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ON THE COVER: HYDERABADI BIRYANI
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WOW! Hyderabad
7-1-27, Third floor, (Next to Green Park)
Ameerpet, Hyderabad-16
Tel: 6651 1956
email@wowhyderabad.com

FOR ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES
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DISTRIBUTED BY
Margadarsi Marketing Pvt Ltd,
Hyderabad

VOLUME 23 ISSUE 9

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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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Our guide to the exciting happenings in town

SHAKESPEARE REVISITED

AUGUST 9

Some of the finest artists produced by the country come together for a retelling of Shakespeare's murderous play *Macbeth* titled, *Macbeth – What's Done is Done*. Directed by Rajat Kapoor and with a cast that includes Ranveer Shorey, Vinay Pathak, Mantra, and Mansi Multani, this adaptation explores Kapoor's signature dark humor with a scary clownish twist.

Venue: Shilpakala Vedika, HITEC City
Timings: 4 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 499 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)



GEN WHY?

AUGUST 24

Not unlike life, the stand-up *Gen WHY: A Millennial Spiral* by Swati Sachdeva, is as funny as it is messy and real. The show aims to share a laugh or two by exploring relatable themes of love, loss, crucial moments missed, and learning to have a sense of humor about them all.

Venue: Bhaskara Auditorium, Saifabad
Timings: 7 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 699 onwards
(bookmyshow.com)

ECO-FRIENDLY DECORATING

AUGUST 24

Perfect for children age three and above, this Ganesh idol decorating workshop by Candy Castle: Play Café offers young artists a hands-on activity. They get to decorate their own eco-friendly Ganesh idols with paints, glitter, and beads, and to take home and include it in their Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations.



Venue: Candy Castle, Madhapur
Timings: 4.30 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 850 onwards (bookmyshow.com)

A FRIENDLY TÊTE-À-TÊTE

AUGUST 3



This month Qadir Ali Baig Theatre Foundation celebrates renowned actress Suhasini Maniratnam. The event is a part of Remembering Razia Baig Series that shines a light on path-breaking works of Women in Performing Arts. With 350 films, Best Actress awards in four languages and seven Filmfare awards under her belt, Suhasini Maniratnam will be present for an on-stage tête-à-tête with theatre revivalist Mohammad Ali Baig.

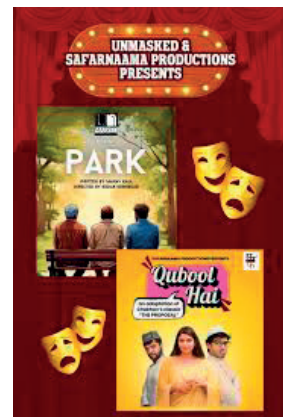
Venue: Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Banjara Hills
Timings: 7 pm onwards
Registrations on:
theatrefoundation@baigtheatrefoundation.com

THEATER THERAPY

AUGUST 9 AND 10

Playing at both Rangbhoomi Spaces & Events on the 9th and at Lamakaan on the 10th, *Therapy Nights* is presented by Safarnama x Unmasked Productions as "a double bill of theater magic". The main attractions are *Qubool Hai* – a Hindustani adaptation of a Chekhov classic; and *The Park* – an abstract and thought-provoking play written by Manav Kaul that explores the converging lives of three men. The event aims to offer evenings complete with drama, humor, and reflection.

Venue: Rangbhoomi Spaces & Events, Gachibowli; and Lamakaan, Banjara Hills
Timings: 7.30 pm onwards; and 8 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 250 onwards (bookmyshow.com)





AN EVENING TO REMEMBER

AUGUST 2

Making a stop in Hyderabad as they tour the world, Bengaluru-based Carnatic progressive rock band, Agam is all set to fire up the stage with their music. Get ready as the rock band – in collaboration with The Cardex Group – promise Hyderabad an evening to remember.

Venue: Heart Cup Coffee, Gachibowli
Timings: 8 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 1,199 onwards (bookmyshow.com)



NIGHTLIFE BEATS

AUGUST 2

An Indian singer-songwriter and record producer from Pune, Ritviz, who has a robust young following, rose to fame with his track *Udd Gaye*. He will perform this song along with his other hits including *Liggi* and *Jeet* at Quake Arena.

Venue: Quake Arena, Kondapur
Timings: 8 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 999 onwards (district.in)



FOR A GOOD CAUSE

AUGUST 3

Run for a cause and make a difference by joining the Telangana 10K Run – Third Edition. With help from the community-driven activity set to take place on Necklace Road, this meaningful initiative, in collaboration with NGO Mohan Foundation, will be promoting organ donation awareness.

Venue: Sanjeevaiah Park, Necklace Road
Timings: 5 am onwards
Ticket: Rs 699 onwards (district.in)



LAUGH RIOT

AUGUST 3

With her traction attracting content on YouTube, comedian Rupali Tyagi has already made a name for herself and is now ready to take on the city with her latest show titled, *Rupali Tyagi Live: India Tour*. Currently on tour, Rupali's set – which she has worked on across multiple shows – is one not to be missed.

Venue: The Comedy Theatre, Gachibowli
Timings: 7:30 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 499 onwards (bookmyshow.com)

A SENSORY EXPERIENCE

AUGUST 24

Ahead of his live concert in Hyderabad this November, world-renowned maestro, AR Rahman is receiving a tribute at Hyderabad's very own, Candlelight Concerts. Set entirely under candlelight, the evening will see live music transform into an exquisitely rich sensory experience, perfect for all ages.

Venue: Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Banjara Hills
Timings: 7 pm onwards
Ticket: Rs 1,399 onwards (liveyourcity.com)



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.

START-UP

AasaanWill, a legal tech start-up in the city, is enabling people to execute their will online without hassles and tedious paperwork

Where there is no will, there is chaos



MYTH #1: YOU MENTION YOUR SON'S NAME AS NOMINEE IN YOUR BANK ACCOUNT AND PRESUME THAT ALL YOUR MONEY GOES TO HIM

Truth: No, he is just the custodian of the money. Unless you have written a will stating that the money should go to him after your death, the money can go in equal shares to your spouse (with whom you may not be getting along or who doesn't need/deserve the money) and your other children.

MYTH #2: IF I WRITE A WILL, EVERYTHING IS IN PLACE

Truth: Chances are that one of your children will contest the will, saying it is not genuine (not made by you) or that you had written it under pressure from others. You will need to get it registered or notarized for more legal validity.

"Unlike earlier times when assets were visible, most wealth today lives in apps and online accounts protected by passwords and multi-factor authentication. And this makes one thing very clear – without a will, your family might struggle to access what you leave behind. That's where **AasaanWill**

comes in handy," says Vishnu Chundi, CEO and co-founder of this Hyderabad-based start-up. Vishnu is an alumnus of HPS Begumpet, BITS Pilani and London Business School. The venture is backed by Tim Draper (Elon Musk's investor) and Techstars among others.

HOW IT WORKS

The year-old legal-tech start-up offers online and premium doorstep services to help Indians create and register their wills within 48 hours. Prices start at Rs 5,000 and go up to Rs 30,000 for lawyer visit and other additions. With over 25,000 customers, including NRIs, doctors, MPs, and educators and operations in 120 cities, the platform ensures asset transfer is smooth, legal, discreet and undisputed. "We have in-house lawyers who draft customized wills within 24 hours. This reduces the time from the traditional three to seven days, enhancing efficiency and user satisfaction," he adds.

Watching his uncle's family go through hassles as he left no will, was one of the factors that urged Vishnu to come up with this start-up concept. Users can log into their website and do the needful

online without having to visit an advocate personally. The firm is working with banks and financial establishments to ensure wills are executed at the stage of investment itself.

BOX: WHY WOMEN ESPECIALLY SHOULD WRITE A WILL

If a Hindu woman dies without writing a will, her assets go to her husband and children – her parents get nothing, even if they're financially dependent on her. That's why wills are crucial to ensure the right people get what you intend.

GUARDIANSHIP OF CHILDREN

In cases where both parents die unexpectedly, who will raise their minor children? India lacks a legal culture around naming guardians in wills, often leaving courts or families scrambling in grief and confusion. With divorces, remarriages, and blended families, legal clarity through wills prevents future disputes and ensures that children and dependents are secure. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 5,000 onwards
www.aasaanwill.com

SPORTS

She won Asia – now she's training for more. Met **Bhuvaneshwari Suresh Jadhav**, the city athlete who eats, sleeps and dreams this martial art

“My dream is to be the Neeraj Chopra of karate”



government's radar, opening doors to funding and better support systems for the next generation.

ROOTED IN SOLAPUR, RISING FROM HYDERABAD

Born and raised in Solapur, Maharashtra, both her parents, Suresh and Sangeeta Jadhav, are karate coaches. They introduced her to the sport, though she didn't take to it until much later. “I used to play handball,” she laughs. “It was only after I randomly lost a karate trial match during college that my ego kicked in. My parents are karate champions and I was mortified that I did so badly in this sport. My father consoled me and asked me to train professionally and give karate a shot.”

FROM RELUCTANT BEGINNER TO NATIONAL HOPE

That moment of defeat pushed her into serious training under national coach Kirtan Kondru at MyDojo Karate in Hyderabad in 2017. What began as a one-month training stint during her Dusshera holidays turned into a full-time career. She stayed back in Hyderabad to train and the winning spree continued. She now trains junior athletes while clocking eight hours a day across three sessions – karate skills, gym and ground workouts – with her eyes firmly on the prize.

A DAY IN HER LIFE

Her schedule is tight: rigorous physical training, coaching junior athletes, and managing her diet with the help of a nutritionist – all while maintaining her weight category. Bhuvaneshwari also teaches karate at the same institute to earn her living. “It's a full-time job. I even take online classes to support myself financially,” she says.

CHALLENGES AND SACRIFICES

Coming from a modest background, funding her international journey hasn't been easy. “Sometimes my mother had to break her savings to send me for my ranking tournaments,” she admits. With no initial government support, she cobbled together sponsorships and coaching income to fund global tournaments costing up to Rs 30 lakh a year. Personal life took a backseat. “No vacations, no relationships – it's just me and karate,” she says. The karate girl also says that her relatives and well-wishers always remind her she is 29 and that she should focus on ‘settling down’. But she is blessed with a parent (mother Sangeeta who runs a karate school) and a sibling who encourage her to chase her dreams.

FUTURE GOALS AND BIGGER DREAMS

Now on the probable list for the 2026 Asian Games in Japan, Bhuvaneshwari is focused. “If I win a medal there, it'll change the way India looks at karate,” she says. “My dream is to be the Neeraj Chopra of karate – so that no one else has to struggle the way I did.” Bhuvaneshwari is looking for sponsorships and says it can help athletes focus on the skill than spend time raising funds for the next tournament. ■ MANJU

At just 29, Bhuvaneshwari Suresh Jadhav is rewriting India's karate history. The athlete who is training in Hyderabad recently brought home India's first-ever senior medal in the 21st Senior Asian Karate Championships 2025 at Tashkent, Uzbekistan – a milestone moment in a sport that, until now, lacked international recognition in the country. “For 50 years, we hadn't won anything on this stage,” she says. “Now things are changing.”

WINS THAT CHANGED THE GAME

Bhuvaneshwari's 2024 Asian Championship semi-final finish, where she narrowly lost to Japan's world no. 2, marked a turning point. Her performance put Indian karate on the





CAUSE

Established last year, this foundation provides equal opportunity to budding young athletes in the field of table tennis

NURTURING RESILIENT FUTURES

Motivated by a desire to aid those who do not come from privilege, and by a belief in the power of sports to foster strength in the face of life's challenges, Ashish Chakravarty founded **SPARS Foundation** in 2024. It was established with the aim of inculcating self-confidence and mental strength in children as young as six through a game of table tennis – a sport Ashish felt deserved a boost.

"We encountered several children from underprivileged backgrounds and sought to provide them with an opportunity to learn and train in this sport. Remarkably, they began to excel, and over time, two of these children became top-ranked players in their respective age groups and also represented Telangana in national tournaments," shares a proud Ashish.

SPARS' ORIGINS

The Foundation emerged out of Ashish's academy, Ping Pong @ SPARS Table Tennis Academy (for which he drew inspiration from his father, a badminton player). Situated in both Yapral and Kukatpally, the academy

was opened right before the global lockdown in 2020. Initially, the money to support children from low-income families was raised through self and crowd-funding. Eventually, it dawned on Ashish that for a more sustainable approach he would need corporate assistance.

"Consequently, we decided to establish the SPARS Foundation with the hope to garner sufficient support from corporate entities to ensure a smooth journey for these children and facilitate their training to be more rigorous and effective," he explains.

TRAINING & COUNSELLING

With readily available access to equipment – including rackets and multiple TT tables across both locations – and under the supervision of experienced coaches, currently, a total of 50 children train at the academy for seven to eight hours every day. This includes eight children (four girls and four boys) supported by the Foundation, who have gone on to participate in state and national competitions.

The daily training includes a focus on skill development, fitness training, and meditation. Counselling is offered to parents in order to help them understand the importance of familial support and the adverse effects of unchecked parental expectations.

ACHIEVEMENTS

So far, two children from the Foundation have gone onto represent Telangana in the national championships for two consecutive years. Both have also maintained a spot in the top four at the state level since the second year of their participation. Currently, they are ranked number 1 in the under-15 category, and number 3 in the under-13 category.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1. Provide financial support through donations.
2. Suggest potential corporate entities that have CSR.
3. Boost morale through encouragement and support. ■ IPSHITA

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What the Night Mayor proposal by the state means for you, me and the city's businesses

Will we become a city that never sleeps?



By midnight, most Indian cities wind down, but Hyderabad may soon be just getting started. Picture this: Sipping artisanal coffee at 2 am, grabbing street food after a late-night film, or shopping post-midnight without a worry. That's the vision behind the state government's bold new plan to appoint a **Night Mayor**, a move set to reimagine the city's after-dark vibe. Announced with much buzz in July by the government, this proposal hopes to unlock Hyderabad's full potential as a 24x7 destination – vibrant, safe and buzzing well past bedtime.

THE BUZZ BEGINS

The state cabinet announced plans for a Night-Time Economy (NTE) framework, including appointing a Night Mayor, creating a Night-Time Economy Authority (NTEA), and launching a digital registry – all intended to streamline late-night operations and safeguard after-hours activity. The proposal was unveiled in response to a growing demand for extended hours of activity in zones like Hitec City, Madhapur, Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR CITIZENS

- More convenience, more vibrancy: Commuters, shift workers, and night-owl foodies stand to benefit the most. With shops, cafés and pharmacies staying open till late, residents may enjoy 24-hour access to essentials – no more scrambling on Sundays or late at night.
- Some commercial zones could run until 2:30 am officially, eliminating the need for individual night permits.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR BUSINESSES

- Retailers & Malls: A dedicated 24/7 “open-zone” model means exemptions from individual night-time permits – a big ease on bureaucracy.
- Cafés, Restaurants, Bars: Extended hours drive late-night footfall, boosting revenues. For eateries near IT hubs, this caters perfectly to shift-based professionals.
- Hotels & Tourism: A true “city that never sleeps” enhances tourism, especially around Charminar and popular entertainment corridors.

GLOBAL SCENARIO

- Amsterdam: Pioneered the Night Mayor in 2012. Mirik Milan helped bring 24-hour licences, curb noise and violence in nightlife spots, and launched Rembrandtplein Hosts



(a team of trained, friendly patrollers deployed in the area of Rembrandtplein in Amsterdam during peak nightlife hours) to de-escalate tensions – a model later adopted in Paris and London.

- Greater Manchester (UK): In 2018, Andy Burnham appointed Sacha Lord as “Night-Time Economy Advisor” to improve transport, safety, and night-shift wages.
- Ottawa: Mathieu Grondin's 2024 appointment aimed to change Ottawa's “boring” reputation with a plan to cut red tape and energize local nightlife.

WHAT THIS COULD LEAD TO

Safer nights: Coordinated security, patrols, and digital monitoring.

Economic boost: More jobs in hospitality, retail, transport, and logistics.

Urban vibrancy: 24-hour districts could emerge, much like Amsterdam's Chinatown for night culture. ■ MANJU

DID YOU KNOW?

- Over 80 cities globally – Amsterdam, London, New York, Prague, Ottawa – now have an official Night Mayor.
- Amsterdam's after-hours economic activity rose by roughly 20% after the Night Mayor model was institutionalized.

TOP STITCH PRESENTS

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2025

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10TH

September 2025

10AM – 8PM

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Convention Centre**

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hills, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad



Miss India 2020,
Manasa Varanasi, chose
cinema over a corporate
life, easing into films with
her next, *Couple Friendly*,
and her moves are
already stirring curiosity

BY MANJU LATHA KALANIDHI

“I’m here
to create, and
to entertain”

There's something about Telugu cinema and its obsession with beauty queens. From Rashmika Mandanna, who became a national crush and a household name, to Meenakshi Chaudhary, who's making waves with one hit after another – the Miss India to movie star pipeline is officially booming. Now, another name joins this luminous line-up: Manasa Varanasi. Poised, passionate, and refreshingly grounded, the former Miss India World 2020 has just wrapped up her debut film *Couple Friendly* and is ready to charm Telugu audiences, not just with her looks, but her earnestness and quiet fire.

CROWNING GLORY

Born and brought up in Hyderabad, Manasa spent her childhood between Ashok Nagar and Indira Park, enjoying pani puris and catching sunrises over Tank Bund. "Hyderabad is like a mother to me," she says simply, the affection unmistakable. Her father is an electrical engineer, her mother a homemaker, and her younger sister, her biggest cheerleader.

SPREADSHEETS TO SASHAYS

An engineering graduate in Computer Science from Vasavi Engineering College, Hyderabad, Manasa began her career as a financial analyst. But COVID-19 changed everything. "I was working from home and juggling my corporate job while prepping for Miss India," she shares. That balance between spreadsheets and sashays paid off – she won the title in 2020, and soon found herself walking on international runways.

GOODBYE CORPORATES

Representing India at Miss World 2021 in Puerto Rico was a turning point. She made it to the top 12, met contestants from across the globe, and felt her inner compass shift. "I had an existential crisis when I came back," she confesses. "Do I go back to a 9-to-5 or do I listen to what this new chapter is telling me?"

The answer came naturally: the arts had claimed her. Since then, Manasa has immersed herself in everything from diction and fitness to dance and acting workshops. "After the initial rebellion of choosing Miss World, the transition to cinema felt easier to explain – especially to myself," she says. As she is all set for her second cinema outing this year, we catch up with her.

ABOUT COUPLE FRIENDLY

It's surreal! I've been dubbing, doing edits, reviewing the cuts – it's all new but exciting. I'm literally on my toes every day. And when I'm not on set, it's ads, events, dance classes, or the gym. No two days look alike.

NELLORE NERAJANA

It's a Telugu-Tamil bilingual romcom called *Couple Friendly*, directed by Ashwin Chandrasekhar. It's a sweet romance between a guy from Nellore and a girl from Chittoor, set mostly in Chennai. I play a modern, relatable girl navigating love and life – something that hits close to home.

TELUGU AMMAYI

Telugu is my mother tongue, so yes, I am a Telugu Ammayi in Tollywood. But since we shot in Chennai, I started learning Tamil too – watching southern cinema really helped. I've been exploring Malayalam films as well. There's so much richness in our regional stories.





SELF-HELP MANTRA

Uncertainty is the name of the game now. In corporate life, everything was linear. Here, I could be shooting 16 hours a day or waiting on a call sheet. But the beauty is – I tell myself: “You’ve got this, Manasa.” I’m here to create, to entertain, and to put out good content. That mindset makes it easier.

EXISTENTIAL CRISIS POST-MISS WORLD

It was lonely at times. It’s a personal journey and no one can really do it for you. I asked myself what I wanted – and the answer was this. Being in the limelight, whether it’s on a ramp or a set, gave me clarity. I’ve learned to surround myself with good energy.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

There’s no such thing as “regular”! If I’m home, it’s gym, dance class, answering emails and DMs, and checking off my mental boxes. I’m also part of a project called Mix Soil – we’re trying to raise awareness about how organic waste unnecessarily ends up in landfills. I want to live a rich life – environmentally, emotionally, artistically.

COMING SOON

I got introduced to Telugu audiences with *Devaki Nandana Vasudeva* in 2023, and now my full focus is on doing films that excite me. I want to work with directors who see something new in me. For now, let me bedazzle you all with *Couple Friendly*. Stay tuned.

“Being in the limelight, whether it’s on a ramp or a set, gave me clarity”

QUICK TAKE

- **Three hashtags to define you:** Resilient. Curious. Calm
- **Favorite activity in city:** Morning run at KBR Park
- **Growing up ritual:** Streetside dosa after a cycle ride at Necklace Road!
- **Hangouts spots:** One8 Commune and Koko
- **Mantra during tough times:** “Apna time aayega” and: You’re here for a reason
- **Favorite monument in city:** Golkonda Fort. The weather, the history, the quiet – it’s my kind of spot

**“Dream is not that
you see in sleep.
Dream is something
that does not
let you sleep.”**

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Kyma is for those who love food that blends multiple cuisines to perfection

Mediterranean Magic with a Touch of Asia



WOW!
Recommends
Cold Mezze
Platter

A high-concept restaurant from Mumbai and Pune that brings its bold Mediterranean-Asian fusion to Hyderabad. **Kyma** (meaning a wave in Greek) is all about 3Cs: cultures, cuisines, and craft. Think dim-lit elegance, tribal-themed floors, clay-toned walls and a menu that travels as much as you do. Our favorite spot was the artefact rack near the private dining room.

BEST SELLERS:

Chicken Shish Tawook (a Middle Eastern dish of juicy, marinated grilled chicken skewers, typically served with garlic sauce and warm pita) and Classic Lebneh Shug Pockets (soft pita parcels filled with creamy strained yogurt (labneh) and a spicy, herbaceous Yemeni green chilli sauce, offering a tangy and vibrant bite).

LEVANTINE LOVELIES:

The Cold Mezze Platter, a colorful platter featuring Muhammara (pomegranate walnut dip), Labneh (yogurt-based), Baba Ganoush (brinjal and tahini dip), and Asparagus Matabal (roasted asparagus dip), served with pita bread and lavash. Picture-perfect – and palate-approved. We went for the Baklava Cheesecake and realized that dessert is not an afterthought here – it's a whole vibe in itself.

DRINKS TO DREAM ABOUT:

We loved the name of the liquor menu called Liquid Atlas – a cocktail map you'll actually want to get lost in. From desi blends to the classic ones, they have over ten crafted cocktails to choose from. We opted for the Starfruit Surprise, which came with vodka/gin and sparkling wine on top. ■ MANJU

Meal for two: Rs 2,500

No. 8 & 9, Tower 2, A Wing, Third Floor,
Sattva Knowledge Park, Madhapur
Tel: 86554 72685
Timings: 12 pm to 1:30 am



WHAT'S NEW

7 DESSERTS FOR 7 DAYS

Burma Burma, at Sattva Knowledge City, has introduced The Sweet Life – an all-new dessert menu of seven indulgent plated creations. Try their Milk Tea Cheesecake (Basque style cheesecake meets Burmese milk tea paired with apple compote and cinnamon ice cream) or the Silkroute Sundae serves up a saffron pistachio gelato with apricot and saffron confit, all encased in a gold chocolate shell. The new desserts have been curated by the team of chefs at Burma Burma led by Chef Ansab Khan in consultation with award-winning patisserie expert Chef Vinesh Johny.

Tel: 99202 40500

KOREAN KROSSOVER VIBE

Combining three of our favorite urban delights – Netflix, *Squid Game* Season 3 and Korean flavors, Good Flippin' Burgers has launched the Korean Krossover, a limited-edition menu that aims to meet the rising demand for Korean experiences in the city. The line-up includes seven signature products including Bean Korean, The Cheesy Oppa, and Chikkin Burger 456 made using in-house sauces and secret recipes, along with sides like Korean Tender Bender and Kimchi Spiced Churros.

Instagram: @goodflippin



BOOK YOUR GRILL

Keeping up with the monsoon rituals, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre has launched 'Book Your Grill' dinners at Permit to Grill for group diners seeking a custom and lively barbecue experience, that lets you take charge of the grill for a monsoon evening. The diners can choose their own meats and vegetables while a dedicated chef and service team prepares and serves it fresh at their table. The experience is complemented by premium alcoholic beverages and a soulful session of live music that sets the mood just right for the evening.

Instagram: @novotelhyd



Welcome NRI's to
The NRI Fest

NEERU'S
Indian Ethnic

The Most Preferred brand by
NRI's

Celebrate Shravanam
with Neeru's



Bridal wear | Silks | Sarees | Lehengas | Gowns | Ready to wear
| Unstitched | Mix & match | Kids wear



Introducing the spirit of Türkiye, this new hub is an exciting addition to the city's fast-growing culinary scene

The Türkiye Style

Bringing authentic Türkiye flavors to the city of Nizams is **Kebapci Hills**. What began as an experimental kitchen by food entrepreneurs and brothers Aasim and Adeeb Shah is now a chain of bustling hubs across Chennai, Bengaluru, Dubai, and now Hyderabad.

"From a four-seater in Chennai to launching Kebapci Hills in Hyderabad, this journey has been incredible for us. Each step has been rooted in our passion for authentic flavors, slow-cooked traditions, and heartfelt hospitality," share the siblings.

THE AMBIENCE

Offering Middle Eastern vibes with the use of traditional design and Turkish music, Kebapci opens its doors to a homely 120-seater space that includes a grand staircase.

AUTHENTIC FLAVORS

A feast for the eyes as much as for our ravenous appetite, the authentic Turkish dishes recommended and that we opt for

include Gazia Kebap, minced mutton on a flat sheekh kebab; Urfa Ribs, mutton ribs cooked slowly in barbeque pits; Şiş Peynir which has smoked cottage cheese marinated with earthy Turkish spices, a dish we creatively paired with the pizza-like Cheese Pide; the Biber Lamb Mandi, a traditional Eastern Türkiye mandi that offer a burst of flavors; and the Tabouk Platter which included a variety of dishes like falafel, Tabouleh, Urfa Peynir, Baylidi, rice, hummus, and pita bread.

Additionally, we paired our lavish meal with Cranberry and Lemon Mojitos, and ended it with desserts like the Cashew Baklava, carefully handcrafted by the chefs of Gaziantep; and the excellent Shish Kunafa, a sweetmeat that was certainly one of the highlights. ■ IPSHITA

Meal for two: 1,300 onwards

Road No. 7, Banjara Hills

Tel: 70903 77366

Timings: 12.30 pm to 12.30 am

Instagram: @kebabci.hills



WOW!
Recommends
Paprika Paneer
Bagel

This Strasbourg-based food chain offers some of the most richly layered bagels you've ever had

BONJOUR BAGELSTEIN

Take one bite out of a bagel from **Bagelstein** and you will be hooked. The famous bread roll hides a blend of rich flavors within that pack a powerful punch.

FRENCH CHARM

Founded in Strasbourg in 2011 by Thierry Veil and Gilles Abecassis, Bagelstein currently has 107 stores spread across France, Italy, Luxembourg, and Switzerland, making it a cult favorite across Europe. On bringing their one-of-a-kind bagels to the city, Thierry says, "India presents strategic growth and an exciting opportunity for us, and we are delighted to introduce our delicious blend of French charm and cuisine to Hyderabad."

LA VIBE

Bagelstein opened to loud cheers at the Nexus mall in early July. The vibrant event saw Thierry joined by special guest Noel Sean (actor, singer, rapper), and together they launched the cozy 700 sq.ft. lounge located on the UG floor of the mall. Flavorful bagels coupled with friendly service and comfortable seating amidst a stretch of stores of leading brands and eager shoppers made for a memorable experience.

TRÈS DÉLECTABLE

Famished and ready for some bagel therapy ourselves, we opted for their excellent Paprika Paneer Bagel which we paired with a Chocolate Fudge Brownie and Strawberry Shake. Other bold options to look forward to include the Halloumi Bagel, Josephine Bagel, Mango and Banana Smoothie, and the Strawberry Iced Tea. ■ IPSHITA

Meal for two: Rs 499

UG Floor, Nexus Hyderabad Mall, Kukatpally

Tel: 78428 75830

Timings: 10 am to 11 pm

WOW!
Recommends
Tabouk
Platter





QOSA

KITCHEN & BAR

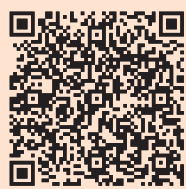


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· BRUNCH ·**

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SUNDAYS | 12 PM - 6 PM

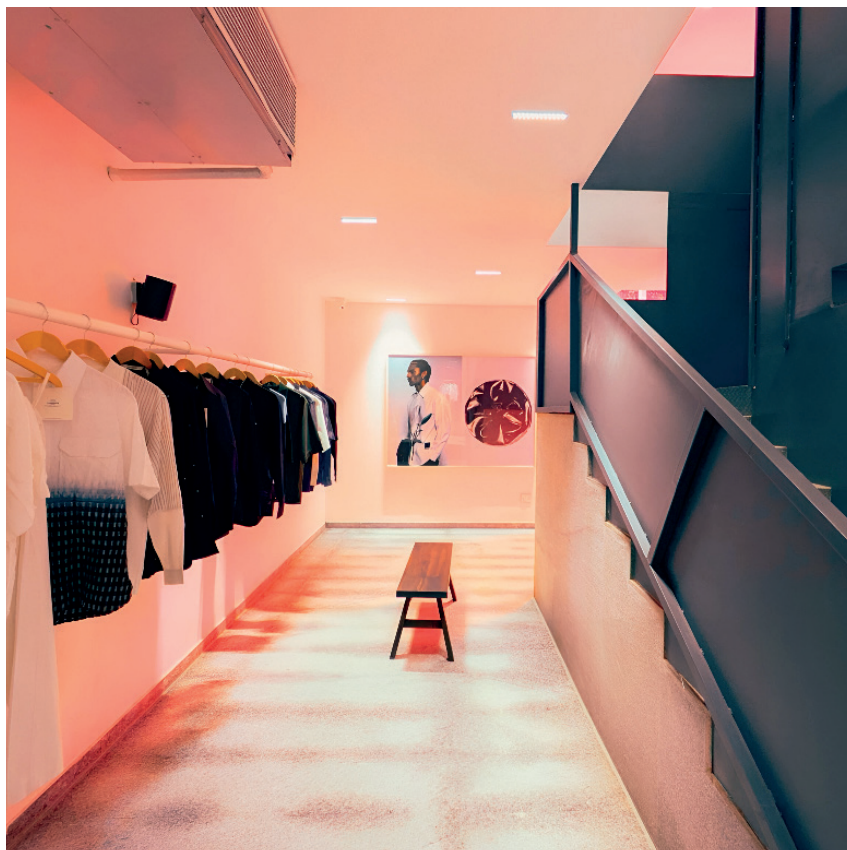


*Scan to reserve a table
or call 9995939299*



Delhi-based **Lovebirds** launch their first store in the city

FOR THE LOVE OF PRET



Playful is the word that comes to mind as we browse through the silhouettes crafted by Designers Gursi Singh and Amrita Khanna. Showcased proudly at the store launch of their label **Lovebirds**, the prêt wear brims with happy colors.

Why did they choose Hyderabad for the Delhi-based Lovebirds? Gursi shares, "With every store, we aim to create something more than a place to shop. Bringing Lovebirds to Banjara Hills was a carefully deliberated decision. It's a neighborhood where tradition and modernity coexist – and that dialogue resonates deeply with us."

A SPIRITED LAUNCH

The elegant soirée took place in late July and saw Hyderabad's elite come together to support the creative minds behind the label. Cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a live musical performance by artist Sijya added to the merriment. An unconventional blend of sophistication and quiet chaos made up the ambience at Lovebirds, effortlessly reflecting every single piece on display.

KEEPING IT EDGY-YET-SIMPLE

The label's best loved pieces, and their latest collection, the Pre-Fall 2025 are sprawled across two floors. Both women's wear and menswear are housed under one roof, offering a wide selection of edgy-yet-simple silhouettes. Ethically sourced from across the country – the fabrics used to craft everything from maxi dresses for women to co-ords for men – include cotton, denim, organza, silk and more.

Discussing the hidden world that they operate from as designers and artists to create these singular pieces, a reflective Gursi concludes "An artist and a designer cannot work without their own hidden worlds. After working on a really big collection, we need to go into our own cocoons for some time. I appreciate other artists who also need to go into their own zones. Without it, we won't be able to move forward."

■ IPSHITA

Price: On Request

Ground & First floor, 8-2-460/2/A, Road No. 4, Banjara Hills

Tel: 91549 27506

Timings: 11 am to 7 pm

WOW!
Recommends:
 White and black
 set with kimono
 sleeves



The man behind the revival of the Parsi Gara, Ashdeen Lilaowala unveils his label, **Ashdeen** at the Anahita store

Gorgeous Garas

Ashdeen Lilaowala is an award-winning textile designer, author, and renowned for reviving the Parsi Gara. Fashion design education played a huge role in his journey, as it began back in his college days at NID, where he studied textile design and was mesmerized by different textiles. He later worked with UNESCO, travelling across China, Iran, and India to study the traditional Parsi weaves and contribute to the research.

PRINCESS DIARIES

The inspiration for his collections comes from books and travelling, by studying the patterns in floor tiles around the world and ancient Indian architecture. He also has a saree capsule inspired by

the Hyderabad princess Niloufer in his collection named 'Princess Diaries'. This range was specially created to celebrate the launch of the new **Ashdeen** store-in-store at Anahita, Hyderabad. The collections also have Japanese influences, with the depiction of cranes and kintsugi art across some designs, with kimono sleeves and coats.

BEYOND THE LOOM

The store, designed by architect Mouna Reddy resembles a jewelry box reminiscent of the rich heritage of Hyderabad. The décor has floral details in gold and elegant interiors. The garments have intricate embroidery for all moods, in pastel flowers and vibrant hues, and Bandini sarees fused with Gara borders priced at around Rs 2,00,000. There is plenty of variety in the collection with lehengas and peplum tops, coat sets, and crop tops for all occasions. ■ KARTHEEKA

Price: Rs 20,000 onwards

*Ashdeen Store at Anahita, Krishnama House, Road 7, Banjara Hills
 Tel: 99993 88442
 Timings: 11 am to 8 pm*

Entrepreneur Mallika Reddy launches **Malle**, a brand for people and the planet, that is fresh, fun and fully you

Wear Your Attitude

After making her mark with Cancelled Plans, a brand known for its innovative reuse philosophy, mana Hyderabad girl Mallika Reddy is back – this time with something even more personal. Say hello to **Malle**, her fresh, youthful label inspired by her childhood nickname Malle (pronounced mall-ay) – a name that captures her playful spirit and rootedness.

ALL-NATURAL ATHLEISURE

With Malle, Mallika brings together creativity, comfort, and cool, all wrapped up in 100 percent organic cotton and dashes of nostalgia (there's even a tattoo of a Mallika juice box!). "We keep the vibe young, gender-fluid, and joyful – built for the kind of people who wear their personality on their sleeves, literally," says Design Head Ayesha Ali, who came on board in April. Athleisure made from natural materials is their biggest flex.

CO-ORDS, MUSCLE TOPS & MORE

Malle's debut drop features two playful collections – 'Creative Juice' and 'Monkey

Business', each packed with personality and punch. Think street-style joggers, muscle tanks, sleeveless hoodies, cardigans, coordinated color fit sets. "Nearly 70 percent of the line is unisex, encouraging effortless mix-and-match across moods, genders, and seasons," adds Mallika. The color-coded layout makes browsing a breeze. We loved the pop-bright pink and mellow yellow co-ord sets.

GET YOUR AIRPORT LOOK!

From playful pop-ups to color-coded floors, and similar prints in varied shades, Malle offers wardrobe versatility. "Perfect for airport looks, coffee dates or simply lounging like a boss," add the ladies. Their second collection is dropping around the Independence Day long weekend. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 2,199 onwards

Available online on www.mallewear.com and Myntra

Timings: 11 am to 8 pm

WOW!
Recommends:
 Pink and
 yellow
 co-ord set



shopping

WOW!
Recommends:
 The Baaz Indrani sneakers with ghungroos

We visit Broadway to check out the homegrown streetwear brand, **Gully Labs**

Gully Boys

"Sneakers are to men what handbags are to women," says the brand's Founder, Animesh Mishra which speaks about his passion for them. **Gully Labs** launched in Hyderabad with their first ever limited edition named 'Chai Beige' which represents the city's love for chai. The color scheme follows suit with its Kantha stitch-inspired embroidery, made with genuine leather, and natural rubber and hand-stitched soles.

Gully Labs is fuelled by nostalgia, and visuals take Indian aesthetics and convert them into contemporary minimal designs, while retaining the essence. This approach creates the right balance of modern and desi elements, rather than making the sneakers look more ethnic, to achieve a perfect blend that is both modern and desi.

CULTURE ON CANVAS

Gully Labs' sneaker collections represent the rich culture of South India, like the Naadu sneakers, which represent Kerala and Onam with kantha embroidery and Malayalam typography. The brand is looking forward to creating more collections to represent other states and their cultures.

Their handcrafted sneakers have a rugged look with some distressed details like embroidered sides and a contrasting color scheme. Their structure and fit differ for women and men in the same design to cater to the comfort of the wearer. While the men's are sleeker, longer and wider from the sole to toe, the women's are curvier with a wider forefoot and narrower heel.

KULFI COLLECTION

Some of their collections are inspired by local food like Kulfi and come in four colors representing the dessert's flavors – badam, kesar, pista and rabri. Another collection, named 'Class Rebels' has old school nostalgia written all over the range, with inspiration from Velcro sports shoes in green and black to disobeying in style. If you're a person who loves sneakers to the point you wear them with your traditional and ethnic wear, then you absolutely must check this brand out. ■ KARTHEEKA

Price: Rs 5,000 onwards

Road No. 2, next to Park Hyatt, Sri Nagar Colony, Kamalapuri Colony, Banjara Hills
Instagram: @gullylabs

Hand block printing is the core element of **Cinnamon Vogue's** design language

Handmade and Homegrown

WOW!
Recommends:
 Pink Twill Kurti



In a world of fast fashion, the joy of handmade things lies in their quiet imperfections, the human touch, and the legacy they carry. That spirit is at the heart of **Cinnamon Vogue**, a label born in Kochi, rooted in Jaipur's artisanal traditions, and now making its Hyderabad debut.

"From the beginning, I chose to work primarily with natural, hand-woven fabrics, and opted for production in small batches to experiment with new ideas, and ensure that every piece feels special. Hand block printing became a core element of my design language, and over time, I built an extensive library of my own printing blocks," says founder Sherin Becker. The brand's quirky name suggests a spicy twist to fashion, blending warmth and style in equal measure.

CURATED COLLECTIONS

From their range of dresses, kurtas, shirts, co-ords (casuals, festive, ethnic and everyday wear) and home linen, we loved their contemporary Cutie



Patootie tops that are ideal for the city's weather. The rani pink twill kurta set with embroidery caught our attention along with the ethnic, festive potli to go with it.

LUXE LIVING

Cinnamon Vogue Living, a newer extension of the brand, includes hand-printed table linen, cushion covers, and soft furnishings meant for everyday elegance. Sherin now runs the label with her daughter, NID graduate Jazeela and her son-in-law Thanweer. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 2,000 to Rs 12,000

First Floor, Plot No. 778, Road 44, CBI Colony, Jubilee Hills
Tel: 86394 14228
Timings: 11 am to 8 pm;
 Closed on Mondays
Instagram: @cinnamonvogue_



Sweet Nothing

It is more than a sweet. It is a piece of love and care.



Made with handpicked ingredients from across Indian heritage.
Delicately balanced in the right proportions.
Elaborately prepared to perfection.
With love and care like home.



A hand made delicacy, using 45 ingredients, 5 premium nuts, 7 exquisite superfoods, 9 unique medicinal plants, 15 Ayurvedic herbs & spices, pure unadulterated desi ghee, milk and khoya. Without artificial additives, sweeteners and food colours. Available in bite-size 9 pcs & 16 pcs gourmet boxes against pre-order only (Granny's elixir / Royal melange / assorted) **Connect: +91 6303368886**



shopping

The House of Rare has a floor dedicated to each of its brands

Raring to Go



The **House of Rare** opens its biggest store in Hyderabad, spanning 10,500 square feet across four floors. The multi-brand store houses: Rareism, Rare Rabbit, Rare Ones by Rare Rabbit, and Rare'Z by Rare Rabbit, covering menswear, women's wear, and kids wear, along with footwear, all in one place.

DISTINCT DESIGN LANGUAGE

Each of the four floors is dedicated to a different brand, giving each label ample space to express its identity. The interiors maintain a cohesive aesthetic with clean white backdrops, gentle architectural curves, and a recurring rabbit motif subtly woven into the décor as a playful Easter egg.

BASICS TO PREMIUM

The men's collection starts at Rs 1,500, catering to a wide range of preferences. The second floor features a designated premium wear section towards the back, along with an entire wall for footwear. Casual options like sneakers and open-toe footwear are placed on one side, while formal shoes are displayed separately.

THE WOMEN'S COLLECTION: RELAXED AND RESORT-INSPIRED

The women's wear section features a



mix of floral prints, chic shirts and fluid silhouettes that lean toward a holiday-ready, tropical aesthetic. A premium selection is located at the far end, offering a variety of exclusive choices.

RARE ONES

The top floor houses the children's brand Rare Ones, with a sporty, casual vibe and a layout designed with young shoppers in mind. Generous space between displays makes it easier for children to move around freely, adding a practical element to the shopping experience. ■ KARTHEEKA

Price: Rs 1,500 onwards

Road No. 2, beside Sri Ranga Tower, Banjara Hills

Tel: 96199 35032

Timings: 11 am to 9 pm

From the streets of **Dhoolpet to Begum Bazaar** and **Moazzam Jahi Market**, WOW! goes in search of essentials for Ganesh Chaturthi

FESTIVE STREETS

Overcast skies hinted at precipitation as we approached Dhoolpet – a place with a rich legacy of crafting idols of Lord Ganesh. As we entered the creative hub, rain showered down on us.

Jumping over puddles and evading busy locals, excited shoppers, and vehicles breaking all rules of road safety, we made our way to where entire streets have been dedicated to selling these idols that come in different sizes, designs, and colors. We were taken aback by their beauty as much as we were unprepared for the madness brought on by the streets – an experience we can now safely say we survived.

A COLORFUL DISPLAY

Our very first stop was by a row of idols displayed by vendors at Shree Tulja Bhavani Ganesh Murti – a five-year-old setup that sells idols ranging from three feet to 13 feet, with a price tag that goes up to Rs 70,000. Next, we moved deeper

into Dhoolpet where a larger number of idols are sold. Not too far from the workshop where they are created, these idols – also sourced from Solapur, Pune, and Mumbai – are rich in variety and prices start as low as Rs 40.

POOJA ESSENTIALS

Just 10 to 15 minutes away, Begum Bazaar and Moazzam Jahi Market are

where we go next. Adorable kumkum boxes starting from Rs 100, Rudraksh malas hanging from street shops with a price tag of Rs 120, a large variety of incense sticks at Rs 50, and pooja utensils, faux flowers, and torans priced at Rs 100 onwards made up the entire street at Begum Bazaar.

At Moazzam Jahi Market we entered a haven full of fragrant blooms that were skillfully being crafted into malas. Starting at Rs 200, the variety on display consisted of chrysanthemums, jasmines, chandni flowers, marigold, lilies, and pooja malas made from mogras, rose petals, and pink and white roses. ■ IPSHITA



With Raksha Bandhan right around the corner, loosen your wallet strings and show your sister how much you care by gifting her something special. WOW! explores gifting ideas to help spark inspiration

HEY SOUL SISTER



FOR THE AUGUST BORN

This August 9, gift your sister this delicate pendant by Swarovski that is inspired by the peridot, the birthstone of August. Featuring shimmering crystals and a single square-cut stone in green hues, this piece can make for a meaningful Rakhi gift.

Price: Rs 9,790
Website: swarovski.com

BUBBLE CLUTCH

With bubbles on its front and back, this yellow gold foam clutch by Lavie makes for a perfect statement piece. Easy to carry, its special features include a snap lock for closure, a detachable metal chain, and a short handle that is creatively crafted.

Price: Rs 2,999
Website: lavieworld.com



A BOX OF CHOCOLATES

You can never go wrong with a box of chocolates. A celebration of festive Indian flavors, the Chocolatier's Selection by Manam Chocolate is a 12-to-24-piece gift box that includes some of their most indulgent truffles, bonbons, and other combinations. You'll find milk chocolate paired with salted caramel, hazelnut praline coated with rich dark chocolate, and apricot-pistachio tucked into a matcha-infused chocolate shell.

Price: Rs 1,600
Website: manamchocolate.com

THERAPEUTIC AROMAS

Treat your sister to some aromatherapy with healing scented candles from the House of Gaea. Our recommendation would be the Dolce Far Niente candle inspired by the Italian philosophy of embracing stillness. It is designed for the quiet pauses in your day, and settles softly into your space, offering warmth, calm, and a sense of quiet joy.

Price: Rs 1,099
Website: houseofgaea.in



A BITE OF THE APPLE

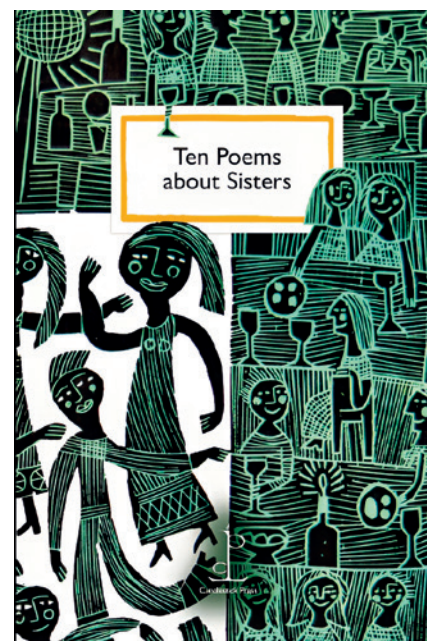
Launched in February this year, the iPhone 16e would make for a pretty neat gift for a tech-loving sister. Drop-tested tough with supersized battery life and built for Apple Intelligence, this new smartphone is available in an elegant black or white finish, and is described by Apple as a product that, "is built to go the distance and survive life's oops and whoops."

Price: Rs 59,900 onwards
Website: apple.com

CHAPBOOK OF POEMS

Written by various authors, this little chapbook titled *Ten Poems about Sisters* (a companion to *Ten Poems about Brothers*), serves as a reminder that life is enriched by having a sister, and reflects the special bond between siblings – from the joys of early childhood that we remember so vividly to the separate journeys we take later in life. ■ IPSHITA

Price: Rs 780
Website: amazon.in



From belted bags to noodle ones, WOW! gives you a taste of the trendiest and the quirkiest in this accessory

KEEPING IT HANDY



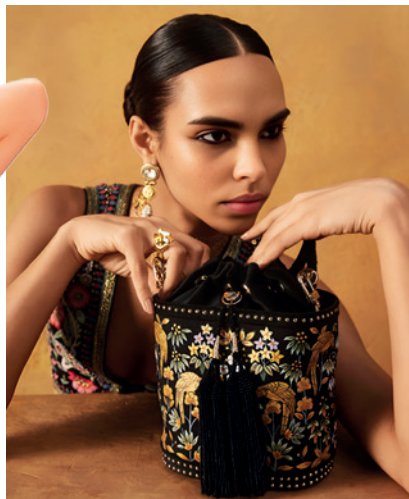
CAST A SPELL WITH RAFFIA

Merging artisanal charm and luxury, the uber cool luxury label Outhouse Jewellery's the **Holiday Eclipse Bag** makes for the perfect vacay hand gear. Expressing free-spiritedness, the vegan leather moon bag includes knotted raffia strands and free-falling keshi pearls.

Just as wild are their newly launched **Scarlet Spell** mini bags that offer a nod to their previously celebrated crystal furbie handbags.

POTTLEE OF GOLD

Elegant yet sexy, this classic gold **Bangle Pottlee** by ace designer Tarun Tahiliani has a structured metallic finish handle, a fluid chain strap and leather strap, featuring a TT metallic logo and charm tassel.



FOR THE LOVE OF PICHHWAI

Designer Anita Dongre pays homage to the 400-year-old legacy of Pichhwais with the cruelty-free **Pichhwai Bucket Bag** that has been hand-painted by artisans and is inspired by the myriad creatures and colors of nature.



BELT IT!

Prada's Spring/Summer 2025 collection featured the glorious **Buckle Leather Bucket Bag** that is a head-turner. This trendy belt bag is made from soft leather with contrasting old-effect leather and silver-finished metal studs and buckle.



WHAT'S UP, DOC?

Hermes hopped the doctor holdalls trend with the **Evercolor Plume 28 Glycine** which features a rectangular bag with curved edges that is a simple, yet elegant bag adorned with matching leather handles and palladium plated silver links.



ROYAL SLINGS

These rectangular **Tropical Slings** from Sabyasachi feature gold-toned embellishments of palm trees and the Taj Mahal, and the iconic Sabyasachi insignia, the majestic royal Bengal tiger.



SATCHEL STYLE

A satchel style bag, the **Leonora Flap Bag** by Gabriela Hearst has a top-handle, removable and tuckable cross-body strap functionality and features an outside open pocket, credit card slots, interior pocket and back pocket slip.



SAUSAGE SILHOUETTE

This elongated shape of Alaïa's **Le Teckel** – meaning Dachshund in French – is a shoulder bag that makes for an edgy accessory, one that is crafted from textured leather and has top handles adorned with a logo-stamped luggage tag.



CURLY WONDER

From the singular vision of Hyderabad-based designer Asmita Marwa comes the **Noodle Bag** – a unique handmade creation made of cotton silk doris and finished with a silk lining. ■ IPSHITA



WOW!
Recommends:
Citrus Bloom

All about **Butterfly High**, the new pub with a Bollywood vibe

High Flier

We give you four excellent reasons to party at Butterfly High.

1. CURATED CHAOS

Butterfly High's Hyderabad edition isn't trying to be your average Saturday-night haunt. It calls itself a space of curated chaos – high energy vibe, bold design and a liquor lab. Expect quirky décor – glass walls, butterfly motifs, surreal wallpaper and trippy botanical touches.

2. SHOWSTOPPER BAR

Backlit bottles, colorful cocktails, recurrent butterfly motifs and the showstopper bar counter added to the vibe. Chef Vinayak Patil's menu gives a Mumbai twist to the Hyderabad palate, or maybe vice versa. From Guntur Podi Wings to Nizami Dum Ka Murg, it's your familiar food, but dressed up for an Insta story. Our favorite was the Asian Barbeque Chicken and Ghee Roast Flatbread.

3. DRINK DIFFERENT

Stanley Fernandes, the brain behind the handcrafted cocktails, has put



enormous thought to make the cocktails stand out. We tried Citrus Bloom, a citrus-infused vodka drink with Elderflower liqueur and orange marmalade and Sunset by the Charminar (blue pea gin with passion fruit). Both set us on a different high.

4. OUTSIDE INSIDE

They have cozy outdoor seating and it rained the day we dropped by. The rain-washed garden and the sound of the raindrops made it a memorable night. Whether you're in the mood to sway to retro Bollywood hits or channel your inner Karan Johar heroine on a Thursday night, they've got you. Themed evenings (ladies' nights on Thursday) and curated playlists are part of their philosophy. Go, get high! ■ MANJU

Meal for two: Rs 3,500

No 8 & (No 8 & 9), Tower 2, A Wing,
 3rd Floor, Sattva Knowledge Park, Raidurg
@butterflyhigh
Timings: 12 pm to 12 am

COCKTAIL CONFIDENTIAL

A month that was loaded with celebs and fashion forward parties



ORRY, ANIRUDH AND LIQUID COUTURE

Some parties are just parties. And then there are moments. June 28 at KOKO was the latter – a delicious mix of fashion, music and mild memory loss. Designer Rimzim Dadu teamed up with KOKO to throw a bash that looked like it was straight off the runway and onto the dance floor. DJ Conrad was on the decks spinning nostalgic commercial hits. The cocktails? Inspired by Rimzim's color palette. That basically means we were sipping couture – one glittery Gun and Vodka at a time. Cheers to drinking our outfits.

BIG BULL GETS BOLLYWEIRD

Just when we thought things couldn't get wilder, Orry, everyone's favorite online hero, strolled into Bigbull with Tej Music Vodka and a playlist that screamed "Bolly + Tech = Chaos." The crowd? Young, hot, and very into it. Was it just us or did the DJ and Orry look like long-lost twins with matching playlists? We're not saying Orry is the party – but let's say if you're at a party and he's not there, are you even really at a party?

A QUAKE CALLED ANIRUDH

And then came the night of July 22 that shook the city. Over 5,000 fans gathered at Quake for what might have been the shortest, but loudest concert ever in Hyderabad. Anirudh took the stage for a mini performance promoting *Coolie*, starring Rajinikanth and the crowd went berserk. We spotted Shruti Haasan cheering like a proud backstage rockstar. It was a short set. And no, it did not matter because Anirudh could've sung his grocery list and the audience still would've lost their minds.

■ DEEPTI ALAPATI





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OPENING UP THE FAVORITE TOPIC OF EVERY HYDERABADI AS WE CELEBRATE OUR DELICACY BEING FEATURED IN 100 BEST DISHES IN THE WORLD. From why it's in the news to its history, to the top 10 places for this much-loved meal, to biryani memes, we've got it all for you here. Grab your plate of biryani and you are bound to say WOW! after reading this

BY MANJU LATHA KALANIDHI

Bravo Biryani



PIC: ANGEL BHIMAVARAPU

4 of the 100: Hyderabad's Crown Jewel

Only four Indian dishes made it to Taste Atlas's 100 Best in the World this year. Mana Hyderabad biryani (other three being Murgh Makhani, Chicken 65 and Keema) makes it to this list which describes itself as an encyclopaedia of flavors and a global guide to traditional dishes, local ingredients and authentic restaurants. The guide published its list of the "100 Best Dishes in the World," a few weeks ago. While we all knew it all this while, validation is always important. So there, we've got a reason to celebrate with a mutton biryani.

Drool-worthy Stats

(Based on food ordering app Swiggy's 2024 annual report)

- Biryanis ordered every minute in the city: 34
- In 2024, Hyderabad topped the biryani order charts on Swiggy with a staggering 1.57 crore orders
- Chicken biryani was the most popular choice, with 97.21 lakh plates ordered, averaging 21 plates per minute
- Total biryani orders: 1.57 crore (15.7 million)
- Chicken biryanis ordered: 97.21 lakh (9.721 million)
- Chicken biryanis per minute: 21
- A Hyderabad foodie ordered 60 biryanis at once for Rs 18,840
- T20 World Cup: 8.69 lakh chicken biryanis ordered during the tournament
- First-time users: 4.46 lakh chicken biryanis were ordered by first-time Swiggy users

Biryani For Beginners

Hyderabad biryani is believed to have been introduced during the Mughal era when Emperor Aurangzeb appointed Nizam-ul-Mulk as the governor of the Deccan in the early 18th century. The Nizams of Hyderabad embraced and refined the dish, blending Mughlai cooking techniques with local Andhra spices. Over time, it evolved into the iconic dum-style biryani known for its layered rice, marinated meat, and rich, aromatic flavors. From Hyderabad's lanes to global menus – it's not just biryani – it's heritage on a spoon.



How to Identify an Authentic One

1. **The rice is not just rice – it's drama.** If each grain of basmati isn't long, fluffy, and carrying the scent of saffron like it just walked off a red carpet, you're eating pulao in disguise. Bonus: You should be able to identify at least three whole spices hiding like surprise characters in a thriller.
2. **The meat should fall off the bone – like your willpower.** Authentic Hyderabad biryani has meat (mutton or chicken) that's slow-cooked to submission. If you need a knife to cut it, the biryani isn't dum – it's dumb.
3. **There's a layer game going on.** Real biryani isn't tossed or mixed. It's layered with precision: meat, masala, rice, repeat. Think of it like a well-written novel. If your spoonful gives you only rice or only masala, call the authorities.
4. **It comes with sidekicks:** A true Hyderabad biryani never travels alone. Look for a thick dahi ka raita (not the watery kind that cries in the corner), a green mirchi ka salan that brings the heat, and maybe a double ka meetha to end things on a sweet note.
5. **You feel sleepy – but happy.** A post-biryani nap isn't optional – it's tradition. If you're still active and energetic after a full plate, either it wasn't real biryani! Eat responsibly. Argue passionately.



The B-verse jargon

1. **Dum:** Slow-cooked magic where steam does all the flirting with the meat and rice – no pressure, just vibes.
2. **Dedh Goshta:** A meaty flex: when there's more mutton than rice and your heart (and arteries) say thank you.
3. **Mirchi ka Salan:** The loyal sidekick who's spicy, green, and always invited to the biryani party – whether anyone eats it or not.
4. **Pakki Kacchi:** Meat being marinated raw (kacchi) or pre-cooked (pakki) before the dum – basically, biryani's version of "Are we there yet?"
5. **Barista:** Nope, not your coffee guy. These are golden fried onions sprinkled like edible confetti on top of a biryani for that royal crunch.



Biryani leaderboard (MAKE YOUR BIRYANI WIN) Score	
Chicken dum biryani	97
Pakki mirchi kodi	52
Konaseema chicken	56
Rayaalseema	121
Mutton dum	88
Keema kaju	99
tsiveni	45
Panier	39

'Hotel Shadab' says global food critic Matt Preston

Matt Preston, recounts how Hyderabad has only two kinds of biryanis. Good and great, because there is no such thing called a bad biryani. Australian food critic and columnist Matt Preston (who visited Hyderabad last year along with chefs Gary Mehigan and George Calombaris) has explored various biryani styles, including those in Mumbai and Old Dhaka, but Hyderabad biryani remains a favorite. He has even shared his biryani experiences on social media, including a visit to Shadab Hotel. In his social media and in his columns back home, Preston highlighted the unique method of cooking the dish with raw meat, a characteristic that sets it apart. He was fascinated to see that the cooks could extract exceptional flavor and fragrance from the same basic ingredients.

Shadab Hotel Visit: He specifically mentions enjoying biryani and marag soup at Shadab Hotel it is understood we are talking about hyd, a popular spot for biryani lovers. Hyderabadis of course shared their wisdom through comments in the viral video of Preston and Gary Mehigan enjoying biryani in Hyderabad. They demonstrated the dish's popularity and the duo's genuine love for Indian cuisine.



MATT PRESTON WITH CHEFS GARY MEHIGAN AND GEORGE CALOMBARIS AT THE BIRYANI TOUR

WOW's Top 10 Picks

We welcome you to fight over the best plate and let's see who wins:

1. **Hotel Shadab, Charminar:** Legendary mutton biryani plus free Charminar vibe
2. **Café Bahar, Hyderguda:** Perfect for a late-night biryani in Basheer Bagh, since 1973
3. **Pista House, Shalibanda:** Famous for biryani and haleem, the ultimate city combo
4. **Shah Ghouse, Shalibanda:** Classic Old City-era flavor, no shortcuts
5. **Bawarchi, RTC X Roads:** No-nonsense and affordable. So good that there are 11 fake Bawarchi restaurants in the city
6. **Paradise, Secunderabad:** A global chain, born in 1953; mixes consistency with authenticity
7. **Four Seasons, Toli Chowki:** Authentic and Nizami delicacy made with homemade spice mixes
8. **Hotel Greenpark, Ameerpet:** Midnight Biryani still reigns supreme
9. **Hotel Golkonda, Masab Tank:** Authentic biryani with tasteful interiors

Biryani		Price
		single/double/triple
Hyd. Chicken Dum Biryani		199/ 389/ 799
Rajugari Paneer Biryani		229/ 419/ 749
Guntur Pachi Mirchi Koli Biryani		229/ 429/ 899
Konaseema Chicken Biryani		229/ 429/ 899
Royalaseema Chicken Biryani		229/ 429/ 899
Hyd. Mutton Dum Biryani		269/ 489/ 899
Keema Kaju Biryani		299/ 529/ 1129
Triveni Biryani		459/ 999

Top Cloud Kitchens

Biryani Souk: Launched in February 2025, specializes in Hyderabad flavors; **Tel: 95811 01190**

10Biryanis: Quality-focused, multiple variants ranging from Shahjahani Gosht Biryani to Noorjahani Biryani; **Tel: 78421 40404**

Nizam's Delicious Kitchen: This Kokapet food venture has chefs from Charminar who have their own ventures back home. **Tel: 77028 80145**



Midnight Biryani at Green Park

Started in 1996, it's still a novelty for most non-Hyderabadis. The thought of feasting on biryanis in the wee hours sounds so indulgent, but that's what Hyderabad is about.

"What sets it apart is our uncompromising choice of ingredients – from handpicked aromatic basmati rice to the finest cuts of meat marinated in freshly ground spices. Our chefs are seasoned experts who have mastered the slow-cooking dum technique, ensuring every grain of rice is infused with flavor and richness. Add to this our consistent quality and adherence to authentic Hyderabad methods, and you have a biryani that's deeply satisfying, no matter when you try it – especially at midnight, when cravings hit hardest," says Anushka Agrawal, sales and marketing director of Green Park Hotel, Ameerpet.

Price: Rs 999 plus taxes
Tel: 97045 67888

Biryanis You Must Try

- **Avakaya Biryani:** Mango-pickle infused
- **MLA Potlam Biryani:** This version that comes in a packet of cooked dough
- **Ulavacharu Biryani:** Horse-gram broth variant
- **Triveni Biryani:** Made of chicken, mutton and prawns
- **Kalyani Biryani:** Hyderabad beef version from the Kalyani Nawab lineage
- **Shaadiwala Biryani:** What you are served at weddings, but in a old-fashioned restaurant



Home Chefs (you won't find on Google)

Home chefs are the ones who make the most authentic biryani as it is often in curated batches, done the traditional way. However, most of them are in their 60s now and are unable to cook for their patrons. The next generation finds it tedious to take up food ventures and therefore either decide to set up full-fledged cloud kitchens or tie up with food delivery apps to make profits. Hyderabad boasts of over a dozen home chefs. Our heart broke when we called up some old chefs to find out they had passed away; some are ageing and can't cook. Others like Ruheen and Anjum Pasha have quit the profession to take up other jobs. Some of them want to do it low-key, as a side hustle, sometimes without their family not knowing about it and are not even listed on Google or delivery apps.

However, here are two home chefs we love:

THE KITCHEN CULTURE: WHERE OLD HYDERABAD LIVES ON IN EVERY BITE

Started in 2007 by Saifuddin Ahmed, a passionate foodie from a seventh-generation Hyderabad family, The Kitchen Culture in Toli Chowki is a word-of-mouth success story. His daughter Tahura Ahmed who has been taking baking orders for over a decade, now runs the show and carries forward her family's culinary legacy. In this interview, she shares what makes their food unforgettable, and why they've never needed Swiggy or Zomato to make an impact.

WHAT LED TO THE LAUNCH OF THE KITCHEN CULTURE?

It all started in 2007 with my father's deep love for traditional Hyderabad food. He wanted to keep our family's recipes alive, especially the ones passed down by my grandmother, Afzalunnisa, whose marag was unmatched.

WHAT SETS YOUR BIRYANI APART FROM OTHERS IN THE MARKET?

Our biryani is made the traditional dum way – there are no shortcuts. We use only homemade masalas and never open the pot once it is sealed. It's always sent as it is. The taste reminds people of the biryani from the olden days. Our version, the dedh goshta biryani, uses 1 kg rice to 1.5 kg of mutton or chicken for a rich, balanced flavor.

“Our biryani is made the traditional dum way – there are no shortcuts. We use only homemade masalas and never open the pot once it is sealed”
– Tahura Ahmed

ARE YOU LISTED ON ANY FOOD DELIVERY PLATFORMS?

No, we are not on Swiggy or Zomato. All our orders come through social media and word of mouth. That's how we've grown – people genuinely love the food and keep coming back for more. Even celebrities and old Hyderabad families order from us.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR SIGNATURE DISHES?

Apart from the biryani, we serve mirchi ka salan (made plain green without artificial coloring), bagara baingan, raita, gajar ka halwa, and double ka meetha. Some of our sweets have even travelled abroad with customers!

DO YOU CATER TO INDIVIDUALS OR ONLY GROUP ORDERS?

We only accept bulk orders – no single plates or takeaways. The minimum order is for 10 people. It's the best way to maintain quality and authenticity.

WHAT IS THE PRICE RANGE FOR YOUR BIRYANI PACKS?

For 10 people, mutton biryani with raita and salan is Rs 3,500. Chicken biryani for 10 is Rs 2,200. We always ensure a generous and equal ratio of rice to meat in every pack.

DO YOU CATER TO LARGE GATHERINGS OR WEDDINGS?

Yes, we cater for weddings and large events. Our in-house team can handle anywhere from 10 to over 2,000 people.

IF NOT FROM YOUR KITCHEN, WHERE WOULD YOU RECOMMEND ONE GETS A GOOD HYDERABADI BIRYANI?

Mak's Kitchen is a great place I'd recommend for authentic chicken and traditional biryani.

Tel: 89786 20619

HOME CHEF KHATIJA SEEMA IRFAN: HOBBY TO PASSION

For over 25 years, Khatija Seema Irfan has been delighting food lovers with her signature Hyderabadi and fusion dishes from her home in Sindhi Colony, Begumpet. What began as a hobby has now become a trusted food stop for loyal patrons who crave her flavor-packed biryanis and decadent desserts. In this candid conversation, she talks about her food journey, her family of natural cooks, and why she doesn't need food delivery apps to stay relevant.

HOW DID YOUR HOME KITCHEN JOURNEY BEGIN?

It started with making good biryani at home, family gatherings and at potluck lunches. With time, friends started asking me to make and send it. It's now become bigger due to word of mouth. I currently operate from Begumpet. I've slowed down a bit. Now, I take only two or three orders a week and personally ensure they're delivered.

HOW DO PEOPLE FIND YOU AND PLACE ORDERS WITH YOU?

Mostly through word of mouth, Facebook, and Instagram. I've

“My specialties include chicken, mutton and prawn biryani, served with mirchi or baingan ka salan, – Khatija Seema Irfan”

never listed on Swiggy or Zomato. My customers know where to reach me, and that's enough.

WHAT'S THE MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM ORDER YOU TAKE?

The minimum order is half a kilo, placed one day in advance. I've handled up to 200 people in the past, and currently, I can comfortably cater to groups of around 30 to 35.

CAN YOU SHARE THE PRICING FOR YOUR BIRYANI?

- Mutton biryani is Rs 2,400 per kg (with 1,200 gm mutton and 1 kg rice)
- Chicken biryani is Rs 2,000 per kg (with 1.5 kg dressed chicken and 1.2 kg rice)

Tel: 98851 00232

Order to be placed a day before, they deliver it to your home

HOME CHEF SOMNA MISRA: A LOVE AFFAIR CALLED BIRYANI

HOW IT STARTED:

I began as a hobby chef in 2021 during COVID, when options were limited. A few friends inspired me to set up a cloud kitchen and I started small that way.

BIRYANI HACK:

Spice it right and layer with flair — biryani is less a dish, more a love affair.

THE BEST BIRYANI IN THE CITY IS:

At people's homes

Tel: 98850 94500

Place order two days in advance and it can be delivered to location (transport charge extra)
Rs 500 per portion. Other specialties include mutton chutney and raita



Tollywood celebs and their biryani picks



JR. NTR

Top pick: Bawarchi at RTC X Roads and Hotel Shadab near Madina Building.

He even joked he could finish a family pack at Bawarchi all by himself – these are his go-to places for traditional Hyderabadi biryani.

RANA DAGGUBATI

Top pick: Hotel Shadab, Charminar area.

Rana described how he visits Old City regularly for biryani and considers Shadab the benchmark – sometimes giving preference to rice over gosht!



RAM CHARAN

Top pick: Bawarchi at RTC X Roads.

Ram Charan is known to enjoy the classic Hyderabadi biryani here, making it one of his trusted spots for the iconic dish.

SAMANTHA RUTH PRABHU

Top pick: Telangana Spice Kitchen in Secunderabad for special chicken biryani.

She reportedly loves their rich, aromatic biryani and frequently heads there when she gets a craving for it.



NANI

Top pick: Café Bahar at Hyderguda is his kind of biryani with the right ration of rice and chicken pieces, not less, not more. Dedh Gosht, like they say!



Biryani Memes

Mansem baledu Kishore.

Biryani ekkada dorukutundi?

Daggarlo Blue Moon aney bar vundi.
Beer taaguthu best biryani ekkada
dorukkuddo discuss cheddamm.

Ayya Naku bhayananga Vundi

Baamma ki idli teppinchu
Aaa voddayya biryani teesukura

Sunday biryani

tinakapothey emauvatadi

Upset avutanu, edupostundi,
talanoppiostundi, okka sariga
thala baddalai poyinattu





What the food influencers say

@AAMIR_FOODIETRAVELER

How often do you eat biryani: Thrice a week at home or outside or via food delivery: At cafés/ restaurants

Your top three picks for best biryani: Nawab's, Gachibowli; Biryani Times, Madhapur; Hotel Shadab, Old City

Most overrated place: Paradise

Most underrated place: Grand Hotel, Abids

Weirdest biryani you've eaten: Chocolate Biryani at Madhapur. Can't talk about it, as it was traumatic.



AAMIR AHMED



VASANTHI SINGAMPALLI

@TASTYDRIPS

How often do you eat biryani: Twice a week

Home or at a café: I order it in

Your top three picks for best biryani: Nawab's, Gachibowli; Sarvi Restaurant and Bakery, Banjara Hills; Hotel Shadab, Charminar

Weirdest biryani you've eaten: Keto Biryani from a cloud kitchen

Most overrated place: Paradise, Secunderabad

Most underrated place: Mak's Kitchen, Mehdiapatnam ■

WOW! attends a workshop that teaches you to find beauty in imperfection, based on a Japanese concept

Kintsugi and the Art of Mending



We at WOW! had a great experience with the workshop as it was recreational, and, while it took us a few attempts to break the mug and then figure out what part went where, it helped us to break the ice with strangers and help each other, as it was a new experience for everyone present.

LIFE LESSONS LEARNT

The workshop primarily teaches patience, to appreciate the past and accept the present in the process, and even though mistakes are made, there are ways to fix them. It teaches us to sit through the damage done and try to repair it, while teaching us the value of the hard work behind making the pottery as you try to join it together. It's a good activity to build teamwork, as there will be moments where you need to help each other. It's a perfect workshop to learn life lessons and go home with a mug you fixed on your own.

■ MANJU

Price: Rs 599 (inclusive of materials, exclusive of food & beverages)

Ground Floor, Shop No. 6, Jayabheri Enclave, Gachibowli

Instagram: @milaap.events for registration and the next class

You know a workshop is unforgettable – maybe even life-changing – when it asks you to take a beautiful ceramic mug, drop it in a bag, and smash it to shards. And just when you think it's ruined beyond repair, you're handed liquid gold to piece it back together – flaws and all. Welcome to the art of Japanese Kintsugi (or Kintsukuroi), where “kin” means gold and “tsugi” means to repair – an ancient philosophy that's striking a deep chord in Hyderabad.

THE ART OF FIXING

Kintsugi is the art of fixing broken pottery with lacquer, which is then dusted or mixed with metallic colors like gold and silver. It's part of the concept of accepting broken things and making amends with what is left, and part of the Wabi-Sabi philosophy, which finds beauty in broken and imperfect things. The workshop was organized by Milaap, a city-based organization, that conducts multiple workshops which bring people together to bond and connect through art and crafts.

The kintsugi workshop is conducted at Third Wave Coffee in Gachibowli and is priced at Rs 599 (excluding food and beverages). It can be booked online on BookMyShow or District, and is held on most days of the month. All the required materials are provided by the organizers.

THE PROCESS OF PROGRESS

The workshop is about three hours long and is a good place to meet other people. Each session starts with every participant being given a mug in a bag. You are supposed to hit it with a stone, which might take a few tries, but the instructors are patient and guide you through the steps.

BREAK A MUG

After breaking it, you gather the pieces and try to figure out which piece goes where, and then stick them with glue after you're sure of their placement, much like a jigsaw puzzle. Then the cracks are filled with grey-colored epoxy clay, which is then painted over with gold color, which gives the mug a marble-like look.



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A two-day dance workshop is coaxing Hyderabadis to 'undance' their way to wellness

5 Reasons to try Emotion in Motion

Emotion in Motion, a two-day movement workshop, is not your typical dance class. It doesn't demand choreography, rhythm, or even a dance background. Instead, it offers emotional release, inner child healing, and a deep reconnection with the body – all through movement, music, theater, and storytelling. Even if you've never danced in your life, here's why you should sign up.

#1. THERAPEUTIC, ALMOST

Designed for everyone – from actors and dancers to psychologists, life coaches, and curious beginners – this workshop welcomes anyone aged between 18 to 80. While not a formal therapy session or meditation class, many participants describe the experience as deeply therapeutic and cathartic. You don't need to know dance; you just need to be open to movement.

#2. UNDAANCE YOUR FEARS

Using guided improvisation, contact work, storytelling prompts, and even breath and joint movement, Emotion in Motion bypasses traditional dance techniques. "Many participants feel like they didn't dance at all – they just expressed," says founder Vishal Telang. Through this process, people reconnect with their bodies, release insecurities, and tap into joy and self-trust. The participants are gently encouraged to transition into dancing without being conscious of it. It starts with them gently tapping their palms on their thighs to

join the rhythm and slowly start the movement; then Vishal takes over in helping them ease into dance.

#3. BODY POSITIVITY AND BEYOND

Through trust exercises, visualization and mindful movement, participants experience emotional release, lightness and self-acceptance. It's a wellness tool disguised as dance. Each workshop has around 30-35 participants and it is not unusual to find participants break down in tears or exchange heartfelt hugs towards the end of the session. You would never think dance can open you up so much!

#4. NO PRESSURE TECHNIQUES

Forget 5-6-7-8. Emotion in Motion has no counts, no pressure, no technique. "You can come late – I just want you to show up," Vishal says. These six-hour sessions (three hours over two days) are about internal movement, not performance. You don't need rhythm, just a willingness to feel.

#5. HEALING THROUGH MOVEMENT

A professional dancer with over 25 years of experience, Vishal trained in the US and returned to India in 2019. During the pandemic, he spoke to hundreds of people and realized that dance, for most Indians, was laced with fear – of judgment, body image, and imperfection. "Emotion in Motion was

born from a need to break those barriers. His bohemian, theater-inspired style is playful yet profound: "Be shameless. Forget you're dancing. Just feel," urges Vishal. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 2,000 for two days

Follow: @emotioninmotion.india on Instagram for upcoming workshops

Tel: 9513822266

Timings: 2 pm to 4 pm on weekends



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A tour of **Utpalam – The Lantern House** near Moinabad – which leverages nature's elements to factor in sunrises, sunsets, full moons and rainbows

A House Without a Clock

THE STUNNING BRICK JAALI NEAR AT THE ENTRANCE

At first glance, Utpalam resembles a boulder nestled in a park – thanks to its raw concrete form. Like a boulder shaping its surroundings, the site seems to grow around the house. But step inside, and that image dissolves.

The 6,000 sq. feet home designed by Studio Inscape on a 1.5-acre plot, transforms into a vessel for light – its walls and spaces designed not just to hold, but to choreograph sunlight. Much like a kaleidoscope, it refracts and reshapes light at every turn, making each moment unique. As you move through the space, you realize that every wall is either a canvas for shadow play or a conduit for light to reveal a new expression.

SLOW AND STEADY

The house on Chevella Road (25 km from Jubilee Hills Check Post on the Vikarabad Highway), situated as part of a larger micro-community called Vanam, belongs to a young couple and their daughter. “The community envisioned by the client himself was an attempt to celebrate the slow pace of living in a neighborhood which prioritized mindful living. The couple too, as early risers, appreciate these innate experiences of watching the day pass by through the narration of light. The family imagined the house as a sanctuary which embodies in every sense who they are as people,” explains architect Kinnera Varma.

LOVE AND LIGHT

A walk in the house during the early morning hours would be starkly different from the afternoons. Light acts as a guiding member, steering your movement as you transverse



SERENE ENTRANCE WITH GREENERY AND A STATUE OF THE BUDDHA AND THE BRICK JAALI

GLASS WALLS OF PRATAP'S OFFICE SPACE THAT ALSO HAS A TERRACE GARDEN





THE SUN-LIT INTERIORS



SIMPLE AND CLASSY LINES AND FURNITURE

through the layout. As the character of the light that is drawn into the room changes, the function shape shifts accordingly. The owner, Pratap Rao, adds how the clock is almost an unwanted entity in the house with the shadows acting as a strong determinant of time. Spatially organized around multiple courts, no two rooms offer a similar experience. Each of them plays a significant role in shaping the light.

WALK (WORK?) FROM HOME

Walking through the house makes one realize how each detail has a materiality attached to it, right from the design table to the drip detail, from the railing

to the door. The site also consists of an office space as well as two units for the workers. The work space is sunken into the earth with the landscape merging into the structure. The mounds hit the concrete structure at various heights. A vertical strip window at an angle is placed right behind where Rao sits, providing him with a view of the house.

THE LANTERN HOUSE

The architect was keen to translate the owner's ethos of living mindfully. The project true to its name, The Lantern House, allows each beam of light to pass through, creating a distinct yet familiar pattern. The contrast in the texture offered by raw concrete provides the

perfect slate for the designs to be viewed and enjoyed. It is in these nuances that one can celebrate the slowness of living away from the city.

DESIGNER SPEAK

The Hyderabad-based Studio Inscape has been engaging with landscapes in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Goa. Founded in 2019 by three classmates, Chaitanya Padal, Kinnera Verma and Radha Neela, Inscape is an amalgamation of their individual energies. "Studio Inscape focuses on craftsmanship, thinking with our hands. In each project, we see an opportunity to expand our learning and understanding of the world," says Kinnera.



OPEN-TO-THE-AIR SPACES FOR THE KID TO PLAY AROUND



WHERE THE FAMILY UNWINDS

OWNER SPEAK

Pratap Rao, owner of the house, shares his thoughts about the design

‘The landscape should become the living room’

After moving through six houses post-marriage with my wife and daughter – while accommodating my mother’s visits – I realized what we truly needed: a home that breathes with us, not just shelters us.

LIGHTS OFF

For me, sunlight is non-negotiable. We use no artificial lights until sunset. The house is designed to catch the rhythm of the day – leveraging morning warmth, full moon nights and golden sunsets. My favorite spot is the terrace. It offers a clear view of the city skyline, framed by sunrise, sunset, birds, and greens. It’s where the house speaks to the sky.

If you landscape well, it becomes the living room of your home. We spend 80 percent of our time outdoors. Walking barefoot on native soil is therapy. There’s no dust or pollution here – just grounded living.

VEGGIES FOR ALL SEASONS

We grow ten vegetables in our own garden, relying on seasonal cycles and natural pollination, with birds playing their part. I was inspired by my Guruji and the symbolism of the Utpalam, the lotus. So, we planted with intention– 500 native species including lemon, guava, kadamba, and flowering trees. Of course, my

team of six gardeners help maintain this green vision.

BAREFOOT LUXURY

Functionality is key too. Food delivery and taxi apps all work smoothly here. We’re just seven minutes from Appa Junction and close to Bhaskar Medical College. I even had to push for a road to be built for better community access. Connectivity is sorted with Manjeera water and fiber-optic internet. This isn’t just a house. It’s a return to nature, a design for daily life, and a choice to live barefoot, with sunlight, and simply. ■ MANJU



India's leading cultural forum for Interiors, Architecture, and Design to be held in Hyderabad between September 5-7 at HITEX Exhibition Center

Design Democracy 2025 Returns

Design Democracy returns for its third edition from September 5th to 7th, 2025, at the HITEX Exhibition Centre in Hyderabad, bringing together 120+ leading design studios and brands from across India. With immersive showcases, special installations, and powerful conversations, the three-day event reimagines how Indian design intersects with culture, craft and community.

Founded by design entrepreneurs Shailja Patwari, Pallika Sreewastav, and architect-lighting designer Arjun Rath, Design Democracy has quickly evolved into a cultural cornerstone for India's interiors and design community. The 2025 edition is set to be its most expansive yet, bringing together designers, architects, buyers, curators, and design thinkers to explore spatial innovation, craftsmanship, and future-forward design ideas. Founded in 2021, Design Democracy is an annual platform that celebrates India's evolving design narrative through curation, commerce and community.

ABOUT DESIGN DEMOCRACY

Founded in 2021, Design Democracy is an annual platform celebrating India's evolving design narrative through a blend of curation, commerce, and community. With each edition, it brings together top design voices, product makers, and emerging talent, offering an immersive space to discover new ideas, forge partnerships, and push the boundaries of creative possibility. This year's edition marks a bold new chapter – one that reflects the richness, depth, and global relevance of contemporary Indian design.

THE ATELIER PAVILION

A celebration of materiality, process, and experimentation. Atelier is a hands-on space where emerging techniques,

sustainable materials, and craft-led innovation take center stage. This pavilion also houses the DD TALKS, a marquee conference featuring over 54 speakers from India and abroad.

THE MUSE PAVILION

A curated collection of thought-led work, featuring highlights like Precious Objects, a showcase of artisanal mastery, and the Sustainability Exhibition curated by Abin Chaudhary, exploring design's role in building a responsible future.

THE CANVAS PAVILION

A dramatic, boundary-pushing zone for large-scale installations and cultural collaborations. Canvas celebrates design as a living language, with standout features like the Museum of Telangana exhibit curated by Supraja Rao, the Bondtite installation, and a VIP lounge curated by The Charcoal Project.

SPONSORS & PARTNERS

"Design Democracy 2025 is made possible with the support of visionary sponsors who are redefining India's design and lifestyle ecosystem," say the founders of the design event.

- **DD TALKS** Powered by Beautiful Homes India by Asian Paints
- **Platinum Sponsor:** Nilaya Anthology by Asian Paints
- A 100,000+ sq. ft. design destination in Mumbai, housing 150+ makers from India and around the world.
- **Gold Sponsors:** ANCA and Bondtite
- **ANCA:** Crafting timeless, bespoke furniture since 1985 with a blend of artisanal craftsmanship and modern design.
- **Bondtite:** A leader in high-performance industrial adhesives and sealants, bringing strength and innovation to construction.
- **Associate Sponsors:**
 - o **FIMA** – Pioneers in sustainable bathroom innovation from Italy
 - o **OSUM** – Made-in-India brand leading the luxury automation space
 - o **Dimore** – Celebrating Zen-inspired, artisanal surface design
 - o **MCI** – Experts in premium imported natural stone with 35+ years of excellence
 - o **West Elm** – Brooklyn-based lifestyle brand shaping modern, sustainable living in India

Website & Passes: <https://event.godreamcast.com/reg-events/gjdhsr-design-democracy>

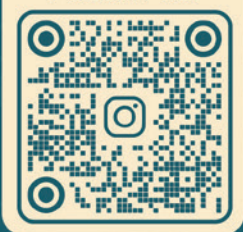
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- 120+ luxury décor brands
- The best in contemporary Indian furniture, lighting, home accessories, surfaces, and materials
- Four must-see special exhibits
- Featuring works and installations by Nuru Karim, Farah Ahmed, Supraja Rao, and other leading voices in Indian design
- DD TALKS – 40+ architects and designers
- A two-day series of conversations and keynotes, spotlighting diverse perspectives that shape the future of design
- Curated culinary and hospitality experiences
- Immersive food zones, artisanal coffee and design-led pop-up cafes that bring together the best of dining and design

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Dhi Contemporary's month-long exhibition views one's home through routines, daily rituals and personal belongings

Home Is Where the Art Is

What constitutes a home? A structure of bricks and beams, or the echo of lived memories within? Dhi Contemporary, a stirring new exhibition titled *Have You Lived Here?* dares to dismantle our conventional notions of home. Through the deeply personal and intimate works of Akanksha Patil, Chalapaka Chakravarthy, Pooja Shinde, and Simran Yagyi, this month-long showcase journeys beyond walls and ceilings to explore the unseen architecture of routines, relics, and resonances. Each artist invites us into their emotional landscapes – where forgotten corners, faded belongings and daily rituals shimmer with meaning. In these quiet revelations lies the extraordinary beauty of the ordinary.

HOME DECONSTRUCTED

Akanksha Patil expresses home as an emotional and ecological anchor using repurposed cardboard, while Chalapaka Chakravarthy captures South Indian ordinary life – urban, rural and in-between. Pooja Shinde maps the memory-laden walls of South Mumbai's Parsi colonies and Girgaum's fading buildings, embedding Wabi-Sabi philosophy into each etched line. Simran Yagyi turns intimate middle-class interiors into rich sites of texture, daily rituals, and restrained satire. These practices intersect in their care of memory, domesticity, identity and place – asking the viewer: What does a place of belonging look or feel like? ■ MANJU

The exhibition will be held from July 19 to August 15

Road No. 11, Kakatiya Hills, Madhapur
Closed on Mondays

MEET THE ARTISTS

Akanksha Danraj Patil:

This visual artist from Nagpur focusses on themes of home, memory and displacement. Working primarily with cardboard and found materials, Akanksha uses her medium to symbolize personal journeys and environmental consciousness through upcycling. She is working on a series called Saudade (meaning longing in Portuguese).



Chalapaka Chakravarthy: Hailing from Andhra Pradesh, he explores the intersection of rural life and urban narratives through printmaking. His work draws on village culture and superstition. He has exhibited in prominent shows, including ART 35 (Nine Fish Gallery) and The Bombay Art Society.



Pooja Krishna Shinde: A printmaker whose etchings explore urban architecture through layered narratives, linear perspectives, and the philosophy of Wabi-Sabi – embracing impermanence and the beauty of decay. "Home is a feeling tied up to memory. Cracked walls, faded windows, old surfaces capture a lot of character in areas such as Girgaum and Parsi Colony fascinate me as they carry a sense of time and quiet history," says Pooja. She describes her metal artwork as 'intuitive' and telling a story.



Simran Yagyi: A Punjabi artist from Vadodara, she explores the emotional weight of everyday repetition and domestic life. Her work reflects the tension between comfort and unease, using gestures, objects, and overlooked spaces to evoke quiet introspection. Simran's work has been featured in exhibitions such as the Second International Print Biennale, NGMA's Women Indian Printmakers, and The Baroda March by Rukshaan Art, among others.



PASSING BY

Legendary dancer and choreographer **Tanusree Shankar** on how she connects with the current generation

“Dance brings me peace”



Chowrangee, a cultural platform in Hyderabad that celebrates India's artistic heritage and diversity, brought legendary dancer and choreographer Tanusree Shankar to Hyderabad to showcase her spellbinding performance titled *Monsoon Dreams*. She performed in the city after 20 years. Staged at Taramati

Baradari on July 26, the sold-out show was an immersive dance production that weaved together the magic of the rains with stories of longing, joy and rebirth.

ARTISTRY IN MOTION

The torchbearer of the Uday Shankar style – a unique blend of Indian classical,

folk, and Western contemporary movements – Tanusree's artistry is as graceful as it is powerful. Trained under Amala Shankar (who later became her mother-in-law), she has been nurturing a rare style that goes beyond performance – one that is spiritual and healing. “When I'm unwell or low, I dance. It brings me peace,” says the 69-year-old danseuse.

GEN Z CONNECTIONS

Tanusree also hopes to introduce this distinctive dance style to new audiences through workshops. “Gen Z moves fast, but if we speak their language and let them experiment with this form, they'll connect,” she believes. With over 92 participants already enrolled in her Mumbai workshops, she's keen to replicate the momentum across India – and globally.

A DAY IN HER RHYTHMIC LIFE

Even today, Tanusree is an early riser, taking online classes for international students at 6:30 am. Weekends are intense – her academy runs from 8 am to 8 pm. Now celebrating 40 years of her dance company, she is more determined than ever to train a new generation of dancers and teachers. ■ MANJU

SHOWCASE

A 25-year celebration with works from India's leading artists

‘Harvest 2025’ at the Museum

To mark 25 years of Arushi Arts Gallery, director Payal Kapoor presents Harvest 2025, a curated exhibition that showcases the evolution of Indian art over the decades. The show opens with a preview on August 31 at Hyderabad's Salarjung Museum.

MASTERS AND MODERNS

On display are nearly 70 works by some of India's most influential modern and contemporary artists. The lineup includes FN Souza, MF Husain, SH Raza, Tyeb Mehta, and Ram Kumar—artists whose works shaped India's modern art

landscape. The collection also features pieces by Jangarh Singh Shyam, Bhupen Khakkar, Krishen Khanna, and Satish Gujral, alongside contemporary figures such as Manu Parekh, Laxma Goud, Sakti Burman and Shobha Broota.

A LIVE ART EXPERIENCE

Adding a dynamic element to the show, artist Sanjay Bhattacharya will be painting live during the preview. His work—ranging from architectural studies to emotive portraits—will be accompanied by a live sarangi performance, setting a contemplative tone for the afternoon.

SPOTLIGHT ON HYDERABAD

“Hosting the exhibition at Salarjung Museum, one of India's most significant art and antiquities spaces, marks a fitting tribute to the city's growing relevance in the art world. The show aims to spark renewed interest in collecting serious Indian art,” says Payal. ■ MANJU

Preview: Sunday, August 31
Exhibition continues till September 9
Venue: Salarjung Museum, Darulshifa
Tel: 96436 00310
Timings: 12 noon to 4:30 pm





Pitch a tent, chase fireflies and wake up to birdsong just 30 minutes away from the humdrum of everyday life, at **Forestrek Park** in Manchirevula

Getting Off The Grid

Just a 30-minute drive from Jubilee Hills Check Post, Forestrek Park in Manchirevula in the Chilkur Reserve Forest, is where city stress takes a backseat and nature takes the wheel. Hosted by Deccan Woods & Trails, the eco-tourism arm of the Telangana Forest Development Corporation (TGFD), this overnight nature camp held last month was part detox, part discovery – and a whole lot of fun.

WELCOME TO THE WILD

At 4 pm sharp, 18 curious campers gathered at the Rock Bay Nature Camp entry point, welcomed with refreshing drinks and smiling forest officials. After a quick intro by the friendly TGFD crew – including FRO S. Srinivas, Project Manager K. Suman, Head Naturalist Akhil, and Naturalist Aparanjani – the group jumped straight into ice-breakers and team games. Within minutes, strangers turned into a tribe. Then came the first real thrill: a breezy trek to ancient Mesolithic rock art tucked away in the wilderness. Yes, prehistoric graffiti in your backyard!

FIREFLY TALES

Back at the base, everyone tried their hand at tent pitching. With the sun dipping behind the hillocks, the bonfire crackled to life – and so did the conversations. There were stories, songs, laughter, and the comforting smell of dinner wafting through the camp kitchen. And just when you thought it couldn't get more magical, it was time for a nocturnal walk. Torches in hand, a few brave ones ventured into the dark forest trails, letting the rustling leaves and owl calls set the tone. If you've never walked through a forest at midnight, you're missing out on nature's most underrated thrill.

BIRDSONG & BREAKFAST

At the crack of dawn, campers laced up again. By 6 am, they were on a bird walk, eyes on the treetops, armed with binoculars and guides provided by TGFD. From darting sunbirds to regal drongos, the skies put on a show. The post-walk breakfast – light, millet-based and nutritious – was the perfect wrap to a soulful experience. By 9.30 am, we were feeling refreshed and ready to get back to survive the city's busyness.

COMING SOON: MORE FOREST, LESS FOMO

IFS officer Ranjeet Nayak, Executive Director of Eco-Tourism, announced that more such family-friendly, alcohol-free camps are being planned under the Deccan Woods & Trails banner. "We want more people to reconnect with the wild and understand the value of our forests – not just as tourists, but as stewards," he said.

During the bird walks, expert naturalists will guide participants in identifying bird species, understanding their nesting preferences based on habitat and vegetation types, exploring their feeding habits, flight patterns, movement behavior and social characteristics. So, pack a torch, ditch the Wi-Fi, and come sleep under a million stars. Manchirevula is calling. ■ MANJU

Price: Rs 1,999 for adults; Rs 1,199 for kids between 6-12 years

Forestrek Park, Chilkur Road, Vikarabad Highway

Tel: 94935 49399

Timings: 4 pm to 9.30 am

PRO HACKS:

- Be ready to do nothing if it rains very heavily. But monsoon is also a great time to be in the forest as it is lush and green
- Veteran nature walkers may find it basic, but it is also one of the closest nature walks one can get, in less than an hour from the city
- You can also take a monthly walker pass to use this facility at Rs 600 per month
- Expect a one-hour drive from Jubilee Hills Check Post to the destination during peak traffic times via Nanakramguda

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MOVIES

In theaters



FREAKIER FRIDAY (ENGLISH)

Lindsay Lohan and Jamie Lee Curtis are back together for *Freakier Friday* this August. Directed by Nisha Ganatra, this sequel to 2003's *Freaky Friday* that saw mother-daughter duo Tess and Anna switch bodies in a freak accident, will now see the two women return to discover that lightning may indeed strike twice.

Date: 8th August



MASS JATHARA (TELUGU)

Bhanu Bogavarapu directs this action flick featuring Ravi Teja and Sree Leela in pivotal roles. *Mass Jathara* is all set to bring high-octane action, catchy music, and punch-packed dialogues to the big screen, with Ravi Teja donning the uniform of a Railway Protection Force officer, promising plenty of heroic moments.

Date: 27th August



WAR 2 (HINDI, TELUGU, TAMIL)

War 2 sees Kabir Dhaliwal descend further into the deepest shadows as India sends its deadliest, most lethal agent after him – a Special Units Officer who is more than Kabir's equal, Vikram. Directed by Ayan Mukerji, and starring Hrithik Roshan, N. T. Rama Rao Jr., Kiara Advani, Anil Kapoor, and Ashutosh Rana, the film explores the relentless pursuit of Kabir with the goal of placing a bullet into his head.

Date: 14th August



CAUGHT STEALING (ENGLISH)

The Oscar nominated filmmaker and visionary behind films like *Black Swan*, *The Wrestler*, and *Requiem for a Dream*, Darren Aronofsky, is back with an all-new film titled *Caught Stealing*. Starring Austin Butler, Zoë Kravitz, and Regina King among others, the film revolves around a burned-out ex-baseball player who finds himself embroiled in a dangerous struggle.

Date: 29th August

DHADAK 2 (HINDI)

Directed by Shazia Iqbal, produced by Dharma Productions, and starring Siddhant Chaturvedi and Tripti Damri, *Dhadak 2* is a romantic drama. It follows Nilesch and Vidhi who fall in love but soon face challenges as tragedy strikes when caste differences threaten to end their relationship.

Date: 1st August



COOLIE (TAMIL, TELUGU, KANNADA)

Starring Rajinikanth, Nagarjuna Akkineni, Shruti Haasan, Upendra, and Soubin Shahir etc., *Coolie* is one of August's most anticipated films. Directed by Lokesh Kanagaraj, the action thriller delves into a man's relentless quest for vengeance, driven by righting past wrongs.

Date: 14th August



SERIES

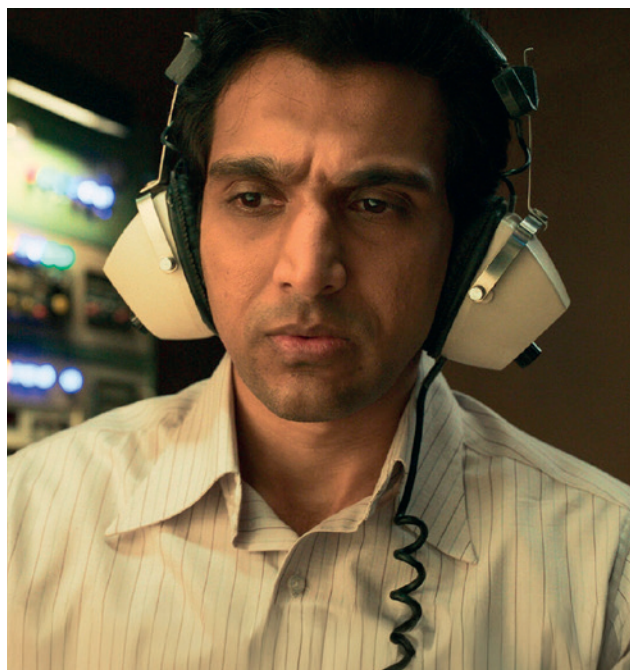
Streaming Online



SAARE JAHAN SE ACHCHA

(HINDI)
NETFLIX

Created by Gaurav Shukla, directed by Sumit Purohit, and with a cast that includes Tillotama Shome, Rajat Kapoor, Anup Soni, Pratik Gandhi, Sunny Hinduja, and Suhail Nayyar etc., *Saare Jahan Se Achcha* is an upcoming Hindi-language Netflix series about a resilient Indian spy who must defeat his counterpart across the border in a battle of wits and tradecraft to sabotage a nuclear program.



TWO MUCH WITH KAJOL AND TWINKLE

(HINDI)
PRIME VIDEO

To the surprise of many who are thinking, “we didn’t know we needed this,” actress Kajol and star wife and author Twinkle Khanna are coming together to host a first-of-its-kind talk show, *Two Much with Kajol and Twinkle*. Premiering soon, the show promises unfiltered energy, something both hosts are well-known to inherently possess.

With a guest list that includes the biggest names in Bollywood, the show has already stirred anticipation online from potential viewers who are as excited as the two ladies who will be hosting it.



MAYASABHA: THE RISE OF THE TITANS

(TELUGU)
SONY LIV

Helmed by acclaimed director Deva Katta, the Telugu series *Mayasabha: The Rise of the Titans* is a political thriller set in the mid-90s’ Andhra Pradesh. Starring Aadhi Pinisetty as Kakarla Krishnama Naidu and Chaitanya Rao as MS Rami Reddy, *Mayasabha* is a promising drama loosely inspired by a few landmark political events, and one that explores the brotherly rivalry between two young politicians from opposing parties.



WEDNESDAY: SEASON 2

(ENGLISH)
NETFLIX

Acclaimed American series, *Wednesday* returns to Netflix for a two-parter season (you heard that right), with the first part releasing this August and the second in September. Also returning is Jenna Ortega as Wednesday Addams, the titular heroine who will be seen diving deeper into the kooky world of Nevermore Academy with new threats, complex relationships, and a fresh supernatural mystery awaiting her. ■ IPSHITA



SNIPPETS

Swordfights, Sarees & Stardom!

With *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* hitting the theaters on July 24, Nidhi Agerwal has been feeling the adrenaline – and the nostalgia. “It took two hours to become Panchami every day,” she laughs, talking about the layered period look, heavy jewelry, and Keeravani’s thumping background score. Sharing screen space with Power Star Pawan Kalyan? “One film with him feels like a hundred,” she gushes. Between horse riding, Bharatanatyam lessons, and belting out contrasting tracks like *Tara Tara* and *Kollagottinadhiro*, Nidhi is ready to rule. “It’s like Indiana Jones in royal India!” she grins. This one’s all about swords and spirit on a serious scale.

SS, not SRK

Looks like South star Suriya Sivakumar, who was recently seen in *Retro* in Telugu, is catching the SRK wave – literally! The ever-charming Tamil superstar recently surprised fans by stepping out onto his terrace and waving at the cheering crowd below, Shah Rukh style. And let’s be honest, with that smile, that grace, and those looks, Suriya might just be the most handsome man in Indian cinema right now (sorry, not sorry!). Fans couldn’t stop swooning as their favorite star acknowledged them with folded hands and heart-melting humility. From intense roles to heartfelt moments like this, Suriya proves once again – he’s not just a star, he’s an emotion.



On the Brandwagon

Rashmika Mandanna is officially on the brandwagon! After charming us on-screen, she’s now stepping into the beauty biz with *Dear Diary* – her new fragrance line that’s all heart, no fluff. “It’s personal,” she says, promising scents that remind you of home, heartbreak, and happy places. And have you seen the BTS clip where she calls her mother to share the news? Subtle, sweet, and smart PR at its finest. Rashmika’s not just dabbling – she’s diversifying with flair, turning memories into mists. One whiff, and you’re inside her world. Emotional marketing? Check. A brand that feels like a warm hug? Double check.



Second Innings

Bhagyashri Borse is clearly not done with Tollywood yet – and we’re here for it! After making her debut last year in a forgettable movie, she’s hoping to hit jackpot again with *Kingdom*, her upcoming film opposite Ram. The buzz? She might just be teaming up with Akhil next too! And that’s not all – she’s also part of *Kaantha*, the much-anticipated film with Dulquer Salmaan. With her girl-next-door charm and screen presence that turns heads, Bhagyashri is lining up some serious star power. Looks like she’s all set for a second innings that’s bigger, bolder, and totally binge-worthy! ■ MANJU



THE BUZZ

Some dope about the recent surprise Bollywood blockbuster *Saiyaara* we didn't see coming

Love, Drama and Box Office Gold

So, why is *Saiyaara* suddenly everywhere – from your Instagram reels to family WhatsApp groups? Simple. It's the romantic drama that's taken 2025 by storm. Released with minimal hype, the *Aashiqui 2* director, Mohit Suri's latest directorial venture has stunned the box office, turning debutants Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda into overnight stars. As the film races past the Rs 100 crore mark, we're diving into what makes it tick.

Produced under the Yash Raj Films banner, this love story launched Bollywood newbies Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda in a soulful romantic drama that's actually breaking the internet. Early social media reactions show people bawling their eyes out – and not just in subtle ways. One guy watched the movie hooked up to an IV drip, prompting a mix of cringe and awe online!

BOX-OFFICE BONANZA & THE BUZZ

Coming off a super-modest promo,

the film minted Rs 7.2 crore in advance bookings – even outpacing the action thriller *Raid 2*. By day five, it had shattered Salman Khan's *Sikandar* record and was already edging into the Rs 150 crore territory in just a few days. Now, it's officially in the list of top five grossers of the year.

PARTY SERENDIPITY

Ahaan is no newbie to glitz – being the nephew of Chunky Panday and cousin of Ananya Panday – he was groomed by YRF's talent wing for six years, undergoing intensive workshops before finally landing his debut opposite Aneet. Believe it or not, Ahaan was cast at a casual industry party, where Mohit was genuinely impressed by his laid-back attitude and quiet confidence. That chance encounter reportedly sealed his role as Krish Kapoor. Meanwhile, there is an interesting story about how Aneet Padda – known for her Amazon show *Big Girls Don't Cry* bagged the role.

CO-STAR CUTE MEETS

While Ahaan was locked in as the lead, it was actually he who championed Aneet for the heroine's role. Turns out, Aneet's first meeting with Mohit was a bit of a disaster, with her audition going all wrong. Mohit wasn't convinced – until Ahaan stepped in, gently nudging him to give her another shot. "Trust me, she's good. I've done a scene with her," he insisted. That heartfelt push worked. Mohit called Aneet back, told her to drop the act and just be herself – and the rest is *Saiyaara* history. Now that's what we call solid co-star energy! A viral comparison to the 2004 Korean hit *A Moment to Remember* sparked a mini frenzy online about originality – but hey, all buzz is good buzz, right?

Saiyaara is a classic example of how less can be more: minimal hype, maximum feels. If you're craving genuine tear-jerkin' moments and some serious heart-tugging tunes, this one's a must-watch. ■ MANJU



BOOKS

THE CHOLA TIGERS: AVENGERS OF SOMNATH

By Amish Tripathi
Harper Collins; Rs 499

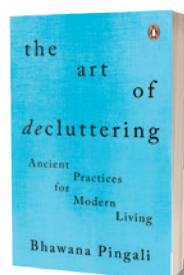


The second book in Amish's Indic Chronicles, *The Chola Tigers* is a historical saga of defiance, honor and redemption that celebrates the indomitable spirit of India. When the ruthless tyrant Mahmud

of Ghazni destroys the sacred temple of Somnath, the greatest ruler of the time, Emperor Rajendra Chola, summons a squad of defiant assassins to embark on a perilous quest and bring the fearsome enemy to his knees. This historical fiction title builds on the world introduced in the 2020 bestseller *Legend of Suheldev*. The book explores the profound question: How far would you go to defend dharma and your country's honour?

THE ART OF DECLUTTERING

By Bhawana Pingali
Penguin Random House; Rs 399

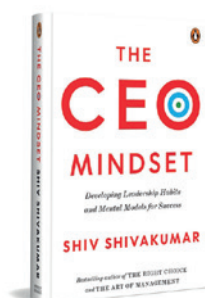


Bagging seeds to relax our eyes, making a cloth pad as self-care, draping a saree like trousers to go upside down, drawing to feed ants: Can ancient methods with their things work as modern 'tools'

to 'declutter' our almost-overloaded senses? Clutter – real and virtual – is a part of our life now. These cleansing rituals and healing practices are believed to have old-world history, rooted essence, purgative properties, health benefits, zero or minimal waste, and if tweaked, help us stay on top of our body-mind game. The book delves into how forgotten Indian rituals can be reinvented and integrated into modern life to enhance our well-being.

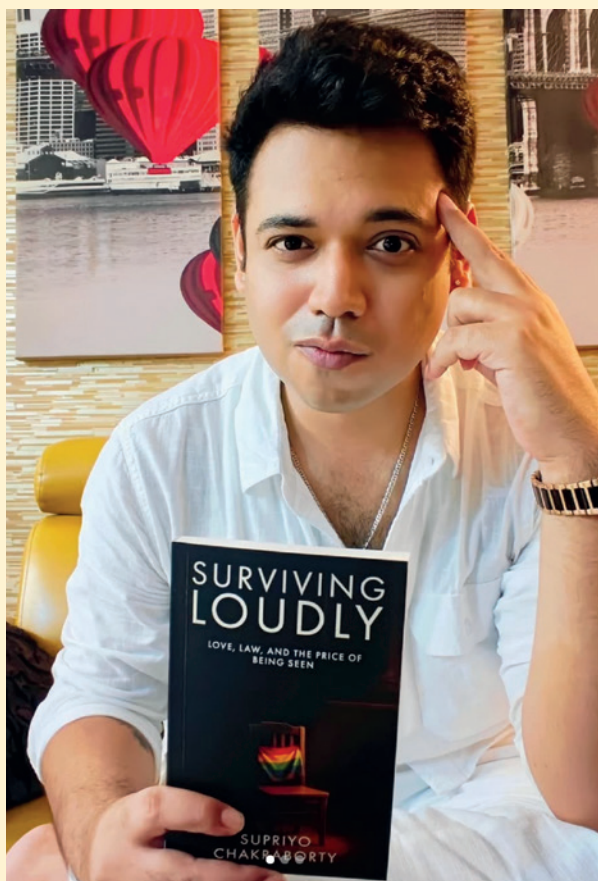
THE CEO MINDSET

By Shiv Shivakumar
Penguin Random House; Rs 599



One of India's most respected and insightful corporate leaders, Shiv Shivakumar's book, *The CEO Mindset* is a powerful, reflective guide on what it truly takes to rise to the top in today's business world.

It brings a masterclass in leadership thinking, strategy, and human-centered growth at a time when the world is redefining what makes a successful CEO. It is a blend of practical guidance, sharp analysis, and deeply personal storytelling that will inspire both aspiring leaders and seasoned executives to reframe how they lead, prioritize, and build trust. Shiv offers rare clarity on how leaders must evolve – not just in what they do, but in how they think.



Hyderabad gender rights activist **Supriyo Chakraborty's** debut memoir offers an unapologetic glimpse into the queer life

LIFE, LOVE AND LAW

SURVIVING LOUDLY: LOVE, LAW, AND THE PRICE OF BEING SEEN

Amazon; Rs 399

The debut memoir by gender rights activist Supriyo Chakraborty is a deeply personal and timely book that explores the intersection of identity, intimacy and constitutional rights in contemporary India.

From growing up queer in a small Indian town to coming out to his family, and falling in love to becoming one of the lead petitioners in India's historic Supreme Court battle for marriage equality, the book is a movement in prose. "I was told to stay quiet. But silence nearly destroyed me," says Supriyo. With raw honesty and poetic reflection, Supriyo invites readers into the emotional journey behind legal headlines. The book not only chronicles a public legal fight but also reveals the private wounds, personal risks, and power of self-acceptance in a society that often demands silence. It goes beyond courtrooms to travel through his childhood shame, activism and the tender story of love with his partner, Abhay.

AUTHOR BIO:

Supriyo is a hospitality professional, activist, storyteller and is considered a powerful voice for queer visibility and acceptance. His TEDx Talk and media appearances have inspired thousands across the country. ■ MANJU



MUSIC

Where Hyderabad's Swifties found their wildest dreams come true

Love Letters to the Pop Queen

Hyderabad hosts new spaces and events for people with a love for specific artists in common, with fandom meet-ups around the city and the calendar. Swiftchella, a mini-Coachella-like inspired night for Swifties across the city with drinks and food, with a dance floor to sway and sing their hearts out with people who get the love for Taylor Swift like they do.

CITY SWIFTIES

Taylor Swift fans in Hyderabad are turning up the glam and glitter, recreating the magic of their idol through themed events like Switchella – a celebration of all things Taylor. From dressing up in Eras-inspired outfits to belting out her iconic anthems under fairy lights and confetti showers, Swifties are proving that you don't need to fly across the world to feel the Taylor fever. Local cafés and event curators are cashing in on the craze, hosting dance nights, karaoke battles, and merch swaps. For Hyderabad's die-hard fans, these gatherings are more than parties – they are love letters to their pop queen.

SWIFT MODE ON

The meet-up was held at Macau Kitchen & Bar in Jubilee Hills, with huge lines

at their entrance and people queuing up to get their wristbands on to get to the event. The entire place was lit with disco balls and flashing lights, people dressed to the nines, some in cosplaying outfits from the singer's music videos or tour costumes, and tying Swift-themed bracelets around each other. People were jumping, dancing, and singing every song word for word, with strangers who turned to friends for the night.

FANDOM AT ITS PEAK

The crowd was diverse, with little Swifties accompanied by their parents, daughters, and mothers, friends, and couples in the house. We connected with some of them outside the event. The night went on with shared drinks, do-it-yourself bracelets, and dances amongst them, and a space where they would be understood and not judged as they let it all out.

The city is gearing up to host more of these Fandom events with Directonia – a One Direction-themed event held in July and a K-pop fandoms, BTS ARMY meet-up scheduled in November. ■ KARTHEEKA

Price: Rs 1,999 onwards

Check BookMyShow for the next event in November





BINDU REDDY AND VARUN CHAKKILAM

DEVIKA DHANYUNI



HARSHITA SHARMA

Stories and Silhouettes

July 23, Jubilee Hills

Stylists, models, creative folks, and close friends gathered in high spirits as Bindu Reddy launched Zvezda Atelier, her new women-led fashion label. The debut collection was unveiled through an immersive, narrative-led showcase, rich in silhouette, movement, and emotion.



SPATIKA SURAPANENI



SHOAIB



GARETH OWEN AND MANPREET MALIK



PALLAB DE



VASANTHI



YASH

All is Well

July 1, Taj Deccan

Curated teas, wellness-inspired bites, herbal infusions, and a calming live flute recital set the tone for the Innergise Wellness evening at the hotel, where wellness enthusiasts came together to share mindful practices and connect as a community.



REEMA



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SANSKRITI



MIHEEKA DAGGUBATI



ANAHITA PATNY



MANIZA PATNY, ASHDEEN AND CHERAZAD PESTONJI

Warmth and color

July 23, Anahita

Parsi Gara revivalist Ashdeen Lilaowala launched his eponymous designer store in Hyderabad as part of the Chermas brand, drawing fashion lovers and loyal patrons who turned up to explore his signature collection. Guests loved the warmth at the opening of this homegrown label.



SUPRAJA RAO



VARISHINI REDDY, AASHI JAIN, RADHIKA PITTI AND JAYANTI REDDY



AMRITA KHANNA AND NIDHI

Birds of a Feather

July 23, Banjara Hills

The opening of Lovebirds was a fancy affair over cocktails and a live set by Listening Room by Sijya. The event was intimate and the rains added to the vibe.

MEKONG

Turnip Cake

*Can you make a cake out of a fried root?
Turns out, yes. Popular during the Chinese New
Year, it's a good luck charm you can eat.
Perfect if you're restarting your resolutions.*

*Taste a piece of history at Mekong.
Now open at Avasa.*





PARIDHI GULATI



AMIKSHA



SHRADDHA



SHREYA LALWANI

Seriously Sassy

July 18, Hilltop@7

Pallavi Mohan's Not So Serious lit up a rainy monsoon evening as stylish moms and their adorable daughters took to the ramp, flaunting her playful yet elegant designs. Despite the downpour, spirits stayed high, with the drizzle only adding charm to the heartwarming showcase.



RUPA BANSAL WITH DAUGHTER



SHIKHA REDDY



PALLAVI MOHAN

PICS BY BHAVIK PHOTOGRAPHY

VA

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NAINIKA REDDY



CHETNA



KAMYA



VAISHALI AND
NANDINI REDDY

Monsoon Ragas

July 18, Jubilee Hills

Vaishali Agarwal launched her festive monsoon edit for Rakhi and Shravana *maasam*, while Kaalii by Vaishali brought a Bridgerton-style twist with its Lace & Loom capsule. Shivasa Fine Jewellery added sparkle with a new gemstone collection, echoing the August festive spirit.

MANVITA



HARINI AND A FRIEND



DEEPTI REDDY



AISHWARYA



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