

# the Indian



a bi-monthly e-magazine for Indians in Dubai

[theindiantrumpet.com](http://theindiantrumpet.com)

ISSUE #2

SEPT-OCT 2013

An e-magazine that captures the colour, culture and chaos of India that NRIs crave and miss, once every two months

70 MM  
return to jewel thief:  
why re-visiting the  
classic film is a brilliant  
idea even after close to  
five decades

horn OK please  
the heritage wheels:  
the tram continues to  
trace & retrace its path  
on Kolkata roads

idhar udhar  
buniyaad: one of the first  
Indian mega soaps and our  
favourite

*It's our  
festival issue!*

Wishing the readers of  
The Indian Trumpet magazine  
a bright, colourful, delicious and  
musical festive season full of love!





\_\_\_\_\_ became a part of our lives  
 on the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ hours.  
 Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

purplehouse



purplehouse

*We love something...*

*We make a noise about it.*

*We hate something... We announce it.*

*We can't figure out something...*

*We stay confused.*

*We want something... We crave for it.*

We believe in everything queen size. And it is our queen size emotions for everything that form our Artworks. If we love our late night coffee cuppa more than each other at times, we pay tribute to the beans. If we wait for our 'bai' more than we wait for the completion of each of our wall art pieces, we feel proud in making one creation just for her. And when we feel we are falling short of words to do justice to our hatred for our ex-bosses, we exercise liberty and expand our vocabulary to express the true emotion in a piece of art. If holding a little one melts our heart, we express it in hues that you can't find in the listed palettes and blueprints.

So, what we have in store for you is a puddle of words and designs! Just make a splash. We bring alive emotions that describe each one of us, and our and yours loves, passions, choices, tastes, hates... be it in your kitchen, loo, relations, desk, car, baby rooms... or in your mind.

““

WE CREATE &  
PRINT  
EMOTIONS ON  
LOVABLE,  
ADORABLE,  
SPEAKABLE,  
GIFTABLE AND  
HUGGABLE  
WALL ARTS

””



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Call us @ +971 55 419 3522 , follow our blog, [purplehomes.blogspot.com](http://purplehomes.blogspot.com)

DURGA PUJA HELPS US FORGIVE  
KOLKATA FOR WHAT IT HAS  
BECOME AND SOAK IN WHAT IT  
WILL ALWAYS BE. PAGE 28

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The Indian Trumpet Magazine is released six times a year. It is available to the readers absolutely free of cost on the portal theindiantrumpet.com.

To all the people I knew, got to know and will know through this magazine.  
Spring, summer, autumn and winter.

We love the flowers that bloom in spring, the watermelon we eat in summer, the yellow leaves that adorn the roads in autumn and the warmth of quilt in winter. Yet, none of these seasons is our favourite season because the season we love and wait for the most is the festive season. Yes, it is this time of the year that we treasure the most. The mess on the streets created by the vendors selling cotton balls, Chinese fairy lights, paper lanterns & more; the incessant honking of the vehicles snaking on the road to reach the spot where the effigy of Ravana is burnt; the air filled with loud chants of *Ganapati Bappa Moriya*; the sight of children atop the shoulders of the elders meandering through the Durga Puja *pandals*, the generous helpings of *sheer kurma* and *payasam*...

We know that it is tough to be away from home on festivals. So this time around we've filled up our pages with the aromas, warmth, colours, love, rituals, excitement and memories of Indian festivals. And the making of this festival special issue has been an enriching experience in itself. On our festive hunt we met up with a huge bunch of people from different parts of India who narrated tales of their festive traditions and even shared recipes of their festival special *mithais*. A few of them even walked us to places in Dubai where we could buy all things festive, from idols to *pooja thalis*. A handful took us down the memory lane and shared their experience of bringing alive the festive spirit in DXB. And guess what by the time we finished working on the issue we were infected by the festive spirit.

So, we're ready to welcome the blessings, traditions and sweets to our homes in our second home, Dubai. We'll be getting our hands dirty while making a *rangoli* and collecting flowers to make a *pookalam*. We'll be overindulging in *jalebis*, *laddos*, *phirni* and *gulab jamuns* to gain some *mithai* weight and inviting our neighbours over for a lavish Indian festive meal. We'll be adding colour to our wardrobes and homes as we raid the malls for all things new. And we're just getting started. What about you?

Wishing all of you a lovely festive season!

Till we meet next, happy tooting!



Purva  
founder & editor  
editor@theindiantrumpet.com



the  
festive  
spirit

Dear Editor,  
 Hope all is well at your end! I am Abrar, from Bengaluru, living in Dubai for almost 5+ years. I just happened to have a glance at your beautiful work, The Indian Trumpet magazine, and I couldn't stop myself from wishing you good luck! It brought back to me all the *desi* memories from home. It's such a great pleasure to see such achievements. Wishing you a very good luck for your future and the best of health & success.  
 Stay Blessed :)  
 Abrar Parwan  
 Al Qusais, DXB



Kudos, trumpet blowers!!!  
 With their gumption, I am sure; many are greatly emboldened to work-up their nerves and live their dreams... as did 'our editor' Purva (our first step, P4 & P5) and Abhinav Bhatt (P 6). Flipping through the 'ingredients' of well composed, thought provoking, delightful something, seemed like a breath of fresh air with conspicuous captions ( P 09, 91 & 98), stunning imagery & grotesque consonance. For me, it's best when the articles get periphrastic or chatty and read with a cup of *chai*. Keep blowing this way...cheers!!!  
 Priyank Joshi  
 Burjuman Arjaan, Bur Dubai, DXB



Purva,  
 Seeing someone achieve a major life dream, and that too with such a lovely result is greatly energising. I enjoyed browsing through your debut issue! You have very mature sensibilities for a magazine. The title and tag line are very clever and offer rich possibilities for marketing and creating a brand. The visual aesthetics are more akin to a big publishing house with deep resources. Are you a graphic designer? I would say your design is your ace card. I think you will do very well with this.  
 Thanks  
 Parthiv N. Parekh, Editor-in-Chief, Khabar Magazine, GA, USA, khabar.com



# 16000 +

likes on Facebook, [facebook.com/TheIndianTrumpet](https://www.facebook.com/TheIndianTrumpet)  
 (Below: A few messages from our FB wall)

Dear Indian Trumpet,  
 Hope your day is going fine. After reading a bit about your magazine on Facebook I decided to have a look at it and found it quite nice and different. A good concept backed by a team of diverse people. Best wishes to the founder and her team of trumpet blowers. Wishing you all the best in your new venture and a pleasant stay in Dubai.  
 Regards,  
 Mehul Paul,  
 Dubai Silicon Oasis, DXB



This is your space.  
 We'd love to know what you have to say about the magazine. Drop a line along with your picture & contact details at [theindiantrumpet@gmail.com](mailto:theindiantrumpet@gmail.com)

'Well begun is half done'! And what a wonderful beginning we've had! Flooded with letters from friends, family, ex-colleagues, ex-classmates and a whole lot of wonderful READERS! But the best letter we got is from Parthiv N. Parekh, Editor-in-Chief, Khabar Magazine, GA, USA (see left). Khabar is a monthly magazine for the Indian community, free in GA, AL, TN & SC ([khabar.com](http://khabar.com), read & know more). Sir, thanks a bunch for your encouraging words! Appreciation coming from an NRI and an editor of a magazine who is serving the NRIs in another part of the world means a lot to us!



trumpet followers

So many diversified topics rolled into one issue... Amazing.. Ekta Sangani  
 My best wishes.....to all.....feeling really great to be part of yr first issue..... thanks..... Shilpa Parmar  
 Awesome work! Rita Mehta  
 ...i hope you are able to realize and enjoy the worth of the fabulous work you have done... you might already be working on the next issue but do remember to let your heart sing a happy song. Here's to many many issues of The Indian Trumpet. Prachi Grover

I went thru the entire MAGAZINE, yes, the entire thing and... \*tears of joy\*.. It's turned out soooooo O'sum joy\* again! Anne Cherian  
 Well done Purva.. The mag looks superb. Great design and I love the colours.. very attractive. Interesting mix of content. Way to go!! You make India proud!! Sanghita Singh  
 ...the way you string words together to make everybody feel so special is what makes you a fantastic editor-in-chief.!! Geetika Nautiyal  
 Super proud. Happy tears. Kanika Kaira



# DESSERTUS FAMISHUS

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**Aanandika Sood** aspires to be the rolling stone that gathers a lot of moss. After 8 years of writing copies and columns, editing and scripting stories and honing her PR skills, she is now playing the part of a freelance writer and a mommie. She lives in Kolkata and can be found at [aanandika.blogspot.in](http://aanandika.blogspot.in).

**Anu M** explains that the M in her name stands for Massakali, a nickname she has earned from her friends for her lively spirit. She writes with passion and every piece is her flight of fantasy. She loves food, music & fashion. She can be reached at [anusehg@gmail.com](mailto:anusehg@gmail.com).

**Arushi Dutt** loves travelling and meeting new people. She has lived half of her life in India, and the other half growing up in North America. Through her diverse set of experiences she has gained a lot of exposure in life. She says, 'I can't say that I am a wise saint but immersing myself in various cultures has taught me quite a bit'. One day she hopes to anchor her own travel show. Eating and dancing are another two of her hobbies. She can be found at [arushiscorner1991.blogspot.in](http://arushiscorner1991.blogspot.in).

**Beth Watkins** has been blogging about Hindi cinema since 2005. 'Can my love for Indian films be explained by a mysterious locket half and the unshakeable sense that maybe Jeevan stole me away as an infant from my real mother Indarni Mukherji?' is how she introduces herself to her blogger fans! Her blog has been featured in numerous publications like The Times of India, Business Standard, and The Globe and Mail (Canada). She has contributed to pieces



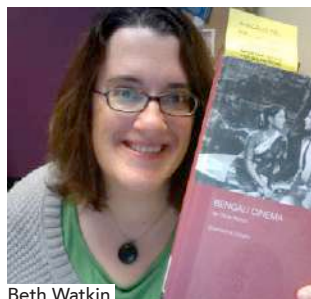
Aanandika Sood



Anu M



Arushi Dutt



Beth Watkin



Chandni Lahoti



Chetna Keer

in international media like BBC radio and CBC television. During business hours, she works in education, exhibit development, and publications at the Spurlock Museum of World Cultures at the University of Illinois. She can be found at [bethlovesbollywood.blogspot.com](http://bethlovesbollywood.blogspot.com).

**Chandni Lahoti** is an eternal *gol-gappa* lover, a furious *saas-bahu* serials hater, a spring-junkie by heart, a blogger by passion, a photography enthusiast and an accountant by mistake. She is caught up between her love for India, London (she was there for the last five years) and her new home, Dubai. She can be found at [chandnilahoti.wordpress.com](http://chandnilahoti.wordpress.com).

**Chetna Keer** is a senior journalist, humorist, lifestyle & culture commentator and social media critic, specialising in critiquing trends in the fast-exploding new media space. Having cast her footprint in journalism 20 years back, she got further book-ed to writing with the publication of her work, "Veggies Go On a Beauty



Debasish Nandy

Parade" (Rupa & Co). In this age that belongs more to the "Pen Drive" than to the wielding of the pen, her tongue-in-cheek humour columns "Haywire" and "Tweak Speak" have been spelling out her pen-chant for living life Pun-ny Side Up!

**Debasish Nandy** is a videojournalist/ photojournalist at CNBC TV18. Photography and travelling are his two biggest passions. He is based out of Kolkata and he loves observing people, society, culture and politics of India. He can be reached at [debasish.nandy1@gmail.com](mailto:debasish.nandy1@gmail.com).

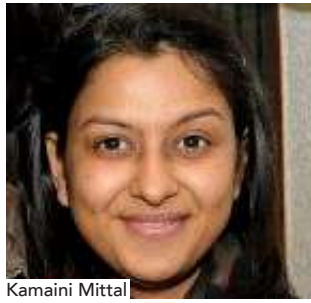
**Devang B'hatt** is an aspiring fashion designer /stylist / photographer / brand consultant based in Dubai. His philosophy at work is 'magic is in the details'



Devang B'bhatt



Inseeya K Nazir



Kamaini Mittal

and he loves the fusion of different cultures in designs as well as life. He believes that beauty and inspiration is all around one, and all one needs is spiritual awakening.

**Inseeya K Nazir**, an engineer by qualification changed gears a couple of years back to become a Tarot & Fengshui analyst, Reiki grandmaster, Past Life regressor, numerologist and gemmologist. She has been a Reiki practitioner for more than 13 years, holding workshops both in India and abroad. She is a person you'd love chatting up, irrespective of astrological predictions! She can be found at [inseeya.com](http://inseeya.com).

**Kamaini Mittal** has been fascinated with arts and designs forever. Bachelors in Fine Arts in Applied Arts she works with India's leading English news channel besides undertaking assignments for various design firms. She observes her surroundings to expand her design vocabulary. She doesn't sleep much, and that explains why she answers our e-mails at all odd

and insane hours.

**Manas Saran** is a lifestyle wedding photographer based in Bengaluru who loves working with vibrant, sophisticated, well-travelled and fun-loving couples. Cross cultural weddings are his speciality. A software engineer by qualification, he chose to pursue his passion for photography after working for some big names in the software industry for over eight years. He's an avid traveller who loves exploring new places from a cultural and human perspective. He can be found at [manassaran.com](http://manassaran.com).

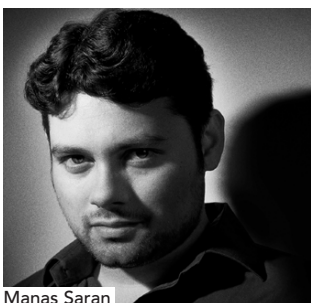
**Manoj Nath** is a graphic designer and illustrator based in Bengaluru. Currently, he is working with Hewlett Packard as a Marcomm Designer. He is an avid reader and a big fan of R.D. Burman, and can play his best tunes with his harmonica. A pinch hitter in cricket, this Bong loves punning with words as much as he loves his sweets and fish curry! Although he confesses that he is a die-hard fan of North Indian cuisine too! He can

be found at [manojnath.com](http://manojnath.com).

**Nasrin Modak-Siddiqi** is a writer, foodie, traveller and a movie-buff. She has a lot of stories to tell, some real and many that are a figment of her imagination. Currently on a sabbatical from a full-time writer's job, her motivation to get out of bed is the promise of a good trip, meal, book, movie or all of them. Her latest pastime is writing fiction, clicking photographs and editing old ones to make them look more dramatic. She can be found at [continuumera.blogspot.com](http://continuumera.blogspot.com).

**Navneet Banwait** calls designing an act of meditation. An independent designer she believes every sunrise unfolds a new surprise. She set up her own design studio, Vichitra Design Studio in 2011, which allows her to play with colours, concepts and more. She paints on canvas & sells paintings online ([generoussparsh.wordpress.com](http://generoussparsh.wordpress.com)), the money for which goes to patients suffering from Alzheimer's and related disorders in India. She can be found at [navneetbanwait.wordpress.com](http://navneetbanwait.wordpress.com)

**Pallavi Singh** is a Delhi-based journalist who works for Air India's inflight magazine Shubh Yatra and is also the Editor of Diabetic Living India. When she is not running between home and work, she loves to listen to old Bollywood songs



Manas Saran



Manoj Nath



Nasrin Modak-Siddiqi



Navneet Banwait



Pallavi Singh



Paresh Lamba



Paromita Bardoloi



Prachi Grover



Ritu Dua

and watch mushy romantic movies. She can be reached at postpallavi@gmail.com.

**Paresh Lamba** had a humble beginning from the back room of a shoe store in Bengaluru. In a world obsessed with women's fashion he dreamt to dress men in his signature style that is sharp and masculine, which has made him the go-to man for fashion in the country for the last 15 years. He can be found at pareshlambasignatures.in.

**Paromita Bardoloi** wrote her first poem at 8. Two decades later she is a writer by profession who writes for herself but the editors' end up publishing her, to her utter surprise. She reviews books for top notch publishing houses in India and these days, she is trying to scribble poetry. To raise a voice she has co-founded a theatre group 'Aatish'. She can be found at paromitabardoloi.blogspot.ae.

**Prachi Grover** is a food maniac (read: food blogger & consultant). On days that she is not able to cook a lavish & large enough meal to feed friends and families she suffers from a migraine. Her other obsession is design. Her home turns a new leaf every few days making you want to re-visit her for

inspiration. She can be found at orangekitchens.blogspot.com and purplehomes.blogspot.com.

**Ritu Dua** has been a banker & a teacher, now she has let herself be drawn by the strong pull of what she loves to do the most, draw and paint. She uses micron pens, water colours & oil-paints in her works, and mixed media is her forte. She also makes murals and environment friendly art by recycling things. In Dubai, she is a volunteer at Al Noor School and teaches art to special children. When not making art, she is celebrating all things delicious. She can be found at beneathmyheartart.blogspot.ae.

**Sanket B Jack** is an engineer by degree, MBA by profession and a cartoonist by passion. He portrays the society's nuisance, behaviour and ignorance through his cartoons. He believes as much in the power of a smile as that of a satire. He believes in the saying, It takes 43 muscles to frown, 17 to smile but only 1 to criticise. He can be found at facebook.com/Jackartoons.

**Sreemoyee Piu Kundu** is a full-time writer based in New Delhi. Her first novel 'Faraway Music' (Hachette India) soared right to the

top of the popularity charts since its launch in January 2013. Out next is an erotica 'Sita's Curse' (Hachette India) followed by a lad lit 'You've Got The Wrong Girl' (Hachette India). Faraway Music is available on Amazon, [http://www.amazon.com/Faraway-Music-ebook/dp/B00B86G8HY/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1360250678&sr=1-1&keywords=faraway+musicSameness?](http://www.amazon.com/Faraway-Music-ebook/dp/B00B86G8HY/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1360250678&sr=1-1&keywords=faraway+musicSameness?) To know more visit, [facebook.com/pages/Faraway-Music/341486359282781?fref=ts](http://facebook.com/pages/Faraway-Music/341486359282781?fref=ts).

**Vinit.V.Manjrekar** is a graphic designer/ freelance photographer. He has two loves, photography and family & friends. He spends a lot of time travelling for work, which also allows him to interact with different people. He runs a service-oriented business and believes that creativity is a result of team effort. He values working closely with clients. He can be found at vmcreations.weebly.com.

**Yazhini Ilanahai** is a management graduate, foodie & writer from Chennai, now based out of Dubai. She was an entrepreneur in the past and is currently a stay at home mom to a one-year-old. When not running behind her son she tries to catch her breath!



Sanket B Jack



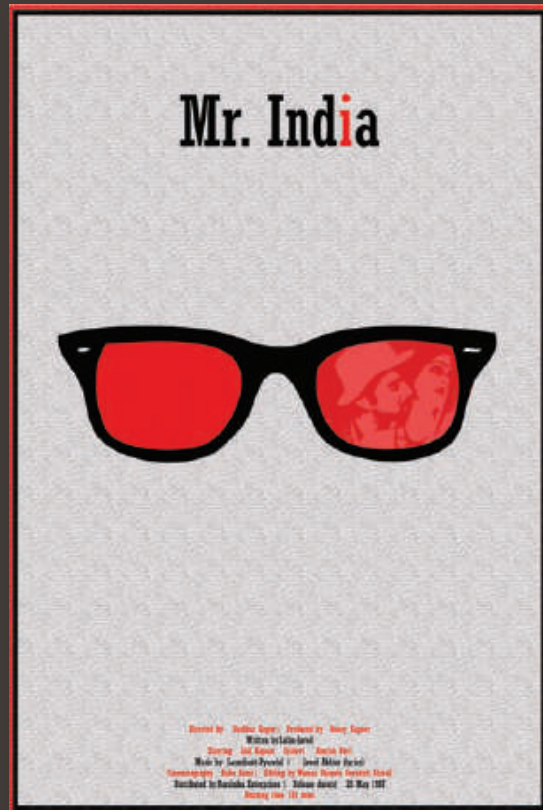
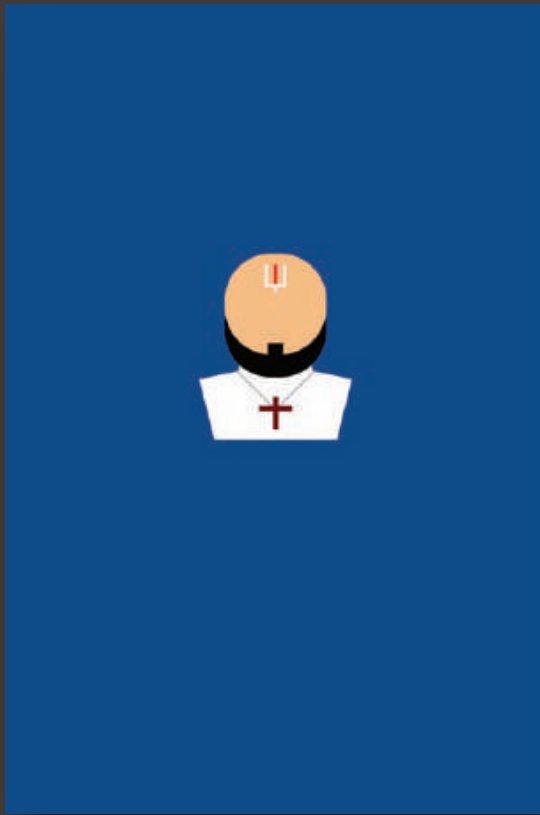
Sreemoyee Piu Kundu



Vinit.V.Manjrekar



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16

70mm

### A RETURN TO JEWEL THIEF

*Jewel Thief* is always worth revisiting. It breaks away from the clichéd double role storyline that Bollywood flicks often fall prey to & when one finally discovers the film's secret, one is tempted to watch it all over again to fill in the blanks! Our tribute to the legend, Dev Anand.

22

indian belly

### THE SCENT OF SAFFRON

Demystifying the charm of saffron, a spice that can brighten up almost any dish. And conversation with the chefs from *Zafran*, Marina Mall, Dubai.

trumpet lead

28

### DURGA PUJA PLAYGROUND

Durga Puja helps us forgive Kolkata for what it has become and soak in what it will always be. These five days are about looking back and looking forward.

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### A FAST TO REMEMBER

A newly-married Indian woman shares her experience of fasting on Karva Chauth

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### GANAPATI BAPPA MORIYA

When a Mumbaikar landed in Dubai 15 years back



follow the noise



she was not sure she would be able to bring Ganapati Bappa home each Ganesh Chaturthi. She narrates her experience of welcoming Bappa with the same fervour in DXB.

- 36 **JUST ONE LITTLE CANDLE**  
Deepawali augurs a celebration of the ushering in of good times while bidding adieu to the dark times. Let's light our share of lamps.
- 40 **THE GOOD ACT**  
The festival of Dusshera gives us a chance to narrate & share the good ol' tale of the victory of good over evil
- 42 **NAVRATRI, WORSHIPPING THE GODDESS**  
Fasting & feasting, worshipping & sharing, dancing & singing - nine days of Navratri give us a chance to express our gratitude towards Maa Durga
- 46 **THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE**  
Eid-al-Adha is not a race to buy the most expensive animal for sacrifice but it stands for the willingness to let go and follow the Almighty's command
- 48 **CARNIVAL IN KERALA**  
Sounds of *chenda*, patterns of *pookkalam*, sights of *vallamkali* and the spices of *sadya*... Onam brings to mind a potpourri of lovely memories
- 50 **KUCH MEETHA HO JAYE**  
The big fat Indian *mithai tamasha!*
- 56 *fashion fry*  
**MORE ROOM FOR THE INDIA GROOM?**  
The Indian groom has always been a victim of fashion neglect. But with the new-age man being more conscious of the self-image and more willing to rise from the shadows onto the spotlight, the brides are in for some serious competition.
- 60 *tax free entertainment*  
**GAANA-SHAANA, KHAANA-PEENA...**  
The world of new-age *bhakti*, Google gods, post-festival diets and more
- bazaar*
- 64 This festive season let your home narrate the rich tale of Indian craftsmanship, textiles and colours
- 72 Just a few of our favourite things for the adorable angels & brats
- 86 Transform from a simpleton to showstopper with these fashionable buys

- 66 the globe & the gully  
**ALOHA! THE PROMISING PARADISE**  
 The picturesque waters and skies don't make this destination, it is the warm spirit of aloha (and yes, the food too) that makes it worth a visit. Let the positive attitude & easy lifestyle of the locals put you in a trance. On a trip to Honolulu, Hawaii.
- 71 satte pe satta  
 You know you are listening to an Indian radio station in Dubai when...
- 74 horn OK please  
**TRAM, THE HERITAGE WHEELS**  
 It's said to cause traffic congestion, it is criticised for its unhurried pace and its passenger turnout too is slowly dwindling... but it is still a part of Kolkata's rich fabric, lovely memories and everyday life. The tram continues to trace & retrace its path on Kolkata roads. Our tribute.
- 80 over a cup of chai  
**COLOURS, THEY SPEAK TO ME**  
 Aanchal Jaggi, a 23-year-old fashion designer in Dubai, loves playing with colours for it allows her to be both an artist & a designer
- 82 dubai darshan  
**OUR MUSE, DUBAI MUSEUM**  
 A slice of history for those who often wonder about the history of Dubai. A visit to the Dubai Musuem, Bur Dubai.
- 85 trumpet teller  
 Read what the stars have in store for you in the months of September-October 2013
- 88 our shabdkosh  
**PUCHKA, THE SPICY STREET-SIDE SNACK**  
 The exploding taste from Kolkata. The Indian street-side snack is also known as *pani puri* and *gol gappa*.



- 90 idhar udhar  
**BUNIYAAD**  
*Buniyaad*, a drama series that made history on Indian TV. An artist pays tribute to the defining soap opera with a minimal graphics poster.
- 92 the globe & the gully  
**BAREFOOT IN THE ANDAMAN**  
 A trip to the Andaman Islands will rejuvenate your soul, take you back to the colonial times, tempt you to explore the waters & more but most importantly it will spoil your DSLR for choices!
- 98 loud toot  
**THE INDIAN TRUMPET'S LAUNCH CELEBRATIONS**  
 Laughter, wishes and goodies...our launch celebrations had it all!
- 102 last word  
**रंगीला, रसीला और आज़ाद**  
 The heart that misses all things Indian



*Sensuous profound, lyrical and moving  
FARAWAY MUSIC is a story of family, friendship,  
fame, love and loss – and all that lies in between.*



# Faraway Music

SREEMOYEE PIU KUNDU



Navketan's

# Jewel

70mm



# a return to *jewel thief*

JEWEL THIEF IS ALWAYS WORTH REVISITING. IT BREAKS AWAY FROM THE CLICHÉD DOUBLE ROLE STORYLINE THAT BOLLYWOOD FLICKS OFTEN FALL PREY TO & WHEN ONE FINALLY DISCOVERS THE FILM'S SECRET, ONE IS TEMPTED TO WATCH IT ALL OVER AGAIN TO FILL IN THE BLANKS! OUR TRIBUTE TO THE LEGEND, DEV ANAND.

WORDS BETH WATKINS  
ARTWORK MANOJ NATH

For audiences who cover their ears when the term “spoiler” appears in a conversation, thrillers don't tend to thrill them as much when it comes to repeated viewing. For some others though, knowing what happens beforehand is almost as significant — or maybe even the same thing — as watching the movie — after all. For those of us who are also interested in the hows and whys of the filmmaker's choices or in understanding how the film shapes and leads our interest levels, repeated watching of a thriller can heap “Aha!” upon joyful “Aha!” As Anuj Kumar said in *The Hindu* a few years ago, “When you know the secret, you want to know how he did it. When you realise how he executed it, you get eager to gather where he fooled you.” ([thehindu.com/features/cinema/jewel-thief-1967/article434403.ece](http://thehindu.com/features/cinema/jewel-thief-1967/article434403.ece))

In the world of Bollywood, there is an added punch in finding out that a film's twist is a *masala* standard turned it on its head. This is a technique we've seen in recent films like *Love Sex Aur Dhokha*, where a young couple inspired by the nearly-thwarted lovers in *DDLJ* is given an ending least imaginable of a Bollywood flick, and *7 Khoon Maaf*, which weaves in some rather unexpected elements with other stereotypical ones like a heroine's religious devotion and the old chestnut about the filmi exaltation of the wedding.

Over the years, Hindi cinema has taught us a few lessons in predicting plots of films with double roles. But *Jewel Thief* was different in the sense that it plays around with our expectations. So if the characters in the film seem to



70mm

think that the hero has done things we know he hasn't, then perhaps his duplicate is lurking just around the corner and is probably going to exhibit some sort of a moral lesson that stands in contrast to the traits of the hero, like the fateful consequences of evil or the quiet suffering of the impoverished or the orphaned. Whatever his purpose, he emerges as an

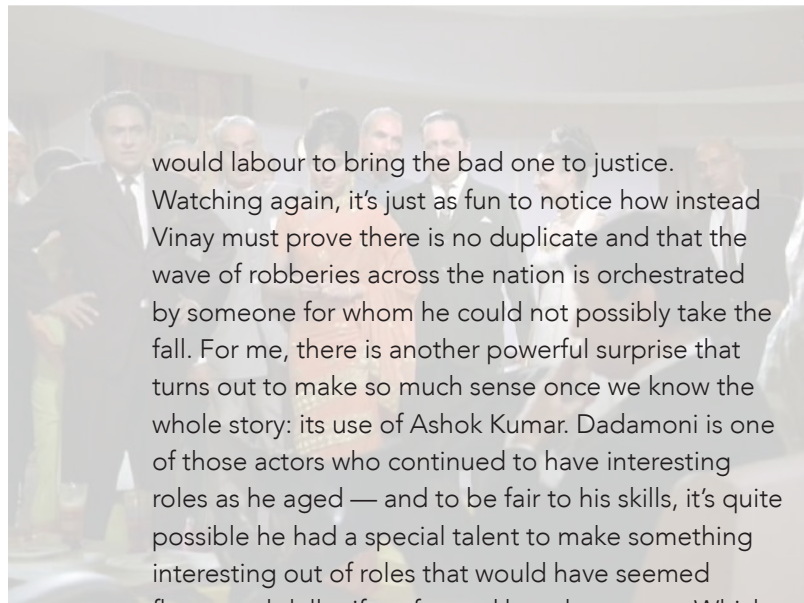
actual person, perhaps even the hero's long-lost flesh and blood. After all the characters — and audience members too — become comfortable with the idea that there's a criminal with Dev Anand's face knocking over jewellery shops worth millions and abandoning the lovelorn heroine Shalu (Vyjayanthimala), we find out that there actually isn't such a person! The idea



of a duplicate is just a facade for the actual criminal mastermind, who has enlisted various people to concoct and enact complicated stories of the stylish, womanising Amar. The illusion is even supported by the film's title, which we naturally just assume refers to the lead actor. But not this time. Setting up a fascinating character who isn't a twin of the hero,

despite every indication he should be, and is in fact a character we previously assumed to be innocuous, is one of the most clever things a Hindi thriller could do.

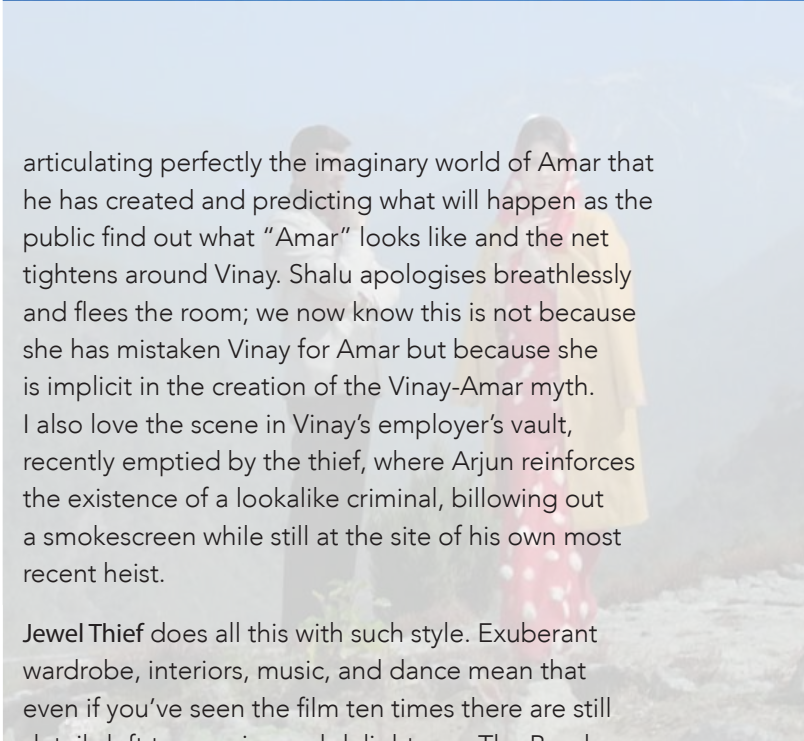
The first time I watched Jewel Thief, I operated just as the film wanted me to: there are identical Dev Anand characters and that the good one



would labour to bring the bad one to justice. Watching again, it's just as fun to notice how instead Vinay must prove there is no duplicate and that the wave of robberies across the nation is orchestrated by someone for whom he could not possibly take the fall. For me, there is another powerful surprise that turns out to make so much sense once we know the whole story: its use of Ashok Kumar. Dadamoni is one of those actors who continued to have interesting roles as he aged — and to be fair to his skills, it's quite possible he had a special talent to make something interesting out of roles that would have seemed flatter and duller if performed by other actors. Which is why his presence in *Jewel Thief* is initially a little confusing. He is a perfectly fine choice to play Shalu's genial brother, but imagine pausing the film halfway through and considering how little importance his character actually has...or even how little impact his performance makes.

Compare the pre-twist portion of *Jewel Thief* to (admittedly later) supporting roles like the literary, avuncular thief in *Chori Mera Kaam*, a twinkling second-fiddle husband in *Khubsoorat*, and the unforgettable, almost godfather-y Colonel Julius Nagendranath Wilfred Singh in *Chhoti Si Baat*. Why hire Ashok Kumar to be a ho-hum well-behaved fatherly type, which almost anyone can do and which is exactly how his role as Arjun Singh here initially comes across? When the twist finally happens, all of a sudden his presence makes perfect sense. He is there to convince us that he is far more than he appears to be. Like the plot as a whole, his character is far more complicated than we initially understand, carefully timing how he reveals layers of the facade, how he scripts the other players to behave, each of them with their own specific part in the illusion that Amar exists. Although his plans aren't as depraved or grandiose as those of, say, Shakal (Shaan) or Mogambo (Mr. India), Arjun Singh is a criminal mastermind on par with Bollywood's greats, and Ashok Kumar, one eyebrow cocked and casually fiddling with a cigarette, is the perfect person to bring him to life.

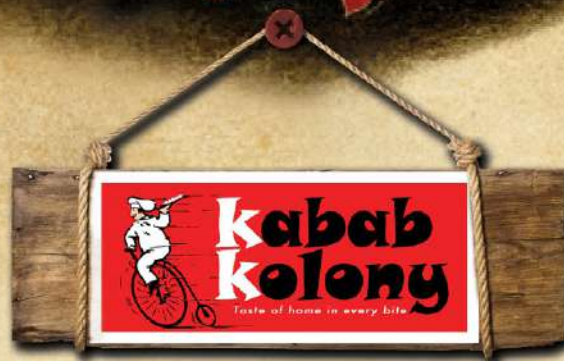
Knowing the film's secrets also creates new ways to watch some of its key moments. My favourite is the shoe scene: "You look so much like Amar that anybody could be confused," Arjun tells Vinay,



articulating perfectly the imaginary world of Amar that he has created and predicting what will happen as the public find out what "Amar" looks like and the net tightens around Vinay. Shalu apologises breathlessly and flees the room; we now know this is not because she has mistaken Vinay for Amar but because she is implicit in the creation of the Vinay-Amar myth. I also love the scene in Vinay's employer's vault, recently emptied by the thief, where Arjun reinforces the existence of a lookalike criminal, billowing out a smokescreen while still at the site of his own most recent heist.

*Jewel Thief* does all this with such style. Exuberant wardrobe, interiors, music, and dance mean that even if you've seen the film ten times there are still details left to surprise and delight you. The Bombay cabaret is in full glory with Helen in sparkles and feathers in a club called Roman Nights ([youtube.com/watch?v=ZKEVpEZqzDw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKEVpEZqzDw)) — could there be a more potent indication of Western decadence than that name, I ask you? — and in her song on a sunken dance stage surrounded by diamond buyers in Calcutta, Faryal manages to wear less clothing but drip with even more gems ([youtube.com/watch?v=B4S1zs4KPxY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4S1zs4KPxY)) Today, we're more accustomed to the films taking their cultural escapism to Spain or Las Vegas or Australia, but *Jewel Thief* turns to Sikkim. The criminals' lair, safely removed from India, is full of secret tunnels and nefarious brainwashing equipment, and they infiltrate a royal palace that revels in dragons and Himalayan motifs, gloriously exalted in the show-stopping "Hothon Pe Aisa Baat Mein," moments of which are glimpsed as though we are Vinay peeping out through his monster mask. ([youtube.com/watch?v=7\\_tNg0n46ss](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7_tNg0n46ss)). The film's decadence even extends to romance and flirting, with Vinay/Amar as the object of attention of no fewer than five women.

Did Vijay Anand deliberately plan the sensory feast in *Jewel Thief* as enticement for viewers to watch it again, even after they knew the twist? It can certainly function that way, even five decades after its release. It's impossible to imagine we could ever take in all of its splendours, be they visual, aural, or even cerebral. Between the spangles, songs, and secrets, *Jewel Thief* is always worth revisiting.





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# the scent of **SAM**



indian belly

# ZAFRAN

DEMYSTIFYING THE CHARM OF KESAR, SAFFRON OR ZAFRAN. LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE WONDERS OF 'RED GOLD'. AND CONVERSATION WITH CHEF ANKUR CHAKRABORTY AND CHEF GAURAV SINGH FROM ZAFRAN, A RESTAURANT IN DUBAI MARINA MALL.

WORDS PRACHI GROVER

IMAGES ZAFRAN, MARINA MALL, DUBAI

The first few images that come to my mind when I think of Kesar (as was Saffron known in our home) are of the Kesar Phirni and the Kesar Pista Kulfis that my mother would make for all of us on special occasions. Biryani too. I remember how she had this tiny box that always lay hidden in a cool and dark corner of her cupboard and how she would use it sparingly each time she liked to use it. For me, the way she would bring her index finger and thumb together to take out just a pinch of those deep red threads and then drop the threads into a bowl of warm milk, mixing it gently with her finger so that the threads don't get crushed, the Kesar then slowly lending its warm redness to the milk and making it a luminous yellow was always a mesmerising sight. Still is. And then there were other occasions like during a *puuja* where the priest would ask her to prepare a paste of Kesar, uncooked rice and milk, which he would then apply to our foreheads. Or when she would add it to a glass of hot milk and sugar each time I would be down with an occasional cold or flu. Ah and also the times when she would mix it with almond oil and insist I apply it to my face for beautiful skin. "It's very expensive so always use it carefully", she would say. I'd nod still not realising the worth of the spice.

In more recent times, a lot of my friends and family started asking me to get them a little of this prized spice from Dubai, each time I was travelling to India. And I decided to study and find out why Saffron or Zafran as it is known here at Dubai had such a coveted status amongst all spices. And my spice hunt took me to Chef Ankur Chakraborty and Chef Gaurav Singh, chefs at Zafran, the restaurant at the Dubai Marina Mall. We met on a warm summer morning at Zafran. The restaurant is empty and waking up to a face a new day. It's just us, frothy cappuccinos and conversation. The chefs at this hour come across more like two backslapping college friends than the culinary masters (and task masters) that they truly are in their kitchen. And without losing any time we start talking about Zafran, the spice and Zafran, the restaurant. Chef Ankur says, "Saffron threads come from the stamens of the flower, *Crocus Sativus* Linneus and each flower just produces three stamens that are handpicked. A roomful of these flowers produce only a few grams and that is what makes it so expensive." Really! That little! Later, I check with my well trusted friend 'Google' and it tells me that it takes about 190

flowers to produce one gram of saffron. He adds, "Saffron comes from mostly Kashmir, Iran and Spain and is divided into grades based on its measurement of colour, taste and fragrance. Historically, Middle East has always been the hub of spice trade because the geographical location is such that the spice traders can buy the spices and then take it to both the eastern or the western world. A bridge of sorts. There was a point in time when the monetary value of spices like cardamom, pepper, saffron, etc. was very high. In fact, in history Saffron has frequently costed more than gold per unit of weight. Many times Saffron was substituted for money. So, Saffron would come from Spain, Iran and India to the Middle East and the valuation of the same would be done via auction based on the quality and then the price would be decided, from there it was sold through these merchants across the world."

"When we opened Zafran in 2010, one of the reasons for the name was that the people here could connect to the name Zafran, a spice commonly used in both Middle Eastern and Indian cooking," he continues. Chef Gaurav adds, "Also, Saffron has the ability to transform a dish into an irresistible delicacy, it is the same irresistibility that we try to translate into what we offer, hence the name." I ask Chef Gaurav about the spice's inclusion in their menu at Zafran and he says, "Saffron is one spice that blends beautifully both with the savoury and sweet things. At Zafran, each of our courses in the menu pay an ode to the spice. Zafran Salad (mixed greens, tandoori chicken with saffron cream dressing and mango chutney), Zafran Fish and Chips (crumb fried fish with coriander and served with saffron chilli mayo), Zafran Malai Tikka (saffron spiced chicken breast, cream cheese and mace marinade) and of course then there are the Biryani's all made with Saffron Basmati rice. Not to forget the desserts, the Zafran Pistachio Kulfi and Zafran Rasmalai." 'No drink with Saffron?' I joke. "Saffron and Mango Lassi" he smiles.

Chef Ankur warns, "A small pinch of Saffron goes a long way. When used in the right quantity it gives the dish a whole new meaning but the moment you overuse it the dish becomes bitter." Chef Gaurav adds, "Also, it is a misconception that one should always buy the most expensive Saffron available. The best quality of gold is 24 Karats but you can't make ornaments with it. Likewise it's not always that



(Clockwise) Chef Ankur Chakraborty, Interiors of Zafran at Dubai Marina Mall, Chef Gaurav Singh and Prawn Biryani

Saffron is one spice that blends beautifully both with the savoury and sweet dishes



## Zafran Malai Pista Kulfi

(Recipe from the kitchen of Zafran, three portions)

### Ingredients

2 litres full cream milk, 1 gram of Saffron, ½ cup of pistachios (peeled), 1½ tsp of green cardamom powder, 1½ cups of sugar, 200 ml fresh cream

### Method

Boil the milk and bring it to simmer. Once the quantity is reduced to half add Saffron. Add the pistachio to the milk and reduce it to 1/3rd of its volume. Add green cardamom powder & sugar. Cool the reduced milk & blend it to a smooth consistency. Now add fresh cream. Pour the kulfi mixture in moulds and freeze. Serve the frozen kulfi with diced fresh strawberry if you want.

(L-R) Lentil soup and Saffron flower

best quality of Saffron that will suit your dish. For what are you using it and how you are treating it are the deciding factors. Are you dissolving it in milk or warm water? Are you dry roasting the strands and powdering them or simply drying and leaving them as filaments? Each of these four methods will give you five different colours." He also tells me that at Zafran they practice the dilution method and dry roasting on very low heat (after which the threads are crushed with hands to make a fine powder). "Word of caution", adds Chef Ankur, "Whenever you introduce heat to any spice they release aromatic oils so we suggest you use it immediately. So never buy ground saffron for it loses its flavour much quicker than the threads and also these days fraudulent merchants mix it with turmeric or paprika." Which brings me to another important issue i.e. how to recognise authentic Saffron? The chef tells me that authentic Saffron threads will always be even in size and very fine. Another thing to watch out for is that the yellow

bits won't be connected to the red threads. And of course then there is the distinctive heady and musky smell that you need to look out for. Chef Gaurav adds, "Also, after eating it should not leave any colour on your hand. Saffron will never give you a dense colour. When fine quality Saffron is added to water, the water will gradually become pale yellow in colour. After some more time the water should turn a deeper and more vivid hue, whereas adulterated Saffron will immediately turn the water a bright yellow."

I look around and outside the sun has also turned from light amber to bright yellow, which signals that it's time for the chefs to begin their day in their kitchen. I thank them for a lovely morning and for educating me with facts on 'red gold' and for sharing what inspires them and drives them, which I promise to share with you another day. Before I leave I request them to share their prized Kulfi recipe and they agree.

A sweet ending indeed.

Remember! The most easiest thing to do is :  
**CRITICIZE!**



Suggestions ,  
Ideas and  
Criticism is most  
welcome!!!

43 Muscles to frown,  
17 to smile, 1 to criticize..

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# Durga Puja playground

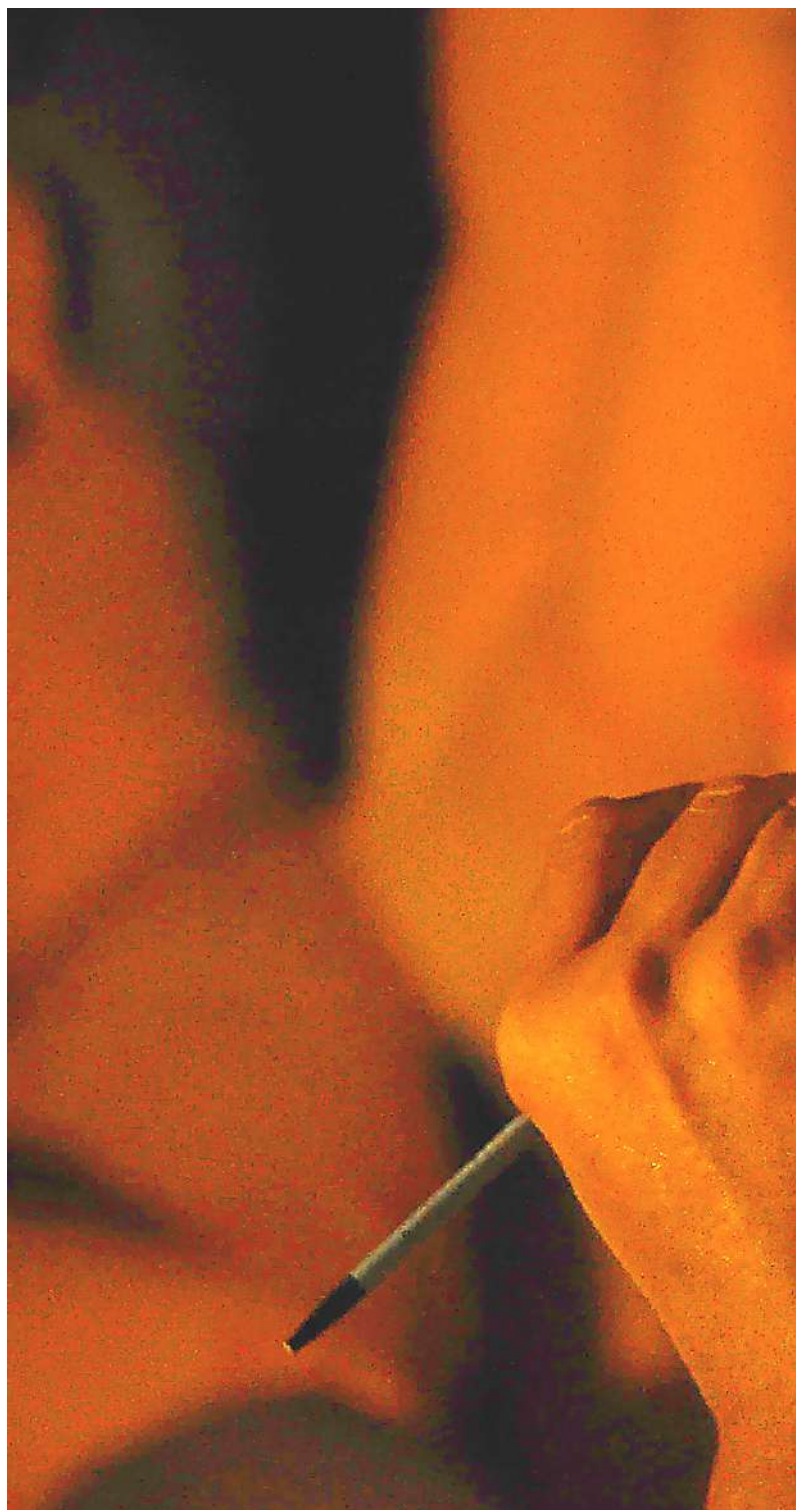
DURGA PUJA HELPS US FORGIVE KOLKATA FOR WHAT IT HAS BECOME AND SOAK IN WHAT IT WILL ALWAYS BE. THESE FIVE DAYS ARE ABOUT LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD – THE ONLY TIME THE CITY CAN CARRY THE WEIGHT OF BOTH ON ITS WEATHERED ARMS.

WORDS SREEMOYEE PIU KUNDU

IMAGES DEBASISH NANDY

I'm talking about another time. A time of bulky transistors and Eastman coloured mornings. When I'd be woken up by my grandfather, as he gently dragged me out of a flimsy mosquito net, our footsteps often colliding as I then sat perched atop his lap, staring out into a mist smudged October morning. Madhu *dada*, our Oriya driver's son would soon turn up the volume as Shanti *mashi*, my toothless nanny brought *Dada* (I called my grandfather that) a steaming hot cup of Darjeeling tea, as we all sat in a curious semi-circle, listening to *Mahishasuramardini* – a two-hour telecast rendered in the overpowering voice of the late Birendra Krishna Bhadra – the saga of Ma Durga's *agomoni* (arrival) on the auspicious day of *Mahalaya* that marked the start of *Devi Paksha* – the most sacred time in the festive almanac.

As Bhadra chanted the convoluted scriptures in his peculiar nasal intonation, I grasped the railings of my balcony, my eyes moistening with an untold fervour as the Goddess mercilessly slayed Mahishasura – in a





For the Devi is not just an idol for us...distant and desirous. She is one of us. A daughter, a mother, a sister, a friend, a lover, a wife, a grandchild.... the sum of what is constant in a world that is ever changing.

classic case of good triumphing over evil. It was easy to believe such a battle was possible. I was six. It was easy to believe in anything I suppose.

Over the years...ever since my grandparents expired and we left our ancestral home in Kolkata, such mornings have been rendered fewer and far between. And, and yet, to a *probashi* (offshore dwelling) Bong like me, *Mahalaya* still holds that magic key – the promise of a home-coming. The chance to get back to Kolkata, in much the same way I left it almost thirteen autumns ago, a strange sadness suffusing my senses – an unresolved parting. Or maybe it has taken me all these years to understand why *Dada* laid so much emphasis on that one October morning, on why I was bought almost fifteen pairs of new clothes, changing into a new dress, as the day waned, what it meant to visit every *pandal*, circled carefully in red ink as soon as the morning daily came in, sometimes on his frail shoulders, making eye contact with divinity, rubbing shoulders with all and sundry at *pada* (neighbourhood) *puja sammelans*, rehearsing for months on our terrace, perfecting the role of Tagore's bravest queen – Chitrangada, perhaps, slipping into expensive silk to eat out, every evening, scouring Park Street, sampling the latest eatery with a despicable vengeance, the nights promiscuously porous... the city bedecked like a bashful new bride to be drunk and delighted in. Loudspeakers on in full blast, the roll of the *dhaakis* (traditional drummers) adding to the din, thousands of people walking on endlessly, clad in fanciest attires purchased after months of careful saving, standing in serpentine queues to visit the latest Sharod-Sammanitto (a popular award conferred during Durga Puja to the best *puja mandap*, a hedonistic frenzy in their sleepless eyes, carrying their infants high up in their sturdy arms, talking loudly, trying to navigate the din...the five day Calcutta carnival, a sensory trip that was supposed to have commenced first under the aegis of the Shobhabazar Rajbari, one of the most bonedi families of the city,

by Raja Nabakrishna Deb in honour of Lord Clive in 1757. The *puja* was said to be organised as a way of Clive wanting to say thanks for his victory in the Battle of Plassey, and his inability to do so in a church as the only church in the city during that time was allegedly destroyed by Siraj-ud-Daulah.

A colonial repository, the city's religious roots are best savoured by a visit to its Northern quarters where till today many families continue with the tradition of housing the idol in their marbled courtyards, celebrating the five-day festival as a tradition of an *ekannoborti poribaar* – an unwieldy joint family that maybe live divided otherwise, and yet converge as one to maintain their historic family legacy. Unlike the glorious past however, most of these *sabeki* (old world) *pujas*, which once made British officers of the East India Company guests of honour, wooing them with sumptuous fares and expensive idol decorations and hiring the most expensive nautch girls to entertain their guests – today are seen opening their frayed wrought iron gates to ordinary proletarians, passers-by...peeking into a lost time and a faded glory, staring up at high ceilings, freshly painted in most cases in anticipation, glimmering Belgian cut glass chandeliers (the one that wasn't auctioned in a distress sale), narrow, winding stairways, mighty canons that have fallen suspiciously silent – perhaps embroiled in a bitter family feud concerning property.

And yet...this is not a sad story. Not quite the sadness a Kolkatan like me feels upon landing, cribbing about the irate traffic snarls or mourning the breaking down of yet another ancestral home to make way for a multiplex or a multi-storied – a faceless city in the constant throes of political ambiguity – a masterless mistress, left with nothing really, except tall tales of yesterday and yesteryears'. Durga Pujas helps us forgive Kolkata for what it has become and soak in what it will always be. These five days are about looking back and looking forward – the only time the city can carry the weight of both on its weathered

Loudspeakers on in full blast, the roll of the *dhaakis* adding to the din, thousands of people walking on endlessly, clad in their fanciest attires purchased after months of careful saving, standing in serpentine queues to visit the latest Sharod-Sammanitto (a popular award conferred during Durga Puja to the best *puja*) *mandap*, a hedonistic frenzy in their sleepless eyes, carrying their infants high up in their sturdy arms, talking loudly, trying to navigate the din...



purity of *Kumari puja* where a small girl child (who has not attained puberty) is worshipped as the human incarnate of the Goddess to the elaborate *Sandhi puja* that marks the onset of *Navami* (the ninth day) and the culmination of *Ashtami*, down to the riotous *sindoor khela* on the afternoon of *Bijoya Dashami*, customary for married wives who apply thick blobs of vermilion on the Goddess' fair forehead, before parting their tinged mouths to smear *sandesh* on her mouth and whisper into her ears, '*ashche bochor aabar esho* (come again next year),' to finally the merriment of wild dancing atop illuminated trucks in the immersion processions that dot the city's main thoroughfares marking the heady culmination of this five-day along human fiesta – that has to be only seen



arms. Rituals occupy centre stage, family comes first, friends step out in their Sunday best, it's about fun and food and we make no qualms about it. From the *Kola bou snaan* (A banana tree is dressed as a new bride in yellow silk cloth, the priest carries the tree in a procession to Lord Ganesha as his bride) that sets off the *puja* revelry on *Mahasashti*, the sixth day of the waxing moon fortnight known as *Devi Paksha*, the perfunctory *Ashtami* (eighth day) *pushpanjali* that sees women step out dressed in their *dhakai jamdanis* or Benarasi *saris* and ostentatious gold finery and men stand tall in their gold bordered, *dhakka dewa dhotis* and off-white, silk *punjabis* or the mellifluous





to be believed, consumed to be converted, lived in to live on....

What is it about this festival that makes it so magical, I wonder each year, as my own father, a devoted and converted South Indian-turned self professed Bengali books our air tickets, almost 365 days in advance, as soon as we return to dusty Delhi, within days of our transit from our homeground? Why is it that our Puja holidays are always spent in the shaded sanctuary of a home we left behind? I ask myself now... as I sit penning this. Why is everything that is Bengali about us, even me, stuff that we laugh at and critique so easily, all year through at get-togethers and offices, suddenly turn into a cultural iconography – a rich tapestry of our roots and return to it we must, even if it is only in passing. Perhaps as my father says and says it best I think, 'How can you not be home on Pujas, it's like sitting out at your own daughter's wedding? That is... it's clearly not possible?'

And so, just like that faded October morning, we pack our bags, stuffing in the remainder of our

childhood, the good parts...we spread our wings... flying towards familiarity. For the Devi is not just an idol for us, distant and desirous. She is one of us. A daughter, a mother, a sister, a friend, a lover, a wife, a grandchild.... the sum of what is constant in a world that is ever changing. So, if you're reading this and are a Bong like me, or just someone who is curious about this thing – this is what the Durga Puja mania in Kolkata is all about. I'd tell you a little secret, you better believe it. Each word and sentence in fact. I'll tell you why – for it doesn't get bigger than this!

*'Ma ashchen... shob tikh hoye jaabe... dekhish dadubhai... shob dukkho... shob raag... shob moila muche jaabe... Ma ashchen...'* Dada whispered, parting my tresses.

He was right.... and no, I'm not going to translate this.

This time.

I am sure; you will know what I mean. Things get lost in translation most often and Durga Puja is one of our few remaining dreams...

# a fast to remember

A NEWLY-MARRIED INDIAN WOMAN SHARES HER EXPERIENCE OF FASTING FOR HER HUSBAND ON HER FIRST KARVA CHAETH

WORDS NAVNEET BANWAIT

I am on a cycle rickshaw in Chandigarh and the rickshaw *walla* is meandering his way through busy streets. The city is busy preparing for the festive season and is bedecked in frills, colours and lights. I am an artist and so I am a little partial to colours and I notice all the hues. Also, this is the first time that I would be fasting on Karva Chauth so I am more excited about the festivities surrounding this particular festival than Dusshera and Diwali. I notice the orange and yellow bangles, the fuchsia and orange sarees, the green and blue *bindis*, the pink and red lipsticks. I notice the tents put up by the *mehendi wallas* on the roadside. I ask the rickshaw *walla* to stop at one of these tents. I step inside and am greeted by a whole bunch of smiling faces. Amidst giggles and gossip, the women get their hands adorned with *mehendi* (*heena*). I admire the design of my *mehendi*. And as I sit there I am reminded of the days when my mother used to fast, I think to myself how things have changed and I have grown up.

Yes, the first time I heard the name of the festival was from my mother. 'Karva Chauth' comes from a combination of 'Karva' meaning 'diya' and 'Chauth' meaning 'fourth'. The amalgamation of the two words refers to the onset of the festival on the fourth day of the dark fortnight in the month of Kartik. While the custom originated in the North-West part of the country, today it is popular in the whole country. It's on this day that the wives fast for a long and prosperous life of their husbands. On my first Karva Chauth I woke up before dawn and after taking a shower dressed up in ethnic wear. Even at that unearthly hour I was excited to dress up. And I wore

it all, from *bindi* to bangles and earrings to *kangans*! I suddenly felt all grown-up following our rich traditions and rituals. As I ate the *sargi* (*meethi matthi*, *feniya* with milk, *namkeen matthi* with *achaar* and *bhaaji roti*) prepared by my mother-in-law, she told me what all we'd be doing during the rest of the day. As goes the tradition, *sargi* is sent or given to the woman by her mother-in-law. If the mother-in-law lives with the woman, the pre-dawn meal is prepared by the mother-in-law. And as promised at noon time we went to a house in the neighbourhood to hear the *katha* about the origin of this festival. The sincerity with each everybody sat together to hear the tale was inspiring. I was happy to see myself transform from a carefree single girl to a loving wife! The next few hours went in observing the sky change colours from orange to blue, and then of course began the wait for the moon. Once the moon was visible, I viewed its reflection in a vessel filled with water through a sieve, and offered the water to the moon and then turned to my husband to view his face indirectly in the same manner. After which, I had my first sip of water and first bite of food from the hands of my husband. Our elders blessed us and the colourful day came to an end.

This year as I prepare to fast for him again I can't help but think that will these festivals survive the test of time. I sincerely hope they do and don't get lost in celebrations like Valentine's Day. I hope we can all follow this tradition without doubting it and at the same time don't fear that if we don't fast it would bring our spouse ill luck. After all, if we can exchange roses and chocolates in the name of love, we can fast too. Right?

# ganapati bappa moriya

WHEN A MUMBAIKAR LANDED IN DUBAI 15 YEARS BACK SHE WAS NOT SURE SHE WOULD BE ABLE TO BRING GANAPATI BAPPA HOME EACH GANESH CHATURTHI. SHE DIDN'T KNOW THAT HER NEW 'HOME' WOULD GIVE HER A CHANCE TO WELCOME BAPPA WITH THE SAME FERVOUR! SHE NARRATES HER EXPERIENCE.

WORDS SWATI RAVAL

*Ganapati Bappa Moriya* - the sound of this pious chant is etched in my memory. It was an integral part of my childhood and is also an emotion that I want my children to respect. The festivities, colour, gaiety and delicacies of Ganesh Chaturthi are an important part of every Mumbaikar's life. The decorations and processions fill up everyone's heart with a kind of joy that is unforgettable. So when the twists of life brought my family and me to the shores of Dubai, I feared that I'd have to leave behind the festivities that had shaped my childhood and made me the person that I am. However, thanks to the benevolence of Dubai and its leaders and rulers, and of course the blessings of *Ganapati Bappa* I, for the last 15 years, have been bringing *Bappa* home each year.

What started as a simple act of bringing home *Ganapati Bappa's* clay deity, making paper decorations, performing a small *puja* and cooking and distributing *prasad* has now evolved into a much-awaited event. I, along with my friends and family, start preparing for Ganesh Chaturthi in the month of July itself. We begin by discussing the theme for the decorations, with a few friends volunteering to get

decorations for me from India. The festival usually falls towards the end of August or early September. Once the decorations are sorted, we head on the temple in Bur Dubai for the selection of the idol, which is one of our favourite family rituals. Interestingly, over the years a huge number of idols have become available in Dubai. A day before the festival, we decorate the *pandal* and *Bappa*. The next morning, we welcome *Ganapati Bappa* home with an *aarti thali* amidst loud chants of "*Ganapati Bappa Moriya*". And just with his presence *Bappa* spreads joy in the home. Once the *Ganesh Sthapana* is completed, the neighbours drop in for the first *aarti*. I am very particular that the *puja* is performed just like my mother taught me, especially for I would like our children to get familiar with the traditions and it is heart-warming to watch the children adorn Indian wear and participate in the rituals. Another reason why I love the festival is because it brings together the community. It is wonderful to watch everyone pray and eat together. Each year, a certain sense of calmness fills my home.

The celebrations continue with generous intake of lovely *mithais*, and yes, no one can stop at just one *laddo* or *modak*! The dinner, post the *puja*, is another lavish spread. The house is filled with love and treats till the day of *Visarjan*. *Bappa* is worshipped for ten days from *Bhadrapada Shudha Chaturthi* to the *Ananta Chaturdashi* and on the 11th day, the idol is immersed in a river or sea symbolising a ritual see-off of the Lord in his journey towards his abode in Kailash while taking away with him the misfortunes of his devotees. At the time of *Visarjan*, some say a silent prayer, a few get moist-eyed and many begin to look forward to *Bappa's* arrival next year. As for me, just like all the years gone by this time too I will send off *Bappa* with a heavy heart and a fervent prayer, '*Purcha varshi, laukar ya*' (Come back soon again, next year).



Swati Raval (the writer) with one of her sons (she is a mom to two lovely boys) is all smiles on bringing home Ganapati Bappa last year, 2012





# just one little candle

DEEPAWALI AUGURS A CELEBRATION OF THE USHERING IN OF GOOD TIMES WHILE BIDDING ADIEU TO THE DARK TIMES. LET'S GET TOGETHER TO LIGHT OUR SHARE OF THE LAMPS AND MAKE THIS WORLD A FAR MORE BEAUTIFUL PLACE.

WORDS PALLAVI SINGH

*It is better to light just one little candle than to stumble in the dark! Better far that you light just one little candle...all you need is a tiny spark...* these words from the prayer we sang at Notre Dame Academy got ingrained in my consciousness and to this day, I wish I could light someone's life in whatever little manner I could. It is for this reason that I love the festival of lights, Diwali. As a child, I remember how just days before Diwali, we went around our society collecting bricks, which we used to build small *gharkulias* or tiny homes made of bricks and clay that we painted with bright colours and finished them off by placing pots of sugar candy and puffed rice inside them as part of the tradition. I am talking of the days when I lived in a place called Ranchi now in Jharkhand, in India. I am not too sure if such a tradition was practiced in other parts of India too. We would begin our Diwali *pūja* from this tiny home and believe me the pleasure of seeing it in its full glory with *rangoli*, lights, decorations, et al. on the D-Day gave us a sense of pride and happiness.

Diwali as it is popularly called is a festival of lights and across India people celebrate it via symbolic *diyas* and *kandils* or colourful paper lanterns. One of the noted festivals of India besides Holi and Dussehra, Deepawali as it was referred to in the days of the yore is a celebration of prosperity and happiness, of the ushering in of brighter days. Legend has it that when Lord Rama along with wife Sita and brother Lakshmana returned to Ayodhya after serving 14 years in exile, ordered by King Dashratha at the behest of his wife

Kaikeyi, the entire city of Ayodhya was bedecked with *diyas* and flowers to celebrate the return of their prince. Another significant event associated with Diwali is the return of Pandavas after 12 years of *Vanvas* and one year of *agyatavas* meaning living incognito.

Diwali celebrations are spread over five days, from Dhanteras to Bhaiduj. In some places like Maharashtra it starts with Vasu Bara, the day when the cow and calf are worshipped. Dhanteras falls on the 13th day of the second half of the lunar month and is considered an auspicious day for buying utensils and gold, hence the name Dhana. The following days comes Naraka Chaturdashi, the day on which the demon Narakasura was killed by Krishna – an incarnation of Vishnu. It signifies the victory of good over evil and light over darkness. In southern India, this is the actual day of festivities. Hindus wake up before dawn, have a fragrant oil bath and dress in new clothes. They light lamps all around the house and draw elaborate *kolams /rangolis* outside their homes. They perform a special *pūja* with offerings to Krishna or Vishnu, as he liberated the world from the demon Narakasura on this day. It is believed that taking a bath before sunrise, when the stars are still visible in the sky is equivalent to taking a bath in the holy Ganges. After the *pūja*, children burst firecrackers and herald the defeat of the demon. The entire day is filled with rejoicing, feasting, meeting family and friends. The third day is Lakshmi Puja, which marks the most important day of Diwali celebrations in North India. Hindu homes worship Lakshmi,



the goddess of wealth, and Ganesha, the God of auspicious beginnings, and then light little clay pots at homes, to welcome prosperity and well-being.

Following Lakshmi Puja is Govardhan Puja, also called Annakoot, and is celebrated as the day Krishna – an incarnation of god Vishnu – defeated Indra and by the lifting of Govardhana hill to save his kinsmen and cattle from rain and floods. For Annakoot, large quantities of food are decorated symbolising the Govardhan hill lifted by Krishna. In Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, it is celebrated as Bali-Pratipada or Bali Padyami. The day commemorates the victory of Vishnu in his dwarf form Vamana over the demon-king Bali, who was pushed into the *patala*. In Maharashtra, it is called Padava or Nava Diwas or new day. Men present gifts to their wives on this day. Following Govardhan Puja is Bhaiduj, the day on which brothers and sisters meet to express love for each other. It is based on a story when Yama, lord of Death, visited his sister Yami, the river Yamuna. Yami welcomed Yama with an *arti* and they had a feast together. Yama gave a gift to Yami while leaving as a token of his appreciation. So, the day is also called Yama Dwitiya.

Diwali is important for the Jains given that it is the day of remembering Lord Mahavira. The Marwari New Year falls on this day, even as the Gujarati New Year falls a day after marking the beginning of a new fiscal year. The festival also marks the end of the harvest season in most of India. Farmers thank God for the bounty of the year gone by, and pray for a good harvest for the next year. Traditionally, this marked the closing of accounts for businesses dependent on the agrarian cycle. Lakshmi symbolises wealth and prosperity, and her blessings are invoked for a good year ahead. There are two legends that are associated with the worship of Goddess Lakshmi on this day. According to the first legend, on this day, Lakshmi emerged from Kshira Sagar, the 'Ocean of Milk', during the great churning of the oceans - *samudra manthan*. The second legend which is more popular in western India relates to the Vamana avatar of Vishnu, the incarnation he assumed to kill king Bali. On this day, Vishnu came back to his abode the Vaikuntha; so those who worship Goddess Lakshmi receive the benefit of her benevolent mood and are blessed with well-being.

The festival of lights has spiritual connotations too meaning 'the awareness of the inner light'. Central to Hindu mythology is the belief that there is something



beyond the physical body and mind which is pure, infinite, and eternal, called the Atman. The celebration of Diwali as the 'victory of good over evil', refers to the light of higher knowledge dispelling all ignorance. With this awakening comes compassion and the awareness of the oneness of all things - higher knowledge. This brings *anand*, meaning joy or peace. Just as we celebrate the birth of our physical being, Diwali is the celebration of this 'Inner Light'.

Centuries have passed since the birth of the celebrations around Diwali. People have been cleaning homes, white washing them, making colourful *rangolis*, decorating homes with lights of all colours, installing new idols of Lakshmi and Ganesha in place of the old ones and praying to the idols by reciting *aarti*. However, in today's times Diwali is much more than lighting of *diyas*, decorating doorways with marigold flowers, terracotta or brass idols, wall hangings and decorative lights. It augurs of the times when corporates focus on strengthening interpersonal relationships with not only their employees but also clients. It's time to gift, exchange greetings and pleasantries, announce bonus for employee performance. Business houses exchange sweets, dry fruits and other gift items as part of the greetings. People prefer to make bigger purchases at this time of the year because it is considered to be an auspicious time. In the urban domain, societies host Diwali *melas*, where residents exchange greetings, enjoy cultural programmes, play games, relish delicacies ending with a round of fire crackers.

Diwali is not a festival restricted to Indian shores. It is celebrated across the world, particularly those with large populations of Hindu and Sikh origin. These include countries like Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Mauritius, Kenya, Tanzania, South Africa, Guyana, Surinam, Trinidad and Tobago, the Netherlands, Canada, the UK, and the USA. With more and more Indians now migrating to various parts of the world, the number of countries where the festival is celebrated has been gradually increasing. While in some countries it is celebrated mainly by Indian expatriates, in others it has become part of the general local culture.

While the story behind Diwali and the manner of celebration varies from region to region in terms of festive fireworks, worship, lights, sharing of sweets, the essence is the same – to rejoice in the 'Inner Light' - Atman or the underlying 'Reality of all things' - Brahman.





# the good act

THE FESTIVAL OF DUSHERA GIVES US A CHANCE TO NARRATE & SHARE THE GOOD OL' TALE OF THE VICTORY OF GOOD OVER EVIL. AND ALONG WITH THAT IT GIVES US A CHANCE TO WITNESS THE DRAMATIC RAMLEELA AND THE BURNING OF THE EFFIGIES OF RAVANA!

WORDS PAROMITA BARDOLOI  
IMAGES CHETNA KEER

A bird's view of India highlights two important elements of our country, colours and festivals. Yes, we're a nation that takes pride in its 'festive' colours and colourful 'festivals'. And what makes our country's fabric so interesting and diverse is its history of more than 5,000 years. Each part and fable of our country offers a reason to celebrate, and one such lovely reason is Dusshera. As a child, I recall how school books introduced us to the festival and the teachings from it, the victory of good over evil, but I think I understood the meaning behind the festival only when I watched the Ramleela and the Ravana's effigy being burnt in the open grounds! Yes, the drama, colours and fireworks made the lessons far more interesting than the words in the books.

As per Hindu mythology, Dusshera signifies the day when Lord Rama, the king of Ayodhya, defeated Ravana, who had abducted his wife Sita. Lord Rama is said to be the seventh avatar of Lord Vishnu. The defeat of good over evil or Rama over the demon Ravana is celebrated as Dusshera, which revolves around the custom of burning effigies of Ravana, his brother Kumbhakarna and his son, Meghnath. It usually falls in the months of October or November,

which is the tenth day of the month of Ashwin according to Hindu calendar. But burning the effigies is not the only ritual associated with the festival. Lord Rama is said to have performed Chandi Homa to invoke Goddess Durga, who told Rama the secret to the death of Ravana, and even today in India many people perform *homa* to evoke the goddess to bless them with power and prosperity.

But the ritual that most of us are familiar with is of course the Ramleela, the colour and drama that we witness in the days preceding Dusshera. Ramleela is the enacting of the Ramayana, which is staged in open areas and attended by all the people in the village, city or town. It begins with a procession of the actors and a small prayer. In villages and small towns, the actors consists of the local people who practice for months to get the lines and emotions right and also dual up as craftsmen, costume designers, set designers, writers, dancers and singers. At least one person in each family is involved in enacting the play thus making it a festival for everyone. Ramleela emphasis the win of good over evil, it shows the goodness of Lord Rama who is named as "Maryada Pursottam," which means "the best among the

dignified." And though over the years the face of Ramleela has changed dramatically and sadly it sees less attendance, despite the use of technology and professional actors being used to enhance its appeal, two things have remained the same. One, the old flavour and joy is still not lost in this age of modernism. Two, the teachings and essence behind the act is still as pure. Interestingly, the Ramleela is the best street play ever produced by India and over the years, it has even travelled overseas! And that explains why people across ages still come to see Lord Rama defeat Ravana, who was supposed to have ten heads. In mythology, the heads represented lust, anger, delusion, greed, pride, jealousy, mind, intellect, will and ego. The lesson behind the whole act is to defeat these qualities in our own self, which is represented by Ravana by our virtues represented by Rama. After effigies and Ramleela, the next thing that comes to my mind about Dusshera is of course the sweets. Dusshera is celebrated with large offerings and servings of *jalebis*.

Indeed, the drama, fireworks and sweets make



the festival but what truly defines it is the simple lesson, victory of good. And again as this year I wait for the festival I hope and pray that the country too overcomes all its problems and as Rama returns to Ayodhya amidst the lights and celebrations, so should goodness and fortune return and reign the country forever. The image above shows some such evils from road rage to child abuse and corruption to dowry. Yes, times have changed but the essence is still the same and as pure.

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The Ramleela, effigies and *jalebis* makes up for the celebrations in northern India and some parts of Maharashtra. In the eastern part of our country Dusshera is celebrated as Vijayadashami. It is celebrated as Goddess Durga defeats Mahisura, the demon. Vijaya Dashami or Durga Puja coincides with the harvesting season. So the Goddess is prayed to and evoked to bless the farmers with fertility of the soil and rains, to bring in fine harvest. The Goddess is worshipped across *pandals*, homes and temples with absolutely amazing craftsmanship and devotion.

# navratri, worshipping the goddess

FASTING & FEASTING, WORSHIPPING & SHARING,  
DANCING & SINGING... THE NINE DAYS OF NAVRATRI  
GIVE US A CHANCE TO EXPRESS OUR GRATITUDE  
TOWARDS *MAA DURGA*, INDULGE IN LAVISH MEALS  
WITH OUR LOVED ONES, DANCE TO THE BEATS OF THE  
DANDIYA AND ABOVE ALL REAFFIRM OUR FAITH IN THE  
POWER OF THE MOTHER, GODDESS DURGA

WORDS CHANDNI LAHOTI

IMAGES VINIT.V.MANJREKAR & DEBASISH NANDY

The sounds of *Jai Mata Di* purifying the air, beautiful idols of Goddess Durga in every nook and corner of our streets, invitations from neighbours to attend the colourful and pious *Mata Ki Chowki*, lovely sounds of the playing of *dandiya* sticks, swirls and whirls of stunning *ghaghras*, aroma of the *singhara barfi* and *aloo halwa*... just these words are enough to paint the picture of our country during the festival of Navratri in North India. Yes, soon it will be that time of the year when one and all will forget their differences and get together for a *dandiya* or *garba* session. Join me as I re-visit and wait for the immensely powerful and positive vibrations of Navratri to fill up our lives.

In Navratri, we invoke the energy aspect of God in the form of the mother referred to as Durga, which literally means the remover of miseries of life. She is also referred to as *Devi* (Goddess) or *Shakti* (energy or power) or *Maa/Mata* (mother).

Our worship of *Shakti* re-confirms the scientific theory that energy is imperishable and cannot be created or destroyed. It is always there, always alive, always intact and empowering. I still remember as a kid asking my grandfather why did we call Goddess Durga '*Maa*' and what he explained to me is still so vivid in my mind. He said, "It's only a mother who can never refuse what her child asks from/ of her." And yes, such is the faith in Durga, a faith that is undeterred, strong and eternal. Interestingly, this is one festival that lays emphasis on the supreme qualities of a mother, the creative aspect of the absolute. At this point, I'd like to mention a Sanskrit *shloka* that reflects the immense belief of the devotees in the power of *Maa Durga*. "*Ya devi sarva bhutesu, shanti rupena sansthita* (Goddess who is omnipresent as the personification of universal mother), *Ya devi sarva bhutesu, shakti rupena sansthita* (The Goddess who is omnipresent as the



Image: Vinit.V.Manjrekar



On Ashtami the *puja thali* (plate) is prepared with incense (*dhoop*), *deepak* (earthen lamps with cotton balls dipped in *ghee* oil), *chunri*, flowers, *bindi*, bangles and *prasad* to perform the Mahashtami Puja

The sounds of  
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Ki Chowki**,  
lovely sounds of  
the playing of  
*dandiya* sticks,  
swirls and whirls  
of stunning  
*ghaghras*,  
aroma of  
the *singhara  
barfi* and *aloo  
halwa*...

trumpet lead

embodiment of power), *Ya devi sarva bhutesu, matra rupena sansthita* (The Goddess who is omnipresent as the symbol of peace), *Namastasyai, namastasyai, namastasyai, namo namaha* (I bow to her, I bow to her, I bow to her again & again!) It is this love and faith for Durga that makes the believers celebrate and worship her nine avatars. During the nine nights and ten days of the festival, nine forms or avatars of *Shakti* are worshipped (To know more, read box). Many devotees fast for all nine days, while others fast in pairs with a family member. Fasting is another way of expressing gratitude and love towards the *Maa*.

As for me, out of the ten days two days hold a special place, the eighth day known as Ashtami and the tenth day known as Vijayadashmi/Dussehra. On Ashtami, my grandmother used to prepare the Ashtami *puja thaali* (plate) with incense (*dhoop*), *deepak* (earthen lamps with cotton balls dipped in *ghee* oil), *chunri*, flowers, *bindi*, bangles and *prasad* to perform the Mahashami Puja. There was a special *bhog* prepared on this occasion to offer to the Goddess. I remember how as a child, I along with my friends and cousins, would wait to get our hands on the lavish meal, which comprised *kheer*, *lauki halwa*, *aaloo halwa* and more! The other favourite day involved sitting atop the shoulders of my grandfather and watching the effigy of the Ravana being lit! My friends from Bihar, Kashmir, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana tell me of the custom that is followed in their households on the eighth or ninth day i.e. worshipping of nine young girls. It is called Kanya Puja and is usually performed on the ninth day, Navmi; the girls representing the nine forms of Goddess Durga. The little girls have a good time as their feet are washed and they are adorned with *kumkum* on their forehead, treated to a lovely meal and given new clothes amongst other gifts. And while the festival is about praying and expressing gratitude towards *Maa* Durga it is not confined to just that. The popular, colourful and celebratory Dandiya Ras is an event that is organised at many places. Dandiya or Garba, originating from Gujarat, is an inseparable part of the Navratri and people swing to *dandiya* beats in traditional attires all through the nine nights. In South India, people set up steps and place dolls and figurines on them. This is known as *golu* and people visit each other's house to admire these beautiful displays.

I feel that this is one festival that allows us to pray, fast, feast and rejoice at the same time. The *shlokas* purify the home, aroma of delicacies fills up our hearts and stomachs, *diyas* bring light to our lives and *dandiya raas* keeps our spirits high. And at the end each one of us experience divinity, one that sends across a strong message that no matter how strong and tough the evil be there is a power that would shield us and guide us towards the light of knowledge, power and wisdom.

# THE NINE AVATARS OF MAA

Among the Nine Durgas, *Maa Shailputri* is considered to be the first manifestation of Goddess Durga and worshipped on the first day of Navratri. The embodiment of the power of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, she rides a bull and carries a trident and a lotus in her two hands. Her vehicle is the Bull, Nandi. *Bhramacharini* is worshipped on the second day and is the second form of the Goddess. A true *yogini* who performs *tapasya* or meditation, she holds a rosary in her right hand and a water utensil in her left hand. Filled with bliss and happiness, she is the way to emancipation, *moksha*. With the moon (Chandra) on her forehead, riding the lion is the golden-complexioned third facet of Durga called *Chandraghanta*. With ten hands, three eyes and holding weapons in her hands, she is the apostle of bravery and possesses great strength to fight in the battle against demons. *Kushmanda*, the creator of the universe is the fourth form of the mother Goddess, and is worshipped on the fourth day. The universe was no more than a void full of darkness until her light spread in all directions like rays from the sun, which she is aligned with and brought in illumination. She rides a tiger and has eight arms, which hold weapons and the lotus. Because of her affiliation with the sun, she blesses her devotees with wisdom. Representing motherhood is the fifth avatar called *Skandamata* holding her son *Skanda* or *Kartikeya* in her hand. Bright-complexioned and holding lotus in two of her hands, she is associated with the fire (*agni*) element. Born to sage *Kata* is the sixth avatar called *Katyayani*, which represents the daughter form of Durga offering the loving energy of a daughter to the mother. However, she can also be a warrior and fight against injustice as she holds a sword in one hand and a lotus in the other. She rides a lion and is golden in colour. Worshipped on the seventh day is *Kaal-ratri*, black like Goddess *Kali*, holding a sparkling sword in her right hand, she battles all evil. Her gesture of protection assures us of freedom from fear and troubles. Her vehicle is the donkey. The eighth day is the celebration of *Mahagauri*, the calm, peaceful and intelligent form of Durga. She wears white clothes has four arms, and rides on a bull. Her right hand is in the pose of allaying fear and her right lower hand holds a trident. The left upper hand holds a *damaru* (a small rattle drum) and the lower one is in the pose of granting boons to her devotees. This eighth day also known as *Durgashtami* or *Durga Ashtami* or *Mahashtami* is a very imperative day during Navratri as the whole family comes together to worship Durga. There is also a belief that Goddess *Kali* appeared from the forehead of Durga on this auspicious day to annihilate *Chanda*, *Munda* and *Raktabija*, the demons. *Siddhidatri* is the ninth form of Goddess, worshipped on the ninth day. *Siddhidatri* has supernatural healing powers. She has four arms and she is always in a blissful happy enchanting pose. Her vehicle is the lion. This day is popularly called *Mahanavmi* and as per Hindu beliefs, *Durga Pooja* on *Maha Navami* is equivalent to the *Durga Pooja* performed on all nine days of *Durga Navaratri*.

Image: Debasish Nandy



# the spirit of sacrifice

EID-AL-ADHA IS NOT A RACE TO BUY THE MOST EXPENSIVE ANIMAL FOR SACRIFICE BUT IT IS A DAY THAT STANDS FOR THE WILLINGNESS TO LET GO AND FOLLOW THE ALMIGHTY'S COMMAND

WORDS NASRIN MODAK-SIDDIQI

Just as the delirium of Ramzaan winds down, the preparations for the next Eid get queued up. The frenzied bazaars provide a rich taste of the festive atmosphere - a rush to the tailors to stitch new clothes; that mad hunt to find matching accessories to go with the dress; new curtains and cushions to complement the fresh coat of paint at home; young girls scouting for trending designs and the darkest hue of *mehendi* cones; ladies discussing how to do justice to the upcoming freezer full of meats and sharing recipes of mutton, *kalejis* and *botis* - all of it make for a happy, cheerful portrait.

Celebrated two months and ten days post Eid-al-Fitr (Ramzaan Eid), Eid-al-Adha or Bakri Eid as they love to call it in India also sets forth a competitive race to shop for the perfect goat or two. Days before the festival, makeshift *bakra mandis* are set up. These cramped markets aren't always a pretty sight and are definitely not for the faint-hearted but if you dare to make a trip here, you could end up sighting some very interesting breeds of goat and sheep. Several large ones, some limp too, some white, black, brown and some spotted ones in various

breeds including *barbari jamunapari* and *desi* are found here. Many of them are dyed and often over-accessorised with shiny decorates and colourful antennas, making for a good photo op. While a decent goat could cost around ₹10,000 (AED 600), the rate for certain breeds can be over a lakh but prices never prove to be a dampener; the *mandis* are always full. It's just that, amidst all the chaos, choosing the right animal could take an entire day.

Back home, the rest of the family waits anxiously and sets the stage to welcome the new member. The moment the vehicle with the animal arrives, everyone including the neighbours go crazy to be the first ones to catch a single glimpse of the creature and give their comments about its health, price and size. It's interesting to see how the owner and his entourage then roam around the neighbourhood holding the rope attached to the animal, flaunting their latest buy only until a bigger and more expensive animal arrives in the area and comparisons are drawn.

In the days preceding Eid, children are busy feeding, grazing and bathing these

animals. Some even give their pet a name and get emotionally attached to them. Their young hearts are torn on the day of Eid-Al-Adha, which roughly translates to the 'celebration of sacrifice', a festival that memorialises the deep, selfless love of Prophet Ibrahim for Allah through his readiness to sacrifice his son Ishmael to God. But the kids know that to sacrifice their tamed animal on this day is synonymous with the ability to forgo worldly desires and attachments for the sake of the Almighty.

In the morning of Eid, Muslims dress in their best and perform the Eid prayer at a mosque or an eidgah. The air resonates with the recitation of *takbir*, the declaration of faith. Post *namaaz*, the sacrifice of the animals begins wherein participants recite the name of Allah along with an offering statement and supplication as a reminder that all life is sacred. About one-third of the meat is given to less fortunate people so that they too can join in the celebrations, another one-third is shared with relatives and the balance of the meat is cooked over days as part of a feast to share with family and friends. Of course, no Eid is complete without everyone's favourite *sheer kurma* and *sevaiya*.

Eid al-Adha is also the Eid of the pilgrims as it marks the completion of the Hajj, a pilgrimage which has its origins rooted in Prophet Ibrahim's life. On this day, pilgrims descend Mount Arafat in Saudi Arabia and pelt the satanic pillars in Mina with pebbles, similar to the stoning of the devil by the prophet when the Satan tried to dissuade him from sacrificing his son. Hajj is an obligation for every able-bodied Muslim who can afford to make the trip in order to renew their faith and sense of purpose in the world. Every year around two million Muslims from all over the world converge at Mecca, wearing simple white clothes and standing before the Kaaba, a house built by Prophet Ibrahim praising Allah. This goes to show that everyone is equal in the eyes of the Almighty.

However, in the frenzy of things, one must not forget the true essence of the festival. Eid-Al-Adha is not a race to buy the most expensive animal for sacrifice. Allah doesn't want the meat of an animal or its skin, nor is he going to assess you based on it. The Almighty will judge you based on your intentions because in the end, it's between you and Him anyway!

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**The story behind the animal sacrifice:** When Prophet Ibrahim had dreams where he was commanded by God to slaughter his only son Ismael (who was born after years) with a sharp knife; his wife and he were distressed but being a Prophet he knew what was expected of him. Rather than protesting, Ismael accepted this command from God as his presumed fate, followed his father to the altar and willingly presented his hands and legs to be bound to be positioned for slaughter. Just as the Prophet raised the razor-sharp knife, uttered the name of God and was about to strike Ismael, God commanded angel Jibrael to replace the child with a sheep. Thus, both prophets Ibrahim and Ismael, who were tested by their Lord, succeeded in their spiritual faith. Eid-Al-Adha is a reminder of this sacrifice and an undying love for God.

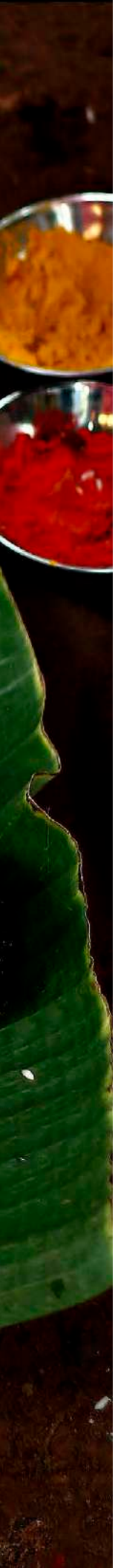


trumpet lead

# carnival in Kerala

SOUNDS OF *CHENDA*, PATTERNS OF *POOKKALAM*, SIGHTS OF *VALLAMKALI* AND THE SPICES OF *SADYA*... ONAM BRINGS TO MIND A POTPOURRI OF LOVELY MEMORIES AND AROMAS

WORDS BONNY CHERIAN  
IMAGE VINIT.V.MANJREKAR



There many ways to know that the town is getting ready to celebrate Onam. The resonating sounds of the *chenda* and the rhythmic singing and clapping of *Kaikottikali* being one. And the fragrance of *pookkalam* and the procession of majestically embellished elephants being another. Yes, it's the streets of Kerala that come alive and send across the message that the state is gearing up for Onam. Ask any Malayali to sum up his thoughts on this high-spirited harvest festival and pat will come the reply, "It's a celebration that brings together the entire state", and it truly does and how.

When I was little, blending fact and fable, my mother used to tell me the story of a powerful *asura* king Mahabali, whose magnanimity and popularity amongst his people made the Gods envious of him. They sought Lord Vishnu's help, who guised as a *vamana* (dwarf Brahmin) went to the king and was granted a wish. Mahabali promised him all the land that he could cover in three steps! *Vamana* had grown so huge that he could step from heaven to earth, and earth to the lower worlds in two simple steps. King Mahabali, being unable to fulfill the promise of three paces of land to him, offered his head for the third step. *Vamana* then placed his foot on King Mahabali's head and sent him down to the netherworld, allowing him to visit his people just once a year. And it is with this belief and spirit that the Malayalis all over the world prepare for the homecoming of their benevolent king on Onam. It recalls the sacrifice of the great king, his true devotion to God, his human pride and his ultimate redemption. Onam welcomes the spirit of a great king, and assures him that his people are happy and wish him well.

"Onam is a ten-day event that starts with Atham, first day, followed by Chithira, Chodhi, Visakam, Anizham, Thriketa, Moolam, Pooradam, Uthradam and ends with Thiruvonam, the tenth day," shares D. Raju, executive member, Kerala Samajam, Chandigarh, "It is on the first day itself that the children and women of the house start making the *pookkalam* (flower *rangoli*) using *thumba* and *thummichittu* among other flowers. Elaborate designs beautify the *tharavads* (courtyards) and in each of the subsequent days, more flowers are added to make the *pookkalam* grand." R Nanda Kumaran, a journalist, who is now based in North India shares, "One childhood memory I cherish most about Onam is the ritual of getting up in the

morning and gathering fresh flowers with a group of friends." And of course if you are in Kerala, you would be creating many more such memories to cherish. You can catch a glimpse of the traditional and cultural events. "*Vallamkali* (boat race) in the backwaters is the highlight of Anizham. *Chundan Vallams* (snake boats) occupied by skilled oarsmen, whose synchronised arm work make the boats appear to be slithering in water, is a spectacular sight to behold and something we miss staying outside Kerala. The sound of the *chenda*, *udukku* (percussion instruments) and *Puli kali* performance (traditional form of art where performers paint their bodies in bright yellow, red and black spots and lines to resemble tigers) adds colour and life to the fiesta," avers D. Raju. Chitra Nair, a journalist who was born and raised in Ahmedabad. "We practice for days before the final Thiruvathirakali performance on Onam. Decked in *kasavu* set saree and traditional jewellery, singing and dancing in a circular formation, the women-folk reinforce the spirit of celebration in their own way," remarks Chitra. On Thiruvonam, after the morning rituals, kids and elders alike take part in various Onakalikal (festive games) till the most awaited Onasadya is served. "This is one day when our entire family makes it a point to gather at one place, and sit down for this extravagant vegan feast that consists of rice, *parippu* (dal) curry, *ghee*, *sambhar*, *avial*, *erissery*, *pulisseri*, *kootucurry thoran*, *olan*, *rasam*, curd, *pappad*, banana, *sarkarapuratti*, banana chips, *injikari*, lime/mango pickle and *adaprathamam payasam*," he adds, "A specific order is followed while serving the eatables on a banana leaf." Yes, being away from home is tough shares Ajay Kuriakose Jacob, an entrepreneur, from Muscat, "We start preparing the Onasadya the previous night and spend Thiruvonam in the company of loved ones, and this one day is the most special for all of us." NK Pillai, who too has been away from Kerala for the last 40 years, feels that recreating the merriment of Onam in a distant land is tough but is also wonderful to see the whole community come together, "I miss the charm of the festival spread over a period of ten days but we still make the most of the one day by indulging in Thiruvathirakali, Kaikottikali, Bharatanatyam, Onakalikal and more."

Yes, such is the charm of Onam that even being away from home, it infects us with a sense of belongingness.



# kuch meetha ho jaye!

WHAT'S A FESTIVAL WITHOUT LOADS OF *MEETHA*? WHAT'S A FESTIVAL WITHOUT SOME WEIGHT GAIN? WHAT'S A FESTIVAL WITHOUT *GHEE-DRIPPING MITHAI*? WHAT'S A FESTIVAL WITHOUT A COLOURFUL & SWEET *THALI*? YES, WHAT'S A FESTIVAL WITHOUT A SWEET BITE? PRESENTING THE BIG FAT INDIAN *MITHAI TAMASHA*! HERE'S WHAT YOU NEED TO COOK & GORGE (AND SHARE!) THIS FESTIVE SEASON.

ARTWORK, WORDS & RECIPES RITU DUA

# फिफनी फिरनी



500 ml. full cream milk



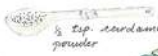
3 tbsp. soaked rice



a few strands saffron



pistachios blanched



1/2 tsp. cardamom powder



1/4 cup sugar

1. Boil milk in a non-stick pan.
2. Add cardamom powder and saffron.
3. Add coarsely ground rice.
4. Keep stirring till cooked & thick.
5. Add sugar.
6. Transfer into Kasseis (earthen bowls).
7. Sprinkle chopped pistachios.



ENJOY AND STAY!!

# DRY FRUIT KHEER मेवे की खीर



1 litre milk



30-40 gms makhane



10-15 walnuts



20-25 cashew seeds



20-25 almonds



1 tbsp. chironji (charoli)



1 tsp. cardamom powder



raisins



1/4 cup sugar



1/2 can condensed milk

1. Boil milk in a heavy bottom pan.
2. Add chopped dry fruits.
3. Keep stirring till thick.
4. Add sugar and condensed milk.
5. Add cardamom powder.
6. Serve hot or cold!



# Melichur Ladoo मोलेचुर के लड्डू



2 1/2 cup gram flour



1/2 cup saffron



1/4 cup milk



orange colour



1 tsp cardamom seeds



ghee for frying



10 almonds



10 pistachios

1. Cook sugar in 3 cups of water.
2. Add milk + saffron + colour.
3. Make gram flour batter... pouring consistency.
4. Heat ghee, pour & pass batter through a perforated spoon to make boondi.
5. Fry, remove, drain and put into syrup.
6. Add cardamom seeds.
7. Shape the ladoo.
8. Garnish with pistachios and almonds.



# Cocobut Parippu Payasam



soaked split bengal gram (chana dal) 2 1/2 cup



soaked yellow moong dal 2 1/2 cup



ghee



cashew nuts 10-12



scraped coconut 1/2 cup



milk 1 1/2 cup



jaggery (grated) 1/2 cup



ghee



ghee

1. Soak coconut till golden.
2. Soak dal in 2 1/2 cup ghee in a non-stick pan.
3. Add milk & 1 1/2 cup water. Cook till done. Mash.
4. ADD JAGGERY.
5. Add coconut, mix well.
6. Add cashews, save some for garnishing.
7. Add 2 tbsp ghee if cook for 3 to 4 minutes.



GARNISH WITH GASHEN NUTS.

SERVE HOT!

# FENIYA फेनिया



feniya



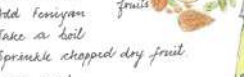
milk 1 cup



sugar 2 1/2 cup



milk 1 cup



chopped dry fruits

1. Heat milk.
2. Add Feniya.
3. Take a boil.
4. Sprinkle chopped dry fruit.

LEAVE HOT!



# Gulab Jamun गुलाम जामुन



1/2 cup khoya grated



1/4 cup paneer (cottage cheese)



3 tbsp refined flour (maida)



2 cups sugar



1/2 cup water



green cardamom powder



ENJOY!!

1. Mash khoya & paneer.
2. Add soda, refined flour, cardamom powder & a little water to make a soft dough.
3. Shape into balls.
4. Heat ghee, deep fry on low heat till golden.
5. Prepare sugar syrup.
6. Soak gulab jamuns in the sugar syrup.

# CHUM CHUM चम-चम



1/2 cup maida plain flour



1 cup cottage cheese (paneer)



2 cups sugar



pistachios



1 cup condensed milk 100 ml

1. Mix maida & paneer... knead well... Make oval-shaped balls.
2. Prepare sugar syrup.
3. Add paneer balls.
4. Cook until fluffy & double in size.
5. Let these cool.
6. Add saffron to condensed milk.
7. Pour over chum chum... garnish with chopped pistachios.

SERVE CHILLED!



# Jalebi जलेबी



1 cup refined flour



1/2 cup yogurt



water



3 cups sugar



2 cups water



1 tsp milk



ADD SAFFRON



Heat ghee



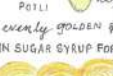
DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 HOURS. SERVE HOT!



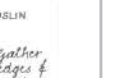
DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 HOURS. SERVE HOT!



POUR BATTER ONTO A MUSLIN CLOTH



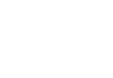
DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 HOURS. SERVE HOT!



Heat ghee



DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 HOURS. SERVE HOT!



POUR BATTER ONTO A MUSLIN CLOTH



DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 HOURS. SERVE HOT!



POUR BATTER ONTO A MUSLIN CLOTH



DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 HOURS. SERVE HOT!

# Phirni फिरनी



500 ml.  
Full cream  
milk



3 tbsp.  
soaked rice

a few  
strands  
saffron



½ tsp. cardamom  
powder



pistachios  
blanched



¾ cup sugar

1. Boil milk in a non-stick pan
2. Add cardamom powder and saffron
3. Add coarsely ground rice.
4. Keep stirring till cooked & thick.
5. Add sugar
6. Transfer into kassores (earthen bowls)
7. Sprinkle chopped pistachios.

CHILL AND SERVE!!



THIS  
EID-AL-ADHA  
ENJOY GENEROUS  
HELPINGS OF PHIRNI

# DRY FRUIT KHEER

## मेवों की खीर



1 litre  
milk



30-40 gms.  
makhane



10-15  
walnuts



20-25  
cashew nuts



1 tsp.  
cardamom  
powder



20-25  
almonds



1 tbsp. chironji  
(charoli)



raisins  
½ tin  
condensed milk



¼ cup  
sugar

1. Boil milk in a heavy bottom pan.
2. Add chopped dry fruits.
3. Keep stirring till thick.
4. Add sugar and condensed milk.
5. Add cardamom powder.
6. Serve hot or cold!



# Motichoor Ladoo

## मांतेचूर के लड्डू



2½ cup gram flour



saffron

1½ cup sugar



¼ cup milk



orange colour

1 tbsp cardamom seeds



ghee for frying



10 almonds



10 pistachios

- 1 Cook sugar in 3 cups of water.
- 2 Add milk + saffron + colour.
- 3 Make gram flour batter... pouring consistency.
- 4 Heat ghee, pour & pass batter through a perforated spoon to make boondi.
- 5 Fry, remove, drain and put into syrup.
- 6 Add cardamom seeds.
- 7 Shape the ladoos.
- 8 Garnish with pistachios and almonds.



NO ONE  
CAN STOP  
AT JUST ONE  
MOTICHOOR  
LADOO ON  
GANESH  
CHATURTHI

# Coconut Parippu Payasam



soaked split bengal gram (chana dal) 2+bsp



soaked yellow moong dal 2+bsp



ghee



cashew nuts 15-20



milk 1½ cups

scraped coconut ½ cup



jaggery (grated) 6+bsp

Saute cashews in a little ghee.  
Saute coconut till golden.  
Saute dals in 2+bsp ghee in a non-stick pan.

Add milk & 1½ cup water. Cook till done. Mash.

ADD JAGGERY  
Add coconut. Mix well.  
Add cashews, save some for garnishing.

Add 2+bsp ghee & cook for 3 to 4 minutes.



GARNISH WITH CASHEW NUTS.

SERVE HOT!

COCONUT  
PARIPPU  
PAYASAM,  
A SWEET  
TOUCH TO  
ONAM'S  
ONASADYA

# FENIYA

फेनिया



milk 1 cup



1. Heat milk.
  2. Add Feniyan
  3. Take a boil
  4. Sprinkle chopped dry fruit.
- SERVE HOT!



FENIYA,  
PART OF THE  
TRADITIONAL  
KARVA CHAUGH  
SARGI

# Gulab Jamun



+ 2 cups water



green cardamom powder

1. Mash khoya & paneer.
2. Add soda, refined flour, cardamom powder & a little water to make a soft dough.
3. Shape into balls.



4. Heat ghee, deep fry on low heat till golden.
5. Prepare sugar syrup.
6. Soak gulabjamuns in the sugar syrup.

ENJOY !!

DIWALI  
DHAMAKA  
WITH  
GULAB  
JAMUN

# CHUM CHUM

चम-चम



½ cup maida plain flour



1 cup cottage cheese (paneer)



sweetened condensed milk 200 ml.



2 cups sugar



pistachio

1. Mix maida & paneer... Knead well...  
Make oval shaped balls.
2. Prepare sugar syrup.
3. Add paneer balls.
4. Cook until fluffy & double in size.
5. Let these cool.
6. Add saffron to condensed milk.
7. Pour over chum chum... garnish with chopped pistachios.



SERVE CHILLED!

CHUM CHUM  
FOR THE  
DURGA PUJA  
FESTIVITIES

# Jalebi

जलेबी



1 cup refined flour



½ cup yogurt



water



whisk to a smooth pouring consistency

KEEP FOR 24 HOURS



3 cups sugar



2 cups water



1 tbsp milk

cook to one string consistency, remove scum

ADD SAFFRON

POUR BATTER ONTO A MUSLIN CLOTH



Heat ghee



gather edges & tie to make a tight potli



Squeeze round spirals into ghee

CUT A 3mm HOLE IN THE POTLI



Deep fry till evenly GOLDEN & CRISP  
DRAIN & SOAK IN SUGAR SYRUP FOR 2-3 MNTS.  
SERVE HOT!



LARGE  
OFFERINGS  
OF JALEBI FOR  
DUSSHERA



# More room for the India groom?

THE INDIAN GROOM HAS ALWAYS BEEN A VICTIM OF FASHION NEGLECT. BUT WITH THE NEW-AGE MAN BEING MORE CONSCIOUS OF THE SELF-IMAGE AND MORE WILLING TO RISE FROM THE SHADOWS ONTO THE SPOTLIGHT, THE BRIDES ARE IN FOR SOME SERIOUS COMPETITION.

WORDS PARESH LAMBA

IMAGES PARESHLAMBASIGNATURES.IN



The new-age grooms demand designs that are astutely well-shaped and compliment the body perfectly, without negating masculinity.



Fashion is cyclic, which is why we are witnessing some of the older trends making a comeback in Hindi cinema, followed by that on the runway and of course the wardrobes.



Colours like dark maroons and regal purples have replaced the safe vanilla hue.



Be it a flamboyant or a less elaborate outfit, the focus is on the finishing, it should be rich.



It has almost been a given that the brides steal the show during weddings, leaving little or no room for the groom to be “noticed”. But with the fashion bug biting the Indian groom, he no longer plays second fiddle to the bride as far as dressing is concerned. Black and white clichéd suits or the vanilla *sherwanis* are passé, giving way to customised designs that have never been seen before. And what has fostered this further is the Indian fashion industry entering into a foray of distinct creativity. It’s a market that is mature, willing to experiment with textures and textiles and well, ready to give the image of fashion itself a makeover.

Clothing in India varies from region to region depending on the geography, ethnicity and cultural traditions of the people. Historically, men’s clothing has evolved from simple *langotas*, loincloths or *kurta pyjamas* worn simply to cover the body, to elaborate costumes used not only for daily wear but also on festive occasions. The reason for this transformation is that the men of today are beginning to give increasing attention to the way they look and

especially the way they are being perceived. They are willing to go that extra mile to make sure what they are wearing makes them stand out of the crowd. The new-age grooms demand designs that are astutely well-shaped and compliment the body perfectly, without negating masculinity. Tailoring is given far more importance as compared to design. And the media that both captures and reflects native and international fashion trends has a huge role to play in it.

But the other big influence on wedding wear has been our very own Bollywood. During the yesteryears, clothes were designed primarily to reflect the society’s favourites or rather the focus was on period dressing. In today’s films however, designers are creating theme-based clothes for stars and creating the right mood. Fashion is cyclic, which is why we have seen some of the older trends making a comeback in Hindi cinema. But at the same time, Bollywood is also creating a new handwriting. And the movie-goer is rightfully smitten. With weddings and other functions being associated with over-the-top song and dance sequences, people are now replicating the same in real life. More and more people want to emulate Bollywood actors.



Because of this exalted status, the clothing they wear takes on positive associations. They do this by using the same products the stars endorse. Clients walk into my office holding pictures of their favourite celebrities and ask us to recreate the same magic with clothes!

With reference to the current trends, they include bright colours, and not just the light shades that were seen the last season. Ornate workmanship like *zardozi/applique/ chikan* etc. is being used a lot. *Sherwanis* are shorter rather than long, and *bandhgala* suits are being paired with *Jodhpuri* pants - creating a sort of fusion look. Colours, from dark maroons and regal purples to stern black for groom wear, are being used on the classic *sherwani* and *kurta* that blend it with modernity. There's also a mixing together of a sombre palette that is punctuated with bursts of hypnotic colours such as pinks and reds. Remember - layering is the key. Don't be afraid to mix different patterns, textures and colours. Flair and volume has also become a trend. Attention to detail is also very

essential. Some grooms might want something more flamboyant while others may opt for something a less elaborate, but rich in finishing. Understanding where they come from and what their personalities are like is something a designer must incorporate into the designs. Occasionally the bride and groom want to stick to a theme; it may involve choosing similar colour palettes and patterns.

Indian men's wear today is essentially rooted in tradition yet embracing the new. My new collection has been designed in keeping with the celebratory mode of the fifteen years I have spent in the fashion world. It is an embodiment of the style, sophistication and masculinity that pervades all of the designs. But this time around, we push the envelope with bolder silhouettes and fabrics that are sheer exquisiteness. The *sherwanis* designed for grooms are impeccably tailored with exquisite embroidery on fabrics of plush paisley that are guaranteed to make any groom feel like a *nawab* and make his bride go weak in the knees!



# gaana -shaana khaana -peena...

WORDS & ARTWORK SANKET B JACK

WHEN WORDS OF *BHAKTI* GET SOAKED IN THE FLAVOUR OF ITEM NUMBERS, WHEN GOOGLE 'GOD' HUNTS DOWN THE MOON FOR US, WHEN FIRE CRACKERS LEND A HAND TO TROUBLE THE UNCLE IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WE DISLIKE, WHEN SALES FOOL US INTO BUYING MORE...

tax free entertainment



A KAAT JAYEGA!



KARWA CHAETH AND NO MOON IN SIGHT!



USE GOOGLE MUM!

FUN,  
FLAIR,  
FEST!



- S. B. J. C. K.

DIETING??  
AFTER FESTIVAL..!!!



BONUS?

BONUS?



WHEN DIETING GOES FOR A TOSS AT THE VERY SIGHT OF A PLATEFUL OF MITHAI, WHEN WE DRESS UP IN NEW CLOTHES EACH DAY & NIGHT, WHEN OUR EMPLOYERS SHOW THEIR 'GENEROSITY' IN THE NAME OF BONUS...

tax free entertainment

WHICH TOP TO WEAR FOR  
TONIGHT'S GARBA?



BONUS??



KUCH  
MEETHA  
HO  
JAYE?????

THIS FESTIVE SEASON LET YOUR HOME NARRATE THE RICH TALES OF INDIAN CRAFTSMANSHIP, TEXTILES AND COLOURS



This is a story of a 20-year-old collaboration between contemporary designs and traditional artisans, which explores colour, texture and contrast. Their stunning range of home furnishings and accessories draw inspiration from the rich fabrics and techniques of India and lends them a contemporary twist. Available at Shades of India's flagship store at Meharchand Market, New Delhi & [shadesofindia.com](http://shadesofindia.com)



Want your living space to tell a story? A designer collection of home furnishings that is inspired by the wonderful colours of Delhi's phoolmandi (flower market) would be perfect to add some gorgeous hues to your home. And if you are a Dilliwalla you need to get your hands on this.

Available at [bringhomestories.com](http://bringhomestories.com)



If you have a weakness for Indian craftsmanship and techniques like handlooms, weaving, hand embroidery and tie-&-dye then you would love the handcrafted home products from Bandhini Home. Take a pick from cushions, bed spreads, throws and more.

Available at [bandhinihome.com](http://bandhinihome.com)



the globe & the gully

# aloha!

## the promising paradise

THE PICTURESQUE WATERS AND SKIES DON'T MAKE THIS DESTINATION, IT IS THE WARM SPIRIT OF ALOHA (AND YES, THE FOOD TOO) THAT MAKES IT WORTH A VISIT. LET THE POSITIVE ATTITUDE & EASY LIFESTYLE OF THE LOCALS PUT YOU IN A TRANCE. ON A TRIP TO HONOLULU, HAWAII.

WORDS ARUSHI DUTT

IMAGES HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY (HTA)



A couple snorkeling  
Image: Hawaii  
Tourism Authority  
(HTA) / Tor Johnson

The slightly salty yet cool taste was still in my mouth when I left the waters after a magical encounter with a dolphin. Still in awe of what I had just experienced, I breathed in the tangy summer air, mixed with the sweet aroma of the hibiscus, symbolic of the Hawaiian atmosphere. I had just kissed a dolphin, and caressed it in my arms, a moment that I will never forget. This experience at Sea Life Park would be my last, before I moved away from Hawaii after living there for six years.

When I first moved to Honolulu, a medium-sized metropolitan capital city of the island of Oahu, I didn't really know what to expect. Well, maybe I did. I was expecting clear blue skies, crystal, turquoise waters, and swaying palm trees. However, imagining it in your head is far less magnificent than actually living it. For a first time visitor in any island of Hawaii, the picture perfect view from the airplane window is enough to take your breath away, literally. Shades of soothing colours, from aqua to cyan to jade green, patched up the crystal clear waters of the Pacific Ocean. Mountain peaks loomed over the waters. Approaching closer, tall buildings bordering the shore of Waikiki Beach gave a stark contrast to the natural setting. Let me give you a brief tour.



An underwater shot of honu. Image: Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) / Kirk Lee Aeder



A yummylicious sushi platter. Image: Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) / Tor Johnson

Honolulu is a relatively small city housing approximately 10,00,000 people. Residents are primarily of Asian American descent, as previous generations of people moved to the islands from Vietnam, Philippines, and Japan as well. This diversity also exists in the cuisine of Hawaii. One can indulge in Asian dishes from the authentic Japanese dish called sushi, which is a combination of rice and raw fish wrapped in an intricate seaweed paper to pho, which is a noodle soup broth served primarily with beef or chicken at Vietnamese restaurants. Local eateries hold some of the best Hawaiian dishes from the crispy chicken katsu to kalua pork, which is pork cooked in an underground oven, commonly served in luau feasts. Of course one can't forget the ubiquitous spam musubis, made out of pork bits. Saimin, the Japanese inspired noodle soup, is yet another light snack to indulge in. For those with a sweet tooth, biting into the fluffy, sugar-coated malasadas, or Portuguese egg-sized balls of yeast, keep you wanting for more. Another popular cool

snack along the beach side is shave ice, an icy dessert made literally out of shaved ice. Available in multiple flavours and toppings, such as mochi balls, it is perfect relief on a hot summer day.

Because the weather remains tropical in Hawaii most of the time, beaches are the best places to go. Waikiki Beach is a popular destination for many, with the cool winds blowing gently, as the waves caress the shores. For mood music, tourists can enjoy a live hula performance right there on the beachside. Local boutiques, surf shops, and restaurants line up along the Waikiki strip, as spectacular fireworks light up the skies every evening.

Although the Waikiki strip is the most popular spot for relaxation, there are many other "nature-esque" places. If trudging through the hills sounds like fun, tourists can take up the challenge of hiking up the Diamond Head trail, or the far more difficult Koko Crater Trail Hike. Not only do you get a workout, but you also get some spectacular views for pleasure. Lookout points such as Tantalus and Nuuanu Pali



(ABOVE) A man blows a conch shell. Image: Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) / Tor Johnson  
(RIGHT) Kii of Hale O Keawe Heiau. Image: Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) / Tor Johnson

State Park are also good ways to please the eyes. For wet adventures, Hanuama Bay is the perfect location to snorkel in the clear, blue waters. My first and only experience there was breathtaking, as I was immersed in a beautiful world of marine life. On the more historic side, tourists can visit the USS Arizona Memorial, or Pearl Harbor. Known to be the landmark of the Pearl Harbor attacks by the Japanese, which took place on December 7, 1941, this memorial straddles the sunken hull of the battleship. A shrine at the back of the memorial bears the names of all the soldiers who were killed during the attack. The 'Iolani Palace, another historic site, is the capital district of Honolulu, which housed the reigning monarch, including King Kalakaua and Queen Lili'uokalani. One can also visit the King Kamehameha statue.

And after you've visited every major part of this beautiful city, you'd realise that what really captures your heart in Hawaii, is the people. Meeting the people of Hawaii is what makes the trip the best. The wonderful set of friends that I have made in six short years, have extended my family, or ohana. Family is an underlying part of the Hawaiian culture. There is a warm spirit of **aloha**, which envelops you as soon as you land in Hawaii. The flower necklace, or **lei**, is a symbol to show the love and warmth, which exists in every corner of Hawaii.

With their laidback and positive attitude, the people in Hawaii know how to make others feel good. The relaxed lifestyle puts you in a trance. So, if you just want to leave the claustrophobic, fast-paced city life, make sure to book your next flight tickets to any Hawaiian island. The delicious food, the serene beauty, and the spirit of aloha of the islands await you.

## Pack & leave!

**Location:** Centrally located chain of islands in the Pacific Ocean.

**How to get there:** Direct flights can be found from Dubai to Honolulu from the Dubai International Airport.

**Best time to visit:** Weather-wise Oahu is a great place to visit year round. Around springtime, after mid-April and beginning of May, you can get good travel bargains.

**To make reservations:** Visit [gohawaii.com](http://gohawaii.com)

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Do remember to carry light clothes to be comfortable in the tropical weather. A sun block will definitely help, along with a sun hat and sunglasses. Sometimes, there are light drizzles so carrying an umbrella is a good idea.

King Kamehameha Statue in Kapaau. Image: Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) / Tor Johnson



# 1

You wish the RJs would shut up



## YOU KNOW YOU ARE LISTENING TO AN INDIAN RADIO STATION IN DUBAI WHEN...

# 4

The high IQ level of the contests on air leave you surprised & you scratch your head in disbelief



You wish there was less advertising



# 2

# 3

You wonder if the people in Dubai ever work ! Or do they just play contests on the radio!



You wonder if Bollywood gossip is all that is required to entertain an Indian!

# 5



You compare the radio stations to MTV and Channel V! You ask yourself, where is the music?

# 6

# 7

Your cab driver knows & each & every song, and he sings along



JUST A FEW OF OUR FAVOURITE THINGS FOR THE ADORABLE ANGELS & BRATS

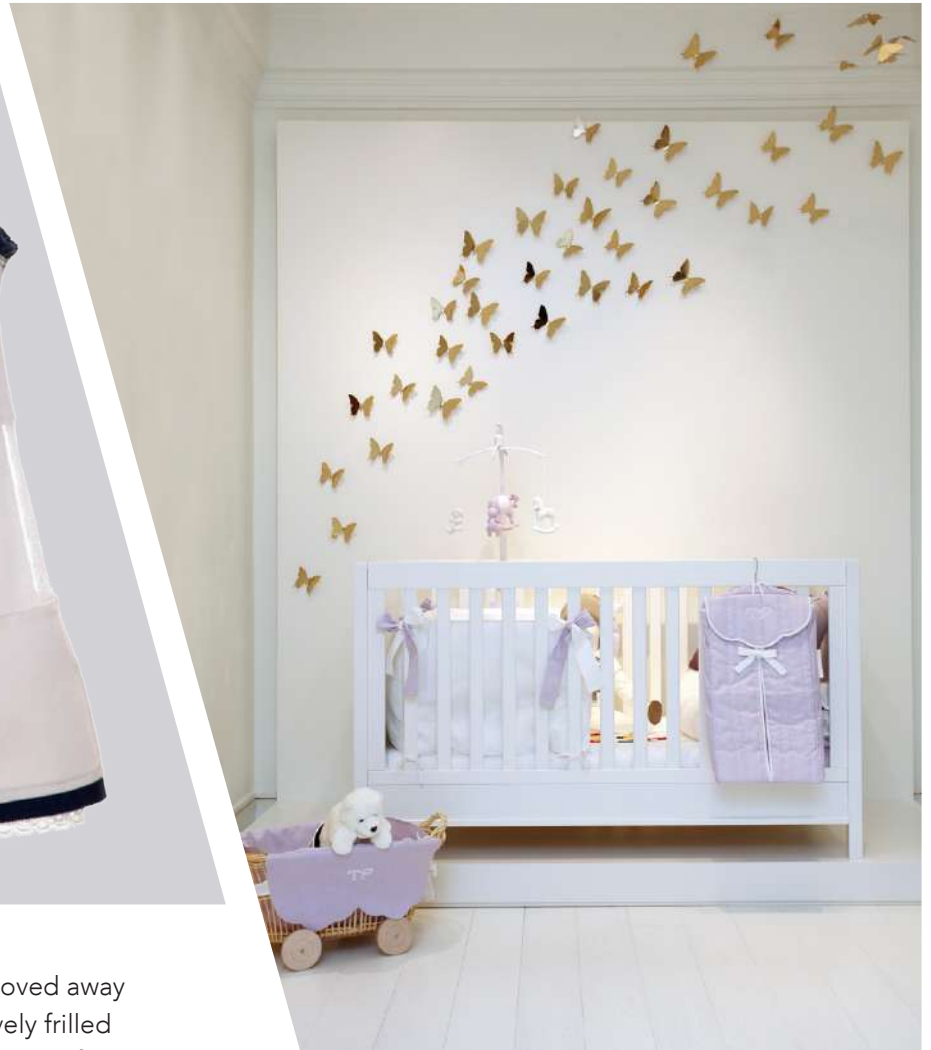


Lilac dreams for the little one. A cute white and lilac basket, lilac leather bottle cover and lilac lamp from furniture brand Theophile & Patachou  
Available at Les Petits, DLF Emporio, New Delhi & lespetits.in

The rays of the sun mix with every shade in the ocean in the new summer proposals dedicated to small sea lovers in this blue romper by Kissy Kissy  
Available at Cherubs store in Ambience Mall, New Delhi



The colours of blue and white have moved away from the regular stripes to polkas. Lovely frilled frocks for the little girls from Monnalisa, Ilgufo Available at Cherubs store in Ambience Mall, New Delhi



An adorable white cot, storage trolley, nappy bag, bed surround and mobile from furniture brand Theophile & Patachou to create a sweet little nursery Available at Les Petits, DLF Emporio, New Delhi & lespetits.in

# TRAM, THE HERITAGE WHEELS

IT'S SAID TO CAUSE TRAFFIC CONGESTION, IT IS CRITICISED FOR ITS UNHURRIED PACE AND ITS PASSENGER TURNOUT TOO IS SLOWLY DWINDLING...

BUT IT IS STILL A PART OF KOLKATA'S RICH FABRIC, LOVELY MEMORIES AND EVERYDAY LIFE. THE TRAM CONTINUES TO TRACE & RETRACE ITS PATH ON KOLKATA ROADS. OUR TRIBUTE.

WORDS AANANDIKA SOOD

IMAGES WRIJU



horn OK please





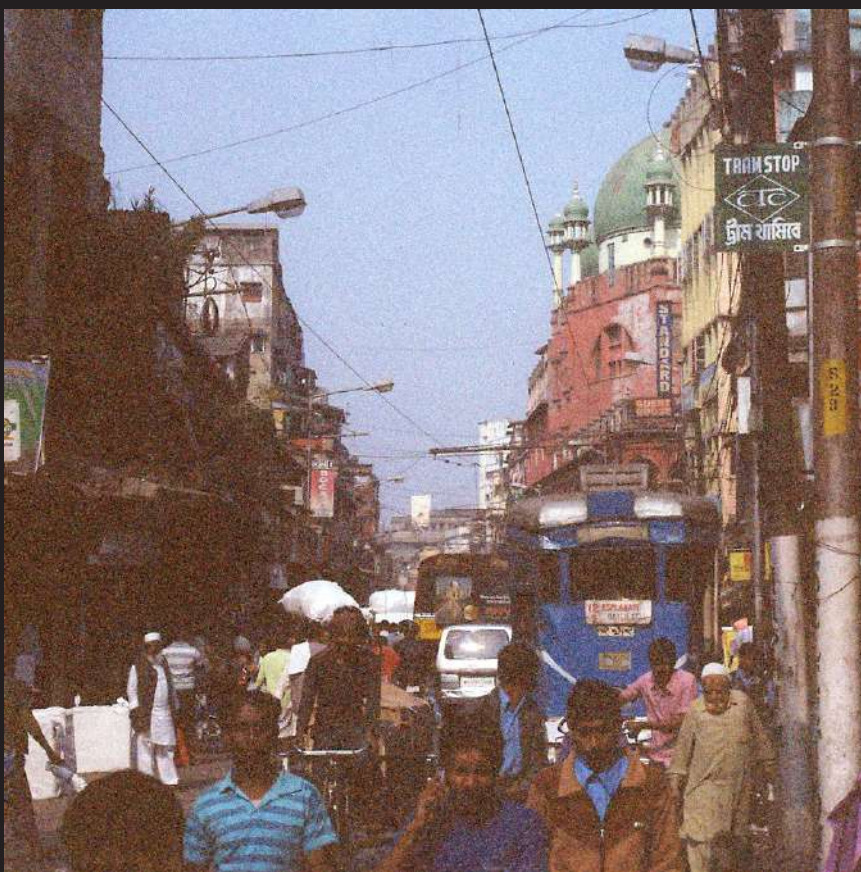
horn OK please

February 1873 was a monumental year for Kolkata, then known as Kalikata. Commerce had compelled the British rulers to look for cost effective and efficient ways to carry merchandise from Sealdah railway station to the Armenian Ghats of the river Hooghly. Unfortunately, the horse trams did not find many takers and had to shut down the same year. But in the mean time something of an affair had been heralded that would go on to add to the uniqueness of the city Kalikata.

Think of trams and you can imagine life slowing down a pace or two. When I first set my eyes on a tram in the middle of a main road in the South of the city, all the other noises seemed to recede away and a Mantovani melody started to play in the background instead. I was so mesmerised by the way it snaked on the road, leisurely at its own pace, not bothered by the honking cars, autos and taxis that I forgot to board the bus my palm had brought to halt.

Kolkata is a metropolis like none other. It is large. It is smelly. And it is congested. Yet there is a strange amalgamation in which many new and old and metropolis like and unlike metropolis things/features, survive side by side. The various modes of transportation are a case to point. Look at what all plies on the city roads and tracks: you have the air conditioned metro rail, the famous yellow taxis, as well as the *haath gaadi* and horse carriages. The trams possibly the first public transport system introduced in that fateful year of 1873 has continued to co-exist with all other modes of commute, without any malice.

Trams became a part and parcel of the daily life of the people of Kolkata once the Calcutta Tramways Company Ltd. was created and registered in 1880. The then viceroy Lord Ripon inaugurated the route between Sealdah and Armenian Ghat via Bowbazar, Dalhousie Square and Strand Road. Electrification of the trams was started in 1900. Alongside the work for reconstruction of tracks to a standard size was



also initiated. The first electronic tramcar ran between Khiddirpore and Esplanade in 1902. By 1905, the entire system had been converted to an electronic traction. Till 1952, the tram cars were imported from England, though a workshop, which exists till date, was set up in Calcutta to undertake repairs.

In 1967, the West Bengal government took over the management of Calcutta Tramways Company. In the year 1992, the Calcutta Tramways Company introduced a bus service and the trams suffered a jolt as the hurrying passenger preferred the bus to the lolling tram. The number of fleet was reduced due to the high costs of maintenance and less takers. Today, only about 130 of the 530 trams running in the 1980s are making their way on the Kolkata roads. But of late efforts have been made to turn the trams in to profit making extensions of the government by bringing in AC coaches and transforming them in to a major tourist attraction. Heritage tours aboard the tram start at the Esplanade Tram terminus offering one a glimpse of history at various destinations like the Dalhousie Square, the Presidency College, the Ashutosh Museum of Indian Art and many more. It offers a slice of life in the form of the view of the coffee houses on College Street. You can get acquainted with history during this tram ride as it chugs along the Victoria Museum and the Writer's Building. You get to sample the delights of the rich cultural heritage of Kolkata.



The city has also been a favourite with cinematic geniuses like Ritwik Ghatak and Satyajit Ray. Many Hindi films of the yore like *Howrah Bridge*, *Do Bigha Zamin*, *Amar Prem* and *Devdas* have been set in Kolkata but then there was a lull. Of late, Kolkata has again become a favoured spot for Bollywood with many blockbusters being shot in the city. Think Mira Nair's *The Namesake*, Sudhir Mishra's *Calcutta Mail* as well as Anurag Basu's *Barfi!* and if you prefer Mani Ratnam, then *Yuva!* Film makers have been wooed with delightful sights and sounds of the Durga Pujo as well as the majestic sights such as the Victoria, the Howrah Bridge and the bustling Esplanade. The trams have held their lure too for the Bollywood directors and we have them either playing out a vivid role or

being part of the narrative in many films. Two which immediately come to the mind surprisingly have Vidya Balan as the protagonist. One is the adaptation of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's novel *Parineeta* and the other is the suspense thriller *Kahaani*.

Yes, the tram has continued to survive and the gong-like sound of its horn is still a part of the mosaic morning sounds in Kolkata. The trams have stayed around despite threats of being scrapped then and now. Even today the sight of a tram manages to bring to mind the picture of a regally clad viceroy or the *bhadrlok* (gentleman) in white *dhotis* chewing *paan*. The trams have journeyed thus far and I am sure this is not the end for them.

(All efforts have been made while compiling the content of this article. We regret factual errors, if any.)



At Orange Kitchens we believe that children who are more involved in preparing food are more likely to try out new flavours on their plates, respect their food, respect where the food that they eat comes from and in the process wipe their plates clean.

When we teach them "real" cooking we talk about where that dish came from (history & geography & learning about different food habits), we follow a certain method (science and following instructions), we are measuring (maths), we are trying to choose the right ingredients (lessons on nutrition and using fresh produce), we share how our elders would always make it or how each Diwali/Christmas/Eid our parents would eat this as a kid (getting to know their family and their traditions better) and of course each time we cook we encourage them to add their special little touch to it... replace that chive with basil, chocolate chips instead of vanilla, serve it differently (getting creative and adventurous)... now that is quite a lot of learning while putting together just one simple dish. While the kids think we are just here in for some fun!

For all this and more, send your kidlets to become a part of the food lessons at Orange Kitchens.

Call +971554193522, drop a line at [orangekitchens.blogspot@gmail.com](mailto:orangekitchens.blogspot@gmail.com), or visit us at [orangekitchens.blogspot.ae](http://orangekitchens.blogspot.ae)





over a cup of chai

# Colours, they speak to me

AANCHAL JAGGI, A 23-YEAR-OLD FASHION DESIGNER IN DUBAI, LOVES PLAYING WITH COLOURS FOR IT ALLOWS HER TO BE BOTH AN ARTIST & A DESIGNER. SHE ASPIRES TO DRESS UP THE DIVAS IN DUBAI IN THE COLOURS OF HER LABEL, AAKARSHAN.

WORDS DEVANG B'BHATT

A sketch from Aanchal's design file



Aanchal Jaggi confesses to being a painter during her free hours and a colour maniac all hours. No wonder, vibrant colours are the trademark of her label, Aakarshan.

She is all about colours. When she dreams of designs, she paints a vibrant and bold picture in her head. A fashion designer by profession, Aanchal Jaggi confesses to being a painter during her free hours and a colour maniac all hours. This 23-year-old designer is the heart, soul and brain behind Dubai's fashion label, Aakarshan. We met up with the lady to know more about her big splash of colours in the world of fashion.

She studied designing at Esmod, Dubai, and was awarded the Best Designer award for her Ready to Wear collection at the graduating fashion show. And while you may expect a fashion designer to be extremely conscious about where she shops from, a look at the kind of outfits Aanchal sports will leave you surprised, for she insists that you wear what you are comfortable in and not chase trends, "Fashion to me is to be comfortable in one's own skin and wear outfits that one can carry with confidence." No wonder, she says, don't run after brands, instead run after what pleases you. Ask her to define her personal style and she says, "I am not a brand conscious person. I pick up what I like and yes, I totally love bright colours." The latter becomes clear with one glance at her creations, the outfits spell a rainbow charm on on-lookers. No wonder then, she tells us that colours are the trademark of Aakarshan. "My designs have to be bright and bold. Even my monochromatic designs have to have a pinch of colour. It's like the colours

speak to me," she says. Before starting her own label she worked for Sohad Acouri Couture, Dubai. As for her own label it was christened by her parents, "I did not want to call the label by my name and when my parents suggested Aakarshan as the name I loved it and decided to go for it," she recalls. She dabbles with both Western and Indian wear and names Manish Arora and Masaba as her biggest design inspirations, "I love the way Masaba plays with prints. And yes, I love Manish Arora for all the colours that come alive in his creations."

Given a chance, she would love to play a designer to Bollywood actress Sonam Kapoor, "She is very classy and stunning, and she looks gorgeous in almost anything she wears." But till then, she is happy dressing up the divas in Dubai, "Dubai is a multicultural hub and is evolving every day. It's good to see people from so many different nationalities and cultures live together in the same place. I love designing for the people here because they don't shy away from bling or experimenting." As she gets back to her work she tells us her future plans, "I would love to have a chain of boutiques, local and international, but as of now I am happy playing with colours and cuts in the local market." Here's to more colours, Aanchal!

A sketch from Aanchal's design file

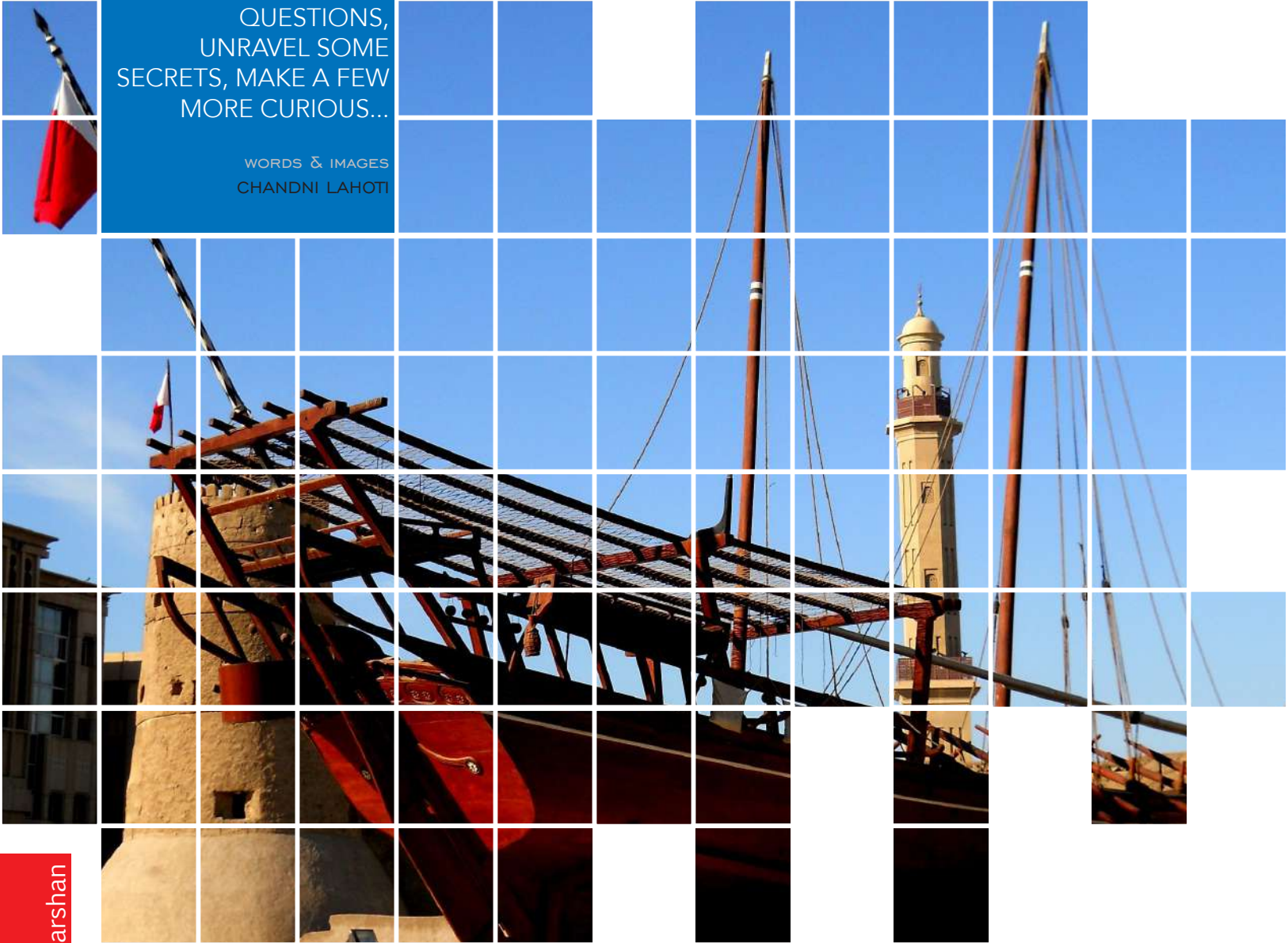


I love designing for the women in Dubai because they don't shy away from bling or experimenting.

A SLICE OF HISTORY FOR THOSE WHO OFTEN WONDER ABOUT THE HISTORY OF DUBAI. A VISIT TO THE DUBAI MUSEUM, BUT DUBAI WOULD ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS, UNRAVEL SOME SECRETS, MAKE A FEW MORE CURIOUS...

WORDS & IMAGES  
CHANDNI LAHOTI

# our muse, dubai museum



dubai darshan

The tall traditional boat called the 'dhow' in the large courtyard of the museum. A perfect slice from the past that makes for a postcard picture.



f history and that's when I visit  
 Fort (built in 1787), Bur Dubai  
 don't go hand in hand as Dubai  
 ik Dubai Museum or India do. But  
 Du the archaeology  
 g stories of how life  
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 Dubai from before the discover  
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 e middle of the large courtyard

Address : Opposite Grand  
 Mosque – Al Fahidi St – Dubai  
 Phone : 04 353 1862

Entry fee: AED 3 per person  
 (Adult)

Hours : Saturday to Thursday  
 08:30 hours to 19:30 hours  
 Friday 1400 hours to 19:30  
 hours



The canon in the  
 central courtyard  
 giving a little peek  
 into the arms and  
 ammunitions that  
 were part of old  
 Dubai  
 display



A beautiful almost  
 real life depiction  
 of the life of the  
 men in the deserts  
 a slice of history  
 located in Al Fahidi Fort (built  
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 e middle of the large courtyard

I am not much into museums but a museum. But I must say that impressed me in an unexpected way is a relatively still, Dubai Museum and does a far

A preserved fragment of the Dubai Wall, which was built in the early 19th century to protect the old city,

was in those days. On entering the Dubai are displayed. Next is the view of oil in the 1960s to the current vendors and buyers. A tailor, a background sounds transport of display of archaeological finds from

Address : Opposite Grand Mosque – Al Fahidi St – Dubai  
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the older times in Dubai. still life, yet speaking a language spiral staircase leads to the first room showing a video that depicts day. Moving a carpenter, a one to the era from different locations in Dubai the middle of the large courtyard some great pictures. The people museums keep decades, miles away into Dubai's past glory. I am not

The entrance of the Dubai Museum opened by the ruler of Dubai in 1971, with the aim of presenting the traditional ways of life in the Emirate of Dubai

That's when I visit a museum (197), Bur Dubai impressed me in hand as Dubai is a relatively or India do. But still, Dubai is the archaeology and does

telling stories gallery where Dubai from before the discovery shops that are home to craftsmen vendor and others line the street modern mosque too and a fascinating But for me the main attraction was



A scene depicting the people enjoying their cup of the *sulemani-chai* and *sheesha*

dubai darshan

# TAROT SPEAK FOR SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2013



## CANCER

Past has to be let gone. When we are tired of something we have to use all our strength to let go off the clutter. In September, you will have to kiss it goodbye and you will never miss it again. Dedicate yourself to making your relationship work. The Eight of Wands represents a romance that comes late in your life. Wealth wise you will have to spend money to make more. A financial venture would need effort and focus.

Lucky colour: Peach  
Lucky number: 4



## GEMINI

Nature abhors a vacuum. If therefore you want to bring something in your life all you have to do is create space for it. The trouble is that Geminis don't like space. Absence puts you on the edge and actually takes you into a depression, especially in love. The tarot depicts fulfillment of love and security in a relationship. Financial success and physical comfort will come to you, so enjoy a period of accomplishment.

Lucky colour: Golden yellow



## ARIES

In September, there will be no magic wand to wave but there will certainly be an improvement you can set in motion and soon you will see the results. In love, your little heart will be pulled by this powerful, invisible magnet. You may feel there is not much to gain from this relationship but as I said just wait and watch. Seven of Wands in your money tarot says the harvest is still a long way off. Don't rush into things, be patient and persevering.

Lucky colour: Purple blue  
Lucky numbers: 7, 16



## TAURUS

The tarot tells you to never to say never. What most people refer to as impossible you achieve easily. In

September, value yourself, your sanity and accept as much as you can. A recent breakup has made you more vulnerable and skeptical when it comes to relationships. Money matters get a bit complicated in October so don't be naive regarding financial matters.

Lucky colour: Chocolate brown  
Lucky number: 6



## LEO

Strong leaders make friends and foes during their years in power. But does a Leo care? They believe passionately in their own policies. In September expect a particular policy of yours to make you universally popular. You would also make a big leap in success. By allying yourself with another person or group you may be able to earn greater profits. The Six of Pentacles in your tarot suggests a romantic period ahead. Expect chocolates, gifts and candle light dinners.

Lucky colour: Light green  
Lucky number: 6



## VIRGO

Appearances can be deceptive but so would be disappearances. Sometimes you would feel that something has gone forever, only to discover that it has been in hiding. In September, there would be a cause for celebration or a reason for great concern. September brings you in touch with old friends. It gives you the chance to choose whether you want to renew a connection or sever it. You would be purchasing land in the month of October.

Lucky colour: Plum red  
Lucky number: 9



## LIBRA

September is going to make you work like a bee. Your career tarot has the sun card that indicates success - time to make hay while the sun shines. Someone you are thinking about is dreaming about you too. Have a heart to heart conversation with her/him. Financially you be very comfortable. Put your feet up and rest on your laurels. The tarot indicates there are chances of you buying a new vehicle too.

Lucky colour: Vintage wine  
Lucky number: 3



## SCORPIO

Life is no great complicated formula. The issues that we are up against just need a bit of positive thinking and common sense. Workwise you will have to work hard to complete the deadlines on time. A huge charity event builds a good team spirit. A relationship affects you profoundly. The tarot advises you to cut through all the confusion and get to the essence of what is wrong. Trust this emerging understanding and bring back your love.

Lucky colour: Chocolate truffle  
Lucky number: 5



## AQUARIUS

You will achieve good name and fame. You will take quick decisions based on your instincts. If you are in a job then you will get a promotion. When you desire something intensely, you can steamroll over objections and obstacles to get it. Family will need your attention. Stress and quarrels with your partner will leave you feeling low and down. Temperance tarot suggests you to take the help of a mediator, who will help resolve differences and solve problems. This could bring back peace.

Lucky colour: Emerald green  
Lucky number: 2



## PISCES

The past may form you but also inform you. In the weeks to come you might benefit from the lessons of experience. Ideas to improve your life without repeating mistakes could be discussed. Decide whether goals that you are focused on are worthy or not. In love, a deep idealistic connection exists between two individuals. Other people may not understand your attraction. The moon card also suspects a clandestine affair. Health is a major cause of concern.

Lucky colour: Sky blue  
Lucky number: 3



## CAPRICORN

The tarot sees a new beginning, a new work. Trust your faith and relax. Don't stress over small issues. Spend some quality time with your spouse this month. Travel is on the cards. Try a visit to a place that entices you or will take your mind off stress. Change is required and although it may be difficult, it will be interesting and helpful. Main focus has to be on improving financials.

Lucky colour: Indigo  
Lucky number: 8



## SAGITTARIUS

The tarot strongly indicates focus will be on ambition and career. Work hard, show your skills and you will be rewarded. A friend can be your support system during this time. Travelling for work is on cards. Your sense of humour will be great. Love life is going through lots of ups and downs. Tarot also indicates pain through your sweetheart's insensitivity. Probably you might feel lonely, rejected or misunderstood. Energise this period with pink quartz crystals.

Lucky colour: Fuschia  
Lucky number: 4

## TRANSFORM FROM A SIMPLETON TO A SHOWSTOPPER WITH THESE FASHIONABLE BUYS



A shout to all those women who love to put on make-up. Colorbar has now entered the Dubai market and on their shelves is a huge range of products to help you sharpen your make-up skills and of course enhance your looks. Get your hands on this set of make-up brushes now. Available at Colorbar, Arabian Centre Al Mizhar First; Lamcy Plaza; Oasis Centre; Exquisite Al Barsha, Al Barsha Mall and Exquisite Al Foah, Al Foah Mall and [colorbarcosmetics.com](http://colorbarcosmetics.com)

Emporio Armani's Stylesport watch collection is designed to evoke a sporty attitude. The collection composed of chronographs featuring three subdials, all water resistant to 5 ATM, is iconic in both design and choice of materials. This one with a rubber strap in red and coloured hands echoes the use of bright accents in modern sportswear. Available at select Shoppers Stop, Lifestyle, Helios, Ethos and Just in Vogue stores & also at leading watch retailers across India



An eclectic collection of exquisite jewellery from Karmic Kabira by Vandana Dewan. Make a bold and beautiful statement with pieces crafted using semi-precious coloured stones and modern materials like crystals, velvet beads, ceramic, etc. This gold and black royal necklace is perfect to make a royal statement.

Available at Evoluzione and Samsaara, New Delhi & a selected few stores in Chennai, Mumbai, Pune, Kolkata



Whether skinny or fat, minimal or psychedelic, checks or stripes, every which way the charm of geometry is working its magic this season. Celebrating 80 years of timeless style Lacoste finds itself at the heart of a geometric expedition.

Available at Lacoste boutiques all across India and Dubai (Dubai Mall & Mall of the Emirates) & [lacoste.com](http://lacoste.com)



# puchka, the spicy street-side snack

THE EXPLODING TASTE FROM KOLKATA. THE INDIAN STREET-SIDE SNACK IS ALSO KNOWN AS *PANI PURI* AND *GOL GAPPA*.


WORDS ANU M

IMAGES DEBASISH NANDY



A golf-sized ball dumpling bursting with tamarind water makes way to your mouth taking your taste buds on a crazy, crunchy and spicy ride. And just then, another one pops into your plate, challenging your senses for another such ride. Sweet, sour and spicy, no one can eat just one *puchka*. Call this favourite street-side snack of India by any name - *pani puri*, *gol gappa* or *puchka*, the explosion it triggers in the mouth remains the same! As for now, let's visit Kolkata for we're sure many of you are missing uttering these words, *Tadatadi puchka dao* or *Joldi ekta puchka dao!*

In Kolkata, it is virtually impossible to miss a vendor selling *puchkas*. Yes, walk down any street and you are sure to spot the road-side stands adorned with deep-fried dumplings arranged into a pyramid, tempting one and sundry passers-by. Did you know that while the *puchka* too is filled with mashed potatoes it is the water that makes it different from the Punjabi *gol gappa* and *Mumbaiya pani puri*? The preparation of spicy water that



fills up the *puchka* is solely tamarind juice-based sans *pudina* or *saunth*. And just the mere sight of the stands is enough to tempt you to eat one, two and more; especially if you are in Russell Street, Hidustan Park or Deshapriya Park. Deshapriya Park is known for its *dahi* (curd/yoghurt) *puchkas*, a richer form of filling that will send your taste buds into another kind of frenzy. Peeu Roy, a hardcore Bengali and a globe-trotter says, "For many people, Kolkata means Rosogolla, Sondesh, Machi (fish), Dim Bhaja (fried eggs) and Begun Bhaja (fried egg plant) but trust me nothing in Kolkata makes people happier than the *puchkas*. *Aswhadharan* (incredible) it is!" While some of the old-school *puchka walas* still serve *puchkas* in *bel patra* or bowls made of Bael leaves others have started serving it in thermocol or plastic bowls.

The best part about the snack is of course the fact that it is so easy on the pocket. You can relish a plate of *puchkas* for less than ₹20 (1.3 AED)! You don't have to make reservation at a fancy restaurant or even dress up properly for a *puchka* outing. As for the hygiene, the less you think the better it is. While the Kolkata's *puchka walas* use a piece of red cloth to cover the dough-balls and the tamarind water is stored in huge steel utensils, they don't promise hygiene. And then, after all it is a street-side snack, let it be just that.

Well, while one can go on raving about the *puchka* the truth is that you can't experience it till you impatiently wait for it to reach your plate, open your mouth wide open to eat it, watch the water drip on your clothes and hands and then get impatient, yet again, for the next one. As we said, no one can eat just one.

## Tadatadi puchka dao

We know it is hard to find out-of-the-world *puchkas* (*golgappas- pani puri*) in Dubai but you must try out the ones served at the restaurants in Karama, Chappan Bhog, Bikanervala and Puranmal to name a few. Or make them at home? *Puchka* is the *puri* or a mini flatbread made of semolina. The dough is rolled into small and round flatbread, which is then fried on low flame until it is crispy and brown on one side and a shade lighter on the other. For the filling, you need to mix boiled and mashed potatoes with boiled black or white peas. Add a dash of spices, chilli powder and black salt. The *puchka* water is made with overnight-soaked tamarind and further spiced up with a mixture of cumin and fennel seed powder, rock salt and chilli powder.

# buniyaad

WE GREW UP WATCHING *BUNIYAAD*, A DRAMA SERIES THAT MADE HISTORY ON INDIAN TELEVISION. TILL DATE, MANY OF US FONDLY REMEMBER MASTER HAVELIRAM AND LAJOJI. AN ARTIST PAYS TRIBUTE TO THE DEFINING SOAP OPERA WITH A MINIMAL GRAPHICS POSTER.

WORDS & ARTWORK MANOJ NATH

## ... the series

In the 1980's when Indian television was catching up, Ramesh Sippy and Jyoti Sarup directed one of the first mega soap operas - *Buniyaad*. The plot dealt with the Partition of India in 1947, and its aftermath. The blockbuster series was aired in 1986 for the first time, on the Indian national television channel, Doordarshan. The protagonist, Master Haveliram, played by the deft actor Alok Nath, is a freedom fighter and patriot.



## ...the poster

The poster artwork tries to capture *Buniyaad* in minimal terms. The illustration signifies a bit of India and Pakistan with a pensive Master Haveliram caught in between, unsure about what's going to happen next. The blue background denotes a certain calm that Master Haveliram tries to maintain

in his family and his whereabouts, despite the chaos all around. The ink drips show his faith in the power of pen as opposed to the sword.



master haveli ram  
**BUNIYAAD.**

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Shot at Havelock Island. During the low tide the sea would recede really far revealing a very interesting landscape of white sands, boulder corals and small puddles of sea-water, with a fair bit of marine life.

# barefoot in the Andaman

A TRIP TO THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS WILL REJUVENATE YOUR SOUL, TITILLATE YOUR TASTEBUDS, TAKE YOU BACK TO THE COLONIAL TIMES, TEMPT YOU TO EXPLORE THE WATERS & MORE, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT WILL SPOIL YOUR DSLR FOR CHOICES!

WORDS YAZHINI ILANAHAI

IMAGES MANAS SARAN

(MANASSARAN.COM)



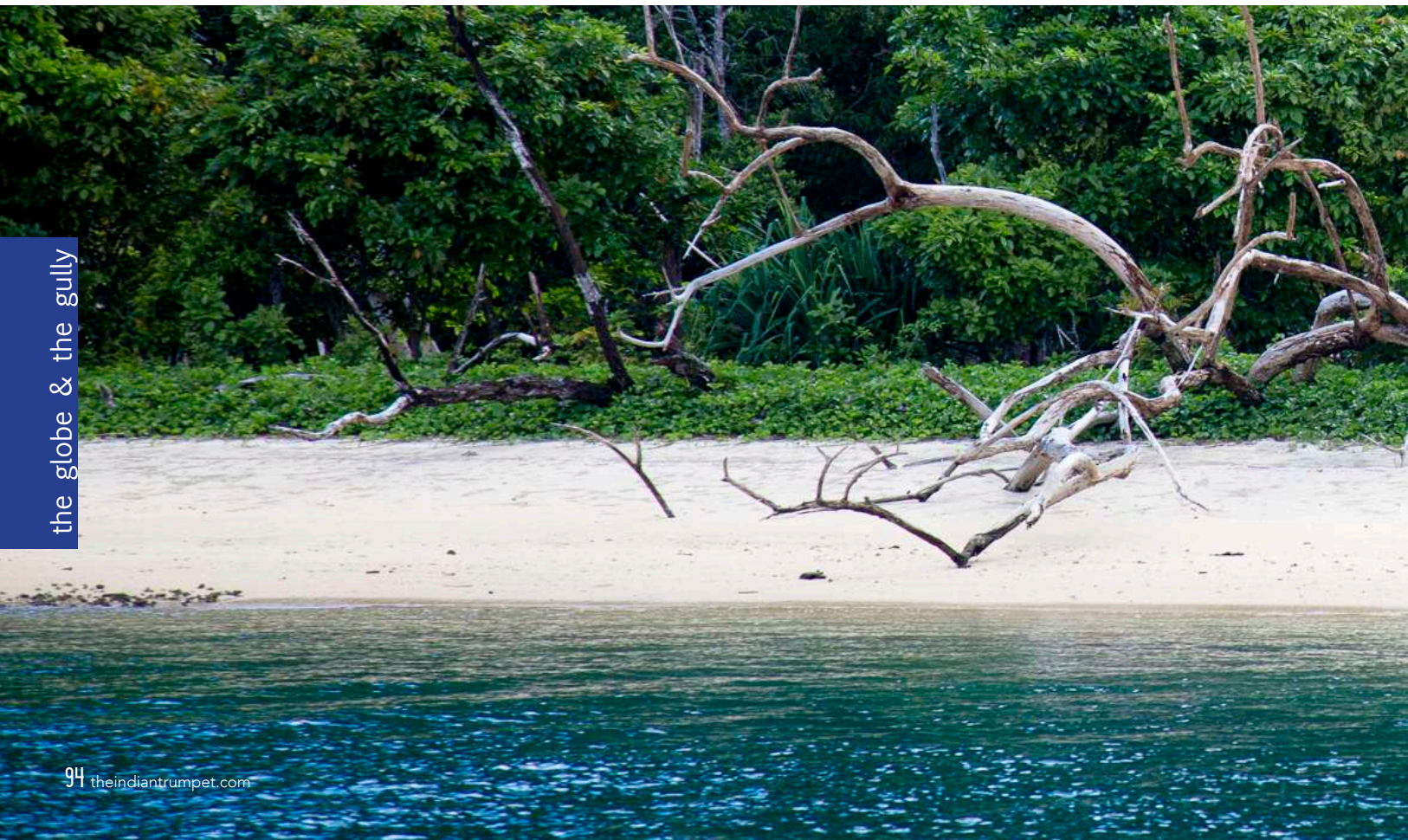
As the yellow Honda moped buzzed to life, we sailed past swathes of greenery, quaint shacks brimming with the aroma of smoked salmon, and not-to-forget friendly bunch of locals waving to us in 'high spirits', literally so. All we wanted to do was unwind at a charming coffee shop in Radhanagar beach. As the sun played hide and seek with the maroon tint of my sunglasses, I pulled out the crumpled remains of the map and fussed about the directions. My husband quipped, 'losing our way will be way more fun here', in a matter of fact tone. Well, he was right, for once. I was all for it. It's true; I hadn't felt so alive in months. From the crystal clear sands and bluish green waters to the charming gourmet scenes, our trip to the Andaman was nothing short of bliss. Snapshots of colonial history, some swash-buckling adventure, and much-needed rejuvenation; these pristine islands are replete with all this and more. Here are some notes from my travel diary.

Every nook and corner of Port Blair, the capital city, is a time portal. The Cellular Jail (Khaala Pani) here was built by the British in the late 19th century to house political prisoners. The isolation cells and execution chambers showcased in the national monument are raw reminders of untold horror stories. If a walk down this grisly

memory lane is not your style, a welcome respite comes in the form of a light and sound show organised here, twice every day. As for the history-buffs, a rendezvous with the Chatham Saw Mill (the oldest in Asia), the Anthropological Museum that highlights the history of different tribes in the Andaman, and the celebrated Samudrika Naval Marine Museum, will be a surreal experience. Of course, if you have the time, a one-day trip to Barren Island, home to the only active volcano in India, and Ross Island definitely deserve a place in your itinerary.

A four-hour boat ride will take you to Havelock Island, a coastal haven like no other. If you haven't had a tryst with snorkeling or scuba diving, it's safe to take the plunge here under the expert guidance of well-trained instructors. The sprawling coral belts and colourful fauna make Elephant Beach the perfect spot for snorkeling and fishing. And the best part is most of the sea side restaurants will be willing to cook the catch for you too! Bicycles and mopeds are available for hire, and frankly, it's the ideal way to cruise through the eco-friendly hotspot. I was swept off my feet thanks to the no-airs food in the open-air, waterfront restaurants here. The salty air laden sea food platter, which tastes like a home-

You see these fallen trees on a lot of beaches. People say that these are all a result of the 2004 Tsunami. Wandoor is about 15 km from Port Blair.

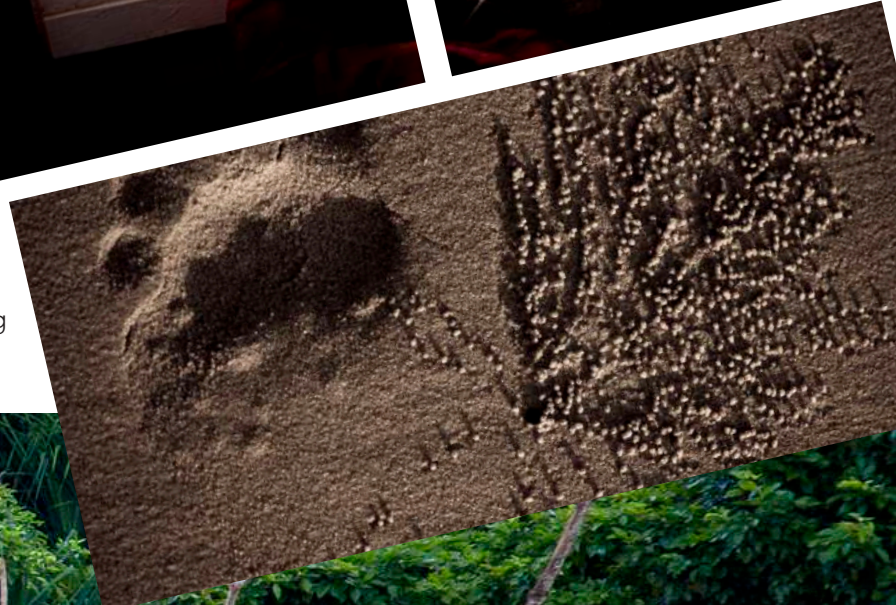


(From top to bottom) Street photography at Mayabunder. A passenger on a ship from Havelock Island to Rangat. A small crab's nest.

cooked meal, will put a Michelin-star restaurant to shame, any day.

Have some adventure in your mind? Baratung Island is just the place for adrenalin junkies. Located 90 km from Port Blair, the best way to get here is via tour operators. The vehicles leave in convoys at specific timings and reach the Jiraktang port. Interesting piece of trivia: even big buses, SUVs, cattle and human beings are ferried in a jetty to Baratung. An array of sightseeing spots, including the mud volcanoes, limestone caves, mangroves, Parrot Island, will play the picture-perfect muse for your DSLR.

The return journey to Port Blair is through the Jarawa Forest reserve, home to the Jarawa tribe, an indigenous tribe. They are dark-complexioned, red-eyed, and armed with bows, arrows and spears. You are not allowed to offer food or take photographs of them. If you do accidentally spot them like me then memories of the tribes' innocence and their idyllic way of life will undoubtedly linger on, long after you are home. So what are you waiting for?



Mayabunder is a two-hour drive from Rangat (town on the Middle Andaman Island). This place sees practically no tourists but is a beautiful place. Geographically, it's an arm stretching into the sea. So, you have the sea on both sides.



# Pack & leave!

**How to get there:** There is a daily flight of Jet Airways from Chennai to Port Blair and three weekly flights from Kolkata and Chennai.

**Best places to stay:** Peerless Sarovar Portico, near Corbyn's cove, Port Blair (3 star at ₹5407/ AED 323 per night); Hotel Fortune Resort Bay (Welcome group), Port Blair (4 Star at ₹6575/ AED 393 per night) and The Wild Orchid, Havelock Island (₹3000/ 178 AED onwards) I stayed in these places during my visit and found them to be reasonably good, a score of 3.5 on 5.

**Best time to visit:** The Andaman have a moderate temperature all through the year within the range of 23°C to 31°C. There are no severe climatic conditions except for

tropical storms and rains in late summer and monsoon. The best time to visit is from October to May.

- Winter (December to February) are pleasant. The period is ideal for sightseeing, water sports and other tourist activities.
- Summer (March to May) are warm with sea breeze. It is suitable for all kinds of tourist activities.
- Monsoon (mid-May to August) and post monsoon (September to November) is not a good time for visit but the island looks very attractive in monsoon. June to September is prone to thunder storms and heavy rains.

**Quick tips:** Carry mosquito repellent creams and coils with you. If you are prone to sea sickness, carry your medical kit with you to be on the safer side.

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(The views expressed by the writer are hers/his & don't reflect that of the editor or the publication. We regret factual errors, if any.)



# The Indian Trumpet

**Loud, louder, loudest... Let's make some noise! We'd love to hear from you.  
Write in to us with your suggestions at**

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**[theindiantrumpet@gmail.com](mailto:theindiantrumpet@gmail.com)**

laughter, wishes and goodies...our launch celebrations had it all! And we promise this is just the beginning of our love for INDIA!  
Happy Tooting!!



**The  
launch,  
the  
loud  
toot!**

(L-R) Samarth Bahl, Prachi Grover, Ritika Kochhar Bahl, Vishal Khullar, Purva Grover, Chandni Lahoti and Amit Lahoti. Amit added a punch to the wall by scribbling his wishes in Bengali!



The first bite of the cake that was baked for us by 'When in doubt, eat a cupcake' was shared for us by the Editor & Founder, Sara Chaudhuri Purva Grover & Trumpet's youngest member, Sara Chaudhuri



Sandeepan Chaudhuri, our proof-reader with Purva Grover, Editor & Founder, The Indian Trumpet. We bother him at unearthly hours to proof read our pages.



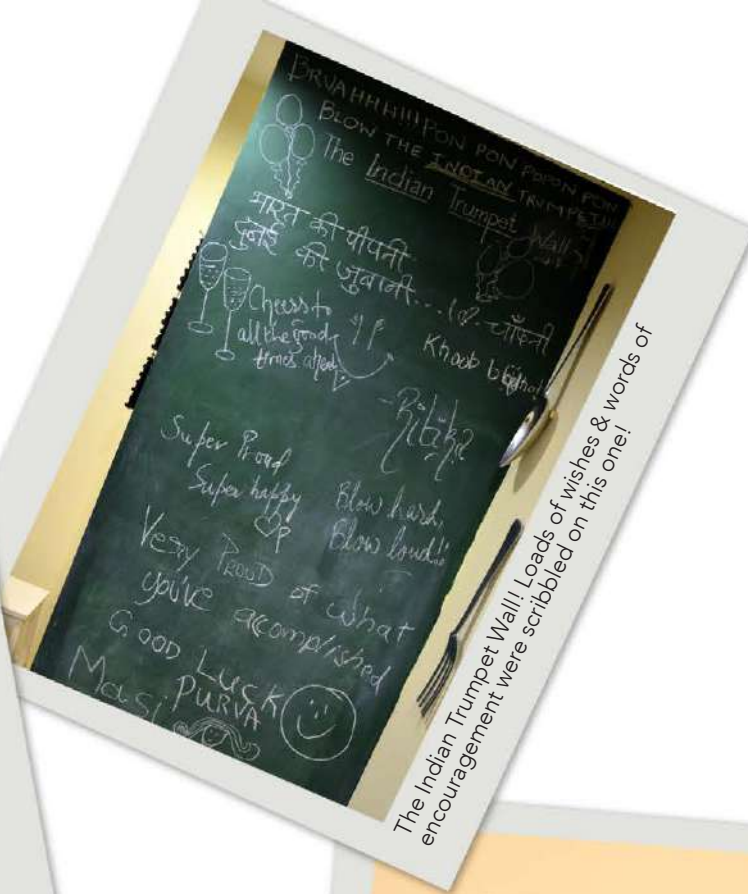
The lipsmacking platter of vegetarian and non-vegetarian snacks that were prepared for us by Kabab Kolony! In addition to that they even prepared yummy Chicken Achari and Veg rolls for us! What a treat!



Vishal Khullar, our web-designer & proof-reader. He fixes our words as well as the technical glitches!



Chandni Lahoti, a blogger and a writer with The Indian Trumpet. She was the first one to scribble on the wall...she began with these words, 'Bharat Ki Peepni'. We loved it!



The Indian Trumpet Wall! Loads of wishes & words of encouragement were scribbled on this one!



Samarth Bahl with Purva Grover, Editor & Founder, The Indian Trumpet. Samarth is someone who has been encouraging us from day one!



The yummy cake baked by 'When in doubt, eat a cupcake'. Thanks, Sahar Latheef Raheem!



Kapish Kohli with Purva Grover, Editor & Founder, The Indian Trumpet. We'd love to have this young good-looking man on our cover one day!



(L-R) Prechi Grover, food consultant & blogger and a writer for The Indian Trumpet; Purva Grover, Editor & Founder, The Indian Trumpet; Chandni Lahoti and Ritika Kochhar-Bahl, a fun loving girl who penned a fashionable piece for us in the debut issue.

# रंगीला, रसीला और आज़ाद

शब्द चाँदनी लाहोटी  
कला अदिति संघु

मिठ्टी की खुश्बू हो,  
या समोसे का स्वाद,  
मोहल्ले की मस्ती हो,  
या अपनों का साथ,  
चाए की चुस्कियाँ या फिर,  
लड्डू की मिठास,  
रिक्कशे का भोपू या,  
मंदिर की घंटी की आवाज़,  
नहीं यहाँ कुछ भी,  
सिर्फ़ एक याद,  
मेरा वतन है ही कुछ निराला,  
रंगीला, रसीला और 'आज़ाद'!  
मेट्रो की क़ैद में अपनी स्कूटी याद आती है,  
गली में खेले क्रिकेट की मस्ती आज रुला जाती है,  
बहुत हुआ फ़ोर्ज़न रोटियों का अत्याचार,

ठंडे सैंडविचस खाने को हम है लाचार,  
अपनों की शकल देखे जैसे सदी बीती,  
कहाँ गयी वो मेरी धूप मीठी मीठी ?  
सपनो की दौड़ में पीछे छूटी है जिंदगी,

गुमसूँ सी है ये, कुछ मुझसे रुठी रुठी!  
इस बेरंग सी जिंदगी में,  
क्यूँ ना रंग भर दें ज़रा,  
इस मायूसी को साथ मिलकर,  
क्यूँ ना डोर कर दें हम भला ?

इस तन्हा सफ़र को बनाकर एक कारवाँ,  
अपना सा फिर लगने लगे यह परदेस बेगाना,  
परिवार अंजानों से भी बन सकता है,  
आओ मिलकर लिखे एक नया फसाना!!!



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LARGE LARGER LARGEST

DUBAI

BIG BIGGER BIGGEST

DUBAI

TALL TALLER TALLEST

DUBAI

...re-learning superlatives

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