

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ATTITUDE

# PEAKLIFE

JUNE-AUGUST 2024

## LUXURY LIFE

*Keyur Joshi  
Bhagath Reddy  
Anish Trivedi*

## WEALTH MANAGEMENT

*Priti Rathi Gupta*

## GAMECHANGERS

*Ana Ros  
Garima Arora  
Virgilio Martinez*

## FASHION


*Vaishali S.*

A full-page photograph of Jimmy Mistry, a man with dark hair, wearing a black suit, white shirt, and a black and white striped tie. He is standing on a staircase with a glass railing, leaning his right hand on the railing. The background is a blurred interior space with warm lighting.

JIMMY MISTRY

THE DELLA DYNAMO

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no one  
told you  
about



**There are reposes, tucked into the  
heart of Alibag, that are only for  
those who know the songs of the Earth.  
Who value assets, beyond the measure of  
the land.**

**They do not follow; they reign, quietly.**

**They, who have arrived. Truly.**

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EXPANDED ESTATES BY THE FORESTS  
LAKE PLOTS  
HERITAGE & BESPOKE LANDS  
curated by those who know Alibag best.

**SAMIRA**<sup>TM</sup>  
H A B I T A T S

# PEAKLIFE

June-August 2024

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## Dear Readers,

We're halfway through 2024 already and there are tons of takeaways from thrilling, meaningful journeys.

PEAKLIFE brings in a cluster of achievers from different walks of life to share their learnings.

Jimmy Mistry of the Della Group shares his strategic foresight, core values and timeless learnings for the next generation in his cover interview. Walk through the making of one of the biggest brands in the luxury and lifestyle space.

Priti Rathi Gupta dips into the making of India's first financial app for women, LXME, and brings out lessons in finance management for all of us. Entrepreneur Keyur Joshi of MakemyTrip.com spotlights the secret sauce that makes his projects in the lifestyle and travel space a success. Case to point, Tipai Wildlife Luxuries. Cigar aficionado Anish Trivedi deconstructs the aura behind the haute puff sticks in his signature style, entrepreneur Bhagath Reddy scales fragrant heights in liquor specials beyond France, through his company Comte de Grasse.

Internationally renowned chefs let us peep into the making of their success across the world: think Slovenian chef Ana Ros, Peruvian cuisine's biggest exponent chef Virgilio Martinez; Australia's most popular Indophile chef Sarah Todd, and more. Join India's only woman member of the swish Paris Couture Club, designer Vaishali S. as she hops across the Milan and Paris runways with her unmatched creations.

And then, double dip into luxury as we round up the opulent launches of the season, the prized golden visas and the best destinations to course through worldwide.

We grow together.

Parineeta Sethi

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Parineeta Sethi". The signature is fluid and cursive.

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**42**

*Cover Story:*  
**THE DELLA  
DYNAMO**



**08**

**What's New:  
Season's Essentials**



**12**

**New Launch:  
Serene Luxury**



**14**

**Haute Hotels:  
Running on Island Time**



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**PEAKLIFE**  
**CONTENTS**

- 20** Gamechangers: Eight Questions with Chef Ana Ros
- 22** Gamechangers: India's Garima
- 24** Gamechangers: The Todd of All Things
- 26** Gamechangers: Scaling Heights
- 28** Gamechangers: The Japanese Takeover
- 30** Gamechangers: Notes from Rangoon
- 32** Gamechangers: Slice of Mexico
- 34** In Conversation: Revolutionising Airport Hospitality
- 36** In Conversation: The Luxury Adventure Maker
- 38** In Conversation: Spirited Luxury
- 40** Guest Column: All for Love
- 48** Fashion: Matchpoint, India
- 52** In Conversation: Midas Touch
- 54** Achiever: Seated on a Pinnacle
- 56** Travel: Off the Trail
- 60** Travel: Your Golden Ticket to the World
- 66** Art: Exploring Tomorrow
- 70** Guest Column: The Allure of Culinary Opulence
- 72** Mixology: Pours from Japan
- 76** Guest Column: New Age Designs
- 77** Horology: Timeless Luxury
- 78** Wealth Management: Breaking Barriers, Building Wealth
- 86** Interiors: Essence of Summer

**62**

Travel: Three Cheers



**68**

By R... in...  
**Community Connect:  
Hospitality Hope**



**80**

**Regatta Special:  
PEAKLIFE Regatta 2024**



**84**

**Golf: A Day on the Greens**

**88**

**Ultimate:  
The  
Sapphire  
Bling**







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PEAKLIFE

WHAT'S NEW

# SEASON'S ESSENTIALS

Picks in the luscious and luxurious, for you



## SKIN SAVIOUR

CodeSkin UltraProtect Fluid Sunscreen (SPF 100+) arrives as the sunscreen ninja, powering sun protection for all skin types, up to 12 hours at a stretch, as the sun blazes on. Its Quadruple Filter Technology gives you superb cover and a glowing complexion, fobbing off hyperpigmentation. Perfect for outdoor enthusiasts.

## READY & RADIANT

Mattify your sticky monsoon skin with the facewash from The Body Shop's Tea Tree Oil Skincare range. Steam distilled within 12 hours of harvesting in Kenya, the ethically sourced tea tree oil swipes away the dust and grime from your face. Get ready to kiss blemishes goodbye in 7 days with its unique gel-to-foam formula



## LOCK DEFINER

Style your locks for the perfect spiffy appearance with the ace professional hair styler by Wella Professionals. The all-new Sebastian Professional Craft Clay holds the follicles in place, gifting your tresses a clean, matte, finish. Fabulous for short to medium lengths. hairstyles, adding volume and strong definition to the hair.



## CARRY ON

The 19 Degree Aluminium travel pack by TUMI is a slick pick for every traveller. It comes crafted from superior aircraft-grade aluminium. The compact brief comes complete with fluid-looking curves that slide easily under the seat when you fly out.

## CHOC-CHEESE SMITH

Rev up your chocolate experience with Eleftheria x Paul and Mike's Brunost Cheese Chocolate. India's luxury chocolatier maker Paul and Mike marries the award-winning Brunost cheese from Eleftheria's state-of-the-art micro-creamery with rich, premium milk chocolate.



## MINUTE GIANT

The Navitimer Automatic GMT 41 distills the iconic Breitling wristpiece with notched bezel and brushed finishes for a dynamic play of light. Straps in alligator leather and bracelets with a seamless butterfly clasp polish up the suave comfort and convenience.

## TOUCH OF JOY

Call it Coach confidential. The Emmy is a modern, equestrian-inspired saddle bag, complete with buttery leather. Wear it your way: as snug short shoulder bag or a hands-free crossbody.



## SLING UP

Grab the Clapton Crossbody fanny pack from the mint new apple leather collection by Nappa Dori. Minimalistic and spacious, the cool pick comes complete with multiple pockets, and an elegant strap d-rings for attaching your AirPods



## COMFORT CHIC

Slip into Etta Mules. The denim velvet suede shoes from the house of Jimmy Choo. A cool pick for the season with moulded rubber soles, they are a comfortable, lazy fit in your weekend and off-duty wardrobe.





# SERENE LUXURY

“Fountain Mahabaleshwar is the perfect place to stay and rejuvenate amidst nature with a plethora of activities. We look forward to welcoming our guests and offering them the warm care that we are renowned for,” says Esakkikumar Konar, General Manager, Fountain Mahabaleshwar.

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India’s largest hospitality company has unveiled its latest property: Fountain, Mahabaleshwar - IHCL SeleQtions hotel in Maharashtra.

The hotel is a serene sanctuary nestled amidst forests with panoramic views of the Koyna valley. Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO, IHCL

said, “We are pleased to bring SeleQtions with its unique and distinctive offerings to Mahabaleshwar, Maharashtra’s most popular hill station. This opening will cater to the growing demand for experiential travel especially given its proximity to cities such as Mumbai and Pune.”

Spread over 11 acres of pristine land, the hotel comprises 77 rooms providing

private balconies with sweeping valley views. Built with beams from Lancashire in the United Kingdom, it was christened “Fountain” due to the abundance of water in the area. Inspired by the contemporary colonial design of the British era and Indian influences, the hotel has a minimalistic aesthetic with walls made of locally available stones.



"FOUNTAIN MAHABALESHWAR IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO STAY AND REJUVENATE AMIDST NATURE WITH A PLETHORA OF ACTIVITIES. WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING OUR GUESTS AND OFFERING THEM THE WARM CARE THAT WE ARE RENOWNED FOR," SAYS ESAKKIKUMAR KONAR, GENERAL MANAGER, FOUNTAIN MAHABALESHWAR.

The all-day-diner Saddleback invites guests to savour the ambience with its multi-cuisines offering and large alfresco area. Dusk, the bar, is a haven for guests to unwind and indulge while enjoying a mesmerising sunset. The spacious banquet hall, accompanied by a large pre-function area, is ideal for hosting corporate conferences, weddings and milestone celebrations. The pièce de résistance is the expansive deck, spanning 11,000 sq. ft and offering unparalleled views of the valley. A wide variety of recreational amenities include an indoor game zone for kids, a tranquil spa, a state-of-the-art gym, and an inviting outdoor pool.

Mahabaleshwar, a picturesque hill station with historical significance is known for its pleasant climate and breath-taking natural beauty. With strawberry farms dotting the hillsides, Mahabaleshwar produces 85% of India's strawberries.

With the addition of this hotel, IHCL will have 34 hotels across Taj, SeleQtions, Vivanta and Ginger in Maharashtra including 10 under development. ▲



# RUNNING ON ISLAND TIME

Living life island style at COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi in Maldives.

By Vidhi Gupta



**B**asking in the splendour of magical sunsets from my room, savouring the freshest catch of the day, snorkelling with whale sharks at night, chasing dolphins on a cruise, and even having a private island all to myself for an entire day, I spent my days realising the true luxury of nature with COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi in Maldives.

The Maldives is an archipelago in the Indian Ocean with bustling reefs beneath crystalline waters, and white beaches fringed with palms. COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi sit on private islands: the former is a more intimate and authentic Maldivian resort, the latter is larger and caters to families with ease.

## COMO COCOA ISLAND

Dear COMO Cocoa Island, I think about you all the time.

Nestled among the sandy atolls of South

Malé, the intimate sanctuary of COMO Cocoa Island is the best tropical getaway I ever had. Just a swift 40-minute speedboat ride from Malé International Airport, this exclusive retreat boasts an impressive house reef embraced by chalk-white beaches and the shimmering turquoise waters of the Indian Ocean.

When the keys were handed to me, with delicate beads that added a charming local touch, I knew I was in for a unique experience. My Loft Water Villa, designed to resemble a traditional 'dhoni' fishing boat, welcomed me with an expansive lower-level living area and a master bedroom on the mezzanine. The private terrace, extending into the ocean, became my haven for the evenings, where I sipped champagne on the deck, watching the sun set and the sky change colours.

The property houses Ufaa, a culinary haven

where modern interpretations of Indian and Mediterranean cuisine take centre stage, with a focus on fresh local produce, including delectable seafood and COMO Shambhala's healthful eating options. I had a refreshing Como Colada, served in a coconut with an edible, sustainable straw. The seafood offerings were a delight, from succulent oysters to perfectly grilled tiger prawns, pasta, sushi, and Indian biryani—each dish a chef's kiss. Desserts were a symphony of flavours, beautifully plated and always delightful. The house-made sorbets and chocolate mousse with ginger frangipane and honeycomb brittle are absolute must-tries. One evening, I enjoyed an enchanting dinner by the shore, lit only by candlelight, with my toes nestled in the sand, creating the most romantic ambiance.

Breakfast here was a celebration of taste and health, featuring delights like 'Real Toast' made with tomatoes, cucumber, parsley salad, and avocado crush, and the





Quinoa Bowl, a vibrant mix of marinated grilled tofu, mushrooms, avocado, broccoli, house-made kimchi pickles, and nori sprinkle.

Faru Bar, just across from Ufaa, is an easy-going, foot-in-the-sand resort bar in an authentic hut and traditional bar stools. This is where the inventive bartenders put together refreshing drinks, along with fine wines, classic cigars, and light snacks.

One of the most enriching aspects of my stay was the deep dive into the fascinating world of coral reefs. Under the expert guidance of our sweetest instructor, Kai, taught me how to propagate corals by tying them onto a frame which is planted at the coral gardens of the resort. Kai's passion for the environment was palpable as she patiently explained every aspect of coral ecosystems. She then escorted me on my maiden snorkelling adventure, where I unlocked a whole new world



under the water. As I dipped my head beneath the surface, the world above faded away, leaving only the serene, silent beauty of the ocean's depths. There were so many colourful corals, and schools of fishes. COMO Cocoa Island, blessed with abundant reefs just off its shores, offers an unparalleled snorkelling experience. Simply gear up, plunge into the crystal-clear waters, and discover the breathtaking wonders that lie beneath the sea.

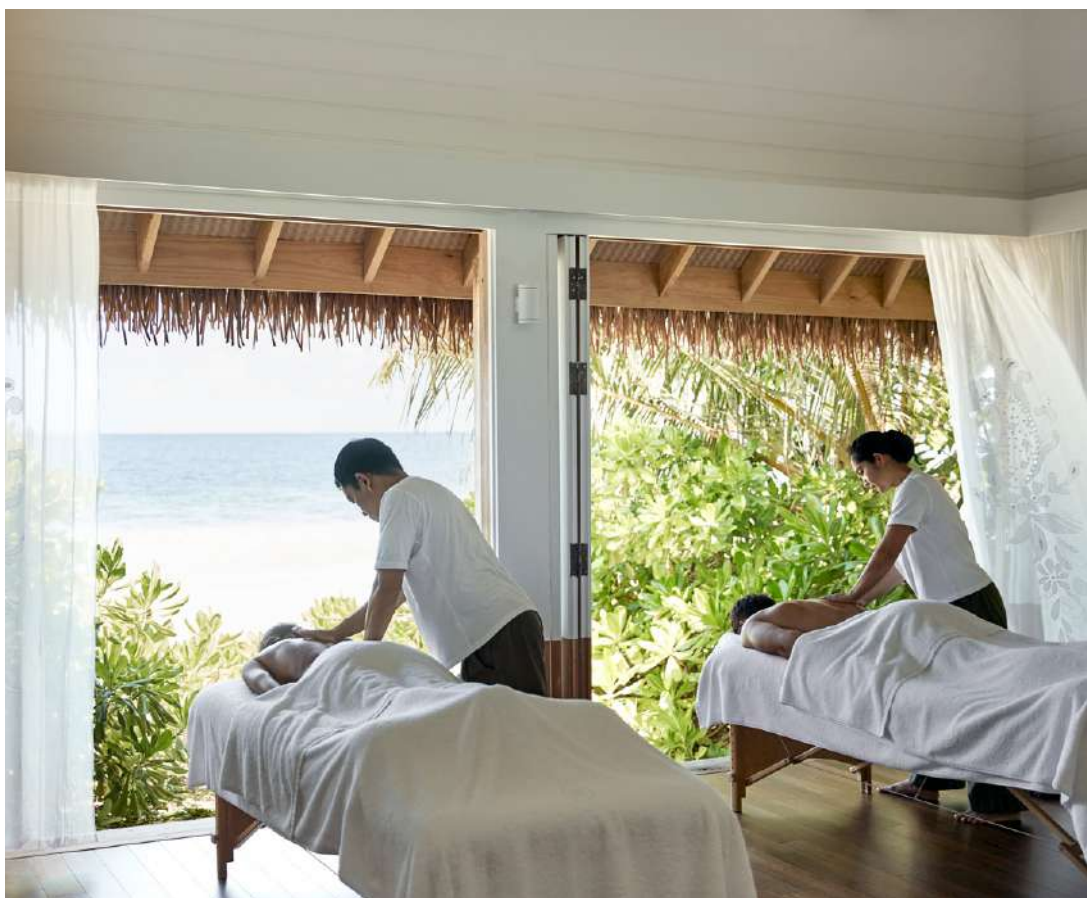
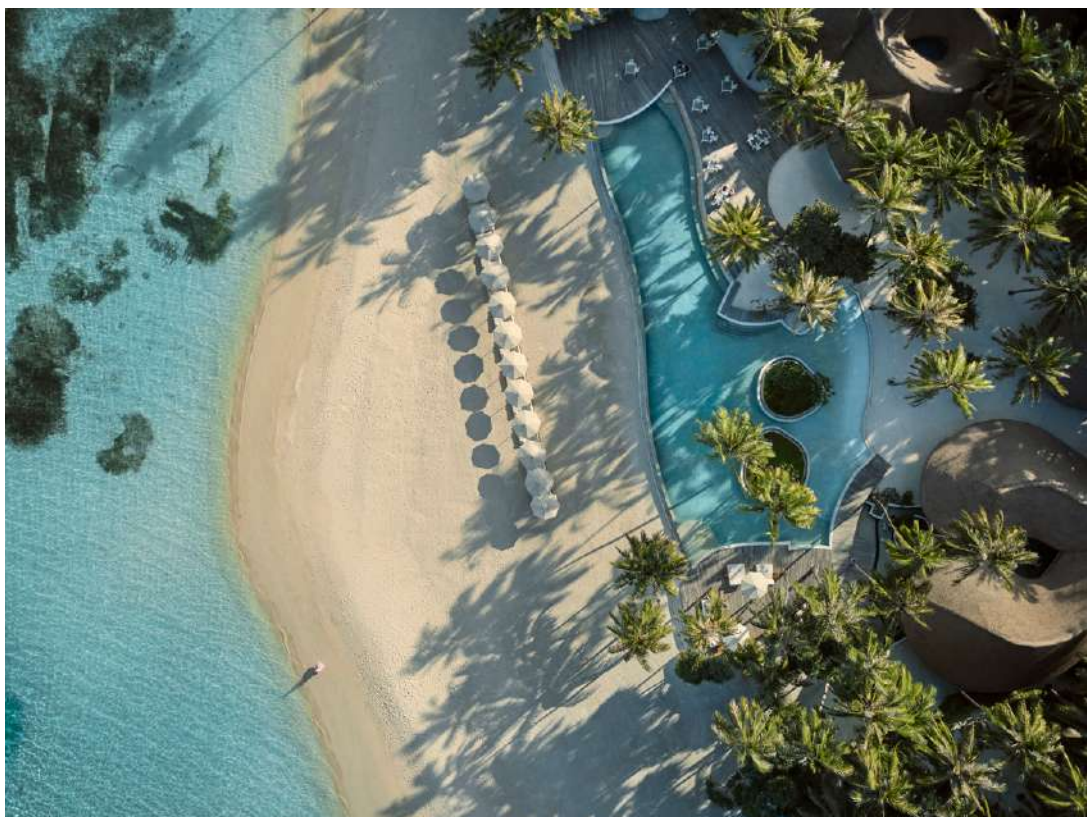
Another aquatic adventure whisked me away on a sunset cruise with dolphins. They were easy to spot, joyfully swimming alongside our boat with grace. The sight was nothing short of magical, as numerous dolphins danced in the water, occasionally leaping into the air. The experience of spotting them in their natural habitat was simply unforgettable.

For the ultimate indulgence in relaxation, I ventured to the COMO Shambhala Retreat for their renowned COMO Shambhala Massage. Unlike traditional spas confined to closed rooms, this spas room seamlessly blended the indoors with the outdoors. Even the bathroom, discreetly nestled under the shade of trees with the sea as its backdrop, offered an open-air experience that simply made me so happy. With the sight of white sheer curtains billowing gently against the lush greens and blues outside, I climbed onto my massage bed and the soothing strokes of the massage lulled me into a blissful slumber. The spa has a hydrotherapy pool, ingeniously designed with various stations that provide different water pressures, each targeting specific areas of the body.

### **COMO MAALIFUSHI**

It just took a quick scenic seaplane ride from COMO Cocoa Island to reach the sister property, COMO Maalifushi. Surrounded by uninhabited islands, world-class surf breaks, and thriving marine life, it is located in the turquoise waters of the Maldives' southerly Thaa Atoll.

As I strolled towards my overwater haven, I wandered past a sprawling garden teeming with vibrant corals, convenient cycle stations, and lush foliage. My room was too good to be true! The overwater suite was located above the water, with spectacular views of the Maldivian sky. It features a large bedroom with a living area and wide doors that open to a terrace with a plunge pool and direct access to the turquoise lagoon. The bathroom was a



**"COMO COCOA ISLAND, BLESSED WITH ABUNDANT REEFS JUST OFF ITS SHORES, OFFERS AN UNPARALLELED SNORKELLING EXPERIENCE. SIMPLY GEAR UP, PLUNGE INTO THE CRYSTAL-CLEAR WATERS, AND DISCOVER THE BREATHTAKING WONDERS THAT LIE BENEATH THE SEA."**



sanctuary with its sunken bath and open-air shower. Each morning greeted me with endless blue skies and shimmering waters, while my days were spent clicking pictures on my sundeck. Evenings became a ritual of watching sunsets from my private pool, and nights were a blissful retreat in the sunken bathtub. My suite had transformed into a personal paradise, a mini-resort where every moment felt like a dream come true!

Menu at Madi are light and flavourful, with a range of local, Mediterranean, Indonesian and Thai-influenced dishes served from breakfast to late evening. I had the most refreshing summer rolls here with poached tiger prawn, along with Crab Tostone consisting of jumbo lump crab, avocado smash, and Sweet Potato Fries. For drinks, my favourites were Dhoni, a mocktail made for Maldivian summers with rocket leaves, parsley, mint, lettuce, basil, fresh mango, fresh pineapple and honey, and Doctor Coco- Pandan and coconut shaken with fresh lime juice, Martini Bianco and Grey Goose vodka.

COMO Maalifushi's Japanese restaurant, Tai, offers sushi and sashimi in an overwater setting. My culinary journey loved the Shrimp Tempura and Toothfish Teriyaki,

complemented by rosemary anticucho teriyaki, gyoza, and a delightful finale of Matcha green tea paired with berries and lychee sorbet. The standout, however, was the Shizuka cocktail—a symphony of sake intertwined with chamomile flower syrup, shaken with fresh mint and orange blossom water—an absolute revelation. Dining in Tai transcended mere meals; it was an immersion in sensory delight—a symphony of cool breezes and the gentle serenade of surrounding waters; it was just something else.

The most thrilling experience was a day on a private island! A boat takes you to Lavadhoo island, beyond the confines of the resort, where land upon pristine shores and untouched nature. Beach beds awaited me in an idyllic arrangement, alongside a perfectly set picnic table, promising a day of seclusion. Here you are given a discreet phone for any required communication from the island to the hotel- no Wi-Fi. Nap, snack, or swim, the entire island is only yours! Stretching out upon the soft sands, I saw swaying trees in the gentle breeze, clouds drifting lazily across a flawless sky, and the rhythmic lapping of waves upon the shore. Tiny crabs scuttled along the sands, adding to the tableau of natural luxury that surrounded me.

Apart from COMO Shambhala Retreat, which has overwater treatment rooms, a huge common pool overlooking the beach, and a kids' activity centre, the resort has a Marine Sports Centre where you can book an experience to be up close with whale sharks at night. Snorkel alongside these incredible creatures, illuminated by the moonlight. Or, if you prefer, marvel at their graceful presence from the deck. Once signed up, the resort calls you when there has been a whale shark sighting - anytime between 6.00 pm and 10.00 pm - and the boat will whisk you 20 minutes north. The Maldives' clear waters allow for an aquarium-like view of these gentle giants. The whale sharks usually ignore snorkelers while feeding, allowing you the time to admire them as they swim majestically and slowly around you.

As the curtain fell on my enchanting tropical retreat, the inevitable moment arrived to bid farewell and embark on the seaplane journey back to the airport. Yet, reminiscing about the days spent at COMO Cocoa Island and COMO Maalifushi, has made my heart beat again for the sun and the sand, longing for a return soon. ▲

PEAKLIFE  
GAMECHANGERS



# LEADING THE WAY



Meet accomplished achievers who believe in breaking rules, setting trailblazing targets, and creating echoes in the entrepreneurial circles. Discover how they interpret the power of people, value the happiness of those around them, crafting impeccable leadership lessons in the process. **SHILPI MADAN** meets the men and women busy carving their own niche and making the world unique in their own pathbreaking ways..

# EIGHT QUESTIONS WITH CHEF ANA ROS

Self-taught Slovenian chef Ana Ros puts her country's produce on the awarding-winning global gastronomy map.

Chef Ana Ros, owner of three-Michelin starred restaurant Hisa Franko, in Soca Valley, Slovenia, is a distinctive voice in the culinary world – with her flavour-forward gourmet gospels, and food philosophy. She ranked third on the Best Chef Awards list in 2023.

Her culinary expertise comes sparkling with the coveted Michelin Green Star. With reason enough, as her conscious kitchen believes in upcycling, and making use of Slovenia's fresh, local, seasonal produce in edgy formats (Arctic char with buttermilk, Lovage ravioli with chanterelles and Valter's pit cheese, Trout Roe-infused Corn Beignet, Potato with delicate Hay Crust; Goat kid, crab, topinambur, crab mayonnaise...).

In 2022 Chef Ana received The Best Chef Pristine Award for her utmost respect for and use of the highest quality local produce at a terroir-based restaurant. She is also the ambassador of gastronomic tourism at the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai, hosted her as part of its Rendezvous series, in collaboration with Conosh.





*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**How's India treating you?**

I love the fragrance of spices, having visited the markets of Mumbai - Lalbaug Spice Market and Sassoon Docks - and Delhi's Khari Baoli spice market in Chandini Chowk. We already have nine kilos of tamarind, jaggery, mustard oil, garam masala and more to carry back.

**Three-Michelin stars. Whom do you count as your backbone?**

Being a chef is not my profession, it is my life. I have a great team to support me. Besides cooking, and marketing, as a business woman I head a team of 80 people and am personally engaged with everyone. I am a bridge between my team and my guests. Sometimes I am cleaning the bar, or explaining courses to the guests, in the kitchen washing glasses and dishes. Lead by example, always to the team. I believe when there is a need I should be the first one there.

**How do you constantly up your game as a chef?**

I always challenge myself to discover something new. Sometimes creating a balance, sometimes shaping a contrast in the flavours. I like contrasts. For instance, persimmon and raw pumpkin come together in a perfect marriage. But green tea and coffee is an edgy spin. Just like lemon curd - light and tangy and full of surprise. I play on different feelings and emotions that the food on your palate evokes in your heart. My new age cuisine goes hand-in-hand with nature.

**Hisa Franko offers one tasting menu. No a la carte. Does this help in making yours a conscious kitchen?**

Yes. The Hisa Franko setting is hinged on sustainability. We source from local farmers, and have a low carbon footprint. Based on our seating and tasting menu, we have a precise calculation of how much to order. Every part of an animal is used when we cook meat. The trimmings, the leftover ground coffee, peels of fruits and vegetables, bits of rhubarb... in simmering stock, and in welcome drinks. Even the residual bread in the basket that goes to every table - we make bread miso using it. We make incredible old bread tiramisu, by soaking the leftover bread in espresso.

**Is it intentional?**

No. But this has always been my food philosophy: no waste. We do not throw away anything. Sure, it is profitable but also calls for remarkable ingenuity.



**"TASTE YOUR OWN FOOD. SIT DOWN AND EXPERIENCE THE ENTIRE TASTING MENU AT THE TABLE TO KNOW HOW THE GUEST FEELS AT THE END OF 14 ODD COURSES."**

We do it every day.

**Do you practise sustainability at home too?**

(Laughs) Tough! I like my fridge to be pretty full. Sometimes we eat a month- old yogurt but we eat it, it just ferments a bit more.

**What is your favourite ingredient?**

Tomatoes. A good ripe tomato that is firm and ripe. You can wash it in sea water and eat it raw. Tomatoes bring with them a perfect umami taste - bordering on sour, sweet, savoury. I love integrating tomatoes into desserts too.

**What's that one piece of advice you would like to give all chefs?**

Taste your own food. Not taking a bite or a sip in the kitchen. Sit down and experience the entire tasting menu at the table to know how the guest feels at the end of 14 odd courses. There is often a lack of greens, fruits, and plants on the plate, especially in Europe. Everyone serves protein. But can you eat 3 kg of meat or fish in one meal, or tuck in 7000 odd calories? Chefs often forget about the well-being of the client. ▲

# INDIA'S GARIMA

The world is going ga ga over India's only woman Michelin-starred chef, and her incredible food artistry.



She is India's most celebrated culinary exponent, the only Indian woman chef to run a two-Michelin star restaurant. Garima Arora is a tour de force on Bangkok turf, with her award-winning restaurant Gaa, driving in droves from all parts of the world. Blame

its ingredient forward cuisine mapping an unbeatable atlas of flavours - with Indian cooking techniques shaping the taste of Thai ingredients.

Garima played judge on MasterChef India in 2023 while running her

successful restaurant in Thonglor neighbourhood in Bangkok. Recently, Gaa secured two Michelin stars in the Michelin Guide Thailand 2024. A double celebration for Garima as it coincides with another special - the arrival of her son, Aham.



*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**How does it feel, being back in India for a bit?**

Always excited to be back home.

**Congratulations on the two Michelin stars in the Michelin Thailand 2024 edition. How has your journey been so far?**

Tiring! Overwhelming, but if you love what you do it is all fun. The honour belongs to my team - we are one big family - without whom none of this would have been possible. It has been a great validation for me, especially as I have had a baby this year.

**Aham is nine months now. What is your state of mind right now?**

Honestly, I would love to take a nap. I am running on plenty of coffee. Life has been very busy, and kind. My restaurant Gaa is doing well, and all the juggling and shuffling, chasing deadlines and playdates has kept me on the run.

**You've said earlier that a person can't have it all. You've got to give somewhere - being physically present at one place and absent at another. Do you stand by this?**

Absolutely. You can't have it all. Superwoman is a myth. Superwoman is a hormonally charged, harried person. It is silly to expect a woman to do everything. When you are at work, part of you is always thinking about deadlines, work, and your baby at home. This is life. In our profession, remote work isn't possible. You can't peel potatoes at home and send them to the restaurant. Life is tough and there are decisions and changes to be made.

**As a strong, independent woman, whom do you draw inspiration from in your family tree?**

I have been raised by a very strong woman. My mother refuses to bow down in front of challenges and always rises to the fore. That attitude has stuck with me. I believe in fighting the odds.

**What has been that crucial turning point in your life?**



**“OUR NEW FOUND LOVE FOR REGIONAL CUISINES IS VERY EXCITING. I AM PLANNING TO TRAVEL THROUGH THE HEART OF INDIA SOON.”**

The pandemic. It deeply impacted my thinking. I broke away from my previous business partners, virtually did a crash course in the construction of my own culinary business. I restarted Gaa by myself, and didn't get to meet my parents and husband for two years. That drove home the importance of family, and the desire to have a baby. The pandemic simply changed the way I looked at things around me.

**Does your biggest strength lie here?**

Yes. I don't let things faze me. Garima in 2024 has more grey hair and is a little wiser (laughs).

**What are the three qualities that make a super chef?**

Believe in the process. Love what you do, that is very important. Keep your head down and work hard consistently. Success will follow. When you start chasing success, it becomes elusive. Discipline is the key. Stay motivated and focused every day.

**What is your biggest challenge right now?**

Finding home. India is home. When in Bangkok, it is home. My son and business are there. I feel torn between the two locations and always feel like coming to India.

**You have taken a lot of India to Thailand. Are you bringing a bit of Garima now to India?**

Soon (smiles). I am open to collaborations and new experiences.

**You are the biggest mascot for women chefs in India? Share a pearl of wisdom**

First, stop thinking of yourself in terms of gender. We need strong, hard working people, good people to work with. I don't care if my head chef is male or female. If you are identifying yourself as a victim by virtue of being a woman, don't let that happen to yourself. Shed that victim syndrome. Develop a strong ecosystem around yourself in family, friends. You need a sound support system especially if you are in a physically demanding job like ours.

**Who composes your support system?**

My husband, parents, my brother, my team at Gaa - they have been with me for seven years now.

**Share with us any biases you have encountered.**

Bias will always be there in terms of gender, race, ethnicity. I have never let that affect me.

**Whom do you look up to?**

Chef Rene Redzepi. Working at Noma was a dream come true. I reach out to him every now and then for advice.

**Do share your comment on upcoming food trends**

That is tricky terrain. Our new found love for regional cuisines is very exciting. I am planning to travel through the heart of India soon. Probably cover east or south India, for meeting people, conducting my R & D, experiencing, and learning from cultures first hand. ▲



# THE TODD OF ALL THINGS

Celebrity Chef Sarah Todd shapes a culinary oasis in India again, in Goa.

She's back with a flourish, shaping the earthy menu at the newly launched Sanctuary Bar & Kitchen in Goa. Set among the 250-year-old ruins with nodding greens all over the expanse, the latest outpost of the restaurant (after Hyderabad) glides in with susegad-ease at Vagator. Chef Sarah Todd lends her expertise to Goa's newest kid on the block, with partners Gokul Krishna, Rohan Gutta, Trilok Potluri and Mithun Yalamarathi, planting over 8,000 trees to create a foliage dense space.

Celebrating her deep-seated connect with India, Sarah brings in specials including xacuti crab cakes, kokum salsa, chicken kiev cafreal bites, feni pickled zucchini, jaggery glazed carrots; Peruvian style morning glory in limy rice, and more.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**What took you so long to come back to India to take up roots again?**

(smiles) For me, last year I did a lot of self-discovery,

going forward and making decisions on what projects to work on. I decided to work only with those in sync with my own food philosophy. After my own restaurant burnt down a few years back, I did move between Australia and India, but Sanctuary developed as a quaint collective expression of all that I love. The ruins, the greenery, the earthiness of the place...everything came together on point. I felt I could put a piece of myself here and create something special.

**What's the narrative behind the menu?**

Honestly, it is a curious combination of the last decade of travelling around. When people come to Goa, they only think of seafood. But I wanted to create vegetarian specials with local ingredients. You feel connected to the earth here through the food, and the vibe. There is abundance, depth and flavour

**What is that one dish that defines India for you?**

Kheema pao. It is spicy, zingy, delicious, warm and



welcoming: a sheer revelation each time I eat it. Just like India.

**Your favourite spot at Sanctuary?**

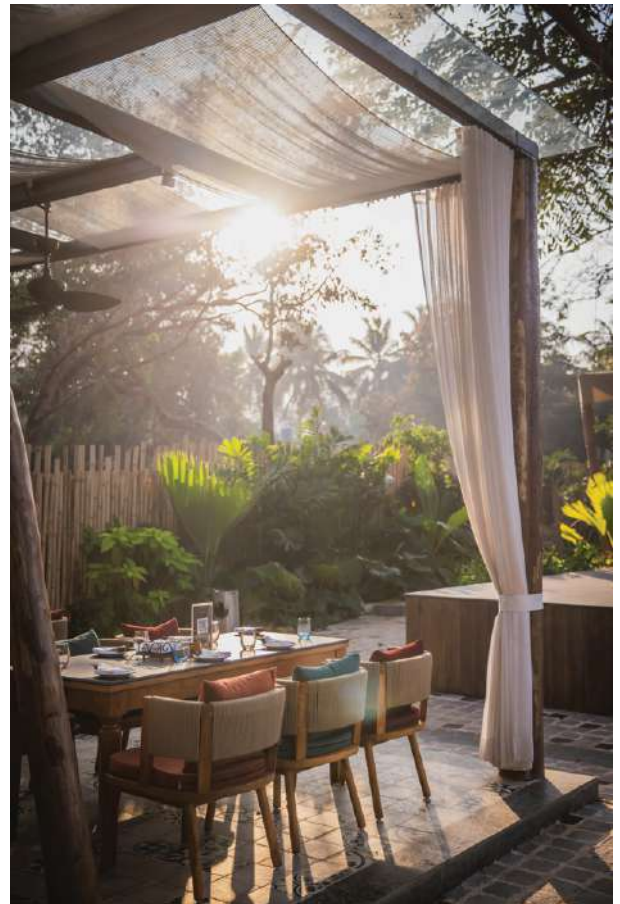
The Ruin Bar. It has been shaped using natural materials like bamboo and nestles so comfortably among the ruins. We are lucky to have super mixologists, Agnieszka Rozenska and Louness Ducos creating an unforgettable bar experience. My favourites include the clear picante, tipped with tequila silver, agave syrup, chilli tincture, coriander, lime and clarified milk, but the game changer and the most exciting is Peanut's Thyme, with bourbon and peanut butter.

**Introspection, and new decisions galore, what has Sarah Todd learnt so far?**

That life can be kind and unkind, and you must be able to accept that. I have learnt not to run away from the difficult times and take challenges head on.

**A pearl of wisdom.**

Trust your intuition. Put yourself out, learn to be comfortable in the uncomfortable, take the feedback sensibly. ▲



# SCALING HEIGHTS

Peruvian chef Virgilio Martinez explores altitude cuisines in a venerable nod to his Peruvian roots.

**C**entral, by Chef Virgilio Martinez, has been accorded the title of the 'World's Best Restaurant 2023'. A mark of global recognition for the Michelin-starred culinary heart who has been plating gourmet gospels, drawing in ingredients from the surrounding ecosystem in Peru – of the towering Andes mountains, the mighty Amazon river; and the vast Pacific Ocean. Clearly, he is the vanguard of Peruvian cuisine.

Masters of Marriott Bonvoy and Culinary Culture brought Central from Peru to India for the first time in partnership with American Express at two dinners at Koishii at The St. Regis Mumbai recently and PEAKLIFE was lucky enough to catch up with Chef Virgilio.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**What is your biggest challenge, serving a tasting menu dependent upon availability of ingredients in the neighbouring mountains, ocean, and river?**

For me, each dish for me represents a certain ecological elevation. The tasting menu circles the altitude cuisine and is subject to unevenness. At times ingredients are unavailable owing to seasonality and we have to replace the dish with another creation.

**What are the similarities between Peruvian and Indian cuisines?**

There are many similarities. There is no single definition of a national cuisine in both countries. The geography of the land brings in a rich diversity in terms, and celebrates multiplicity in flavours. In India, the magic of spices elevates preparations. Similarly in Peru we make use of many herbs and seasonings to build up a dish. There is harmony that results from chaos.



PHOTOS: CULINARY CULTURE



**Share with us the diversity of ingredients you use at Central.**

Over 120 varieties of salt; different kinds of corn, and potatoes that are indigenous to the Andean topography. A dish at the restaurant is Extreme Altitude – it brings in multiple varieties of corn, potatoes, vegetables that occur seasonally high up in the mountains. The famous Amazonian piranhas make their way to another dish, that also brings in the ecosystem of the river to the table in the form of edible seaweeds.

**Share a childhood food memory with us.**

As a child I always used to go with my father to buy the fresh catch of the day. Chatting with the fishermen, holding the fish, learning to discern set my relationship with the ecosystem early on. My menus at

**"THERE ARE MANY SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE SPICE-RICH INDIAN, AND HERB-LACED PERUVIAN CUISINES."**



all my restaurants are a tribute to nature.

**What keeps you going?**

Curiosity.

**What wins the day for any chef?**

Consistency.

**What are you carrying back to Peru?**

Indian chillies that I have shopped for at the spice market in Lalbag in Mumbai.

**What's your comfort food?**

The ceviche!

**You are the creative heart behind the world's best restaurant. What's next?**

I want to spread the joy of Peruvian gastronomy across the world, and make Central the best place in the world to work at. ▲

# THE JAPANESE TAKEOVER

Restaurateurs Vedant Malik and Lakhan Jethani are powering Japanese cuisine beyond simply miso chic.



Two childhood friends, foodpreneur Vedant Malik and Chef Lakhan Jethani, have shaped an award winning re-jig in Japanese cuisine in India, by ushering in the Izakaya culture. Their restaurant – Mizu Izakaya – in suburban Mumbai is a manifestation of their shared passion for food and brings in an informal resto-bar typically found in the inner lanes of Tokyo.

Vedant is growing Mizu in quality and scalability, emphasizing the accessibility of Japanese cuisine beyond the conventional perceptions and also redefining Japanese dining in Mumbai to make it more approachable. Lakhan, the culinary heart, bring in his understanding and skill with native and Japanese ingredients.

Taste the flavors of the nation front and center, from classics like sushi, ramen, and matcha to unique specials in Japanese milk parfait, katsu udon, sapporo pork, ginger gyozas, salmon gondhoraj yuzu truffle, scallop mentaiko corn mousse, chasu pork belly bao packing in elements of surprise in the menu

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

## **Why Japanese cuisine?**

Why not Japanese cuisine? It caters to such a wide palate. For years we have misunderstood Japanese cuisine and all that it has to offer. There are so many beautiful layers to it. It is simple and yet so complex. We wanted to be the first to introduce India to the Izakaya culture.

## **Japanese cuisine is elitist. Agree?**

Completely disagree, and that is the notion

and perception we want to change. I feel this perception exists only because of what we have been made to believe about the cuisine. The pricing and understanding of Japanese cuisine have always intimidated the Indian consumer and with our approachable price points and a simplified menu, we want to change the elitist misconception.

**Japanese, Korean, Mexican, Burmese have elbowed aside Chinese cuisine. Do you see this growing over the next few years?**

Our country, people, economy – everything has evolved. Different cuisines are now gaining popularity in our country. Last year, Japan had a crazy inflow of Indian tourists. Once Indians go to Japan and eat the food, they want to have the same food in their home land on returning.

We feel there is space for all cuisines to co-exist. It is just that new flavours are coming into the spotlight, good Japanese, Mexican, Burmese restaurants are going to come up. That is the evolution of food.

**What food trends do you see emerging this year?**

Plenty of street food from all around the world is gaining popularity on home turf. A little more refined in presentation, but it is certainly a trend that is growing fast. Street food is soul food.

**It's a crowded foodscape. What has been the biggest game changer for you?**

What worked in our favour was that we have been very approachable as a Japanese restaurant. Many people get intimidated by Japanese cuisine. Our aim has always been to make it more approachable for the Indian palate and that has worked wonders for us.

**What figures are you looking at touching by the end of 2024?**

We have had a revenue growth of about 20 to 25% yearly since inception and have doubled up our revenue since the time we started out four years ago.

The ballpark is for a restaurant to generally hit a top line. It will hit a stagnation point



**"OUR AIM HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO MAKE JAPANESE CUISINE APPROACHABLE FOR THE INDIAN PALATE AND THAT HAS WORKED WONDERS FOR US."**

because of the fixed number of seats, per rotation. We are doing 100 per cent of those seats. Now we are looking at pop-up, events, catering for high net individuals and high net companies. Targetting a revenue of 1.3 to 1.5 crores monthly, in the year 2024, this would spell between 15 -18 crores in the current financial year.

**How important is the exclusive bar with Japanese mixology?**

It is not just about Japanese mixology. A good restaurant should have a good bar, great service, even better food and an outstanding pastry section. All these factors have been factored in at Mizu. About 30- 35 per cent of our revenue comes in from the bar. People do come to Mizu for food primarily, yet the trend of guests coming in for a few cocktails, and amazing bites, before heading out elsewhere is also big. We are netting the crowds in this segment too.

**What piques the interest quotient of customers at a restaurant?**

Creativity, sustainability, approachability. There must be always something new for customers to look forward to.

**What's been the turning point?**

When we started out, we were a little

rigid and wanted to cater to a slightly niche palate. The turning point arrived when it came to doing justice to the more casual, informal Izakaya style of dining. That made us shape our own identity.

**A pearl of Japanese wisdom learnt in the process.**

Less is more.

**A piece of advice to someone starting a Japanese resto bar**

Stay true to the course you have chosen to run. Don't focus on the financial gains instead focus on creating an enjoyable and flawless experience for the consumer. Have a clear vision of where you want your restaurant or brand to be within 5 years and every 6 months you must step back and honestly review just how many steps you have taken in the right direction towards achieving what you envisioned.

**What's the game plan?**

To make Mizu a recognized brand on international turf as well. The plan is to grow slowly and steadily, but our way. We are away from the franchise model, as we want to grow the experience of dining at Mizu. ▲



## NOTES FROM RANGOON

Ankit Gupta is busy bringing Burmese cuisine to Indian tables with green flair.

**I**t is a hum across India. Burma Burma. Pandering to the palate through an atlas of flavours that go beyond the usual khau suey. Founded in 2014 by childhood friends, Chirag Chhajer and Ankit Gupta, Burma Burma (Hunger Pangs Pvt. Ltd.) currently owns twelve restaurants and delivery kitchens across Mumbai, Delhi NCR, Noida, Gurugram, Bangalore, Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Ahmedabad.

Stemming from Ankit's maternal roots in Burma, the brand brings out decidedly vegetarian fare (and no alcohol) doubling revenues across cities by the day. Experiential dining experience and





a holistic experience of Burma's food, culture, and happiness forms the anchor point for one of the biggest veg successes in the food industry.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**You're in over eight locations pan India. How has revenue increased since inception?**

It has doubled.

**Would you say the vegetarian format (and no alcohol) has clicked with the**



**Indian palate?**

Absolutely. This is a great time for us. With 20 percent of our ingredients from Burma, and innovative preparation techniques involving pickling, lacto fermentation, making milk wash, plum leather, and our very own agave, has brought in an extensive non-alcoholic menu that people love. There is even kombucha on tap - Cucumber Kvass, Yangon Citrus... We want to promote Burmese food throughout the country and my mother's heirloom recipes have played a huge role in popularising the cuisine.

**How has the market evolved over the past five years?**

People never had such elevated veg dining options earlier. With disposable incomes, aspirational lifestyles, late night dinners, there is also the leaning towards vegetarianism. Also, there are micro markets developing rapidly within metros. The suburbs are evolving into satellite towns everywhere, across metros and non-metros. India is a very NICHE market, with restaurants on home turf clocking the same (if not more business) than their counterparts in Dubai and Singapore..

**Are you looking at expanding further?**

To Dubai and London, soon.

**What is your target over the next financial year?**

We stand at 103 crores turnover, with ten outlets as of now. Our target is to touch 180 crores by next YEAR end. We took seed funding of 2 million USD last year, doubling revenues from 46 crores to 103 crores. Now we are raising 4 million USD to open



more outlets. Subsequently the business will fund itself.

**A lesson from your experience in the industry?**

Stay true to what you do, and consistently work on your core product or expertise. That will take you places. ▲

# SLICE OF MEXICO

Restaurateur Vicky Singh's seriously cool Mezcalita rolls in the informal appeal of breezy flavours with a cosmopolitan bar.



Colours, noise, and laughter fill up the buzzing Mezcalita in South Bombay. Co-founder Vicky Singh has a grip on the city's evolving palate, serving up global gourmet gospels at his tony restaurant Slink & Bardot, lining the blue off the sealink, and now with delicious Mexican flavours in small and big plates at his restobar in town.

With Mexican, Burmese, and Japanese burrowing into India's experimental foodscape, the commercial draw is big. For Singh, who launched Sanchos in 2008 – and virtually the Mexican movement in Mumbai – the rip roaring success of Mezcalita is a labour of love.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**How has the TexMex journey been?**

When we launched Sanchos many moons ago, unfortunately the global perception of Mexican food was limited to tacos. It is an evolving market today, and people understand the finer nuances and the difference between TexMex and Mexican cuisines. Chilli corn and nachos are something people eat in cinemas, and parks – and these are not a true reflection of authentic Mexican food.

**Why is Mexican cuisine picking up momentum in India?**

Mexican cuisine always had it in itself to be popular with the Indian palate. Acidity in flavours, dairy, and spice have always played a big role in Indian cuisine. I feel Mexican and Thai cuisines are the most homogenous with the Indian palate. Desi versions of TexMex have been around for a while. Now with the well-travelled, there is a decided demand for original TexMex and Mexican cuisines. There is a large population of Indians staying abroad, eating Mexican fare as their comfort food, and on returning to the country, continues to build upon this palate.

**How important is the veg-punch in the scheme of commercial appeal?**

Very important. Mexican food lends itself to being vegetarian very easily. Spicy and tangy, it ticks all the right boxes for the vegetarian palate



**"SPICY AND TANGY, MEXICAN CUISINE TICKS ALL THE RIGHT BOXES FOR THE VEGETARIAN PALATE."**

**What elements make the recipe for success?**

Multiple factors. Authenticity being number one. Our Mexican chef is a professor in gastronomy. We import key ingredients that have no local substitutes. Mezcalita is a family restaurant – there is no DJ. We want the family crowd. The food and the décor are in keeping with the high energy of Mexican culture. Our design is effervescent, spells party time, and is informal with a splash of artworks and happy color scheme – designed by Mexican artists.

**What's your metric for growth?**

Ratings, food reviews, feedback. In terms of commercials, we always look at an equal ratio in the percent of new customers, and repeat customers. Of course, this demands active involvement on the floor of the restaurant. Mezcalita has a revenue

overview of 70 per cent from food and 30 percent from the bar.

**Three lessons in carving a success in the food space?**

Never sell something you would never eat yourself. Be authentic. Don't try too hard. Do your best, put forth a good, clean product and let people vote for it with their wallets.

**Where do you see Mexican food going on domestic turf?**

Bigger, and spreading out more. Percolating into streetside sandwiches and dosas as well.

**What's your biggest challenge?**

Access to fresh supply of a variety of ingredients. The Indian climate is congenial for growing corn and chillies, but the logistics fall short. Trained manpower is always a big challenge in the industry. Add to that real estate.

**What's next?**

A larger Mezcalita in Bandra - Casa Mezcalita. Offering Texmex and Mexican on one level, and a chef's table with a curated menu on a separate floor. I want to showcase the diversity of Mexican cuisine. ▲

# REVOLUTIONISING AIRPORT HOSPITALITY

Vikas Sharma, CEO of Encalm Hospitality, talks about airport hospitality, sustainability, and Encalm Privé.

By Abhya Adlakha

Vikas Sharma, the CEO of Encalm Hospitality, is leading the charge to revolutionise airport experiences. With a rich, 25-year journey through hospitality giants like Sheraton, Ritz-Carlton, and Four Seasons, Vikas brings a powerhouse of expertise in operations, sales, marketing, and revenue management.

At Encalm, Vikas is all about innovation, teamwork, and pushing the boundaries to create unforgettable hospitality moments. His knack for strategic planning has earned him top honours like the General Manager of the Year and the Leadership Excellence Award.

In an exclusive interview with PEAKLIFE, the visionary leader delves into his journey, his vision for the airport hospitality industry, and Encalm Privé, which has set a new benchmark for airport lounge experiences.

**With your extensive background in various sectors of the hospitality industry, how do you envision the trajectory of airport hospitality in the years to come?**

First, technology will play a central role in enhancing the passenger experience. From streamlined check-ins to personalised services, technology will allow us to create a more seamless and tailored journey for travellers. This also includes the use of artificial intelligence and data analytics to better understand customer preferences and deliver customised offerings.

Second, sustainability will become increasingly important. Airport hospitality





will need to focus on eco-friendly practices and create spaces that promote health and well-being. This could range from sustainable food options to eco-friendly travel practices. Additionally, the industry will also see a rise in the demand for wellness offerings during travel, ranging from specialised services to areas designed for relaxation and stress relief.

Airports are no longer just transit points; they are becoming destinations in their own right. By offering a mix of entertainment, shopping, dining and spa services, we can make airports a part of the travel experience that passengers look forward to.

**Could you offer us a glimpse into the airport projects and expansions that Encalm Hospitality has in the pipeline?**

We have introduced a new CIP lounge at the Manohar International Airport in Goa. This lounge offers a sophisticated yet relaxed environment, streamlining airport procedures to ensure a stress-free pre-flight experience. Our goal is to make sure that passengers can enjoy a calm and comfortable setting before they board their flights.

Similarly, we're extending our services to the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport in Hyderabad. In addition to providing a CIP lounge, we're launching 'Transit by Encalm,' a unique concept offering 58 private rooms and suites for travellers who need a quiet and tranquil space during their transit. This initiative is designed to meet the needs of passengers who require some rest and privacy between flights, ensuring they are refreshed and ready for the next leg of their journey with offerings such as an all-day dining restaurant and specialised spa services along with a relaxing space.

**Beyond the realm of lounges, how is Encalm Hospitality innovating to enhance the overall passenger experience within airports?**

One of our key innovations is Atithya, a bespoke Meet and Assist service that provides personalised assistance throughout the airport experience. Our dedicated team of cohorts is there to support travellers at every step—whether they're arriving, departing, or transiting. Inspired by the Indian ethos of "Atithi Devo Bhava," we aim to create an environment where travellers feel welcomed and valued.

Atithya offers a comprehensive range of services, designed to ensure maximum comfort and luxury for our guests. This includes airport meet and assist, concierge services, baggage assistance, and even buggy service to help travellers navigate the airport with ease.

Beyond Meet and Assist, we also offer services like EnWrap, our luggage wrapping service, providing travellers with extra security and peace of mind for their belongings. This is especially valuable for those carrying delicate or high-value items.

To further enhance the airport experience, we have designed a range of amenities catering to diverse traveller's needs. Our sophisticated Business Centre is ideal for those who need to work while on the go, along with a tranquil spa retreat for relaxation and rejuvenation at the Encalm Spa, providing a much-needed escape from the hustle and bustle of travel. Additionally, our immersive gaming zone at Encalm Privè, powered by AR/VR technology, offers entertainment options for travellers of all ages. ▲

# THE LUXURY ADVENTURE MAKER

Keyur Joshi is busy shaping another success in  
Tipai – Wildlife Luxuries

By Shilpi Madan



**E**ntrepreneur Keyur Joshi's sharp business acumen, insights and strategic thinking have redefined the travelscape in India. He has played a decisive role as co-founder and COO of MakeMyTrip.com in kickstarting the online travel market in India.

Following his passion for wildlife, he scripts

an ode to the forests through his latest venture, Tipai, located two hours from Nagpur. As Founder and Chief Strategic Advisor of Wildlife Luxuries, Keyur has created another trailblazer template that goes beyond the typical safari-buffet-bed formula. Tipai celebrates the joys of the jungle while conserving natural resources and empowering local communities.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**What made you shift focus: from shaping online travel at MakeMyTrip.com to naturalist-led safaris and luxury forest villas?**

Travelling and meeting new people is something I enjoy and that led me to creating MakeMyTrip. With Wildlife Luxuries, there is an element of travel and an element of experience combined.

**What are the challenges you read in the industry?**

There is a serious lack of imagination, and destinations in India. The Indian tourism landscape is primitive compared to where our economy stands at \$4 trillion. We lack the tourism infrastructure we need. This infrastructure needs to be developed by the private sector.

Also, the hospitality industry is not given an industry status, that makes the inflow of finances tough. Government support is needed. Wildlife is a big opportunity to create unique, personalised experiences for people, and India has many potential locations.

**What does luxury mean to you?**

Luxury is an extremely personalised experience. A unique experience which only I can avail, and it is unique to me.

The only place in India that has created some kind of infrastructure for such experiences is Rajasthan. But the infrastructure here has been largely created for the inbound visitor travelling from Europe or America.

**It's a crowded strip: with over 8 wildlife resorts fringing Nagpur. What made you centre in Tipeshwar forest?**

Tipeshwar is a dry, deciduous, boutique forest. A new, intimate park. Also, this is one of the poorest districts in the country. It felt sickening to keep hearing about farmer suicides. The Yavatmal area lacks many industries, it is primarily agrarian. Mining was shut down earlier as it is an eco-sensitive zone. The place was just right to make a difference in.

We have developed the economy of the region, by creating employment opportunities for people living within 50km<sup>2</sup> of the park. If we start building some kind of tourism infrastructure, that in itself brings interest for the locals, the park will be looked after better. It's a game. Plenty has been done by the forest department in developing the park, but a symbiotic relationship has developed between the people, and the jungle. More focus on the park, more tourism, more work.

**Tipai is a draw for people in Telangana too.**

Maharashtra is doing a far better job looking after its forests than Telangana is. Tipai is only a 350-kilometre drive from Hyderabad and attracts overwhelming visitors from Hyderabad.

**Are you adding to the local ecology?**

We are using solar panels, implementing rain water harvesting, and bringing in permaculture. It isn't just about ticking boxes for me. Sustainability is a culture. It is what we eat, breathe, live and sleep. When we create a restaurant, we make use of the local flowers and foods, generating work opportunities for the villagers.

**What's your state of mind as an entrepreneur right now?**

A feeling of immense satisfaction that I have been able to find a way to build and give back to society in some tangible way. Not charity, but making a difference to the lives of the locals here through skill building and work opportunities. ▲



# SPIRITED LUXURY

Bhagath Reddy of liquor-tech company, Comte de Grasse, is committed to reinventing luxury spirits in a sustainable way.

The artistry of fragrance extraction meets the spirit-distilling world. Finally, Bhagath Reddy of Comte de Grass has brought in the world's first luxury gin, 44°N, and 06 – hundred per cent French Rosé Vodka, pushing the boundaries of flavour extraction in the alco-bev industry.

With the manufacturing facility headquartered in France, Reddy powers the pours with decided flair and ease. Blame his expertise in the fashion retail background that colours the complexion of the suave bottles. He has combined his expertise in luxury goods with his deep-seated passion for re-engineering flavours, to raise the bar for conspicuous consumption. With reason enough, 44°N gin is a labour of love, crafted using a combination of sonic waves and ultra-low temperature distilling. It is named after the latitude of Grasse, the perfume capital of the world, located in France. The French Rosé Vodka, 06, focuses on extracting flavors from the natural beauty of Provence, combined with modern distillation and extraction methods.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**How has the journey been so far?**

It has been a roller coaster. With your own start up, there are bound to be extreme highs and extreme lows, but I wouldn't want to change it for anything else.

**You launched in 2018 and then the pandemic took over. How did that impact business?**

The first six months into the pandemic saw liquor sales at a consumption peak. Volumes went up, people were drinking a lot more, primarily beers and wines in the cheaper price segment. Through successive lockdowns the shift towards super premium stock, better quality pours happened. The focus moved from sipping quantity, to consuming quality alcohol. We steadily went from being a small niche peripheral brand to a more mainstream luxury brand.





**How important is India as a market for you, with 44°N bottles priced at an average of Rs 10,000 per pick?**

Honestly, I wasn't planning on entering India before 2025. My research on the gin market in India showed a spend of about ₹3,500 per bottle. Europe has a good per capita income, and there is free movement of alcohol. It was the logical market for us. But the travel savvy consumers, and the pandemic driven shift in consumption pattern turned my perspectives. I realised there is a market in India for ultra-premium gin. Though with excise duty, the price went up by 1.5 times compared to the tag in France. We did a test launch at duty free point at Delhi airport and the bottles simply flew off the shelves in mere days.

**What was the reason behind this marketing strategy?**

Duty free shopping in India is mostly in arrivals, which means locals coming back to the country and buying the product. It was a great environment to test the product and the price point. We shipped 120 bottles. They were sold out in nine days. Today India today is our sixth largest market in the world, and we arrived here only a year and a half ago, for the most part staying in Delhi NCR region. We have just launched in Mumbai, and are looking at Bengaluru and Hyderabad next. To put it in perspective, one city in India has surpassed sales in Italy for us.

**Why did you skip the whiskey market?**

Liquor licenses in India make it very cost prohibitive to be a small batch distillery. The economics and the numbers just didn't add up. Also, the whiskey segment is dominated by tradition and age. A luxury whiskey is an old whiskey made in the same way for the past 150 years. Age is the biggest marker defining luxury. If you set up your distillery now, you can't sell your first product before 12- 15 years. I wanted to find a modern way of beating this challenge and the French connection came up - marrying perfume with distillation of spirits.

**What's the common thread in fragrance and spirit production?**

Copper-stills. I decided to buy the perfume stills and recondition them to make small batch, high quality spirits. That's when I came upon Grasse, the perfume capital of the world, in France. It was the perfect



**"TO PUT IT IN PERSPECTIVE, ONE CITY IN INDIA HAS SURPASSED SALES IN ITALY FOR US."**

starting point for me to set up my luxury distillery.

**What was your challenge at this point?**

Most of the old equipment had been decommissioned, was in museums or thrown away. At this point, I discovered the high- tech science in extraction and distillation that the fragrance industry has developed. Over the past 20 years that fragrance has been dealing with flowers and very delicate, and hideously expensive botanicals whereas spirits have only been dealing with barley, wheat, and fruits. As the prices went up, scientific technology had to be developed to optimize extraction.

**How did this make you reorient your marketing strategy?**

My investment did not go into marketing and heritage storytelling, instead it went into technology. Using cutting -edge science I created a luxury brand, modern and sustainable.

**What are the revolutionary techniques, like ultrasonic maceration and vacuum distillation, that you are employing?**

With gin, we pioneered a three-step process. As opposed to traditional set ups, we use a process, through ultrasonic distillation, to achieve maceration in 45 minutes. We pass sound waves through the liquid that creates microbubbles. These open the surface of the botanical, and there's a faster level of extraction that achieves deeper flavours. Nothing evaporates into the atmosphere. We then pass the liquid through vacuum



distillation to create vacuum inside the steam and retain all the delicate, sub flavors. The entire distillation happens between 28 -50 degrees. That's how we bring flavor molecules onto the palette which are unique and different. A more sustainable and energy efficient method.

**A lesser known inclusion?**

All the houses in the south of France have bitter-orange trees. They can't be consumed but make the landscape beautiful. We work with a social organization where the individuals from rehab centres are paid to pick these oranges, peel them. We use the dried peel for its high concentration of flavor. We also work on foraging trips with gypsies in the forests.

It's just a commitment - when you're buying our product, you are buying something we have tried creating in the most sustainable and community friendly manner.

**Secret learning in the process.**

Not everything that smells good tastes good. When we started transferring tech from fragrance to flavor, we thought it would be a very direct transfer. We also thought the R&D process would be done within six months. It took us two years. When you set up a company, you do a crash course in MBA. ▲

*Shilpi Madan*

# ALL FOR LOVE

Anish Trivedi, President and CEO, Alenka Media, and cigar aficionado says all things you need to know before you puff up.

**Y**ou know, when it comes to cigars, it's really not about envy or size. It's not about trying to be cool or anything sexual either. For most men, it's simply about the smoke. Lighting up a cigar and enjoying it.

People often ask me about the whole ritual of smoking cigars. They want to know if I have a special time of day for it or what drink I prefer to pair with it. Honestly, I find these questions a bit silly. There's nothing magical or mysterious about a six-inch cigar. It's not like there's some ancient ceremony behind it. Some folks like to believe in all that, only smoking a Montecristo when the lighting is perfect, and then only with a fancy brandy or whiskey. But you know what? You don't need all that fluff. People who live like you do, understand style without all the extra embellishments.

Smoking a cigar does have a certain grace, like many things in life. Some men will tell you the only way to cut the end of a good cigar is to bite it off. These are likely the same men who haven't actually smoked a good cigar, probably too busy watching bad John Wayne movies. If you find yourself with a cigar, don't use your teeth. Just make sure you cut it



right, because a badly cut cigar is a lousy smoke.

Then there's the band. It's not some sentimental ring to give to a loved one; it's just a band. People who don't smoke cigars might tell you it's bad manners to leave the band on, but that's just in England. Everywhere else, what might be considered bad manners there is often seen as charmingly eccentric. There's really no reason to take the band off, and you might even damage the cigar if you try.

As for the ash, that's a tough call. The construction and color of the ash can tell you a lot about the cigar. The length before it falls off is a sign of a well-made cigar. If you're sitting with an ashtray nearby, it's probably best to let it fall off on its own. But if you're at a cocktail party, you might want to flick it off once it's about an inch long. It's all about making the right call for the situation.

Smoke what you like. Sure, Cohibas are great, but there's a whole world of



cigars out there. I once found myself in Budapest with nothing but Sumatran cigars, and you know what? They were enjoyable too. Cuban cigars are fantastic, but plenty of other people make great ones too.

Finally, where to smoke. Manners dictate that you should never offend those around you. And this applies to cigars as well. Ask your hostess if you may smoke. Not your host. He's not the one who has to deal with the smell in the curtains the

**“THERE'S NOTHING  
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next morning. Occasionally in a public place you will be told you are offending someone. This will usually be in a place

where the air is thick with cigarette smoke. Be polite. Tell the offended party to buzz off as nicely as you can.

And most importantly. Enjoy it. Cigars are not cool. Cigars are not hip. Smoking one won't make you look like a better man. You won't attract women. So don't smoke for the wrong reasons. But if you do, and you derive as much pleasure from a good cigar as I do, you'll find the world's your oyster. Well. Almost. You still won't attract women. ▲

# THE DELLA DYNAMO

He's carved an unbeatable empire in the domain of luxury and lifestyle in India. Meet Jimmy Mistry, founder, Della Group. A trailblazing designer, hotelier, adventurer..

By Shilpi Madan

He is a gritty trailblazer. A first generation entrepreneur, Jimmy Mistry started out at the age of 19 with only two employees and rupees 20,000 in his pocket to start his company Mistry Pest Control. In 2003 he ventured into architectural design, winning the Urban Heritage Architects Award for the restoration of Rustom Faramna Agiary in Mumbai, the only non-architect in India to clinch an award. Soon enough, he ventured into real estate development with the stunning Persian architecture landmark, Della Tower, in Mumbai; essaying a luxurious makeover of Richard Burton's stunning Kalizma yacht.

Mistry has developed Della into a strong brand in the luxury space over the years. He ventured into luxury second homes with Della Villas, a 24-villa project in Lonavala, launching India's first extreme adventure park with over 70 activities across 50 acres; and the country's first glamping experience at Della Camp. Della Villas has experienced subsequent phases of luxury additions to its cornucopia of five-star villas.

Fiercely ambitious, Mistry is a man who follows his instinct. Shaken by the 26/11 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, Mistry set up India's first counter terrorism training academy: Della D.A.T.A., in 2017, dedicated to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw. With luxury meeting military chic, he launched the first of its kind military themed glamping resort in the middle of a jungle.

Cut to 2024. The Della Group is a formidable force in the field of ultra-luxury projects. As an agile community builder, Mistry was quick to seize the opportunity during the pandemic to birth Della Leaders Club, the world's first business platform, headquartered in New York, with global chapters bringing together over 2800 entrepreneurs and young leaders from 56 countries.

His latest venture, Della Luxury Products, is a sheer disruptor, creating India's 1st D2C (Direct to Consumer) Luxury Interior brand, designing, and manufacturing more than 2500 Luxury Interior Products. Undeniably, Mistry is a firm subscriber of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

A social entrepreneur, and a zealous animal welfare advocate, Jimmy Mistry is an iconic business magnate who has shaped his entrepreneurial success through his passion and sense of adventure. His bold ideas, calculated risks, and touch of eccentricity bring in signature finesse to each project he conceives. Learning constantly, adapting to evolving customer needs, and creating luxury touches form the core of his prowess. Mistry's story is a powerful reminder that a sharp combination of vision, consistency and determination, together with the indefatigable will to disrupt, shapes dreams into reality.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**How has the journey been so far?**

Fantastic, and like all journeys there have been highs and lows. I'm a first-generation entrepreneur, and an avid self-learner and personally believe in learning, unlearning, and relearning constantly. We have constantly been innovating and reinventing as a team, diversifying into new segments, and growing deeper into verticals.

**A closed mind is a luxury you cannot afford. Comment.**

Absolutely correct. Your mind is the only differentiating factor – it takes you ahead of the learning curve. The moment you have a closed mind, you become passive. When you're ahead of the curve, even failures teach you lessons. A successful person is someone who has had more failures than others. That is my definition of success.

**Are you where you thought you would be ten years ago?**

No. I thought the journey would be far faster and a little easier than it is right now. There have been many challenges, including the pandemic. The launch of Della Luxury Products has been delayed, even product development has taken more time. Yet the beautiful opportunity of Della Leaders Club came up.

**How important is 2024 for you?**

It is critical. We are in the process of realising parallel townships, DLP is set to launch, we are working on multiple





collaborations. The next summit for DLC comes up soon.

**You've just concluded the DLC Global Hospitality Summit that brought together 18 Michelin-starred chefs from all across the globe. Does the next DLC Summit come up year-end?**

Honestly, DLC – a pandemic baby - has been a game changer. We have managed to set up a global community of entrepreneurs and the resultant intellectual stimulation is simply unbelievable.

There is an enviable line-up of achievers in DLC from all walks of life – award winning artists, multiple Michelin-starred chefs of Indian origin, successful billionaires, Nobel laureates, magnates associated with the World Economic Forum, start-up unicorns – grounded, humble individuals who have inspiring stories to share. I am a college dropout who never completed university. Speaking with the dean of international

**“WHEN YOU'RE AHEAD OF THE CURVE, EVEN FAILURES TEACH YOU LESSONS. A SUCCESSFUL PERSON IS SOMEONE WHO HAS HAD MORE FAILURES THAN OTHERS. THAT IS MY DEFINITION OF SUCCESS.”**

universities including Cornell, Oxford, Thunderbird; Barack Obama, Warren Buffet, Steve Rogers... is something I never envisioned.

**When do the best ideas come to Jimmy Mistry?**

3:00 am. I'm a night bird and make everybody else's life miserable. I started Della D.A.T.A. after the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

I feel guilty sometimes about demanding too much, perhaps from my team members who travel long distances to report to work.

**You come of humble beginnings too.**

I used to go on a scooter from Colaba Causeway to Borivali, carrying raw materials too. Once I was carrying a big block for waterproofing and repair work during a road building project, and the block fell off my vehicle at Kemps Corner. I got off, lifted the block like a labourer, put it back on the scooter, and somehow managed to pull my way through the traffic.

**Does this make you more empathetic as a leader?**

When people interact with me, they are unaware of my background. They think I am insensitive towards their daily grind. I'm sensitive towards them but as the leader of the team, when there is a job to be done, it needs to be done.

### **A lesson in leadership**

Leadership is not a popularity sport. It is a contact sport. You need to be empathetic, but remember that you aren't heading the team to win awards for congeniality. The work needs to be done at the end of the day.

Also, you need to front your team. Forget living in your ivory tower. Your people need to be able to relate to you and get the work done, together. Be present on ground zero with them, participate actively in the daily drill, align the vision and set the momentum. Delegation doesn't work beyond a point, especially when you're trying to disrupt and do new things.

### **What is your biggest challenge?**

Men, money and time. Developing a second in line is a challenge.

### **There are an amazing number of women in your workforce.**

It isn't a conscious decision but in terms of working style, I am more comfortable working with women than with men. Both my daughters are a part of my team.

### **How important is giving back to society for you?**

Our work at Della impacts people, and helps local communities to grow. We foster the environment.

We have over 1100 local employees on our payroll. With our upcoming townships, they will be the first ones to be able to assume the managerial positions and grow. We have adopted a local school with Adivasi children. It started with about 60 students, and has grown in strength to 260 children.

I'm very proud and happy the way we are able to impact these lives. The gratification is immense. When these students graduate, we help them with getting jobs.

### **You're a bulwark in the space of luxury and lifestyle. What does luxury mean to you, Jimmy?**

Luxury means different things to different people at different points in time. There was a time I was very fond of collecting pens and every new Montblanc was delivered to me as per my standing instructions. Now for the last 10 years, I haven't bought a



PEAKLIFE

COVER STORY

“LEADERSHIP IS NOT A POPULARITY SPORT. IT IS A CONTACT SPORT. YOU NEED TO BE EMPATHETIC, BUT REMEMBER THAT YOU AREN’T HEADING THE TEAM TO WIN AWARDS FOR CONGENIALITY.”





single pen or a watch. Likewise, each time a new motorbike was launched, I got the latest model. This went on for 5 years. When the first Hummer 6.2 was delivered in India, I got it...

Today none of this matters to me. For years I used to drink only mineral water. I discontinued the practice to cut costs during financial stress. Being in the business of luxury, my job is to deliver luxury to people, surprise them constantly.

For me, luxury is time. Luxury is being able to design products that don't exist but fulfil tacit needs. I have just designed a cabin inspired by the latest Richard Miller watch, and that's personal luxury.

**What trend do you see emerging in the field of luxury?**

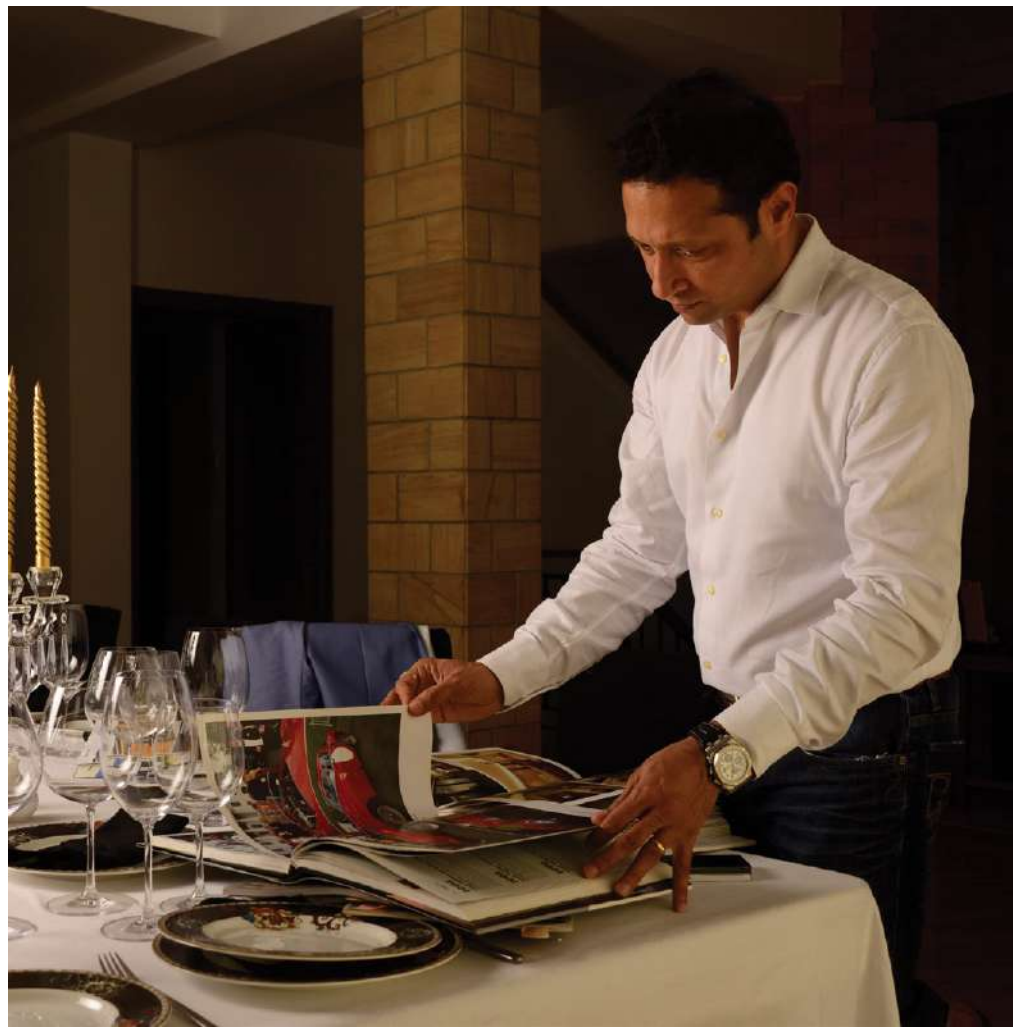
Five-star luxury residential accommodations, because now that people are used to, a certain level of luxury is being provided to them beyond the usual gym, lobby and concierge. You have your personal laundry service, bakery, restaurant, bar, patisserie, mixologists, and chefs at your disposal, 24 hours.

**Where do you see Della in the luxury scape?**

We want to be India's first, only team-based hospitality real estate developer. Whether it is fashion, art, architecture, wines, or a racecourse, we are configuring a mega luxury township around the luxury nooks. This will attract big global players, like for instance BMW, or Porsche, Mercedes, to set up their own school, or racing circuits. That's what I am developing: Consumer centric luxury, globally. I want to be the first brand to do this. We will be the first to be involved in international collaborative design processes and do projects.

**Any regrets?**

None, perhaps I could have initiated projects on a different footing and got a little more personal quality time. At times the stress gets overbearing. If you're screwed up at work, you're screwed up at home. If you're screwed up at home,



you're screwed up at work. That's an honest answer. The other day, I was joking around with Chef Sanjeev Kapoor – we agreed we managed to do more work in our sleep than people do otherwise.

**A confession**

Sometimes I do not read my WhatsApp

the whole day. I gave up reading emails five years back.

**A piece of advice for all our readers who aspire to be in your shoes..**

Whatever you do, be consistent because it's only consistency that will get you where you want to go. ▲

# MATCHPOINT, INDIA

India's leading fashion designer Vaishali Shadangule is powered by sheer grit and gumption, creating couture for Paris fashion weeks with inborn aplomb.

She has just returned from the Paris Spring/Summer 2024 fashion week where her haute couture collection met with a thumping applause. Indian fashion designer Vaishali Shadangule, with her eponymous label Vaishali S., is the toast of the fashion world, globally.

A precious member of the Club of Haute Couture in the French capital (membership is by invitation only), and winner of tony awards in the design and home décor space, Vaishali's refreshing creations stem from the skilful use of artisanal crafts. She is powered by her love for handweaving, and celebrating Indian handlooms on the global stage - where it deserves to shine and command awe. Prod her for the best compliment she has received, and Vaishali quotes a comment in the French media after her first show in Paris in 2021 - "Haute couture is back". It truly is.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

## **How has the journey been - from being raised in small town Vidisha, to the ramp in Paris?**

Looking back, I feel I have led so many different lives. It feels surreal. I am finally able to design what I want, on such a scale. It is unbelievable.

I left home at 17, before finishing my engineering, walking out in the middle of the night without any money (the thought of my 16-year-old now doing the same fills me with dread!). The small-town life

with zero opportunity and exposure was throttling me.

The restrictions were aplenty. I had to conform to a certain way of life being a daughter. My father, a brilliant painter, forbade me from even touching his art materials too. I was restricted to house work, not allowed to argue back, talk loudly, even though I pursued sports, music, and dance on the sly in school. One day I decided I wanted to live a different life, and not be married off.

My first job in Bhopal earned me Rs 500. It was very tough, I even slept at the station before I could afford lodging. I completed my engineering, refusing to go back home, determined to get a good job.

## **When did you decide to pursue design?**

I worked in a gymnasium, and the women I trained liked my sense of style. I had no exposure to designing clothes then. I moved to Mumbai for better work opportunities. A kind lady, whose husband worked in a bank, facilitated a loan of Rs 50,000 and I set up a small tailoring unit and store in 2001. Gradually, I was able to set up a couple of retail points in the suburbs.

I had an arranged marriage, and by the time my daughter was a year old, I realised that if I do not study fashion, I would never be able to give a certified edge to my work.

## **Was your family supportive?**

I had to convince my in-laws and husband.

By the time they consented, the deadlines for the Mumbai design colleges were long gone. I enrolled at a design institute in Delhi and every weekend came back to Mumbai to struggle with the backlog of client orders at my boutiques, while studying throughout the week in Delhi. There were losses I suffered, with a team of 50 workers, and very little time to devote to the commercial work.

## **What powers you?**

I feel the universe pushes you all the time to achieve your dream, if you are driven. I was lucky to listen to my inner voice, and I feel blessed. Few people have the courage to listen to their inner voice and follow it.

## **What was your biggest challenge then?**

At 19, I had enough on my plate with college, business, baby, and family. I was in constant conflict with my faculty members, as they wanted structured 'inspirations' while I was creating my own mood boards. My final project netted a zero, I have yet to collect my degree too! But I was clear that I was in college to learn. I had been following my instinct and designing, and got an inside peep into the mechanics of the designing process. It validates what I was already doing. I would read up in the library, experiment with draping. I have always been deeply connected with nature and this reflects in my work.

## **Share how this connection found expression in your designs**

My concept is breath. It works like a string, an umbilical cord and that links

**“THIS WAS MY DREAM TO PRESENT INDIA ON A GLOBAL SCALE IN ALL HER RICHNESS. MY DESIGNS ARE INDIAN, BUT GLOBAL. FOREIGN DESIGNERS HAVE BEEN USING OUR SKILLS, AND FABRIC, SO WHY SHOULDN'T WE TAKE PRIDE IN OUR OWN CRAFTSMANSHIP AND OWN IT PROUDLY ACROSS THE WORLD?”**







**“I FEEL INDIA IS THE MOST FASHIONABLE COUNTRY. EACH OF OUR VILLAGES BRINGS FORTH DISTINCTIVE CRAFTS, STUNNING EMBROIDERY, AND SILHOUETTES. HANDLOOM IS THE FUTURE OF FASHION.”**

us to nature, to life. The signature cord in my creations is a representation of this string. The cord connects fabric to life, in a wearable, sustainable garment.

**Why did you do your masters in fashion designing from Milan?**

I wanted to explore the international design scenario. In many ways, the finishing and execution processes were lacking in India, back then.

**When you took to fashion shows, were you able to put across your design ethos effectively?**

I was unable to speak well. In our house, we weren't allowed to speak up, so expressing thoughts and articulating my creativity was tough. Forming sentences was challenging for me, I lacked confidence. I was also ridiculed for dressing traditionally. I could sense that wearing a big bindi and mangalsutra on the ramp at the end of the show did

not go down well with some at the press conference later. I was judged quite insensitively. Instead of being pushed down, I made the bindi the accessory on the catwalk in my next show.

**What lesson can thread out for us?**

There will be forces against you but stand tall like a tree. Grow stronger to fight the heavy rain, scorching sun, and weather the storms. It is not going to be easy. But there is no growth in your comfort zone.

**How did you break into the Paris Couture week circuit?**

Post pandemic I applied for the selection process and got an overwhelming response – the feedback was how original, fresh, innovative, sustainable my designs were. It was overwhelming. It has been my dream to put Indian handlooms and weaves on the global map. My designs are Indian, but global. Foreign designers use our skills, fabric, so why shouldn't we take

pride in our own craftsmanship and own it proudly across the world?

**Gender bias is prevalent everywhere. Comment.**

Think beyond the boundaries of gender. Face challenges, God has given you attributes and talent. When you want to do something, it does not matter if you are male or female. Don't let your gender restrict you. Till 2016, people in India could not understand what I was doing. Once the global acclaim came in, I was recognised on home turf.

**A pearl of wisdom**

Be honest and true to your work if you want to grow. Prove your worth to your own self. Remember you are answerable only to yourself, and the universe has your back, always. ▲

*Shilpi Madan*

# MIDAS TOUCH

Priti Rathi Gupta, founder of LXME, is steadily powering financial freedom for women in India.

**T**he dynamic Priti Gupta Rathi is the founder of LXME, India's first financial platform for women, that is busy shaping the financial planning acumen for women in India, helping lakhs to invest seamlessly through the LXME platform.

It hasn't been all about figures for Rathi. Her creative conduit finds expression in Ishka Films, a media production company that unspools the best in urban cinema. Blame her diverse interests on her travels across the globe, and of course her undeniable rhythm, discipline, and finesse in work on her training in classical singing.

As the Managing Director of AnandRathi, a leading financial services firm in India, Rathi brings with her over 27 years of experience in the capital markets, commodities, and currency sectors as she spearheads the setting up of the commodities desk, currency and forex advisory businesses she leads, establishing exclusive partnerships with international counterparts.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

## **How has the journey been so far?**

Interesting and challenging. The LXME journey has been a restarter for me, learning how to manage the money for 5 lakh women. There are a lot of pillars on which LXME is built, primary being community. We started off during Covid times and have been reach out to dynamic tech to women out there. In the process, we have been able to build a great women-centric team at work too.





**"IT IS TOUGH TO MAKE SOMETHING FOR WOMEN IN INDIA WITHOUT MAKING IT SOUND LIKE A CSR PROJECT. WE LOVE HELPING OTHER WOMEN, IN FASHION, FITNESS...SO WHY NOT IN THE MONEY DOMAIN?"**

**What is the importance of financial power?**

I believe financial power gives you a voice, a sense of true identity, and the ability to not compromise on professional situations. When I was 16, (and 'internship' wasn't a thing!) my father called me to manage the family portfolio, and shape my understanding of the financial markets. I truly feel money management and investment can power your life and make your perspectives evolve. As women we let go of a lot of decisions, including money management but we need to take charge of this important domain in our lives. It is just so important for every woman to set her independent financial goals.

**What have been the turning points for you?**

Many. I got married early, fortunately into a supportive family. When my son was a year old, I went in the Executive Education program to SP Jain School of Global Management in Mumbai. The financial industry was changing with more stockbrokers, professionals coming into the sector. I realised if I were to lead a team, I needed to have the certification in addition to my experience. I feel it was the biggest gift that I have given myself. It is so important for every leader to go back to school and broaden horizons.

**How was the experience at Harvard Business School?**

I was among the 25 women in class. SP Jain in India was still a protected environment. IN comparison, Harvard threw me into the open sea. I learnt so much through the strong cultural exposure, from my professors. There were many exponential learnings. Frontier next is Stanford.

**Was LXME born at Harvard?**

Yes! It validated my learning. I felt there was a huge disturbing gap between women and money back home. In class at Harvard, each group in class had to pitch eight ideas. My idea was chosen from my group. The name was logical as we have been praying to the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi, since childhood in our country. Also, as women we don't feel we are good

enough to handle money. My presentation was impressive, and one of my classmates turned around and said 'This idea is great, can I take it to my country?' That was a huge validation.

**What was the reaction back home?**

Most men asked why a different platform for women was needed. I wanted to help women turn more savvy financially. It is tough to make something for women in India without making it sound like a CSR project. We love helping other women, in fashion, fitness...so why not in the money domain? I feel money conversations are pivotal. If you are getting married, have the money conversation. Women don't have a place where they can talk money, ask questions and not be judged. LXME offers a community driven safe space, where you can learn, unlearn, ask questions without hesitation.

**Are there any strong women in the family who have inspired you?**

My grandmother. Back then when she was raising her children, she was strong enough to save money and grow. She would lend money at interest to educate her five children. Today my aunts are Phd. Holders, and my father's siblings included are CAs. Taking cue from her, women know how to manage money, fulfil aspirations. My mother's value system stands ingrained in me, she is my strong cheerleader.

**Do you have a women-centric team?**

(laughs) Our team comprises mainly women. It is odd to see many men in the tech team.

**Three pearls of wisdom**

Chart your own financial goals. Start on a journey, create an emergency fund for yourself. Be in control of your own retirement plan. Don't leave it to your partner. Take charge, start investing, and have a personal insurance safety net cover. Keep it simple. There is too much talk on how complicated investing is an art. Bring in mutual funds, equity, and gold, for consistent returns. ▲

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*Shilpi Madan*

# SEATED ON A PINNACLE

Art curator, fashion patron and philanthropist Shalini Passi believes in taking risks every day to evolve artfully.

By Parineeta Sethi

She is a design connoisseur, an artist, a writer, and a philanthropist, with an innate passion for every form of creative expression. Shalini Passi is a force to reckon with in the world of art and style. As founder of MASH, a digital platform, she also spotlights the fascinating world of architecture, art, craft, design, and fashion, lending an expression to young artists.

A travel aficionado, and a feted photographer, Shalini is constantly ferreting points of interest



for MASH through her extensive travels across the globe. Her deep seated love for art brings in a veritable design journey through the corridors of her stunning home in Delhi, with artworks by famous hands including Riyas Komu, Anita Dube, Zarina Hashmi, Subodh Gupta, Atul Dodiya, Jeff Koobs, Damien Hirst and Vladimir Kagan dotting the walls.

*Excerpts from a conversation:*

**How do you perceive women in art?**

Women have inspired artists and writers for centuries, but playing the role of a muse. WOMEN are born creators : We birth mankind. I feel over the years, women have been marginalized, and left out of history, starting way before the Renaissance. There have been no early women painters. Cut to 2024. There has been a conscious effort by museums and art communities all over the world, to include and highlight women artists. A commendable start.

**Do you have any piece of art that exemplifies women?**

I think women artists bring sensitivity as well as vulnerability to their work, and I can relate to them easily. An artwork titled "One and Two" inspired by New York based performance artist Marina Abramović brings in a swirl of emotional fibres circling religion, performance, art and death. That is very special to me.

**What role do art and culture play in gender equality?**

The medium of cinema can truly make a change. But the filmmakers, and the film industry







**“I THINK WOMEN ARTISTS BRING SENSITIVITY AS WELL AS VULNERABILITY TO THEIR WORK, AND I CAN RELATE TO THEM EASILY.”**

overall, needs to be ready for it. Certain artists very vocal in this respect, working towards a cause and making a tangible difference.

**Are you planning to get into filmmaking?**

I want to make a film on art by women, especially in South Asia. Right now, my involvement with painting, dance, work with UNICEF for the betterment of children, travel, and photography is keeping me sizably engaged.

**What are the most pressing issues which women face?**

In addition to the issues at their workplace, circling no pay parity, and the glass ceiling, what a girl child faces at home is a concern. Nerve wracking stories pour in from every corner of the country in view of this gender bias. We belong to the privileged few. I was born into a privileged family, and enjoyed the freedom to do what I wanted. I feel if the women just started supporting the women, we would not need the men to do anything for us.

**What tools in your opinion can contribute towards empowering women?**

Active storytelling through short films will strengthen the fight for equality, making the changes in perception seep into the psyche of the society.

**What does travel mean to you?**

Travel is about learning, exploring the culture of a place and understanding the history, the locals, and soaking up the architecture. Each place has so much to offer, from textiles to art to jewellery, and cuisines.

**What is your advice to the modern Indian woman?**

Live your life, take risks, learn every day. If you are working all day, take time out for yourself. Do what you feel you missed out on, as the universe will give you an opportunity to go back to it. You never know your dream might come true when you keep your goal in mind, and enjoy what you do. ▲



PEAKLIFE

TRAVEL

# OFF THE TRAIL

These unique destinations unveil a different perspective on the world's beauty, inviting you to make new memories in corners less explored.

**By Neha Mehrotra**

If you look beyond the typical tourist trails, there are a plethora of offbeat destinations waiting for you to explore and experience. There is no more rewarding feeling than being among the first few to reach and explore a destination that others haven't yet had the pleasure of witnessing.

From secluded islands to quaint countryside hamlets and enchanting towns nestled amidst nature's embrace, our planet is a treasure trove of undiscovered delights, beckoning even the most adventurous souls to embark on unforgettable journeys. We've rounded up the best unexplored destinations for you to add to your bucket list in 2024...

## *Zermatt, Switzerland*

The Matterhorn is one of the world's most dramatic mountains and attracts visitors around the world to the Swiss Alps to glimpse it for themselves, and there is perhaps no better place to do so than Zermatt. The car-free town of Zermatt, located in the Valais Canton at an altitude of 1600 metres, holds a magnetic attraction for those who love the mountains. Whether or not you visit for the winter season, this place is an outdoor lover's paradise. It also doesn't

hurt that there's plenty of culture, food, luxurious five-star hotels, world-class spas, shopping, a lively apres-ski and a wonderful atmosphere to be enjoyed.

The ski town is also a paradise for hikers, climbers, and outdoor adventurers in the summer months. Miles of well-marked hiking trails wind their way through lush alpine meadows, offering breathtaking views of glaciers, waterfalls, and towering peaks at every turn.





## *Czech Republic*

The Czech Republic is a destination straight out of fairy tales. Allow yourself to be enchanted by romantic castles, the warmth of Czech hospitality, picturesque historic cities, world-class architecture, and the charming natural wonders of the Central European country.

Prague, the capital city, is a living museum, where Gothic cathedrals, Baroque palaces, and Art Nouveau buildings coexist harmoniously along with the city's vibrant nightlife, lively pubs and cosy cafes. The Czech Republic is also a haven for nature lovers and outdoor

enthusiasts, with the dramatic landscapes of the Bohemian Switzerland National Park and the scenic trails of Moravia, you can sample the region's world-renowned wines. If you're looking for some adventure, hit the slopes in the Krkonoše Mountains. No visit to the Czech Republic would be complete without indulging in its rich culinary traditions. From hearty Czech classics like goulash and dumplings to delicate pastries and artisanal cheeses, the country's cuisine reflects its diverse cultural heritage. Wash it all down with a pint of world-famous Czech beer, brewed according to centuries-old traditions.

## *Red Sea, Saudi Arabia*

Creating a completely new tourism destination in an area of pristine natural beauty—including coral reefs, unspoiled deserts, and dormant volcanoes—the Red Sea is where nature meets luxury. Located 500 km north of Jeddah, between the towns of AlWajh and Umluj, the Red Sea is easily accessible worldwide through its dedicated Red Sea International airport. This region is not just a holiday spot; it's a cornerstone of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiative, aiming to diversify the economy and embrace eco-consciousness.

Spearheaded by government-funded developers, the Red Sea project is set to redefine luxury tourism, boasting 50 ultra-luxurious resorts, 8,000 hotel rooms, and over 1,000 residential properties across 22 islands and six inland sites by 2030. From captivating art installations to celestial stargazing, from farmers' markets bursting with local produce to exhilarating falconry studies, every moment is an invitation to connect with the rich tapestry of this region. Delve deeper into nature's embrace with experiences like astrophotography, birdwatching, mangrove seeding, and the heartwarming ritual of turtle hatch monitoring.



## Croatia

This country on the Adriatic is one of the sunniest in Europe and shines brightly for its people, traditions, food, and culture. Whether island-hopping around its many archipelagos or delving around rustic country villages, a visit to Croatia should be on your bucket list this year. For nature lovers, Croatia's diverse landscapes provide endless opportunities for adventure and exploration.

Along the coast, the crystalline waters of the Adriatic beckon swimmers, snorkelers, and sailors alike, while hidden coves

and secluded bays offer tranquil escapes from the hustle and bustle of city life. Inland, Croatia's national parks showcase the country's pristine natural beauty, from the cascading waterfalls and emerald lakes of Plitvice Lakes National Park to the rugged peaks and deep gorges of Paklenica National Park. Moreover, throughout the country, foodies, wine connoisseurs, and coffee lovers can find fine food, delectable wine, and strong java to enjoy. And if you're a history buff or TV addict, many of Croatia's ancient sites have served as filming locations for the HBO show *Game of Thrones*.



## New Orleans

As the birthplace of Jazz and Blues, New Orleans boasts a warm and embracing spirit that entices travellers to stay longer. The Big Easy, of course, has its must-see sights—the New Orleans Museum of Art, the National World War II Museum, Jackson Square, and the stunning views of the Mississippi River—but the city offers so much more than those well-known headlines. While you are immersing yourself in the city's vibrant nightlife, gourmet cuisine and foot tapping live music, find some time to discover the less obvious places like City Park and the region's natural treasures with a local swamp tour or take a cemetery tour.

The most magical aspect of New Orleans is its sense of celebration. From Mardi Gras to Jazz Fest, the city knows how to throw a party like no other. Join in the revelry of a second-line parade, where brass bands and dancers take to the streets in a joyous procession, or immerse yourself in the rich cultural heritage of the city's many festivals and events. Lastly, savour innovative and classic dishes like gumbo, crispy fried chicken or sweet beignets at trendy eateries and food trucks scattered throughout the city. ▲



# YOUR GOLDEN TICKET TO THE WORLD

Investing in a Golden Visa is the swiftest and most adaptable avenue to obtaining a second passport.

By Neha Mehrotra

Imagine being able to travel to Switzerland without worrying about getting a Schengen visa, or heading to New York without the year-long US visa wait time. While it may sound too good to be true, many nations through their Golden Visa programme welcome non-residents who are willing to invest in their economy. Countries like Italy, Australia, Canada and the UK, have established specialised visa programs that allow you to settle within their borders without the immediate requirement

of securing employment or enrolling in educational institutions. By means of substantial investments, typically in real estate or other qualifying sectors, the golden visa initiative extends the privilege of residency to investors, entrepreneurs, and individuals of high net worth in foreign territories.

*Here's a list of the 5 Best Golden Visa programmes for you to consider:*



## Portugal

The Portuguese Golden Visa, also known as the residence permit for investment activity (ARI), stands out as one of the most sought-after Golden Visa programmes globally. It offers non-EU citizens a pathway to Portuguese residency and, eventually, citizenship. Further, the programme allows individuals to obtain a European passport after five years of the Portugal golden visa, facilitating broader visa-free travel worldwide and the right to reside and work anywhere in the European Union. Additionally, the Portuguese visa offers tax-exempt status for fund investments.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To qualify for Portuguese residency, you need a Portuguese tax identification number, a clean criminal record from your country of residence and Portugal, and must spend an average of 7 days annually in Portugal. As of 2024, residency through property investment is no longer an option. However, you need to invest a minimum of €500,000 in public or private scientific research institutions or approved investment funds/venture capital funds. Alternatively, a €250,000 donation towards national cultural heritage maintenance grants eligibility.

## Switzerland

Switzerland's Golden Visa programme is renowned for its efficiency, offering a pathway to residency. Switzerland distinguishes itself by providing two investment options: Lump Sum Annual Tax and Swiss Business Investment. The Lump-sum Taxation grants residence to people who can pay a minimum annual tax of CHF 250,000 in one of Switzerland's cantons without taking up employment and the Swiss Business Investor Program is for investors who want to establish a new Swiss company that creates jobs or invest a minimum of CHF 1,000,000 annually in an existing Swiss company. Citizenship through naturalisation is possible after residing in the country for a minimum of ten years.

**ELIGIBILITY:** For Switzerland's coveted residency, applicants aged 18 to 55 must uphold a spotless criminal record and exhibit sound health. Moreover, the applicants should have an official source of income and provide proof of owned or rented accommodation in the country.





## Austria

Austria's Golden Visa programme stands out among the best EU passport countries, offering you the freedom to choose your investment type. An Austrian residence permit allows you to travel to all of Europe's Schengen Area states without a visa. A residence permit known as Red-White-Red Card is initially issued for one year and can then be renewed without problems or interruptions. After 10 years of legal residence and, in certain circumstances, after six years, it is possible to apply for Austrian citizenship.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To be eligible for the programme your business must sustainably transfer at least EUR 100,000 in investment capital to Austria. Additionally, you must maintain at least EUR 40,000 in liquid funds in a bank account, with the required amount scaling based on your family size. You also need to provide evidence of permanent residence and have private healthcare insurance and documented German language skills (at A1 level).



## Greece

The Greek Golden Visa programme grants a five-year residency visa in return for an investment in real estate. Successful applicants are able to benefit from visa-free access to Europe's Schengen Area within three–four months of applying. There is no minimum stay requirement, and children up to the age of 21 are included in the family application. The visa is granted for five years and renewed every five years if the property investment is retained. It is not necessary to live in the country in order to retain and renew the investor visa. However, you can get citizenship only after seven years of residency.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Under the updated regulations, the Greek government has increased the minimum investment threshold from €250,000 to €500,000 as of 2023. Furthermore, starting from 2024, this minimum amount will be further elevated to €800,000 for real estate acquisitions in urban areas. Additional eligibility criteria encompass maintaining a clean criminal and professional history, possessing medical insurance that functions within Greece and provides coverage of no less than €30,000, as well as holding both a Greek bank account and tax identification number.



## United Arab Emirates

The UAE's 'Golden Visa' is a prolonged residency permit offering the opportunity to reside, work, or study in the UAE. These benefits comprise a six-month multiple-entry entry visa for residence issuance and a renewable long-term residence visa lasting 5 or 10 years. It also allows extended stays abroad without jeopardising your visa status. Moreover, it allows you to sponsor family members of all ages and an unlimited number of domestic helpers. The Golden Visa also ensures your family's security, allowing them to remain in the UAE in the event of the primary visa holder's demise.

**ELIGIBILITY:** You must invest AED 2,000,000 in an accredited UAE-based investment fund for a 10-year residency or purchase property valued at no less than AED 2,000,000 for a 5-year residency. Additionally, engaging in businesses or projects valued at a minimum of AED 500,000 grants a 5-year residency. Exceptional talents in fields like medicine, science, invention, or professional athletics may qualify you for a 10-year residency. ▲

# THREE CHEERS

Vietnam brings in a mega fun splash out experience at the Grand Ho Tram fringing Ho Chi Minh city..







**I**t doesn't get more luxurious. The Grand Ho Tram brings in three five-star resort towers – The InterContinental® Grand Ho Tram, the Holiday Inn Resort® Ho Tram Beach and Ixora Ho Tram by Fusion, stretching lazily along the 2.2 kms of untouched coastline by the bobbing blue. When you land in Ho Chi Minh, look no further than the buzzing Grand Ho Tram to bring in the best of Vietnam,

Think award winning spas, whisky cigar tastings, wine paired dinners, edgy dance floors, arcades full of challenges, magical sundowners, and more running through 15 globally toasted restaurants and bars on the beachfront.

### **WHERE TO GO**

*Three plush inviting options make your stay at Ho Tram memorable:*

#### ***Holiday Inn Resort Ho Tram Beach***

Bright, airy, fun, and young, the nautical-themed beach resort goes way beyond the compact and concise. With 561 stylishly

appointed rooms and rambling suites inside The Grand Ho Tram complex, this inviting tower treats you to jaw-dropping sea views. The marine palette brings in a smattering of artful décor as you relax and discover the true joy of travel in water sports, miniature golf, cinema, a contemporary fitness centre and much more.

#### ***The InterContinental® Grand Ho Tram***

Think 543 luxuriously appointed rooms (think 46-inch LED televisions, yawning bathrooms with rain shower and 24-hour room service) with awe inspiring views of the sand dunes of The Bluffs Grand Ho Tram Golf Course or the panoramic East Sea. Soak up the prized therapies at the award-winning spa, or raise a toast at your pick of the best from the melee of gourmet restaurants here. Live The InterContinental Life in high glam and luxury.

The Bluffs Grand Ho Tram unravels as a high-ranked golf course designed by the legendary Greg Norman, set against the magnificent backdrops of untouched



primeval forest stretching along the shores of Ho Tram's coastline. Perfect for family vacations with a well-equipped Kids Club, twin spas, cinema, karaoke rooms and a range of indoor and outdoor excitements with swimming pools set against the backdrop of the sea.

### *The Club Intercontinental Experience*

The Club InterContinental experience combines personal service and exclusive privileges to make your stay super memorable. Sign up for special benefits including an upgraded room, private check-in and check-out, access to Club InterContinental Lounge including breakfast, all day refreshments, afternoon tea, and evening cocktails and canapés.

### *Ixora Ho Tram by Fusion*

Looking at luxury villas for a private vacation? A multigenerational holiday at the glorious beaches in Vietnam? Adventure packed days lolling by the sea, surf, and sand? Ixora Ho Tram by Fusion arrives as a secluded holiday cocoon with



**"THINK AWARD WINNING SPAS, DESTINATION WEDDING VENUES, WHISKY CIGAR TASTINGS, WINE PAIRED DINNERS, EDGY DANCE FLOORS, ARCADES FULL OF CHALLENGES AND MAGICAL SUNDOWNERS ACROSS THE BEACHFRONT!"**

breathtaking beach views and seamless architecture in harmony with the natural elements.

The Harmony of Connections forms the core of Ixora Ho Tram by Fusion as the luxury resort invites guests to bond with themselves in quiet, beatific surroundings, and spend time with their loved ones (with a little help from Ixora Kids Club). The stunning menu of holistic treatments at Maia Spa strengthens this pivotal connection between physical and mental well-being.



## WHAT TO DO

- Tee off at the coveted golf course, Bluffs
- Watch an MMA fight live
- Double dip into your luck at the roulette at the casino
- Indulge in water sports
- Soak up the soul-stirring therapies at the spa
- Savour Vietnamese delicacies
- Enjoy cigars, single malts, wine paired gourmet dining experiences
- Explore the Vung Tau area studded with local attractions

## WHERE TO EAT

The breezy vibe suffuses Lemongrass and The Beach where you can pick from an expansive menu of culinary delights. Lipsmacking desserts at the Coral Cafe, juicy steak au poivre at The Grand Bistro woo your palate. Dining at the marketplace-inspired - The Grand Food Court - is a delightful experience full of colours and flavours typical of a bustling Vietnamese mart.

Fuel Sports Bar sets the mood for cheering over cocktails with a lavish spread of gourmet delights for all taste buds. Make a stop by the electric Roxy Night Club, hailed as The Grand Ho Tram's favourite night spot for party-lover. The eclectic dance floor, edgy cocktails and energising décor add to the vibe.

## NEED TO KNOW

### Getting Here

The InterContinental Grand Ho Tram is located two hours from Ho Chi Minh City by daily complimentary VIP coach. The nearest airport to the complex is Tan Son Nhat International Airport. Private pickup service is available on request.

### Grand Yet Intimate

The Grand Ho Tram complex offers some of the most unique and elegant event venues in Vietnam. From business lunches to corporate conferences, press events to wedding celebrations, bespoke cocktail or private dining events, the multiple venues function seamlessly with personalised service, wine paired dinners, whisky cigar tastings at Churchills, elevated bar experiences and more.

### M.I.C.E. Affairs

The 1,968 sqm convention space includes a 1,254 sqm pillarless ballroom with 1,100 seats. Breakout rooms include immersive high-resolution projection and state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment. But what's staggering are the multitude of options from activities on the beach to putting at the greens at The Bluffs, maverick challenges at the Game, and buzzing performances at the chic Roxy Night Club. ▲

# EXPLORING TOMORROW

Gallerist Aparajita Jain, co-director of Nature Morte, examines the future of contemporary art in the age of AI.

In the Indian art market, the paradigm shifts of artistic expression as it intersects with advances in Artificial Intelligence (AI) hold particular significance. India boasts a rich cultural heritage with a diverse artistic tradition spanning centuries. As the nation embraces technological innovation, its art scene stands at a crossroads, poised to integrate AI-driven tools and concepts into its creative fabric.

## DEMOCRATISATION OF ART

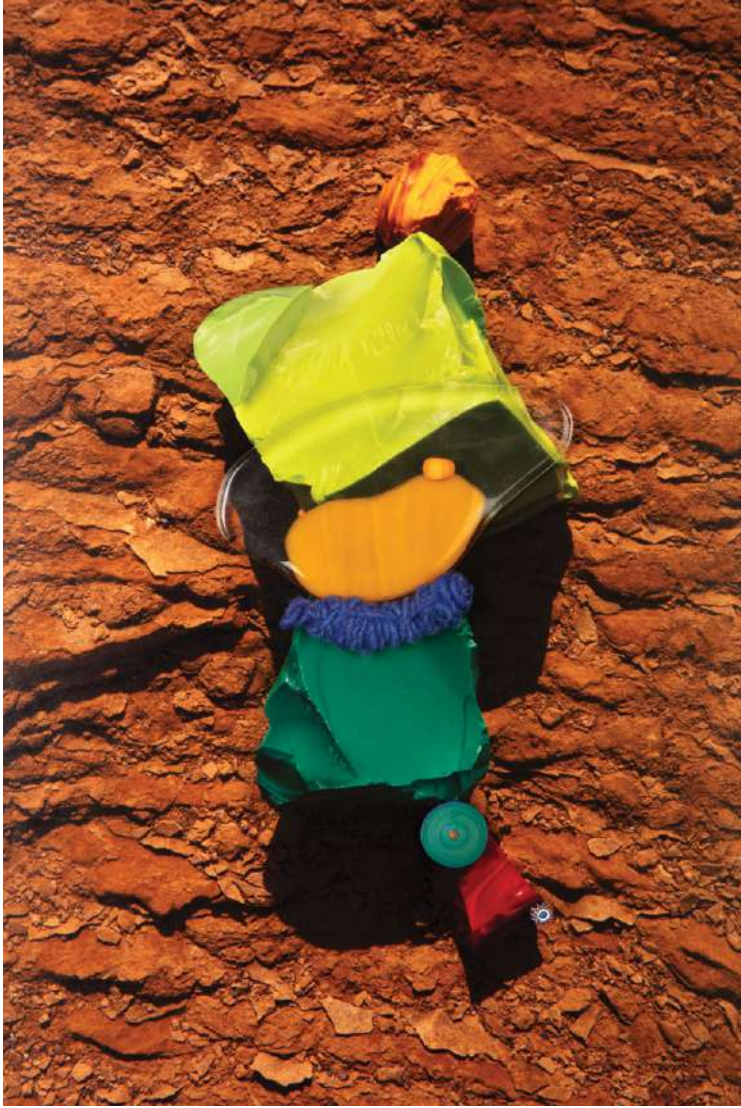
One notable aspect of AI's impact on the Indian art market is its potential to democratise artistic production and consumption. With AI algorithms enabling broader access to tools for creation, artists of diverse backgrounds can experiment with new mediums and techniques, transcending traditional barriers of entry. This democratisation may foster a more inclusive and vibrant artistic community, amplifying voices that were previously marginalised.

Moreover, AI's influence extends beyond the process of creation to the curation and appreciation of art. Machine learning algorithms can analyse vast amounts of data to predict artistic trends, assist collectors in making informed purchasing decisions, and personalize the art-viewing experience for audiences. As Indian art enthusiasts embrace digital platforms for discovering and acquiring artworks, AI-driven recommendation systems could play a pivotal role in shaping their preferences and expanding their exposure to diverse artistic styles.

## CONSERVING ORIGINALITY

However, amidst the promise of AI lies the challenge of preserving the authenticity and human touch that define the essence of art. As technology becomes increasingly integrated into the creative process, questions of authorship, originality, and artistic intent come to the forefront. In the Indian context, where cultural heritage and tradition hold significant value, artists and stakeholders must navigate the tension between innovation and preservation, ensuring that AI serves as a tool for amplifying creativity rather than overshadowing it.





**"AI-DRIVEN RECOMMENDATION SYSTEMS COULD PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN SHAPING PREFERENCES OF ART ENTHUSIASTS AND EXPANDING THEIR EXPOSURE TO DIVERSE ARTISTIC STYLES."**

Discussions surrounding the ethical implications of AI in art are crucial within the Indian art market. Issues such as bias in algorithmic decision-making, data privacy concerns, and the potential for exploitation of AI-generated artworks raise complex ethical dilemmas that require careful consideration and regulation. As India continues to chart its course in the age of AI, policymakers, artists, and technologists must collaborate to establish ethical guidelines that foster innovation while safeguarding the integrity and dignity of artistic expression.

In conclusion, the future of contemporary art in the age of AI offers a compelling narrative of transformation and adaptation within the Indian art market. By embracing the opportunities presented by AI while confronting its challenges head-on, India has the potential to redefine its artistic identity in the digital age, enriching its cultural landscape for generations to come. ▲

# HOSPITALITY HOPE

Food expert and author Rashmi Uday Singh is serving up hope to millions through her trailblazing, non-profit initiative.



“It’s my passion project, to serve the hospitality world and its job seekers with the hospitality hotspot,” says Rashmi Uday Singh, founder and CEO, HospitalityHope.org. India’s true blue culinary Columbus, she brings to the table her vast experience and expertise, as a world gourmand and TV host, an award-winning author of over 40 food books, and a heart of gold that aims to lend a helping hand to those who need it, in the hospitality segment.

The concept gathered momentum when Rashmi sensed the vacuum during the pandemic – thousands lost their jobs, and struggled to gain footing. She generously posted across her social media handles to connect the job seekers to the hirers. She pours in financial support from her own earnings and savings, to connect the world by enabling job seekers in the hospitality industry to find suitable exciting jobs, internships, stages around the world.

“Call it my way of making the world a delicious, happy place. One click at a time,” she smiles, having received love and accolades across the globe for over three decades of writing, authoring India’s first city-restaurant guide, and the world’s first vegetarian guide to Paris, presenting international and national culinary shows, and earning her knighthood from the French government as a mark of honour. ▲





# THE ALLURE OF CULINARY OPULENCE

Exploring the Inclusion of 24-Karat Gold Dust in Gourmet Gospels.

By Rupali Dean

**C**elebrity Chef Ranveer Brar's debut restaurant, Kashkan, in Dubai is causing a stir on social media due to its unique offerings. The spotlight is on the '24-carat gold tadka dal,' a lavish dish served in a wooden box with gold-infused ghee. Dubbed 'Dal Kashkan,' this exclusive meal costs around 58 dirhams or approximately Rs 1300.

Once reserved for ornamental purposes and high-end confectionery, edible gold has now found its way into the kitchens of renowned chefs and adventurous food enthusiasts alike, elevating dishes to new heights of extravagance. Throughout history, gold has been synonymous with wealth, power, and prestige. It has adorned the palaces of kings and emperors, symbolizing luxury, and opulence. Fast forward to modern times, gold continues to captivate our imagination, albeit in a more edible form.

The use of gold in food dates back centuries, with ancient civilizations such as the Egyptians, Romans, and Chinese incorporating gold leaf into their cuisine as a symbol of prosperity. Today, the tradition lives on in the form of 24-karat gold dust, a highly refined and safe-to-ingest version of the precious metal. Chefs and food artisans around the world have embraced this luxurious ingredient, using it to add a touch of glamour and sophistication to their creations.

The Burj Al Arab presents its debut 24-karat gold coffee at UMA Lounge. This luxurious



brew includes edible gold and regional camel milk. One can enjoy this unique coffee with breath-taking views of Dubai's skyline and the Arabian Gulf.

One of the most iconic uses of 24-karat gold dust is in the realm of desserts. Picture a decadent chocolate truffle dusted with shimmering gold, or a delicate macaron with a golden sheen – these indulgent treats are not only a feast for the taste buds but also a feast for the eyes. The visual impact

of edible gold is undeniable, transforming ordinary desserts into edible works of art that are sure to dazzle and delight.

Beyond desserts, savoury dishes have also been elevated by its use. Imagine a seared foie gras topped with delicate gold flakes, or a lobster risotto garnished with a sprinkle of golden dust – these creations blur the line between food and fine art, inviting diners to savour the experience of luxury on a plate. Chefs have embraced the versatility of



"THE USE OF GOLD IN FOOD DATES BACK CENTURIES, WITH ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS SUCH AS THE EGYPTIANS, ROMANS, AND CHINESE INCORPORATING GOLD LEAF INTO THEIR CUISINE AS A SYMBOL OF PROSPERITY."



interesting to learn that gold is more than just a lavish indulgence. This precious metal is thought to offer impressive health benefits, making it a highly valued food supplement globally for its unique properties. In conclusion, the allure lies in its ability to transform ordinary dishes into extraordinary culinary masterpieces. Whether it is a shimmering dessert or a savoury delight, edible gold adds a touch of luxury and extravagance that elevates the dining experience to new heights. As chefs continue to push the boundaries of creativity and innovation, we can expect to see more dazzling creations that blur the line between food and art, inviting us to indulge in the decadent world of gastronomic opulence. ▲

edible gold, using it to accentuate flavours, textures, and presentations in innovative ways that push the boundaries of culinary creativity.

In addition to its aesthetic appeal, edible gold also carries symbolic significance. In many cultures, gold is associated with luck, prosperity, and celebration. Whether it is a special occasion or a simple indulgence, the presence of edible gold invokes a sense of luxury and indulgence that adds a touch

of magic to the dining experience. This inclusion also speaks to a larger cultural shift towards experiential dining. In an age where social media drives trends and influencers seek out the next Instagram-worthy meal, the use of edible gold has become a way for chefs to create buzz and capture the attention of a discerning audience.

While the idea of consuming gold may seem extravagant and fit for royalty, it is



*(Awarded the "Best food writer in the country" by the Indian culinary forum, WACS and the ministry of Tourism, Rupali Dean writes on food and travel.)*

# POURS FROM JAPAN

Glorious hotfooters from the Land of the Rising Sun elevate the action at your bar this season.

By Hyatt Centric Juhu Mumbai

*Mixologist: Ketan Satpute, Assistant F&B Manager, Hyatt Centric Juhu Mumbai*



## *Tokyo Rose*

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 45ml Luxardo Cherry Gin
- 25ml Hakutsuru Sake
- 25ml Yuzu Syrup
- 20ml Grenadine Syrup
- Sparkling wine (to top up)

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Inspired by the vibrant streets of Tokyo during the sakura festival, the Tokyo Rose cocktail is a celebration of locally sourced ingredients and craft spirits. Luxardo Cherry Gin provides a perfect balance of botanical complexity, complemented by the dryness of Hakutsuru sake and the homemade yuzu and Grenadine syrups. This expertly crafted cocktail appeals to both genders with its citrusy and refreshing finish, elevated by the addition of extra dry sparkling wine.

## *Mount Fuji Fizz*

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 45ml Roku Gin
- 25ml Umeshu
- 25ml Yuzu Syrup
- 1/2 tablespoon Matcha Powder
- 1 tablespoon Honey Syrup
- Cucumber tonic (to top up)

### **DESCRIPTION:**

The Mount Fuji Fizz showcases the intricate flavors of Roku Gin, complemented by the sweetness of Umeshu and the tanginess of yuzu syrup. Matcha powder adds depth

to the profile, while honey syrup provides a touch of natural sweetness. Topped up with cucumber tonic, this cocktail offers a refreshing twist on traditional gin-based drinks.



## *Raspberry Sake Tea*

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 15ml Vodka
- 15ml Sake
- 60ml Homemade Japanese Raspberry Tea
- 10ml Lime Juice
- 10ml Simple Syrup

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Crafted with homemade Japanese Raspberry Tea infused with sake and vodka, the Raspberry Sake Tea cocktail offers a delightful blend of citrusy and herbal notes. Lime juice adds a refreshing kick, while simple syrup ensures a harmonious balance of flavours.



## *The Oishi*

### **INGREDIENTS:**

- 45ml Japanese Whiskey
- 6 to 8 Mint Leaves
- Brown Sugar (to taste)
- Burnt Rosemary
- Homemade Ginger Beer

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Muddled whiskey, mint leaves, and brown sugar are infused with the smoky essence of burnt rosemary in the Oishi cocktail. Topped up with homemade ginger beer and served over crushed ice, this cocktail tantalises the palate with a harmonious blend of herbal and spicy flavours



# NEW AGE DESIGNS

Sumit Dhawan, Founder and Principal Architect at Cityspace '82 Architects, marks tech as an innovative tool in the future of architecture.

Architecture is experiencing a breakthrough and explosions of creativity with new tools. These seek to automate and augment design processes, ensuring resilience and economic efficiency of structures. Aspects like 3D printing and parametric design are altering conventional concepts and reshaping landscapes to enhance precision:

## DIGITAL MODELS

With Computer-aided Design (CAD), architects can create detailed designs, streamlining processes. Further, Building Modelling Information (BMI) provides a holistic approach to design. It allows for the idea of structural, mechanical, and electrical systems in a single model, leading to an efficient design process. Another model is the parametric design that allows the creation of complex geometries and forms easily, fusing concepts with convenience.

## TECH SMART BUILDINGS

Buildings are now integrated with the Internet of Things (IoT) that enhances interconnectedness between networks. This helps to communicate and exchange data, enabling real-time monitoring. IoT sensors and devices manage elements like lighting and security, creating a responsive and smart environment. Further, automation and control systems are making building operations easier. With advanced algorithms and machine learning, centralised control is easy and simplifying makes fault detection and energy management.



## 3D PRINTING TECHNOLOGY

A new generation of machines capable of printing models to complete buildings arrives. Digital advance has aided welding, additive manufacturing, and bonding. Certain printers create dwellings with concrete lines, reducing material costs and waste.

## AUGMENTED AND VIRTUAL REALITIES

By superimposing digital graphics over real-world imagery, augmented reality (AR) enables architects to 'see' plans; and train hands to use new construction

tools for inspections. Designers walk a client through proposed designs using virtual reality (VR). Collaborations and communications are easier through mixed reality (MR) and extended reality (XR).

## FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY

Artificial Intelligence offers generative designs. Machine learning, robotics and automation are altering construction processes, improving efficiency, and precision through speedy and quality construction. Use of drones in site surveys enhances safety. ▲

# TIMELESS LUXURY

Swiss watch major Chopard epitomises Italy's celebrated 1000 Miglia Italian classic car race in the Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph

The new Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph model from the house of Chopard draws inspiration from the wealth of details linked to motor-racing symbols. Dynamic, luminous, and comfortable, the meticulous construction and finishing are distinguished by harmonious shapes and volumes aligned with the aesthetic of the historical cars competing in the 1000 Miglia.

Reflecting his family's passion for classic car races, the Maison's Co-President Karl-Friedrich Scheufele has personally taken part in the 1000 Miglia every year, covering more than 30,000 miles since 1989. The partnership – one of the longest in history between a watchmaker and a motorsports event – has now seen the creation of 36 watch editions in the Mille Miglia collection by Chopard, all capturing the essence and spirit of what Enzo Ferrari called 'the most beautiful race in the world'.

The bezels, crowns and pushers of the Mille Miglia Classic Chronograph are in Lucent Steel™, with contrasting polished and satin-brushed finishes. The pushers are knurled to create a motif recalling brake pedals, while the notched crown guarantees optimal grip. The three black counters, as well as the shape of the hands and Arabic numerals are also nods to the characteristic design of collector's car dashboards.

Its 40.5 mm case in Chopard's exclusive Lucent Steel™, made with a recycling rate of at least 80%, frames a dial inspired by the black and white chequered flag marking the arrival of a motor-race winner. Symbolising the competitive spirit, this dial is called 'La Gara' (Italian for 'race'). It is topped by a superb 'glass box' crystal ensuring optimal opening onto the dial and hence maximum legibility.

The white minutes track and tachymeter scale – essential elements in making speed and distance calculations – are both prominent, while the dial markings along with the hours and minutes hands are coated with white Grade XI Super-Luminova® to ensure a high degree of legibility.

A true exercise in 'practical beauty', the dial is protected by a deep, glass-box sapphire crystal



secured by a slim bezel. The back of the watch is fitted with a sapphire crystal affording a view of the self-winding chronograph movement certified by the Official Swiss Chronometer Testing Institute and endowed with a 54-hour power reserve. The perforated black calfskin strap evokes traditional driving gloves. Enhanced with ecru bridle stitching, it is secured by a Lucent Steel™ pin buckle.

This model is clearly intended for drivers seeking to surpass themselves – much in the spirit of the Maison's legendary ambassadors Jacky Ickx and Romain Dumas. ▲

# BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING WEALTH

Priti Rathi Gupta, founder of LXME, India's first financial platform for women, believes in empowering women in the digital economy.





**A**s the founder of LXME, I have witnessed a significant change in the relationship between women and money. In recent years, an increase in digitisation and the availability of easy-to-consume information has led to an uptick of women investors who are now increasingly participating in financial conversations and taking an active part in their money matters, something that was unheard of nearly a decade or two ago!

This shift is more than a trend; rather, it is a critical move in empowering women to build their financial security.

### **BREAKING BARRIERS**

Traditionally, women in India have faced multiple barriers when it comes to accessing financial services. Even with women excelling in all fields of life and becoming increasingly independent, their financial planning still takes a backseat. This roots from societal norms, lack of confidence, and not being encouraged to actively manage money as the ecosystem has primarily targeted men.

However, the rise of digital platforms has been a game-changer, breaking down barriers and democratising access to financial information and services for women in the country. With the increase in digitisation, all friction points like physically going to the bank, and handing paperwork are almost a thing of the past.

### **EMPOWERING THROUGH EDUCATION**

Financial literacy is more important than ever to make informed decisions and one of the most significant benefits of digitization is its accessibility. The landscape has changed from women having few and limited information from traditional sources to now having study materials, resources, and apps like LXME that cater specifically to women's financial needs.

With just a few clicks, they can access a wealth of knowledge and tools to help

## **“WOMEN ARE MAKING SMART MONEY CHOICES AND DIVERSIFYING MONEY ACROSS ASSET CLASSES.”**

them understand money management and plan for their future goals. Over 3 lakh women are learning from our platform with 15 lakhs+ money conversations in the community.

### **BUILDING WEALTH**

Women are known to be great savers, and along with their preference for traditional investment options like Gold, Fixed Deposits, and PPF, with increased awareness, we have witnessed a shift to new investment opportunities like Mutual Funds as they offer a diversified



way to invest their money and achieve financial goals.

As per the AMFI data, women's share in mutual fund industry assets has increased from 15% in March 2017 to nearly 21% as of December 2023, depicting a positive change. Women are making smart money choices and diversifying money across asset classes.

They are saving money but instead of keeping it in silly places like purses, cupboards, or even Savings Bank Accounts, they are saving smartly in LXME's Gulluck, a First-of-its-kind Digital Piggy Bank for Women where they can instantly access their money in times of need. They are investing in Gold but in a smart way through Sovereign Gold Bonds and Gold Mutual Funds.

Moreover, we are democratising financial services for women where women can start their investing journey, for example, in mutual funds with just Rs.100/-, making it more accessible and customised. This initial step allows women to embark on their investment journey confidently and progressively plan for their financial goals.

### **EMBRACING THE FUTURE**

The growth in the digital space has opened exciting new opportunities for women leading to creating a more equitable, inclusive, and brighter financial future.

I believe women will play a crucial role in the growth of financial services in the country as they take a step toward making their own financial decisions to achieve their dreams. At LXME, India's First Financial Platform for Women, which is a fast-growing robust community-led expert-backed hassle-free platform curated for women, we are working to inspire a wave of financially fearless women by providing them with the right knowledge and tools to take charge of their personal finances offering the ability to Ask, Learn, Plan, Invest, Spend, Earn & Borrow via a simple mobile app. ▲

PEAKLIFE  
REGATTA SPECIAL



# PEAKLIFE REGATTA



The annual sailing competition brought in a signature style at the most highly awaited PEAKLIFE Regatta 2024.

**By Shilpi Madan**

The 2024 edition of PEAKLIFE Regatta, presented by Samira Habitats in partnership with HSBC, New Orleans, Swiss International, and ELE|NA played out as a perfect symphony of luxury and adventure on the Arabian Sea - one of the best aqua racecourses in the world. From fashion designer Surily G's boho-chic resort wear splash out in Alibag to a thrilling nautical spin on the sea, it was a magical weekend.



# A 2024

Our title partner, Alibag's leading Real Estate, Infrastructure and Lifestyle stakeholder, Samira Habitats, is synonymous with world-class luxury living and life scape curation in the region. With an international network and breadth of unbeatable expertise, HSBC came on board in partnership for the grand event. New Orleans, an iconic U.S. destination which boasts rich culture, historic architecture, and diverse neighbourhoods, was our luxury destination partner. SWISS, with its impeccable international connectivity, arrived as a premium partner. Our wellness partner was ELE|NA - an organisation personifying a holistic journey in wellness, and Florian Hurel Hair Couture Spa as our make up partner for exceptional beauty artistry.





## Day 1: GLAM ON THE GO

Fashion designer Surily Goel wowed with her boho-chic resort wear, inspired by the colours of Alibag. A shimmering splash out of relaxed silhouettes with winking mirrors, curious beads, and taut tassels, Surily's first show in a decade, arrived with a resounding splash and met with roaring applause. In a first, the Mandwa jetty played ramp to 'ISLA by Surily G' with 35 models staking across 250 feet of the runway against the blazing colours of the sunset that filled the skies. Celebrities graced the seats lining the jetty, marking a celebration of two decades for the label, Surily G. Sophie Choudry, Bhavna Pandey, Maheep Kapoor, Seema Sajdeh, Anil Agarwal, Yash and Avanti Birla, Perna and Abhishek Kapoor, Shruti Seth, Danish Aslam, Kubbra Sait, Kailash and Aarti Surendranath, Malini Agarwal were seen toasting the evening, with Cyrus Sahukar at his wittiest best, playing comper.

Mandwa jetty gained a glamorous dimension with wispy whites lining the sides to make way for front row seats for all our treasured guests. "It was a trailblazing fashion show on Mandwa jetty, the first of its kind," says Anoopama Mukerjee Director, Samira Habitats. "The sea, sun and sashaying models came together to add an unbeatable sparkle - PEAKLIFE Regatta has made it happen and we are absolutely delighted to be a part of this fantastic event."

Says Shubham Golash, Director (West) Wealth and Personal banking, HSBC, "We are delighted and honoured to continue our partnership with PEAKLIFE for the second consecutive year of the PEAKLIFE Regatta. PEAKLIFE consistently elevates the luxury experience at sea, and we are privileged to be part of this exceptional event."





## Day 2: SAILING AGAIN!

The spirit of adventure beckoned as the second day brought in a thrilling nautical journey, charting a course across the Arabian Sea. At The Royal Bombay Yacht Club, five teams - PEAKLIFE, New Orleans, Samira Habitats, SWISS & ELE|NA, took to competitive sailing to vie for the coveted PEAKLIFE Regatta 2024 trophy.

The exhilarating race kicked off from Gateway of India, with all teams brimming with enthusiasm. While our adventurous sailors battled it out on the open sea, spectators aboard a luxurious yacht eagerly watched the thrilling spectacle unfold, rooting for their favourite teams. As the sun dipped below the horizon, casting a golden glow upon the historic Gateway of India, the race reached its thrilling conclusion, etching an unforgettable moment in time. Claiming victory in the prestigious sailing competition, New Orleans emerged as the winner of PEAKLIFE Regatta 2024, with HSBC as first runner-up, Samira Habitats as second runner-up, and SWISS claiming the consolation trophy. With hearts full of pride and accomplishment, day two of sailing came to a triumphant close, leaving everyone basking in the glory of a successful event.



The PEAKLIFE Regatta 2024 epitomised elegance and exhilaration, a splendid extravaganza on the sea. A special mention of the invaluable support we received from Maharashtra Maritime Board, Mandwa Port, Mumbai Port Trust, and Raigad Police and Administration that made PEAKLIFE Regatta 2024 a resounding success.

As we gear up for the 8th edition next year, we invite you to stay tuned for another extraordinary experience ahead, with us. ▲

Sheema Vohra, Managing Director, Sartha Global Marketing LLP says, "PEAKLIFE knows how to throw a great party on the high seas. From fantastic food to lively entertainment and music, it was all about having a great time. Something that New Orleans is known for, making it a perfect partnership!"

"As the flagship wellness sponsor, ELE|NA's collaboration with Pinnacle Connect at their signature event illuminates the richness of wellness and also showcases our shared dedication to excellence," says Heidi Grimwood, Vice President, ELE|NA. "Sailing high at prestigious gatherings like the PEAKLIFE Regatta and exclusive networking soirees allowed us to anchor directly with an elite crowd, unfurling the transformative sails of our wellness programs. This partnership has charted new courses in luxury wellness, proving that together, we can steer the wellness journey to soaring new heights."

Sng Ju Stephanie, Senior Manager, Global Marketing South Asia & Southeast Asia, Lufthansa Group, says, "SWISS is proud to be a partner of the PEAKLIFE Regatta, a beacon of luxury experiences and excellence. Our ongoing partnership aligns with the premium positioning of SWISS and this distinguished event. We thoroughly enjoyed the collaboration and thank PEAKLIFE for the wonderful experience."

Concluding the spectacular night, Parineeta Sethi, Chief Editor, PEAKLIFE magazine said, "Taking PEAKLIFE Regatta to the vistas of Alibag and making it larger than life is in keeping with our brand ethos - of being leading curators of lifestyle trends. A special thank you to all our partners, friends, and the entire PEAKLIFE team that made it happen seamlessly."



# A DAY ON THE GREENS

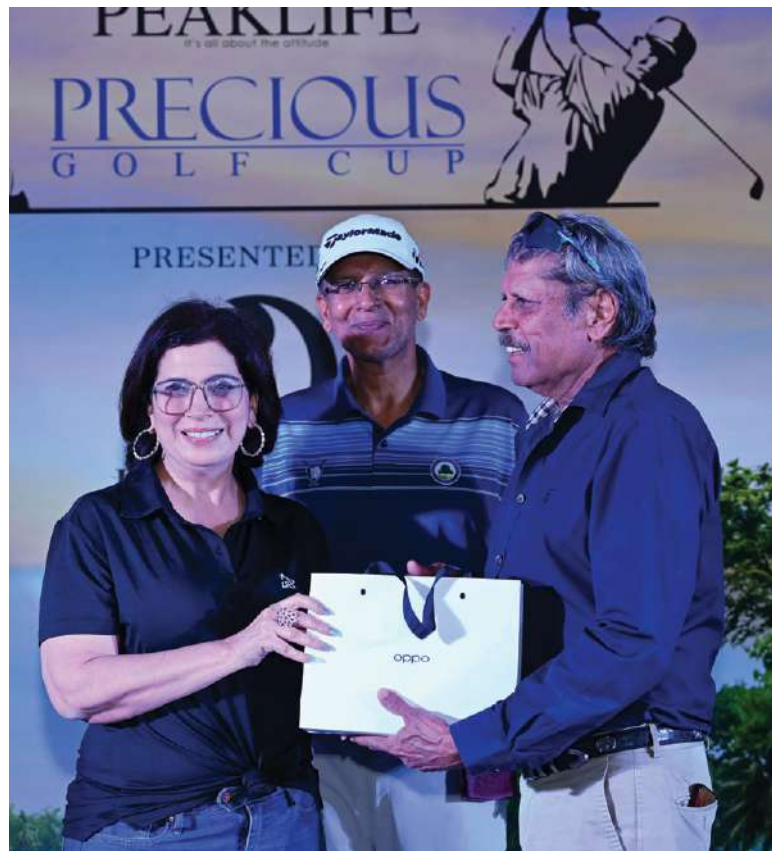


## Perfecting the putt at PEAKLIFE Precious Golf Cup 2024.

Lush greenery and a day of challenge and fun marked the PEAKLIFE Precious Golf Cup 2024 edition. Presented by Brandon de Souza management services, the tournament was hosted on the crowned greens of the beautiful ITC Classic Golf & Country Club Resort in Gurugram on 22nd March 2024.

The day began with a vibrant sense of fervor, bringing in over 90 golf enthusiasts to the undulating greens, ready to tee off and deliver epic shots. Bringing their A-game to the rolling green fairways were Sachin Mehta- Head of William Grants India, Vivek Vashishta- Vice President, Public affairs at Oppo India, Shubhodip Pal- Co-founder & CEO of Googlify, Sukrit Singh- Founder of XP&D and Karan Chaudhary- Head-Retail Sales at BMW India. Former Indian cricketer and captain of the World Cup winning Indian cricket team in 1983, Kapil Dev graced the event with his presence.





Papa CJ, stand-up comedian, and emcee, set the tone on the turf with his wit. A plethora of prizes and giveaways kept the momentum going with the prizes sponsored by our apparel partner Athletic Drive, giveaway partner MOHA and luxury lifestyle partner Da Milano. Two lucky winners clinched Oppo phones, courtesy of our prize partner, Oppo India. The day progressed through the sun and fun with pouring partner, Diageo Johnny Walker.

The ITC Classic Golf & Country Club Resort unfurls across 300 lush acres at the foothills of the picturesque Aravalli range, on the outskirts of India's national capital, New Delhi. It is one of the coveted destinations for golf-lovers from across the country. The perfect pick for the summer golf tournament.

Parineeta Sethi, Chief Editor, PEAKLIFE, said, "We look forward to multiplying the editions of the PEAKLIFE Precious Golf Cup throughout the country."

Following the adrenaline powered game of golf, the sportsmanship and camaraderie spilled over the delightful lunch as the winners went home with trophies and memories. ▲



# ESSENCE OF SUMMER

We spoke to 7 interior designers to gather tips on keeping our homes light and breezy this season.

By Neha Mehrotra

As the sun extends its warm embrace into the longer days and tranquil evenings, our homes undergo a seasonal metamorphosis. With the right elements and a keen eye for detail, you can truly create a space that captures the essence of the season.

Soft palettes inspired by nature and peppered with earthenware ceramics, sheer fabrics, and accents of natural elements create a serene oasis from the heat and humidity. Not to mention, open spaces in your house are an excellent way to bring in an air of effortless summer breezes.

## *Bring the Outdoors Indoors*

According to Shuchita Sancheti Garg, founder of vVyom by Shuchita, the best way to bring in the outdoors is by incorporating natural elements like fresh flowers, greenery, and seasonal fruits into your table setting. Keeping indoor plants maximises the spatial flow and conjures an indoor-outdoor continuum that keeps nature a close neighbour. "Consider keeping indoor plants such as snake plants, spider plants, peace lily and ferns," she suggests.



## *Sheer Fabrics is the Key*

Choosing the right materials for summer decor is essential to creating an atmosphere that is both refreshing and inviting. Sancheti Garg, founder of vVyom by Shuchita, explains that summer decor thrives on materials that enhance a light, breezy, and natural ambiance, like linen, cotton, and bamboo. "Linen is lightweight and breathable, while cotton is ideal for upholstery, bedding, and curtains, and bamboo is one of the most sustainable options because it is also lightweight, durable, natural and tropical," she further adds.

Advocating the use of sheer fabrics, Sachin Chauhan, Director, Dialogues by Nirmals, also suggests that these fabrics not only allow natural light to filter through but also create a sense of openness and spaciousness. He suggests that "when it comes to wallpapers, choose designs with gentle patterns or textures that add depth without overwhelming the space. Think pastel florals or geometric motifs to infuse a touch of elegance and sophistication." He also believes that cushions and rugs play a crucial role in tying the room together and suggests selecting cushions in complementary pastel shades and textures to add visual interest and comfort.





### *Thoughtful and Practical Decor*

For crafting a refreshing summer interior, rugs and carpets play a pivotal role in setting the tone and ambiance of a space. Opt for rugs and carpets made of light and airy materials. “Natural fibres such as jute, sisal, and seagrass are ideal choices for summer interiors,” advises Anushka Ahuja, Co-Founder of Studio by Agni. For indoor-outdoor living spaces, consider rugs made of polypropylene or bamboo. These materials are resistant to moisture, making them perfect for high-traffic areas such as patios, decks, and sunrooms.

Smriti Choudhary, Brand Director at Cocoon Fine Rugs, is also a fan of hand-tufted rugs crafted from natural fibres and dhurries, which are lightweight and flat-woven rugs traditionally made from cotton or wool. For those seeking to maximise space and minimise clutter, wall rugs offer a creative solution that combines form and function. “These decorative tapestries not only add visual interest to walls but also help to absorb sound and insulate against heat, creating a more comfortable and inviting environment,” she explains.



### *Pastel Core*

Summer decor exudes a fresh and vibrant aesthetic, drawing inspiration from the sun-kissed hues of the season and the beauty of nature in full bloom. “Pastel shades, including delicate Pantone pinks, serene whites, and tranquil blues, infuse the space with a sense of lightness and warmth, making rooms feel brighter and more spacious,” suggests Dhara Shroff, Head of Retail and Reema Shah, Head of Creative, Opulin.

To complement the airy palette of pastels, you can incorporate elements of nature through the use of soothing flower vases that adorn living spaces. These vases, filled with fresh blooms in hues ranging from blush pink to sky blue, infuse rooms with a sense of vitality and freshness. Additionally, you can even add soft cutlery and floral tableware to elevate the dining experience and create an inviting atmosphere for gatherings with friends and family.



### *The Art of Lightning*

Aryaman Jain, CEO of Innovative Design Studio, encourages embracing natural sunlight during the summer, highlighting its transformative effect on indoor and outdoor spaces. “Open your curtains wide or choose sheer fabrics to allow sunlight to filter through while maintaining privacy. Opt for fixtures with lightweight, ethereal designs that complement the season,” he advises. Jain emphasises that layered lighting adds depth and richness to living spaces. Combining downlights with task-oriented lighting, such as table or floor lamps, achieves harmonious light distribution.

Prateek Sabharwal, founder of Escape by Creatomy, further explains that strategically placed decorative mirrors amplify natural light and create the illusion of more space, enhancing the airy feel of the interior. “For lighting, people can opt for our Celeste Light. The pendant light made with wood captures the essence of nomadic aesthetics with a stunning blend of materials and design elements,” he adds. Inspired by the free-spirited essence of nomadic life, this fixture offers a captivating visual experience reminiscent of vast desert landscapes. ▲

# THE SAPPHIRE BLING

Big Bang Mp-11 14-Day Power Reserve  
Water Blue Sapphire: Hublot Unveils A New  
Interpretation Of Sapphire.



The MP-11, featuring its sculptural 7-barrel movement with a 2-week power reserve, makes its debut in a brand-new sapphire colour: a radiant and translucent water blue. A new colour is added to Hublot's palette of sapphire tones, a major first for this Manufacture Piece.

It has to be said that the bar is very high: seven barrels, and a 14-day power reserve. The technology remains the pinnacle of inventiveness in watchmaking. To maintain a conventional height (10.9 mm), the seven barrels are coaxial and vertical. They are not integrated into the thickness of the movement. They are physically in front of it, set at 90° to it. To allow their 336 hours of power reserve to reach the movement, Hublot had to design a tailor made device: a

90° transmission which uses a helical worm gear, following the principle of an endless screw. The wheel in question is clearly visible between 9 and 10 o'clock. To ensure harmony with this mechanism, Hublot has taken care to place the balance opposite it at 2 o'clock, with its rate at 4 o'clock.

The Hublot HUB9011 calibre, with 270 components, is also distinguished by its patented index-assembly system and silicon escapement which protects the movement from any electromagnetic or thermal interference.

A very slowly rotating disc (one revolution every two weeks) indicates the remaining power reserve as close as possible to its energy source, directly at the head of

the seven aligned barrels. Furthermore, by echoing the shape of the barrels, the sapphire crystal naturally creates a magnifying effect on this signature element of the watch. The Big Bang MP-11 can be wound manually using the large, fluted crown with a worm screw type relief that echoes the helical gear, or an electric Torx stylus. This sculptural construction is truly worthy of the name "Manufacture Piece", earning its place in the MP collection.

The Water Blue Sapphire is based on a new chemical formula, a custom development, and an exclusive transparency index, yet still boasts all the usual properties of sapphire: brilliant, luminous, perfectly inalterable, and resistant to knocks and scratches. This delicate operation is usually completed by hand. The result required compliance with a very strict set of specifications, and took several years to develop and test, in particular to simulate accelerated ageing and guarantee flawless water-resistance. The result is close to perfection, in line with the MP spirit. ▲



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