

FEMINA

*Be
unstoppable*

DATE NIGHT

Athiya Shetty
sets the
fashion mood

A Delicate Balance

Making room
for work and life

BACK TO BUSINESS

MOMS WHO'VE
BOUNCED BACK
TO WORK

STAY SASSY!

Sonam Kapoor-
Ahuja on
personal style

FASHION
PICKS
TO STAY ON
TREND

LOVE ALL!

SANIA MIRZA

ON HER GAME POST MOTHERHOOD

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**TRIPPING
ON LOVE**

Go-to
romantic
destinations

**TABLE
FOR TWO**

Recipes
for special
celebrations

**COLOURS
OF LOVE**
BEAUTY
LOOKS TO
SLAY

**THE NAIL
EMPRESS**

**DR. LEENA S.
ON GOING
INTERNATIONAL**



EDITOR'S LETTER



IN THIS ISSUE,
WE SALUTE
SOME SUPER-
ACHIEVER
MOMS
WHO HAVE
BOUNCED
BACK TO
WORK SOON
AFTER
HAVING THEIR
CHILDREN

The year began on a good note with a strong ray of hope. With the COVID-19 vaccine out and so many countries in overdrive to vaccinate their population, this planet is hoping to limp back to normalcy. After a horrid year of uncertainty that threw everything out of gear, we finally see some light at the end of the tunnel. A lot will have to be written off, but let's work with a positive mind and attitude to pick up from where we left off. This is the month of love, as we all celebrate Valentine's Day. Each one of us has gone through so much pain, suffering and loss that love is the only way we can heal the world. It should be the binding force that brings the world together and helps us rebuild our lives. We can only do so when we support each other. It's time we hold hands and stand by one another. Even nature has its own way of uniting people. We need to pick up the signs.

In this issue, we salute some super-achiever moms who have bounced back to work soon after having their children. Their stories inspire all of us; they tell us nothing is impossible if we have the will and the determination. Our cover girl, tennis champion and India's pride Sania Mirza, talks about what goes behind being a winner, and how she came back to win an international championship soon after the birth of her son. To all those moms who think of giving up work after childbirth, please rethink. If these women can continue to excel in such time- and rigour-intensive professions, so can you. It is all about balancing things out.

In our fashion special, the lithe and lissome Athiya Shetty looks stunning in shades of red and pink—all set for her Valentine, as she shares her style secrets with us. Food is all about tasty treats to pamper your loved ones on this special day. Though we don't need a special day to celebrate love, it is a good reminder to everyone to go out and express love. Here's wishing all our readers love and more love. Spread love around and see how it comes back to you manifold!

Ruchika
RUCHIKA MEHTA

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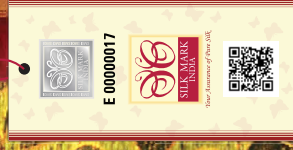
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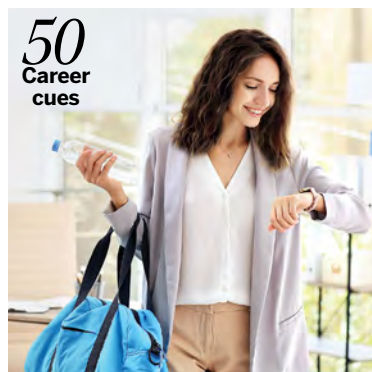


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THE '80s RUCED
TREND IS A POWER
FASHION MOVE
THIS SEASON

Feminine flair

2021 MAKEUP
TRENDS THAT STAND
OUT!

Beauty Report

#MADEININDIA:
THE COOLEST DESI
FOOD GIFT IDEAS
FOR 2021

Gifting happiness

FOODS THAT WILL
HELP YOU TO FIGHT
THE COMMON COLD

Wellness 101



In the spirit of new beginnings, what are the new year resolutions you plan to uphold throughout 2021?



Gumnaam @RajxSimran

Watch more films but try not binge eat while I do so.



RadhikaSP @radztastic

Keeping health at the forefront is the resolution for 2021.



Reede Tai @cabbagemarri

Put thoughts into action without overthinking.



eden noronha @NoronhaEden

Learning how to cook new dishes and also making more time for my hobbies, friends and family.

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WE HEAR YOU!

Write to us at femina@wmm.co.in

I'm always looking for real women who inspire, and Femina consistently gives me that, but the January 2021 issue had an added surprise: Deepika Padukone, who, besides answering all the expected questions, also revealed herself to be very real. In her matter-of-fact statements about growing up simply, doing a lot of things for herself, and her bouts of depression, she is inspiring and relatable. Thank you for showing us a different, down-to-earth side of one of India's highest-paid actors.

Maya Mantri, Bengaluru

This is the perfect kind of inspirational and thought-provoking content that has got me looking forward to the new year with a fresh new vision. From interesting fashion and beauty trends that are both holistic and progressive to real-life heroes and real-life solutions, the January issue gave us the lowdown on everything we should be grateful for in 2021.

Priya Nair, Nashik

Reading about the various education savings schemes for the girl child was really insightful and very much needed at this point. It was quite informative and engaging. I loved reading the cover story as well. Deepika has always been my favourite actor, and finding about her in such detail was a treat! Kudos, Team Femina, for always coming out with interesting issues one after the other.

Rashmi Singh, Nagpur

Femina has always brought inspirational women forward, and it makes me very happy to see it being



done yet again in the latest issue. Deepika Padukone has been covered as a star by most magazines, but you covered her as a successful woman, wife and daughter in the January 2021 issue. It is always heartening to learn from successful and inspirational women. And Femina

helps us with just that. Great work!

Esha Sikka, Delhi

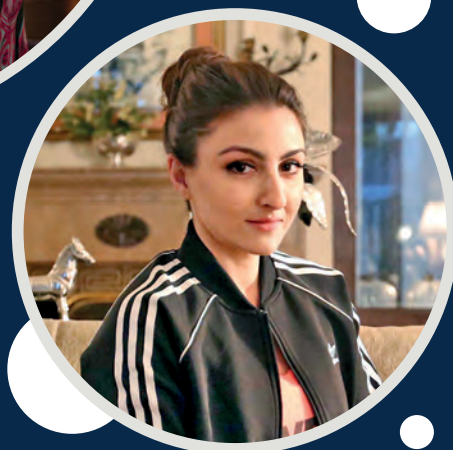
Kudos, Team Femina, for yet another amazing issue! Deepika Padukone is a class apart, and the way she carries herself is amazing. Your interview with her has brought out many aspects of her life that we did not know. Thank you for providing an insight into the person behind the star. I must also compliment the team on the amazing recipes that we get to see in each issue; they are easy to pull together, and make one feel like a MasterChef after cooking the dish! I will definitely try the Middle Eastern meal recipes from this issue as well.

Pallavi Hemani, Vadodara

The topics covered in the January issue focus more on providing information that can actually help us readers in the real world. I love how the magazine covers more than just fashion and beauty trends, and brings real women to the forefront too. Cover girl Deepika Padukone also shared her story behind her fame and success, something which is amazing and inspiring. The quizzes in the 'All About You' section never fail to make me smile and are super fun and engaging.

Anaita Bakshi, Mumbai

THE BIG STORY



FOR THE LOVE OF IT ALL

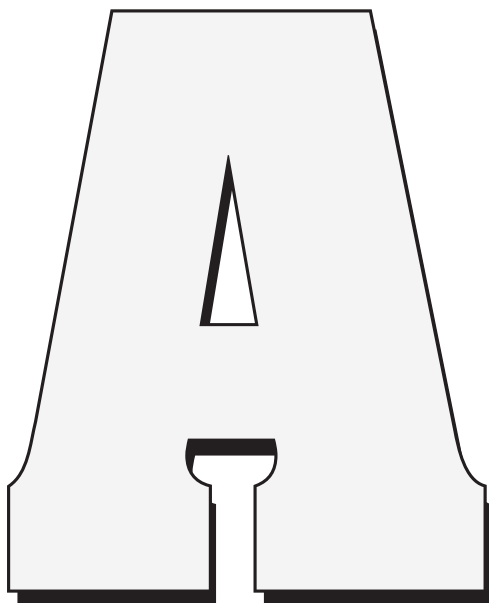
THEY WERE AT THE PEAK OF THEIR CAREERS WHEN THEY DECIDED TO TAKE ANOTHER PLUNGE HEADFIRST—THAT OF BECOMING MOTHERS—AND THEY BOUNCED RIGHT BACK TO ACHIEVE GREATER CAREER HEIGHTS. IT TOOK SACRIFICE, DEDICATION, AND ENDLESS SLEEPLESS NIGHTS, BUT THE REWARDS HAVE BEEN FABULOUS. TAKE CUES FROM THESE REAL WOMEN ON HOW TO GIVE BOTH, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR CAREER, THE ATTENTION THEY DESERVE

DOUBLE (love) FAULT

SHE PUT INDIAN WOMEN'S TENNIS ON THE GLOBAL MAP WHEN SHE WAS 16, AND HAS MADE HEADLINES EVER SINCE. **SANIA MIRZA** TALKS TO **SHRADDHA KAMDAR** ABOUT BEING A NATURAL AT BOTH—HER PROFESSION AND MOTHERHOOD



PHOTOGRAPH BY: STARGAZE
OUTFIT: THE LOOM ART STUDIOS. MAKEUP: ALIYA BAIG. STYLING: TANUSHA BAJAJ



player who defines the word icon to a T, she is one sportsperson who not only taught many young girls to dream, but to go right ahead and achieve those dreams. An icon since her teenage years, tennis superstar Sania Mirza continues to uphold a similar passion and values post the birth of her son as well. She has many credits to her name: former doubles world No. 1, winner of six Grand Slam titles in her career, ranked by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) as India's No. 1 player until her retirement from singles in 2013, the only Indian woman tennis player to win a WTA title, and reach the top 100 singles rankings. Yet, resting on them is not what she chose; she took up the tougher path of returning

to her sport, and did it with a bang! Over to the mom who continues to inspire other mothers the world over.

You've been on the top of your game since your debut in international tennis. How was that journey and experience?

Immense pressure and responsibility come with being the first person to do so many things. It is a very special feeling... almost a privilege, undoubtedly, because, you are, after all, the first! Billie Jean King once said, 'Pressure is a privilege', and that's how I feel. Moreover, I have a responsibility towards the younger generation because they look up to me to be No. 1 in the world. To be the best for almost two years was pretty incredible. I am extremely proud of what I have achieved, what we have achieved as a family. And it's just not for the family, it's also for the country. I've had a pretty long career and, fortunately, I've been able to perform pretty well for most part of it. It's been an amazing journey.

As a six-time Grand Slam champion, what is it that you did differently from other

tennis players to reach where you did?

I don't think there was anything different; I think that a lot has to do with your commitment. I was very committed. The whole family sacrificed so much; we worked extremely hard, we almost never had family time together for all those years. We were putting in eight hours a day, every day, from the time I was eight! We loved the game! And I love competing, so my passion kept me going. I also believe destiny and luck are involved, but, at the same time, a lot of hard work goes in.

On the international circuit, you have played against some of the best names in the sport. How did you mentally prepare to face them?


It doesn't matter who you're playing, you just want to give your best, you want to be the best version of yourself on that day. Yes, perhaps, you can't always be that version, but you try. That's how I approach each match, no matter whom I play, whether they're the greatest champions in the world or whether it's their first match ever.

You tied the knot and plunged into motherhood when you were at the top of your game...

Getting married had nothing to do with playing tennis or competing. That decision was made when I thought it was the right >

"IMMENSE PRESSURE AND RESPONSIBILITY COME WITH BEING THE FIRST PERSON TO DO SO MANY THINGS. IT IS A VERY SPECIAL FEELING... ALMOST A PRIVILEGE"



A full-page photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, wearing a long, flowing pink gown with a heavily embellished bodice. She is standing on a green tennis court, with a black tennis net and several yellow tennis balls in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting daytime. The woman is looking towards the camera with a slight smile, her hands resting on her hips.

**“IT DOESN’T
MATTER
WHO YOU’RE
PLAYING, YOU
WANT TO BE
THE BEST
VERSION OF
YOURSELF ON
THAT DAY”**

PHOTOGRAPH BY: ANURAG KAMILLA
OUTFIT: ANUSHREE REDDY, MAKEUP: TAVANNA
ROOZ, STYLING: ANAM MIRZA



time, at a point when it was in my destiny. I always wanted to be a mother, a young mother at that, and hence, that decision was made. It was a conscious decision to get pregnant and have a baby. And, hands down, it has been the best decision of our lives.

Tell us the feeling you experienced when you came to know you were pregnant, and, later, when Izhaan was born.

It's very difficult to put

“THE JOY AND EXPECTATION IS IMMENSE WHEN YOU ARE PREGNANT. THEN, ONE DAY, YOU HOLD YOUR BABY IN YOUR ARMS, AND YOU REALISE THAT YOU WANT NOTHING MORE”

into words! The joy and expectation is immense when you are pregnant. Then, one day, you hold your baby in your arms, and you realise that, after

that moment, you want nothing more. I'm not a very maternal person; I didn't know how I was going to be with the baby, how I was going to handle it, but it all

just came so naturally! The most selfless relationship that you will ever be in will be with your child. When Izhaan was born, it was one of the best moments of my life. He has brought so much love and happiness to our family! Every day, he makes me learn new things about myself.

How has motherhood changed you?

As tennis players, we tend to be kind of self-centred about our timings, our warm-ups, our practice... everything is about ourselves. When you have a baby, nothing is about you anymore. It made me evolve into a better person; it made me understand about the selfless love I wanted to give this little boy. I want so much for him, more for him than I want for anyone else in the world, including myself. And I think that's what being a mother teaches you: it changes you, makes you a better person.

You have said that motherhood does not mean sacrificing your life. How does societal (and often, familial) pressure lead women to believe that?

Personally, I never experienced it. I've had an extremely supportive family, including my husband who always told me I should come back, even in moments when I thought I wouldn't. I can understand, however, why there's so much pressure on women. You're feeding the baby; people are always worried if

you are away from the baby even for an hour. People try to guilt trip you and, on top of that, you have your own 'mother's guilt'. I was never made to feel like that by anyone, but I know a lot of people who have gone through this, my friends, my friends' wives, who have had that experience. All I can tell them is that it doesn't need to be like that; you need to still follow your dreams. Having dreams and a career does not make you a bad mother. This is where equality comes in. If the father focuses on career, no one makes a big deal of it. Luckily, I come from a family where we do not believe there is a difference between a mother and a father. Still, the physical and mental toll on a mother is always high because, initially, the child is most attached to the mother.

At what point after being settled into a routine with baby Izhaan did you start thinking of coming back on court?

The first step was losing around 23 kilos. Once I started shedding the extra weight, I was like, if I'm able to do this in four months, I could go ahead to look at coming back. I wanted to see how my body would react to the changes. About six months after I gave birth to Izhaan, my body told me that it was a realistic possibility that I could make that comeback.

How did you train post childbirth to get

“PEOPLE TRY TO GUILT TRIP YOU AND, ON TOP OF THAT, YOU HAVE YOUR OWN ‘MOTHER’S GUILT’”

back on court? How strict were you with your diet and exercise regimen?

Training after childbirth was difficult because, first, I had to get rid of the weight. For the first three months,

I followed a strict diet of 1,100 calories and two-and-a-half hours of cardio exercise every day. I then moved on to strength and conditioning exercises in order to build muscle and power, so I could get back

to playing tennis. There was no other way. I never felt over-stressed because I was doing it for myself; nobody was forcing me to do it. Since I took it happily and positively, I didn't really feel like it was too much, even though I was tired due to lack of sleep.

In the midst of the joys of motherhood, did you ever wonder if you would play again?

Yes. I did have some doubts. >



I didn't know how I was going to lose the weight, I didn't know how my body was going to react to high-intensity training, I didn't know how I was going to manage with the baby. My strong support system helped me through it.

With all the emotions that you had been through in the 15 months prior to playing the Hobart International, what did the win there signify?

It was certainly one of the most special victories

of my life. I think I have won bigger tournaments, but that tournament was with my son in tow! After not competing for almost two years, to accomplish something like that, to be able to still win was incredible, and I could only

have dreamed of such a comeback! I went in with no expectations; I was so proud of myself for being able to put myself in that position and being able to compete against the best in the world again! The feeling of being able to

prove to myself and the world that your life does not end when you have a baby was out of this world. You can still follow your dreams and be a great mother. It was a mixture of all these emotions, and it was really amazing.

“I THINK I HAVE WON BIGGER TOURNAMENTS, BUT THAT TOURNAMENT (2020 HOBART INTERNATIONAL) WAS WITH MY SON IN TOW!”

What challenges did you face when the world (and the tennis scene as well) went into limbo due to the pandemic just after you made such a strong comeback?

The pandemic was extremely hard, and it has put almost all of us on the back foot. Everybody has had a different struggle, and has engaged in various ways of dealing with it. I have also put a lot of things into perspective, with the feeling of being blessed and grateful for being healthy and having a roof over my head. With tennis, I kept telling myself that I had worked hard to make a strong comeback, and would always think of the bigger problems of the world at large. I just hope we come out on the better side of this!

Do you think women have to work harder at proving themselves at everything (even being parents) than men do?

I think people do not like to accept it, but we do live in a man's world, and I think a lot of things are a lot easier for men in this world. I don't think being parents, we need to prove ourselves, >

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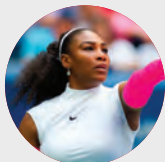
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A sportsperson you look up to
Serena Williams

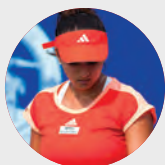


A Bollywood movie you could watch again and again
Kuch Kuch Hota Hai



An actor you think could play the role of Sania Mirza in the biopic

Too many good actors out there, so let's wait and watch!



Your favourite street food
Chaat



Your life in one word
Blessed!

but the mother is always put on more of a guilt trip than men are. I think they are made to feel that they are not doing a good job as mothers, whether it comes to breastfeeding, or going back to work after having a child. I do think mothers are judged a bit more, but I do not think they necessarily need to prove themselves to anybody. They do face immense pressure. I just think women should be doing what makes them happy and allows them to sleep at night. The fact is that absolutely no one can love a child more than its mother, so no matter how much advice you get (and you get a lot!) when you are pregnant and become a mother, it is you who knows what is best for your child.

Tell us about a few special moments with Izhaan...

Every moment we spend together is special. We read together; he loves reading. He comes up with new words every day, every moment. He loves drawing, so we draw together. And, thanks to the lockdown, we have been able to spend a lot of quality time with each other.

What values would you like to see Izhaan grow up with?

So many! Treat everybody equally. We would want our son to have the same kind of upbringing we had, where we do not differentiate between anybody, and we work hard while not expecting anything or taking



“BEFORE BECOMING ANYTHING, I WANT IZHAAN TO BE A GOOD PERSON WHO LOVES PEOPLE AROUND HIM AND TREATS EVERYBODY EQUALLY”

anything for granted. Before becoming anything, I want him to be a good person who loves people around him. He is a very loving boy; I want him to be that way.

How do you unwind?

I have my hands full with practice and training. Izhaan needs me when I'm not training, so I don't have that much time, but I like watching TV, a few select

shows. Every once in a while, I meet up with my set of close friends.

What are you looking forward to this year?

I am definitely looking forward to no COVID-19, and to getting back to normalcy as soon as possible. I hope for a healthy and happy year not just for my family, but for the world as a whole. >



Time and again, women have proved their mettle in every sphere of life. Be it as homemakers or at work outside, as a taxi-driver or the CEO of a multi-national company, women have showed that with just a little encouragement, they can touch heights. However, harassment and gender-violence have a debilitating effect on them. Ever since I took office in March 2017, the safety and security of women were uppermost in my mind,” the CM said about the initiative.

MISSION SHAKTI

A CAMPAIGN BY CM YOGI ADITYANATH'S UTTAR PRADESH GOVERNMENT THAT IS ALL ABOUT CELEBRATING WOMEN POWER. FROM SAFETY TO EDUCATION TO EMPOWERMENT, MISSION SHAKTI HAS SPREAD AWARENESS IN EACH AND EVERY NOOK AND CORNER OF THE STATE, BE IT IN THE CITIES OR IN THE RURAL AREAS.

MAKING **EMPOWERMENT AND SAFETY** PARAMOUNT

MISSION SHAKTI IS AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING INITIATIVE THAT IS ALL ABOUT WOMEN SAFETY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT. HERE'S LOOKING AT SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS CAMPAIGN BY CM YOGI ADITYANATH'S GOVERNMENT IN UTTAR PRADESH.



Safety and security of women, and for women, is paramount; and the Uttar Pradesh government is taking great strides in ensuring it. Mission Shakti was launched to guarantee that all daughters of UP are safe at all times. Launched during Navratri in October 2020, these past months have been filled with many initiatives and campaigns for dissemination of the right information as also ensuring that women get the help they need. CM Yogi Adityanath has led the mission in its path to success. Under his guidance, many events are being held across the state – in cities and villages – on a monthly basis to make the masses aware of and sensitise them towards the security, safety, self-reliance and

empowerment of women and girls.

This initiative is being taken to the remotest of places also with help of many self-help groups (SHGs) and Anganwadi workers alongside the police and administrative departments of the state government. For example, the distribution of dry ration among women is being done by Bal Vikas Evam Pushtahar Vibhag and food and civil supplies at the Anganwadi centres in the state. The women of the self-help groups are also helping spread the message about women empowerment and helpline numbers among the villagers. Some of these are using rangolis to help create awareness. The helpline numbers like 1090, 1076, 1098, 108, 102, 112 and others are of great help to women in need.

As part of the campaign, there have been meetings with people and organisations who help fight the crimes against women to get them on board for spreading awareness and finding ways to be able to help women. In one such case, the National Commission for Women chairperson Rekha Sharma recently did a tour of UP where she not only met CM Yogi but also Uttar Pradesh DGP H C Awasthy and discussed issues related





to women safety. The DGP apprised Sharma about the initiatives of the UP Police pertaining to Mission Shakti, the security of women - including the helpline numbers, and the state police's Safe City Project. They also spoke about the gender sensitisation of police officials, which will be conducted all over the state in collaboration with the commission.

As part of Mission Shakti, another initiative that will be taking place is tracking of women in distress through AI. During a workshop on women safety called Aashi: Abhay and Abhyudaya in Lucknow, the city commissioner D K Thakur informed that the police has decided to equip public spots with AI-enabled cameras to pick up pictures of women in distress and alert the nearest police station 'based on their facial expressions'. He also informed that 31 'pink booths', managed by women, have been established across the city and UP police's 'Women Power Line' - 1090 has been launched. He clarified that 200 hotspots had been identified where



the movement of girls is maximum and from where most of the complaints are received. There will be five AI-based cameras set up which will send an alert to the nearest police station. These cameras will become active as soon as a woman's expression changes to that of distress. "Before she dials 100 or 112 for help, an alert would reach the police," he added.

One of the biggest achievements of



The state government has helped 27.95 lakh women, through the 'Nirashrit Mahila Pension Scheme' while 5.8 lakh girls have received benefits of 'Kanya Sumangala Yojana'. As many as 51,25,579 girls have got the direct benefit of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme. Through the 'Rani Lakshmi Bai Mahila Evam Samman Kosh Yojana', 4,937 victims of violence have been supported.



the mission have been the fact that the state department of women and child development has reached out to more than five crore people under the Mission Shakti campaign since it began in October 2020, sensitising them about women empowerment and their rights. Manoj Rai, director, women welfare department, said that platforms like 'Shakti Samvad' and 'Haq ki Baat' are also being used to redress grievances of women in both rural and urban areas. "The state

government has helped 27.95 lakh women, through the 'Nirashrit Mahila Pension Scheme' while 5.8 lakh girls have received benefits of 'Kanya Sumangala Yojana'. As many as 51,25,579 girls have got the direct benefit of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme. Through the 'Rani Lakshmi Bai Mahila Evam Samman Kosh Yojana', 4,937 victims of violence have been supported," he said. He added that under Mission Shakti, government and non-government organisations are making rural women aware of job opportunities. Not only are they being trained for work in small and cottage industries but also are gaining experience in organic farming, mask making, dress and jewellery designing. The department aims to make women and girls self-dependent.



SHINING BEACONS OF UTTAR PRADESH

Organization (WCSO), Uttar Pradesh and also heads the Women Power Line 1090. The mayor of the capital of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow is Sanyukta Bhatia. She is the current and the first woman to be elected as the Mayor of the city. In an interview with a national daily, she mentioned, "Like a woman takes care of her family and house sensitively and properly, in a similar manner, I will make the city neat and clean." Renuka Kumar, IAS (UP 1987) is currently the Additional Chief Secretary at the Geology & Mining, Women Welfare Department, Lucknow. She has been empanelled for holding secretary-level posts at the Government of India approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet. The Lucknow nodal head of Mission Shakti is Renuka Mishra, IPS 1990, and currently the Additional Director General of Police, PSR and PB, UP.

Such ladies have inspired many to follow their footsteps. To help them and in another step towards empowering the girl child, the Uttar Pradesh Government, under the Mission Shakti campaign, will hold special counselling camps called 'Prashasan ki Paathshala' for girl students who aspire to make their career in civil services, army, police, air force, medical, engineering and other fields.



Women have always been as much at the forefront in being change-makers for society. History exemplifies this through the valour of Rani Laxmi Bai, Uda Devi and Begum Hazrat Mahal. Even in recent times, we have had inspiring women who have taken up the mantle in bringing about a change in society. Be it in sports with stalwarts like sharpshooters Chandro and Prakash Shah, badminton champion Meena Shah, tennis player and Miss Deaf International Vidisha Baliyan or social activists like Zainab Khan, Sampat Devi Pal, etc, women have led from the front. When it comes to administration, law and order too, women are an integral part. We bring you shining examples of a few such inspiring women...

An IPS from the 1992 batch, Neera Rawat is the Additional Director General of Police, Women & Child Security



“The Hon'ble Chief Minister's launch of Mission Shakti campaign to provide 360° and holistic approach to women safety, dignity and self-reliance gave an impetus to WPL 1090 to form a special team to take stringent action against habitual offenders of crime against women.”

- Neera Rawat, IPS, Additional Director General of Police, Women and Child Safety Organization

Women & Child Security Organization (WCSO) has been established by the U.P Government to provide special monitoring of crime against women and addressing women crime-related issues with a holistic approach. Rawat also heads the Women Power Line 1090. It is a 24x7 Helpline established for the women of Uttar Pradesh to deal with the cases of women harassment at a primary stage. WPL deals with various type of cases like harassment over phone, harassment in cyberspace (Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter etc), and stalking at public places. It also deals with other crimes against women reported to it with the support of district police and UP 112. Complaints are taken by the women operators only. Identity of the victim is not disclosed. WPL 1090 team remains in touch with the victim till the problem is completely resolved by taking multiple feedbacks.

In addition to the measures taken by the government for the safety, security, dignity and empowerment of women there are few more things that are required to be done at the end of women also for their empowerment, says Rawat. These can be summarized as follows:

- Women must speak up for themselves.
- Women must support each other



in times of need and distress.

- They must be vigilant about their surroundings.
- Women must possess the knowledge about the help they are entitled to get and also about various agencies, helplines, laws etc. existing for women safety and security.
- They must spread the word and knowledge about women safety through whatever medium available to them.
- The change should start from one's home itself.



MISSION SHAKTI AT A GLANCE

Mission Shakti focuses on 360-degree development of Nari Suraksha (women's safety), Nari Samman (dignity of women), and Nari Swavlamban (women's self-reliance).

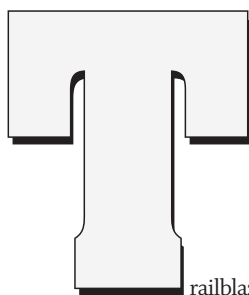
- Twenty four departments of UP government are conducting various activities across the state covering 75 districts, 822 blocks, 599 villages, 630 local bodies and 1535 police stations.
- The Mission Shakti campaign involves activity like:
 - Gender sensitisation
 - Webinars
 - Self-defence trainings
 - Workshops
 - Corporate activities
 - Audio messages
 - Interviews
 - Training
 - Programs in pandals and police stations
 - Awareness programs at village level



- Nukkad natak / street plays / roadshows
- Women Help Desks have been established at all police stations of UP, where female police personnel are deployed 24x7 to provide women and children friendly atmosphere. For this purpose, government has provided a fund of Rs.15.84 crores.
- For public awareness and to bring about behavioural change amongst masses, outreach programs have been conducted through various mediums like social media, nukkad natak, branding of UPSRTC buses in addition to traditional means of publicity.

THE BEST OF BOTH *Worlds*

WHILE HANDLING HER HIGH-PROFILE CORPORATE POSITION, **SCHAUNA CHAUHAN**, CEO OF PARLE AGRO, IS ALSO A HANDS-ON MOM TO SON JAHAN. SHE TALKS TO **SHRADDHA KAMDAR** ABOUT HOW SHE MANAGES IT ALL



railblazer

CEO, on several lists as one of the most powerful businesswomen in India, and a hands-on mother to six-year-old Jahaan, Schauna Chauhan makes the world believe that super moms like her can have it all. What people don't see is the hard work that goes into planning that life and the changes that the CEO of Parle Agro has to make. Being a single mother makes it more challenging, but Chauhan has her priorities in place. Over to the CEO who credits her team with helping her make it happen...

How hard do you work to strike a balance?

I have the good fortune to be able to balance out my time well between Jahaan and work, and it is not something that just happened; it is well planned, I ensure it. I have a wonderful team of people who help me do it all. When >





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I travel for work, Jahaan accompanies me.

When the need arises, he comes with me to work, and spends his day doing different things. That said, I ensure each day, week, and month of mine is planned keeping him in mind. That's where the hard work lies. I also plan ahead for time with him, whether it is going away for the weekend, planning an activity, or spending time with the whole family. An absolute must for me is to put him to bed every night. This is the time when he discusses his day with me, and I talk to him about mine. He loves listening to all my stories!

How do you plan regular days with him?

The first day and the last day of school are the two days that I schedule to spend with him;

“MOTHERHOOD TENDS TO PUT YOU IN SITUATIONS WHERE YOU WONDER IF YOU’RE EVER GOING TO MAKE IT”

I pick him up from school, a tradition we have followed from day one. If I can't, I explain why to him, even if it is tough. This balance is not easy, since I, too, know how excited he gets when he sees me in school.

Often, work needs to be prioritised too, but I don't feel guilty about that, because I can confidently say that I have ensured that he will never feel that I have neglected him. He has also come to realise that, for me, my work and him are the most important things. He has seen me work from

the beginning! Like he says, 'My mumma is the boss!'

You were already a business leader when you had Jahaan. How did you plan the changes in order to embrace motherhood?

I had my schedule rewritten for the year! Jahaan adapted to my schedule and routine. He started coming to work with me at the age of three months. That way I was close to him and was able to also give my attention to my work. The biggest change that

happened at that time was that I lost out on 'me time'.

I can't complain; it was a choice I made.

What kind of changes did you make in your schedule when you went back to work?

Whenever I got the chance, I would change his diapers, give him a sponge bath, sing nursery rhymes, and make funny faces for him to laugh at. That was the time I got to bond with him while he was still an infant. Jahaan took his first steps at my workplace. Unfortunately, I missed the exact moment as I was in a meeting, but he was in my father's cabin and, fortunately, we got it on camera (smiles). Having Jahaan just balanced and completed my life.

How did becoming a mother change you?

Motherhood brought back the child in me. It has also made me more adventurous. The midnight feasts, the roller-coaster rides, jumping in puddles or just playing tag in the garden, making bamboo houses or going zip-lining, we do it all. It also taught me a lot because of the questions that children ask.

Motherhood tends to put you in situations where you wonder if you're ever going to make it. At the same time, it has made me appreciate the little things in life. For instance, just a smile from Jahaan when he used to open his eyes, or his laugh when I did something funny would make my day so much better that I would forget all my stress. Motherhood also makes you stronger, >

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TO BE HATED
BY EVERYONE,
THAN BE KNOWN
BY NO ONE.

emotionally and mentally, able to take on so much more and handle it with grace, care, and patience.

Did you face pressure to give up working to raise your son?

Never. And I am not someone who would give up what I love doing. In fact, raising Jahaan and continuing to work towards my goals is what balanced my whole life out. You have to be able to make the right choices for the priorities that you are dealing with at the moment.

Did you ever think of compromising your career to be the proverbial “good mother”?

No, because that would have been the wrong thing to do.

It is also important to me that Jahaan does not believe that mothers have to be at home, for him to understand what his mother does.

What is your approach now that Jahaan is a little older?

I still maintain the balance. Now that he's older, he has less free time, but we still do as much as possible in our time together. Work still keeps me extremely busy all

year round. So, for me, things have not changed. What has changed is that he is now a lot more independent.

What if Jahaan needs your attention when you have something urgent going on?

Jahaan will come to me when something is wrong and he needs to discuss it. He knows that when he wants to speak with me, I will take his call regardless of what meeting

I am in or who I am with.

There have been so many instances when I have been in a meeting with the team, and he has just walked straight in to me to tell me what is bothering him. He has the liberty to do that, because he only does it when he is upset. I don't know whether it is the right way to handle it, but I drop everything at that time, listen to him, and guide him to solve the problem. Then, the team and I get back to what we were dealing with.

How do you spend your time with Jahaan?

We like to travel. On a trip, we explore the different things that the place has to offer, visit different car showrooms, go swimming, or shopping. He enjoys riding his bike, so I watch him ride it through puddles.

What are the values that you want him to grow up with?

He needs to be better than himself, not anyone else. He should be committed to what he says, and follow it through. He must be a responsible person whom people can depend on, and he must challenge himself and others around him. He must always encourage people, and be somebody that always makes people around him feel like somebody.

What would your advice be to moms who are struggling to keep the work-life balance?

Plan and then ensure you execute. Don't just talk about it, and keep saying 'I want to...'. Do it; make it happen. >

“IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME THAT JAHAN DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT MOTHERS HAVE TO BE AT HOME, FOR HIM TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HIS MOTHER DOES”





(L to R) Dr. Jai Pawar, Ms. Archana Joshi & Dr. Akash Kumar Lal

PHILANTHROPY TO EMPOWERMENT

GUJARAT BASED **DEEPAK FOUNDATION** IS FOCUSING ON CREATING SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS AND EMPOWERING WOMEN WORKERS

Bidding adieu to his industrial life as chairman and managing director of Deepak Group of Companies at the age of 70, Mr. C.K. Mehta decided to dedicate his time and resources to Deepak Foundation, an emerging civil society organisation catering to 50,000 rural population surrounding Nandesari GIDC area in Vadodara, Gujarat. The Trust was registered in 1982 post relief operations in his hometown Amreli district where floods led to loss of lives and livestock. The vision of the Trust was clear to undertake development activities for women by engaging them in every step, from planning intervention and implementation to governance with focus on women empowerment.

"Money has little value

unless it is used for a good cause by a set of committed people. The donor is never above the implementer and the desired results can be achieved only if they work in tandem for a common goal", says Mr. Mehta. The foundation's work began with funds donated by likeminded philanthropists and donor organisations for setting up hospitals for women



and children, community halls, establishing women's dairy cooperatives, strengthening Integrated Child Development Service scheme, prevention of HIV/AIDs among family of industrial workers, women's saving group by a small team of committed workers. The foundation later branched out to Maharashtra, Telangana, Jharkhand, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh with staff of 1000 and volunteers, engaged in development activities revolving around women and children. For over 36 years, the foundation continued uplifting the poor either by engaging in large-scale intervention partnership project with the government, aimed at reducing infant and maternal mortality in line with Millennium Development Goals or providing livelihood opportunities to women and tribal by ensuring the reach of government schemes and programs at their doorsteps. "Considering the population diversity and density of our country, the challenge is to implement large scale gender-sensitive programs with clear time-bound measurable goals, identify evidence-based successful components and failures in the projects and engage in policy advocacy to scale up successful models," said Archana Joshi, director of Deepak Foundation.

"Women social entrepreneurs working in remote and underserved communities are steadily helping the government in improving the human

development index by helping communities to overcome the poverty and hunger through agriculture reforms, skills building and management of water resources," said Dr Jai Pawar, deputy director, Skills Building & Livelihood. The foundation ensures unpaid women workers get recognition in labour force participation as 'farmers' and get access to knowledge and opportunities for growth through collectivisation under Women Producer Companies.

Health promotion and prevention plays a vital role in the strategic approach towards healthcare. In line with the National Health Policy 2017, Deepak Foundation's healthcare activities are directed towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal – 1, 2 and 3. "We are determined to contribute towards attainment of universal health coverage by providing affordable healthcare in difficult areas to prevent households falling into a vicious cycle of poverty due to the expenses incurred on hospital care," asserts Dr Akash Kumar Lal, deputy director, Public Health & Clinical Services, Deepak Foundation. The increasing cost of healthcare is one of the major public health challenges in developing countries like India. The extent of poverty, impoverishment and indebtedness due to high out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) is on the rise. In the backdrop of all this, accessing quality healthcare remains a challenge, especially for the disadvantaged communities.



SUPERMOM, *salute!*

A PRINCESS, AN ACTOR, AN AUTHOR, AN INFLUENCER, BUT, ABOVE ALL A MOTHER. **SOHA ALI KHAN** TELLS **SHRADDHA KAMDAR** HOW SHE GOT BACK TO WORK AFTER INAAYA WAS BORN

Her

little munchkin has the world swooning, and, although it was tough for her to manage initially, she looks up to how her mother handled it all, and marches right ahead. Soha Ali Khan dons many hats, and the one she is most proud of is that of being Inaaya's mother. She is a strong believer in the idea that motherhood does not mean the woman having to sacrifice her dreams and ambitions. In a freewheeling chat, the actor talks of how she managed to move ahead post childbirth.

When we see your posts, we believe we can have it all. How hard do you work to strike a balance between your personal and professional life?

Initially, it was very difficult to take up anything that took me away from my daughter! I used to schedule my day as per Inaaya's sleep schedule. For the longest time, I did not take up any work. There is a lot of guilt that comes with being a working mother. Shooting usually involves travelling and staying out for days; I found that very difficult. I needed to see her at some point in the day. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't go ahead with taking up projects and getting out of the house. As women, we wear many hats and we need support. It is great to have a supportive family; >

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it enables you to live your dream. Becoming a mother does not mean your ambitions and passions need to go away.

You were already an actor and writer when you had Inaaya. Tell us about the changes you had to make.

I decided to have my child later on in life because I've always wanted to be the parent who could devote her time to her child. I wanted to make sure that I worked enough in films, post which I wrote my book, travelled all over the world—basically did all the things I wanted to do before I had my child. Motherhood changes your life in a way that you can never

“I PUT PRESSURE ON MYSELF TO BE THE BEST MOTHER POSSIBLE. MOST MOTHERS DO THIS”

go back. You have a constant responsibility as a parent, and anxiety that doesn't let you sleep at times. Your child will always be a priority, but you can create a safe environment for her and still go out and achieve your ambitions.

Did you face any social pressures to give up working to prove you are a “good mother”?

For me, there has been no pressure from society; the

pressure comes from within—the pressure I put on myself to be the best mother possible. Most mothers do this. My family, my husband, and my in-laws have been supportive throughout, and my work environment supports me too. Things are coming around to supporting a working mother, but a working mother herself has to come to terms with the guilt that comes with being away. Society has conditioned us to accept certain roles a

certain way. But it is not only the mother who needs to plan around her baby's schedule; it could be the father too. The idea is to have the child be independent of you, yet appreciative of the work that you do—that you are an equal partner both at home and in your workplace. When I was growing up, I saw my parents go to work and never thought it was odd. My mother would be away for long periods of time. As a result, I never thought it strange that my father was at home (he had retired as a professional cricketer) and that my mother continued to work. I understood my mother was passionate about her work. But I also knew that, when I needed her, she would be there for me. Someone responsible was always around to look after us. These, I believe, are good values to inculcate in children.

What kind of challenges did you face after you got back to work post delivery?

Many! Your sleep goes for a toss as your child wakes up every two to three hours, leaving you exhausted. Everything was new to me—both, the good and the bad. There is a lot to celebrate and a lot to be anxious over. Physically and hormonally, your body is going through so much after delivery. You'll want to lose weight and be fit again, but you'll also have to accept certain changes in your body; they cannot go back to the way they were earlier. Our diet and food habits also change when we are pregnant and, even after that, owing to

478





breastfeeding. I want to say to all the mothers out there, there are many online and offline communities that can help you through this journey. People are more than willing to share their challenges and how they overcame them. Always connect with people and get the right support.

One diet tip you received during your pregnancy that you would like to share?

Growing up, I looked up to my mother and tried to imbibe her healthy lifestyle choices into my own routine. Pregnancy requires a lot of energy along with staying active, which is why I made sure I practised yoga along with mindful snacking

“INAAYA IS OKAY TO BE WITHOUT ME NOW AND FEELS SECURE WHEN LEFT WITH SOMEONE I TRUST”

throughout. For expecting mothers, my advice would be to make sure you include wholesome foods that are rich in nutrients such as fruits, dairy products, and nuts like almonds. And, finally, make sure to stay hydrated!

How did you work on your fitness routine post-delivery?

I did prenatal yoga to keep up. While I was in hospital during the pregnancy, I used to do yoga for my abdominal

muscles, and I walked a lot. Post-delivery, I continued my yoga to shed the extra body weight. Currently, I engage in regular exercise for at least 30 to 45 minutes. It not only helps me rejuvenate but also build my body mass.

How do you tackle a situation when Inaaya needs you at the same time you have something urgent to take care of at work?

It was difficult in the

beginning when Inaaya was younger, but she is now old enough to communicate, making it easier for me to explain things to her. She is okay to be without me now and feels secure when left with someone I trust. I recently took her to Rajasthan with me for a shoot, and she was happy to be around as she understands that I work. I don't wear makeup at home, so she knows I am working when she sees me with makeup. She has her set of friends, and she goes to play with them without me. She does need my attention from time to time, but, when I explain it to her patiently and calmly, she understands that I have other things to do.

How do you spend your time with Inaaya?

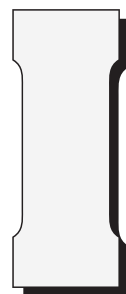
It is a whole new aspect after she has started talking and understanding. She is very observant about her surroundings, and it is great to spend time with her. Her school is online, but we do take time out and do various things together. She likes art and she likes to spend time in the kitchen too. The other day, she made orange juice for us. She likes to bake cakes, and we make sandwiches too.

What is your advice to moms struggling to keep the work-life balance?

Try not to feel guilty! It is okay to have your own dreams. Even when you have a child, learn to make them independent of you, as they need to grow up to be their own person as well. >

KALING *It!*

AUTHOR, ACTOR, PRODUCER AND, IMPORTANTLY, MOTHER OF TWO, **MINDY KALING** IS PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS TO MAKE HER MARK ON HOLLYWOOD. BY **SUKRITI SHAHI**



It is a pleasant coincidence that I sit to write about Mindy Kaling on the day the US welcomes its first woman of colour as vice president. Most Americans see it as a new beginning, and people here in India couldn't be prouder of Indian-origin women who are changing the perception of the subcontinent, and riding a global wave of recognition.

I am a huge Mindy Kaling fan. There, I've said it. I adored Kaling for her portrayal of Kelly Kapoor in the award-winning sitcom *The Office*. Kaling, who also co-wrote the show, was all of 24, the only woman and the only woman of colour when she joined seven other writers on the show that was later nominated for an Emmy for its writing. Her character had a relatable spunk, and many, like I have, have closely followed Kaling's work ever since.

Her journey to success hasn't been easy. While she has been adored for her



acting and writing skills, she has also had to fight to get credit for her work in Hollywood. After years of feeling like an outsider, Kaling, the first Indian American to have her own network show, now admits, in several interviews, that she enjoys her ‘trailblazer’ status. “It really doesn’t matter how much money I have,” she is quoted as saying. “I’m treated badly with enough regularity that it keeps me humble.”

On Work and Motherhood

Kaling has her hands full right now; it came as a pleasant surprise when she announced the birth of her second baby, Spencer, in September 2020. Kaling, who has quite a presence on social media, told a publication that it wasn’t too tough to keep the news under wraps. “It was not too bad. I mean, clearly, I was not going anywhere, like everybody else, so nobody

**“IT DOESN’T
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found me out,” she revealed in an interview. “Just being at home and taking photos, I’d largely just kind of shoot around my pregnancy. Shot myself from the waist up and also wore baggy things. I never got super huge, so it was a little bit easier.”

However, even with mothering a three-year-old and being pregnant, the lockdown was productive for Kaling. She released her show *Never Have I Ever* (NHIE) and announced

its second season. “I’m so excited because we had to delay everything because of the pandemic, but, now at Universal, they’ve made it really safe,” Kaling has said about shooting NHIE.

She is also working on a yet-to-be-titled project with Priyanka Chopra-Jonas, and has announced an adaptation of Jennifer Weiner’s novel *Good in Bed*, which she will produce and star in. “I’m excited to act again! There’s been a lot of stuff I’m working on behind the scenes, which is a wonderful part of my job and really great to do when I have two kids, but it’ll be really fun to be on screen again,” she told an online portal. Lastly, she has been signed on by Reese Witherspoon to write the script of *Legally Blonde 3*.

An Indian Out There

So, what makes Kaling so inspirational for Indian audiences? Perhaps it’s her representation on screen of an Indo-American. Like in *The Office*, she’s funny, chatty... and Indian. There’s something about the way she portrays her character; it’s exaggerated but still relatable. Kaling, who’s been to India only twice, the last time when she was 14, might not know how big she is in India, but her impact is undeniable and her recognition well deserved. >

KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN

Actor

When it comes to women who got back to work with just as much commitment and success as before becoming moms, Kareena Kapoor Khan leads the pack. The Bollywood diva got married at the peak of her career—and destroyed the notion that female actors cannot work post marriage. She went on to give blockbuster after blockbuster before she and husband Saif Ali Khan announced their first pregnancy. She was active throughout, and, in her seventh month, walked the ramp for Manish Malhotra—becoming one of the few to carry off a baby bump so gracefully and dramatically. After giving birth to everyone's favourite star-child, Taimur Ali Khan, she took just a few months to adjust to motherhood and get back in shape before hitting the silver screen again. She is now expecting her second child, and has been shooting for her upcoming movie with Aamir Khan since the sets opened up again post lockdown.



PHOTOGRAPH: SAIF ALI KHAN



AISHWARYA RAI BACHCHAN

Actor

The Miss World 2004 has conquered milestone after milestone in her career and not let anything stand in her way to the top. After she gave birth to Aaradhya Bachchan, her weight gain caused many to wonder if she would be able to get back to acting again. But not only did Aishwarya Rai Bachchan hit the silver screen, she also graced the red carpet at Cannes for many years and wowed international audiences. She now works her professional life—movies, advertisements, red carpet appearances—around being an active and involved mom to the now nine-year-old.

KALKI KOECHLIN

Actor

Known for her edgy work, this acting powerhouse gave birth to her first child in February 2020. She had announced her pregnancy in the September of the previous year, and worked at film and theatre almost right through it. She was trolled about working through her pregnancy, about what she wore, even about why she hadn't married her boyfriend who is also the father of her child, but, standing strong, Koechlin did not let any of that get her down. After a couple of months of adjusting to this new phase of her life, she was back at work recording her radio series, and is now shooting for her next project.



PHOTOGRAPH: ARJUN MARK / STUDIO LUCID



PHOTOGRAPH: VINAY JAVKAR

MARY KOM

Boxer

The dynamic diva sure knows how to throw a punch, literally and figuratively, in the face of patriarchy. She comes from a small village in rural Manipur and, as with most Indian families, wasn't encouraged to pursue sports, but she was not dissuaded from following her dreams. While she did take a break after marriage, she got back to training after the birth of her second child, and went on to win a silver medal at the 2008 Asian Women's Boxing Championship in India. The rest, as they say, is history. She is the only boxer (male or female) to win eight world championship medals, and we can't wait to see how she does at the Tokyo Olympics. >

BEYONCE

Singer

Queen Bey, as she is called, is one of the most popular stars and most-photographed women in the world. Mother to Blue Ivy and twins Rumi and Sir, Beyonce has always been a supporter of body positivity, and she has been vocal about accepting post-partum body sizes and shapes. A few months after giving birth to the twins, she featured on an international magazine cover sans makeup or hair extensions. She said in the accompanying interview, “During my recovery, I gave myself self-love and self-care, and I embraced being curvier. I accepted what my body wanted to be.” She made a comeback at Coachella less than a year after the twins’ birth and did a long set of non-stop dancing too!



PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK

SERENA WILLIAMS

Tennis player

This tennis star is an inspiration across the globe not just for her on-court play, but off the courts too! The 35-year-old played—and won—her 23rd Grand Slam at the Australian Open in the eighth week of her pregnancy. Despite post-delivery complications, Williams has not let anything stop her from being the strong player that she is. At a time when most women would be resting it out after delivery, she was soon back in training and on the court. Nine months after the birth of Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr, she played her next Grand Slam at the French Open in 2018. “I absolutely want more Grand Slams,” the champ is quoted as saying. She overtook Steffi Graf, and is the record-holder of the highest Grand Slams singles titles. **F**



PHOTOGRAPH: SHUTTERSTOCK

ENTREPRENEUR DR SOMDUTTA SINGH INTRODUCES UNIQUE SKIN FOOD LINE OF PRODUCTS, LAUNCHES SKINCARE BRAND THE REAL BOSSLADY BEAUTY

Serial Entrepreneur Dr Somdutta Singh is delighted to expand her portfolio of home-bred products by announcing the arrival of her exclusive skin food related line of skincare collection The Real BossLady Beauty. The launch has kicked off with an assortment of ever-evolving products that focus on precise attention to skin, while making one look beautiful regardless of skin color, age and skin tone. Today's aspirational women are on the lookout for a beauty regimen that does the job of makeup as well as improves their skin from the hypodermis, the innermost layer of our skin. The Real BossLady Beauty products do just that. Manufactured with clean ingredients, they purify the skin from the inside out.

This launch signals Dr Som's commitment to reach consumers across the globe by offering products that help transform daily skincare routines into more meaningful moments. The full line of The Real BossLady Beauty's thoughtfully formulated, thoroughly tested products is currently available in the US and will very soon launch in India and more regions around the world in 2021.

Today the global beauty and personal care products is a \$532 billion business and expected to grow to \$756.63 billion by 2026. The improving quality of life, rising awareness about harmful effects of chemicals and

synthetic products and the gradual consumer shift toward products with vegan, cruelty-free, 'clean' labeling are a few factors that are propelling the market growth.

The global beauty industry is scaling at breakneck speed and with such a growth trajectory and endless opportunities in the field, Dr Somdutta Singh founded The Real BossLady Beauty which is a modern multitasking skincare beauty brand for multitasking women. The Real BossLady Beauty is a unique skin food related product line for aspirational women, women who are always on the move, to whom time is of the highest essence yet taking care of their skin is of utmost importance.

The Real BossLady Beauty founder Dr Somdutta Singh says, "The Real BossLady Beauty is for boss women, urban metropolitan women who care about their skin as much as they care about their social connections. The Real BossLady Beauty combines the goodness of nature, intensity of technology & power of science to give you a beauty brand so versatile, a beauty brand that makes you YOU!"

Dr Som did not just want The Real BossLady to be another off-the-shelf beauty brand that made fancy skincare products. She wanted to make skincare and beauty products that streamline lives, basically make lives better & easier. She wanted to create

something transparent and rooted in science, skincare that is approachable and the science behind each ingredient decipherable. RLB products, be it the serums, masks or sprays, use only tried-and-tested ingredients backed by science.

Dr Som adds, "After several months of formulation, research and experimentation, the launch of The Real BossLady Beauty is a celebration. I wanted to create a brand that celebrates what's unique in each one of us and reach a place of self-love and acceptance. It's exciting that people are getting healthier through body care and now can soak in the experiences with our cutting-edge formula."

The Real BossLady Beauty is by multitasking women, for multitasking women, of multitasking women...it is for Boss Ladies!



ABOUT DR SOMDUTTA SINGH

Dr Somdutta Singh is a serial entrepreneur with a strong focus on building brands across digital platforms and E-commerce websites in the Nutraceuticals, Health & Beauty, Fashion, Houseware & Kitchenware industry genres. She is an angel investor, serves as a Board Member at Kotler Impact. Former Vice-Chairperson NASSCOM Product Council and a Core Committee Member of WEP – NITI Aayog. Dr Somdutta is a Global Mentor at Google Launchpad and a Mentor of Change at Atal Innovation Mission (AIM). Dr Somdutta has been bestowed with several prestigious awards, speaks at influential platforms and has contributed across various publications. She is also the author of the bestselling book - Decoding Digital: Unlocking Digital Barriers that entails a detailed analysis of digital sciences, its impact on marketing and serves as a manual, a text for students and businesses.





FESTIVE INDULGENCE

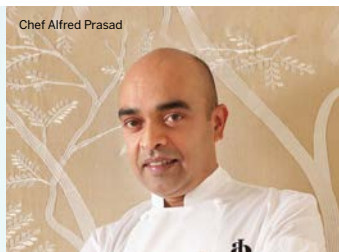


The virtual Indulge Fest by Femina x GoodHomes was a delicious affair spotlighting the best in food and drink. **Sarah Khalko** reports

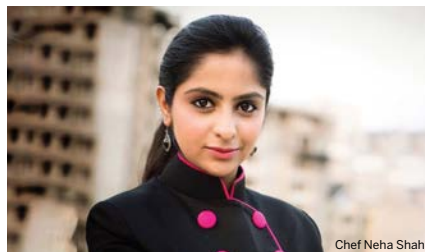
Chef Gary Mehigan



Chef Alfred Prasad



Chef Neha Shah



Chef Manjunath Mural



Chef Sashi Cheliah



Roxanne Bamboat



Kalyan Karmakar



Vinayak Grover



Shivesh Bhatia



Chef Varun Inamdar

Chef Kunal Kapoor



Suprio Bose



Coinciding with the lively festive season, the three-day Indulge Fest by Femina x GoodHomes brought culinary masterminds from all over the world under one (virtual) roof. The online festival took place on December 23, 24 and 25, and celebrated the magic of food and drink with invigorating discussions and scrumptious masterclasses that left us drooling. The success of Indulge Fest was in no small way also thanks to our food and drinks partners: Nestle MILKMAID, Just Jelly, Tirupati Edible Oils, Estuary, JioMart.com, R City and Jimmy's Cocktails.

WITH STRONG OPINIONS AND INSIGHTS

Indulge Fest starred a medley of tastemakers:

celebrity chefs, food influencers and consultants as well as coffee and chocolate connoisseurs.

The digital event saw the spirited participation of world-famous food personalities. Chefs Gary Mehigan, Sashi Cheliah and Varun Inamdar spoke about why Indian food is so important out in the world. Chefs Alfred Prasad and Manjunath Mural let us into how they acquired their Michelin stars, while baking sensation Shivesh Bhatia, food photographer and stylist Vinayak Grover and *MasterChef India* runner-up Neha Deepak Shah offered tips and tricks on showcasing food on social media. Food bloggers and writers Roxanne Bamboat (The Tiny Taster), Kalyan Karmakar (Finely Chopped) and Supriyo Bose (The Nomad Foodie) gave us the lowdown on discovering the best local food when travelling,





while India's much-loved chefs Kunal Kapoor and Saransh Goila talked about what it means to be ambassadors of the country's cuisine. Chef Thomas Zacharias of The Bombay Canteen fame, food expert and consultant Rushina Munshaw Ghildiyal, and Chef Himanshu Taneja of Marriott International discussed the nuances of regional Indian food. Chocolatiers L Nitin Chordia of Kocoatrait, Devansh Ashar of Pascati, and Nishant Sinha of COLOCAL gave us an insight into the bean-to-bar movement in India, while Chef Rahul Akerkar sat down with restaurateur Keenan Tham for a candid conversation about the future of restaurants in a post-pandemic world.

Our favourite beverages were definitely not left out of the discussion. Coffee entrepreneurs and founders of artisanal coffee companies Tejini Kariappa (Halli Berri), Arshiya Bose

INDULGE FEST CELEBRATED FOOD AND DRINK WITH MASTERCLASSES AND INVIGORATING DISCUSSIONS



(Black Baza Coffee) and Kunal Ross (The Indian Bean) debated on the burgeoning Indian coffee movement. Editor-in-chief of *GoodHomes* Ronitaa Italia, in a tete-a-tete with Ankur Bhatia, founder and Chief Drinking Officer at Jimmy's Cocktails, discussed the journey of the brand in bringing the fun of cocktails to homes. In an invigorating session, whiskey aficionados and advocates Keshav Prakash of The Vault, Swati Sharma of The Dram Club and Yash Bhamre of Paul John Whiskey deconstructed the whiskey scene in India. Rounding off the sessions on drinks was >





Chef Mariko Amekodommo



Chef Anahita Dhondy



Chef Aarti Mehta



Chef Aditi Handa



Chef Aabhas Mehrotra



Ruchi Sharma



Mansi Jasani



Trisha Das



Chef Natasha Celmi



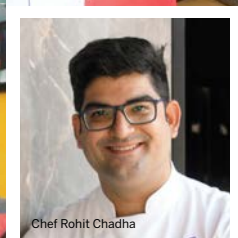
Parth Bajaj



Richa Tiwari



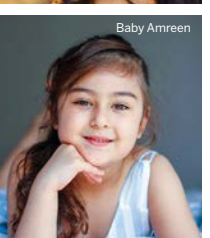
Chef Rachel Goenka



Chef Rohit Chadha



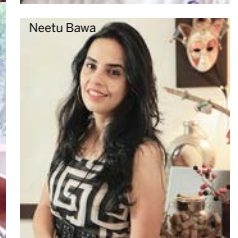
Chef Udayshankar Shenoy



Baby Amreen



Ami Kothari



Neetu Bawa

THANKING OUR PARTNERS



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THERE COULD NOT HAVE BEEN A BETTER WAY TO ROUND OFF THE YEAR THAN WITH INDULGE FEST BY FEMINA x GOODHOMES

a fun chat with India's sole Master of Wine Sonal Holland, India's best bartender 2019 Devi Singh Bhati, and culinary mixologist Ron Ramirez.

....AND MASTERFUL INSPIRATION

Indulge Fest's masterclasses offered us ample inspiration to cook up delectable recipes at home. Celebrity chef Varun Inamdar grilled up decadent Old Bombay seekh kebabs, while international culinary expert Mariko Amekodommo showed us two easy ideas for vegan snacks. Chef Anahita Dhondy from SodaBottleOpenerWala shared a recipe for chilli cheese poppers, and Chef Aarti Mehta of Elephant & Co. made the winter classic *Surti undhiyo*. There were other impressive savoury recipes by Chef Udayshankar Shenoy, Chef Neha Shah, Chef Rohit Chadha, and Chef Richa Tiwari of Savory Tales.

Decadent desserts were not left behind. Chef Rachel Goenka turned *kaju katli* into tempting truffles. Chef Natasha Celmi demo-ed a warm fruity

crumble perfect for winter, and Chef Neha Shah showed us how to make the fan fave, salted caramel fudge. Chef Trisha Das shared a kid-friendly recipe for zucchini and carrot *halwa*, and nutritionist and wellness coach Richa Sharma put a healthy twist on well-loved sweet treats. Fun Christmas desserts were a popular theme, and Chef Aditi Handa, Chef Aabhas Mehrotra, Parth Bajaj, and baby Amreen all taught festive favourites, as well as their innovative takes on Christmas classics.

There were also masterclasses on topics such as setting a Christmas table, edible centrepieces, and putting together a cool cheese board by Mansi Jasani, Ami Kothari, Ronitaa Italia and Neetu Bawa.

MORE ON THE MENU

With stimulating panel discussions and insightful masterclasses, there could not have been a better way to round off the year than with the Indulge Fest by Femina x GoodHomes. **F**



INDIANS AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

54%

young professionals
find technology
a hindrance.

18%

find after-office
meetings, calls
and training
sessions stressful.

11%

stated that supervisors
had a negative attitude
towards work-life balance
despite policies in place.

13%

frequently
experienced
headaches
and fatigue.



The Equilibrium Equation

Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan gives you tips on how to strike the right balance between work and life



The work-life balance is a hard one to maintain. A survey by job portal Monster.com shows that 60 per cent of working Indians feel they have average to terrible work-life balance. However, business psychologist ModMonk Anshul, founder of SoulSchool, avers: "We do not need to create a balance; the balance is already there. It is natural and universally designed; all we have to do is understand and integrate it consciously into our lives." How does one do that, though?

First, it is important to understand where to draw the line and how to go about it. Once you know where you are faltering, it is easier to get things in line. Here are some tips.



THE ETERNAL STRUGGLE

While 'doing what you love' is what we all strive for, you need to also

think about 'loving what you do'. Rachana Sodhi, 34, an HR professional from Chandigarh, says, "I have always loved to paint, and took art classes through my school and college years. I wanted to choose a career in art, but I also realised that, unless one is very successful at it, it cannot sustain you financially."



Ever so often,
take a vacation
and rejuvenate
yourself

As she is an only child and wanted to help her parents monetarily, she has chosen to work with a corporate firm for the past decade after pursuing a masters in business administration in HR. “To keep in touch with my artistic side, I take art classes for the children in my area on weekends,” she reveals. “This helps me do what I love, while not being monetarily dependent on it. Also, I like that I get to interact with different people as part of my job, which is what I have come to love about what I do.”

If just doing what one loves is not enough in these times, finding the best-case scenario, like Sodhi did, is a good choice. Another option? “Earn

“PRACTISE TECHNIQUES LIKE MEDITATION AND BREATH-WORK TO RELAX. *NADA DHYAAN* (SOUND HEALING) WILL ALSO HELP”

enough money at first, ensure you have proper savings and investments, and then indulge in the things you love in the latter part of your life!” laughs Sunita Bhaskar, 47, a chartered accountant and travel enthusiast from Bengaluru. Sunita worked with a top financial firm until she was 43, before quitting her job to explore the world. She has gone on half-yearly international trips and bimonthly domestic vacations. What helped her was smart investing when she was

working full-time, and taking up small freelance jobs intermittently after she quit.



LIVE IN THE MOMENT

According to Anshul, the problem arises when “we want to do too many things at the same time.”

FINDING PEACE

“Leave your baggage at the door when you enter your home,” Anshul advises. “Your home is a reflection of the energy you carry around.” In the current scenario, ensure you log off from work at your scheduled log-off time. Plan your day accordingly.

TIPS TO RELAX AND FREE YOUR MIND:

Practise techniques like meditation and breath-work. *Nada Dhyaan* (sound healing) will also help.

Listen to music, or read.

Take baths or showers using sea or rock salt; this helps release negative and blocked energies in the body, and refreshes you.

Set aside a time—even if it’s just five to 10 minutes—in the night or late evening, light a fragranced candle of your choice, and shut out all distractions, even books.

Stay silent or chant or recite positive affirmations.

For instance, when we are working, we are also thinking about a vacation, or what we will do when we get back home, or wondering about the future. While relaxing or on a vacation, we worry about how work will pile up, or different to-do lists post leisure time. The Monster.com survey also recorded that 67 per cent of India’s working professionals either sometimes, often or always think about work when not at work. “We are stretching ourselves in two opposite directions every time,” Anshul notes, reminding us that we need to live in the moment. “This is called being spiritually aware and mindful about >

Don't let your work
consume the essential
time of your life



yourself. If we practise this consciously, we will be able to re-discover the blurred line of balance between our professional and personal life.”



CHANGE YOUR OUTLOOK

More often than not, it is our preconceived notions that keep us from loving what we do. Author, filmmaker and journalist, Weam Namao has said in a digital publication, “Our prejudices get in the way of loving what we do, even if we’ve chosen that very

“OUR PREJUDICES GET IN THE WAY OF LOVING WHAT WE DO, EVEN IF WE’VE CHOSEN THAT VERY THING”

thing. If you can master the art of loving what you do, then you can do anything, like the things you do love to do.” Anshul agrees: “It is we who tend to blur the concept of balance with our biases and personal norms of living.” The survey also notes that 78 per cent of working Indians want clearly-defined boundaries between their work and personal life.

Finding things you like, or even love, about what you do is equally important as doing only the things you love. In fact, there must be something about

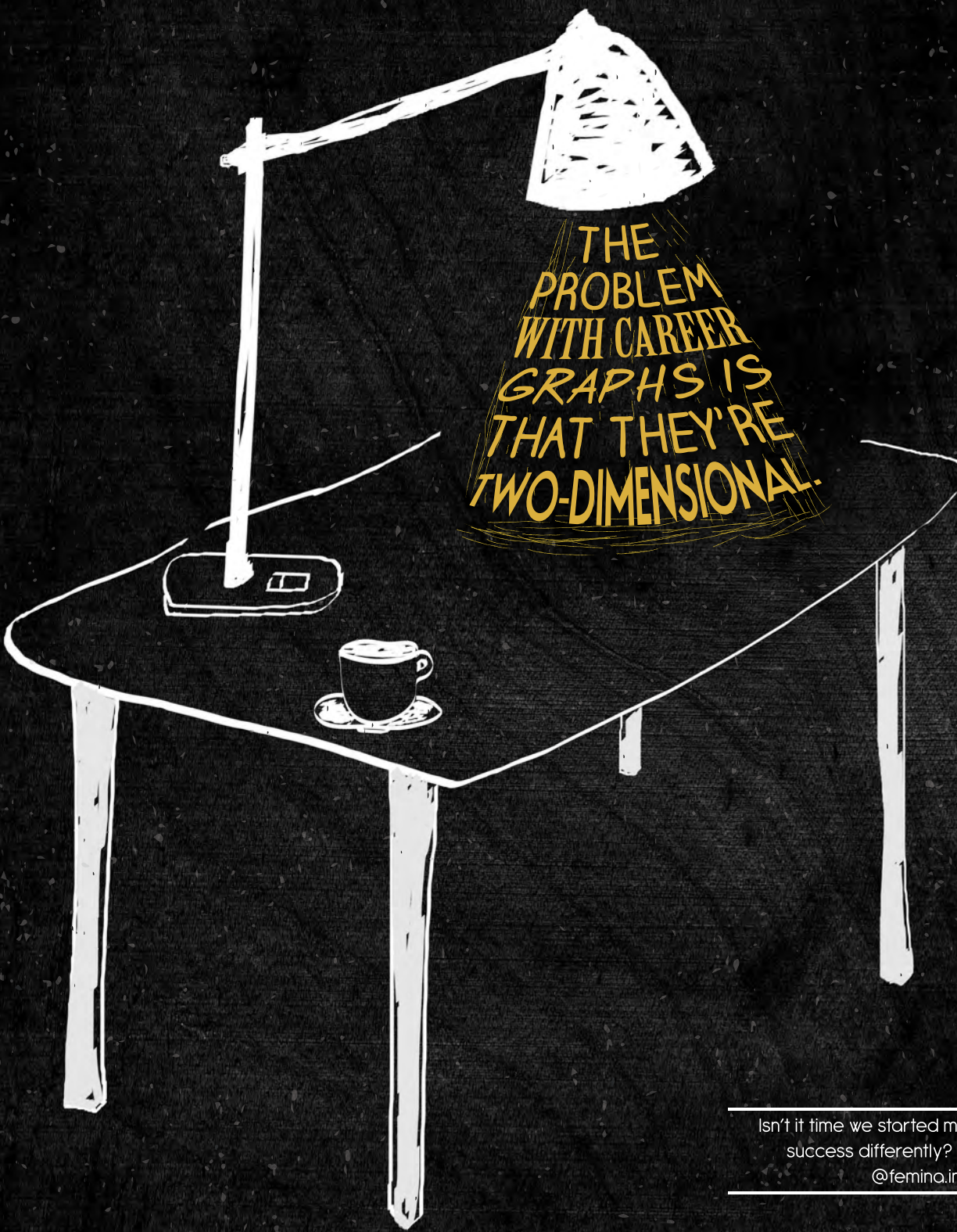
what you love that you don’t like doing. Take Mother Teresa, for example. It is reported that she used to really dislike interacting with the media, as she felt it took her away from helping the children, but she came to realise that it was part and parcel of what she was doing to ensure that more people found out about the problems the children face and can help out. So, instead of thinking that you’re doing something you don’t love, find what you like in it; it will help ease any frustration you might feel.

Anshul adds, “The balance needs to be in the mind, and spiritually. We need to accept the situation unconditionally, instead of finding faults. Look at what you’re doing as life lessons.” Whatever you do will teach you different things—time management, new knowledge, patience, and so on—and you need to imbibe those lessons. “Enjoy the moment to its fullest, knowing that it is an experience through which we are learning and growing,” Anshul smiles.

Take time out to do things that you love too. Let your work serve its purpose while you make time for things you actually love. Rejuvenate, refresh and repeat because life as you know it is short. Make it worthwhile! **F**

FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE



THE
PROBLEM
WITH CAREER
GRAPHS IS
THAT THEY'RE
TWO-DIMENSIONAL.

Isn't it time we started measuring
success differently? Let's talk.
[@femina.in/lifestyle](https://www.femina.in/lifestyle)

GILDED LEGACY

Despite being a director at one of the biggest jewellery brands – **P. N. Gadgil & Sons Ltd.** –, **Renu Gadgil** is down-to-earth. As she sits at her desk in the corporate office amidst beautiful art-pieces, this modest lady gives an insight into her journey to date. By **Radhika Sathe-Patwardhan**



Renu Gadgil, Director, P. N. Gadgil & Sons Ltd.

I come from a family with professional background not a business background. My maternal grandfather and even my father were doctors. I myself have studied homeopathic medicine in Pune and then practiced with my father at Nashik for 10 years before marriage. After marriage though, it was totally different scenario. The whole family was from a business background so I didn't continue my

medical profession," Renu Gadgil shares about her formative years. It was seeing the jewellery making (and selling!) so up, close and personal that got her more interested and on board the business side of P. N. Gadgil & Sons Ltd.

"Being a lady, I was interested in how the jewellery is made," she smiles, "Initially we had a shop at Laxmi road only where my husband and his cousins were all together. Our house was nearest to Laxmi Road so all the merchants,

karigir (artisans) used to come to our residence. I used to interact with them because I was at home. It was then that I slowly got interested in that process.” When Purshottam Narayan Gadgil & Company demerged in 2012, P. N. Gadgil & Sons Ltd was formed by Govind & Dr Renu Gadgil and the rest as they say is history.

Govind Gadgil, her husband, was always involved when it came to designing and making jewellery for temples. They got to make Dagdusheth Halwai's traditional crown. He looked into all the details from design to making after an indepth research about its history. When she also took interest and looked into it further, she realised that every occasion has a meaning behind it and so does the jewellery; “I understood the importance that every season has different jewellery.”

Talking about carrying the legacy – that started since 1832 –, she tells, “Carrying forward our legacy has always been about purity, integrity, transparency – which is also our USP – and it has been the focus which won't deteriorate. And what new we can add to it, and then it can get carried forward. We always believe that trust of the stakeholder including customer is almost important and we also go step ahead to cater them. Jewellery business is always been a 'high volume-low margin' business. If you need to succeed in this business then your core values need to be strong and well followed by all.”

As one of the directors of the company, she became more involved in 2012. “The family responsibilities had decreased, and children had also grown up,” she recalls, “I have been more involved since then. I started taking active part in some or the other business function in organization, and

I closely look after HR functions.” While the women in the family were not as actively involved in the organisation businesswise my mother in law was still involved in different ways. “She used to prepare snacks during festival days for the staff members because they had to work extended hours in the shop,” Dr Gadgil notes. It was her generation women though who became an active part of the business.

Jewellery industry male-dominated, despite the end-customer being females. When asked about why and how its changing, she points out, “It might have initially started way back when jewellery was made from heavy metal like iron and stones. As it was difficult and hazardous to work with, men might have been doing it. Down the centuries, jewellery making evolved, but men continued to do it. Also, for the longest time, women did not work outside their homes till recent history. But that's changing, and even in the jewellery business, you will find more and more women involved, especially as designers,” she informs, “On the store front, a manager has to be available 24x7 to resolve any difficulty across functions like HR, Operations, Inventory Management and off course sales. This might make it difficult for women, as they also have their home to manage. But this too has seen a change over the years. More number of female managers are getting promoted because of their dedication and I can proudly tell you that two of my highest revenue generating stores like Chinchwad and Nashik are being currently headed by female managers!”

How are the classic traditional styles and new trends in jewellery balanced? Pat comes the answer,

“CARRYING FORWARD OUR LEGACY HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT PURITY, INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY WHICH IS ALSO OUR USP”



"WE ALSO HELP WITH THE CHANGE IN THE TASTE OF JEWELLERY. WE SUPPLY TRADITIONAL JEWELS WITH A NEW TOUCH TO IT WHICH IS WHAT THE YOUNG GENERATION LOVE."

"The balance depends on demand and supply, and we also help with the change in the taste of jewellery. We supply traditional jewels with a new touch to it which is what the young generation love. How do we know this? It's because we had to design so many jewellery for TV serials, the historical ones, and period cinema also. At that time, we came to know that, if we use the same old traditional designs and add in the new patterns, they are more accepted. The younger generations see the actor and actresses wearing something, they like it more. For example, the *nath* (nosing) - a typical Maharashtrian traditional piece my mother-in-law or the generation before used to wear regularly - is being sported more as the current generation saw their favourite actors wear it. The *nath* is back with a bang, with more shine and glitter!"

The latest trend in jewellery, according to her is lightweight jewellery; jewellery that can be worn at workplaces. This is what is reflected through their latest collection. "We have been using the coloured stones recently. We used more geometric shapes and patterns, keeping in line with new demands. Budget or pocket friendly diamond jewellery collection is also on the rise in popularity. We have collection of diamond jewellery that starts at Rs 10,000 only."

While the pandemic threw a wrench in the well-run systems across the world, P. N. Gadgil & Sons Ltd ensured they remained connected with their employees throughout. Dr Gadgil says, "We told them that we have got this rest time, spend it with your family to secure your bond and ties with them. I ensured that everyone received their payroll without any cuts. Nobody got sacked, we continued



with that despite we have to pay all the maintenance and everything." The staff is their backbone, and they ensure it remains strong. Speaking of good backing, she believes that without proper support from home, working is not a possibility. She notes, "I'm very glad to say that he is cooperative; he looks after the children as much as I do as a mother. He is also involved with all the activities."

This dynamic lady is looking to continue the brand's legacy, keep doing everything they do today with new views and approaches. With her attitude and conviction, it is evident that the brand will reach newer heights as it progresses. **F**



FEMINA

FASHION

FLIRTY FLORALS

Choose dreamy
florals for an effortlessly
romantic vibe

NIDHI YASHA

The classic bold
black pump

Sunglasses to
amp up your
glam factor

THE ACCESSORY EDIT

The accessories we are currently lusting after

A stunning
watch that is
a class apart

The ornate
detailed
dainty ring
to make a
statement

A bag that is
the epitome
of drama and
exuberance

The stylish
earrings of
opulence
extraordinaire

The
edgy bag
with a
touch of
luxé

1. Crystal flower watch ₹7,690, **Swarovski**
2. Pump in suede goatskin, price on request, **Hermès**
3. Medusa Icon sunglasses, price on request, **Versace**
4. Demi goddess mirror and abalone open statement ring, ₹4,853, **Ishaarya**
5. Delancey Canteen bag, price on request, **MICHAEL Michael Kors**
6. LV trophy bag, price on request, **Louis Vuitton**
7. OH Celeste Sirius hoop earrings, ₹14,500, **Outhouse**

FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE



Isn't it time we did away with the
'perfect body' myth? Let's talk.
[@femina.in/fitness](https://www.femina.in/fitness)



A standout mask with a modern update

A necklace that channels minimalist elegance



A gilded clutch with striking embellishments



Truly whimsical gleaming earrings



A spiffy necklace that embraces gold



Add these functional items to accentuate your look effortlessly

The flamboyant printed scarf with extravagant flair



The bucket bag that makes a fanciful case in point



An upscale bucket hat that makes it to the checklist

8. Pigeon grey mask chain, ₹2,340, Tann-ed 9. Sun stud necklace, ₹8,750, Misho 10. Rosantica's Sasha pearl and crystal cage clutch, ₹75,000, AisPi 11. Face and vases necklace, ₹1,890, Zara 12. Femme hat, price on request, DIOR 13. Mon Tresor bag, price on request, Fendi 14. Frédéric Zaavy Dissonance drop earrings, price on request, Fabergé 15. Patterned satin scarf, ₹799, H&M



Dr Rashmi Shetty, Celebrity Dermatologist

THE NEED OF THE HOUR

for healthy skin, hair and overall well-being

Acne, hair fall, skin dullness, pigmentation, irritable gut, hormonal imbalances, bloating, insomnia, and more are caused by an unhealthy foundation.

HOW DOES ONE FIX THIS UNHEALTHY/ DAMAGED FOUNDATION?

Aiming to lead a healthier lifestyle is the first step. However that is not always fully possible. Here is where supplements come in. Nutritional supplements help give you that extra support and nourishment that can help fix the unhealthy foundation that has taken a beating for years. Fixing this internally will help address both internal and external issues.

WHAT CAUSES THIS INTERNAL DAMAGE AND HOW CAN RA SUPPLEMENTS HELP?

Oxidative stress or free radicals are one of the major contributors to almost every issue - whether it is ageing, acne, hairfall, a weak immunity, pigmentation. Hence, we have RA supplements like RA Skin Bright and RA Vitamin C that are packed with the best, most powerful antioxidants to help fight the free radicals and reduce oxidative stress. Free radicals and oxidative stress can be caused by stress, UV exposure, pollution, alcohol consumption, smoking, and even day to day metabolic reactions in the body.

Another factor that can kick start many issues is Inflammation. Chronic inflammation can lead to serious illness, and issues like irritable gut, weak immunity, acne, pigmentation, rashes, allergies, eczema and more. Here, RA supplements like RA Defence which have strong anti-inflammatory properties can help reduce inflammation and inflammation related issues.

Finally, it is important to provide your body with essential nutrients, amino acids, minerals that can help heal, repair, rebuild and replenish your cells from all the damage that they have been put through. Here is where RA supplements like RA Anagen and RA Skin Hydrate come in. Improving your body's healing ability and strength to fight off damage.

SUMMARY / QUICK FACTS :

RA Supplements are one of the first and only dermatologist created beauty supplements. Created by Dr. Rashmi Shetty, they aim at fixing the root cause of all your skin, hair and health concerns.

RA Skin Bright, with powerful antioxidants, helps reduce oxidative stress, protect from damage and reverse the damage done over the years, leading to healthy, even toned, clear and bright skin.

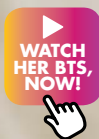
RA Anagen, a combination of essential amino acids, micro nutrients and minerals helps repair rebuild and replenish every cell.

RA Defence, an anti inflammatory, that helps reduce inflammation and inflammation related issues.

RA Vitamin C+, is one of the only sugar free Vitamin C made from all organic sources. It helps improve body's intake of nutrients, boosts collagen production, immunity and radiance.

RA Skin Hydrate helps hydrate the skin from within, therefore rejuvenating your collagen, elastin and ground substance. A hydrated skin heals faster and looks more youthful and dewy!

RA Primerose+ especially made to help issues related to PCOS, PMS and menopause, including hormonal breakouts, bloating, breast tenderness, mood swings, hot flashes and more. It has ingredients to help give your skin the oils it needs to stay healthy and calm.



IN THE MOOD FOR LOVE

ACTOR **ATHIYA SHETTY** SETS THE TONE FOR *L'AMOUR* WITH GRACE AND ELEGANCE
IN THESE MODERN ROMANTIC ENSEMBLES. TAKE CUES!

Photographs: **Keegan Crasto** | Styling: **Yukti Sodha**
Fashion Coordination: **Radhika Gattani**

MAKE A BOLD MOVE

Look for both drama and comfort in your outfit, like in this stunning ruffled ensemble.

Coral pleated ruffle gown in organza, ₹70,000, **Dolly J**; nymphet shell button earrings, ₹13,850, **Outhouse**; ring, ₹5,100, **Maithili Kabre at Azotique**; shoes, ₹8,500, **Dune** >





TRY A TOUCH OF WHIMSY

Opt for a velvet top and feather-detailed jacket to make a bold romantic statement.

Sheer 3D hand-embroidered ivory organza multi-leaf jacket, price on request, **Rahul Mishra**; ruby velvet cutout bikini top, ₹24,950, **Shivan & Narresh**; 'Slim Jim' pants, ₹10,000, **Reik Clothing**; Borla legacy couture choker, ₹22,500, **Outhouse**; ring, ₹5,100, **Azotique**; shoes, ₹8,000, **Dune**

FIND THE FEATHER FACTOR

Embolden yourself with
the effortless elegance
of the comfort-fit power suit.

Pink fringed oversized jacket suit
from Parisian D'esprit, ₹11,000.
Trisara; hula rings, ₹6,500 and
interlink earrings, ₹10,500 both

Misho; the welded pipe ring,
₹5,880, **Sa.Ba Designs**; ruby velvet
spiral clogs, ₹28,950, **Shivan
& Narresh** >





BOW TO INTIMACY

Allow an exaggerated bow to add the right amount of drama to a power-packed ensemble.

Zinnia blazer set with exaggerated tie knot, ₹15,300, **Deepika Nagpal**; earrings, ₹9,600, **Maithili Kabre** at Azotique

A woman with long, dark, wavy hair is sitting and looking towards the camera. She is wearing a vibrant red, high-necked, sleeveless dress with a draped, cape-like detail over her shoulders. Her right hand is resting near her chin, and a small tattoo is visible on her inner forearm. She is wearing large, gold-colored hoop earrings. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

SEEK THE SPIRIT OF PASSION

Make a sensational impression
with an elegant dress that has
a game-changer hemline.

Trapeze high-low dress, ₹68,000,
Gauri & Nainika; 18K gold plated
tri-hoop earrings, ₹4,420, **Tanzire**;
the cube ring, ₹1,800, **Sa.Ba
Designs**; pyramid mirror cuff,
₹9,149, **Isharya** >



HER OWN HERO

Actor **ATHIYA SHETTY** talks about fashion, wellness and acting in a freewheeling conversation with **Yukti Sodha**

Comfortable in her own skin and known to live life on her own terms, Bollywood actor Athiya Shetty is being hailed as a force to watch out for, and for good reason. Since her debut in 2015 with *Hero* opposite Sooraj Pancholi, her unconventional grace and limitless energy have been much applauded in the

industry. The millennial star offers us insights into her love for film, her style evolution, the beginning of a new 'Athiya' during quarantine, and her journey as an actor.

You were a designer, chef, architect, and even a waitress in a New York café before you enrolled in the New York Film Academy (NYFA). How

has the acting journey been so far?

New York has been one of the best experiences I have had. The film school was an amalgamation of everything from filmmaking and script writing to editing. It gave me immense confidence and a sense of freedom.

I was only 17 when I left the country after my 12th grade, so going to acting school

really paved the road for me to be independent and hone the ability to take my own decisions and grow to be the person I am today. I think experience is something that makes you a better actor, and the New York experience made me feel more confident about myself.

You used to be a self-confessed tomboy, but now being in the limelight demands a constant evolution in style. Tell us a little about your current style mantra.

I continue to have an unapologetic attitude about being the tomboy I was in school, and find great comfort in my hoodies, track pants, and Jordans even now. Apart from the style inspirations I absorbed walking the streets of New York, a lot of my style sensibilities come from my grandmother and my mother. Growing up in a family of fashion designers, I spent my childhood sitting on mountains of various fabrics, surrounded by conversations between them and the *karigars*. I have subconsciously taken a lot of my style from that. I feel fashion is like art; it's very subjective. The only mantra I follow is to be comfortable in what I am wearing.

You've always professed a great love for wellness. What does your post-lockdown beauty and fitness regimen look like?

I found my new love—yoga—at the beginning of the beginning of lockdown. I feel like it's just transformed me, not only physically but also mentally. I have realised that stillness and calmness are very hard to achieve, and I feel

like I am finally on that path. The lockdown opened up an opportunity to use fewer products and to go natural. I found myself not only using home products and masks for rejuvenation, but also becoming more conscious about eating healthier.

It has been five years since your debut with the romantic action film *Hero*, for which you received the Dadasaheb Phalke Excellence Award. Where do you see yourself in the near future?

One thing the pandemic has taught me is to really live in the moment and not plan my future. Although I would

always have elaborate answers when asked this question earlier, I am finally focusing on achieving smaller, simpler things that make me more grateful as a person. One such small practice I have implemented since January 1, 2021, is to maintain a gratitude journal. I write down 10 things I am grateful for, and that keeps me motivated to stop and enjoy the moment.

“I FEEL FASHION IS LIKE ART; IT’S VERY SUBJECTIVE. THE ONLY MANTRA I FOLLOW IS TO BE COMFORTABLE IN WHAT I AM WEARING”

What is the most important lesson you have learnt from being part of Bollywood?

To be myself. Honestly, at the beginning of your career, you have so many people telling you how to be, how to look, what to wear. I feel like it’s so important to be yourself; you are just super happier being yourself. I am more comfortable in my own skin and I feel that shows even in

the choices I make, the films I do, my acting; I’m just more at peace with myself.

You have always been known to be a nature lover. How has your love for animals intensified over the years?

I feel my love for nature comes from my family, especially my father. During the lockdown, we spent a lot of time at our farmhouse in Khandala, and I found him growing his own vegetables and maintaining his own salad plantation. So everything was very organic. It helped me turn vegetarian; I was on the fence about it for a couple of years, I have been pescetarian in the past, but not fully vegetarian. Now, it just feels right. My love for pets has always been a big part of me; I have four Great Danes, a husky, and an adopted rescued turtle.

What has been the best piece of advice that your parents have given you?

My family has always believed in equalism. My brother Ahan and I have always been allowed to have our own opinions and encouraged to voice them. Another important defining factor in shaping the person that I am today has been their values of being respectful and growing into being a good human being.

Movies in the pipeline we should be excited about?

Yes, something on the OTT platform is my next. **F**



A STYLE MASTERCLASS WITH

Sonam Kapoor Ahuja

SONAM KAPOOR-AHUJA talks all things
fashion and style with *Femina* editor
Ruchika Mehta



Style is Sonam Kapoor-Ahuja's middle name. She's one of the first people who comes to mind when we think about fashion trendsetters in India. Her personal mantra of being true to herself and dressing the way she wants to, irrespective of other people's opinions, has made her the style icon she is today. Sonam isn't afraid of taking risks and owning the spotlight. Vintage elegance coupled with a modern touch, her sartorial choices have always been noteworthy. Changing Bollywood's fashion game one outfit at a time, Sonam has found a place in all our hearts. Read on for exclusive details about her personal style, family, and more!

What is Sonam's style statement?

I think my style statement, if there is one, is of me being a complete individual. I like being myself and expressing myself. Anyone who has ever been called stylish or who's gone down in history as a style icon has always had an individual style; that, I believe, is what style should be. I don't believe in dressing for others; it's just for myself, it's my own individuality, my own self-expression.

Are you an accessories person?

Right now, I'm wearing jewellery pieces from the Bhaane and Misho collab. Both are contemporary brands for young

artists or young people who go to work, young people who just want to express themselves. The collaboration is such a beautiful marriage of brands that are doing such amazing things individually.

We've been following Anand's style too. You complement each other's style sensibilities so well, it's like a match made in heaven!

I think he's way cooler than I am. I like to dress in more classic, vintage clothes that are timeless, whereas he's the one who popularised street style in India. I think there was no sneaker culture in mainstream India media before Anand made it popular through Veg Non-Veg,



“
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MY OWN SELF-
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which was five years ago. He's the cool, modern part of this couple, and I'm the more classic one. He's not what you call a 'sneakerhead'; he does have a few sneakers, but they're very curated. He doesn't believe in buying all the hyped ones. I personally love the collaboration between Comme des Garçon and Nike that just happened. Those are more my style of sneakers, and they go really well with my dresses.

Your mom is very stylish too! Would you say your sense of style comes from her?

My mom was a fashion designer about 30 years ago! She also used to manage a lot of my dad's work, and style him as well. But, after having my two siblings and me, she couldn't design full-time and raise three kids too, so she stopped fashion designing and continued designing jewellery. It's because of

her that I met designers like Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla, Tarun Tahiliani, Anamika Khanna, Rohit Bal, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Anuradha Vakil, and Sabyasachi. I've known them since I was very young. Since I grew up seeing my mom wearing Japanese designers like Issey Miyake, it came very naturally to me. My style, therefore, is inherent. My mom and dad are very encouraging and progressive parents. They encouraged artistic expression and weren't strict in the conventional sense. They just wanted us to be happy and be ourselves. Fashion is such a huge part of that, because we would express ourselves with makeup and clothes, and wear crazy things. I went through a phase at 15 when my tongue was pierced and I had full dreadlocks. I found myself through that, and I wasn't ever scolded by Mom. I was allowed to be who I wanted to be, and so were my brother and sister. I think that

is such a healthy way to bring up children; it gives them such an individualistic voice. We aren't conforming to what people expect us to be, and I thank my parents for that.

Would you say that your style is experimental? Are you a risk taker in fashion?

When I came into the film industry, girls were just wearing saris and simple dresses. I didn't know that that was how a heroine was supposed to be. Back in the day, you had to dress in certain designer wear and behave in a certain way, blow-dry your hair straight, and wear *kajal* and smoky eyes. I found that a little tired and dated; I realised that that was not my vibe. Initially, everybody used to make fun of me; most people found it hilarious. Fortunately, because of my upbringing, I really didn't care, and I just did what I wanted to do; if that is taking a risk, then I guess it is. I wore whatever I wanted to wear, and I think that's what all girls and boys should be able to do.

When you really want to dress up, what do you choose to wear?

I love wearing a sari, a string of pearls, and red lipstick, and doing up my hair. I like dressing up and dressing down as well, but, when I dress down, I still like to look put together. I love the idea of taking care of myself and loving myself. Even during the lockdown, I tried to dress up as much as I could every day.



“
*I WAS ALLOWED TO
BE WHO I WANTED
TO BE, AND SO WERE
MY BROTHER AND
SISTER. I THINK
THAT IS SUCH A
HEALTHY WAY TO
BRING UP CHILDREN*”



Indian or western; what's your first pick?

Indian

Who's your favourite international designer?

I love Karl Lagerfeld and Jean-Paul Gaultier. Chanel had sent me my first red-carpet look in India. I wore Chanel for *Filmfare*; they had sent me such a beautiful white dress. I love Valentino, Margiela, Galliano, Ralph and Russo; I love Tamara's designs, she's so brilliant! They're all such incredible designers! I think Kim Jones does such fabulous things as well. Maria Grazia is doing great work too. In the new designers, Gabriela Hearst is amazing. My favourite brand is The Row by Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen. I've been buying their clothes since their first season. There are definitely some incredible young international designers out there!

If you were to style someone, who would that be?

I'd love to style Zoya Akhtar. I love Zoya; I think she's one of the most amazing people I know. She's extremely talented, she's beautiful, and she's got such a great personality. I would love to figure out what her style is, and just bring out that vivaciousness and that amazing energy that she has through her clothes, and give

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**2020 WAS DIFFERENT,
I WOULDN'T CALL
IT A WRITE-OFF.
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THINGS THE
HARD WAY**”

her that distinctive panache that she brings to her films.

Everybody wants to know: what are the essentials in Sonam's wardrobe?

I love my Bhaane jeans and trousers. My husband started the brand Bhaane because they are one of the leading export houses in the world and they were making the best quality clothes for brands all over the world, and they were all getting exported out of India. He wanted to give this quality and this design to India, and that's why he founded Bhaane. Everything is designed and made in India for amazing young creatives. The first

time I shot in Bhaane clothes was for a magazine many years ago and, after that, I just started buying their clothes; I didn't know it was Anand's brand! I still have a pair of jeans and some jewellery that they'd made. Those jeans have never left my wardrobe, I keep getting jeans and trousers from them, and I love their separates. So my wardrobe essentials would be one pair of jeans that I have from Bhaane, one pair of trousers, a sari, and a white shirt.

What would you walk out in, jeans and white shirt or tracks?

Jeans and white shirt

You are a style icon for so many out there today. Who is Sonam Kapoor-Ahuja's style icon?

My mom. I think she is very stylish and she really puts herself together well. She's very generous in the way she styles herself, so definitely Mom. Anything that I know about style and fashion is because of her. I also don't step out without showing my sister what I'm wearing; these two people have had a huge influence on me where my fashion and style are concerned. Even my aunt, she's got impeccable style.

Everybody's waiting to see you next on the big screen. When and what are we going to see you in soon?

I was supposed to start filming in March and then lockdown happened. Then in June, but lockdown happened again! I actually have three things in the pipeline. I have been filming in Glasgow, Scotland, and hope to start something after that, which I unfortunately can't talk about. 2020 was different, I wouldn't call it a write-off. I think everything happens for a reason, and we've all learned things the hard way; I think every lesson is a well-learned lesson. I don't know if everybody's absorbed what we were supposed to absorb through this, but I definitely hope I have. And, hopefully, you guys will be seeing me in cinema halls this year! **F**



ADORNED TRADITION

Tap into the oomph factor of the Vani Vats Chand collection, designed for today's women who are quirky and refreshing, and who love to experiment with colours and trends. The collection is handcrafted, with beautiful hand embroidery on fabrics such as silk, organza, and georgette, making it perfect for winter weddings and festivals and also as edgy pieces in a bride's trousseau.

Price: On request

Available at: Aza Fashions, Pernia's Pop Up Shop, Carma Online

EYEING LUXE

Burberry's latest eyewear collection is a contrast of contemporary designs with iconic details including square and cat-eye frames.

The collection is inspired by Chief Creative Officer Riccardo Tisci's reflections on his years as a young designer, with references to the places he visited, the people he met, and the music that informed him at the start of his career, while continuing to build upon the fashion house's rich heritage and signature cues.

Price: On request

Available at: Burberry stores



Trending

FEMINA'S ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST NEWS, VIEWS, AND BUZZ IN FASHION

WITH DESIGNS ON LOVE

Platinum Days of Love's new collection of exquisitely-crafted Platinum Love Bands is a tribute to couples who have displayed values of strength, resilience, patience, and optimism through some really dark times. The collection's narrative showcases geometric designs, delicate markings, intricate patterns, clean lines, and hints of precious stones, as well as two-toned pieces.

Price: ₹80,000 onwards

Available at: platinumdaysoflove.com



STONED ON LOVE

Neety Singh Jewellery's Gifts of Love collection, a capsule collection for Valentine's Day, features a range of pieces including chokers, hoops, elegant balis



and tennis bracelets. The collection is emblematic of the emotion of timeless and classic love we have been celebrating for eternity. The range of gemstones used spans diamonds, polki and rubies set in 18 and 22 carat gold.

Price: On request

Available via: Instagram, Facebook or by appointment at Neety Singh's atelier in Gurgaon



GLOBAL FINERY

Inspired by tradition and moved by the modern world, Talking Threads celebrates culture in fashion and exceptional craftsmanship while masterfully delivering on the promise of customised and personalised luxury. On offer are five distinct lines for women—everyday luxury, light occasion wear, evening couture, bridal couture, and a heritage line comprising future heirlooms. For men, the brand focuses on Indian wedding couture.

Price: ₹6,400 onwards

Available at: talkingthreads.in >

ALL EYES ON YOU

Michael Kors's latest eyewear collection features iconic and fashion-forward shapes updated with modern details for an elevated and elegant take on the brand's signature flair. Ranging from the sophisticated to the sporty, each pair is characterised by urban-chic style and contemporary features, including the iconic Michael Kors circle charm logo, crystal fabric pieces or pavé accents, and refined metal overlay that is seamlessly integrated into the thin metal temples.

Price: ₹11,800 onwards

Available at: Sunglass Hut



FLORAL ALLURE

Made for intimate celebrations, Pankaj Nidhi's new collection, *Fleuressence*, is influenced by the ornamental forms of flora inspired by the French court textiles of the 17th century. The colour palette ranges from blushing peach and seashell pink to mineral blues and hints of mint.

A combination of crimson and misty pink lends a fresh and festive air to the collection.

Price: ₹5,500 onwards

Available at:

pankajandnidhi.com



MANIFESTING KARIGARI

A breezy RTW brand based in Lucknow, Label Romaa creates chic and stylish ensembles, and showcases the timeless elegance of Parsi gara work. Taking inspiration from birds and the original colour palette of beauty in nature around us, the entire collection is in pastels and soft-hued colours embellished with both detailed and minimal hand embroidery.

Price: ₹15,500 onwards

Available at: Pernia's Pop Up Shop



ETHICAL FASHIONABILITY

The Tribal Thumka collection from Color Story by Dee is all about Ankara fused with Indian fabrics like ikat, bandhani, Chanderi, and raw silk. Influenced by issues of the fashion industry's ethics, and survival in the pandemic, they have used fabrics sourced from India and Africa, and conscious methods of production to create exclusive and contemporary pieces, vital to every woman's wardrobe.

Price: ₹7,000 onwards

Available via: [instagram.com/colorstorybydee](https://www.instagram.com/colorstorybydee)



FUTURISTIC FOOTGEAR

adidas Originals launches a new generation of sustainable Stan Smith Sneakers. This season, adidas Originals turns its attention, once again, to the timeless silhouette, overhauling the Stan Smith from the inside out, working with PRIMEGREEN, a series of high-performance recycled materials, to help 'End Plastic Waste'. The series is an archivable icon, reimagined for the future.

Price: ₹7,999 onwards

Available at: Select stores and shops.adidas.co.in





#VirtualAutoShowcase

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A Times Group Initiative

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UP FOR GROWTH



THE **VIRTUAL AUTO SHOWCASE - A TIMES GROUP INITIATIVE** - BROUGHT TOGETHER THE WHO'S WHO OF THE INDUSTRY

Like all other sectors, the **Indian automotive sector** too took a big hit when the lockdown was announced and the protocols for handling the pandemic were being implemented.

But in retrospect, COVID was a catalyst for change that seems to have redefined how the sector does business for the better. The industry took the time to come up with response strategies that could bring about some form of normalcy to our automotive experience, but respond they did, with the pandemic forcing automotive manufactures to look at the entire automotive experience in a new light.

The Virtual Auto Showcase 2020 brought this to the fore, aligning industry experts, thought leaders, and automobile enthusiasts at **India's first ever digital automotive show**. With an eclectic mix of keynote presentations, panel

discussions and fire-side chat; this event delved into how sustainable growth can be achieved for the automobile sector, with a diverse array of speakers on show offering up much food for thought.

Besides all the high-octane discussions, there were also contests and performances on offer, and brands took centerstage in exclusive display areas, where they could interact with consumers and offer exclusive deals and discounts.

2020 has been a crazy rollercoaster ride for industry and society alike, but **The Virtual Auto Showcase 2020** represented a new paradigm of dialogue and deliberations. Digital represents an opportunity and a challenge, and if the show's reception is anything to go by, the industry and consumer are ready to rise to the occasion and grab the opportunity ahead of us.

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Passion for life



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FEMINA

BEAUTY

OH monogram
ivory nova
studs, ₹3,500,
Outhouse.

FEMINA
LOVES

BEYOND RULES...

Beauty, like love, knows no boundaries! This season of love, choose to be playful with edgier shades. Amp up the drama with bolder hues and contemporary looks that are anything but basic! >

The Colours Of **LOVE**

Love is a many-coloured emotion! Hair and makeup artist **AVNI RAMBHIA** shows **Sukriti Shahi** shades that resonate with love.

Photographs: **Vinay Javkar** | Styling: **Yukti Sodha**
Fashion Coordination: **Radhika Gattani**

CRIMSON LOVE

While red and maroon have always been the colours of love, it's time to add an edgier shade—deep crimson. It's classy, quirky, and triumphant! With a deep crimson pout, and dewy lids with a hint of cranberry on the lower lash line, you're ready to take on the world. >





ENCHANTING WHITE

Like to keep your makeup fuss-free? White could be your go-to shade! In makeup, versatile white brings an eclectic twist to a basic look. No matter how the shade is used, it tones down the look while also making it brighter. P.S. those rhinestones add the right touch of drama!



BOLD, BEAUTIFUL & BLUE

Blue is an 'intense' shade with great power and depth. When it comes to makeup, blue can give any look a bolder twist. Let your eyes take centre-stage with glittery blue lids, amped-up lashes, and stronger brows!

Lepidoptera midnight blue ring, ₹16,500, **Outhouse**; ostrich feather and tulle gown, ₹70,000, **Dolly J.** >



PRETTY IN PINK

There's nothing pink can't fix! Whether on your lips, cheeks or eyes, this shade instantly lifts your whole look. If brighter shades intimidate you, choose monochromatic makeup—it's a fail-proof way to sport peppy shades. **f**



THE BRIGHTER, THE BETTER

A happy cheer or a hearty laugh—there's no emotion of love that yellow cannot express. Experiment with your look; opt for yellow graphic or floating eyeliner. Add a little bit of orange, and make your face stand out in the crowd. Remember to use a softer shade on the lips, and let the yellow do the talking.

Josephine hammered pear earrings,
₹4,399, **Tanzire** >

FASHION INTERN: G. RITWIK SUDAN; MAKEUP & HAIR ASSISTANT:
MANASI GAMI; MODELS: JAMEELA, SANJANA VJ

HOT RIGHT NOW

All that's fresh and fun
on the beauty shelf



SHINING BRIGHT

The skin-loving product we've always known is back in our beauty arsenal with a revived persona. The Deep Radiance range from ITC Charmis includes a face serum, vitamin C face wash, and hand cream. Perfect companions through harsh and dry winters, the products are designed to penetrate deep within the skin to hydrate dull skin and give you a natural glow. Price: ₹70 onwards
Available at: **All leading retail and e-stores**

2

E.L.F. ON THE SHELF!

Vanity at the most affordable prices! e.l.f., one of America's most-loved and pocket-friendly cosmetics brands, is now in India! Launched exclusively on the e-comm giant, Nykaa, it is one of the pioneers in vegan and cruelty-free makeup products. The product range includes Poreless Putty primer, 16HR Camo concealer, SRSly Satin lipstick, Bite Size eyeshadows, and the Supers Collection. Price: ₹300 onwards
Available on: **Nykaa.com**



3

QUENCH THE SKIN!

Nothing better than well-hydrated skin! Clinique's oil-free hydrating clearing jelly with active cartridge offers 24-hour hydration, clears skin imperfections, and restores smooth texture. Infused with hyaluronic acid and a lactobacillus probiotic ferment, the hydrating jelly provides dull and dehydrated skin with an instant splash of moisture. Price: ₹2,000 onwards
Available at: **Clinique stores**

4

LUSTROUS LOCKS

Fretting over incessantly falling hair? Genesis, a new haircare range from Kerastase, targets the issue of hair fall. Treating both, hair fall from the roots and through breakage, this range offers a complete spa-like hair treatment at home. The ingredients in Genesis protect the hair from extreme conditions, reducing breakage, and stimulating circulation for healthy, lustrous hair. The range includes a shampoo, conditioner, masque, and blow-dry fluid that doubles up as a heat protectant. Price: **On request**
Available at: **Kerastase salons**



RADIANCE EXTRAORDINAIRE!

Swiss-engineered skincare brand GlutaWeis is finally in India with its much-sought-after radiance-boosting range. Backed by active ingredients, the radiance range includes a rejuvenating cream, repair serum, and recovery cleanser. Offering indulgent solutions for skin problems like pigmentation, spots, wrinkles and scarring, it is suitable for sensitive skin. Price: ₹2,995 onwards
Available at: **glutaweis.com**

5



When the world was rather siloed from the early months

of 2020, it actually proved to be a great incubation period for new business ideas, start-ups, and numerous 'Make in India' initiatives that indeed gave rise to small businesses. Small enterprises certainly flourished, as did the planet. The global lockdown had dramatic positive effects on the climate and environment. Skies were bluer, the air was cleaner, roads were clearer, and you could hear birds chirping and even see them come out into the open to celebrate a rather overdue freedom. In an attempt to give back more to society and the environment, Nitika Sonkhiya kickstarted a sustainable company, MyONEarth, which catered first to home and personal care; fashion came later after she realised the field of organic and clean skincare

was already done to death. "MyONEarth is the result of a series of experiments I have done in the field of sustainability over the past four years. I focused on the immense amount of single-use plastic we have in our lives, and I decided to do something about it. I used my first bamboo toothbrush five years ago, and, since then, I have incorporated little changes in my daily life that have a bigger impact," says Sonkhiya, who founded MyONEarth after she figured out that not much was being done in this field across the country, and that it was the right time to jump into the field.

The journey to the end product of your dreams is



EARTH WARRIOR

Founder of sustainable venture MyONEarth, **NITIKA SONKHIYA** talks to **Aishwarya Acharya** about the challenges of running an offbeat business venture as a woman, and the importance of giving back to society

"My father was supportive, but my mother was worried. **SHE THOUGHT NO ONE WOULD MARRY ME BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE A JOB**"

never easy; Sonkhiya, too, experienced that especially when it became necessary for her to leave her high-paying job. "My father was supportive, but my mother was worried. She thought no one would marry me because I don't have a job. I realised that being a girl makes the entrepreneurial journey, which is already tough, even tougher." On a more professional front, she faced issues related to her gender, and ones that arose due to the industry being male dominated. "I met vendors in places that were not very welcoming for women; in fact, I couldn't spot a

woman for miles. Some vendors were not comfortable talking to me because I am a woman, and also because I don't look my age. I realised that this space and the industry, at large, was still very male dominated," shares Sonkhiya. She, nevertheless, cut her way through the space with some tips from her father; he exhorted her to stay honest with all her work. When running an eco-friendly biz, the focus and scrutiny is more on how the raw materials came to be and the processing of the same. With MyONEarth, Sonkhiya ensures that all the bamboos are sourced from villages in >





"Our products are handcrafted, thereby ensuring a personal touch. **SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE, NOT A MACHINE, MADE WHAT YOU ARE HOLDING**"

MyONEarth has partnered with Jaipur-based NGO Centre For Human Rights & Social Welfare to provide employment to women

Sonkhiya ensures she partners with NGOs to provide employment to rural communities. She believes corporates everywhere are now being more socially responsible and finds it's extremely

important to give back to society in order to survive, grow and build one's business and goodwill in society—together. Sonkhiya breaks it down further: "It makes sense because a lot of the raw materials for businesses are generated in far-flung areas, where people work very hard to ensure quality. If people at this end of the supply chain are not taken care

of, then the supply chain will not sustain. For us, for instance, one of the unique aspects of many of our products is that they are handcrafted, thereby ensuring a personal touch to each unit that is sold. Somebody somewhere, not a machine, made what you are holding in your hands. Such uniqueness can only be sustained if our partners in the villages, the artisans, are happy." MyONEarth provides employment to women—primary breadwinners of their families—who were impacted by COVID-19. "When I see them empowered, I feel great; there is no way we are leaving them behind," she enthuses. "It is by the good wishes of these women and local artisans that we are growing, and supporting them will always be key for us."

Stepping into a new year, Sonkhiya is hopeful and positive. Having registered in the US and UK, she is looking forward to growing her business and simultaneously giving rural communities and women a much wider platform to empower them and help them grow and find their own space. **F**

Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, and the coconuts from southern India. "We employ local rural artisans at the source of our raw material and we get our products made by them. We try our level best to ensure that all these artisans, including rural women, are paid a fair price and that their work environment is fair and safe. Also, we make sure that they work no more than eight hours a day," Sonkhiya adds.

All companies after a point are required to involve themselves in corporate social responsibilities. Now that the company is solely structured on sustainability, one of the boxes has already been ticked. Additionally,

Helping The Planet

All items at MyONEarth are 100 per cent eco-friendly, plastic-free and bio-degradable. Here are some of the materials products are made of:

Bamboo	Cork
Organic cotton	Coconut coir
Eco-friendly cotton	Water reed
Coconut shell	Jute
Organic neem wood	

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Don't be caught *IN THE WEB*

PINKY PRADHAN, Director, Marketing & Communications, Plan India, talks of creating a safer and more inclusive cyberspace for girls and young women

When Kirti, a 19-year-old student at Delhi University, posted a photograph of herself on a social media platform, the last thing she expected was for a random boy to download the image and use it to create a fake profile. It bothered her deeply that anybody could violate her online privacy in spite of the security settings that social media platforms offered. She felt angry and helpless, but she decided to not stay silent. With the help of her friends, she reported the account several times until the picture was finally taken down and



**Pinky Pradhan, Director,
Marketing & Communications,
Plan India**

the account deleted. She felt a sense of victory as she reclaimed her freedom to be online without fear, but did not just stop there.

Today, as part of the Safer Cities project of Plan India—a not-for-profit organisation championing the right of girls' equality—Kirti is encouraging girls in her community to learn about online privacy settings and report incidents of online abuse to the relevant authorities.

Like Kirti, there are several girls and young women who face online harassment and abuse on an ongoing basis. According to *The State of World's Girls Report – 'Free to Be Online'* by

Plan International, more than half (58 per cent) of the 14,000 respondents across 22 countries have been victim to online harassment or abuse. Moreover, the report highlighted the fact that most of the girls who might have not faced harassment themselves knew of other girls or young women who have, making it a common and trans-national problem.

While one form of online harassment and abuse includes creating profiles, using pictures, and circulating them without consent, it also extends to trolling, sexist and abusive comments, and rape and death threats that make the online experience unpleasant or terrifying. These various forms of harassment have serious mental and emotional consequences, especially when girls as young as between the ages of 14 and 16 years face their first online harassment experience. It has been reported that girls and young women have experienced lower self-esteem, lost confidence, felt increased fear and anxiety, practised self-censorship, felt physically unsafe, faced problems at school or with friends and family, and faced difficulties in finding or keeping a job.

Today, with women forming 33 per cent of India's internet population, as per the India Internet 2019 report*, coupled with the pandemic, this percentage is set to exponentially grow as girls and young women alike are increasingly consuming content online through various devices. Therefore,

“Online abuse extends to trolling, sexist and abusive comments, and rape and death threats”



it is imperative that we all make concerted efforts to tackle online harassment and abuse.

As a first, education and raising awareness on what constitutes online abuse and how to tackle it should be a multi-pronged approach. While sharing information with girls and young women on how to deal with online abuse is the first step, to truly empower them and create a safer and freer online environment, it is also essential to share information on the risks of being online through public campaigns and engagement with boys, young men, parents, and educators, among others. On the other hand, educating harassers of the consequences of their actions becomes equally important to address this issue. The National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal from the Ministry of Home Affairs and authorities such as the Cyber Crime Cell are swift in tackling harassment and are becoming even more stringent in their approach.

Social media platforms are also working to support a safe and open environment for everyone. Instagram provides the user an option to report abuse in its help centre. A user can report violations by a post, user, and comments. Twitter has a block feature that helps a user control how they interact with other accounts on Twitter. This feature helps users to restrict specific accounts from contacting them, seeing their tweets, and following them.

It is also important to understand that, unless we work towards stopping the perpetuation of harmful stereotypes around girls and young women around the way they are perceived and depicted and how they should behave, and change the gender norms that pervade society, it will be difficult to stop online abuse in the form of trolls, hurtful comments, and even threats. There are multiple recent examples of celebrities and influencers being trolled online for arbitrary reasons, highlighting the need for us to change our thinking towards girls and young women.

Additionally, we need to advocate for swifter, stronger, and more effective reporting mechanisms implemented by technology platforms. This includes ensuring that there is greater education and availability of information on how to use these tools for a safer and more conducive online experience.

To be as fearless as Kirti, we must all come together to do our part to find a solution to the ever-growing issue of online harassment and abuse. **F**

THE ORIGINAL NAIL EMPRESS: DR. LEENA S.

Nail tycoon Dr. Leena S. talks about her luxury salon chain, her newly-launched online news portal and future plans

Dr. Leena S., who is referred to as the 'nail tycoon' by many, has built an enviable reputation for herself with the unparalleled success of The Nail Artistry, her luxury salon chain which has established itself as the absolute favourite amongst its target audience.

The Nail Artistry is where Indian elite and celebrities head to when they wish to be pampered with a relaxing and luxurious manicure or pedicure. They all seem to love the sheer luxe experience that they get from The Nail Artistry team, which treats them like royalty.

We recently caught up with Dr. Leena S. to speak to her about her inspiration, her plans for The Nail Artistry, her newly-launched online news portal and her future plans. Here are the excerpts:

How does it feel to see that your hard work has paid off?

What we do at The Nail Artistry is special. We make people feel relaxed and good about themselves while also delivering better hygiene and grooming. Nothing can actually beat the feeling that the smiles of a satisfied customer gives us.

Needless to say, it is absolutely gratifying to know that people appreciate the hard work we have put in to make The Nail Artistry a global brand that cares so much for its customers.

How is The Nail Artistry different from a visit to a regular salon?

Whether we're at work or at home, we use our hands and feet all day long. While most of us take good care of our face in the regular beauty or grooming routines, somehow we just tend to ignore our hands and feet. They need our attention too and we need to take good care of them as we use them so much. So it's necessary to give them some pampering

"WHILE MOST OF US TAKE GOOD CARE OF OUR FACE IN OUR BEAUTY ROUTINES, WE TEND TO IGNORE OUR HANDS AND FEET"

and help them destress. It adds a lot to one's overall feeling of wellbeing. Most regular salons miss out on the nuances of a professional manicure or pedicure. They treat them just as a part of their routine while at The Nail Artistry, this is the crux of very being. This is what we specialise in. We're India's first super luxury nail salon and our focus is altogether on a different level. No regular salon can even >



PHOTOGRAPHER: DABBOO RATNANI; MAKEUP: POMPY HANS; HAIR: YIANNI TSAPATORI; STYLIST: MOHITRAI; JACKET: ROHIT GANDHI RAHUL KHANNA

"I WOULD LIKE EVERY WOMAN TO LEARN SKILLS THAT THEY CAN EARN A RESPECTABLE INCOME FROM"



PHOTOGRAPHER: DABOO RATNANI; MAKEUP: POMRY HANS;
HAIR: YIANNI TSAPTORI; STYLIST: MOHTI RAI; JACKET: GUCCI

come close to the quality of service that we deliver to our clients.

Tell us a bit more about your Indian operations.

We started The Nail Artistry with our flagship salon in Kochi, Kerala. The warm response enthused us to open our second salon in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. In the coming few months, we plan to open new The Nail Artistry salons in Las Vegas and Dubai. We will also expand in India with new salons at Hyderabad, Bangalore and Goa too.

Tell us a bit more about your international plans.

I am proud to state that The Nail Artistry is among the rare few brands from the Indian beauty industry that have transcended the national border and created an identity for themselves abroad. To be truthful, I myself didn't know that The Nail Artistry will evolve into something so dynamic. It is the love and appreciation from our customers that has given us the confidence to expand beyond India and take our brand to Las Vegas in the USA with our first international salon. As mentioned, we also have Dubai on our horizon too.

We hear that you have also recently ventured into the online news publishing industry. What prompted you to take up this challenging venture?

The whole world, including

India, is in a state of flux and there is so much happening everywhere. Online news websites and social media are what all of us turn to for keeping ourselves updated. These websites and social media platforms hold a lot of influence in shaping people's perceptions. What I have noticed is that some unscrupulous elements have been taking advantage of this privilege. They post absolutely fake news on their websites and then amplify the same on social media, which is a gross misuse of freedom of speech and utter disrespect to journalism. These people have no ethics at all. We wish to wake the readers up and that's why our online news website, News Express Post is here. Our mission is to fight fake news and misinformation being peddled by most online websites and social media platforms. We're hiring seasoned journalists and editors to cover the latest happenings from different sources and geographies and deliver facts-based news in an interesting format on our website and also on various social media platforms.

We've also heard about how you were active during the lockdown to help your employees. Can you please share the experience?

Well, lockdown was tough on all of us. I knew I had to be strong for my team. Most of the employees in our salons are young women whose families depend upon



“WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS HOLD A LOT OF INFLUENCE IN SHAPING PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS”

their earnings.

We ensured that none of them suffered because of money issues and paid everyone's salaries on time. Apart from money they also needed moral support and counselling. I am glad that I could be there for them through this very challenging time. We all must stay positive to see through such dire circumstances. Thankfully, I am a Taurean and have strong will power, which definitely helped!

Based on your journey and experience, what

would your message be for our readers?

I am a strong advocate of women's empowerment and I'd like to see all of us being independent. I would like every woman to learn skills that they can earn a respectable income from. Nothing can beat that in today's tough world, which the men seem to think they own. Also we need to build a support system for each other. Women should look out for each other and provide support to those who need it so that all of us can move forward emphatically. **F**

God's FAVOURITE CHILD

With her debut movie done and dusted, **RENEE SEN**, all of 21, is following in the footsteps of her mom Sushmita Sen. **Kalwyna Rathod** chats with this young lady who has her heart and head in the right place!



While she plays a rebellious teenager in *Suttabaazi*, Renee Sen is quite the affable kind in real life. She believes she is blessed in the life she has, in her journey, and, above all, in her mom; she avers that she is, indeed, 'God's favourite child', as her Instagram bio reads! Minutes into the conversation, you know this newcomer is big into hoping but is also equally pragmatic. Read on for excerpts from a candid interview.

Tell us how *Suttabaazi* happened.

I got the script, met Kabeer (Khurana, director), and the producers Simran (Lakhanpal), Ramneek (Sawhney), and Pankaj (Rungta). When discussing the film we had the same vision—to tell an honest story. It never felt like work; rather, it was a smooth and happy process, and we all felt like family!

**"I'M DOING
A DOUBLE
MAJOR IN
PSYCHOLOGY
AND
SOCIOLOGY,
AND IT
HELPS ME
UNDERSTAND
THE
IMPORTANCE
OF MENTAL
HEALTH"**

In what ways has Mom inspired you?

Her ability to stay grounded, her kindness, her hardworking nature... If I can emulate even 0.1 per cent of all that, it would mean a lot. I want to put to use all the values and lessons she has been teaching me and make her proud.

Have you always wanted to be an actor? What drew you to acting?

I've wanted to face the camera since I was five or six years old. Watching my mom on screen was probably the catalyst. I've always loved watching movies; I would imagine what it would be like to act, how people would react to me laughing or crying. I love acting, so, when this opportunity came, I told myself this was it.

How was the experience of facing the camera for the first time?

It was surreal. Kabeer introduced me to Pratik (Kothari) sir, my acting teacher. He taught me about understanding the character without judging it, about creating a back story for the character, and other such nuances. My on-screen parents, Komal (Chhabria) ma'am and Rahul (Vohra) sir, were very patient with me. We did bonding exercises that helped us open up

to each other. There was no pretence, and that translates on screen. I call them Mom and Dad even now!

Tell us about your sister, Alisah.

We have an age gap of 10 years, so she's more like my child; I'm very protective of her. She manages to get all my secrets out even if I don't want to tell her anything. She's very cute. We do fight sometimes, especially when she eats my food.

Tell us about issues or causes close to your heart.

My mom has always stressed on education, and I'm now realising why it's so important—it shapes your thinking, enables you to have a conversation. I'm doing a double major in psychology and sociology, and it helps me understand the importance of mental health. It helps me understand not just other people, but myself too. **f**



THE SWEET SIDE OF LOVE

This recipe by Chef Poonam Agarwal of Cuisson Amour takes just 20 minutes to pull together, and serves four.

Perfect to celebrate love with the people dearest to you!

Strawberry Cheesecake Mousse Jars with Citrus Crumble

Ingredients

For the crumble:

50 g butter, chilled
50 g flour
50 g brown sugar
Sea salt, to taste

For the strawberry compote:

200 g frozen strawberries
45 g sugar
10 ml lime juice

For the cheesecake mousse:

200 g cream cheese
135 g icing sugar

70 g orange juice
30 g lemon juice
1 lemon, zested
1 orange, zested
12 g gelatine
335 g heavy cream (35%)

Method

1. To prepare the crumble, mix the cold butter into the flour, brown sugar, and sea salt to form a crumble. Freeze for 15 minutes. Bake at 170°C until done.

2. To prepare the strawberry compote, combine the sugar and frozen strawberries, and cook them on a medium flame until slightly thick. Finish with the lime juice.

3. To prepare the mousse, mix the cream cheese and icing sugar together to a smooth batter. Mix together the orange and lemon juices and the zests, and warm in the microwave for 15 seconds. Melt the gelatine in the microwave, and mix into

the juices. Whisk into the cream. Whip the cream until soft or medium peaks are achieved, and whisk into the cream cheese.

4. To assemble, place some crumble at the base of a jar, top with cheesecake mousse, then add a layer of strawberry compote. Repeat the layers for each of the jars.

5. Chill for two to three hours before serving.

PLATED FOR LOVE

These recipes by Chef Udayshankar Shenoy of Lazy Suzy, Bengaluru, are perfect for an intimate meal for two

BAKED JODHPURI PYAZ, KAJU, AUR MAKHANE KI POTLI

50 ml ghee
1 tbsp coriander seeds, crushed
2 to 3 dry red Jodhpuri chillies, chopped
200 g sliced onion
1 tsp chopped ginger
1 tbsp chopped garlic
1 tbsp chopped green chillies
1 pinch hing
¼ tsp turmeric powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
¼ tsp cumin powder



1 pinch dry mango powder
1½ g besan
50 g cashew nut, fried
1 tsp coriander powder
Salt, to taste
½ tsp lime juice
25 g roasted makhana
Filo pastry sheet (available in any leading supermarket)
2 tsp chopped coriander leaves

Calorie count:
609 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: Two > **PREP TIME:** 25 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 15 minutes

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Heat the ghee in a medium frying pan on a medium flame. Add the coriander seeds, and splutter. Add the dry red chillies, and splutter. Add the onion, and sauté until translucent.
3. Add the ginger, garlic, and green chillies, and sauté for two minutes. Add the hing, red chilli, cumin and dry mango powders, followed by the besan, and sauté on a low flame until the raw smell goes off.
4. Add the cashew nuts, and sauté for a minute. Adjust seasoning.
Add the coriander powder and lime juice, and stir. Remove, and set aside to cool.
5. Once the masala is at room temperature, add the makhana, and mix well to coat the cashew nuts and makhana.
6. Cut the filo sheets into four eight-inch squares. Apply ghee lightly on the sheets, and arrange them one on top of the other diagonally.
7. Mould about five tablespoons of the mixture into a ball with your palms, and place at the centre of the top filo sheet.
Pick up the edges of the sheets together, and form a potli or money bag.
Fasten the neck of the potli with a crumpled aluminium-foil string or a blanched spring onion blade.
8. Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown and crisp.

TIP: SERVE THE POTLIS HOT WITH TOMATO, MINT, OR TAMARIND CHUTNEY.

MUSHROOM KARUVEPPILAI



4 tbsp
coconut oil

200 g chopped
onions

1 tbsp chopped
ginger

2 tbsp chopped
garlic

1 tbsp chopped
green chillies

25 to 30 curry
leaves

100 g chopped
tomatoes

Salt, to taste

½ tsp turmeric
powder

1½ tsp red chilli
powder

1 tbsp coriander
powder

400 g button
mushrooms,
washed,
dried, and
quartered

1 pinch sugar

1 tsp lime juice

1½ tbsp
Karuveppilai
spice powder

**For the
Karuveppilai
spice powder:**
2 tbsp coriander
seeds

1 tbsp cumin
seeds

1 tbsp fenugreek
seeds

1 tsp
peppercorns

1 star anise

25 curry leaves

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

SERVES: Two > **PREP TIME:** 20 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 20 minutes

1. To prepare the Karuveppilai spice powder, heat a sauté pan on a medium flame until moderately hot. Add the coriander, cumin, and fenugreek seeds, peppercorns, and star anise, and sauté, stirring, until the spices are roasted. Add the curry leaves, and stir until they dry up. Remove the mixture from the pan, and cool. Coarsely powder it with a mortar and pestle or in a mixer. Store in an airtight container.
2. Heat the coconut oil in a heavy-bottomed frying pan. Add the onions, and sauté until they start browning lightly.
3. Add the ginger, garlic, green chillies, and curry leaves, and stir for a minute.
4. Add the turmeric, red chilli, and coriander powders, and sauté on a low flame for a minute.
5. Add the tomatoes, and sauté on a medium flame for 10 minutes. Add salt, and sauté until the tomatoes are cooked, the oil starts to separate on the sides, and you get a chunky, semi-gravy consistency.
6. Add the mushrooms and stir-fry on a high flame, stirring continuously to keep the masala from sticking to the pan. When the mushrooms are cooked, and the water has evaporated, add one-and-a-half tablespoon of the Karuveppilai spice powder, and cook for about three minutes on a low flame.
7. Add sugar and salt to taste. Finish with a few drops of lime juice. >

TIP: SERVE THE MUSHROOMS WITH MULTI-MILLET PARATHAS.

PARMESAN & HERB-CRUMBED ROAST VEGETABLES



1 zucchini
1 red bell pepper
1 yellow bell pepper
3 large button mushrooms
Salt, to taste
Freshly-ground pepper, to taste
3 tbsp olive oil (divided usage)
1 tsp chopped garlic
500 g ripe tomatoes, seeded and pureed

4 fresh basil leaves, torn + extra to garnish

For the Parmesan and almond herb crumb mix:
10 almonds, slivered and toasted

80 g grated Parmesan

1 tsp chopped thyme

1 tsp chopped oregano

50 g breadcrumbs

Calorie count:
552 calories (per serving)

SERVES: Two > **PREP TIME:** 20 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 20 minutes

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
2. Mix together the almonds, Parmesan, thyme, oregano, and breadcrumbs. Set aside.
3. Cut the zucchini into 1.5-inch cylinders, and scoop out the centre pulp, leaving a base of about a half an inch. Leaving the stem on, cut the bell peppers horizontally into quarters, and remove the seeds. Gently remove the mushroom stems to leave a small pocket in the cap. Season the vegetables with salt, pepper, and one tablespoon olive oil. Roast in the preheated oven until coloured (about eight to 10 minutes). Set aside to cool.
4. Raise the oven temperature to 220°C.
5. Heat a pan on a low-medium flame. Add two tablespoons of olive oil and the garlic, sauté for about 20 seconds. Add the tomato puree, and bring to a boil. Reduce the flame, and cook until the raw flavour goes off. Add the basil leaves and salt to taste. Remove from the flame.
6. Pour one to two teaspoons of the tomato sauce into the cavities of the roasted vegetables. Place on a roasting tray. Sprinkle the Parmesan and almond herb crumb mix over. Roast until the crumb attains a roasted brown colour. Remove from the oven.
7. Pour some of the remaining tomato sauce onto a deep plate, spreading the sauce in circles with a spoon. Place the herb-crumbed roasted vegetables on the sauce, garnish with fresh basil leaves, and serve hot. **F**

TIP: IF THE TOMATOES ARE SOUR, ADD A LITTLE SUGAR TO BALANCE THE SOURNESS.

SIT DOWN TO CHOCOLATE DREAMS

There's a new kid on the chocolate block in Mumbai, and the city's chocolate enthusiasts have much to rejoice about! The online store offering global chocolate brands, **Cococart** has launched its flagship store in the heart of Colaba. With an in-house bistro, **CocoCafe**, serving indulgent but wholesome fare from Chef Karishma Sakhrani, it aims to become the new sweet favourite in town.

Price: ₹115 onwards

Available at: Jiji House, 17, Raveline Street, Damodar Sukhadwala Marg, Azad Maidan, Fort, Mumbai



CARRY YOUR COFFEE WHEREVER YOU GO

If you miss your coffee when travelling,

Coffeeza has launched nifty pour-over coffee bags that it hopes will make drinking your cuppa joe on the road hassle-free. The portable single-serve bag is kitted with a compact filter filled with pre-ground Arabica coffee from Indian plantations, and comes in four variants. Coffee fiends will love the ease and practicality of brewing their favourite drink on the go!

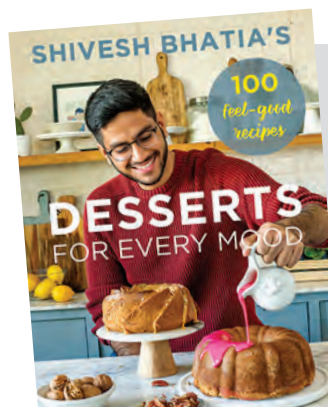
Price: ₹40 for a trial sachet

Available at: brew.coffeeza.com



ON THE MENU

ALL THAT'S NEW AND TASTY IN THE WORLD OF FOOD AND DRINK



HAPPY? SAD? TREAT YOURSELF!

A brand-new sparkler to add to your cookbook collection, baking star and popular food blogger Shivesh Bhatia's second book **Desserts For Every Mood** is filled with over 100 toothsome and satisfying recipes.

The book brims with sweet dishes for every occasion, accompanied by pictures and tips that will help you expand your baking repertoire.

Price: ₹999

Available at: online stores



HEARTY VEGAN MEALS ARE NOW WITHIN REACH

Vegans lamenting the lack of options in Indian supermarkets will love **Wakao Foods's** latest offering—jackfruit vegan meat products. The Goa-based sustainable food brand's gluten-free treats come in a variety of flavours like teriyaki, butter jack and BBQ to liven up and add heft to your meatless meals.

Price range: ₹300 to ₹400

Available at: wakaofoods.com



INGREDIENT ALERT: URFA CHILLI PEPPERS

Spice up your meals with **urfa pepper**. Grown in the town of Urfa, Turkey, the urfa *biber* has taken the food world by storm with its salty-sweet and smoky-sour flavour that is said to add excitement and richness to any dish. The distinctive dark burgundy pepper flakes are versatile enough to be used in everything from marinades to salad dressings. **f**

A Place for Love

There are places synonymous with romance, but there are also hidden gems. We asked travel enthusiasts to share their picks of romantic destinations in India, some known, some hidden gems, so you can seek them out too! And the best part: they make perfect sense even if you're travelling alone!

By Primrose Monteiro-D'Souza



WAYANAD, **KERALA**

ANKITA KUMAR
 @monkey.inc

Wayanad is made for love! The romantic experiences it offers range from a lovely candlelight dinner inside the Edakkal Caves to a romantic tea-tasting session.

DON'T MISS: The cool StingRay tent experience (*below*), made for adventurous couples; you stay in a tent suspended over a tea plantation—great for conscious travel as it leaves no trace. Or try ziplining over a tea plantation on one of the longest ziplines in Kerala. Don't miss the waterfalls either!

BEST TIME TO VISIT:

January to March

ANKITA'S STAY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Edakkal Hermitage or StingRay Tribe



LEH **LADAKH**

ANU & PAVAN, HUNGRY TRAVELLERS

@hungry_travellers

The cold weather, bonfires, hot Maggi, beautiful cafés, magical lakes, high-altitude desert—what's not to love about Leh? There's something magical about the mountains! Find yourself in one of the many peaceful monasteries, ride around on a bike, and take in the breathtaking sights.

DON'T MISS: Beautiful Pangong Lake, as well as the less-visited Tsomoriri Lake—snuggle up in tents by the lake and watch the night sky light up with stars. Enjoy a bonfire as the temperature dips in the Nubra Valley with its high-altitude desert. Take in the views from Khardung La, the world's highest motorable road. Enjoy a plate of steaming noodles together! Find peace



and solitude at the Shanti Stupa. Sit back, relax... Or mix romance with adventure—go rafting on the Zaskar.

BEST TIME TO VISIT: June to September; at the end of September, you get a lot of the places to yourself. It gets a bit colder, but it's worth it.

ANU AND PAVAN'S STAY RECOMMENDATION:

Hotel Ladakh Palace—beautiful architecture, great food, stunning views...

MANDU **MADHYA PRADESH**

PRAKRITI VARSHNEY

@itisinthename

Mandu, in the heart of India, Madhya Pradesh, is magical in the monsoon, and definitely the most romantic place I've visited. Termed the fort capital, this beautiful town has a rich history. Walking the misty lanes and visiting the ancient monuments and palaces in the rain is an amazing experience.

DON'T MISS: Jahaz Mahal. Situated between two artificial lakes, this two-storeyed architectural marvel appears to be a ship floating on water. Every corner deserves to be explored. Spend some time sitting within the *mahal*, looking over the lake with your special someone. Then, just wander aimlessly



through the mist past the many monuments across town.

BEST TIME TO VISIT: During the monsoon; it's charming!

PRAKRITI'S STAY RECOMMENDATION:

Malwa Retreat Resort, a beautiful property managed by Madhya Pradesh Tourism >

TRANQUEBAR TAMIL NADU

KRITIKA GOEL

@kritika_goel

Time slows down in Tranquebar, a Danish coastal town of tranquil beauty and rustic charm, located on Tamil Nadu's Coromandel Coast. Called Tharangambadi in Tamil, or the land of the singing waves, it's perfect for a romantic getaway.

DON'T MISS: Fort Dansborg, built way



back in the 1600s in the Scandinavian military style. It has the distinction of being the second largest Danish fort in the world. Other attractions include the Town Gate, the Zion Church, the Governor's Bungalow, and the Maritime Museum. The best part: you can explore the entire town on foot. While you're here, plan a half-day trip to the Pichavaram Mangrove Forest, around 60 kilometres away,

and explore the world's second largest mangrove forest by boat.

BEST TIMES TO VISIT: December to March, or around August-September

KRITIKA'S STAY

RECOMMENDATION: The Bungalow on the Beach, once a summer home of the British collector, now a boutique hotel, with vintage furniture, high ceilings, and beach views

FAGU HIMACHAL PRADESH

PARNASHREE DEVI

@parnashree19

AJMIRA SHAIKH

@eatravellaugh

Untouched by excessive tourism, the quaint hill station of Kasauli, located between Chandigarh and Shimla, is gifted with nature's bounty, and is a hidden gem for romance.

DON'T MISS: The Gilbert Trek trail—a beautiful road dotted with lush green and offering mesmerising views of the hills, ideal for long, romantic walks

BEST TIMES TO VISIT:

April to June, and September to November

AJMIRA'S STAY

RECOMMENDATION:

ITC Glenview

Imagine waking up to sun rays peeking through wooden windows. The chilled air wraps itself around you the moment you step out onto your balcony to view the layers of hills beyond the horizon. As you sip a cup of hot tea and bask in the sun, the only sound is the soothing chirping of birds in the apple orchards. With lush green vegetation and deodar forest cover, Fagu is a hidden paradise in Himachal Pradesh. Located 22 kilometres away from Shimla on the Hindustan-Tibet Road, it is often overlooked by tourists, but ideal for those who prefer quiet corners, and the luxury of nature.

DON'T MISS: The magnificence of nature here. Although Fagu is well connected by road, this Himalayan hamlet doesn't offer shops, cafés or restaurants. Instead, you will be treated to some of the most jaw-dropping



vistas. Its serenity, the captivating views it offers, and the low population density make it an ideal romantic getaway in the heart of Himalayas.

Take as many nature walks as you can. Fagu is also ideal as a jump-off point to touristy places like Kufri, Chail, Mashobra, and Naldehra.

BEST TIME TO VISIT:

Summer, though you can also go in winter for the snow.

PARNASHREE'S STAY

RECOMMENDATION: North Moon Homestay, and the Himachal Pradesh Tourism-run Hotel Peach Blossom



NEIL ISLAND **THE ANDAMANS**

DIVYAKSHI GUPTA

© @divsigupta

While Havelock island often overshadows the other islands in this archipelago, Neil Island is equally stunning. Turquoise waters with driftwood on the shores, beautiful beaches, and forests with tall sea mahua trees are staples of every Andaman island, but Neil Island has something unique: the Natural Bridge, which is accessible only at low tide. The pristine Laxmanpur, Sitapur, and Bharatpur Beaches are perfect for walks with your loved one. The waters are crystal clear, the sunsets surreal, and greenery is in abundance: from forests to paddy fields and plantations. This small, lesser populated island with little



internet connectivity and minimum vehicular movement ensures a quiet, disconnected vacation for love birds.

DON'T MISS: Chasing the sunset on Laxmanpur Beach, and catching a sunrise at Sitapur Beach; cycling with your partner under green canopies; snorkelling in the warm waters to marvel at the exquisite corals; scuba



diving to get a glimpse of the marine life; and visiting the Natural Bridge.

BEST TIME TO VISIT: November to February to enjoy the water activities and not burn in the heat; the ferries will largely be on schedule, and the weather will be predictable.

DIVYAKSHI'S STAY

RECOMMENDATION: Sea Shell Neil offers affordable luxury cottages.

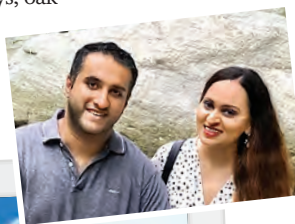
PARVADA **UTTARAKHAND**

SHIFA MERCHANT

© @sassyshifasays

Parvada Village, which sits in the South Gola Range in the district of Nainital, Uttarakhand (it is also a part of the

lower Himalayas) has to be my favourite hidden gem for romance. Located at an altitude of 7,000 feet (2,135 metres), this village is blessed with panoramic views of mountain ranges, misty jungles, lush green pathways, oak forests, clean air, a variety of flora and



fauna, topped with rainbow sightings, all waiting to greet you with open arms.

DON'T MISS: Exploring the misty jungles together, bird watching, experiencing the most heart-warming home stays, and staying in the cosiest cottages set up in fruit tree estates—all these are perfect for a romantic getaway with your loved one, set in the lap of nature. Also explore the village walking trails in and around Parvada, and visit the Bhalu Gaad Waterfalls.

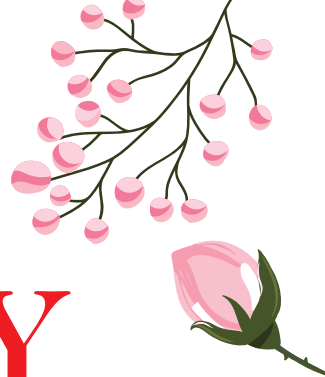
BEST TIMES TO VISIT:

Summers from March to May, and, for winter babies like me, from October to February

SHIFA'S STAY

RECOMMENDATION: Parvada Bungalow, a boutique resort spread across three acres within a fruit tree estate, is just a six-hour drive from Delhi. It is also every bird lover's paradise with regular visitors like the blue magpies, rufous treepies, and parakeets. We also loved the fact that it is wheelchair friendly. **F**





A (HOME) LOVE STORY

Spending time in the cosy cocoon of your home is the best way to celebrate Valentine's Day. Make the day special for your loved ones with these simple ideas from **Seema Sreedharan**

Feature courtesy **GoodHomes**



PHOTOGRAPH: SOPHIE ALLPORT

START THE DAY WELL!

Make sure the day begins on a positive note. You don't need to be a creative genius, or a DIY guru to pull this one off. Just light some aromatic candles, prepare a cup of sinful hot chocolate, and wake your loved one up with a smile. You're sure to win brownie points for the romantic start to the day!



PHOTOGRAPHS: ROSE COTTAGE BY VILLEROY & BOCH, SUSTENANCE BY RICHIA TALWAR

SERVE UP A BREAKFAST FIT FOR A KING...

This is the ideal follow-up: there's something quite romantic about serving up breakfast for your valentine, especially if he is the one who does the cooking otherwise. You don't need to do anything elaborate; curating a cool spread is the key. It could be just a bowl of healthy cereal and fruits, or even a simple sandwich. It's the gesture that matters, after all.



PHOTOGRAPHS: ROSE COTTAGE BY VILLEROY & BOCH, SUSTENANCE BY RICHIA TALWAR

ADD A KISS OF SCARLET

Lend your Valentine's Day decor an air of traditional elegance with touches of red! Set the stage, imbue some sparkle and glow, throw in some gifts... Trust us, this day is sure to stand the test of time and feature as a cherished memory. Plan it **already!**



PHOTOGRAPH: IKEA



BLOOM YOUR LOVE

Flowers are a Valentine's Day go-to for a reason: they scream romance. While a classic red-and-white bouquet is always a winner, pair the classic colour combo with unexpected hues—pinks, purples and blues—to give your posy a whimsical, almost fairy-tale-like look! Can't go wrong with this one, can you? >



PHOTOGRAPH: VILLEROY & BOCH




TRY THE ROMANTIC-BY-TWILIGHT ROUTE

If you're of the hopelessly romantic ilk, go with the clichés; they work! As evening falls, set out candles and lanterns, music and wine... On the terrace or balcony, or even in a cosy corner of your bedroom, space is hardly an issue. Creativity and a romantic heart are all you really need!



PLAN A COSY PICNIC

Drop the yearly routine of testing that up-and-coming restaurant; try something new that guarantees alone time with your date: a Valentine's Day picnic. The first thing is to figure out where. February is still cool enough, so head out to a secluded park, a nice spot on the beach, or a little alcove off a nature trail just out of town. If you do have the luxury of space, your garden or terrace would be just perfect! Then spend some time and thought on packing a basket with your true love's favourite food and drink, and you're set! 



PHOTOGRAPH: SHADES OF INDIA



PHOTOGRAPH: IKEA



MOVING FORWARD

She went from a 9-to-5 job to building her own jewellery brand. **Ravina M Sachdev** details her journey

CHHAVI TANDON
FOUNDER,
CHHAVI JEWELS

As a young woman, Chhavi Tandon was always inspired by fashion. She knew that her passion lay in designing jewellery, but her journey to establish her own jewellery brand wasn't easy. "It all began when I was a student in Cardiff,

the UK," she reveals. "Although I always knew my calling was towards fashion, I wasn't as sure about designing at the time and took up a conventional 9-to-5 job with the Royal Bank of Scotland."

Propelled by her intense passion for designing, she eventually started making jewellery on her own in the evenings and over the weekends. "In the early days of my start-up, I went from store to store to sell my items," she recalls. "Those initial designs are still very close to my heart as they represent the first milestone in my journey."

The positive response that her designs and jewellery pieces received cemented her decision to become an entrepreneur in the jewellery design and

retail business. "By then, I had travelled across the world for many trade jewellery exhibitions, had conducted in-depth market research, and understood global client needs fairly well," she adds.

After setting high standards in the international markets, she moved back to India and struggled once again to find her niche in a saturated market. "I travelled across the country to understand the nuts and bolts of the ethnic jewellery industry, and put together a trustworthy team of local artisans, manufacturers and traders from many cities," she explains.

After building her base and with her team of talented people in place, things, fortunately, moved in the right direction for her, and she started fulfilling large order quantities on major websites. "Building associations with established multi-designer stores across India was a major milestone for us," she shares. Ask her how she's been able to do it singlehandedly, and Tandon reveals that it's all easy once you set your mind on something. "Business is an art—the art of trying, relentlessly, methodically and, sometimes, innovatively—but always trying to find the solution, the next step forward, until you get it right."

Sharing her experience of working through the pandemic, she says that working remotely in her trade isn't easy. "Explaining client expectations to the craftsmen and coordinating with our regional teams was a huge challenge in the beginning," she adds. Like the rest of the world, she faced huge challenges with store rents, staff salaries and significantly fewer sales during the lockdown. "However, being an Indian woman from a middle-class background, budgeting and the judicious use of resources were skills taught at home. With the support of my team, I was able to minimise our costs and actually invested the additional time in creating new and trendy designs for the market; everything worked out," says Tandon with a smile. **F**

Celebrate in style

Rock those sartorial vibes

What: Utsav collection by Athas

What's interesting: The all-new Utsav collection embraces the beauty of Rajasthani gotta patti. The intricate lacy finish on the borders depicts grace and elegance, and the bright colours are a symbol of joy. The eco-luxe clothing collection captures the emotions, expressions and little acts of joy that we experience during festivals. The brand aims to brighten the homes of local karigars, masters who have been contributing endlessly to the glory of our Indian textile heritage.

Price: From Rs 2700/- to Rs 3700/-

Availability: Instagram - @athasbyakanksha



Go local is the mantra

Get a glimpse of the North East with these decor pieces

What: Dinnerware from The House Of Peony

What's interesting: The House of Peony is a bespoke home décor brand. The

founders Annie and Tashi are an enthusiastic duo on a journey to curate home décor, crockery, homemade stationery and more from the

foothills of Himalayas for people all over India. All the products are sourced from vendors and local entrepreneurs in the North East who were facing difficulties making sales during the pandemic, as crockery is not essential commodities. The dinnerware collection is hand painted and they choose the most exclusive pieces to promote online. They package their consignments in hand-woven bamboo baskets from local weavers in rural areas, which they request clients to reuse.

Price: On request

Availability: Instagram - @thehouseofpeony



BROOCH THE TOPIC

Add this accessory to your daily wear!



What: Brooches from Detach Accessories

What's interesting: Detach Accessories celebrates the beauty of brooches and highlights their versatility in our daily wear. They are made by local artisans, and beautifully embellished and hand embroidered. The collection showcases how a single accessory can make a difference and enhance your style. The brooches are fun, quirky and can add something different to your look.

Price: From Rs 1200/- to Rs 2200/-

Availability:

Instagram-

@detach_accessories

- Compiled by

Ravina M Sachdev

BE BREAST AWARE



DR PRASAD KASBEKAR
M.S. M.Ch. F.E.B.S.

Consultant Cancer Surgeon,
Mumbai

CONTACT:- 9820611490

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www.drcancer.in

As the incidence of breast cancer is increasing in the urban woman, a proper informative article was the need of the hour. Breast cancer is mostly seen in women above the age of 30 with increasing age presenting with an increasing risk. Thus, it is important for every woman above the age of 25 to be knowledgeable about her breast health. Those with family members with cancer, especially breast cancer; should be all the more alert.

The first step should be to learn the technique of breast self-examination. This is a simple technique that one may learn and perform at one's own home. Lot of data on the method is available online and one can seek it out. For those unable to find it, it can be found in my website given below. Every woman above the age of 30 should ideally get herself checked by a gynaecologist or more better, a breast cancer specialist at-least once for a baseline

assessment. It's a small price to pay for one's health.

Cancer treatment has undergone a massive shift in treatment and outcomes over the last 20 years or so. Early detection of breast cancer almost has a 100 percent cure rate with a large proportion of women living successful normal lives post treatment. Advances in surgeries have led to breast preservation as the treatment of choice in early cancers. Even in cases of breast removal, cosmetic surgery advances have led to recreation of an almost identical artificial breast giving women a normal post treatment appearance. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy advances have resulted in the entire process of treatment being pain and hassle free. Thus, it is always imperative that you seek the right specialist for your treatment to achieve the best results.

Be Breast Aware for best results!

WOMEN CAN REGAIN THEIR BREASTS AFTER BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women throughout the world. As a part of the breast cancer treatment, the breast with cancer may be removed. Such women now have an option to look and feel normal. The



Dr Raja Shanmugakrishnan
MBBS, MS (Gen) MRCS, DNB (Plastic)

Consultant Oncoplastic Breast Surgeon
Ganga Hospital, Coimbatore.

Ph: +91-9952617171

www.gangabreastcare.com

breast lump can be removed with a margin of tissue and radiotherapy can be given when presented early. This is known as Breast Conservative Surgery (BCS). When the whole breast has to be removed, the breast can be reconstructed from the excess skin and fat from the lower abdomen.

This advanced method of reconstruction using microsurgery is called the DIEP flap. The new breast looks and feels like a breast. This surgery can be done at the same operation while removing breast cancer or can be done later. Breast reconstruction helps women regain their confidence as they can get into clothes of their choice and feel complete.

Valentine's - The Healthy Way



Priya Maisa
Nutrition Specialist

Priya Maisa - A highly experienced Nutritionist working with Industry leaders like VLCC, Anjali Mukherjee, Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital for over 10yrs. Clinical experience with helping people achieve their desired health goals by providing customized food plans.

The month of Feb marks the start of the celebration for Valentine's Day, breakfast in bed, presents wrapped and waiting for the moment, order placed for flowers, or a special dinner. This Year why

not consider "Valentine's- The Healthy Way!"

Regular exercise is one of the most beneficial things that any couple can do together. It's a fun and healthy way of bonding. Make a healthy goal and do it together!

Eating together must mean eating a healthy meal together. Plan ahead and Stock up on healthy options, from fruits & veggies to wholesome pulses and cereals.

You can eat all foods you enjoy but the key is to ensure that you are consuming a balanced meal that includes a healthy fare of fruits, vegetables, and healthy snacks.

A unique healthy plan can show that you truly care & that you have put a thought into your loved one's health. Is it better to celebrate your accomplishments alone or Both of you celebrating both of your accomplishments -together!

Call: 08369978195 | 09167482854

[f/Complete Nutrition by Priya Maisa](#)

[i/priyamaisa1910](#)



GO GREEN

Plants, coffee and more

What: The Jungle by Ugao

What's interesting: Siddhant Bhalinge, Founder and CEO of Ugao, had a dream of packing thousands of plants into a cozy little space where he could sit reading a book while sipping a cup of his favourite coffee. That same idea inspired him to build The Jungle. Here, everything you touch is for sale - plants, fertilizers, gardening tools and accessories, to name but a few. You have a plant expert at hand who will help you make the right choices while you browse a variety of plants and enjoy copious amounts of free tea and coffee.

Price: Starts from ₹300

Available at: The Jungle by Ugao, Pune

THIRST QUENCHER

Say cheers to good times



What: Growler Station by Drifters

What's interesting: A growler is a glass, ceramic, or stainless-steel bottle used to transport draft beer; growler stations are hubs where you can refill your growlers with your favourite beer. Mumbai's popular microbrewery Drifters has launched its first growling station in Pune's influential Koregaon Park. The brand-new, cozy 250sqft space has both pick-up and delivery services for

beer enthusiasts to quench their thirst and fill their growlers up. On the menu is a great line-up of flavoursome beers, including Vienna Lager (Mozart's Magic), Irish Craic (Irish Red Ale) and Kokum Cider alongside well-loved flavours such as Belgian Wit, Apple Cider and German Lager.

Price: One-litre growlers at ₹550

Available at: www.driftersbrews.com

Food for thought

Treat your tastebuds

What: Switch Deli & Kitchen

What's interesting: Switch Deli & Kitchen is a gourmet food factory based out of a cloud kitchen in Pune that produces exceptional dishes daily. The menu and concept is the brainchild of Ashish Chandani who has been in the hospitality space in Pune for the last two decades. The must-haves include the thin-crust pizzas with toppings of your choice, salads and deli sandwiches. Switch



has currently three divisions: a deli, kitchen, and a catering service for both office and house parties. To meet the needs of the times, it is geared to contactless catering with pre-plated foods and disposable cutlery.

Price: ₹800/- for two.
Available at: 8530750505, Switch Deli & Kitchen. **F**

Diet-e-Nation Taking Nutrition to the Next Level...

Dr. Pranoti Mane, is the founder of Diet-e-Nation and passionate leader captivating its mission forward. Her passion has come into reality when she experienced that corporate life was taking a toll of health & fitness, especially the health of teen agers and young corporate employees who lead sedentary life style heading towards a nightmare. She has taken a formal training in dietetics and nutrition and took the initiative to establish a formula that uses the perfect mix of science and pattern psychology to ensure that they not only provide strategies to reach your health goals, but also the finest method to put into practice these strategies into your existing lifestyle.

According to Pranoti:

At Diet-e-Nation we work one-on-one with clients and provide an end-to-end solution including a custom diet kit with an easy-to-follow diet plan, minimal exercise protocol and Positive Affirmation techniques for a perfect mind and body control.

Why The Diet Kit?

Generally, people are reluctant to follow Diet plan, follow it for a few days and lose patience and leave the Diet program ultimately losing hard earned money.

Have you considered factors such as

disciplined lifestyle, enjoyment, flexibility, sound sleep, longevity, youthfulness?

Diet Kit program is our USP for your Ultimate Transformation. It is a sustainable solution over the so-called diet plans in the market which do not guarantee you that you hook on to it till you achieve the Goal of Losing your weight.

This easy-to-follow healthy and tasty diet kit and customized program will help you lose weight, build muscle, and stay healthy without any nasty side effects or complicated exercise routines.

The Kit is made of all-natural foods and supplementary super foods with no preservatives. You can prepare your own food along with routine cooking of other family members, thus saving lot of your time.

Additionally, we work on other aspects such as weight management, weight gain, perimenopausal diet, diet for clinical ailments such as thyroid, diabetes heart health, etc. For this we handpick the best coaches and health experts from across the country to make sure you get the most personalized health care. Soon Diet-e-Nation's products will be available pan India, in Nutrition Hubs & supermarkets.

Dealers, Distributors Enquiry Solicited.
Please visit at: www.diet-e-nation.com



Pranoti Mane
(Founder, Diet-e-Nation)



Diet-e-Nation

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Amanora Park Town, Hadapsar,
Pune, India 411028

Call: +91 8806661816 / 9272321642

Email: info@diet-e-nation.com
p pranotimane@gmail.com



A Fitness Expert and Body Builder, Dr. Nikhil Tari

Dr. Nikhil Tari is one of India's leading bodybuilding & fitness consultant located in Kandivali (W), Mumbai. He has vast clinical experience of 15 years in fitness industry as a doctor and 24 years as a Bodybuilder himself. He has helped thousands of clients to transform their physique while maintaining their health too. His passion & love for the sport has made him famous in the field of bodybuilding & the fitness industry. Dr. Nikhil feels that ongoing trend of using supplements and drugs for the purpose of attaining good physique is increasing enormously all over the country, specially with the young generation. It is leading to severe irreversible health issues like infertility, heart issues, kidneys and liver problems. This is all because of wrong guidance in gyms and huge scam of ongoing counterfeit bodybuilding supplements. So Dr. Nikhil Tari being a doctor, a fitness athlete, bodybuilder & a coach himself has helped numerous fitness and bodybuilding athletes to achieve their dream physique along with taking care of their health. Till date he has done more than 2000 successful transformation throughout the world and has been awarded as India's #1 bodybuilding & fitness consultant by different institutions of our country.

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ENGAGING THE CHILD!

Here's how parents can keep their child occupied with fun yet educational activities. By Gayatri Chivukula

While things have become better post lockdown, the current scenario still states that we do not step out unless it is essential. Though we all - especially the children - might be feeling cooped-up, its better to be safe than sorry. But how can we keep the children active and engaged? Children are instinctively hyper and find it hard to stay still for even a little while. Keeping children engaged and entertained while making sure that they are being educated has become an important task for parents.



"IN EVERY ACTIVITY, I MAKE IT A POINT TO EDUCATE HIM ON SOME OF THE OTHER LESSONS OF LIFE OR MANNERS."

Sharing a similar sentiment, artist, model and proud mother to an eight-year-old, Bindiya Kapse adds, "We, the parents are getting a lot of quality time with our kids. I have keenly noticed many facets of my child's personality. I have continuously made endeavours to make learning fun. So, in every activity, I make it a point to educate him on some of the other lessons of life or manners. Some encyclopaedias have helped me to keep him informed about science and other subjects." Here are a few activities to keep your kids busy during the lockdown.

3-6 YEAR OLDS

These are the formative years with pre-schoolers and early grade schoolers. Proper educational activities will not hold their attention or interest since a home is a place of relaxation and fun for them. Try out fun activities like building cardboard forts, watching animated films and taking virtual tours of zoos and aquariums. Online and offline games that improve cognitive abilities like Legos, Ludo, quizzes, puzzles and many other such options work wonders with children of this age group. Arts and crafts are probably

the best way to keep them engaged. While cooking may be an option, if the kids seem to be afraid, baking may be a great way to start their culinary journey. Parents can also involve them in simple household tasks like picking up their toys, setting their bed and so on. Preeti Kapoor, an IT consultant says, “During this lockdown, since I am home the whole day, I realised my five-year-old is interested what I do in the kitchen. So, I got her to help me out. I feel she is becoming more independent and open to chores. She insists on helping out now.”



PARENTS CAN USE THIS TIME TO UNDERSTAND THEIR (CHILDREN'S) BEHAVIOURS AND PERSONALITIES BETTER

7-11 YEAR OLDS

Children in this age group get more attentive, so involving them in more educational tasks is not good. However, it is still necessary to ensure that every activity is fun. Kapse says, “Keeping him involved in daily chores and educating him in helping at home has kept him occupied and interested.

Some workbooks, art activities, and storybooks are also helping. Animated movies on TV and Netflix have been a great source of lessons and entertainment.” Make sure you teach your children to follow a schedule despite not having to go to school to ensure that their routine stays the same. If this becomes hard, try involving them in the process of making the schedule and allow them to add in a few of their demands.



12-15 YEAR OLDS



These are the years where children get more independent and wish to be left alone. Parents can use this time to understand their behaviours and personalities better, without being too invasive. Try joining them in some of their favourite activities like gaming or watching TV. Introduce them to some educational content both online and offline. Have them join you in activities like yoga, brain games, cooking, cleaning, etc. While planning any activity with them, make sure it sticks to their interests. While online classes are taking care of the academics, you can focus on non-academic activities that will help them improve their cognition, self-awareness, fitness, inter-personal skills and communication skills. **F**

WHAT WOMEN WANT!

Dear men, here are five things we want you to do in bed more often.



Do women love sex? Or do they hate it? There can be misconceptions galore about what men think women want when it comes to sex. So, here are certain things demystified.

HEART TALK

In most cases, conversations are a turn-on for women. So, if men want to forego that, it will be a cardinal sin. And it's not simple sweet-nothings that arouse women; soul-stirring conversations are an added bonus! So, talk your way

through her heart.

SPONTANEITY COUNTS

Nothing can be more off-putting than routine, mechanical sex. Women do want men to be more imaginative and aware of what turns them on.

A simple way to do this? Simply ask your partner about her likes and dislikes.

LIMITS OF ENDURANCE

To be sure, women do not want intercourse to last forever. Marathon sex

WOMEN DO WANT MEN TO BE MORE IMAGINATIVE AND AWARE OF WHAT TURNS THEM ON.

looks good on paper, but in reality, an inordinate delay in orgasming on part of the guy can make a woman writhe in boredom.

BEING SELFISH ISN'T COOL

When it comes to sex,

women do expect men to not be self-centred. So, if you orgasm and she doesn't, that would be counted as selfishness. Carry on, till both partners reach the climax.

SPOONING MATTERS

Normally, women do want men to follow certain after-sex amorous rituals. Cuddle-and-kiss takes top priority. In other words, women want to let the sweet aftertaste of sex to linger - rolling off to sleep after sex gets a big thumbs-down. **F**

FIGHTING ALL ODDS

MEENAKSHI GOEL, the founder of Label Eena, talks about standing on her own feet even without family support. By **Ravina M Sachdev**

Meenakshi Goel, founder and owner of Label Eena, dreamed of becoming a woman entrepreneur ever since she was a little girl, but her journey wasn't easy. "I remember seeing my father take export orders; all his overseas travel for his work and everything that came along with it always fascinated me," she recalls. "That's what I wanted for myself – to become a woman entrepreneur."

They say that the hobbies you take up in childhood often have something to do with your career later in life; that's exactly how it happened with Goel. "During the summers, my parents would encourage me to join embroidery and cooking classes. The skills I picked up then are what I utilise now; they enabled me to develop this passion for embroidered things," she reminisces.

She completed her

Bachelors in Business Administration a year before she got married. Despite being a topper throughout her school life and topping her school in grade 12, getting married was what the family expected her to do. But she wasn't a woman to sit idle though.

Goel experimented with multiple career paths over the years in an attempt to become more financially independent, but nothing felt right. She designed a few potlis for herself from time to time as she "always loved and treasured my own collection of potlis which were my trademark accessory with my saris. And I would always get complimented for them."

It wasn't until much later though that she thought of introducing her creations to the rest of the world. "Now, it gives me immense satisfaction to be working on something I am truly passionate about," she says. She shares that Eena

Eena "is about celebrating our heritage, an attempt to **make our age-old forms of needlework more accessible.**"



"is about celebrating our heritage, an attempt to make our age-old forms of needlework more accessible to a generation that has a more Western approach to fashion," explains Goel.

Building a brand from scratch was no cakewalk. "I have realised how much actually goes on behind-the-scenes for just a single piece," she reveals. Ever since they started online, it was a long wait of trying to increase their reach on social media to make themselves seen. "Apart from my husband and children, not a lot of people around me were encouraging of this venture," she rues. Even

now, many of her family members believe a woman should restrict herself to housework and be dependent on her partner. "Procuring finance, dealing with the legal hassles of setting up a home-grown brand, leaving home to showcase it at exhibitions and still not receiving a huge response—these were all difficult situations," Goel recalls. The COVID lockdown, she adds, did make her appreciate their online start and made her more ambitious to grow in a space that has so much potential. "We tried to be positive about the situation and do our best," she signs off.

SPEAK UP!

Women tend to make common mistakes of tolerating certain habits of their partners and suffering in silence. **Ravina M Sachdev** lists some things that you should absolutely put your foot down on.



How often has your own mother asked you to tolerate something and let it slide in your marriage? Indian women are often dictated by their own mothers, their families and even the society as a whole when it comes to matters of their own marriage. Women are taught to stay quiet, keep low and behave in a certain way towards their partners but enough is enough. It is high time Indian women took matters in their own hands and stood for themselves. To start with, here are certain things that no woman should ever do or tolerate in a marriage.

QUIT THEIR CAREERS BECAUSE OF THEIR PARTNER

While quitting your career because you don't feel like working anymore is a valid reason but leaving your job and giving up your

independence just because your partner doesn't want you to work is just not done. Communicate with your partner how important your job and your career is to you. You deserve someone who wants to see you succeed and not the other way round.

VIOLENT TREATMENT

Women often put this off as a one off and make things complicated for their own selves. If it can happen once, it can happen always. No matter how difficult it may seem, it's always wise to get help at the onset of any abuse and it's most definitely not something that should be tolerated.

BEING KEPT FROM YOUR FRIENDS

Your friends are an important part of your life and your husband cannot dictate who you meet or don't meet. If your husband is asking you to ignore your friends for him, then it's wise to talk with someone whose opinion you value as we can assure you this is not healthy for your relationship.

BEING SPOKEN DOWN TO

Your partner is supposed to be your equal and not your parent. He cannot talk yell, shout or even get mad at you for expressing your views on a particular matter. Do not ignore the topic and your feelings just

because he may get upset. Don't lose your voice and opinion for anybody. You are a human being and not a puppet.

CONVENIENCE

It's a relationship and not a deal where your partner can do or participate in things according to his convenience. You should not be okay with your partner loving you as per his convenience and should certainly convey the same to your partner.

DO NOT LOSE YOUR IDENTITY

Women in general love to have a sense of belonging and it's also okay to depend on your partner but what's not okay is losing your own identity in the process. Take time out from your marriage and do things that you enjoy doing. Focus on building your personality and being an equal in the marriage. **E**

Your partner is supposed to be your equal and not your parent. He cannot talk yell, shout or even get mad at you for expressing your views on any matter.

MAKING EVERYDAY HEALTHY



HAVE A HANDFUL DAILY TO MAKE EVERYDAY HEALTHY

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Tackling boredom can be quite stressful, not just for you, but for your children too, especially when they are still young. Now as a parent, we may be able to find a million ways to keep our child engaged in some activity or the other, but are all of them beneficial to them? Board games are a great, not only for family

Let us go back to the classic ways to beat the boredom. Here's how board games can be an entertaining yet mentally benefiting way to pass time, both for the parents and their children

and bonding time but it is also extremely beneficial when it comes to expanding your child's thinking capacity. Here are a few commonly played board games that are available in almost every household, with benefits that you never knew of. household, with benefits that you never knew of. household, with benefits that you never knew of.



PICTIONARY

Pictionary is a game that everyone in the family can enjoy and there is an edition that has been designed specifically for younger ones. This game involves representing the given words in the form of a picture which pressurises the brain to communicate in the form of drawings, not as easy task! Doing this helps in visualisation, memory, manipulation of mental imagery, along with the organisation of thoughts. All these skills are of great use when the child is developing his reading and understanding skills.

Along with that, creating images enhances hand-eye coordination and expands their creative boundaries too!

Alternative:

If you don't have the board game itself, you can adapt it to play without the board. All you need a bunch of papers and pens/pencils. Make chits of different words and fold them up. Keep them in a box/bag. Make teams, and turn by turn, a person takes a chit and draws for that team to guess.



SCRABBLE

The best way to expand your vocabulary is to have fun with it. Playing scrabble with your child is not only a fun way to pass time and kill the perpetual boredom but it promotes the cerebral development of your child in addition to the obvious fun! Scrabble can do wonders with the development of spellings for your child. Scrabble includes the concept of addition too, which enhances mathematical skills, a crucial ability in school-going kids. The anagram of developing new words from existing ones pressurises your child to think outside the box, thus expanding his/her creative horizons!

Alternative:

You can take a template from the internet for the board. Print it out and you can write down the word with a pencil instead of using tiles. Keep a dictionary near so that you can take this opportunity to teach/learn new words as you move ahead in the game.

**PICTIONARY HELPS
IN VISUALISATION,
MEMORY, MANIPULATION
OF MENTAL IMAGERY,
ALONG WITH THE
ORGANISATION OF
THOUGHTS.**



MONOPOLY

Monopoly is the most commonly played board game, available in almost every household. This game is capable of bringing all the family members together and create an environment of laughter. But the main reason, apart from killing boredom is that it is very beneficial when it comes to your children. Not only does it engage them in something fun for a long time, but it also helps in the development of mental skills of a child. Not only does it force your child to do the math, but it also teaches them the basics of financial handling. It also develops negotiation skills, a much-needed quality to deal with people in the real world.

Alternative:

Well, while this cannot be played without a board, making it is not that difficult. You'll find printable templates of the board, and money. Use the dice and pawns from another game.

BENEFITS OF BOARD GAME

HELPS WITH VITAL SOCIAL SKILLS

Competition and motivation one gets through board games encourages verbal expression while developing qualities like determination and patience. Critical thinking skills, the ability to focus longer, spatial awareness, memory and concentration are also honed.

BONDING TOGETHER

Board games are a great way to bond with the family and spend some quality time together.

PROBLEM SOLVING

Games will help them understand problems and how to solve them. They'll also learn how to analyse and figure out a workable solution.

UNDERSTANDING DECISION MAKING

Decision making is essential as an adult. Learning it as a child will only help in the long run. Board games – especially those using strategy – will hone those skills.

So, parents, you no longer need to look for creative ways to keep yourself or your child busy. Time to get those dusty boxes out of the corner of your cupboard and engage in some useful family time! **F**



Invest right

For best returns, having sustainable investing habits is the right choice. Here are some expert tips by **Manish Hathiramani**, property index trader and technical analyst, Deendayal Investments.

The global health crisis has forced each one of us to take a hard look at the way we spend and more importantly save money. Here's how we can inculcate sustainable investing habits for a better financial future.

PRACTISING A GOAL-BASED APPROACH

Identifying your priorities and immediate goals is the first step towards actualising the outcomes. Whatever your goal might be – investing in insurance, starting a family, or simply planning a vacation – save, save small, save now. Invest smartly and, remember, every penny counts.

AVOID HIGH RISKS

A novice investor looking for an alternate source should consider choosing a mid-risk avenue. Investing in high-risk avenues like the stock markets must be done only after thorough research and guidance. Invest considering your risk-taking appetite. Safer investment options like FDs and PPFs are always available.

INVEST SMARTLY

Keeping daily expenses

aside, only invest a surplus amount to avoid going into debt instead of earning. Investment should be looked at as a “profit-generating” means and not as a “sole earning” means.

HIRE A FINANCIAL ADVISOR

If you are still feeling confused, consider taking professional help. Not only will you save some strands of hair, but you will be able to look at the bigger picture

in life. Additionally, they are seasoned professionals; they will help choose the right avenues based on your needs and risk appetite.

THINK FIRST

Always think with a clear mind before you act upon a decision. Financial needs are subjective; do not base your financial plan observing your peers. Just because Formula 'A' worked for them doesn't validate its credibility of working for you too. Most importantly, think of how you can recover the savings you lost in the crisis. Do some groundwork and lay a solid plan so you are well equipped to tackle a financial crisis like this in future. **■**

Financial needs are subjective; do not base your financial plan observing your peers.

ALL ABOUT LOVE

Television actor **Hima Bindhu** made her debut as the lead in *Idaiyathai Thirudadhey*. **Kayalvizhi Arivalan** caught up with the emerging star on her journey in television and her V-day plans this year

A year ago, Colors Tamil television launched *Idaiyathai Thirudadhey*, which claims to be a never-seen-before love story that blossoms between two people forced into wedlock. The story fell in line with the channel's philosophy of portraying strong women-oriented stories. It is a complicated love story set against a rivetting backdrop of politics. Starring Navin as Shiva and Hima Bindhu as Sahana, the television series became a household favourite within a few weeks of its launch. "It is an interesting plot, and the concept is very intriguing," says Bindhu, who became an overnight internet sensation for her role. "Sahana is a very endearing character who struggles to deal with the trauma of being wedded to a guy she dislikes. On the whole, it is going to be a captivating show filled with a different kind of love story." She adds that there are a few similarities between her reel and real self. "Sahana is a well matured, bold and strong woman, and I try to adopt those qualities in real life too." In spite of many sequences with chemistry between the leads, it is their 'Tom & Jerry' fights that caught the viewers' attention, she feels.

Prior to acting, Bindhu was trained in fashion design,

and she designed new costumes and took part in ramp walks as part of her modelling assignments.

"The journey has been good so far. From nowhere, people have started recognising me. More than my real name, I've been celebrated as Sahana. I'm forever grateful to the IT team. They have showered lots of love and support on me, and they are my extended family," says Bindhu, who believes that it will be a memorable Valentine's Day this year as *Idaiyathai Thirudadhey* completes one year and there are hopes of many more to come.

SAHANA IS A WELL MATURED, BOLD AND STRONG WOMAN, AND I TRY TO ADOPT THOSE QUALITIES IN REAL LIFE TOO.



FROM STEPPING STONES TO MILESTONE



There were many ups and downs but **R. Archana** was determined never to give up. She took every challenge in the right stride and focused on achieving the goal



At the blooming age of 23, the award-winning school directress, Archana who had already completed two consecutive degrees in Engineering and Management devised her own brainchild of what we today know as the San Academy. She had previously worked at an educational institute for a year before starting a career with her first personal venture at Velachery, Chennai. At some point during the 3rd year of engineering, when anyone else in her shoes would be thinking of machines and gadgets, she got an idea of starting a school. Come what may, there was no derailing from that day. With constructive research on the education system of India for over a year and exceptional moral support from her family, she was ready to set an example for all young women leaders and entrepreneurs of India.

Even though her journey made her face a lot of negative perspectives about the current education system of the country, she is of the belief that the age old blame-game on the education system is immoral and incorrect. She is of the opinion that the competitive education system is not

the one to be blamed for becoming a burden on the student, but the real culprit here is the society and the people who make up the society, essentially, us. She started her journey with San Academy twelve years ago and it can be only described as a pristine experience. Beginning as a humble primary school teacher led to her success. Even though the path was filled with pits and rough edges, she started from a grass root level and built her way to establishing primary, secondary and higher secondary schools in Chennai. As a directress, she not only had to learn teaching different classes, but also had to master her administration and execution skills. "I firmly believe one can't be what one can't see; hence one's vision in life is very important," says the directress of four different schools panned out in Chennai. Today, her vision of making a difference for over 3000 families has finally come true and she also plans on taking this venture to an international level, someday.

Archana who has been bestowed upon with multiple prestigious awards for her contribution to the educational sector of the country, is involved in every department of the schools, be it teaching, curriculum planning, concerts, extra-curricular activities, administration and execution of all school policies. According to her, the key ingredient of a successful institution is sensitivity. An institution that is dynamic but sensitive to the needs of all its stakeholders, especially the students, their

parents, the teachers and the management will inevitably be successful. Besides, the fact that it must keep up with all the latest technological developments while having as its foundation, valuable traditions and strong values. It must have a management that understands educational needs of not only the children, but also the whole society, at large. Children learn what they see; hence setting a good example for them with sterling staff of teachers should be the ultimate motto.

She feels that the education system in India is vastly different from school beyond the border. At the age of 15, when she had visited London with her father, she realised how different the educational practice was over there. She said that children over there are given the freedom to exhibit their imagination and the teachers take personal approaches to appreciate their creativity individually which in time boost the confidence of the students. However, here in India, only the best candidate gets to showcase his or her calibre. Hence educationalists have to give equal importance to every child in order to mould a strong and bright future for the generations to come.

Being an educationalist and a social worker, the directress has always tried to contribute to society and the environment. All the four schools under San Academy are green campuses and the usage of plastic is prohibited. She believes in the fact that a



**"I FIRMLY BELIEVE ONE
CAN'T BE WHAT ONE CAN'T SEE;
HENCE ONE'S VISION IN
LIFE IS VERY IMPORTANT"**

journey is over when one quits and not when one loses. Self confidence is the quality which channels her passion into productivity. According to her, a good institution takes care of every single student and here at San Academy, the utmost priority is attention and motivation. All the branches uniquely stand out best at sports, self-defence, everyday skills, etc.

Archana also believes in the fact that everything can be achieved with love and

care. The happy faces of her students motivate her to work even harder and provide appropriate freedom to them. The teachers, official staff, principals and even the parents have acted as her backbone throughout this journey. She is proud about the fact that every student at San Academy Group of Schools has earned a name of themselves in the field panning from sports to science through various achievements. **f**

HOME REMEDIES FOR YOUR SKIN FROM WRINKLES TO BURNS

Everything you need for quick-fix skin remedies is probably at home—you're just not using it right, says **Neeti Jaychander**

You don't need to break the bank for great skin! While nothing beats the convenience of a store-bought product that suits the needs of your skin, you can also look to your pantry for cues. Here are some hacks for every conceivable issue—from acne to fine lines, and suntan to burns.

Baby Oil For Makeup Removal

Astringent-based makeup removers can dry out skin that has already suffered the ill-effects of makeup. Any good baby oil is a great substitute because it is light and also safe to use, since the ingredients are hypoallergenic and gentle on the skin. It leaves the skin nourished, doesn't cost an arm and a leg, and does the job effectively! You can also use extra virgin olive oil and extra virgin coconut oil if you have dry skin.

Cow's Ghee For Mild Burns

If you accidentally scald yourself while whipping up something in the kitchen, the general tendency is to put cold water on it. However,



that's not too effective as the affected area will still blister. Instead, use cow's ghee immediately before blisters start to form! Even if the burn has formed, ghee can be used to treat the affected area, and it will heal beautifully, without too much scarring.

Toothpaste For Ant Bites Or Acne

Toothpaste typically contains triclosan, a chemical formula that kills acne bacteria and dries up pimples. In addition, it also contains other ingredients like baking

ANY GOOD BABY OIL IS A GREAT SUBSTITUTE BECAUSE IT IS LIGHT AND ALSO SAFE TO USE.

soda, alcohol and hydrogen peroxide, which could dry up pimples. This is great if you know the toothpaste won't cause adverse reactions or any other skin complications; always run a patch test.

Freshly-Cut Tomato For Tan Removal

If you're looking to alleviate LIGHTEN? a suntan and soothe your sunburnt skin, applying raw tomato on the affected area is a great hack. Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that offers many benefits, including protecting the skin from harmful UV rays and even skin cancer. Tomato has cooling properties that soothe sunburn and also offers astringent benefits that tighten large pores. **F**

LEADING THE WORLD OF BUSINESS

Meet the Industrialist, Philanthropist and Founder of Safe and Strong Business Consultants Private limited
Dr. Praveen K.P. (Praveen Rana) It is one of the fastest growing business group,
having presence in India and all over the World

Dr. Praveen K.P.



An industrialist, philanthropist Dr Praveen K.P. is capable of making

India the number one country in the world. He is truly a living example who has showed us that nothing is unachievable. He has bounced back harder every time with a never give-up attitude. Since his childhood, he had a broad sense of patriotism fore sighting India to be a number one country in the world.

He received the best young entrepreneur from the Governor of Kerala, Mr. Arif Mohammed khan at a very young age. He is a person who takes pride in once origin as well as work for the prosperity of the Country. He created and developed ideological science. In similarity to the name of the company Safe and Strong, Dr. Praveen K.P displayed exceptional intellectual ability, creativity, productivity and originality.

After graduation, Dr. Praveen K.P ventured into the market in search of employment opportunities, where he realized that he was also a victim of the present faculty education system which gives out information about subjects not having any prominence in the working

environment. He had his own idiosyncratic alternative education methods. He presented them with the piece of knowledge that intended to eliminate misconceptions and sharpen focuses. Through his real education system he wanted his peers to develop the habit of thoughtfulness which can build up traits that are essential for every global citizen. He developed a passion for tailoring education according to the individual needs. He understood and realized that the best ways to make a fortune in life is to become an entrepreneur. He is all about learning, innovation, research, testing and normalizing out of bound ways of doing things and tries to address the root cause of any problem. He understands the power of money to different stages.

A vast experience coupled with strong will-power is the hallmark of Dr Praveen K.P. His march into the world's darkest alleys has started and is continuing in his best of forms. He's a genius and multi-talented person who is an Actor, Director, Producer, Industrialist, Motivator, and Leader. He is someone who is capable of turning the value of money, a rupee into many folds. **F**

KEEP YOUR LUNGS HEALTHY AND STRONG

Lung cancer is often diagnosed in the late stages of the disease, because there are few or no symptoms in the early stages. The best way to prevent lung cancer is to have awareness about the disease, says **Kayal Arivalan**

Around 50% of Indians diagnosed with lung cancer are non-smokers.

Air pollution—both outdoor and indoor, including coal and biomass burning—is linked to the rising number of lung cancer cases among non-smokers in India. Lack of awareness, delayed diagnosis, and unavailability of specialist care are leading causes of lung cancer deaths in India.

The conventional thought process is that lung cancer affects only males with a smoking habit, but this is not close to the actual truth. Women who do not smoke or have never been exposed to tobacco products are at

risk too. In fact, there has been a 25% increase in the incidence of lung cancer in women globally over the last few years.

Unfortunately, women with the habit of smoking or chewing tobacco are at a greater risk of developing lung cancer than men with a similar predisposition. Avoiding any form of tobacco, including cigarettes or smokeless tobacco, are the first steps. As urban women endure air pollution and rural women are exposed to indoor smoke while burning solid fuels, both groups are unknowingly at risk of developing lung cancer due to prolonged exposure.

DOCTOR SPEAK

Never neglect symptoms like a persistent cough, breathing difficulties, unintentional weight loss, blood in sputum, change in voice, and hoarseness. Reach out to your doctor for an early diagnosis and appropriate treatment. Detection at an early stage has proven to have the longest survival rate; however, nearly two-thirds of lung cancer cases are diagnosed at a later stage. Understanding

the biology of lung cancer with genomic testing is the most critical, as different kinds of lung cancer could have different therapy and different prognosis. Seeking help at a multi-disciplinary centre, one that could guide you with the most cutting-edge therapy, is imperative.
- Dr Sewanti Limaye, MBBS, MD (USA), MS (USA) 



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GIVE YOUR INSTANT NOODLES A HEALTHY MAKEOVER

Grab a bowl of healthy noodles with a right kind of add-ons, says **Neeti Jaychander**

If you're challenged on the culinary front during the lockdown, instant noodles work like a charm! But despite its two-minute cooking convenience, they aren't the most nutritious food you can have. While you can't change that, you can always prep it with other ingredients that could add nutrition.



With Eggs

Eggs are protein-rich, and vital in ingredients like B vitamins. They're a complete food, so getting an egg or two along with a portion of your instant noodles is always a good idea. You can scramble it in, boil and finely



chop it, or make an omelette with the noodle-stuffing.



With Veggies

If you don't want to cook a conventional vegetable side dish or curry, instant noodles with the readymade flavouring adds enough taste on its own. All you need to do is throw assorted boiled vegetables into this mix (boiled with just a little salt), and your one-dish meal is ready!



With Mushroom & Cheese

Channel Italian pasta with your instant noodles! Just sauté a few mushrooms in olive oil, melt any cheese of your choice and drizzle them both on top of the noodles. Garnish with herbs if you have them handy. Not only does this taste yummy, but mushroom is also rich in selenium, and cheese is protein and calcium-rich.

In A Soup

Prepare the noodles the same way as you would a regular noodle soup, with water or vegetable/chicken stock, adding ingredients like vegetables or meat to this. This is truly a comfort food which practically helps you keep cough cold and flu at bay. This could also become your kid's favourite. **F**

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5 JOB SKILLS THAT ARE A MUST IN A POST-COVID WORLD

As the COVID-19 pandemic resets major work trends, **Anindita Ghosh** lists down essential job skills you need to develop to survive in a post pandemic world



The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive economic fallout. With industries shut and business making almost no profits, the biggest casualty has been jobs. Employers have been handing out pink slips or cuttings huge chunks of salary to stay afloat. A CII study of 200 CEOs found that one-third expected

job losses of 15-30 per cent in their respective sectors. And according to the International Labor Organisation (ILO), the lockdown is affecting almost 2.7 billion workers, representing 81% of the world's workforce. In this kind of a scenario, with jobs expected to be in short supply even when the lockdown ends, it is important that you be

**MORE
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armed with skills that will be in demand in the post-COVID world.

Being Tech Savvy

You must have seen how the coronavirus pandemic has forced even the most traditional of businesses to scale up their digital processes. Technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, Internet of Things, virtual >

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COMMITMENT TO LEARNING

According to the World Economic Forum, 35 per cent of the essential skills you have today will be redundant in less than five years. So pledge that you will learn new skills or upgrade the ones you already have regardless of the stage of career you are in. Advanced qualifications will also single you out from the hundreds of people who will be looking for a job after the COVID crisis is over.

and augmented reality and robotics will be in high demand now as they give some protection against the disruptions of the kind we are facing. More and more organisations will be relying on these in the future so it is important for you to skill up and get familiar with them.

Get Data Literate

Data science is a very important tool for any company to serve customers, understand business trends, gauge changed customer needs and predict how disruptions affect the business. This information will be crucial in the post-pandemic world not just to

COMPANIES WILL
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deal with customer behaviour but also to buffer against future calamities. So data scientists who can make sense of a huge amount of data to sift out what a company needs will be in great demand.

Digital Is The Way Forward

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of digitising operations and processes in companies. Now, all companies will be forced to go digital and will be looking to hire people like coders, web developers and digital marketing and branding professionals who are crucial to keeping the digital side of a firm's operations running.

Flexibility

After the pandemic is over, traditional ways of doing business are going to change forever. You won't get far if you expect to get by with your existing skills. Employers will look for people who have a proven track record of flexibility and the ability to adapt to evolving situations. Innovation and creativity will also be at a premium. **F**



MASTERING THE ART OF MULTITASKING

A textile designer, mother, entrepreneur, Director of Dindigul Thalappakatti Hotels – **Deepika Nagasamy**, is a multitasker by nature. She inspires many young women with her success story

She started her journey with an interest in textile designing. She was married to Nagasamy Dhanabalan, Managing Director of Dindigul Thalappakatti Hotels. Deepika says she has not even heard of Seeraga Samba Rice Biryani before she was married into the family that owns a legacy for the delicacy. "The very first time I had the biryani, I understood the love and legacy of the dish" says Deepika, who added that her role was to understand the functioning and the process of the brand. "I started understanding the basics, handled smaller projects, their brand creatives started to run past by me". As a creative person, it became an extension for Deepika, to get into the marketing and the visual aspects of the brand.

She had to shut down her boutique as her prime responsibility was to shoulder the brand Thalappakatti restaurants and to make sure the creative aspects of the brand's need was fully taken care of. "It has been



Deepika Nagasamy

a wonderful journey and I never regret my decisions that helped me grow" says Deepika, who has played a huge role in taking Dindigul Thalappakatti to the new-age millennials. Not just Tamil Nadu that Thalappakatti

has a strong presence but in Karnataka and very soon in Kerala too! They have a strong abroad presence with 9 branches in 6 countries. "this gave us an opportunity to experience various culture and served as a platform to

incorporate few changes according to what the locals prefer. Creativity is a never ending process, and I am loving the constant learning that comes from it" says Deepika.

Being an all-rounder, Deepika's typical day starts at 5am. "My morning starts with an hour of workout and ends with a relaxed coffee break after the kid's morning school routine. My work day starts from 10 am till 3 pm. After a quick lunch it is a complete shutdown on the work front and I spend time with the kids, for their classes / homework or just letting them be kids". She stresses on the importance of learning to balance life, career and kids. "Planning the day out really helps in making sure that everything is completed within a short time frame" says Deepika whose advice to young entrepreneurs would be to find positive energy within yourself and the people around you. And most importantly, to have fun! "If you are not enjoying yourself, you are not doing it right" She concludes. **F**

AN IMMUNITY BOOSTER

Enjoy a mouthful of tasty delights while warding off germs!

What: Weikfield launches the EcoValley immunity-boosting range

What we love: With plans to strengthen its user experience with herbal infusions and organic tea, Weikfield has launched its latest immunity-boosting range of beverages under the EcoValley brand, with two products – Divya Kawach and Pahadi Kahwa. The brand-new EcoValley products have been developed with a blend of traditional Indian homemade recipes and natural ingredients. Divya Kawach has been carefully crafted with herbs such as tulsi, shunthi, dalcini, mulethi and black pepper, to name a few. All the products for EcoValley are grown above 8,000 feet in the Nilgiri mountain ranges, creating a smooth and delicate brew that offers multiple health benefits.

Price: ₹175 for 30 tea bags

Available at: Retail stores and on e-commerce platforms



GOOD NEWS FOR COFFEE LOVERS

What's better than a cup of coffee?

What: Levista launches flavoured coffees and an instant coffee variant

What we love: Bangalore-based company Levista, on completion of four years in the market, has unveiled four different types of flavoured coffee. The mouth-watering coffee variants that are all set to take everyone by surprise are Vanilla, Caramel, Hazelnut and Choco-Orange. Levista has also launched a new variant of instant coffee named Supreme, which has 70% coffee content and 30% chicory. The company believes the brand-new flavoured coffees will appeal to the millennial clan as well as the younger lot, and, of course, coffee lovers across the board.

Available: across Tamil Nadu and Karnataka through select retail stores, and nationally through e-commerce platforms.

A way to stave off UTIs

UTIs affect 150 million women every year, but VLCC has got you all covered

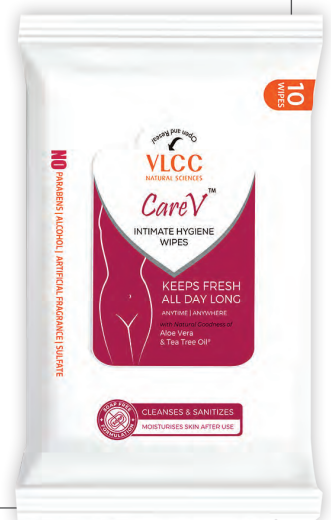
What: VLCC launches CareV Intimate Hygiene Wipes

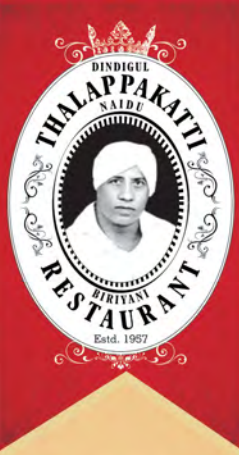
What we love: Feminine hygiene has always been a necessity often neglected while balancing between work and home. In order to keep your intimate areas pristine and ward off harmful infection-causing germs and viruses, VLCC's CareV Intimate Hygiene Wipes are made of a soap-free formulation that cleanses and sanitises the intimate area and keeps it odour-free.

They are enriched with the natural goodness of aloe vera and tea tree oil that moisturise your delicate skin. These wipes do not contain parabens, alcohol, artificial fragrances or sulfates, so it is safe to say that the hygiene of your intimate area will be taken good care of. Furthermore, the CareV intimate hygiene wipe will make you feel fresh and clean with its mild cleansing properties, and it also prevents the skin from getting unwanted rashes or allergies.

Price: ₹100 for a pack of 10 wipes

Available at: Retail and e-commerce stores **F**





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What: ORNAZ creates diamond rings exclusively for Indian couples

What we love: With top-notch technology, iconic designs and excellent craftsmanship, ORNAZ has revolutionised the world for romantics. ORNAZ uses cutting-edge, advanced web-based tech with features like virtual ring try-ons to enhance the user's experience. It also provides a vivid 360° diamond-viewing experience along with virtual consultations assisted by experts. With a lifetime diamond upgrade programme on all GIA graded diamonds, the rings are crafted by professional and valued artisans. The collection includes classic solitaires, customised models, all diamond cuts, and varied stone settings to suit current styles, modern design trends, and, most importantly, a pocket-friendly budget.

Price: On request

Available at: At a customised price globally



STUNNING JEWELLERY PIECES FOR THE SPECIAL ONE

Enjoy the season of love with a touch of tradition and special discounts across showrooms in Tamil Nadu

What: Kalyan Jewellers launches eight exquisite pieces of jewellery

What we love: Kalyan Jewellers has announced special festive discounts including upto 25% off on diamond jewellery, as well as on making charges (known as value additions or VA) starting from 3%. The beautifully-designed pieces of jewellery showcase elegance and beauty. The richness of the designs, the vibrant embedded gemstones and the minute detailing on these jewellery pieces pay tribute to nature. The trendy and traditional designs complement your modern and contemporary tastes.

Price: On request

Available at: Kalyan Jewellers' showrooms



The season of love is almost here!

Still confused about the perfect V-Day 2021 gift? Ecotasar is here with trendsetting gifts

What: Ecotasar brings you exquisite Indian weaves for Valentine's Day 2021!

What we love: Ecotasar specialises in hand-woven products that are the epitome of quality and style. These products are eco-friendly in nature and have a zero carbon footprint. The handloom industry is booming in India, and, with companies like Ecotasar, this age-old Indian heritage is shining brighter than ever. Whether it is a beautiful silk sari or a cotton linen scarf, Ecotasar has the best V-Day gift for your partner, and, best of all, you would be gifting natural wild silk through a collaborative venture of tribal silkworm rearing, rural women yarn makers and handloom weavers in the hinterlands of India.

Price: On request

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As a defence child, Ritika Raghav travelled to over 10 states in the country, which served as a catalyst for her modelling career. “Owing to my father’s profession, my life has been all about travelling to new places and experimenting with new things,” she shares. “It has made me a curious learner, very adaptive and open-minded.”

Raghav chanced upon her very first modelling opportunity back in her graduation days. Since then, she has taken every opportunity that came her way. Her finest achievement was being shortlisted as an FBB Campus Princess 2020 finalist last year, which has brought her closer to achieving her dream of becoming Miss India one day – which is now turning into reality as she is the VLCC Femina Miss India Union Territory 2020. Along with this, she has also walked the ramp for various shows in Kerala such as the Kerala Fashion League, Kerala Fashion Runway, and Indian Luxury Expo. She has also shot for Face of the Week on Kapa TV (a Kerala TV channel), for the Mathrubhumi newspaper, the magazine Vanitha and

THE MODELLING INDUSTRY HAS GIVEN RAGHAV AN IMMENSE AMOUNT OF EXPOSURE, AND SHE HAS PICKED UP THE BEST OF EVERYTHING



MARKING MILESTONES

RITIKA RAGHAV is working hard towards winning her dream pageant, says **Saloni Dhumne**



various labels in Kerala.

The modelling industry has given Raghav an immense amount of exposure, and she has picked up the best of everything. Her family and friends are very supportive of her dream of leaving a mark in this field as a bold, confident woman. Her parents especially have had a crucial role in who she is now today. She revealed, “They gave me everything a child needs to be a well-functioning individual in society. Right from childhood, my father exposed me to all sorts of opportunities that helped in the enhancement of my personality—be it singing, playing the piano, or sports. It was actually my father’s dream, inspired by Priyanka Chopra’s win, to see me on the same stage with the crown that pushed me to audition this year.” To facilitate their shared dream of seeing her as a pageant winner, “my father learned every possible thing that one can from YouTube to help me out, including photography, photo editing and hairstyling.”

Living by the belief that nothing is truly impossible, this black-eyed beauty goes way beyond just slaying the ramp. Dancing, singing, painting and watching inspirational documentaries are her hobbies, and she de-stresses by going for a run while listening to music. She subscribes to the idea that whatever happens happens for a reason, and she thanks the universe for her blessings before tucking herself into bed each night. **F**



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