

Aishwarya Lekshmi

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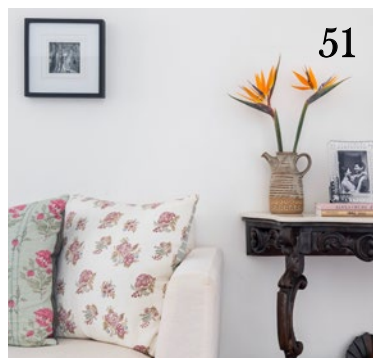
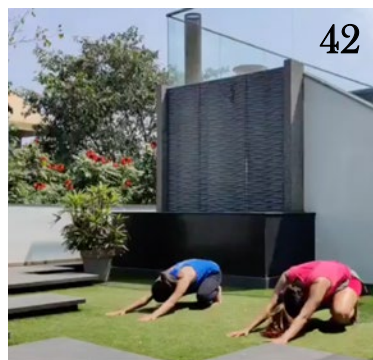
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Mailbox

LOVE WHAT YOU SEE?

Don't forget to share your thoughts and suggestions. Tag us, drop us a comment or just email us at jfw@optionsmediagroup.in



Vinita, Chennai

The article on building your identity was very relatable. Simple, practical and the best part - NOT time consuming. Very rightly said that in the midst of things, a rigorous fitness regime is what always gets left off the list. So simple 5 minute alternatives are the perfect solution for people like me with NO time to spare.



Saarah Paul, Chennai

Anu Hasan's maze of emotions through her Covid journey is all of us. If more people come out and share their journey, it will surely help with erasing the stigma around it.



Chithra on Food

Mangoes play on my heart strings. I absolutely love them, and the recipes were very creative. Shrikhand was my top pick. As for the shopping pages, though not much of shopping can be done right now, it doesn't hurt at all to browse through some uh-mazing future buys *wink. Nice array. Good mix!



Saraswati, Coimbatore

Health picks were top notch this month. Very encouraging to be reminded of the goodness of home-baking.



Ayesha, Coimbatore on Health

Very informative. We all think cost first and lose out on valuable nutrients by opting for our regular mixer/grinders for juices as well.



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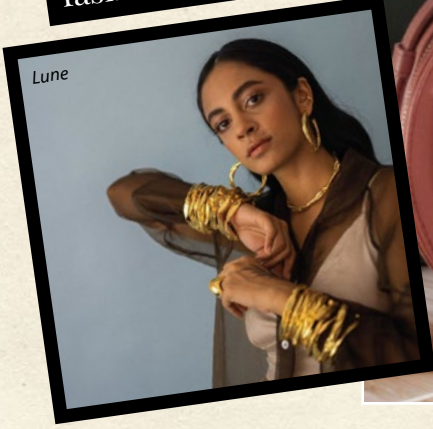


SOUTH INDIA'S LEADING DIGITAL COMMUNITY FOR WOMEN



www.jfwonline.com

Labels like Nappa Dori and Nicobar artfully balance contemporary fashion and Indian accents.



Lune



Nappa Dori



Nappa Dori



Nicobar

Mindfully in Vogue

Planet-friendly fashion is extremely à la mode, and it's here to stay! By **Lorie Das**



Brands like Doodlage render high street options that are also eco-friendly.



Doodlage



Nicobar



Doodlage

A wave of awareness and consciousness has been coursing globally among creators as well as consumers of fashion. Sustainability is the word of the now, and more and more fashion entrepreneurs have come out in support of this cause. Environmentally viable designs and local designers are deservedly in the current limelight. Modern jewellery lines by Lune (a homegrown, female-led brand) showcases minimalism with a waste-conscious approach. Aparajita Toor offers a wide range of traditional, responsibly sourced footwear designs. With all these sustainable options opening up across the country, you can easily hop aboard this bandwagon, if you haven't already! ■

Aparajita Toor

Body, Body

Recovery from Covid was supposed to be slow. It was supposed to be tough especially considering the level of lung involvement I had. But I think that the determination to get well is also what decides how fast recovery is going to be. My dearest friend jokes about my mind over body approach. He says “You have such a powerful mind. You say, “Body, Body, you must do this.” And the body goes, “Okkkaayyyy” and just obediently does what you expect it to “

I always laughed it off because while I knew I could be focused and determined, I didn't think it was quite how things worked.

And then this Covid thing happened and I got home from the hospital. I was warned that I was going to be extremely fatigued and weak.

So, the first day I stayed obediently in bed. But not before I offered to volunteer for OxygenForIndia. The second day I realized I wasn't feeling so tired, so I just got up and came to the living room and started working. And then I realized that things were not too difficult when food was getting taken care of.

Oh the excitement!! The bell would ring, and a little voice inside would go “Food! Food!,” and I would go to the door with barely concealed excitement

and get my food in. I'd quickly open it to see what was inside. This was something I did for every meal the first ten days. Of course, I was also working about 14 hours a day and since I was so busy (either with the volunteering work or with the excitement about food), I forgot that I was supposed to be recovering. The cough subsided in week two and I thought why not start 15-minute workouts. I did that. I watched my body closely. I was told

that people had gotten faint and fallen unconscious during workout, and I didn't want that to happen to me. I think I must be made of sterner stuff, for I remained fine in week two - until I received bad news one after the other.

And that is when I realized that the physical impact of Covid was nothing compared to the emotional impact. I got news that

Appa's dearest friend had passed away. I got news that my friend's mum had passed away. And I got news that the guy who had inspired Ramanan (the Bitsian friend behind the initiative OxygenForIndia) passed away. As each news came in one after the other on the same day, I took it quite well. Or so I thought, until I realized that at one point, I had stopped breathing and was feeling breathless. A slight panic rose in me, and I forced myself to consciously start breathing again. I continued feeling

“ I SAT DOWN AND THE REALISATION DAWNED ON ME. I HAD JUST HAD MY FIRST ANXIETY ATTACK. SO, THIS IS HOW PEOPLE FELT. AND CLOSE ON THE HEELS CAME THE THOUGHT, IF SOMEONE AS STOIC AS ME REACTED LIKE THIS, CAN YOU IMAGINE HOW SOMEONE MORE SENSITIVE MIGHT BE REACTING?



Sunny
sideUP
ANU HASAN



date	workout	details	grpin squat	side lunge	lungo knee rest and same side twist.	one leg extend toe touch	plank to toe to palm	kneel back arch	plank and then toe to palm other side	glute raise	kneel with one leg opened and bent to side. side bend	extend that leg and touch toe	plank under ham curl	bend leg from plank	push up to plank	leg raise toop	postie side twist in plank	crunches
14-05-2021	sheet 2 Monday workout	all reps until plank outside toe. Stopped with 25 on each side					25 each											
15-05-2021		all reps until palm to toe - 30 o each plus 50 glute raise					25 each		30 each									
16-05-2021		BREAK											30 each					
17-05-2021		BREAK																
18-05-2021		BREAK																
19-05-2021							25 each		30each									
20-05-2021		BREAK																
21-05-2021																		

plus 3 x 20 rows with 2 kg and 3 x 20 external



“YOU SHOULD WANT TO GET WELL. THAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS,” AND I SOMEHOW THINK THAT IS ONLY PART OF THE STORY HERE.

short of breath. Was this the after effect of Covid, I wondered.

Feeling short of breath when you are all alone in the house is not a very comforting thing. And I did what any sane person would do. I gave myself a firm talking to and got up and started walking while I took slightly deeper breaths. In about ten minutes I started feeling better. I sat down and the realisation dawned on me. I had just had my first anxiety attack. So, THIS is how people felt.

And close on the heels came the thought, if someone as stoic as me reacted like this, can you imagine how someone more sensitive might be reacting? It reminded me that I needed to work through the grief of losing people in quick succession – even if they were people who weren’t with me at the moment. And with this realisation I segued into week three.

As the third week started, I felt a sense of purpose. My friends make fun

of me for my love of excel sheets. I love Excel. At the slightest excuse, I am off making tables and tracking stuff. So, it was no surprise that I pulled up the excel file that had my pre-Covid workouts and I made a new sheet to track progress.

I decided to do just as much of the workouts I could do every day and mark it on my sheet. The first day I did about 30%. But the next day I did more. And the next day I did even more... and by the end of the week, I was doing 100% of my pre-Covid workouts.

My throat is a bit more sensitive than usual but nothing that hot water and saltwater gargling doesn’t sort out. I do get slightly anxious occasionally but focusing on my breath grounds me again. The fatigue is nonexistent, and the cough makes an occasional appearance. But all in all, I think the recovery has been pretty good.

I spoke to a doctor friend of mine

and he said “You should want to get well. That is the most important thing in the recovery process,” and I somehow think that is only part of the story here. I think you should also set aside fear and yet be aware of what the body is capable of and what it is not post Covid. We should let our body dictate our progress not our fear or our ego.

Or maybe it is exactly like my friend says. Maybe I do this mind over body thing and tell my body “Body, body, you have to recover” and my body says “okkayyyy.” ■

Connect with Anu Hasan. For more anecdotes, follow her on [facebook](#) or shoot her an [email](#) her for any feedback and suggestions.





Life coach and motivational speaker, Maalica Ravikumar works to equip women with the tools needed to become emotionally intelligent, set clear goals, design visions and help uncover the blocks that stop them from being successful in every area of their life. She offers one-on-one coaching, group coaching and corporate trainings.

Follow her on [Instagram @maalica.ksr](#) or contact her on [Whatsapp](#) or [email](#) for any feedback and suggestions.



Stress Busters

5 POWERFUL TIPS TO HELP MANAGE EVERYDAY STRESS

Oftentimes stress occurs when we carry over yesterday's concerns into our present day concerns. An accumulation will almost always end up in high stress levels. Therefore it is prerequisite to 'dump' all of our worries from the previous day or days and concentrate wholly on our today. Here are five stress busting tips that will help you get a fresh start.

STRESS BUSTING TIP #1

Resolve right now to release every thought from yesterday and be only mindful of the now... only this thought... this breath... this moment. Take in three very deep breaths and slowly release each one. Feel each and every concern, every problem, every unresolved moment begin to dissolve. You can deal with them at a later time. For now, you are only to be in this very moment. Reach into your inner quiet place. Go deep inside where you feel you are at one with yourself and then just relax and breathe in deeply. Soak in this feeling of being at peace. Choose this moment to be calm. Free your mind and body of all worry, all regret, all disappointment, all anger and grief.

STRESS BUSTING TIP #2

Next, think of one particular act such as rocking your baby, taking a quick stroll, raking the leaves and immerse yourself in this activity. All the while, making sure your mind is quiet and calm and you are in your own special place within. Practice this act of quiet and calm each day and you will see that you will accomplish so much more. At the first sign of being stressed, go back to this mindful, quiet place and start all over again until you have reached your inner place of calm.

STRESS BUSTING TIP #3

The very best thing that you can do for yourself is to eat, drink and rest – to



“
I generally recommend to all my clients to have a cosy spot in their house that's specifically designed to light up their thoughts and ease their mind. A small couch with a few candles or a good book in a corner makes a lot of difference.
”

your health! Stress is easily brought on by not eating and drinking properly. When you don't get adequate hours of sleep each night, you are only setting yourself up for additional stress. Limit the amount of salt, sugar, caffeine and alcohol in your diet. Drink plenty of clean, pure water every day and try to include moderate amounts of physical activity to your weekly routine. This will breathe new life into your

skin, hair and will nourish all of your vital organs.

Take time to breathe the right way. Take deep belly breathes to send pure oxygen to all of your body. Laugh and then laugh some more. It is food for the soul! Spend time doing the things that please you most. Engage in healthy and fueling relationships and work on problems that would erode the closeness that you have with that someone special. When we are content and living a balanced life everyday stresses are sure to appear pale in comparison and we will better equipped to deal with the unexpected.

STRESS BUSTING TIP #4

Play relaxing music. Experiment to see which music effectively relaxes you the most and save it in a particular folder on your playlist. Whenever you feel stressed, try to get into the mood that particular song is trying to create for you. For me, relaxing jazz works wonders. It creates this luxurious yet light feeling and in a few minutes I find myself totally loosened and eased up.

STRESS BUSTING TIP #5

Go somewhere else. This really helps if the things stressing you out are in the room or associated with it. Why not step out for a little while? When the shift in space occurs, we get into a new frame of mind as if auto-pilot almost all the time. It does not have to be somewhere far. It can be your balcony or terrace too. I generally recommend to all my clients to have a cosy spot in their house that's specifically designed to light up their thoughts and ease their mind. A small couch with a few candles or a good book in a corner makes a lot of difference. If that's not possible, a quick stroll down your street or just standing for a few minutes at the entrance of your home, watching random people do their thing will give you a quick shift of perspective and is sure relax you down. ■

Lounging is a Mood Too!

Hanging around in the comfort of your home, brought to you by light, summer-y numbers that lend comfort and a stylishly chill vibe. No more running to change every time you click a lockdown selfie.

ACDC Graphic Band Tee by **American Eagle** ₹1,380

Printed image T-shirt by **Mango** ₹990

Textured Joggers by **Zara** ₹1,790

66% Lenzing Modal Short Sleeve Crew Neck Printed T-Shirt by **Tommy Hilfiger**

RO Dot Aop Classic Vest by **SuperDry** ₹2,599

TShirt with a Motif by **H&M** ₹799

Super High-Waisted Striped Paperbag Short by **American Eagle** ₹2,310

Crochet Shorts by **Zara** ₹1,990

Typographic Print Joggers by **Aeropostle** ₹1,499

Aop Flip Flops by **SuperDry** ₹1,399

Mustard Crew Neck Logo T-Shirt by **Aeropostle** ₹979

Thong-Strap Flip-Flops by **Tommy Hilfiger** ₹2,159

Cropped Printed TShirt by **H&M** ₹799

Graphic Printed TShirt by **Vero Moda** ₹650

Applique Joggers **SuperDry** ₹4,999

HOW TO FIX MESSY EYELINER

Use cotton buds and cleanser/petroleum jelly

Dip a clean cotton bud in any makeup cleanser and use it on the spot where you have made an error, or dab petroleum jelly on the specific area where you have misapplied the eyeliner, then wipe it using the cotton bud and allow it to dry. After the spot is completely dry, re-apply the eyeliner.

@sandhyashekar

HOW TO FIX CAKEY MAKEUP?

Melt it with setting spray

Once your done contouring, bronzing, highlighting if your face still looks extremely cakey, the only way to fix it is to use a setting spray. This will not only set your makeup, but will also take away any powder residue and blend everything into place for a better, natural finish.

5 MAKEUP HACKS THAT CAN SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

If your looking to learn a few time-saving tips, better start taking notes! By **Simran Khatri**

HOW TO FIX BROKEN MAKEUP POWDERS

Use coconut oil

When your makeup powder crumbles, its heartbreaking indeed but fear not, add a few drops of coconut oil to the product until saturated. Use fingers or a wooden waxing stick to blend it together. Store it in a dry container. ■

HOW TO MAKE YOUR LIPSTICK LAST LONGER

Dab translucent powder

After your done applying lipstick, place a tissue paper and dust translucent powder on it. It makes your lipstick long lasting and also gives a smooth matte finish to your lips.

HOW TO REVIVE DRIED MASCARA

Use saline solution

If your mascara annoyingly dries up every now and then, revive it by adding a few drops of saline solution into the flaky formula to get back the smooth consistency.





Sun-tastic Skin!

Achieve healthy, protected and gorgeous skin all through the harsh summer!

The Indian summer is quite the bugle call to fortify your skincare routine.

The concentrated sun rays could damage your skin, making it look dull and lifeless. For your skin to retain its vibrance, here are some simple yet effective skincare tips.

Refresh & Rehydrate

It is true when they say you are what you eat. The golden rule to maintaining glowing skin throughout this season is to whip up a mindful, wholesome diet... and commit! Add a variety of citrus fruits to your meals. They explode with Vitamin C and antioxidants which have natural anti-aging properties.



About the writer:

Sarrah Broach is a successful makeup artist and beauty content creator. With a steady clientele for bridal makeup and other events, she hones her skill by regularly conducting makeup workshops. She has a unique eye for capturing the essence of products to create stunning ads.

Follow her on [Instagram @sroachbeauty](https://www.instagram.com/sroachbeauty).



A SKINCARE KIT FOR SUMMER

Dehydration can be a major cause of patchy skin, irritation, and redness. You can treat yourself to chilled homemade drinks such as buttermilk and jaggery water. To pack your water with extra richness, you can add a splash of lemon, with the goodness of mint, and cucumber. Hydration plumps the skin cells and retains its elasticity, leaving you glowing and youthful.

Along with consuming nutritious food, it is essential to establish a skincare routine that suits you best. Light and refreshing should be your priority for skin products in this weather.

1 Splash

A good face wash helps to cleanse your skin it's been exposed to dirt, pollution, and sweat. Opt for deep pore purifying face washes that can remove toxins, bring about a matte effect and also keep a check on various skin troubles like acne, pimples and blemishes, rashes.



2 Spritz

Facial mists can be used as toners to replenish your skin. They leave your skin feeling fresh and illuminated.

Pro Tip: Refrigerate your mist for maximum benefits.



3 Replenish

Lightweight moisturizers prove to be the heroes. They give your skin a luscious, youthful glow. Your skin will feel soft and remain hydrated even during the most parching days.

5 Shield

You can include a face mask in your skin care routine once in a week depending on your needs to leave your skin feeling refreshed and rejuvenated.

4 Shield

Perhaps the most vital anti-aging skincare product to use is sunscreen. Even in this house-bound phase, sunscreen cannot be skipped; sitting by windows and glass doors also counts as sun exposure. Lather yourself with sunscreen to defend your skin against harmful UV rays. It prevents sunburn, irritation, and damage. Invest in a sunscreen with SPF 50 which protects from UVA and UVB rays with PA+++.



Must Try! SUMMER MAKEUP TIPS

KEEP IT LIGHT

Heavy makeup can trap sweat, clog your skin pores, and cause acne. Stick to light makeup consisting of a single layer of concealer, powder, and tints. This gives a classic and elegant look, while also making you look fresh for a longer time.



TINTS AREN'T JUST FOR WINDOWS

Tints give you a natural, peachy glow. They are lightweight, easy to apply and if you do your makeup on the go, they are indispensable with quick fingertip application.



TOUCH UP THAT SPF

Dermatologists strongly encourage reapplying of sunscreen every 3 or 4 hours (the average-performing sunscreen lasts a little over 2 hours). You can do this by opting for a compact powder with an SPF or mist with SPF. ■

SPOTLIGHT

THE ONE

SHOT BY
RAHUL JHANGIANI

STYLED BY
ABHINAV

HAIR & MAKE UP
NIDHI AGARWAL

LOCATION
MANDARIN STUDIO

©JFW



WITH THE PLAN



WITH MORE THAN FIVE FILMS IN THE PIPELINE WAITING FOR RELEASE THIS YEAR INCLUDING THE JAGAME THANGIDRAM, IT IS SAFE TO SAY THAT **AISHWARYA LEKSHMI** IS ONE OF THE MOST HAPPENING, RISING ACTRESS OF THE YEAR. IN CONVERSATION WITH **SRUTHI RAVINDER**, SHE OPENS UP ABOUT WORKING ON FILMS BOTH BIG AND SMALL AND WHAT IT TAKES TO STAY RELEVANT TODAY.

YOUNG, ENERGETIC, AND HARDWORKING



ISHWARYA IS A COMPLETE DIRECTOR'S ACTOR. SHE HAS BEEN HAVING BUSY DAYS WITH HER PRESENCE FELT IN ALMOST ALL INDUSTRIES ACROSS THE SOUTH JUGGLING BETWEEN TAMIL, TELUGU, AND MALAYALAM PROJECTS.

“Currently, I’m working on my Telugu project Godse with Satyadev Kancharana, my Malayalam film Archana 31 Not Out is almost ready for release and we have a few CG works to be finished. Kaanekkaane is ready for release. Regarding Mani sir’s project Ponniiyin Selvan, few days of shoot is left and it will resume when things get better and we have a safe environment to shoot.”

The year started with a busy schedule but is now on pause. “I had few days of shoot left in Mani sir’s project, then I had few days of dubbing left in two Malayalam projects and I started my Telugu film. Things were doing fine until I tested positive on April 3rd, 2021. Since then I’ve not been working, I did go for dubbing corrections for my Malayalam project other than that I’m not working currently, I have my parents at home and also keeping in mind the pandemic situation.”



JAGAME THANDHIRAM WILL BE A COMPLETE ENTERTAINER!

Jagame Thandhiram produced by YNOT Studios and Reliance Entertainment, has been available worldwide on Netflix from June 18th, 2021. The film is set entirely in London, it’s a crime-drama starring Dhanush in the lead role. Aishwarya Lekshmi has gained a lot of appreciation and fame after her role in this Dhanush starrer.

“I had a wonderful team. All were young, energetic, and hardworking. Director Karthik Subbaraj is a dream to work with, he doesn’t speak much on sets and if he does then it is about the shot and the instructions we have to follow for the shoot. The assistant directors were very well versed about the script and they knew everything about the shot, scene, and shooting schedule. It was an interesting team to work with.”

“I had a lot of inhibitions to work in Jagame Thandhiram because it was a huge project. I travelled alone for a shoot, new city, new team and I was scared. Dhanush sir was very kind and always enquired whether I’m okay and eating and sleeping on time and his manager Shreyas helped me and ensured I’m safe and secure. I spoke less, I didn’t want to make mistakes but



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WOMEN



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WOMEN

I should thank Dhanush sir and the crew, they made me comfortable and made it easy for me to work. I would always remember and be grateful for that.”



PONNIYIN SELVAN; “PROUD TO BE A PART OF HIS DREAM PROJECT”

I’ve been a hard-core Mani sir’s fan since I started watching films. I love his works be it Iruvar, Kannathil Muthamittal. There were days where I could sit and watch his films back to back, I feel so proud to be a part of his dream project Ponniyin Selvan and I cannot reveal much of my character now. We filmed for one and half months at the end of 2019 and we filmed bits here and there in 2020 and 2021. I’m waiting to re-join the sets, there are brilliant actors and technicians and it’s a blessing to work on this project. We are filming a classic novel, it is an experience to see Mani sir work and be on his sets.



WORKING ACROSS SOUTH! “I DON’T LET THE WORDS OR LANGUAGE HINDER THE EMOTIONS”

For the longest time, I’ve thought that I couldn’t act in Tamil or Telugu films as I don’t know the languages. Thankfully I’ve acted in three Tamil films before my Telugu debutant and it gave me the confidence and also I was more open to learning the language and getting the emotions. I never bothered about the dialogues and I don’t let the words hinder the emotions and I think that’s how an actor should be and I feel I’m closer to achieving this goal. My Telugu project Godse is directed by Gopi Ganesh starring Satyadev Kancharana.

Kaanekkaane is a family drama penned by Sanja-Bobby, one of the best screenplay writers in the Malayalam

industry. Their stories are unique and this one will be too, directed by Manu Ashokan this film will be a little hard to digest and it is relevant to recent times. The film is in the last stages of post-production and we can expect the announcement of the film’s release anytime soon.

ANY STORY THAT IS WORTH TELLING, ANY STORY THAT IS ENTERTAINING, ANY FILM THAT BRINGS OUT EMOTIONS BE IT ANY KIND OF EMOTIONS BE IT THROUGH MALE LEADS OR FEMALE LEADS DESERVE TO BE MADE.



FEMALE LEAD AND SOUTH INDIAN FILMS! “I DON’T BELIEVE IN SEEING SOFT STORIES OF FEMALES”

Aishwarya will be playing the protagonist in two of her upcoming films. Though she believes in strong characters and playing a meaningful role she believes a character’s significance should not be pushed more than needed. That at the end of the day they are characters and their importance should not be determined by their gender.

“Any story that is worth telling, any story that is entertaining, any film that brings out emotions be it any kind of emotions be it through male leads or female leads deserve to be made. I don’t believe in seeing soft stories of females, because that is the trend now. In these hard and disturbing times, at least films should be entertaining and should cater to the audience. If a story demands a particular character to have limited space, I think that’s fine. If the

female character doesn’t have much to do in a film and the story demands that I think that’s okay and we need not bring in gender bias thoughts there, characters need to be seen as characters. Also, filmmakers are more into female leads and stories nowadays. And I’m currently concentrating only on entertainers and I will continue to do so for a while.”

“Both Archana 31 not out and Kumari, even though they revolve around female protagonists they both are entertaining films. Filmed by Akhil Anikumar and Nirmal, both are interesting filmmakers, and ever since I saw Akhil’s short film I was looking forward to working with him and Nirmal’s film Ranam released on my birthday. Our likes and dislikes for films, working patterns, and thoughts kind of fall into the same spectrum. I’m looking forward to filming Kumari and I think people of Kerela will love it.”



THE SHIFT FROM MBBS TO ACTING

A lot of people don’t know that Aishwarya Lekshmi did not plan a career in films she is a Doctor. She completed her MBBS degree from Sree Narayana Institute of Medical Sciences (SNIMS), Ernakulam. Film to her is a passion that she chanced upon.

“I came across a casting call in a café, it was for a Nivin Pauly film and I sent my pictures, they called me for an audition and a screen test and I got selected. It was on 25th December 2016, I remember every other date as they are all the magical moments that happened in my life. I never wanted to be an actor, I wanted to give it a try and see whether I Like it. At the end of my first film, I was sure that I wanted to do only this. I went to acting classes and was passionate. I’ve been getting good characters ever since then (past three years) and I hope it continues. If I don’t

get good and memorable characters I will eventually stop acting. In the end, playing good characters matter.”

Aishwarya Lekshmi made her debut as an actor in the Malayalam film industry with the movie ‘Njandukalude nattil Oridavela’ opposite Nivin Pauly. “He is disciplined as an actor and very observant when he talks with the director. Such a fun-loving person, he loves animals he has cows, dogs and will soon set up a farm. He maintains his physique and follows his diet, disciplined actor.”

The shift from being a doctor to an actor had a lot of challenges and convincing to do. “My parents were initially against me acting in films as they believed that female characters did not have longevity in films. As I don’t have a filmy background and they believed females don’t have a lot to do in the film industry. But now they are happy with the films I’m doing and the choices I make. They ensure I make informed decisions rather than me jumping into things.”

Like any other field, Aishwarya sees a lot of pros and cons in the film industry too. “The biggest challenge is to be staying in the industry, staying updated, and having a voice. Having our own voice matters. Updating skills, staying relevant to your times, matter. The biggest boon in the industry is that I get to live multiple characters, lives in this one lifetime.”

“I’m a director’s actor, I follow my directors blindly and prepare myself according to their instructions and I know my script inside out. While my other preparations are purely internal and spontaneous, I don’t know how to describe this, my best happens in the spot and in the environment. A divine thing kind of happens when I wear the costume and at the moment.” She ends.

YOUR GO-TO SELF-CARE ROUTINE

I’m very lazy, if I see something on Instagram I would save it and try it sometime later. I take Ayurvedic massages, steam baths in the spa once a month, they are relaxing. I love long showers, I will be dreaming about life, characters and just be there.

FITNESS ROUTINE

I do yoga, go to the gym and I’m super irregular. I have trainers who push me and that’s how I survive. They motivate me and get me going with the workouts.

FAVORITE BINGE-WATCH!

I have a lot of favorites, I keep watching it again and again. Iruvar, Panchathanthiram, Manichitrathazhu, Michael Madhana Kamarajan. I love F.R.I.E.N.D.S (watch it repeatedly), Breaking Bad, Game of Thrones, Better Call Saul. The last series I watched and loved was The Bold Type, Fleabag, and The Queen’s Gambit.

3 THINGS YOU’D LOOK FOR IF YOU HAD TO DATE SOMEONE!

I’m a very talkative person especially in relationships; I want to hold a good conversation with him. It would be great if the person is well-read and share the same passions as me. I want a fun-loving and adventurous person. I also want him to be a clean freak. ■

“HAVING OUR OWN VOICE MATTERS. UPDATING SKILLS, STAYING RELEVANT TO YOUR TIMES, MATTER. THE BIGGEST BOON IN THE INDUSTRY IS THAT I GET TO LIVE MULTIPLE CHARACTERS, LIVES IN THIS ONE LIFETIME.”



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FEATURE
WORDS



GREAT RESOLVE IS EQUAL TO GREAT RESULTS

Train your mind and your body will follow! One of the biggest paradoxes of life is that if you want to be in control... you have to let go!



About the writer:

Shitija is a certified nutritionist & wellness coach. Her deep passion for fitness has put her on a path of being certified as a personal trainer. Her keenness in nutritional wellbeing helped her start #fitchef so she could help people eat better, move better and live better! If you would like to join and transform your life the fitchef way contact Shitija on [Instagram](#), [email](#) or [Whatsapp](#)



MY JOURNEY WITH HEALTH AND FITNESS

STARTED when I was trying to conceive about 8 years ago. Lots of misguided approaches from various doctors landed me in a situation where I had gained 15 kilos, developed massive hormonal imbalance... I was steeped in depression and was battling harsh comments about my rapid weight gain. Worst of all, I still wasn't pregnant. Many failed IVFs and many, many more failed IUIs later, I decided enough was enough. Years of pumping my body with hormones and the advice from the best doctors in the country still didn't result in the miracle I was hoping for.

PERPLEXING OF ALL WAS THAT MEDICALLY, NOTHING WAS REALLY WRONG. I checked all the boxes. There were moments of deep pain and all I really wanted was to be a mother and that was exactly the thing eluding me. I had not embarked on my spiritual journey yet; had that been the case, maybe I would've been more compassionate with myself. But here I was, trying to control something that was totally out of my control. I remember sitting by myself and thinking that there has to be an answer and I have to find it.

BROWSING THROUGH SOME NUTRITION ARTICLES IS HOW IT STARTED. I started reading about autoimmune conditions and one thing led to the other many online articles and a few books later, I realized the answer lies in the food I am eating. I realized that the right food can be medicine. Around the time, I also started training again (something I wasn't regular with until then) and slowly understood that sometimes stress is your only symptom. Working on myself from inside out, fixing my nutrition and training in moderation



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led to losing 10 of the 12 kilos I had gained and a natural pregnancy. No medication, no hormones. I proved the best doctors in the country wrong. Our mind and bodies are so much stronger than we know. My son has taught me so much, and continues to do so. From the day he was conceived, everything in my world started to shift slowly but surely, and thus started my metamorphosis into the person I am today.

PHASE TWO OF MY FITNESS JOURNEY was quite eventful as well. I developed thyroid, Hashimoto's to be specific (an autoimmune condition) after my pregnancy and had massive weight. I was up 30 kilos. But this time, I knew what I had to do and I got down to doing it as soon as the doctor gave me the green. After my experience with becoming a mother, the valuable lesson I learned, was one of patience. Good things come to those who wait, I do believe that. Mine was a C-section and I had to take it very slow, which I did. This time, something was different, I could feel it. I knew in my mind this was not a 500mt sprint, I was running a marathon. I was in this for the long haul. That's when I truly started loving and enjoying my training. No quick fixes, no speedy results, I took it low and slow and stopped obsessing about the results. I always put in the work but instead of doing it as a chore, I enjoyed this gift I was giving myself.

MY TRAINING HAS BEEN A MASSIVE ANCHOR IN MY LIFE. It has gotten me through some tough phases which otherwise can be derailing. I was drawn to various aspects of nutrition and fitness and soon, I got certified as a nutritionist (Precision Nutrition) and now am studying to be a certified personal trainer (Train Fitness, UK).

Because of my own tryst with postpartum depression, weight gain and an autoimmune condition, I am a big promoter of moderation and sustainable choices.

I am fitter than I ever imagined, not just physically, but mentally too. I am still a work in progress and will always be, but am grateful to be doing what I love. I am also a big believer in meditation, sleep time breathing, and various other tools that can be hugely beneficial in providing mental balance and stability which ultimately help show better results when training and have massive long term benefits. ■



'SHOT'-CUTS TO Good Health

Call it Paati Vaithiyam (Grandma's Remedies), kashayam, juice or miracle drink here is an ounce of blended cold pressed wellness shots that are inexpensive, designed to boost immunity, give you a jolt of plant-based energy, or naturally reduce bloat and rev your metabolism.



About the writer:
Premalatha Aravindhan, hails from Thanjavur and currently lives in Dubai. Certified Baker, low carb air fryer, instant pot recipes and Youtuber, she loves to serve traditional recipes with a modern twist. For more healthy options visit [wesbite](#) or follow her on [Youtube](#) or [Instagram @premasculinary](#)



PLEASE NOTE: This can be consumed by adults and kids above 5 years (reduce the quantities and make it milder). Too much of anything is not good so take shots alternative day or weekly twice. Before trying any home remedies, ensure that you do not have allergies or health issues.

Vitamin C Shots

Good for hair growth, boosts immunity, prevents viral and bacterial ailments.



PREPARATION

2 amla, cumin, ½ tsp cumin seeds, ½ inch ginger, 1 sprig curry leaves, a pinch Himalayan salt. **Add a little water. Blend everything and extract the juice.**

PREPARATION

1 lemongrass, ½ inch ginger root, mint + honey
Grind everything and extract the juice.



Lemongrass Shots

Helps relieve body pain, stress, fever, and swelling.

ABC Shots

This refreshing drink after an exhausting workout, promotes blood purification.



PREPARATION

½ apple, ½ carrot, ½ beets, 1 tsp lime juice, Honey. **Blend everything and extract the juice.**

PREPARATION

10g bitter gourd, half cucumber, mint.
Blend everything and extract the juice.



Karela Shots

Activates the insulin, which in turn, prevents the storage of sugar in the body as fat. This is must for weight watchers.

Turmeric Shots

Powerful immune booster, relieves throat pain.



PREPARATION

¼ cup orange juice, 1 inch fresh turmeric or ½ tsp turmeric powder, ¼ tsp black pepper, 1 inch cinnamon. **Blend everything and extract the juice.**

PREPARATION

¼ cup aloe vera gel (wash before use), ½ inch ginger roots, 1 tsp lime juice. **Blend everything and extract the juice.**

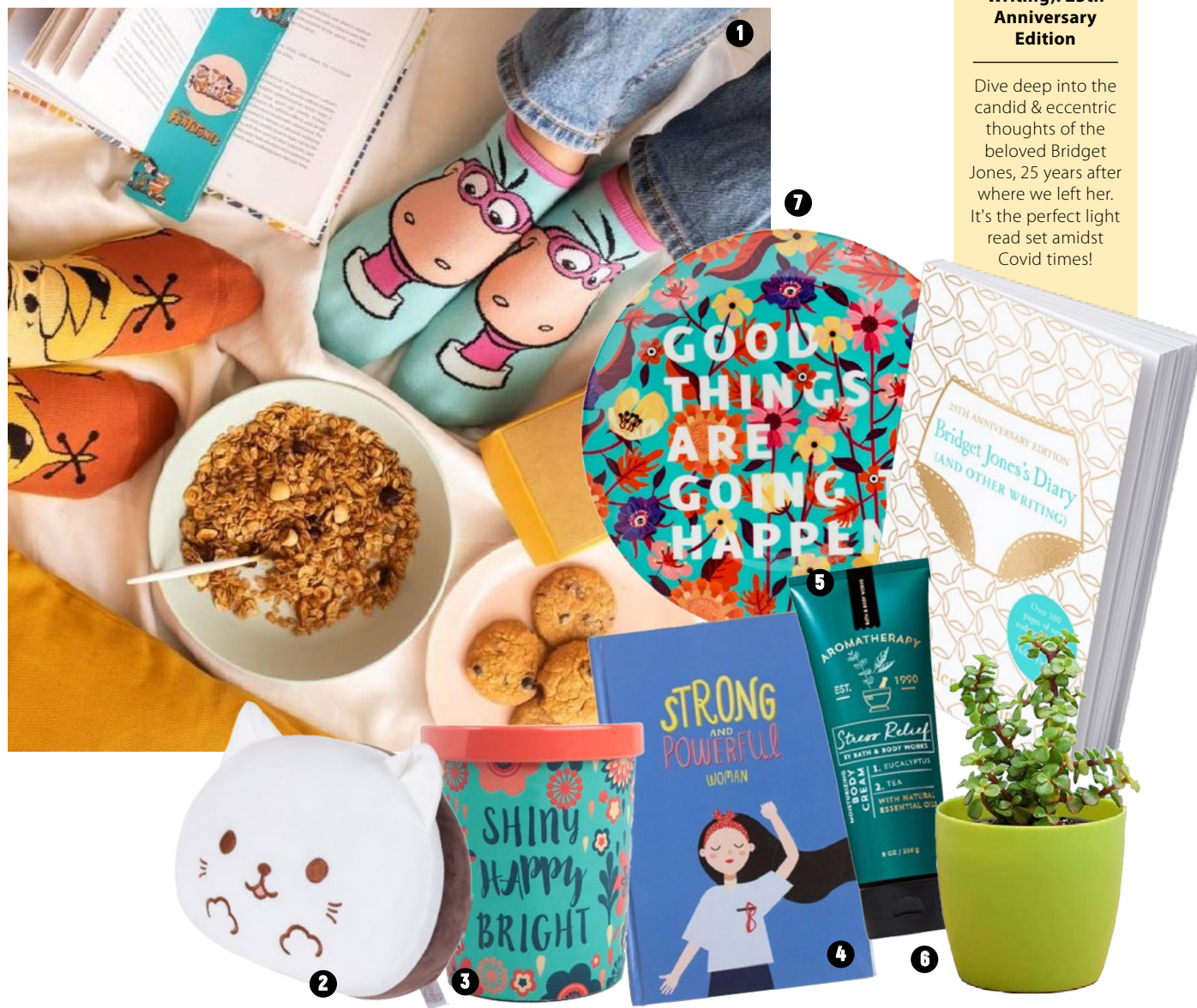


Aloe Vera Shots

Helps treat constipation, staying hydrated, controlling blood sugar levels and weight loss. ■

The Cheer-'Em-Up Kit

Now these are great to have on standby as small, last-minute presents, or retain as keepers. Just some feel-good stuff to put smiles on faces!



Bridget Jones's Diary (And Other Writing): 25th Anniversary Edition

Dive deep into the candid & eccentric thoughts of the beloved Bridget Jones, 25 years after where we left her. It's the perfect light read set amidst Covid times!

1. The Flintstones Socks (Set of 5) by **Thela Gaadi** ₹699; 2. Shiny Happy Bright Candle- Red by **Chumbak** ₹995; 3. Sushi Cat Plush by **Miniso**; 4. Strong Women Notebooks (Hard Cover) by **The June Shop** ₹450; 5. Euclyptus Tea Body Cream by **Bath & Body Cream** ₹1,499; 6. Elephant bush (*Portulacaria afra*) Jade Succulent by **Nursery Live** ₹299; 7. Good Things Wall Plate by **Chumbak** ₹1,036

On the Side

Who said going the healthy route was mundane. Choose from these easy to make vegetarian sides from world cuisine to help you and your family make the health switch today.



BROCCOLI ALMOND SOUP

↓ Broccoli Almond Soup is a dairy free protein rich Soup. It is high in vitamins and a make a wholesome dinner option.

PREP TIME : 15 MINUTES | COOK TIME : 15 MINUTES | COURSE : SOUPS

SERVES : 3 | CUISINE : AMERICAN



About the writer:

Sharmila Kingsly is a software engineer by profession and a food blogger by passion. Growing up in Nagercoil and spending years in Bangalore and Chennai, her cooking reflects the beauty of local cuisines with coconut oil and coconut finding their way through to the recipes. With cooking having become an integral part of her life, blogging is what keeps her motivated. Visit her [website](#), follow her on [Youtube](#) or [Instagram @happietrio](#) for more interesting recipes.



INGREDIENTS

1/3 cup Almonds
2 tsp oil
4 clove Garlic
1 Onion medium size
1/2 cups Broccoli Florets
2 cup Water
Pepper
Salt as needed
1 cup Coconut Milk

PREPERATION

1. Soak the almonds in hot water for 1 hour. After soaking, remove the skin of the almonds by pressing the skin lightly. It will come off easily.

2. In a cooker add 2 tsp of oil. Once its hot add in the chopped garlic and sauté for few seconds.
3. Now add in the chopped onions. Sauté till the they soften.
4. Now add in the broccoli florets and sauté in medium flame for a minute.
5. Next add in the soaked almonds. Combine everything and cook for another minute.
6. Add in 2 cups of water and the required salt. Combine once again and close the cooker and

pressure cook for 2 whistles in a high flame.
7. Wait till the pressure gets released by itself and then open the cooker.
8. Allow it to cool down and blend well to a fine puree. You may also use your immersion blender.
9. Put the soup back on the cooker and heat it for another 2 minutes. Add in the pepper powder and combine.
10. Finally add in coconut milk and switch off the flame. Serve hot with some sliced almonds as garnish.

GINGER THOGAYAL

↓ Ginger is good for digestion, so this spicy ginger thogayal is usually served with rice and any other mild curry.

PREP TIME : 10 MINUTES

COOK TIME : 8 MINUTES

COURSE : SIDE DISH

SERVES : 4 | CUISINE : INDIAN

INGREDIENTS

4 tsp Oil

2 tbs Urad dal

1 cup Ginger

5 Shallots / Small onions

6 Dry red chilli

Tamarind gooseberry sized

Salt as needed

2 springs Curry leaves

¼ cup Grated coconut

PREPERATION

1. Heat a pan with 2 teaspoon of oil, once hot add in the urad dal and roast until golden and set aside.

2. In the same pan add in the remaining 2 teaspoon of oil and once its hot add in the chopped 1 cup of ginger. Sauté in a medium flame until its slightly golden. Next add in the sliced small onions and saute till soft and glossy.

3. Next add in the dry red chilli. Roast in low flame for 2 minutes.

4. Next add in the tamarind and 2 springs of curry leaves. Sauté in a medium flame for a minute. Switch off the flame.

5. Now add in the grated coconut and mix well. Let it cool down and then grind the thogayal by adding little water and the required salt. Ginger thogayal is now ready to be served.



@cookwithsharmila

ORANGE CAULIFLOWER

Orange Cauliflower is the vegan version of the Popular Asian Orange Chicken dish. It has a juicy and citrus blast in every bite. Enjoy with some Fried Rice.

PREP TIME : 10 MINUTES | COOK TIME : 30 MINUTES | COURSE : APPETIZER
SERVES : 5 | CUISINE : ASIAN



INGREDIENTS

1 Cauliflower, medium sized head
½ cup Rice flour
½ cup Water
Salt to taste
½ tsp Pepper

Orange Sauce

2 tbsp Olive oil
4 Garlic

½ tsp Crushed ginger
½ tsp Chilli flakes
1 cup Orange juice
¼ cup White vinegar
⅓ cup Sugar
2 tbsp Soya sauce
2 tbsp Corn flour
¼ cup Water
2 tsp White sesame seeds toasted
1 tsp Scallions to garnish

PREPERATION

1. Blanch the cauliflower in salt and turmeric water for 5 minutes. Drain it and set them aside.
2. In a mixing bowl add in the rice flour, salt, and pepper powder. Whisk once and then add in water. This makes the batter.
3. Dip each cauliflower

floret one at a time and make sure the batter coats the cauliflower fully.

4. Place the batter coated cauliflower in a baking tray lined with parchment paper.
5. Preheat the oven at 200°C for 10 minutes. Bake them at 200°C for 20 - 25 minutes until they turn crisp. Flip once in between as you bake. You can also fry or air-fry the cauliflower florets instead of baking.

Prepare Orange Sauce

1. Heat Olive oil in a pan. Once the oil is hot add in the sliced garlic and crushed ginger.
2. Stir for few seconds and then add in the chilli flakes.
3. Next add in the orange juice. Also add in the white vinegar and sugar. Combine everything and allow the sugar to dissolve. Next add in the soya sauce and cook for a minute.
4. Mix the cornflour in ¼ cup of water and let it form a slurry. Add this to the pan and cook in medium flame for 2-3 minutes. The orange will thicken by the time.
5. Add in 1 teaspoon of olive oil. Now add in the baked cauliflower florets. Combine until the sauce is evenly coated on the cauliflower.
6. Switch off the flame. Garnish with chopped spring onions and toasted white sesame seeds. ■

Make Every Breath Count

Simple enough Yoga practices to make you breathe like you mean it. By **Humsika J**

LUNG PROTECTION HAS BECOME AN ALL-TIME PRIORITY ALL OF A SUDDEN.

And while every new media report can cause paranoia and anxiety about your respiratory health, all you really need is some good, hard fact-checking and a rock-solid strategy. Known to lower blood pressure and boost lung capacity, meditation is a sure-fire way to calm those nerves as well as stay healthy through this outbreak.

Here are a few simple meditation practices that you can follow no equipment necessary. You can sit in a cross-legged position, hold the padmasana (lotus pose), or even be seated on your chair or sofa.



1 Guided Meditation

The common objective of any guided meditation resource is to draw focus to your breathing. You may find yourself distracted sometimes, but it's important to keep at it. A diverse range of content can be easily found online to suit your needs.

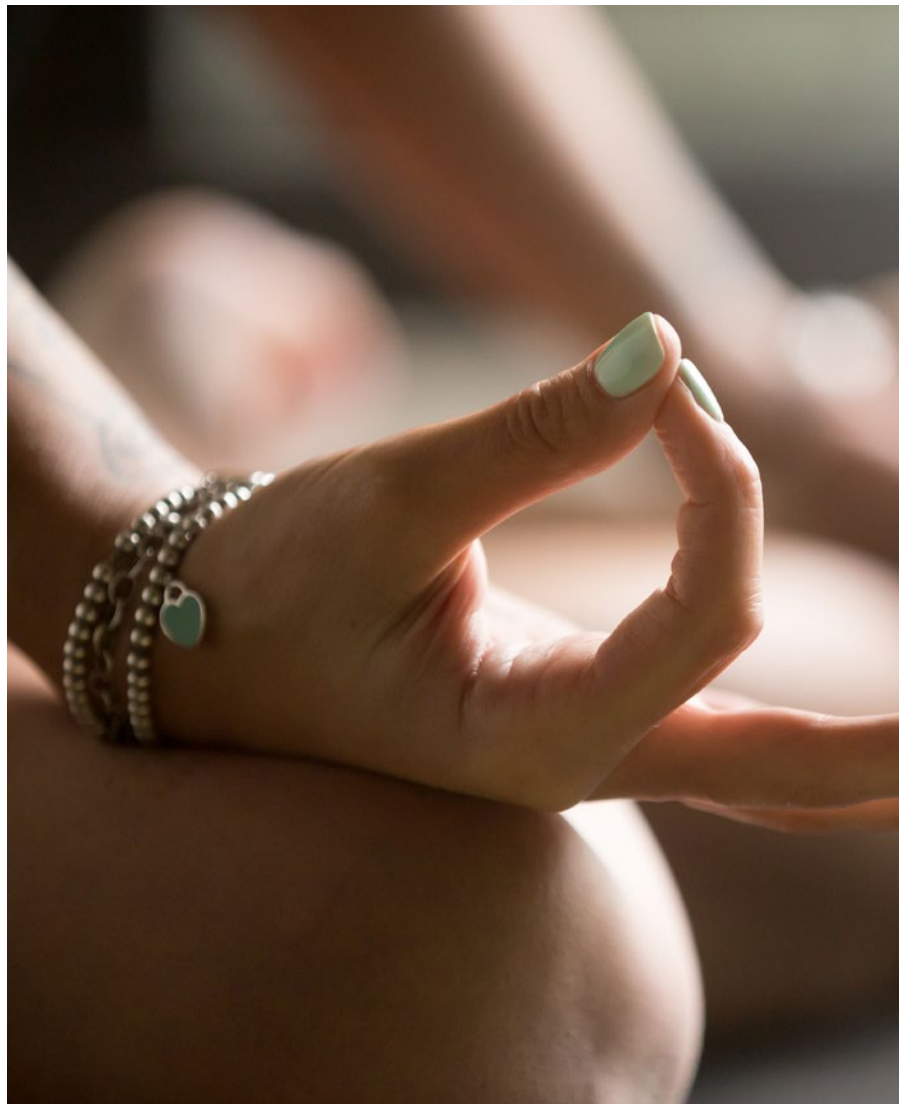
BENEFITS: Enhances self awareness, promotes emotional health, and is a great way for any beginner to dip their toes into the art of meditation.

2 Bhastrikapranayam

The meaning of the word 'bhasrika' is 'bellows'. The technique involves inhaling and exhaling quickly ten times, like the bellows of the blacksmith. Close your palms to make a light fist and place them near the shoulders. While breathing in, open your fist and raise your hands up like you are reaching for something. While breathing out, bring your hands back down and make a light fist again. Each round consists of 10 breaths. Perform 3 rounds. People with hypertension and cardiac problems can stop with one round.

BENEFITS: Strengthens respiratory muscles and improves ventilator function.

KNOWN TO LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE AND BOOST LUNG CAPACITY, MEDITATION IS A SURE-FIRE WAY TO CALM THOSE NERVES AS WELL AS STAY HEALTHY THROUGH THIS OUTBREAK.



3 Blowing candles

Birthday or not, this is a fun one. Imagine more than 30 candles in front of you. Take a deep breath through your nose and while exhaling, push all the air out through your mouth. Pull your stomach in and exhale all the air out. The aim of this exercise is to help move from a more upper chest breathing pattern to one that uses the full capacity of the lungs. Practice this 5-10 times in one round.

BENEFITS: Makes you tap into your full lung capacity, and normalises your breathing as well as heart rates.

4 Kapalabhati

Every asana in yoga targets a specific purpose and requires bodily discipline. Additionally, it's a fine way to develop a healthy posture as well. 'Kapalabhati' helps with abdominal breathing. Sit straight with your spine erect. Push out air while exhaling and try pushing your abdomen to your spine. The inhaling happens automatically. Practice this 10 times in one round. Perform 3 such rounds to feel your 'kapala' (skull) 'bathi' (brighten up/shine).

BENEFITS: Stimulates internal organs in the abdominal area, and steadies mood swings.

5

Bhramari pranayam

'Bhramari' means 'bees' and in this pranayam, you will essentially be humming like a bee. Place your hands on your face in such a way that the thumbs are on the ears, the index finger is placed lightly in the socket of the eye, the middle finger on the nose, the ring fingers meet at the cupid's bow and the little fingers placed near the chin. While inhaling, take a deep breath. While exhaling, hum in a high pitched voice and rhythmically open and close your ears with your thumbs. Repeat this 5-10 times.

BENEFITS: Relieves cerebral tension, and allows better sleep.

6

Nadishuddhi (Anulom Vilom)

'Nadishuddhi' refers to the cleansing of the breathing system. Place your right hand on your face in such a way that the thumb is on the right nostril, the index finger and middle finger are on the eyebrow bridge and the ring finger is on the left nostril. For the first round, inhale and exhale only through the right nostril. For the second round, inhale and exhale through only the left nostril. This way, the intake of air from both nostrils is balanced. For the third round, inhale through the left nostril and exhale through the right nostril. Then, inhale through the right nostril and exhale through the left nostril. Each round consists of 10 breaths. Do not perform it in a hurry, take deep breaths. Ensure the posture is right. Don't force yourself beyond your comfort level.

BENEFITS: Brings symmetry to the nervous system, and improves attention span by clearing the mind.



ALL THESE BREATHING REGULATORY EXERCISES ARE PROVEN TO BE BENEFICIAL WHEN CARRIED OUT PATIENTLY AND IN THE RIGHT POSTURE. DON'T EXERT YOURSELF BEYOND YOUR COMFORT LEVEL.

All these breathing regulatory exercises are proven to be beneficial when carried out patiently and in the right posture. That said, it is always safer for those with hypertension and other cardiovascular issues to consult their physician before performing any of the above. Don't exert yourself beyond your comfort level. Start off with 5 breaths a round and gradually increase the number. Breathe easy, now! ■

GOOD FOOD Good Mood

In these highly tested times, it is a basic necessity that we keep our "mental health" at its top level. Foods that you put in your plate have a great impact on your mental health. So, what is the connection between food and mood?



About the writer:

Shiny Surendran is a sports and preventive health dietitian and nutritionist with 21 years of experience. She is the first Indian to attain Graduate Diploma in sports nutrition by the International Olympic committee. Lecturer and author, she has also worked with leading fitness studios on sports nutrition. Follow her on [Instagram @shinysurendran](#).



It all begins in our gut (commonly called as the second-brain), which is not only a place of digestion of foods but also a haven for millions of nerve cells or neurons.

Around 98% of the neurotransmitter serotonin is produced in the gut. It regulates sleep, appetite and most importantly, mood. The production of this “feel-good” hormone is highly influenced by the “good” bacteria present in your gut. Eating a healthy diet can promote the production of these neurotransmitters which indirectly reflects in your positive mood. On the other hand, an unhealthy diet can increase the growth of “bad” microbes. As a result, Inflammation in your gut can spoil neurotransmitter-production and also, mood.



ANTIOXIDANTS

ANTIOXIDANTS COMBATS INFLAMMATION IN THE GUT. ALL-COLOURED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ARE A GREAT SOURCE OF ANTIOXIDANTS.

Eat fruits and veggies that are in season to get maximum benefits. Avoid overcooking veggies, as it reduces the antioxidant availability in them. Include raw vegetables in your daily diet, as a kosambari salad, vegetable raita or plain salad. Include spices with antioxidant properties like turmeric and pepper.

FIBRE

FIBRE OFFERS NUMEROUS BENEFITS TO OUR BODY, ONE OF ITS ROLE IS TO KEEP OUR MENTAL STATE STABLE.

Eating fibre-rich foods such as whole grains (millets, brown rice, traditional rice varieties etc.), vegetables and fruits prevents sudden sugar spikes and crashes in the blood, which is the main culprit behind a sluggish-state of mind. It is recommended to eat 4 to 5 servings of vegetables and fruits everyday (approx. ½ kg). Fill half of your meal plate with fibre-rich veggies. Eat green leafy vegetables at least thrice a week. You can also include them in the form of coriander-mint chutney or curry leaves powder added to rice and buttermilk.



EAT GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES AT LEAST THrice A WEEK. YOU CAN ALSO INCLUDE THEM IN THE FORM OF CORIANDER-MINT CHUTNEY OR CURRY LEAVES POWDER ADDED TO RICE AND BUTTERMILK.

GOOD FATS

AROUND 60% OF OUR BRAINS ARE MADE UP OF FAT. CONSUMING FOODS RICH IN OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS PROMOTES BRAIN FUNCTIONS AND THEREBY, PROTECTING MENTAL HEALTH.

Omega - 3 fatty acids are found in oily fishes such as mackerel, tuna, sardines, salmon and herring.

Eat fish at least thrice a week, added in gravies or steamed. Vegetarians can get their dose of omega - 3 fats from flax seeds, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, walnuts and soya beans.

You can consume up to 3 tsp of flax seeds everyday sprinkled in buttermilk, salads and cooked vegetable preparations.

Use good quality fats in your cooking, such as butter, pure ghee, coconut oil, olive oil or wood-pressed groundnut and sesame oil or rice bran oil. Include a maximum of only 4-5 tsp of oil per day.

YOU CAN CONSUME UP TO 3 TSP OF FLAX SEEDS EVERYDAY SPRINKLED IN BUTTERMILK, SALADS AND COOKED VEGETABLE PREPARATIONS.



PROBIOTICS & PREBIOTICS

PREBIOTICS ARE FIBRE-RICH FOODS ON WHICH THOSE FRIENDLY-GUT

BACTERIA FEED ON. They promote both digestive health and mental fitness. Fermented rice, buttermilk, curd, pickled vegetables, kombucha and sauerkraut are good food choices to include for the gut. Prebiotic food sources include millets, hand-pound rice, dhals, chickpeas, onion, fruits and vegetables.

OTHER NUTRIENTS

THE SUNLIGHT NUTRIENT, VITAMIN D HELPS IN THE PRODUCTION OF THE "FEEL-GOOD" HORMONE

SEROTONIN. In this lockdown, don't be negligent in getting your daily dose of this vitamin from sunlight. Perform any exercise, or yoga in your home terrace or balcony exposing your body's skin to direct sunlight. Mushrooms, oily fishes, egg yolks and liver are rich sources of vitamin D. Magnesium is another such nutrient that is proven to be protective against stress and anxiety. Leafy greens, dark chocolate, whole grains have good amounts of magnesium. Folate is a B vitamin present in lentils, broccoli and beetroot. This nutrient helps in the production of a neurotransmitter, dopamine which has a positive impact on mental health.



REFINED CARBS

White sugar, white rice, refined flour (maida), and potato can cause fluctuations to your blood sugar levels and can turn your mood grumpy.

PROCESSED FOODS

High sugars, preservatives, artificial flavourings and colours present in the processed foods are proven to cause hyperactivity and depressive symptoms in people. Avoid chips, candies, instant foodstuffs and processed meat like salami and sausage. Nevertheless, these foods

are also high in salt content. Always opt for whole and natural foods over commercial foods.

WRONG TYPE OF FATS

Be wary of the trans-fat or partially hydrogenated fat present in margarine, vanaspathi, ready-to-eat snacks, ready-made cakes and pastries, cookies, and frostings. Bad fats can do serious harm to your mental health by causing inflammation in the brain and the body. Above all, prioritise your day for at least 30 minutes


of exercise or meditation to keep your mental health in good shape.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol is surely a depressant. While drinking alcohol gives you a sense of reward, it only lasts for a very short term. Alcohol can interrupt the smooth balance of chemicals in the brain, which over the long run can crush your mental health by increasing the levels of anxiety and the ability to cope up with one's stress becomes much difficult.

AVOID CHIPS, CANDIES, INSTANT FOODSTUFFS AND PROCESSED MEAT LIKE SALAMI AND SAUSAGE. NEVERTHELESS, THESE FOODS ARE ALSO HIGH IN SALT CONTENT. ■

FITNESS

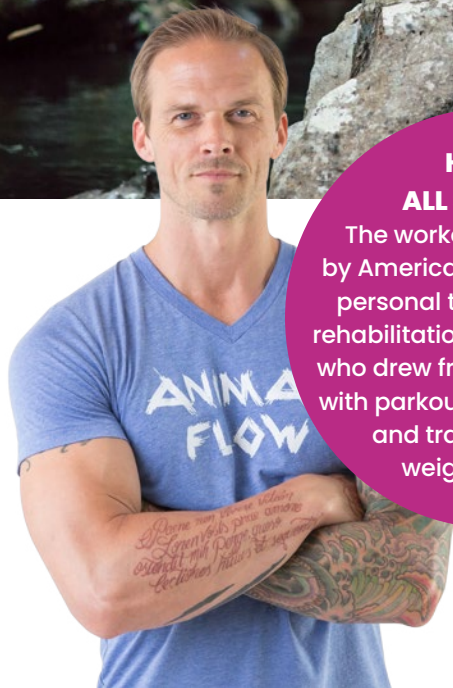
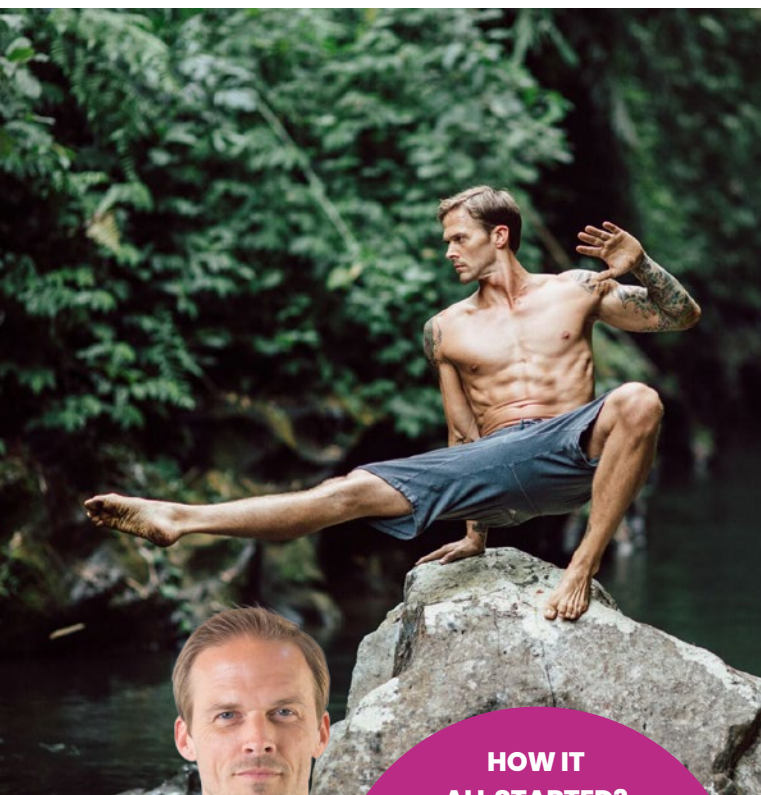


I want to live like
an animal

A form of innovative bodyweight movement routine designed to improve strength, flexibility, power and mobility, Animal Flow workouts are here to stay. Here's how to get started with the basics. By **Simran Khatri**.

WHAT IS ANIMAL FLOW?

As the name suggests, it involves doing physical movements like animals such as scorpions, apes, crocodiles to name a few. These exercises are a series of postures that are linked together in a fluid sequence, seamlessly moving from one position to another. To practice, you flow from one position to another, opening up and stabilizing your body. It can also be described as a cross between yoga and gymnastics.



HOW IT ALL STARTED?

The workout was created by American strength coach, personal trainer and injury rehabilitation expert Mike Fitch who drew from his experience with parkour, hand balancing and traditional body weight training.

Image Source: Animal Flow India



Animal Flow includes a range of movements and combinations that are designed to elicit specific results - wrist mobilization, activation, form specific stretches, traveling forms, switches and transitions and of course, flows.



WRIST MOBILIZATION



ACTIVATION



FORM SPECIFIC STRETCHES



TRAVELLING FORMS



SWITCHES & TRANSITIONS



FLOWS

“The most important thing to understand about animal flow is that it is a bodyweight based training method, essentially all you need is just your body. No equipment, no fancy gear none of that is required. You don’t even require shoes. You just need to be physically fit enough to support your own bodyweight in quadrupedal position. It takes inspiration from different forms of workouts but is unique in itself,” says Ananya Mukund, a Chennai based certified Level 1 Animal Flow Instructor.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

Although warm-ups probably won’t help much in burning calories or building muscles, it elevates heart rate and raises your body temperature as a result oxygen becomes more available to your muscles, allowing them to contract and relax more easily. It also improves muscle elasticity which means the chances of accidentally hurting yourself or overheating

“ IT IS A BODYWEIGHT BASED TRAINING METHOD, ESSENTIALLY ALL YOU NEED IS JUST YOUR BODY. NO EQUIPMENT, NO FANCY GEAR.



“ WARM-UPS ARE REALLY IMPORTANT WHEN IT COMES TO ANIMAL FLOW BECAUSE YOU ARE USING YOUR BODY. THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY TO HIDE BEHIND EQUIPMENTS.

during your workout are far less. “Warm-ups are really important when it comes to animal flow because you are using your body. There is no possibility to hide behind equipments. Hence the component wrist mobilization that is done before and after the flow is very important to your practice. That is also

because you spend a lot of your time on your palm. So don't forget to do your warm ups and cool downs,” Ananya recommends.

The muscles that surround your wrist are not as strong in comparison to others which is why it is very important to warm up your wrist/palm before beginning your workout session.



LEG SWINGS

Keep your torso straight and tall, swing one leg as far as it will comfortably go in each direction. Make sure to keep your leg straight and focus the movement

at your hip. You want to get a full range of motion, but don't force the swing so far that your hips rotate or your back bends.

ARM CIRCLES

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart and extend your arms parallel to the floor. Make circles with your arm using small controlled motion, gradually making them bigger until you feel a stretch in your triceps. Reverse the direction of the circles after about 10 seconds.

TORSO TWIST

Stand tall with legs shoulder width apart and hands resting on your waist. Twist from side to side about 90 degrees. Move with the shoulder and hold the movement at each side.

LUNGES

Step forward with one foot until your leg reaches a 90-degree angle. Make sure your rear knee remains parallel to the ground and your front knee does not go beyond your toes. Lift your front lunging leg to return to the starting position. Repeat with the other leg.

SOME BASIC ANIMAL FLOW MOVES

1 CRAB REACH TO SCORPION REACH

Begin facing up with hands and feet on the ground, feet at shoulder width, fingers pointing behind you, hips off the ground and right arm bent by your chest. Press hips up and extend right arm behind body, keeping it relaxed so it frames the head. Return to the start. From this position, lift left foot off ground, rotate leg underneath your body, then get back on all fours. Keeping knees off the ground, sit back on heels, straightening arms in front of body. Initiate the scorpion reach by sitting back on

your heels, straightening the arms. Bring left knee past right wrist, then kick the left leg up, dropping your head between your arms. Rotate hips outward slightly and pivot on the right foot to flip your body over and return to start. Repeat with the opposite leg.

2 BEAST REACH

From a child's pose position with your knees and inch off the ground, lift your hips up towards the sky and lift one foot off the ground, bringing the leg tight to your ribs, keeping your core engaged, and toes pointed. Wave through your spine, putting forward pressure on your wrists as you squeeze your glutes as you lift your chin, glancing forwards. Pull your



UNDERSTAND YOUR BODY'S FLEXIBILITY AND MAKE A FLOW WORKOUT ROUTINE THAT SUITS YOU. IT COULD BE JUST ONE MOVE OR 3-4 MOVES PUT TOGETHER.

shoulders down and back, then tuck your chin, and wave through your spine, keeping your knee tight to your body as you descend back into your modified child's pose position. Alternate sides.

3

SIDEKICKS

Start on all fours with knees off the ground. Lift left hand and right foot off the ground simultaneously. Bring right leg to underneath body and kick to the left, pointing toes and leaving butt close to the ground, holding body up with right hand on ground and left heel. Bring left fist to chest. Open chest to the ceiling. Hold for a few seconds. Return to starting position then repeat on opposite side. Do 8 reps on each side.

"There is always room for improvement, keep challenging yourself. Understand your body's flexibility and make a flow workout routine that suits you. It could be just one move or 3-4 moves put together," says Ananya signing off.



Ananya is a certified RYT 200 Hatha Yoga & Registered Pre-Natal Yoga Instructor (RPYT). She began her association with Yoga in 2011 and has been practising Animal Flow since 2019. In addition to teaching group Animal Flow modules, Ananya also incorporates Animal Flow into her training programs with her one on one training programs. Follow her on Instagram @ananyamukund. ■

CLASSROOMS OF TOMORROW

Lockdowns are particularly difficult for the younger, school-going generation. Their on-campus lives are disrupted and their academic development at an uncertain standstill. In conversation with **Radhika Ramesh**, mother-daughter duo **Dr. Aarthi Ganesh** and **Preetha Ganesh** talk about how they are making a difference through the modern education system, during these trying times.



While Dr. Aarthi Ganesh is the current chairperson of one of the most celebrated VELs Group of Institutions, her daughter is all set to take over, but with a fresh set of ideologies and concepts. From a unique style of education, to managing the students' progress during lockdown, Aarthi and Preetha share their success stories.

SEEDLING TO SUCCESS

Dr. Aarthi Ganesh comes from a background of educators. After she completed her graduation in Computer Science, she knew right away that she would contribute towards the field of education. "Given my family's background in the world of academics, it was easy for me to enter the teaching

fraternity. I didn't want to stop with that; I wanted to equip myself. I went on to do my B.Ed and M.Ed and I also completed the Cambridge Diploma for Teachers and Trainees (CADT) from Cambridge University. I made myself equipped enough to work along with the teachers and form a great team," said Dr. Ganesh.



Having earned her PhD, Dr. Ganesh spent quality time with research and today, has a brilliant team of educators. The VELS Group of Institutions comprise a CBSE school, an ICSE school, a Cambridge school, and a school in Singapore as well. The good news is that the Singapore school works with our own R&D curriculum where the curriculum comes to them from India. They are doing really well with more than 300 students. “We are looking forward to starting another unit,” she reveals. The team also runs a school in Croydon, London and it is a boarding school. They have six schools in Chennai, Bangalore, Delhi and an opening in Trichy is awaited. The branches are going to expand.

Meanwhile, her daughter Preetha Ganesh took a different route. After completing her education in engineering, Preetha decided that it would only be morally right to carry forward the family business since she has seen her parents hard at work every single day building this educational empire. So she completed her Masters in Management and is now all set to take over.



“**I WANTED TO EQUIP MYSELF. I WENT ON TO DO MY B.ED AND M.ED AND I ALSO COMPLETED THE CAMBRIDGE DIPLOMA FOR TEACHERS AND TRAINEES (CADT) FROM CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY.**”

FUTURE OF EDUCATION

With the lockdown upon us for over a year now and physical education coming to an indefinite pause for children, the struggle seems to be real for all the educational institutions. How is VELS doing it now? “If there is one good thing that this pandemic has done, it’s create a whole digital transformation, a digital era. So I think that’s the direction schools will also go in in the near future. Online learning, different learning apps and even YouTube: learning is no more limited to the classroom. So I think that’s where VELS should also make their mark,” says Preetha.

And how is the institution managing both its students and its staff remotely? “From the little ones to the teens, everyone knows how to handle technology well today. Although many speak of the strain of screen time, I have been positive from the very beginning about my Zoom classes,” quotes Dr. Ganesh further adding, “With the cooperation from parents, teachers and our students, we successfully conducted the online pre-board examinations too. In fact, before



IN SPITE OF THIS ONLINE ERA, THE PHYSICAL THING IS NOT GOING TO DIE OUT. NEW TERMS LIKE 'BLENDED LEARNING' AND 'PHYGITAL' WHICH IS A COMBINATION OF PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL – THIS IS GOING TO BE THE NEW NORM.

everyone else, VELS started out the concept of online education way back in March 2020.”

It was an altogether different challenge when the new academic year began. “I would like to thank all our van drivers and attendants as nearly 5500 children got their books delivered home,” says Aarthi Ganesh further adding, “We have different levels of school for various classes of the society and the teachers from our CBSE schools come from a simple background. In fact, many of their husbands even lost their jobs. Knowing that they run the household

completely, I made sure they received their complete salaries, no matter what. From our van drivers to our top teachers, everyone has been receiving their regular pay in full, till date. I think the entire family of teachers, other staff and parents, have turned to technology to make the whole academic year a true success. I wholeheartedly credit all of their efforts.”

Adding to this, Preetha says, “We also run a multidisciplinary university that has around 20,000 students and 150 courses. They have also been receiving continued educational

services online, including placements and job interviews. We had a lot of global seminars where we connected with foreign speakers and teachers. So I think that just opened a lot of doors for us and this will make it easier for us to hire teachers from abroad to teach our students who can also bring their perspective and experience.”

NOVEL LEARNING GROUNDS

Although the students always prefer physical classes, today’s scenario demands differently. Preetha says, “In spite of this online era, the physical thing is not going to die out. New terms like ‘blended learning’ and ‘phygital’ which is a combination of physical and digital – this is going to be the new norm. So even if students come to class, teachers will have to use smart tools like ICT to teach students and incorporate virtual reality and augmented reality to teach some difficult concepts.”

TAKING OVER THE NEW ERA

Preetha is the future of management and here’s how she plans to take it further: “I would like to say that in the next five years, we will definitely take one step at a time, but in general it would be transforming a family-run business to a more corporate, professional entity that is managed with all the pieces of the puzzle put in place and a lot of accountability and trust in senior management members. Also, we will be looking into the whole digital transformation to balance the traditional pen and paper system of running institutions. The new education policy will be challenging for us as top foreign institutes will be allowed to function in India. So we definitely have to increase the standards of Indian counterparts in terms of teaching, learning and research. So this is an opportunity to make ourselves better and offer a more holistic education to our students,” says Preetha, determinedly. ■

On A Mission To Rule Skin Care

S Nithiya and **P Mohan** have been an inspiring brother-sister duo for many building an empire on the foundations of hard work and passion. Offering quality skin, body, hair and health care products has always been their motto. Starting from a small town in Tamil Nadu, the brand '**Lakshmi Krishna Naturals**' has become a household name as they reached out to the majority using social media to their advantage.



The Beginning

Ms. Nithiya, being a mother, had always tried making organic products to reduce the acne, dandruff and other issues that her girls went through. These products were then shared with a couple of relatives and seeing their positive feedback and encouragement, she made it into a business along with her brother in 2018. They ventured into social media and parallely reached out to many celebrities on the small screen as well to promote their products. With the positive responses from celebrities and their supreme quality, it was not long before they gained recognition for their work.



I AM A STRONG BELIEVER IN LORD KRISHNA AND I BELIEVE THAT IT IS A VERY MAGNETIC NAME WHICH ATTRACTS POSITIVITY

It's all in the Name

When asked about the name of the company, Ms Nithiya said, "I am a strong believer in Lord Krishna and I believe that it is a very magnetic name

which attracts positivity". Mr Mohan added that it was a factor which gave them a unique place in the Indian skin care market and also resonated with the land it belonged to.

The Highs and Lows of the Journey

With endorsements and reviews, the company had reached a great pinnacle. They were first approached to help a customer tackle pimples and when they shared before and after pictures, it stood as proof of effectiveness. The lockdown was a boon in disguise for the company as people had more time to give towards skin and hair care. The company has gained the trust of



OFF THE SHELVES!



“EACH PRODUCT TAKES A MINIMUM OF 5 POTENTIAL COMBINATIONS BEFORE THE FINAL ONE COMES TO THE MARKET. AFTER INITIAL LAB TESTS, THE PRODUCTS ARE GIVEN TO MANY PEOPLE OF VARYING SKIN TYPES AND HAIR TEXTURES IN ORDER TO SEE IF THE SINGLE PRODUCT WORKS FOR ALL TYPES,” SAYS MS. NITHYA.

All of the products curated by the brand are completely organic. The most celebrated ones have been the hair oil and hair regrowth gel in hair care, black spot and pimple removers in skin care and weight loss products in health care. Their customers always pour in their appreciation and voluntarily send before and after pictures which stand as testimonials for the success of the product.

many with their products as they are all about results. With an abundance of happy customers, it is not a surprise that they have bagged many awards and are considered from amongst the top skin care and beauty brands.

The X-Factor

Mr Mohan proudly states that their products are solution-based. The products are handcrafted by a workforce of hardworking women in small batches. Starting off as a duo, today they have more than 90 members in their all-women workforce. Another thing unique to them is their choice of ingredients. Apart from the usual rose and shea butter, they try using ingredients like mango butter, avocado butter and donkey milk. A lot of these are

procured from their homeland and are freshly used which makes the products more effective. Their main aim is to reach the masses and hence all their products are affordably priced, an added benefit.

The Future

With a shop already established in Chennai, the brother-sister duo would like to expand exponentially to cities like Coimbatore, Erode and Hosur in the future. They are working on bringing out more kits in order to tackle any skin, body, hair or health care issues which needs attention. More than increasing the range of their products, they focus on becoming a better version of themselves to assure best possible results for their multitude of customers. ■

As pretty **AS A PICTURE**

With artefacts and collectibles that reflect memories and complementary furnishings that range from family heirlooms to thrifted pieces, take a journey through this eclectic home renovated to perfection.





The truth of the matter was that I needed to finish this place in an absurd 15 days, yes thats right- 2 weeks! So I prioritised and made use of what I had, and re-purposed a lot of existing elements to potentially flip this home to work for us, without dropping big bucks.

I embraced the flaws the apartment came with, and made it work in our favour. Like that long wall that spans across the living and dining has some serious undulations and we couldn't get into re-plastering it, so I used wooden beading to create a panelling effect from the floor to the ceiling, which draw your eyes up making the space feel larger and added a bit of nuance as well. The biggest misconception is to get small furniture when you have a space constraint. I go big - It makes a room feel much larger than it actually is. Scale is so important while designing a space. The furniture was deliberately kept long and low-lying, to mimic the bones of the apartment. The other thing I tend to do is to always start with a focal piece and then build around it, whether its a couch, a table or even a piece of art. Once that anchor piece is in, everything falls into place.



About the writer:

Gowri Adappa is a practicing architect and interior designer, partner and co-founder of 'A Design Co.' - an award-winning Chennai based practice. She specialises in the design and styling of residential, retail and hospitality spaces. She also collaborates with creative agencies and photographers by styling spaces for leading consumer brands. Visit her [website](#) or follow her on [Instagram @gowriadappa](#)



The biggest misconception IS TO GET SMALL FURNITURE WHEN YOU HAVE A SPACE CONSTRAINT. I GO BIG - IT MAKES A ROOM FEEL MUCH LARGER THAN IT ACTUALLY IS.



NO. 1 Living Room

One of the biggest challenges in the apartment was its linear layout, so the zoning of spaces became quite unnerving. I used furniture and art to help with that. The sectional couch was the anchor piece creating an invisible line to demarcate the living area. I then chose to place a large round coffee table off of that and a credenza (which doubles as a shoe rack and a tv unit) opposite it to balance the room. We painted it a glossy white so it disappears into the wall and doesn't feel like it is encroaching into the thoroughfare. The Sham Ahuja hand-me-down rug finally brought in the right amount of colour into the room.



NO. 2 Dining

For the dining area, I tore down the wall, removed the existing door separating the kitchen and dining and made the opening to the kitchen wider. This made the entire apartment feel open and breathable, essentially creating 4 different interspersing spaces - the dining, the breakfast bar, kitchen and utility. This is a great space for entertaining, because of how one space flows into the next and honestly who doesn't love having a chat with friends whilst cooking? I added brass sconces over both the window and the opening to the utility to establish symmetry and tiny recessed lights into the loft above the breakfast counter.



NO. 3 Kitchen

For the kitchen I knew I wanted a herringbone subway tile backsplash and a slight hint of colour in this space. With everything else being white, the cabinetry is where one can have fun! I kept all the appliances black to tie in the black accents from the living space and maximised storage by squeezing in a tall pantry and tucking the refrigerator next to it. This kitchen has had 10 people at a time in here with some cooking, some prepping, some grabbing their beers, while having cookies humming away in the oven, whereas earlier it felt claustrophobic with just me in there!

for the kitchen I KNEW I WANTED A HERRINGBONE SUBWAY TILE BACKSPLASH AND A SLIGHT HINT OF COLOUR IN THIS SPACE. WITH EVERYTHING ELSE BEING WHITE, THE CABINETRY IS WHERE ONE CAN HAVE FUN!



NO. 4 Bar

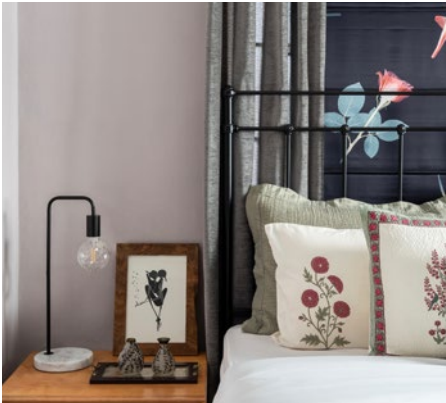
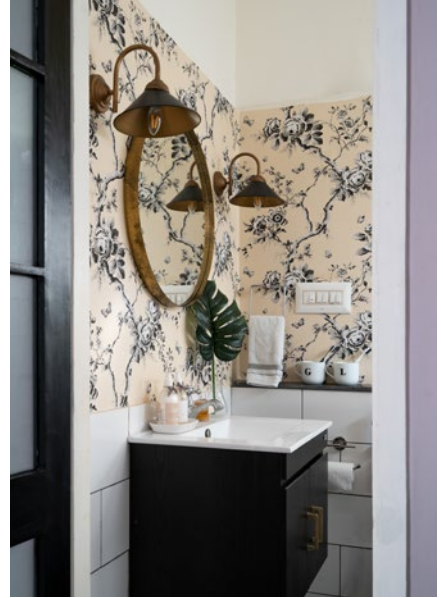
We re-purposed this etagere as our bar, which was purchased in England (almost 35 years ago), and it fit perfectly along the length of the wall. I reupholstered my grandad's rocking chair to match the aesthetic of the house and transformed it into a cozy cocktail room. With an abundance of natural light that floods into the apartment through this large western window, it's my favourite spot in the house to have my morning tea or to curl up with a book.

I KEPT THE SHELVING OPEN INSTEAD OF UPPER CABINETS so that I could display my china and other collectables, and this made the room feel open and airy and the plaid blinds added the right amount of playfulness.



NO. **5**
Bedroom

I painted the entire room this dove grey and embraced a dark, moody boudoir vibe. I fixed mirrors on the wall of wardrobe shutters, which gives you the illusion that the room is double its width. My mother-in-law co-owned a company where they custom-made blinds and window treatments and she gave us these beautiful black silk ones which created a headboard for the nondescript metal frame bed. The mid-century side tables add warmth to the space and I created a black and white gallery wall of our pictures together to make the room feel more personal.

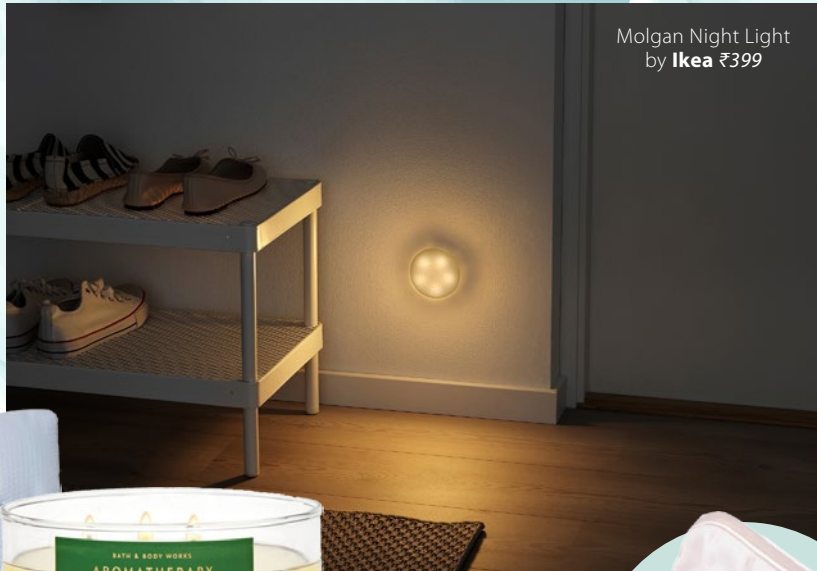


NO. **6**
Bath

This was the last thing we tackled in the apartment, and it wasn't part of the renovation plan. But I saw this Cole & Son wallpaper and needed to use it somewhere, so I just gutted the whole bathroom and re-did it. I used inexpensive tiles and staggered them to mimic subway tiles to a height of 4 feet and covered the rest of the space with rustic wallpaper for contrast. I had this image of a mirror with sconces on either side and made sure I implemented it somewhere in the house. My quirk for this space was an old portrait of my mum and I which we got made on our trip to Disneyland in 2006. ■

always start with a focal piece AND THEN BUILD AROUND IT, WHETHER ITS A COUCH, A TABLE OR EVEN A PIECE OF ART. ONCE THAT ANCHOR PIECE IS IN, EVERYTHING FALLS INTO PLACE.

Vapor Blue Single Size Comforter Super Soft Dobby & Waffle Micro Fabric, Reversible New York Snow Flakes Collection by **Portico** ₹1,799; Periwinkle - Cooling Gel Memory Foam Orthopedic Bed Pillow - Medium Firm by **The White Willow** ₹1,611



Molgan Night Light by **Ikea** ₹399



Eucalyptus Spearmint 3-Wick Candle by **Bath & Body Works** ₹1,899



Satin Eye Mask by **Forever 21** ₹349; Eyelash Graphic Sleep Mask by **Forever 21** ₹349

Bonne Nuit

The lap of luxury awaits, to make sure your beauty sleep is cozy, uninterrupted, and well accounted for. Nighty-night, then!



Deep Sleep Pillow Spray by **This Works** ₹552; Nidra - Tranquil Sleep Calming For a Restful Sleep by **Forest Essentials** ₹975



Natural Incense Sticks - Lavender by **Phool** ₹165



Lavender Rosemary Tea by **The Tea Shelf** ₹415



Golden Pineapple Wallflowers Fragrance Plug by **Bath & Body Works** ₹1,299; Lemon & Lavender Bath Salt & Foot Soak by **Juicy Chemistry** ₹450



Tranquil Sleep Gel Lavender, Vetiver & Grapefruit by **Forest Essentials** ₹850

Re-Light the Candles

Between the domestic workload, online school for the kids, pressure from the virtual office, and general stir-craziness fraying the nerves, romance can take a backseat. Let's not ignore the little things that keep the magic aglow in a relationship. By **Susanna Selwyn**

Every marriage, no matter how many anniversaries it's lasted, needs the occasional excitement to thrive. And let's not forget, it feels goood!

Get started by carving out an hour or two once a week just for the two of you. Make it a fortnightly thing if your schedule is too tight. Set up virtual play-dates for the kids or play them an age-appropriate movie. This can be your anything-can-happen window: slow-dance on the balcony (or bedroom if you're too shy) to some light, romantic music, dine with some door-delivered Italian fare (or another cuisine that you enjoy as a couple) and candlelight, give each other massages, the choices are endless.

Once the kids have turned in for the night, go up to the terrace, or out to the balcony or patio late at night and just enjoy each other's company. Stargazing, holding hands, lighting lanterns, sharing a glass of wine – the romance is inevitable. You can keep it simple and quiet, the magic of moonlight and the gentle breeze will do the rest.

Make a collection of tiny bits and bobs that would have or trigger special meaning for the two of you. It could be a small



Torrid Tales

Agree on an erotic novel or short story and read them simultaneously. Just talking about the story can be a shared sensual experience (or you could both laugh about how ridiculous you found it). It could even be the perfect source to inspire your inside jokes and secret language. Seemingly meaningless character names and settings can become loaded innuendos. Next time the entire family is at the dinner table, but you want to say something spicy to each other, you'll have your own, unique way to do it without sounding inappropriate.



heart-shaped pendant, a charm from your bracelet, a button, a little scrap of fabric – basically something almost unnoticeable in size, that your partner would immediately associate with you and your time together. Sew it on to each other's shirt or top, in a way that's not too conspicuous to others and also in a way

that doesn't compromise the comfort of the outfit. You can even embroider a letter or symbol, if you're good with the needle. This is bound to bring a smile to your face every time you look at it, run your fingers across it absently, or even think about it. And it can make you both feel like high school sweethearts all over again.

BOTH OF YOU NEED TO RESPECT THE BALANCE, when it comes to expressions of love. Frequently going overboard with grand gestures can get cloying and tiring. At the same time, being neglectful of your partner because you're always caught up in other things can make you grow apart without you even realising. It's the little, personalised tokens of feelings shown now and then, that pay off greatly in any relationship. ■

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Aishwarya Rajesh speaks about her porattam at JFW movie awards 2021! The award for Best Actress in a Women-centric Film was bagged by Aishwarya Rajesh for her performance in Ka Pae Ranasingam.

► INSTA-BEAT [@jfwdigital](https://www.instagram.com/jfwdigital)



#1 An adorable picture of #nazriya #fahadhfaasil #dulquersalmaan #amalsufiya #prithviraj and #supriyamenon



#2 Write down the sexist comments you hear almost everyday!



#3 Comment with your favourite song!



Your favourite combo is back with an exciting cutesy short film - **GREYING TOGETHER**



Walk in the Park

Whether you want to get your early morning walk, enjoy a pleasant evening stroll or a group walk to experience the city's culture, Chennai has options for it all. here is a quick list on the best walks to take in this beautiful city.



About the writer:

Vidya Raju Singh is a travel blogger who takes her reader on exciting trips around the world and within India. A strong advocate of multicultural experiences, she has been the president of IWA (International Women's Assosiation), Soroptomist International whilst also serving on the Committee of FLO for the past 4 years. Visit her [blog](#) [Wanderlust Princess Vidya](#) for more unique outlooks on several destinations.





THE MARINA BEACH

with Chef Willi

Chef Willi and I are out there on Marina Beach, ready to take in the beauty of the sunrise and the remnants of the coolness from the night before. From the road we have an amazing view of the Bay of Bengal and the beautiful boulevard that extends down all the way from end to end. The walking pavement is wide and fairly well maintained, it is also well lit for the evening walkers. We begin at the Lighthouse end of the promenade and walked towards the War Memorial. Keeping a brisk pace, it has taken us about an hour of walking as we enjoy the cool sea breeze and go past all the very iconic heritage buildings, dodging other walkers as we go.

At the far end we cross, over the Napier Bridge, pass the Island Grounds and do a loop around the War Memorial and turn to retrace our steps back along the wide pavement and return to the Lighthouse.

JEEVA PARK

with Kamlesh Patel

Kamlesh Patel and I begin our walk at the crack of dawn, the moon is still high up in the sky and Chennai's fitness enthusiasts are up early to begin their fitness routines before their work day starts. I am told that there are people here through the day, as this park is exceptionally shady, with all the wonderful trees.

T Nagar is fortunate to have three parks in its neighbourhood: The Jeeva Park on GN Chetty Road, Natesan Park on Venkatanarayana Road and the Panagal Park, where both these roads meet. Over the past few years parks have been spruced up proving to be a haven for all fitness enthusiasts.

T NAGAR IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE THREE PARKS IN ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD: THE JEEVA PARK ON GN CHETTY ROAD, NATESAN PARK ON VENKATANARAYANA ROAD AND THE PANAGAL PARK, WHERE BOTH THESE ROADS MEET.

ST THOMAS MOUNT

with Uma Krishnan

They say that on a clear day you can see forever, and that was certainly true, as Uma Krishnan and I began walking uphill at St Thomas Mount.

The road begins at the arch, near the entrance to the OTA (Officers Training Academy) side of the hill, forming a gentle slope initially as we get into our walk and then begins a winding, steeper climb that gets us rather breathless, as we climb to the top. It opens up into a little plateau, with the pristine white St Thomas Church and a beautiful banyan tree. We could see right across the city and out on to the ocean, in the far distance, glistening with the gold of the rising sun, from this point.



THE CLIMB BACK UPHILL IS TOUGH ON THE LEGS AND WE NEED TO PUSH A BIT TO KEEP THE PACE TO REACH THE TOP AGAIN. THIS COULD TAKE ABOUT 45 MINUTES TO AN HOUR DEPENDING ON THE PACE THAT YOU KEEP ALTOGETHER!

We then started to walk down the steps that wind down on the other side of the hill to the Wesley Church. The climb back uphill is tough on the legs and we need to push a bit to keep the pace to reach the top again. This could take about 45 minutes to an hour depending on the pace that you keep altogether!

This is probably the only place in Chennai, where you can challenge yourself to a 'Hill Walk'. This is a great workout for body sculpting, as it challenges the glutes and leg muscles and there will definitely be a high calorie burn.

MY LADY'S GARDEN & PARK TOWN *with V Sriram*

We had an early start that morning at Park Town, as we begin our walk at the famous My Lady's Garden on Sydenham Road, at the Rippon Buildings corner.

It is 6 am and very inspiring for

Sriram and me to step out and walk along. As we walk around, there is so much to see in the 6.5 acres of the park. There were shuttle games on one side, basketball and there was a stadium with a track as well with people training there too.

ELLIOT'S BEACH *with Rohini Rau*

It was an early morning start for young Rohini Rau and I, when we set out to walk at one of our city's more popular walking spaces, the Elliot's Beach. Lots of like-minded people there, early morning walkers, joggers and other athletes practicing their sprints on the sand. It is a good distance to cover for a serious fitness walk. We begin at the top end, where the late Chandralekha's home stands and walked the curve right down past the skating rink to the end made a turn and walked back up the path. A few laps of this and our one hour passes very quickly!





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AVM STUDIOS

with Suhasini Mani Ratnam

Suhasini and I were out at AVM Studios, at half past six in the morning. A perfect time to be there as we had the place to ourselves, except for a few sleepy security guards and some birds! It was pure nostalgia for Suhasini, as we walked around these sprawling grounds, it brought back so many memories, during all the film shootings that happened right here. It was an enjoyable hour walking in the AVM Studio complex and we realise with some regret that we need to get back to reality and our more mundane lives.

BOAT CLUB

with Shalini and Biswajit

It is a warm and muggy morning and Bis, Shal and I set out in Boat Club, one of Chennai's premier residential localities which has served as a walking haven for people who come here from all over the city. Shady, tree lined streets and a fairly secluded location with no traffic makes it a perfect place for those who like their morning or evening walks. It also helps, that this area is not a drive through and is accessible only to those who live in the neighborhood. There are three clubs that line the Adyar River, that forms

the outer parameter of Boat Club; The Madras Club, the Boat Club and the Alumni Club.

The trees and greenery in the area, gives it the feeling of a park and the presence of security staff at each of the gates makes it very safe at any time of the day or night.

THIRUVANMIYUR BEACH

The length is almost a kilometer and it would be ideal to try to walk at least an hour, to gain the maximum benefit. Set a brisk pace and you ought to be able to complete about 6 laps. The atmosphere is quite marvelous, as you have fresh breeze blowing in from the sea and the wonderful visual of the beach, all of it adding to the ambience. The beach stretch is well lit and so can be used in the morning and evening.

HADDOWS ROAD PARK

This small but lovely park is tucked away off Haddows Road and was an absolute pleasure to walk in. About 15 laps around this should be around 5 km. The sounds of the traffic on Haddows Road, become quite muted after you enter the park because of the trees all around. It was rather fun to have the company of so many fellow walkers. The walking track is well laid out, well lit, landscaped with lawns, waterbodies, gardens and play areas for children as well.



AS YOU WALK THROUGH THE AREA, YOU BEGIN TO GET A FEELING OF WHAT MADRAS MUST HAVE BEEN, ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. IT IS ALSO THE HOME TO SEVERAL SPECIES OF BIRDS, A FEW DEER AND OTHER SMALL WILDLIFE.

TOWER CLUB PARK

Tower Park is dominated by the Anna Nagar Tower, and is a throwback to the late 1960s and the World Trade Fair. Spacious and well laid out the entire park with its walking path is covered by shady trees and so has the advantage of being usable through the day. It was an extremely pleasant one-hour walk, about 7 laps around. Being Sunday evening, the park was a little crowded, but I am told, that on weekdays and most mornings, it is

only the regular walkers and joggers that use the park.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

This has to be Chennai's best kept secret, and this beautiful park inside the Theosophical Society, just takes your breath away. Thickly wooded and shady, the pathways crisscross each other, through the entire area. There are several temples and areas to meditate and pray, scattered through

the park. Beautifully maintained, the TS as it is fondly known, has very strict restrictions on cell phones and noise.

As you walk through the area, you begin to get a feeling of what Madras must have been, all those years ago. It is also the home to several species of birds, a few deer and other small wildlife. Walking along these pathways, gives you a sense of peace and calm and after you return, you feel that you may have been meditating, instead of having been on a one-hour brisk walk. ■



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