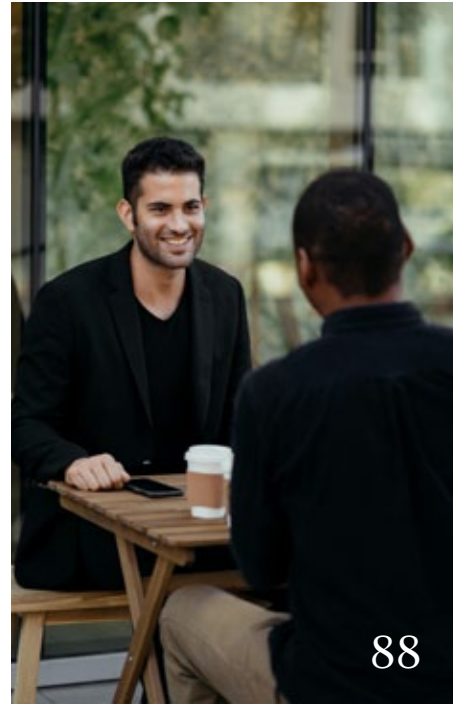
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Please Recycle This Paper

editor's note



Dear Readers,

As the vibrant hues of spring merge seamlessly into the warmth of summer, we are delighted to present to you the latest issue of Amore, brimming with inspiration to elevate your lifestyle.

Dive into the azure waters of Jamaica through our travel feature, where sun-kissed beaches and island rhythms beckon. Explore the art of effortless summer entertaining, perfect for lazy afternoons and lively gatherings with loved ones. Discover the timeless elegance of decorating with white, a palette that whispers serenity and sophistication into every corner of your home.

For culinary enthusiasts, tantalizing watermelon recipes await—fresh, juicy, and bursting with seasonal flavours. Delve into the art of resolving relationship dilemmas with mediation techniques that foster harmony and understanding. And don't miss our special spotlight on South Indian textiles, where traditional craftsmanship meets contemporary design, weaving stories of culture and creativity.

We invite you to immerse yourself in these pages, where every article is crafted to add a touch of joy and inspiration to your spring-summer journey. Let Amore be your companion in celebrating life's simple pleasures and exquisite moments.

Happy reading!

Shubhra



Sanjeev Shetty

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The **A** List

TRENDING RIGHT NOW



TUDOR BLACK BAY CHRONO FLAMINGO BLUE

This sports chronograph sits perfectly on the hand with its comfortable 41mm size and brushed stainless steel case.



SOORAHİ WHISKY

The whisky's name, drawn from the Hindi terms "soo" (good) and "rahi" (traveler), captures the spirit of exploration and discovery. Its packaging incorporates symbolic elements like a Compass and North Star, signifying ambition, guidance, and the promise of an unforgettable journey.



UPPERCASE TRAVEL GEAR

The brand has launched two collections—Rock Suitcase and Vector Suitcase—each designed with a unique approach to modern, eco-conscious travel.



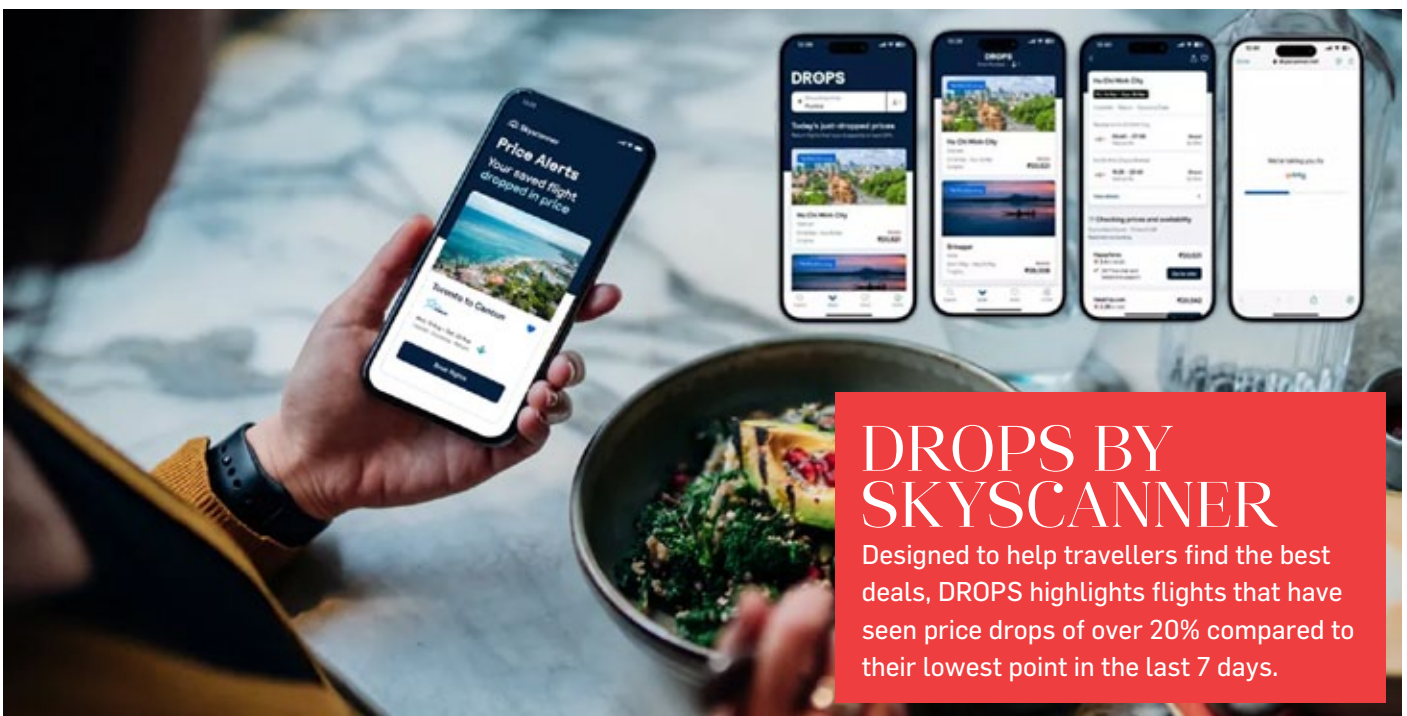
EMIRATES NEW MENU

Business travellers can pick from 18 chef-curated dishes with Moët & Chandon Champagne, including vegan options like silken tofu with poached asparagus.



SAFFOLA CUPPA OATS

Ready in 4 minutes by just adding boiling hot water. Available in two flavours - Magic Masala and Spicy Mexicana, along with a delightful blend of oats, millets & crunchy multigrain bites.



DROPS BY SKYSCANNER

Designed to help travellers find the best deals, DROPS highlights flights that have seen price drops of over 20% compared to their lowest point in the last 7 days.

PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/180724/006944



 **PROVIDENT**
SUNWORTH CITY

A Township Built for the Future

— THE CITY OF MORE

Provident Sunworth City is not just a place to live—it's a lifestyle statement. Spanning across 60 acres with 19 acres dedicated to lush greenery, this integrated township is designed to provide a holistic living experience, with top-tier amenities, seamless connectivity, and thoughtfully planned homes that cater to every modern need. The homes are thoughtfully designed with spacious interiors, abundant natural light, and high-end specifications. From 2 and 3 BHK residences to state-of-the-art clubhouses, the township ensures that residents enjoy a superior quality of life.

Artistic Impression | Provident Sunworth City = Provident Equinox 3
RERA websites: <https://rera.karnataka.gov.in/>

Seamless Connectivity

Located off Mysore Expressway, Provident Sunworth City enjoys excellent connectivity to NICE Road, Challaghatta Metro Station, and Bengaluru's IT hubs. This strategic location makes daily commuting hassle-free while ensuring that residents have quick access to essential social infrastructure, including top schools, hospitals, malls, and entertainment hubs.

World-Class Amenities

Provident Sunworth City is more than just a home; it's a lifestyle destination. The township boasts an array of world-class amenities including:

- 3 Grand Clubhouses with swimming pools and multiple recreational facilities
- Dedicated sports court for Badminton, Basketball, Tennis and Squash
- Children's Play Areas and Landscaped Gardens for a serene environment

The Provident Promise

Provident Sunworth City is a testament to the brand's commitment to delivering quality homes with on-time delivery and unmatched customer satisfaction. With an impeccable track record in the real estate sector, Provident ensures that every resident experiences a life of ease, elegance, and excellence.

Whether you're a first-time homebuyer or an investor seeking lucrative opportunities, Provident Sunworth City offers the perfect blend of modern living, strategic location, and value for money. Experience the harmony of nature and modernity at Provident Sunworth City, where every day feels like a retreat.



MOUNTAIN MAGIC

“

How glorious a greeting the sun gives the mountains!

- **JOHN MUIR**
The Mountains of California



“

Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea, are excellent schoolmasters, and teach some of us more than what we could learn from books.

- **JOHN LUBBOCK**



“

Every mountain top is within reach if you just keep climbing.

- **BARRY FINLAY**
Kilimanjaro and Beyond



“

Life's a bit like mountaineering—never look down.

- **SIR EDMUND HILLARY**



“

In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks.

- **JOHN MUIR**
Mountaineer

“

When preparing to climb a mountain, pack a light heart

- **DAN MAY**

“

I learn something every time I go into the mountains.

- **MICHAEL KENNEDY**

“

May your dreams be larger than mountains and may you have the courage to scale their summits.

- **HARLEY KING**
Author

“

Everyone wants to live on top of the mountain, but all the happiness and growth occurs while you're climbing it.

- **ANDY ROONEY**
American Writer

an ode to Linen

Aeka is a planet- positive brand that consists of linen sarees and separates. The endeavour at Aeka was to empower the wearer to lend her personality and style to the garment.

We work with breathable fabrics and relaxed silhouettes and believe in slow fashion and living.



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



BOOK EXTRACT

MORE THAN A MOUTHFUL

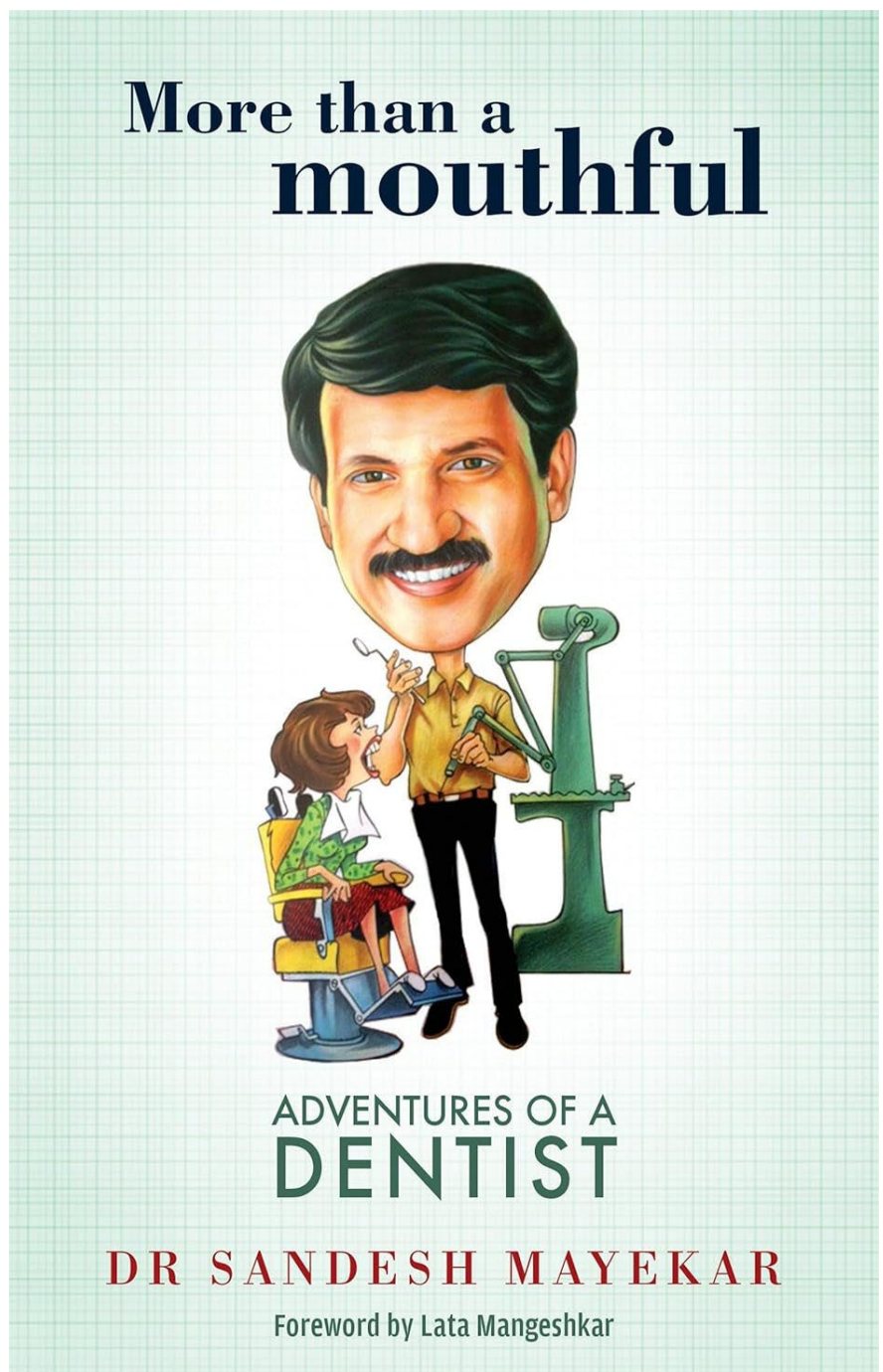
BY DR SANDESH MAYEKAR

ACID ATTACK

A dentist's life is never dull. We meet all sorts of people, from every walk of life. They come from all ages, and the variety of stories they present along with their problems makes every day fascinating. And the blessing is that most of the problems that afflict them are never life threatening. Acutely painful, yes, but nothing that will cause a life or death emergency. So a dentist is spared the many anxious moments practitioners of other fields of medicine are often subjected to.

One morning I entered my clinic to find a young couple seated in the waiting room. They looked anxious. Seeing me walk towards the treatment room, they quickly rose and approached me. 'Doctor, we don't have an appointment, but please listen to our problem.'

I could see from the wife's hands full of bangles that she was newly wed. Even the mehendi had not faded completely: faint lines of orange were still discernable as she adjusted her dupatta. I assured them of my attention after I had tended to the patient who was already in the chair, getting prepped for me to work on his problem, and entered the treatment room.





DID YOU KNOW?

Dentists have a halitosis meter which, when blown into, tells the intensity of the odour!

It was a good two hours before I found time to call the couple in. The appointments that morning were all back to back, and I got completely immersed in the cases, some of which were complicated. With a jolt, I remembered the waiting couple, and asked my assistant to check if they had left. They had not.

'We don't know what the problem is, Doctor,' the husband began. 'But I have bad breath, and it is affecting me tremendously.' I turned to look at the wife; she seemed as upset as the young man who stood before me. I motioned him to take the chair so I could take a look. 'We've been to specialists, but the problem remains; he keeps saying his breath smells bad,' the wife told me. I soon discovered he could be right. There were no food particles stuck in his teeth that could ferment and cause bad breath. But his teeth needed cleaning, and his tongue was coated. Both could cause bad breath.

I cleaned his teeth, told him to clean the back of his tongue with his toothbrush or a tongue cleaner every time he brushed his teeth, and sent him home. I thought the marriage would now get off on a good start.

I was wrong. Within a week they were back. The problem persisted.

I checked him again. There seemed no cause for his conviction that he had bad breath. Suddenly it struck me. 'Do you suffer from acidity?' I asked. The man nodded. That explained it. An acidic stomach taints the breath. The person who suffers from acidity smells it strongly, though it may not reach those around him. The odour from acidity is different from oral odour. Unlike the odour caused by coughs, colds and chest infections or fasting, which can be sensed by others when the patient speaks, acidity causes a stale feeling in the mouth that the patient translates as bad breath.

I told the young husband to treat his acidity; his breath problem would solve itself. I told him it was necessary to treat the acidity as quickly as possible; he was still young, and it could cause serious damage in the long run. I told him the story of this gentleman patient from Kolkata who had been suffering from acidity for years. He had come to me with his young daughter because he was worried her teeth would look like his. His mouth was full of teeth, but there was hardly any enamel left on any of them. His teeth were completely eroded! I investigated his eating habits. He was a vegetarian, he ate regularly, and his meals were balanced. But he admitted, on questioning, that he was constantly

anxious. And he suffered from regular acidity as a fallout of his continuous worried state.


I also warned my young, newlywed patient about other causes of acidity in the mouth that could harm his teeth: cola, wine, lime juice. Colas wear out teeth, the carbonization works on the inside area of the teeth, whittling away the enamel and giving rise to cavities. Lime juice is acidic and in the hope of staying slim, he or his wife drank lime juice first thing every morning, they could, like a much earlier lady patient of mine, end up with teeth whittled down by the acid in the lime. Even water drunk at the wrong time be harmful: water at the end of a meal neutralizes the PH balance of the saliva and can allow the acids to attack the mouth.

Red wine is another acid creator, and if he favoured drinking it, I told him to have a nibble of cheese to balance out the acidity. 'And cookies go well with tea to counteract the acid in the tea, especially if you are having morning tea in bed,' I said, smiling at the young couple. The young bride blushed. But when they left my room, I could see their step, and their hearts were lighter.


I leant back in my chair and let out a sigh of happiness. Nothing pleases a doctor more than a patient who goes back happy.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing in a notebook with a blue pen. The person is wearing a white shirt and a black watch. In the background, two other people are sitting on a couch, but they are out of focus. The overall scene suggests a mediation or conflict resolution session.

MEDIATION **MAKING** **PEACE**



// Legal battles are expensive—there’s no sugarcoating it. Mediation costs a fraction of litigation fees. //



It all started with a patch of land and two childhood friends, Vikram and Arjun. They had grown up together, studied in the same school, and even started a business side by side. But when they jointly purchased a property on the outskirts of Pune for business, their lifelong friendship turned into a battlefield.

Both felt they had the stronger claim. Conversations turned into arguments, arguments into accusations, and soon, they were hurling legal notices at each other. Courtroom hearings became routine, and with every passing month, their relationship soured further. Arjun refused to be in the same room as Vikram. Vikram told their mutual friends he would rather “never see Arjun’s face again” than give in.

Then came a suggestion from the judge: Mediation.

WHAT IS MEDIATION, AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Mediation is a method of resolving disputes without dragging them through the courts for years. Instead of a judge dictating the final verdict, a neutral third party—the mediator—helps both sides see the complete picture and reach a solution that works for everyone. It’s faster, less expensive, less cumbersome and, most importantly, less destructive to relationships, bringing peace of mind.

In Vikram and Arjun’s case, they were hesitant at first. “If we could talk it out, we wouldn’t have reached court in the first place!” Arjun scoffed. But with nothing to lose, as they could go back to Court if a settlement eluded them, they gave it a shot. They also realised during Mediation that they could settle all disputes between them in various Courts and not just this one case.

Mediation is a structured process guided by a neutral mediator who ensures both parties are heard and

helps them find common ground. The mediator does not impose a decision but facilitates discussion and a resolution. Mediation is voluntary where the parties have flexibility to determine the terms of settlement themselves, with assistance of the Mediator. A mediated settlement is final and binding and cannot be challenged in Court.

MEDIATION VS. ARBITRATION VS. COURT LITIGATION

Mediation is voluntary, confidential, and focuses on mutual agreement. It is a win-win, balanced solution rather than a winner-takes-all approach. The Mediator facilitates the parties to negotiate and settle all their differences mutually; a mediator does not pass an Order. Arbitration is more similar to Court litigation but is for a particular dispute, where the Arbitrator examines evidence and gives a Judgment, similar to a Court. Litigation, or even arbitration, is lawyer driven, where the voice of the parties is often lost in the complexities of the litigation process, unlike Mediation which is party centric.

HOW MEDIATION SAVES TIME AND MONEY AND BRINGS PEACE OF MIND

Legal battles are expensive—there’s no sugarcoating it. Between lawyer fees, court expenses, and years of hearings, litigation can drain your bank account and peace of mind.

Mediation costs a fraction of litigation fees.

It is flexible and can be online or in Hybrid mode and at a time and place convenient to all parties.

It saves years of legal delays—most cases are resolved in days & weeks, not years.

Since it’s not an adversarial process, you also save on emotional and mental exhaustion.



MEDIATION: A GROWING TREND IN INDIA

Mediation is rapidly gaining ground in India, specially with the new Mediation Act of 2023. The Indian judicial system has a backlog of over 4.5 crore pending cases as of 2024 and the Courts are increasingly recommending mediation as an alternative to lengthy trials, which are likely followed by multiple Appeals as one party is dissatisfied with the outcome.

Though attempt at mediated settlement is mandatory prior to initiating commercial litigation, businesses are now embracing mediation voluntarily to resolve corporate disputes. Companies prefer it because it's faster, confidential, and allows them to maintain professional relationships instead of burning bridges in court.

WHO CAN BECOME A MEDIATOR?

Mediators aren't just lawyers or retired judges. Some are other professionals trained specifically in conflict resolution through mediation. They undergo the minimum 40-hours certification course in negotiation, dispute resolution, and communication skills. Some common eligibility criteria include:

- ✓ A background in law, psychology, business, or social work
- ✓ Certification from recognised mediation institutions.
- ✓ Practical training in mediation techniques and ethics.

WHEN & WHERE TO GO FOR MEDIATION IN INDIA?

You can mediate a conflict even prior to filing a case. Infact, for certain types of disputes 'pre-litigation' mediation is compulsory before approaching the Courts. If you have missed that opportunity, at any point of time

// The Indian judicial system has a backlog of over 4.5 crore pending cases as of 2024. //

during the pendency of case in Court, the parties can directly go to a Mediator or request the Court to refer their case for mediation.

If you or someone you know needs mediation, there are several reputable institutions and Mediators in India that offer services, including Court Annexed Mediation Centres at the Supreme Court, High Courts, District Courts and Consumer Courts. Online mediation is also becoming popular.

In the labyrinth of legal disputes, mediation shines as a sensible, cost-effective, and relationship-saving solution. Whether you're dealing with a business feud, family disagreement, matrimonial conflict, consumer dispute or property battle, consider mediation before heading to court.

After all, wouldn't you rather shake hands at the end of a dispute than spend years fighting a war no one truly wins?



Shirin Khajuria is a Senior Advocate & Mediator, Supreme Court of India



SUNSET THERAPY

Pause. Breathe. Watch the sky change.

In our fast-paced world, the simple act of watching the sunset can be a daily reset for the mind and soul. As the sky melts into hues of gold, pink, and orange, something magical happens—you slow down, reflect, and reconnect with yourself.

Why Sunsets Are Good for You

- **Instant Stress Buster** – The changing colours have a calming effect, lowering anxiety and heart rate.
- **Mindfulness in Motion** – Watching the sun dip below the horizon keeps you present, like a mini-meditation.
- **A Natural Mood Booster** – The golden light triggers serotonin, the feel-good hormone!
- **Tech Detox** – It's the perfect excuse to step away from screens and simply be.

Make Sunset-Watching a Ritual

- Find a quiet spot—your balcony, a rooftop, a park.
- Leave your phone behind (or use it only for a quick photo!).

Breathe deeply, soak in the colours, and let your mind unwind.

Each sunset is a gentle reminder that endings can be beautiful, too. So, take a few moments, watch the sky, and let nature work its quiet magic.

THE LIFELINE OF JAMMU: TAWI RIVER

BY AJAY KHAJURIA

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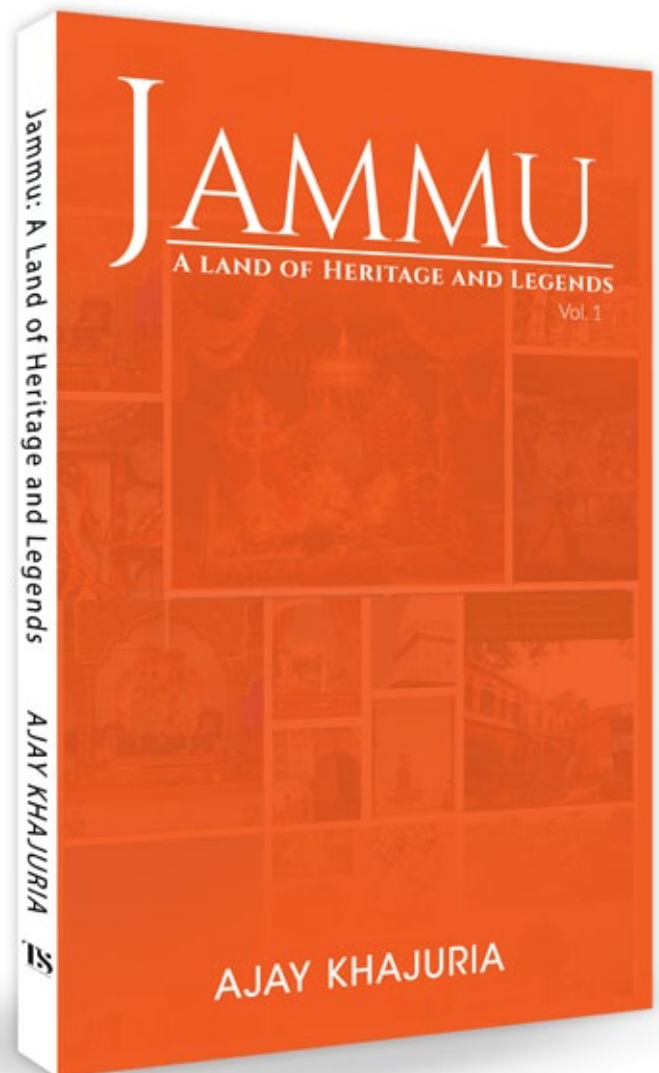
awi or Tausi or Tauh (as described in old texts and had its reference with the same name in Rajatarangini, first written record of Kashmir kings). Tawi is the lifeline of Jammu. It flows through Jammu city and divides the city into two parts: old and new Jammu.

Tawi rises from Glacier Kali Kundi and flows through many places before entering into Jammu and finally culminating into Chenab. River Tawi is part of the vast history of Jammu Hills. It has its reference in religious customs like praying at "dabbar" (deepest point of river) which is related to Pehar Devta. The Prince of Wales, on a visit to Jammu, crossed River Tawi on elephant.

Tawi has seen it all.

Its journey through the originating point to Ramnagar to Jammu is also very interesting. Pt Kedar Nath Shastri Ji covered this extensively in his book "Tasusi Shatkam." The book and the description are a pleasure to read. Several groups are working to revive the lost glory of the Tawi, and "Tawi Aarti" is beautiful to watch.

Ferocious during monsoons, River Tawi is serene and calm for the rest of the year. For people coming from outside J&K, I would like to request that whenever you pass through Jammu, stop for a while on Tawi bridge and remember that you are crossing the part of vast Jammu hill heritage and history.



Ajay Khajuria, a resident of Jammu, is an experienced marketing and sales professional with over 25 years in the telecom and FMCG industries. He has worked with top companies like Coca-Cola, Airtel, and Bharti Airtel, where he served as Head of Marketing for J&K and Ladakh. In 2023, he moved into academics as a Professor of Practice at MIET, Jammu. He is also a member of the advisory board at Impact Guru Foundation and an external advisor to KPMG. Passionate about Jammu's history, he has authored three books on its heritage.



CHILL IN STYLE

Nothing says summer like a chilled drink, but why stop at plain old ice? Upgrade your cubes with fresh herbs, fruits, and edible flowers for a touch of beauty and flavour!

HOW TO MAKE IT?

1. **Pick Your Add-ins** – Mint, basil, lemon slices, rose petals, lavender, berries—anything fresh and vibrant!
2. **Arrange & Pour** – Place your chosen ingredients in an ice tray and fill it with water, coconut water, or lemonade.
3. **Freeze & Enjoy** – Pop them into your drinks for an instant summer refresh!

FUN COMBOS TO TRY:

- **Lemon + Mint** – The classic summer refresher.
- **Rose Petals + Cardamom** – A fragrant twist for iced tea.
- **Strawberries + Basil** – Sweet, tangy, and oh-so-chic!
- **Coconut Water + Kiwi** – A tropical delight in every sip.

These ice cubes aren't just pretty—they infuse flavour as they melt, making every sip feel like summer in a glass!

- **Pro Tip:** Freeze coffee for iced lattes that don't get watered down!

YŪGA

A New Thread in South Indian Textiles

Yūga is where heritage meets the here and now. Born from South India's rich weaving traditions, it reinvents age-old handloom techniques with a bold, contemporary edge—keeping centuries-old craftsmanship alive and effortlessly stylish.

M EET PARUL

GUPTA: THE FOUNDER OF YŪGA

For Parul Gupta, fashion was always more than trends—it was about the people behind the fabric. A fashion designer and textile researcher from Mathura, she first explored Indian textiles at the Indian Institute of Art and Design, Delhi. But it was at 11.11/eleven eleven that she truly understood the depth of handwoven craftsmanship.

While deeply immersed in textile research, Parul noticed something striking: South Indian weaves weren't as celebrated as other Indian textiles. Having grown up in North India, her only exposure to Kerala's textile heritage was the Kasavu saree during Onam. This gap in recognition intrigued her.

In late 2021, she reached out to Kerala native and fellow researcher Gadha Gopal, and together they mapped out an exploration of Kerala's weaving traditions. A few months later, Parul found herself in the heart of Kerala's weaving



communities—sharing meals with artisans, learning the nuances of their craft, and discovering small but significant details, like how rice starch strengthens yarn and coconut oil aids in warp setting.

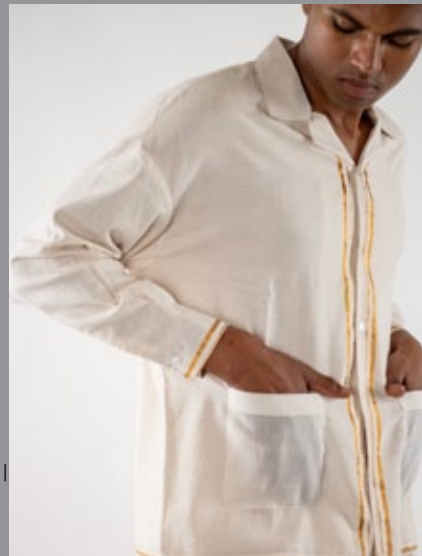
In September 2022, Yuga was born. Since then, it has released

four collections, each inspired by movement, texture, and community. The brand's commitment to craftsmanship has earned recognition from The Hindu and Practising Solidarity by Artez University.

Dividing her time between Kerala and Delhi, Parul remains immersed in the craft—collaborating with weavers, refining her designs, and bringing South Indian textiles into the global fashion conversation, one handwoven piece at a time.

WHAT MAKES YŪGA UNIQUE?

- **Authentic South Indian Weaves** – Handwoven fabrics crafted by artisans in Kerala.
- **Sustainable & Ethical** – Emphasis on natural materials, traditional techniques, and fair wages.
- **Contemporary Aesthetic** – Classic weaves reimaged in modern silhouettes.
- **Slow Fashion Approach** – Thoughtfully designed, limited-edition collections.
- **Global Reach** – Available at OED Elements in Fort Kochi and on Clotho, a Toronto-based platform.





Why Don't You...
SIT ON A PARK BENCH
And watch the world go by...

When was the last time you did nothing? No scrolling, no rushing, no checking the time—just sat and watched life unfold?

A park bench is a front-row seat to the theatre of the ordinary. Watch kids chase pigeons, an old couple share a quiet moment, a jogger lost in their own rhythm. Listen to the rustling leaves, snippets of passing conversations, the distant jingle of an ice cream cart.

Why You Should Try It:

- **Instant Stress Relief** – Nature has a way of slowing you down.
- **People-Watching is Fun** – Make up stories about strangers. Who's on a first date? Who's secretly famous?
- **Mindfulness, the Easy Way** – Just breathe and be.

No agenda. No destination. Just a bench, a breeze, and a little time to let life surprise you.

EXPLORE

WHERE ARE YOUR DREAMS
TAKING YOU THIS SEASON?



GUESS THE PLACE: THE MUSICAL GEM OF EUROPE!





Think you know your travel destinations? Here's a fun challenge for you! We've got five intriguing clues about a city famous for its music, history, and breathtaking scenery. From legendary composers to fairy-tale architecture, this place has it all. Can you guess where it is? Let's find out!

CLUE 1

This city is the birthplace of one of the greatest classical composers, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

CLUE 2

A famous Hollywood musical, *The Sound of Music*, was filmed in and around this picturesque city.

CLUE 3

It is home to one of the largest fully preserved medieval fortresses in Europe, perched high above the city.

CLUE 4

A stunning Baroque old town, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lies along the banks of the Salzach River.

CLUE 5

This Austrian city is known for its world-famous music festival, attracting classical music lovers from around the globe

The answer is somewhere in this issue.



Beyond Goa

EXPLORING SINDHUDURG'S UNTOUCHED SHORES AND STORIES

BY ANISHA SIRCAR

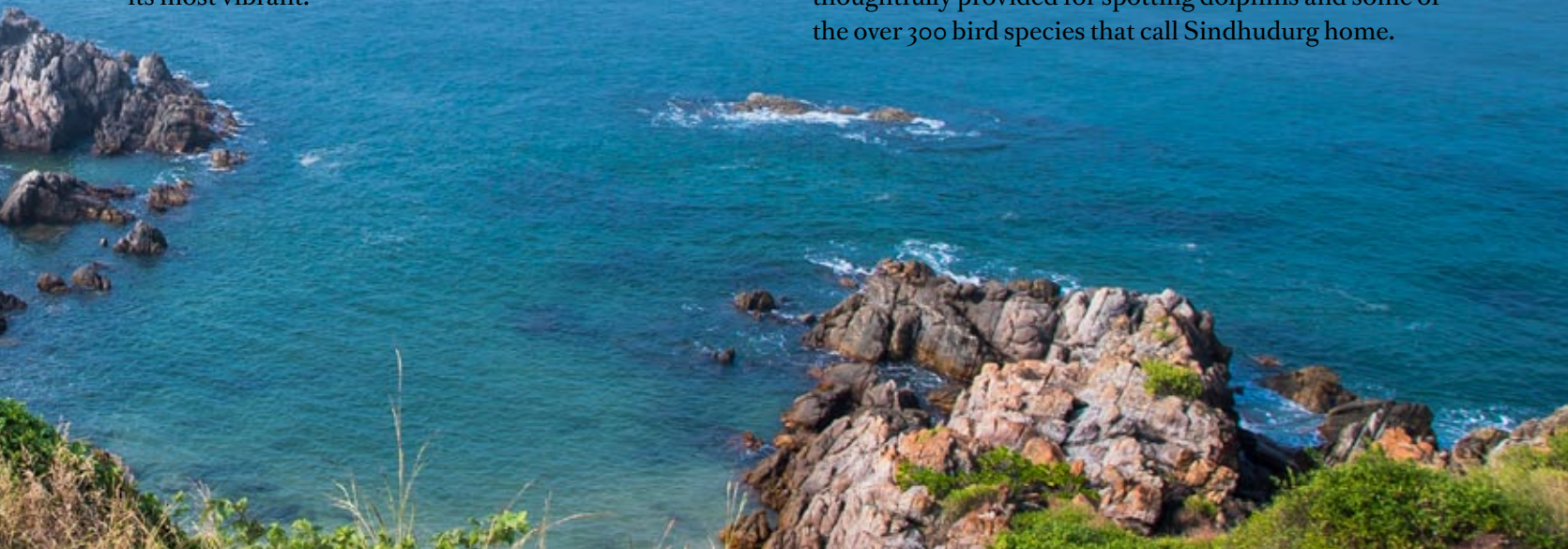


As the pressures of overtourism continue to strain Goa's beloved beaches, a quieter, more sustainable alternative is emerging on the western coast of India. Just a few hours from Goa's bustling tourism hubs and about an hour's drive from its international airport, Sindhudurg is becoming the go-to destination for travelers seeking an experience where the natural landscape remains relatively untouched and local traditions define its essence.

It was in this tranquil corner of the Konkan coast that I found myself one breezy afternoon. The air was thick with the salty tang of the Arabian Sea, and the world felt far removed from the neon-lit clubs and packed shacks of Goa. Instead of throngs of tourists and littered shores, Sindhudurg offers you unspoiled beaches, winding trails through dense forests, and a cultural richness that feels more personal than performative and commercial. The best time to visit Sindhudurg is between October and March when the weather is pleasant, and the region is at its most vibrant.

Sindhudurg is bordered on the north by Maharashtra's Ratnagiri district, on the south by Goa, and on the west by the Arabian Sea. The district forms part of the Konkan region – a narrow coastal plain in Western Maharashtra tucked between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea. With activities spanning history, nature, and local culture, an ideal stay here would be three to five days to fully immerse yourself in the experience.

I stayed at Coco Shambhala, a boutique retreat nestled in the heart of this coastal haven. Built entirely on elevated stilts to preserve the forest floor, every detail of the resort speaks to its eco-conscious ethos – from its architectural design that minimises environmental impact (the decor is crafted entirely from recycled wood and natural fibers) to the curated local experiences it offers. Each villa, framed by towering coconut palms, opens to a personal infinity pool that seems to spill into the horizon. The structure itself feels like an extension of the landscape – a seamless symphony of timber, glass, and earth tones. You wake up to panoramic views of the Arabian Sea, with binoculars thoughtfully provided for spotting dolphins and some of the over 300 bird species that call Sindhudurg home.





Sindhudurg Fort

A trek from Coco Shambhala led me to the ruins of a historic Shivaji fort, a fascinating relic of the Maratha Empire. While the full trek can take up to four hours, it's broken up into shorter sections, offering ample opportunities to rest and soak in stunning views of the coastline and the Arabian Sea.

The fort's strategic design is evident in its vantage point, offering sweeping views of the coastline, a lighthouse, and the Arabian Sea. Our guide, Redkar, shared stories of the fort's construction – from the ingenious use of gun holes for mounted cannons to a moat reportedly once filled with hot oil to fend off invaders. It was easy to imagine the strategic importance of the fort and region during the reign of the Maratha Empire – its significance is echoed in Sindhudurg's name, which literally translates to “sea fort.”

History, however, is just one layer of Sindhudurg's charm – its cultural heritage is equally captivating. During my stay, I had the privilege of witnessing Chitrakathi – an endangered art form kept alive by the Adivasi Thakar tribe.

This fascinating storytelling medium combines intricate hand-painted scrolls with oral narratives, bringing to life epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Joining a Chitrakathi painting session added a hands-on element to your visit there, offering a direct connection to this ancient art form. Watching the storyteller unfurl each panel while narrating in rhythmic, lilting tones is nothing short of mesmerizing – and trying your hand at a Chitrakathi painting myself feels like stepping into a time machine, a direct connection to an era when art was as much about community and solidarity as it was about creativity. The folk artist shared how his ancestors once served as spies in Shivaji's court, traveling between villages to gather intelligence while using their art as a covert means of communication.

Sindhudurg's culinary heritage is another highlight. The district's coastal bounty offers a feast for seafood lovers, with fresh catches like pomfret and shrimp taking center stage. At Coco Shambhala, I joined a cooking class where I learned to make Malvani specialties such as Ambotik Curry, a tangy fish curry spiced with kokum, and Tambdi





Walawal River Exploration & Village Discovery

Fry, a red chili-marinated spinach fry. These hands-on lessons, led by talented local chefs, taught even an unseasoned cook like me not just punchy, delightful, and easy-to-make recipes, but also offered a window into the region's soulful food traditions assimilating the region's multicultural influences.

What sets Sindhudurg apart is its commitment to sustainable tourism. Unlike Goa, which has often, particularly in recent years, struggled under the weight of its own popularity, Sindhudurg seems determined to learn from its neighbour's missteps. Resorts like Coco Shambhala emphasise local collaboration, from sourcing materials to management, ensuring that tourism benefits the community as much as the visitors. The region's beaches remain pristine, and its forest trails unspoiled – a testament to the careful balance being struck between development and conservation.

Here is a destination that offers the serenity of solitude without sacrificing cultural depth – a place where time seems to slow down, inviting you to savour every moment,



whether you're tracing the contours of a Chitrakathi painting or soaking in crimson-hued sunsets or biting into a perfectly spiced coriander hummus taco.

In a world increasingly dominated by mass tourism, Sindhudurg and Coco Shambhala feel like a quiet revolution, offering a much-needed reminder that travel doesn't have to come at the cost of the environment or local identity – instead, it can indeed be a celebration of both. For anyone seeking an escape that nurtures both the soul and the planet, and also offers sun, sea, forest, and history in perfect unison, this emerging treasure on India's western coast is well worth the journey.



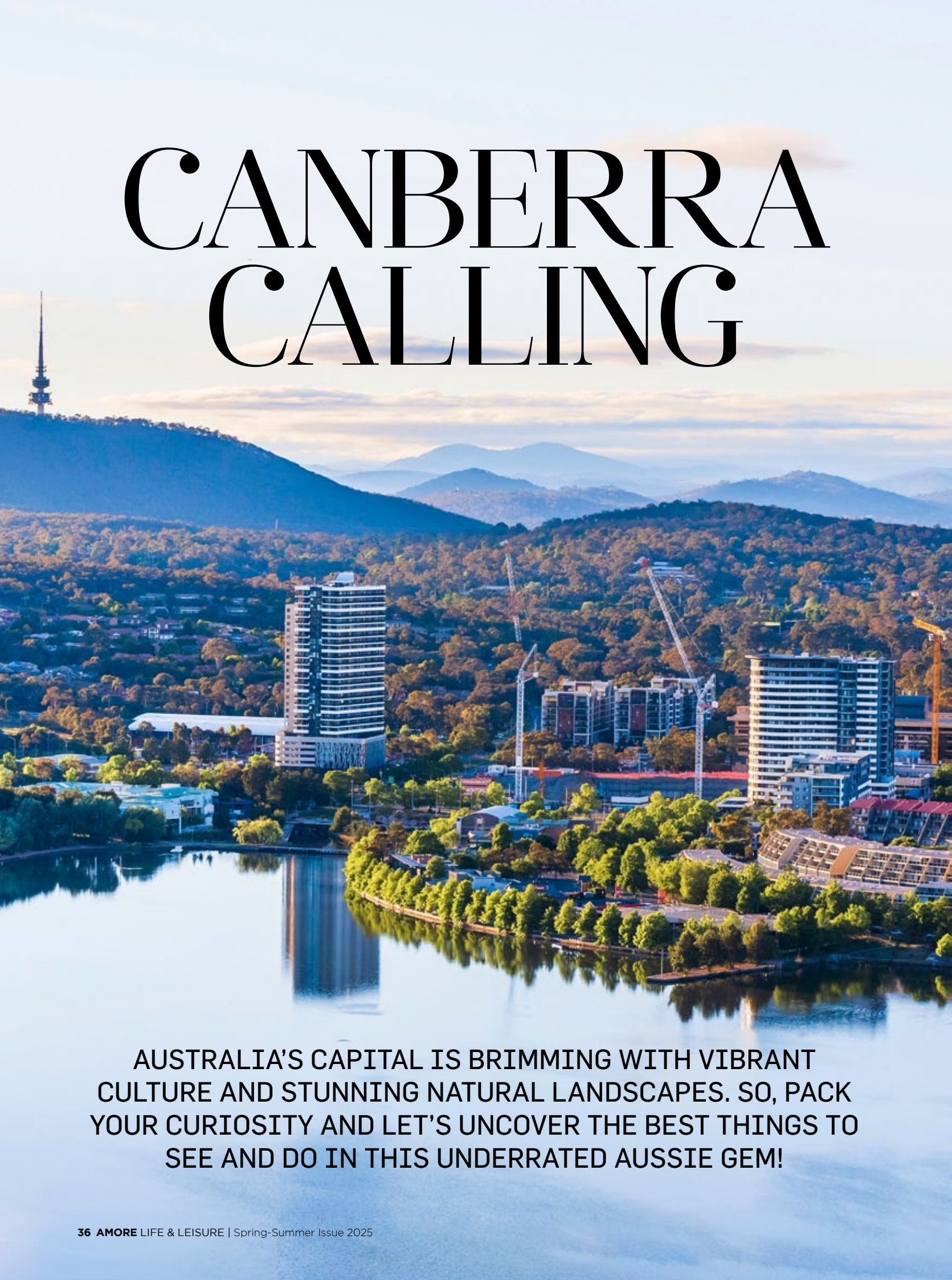
TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

Best time to visit:
October to March

Ideal length of stay:
3 to 5 days

Who should go:
Nature lovers, history buffs, sustainable luxury travelers

CANBERRA CALLING

An aerial photograph of Canberra, Australia, featuring modern high-rise buildings, a large lake in the foreground, and a backdrop of forested hills and mountains under a clear sky. A tall telecommunications tower is visible on the left side of the image.

AUSTRALIA'S CAPITAL IS BRIMMING WITH VIBRANT CULTURE AND STUNNING NATURAL LANDSCAPES. SO, PACK YOUR CURIOSITY AND LET'S UNCOVER THE BEST THINGS TO SEE AND DO IN THIS UNDERRATED AUSSIE GEM!

VISIT CULTURAL SITES AND UNCOVER THE CITY'S ART SCENE

While Canberra is best known for its national attractions, its local arts and cultural sites are a hidden treasure for art enthusiasts and culture lovers. Catch the glassmaker artists in action at Canberra Glassworks or admire Sir Sidney Nolan's iconic works at the Canberra Museum and Gallery. You can also check out the art galleries in the suburbs, which feature everything from photography to screen printing. With exhibitions that frequently change, there's always something exciting to see.





AN ADVENTUROUS WONDERLAND

You get easy access to natural landscapes when in Canberra as the city features popular lookouts, challenging trails, and mountain biking routes in the inner suburbs. A brief stroll will lead you to the sparkling Lake Burley Griffin, the glistening masterpiece of the city. And for those on the look-out for a little more adventure, steep gorges, vibrant forests, and snow-capped mountains await just 45 minutes away in national parks and nature reserves.



GO BEYOND THE USUAL WITH FAMILY

Explore Australia's top sports precinct with an Olympian at the Australian Institute of Sport, get up close with wildlife at the National Zoo & Aquarium, and satisfy your curiosity at Questacon with its hands-on exhibits and interactive displays. With an array of active and educational outings, there are plenty of attractions to choose from where kids can let their imaginations and energy run wild. Thanks to indoor snow sports, lakeside e-scooters, and interactive museums, the kids will surely be asking for another visit every holiday.



A FOODIE'S PARADISE

From spotting Insta-worthy cafés to enjoying live music at some of the most vibrant bars and breweries, the city continues to take you by surprise to elevate your dining and drinking experiences. Whether you're a coffee aficionado, a fanatic of unique and distinctive cuisines, or someone who just relishes a hearty meal, there are many hotspots in this Australian city that are definitely worth adding to your must-visit list.



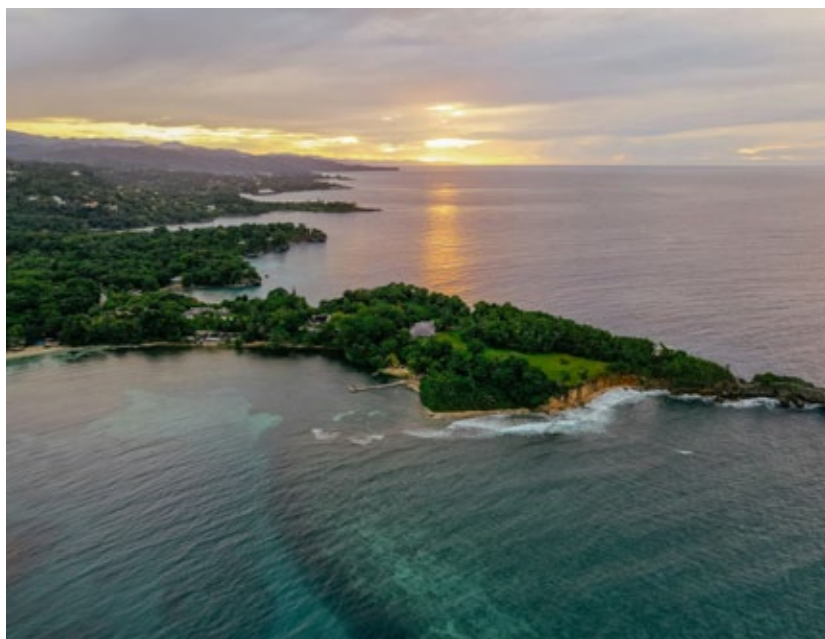
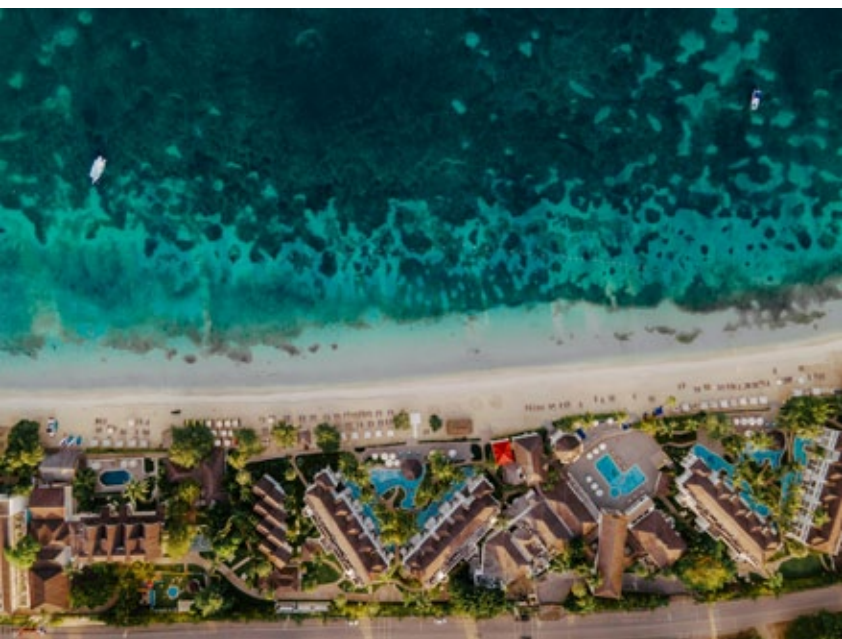
IT'S ALWAYS WINE O'CLOCK IN CANBERRA!

With 140 vineyards and over 40 wineries just a 35-minute drive from the city, Canberra's wine region makes for a perfect weekend getaway. There are a plethora of winery tour options to choose from that can be tailored to the preferences of your loved ones. It's the ideal way to help you discover your new favorite wine as you explore cellar doors, meet the winemakers, and even spend the night among the vines. Enjoy a fun experience while sipping exceptional wines in one of Australia's best-kept (and underrated) wine regions.

Jamaica BEYOND THE BEACHES



Close your eyes and picture Jamaica. Got a postcard-perfect beach in your mind? Sure, the island's got plenty of those. But beyond the swaying palms and turquoise waves, Jamaica is a whole mood—bold, buzzing, and bursting with life. From reggae-soaked streets to misty mountaintops, this is a place where adventure, history, and culture collide in the best way possible.



THE BEAT OF THE ISLAND

You don't just listen to reggae in Jamaica—you feel it in your bones. Bob Marley's spirit is everywhere, from the legendary museum in Kingston to the street parties that turn up the bass till sunrise. Want the real deal? Head to Trench Town, where Marley got his start, or catch an impromptu jam session at a rum bar.



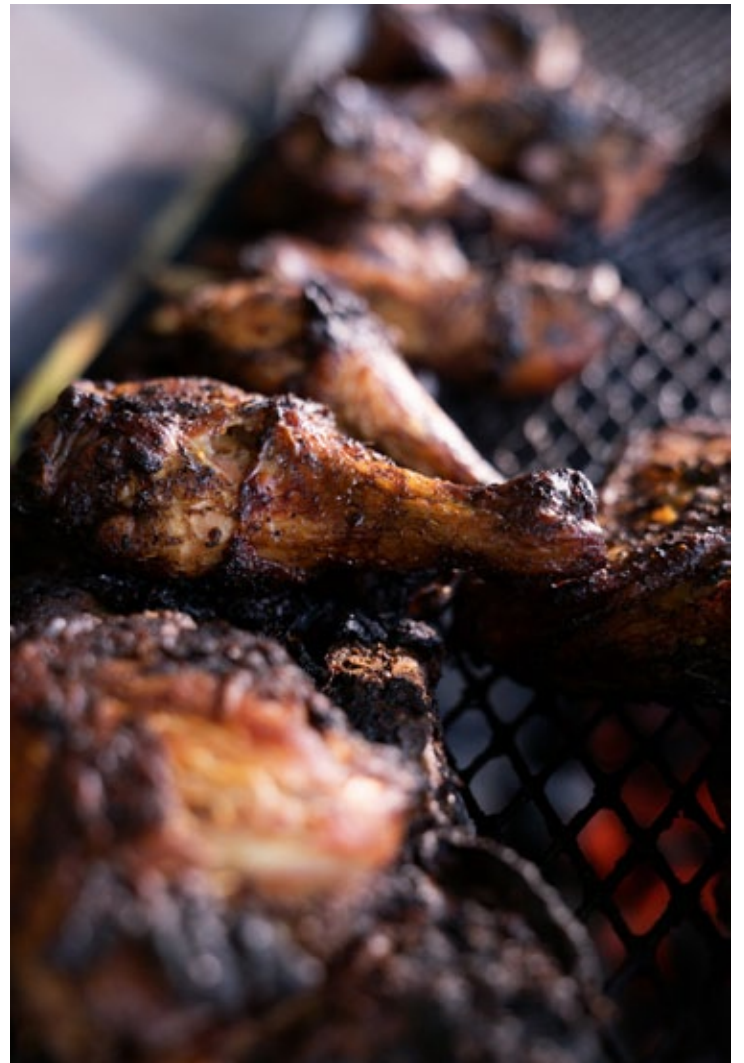
MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, AND GLOW-IN-THE-DARK WATERS

Jamaica doesn't believe in being predictable. One minute you're sipping world-famous Blue Mountain coffee at sunrise, the next you're plunging into the glowing waters of the Luminous Lagoon. Hike the misty Blue Mountains, zip-line through rainforests, or float down the Martha Brae River on a bamboo raft, drink in hand. And if you're into spine-tingling legends, explore the haunted halls of Rose Hall Great House—if you dare.



FLAVOURS THAT PACK A PUNCH

Jamaican food is not for the faint-hearted. The jerk chicken? Fiery. The patties? Addictive. The rum? As smooth as a reggae bassline. Whether biting into freshly grilled seafood in Ocho Rios or digging into a plate of ackee and saltfish at a roadside cookshop, every meal here is an event. Bonus points if you chase it with a bottle of Red Stripe.





BEYOND THE BEACHES

Yes, Seven Mile Beach is straight out of a dream, but Jamaica's real magic is in the unexpected. Explore the historic streets of Falmouth, where grand Georgian buildings whisper stories of the past. Discover the once-infamous pirate haven of Port Royal. Lose yourself in the eerie beauty of the Green Grotto Caves. Everywhere you turn, there's a story waiting to be told.



JAMAICA, UNFILTERED

This island isn't just a destination—it's a feeling. It's the smoky aroma of jerk pits, the hypnotic sway of a street dancer, the rush of cool waterfall mist on your skin. Jamaica dares you to dive in, vibe out, and leave a little piece of your heart behind.

So yeah, the beaches are incredible. But Jamaica? It's pure fire.

Information courtesy: Jamaica Tourism





Postcards from Oleander Farms

THIS HIDDEN GEM IN KARJAT PROMISES LUXURY & BEAUTY

Nestled in the serene hills of Karjat, Oleander Farms is a perfect haven for those looking for relaxation and well-being.

BY RACHNA VIRDI

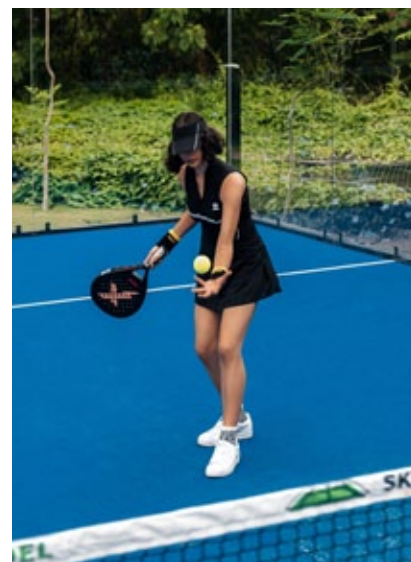
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OSTCARDS FROM OLEANDER FARMS

Tucked away in the scenic town of Karjat, near Mumbai, Oleander Farms is a hidden gem for a perfect family retreat. Seeking a break from our daily routine, we opted for a relaxing staycation at this luxury farm resort, which seamlessly blends rejuvenation with mindfulness. Founded by Aaliya Ahuja in 2021, Oleander Farms has quickly transformed into a thriving haven of wellness and serenity.

GETTING THERE

On the planned day, we departed from Mumbai at 9:30 am and reached Karjat by noon. The 2.5-hour drive was a visual treat, with breathtaking views of the hilly landscapes of Raigad District. As we entered Oleander Farms, we were guided through a scenic pathway towards the reception. The entrance, adorned with floral swings and tranquil water bodies, immediately set the tone for a luxurious and nature-infused escape. A warm welcome by the staff, coupled with a refreshing lemony drink, elevated our spirits. Post check-in, we were escorted via buggy to our lake-view room, located in another wing of the resort.



We tried our hand at Padel, an exciting racket sport. This is among the first resorts in India to offer this experience.

ACCOMMODATION & FACILITIES

Spread across 180 acres, Oleander Farms boasts over 110 rooms and a wide range of amenities, including restaurants, a brewery, a coffee house, a vintage car showcase, a spa, and a yoga studio. To navigate the expansive property, guests have access to 40 in-house buggies and cars.

Our buggy ride was a delightful way to explore the resort's lush landscapes, serene lakes, and panoramic hill views. The lake-view room on the first floor was both plush and cozy, featuring comfortable bedding, a coffee table, a bathtub, and a private balcony that overlooked the tranquil lake and hills—offering a much-needed escape from the city's hustle and bustle.

CULINARY DELIGHTS

For lunch, we dined at Saltt, the in-house restaurant known for its fusion of Asian and European flavours. The Sunday afternoon rush added to the lively atmosphere, yet the service remained efficient. We started with beautifully crafted cocktails—Guava Punch and Dragon Fruit Mitsu, both delightful in presentation and taste.

In appetisers, the Butter Garlic Prawns were flavourful, the Ajwaini Fish Tikka was light and heavenly, the Chicken Wings had a satisfying crunch, and the Seekh Kebab was tender and spiced to perfection. The highlight was the Raw Papaya Salad, a nutritious mix of fresh ingredients, peanuts, and a well-balanced dressing.

For the main course, we savoured Wok-Tossed Noodles paired with a rich Prawns Gravy. Desserts were equally indulgent—the Shahi Tukda, covered in rich, creamy rabri, felt regal, while the Chocolate Tres Leches, a Spanish-style chocolate cake soaked in three milks, was a delightful finish. With our appetites fully satisfied, an afternoon siesta was inevitable.

Dinner was at Common House, a café focusing on fresh and healthy ingredients. The Burmese Thupka Soup was hearty and comforting, while the Chicken Breast with mashed potatoes and greens struck a perfect balance of nourishment and taste. The Vegetarian Thai Curry with rice was light yet flavourful. As we enjoyed our meal, we watched the

Indo-Pak cricket match on a giant screen, making for a fun and relaxed dining experience.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES

The resort offers an array of activities to engage its guests. Our evening began with a Tea Tasting Experience at Tea Ceremony, a charming space celebrating the art of tea with a curated collection of black, green, white, and Indian masala teas. This immersive journey introduced us to refined flavours from around the world.

Next, we tried our hand at Padel, an exciting racket sport gaining popularity in India. We were thrilled to learn that this is among the first resorts to offer this experience, and playing in a scenic outdoor setting made it even more enjoyable.

One of the most memorable highlights was the spa experience at Sohum Luxury Spas, a wellness brand known for its holistic approach. The rejuvenating back massage, followed by a warm shower, left us feeling utterly relaxed.

The retreat also houses an Organic Hub, where we discovered sustainable and locally sourced products like A2 Ghee, Cold-Pressed Oils, and Raw Honey—perfect souvenirs to bring home a slice of wellness.

WELLNESS & MINDFULNESS

Committed to holistic well-being, Oleander Farms has partnered with Yogic Gurukul to offer wellness programs at its Yoga Studio. Sessions include Pranayama, Hatha Yoga, Meditation, and Chakra Healing, available in both group and private settings. Our morning yoga session, led by the experienced instructor Kaamna, was thoughtfully structured yet flexible, offering a deeply personalised and restorative experience.

A MEMORABLE ESCAPE

From the moment we arrived, we were embraced by an atmosphere of warmth, wellness, and luxury. The combination of wholesome food, engaging activities, and serene surroundings made this retreat truly transformative. By the end of our stay, we felt significantly refreshed and content. Oleander Farms stands out as a perfect blend of nature and indulgence—an idyllic getaway for anyone seeking to reset and recharge.



M M Javed
Men's Designer

YOUR LUXURY WEAR SPECIALIST

DECORATE

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



BORING DONE RIGHT

When less is truly more in modern home design

Less truly becoming more, stripping away the excess to focus on essentials, making way for thoughtful design that is kind to everyday needs.

BY SAUMYAA TANEJA





GOOD TO KNOW

PROJECT NAME: VANILLA WOOD

PROJECT TYPE: Residential Interiors

LOCATION: Gurgaon

PROJECT AREA: 3000 sqft

DESIGNED by: Meronym (Ar. Saumyaa Taneja)

PROJECT SHOT AND STYLED by: Kanupriya Lal

Let's talk about boring. Not the mind-numbing, stare-at-the-wall kind; but the kind that whispers instead of shouts, that doesn't try too hard, but still gets noticed. The kind of 'boring' that feels like easing into that old worn-in armchair, wrapped in soft linen, with a warm cup of coffee in hand. This is the new face of minimalism, refined, warm, deeply human. Case in example is this 3,000 sq. ft. home in Gurgaon that embodies this philosophy so effortlessly, it makes you want to declutter your entire life.

LESS STUFF, MORE SOUL

Step inside, and this house doesn't hit you; it hugs you. A weave of soft whites and muted beige greets you, the kind that glows just right when the afternoon sun filters in. There's nothing screaming for attention, no over-the-top chandeliers, no statement furniture that needs its own Instagram page, nothing that over-stimulates the mind. Just space. Beautiful, breathable, intentional space.

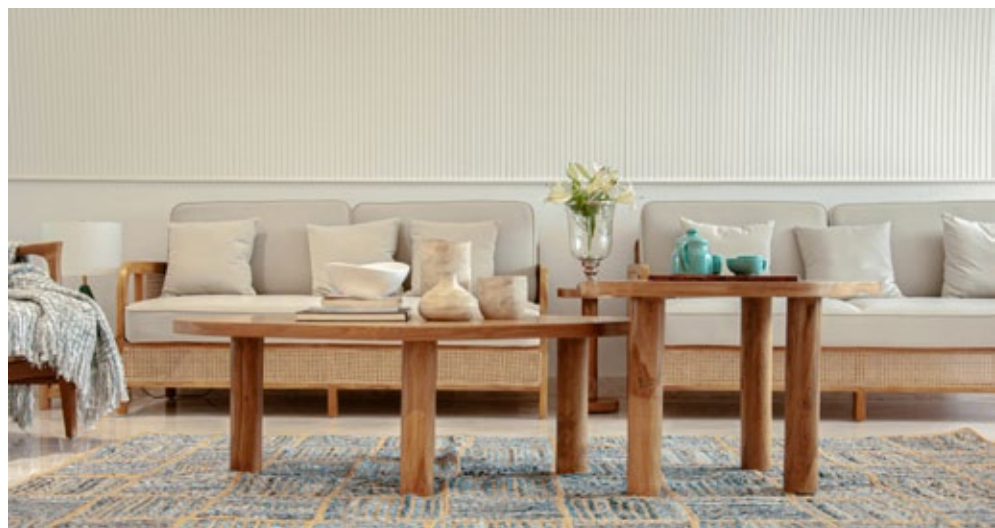
Arches soften the edges, creating a gentle flow through the spaces. Large mirrors reflect the outdoor greenery, bringing the nature in.

It's seamless, calm, and just what one needs in the hustling lives of a city.

THE 'BORING' PALETTE THAT'S ACTUALLY BRILLIANT

The neutral beige and white are accentuated with the soft brown wood of the furniture. A closer look gives you a pop of blue peeking through, like a wink from across the room. It's just enough to keep things interesting, without breaking the spell of serenity.

And let's talk texture. Oak and rattan furniture, fabric-upholstered seating, the grain of natural stone- all layered to bring your own style into the character of the space. It's proof that 'simple' isn't about doing less- it's about doing better.





The Living Area: Furniture made out of Nagpur Teak and Rattan



The Living Area: Incorporation of mirrored arches to make the space look bigger



The Dining Area: Table of tales



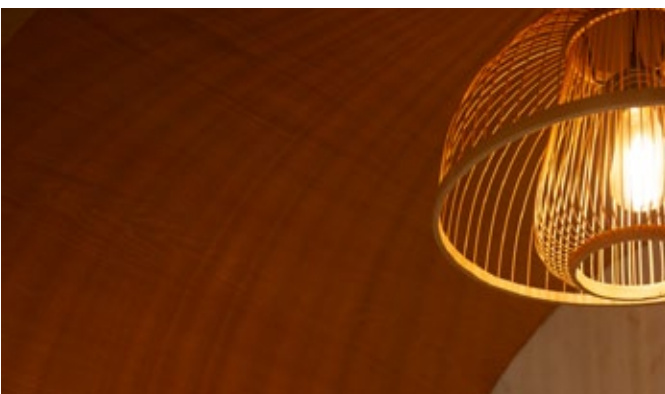
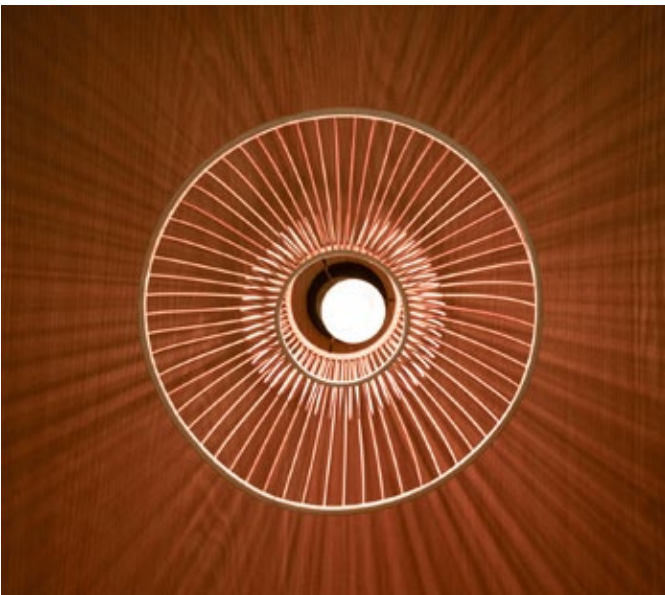
TV Room Corner



Wooden warmth: Bedrooms that evoke a sense of comfort



Corridor Area: Continuing the same visual language



Mandir





Creating a bay window seat with an arched top; Inbuilt seat with storage



DESIGNING FOR REAL LIFE (NOT JUST AESTHETIC PHOTOSHOOTS)

Some minimal spaces look like no one actually lives in them. This one? Designed for life.

Bay windows with built-in seating invite you to pause. Benches in cozy nooks say, stay a while. Every piece of furniture earns its place, balancing beauty and function. Even the number of shoes at the entrance was considered (yes, really), because minimalism is all about intention and ease.

Often mistaken for an aesthetic choice when, in reality, it's a lifestyle decision. That is what this home is creating, every space serves a function, ensuring that minimalism doesn't become sterile or impractical but instead, a canvas for daily life, both busy and still.

REFINING 'BORING' INTO TIMELESS BEAUTY

Here's the thing: 'boring' isn't the enemy. The enemy is

clutter, chaos, and design that tries too hard. This home proves that when you strip away the unnecessary, what remains isn't empty, it's full of meaning.

It's the kind of space that doesn't beg for attention but holds it. The kind that feels like an exhale at the end of a long day. A home that breathes, and has space to evolve with the changing light and seasons.

Minimal but never empty. Quiet but never lifeless. Simple but never uninspired.

This is the beauty of refined minimalism, where less isn't just more, it's everything.

Saumyaa Taneja is the founder of Meronym, a design studio dedicated to crafting thoughtful and functional spaces.

CHENNAI'S FIRST WORLDHOMES ARE READY TO LIVE IN



ACTUAL SHOT

TOP REASONS TO OWN CHENNAI'S FINEST HOMES

1. A world so luxurious, peers will call you "Sir"
2. Views so captivating, you'll run the meeting from home
3. Homes so lavish, your party invites will be coveted
4. Amenities so elevating, you'll forget the word 'routine'
5. A location so central, errands become delightful
6. Duplex Penthouses with private terrace, fit for city's aristocracy



10 mins from Chennai International Airport



Views of India's oldest race course



Curated rooftop experiences



23,000 sq. ft. clubhouse



Homes with BluNex Technology

Ready to move-in
3-4-5 BHK Residences

₹3.50 Cr.* onwards



PURVA SOMERSET HOUSE

THE WORLDHOME COLLECTION
FIVE FURLONG ROAD



DESIGNER TIP

Mirrors should typically be hung at eye level, which is usually around 57 – 65 inches from the floor. However, the perfect placement depends on exactly where your mirror will be situated and what surrounds it.

- Shalini Misra
London-based
interior designer

CLEARLY SPECIAL

Where to Place a Mirror in Your Bedroom— For Style, Light & a Touch of Magic

A

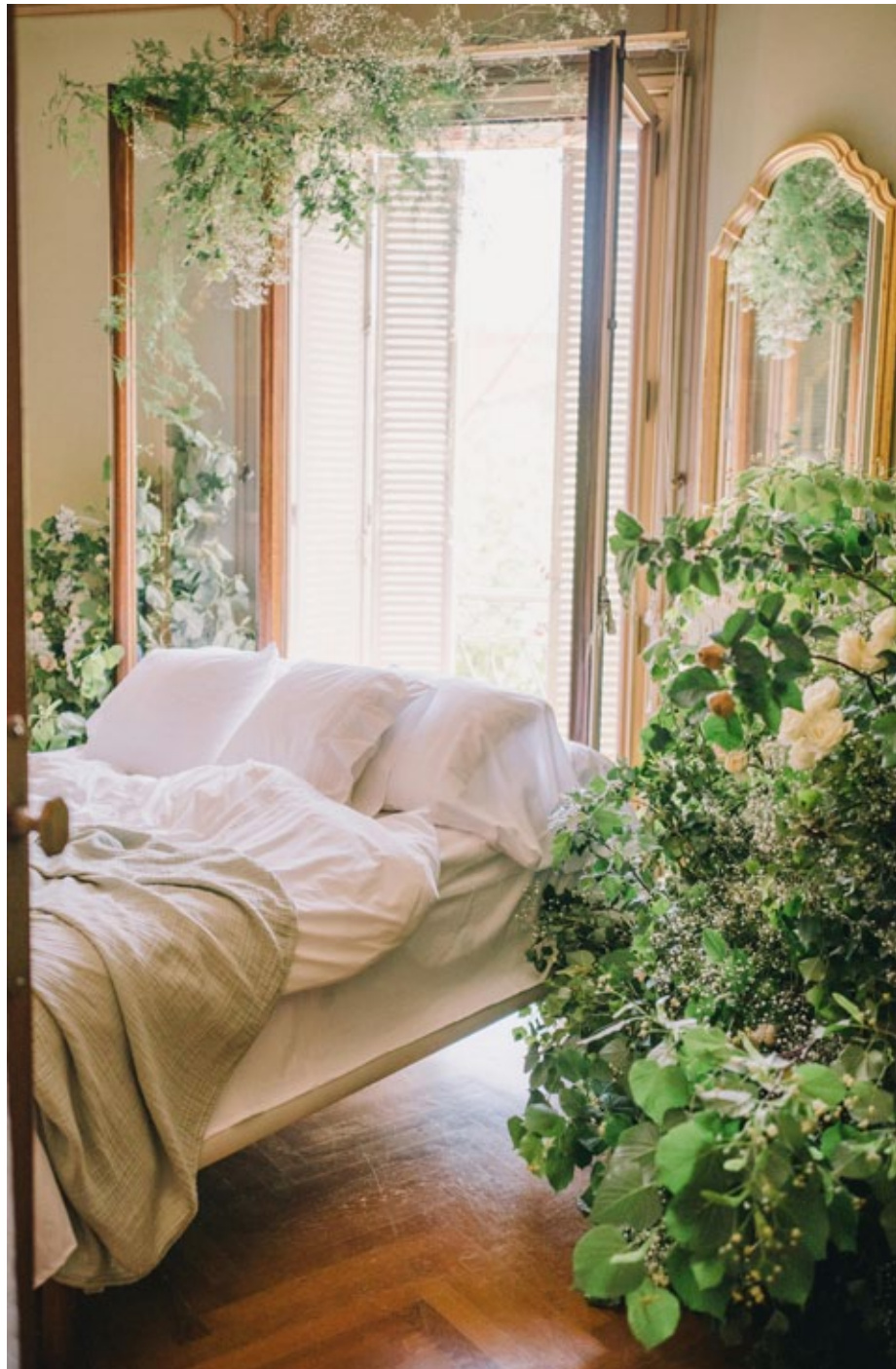
A mirror in the bedroom can be your secret weapon—making the space feel bigger, brighter, and more serene. But where you place it? That's the real game-changer. Get it right, and your bedroom will look effortlessly stylish. Get it wrong, and you might find yourself staring at your reflection at 2 AM, wondering why you feel unsettled. (We've all been there!)

So, let's crack the code on where to place a mirror in your bedroom for maximum beauty, function, and a little bit of magic.

1

OPPOSITE A WINDOW— FOR THAT DREAMY GLOW

Want to bring more natural light into your room? Place a mirror directly across from a window. It'll bounce the daylight around, making your bedroom feel airy and luminous. Bonus? You'll get a beautiful reflection of the outdoors, so even if your view isn't great, you can trick your eyes into thinking it is!





2

BEHIND THE BED—A STATEMENT MOVE

A mirror behind the bed instantly creates a dramatic focal point. It's unexpected, chic, and makes your headboard look even more impressive. If a full mirror feels too bold, consider mirrored panels or a mirror-framed piece of art to add just a hint of glamour.



3

INSIDE A CLOSET DOOR— A CLEVER SPACE SAVER

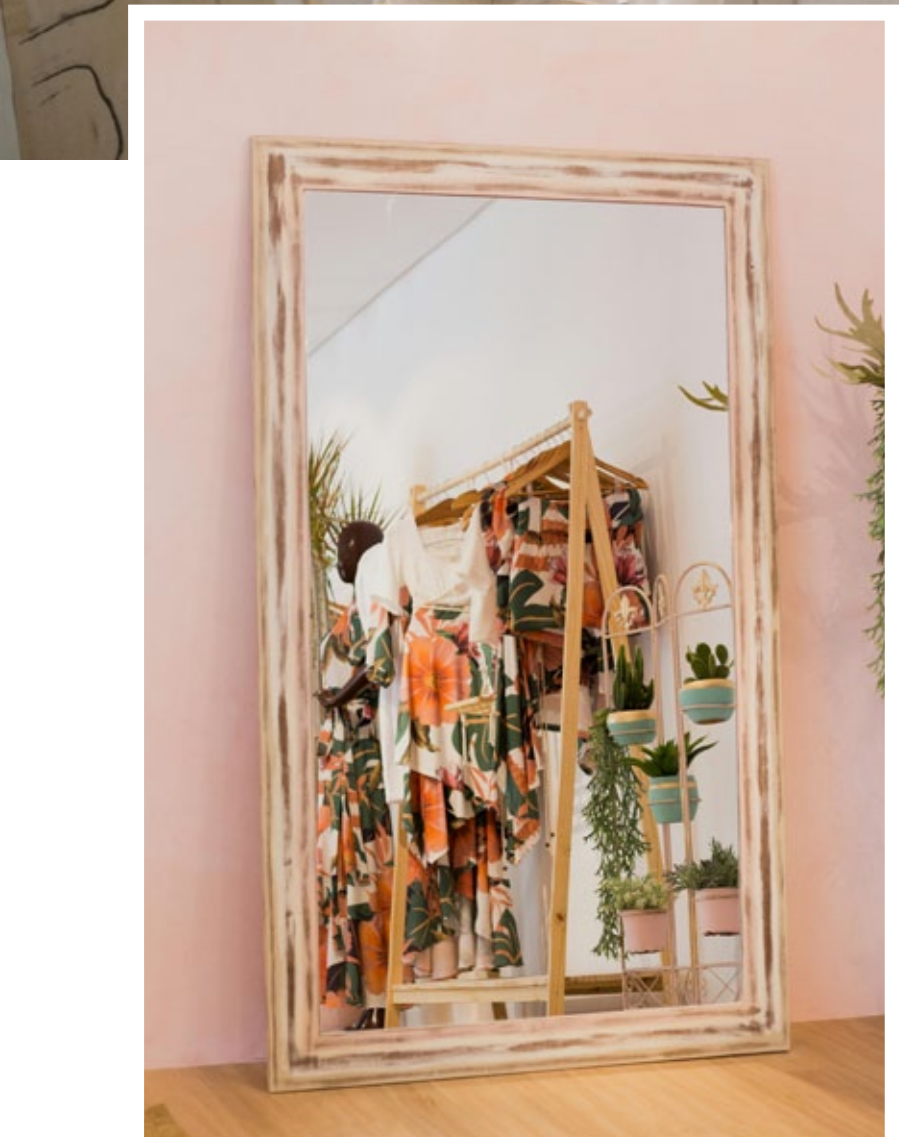
If you're short on space, mount a mirror inside your closet door. It's hidden when not in use, but super handy when you need it. If your closet doors are sliding, you can even go for mirrored panels—double duty as décor and function!



4

AVOID FACING THE BED—FOR A RESTFUL SLEEP

Some people swear by Feng Shui, others just know that seeing your reflection when you wake up can be... startling. If you're sensitive to this, avoid placing a mirror directly facing your bed. Instead, angle it slightly or position it so it reflects something lovely, like a piece of art or soft lighting.



5 ABOVE A DRESSER— YOUR PERSONAL VANITY SPOT

Pairing a mirror with a dresser instantly creates a charming vanity area. Add a few candles, some perfume bottles, or a little tray of jewellery, and suddenly, your morning routine feels more like a self-care ritual.

6

LEANING AGAINST THE WALL—FOR THAT EFFORTLESS VIBE

A full-length mirror casually propped up against the wall screams “effortless style.” It’s perfect for small bedrooms because it adds depth, making the space feel bigger. Plus, it’s practical—hello, outfit checks! Just make sure it’s angled slightly upward to avoid weird distortions.

THE ART OF A PERFECT SUMMER

Afternoon



There's something about summer afternoons that just begs for a slower pace—a moment to escape the rush, sink into comfort, and savour the simple joys of life. Whether it's the golden glow of the sun, the lazy hum of honeybees, or the scent of ripe mangoes in the air, summer in India has its own poetry.

So, how do we make this time feel even more delightful? Let's add a few creative touches—starting with something cool to sip, a fun DIY project, a book to lose yourself in, and, of course, a delicious summer spread.

SIP ON THIS: MANGO & BASIL SPARKLER

Nothing says Indian summer quite like mangoes! But instead of the usual aam panna or lassi, let's mix things up. Try this Mango & Basil Sparkler—light, fizzy, and ridiculously refreshing.

YOU'LL NEED:

- 1 ripe mango, blended into a smooth purée
- 1 tablespoon honey (or sugar)
- A handful of fresh basil leaves
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Chilled soda or sparkling water
- Ice cubes

HOW TO MAKE IT:

Muddle a few basil leaves with honey in a glass to release their flavour. Add mango purée, lemon juice, and a few ice cubes. Top it with chilled soda and stir. Garnish with a basil sprig, sit back, and



A DIY THAT SMELLS LIKE SUMMER: CITRUS & MINT POTPOURRI

Let's bring the fresh, zesty vibe of summer indoors with a homemade potpourri. This one smells like a citrus orchard and takes just minutes to make!

YOU'LL NEED:

- Peels of oranges, lemons, or sweet limes (sun-dried or oven-dried)
- A handful of dried mint leaves
- A pinch of cinnamon powder
- Cloves (for that warm-spicy kick)
- A few drops of essential oil (lemongrass or orange work best!)

HOW TO MAKE IT:

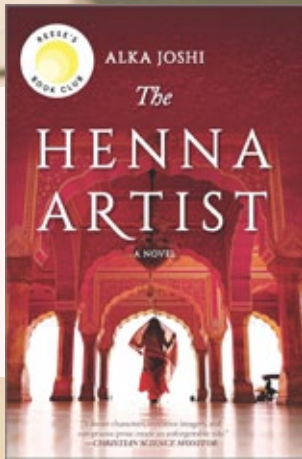
Mix everything in a bowl, store it in a jar, or place it in a small fabric sachet. Tuck it into your wardrobe, keep it by your bedside, or place a bowl in your living space—it'll make your home smell like a summer dream!

A SUMMER SPREAD THAT'S LIGHT YET DELICIOUS

Forget heavy meals—summer calls for food that's fresh, flavourful, and fun to eat. Here's what to put on your table:



- 1. Cucumber & Yoghurt Chaat** – Cool, crunchy, with a tangy twist of chaat masala.
- 2. Mango & Chilli Bruschetta** – Sweet mango chunks on toasted bread with a drizzle of honey and a sprinkle of red chilli flakes.
- 3. Grilled Masala Corn** – Charred corn brushed with butter, lime juice, and chaat masala.
- 4. Watermelon & Feta Salad** – Juicy watermelon, crumbly feta cheese, and a hint of mint for a refreshing bite.
- 5. Coconut Water with Sabja Seeds** – Hydrating, cooling, and perfect for the heat.



A BOOK TO GET LOST IN: 'THE HENNA ARTIST' BY ALKA JOSHI

If you love books that transport you to another world, *The Henna Artist* is a perfect pick for a summer afternoon. Set in 1950s Jaipur, it follows Lakshmi, a skilled henna artist navigating a world of secrets, tradition, and ambition. The descriptions of colours, fragrances, and life in a bygone era make it a stunning read—one you'll want to devour with a tall glass of iced tea.

THE PERFECT ENDING? JUST BE.

Once you've set up your little summer oasis—drink in hand, a book on your lap, the scent of citrus in the air—let yourself just be. Maybe you lie back on a charpai, watching the lazy drift of clouds. Maybe you let your playlist set the mood with some soothing Hindustani classical or lo-fi indie tunes. Whatever it is, let yourself melt into the moment.

Because as Henry James once said, "Summer afternoon—summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language."

So go ahead—make yours as lovely as it can be.





SET A STUNNING SUMMER TABLE

W

hy wait for guests to set a gorgeous table when you can bring a little joy to your everyday meals? Whether it's breakfast in the golden morning light or a breezy summer dinner, a pretty table turns even the simplest meal into something special. And the best part? It's easier than you think!

START WITH WHAT YOU HAVE

You don't need a designer tablescape—just a bit of imagination! A wooden dining table looks effortlessly beautiful on its own, but if you want a softer touch, throw on a linen tablecloth or even a light cotton scarf. Don't stress about perfection—crinkled linen and mismatched dishes have a charm of their own.

FLOWERS, FLOWERS, EVERYWHERE

Nothing says summer like fresh flowers! Snip a few from your garden, pick up a bouquet from the market, or even gather wildflowers from a morning walk. A single stem in a tiny glass bottle? Lovely. A big, wild arrangement spilling over a jug? Showstopper! The trick is to let it feel natural—like your table just happens to be this dreamy all the time.

PLATES THAT BLOOM

Floral crockery is an instant mood-lifter. If you have vintage china, now's the time to bring it out. But even plain white plates can be dressed up—just tuck a little sprig of rosemary on top or place a flower petal beside the cutlery.





NAPKINS WITH A TWIST

Forget paper napkins—cloth ones feel instantly luxurious (and they're better for the planet!). Roll them up and tie them with twine, or slip a sprig of lavender or mint inside for a fragrant surprise.

A SPRINKLE OF NATURE

Some of the best table decorations are right outside your door. Scatter a few leaves, tiny twigs, or pebbles down the centre of your table for an organic touch. Small potted herbs like basil or thyme make adorable centrepieces and are handy for seasoning your food. Double win!

CANDLELIGHT FOR THE WIN

Even if the sun is still shining, a few candles add instant magic. Go for chunky white ones, or place tea lights in little glass jars. If you're dining outdoors, lanterns or fairy lights will make everything feel extra dreamy.

WHY SAVE IT FOR GUESTS?

Here's the secret: you don't need a dinner party to enjoy a beautiful table. Treat yourself to a pretty setup just because—it'll make your morning coffee feel like a café moment, and your weeknight pasta taste a little more special. Because life is special, and every day is a reason to celebrate.

So go ahead—set that table, light a candle, pour yourself something delicious, and bask in the beauty of the little things. Summer won't last forever, but these moments?

They'll stay with you long after the season fades

WHITE IS RIGHT

“White is the most wonderful colour because within it, you can see all the colours of the rainbow.” – Richard Meier

Legendary architect Richard Meier, known for his striking white structures, captured the essence of white in design perfectly. There's something undeniably luxurious, timeless, and calming about a white-dominated space. From Kim Kardashian's ultra-minimalist all-white mansion to Jennifer Aniston's serene, light-filled home, celebrities and designers alike swear by the power of white to create a sophisticated yet welcoming atmosphere.

Whether you prefer a classic, airy aesthetic or a sleek modern vibe, white is the ultimate decorating choice. Here's why:

1. FOREVER IN FASHION

White never goes out of style. Its crisp and clean look adds a sophisticated charm to any space, whether it's modern, vintage, or somewhere in between.

"I have always liked white. It is simple, pure, and goes with everything." – Christian Dior

2. LET THERE BE LIGHT!

White surfaces reflect light beautifully, making rooms feel brighter and more open. Perfect for small spaces or homes that need a little extra glow.

3. A BLANK CANVAS FOR CREATIVITY

Think of white as the ultimate backdrop. It allows you to mix and match textures, patterns, and colours without clashing, giving you endless décor possibilities.

"White is not a mere absence of colour; it is a shining and affirmative thing." – G.K. Chesterton

4. YOUR PERSONAL ZEN ZONE

White has a naturally calming effect, making it ideal for bedrooms, bathrooms, and living areas where you want to unwind and relax.







5. SMALL SPACE? NO PROBLEM!

If you're working with a compact space, white is your best friend. It visually expands the room, making it feel airy and uncluttered.

6. SPOTLIGHT ON STYLE

From intricate mouldings to high ceilings, white accentuates the details of your home, bringing out its unique character.

"There is something about white that suggests the infinite."
– Georgia O'Keeffe



7. CLEANER THAN YOU THINK

With modern washable paints and stain-resistant fabrics, maintaining a white home is easier than ever. Plus, dirt is more visible, so you can tackle it before it becomes a bigger problem!

8. A GALLERY-WORTHY LOOK

White walls make the perfect backdrop for artwork, photographs, and statement décor pieces, allowing them to shine without distractions.

9. PERFECT YEAR-ROUND

White transitions effortlessly through seasons, pairing well with warm textures in winter and cool, breezy accents in summer.

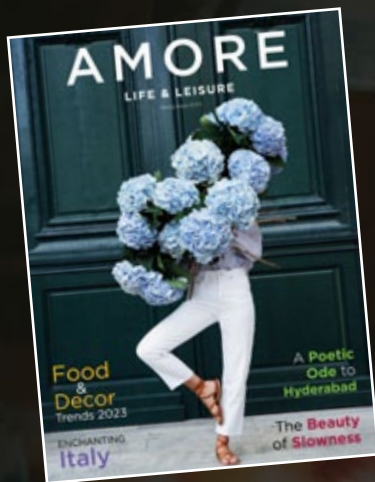
10. EASY TO REFRESH, HARD TO REGRET

Feeling a change? White makes it easy to switch up your style with colourful accessories, bold furniture, or seasonal décor—keeping your home fresh and exciting.

By embracing white in your home, you create a space that is timeless, elegant, and endlessly versatile. Whether you go all-white or use it as a base for creative contrasts, white is always the right choice!

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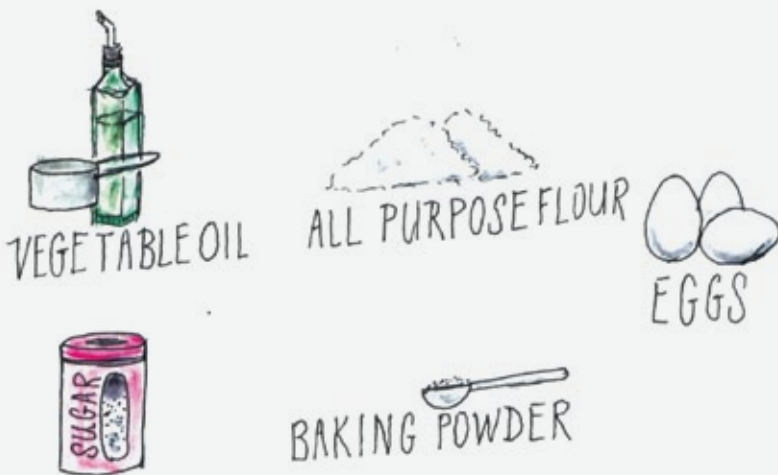
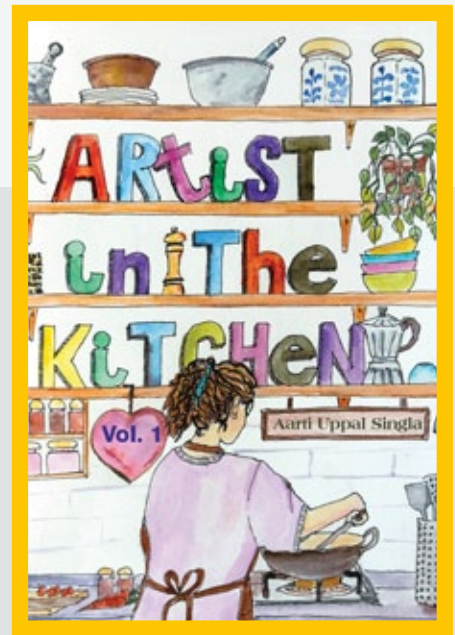
INDULGE

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



ARTIST IN THE KITCHEN

This book is a blend of cooking and art; a personal collection of handwritten, illustrated recipes created during the quiet days of lockdown. With no set theme or cuisine, it brings together flavours from around the world, inspired by curiosity and the joy of making something from scratch. Each recipe is accompanied by a hand-drawn sketch, making this book as much a visual delight as a culinary one. Unstructured and intuitive, it invites you to cook with spontaneity, embrace imperfection, and find beauty in the process ... just like art.



BAKING POWDER



Almond Biscotti



Almond Biscotti
 ½ cup vegetable oil
 1 cup white sugar (powdered)
 ¾ cup all-purpose flour
 3 eggs
 1 Tbsp baking powder
 1 Tbsp almond essence
 ½ cup chopped almonds
 Pre-heat the oven to 375 degrees F (190C)
 Grease cookie sheets or line with parchment paper.

In a medium bowl, beat together the oil, eggs, sugar and almond flavouring until well blended. Combine the flour and baking powder into the egg mixture to form a heavy dough. (Mix in almonds) Divide into 2 parts. Form each piece into a roll as long as your cookie sheet. Place roll onto the prepared sheet and press down to ½ inch thickness.

Bake for 25-30 minutes in the preheated oven, until golden brown. Remove from the baking sheet to cool on a wire rack. When the cookies are cool enough to handle slice each one crosswise into ½ inch slices. Place the slices cut side up-back onto the baking sheet. Bake for an additional 6 to 10 minutes on each side. Slices should be lightly toasted.

Cool to room temperature and store in an air tight tin



Hara Bhara Kabab



Hara Bhara Kabab

1 medium bunch spinach (600gm)
 3/4 cup chana dal
 3 large potatoes (flaky ones)
 1 tsp roasted cumin powder
 1 tsp coriander powder
 1/2 tsp garam masala. 2 tsp salt
 1 tsp oil.
 Oil for frying.
 3-4 tsp besan (if required)
 4-5 green chillies
 1/2 tsp red chilli powder
 1 onion cut into rings
 Boil potatoes, peel and mash. Boil chana dal, drain and keep aside. Blanch spinach, drain all water and keep.
 Put chana dal and green chillies in a food processor and blend. Add spinach and blend well to smooth mixture. Do not add water.

Add this to the mashed potatoes. Add salt, cumin powder, coriander powder and chilli powder to this and mix well. The mixture should be like a dough. If it is a little wet, add a bit of besan and mix well.

Make small balls and flatten them, taking care that there are no cracks and broken edges. Place in plates and put in freezer. Once frozen, you can put it in a freezer bag and store it for upto a month.

Do not thaw before frying. To cook in air fryer, brush with oil and cook in air fryer for 20 mins. Serve with imli chutney and green chutney and onion rings.



Aarti Uppal Singla is a visual artist, educator, and curator passionate about art, design, and photography. She founded *The Art Exchange Project* to foster creativity and skill-sharing and runs *Easel Ideas* and *Kagazi Ghoda*, crafting specialized stationery. Her studio, Garage 266, hosts workshops and artist collaborations. Aarti also curates exhibitions, interviews artists, and organizes free art meet-ups, believing that creativity has no limits.



Sensory Shift
Studies show that dining in the dark can increase flavour perception by up to 30%!



Dining in the Dark



MAKE THAT *PITCH* DARK. A REVIEW
OF DANS LE NOIR, LONDON

BY SHUBHRA KRISHAN AND SHIREEN WANI

W

hen was the last time you saw total blackness? Last night during sleep, perhaps? Inside a room with the lights off? Enter Dans Le Noir, where blackness is darker than all of these darks. Located in Clerkenwell, London, this unique dining spot is a go-to for adventurous foodies and thoughtful diners alike.

The bar lounge is well lit. You can enjoy a drink or two here while you wait to be led inside for dinner.

The first surprise hits when you are asked to deposit your bag, phone and even watch in the locker. "We cannot have even the slightest light inside," you are told. Interesting.

Bereft of all your worldly possessions, carrying only a curious appetite, you meet your hostess for the evening. A blind woman.



Her instructions include asking you to keep your hand on her and then each other's shoulders and walk behind her. 'I will tell you when to turn left or right.'

By now, your breath is bated and the heartbeat a bit faster.

Seconds later, you are in the dark. And it is pitch black dark. You are not blindfolded, but you cannot see a thing. Not even the faint outline of your guide's figure as she leads you expertly inside, asking you to place your free hand along a wall panel to navigate a turn, minding your feet as you grope your way to your dining table.

You sit across from your friend, and suddenly, it feels like you are both strangers. Nervous giggle. Truth to tell, a tinge of fear. For a few moments, every instinct in your gut urges you to make a run for it, escape this blacker-than-black space.

Then, the start of a conversation as your drinks arrive. You talk, and then you realise you are really talking. You are not distractedly glancing at your phone or your watch, because, of course, you can't. And you are listening. By now, your senses have adjusted to being inside this black bubble, and you permit yourself to relax and enjoy this special evening.

You don't see your food. You don't even know what you are eating. Your 3-course meal preference has already been taken, and your senses are now focused solely on trying to identify what you are eating.

You don't know how many people are sitting beside you, on other tables. Laughter, conversation float your way, but it's hard to tell how far the other guests are. Or how many.

And then, just like that, the meal is over, but something deeper lingers. As you're led back into the glow of the lounge, the first sliver of light stings your eyes. You blink and squint, as if returning from another world—one where sight didn't matter, but connection did. You exchange glances with your friend, a look that says we've been through something profound together.

Dining in the dark strips away the familiar comforts of vision and leaves you with a sharper taste for life. It reminds you that, sometimes, the deepest connections and the most vivid experiences happen when you can't see a thing. And perhaps, just perhaps, we should close our eyes a little more often.



THE CONCEPT BEHIND DANS LE NOIR

- **Purpose:** Dining without sight heightens your other senses – taste, smell, touch, and hearing – creating an unforgettable experience.
- **Inclusivity:** The experience is guided by visually impaired hosts, promoting awareness and social inclusion.
- **Challenge:** It's more than a meal – it's a journey into empathy, vulnerability, and mindfulness.

ORIGIN & LOCATIONS

- **Founded:** The concept began in Paris in 2004, created by Edouard de Broglie in collaboration with the Paul Guinot Foundation for Blind People.
- **Reach:** Dans Le Noir has expanded to cities like London, Paris, Madrid, and Melbourne.
- **Celeb Guests:** Diners include Will Smith, Sting, and Kylie Minogue – all drawn to its extraordinary experience.

Watermelon

Summer's Sweetest Elixir

"When one has tasted watermelon, he knows what the angels eat."
— Mark Twain

Summer has a flavour, and it drips down your chin in deep pink rivulets. Watermelon—the fruit that hums with sunshine, cools like a sea breeze, and feels like a childhood memory waiting to happen. Juicy, jewel-toned, and impossibly refreshing, it's the one ingredient that needs little embellishment but welcomes a touch of magic.

Here are three simple, sun-kissed recipes to make the most of this summertime elixir.





WATERMELON & MINT CHIFFON SALAD

The kind of dish that requires no fuss, just a bowl, a fork, and a moment of quiet appreciation.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups watermelon, cubed
- A handful of fresh mint leaves, torn
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
- A drizzle of honey
- A squeeze of fresh lime juice
- A pinch of sea salt

METHOD:

Gently toss the watermelon with mint and feta in a wide bowl. Drizzle with honey, squeeze over the lime juice, and finish with a whisper of sea salt. Let it sit for a few minutes—the flavours deepen as they mingle. Serve chilled.

Serving Tip: For an extra cool crunch, toss in a few frozen grapes or pomegranate seeds.

SUNSET WATERMELON SORBET

This is summer in a spoon—icy, sweet, and so fresh it almost tingles.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups watermelon, blended and strained
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 tbsp honey (or more, if needed)
- A pinch of flaky salt

METHOD:

Stir the lime juice and honey into the watermelon juice. Pour into a shallow dish and freeze, stirring every 30 minutes until smooth and icy (about 3-4 hours). Scoop into bowls and sprinkle with flaky salt.

Serving Tip: For a grown-up twist, serve with a splash of tequila or a sprig of rosemary.





WATERMELON ROSE LEMONADE

A drink so pretty, it feels like poetry in a glass.

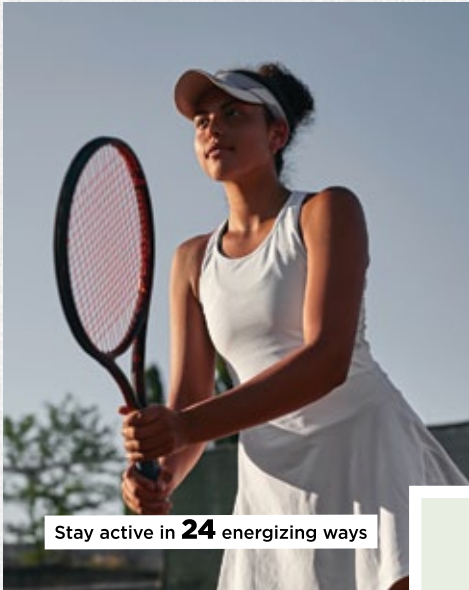
INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups fresh watermelon juice (strained)
- 1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1/2 cup rose water
- 1/2 cup simple syrup (or honey, to taste)
- 2 cups cold water
- Ice, for serving

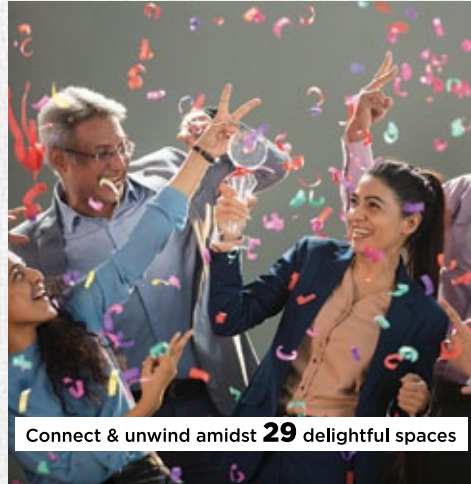
METHOD:

Stir everything together in a pitcher, pour over ice, and sip slowly. The floral whisper of rose water elevates this from ordinary to unforgettable.

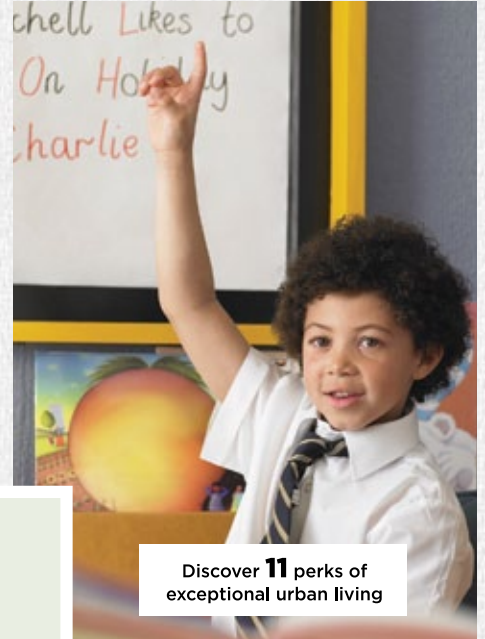
Serving Tip: Garnish with edible rose petals or a sprig of lavender for a touch of elegance.



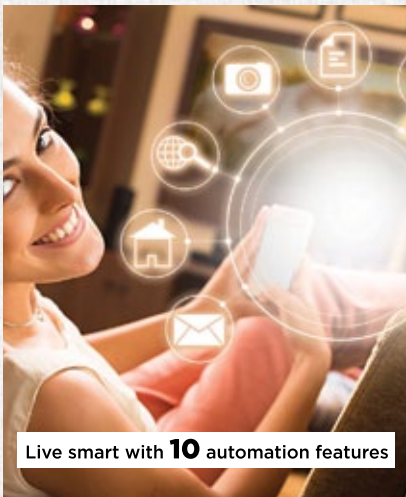
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THE ART OF BEING INTERESTING



Ever **met someone** who could make a **conversation** about literally anything **entertaining?** And then there are those who could be **telling you** about their **world tour**, and you'd still be **checking your watch**. Being interesting isn't about having the **most dramatic life**—it's about **having a fun**, unpredictable energy. Let's **break down** how to be that **person** everyone wants to **talk to**.

1. LEARN TO TELL STORIES

Nobody likes a walking Wikipedia. Fun facts are great, but stories are better. Instead of saying, "I went to Kerala," tell them how you got lost in Fort Kochi, accidentally crashed a Kathakali performance, and ended up having tea with the performers. Way better, right?

2. SAY YES TO NEW IDEAS

Pick up an offbeat skill. Learn a few lines of Urdu poetry, try mimicry, or master making the perfect South Indian filter coffee. Even if you're terrible at it, people will be intrigued.

3. BE GENUINELY INTERESTED

The most interesting people are also the most interested. Actor Irrfan Khan had this rare ability—every interview of his feels like a masterclass in listening. He asked thoughtful

questions, took his time responding, and never gave robotic answers.

4. HAVE A GO-TO "PARTY TRICK"

This doesn't mean juggling knives (unless that's your thing). A great party trick could be anything—a hilarious impression, a bizarre talent, or even knowing the exact song to play to get people dancing. Learn one killer joke, a cool hand trick, or a fact so weird that people have to look it up. Example? The Taj Mahal was once almost sold off by conman Natwarlal.

5. DON'T TAKE YOURSELF TOO SERIOUSLY

Boring people try too hard to be cool. Interesting people embrace the chaos. Think of Vir Das—one of India's smartest comics, who makes even serious topics hilarious. Own your quirks. Once you stop caring about being judged, you instantly become more fun.

BOOST YOUR INTERESTING-NESS



BOOKS

- **The Art of Thinking Clearly** by Rolf Dobelli: to sound wise in casual conversations
- **The Fine Art of small Talk** by Debra Fine: a bestselling guide to social success

MOVIES TO WATCH

- **Anbe Sivam** (because Kamal Haasan + crazy adventure = deep life lessons)
- **Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara** (to remind you to say "yes" more often)



PODCASTS

- **The Seen and the Unseen** by Amit Varma: for stories behind the headlines
- **The Indian Noir**: if you like dark, thrilling tales



FUN EXPERIMENTS

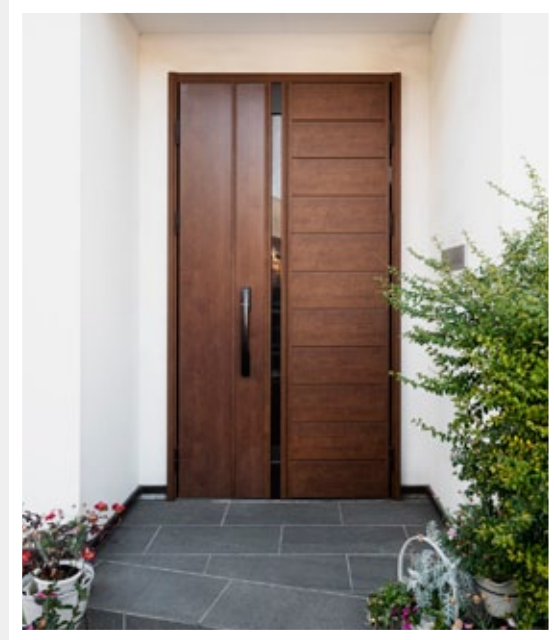
- Try **stand-up comedy** at an open mic
- Start a **one-week challenge**: Speak in a new accent, write a haiku every day, or only reply in movie dialogues

Home Interiors



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POSTURE POWER

SMALL FIXES, BIG BENEFITS



As a physiotherapist, I see it every day—young professionals with hunched backs, teenagers glued to screens, even seniors struggling with pain they could have avoided. Poor posture isn't just about looking slouched; it's a slow road to discomfort, stiffness, and injury.

Take Anantha, a 32-year-old software engineer. Years of slouching over his laptop left him with chronic neck pain and a herniated disc. One day, he simply bent down to tie his shoelace—his back gave out. Surgery followed. If only he had corrected his posture sooner.



TYPES OF POSTURE

- **Dynamic Posture** – How you hold yourself while moving (walking, bending, running).
- **Static Posture** – How you hold yourself while still (sitting, standing, sleeping).

Your spine has three natural curves—at the neck, mid-back, and lower back. Ideally, your head aligns with your shoulders, and your shoulders stack over your hips.

WHY POOR POSTURE HURTS

- Back, neck, and shoulder pain
- Decreased flexibility and mobility
- Increased risk of injuries

SMALL ADJUSTMENTS, BIG IMPACT

Sitting Right

- Keep feet flat on the floor (or a footrest if needed).
- Use a rolled towel or cushion for lower back support.
- Keep screens at eye level to prevent hunching.
- Adjust your chair height so knees are at 90 degrees.

Standing Tall

- Distribute weight evenly on both feet—don't lean to one side.

- Keep shoulders relaxed, not pulled back stiffly.
- Engage core muscles slightly to support the spine.

Better Work Posture

- Take a 2-minute standing break every 30 minutes.
- If working long hours, try a sit-stand desk or stretch often.
- Avoid cradling your phone between your ear and shoulder—use earbuds!

Quick Neck Stretches for Instant Relief

- **Chin-to-Chest Stretch** – Lower chin to chest, hold 15-30 sec, repeat.
- **Side Neck Stretch** – Tilt head to one side, hold 15-30 sec, switch sides.
- **Neck Rotation** – Turn head side to side, hold 15 sec each way.

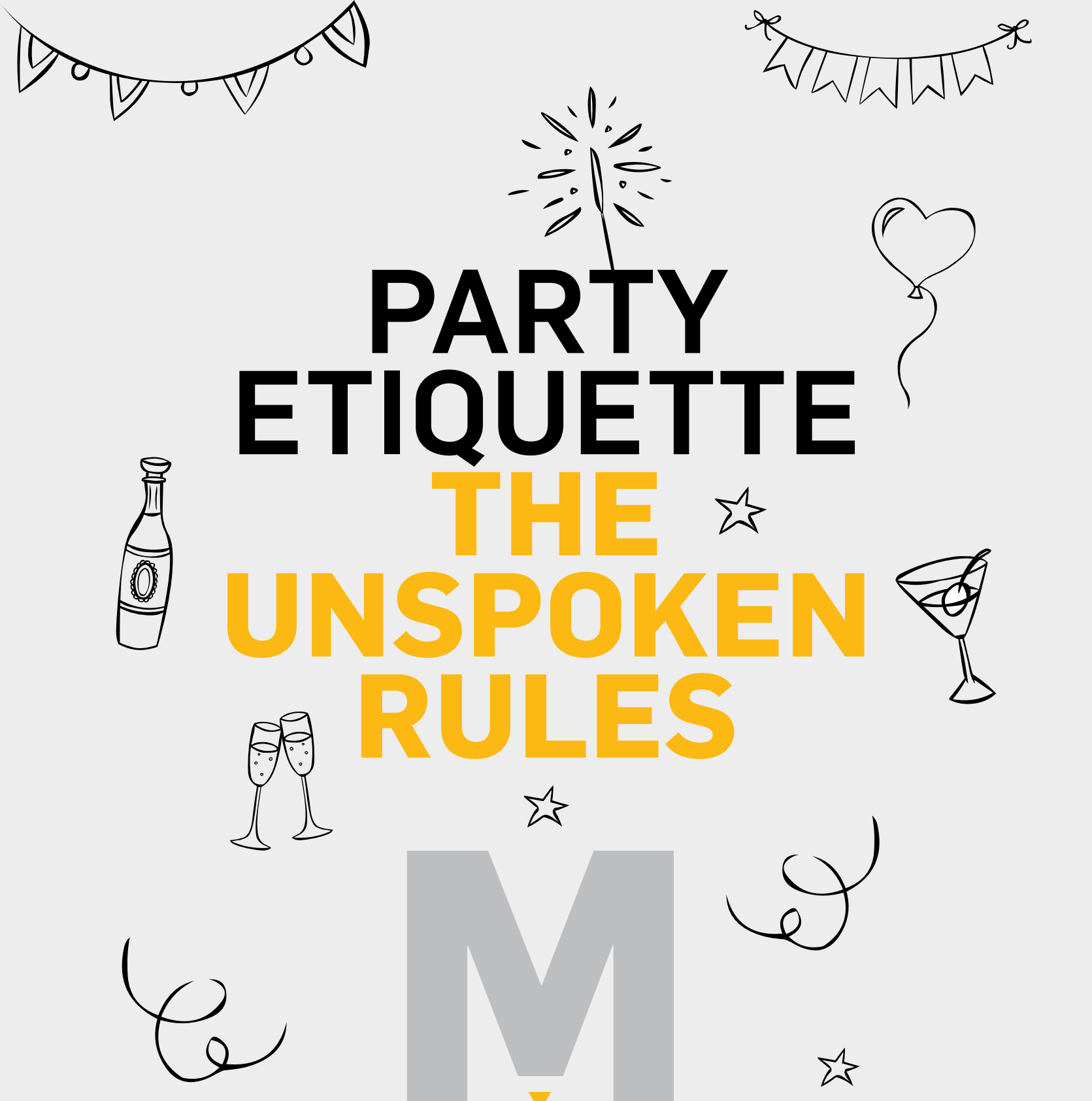
FINAL TAKEAWAY

Posture isn't just about looking confident—it's the key to less pain, better movement, and long-term health. Make these small tweaks every day, and you'll feel the difference!



Zeeshan Ahmad

Sr sports physiotherapist
MPT (Sports medicine)
Strength & conditioning coach
Level-1 Australia (ASCA)



PARTY ETIQUETTE THE UNSPOKEN RULES

M

Meet Rohan. First, he arrives two hours late to a dinner party, just as dessert is being served. Not only are you scrambling to reheat the food, but also having to smile as he introduces his “chill friend” you have never met. He loads up his plate, double-dips his kebabs into the shared mint chutney, and—just when you think it can’t get worse—asks if he can take some biryani home for later.

Don't be Rohan.

Here's how to avoid the common guest blunders that no one talks about.



GUEST ETIQUETTE: HOW TO BE THE PERFECT INVITEE

1

Should you Arrive Right on Time?

We like to arrive “fashionably late,” but how late is too late? For formal events like weddings or milestone birthdays, arriving within 15–30 minutes of the stated time is best. For casual gatherings at someone’s home, coming exactly on time might catch the host unprepared. A buffer of 20–40 minutes is usually ideal unless the invite specifies a strict schedule.

2

Is It Rude to Leave Early?

Yes and no. If it’s a dinner party, leaving immediately after eating can make it seem like you came just for the food. Ideally, wait at least 30–45 minutes post-meal before making an exit. For larger events, leaving without saying goodbye to the host is a major faux pas—unless they’re swamped, in which case a polite text afterward suffices.

3

Can You Bring a Plus-One?

Unless explicitly mentioned, assume the invite is for you alone. If you’re unsure, ask well in advance—never spring a surprise guest on your host at the last minute.



4

When the Host Insists “Have One More?”

A warm but firm “It was delicious, but I truly can’t eat another bite” works better than just saying “No.” If they persist, placing your hand over your plate while smiling makes your refusal clear.

5

Can You Take Leftovers?

At a family gathering, yes—especially if the host offers. At a formal party or a restaurant celebration, absolutely not. Taking leftovers from a restaurant dinner can seem odd unless it’s a close-knit group.



HOST ETIQUETTE: THE ART OF BEING A GRACIOUS HOST

Meet Priya. She has cooked way too much food, half her guests are waiting for dinner while the other half have already eaten from the snacks platter, and her introverted cousin looks like he's plotting his escape. Meanwhile, Rohan (yes, the same one) is still hanging around at 1 AM, oblivious to her yawns.

Don't be Priya. Hosting is an art, and here's how to do it right.

1

The Dinner Timing Dilemma

Guests arrive at 8 PM, but dinner is served at...? If you serve it too early, people leave. Too late, and they start eyeing the exit. The sweet spot? Around 9:30–10 PM for a home party. If it's a lunch gathering, aim for 1:30 PM.



2

Helping the Awkward or Bored Guest

If you spot someone sitting alone, looking at their phone, or nervously sipping their drink, step in. Introduce them to someone with shared interests ("Hey, you both love trekking!"), or give them a small role—handing out plates, helping with music selection, or even tasting dessert. It makes them feel included without forcing interaction.

Master these little-known rules, and you'll navigate any social event with ease.

3

What If Someone Brings an Uninvited Plus-One?

If it's a formal event and you truly can't accommodate them, you can say (politely), "I wish I'd known! But please, let me get you something." For informal parties, just go with it.



4

If A Guest Forgets to RSVP?

Check, but delicately. "Hey! Just confirming if you'll be able to make it—no worries either way, just sorting out food and seating." This removes pressure while prompting a response.





5

How to Check Food & Drink Preferences

The trick is to ask without making it sound like a customer survey. Keep it breezy:

- **For food:** “Planning the menu—anything you’d prefer to skip or absolutely love?”
- **For drinks:** “Stocking up the bar—any favourites you’d like me to have on hand?”

This way, you’re giving guests the option to mention preferences without putting them on the spot. It also subtly signals that their comfort matters to you—without making it feel like a special request.



SMELL LIKE A SUMMER GARDEN

Light, floral body mists to keep you fresh all season!

Summer calls for something breezy, refreshing, and effortlessly beautiful—just like a floral body mist! Unlike heavy perfumes, body mists offer a soft, lingering scent that's perfect for warm days. Here's how to pick your signature summer mist:

Floral Mists That Feel Like a Breeze

- **Jasmine Bliss** – A timeless Indian summer favourite, light and intoxicating.
- **Rose & Peony Mist** – Romantic and delicate, like walking through a blooming garden.
- **Lavender & Chamomile** – Soothing and fresh, perfect for laid-back summer evenings.
- **Orange Blossom & Neroli** – A zesty floral burst with a hint of citrusy sunshine.

How to Make Your Mist Last Longer

- **Spray Right After a Shower** – Damp skin absorbs fragrance better.
- **Target Pulse Points** – Wrists, neck, behind the knees for a gentle all-day scent.
- **Mist Your Clothes & Hair** – For a subtle, airy fragrance that lingers.

Ditch the overpowering perfumes—this summer, smell like a garden in full bloom with a floral body mist!

Guess the Place Answer: Salzburg.

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