

MEET THE CITY

FESTIVE SPECIAL

MEET THE EVER-RADIANT SUSSANE KHAN

Art
Fashion
Luxury
Style
Couture
Cuisine
Home
Happenings
Nightlife

Join us as we learn more about the artful designer as she talks about her life, her work at The Charcoal Project, and her most prized possessions, her children.



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An architectural rendering of two modern skyscrapers, Trump Towers Pune, set against a dramatic twilight sky with soft clouds. The taller building on the left is a slender tower with a glass facade, its interior lights glowing through the windows. The shorter building on the right is a more compact, rectangular tower, also with a glass exterior and illuminated interiors. Both buildings are situated behind a lush, green landscape with various plants and trees. In the background, the city skyline of Pune is visible, with several other high-rise buildings lit up. The overall scene conveys a sense of modern urban development and luxury.

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FOREWORD

This festive season, I invite you to join us in ushering in the festive season - made all the more special as it marks the second anniversary of *Meet the City*. This edition of the magazine also marks a change in us; we bring forth more cutting edge imagery and design, coupled with must-read content.

In the *Cover Story*, meet the celebrated designer Sussanne Khan as she offers valuable tips on decor to get your home all dressed up for the festivities. Celebrate India through her many festivals, as we take you 'Around the Country in Seven Festivals' in the *Travel* section.

There has never been a better time for the burgeoning Indian Wedding Industry. Our feature on weddings gives you an insight into the 'Business of Love' and tips from experts on planning a perfect wedding. The *Fashion* segment will leave you swooning over the bridal collections of four top designers of India.

Read the stories behind some of the most sought-after art in the *Reader's Corner* or take a look at two contemporary out-of-the-ordinary artists in the *Arts* segment. Join us in paying homage to the guru of *Fitness*, Yogacharya BKS Iyengar; who has left behind a huge legacy.

I wish everyone a fun and peaceful festive season, and hope you enjoy reading this celebratory special, as much as we have enjoyed putting it together for you.

Warm wishes for the festivities.

ATUL CHORDIA

*Festivities bring with them a sense of community and joy.
The joy of being; with friends and family.
Happy times, when everyone comes together to celebrate.
And now it's that time of the year again!*

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寿司

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GO TO THE DUMPLING CAKE MAKER.

Japanese proverb



Miyuki

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PUNE - CHINCHWAD

CONTENTS

MEET THE CITY
VOL. II / OCTOBER-NOVEMBER 2014

1

COVER STORY



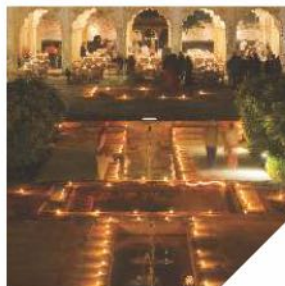
By Design, Not Accident

Far too many people go through their entire lives neither knowing nor thirsting to know who they are, or where they're meant to be.

Sussanne Khan is not among those aimless wanderers.

2

TRAVEL

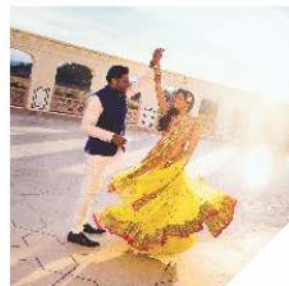


AROUND THE COUNTRY IN SEVEN FESTIVALS

India is a country of numerous languages and cultures, each unique from the other. Come celebrate India through her festivals!

3

FEATURE



THE BUSINESS OF LOVE

Gone are the days when weddings were a modest affair and each one seemed identical to the other. In today's glitzy high-tech world, money is no object and it's all about location, customisation, and pomp.

IN STORE
COPPRE COPPER
Preserving a legacy

HELPING HAND
DHONK ART BY DIVYA KHANDAL
Creation of Craft for Conservation

FITNESS
REMEMBERING THE LEGEND
Yogacharya - BKS Iyengar

FINE DINING
A (MASTER) CLASS APART
Fine dining at Stone Water Grill

EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

4

FASHION

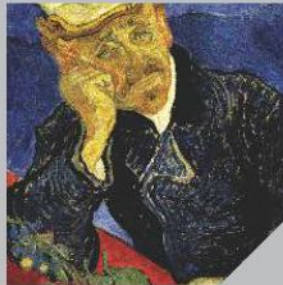


SOMETHING OLD SOMETHING NEW

Featuring : Tarun Tahiliani, JJ Valaya, Anita Dongre and Manish Malhotra.
These four top designers go all out to clothe the brides and grooms in their best designs, styles, colours, embellishments and fabrics, that leave everyone mesmerised...

5

READER'S CORNER



THE STORY BEHIND THE ART

There is much speculation as to the where and the how of the birth of art. More so about certain masterpieces. Some works of art are so haunting in their telling of a story that they beg for some amount of investigation.

6

ART



SCULPTURE IN MOTION

This story showcases two radical artists in their own light of the truth. Not only are they different in their art and medium, but even more so in their messages.



sussanne khan for yoopune



Shot on location.

With unique and plush interiors by the acclaimed designer Sussanne Khan, yoopune brings to the city of Pune a retreat of inspired living. Tucked away in the posh neighbourhood of Koregaon Park, the property stretches out for over 17 acres. At the heart of it all - a 5 acre thick rainforest.

Inspired by the world-renowned designer Philippe Starck, its 228 extraordinary apartments, ranging from 5,100 - 6,900 sq. ft., are unique, well-appointed and inspirational. The multiple award-winning yoopune enjoys the best of both worlds - the wealth and serenity of nature and every conceivable modern comfort.

Let beauty and luxury embrace you. Come experience the unparalleled richness of yoopune.

yoopune
by Philippe Starck

Luxe Features

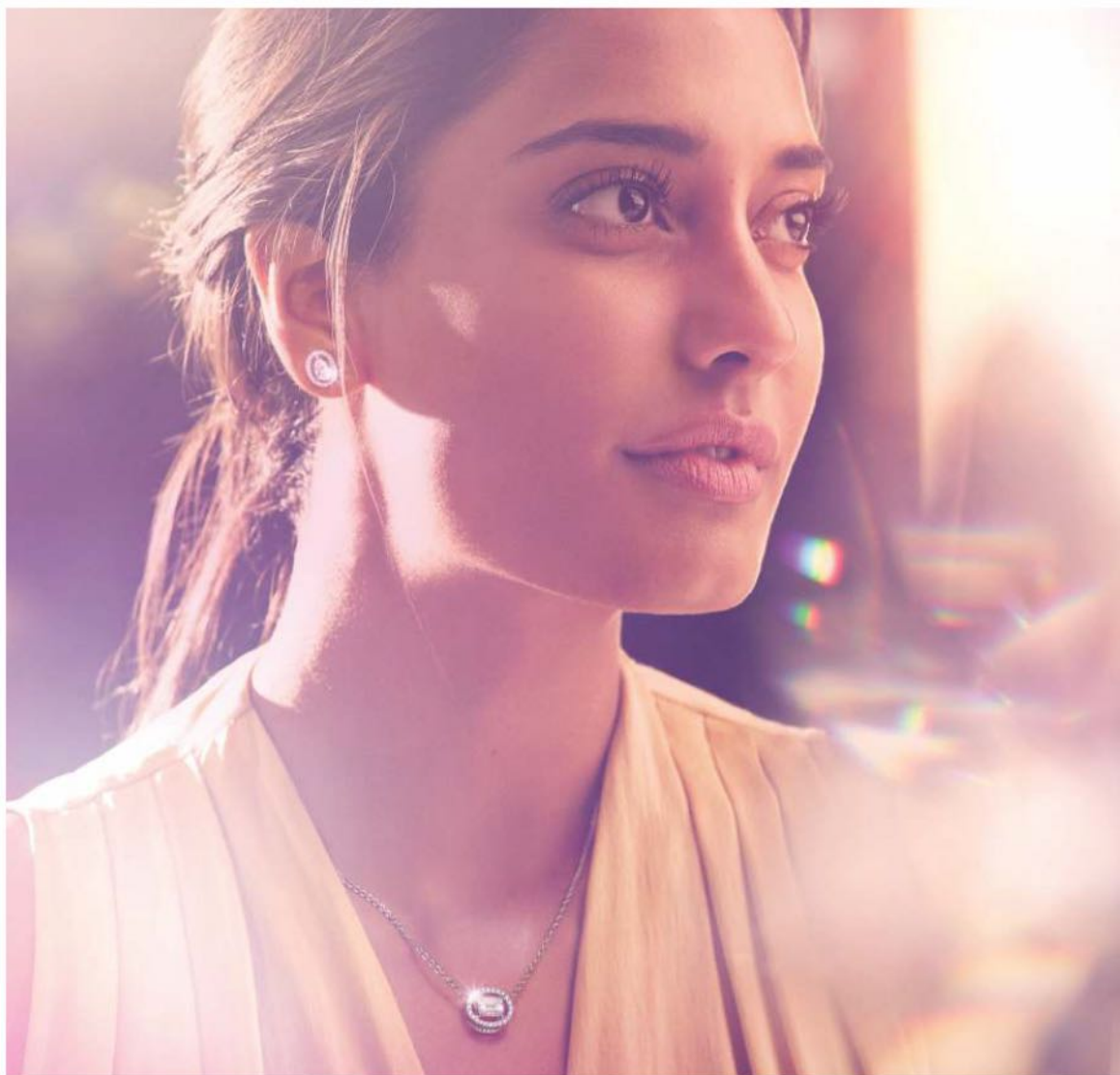
Spa la Vie by L'occitane, 5 - acre rainforest, Swimming pool, Kids' pool, Private cinema, Concierge services by Quintessentially, Cabanas, Salon, Fitness centre, Chess room, Fussball and Snooker room, Cards room, Yoga, Games room, Wine and cigar library, Music room, Art gallery, Business room, Creche.

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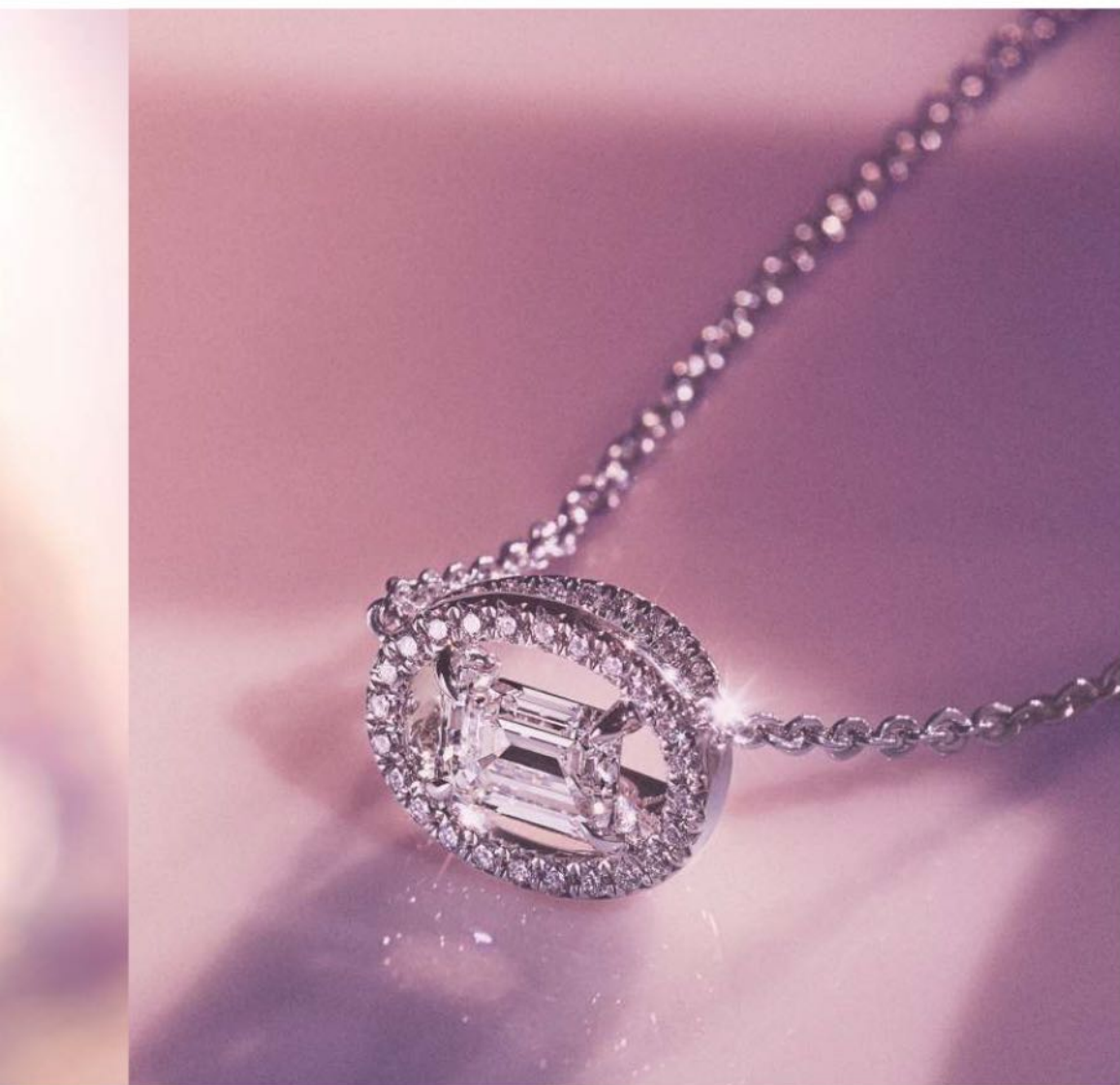




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By Design, Not Accident

Far too many people go through their entire lives neither knowing nor thirsting to know who they are, or where they're meant to be.

It took *Rashmi Alevoor* all of one meeting to find out that *Sussanne Khan* is not among those aimless wanderers.

Photography: Tina Dehal
Make-up: Meghna Butani
Hair: Meghna Butani & Reena Craedo
Photo Assistants: Jay Kumar and Suresh
Wardrobe: Abu Jani & Sandeep Khosla
Jewellery: Farah Khan



The Charcoal Project

"Fashion is something that should be only about personal style.

The trends can be appreciated, but what suits oneself is more important than trying to ape people. Elegant, classic, vintage, breezy, comfort is more my style."

At an early age, when most of her friends were out playing hopscotch, Sussanne would have her little nose stuck in one of her mother's Architectural Digest magazines. She used to accompany her mother, Zarine Khan, also a well-known interior designer of her time, on site visits and would watch with amazement as her mother would breathe life and beauty into blank spaces.

What was born then was more than a child's fleeting passion. Sussanne kept the embers of her curiosity warmly aglow until she went off to California as a young adult, dreams in tow. There she received an Associate Art Degree in Interior Design and further solidified her dreams of becoming an interior designer.

Her approach to design is very organic. When asked about her inspirations, she expresses her gratitude toward "Music, wood forests in nature, history of architecture through the ages, my thoughts, my feelings, my children's story books, vintage, modern, gothic, Frank Lloyd Wright, people in the design industry, (and) unique souls".

What strikes most people who meet Sussanne Khan for the first time is her warmth and her lack of pretension. She has retained a child-like enthusiasm for her work and life - a feat that is by no means easy, especially in the fast-paced and glitzy world she operates in. Keeping her sane, are her two little helpers, Hrehaan and Hridaan. Her children infuse energy into her, she says. "We sit and play various board games and read together, their thoughts and reactions to my work helps me criticize and understand better. (They are) Little powerhouses of uniqueness and their inputs have a very intelligent contribution to all that I do."



Her self-proclaimed third child, The Charcoal Project is a visual-spatial person's playground. The design store is spread over 14,000 sq. ft. and split over two levels. Here you'll find a range of carefully curated décor products that include unique artefacts, plush home furnishings, dinnerware and other such statement accessories for the home.

Apart from carrying her own designs, The Charcoal Project houses exclusive lines by celebrated designers such as Abu Jani-Sandeep Khosla and Andrew Martin. At the Charcoal Project, there is a palpable sense of freedom - of mind and creativity. Here, Sussanne and her young and motivated team "create design stories for every victim of a curious mind".

She understands the universal need of everyone to have a beautiful home, and this was the seed from which her most recent venture, The Home Label was born. The Home Label is an e-store that sells affordable and beautiful home accessories. "It has been designed to reach out to all parts of our country in each home, at any given budget."

Talking of her future plans, she says, "My only plan is to work as hard as I can and infuse my sense and sensibility of design in as many spaces as I can..."



14 MEET THE CITY | OCT-NOV 2014



yaopune

Sussanne's tips for Diwali decorating :

"Use earthy clay diyas all over, white rose petals and mogra, tall rajnigandha flowers in silver vases, homemade sweets and loads of food."



The Charcoal Project

Sussanne's tips for Diwali decorating :

"Use earthy clay diyas all over, white rose petals and mogra, tall rajnigandha flowers in silver vases, homemade sweets and loads of food."



The Charcoal Project



Sussanne on her design process,

"I enter a space, or land, or a home & I absorb all the sources of natural light that enters there, then I collect my thoughts and transcend what motivates or inspires me the most, after that I like to spend time with the person or the people I am designing for to understand and study the character and assess what I think they would most appeal to. Then I put together all of it and explore all possibilities."



"Reading, creating storyboards of feelings, writing down my thoughts of various things around me, travelling to new places, absorbing the place and the way of life.

I love observing people, actions, thoughts and creativity. All these things motivate me."

Apart from design, Sussanne is an art and music aficionado. The artworks of prominent artists decorate her office walls. Amongst them, the four most precious to her are the hand-drawn sketches made by her two sons. Among the many books on design that sit on her shelves, there is a generous smattering of children's literature.

It is clear to any observer, Sussanne Khan is very serious about her role as a designer but more so, about her responsibility as a mother. She prides herself on being an involved parent, fully invested in the intellectual growth of her children. Incidentally, her favourite children's books are the series by author Julia Donaldson - 'The Gruffalo' being her children's most preferred.

The doting mother and her children are now gearing up for the beautiful Festival of Light. Sussanne plans to thoroughly spring-clean her home, as is the Diwali tradition, and beautify it with diyas and fresh flowers. Her favourite aspect of the festive season is hosting friends and family at home over good food, cheer and song.





"A home is a place that should be only about the people who live in it. So the musts in a home are the creation of spaces where there could be art, sculpture... a collectible from one of their trips. A must-have for me is a great collection of art & antique hallmarked silver.

Current trends don't matter, It's important that what one has at home brings in a feel good factor. A happy vibe. Design is about thoughts & feelings."

- Sussanne Khan on trends in Home Décor.



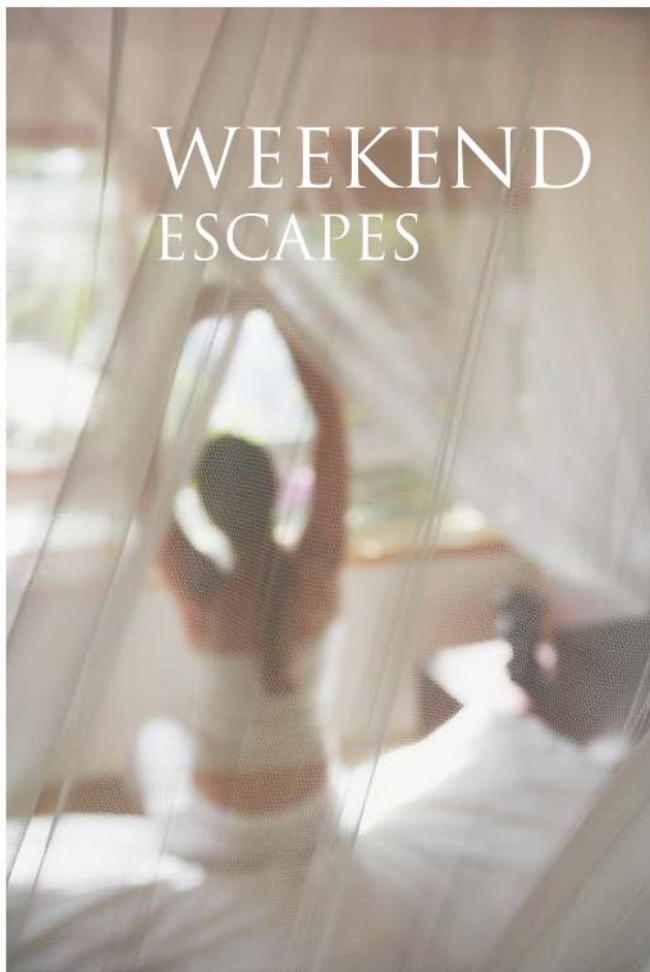
"Art talks to me and then if I respond I will like to own it. I don't get into what the criteria is, as long as it appeals to me, that's how I react to art."

yoopune

It may seem that Sussanne Khan has many favourite things. This is made possible by her appreciation of the world around her and more importantly, by her firm understanding of her mind. She has cultivated a rich inner world, nourished on a diet of art, travel, beauty, and love.

Her recipe for happiness, "Follow your sunshine. Be your truest you. Love what you do at work and motivate all that you can to think like and be an original. And the most important, 'Relax and Sparkle'."

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FESTIVALS

AROUND THE COUNTRY IN SEVEN FESTIVALS

India is a country of numerous languages and cultures, each unique from the other. The myriad festivals of India celebrate its people and culture, and spread an aura of bonhomie across the length and breadth of the country. There seems to be not a single day that passes by without a celebration, the scale of the festivities notwithstanding.

Join Chaitra Patel and Rashmi Alevoor as they take you "Around the Country in Seven Festivals".
Come celebrate India through her festivals!

OF INDIA

Travel to the golden sands of Jaisalmer for the Desert festival, or delve deep into the cultural milieu of Nagaland at the Hornbill festival. Evoke the wanderer in you and experience the thrill of the white desert and salty marshlands of Kutch. The World Sufi festival at Nagaur will leave you mesmerised, while the Kullu Dussehra celebrations will enchant you. Head to the Himalayas for the Hemis Dance festival, or go deep down south to Kerala, and seek the blessings of the temple elephants during Pariyanampetta Pooram.

WORLD SUFI FESTIVAL

"Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life."

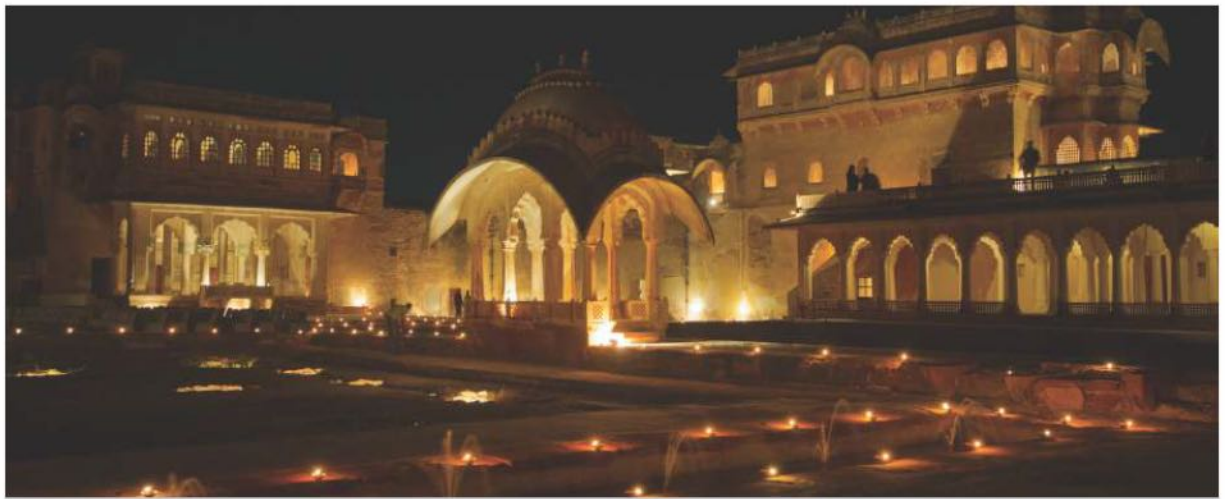
- Omar Khayyam

"The labyrinth of artistic expressions which attempt to transcend the spiritual emotions leads to the same goal: to find another way facing the transient carnal lives we lead in this world."

"It all started with the great masters of polytheistic India which gave us spiritual free-thinkers like the Bauls or the Fakirs of Bengal."

- Alain Weber - Artistic Director World Sufi Spirit Festival 2014

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*"Tell me, madman, what are you looking for on the paths of the world?
Look in your room and you will find the jewel. Why are you searching in vain in Delhi, in Lahore?
The very same cosmic game is being played in the human body. Like the moon that hides behind the clouds.
Knowing yourself, that is a prayer. He who knows the Unseen, says Lalan, knows where to go."* - Lalan Fakir, a Baul poet



The World Sufi Spirit Festival is a three-day long celebration of the beautiful tradition of Sufism. The event pays tribute to the philosophy's roots across Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. It draws thousands of aficionados annually to the very enchanting locations of Ahhichatragarh Fort in Nagaur, and Mehrangarh in Jodhpur.

From the heartfelt songs of the Bauls of Bengal and the exquisite poetry of the great Sufi mystics such as Rumi, Khusrav, and Hafiz to the Aramaic church chants and Andalusian-Arabic music, the World Sufi Spirit Festival becomes a meeting ground to experience the cultural ties that have historically existed between India, Iran, Central Asia, and the Middle East.

Artists that have performed at this event include the likes of Kavita Seth, Kailash Kher, Indian Ocean, Javed Bashir and Fareed Ayyaz from Pakistan, Dr. Madan Gopal Singh and

ChaarYaar, the local Manganiyars and the Langas children, as well as prominent Sufi artists from Lebanon, Azerbaijan, Iran, Morocco, and Tajikistan.

There is a raw and honest quality to every Sufi song that wonderfully encapsulates the meaning of this mystical branch of Islam which is the selfless experiencing and actualisation of the truth. The heady blend of Sufi music along with the historic backdrop of Western Rajasthan works toward offering a unique, soul-stirring experience of a lifetime.

The current fort and the town of Nagaur came into existence in the 12th century, through the hand of Punjabi Mohammad Bahalin. The great Sufi Hamid al-din Chishti established his school in Nagaur, before the Rathore Rajputs took possession of the town in 1530. Later, in 1570, the great Akbar, furtively passed by the fort of Nagaur where his garden, the Sheesh Mahal, still exists.



The festival venue is spread across the beautiful terrace of Abha Mahal, Deepak Mahal and Bakhat Singh Palace and Courtyard.

The second location of the festival is the well-known Mehrangarh fort that watches over the blue city of Jodhpur. Takhat Vilas, Phool Mahal, Zenana Deodi, and the sprawling Chokelao Garden transform into beautiful stages for the performances.

Apart from the promotion of conservation and tourism through the intelligent use of culture, the World Sufi Spirit Festival offers something that is rare to be found in our modern times - an opportunity to embark on an inner journey and to experience the divine within ourselves.

How to get there: Jodhpur airport which is the closest domestic airport is located around 140 kms from Nagaur. It is an important airport in the state and is connected to places such as Mumbai, Delhi, Jaipur and a few more places.

When : Feb 9-12, 2015. (Nagaur)
Feb 13-15, 2015. (Jodhpur)

Where to stay: The Nagaur edition of the festival is open to residents of Ahhichatragarh Fort only. Accommodation is available in the beautifully restored rooms of Ranvas - The Queen's Palaces. In Jodhpur, stay at the beautiful Umaid Bhawan Palace (a Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces property).

For more details:
<http://worldsufispiritfestival.org/>



"We are spirits in a material world...
Join the World Sufi Spirit Festival at Jodhpur - Nagaur
and experience the magic."

- Sting

JAISALMER DESERT FESTIVAL



The "Golden City" of Jaisalmer stands tall on the tourist map of India; on a ridge of yellowish sandstone, in the heart of the Thar Desert in Rajasthan. The city gets its name from its founder Maharawal Jaisal Singh, a Rajput ruler who founded Jaisalmer in 1156 AD and built the imposing Sonar Quila (Golden Fort), today a World Heritage Site, and a much visited monument in the heart of the city.

Rajasthan in many ways is almost an oxymoron - the dry barren Thar desert is stunningly complimented by the many hues and myriad colours of its beautiful people and their everyday life. The city of Jaisalmer celebrates this very contradiction, by way of its Desert Festival.

The Jaisalmer Desert Festival is a three-day event organised by the tourism department of the Rajasthan government, usually between January and February each year. Primarily initiated to attract tourists looking to explore Rajasthan, but are unable to do so due to paucity of time, the festival is the perfect window offering a glimpse into the cultural heritage of the state, showcasing stunning and colourful attire, folk dances, ballads, and acrobatics.

Amongst the various attractions at the festival, the most popular ones are the Gair and Fire dances. Gair performed by men dressed in colourful attire, involves a series of half swirls, paired with the striking of sticks that lends the dance a vigorous character. The Fire dance, a very difficult dance form performed by members of the Banjara (nomadic gypsies) community involves breathtaking stunts with fire, to the beat of local percussion instruments.

One's honour is no frivolous subject matter in Rajasthan and the men here are extremely proud of their moustaches and their turbans, both of which symbolise honour. Therefore it is not surprising that the festival also has entertaining competitions such as a turban-tying contest and a best-moustache contest.

The desert festival does not disappoint. The camel rides in the sand dunes, camel polo, the camel dance and decoration competitions are some of the other major attractions that capture the hearts of visitors. The snake-charmer dance, music and dance performances by folk artists, acrobatics by nomadic gymnasts, and colourful and entertaining puppet shows enthrall the audience and leave them with a yearning to return to the golden sand dunes of beautiful Rajasthan each year!

How to get there: The closest fully operational airport is Jodhpur, which is approximately 275 kms away. Jaisalmer can also be accessed by rail via Jodhpur, Jaipur, Agra, New Delhi, and Mumbai and by road via Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, etc.

When: While the city of Jaisalmer is bustling with tourists almost all year round, especially between October to March, January-February is perfect, if you want to soak in the thrill of the desert festival.

Where to stay: A major tourist destination, there is absolutely no dearth of luxury accommodation in Jaisalmer. The Serai, Jaisalmer, an ultra luxurious desert camp and spa is a spectacular getaway.



PARIYANAMPETTA POORAM



Kerala is home to a large number of Hindu temples, each one of which is famous for its unique traditions and festivals. These temple festivals are celebrated with great pomp and aplomb, and usually go on for a number of days. Temples in north-central Kerala (present day Palakkad, Thrissur, and Malappuram districts) celebrate *Pooram* (festival), dedicated to goddesses Durga and/or Kali, soon after the summer harvest.

Each year, the Pariyanampetta Bhagavathy temple, at Kattukulam, in the Palakkad district of Kerala plays host to the seven-day festival of *Pariyanampetta Pooram*. The festival that celebrates the presiding deity Goddess Bhagavathy, dates back to the 18th century, and was initiated by Sakthan Thampuran, the then ruler of Kochi. This is one of the largest temples in Palakkad district dedicated to the Goddess of 14 Desams (14 temples).

The *Pooram* is an annual affair and generally commences in the second week of February, or according to the Malayalam calendar, the 7th month of Kumbham (Aquarius). The seven days are marked with myriad colourful festivities, dance, and folk art. Not to be missed among the extraordinary art forms are *Kathakali*, the famous classical dance-drama of Kerala, *Kalamezhuthupattu*, the ritualistic temple art of "powder drawing" the image of the goddess on the temple floors, and *Chakiyarkoothu*, one of the oldest art forms of the state; a monologue incorporating social satire, mime and comedy. Another very popular art form here is *Tholpavakoothu* or shadow puppetry.

Tholpavakoothu is staged at night, using leather puppets which in modern times are made of goat skin instead of the historically used deer skin.

The seventh and final day of the festival is witness to a spectacular ceremonial procession of 21 caparisoned elephants. These grandly festooned elephants are paraded through the streets of Kattukulam, accompanied by the temple musicians. Music is an integral part of the celebrations, and devotees and tourists throng the streets to seek the blessings of the elephants amidst the sound of drums and other percussion instruments. Folk arts such as *Kaalavela*, or the bull effigy spectacle and *Kuthiravela*, or the horse effigy spectacle are the other big entertainers of this day.

How to get there: The nearest railway station Palakkad is about 45 kms away. The nearest airport is Coimbatore, about 55 kms away, in the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu.

When: While the best time to visit Palakkad is between December and February, *Pariyanampetta Pooram* is celebrated approximately in the second week of February, so planning a trip then would be a good idea.

Where to stay: Kattukulam does not really offer a variety for lodging and boarding. However, Tree Top Resort at Mukkali, Silent Valley Road, one and a half hours away from Kattukulam offers luxurious tree house and cottage accommodation. If you are seeking residential ayurvedic treatment, Kalari Kovilakom offers ultra luxurious accommodation, about thirty minutes from Kattukulam.





RANN UTSAV KUTCH

A dramatic display of culture and colour!

Imagine a seasonal marshland in the heart of the Thar Desert, submerged in rain water for some part of the year, and completely dry and arid the rest of the year. Welcome to the Rann of Kutch, one of the largest salt deserts in the world! An integral part of Kutch district in the state of Gujarat, the Rann of Kutch spans approximately 7505.22 sq. kms.

The Great Rann of Kutch along with the Little Rann of Kutch and the Banni grasslands make up about 30,000 kms of these white lands, strategically located between the Gulf of Kutch on one side and the great Indus Valley Civilisation in Southern Pakistan on the other.



The name Kutch is derived from the very curious nature of the land formation which is surrounded by salt water, and its shape which almost resembles a tortoise, *katchua* or *kachbo*. Kutch is a riot of contrasting colours - the dry white salt lands render a picture-perfect backdrop to the exhilarating movements of the bangled women, clad in hand-embroidered appliqué *lehengas*, swaying gently to the beats of the *dholak*, *dakul*, and *ghagharok* played by the turban clad men.

The Rann Utsav is a celebration of the beautiful culture of this colourful land - Kutch. A cultural extravaganza of dance, music, art, craftsmanship, and food, the festival is an initiative by the Gujarat tourism department to showcase a kaleidoscope of the culture and beauty of this region. What started off as a three-day festival is now an annual carnival that takes place over three months, commencing in December, with a finale celebrating the festival of Holi, between February and March.

A visit to the Rann Utsav is never complete without a stay at the grand tent city - a hamlet of approximately 350 to 400 luxury tents, set up in the village of Dhordo, on the outskirts and approximately 85 kms from Bhuj. In addition to scintillating music and charming folk dances, the tourism department organises various activities such as camel safaris, visits to historical monuments, and the wild ass sanctuary, making the festival a one-stop shop to satiate your

wanderlust. Kutch is famous for its beautiful handicrafts, *bandhini* saris, embroidered garments with intricate mirror work, camel wool shawls and chunky silver ornaments, naturally making this a shopper's paradise.

The salt marshland of the Little Rann of Kutch is also famous as the last refuge of the Indian wild ass and has been declared a wild life sanctuary. The region is rich in biodiversity, and has been recognised within the framework of UNESCO's Man and Biosphere (MAB) programme. Despite its barren landscape, the area attracts a host of migratory birds such as cranes, flamingos, the great Indian bustards, etc, much to the delight of avid bird watchers.

How to get there: The Bhuj airport operates daily flights from major cities such as Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, etc. and is well connected. Kutch is well connected by bus services, courtesy a well laid out road network. Likewise Kutch is also connected by train services to and from major cities across the country.

When: The best time to visit the Rann of Kutch is between November and March, with the festival taking place between December and February. Summers between April and May are highly avoidable due to extreme heat.

Where to stay: If you are looking to visit during the Rann Utsav, it would be best to book yourself at the impressive Tent City.

RANN UTSAV KUTCH

HEMIS FESTIVAL



Photo Courtesy : Rajkumar

Leh, the erstwhile Himalayan kingdom of Ladakh, and one of the coldest deserts in the world, has always been a backpacker's haven. The rugged topography and harsh climates of the land were however never a deterrent for the monks and preachers, who over centuries travelled far and wide across this hostile terrain to build monasteries or *gompas*.

Some of these monasteries today are in ruins, while others are still inhabited, and continue to function as religious and educational centres. These *gompas* never cease to delight the inquisitive traveller!

A very distinctive feature about the monasteries of Leh is that

each one of these constructions has a courtyard which serves as a venue for festive celebrations, yearly rituals and ceremonies, witnessed by a large gathering of clergy, villagers, and tourists. One such being the Hemis monastery which plays host to the annual Hemis Festival.

The Hemis monastery, managed by the Druggpa sect and founded by the Namgyal dynasty in 1630 AD is about 40 kms from Leh. It is one of the largest and most significant of Tibetan Buddhist *gompas*. On the 10th day (*Tse Chu*) of the Tibetan Lunar month (June-July) the Hemis monastery celebrates the birth anniversary of Guru Padmasambhava (Guru Rimpoche), over two days of festivities.

The highlight of the Hemis Festival is the Masked Dance, performed by the Lamas, that illustrates good prevailing over evil.



Photo Courtesy : Rajkumar



The festivities are ushered in with an early morning ritual atop the gompa, where the Guru's portrait is ceremoniously put up on display to the sound of beating drums, clashing cymbals and the spiritual wail of trumpets and pipes. A colourful fun-fair with a number of stalls selling souvenirs and handicrafts is an integral part of the festivities, as are the elaborate song and dance performances and plays. The highlight of the festival is the mask dance that is performed by the Lamas, gathered around the central flag pole, to celebrate the victory of good over evil. The performers are garbed in extravagant costumes and wear brightly painted masks, each depicting a different figure in the legend that is being portrayed.

The Hemis festival is one of its kind - colourful, ceremonial and ritualistic! It's certainly a destination to add to that bucket list!

How to get there: Daily flights to Leh operate from Delhi, Srinagar, and Jammu. Leh is also connected by road from Manali and Srinagar, both routes being spectacularly beautiful. These routes however are accessible only between June and October. Note: Weather being unpredictable in these parts, it would be wise to always check for weather updates before hitting the road.

When: The best time to visit Leh - Ladakh is between June to October. However if you are looking to soak in the mysticism of the Hemis festival, then travel between June and July.

Where to stay: Leh offers a variety of accommodation for everybody. Budget travellers can choose from a range of guest houses and hostels that provide basic facilities and hot water. Or soak in the beauty of the rugged terrain in the lap of comfort at Saboo Resorts, Tsermang Eco Camp, or The Grand Dragon

KULLU DUSSEHRA



This week-long annual festival takes place in the Valley of the Living Gods, Kullu Valley. Like Dussehra festivities all over India, it celebrates the triumph of good over evil - the victory of Lord Rama over Ravana.

The festival begins with the Rath Yatra of the idol of Lord Ragunath (Lord Rama) accompanied by over 250 other village deities, and is known as the running of Gods. The royally decorated palanquins travel from Rath Maidan to Dhalpur Maidan, marching to the beat of the many drums and trumpets.

During this time, the little town is filled with lakhs of devotees and tourists who come to experience the over-350-year-old tradition. This is precisely the reason why the State Government has granted it the status of an international festival.

The celebrations which include an open theatre and a dance festival of Gaddi shepherds, is a joyous union of art, culture,

religion, history and fun. On the concluding day, the Rath is carried over to the banks of the river Beas where a pile of thorn bushes is set on fire. This symbolises the burning of Lanka, the island fortress capital of the Demon King Ravana.

Even as Kullu Dussehra draws to a close, the festivities continue - the Lal Chand Prarthi Kala Kendra hosts international cultural programmes, where artists from many countries world-wide perform each day. State departments and NGOs hold lively exhibitions on local and regional agriculture and horticulture. At the nearby Dusshera Maidan, hundreds of little shops and stalls sell traditional handlooms and handicrafts.

Kullu Valley was once known as Kulanthpitha - the end of the habitable world. One look at the majestic Himalayan range that surrounds it confirms why that was. There are many national parks in the vicinity and it is home to some of the rarest of animals like the Himalayan Tahr, Western Tragopan, Monal, and the Red bear.

How to get there: The closest airport to Kullu is Bhuntar airport which is situated at a distance of around 10 km from Kullu. Bhuntar is currently not operational therefore Chandigarh is the closest alternative, around 265 kms from Kullu (roughly a 4 hr 25 min drive). Kullu is also connected by road and railway to Chandigarh, Delhi and Simla.

When: The festival takes place in October every year as per the Hindu calendar. Apart from this, the beauty of Kullu Valley can be experienced from the months of March to June and September to November.

Where to stay: A stay at The Himalayan, a premier luxury resort in Manali will give you the sense of staying in a Swiss chalet. The hotel also makes arrangements for guests to enjoy certain Kullu-specific outdoor activities such as camping, canyoning, mountain-biking, paragliding, skiing, white-water rafting and so on.

THE HORNBILL FESTIVAL

Birds of the same feather celebrate together!



Image Courtesy : Supriya Sehgal

The Hornbill Festival is held every year in Kisama Heritage Village, around 12 kms from Nagaland's hilly capital of Kohima.

The festival has been organised by the State Directorate of Tourism since 2000, as a means to encourage inter-tribal cultural interaction and also to revive and preserve the rich customs and traditions of the state.





Image Courtesy : Supriya Sehgal



Image Courtesy : Supriya Sehgal



Image Courtesy : Supriya Sehgal



Image Courtesy : Alamy

Each of the 16 major tribes and many sub-tribes in the state can be distinguished by their stunningly colourful traditional ceremonial attire. During the length of the festival, Kisama sees a multitude of colourful spears and daos (a knife-like tool) decorated with dyed goat hair, headgears made of finely woven bamboo adorned with wild boar teeth and hornbill feathers, and ivory armlets.

The week-long festival features vibrant dance performances, traditional art and craft stalls, food fairs, herbal medicine stalls, flower shows and sales, fashion shows, traditional archery, Naga wrestling, games, and it all comes to an end with a joyous musical concert. The festival derives its name from the hornbill, a bird most admired by the Naga people for its quality of alertness and its majestic appearance. The bird is entrenched in the social and cultural fabric of the people, as is evident in their folklore.

For a closer understanding of the people and culture of Nagaland and an appreciation of their rich repertoire of folk

dance and song, head to Kisama during the first week of December. Indian tourists visiting Nagaland need an Inner Line Permit. This is available from any Nagaland House, or Government of Nagaland office. While entry permits are no longer necessary for foreigners, they will need to register themselves with the Foreigners Registration Office within 24 hours of entry into the state.

How to get there: Kohima doesn't have an airport. The nearest one is in Dimapur, with flights to and from Kolkata and Guwahati. Kohima is 74 kms away from Dimapur (a 2-hr drive or a 30-min helicopter ride).

When: In addition to the festival days of 1st to the 10th of December, the best time to visit Nagaland is between the months of October to May.

Where to stay: The Hornbill Festival is one of the top tourist draws in Nagaland, so if you're planning to attend, do book accommodations well in advance. Hotel Razhu Pru in Kohima is a colonial house built in 1946 which has been converted into a boutique hotel. Similar to the Razhu Pru and also in Kohima is The Heritage.



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THE GREAT INDIAN

WEDDING

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SPECIAL
FEATURE

THE GREAT INDIAN WEDDING

Image Courtesy - Stories by Joseph Radhik

Gone are the days
when weddings were
a modest affair and
each one seemed
identical to the other.
In today's glitzy
high-tech world,
money is no object
and it's all about
location,
customisation,
and pomp.

*Rashmi Alevoor looks into the colourful,
'dhamakedar' world of
Indian Weddings and comes away amazed
at the scale of everything.*



Image Courtesy - KnotinFocus

THE BUSINESS OF LOVE

The over \$30-billion Indian wedding market continues to grow at 25-30% per year and bridal parties across the land seem more than happy to pay up. The explosion of middle class consumer power has meant that the big, fat Indian wedding is now a possibility for a rising number of people – not just the privileged few.

Earlier only the elite were known to have grand and well-orchestrated events. These days, a new consciousness has been seen in the upper middle-class as well. They too, seek to fulfil their dreams of a fairytale wedding and have the capacity to see it through.

BIGGER BUDGETS MAKE THE WORLD A SMALLER PLACE.

The hottest trend in the industry these days is that of destination weddings with couples opting to get married in exotic locales both within India and overseas. This trend is catching on even among the aspiring and nouveau riche families in Tier-II and Tier-III cities such as Mysore in Karnataka and Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh.

Candice Pereira, co-founder of Marry Me - The Wedding Planners, says, "In India, the most popular destinations continue to be Goa and Rajasthan. Also, certain cities in India like Jaisalmer in Rajasthan and even Hyderabad for the spectacular Falaknuma Palace are getting popular."



As for those who dream of declaring their love on foreign shores, the Southeast Asian islands of Koh Samui in Thailand, Langkawi in Malaysia, and Bali in Indonesia seem to be the preferred wedding spots.

So big is the Indian wedding market that countries like Oman, Thailand, and the Philippines are promoting themselves as wedding destinations. They seek to boost tourism from India by offering packages complete with all arrangements, including visas for guests.

Lubaina Sheerazi, India Representative, Oman says, "...Indians are constantly on the lookout for new wedding destinations to conduct lavish weddings which has become a trend now. We feel Oman has great potential to become a wedding destination and the feedback we got from some wedding planners after they visited the country was very encouraging and positive."

Not to be outdone, the well-heeled are aiming to transcend geographical boundaries in search of novel wedding destinations. "City-centric areas like London, Paris or New York are given a miss for sought-after destinations like Cannes (France), Florence (Italy) or Portugal," says Vandana Mohan of The Wedding Design Company. "In fact, I just did a wedding at Puglia in Italy. Regions in the south of France always remain a favoured choice."

A recent lavish wedding in Puglia was that of New Delhi-based entrepreneur Ayesha Thapar and Google's former senior vice-president Nikesh Arora. Among their guests were Hollywood celebrities, Ashton Kutcher and Mila Kunis.

Another rising trend among the upper echelons of society that seems to be here to stay is the use of wedding planners to take over and look after every little detail. Candice remembers, "When we first started out... things were very different. The concept of a wedding planner was almost unheard of and it seemed like the most absurd thing to do - to hire a wedding planner. Today, clients realise that hiring a wedding planner is a must, not just for a large wedding or a destination wedding, but for a wedding of any size, any location."



Image Courtesy - Knotinfoocus

WEDDING DESTINATIONS

Usually, a destination wedding sees an intimate group of attendees, which marks a breakaway from the traditional Indian custom of inviting thousands of guests. The wedding party is considerably smaller with 200 to 250 guests in attendance. Some guests prefer to hold a large reception, once they return to their home cities.

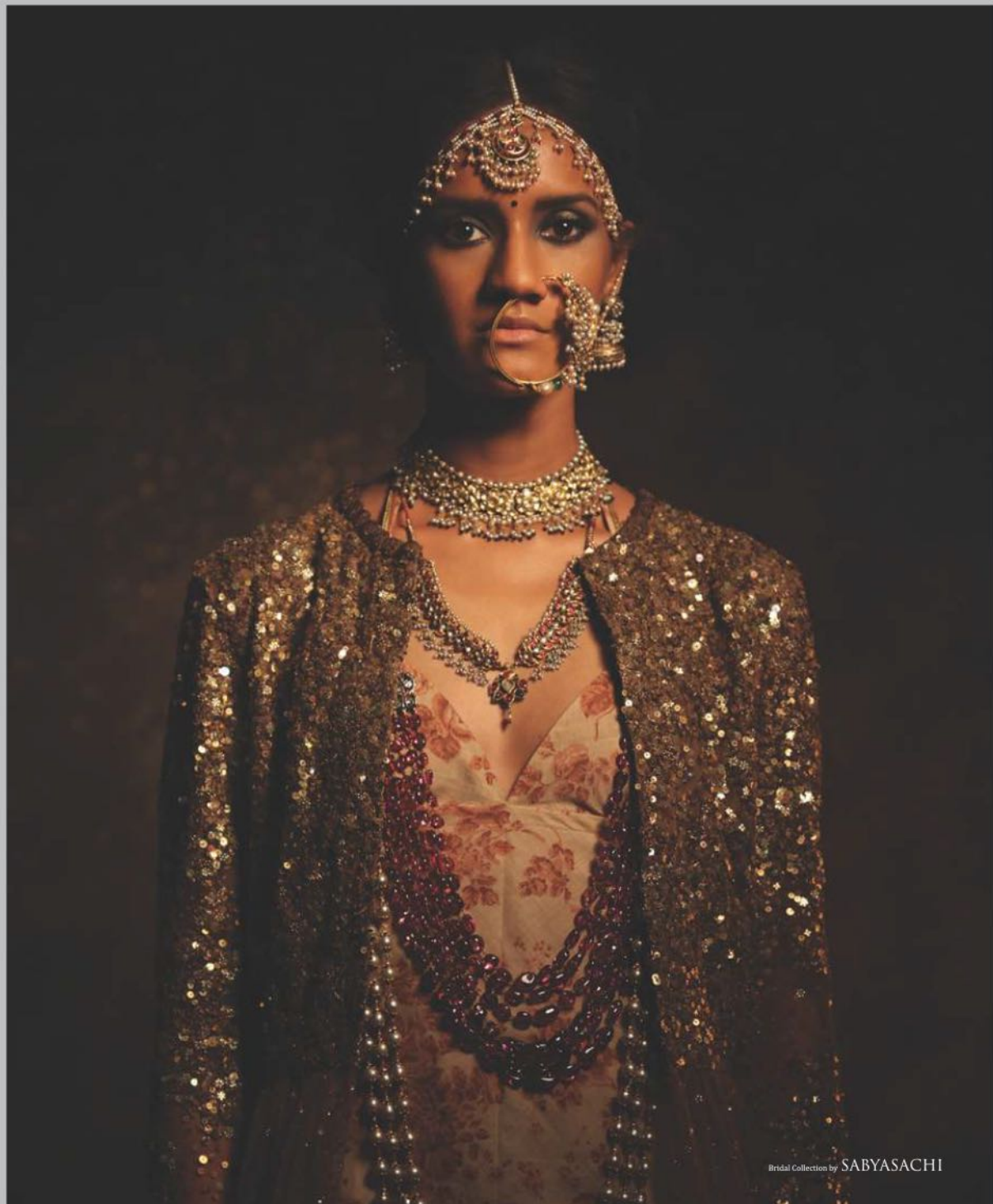
But a smaller wedding doesn't necessarily translate into a smaller budget - it is fast becoming quite common for people to spend over Rs. 1 crore, just on food and décor. "...while on an average, the upper middle-class tends to save up and spend Rs. 3 crore to Rs. 6 crore on a wedding.

A high-end affair would involve anywhere between Rs. 10 crore and Rs. 20 crore, and an uber-luxurious celebration involves funds upwards of Rs. 20 crore," says, Jasleen Kochhar, Founder-Designer of Bougainvilla Design.

That spells big business for invitations, catering, décor, jewellery, apparel, photography, and as previously noted, even tourism.

Images credit :

Stories by Joseph Radhika is an award winning, international brand of lifestyle and wedding photography and cinematography, with experience of over 250 wedding shoots across 17 countries in five continents thus far. Find out more at: stories.josephradhika.com



Bridal Collection by SBYASACHI

A huge volume of wedding fashion shows hit the Indian runway each year - the Vogue Wedding Show, BMW Bridal Fashion Week, and Bridal Asia are but just a few of them.

It is clear that fashion designers in India are fishing where the fish are. Wedding apparel makes up over 10% of the big, fat wedding industry.

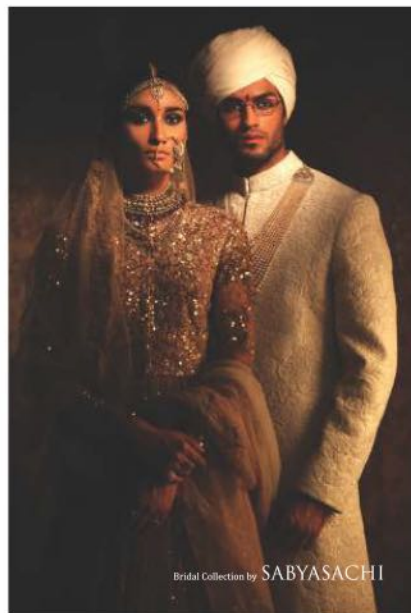
BIG WEDDING BIGGER FASHION

"Many young designers start with a more prêt approach, but in India, you have to go bridal," says designer Varun Bahl. Over 80 per cent of his business turnover comes from the bridal market, of which 40 per cent comes from wedding lehengas. Bahl says that it is a very challenging category of apparel to design. "Basically there are three Indian silhouettes: the sari, the *anarkali* and the *lehenga*."

The challenge in Indian fashion is to make them look different and to give them a stamp. That to me is the beauty of Indian fashion."

But the real incentive is monetary. This year, Sabyasachi's beautiful bridal lehengas carried his annual turnover over the Rs. 100 crore mark, thereby making him one of Indian fashion's most financially successful designers.

"The organised retail sector in India is still very poor and corporate investments are tentative," explains Sabyasachi. "Hence for a designer in India to grow big in both stature and turnover, the only route is bridal." To further woo this high-yielding category of fashion he started a bridal make-over show on TV called "Band Baaja Bride".



"I believe that there is a new era in bridal fashion at the moment," says Monisha Jaising who designs exclusively for the young and modern bride. "It's all about individual and personal style and mixing the old with the new. Basically, there are no rules."

And that appears to be true even for Indian weddings in general. If it can be imagined, it can certainly be achieved.

This year, Sabyasachi's beautiful bridal lehengas carried his annual turnover over the Rs. 100 crore mark, thereby making him one of Indian fashion's most financially successful designers.



Image Courtesy - Knotinfocus

DESTINATION WEDDING



Image Courtesy - Knotinfocus



Dos and Don'ts of a Destination Wedding

by Candice Pereira, co-founder of Marry Me - The Wedding Planners

Guest list – The average Indian wedding will have an unending guest list. But if you are having a destination wedding, a guest list of under 300 is ideal. Compiling a guest list is a huge task, so we suggest you get this done as soon as possible. Remember that curbing your guest list is not an easy job and your final number of guests will affect a lot of areas – the venues you choose, the kind of celebrations and more!

Keep them busy – Most Indian weddings have anywhere from three to ten different wedding related events spanning over a couple of days to a week sometimes! So when your guests travel all the way to be part of your celebrations, it's important to take care of them and set some activities for them. For example, if you have a smaller family event like a Puja a day or so before the wedding, don't forget about the rest of your guests! Maybe you could set up a relaxed brunch or a water sport fun filled day for them. Not everyone may choose to attend, but it's definitely the thought that counts!

Wardrobe – It is of utmost importance that the guests are informed about the kind of wedding and venues, along with dress codes. If you are having your wedding ceremony on the beach, you



Image Courtesy - Knotinfocus



definitely don't want guests turning up in heavy sarees and heels! They will be uncomfortable and unhappy and you don't want that! Instead, be clear about whether the wedding or event is informal, on the beach, on a cliff or wherever!

Other costs – When it's a destination wedding, you have a lot of other areas to think about! Is the destination of your choice equipped to handle an Indian wedding? Can you work with local vendors for your wedding? If not, you may have to bring in professional vendors from the nearest well equipped city. In this case, you will have to take into account flight costs, accommodation, local transport and meals for all the vendors from out of the destination.

Communication – Most often, you will start planning your big fat destination wedding at least a year in advance. Stay in touch with your guests and keep them informed at the earliest so they can make their arrangements. Start by sending out Save the Date cards or emails well in advance so everyone blocks the date. A must do for a destination wedding is a wedding website. Here you can upload details of the wedding, the destination, the travel options, dress codes for various events and more so guests can keep checking for updates.

Image Credit

Knotinfocus are Mumbai-based, award-winning candid wedding photographers, Anand and Abhinav. To get in touch with them, visit: www.knotinfocus.in or reach them at info@knotinfocus.in



SPECIAL
FEATURE

THE GREAT INDIAN WEDDING

WEDDING JEWELLERY
MAKE-UP
DIET-FITNESS

EXPERT SP

Makeup and Hair Trends

by Amrita Bokey, Hairstylist and Makeup Artist

The Indian bridal hair and makeup trend has seen a paradigm shift in the recent past. As opposed to thick, loud, cakey makeup of the yesteryears, the focus is now on a perfectly highlighted complexion with beautifully accentuated features.

Brides come in with international wedding and runway references. The aim now, is to focus on and highlight one feature and keep the rest of the makeup natural and nude. Dusky brides are embracing their skin tone instead of trying to look fairer. The double winged liner is currently very popular.

In terms of colour, the trend is more towards neutral and classic shades, golds, coppers, bronze and earthy tones, as opposed to greens and blues. Light, subtle makeup in the day, smokey and bronze in the evening. On the lips, warm deep reds and peach/coral are becoming increasingly popular.

In terms of hair, brides are opting for softer more tousled styles. Textured buns with twists seem to be the hottest trend on the bridal circuit. Also, messy textured braids have made a huge comeback. In open and half-up hair styles, soft curls and tousled hair with lots of volume are a favourite with Indian brides.

Image Courtesy - Stories by Joseph Radhik



EAK

Diet and Fitness Tips

by Zarine Watson from Watson Fitness

Brides come in all shapes and sizes and so there is no one prescribed fitness regime that would work for everyone. But here are some general rules of thumb to follow:

- Brides must begin their fitness regimes at least 3 months prior to their big day.
- The areas to focus on are the parts of the body that are most accentuated by bridal attire - shoulders, arms, midriff, and back.
- The muscles on the back are postural muscles that will ultimately help the bride stand taller and with better poise.
- Focus on exercises that sculpt the biceps, triceps, and those that help give more definition to the shoulders.

The aim is to work on sculpting and not bulking the bride. Fitness is 70% diet and 30% exercise.

- Drink lots of water - it is very important for brides to stay hydrated. Water helps with weight loss as it satiates hunger cravings and it is also excellent for the hair and skin.
- Absolutely avoid refined sugars - they do monstrous things to your waistline and skin.
- Avoid empty starches found in white rice and flour.
- Feast on vegetables.
- Make sure your diet is balanced with proteins, complex carbohydrates (that are found in grains and pulses and healthy fats (that are found in almonds and walnuts).



WEDDING JEWELLERY EXPERT SP

BY FARAH KHAN

Farah Khan-Ali is a renowned jewellery designer and gemologist. She has designed exquisite jewellery for many celebrities - both in India and abroad.

Images Courtesy - Farah Khan Fine Jewellery

Bridal jewellery is now-a-days an integral part of the brides personality. The bridal jewellery market has evolved.

People prefer buying jewellery that is wearable and multi-functional. They want jewellery that makes a fashion statement, rather than just being an investment

The most commonly bought jewellery pieces are bridal necklace sets, *mangtikas* and *jhoomars*, *kamarbandh*, bangles and bracelets, rings, *haathphool*, *payal* and armlets. These categories could be traditional pieces of jewellery or statement pieces.

Today the bridal trousseau is not limited to only traditional pieces of jewellery. Now families are open to style and designs and buy a lot of practical pieces like changeable, prêt pieces, statement cuffs and necklaces. The brides like a mix of feminine, statement and traditional pieces.

The amount spent on jewellery varies from family to family. Average amount spent by our past clients vary somewhere from Rs. 30 lakhs to Rs. 2 crore and more.



Today the bridal trousseau is not limited to only traditional pieces of jewellery.

Now families are open to style and designs and buy a lot of practical pieces like changeable, prêt pieces, statement cuffs and necklaces.

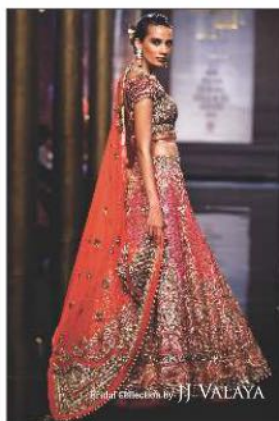


EAK





"There exists a significant degree of timelessness which is important when one is investing in wedding clothes or anything of great value." - JJ Valaya



FASHION

The drama, the elegance, and the sheer beauty of Indian Bridal wear comes alive as the wedding season arrives. Indian wedding celebrations are a time for resplendence, dazzle and beauty all around.

Radhika Sathe takes note, as four top designers go all out to clothe the brides and grooms in their best designs, styles, colours, embellishments and fabrics, that leave everyone mesmerised...

Sticking to their roots

As modern as the Indian bride may be, the wedding attire is inherently traditional, and it looks that much more beautiful for it! The designers themselves take inspiration from traditional arts and crafts and incorporate them into their designs. The lehengas, the saris and the anarkalis... all form a part of the trousseau.

Glimpses of shimmering gold, hues of soft pastels and a whimsical frothiness are reminiscent of an era of elegance

and charm; Tarun Tahiliani's bridal couture collection is about creating couture that keeps distinctive Indian crafts alive, while exploring visions in sparkling crystal and carat. It reflects emotions that give shape to sensuous, elegant and bespoke luxury for brides, grooms and their families as well as for other occasions.

Incorporating the contemporary

Keeping the 'traditional' intact however does not mean that designers do not give it a new twist. Anita Dongre in her 'India Modern' collection, paints a regal picture with flowing bridal lehengas reinterpreted with an innovative twist of modern day styles, subtle detailing and layering, juxtaposed with intricate gota patti, dori and hand embroidery on rich fabrics. Lehengas get paired with crop tops, structured jackets with embroidered pants and elegant couture gowns - unique yet quintessentially Indian. Anita ensures the collection is high on comfort, but still displays her signature style quotient.





Bridal Collection by MANISH MALHOTRA



Bridal Collection by MANISH MALHOTRA

New techniques and styles also give the dress a touch of unique. JJ Valaya has a different take on the bridal wear with 'The Nautch of the Fez' collection. This crisp couture collection showcases signature weaves in crepes, Dupion silk, georgettes and fine velvets. It champions various techniques ranging from digital printing, appliqué, laser burning and the legendary Valaya embroideries, to create a perfect blend of the past, with cutting edge contemporary chic.

Seeped in Indian tradition, yet relevant to the new age bride, in his 'Gloss' collection Manish Malhotra reinvents the *lehenga* as a flowing skirt, while adding an extra edge to the festive season with glamorised racer backs. The long *kalidars* too get a makeover in this collection. Another highlight of the collection is his version of the Gown Sari – the easy silhouette adding to the romance of the ensemble.

Colours and embellishments

From the colour palette to the embroidery, fabric and silhouette, each plays an important role in the bridal ensemble.

The ensembles in Tarun's collection portray a mélange of Indian craftsmanship perfected over generations with the fit, finish and functionality of western clothing. With the use of modern fabric like sheer silks, *reshams* and tulle; the ensembles are lighter, giving ease of movement. Evolved draping techniques are designed to work with the dynamics of the body and let the fabric echo the shapes of the body as it moves. Manish's collection is brimming in rich festive shades of wine, burgundy, golds and purples on specially treated textured silks, velvets and flowing chiffons that lend a delicate feminine touch. In line with the international trend of gloss, gleam and shine, the contemporary mirror work and textured shimmer dazzles the onlookers.

On the other hand, the artistic palette of Anita's collection shuttles between soft neutrals like cream and flesh, to vibrant jewel tones of ruby reds, peacock blues and *raani* pinks, adding a touch of vintage luxury. Each style is a magical blend of the old and the new, where modernity stems from traditional aesthetics, in contemporary silhouettes. Valaya's colour story dabbles in antique, metallic and neutral tones in symphony with Indian brights! Grandeur, intrigue and drama come together in silhouettes which embrace the spirit of India in cool newness and superb scale.

A close-up photograph of a person's hand resting on a wooden table. The hand is positioned next to a small glass containing a white yogurt-like substance with a thin layer of dark berries on top. The background is blurred, showing the person's torso and another hand. The text "HAPPINESS IS HOMEMADE..." is overlaid in the center.

HAPPINESS IS HOMEMADE...

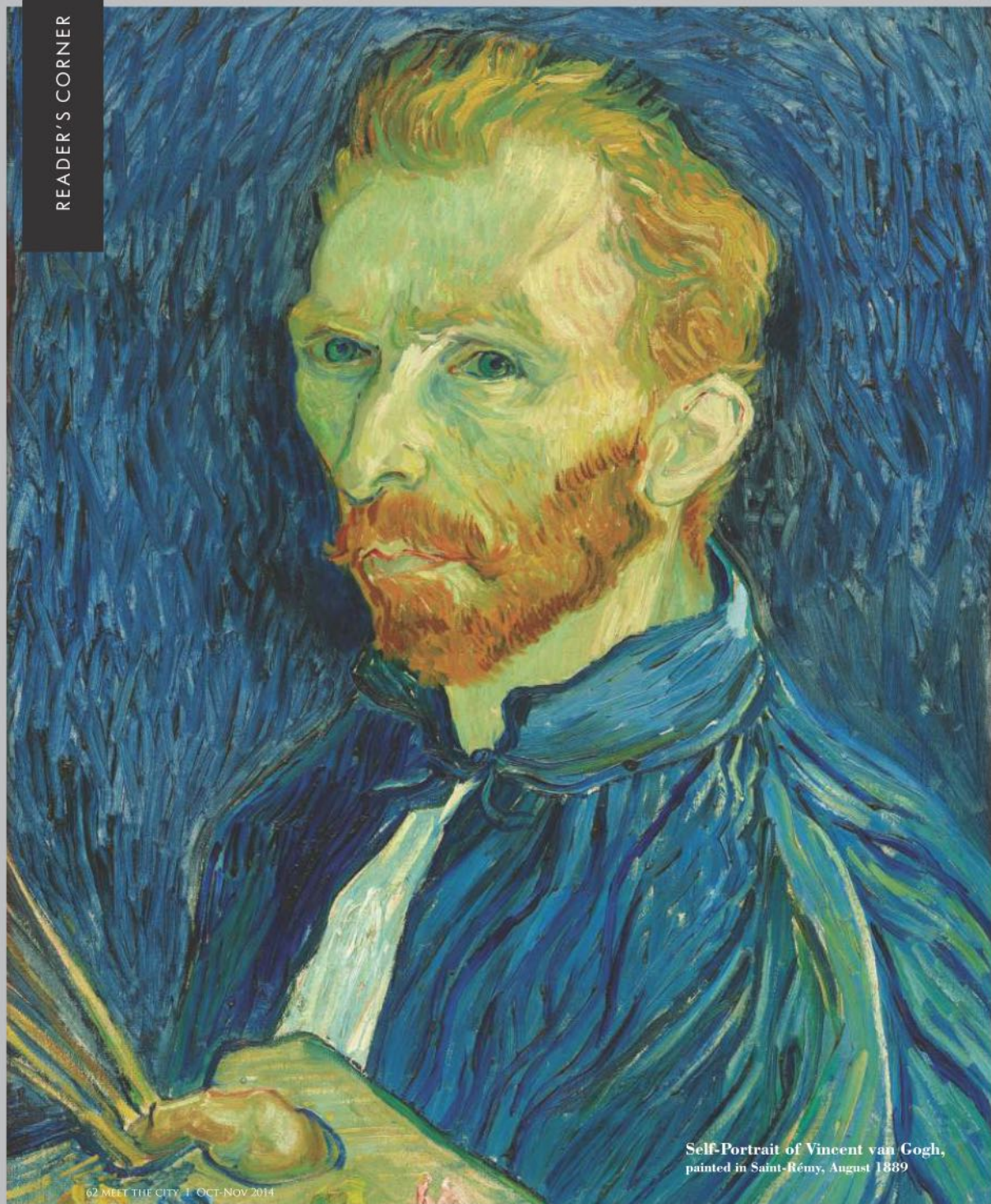
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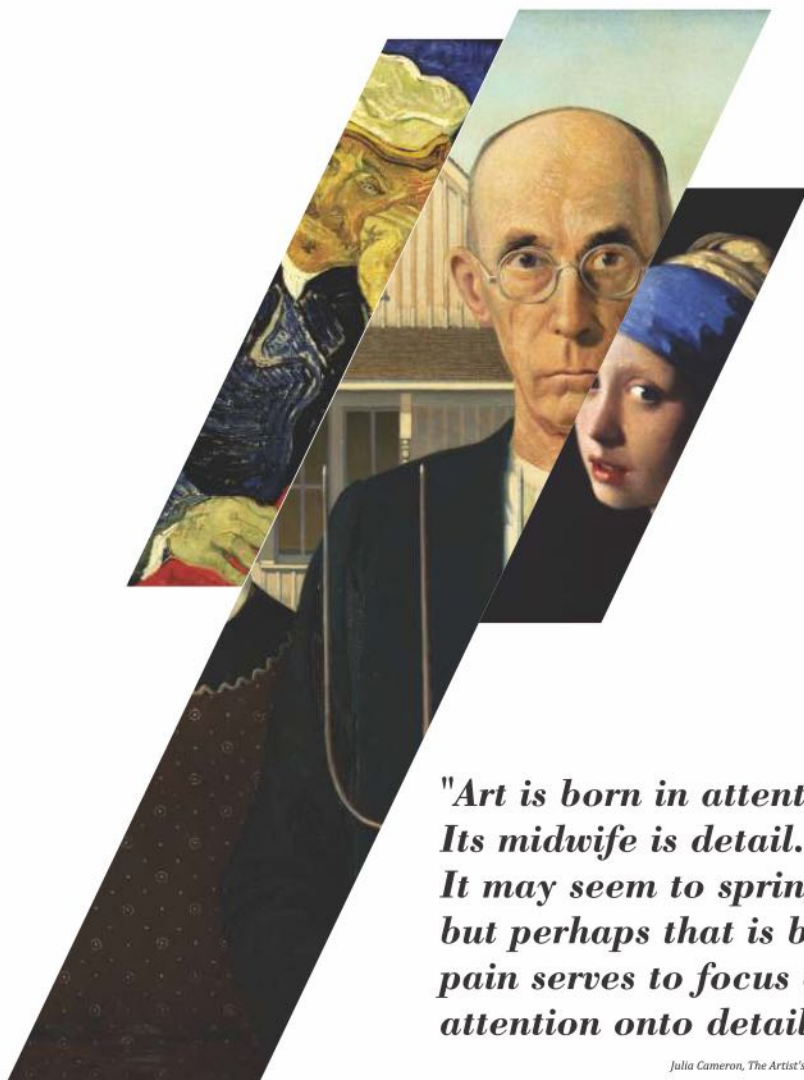
AND KITCHENS BY...



LIFESTYLE
INTERIORS



Self-Portrait of Vincent van Gogh,
painted in Saint-Rémy, August 1889

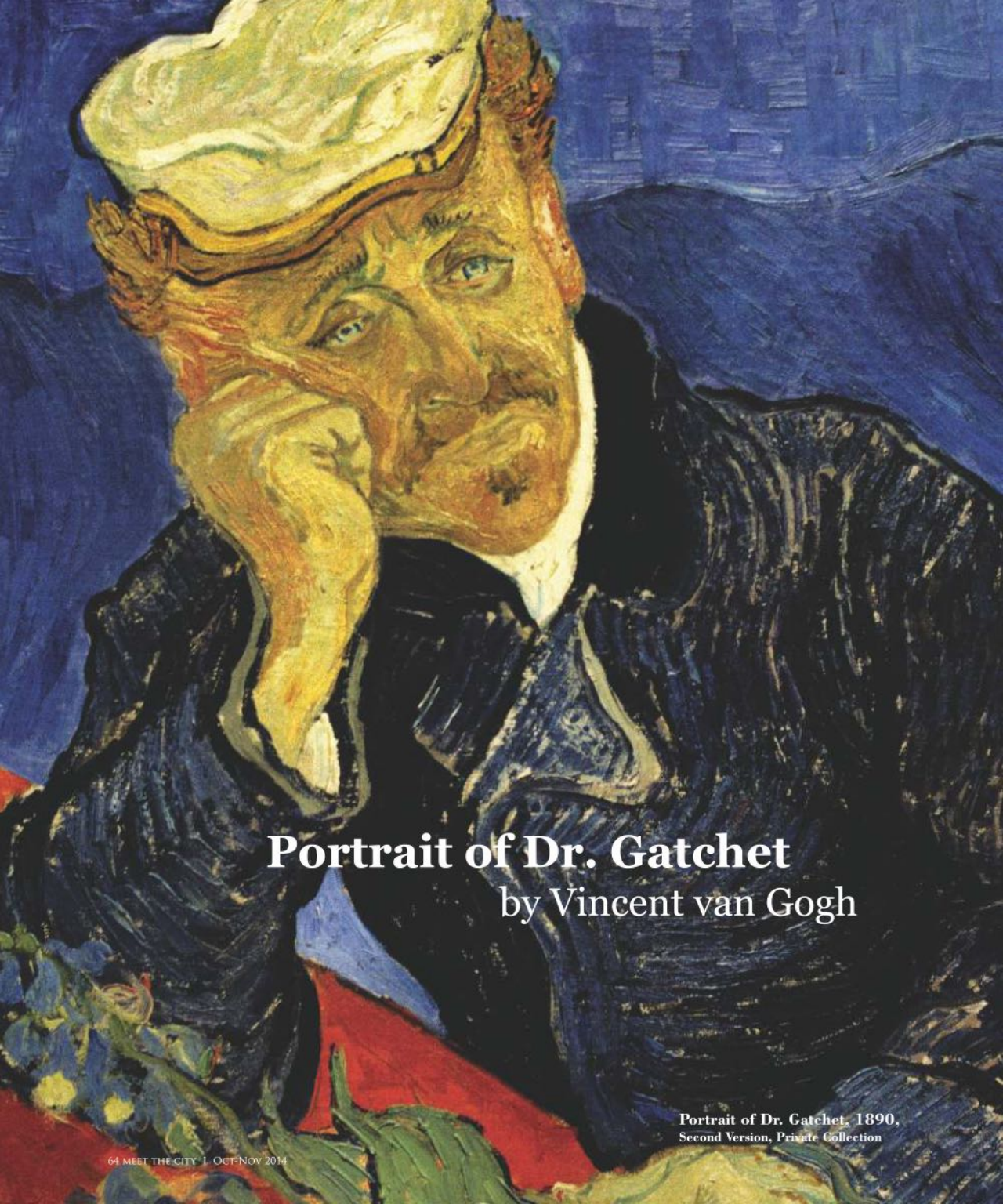


***"Art is born in attention.
Its midwife is detail.
It may seem to spring from pain,
but perhaps that is because
pain serves to focus our
attention onto details."***

Julia Cameron, The Artist's Way.

There is much speculation as to the where and the how of the birth of art. More so about certain masterpieces. Some works of art are so haunting in their telling of a story that they beg for some amount of investigation.

Rashmi Alevoor reveals the stories behind three such masterpieces.

A reproduction of Vincent van Gogh's 'Portrait of Dr. Gachet' (Second Version). The painting depicts a man with a pale, yellowish face, resting his head on his right hand. He wears a white turban and a dark, textured blue robe. The background is a deep, swirling blue. The overall style is characterized by visible brushstrokes and a somber, melancholic mood.

Portrait of Dr. Gachet

by Vincent van Gogh

Portrait of Dr. Gachet, 1890,
Second Version, Private Collection

When van Gogh was discharged from the asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, his brother suggested that he go see Dr. Gachet. Upon meeting the doctor, the artist found him to be "eccentric" and to be suffering from "nervous trouble" just as serious as his own. But despite these initial reservations, a strong bond was formed between the two men. In a letter to his youngest sister, Wilhelmina, van Gogh noted, "I have found a true friend in Dr. Gachet, something like another brother, so much do we resemble each other physically and also mentally."

He made three portraits of Gachet, an etching (May 1890) and two paintings (June 1890) - the second, for Gachet himself to keep, a near copy of the first.

The portrait of the doctor was painted during a particularly intense phase in Van Gogh's life. He depicted the doctor wearing "the heartbroken expression of our time". As he wrote to his brother Theo, "I had to paint (him) like that to convey how much expression and passion there is in modern heads... that is how one ought to paint many portraits." Dr. Gachet's expression appears to be twisted, his glance, distanced and disengaged.

Dr. Gachet, inseparably intertwined with the last period of Vincent van Gogh's life in Auvers, specialised in homeopathy and nervous disorders. But his true passion lay with the arts. He was an accomplished painter and engraver and his circle of friends included many renowned Impressionist artists like Manet, Monet, Renoir and Cézanne (who painted 'The House of Dr. Gachet').

The painting shows the doctor with his head propped on his right hand while his elbow rests on a table next to a purple foxglove and two novels (depressing in content) Germinie Lacerteux (1865) and Manette Salomon (1867), both by the Goncourt brothers, Edmond and Jules.

Some experts have suggested that the dark and heavy colours used were van Gogh's way of communicating the doctor's deep emotional malady.

Shortly after painting the 'Portrait of Dr. Gachet', the artist committed suicide.

This iconic van Gogh masterpiece, having passed through many owners, was last sold at Christie's in New York on May 15, 1990 for a record \$82,500,000. The buyer was the Japanese businessman Ryoei Saito, chairman of a paper manufacturing company, who created quite a stir, when he declared that he would like to be buried along with the painting at his time of death. Since his death in 1996, the location of the painting is still a mystery.



Girl with a Pearl Earring, originally titled 'Girl with a Turban', is universally regarded as Johannes Vermeer's absolute masterpiece.

After more than a century of study, the work still poses significant questions. Who was the girl with a pearl earring? Was it intended as a portrait? And why had it remained in complete obscurity until it was rediscovered in 1882 and sold for a trifle?

Because of the mystery that surrounds the identity of the sitter as well as her inexplicable expression, this particular artwork is often referred to as the Mona Lisa of the North or the Dutch Mona Lisa. The girl in the painting is believed to be Vermeer's eldest daughter, Maria, who was about thirteen-years-old at the time it was painted. Her facial features appear in many of the artist's works but because of the different lighting employed on his subjects, it is difficult to make an accurate comparison.

Vermeer was known to be a discreet personality. He kept tight-lipped about his personal affairs as well as his work. There is no date recorded for 'Girl with a Pearl Earring'. It isn't clear if this painting was commissioned - it is more likely to have been a 'tronie', a seventeenth-century Dutch-style face painting, not meant to be a portrait. This painting is one of over forty images created by the artist that is evidence of Vermeer's keen interest in the socio-cultural roles of women. His homogenised projection of women was his way of showing appreciation and encouragement for Christian moral values and tradition.

Girl with a Pearl Earring

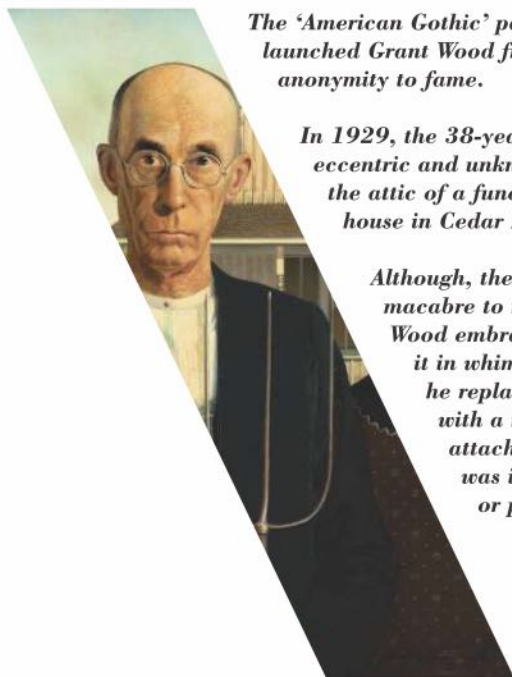
by Johannes Vermeer

Due to the enduring interest surrounding 'Girl with a Pearl Earring', artists chose to bring the mystery of the painting into other formats so that they may reach a wider audience. In 1999, Tracy Chevalier brought the story into the forefront by writing a novel based on the painting. She tells the story of Johannes Vermeer and his relationship with the family servant, a girl called Griet, who many believe is the subject of 'Girl with a Pearl Earring'. This was later made into a film, starring Scarlett Johansson as Griet and Colin Firth as Vermeer.

Experts say the mystery is part of its allure. "Sometimes the questions are more intriguing because they can't be answered," says Melissa Buron, Associate Curator, European Art Department at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

"Who was she? What was she thinking? What was her relationship with Vermeer? The mystery is part of its popularity."

American Gothic
by Grant Wood



The 'American Gothic' painting launched Grant Wood from anonymity to fame.

In 1929, the 38-year-old eccentric and unknown artist lived in the attic of a funeral-home carriage house in Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Although, the location may seem macabre to most, Wood embraced his home and decorated it in whimsical fashion - he replaced the front door with a remodelled coffin lid and attached a dial that indicated if he was in, out, asleep, or painting.

'American Gothic' became the primary example of Regionalism, a movement that aggressively opposed European abstract art.

In August 1930, Wood was driving through a tiny town in Iowa, and spotted a compelling-looking house with high, arched windows in Carpenter Gothic style. He was immediately curious as to who the tenants might be and right there, the picture of 'American Gothic' started to take shape. The farmer in Wood's painting is his 62-year-old dentist and the spinster daughter, his 32-year-old sister. Both of the characters depicted appear to have unnaturally long faces and thin necks, as if to emphasize their uprightness. They seem to be hardworking and stern, honest but humourless.

'American Gothic' became the primary example of Regionalism, a movement that aggressively opposed European abstract art. The Regionalists shunned city life and much preferred depictions of rural American subjects rendered in a representational style. Some critics praised the painting as honouring the Midwest and its strong values while others perceived the work as a scathing parody of the region. In response, Wood ambiguously said, "There is satire in it, but only as there is satire in any realistic statement. These are types of people I have known all my life. I tried to characterize them truthfully—to make them more like themselves than they were in actual life."

With the Great Depression weighing down upon the country, Americans longed to be seen in positive light. Wood's painting empowered them with a renewed sense of hope. The farmer and his daughter became symbols of the honest-to-God, hardworking values of the heartland.

As with many other great pieces of artistic expression, 'American Gothic' remains largely inscrutable - satire and homage, highbrow and lowbrow, heartening and disturbing, all at once.

*"Artists use
lies to tell the
truth".*

Alan Moore

PARK



A large red 'X' is painted on the left side of a white brick wall. To its right, the word 'KILL' is painted in large, red, distressed, stencil-like capital letters. The paint is thick and uneven, with some areas appearing more saturated than others, giving it a gritty, urban feel.

*In this story Chaitanya Deshpande showcases two radical artists in their own light of the truth.
Not only are they different in their art and medium but
even more so in their messages.*

***"I originally set out to try and save the world,
but now I'm not sure I like it enough,"***

Banksy in an e-mail to the New Yorker magazine.



His most iconic work of art - 'Girl with Balloon'



THE BRISTOL BOMBER

The 2010 *TIME* Magazine's list of the world's 100 most influential people found an uncanny entry amidst the likes of Barack Obama, Steve Jobs, and Lady Gaga. He wasn't a celebrity, but had zealously loyal supporters. He wasn't a politician, yet his views resonated in thousands.

He was an artist, an artist unlike any other. This was none other than Banksy - graffiti master, painter, activist, filmmaker, and provocateur.

Banksy is a "bomber", and he has spread and sprayed his art from Vienna to San Francisco, Barcelona to Paris and Detroit. Even Disneyland and the West Bank became canvas to his art.

No one knows who Banksy is. Everyone is familiar with his work, and more importantly, the messages they carry. There's social commentary, political satire, subversion, and dark humour; all of this in his signature stencilling technique. As to his identity, one can only speculate.

Ever since he hit the underground art scene in Bristol, England in the 1990s, Banksy's art



has evolved as have his messages. Some of his greatest works include an inflatable Guantanamo Bay prisoner doll at Disneyland, England's Queen Elizabeth II as a chimpanzee, a West Bank border fence, and his own Mona Lisa with her mysterious smile replaced by a yellow smiley face — in the Louvre. His most famous street paintings are a series of black-and-white stencilled rats who exhibit such roguish tenderness that they were an instant hit with Londoners.

Some say he's brought the zeitgeist to life. Many say he's a vandal and has cashed in on the popularity of his art. But inarguably, his guerrilla art is accessible, and his work speaks to people. It certainly has resuscitated the commerce of street art and artists.

While his art is instantly recognisable, it's his anonymity that has fuelled his aura of mystery. But what really makes Banksy an icon is the call-to-action in his art. He's brought the world's attention to class struggles, social injustices, and issues that have been swept under the carpet.

"We can't do anything to change the world until capitalism crumbles. In the meantime we should all go shopping to console ourselves."

-Banksy

He is the Batman of the art scene, a cult figure. His obscurity is at once intriguing, refreshing, and a powerful statement in our celebrity-obsessed culture.

Surprisingly for someone with a class-action message, his works fetch thousands of dollars at auctions. In fact, a Picasso costs as much as a Banksy, thus making him an established brand. Yet, Banksy the brand says his work is 'brandalism', a calculated act of subverting familiar images and icons so that they are twisted into novel and provocative forms.

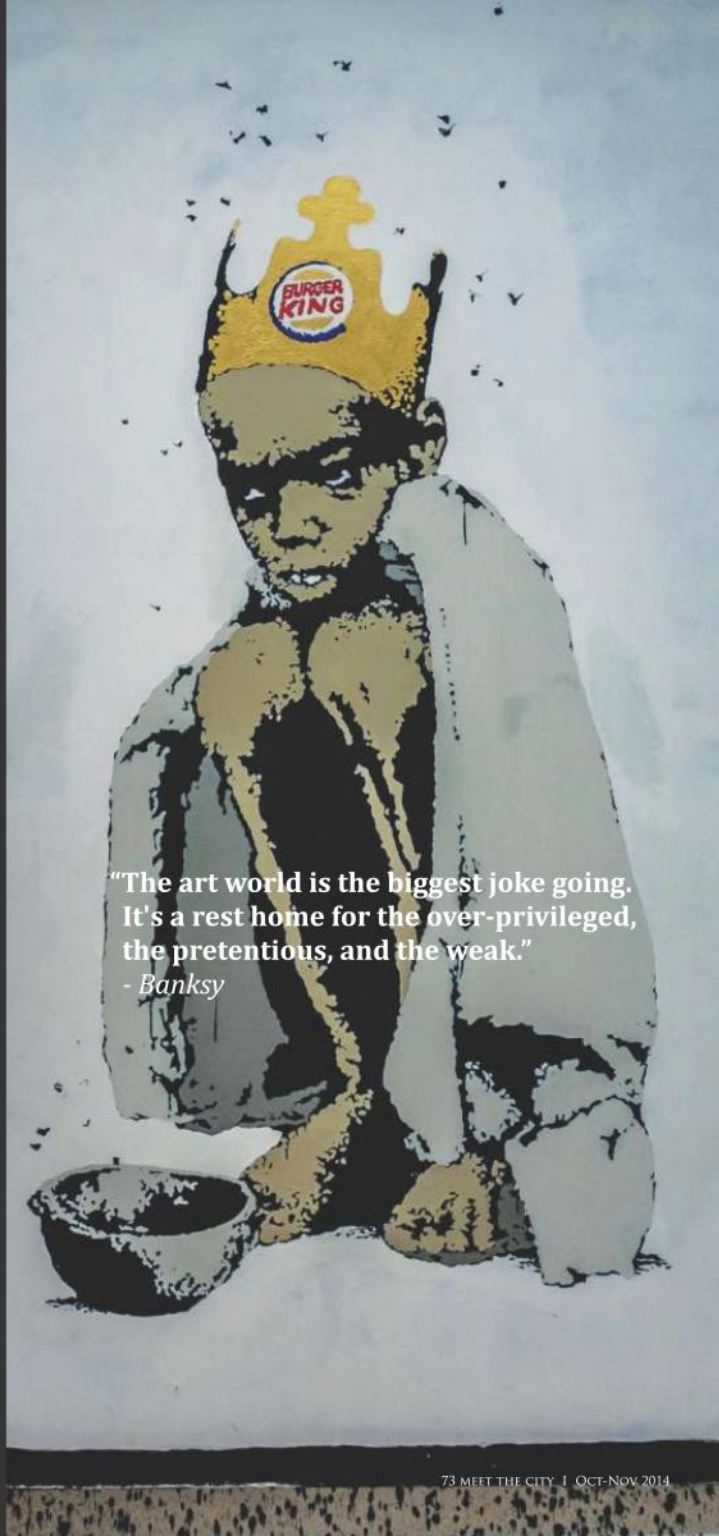
The identity of this brand however is a paradox. His facelessness has brought him commercial success even as he condemned its very consumerist nature. In fact, a day may come when Banksy's subversiveness may diminish; but not today. For now, this faceless talent is the world's hero, with his stencils and messages on the wall.

His art comes up in places unknown, and disappears just as quickly. Nearly 40 of his 52 London street arts have disappeared, or have been whitewashed or defaced.

The thrill for an art lover lies now in touring a city in search of his art. Despite this being a time-consuming together, the prospect of discovery can be delightful.

NOTABLE WORKS OF ART BY BANKSY

- "The Elephant in the Room" installation
- "Crude Oils", London
- The West Bank graffiti
- Exit Through the Gift Shop, 2010
documentary on creation and marketing of street art
- "Girl With Balloon" (also known as "There is Always Hope"), 2007
- "This is My New York Accent"
- "Bombing Middle England", 2001



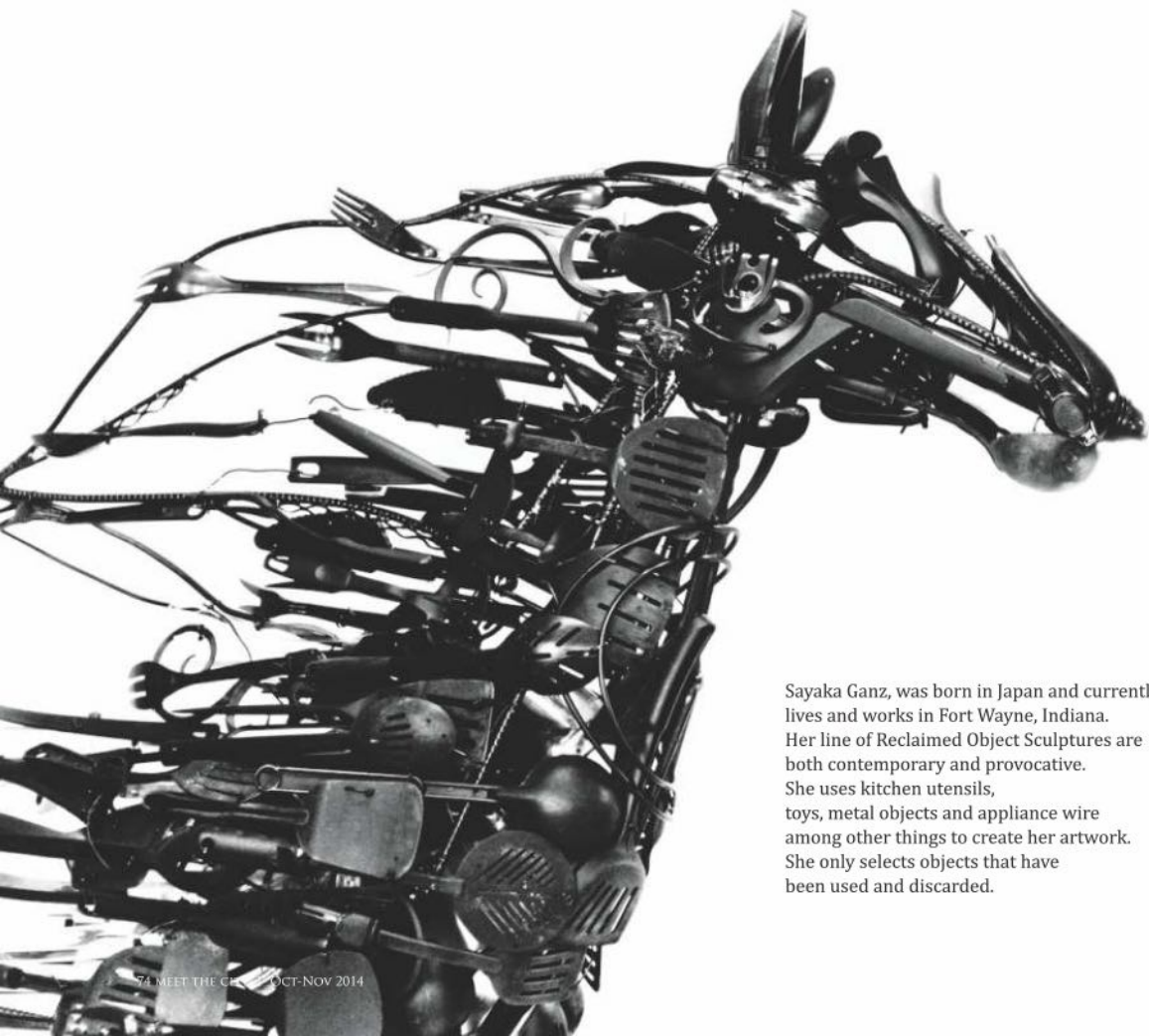
"The art world is the biggest joke going. It's a rest home for the over-privileged, the pretentious, and the weak."

- Banksy

SCULPTURE IN MOTION

Down-cycling is the new inspiration, or so it seems with Japanese-born artist Sayaka Ganz.

She uses discarded plastics and unwanted materials to produce imitations of natural beauty. For the sake of labels, Ganz is a sculptural artist, but her art is beyond that. It is an expression.



Sayaka Ganz, was born in Japan and currently lives and works in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Her line of Reclaimed Object Sculptures are both contemporary and provocative. She uses kitchen utensils, toys, metal objects and appliance wire among other things to create her artwork. She only selects objects that have been used and discarded.



Her Shinto beliefs hold true when she's working on her sculptures. She believes all things have spirit and this is what breathes life into her animal sculptures of kitchen utensils, salvaged plastic housewares and lots more.

Her work is powerful. There's untamed dynamism in her depiction of various animals in motion. Through the chaotic jumble, the waste plastic almost comes alive as a whole.

Ganz collects waste material from stores, through donations, and even from garbage dumps. Everything that is collected is then colour-coded and sorted before she begins her work. When a specific colour is strong, she sets herself the task of creating animal motion. To do this she studies pictures of birds and animals, makes mental notes on the form, structure, joints, and poise.

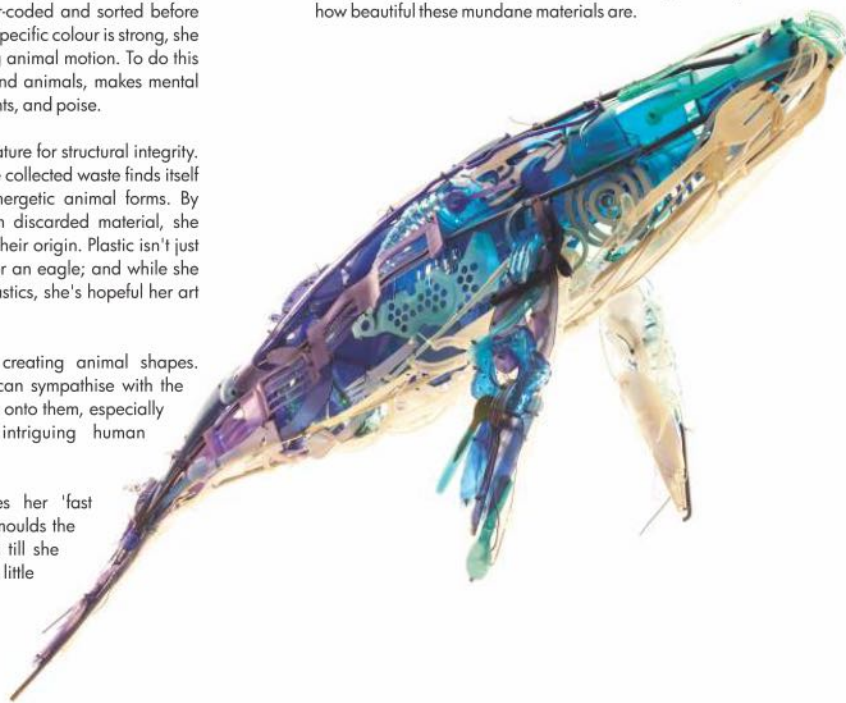
Ganz then welds a metal armature for structural integrity. Once she's satisfied with it, the collected waste finds itself pieced together, to create energetic animal forms. By creating beautiful pieces from discarded material, she helps these objects transcend their origin. Plastic isn't just waste anymore, it's a horse, or an eagle; and while she doesn't advocate disuse of plastics, she's hopeful her art will help reduce waste.

Her focus lies primarily in creating animal shapes. Through this Ganz says she can sympathise with the objects. She projects emotions onto them, especially birds since flight is an intriguing human non-capacity.

Amazingly, when she makes her 'fast motion' sculptures she rarely moulds the object's character. She works till she finds the 'right fit'. Sometimes a little

heat-gun treatment is needed, but that's only for around 10% of the total objects used. In her own words, she doesn't control each individual object and mould everything. Things not fitting well is good because it adds character, while negative spaces become interesting visual points.

As an artist, she finds the process of reclamation and regeneration liberating. She believes it is difficult to think far into the future in terms of our ecological foot print. Yet she's aware that convenience has hidden costs; and that the best way for artists to help reduce waste is by showing how beautiful these mundane materials are.



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Coppre attempts to reflect the legacy and lineage of metal craftspeople. It is the outcome of a creative collaboration with the 'Tambat' metal craftspeople, to evolve a contemporary range of copper products that cater to the present while retaining intact, the heritage craft process.

Rashmi Alevoor learns more about this ancient craft through the telling of Coppre's story.

COPPRE COPPER

At the heart of this collaboration is founder, Rashmi Ranade, a product designer from Industrial Design Centre, IIT Powai and Sir JJ School of Architecture. Rashmi has worked with the craftspeople for almost a decade, honing the products to perfection and readying it for a discerning audience. Coppre has been mentored by Adhar Mirchandani, whose vision has been to create enhanced livelihoods for skilled craftspeople in India. The company has received start up support from INTACH, the Pune Chapter and the Forbes Marshall Foundation.

PRESERVING A LEGACY

Design Inspirations

Rashmi believes that there is much beauty, richness and cultural integrity in India's designs and skills of yore. Traditionally, craftspeople lived and worked closely with the communities they serviced. Contemporary market requirements have now become alien to craftspeople as trends and fads are now dictated by a class (and geography) of people that are several times removed from our craftspeople. Rashmi believes that the time has come once again for skilled artisans to have a direct link and contact with markets.

In the inaugural series, 'Beautiful Copper' she contemporarised her grandmother's trinket box and her mother's meditation urali. The Ayurvedic practice of drinking *Tamra-jal* (water stored in a copper vessel) from the *lotta* and *kalshi*, inspired her to create the bedside water carafe.





In the last series, 'Lamps & Flowers Festive Collection 2012', she was inspired by nature - from palm leaves, castor leaves, peepal leaves and lotus buds.

In the current series, 'Vintage Inspirations 2013', she draws from influences of a trunk-full of antique brass and copper utensils, puja accessories brought to India by her friend's grandmother during partition, from erstwhile East Pakistan, and other objects of yore.

The craft, the community, and its history

The legacy of the *Tambat* craftspeople who handcraft Coppre's products dates back to the 17th century when they were invited to Pune by the Peshwas, when Shivaji set up the city as the capital city of the Maratha Empire.

When the *Tambat* craftspeople migrated from Konkan to Pune, they formed their settlement in Kasba Peth, an already established nucleus of old Pune. Their precincts came to be known as *Tambat Ali* (copper precincts). These narrow and dusty alleys of *Tambat Ali* where the timeless sound of metal-hammers clang on copper, have remained pretty much the same as they were almost 300 years ago.

From making armours, coins, canons, copper utensils, and ritual wares for the Peshwa rulers, the craftspeople embraced the culinary and ritual needs of Maharashtrian communities, and crafted traditional products such as utensils and *puja* items.

'*Matharkaaam*' or beaten work is the distinguishing feature of *Tambat* craft. The hand-beaten indentations strengthen the object and enhance the inherent rich surface by imparting a mirror-like appearance. It is a skill-intensive craft that needs strength, dexterity and a keen hand-foot-eye coordination. It is the only skill that the community could save from the onslaught of mechanisation, with the coming of British rule. To date, this skill has not learnt itself to be mimicked by any machine.

Challenges

The loss of the patronage of the Peshwas, the introduction of mechanisation and the bans imposed by the British, forced the *Tambats* to set up their own shops to sell their wares to commoners. Over the years, the members of the community practicing this craft have continued to dwindle. There were up to 800 *Tambat* households in the early 1970s. By the early 90s, their number in Pune city fell to 250. Currently, about 80-100 families directly depend on this craft for their livelihood.

Hit by changing traditions, rising copper prices on the commodity markets in recent years, the convenience offered by materials like stainless steel and plastic and the provocative economic opportunities outside the confines of their craft, has led to a near stagnation. Yet, some families of the community persevere with this craft of shaping objects from sheets of copper.

Passed on through apprenticeship from one generation to the next, today the craft remains in the hands of a few craftspeople with even fewer willing to take on this heritage craft.

Coppre's vision

Coppre seeks to bring the spotlight back onto this old artisan tradition. They want to take this heritage craft to the world stage; involve world-renowned designers to produce design lines in collaboration with the craftspeople. Coppre aims to unite the old with the new; to make the dying art of copper craft relevant to modern aesthetics.

They also wish to preserve the craft by encouraging and supporting next generations, so that the craft sustains the long haul.

For more information, write in to Coppre at hello@coppre.in.
Coppre wares can be viewed and purchased on www.coppre.in

Clamouring for space under a fast dwindling green cover, and poached for their stunningly beautiful fur, tigers in India are a much endangered lot.

Images Courtesy: Divya Khandal

But there is also hope for these regal animals, especially in the jungles of Ranthambore where Dhonk Crafts, run by Divya Khandal provides an alternative livelihood to the local Mogya tribe, who share the jungles with the tiger, and learn to co-exist with the big cat.

Read on as Chaitra Patel takes you on a journey through the forests of Ranthambore.

Dhonk - Creation of Craft for Conservation

"The forests and all its creatures were a creation of the gods" said the legendary late Fateh Singh Rathore, India's best known tiger conservationist. Widely acknowledged for his dedicated contribution of over fifty years to wildlife conservation in India, and specifically "Project Tiger", Rathore was responsible for relocating scores of villages out of the forests of Ranthambore, Sawai Madhopur.

By 2005, the NGO Tiger Watch, of which Rathore was the Vice-Chairman, established that a large number of poachers in Ranthambore, arrested for tiger poaching, belonged to the Mogya tribe. The Mogyas, essentially nomadic hunter-gatherers with no alternative means to a livelihood, faced the danger of marginalisation, with absolutely no access to an education. Tiger Watch initiated a rehabilitation programme of handicraft production for the women folk of these families, setting up hostels where their children could be clothed, fed and educated, on the strict condition that the men renounce all poaching activities. This was the seed that gave birth to the idea of Dhonk Crafts!



Early Beginnings

Circa early 2008, the young post graduate in Dietetics, Divya Khandal from Mumbai joined Tiger Watch as a volunteer. Little did she know that attending a talk on tiger conservation by Fateh Singh Rathore at an eco-retreat in Ranthambore, would change the course of her life. This is where she met Dr. Dharmendra Khandal, a conservation biologist with Tiger Watch, whom she would later go on to marry, and this brought her to Ranthambore. "The supreme powers of the forests convinced the city dweller in me to make the jungles my home" says Divya, and soon she found herself writing a blog "Ranthambore Diaries" and capturing the magnificent fauna through her camera lens, all in an attempt to lend a voice to the conservation project.

"The supreme powers of the forests convinced the city dweller in me to make the jungles my home"





Hansa and Usha busy at work

At Tiger Watch, Divya volunteered to work with the Mogya women. However, the NGO was increasingly finding it difficult to make this activity a sustainable model since they lacked the necessary marketing skills to sell the embroidery works and handicrafts created by the women folk. While they contemplated closing down the craft project, Fateh Singh and John Singh (Chairman, Tiger Watch) asked Divya if she would like to take the project forward on her own. She agreed, and eventually in February 2010, Divya took charge of all the old sewing machines, remainder fabric and raw material and moved the crafts project into the garage of her house. Dhonk Crafts was now formally registered as a social enterprise, and not a charity (NGO).

A Responsible Business Model

Just as any enterprise requires a large and efficient space to function, eventually so did Dhonk Crafts. However, since Dhonk is a self-funded project, creating a crafts village was not a viable option and they did not own any land either. This is when Fateh Singh Rathore's family stepped in and offered Dhonk Crafts a space, at a very nominal rent.

Today, Dhonk Crafts is a "responsible business model". As Divya articulates, "it almost serves a dual purpose - each of the employees earns his or her own income with a sense of entrepreneurship and self-respect, and secondly this benefits the community as a whole because the locals, not just the Mogyas, but the local villagers too, who share the neighbourhood with the tiger, learn to co-exist with the

big cat, thereby creating a whole lot of goodwill for the tiger and the conservation programme". Dhonk contributes 10% of its profits by way of cash or kind to Tiger Watch, to enable this conservation work to carry on.

A Window of Opportunity

The organisation borrows its name from the Dhonk tree (*Anogeissus pendula*), native to the Aravalli hills and the dry deciduous forests of Ranthambore. Just like the Dhonk tree shelters the tiger, and is fodder to the ungulates, Dhonk Crafts supports the tiger conservation project and provides alternative employment options to the Mogyas and the villagers. Since the products made by the organisation are indigenous to the Aravallis, so stands its name. Dhonk Crafts today boasts of a range of beautiful products - both embroidered and block printed, such as bedspreads, cloth bags, purses, pouches, home furnishing, black pottery and lots more. The enterprise successfully employs more than thirty artisans comprising of tailors, embroidery workers, and block printers.

Dhonk Crafts also provides summer training to young Mogya boys, on the brink of adulthood, staying at the hostel run by Tiger Watch. This gives them an opportunity to choose a means of livelihood for themselves. "The Mogya tribe," Divya explains, "is very close knit. A single hamlet would probably consist of about thirty to forty people of the same family living together. They are also not very open to the idea of moving away from their familiar and familial surroundings in search of employment, which naturally makes Dhonk Crafts the ideal choice for many of them".

An Alternative Livelihood

The success of Dhonk Crafts though has not been without its share of struggles and challenges. "Changing the local community mindset was tough, as they did not believe in spending time and energy to learn a skill set which offered no guarantee of a job - people did not enjoy the idea of arts and crafts as a means of livelihood," explains Divya. The organisation however relentlessly worked towards training several individuals, many of whom today have stayed back and now reap the benefits of the initiative.

Divya fervently believes that a social enterprise such as Dhonk is the need of the hour, not only because it makes people self-reliant, but also because it means that these people will eventually cease to venture into the forests looking for firewood or to hunt animals. The local administration on its part, too, has contributed to the cause by providing twenty-six thousand LPG connections to tribal and village homes in the neighbourhood, thereby reducing human dependency on the forests.

Responsible Tourism

The influx of tourism in Ranthambore brought an American tour company to Dhonk's doorstep. "The company offered to promote the project to fellow travellers, thus giving Dhonk a new lease of life," says Divya. 'Responsible Tourism', as Divya prefers to call it, can change several lives. A few hotels in the vicinity, too, have come forward to support the cause that Dhonk stands for, and promote the organisation through their local shopping itinerary. This has

provided the artisans at Dhonk Crafts, a platform to meet and interact with other artists and tourists from India and abroad. The Dhonk Crafts centre gives visitors an insight into the conservation initiatives being undertaken, and also allows them to creatively express themselves by designing some of the products, too.

Counting their Blessings

"Dhonk has been an experiment," says Divya, "and it has worked because of the efforts of the artisans, the travellers, responsible tour operators and well-wishers - it tells me there is hope when we want to work for a cause". The same night that Dhonk opened its doors to business, a tiger came up to the front door and left its fresh pug marks for all to see the following morning. Divya believes the tiger came in to bless them, and the blessings continue...

Dhonk Crafts does not accept monetary donations. You can however donate in kind, specifically fabric.

Dhonk Crafts also undertakes orders for corporate and personal gifting and you can get in touch with them for more details :

Visit: www.dhonk.com

Email: divz333@gmail.com | contact@dhonk.com

Phone: +91 91661 67005



Tiny colourful threads make a pattern - artisans hard at work

"Changing the local community mindset was tough, as they did not believe in spending time and energy to learn a skill set which offered no guarantee of a job - people did not enjoy the idea of arts and crafts as a means of livelihood"



Guddi and Divya Magga proudly display their coin purses



The perfect gift for festive season - coin purses crafted by Dhonk

The seamstresses of Dhonk



*"We shall not cease from exploration,
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we started
and to know that place for the first time."
- T.S. Eliot*

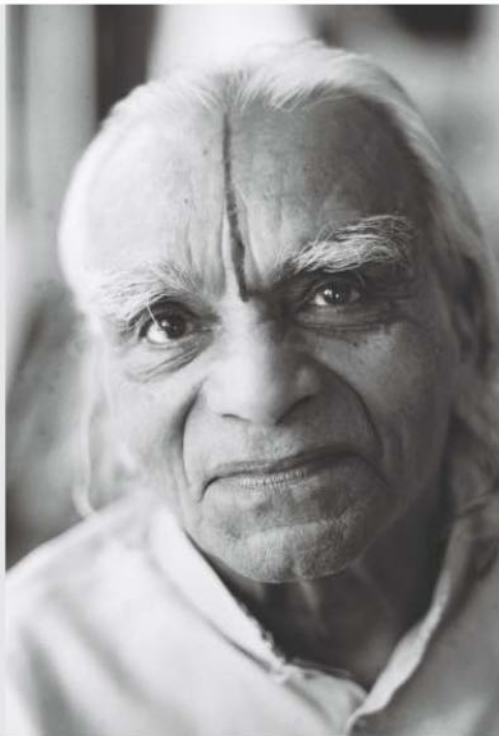
Some people are explorers; exploring their craft, philosophy, beliefs, and life in general. They don't just explore, they go to the very heart of the matter and draw out its true essence. BKS Iyengar was one such person.

The world - not just limited to yoga practioners will miss this great man of wisdom. Radhika Sathe gets to know what it was about him that made so many people ardent followers of an art that not only keeps one fit but also improves one's health...

The late Padma Vibhushan award winner Bellur Krishnamachar Sundararaja Iyengar explored the art of yoga and learned by trial and error, the proper method of practising yoga, the techniques of each posture and their effects.

After learning the art at the young age of 15 from the scholar and yogi, Sri T. Krishnamacharya, BKS Iyengar came to Pune - as instructed by his guru - to teach yoga to its patrons. Yoga was not quite a rage then, and it was pretty hard to make ends meet, merely teaching yoga. But he strove hard and diligently until he perfected each of the postures and their techniques.

It was in 1952 that he got international recognition when he met violinist Yehudi Menuhin. It was Menuhin who arranged for Guru Iyengar to teach abroad, in Switzerland, London, Paris and other places and meet people from all over the world and from all walks of life. This was the start of a legend.



REMEMBERING THE LEGEND

BKS Iyengar, or Guruji as his disciples call him, has helped many with his unique yoga techniques. Dr Rajvi Mehta, a student of Iyengar Yoga for over 30 years, teacher at Iyengar Yogashranya in Mumbai, and editor of the quarterly journal of the Iyengar Yoga Institute - Yoga Rahasya, informs, "Guruji has clearly said 'Yoga is one, like God is one. Different people call it by different names. There is nothing like Iyengar Yoga'." But, "he taught in such a unique manner that even the Oxford English Dictionary defines Iyengar as a form of yoga."

The Yogacharya believed that "the body is the only instrument we are born with" and it is the temple of the soul, and so we have to keep it clean and only then can we realise ourselves. Rajvi elaborates, "Iyengar Yoga uses *asanas* and *pranayama* as a means to penetrate within ourselves. In the process, an individual works on the skeletal-muscular body, the physiological or organic body, the mind, emotions, senses, intelligence and the conscience. Thus, depending upon how intense and penetrative our practice is, the more we can delve into knowing the unknown. For this, he demanded precision and alignment in the practice for which he devised many props to guide us."



Fitness first

Talking about different asanas, Dr Rajvi Mehta enunciates, "Regular practice is important. However, as Guruji said 'asanas are not prescriptions but descriptions.' So, it is not just which *asana* you do that is important but how you do them is more important. Each type of *asana* has a different effect and as it is not practical to practice all daily - one should defer their practice over the week."

The festivities being around the corner, one's fitness regime and eating habits might go for a toss. Dr Rajvi says, "There are specific *asanas* that will need to be done depending upon how one has 'abused' the body and which part is affected. This could be an entry point into yoga if you are not a practitioner... but then yoga should not be used solely for that purpose. It is a much deeper subject."

"Body is the only instrument we are born with and it is the temple of the soul, and so we have to keep it clean and only then can we realise ourselves."





Guruji has inspired generations of people. Rajvi says, "The reason that Guruji touched the hearts of millions is because he was full of genuine compassion and love. He did not use these words, but it reflected in all his work. Even at the age of 95 - he would go to the medical class and guide and help patients."

"He was an embodiment of truth," she further notes, "He was not a contradictory person. He was so simple and transparent. There was nothing that he hid from the world; his life was an open book... He followed the path of truth. He taught what he experienced and therefore he could touch people's hearts even if part of the experience was transmitted to the people."

The Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute was founded in 1957 in Model Colony, Pune to form a centre for Iyengar yoga. Guruji, along with his eldest daughter Geeta and son Prashant, taught here. He officially retired from teaching in 1984, though he was still physically capable of continuing. He continued to take medical classes and teach at special events. He was fully active in promoting yoga worldwide, and was involved in the institute and its charitable foundation.

Being one of the premier Yogis responsible for introducing yoga to the West, the Iyengar style of yoga is probably the most widely practised form of yoga in Europe and America today.

*"He was not a contradictory person.
He was so simple and transparent.
There was nothing that he hid from the world;
his life was an open book...
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*He taught what he experienced and therefore he
could touch people's hearts even if part of the
experience was transmitted to the people."*



HUMANS OF NEW YORK

BRANDON STANTON

*"Street photography is unpredictable.
Your subjects will do unexpected things. Let these things happen.
Don't try to "control" every part of the photo."*

*- Brandon Stanton, on his
immensely popular photographic census
Humans of New York.*



Humans of New York celebrates individuality, and is a befitting tribute to the glorious metropolis with a vibe - New York!

Chaitra Patel flips through the fascinating world of Stanton's 'Humans of New York.'

The beginnings of the internet sensation Humans of New York go back to the summer of 2010 in Chicago, where young Brandon Stanton, a bond trader, set out on an ambitious project of single-handedly creating a photographic census of New York City. The wonders of social media took the project to a completely different level, eventually leading to the release of the book Humans of New York, a collection of 400 colour photos and exclusive portraits, paired with some tender human stories, showcasing the outsized personalities of New York.

In his introduction to the book, Stanton explains how a weekend photography novice like himself would take his camera to downtown Chicago and photograph everything possible, everything he found beautiful, intriguing and that caught his fancy. Some pictures were awful while others were stunning, but he carried on nevertheless.

Stanton goes on to narrate how he became a full-time photographer, having lost his job in July 2010. In his own words from the book, "The job was challenging and stimulating. And I'd obsessed over markets in the same way that I'd later obsess over photography. But the end goal of trading was always money. Two years of my life were spent obsessing over money, and in the end I had nothing to show for it. I wanted to spend the next phase of my life doing work that I valued as much as the reward". Photography was a natural choice.

Battling parental apprehensions towards his "attempt to avoid employment", Stanton left Chicago in pursuit of his pictorial adventures. Stanton describes his visit to Pittsburgh, walking around aimlessly and looking to photograph everything

he set eyes on. While most of the photos were of buildings and bridges, he would also include a shot of an interesting person, every once in a while. Pittsburgh was followed by Philadelphia, and Stanton goes on to add "My photos remained similar to those I'd taken in Chicago and Pittsburgh, but with one notable exception. I was starting to take more pictures of people".

Stanton arrived in New York in early August looking to spend one week in the city before heading for the West Coast. What followed is anybody's guess. The moment he set foot in New York he saw people and more people - tons of them everywhere, and they were all in a hurry. That night Stanton uploaded a new album on Facebook and called it Humans of New York!

Stanton elaborates that his first thoughts on 'HONY' was to make it a photographic census of New York city, ten thousand portraits plotted against an online interactive map of the city. That way clicking on any neighbourhood on the city map would display the faces of the people who lived there. With that goal in mind, he set off looking for interesting people to photograph.

The result is for everyone to see. The power of social media convinced Stanton to create an exclusive account for Humans of New York on Facebook, and ever since then there has been no looking back. Tumblr followed soon after, catapulting his pictures to a new high.

This book, Humans of New York is a labour of love, an endearing result of three years of hard work and persistence. Stanton would walk several miles in search of people, to capture on his lens. He would talk to perfect strangers, and soon paired almost every photograph with a relevant story or quotation. The subsequent result has been a collection of human stories that tug at your heart strings. Stanton's portraits speak for themselves - they reach out to the viewer, they tell you stories of far and wide, of distant lands and fascinating people. It's obvious the people in the photographs are very dear to Stanton - they have helped him pursue his dream and realise it.

"After all, I had no experience or formal training. And it didn't help that I had no plan for making money. But I figured the best way to become a photographer was to start photographing. So I planned a photo tour through several major American cities. Back then I had no intention of starting a blog. I didn't even know what a blog was. But after spending time in

New York, I knew that I wanted to photograph people". - Brandon Stanton





Chef Shailendra Kekade,
GM and Executive Chef - Stone Water Grill

Pune is a place known for its numerous restaurants, but with most of them serving almost the same kind of cuisines and beverages.

What Puneites truly need —Stone Water Grill delivers! A unique experience where one gets to choose whatever one wants, from a legion of food and drinks.

Radhika Sathe sets out on a gastronomical journey...

A (MASTER) CLASS APART



When you think MasterChef Australia, you think of delicious, mouth-watering food, aesthetically and tantalisingly presented. Each episode leaves you inspired to try your hand at recreating these recipes in your kitchen. Often however, much to our dismay, not all of the ingredients are easily available in local markets, dampening our culinary enthusiasm. But even if you can't cook, you can certainly eat, and there is one place, that offers this exotic fare. Stone Water Grill is an epicurean's delight to say the least. From the moment you enter, until you leave, it is an experience unlike any other. Maintaining exclusivity and decorum of the place, entry to the restaurant is restricted, often leading it to be misinterpreted as an expensive place. But one glance to the right side of the menu card assures you that this is not the case.

The ambience itself is very inviting and cosy, and makes one feel comfortable. The outdoor is a lounge area with low seating and an impressive bar. The formal seating indoors comprises of comfortable couches and chairs, set at tables that are just the right size to have your meals at, and for diners to converse over. The lighting of the whole place is just perfect – not too bright, not too dark.

But the very star of the whole experience remains the food! Stone Water Grill serves European food, accentuated by a wood fired oven and a charcoal grill.

Chef Shailendra Kekade has made sure that each and every dish here is perfected not only in taste, but also in its presentation. With 25 years of experience in the industry, Chef Shailendra brings about an amalgamation of exceptional cooking skills, along with a lot of creativity, talent and imagination. With just a simple approach of combining fresh ingredients with a light uncomplicated touch, he has nurtured his appetite for foods' purest flavours. He is a recognised food stylist across the food and beverage industry, and is extraordinarily skilled at making every recipe look stunning on a plate.

Chef Shailendra recommends some crispy cumin-crusted breadsticks with soft miso butter until the first round of dishes comes forth. For soup, the Light Tomato 'Tea' with Ginseng and Ginger, or the Smoked Mushroom Cappuccino, both equally pleasurable are highly recommended, while the Chicken & Mushroom Broth served in attractive stoneware, not only tantalises the taste buds but is also a visual treat. This is only the start of a resplendent sensory feast.



Mushroom Galouti with Saffron Brioche

There is a real danger of loading up on the *amuse bouches* because they are sumptuous and divine - Grilled Wasabi Cottage Cheese, Mushroom Galouti with Saffron Brioche, Smoked Aubergine Soup with chilled Gari Caprese and Pan seared Crab Cakes all just the right size for a first course – not too heavy and just enough to tease your taste buds into wanting more. The Beetroot and Fennel Salad with Mixed Salad Leaves is a nice tie-in with this course.

The dishes on the main course are nothing short of an all sensory treat! Capellini with Roasted Zucchini Pesto, Chilli and Garlic Marinated Basa and Grilled Chicken with Lemon Chilli Coriander Pesto... only one word can describe the feeling – yum! Every bite is succulent, filled with taste and texture. The desserts on the menu are a glorious sign-off for a perfect meal. The Malai Coconut Panacotta is a must-have, and the Flourless Chocolate Torte with Beetroot Ice-cream is wonderful gluten free indulgence. The 'Dessert Taster' on a platter, includes a Hazelnut Dacquoise, Pistachio crusted Passion Roll, Mango Mousse and Orange Gateau, and is a little of everything.

Mouth-watering, flavourful and highly delicious, almost everything on the menu will leave you ooh-ing and aah-ing, asking for more!



Roasted Lamp Foreshank, Saffron Amaranth Risotto



Whiskey Maple Barbequed Pork Belly

SWEET CRAVINGS

With love, from **Tarta**

Pamper your loved ones with the delectable freshness of toothsome cookies, baked cakes, luscious coffee frappes and palatable desserts.

Welcome to Tarta, a cake shop, a class apart!

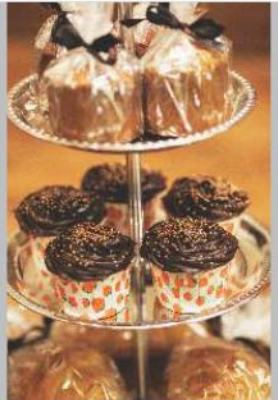


The festive season is almost upon us. It's the time of the year, to loosen your purse strings and indulge in some sumptuous gastronomical delights.

Head to Tarta, the cake shop to satisfy your epicurean cravings. Tarta opened its doors to business in 2013, as the in-house cake shop and patisserie at the Double Tree by Hilton at Chinchwad, Pune. The phenomenal response from customers, within a short span of one year, has compelled them to open another store, this time a stand alone, at Koregaon Park.

Chef Manoj, of Tarta tells us, "Tarta is all about using the finest quality ingredients, to create masterpieces. We only use the most premier of raw material, chocolate and even exotic berries. Our signature cake is the Oreo Red Velvet cake", he says. The cake he talks of, is a delicious red velvet sponge cake layered with sinful Oreo truffle - a mixture of Oreo cookies, cream and chocolate truffle. Customers these days also desire for cakes specially customised to their requirements, and Tarta does not disappoint - they specialise in beautiful hand-crafted designer cakes. After all, special occasions are meant to be celebrated!

If you are looking for the perfect accompaniment to your lovely afternoon cuppa, head to Tarta. Choose from the delectable fresh butter Madeleine cake, or the almond powder cake, a soft, delightful tea cake, and you're all set to take



The festive special hazelnut chocolates and almond drops at Tarta are a must-have for any chocoholic and are delightful gifting options.

on the rest of the evening. And if that's too sweet for your sweet tooth, then Chef Manoj recommends some crunchy biscotti and the savoury tarts and pies. Tarta also offers customers a variety of bite-sized finger desserts such as macarons in different flavours and assorted chocolates dipped in some delicious gooey chocolate truffle.

With festivities just around the corner, the season of gifting is coming up quickly too. Mithais and dry fruits are passé. How about gifting delicious almond cakes, and some delectable pecan nuts stuffed with marzipan? Chef Manoj highly recommends these - and for the season these will also be completely egg-free. Chocolates never go out of vogue, do they? The festive special hazelnut chocolates and almond drops at Tarta are a must-have for any chocoholic and are delightful gifting options. And Chef Manoj promises these will all be attractively packed in small irresistible hampers and flower baskets.

A true *bon vivant* just cannot resist a visit to Tarta. Drop by at either of the outlets and pamper your loved ones with not just the fresh scent of bakery but also the fresh fragrance of enticing bites!

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS

An Event to Trump All Others...

Donald Trump's maiden visit to Pune on the 13th of August, 2014 was a landmark event that called for much celebration.

Trump, along with his son, Don Trump Jr. unveiled the show flat at Trump Towers Pune and they were both left impressed at the quality and scale of what they saw.



Saniya Chordia, Sagar Chordia, Donald Trump, Resham Chordia, Varsha Chordia, Atul Chordia, Amanda Miller & Donald Trump Jr.



Sagar & Atul Chordia, Donald Trump, Donald Trump Jr. & Kalpesh Mehta

Donald Trump & Lara Dutta



Donald Trump with Yohan & Michelle Poonawalla

Anil & Sabina Sanghvi

Shweta & Amit Bhosale

Sejal & Prasanna Firodia



Nirmala & Ishwardas Chordia, Abhay & Indira Firodia, Vitthal Maniyar, Atul Chordia & Prataprao Pawar



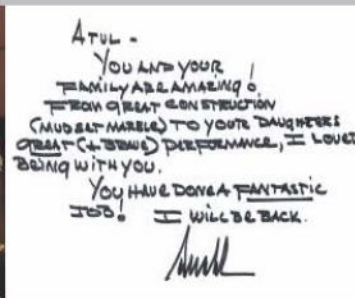
Donald Trump Talk Show



Sagar & Shribala Chordia



Varsha Chordia & Shobha De



Natasha & Adar Poonawalla with Donald Trump



Jackie Shroff with Neelam & Anil Sheolekar



Atul Chordia, Shefali & Sanjiv Bajaj



Kubra Sait

The evening saw a glamorous dinner party held in Donald Trump's honour at the JW Marriott, which was very well attended by the Who's Who of Pune - socialites, industrialists, entrepreneurs, and Bollywood film stars. The event highlight was the engaging tête-à-tête between the luxury property mogul and former Miss Universe and Bollywood actor, Lara Dutta.

Following this, guests had the opportunity to interact with Mr. Trump, himself.



Zavaray & Behroze Poonawalla



Jatin & Uzma Aggarwal with Donald Trump Jr.



Dr. Koppikar & Govind Thakkar



Dr. Parag & Pranjal Sancheti

EVENTS AND HAPPENINGS



Karisma Kapoor, Jeetendra & Esha Deol



Hema Malini & Esha Deol



Pooja Sawant



Suresh Kalmadi & Rahul Bajaj



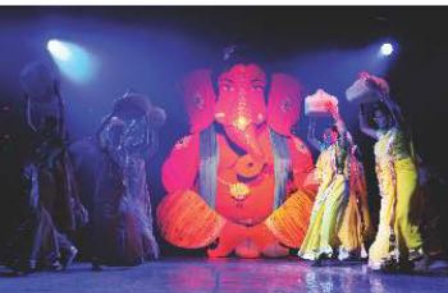
Gracy Singh

Celebrating Pune

Celebrating the 25th Pune Festival, the city saw a gamut of cultural events that had all the aficionados of art enthralled. The inaugural ceremony saw Hema Malini and Esha Deol perform the *Ganesh Vandana*. A pictorial coffee table book was launched to mark the silver anniversary. Actress Gracy Singh also performed, playing the role of Radha in a dance celebrating Radha and Krishna. Like every year, the event was attended by those from the film industry, businessmen and politicians. Karisma Kapoor, Aftab Shivdasani, Sachin Pilgaonkar, and Cine-stars of yesteryears Jeetendra and Bindu formed the film industry contingent. Rahul Bajaj amongst other business tycoons was also seen here. As also present were Chaggaan Bhujbal, Harshavardhan Patil and of course, Suresh Kalmadi.



Ghode Modni Dance



Ganesh Vandana



Projakta Mali



Reshma & Tarun Sharma



Sagar Chordia & Niel Lumsden

The one-in-a-million race

This derby season saw the glitterati of the city descend upon the race course, dressed in their finest as the Panchshil Million 2014 was held on a nice and breezy Sunday afternoon. Amidst a Victorian setting, the Style Stakes held were difficult to judge as everyone had put their best foot forward. The delectable finger food presented by Double Tree by Hilton Pune, made the afternoon all the more delightful and ensured the races were a grand success.



Champaklal Zaveri, Sagar Chordia & Vivek Jain



Sagar & Shribala Chordia with Badal & Nivedita Saboo, Michelle & Yohan Poonawalla, Adar & Natasha Poonawalla



Shilpa Sarvate, Madhura & Samir Thete, Sanya & Rajiv Hingoo & Praveen Mutha



Janice & Chris



Shalendra & Rashmi Porwal



Anand Sanghvi & Rajiv Batra



Guests enjoying at the races



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