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"Chef Srishti Kovelamudi: Weaving Global Elegance into Every Dish – Elevate Your Dining with Our Signature Menu Maestro"

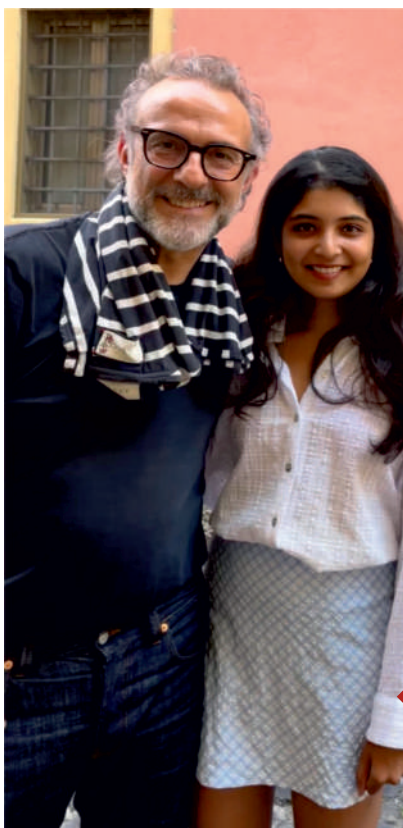
"Transform Your Dining Experience with Innovative Creations from a World-Class Culinary Talent."

Meet **Chef Srishti Kovelamudi**, a distinguished graduate of the **Culinary Institute of America**, now based in New York, and currently working alongside Michelin-starred Italian restaurants. Chef Srishti showcases her extraordinary culinary skills worldwide, lending her unique expertise in crafting signature dishes for renowned restaurants and hotels across the globe.

Chef Srishti's culinary journey is marked by her ability to infuse local dishes with a touch of global elegance. Drawing from her rich Indian heritage and her extensive experience in the diverse culinary landscape of Italy, she specializes in designing menus that speak the language of the locale while resonating with a global audience. As she collaborates with some of Italy's finest Michelin-starred establishments, Chef Srishti continues to expand her repertoire, blending the refined techniques of world-class cuisines with the authenticity of local flavours. Her signature dishes are not just meals; they are an exploration of cultures, a celebration of regional ingredients, and a testament to culinary innovation.

Now, Chef Srishti extends her expertise to your establishment, regardless of its location. With her at the helm of your culinary team, your menu will be transformed into a collection of extraordinary experiences, each dish tailored to elevate your brand and enchant your guests.

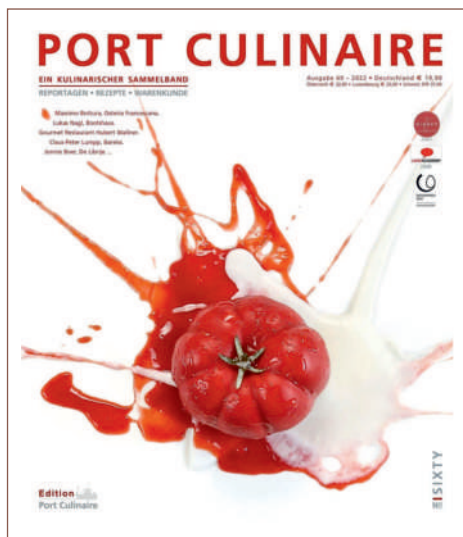
Embrace the opportunity to have Chef Srishti Kovelamudi, a name synonymous with culinary excellence and innovation, as a part of your restaurant's journey. Let her signature dishes become the highlight of your culinary offerings, drawing in guests from around the world."



Osteria Francescana, one of my favorite restaurants, has been a significant part of my culinary journey. Working there provided me with an enriching experience that greatly contributed to my professional expertise. This time at Osteria Francescana, renowned for its excellence, allowed me to deepen my understanding of gastronomy and refine my skills in the art of cooking.

"Hi there, I'm Chef Srishti! Trained in Italy's Michelin-starred restaurants, I specialize in fusing global culinary techniques with local traditions to craft unforgettable dishes. I'm thrilled to offer your establishment a taste of this unique culinary blend. Join me for a border-crossing culinary adventure where each dish celebrates local culture with international finesse. With my Indian roots and Italian experience, I'm ready to elevate your menu, blending the best of both worlds – the charm of local flavors and the elegance of global cuisine. Let's transform dining into an extraordinary experience together!"

With **'Massimo Bottura'**, the renowned chef and proprietor of **Osteria Francescana**.



Massimo Bottura's **"Oops, I Forgot the Caprese"** is an inventive dessert that creatively transforms the familiar Caprese salad. This dish playfully deconstructs traditional ingredients, featuring elements such as tomato water, basil gel, and mozzarella foam. It offers a whimsical reinterpretation of classic flavors, culminating in a visually captivating presentation. This dish, a collaborative effort of my team at a notable Italian restaurant, was showcased on the cover of **Port Culinaire**.



With Chef Doina Paulesco, the head of pastry at Osteria Francescana, she guided us in creating this beautiful Dessert called **'Caprese'**. Massimo Bottura's **'Never Trust a Skinny Italian Chef'** has always been one of my favorite books to read.

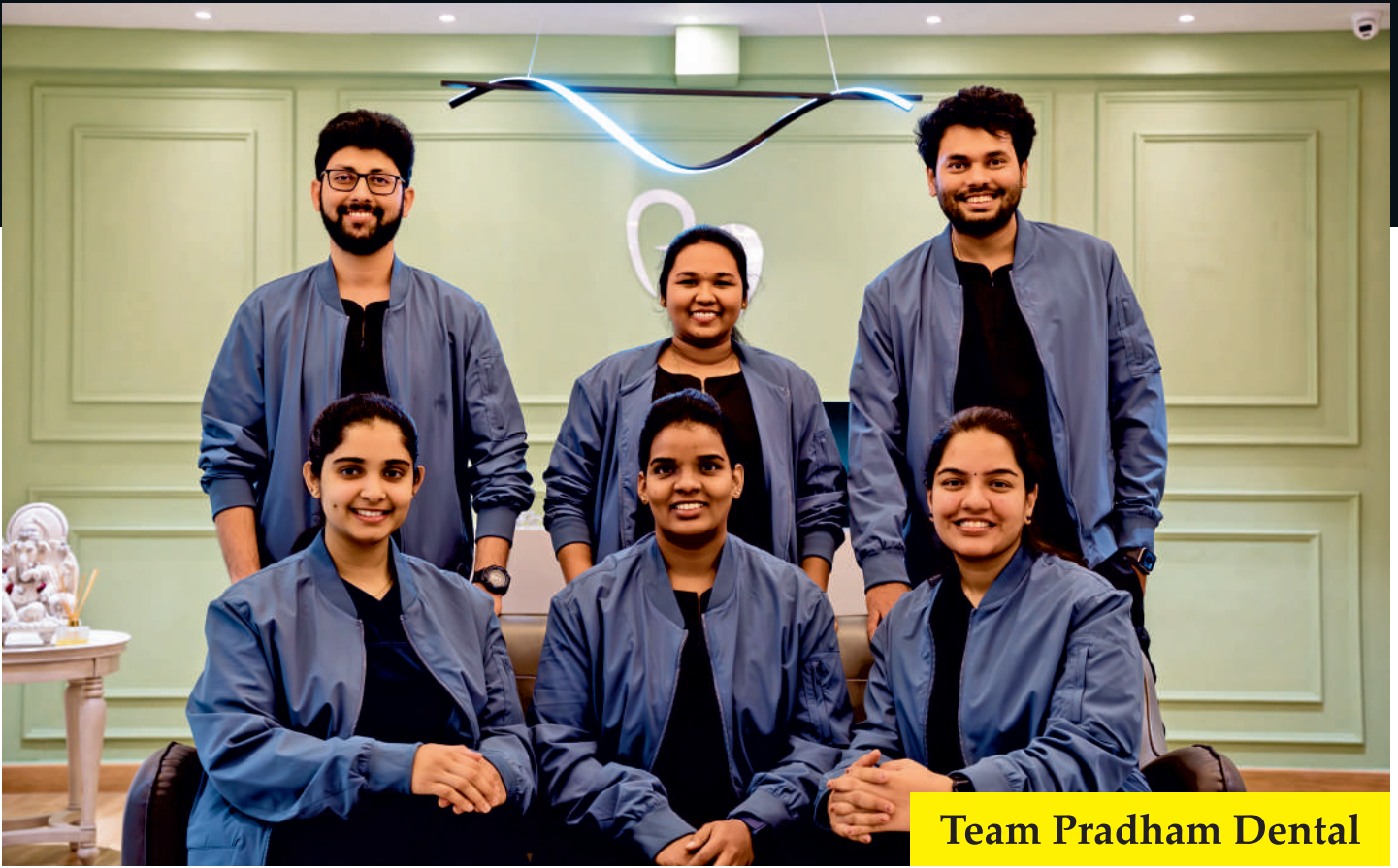


Me with "Chef Melissa Rodoriguez" of Al Coro a Two Michelin star Italian restaurant



In a recent event with, **Mr. Vito Mezzina**, Executive Manager of Pizzeria at **The Casillo Group**, a diversified conglomerate, hosted the **"Change Your Experience"** event from January 20th to 22nd, 2024, during Fuorisalone at Molino Casillo in **Rimini, Italy**. The event was a showcase of culinary and production prowess, featuring masterclasses, engaging meetings, and live show cooking, all highlighting the latest innovations in white flour production.

Chef Srishti Kovelamudi is a culinary artist poised to revolutionize your menu, masterfully blending local traditions with global sophistication. Her experience with Michelin-starred restaurants in Italy has fine-tuned her skill in crafting extraordinary, location-specific signature dishes. Choosing Chef Srishti means elevating your establishment's dining experience to a global standard. She is more than a chef; she's a culinary storyteller, ready to narrate the unique tale of your restaurant or hotel. Though based in New York, Chef Srishti is available for exclusive assignments worldwide, subject to prior appointment. For collaborations and inquiries, reach out to her at srishtichef@gmail.com



CRAFTING SMILES WITH ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

- Pradham Dental Clinic stands out in the realm of dentistry, offering a top-grade, holistic dental experience with its state-of-the-art methods and technological brilliance. Embracing digital diagnostics and ultra-advanced treatment methodologies, the clinic ensures efficient, precise dental care, striving for unparalleled patient satisfaction.

COLLABORATION AT THE CORE OF DENTAL

MASTERY - At Pradham Dental, the strength lies in collaboration. A diverse team of dental specialists comes together, each specializing in different facets of dentistry, ensuring a holistic and comprehensive approach to oral health. This synergy among experts at their Kondapur and Manikonda branches in

Hyderabad allows for a seamless blend of skills, catering to every client's unique oral health and smile-care needs.

THE SYMPHONY OF DEPARTMENTS: PERFECTING DENTAL SERVICE

- Behind the scenes, the synchronization of administrative, clinical, and supportive departments at Pradham Dental Clinic translates into a smooth and efficient treatment flow, offering a superior, customized dental experience to every client. This perfect harmony ensures that every aspect of the dental service transcends expectations.

CUSTOMIZED DENTAL SOLUTIONS - Tailored to Your Needs Pradham Dental's approach involves tailoring treatment plans to individual needs, functional

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EXPERIENCE EXCELLENCE IN DENTISTRY: THE PRADHAM DENTAL WAY

requirements, and budget constraints. This results in successful, customized dental services that address the nuances of each client's oral health journey, ensuring happy and healthy smiles.

BEYOND CLINICAL CARE: A FAMILY OF

COMPASSION - The ethos of Pradham Dental extends beyond clinical services. It binds every member of the team with love, compassion, and passion for dental brilliance. From skilled dentists to warm support staff, everyone plays a crucial role in delivering the best dental service, ensuring personalized care and making clients feel valued and understood.

GROWTH AND EXPANSION - Serving More Smiles From its inception in Manikonda to its expansion in Kondapur, Hyderabad, Pradham Dental has been on a commendable journey, fueled by dedication and relentless efforts to achieve top-standard dentistry. Both branches showcase a convergence of diverse talents, departments, and roles, contributing to a cohesive symphony that elevates the overall client experience.

VISIT US FOR YOUR DENTAL CONCERNS: If you have a dental concern or are seeking the best smile transformations, visit Pradham Dental Clinic at Manikonda and Kondapur branches in Hyderabad. Experience the difference with our advanced dental services and compassionate care. Your journey to a perfect smile begins here!



Founder & CEO

FOUNDER'S MESSAGE

Crafting More Than Smiles

Dr. Ashok Chandra, the founder, and director, highlights the clinic's commitment: "Beyond oral health, we sculpt smiles and forge endearing connections with our clients. Through advanced technology, collaborative expertise, and unwavering commitment, we offer redefining dental solutions in the realm of dental excellence. Our success is measured by healthy smiles and the trust our clients bestow upon us."

FOR ALL YOUR NEEDS"

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- **Prosthodontics:** Restoration and replacement of teeth.
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Contents

nightlife 60

PEOPLE

32



SOUTH ACTOR ANUPAMA

PARAMESWARAN TELLS US what goes into the making of the sassy girl Lilly in her upcoming release *Tillu Square* and why she loves experimenting with her roles, but not her hair

TOURIST
INFO

70



GO SPLASH SOME COLOR at the new Neon Wonderland funzone in the city



WE CHECK OUT AT MINDSPACE SOCIAL AND TELL YOU WHAT WE RECOMMEND. Plus, we recommend clubs where ladies can head to for a night out with free drinks

24
City

RESPONDING TO THE CHAOS AT AIRPORTS, OUR EDITOR HIGHLIGHTS THE BLISS OF TRAIN TRAVEL AND THE HOME-PACKED MEALS OF THE PAST. In Cause, we feature a young hairstylist who donates wigs to cancer survivors. We tell you why Pranavi Chandra is the new star on the cricket horizon in Sports. Also, read about architect Yeshwant Ramamurthy's take on stepwells. And we feature a start-up called Shakti

62
leisure

TAROT CARD READING CAN BE AN INTENSE AND PURPOSEFUL ACTIVITY for those who believe in divination. Find out how and where to learn it

22
upcoming events

EXPLORE THE MONTH'S HAPPENINGS, from lively concerts to engaging theater and art workshops

FOOD

34



WOW! REVIEWS THE NEW SUSHI PLACE KA KA KOI, AND THE FISHPOND RESTAURANT KOI & CO. Try the progressive Indian restaurant Zila, the new Chinese chain Chowman India, and cafés like The Beanery and Breath Station. I WOW! discovers, a home chef in Malkajgiri; plus, RU, the new craft bar and art cuisine place in Jubilee Hills

SHOPPING

WE VISIT THE ETHICAL LIFESTYLE BRAND ELEPHANT IN YOU, AADHYAM KNOWN FOR ITS HERITAGE WEAVES AND WE DO A LINE-UP OF CRUELTY-FREE BRANDS THAT THE WOKE FOLKS CAN SPORT. We check out the spirited youngster Sneha Jalan's recycled clothing concepts, and eyewear brand Lawrence & Mayo's luxury edition



44

TRENDS



66

WOW! SPOKE TO UPCOMING TRENDY DESIGNERS to put together a date night look, especially for Valentine's Day



68 arts

WOW! CHECKS OUT THE NEWS ART 24 FESTIVAL THAT BRINGS TO TOGETHER SOME OF THE BIGGEST NAMES IN THE ART FRATERNITY OF THE COUNTRY. We talk to the founders of Paramparaa which has taken dance to public spaces like temples, that turns 10 this year

64 WELLNESS

WHILE DISHA KHADELWAL GIVES US A 24-DAY FITNESS CHALLENGE FOR LAZY AND BUSY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS; we've got a psychologist to give us advice on how to avoid getting overwhelmed by social media



ENTERTAINMENT

72



WE'VE GOT YOU SINGERS – MANGLI AND HER SISTER INDRAVATHI – TO SHARE THEIR MUSICAL JOURNEY WITH US. Plus, we have all the regulars such as movie and OTT recommendations, and a books round-up



78 spotted

HERE ARE YOUR GO-TO PAGES for glimpses of the top launches, parties and art soirees



50

Focus

FEBRUARY IS VALENTINE'S MONTH AND A GOOD TIME TO PAUSE AND TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT GEN Z IS UP TO IN THE DATING UNIVERSE. WOW! finds out more about dating apps, attitudes to relationships and interesting singles clubs and meet-ups in the city



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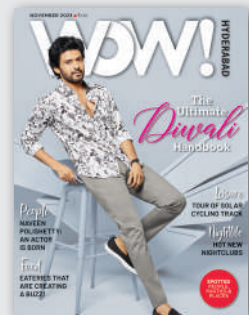
DISTRIBUTED BY
Margadarsi Marketing Pvt Ltd,
Hyderabad

VOLUME 22 ISSUE 3

Published by Deepti Reddy, on behalf of
Shravya Publications Pvt. Ltd., and
Printed at Kala Jyothi Process Pvt. Ltd.,
RTC 'X' Roads, Hyderabad and Published at
7-1-27, 3rd Floor, Greenlands
(beside Green Park Hotel),
Ameerpet, Hyderabad - 500 016.



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YOUR SUBSCRIPTION WILL BE EFFECTIVE FROM THE FOLLOWING MONTH.

Kushal's
fashion jewellery



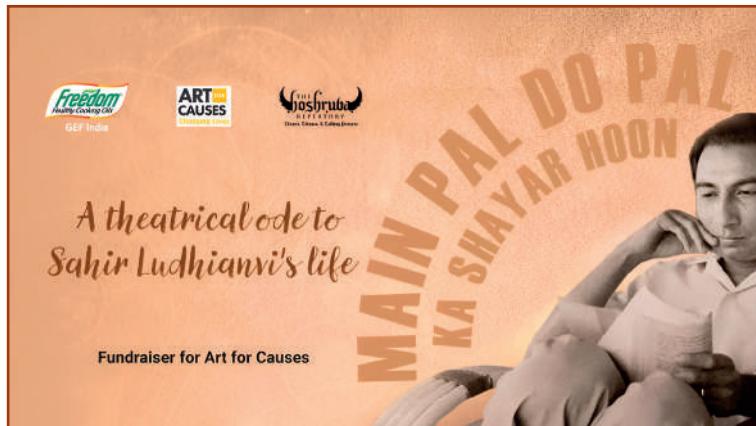
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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

We tell you about the upcoming events for this month

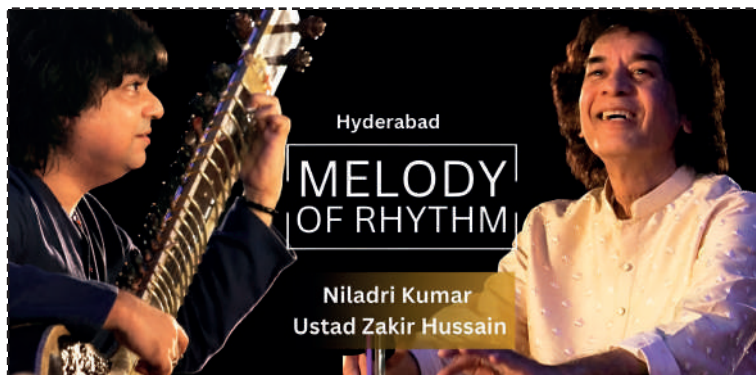


LIGHT ON THE POET SAHIR

FEBRUARY 24

The non-profit Art for Causes in collaboration with theater company, Hoshiruba Repertory, is planning to bring to the city, *Main Pal Do Pal Ka Shair Hoon*, a play on the life and writings of poet-lyricist Sahir Ludhianvi and the perennial favorite film songs penned by him. The play, which is an initiative to raise funds to support the ongoing activities of Art for Causes, attempts to bring a 360-degree perspective on the artist's life interspersed with some of his iconic poems and music.

Venue: Shilpakala Vedika, Hitech City
Timings: 7 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 750 onwards (bookmyshow.com)

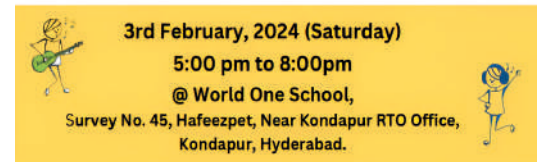


AN EVENING WITH MUSICAL LEGENDS

FEBRUARY 18

Curated by Sa Va Ni Events and Art Hub, the concert *Melody of Rhythm* brings together stalwarts of Indian classical music Niladri Kumar accompanied by none other than Ustad Zakir Hussain on the *tabla*, who, with this event, is going to mark his return to Hyderabad for a performance after a long five years.

Venue: Shilpakala Vedika, Hitech City
Timings: 6:30 pm onwards
Tickets: Rs 750 onwards (bookmyshow.com)



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ABHIVYAKTI

FEBRUARY 3

Abhivyakti is a free event hosted by Nayi Disha Resource Center which celebrates the creative expression of children and young adults with autism, Down's Syndrome and developmental disabilities. These special individuals of all ages will showcase their talent in music, dance, baking, art and craft and more. Additionally, you will find balloon makers, photo booths, face painters and food stalls.

Venue: World One School, Kondapur
Tel: 75692 03612 / 79893 72928
Timings: 5 pm to 8 pm

DANCE AT RESIDENCY

FEBRUARY 11

Parampara, a non-profit that works towards reviving art forms in temples and heritage spaces, will be presenting an incredible line-up of rhythmic performances at Women's College, Kingkoti, by Rudrakshya Foundation, an Odissi dance ensemble. In another performance, Lasyakalpa Ensemble will be showcasing Bharatanatyam.

Venue: British Residency, Women's College, King Koti
Tel: 83676 07607
Timings: 6:15 pm onwards





COTTON ART

FEBRUARY 22

The Goethe-Zentrum Hyderabad's exhibition, *Landscapes in Cotton*, will be showcasing artist Kanika Mukerjee's work depicting nature in cotton fabrics of different colors and sizes. From hand-woven *khadi*, to different textures and colors, the cloth in her collages stand out as a reminder of what nature holds within itself.

Venue: Hamburg Hall, Goethe-Zentrum Hyderabad
Tel: 040 23350443

Timings: 6:30 pm onwards



FROM BENGAL, AN EXHIBITION

FEBRUARY 2 AND 3

Syuti Shaili, which means weaving styles in Sanskrit, is an exhibition showcasing handcrafted textiles using regional artisanal crafts, in saris, apparel, bags and other accessories. The exhibition acts as platform for weavers, handloom brands, young designers, curators and entrepreneurs.

Venue: Kalinga Cultural Hall, Banjara Hills
Tel: 79800 35998

Timings: 11 am to 8 pm



GADWAL REVIVAL

FEBRUARY 3

Join Ratna Rao Shekar in conversation with Savitha Suri and Manish Saxena at the unveiling of Aadyam Handwoven's new line of Gadwal saris. These saris have been revived in all their glory with the signature Kuttu technique. From the classic silk and cotton body to the stunning *zari* work on the *pallu*, these saris celebrate the enduring beauty of handlooms from Telangana.

Venue: Ground floor, Hill Top @7, Banjara Hills (for invites call: 74086 74046)

Timings: 11 am onwards



MADHUBHANI ON MY MIND

FEBRUARY 11

Madhubani or Mithila painting is a folk art form, that originated from the Mithila region of Bihar. The paintings are traditionally based on mythological, folk themes and pastoral symbols. And by participating in this Madhubani art workshop by Trishna Patnaik, you will get a chance to appreciate the art form and create your very own Madhubani art masterpiece with acrylic colors on cartridge sheets.

Venue: Align Hub by Padmaja Penmetsa, Film Nagar
Tel: 98679 82075

Timings: 4 pm to 7 pm

Fees: Rs 1,800 per participant including art material

If you'd like your event listed in the WOW! events' calendar, please mail it to wowhyderabad2023@gmail.com for the following month, before the 20th.

FROM THE EDITOR

HOLIDAY? DITCH THE FLIGHT!



Recently, we have been reading about the utter chaos and mayhem at airports caused by delayed flights and uncaring airline staff, and I am glad I'm not taking flights anywhere in or out of the country. Irate and frustrated passengers are even beating up airline staff leading to further slowdowns at airports. Travelling by plane has taken the fun out of a holiday which in reality is supposed to relieve stress. But instead of enjoying a beach resort in Kerala or Goa as people had planned, they are now finding themselves locked inside aerobridges or aircrafts because of flights not taking off due to the absence of pilots or bad weather!

But decades ago, flights were so expensive that our families preferred to take road trips or travel by train. These were not only fun but gave us a thorough education about the country – of how vast it was, of how varied its geography and land were. And of its myriad communities, their clothes, their language, their faith and above all, their generosity. As we whizz past in a car, even now images flash, of little girls standing by the roadside selling groundnuts or guavas, or the boys driving home cattle, or the colorfully dressed

women with pots delicately balanced over their heads. We didn't have to see National Geographic documentaries about India. We saw how real people lived in the country on road trips.

Besides, on car journeys, we as a family bonded as a unit, and sang songs, played word games or constantly ate off huge steel tiffins, the meals and snacks prepared specifically for the journey. A car journey gave that family bonding that hardly comes from going to Geneva or Germany which kids and their families undertake nowadays. Of course, being closeted in a car for long hours also led to sibling fights, that to me seemed like a good way of getting frustrations out early in life!

Travelling by plane has taken the fun out of a holiday which in reality is supposed to relieve stress

Travelling by trains was even more memorable, something that I still remember even now, more than a trip to holidays in Bali or Burma. Before a train journey, we planned for days what we should take: the books, the food, the board games. Once on the train, we children would scramble for upper berths where we would whisper and plot against some school friend. Or do devilish things like hang upside down, scaring fellow passengers in the lower berths. The next best thing was the window seat on the lower berth where each of us would get a turn for a few hours. On the train, everyone was an uncle or aunty or *thatha* as they pinched our cheeks and told our parents how cute, or clever we were. The cuter we were, the more chocolates or biscuits we were gifted by them. If it was a first class compartment, we could run from one end to another, playing wild games of cops and robbers or even hide-n-seek, hiding behind random strangers or under their seats.

As for food, I still cannot forget the flourish with which the dinner *thali* was

delivered to us at a station like Kazipet or Kharagpur (does anyone else remember these pit shops for lunches and dinners?) where the uniformed railway attendant leapt onto a moving train with much elan, holding dozens of similar trays, one on top of the other. They now serve food in aluminium foil trays, but back then steel *thalis* with rice or *chapati* in the center with all sorts of liquid items in little depressions around it were served to passengers. I still remember how the *rasam* or *sambar* used to jiggle with a speeding train's movement, and the soggy *papad* that went with it, has few rivals to this day. We could hardly distinguish the *dal* from the curry on these *thalis*, as they flowed freely from one end to another. If this was one aspect of the pre-paid *thali*, another were the vendors who kept coming throughout the journey to serve us everything from half-melted ice-cream to soggy *bhajjis*. I still yearn for that train coffee which was more water than milk, and more a sugary drink than a caffeine boost.

Another high during a train journey was getting off at platforms even if the train stopped for just a few minutes. Once off the train, we would explore the platform, look for AH Wheeler's *bandis* to buy *desi* comics like Tinkle or hunt for stalls that sold the famous *chikkis* at Pune station or the *kajji kayalu* at Vijaywada.

On a train journey we just went with the flow of things. When the TT came, we simply showed him the ticket that he punched nonchalantly. When the watery coffee came, we just paid for it and sipped it without complaints. Even if the train was delayed, we were not overly concerned, because either we had the family to play cards with, or there was an aunty on an adjacent berth who told us stories from *Panchatantra*. No one was irate about anything because the journey itself was so de-stressing. We forgot the stress and tensions of our lives, as we let our life pass by on a train, interacting with what seemed like a slice of humanity.

There was a slowness to the journey and we didn't care when we would reach. As they say, the journey itself was as important as the destination.

■ RATNA RAO SHEKAR

HAIR SCIENCE CLINIC

Where Science Meets Beauty

Reclaim Your Crowning Glory with Hair Science Clinic's Cutting-Edge Hair Stem Cell Transplantation

Imagine waking up every morning to a full head of healthy, vibrant hair. Hair that's not just an extension of your scalp, but a confident expression of your youthful spirit. At Hair Science Clinic, we make this dream a reality with our revolutionary Hair Stem Cell Transplantation (HST) technique. Now, no more traveling abroad for the world's best hair restoration. Hyderabad now has its own sanctuary for healthy, natural-looking hair

What is HST?

HST is a minimally invasive procedure that harnesses the power of your own hair stem cells to restore natural hair growth in areas experiencing loss. Unlike traditional transplants, which rely on harvesting hair follicles from one area of the scalp and transplanting them to another, HST uses your body's own regenerative potential to achieve truly remarkable results. It provides all round growth, as the donor area is not stripped of hair completely (See The Process)

Why Choose Hair Science Clinic?

There are many reasons why Hair Science Clinic is the premier choice for discerning individuals seeking hair restoration:

- **Unparalleled Expertise:** Led by the visionary Dr. Coen Gho, a world-renowned pioneer in hair and scalp research, our team boasts over 25 years of experience and a proven track record of success.
- **Virtually Pain-Free Procedure:** Relax and rejuvenate with our minimally invasive technique. HST requires only local anesthesia, ensuring your comfort throughout the entire process.
- **Donor Area Preserved:** Hair Science Clinic's stem cell technique gently extracts only a part of the follicle containing stem cells which not only minimizes scarring but also preserves future hair growth potential in the donor zone.

- **Back-to-work Next day:** Get back to your busy life with minimal disruption. HST is an outpatient procedure, allowing you to return to work or your usual activities the following day.
- **Comprehensive Aftercare:** Committed to your long-term satisfaction, our dedicated team provides personalized support and guidance throughout your hair restoration journey.
- **Natural, Permanent Results:** Say goodbye to unnatural-looking plugs or patchy growth. HST delivers hair that blends seamlessly with your existing strands, replicating your natural texture and density.

Invest in Yourself

Hair Science Clinic's HST is more than just a cosmetic procedure; it's an investment in your confidence, self-esteem, and overall well-being. Reclaim your youthful appearance and radiate vitality with a head of hair that reflects your inner spirit.

Whether it is thinning hair, receding hairlines, scars, burns, or even past transplant failures, Hair Science Clinic has a solution for you. We offer a comprehensive range of services tailored to your individual needs such as Beard Restoration for a sculpted look, Eyebrow Correction for perfect framing, and even Scar & Burn restoration

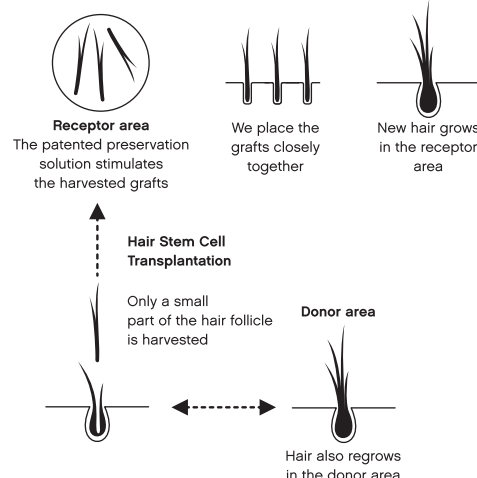


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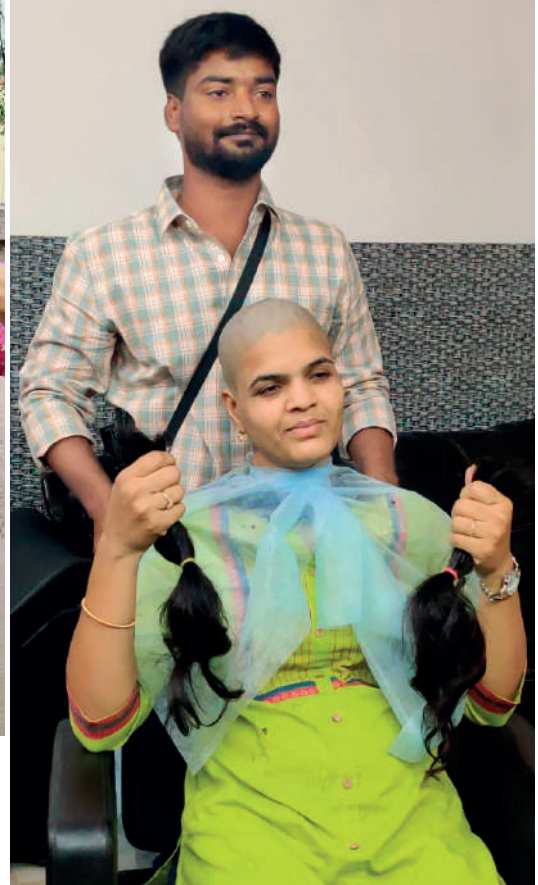
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- CAP D'ANTIBES • DUBAI
- DÜSSELDORF • HONGKONG
- JAKARTA • LISBON
- LONDON • LOS ANGELES
- MAASTRICHT
- MIAMI • MILAN • PARIS
- SINGAPORE • THESSALONIKI

THE MIRACLE OF HAIR STEM CELLS



Contact **Hair Science Clinic** today for a personalized consultation and unlock the potential for a fuller, healthier head of hair. Visit our [website](https://www.hairscienceclinic.com) or call us on **+91 91773 18777** today to schedule your free consultation and learn more about how Hair Science Clinic can help you achieve the hair of your dreams.



CAUSE

Hyderabad Hair Donation for Cancer Patients motivates individuals to donate their hair for those who need it

Meet the Real ‘Hair-oes’

In the challenging journey of cancer treatment, the physical toll is often accompanied by emotional distress, and for many, the loss of hair becomes a symbol of their battle. Hyderabad-based hairstylist A Shiva Kumar Yadav has been weaving strands of hope for cancer victims, using the power of donated hair to help them regain confidence and rebuild their mental well-being.

HAIR AND THERE:

Did you know that a wig costs Rs 4,000 and it takes seven ponytails to make one? “A small act of caring – like handing over a wig to someone who has lost their hair and is busy with treatment – can make them feel loved and hopeful. These wigs enable them to face the world with renewed confidence,” says Shiva.

THE JOURNEY:

A certified hairstylist since 2014, Shiva has worked with several upscale salons. “While I loved witnessing clients undergoing transformative makeovers, it pained me to see beautiful hair go to waste. Most of us take hair for granted, but there are people who cherish hair. I wanted to give hair to someone who would appreciate it. In 2018, I took the first step to set up my own NGO, **Hyderabad Hair Donation for Cancer Patients**,” he says. Shiva’s mother and

wife were among his first donors as was anti-trafficking activist Sunitha Krishnan.

“People donate hair for free and I spend my own money and time to get the wigs made and hand them over to those who need them”
— Shiva Kumar Yadav

HAIR RAISING STATS:

Between March 2020 to January 2021, all through the lockdown, Shiva received several requests for wigs and he managed to hand over 30 of them. “It was also the time when salons were closed and people grew their hair and reached out to me about hair donation,” he recounts. By 2024, this Chandanagar resident managed to collect hair and make custom-made wigs for 700 cancer patients across India. As World Cancer Day approaches on February 4, Shiva’s initiative emerges as a beacon of compassion and resilience. My friend Pradeep Kumar supported the NGO by giving me space for the NGO.

FREE OF COST:

There is no exchange of money anywhere, he assures us. “People

donate hair for free and I spend my own money and time to get the wigs made and hand them over to those who need them,” he says. It’s a tedious process even after collecting the hair. He informs that, despite collecting one kilogram of hair, the three-step process of washing, segregation, and weaving results in only 600 grams of useable hair. Shiva’s wigs are fashioned from 100 percent natural human hair generously donated by individuals. “My donors are my heroes, or should we say hair-oes,” he quips.

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE:

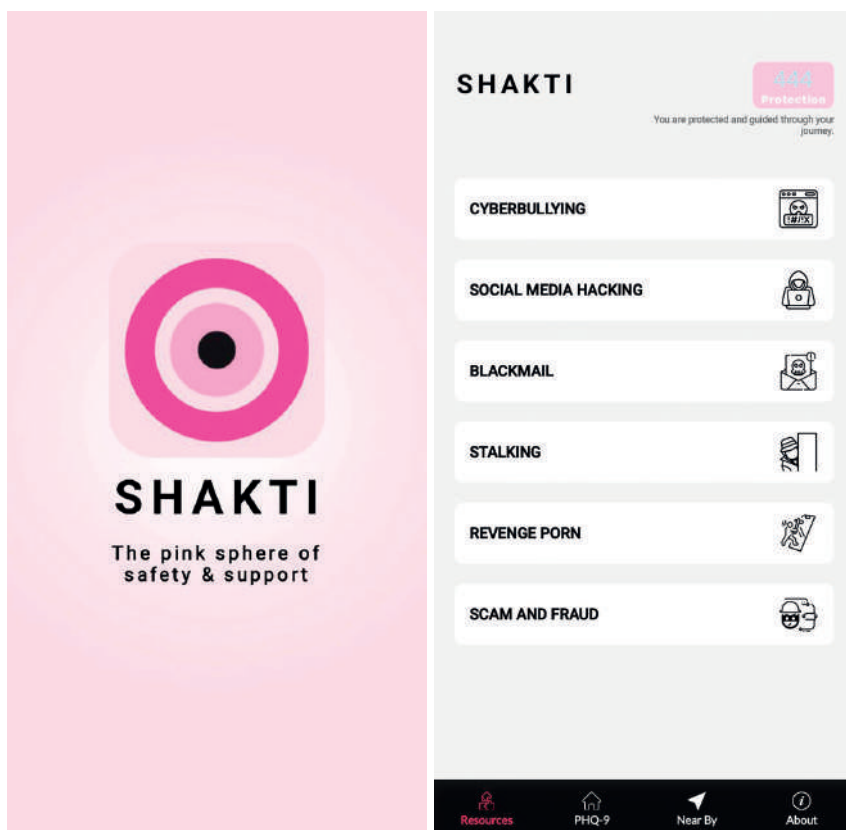
- Grow your hair to at least 12 inches
- Do not style/cut/layer/dye it once you start growing it
- Wash and dry hair on the day of donation
- The process is as simple as your regular haircut

DETAILS

Tel: 96664 06586;
hyderabadhairdonation99 on Instagram

You can call Shiva to donate your hair (he can come home and travel to any city to take your hair) or request a wig

Spread the word by donating and allowing a reel to be made which can be used on his social media pages ■ MANJU



“Most cyber-crimes go unreported due to the stigma attached – from something as basic as account hacking to more dangerous issues like stalking, blackmail and leaking of private photos”
– Anoushka Reddy



“Simple precautions go a long way. Report to the police, do not engage with the perpetrator and give it enough importance”
– Fiza Raju



START-UP

Two school girls have created an app that shows you how to protect yourself from online crimes of all kinds

The Power of Knowledge

Think of gen Z and images of teens scrolling on their phones and browsing social media apps come to mind. As they say, no two leaves of a tree are alike and 17-year-olds Anoushka Reddy and Fiza Raju, put these misconceptions to rest with their passion, focus and determination.

Family friends and students of Oakridge School, the youngsters noticed the high level of cyber-crimes and fraud happening around them and launched the **Shakti** app last year, to educate, create awareness and help people reach out for justice.

Anoushka explains, “Our generation grew up with social media and increased internet penetration, so we understand its pitfalls too. Many a time, we realize that most cyber-crimes go unreported due to the stigma attached – from something as basic as account hacking to more dangerous issues like stalking, blackmail and leaking of private photos.

It is to sensitize people to these issues that we founded the app.”

After nearly a year of planning and research, the duo has worked on creating a simple, informative and user-friendly app. From helping users understand how to file a complaint, gathering evidence, showing the nearest cyber-crime police department to even providing mental health help for those dealing with trauma.

Fiza adds, “There are so many things young people wouldn’t be aware of. Like the right method of gathering evidence, understanding the law when it comes to cyber-crimes and filing a complaint. We give step-by-step information about all of these measures.”

The twosome has worked on all aspects together. While Fiza worked on the format, and communication with app development, Anoushka focused on research on the issues that needed to be addressed by the app. They have

not raised any funding yet, and have invested over a lakh-and-a-half on app development and design.

Anoushka says, “Young girls are embarrassed to file a report. In cases like revenge porn which happens more than we like to acknowledge, girls need to take action before things spiral out of control. There is a need to not be embarrassed. There is so much stigma around these issues that we need to talk more about them.”

Scam and fraud, blackmail and social media hacking were the most common cyber complaints in Telangana, so the duo ensured that these were addressed through the app, as it is meant only for our state currently. Fiza adds, “Simple precautions go a long way. Report to the police, do not engage with the perpetrator and give it enough importance. A hacked account today can play havoc tomorrow with your list of contacts. So be aware and vigilant.”

It has been a great learning curve – from using stronger passwords on Instagram to being cautious about what they post online and taking a social media detox. A true representation of Shakti, the next step for the budding entrepreneurs is to sell the app and add more features to it.

■ MALLIK

SPORTS CORNER

WOW! profiles a promising female player of India's favorite sport

All Things Cricket



Five short years can make a life-changing difference in a person's life. Like it did for **Pranavi Chandra**. In this span of time, not only has she received training, but Pranavi has played cricket in England for two years, and was one of the first players to be selected for the women's T20 in 2022. She is also today considered to be one of the top three emerging stars of Indian women's cricket.

The 21-year-old Pranavi had no dreams of becoming a cricketer. She laughs, "My father was a big cricket fan but that was all there was to it. I used to enjoy playing gully cricket with my friends and online with my cousins but it was always for fun. Never did the thought of taking it up professionally cross my mind."

It was in 2018, when she was studying for her Intermediate and got sick of studying maths that she decided she needed a break. She then attended a summer camp at Daniel Cricket Academy when she realized that she had found her calling. Training at the Ramanaidu Cricket Academy in Madhapur since 2019, she is considered to be one of the most promising young players in the women's cricket team currently.

The all-rounder says that it was not an easy path. She recalls, "I have to say that I got lucky with my parents, as not many would agree to their only child wanting to be a sportsperson, especially in India. Then, there are other challenges – fitness and staying away from friends and family and not being able to do many of the things others my age do."

"With the Women's Premier League coming up, there is a lot of enthusiasm. While it's not on par with men's cricket, we are getting there"
— Pranavi Chandra

Playing for the state just a year after she turned pro, she is a part of the women's T20 team and speaks to us from Delhi where she is playing for the Senior One Day trophy. Women's cricket in India has come a long way from where it was even a decade ago and the youngster agrees, "With the Women's Premier League coming up, there is a lot of enthusiasm. While it's not on par with men's cricket, we are getting there."



Over the past year, Pranavi has dealt with a lot of injuries and her focus currently is to stay in the best shape possible with her team of trainers, physios and nutritionists. Looking back at her journey she shares, "I'm very happy where I am. Considering that I turned pro just five years ago, I'm excited about all that I have been able to achieve."

Looking forward for an exciting 2024 and playing to the best of her ability, her current goal is to be selected for the national team and play for India.

■ MALLIK

QUICK TAKE

One-dayers or T-20s:
ODI's, any day!

Favorite female cricketer:
Ellyse Perry

A sportsperson you admire:
MS Dhoni

When not playing cricket:
I sing, play the guitar and love reading!

Lihaaz Bhi. Lazeez Bhi.


THE
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Jewel of Nizam - The Minar is inspired by the elegance, opulence, and flavours of the city of Hyderabad and its erstwhile kings.



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CITIZEN SPEAK

In this new column where well known Hyderabadis speak about the city, we catch up with eminent architect **Yeshwant Ramamurthy** and get talking about stepwells, architecture of cities and how design impacts all of us...

“Public architecture gives character to a city”



Seventy-year-old architect Yeshwant Ramamurthy smiles warmly seated in his office at his art deco home (built in 1940) in Marredpally. In the book, *The Forgotten Stepwells of Telangana*, envisioned, curated and edited by the architect, the history of these timeless wonders, and their religious and cultural significance, is detailed with loving care.

We talk with the senior architect who tells us about the function and finesse of the stepwells.

HOW DID THIS BOOK HAPPEN?

In 2014, when the state of Telangana was formed, there was a resurgence of interest in its culture, cuisine, dialect and identity. However, till then there was no study of its rural architecture, and every weekend I used to take my camera and go to the countryside. It was in Kichannapalli (today part of the Sangareddy district) that I came across my first stepwell and it was a life changing moment. I started reaching out to various departments – from

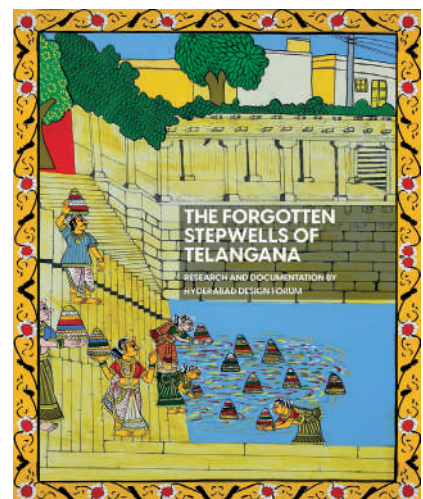


endowments, archaeology, revenue and irrigation. Slowly, people started calling too, and we traced over 170 stepwells in Telangana. Not all are functional, many have collapsed, while others are used as garbage dumps or are taken over by the land mafia. I worked with seven other designers and architects, formed the Hyderabad Design Forum and after seven years, the book is out!

“Hyderabad is in transition... It does not have a soul (according to me), but that is a matter of perspective”

WHAT WAS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE STEPWELLS IN TELANGANA?

Most of them were attached to religious structures. Their use was very functional, for pilgrims to cleanse themselves before entering a sacred space. Bathukamma, the floral festival of Telangana was held here in case the rivers and ponds were at a distance. In Hyderabad’s Old city, most *baghs* had a stepwell which was used by the Muslim gentry, especially the



ladies of the *zenana* in summer. It was where women learnt Urdu, conducted matrimonial alliances and swam! In *sarais*, they were used by travellers, so they were community spaces used by all.

IN WEST INDIA, ESPECIALLY GUJARAT AND RAJASTHAN, STEPWELLS ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR ARCHITECTURE. WHAT WAS THE DESIGN ETHOS OF TELANGANA'S STEPWELLS?

The stepwells of Telangana are not as deep as those in Rajasthan and Gujarat, as the water table here is higher. Also, the rock here in the Deccan (granite) is harder to carve unlike the sandstone which is prevalent in the West which is conducive to carving. Our stepwells therefore are not inverted temples but functional spaces with robust galleries, arches and geometry in construction.

WE HAVE SEEN THE BANSILAPET STEPWELL WHICH IS RESTORED AND NOW FUNCTIONING AS A CULTURAL CENTER. IS THAT THE FUTURE?

Absolutely! Look at the stepwell in Ammapalli temple which is one of the biggest and at one time could irrigate 5000 acres of paddy! It is an amalgamation of the Qutub Shahi and Kakatiyan styles which is a typical representation of Telangana's syncretic culture. It is around 1100 years old and today is used for everything from concerts to weddings and photoshoots.

Why not have *angadis* around them? Why not take school children and showcase them as models of conservation and sustainability? There are innumerable uses.

WHAT NEED/PURPOSE DO THESE STEPWELLS HAVE IN 2024?

Public architecture gives character to a city. They can provide inspiration for contemporary design. Charles Correa was so inspired by the *vavs* of Gujarat that he recreated those courtyards in many of his buildings. In fact, the office of the Institute of Banking & Finance in Gachibowli, designed by him turns to the stepwell design node and instead of water, creates lawns and gardens which function as break out areas.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE DESIGN AND GROWTH OF THE CITY, ESPECIALLY THE HIGH RISES AND THE NEWER PARTS LIKE FINANCIAL CITY?

Hyderabad is in transition. It does not have a soul (according to me), but that is a matter of perspective. Many students at the college I teach haven't even seen the Charminar. This is the changing face of society. What I certainly do not approve of is the complete lack of amenities in the newer areas. No parks (they are all inside communities), pedestrian crossings or foot paths. Social interaction in community spaces is what made Hyderabad what it is – these

were the precincts where the stories of Hyderabad were told. Look at the number of colonies still called *baghs* or *bowlis*!

Gachibowli was the area where limestone used to come from Tandur on bullock carts. The water from the *baoli* was used to convert the limestone into lime plaster or *choona* used in construction. *Gachi* is the Persian word for limestone and that's how the area got its name. Today, we can only see the remains of the *baoli* next to a temple. But then, if this is the template for development, so be it.

HOW CAN A FAST-GROWING CITY BE INCLUSIVE IN ITS ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN, YET CATER TO THE EVOLVING NEEDS?

Hyderabad is the only city (apart from Delhi) in India, where one can take the Metro and see 450 years of its history – from the Old City to Secunderabad and Hitech City. The only way to save history is by bringing in social awareness even to the lowest common denominator. For example, Gudimalkapur has a beautiful stepwell which is in the area once owned by Seth Bhagwandas, but six feet away from it is a huge apartment complex. The community needs to come together and ensure that its history is persevered. ■

MALLIK

(The book is available on Amazon.com)



Anupama Parameswaran is all set to unleash her sassy, badass avatar as Lilly in *Tillu Square*. She gives us a peek into what she is like in real life

“I am excited about experimenting”



“As a person, I can now tell my mother not to accompany me for my shoots. I can handle my life like a pro – from my shoot dates to finances and even the creepy men”

It's been nine years since she entered movies and with a spate of exciting releases lined up this year, the curly-haired **Anupama Parameswaran** is already on cloud nine. The actor with 20 movies in Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada and Tamil to her credit is known, not just for her gorgeous South Indian looks, but also for her acting. In 2015, she was a simple Thrissur girl studying in Class 11. She casually went for a casting call after coming across the announcement on an actor's social media page and the rest was history. She got picked up for the iconic character of Mary in *Premam*. The movie (which also marked the debut of Sai Pallavi in 2015) changed her life so much that even her house in Kerala is named *Premam*! From a middle-class Mallu girl to a sultry siren in the South, she has had an eventful cinematic journey. As her badass role of Lilly in the much-anticipated Valentine's Day release *Tillu Square* (opposite Siddhu Jonnagalagadda) this season gets talked about, WOW! catches the spirited actor in a chatty mood.

What does 2024 look like?

Hectic and exciting. I have *Eagle* (with Ravi Teja) and *Tillu Square* around the corner. I also have a Tamil and Malayalam movie each. In Telugu, I am working on two movies, one directed by Praveen Kandregula and one by Prashanth Verma. That's a good place to be, right?

Radhika (played by Neha Shetty in *DI Tillu*) is an iconic character and it struck a chord with the audience. Will Radhika continue to be so iconic in this movie? My character is called Lilly and takes off where Radhika left. Neha Shetty has set a benchmark with Radhika and now I have to match it. All I can say is that Anupama is not a cute girl anymore.

Aah, so are you the bad girl in *Tillu Square*?

I am the swag girl! Perhaps, Lilly will even face a backlash for exploring and experimenting with the bold character. Her character goes beyond the cleavage and the navel you see in the trailer. Fingers crossed!

What has your transition as an actor and as a person been like in the past nine years?

I look more for versatility and I am excited about experimenting. At the time when I was doing mainstream commercial cinema, I opted to do an offbeat short film called *Freedom at Midnight* in 2021 – about a wife who seeks sexual freedom. That gamble paid off as people noticed the actor in me. As a person, I can now tell

my mother not to accompany me for my shoots. I can handle my life like a pro – from my shoot dates to finances and even the creepy men.

Do you need different and intense preparation for such out-of-the-box roles? What is your process?

I learn my lines, understand the arch of the character, but I give my best when I am on the actual set and the director calls out 'action'. My co-stars, the set, the vibe and the whole landscape helps me feel the character and live it.

Did touching 15 million on Instagram help?

Yes, all through 2023, when I had no releases, I was in touch with my followers through a lot of unfiltered moments. The downside, however, is that they see a relatable, girl next door in my Insta feed and they get offended when they see me in intimate scenes. It's almost like seeing your next-door neighbor in an intimate scene.

What do you love and hate about being an actor?

I love that every day I get to meet interesting new people, travel; and the respect, recognition and love I get from being an actor. I hate that actors can't show their real emotions in public life. I am probably having a bad day at a village shoot and don't feel like the warm person they see on screen when they ask me for a selfie. But I don't have the liberty to show my disinterest or fatigue, because sometimes fans tend to come after travelling hundreds of kilometers and may have been waiting for a few hours to get a glimpse of me. I will have to be my best despite my emotions at that point of time. Anyway, you win some, you lose some.

What's the real Anupama like at home?

At home, I am wearing a nine-year-old tattered T-shirt with a hole pyjamas with loose elastic and a messy bun. Back home, my mother expects me to come down the steps of my room in a *pattu pavadai* like a princess, but she gets Anupama looking like a street urchin. Even when she makes a video call from Kerala, I have to conceal what I am wearing or she will go ballistic. Moms will be moms.

What is a day off in the life of Anupama like?

I don't employ a full-time maid. When I'm at home, I find joy in maintaining the cleanliness, handling laundry, and tending to the plants. Unlike someone who prefers the gym, I've never set foot in one. Yet, I excel in gardening. A



few years back, I shed eight kilos while planting mango saplings, nurturing jackfruit plants, and caring for banana plants – embracing the role of a skilled gardener/farmer.

Here's one of the most Googled questions about you... Are those curls real?

Absolutely! But none of the Telugu or Tamil directors want my curly hair. Every day, I had to iron it for other movies. In 2019, I decided I didn't want to work with directors who didn't want my original hair. I come with my curls, deal with it. Good hair days only for me from now. ■ MANJU

QUICK TAKE

- **THREE HASHTAGS THAT DEFINE YOU:** #Passionate #Loving #Honest
- **YOUR LIFE SO FAR IN ONE LINE:** A butterfly that took its own path
- **WHAT HAS BEEN THE HIGH POINT IN YOUR LIFE:** Deciding to do a short film as a mainstream actor
- **WHERE DOES ONE FIND YOU HANGING OUT WHEN YOU ARE IN HYDERABAD:** Home
- **YOUR GO-TO KERALA FOOD JOINTS IN HYDERABAD:** Akson, Pathemari, Hanwin and Aniyayees

Ru, the new resto bar is a modern Indian restaurant in the heart of Jubilee Hills

Soul of Good Times



A city full of foodies just got a new favorite. Spread across a 1,600 sq.yd. property and four floors, **Ru** truly stands out. It embodies an old-world charm with boulders and rocks tastefully incorporated into the design.

Rü is a word derived from ruins and the word Rü (Rooh) also means soul in Urdu – a language which holds a prominent place in the history of Hyderabad. This is the reason they have beautiful Urdu *shayari* (poetry) on the walls of the restaurant level in dreamy calligraphy.

Started by four groups of friends, rather families coming together – Rahul Reddy and his sisters Shreya and Divya – all of whom have a strong connect with Hyderabad. Additionally, there are the ever-popular Sahil and Swati of Concu; and Kirithi Chilukuri and Amit and Sanjay Gulabani who found the beautiful property.

The whole restaurant has been designed around a large rock that naturally exists here. The Instagram worthy grand spiral staircase which leads to the rooftop is also built around it.

The terrace level is biggest section which contains the rooftop bar. The entire level is an outdoor area. Both

the food and drinks menus are the same as downstairs, but this level has a more chill vibe to it for people (aged 21 and above) who prefer high seating/standing tables and music.

The menu is mostly Indian cuisine with the addition of a few favorite items like pizzas and bar bites. Ru's art cuisine menu has been curated by Chef Deepanker Khosla, the youngest ever Indian chef to receive a Michelin star.

"Here, we embrace a pace often forgotten in the modern day – the Hyderabad way that invites patrons to relish and savor each moment," says Rahul. And just as he says, the Indian favorites hit the spot, like the succulent *Patthar Ka Gosht* which transports you straight to the bylanes of Charminar. The *Sigdi Waala Chicken* is tender with the right balance of flavors and *Reddy Wines Tawa Macchi* is a must try.

Vegetarians can try the *Dahi ke Kabab* and *Paneer Khagina*.

For mains you have hands down the most authentic *Butter Chicken* in town. Those looking for a touch of Telangana can opt for *Lamb Pepper Fry* and if you haven't been invited to a Hyderabad wedding lately, the *Shaadi ka Lal Murgh* is a great ode to the city.



WOW!
Recommends
Shayr-o-Shayari



Round off with a *Rabri and Brioche ka Meetha* or a *Pistachio Phirni Brulee* if you still have space in your stomach.

The bar menu is unique and as pleasing as the food. Meticulously crafted by mixologist Karl Fernandez, *The Nizam's Opulence*, a rum cocktail with a note of muskmelon is smooth as silk. Whereas if you're looking for something tangy and *desi*, try the *Guntur Gang* with its hint of tamarind and chilli. And if you are keen to know which drink everyone's posting – it's the *Sher-O-Shayari* – a whisky cocktail with a couplet of Urdu poetry printed in the foam. The terrace has an ambience of its own and perfect for a ladies night out or a date.

We can definitely say our *rooh* is happy. Full marks to what's surely going to be the hottest resto bar in town. ■ MALLIHA

Meal for two: Rs 2,500 (excluding alcohol)

376, Road No. 10, Near Diamond House
Jubilee Hills

Tel: 73311 17812

Timings: 12 pm to midnight



Inside a new restaurant serving new-age Indian cuisine

Comfort Food with a Twist

A new restaurant opens every single day, so how does one stay ahead of the curve? By reinventing the familiar and infusing it with the zest of the new. As we dined at **Zila**, the answer presented itself. This new restaurant located in District 150 of Hitech City, serves progressive Indian cuisine with panache.

Chef Krishna Chaitanya says, "The idea is to serve familiar foods with a twist. We wanted to make sure that no one leaves here without being surprised." The interiors of the space are well done and the cozy seating is for around 35 people, but the wicker chairs and the lovely ambience make it a great place to unwind.

The surprise starts with an old appetizer – *Kachumber* – refashioned as a fusion of salad and soup. A broad dish was presented containing a small heap of meticulously arranged, slender vegetable curls at its core. Sip on the refreshing cucumber and tomato blend while enjoying the crisp cucumber strips adorned with cherry tomatoes and a dressing of *chaat masala*.

We also sampled *Tacos* featuring pulled jackfruit, elegantly presented on

Malabari Parottas. The combination of bold flavors and the lingering aftertaste of the *parotta* resonated well, making the *tacos* a standout hit at our table. The *Kulcha* that came next was also delightful and served with *Kacha Aam* and *Cranberry Chutney*.

Tacos with the *Mutton Boti Masala* as the non-vegetarian starter was absolutely delish, with well-cooked meat. For the main course, try the *Not Regular Khichdi*, which comes from quinoa that is taken to another dimension with yoghurt and *achar*. The best part is that the dish is very easy on the palate. The *Succulent Lamb Chops* was the final dish of the evening which was served with potatoes and was excellent in both taste and flavor, making every morsel enticing.

In keeping with the tone of the restaurant, even the dessert was a complete surprise. *Chai*, which was a *masala chai* served with an *Assam Tea Mousse* and *Salted Osmania Crumble* was an unusual dessert but also one of the most delicious!

The portion sizes are small so do keep that in mind while ordering and since the dishes are unique, do take help of the



WOW!
Recommends:
 Succulent
 Lamb Chops

staff who are both knowledgeable and helpful. ■ MALLIK

Meal for two: Rs 3,000

Gate 6, Salarpuria Sattva, Knowledge City
 Tel: 89778 6192
 Timings: 9 am to 11 pm



WOW!
Recommends
 Basa Fish
 Tikka



A new pond-side café is winning hearts

Koi Mil Gaya

Discover tranquillity at **Koi and Co.**, a culinary haven nestled in the heart of Sainikpuri. Renowned for its global cuisine, this enchanting restaurant, founded by restaurateurs Ajay Reddy and Abhishek Bhatt, offers a peaceful escape for discerning patrons.

Immerse yourself in the lush outdoors or relish the cozy ambience indoors, both meticulously designed to enhance your dining experience. The highlight is the captivating koi pond – with a capacity of 1.5 lakh liters of water and over 100 Japanese koi fish – adding a touch of nature's elegance to the surroundings.

We were seated close to the koi pond by our hosts and managers, Srinivas Uppaluri and his charming wife Lien. The afternoon commences with a refreshing and colorful cooler; *Kuko Mikan* that brought forth a citrusy basil flavor married to passion fruit and cranberries.

The *Kuko Mikan* was paired with a succulent *Korean Crispy Chicken*, glazed with Korean chilli paste, soya sauce, sesame oil and a sublime hint of sweetness.

The Italian *Bruschetta* arrived just as we licked our lips with Korean flourish. Toasted slices of Ciabatta bread topped with tomato, basil, black olives, feta and mozzarella cheese with a drizzle of balsamic vinegar were scrumptious.

Moving closer home, we were then served a white *Basa Fish Tikka* marinated in yogurt and mustard sauce. Along with a plate of tangy and spicy *Tandoor Roasted Prawns*. Devoured all too soon!

For the main course, we returned to Italy with a *Garden Fresh Pizza* served on dough made from bread flour, whole wheat and semolina. Topped with mozzarella cheese and fresh vegetables, this 11-inch pizza is only 400 calories!

We finished our lunch with a feel-good, simple and refreshing *Watermelon Feta Salad* complete with black olives, fresh basil and dressed in balsamic vinegar.

Last but not the least, the dessert was the piece de resistance of our entire meal. A slice of *Blueberry Cheesecake* made with fresh cream and Philadelphia cream cheese topped with their in-house blueberry compote.

Koi and Co. beckons you into a world of serene unwinding, where each dish is a masterpiece and every moment is an invitation to savor the art of exquisite dining. ■ SHRUTI

Meal for two: Rs 1,200

5th Avenue, Sai Baba Officers Colony,
 Sainikpuri
 Tel: 88850 31200
 Timings: 12 pm to 11.30 pm

EMBARK ON A PAN-ASIAN EXTRAVAGANZA IN KOMPALLY!

Indulge your taste buds in a culinary escapade at our opulent restaurant **'THE CASCADE'** nestled in Kompally, Hyderabad. Immerse yourself in the captivating world of Pan-Asian flavours, where culinary tales from China, Malaysia, Singapore, and Japan dance on your palate.

DISCOVER PAN-ASIAN DELICACIES

Embark on a gastronomic journey that traverses continents, showcasing not only the timeless classics but also hidden gems from the heart of Asia. Our talented chefs weave a symphony of flavours, presenting Thai curries, Malaysian Calamari, Prawn Tempura, and exquisite sushi from Japan, each narrating a cultural story on your plate.



ELEVATE YOUR PALATE WITH NIGIRI VARIATIONS

Experience a culinary elevation with our Nigiri variations that push the boundaries of sophistication. Let your taste buds revel in the delicate touch of our chefs, presenting Nigiri creations like Truffle-infused Salmon and Unagi Tempura—a delightful fusion of traditional and contemporary Japanese flavours that will leave you tingling with pleasure.



A VEGETARIAN SYMPHONY OF SENSATIONS

For our vegetarian enthusiasts, savour a palette of flavours celebrating the bounty of nature. Delight in the Umami explosion of dishes like Crackling Spinach and an array of vibrant Dim Sum offerings. Our vegetarian menu is a testament to the limitless indulgence of exquisite flavours.



THUKPA TALES: FROM TIBET TO HYDERABAD

The journey continues with the comforting warmth of Thukpa—a Tibetan noodle soup that captures the soul of the Himalayas. Crafted with love and tradition, our Thukpa is the perfect companion for those seeking solace in the embrace of wholesome broth and delicate noodles.

TANTALIZE YOUR TASTE BUDS WITH TAKWAN MAKI

Embark on a sushi adventure like never before as our culinary artisans unveil the artistry of Takwan Maki. Delight in the harmonious combination of fresh ingredients rolled into a culinary masterpiece that perfectly captures the essence of Japanese gastronomy. Let the flavours of each meticulously crafted roll transport you to the vibrant streets of Tokyo, creating a symphony of taste that lingers on your palate.

SAVOUR THE IRRESISTIBLE KATSU CURRY SENSATION

Prepare your senses for a journey into the heart of Japanese comfort food with our irresistible Katsu Curry. Experience the perfect fusion of crispy breaded goodness and rich, aromatic



curry sauce, expertly crafted to captivate your taste buds. Each bite is a celebration of culinary excellence, leaving you craving more of this delectable dish that effortlessly marries tradition with innovation.

CHARM YOUR PALATE WITH CHICKEN BAO PERFECTION

Elevate your dining experience with the exquisite charm of our Chicken Bao. Indulge in the succulent tenderness of perfectly seasoned chicken encased in a pillowy steamed bun. The melding of flavours, textures, and aromas in each bite creates a culinary symphony that resonates with the soul. Our Chicken Bao is not just a dish; it's a gastronomic love affair waiting to enchant your taste buds.



Experience the soulful embrace of Pan-Asian flavours, where each dish tells a unique story, making your dining experience an unforgettable journey. Indulge in the richness of culture and taste, only at our exquisite restaurant in Kompally, Hyderabad!

The
Cascade
Pan Asian Kitchen

Ratna Arcade First Floor, Kompally,
Secunderabad, Telangana 500 014
Phone: 081100 11110

THE CASCADE – A PLACE WHERE EVERY BITE TELLS A STORY

 thecascade_hyderabad  /thecascadehyderabad/



The Chinese chain brings in some fusion food that the city may fall in love with

Chinese @ Chowman

The Chinese food brand **Chowman**, which has a presence in Kolkata, Bengaluru and Delhi NCR, has now made its foray into Hyderabad. Its second outlet opened in Madhapur in early January this year, while their first outlet opened late last year in Kukatpally.

The Madhapur outlet has an Oriental ambience, with traditional Chinese calligraphy on the walls, and a contemporary finish in black and red interiors.

For starters, we tried the light and healthy *Chicken Sui Mai* (there was a veg version too) *Pan Fried Chilli Fish*, *Kung Pao Veg*, *Crispy Chilli Babycorn* and the absolutely delicious *Kolkata Style Chilli Chicken*.

For mains, the *Coriander Burnt Garlic Egg Fried Rice*, *Moon Fan Fried Rice (veg)* and *Thai Style Noodles* are great options, as is the *Seafood Chinese Chopsuey*. Don't miss *Butter Garlic Prawns*, *Chilli Wine Fish* and *Hong Kong Chicken*, if you are a non-vegetarian. For vegetarians, *Hunan Paneer*, *Stir fried Pok Choy in Chilli Garlic Sauce* and

Exotic Veg in Oyster Sauce/Chilli Basil are excellent options.

The food is fresh, flavorful and comes in generous portions, and the pleasing ambience makes Chowman a great dining experience, despite the small size of the Madhapur outlet, Kukatpally being slightly larger. Last, but definitely not the least, is the competitive pricing. True to his promise of democratization of fine dining experiences, the right side of the menu comes as a pleasant revelation, especially considering the finesse of the plated dishes.

While the restaurant chain is on delivery apps Swiggy and Zomato, it has its own app and delivery fleet. It is no surprise, therefore, that Chowman is now a case study for B-schools and IIMs in their digital and social media elective course. ■ SWATI

Meal for two: Rs 1,000

Pillar No. 1735, Ground floor, beside G Pulla Reddy Sweets, Kavuri Hills, Madhapur

Tel: 92309 97404

Timings: 12 pm to 4 pm, 7 pm to midnight



WOW!
Recommends
Kolkata
Style Chilli
Chicken



VIETNAMESE SEAFOOD PHO BOWL

WHAT'S NEW

Food from the depths of the heart and the ocean

Dil ki Khushi...Sushi

Looking for a place to enjoy some delicious seafood and Asian cuisine? Check out **Ko Ko Kai**, a new Pan-Asian restaurant at Kokapet. The catchy name means "heart and ocean" in Thai, which reflects the restaurant's philosophy of serving food from the heart and food from the ocean. The restaurant has a calming and relaxing ambience, with fun pictures of Koko, the cat, brand mascot, enjoying a meal. The décor is soothing and elegant, with pastel colors and potted plants. The light mint green walls are quite a departure from the darker shades of green, red, and black with gold accents that dominate the interiors of most restaurants serving South Asian food. Their cocktail bar will soon offer Asian-inspired cocktails. I had a chance to try some of their mocktails and dishes, and here are my impressions.

For drinks, we ordered the *Eastern Spice*, a refreshing mocktail made with green apple and cinnamon. It was a perfect balance of sweet and sour, with a hint of warmth from the spice. The other noteworthy mocktail, an acquired taste, was the *Melon Oasis* made with fermented milk, Yakult and fresh watermelon. We followed this up with an *Avocado, Plum and Pine Nut Salad* with a Greek yogurt dressing. This was stellar, as was the *Chicken Tom Kha soup* with delicately balanced flavors and a great consistency.

For starters, we tried the *Singaporean Creamy Chilli Prawns* and the *Chicken Shaggy Roll*. The prawns were succulent and coated with a creamy sauce that had a mild kick of chilli. *Machinga Chicken Dumplings* topped with a spicy sauce were lip-smacking and vanished in a trice. The *Chicken Shaggy Roll* was a crispy fried roll stuffed with minced chicken and cheese served with a tangy dip and salad.

For the main course, we opted for the sushi and the *Hot Stone Bowl*. *Khar Mi Uramaki*, a vegetarian sushi had grapefruit segments on top that mimicked salmon flakes. It was a clever twist on the traditional sushi, and the grapefruit added a burst of freshness and acidity. The *Hot Stone Bowl* is one of the best sellers here and offers a choice of rice or noodles, protein, and

sauce. We ordered jasmine rice topped with chicken and teriyaki sauce. The rice was allowed to cook further in the residual heat of the hot stone bowl to lightly crisp it up for texture.

The desserts were a fitting finale to the lovely meal. We loved cracking open the chocolate shell to get to the firmly set mousse and Nutella in the *Chocolate Hazelnut Mousse*; a must try. For ice-cream fans, there is *Mochi Ice-cream* in seasonal flavors; we tried the prettily plated *Strawberry Mochi Ice-cream*. The unhurried vibe at Ko Ko Kai made it an enjoyable meal. ■ SUPRIYA

Meal for two: Rs 1,800

4th floor, Kokapet Terminal, Gandipet Main Road, Above Bata Showroom

Tel: 89775 25562

Timings: 12 pm to 3 pm and 7 pm to 11:30 pm



WOW!
Recommends
Tom Kha, Hot
Stone Bowl



Unique in its concept, **Breath Station Café** offers more than just delicious food

A Rare Fusion

The creators behind My Café Latte (now known as Heart Cup Coffee) swung open the doors of their new **Breath Station Café** to the city in November of '23. Conceptualized with an aim to provide their customers with a one-of-a-kind experience, they foster a positive and healing environment to go with their fresh, healthy and, dare I say, heavenly food.

Founded by M. Sujatha Reddy and Shreedhar Reddy Mallavarapu, the café's 4,000 sq.ft. area spreads across two floors – indoors and outdoors. The inside is certainly cozy, but it is the open outdoors where you want to be. The rooftop, surrounded by lush green foliage, provides a tranquil and meditative ambience and, as a result, frequently doubles as a spot to practice yoga *asanas* and ancient breathing techniques. When asked what inspired them to come up with the idea of serving delectable food alongside spiritual healing, a passionate

Shreedhar states, "I want to connect with people beyond food and give them a unique experience."

We make our way to the rooftop and take a seat amidst the greenery. We lean back in our chairs and sway to the soothing music playing in the background as we sip on our drinks, the refreshing *Pink Glow* smoothie, and the excellent *Pomelo Iced Tea*, in which the crispness of the pomelo harmoniously blends with a chilled green tea base.

Next, we are recommended by Shreedhar and Chef Raj Shekar M., the *Pan-Fried Shrimp*, *Paneer Tikka Skewers* and the *Asparagus and Broccoli Soup* for the appetizers; the Indonesian *Nasi Goreng* and the healthy *Quinoa Bowl with Roasted Red Pepper Sauce* for the mains; and the creamy *Chocolate Brownie* for dessert.

Each item had its own distinct texture and taste and the ones that stood out

the most were the soup, made with the blend of earthy asparagus and nutrient-rich broccoli; the quinoa bowl, made with lettuce, lemon, sauteed boiled quinoa with bell pepper, herbs and nutritional yeast sprinkled on top; and the gooey chocolate brownie with ice-cream, which we gorged down as quickly as we downed the *Pomelo Iced Tea*. ■ IPSHITA

Meal for two: Rs 500 to Rs 700

3rd Floor & Terrace, Ghanshyam Super Market, Lane, Lanco Hills Rd, Chaitanya Enclave, Khajaguda
Tel: 91771 90000
Timings: 11 am to 11 pm



WOW! Recommends
Quinoa Bowl with Roasted Red Pepper Sauce



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Contact us at: +91 984 933 8902



2nd Floor, Mahboob Habib Plaza, Road #9, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad, Telangana.

Email: info@sharmilasyogazone.com  [SharmilasYogaZoneHyd](https://www.instagram.com/SharmilasYogaZoneHyd)  [Sharmila's Yoga Zone](https://www.facebook.com/SharmilasYogaZone)



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WOW!
Recommends:
The red-pink
Jamdani with
zari work

created by the Ananya Birla Pottery Studio. From ceramic bowls to cutlery and glassware, there are gifting options galore. There are also thick rugs and bed linen, curtains and cushion covers with jungle themes. In short, something for everyone; especially since customization is available for the décor section.

If there is one word to describe the Aadyam Handwoven store, it would be exquisite! ■ MINAL

Prices: Stoles: Rs 2,000 onwards; Shawls: Rs 5,000 onwards; Saris: Rs 8,000 onwards; Dupattas: Rs 8,000 onwards; Home décor items: Rs 500 onwards

Ground Floor, The Hilltop@7, 4 & 5, Road No.7, Resham Bagh, Banjara Hills
Tel: 74086 74046
Timings: 11 am to 8 pm

Handwoven garments are rapidly becoming heirloom pieces thanks to stores like **Aadyam Handwoven**

Handloom Heirlooms

The Aditya Birla Group owned **Aadyam Handwoven**, launched its flagship store in November 2023, at the new luxe store venue Hilltop@7. This is a bigger space than the existing outlet housed in the CCT building. Spread over 3,500 sq.ft., with high ceilings, colorful inlay work from Jaipur on the floor to break the monotony of the grey tiles; and a charming in-house café serving wholesome snacks, it is big enough to even host workshops or talks on handlooms.

As for the merchandize, those who fancy saris, shawls, stoles and *dupattas* that are lovingly made by hand, this store is a veritable treasure trove. Working with weavers from several clusters across the country, the range here will leave you spoilt for choice. Saris hanging down from the high ceilings, displaying their *buttas* and intricate *pallus* in full glory, to others neatly placed on shelves, we guarantee you will spend hours here.

Says Manish Saxena, Business Lead, Aadyam Handwoven, "The weaving clusters that we work with are Varanasi, Pochampally, Bhuj, Mirzapur, Bhadoi, Gadwal and Kashmir. The idea is to get diversity in handloom techniques for a unique selection and to cover a gamut of products ranging from saris, stoles shawls, throws to fabrics for cushions and upholstery and floor rugs as well."

Some not-too-common weaves too are part of the displayed goods. Unusual designs and a contemporary feel make these saris wearable across age groups. He adds, "We try and cover the entire gamut of weave techniques and skill for diversity. In Varanasi we work with Tanchoi *kadwa phekwa*/cutwork for finer fabrics and the *Gyasar* weave for thick upholstery fabric. We also work with the exquisite and timeless Jamdani weave as well."

The store is reviving weaving techniques in a big way. Manish adds, "We have worked on giving *Gyasar* a relevance that extends to more than just the back panels of Tibetan monasteries, by changing the palette and the kind of motifs that go beyond the Oriental flavor. Another revival project that was ongoing for two years will culminate in a Gadwal collection with all its glory and distinct features intact such as *kuttu* weaving and *palla* jointing."

Contemporary relevance with age old weaves is a winning combination and whether it is a Pashmina sari or a geometric and spartan weave from Bhuj, they all make their mark, even amidst the more dramatic Pochampallys and Jamdanis on display.

The home décor section houses merchandize from the Ikai Asai brand,



EATS @ AADYAM

If you are tired from shopping, or need a moment to decide which heirloom weave will make it to your wardrobe, there is a spacious café within the same space. With an al fresco seating area as well, sunlight pouring in from the tall windows, it is great to even have a quiet meeting or discuss your next big purchase from the store.

The menu has snacks and infused teas, French press coffees and more. We tried several of the accompaniments and all of them passed muster. If you are in a mood to indulge, do try the *Pyaz* and *Jowar Crispies with Dip*, *Murgh Khurchan with Baked Kulchas*, *Sikka Parathas* *Kair Sangria Sangh*, and for dessert, the *Jamun Ghosla*. The portion size is enough to qualify as a mini-meal. The veg and non-veg array includes dishes from all over the country. The *Blue Pea Tea* is a must-have, especially if you like posting on Insta.

Meal for two: Rs 1000

Premium eyewear luxury brands from Maybach to Balmain lined up for city fashionistas

Truly Eye-Catching!

Lawrence & Mayo Boutique,

Hyderabad's first boutique for eyewear, celebrated its eighth year of luxury by curating an exclusive 2024 luxury eyewear showcase in the city on January 20 and 21. The eyewear boutique and optician has put together some of the world's leading eyewear brands from the houses of Maybach, Balmain, Chrome Hearts, Silhouette Atelier, Bentley, McLaren, Cazal and Philippe V.

The spacious store in gleaming glass with an extensive luxury brand portfolio offers a personal shopping experience and a state-of-the-art eye-testing facility. L&M's team of experts interact with the customers to recommend the best eyewear to match their looks. After all, accessorizing eyes is an integral part of sporting 'the look

for the first season of 2024'.

"The 147-year-old legacy that began in 1877 has been a favorite since the time of the royals and renowned for the highest standard in precision eye care solutions. Spread across more than 100 locations in 30 cities in India, we offer genuine and authentic branded eyewear products," say directors Menaka and Amitava Mendonca. The brand also has boutique stores in Chennai and Kolkata featuring premium luxury eyewear for discerning clients and celebrities. ■ MANJU

Prices: On request

Road No. 12 Banjara Hills

Tel: 040 2339 9133

Timings: 10.30 am to 8.30 pm

WOW!
Recommends:
Balmain Paris

PIX BY STUDIO CAPTURELIFE



Learn about an initiative that is upskilling craftspeople

IN SYNC WITH THE WORLD

Creative Dignity is an innovative, collaborative network that emerged during the pandemic, uniting various stakeholders within the Indian handmade craft sector. With everything coming to a standstill due to the lockdowns, members of the initiative helped craftsmen to reach out to the members of the new order in various ways.

"We teach how design can come with a difference if aided by technology"
— Meena Appender

Meena Appender, Co-chair of Creative Dignity shares, "We helped them deal with the new normal. Prepared catalogs, showed them how to use social media and click good images for online sales as well bridging language gaps as and when necessary. The synergy we built was amazing and helped the craftspeople learn many skills that can help them reach out."

The project continued post the pandemic mostly because of the energy generated

by the initiative leading to corporate funding. One of those who reached out to partner with Creative Dignity was Project Tarasha, a pandemic-born social initiative by Titan Company Ltd. that brings craftspeople from the nooks and crannies of the country to the fore.

The two initiatives got together to ensure that digital literacy can aid these skilled crafts persons. Creative Dignity x Project Tarasha is offering a digital skills and social media workshop for artisan entrepreneurs to help boost their businesses on social media. This workshop teaches entrepreneurs how to create eye-catching visuals and effectively market their products online. By improving both technical and creative skills, artisans can stand out in the digital space and grow their businesses in a competitive market.

Meena adds, "We teach how design can come with a difference if aided by technology. From a NID student teaching photography to helping the craftspeople branch out into newer avenues like home furnishing, we are offering a holistic platform for them."



Together, they held a 10-day workshop with around 17 artists from across India who will showcase their work in February. The exhibit gives a platform to those practicing several crafts – natural fiber crafts from Karnataka to handmade kites from Uttar Pradesh – the Bhil art of MP to the Sohrai paintings of Jharkhand; and, Dhokra metal craft of West Bengal to the unique applique work from Odisha.

Creating a win-win for everyone involved, this is a great initiative that helps create change at the grassroots level. ■ MALLIK

Artisan entrepreneurs from the workshop will showcase their products at a Craft Exhibit at CCT Spaces from 21st to 24th Feb.

WOW! cherry picks a few cruelty-free fashion brands worthy of your wardrobe

A Kinder World of Fashion



Cruel fashion implies the use of animal-based materials. What we do not account for is that to define cruelty-free fashion, it is not enough to just talk about apparel. Cruelty-free fashion encompasses clothing, shoes, bags, gloves, hats, belts, scarves, sunglasses, socks and even shoes.

The important thing is to minimize the use of materials such as feathers, fur, silk, leather and wool, all being rather gory in their process of extraction. In recent years, due to a surge in the awareness movements pioneered by animal welfare associations, many fashion brands are switching to cruelty-free responses to crafting their collections.

HEMIS STORE

Prashansa Shahani, founder, **Hemis Store**, Hyderabad, celebrates humanity's timeless connection with Mother Nature as well as the finesse of Indian craftsmanship. Her range brings forth exotic fashion that is not just great for one's aesthetic sense, style, or trends but also for the planet, our future generations, and the overall well-being of humankind.

Hemis crafts clothes that embrace sustainability in every facet of the brand;

materials, fabrics, dyes and recyclable biodegradable packaging. Their bespoke craftsmanship and construction from cutting-edge fabrics made with materials like aloe vera, banana, orange peel, lotus, recycled PET bottles fished from oceans among others, and detailed hand finishing, impresses upon users that quality is their hallmark.

Prices: Rs 999 to 19, 999

Available on: www.hemis.in
Also available at Ogaan, and soon at Ajio Luxe, Tata Cliq Luxe and Myntra
Tel: 888557322



CAI

Encapsulating the true spirit of joy, **CAI** (meaning 'to be happy' in Welsh) has found purpose in bringing the world to its customers' feet since 2015. What began as a passion project quickly became founders Aradhana Minawala and Dhanraj Minawala's full-time fixation! CAI's philosophy is to create conscious, fashion-forward, high-quality vegan footwear that is as comfortable and accessible as it is stylish. CAI's multifaceted approach changed the footwear game by offering the luxury of comfort, global trends, and reliability at affordable prices.

CAI's commitment to sustainability extends to bags too, which are crafted from vegan leather, ensuring ethical and cruelty-free fashion that speaks to the fashionable, contemporary woman.

Prices: Footwear: Rs 600 to Rs 5,000
Bags: Rs 2,000 to Rs 4,000

Available at: Nykaa, Myntra, Amazon, Shopper's Stop, Ajio
Rapport Shoes & Accessories
130, Road No. 10, Opposite Canara Bank, Icrisat Colony, Jubilee Hills
Tel: 85912 37531
Timings: 10:30 am to 8 pm

EWOKE

Ewoke, House of Conscious Clothing, is a premium sustainable fashion brand for women, based in Hyderabad. Ewoke stands for environmentally woke, where the founder, Shruti Rawal's aim is to create conscious wardrobes for men and women with eco-friendly fabrics while staying in vogue. All the fabrics are globally certified eco-friendly with lab tested reports which are great for your skin and the planet. Hemp is one of the materials that they work with, that helps them save about 2,500 liters of water per outfit as compared to traditional cotton textiles.

Prices: Rs 3,990 to Rs 26,990

Available at: ewokestudio.com;
Pernia's Pop- Up Shop, Nykaa and Myntra
Ewoke Studio, Journalist Colony,
Road No. 70, Jubilee Hills
Tel: 91000 04121
Timings: 10:30 am to 8 pm



MISFIT PANDA

As a vegan and sustainable fashion enthusiast, Juveca Panda, founder, **Misfit Panda** wanted to level up her brand by switching from using PU and PVC-based alternatives to plant-based leather, recycled materials and natural organic fabrics.

Through Misfit Panda, Juveca hopes to encourage more people to shop



mindfully. She believes the world can be a better place if we are all a part of the change in our little ways!

Prices: Rs 1,200 to Rs 7,500

Available at: www.misfitpanda.in with pan-India shipping
Nykaa Fashion, AJIO and Amala Earth

EERENA

Deep in North Eastern India, a unique peace silk known as eri came into existence. Apart from the mulberry silkworm, another species, *Samia Cynthia Ricini* is an unknown wonder, that inhabits the native castor forests. It feeds on the castor leaves and spins a magical tale of eri silk. Considered sacred by natives who made it their way of life for centuries, this silk is spun from open-ended cocoons, after allowing the moth to fly away.

Jyoti Reddy, founder, **Ereena** creates eri silk that is inherently sustainable all along its value chain. The castor plants that sustain its silkworm are drought-resistant and require very little water, leaving a low carbon footprint. The processing of the cocoons, yarn



spinning and hand weaving are all earth-friendly processes. As a fabric, it is extraordinarily versatile, comfortable and breathable with a wonderful drape and a sophisticated sheen. ■ SHRUTI

Prices: Saris: Rs 7,000 to Rs 20,000
Stoles and shawls: Rs 1,500 to Rs 10,000
Fabrics: Rs 850 to Rs 3,000

Plot No. 1260 A, Krishna Mansion
Road No. 63, Jubilee Hills
Tel: 98661 53195
Timings: 10:30 am to 8 pm
www.ereena.in

Meet the teenager creating trendy laptop bags, t-shirts, jackets and more from plastic waste

Transforming Plastic into Fabric



Sustainable living is not a passing trend, but a conscious lifestyle that is here to stay. Leading the way are the ever-passionate youth of today. The latest to contribute to it is Hyderabad's Sneha Jalan, a tenth-grade student at Oakridge International School and founder of **Weaving Sustainability**, an online store which sells products created by transforming plastic into fabric.

Elaborating on the inspiration behind the venture, Sneha shares, "I founded it with the vision of transforming plastic waste into stylish, eco-friendly fashion items. The initiative took shape as a response to the urgent need to address plastic pollution and create awareness about sustainable practices."

The plastic to fabric conversion process involves the collection of plastic waste, including bottles and other discarded plastic materials. Once they are sorted, they undergo a meticulous process including shredding, washing, and extrusion and the raw material for fabric production is created. From this material she makes eco-friendly products including scarves, jackets, laptop bags, t-shirts, tote bags and more.

We had the pleasure of viewing Sneha's collection at a student project exhibition conducted at Oakridge International School.

With Weaving Sustainability, Sneha is already on track to create an impact.



WOW!
RECOMMENDS
DENIM JACKET

Going forward, she aims to expand its reach and inspire more communities to adopt sustainable practices. "I hope to see it as a catalyst for positive change in the fashion industry and beyond," she concludes. ■ IPSHITA

Prices: Rs 700 to Rs 1,200

Tel: 95021 81357
Instagram: @weavingsustainability_hyd

WOW! discovers an ethical brand

NATURAL WONDERS



In August 2020, software developers Alankrutha Chandra Tadepalli, 30, and Meher Gundavarum, 33, who lived in Chicago, US, decided to move back to their *janma bhoomi*, Hyderabad, and make it their *karma bhoomi*.

The idea of relocating to India was made after the couple did a nature trip for ten days in the mid-north USA. Alankrutha recalls, "It was a road trip, and we ate, slept, and hiked in nature. No hotel rooms, only our car, tent, water, and some local groceries and food."

The trip made them understand that to live well, very little was needed. The philosophy became the cornerstone as they started their ethical lifestyle brand, **Elephant in You**, in December 2021.

Quiz them about the name, and the entrepreneurs say, "Elephant in You is about redefining the most waste-generating activities, which are also the basis of human life (food, clothing, and housing). We are doing this for ourselves first and trying to lead an eco-friendly and sustainable life. Trying to reduce the dependency on the outer world as well as reducing the waste."

From healthy food to eco-friendly clothes, these young entrepreneurs grow their own produce on the eight-acre farm (in Meedigonda village) near Hyderabad and have embraced a holistic lifestyle.

The clothing range started as Alankrutha experienced frequent allergic reactions to retail clothing. To work around it, she learned to work with natural dyes by sourcing unbleached kala cotton from Khamir in Kutch, linen, cotton, and hemp from others. Today, they make a limited range of clothes for both men and women that are organic and free from chemicals.

Currently, they use rain-fed *desi* cotton, which is a form of organic cotton grown in Bhuj, Gujarat. The duo partners with organizations like Khamir to get the fabric needed and develop their own styles from the fabric. They also work with linen and hemp; and their clothing lines are made out of hand-woven fabrics that appeal to a modern minimalist audience.

Alankrutha explains, "Our philosophy is the biodegradable nature of the fabric and no use of chemicals in the entire process. Also, each and every style we create can be worn in multiple ways, which promotes minimal consumption. We blame fast fashion brands for producing more, but people are buying them. Our slow fashion range promotes the authentic products that you have to wait to get, which you can mix and match with your existing wardrobe pieces and hence add value to the wardrobe."

Next on their cards is an expansion of their clothing line by adding styles for kids, and converting the farm into a full-time educational space for people, especially kids, to come, see, and experience soil, fresh food, clothing, and natural dyes. ■ MALLIK

<https://elephantinyou.com>
Prices: Rs 2,000 onwards



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GEN Z'S LOVE MANTRA IS ALL ABOUT VIRTUAL SPARKS, SWIFT GHOSTS, AND THE RISE OF SLOW FADES. FEBRUARY IS THE MONTH OF LOVE AND VALENTINES. WHAT BETTER TIME TO DISCUSS THE MATTERS OF THE HEART? FROM LOOKING FOR A PROSPECTIVE GROOM ON MATRIMONIAL SITES; TO APPS FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND SOLO DATES; AND CURRENT SLANG WORDS, WOW! explores how the dating game has changed with generous help from social media and technology

BY MANJU LATHA KALANIDHI

LOOKING FOR LOVE? SWIPE RIGHT»»»





Love me Tinder, love me true.... Elvis would have had to change the lyrics of his classic hit; had he been crooning for today's youth. Dating is no longer the simple meet-ups over coffee, coy glances and romantic drives and movies. Things have spiced up on the dating scene. And how!

DATE NIGHTS AND MORE

From flexing with virtual meet-cutes to ghosting faster than you can say "swipe right," it's a wild ride. Forget FOMO (fear of missing out), it's all about JOMO (joy of missing out) as lonely hearts vibe with solo dates.

Then there is dating lingo which will soon need a dictionary of its own. Getting 'cuffed' means making your relationship exclusive or official. 'Slow fades' indicate a gradual and intentional distancing from a romantic partner.

"Is Orry single? Orhan Awatramani, the 24-year-old viral sensation and Bollywood socialite whose answers to Karan

Johar in the season finale of *Koffee with Karan* broke the internet, admitted on national television that he is dating "not any one, but dating five" at the same time. "If dating one is fun, dating goddaman five should be five times more fun." "We are young only once," "Live fast, die young," he stated giving the singles of India new hope and confidence. Have the dating rules changed in 2024? Is the new age dating messed up?

Meanwhile, in December, a thought-provoking Netflix film garnered attention for providing a sensible perspective on relationships. In the final 18 minutes of *Kho Gaye Hum Kahan*, Ananya Pandey starring as Ahana, discovers that she has been curating a fictitious social media presence to portray a non-existent dating life. Her obsession with someone leads to a revelation, prompting her to realize the importance of self-love over seeking validation from others. The film resonated with numerous Gen Z individuals. Despite the vast world of dating and love, especially in Hyderabad, various trends and strategies in the swipe-right universe are worth exploring.



QUICK REWIND

- **QUIRKY ROMANCE:** 45 percent of singles in India swoon over imperfections that make someone special
- **LOVE OUTSIDE THE BOX:** 70 percent of Indians are keen on embracing different personalities
- **ON CUPID'S WATCH:** India's leading the charge with 60 percent seeking a little outside help in their quest for love
- **R.O.R: RETURN ON RELATIONSHIP:** 86 percent are seeking emotional balance in relationships



'APP'Y BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

When you have apps for everything, why should love be left behind? And given the flexible nature of relationships today, where often, no strings attached is the rule of the game, technology does its bit to help. So, there are apps for those looking for casual dates to those who want to get married. There is even one app for extra-marital dalliances!

- **Tinder:** For hook-ups
- **Bumble:** For a relationship
- **Aisle:** Regional language daters for those not comfortable with the English language
- **Grindr:** Gay/non-binary
- **Hinge:** Long-term and for the committed
- **Gleeden:** Extra-marital dating app (free for women, paid credits for men)

(information based on popular perception)

THE HYDERABAD DATING SCENE

Bumble, the women-first dating app, released its annual predictions trends for 2024, with Hyderabad as its focus. Bumble's research says 2024 is set to be the 'year of self' in dating and relationships with more people looking inwards at what they value and want.

- 84 percent of surveyed singles are actively seeking ways to better themselves, and 63 percent feel unworthy of a partner if they haven't invested in self-improvement
- Previous relationship experiences influence 27 percent of Hyderabadis to engage in self-improvement for dating

- 53 percent of people say they want to choose the 'slow life' (being happy here and now) more than the hustle culture
- While 47 percent Hyderabadis value inner fulfilment over external validation; 43 percent will embrace authenticity over perfection in 2024
- For 64 percent of Hyderabadis not caring about social issues or social causes (justice, freedom, equality, etc.) is a dealbreaker in a potential partner
- Women are less open to someone with differing political views and for 58 percent of women, it is a turn-off if someone they are dating is not aware of current societal issues
- Val-Core Dating: Val-Core Dating refers to the rise of people valuing engagement on issues that matter to them; 70 percent of people are more attracted to someone who actively engages in societal issues. This is also relevant for over half (63 percent) of LGBTQIA+ daters in Hyderabad

Samarpita Samaddar, India Communications Director, Bumble shares, "It's encouraging to see that daters in Hyderabad are taking charge of their dating journeys. We know that cultural conversations around misogyny, women's rights, and social issues, that are intertwined with our dating lives, left many exhausted this year. This has impacted the way people want to date – people are feeling more empowered in their sense of self and seeking out those who value what's important to them, whether it's social causes, lifestyle choices or even their favorite sports.

"People are feeling more empowered in their sense of self and seeking out those who value what's important to them" – Samarpita Samaddar, India Communications Director, Bumble

DATING TRENDS

Young 18 to 25-year-old singles, who make up more than half of Tinder globally, nowadays are ditching the pressure of rushing to a “happily ever after” and are Not Attached To Outcomes (aka N.A.T.O), a dating trend revealed by Tinder’s Year in Swipe 2023. Anukool Kumar, Marketing Director, Tinder India, said that the new generation of daters who are embracing a low-pressure, zero-label approach to dating which opens them up to new types of relationships. In India, 65 percent of 18 to 25-year-olds using Tinder’s Relationship Type feature say they are “open to exploring”, and a quarter (25 percent) using the Relationship Goals feature say they are “still figuring it out.”

Hottest profile trends according to Tinder from its recently released Year in Swipe report



About 65 percent of young daters in India said a verified profile makes a match more attractive

- The optimal number of words in a Tinder bio is between 15-45
- During peak season, there are 519 Tinder bios edited a minute
- Championing social causes such as environment, mental health, and animal rights to their dating mantras like authenticity, no labels, and emotionally available in their Tinder bios
- Share at least five photos that capture your personality at different times. During peak season, 2263 photos are added to Tinder profiles every minute
- Did you know that a verified blue tick on the Tinder profile means your profile shows your potential Tinder matches that it's you in the photos? About 65 percent of young daters in India said a verified profile makes a match more attractive
- Quality Time: Including your love language on your profile helps indicate your communication style for future relationships. Spending quality time together is the most popular love language for singles on Tinder



HELP, I AM DATING

The dating app happn and a mental health organization called The Alternative Story have launched an initiative called #SundaySharingSessions to address the emotional challenges of online dating and provide users with valuable mental health resources. At least 35.6 percent of singles frequently experience emotional exhaustion from dating discrepancies. #SundaySharingSessions is a month-long initiative that is on till February 4th, 2024 and takes place every Sunday from 8 pm to 10 pm on the happn app. This initiative provides happn users with a dedicated and safe space for free counselling chat sessions where they can discuss topics such as digital dating nuances, identifying red flags, practicing self-love, and coping with emotional burnout.





SINGLES MIXER

For singles who want to ditch dating apps and want to get connected in person, old style, Let's Socialise has a Singles event lined up this month. Started by author Ravinder Singh who has several single followers, thanks to his bestseller *I Too Had a Love Story*, Let's Socialise has conducted 62 events in nine Indian cities including six in Hyderabad. Siddharth Bhatia, head of operations, says that many find dating apps superficial with no real human connection. "Texting can feel lonely sometimes. Our Singles Mixers try to bridge that gap bringing together like-minded people over coffee and conversations. These ticketed events also have a fun element like a salsa or cocktail mixing or a sip and paint workshop."

What is the success rate of such events? Do people find their soulmates? Plus, what about the ban from the moral police for encouraging 'a toxic dating culture'? "We don't promise any outcomes – like landing a date or finding their soulmate. We only facilitate people meet their tribe," he says.

"We don't promise any outcomes – like landing a date or finding their soulmate. We only facilitate people meet their tribe"
– Siddharth Bhatia, Head of Operations, Let's Socialise

Also, how do they ensure that only singles are part of the meet-up? The organizers make it clear that the videos and photos of the event will be shared on social media. So obviously those who are in a relationship or are married, don't want to take the risk of being identified and hence stay out, he says.

Price: Rs 2,000 onwards (covers food and beverage costs)

Date: February 11

Venue: To be announced on @letssocialiseofficial on Instagram

Tel: 9873764253



THE MEET-UP EXPERIENCE

Aamer Mohammed, fitness coach and event manager, attended a Let's Socialise meet-up at Farzi Café in Jubilee Hills in May 2023 after seeing an Instagram post announcing a meet-up for singles. "The event had a good turnout, but almost all of them fell through, and I didn't see any solid bonding. However, I thought it was a great platform to give life another chance to connect with someone special. The event creates a space and time for singles to meet," says Aamer.

The process: Ravinder Singh, the founder of Let's Socialise, first breaks the ice with some jokes and conversations; followed by an introduction round, where you are given a certain number of words or sentences to describe yourself. It ends with an open floor where anyone can go and talk to the person they're interested in.



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MEMBERS OF STATUS SINGLE AT A MEET-UP



THE SINGLE WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE

THE TRIBE:

Called GG, the single women's collective with 40 women, started in 2023. It was started as a community for single women who have their own struggles as career women plus society's judgments on their chosen/forced singledom.

WHAT'S IT ABOUT:

To give a safe space to young and old, single women includes all single women – whether unmarried, divorced, separated or widowed. A woman can be single by choice, luck or destiny. "The group is for women to help them lose the burden of having to be in a relationship or meet the societal timelines for marriage and motherhood and no pressure 'to fit in'. It's all about finding one's own tribe," says the spokesperson of the group.

THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT:

The group consists of 40+ single women. Any single woman in Hyderabad can join and stay connected on WhatsApp and there are no social media pages.

VIBING WITH THEM:

The group members meet at an informal café or restaurant, share the costs and thoughts.

Fee: None

Tel: 94938 40589

SINGLE AND SWINGING

A Facebook group called Status Single with about 4,000 women is known to be India's first, only community for single women. Started by former journalist Sreemoyi Piu Kundu in 2021, it is like a community for single women in India who face harassment and pressure to settle down. The Hyderabad chapter of Status Single was formed in May 2023 and has 25 women from various age groups.

To join, send a request to the Facegroup group called Status Single

Mahithi Kamdar, a software professional who heads the Hyderabad chapter makes a video call to ascertain the person's identity. The group members meet on weekends and also share news and info about rental homes, jobs etc. as well. "Any woman who is not legally married is considered single and is welcome to join the community," she says.

Fee: None





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Love Outside the box

OMG...



THE DATING DICTIONARY

Quack Quack app has put together the dating lexicon for those who are newbies in the digital dating world.

THE LOWKEY MOVEMENT: Inspired by celebrities, a growing trend among respondents is the 'LowKey Movement', where relationships are kept under wraps on social media until the big reveal, adding an element of mystery and anticipation. Approximate 26 percent of men and women above 28 disclosed preferring to soft launch their partners on social media platforms and never fully revealing their identity.

SOUL SNUGLING: This year is all about genuine soul connections, and based on the opinion of 33 percent of women between 20 and 30, the priority of most couples will be to create emotionally snug bonds through shared feelings over physical closeness.

INTENTIONAL DATING: Gen Z is opting for slow dating, with even slower commitment. They intend to commit but don't believe in rushing into it. About 23 percent of men between 18 and 25 explained how exploring different relationships is equally important to finding the perfect one.

ZEN DATING: Hearteningly, 41 percent of daters from Tier one, two and three cities said that if a match or relationship affects your mental peace, it is not worth pursuing. More daters are matching with people who positively impact their minds and souls instead of going for good looks and status.

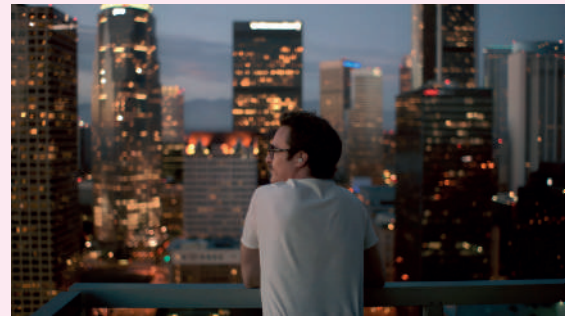
HD: VIRTUAL LOVE THROUGH A MOVIE PLAYLIST

This Valentine's Day, WOW! recommends a list of films that explore the concept of romantic love with help from seven unique stories that are sure to leave you feeling giddy long after they are over. So, get your popcorn ready, cozy up next to your beloved and take a journey with Jesse and Celine, Samantha and Theodore, Carol and Therese, Geet and Aditya, and Rocky and Rani among others.

HER

A possible response to Sofia Coppola's otherworldly *Lost in Translation*, Spike Jonze's film *Her*, set in futuristic

L.A., explores the deep human desire to connect with another. Timely, the film daringly navigates the love story of an unlikely couple, Theodore, a human being (played by Joaquin Phoenix) and Samantha, an artificial intelligence creation (voiced by Scarlett Johansson).



Where to watch? - Amazon Prime Video

THE BEFORE TRILOGY

Long before Richard Linklater stunned the world with his magnum opus, *Boyhood*, he took us on a train ride to Vienna with 20-somethings Celine (Julie Delpy) and Jesse (Ethan Hawke) in *Before Sunrise*. It made us contemplate on our past with their 30-year-old versions in *Before Sunset* and ultimately ask us to explore and accept reality alongside their 40-year-old versions in *Before Midnight*. With a love story that spans two decades and three films, the *Before* trilogy is a must-see classic.

Where to watch: Amazon Prime Video





PAST LIVES

Gaining a tremendous awards-buzz this year is the newly released *Past Lives*, an impressive first feature film by writer-director Celine Strong. Starring Greta Lee and Teo Yoo, this beautiful tale follows Nora and Hae Sung, two childhood friends who are split apart after Nora's family emigrates from South Korea and years later are reunited for one fateful week.

Where to watch: Lionsgate Play



JAB WE MET

Trains, Hotel Decent, Ratlam *ki Galiyan*, *ganne ke khet*, Punjab *di lassi*... need we say more? These keywords are enough to figure out that one Imtiaz Ali film everybody loves. Based in Mumbai, Bhatinda and Shimla, *Jab We Met* plays out like a coming-of-age story of its protagonists, high-on-life Geet and the comparatively somber Aditya, who take us on a journey of self-love and discovery.

Where to watch: Amazon Prime Video



CAROL

Based on Patricia Highsmith's novel *The Price of Salt*, *Carol*, directed by Todd Haynes, is a tender love story between two women Carol Aird (Cate Blanchett) and Therese Belivet (Rooney Mara). It is set against the backdrop of post-World War II New York City during the early 1950's. Visually stunning, effortlessly acted and sensitively crafted, *Carol*, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival in 2015, is a treat for both cinephiles and romantics alike.

Where to watch: Lionsgate Play

ROCKY AUR RANI KI PREM KAHANI

Looking for some Bollywood *masala*? Karan Johar's *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahaani* might just do the trick. The film follows Rani (Alia Bhatt) and Rocky (Ranveer Singh), an odd pair who decide to live with each other's families before tying the knot. What this results in is hilarity and utter chaos. With a cast that includes all-time greats like Dharmendra, Jaya Bachchan and Shabana Azmi, the film is a fun watch.

Where to watch: Amazon Prime Video



YE MAAYA CHESAVE

Considered by *Film Companion* to be one of the '25 greatest Telugu films of the decade,' *Ye Maaya Chesave*, directed by Gautham Vasudev Menon and starring Naga Chaitanya and Samantha, details the various stages of love in the lives of its protagonists, Karthik and Jessie, which is beautifully elevated by A.R. Rahman's music.

■ IPSHITA

Where to watch: Amazon Prime Video





A well-known nightclub from Mumbai opens its 50th outlet and finally comes to Hyderabad

Let's Get Social

Popular for its spirited nightlife, ten-year-old SOCIAL recently threw its doors wide open amidst the high rises of Cyberabad. The breathtaking views of the concrete jungle juxtaposed with the sprawling rock garden is bound to make **Mindspace SOCIAL** a stomping ground for many, if it has not already.

Spanning across three sections, the 500-plus seater lounge comprises an alfresco area, the main café on the first floor, a hang out space for large groups that comes with accessible charging points and community tables; and the high-energy top floor with programmatic lights for those interested in grooving to contemporary music.

CHEERS

We took our seats indoors as contemporary music played above us on the speakers. We ordered two cocktails – the *Toxic Lilit with Ketel One* and a *Bloody Mary* and we loved the former. The tall drink, which consists of vodka, gin,

tequila, rum, apple and cranberry juice, was as fun to drink as it looked.

MUNCHIES

With the drinks, we were served some of the specials including *Marag*, a rich and aromatic mutton soup; an ever-so-soft *Hyderabadi Mutton Biryani*; and some *Crispy and Fiery Mushrooms*. Famished, we dove in and finished every last morsel. And thanks to the excellent dessert combo of *Shahi Tukda* and *Double Ka Meetha* (layered with *rabdi* on top), we ended our lunch on a high note.

THE TUNES

The real cherry on the top, however, is the music. Although daytime has radio tunes playing at a low volume, the evenings, in stark contrast, have the in-house DJ fire things up and transform the venue into the high-energy bar everybody has come to love. Additionally, the weekends have special programming that include various genres such as electronic, techno, dance, and disco



WOW!
Recommends:
Toxic Lilit with Ketel One

music, along with vocal performances from emerging talents from around the globe. ■ IPSHITA

Night out for two: Rs 1,500

Raheja IT Park, Survey No.64, Ground plus, near Mindspace Junction Flyover
 Tel: 86577 25635
 Timings: 9 am to 11:30 pm

WOW! visits the top ladies night venues in the city to come up with a list of places that are making the buzz

Where she sips, sways and sparkles



WHAT: 10 DOWNING STREET

THE BUZZ: They are the OGs of Ladies Night in Hyderabad since their inception in 2000. The only two places in the city where the free drinks are served on the table to the ladies unlike other places where they have to fetch it themselves from the bar counter.

WHERE: Ground floor, White House Building, Begumpet and 4th Floor, Ratnadeep Supermarket, 1st Main Road, Sainikpuri

WHEN: 8 pm to 10.30 pm, Wednesday (Begumpet) and Thursday at Sainikpuri

BOOZE BOUNTY: Beer, whisky, cocktails, shots, wine

Tel: 70329 26106 (Begumpet) and 74165 31010 (Sainikpuri)
Price of food for one (without alcohol, as it's free): Rs 350

WHAT: INSOMNIA

THE BUZZ: Best place to catch the latest female fashion as the crowd is elite and comes there after a bout of shopping at the designer stores nearby. They have DJ Nad and DJ Piyush on the console playing Bollywood music on alternate weeks.

WHERE: 3rd floor, Jaya Chambers, Road No. 36, Jubilee Hills

WHEN: 8 pm to 10 pm, Wednesday

BOOZE BOUNTY: Vodka, beer and whisky

Tel: 73311 54411
Price of food for one: Rs 600

WHAT: CROSSBREED CLUB AND KITCHEN

THE BUZZ: Bollywood night every day by DJ Kim plus a vibrant dance floor and a

great place to make girlfriends as most of them come regularly after work to unwind. Their acoustics is superior and can make anyone dance.

WHERE: Level 2, SLN Terminus, Gachibowli

WHEN: Every night is ladies night

BOOZE BOUNTY: Gin, vodka, whiskey, dark rum, red wine, sangria and cocktails

Tel: 98480 00151
Price of food for one: Rs 500 to Rs 1,000

WHAT: FIREFLY CLUB & SOCIAL ROOM

THE BUZZ: With DJ Paul and DJ Bittu belting out EDM, they have different music playing inside (DJ) and outside (live band) and the place has a Goa casino like vibe. Try their *European Classic Grilled Chicken* after the spirits for best results.

WHERE: Level 5, Sarath City Capital Mall, Gachibowli-Miyapur Road, Kondapur

WHEN: Friday and Saturday, 8 pm to 10 pm

BOOZE BOUNTY: Vodka shots

Tel: 91312 22469
Price of food for one: Rs 500

WHAT: KOMMA - THE CLUB

THE BUZZ: They have a mirror maze walkthrough that heightens the vibe, especially after a few high energy dances. Good place to network as it is housed in a co-working space. "The birthplace for many start-ups over a ladies night," say the divas who visit the place.

WHERE: Workafella Western Pearl, Hitech City

WHEN: Wednesday and Thursday, 7 pm to 11 pm

BOOZE BOUNTY: All the drinks are on the house

WHY: DJ Akhil on the console playing Bollywood chartbusters ■ MANJU

Tel: 79997 98000
Price of food for one: Rs 600





You can learn how to read tarot cards and embrace this astro-spiritual art as a hobby or a purposeful divination tool

Written in the Cards

Often people are simply curious to know why they are going through something in life. The quest to find answers makes them gravitate towards tarot cards.

Maneet Gill aka Maa Nirmi Keertana, a tarot card reader and trainer in Hyderabad, says those interested in the cards will find the means to get a tarot reading done or even embrace reading for others. Tarot is pronounced 'ta-roh' with the t silent in the end.

TAROT AS A TOOL

Maneet is one of Hyderabad's leading tarot card readers and also teaches those who are interested, how to read them. She has been practicing tarot reading since 2007 and started teaching three years later. Over 3,000 people have sought her tarot consultations. In the last 16 years, she has taught over 100 students how to read tarot cards. Tarot cards are tools that can take one into the spiritual realm, she says. When we shuffle these cards or use any other oracle, we open our consciousness to perceive the essence of that moment. Maneet

answers a few FAQs on becoming a tarot card reader.

WHAT IS A TAROT READING?

A set of tarot cards consists of 78 mystical cards that hold deep wisdom. When a person comes for a tarot reading, they have to come with specific questions (when will I marry, when will I stop facing financial distress, etc.) and the tarot reader picks one card each pertaining to each question, from their intuition. The card is considered a divine tool through which one can give answers to the curious person.

WHO CAN LEARN HOW TO READ THE CARDS?

Anyone curious to learn tarot can learn it. The person need not be into any kind of spiritual practice to learn tarot card reading. Tarot cards are tools of astrology, and those who want to become more intuitive can embrace it.

WHY SHOULD ONE LEARN TAROT CARD READING?

To help others understand what's

going on in their life and perhaps help them find a purpose too, in some cases. Tarot card reading is a spiritual activity and some people are naturally drawn towards the mysticism of life.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO LEARN?

The duration of an in-person tarot learning workshop is four days. Besides the theory, dwelling upon concepts such as free will, karma, intuition, etc., there will also be practice sessions on day four. "I practiced tarot card readings for three years and I started teaching when my intuition told me I was ready to do so."

■ MANJU

Fees for workshop to learn how to read tarot cards: Rs 21,000

Fees for a tarot card session: Rs 2,000 per hour with six questions

Plot No. 92, 2nd Floor, Flat No. 201, Trendy Homes, near Hotel Jubilee Ridge, Kakatiya Hills, Jubilee Hills

Tel: 96182 59419

Timings: Workshops: 11 am to 7 pm

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Leverage the upcoming 29 days this month to glow up with a fitness expert

FEBRUARY FITNESS FRENZY



If January hasn't been your month, what with New Year hangovers and travel over the long weekends, February is a great month to start your fitness journey. February with 29 days sounds more doable than a 31-day month, right? Plus, looking a bit more glamorous and toned up and glowing for Valentine's Day sounds like good motivation! Moving your body is important for all, but more so if you are a busy person who works eight hours a day plus does a side hustle (influencer, YouTuber, creator, start-up on the side). It sounds counter-intuitive, but busy people need to add fitness into their busy schedule to have stamina for all their dreams and desires. So, a 7 pm workout after work is a great idea.

Disha Methi Khandelwal has been into fitness for the last eight years. A certified Zumba and STRONG instructor, this Hyderabad girl loves February as she feels it has a unique energy. "I conduct an online challenge for 24 days every year this month on my Instagram page. I have been doing it online via Zoom and Instagram for six years now. I have transformed over 1,000 women so far," she says.

FITNESS CALENDAR

WEEK 1: LET'S GET YOU STARTED!

- **Set clear fitness goals:** Define specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) fitness goals
- **Schedule workout times:** Block dedicated time slots to establish a routine for workouts and set reminders
- **Try different activities:** Experiment with various workout formats such as bodyweight workouts, virtual fitness classes, Zumba, yoga, Pilates, or HIIT

WEEK 2: ADD VARIETY AND NUTRITION

- **Mix-up workouts:** Add something new to the routine to keep it fun and exciting
- **Explore nutrition basics:** Embrace vegetables, lean proteins, whole grains, and healthy fats in your diet

WEEK 3: PERSONALIZATION

- **Identify preferences:** Determine the types of workouts that you enjoy the most and stick to them
- **Adjust nutrition:** Fine-tune your diet based on what makes you feel energized and satisfied, using easily accessible and healthy home ingredients
- **Explore workout attire:** Invest in comfortable clothes to keep your workouts exciting

WEEK 4: CONSISTENCY AND REFLECTION

- **Establish a routine:** It's time that you solidify a consistent workout schedule that aligns with your daily life
- **Reflect on progress:** Review the changes in your fitness and energy levels, and overall well-being
- **Adjust goals if needed:** Review your initial goals and now modify your fitness outcomes sought based on your experiences and current results
- **Celebrate achievements:** Celebrate, you have completed one month of regular working out! Treat yourself now!

DISHA PUTS TOGETHER A FOUR-WEEK EASY BREEZY BEGINNER'S WORKOUT:

FIND YOUR FITNESS FUN

Yoga: If you have a high stress job instead of for those with stressful workdays

Zumba: For those who need to stand a lot (teachers, doctors, hospitality crew, even Metro commuters, etc. (to build stamina)

Kalaripayattu: A martial art if you are creative but at your desk instead of for those those with sedentary, but creative jobs

Animal flow: Perfect if you are nervous and have excess energy instead of for those with excess energy and nervousness that needs to be channelized productively

Sofa workout: If you work from home, this workout is for you. Stand up, and sit down, as though you have changed your mind. Then repeat. Do this 15 times and your workout is sorted. ■ MANJU

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Valentine's Day is about celebrating love, so dress up with all the bells and whistles

Dressed for Romance

recommends women to opt for, "A flowy jumpsuit in soft pastel tones will not only keep you comfortable throughout the evening but also make a stylish statement." To complete the look, opt for delicate dangling earrings and strappy sandals.



With February 14th right around the corner, WOW! asks designers and professionals associated with fashion brands to play Cupid and advise us on how we could best style and accessorize ourselves for a fun Valentine's Day date.

This is what they had to say...

CLOTHING

CLASSIC TO BOLD

Diya Aggarwal, designer of resort wear brand, **Vitamin Di**, talks to us about specific fashion trends that are gaining popularity for women that can be best emulated on a Valentine's Day date.

She shares, "Feminine silhouettes, ruching, cut-outs done elegantly, and floral motifs are all trends that exude romanticism when styled correctly." For colors and fabrics best for a V-Day date night, she says, "I'm a classic pastel or bold red girl on Valentine's Day, and knits like crochet, chiffons, or satin are my fabrics of choice depending on the weather." To tie it all together she advises us to accessorize with, "Statement earrings, delicate jewelry, or a pop of color with a bag or shoe can elevate your look."

JUMP INTO JUMPSUITS

Prashanti Kumar, the creative mind behind her eponymous label,

Her other recommendations:

- Top co-ord set with peplum pleats
- Diverse jumpsuit designs
- Basic embroidered applique calf or mid length dresses
- Slit drape one-piece dress

RELAXED VIBE

Ram and Chandrika of **Chandrika Raamz**, a decade-old label that offers artisanal couture for men, share that as boxy and oversized outfits are gaining popularity amongst the younger generation, "One cannot go wrong with a relaxed fit for a brunch date on Valentine's Day." And for a date night, they advise men to, "Opt for monochromatic outfits in deep tones to create a bold yet refined look."



Red, neon, pink and purple are a few hues she asks us to opt for. And from within the collection, she recommends Melissa heels like the Lady Dragon as the choice this Valentine's.

PLATFORM MULES ARE IN

On what footwear for girls and boys, Sumeet Lohia, Country Manager of ECCO footwear suggests, "Platform mules look sophisticated and still retain a touch of romance, making them the perfect for a special evening."

And for young men, he adds, "Leather sneakers that are stylish, comfort and durable work for and beyond the romantic occasion."



JEWELRY

LOOP IN THE ELIZABETH BANGLE

For jewelry, designer Akanksha Arora of **Amrapali Jewels** asks us to keep it simple. "Classic, dainty pieces of jewelry can elevate your look and create something extremely elegant for your date night," she suggests. She recommends silver azure necklaces, a crystal ring, an Elizabeth bangle, luna drop earrings and more from their Cosmos collection.

■ IPSHITA



As most youngsters dress up casually at other times the designers say that a slightly semi formal outfit will show their commitment to the date.

According to Chandrika Raamz, these are a few do's and don'ts for men when selecting their V-Day outfit:

Do's:

- Choose romantic colors
- Accessorize
- Wear something comfortable
- Express your style

Don'ts:

- Overly casual attire or too formal for the occasion
- Mismatched colors
- Inappropriate graphic tees

FOOTWEAR

HEELS IN NEON

Ruchi Sally, Managing Director of Melissa India says, "To make a basic outfit more evening-appropriate, combine a pair of heels in a bright color or if you are bold enough, opt for print."





As Gudi Sambaraalu, the temple dance festival which aims to revive traditional art and dance forms enters its tenth year, WOW! looks back...

Dance at Temples

When Shashi Reddy attended *Gudiya Sambhrama*, the temple festival of Bengaluru, she realized that Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala give adequate prominence to local art and dance forms. Yet, the same was missing in the Telugu speaking states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

She explains, "It struck me then that while most southern states treasure their language and culture, it wasn't the same in the Telugu states. And, I thought, what better way to bring back art than through temples...where they started from."

After discussing the idea with her friend of two decades, Dr Srinagi Rao, the duo started *Paramparaa*, a not-for-profit organization and thus, in 2015, the festival of *Gudi Sambaraalu* (temple celebrations) was born with the idea of reviving traditional art forms with the temple as their axis. While Shashi runs an NGO called Roshni in Hyderabad, Srinagi is a doctor from the Medwin Hospitals family.

The duo feels that one of the biggest successes of their ten-year journey with the festival has been its visible impact and influence in motivating many people to conduct weddings in the temple courtyards. It has also been instrumental in nurturing music and dance by having

upcoming artists to perform on such meaningful occasions.

"The origin of these performing arts can be traced back to the temples or village squares where people congregated to learn and appreciate the art forms" – Dr Srinagi Rao

Shashi reveals that it has been *Gudi Sambaraalu's* objective to give easy access to good performing arts to the common man. She adds, "While dance and music remain a prerogative of the elite and the learned who witness these programs in *sabhas* and auditoriums, *Gudi Sambaraalu's* initiative of taking these dance forms by renowned artists to temples has raised awareness amongst the general public."

The festival takes place mostly from Sankranti to Shivaratri to take advantage of the cool evenings. Srinagi believes that it pays homage to the long romance India has had with the art of drama, dance and music. "The origin of these performing arts can be traced back to the temples or village squares where people congregated to

learn and appreciate the art forms." She explains, "Since dance and music were originally an important part of the temple ritual, there was the *natya mandap* within the temple, a distinct feature to help encourage the aesthetic value of the performing arts."

Starting from the temples in and around Hyderabad, *Gudi Sambaraalu* has spread its wings throughout the remote temples of Telangana and moved on to capture the audiences across Andhra Pradesh this year. This has helped to discover the many forgotten performing art forms indigenous to local communities. The festival is free for all and conducts its programs in courtyards, *kalyana mandapas* and stepwells of various temples.

Srinagi says, "Even till the 1950's and 60's, temples were the places for the entire village to gather and discuss family/social issues. They were the center of activity and given the backdrop, places for civil gathering. I hope we succeed in getting back at least a portion of that back through our festival."

For this year's schedule (of about 20 programs), the Kavuru family are the patrons. Shashi signs off saying, "When we started around ten years ago, I really didn't know much about classical dance, my interest was in art forms. Now, I can say that I know quite a bit!" ■ MALLIK

The next performance under the Paramparaa Foundation is on Feb 11, 6.15 pm at the British Residency in King Kothi with a performance by Rudrakshya Foundation and the Lasyakalpa Ensemble.



WOW! gets you all the details about Hyderabad's biggest art festival

South's Biggest Art Festival



A holistic celebration of art, the **NEWS Art 24 Festival** is the first of its kind celebration that brings together some of the biggest names in art. Curated by Telangana artist duo Laxman Aelay and Bolgum Nagesh Goud, along with the founder of India Fine Arts, Mumbai, Manvinder Daver, it aims to showcase some of the best artistic practices from the country with Hyderabad as its host city.

Manvinder shares, "This is an endeavor to ensure that artists from the country come together. NEWS stands for North, East, West and South – we have artists across disciplines and ages and it is a true celebration of art. Hyderabad is technically a young market for art where there is a lot of potential to grow and learn. This is our attempt at creating a platform where artists can collaborate with others."



With senior and eminent contemporary artists from all over India such as Anjolie Ela Menon, Prabhakar Kolte, Palaniappan, V Ramesh, Seema Kohli amongst others attending the art camp to be held at State Art Gallery, it will be a great opportunity for art enthusiasts to witness these legends working live and interacting with them.

"The aim is to ensure that Hyderabadis are exposed to India's best artists and their work"

– Laxman Aelay

Camps on folk art, new media etc., curated by art historian Anand Gadapa and artist Nirmala Biluka will be held. Laxman adds "It promises to be one of the biggest festivals of its kind in Hyderabad, giving an opportunity for art connoisseurs and collectors to witness some of the stalwarts in the field. The aim is to ensure that Hyderabadis are exposed to India's best art."

The show will also include programs such as live onsite workshops, art talks, panel discussions, folk art display, music concerts, performances and film screenings. The State Art Gallery is the venue for the event and the entire campus including the nine galleries are booked for the festival, aiming to make it a true celebration of art.

The camps and workshops will be held from February 12 to 17 and the exhibition and other events will be held from February 17 to March 7 at the State Art Gallery. ■ MALLIK



You can spray neon paint on friends just for fun at this new wonderland

Get Splattered!

If you want to have some crazy fun, and create memories you can laugh about even years later, then head to **NEON Wonderland**. It is a facility for friends and family to engage in child like frivolity that doubles up as art therapy. The dark 1,200 sq.ft. paint-splattered room encourages people of all ages to, as its owner declares, “Ditch their stiffness and accept colors with open arms.”

Founded by JNAFAU alumnus and art lover, Harshini Krishna, NEON opened in November 2023 in the bylanes of

Bandlaguda, Nagole, and has already attracted over 1,500 curious customers, from ages three to 70. It was launched with the hope of providing a space not just for children to play around with color and create abstract DIY art, but also one where adults can reconnect with their inner child and let their imagination run amok.

The neon paint hues – which come in a pack of five 100 ml bottles – include blue, yellow, green, pink and orange colors, and are updated every three months. Assuring us of the safety of



these paints, which are used in multiple fun-filled activities that last for an hour per session, Harshini shares, “The colors are skin-friendly with no chemicals and heavy metals in them.”

We had the chance to indulge in some splatter fun ourselves as we entered the glowing neon-splashed room, rocking protective bodysuits and socks. The space, which can house up to 15 to 20 people in every session, is equipped with neon signs placed over paint-struck walls; tables with wet colors strewn across them; and loud music, to elevate the unfiltered madness of it all.

We engaged in *Spin the Wheel*, which involves creating abstract art over a canvas placed on top of a spinning wheel. *Pendulum Art* is where all colors are placed inside a pendulum (hanging above a canvas) that when released, create geometric patterns as it oscillates. Lastly, *Fluid Art*, a simple activity in which you can splash colors of your choice across a canvas (which can fit in the palm of your hand) and create unique abstractions with just the movement of your wrist.

Aside from this, NEON also hosts birthday parties, art sessions and workshops on the rooftop. So far, they have conducted some related to sketching, sculpture painting and pottery. Moving forward, Harshini aims to host more events and slowly yet steadily grow and expand NEON by introducing more outlets.

■ IPSHITA

Price: Rs 699 per person per session

Shivani Nagar, Bandlaguda, Nagole
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MOVIES

At the Cinemas

Crakk

Aditya Datt proved his prowess as a filmmaker with the excellent *Commando* 3. He teams up with Vidhut Jammwal once again to push the latter's martial arts and other skills to the limit. This movie is about a Mumbai-based slum dweller who gets involved in the dangerous world of underground sports, where only winning can help him survive. Nora Fatehi co-stars alongside Arjun Rampal and Amy Jackson, as Jammwal produces the movie under his Action Hero Films banner. Jammwal has been acknowledged as one of the greatest martial artists in the world. Here's hoping this movie brings him the stardom he deserves.

Date: 25th February
Location: The Cinemas



Lal Salaam

Vishnu Vishal and Vikranth star as the lead in the movie written and directed by Aishwarya Rajinikanth, with the superstar in an extended cameo. Based on the backdrop of cricket, the film has music by A.R. Rahman. Having removed itself from the packed Sankranthi releases, the film will now release this month – enabling us to enjoy the superstar's glory in all its might.

Date: 9th February
Location: The Cinemas



Bob Marley: One Love

Tracing the life of one of the greatest singers, Reinaldo Marcus Green places the responsibility of portraying Bob Marley in the hands of Kinglsey Ben-Adir, while Lashana Lynch portrays Rita Marley, as we witness the former's rise to fame and eventual passing in the early 1980's. The score is provided by Kris Bowers while Brad Pitt's Plan B Entertainment produces the film along with Rita, Ziggy and Cedella Marley.

Date: 14th February
Location: The Cinemas



Operation Valentine

Shakti Pratap Singh expands upon his short film on YouTube based around air force pilots as he portrays the challenges they face around their biggest, fiercest aerial attacks our country has witnessed. Varun Tej will make his Hindi debut with this film and is joined by Manushi Chhillar. The film is touted to be the first air force movie in the Telugu film industry and the third to release within six months in the country after *Tejas* and *Fighter*. *Top Gun*-impact, indeed.

Date: 16th February
Location: The Cinemas



Argylle

When in doubt, watch a Matthew Vaughn motion picture, for it provides an experience you have never had before. Staying true to his unique approach and plotlines, Vaughn brings together an enviable ensemble consisting of Henry Cavill, Sam Rockwell, Bryce Dallas Howard, Bryan Cranston, Dua Lipa, John Cena and Samuel L. Jackson among others. The movie is about a spy novelist who is drawn into the real world of espionage when the plots of her books get too close to the activities of an underground syndicate.

Date: 2nd February
Location: The Cinemas



Madame Web

Let's face it – the superhero movies are not the same anymore. Post *Avengers: Endgame*, they don't seem to be working out as they were earlier. But Sony is not giving up and neither are studios with rights to lesser-known characters. Columbia Pictures and Lorenzo di Bonaventura join hands and bring us Dakota Johnson as Cassie Webb – who is forced to confront her past while trying to survive with three young women. In addition, she uses her abilities to see future events within the 'spider-world'. This sounds like a Valentine's Day movie, indeed.

Date: 14th February
Location: The Cinemas



Eagle

Mass heartthrob Ravi Teja seems to be on a releasing spree. He has released six movies in two years. His spell continues as this one hits celluloid screens a month after Sankranthi in order to allow theaters to run! The film is directed by Karthik Gattamaneni – who is known for *Surya vs Surya* but also as a cinematographer for various Ravi Teja movies including *Disco Raja* and *Dhamaka*. The film is an action-thriller with Anupama Parameswaran, Navdeep and Madhoo co-starring and Davzand providing the music.

Date: 9th February
Location: The Cinemas



OTT SHOWS

WOW! recommends these popular movies/ serials on the OTT platform



Killer Soup

Swathi Shetty, a talentless home chef, cooks up a bizarre plan to replace her husband, Prabhakar, with her lover, Umes. When a bumbling inspector and amateur villains stir the pot, things don't go as planned and a recipe for chaos ensues. Starring Konkona Sen and Manoj Bajpayee, it's a gripping eight episode Hindi dark comedy.

Where: Netflix



Bhakhshak

Bhumi Pednekar plays the role of Vaishali Singh, an investigative journalist, in this Hindi movie which is based on real events. It follows Singh as she investigates sexual assaults at a child shelter. The film also stars Sanjay Mishra, Aditya Srivastava, and Sai Tamhankar, and is directed by Pulkit.

Where: Netflix



The Railway Men - The Untold Story of Bhopal 1984

After a deadly gas leak from a factory in Bhopal, brave railway workers risk their lives to save others in the face of an unspeakable disaster. Starring R Madhavan, Kay Kay Menon, it is a dark, ominous thriller in Hindi directed by Shiv Rawail.

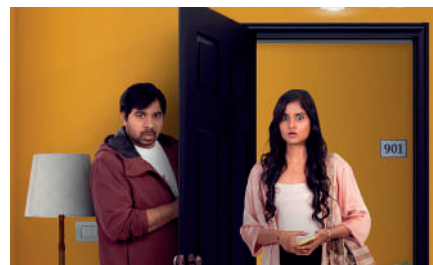
Where: Netflix



Karmma Calling

Set in the world of glitz and glamor, filled with deceit and betrayal, *Karmma Calling* features Raveena Tandon as Indrani Kothari, the reigning queen of Alibaug society. Based on the popular American series *Revenge*, and directed by Ruchi Narain of *Guilty* fame, it is about God forgiving one's sins but karma catching up eventually.

Where: Disney+ Hotstar



My Dear Donga

Featuring the funny duo Abhinav Gomatam and Shalini Kondepudi, *My Dear Donga* is a Telugu romantic comedy about self-discovery and empowerment. Abhinav is stealing the most unexpected things, including a packet of Maggi noodles, while Shalini appears lost in her own sweet whimsical world, leaving a comedic chaos for viewers.

Where: AHA



Players

New York sportswriter Mack devises successful hook-up techniques with friend Adam and their crew, but when she unexpectedly falls head over heels for one of her targets, they all must learn what it takes to go from simply scoring to playing for keeps.

Where: Netflix



Avatar: The Last Airbender

After various attempts to bring the franchise onto the big-screen, Netflix goes all-in on what it knows best – series. Hence, this live-action adaptation of the infamous animated version by the same name has received the big-budget treatment, with Gordon Cormier in the lead as Aang, with the series being set in a war-torn Asia. Developed and directed by Albert Kim, it has music by Takeshi Furukawa. ■ CHANDRAMOULI

Where: Netflix

SNIPPETS



Excitement peaks as *Kalki 2898 AD* unveils release date

Celebrated as a cinematic spectacle, *Kalki 2898 AD* helmed by the visionary Nag Ashwin took the spotlight with a grand announcement of its release date. The film, featuring ace actors like Amitabh Bachchan, Kamal Haasan, Prabhas, Deepika Padukone, and Disha Patani in pivotal roles, promises an extraordinary cinematic experience. Going the extra mile, the makers of *Kalki 2898 AD* announcing the film's release date as May 9, 2024.



Record-Breaking Nominations for *Animal*

Telugu director Sandeep Reddy Vanga and Bollywood superstar Ranbir Kapoor's magnum opus *Animal* has garnered a staggering 19 nominations at the highly anticipated 69th Filmfare Awards in 2024, showcasing the film's impact on various aspects of filmmaking. The diverse nominations span across crucial categories, highlighting its prowess and the talent involved in its creation.

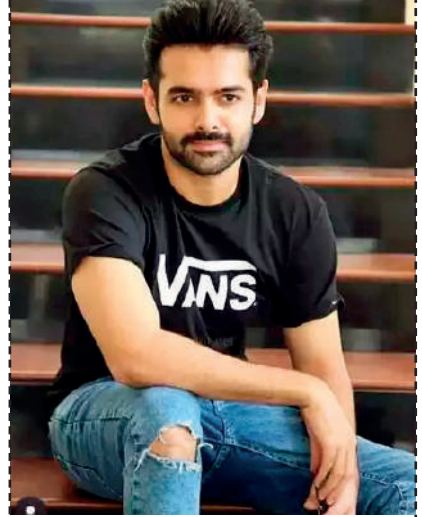
Vanga is being acknowledged with a nomination for Best Director, while the film's lead actor, Ranbir Kapoor, secures a nomination for Best Actor in a Lead Role (male). The stellar supporting cast, featuring Anil Kapoor and Bobby Deol, is recognized with nominations for Best Actor in a Supporting Role (male). Triptii Dimri earns a nomination for Best Actor in a Supporting Role (female), showcasing the film's well-rounded performances.

Prabhas' *The Rajasaab* massy first look

Prabhas, is gearing up to charm audiences once again by collaborating with director Maruthi for an upcoming project that has generated significant excitement.

Prabhas officially reveals his next project today, titled *The Raja Saab*, a captivating romantic entertainer that is a departure from his recent roles.

This Pan-Indian film, boasting an ensemble cast, is slated for release in Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Telugu, and Hindi. National award-winning music composer Thaman S is crafting the film's music.



A make-or-break 2024 for young heroes in Tollywood

The year 2023 proved challenging for some Telugu heroes as their anticipated films faced disappointment at the box office. Now, some of them are determined to make a strong comeback and leave an impact at the box office. From Nithiin to Ram, everyone wants a hit in 2024.

Nithiin faced a setback with *Macherla Nijojakavargam* in 2022. The hero aimed to connect with the mass audience through *Extra Ordinary Man*, as well. However, this attempt also fell short. Undeterred, Nithiin is set to return with a new project alongside Venky Kudumula. The duo wants to turn the tables and score a big hit.

Similarly, Pothineni Ram, after the mass hit *iSmart Shankar*, encountered disappointment with *Warrior* in 2022. Despite facing criticism and trolls on social media for his subsequent film *Skanda*, Ram is now collaborating with director Puri Jagannath for the sequel *Double Smart*. There are high expectations of the film.

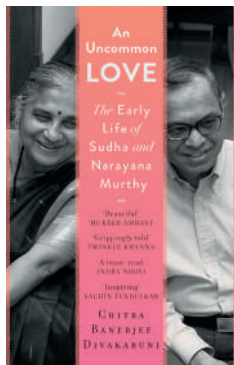
Even Nag Chaitanya has pinned his hopes on the project *Tandel*, directed by Chandu Mondeti, featuring Sai Pallavi as the female lead. The film is being crafted as a pan-India venture.

In addition to these actors, the likes of Vijay Devarakonda, Nikhil, Manchu Vishnu, Vaishnav Tej, Kiran Abbavaram, and others are also hoping for success in their upcoming projects. ■ MALLIK

BOOKS

AN UNCOMMON LOVE: THE EARLY LIFE OF SUDHA AND NARAYANA MURTHY

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni



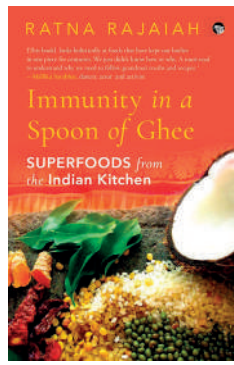
This book marks the coming together of one of India's best-known couples as well as an author known for her strong storytelling. Sudha Kulkarni was forging a career as

TELCO's first woman engineer when she met the serious, idealistic and brilliant Narayana Murthy, and they fell in love. For the first time comes the story of their early years — from their courtship to Infosys's founding years, and marriage to parenthood.

Taking us deep inside the minds, hearts and values of the Murthys, with exclusive access to them, Divakaruni tells their story with extraordinary emotional depth, bringing them and their worlds vividly alive.

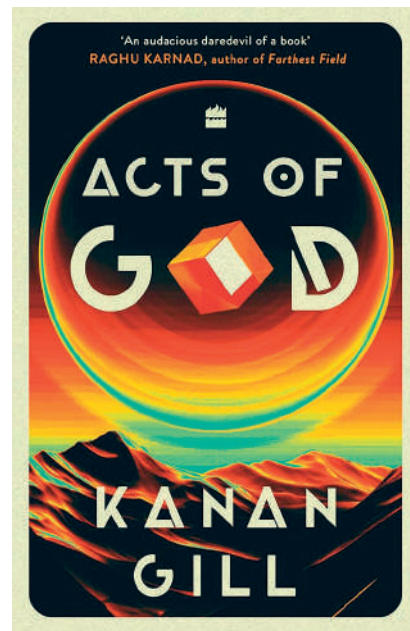
IMMUNITY IN A SPOON OF GHEE: SUPERFOODS FROM THE INDIAN KITCHEN

Ratna Rajiah



Ratna's book delves into immunity boosters commonly available in Indian kitchens — from nuts and amla, to ginger and turmeric. Brilliantly written and full of

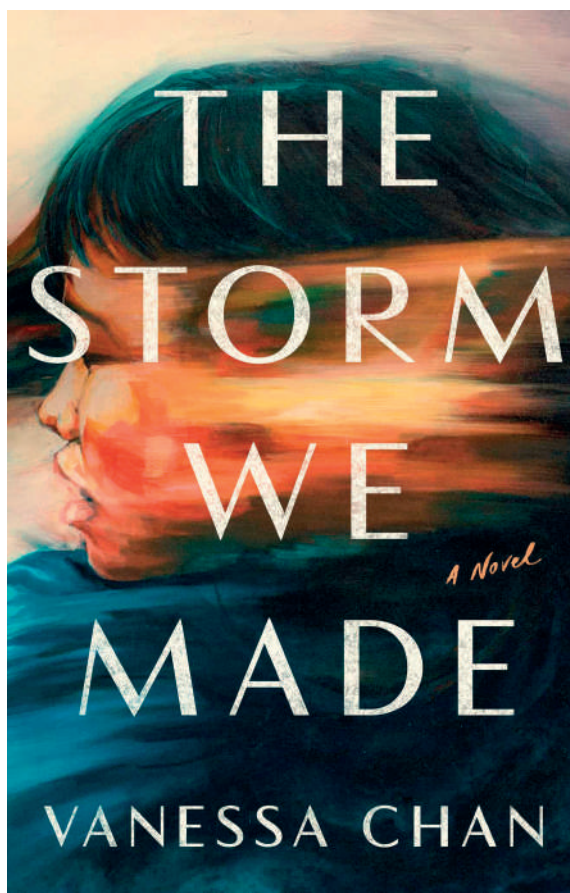
anecdotes from Indian scriptures as well as traditional wisdom, this is a great read that breaks down food myths into easily understandable literature. The author has in-depth research and delves deep into the realm of home-cooked food through the various jewels of Indian kitchens: the Rama and Lakshmana of immunity (turmeric and ginger), the trifecta of health (tamarind, lemon and kokum), as well as the numerous nuts, fruits and oils extensively used in regional cooking. A must read for all ages.



ACTS OF GOD

Kanan Gill

Everyone knows the author as the comedian who rose to fame with his 2014 YouTube series called *Pretentious Movies Reviews* which he co-hosted with his friend Biswa Kalyan Rath. Since then, he has dabbled in stand-up, acting in Bollywood movies and was recently even seen in an international family flick titled *Christmas As Usual*. Now, we get to see him as a fiction writer. *Acts of God* follows a Danish policeman who accidentally becomes a clothing-optional leader of a global group of science haters.



THE STORM WE MADE

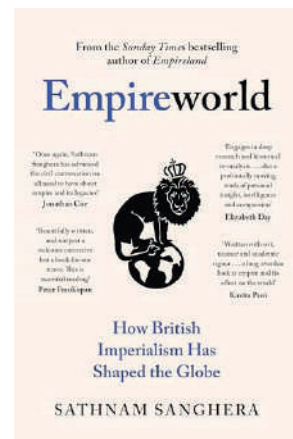
Vanessa Chan

This debut novel from Chan, set during World War II when the Japanese forces invaded Malaysia is topping best seller lists worldwide. It focuses on the tragedies that befall Cecily Alcantara (a secret spy to the Japanese) and her family — consisting of an older daughter who works at a Japanese tea house, a 15-year-old boy who has disappeared and her youngest, who is hiding in a basement. The book chronicles the horrors of war — surviving which comes with a cost.

EMPIREWORLD: HOW BRITISH IMPERIALISM HAS SHAPED THE GLOBE

Sathnam Sanghera

We know that the colonial rule of the British impacted billions of people around the world. Journalist Sathnam Sanghera in this book provides a deep and insightful examination of British legacies across different countries from Mauritius to India to Nigeria and more. Britain's idea of its history is very different from how its colonies experienced it, and this book is a great way to shed light on just how much of an impact the British Empire has had and what these consequences have been, decades after its rule. ■ MALLIK



Sisters Mangli and Indravathi, well-known talents in Telugu music, shine individually and blend their voices seamlessly. From Mangli's record-breaking folk to Indravathi's peppy playback, their musical journey captivates hearts. **WOW!** caught up with them a few minutes before their live show in Hyderabad recently

Sisters. Singers. Sensations



MANGLI

Mangli (originally Satyavathi) and her sister Indravathi Chauhan are formidable forces individually in the Telugu music circuit and when they come together, they are unbeatable. An accomplished folk singer since 2013, Mangli holds a degree in music and has been a familiar face on TV with her chatty new show such as *Teen Maar Varthalu* and *Maatakari Mangli* on Telangana news channels.

However, she burst onto the music scene with her record-breaking Telangana folk song *Rela re rela re* in 2017. She went on to become the voice for songs with a Telangana soul. As a playback singer, she tasted massive success rendering blockbusters such as *Vaadu naidipe bandi* (George Reddy), *Saranga Dariya* (Love Story) and *Ramulo ramula* (Ala Vaikunthapurramuloo) in over 30 films and over 50 independent singles for *Bathukamma* and *Bonalu*. Today, the 29-year-old has her own band – Sounds of Mangli – and performs as an independent artist

and a playback singer for Telugu and Kannada movies.

Social media and Insta reels add value to my craft of singing. They bring me closer to my fans, thus helping me create more content and shows."

— Mangli

Her sister Indravathi, inspired by Mangli, has been a singing prodigy since 2007 and has won music reality shows such as *Bol Baby Bol* on Gemini TV. The 27-year-old playback singer, who also sang for George Reddy was handpicked by composer Devi Sri Prasad (DSP) for the special number *Oo Antava* in *Pushpa: The Rise*. With a peppy beat and catchy lyrics, and actor Samantha dancing to its tunes, the song went on to become one of

the most-played numbers at social gatherings across the Telugu states.

The duo performed live at Zomaland, a two-day food and music festival in Hyderabad in January. Mangli is flush with the success of her first visit to London, as part of the *Oo Antava* rockstar DSP London tour last month, regaling the Indian diaspora. Indravathi is excited about her songs in upcoming releases. Both of them sounded upbeat when they spoke to **WOW!**

How do you prepare for live shows like Zomaland or the London tour? Is it different when you are performing in your home ground Hyderabad?

Mangli: My band, Sounds of Mangli, and I are touring across India and the world most of the time. But Hyderabad is where my heart truly lies! After our performances, we take some time to unwind before getting back to work. Our jam sessions are done twice a week, and they are fun yet rigorous. For festivals like Zomaland, which are on a massive scale and attract a high footfall, we usually adhere to a rigorous routine.

Indravathi: I am a part of Sounds of Mangli, and we jam two times a week whenever we are back in Hyderabad. For Zomaland, we prepared for over a week, keeping in mind the reputation of the event and the expected turnout.

What work are you doing now? Are you coming up with your own albums?

Mangli: I am always working on new songs, not only Telangana folk, but also light, classical, and commercial numbers, which are a hit among the listeners.

Indravathi: I've sung for a couple of untitled films in Telugu and am planning a few of my independent singles, which I am sure will be hits.

What about other live shows, collab albums, and movie songs? Tell us about the exciting projects you are working on.

Mangli: We will be performing in Hyderabad, Goa and Bengaluru in February. I will also be performing alongside Padma Bhushan Sudha

Raghunathanji and Padma Shri Usha Uthupji for a fundraiser for underprivileged children at Chowdaiah Hall in Bengaluru. After that, we will be headed to the US, Europe and Australia, followed by Singapore. I'm also excited about a few movies that I've sung for and my single for *Mahashivaratri* that I've sung and shot for in Kedarnath, which will be released in March.

Indravathi: I am touring along with the band.

“Oo Antava became the biggest party anthem ever since the movie released”

— Indravathi

Which song has given you the utmost satisfaction as an artist and why?

Mangli: *Rela re rela* was the first independent song that helped me propel my singing career and made me the artist. It was released in 2017 for the Telangana Formation Day, and has garnered 26 million views so far on YouTube alone. It is dedicated to all the heroes who struggled for the formation of Telangana; I have sung and danced in the video.

Indravathi: *Oo Antava* from *Pushpa: The Rise*. I was just another artist before this song, but after it released, the kind of adulation and love that

I've been getting from people all over has been indescribable and heartwarming. Wherever I go, the reception is phenomenal, and the love is unconditional. *Oo Antava* became the biggest party anthem ever since the movie released. It has had 399 million views on YouTube.

Where do you hang out on your day off?

Mangli: I'm usually at work, building new ideas with the team for my songs/albums. I'm a family person, and I love to spend time with my parents and my siblings, with whom I share a very close bond.

Indravathi: I am pursuing B.A (MLS) at the moment, and I love going to college, where I spend my time with friends discussing academics, among other things. Most importantly, I spend time with my family, with whom I have a close-knit relationship.

What music or songs are you listening to currently?

Mangli: I'm into *ghazals* and *qawwalis*. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan *Saab*, Mehdi Hasan *Saab*, and Reshma Rathodji are at the top of my playlist.

Indravathi: These days, I'm in the mood for Carnatic classical music. MS Subbulakshmi *Amma*, Bombay Jayashree *garu*, and Mangalampalli Balamurali Krishna *garu's* songs are the ones topping the list currently.

Do you find social media and Insta reels as useful tools in your craft of singing, or is it extra pressure? Does it add to your success and fame?

Mangli: Social media and Insta reels add value to my craft of singing. They bring me closer to my fans, thus helping me create more content and shows.

Indravathi: Absolutely! I believe that whenever I'm not performing, social media is where I seek connections with my fans and keep them close to my heart.

How long do you practice? Where do you seek inspiration from?

Mangli: I practice whenever I get time from my busy schedule, but most of the time, I'm performing in concerts, and that itself keeps me going. My inspiration comes from new people that I meet and when I get to hear their stories, it really helps me stay grounded.

Indravathi: I practice once a week for a few hours, which helps me in improving further.

What is your lifetime goal as a singer/performer?

Mangli: To sing and perform for the one and only A.R. Rahman, sir.

Indravathi: I'd love to perform and sing for Anirudh Ravichander *garu*. I really love his music, which is not only adrenaline-pumping, but also mellifluous. ■ MANJU



INDRAVATHI



MANGLI

SWAYAM SIDDHA, SOURAV DAS AND ANITA



PRAVEEN



KAUSHIK



Sitar Symphony

Jan 23, Shilpakala Vedika

Hyderabad was a pit stop for sitar maestro Anoushka Shankar's India tour. Music aficionados made a beeline to enjoy this unforgettable weekday evening over ragas and rhythms.



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Whisky Wonders

Jan 7, Sattva Knowledge City

Whisky Samba, boasting an impressive 50-foot bar with over 100 vintage whisky selections, marked its grand opening with a dazzling launch party and an exclusive celebrity bar takeover. Superstars Allu Arjun, Rana among others were spotted hanging out with other young and glam actors and entrepreneurs.



LIKHITA AND ASHISH



PRANATI



PRIYANKA, ABINAV, PRAGNYA AND MAHESH

MIHEEKA



RAJKUMAR SINGH, ANNAPURNA MADIPADIGA AND AASHISH MALL



SURESH DAGGUBATI



Art Collab

Jan 20, Film Nagar

The inauguration of HUE – House of Unified Expression by EkChitra saw a gathering of art lovers. The exhibition, in collaboration with South Bay (a studio run by Rana Daggubati) featured 33 contemporary artists including Thota Vaikuntam, Thota Tharani, and Rajeshwar Rao who showed the possibilities of art in varied mediums.

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DEEPIKA, JAYSHRI AND PARIDHI

REEMA AND ANIKA

Lakefront Brewery

Jan 22, Durgam Cheruvu

The launch of Akan, the new Mayan-inspired brewery, on the banks of Durgam Cheruvu, made it to the list of partygoers. The panoramic views of the lake, the Mayan calendar theme on the ceiling and their dessert of the day called *Chocolate of the Gods* got talked about the most.

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