

FFINA

*Be
unstoppable*

INSIDE OUT

Pay closer
attention to
those skincare
ingredients

Old clothes,
new look

Raising the bar

JACQUELINE
FERNANDEZ

The Simple Life

BREATHE IN
DECISIVENESS,
BREATHE OUT
THE CLUTTER

STAY TUNED

Would you
consider a career
as a podcaster?

Food for
every mood
Dig in!



EDITOR'S LETTER



Dear Reader, hope you are all well and safe. Trust the COVID-19 paranoia has petered down, drawing us to the reality of living with it, which is going to be the 'new normal.' The coronavirus is here to stay, for God knows how long, so pull yourselves together and get going. Lockdown 5.0 has started and it is all about being *Atmanirbhar*, or being self-reliant and looking out for yourself. That's what our June issue is about. The lockdown period has thrown up many realities and taught us how to keep our lives simple, and manage it without an army of people and the frills around it. The biggest winner has been self awareness. We will all come out of it more

**WE WILL ALL COME OUT
OF IT MORE EVOLVED,
MORE AWARE, AND MORE
CONSCIOUS OF HOW
TO RECONNECT WITH
OURSELVES AND HOW TO
REARRANGE OUR LIFE.**

evolved, more aware, and more conscious of how to reconnect with ourselves and how to rearrange our lives. This pandemic has taught us to live with little, and post COVID-19 we will have to accept this reality. The way business is done will change—be it in fashion, beauty, or retail. Work culture will have a new norm and, work from home may be the only way now for a lot of organisations. We also need to declutter

our lives—physically, mentally, and digitally. Our various features inside tell you how to keep life simple, smart, and alive. Health, fitness, and wellness have taken a priority and we tell you what all can you do to stay safe. Learn about more meaningful ways to engage with yourself.

So reconnect with yourself, and become more '*Atmanirbhar*.' Just accept the new world and live with it, your way!

Ruchika Mehta

@ruchikamehta05

@ruchikamehta05

TAKE THE LEAD

HUSBAND-WIFE DUO REVAMPED THEIR FAMILY'S INDUSTRIAL PRODUCT FOR HOUSEHOLD USE TO HELP FIGHT COVID-19

Today, we are living with the new normal. We are working from home, and wearing masks and gloves when we venture outside for whatever reason. Everyone is doing their bit to protect themselves and those around them from the virus. And while we are adjusting to our new routines, young entrepreneurs and husband-wife duo, 29-year-old Aniket Parikh, and 24-year-old Namrata Parikh, took the opportunity to introduce an effervescent disinfectant tablet suitable for various household needs.

With over 25 years of experience in the healthcare space, the Parikh family has been manufacturing similar products, with a similar product being developed and introduced in the veterinary space about 15 years ago by Amit Parikh, and since then it has gained popularity as an industrial disinfectant. However, seeing that a variation of this popular disinfectant could be adapted and used particularly during the COVID-19 crisis, Namrata and Aniket took this opportunity to help the everyday consumer by introducing Sanitab, a modified version that can be used by an individual to sanitise groceries, as well as one's living space.

"One tablet has several uses," says Aniket when asked about its efficacy. "It can be used to disinfect fruits and vegetables by mixing it in 20 litres of water. Similarly, it can also be used for disinfecting surfaces, compounds, gates, vehicles, etc. and can be used together with knapsack spraying machines." He further explained, "The product when mixed in 200 litres of water, makes it safe for drinking. In addition, the product can also be used in a higher concentration to disinfect areas like hospitals."

Talking about the success of the product, Aniket says, "The product has been doing wonders and is now



sold in every state. It is easy to carry and transport, and is non-flammable unlike most disinfectants, particularly the alcohol-based ones. Moreover, it's active ingredient – NaDCC (Sodium Dichloroisocyanurate) – releases hypochlorous acid, which is more stable than Sodium hypochlorite, and proven to be more biocidal than other disinfectants. The active ingredient is also approved by the EPA against COVID-19, and is regularly used and recommended by WHO, UNICEF, the UK Department of Health, and the Indian Ministry of Health and Family Welfare."

While Aniket looks after the production and operations of Sanitab, Namrata looks after the marketing.

So what are you waiting for? Sanitab is easy to use, safe to carry, and economical! Get yours today at buysanitab.com



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ON THE COVER

MODEL: JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ. HAIR & MAKEUP: SHAAN MUTTATHIL (SHAANMU) (SPARKLE TALENTS); OUTFIT: SPORTS BRA - FILA, SPACE LUXE JUMPSUIT - PURPLE PAISLEY, THE SLYPHINA TAIL EARRINGS - OUTHOUSE; SHOES: ADIDAS ORIGINALS; PROPS: THE SELECTION SPORTS AND THE CHAMPIONS STORES; PHOTOGRAPHER: TARAS TARAPORVALA; STYLIST: YUKTI SODHA; STYLING INTERNS: KEYURI NISHAR, SANSKRITI SHAHJEE, SHER SINGH; LOCATION: SOFTEL MUMBAI BKC; SENIOR CREATIVE DIRECTOR: MEETESH TANEJA



BRAND SOLUTIONS

BUSINESS DIRECTOR Sunil Wuthoo,
sunil.wuthoo@wwm.co.in

WEST

VICE PRESIDENT & BUSINESS
HEAD-FEMINA SALON & SPA Gautam Chopra,
gautam.chopra@wwm.co.in

ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT Reena C Dave,
reena.dave@wwm.co.in
Sriram Krishnan, sriram.krishnan@wwm.co.in
Leena Bhandari, leena.bhandari@wwm.co.in
PUNE Ekta Dang, ekta.dang@wwm.co.in,
AHMEDABAD Kamal Rajput,
kamal.rajput@wwm.co.in

NORTH

VICE PRESIDENT Anjali Rathor,
anjali.rathor@wwm.co.in
Sachin Saxena, sachin.saxena@wwm.co.in.
JAIPUR Pushpesh Sood, pushpesh.lood@wwm.co.in

SOUTH

VICE PRESIDENT & BUSINESS HEAD-FEMINA
TAMIL Pravin Menon, pravin.menon@wwm.co.in
CHENNAI ON Rajesh, on.rajesh@wwm.co.in
BANGALORE Sen Thomas, sen.thomas@wwm.co.in

EAST

ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT Alka Kakar
alka.kakar@wwm.co.in

FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS

MANAGER MARKETING

Asha Kulkarni

asha.kulkarni@wwm.co.in

ASSOCIATE GENERAL MANAGER
(RMD MAGAZINES) Suparna Sheth,
suparna.sheth@timesgroup.com

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Healthy habits to add to your daily routine

Setting up a solid daily routine can give us focus, security and help us build healthy habits to face each day with excitement.

We are living in extraordinary times. The lockdown has done a complete 180, changing our daily lives. And it's only natural that this new normal will make us feel anxious. This is why, establishing a solid daily routine can help us focus, provide security, and enable us to build healthy habits to face each day with excitement.

MIND AND BODY

Embrace quiet time, meditate for 10 minutes every day, and practice the ancient yogic breathing technique known as pranayama. Not only is it simple, but doing this for a few minutes every day will revitalise your body and calm your mind. Pick up that book you've been meaning to read, or perhaps turn to music—truly one of life's best medicines—and listen to anything that you love, can relax you and uplift your spirit. And remember, whatever you do, try to get some exercise in every day. Move your body, stretch your muscles, and let the energy flow. It could be yoga or just turning up the volume to your favourite playlist and dancing in your living room. Moreover, there's no better time to take the plunge and acquire a new skill. Try your hand at gardening; spending time outdoors in your balcony or garden, with some fresh air to boot, can be very therapeutic, too.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Right now, we're all concerned about staying healthy and keeping our immunity at an all-time high. You need look no further than Spanish olives because they offer delicious taste and great nutritional value. Olives are packed with Vitamin E, which is a powerful antioxidant, besides being rich in minerals like iron and calcium. Along with their concentration of good fatty acids like oleic acid, olives have been shown to decrease inflammation, heart disease, and control

"OLIVES ARE PACKED WITH VITAMIN E, WHICH IS A POWERFUL ANTIOXIDANT, BESIDES BEING RICH IN MINERALS LIKE IRON AND CALCIUM"

cholesterol. These, and many more great inherent properties, make Spanish olives the perfect healthy snack to reach out for during the lockdown. They have a firm yet buttery texture that guarantees you'll eat more than just a few during these binges. Fortunately, they are extremely versatile and pair well with a range of condiments, to suit each palate. And guess what? The lockdown is the perfect time to experiment in the kitchen.

And remember, this too shall pass. For now, we suggest you pop that Spanish olive in your mouth and let its rich taste and velvety texture bring you joy, satisfaction, health, and comfort. Stay safe!

In the meantime, here's one delicious recipe to get you started:




MARINATED SPANISH BLACK OLIVES WITH BASIL AND ONION

You Need:

- Spanish black olives
- Fresh basil,
- Extra virgin olive oil,
- Onions (fresh or pickled),
- Sweet paprika (or chilli) powder,
- Vinegar
- Salt, to taste

Method:

Finely chop the onion and the leaves of fresh basil (without the stem). Place them in a bowl or a plate, add the Spanish black olives, olive oil, sweet paprika or chilli powder, and the pickled or fresh onion. Stir well and refrigerate for 15 minutes. And voila! A simple, easy, and absolutely delicious recipe is ready in no time! 

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CLEAR THE CLUTTER

The ongoing pandemic has made us rethink several aspects, and given us ample time to reflect on what weighs us down in our everyday lives. Taking off from the trail of thought, we take a look at what needs decluttering—be it your wardrobe, makeup kit, a corner in your home, your digital life, or even your mind! We bring you the how tos, and the top tips on where to start, and be practical to make it a continuous process





FIND THAT ZEN

Worrying about the future, ruminating over the past, and stressing over current to-do lists can lead to mental clutter. **Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan** shares a few tips to clear it

The lockdown has made everyone sit back and take stock of various things. While thinking may be good, too much of it can lead to an overloaded mind. The pandemic and the resulting lockdown has sent many in a frenzy about the future and made them apprehensive about job security and health. “With juggling household chores, helping my daughter with online classes, and office work, I don’t find much time to rest. In the little time that I do have, I am constantly thinking about the stability of the economy, and how it will affect my family,” says Vandana Gupte, 40, a software engineer from Bangalore. Her mind simply didn’t seem to shut off. Relate to this scenario? What you and Gupte need is to declutter the mind and find a sense of calm.

“The most common reasons for mental clutter are lack of clarity and simplicity. It happens when we lose focus. To focus on the present, you have to simplify your needs and feelings to a basic level,” informs Pune-based

“THE COMMON REASONS FOR MENTAL CLUTTER ARE ARE LACK OF CLARITY AND SIMPLICITY. IT HAPPENS WHEN WE LOSE FOCUS.”

counsellor, Kshama Jain. A study by Manhattan College’s Kelly Marin and the University of Wisconsin’s Elena Rotondo (2017) states that rumination involves brooding, self-criticism, and negative emotions, and this leads to one’s self-esteem taking a hit, and increased feeling of distress. A cluttered mind can become host to negativity. [Take steps to avoid ruminating.](#) Follow these steps.

BREATH OF FRESH AIR

➞ Deep breathing helps in getting a higher supply of oxygen to the body and brain. It stimulates the parasympathetic nervous system, which helps one calm down. Jain believes that regular meditation coupled with using breathing techniques take you to a higher level of awareness. So, pause, and take a few deep breaths.

WORK IN, WORK OUT

➞ With work from home, don’t forget your daily workout! Apart from keeping you physically fit, it helps with clearing the mind. Exercising releases endorphins—happy hormones. Even better, be mindful about your workout by concentrating fully on the activity at hand, and on how it feels. “A 30-minute walk or jog can help,” Jain informs.

BREAK THE MONOTONY

➞ A five-minute break never really hurt anyone, ever. Working continuously can get monotonous, and all you need is a few minutes off. Take a breather to do something else, a quick walk around the house, stretches to ease those muscles, or visualising something you like, will help break the monotony.

REBOOT THE MIND

➞ Carrying forward thoughts from the previous day adds to the clutter. Instead, at the end of the day, make a list of everything on your mind. Calmly go over the list, a sort of a CTRL+S. Strike out the unimportant aspects from this list, and then put your mind in CTRL+ALT+DLT mode.

PLAN OF ACTION

➞ **Having a definitive plan for the day can help keep you focused. Note it down, and keep ticking off things as they get done. You can have a larger plan for the week, but keep a crisp plan for each day. >**

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



DIGITALLY LEANER

You will feel much lighter after you declutter your email, photographs, desktop, and other folders, getting rid of unwanted and duplicate items, says **Shraddha Kamdar**

In the digital era, it is tough to find people who can say that they are free of digital clutter. Since you have the time whilst at home, use it to declutter and [organise your digital life](#). The human nature to hoard things has penetrated on digital platforms as well, and ever-expanding GBs do not help. Follow these simple pointers, and trust us, you will come out feeling much lighter!

LOOK AT UNWANTED APPS

➔ If you browse through, on both your phone (especially) and on your laptop, you will find apps that you have not used for a while. Also, increasing the memory of the phone is of no use. There may be apps you downloaded for trial, or on an impulse and haven't used. Do not hesitate to delete these, and free up that much-needed space. "Indians are great at hoarding, and this thought extends to one's digital life as well. You need to revisit your memory constantly to make your device fitter," suggests US-based computer engineer Swati Kumar.

WE ALL LOVE TO TAKE BACKUPS OF OUR DATA REGULARLY, WHICH RESULTS IN DUPLICATION OF PHOTOS. CHECK WHICH YOU WANT.

SORT PICTURES & MUSIC

➔ This is the toughest and most time-consuming, so ensure you break it up in parts. We all love to take regular backups of our phone data, which results in duplication of photos. In addition, since clicking pictures is now swift, not to mention free, you are likely to have multiple shots of the same landscape, from the same angle. Figure out which you like the best and delete the rest! That's all there is to it! This also calls for sorting photos and music into appropriate folders so you can avoid duplication. "Ever since the advent of digital cameras and mobile phones, duplication, and that too in HD, has been a problem. If not acted upon soon after the album is downloaded, the work tends to pile up and be procrastinated upon," Kumar asserts.

RELIEVE YOUR DESKTOP

➔ It is a general tendency to save things immediately on the desktop and forget about them. The icon stays there forever, until it is so cluttered that you decide to sweep things under the carpet instead of resolving it, and throw the extra icons in a new folder. It slows down the computer. So, get to a point of checking what you need and deleting the rest!

LIGHTEN UP YOUR INBOX

➔ The last cut is the deepest. This daunting task needs to be taken up. Most of us spend more time deleting emails rather than reading them. Delete all you need to, unsubscribe to emailers, and archive only if you want to save them for a later date or for proof of communication. At least the archived emails will not show up on your inbox.



SLICE DOWN SOCIAL MEDIA ALERTS

➔ You may not like us saying this, but go through your social media and revisit the number of pages you receive alerts from. Do you go through all? Do you need it all? While there, also check whom you are friends with and whether you actually want to share details of your life with someone you met on a random trek and haven't been in touch with since then. "We have been living virtually ever since the pandemic set in, but it does not mean you let things sit around in these apps for no reason. Ensure you maintain your digital hygiene as it suits you," says website developer Harshal Shah. He believes that more often than not, the time spent on these apps is used up in scrolling through lengths of unwanted stuff.





MAKEUP MANTRA

Extend the Marie Kondo approach to beauty as well, since minimal and multi-purpose products are the way to go, says **Sukriti Shahi**

With over two months in lockdown, you might have aced the deep-cleaning approach to decluttering your home. Now, it's time to add this focus to your makeup shelf as well. It's time to get rid of the products that you don't use often. As a makeup lover, it might be difficult to do so, but that's how this process should end. Just follow our guide!

PLACE ALL PRODUCTS IN FRONT OF YOU

➔ The possibility of having makeup products in every drawer, bag, and on all your side tables is relatively high. Take them all out at once, so you know how much and what you have versus what you need.

TIPS

FROM THE EXPERT

Swatch the rest of the products. You'll be surprised to see how an unused lipstick a few months back might not suit you now. Think of the products that you tried using but never enjoyed and those that you might not use again. Don't be greedy, give them away.

Divide your makeup in two categories—must-have and fun-sake. This will help you prioritise. For example, neutral palettes are a big yes and can come under must-have, but coloured liners that you need to break the monotony can come under the latter category.

YOU USE ONLY A FEW PRODUCTS

➔ No matter how many bottles of foundation you own, at one point you can use no more than one or two. This applies to all products like highlighters, blush, contour palettes, and concealers. Take note of all products that you use and the ones that haven't been touched for months. This will make the process easier.

Another way to declutter is to invest in multi-purpose products. "These products not only save space but are also easy on the pocket. When in a rush, you can use one product to complete the look. For example, a lip tint can be used on the lips, on the cheeks for dewy blush, and as tinted eyeshadow," advises celebrity makeup artist Savleen Manchanda.

SWATCH AND CHECK EXPIRY

➔ If they have crossed the expiry date, you need to toss them out, Manchanda advises. Makeup products come with a shelf life, no matter how expensive they are. "Pay attention to cream-based products, like eyeliners and mascaras. These need to be replaced every six months," she says.

CLEAN AND SANITISE

➔ Now that every product is out, clean and sanitise everything, including the boxes and your shelves. Check the boxes for product spillage and [sanitise your brushes](#), lipsticks, and necks of the bottles. Broken makeup should be thrown if the products are beyond repair.

DON'T HOLD ON!

➔ **Try not to stash products you've eliminated from the bunch in some random corner of the closet. Keeping them with you for too long will tempt you to keep them forever. If you plan on giving away some of the products to family or friends, make sure you do it when you see them next.**

Organise according to need and priority. Designate a shelf to the products you use daily. Make a separate corner for brushes and blenders.

Products of occasional use should be stored in a separate drawer. Ensure products are stored close to each other, so you can keep checking them. Also, the lockdown has changed priorities for many, so think of the new ones before.

You may want to organise the products category wise like foundations, eyeshadow palette, lipsticks, eyeliners, and so on! Products under similar categories like for face, eyes, and lips can be stored together. >

CLICK HERE TO READ MORE



KEEP, RECYCLE, PURGE, REPEAT

Wardrobes are prone to clutter, no matter how much you think of organising. **Kalwyna Rathod** brings the top ways in which you can avoid it

Wardrobe decluttering is a chore that is tiring simply as a thought, but on the bright side, you'll do away with unwanted stuff and [create precious space](#). And, if nothing, a decluttered wardrobe is way better to look at than that heap of clothes.

Fashion communicator, stylist, and sustainability proponent, Falguni Patel, echoes, "As much as I agree with Marie Kondo's idea of letting go, we Indians are inherently blessed with hoarding genes. I have been unable to let go off many of my clothes and accessories for the fact that I took a lot of time in screening and buying them. Apart from that, I love repeating clothes by accessorising in different ways, and mixing and matching works for me. However, it's certainly important to declutter."

"AS MUCH AS I AGREE WITH MARIE KONDO'S IDEA OF LETTING GO, INDIANS ARE INHERENTLY BLESSED WITH HOARDING GENES."



IF YOU'RE UP FOR THE CHALLENGE:

1. Take all the clothes out of your closet. If it's a daunting approach, go one shelf at a time.
2. Make four piles—keep, mend/dry clean, swap/donate, and seasonal.
3. Arrange clothes category-wise in your wardrobe—tops, pants, skirts, kurtas, saris, etc.

Keep: Clothes that fit well, match your current style and weather, and you wear regularly.

Mend/dry clean: Garments which need mending or alterations, or laundry. You might want to give some items a fresh look with dyeing or eco-printing.

Swap/donate: Clothes that you're bored of can be donated or swapped with friends. Ensure they are in good condition, and not worn out or torn.

Seasonal: Winter wear, summer wear, and occasional wear. It will make life easier when you need them quickly.

LEARNINGS FROM A DESIGNER'S LOCKDOWN

Like most of us, fashion designer and stylist, Archana Makwana, finds it difficult to let go of her prized possessions. "My basketball T-shirts, which I had got during my national and district games about 18-19 years back were worn out, but I was emotionally attached to them. They made me feel proud. But when you have to let go, you just have to!"

1. **Make a pile of all clothes that don't fit but are in good condition to be given away.**
2. **Make a separate pile of clothes to be discarded or exchanged.**
3. **Throw away worn out and chipped footwear, and loose socks.**

JEWEL TALK

Jewellery designer **Vrushanki Doshi** says, "Life would be dull if we'd have only clothes to play with. Accessories are just as important and keeping them clutter-free is essential because if you can't see them easily, you won't wear them."

Take out all the pieces and sort—necklaces, earrings, bracelets, rings, etc.

Discard broken items straight away. Pass on items you haven't worn for years. Only keep pieces that you love to wear regularly and that match your current wardrobe.

Discard pieces that you're holding on to for sentimental value.

Store smartly—invest in boxes or trays.

Declutter regularly so you devote equal attention to each piece you own.



THE PERFECT PLATE

Given that the lockdown has made people turn to their kitchens more frequently than ever before, it's time to focus on decluttering your diet, **finds Neeti Jaychander**

During the pandemic, we've been able to rethink the way we eat in many ways. Sticking to local produce to cook is just a part of it. Given that we're not faced with the excesses of eating out, and are careful about ordering in, there's no better time to declutter your diet. With good health, clean eating results in a better mood, regular sleep patterns, and a positive outlook. So, get started!



KEEP A FOOD JOURNAL

➔ List each food item—from juice to pickles, rice to veggies, and chocolate to condiments. Note down quantities of everything you've eaten, what time you eat, how much time you leave between meals and snacks, what triggered the meal or snack, what you were doing while eating. This will help identify what you're doing wrong, and help you to declutter your eating habits.

PLAN YOUR PLATE

➔ Planning your portion intake from each food group will help. Chennai-based nutritionist Shiny Surendran simplifies it, "Half your intake should be non-starchy vegetables, a quarter should contain lean proteins, and a quarter should be whole grains or starchy foods." She also recommends considering the number of ways you can use an ingredient, its versatility, and how long you can store it.

MAKE IT SUSTAINABLE

➔ The pandemic has made us relook our food choices and how they impact the planet. According to The United Nations Food & Agriculture Organisation, "Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimising natural and human resources." Eat more local fruits and vegetables, and seafood from local sources too. They do not impact the environment as much as those imported. Breads, rice, and grains have a lower greenhouse gas emissions profile than meat, seafood, and eggs.

Nutritionist Shiny Surendran RECOMMENDS

GRAINS

Rice, sooji, semiya, broken wheat, poha, and millet

PULSES

Moong dal, Bengal gram, urad dal, rajma, black/white channa, soyabean, peas, and green gram

DAIRY

Paneer or tofu, ghee, and yoghurt

FLAVOURS

Brown sugar, jaggery, and salt

CONDIMENTS

Black pepper, cumin, fenugreek, fennel seeds, and coriander powder.

OTHERS

Local fruits, green leafy and seasonal vegetables, and curry, coriander and mint leaves

MAKE YOUR FRIDGE LOOK BETTER

➔ Keep a healthy refrigerator! Don't keep expired foods, or ones that have gone bad, just because you spent a lot on them and don't feel like throwing them out. Follow your list of what you should be eating. Use the shelves at eye level to keep the healthy items. Keep junk food in the bottom drawers, so there is less temptation. Store your healthy food in neat glass containers. For an inventory, stick a list on the fridge, striking off each item when it is over.

STICK TO LOCAL, TIME-TESTED FARE

➔ Shvetha Jaishanker, former model and author of *Gorgeous: Eat Well, Look Great*, says that the lockdown has given her time to bond with family and whip up foods like pizzas and cheesecake, which keep even her kids happy. However, these are homemade, and tweaked and made with local ingredients that she has access to. "I'm also eating a lot of fresh, local fruit, and drinking coconut water every day. I've slowly started knocking off one meal, and eating an early lunch." While she believes it's different strokes for different folks, there is a spectrum of good food common to all diets. Her general advice is to keep it simple, stick to the kind of cuisine you like, and try fresh, seasonal produce. **F**

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ALL ABOUT YOU

PODCAST

*Deciding
factors that
motivate
listeners
to try new
podcasts:*

53% THE
HOST

20% THE
PUBLISHER

17% THE
BRAND

10% OTHERS



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offer non-surgical procedures for tightening skin around abs, underarms, bra bulge, and inner thighs. These are among other areas prone to sagging. This can help firm up the skin texture from half an inch upto three inches in one session. Its effect lasts for a long time when teamed with a healthy lifestyle.

Do these treatments require an intensive post-care routine?

People can resume their normal routine soon after the treatment. With 20 years of experience in this field, we've mastered the science that requires minimum post-treatment care from the patient's end. In most cases, one would require to use the prescribed creams for a couple of days. Sometimes we ask the patient to come for a follow up meeting to see if any add-on therapy is needed to enhance the benefits.

Is there any advance therapy for hair loss in men?

Except in the cases of complete baldness, hair regain therapy can be done by means of specialised stem cells. This requires about three to five sessions, and we have witnessed positive results in most people.

INXS ANTI-AGING AND OBESITY CLINIQUE

1st Floor, Below-Daily Bread,
Vyalikaval, 36, 2nd Main
Rd, Guttahalli, Bengaluru,
Karnataka 56000
M: 9845002024
Phone: 080 2331 1774
drkeerthi@hotmail.com;
drsangeethapatel@gmail.com

IS THE LOCKDOWN-STRESS AGEING YOU FASTER?

In Conversation with **Dr Keerthi Patel** and **Dr Sangeetha Patel**—founders of INXS Anti-Ageing and Obesity Clinique—on how to fight stress-triggered ageing

As the lockdown stress can translate into skin concerns for many, *Femina* consults industry experts Dr Keerthi Patel and Dr Sangeetha Patel for expert insights on ageing skin during times of stress and uncertainty. With over two decades of experience in the field, the experts come with in-depth knowledge and global exposure, offering the best and most advanced services to cater to all skin-related needs.

Can stress trigger ageing and/or weight gain?

As a plethora of worries is surrounding us at the moment, the stress hormone can lead to wrinkles and sagging in cases of persistent anxiety. In addition, poor and inconsistent dietary habits during the lockdown can result in malabsorption of essential nutrients, a potential cause behind dry and dull skin. Stress eating can also cause weight gain, leading to a noticeable double chin.

What are some effective remedies to keep signs of ageing at bay?

At INXS Clinique, we offer non-surgical procedures to treat ageing skin concerns. These quick and effective treatments take from anywhere between 30 to 120 minutes. One can see significant results after the therapy, and the results can last for between six months to three years. Some need only one session, others may require two or more, depending on their individual needs. For the



treatment, we target skin at the molecular level for strengthening the skin structure and integrity. It is a combination of stem cells derived from plants, the patient's own platelet cells, FDA-approved skin laser techniques, and collagen strengthening therapies. The focus is to offer treatments that are uncomplicated, inexpensive, and give evident results.

Are these treatments limited to facial skin, or do you also have such cures to tighten sagging body skin?

Skin sagging is most common in cases of childbirth or drastic weight loss. In such cases, regaining firm skin texture is not possible with exercising and healthy eating alone; it requires extra support. At INXS, we

MIC DROP

With digital platforms currently ruling the roost, podcasting has emerged as a great option for many. **Aishwarya Acharya** brings you the low-down



The lockdown has cast a rather gloomy cloud over the [professional lives](#) of many, with each day bringing a renewed fear if one would have to face the metaphoric guillotine in the organisation. But until it actually happens, there is no reason to despair, especially when technology has paved new ways of business operations. At such a time, it wouldn't hurt to utilise this time to up your tech skills and explore other opportunities. During this digital movement, podcasts are doing well. Podcast literally means an episodic audio series available on the internet for people to download on their devices. It can either have a host or a series of guests to discuss

a topic or hold casual conversations depending on the format of your content. We bring you the nitty gritty to develop your podcast skills.

➔ **Starter Pack**

Multiple mediums are available to start your channel, but you need to know what your base will be. As a podcast is an audio series, the onus completely weighs on the content and narrative. Mumbai-based Roshan Abbas, an established creator on Spotify and founder of Kommune, radio jockey, and theatre actor, advises, "The first and the most crucial step is to have a strong podcast idea that will help build you an audience. If you get that right,

then creating the actual podcast becomes much easier with the online tools available. Anchor, for instance, allows you to record, edit, and add music. Once the episode or the series is ready, you can directly upload and publish your podcast, live for the world to listen to."

For people looking to host more than one show, Mae Thomas, founder of Maed in India, Mumbai, suggests Libsyn. "It is the largest podcast distribution platform. Some of the most popular podcasts in the world are hosted by Libsyn. It is a paid platform, and distributes to almost all podcast apps, and offers prompt customer service," she adds.

Ashwin Gunjkar, a Dharwad-based content creator and podcaster

at 99% Tripping on Spotify, shares his first tryst with podcasting during the pandemic. "Being a Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) aspirant, I have had a chance to gather knowledge on various topics, and was looking for a platform to share my opinions, thoughts, and ideas. When I learned about podcasts, I felt it would be the perfect medium to put forth my ideas on common things that are not oft of. The ideal minimum requirement is having an idea and the necessary content. I started recording with my smartphone with a software application," he says.

➔ **Initial Investment**

Before setting out to venture into something completely new, what are the investments that are required, should you ask? Then, the answer is simple! Financially, almost nothing, you can recording with your smart phone. Time-wise, you don't need to quit your job or be at a specific location to be able to record a podcast. You can do it within the confines of your home after work hours. "Anyone with access to a

basic setup, which includes a laptop, mic or a recorder and headphones, can explore. Also, have a basic understanding of audio dos and don'ts, such as room acoustics or noise reduction, since these tiny precautionary measures help greatly during editing. Once the content is ready, it is a good practice to

TIME-WISE, YOU DON'T NEED TO QUIT
YOUR JOB OR BE AT A SPECIFIC LOCATION TO
BE ABLE TO RECORD A PODCAST.



Don't look for expensive set-ups initially. Instead, start with basics like laptop, smartphone, or a recorder



Roshan Abbas

Established Creator on Spotify
and Founder of Kommune

"The first and the most crucial step is to have a strong podcast idea that will help build you an audience. If you get that right, then creating the actual podcast becomes much easier with the online tools available. Anchor, for instance, allows you to record, edit, and add music."



Mae Thomas

Founder, Maed in India

"I suggest running a test pilot for the show and see how it sounds. Once you have your idea in place, and have figured out the format for your show, send it to a few people to listen to, and get some feedback. You're friends and family are your biggest cheerleaders and biggest critics."

work with a hosting partner (podcast aggregator) to boost your distribution potential," advises Ishani Dasgupta, lead, podcast partnerships at JioSaavn.

Rushing into launching your podcast won't do you any good, Thomas puts in a word of caution. "I suggest running a test pilot for the show and seeing how it sounds. Once you have your idea in place, and have figured out the format for your show, send it to a few people to listen to, and get some feedback. Your friends and family are your biggest cheerleaders and hardest critics."

Thomas also suggests setting up the frequency of the show whether it is weekly, fortnightly, or monthly. "Weekly is ideal to attract audience. Also, make sure you have a couple of episodes banked so that you're not pressured in the week to rush the release. Give yourself some buffer time to work on your next episodes," she adds.

Beginners looking for external sources to produce their podcasts can participate in the Kommune Pitchfest, where the best of ideas will be selected and produced thereafter, informs Abbas. >

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



➔ Checklist

As it is said, to be an influencer, one needs to connect with the audience via the content. To keep a listener hooked for a stipulated time, you need to keep certain things in mind. "It is essential to define your audience and frame a general skeleton of the topic the podcast should cover along with a general objective. For instance, if you want to start a chat show, define the overarching theme to be able to plan your guests. Similarly, if it is a storytelling show, the podcaster needs to feature appealing stories. Popularity and engagement depend heavily on this understanding," says Dasgupta. Once the outline has been finalised and established, the podcaster must then shift focus to building a content plan. This helps in maintaining consistency and getting a broader perspective. "Beginners can use themes like books, films, conspiracy theories, travel, history as they perform really well," says Gunjkar.

➔ Monetise

At the end, one needs to realise the financial value of his/her skills and work. As is the case with [other influencer options](#) like on Instagram



Keep your your audience hooked with fresh and updated

ONCE THE OUTLINE
HAS BEEN FINALISED
AND ESTABLISHED,
**THE PODCASTER
MUST THEN
SHIFT FOCUS
TO BUILDING A
CONTENT PLAN.**

or Facebook, you can monetise your podcasts too, by channelling advertisement revenues.

Podcasters can approach this in two ways, Dasgupta suggests. "Podcasters can choose to directly approach advertisers or enter into a mutually agreed upon revenue share deal with the hosting partner. In the first case, advertisers will dynamically insert audio ads in the beginning, middle, or towards the end (pre, mid, and post roll slots) of an episode. The second way of advertising is by way of 'host reads', which can be integrations or mentions that are read out by the podcast hosts themselves," she says. Other avenues for monetisation include revenue from licensing content, subscription, and offering it as a service or merchandising.

Besides sponsorships and advertising, there are various services that automatically carry out ad-insertions. "In Audioboom, you can provide them with timestamps for where ads can be inserted. You can then the notify ads you're comfortable with. Services like Podcorn can connect podcasters to brands as well," suggests Thomas. **F**



Ashwin Gunjkar
Content Creator and
Podcaster at 99% Tripping

"Being a Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) aspirant, I have had a chance to gather knowledge on various topics and was looking for a platform to share my opinions, thoughts, and ideas. When I learned about podcasts, I felt it would be the perfect medium to put forth my ideas on common things that are not off of."



Ishani Dasgupta
Lead, Podcast
Partnerships at JioSaavn

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It would be an understatement to say that the COVID-19 pandemic has completely changed the way we live, interact with people, and make new connections. With nowhere to go and nobody to meet in the real sense, we're reaching out virtually to the outer world from our locked-down spaces for our social sustenance. Not surprisingly, activity on multiple dating apps has seen a significant surge in recent times.

According to Delhi-based marriage and relationships counsellor Shivani Misri Sadhoo, "It is easy for a human

mind to get bored when you are not supposed to do what you normally do. When you are stuck at one place for a prolonged duration (especially without any other human being around) it can get lonely, so it's natural to seek a human connection, even if virtual." Read on to know how the lockdown has changed the dating trends.

LONGER CONVERSATIONS

According to Ravi Mittal, founder of QuackQuack, people are browsing more profiles and taking time to read them. "Since people cannot date

offline, chatting on the app has taken centre stage as is evident from a sharp jump of 40 per cent increase in daily chats. The COVID situation has made people anxious, lonely, and bored so singles are chatting extensively. Since there is no pressure to meet, people are exploring more profiles and talking to more people." He also says people are chatting with strangers to understand and share how they are dealing with the COVID situation.

For Sheena Singh*, the time >

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



A BOOM IN NUMBERS



Tinder saw 3+ billion swipes on Sunday, March 29 alone. This is more than on any

single day in the history of Tinder.

And, this was before Passport, a paid feature for Tinder Plus and Gold subscribers was made free.

"Social distancing hasn't meant disconnecting for Tinder members. Globally, more members are swiping right on someone new, having more conversations overall, and those conversations are lasting longer. Stay home, be safe, social distancing, 'how are you', wash your hands and face emojis are seen on bios," a Tinder spokesperson tells us.



QuackQuack, another dating platform announced that it was witnessing a surge as

huge as 80 per cent in its userbase during the lockdown period. The platform has over eight million active users, and is adding 18,000 new users per day since the lockdown started. The number of chats has jumped to five lakh per day from 3.5 lakh chats per day.



Bumble saw a similar spike with an 11 per cent increase in Gen Z registrations

during the week ending March 27, versus the week ending March 13. It also witnessed a 29 per cent increase in messages sent during the same period. "It's not just the rise in the number of chats, but also more than two in five chats are turning into something more meaningful with a large number of messages exchanged," the Bumble spokesperson informed us.



WHEN PEOPLE CAN'T MEET IN PERSON, THEY ARE RESOURCEFUL IN FINDING WAYS TO DATE.

spent on a dating app pre-lockdown was more about casual fun and quick profile visits, often in the company of friends, without any intention to take it any further. "Now with all the time in the world and nothing much to do, I am actually spending more time on each profile and sometimes striking meaningful conversations. I also speak for longer periods of time, now that there is no option to meet in person and take it further, at least, for the time being," she says.

Tinder reports that on the app, daily conversations have been up an average of 20 per cent around the world, and the average length of the conversations is 25 per cent longer. In India, conversations have been up an average of 39 per cent and the average length of conversations is 28 per cent longer (daily and average conversation data is based on increases from February 20 to March 26).

Bumble says that there has been a 17 per cent increase in video calls during the week ending March 27, versus video calls during the week ending March 13. The average call

time is 14 minutes, which is much higher compared to the past. Interestingly, users around the world are increasingly mentioning COVID-19 and coronavirus in their profiles.

MATCHES ON DATING PLATFORMS

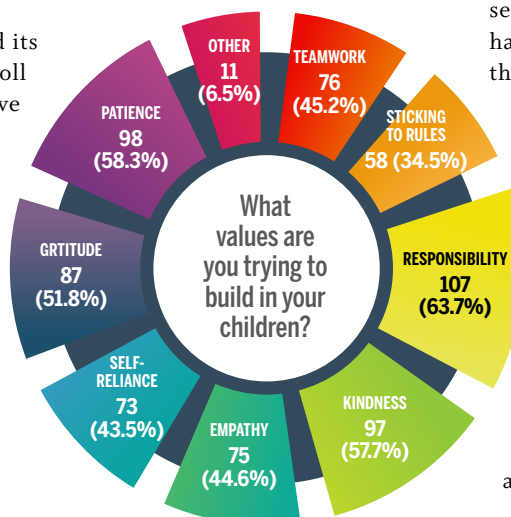
OkCupid has seen an increase by 10 per cent worldwide since March 2020, and conversations have increased over 20 per cent. According to Ariel Charytan, CEO, OkCupid, 85 per cent of the users on app believe it's important to develop an emotional connection before a physical one, and the switch to virtual dates has allowed these emotional connections to thrive. "When people can't meet in person, they are resourceful in finding ways to date. In fact, there have actually been over 50 million 'intro' messages sent across the world on our app over the last month among daters connecting for the first time. People are looking for human connection now more than ever before," Charytan concludes.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The unexpected situations resulting from the lockdown are enabling parents to build values in their children, finds **Shraddha Kamdar**



With the lockdown and its extensions taking a toll on the public, we have learned to manage the digital way. Besides, the situation has proved that man is capable of adapting soon enough and can set new habits when the time demands it. For [parents who are facing multiple challenges](#) while being at home—their own work, children's classes, cooking, cleaning, among other things—the pandemic has provided a



chance to relook at the ways they build values in their children.

When Femina asked parents how they were coping, 75 per cent said it was challenging. But with these challenges, they agreed that they were using the time to build values and develop skills in their children. The informal survey that saw responses from 171 parents, threw up some interesting insights.



RESPONSIBILITY, YOU RULE

Teaching children to accept responsibility is an uphill task, but experts believe that children can be given responsibility even as young as two years old. Among our respondents, 63.7 per cent said they were teaching their children to accept responsibility. Mumbai-based Sejal Shah, mother of two boys, 13 and nine, says that her sons have been managing their schoolwork on their own. "Initially they needed assistance since the classes suddenly went digital, but now they are set. Additionally, my husband and I have devised a plus and minus points chart for them to take their responsibilities seriously," she informs. Shah has left the duty of keeping their rooms, bathrooms, and cupboards tidy to her children, and helping with dinner prep, even cooking it

sometimes. She believes that only words can't do the trick, children have to be thrown headfirst into their responsibilities. "Before the lockdown, we had help with our chores.

Necessity has made us take it up, and now I will ensure we all continue," she says. >



PATIENCE, YOU TOUGH ONE!

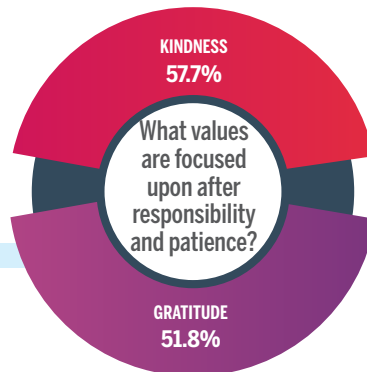
It is not called a virtue for nothing. It is tough to build and getting tougher with the new generation since they have come into the world at a time of instant gratification. A 2013 Swedish study titled *Adolescent Time Preferences Predict Lifetime Outcome* (conducted with 13,606 children aged 13), finds that “patience among adolescents matters in the very long run and for a wider variety of outcomes”. These outcomes include choice of profession and behavioural characteristics. No wonder then, that 63.7 per cent of our respondents said they were trying to build [patience among their children](#).

Mumbai tutor Reena Jhaveri found it tricky to establish certain expectations from her two children, aged 11 and six, since each would instigate the other for some mischief. She finally managed to lay the rule that she is not to be disturbed when she’s over the phone, “I faced tantrums,



Parents must lead by example and not by words

Parents believe that no values can be taught independent of each other, but some can be inculcated young.



KINDNESS AND GRATITUDE

Among the respondents, 57.7 per cent said they are trying to inculcate kindness and 51.8 per cent said they are teaching gratitude to their children. Parents believe that no values can be taught independent of each other, but some can be inculcated young. “My boys are seven and three, and understand the meaning of kindness. They have to experience it to pay it forward, so we talk to them about instances when someone has shown kindness towards them,

and ask them to conjure a situation in which they can pay it forward,” says media person Chandni Mehta*, based in Mumbai.

An interesting approach she uses is to pause a TV programme at a crucial moment and ask her older son what he would’ve done in that situation. She also emphasises the need to say thank you, and follows the practice herself, for the children to learn it.



bawling, even rolling on the floor, but I didn’t give up. They had to be taught the need and value for waiting it out,” she says. Her children have begun to pay heed to wait their turn for looking up something on the computer, watching TV, or even playing with the parents. Nothing will come instantly.

Jhaveri doesn’t hesitate to punish her children appropriately to discipline them in a bid to make them understand the ramifications of their behaviour. “Last week, I needed some stationery from my older kid, and I repeatedly asked her until she had to pause what she was doing and give it to me. She was evidently annoyed, but neither of us said anything at the time. The next day I took it up as a teaching moment and we had a constructive chat,” she says.

Shah adds that she uses the examples of corona quarantining to explain patience to her children. “We speak to them about the necessity to wait 14 days in quarantine, the need for multiple testing even if the first result is negative, and of course, the safety of being home, which all require patience,” she says. As a result, news items are becoming a point of discussion and knowledge in her house, apart from learning about patience. **f**

FEMINA

FASHION

COLOUR THERAPY

Let fluorescent shades help your wardrobe beam brighter this season

Twisted hoop enamel stud earrings, ₹1,050, Accessorize

ABHISHEK

KOCHÉ

VICTORIA BECKHAM

VERANDAH

MANISH ARORA

VALENTINO

Draped cape-effect silk-crepe dress, price on request, Brandon Maxwell

Flow stack rings, ₹7,400, Misho

Cylindrical Crossbody Bag, ₹1,399, Forever 21

Virago shoes, ₹6,599, Aldo



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CHECK- MATE

Give your basic
pantsuit an
inventive update
with square pegs
that are cool this
season.

Double-breasted
blazer, ₹3,999,
H&M



Black leather
belt, price on
request, Fendi



Textured hoops,
₹18,800, Misho



Double zip
pointed toe ankle
boots, ₹8,999,
Charles & Keith

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Get a lowdown on fashion
trends that you can
experiment with by mixing
and matching
pieces from your
wardrobe

Sheer mesh
top, ₹990,
Zara



Woven Crop
top, ₹899,
Forever 21

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SHIVAN AND NARRESH

OH celeste cosmos
ring, ₹8,500,
Outhouse



Eyelet-
embellished
mules, ₹5,499,
Charles & Keith



PEEK-A- BOO

Adding a layer
of sheer to
your outfit is
a subtle way
of tapping into
the summer
season.



VALENTINO

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Floral shirt dress,
₹2,190, IS.U



Enery earrings,
₹6,000, AlmaFive
Jewellery



Butterfly
sunglasses, price
on request, Polo
Ralph Lauren



Romy Medium
Satchel,
₹35,990, Kate
Spade New York

JUNGLE PARADISE

If florals for
spring do not feel
groundbreaking,
make way for
tropical print
motifs for that
extra edge.



Pinstripe
waistcoat,
₹3,990, Zara



Spirit earrings,
₹6,590,
Swarovski



Leather
boots, price
on request,
Gianvito
Rossi



Striped paperbag
shorts, ₹2,499,
Vero Moda



Hermi-saddle sling,
₹5,270, Cord >



SAINT LAURENT

DEFINING MOMENT

Add dimension to
your look with
waistcoats that are
making a mark on
runways, and are
perfect for jazzing
up any look.

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Fringe trim linen maxi dress, price on request, Fabiana Filippi

La Chaîne, ₹12,950, Misho

Stackable rings, ₹2,500, Accessorize

FLOUNCE CRAFT
Take fringe out of festival territory, and opt for everyday summer basics and accessories with detailing.

Vintage halo sling, ₹5,270, Cord

Arianna shoes, ₹5,399, Aldo

SUNSHINE HUES
Brighten up your outfit with yellow, which has emerged as the hottest colour of spring/summer fashion.

Top, ₹2,490, UNIQLO X Hana Tajima

The Lynx midi ring, ₹3,200, Outhouse

Flared trousers, ₹3,990, Zara

Pure Viola, ₹7,499, Clarks

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RIDHI MEHRA

PADA AVIS

SELF-SUFFICIENT INDIA WITH LABEL VARSHA



We live in an age where the category/division of women's clothing have been largely dominated by westernized trends, styles, and patterns. Label Varsha has taken this course of traditional Indian wear and transformed it into a style statement that reaches a new level. It is when adept designers like Yashraj Bhaiya started exploring the innovativeness in the deep market of 'traditional Indian wear' that its normalcy and conservative status grew into something that was much sought after. Cutting-edge discoveries ensued, where the use of new-age digital and electronic technology intermixed with handicrafts and embroidery, was brought into the long-established Indian fashion field.

An uproar of the will to be self-sufficient has taken over every Indian's tongue. Individuals are straying away from excessive and compulsive buying habits and turning to sustainable and ecological solutions

instead. A brand's values that coincide with the need of the hour, i.e., 'sustainability' is Label Varsha.

Label Varsha is an Indian ethnic wear brand for women that interweaves traditionality with contemporary thoughts and likings. Label Varsha, with wide offerings of some of the most breathable cotton fabrics, turns their focus to artisan's talents, the handiwork of embroidery, and the adoption of enduring production practices.

Staying true to their motto of being an 'every woman's brand', Label Varsha's offerings cater to women of all ages, from every background. An all-inclusive approach is one that is followed ardently, ensuring that through the amalgamation of various fabrics and intricate weaving methods, every woman's needs are met. With the inception of its digital platform (www.labelvarsha.com), Label Varsha has been able to further expand its offerings to a global scale, with a variety of outfits to choose from. A blend of exceptional contributions in the space of Indian ethnic wear for women, Label Varsha works towards a durable tomorrow.



VARSHA

for more information, visit
www.labelvarsha.com | [@labelvarsha](https://www.instagram.com/labelvarsha)

ALL THAT JAZZ

Add an ounce of funk to your mundane flip flops with these few easy steps



TOOLS & MATERIALS:

- 1 pair of flip flops
- 3 yards of ribbon
- Paillettes
- Needle and thread
- Hot glue gun



Step 1

Using your hot glue gun, apply a small amount of glue at the outside base of your flip flop and stick the end of the ribbon to it. Start wrapping the ribbon around the strap of your flip flops.

Step 2

Once you cover the entire strap, from centre inwards, start wrapping the ribbon back and forth, inside out, halfway through the straps as shown.

Step 3

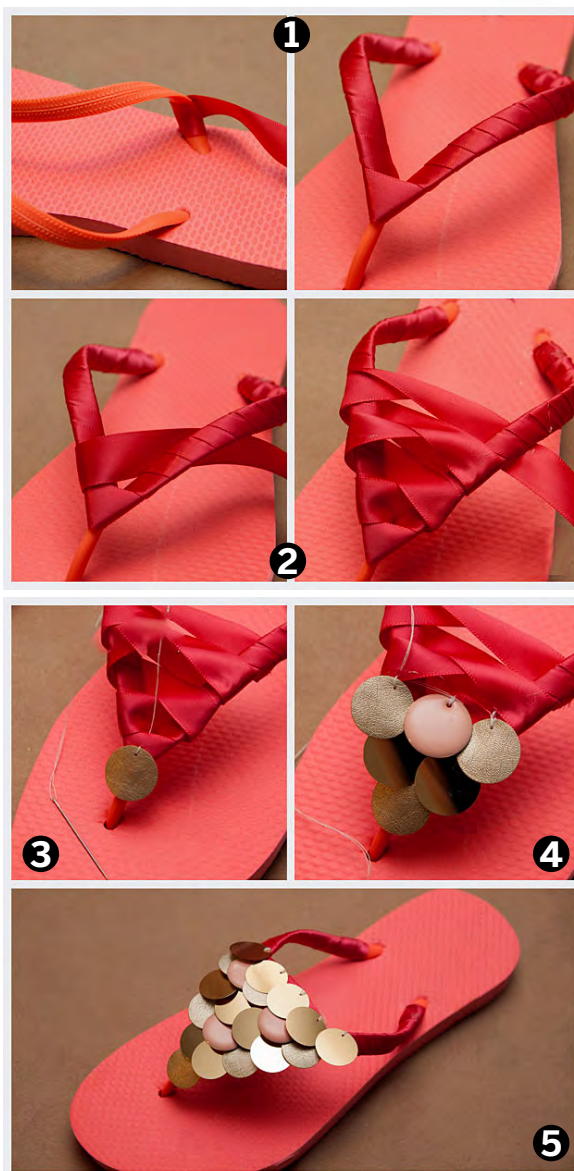
Figure out your pattern with your paillettes, and lay it out on the ribbon. I used three different types. Start sewing your paillettes from the lower end.

Step 4

Gradually move up, adding and sewing your paillettes as you advance in your design.

Step 5

When you finish sewing, be sure to tie off your end securely. Enjoy wearing this beauty.





Step 1

Starting at the base of the flip flop, using your super glue, stick your first row of lace along the bottom half of the strap.

Step 2

Repeat with your second row of lace along the top edge of the strap.

Step 3

Put a drop of glue in the centre of the flip flops and press your rhinestones or beads into it.

Step 4

Have fun with these and make them as sparkly or simple as you like! Either way your feet will thank you!



TOOLS & MATERIALS:

- Flip flops
- Eyelet lace—two yards
- Rhinestones or beads
- Jewels or stones
- Super glue **F**

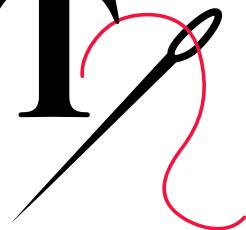


[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



SAFETY NET

As everything comes to a halt owing to the pandemic, fashion designers taking measures to safeguard their businesses and craftsmen, finds **Ruman Baig**



Where does fashion stand in this daunting period of the COVID-19 pandemic? Much like every other industry, it is in a state of uncertainty. From a tiny vintage boutique to a multi-designer store, all of it has come to a halt.

Besides the regular trade, the most awaited events of the year like fashion weeks and the Met Gala have been indefinitely postponed. Designers and brands have a massive

challenge ahead of them. Not only do they need to safeguard their businesses, but also protect the livelihood of their labourers, the spine of their brands.

In times like these, designers and labels have enforced protective measures for their artisans to ensure their financial well-being. In a brief conversation with *Femina*, multiple labels spoke about their strategies to sustain their businesses, and the measures they are implementing to protect their craftsmen.

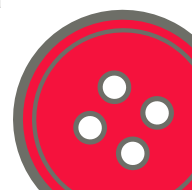
SHRIYA BHUPAL — Shriya Som

"Let me start by saying that we are in this together. As a fashion brand, we have to fuel ahead with proper economic planning, the results of which will help the stability of the brand. My measures include ensuring the well-being of my employees and their families, finding alternative business strategies, and most importantly, sustaining newer creative endeavours with zero-waste solutions. The tech industry has been flouting the principles and gains of outsourcing since the past decade, and that is a solution we will adopt, wherein we recruit our craftsmen and skilled labourers in their environment and offering them contract jobs, thus outsourcing some production."



SANJAY GARG — Raw Mango

"We must acknowledge that things are changing on a day-to-day basis. What one can do best is to manage the situation sensitively and proactively, keeping in mind the well-being of all. At Raw Mango, we have teams across retail, design, admin, in-house production, and regional weaver clusters—and all operations have been suspended indefinitely. We are trying our best to reflect on our offerings for the future by working from home, which is new for us. We are also fortunate to be in a position where we financially can wait this out and emerge, having reflected on opportunities for the future."





MONICA AND KARISHMA — Jade

"The world is under lockdown, and we think our focus as a responsible business is to ensure the safety and health of our teams. It's also important to communicate with our audiences, whether it's the buyers, suppliers, vendors, etc, on how the lockdown is being handled and how we can accommodate each of their needs. If trust and relationships are maintained, businesses will emerge without too much damage, and we will be able to sustain business models in the long run, which is more important."



RINA SINGH — Eka

"Our primary focus at this time is to ensure that our employees' salaries and benefits reach them so that they can sustain themselves. We will also be working towards ensuring all advances for our weaver network are processed, so we come out stronger post this slowdown. Currently, our studio and factory are shut, and so are our order deliveries. Hopefully, with our retail partners resuming operations, we will start taking small steps to rejoin the workplace. I am confident that we will see a bounce back in August-September. There will be a rise in discretionary spends."

ANJUL BHANDARI

"Most responsible brands are ensuring that their craftsmen are well-taken care of. At the same time, all customer queries and concerns about current and future orders are being answered with as much possible information available to us considering the current situation. It is a difficult time; we are all doing as much as we can. Further, the business climate will have to be re-assessed when we are back to working (not remotely but from our studios, stores, and workshops). Our craftsmen back in Awadh are fortunately able to work from home, and in times of isolation, it is a saving grace for them mentally and financially. They will continue to be paid regularly for the work they do, and we are also working towards providing further provisions for our other workers so they are safe and can sustain their livelihood."



PUNIT BALANA

"Both our stores and the manufacturing unit have been closed to ensure the safety of all our staff. The marketing and design team is working from home. The lockdown due to the pandemic will affect the business massively, but it's important to adhere to regulations. Online sales are the only means of sustainability during these difficult times. We have communicated to our customers about the delay in deliveries. We are hoping that this lockdown would help stabilise the situation, and we can all get back to our normal lives soon. Talking about our craftsmen, we have given them paid leaves with advance to ensure that their families are taken care of during this time of emergency."

K RADHARAMAN — House of Angadi

"In these difficult times, the first duty of entrepreneurs is to ensure business continuity. And to this end, we have activated our contingency plan. As a business house, we always try to remain nimble in our business plans to be able to respond to any situation. Immediately, we have postponed all nonessential, discretionary spends that would have otherwise been carried out. We are also trying our best to bifurcate future product launches since we have lost valuable preparation time in these past few weeks. We have pledged to continue providing full wage support to the hundreds of weavers and artisans we work with, regardless of their ability to work from home." **E**



TRANSCENDING TRADITIONS

Heritage revivalist **Sanjukta Dutta** talks to **Ruman Baig** about how moving backwards in fashion is the only way forward



Sanjukta Dutta found her true calling in fashion after working as an engineer for 10 years in the Public Works Department in Assam. Despite having no formal training in this stream, Dutta managed to make a flourishing career as a designer, by putting her culture on the map. Dutta's passion towards Assam's heritage can be traced back to her childhood, when she handcrafted the Mekhela Chador (traditional Assamese ensemble) for those close to her. It was a revival of this cultural gem from her hometown that made her realise her potential, and paved the way for her new-found career.

In 2012, Dutta launched her eponymous label, which began gaining popularity for its modern take on classic Mekhela Chador. Her design ideology stems from her traditional lineage, which she refers to as a treasure of inspiration. Contrary to the world of fast fashion, quick money, and deteriorating working conditions for the labourers, Dutta's label is all about supporting the

"INDIAN HANDLOOMS AND TEXTILES ARE A PART OF OUR RICH CULTURAL HERITAGE. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE PRESERVE THEM AND PASS THEM ON."



dying craft while safeguarding the interests of weavers and craftsmen behind the intricacies of her designs. But does her revivalist label look at restoring the traditional Assamese craft alone? No. Dutta has also designed ensembles that have influences from all over India. From the Bandhej of Gujarat, Leheria from Rajasthan, and Ari from Kashmir, her designs are the perfect marriage of traditional and modern. In a free-flowing conversation with *Femina*, the designer talks in depth about her craft, how her hand-woven wonders go through a 25- to 45-day period of production, setting an all-time new standard for precision and quality control, the importance of retaining heritage, and why protecting artisans is her topmost priority.



“FUSING TOGETHER THE TRADITIONAL STYLES AND PRINTS OF DIFFERENT CULTURES INTO ONE UNIQUE CUSTOMISED GARMENT HAS ALWAYS FASCINATED ME.”

What inspired you to work with traditional Indian handicraft and weaves?

Hailing from Assam, I have always had a strong fondness for Mekhela Chador. Growing up, this liking turned into my passion, eventually leading me to become a full-time fashion designer. Another reason for venturing into this career was the urge I felt to revive the handicraft industry. Due to a lack of demand for these crafts, the artisans found it increasingly difficult to manage finances, and were opting for alternative ways to earn a livelihood.

The revival and redesigning of traditional textiles has been a major part of your brand. Tell us a little more about it.

Indian handlooms and textiles are a part of our rich cultural heritage. It is imperative that we preserve them and pass them on. Future generations have to learn to



cherish and celebrate their heritage. Moreover, this helps encourage and provide employment to local and talented artisans. During my initial days in this field, I learned that fast fashion and an increase in power looms have led to a lot of weavers turning away from traditional handicrafts. To keep the handlooms alive and motivate artisans back into the craft, we not only pay them a salary, we also look after other aspects like education for their children, medical needs, and lodging for them and their families. A large portion of our profits is reinvested to motivate more artisans to return to their craft.

What are the different handicrafts and weaves that you work with, and why?

I believe that clothing is not just about an outer appearance, but an integral part of the wearer's identity. I love playing with colours and designs. Some of my work draws influence from Bandhej, Leheria, Aari, and >



digital prints. I experiment with traditional textures and blend them with modern accents. Fusing together the traditional styles and prints of different cultures into one unique customised garment has always fascinated me.

How are you safeguarding your skilled craftsmen and daily wage labourers who may have found themselves out of work during this pandemic?

This pandemic is perhaps one of the most unfortunate events in recent times. While it has affected everyone on different levels, daily wage earners are the most affected. I spread awareness about the disease within my team to avoid panic. I ensure they adhere to safety guidelines. Apart from their basic wages, benefits like education, medical costs, lodging and boarding, health insurance, and incentives are still being issued regularly so that they can live like they were before the lockdown.

Life as we know it will change in the post-COVID world. As a brand, how are you looking to adapt to this change and make sure your business is back on track?

At this current juncture, the health and safety of the artisans is our priority. We are working towards creating safer and hygienic working conditions, so that post the lockdown, the entire team can work efficiently while



“EVERY MEKHELA CHADOR IS DESIGNED, CUSTOMISED AND HANDCRAFTED BY A SELECT GROUP OF SPECIALISED MEKHELA CHADOR ARTISANS.”

maintaining the social distancing norms. We have also reserved higher health and medical incentives for our employees.

Every piece designed under your brand, goes through a 45-day process. Can you tell us a little more about that?

Every Mekhela Chador is designed, customised, and handcrafted by a select group of specialised Mekhela Chador artisans. The material used is locally produced by rearing silkworms and getting cocoons of a particular lineage of worms found only in a single village in Assam. The Mekhela Chador has to go through multiple processes like de-gumming of the silk, warping, drafting, and denting, among many others, before it is ready. The process of creating a design on an ordinary loom is time consuming, and requires a lot of attention from the weavers. This method takes much more time, depending on the complexity of the design and the type of loom. Hence it takes a minimum of 25 days to 45 days to weave one set, and the colour and lustre brightens up with time. **F**

CONSUMER INGREDIENTS
CHOICE (PER 100)

HAIRCARE

SKINCARE

55%

57%

Organic Ingredients

68%

71%

Natural Ingredients

38%

37%

Botanical Ingredients

Source: Euromonitor (published in Economic Times)

INDIAN BEAUTY AND
PERSONAL CARE EVOLUTION

For face care, consumers are moving towards the integration of health and wellness in skincare products.

For hair care, consumers are warming up to more evolved western-style care regimes to avoid damage.

Source: Ministry of Economy and Industry



CHEMISTRY OF COSMETICS: UNDERSTANDING INGREDIENTS

Make the most of your quarantine self-care by getting aware of the new ingredients in your skin and haircare products, says **Sukriti Shahi**

Let's face it, these two months under lockdown have made all of us to use the time to reflect on our health. It's ironical how it took a virus to make us rethink and analyse our health practices. Talking of which, it's incredible how most of us have found our long lost love for self-care by indulging in skin and haircare. Whether it's about putting a morning and nighttime beauty routine in place or trying DIY remedies to treat skin and scalp concerns, we all have started to pamper ourselves, just that tad bit more!

As beauty regime has become an essential part of our day, there's no better time than this to make a mindful decision about it. One of the major components about it is contemplating about ingredients in our products.

E-commerce portals have also listed skin and haircare under essentials. If you are adding products to your quarantine-special shopping cart, make sure to learn about ingredients in your products. Here are some of the newer ingredients that have taken the beauty industry by storm.

Electrolytes

Don't you reach for that bottle of electrolytes when you run a marathon, sweat it out in gym, or just feel dehydrated? It's because electrolyte drinks supply your dehydrated body with the required minerals. In the same manner, electrolytes for your skin cater to starved, thirsty, dehydrated skin. But, before we see how we can make electrolytes take once dull skin to whole new levels of radiance, let's first understand the ingredient, shall we?

What are electrolytes?

It comes right down to chemistry. Electrolytes—magnesium, potassium, calcium, sodium, chloride, and phosphate—conduct electricity when mixed with water. And we're all aware of the fact that the human body naturally has electricity coursing through it. In fact, this electricity is rather essential when it comes to cell renewal. "There are different types of electrolytes, the most important ones for skin are mineral electrolytes such as potassium, sodium, copper, calcium, and magnesium," says Paula Begoun, founder, Paula's Choice Skincare.

In fact, electrolytes also aid in the effective functioning of other ingredients like vitamins and ceramides. "Mineral electrolytes work by enhancing the effectiveness of hydrating substances in skin such as hyaluronic acid, glycerin, ceramides, and even water by making sure they all get to where they are needed to maintain balanced levels of moisture," explains Begoun.

So, what does including electrolytes in skincare mean? When the skin loses electrolytes, it looks dull and lifeless. Electrolytes help replenish depleting moisture levels, and strengthen the skin's barrier. "Aquaporins are the intricate system of channels found in all layers of skin, and are responsible for the normal flow of moisture. One of the major functions of mineral electrolytes is to restore and support the skin's aquaporins," says Begoun.

MINERALS AND HYDRATION

Minerals (in the skincare products) are absorbed in the skin with the help of the skin's water content. These minerals then get electrically charged, and become electrolytes which then work to stimulate skin water channels, restoring hydration levels in dull and lifeless skin.



How do they work?

Since water in the body follows the flow of electrolytes, using electrolyte-infused products draws water into the skin, thus increasing its levels of [hydration](#). The presence of electrolytes in skincare means providing your skin with an efficient and functioning system for retention and redistribution of moisture to every part of the face.

Incorporating electrolytes into skincare

Electrolyte-infused skincare is ideal for dry and dull skin. Moreover, as we age, our skin cells tend to lose their efficiency when it comes to fighting and eliminating various skin stressors that take a toll on our complexion. Electrolytes work to combat this problem. Since, electrolytes work well with water, check for products with a similar consistency. "In >

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order for mineral electrolytes to penetrate and reach the deeper layers of skin, they need to be linked to a skin-identical molecule such as lactate, gluconate, or pyroglutamic acid (PCA, derived from amino acids). Without an effective delivery system, electrolytes won't be able to do their job, so the overall formulation of the product is key," explain Begoun. Electrolyte-infused products are most commonly available in moisturisers and hydrating masks. However, some brands are using electrolytes in face mists and cleansers, too.

Breaking down electrolytes

- Potassium (in electrolytes) facilitates the aquaporins in the skin, and ensures a balanced level of hydration. This mineral also helps organise the lipids which reinforce the skin's protective barrier.
- Magnesium piggybacks on potassium, further improving the skin's hydration level and barrier. It also enhances the skin's natural shedding process, and helps to energise skin cells.
- Calcium helps to retain and preserve moisture in the skin's uppermost layers. Simultaneously, calcium plays a crucial role when it comes to cell turnover. It influences the formation of the new cells and how they travel from the hypodermis to the epidermis.

Peptides

The latest buzzword in the world of skincare ingredients is peptides. It reminds us of our school's chemistry lessons, does it? Well, who knew that 'alien-sounding' chemical names would one day make an essential part of our skincare essentials! Let's details of their role and needs in detail.

RIGHT PEPTIDE PRODUCT

Now, this is tricky! Any short-chain amino acid can be called and labelled as a peptide. So how do you identify if the product you are buying is a marketing gimmick or actually effective? The simplest way to do so is to rely more on science-backed brands that can provide you with studies to support their claims. Also, experts believe that the best formulation to look for peptides is in a serum. Serums usually have a higher concentration of peptides and are easily absorbed by the skin.

If you wish to get into details, look for a specific type of peptide to benefit the skin concern. Like pentapeptides induce collagen growth, hexapeptide may help soothe fine lines and wrinkles and copper peptides enhance regeneration and healing while improving skin elasticity and firmness.



What Are Peptides?

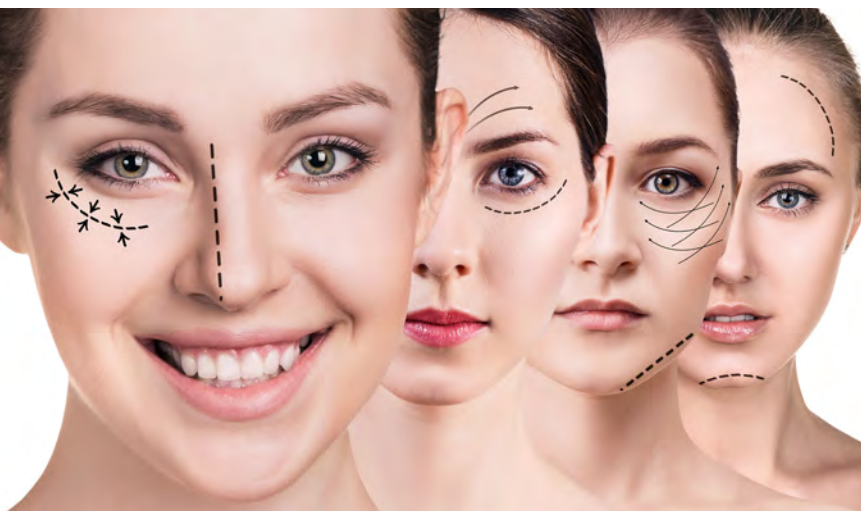
They are chemical compounds composed of short-chain amino acids, which are building blocks of protein. These proteins—collagen, keratin, and elastin—together make the foundation of the skin, giving it strength, elasticity, firmness, and texture.

They are responsible for boosting [collagen production in the skin](#) basically, they tell your skin to produce more collagen. But does applying peptides on our skin help or are they getting popular simply because of the current buzz around collagen?

Peptides are fragmented protein portions; so when they are used in any skincare product, those fragments stimulate collagen growth. As the complete, non-fragmented protein are unable to be absorbed by the skin, these smaller fragments help to get deeper into the skin layers. In short, peptides are the messengers that tell the skin to produce collagen and improve its elasticity.

Benefits Of Peptides

When the skin starts producing more collagen (as signalled by peptides), it starts to look more plumper and younger. Therefore, it visibly reduces the appearance of fine lines. "Peptides are natural components of skin formed by amino acids. These amino acids link together



and create an endless array of peptides that are fundamental building blocks of skin. Each peptide directly influences how skin functions and behaves. In young skin, peptides are resilient and stable and are present at optimal levels keeping skin normal and healthy. Unfortunately over time, peptides become depleted and stop functioning like they did when we were young,” says Begoun.

According to dermatologists, however, peptides, do not reach nerve targets in large numbers to help soothe the fine lines. The result then may not be as smooth as botox, but it may change in coming times! Some experts also feel that peptides alone aren't enough, but if used with other effective ingredients, like antioxidants, can work well.

Skin strengthening and hydrating: Everything happening with our skin more or less revolves around collagen production. Increase in collagen production means that the skin's barrier is automatically getting strengthen. And it also means more hydrated skin.

Prevent skin inflammation: Antioxidants found in peptides exhibit anti-inflammatory properties. Topical application of peptides on the skin can help soothe skin and prevent inflammation. Also, when the collagen level rises in the skin, it helps even out the complexion. Peptides also work to repair damaged skin cells to heal skin from the inside.

Niacinamide

Skin experts consider niacinamide as a miracle ingredient that helps to brighten and hydrate the skin. Niacinamide is also known as vitamin B3 and is loved for its versatility since it suits all skin types and addresses various skin concerns.

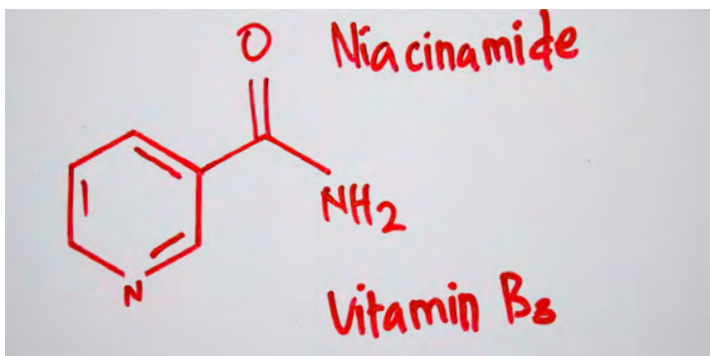
What is Niacinamide?

Niacinamide (vitamin B3) is water-soluble and works in tandem with skin's natural substances. It helps in minimising enlarged pores, preventing [fine lines and wrinkles](#), improving uneven skin tone and unveiling brighter-looking skin. “Research over the past 10 years has shown that niacinamide is a remarkable ingredient for improving skin discolourations and dull skin, especially when used in higher concentrations,” says Begoun. This vitamin is not produced by our body, hence topical use is beneficial for the skin.

Niacinamide has made protective skincare stronger by strengthening the skin barrier. It also diminishes the impact of past damage. Begoun



NIACINAMIDE, ALSO KNOWN AS VITAMIN B3, IS LOVED FOR ITS VERSATILITY SINCE IT SUITS ALL SKIN TYPES AND ADDRESSES VARIOUS SKIN CONCERNS.



SO, DO YOU NEED PEPTIDE SKINCARE?

Well, who doesn't need firmer and smoother skin? All of us can benefit from using products with peptides. Even if you are in your early twenties and want to use it as a preventive measure, you may do so. And that's the biggest pro when it comes to peptides—anyone can use it. Unlike other collagen-boosting ingredients, peptides do not cause any skin irritation and are easily tolerated by everyone.

explains that it helps to form ceramides and keratin—both being vital protective elements in the skin.

How does it work?

Niacinamide is restorative in nature; it helps rebuild cellular energy, repair damaged DNA and reduce the impact of UV rays on the skin. “It also delivers powerful antioxidant properties which interrupt damage from the sun and pollution,” she explains. The vitamin fights internal and external stressors that lead to discolouration, premature ageing, and skin deterioration.

Vitamin B3 helps in reducing skin redness because of its anti-inflammatory properties, maintains hydration, and improves the synthesis of fats to give glowing skin. It is well-suited for people with sensitive skin and those with eczema and rosacea. “You can find niacinamide in a variety of toners, serums, or moisturisers. To see more dramatic results, add a concentrated niacinamide product to your routine,” advises Begoun. >

Quinoa Protein

Quinoa is known as the mother of all grains, an one that's considered as a superfood. A great source of protein, fitness enthusiasts love quinoa, mainly for diet purpose. But who knew this dietary protein could be equally beneficial for hair? We all have seen how keratin treatments became popular specially among women to tame frizzy hair. Keratin is a protein our hair strands are made of. Thus, keratin treatments help reinforce hair bonds making them healthy and shiny. It's not difficult to understand now why quinoa (which is also a protein) can help grow healthy mane.

So, what does it do?

Quinoa is made up of amino acids, which explains why it is effective in strengthening and moisturising of hair. Just like our skin, amino acids are building blocks for our hair. They work as a nutritional supplements for hair.

The reason behind frizzy hair is that the keratin present in hair absorbs water and causes hair strand to swell. When the hair is treated with quinoa, the glycolic acid present in it prevents water absorption, thus, leaving the hair frizz-free and shiny.

Quinoa also helps in preventing hair damage. When the oxygen present in atmosphere interacts with our hair, it damages the outer layer of the strands. This grain has the highest concentration of protein and essential amino acids that our body cannot make on its own. These amino acids match with those present in our hair thus, filling the gaps from that



QUINOA IS MADE UP OF AMINO ACIDS, WHICH EXPLAINS WHY IT IS EFFECTIVE IN STRENGTHENING AND MOISTURISING OF HAIR.



deficit. Experts also believe that because it is an antioxidant, quinoa-enriched hair products can help in preventing the colour from fading.

Micellar Water Technology

Who's not micellar water fan? It has been at the forefront of the beauty arena. It cleans pores, sloughs off dirt and grime from the skin and proves to be an effective first step of double cleansing routine. Now imagine getting the same benefits for hair! Yes, micellar water is now among its mark in hair care segment as well. Scalp is nothing but the tension of the skin and therefore, it deserves the same care you give to your skin.

What does it do?

Micellar is made of micelles—micro-sized cleansing oil droplets that are suspended in water. Micelles have both, oil- and water-loving properties. This technology in the skin and haircare products you use means it will help the product better to stick to the dirt, pollutants, oil and product build-up on scalp and make it easy to cleanse it. These help in attracting minutest dirt particles with our being too aggressive on hair or scalp.

The benefit of using products (specially shampoos) with micellar water technology is that unlike other clarifying shampoos, micellar formulas can be used more frequently. In fact, these are safe for coloured hair too. Micellar formula is milder and do not strip away scalp's natural oil. Result is clean and fresh scalp and hair with the feeling of hydration and moisturisation. **F**





A SIP OF HEALTH

As consumers focus more on the benefits of healthy drinks coupled with a nutritious diet, effervescent supplements make a smashing debut in the market

Topical application of antioxidants and minerals in beauty products can prove to be a boon for skin and hair. However, changes made in diet and lifestyle for internal health can reflect on one's outer beauty as well. Which is why, you are what you eat holds true. And there's nothing better than working on one's internal health to achieve that magical glow and gorgeous head of hair.

Effervescent supplements are becoming increasingly popular. These are designed to break and dissolve in water, creating effervescence and are generally better tasting! These supplements are made to work on bettering the health and condition of skin and hair. If this idea of holistic wellness sounds appealing to you, try Chicnutrix effervescent supplements that work to give you luscious hair and glowing skin.



CHICNUTRIX NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

Chicnutrix products offer a range of beauty nutrition developed with dermatologically-approved effervescent technology. It allows for a large dose of nourishing ingredients to be taken in a single serving, increasing the bioavailability. It just needs to be popped into water, and the active ingredients of this fizzy, refreshing, and nutritious drink, will simultaneously work to solve your beauty needs.

CHICNUTRIX FOR SKIN

Available in two variants—Chicnutrix Glow and Chicnutrix Super C—Chicnutrix products for skin offer solutions for acne-prone and for dull, lifeless skin.

Chicnutrix Glow, which contains Japanese glutathione, and made with Swiss effervescent technology, aims at promoting glowing skin, reduces melanin production, dark spots, and promotes even toned skin. It also offers

consumers a powerful anti-oxidant support against damage from pollution and ultraviolet rays.

Chicnutrix Super C is rich in Amla extract and zinc, and protects the skin from harmful free radicals, aids in the prevention of acne and helps repair skin by reducing acne scars.

CHICNUTRIX FOR HAIR

Chicnutrix Bounce, is one of the most preferred products by consumers. It contains biotin, selenium, and amino acids which help to repair and recover hair health. Available in a delicious raspberry flavour, the product works to give lustrous and bouncy locks. Biotin stimulates hair growth, strengthens hair keratin structure, and provides nourishment. Selenium and amino acids supplements in combination with biotin, help improve hair fall, dry and rough hair, and thinning or splitting of brittle hair.

One tablet, delicious taste, and nourishment from the inside out! **F**



PHOTOGRAPH: MEETESH TANEJA

HOMESPUN *beauty*

Turn those everyday ingredients into your beauty must-haves to beat the out-of-stock woes. Shruti Shukla tells you how

Tough times call for smart measures. There are days when you rummage through your kits only to discover that you have run out of some of your regulars. Fret not, you can always find a household ingredient that can double up as your store-bought product.

Make your beauty products at home with commonly available ingredients. We bring you a list of five such items that can serve you well.

ALOE VERA

What was introduced as beauty royalty in ancient times, caught the attention of the industry in 2010s. Where some opt for store-bought gel tubes and jars, others tend to grow it at home.

Megha Asher, founder of organic beauty brand Juicy Chemistry, tells, "Aloe leaves secrete a clear gel when broken off from the rest of the plant, an all-natural ingredient to heal wounds and soothe irritated skin. Aloe vera gel contains a plethora of antioxidants, including beta-carotene, vitamin C, and vitamin E, all of which can help improve the skin's natural texture and keep it hydrated." Dive into the goodness of aloe vera with:

Makeup Remover

Combine equal parts aloe vera gel with honey and whip up a home-made makeup remover. Simply take a dollop of this gel on a cotton pad, and wipe your way to clean, hydrated skin. You can also add a few drops of your preferred essential oil to this mixture.

Shaving Gel

Lather aloe vera gel before reaching out for your razor for a smooth shave. Alternatively, mix three-fourth cup of aloe vera gel with one-fourth cup of coconut oil. Blend and use as shaving gel.

It offers intense nourishment, and prevents razor burns, or dry skin. In case of any nicks and cuts, the antiseptic properties of coconut and aloe will come handy.

Spot-corrector

Simply dab a generous amount of aloe vera gel on pimples and dark spots. Repeat application twice or thrice a day for visible results.

Eyebrow Gel

Love that slick look? Swap your eyebrow gel with aloe vera, and style your brows using a cotton swab or an old mascara spoolie. If available, you can mix in vitamin E oil to boost hair growth and get that Insta-worthy thick and full brow look.

Night Cream

Treat your skin to an aloe vera face serum for an all-natural night treatment. Remove all your makeup and follow by massaging the gel on your face before you call it a day. For dry skin, mix a few drops of olive or jojoba oil to the gel.

Hairstyling Gel

If you're fresh out of your favourite hairstyling wax or gel, or you are just looking for natural ways to style your hair, aloe has got it covered.

Blend aloe vera pulp and add a few drops of almond oil. You can swap almond oil with your preferred choice of essential oil. Use this to style your mane while reaping the benefits of aloe's hair-healthy properties.

APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

[Apple cider vinegar \(ACV\) makes for a great beauty ingredient](#) when used the right way. If you wake up to an empty shampoo bottle or are out of your deodorant, here are simple ways to make use of ACV to meet your routine beauty needs:

Face Cleanser

To use ACV to remove dirt and oil from your face, add two tablespoons ACV to one-fourth cup of filtered water. Gently massage this mixture on your face and rinse clean with water.

Aishwarya Sawarna Nir, founder of Global Beauty Secrets says, "ACV contains vitamins and minerals that make it skin-friendly when diluted and applied. It will help exfoliate skin, improve skin's elasticity, and promote an even skin tone."

Face Toner

For a natural glow, swap your store-bought face toner with ACV. "It is naturally acidic, and can help balance the pH levels of your skin, keeping it functioning optimally," says Bhaskara Seth, co-founder, Neemli Naturals.

SHAMPOO

Endorsing ACV's hair-healthy properties, Nir says, "The presence of acetic acid in ACV helps cleanse the scalp and restores its acidic balance, making the hair clean, soft, and lustrous."

For a [home-made cleanser](#), first wash your hair with baking soda paste (one part baking soda to three parts water) and follow with an ACV rinse. Use diluted ACV for cleaning your hair and wash it off with fresh water. It will help clear buildup that causes greasiness and its exfoliating properties will keep dandruff at bay.

Take one cup of purified water. Mix in two tablespoons of ACV and two teaspoons of rose water. If available, add a drop or two of your preferred essential oil for an extra boost of nourishment. Store it in an airtight container and dab it on your skin using a cotton ball..

Additionally, ACV is loaded with components like acetic acid, lactic acid, succinic acid, and citric acid, which curb the proliferation and growth of acne-causing bacteria. "Rich in malic acid, it gently exfoliates and unclogs pores, working well on acne-prone skin. It also reduces dark spots and hyperpigmentation," adds Seth.

Leave-In Hair Mist

Use this DIY hair mist to tame the texture of your hair. Mix two tablespoons of ACV in a glass of purified water, and add a few drops of your preferred essential oil—almond, olive, or lavender. Pour this mixture into a spray bottle and spritz it on your tresses. For best results, opt for raw, organic, and unpasteurised ACV.

Deodorant

ACV kills the bacteria that causes body odour, and thus makes for a great all-natural deodorant. Simply dab ACV on your underarm area using a cotton ball. You can also opt for a mixture of ACV and an essential oil, diluted in water, for this purpose. Lemon essential oil may just prove to be a good choice in this case.

Mouthwash

The acetic acid component in ACV makes it a good addition in oral care, as acidic environment is not suitable for bacterial growth. Diluted ACV can be used as mouthwash before brushing your teeth for [fresh breath and whiter teeth](#). Gargle for about 30 seconds for visible results. >



Apple Cider Vinegar kills the bacteria that causes body odour, and thus makes for a great all-natural deodorant.



GRAM FLOUR

Gram flour, commonly known as *besan*, makes for an economical and effective remedy for common skin and hair woes. It's time to bring back this traditional remedy for excellent results.

Manish Chowdhary, co-founder and CEO, WOW Skin Science, explains why it's a superfood for the skin. "Gram flour is rich in zinc and essential nutrients that promote clear, acne-free skin. Zinc helps to absorb excess sebum and prevents the pores from clogging. This keeps infections at bay. It also has an exfoliating action on the skin, which helps clear blemishes and patchy skin. Its use is ideal for restoring suppleness and radiance for people struggling with dull, greasy skin," he says.

Face Cleanser

To make a chemical-free, all-natural facial cleanser, take one cup of gram flour in a bowl. Add two tablespoons powdered fenugreek (*methi*) seeds. Add a teaspoon of turmeric power, and combine all the ingredients. Store

Rich in protein, gram flour is beneficial as it strengthens hair, prevents hair fall, and fights dandruff.



ANTI-DANDRUFF HAIR MASQUE

Struggling with dandruff? Indulge in a hair treatment with this gram flour hair masque.

For this at-home treatment, take one cup of gram flour, four grated almonds, and half of cup curd in a bowl. Combine all the ingredients well, and add vitamin E oil, if you have it handy at home. Apply and leave it on for 20 to 25 minutes, and shampoo as usual.

this powder in a container for daily use.

To use, add water to achieve a paste-like consistency, and wash your face with this home-made cleanser. If you have dry skin, swap water with milk for that extra nourishment.

Tan-Removal Body Scrub

Extend gram flour's healing benefits and whip your own body scrub.

Take one cup each of gram flour, ground oats, and curd in a bowl. Add one tablespoon of honey and a teaspoon of turmeric powder to this mixture, and blend well. Use this DIY scrub to exfoliate your skin, get rid of dead skin cells, and remove tan.

Brightening Face Pack

For a strong dose of brightness, resort to this home-made gram flour face pack.

Take one tablespoon of gram flour in a bowl. Add one teaspoon of tomato juice, half a teaspoon of turmeric, and a few drops of lemon juice. You can add rose water to get a smooth consistency and apply it, aiming for a thin layer. Leave it on for 10 minutes before you scrub your face gently. Rinse clean and pat dry.

Shampoo

While gram flour is popular for its skin-boosting properties, it comes with great cures for hair health issues as well.

"Rich in protein, gram flour is beneficial as it strengthens hair, prevents hair fall, and fights dandruff. It also works as an excellent deep conditioning treatment," tells Kamakshi Sood, co-founder of Mystic Valley.

Washing your hair with gram flour is simple and effective. Simply take the flour (as needed for your hair length and density) in a bowl and add water to make a paste. Apply it on damp hair and leave it on for 10 to 15 minutes. Work it into your hair like you would do when using a store-bought hair cleanser. Rinse thoroughly for clean and shiny tresses.

OLIVE OIL

Feels light as a feather, looks like gold, and works like magic—[the bottled goodness of olive oil](#) is as versatile as its efficacy. Most popular for cardiovascular benefits, this superfood has gone beyond healthy skin and hair benefits. Indulge yourself in its richness with these DIY products.

Eye Cream

Lightweight, hydrating, and packed with nutrients essential for maintaining healthy skin, olive oil makes for a great eye cream. “It is high in antioxidants, vitamins A, D, and E, and essential fatty acids. It helps fight free radicals and prevents skin damage. Vitamin A in olive oil supports skin’s collagen structure and restores its elasticity. Applying the oil regularly will help in reviving skin’s natural lipid barrier—locking the moisture into the skin,” explains Chowdhary.

Simply take a pea-sized amount on your ring finger. Dot the oil underneath your eyes, moving towards your upper eye area, till the brow bone. Massage gently.

Body Scrub

Stressing on the skin-healing benefits of olive oil, Chowdhary adds, “It protects the skin from UV damage and supports repair. Vitamins A and E in olive oil aid in restoring skin’s structure by strengthening collagen and elastin. It keeps skin moisturised and supple.”

Take half cup of sugar, preferably brown. Add three tablespoons of olive oil, two tablespoons of honey and combine all the ingredients. Use this mixture as a scrub to get rid of dead skin while offering intense moisturisation.

Makeup Remover

Are you finding it hard to clean your face after a full-makeup look? For people with normal to dry skin, an oil-based remover works the best to get rid of makeup without stripping the skin off its



Applying the oil regularly will help in reviving skin’s natural lipid barrier—locking the moisture into the skin.

natural oils. Pour some olive oil on a cotton pad and work your way gently to [take every trace of makeup off your face](#).

Hair Serum

Stressing upon the hair-healthy benefits of olive oil, Shivani Prabhakar, marketing and product innovation head at Souttree, asserts, “The antioxidants, monosaturated fats, vitamin E, zinc, and calcium packed in olive oil work wonders for the hair.”

Olive oil not only helps detangle knots but also add shine and improve the texture of your hair. A small amount of olive oil can be applied on damp hair sparingly for serum-like benefits, without making your hair greasy.

Hair Conditioner

To condition your hair, resort to this pre-cleansing treatment. Massage olive oil onto the scalp and comb your hair to spread it across. Cover your hair with a shower cap for about fifteen minutes before washing it. Let your hair air dry to feel its natural texture.

Alternatively, you can team olive oil with other, easily available ingredients for gorgeous tresses. “When combined with lemon juice, raw honey or egg, olive oil acts as an effective treatment for dry and damaged hair. [Olive oil hair masks](#) also help in reducing dandruff and strengthening the hair from the roots at the same time,” informs Gayatri Dawda, senior nutritionist at One Life Nutriscience. >

OVERNIGHT LIP MASK

The skin of the lips is thin, sensitive, and prone to dryness, which means applying lip balm a few times during the day is insufficient nourishment. Moreover, lipsticks lead to pigmentation over time, leading to darker lips.

Masks for the pout cater to such concerns by providing intense hydration, and are generally used as an overnight treatment. Swap your expensive lip masks with a homespun olive oil mask that offers lip care without burning a hole in your pocket. Use a combination of olive oil, coconut oil, and honey (in 2:1:1 ratio) to make your own mask.

SHEA BUTTER

Shea butter is one of the most sought-after ingredients in homemade beauty recipes. “It is rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, phytonutrients, and vitamins A and E, which makes it the ideal ingredient to provide nourishment,” explains Mansi Chowdhary, co-founder of Body Cupid.

The fatty acids in shea butter are much like the sebum that’s naturally produced by the skin. This helps the skin absorb it easily, and boosts absorption of other ingredients that are added to your shea-based DIY remedies.

To make use of this agent to enhance your skin health, take a look at this how-to guide.

Moisturiser

To make your DIY face moisturiser, take two tablespoons of shea butter in a bowl and mash it. Add one teaspoon of argan oil and whisk till you get a creamy consistency. Add five to eight drops of your preferred essential oil to this mixture for added benefits and a pleasing aroma. Store it in a jar and apply after using a cleanser.

It’s a good fit even for people with acne, who are likely to shy away from creamy moisturisers.

The fatty acids in shea butter are much like the sebum that’s naturally produced by the skin.

FOOT CREAM

Taking care of one’s face comes easily; caring for one’s heels is the real deal. If you are struggling with dry feet and cracked heels, simply massage shea butter on the affected area before turning in for the night. Alternatively, you can team shea butter with coconut oil (equal parts), for a more hydrating effect. A few drops of an essential oil, preferably lavender, will give this foot cream an aromatic touch.



“Cinnamic acid in shea butter helps with skin inflammation, making it great for acne-prone skin,” confirms Nir. She also recommends shea for its anti-ageing and SPF properties.

Lip Balm

The skin of our lips is thin and highly sensitive. Constant, deep hydration is a must to keep them soft and prevent them from cracking. What better than the moisturising benefits of shea to perfect your pout.

“A great nourishing agent, shea butter provides hydration to dry lips, keeping them soft and supple. Since it’s naturally rich in a number of vitamins and minerals, it is a great way to boost production of collagen and creates a protective barrier against cold, dry weather and harmful UV rays,” tells Seth.

To whip your own DIY balm, take one teaspoon of melted shea butter and add one teaspoon of almond oil or olive oil, based on what you have available. You can also mix in a few drops of vanilla extract for that added oomph. Mix well and transfer it into a container. Wait for it to solidify for a better consistency. For a sultry tint, you can add cocoa powder to the mixture.

Soap

Get the nourishing benefits of a body butter in your soap with this power ingredient. Take half a cup of melted shea butter and add to it crumbled, dried rose petals. Add one teaspoon of vanilla extract and mix well. For a stronger fragrance, double the amount of vanilla. Pour this mixture into a mould, depending on the shape and size you want for your soap. Let it sit for an hour, or till it solidifies and then pop it out of the mould. Use it after regular cleansing on days your skin calls for extra nourishment.

They say, ‘All good things to those who wait’. Well, sometimes, good things don’t always come the hard way. Some are simply sitting in your kitchen cabinet waiting to be put to use. **f**



The ongoing pandemic has shed light on not only the physical consequences

of the virus, but also the toll it has taken on citizens' mental well-being. Nikita Gupta, a 21-year-old psychology graduate from Lady Sri Ram College, New Delhi, launched a helpline mid-March to tackle the emotional upheaval that people might face amidst the crisis. "Whether we admit it or not, we could do with some support at this point. Unfortunately, not many who seek help know the way forward. With the helpline, I wanted to make that easier," she tells us.

Gupta & Co provide free-of-cost emotional and mental health support, and, in a matter of months, have grown from four to a strong 70. The group attends calls every day between 9 am to 9 pm. "We have two teams. One addresses social media communication (headed by her friend, Jaanvi Chopra), and the other comprises trained psychologists and psychotherapists who answer queries, take on cases, and perform follow-ups. This one also includes volunteers," she adds. The Delhi resident also informs that they follow a tagging system wherein volunteers are trained to transfer calls to relevant helplines in case people with more serious issues like suicidal tendencies, call.

In times like these, uncertainty looms large. From anxieties related to job uncertainty to breakups, those reaching out to the team have various concerns. "Most of the calls we receive are from people between 21 and 40 years."



MATTERS OF THE MIND

Nikita Gupta's COVID-19 helpline is a step towards eradicating the stigma around mental health, finds **Nikshubha Garg**

"Whether we admit it or not, we could do with some support at this point. **UNFORTUNATELY, NOT MANY WHO SEEK HELP KNOW THE WAY FORWARD.**"

As we stay indoors, it's important to keep mentally fit. According to Gupta, one can pick up any activity that helps them stay positive. "It could be cooking, cleaning, or even talking to your family members. However, it's important to limit screen time. Why? First, overexposure to news can make one more anxious. Second, one tends to constantly compare their life with other people, which further perpetuates mental health issues," she states.

Gupta & Co are going strong at the moment. However, the impetus to launch the website was the pandemic. Therefore, once this is over, does the group plan to cease services? "We

don't know at this point. One thing is for sure; we will see a different world once all this is over. We plan to run this helpline till people need someone to talk to," she reassures.

The 21-year-old emphasises that the pandemic can help make people realise the importance of mental health, more than ever before. "My teacher had once said—when we fracture a bone, we're fast to get crutches/cast, but when we feel upset, why are we slow to get emotional support?" she signs off.

In case you're looking for emotional support, the group can be contacted as below:

Telephone: +91 7707070002

Email: covid19helplineindia@gmail.com

REALITY cover girl



HER BIGGEST STRENGTH LIES IN FINDING
CONTENTMENT IN HER STRUGGLES.
SUKRITI SHAHI PRESENTS AN UNFILTERED,
UNADULTERATED VERSION OF THE MODEL-
TURNED-ACTOR WE HAVE ALL COME TO
KNOW AND LOVE—JACQUELINE FERNANDEZ.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TARAS TARAPORVALA

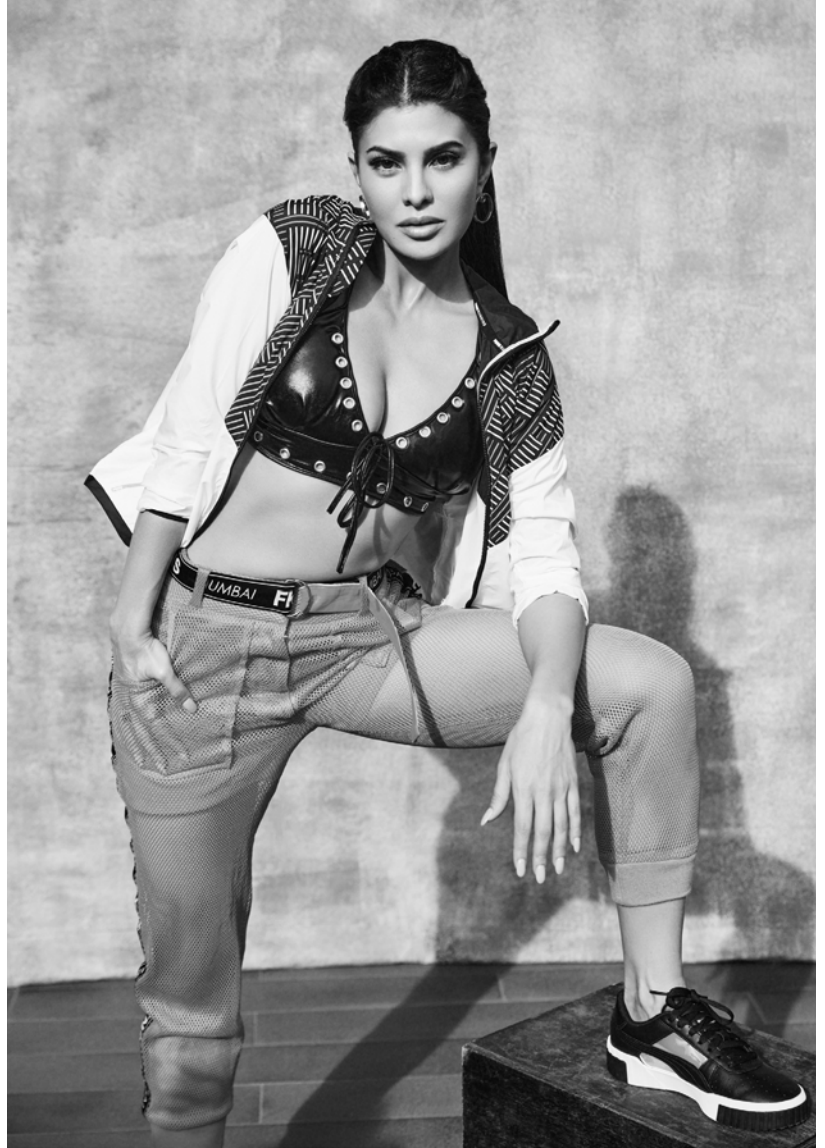
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SPORTS BRA: \$1,599. FILA. SPACE LUXE JUMPSUIT: \$12,000. PURPLE PAISLEY: THE SLYPHINA TAIL
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AKUA INTER-LACED MAILLOT: ₹21,950. SHIVAN AND NARRESH: NOIR LATEX PARKA JACKET: ₹8,000.
ANIKET SATAM: DEMILUNE HOOPS: ₹8,500. MISHO: HONEYCOMB RING: ₹3,500. STAC FINE JEWELRY





A

n aspect that's undeniably attractive about Jacqueline Fernandez is her ability to bring out a sense of childlike optimism in everyone she meets. She is perhaps one of the few actresses to have joined an acting school after having established herself in the movie business. The actor is also not afraid to speak her mind, and has been vocal about her struggle to stand firm in the industry. Over to her as she opens up about her new approach to fitness, philanthropist interests, and her social media presence.

You once said in an interview that you always wanted to be an actor. Tell us about your big break, and your journey thereafter.


I knew I wanted to be an actor since I was seven. Funny turn of events led me to India. I didn't anticipate it; I just took up a modelling assignment when I was spotted by Sujoy Ghosh. It was then that I realised that this is what I wanted to keep doing. My big break came with the 2009 film, *Aladin*. My journey since then has been great. Of course, there have been ups and downs, but it's everything I could have asked for.

You've been vocal about your initial struggles in the industry. How has it changed with time?

Struggles are part and parcel of every journey, and that's what makes it beautiful. Besides, is anything worthwhile if it comes easy? We may not understand the positives of our struggles while we are going through them, but in time, we learn to appreciate every lesson. I don't think it's easy for anyone; you have to focus on your goal and follow your passion. My biggest learning is that patience is key. We get very impatient when things do not go our way, but there's a right time for everything.

Tell us about your new video, *Mere Angne Mein*. How did the idea come up?

When Bhushan Kumar (Chairman and Managing Director, T-Series) approached me for the song, both of us felt that there was some magic in *Mere Angne Mein*, and this was something we wanted to do. The concept of the video is also different and interesting. >



“STRUGGLES
ARE PART AND
PARCEL OF
EVERY JOURNEY,
AND THAT’S
WHAT MAKES IT
BEAUTIFUL.”

BIKER BRALETTE: ₹5,200, MASH BY MALVIKA SHROFF: TRACK JACKET: ₹5,499, CALI GLOW SHOES: ₹7,499, BOTH PUMA, MESH
JOGGER PANTS: ₹4,760, NARENDRA KUMAR: MOTION HOOPS: ₹6,500, ALMA FIVE: THREE SIXTY ONE GAP RING: ₹12,500, STAC
FINE JEWELRY: THIRDEYE RING LITE: ₹15,000, ANGANA NANAVATI

"I HAVE
SUFFERED FROM
PERFORMANCE
ANXIETY, AND
FELT THAT
ENROLLING
IN AN ACTING
SCHOOL WOULD
HELP ME
ELIMINATE THAT."



BODY SUIT: \$5,800. FUR TATTOOS: MULTI-COLOR. JOGGER PANTS: \$1,350. MAKEUP: JACQUELINE
EARRINGS: \$5,500. VALLI VALLI. RUINE STAR SLIDE BRACELET: \$6,500. BROCCO SLIPPER BRACELET
\$6,500. BOTH OUTHOUSE. BLOCK HEEL ANKLE LENGTH BOOTS: \$1,300. HAIR: ELI LASH COLLECTION

You have worked across different platforms—movies and digital. How different is it working for both?

It's pretty much the same as you work with the same people and technicians that you have worked with from the film industry. The only difference between digital or OTT platforms, and the film industry, is that the content seems to be different; it's not so commercial. It's out of the box!

You are calm, patient, and polite even in difficult situations. How do you manage to strike that balance?

It's not as easy as it looks; there is a lot to cope with. You do have to hold your tongue to keep from replying to silly questions and remarks. But it's important to maintain a sense of calmness. I exercise and meditate. I understand that nothing is important enough to upset yourself with. Also, sometimes, things get blown out of proportion and become news. We are also human and it's not possible to always be in a good mood. But we don't get the freedom to express it. That's why I prefer to stay calm and patient; it's the best way to avoid controversy!

You have been associated with many multi-starrer projects. How do you keep it smooth sailing as far as your co-stars from the industry are concerned?

We are storytellers and make films to entertain people, which requires team work. It's important for everyone to focus on a specific goal, and that is to tell a good story. For me, it's imperative to bond with my team, so that we are all on the same page. This also helps to maintain peace since sometimes things go out of control, and people's egos are bruised in the process.

Filmmaking is a strenuous process that involves erratic schedules and stressful situations. However, at the end of the day, it should never affect the ultimate outcome. I make a conscious effort to stay positive around people, and that has helped me in all aspects of life.

With over a decade in the industry and after 20 films, last year you decided to enroll in acting school. Why the sudden move?

I have suffered from performance anxiety, and felt that enrolling in an acting school would help me eliminate that. I wanted to be able to go on set, and have a good time as I see other actors doing. I want to continue my stint at acting school because it has made me respect the craft much more, especially because I studied with people who have so much

passion for acting. If I could go back in time, I would study and train as much as possible.

You are active on social media, and connect with your fans regularly. How different are you in the virtual and real world?

I would say 98 per cent of it is real (laughs). Honestly, I cannot fake it, and can't stand people who do. I know some people who are not like what they pretend to be on social media, and that irritates me. However, people in the virtual world can be highly judgemental since there are millions of opinions, beliefs and perspectives. It's difficult to cater to everyone. There's a good chance that, sometimes, what you post might disturb or offend someone. And I do not wish to do that, or create controversy. >





You are also a philanthropist, and work for humanitarian issues as well as animal rights. What motivates you?

Animals are my first love. I grew up with nine dogs and several rescued cats. Our house was like *Dr Dolittle's* place (laughs) with birds, fish, and turtles. I also have witnessed a lot of cruelty towards animals, and, as a human being, it irked me. People need to understand that animals and humans co-exist on this planet. A lot more needs to be done, though there are certain groups doing a fantastic job. I am also associated with Habitat for Humanity for over a decade. It's about rehabilitating people who have been displaced due to natural calamities.

You recently started your own YouTube channel. Tell us about it.

My team has seen my unfiltered self, and suggested I share such moments with fans. However, we have taken a break at this point because it turned out to be a much bigger commitment that we imagined. We want to do it right, thus, we will be reinventing and redoing the channel. Currently, we are trying to figure manpower to be able to present it properly.

“MY BIGGEST LEARNING IS THAT PATIENCE IS KEY. WE GET VERY IMPATIENT WHEN THINGS DO NOT GO OUR WAY, BUT THERE’S A RIGHT TIME FOR EVERYTHING.”

What projects are you looking forward to?

Mrs Serial Killer (an OTT platform film) recently released. My film *Attack*, with John Abraham, will hit theatres on Independence Day.

Take us through your fitness routine.

Getting up is the most unenjoyable part of staying fit. Nonetheless, I wake up at 5.30 every morning to go for horse riding. Now, I do not exercise anymore to look thin or fit, I do so to strengthen my mind so my choices and thoughts are stronger. When I am not shooting, I train in dance and stretch whenever I can. **f**

MAKE YOURSELF A HAPPY SPACE

Your home is now both, your cocoon and your workplace. Here's how you can get work done in a place that enhances your productivity and reduces your stress.

1. Bring in light

Consider the light that you are likely to be most productive in. Then work with curtains, blinds, and light fixtures to achieve that.

2. Declutter

Remove the things that bring no joy to your current scenario. Stash them away—out of sight and out of mind.

3. Bring in good memories

Surround yourself with things that make you happy, but at arm's distance, so they don't distract you from your work.

4. Set up a spot for relaxation

Place a comfortable armchair close by, in which you can take a break with something other than work.

5. Keep moving

Keeping active will enhance your productivity and be fitter. Every hour, stand up, stretch, and walk for five minutes.



Bites of HAPPINESS

Brighten your time at home with these easy recipes from
Executive Chef Mani Mohan Pathak, at Fox in The Field, Bangalore

ROASTED BEET AND CHEESE SALAD

50g goat cheese,
paneer, or hung
yoghurt + extra to
garnish

20g cherry tomatoes
(or regular tomato
wedges)

20ml olive oil

200g arugula or
iceberg lettuce, torn

1 orange, cut into
segments

20g almonds,
toasted + extra
to garnish

20g walnuts,
caramelised
+ extra to garnish

1 sprig basil leaves



For the beets:
100g baby beets

Salt, to taste
10 garlic cloves
5g thyme
10ml olive oil

For the dressing:
20ml extra virgin
olive oil

20ml balsamic
vinegar

Salt, to taste

5g black pepper,
crushed

**Calorie
count:**
283 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: 4 > PREP TIME: 10 minutes > COOKING TIME: 20 minutes

1. Prepare the dressing by whisking together the olive oil and balsamic vinegar to an emulsion. Add salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.
2. Clean and wash the baby beets, and marinate them with salt, garlic, herbs, and olive oil. Wrap them in aluminum foil and roast in the oven at 160 °C for 20 minutes. Set aside to cool. Cut half the beets into small dices, and the other half into thin slices.
3. Wrap the creamy goat cheese or seasoned paneer or hung yoghurt in the beet slices and fold as a flower. Set aside.
4. Sauté the cherry tomato halves in olive oil with salt and pepper. Remove from the flame. Set aside.
5. Now mix the arugula or lettuce, cherry tomato halves, beetroot dices, orange segments, almonds, and walnuts in a salad bowl. Dress the salad with the balsamic dressing.
6. Plate the salad. Garnish it with the beetroot floral wraps, and sprinkle with almonds, walnuts, and cheese.

TIP: SERVE THE SALAD CHILLED, GARNISHED WITH MICROGREENS.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



MUSHROOM NAAN POPS

For the naan dough:

500g refined flour, sieved

50ml refined oil

20g salt

10g sugar

250ml water, or as needed

For the mushroom filling:

30ml refined oil

50g chopped onion

10g chopped garlic

10g chopped green chilli

400g button mushrooms, washed, cleaned, and roughly chopped

Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

5g garam masala powder

20g smoked cheese, grated

50g salted butter, melted

For the mint mayonnaise:

100g mayonnaise

50g mint chutney

Salt, to taste

5ml lemon juice



Calorie count:
874 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: 4 > **PREP TIME:** 40 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 20 minutes

1. To prepare the mint mayonnaise, blend together the mayonnaise and the mint chutney. Season with salt and the lemon juice. Set aside.
2. To prepare the naan dough, mix the flour, oil, salt, sugar, and water (as needed) and bind to a soft dough. Set aside to rest for 20 minutes.
3. To prepare the filling, heat the oil in a pan over a medium-high flame, and add the onion, garlic, and green chilli. Sauté until golden brown.
4. Add the mushrooms, and cook until the water evaporates, and season with salt, pepper, and garam masala powder. Add the smoked cheese and mix well. Remove the mixture from the flame, and set aside to cool.
5. Preheat the oven to 160°C.
6. Divide the naan dough into 16 equal small balls. Roll each one into a circle, approximately 10cm in diameter. Place a tablespoon of mushroom filling in the centre of the naan dough circle, and neatly pull together to enclose (like in the picture). Brush the mushroom naan pops with melted butter.
7. Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes until light golden brown.
8. Serve hot with the mint mayonnaise. >

TIP: IF YOU CANNOT GET SMOKED CHEESE, USE PANEER IN THIS RECIPE.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)



INSTANT NOODLE FRITTERS



2 packets
instant noodles
(140g)

50g chopped
onions

10g chopped
green chillies

10g chopped
coriander
leaves

100g boiled
potatoes,
grated

150g
breadcrumbs

50g refined flour
(maida)

Salt, to taste

Pepper, to taste

Water, as needed

300ml refined oil

**Calorie
count:**
430 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: 4 > PREP TIME: 20 minutes > COOKING TIME: 20 minutes

1. Cook the instant noodles with the tastemaker in a minimum quantity of water (about 300ml), so that no liquid is left in the pan after cooking.
Remove from the flame, and allow to cool.
2. Once the noodles get to room temperature, add the onions, chillies, coriander leaves, potatoes, and 50 grams of the breadcrumbs, and mix well. Set aside for 10 minutes.
Make small balls (of about 20g each) of the mixture.
3. Make a batter with the refined flour, salt, pepper, and a little water.
4. Lightly dip the balls in the batter and then roll coat them in the breadcrumbs.
5. Heat the oil for deep frying on a high flame.
6. Deep fry the balls, remove from the oil, drain, and serve. **F**

TIP: SERVE THESE FRITTERS WITH KETCHUP OR MAYONNAISE SPICED WITH TASTEMAKER AND LEMON JUICE.

[CLICK HERE TO READ MORE](#)





Cheat's Hummus

INGREDIENTS

1½ cups cooked chickpeas, drained
1 tbsp olive oil
1 lemon, juiced
Water, as needed
2 tomatoes, finely chopped
2 spring onions, finely chopped
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste
Red chilli powder, to garnish

METHOD

1. Blend the chickpeas to an almost dryish paste in a food processor.
2. Add the olive oil, lemon juice, and a little water, and blend again to get the consistency you want.
3. Stir in the spring onions and tomatoes, and season well with salt and pepper.
4. Remove to a bowl, and serve, dusted with red chilli powder.



Chickpea coconut curry

INGREDIENTS

1 cauliflower, broken into small florets
1 large onion, chopped
1-inch piece ginger, roughly chopped
2 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
2 tbsp oil
1 tsp curry powder
2 tsp mustard seeds
2 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp turmeric powder
2 cups coconut milk
1 cup vegetable stock
2 cups cooked chickpeas, drained
¼ bunch coriander leaves, finely chopped, to garnish

METHOD

1. Blanch the cauliflower florets in boiling salted water for three minutes. Remove, drain, and set aside.
2. Blend together the onion, ginger, garlic, and four tablespoons of water to a puree.
3. Heat the oil in a large frying pan. Add the onion puree, and fry gently until all the moisture has cooked off. Add the curry powder, mustard seeds, cumin seeds, and turmeric powder, and fry for two minutes.
4. Stir in the coconut milk and stock, and simmer, covered, for five minutes. Stir in the cauliflower and chickpeas, and simmer, uncovered, for 10 to 15 minutes or until the cauliflower is tender.
5. Stir in the coriander leaves and serve hot. **F**

CHICKPEAS TO THE RESCUE

Cook and store these grains as a handy ingredient to be used at any time

Spicy Roasted Chickpeas

INGREDIENTS

2½ cups cooked chickpeas, drained and dried
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp cumin powder
1½ tsp red chilli powder, or to taste
½ tsp salt

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Mix together the chickpeas, olive oil, cumin and red chilli powders, and salt. Toss well to coat evenly. Spread out on the prepared baking sheet.
3. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, then stir, and bake for another 15 to 20 minutes, until browned.
4. Remove from the oven, and allow to cool.



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