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OF SUCCESS**

IN CONVERSATION WITH  
DARPAN SANGHVI



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# PEAKLIFE

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Dear Readers,

It's been tough for many navigating through the Pandora box that has been the pandemic, but it only seems timely with the rain that seasons are turning leaves and so is the world. Luxury has found a new meaning, and tracing our own silver linings within the box, we're elated to share with you our latest PEAKLIFE issue.

As the doors of the world begin opening softly, we've made sure your wanderlust doesn't feel faded. Our "India's Unmissable" is an offbeat series that'll bring to your attention some of the most explore-worthy yet lesser known destinations of India. For our nature lovers, we bring you some of America's greatest national parks offering more than just an experience, and as for our history encoders, you'd love to discover what lies within the heritage of Mid-East's emerging - AlUla. Flip through to find out what your next summer haven looks like.

This month's cover star is none other than Darpan Sanghvi, the man behind MyGlamm - India's fastest growing e-beauty brand. Along with co-founder Priyanka Gill, the businessman has created a niche of his own within the pacing beauty industry in India. Tap into his 'Mindset of Success' and what beholds next for the beauty empire.

Hospitality is reviving, fortunately, and the women behind them are changing the meaning of it even so. In conversation with India's leading women hoteliers and General Managers, we bring to you a candid look into what it really takes to be one at the top in the industry.

Of course, the world is a digital drone today, and with our list of tech's biggest launches this season, it'll keep you updated on what next to add to your tech-savvy. Hot on the wheels this season is the Maybach GLS 600 and the Audi A4 - both renowned for their classic build and innovation. Breguet unfurls its 220 years in our "Year of the Tourbillon" feature, while horology goes the extra mile this season with some of the most distinct craftsmanship in play and on dial.

With a new flair of ideas, genuity, and compassion, the new normal's beginning to look hopeful already. Here's wishing for better days!

Until then, stay safe, and stay inspired.

Parineeta Sethi



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## BODH GAYA,

where a Bodhi Tree offered  
shade and awakening.

*This is where Prince Siddhartha attained  
enlightenment beneath what is now known as  
the Bodhi Tree and became the Buddha.*

*The crucible of Buddhism, Bodhgaya is  
one of the four key sites on the  
Buddhist circuit and attracts followers  
from around the world.*

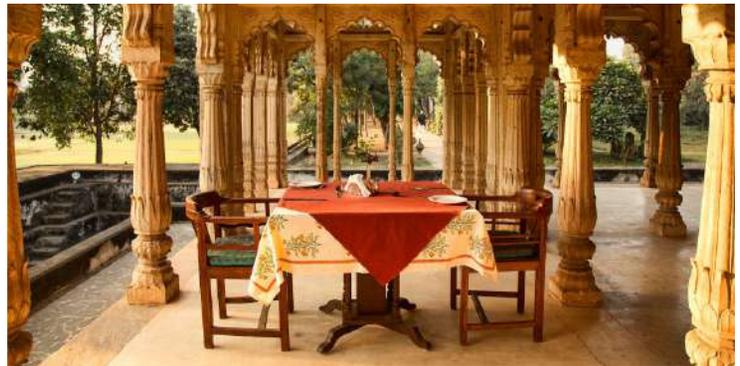
Incredible India



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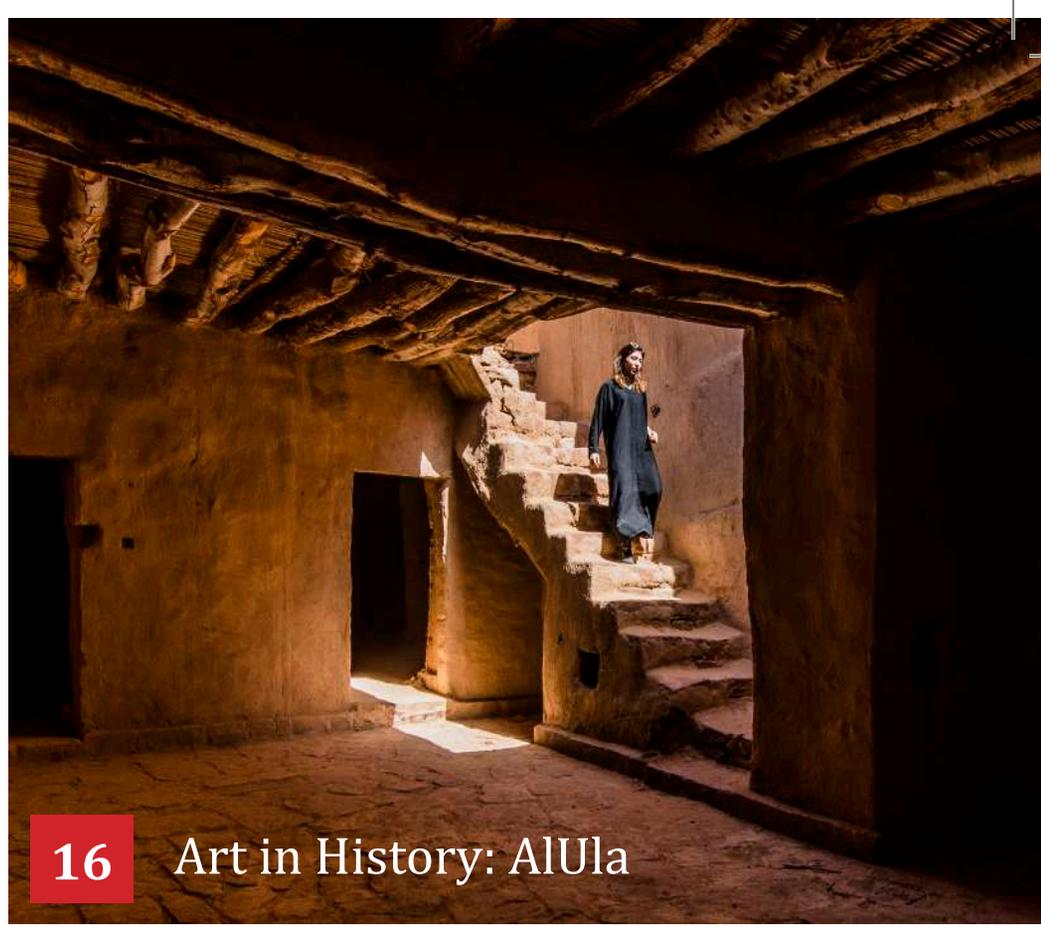
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An Oasis Of Pleasure

# TOWN OF SERENDIPITY

Nestled in the Narmada district of Gujarat, Kevadia is a quaint little town popular amongst travellers for its haven of undiscovered spots, and the world's tallest tower. As I stepped into its beauty for the first time in my life, here's Kevadia through my eyes.

**By Parineeta Sethi**

I was invited as a speaker at the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) Conclave in March, but when I was informed it would be taking place in Kevadia in Gujarat, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't rather taken aback. Why Kevadia...

Well, I decided to set out for the conference and find out more about the destination they had chosen. I thought I knew India very well, but I must admit my ignorance in this case. I have to say, Kevadia was a pleasant surprise. It is certainly not a village in the middle of nowhere that I had presumed I was heading to.

A comfortable two-hour drive from Baroda is situated in this must-visit town. It boasts of the tallest statue in the world - "The Statue of Unity" - that towers over the superbly well-maintained town. It also houses the famous Sardar Sarovar dam.

The town's circuit also covers thirty-five inviting tourist spots; some of which are already open and attracting plenty of tourism. The Valley of Flowers, Vishwa Van, Arogya Van, Jungle Safari, Cactus Garden, Butterfly Park, and River Rafting are on the periphery of the Statue and the Narmada Dam - always seen flocking with tourists.

The Statue of Unity that dominates the city with its sheer size and splendour is the world's tallest statue at 182 meters and is an ode to our first deputy Prime Minister of Independent India - Sardar Vallabhai Patel. A splendid work of art, this statue has been designed by Indian sculptor Ram V. Sutar was inaugurated by our Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 31st October 2018, marking the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Patel. It has since become a talking point in tourism circles across the world.

An interesting fact about this statue is that the Unity movement, prevalent during 1889, was started by asking farmers to donate their used farming instruments to help collect iron for making the structure and a total of 135 metric tonnes of scrap was collected and about 109 tonnes of it was used to make the foundation for this very statue.

This architecture and design marvel is expected to bring in tourists from across the world in large numbers to this small town in Gujarat. As per latest figures by 15th March 2021, fifty lakh tourists had already visited Kevadia and this number would have been way higher had it not been for the pandemic.





*A fulfilling destination, some of the must-visit sites in this tranquil town include:*

### **SARDAR PATEL ZOOLOGICAL PARK AND JUNGLE SAFARI**

The park is spread over an area of 375 acres at seven levels ranging in altitude from 29 metres to 180 metres. It houses more than 100 species of animals and birds, including wallaby (a macropod related to the kangaroo and found in Australia and New Guinea); llama and alpaca (camelid species native to the Andes of South America); giraffe, zebra, blue wildebeest, gemsbok or oryx, and impala (all native to Africa).



### **CHILDREN'S NUTRITION PARK**

The park is known to be the “world’s first technology driven Nutrition Park”. It offers “nutri-train” rides on a 600m track around the 35,000 sq. metre park, passing through five theme-based stations.

Each of the stations has a mascot — for example, “Kumar Kisan”, a puppet farmer who tells the story of how he grows fruits and vegetables at Phalshakha; an animated cow grazer “Janardhan” at Payonagri, who explains the importance of milk; and a doting mother at Annapoorna. The stations feature interactive games to ingrain the value of healthy food in children. There is also a five-minute-long 5D animation film on India’s “Unity in Food Diversity”, with animated characters talking of food habits in the West, East, North and South of India. A true treat for children along with giving them vital knowledge on nutrition.



### **RIVERFRONT CYCLING TOUR**

Beginning right from the Valley of Flowers parking lot, it is a family-friendly guided bicycle tour that includes small-frame kids bicycles and regular bicycles for adventure enthusiasts. There is also a tandem cycle tour available for couples, as well as electric cycles.



### **THE CACTUS GARDEN**

The Cactus Garden is a grand greenhouse with 450 national and international species of cacti and other plants from 17 other countries. The area of its dome is 836 sq. m, and the garden has an open area of 25 acres. There are 6 lakh plants, including 1.9 lakh cacti, 1.6 lakh succulent plants, and 2.5 lakh ornamental plants.



### **THE AROGYA VAN**

The Aarogya Van is spread over an area of about 17 acres and houses 5 lakh plants of 380 different species. It also has an Aarogya Kutir, set up in association with the Thiruvananthapuram-based Santhigiri Wellness Centre. This is a traditional Kerala treatment facility that provides modern holistic healthcare, Ayurveda, siddha, yoga and panchakarma.

Some of the therapies available at the wellness centre include abhyangam (synchronised body massage), shirodhara (for neurological disorders, insomnia, migraine and stress), and shirovasti (beneficial for strokes and hypertension).

### **THE EKTA CRUISE**

A ferry boat service called the Ekta Cruise goes from Shrestha Bharat Bhavan to the Statue of Unity - covering a distance of 6km downstream on the Narmada over 40 minutes. The cruise has two



vessels, one being Unity-1, a two-deck catamaran certified to carry 200 passengers and provide a dinner cruise with a 160-sq-foot performance stage on the upper deck.

### VISHWA VAN

ome to herbs, shrubs and trees native to all seven continents signifying the underlying theme of 'Unity in Biodiversity', the Vishwa Van symbolizes the life sustaining portion of forests in the context of all life forms on the planet. The vegetation is arranged in a way to resemble the natural forest of a particular zone. It also aims to educate visitors about biogeography – the study of distribution of species and ecosystems in geographic space.



## KEVADIA BY NIGHT

Kevadia is one of those towns that light up during the night and seem even more stunning under nightfall. As the sun begins to set, the town starts to prepare to bring to life another reason why visiting this place is such a good idea.

The 8.5 km stretch of road from Ekta Dwar to the Sardar Sarovar Dam has a carnival look, decorated with colourful motifs and lights that lend the area a festive appearance after sunset.

The Statue of Unity though a stunning sight at day, becomes even more marvellous at night. The structure is lit up with warm yellow lights that cast a magnificent aura upon it. Truly mesmerising. The Statue of Unity Laser Light Show is another magical experience introduced through the use of modern-day technology.

The Laser Show portrays the story of the Journey of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel – focusing mainly on his role in helping India become a nation. Laser lights and sounds are used to create a beautiful sight centred around the Statue. It truly is a sight not to be missed.

The Unity Glow Garden, which is an amusement park, uses uniquely created optical illusions and various installations, which make the park glow with its LED fountain and many other figures.

The Sardar Sarovar Dam Light and Sound Show is another attraction that lights up the town at night. Considered the third highest dam in India and the second biggest in the world, at night, the dam shines with a dazzling light show that dances following the sound effects, entertaining the crowd. It is these efforts that make the town dazzle with brilliance, no matter day or night.

### COMFORT GALORE

Kevadia is also home to some great accommodation options. We stayed at The Statue of Unity Tent City 1 – a luxury accommodation with Swiss-styled and eco-friendly cottages sparing no facility. With options right from presidential suites to royal villas, this is true luxury in the lap of nature. Apart from high-end options, other more affordable accommodations are also available in Kevadia. The Ramada, The Grand Unity Hotel, The Fern Sardar Sarovar Resort, and more are easily prevalent and comfy options to choose from when travelling to see this marvel of a town. ▲

# INDIA'S UNMISSABLE

Whether it is the glorious Gateway of India, the imposing Sea Link, the sun-kissed Haji Ali, India Gate, or the Howrah Bridge, all of them with their ingenuity have one thing in common - they are all an essential part of the opulent legacy that represents India - a country where every street and every corner has some tale to tell.

We're loved for our food, our culture, and our undeniably warm hospitality. In our series "India's Unmissable", we take you through a trip down India's some of the finest yet underrated experiences we can't have you miss out on.

**By Rupali Dean**



## LIVE IN A COLONIAL BUNGALOW IN GWALIOR

**A**waken history in a char-bagh where Mughal emperors once camped. Surrounded by exquisite temples, blooming greenery, regal dining, and comfortable stays in Gwalior's heritage, as DeoBagh Gwalior opens doors for all and one.



Standing as a portrayal of glorious royal India as one of the best heritage hotels in the country, there's an unusual charm about staying at this property. According to history, Sardar Deorao Bhausahab Jadhav and his son Sardar Krishnarao Deorao Jadhav converted the chhattis-dari (36-pillared pavilion) into a summer house, and that's how Deo Bagh came into being.

The garden complex houses the most exquisite family temples, a 'hathi khana' for elephants, stables and cenotaphs. Important Gwalior State meetings, especially against the British – when the valiant Rani of Jhansi fought from the fort rampart close by, were held here during that time.

Thus, staying at Deo Bagh makes your experience of exploring Gwalior even more remarkable. It makes you step back in time and revel in the glories and mysteries of the past.

## TRAIL BY THE CASHEW FARMS OF GOA

**H**eld annually at Goa's largest Feni maker, The Cashew Trail of Goa is as interesting and adventurous as it gets. Paired with practical tours and much more on the fake fruit, here's why one simply shouldn't miss out on this unique journey.

Fuelled for cashew probably sounds a little clichéd, but this holds one in good stead for a walk through Valpoi Cashew Farm of Cedric and Mac Vac, Madame Rosa Distillery – Goa's largest Feni maker.

Yellow, red and reddish orange, these beautiful fruits are sprinkled on the ground, each dressed with a hard nut in a sheath of charcoal and it is here that you learn your first lesson of picking the fallen ripe fruits and never plucking them off the tree. And there's more. Guests get to taste Nerow (the juice of the fruit) as well as feast on a yummy lunch at the cashew farm.

Interestingly, the cashew tree was brought into Goa by the Portuguese many moons ago and today locals have taught the world how to use each and every part of the cashew in its true glory! Held annually, the



Cashew Trail is easily an offbeat yet exciting event one must visit when in Goa.

The wildlife site is managed by the Rajasthan Forest Department with the

support of local communities and national and international conservation organisations, and a management plan has been developed for the protection and management of the property.





## GURGAON'S GLAMPING HUB: KARMALAKELANDS GURGAON

Where there's the heritage of our country, India is keeping up with the importance of going green and contributing as little as possible to one's carbon footprint. With more hotels and resorts now introducing sustainable practices in their force, Karma Lakelands is emerging as one of the most unique and evolved.

Committed to the environment and world-class hospitality, Karma Lakelands is one of India's finest producers of organic honey. Check into one of the luxuriowus safari-style glamping bungalows – nestled within 300 acres of greenery, providing the perfect escape from day to day hustle and bustle. Here times stand still and nature takes centre stage.

Klub Kara's is a glamorous venue offering a Grand BallRoom, Conference room, indoor and outdoor Swimming Pools, Jacuzzi, Isha Room for meditation and wellness, and is supported by all kinds of sports, multiple F&B outlets, and event facilities. Rent a bicycle, stroll around for bird watching, or discover the nearby village!

Ecological and sustainable activities are a big part of Karma Lakelands' ethos. Water Harvesting, Organic Agro initiatives, Solar Energy utilisation, 500,000 liters of Sewage Treatment daily for irrigation purpose, a No Honking policy (the guards respond to sight not sound), No Plastic, Eco-bricks, Tree Top development and many more are not only encouraged but practiced at KarmaLakelands.



## A BIRDER'S PARADISE: KEOLADEO NATIONAL PARK, BHARATPUR

India houses a total of 101 national parks. From well-defined treks that can be covered on either foot, cycle, or rickshaws to guided trails and bird watching, a day off to the parks are an interesting affair. Announced a World Heritage Site in 1985, Keoladeo National Park is one such hotspot to check out. It is where you will discover some of the rarest and most stunning feathered species.

Previously known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, the Keoladeo National Park is renowned as one of the realm's most

significant bird breeding and feeding grounds. Some 364 species of birds, including the rare Siberian crane, have been recorded in the park. It coined in as an imperial shooting reserve during the 1850s and was a game reserve for Maharajas and the British. In 1982, Keoladeo was acknowledged as a national park and later registered as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985.

The park is home to more than three hundred and seventy kinds of birds and animals. The distinct treks can be covered on either foot or cycle or rickshaws. In fact, the rickshaw pullers make for tremendously well-informed



## A DAY'S TRIP TO MAHMUDABAD PALACE, LUCKNOW

**E**xplore Awadh's culture and traditions. Discover heritage forts, palaces, shrines, temples, and other sights – all part of a rich Indian history that goes back centuries. With a new variant of architecture in each piece, a different story set in different stones, we have got it all adorned neatly.

Part of this very heritage is the magnificent Mahmudabad Palace in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Known for its centuries of history and culture, here's why this Awadhi Palace is one to not miss.

One of the oldest estates in Awadh, the name Mahmudabad comes from Nawab

Mahmud Khan, who was in fact titled by none other than Akbar the Great.

The tour around the property is enlightening and overwhelming – boasting extraordinary ceilings, extravagant tapestry, and chandeliers that can make anyone swoon. In Mahal Sarah which is the ladies' segment of the fort, a set of women still sit each day and meticulously create stunning chikan outfits under the label "Qilasaaz" which Vijaya Khan, Rani of Mahmudabad, personally supervises. There is a family mosque in the grounds, as well as quite a few of imambadas.

Meals which are an integral part of a day

trip (morning to early evening) are hosted by the family in their city-dwelling in Lucknow as well as in the Qila. The 400-year old gastronomic practice will blow you away the moment you step inside the majestic dining table. The fort of Mahmudabad is often viewed as a retreat for artists, writers, and intellectuals to find inspiration to create and collaborate.

The Royal Library, accessible only by appointment, is home to approximately twenty thousand books including early editions of 19th-century classics by Charles Dickens together with writings in Persian, Arabic, Urdu Latin, and Greek.

## A FRESH BEGINNING AT THE ROCK GARDEN, CHANDIGARH

**A**lso known as the Nek Chand's Rock Garden, take a walk in the Rock Garden in Chandigarh – which boasts a multitude of structures, statues, and artworks of recycled materials.

Nestled near the Sukhna Lake, the garden is visited by over 5,000 people daily, with more than 12 million visitors since its inception! Head to this embodiment of creativity, resourcefulness and invention aka Nek Chand's Rock garden – a bizarre vision of a native government official who,

beginning in 1957, created over 2000 sculptures by means of stones, debris and other rejected waste. Today, spread over a whopping 40 acres, this sculpture garden is like none other. Things like steel drums, light switches, broken bathroom sinks, concrete, terracotta scrap and bicycle frames have been used to create these unique works of art.

Do not miss the mass of dancing girls made from broken glass bangles, waterfalls, the dolls museum, and an elegant colonnade of tall curves with hanging rope swings. ▲





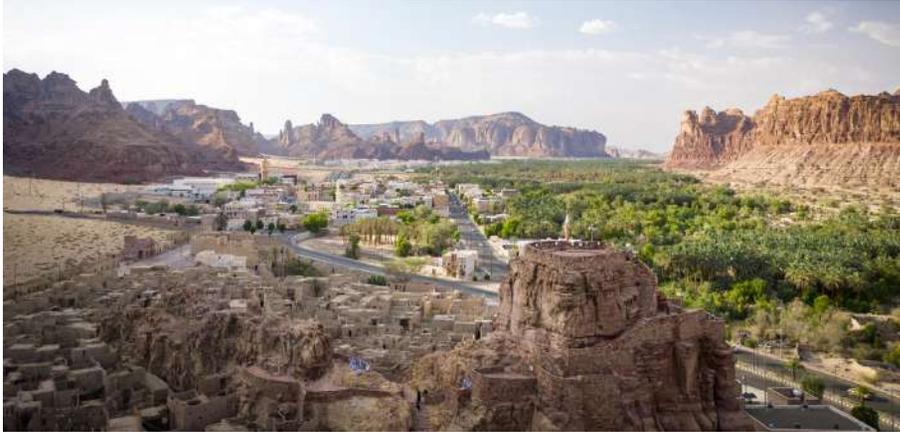
# ART IN HISTORY: ALULA

A lush oasis valley, towering sandstone mountains and ancient cultural heritage sites dating back thousands of years, AlUla, Saudi Arabia, is a melting pot of untouched and undiscovered specialties. From awe-inspiring adventure activities and local cuisines to historic towns and ancient galleries, the city awaits a mystical journey.

One of the world's most significant heritage and culture destinations to India, AlUla is a living museum that holds 200,000 years of largely unexplored human history. The vast desert landscape features preserved tombs, sandstone outcrops, historic dwellings and monuments, both natural and human-made. It is a cradle of human history offering a bounty of ancient and traditional cultural and artistic charms.

## EXTRAORDINARY HERITAGE

For years, Saudi Arabia has played home to religious tourism - after all, this is the birthplace of Islam. But AlUla's landscape is as monumental as its history. The first UNESCO World Heritage of Saudi Arabia, Hegra, was the centre of the Nabataean kingdom in the region. The awe-inspiring carved tomb facades of the Nabateans can still be seen today in perfectly preserved detail. The history and heritage of AlUla



**"ALULA IS A CRADLE OF HUMAN HISTORY OFFERING A BOUNTY OF ANCIENT AND TRADITIONAL CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC CHARMS."**

experience has caused quite a stir among adventure seeking travellers. One of the longest in the world, visitors will race along to a speed of over 100km/h while enjoying the incredible scenery of the Hijaz Mountain range - this one is not for the faint-hearted!

Set in golden desert sands and climbing three stories into the Arabian sky is the awe-inspiring Elephant Rock (Jabal Al-Fil), one of AlUla's many geological marvels. The area is open for visitors to hike the trails and camp amongst the starry night sky.

AlUla's Old Town is another historic wonder where pilgrims, travellers and permanent settlers congregated through the ages. Built in an elevation, it contains remnants of the original stone and mud-brick building constructions.

### **FARM-TO-PLATE DELIGHTS**

AlUla is a fertile oasis within the otherwise and climate of north-western Saudi Arabia with ample fresh produce unique to the region — from dates and figs to acacia and more. Visitors can indulge in food as well as farm experiences, straight to the table.

### **DREAMS ARE MADE OF HERE!**

Far away from city lights in the vast open space of AlUla's remote Gharameel desert lands, a magical evening of stargazing is a must-do experience for nature lovers. Led by a star expert, visitors will learn about the constellations and their relation to the ancient land's culture and history as they marvel at the brilliance of the dark sky sprinkled with infinite stars.

Brimming with distinct natural and human heritage, AlUla is a destination of wonders worth exploring. ▲

is evidenced by a recent documentary by Discovery Channel, 'The Architects of Ancient Arabia' that revealed human civilization's first building blocks were set in place in AlUla.

'The Architects of Ancient Arabia' journeys into Saudi Arabia's deeper past, following teams of leading international and Saudi archaeologists and a local historian as they reveal new wonders in the previously unexplored land.

### **ALULA: AN ANCIENT ADVENTURE HOTSPOT**

It is the perfect destination for soft adventure activities such as hot air ballooning, zip lining, camel and horse riding, and many more.

AlUla's vast open spaces provide the perfect backdrop for safe, fun, exploration with more experiences opening up over the coming months. AlUla's new zipline

# PARK PARADISE

Transport yourself to lush and distant lands of America's greatest parks in history as you discover the country's diverse natural and cultural heritage.

**T**he United States of America has a rich outdoor heritage of over 60 national parks that attract millions of visitors each year. In 2019 itself, more than 327 million people visited these parks to immerse themselves in their natural beauty. Whether you are seeking lush greenery and trails or an adventurous run away to someplace vast, these are some of the most renowned parks to elevate your trip in the USA.



## REDWOOD NATIONAL AND STATE PARKS, CALIFORNIA

Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1980, Redwood National and State Parks in Northern California are home to the world's tallest trees with a lush mix of coastal, riverine and prairie wildlands. Discover Howland Hill Road, a windy, 10-mile scenic drive through old-growth redwoods. Have a picnic lunch at the Elk Meadow Day Use Area, one of the best places to go if you want to combine biking, walking or hikes. Experience the stunning scenery from your car along the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway, a 16 kilometre scenic drive through ancient redwoods or drive to Klamath River Overlook, a prime spot for watching gray whale migration.

## ARCHES NATIONAL PARK, UTAH

Located just outside the adventurous town of Moab, Arches National Park is unlike any other park in the world. It is home to some 2,000 natural sandstone arches that have been shaped by years of wind and rain. The Delicate Arch is one of the most renowned and photographed arches in the park. Hikers can take advantage of a variety of trails in Arches. While some hikes take a couple of hours to complete, others are longer half-day hikes for the intermediate and advanced hiker. Apart from hiking, there's an endless array of things to do in the park including biking, camping, and horse riding.



## DENALI NATIONAL PARK, ALASKA

Denali National Park is one of the most visited attractions in Alaska and is the only U.S. National Park with its own sled dogs. It was established in 1917 as Mount McKinley National Park and renamed Denali National Park in 1980. This outdoor wonderland contains the tallest mountain in North America - Mount Denali. More than 6 million acres is packed with stunning scenery, wildlife and adventures for the bold, from horseback riding to white water rafting.



## HOT SPRINGS NATIONAL PARK, ARKANSAS

Hot Springs National Park protects 47 hot springs found below the Earth's surface in central Arkansas. Though more than 180 years old, the park still attracts visitors who come for the thermal baths whose high mineral content is said to be therapeutic. Even though there are no soaking opportunities outdoors, Bathhouse Row does have two available facilities that offer visitors the chance to fully submerge and relax in the thermal water. You can also drink the hot springs water and even fill bottles to take home.



## ACADIA NATIONAL PARK, MAINE

Situated near Bar Harbor, Maine, Acadia National Park is renowned for its incredible rocky beaches and is home to towering mountains, lush forests and a wide variety of animals. Hiking and biking are popular park activities. One can hike to the Cadillac Mountain, which at 1,530 feet is the highest point in the U.S. Atlantic coast. At 3.5 million visits a year, this sprawling 47,000 acres park is one of the top 10 most-visited national parks in the United States. ▲



## GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, MONTANA

With over one million acres of protected land, including majestic peaks, lakes, alpine meadows and glacier-carved valleys, Glacier National Park boasts an outstanding natural world. It takes its name from the many glaciers and glacial forces that shaped its rugged topography over two million years.

The park features a variety of trails and is a favorite among hikers seeking wilderness and solitude. One of the most popular destinations of the Glacier National Park is 'Going-to-the-Sun Road' - a 80 kilometre trek that provides some of the most amazing views in Montana.





## REGAL AND ROYALE

Glistening with its own northern charm, The Leela Palace Jaipur compliments the enthralling beauty, vibrant culture, and magnificence of the royal palaces of Jaipur – the stunning Pink City of India.

Recognized as a UNESCO Heritage Site, Jaipur reels with the best in regal and royal. Well known as a cultural hub, the place is well connected with the rest of the world, making it just another reason to not to miss the enthralling experience The Leela Palace Jaipur has to offer at this land of royalty and culture.

### A SWEET SUITE STAY

The Leela Palace Jaipur defines royalty and elegance with guest rooms of white marble, unique leafing work on the headboard wall, Venetian mirrors with wall sconces showcased over pastel-colored rooms adorned with embellishments like a chandelier, paintings, and intricate woodwork - all paired with modern features and premium amenities to provide you a comfortable experience. All The Leela Palace rooms have one thing in com-



**ALL THE LEELA PALACE ROOMS HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON - LUXURIOUS SERVICES THAT INCLUDE COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST, HIGH TEA AND BUTLER SERVICES."**

mon - luxurious services that include complimentary breakfast, high tea and Butler Services which include taking care of all guest requirements during the stay.

**FINE TASTES OF JAIPUR**

Well, what is an experience without food? The Leela Palace has a wide range of restaurants serving a variety of delights to pacify your taste buds. Restaurants here are inspired by dreamy cities, eloquent palaces, and architecture of Rajasthan. They offer a wide range of cuisines and drinks to indulge into. The Leela Palace is committed to offering a fine dining experience with a dash of royalty to top it all!

**ADVENTURE THEN UNWIND!**

The Palace also offers a multitude of experiential activities to partake in and make the best out of leisure time. It offers team building games such as cricket, polo, passing the Hula Hoop, Tug of War, Brush the Balloon, Water Relay, Minute to Win It, and Bicycle Race. One can also enjoy traditional folk dances and puppet shows. Wellness activities include Aqua Aerobics, Cycling, Badminton, Football, Cricket, Zumba, Sunrise Yoga and Croquet.

Unwind with a morning Flute recital, Langa Party, Kukas Ki Chaupar, Diya

Painting, Karaoke Singing, Tambola, Puppet Show, Bangle Making, Pottery, and Block Painting or opt for a guided walking tour to explore nature recharging sightseeing excursions in Kukas Village, Boot camp, trekking, swimming competition, cycling and farming lessons

Is it true luxury without an exhilarating self-care session? The Leela Palace also offers a range of self-care options to pamper yourself with. It has its very own rejuvenating Spa Centre, Salon, and Gym, to feed your soul, mind and body – completing your exciting stay at The Leela Palace Jaipur! ▲



# SUMMER'S SAFE HAVEN

Grasp the fresh summer season at its best in the Maldives this year – offering wellness integrated adventures, privacy, safety, and unending experiences with the Marriott Bonvoy.

**T**hanks to its unending spaces and experiences too, Maldives is easily the top summer destination for visiting this year. Thoughtfully integrated for creating memorable spaces, the isolated nature of each resort offers much privacy and security for the ideal staycation amidst the pandemic. Whether you are seeking refuge from your burnout or looking at vacations with your loved ones, here are some of Maldives' finest choices to make your stay comfortable and luxurious to the max:



## SHERATON MALDIVES FULL MOON RESORT & SPA

Situated on the private island of Furanafushi in the Republic of Maldives, Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa is a five-star resort offering 176 guest rooms designed to blend into the surrounding turquoise waters, pristine beaches and lush greenery. Home to seven unique restaurants and bars, the Shine Spa for Sheraton is also located on its very own island. The award-winning Shine Spa has six treatment villas, two hydrotherapy pools, two relaxation lounges, separate steam rooms, and a brand-new yoga pavilion – all surrounded by a private garden and tropical lush vegetation. Special attention has been given to privacy and tranquillity at the Sheraton Maldives.

<http://sheratonmaldives.com>



## JW MARRIOTT MALDIVES RESORT & SPA

Located on Vagaru Island, Shaviyani Atoll, JW Marriott Resort & Spa is a mesmerizing stay for a stress-free, rejuvenating vacation. Boasting nature-inspired experiential activities, the resort overlooks views of the Indian Ocean. JW Marriott Maldives focuses on bringing holistic wellbeing through enriching experiences to guests – including activities like Sunrise and Sunset Yoga, Meditation, Body Challenge, Core Workout, and many more at the Yoga Pavilion and the 24/7 Fitness Centre. Begin your journey by checking in into their spacious villas, followed by a bottle of Spa by JW detox juice. Learn how to tune into your body by guided meditation and reconnect with your inner self. Indulge in Detox & Tone, a Couples' Massage, and Buffet Breakfast at Ailaa Restaurant for utter relaxation and fun.

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

## THE WESTIN MALDIVES MIRIANDHOO RESORT

Nestled on a beautiful coral island in the Baa Atoll, a designated UNESCO Biosphere Reserve site, The Westin Maldives Miriandhoo Resort is committed to leisure, luxury, and environmental stability.

Reflecting Westin's commitment to wellness, The Heavenly Spa by Westin™ allows guests to replenish mind and body with a personal sensory experience. Its new Detox and De-Stress program stay true to the brand's Six Pillars of Well-Being: Feel Well, Work Well, Move Well, Eat Well, Sleep Well and Play Well. Expect Yoga Nidra session (Yogic sleep) for 45 minutes, Body massage with a magnesium gel for 60 minutes, Juice/Drink to aid restful sleep, Detoxifying scrub with sea salt and coconut to enhance circulation, 60 minutes jet lag massage with an exclusive essential oil blend and Jet lag recovery yoga session for 45 minutes – an all-encompassing experience.

[www.westin-maldives.com](http://www.westin-maldives.com)



## W MALDIVES

Escape to W Maldives, inviting infinite days of white-sand beaches, turquoise lagoons and breathtaking reefs. Flirt with adventure over the water with adrenaline-filled water sports or go DOWN UNDER with a PADI diving professional and discover some of the best dive spots in the Maldives all within

proximity to W Maldives. Explore the spectacular Indian Ocean aboard a luxury 2-cabin sailing yacht or create your own adventure under the stars with an overnight diving experience.

Discover true pampering at AWAY Spa, embarking you on a journey of

transformation. With signature treatments, body wraps, sunburn soothers, perhaps immersions in tropical therapies or individual cleansing steam baths, the world feels like your oyster as you gaze out at the infinite Indian Ocean from the 5-star resort. ▲

[www.wmaldives.com](http://www.wmaldives.com)



## LUXURY SET APART

Sublime surroundings and bespoke interiors furnished with avant-garde amenities, make your step into the breezy haven of Goa's newest holiday escape – Mayaland Homes.

By Vrinda Rastogi

**N**estled in the quaint village of Assagao in North Goa is the novel Mayaland Homes. Established in 2017, Founder and CEO, Paul Dass OBE has seamlessly combined his years of property experience with the finest of designers, artisans and technology as he introduces an uber space with a fresh sense of luxury within the city. "Coming back from London, I wanted to reconnect with my home country and fell in love with Goa the moment I stepped here. I wanted to bring a new meaning – a new standard of luxury different from the city's renowned, and so began my journey with Mayaland Homes."

A visionary to his core, Paul aims to create an "eco-luxury lifestyle" built with sustainability and standard at par through Mayaland.

### TWIN VILLA MASTERPIECE - THE GRANDE GEMEO VILLA I

Perched foremost at the Mayaland Homes label is the Grande Gemeo Villa I. Barcelona-based award-winning international designer Aaron Clarke, also renowned for his remarkable work at the Soho House, Mumbai, joined hands with Paul in giving shape to this stunning escapade.

Spanning an area of 5358 sq. feet with outdoor area of 2744 sq. feet, the two-floored villa overlooks lush green hills and abundant birdsong to keep privacy in place. The four-bedroom luxury twin villas encompass living, dining, and entertainment spaces with huge outdoor extensions to liven up the surroundings. Private swimming pools, state-of-the-art kitchen, and landscaped gardens leave no room for imagination. A minimalistic color palette makes the villa subtle and comfortable.



A tranquil escape away from the rush of daily life, Grande Gemeo I is one step ahead of a comfy paradise.

### SOOTHING INDOORS

Grande double doors welcome you to an extended foyer overlooking a pristine pool. Special attention to natural lighting ensures ample sunlight in all spaces – allowing the warmth of Goa’s fine weather to accompany your days. Italian marble bathtubs, French-arched windows, walk-in wardrobes, Japanese fixtures and bespoke Portuguese-styled architecture reflects immense luxury and taste. “Since Goa flaunts many traditional Portuguese and European architecture, we wanted to incorporate that touch with classic Indian sensibilities and create a fusion of sorts, so that’s why you’d find many references to Indo-Portuguese details in the space.” shares Aaron.

Marble floors, a Corian central island, dishwasher, and Hafele appliances revamp the kitchen to a new level, while the first floor lounge is made to naturally unwind you as you let open the windows and bathe in fresh air and sunlight.

The aesthetics have been tended with taste too. Custom handmade tiles by artisans from Rajasthan have been used for the flooring while bespoke furnishings and lighting have been lovingly handpicked from award-winning selections. What’s interesting is the villas are Vaastu-compliant – elevating the positive vibrations of the summer house. Automated home control systems with off-site control, full air-conditioning, and external solar lighting add to the final touch of utmost luxury.

### EXPANSIVE OUTDOORS

With a 4x7m swimming pool as the perfect summer splash for your loved ones, the outdoors of the villa is spacious enough for any gathering. The verandah and balconies are tucked within canopies of a green shelter that separate the rest of the city from your cocoon. A magnificent verandah designed for all seasons, it can be your own raving hub of afternoon high-tea, an intimate dinner party, or breakfast tete-a-tete. A private driveway with off-street garage parking is also provided for maximum convenience.

Indulgent and complete with all amenities, Mayaland Homes opens a new chapter in Goa’s lineage of luxury interior and design. ▲

[www.mayalandproperties.com/grande-gemeo-villas/](http://www.mayalandproperties.com/grande-gemeo-villas/)

**“SINCE GOA FLAUNTS MANY TRADITIONAL PORTUGUESE AND EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURE, WE WANTED TO INCORPORATE THAT TOUCH WITH CLASSIC INDIAN SENSIBILITIES AND CREATE A FUSION OF SORTS, SO THAT’S WHY YOU’D FIND MANY REFERENCES TO INDO-PORTUGUESE DETAILS IN THE SPACE.”**

# SUAVE SPACES

With diverse materials, textures, and designs, lovingly curate your home with these stylish pieces crafted for elegant yet bold spaces.



## EMERY STUDIO

This year, Emery Studio unveils the exquisite Mer de Corail collection by Daum. Exploring the depths of the Mediterranean Sea with its new collection Mer de Corail (Sea of Coral), the collection celebrates the infinite treasures of the underwater world and its aesthetics. From decorative objects to works of art, each piece of the collection gives us a glimpse of its incredible marine fauna and flora.

## OTTIMO BY CPRN HOMOOD

Ottimo introduces “Starlight”, a nature inspired collection of living room furniture by the Italian luxury brand CPRN Homood. Paying ode to the secret harmony of the delicate balance of nature, ‘Starlight’ reimagines in functional shapes, the power play of sky, water and light and creates pieces that are a perfect balance of body and soul. As Ashok Basoya, Founder, Ottimo, says “The Starlight living room is a statement of uber sophistication. It shuns the loudness of eye riveting pieces or accent walls; instead choosing to be the perfect backdrop for elite gatherings and dignified owners.”



## DRAENERT BY PLÜSCH

Plüsch, pioneers in bringing some of the finest German luxury brands to India, has introduced statement side tables “Totem” by Draenert, the internationally famed German company. The Totem tables are like members of a family – similar, yet individually different from each other. There are three side tables in the collection each of which showcases uniquely blended geometric shapes to lend a sculptural look to your interiors.





## SAGE LIVING

Creating something modern from something traditional has been an inspiration behind Hyderabad-based first design house, Sage Living. Introducing “The Malacca Collection” in tailor-made style, the collection is defined by its cutting-edge contemporary designs, a mix of contrasting materials and use of age-old techniques. Reimagining the home space, the Malacca Collection revisits traditional styles with a modernist’s eye.



## BEYOND DESIGNS

Add oodles of glamour and artistic sophistication to your space by choosing from Beyond Designs’ new collection of credenzas. Each of them showcases a one-of-its-kind look and finish that make a new statement. A combination of styles results in timeless contemporary pieces ideal for all kinds of spaces.

## INHABIT

With her keen anti-minimal and passionately original approach to design, Neeta Kumar, Founder, Inhabit, has launched the “Noveau” collection. Introducing a magnificent range of modern furniture for contemporary homes, ‘Noveau’ translates to ‘new art’ featuring bold furniture pieces with curved lines, floral prints and organic shapes. A unique and inviting blend of authenticity and functionality, the range features a vibrant and attractive interplay of colours perfect for the season. ▲



# MINDSET OF SUCCESS

Meet Darpan Sanghvi – the man behind India’s fastest growing direct to consumer beauty brand ‘MyGlamm’. With eleven years of marketing experience up his sleeve, Darpan is accredited with introducing many globally acclaimed beauty brands to the country, including L’Occitane and Clarins. Here’s how the Mumbai-based entrepreneur and co-founder is carving his own niche in the space of beauty and well-being for modern Indian women, especially amidst the pandemic.

By Soumya Maheshwari

**Tell us about your journey towards MyGlamm.**

I have been extremely fortunate that my journey has been one of growth. I started my journey by bringing L’Occitane Spas to India in 2010. That’s where we started thinking that there’s probably an opportunity to create a brand that is built for Indian women by Indian women - that’s how MyGlamm was created. It has been a great transition from being an entrepreneur in the beauty service space to now being an entrepreneur in the beauty product space.

**Could you tell us more about the philosophy of MyGlamm?**

MyGlamm is beauty for Indian women by Indian women. We are a brand that believes that we should listen to what women have to say, and understand their needs better than anyone else. Once we understand their needs, then we are able to create products that are best suited for them. In a way, 1 lakh women co-create products with us - we listen, understand their needs and then we start creating products. We are able to connect with our customers through our app and other mediums and platforms.

**Is there any set of expectations that you have from your customers at MyGlamm?**

I don’t say that we have expectations, but we do have a hope that our customer will talk to us, whether through reading or watching on Popxo, through our app or through our website. We want her, our customer, to tell us what it is that she wants, likes, dislikes because when she talks to us and we listen to her, is when we can actually create products that she loves. We want to engage with her beyond just a transaction. We want her to be a part of this journey, this ecosystem and this community.

**What are the future plans for MyGlamm?**

Our vision is that we want to be the beauty partner for women throughout their life from the age of 16 to 35. So, what we want to do is connect with the customer and take care of her beauty and personal care needs through that particular part of her life cycle.

The one key difference between us and other beauty brands is that we do 2,50,000 orders on our own website and app, so we really in a way are connected with our customers. Most other beauty brands are



selling through third-party marketplaces, so they don't get that connection with the customer. To fulfil that vision we are creating brands and products across all these different needs, we are also creating digital assets to reach out.

**You also have a collaboration with Manish Malhotra. Can you tell us more about it?**

MyGlamm has a deep partnership with Manish Malhotra, whose Manish Malhotra Beauty is created with MyGlamm. Manish and his team are cutting-edge in fashion - they understand colours, trends, female consumers, and trends which are going to define next year. We have done some amazing work together, and we are certainly very proud of it. We recently launched Manish Malhotra skincare by MyGlamm, which has become hugely successful. We are using authentic artisanal Indian ingredients to create Manish Malhotra skincare and support the Make In India campaign.

**Talking of lockdown, how did lockdown affect MyGlamm?**

We were growing 400% yearly, and when you are growing that much, you are planning for growth, making investments and all of a sudden, the revenues are zero and the lockdown had to be done because of COVID-19 everyone is then on the same boat. I think we were very lucky because the beauty and personal care category held very strong during the lockdown, globally. We acquired Popxo which exponentially increased our digital reach and increased our offline presence. We went from 500 points of sales to 10,000 points of sales. We developed a whole over-the-counter distribution network and when the lockdown lifted, we recovered within one-quarter and after that, we were at 200 per cent of pre-covid levels. All kudos to the team. We are looking to grow at least 3x, and cross the 600-crore run rate mark by December this year.

**During the lockdown, each one of us figured out something or the other. What was it for you?**

I learnt how to cook. I have never cooked in my life. I am a vegetarian. While I was in Spain for my Masters, there was no vegetarian food available. I just used to eat cheese all day to survive. During the lockdown, I learnt to cook; my wife and children can

**"MYGLAMM IS BEAUTY FOR INDIAN WOMEN BY INDIAN WOMEN. IT IS A BRAND THAT BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD LISTEN TO WHAT WOMEN HAVE TO SAY, AND UNDERSTAND THEIR NEEDS BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE."**

swear that I can cook decent food.

In terms of something I learnt myself, I learnt to deal with a lot of stress and uncertainty because being an entrepreneur you are always dealing with uncertainty and the pandemic took it to a very different level. But I just kept moving on and thinking ahead. I think that is going to stay with me for life - the ability to not have mind and body be affected by that level of uncertainty and stress.

**You are heavily invested in the digital platform space and you also heavily invested yourself in the point of sales which are on the ground. What does the future look like?**

In India, you can't build a massive scale brand unless you are omnichannel, you need offline presence for visibility and online obviously scales up faster than offline. I think we would probably end up at about 65 per cent online and 35 per cent offline, as we stabilize in the next 18-24 months.

**What is the percentage of repeat buyers for you?**

Our twelve-month customer retention is 45 per cent, which is quite high for a single brand. Usually, it is only marketplaces that have such high customer retention rates. Customer retention is the holy grail because when you are building a brand you want loyalty. Nothing tells you that your customer is loving your brand more than when they are coming back and buying again. We are probably the highest single brand with such rates in the country today.





**'MyGlamm' - the name sounds very fancy and it automatically tells you that it is something to do with beauty. How did this idea of the name come up and who thought of this venture that this was what we should be doing?**

MyGlamm actually had a pivot. It used to be a home services business, and then in October 2017, MyGlamm was born. The birth of MyGlamm was a combination of things, it is the culmination of the efforts of my advisors and investors. I have been surrounded by some of the greatest folks, and we together continue to refine and tune it. I thought of the name MyGlamm. The idea behind the name was to make it personal while having beauty as the connotation. So 'My' makes it personal and nothing is more personal than saying 'MyGlamm'. So, that

is how the name came up.

**You earlier mentioned that beauty was one segment that actually grew during the lockdown. What is the specific reason? Can you pinpoint something because we also see that it is not just the beauty brands that are talking good, it is also the investments the investors are putting in? Why is it that suddenly beauty has gotten everybody's interest?**

The BPC category (Beauty and Personal Care) is growing about 10% online and about 40-45% offline. If you see other emerging market economies, the minute a country's GDP per capita crosses a certain threshold, the BPC category sees an exponential rise in consumption. India has not even



## "BEING CONSTANTLY SWITCHED ON TO WORK IS PART OF THE COURSE FOR AN ENTREPRENEUR. I CAN'T THINK OF LIFE ANY OTHER WAY AND THAT IS NOT STRESSFUL FOR ME."

scratched the surface in terms of BPC, and hence, this category will continue to grow for the Indian consumer.

All the brands in the market that have been here for 20-30 years are all legacy brands. The new emerging brands that are going to build in this category for the new age customer and its digital explosion is making things easier. The new brands are able to move faster than legacy brands in coming up with products that are in trend because they are reachable online and not limited to offline distribution. I feel that the BPC category is having its moment in the sun right now.

### **What do you have to say about make-up trends in lockdown considering wearing a mask is the new normal now? Also, what is your take on the wellness market?**

In a lockdown, I saw 2-3 trends, one was make-up colour gratification for a very low price, and a new lipstick colour just makes one smile so it is an easy gratification. Second, people have more time to themselves do more, hence, their personal and skin care regimes have shot up.

I think wellness products are booming. Wellness services are not something that can scale quickly because services are always a challenge. That is why you don't see too much venture funding in the service business. But I think wellness products are going to see the same boom as the BPC category.

### **What is your take on companies investing in the employee's wellbeing?**

Due to COVID-19, focus on health and wellbeing has shot up and all of us as employers have to be very cognizant of that. The trend towards providing employees' wellbeing is going to continue and increase. It is going to be a differentiator today, but in time to come, it will be table stakes.

We are starting to put in place different things. We have a plan set up to provide vaccination to all our employees, as soon as the government allows vaccines to open up to the age group of our employees. We have done a bunch of additions to their insurance programmes. We are doing an employee survey and then come up with a programme for the same. Employee health and wellbeing is our focus area now.

### **What is next on your To-Do list?**

Next on my to-do list is very straightforward and clear. We have to make sure to do everything I have told you in vision and go deep into each of these categories-hair care, personal care, and make-up.

We need to increase our offline point of sales from 10, 000 to 30,000 this year and we have to take our revenue run rate to 600 crore rupees.

### **How do you unwind and draw a line between your working hours and non-working hours?**

As an entrepreneur, your work is unwinding. It is stressful not to work because as an entrepreneur you are always moving forward. Unwinding is my family time. So, I make sure whatever I do, I take out the time to be with my kids and wife. The pandemic has made that easier with zero travel. Being constantly switched on to work is part of the course for an entrepreneur. I can't think of life any other way.

### **Any advice for aspiring entrepreneurs?**

There is one piece of advice I always give – just go ahead and do it. Whatever you think you want to do, the hardest part is getting started. Once you start, you have to figure out the right part and strive to stay in the game. If you stay in the game, eventually your tipping point will come and the rest is destiny. ▲

# THEIR STORY, BY THEM

We bear witness to the evolution of the hotel industry, thanks to the people behind the scenes bringing us that luxury and comfort we've relied on for decades, and continue to even today. PEAKLIFE gets in conversation with four such fierce female hoteliers that are at the helm of the biggest names in hospitality - leading with nothing less of grit and passion.

By Vrinda Rastogi

## SETTING NEW STANDARDS

Twenty years of experience paired with an extreme set of skills and business acumen, Nikita Ramchandani, General Manager of the JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu, is spearheading the Marriott brand passionately. A seasoned hotelier, here is the boss lady in candid conversation on her journey, challenges and hobbies.

**You have been in the hotel industry for sometime now, could you tell us about your journey?**

It's been an extremely fruitful journey having moved through various roles, cities and countries in this industry. I have met a lot of diverse people along the way and one thing I have learnt is that people everywhere in this industry are primarily the same - we are all driven by our passion for the business. Being a highly time intensive industry, creating a nurturing and collaborative work culture is paramount for a hotel's success.

**How difficult has it been being a woman in an earlier predominantly man's world?**

I wouldn't say it has been difficult; on the contrary, most of my mentors have been men who have supported me every step along the way, and I have been fortunate enough to work with progressive colleagues, be it men or women. This is one of the advantages of working with an organisation which has

such a strong ethos of diversity and inclusivity.

**The world has changed in the last one year. What have been your learnings from this pandemic?**

Be agile, think on your feet and improvise, seek and create new opportunities, and lastly, the most important takeaway has been that we are stronger collectively rather than individually.

**Who or what has been the driving force for you during these different times?**

It is tremendously important to have a strong support system professionally and personally, and I am blessed to have both.

**How do you see the revival of the hospitality sector post the pandemic?**

Given the current market sentiment, the revival of the hospitality sector is heavily reliant on domestic tourism and we remain optimistic looking at the

**"BE AGILE, THINK ON YOUR FEET AND IMPROVISE, SEEK AND CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES, AND LASTLY, THE MOST IMPORTANT TAKEAWAY HAS BEEN THAT WE ARE STRONGER COLLECTIVELY RATHER THAN INDIVIDUALLY."**



scale of our massive domestic base. The other ray of hope is the vaccination drive across the country and the globe, of which the hospitality industry will be a major benefactor.

**You are someone who commands authority, how do you maintain a work-life balance?**

I believe it is all about prioritising in life; some days work takes a higher priority, while other days it's family. It's about making a choice that matters most at that point in life.

**What is your work philosophy?**

In my opinion, it's important to constantly strive for excellence and truly enjoy what you do.

**When you do get some free time what is it that you love doing?**

I love listening to music, exploring various culinary trends and spending quality time with my family.

**Any passion projects you are currently working on or would like to work on?**

With the growing environmental concerns across the world over the years, I have taken on projects revolving around sustainability initiatives such as eliminating single-use plastics, waste reduction and local, responsible sourcing of produce. I also believe that the well-being of associates is of paramount importance. Along with my team, I am working towards creating an environment that stimulates professional and personal development, and provides a scale for associates to pursue their interests outside of work. ▲

## FINE LEADERSHIP

Meet Benita Sharma, Area Manager North, Luxury Hotels and General Manager - ITC Maurya. With her management expertise garnered through international exposure and reputed institutions, Benita is known for transforming WelcomHotel Sheraton New Delhi, taking it to unprecedented levels. An icon in the hospitality industry, here is Benita in conversation with us.

**You have been in the hotel industry for some time now, could you tell us about your journey?**

I joined ITC hotels a few weeks before my 18th birthday at ITC Mughal, Agra. About two and a half years into my career with ITC, I was selected for the management training program (ITC Hotel Management Institute) HMI. In my class, I was the youngest and the only person who was not from a catering college background. The interactive course set a great platform for me from a future growth perspective. It instilled in me a desire to excel and inculcated a never-say-never attitude to achieve.

**How difficult has it been being a woman in an earlier predominantly man's world?**

Contrary to popular belief, I don't think women in the service industry will find it difficult. In fact, I believe that women can succeed very easily in this industry since as women we are natural hosts. There is no such thing as a glass ceiling for women in any profession and definitely not in the service industry. Never ever give up and never believe that there is something that can't be attained. Believe in your own strength and capacity.

**The world has changed in the last one year. What have been your learnings from this pandemic?**

COVID-19 has changed the rules of the game - safer, cleaner and virus free environments entail new process of no or low contact service, safe distancing with systems that continue to make a guest feel cared for, personal protection equipment for the team and the guests, technology, new sanitizing products and processes. Associates would need to carry these procedures home and keep safe. The most important objective being for guests and associates to perceive and experience safety and no health threats. It is going to mean overcoming old habits, processes and intellectual barriers and opinions and adoption of new technology.

**Who or what has been the driving force for you during these different times?**

I am always backed by a very competent team and loyal guests who are strongly committed and look forward to a better tomorrow. The team integrates with inter-related activities that differentiates us to provide a superior competitive performance.

**How do you see the revival of the**

**hospitality sector post the pandemic?**

The third quarter in this financial year has witnessed a marginal recovery giving way to hope. The main driver behind this partial recovery is the domestic leisure traveller. The outbound Indian luxury traveller will look out for exclusive domestic vacations within the country. To tap this demand, most domestic hotels have curated special Staycations, 'work-from-hotel' and F&B packages, which have sparked some recovery in the sector.

Our guests will continue to be drawn towards hotels that take care of their wellbeing. We are fortunate to have a head-start in the Responsible Luxury initiative which has been our guiding premise for over a decade. As part of this ethos, we welcome guests with the 'WeAssure' protocol.

**When you do get some free time, what is it that you love doing?**

My hobbies include reading, listening to music and swimming. Love for parchment craft and catching up with friends and spending quality time with colleagues at work are some others!

**Any passion projects you are currently working on or would like to work on?**



**"THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A GLASS CEILING FOR WOMEN IN ANY PROFESSION AND DEFINITELY NOT IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY."**

Emphasis has been in encouraging the team and contributing towards enhancement of Responsible Luxury, People management – identify and magnify the strengths of the best fit for a job, and New Markets.

What I love best about hospitality is working with people. I believe success comes from guest satisfaction and high-quality service, which is only possible when you have a team of brilliant staff members that communicate well with one another and our guests. ▲

# REDEFINING HOSPITALITY

With a rich history of hospitality and hotel management, Utsa Majumder, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Dharamshala Resort, is the lady behind elevating the Hyatt experience in the Himalayas. Meticulous, passionate, and humble, here is Utsa in conversation with PEAKLIFE.

**You have been in the hotel industry for some time now, could you tell us about your journey?**

Being a General Manager was my dream! I have never wavered from. I have never had the desire to be anything else. Even before graduating from the hotel management course, I had an opportunity to join Hyatt Regency Kolkata, and ever since then, I never looked back. I have been fortunate enough to work in different Hyatt brands like Hyatt Regency to Hyatt Place and Park Hyatt and then moved to the first Hyatt mountain resort in India, and all in diverse cities.

My 17 years journey with Hyatt has been nothing short of spectacular! I have co-headed front office operations at Park Hyatt Goa Resort & Spa, managed Food & Beverage at Hyatt Place Pune, Hinjawadi, and headed the Rooms Division at Hyatt Place Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I have been part of four Hyatt pre-opening teams and was instrumental in setting up these hotels. After a magnificent and tremendously enriching first stint as a General Manager at Hyatt Place Rameswaram, a beautiful island in the South-East of India, I took over the reins at Hyatt's first mountain resort property in India, Hyatt Regency Dharamshala Resort, managed by Shanti Hospitality Management Services in the scenic Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh, in June 2018.

**How difficult has it been being a woman in an earlier predominantly man's world?**

Empowering women in leadership positions in the workplace was never an issue; it is just something people have now started to accept. I do not think gender has anything to do with any industry. It is the perspective and the personality that matters. Hospitality has been my passion and once you know your path to achieve your goal, then nothing can stop you. I have always believed that the sky's the only limit.

**The world has changed in the last one year. What have been your learnings from this pandemic?**

One philosophy that I have subscribed to throughout my career is, 'Change is the only constant.' Considering the ever-evolving world we are living in today, adaptability is very crucial. One thing is for sure in today's times - it is no longer business as usual. Especially in hospitality, one needs to be flexible and adaptable in the most unexpected places and situations. Apart from rethinking workflow to virtual meetings to managing cash reserves - the ongoing pandemic has taught me so much! But most importantly, it has taught me to be more kind and lead with empathy, a critical element that always gives us hope that better days are ahead. Supporting and promoting local businesses has also been one of the key elements which we are very proud of at Hyatt Regency Dharamshala Resort.

**Who or what has been the driving force**

**for you during these different times?**

This pandemic taught each one of us to rise above the rest and to forge strong relationships. These moments of the crisis revealed a great deal about the strong leaders in my team - my extended family. From the time, when the world came to a standstill to date, it was my team, my family and myself supporting each other to sail through it.

**How do you see the revival of the hospitality sector post the pandemic?**

COVID-19 has had a severe impact on the global economy, with the hospitality sector being one of the hardest hits. But what remains a fact is that every experience is a lesson. The industry is in a transformation period, and we all are optimistic! We will continue to be guided by our purpose - to care for people and support each other. We all are learning, innovating, and adapting to face any uncertainty in future crises.

**You are someone who commands authority, how do you maintain a work-life balance?**

I think balance isn't the right word! It is more of work-life integration, considering hospitality is 365 days, a 24/7 job. It is a process I would say that I am still learning.

**What is your work philosophy?**

"CARE" and "Being Empathetic" to everyone who is around me. I like to keep my communication clear and transparent. My



"HOSPITALITY HAS BEEN MY PASSION AND ONCE YOU KNOW YOUR PATH TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL, THEN NOTHING CAN STOP YOU. I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THE SKY'S THE ONLY LIMIT. "



team knows and understands what I expect which is always a bigger goal reflecting the organisation strategy and values. If my team is happy, I am happy! I also like to see that my team gets the best of their personality to the table because new innovative ideas and fresh outlook are always welcomed. There is nothing more satisfying than creating a space where your team feels empowered and supported to be their best, most creative selves.

**When you do get some free time, what is it that you love doing?**

I love adventure! I am a photography and a travel enthusiast who loves to go hiking, explore new places, and capture moments. A true 'bong' at heart, I also enjoy food. Apart from being a coffee connoisseur, my favourite cuisine is Continental.

**Any passion projects you are currently working on or would like to work on?**

I have been recently appointed the President of The Himachal Pradesh Chapter of WICCI (Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry) and am thrilled to be part of it. I am a firm believer in gender equality and women play a very strong role by making the workplace more nurturing, welcoming and a more creative environment. WICCI aims to drive the fundamental changes in governmental policies, laws, incentives, and entrepreneurial ecosystems, intending to robustly encourage and empower women in business, industry and commerce across all sectors and fields. I look forward to this association to grow the presence of women in the Hospitality industry in this beautiful northern state. ▲

## AN EYE FOR DETAIL

Leading as Area Director and General Manager at Taj Bhopal - Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttarakhand, Kanika Hasrat is a passionate hotelier known for her keen eye for details. Geared with her years of experience and everlasting grit, here is how she's changing the frontline...

**You have been in the hotel industry for some time now, could you tell us about your journey?**

With an experience of over 26 years now in the industry, the journey truly has been an enriching one. Hospitality happened to me by chance and I fell in love! Each day brings new opportunities and innumerable possibilities, and the victory lies in embracing them with an undeterred spirit to achieve. I have had the good fortune of working with some of the most reputed brands in the industry and have learnt and grown under the watchful eye of some exemplary leaders who became mentors and then friends.

**How difficult has it been being a woman in an earlier predominantly man's world?**

I have never thought of myself as a "woman" on the job, rather as a professional, a teammate or a leader, who happens to be a woman. We need to break that barrier within! On the job, gender truly does not matter and what counts is delivering results. I believe every individual has an opportunity to contribute - irrespective of their gender, and what counts is showing value to your guests and to the team by standing by them, delivering service with passion and being dependable.

**The world has changed in the last one year. What have been your learnings from this pandemic?**

The biggest learning that I will take ahead

in my life is how to better manage an unprecedented situation like this and be better planned for the future - both on the professional and personal fronts. It has indeed enhanced my understanding of better management of everything - people, costs, business, additional revenue levers, and most importantly, team spirit. While the lockdown was a new experience from the usual, it gave me some much needed "me time" too and also an opportunity to learn new things. So not only did I complete a programme on Finance Management, but I also applied for a 6-months course on Digital Marketing from Google. On the personal front, I learnt to make an amazing stick kulfi!

**Who or what has been the driving force for you during these different times?**

All one needs is gumption, determination and an undeterred spirit to accomplish - Never Give Up! The belief in oneself is always a key driving force. Be at the edge of the situation and find solutions. This is what kept me going. Above all, I treasured spending more time with family while very much working from home.

I am also immensely proud to be a part of the IHCL family that has emerged stronger than ever before - from hosting over 70,000 room nights for the medical fraternity and for quarantine purposes to distributing over 3 million meals to medical workers across the country and migrant workers in Mumbai during the lockdown last years - the

opportunities of hope soared with each passing day.

**How do you see the revival of the hospitality sector post the pandemic?**

The key message in this regard would be - tough times don't last and we shall soar again. The kind of resilience the hospitality industry has exhibited during the pandemic has been exemplary. The pandemic has only escalated certain developments, especially when it comes to technology - be it digital menus becoming a mandate today, to virtual site inspections, online master classes, food from your favourite restaurants delivered at your doorstep, home delivery of hampers and much more! Post the pandemic and effective vaccination roll-out, while the new normal may still remain the norm, revival is definite. We are one of the most resilient industries and we will emerge on the other side of this too, stronger than ever.

**You are someone who commands authority, how do you maintain a work-life balance?**

I try to set a plan for myself, set my priorities right at work and in my personal arena. I believe, each one of us in our own unique space, has the capacity to create that balance. If you need help, reach out. This is also where building a team becomes a critical exercise - know your team, know their strengths and challenges and most importantly have trust in them to deliver! I

**"IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES AND FOCUS ON THE SOLUTION RATHER THAN THE PROBLEM. I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE ARE YOUR BIGGEST STRENGTH AT WORK."**



am also fortunate to have a family who understands my work and supports me to maintain the balance at home. My parents in the past and my husband now are my pillars on the personal front and are the wind beneath my wings.

**What is your work philosophy?**

Identify your strengths and challenges and focus on the solution rather than the problem. I strongly believe that people are your biggest strength at work. I enjoy working with people and teamwork is what makes the dream work! Learn each day, connect and empathize with your team, add joy to work, ideate and innovate, add that unique streak that defines your work and most importantly take that chance and get on with it! I believe in harnessing the team's strengths, and strongly opine that true success lies in growing and developing people.

**When you do get some free time what is it that you love doing?**

I thoroughly love travelling and exploring new places and cultures together with my family. In my leisure time, I enjoy gardening and reading. Yoga is another new found passion!

**Any passion projects you are currently working on or would like to work on?**

On a personal level, I act as the National President of the Hospitality and Tourism Council at Women's Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WICCI), a National Business Chamber for Women. As part of the charter of WICCI, we aim at providing inspiration and help organizations grow the number of women in the hospitality and tourism industry through opportunities for up-skilling and development. In addition, I am also a strategy advisor and a board member for Labhya Foundation, a non-Profit NGO that teaches social and emotional learning, popularly known as the 'Happiness Curriculum' in Delhi government schools.

I am definitely excited about my new role as an Area Director - Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand and the General Manager at Taj Bhopal. I look forward to working with the dynamic team at Taj Bhopal for a grand opening and taking the hotel to new heights by combining cutting-edge hospitality with innovative experiences for our guests and creating milestones for the hotel. ▲

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# COVETED FINDS

Timeless and unforgettable, take a peak at some of the finest pieces in time that'll add an extra dash of luxury to your life - be it fashion, travel, or home sweet home.

## TUMI

Designed to uncomplicate and elevate performance in all aspects of life on the move, TUMI introduces premium capsule luggage and travel collection inspired by McLaren – the British racing team. Incorporating TUMI and McLaren’s mutual ethos of performance luxury, the capsule collection comprises nine pieces for elegant business, travel and everyday essentials. Each encompasses elements of McLaren’s sleek, bold supercars and race cars. All are highlighted with McLaren’s signature Papaya colours and feature CFX carbon fibre accents! The collection’s highlights include the Aero International Expandable 4 Wheel Carry-On and the Quantum Duffel.

[www.tumi.com](http://www.tumi.com)



## CODY SIMPSON X VERSACE EYEWEAR

The men’s eyewear collection reimagines the iconic Medusa – designed as a hollow, tactile cast that embellishes contemporary openwork eyewear frames. The exclusive collection is followed by a campaign starring Cody Simpson. A singer, actor, model and

swimmer, Cody encapsulates the Versace man – bold, talented, and unafraid to step out of his comfort zone. Classic, contemporary or futuristic, the collaboration effortlessly sports the Versace spirit.

[www.versace.com](http://www.versace.com)

## BEYOND DESIGNS

Renowned for their bespoke furniture, luxurious and elaborately designed interiors, Beyond Designs launched Beyond Designs Home – beginning with a fine collection of canine artworks that add immense interest to your interiors. The Pet Portrait Art on canvas collection features canine figures in dapper clothes in various moods. The elaborate 3D frames add a classic element to the playful portraits, while the Classy Edge Dog collection are adorable canine paintings with simple teak frames that add colour and cuteness to your interiors. They are sure to grab the attention of your guests.

[www.beyonddesigns.com](http://www.beyonddesigns.com)



## MESTERMOR

Shopping for men is no cakewalk with the distinct lack of real, honest, affordable guidance. With a vision to bridge this gap, Mestermor is a subscription box that is dedicated to mens' fashion while discovering and celebrating personal style. Whether for gifts or for essentials, there's a recurring surprise shipment out there to make your day, week, month or your year! Spanning across top-notch clothing brands like Toffle and Son of a Noble to premium and quirky accessories from Sock Soho and Outback, stationery stores like Paper Clip and Beardo's grooming products, one can pick between the Essentials Box, an Indulgence Box or a Gifting Box that includes surprising elements keeping in mind personal requests and preferences. ▲

[www.mestermor.com](http://www.mestermor.com)



# EMBRACE THE SUMMER SPIRIT

Cocktails in the summertime have a singular purpose - it must make you feel refreshed. From simple to more intense concoctions, whatever your spirit of choice, these drinks will keep you cool through the hottest of seasons.

**By: Aaron Jacob**

## ABSOLUT RAPIROSKA

### INGREDIENTS

- Absolut Raspberri - 45 ml
- Simple Syrup - 10 ml
- Whole Raspberry - 6
- Crushed Ice

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Muddle raspberry and simple syrup in a rocks glass.
2. Fill with crushed ice. Add Absolut Raspberri.
3. Stir. Garnish with a raspberry!



**GRAPEFRUIT & TONIC**

**INGREDIENTS**

- Absolut Grapefruit - 45 ml
- Tonic - 120 ml
- Garnish: Grapefruit or Lime Wedge

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Pour Absolut Grapefruit and Tonic into a Copa glass filled with ice cubes.
2. Stir and garnish with a grapefruit or lime wedge.



**STRAWBERRY SUMMER BLAST BY SASHA ANAND**

**INGREDIENTS**

- Vodka - 30ml
- Ice Cubes - 3 to 4
- Lemon Juice - 20 ml
- K's kitchen Strawberry conserve - 2 tbsp
- Fruzzanté Strawberry - 1 bottle per serving
- Fresh Strawberry - 1 per glass

**INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Take a shaker and put ice in it.
2. Combine lemon juice and K's strawberry conserve and vodka.
3. Shake vigorously for about 30 seconds.
4. Strain into a wine glass and top it up with Frizzante strawberry.
5. Cut a small slit at the center of the strawberry and place it on the lip of the wine glass.

## TOM COLLINS

### INGREDIENTS

- Monkey 47 Schwarzwald Dry Gin - 45ml
- Lemon Juice - 20ml
- Simple Syrup - 20ml

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Build with ice into a Collins glass.
2. Stir well and top with Soda Water.
3. Garnish with lemon and orange wheel.



## ORANGE MINGLE

### INGREDIENTS

- Glenmorangie Original - 45 ml
- Orange Marmalade - 2 ml
- Aperol - 10 ml
- Lemon Juice - 15 ml
- Orange Juice - 10 ml
- Egg White - 25 ml
- Orange Bitters
- Garnish: Edible Flowers

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients to a shaker and reverse dry shake.
2. Double strain into a nick and nora glass.
3. Garnish with bitters and edible flowers.



## THE ORANGE HIGHBALL

### INGREDIENTS

- Glenmorangie Original - 50 ml
- Soda Water - 50 ml
- Tonic Water - 50 ml
- Orange Wedges
- Garnish: Orange Wedge

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill a highball with ice and add Glenmorangie.
2. Squeeze on wedge into the glass and then top with Soda and Tonic Water.
3. Garnish with an Orange Wedge.

## GINGER LEMON

### INGREDIENTS

- Glenmorangie Original - 50 ml
- Sweet Vermouth - 7.5 ml
- Ginger Syrup - 7.5 ml
- Angostura Bitters - 2 Dashes
- Orange Bitters - 1 Dash
- Garnish: Lemon Twist, Crystallized Ginger

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add all ingredients to mixing glass filled with ice.
2. Stir until well chilled, strain into an old-fashioned glass with a block of ice.
3. Garnish with a lemon twist and crystallized ginger. ▲





## 4/4 – THE NEW A4

Audi's new A4 is a force to reckon with. We take a quick look at this all-new iteration of one of the world's best-selling entry luxury cars.

**By Ranojoy Mukerji**

**A**udi has been a very well-respected name in India in the luxury car business and the A4 is what helped it cement its reputation here. The angular, sharp look debuted here in 2008 with the 4th generation B8 shape. Along the way, a few nips and tucks later came the B9 which also meant a bit of a facelift in 2019! This year, Audi decided to do it again – a new facelift but a lot of new goodies as well and a more powerful BS6 engine. The diesels have now disappeared and in its place is the new knight in shining armour – the 2.0-litre TFSI Ultra with 190 horses and 320Nm of torque. This one of course claims to do the 100 sprints in 7.3 seconds with a top whack of 240kmph!

But I get ahead of myself. First of course, let's talk about the external changes. The first thing to strike you are the new LED headlights – with their serrated DRL and segments inside, they look classier than the past units. The taillights are similar – the

same serrated look gives a nice illumination and of course the trademark matrix direction indicators look nice; something that has been copied overwhelmingly by the Chinese! Of course, the new front grille looks kind of cool too, while retaining Audi's traditional look.

The interiors continue to be finished in very high-quality material which now actually gives you the feeling of class. One of my favourite features in the new car is the continuous AC vent design. While there were mixed views here, I definitely liked it. There is a brand spanning new 10.1-inch touchscreen, which is quite snappy to respond and is a breeze to operate with Audi's revised Multi-media Interface (MMI) design. Thankfully, you can still control the climate with knobs and buttons, which for someone like me is a blessing! Fit and finish quality of course is excellent. The variant I got to drive came with tan colour upholstery, which Audi calls "Okapi Brown." In my opinion it



looks better than the “Atlas Beige.” Naturally, space in the rear is not as much as its Bavarian rival, which is now available in a long wheelbase, but it is adequate for most. Seats are of course extremely comfortable, and you do get some nice goodies like wireless charging for your smartphone and a very smart frameless interior rear-view mirror.

Now of course we come to the main part – driving. The new 2.0-litre 190hp motor feels much nimbler and more powerful than the earlier 150hp 1.4-litre unit. VW’s patent 7-speed dual clutch tranny (DSG) is also a quick shifter and if you drive yourself, you will find yourself marvelling at its power delivery characteristics. According to the company, 100kmph is dispatched in a quick 7.3 seconds and she does feel very quick. Did not have the opportunity to test fuel efficiency but I expect she should return around 15kmpl in the city with some conservative driving. It’s a very quiet engine as well and you will appreciate the quietness inside. If you are being driven, the ride is buttery smooth, and you can have a quiet conversation in the back seat. Of course, like most European cars you can choose drive modes like ‘Comfort’ or ‘Dynamic’ or simply leave it in ‘Auto’ to let the car decide. Suspension is very good and for the most part you don’t need to worry about potholes, speed-breakers etc. Safety, again like all European cars has not been overlooked and you get the full complement of 8 airbags, ESP (electronic stability protection), ISOFIX child seat connectors and a whole lot more kit.

Currently there are two trim levels available – the Premium Plus at INR 49.3 lakh and the Technology at INR 54.2...both prices on-road Delhi. So, is buying the new A4 worth it? As far as solid engineering and a whisper quiet powertrain goes, there is no equal. Whether you are looking at driving yourself or want to be driven, the A4 40TFSI is a good value. It is also a worthy flag-bearer to the Audi badge in India. ▲



# THE BEST OR NOTHING!

The new Maybach GLS 600 sets the standard for SUVs in its segment.

By Ranojoy Mukherji

**M**ercedes-Benz has introduced the Mercedes-Maybach GLS 600 4MATIC in India – the second vehicle in the prestigious Maybach line-up and currently part of the best portfolios of SUVs in India. Its spacious interior with the highest-grade materials and extremely effective noise insulation creates a stylish, cocoon-like feel-good atmosphere. From their pleasantly elevated seating position, thanks to electrically operated roller sun blinds on the two rear side windows, the passengers can decide for themselves how much of their surroundings they want to see. The AIRMATIC suspension included as standard or the optional, fully-active suspension with E-ACTIVE BODY CONTROL effectively keep the road bumps at bay. For the first time there is a dedicated Maybach drive program that ensures even more comfort in the rear. Access and egress are also highly convenient: when the doors are opened, the vehicle is lowered slightly, and an illuminated running board quickly and silently emerges on the access or egress side.

Power comes from a 3982cc V8 petrol engine with 557hp and 730Nm of torque. With such massive amounts of power available, the Maybach can accelerate from 0-100kmph in 4.9 seconds and is electronically limited at 250kmph. It's spacious wheelbase of 3135mm ensures that the inside luxury is with enough room for everybody.

Martin Schwenk, Managing Director & CEO, Mercedes-Benz India said, "We are excited to introduce the Mercedes-Maybach GLS 600 4MATIC to India. The Maybach brand represents the pinnacle of luxury and this SUV will elevate customer experience to an unmatched level. It blends classic old-world charm and supreme comfort with the most cutting-edge technology to redefine the luxury experience on wheels. Luxury motoring with an SUV in India is reimaged with the introduction of the Mercedes-Maybach GLS 600 4MATIC. We are now glad to hand over these SUVs to discerning customers who have expressed exceptionally high interest in this fine model that rewrites expectations in the luxury SUV segment and we continue to stay optimistic. Our customers can expect more product introductions across segments in the coming months." Mr. Schwenk added.

Interestingly, all 50 initial units imported have been sold at an ex-showroom price of INR 2.43 crores each. If you order now, you can expect delivery by 2022! ▲



# TECH LIFE

From the newest smartphone models to wireless headphones and more, this is the latest in tech to grab this season.

By Ranojoy Mukherji



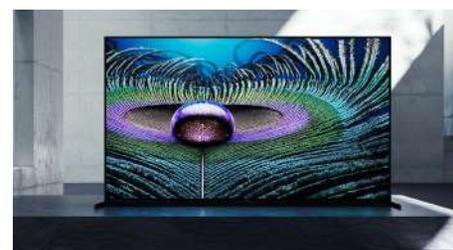
## OnePlus Nord CE 5G launched

The OnePlus Nord CE 5G has been launched with a 6.43-inch FHD+ AMOLED display with 20:9 aspect ratio and 90Hz refresh rate. OS is the OxygenOS running on Android 11. It has a powerful triple camera setup, including a 64 MP main sensor with a large f/1.79 aperture and a 119° ultra-wide-angle camera. On the front it carries a 16 MP selfie camera. The Nord CE is powered by the Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ 750G 5G Mobile Platform. Connected to a stable 5G network, it's capable of reaching download speeds up to 2.95 Gbps. It packs a 4,500mAh battery combined with Warp Charge 30T Plus that will take you from 0 - 70% in just half an hour. Coming in at a trim 7.9 mm, Nord CE is a very slim device and comes in three colours: Silver Ray, Charcoal Ink, and Blue Void. The 3.5 mm headphone jack is back, and the phone is priced at INR 22,999 for the 6GB + 128GB storage variant.



## Razer Opus X wireless headphones

Razer, well known for its Bluetooth gaming headphones, has recently launched the Opus X. It comes with a rotatable circumaural cup design and 40mm drivers for solid bass. Bluetooth version 5.0 is supported as well as a 60ms low-latency mode for gaming and video watching. Frequency response is pretty good from 20Hz to 20,000 and you also get 'Quick Attention Mode' to let ambient noise in for being more aware of the situation around you. The Opus X can be bought for INR 9,800 from [www.razer.com](http://www.razer.com)



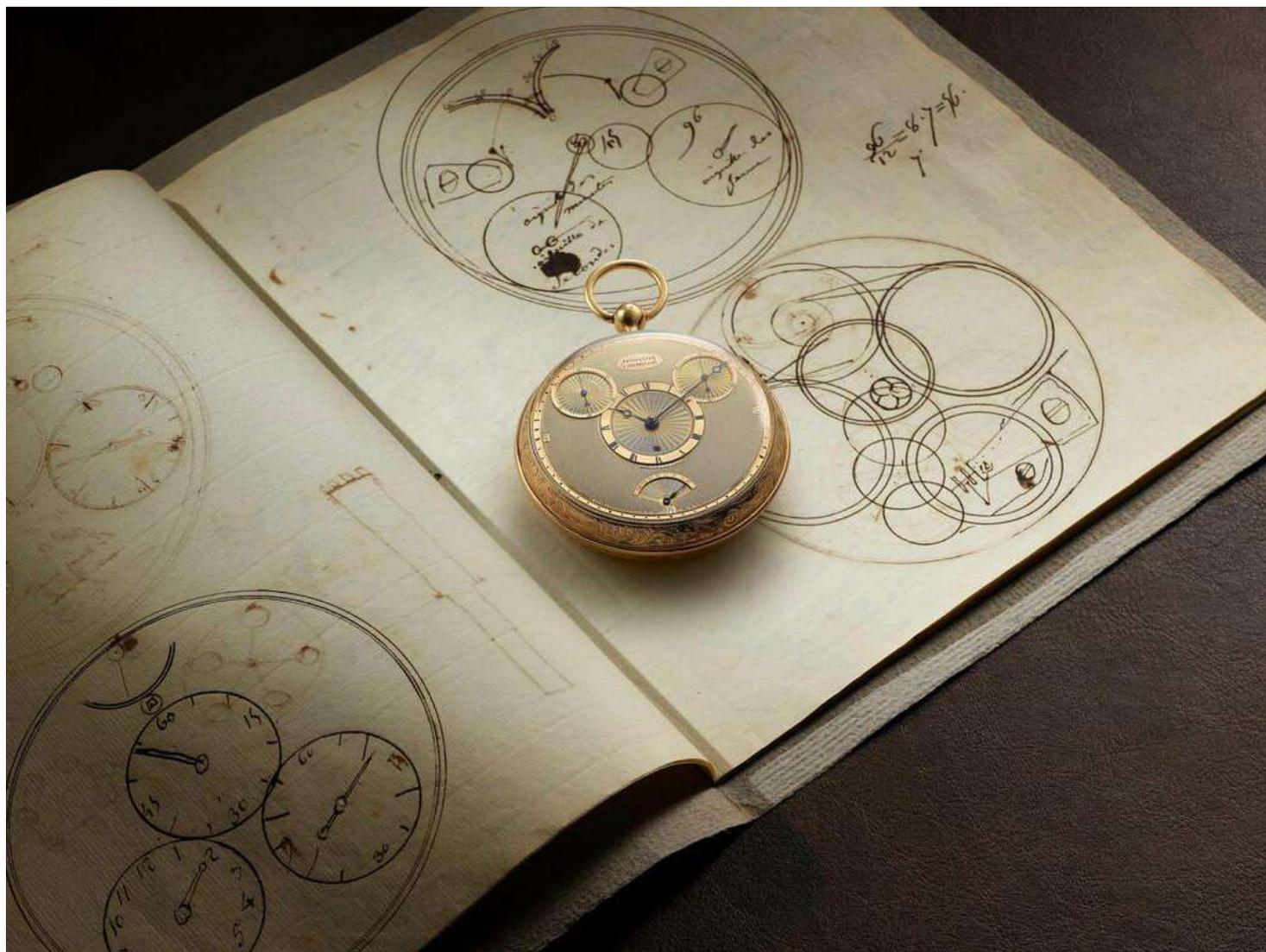
## Sony introduces the XR in India

Sony has launched a new Bravia KD-55X90J TV in India. It is one of the best Bravias to be launched till date and comes with features like Triluminos technology, HDR with HLG, HDR 10, Dolby Vision and supports audio formats like Dolby Audio and Dolby Atmos, through its 20-watt speakers. Right now, a single model is available with a 55-inch screen, with 65 and 75-inch models slated to be launched later. It is powered by the XR cognitive processor, which will help enhance the picture quality exactly where it predicts the viewer's focus is. It ships with a Google TV user interface. It supports digital voice assistants, Google Chromecast, Apple AirPlay 2, and Apple HomeKit. The new Sony TV is priced at Rs 1,49,900.

## Vivo Y73 launched in India

Recently Vivo launched the Y73. Initial specs are quite impressive – the phone sports 8GB = 3GB Ram and 128GB internal storage. The processor is a MediaTek (MTK) Helio G95 and of course two nano Sim slots along with a Micro SD slot is available. The OS is their own tweaked version of Android 11 called Funtouch OS 11.1. Camera specs are

impressive too, and the back features a triple camera setup with a 64MP primary sensor, a 2MP depth sensor, and a 2MP macro sensor. On the front, there is a 16MP camera with an f/2.0 aperture. There is a 4,000mAh battery with support for 33W fast charging and an in-display fingerprint scanner. Strangely, 5G support is missing and the Vivo Y73 retails at INR 20,990.



# THE YEAR OF THE TOURBILLON

Developed 220 years ago by Abraham-Louis Breguet, the Tourbillon has never been as vital to fine horology as it is today.

**B**orn from the brilliant mind of a man who had already carved out a successful career for himself, the Tourbillon has never been as vital to fine horology as it is today. An exquisite mechanism of unrivaled complexity, the invention lies at the heart of a genuine human adventure that, to this day, contributes extensively to the reputation of its creator Abraham-Louis Breguet and his House.

Regarded as one of the greatest complications of all time, it continues to flourish at the House of Breguet, its custodian. But it has also been adopted by a number of other watchmaking brands, since Breguet only patented it in 1801 and for merely 10 years! Throughout the 19th century, it inspired other engineers, among them Bahne Bonniksen who, based on the observations made by Breguet, invented the carousel.

The fascination with Breguet's invention derives from its very genesis: The Tourbillon is more than just a mechanical work of art – it is the result of a precise study of physics, a human adventure and an industrial saga in its own right. In 2021, the House of Breguet intends to commemorate its founder's ingenuity and the adventure that is the Tourbillon through various events and the celebration of a new model on June 26. On this day in 1801 – the “7th Messidor of the year IX” as it was referred to in post-revolutionary France – obtained its patent!

## THE STORY

Abraham-Louis Breguet, born in 1747 in Neuchâtel in Switzerland, was apprenticed to a watchmaker, and at the age of 15, he traveled to France to continue his apprenticeship in Versailles and Paris. In the French capital, young Breguet obtained an academic education which provided a strong foundation in sciences, particularly mathematics and physics, which to all intents and purposes made Breguet an engineer before the time. He

soon set up his own business and by the time he presented his idea and applied to the authorities for a patent, he was already looking back on a long career. His so-called Perpétuelle, or self-winding, watch enchanted first King Louis XVI and Queen MarieAntoinette and eventually the entire court at Versailles. Countless technical innovations and a talent for sleek, minimalist design made Breguet an innovator of international repute. His name became known in all the ma-

major capitals, and many started to imitate him even then. Due to the excess of the French Revolution and to seek refuge in the country of his birth he returned to Switzerland which turned out to be a fruitful sabbatical. After a period of intense intellectual work and exchange with the Swiss watchmakers of the Geneva and Neuchâtel Jura regions, he returned to Paris and presented new products to a clientele that had long become international and cosmopolitan. Among



**"THE TOURBILLON IS MORE THAN JUST A MECHANICAL WORK OF ART – IT IS THE RESULT OF A PRECISE STUDY OF PHYSICS, A HUMAN ADVENTURE AND AN INDUSTRIAL SAGA IN ITS OWN RIGHT."**

these novelties were the tactile watch (which allows time to be read by touch), the Sympathique clock (which resets and synchronizes watches placed on top of it), the subscription watch (breathtaking in its minimalism), a new constant-force escapement, and a new mechanism referred to as a "Tourbillon regulator".

Who other than Breguet could propose such a project, both scientifically sound and still a little optimistic? It took all this conjecture for the birth of the project to be baptised "Tourbillon" by its inventor, a word whose meaning is often misunderstood and which referred to in astronomy is a sense forgotten today. According to the major dictionaries of the 19th century, among them Descartes and the Encyclopédie, the word referred either to a planetary system and to its rotation on a single axis, or to the energy that causes the rotation of the planets around the sun. A man of Enlightenment, Breguet thus chose a word that someone who observed the world before imitating it would choose. In this, he resembles the 18th century philosophers who considered watchmaking to be the creation of a microcosm. In fact, it is hard not to envision a tiny, tidily ordered constellation in this mechanism, which assembles the devices for regulation (balance spring) and transfer (escape wheel and lever) in a mobile cage that spins as constantly as any planet...

It took Abraham-Louis Breguet more than ten years not only to develop his extremely complex invention, but also to make it reliable. The master watchmaker mentioned his invention at every opportunity and promoted it at the French industrial fairs held in Paris in 1802, 1806 and 1819. He praised it as a mechanism, which allowed timepieces to "maintain their accuracy, irrespective of whether the position of the watch is upright or tilted." Convinced of the significance of the invention, which could be installed

"THE CREATION OF EACH OF THESE PIECES WOULD TAKE BETWEEN FIVE AND TEN YEARS. APPOINTED WITH A GOLD OR SILVER CASE, THESE TOURBILLONS ARE WORKS OF ART WHOSE AESTHETIC MATCHES THEIR TECHNOLOGICAL BRILLIANCE."





in different types of timepieces, Breguet and his staff went on to produce 40 Tourbillons between 1796 and 1829 – plus nine other pieces which were never finished and appeared in the ledgers as written off, scrapped or lost...

### THE CUSTOMERS AND APPLICATIONS

There are 35 watches, more than half of which possess a cage that revolves at a rate of once per four or six minutes, whereas the patent describes a cage revolving every minute. There

also are five other unique items: a Sympathique clock and a clock and watch set, a large-scale model for demonstration purposes, a naval chronometer and a travel clock...

Among Breguet's clients featured, unsurprisingly, monarchs (George III and George IV of England, Ferdinand VII of Spain), Russian aristocrats (Princes Yermolov, Gagarin, Repnin, Demidoff and others) as well as prominent European personalities from Poland (Count Potocki), Prussia (Prince Hardenberg), Italy (Count d'Archinto, G.B. de Sommariva), Hungary (Baron Podmaniczky) and Portugal (Chevalier de Brito).

Only recently, it became widely known that a quarter of these 40 Tourbillons were likely used for naval purposes by ship owners or sailors and used for navigation at sea and for calculating longitude. An explorer in Africa used the watch for the same purpose. Thomas Brisbane reached Australia with his. Some pieces were used on the global ocean for half a century. Several pieces even belonged to leading scientists. The Tourbillon fell into the category of watchmaking for scientific use rather than watchmaking for civilian use. These buyers understood and benefited from the increased precision offered by the mechanism.

### SUCCESS AND RESURGENCE

The creation of each of these pieces would take between five and ten years. Appointed with a gold or silver case, these Tourbillons are works of art whose aesthetic matches their technological brilliance. Although they were considered to be purely scientific objects, they were given a sophisticated finish. The dials of the Tourbillons are among the most

beautiful in the history of the House. Perfect readability – a characteristic of any Breguet watch – and dials whose functionality was enhanced by gold, silver or enamel: constant seconds, seconds on demand, power reserve, sometimes even a thermometer... no two pieces were the same. The Tourbillon mechanism could be adapted to several types of escapements and watches.

In total, almost 30 out of the 40 original pieces have survived, a proportion that speaks volumes to the fascination at play. Twelve pieces are preserved in museums: three belong to the collections of the Breguet Museum, five are kept in the British Museum and other museums in England, the other ones can be found in Italy, Jerusalem, and New York. A further fifteen are in the hands of private collectors, and in recent years, two pieces were bought at auction.

The House of Breguet not only preserved its founder's pieces with great care, but it also created a selection of new Tourbillon pocket watches that were sold from the 1920s into the 1950s. Only a small number of insiders knew about this.

Abraham-Louis Breguet's invention made its comeback in the mid-1980s, in the much smaller cases of wristwatches that were far less sensitive to gravity. Since then, the triumph of the Tourbillon has proved unstoppable, and year by year, it gains ground. Today, the main advantage of the Tourbillon no longer lies in increased precision. Instead, the enlightened amateur may delight in the beauty of a brilliant invention, in a chapter of human history and in the reassuring regularity of a revolutionary process which, 220 years later, continues to bear witness to the human spirit. ▲

# UP TO THE MINUTE

This season, let time speak for itself. Wrapped with the latest in innovation, style, and craftsmanship, these are the timepieces worth spearheading your collection this year.

## BREITLING

After nearly two decades of partnership, watchmaker Breitling and luxury automotive manufacturer Bentley Motors come together in collaboration of an exclusive series of just 25 pieces - the Premier B21 Chronograph Tourbillon 42 Bentley Limited Edition. Embodying the brand's expert craftsmanship and technological excellence, the timepiece features a 42 mm case in 18k red gold, rectangular chronograph pushers, a gold-brown alligator strap, and a transparent sapphire caseback revealing the magnificent movement with its 22-karat gold oscillating weight. The highlight is the special chronograph tourbillon caliber and cage seen through the distinctive green dial; reminiscent of the British racing green color associated with other models in the Breitling and Bentley collaboration. Powered by the Manufacture Caliber B21, this COSC-certified tourbillon movement has a power reserve of approximately 55 hours and is water-resistant up to 100 meters.





## JAEGER-LECOULTRE

Jaeger-LeCoultre unfolds infinitely in four chapters with the Reverso Hybris Mechanica Calibre 185. In 2021, the latest addition to this celestial assemblage is a grand oeuvre six years in the making - the Jaeger-LeCoultre Reverso Hybris Mechanica Calibre 185 Quadriptyque. It is the world's first wristwatch with four functioning display faces. By incorporating three displays of lunar information on the interior face of the iconic Reverso cradle (the synodic cycle, the draconic cycle and the anomalistic cycle), the Hybris Mechanica Quadriptyque can predict the next global incidence of astronomical events such as supermoons and eclipses - the world's first wristwatch to provide such a deep reading of the cosmos. This was made possible only through the 188 years of innovation and expertise accrued within the workshops of La Grande Maison!



## BLANCPAIN

Blancpain reinterprets one of its emblematic historical timepieces, the Fifty Fathoms "no radiations". These diver's watches, whose dial indicated the absence of radium through the "no radiations" logo have become particularly sought-after collector's items. They now form part of the Fifty Fathoms' legendary heritage spanning almost 70 years. The Tribute to Fifty Fathoms No Rad watch be-dazzles a deep black dial punctuated by geometrical hour-markers, combining traditional round dots as well as rectangles and a diamond-shaped mark at 12 o'clock. The unidirectional rotating bezel, featuring a graduation typical of the initial Fifty Fathoms models, is fitted with a sapphire insert, a distinctive feature of the contemporary collection. Water-resistant to 300 metres, the steel case measures 40.3 mm, and houses Blancpain Calibre 1151, a self-winding movement equipped with a silicon balance spring and endowed with a four-day power reserve. This watch is issued in a 500-piece limited series. ▲

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