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GRAZIA

Easy Chic

Volume 13 Issue 7
October 2020
₹ 150

**WOKE
BEAUTY**
Celebrating
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with a
Conscience

SETTING HER
OWN PACE:
**Diana
Penty**

Our
Essential
Rules for
Slowing
Down



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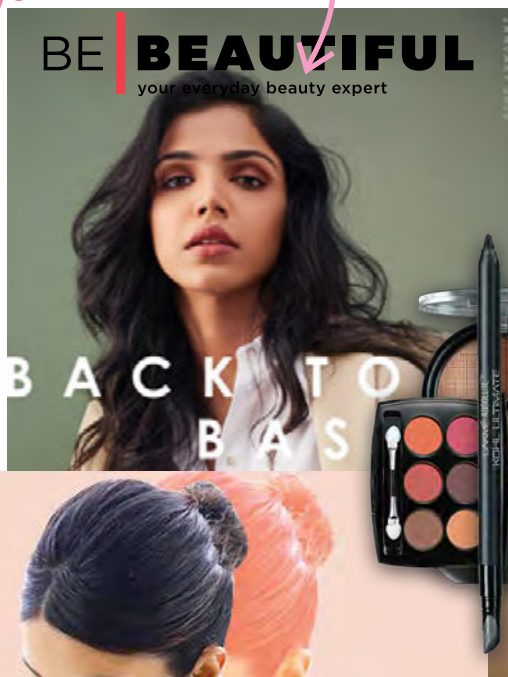
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HOW TO MAKE THE TIKTOK-INSPIRED
DIY TINTED MOISTURISER

SKIN



ALL THINGS
MAKEUP

ALL THINGS
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ALL THINGS
HAIR



STAR STALK

5 BOLLYWOOD CELEBRITY UPDOS YOU CAN TRY
AT YOUR NEXT PARTY

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WATCH
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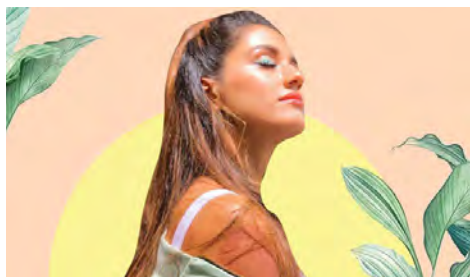


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WANT TO EXPERIMENT WITH A PASTEL
HAIR COLOUR? READ THIS FIRST

HAIR



4 WAYS TO GET THE ULTIMATE GLOW
USING MAKEUP

MAKEUP



FOUNDATION DOS AND DON'TS

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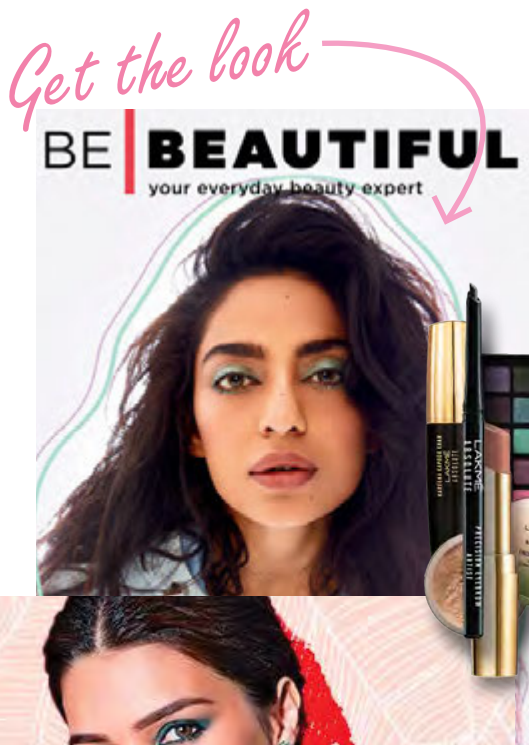
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A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DO A FACIAL AT HOME

SKIN



ALL THINGS
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STAR STALK

CELEBRITY MAKEUP TRENDS TO WATCH OUT FOR THIS SEASON

MAKEUP



BOBBY PIN HACKS EVERY GIRL SHOULD KNOW

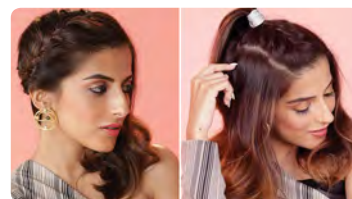
HAIR



ACNE IS NOT UGLY! 5 WOMEN SHARE HOW ACNE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH BEING BEAUTIFUL

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3 CUTE FRENCH BRAID HAIRSTYLES



HOW TO PREVENT KAJAL FROM SPREADING

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PLAY



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An editorial exhibition that contemplates the different facets of mental health and wellness.



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DIANA PENTY is wearing a bandhani silk shirt, 11.11/ Eleven Eleven; embellished trousers, Tarun Tahiliani; hoop earrings, Outhouse; 'Elan' necklace, 'Aspiration' necklace, 'Iconic Link Lumine' watch, 'Elan' bangles, 'Elan Triad' ring, 'Elan Dual' ring, all Daniel Wellington.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Mark Sequeira

FASHION DIRECTOR

Pasham Alwani



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By
FEMINA × GRAZIA

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From the EDITOR'S DESK

It's ironic that I'm writing about the art of slowing down when I'm, literally and simultaneously, trying to get a seven-year-old to answer a Google form as part of homework and a five-year-old to practice newly-learned cursive writing, answering stray questions thrown my way on a Microsoft Teams meeting I'm plugged into while also trying to send feedback on a design layout via chat. And just when you think you have an indulgent free moment between the vicious cycle of daily activities, the worry and anxiety about our uncertain future stands ready to gnaw you down. Which brings me back to slowing down – while I still try to find coping mechanisms, there are a lot of people out there who've found their sweet spot. "Taking charge of our time is an effective way to take control back, even if it's marginal," wise words you'll find in our pages, but it's true – the only way to displace these feelings would

be to channelise them into an activity that makes you feel good about yourself and transports you to a place that helps keep your mind focussed and unfettered with stray thoughts.

We bring you stories of people who've moved during the pandemic to find solace in Goa, to people who've taken up biking or even art as therapy. Part of our slowing down process also lies in the way we consume fashion, which is why we approached seven women to share their stories with us in this issue. The main premise: Streamlining and creating a capsule wardrobe is a process that not only seems like the better option to opt for, environmentally, but it also takes the pressure off what you're going to wear.

Stay safe,

Mehernaaz
Mehernaaz



Photograph KEEGAN CRASTO



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FASHION CHARTS

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WATCH, BULGARI,
PRICE ON REQUEST**

Treat a loved one (or yourself) to this limited edition leather strap timepiece that's finished with an 18K white gold folding clasp and set with baguette-cut diamonds.

2

**KURTA AND
TROUSERS, BOTH
RASHMI VARMA,
PRICE ON REQUEST**

We've found a great versatile set to dress up or down depending on the scale of your festivities. Wear with beaded flats and a printed stole by day and your fave XL earrings and an embellished jacket for a dressier look.



3



**METALLIC LOAFERS, TOD'S,
₹58,385 APPROX**

Behold, ideal metallic flats that can be worn from day to night, desk to (Zoom) drinks and with your business suits and tunics and trouser combos alike.

5

**MIDI SKIRT, RALPH LAUREN,
₹24,570 APPROX**

Move over baby pink and make way for its bold, saturated fuchsia (or hot pink) cousin with this pleated skirt. Add a printed silk blouse, an OTM chain link necklace and you've got yourself a chic, yet mood-elevating look.



4

**BROOCH, NARAYAN
JEWELLERS, PRICE
ON REQUEST**

Whimsical and edgy – here's the adult and fine jewellery upgrade from your childhood accessories. Fasten on everything from an oversized white shirt to your sari drape.



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**ENAMEL AND GOLD
CHARM BRACELET,
FABERGÉ, PRICE
ON REQUEST**

Inspired by the 'Rocaille Egg' – an original Fabergé Easter Egg created in 1902 for Russian heiress Varvara Kelkh – this gemstone charm bracelet has all the makings for a modern day princess.



6

**PRINTED BLAZER AND
TROUSERS, H&M STUDIO,
₹ 11,085 AND ₹ 6,873
EACH RESPECTIVELY**

A jewelled co-ord set is most likely to be the MVP in your closet this season. Wear with a printed loose tunic at home now and with a metallic cami for nights out on the town in the future.



7

8

**'BOXYZ' BAG,
SALVATORE FERRAGAMO,
₹ 1,82,099 APPROX**

Meet the next generation of trending animal prints: a hybrid cow print. Like all things this year, it's completely unexpected and different from what we're used to – but we aren't complaining.



10

**MAXI DRESS,
HEMANT NANDITA
₹ 24,990**

The prairie dress has our vote for the dress that does it all. Layer with a biker jacket and pair with ankle boots for when it gets cooler or pack it as is with strappy flats for your next staycation.



9

**EMBROIDERED VEST,
ETRO, 1,68,431
APPROX**

The A/W 2020 runways saw a kind of easy-luxe hybrid of bohemian and bourgeoisie jet-set, resulting in chic elegant looks with a folky twist. Try this vest on for size over your basics and just add some gold hoops.



SACRED WEAVES

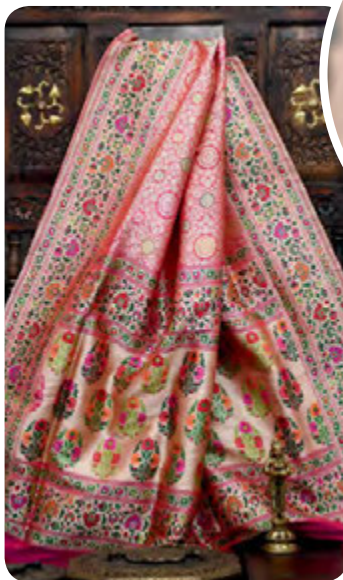
AUTHENTIC BANARASI SAREES

The pioneers of Banarasi handloom trek through meadows of exquisite weaving to add more grandeur and glow to beautiful women, and the place they walk in

Sacredweaves.com, India's leading e-commerce platform for Banarasi sarees, is all set for a festive run in 2020.

The company is founded by Mrs. Shruti Shah, a mother of two and a lover of Banarasi sarees. Her impeccable journey and the idea of reviving Indian handloom by promoting craftsmanship has been appreciated globally.

The brand specialises in pure silk Banarasi sarees and Banarasi dupattas which treks through meadows of exquisite weaving of Banaras handloom to add more grandeur to the glow of beautiful



women and the place they walk in. The company acknowledges that the trousseau of an Indian woman is considered incomplete without the exquisite handloom fabric. Keeping authenticity alive and believing in 'Make in India', the company produces a fabric which is woven using the

age-old tradition of Varanasi, with intricate designs and the use of Katan silk, tussar silk, cotton silk, kora silk, moonga silk and khaddi silk.

Their delicate Banarasi sarees and fabrics are well designed and manufactured using unmatched quality of yarn, motifs and dyes that are eco-friendly.

Banaras, a city older than time itself, is the home of this Banarasi saree manufacturing company. For more than five decades, the Shah family has protected their employees and have continued to do so even in these unprecedented times by giving them full salaries and maintaining harmony.


Sacredweaves.com have built up hundreds of years old Banarasi weaving convention and what truly sets them apart is their USP of being the only ones to provide customers with a 'Certification of Authenticity' and the HSN Code (5007) upon purchase.

Shruti Shah adds "Every saree is unique and a piece of art." Beautiful designs and patterns used on Sacred Weaves sarees involve special skills, and hard work. This adequately reflects the fine, delicate and elegant karigari of the sarees.

With a great international presence, Banarasi silk sarees are making their mark in the world of glamour. Where the market is shifting towards the power loom and artificial silk, Sacred Weaves is keeping the heritage alive, providing people with an assortment of hand-woven, pure silk Banarasi sarees.

 <https://instagram.com/sacredweaves>

 <https://fb.com/sacredweaves>

 <https://sacredweaves.com>



SACRED WEAVES
EXQUISITE BANARASI SAREES

BEAUTY CHARTS

Skincare and make-up on our radar right now

1

SMASHBOX PHOTO FINISH VITAMIN GLOW PRIMER, ₹ 3,050

A make-up primer infused with vitamin C? Yes, please. This cocktail of skin-loving vitamins and antioxidants ensures that your skin is not only prepped for make-up, but also moisturised, nourished and well taken care of.



5

BECCA COSMETICS HYDRA-MIST SET & REFRESH POWDER, ₹ 3,300

We haven't been this excited in a while – the Australian brand has finally launched in India, which means that getting our hands on their super gleamy, iconic highlighters and powders will now be easier.

2

INNISFREE BRIGHTENING PORE RANGE, ₹ 900 ONWARDS

This range contains extracts of Jeju's special Hallabong fruit, a kind of orange that's supercharged with vitamin C. So what does this mean for you? Lesser pigmentation, reduced appearance of pores, and renewed vibrance in as less as six weeks.



3

LAKMÉ PEACH MILK ULTRA-LIGHT GEL, ₹ 150

If the weather change is already starting to get to you, give this revamped formula a go. The non-greasy gel-cream promises an instant boost of hydration, promising to last for up to 24 hours.



4

YVES SAINT LAURENT LIBRE, ₹ 5,600 (50ML)

It has the potential to be your scent of the season – the cool floral lavender-orange blossom-vanilla perfume is a perfect blend of masculine and feminine notes. It's empowering and liberating, just like the name suggests.





IN FOCUS

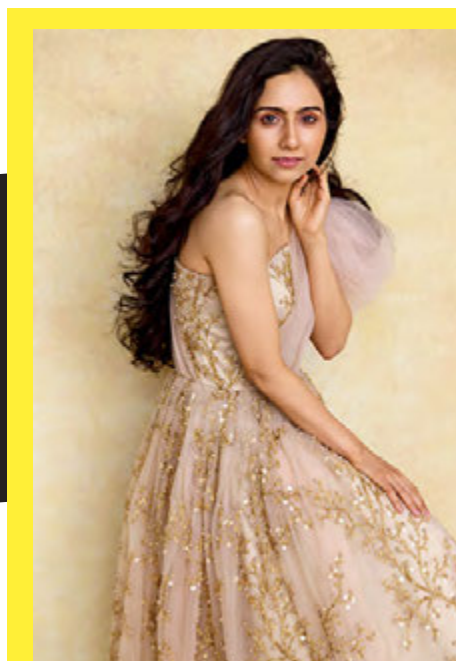
Photographer Vidhi Thakur believes beautiful imagery goes beyond just scenic beauty

Like so many aspects of our current world, youth culture has been revolutionised by technology. Today, we have access to digital platforms like Instagram and Tumblr that have empowered us to build communities and cultural awareness and share informed social and political opinions. Within this landscape, female photographers are reclaiming their image and the way young women are portrayed in the media – with body-positivity, individuality, diversity, and acceptance as foremost concerns.

For Mumbai-based Vidhi Thakur, a minimalist portrait and fashion photographer, it's all about empowering **EVERYDAY WOMEN** and artists from across genres by capturing them in their most natural element and tapping into their emotions.

After picking up basic skills in photography at The Art Institute of Colorado, Thakur practiced photography in Denver for three years, exploring different genres of photography, including weddings, lifestyle, and fashion, among others. She returned to India in 2013 to pursue her passion for portrait and fashion photography. Thakur confesses to being a self-taught photographer as most of what she's learnt over her decade-long photography journey was through practical work.

In a candid chat, she lets us in on her mission as a photographer as well as what inspires her craft.



GRAZIA SHOWCASE



GRAZIA: Where do you find inspiration as a photographer?

VIDHI THAKUR:

I love viewing portrait shots by photographers around the world.

The way they use

colours, keeping in mind that the focus should always remain on the subject, attracts me the most and is what influences my fashion and commercial work as well.

G: If you could capture one thing in the world with your art, what would it be?

VT: People and their eyes, as the latter reflects what's happening inside, which is fascinating to capture.

G: We're curious. What's the best advice you've ever gotten?

VT: If you want your images to remain timeless, keep it simple. I never play around with too many effects and filters as I like to keep my images close to what I capture.

G: Who are your favourite photographers?

VT: Peter Lindberg – I love the raw, fearless and organic touch with which his imagery is treated. He has inspired me to tap into emotions first before worrying about colours, patterns or surroundings.

10 HOT STORIES

EVERYONE'S BEEN TALKING ABOUT

AMIT AGGARWAL

1 SHOW TIME

The country's first-ever digital fashion showcase saw runways replaced by feature film presentations

It's been a year of novel experiences, and fashion has been no exception to that. The way we produce and consume fashion may have changed forever – and temporarily, even the way we view it. But here's where some of our most creative minds get cracking, scaling up their innovation quotient and presenting to the consumer, seated safely on their couch at home, an experience that reflects the grandeur of the garments they're about to present. FDCI's India Couture Week, that concluded last month, was no exception to that – and more sensibly, it was a time when most designers preferred to present capsule lines, picking quality over quantity, and functionality over trends, with some revisiting their brand's heritage and codes to build their 2020 statements pieces.



RAHUL MISHRA

THE NEW 4:3 CANVASS

The opening show of ICW set the bar high – Gaurav Gupta presented his statement sculpture couture via a narrative extended to showcase his craft, while making it an inclusive experience by partnering with fierce individuals who represented varied forms of love. “We started by thinking about how much in despair the world had been in because of the pandemic – which is why we surrendered to hope and love”. The show featured an original soundtrack, written and recited by Navkirat Sodhi and was set to an original composition by composer Sahil Vasudev.

On Day 2, Amit Aggarwal's presentation was a beautifully shot five-minute underwater video, “The limitations of the lockdown inspired me to view our garments in a new light, to celebrate oneself more than ever before. The freedom and lightness of nature inspired me to create the fashion film, to help re-imagine the wearability of signature Amit Aggarwal textiles.” Rahul Mishra's collection ‘Lotus Pond’, an organic extension of his recent Paris Haute Couture line, was also presented as a fashion film shot at the panoramic Tijara Fort Palace in Alwar. Shane & Falguni Peacock's show was an open backstage film that played out to a live audience “That was the whole idea – since there was no one sitting in front, we thought: ‘Let's do the show backstage’. And what you gain with this virtual format is the widespread reach. It's like everyone is invited to it.”



GAURAV GUPTA

Words MEHERNAZ DHONDY



JJ VALAYA

THE BRIDE WORE RED

The 2020 bride may have less to choose from since most designers opted for capsule collections, but if going traditional is an option there's hope since bridal red made a big return on the virtual runway. Deep crimson with bursts of regal purple in precious vintage brocades were seen at Anju Modi (her line, titled 'Sindoori', was an introspective thought seeped in archival textiles and heritage embroidery), bright red *lehengas* with red raw silk embroidery at Shane & Falguni, fuchsia-red sarees and *lehengas* at Reynu Tandon and flush-red *lehengas* at Dolly J. "Weddings are smaller and more intimate; we're showing limited but key silhouettes with no shortcuts to achieve the grandeur and elegance that the brand is now well associated with," said JJ Valaya speaking about his beads, pearls and Swarovski-encrusted, age-old zardozi-crafted *lehengas* and saris. And for a sharp red edit that included scarlet, berry and lava in sculpted sari-gowns and structured sari-*lehengas*, Gaurav Gupta had it covered.



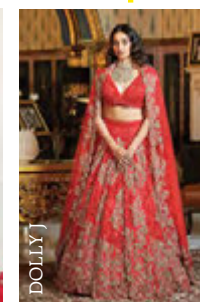
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DOLLY J

CAPES AND CAPELETS

Adding drama to *lehengas* and saris alike, capes and mini capelets seemed quite popular given the number of appearances they made. Suneet Varma's gold creations added flair to his embroidered *lehenga*, Dolly J featured gowns with cape detailing, while Shane & Falguni's feathered capes provided a finishing touch to their crystal, sequins and stone-work encrusted ones. Rahul Mishra's beautifully embroidered psychedelia of underwater-scape lived up to the title of his collection ('Lotus Pond', an ode to the evolving ecosystem of aquatic plants, fish, planktons, dragonflies and butterflies).



SHANE & FALGUNI

...AND ALSO, NEUTRAL TONE-ON-TONE

Blending elements from the Mughal era with archival fabrics, Manish Malhotra fashioned accent borders that were *zari*-woven in gold and silver, with a colour palette that spoke in shades of grey and dusty ink among others. "The direction we took this time focused on responsible clothes that's eternal. Quality over quantity and reviving our country's crafts and craftsmanship through our heritage and history, whether it's the vibrance of Punjab and the *nazaakat* of the Awadhs, bringing back embroideries collected over the years from museums, or a forgotten mix of crafts with a balance of fine hand-embroidery," said Malhotra. Also seen were dove grey, ivory and silver *lehengas* at Shane & Falguni Peacock and champagne gold numbers at Shantanu & Nikhil. Neutrals at Kunal Rawal's menswear-only presentation included jackets, kurtas and sherwanis, all made for versatile pieces with layers of grunge elements like metallic highlights and understated bling.



SHANE & FALGUNI



MANISH MALHOTRA



SHANTANU AND NIKHIL



SHANTANU AND NIKHIL

THE BOYS CLUB

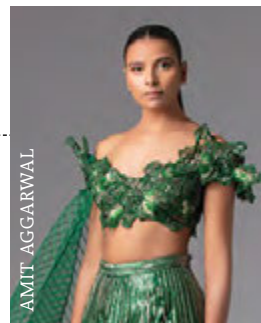
Kunal Rawal's modern grooms stepped out for the designer's first digital showcase, "Nostalgia feeds my creativity," says the designer, "We have deconstructed pieces that can be worn and later mixed and matched with other pieces to create a whole new outfit." Titled 'Hide and Seek', the pieces highlighted Rawal's thought process – to achieve versatility and functionality, "Today, we have a lot more men coming in and talking about sustainability, asking if pieces are hand detailed or mass-produced. These are really big steps in the right direction." Their signature style reinterpreted, Shantanu & Nikhil's muted minimalism saw shape in *bandhgalas* and cocktail sherwanis in a monochrome palette.



KUNAL RAWAL

ICW HIGHLIGHTS

Amit Aggarwal's hand-embroidered, 3-D malleable floral forms on his blouses.



AMIT AGGARWAL



GAURAV GUPTA

While inclusivity was Gaurav Gupta's big narrative with models Anjali Lama, trans-male model Vee, same sex couple Rudra and Anurag, same-sex couple Manauti and Anjali completing the designer's vision of 'My Name is Love', he made sure he also focused on body positivity by including accessory designer Nitya Arora in his film.

The younger sibling of JJ Valaya's iconic 'Alikā' jacket, the 'Ika', made an appearance at the show. "It's the younger and cooler version that people can configure for themselves on screen, by choosing the fabric, colour, print, piping, and embroidery details of their choice," says Valaya.



JJ VALAYA

Another icon seen at ICW was Mumbai's Asiatic Library, the backdrop for Kunal Rawal's menswear presentation. "Bombay and its people have always been a source of inspiration for me, and since things have opened up we find ourselves drawn to open spaces. The raw beauty and neutral colour palette of the location helped bring out every aspect of the collection – from outfit details to colour variations."

KUNAL RAWAL



RAHUL MISHRA

TEXTILE & EMBROIDERY

Redefining the codes of her design house is something that's found meaning for Anju Modi in 2020. She presented modern heirlooms made of crushed *muls* and archival textiles, marble tones, ochres and mehendi hues, and heritage embroidery. Rahul Mishra's hand embroidered flora, impeccable with its mirror-work detailing and French knots, found its way on saris, blouses and *lehengas*.



ANJU MODI

THE ARTISANAL BRIDE

"The freedom and lightness of nature inspired me to reimagine the wearability of signature Amit Aggarwal textiles" – what this translated into was a collection that juxtaposed Aggarwal's aesthetic of surreal and functional – futuristic biomimicry with his signature metallic polymers offset with 3-D blouses. Gaurav Gupta's sculpting techniques moulded garments into spirals, waves and even wings – and finally to a place that Gupta likes to term "art couture".



GAURAV GUPTA



AMIT AGGARWAL

CAST & CREW

"For 'Ruhaaniyat', we broke away from a regular runway showcase style and instead took the direction of a film. The idea behind the film was to narrate a story of soulful, indigenous living immersed in old-world charm, primarily from the Punjab and Awadh provinces. I love direction and every film allows me an opportunity to sit on a director's chair and execute my vision," said Manish Malhotra. Actor Janhvi Kapoor made a brief appearance in his video. 'Spectacle Prive', by Shane & Falguni, played up to its name – staged as a backstage presentation, the fashion film featured stylists Shaleena Nathani, Aastha Sharma, Mohit Rai and Tanya Ghavri adding finishing touches to the final looks on models – all of which was caught on camera as part of backstage drama, while actor Shraddha Kapoor played showstopper. **IC**

MANISH MALHOTRA



DOWNLOAD YOUR FAVOURITE MAGAZINES FOR FREE!

Stay Indoors. Stay Safe.



CHAOS THEORY

Luxury accessories get a high-tech makeover

Providing a luxuriously sexy and powerful follow-up to her sunny Spring / Summer 2020 collection, Silvia Venturini Fendi's offering for Fendi's size-inclusive Autumn/Winter 2020 show aimed to communicate an air of 'soft power'. As she explored the dichotomy between strength and vulnerability, restraint and romantic, reckless abandon, austerity and sensuality, Venturini Fendi

articulated her subversive and nuanced vision of femininity with a collection worthy of the modern femme fatale. The show took its cues from the controversial 1975 film *Maîtresse*, which revolves around a tumultuous relationship between a small-time criminal and a professional dominatrix, and whose costumes were designed by the late Karl Lagerfeld.

A boudoir-meets-boardroom inspiration ran through the collection as we saw demure lady-like silhouettes with cinched waists and modest knee-skimming hemlines that were juxtaposed with a touch of kink thanks to sheer panels and bonded leather detailing. Dramatic plays on volume were contrasted with hints of corseting on flannel coats, blazers and velvet dresses – exuding a clandestine sensuality that would fit right into any film noir classic – all accentuated with final touches of ultra-futuristic add-ons.

In addition to the inclusive casting for the show, another nod to the future was the super-cool tech collaboration with London-based accessories brand Chaos, designed by Charlotte Stockdale and Katie Lyall, who collaborated on a series of 'tech jewellery' pieces that offer a luxurious alternative to everyday accessories.

Models took the runway in decorated belts akin to charm bracelets, adorned with practical everyday essentials masquerading as trinkets that were undeniably chic. From delicate Fendi-

branded gold mesh phone pouches, perforated minaudière storage devices resembling vintage cigarette lighters emblazoned with the brand's trademark double F logo to smartwatch covers and charms, brass AirPods cases, laptops with protective shearling panels and multi-function gold and silver scribble pens that can be used on paper and tablets alike, or even worn as an earring – no piece of tech was left unturned. This unique collab fuses perforated and engraved metal shapes with fine Italian leather craftsmanship along with iconic logo hardware to instantly transform tech essentials into jewel-like accessories.

Worn in clusters or solo, the charms and tailor-made cases added a new dimension to the idea of functionality in fashion – as they are designed as an interconnected system to clip onto waist belts, zipper chain lanyards or handbag straps that enable ultimate hands-free movements. **EW**

Your basic tech accessories – with a fashionable twist



'La Grande Bellezza'
acetate sunglasses,
Louis Vuitton,
₹ 40,000



Wrap midi dress, Ted Baker
at The Collective, ₹ 33,750

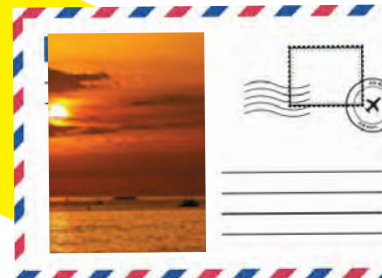


GIVENCHY

CAROLINA HERRERA

DION LEE

MICHAEL KORS



3

SUNSET WALK

*Keep your spirits up with the warmest
colours of the season*

In a persistent bid to bring the outdoors in, while being cooped up at home, there's nothing that fits better than A/W's new 'hot' hues. Inspired by our favourite time of the day – the sunset – blazing, eye-catching shades that range from coral to bright orange and fiery red (some as dark as crimson) can become the starting point of your otherwise stressful daily outfit planning. Think: Terracotta pots, ginger spice, and burnt henna. Depending on your personal style, you could either take the OTT route and clash your sunset shades with hot pink and bright green, or go down the minimal path with neutrals like black, white, or nude. All you have to do is keep the 'fire' alive.



'Salta' recycled
plastic necklace,
Love Letter, ₹ 3,899



'Peekaboo Mini' handbag,
Fendi, price on request



Faux leather joggers,
Zara, ₹ 2,790



Ruffle detailed blouse,
H&M, ₹ 7,760 approx

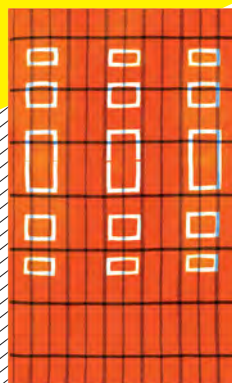


Ankle strap heels,
Ralph Lauren,
₹ 62,000



Monokini,
Uniqlo, ₹ 2,490

Cashmere throw,
Hermes, price on request



Beaded earrings,
Vaidaan, ₹ 3,500

While 2020 may be the year to embrace wellness and self-care to the fullest, these bizarre trends from around the world will make you second-guess your choices

You barely need to watch the under-a-minute promo of Netflix's *The Goop Lab* to comprehend the weird journey you're about to embark on. Based on actor Gwyneth Paltrow's lifestyle brand and company that she founded in 2008, the platform has been notorious for prescribing various alternative wellness advice whether it's selling ₹5,000 jade eggs that promise better female orgasms or bee-venom therapy which claims that being stung by bees heals old injuries. The practice of wellness is definitely of the essence in this current period of uncertainty and isolation, but much like any industry that experiences fads, we've witnessed a similar trajectory of weird inventions in the wellness world, and we're not talking about juice cleanses and cauliflower-based everything. Here's what you need to know about all the 'woo-woo' trends taking over the Internet that you probably shouldn't try out at home.

CRYSTAL WATER BOTTLES

Healing crystals have been doing the rounds for decades – but how would you like a crystal shard in your water bottle so that your H₂O is anything but ordinary? Brands such as Glacce, Anthropologie and Moksha Elements are creating bottles infused with crystals, in the belief that the healing vibrations of stones such as amethysts, rose quartz and tourmalines can charge the water with different properties like positivity, love, creativity and strength, to name a few. Plus, it looks way prettier than your average sipper.

EAR SEEDS

Much like the name suggests they resemble a constellation of tiny metallic studs that come in sticker form and are supposed to apply pressure to certain auricular points in the same vein as acupuncture. Following the route of traditional Chinese medicine they are known to relieve stress, promote calmness and even soothe migraines and stomach aches. Disposable and affordable, they might just be the apt accessories for the moment.

CBD-INFUSED LEGGINGS

It's been almost a decade since athletic-wear label Lululemon blew up on the scene, retailing exorbitantly-priced yoga pants and establishing its name as one of the primary purveyors of 'athleisure', as we know it. But now, there's a new luxury activewear brand called Acabada based in New York that's creating leggings infused with CBD – a non-psychoactive cannabinoid thought to have various medicinal properties, this is already widely used in various skincare products such as oils and serums, and is known to be anti-ageing and acne-combating. At Acabada, various garments that target specific muscle groups have CBD sown into the garment's fibres (the molecules are released through the body movements of the wearer), thereby helping reduce pain and inflammation during a workout. While the effectiveness varies, each garment only lasts for up to 40 wears until the apparent efficacy of the CBD wears off, thus attaching a hefty price tag to your gym wear.

V-STEAMING

Vaginal steaming has received criticism from gynaecologists and health experts for its dangerous ill-effects, such as severe burns and even infections. Despite the warning, there are women who partake in it with the belief that sitting over a steam pot brewing with herbs can result in benefits like detoxification and better fertility – none of these facts have been scientifically proven yet. **ff**

SLEEP ROBOTS

Move over white noise machines and sound baths. For many of us struggling to pack in the recommended hours of sleep, behold – the sleep robot. The Somnox sleep robot could be the equivalent of your security blanket or even a stuffed toy for adults, but unlike the latter, it breathes! It's a bean-shaped mechanical pillow that comes with a birth certificate (cute) for you to snuggle with. It also comes with a carbon dioxide sensor to track breathing, an accelerometer to detect movement, an audio speaker to play soothing sounds and even a lullaby. The most human feature that makes it such a good cuddle buddy is its ability to expand and deflate in the rhythm akin to belly breathes, which can help you to get some shut-eye.



Label ALERT

5

Don't let the pandemic dampen your festive spirit. Bring the celebrations indoors by investing in versatile ethnic-wear and handcrafted sustainable jewellery



IF YOU LOVE: Contemporary festive-wear.

THEN YOU WILL LOVE: Label Earthen.

WHO: Priti Shekhar spent more than a decade working with the country's leading fashion houses before starting the label, in 2019. The designer noticed a wide gap in the festive-wear market – luxury labels were priced exorbitantly high while the affordable brands lacked intricate craftsmanship. This inspired Shekhar to create a unique crossroad with a brand that offers premium ethnic-wear clothing options.

WHY: Shekhar's designs have been inspired by iconic cinematic and pop culture style icons; be it sartorial influences of female political leaders as well as actresses and women achievers in various fields. Case in point: The label's versatile separates feature classic stripes, retro polka dots and vintage florals reinterpreted in a modern style. Further, Shekhar uses traditional weaves such as handwoven *banarasi* brocades, silks and cottons, and fuses them with delicate surface ornamentation of *aari*, *kashida*, *resbam*, *zardozi* and *sujni* embroidery.

PRICE RANGE: ₹ 9,000 to ₹ 50,000

WHERE: www.aashniandco.com, www.perniaspopupsshop.com, www.modvey.com, Ensemble, Mumbai, New Delhi; Elahe, Hyderabad.

WEAR: This festive season, steer clear of bedazzled, OTT outfits and opt for styling-friendly, timeless classics – pair them together or individually. Whether you're attending evening cocktails or house parties, the minimal silhouettes in warm hues will allow you to channel understated glamour.

IF YOU LOVE: Statement jewellery.

THEN YOU WILL LOVE: The Slow Studio.

WHO: The label stemmed from designer Asmita Kulshrestha's quest to find jewellery pieces designed in India, with a contemporary appeal. The young entrepreneur observed that millennial and Gen-Z customers had to resort to either fast fashion brands or invest in fine jewellery to own modern accessories that were in sync with global design sensibilities. Hence, the London College of Fashion graduate, after working at retail giants such as Tanishq and Hidesign, decided to launch a label that employed sustainable and indigenous craftsmanship on modern jewellery pieces.

WHY: Kulshrestha takes a user-centric design approach to her creations, where she prioritises her consumer's needs and utilities before marrying them with her art. Further, the designer has managed to navigate the challenges that come with embracing slow fashion and adopting sustainable practices – all their pieces are handmade by local craftsmen in reclaimed brass and manufactured in limited quantities.

PRICE RANGE: ₹ 1,900 to ₹ 7,500

WHERE: www.ogaan.com, www.ensembleindia.com, www.jaypore.com, www.nykaafashion.com, www.aashniandco.com

WEAR: Consider the label's minimalistic pieces for your waist-up Zoom meetings or experiment with the chunky accessories for your post-pandemic outings.





NEW OUTLOOK

Designer Pranav Misra on why fashion needs to migrate from superficiality to be positioned as a cultural tool

“The bird fights its way out of the egg. The egg is the world. Who would be born must first destroy a world.” –

writes Hermann Hesse in his book, *Demian*.

A creative intellectual is a funambulist of sorts, balancing between the acts of creation and destruction on either side. One slight unchecked inclination to any side will make you fall. The constant learning and unlearning is part of the fine creative process. Fashion has always been and will be a reflection of society and its time. Today, people have access to more information, and as a result, people are more curious. They want more.

A creative individual is like a sponge who soaks in whatever surrounds him, and that is why I feel it is important to be a collector of information only to let the emotion out of you in the form of your work. It is a process of never speaking out of turn. Today, we are living in an impulsive era where social communication is designed for you to react, and that is not good for any creative mind.

I have always had questions in my mind about the role of fashion in society. I feel that colours, motifs, and details are ingredients that help you in the same manner that certain ingredients help decorate your food while garnishing it. But we must look deeper at the raw material used at the core of this decoration. What are we trying to say with what we create? How does it impact the world around us? How much change is it capable of bringing? And, why are we creating what we are creating?

Change is inevitable. Gone are the days when pretty motifs and attractive

colours were enough to excite customers and influence sales. All that's pretty isn't necessarily beautiful anymore, and people deserve more than just pretty. Having said that, ideas of beauty are also changing and so is the understanding of fashion. The social responsibility that comes with having a fashion house is still at a very nascent stage in India, though the revival of the craft, and looking at meaningful cultural references in clothes is a welcome change. It's visible around us right from the choice of models in campaigns to a shift to homegrown textiles.

Designers are becoming more aware of the atmosphere around and that's because the new generation is a bit more responsible than the previous one. Young creative entrepreneurs are questioning everything – from the process of making clothes to selling it. Although designers are still far from making political statements through their work; and politics is important not only for its influence on society but also because of the power it has to change the cultural history of a landscape (whether it's re-naming important architectural landmarks or academically influencing a whole generation into following a new propaganda-based narrative.) It is our cultural responsibility

as image-makers to keep educating people and influencing them with our work. It is equally important to be a sceptic, to steer the conversation in new directions; to influence people to demand better, and more.

Whoever said 'don't judge a book by its cover' lived in a different time. The attention to detail starts with the packaging used to deliver the message. And if fashion's sizeable social scope and requisite expiration date is what makes it so useful as a marker of time, then I say wear your opinion on your sleeve, fearlessly. **✎**

Clothes express a lot about the wearer to the watcher



Clothes communicate messages other than that of resemblance



Fashion is now a real, legitimate means of communication

Analog watch,
Esprit, ₹ 12,600



'Forever Fendi' watch,
Fendi,
price on request



'The Scarlett' watch,
Fossil,
₹ 9,495



7

TREASURED TIME

*The festive season calls for
timepieces that are as good
as jewellery*

Watches are a great investment piece that will elevate the simplest ensemble. While we've got cutting-edge smartwatches tracking all your health data, they need an update every other year and tend to look jarring on a festive outfit. Metallics? They never go out of style, and golden hues are having a moment with celebrities and street-style crews alike. The best thing about a gold-toned watch is that it ages well too, simplifying the tricky pursuit of finding the perfect timepiece for long-term wearability.

'The Icon' watch,
Daniel Wellington,
₹ 14,999



Analog watch,
Guess,
₹ 10,500



Analog watch,
Kenneth Cole,
₹ 11,495



MILAN FASHION WEEK



MILAN FASHION WEEK

Analog watch,
Versus,
₹ 16,800



'The Round' watch,
Marc Jacobs,
₹ 25,800



'The Wallace' watch,
Vivienne Westwood at
www.farfetch.com,
₹ 22,950 approx



MILAN FASHION WEEK



8

LIKE A BOSS



Digital reading, writer's block and WFH state of mind – Mrs Funnybones gets candid

Her digital venture Tweak turned one last month, she's just launched an imprint (Tweak Books), and along with it, two new books (in association with Juggernaut, titled *When I Grow Up I Want To Be...* and *What's in your Dabba*), and all this while she's been operating remotely from Scotland for the past two months – is there anything Twinkle Khanna can't do? We spoke to Mrs Funnybones on everything from navigating the digital world, technology, and start-up advice.

GRAZIA: How do you, as the founder of a new-age digital content company, capture the joy of being able to dive into the written word online?

TWINKLE KHANNA: Tweak was designed by and for people immersed in the world of words. There are certain things you have to keep in mind when writing for an online audience, like length and snackable content interspersed with longer reads, but the skill-set required to write a novel, a column, or for an online platform is the same.

G: How exactly does the technology we use to read change the way we read?

TK: I believe that our brain has evolved in a manner that it knows what to retain and discard. What we read online doesn't seem to stick in our memories in the same way as reading a physical book. It could be

because, subconsciously, we know that it can be retrieved through a search, or it could be that reading a physical copy, there are more senses involved, including the tactility of turning pages or, sometimes, underlining sentences. Like Douglas Adams said, 'Books are sharks...there were sharks before there were dinosaurs, and the reason sharks are still in the ocean is that nothing is better at being a shark than a shark.' I may run a digital platform, but I have to be honest and say very few things can beat the experience of reading a physical book.

G: Would you say the pandemic has afforded readers the flexibility to consume new kinds of writing in the digital space?

TK: The pandemic, along with the disasters it has brought in its wake, has also allowed us to experiment with the way we work and

live in a manner that has never been explored before. Consuming unfamiliar forms of content is just a small part of that ecosystem.

G: It isn't all unicorns and rainbows with digital reading. Despite the gradual shift online, exacerbated by recent events, are there any potential downsides?

TK: The potential downside is we are all becoming a species filled with information, without enough

time to assimilate that into knowledge, let alone wisdom.

G: The digital space is fast-paced and, at times, unforgiving. How do you drive traffic to your website without compromising content quality?

TK: Hire good writers and nurture them. We have a wonderful team, and we also spent almost a year before the launch defining what we stand for and how we are going to present our stories. **TK**

Tweak Books has two books under its umbrella – *What's In your Dabba* and *When I Grow Up, I Want To Be...*



TWINKLE KHANNA'S READY RECKONER

WEBSITES

The New Yorker
www.newyorker.com

Smithsonian Magazine
www.smithsonianmag.com

Lightspeed Magazine
lightspeedmagazine.com

The Cut
www.thecut.com

Mental Floss
www.mentalfloss.com

BOOKS

Girl, Woman, Other,
Bernardine Evaristo

Too Much Happiness,
Alice Munro

Family Matters, Rohinton Mistry

My Sister, The Serial Killer,
Oyinkan Braithwaite

Invisible Planets: An Anthology of Contemporary Chinese,
Ken Liu

G: What's your current state of mind?

TK: Based on my growling stomach, at the moment, I would say hungry pretty much sums up all my emotions at this point.

G: A line on how you introduce yourself...

TK: I sing a rather familiar nursery rhyme.

G: What gets you out of bed each morning?

TK: I don't get out of bed. These days I work from there – a pillow masquerading as my desk.

G: First-mover advantage or never too late to start anything?

TK: The latter, because you can then learn a lot from all the potholes the first mover will invariably find himself tripping over.

G: What's the best and worst comment you've received for your writing?

TK: I have been writing for a long time and I now realise that both bouquets and brickbats are all momentary. In fact, I wrote a short piece once about how a dog is lauded for being a hero and then almost immediately falls from grace. It is an allegory for bipeds as well.

G: Have you ever had writer's block?

TK: If you are asking me about all the times I have ever wanted to smash my head against the wall in the hope that a tiny piece of my brain accidentally falls onto the page, then yes, I have experienced the dreaded writer's block often enough.

G: What does a work crisis look like for you?

TK: It could range anywhere from small tremors like our platform crashing, which it did when we had a story called *A Dummy's Guide to Your Vagina* or racing against a column deadline when I also have to ensure that my child has finished all her virtual school assignments, to an earthquake somewhere around a 7.9 on the Richter scale, like bouncing cheques and dropped contracts.

G: What's the best business advice you'd offer a start-up?

TK: Be agile – it's your biggest advantage. I remember hearing a Ted Talk about the advantage that a nimble David had over a lumbering Goliath and its equivalence to what a start-up has over big corporations, and it is a bit that has stayed with me for a long time.

G: One quote you'd like to be remembered by.

TK: Nothing in life is sacred except laughter.

HOME BOUND

9

*Let traditional home decor pave the way
for your Fall wardrobe*



MARNI

After months of wearing airy silhouettes and feather-light fabrics, we're ready to embrace a new season that celebrates all things cosy. But instead of sticking to the usual chunky knits and puffer jackets, A/W 20 runways served a modern spin on winter dressing. One way to channel the more-is-more approach is to take a cue from your grandma's closet and turn to tapestry, carpets and home linen as wardrobe inspiration. Some designers even consciously upcycled upholstery fabrics and decorative items for their collections. There's no better way to enjoy the comfort of home, wherever you go.



Cashmere throw,
Hermès, price on request



PACO RABANNE



MARINE SERRE

OFF THE WALL

With coats crafted from repurposed Turkish kilim, jackets inspired by gaucho blankets, and velvet-inlay brocade dresses that remind you of a wall carpet, designers like Marni, Paco Rabanne, and Marine Serre have redefined winter dressing. We're not suggesting wrapping yourself in carpets, but opting for earthy, natural fabrics like linen and ikat cotton, monogrammed canvas or motif-printed dresses with fringe detailing could be a good way to start.

Ikat cotton one-shoulder dress,
Madhurima Bhattacharjee.
₹ 3,400

Gold plated chime
necklace,
Tribe Amrapali.
₹ 11,250



Ahir tote,
Injiri, ₹ 5,900



Since 1854 Starboard
espadrilles,
Louis Vuitton.
₹ 54,000

Printed wrap dress,
Zara, ₹ 4,490



Photographs IMAXTREE, Fashion Stylist GARVIKA KHANNA

Pearl detailed raffia handbag, **Rosantica** at www.net-a-porter.com, ₹ 25,275 approx

Paisley print bustier blouse, **We Are Kindred**, ₹ 10,770 approx

Woven leather ballerinas, **Tissr** at www.jaypore.com, ₹ 4,500

Crochet blouse, **Ralph Lauren**, ₹ 1,25,000

Chanderi silk wrap jacket, **Meadow**, ₹ 4,980

Chanderi silk flared trousers, **Meadow**, ₹ 3,850

CURTAIN CORE

To some, the idea of taking wardrobe inspiration from curtain fabrics might not sound very appealing. And it's quite obvious why: Nobody wants to look like they pulled down the window drapes, threw them on and called it an outfit. But elements like muted florals, ornate paisleys and delicate details were all over the runways, and we'd suggest you give them a go.

Paisley print maxi skirt, **We Are Kindred**, ₹ 14,355 approx

Baroque pearl drop earrings, **Hannan**, ₹ 5,860

'Cannage' brim bucket hat, **Dior**, price on request

Velvet platforms, **Aquazzura**, price on request

Embroidered cotton trousers, **Untitled Co.**, ₹ 17,400

Leather handbag, **Givenchy** at www.darveys.com, ₹ 1,98,950

Jacquard kaftan dress, **H&M**, ₹ 3,440

Quilted jacket, **Mango**, ₹ 5,590

COZY COMFORT

Age-old homespun textile art of self-on-self jacquard, traditionally called Matelassé, may have been the hero fabric only reserved for your grandma's living room. But, the opulent fabric has got a major, modern update this season. From micro-quilted jackets at Erdem to a floral patterned version at Loewe and Acne Studios, it has been interpreted in designs that are minimal and contemporary. There has never been a better time to embrace the trend since home is officially our new office and we could use all the comfort we can get. **LI**

MOSCHINO

PACO RABANNE

LOEWE

ERDEM

ACNE STUDIOS

10 HOT
STORIES



GAME ON

By adopting a winning mentality, this tennis star is paving his own path to fame

There were all sorts of storylines from tennis star Sumit Nagal's gutsy United States Open performance to celebrate. Most obviously, after a relatively nerveless first round win against Bradley Klahn, he was touted as the country's next big hope for a tennis major. After all, the win made him the first Indian singles player to cross the first round hurdle of a Grand Slam match in seven years. We knew the 23-year-old New Delhi native was very good. But on the supposedly unfavourable acrylic hard courts at Flushing Meadows in Queens, New York, Nagal exuded the kind of tenacity that's required to break out from the pack – the kind that separates the ingénues from the potential Slam winners.

But again, it may be his loss to eventual champion Dominic Thiem in the second round that will be remembered more. While Nagal may have lost in straight sets, the learning he got from his second outing on Arthur Ashe was a gain. "The situation was a lot more different this time around. Although I had momentum on my side, I felt the nerves kick in. I was stoked to play someone like Thiem. I have played Roger (Federer), (Marin) Cilic, and (Stanislas) Wawrinka in the past. They're all great in their own distinct way that you get to learn so much from them, especially when it comes to being disciplined and focused on the right things," he says via a phone call, a few days before the qualifying rounds for the French Open began.

Although Nagal first made headlines in 2015, with his Wimbledon boys' doubles win, it was his grand slam debut in 2019 that turned the spotlight on his raw talent and winning belief. Not many would have predicted him making *the* Roger Federer toil, let alone claim the first set itself. And even though the match eventually slipped out of his hand, Nagal walked out proud – cementing his position as a rising star of Indian tennis.

Cut to 2020 and the tennis pro has begun adopting a winner's mentality. "I'm in no rush to prove anything and put pressure on myself saying that 'I reached the semis' or won a lot of tournaments so I have to keep up the winning streak. If I was to compare last year to this year, my goals are different. I am also playing at a

Photograph ASHISH CHANDRA. Words BARRY RODGERS



In his US Open debut last year, Nagal took a set off Federer before bowing out

higher level, so I think being patient and doing the right things is the way to go," he shares.

On a personal note, watching Nagal play makes you want to get out on the court and hit, too. His laser focus, high level of energy, positive attitude and great movement all contribute to his winning persona. And then there are the human elements – the warm humility and self-assuredness. "I had a normal upbringing in Delhi. I was originally drawn to cricket like other children, but my dad intervened and enrolled me at the DDA tennis academy in Paschim Vihar, when I was seven. During my initial days, it was either my mom or my dad who would take me for practice; they ensured I didn't miss a day of training," he says.

IN HIS STRIDE

Yet beneath his precocious rise to overnight fame lies a quiet determination to win. "Do I enjoy the attention? Yes, who wouldn't. Would I say that I feel pressured to top my achievements? No. A tennis player constantly evolves. Thankfully, I've always been disciplined. I don't enjoy late-night parties; it's all about the hustle right now," he says, adding that touring the tennis circuit amid a pandemic hasn't been easy. "It's been challenging, but the thrill of a tennis court keeps me wanting more. There are protocols in place that we're all adjusting to. But yes, I do miss not having a full-capacity crowd cheering during a match.

It's become more important than ever to dig deep and rely on self-motivation," he says.

Nagal is candid about his fearless counter-punching and at times unreturnable power; and says he would be comfortable testing his skills against the best of the best. "I was raised to be a good sport, win or lose, to shake hands and get off the court. I am a bit introverted and I don't like to show much emotion, but I think I have that killer instinct," he says, adding that he moulds his game after former Spanish tennis pro, David Ferrer. "He was a tireless competitor – his overall game and outstanding stamina made him a feared opponent, someone not many players relished seeing on their side of the draw. I want to hone the same intensity and court-coverage that helped him forge his path in the tennis world," says Nagal, who, like his idol, prefers playing on the clay. "It (clay court tennis) almost feels like a game of chess. You're always looking for a strategy to beat your opponent, and if you're not beating him one way you need to work out where his weaknesses are and change your game – that's where the patience and game development comes in," he says

Above all, the young tennis pro is earning plaudits for his unbending devotion to the sport, building an ardent cast of admirers, including Mahesh Bhupathi, for going about it with an admirable lack of histrionics. It's safe to say that in Nagal, Indian tennis has found a promising new superstar. **U**



Nagal enjoys playing on clay



Patience on the surface is key



Nagal's court coverage is his strength



sky
full
of
stars

“

Roll the camera and look for the showstopper. There is one within us, all the time, walking the ramp, making heads turn. One last walk and our third eye evaporates from the green room to the blowing whistles.

—Pankaj Kumar, Founder, The [P] Factor, Goa



Great conversations begin with a good design. The [P] factor is a design studio based in Goa that works on beautiful holiday homes which are functional, smart and nature collaborative. The Founder, Pankaj Kumar – a stylist and a designer at heart – has a young talented team of architects, including Shreeya Jagtap and Nupoor Mhatre. With an eye for all things pretty, the studio's latest offering is 'The Silk Route', a bouquet of ten extreme design homes spread pan India.

If we had a third eye, what would it like to see that the other two don't? Imagine a world of aesthetics where the numbers don't matter. Design intrinsic, opulent and commerce ignorant. Maths or no maths, the sensibilities of a great design is to touch as many emotions that otherwise stay dormant. That's the power of design, influential design.

The philosophy of believing in design. On its own, it knows of no boundaries. Free spirited fluid take on our perceptions. What we perceive when they are work in progress, and the birth of something communicative. When it speaks, language is no barrier to our visual listening. Its existence and emancipation, in form, is defined as art.

If our coffee is the wake-up call for the beginning of a great day, so is the first sight of whatever our eyes catch. A beautiful bed to get

off and a great shimmering window to catch a glimpse of the world to follow. The overhead chandelier to shine bright like you and that small arch by the window to hold that absolute unnecessary just to lift your visual awesomeness. Flirt with everything pretty around. Find your heart for that favourite shade and that not so straight line, caressing the love handles while negotiating the curve. The oomph and the love for design. Welcome to the wonderland of dreams. And how much we love to keep bridging that gap. The communication between the objects finding its space within art and its interpretation. All things pretty. Roll the camera and look for the showstopper. There is one within us, all the time, walking the ramp, making heads turn. One last walk and our third eye evaporates from the green room to the blowing whistles.

At [P] Factor, we have just begun. If age is a parameter, we are young. Young at heart where the language is still being schooled. Naïve enough to talk about it, but certainly bold to define our vision. Our small team has just started getting noticed, making few heads turn, and the rest is just a matter of time. The awesomeness of youth is its rough edges and the rebel we tame in the name of design. We work in a studio of unfair desires of unworldly imaginations. Why else then would we live off our wings, when we have our feet firmly grounded to get those numbers. Aren't they magical? Well, let's fly for a while, it's a sky full of stars.

(Instagram: studiopfactor)



PRESS PAUSE

Diana Penty opens
up about why it's
important to allow
yourself to go slow
now and again

Photographs **MARK SEQUEIRA**
Fashion Director **PASHAM ALWANI**
Words **BARRY RODGERS**

Quilted waist coat, **Yavī**, ₹ 12,900,
silk trousers, **Akaaro**, ₹ 7,000;
hinge bangle, **Isharya**, ₹ 8,883;
'Iconic Link Lumine' watch,
Daniel Wellington, ₹ 17,999



Satin silk jacket and trousers, both **Ekaya**, 49,150 (for the set); 22K gold-plated viper necklace, **The Slow Studio**, ₹ 4,000; 'Homecoming Big Vase of Plenty' necklace, 'Viper Moon' choker, both **Lune**, ₹ 3,500 and ₹ 6,200 respectively

When the cook (with his mask firmly in place) at the home-stay mentioned that dinner would be served at 7.30 pm, I asked: "Is that 7:30 pm regular time or Goa time?" He started laughing. Day 2 of my four-day, well-earned break in the sunshine state in mid-September and I was finally getting used to the pace: Be ready by 8.30 am meant leaving at 10 am. Home by 7 pm suggested that fireflies would be emitting their soft lights for a couple of hours by the time I returned. In fact, I stopped setting my alarm – not because I was uninterested in what the days had in store. Here in Assagao – a quiet inland village known for its leafy streets lined with elegant colonial villas and Portuguese-era churches in north Goa – time was merely a word.

If there was ever a time to embrace the international 'Slow Movement' – a cultural shift toward slowing down life's pace – now would probably be it. And our cover girl, Bollywood actor Diana Penty, agrees. On a languid Sunday afternoon (a few days after I had returned to Mumbai), Penty and I traded notes on how the novel coronavirus has served as a reminder of something lost long ago – that life is about doing right not just the first time, but all the time. "Obviously aside from just how devastating [this moment] is, this period has allowed me to pause

and reflect. It may sound cliché, but I've been able to get to know myself in a way that I hadn't been able to before," she says. Investing in self-care has made the actor feel comfortable with being vulnerable, "because now I'm tapped into myself in such an intimate way."

In the beginning, feels Penty, it seemed like the staycation none of us expected, but most of us delighted in. "Some days I tried staying productive from my bed. It was great. My days slowly drifted, leisurely, amidst hearing birds chirp in the morning, evening calls, and lots of reruns of a few of my favourite shows. This paced, day-to-day-ing was a treat and a delight," she says. Fifteen minutes into our conversation and I realise that there's something warm in the timbre of Penty's voice that feels so familiar. Her manner is warm and appropriately sisterly.

NEW LIVING

After making her acting debut in 2012 with *Cocktail*, in which she co-starred with Deepika Padukone and Saif Ali Khan, she went on to feature in movies like *Happy Bhag Jayegi*, its sequel *Happy Phirr Bhag Jayegi*, *Lucknow Central*, and *Parmanu: The Story of Pokhran*. She will next be seen in *Shiddat: Journey Beyond Love*, shooting for which has resumed after a long lockdown-imposed hiatus. "The halt of the hustle and bustle of the film industry has been a blessing in disguise," she says, admitting that while she does consider herself »

"NO MATTER WHERE YOU TURN, PEOPLE ARE
RESETTING, RETHINKING, AND CHOOSING
NEW PATHS"

"IF ANYTHING, THE PANDEMIC HAS TAUGHT US
ABOUT COMMUNITY, ABOUT BEING THERE FOR
EACH OTHER"



Silk shirt, **Yavī**, ₹ 11,200; embellished jacket, **Tarun Tahiliani**, price on request; *bandhani* trousers, **11.11/ Eleven Eleven**, ₹ 11,900; 'Bibooty Bicolor' ankle boots, **Christian Louboutin**, ₹ 83,899 approx; 'Elan' bracelets, 'Elan' ring, 'Elan Triad' ring, 'Elan Dual' ring, all **Daniel Wellington**, ₹ 4,999 each, ₹ 2,999, ₹ 5,099, ₹ 4,399 respectively



Silk brocade kurta, quilted silk brocade jacket, both **Raw Mango**, price on request; 'Iconic Link Lumine' watch, **Daniel Wellington**; ₹ 17,999; pearl embedded hoops, **Isharya**, ₹ 8,883



a home-body, there were moments when she missed the company of other people and craved meeting her closest even if it was for an intimate dinner. “Without giving it a second thought, we slowly slip into the routines of our lives, like growing accustomed to living on a noisy street that we cannot remember our previous neighbourhood and a time of silence. We’ve all been forced to wake up from our slumber in a way,” she says.

What, then, might be regained with a less hurried life? “Well, a lot. For starters: We can all finally invest in things that we may have taken for granted earlier; things we thought could wait because they were not high up on our priority list,” says Penty. Now that she has a hot minute to breathe, she says that she’s “actually learned how to relax without finding the need to stay occupied.” She’s spending more time with her mother [“we would barely see each other considering my erratic schedule, but I think I’ve more than made up for it”], reading scripts [“more than I have in the past few years”], helping with household chores, doing her nails, sleeping eight hours a night, and making time to stay connected with friends. “No matter where you turn, people are resetting, rethinking, and choosing new paths – perhaps living in a new place or devoting themselves to a cause they believe in or just doing their best in a moment of tremendous economic strain,” she says, adding that she is acutely aware that there are multiple complex levels to the butterfly effect of this pandemic – not just the sickness but the emotional and mental effects.

PACE YOURSELF

When I ask her how she’s feeling now, she pauses, ponders and says that she’s allowing herself to be hopeful. But hope, she admits, is a scary word because it doesn’t magically turn things around. In early June, Penty did her bit by initiating The Khaki Project to support Mumbai police officers on the frontline of the Covid-19 pandemic. A week into the lockdown, she had reached out to local police authorities to distribute essentials – hand sanitisers and protective eyewear – to police personnel in Mumbai’s Byculla. To scale up the effort, she partnered with the Salaam Bombay Foundation to connect with senior officials of police stations across Mumbai. “If anything, the pandemic has taught us about community, about being there for each other, and going the extra mile to ensure people remain healthy and safe,” she adds.

While the lockdown did give us several months to self-reflect, Penty believes that deliberate living requires a long-term change of lifestyle and habits.

“At some point, the coronavirus will pass, or at least recede into the haze of other viruses and ailments. There will be (and already is) enormous suffering and loss of life, coupled with economic devastation. That tragedy cannot be overstated. We will be trying to build a broken world. But perhaps the slower lifestyle in these months can help put the pieces back together,” she says.

And perhaps a more contemplative, deliberate way of living can become permanent. **IN**



Assisted by **GARVIKA KHANNA** and **OJAS KOLVANKAR**

THE LONG HAUL

Embracing longevity over fleeting trends, the conversation about a capsule wardrobe has been more imperative than ever

WORDS
TANYA MEHTA



Back in 1985, when Donna Karan debuted her eponymous collection to the world, she introduced the concept of ‘Seven Easy Pieces’ – her idea of essentials to rescue women from their routine wardrobe crises so that they could put together outfits more seamlessly. This comprised a black bodysuit, a dress, loose trousers, a white shirt, a skirt, and a cashmere sweater. Fast forward to 2020 and we unanticipatedly find ourselves at home, smack down in the middle of a global pandemic. This period of isolation has made many of us don our thinking caps, questioning our lifestyle choices, and how we consume fashion. Presented with

only a few occasions to step out and dress up, a number of individuals are veering towards more conscious buying patterns, tightly editing within their own wardrobes and investing and re-wearing pieces that are high quality and resonate with their personal style.

Decades later, the idea of streamlining and curating a capsule wardrobe is making a massive comeback. The benefits of this are manifold. For starters, less consumption equates to a reduced carbon footprint. It also eliminates the chance of you suffering from buyer’s remorse after purchasing an extremely ‘trendy’ item that will look outdated in a couple of years, you spend less

time staring at your closet wondering what to wear, and lastly, contrary to the adrenaline rush of purchasing something new, the practice of re-wearing is a far more gratifying feeling as it molds your aesthetic further – a more substantial feel-good factor.

But, we’ve come a long way since the era of 90s minimalism – a good white shirt and a tailored jacket are still vital pieces, but the women of today are honing their style sensibilities and redefining their idea of a classic. We reached out to seven fashionistas who brought out their most versatile pieces and styled them in two separate ways while offering some sage advice on the art of dressing, and why less is more.

CAROL HUMTSOE*Model and founder of Carol's Shop*

An avid thrifter and lover of all things vintage, Humtsoe's quaint dressing style resembles beautiful postcards from the past – pussy-bow blouses, printed tea dresses and gargantuan straw hats. It's no surprise then that one of her most cherished pieces is pre-loved. "I chanced upon this floral jacket at a thrift store in Thailand seven years ago, and it has been a favourite ever since. It works with anything – be it jeans, shorts, dresses or skirts. I tried to sell it on my shop (@carols.shop) but did not have the heart to part with it. It almost feels like it describes me, like it's meant to be my coat. The sense of belonging with clothes is rare, personally, but this one turned out to be a keeper. Here, I have paired it with an ivory slip dress and loafers that I procured from a vintage store in New York. The second look brings out the more eccentric, zany side of the jacket, and in order to lend it a 70s feel I styled it with bright red trousers and a corset blouse from a store in my hometown of Dimapur (Nagaland)."

HER TAKE: "My lockdown uniform consists of airy cotton trousers, a trusted scarf and calf-length dresses. I haven't bought anything for myself this year and it feels good because it has been a period of reflection to evaluate my buying choices. I have found that upcycling old clothes is a fun and sustainable activity. Invest in staples and wear what makes you feel comfortable; the only way forward is to be as individualistic as you can."





AMRITA THAKUR
Designer and content creator

If you're familiar with Thakur's videos on Instagram you'll realise that she's a style chameleon. The designer and content creator decodes looks and doles out style advice that is effective and relatable, from her living room. During the lockdown, she confesses to have lived in night-suits and robes, and has been collecting beautiful, printed fabric over the years to transform them into chic nightwear. "The drop-crotch trousers are

by Abraham & Thakore. I bought these from Ensemble about a decade ago. It was relevant then, it's relevant now. They're the coolest pair of trousers I own. I enjoy wearing them paired with various key pieces – be it a shirt or even a kurta. I've worn it differently this time around, with a khadi shirt from Khanijo's 'Unitive' collection. The shirt, with its big sleeves, when paired with the trousers lends a very

Japanese vibe. I also like the vertical print of the shirt as it seamlessly blends into the pin-stripe of the trousers. I threw on a pair of stilettos and completed the look with cool aviator shades. The second look showcases the true versatility of the trousers, proving that they can look just at home when paired with a cropped top and metallic brogues for a casual, understated look".

HER TAKE: "During the lockdown, I reassessed my wardrobe and conducted a massive clean-up. Going forward, I want to buy something only if I see myself wearing it over the next 5-10 years. And that thought and self-check has brought about a change in what I purchase. Peek inside your wardrobe and edit the pieces that you haven't worn in the last six months. Retire pieces that don't feel like you anymore, or those that still require the right occasion to be brought out again. And, try and find those pieces that are classics – like a *chikankari* kurta or a plain sari – and wear them more. Re-wear, reimagine, reinvent."



EKTA RAJANI*Fashion stylist and creative director*

A purveyor of slow fashion, Rajani turned her social media account into a channel for educating and spreading awareness about emerging local fashion labels that employ ethical and sustainable processes – whether it's the use of vegetable dyes, organic cotton or hands-on techniques – all with the aim to promote 'glocalised consumption' amongst audiences. "A few years ago, I decided to hold back on excessive shopping and, instead, opted for well-researched pieces I wanted to keep. I look for processes, packaging,

fair practices as much as I do design and longevity," she explains, which is evident in the way she dresses.

"The trouser on repeat, by Suket Dhir, is about five years old. It's a classic pleated, wide-legged one with 1920s inspiration. If I recall, Suket was looking at how his grandfather dressed when he decided to design this suit set (it has a matching jacket). He used the reverse side of a hand-block print, making the impression and texture of the same slightly rustic. While I do live



in shirts and trousers on the daily, I've worn this pair to red carpet events as well as on the occasional coffee run. I could have mixed casual and formal to shift the mood," she shares. With Diwali on her mind, Rajani decided to give the trousers a festive spin while preserving a low-key outlook. "The bottle green, sequinned Rajesh Pratap Singh dinner shirt is such a strong classic that I'd wear it for a night out with a close circle of friends, a little take on the 'Le Smoking' (Yves Saint Laurent's iconic suit) look I've always loved. The cut and detailing on both pieces are so strong that I didn't feel the need to accessorise it at all. My second look comprises a deconstructed, naturally-dyed *kalidar* kurta from 11.11. With the front button open, it changed from its classical avatar into something more risqué. The earrings and neckpiece are almost 20 years old, made of wax or lac while the zardozi-embroidered mules are from Anand Kabra."

HER TAKE: "Try different combinations and fan out your unworn styles to find people who may want it. Begin enjoying what you have through styling assortments. Build on life and experiences more. As I always say: It's okay to repeat clothes."





NAVNEET RANDHAWA
Restaurateur

While many would consider a wardrobe staple to be a crisp white shirt or even a leather jacket, Randhawa found versatility in a chartreuse snake print dress from popular streetwear label Off-White. She picked this piece up from the Montaigne Market in Paris. “Funnily enough this colour makes me happy and is a reminder to not take life so seriously. I decided to wear it as a jacket over leather trousers and a cropped blouse to lease it a new life. The pristine white is the perfect canvas for the neon green. The dress has quite a lot going on in terms of colour and pattern so, I kept the other elements monochromatic and minimal. For the second look, I was leaning towards a more casual vibe, so I kept it simple with chunky sneakers,” she shares. Being cooped up at home, Randhawa has found renewed solace in a few salwar suits she purchased from emerging Indian labels. She’s also putting her floaty

kaftans and resortwear to use, hoping that the wishful dressing will lead to her travelling sometime soon.

HER TAKE: “Choose versatile yet statement pieces; detailing on your outfits and accessories can take you a long way. Try not to impulse-buy but wait for an outfit to truly speak to you – question if you see yourself wearing it a year from now. Old dress codes that once dictated fashion are obsolete. Now, it’s all about having fun with it so don’t shy away from trying on a bold print or mixing formal and casual elements together.”




ROOHI JAIKISHAN
Executive director, RR Oomerbhoy Pvt. Ltd

A known face on Mumbai's social circuit, Jaikishan is the epitome of cool – whether she's rocking a tulle mini dress with combat boots or front-rowing at New York Fashion Week. She's also a self-confessed Gucci loyalist and has a knack for pulling off eclectic pieces from the Italian luxury label – pleated satin skirts and scarf print kimono jackets, to name a few. But now that she's retreated to the indoors, like the rest of us, she's spending most of her time browsing through retailer Lululemon's website, and will put on a dressy shirt and trousers on days when she needs a pick-me-up. Despite

her affinity for extravagant clothing, she proves that she can nail two outfits while creating a refreshing high-low mix. "I purchased this crisp shirt from the men's collection at Gucci to wear under a jacket, but since I'm at home it's an easy piece to layer. I've worn it with drawstring trousers from Zara that I tucked into floral Balenciaga boots. My earrings are from Isharya, and this stack of bracelets is from Rae Feather. For the second look, I repeated

the trousers (comfort was imperative) and paired it with a cotton-viscose bomber jacket that's also from Gucci. It has an old-school athleticism to it and I love the clash of jewel tones with pastels." Jaikishan also shares that she hasn't let the lockdown dampen her celebratory spirit, especially when it comes to putting together a dinner party at home, "We recently celebrated a birthday in the family, and I decided to put on a Rosie Assoulin dress, even though it was to host a small group."

HER TAKE: "We're often tempted to buy things impulsively, as I have on the Internet, for gratification. Once that parcel arrives, you know you aren't going anywhere. I believe it's wiser to shop within our own closets for things that we will wear 'now' rather than in the future. Investing in clothing that is well-stitched and has longevity is key. The brand also must have a strong ethical responsibility towards fair and safe manufacturing practices. Personally, I believe digital apps are the future, and brands that are upgrading their websites and providing consumers a wholesome virtual shopping experience are making retail more seamless, especially during a pandemic."



SUMMIYYA PATNI

Fashion influencer

One half of popular fashion account, House of Misu, a glimpse at Patni's images is enough to discern her hyper-glamorous and sophisticated style – what she refers to as “nomadic.” IRL, she goes on grocery runs and micro-socialising sprees in her luxe sweatpants, and loungewear, but when the occasion presented itself she was keen to pluck out a coveted piece from her closet, one that has granted her multiple wears. “I purchased this pleated kimono cape from Payal Khandwala a few years ago, for somebody's *mebendi* ceremony. I was instantly drawn to the olive gold hues, while the sheer versatility of knotting, pinning and draping it provided me with endless possibilities – it's a malleable piece. For the first look, I tucked it into a pair of



tan trousers and added a large-buckled belt for shape to create a tone-on-tone ensemble. The second one is minimal and shows how beautifully this blouse can take on another form, so I draped it sideways and paired it with white bellbottoms and strappy sandals.”

HER TAKE: “Before the pandemic hit, I had curated a semi capsule wardrobe with fail-safe, no-brainer key pieces that I could mix and match. I believe

trousers and denim in earthy tones are wardrobe essentials while investing in light knitwear pieces and capes offer layering options. In my book, one should own three types of footwear – sneakers, sandals and a small heel – that are appropriate for all occasions. A hairband and a chic blazer are great ways to amp up your style. Before you purchase something, visualise yourself wearing it in at least three different scenarios. Also, quality *always* trumps quantity.”



DEEPSHIKHA KHANNA*Design head for Flow Apparel at Good Earth*

Khanna's fondness for Indian heritage and culture has deeply influenced her sartorial proclivities. Her love for earthy tones, tailored silhouettes and vintage jewellery has gravitated her towards brands such as Aish, Maku, péro and En Inde, that make up her list of favourites. She also has a penchant for Raw Mango's 'Soothi' saris and *kolhapuri* chappals from Colaba Causeway. "Last year, I planned a collection for Good Earth's new contemporary apparel offering, called Flow. The focus is on providing easy-

to-wear classic clothing made in beautiful handlooms for the modern multitasker. One of my personal favourite silhouettes is the drop-crotch pant which is a derivative of the dhoti, given the loose nature of this style. It's quite versatile, comfortable and forgiving for our ever-changing bodies. So, I snagged this pair crafted in khadi linen that I've been surviving the pandemic in. I realised that not even the lockdown could propel me to warm up to a T-shirt and sweatpants combo, so I wore these trousers with a beautiful khadi



shirt, and a few accessories for work calls. And when I'm cooking and pottering around the house, I style it with a tank top," she says. To beat the quarantine gloom, Khanna found herself wearing languid kaftans, and even saris on occasion. She's also swapped online shopping with purchases from homegrown designers that offer customisation. "I've definitely curbed my buying habits, and that's not because I have nowhere to go but because I'm making a conscious effort to reduce my carbon footprint whenever I can. The times that I have shopped during the pandemic was to support handloom weavers and sustainable brands."

HER TAKE: "Start with what you haven't worn in a year – donate right away. Then, remove clothes that you spent money on but have never worn – gift them to the people you love. What you're left with is what you love and wear regularly, that is your personal style. To complement these clothes, I would plug in some staples like a black linen suit or a white shirt, in addition to a few luxury buys like a brocade bomber jacket and a pair of silk trousers. Lastly, use accessories to create a new look instead of buying more clothes. For instance, a beautiful brooch is not only an investment, it can perk up a white shirt, and can add shape to a dress when used to cinch the waist." 

THE SIMPLE LIFE

Three couples reflect on their hamlet-like life in Goa

Words **OJAS KOLVANKAR**

For city-dwellers, ditching the comfort and lifestyle – that satisfies their impulses and whims – of a metropolis can be difficult, let alone moving to a smaller town. Yet during the pandemic, a considerable number of creatives made the shift.

Three couples – musician Suryakant Sawhney and video journalist Surabhi Tandon; Vaibhav Chhabra and Richa Shrivastava, the driving forces behind *Maker's Asylum*; and, social media influencers Chandreyi Bandyopadhyay and Joydeep Mondal – share their experiences of shifting from metros like Delhi and Mumbai to Goa.

From embracing slow living and focusing on mental well-being to achieving a work-life balance and mingling with the budding creative community, the paradise town is definitely a new-found melting pot for creative folk.



CHANDREYI BANDYOPADHYAY & JOYDEEP MONDAL

“Goa? We are so excited for you guys. We’ve always wanted to do this, but you guys are actually beating us to the punch.’ Our friends were evidently over the moon when we told them about our plan to shift to Goa after seven months in lockdown, in Mumbai.

Our reason to give up the sweat and grime for the ‘susegad’ life probably stems from the fact that Mumbai can be unforgiving and suffocatingly demanding of its creative professionals. The continuous pace, rising rents and costs, and cluttered spaces were becoming increasingly claustrophobic. The city quietly made us adapt to a continuous routine of work, where the art of continuous creation often transcended the actual act of being creative.

With the country staggering back to some sort of normalcy, businesses being forced to open, and people taking secure road trips and socially distancing to quietly unwind from being cooped up, 2020 has taught us to value ourselves, care about climate change, and be more self-reliant and observant.

Our love affair with the Sunshine State is a storied one. In the past, we’ve visited on multiple occasions – almost like an annual pilgrimage. In retrospect, it was the people that brought us back, time and again. The delicious *bebinca* (a type of pudding and a traditional Indo-Portuguese dessert) from our favourite aunt in Majorda, or the taste of the aromatic espresso from Carlos uncle’s cafe makes us feel right at home. Smaller towns have a different essence, where opportunities are probably less but good work and people are valued. Despite the challenges (with poor connectivity topping the list), the views, scenic drives and beautiful beaches more than made up for it.

Life in Goa, post lockdown, presented a sight completely new to us. Since starting *The Moonchasers*, our lifestyle platform, travelling during the off-season has been our way of avoiding crowds at tourist

destinations. The monsoon season, perhaps, is the only time you can find Goa in its fresh, pristine self, sans tourists. But this September, as we drove down, the sights of desolate beaches, closed and abandoned beach shacks, hotels and villas up for sale, were a testament to the devastating impact of the pandemic.

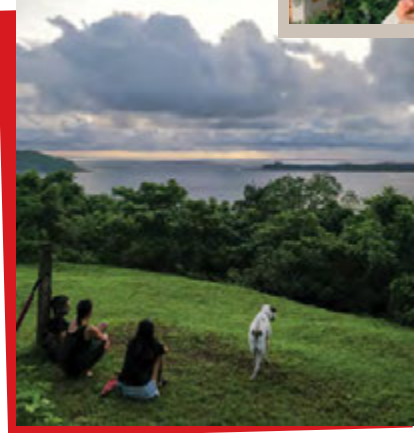
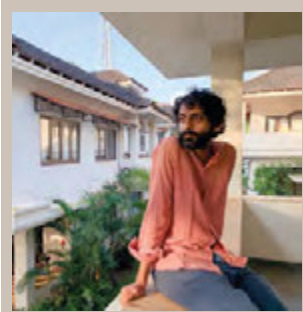
Even as we find our feet, Goa has already allowed us the liberty to focus on creative opportunities in a new light, with conversations flowing and ideas blooming. We firmly believe that the journey from creating for a medium to creating for yourself must be traversed and we are hopeful that this move will reward us with everything.”





SURYAKANT SAWHNEY & SURABHI TANDON

"Living by the sea, under vast skies and tall coconut trees, sounds like the beginning of a dream. The move to Goa then always beckoned, even when we weren't ready to abandon the comforts of city living. And in the end, when we finally did pack up and move, it wasn't into an idyllic beach house with a balcony that oversaw sunsets, but a quiet house atop a hill, in the lush and sleepy village of Moira, in North Goa.



Our reasons are probably not unique. If you're no longer tied to an office job, one of the first major life changes for anyone past their 20s is usually an immediate break with the urban umbilical cord, and a step towards greener pastures (quite literally). After months of being locked down in our apartment in Delhi, Goa beckoned sooner, not later.

Several brokers, house visits and a long-drawn monsoon trip later, here we are. As I write this and look up from my laptop, the sun is filtering through the thicket of palms in our front yard. *Blissful*. Upon closer inspection though, I can see that two giant millipedes have made their way across the hallway. Again. It makes me smile – a reminder of this new life – which certainly isn't a permanent resort vacation.

But with the removal of city chaos from our days, we have certainly been churning out far more productive hours. And by productive, I don't just mean being creative but also enjoying the cutbacks on our city comforts; small grocery runs so you can buy the day's freshest vegetable harvest from the ladies on the street, planning meals in advance because

you can't order-in anything on a whim, or even taking on more labourious work around the house because UrbanClap

will not come to the rescue. One of the most fundamental changes that has come from this move has been in the air quality and with it, our ability to sleep deeply and have more energy through the day.

Creatively, Goa is certainly becoming a melting pot of ideas. What we've particularly enjoyed is meeting people from across the country who have all jumped ship from various cities. As a film production studio, change is everything for new ideas and work. Not only does the change in conversations and geography inspire, but the pace of life has helped with mental and emotional decluttering. Out with the stagnated, deflated energy of a city on edge, and in with the rhythmic songbird notes of this new life, we say."



VAIBHAV CHHABRA & RICHA SHRIVASTAV

"In Mumbai, we would wake up to the noise of traffic, but since we moved to Goa, we now start our days staring at peacocks, who are occasional visitors in our backyard. To be honest, moving out of Mumbai has always been our long-term plan. However, shifting to a smaller city didn't make sense earlier since we'd established ourselves well in the Maximum City as entrepreneurs. Maker's Asylum is an experiential and interactive space that invites artists, engineers, doctors

or anyone else who is interested in innovation and the execution of new ideas. The pandemic resulted in reduced footfalls, which made us move all our projects online, and so we started to question the hefty rents

we were paying for the business's physical space. Coupled with that, Richa and my own endeavour to find a better work-life balance allowed us to consider relocating to a non-metro city. Without much debate, we settled on Goa. With our plans to expand Maker's Asylum's physical space to make it more scalable, our team was on-board immediately.

In the last month alone, we've already started to notice positive changes in our lifestyle. We go to bed early, have a leisurely breakfast, exercise and cycle regularly. Having said that, living in a non-metro city has its own challenges. For instance, the power supply can be uncertain, and

the mobile networks fluctuate. When it comes to recreation and socialising, there is an interesting creative community that thinks out of the box. We noticed more and more people have been living life sustainably here as well. We have also realised the importance of giving our mental well-being precedence, while running our venture. Having a community who thinks alike is a great starting point for us." **AI**





THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT

The ongoing period of isolation and uncertainty has urged many of us to revisit our favourite childhood activities as unique methods of coping



A painting of Portuguese azulejos tiles created using photo inks, by Shibani Surkund

Hunkered down at home for what seems like half a year of quarantine and social distancing I found myself spending more time on social media than usual. Induced by boredom and restricted movement, I noticed a familiar pattern in the content that materialised over the months – it was a chaotic lattice of manic banana bread-making, dizzying TikTok challenges, and innumerable sunset pictures.

Adult colouring books have become immensely popular and are proving to be effective in shifting the focus away from negative thoughts and anxiety



But amongst the melee of posts was also the constant influx of unsettling headlines and formidable numbers rising with the outspread of the novel coronavirus, leading to constant feeling of stress and anxiety. While social media seems to have become a frequent

escape for many, the constant scrolling and information overload are far from beneficial for our mental health.

PRESSING PAUSE

Around this time, I noticed a refreshing development amongst many adults as they traded in their excess screen-time to indulge in and take up a hobby instead. The streets began to be littered with more people cycling, many friends had started painting and journalling, and there has also been fervent utilisation of board games, adult colouring books, and puzzles. In an interesting turn of events, we have begun to slow down and return to activities from our childhood. With curbed social interaction there are very few experiences that provide us with gratification that we have been conditioned to, and as we work from home our routines are bound to lack solid structure. Thus, engaging and completing these activities and fuelling our creativity instills us with a sense of self-rewarding. And the process itself proves to be all-consuming, which introduces a feeling of calmness. “While I studied fine arts in college and was alright with the medium of acrylics and oils, watercolours left me feeling unmoored. Acrylics, especially if

you use impasto, are quick in their process, even the texture gives you a weird sense of satisfaction. Water colours on the other hand are far more laboured, and being short on patience I just plain sucked at it. I have not painted in years, but during the pandemic, I decided to learn watercolours again – not just as a creative exercise but more as a kind of meditation. In some ways I find that the medium is an establishment of control over watercolour itself, you must be restrained and yet you must allow it to find its course. Three hours every Sunday, absorbed in the flow of water-based on tempering light and colour, I would find myself coming out feeling refreshed. I love old photographs, I love saris,

Playing board games is not only an enjoyable experience, it also helps in problem-solving and decision making



Photographs PIXABAY Words TANYA MEHTA

I love observing women, so I started painting those. These days I am trying to recreate my friend's photos of the people on her farm somewhere in Tamil Nadu, it almost feels like I am being transported to her space", shares Meera Ganapathi, founder of *The Soup Magazine*.

The long spell of cabin fever and prolonged ennui can also lead to feelings of diminished productivity. And for many, the best way to tackle this is through innovation, minus the diversions. Shibani Surkund, a wine specialist who's currently amid a job search, took to her love of art as a creative outlet, "During this uncertain time, my mind has been a hot pot of emotions that oscillate between extremes of self-deprecating or stress-inducing thoughts and hopeful optimism. Not long into the lockdown did I start to notice this pattern and realised the only way to displace these feelings would be to channelise them into an activity I truly adore – painting. I was completely disconnected from art once I finished school, but luckily, I was re-introduced to it by my mother a few years ago when we were coping with the loss of a loved one. She encouraged me to express my feelings through art. It started as a hobby and eventually turned out to be a therapeutic form of self-care. During quarantine, it has helped me focus and pour all my emotions out on paper," she says.

GROUND CONTROL

For many of us, the need to indulge in a task with fruitful outcomes is not just due to boredom or temporary respite from our hectic work schedules but a conscious effort to centre ourselves and detach from the white noise that surrounds us even in isolation. "When ambiguity and uncertainty grow in our external environment, we as humans have an innate need to hold on to any form of control we have and can exert. Taking charge

of our time is an effective way to take control back, even if it's marginal. These child-like activities have several benefits, which is precisely why we allow kids to indulge



Putting the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together sharpens cognitive functions and ushers in a feeling of relaxation

in them. Painting, drawing, craftwork, or any art-based activity has proven to release endorphins – which is the happy hormone in our body. Additionally, this also helps us stay focused in the 'here and now', which is an essential coping strategy for anxiety and stress. Furthermore, the use of colours and other such tools make us utilise our physical environment, which in turn activates almost all our senses at the same time, this is a technique normally referred to as 'grounding,'" explains Jasdeep Mago, a neuropsychologist and counsellor.

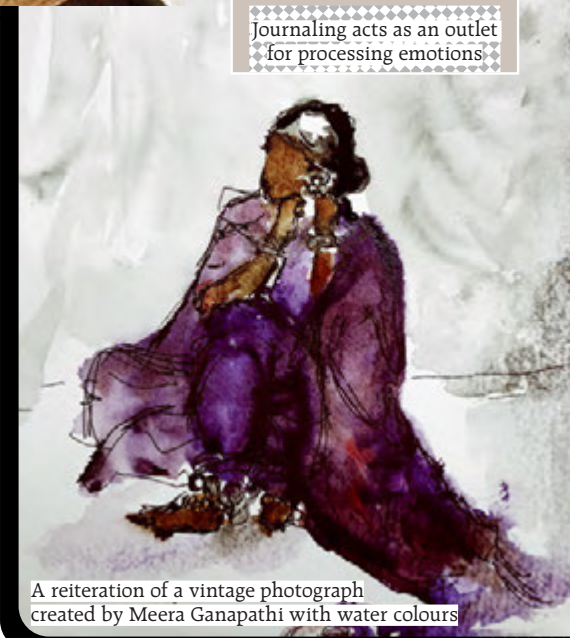
Adulthood is hard and as we struggle to grapple with our reality and the new order, reflecting on our care-free childhood days ushers in immediate comfort, "As adults, we still find peace through these activities because it takes us back to our childhood. This triggers your episodic memory and in turn, retraces the same feelings. This is what we call 'nostalgia' which is simply our memory being triggered by a conditioned stimulus, which in this case includes colours, paints, boardgames, or a bike. This could most definitely be one of the reasons for us to drift towards our childhood experiences. We perceive childhood as a time of complete freedom and uninhibited behaviour and occasionally we all yearn to feel that sense of release again," she says.

THE BREAKTHROUGH

With roads once chock-full with vehicles and blaring traffic sounds, the outdoors wore a deserted look until biking became a popular trend. It could be the shuttering of gyms and the monotony of at-home workouts that is urging individuals to venture out. Biking also proves to be an excellent group activity, encouraging bonding between family and friends. Physically, it is an excellent cardiovascular exercise and an excuse to soak up some sun, but for many lone riders, it comes with the benefit of burning frustration while being liberating and explorative. Shivali Sharma, managing director of

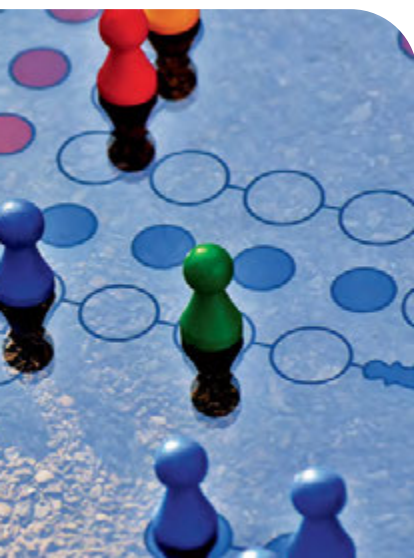


Journaling acts as an outlet for processing emotions



A reiteration of a vintage photograph created by Meera Ganapathi with water colours

Mumbai-based eatery, easyhuman shares her personal account. "Cycling is something I did for years until I quit my job and decided to start my venture, easyhuman. Building a business diverted my attention for a couple of years and I slowly gave up on activities like cycling completely. When the pandemic hit, the stress of navigating the unknown while trying to keep my dream business afloat left me stressed out and worried. I found myself restless, unable to sleep or think, and helpless in the face uncertainty. During a regular clean-out, I stumbled upon my old bicycle. Getting back on it and taking it out for a spin (a few kilometres at first and then 20-30 kms every other day) helped me stay calm. Cycling, as I relearned, can be incredibly meditative. The repetitive action that keeps you in your body and in the moment allows your mind to tune out and recharge. It has become my 'go-to' method for handling stress and has also helped me find my 'happy place' by forcing me to slow down and value things that are important to me. I turn 50 this year, and it took a pandemic for me to take out time for myself and the things I love doing." ■





being

An editorial exhibition that contemplates various facets of mental health and wellness

VIRAJ MIHTANI
ARTIST & GUEST CURATOR

When I was invited to curate a special art feature, it brought back memories of when I was mental health first-aid certified as part of the wellness centre at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. I remember how our support network interacted with other students and peers who battled mood disorders like clinical depression, dissociation, anxiety, and bipolar depression. We were always told to be available and provide care and compassion through conversations, as friendly counsellors. We were trained to listen, help, persuade and defuse situations that involved violence. The importance of those teachings has stayed with me, and it takes on different shapes and forms. Being | Becoming explores the concepts of mental health, wellness and self-preservation through individual practices. There are many ways these could be deciphered – through the methodology of an artist, materials used, conceptual ideology or visual sense. In fact, the art on display is complex in nature and goes beyond the surface level of the definition. Such intangible attributes become the secret language, which are often found in grey areas to be resolved.

In 'Heptane and Octane', various conflict-related issues have been given an equal standing — a street fight between dogs from different packs in Delhi's Shahpur Jat; the geopolitical tension in the Himalayas; and, a scam related to the mutilation of the hands by the police of demonstrators protesting against land grabbing in a village in Chhattisgarh. Collected from various newspapers and from stories heard and seen on the streets, in the parking lot of a mall, or at a garden party at the residence of an ambassador, these anecdotes are depicted by an army of figures, pictograms and symbols dancing in the sky. In a manner similar to many pre-Columbian codices, the vibrant colours are applied to a dark reality. The local and the global, the minuscule and the gigantic, the poor and the rich, the vibrant and the dark, all come together leading to a rational-irrational dialectic that destabilises ideas of hierarchy and systems of order.

2019
Watercolor and gouache on dyed cotton fabric
280 cm x 180 cm

JULIEN SEGARD



RATNA GUPTA

The sound of silence
A numbing hum that leads to a smile
The sensation of a continuous rhythmic tickle
To dance to the sax that is the wind
The beginning of an itch deep inside.



I live in a box of needles.
I want to be a box of needles.

If I am a box of needles,
will you blow me a balloon?



It creeps in
Itching and scratching it's way
Then it peels and peels
Making you raw
It touch's you ever so gently
You don't even realise
That you've lost control. And then I make.



The catch in my breath.
The life that is mine today.
The beginnings of guilt
in the middle of the day,
when I feel my breath clamp
and I look around,
like I am caged,
trying to find that one
weak stitch that I can tear.

I begin to make stories.

The desire to run far away, to disappear,
to find my cave. Solitude. Complete.
Not a cave.
The cold and the damp isn't for me.
The form is of a space alone,
with vines climbing all around,
the sun flittering at my fingertips
and warming my skin. To be there.
To feel that tingling when I take that breath.
The running, the desire to run
before claustrophobia overtakes me.



The creases on my forehead ease,
the tightness around my mouth loosens.
My breath frees itself and
the rhythm is soft and flowing.
I feel the beginning of a smile.
I open my eyes. I am well. I am home.
The familiar sounds of us three.

The solitude of three together. Complete.



Till my next itch.
I write this with the smile of acceptance.
Everything is precious. This should not
become a forgotten memory.

This time deserves many words. This time has
no words. I don't know when this time began.
Different dates for different places. But for
me, here, it is the starkest.

We are lost. Humanity.
The thread is broken. It's frayed so much
that it no longer is. In many ways this has
happened through history. There are many
stories.
Today this is the one.

Will we recover from it? Will our sense of
right and wrong be weighed?
Will we ever be able to look in the mirror and
see our eyes smile?
Will we ever be able to dream in the silence
of sleep?

Some will.

PRAJAKTA PHOTNIS

6:19 pm

2012 December, mom calls saying Balu kaka's youngest daughter is no more, that she had taken her own life and they were all leaving immediately to visit the family, Balu kaka – one of dad's closest friends was the most humorous one.

I had hardly met K, she was in her early 20s, a yoga teacher by profession, being the youngest one she was dearly pampered.

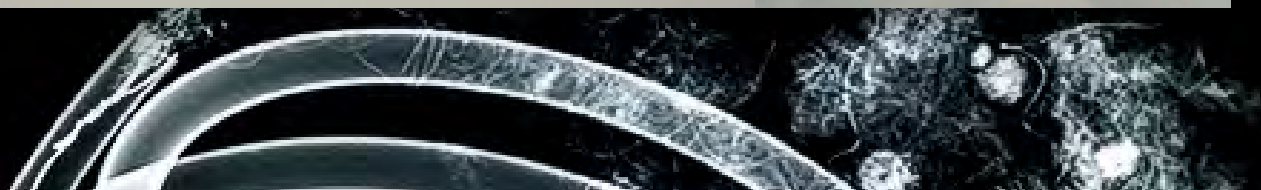
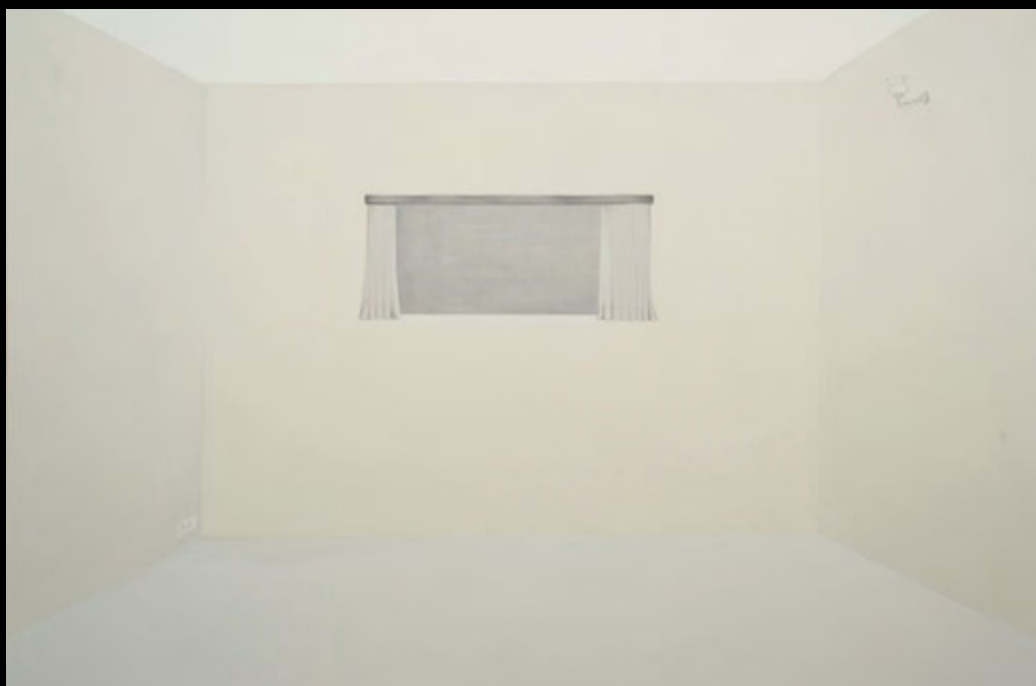
I just couldn't understand, it just didn't make any sense, why had she taken such a drastic step? What had happened?

I had to go and see Balu kaka, by the time we reached the ground floor apartment at Vile Parle East, it was full of commotion, but Balu kaka seemed strangely calm, I heard him tell dad how he had to take help from his neighbours to get her off the fan, I don't think I can ever forget those words; his calmness was discomfoting.

I went into her room, looked at the ceiling fan, the walls, the bed, her desk, hoping that the walls would say something. There was a window in the room that overlooked a parking lot and a small garden, I sat on the bed gazing outside, trying to imagine what K would think each time she looked outside her window.

Her elder sister came in and sat next to me, she told me how K would spend most of her time on Facebook, looking at other people's windows, thinking how amazing their life was, believing in all that was projected; the endless windows on a screen were more real than the window in her own bedroom.

Suddenly I could see a wall outside her window, I could see her looking out and feeling breathless.



İLAL BAARAIN

'Hostile Witness' is about silenced narratives. It explores the phenomenon of mute spectatorship and its normalisation through extreme violence. It is a series of paintings on digital prints of fragile architectural sites that are mostly unlisted monuments in the six major metros of India, which mostly will be allowed to fall to ruins and razed. The paintings shift focus through the loss of sites to the phenomenon of allowed erasures borne by the untold testimonies of the past and the present inhabitants of the sites and the city. The testimonies that they share openly, as well as anonymously, are brought on record, juxtaposed with the grand historical narrative.



Hostile Witness: Esplanade Mansion Watson's Hotel, Kala Ghoda, Bombay-Mumbai

The damp walls of Esplanade mansion, once Watson's hotel, had become too fragile and tired with the fear of losing its tenants to mass eviction. The walls could not contain the tenant woman Shahnaz's dream of Gabrielle, the angel of the large wings, landing on the terrace of the coveted building to rescue her. The dream transmitted and played in the heads of all the residents and they climbed up the sturdy iron structure to get rescued by Gabrielle. Ghosts of the guests from the past walk in and out of the rooms of Watson's hotel, they sometimes walk into the lawyers offices and listen to the lawyers asking their clients if there is a witness who can prove their innocence. As the sea rises, the last song played at the Watson's Hotel gets drowned in it.

Note: The residents of Esplanade Mansion have been evicted and the building has been sealed.



Hostile Witness: Bhopal, Iqbal Maidan, Naqqar Khana

They live in a magnetic town, this boy who cut his turban to survive the night 35 years ago and this girl with big dry eyes. Her town, tucked away in the deepest recesses of time, welcoming and laid back, attracts all kinds of elements. From the leaked MIC gas of the now defunct Union Carbide factory that refuses to leave its earth, that has seeped into the crevices of its being, to the violence that is never sudden, always present, sometimes boiling, sometimes simmering and erupting occasionally. The violence that took away her two brothers one curfewed afternoon, how

carefully she had placed her brother's guts back inside the lacerated belly before she carried his body inside the house, she said. Her tear ducts have dried since. She lives seconds away from the city square and its rising monument Shaheen (Eagle), seconds away from the couplet inscribed on the monument: *Tu Shaheen hai parvaz hai kaam tera tire samne aasman aur bhi hain* (You are the bird of the legends, your job is to fly, ahead of you are many more skies) The bird stands witness to her dry eyes, to the turbanless boy and to the extinction of Valerianella Affinis from the Valerianaceae family, a flower found mainly in Yemen.

Note: A part of the structure in the painting was demolished in 2018.



GRAZIA

FASHION



*Exaggerated
silhouettes, opulent
fabrics, luxe styles,
and jewels of every
kind – it's all about
the glitz and glam
this month*

TEXTURE PLAY

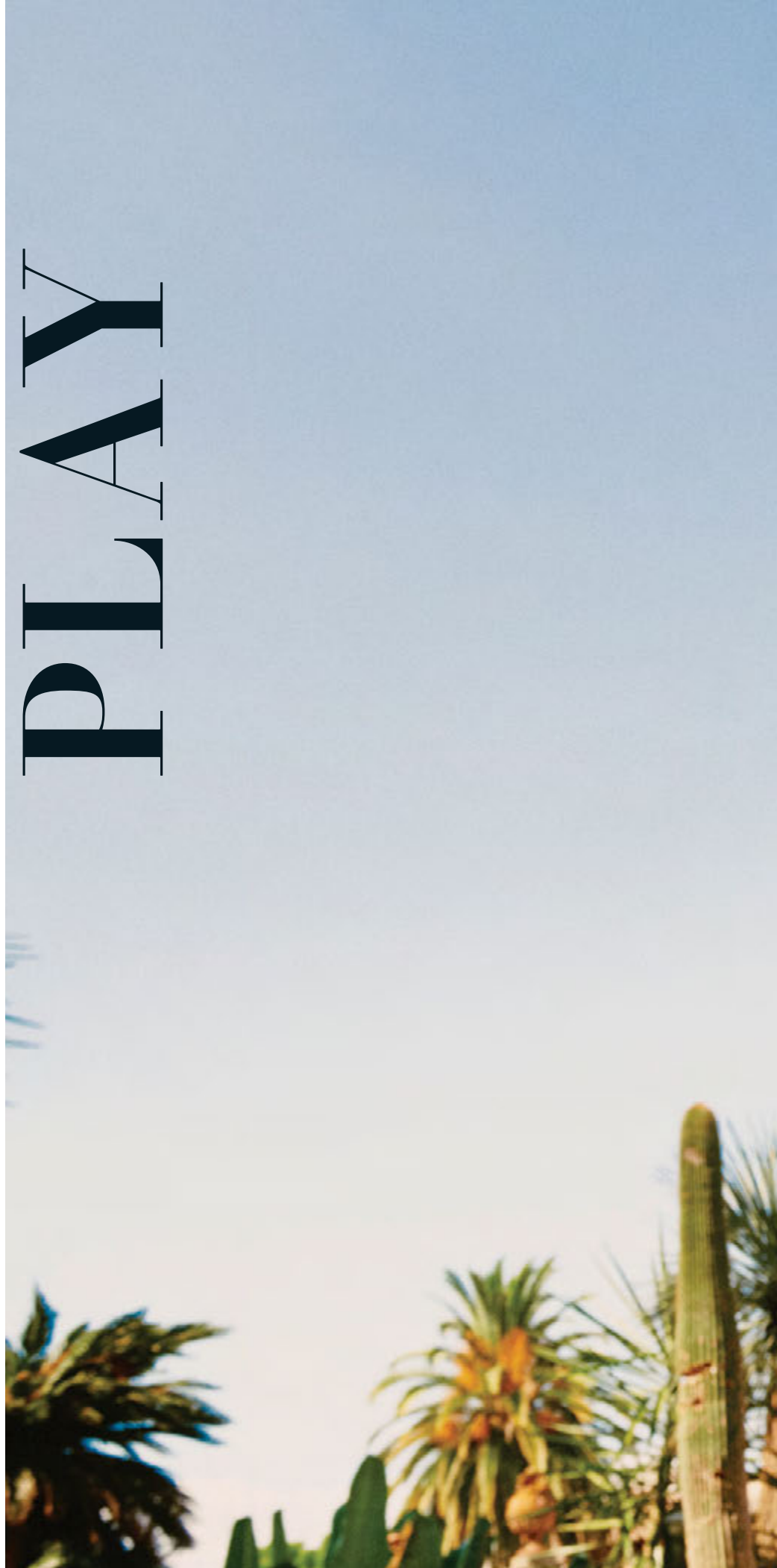
*Volume, shine and surface
embellishments — all the
essentials you need to lift
your spirits*

PHOTOGRAPHS **FREDERICO DE ANGELIS**

STYLING **SELIN BURSALIOGLU**

MODEL **MATILDE GIANNETTI**

AT **MONSTER MGMT**





Fringed organza dress,
Alberta Ferretti

Crystal embedded dress, leather
pochette, leather boots, all
Bottega Veneta; chain link
necklace, Alighieri





Asymmetric dress, Genny

Button down shirt, striped
knit sweater, silk cady skirt,
boots, all Versace





Paisley inlay shirt, knit bustier,
flared skirt, all Fendi; ring,
Alighieri; sandals, Miu Miu




Button down cotton shirt, leather
mini dress, shoes, all Tod's

Cotton shirt, jacquard sweater, both
Sportmax; necklace, Alighieri





Embellished chiffon dress,
Ermanno Scervino



Embroidered silk jacket, velvet skirt, earrings, all **Giorgio Armani**

Casting **Simone Bart Rocchietti** at **Simo Bart Casting**
Makeup **Arianna Campa** at **Close Up Milan** using **Kiehl's Vital Super Serum**
Hair **Giulio Ordonselli**

FILTERED

From printed wool to winter staple tweed and evergreen denim coupled with bright hues and bling, this Fall's wardrobe is looking good

PHOTOGRAPHS **CHARLIE GRANT** STYLING **KIM PAYNE**



Printed wool dress, **Sportmax**

Facing Page: Tweed jacket, boy shorts,
tweed skirt, resin hair pin, cotton sheer
stockings, boots, all **Chanel**



Chiffon blouse, denim jacket,
flared jeans, 'Mini Baguette',
monogrammed belt bag, 'Baguette',
plissé tulle crossbody bag, ankle
strap pumps, all Fendi





Taffeta dress, pearl drop earrings, crystal necklace, 'Montaigne' bracelet, 'Lady D-lite' handbag, embroidered belt, mesh socks, kitten heel pumps, all Dior



Jersey dress with epaulettes,
Giorgio Armani

Silk fringed blouse, leather bermuda shorts,
'BV Snap' woven leather clutch bag, 'Crunch
Lux' mule sandals, all Bottega Veneta



Plissé dress, plissé skirt,
both Stella McCartney;
ankle strap heels, Bally



Silk shirt, embroidered gilet, pinstripe trousers, beanie, handbag, boots, all Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello

Make-up Max May
Hair Anthony Nader
Set Designer Dane Stojanovic



CLOSE KNIT

*Step into autumn with cosy knits, boxy
silhouettes and muted tones*

PHOTOGRAPHS **ADAM FLIPP**

STYLING **AILEEN MARR**

MODEL **JESS PICTON-WARLOW** AT **VIVIEN'S**



Denim quilted blouse, jeans,
both Fendi; bandana, vintage





Striped poncho, Max Mara;
metal rings, bracelets, all vintage



Tulle down jacket, Moncler



Sequined mohair sweater, mohair skirt, both Valentino; knit muffer, puffer jacket, both vintage



Cashmere and marabo coat,
drop earrings, lace-up boots, all
Giorgio Armani; beanie,
stockings, both vintage

Collaborated by **Kate Harper**
Makeup **Rae Morris**
Hair **Kyye Reed**

ALL THAT GLITTERS

*The trinkets and baubles to perk up
your festive season*

Words **SURBHI SHUKLA**

At a time when investing in things that are built to last takes centre stage, the timeless charm of great jewellery is not lost on us. If you're looking to play up the bling this festive season, we've found the perfect pieces. From trinkets inspired by Maharani Gayatri Devi's celestial pearls to Faye Dunaway's double-take-inducing silver jewellery, our edit will take any festive look to another level.

Photographs IMA XTREE.COM

STELLA MCCARTNEY



Embellished brooch,
Diamond Constellation,
price on request

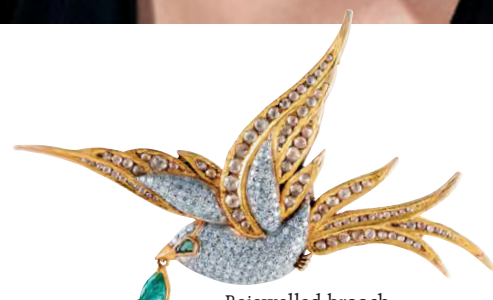
Hoop earrings, Shoshaa at
www.nykaafashion.com,
₹ 2,840



Drop earrings, Nilaya at
www.net-a-porter.com,
₹ 9,447 approx



Wallis Simpson in her famed
Cartier flamingo brooch



Bejewelled brooch,
Narayan Jewellers,
price on request



Stud earrings,
Bottega Veneta,
price on request



Drop earrings,
Priyaasi,
₹ 1,385



Embellished bracelet,
Gucci,
price on request

Earrings, Earnest
Zaveri Pearls,
₹ 1,650

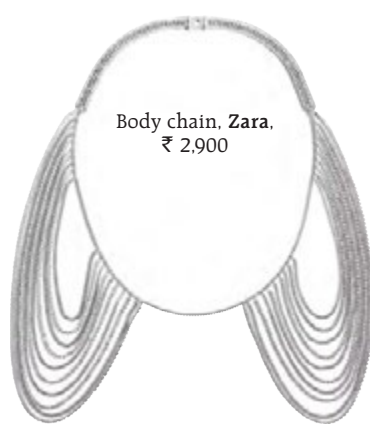


OSCAR DE LA RENTA

WILD THING

Fellow occupants of our planet have served endless inspiration to designers for time immemorial. Our friends from the great outdoors are brought back into style in the form of delicate pendants, bold earrings and gem encrusted brooches - there's plenty options on offer to pick your spirit animal.

MARC JACOBS



Body chain, Zara,
₹ 2,900



Bejewelled necklace,
Swarovski,
₹ 16,900

CRYSTAL CLEAR

From Marc Jacobs' to Lady Gaga, Audrey Hepburn's ultra chic *Breakfast at Tiffany's* look is still emulated decades after the movie aired. From show-stopping diamonds in fine jewellery to the ultra-reflective rhinestone on the high-street, the clear stone makes for a timeless classic for all budgets. The coolest way to wear them this festive season is with your off-duty outfits.

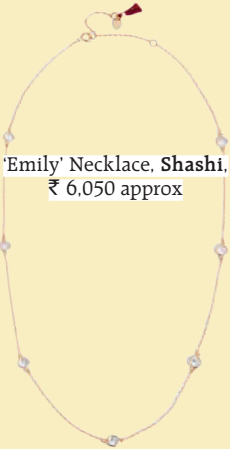
Rhinestone clip earrings,
H&M Studio,
₹ 2,299



Layered diamond necklace,
De Grisogono,
price on request



'Emily' Necklace, Shashi,
₹ 6,050 approx



Floral earrings, Tanishq,
price on request



AREA



Audrey Hepburn's diamond
necklace and tiara from *Breakfast
at Tiffany's* are iconic to this day.



Drop earrings, Orra,
price on request

Crystal necklace,
Ralph Lauren,
₹ 73,500





Beaded necklace, Nicobar, ₹ 7,800



Hoop earrings, Suhani Pittie, ₹ 5,500



Choker, Olto, ₹ 12,500



Embellished leather cuff, Louis Vuitton, price on request



Stone ring, Dior, price on request

OLD IS GOLD

Aside from their customary annual outings at weddings or other festivities, heritage jewellery usually hides in your mother's locker. However the design aesthetic is now outshining a slew of super-modern trends. The approach to how it is worn is what has changed the most, as a wear-it-any-way style of dressing has taken hold, with brands such as Dior, Ulla Johnson and Dolce and Gabbana leading the charge in eclecticism.



Rekha's style of donning gold jewellery transcends time

DOLCE AND GABBANA



Gold-plated bead necklace, Jil Sander at www.matchesfashion.com, ₹ 29,250 approx



Spherical necklace and earrings set, Our Purple Studio, ₹ 3,200



ULLA JOHNSON



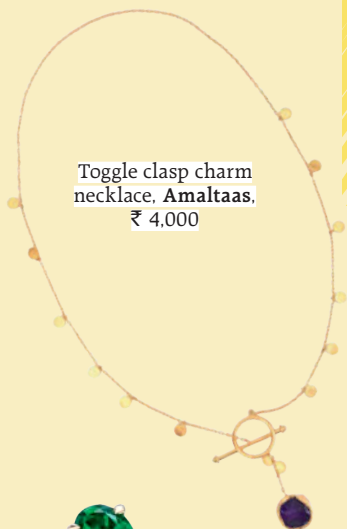
'Enigma of art' bangle, Zariin, ₹ 4,450



Necklace, Zariin,
₹ 3,470



Bejewelled ring,
Kohinoor Jewellers Agra,
price on request



Toggle clasp charm
necklace, Amaltaas,
₹ 4,000



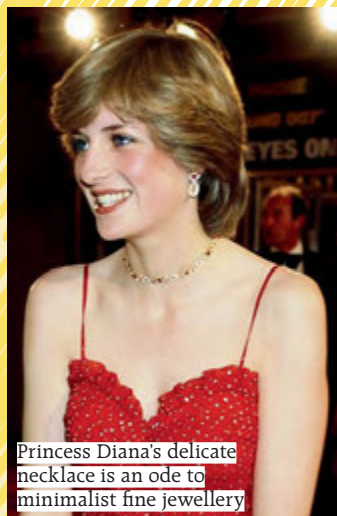
Emerald fluted ring,
Fabergé,
price on request



Collar necklace,
Oscar de la Renta at
www.net-a-porter.com,
₹ 49,560 approx

BARELY THERE

If quiet accents of jewels are your thing, it is your time to rejoice. As a sign of the times, restraint has been a large character in jewellery design this year. The key to a minimalist piece is in its versatility and layering opportunities. They can be worn from day to night from desk to drinks (at home). Their functionality keeps them feeling up-to-date, meaning you'll never grow bored of them.



Princess Diana's delicate
necklace is an ode to
minimalist fine jewellery

Drop earrings,
Shaya by Carat Lane,
₹ 1,200



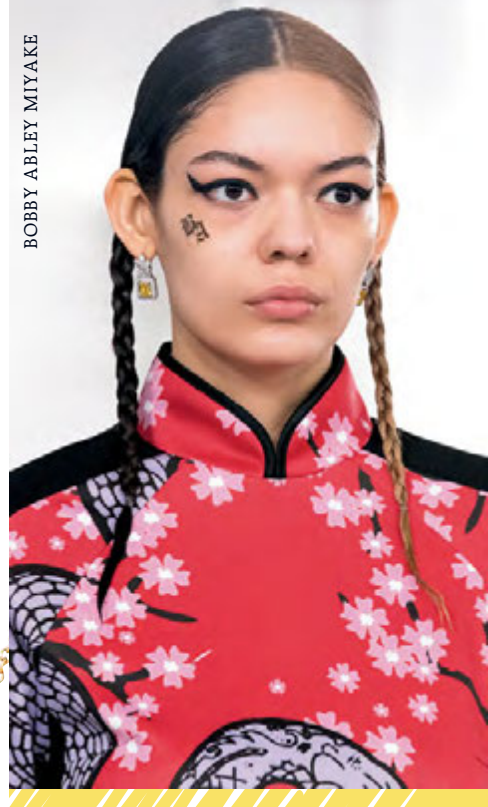
Drop earrings,
House of Cleo,
₹ 3,600



Necklace, Atelier Mon,
₹ 1,700



BOBBY ABLEY MIYAKE



CHLOÉ





Maharani Gayatri Devi serves timeless inspiration in her classic layered pearl necklaces

CHANEL



'Regina' collared choker, Outhouse, ₹ 35,000



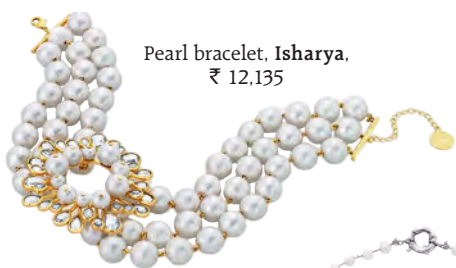
Stud earrings, House of Aynat, price on request



Cultured pearl necklace, Accessorize, ₹ 3,745



Hoop earrings, Mondano at www.nykaafashion.com, ₹ 695



Pearl bracelet, Isharya, ₹ 12,135

PEARL PARTY

Pearls are instantly reminiscent of Indian royalty and have evolved into one of the most popular trends for 2020. Chanel's layered pearls were done in a subtle bourgeois style, while the Marie Antoinettes of Moschino were edgier and playful. Pearls are as timeless a jewel embellishment as can be, even beyond classic looks as seen on Jaden Smith and Harry Styles.



Embellished earrings, Deepa Gurnani, ₹ 3,360 approx



'Piri' necklace, Latique, price on request



Stud earrings, Joker and Witch, ₹ 750 approx



MOSCHINO



BRANDON MAXWELL

Coin necklace, **Etro**,
price on request



Choker necklace, **Jeryco**,
₹ 21,170 approx



Embellished earrings,
Alexander McQueen,
price on request

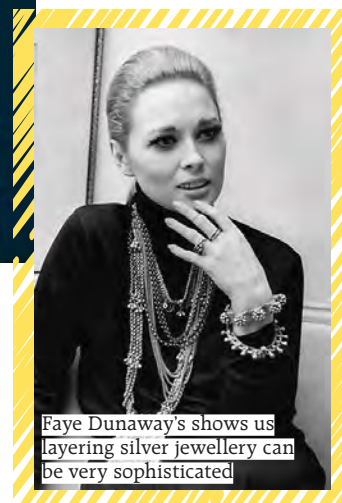
Beaten silver earrings,
Misho, ₹ 15,170



ISABEL MARANT

SILVER SPIRIT

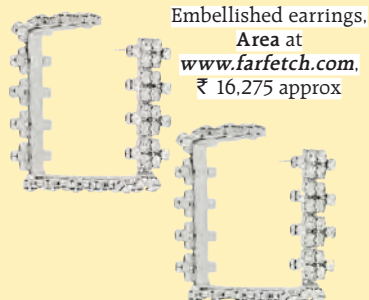
Silver jewellery's vibe is always a little more old-world. In context to present day, silver jewellery adds a tasteful amount of ethnic drama to any outfit. Take cues Brandon Maxwell and style your silver hardware with monochromatic looks. We saw glimpses of jewellery native to the Indian subcontinent bring sophistication to ultra-modern evening wear in the form of elegant cuffs at Alexander McQueen and chandelier earrings at Isabel Marant. **IN**



Faye Dunaway's shows us
layering silver jewellery can
be very sophisticated



Embellished
earrings, **Rubans**,
₹ 2,490



Embellished earrings,
Area at
www.farfetch.com,
₹ 16,275 approx



Link bracelet,
Ashley Zhang at
www.lyst.com,
₹ 21,475 approx



Cuff, **Hermès**,
price on request



Cuffs, **Helena Bajaj Larsen**,
price on request

ON THE STYLE RADAR

ARTISANAL GARB

We may have enthusiastically spent the first couple of months of the pandemic in loungewear, while the following months saw a growth in popularity of tent dresses and cute sleepwear. But that kind of energy just won't do when the festive season is around the corner. Artisan Luxe's pieces are a testament to the ever-adapting Indian craftsmanship that is ready to cater to an audience looking for luxe but pared down pieces. The silhouettes of their tunics and overlays are easy while the trousers are tailored to perfection. Their clothing is perfect for celebrations at home and will evolve into being your wardrobe staples for life.

Artisan Luxe's take on Indian festive is refreshingly minimalistic



A FESTIVE FEEL

Gucci's new collection features a range of wallpapers, furnishing, kitchenware and ceramics



SPRUCED UP DECOR

Gucci's creative director Alessandro Michele's surrealist textiles and interior design are increasingly appealing as we prep ourselves to spend the festive season in the intimate setting of our humble abodes. If you're ready to transform your space with motifs from a Gucci runway, the floral wallpapers should be right up your alley, and are sure to make it feel like Spring in the colder months to come. The throw pillows feature animal motifs from Gucci Garden that'll make your living space all the more stylish. The season's decor collection also features silverware and ceramics, which are worth investment, especially if you're entertaining a small group of loved ones at home.

ACE UP YOUR SLEEVE

Louis Vuitton's Cruise 2020/21 collection arrives on Indian shores just in time for the festivities, and it is especially exciting for those enthralled by a deck of cards around this time of year. Nicolas Ghesquiere spliced playing card symbols, like clubs, spades, diamonds and hearts with the label's historic Monogram on the accessories. The instantly recognisable pieces from the collection are muted and timeless, and are sure to become staples in your wardrobe — pieces that you could wear for years to come.

The Louis Vuitton Cruise 2020/21 collection takes inspiration from a deck of cards





FEELGOOD FASHION

This iconic fashion house is making its handbags a new symbol of hope

When legendary designer Carolina Herrera took her final bow as the head of her namesake brand two years ago, she passed on something important to the next generation as part of her legacy – the spirit of giving back. As a fashion house, Carolina Herrera New York is known for its elegant and feminine aesthetic that has won over everyone from Kate Middleton to Karlie Kloss. But, it's the philosophy of *alegría de vivir* (joy of living) that has set it apart from the rest. Over the years, it has lent support to several social causes, ranging from breast cancer to children's welfare. Now more than ever, as the world needs an extra helping hand in battling the Covid-19 crisis, CH has launched the 'Heart For Hope' initiative, through which 10 per cent of all sales will be donated to the Red Cross and Red Crescent, to help with their global relief efforts.

"Carolina Herrera Heart for Hope is an invitation to take action as a global community and make a positive change. We believe it is our responsibility to help as much as possible and, until December 31st 2020," says Wes Gordon, the company's dynamic creative director.


When the pandemic broke out earlier this year, the fashion house was quick to help by producing hand sanitisers in their perfume factories and by also donating to government-led relief efforts in Spain. But now, the efforts have gone global with Heart

For Hope, through the sale of handbags and accessories both in stores and online. But why bags, you ask? Carolina Herrera de Baez, daughter of the iconic designer and the brand's beauty creative director explains, "Handbags are special objects; they never go out of style. They are passed down from mother to daughter, stored with care and brought out when the occasion calls for it." Just as with any other fashion-obsessed woman, handbags have always been special to her. She still remembers buying her first bag with her own money in her late teens, holding onto one passed on by her grandmother, while already bequeathing some to her own daughters. Plus, since bags and accessories sell the most, they were practical choices to raise the maximum money. "It makes me happy to know that in the coming months, when someone decides to purchase a Carolina Herrera handbag, they acquire not only a beautiful and lasting object, but also one that tells a story about the time it was bought in, and the cause it helped."

At a time when the future of fashion is being constantly questioned, initiatives like these are going a long way in proving that it still matters. "Fashion is about community, optimism and hope. While this may be a challenging time for the industry as a whole, it is our job to reach out, listen and think of ways that we can support our communities in every possible way to make a positive impact," says Gordon.



Carolina Herrera De Baez

From Herrera Jr and Gordon to every craftsman working in the atelier, it's a cause that's close to everyone's heart, one they hope to share with people all over the world. As Herrera concludes, "There's force in masses, so the more we collaborate, the greater change we can bring about. We have to break away from our social, religious, cultural differences and agree on one thing – that our help is necessary. We are proud that our bags, trusted companions to women around the globe, can acquire new meaning in these troubled times." 



The iconic 'CH Insignia' bag

LABEL WE LOVE

BLANCHE

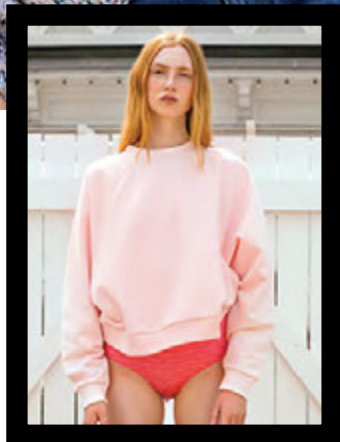
Blanche is French for white. Why? Because white is a colour with no hue. There are some who would even argue that it isn't a colour. Maybe white isn't really a thing. And that's where Mette Fredin and Melissa Bech, the Danish design duo behind the cleverly cool eco-conscious denim brand, Blanche, set out from when they launched the label in the spring of 2017. Designed in Copenhagen, Fredin and Bech's brand of denim is more than just that: It's produced from pure textiles through sustainable production, where a large majority of the materials they use are either organic, Global Organic Textile Standard-certified or leftover fabric from past production. It also comes in a wide range of cuts and washes. While Fredin serves as the creative director, and Bech, the commercial director, they both work in tandem on everything, including design, marketing, and branding.

Further delving into the sphere of womenswear design is Blanche Atelier – a line that builds on the archetypal typologies of the brand's denim line yet adding a contemporary, refined expression to ready-to-wear styles. However, contemporary in this case is not synonymous with trend-based clothing – rather, it is an underlying value in their design philosophy that breathes modernity into the choice of fabric, colour and cut they employ.

For their Autumn/Winter 2020 showcase, the duo celebrated feminine utility. The collection juxtaposed iconic feminine silhouettes with masculine, workwear-inspired details; two opposites in a continuous dialogue, resulting in a range of ready-to-wear styles that were versatile and expressive. Soft cashmere, delicate silk and draped jersey were combined with raw, overdyed denim and military-influenced accessories. The collection drew from a wide colour palette that ranged from light and subtle earthy accents over bright and playful prints to powerful and dark tones.

This apart, a selection of bonded wool coats, vests, and shirts, which are all reversible and carry the signature Blanche button details, were interspersed with simple, clean denim, and tailored pieces that have been equipped with sharp and significant details, referencing traditional uniform styles that will make any woman stand out in a crowd. **by**

Available at www.onlyanita.com





**DR MOHAN THOMAS,
MD (USA), FACS (USA),**

Leading Cosmetic and Laser Surgeon,
Visiting Scholar Mt Sinai Hospital
(New York) and Consultant, Breach
Candy Hospital, The Cosmetic Surgery
Institute, Mumbai, answers your
queries related to cosmetic surgery.
Send in your queries to
femina@www.co.in /info@csisite.com

I am concerned about the 'Puffy areola and nipple' on my chest. This has occurred recently due to ingestion of medication. This gives an abnormal pointed shape to my chest. I would like to seek your help in making my nipples / areolas smaller and flatter. Is there a surgery for the correction of this condition?

- Karan Raj, Agra

Ans. Puffy nipples are caused by excess male breast tissue. Male breast is a combination of residual breast tissue and fat accumulation which can be removed by power liposuction. Most cases occur during sexual development but the drug induced cases are on the rise now with increasing use of steroids for body building. This is a keyhole surgery and the access points are 2-3 mm long. Through this, both the fat and breast tissue can be removed. The results are permanent and predictable.

This surgery can be done as a day care surgery and you will be discharged the same evening. You can resume work in a few day's time, but heavy exercises can be done only after 4 weeks.

I am a 55 year old happily married, successful professional woman but disturbed by the sudden aging changes that I have noticed on my face after I intentionally lost about 15 kgs. Could you please suggest some surgical and non-surgical options to improve my appearance along with the downtime?

- Mitali Rastogi, Surat

Ans. The aging changes on your face have further aggravated by the significant weight loss and associated volume loss of the face. The deflation syndrome which affects face as well does not get appropriately restored with non-surgical measures such as dermal fillers

and threads and would best be addressed by a minimal access face lift which will tighten your mid-face, jawline and the neck and remove the excess skin. Additionally loss of face volume can be addressed by grafting stem cells derived from your own fat cells. Combination surgical therapies bring about improvement not only in restoring the volume and picking up the droopy skin but also provide glow to the overlying skin. Non-surgical options are temporary and can only achieve a very limited improvement.

Hi I am 23yr. old student. My breast size is 40 DD which is very embarrassing for me. My parents are looking for a match but some guys have rejected due to this. Please help.

- Syeda Begum, Guwabati

Ans. Large breasts can cause a lot of physical problems like back and neck pain and fungal infections below the breast. Very large breasts make people uncomfortable as people stare at them and it is difficult to find well-fitting clothes. These are indications of breast reduction surgery. Breast reduction is a relatively pain free procedure and can be done in a variety of ways depending on the extent of breast enlargement and the extent of the droop. In my center we try to save a significant amount of functional breast in unmarried ladies so that pregnancy and later on breast feeding does not pose a problem. Hospitalization for 2-3 days may be required in large reductions. 2 weeks is sufficient time to recover and start normal activities. Physically taxing work should be restricted for 6 weeks. The expected changes will depend on how big the breasts are to start with. In massive reductions, one can go down by 3 or 4 sizes, whereas in moderate reduction you could go down by about 2 sizes.

I am 36 years old and have two children. I have lost my figure after pregnancies. Can I achieve the body I had before marriage?

- Carey Dsouza, Mumbai

Dr Mohan Thomas: Women lose their body shape after pregnancies and they need a combination of procedures coined "Mummy Makeover" by me to get the body back into shape. Body Contouring or sculpting can certainly help you lose inches and have an appealing look. Usually, there are bulges around the abdomen and fat deposits on the hips and thighs which makes one look wide in that region. All these fat deposits can be removed by liposuction. The bony and muscular structures cannot be altered. The loose skin on the abdomen can be tightened by a tummy tuck, which will make the tummy look flat and tight. The breasts lose shape because of breast feeding and become worse by not wearing a well supporting bra. Breast augmentation and /or breast lift restores the upper body structure back to the good old days.

Female genital areas go through dramatic changes after normal delivery and it becomes very lax and causes unhappiness in the relationship. This too can be addressed by a Vaginoplasty which can bring back the excitement in your life. It is important that the surgical possibilities and your expectations should match.

JUST
ONE
THING



POWER PUFF

A fashion staple since the 1800s – voluminous sleeves just got a sleek yet feminine 2020 update with frills, gathers and puffs



Faux-leather coat, **Balenciaga**
at www.matchesfashion.com,
₹ 64,300 approx



Checkered column
dress, **Zara**,
₹ 2,990



Jacquard peplum
blouse, **H&M**,
₹ 5,150 approx



A-line maxi dress, **Rejina Pyo**
at www.net-a-porter.com,
₹ 41,610 approx

CHICONOMICS

Great style picks, all *under ₹5,000*



1



2



3



4



5



6

- 1 Ruched crop top, Zara, ₹ 1,990
 2 Enamel earrings, Roma Narsinghani, ₹ 5,000
 3 Puff-sleeved midi dress, H&M, ₹ 3,999
 4 Pleated scarf, Accessorize, ₹ 1,800
 5 Printed midi skirt, Vero Moda, ₹ 1,999
 6 Link lariat necklace, Zariin, ₹ 3,499
 7 Leather card holder, Ted Baker at The Collective, ₹ 3,330
 8 Pre-draped sari, Jade by Ashima available at www.datetheramp.com, ₹ 4,800
 9 Strappy sandals, The Cai Store, ₹ 2,599



7



9



8

ECLECTIC NOMAD

Even if you aren't escaping to an exotic locale right now, you can still dress the part



Tasselled jacket,
Alanui,
price on request

There's nothing that can lift your spirits quite like a beautiful multicoloured and versatile jacket. Perfect to throw over your PJs for your Zoom meetings now and with a sheer blouse for nights out on the town, in the future.

Printed scarf,
Accessorize,
₹ 1,100

The humble printed square scarf is having a moment. Wear yours with a chic knot around your neck, add it to your wrist stack, or try it out as an OTM head accessory – the options are limitless.



The time to retire your home slippers has finally arrived. Go on, embrace the quintessential A/W knee-high boot for your #OOTDs. We're going to wear ours peeking through a high slit, what about you?

Knee-high boots,
H&M Studio,
₹ 6,990



Button down
blouse, Zara,
₹ 2,590

This 2020 take on the leopard print trend is much like everything else this year: Unexpected. Artistic, monotone and sheer – it's a great alternative to the tie-dye Tees you've been living in for the last six months.

Easy
CHIC



Midi skirt,
www.asos.com,
₹ 3,467 approx

Your search for the most versatile skirt ends here. A pencil silhouette is universally flattering, hugs your figure and has the perfect amount of stretch for unrestricted movement. We're sold.

THE WAY WE WEAR... VELVET



CHRISTOPHER JOHN ROGERS

1.

Double-breasted blazer, Zara, ₹ 6,990



+



Multi-layered necklace, Ayesha Accessories, ₹ 638

+



+

'Scarlette Mini', Fossil, ₹ 9,495



+

Leather pumps, Massimo Dutti, ₹ 8,290



Straight leg trousers, Zara, ₹ 5,490

A perennial mainstay on A/W runways, luxe velvet returns this season with a brand-new, modern update. Steering clear from the conventional sartorial references of old Hollywood glamour and an air of being overdressed, designers have reinterpreted the plush fabric in sleek, uber-luxe separates with grunge-chic styling and sophisticated eveningwear. From rich jewel tones of ruby reds and emerald greens to cool, electric blues - the soft and shiny material is no longer just limited to fancy dress events, it has now found a new place in our wardrobe as a daytime staple.



OFF-WHITE

2.

Silk crepe maxi dress, Rochas at www.matchesfashion.com, ₹ 62,800 approx



'Jolie' earrings, Zohra Jewelry, ₹ 3,100

+



+

3.



TARUN TAHILIANI

Monogrammed velvet cape, Gucci at www.net-a-porter.com, ₹ 1,25,895 approx

+

'Selima' heeled sandals, Christian Louboutin, ₹ 59,000



'Baguette' bag, Fendi, price on request

+

Heeled sandals, Aquazzura, price on request

+

Ruched mini dress, Balenciaga at www.mytheresa.com, ₹ 81,610 approx



+

Beaten metal earrings, Accessorize, ₹ 1,100



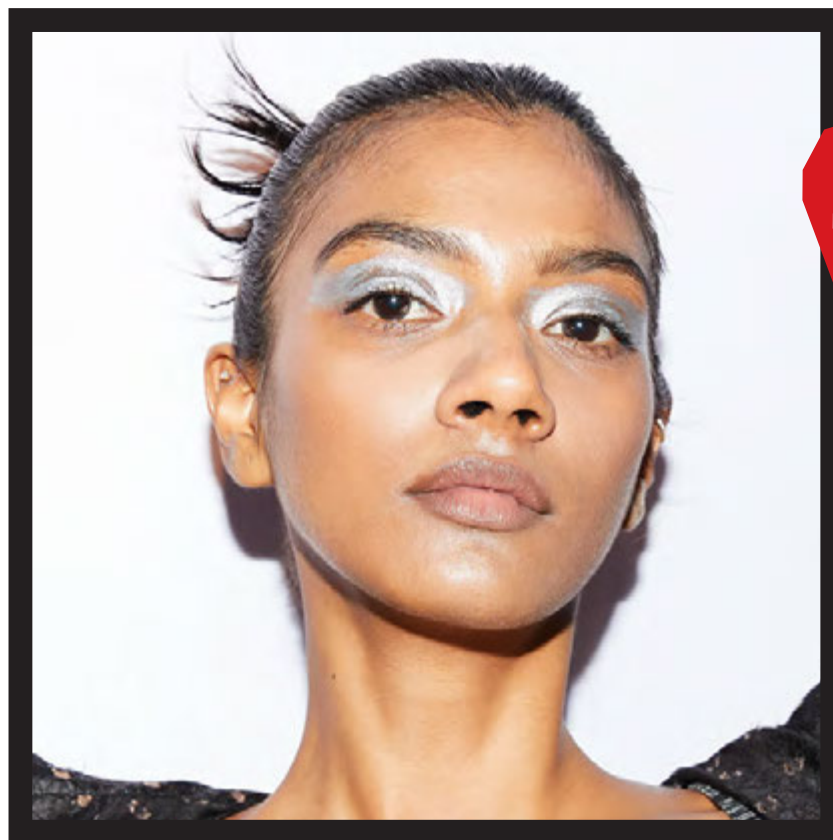
LOVE LOVE LOVE



Add some old-world charm to your look with this velvet, embroidered bucket bag, that pays homage to the humble 'potli' style

'Nani' bucket bag in Alhambra, Sabyasachi, price on request

GRAZIA BEAUTY



HOW
WE
WORK
IT

Photograph KEEGAN CRASTO, Compiled by HENA DESAI

Where we spotted it

At Swapnil Shinde's Lakmé Fashion Week Summer/Resort 2020 showcase.

Why we loved it

Nothing sets the festive mood better than metallics, and this look makes a strong case for it.

Ways to work it

1. Prep your face with a pore-minimising primer. On the clean, smooth canvas, apply a light coverage foundation in a dewy finish. You can skip concealer if it's not required. Blend well and dab in place.
2. For the eyes, use a pigmented, liquid metallic shadow. You don't need expert precision to get the look – apply some on your lids and pat it gently in place with your ring finger.

Remember not to rub it in to retain that hi-shine impact of your shadow.

3. Add a little definition to the eyes by curling your lashes and coating them with mascara.

Brush out the brows but don't fill them in heavily, to retain focus on the lids.

4. Lastly, apply a tinted lip balm on the lips. Pull your hair back into a sleek bun and you're good to go.

1 Kiko Milano Lost In Amalfi 24 Hour Lasting Click Mascara, ₹ 1,500, 2 Max Factor Facefinity All Day Flawless 3-in-1 Foundation, ₹ 1,199, 3 Etude Color My Brows, ₹ 560 4 Dior Backstage Curler, ₹ 2,600
5 MAC Cosmetics Dazzleshadow - Stars In My Eyes, ₹ 1,850, 6 Innisfree Pore Blur Primer, ₹ 1,000
7 SUGAR Cosmetics Tippy Lips Moisturizing Balm, ₹ 199



Welcome
Jao To Bhid Kum

MINERVA MOTORS

SPECIALIST REPAIRS • PARTS • OILS • TYRES • BATTERIES • MOTORS • PAINTS

2020 February 2

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25	26	27	28	29	30	31	





THE 'WOKE' BEAUTY BAG

From supporting social causes to gender neutrality, millennials want more from their beauty products, and brands are coming through in meeting those demands

Photograph **KEEGAN CRASTO** Words **HENA DESAI**

I watched a video about mica mining by children in Bihar and Jharkhand, which then makes its way into make-up products like blushes and highlighters.

Since then, I've sworn to move away from such products, double check the back of the pack and only buy from brands that ethically source their ingredients," says Priyanka Kamidi, a 29-year-old media professional from Mumbai. She also admits to having drastically reduced buying make-up – "I focus on whether the brand is vegan, chemical-free and if they have eco-friendly packaging."

Just like her, this new generation of 'woke millennials' is demanding a lot more from beauty brands – apart from chasing that 'Gram-worthy glow, they're also on the lookout for transparency, inclusivity, conscientiousness and a degree of personalisation. Just being natural or cruelty-free doesn't cut it – as customers become more aware, they're shaking up the mainstream perspective of

cosmetics, pushing brands to do and deliver better. When they pick up a lipstick, they wonder how the discarded tube will be recycled, how the brand is adding value to the local economy and whether the model in the ad breaks away from stereotypes. Priyanka Ganjoo, founder of newly launched South Asian brand *Kulfi* affirms this, "Gen-Z and millennial customers choose mission-driven and value-based companies over others. Inclusivity is the expected standard. Through *Kulfi*, we aim to meet this need by challenging beauty standards and creating products specifically for BIPOC (black, Indigenous and people of colour), celebrating South Asians in a way that's never been done before."

As buying habits change and beauty bags become smaller, one thing is certain – there's no admission if you're not cool enough. At a time when purpose and responsibility is intrinsically woven into beauty, we shine the spotlight on beauty brands that are taking cues from this by going the extra mile.

The K-beauty giant has vowed to make 100 per cent of their plastic waste re-usable by 2030, but for now, they're trying out sustainable packaging substitutes like this paper bottle. It cuts down plastic used by 51.8 per cent without compromising on the quality of what's inside.

Innisfree Paper Bottle Green Tea Seed Serum, ₹ 2,600



Most of us shy away from discussing skin issues for the body, but this brand aims to normalise that conversation.

From a neck and back cream to one for the derrière (it's loaded with AHAs and BHAs to deal with body acne), everything on offer is designed to take skin and self-care to the next level.

Bare Body Essentials Neck Back Cream, ₹ 450



Gucci seems to have gotten with the programme by breaking free of stereotyping. With their empowering campaigns and unisex fragrances like this one, there is emphasis on gender neutrality, which is refreshing coming from a mainstream, luxury brand.

Gucci Memoire, ₹ 8,950

Businesses that give back to the community deserve a special place in our vanity. This indie brand supports two important ones – 10 per cent of all their profits go to two foundations that work towards curbing afforestation and educating the girl child, respectively.

Daughter Earth Lip and Cheek Tint, ₹ 975



Who says Ayurveda can't be cool? This one-of-a-kind brand assesses your doshas and recommends personalised regimens to tackle all kinds of hair problems with age-old, effective Indian remedies.

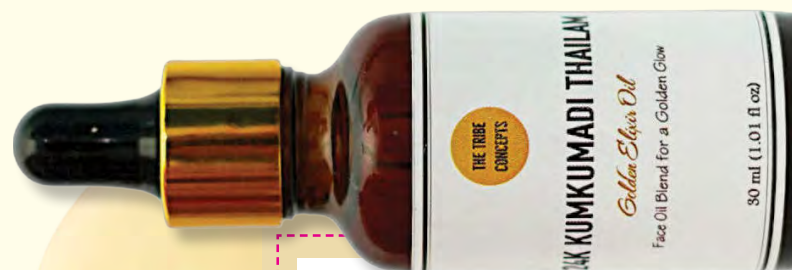
Vedix Customised Ayurvedic Ritual, price on request





We all know that the beauty industry is notorious for generating excessive plastic waste (the US alone has put out over eight billion units of waste in 2018.) And so, L'Occitane is offering some of its bestsellers, like body washes and shampoos, in economically and ecologically-friendly refill packs. By doing this, they have cut down 80 per cent of the plastic used for the original product.

L'Occitane Almond Shower Oil Eco-Refill, ₹ 2,600



Taking 'pure' to the next level, this homegrown brand sources ingredients from tribal regions, grown in soil that's pesticide and pollution-free. The blends are packed into reusable steel containers before they are shipped to you, wrapped in sustainable, plastic-free packaging. Be assured: Everything that touches your skin and hair is Earth and skin-friendly.

The Tribe Concepts 24k Kumkumadi Thailand, ₹ 999

Kick-starting the day with kombucha-infused masks? It doesn't get more millennial than that. Pulp's superfood-infused selection of face masks and body scrubs (we're talking everything from spinach to *moong* beans) are designed to save your skin from the aftermath of having one-too-many drinks or that late-night Netflix binge session.

Pulp Day After Binge Superfood Mask, ₹ 899



Breaking away from the one-size-fits-all idea of beauty, this brand gives you a freshly blended botanical formula that is tweaked to work specifically for you. Through a detailed quiz, they factor in everything from your hair concerns to even your fragrance preferences, and share a detailed list of the ingredients that will make their way into your haircare products.

Bare Anatomy Shampoo, ₹ 749



Clean beauty doesn't have to be boring or expensive, and that's exactly what Vasundhara Patni is trying to prove with her new make-up line – Kiro Beauty. The mindful brand's high-performing 'hybrids' are a smart cross between make-up and skincare, ensuring that the blushes and lipsticks are not only safe to wear everyday but also good for your skin. **11**

Kiro Live-in Creamy Matte Lipstick, ₹ 800

KIRO

TRUST YOUR GUT

Here's why you could be underestimating your body's secret weapon

Photograph **MARCO VITTUR**
Words **ROSAMUND DEAN**



There's nothing like a pandemic to make you think about your immunity, and what you can do to futureproof your health as we venture back out into this uncertain world. Experts agree you can't 'boost' your immune system as such, but you can support your body's immune response – by getting enough sleep, keeping active, reducing stress where you can (I know, easier said than done), and making good decisions about what you eat (more vegetables, less sugar: The broad strokes of nutrition remain very simple). Yet, is there one element of health you might be overlooking?

Nutritionist and naturopath Rosemary Ferguson is on a mission to get people to pay attention to their gut. The gastrointestinal tract, through which food is digested then

expelled, is not the sexiest element of human biology. "But your body's immune system lies in the gut," says Rosemary, so it's one of the most important elements of keeping your body fighting fit.

"Gut health truly is the starting point when addressing issues in the body," she explains. "They say we are what we eat – but really we are what we digest and absorb. Good digestion turns food into fuel for your body's cells. Many people have poor digestion, which makes them feel fatigued, foggy, bloated and gassy, with nutritional deficiencies, constipation, diarrhoea, weight gain, low immune function and hormonal imbalances – to name just a few of the issues! If the gut isn't working, nothing is."

How to show your gut some love? Clearly, what you eat is a good place to start,

and you know much of the nutrition advice already: veg, veg, veg, plus "fresh wholefoods in their purest form," says Rosemary. "And avoiding processed, sugary foods is a huge step in the right direction, but a healthy gut also needs a good balance of bacteria. Your gut holds trillions of bacteria that process food, produce nutrients and fight disease."

Wholegrains, beans and (sorry to bang on, but) vegetables are all great sources of fibre, which will keep your gut running smoothly, and fermented foods are brilliant for repopulating your gut's good bacteria – try live yogurt, sourdough and kefir or miso.

While nutrition is clearly vital, don't underestimate the importance of reducing stress and keeping your body moving. One of Rosemary's best tips is establishing a routine or starting a challenge as a good way



of getting motivated to exercise or meditate. That's why initiatives like the NHS's 'Couch To 5K' are so popular.

And it's not only your immunity that will benefit. According to Rosemary, everything from your sleep and your hormones to your mental health will improve. "The gut has everything to do with everything," she explains. "Ninety-five per cent of your serotonin [known as the happy hormone] is made in your gut. It's why they call your gut your 'second brain'. It's also a chemical transmitter that works closely with melatonin, so it can affect your sleep, which is crucial for your mood."

Rosemary is an excellent advert for her advice. Even over FaceTime, she glows with good health – which admittedly is partly down to the excellent genes that led to her

first career as a model. She spent 15 years in the industry, shooting Prada campaigns and walking for Alexander McQueen, while partying with the Primrose Hill set – and you need good genes for your skin to stand up to that kind of lifestyle. She married artist Jake Chapman in 2004 and they now live in the Cotswolds with daughters Bliss, 14, and Blythe, 13. Her eldest, Elfie, 20, has also gone into modelling and is on the books at the Kate Moss Agency.

"I modelled for a long time: Travelling, working, playing and feeling run-down," Rosemary says. "I spent an even longer time being less than angelic!" It's one reason why Rosemary's approach is so popular – she is all about balance and knows the importance of eating and drinking things that you enjoy. It only becomes a problem if you overdo it.

"I am well-versed in fatigue and stress, which is what led me to study nutrition," she says. "I qualified as a naturopath and nutritionist in 2009, and have nearly completed my Functional Medicine qualifications too."

Now she has never been happier and, for anyone considering a post-lockdown career change, she is the poster girl for self-reinvention. "I love my job!" she grins. "It's an ever-changing field, which is very exciting. At the clinic, I'm constantly faced with different scenarios, and with that comes a huge sense of reward, knowing you've helped someone." Her advice for anyone thinking of taking the leap? "Do your research on where you'd like to study, as there are so many options. But it's never too late, you can train at any age," she declares, "so go for it!" **U**

BEAUTY REPORTER

CULT CALL



Ritika Sharma

It's only been a short while since Ritika Sharma embarked on an entrepreneurial venture and launched beauty brand House of Beauty and e-commerce beauty retailer Boddess.com. Not surprisingly, both the ventures have grown to be successes, amplifying her vision to launch a company that went beyond the traditional beauty selling to create genuine value in the lives of people. This included the consumers' holistic knowledge of self-care getting enhanced and their queries addressed by a slew of experts in the business. Along with that, Sharma ensured state-of-the-art technological tools that allowed the ease of information to reach consumers—critical in current times when lockdown seems more of a norm than an exception. And now, in a bid to bring the best international brands to your doorstep, this e-comm site has associated with cult beauty brand Anastasia Beverly Hills as its official retailer in India.

Anastasia Soare, the founder of the namesake brand, is touted as an eyebrow queen for good reason – she's the go-to brow artist for everyone from Michelle Obama to the Kardashians and even Oprah Winfrey. Naturally, we couldn't help but chat up with her about all things beauty, and snag some brow grooming tips while at it.

GRAZIA: How excited are you to bring your products to India?

ANASTASIA SOARE: I am so excited. When the brand first started expanding, it was always such a rush to see the diverse places and experiences people would take our products to. I can't wait to see the beautiful looks created in India. I am thrilled to associate with Boddess.com as the authorised distributor of ABH products in India. Both ABH and Boddess' brand philosophy is perfectly in sync with each other which

Iconic beauty brand Anastasia Beverly Hills has launched on India's fastest e-commerce site Boddess.com, and we got its world famous founder and brow queen to share her top tips for perfect eyebrows



Anastasia Beverly Hills
Available at www.Boddess.com

makes it a unique opportunity for us to popularise ABH Beauty purpose among the Indian consumers.

G: Which clients have been the most memorable to work with?

AS: In 1998, a year after I opened the salon, I received a call from the Oprah Winfrey Show – they wanted me to do her eyebrows on live television. That appearance was a real turning point for the brand, and for months afterward, the phone would not stop ringing. She is still a client, and an incredibly dear friend.

G: You're called the 'brow queen', and for good reason – what's the best brow grooming advice you can share with us?

AS: Brows should be tailored to your individual bone structure. The Golden Ratio Shaping Technique has three steps to achieve your uniquely perfect shape: brows should begin directly above the middle of your nostrils, brows should end where the corner of the nostril connects with the outer corner of the eye, and the



Anastasia Soare

highest point of the arch should connect the middle of the tip of the nose with the middle of the iris.

G: When it comes to beauty brands, you have one of the largest following on Instagram. How do you use social media to connect with your customers?

AS: Thanks to my daughter Norvina, the current President of ABH, we were early adopters on Instagram. She saw it as an opportunity for the brand to expand through social media and build a special relationship with users. Knowing that not everyone would use make-up the same way and that it would need to be customised from face to face, we were excited to showcase the diversity of what everyone was creating. It's amazing how close-knit a community of 20 million people can feel, but it does. We love our community and we love encouraging new talent, and I think our fans recognise this genuine connection.

Recognising the importance of technology, Boddess.com has also recently launched their app for the Indian users to get access to their AR/VR technology which is a perfect tool to try our ABH products. The beauty retailer has also curated a content model which is like a preamble that educates the beauty enthusiasts seamlessly at home about healthy glowing skin and flawless make-up tricks with their beauty blogs and technology.

G: If you were allowed to only use five products for the rest of your life, what would they be?

AS: Brow Wiz, Luminous Foundation, Soft Glam Palette (I would repurpose a couple shades for my cheeks as well), Lash Bg Mascara, and a liquid lipstick. **U**

HYDRATION HEROES

Think hair oils are passé? Then these new age formulas are just what you need to change your mind, especially as we walk into winter

NEW AGE AYURVEDA

It's packed with antioxidants, vitamins and mineral that do everything from repair hair and scalp damage, to boost growth.

Bonus points for the mess-free spray-pump dispenser and the fact that it doesn't stain your pillows.

Pure Cure + Co Neelibhringadi Hair Oil, ₹ 599

FOR CARE AND STYLE

The one-of-a-kind blend of six floral oils is surprisingly lightweight and non-greasy. We love that it's multi-purpose – you can use it as an overnight treatment, heat protectant or even as a finishing oil to add sheen to that fresh blow-dry.

L'Oréal Paris Extraordinary Oil Serum, ₹ 499

OLDIE BUT GOODIE

This one's as effective as grandma's handmade hair oil, but it's super lightweight in comparison. It's ideal for head massages at the end of long, stressful days – the cold-pressed oil will cool your scalp and help you drift into a peaceful sleep.

Mantra Herbals Mababhringraj Hair Oil Ancient Formula, ₹ 995

CLEAN FORMULA

It's fully toxin-free, which means no minerals, no parabens, sulphates or artificial fragrances – just a pure mix of eight plant-based oils that strengthen hair and fight hairfall.

The Mom's Co. Natural Hair Strengthening Oil, ₹ 599

ALL ROUND PROTECTION

The naturally-sourced argan oil in this is good enough to tame the toughest frizz + UV protect, without weighing the hair down. A hearty pump is enough to do the job.

Nashi Argan Oil, ₹ 1,200

BEST FACE FORWARD

Your five-minute, quick-fix glam guide for the season

PREP N' PRIME

Achieving naturally radiant skin isn't easy, but Bobbi Brown's new Hydrating Water Fresh Cream (₹5,600) goes a long way in helping you achieve that. This vitamin E-enriched multi-tasker doubles up as a great primer to give you a well-moisturised, glowing canvas.



KOHELED UP

You don't have to be a pro to create these intense smokey eyes — use one end of Kay Beauty's Smokey Kajal Pencil (₹599) to line the eyes and the other to roughly diffuse the kohl. That's it, you're good to go.



FIRST BASE

Dior's Forever Skin Glow Foundation (₹3,400) has a long-wear formula that resists heat and humidity. Pat it on without the fear of the October heat melting it away.



GLITZ AND GLAM

You don't want to be too heavy-handed on the brows for this one. Just reach for Benefit's Precisely, My Brow Pencil (₹2,390) to lightly fill and groom them.



BERRY CRAZE

Is it even autumn if you don't have berry lips on? Swipe on a deep hue like Tom Ford's Boys And Girls Lip Colour in Nicholas (₹2,800) and don't forget to blur out the edges for that 2020 vibe.



NO SWEAT

A final spritz of NYX's Matte Setting Spray (₹1,250) will keep your make-up in place, save it from feeling clammy under face masks, and also save you from looking like an oily mess in photos.



NEXT LEVEL LIT

The perfect antidote to drab eyes? A subtle shine with Pixi's Liquid Fairy Lights shadow (₹1,450). Elevate the humble smokey eye with a touch of this festive gold shimmer.



LOVE LOVE LOVE



*A spritz of this
vetiver-peppermint-
tea tree combo
is the quickest
way to snap your
skin back into
shape after
spending hours
behind masks and
computer screens.*

RAS Vetiver Refresh
Face Mist, ₹ 640

EAT LOCAL

Great produce and authentic flavours contribute to Goa's vibrant food scene

WORDS **BARRY RODGERS**



The 'sunshine state' of Goa is currently in the throes of a food reinvention – one that involves modernising flavours while maintaining a balance. It isn't about making things complex but working with authentic base flavours and great produce to make it palatable to everyone. Call it modern or experimental cooking, but this much-awaited coming of Goan food – with a forward-thinking approach – is visible enough to get people talking about it.

SOUL FOOD

Sun-kissed, nestled under the whistling palms and tucked away in a little hamlet called Rua Central, now more popularly known as Assagao, lies Jamun – a restaurant that's constantly exploring the versatility of simple produce and finding different ways to tap into the fine balance of familiarity and newness. Featured is a dish that stays true to its Goan roots, comprising the seasonal Malabar spinach (also known in Goa as *daento* or *valchi bbaji* in Konkani), drumsticks, a variant of the kaffir lime (called *gauti nimbu* in Goa) and fresh peppercorn and coriander, all sourced from the restaurant's backyard.

"It's about forging a sense of regional cultural identity through food; we want you to feel good about what you're eating. Even our earthenware and clay pots are locally sourced from neighbourhood potters located in Bicholim, a quaint village in North Goa," says executive chef Hanoze Shroff.

FIND YOUR CORNER

Black Market, situated in Panjim's Campal area, is a slow savour. Housed in a beautiful Art Deco building, the restaurant sprawls across the floor, and almost resembles a lived-in art gallery. The chic interiors don't take away from the fact that the restaurant is serious about promoting sustainable farming and local produce. It chooses organic harvests and procures from trusted Goan farmers, butchers and fisher-folk. Even the alcohol – from beer to gin to whiskey – is locally sourced. Featured is the deceptively simple mushroom stuffed *baos* that taste like a warm hug in a cosy alcove. The only prerequisite is that you turn up hungry – ready to explore a different side to Goa's culinary traditions.





ROOTED

Standing tall in the by-lanes of Anjuna is Mahé, a modern coastal restaurant where each dish has native roots across the Indian coastline. According to chef and co-founder, Sandeep Sreedharan, food in Goa is not just about fish-curry-rice anymore, but more about selling a new idea that still celebrates what the food is about. Featured is a fine-dine take on a *laal math* (Amaranth leaf) *ki sabzi*, which is sourced locally from the many women who sell it on the way to Mapusa, in North Goa. “We pride ourselves on cross-palatising flavours. Here, the humble Amaranth leaf serves as a comforting filling in a type of *spanakopita* (Greek spinach pie) made of perfectly flaky phyllo dough and nestled in feta cheese,” he says. Not only is it baked to perfection, but the accompaniment of a beetroot and date chutney gives it that local finish.



ON A PLATTER

The lockdown afforded chef Pablo Luis de Miranda – of Casa Playa, a modern European restaurant in Vagator – the time to flip through old food and travel pictures, where he came across certain dishes like a ramen from Japan and a pastrami sandwich from New York. “I had all the free time to go ahead and make these dishes. What began as a Sunday lunch plan soon turned into a flood of DMs asking me to deliver this. I can never say no to friends,” says Miranda. He began sending out boxes of food, always with a little extra. The ‘Bali in a Box’, which is featured here and made from ingredients sourced from his own backyard, was a response to “friends sharing Bali throwback pictures on social media”, and features *satay* and *rendang*, with banana leaves, tender coconuts, garlands, and lanterns. **G**



BOTANIC BOOM

*What a global trend reveals about
people's interactions with nature*

WORDS **BARRY RODGERS**



Jack was dropped off below my building on a Thursday morning in early September. I was asked to plant-sit for a friend — a proud plant parent who has been tending to orchids, succulents, and bonsai trees for a while now. My new green responsibility (a Swiss cheese plant) travelled in a cardboard box, at least two feet tall and weighing about 25 pounds. I carried him, still inside the box, up the single flight of stairs to my apartment.

Later that day, I filled my mother in on the newest addition to my home. But the fact that my friend had named his house plant puzzled her. And the puzzlement is understandable. She has heard stories of people talking to their plants and of plants getting “annoyed” after being transferred away to another home. But it had never occurred to her that people would give

names to plants. Even the money plant that has now become a mainstay in our home in Kolkata for about four years now, remains unnamed.

Seven months ago, I would have felt a similar puzzlement. But, I don't anymore. The pandemic has spurred a 'botanic boom' globally, one that has led people to buy, collect, and nurture plants within the confines of their homes. Over texts and the occasional phone call, I began trading stories with friends about their own adventures in house plant care. They all seem slightly obsessed.

“I look at plants as companions. Taking care of them doesn't feel like a chore. While I do enjoy the presence of other people, plants offer a silent reassurance that I am not alone. The joy of a leaf unveiling or seeing how much a plant has grown three

months down the track benefits the mind in a number of ways,” says Mumbai-based Sameer Patwardhan, who has been stocking up on all types of potted plants for over three years now.

During this period of uncertainty, plants have begun to resonate with millennials as an antidote to the insane connectivity we've fostered. It seems somewhat necessary because it provides an escape from our screens. Even plant parents who are not big on naming their plants often ascribe emotional states to them: Happiness, sadness, anger, and fatigue. Such personalisation suggests that caring for plants is, at least for some people, much more than a hobby. And if the pandemic is a moment when humans were forced to reckon with a world shared with other life forms, then these new-found intimacies with plants should come as welcome growth.





@otbertimesvintage



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@thesill



@plantastic_mr_fox



@plantastic_mr_fox



@allorabloom



@plantastic_mr_fox

HEAR THEM OUT

“Taking care of plants can be a challenge but it all depends on the individual carer as much as the individual plant itself. Before I found my passion for taking care of a wide range of plants, I too thought it would be as easy as just watering them. At the time, I didn’t take into consideration that plants are as needy as any other living thing. I have so many different species of plants that I now maintain a chart for each, which tells me how often they need to be watered (which differs depending on light and temperature), to how high the humidity should be. It’s important to do your research about the natural environment conducive to a plant’s growth to mimic it at home,” says London-based ‘plantfluencer’ and house plant consultant, Stuart Wilson.

Mumbai-based Manmayee Desai, a graphic designer and founder of the Instagram page @the.bombay.gardener, believes that the current generation is growing more aware of the fact that life will have to be about respecting nature and living intertwined with it.

“I have found gardening to be hugely meditative. In a fast-paced world, in which you’re expected to progress at a breakneck speed, a gardening corner provides a pause – a ritual that forces you to spend time with something that progresses slowly. It teaches patience, and that not all hard work is rewarded with success,” she says, adding that tending to indoor plants does evoke a sense of responsibility as our actions influence the well-being of a living thing. “Millennials are often seen as individualistic and incapable of caring about anything besides themselves, but I think my generation craves feedback – and

growing plants seems to fulfil that craving.”

Vivian Baptist, a Delhi-based professional and a newly-minted plant parent, believes that his ‘babies’ are essential to his work from home life. “My environment has always been very important to my overall mental health, but also my productivity,” he says. “Working from home in the past six months means that my surroundings are a priority for me and plants just seem to make any corner or surface a lot more appealing.” He also takes out time in the day to get to know his house plants better and says that he feels a sense of pride in tending to their specific needs, like you would for a pet or a child. He even sings to them while he waters them. “Caring for them brings me a lot of happiness because there is a sense of accomplishment in keeping them alive. I like learning about each of their needs and watching them thrive when I do the right thing is weirdly very rewarding,” he adds.

Taking care of plants is easy, believes Desai, and encourages people to think of it more transactionally. “Plants are not just a piece of furniture that need watering occasionally – they grow and thrive when you pay attention to them, and when you learn their language. They give back by making your space less sterile and more welcoming. If you let yourself garden intuitively, you’ll find that you can understand what your house plant is telling you, and you’ll very easily be able to gauge their requirements. Very soon, your plants will reward you with new growth, directly a result of your attention and care toward them,” she says.

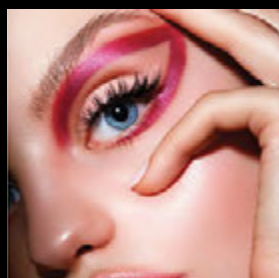
Personally, however, settling into the role of a foster plant parent proved to be

daunting initially. I was handed a bunch of instructions on how to optimally take care of Jack. Swiss cheese plants prefer high humidity, but it will adapt fine to dry indoor conditions. Water a Swiss cheese plant until it runs out the bottom (make sure your pot has drain holes. No plant likes wet feet.), then wait until the top few inches feel dry before watering again. Don’t over-water – that’s a common mistake with this plant. It was a lot to process, given my poor track record with plants over the years. But as I learned, keeping a plant alive can be an achievement that is consistent with a positive self-concept. Most owners opine that sharing their plant ‘parenting’ on social media is something that feels good. Most feel like it’s a badge of honour, like they’re succeeding at something that’s not tacky.

For Wilson, climate change also factored into his decision to become a plantfluencer. “There is a belief amongst most that because climate change occurs naturally, it is not our responsibility to make small changes to find solutions to our planet getting warmer. Doing small things to protect nature has a huge positive impact. Recycling, buying less plastic-wrapped produce, eating green, walking or cycling rather than using buses or cars all add up to bring us closer to nature in a positive way and assists to redefine our thinking around the natural world,” he says.

Even as the lockdown eases across the country, perhaps some plant parents may abandon their plants when they can travel again. But others, I expect, will continue to care for their green babies, with the recognition that they lived through the pandemic together – an affection that will hopefully extend to the at-risk natural world at large. **■**

#THROWBACK



A decade since it all began, influencers reveal how Instagram has impacted their lives

Words **BARRY RODGERS**

Do you remember your first Instagram post? Mine was a fresh-faced, badly-filtered selfie as a 21-year-old me stared up at my phone camera from my sofa. There was no caption – seemingly, I didn't know what to communicate. Yet, a decade ago, Instagram ignited an irresistible urge to share something with the world, and the world obliged by sharing right back. This month, the social media platform turns ten, though it's hard to believe it's not older. Launched in October 2010 as a simple photo-sharing app, it served as a tranquillising reel of pretty pictures. Later, the dopamine hit shifted to refreshing our feeds to see how many likes our own pictures had. From its early days as an arthouse space through more recent waves of pool inflatables and smoothie bowls, we asked 10 of the country's most popular influencers to share their personal favourite memories of the app and tell us where they think it's headed.

© **RANVEER ALLAHBADIA (@BEERBICEPS), CONTENT CREATOR**

"Instagram has made everyone a lot more conscious, in a good way, about aesthetics. People now focus more on the kind of content they're putting out on social media."

A standout memory...

"It would probably have to be the 'Rasode Mein Kaun Tha' meme; that's the one that comes to mind straight away."

The next decade...

"In time to come, the app will become a one-stop shop for all kinds of social media interactions, like Facebook, but in its own unique artistic style."

© **KELVIN CHEUNG (@CHEFKELVINCHEUNG), CHEF**

"Instagramming is officially a verb. There's no debate about it shaping pop culture – in fact, Instagram is pop culture. Scrolling and sharing is now part of our daily lives."

A standout memory...

"I still cannot wrap my head around my Reel on stovetop kettle corn, that honestly speaking wasn't the clearest, and definitely took far less time than most videos I create, but it still hit 12.5 million views last month. I'm still trying to figure out what makes videos connect with people on Instagram and what doesn't. I know there's an algorithm out there and I really need to crack it."

The next decade...

"I see Instagram being used as a food ordering platform for in-dining and take away for restaurants. Click the food photo on a chef or a restaurant's profile, modify the item, scan your table code, and voila! It's at your table."

© **LISA MISHRA (@LISAMISHRAMUSIC), MUSICIAN**

"Instagram hasn't only shaped pop culture, it practically is pop culture. The best of music, film, fashion, media, and sport is now housed on the app."

It's become a vessel for the circulation of news too. So much of who we are is tied to the app."

A standout memory...

"Instagram is a fantastic place of discovery for up-and-coming talent. The way the video for the reprise version of the song 'Tareefan' circulated two years ago still feels like a dream to me."

The next decade...

"I'd like to see a feature for discovering small businesses – maybe a tab on the explore page that lets you shop directly through a native IG marketplace."

© **ABHIRAJ RAJADHYAKSHA & NIYATI MAVINKURVE (@ABHIANDNIYU), INFLUENCERS**

"Instagram enables everyone to be a creator. No matter what you do, every niche has a space."

A standout memory...

"Our first video that went viral. It was about a social issue – the environment. We had zero expectations from it. But people loved it, shared it, and shared it again."

The next decade...

"We like engaging with our audience, so our DMs are full of interesting conversations. But good conversations may get lost in the clutter of story replies and self-promotions. The direct messaging side of Instagram has the potential to improve so that we can save conversations for later, add subjects to chats, and search accordingly."

© **NIKUNJ LOTIA (@BEYOUNICK), CONTENT CREATOR**

"This connection, though virtual, is so much more personal and it's been nice to see fellow creators, people we admire, and people who admire us all share a slice from their life on the platform."

A standout memory...

"I'd have to say the April fools' prank involving Dwayne Johnson, where I announced that I would be making a cameo in 'San Andreas 2'. The photoshopped images I shared on the platform blew up. I didn't expect news portals to run it."

The next decade...

"A few tweaks to the Reels format, or maybe minor changes with how we manage comments and branded content enquiries could go a long way."

© **ARJUN KANUNGO (@ARJUNKANUNGO), MUSICIAN**

"It's where all my listeners want to interact and it's definitely an easy way to do that. We launch our music on Instagram and even use the word 'Instagram' in our lyrics. I think it's increased my social awareness greatly, and as a tool it amplifies our creativity as artists."

A standout memory...

"The egg that broke Instagram; humans are strange."

The next decade...

"As the visual medium grows, I imagine Instagram will also experiment with Virtual Reality and gaming. I would like to see more functionality in the 'close friends' function."

© **SAVI MUNJAL & VIDIT TANEJA (@BRUISEDPASSPORTS), TRAVEL INFLUENCERS**

"Not only has it made travelling less intimidating for most of us, it has brought about change at the grassroots. In Bali recently, we met a gentleman who could afford to provide for his entire extended family because Instagram helped popularise his rental accommodation."

A standout memory...

"The fights for justice against racial and gender inequality."

The next decade...

"We'd love to see a feature that prioritises informational content over comic content."

© **MASOOM MINAWALA MEHTA (@MASOOMMINAWALA), FASHION INFLUENCER**

"It has created sub-cultures, sparked discourses and given people a place to belong on the Internet, whatever their niche may be. I believe it hasn't only shaped pop culture but has led to the development of pop culture over the years."

A standout memory...

"It would definitely have to be my virtual wedding. To be able to share a special moment like that with my Insta family made it unforgettable."

The next decade...

"If there was one feature I could include in the app it would probably be a timeline overview that would allow users to filter content based on upload date, content type and location."

© **KOMAL PANDEY (@KOMALPANDEYOFFICIAL), FASHION INFLUENCER**

"It has enabled the youth to start their own businesses apart from giving them a strong medium of expression."

A standout memory...

"I remember starting my career five years ago by posting #ootds every day, which then paved the way for my dream job."

The next decade...

"From news to fashion to food and world politics, it's going to be a bigger contributor than it already is. Personally, as a content creator, I'd like a feature that could help us monetise our content."

© **DOLLY SINGH (@DOLLYSINGH), CONTENT CREATOR**

"It's the hub of pop culture. So many challenges, contests, and new trends have defined the platform."

A standout memory...

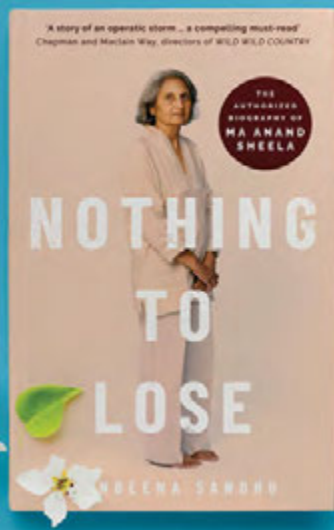
"The Ice Bucket Challenge, which promoted awareness of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and encouraged donations for research. I was quite upset that none of my friends nominated me for it."

The next decade...

"A feature that allows us to delete or move images from our carousel. Also, wouldn't it be cool for people to view a Reel in its entirety when we post it as a story?"

➔ MONTH IN MONTH OUT

MOVIES, ART, BOOKS, AND MORE, HERE ARE OUR TOP PICKS OF THINGS THAT GOT US TALKING THIS MONTH



CONTROVERSY'S CHILD

Ma Anand Sheela's biographer captures her complex life on paper

A biography of a controversial figure, especially someone like Ma Anand Sheela, is bound to have its share of naysayers. Her biographer, Manbeena Sandhu, is prepared for the reproval that may come her way with the release of *Nothing to Lose: The Authorized Biography of Ma Anand Sheela* (published by HarperCollins India). The Toronto-based author recalls meeting the former spiritual sect leader and being completely drawn in by someone she describes as 'dainty, fragile, yet strangely enough, strong as a mountain'. Here, she tells *Grazia* about her reasons for penning the biography.

GRAZIA: What prompted your decision to delve into the life of a controversial figure?

MANBEENA SANDHU: I had been ruminating on it for over two decades. As a young girl, I was a voracious reader — especially of materials relating to the New Age. Philosophers like Nietzsche and contemporary psychologists like Leary, who were shaking the grounds of the modern world and its dated beliefs, left a deep impact on my psyche. It was only natural that when I first lay my hands on a book of Osho, I was bowled over. I visited the ashram several times, starting sometime in 1993 or 1994, and formed some great friendships with many old-time *sannyasins* who had been through the making and breaking of the Orange Era. One figure that stood tall in all their stories was that of Ma Anand Sheela. Many *sannyasins* spoke of her with clear disdain while others would narrate tales of her extraordinary feats, but only behind

closed doors. I wanted to befriend this person, hear her stories first hand, and present those to the world, with every little intricate detail that I could provide.

G: Ma Anand Sheela has lived, in her own words, 'a complex, intense and eventful life'. What was your research and writing process to capture such a life in words?

MS: My research regarding the ashram and Ma Sheela was complete before I met her. Even though she opened up to me when I was in Switzerland with her, that was just the beginning. Over seven months, we interacted almost daily and I asked her to relate her story as I wrote, page after page, chapter after chapter. She was very supportive and open.

G: How did you ensure a balanced piece of work?

MS: I tried to document her life in the most non-judgmental way possible. I have learned and practiced this art for several years in my work as an addictions counsellor. We steer clear of all assumptions and judgments and only 'listen', as an 'active' listener.

While writing this biography, I had all my research and the facts in front of me; and the personal experiences that Ma Sheela shared. I mixed the two as evenly as possible so that the reader could get the best out of this biography.

On the Bookshelf



Piranesi

Bloomsbury India, Susanna Clarke

A magically-immersive experience, Clarke's follow-up to her debut novel tells the tale of a mysterious house and its equally mysterious inhabitants.



The Phoenix

Penguin Random House India, Bilal Siddiqui

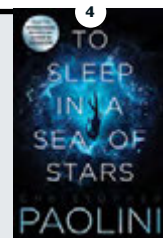
A dystopian tale of espionage and global terror, Siddiqui's spy novel is a story of hope and one man's love for his family and country.



The Deficit Myth

Hachette India, Stephanie Kelton

The author uses modern monetary theory to explain how we can make use of our resources to maximise our potential as a society.



To Sleep in A Sea of Stars

Pan MacMillan, Christopher Paolini

Earth and its colonies stand on the brink of annihilation as a war erupts among the stars in this sci-fi novel.

STORY TIME

This creative hub in Goa is at the intersection of science, philosophy and culture

The world may be in the grips of a pandemic, but that hasn't stopped thinkers and innovators from doing what they do best – create. Two years ago, filmmaker Anand Gandhi put his might behind Memesys Culture Lab, a new media studio and a systems think-tank dedicated to crafting high-concept, experientially-rich and high-impact media. But it's in these last six months of lockdown at their campus in Goa that the group of ideators has experienced a time of unprecedented focus on work. Here, the National Award winning-director reveals what Memesys has in store soon.

can learn, share, create, critique, and shape our future culture. That's the space we have built with Memesys.

G: How important is it to collaborate with people who bring different ideas and perspectives to the table?

AG: The media that we work in – cinema and games – are by nature, collaborative. Peer review has traditionally been one of the most powerful learning methods in cinema – Godard, Truffaut, Chabrol, and Rohmer were friends who challenged each other, learned and worked together, and led the French New Wave in the late 50s. While building rigorous peer networks and fostering collaboration is at the foundation of our creative process, our projects are also very author-driven.

G: What have these six months of togetherness and exchange of ideas culminated in at the lab?

AG: The last six months have provided us an unprecedented focus as about 35 of us are currently cohabiting on our campus. It's a joy to see creators at work. There's an incessant exchange of ideas, epiphanies, and peer review. Over the last two years, our teams have amassed a massive bank of intellectual wealth stories that entertain and enlighten. We have sieved through all our solutions and ideas with the highest standards of rigour to distil the most relevant stories and insights of today.

G: Has the pandemic changed the way Memesys perceives cinema?

AG: While the pandemic's devastating effects unfold around the world, our studio is

GRAZIA: Why Memesys?

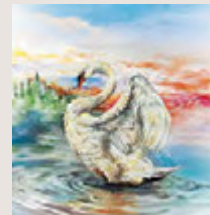
ANAND GANDHI: A billion people have a billion stories to tell and we want to provide creators the resources to tell them well – and tell them to the entire world. For this, they need to become deeply knowledgeable, critical thinkers with a firm grip of the media they are working with, so they can not only be at par but surpass the imagination of makers in other parts of the world. Imagine a place where brilliant minds

Words DEEPA SINGH

FIRST LOOK | GRAZIA

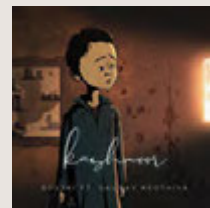
PRESS PLAY

The tunes that deserve a place in your playlist



By the River, Benbur

The lyrical theme is about realistic expectations in relationships. Using harmonies and instrumentation to portray a sense of beauty, this tune fits into the Indie wheelhouse perfectly.



Kashnoor, Bonski ft Gaurav Reothiya

Poetry and rap come together to address hope, fear and frustration around the idea of home and identity.



Labels, Pratika and Krantinaari

The gritty Hindi and English rap single deals with discrimination and how society wants to label people based on class, caste and skin colour.

busy adapting to the changing cultural and economic landscape of cinema. It has only reinforced our commitment to creating art that promotes scientific, progressive ways of living. The work I want to put out there is in continuity with the work I have produced in the past – *Ship of Theseus*, *Tumbbad*, and *OK Computer*. Diverse as they are, they share one thing in common – a drive to tell great stories with uncompromising excellence. **U**

BIG BYTE

*All the gadgets we're
crushing on this month*



MERCEDES-AMG GLE 53 COUPÉ, ₹1.2 CRORE ONWARDS

With the pandemic putting a brake on our travel bucket list for 2020, we're turning to a surprising place to get some alone time – our cars. The all-new, super-fun Mercedes-AMG GLE 53 Coupé has increased our appreciation for the solitude you can get from a personal vehicle. This AMG-tuned version of the GLE range of crossover coupés comes with a new AMG-specific radiator grille (which will incite a double-take) with vertical slats, a bold exterior, and plush interiors.

APPLE WATCH SERIES 6, ₹ 40,900 ONWARDS

Health is re-imagined on your wrist. Day to day, it's going to be two things with this new variant: The most critical feature is the new blood oxygen sensor, especially needed in these pandemic times. Photodiodes capture the light reflected on detecting your blood's colour, which indicates how oxygenated your blood is. Big-ups to the improved battery performance and the always-on Retina display being up to 2.5 times brighter than the Series 5. It's the best wearable to buy when the focus is entirely on you and your health.



GOPRO HERO 9 BLACK, ₹ 49,500

This miniature, always-ready camera has gone where no camera has gone before, and is perfect for those situations when you want to do something adventurous. The revamped Hypersmooth mode captures stable images, giving you super-slick cinematic shots. The #MoreEverything philosophy of the camera this year comes with a cute front screen to up your vlogging game to the next level. Side note: It's also discreet, so you don't look like a dorky tourist every time you pull it out. **W**

XBOX SERIES X, ₹ 49,990

It's next-gen console season, and the Xbox Series X (with its smaller, cuter Series S sibling) couldn't have come at a better time. Apart from providing killer entertainment, it comes '8K ready' (if you're an A/V nerd, you get the drift), coupled with 120-frames-per-second gameplay + a Game Pass subscription with a catalog of hundreds of titles to dive into.



WHERE TO FIND IT

11.11
www.11-11.in

ESPRIT
available at www.myntra.com

ACCESSORIZE
accessorize.co.uk

AKAARO
www.akaaro.com

ALANUI
www.alanui.it

ALEXANDER MCQUEEN
www.alexandermcqueen.com

AMALTAAS

ANASTASIA BEVERLEY HILLS
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www.aquazzura.com

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www.ayshaaccessories.com

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available at www.mytheresa.com

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BOTTEGA VENETA
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GUCCI
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GUESS
available at www.luxury.tatacliq.com

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HANNAN
www.shophannan.com

HELENA BAJAJ LARSEN
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LABEL EARTHEN
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www.latique.in

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