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April
2014



"AIN'T NO DAMSEL IN DISTRESS"
Feisty Taapsee Pannu on living life on her own terms

MARCH FOR CHANGE
A ringside view of JFW Women's Summit 2014

VISHU AASHAMSAGAL
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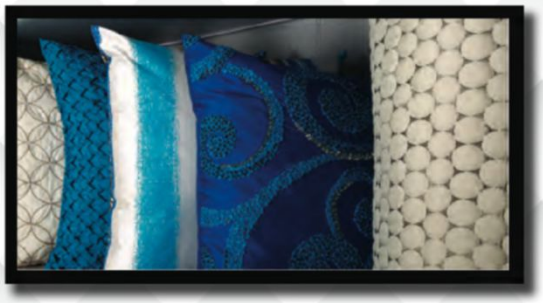
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Editor's Note



The one thing that was reiterated at the inaugural edition of our JFW Women's Summit last month was the fact that women ARE unstoppable and we are born multitaskers! If we set our minds on our goal and aim to achieve it there is nothing that can hold us back.

That thought perfectly matches the sensibilities of JFW, which has been a trendsetter in every initiative it undertakes. For instance, our JFW Women Achievers Awards that we instituted way back in March 2008 was a one-of–a kind acknowledgment and celebration of the success of women from various fields. After completing 5 successful editions, our JFW Awards remains the most significant and distinctive recognition of women power. (Watch out for the details of this year's awards in the coming months).

On that high note we are happy and energized to kick start a fresh financial year (yes the ex-banker in me can never be suppressed!). There are lots of exciting plans in store in the months to come. For starters, we have sealed our tie-up with a leading national publication house for wider distribution of JFW covering 19 cities across India. So more women in more cities are going to be treated to our unique mix of style and substance month on month.

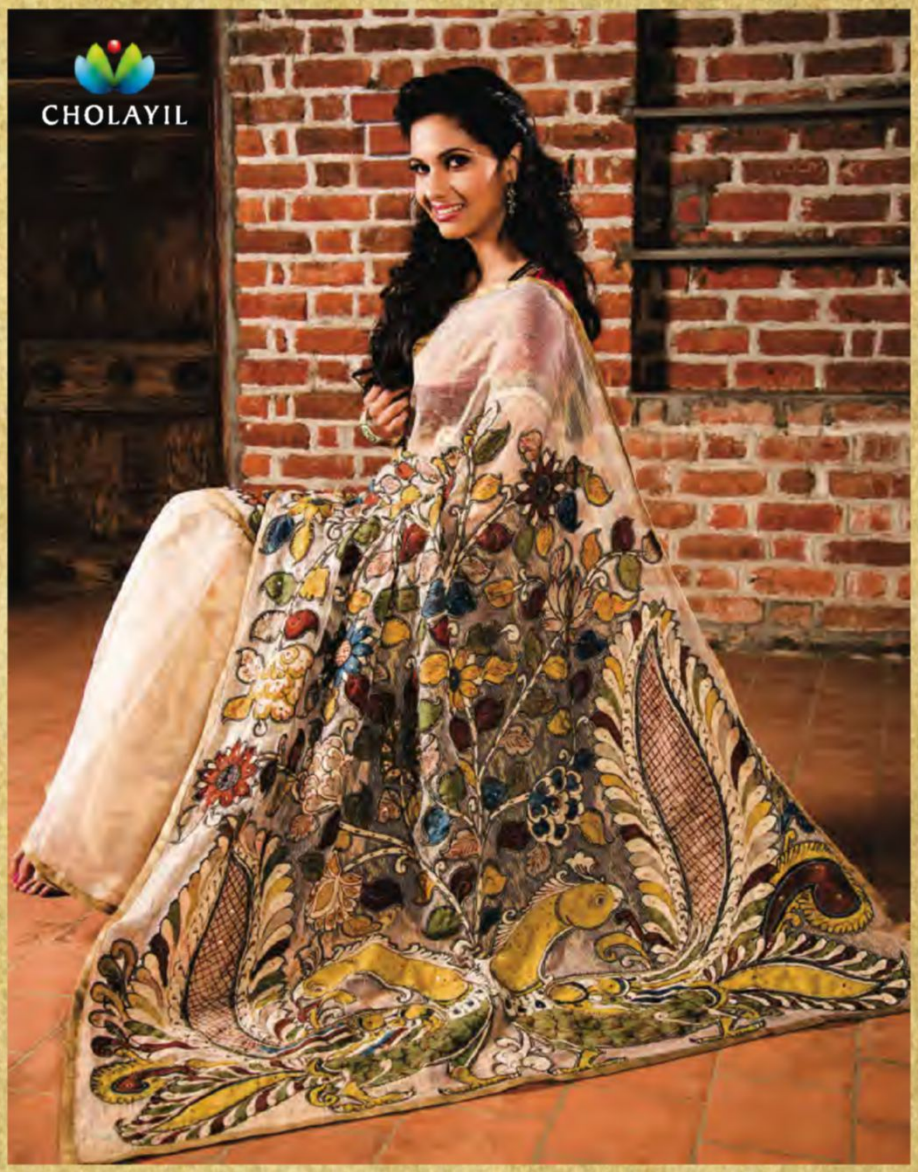
As students look forward to the end of another academic year and families freeze on their travel plans, here's wishing you a very pleasant holiday season ahead.

Cheers!



Bina Sujit
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On the Cover Taapsee Pannu
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Styled by Shilpa
Dress Evolv
Makeup & Hairstyling Nikki and Meena
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With summer on its way your decor article could not have been better timed. The cues given are simple, practical and economical. I tried some of them and the instant transformation was evident. Thank you JFW! Looking forward to more such practical articles in the months to come!
Shruti S., Cochin





The March issue was power packed and fun at the same time. I found a sense of balance among the articles. The interviews were inspiring while the fashion pages were trendy and cool. I also loved Braid like a Boss. I tried a couple of the styles given to college and they were a big hit.
Aarti Mahesh, Hyderabad



The March edition of JFW was a fitting tribute to the multifaceted women of South India. And I loved the fact that you featured achievers from all domains, be it healthcare, hospitality, education, sports. These personalities have showed us that following our hearts can lead to bigger things in life.
Karuna Iyer, Chennai

I am an avid traveller and subscribe to nearly all the leading travel magazines. But I am yet to come across an article on zodiac travel. Your piece on sun sign linked destinations was as unique as they come. The places were varied and interesting and although I am a Virgo, I plan to cover all the 24 destinations in the coming year. Thank you for inspiring me anew.
Rohini Menon, Bangalore





I cherish Dr. Gita Arjun's columns, especially those that helped me during my menopausal stage. As a mother of two college going girls, I found the write up Eat your way out of PMS very helpful. Till now I watched haplessly while they went through mood swings, depression and frustration in those days of the month. Now I feel I can help them in the way that I know best, by giving them a diet that will help alleviate the symptoms.
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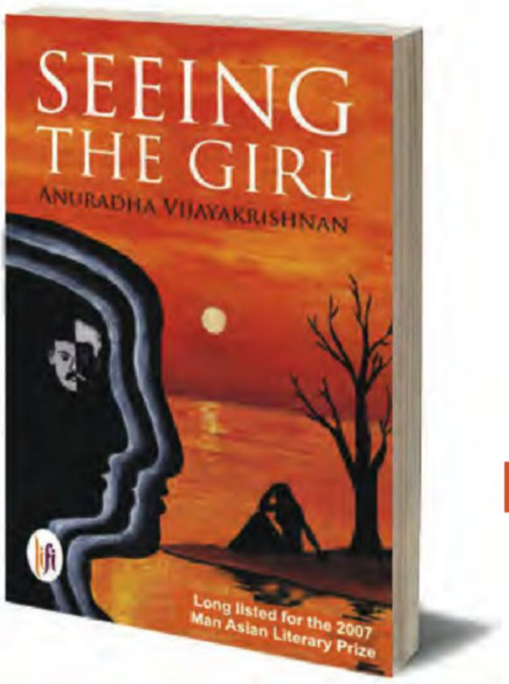
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WHAT'S NEW THIS MONTH

BOOK CORNER

Seeing the Girl
By Anuradha Vijayakrishnan
Seeing the Girl is the story of three women who live inside one another's



lives dangerously. Janaki is poised to enter into a conventional arranged marriage when unanticipated events break out. A marriage takes place, a daughter is exiled from the sanctuary of her home while the other struggles to build a life. Then someone dies caught in a vindictive shadow play of life and secrets that must be buried. This intricate drama promises to draw the readers in fight from the start and keeps them hooked till the end.
Price: ₹ 250

TALKING TUNES

Shakira
By Shakira
Finally! After 2012's 'She Wolf', Shakira launches her new self-titled album. The all English album that the Colombian singer-songwriter started recording in



2012 is now topping music charts. The buzz around it started prior to its release when a leaked video of 'Dare, La La La' went viral a few days before the launch of the album. By the time she released the single, the explosive 'Empire' officially in March, Shakira fans were all agog with excitement. With this album she is back after 2 years of dedicating time with her baby boy and is here to shake her hips once again.
Price: ₹ 700

FASHION FORWARD

Bohemyans Tops and Pants
By Shoppers Stop
Shoppers Stop adds a twist of East meets West to its spring summer collection with Bohemyans styled palazzo pants, which are made from cotton to make you feel light and comfortable in the sticky weather.







Apart from pants, the collection comprises kaftans and cotton tops in chirpy summer colours. So let your hair down and walk in style with these great pants and tops that help you beat the heat.
Price: ₹ 800 onwards

Capri Collection
By Forever New
The Capri collection from Forever New gives spring summer a new brightness with light pastel, turquoise and light yellow tanks, tops, tees, dresses. The Capri look is for working



women with a slight touch of floral to lighten the day. Their scarfs, heels and flats add that tinge of spring to complete the look.
Price: ₹ 1200 onwards

Ixora Collection
By Samasta
The Samasta Ixora collection promotes the global design and urban chic of colourful star-shaped blooms that



brighten up the southern gardens. Like the flowers, the collection is designed in resplendent hues ranging from red to orange, yellow to cream and purple to pink. The range includes smart dresses, silk skirts, crop tops, tunics and kurtas in flattering cuts for ladies of all ages and silhouettes.
Price on request

Summer Skirt Lehangas
By Manish Malhotra
Showcased at Lakme Fashion Week Spring/Resort 2014, designer Manish Malhotra's 'Summer Affair' collection was quite a hit where soft pinks, powder blues, beige and ivory fused with navy and grey on beautiful lehengas and gowns. The ace designer chose to keep the designs simple





and minimalistic, to portray modern day romanticism.
Price on request

Watches
By Michael Kors
Michael Kors helps you make a style statement with their latest 'Channing' timepieces. The classic designs are



brought to life with beautiful colours with enticingly new materials that create an attitude for the iconic brand. They are perfect for business meetings and evening cocktails.
Price: ₹ 16,795 onwards

SKINCARE

Absolute Plump and Shine lip gloss 3D
By Lakme
Lakme launches Absolute plump and shine glass in 3D. The gloss gives a layering to the lips, with the colour getting richer with each application. It contains marine collagen and high shines pigments that keep the lips fully hydrated. This gloss lasts up to 6 hours and is dermatological tested.
Price: ₹ 450



CC Cream
By Clinique





The CC Cream is an oil free, perfecting formula that gives a natural glow as it hydrates and protects the skin. This colour correcting formula promises to smooth the complexion by creating an ultra natural radiance to the face. It can be worn along or below a foundation that can be used for all skin types.
Price: ₹ 1850

L'Oreal-White Perfect Laser
By L'Oreal



The anti-spot brightness essence is an all-round protection whitening cream with pro-vanish and SPF 19pa+++ that claims to even out the skin tone, moisturise and protect it from UV-A and B. The product whitens the skin makes it radiant with its pro vanish whitening technology with three active ingredients that is vitamin B3, procystein and BHA that give a finer and suppler tone to the skin. It also nourishes dehydrated skin and protects against damage.

HOMEWARD BOUND



Air Fryer
By Philips

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Price: ₹ 10,500



GADGET GURU

Women Safety Phone
By iBall



iBall Andi Udaan launches India's first women's safety phone with SOS buttons that set the alarm, GPS tracking device, emergency contact and personal details of the phone user. This phone is not only a lifesaver but also looks stylish, along with a Swarovski zirconia crystal on the front for home button. It comes with a powerful dual core 1.3 Ghz Cortex A7 Processor at the heart, driven by 512 MB RAM and a 4GB internal storage which is expandable up to massive 32 GB. Its "A" grade 2000 mAh battery will provide enough talk time and also help enjoy video and games for hours!

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JFW WOMEN'S SUMMIT'14

REDEFINING EMPOWERMENT

It was an evening that is sure to have kick started a change: a change of mindset, of thought processes and of perspectives. The inaugural edition of the JFW Women's Summit, aptly titled March for Change, saw high profile women from all walks of life take on the restrictive rules of patriarchal society and turn them on their heads



March for Change: the moniker of the inaugural JFW Women's Summit had everyone abuzz with curiosity. Being a one of its kind initiative, the Summit drew eyeballs and expectations were fever pitch at the Hyatt Rgency, Chennai, the venue for the event, and they were fulfilled to the T. The grand success of the evening owed equally to the elite panellists, who were at their candid best, and the lively crowd, a mix of college goers, homemakers and professionals, which did not believe in mincing words.

The evening got off to a perfect start with a small presentation on Krav Maga, an Israeli self defence system, by S Sree Ram, who demonstrated why women should be equipped with the military combat technique in these hostile times.

The first interactive session on Breaking Stereotypes brought together actor Gauthami, fashion designer Rehane, Dr. Gita Arjun, ace shuttler Jwaala Gutta and Sudha Ganesan of Orient Blackswan. While Sudha Ganesan emphasised on the need for male sensitisation, Gauthami and Dr. Gita expressed concern on the regressive contents of certain movies and television serials.

The second topic of the evening, Women and Workplace, saw VJ turned singer Suchithra, educationist Anusha Ravi, hotelier Nina Reddy and Padmini Sharathkumar of Polaris ascend the dais to put forth their thoughts on how the work environment could be made more conducive for women.

The last debate of the conclave was on Objectification of Women in the Media. The panel comprising actors Nadia and Taapsee, producer Dhananjayan and JFW Editor-in-Chief Bina Sujit exchanged frank ideas on the portrayal of women in films and the contrast between Bollywood and South Indian cinema when it came to roles of substance for the leading ladies.

All 3 sessions were moderated by former NDTV India bureau chief Sanjay Pinto. The prolific journalist turned lawyer kept the audience absorbed and involved in the proceedings with his witty repertoire and candid humour.

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Subservient No More: Breaking Stereotypes *(Session 1)*

Panellists : Dr. Gita Arjun (*Ob-Gyn*), Rehane (*Fashion Designer*), Gauthami (*Actor*), Jwala Gutta (*Badminton Champion*), Sudha Ganesan (*Consultant, Medical Publishing, Orient Blackswan*)













Everyone gets pigeonholed into stereotypes at some point in their lives but for a woman being stereotyped at each step has become the norm. As a mother, a daughter, a sister and a wife, she gets moulded into choices that are not her own. Regressively enough, society equates subservience with a 'cultured upbringing' while living on her terms gets a woman tagged a 'rebel'.

House Husbands Needed

The stereotyping begins right at home said moderator Sanjay Pinto when he tabled some shocking (or maybe not so shocking, considering Indian mindsets) statistics. According to a recent survey, Indian men had earned the dubious distinction of spending a measly 19 minutes a day on routine housework while Slovenian men spent 114 minutes, followed closely by Danes and Estonians. The results may have something to do with the fact that the onus of helping with the housework falls only on the daughter while the son lounges in front of the telly. "The need of the hour is male sensitisation," said Sudha Ganesan. "Women take pride in saying that my son does not lift a finger in the house. The real change will come when the same women proudly say that my son never raises a hand on any woman." Rehane's seemingly witty remark was a pertinent question in disguise, "Men stop at buying the grocery. Why don't they go all the way to rustle up a meal with said grocery items?"



Say NO to Abuse

The rise in the cases of abuse in the country is testimony to yet another stereotype: men have the right to vent out while women have to suffer in silence. Actor Gauthami stated, "Unfortunately, women have been conditioned since caveman times to put up with abuse silently. That has to change. Women have to believe that no human has the right to violate another." Pointing out that things are looking up though, she said with a smile, "I have an example right at home. My maid's alcoholic husband abuses her when he is in a drunken state. She waits for him to sober up the next morning and gives it right back to him."

Dr. Gita Arjun stressed that to an extent the blame should be laid on television serials which showed women being rebuked and abused by the in laws and where a homemaker was considered a virtuous daughter in law while working women drew flak. She asserted that it was time to make a conscious decision to stop watching regressive content.

Ace shuttler Jwala Gutta emphasised the need to stand up and fight. "Abuse does not just have to be physical. Influential people abuse their power and if we bow down to it we are as much a part of the wrongdoing as they are. I have faced so many such situations in life but have never taken it lying down. Fight for your rights and be counted."

Everyone gets pigeonholed into stereotypes at some point in their lives but for a woman being stereotyped at each step has become the norm. As a mother, a daughter, a sister and a wife, she gets moulded into choices that are not her own

Might is Right: Women in the Workplace *(Session 2)*

Panellists: Anusha Ravi (*CEO Park Group*), Nina Reddy (*Executive Director, Savera Hotels*), Suchitra (*Singer*), Padmini Sarathkumar (*Chief Marketing Officer, Polaris*)







The woman of today is seeking independence and achievement more fiercely than ever before. Even though the sex ratio at most organizations is almost 50-50, there are still several challenges that women going out to work face. Whether the challenge be finding the balance between a career and home or handling professional stereotyping, there are many issues that hinder the progress of ambitious women even in this modern age.

Housework is a Job Too

Talking of work Sanjay Pinto hit closest to home, at the beginning of the session, throwing the question of whether 'a stay at home wife/mother should be recognized as a working woman deserving a pay' to all the panellists. Nina Reddy was of the opinion that instead of setting rules that are hard to impose, it is prudent to have a balance between the partners of any relationship. "Why not have a couple who are equal participants in the marriage?" she suggested. Suchitra agreed adding, "It is not feasible to have women paid for the chores they do in the house. There are too many grey areas. For example, if the woman is also working, does she still have a right to the additional income? As long as both



partners have respect and regard for each other, it works out well."

Changing Perceptions at Work

Theories aside, the harsh reality is that almost 80% women allow their career to take a backseat, either after marriage or after having children. The mediator asked the panellists what they felt about this situation. Anusha Ravi who has spent much of her life in the USA, said, "I started working at Anheuser-Busch, in USA, when I was almost six months pregnant. But in India, we still see women in a certain way. It is ridiculous!" Padmini Sarathkumar agreed with Anusha, "Once a woman enters an organization they expect her to take on the 'easy' jobs. They push her into HR or PR but if a woman wants to do currency trading like I wanted to do, she meets with a lot of resistance." Nina Reddy added, "It is also a little more challenging for the woman to be a boss. You have to put on your toughest face or you get taken for granted." Sanjay Pinto added jovially though, "I have somehow always had better female bosses than male ones!"



Developing a Sound Support System

To facilitate a woman going to work to give her best, she needs a good support system at home. Anusha Ravi pointed out that one of the advantages of living in India is that you have family close by. Usually grandparents step in to help take care of the children; you also have the luxury of hiring good domestic help without emptying your pockets. From an employer's point of view, Ms Sharathkumar suggested, "Companies would do well to provide for a day care unit at work itself. Women work better when they know that their children are well taken care of." Anusha also felt that having added incentives, such as flexible working hours, is a much better option than losing a good worker altogether. Suchitra on the other hand said, "You don't always get the resources you need. When I chose to get into radio, no one in my family supported or even accepted the decision. I knew from the get go that the onus was on me to prove myself. If you do find the occasional help, well and good but don't wait for it to get the show on the road!"

Balancing Work-Home Pressures

The debate was sparked off by a question from the audience about whether working mothers lose out in the parenting department. Anusha Ravi replied, "The guilt is part of the job profile of being a parent! Irrespective of whether you are working or staying at home, you always feel that you could do better. But more often than not kids turn out okay if you pay a little attention, even if they didn't have the best fancy dress!" Nina Reddy, who has two grown up daughters, said, "You prioritise. If you feel that your kids need you more, take a couple of years off and then start off again. Be clear about what you want to do, rather than juggle everything half-heartedly."

> "Once a woman enters an organization they expect her to take on the 'easy' jobs. They push her into HR or PR but if a woman wants to do currency trading like I wanted to do, she meets with a lot of resistance"
>
> -Padmini Sarathkumar
> (*Chief Marketing Officer, Polaris*)

Handling Harassment

The unpleasnat truth is that even today a shocking number of women face sexual misdemeanour at their workplace. Suchitra recounted, "While working in Banglore,my colleagues started misbehaving with me. My boss refused to get involved. I had to literally flee from the organization." Ms Sarathkumar conceded, "Sexual harassment is still quite rampant. Communicating is the key. I advise all the women out there to speak out. Talk to counsellors, and friends." Suchitra advised, "We live in a world of social media. If you have been violated, blog about it, tweet it! Don't suffer silently!"

Selling the Item Girl: Objectification of Women *(Session 3)*

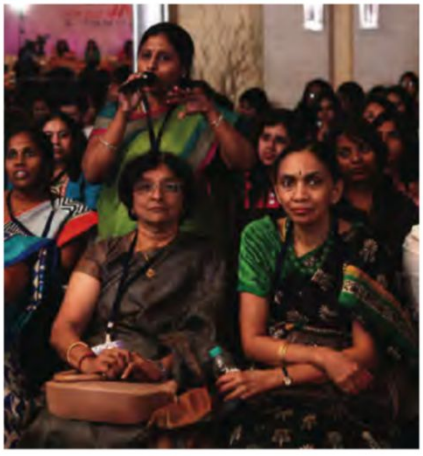
Panellists: Bina Sujith (*Editor, JFW*), Nadia (*Actor*), Taapsee (*Actor*), G Dhananjayan (*Producer*)

















The media, television and movies are instrumental in changing the mindset of the community. While common market analogy dictates that 'sex sells', cinema in the South in particular has sold it a little too much. While Bollywood is catching up with the West in making more women-centred films, South Indian cinema seems adamantly glued to the age old 'hero-beats-baddies-saves-damsel' plot.

Make the Ladies Count

Bina Sujith started off the discussion on a perfect note by reminding everyone of the many Hollywood and Bollywood movies in which the leading ladies had author backed roles, irrespective of whether they were the central protagonists or whether they carried the movie along with the heroes. "We need not make an Erin Brokovich, a Kahaani or an English Vinglish every time. Even mass entertainers like Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Chennai Express and Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jaayenge had the heroine standing as tall as the hero," she stressed. "Why are such meaningful roles woefully lacking in South India cinema, especially Telugu and Tamil movies?"



Pulling Past the Pigeonholes

There is a certain casting pattern in the industry even today. Women see a very fixed career graph in this film fraternity, starting out as fresh faced, romantic interests and ending as the grey-haired, all enduring mother. Taapsee piped up animatedly, "A heroine has a set pattern she must follow: a couple of 'song and dance' sequences, minimal clothing and lesser screen time! Usually, the girl's role is negligible." Nadia who starred in M. Kumaran S/O Mahalakshmi as Jayam Ravi's mother said, "I was asked to colour my hair grey for the role. I put my foot down! Even when I get to 60, I will dye my hair black so why should I deliberately grey my hair to fit a stereotype?" Both the actors were of the view that women should be able to enjoy diversity in their acting careers.

Market Trends

Speaking of trying to break typecasting in the industry, producer Dhananjayan said candidly, "It is not as if we want to keep making the same kind of movies. What has to be understood is that in the South especially, box office collections are ruled not by the audience that goes to multiplexes, but from villages and smaller towns. Majority of the movie goers comprises not of the educated cosmopolitan crowd but of the masses, 80% of which are men. These people are looking for entertainment in its most simplified form. We give them what they want in the form of these masala movies, which are commercially successful." Sujith Kumar, the Managing Director of JFW, countered this by saying, "The so called successful ingredients have long been rendered redundant. Item numbers, skin show, violence and spicy dialogues are no longer integral parts of hit films. You can also have a Suthu Kaavum or a Pizza, which were successes even outside of the city, and which had none of the formula factors. Why does every movie have to involve a woman gyrating to cheap lyrics?" Taapsee agreed saying, "Yes, women don't always have to be the object in movies. Let the men have a turn at being objectified too!" ■



There is a certain casting pattern in the industry even today. Women see a very fixed career graph in this film fraternity, starting out as fresh faced, romantic interests and ending as the grey-haired, all enduring mother


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Scarlett Johansson


Jennifer Aniston

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Crop it Right

Get in the mood to have fun this summer and crop it up for a casual weekend or an elegant evening out. Style them with high waisted skirts or with capris, a chic crop top will put your toned midriff in the limelight. So pair them right and don't be afraid to show off a little skin



Fendi crop top



Missselfridge.com - blue lace crop top



Aztec - urban vivi crop top



FSL art funky print crop top



Blue Inc - pink sleeveless turtle neck crop top



Bowcrop-strappy cut

Amazon-comic print



Della - coral lace short sleeve crop top



Ardrossan-wholesaler splash paint crop top everything 5pound



Peter Som mega rose cady stretch v-neck cropped top

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Baby Sai Tanya (Little Miss Chennai 2003)
Maheshwari (Miss India Asia Pacific 2001)
Divya Ram Prasad (Miss India Finalist 2001)
Simran (VJ - SS Music & Miss. India Finalist 2004)
Aparna Pillai (Actress & Model)
Pooja Nair (Miss Chennai 2000)
Sharmili (Miss India Finalist 2004)
Merita D'Souza (Miss India Finalist 2004)
Samiksha Lal (Miss North India 2001)
Swathi (Top Actress in Kannada)
Komal Sharma (Actress & Model)
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Month: May 2014
Time: 3 pm to 5.30 pm (2.5 hrs)
Duration: 10 days
Fees: Rs 9500 /-
Registration: Rs 500 /-

For Kids (3Yrs -12 Yrs)
Date: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
Month: May 2014
Time: 10.30 am to 12.30 pm (2 hrs)
Duration: 10 days
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Registration: Rs 500 /-

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Fab 5



Spring-Summer Trends

It is all about lightweight fabrics, femininity and comfort this Spring-Summer. Taking inspiration from the greats, build your own collection from their ready-to-wear and couture medley. While it is hard to figure out wearable trends here, this year brings to you a line of conservative and demure clothing. *By L.G. Abhirami*

The 101 from the West

Giorgio Armani couture: Silk, lightweight fabrics, utterly feminine with men's clothing concept, Armani Privc gave way to shades of the night sky and stars. Comfortable, conventional and modest, Armani's ready to wear is spun around pastels and colour bursts in sheer chiffons and silks that are so breezy, you will want to wear them forever. With a glamorous spin on men's wardrobe, the range exuded exoticism infused with iridescence and glitter dipped in the deepest end of worldly luxury.

Chanel: With emphasis on the waist, more bashful, the array of classy attire was mostly dominated by soft colours and peppered with candy pinks. The couture collection was all for sophisticated fashion and less skin show while their ready to wear went all out with peppy, young and oh-so-gorgeous outfits.

Dominating the entire range splashes of colour against neutral tones with the occasional glitterati and studded accessories make you sigh and visualise on how you can create your own number.

Valentino: Undoubtedly elegant, Valentino's SS'14 is all about earth tones. From midnight black to moss green, full of gauze and tulle and chic down to the tee, the ensemble



is complemented by intricate details like ruffled sleeves and shoulders that are left without hemming for added essence. Their fashion statement might be remembered more for Katy Perry's couture gown at the Grammy's that took everyone's breath away; a dress made of music notes and tulle in the form of a beautiful strapless serene off-white gown.

Their ready to wear is simple yet ostentatious; inspired by folksy embroidery and beadwork, in jewel tones and moderate berry, nature hues. With intricate work all over with brilliant infusion of tribal art, this particular melange can actually be worn around here for special occasions as well as for casual wear. This SS'14, make your own trends and be inspired by these ideas!



1. Pretty Pastels

Wear them any way you want it, hues of the rainbow and spring just can't go wrong. Pair a blushing pink skirt with a jacket or top in the colour of the sky or other numerous combinations.

The best thing about this dainty trend is its ability to go from day wear to date-night wear in a jiffy. Pair your dainty outfit with matching shoes and a statement clutch, and you are all set. Let pastels reign in your wardrobe this summer!

2. Iridescence

Go all out and don a dress or a skirt in the shimmering shade of iridescence. For a more subdued effect, accessorize in the radiant tint instead with shoes or a clutch and make it your very own fashion statement. More points for you if you paint your nails in this uber chic prism hue!

3. Tea-length skirts

Gone are the days when full length and knee-length skirts were the only things okay to strut around in; tea-length skirts are the new rave and this spring brings to you plenty of variations on the ladylike hemline. A tea-length skirt is essentially a cross between the midi and maxi but absolutely the in thing to don right now! Pair it with a cropped top to offset the length or to create an ensemble meant for the top-notch echelons.

A tea-length skirt is essentially a cross between the midi and the maxi but absolutely the in thing to don right now! Pair it with a cropped top to offset the length or to create an ensemble meant for the top-notch echelons



4. Boxy and Bomber Jackets

Yes, it is hot out here but that does not mean you have to give up on jackets; what with the uber cool lightweight variants of boxy, cropped jackets along with bomber ones available in denim and cotton. Wear it with dress-shorts or trousers and let this sporty layer of clothing complement your usual attire







and make you appear all dolled-up, thanks to its silhouette defining feature.

5. Wide-Leg Trousers

These menswear inspired trousers are not just for the models with mile long legs; pick ones that are not too flared and slightly high-waisted to make you appear lean and tall. The wide-billowy trousers are ultra chic and uber easy to wear. Pair this classic beauty with contrasting shades like the classic black and white or go risqué with prints or embellished trousers and a sheer or mesh blouse.

The Verdict

Splashes of colour and variety are the main theme this Spring-Summer. Be your very own fashion diva and experiment with shades and combinations from the plethora of prints and textures available around this time of the year. Most important of all, dress comfortable and let your skin breathe with easy, breezy fabrics.







SUNNY SIDE UP

ANU HASAN

Pictures and Words

It was nearly 8.30 in the night and I was sitting on a bench in Liverpool Lime Street station, my McDonald's meal in my hand. I leaned forward to place my backpack on the floor, before resting my elbows on my knees and beginning to dig into the decidedly unhealthy meal. It had been a long day. Right from 7 am, most of the day had been spent editing and deciding where a voiceover was needed to accelerate the passage of time, and where we needed music to enhance the passage of time. A picture might paint a thousand words but sometimes it is still incomplete. I am no expert but I was pleasantly surprised to know what was needed where.

Joe, the director in charge of our travelogue (the pilot that I hope to make into a series), has taken to calling me either 'Boss' or 'iMaam'.





I had this weird almost out of body experience as I visualised it: a nearly deserted station hall and I sitting on a bench on my own, a backpack at my feet and a bag of chips in my hand. There are two ways this picture could be interpreted, depending on your mood. You could either see a lonely woman sitting by herself or you could see a free spirit who does not give a damn

Sometimes the title is affectionate, sometimes laced with exasperation and sometimes with barely concealed irritation. But underneath it all is an acceptance. Joe and I have found a great way of working around our differences. Since both of us are clear that it is the project that comes first, it is easy to put our egos last.

The station is large and open and at that time of the night there were only a few stragglers...tired people getting back home at the end of a long day, store workers closing down their shops, a few disinterested guards

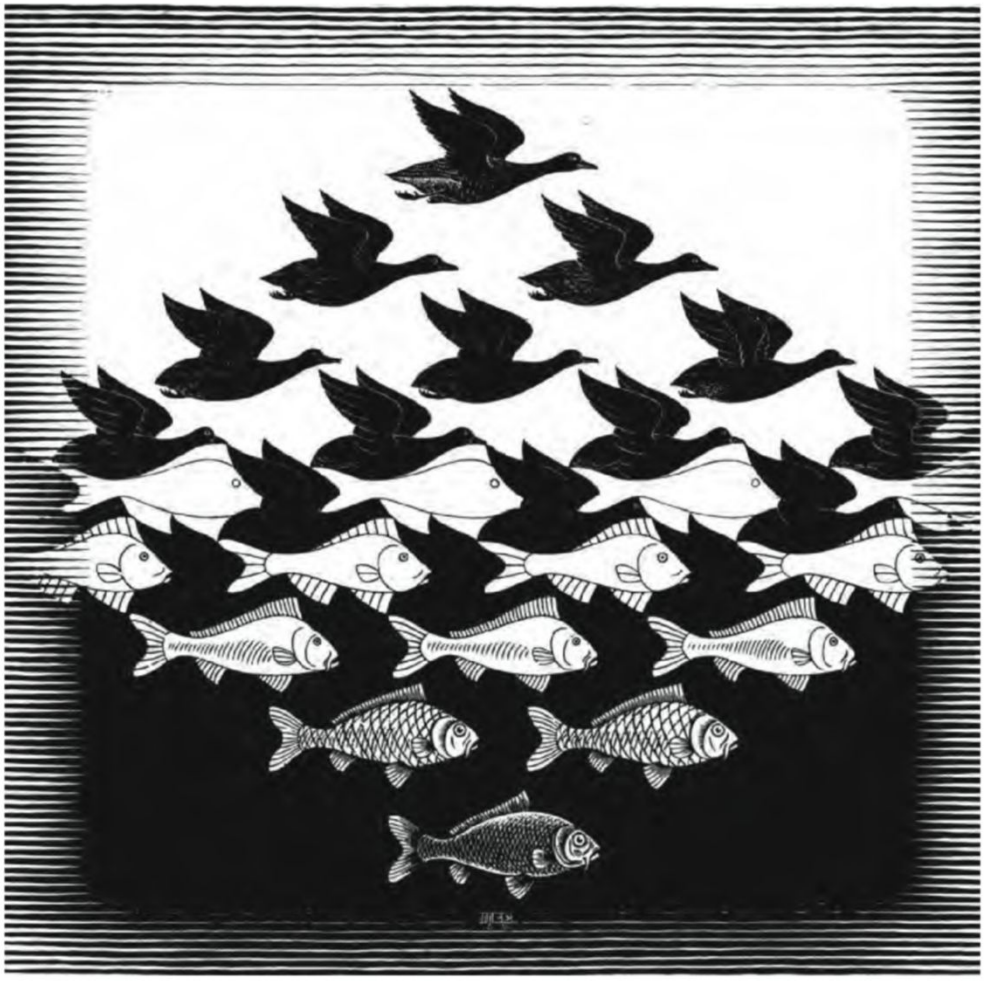
leaning idly on the wall keeping an eye out for mischief makers. There was a sudden rise in the noise levels and I watched as the policemen quickly became alert. I followed their eyes and looked at what had caused the commotion. It was two young lads on skates, laughing as they swerved around the pillars, the noise of the rumbling wheels and their laughter echoing in the nearly empty space. To my eyes they seemed innocent enough. But it was obvious that the policemen were not willing to assume that. I watched as one of them straightened and started to walk towards the boys gesturing to them to get off the skates. After all, a railway station was not the safest place to go skating. A miscalculation might land you under a train.

The boys good-naturedly grumbled but obliged by getting off the skates. Tucking them under their arms, they exited the station. They turned a corner and I heard a slight rumble as they got on their skates again. I looked at the policemen to see if they were going to go after them. But obviously they were out of the area of jurisdiction. They both went back to leaning on the wall and scanning the station. One of them caught me watching him and he dipped his head in that inimical British way. I gave him a slight smile and went back to eating.

I chomped on the fries and wondered how it would look to someone looking at me. I had this weird almost out of body experience as I visualised it: a nearly deserted station hall and I sitting on a bench on my own, a backpack at my feet and a bag of chips in my hand. Now there are two ways this picture could be interpreted. It depends on your mood really and on what you choose to see. You could either see a lonely woman sitting by herself or you could see a free spirit who does not give a damn.

Now we all know which one I am. But it did set me thinking...a picture might paint a thousand words but are they the right ones? Or are they the ones you want to see? Were the policemen really disinterested? Were the boys really innocent? Was the grumbling good natured? I had interpreted all these images from a distance, with their body language being my only cue. Surely my interpretation was coloured by my approach to life in general.

I took a moment to check how I felt. I stepped outside myself again to see the picture of me sitting by myself. I waited for the sadness that never came. Instead, the thought that came to my mind was, "How cool is this! Who would have thought that the small town girl from Trichy would be here?" Having reaffirmed my opinion as to the kind of person I was, I smiled to myself and continued eating my chips. I glanced up at the clock – nearly time for my train home. It had been a day well spent. Joe and I had worked on the edit, completed the voiceovers and it looked like the episode was complete. I slung my backpack over my shoulder and sauntered to the train. I looked at the nearly empty platform before me, at the silver and green train that waited to take me home, at my courteous fellow passenger who gestured for me to board first and at the rough looking guy with the pierced upper lip watching me with a fixed stare as I walked down the aisle and settled in a seat. A kaleidoscope of interchanging pictures – flashing across fleeting moments, to be picked and discarded and analysed and saved! That is what this tapestry of life is, don't you think? Several pictures painting fragmented stories.





Short AND SWEET

Bored of your same ol', same ol' hairdo? Craving for something cute and funky? Boy! Is the bob cut the thing for you! Chic or quirky, refined or funky, uber feminine or radically punk, this timeless style has many avatars. *Malini Gopalakrishnan* finds out how you can rock this look

Summer is making its comeback and temperatures are soaring again. If your long heavy locks are getting you sweltering, consider snipping them off for a lighter, fresher style. The versatile bob is just the flavour of the moment. A style that suits almost every face shape and hair type, the bob can be styled to reflect your personal sensibilities and dressing sense.

Liberty of the Locks

The bob gained popularity during the World War 1 when women were forced to opt for simple hairdos to keep up with the harsh times. The hairstyle went on to become an expression of rebellion, freethinking and independence. In 1915, a ballroom dancer by the name of Irene Castle chopped off her locks for the sake of convenience. It was the first time that a woman of glamour had given up her locks. The style caught on and got nicknamed 'The Castle Bob'. It was a hair revolution that followed – the trend of short hair.

There were plenty of people who found this style distasteful, feeling that it was a long way off from the long-haired soft look that women should have. The 'bob' they felt was not feminine enough. To the young generation however, chopping off their long locks felt like liberation of sorts. In fact, the style was such a topic of discussion it even inspired F. Scott Fitzgerald to write a short story he called 'Bernice Bobs Her Hair'. The story was that of a strait-laced goody two shoes heroine who gets tricked by her friends into

having her glorious locks chopped off. The trick allows the heroine to find herself and shun her old image.

The style went on to become a hit with the leading ladies of the international fashion scene from Vogue's head, Anna Wintour, to the ever trendy Victoria Beckham. This style makes for an easy change and is a great way to transform your look instantly. Read on to find out which one suits your personality and face cut the best.

Classic Bob

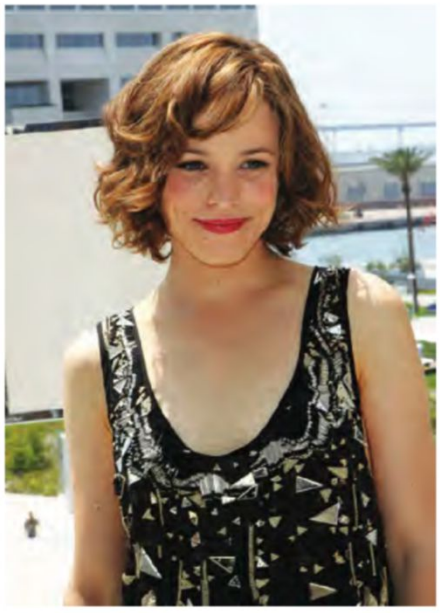
If you are experimenting with a bob for the first time, the classic bob is a great place to start. The evergreen classic earns its name for good reason. The style is simple yet elegant, with hair cut to just reach the nape of the



neck making it a style that suits all face shapes and most textures. The classic cut is straightforward with centre partition and a couple of layers added at the back if required, to give the hair some volume. This hairstyle goes best with relaxed bangs across the forehead, curving at the temples.

Side Swept Bob

If you have smooth and silky hair with lots of volume, this is a great option for you! Although it works best with oval or round faces, a tastefully cut side bob will suit most faces. Very long narrow faces don't look too great with this style though. This do is usually worn with the hair parted along one side and the bob is styled around this combing. This hairdo involves sectioning off a part of the hair from the front, running from one side to the other. The remaining hair is cut very



much like a classic bob. Once this is done, the rest of the hair is trimmed using scissors or an electric trimmer so that the side bangs fall to one side framing the face and narrowing it down. While some types of wavy hair fall easily into the side swept bob, light, frizzy hair requires a lot of maintenance to keep the look neat and glamorous. If you don't mind blow drying your hair into a perfectly swept out look, this ultra feminine look could be just the thing for you.

The Chinese Bob

A hairstyle so edgy, it turns your whole look around, the Chinese bob is a great way to wear your confidence and attitude! The look only works with hair that is super straight and glossy. Also, fine hair does not sit well in this look at all. The overall image is sharp, put together with tons of drama. While styling hair into a Chinese bob, it is essential to make sure that the hair at the back and around the sides remains at exactly the same level.



No graduation or layers for this style. The lines are simple and severe. The front portion of the hair is sectioned off and cut into a straight bang across the forehead without curving them along the temples. The fringe is supposed to have plenty of body too. This look does not play peek a boo. Avoid this style if you have a very round face or a very long one as the Chinese Bob does nothing to add shape to your face. This hairdo looks great on oval shaped faces though.

Stacked Bob

Most women complain of having hair that is too thin or fine to do anything with. The stacked bob is great if you are looking to add volume to your hair and not afraid of losing length. It is a hot favourite with the fashionistas today. If you want to draw attention to your face and elongate your look there is nothing better than the stacked bob. To achieve this style, the hair in front is bluntly cut to graze the chin. The hair at the back of the head is sectioned out into layers starting from the crown going down. The layers are then cut one at a time, with the topmost layer levelling with the tops of the ears. The longest layer



tapers in from both sides of the head and is combed in towards the nape of the neck. The end result is an effect of the face being framed by hair on either side. The neck appears longer and slimmer due to the volume that is added to the head.

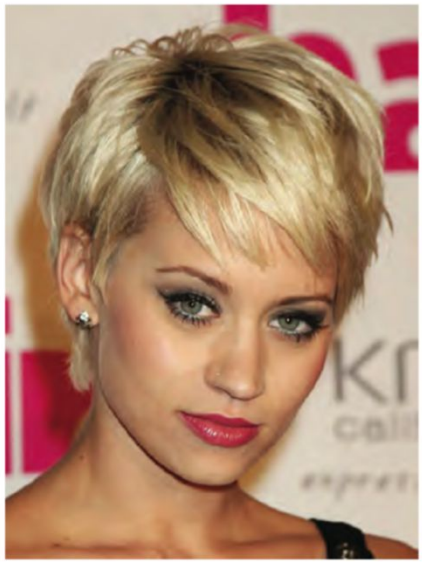
Shaggy Bob

A majority of women have partially wavy hair as opposed to tresses that are too straight or too curly. This shaggy bob or the messy bob as it is commonly called is a fun, whacky way to sport short hair. Choppy, layered with lots of movement, the shaggy bob emanates youthful exuberance. This look is achieved by chopping the hair into a classic bob first and then partitioning the hair into several sections moving from the top going to the bottom. The sections are then given a light touch of the razor or a mechanical trimmer. This gives the hair a lot of texture and bounce as wispy ends project from each layer of the hair. To create the best effect, blow dry the hair at the roots and then flat iron the tips a bit. The best thing about this look is that it looks great just as a messy do as well and requires very little maintenance. This shaggy bob looks great on wide faces as it runs along the cheekbones and takes the focus away from a broad jaw line.



The Pixie Bob

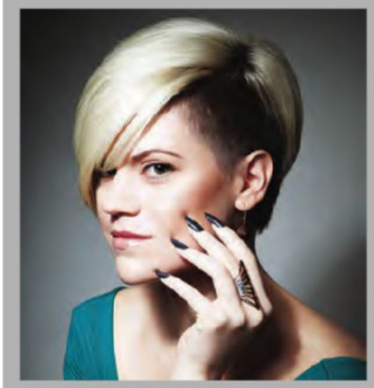
Sexy, minx-like, daring and ever so naughty the pixie bob is just as exciting as the name suggests. Styled from the traditional image of the magical pixies, the style looks adorable on heart shaped or oval faces. This ultra short hairdo involves cutting the hair into a 'boy-cut' with the sides just brushing against the tops of your ears. The hair at the back of the head is cut similar to a stacked bob, except that the length is kept extremely short. To add a feminine touch the front of the hair is usually teased into a side swept fringe. You can wear the pixie bob in a neat swept back manner in a way that puts the face into focus, or you could tease out the tips of the hair to make them stick out a little.



The textured look is a winner for the free spirited kind of girl! The bonus: This is one bob that works with very curly hair. The close cropped curls look charming and cute and lend a youthful look to the wearer.

In 1915, a ballroom dancer by the name of Irene Castle chopped off her locks for the sake of convenience. It was the first time that a woman of glamour had given up her locks. The style caught on and got nicknamed 'The Castle Bob'. It was a hair revolution that followed – the trend of short hair

Here are a few pointers to remember before you visit your hair stylist:



- Long bobs are better for round faces or slightly chubby ones. They give you a slimmer look.
- Traditionally, bobs work best with thin to medium hair as opposed to extremely thick hair.
- Be careful if you have curly hair. It works differently from straight or wavy hair and unless the layers are structured, you could end up with a triangular head!
- With fine hair, it is all about the layers. The more layers you can get the better. Try teasing the ends outwards or curling them into gentle outward waves.
- If you choose to sport a bob, make sure you have a good flat iron and a blow dryer handy, since it frequently needs a bit of styling.



ASOS - embellished stone floral collar



Silver embellished collar necklace



Accessorize - berry gold toned collar necklace

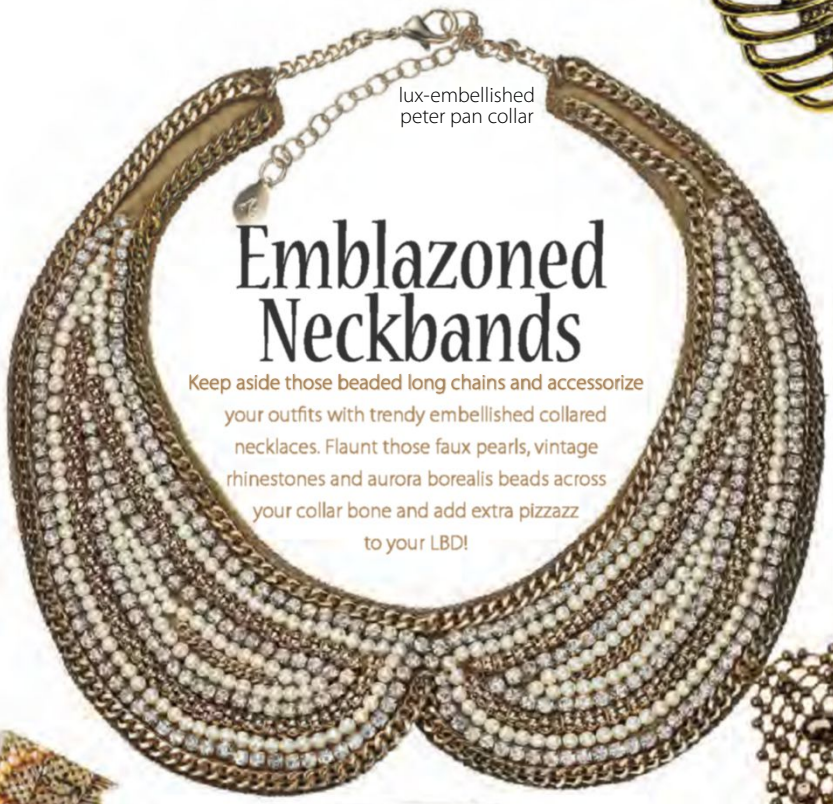


Topshop - antique embellished collar

lux-embellished peter pan collar

Emblazoned Neckbands

Keep aside those beaded long chains and accessorize your outfits with trendy embellished collared necklaces. Flaunt those faux pearls, vintage rhinestones and aurora borealis beads across your collar bone and add extra pizzazz to your LBD!





Britney Stephens pop on and off collars



Otytaline and Henri embellished collar



Lanvin-antique gold collar



Emilee Anne -beaded vintage collar



DKNY- black embellished collar



Jolita Jewellery - blue crystal stoned collar



Louis Vuitton - gold collar



A DASH *of* FREE SPIRIT

A riot of curls frames the apple of her face, dimples encasing a dazzling smile and a bounty of energy bursts out of every pore: that is Taapsee Pannu on the outside. Get a little closer to the actor however, and you see how the sparkly exterior is just the preview to what is on the inside. *Malini Gopalakrishnan* catches up with the spirited Punjabi dynamite as she talks about typecasting in movies, likes, dislikes and her everlasting thirst for life

Photography: Karthik Srinivasan

Styled by *Shilpa*
Makeup & Hairstyling *Nikki and Meena*
Location *Taj Connemara, Chennai*
Dress *Evolv*
Accessories *Ayesha*





There is something about free thinkers, some palpable degree of gravity they exude: the ones who know what they want, live by their heart and throw caution to the winds. Now imagine that allure, only in a woman, and a pretty one at that. The first thing that strikes you about Taapsee is vigour; she is bursting with it, right to the tips of her signature curls. Dressed in a crop top and simple slacks, she sits cross-legged in an ornate chair munching on a plate full of French fries. She is full of life and a quick wit, and she chats animatedly between mouthfuls, seeming younger than her 26 years. She insists right away on not airbrushing her interview too much since her fans love her outspokenness. Four years in the movie making business, she is still full of the kind of spunk and gumption that makes Taapsee excellent company.

"I have been proving people wrong from the very beginning. People used to tell me girls are bad at maths, I aced the subject. When I was expected to go the higher studies path, I took up modelling. The trick is not to get bogged down by someone else's conception of you"

"Before my first movie had been released, I had three others in my lap"

Call her destiny's child; Taapsee Pannu's entrance into the film industry was just a stroke of luck, with the kind of returns she would never have imagined. For a girl from the North, making an impact in another realm should have been scary. But Taapsee has no time for such things as fear and doubt. She is young and vivacious, eager for new experiences, enthusiastic about trying different things. Having studied to be a software engineer, Taapsee started out by working in a regular corporate set up as an IT professional. Her break came when she decided to take a year off to study for her CAT exams, when she received a few modelling offers. "The career change was not a sudden decision at all, it started out with small modelling assignments, which were a good source of pocket money!" she jests. Her study plans had to be shelved however as movie offers started pouring in. "It was overwhelming. What began as a fun pastime was turning into a full fledged job. Before my first movie had been released, I had three others in my lap," she exclaims almost with disbelief!

"If they see you as this sweet, innocent, bubbly girl, they will only cast you in a certain kind of role"

Starting out, things were looking good for Taapsee. The young actor feels there is nothing compared to the amount of respect and love the stars receive on the set and off it. "I love how people receive you as an actor. They are so respectful of your needs and are so polite and hospitable. There is so much warmth that you receive from your audience. Initially, you are floored by it all. Slowly though, I saw that there was an underlying current to all that attention," Taapsee confesses. She feels that even though people love to cast you and watch you on screen there is a fair amount of typecasting that happens especially in the South Indian movie industry. "If they see you as this sweet, innocent, bubbly girl, they will only cast you in a certain kind of role. It is a given; three songs, five scenes and your work for a movie is done," she says.

Like every other artist, Taapsee yearns for a movie that celebrates a woman beyond simply objectifying her. Ever the realist though she admits, "The strange thing is that should I get a role as a strong central protagonist, I would feel reluctant about taking it up even if the role really appeals to me. The fact is that there is simply no market for movies that break that typecast women in the industry face." The reason for this is what Taapsee considers a vicious cycle. The directors see that there isn't an audience for movies without a strong hero, so very few movies are made that are different from the run of the mill 'masala hits'. Having been for years treated to one form of male dominated cinema, the audience has no appetite for anything different either. So, one thing leads to another. Taapsee feels that it is high time that the mould is broken though. "The circle must be broken. Today, that is possible only if the big banners decide to take a risk. Change the name of the game. After all, life is no fun if you are playing it safe all the time!" she says feelingly. The actor feels that more movies should be made with a woman in the lead. She reasons, "I don't see why no one else sees the potential. Women are so unpredictable, have so many more layers, emotional depth and complexity!"

"I have been proving people wrong from the very beginning"

A true blue 'Dilli girl', Taapsee was brought up to rough it out. Coming to the South was something of a culture shock. She explains, "Don't get me wrong, everyone treats their women really well. They are loving and protective about the girls around them. But there are a lot more labels around here. You are expected to behave in a certain way and live your life within some set boundaries." She takes it in her stride however; it is all in a day's work. "I have been proving people wrong from the very beginning.

People used to tell me girls are bad at maths, I aced the subject. I have never let my looks be my end all. I earned a degree on my own capacity and got a good job. When I was expected to go the higher studies path, I took up modelling. The trick is not to get bogged down by someone else's conception of you," she says spiritedly, with wisdom beyond her years. "People forget that you are just a girl who is doing a job like anyone else. They treat you differently. I keep trying to explain that I am the girl next door. I am not a glamour doll. You also notice that however much they like their actresses on screen, no one wants an actor in their family, which is strange," she muses, dimples flashing. She dances to her own tune though, having no interest in proving a point. She is here to have a good time, do some memorable roles. "I pick up roles that interest me. For instance, there is a general idea in the industry that

"There is a general idea in the industry that a girl who takes up a role with shades of grey is done for. I took up a slightly negative role in Gundello Godari and am appearing in another in the upcoming film Vai Raja Vai. It was fun and I think it diversifies my portfolio. Have I stopped getting offers? Absolutely not!"



Dress and Necklace *Evolv*
Earrings and Ring *Ayesha*



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"I want to mean more to the script than the sets and the furniture"

Three and a half years in this industry and Taapsee is looking good. She has been part of projects in Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. Recently she appeared in her first Hindi movie, Chashme Baddoor, which went on to be a reasonable hit at the box office. With near complete projects like Muni 3, Vai Raja Vai and Shaadi.com in the offing, she is relaxed and complacent. "I am not someone who is going to keep taking on movies just to cash in or stay amongst the top stars in the industry. There are many actors who are okay with being the 'it-girls' of the industry, appearing in the age old role of the damsel in distress. I am not one of them. I want my audience to enjoy going to a film because I am in it. I want to mean more to the script than the sets and the furniture. I came into this industry in search of some fun and as long as I am happy everything is great. I don't fear losing anything." Taapsee is a girl who lives life on her own terms, throwing caution to the wind. "One day I will have done my fill of movies and I will embark on the next adventure. I will pack my bags and settle somewhere that I am not known as an actor. Maybe I will start a family," she muses. Ask her if there is a possible romance in the offing and she guffaws, "Absolutely not! I mean someday, not now! I don't think too much about the future. I also believe that the biological clock ticking is absolute nonsense! There are choices a woman has today that we did not have before. I think if I let my career take a backseat it is going to be on my own terms and not because any social norms require me to," she declares loudly.

"One day I will have done my fill of movies and I will embark on the next adventure. I will pack my bags and settle somewhere that I am not known as an actor. Maybe I will start a family"

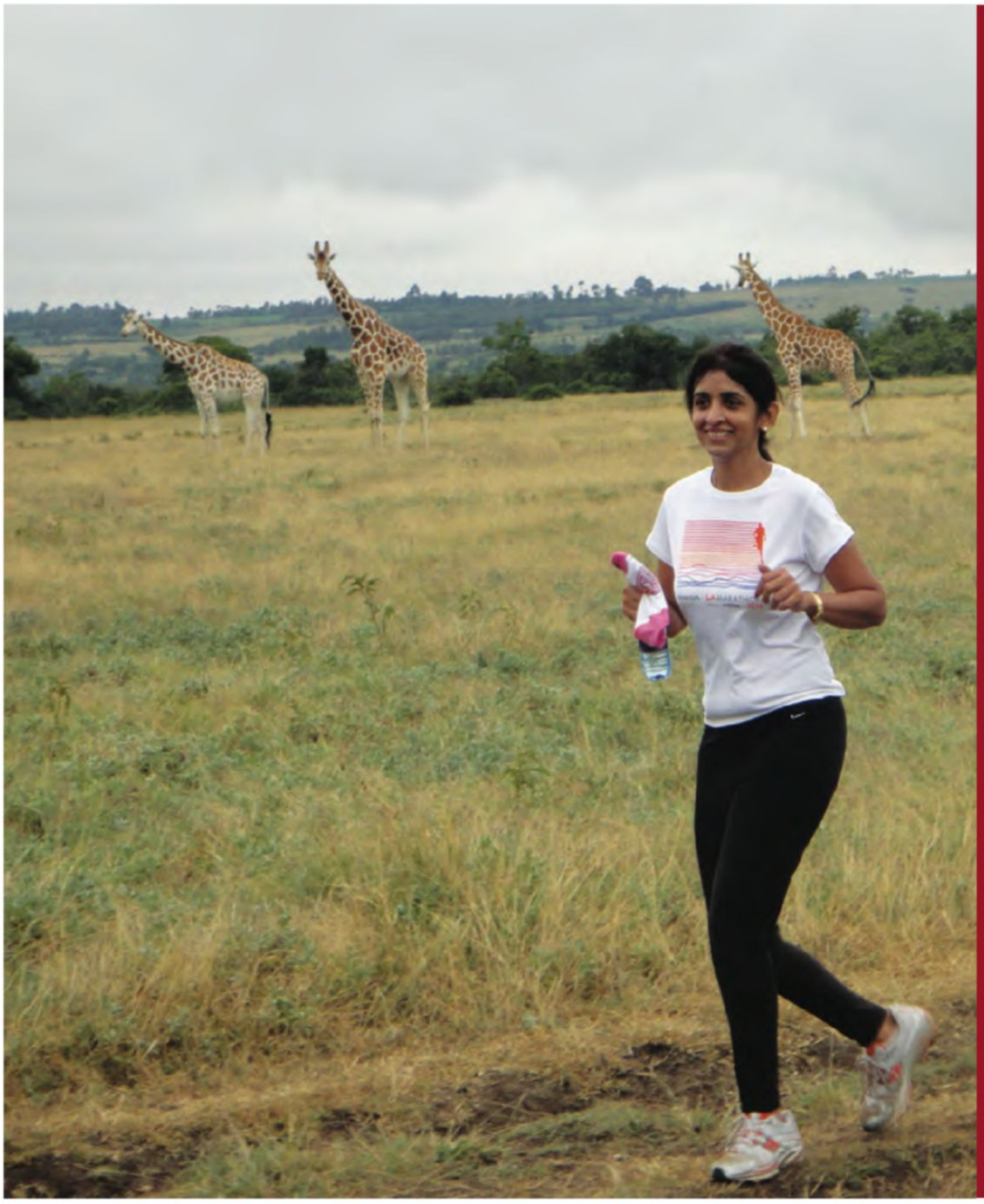
Taapsee Exclusively

- She is an extremely low maintenance girlfriend. She loves the simple things in life, preferring street food and lazing around at home. No diamonds and five star dining for this girl.
- She is a maniacal bargain hunter. Trained in the streets of Delhi, this girl will haggle over the price. So much so that her close friends and relatives refuse to go shopping with her.
- Taapsee needs her sleep. Be it between shots, missing meal times or on flights, she needs her eight hours beauty snooze!
- She is a foodie to the core. From French fries to spicy chaat, this girl likes her munchies. If she likes the taste of something, she forgets diet and calories and simply indulges!
- She has a short fuse. Being in the industry has taught her how to plaster on a smile but this Leo is usually easily ticked off.
- A beach bum, the actor can holiday at a beach resort any day of the year.
- She hates travel but wants to see the world. She is saving for a time machine to transport her instantly to her destination.
- A self professed 'party-pooper', she hates doing late nights. Her friends are always complaining about her being a sleepyhead!
- She loves to dance. Be it Kathak or Western style, dancing is second nature to Taapsee. She loves dancing 'like a crazy person' to Bollywood music.
- She has never fancied any actor for too long but has harboured a huge crush on Hrithik Roshan for the better part of a decade!





Dress *Shilpa*
Accessories *Ayesha*



Run for your **dreams**

From choosing soil microbiology in college to participating in record setting marathon runs across continents, from making a name in the pharma space to aiming at putting India on the global 'wine' map, she has always ventured into unexplored territory and come out a winner. In a chat with *Aditi Mandanna*, Uma Chigurupati talks about choices, challenges and choosing the road less travelled

If trends and statistics are anything to go by, India is a country obsessed with producing doctors and engineers, where most families start drilling the importance of medical and engineering entrance examinations into malleable young minds. Given such a premise, what prompted Uma to choose an unconventional subject like soil microbiology for higher studies? "Even though my father wanted me to pursue medicine, I was very clear about my priorities and took botany as my main subject for under-graduation and soil microbiology as my major during post-graduation. The wilderness of nature is intoxicating and I feel one with the elements when surrounded by greenery and plants," she says. The one Indian 'convention' that Uma did follow was to agree to an arranged marriage but serendipity intervened and it turned out that her better half, Krishna Prasad, also shared her passion for plants. Their marriage may have been conventional but the courtship period was anything but as the talks veered not around probable honeymoon destinations but around seeds and saplings. "It is funny to recollect, we spoke a lot about plants during our first meeting itself and the

topic dominated all our subsequent 'getting to know each other dates'," she smiles. "Of course, his passion for wines and winemaking was something that I found out about only after our marriage and imbibed the same from him."

Entering the world of wines

Elaborating she says, "I was a sort of late starter in the world of wines but Krishna got into vintages right from when he was in his teens. He had his first tryst with it at the age of 17 when the local Bishop allowed him to taste the wines that he was importing from Italy. While the drinks were nothing excellent, it heralded the beginning of his love affair with wines. By the age of 21, he began making wine from Bangalore purple grapes, fermenting little amounts in a few demijohns in his house. Soon this became his passion and his experimental beverages became a hit among his friends.

"I was shocked when I first came to my marital home to see one bedroom converted into a mini winery with many demijohns fizzing away happily. Thirty years ago, it was unheard of that you can experiment on making wines at home. Shock, however, soon gave way to intrigue and out of my obsession for learning new things, I became a cellar hand and an assistant winemaker to him. I found myself delving into the subject and understanding the nuances of wines and winemaking."

The marathon couple

It is hard enough to imagine the unusual pairing of plants and wine. How do marathons fit into the picture? "Running marathons is a passion that we both discovered much later. In 2003, we took part in a 10 km run to inspire our company staff to live a healthy life. The experience was exhilarating. 10 km became half marathons which became full marathons," says Uma.

Was this run the inspiration behind the 10k Foundation? "What started 11 years ago as a motivational exercise changed into a passion and I became wholly involved in organizing runs in the city of Hyderabad. 10k Foundation came into being in 2003 as a voluntary organization started by eminent personalities from different fields to promote health and fitness in Hyderabad, organizing annual events like 10k runs, marathons, running races for women and school sports."

"Running marathons is a passion that we both discovered much later. In 2003, we took part in a 10 km run to inspire our company staff to live a healthy life. The experience was exhilarating. 10 km became half marathons which became full marathons"

Among the many marathons that the couple has run, the one across the continents features somewhere on top. How was the experience? "In 2010, we ran marathons in all the seven continents including some tough races in Kenya among the wildlife, the Gobi desert, the Australian outback, Antarctica and the North Pole," she says with the satisfaction that comes from following your heart. And the feather in the cap is that for this pioneering feat the couple now holds the Guinness World Record.

It may now be easy to rest on the laurels but training for the marathons was not easy, especially the one in the North Pole, she recalls. "All the other marathons we ran were on land,



however, the North Pole marathon was extreme as we had to run on frozen sea water (Arctic Ocean), at -34°C, braving freezing wind and cracking ice with a determination to plant the Indian flag at the finish line. The sense of accomplishment that I felt then remains unmatched.

Evolution of KRSMA

Along the way have there been any memorable 'marathon' experiences? "The Medoc Marathon in 2007 holds a special place in our hearts. Besides being our first full marathon, it combined our passion for running and love of wine," Uma recalls. "The Marathon trail passed through scenic vineyards of Bordeaux and fabled chateaus that produce some of the best wines in the world which fed our love for all things grapes."

As Executive Director of Granules India, a ₹ 1200 crore Hyderabad based pharma company, with offices in the U.S., U.K., Colombia and China, Uma had to do quite the balancing act between work and family. Having so much on their plate, was it not difficult for them to indulge their passion for winemaking? "Initially, business pressures kept us away from winemaking, but as we travelled on business to various countries and tasted 'proper' wine, we realized how inferior our homemade wine was," she says. "On our travels we began visiting wineries, where we met leading oenologists and viticulturists and gained invaluable nuggets on both winemaking and viticulture. We also managed to amass an enviable collection of wines. All of this led to us developing our own unique palate, which helped us in our oenophilic venture."

"Indeed our core focus now is KRSMA and we devote all our time and energy there. We would like to develop the wines and winery and maybe on later date offer wine tourism, in a truly international world class setting"

The stepping stone for KRSMA Estates was laid in 2007 by Krishna and Uma. KRSMA is spread over 170 acre vineyards near Hampi. "Indeed our core focus now is KRSMA and we devote all our time and energy there. We would like to develop the wines and winery and maybe on later date offer wine tourism, in a truly international world class setting."

Juggling work, family, marathons and estate all at the same time, what has been Uma's biggest learning? "Undoubtedly, time management!" comes the prompt reply. "To me family is always the priority, and I would never compromise on that aspect. Whenever my children need me I am there."





Maybelline Baby Lips Tinted Lip Balm with SPF 20



VLCC Red Grape Tinted Sunscreen Souffle

VLCC Extreme Protection with Mango seed oil SPF 60



Flavours under the Sun!

From the streets to the beach, you just cannot get by without sunscreen this Indian summer. Except this time, you don't have to settle for the plain old chemical waft; add a little joie de vivre by switching to these flavoured sun protection lotions and lip balms. Pick your favourite flavour, be it chocolate or strawberry- they all smell good enough to eat!



VLCC Sandalwood Glow Sunblock Lotion SPF 20



VLCC Hydrophobic Raspberry Sun Block SPF 50



Palmer's - Cocoa Butter Original Lip Balm SPF15



Palmers Cocoa Butter Tinted Dark Chocolate and Cherry Lip-Balm SPF15

The Body Shop
Wild Rose Hand Cream SPF 15





Nivea Cranberry and Raspberry SPF 10 Lip Balm



Nivea Fruity Shine Cherry Lip Balm with SPF 10



Palmer's Cocoa Butter Formula SPF 15 Body Lotion



Crabtree & Evelyn Gardener Lip Butter with SPF 15

UNTANGLING THE CANCER DIS-TRESS

While patients suffering from cancer experience unimaginable levels of physical pain and emotional strain besides enduring social stigma, it is the chemotherapy induced hair loss that takes the worst toll on most! Chennai recently saw the first of its kind hair donation drive 'Tangled' with the objective of spreading awareness and to donate hair to wig makers for cancer patients. In conversation with Rennee Saradha, the brain behind the operation, *Malini Gopalakrishnan* learns more about this noble cause

Rennee Saradha is all of 19. At an age when most girls are busy thinking about the fun stuff, Rennee is on a mission to make others smile. At the centre of the 'Tangled' hair donation drive is this girl with a honey sweet voice, and a head proudly shaved for a cause she believes is bigger than her.

The Germination of an Idea

In her final year of B.A. English at WCC, Chennai, Rennee looks as lively and sweet-natured as most girls her age. That is at the surface though. As the president of the Rotaract Club at her college, she leads a team of almost twenty in trying to make a difference. At the time that she was elected president, she was required to come up with a plan for the year that she would lead the team. About the time that she was soul searching for a plan, her sister grew fascinated by a cause called Locks of Love in the USA, which was asking for hair donations from around the world to make wigs for cancer patients. While her sister contemplated sending in her own locks, Rennee started to think more locally. "At the onset I was full of doubts. People in the South are quite orthodox. Shaving off their hair might be too drastic for them. Then there was the question of whom we would give the hair to," says Rennee. Even with all the 'ifs and buts', the idea grew in her mind as something worth perusing. She took the idea to her team. Together they researched the options available in India, more specifically, Chennai.

To get an expert's take on the concept of hair donation, the girls approached Dr Surendran, the head psycho-oncologist at Adyar Cancer Institute. "We had barely outlined the concept that we had in mind when Dr Surendran threw us off with his approval. He told us that such a drive was just the kind of project the Cancer Institute had been looking for," Rennee relates. According to the



doctor, there was enough and more research that went to show how hair loss directly affected the efficiency of cancer treatment. He said that once patients start losing their hair, there is a veritable change in their mental and psychological state. Patients became less receptive to treatment. In fact, there were many cases of cancer patients quitting therapy post hair loss. By providing people with good quality wigs, it was possible to remove some of the stigma attached with chemotherapy treatments. Dr Surendran also promised to help the team of young Rotarians with the training and information required to spread awareness and draw in more donors.

Having received the right kind of backing for the project, 'Tangled' was on its way. The next step was to get a reputed salon to participate in the event. "Hair used to make wigs for cancer patients has to be of a certain quality. Loose hair, chemically treated hair or hair swept off the floor cannot be used. A quality wig requires hair that is tied properly and cut to a length of at least eight to ten inches," says Renee. Help came from another Rotarian Mr Ganeshan, who helped set up a meeting with Mr Gopalakrishnan, the business head of Green Trends Salon. Once again, the girls met with no resistance. With the salon on board, the project really took wings. Hairstylists from Green Trends were put through a training program to learn to cut/shave hair in a manner suitable for wig making.

"We had 150 participants in that inaugural hair donation camp, of a whopping 300 registrations. We never expected such overwhelming participation"

Shaved Clean

With all the cogs in place, Tangled was all set to take off. To make the campaign effective and give it as much steam as possible, Rennee's team decided to teach by example. They decided to have the inauguration at their own college, where the girls would take the initiative and be the first donors. On 4th February, World Cancer Day, Tangled was inaugurated at WCC with Dr Shanta, the Chairman of Adyar Cancer Institute, as chief guest. Rennee volunteered to be the first person to have her head shaved. When asked if she was at all nervous or anxious, she causally replies, "I had no problems with letting go of my hair. I believed in doing something bigger to help these cancer patients. I was worried about my mother's disapproval though. Turns out I was wrong, she was incredibly supportive and proud of what I was planning to do."

By taking this brave and bold step, Rennee encouraged and inspired many more to join in and want to donate their tresses. "We had 150 participants in that inaugural hair donation camp, of a whopping 300 registrations. We never expected such overwhelming participation," says Rennee proudly. She attributes the success to all the Rotarians who helped her at every step. "My team members were great, they believed in this project. The club secretary Ramya and Tangled co-chairperson Meera were largely responsible for the hugely successful campaigning and creating awareness across colleges in Chennai," she says.

A Taste of Success

Even while the girls were running from pillar to post to translate the dream concept into a feasible reality, they never imagined the kind of response they would receive. Apart from Rennee, ten donors volunteered to have their hair shaved off while hundreds of participants had their hair cut.

How is it that a girl so young can feel so strongly about a cause that she has not directly experienced? "It is all because of my mother. She always taught me to step into the other person's shoes before judging anyone. Even though I have never personally known anyone suffering from cancer, I feel for them. Everyone deserves to fight a disease on their own terms. Most cancer patients hurt from the attention they get after losing their hair. They don't want to be the subject of sympathy and pity. They want to continue to live their lives as normally as possible. I would like to think we are helping some of them along in this journey."

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The project goes on till June, after which all the hair collected will be handed over to another Rotarian, Mr George B Cherian of Raj Hairs, who will help the team get wigs ready. He will also donate 20 wigs. Following the WCC initiative, there have been many more hair donation drives springing up across the South. According to Rennee, there could be no better testament or result of their campaign than more people wanting to join the cause. "It is a huge pride for our team, an achievement that forestalls any questions regarding our work for the society as Rotarians. We will see the project through and make sure the wigs find their way to the right people," she says, confidence and optimism shining bright in her eyes.



CHENNAI DIAMONDS 6th Anniversary



In a unique and very enthusiastic celebration mood, Chennai Diamonds on the occasion of its 6th anniversary is celebrating their own 'Thanksgiving Week'. Celebrations will begin from 14th April and will go on till 20th April. Special discounts and schemes are a passé. To engage with and express their gratitude to the customers, the store is gifting diamonds to them. On this occasion, in its ever romantic tones Chennai Diamonds has also announced the launch of a new range of gold & platinum jewellery called The Affair Collection.

During Chennai Diamonds' Thanksgiving Week, any customer who is celebrating their wedding anniversary can walk into the showroom and claim a 2 cent diamond. This news spread quickly through the city and the store has started receiving calls as to clarify if its absolutely free or some additional purchase will be required. The store is delighted to tell them that this is the gift of gratitude and is absolutely free. Besides this, Chennai Diamonds also wants to be generous to other customers by giving them ₹ 4000 off and a 5 cent diamond free on purchase of every carat. This is a one of its kind offer that Chennai Diamonds has floated out, which is bound to generate curiosity, admiration and some envy in the market.

Mr. Kanthilal, CEO of the magnificent store at Cathedral Road says, "The new Affair Collection stands for the eternal love affair of a woman with her beloved jewels. It also is a celebration of all the bonds that she fosters as a mother, sister, daughter, lover, wife and as a customer of Chennai Diamonds. The collection also features a special range of accessories designed for men."

Since it's their anniversary celebration, Chennai Diamonds have ensured to cater to couples with their lovely lustrous designs. The lady can cherish an exhaustive range of jewellery such as earrings, nose-rings, pendants, necklaces, bangles, bracelets, watches, rings, anklets, girdles, etc. and the man can choose from a sophisticated range of accessories such as watches, cuff links, belt buckles, tie pins, spectacles, etc.

Chennai Diamonds craftsmen talk with a lot of pride about their creations which are featuring in the new Affair Collection. It's a special range of gold, platinum & diamond jewellery specially crafted to represent the love, passion and beauty that an 'affair' stands for. Motivated by the response received from customers on the customizing jewellery offer, Chennai Diamonds has also spoken with their loyal customers and has considered their views and ideas while designing for the Affair Collection.

Situated in the heart of the city, Chennai Diamonds has been enchanting its customers with their innovative and gorgeous jewelry designs, the certificate of authenticity and 100% buy-back offer on exchange.
Showroom: 46, Cathedral Road, Chennai.
Ph: 044 4210 4050. shop@chennaidiamonds.in

Advertorial



THE SURREAL MIX

She landed in the film industry without the backing of any godfather. Yet ever since her debut a couple of years ago, Nidhi Subbaiah has come a long way having found her footing in the Kannada and Hindi film industry. By *Lubna Parveen*

No blockbusters. No massive 100-crore churners. No big banners. And yet, right from her first Kannada film Abhimaani, where she essayed the role of Aparna, to her critically acclaimed roles as Ambika in Pancharangi and as the spunky Divya in Anna Bond, she has been steadily carving a niche for herself.

Family First

Her idyllic childhood days in Coorg make her nostalgic. Talking about her school and college days, she says, "I grew up on an estate and I am the only child. My childhood was filled with family get-togethers and bonfires; my mum would sing on the guitar, we used to go swimming, fishing and hiking. It sounds surreal, but that is exactly how it was. It was a fun filled and an extremely beautiful childhood."

She grew up amidst books and as her parents imbibed reading as a definitive hobby, the writer in her came alive. She is an avid blogger and has written many short stories. Nidhi stresses, "My family and friends do not treat me like an actress. They are the ones who make me feel grounded. So when I seek normalcy, I head straight home."

Sharing a strong bond in a close knit family, comprising her mom, dad and granny, Nidhi says they are all closely connected to each other. Nidhi has recently moved to Mumbai and stays all by herself, so her mother calls at least five times a day to makes sure she is okay.

Sporting Avatar

After finishing school from St. Joseph Central, Mysore, Nidhi got into NCC in the eleventh grade, and went on to become an All India Best NCC cadet. That is how she got into sailing, which eventually catapulted her to the national level. She got her first taste of fame when she represented Karnataka and won two gold medals. "I was really good at sailing and there was a time when I wanted to take it up professionally. Now I prefer to keep it as my hobby. I am a completely outdoor person and might take to playing tennis soon. I am also blessed with a high metabolism and an athletic body."

Sports even helped her get a seat in an engineering college. "Because of the sports quota, I got a merit seat in engineering though my heart was not in the subject. I enrolled at SJCE Bangalore as all my friends were there.



"I was really good at sailing and there was a time when I wanted to take it up professionally. Now I prefer to keep it as my hobby. I am a completely outdoor person and might take to playing tennis soon. I am also blessed with a high metabolism and an athletic body"

In my second year of college, modelling happened and as I was not so keen about engineering, I discontinued it."

Movies and Inspiration

Nidhi started her career from scratch and went on to realise her dreams of stardom. Coming from a small town like Coorg, not many have the opportunity of becoming a star. "My parents were initially sceptical about my decision to enter films but gradually, after seeing the kind of roles I have done and the appreciation I have received, they have become very supportive."

Without any formal training in acting, how does she prepare for each character that she portrays on reel?

"I am crazy about Kajol. I have watched all her films first day, first show. Usually, teenagers then had pictures of heroes on their bedside and framed on the walls but I had Kajol's posters in my room. So doing a film with her would be like a dream come true!"

Drawing inspiration from other actors, Nidhi says, "Whenever I am moved by a performance I keep it as a benchmark and aspire to achieve that perfection in my roles so that I am able to move my audience." While modelling, Nidhi also did a handful of advertisements which led to movie offers. "My first two films were average hits but my fourth film (Pancharangi) was a super hit. In Bollywood, I signed Oh My God! and Ajab Gazabb Love."

Nidhi does not see her South films as a stepping stone to the Hindi film industry and wants to strike a healthy balance between the two industries. "I don't let box office status affect me. Neither does success give me a high nor failure a low. People praise me, I say thank you and move on. I am critical of my own work. I don't think I take things too seriously, maybe that helps me."

Beauty and Fashion

Beauty is a given in the film industry and Nidhi too has a skin care regime but she does not believe in anything elaborate. "I don't have the patience for facials. I just use face wash, baby lotion, sunscreen and bio-oil. My beauty staples include a lip balm and kajal and a lip and cheek stain. I believe that if you are a chilled out and spontaneous person, you end up looking good," she says.

"I do try to catch up with the latest fashion trends but I am not completely fashion driven. I like the global runways and would love to team up those awesome designs with high heels." Defining her fashion attitude, she says she is completely aware of what she should wear, and knows what suits her.

All actors have that dream role they want to essay once in their lifetime; which role does she want to sink her teeth into? "I am crazy about Kajol. I have watched all her films first day, first show. Usually, teenagers then had pictures of heroes on their bedside and framed on the walls but I had Kajol's posters in my room. So doing a film with her would be like a dream come true!"





Suitepotato



Fab

Ottoman Empire

They are not just for resting your tired feet on anymore. Ottomans now have a new role to play: they liven up small spaces and neglected corners, which explains why they come in quirky hues and shapes. Indulge in some pouffe magic!



Home Goods

Home Goods





Tribal Home

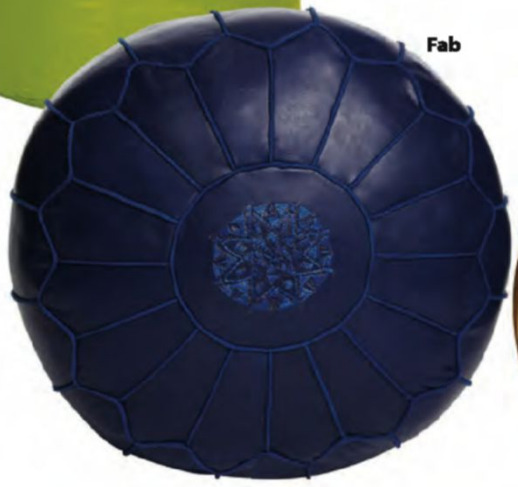
Fatboy point pouffe lime green bean bag





Estaban wool pouffe

Fab



Overstock



MAGIC WITH MIRRORS

And boy, do they look good! Giving your interiors an instant uplift or adding an illusion of spaciousness, mirrors, when used well can be the glamorous touch you need to liven up your living spaces. Aristocratic or understated, feminine or bold, kitschy or classic, there is a mirror to go with every taste in decor. *Malini Gopalakrishnan* discovers the best ways to tap into this trend

If you are looking to spruce up your home without having to redo too much, a mirror might be your new best friend. It is all about finding the best way to use these accessories to accentuate your space, furniture and accessories.

Illusion of Space

A mirror is one of the best ways to create an optical illusion in any space. By placing a large mirror in a small room, you can create a roomy effect due to the extensive reflection that draws the eye of the casual observer. Don't hesitate to go big and loud. Wall to wall mirroring is back in vogue too. Another wonderful way of accentuating the space feel is to add mirrors to the ceiling. By doing this, you add a feel of faulted ceilings with a touch of luminosity. If you are unwilling to take such a big step, you can use a little cheat code, which is to put up a glamorous mirror near the ceiling in a slant. This is a great tip to use, especially in a dining area. It also works great if you have an interesting light fixture or a chandelier, reflecting the light and the shimmer to give your dining area a magical feel. Another great trick is to paint one wall a slightly darker shade of your chosen colour and place the mirror on the darker wall. By doing so, you give the room a sense of depth and thus enhance the idea of spaciousness.



Avoid: Avoid placing the mirror opposite to clutter or random objects that you don't want to draw attention to. Keep the reflective surfaces away from any messy storage spaces. You might not always remember to keep the doors shut.

Feng Shui and Mirrors

The Chinese philosophy of balancing energies with the environment frequently employs the use of mirrors for various purposes. The ancient system believes that mirrors or reflective surfaces are very powerful objects that can redirect and course energy in a particular direction. If you wish to follow the Feng Shui sensibilities, there are a lot of services

you can enlist mirrors for. Enhancing space, warding off negative energies, drawing boundaries and activating latent energies, the uses are numerous. One of the most important concepts in Feng Shui is harnessing water energy, supposedly the most harmonious of all and mirrors are considered the masters of the water element. They are believed to bring peace and calm to your environment along with refreshing the surroundings.

Avoid: Feng Shui advises against the placement of mirrors inside the bedroom. This is because adding mirrors to the place of rest is thought to increase the need for sleep and results in deep lethargy. Inversely, since mirrors activate the space, a mirror placed opposite a bed might cause you to experience insomnia and restlessness.

Cover It Up

Do you have an ugly seepage mark on your wall, or an ugly window facing a brick wall? A mirror is a great way to cover up the awkward spots in your room. If you feel like a particular wall looks too empty, the clever use of a mirror and a couple of nice lamps will fix that problem for you in a jiffy. In fact, a narrow awkward wall between two pillars can be instantly spruced up by adding a classy full length mirror. You can even get a mirror that stands on the floor leaning against the wall, to add an interesting angle to your bedroom or dressing area. Doing this will help you achieve a flexible, raw look which is very hot right now.



Another great trick is to paint one wall a slightly darker shade of your chosen colour and place the mirror on the darker wall. By doing so, you give the room a sense of depth and thus enhance the idea of spaciousness





Avoid: Just because you are cutting corners to cover up, it does not mean you absolutely do nothing to improve the rest of the space. Remember, shabbiness will be reflected just as everything else and that would do nothing to make your room look better.

Lighting the Way

Light is to design what air is to lungs. By amplifying any source of light, you can fill a space with energy and luminescence. The first thing to do is to catch all the natural light you can. Place a mirror perpendicular to or directly opposite a window and see the difference it makes. Light bouncing off the mirror and window will genuinely breathe life into the room. This is a perfect solution, especially for small areas, since every corner gets lit up. If the mirror reflects a nice view, consider it an added bonus! If you are up to a little quirk, frame the mirror to resemble a window. If natural light is not exactly free flowing, pretty lamps do the trick just as well. Place a multifaceted mirror behind a lamp to see its reflections dance all around the room.

Avoid: While lighting up the room, keep in mind that the light does not fall in the wrong spots. Make sure the mirrors throw the light into the spaces where you are sitting, like the dining table or around the couches in the living room. Remember you are looking to create a luminous effect not a blinding one.

Mirrors and Art

Another amazing thing to do is to use mirrors to draw attention to some standout piece of furniture or art. A mirror placed opposite a painting or a beautiful sculpture will automatically double the focus on that one piece and add more pizzazz to it. In fact, a brave new trend is to make the mirror itself the focus. This can be achieved by adding an elaborate frame to the mirror and surrounding it with a few beautiful objects. Throw in a few crystals for effect too. If you have a particular wall that has been done up in bright, cheerful wallpaper, you should definitely play it up by putting a mirror right across it and cash in on the dapper effect. If you love collecting little mementos or miniatures, this one is for you. Place mirrors against the back of the shelf that you display your little treasures on, adding some backlights if possible and watch how they instantly grab the limelight!







If you love collecting little mementos or miniatures, this one is for you. Place mirrors against the back of the shelf that you display your little treasures on, adding some backlights if possible and watch how they instantly grab the limelight!

Avoid: If you are using this trick in a very small room, try not to pack too many pictures or articles opposite the mirror. Remember you don't want the look to be too busy. Make sure that the mirror is placed so as to only reflect what you want without any background noise like fan fittings or electrical fittings.

In the Kitchen

If you want to brighten up your kitchen, an excellent option is to just add long horizontal, narrow mirrors vertical to your kitchen counters, against the wall. If you have some concealed lighting fixtures under your cabinets this will work even better. Your work area will definitely take up a new shine. A mirror backsplash is one of the best tricks to use since it is easy to maintain. You could opt for



a smoked mirror for a subtler look. Mirrors can also add a glamorous touch to your cabinets. A neat little trick is to use a mirror on the electrical outlet covers to draw attention away from them.

Avoid: Mirrors will amplify the surroundings so make sure you keep them away from the clutter, washstand or sink. Don't go overboard while putting mirrors on cabinets or you might get dizzy while working!

In the Bathroom

Generally dark and dingy bathrooms can be wonderfully redone using mirrors. Pick out a statement mirror and work your bathroom around it. Putting sliding mirrors on bathroom cabinets to create concealed storage is also a wonderful option. A cool new trend is to add a mirror finish to the shower doors. If you have the space you can create a beautiful vanity



like setting near the sink. Keep in mind the rest of the decor. Opt for a mirror that blends well with your tiles and sanitary fittings.

Avoid: Putting mirrors opposite the WC unit is not advisable for obvious reasons! Also make sure your drain and plumbing are concealed. However clean your bathroom is, there is no way that highlighting a drainpipe will help your decor.



Mirrored Furniture

Bringing in furniture that has elements of mirror finish is a good decorating idea. If you don't want to splurge on buying new furniture you can just as well add mirrors to your existing pieces. Chalk out a plan before you start any project, you don't want to end up messing up a table or a cupboard that was doing fine in the first place. Fixing a smoked mirror on top of a coffee table is a good idea. If you can, place a pretty vase or an interesting showpiece on top of it to gain maximum effect. Add mirrors to the back of open shelves to give a perception of depth. A chest of drawers that has a mirrored finish is a great touch since it fools the eye into missing the mirror itself while still creating the desired effect of extended floor space.

Avoid: If you already have a lot of wallpapering, colours or accents in a room, give mirrors a skip altogether.

Once you have found the best way to use this reflective trend, make sure you stay vigilant in keeping them clean and sparkling. Keep them dry to avoid rusting and use soft materials to dust them on a daily basis. Having a dusty, splattered mirror will only make your space look shabby.

The Coconut Chronicles



There are no two ways about it: coconut is the hero of Kerala cuisine and with good reason too. The coastal fruit just adds that x factor to a traditional spread. Chef Aji Joseph, Corporate Chef, Ente Keralam, lays out a delectable coconut-y Vishu Sadya for you to indulge

Vishu Kanji

Ingredients

Green Moong Dal	100 gm
Broken Matta Rice	50 gm
Coconut (Grated)	1/2
Coconut Milk	100 ml
Cumin Seeds	1 gm
Cardamom	1 gm
Water	1.5 l
Salt	To taste
Jaggery	20 gm

Method

- Cook green moong dal, broken matta rice and add salt and 1.5 litres of water.
- Cook in a pressure cooker and allow 3 whistles.
- With a pounding stone crush the grated coconut and cumin seeds.
- Crush the cardamom.
- Add the crushed coconut mixture and cardamom in boiled rice and dal mixture.
- Add the jaggery but make sure the mixture does not turn sweet.
- Bring to boil.
- Once boiled, add coconut milk and salt to taste.
- Remove from fire and serve in a glass.



Avial

Ingredients

Yam	350 gm
Raw Kerala Banana	250 gm
Drumstick	100 gm
Snake Gourd	100 gm
Carrot	100 gm
Long Beans	50 gm
Coconut (Grated)	150 gm
Turmeric Powder	5 gm
Cumin Seeds	3 gm
Green Chilli (Sliced)	30 gm
Salt	To taste
Curry Leaves	a few
Raw Mango	50 gm
Coconut Oil	30ml

Method

- Cut all the vegetables into baton shape.
- Cook the vegetables on slow fire; add salt, green chilli and a pinch of turmeric powder and 100 ml of water.
- Once vegetables are cooked, add the ground mixture of grated coconut, turmeric powder and cumin seeds.
- Add the curry leaves and salt.
- Mix all the ingredients on slow fire.
- Check for the sourness. Sourness can be adjusted by adding a few tablespoons of curd.
- Remove from fire and add coconut oil just before serving.



Pachadi

Ingredients

Pineapple	500 gm
Chilli Powder	5 gm
Turmeric Powder	2 gm
Water	500 ml
Salt	To taste
Sugar	70 gm
Coconut (Grated)	2 gm
Mustard Seeds	5 gm
Curd	250 ml
Cumin Seeds	2 gm
Red Chilli (Whole)	3
Curry Leaves	1 bunch
Coconut Oil	15 ml
Green Chilli	1

Method

- Cut pineapple into small pieces.
- Boil the pineapple pieces with chilli powder, turmeric powder, green chilli, salt and curry leaves in water. Cook till the water evaporates.
- Make a paste of coconut and half the mustard seeds. Add this to the cooked pineapple mixture. Add curd and sugar.
- In a pan, add coconut oil and crackle the mustard seeds, cumin seeds, whole red chilli and curry leaves. Add this tempered mixture to curd and stir in the pineapple mixture.

Kaalan

Ingredients

Yam	100 gm
Raw Kerala Banana	100 gm
Green Chilli	20 gm
Curd	500 ml
Curry Leaves	A few
Red Chilli (Whole)	3 gm
Coconut (Paste)	1 cup
Mustard Seeds	2 gm
Coconut Oil	30 ml
Pepper Powder	15 gm
Cumin Seeds	2 gm
Turmeric Powder	5 gm
Chilli Powder	2 gm
Asafoetida	3 gm

Method

- Cut yam and banana into dices. Cook along with green chilli, curry leaves, turmeric powder, chilli powder, pepper powder and a small amount of water.
- Beat curd and coconut paste together. Add this to the yam and banana mixture and cook on low flame till the mixture becomes very thick.
- Heat coconut oil and crackle cumin, mustard seeds, asafoetida and whole red chilli along with curry leaves.
- Add this to the thick yam mixture. Serve hot with rice.



Vishu Ada

Ingredients

Rice Powder	100 gm
Maida	200 gm
Coconut (Grated)	1
Jaggery	150 gm
Jack Fruit	300 gm
Cumin Seeds	1 gm
Ghee	25 ml
Banana Leaf	5
Water	500 ml

Method

- Mix rice powder and maida with water.
- Mince jack fruit in a saucepan; melt ghee and add the minced jack fruit.
- Add jaggery, coconut and powdered cumin seeds.
- Cook till it turns to a thick paste. Keep it aside.
- Make small dumplings of the rice and maida mixture.
- Cut banana leaf into small circles.
- Make the banana leaf pliable by just passing it on top of open flame.
- On the banana leaf flatten the rice maida mixture, place a teaspoon of the sweet jackfruit mixture and fold the flattened rice mixture along with the banana leaf so that the jackfruit mixture is encased inside.
- While flattening, make sure the banana leaf ada looks in the shape of a half moon.
- In a steamer boil water and steam the folded banana leaf mixture till it is cooked. Serve hot.

Wish-u a Happy Vishu!



A festival held dear by all Malayalis, Vishu is celebrated all over Kerala in the second week of April amid much fanfare and merriment. Read on to find out more about the harvest festival of God's own country!

Every state in the country has a version of the harvest festival, a celebration of a good crop and, as an extension, a year of prosperity ahead. Here are the five things that make Vishu so special!

Vishukkani: Kani means 'that which is seen first'; it is believed that the year should be started on a propitious note by opening your eyes to an assortment of auspicious objects placed in front of god. Traditionally, this is set up the night before, on a brass plate. Things like raw rice, fruits, money, gold, scriptures etc. are arranged around a brass lamp. A particular flower called the Kanni Konna (cassia fistula) is also placed along with everything else. A mirror is placed in such a way that the viewer can see both the picture of Lord Vishnu, and the reflection of the brass plate at the same time. The eldest woman in the house usually leads each family member to the pooja area at the break of dawn, where, in the light of the lamp, each one observes the mirror and prays for a good year.

Vishukkaineetam: This ritual is a treat for the youngsters. Elders in the house traditionally give money to the children in the house as a blessing. This custom is sometimes extended to tenants and servants as well.

Vishukodi: A new year and new beginnings signify new clothes. Shopping for apparels before Vishu is almost a ritual in every Malayali household so that everyone is decked in their finest threads before they sit down to the traditional meal with family members.

Vishu Sadya: The traditional Vishu feast is packed with vegetarian goodies. Eaten off a banana leaf, the meal consists of rice served with specialties like Sambar, Olan, Thoran, Kaalan, Pooliseri, Erisheri, Pacchadi etc. The meal is wrapped up with a sweet Payasam.

Vishu Padakkam: To rev up the celebratory mode, firecrackers are burst by the children! Crackers burst on the eve of Vishu light up the night sky and become harbingers of good things to come.



COPPER KITCHENS

Move over, steel; we have a comeback! Gleaming, metallic and rich, copper has been used in the kitchen since time immemorial. It may have taken a brief hiatus but the trend is back big time and has everyone clamouring for it! Find out why you should 'cop' this look for your kitchen!

Copper? Yes, the 29th element in the periodic table. Yes, the metal used in electrical wiring! Yes, the same copper that your grandmother probably used in her kitchen. It is back in vogue and taking over the kitchens in state-of-the-art homes. Brightly burnished copper makes a stunning appendage to any space. Read on to understand more about the metal that has got steel running for cover.

Copper Cookware

The obvious qualification of copper is its wonderful beauty. Its unusually glamorous colour instantly brightens the space around it. Substituting drab steel with copper also lends a sort of antique charm to your kitchen.

There is a wide range of copper cookware available in the market today in mind boggling designs and finishes. Pick out a set that suits your personal style and matches the rest of your kitchen too.

Apart from its dapper appearance, copper is also an ideal medium to cook

in. The reasons are simple to analyse. Firstly, copper utensils conduct heat better than other metals helping you save on energy, fuel and time.
Copper also has a very long life.
It will not be a wonder if you still retain some vessels that your mother inherited from hers. Copper's enduring lustre requires very little maintenance. Even scratches and minor signs of wear disappear if you scrub them mildly with copper paste! This implies that the cookware you invest in will serve you for the rest of your lifetime.

Another remarkable feature about copper cookware is that regardless of the heat source, the entire vessel heats evenly. This is one of the reasons that chefs world over prefer to work with copper utensils. They are ideal for cooking sensitive foods without the worry of the dish getting burnt at the bottom. It also helps to retain the moisture in foods, especially meats









which have the tendency of drying up quickly under heat. If you are a novice at cooking, there is perhaps nothing better to take care of your cuisine concerns than a copper saucepan that cooks its contents uniformly! Braise and brown foods like an expert with these cooking companions. Copper is also an essential nutrient required by the human body. While traces of the metal are found all over, the highest amounts are found in the brain and liver. Copper has many functions including the formation of melanin (skin pigment), formation of haemoglobin and even keeping your tresses healthy. Using copper utensils facilitates in the incorporation of miniscule amounts of the metal in the system.

Did you know? Copper is known to have antimicrobial properties. Water stored in copper pots is known to stay fresh longer and is also believed to have healing properties. In fact, age old medicinal preparations used tiny amounts of the metal too!

Hot Tip: If you have plenty of copper pots and pans, create a sleek hanger from which you can dangle all your cookware. Something that looks so good demands a display!

Copper Decor

If you are a lover of sleek cooking spaces, you can make a big statement with this element. Cookware aside, there are lots of ways to incorporate this metal in your kitchen. Copper fittings are now available in quite a wide range to give your kitchen an aesthetic boost. The shiny, reflective metal can be used almost anywhere.

Being naturally antimicrobial, copper makes a good material to be used on kitchen surfaces like countertops, sinks, tiles and handles. There is a big demand in the market for copper sinks these days as they exude a distinct charm with their patina that steel sinks cannot. Most often a copper sink is created with a single sheet of the malleable metal hammered to achieve the right dimensions. While some people prefer to preserve the natural

Opt for a copper hood over the stove or a copper finish to your chimney. Although it serves no additional functionality, the bright tinge of the metal adds to the aesthetics. If you are using more than one copper element, decorate the rest of your kitchen with earthy neutral tones

colour of copper by coating it, others like the character and depth copper acquires over time.

Again due to its antimicrobial properties, it makes for an excellent wash area. As opposed to traditional sinks where bacteria can thrive for weeks, copper sinks are considered more sanitary. You can even soak your vegetables in a copper sink full of water to reap all its benefits. Another amazing feature about using copper in your sink is that it is not corrosive and will not rust over prolonged usage!

Yet another great idea is to opt for a copper hood over the stove or a copper finish to your chimney. Although it serves no additional functionality, the bright tinge of the metal adds to the aesthetics. If you are using more than one copper element, decorate the rest of your kitchen with earthy neutral tones that would complement the copper finish.

Did You Know? Feng Shui recommends the use of copper fittings since it is believed to attract positive 'chi' or energy. The reflective properties also mean that they help ward off the negative influx as well. Copper chimes are also an excellent way to incorporate an energy harness into your kitchen.

Hot tip: Let us not forget the lighting. Copper lampshades can be fixed to drop down from the ceiling. Being so reflective, they throw the light around very well and also look top notch!

Remember, if you are a stickler for perfection, you would be better off using copper that has been treated to some sort of chemical processing. Alternatives for pure copper are also available with steel/aluminium layers. These varieties are less likely to get oxidized and develop that greenish tinge. On the other hand, there are many who love this very property of copper. It is a metal that acquires character with time. One of its charms is that it ages with the house and that it will look different today than the day it was installed. The copper in one area of the kitchen will differ from the fittings in another section. Lovers of the antique, rustic look seek this very charm in using copper.



CONS

- If you are planning on going big on your copper fittings, it could be a very expensive affair. So be sure to do your research before taking the plunge.
- It takes work to keep copper fittings looking shiny and grease free. Although maintenance does not cost too much, frequent elbow grease needs to be applied.
- If you are not into the greenish tinge, you will have to keep a watch to prevent copper from oxidizing naturally.
- Some foods, especially the ones which are acidic in nature, react with copper. If you are planning to use your cookware for a variety of cooking purposes, opt for vessels with a tin lining.





HOW GOOD IS YOUR GREEN DIET?

A well-planned vegetarian diet can meet the nutritional needs during all stages of life from young children to nursing mothers, says *Vaishnavi Narayanan*

"To eat meat or not to eat?" is the question that haunts many of us. The negative impact of animal foods and their associated damages pitted against the deficiencies and other drawbacks resulting from following vegetarian diet has contributed to this state of confusion. However, the key is to plan the meal carefully so as to include all nutrients required by the body in adequate amounts.

Types and Kinds

Vegetarians typically don't eat meat, poultry or fish. However, different types of vegetarian diets exist:

Lacto vegetarians: Eat dairy products but exclude meat, fish, poultry, seafood, and eggs
Ovo vegetarians: Include eggs but avoid all other animal products including dairy
Lacto-Ovo vegetarians: Include eggs and dairy products, but omit meat, fish, poultry and seafood
Vegans: Exclude all products of animal origin including honey

While there are many benefits to eating a vegetarian diet, there are some inherent disadvantages too, but by making a conscious effort to eat the right quantity and combinations of food, the benefits of vegetarianism can outweigh the disadvantages.

Pros of a Vegetarian Diet

Better weight management: It is true that people who follow a vegetarian style of dietary regimen are less likely to become obese than those who follow a completely non-vegetarian diet. This may be because a vegetarian diet typically includes less saturated fat and emphasizes more on fruits, vegetables, whole grains and plant based proteins, which are lower in calories and are more filling.

But a vegetarian diet is not automatically low in calories. Despite being vegetarian, if the portion size is too big or too many calories are consumed at one go, you can put on oodles of weight.

Potential health benefits: Potential health benefits include lower rate of cardiovascular diseases, lower cholesterol, lower blood pressure and longer life expectancy. Cardiovascular benefits come from the lack of fatty meats, which are high in saturated fat. Also, vegetarian food is comparatively lower in bad cholesterol than the animal sources, which if included can increase the risk for heart disease.

Increases antioxidant intake: Vegetarian eating usually follows an increased intake of wholesome food such as fruits, vegetables, beans, legumes and whole grains, which in itself is a great opportunity to include plentiful antioxidants in the diet. Consuming adequate amounts of natural antioxidants helps in maintaining health by minimizing the effect of free radicals, the main reason for cellular damage. Although red meat contains antioxidants, its good effects are negated by the high amounts of bad cholesterol present in it.

Reduced risk of food-borne illness: Food that constitutes meat, poultry, fish or any seafood is frequently involved in food-borne illness outbreaks. A vegetarian diet helps avoid some of the virulent forms of food borne illnesses, which primarily influence children and those with poor immunity. In addition, artificially injected hormones and chemicals fed to the animals also leave their negative effects in meat and poultry. These unwanted contaminants are stored in the tissues of animals and are then consumed by meat eaters.

Cons of a Vegetarian Diet

Possible nutrient deficiency: Vegetarians are more susceptible to nutrient deficiencies and, the more restrictive their diet is, the greater the chance of them not meeting their nutritional requirements. The nutrients, which require special focus by vegetarians, include protein, iron, calcium, zinc and vitamin B12. Individuals following a vegan diet, which excludes dairy products and eggs, especially need to focus

It is true that people who follow a vegetarian style of dietary regimen are less likely to become obese than those who follow a completely non-vegetarian diet. But a vegetarian diet is not automatically low in calories. Despite being vegetarian, if the portion size is too big or too many calories are consumed at one go, you can put on oodles of weight



on vitamin B12. They might have to reach out for B12 fortified products or supplements. Combining the plant sources of iron with foods rich in vitamin C increases the absorption of iron more efficiently. Omega 3 fats are absolutely critical for vegetarians because they naturally have high amounts of omega 6 in their diet, from all vegetable derived oils and nuts. It is essential to balance omega 6 with omega 3 fatty acids in order to void the risk of chronic diseases. Walnuts and flaxseeds are rich vegetarian sources of omega 3 fats.

Protein malnutrition: Mostly vegetarians tend to include adequate amounts of total protein in their diet. But plant based proteins lack certain amino acids that can lead to malnutrition if not taken care of. There are certain amino acids and related compounds that are not technically essential but are useful in the diet, possibly under specific conditions and needs, which are mostly found in animal products. Some of the best protein sources that possess good amounts of various amino acids in the vegetarian diet include pulses





(like beans, lentils, peas, soy products), grains (like wheat, buckwheat, oats, barley, millet), nuts (like almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts, brazil nuts), and seeds like sesame, sunflower and pumpkin seeds.

False assumption of automatic health benefit: Despite the potential health benefits of following vegetarian diet, the effects are not automatic. Just cutting down on meat, poultry and seafood does not turn a meal healthier. You have to make sure that the entire meal is well balanced with healthy food choices. If vegetarians replace meat with high fat cheese, margarine, junk food and saturated fats, they are unlikely to reap

Despite the potential health benefits of following vegetarian diet, the effects are not automatic. Just cutting down on meat, poultry and seafood does not turn a meal healthier

many health benefits out of it. In fact there is no meat in ice cream, chips and brownies but it hardly constitutes

a healthy meal. Whether you follow vegetarianism or not, a healthy meal has to be low in cholesterol and saturated fat, and be based around fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean protein.

A Healthy Balance

The digestive system of human body can digest both vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods, yet it is always better to be moderate with meat and other animal source consumption. Consuming fish about three times a week or lean meat and poultry about once or twice a week is not going to harm you if accompanied by regular physical exercises in order to stay fit and healthy. As for vegetarians, a well balanced diet with adequate amounts of fruits, vegetables, whole grains cereals, pulses and low fat dairy products are a must on a daily basis for a healthy living.

Good to Remember

- Planning is everything - Make sure to eat a balanced meal, be it vegetarian or non vegetarian
- Include meat alternatives - Consult the nutritionist or health professional and include meat substitutes in order to avoid any nutrient deficiency
- Calcium, Iron, Iodine, Protein are important. Reach for fortified products if required
- Focus on good fatty acids
- Do not fill up on processed foods
- Be adventurous - Be willing to try new fruits, vegetables and recipes

The author is a Chennai based Nutrition Consultant. Mail in your queries to vainavi@gmail.com





Vegetarian Food Pyramid
Like any other diet, the key to vegetarian diet is variety. No single food can provide all the nutrients the body requires. With a little planning, a food pyramid can be of practical use to it. The vegetarian pyramid outlines the different food groups and food choices, which if eaten in the right quantities, form the foundation of a healthy vegetarian diet.



Does childbirth have to be painful?

Most women are very apprehensive about facing the process of childbirth. As the due date approaches, the anxiety and fear increase exponentially. Some friends and relatives may use ill-chosen words to describe the travails of labour.

Ask Dr. Gita Arjun



In every language in the world, the words for childbirth and labour are synonymous with pain. The joy of giving birth is always coloured with the fear of pain during labour. In rare cases, a woman dreads childbirth to the extent of demanding a caesarean section instead of going through natural childbirth! Fortunately, modern obstetrics offers the labouring woman many choices for pain relief.

There are many ways to lessen pain during labour and the birth of a baby. Being prepared with knowledge of the birth process is the first step towards being able to handle labour pains. Labour preparation classes for the couple are very important. There are also safe pain-relieving drugs that can be given as an injection. Newer methods include epidural analgesia that cuts off the pain of labour without interfering with the action of labour contractions.

The type of pain relief that is right for you depends on your pain threshold. Some women can tolerate pain to a greater extent. Some women have a very low threshold for pain and this, combined with the fear of labour pains, can make them intolerant of the slightest pain. A woman's physical fitness, having taken labour preparation classes, length of labour, intensity of labour pains and size of the baby play a role in the ability to handle the pain of labour.

Q. This is my second pregnancy. I am due in April. Funnily, I don't remember the pain during the last delivery but the one thing I remember is that I kept asking for painkillers and was told that pain is part of labour and I should just put up with it. Is there no safe way of reducing the pain of labour? I know that they offer 'painless labour' in the West. Why not for me?

A. You absolutely deserve a pain-free childbirth, as does every woman. Of course, the ability to give you a relatively pain-free childbirth depends on the attitude of the obstetrician and the facilities available at the hospital you are delivering at. However, you must remember that there is never a completely painless delivery. There are methods to decrease the pain you feel and an epidural will almost completely take away the pain. But even with an epidural, you will feel some pressure and discomfort during the actual delivery of the baby but this will be only 10 % of what you would feel if you had no epidural at all.

The first step towards a pain-free childbirth is to attend a good birth preparatory class. Many hospitals are offering this now. Fear of the unknown always makes it seem worse than it actually is. Therefore these classes help you understand the process of labour and allay your anxiety.

Pain relief offered during labour is safe for both the mother and the baby.

Narcotics (such as an injection of Pethidine) may be used during the first stage of labour to help you relax. Narcotics are usually injected into a muscle (IM) or into a vein (IV). They affect the entire body. Narcotics lessen the pain and can help you feel less tense or anxious.
A combination of nitrous oxide and oxygen can be given by mask and can help you tolerate the pain. You hold this mask yourself and use the gas mixture when you feel the pain is too much.

There are many ways to lessen pain during labour and the birth of a baby. Being prepared with knowledge of the birth process is the first step towards being able to handle labour pains. Labour preparation classes for the couple are very important.



Regional anaesthesia lessens or completely blocks the pain in a specific part of the body. The epidural block is a commonly used type of regional anaesthesia during labour. Spinal anaesthesia is also a regional block but is used only for a caesarean and not for pain relief during labour.
With either narcotic pain relief or epidural anaesthesia, there is no loss of consciousness, so you can actively participate in the process of delivery.

Q. My obstetrician spoke to me about taking an epidural block during labour. My friends are frightening me about this. They say that I will have back pain as a result of this procedure. What is an epidural block?

An epidural block is a great way to actually enjoy childbirth without having to feel the contractions. For an epidural block, pain-relieving medicine is injected into the lower part of the back. Usually a small tube (catheter) is inserted into this area of the back. The medicine can be repeated through the catheter when the effect of the medicine wears off.

In low doses, an epidural block eases the pain of contractions and numbs the birth canal during labour and delivery. The pressure of the contractions is still felt with an epidural block but the pain component will be minimised. In higher doses, an epidural may be used for caesarean sections. Taking an epidural does NOT increase the chance of low back pain after the delivery. This is an unfortunate myth.

Q. My grandmother says that a woman is supposed to feel pain during labour and taking painkillers will affect the baby. Is there any risk to the baby if I choose to take painkillers during labour?

A. For once, your grandmother is wrong! There are no risks to either the mother or the baby but as with any medical intervention there can be side effects to look out for. Because a narcotic like Pethidine affects the entire system, both the mother and the baby may have mild side effects from this drug. Drowsiness and feeling dizzy are the commonest side-effects. If given too close to the time of delivery, the baby may be very sleepy at the time of birth and therefore may not cry vigorously. That is why Pethidine will not be given if the baby is possibly going to deliver in the next 3-4 hours.

The medicines used in epidural analgesia are less likely to pass to the baby and affect the baby because the medicine does not enter the bloodstream. An epidural may cause the mother's blood pressure to drop. This may slow the baby's heartbeat. To help prevent this, intravenous fluids are given to the mother through a drip before the epidural is given.

An epidural block is a great way to actually enjoy childbirth without having to feel the contractions. For an epidural block, pain-relieving medicine is injected into the lower part of the back. Usually a small tube (catheter) is inserted into this area of the back. The medicine can be repeated through the catheter when the effect of the medicine wears off

Labour is a very difficult time for most women. All women, therefore, deserve to be supported in their decision to have as painless a delivery as possible. ■

Mail in your queries to doc@jfw.in
(Dr. Gita Arjun is an obstetrician and gynaecologist practicing in Chennai. She is the author of 'Passport to a Healthy Pregnancy'. Visit her at www.passport2health.in.)



STRIKING A CORD

The umbilical cord, the almost divine connection between mother and foetus, is also a genereous source of stem cells. There has been an upsurge in the medical trend of banking the umbilical cord blood as an insurance against any major organ dysfunction that the child might suffer in future. *Malini Gopalakrishnan* looks into the facts behind the trend

They say that you become a mother from the minute you know that there is a little life inside the womb that is part of you. From the first time you hear the magical sound of tiny heartbeats, or squint at the peanut like shape on the ultrasound image, you know that everything in your life has changed, that the world has shifted around you. Every action that you perform from then on and throughout your life will be defined by what is the best for your child. Such is the nature of parenthood and that is how nature intended it. In keeping with trying to do everything you can to ensure the best possible life for the offpring, most new parents are opting to bank the blood of the umbilical cord which was until recently considered to have no use post partum. We bring you the most important facts that you need to know before you exercise this option.

What is Cord Blood Banking?

The umbilical cord is that miracle of nature that connects the foetus to the mother's womb, providing nutrition, oxygen and every form of nourishment the newly developing life might require. This cord that runs from the abdominal opening in the foetus to the placenta in the mother's womb usually measures about 20 inches or so and is literally the lifeline for your baby's survival. During any regular delivery, the umblical cord is clamped a few inches from the newborn's belly button and then cut, since its services are no longer required. Modern day advances in medicine have discovered however, that cord blood is rich in Hematopoietic Stem Cells (HPCs). These are

the most primitive versions of cells which have the ability to transform into a variety of specific tissue cells, when applied with the right stimulus. Several potentially terminal diseases (occuring in children as well as adults), like lymphoma, leukaemia, sickle cell anaemia etc. can be treated by injecting HPCs. These stem cells then replicate and replenish the malformed, defective or diseased cells in the body with new healthy cells. Recovery from harsh treatments like chemotherapy and radiation can also be aided by the use of HPCs.

How is it done?

Should you choose to go with cord blood banking, the blood is collected from the baby's end of the umblical cord, packed and sealed, and sent to the facility of your choice.
This procedure is carried out within ten minutes of giving birth, immediately after the umblical cord has been cut. Since the baby's stump is clamped, the procedure is not painful for the baby. 75 ml is usually the amount requried to make viable sample.

If the amount taken from the cord is not enough, additional stem cells can be acquired from the placenta which is considered to be rich in stem cells too. The sample is then sent to a laboratory for testing for viral infections, HIV, Hepatitis to tissue typing, cell viability, cell count, blood grouping and Rh typing. Complete blood profiling is essential before any sample is banked. Most important is the testing for HLA (Human Leucocyte Antigen) which is what helps detect if a sample can be used for any individual.

"Public stem cell donation is the only way forward to help cure all those affected with haematological illnesses of various kinds. Stem cells are precious, they should not be discarded": Dr Saranya Narayanan, MD, Jeevan Stem Cell Bank

The sample is then processed for cryopreservation. There are two schools of thinking about the best way to preserve the blood cells. While some prefer to seperate the blood cells and remove them, others keep the blood intact. A cryoprservative agent is added to enable the cells to survive the process of preservation. The sample is then cooled gradually to prevent thermal shock, to -90°C. The unit is then added to a liquid nitrogen tank which will keep the sample frozen at -196°C. The sample is preserved as such until it is required.

Public or Private?

If you are thinking of banking your little one's cord blood, you might wonder what the options available are. There are two types of banking facilities available to soon-to-be parents: Public Banks and Private Banks. Both types of banks will essentially preserve the extracted cord blood cells till such time that they are needed. However, there are some essential differences.



Public Banking

Traditionally, Public Banks have been the more widely eccepted option because they are much more affordable giving parents from all sections of society a chance to preserve the cord blood. Should you as an expectant

"The future looks positive as there are many clinical trials happening around the world. Stem cell banking is a gift that even friends and relatives should give expectant parents, since it is something that would give them a lifetime of security": Mayur Abhaya, MD, LifeCell

mother wish to choose it, a Public Bank will require you to register with them during your third trimester (although the rules vary with different banks). Once the blood is donated, the sample is put through extensive testing. After the sample is deemed safe and viable, all records of the source are strigently deleted. The blood is stored in banks as donations. As and when there is a need for cord blood cells, the samples are matched against the patients requirements according to HLA matching. If there is a match the sample can be used by the patient.

By choosing a Public Bank, the stem cells that would have otherwise gone waste might get the chance to save a life. Since public banks are few and far apart in India, most patients desperately seek to get HLA matched cells from abroad at a much higher cost than is necessary. "Public stem cell donation is the only way forward to help cure all those affected with haematological illnesses of various kinds. Stem cells are precious, they should not be discarded," says Dr Saranya Narayanan, Co-Founder and MD of Jeevan Stem Cell Bank.

Pros

- Stem cells which would have otherwise been discarded might one day help save a life.
- Efficient and extremely economically feasible.
- Could be the solution to fighting haematological diseases that have no cure otherwise.
- Cord blood can be banked here for any amount of time since there is no expiry date on it and since it does not need monetary backing.
- Opting for a cord blood transplant is an excellent choice in fighting terminal illnesses especially in infants and children.

Cons

- Since all records of the blood are deleted in keeping with the privacy issues, if the donor develops hereditary diseases / immunodeficiencies, years after sample collection, there will be no way to trace out the sample containing the same cells. This could lead to complications in a potential recipient.
- There is no way to access your own donation to the public blood bank.
- Sample from a single collection cannot be used to treat an individual weighing more than 40 kg.
- Maintaining of Public Banks is a large obstacle facing the fraternity.

Private Banking

These facilities once chosen by parents go about collecting and testing cord blood in much the same way as Public Banks would. The difference is that a private bank is more of a personal experience where the bank would store a link of the sample to its donors, at a steep price. The custody of the blood lies with the parents until the child grows into an adult. The cord blood is thus available for use in case of a haematological disease developing in the donor at a later stage. The blood can also be used for relatives or siblings who are an HLA match to the donor. This kind of banking is considered a kind of biological banking, in which the parents pay a heavy sum to insure their child against certain kinds of illnesses. To draw out the picture of its advantages, you could simply compare cord blood transplants with bone marrow ones. While a bone marrow transplant requires a 6/6 (measures on the basis of 6 key antigens) match, or a perfect match, cord blood achieves the same matching with a score of only 4/6. This is because HLAs are inherited from both parents so have a broader spectrum for matching. Due to the high probability of matching, Private Banks have become an attractive option to those who can afford it. Mayur Abhaya, the MD and CEO of LifeCell says, "The future looks positive as there are many clinical trials happening around the world. This is going to make stem cell therapy the solution to more and more medical conditions in the future. Stem cell banking is a gift that even friends and relatives should give expectant parents, since it is something that would give them a lifetime of security."

Pros

- If there is history of diseases like cancer in the family, banking the cord blood is a good way to ensure your child's safety.
- The donor's sibling or another relative might be able to benefit from the banking. Siblings have a 75% chance of being a match. Close relatives might have almost a 50% chance.

Cons

- This form of banking is expensive.
- You might never use the sample you have been banking. In fact, general opinions support opting for private banking only if there are high chances of the child developing such illnesses that require cord blood transplants.
- Stem cells cannot currently be used to treat inborn errors of metabolism or other genetic diseases in the same individual from whom they were collected because the cord blood would have the same genetic mutation.*
- Cord blood collected from a newborn cannot be used to treat the same child if it develops childhood leukaemia, for the same reason.*

(Inputs given by Jeevan Stem Cell Bank, Chennai and LifeCell International Pvt. Ltd., Chennai)
(*Source: http://www.acog.org)

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EVERY INVITATION IS TREATED AS A PORTRAIT
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Advertorial

It's SUMMERTIME Again!

"Mom, I am bored!" The summertime refrain that all mothers dread hearing, especially when it starts echoing exactly two days into vacation time. This holiday season, however, things may be different as *Smita Shenoy* rounds up a plateful of assorted activities that will keep boredom at bay

Every child has a gift of her own. Cooking interests some; art and craft impassions others. Some prefer exploring their arty side while others are into experiments of the scientific kind. See which boxes your young ones tick so that you can match the kids to the camps and help maximise their potential for knowledge and fun.

Junior Master Chefs

It is a myth that only girls enjoy cooking; some of the world's top chefs are men. Whether you have a budding Nigella Lawson at home or a Sanjeev Kapoor waiting in the wings, enrol



It is a myth that only girls enjoy cooking; some of the world's top chefs are men. Whether you have a budding Nigella Lawson at home or a Sanjeev Kapoor waiting in the wings, enrol them in age appropriate cooking classes

them in age appropriate cooking classes. Camps on cooking without fire, juice making and baking are trending this summer. "Kids love mixing and stirring and when the end product is a delectable cake or a crisp cookie, the joy is doubled," says Vinoshnee Shankar, Chief Facilatator, De Pastry School, Cochin. She says last year's fun and engaging workshop has prompted them to hold one this year too.
The camp is open to kids between 8 and 16 and will be held in two batches: the first batch from 7th April to 18th April and the second one from 5th May to 16th May.

Vanilla Children Place, Chennai, is holding cooking camps for children above 5 years. Starting from April 21st, the workshop is divided into three sections: pastas, grill and barbeque dishes and desserts. "Our cooking camps are very popular among children, who are mesmerised by the colours, flavours and aromas," says Bagyashree of Vanilla.

Tarzan on the Loose

If your kids' penchant for climbing walls is driving you up the wall, it is time to put their adventurous streak to good use. Wildlife camps are all the rage for a good reason as they let the kids unleash their sporting avatar without fear of admonition from strict parents. Frolic Boonies has been one such go-to destination. "For the past five years, we have been organising camps where children get a great opportunity to explore wildlife and experience adventure and return re-energized for the next academic year," says Nivedhitha, organiser of the camp. "We organise camps spread over 5 days for children aged 8 to 16 years that include activities like pitching tents, bird watching, picking crabs, examining tiny bugs, tracking animal footprints, collecting dry firewood but the most popular ones remain fishing, chocolate making and the jungle safari." The camp is held in Ooty and transport arrangements are made to take the children from Bangalore to Ooty and back.

For kids who want to experience wildlife in their backyard, Chennai based activity centre, Thejomaya Centre of Excellence is conducting a unique summer camp titled African Safari in April. Open for cubs (3 to 5 years), Jumbos (6 to 8 years) and Giraffes (9 to 12 years), the camp aims at acquainting the young ones with the various aspects of the Dark Continent including the folk dances,





music, stories, masks, arts, crafts and tribal costumes. "Africa is a continent we perhaps know little about and we at Thejomaya feel that this is a great opportunity to introduce the little ones to the second largest continent," says the founder Uma Yogesh.

Calling all Picassos

Every random doodle and squiggle can lead to something big. Art is much more than a few brushstrokes and a splash of colours. Self expression, improving fine motor skills, developing social skills, experts concur that children learn a lot through art. Monkey Maze in Bangalore aims at creating another Picasso. "From hand block printing, screen printing and glass painting to terracotta pottery, jewellery making and quilling workshops, there is an array of treats for young ones, from 3 years to 15 years, this summer," says Cynthiya of Monkey Maze. It also has a tiny makeshift rink where skating camps are conducted and are very popular among the kids.

Mind Your Language

There is nothing more potent than honing the brain while having fun. Like every year, this year too Kala Manjari, a popular Chennai based activity centre founded by Jayashree Chinni, is conducting its summer enrichment camps for children in the age group of 5-15 years. This mixed bag camp offers interesting sessions in art and craft, storytelling, theatre, Western dance and origami. "We also have the Young Learners English (YLE) program in association with British Council and Aim English with certification from University of Cambridge aimed at improving reading, writing, speaking and listening skills of children and targeting school kids from class 2 onwards," says Jayashree. "Our chess and Shloka workshops not only help kids improve memory power, it also keeps them rooted to tradition."

Vanilla also has planned a camp on public speaking, life skills, learning maths in a fun way and on writing. Toddlers, kids and tweens who wish to improve their English, Hindi and Tamil skills or hone their phonetic

and handwriting abilities can join Thejomaya's summer programmes which are divided into convenient slots.

All the World's a Stage

There is an aspiring actor hiding somewhere in us. Preening in restroom mirrors, emoting in the privacy of our bedrooms, we have all had our Oscar moments. With Shakespeare's famous line finding resonance among all, especially kids, a drama workshop is the perfect tool to combat summer holiday blues. Tapping in on this potential is Chennai based theatre company, theatre Y. Founded by actor, director and writer Yog Japee, they hold theatre camps every summer. This year too they have a theatre training programme called funtY for children between the ages of 7 and 15. "In this programme we introduce children to an exciting blend of basic acting, voice, storytelling, writing and poetry skills," says Mandira, organiser of the camp. The two week workshop with a maximum batch size of 24 has been a great success so far. "It is amazing to see children lose their inhibitions and blossom durin the two weeks," says Mandira.

If the thought of venturing out into the blazing heat overwhelms the vista of enjoying clear blue skies, there is plenty to do at home too, especially if the young ones are interested in chemical reactions and physical phenomena

StorYlines is yet another well loved workshop run by the company. Open to children aged 7 and above and spread across 4 to 5 weeks (50-60 hours), it aims to be the first step towards the concept of 'visual representation' of an individual's imagination and fantasy. "Right from the booming fields of comics, animation films and graphic novels, to the cartoon strips in the dailies, we see the art form of telling stories through sketches and illustrations," says Mandira.

I, Robot

Assembling new things and breathing life into them makes kids feel no less powerful than Harry Potter. Hyderabad based Jay Robotix Pvt. Ltd. recognises this need to create in young ones and eggs them on to build their own automatons. "We hold Robocamps across Hyderabad in the holiday months in which kids from Grade 6 to Grade 12 can learn the wonders of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) in a practical way that will unlock the world of robotics for them," says Pradeep, General Manager, Marketing at Jay Robotix. The summer camp also preps the youngsters for the Robokid competition that Jay Robotix holds every June (Registrations start in May).

In Chennai, Kala Manjari plans to conduct a workshop on Robotics to acquaint children with the various phenomena of the scientific world. Thejomaya offers summer courses on aeromodelling for children aged between 11 and 15 years. Here, the participants will learn to build and fly a rocket and 4 flying models. (A catapult model, Sprint and Osprey Rubber powered models and an indoor Glider-Bike).

Home Based Einstein

If the thought of venturing out into the blazing heat overwhelms the vista of enjoying clear blue skies and your kids prefer to stay at home during the summer 'vacays', do let them. There is plenty to do at home too, especially if they are interested in chemical reactions and physical phenomena. Iken's online store, ikenstore.com has a whole range of scientific goodies to entice kids of all ages, from a preschooler to a teen. "Each of our products is designed to enhance conceptual learning through cool tools," says Pinkal of Iken. "Apart from colourful books which explain technical concepts in a simple and fun way and DVDs that take young minds on a virtual tour of the scientific world, toys like the 72+ Science Station for doing basic electromagnetic and electrical experiments, Aquaforce that helps tweens understand the concept of water power and Zing Learning which introduces preschoolers to various basics remain eternal favourites".



Home, but Not Alone

There are options galore to explore as a family if you are planning a staycation this summer.

- Junk food out, homemade snacks in
- Takeaways out, rustling up a simple meal in
- Mall visits out, play dates in
- Googling out, scanning books for information in
- Video games out, board games in
- Staying glued to smartphones out, messy play in

THOSE UNFATHOMABLE FEARS

Fear can manifest itself in forms unimaginable. Fear is in the mind, fear is the heart, fear keeps the world spinning, fear gives us inner strength, fear helps us overcome, fear teaches, fear is immortal. If you are wondering what could possibly be so interesting about fear, *Vidhya Anand* gives you a peek into some of the world's most interesting phobias

Apeirophobia – Fear of Infinity

"And in that moment I swear we were infinite": this famous quote from "Perks of being a Wallflower" swept across the planet. Tattoos, banners, facebook statuses, vintage metallic engravings are just a few of the several forms that people took to for immortalising the quote. The idea of infinity has always fascinated most; yet there are those who dread it immeasurably. Paradoxically, the concept of eternity makes them fear death.

Dendrophobia – Fear of Trees

Green is the colour that lets you breathe a happy sigh, and feel blissful. It is an escape from the grey picture of the polluted city you live in.
Could there possibly be a chance of not liking trees, not finding them pleasant? Yes, there is. While most people adore greenery, a few individuals are not even close to being pleased at the sight of trees. The tangled branches or the dense forests give them a sense of being strangled or trapped in a place from where there might be no escape.

Kathisophobia – Fear of Sitting Down

It is unfathomable that a posture you cannot avoid, having been born human, can be a fear. But yes, it happens to be. Case studies suggest that those with kathisophobia face such fear for they relate sitting to doing something they hate or dread, like a boring job they have to sit through nine to five or an incident that has left them scarred for life.

Logophobia- Fear of Words

If you are able to process the words written here, you can be sure you don't suffer from logophobia, the fear of words. Usually, it is believed that illiteracy, failure to understand words, pressure to learn new words as children are some of the reasons for logophobia to occur.

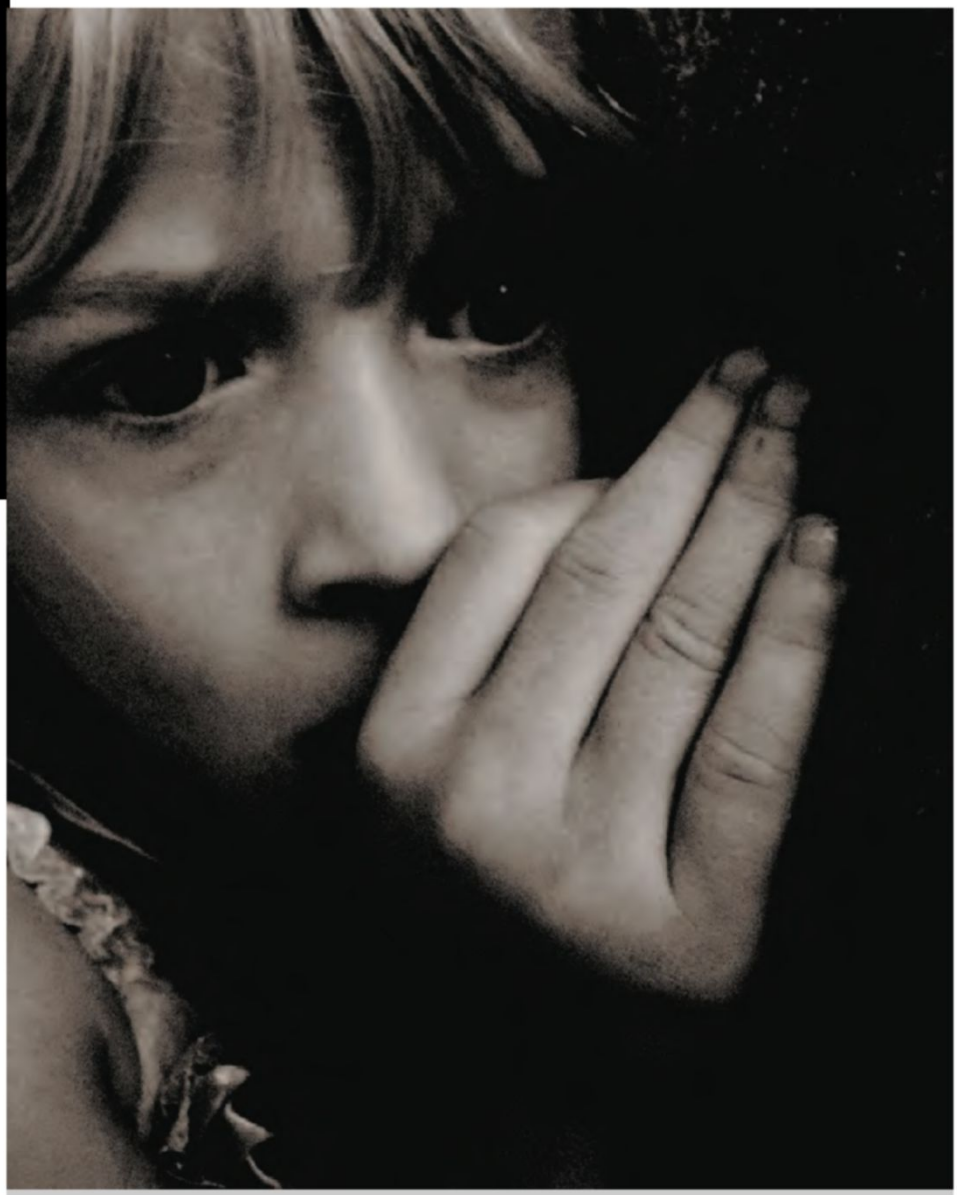
Mycrophobia- Fear of Small Things

In this century, small is good, small is innovative. It is the new culture of science and technology. Nanotechnology is making the world a better place. And are small things not cute? Not for everyone! This is yet another irrational fear, the fear of small things. In fact, larger things always tend to make people with mycrophobia feel comfortable and at ease.
It removes their sense of insecurity unlike with tiny ones.

Ephebiphobia- Fear of Teenagers

Young, Wild and Alive are words that describe young people.
Whether in years or at heart, we are

"90% of the phobias are related to childhood experiences. Identification of the root cause helps us analyse and decide a suitable pattern of treatment. Normally, we recommend CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) where the person's thinking patterns are analysed": Dr. Usharani



young ourselves, aren't we? For age is just a number. How can the power and verve of the young be looked upon as something that irritates and disturbs? But here is a phobia that is quite common, but often escapes the eye. This phobia, as most studies believe, goes hand in hand with the lack of trust in youth. They are often deemed as reckless, unstable and sometimes even competition and subsequent threat to the older people in the business world.

Heliophobia- Fear of the Sun

Apparently, it is not only vampires who hate the sun. There are those who dread staying out for long during the day. Heliophobia, the fear of sun, is believed to have arisen with the increase in the number of skin cancer victims. Because of this, those with heliophobia tend to stay away from sunlight leading to side effects such as Vitamin D deficiency.

The Fear Factor

Are you scared of buttons or potted plants? These are just a few of the thousands of phobias known to mankind. The list is really endless: Colour, dust, sex, vegetables, names, dirt, wrinkles, food, outer space, learning, knowledge. Phobias are beyond mere pieces of information that make you exclaim. They are serious problems that thousands of people suffer from. But that having been said, there is always enough help and medical care available to get over them successfully.

Identifying a Phobia

No matter what the cause, all phobias have some symptoms in common which may help identify when a person is in the throes of a panic attack, says Chennai based eminent psychologist Dr. Usharani S. "Anxiety and shivering are indicators as are a feeling of tightness in the chest and breathlessness. Excessive sweating and ice cold hands are other symptoms to look out for," says Dr. Usharani.

Cure for Fear

You are the best judge of how severe your phobia is and whether you should consider treatment. Experts say if your phobia starts interfering with your normal life it is time to hit the panic button. If you recognise the fear as unreasonable and excessive, one which causes paralysing anxiety, book an appointment with a trusted psychologist. "90% of the phobias are related to childhood experiences. Identification of the root cause helps us analyse and decide a suitable pattern of treatment. Normally, we recommend CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) where the person's thinking patterns are analysed. Over a specific number of sessions, we guide them to select strategies that will help address the problem areas," says Dr. Usharani.



OH BABY!

Your life doesn't have to be a scene out of Shaadi ke Side Effects. Unlike the common misconception, babies don't necessarily have to be the bane of your bedroom life. With these tips, the post-baby phase can actually be quite an opportunity for unabashed sex and romance

There are many factors why most couples want to postpone parenthood and one of them is the fear of losing an appetite for sex, an incredible zest for lovemaking and all things romantic. Having kids is a game changer – your sleep pattern is off-kilter, your body goes through hormonal changes, you are emotionally and mentally in a different place and among a thousand other reasons, your baby becomes the apple of your eye.
While all this is entirely true, the fact that your sex life is done and dusted after kids is false. In fact, having babies can strengthen the bond between couples and in the presence of that unconditional love, sex can be seriously good.

Get yourself some 'me' time

What does having some personal time off have to do with sex? Everything! It is a known fact that feeling good about yourself is a straight ticket to a good sex life. Between diaper changes and breastfeeding, make time to do things that make you happy. A couple of hours at a spa or kicking back on your couch with a book will not come in between you and your child!

Sweat it out

This might be a reoccurring mantra, but it still does not lose its importance – exercise! When the time is right, pick up the dumbbells or go on a brisk walk. If you dedicated 45 minutes in a day for some physical activity while you were pregnant, save at least half an hour for some form of workout after becoming a new mommy; it is difficult but doable. Exercise can resurrect your lost levels of libido and give you back your desire for sex. If you find the treadmill monotonous try something new – remember, those lower body exercises help strengthen your pelvis, which means not only great sex but sculpted abs.

Schedule time for sex

Yes, we are all for spontaneity when it comes to sex but it is time we face some facts. After pregnancy, your life becomes a whirlwind of baby food and nappy changes apart from domestic chores and sex might just be the last thing on your mind. So when you are penning down your to-dos for the week, don't be ashamed to include sex in it, make it a priority. Who knows? You might end up having sex so regularly that you don't have to schedule it anymore!

Make room for daddy

It is natural for a new mother to pay undivided attention to her baby, but that does not have to happen at the cost of ignoring the husband. Make him a part of your baby care regimen and tell him what an amazing father he is. Remember, there is nothing sexier than fatherhood; the things a father does to protect his child can be such a big turn on.

Rediscover foreplay

Intimacy is subjective and does not always have to end up in sex. After pregnancy, you might not be physically ready to have intercourse but that should not get in the way of indulging in other things. The fact that your body is not ready for sex opens up a whole new playing field for foreplay – discover his soft spots, allow him to find yours.

There are more ways to express yourself physically and if it means that a long kiss will bring back the romance that has been fading, indulge in it wholeheartedly.

Get chatty with the doc

After countless visits to the ob-gyn and invasive examinations, women tend to put off doctor visits after pregnancy. Lack of sex drive for a couple of months after pregnancy is something that can be reasoned with but anything beyond that is something you will have to address. Schedule an appointment with your physician and have an open conversation with her about the physical discomfort you are facing or why you are not mentally ready to have sex yet. If not medicines, there are other ways a doctor can help you find your way back to good sex.

Sleep, sleep and sleep again

After singing 'Rock a bye baby' to your baby, make sure to get some shut eye as well, whenever you can. Sleep deprivation can be a gigantic obstacle to sex and if you are not making the effort to sleep, instead of cozying up with your husband you will end up giving into a snapping frenzy.

10-day sex challenge

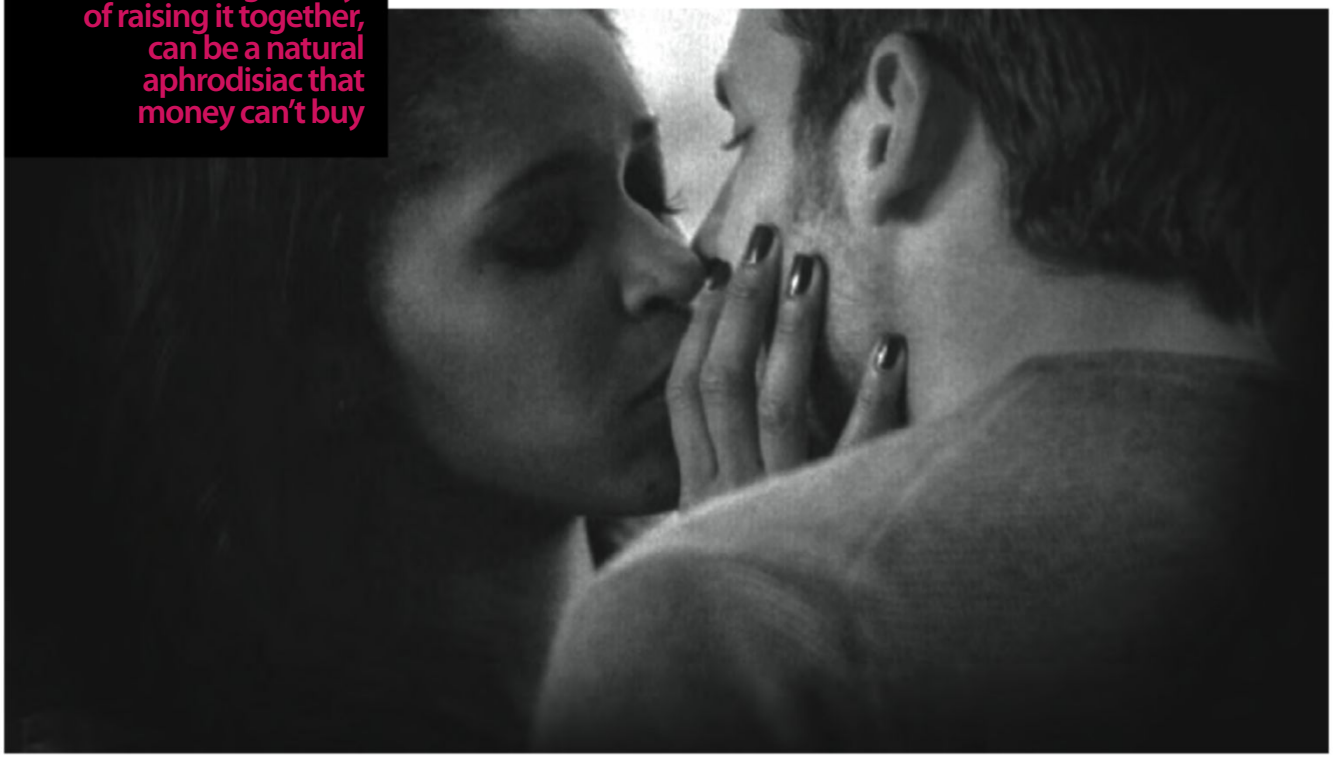
Forget the '100 days of Happiness' challenge; create a practical sex challenge for yourself. Day one can be getting rid of food-stained mommy clothes and slipping into something sexy; day two can be having a romantic meal together. Take small steps and day 10 might possibly be the best sex you have ever had!

Find a new making-out spot

After pregnancy, it is likely that your bedroom is filled with baby things. A room filled with crib, toys and breast-pump can be a psychological barrier to sex. Make use of this chance to get hot with your husband elsewhere in your home, perhaps the living room or your kitchen if you are more adventurous or hop into the shower with him for some steamy sex. It is all in your head at the end of the day.

Parenthood is such a beautiful thing, something to be cherished and you don't really stop becoming a parent ever. Instead of letting it get in the way of your sex life, make the best out of it – you don't need pills or oysters, the shared experience of having a baby, of raising it together, can be a natural aphrodisiac that money can't buy.

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7 must haves in your purse

Do you find yourself going on a treasure hunt within your bag? For women on the go it happens quite often that you forget your necessities during emergencies. It is time to master the art of preparing your bag before your leave; feel equipped all day long with these handbag essentials!

Cool Sunglasses

We definitely need a pair of shades in our bag to beat the heat. They not only help the eye from the bad UV rays but also impart an edgy stylish look. Make sure you pick the right kind of frames based on the shape of your face.

3



2

Pen and Diary

Having no pen and diary in your bag is like having peanut butter without jelly. In spite of the multifunctional smartphones, good old stationery has its uses. Besides on-the-go notes that you may need to take, jotting down a tiny note for someone becomes easier with pen and paper.

Makeup and Mirror

It is mandatory to carry a small pouch with compact, eyeliner and lipstick/lip-gloss. In case you want to do a quick retouch of your makeup before an important rendezvous, you know where to look. Add a tiny hand mirror to the pouch too. A sneak peek into the looking glass will ensure you don't walk into a meeting with lipstick stained teeth or overdone cheeks.

1

iPod and Earphones

Be it Enrique's latino beats or JLO's pop tunes, listening to good music while travelling or working keeps your mood light and uplifted. It always takes you to a zone of inspiration and keeps negative thoughts at bay.

4

Tissues and Wipes

They are another unavoidable commodity. You never know when you end up being clumsy and spill something. A drop of coffee on your spotless work desk can lead to a permanent and ugly stain. Dry tissues and wet wipes are your cleaning first aids till the housekeeping staff arrive to undo the damage. So never leave them out!

5



Hand Sanitizer

With the ubiquitous bacteria and germs in abundance, a sanitizer is always handy. Keeping yourself germfree is keeping away infections and illnesses. Before and after meals, squirt a drop of sanitizing gel on the palms, rub gently and lo! you are ready to go.

6

Breath Freshener

Well you don't want your mouth to smell like onions when you have to go meet someone! It is quite important to have a breath freshener in your bag probably a mint flavoured one. It not only refreshes your breath it also cools the senses making you feel rejuvenated on the whole.

7

Bring It On, Belgrade

From floating restaurant and eclectic architecture to hip night clubs, this fast evolving East European capital seems to have something for everybody. By *Shibi Kumaramangalam*



Take a walk on the streets of Belgrade and you will find a sense of energetic yet thoughtful calm that encompasses most. With locals seeming to come to terms with former dictator Milosevic's exit and the war, Serbia of former Yugoslavia is looking hopefully at the future. Leaving behind the bad memories, Serbia's capital city, Belgrade, is fast becoming the gateway to Eastern Europe. With a rich and ancient heritage (Byzantine to Ottoman), good local cuisine and proximity to many Mediterranean countries there seems much on offer for travellers.

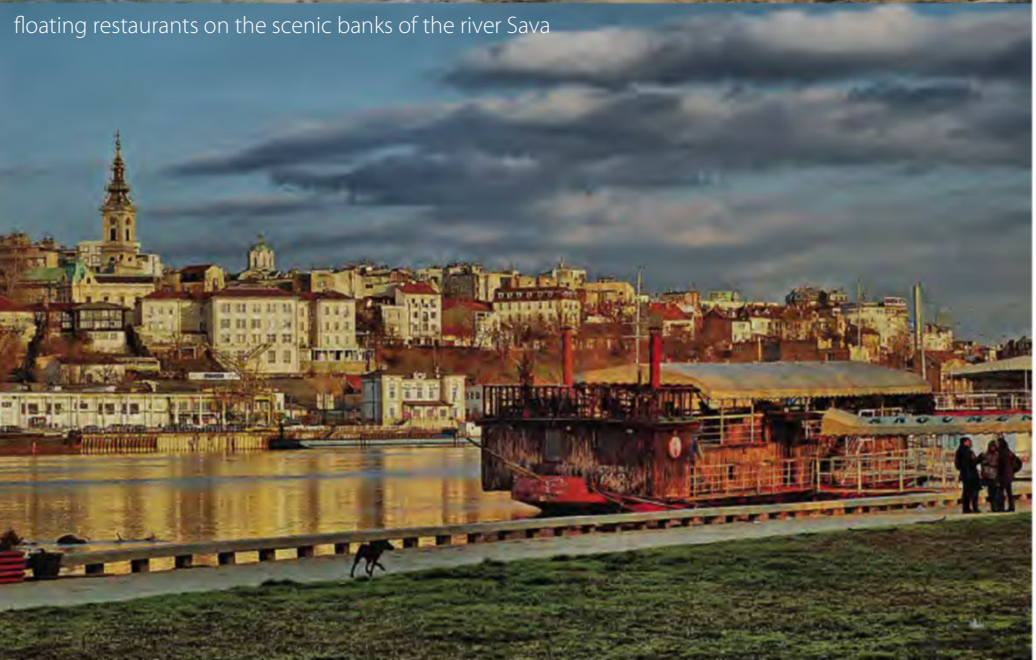
To Belgrade – How and When to Go

There are no direct flights available to Belgrade. However, there are several connecting options offered by popular airlines with stopovers in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Frankfurt and Istanbul. Check for tickets from all major airports including Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram.

Tickets booked in advance will usually work out the most economical. Spring and summer are both ideal for visitors as this country suffers a very chilly winter. April to May is deemed to be spring here, whilst the months of June to August get very hot (30-40 degrees Celsius) even by tropical standards.



floating restaurants on the scenic banks of the river Sava



Useful Tip: Tickets booked in advance will usually work out the most economical.

Home and Away – Where to Stay

Upon reaching the Nikola Tesla terminal, you should ideally take a taxi to your hotel of choice. There are several options available with some familiar multinational chains including the Hilton and the Holiday Inn. Multifarious accommodation options that would suit every budget are available on popular travel websites.

Useful Tip: Smoking in public is part of the local culture and permitted indoors so ensure that you stay at a hotel where there is a non-smoking floor. This is especially pertinent to those who travel with kids or suffer from asthma.

Translating and Money Matters:

Locals in Belgrade do not speak English readily or very fluently. Do not be surprised if you encounter those who don't speak English at all.
The place, aside from the hotels and clubs, are not used to Asian travellers. Of course, learning words like 'Doberdan' (Good day) and 'Hvala' (Thank you) will be most appreciated.
The local currency is the 'Serbian Dinar' which avid shoppers should happily know is valued at slightly less than a Rupee. Euros are also accepted at hotels but not by local merchants or at retails outlets.

Useful tip: It proves very handy to buy a local language (Serbian) guide at the airport or order one off the internet.

Feasting under the Sun

Serbians love their food with the local cuisine consisting predominantly of roasted meats which is served with kupus (cabbage) or shopska (tomato, paprika and cheese) salad and potatoes. Non-vegetarians will have plenty to sample but be warned, the preferred meat here is beef. Pork is also popular with healthier chicken and fish options coming a distant third. Vegetarians may not be able to partake of the local cuisine but will certainly have the ubiquitous vegetarian pizza and pasta

options. The salads here are excellent as is the selection of cheese.
Wine connoisseurs would think every meal a 'moveable feast' with plenty of affordable wines from interesting vineyards nearby to choose from. Especially recommended are the Italian whites and the Spanish and Portuguese reds. You must drive to 'Avala' outside of the main city and have lunch at 'Kumbara', the award-winning national (cuisine) restaurant.
Another experience you should not miss out on is dining at one of the floating restaurants on the scenic banks of the river Sava in Neo (new) Belgrade. Take a stroll after lunch to work off the calories; it is one of the most scenic spots. Drinking wine and sampling aperitifs under the Serbian sun with some good company would probably count as the most memorable culinary experience from your trip.

Useful Tip: If you get tired of the local cuisine, there is one north Indian restaurant happily christened 'Diwali Palace'. International fast food chains too are available


'Kumbara' the award-winning national (cuisine) restaurant

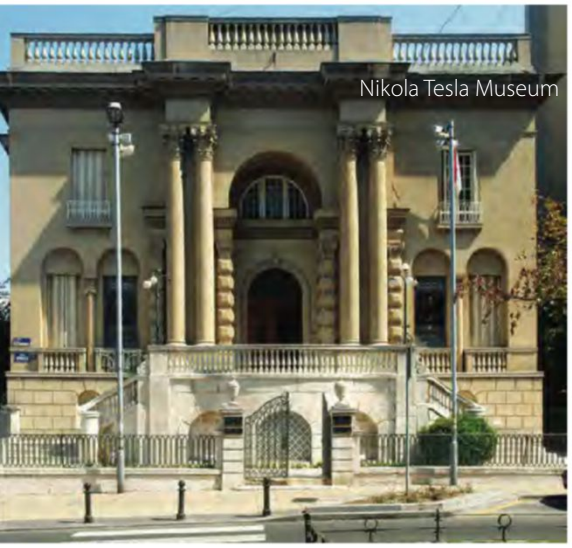
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Cultural Hubs

Visit the 'Belgrade Fortress' which has an outstanding view of New Belgrade, the confluence of the river Sava and Danube and an overview of nearby museums and restaurants. A peaceful area, be prepared to walk around at leisure with your children. Given the history of the place, it may be worth your while to hire a guide. For those travelling with children, you may also be interested in a visit to the Belgrade zoo.
A visit to Belgrade would entail a trip to the Nikola Tesla Museum – an ode


Belgrade Zoo


Belgrade Fortress



Nikola Tesla Museum



St. Sava Temple

St. Michael's Cathedral

to the country's most famous son. Other places of note are the St. Sava Temple, which is a beautiful piece of architecture, the National Theatre which boasts of world-class ballet and other performances, St. Michael's Cathedral and the National Assembly.

Useful Tip: Also worth a visit is the Military Museum which is close by and a stroll through the connecting streets replete with local food and vendors

Friday Night Lights – Clubbing and Concerts

An amusing local saying is that Serbians treat every night like Friday



Rakia

night! Belgrade's nightlife is buzzing and the city is rated one of the top ten party cities in the world. Clubs are plenty and stay open till 6 a.m. From electronic dance, tribal trance and Ibiza house to hip hop, gypsy music and hard rock there is a bar or a club that suits every palette. Summertime often has clubs outdoors whilst many international artists including Beyonce, Jamiroquai and more visit Belgrade on their European tours so check for dates. If you are a party animal you must not miss the clubs on the floating barges by the river.

Useful Tip: Locals encourage visitors to try a round of the deadly local liquor 'rakia'. To be consumed as a shot or slowly (for the uninitiated), the often home-brewed speciality would give turpentine a run for its money! Consume it only if you have a strong head for alcohol



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Mall Magic - Shopping

Serbia's main malls are both located in Belgrade (a comfortable ten minute ride from each other). 'Delta City' and 'Usje Shopping Centre' will serve as familiar ground for Chennai mall rats having an almost similar selection of high-street brands to choose from. Of note though are the manicure bars, cosmetics haven 'Sephora', Spanish brand Desigual, and the beloved Carters for small kids.

Useful Tip: A shoe addict would find shopping in the 'Pyramida' shopping area in Neo Belgrade 'sole-ful' as there are many small boutiques that retail beautiful Italian leather shoes ▪

Delta City Mall



Tarot Forecast

April 2014



ACHARYE NANDITA PANDEY,
(Astro- Vaastu - Tarot consultant, spiritual healer and PLR Therapist)



ARIES (22nd March- 21st April)

Matters of heart shall be extremely memorable. Children bring lots of happiness. Professionally, new beginnings are the key to success. A lot of activities are taking place on the work front and your juniors show their support through and through. Money that was stuck in some venture too comes back into your kitty as the month progresses and legal matters turn in your favour. However, keeping a check on your health matters helps you avoid minor illnesses. **Lucky Colour: Pearl White**



TAURUS (22nd April - 21st May)

This month family will be a strong focal point. Relationships take a more stable turn and you would want to take your love life to the next level. Professionally, a youngster helps you in your endeavours as the month progresses. Financial benefits shall come through only when you take firm decisions. A little meditation helps you to rejuvenate holistically. **Lucky Colour: Blue**

YEARLY FORECAST FOR ARIES

The year begins with a positive reflection for you. Your relationship shall reach greater heights of happiness as you come across a number of opportunities that help in recreating romance. There are issues with a fatherly figure that you need to deal with in order to change the outcome at your projects. Networking is the key to financial success. Health needs better care. You need to be diplomatic and patient towards family matters and this helps in creating peace in life. You shall be very busy in the latter half of the year.



GEMINI (22nd May- 21st June)
Expenses shall be on the higher side as the month progresses. And expenses on the women in your life will be the cause of maximum concern during this phase. Hard work is the key to success and a focused mind helps you in achieving success on the work front. Subtle romance seeps into your life this month. The cards guide you to avoid unnecessary travel. A youngster in the family shall act in a very demanding manner. **Lucky Colour: Pink/Peach**



CANCER (22nd June - 21st July)
Matters of heart shall be pleasant. There are celebrations and you would want to further stabilize your relationship. Professionally, this is an excellent time for you to achieve greater heights and expand your business. You shall be appreciated for your efforts and your wisdom even by your contemporaries. Joint investments might be tough to handle during this phase. A man with a dominating personality shall help you in your family endeavours. A patient approach from your end helps you to tackle difficult situations in life. **Lucky Colour: Grey/Blue**



LEO (22nd July - 21st August)
Professionally, this is a good time for you to indulge in new projects though there is still scope for improvements as the month progresses. Financially, this is the month which requires you to be more careful. Excessive expenses are likely to take place, especially on children. Keeping a check on your diet patterns shall be a good idea as abdominal problems might trouble you. Being careless in matters of heart might lead on to an adventurous ride for you which you might have to regret later on. A sensible handling of situations helps you in overcoming deadlocks.
Lucky Colour: Green



VIRGO (22nd August- 21st September)
Professionally, you need to work a little harder in order to gain from the situations in your life. Whatever effort you put in shall give you results by the end of the month. Hard work is the key to financial success and shall be eventually prolific if dealt with care. Matters of heart resolve subtly. New health activities help in strengthening your system and rejuvenating your mind, body and soul. There are a lot of subtle positive changes taking place in your life. **Lucky Colour: Peach**



LIBRA (22nd September- 21st October)
Matters of heart shall be favourable. You would love to spend quality time with your loved one and that helps you in relaxing your mind, body and soul as well. Professionally, a youngster helps you in achieving success in your work related matters. Expenses are on the higher side. New beginnings in the family are indicated bringing happiness. Travel shall be enjoyable.
Lucky Colour: Peach/Lilac



SCORPIO (22nd October- 21st November)
Travel and holidays with your loved one shall be pleasant. Professionally, there are subtle changes taking place in your life and they will bring growth. Financial trips shall be favourable and growth oriented. Travel indicates average success and yet a lot of travelling might create health problems. Avoid communication deadlocks with your family as they might keep becoming more and more demanding.
Lucky Colour: Peach



SAGITTARIUS (22nd November- 21st December)
Professionally, a number of activities surface and bring you honours and success. You shall come across a number of opportunities which will boost your career. Financial matters might be demanding and expenses on a fatherly figure shall be on the higher side. A property matter in the family might cause you a lot of stress. There will be some respite for you as the month ends.
Lucky Colour: Sky Blue



CAPRICORN (22nd December- 21st January)
Celebrations with friends, family and loved one helps in recreating phases of happiness. Professionally, a partnership helps you in achieving targets on time. You will be very busy throughout and any gains from investments shall be possible only if you focus on them. A child in the family will be a strong support system for you, though you might feel emotionally drained. **Lucky Colour: Pearl White**



AQUARIUS (22nd January- 21st February)
Professionally, this is an excellent time for you to venture into new activities as planetary positions indicate success. Financially too, there are a lot of positive reflections, especially in the form of a letter or a cheque. You need to be firm in matters of heart and this is the time which requires you to take courageous decisions. Health issues too need better handling as neglect might lead to distress. There are new and positive changes that take place as the month comes to its end.
Lucky Colour: Red/Orange

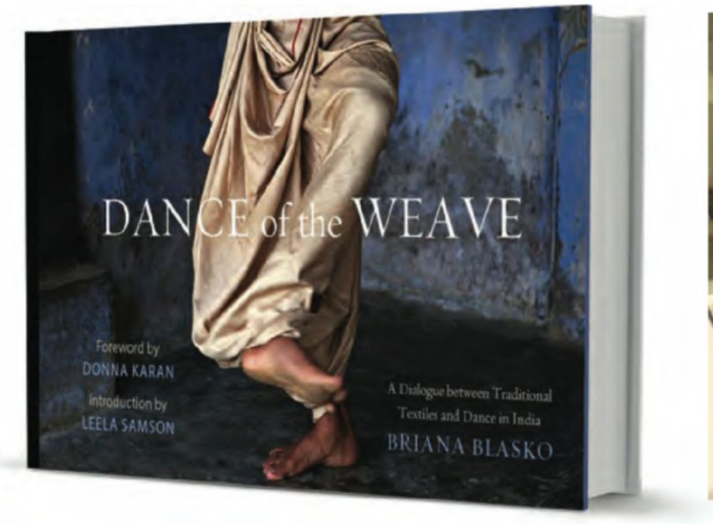


PISCES (22nd February- 21st March)
Financially you might undergo some tough times and this might lead to further expenses. Professionally, the cards guide you to avoid travel and also to not take up new projects. Avoiding confrontations in matters of heart will help in achieving peace and happiness. Health brings in huge transitions and there are new activities that create a complete health overhaul in your life. A woman in the family will be quite an attention seeker in this period. She might turn out to be very demanding during this phase and yet you shall feel quite relaxed and happy as the month comes to its end. **Lucky Colour: Orange**



CavinKare Ability Awards

The CavinKare Ability Awards, jointly instituted by a leading FMCG corporate and Ability Foundation, a national NGO for the empowerment of persons with disabilities. The only woman achiever for this year was assistant director Sangeetha Gala, who is deaf and has worked in several Bollywood movies. This special awards ceremony which honoured 4 achievers from across the country was attended by several eminent personalities, celebrities and successful social entrepreneurs.







Dance of the Weave

Amethyst in Chennai was the venue for the launch of Dance of the Weave by artist-photographer Briana Blasko. The book is a memoir of photomontages of her experience in the tapestry of dance and the movement of cloth with it. The book talks about her research into several Kalakshetra schools that cover different dance forms as well as weaving villages that show intricacy in fabric. It also highlights the drapes that are used for every dance form which depicts symbolism of sacred Indian dance tradition.

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Heal a Child Foundation

Heal a Child is a charitable trust and a non-profit organization founded with the objective to help sick children in need of medical help. They celebrated their 4th year anniversary at The Westin Hyderabad by inviting the city's Who's Who for their themed Halloween, mardi gras and Venetian masquerade as a fundraising event for the organization.



Run for a Cause

For the fifth year in a row, Bangalore based NGO Asha organised the Contours Women's Day Run last month. The purpose of this run is to raise funds to provide quality education to underprivileged girls. The primary sponsor for the events is Contours, an international chain of fitness studios. This year's run had around 2000 participants.





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