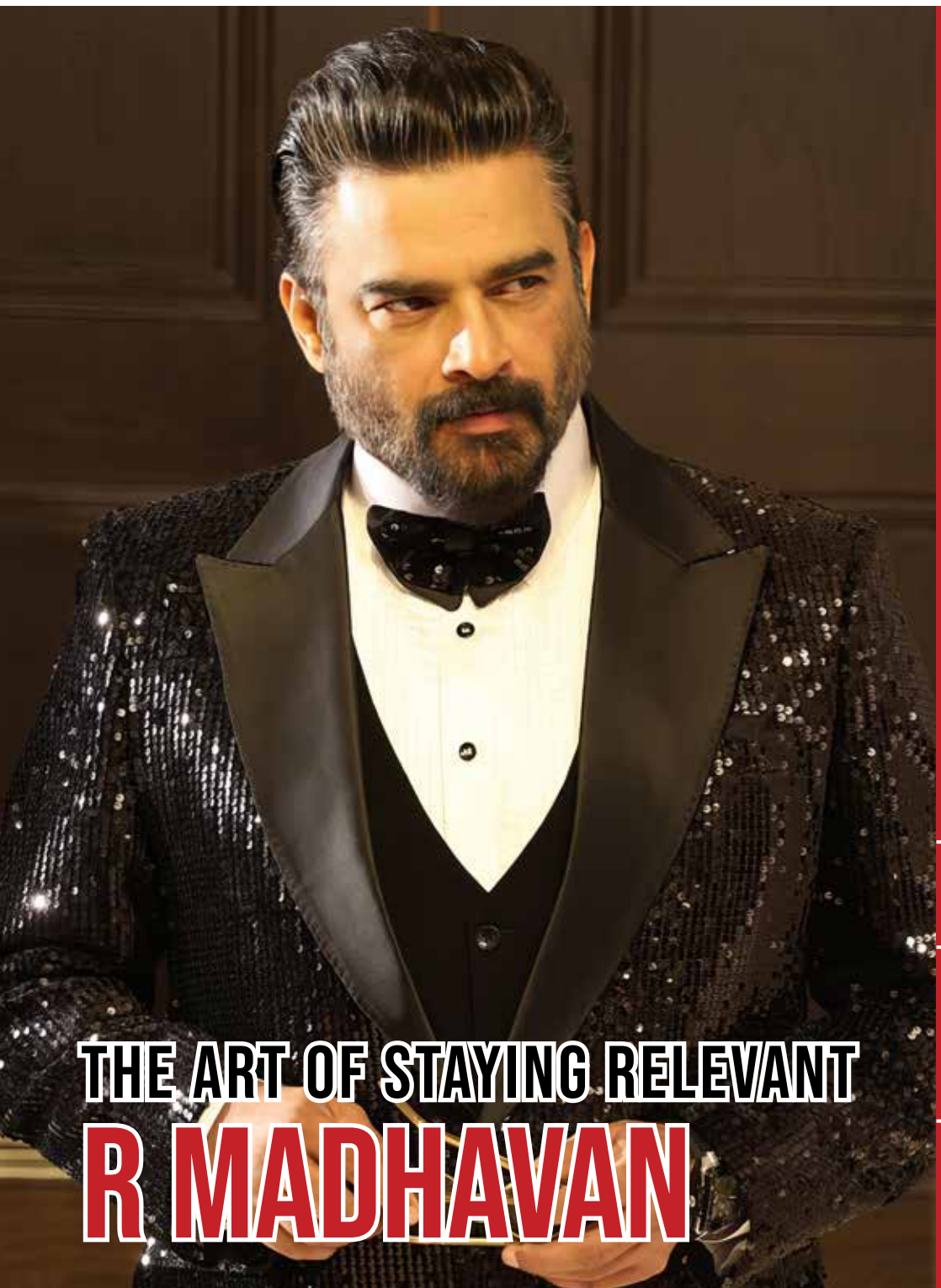
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April 2024



THE ART OF STAYING RELEVANT
R MADHAVAN

LEGENDS & ACHIEVERS

SHIV NADAR

IPL HEROES

MUKESH RISHI

VICTORIA BECKHAM

VIVEK RAMASWAMY

SHANE & FALGUNI PEACOCK

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Editor's Note

The swashbuckling, sexy and immensely talented R Madhavan is our hero this month! Walking us through his various films across languages, Madhavan talks about his escapade in the director's seat as well. Diving into the troughs and peaks of his career, he decodes what it takes to stay relevant over decades. And speaks candidly about his personal space – what keeps his marriage rock solid despite the challenges, his son's swimming career with a focus on the Olympics and more... Heartwarming and honest, Madhavan is truly at his best in our **Cover Story.**



When we talk about **Legends & Achievers**, India's tech guru Shiv Nadar zooms to the top of the list and sits there majestically yet so simply. Nadar is not only a genius techie, but also a genius entrepreneur. ...The accolades just don't stop for this man!

Joining him in our list of legends and achievers are men and women who are acing their respective games – from our IPL champions to legendary villain Mukesh Rishi, Britain's swish girl for decades now - Victoria Beckham, Indian roots entrepreneur and politician Vivek Ramaswamy, and dreamy designers Shane & Falguni Peacock. Guts, gumption and glory define them all!

Let's move into our **Lifestyle** section with laughter yoga expert Pranali Dhamankar. While breaking down the benefits of this therapy in 'Wellness', she nudges us all to get into laughter mode to live meaningfully and magically. 'Fast Lane' cues us into the world's dapper vintage car owners – Amitabh Bachchan, George Clooney, Gautam Singhania, Ben Affleck and Nick Jonas among others... In 'Food', Chef Vicky Ratnani plates up some gourmet cheese, making it worth our while to dig into! Beat the heat with 'High Spirits' which concocts delicious coolers, while leafing through 'Book Nook' which serves up the latest reads on the shelf.

Summering beckons... step into the season with warmth and vigour, and have yourself a cheery li'l summer now!

- Andrea CostaBir

Photograph: Viraj Shirodkar

R Madhavan: “It has truly been the game of destiny”

From a young lad who wished that people would glance up when he entered the room, to achieving a praiseworthy position as an actor and even a director, Madhavan is living his best dream.

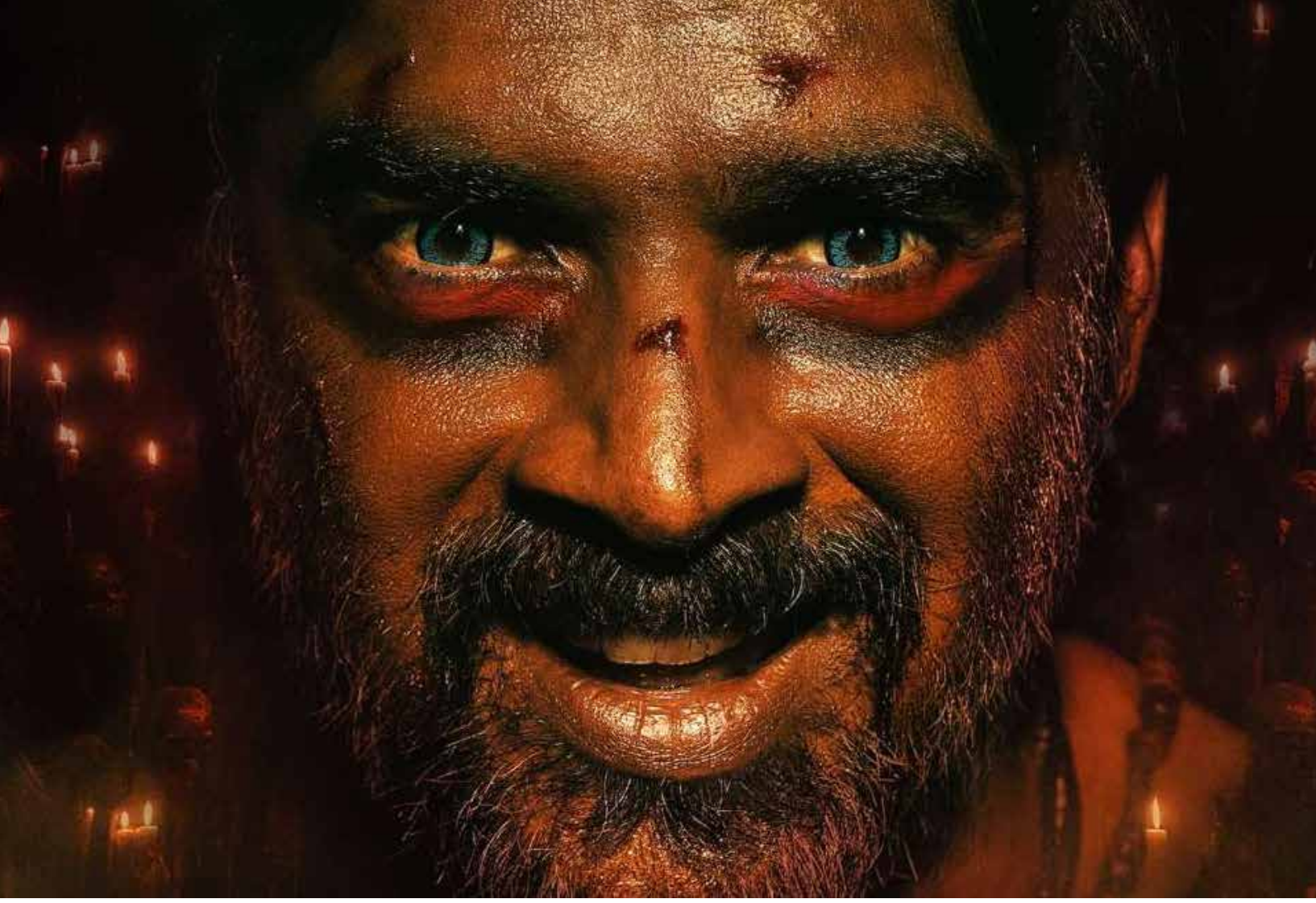
By Nichola Marie

Your supernatural horror ‘Shaitaan’ joined the ₹150 crore club. What was the experience like playing the devil who comes out of nowhere to take over the lives of a once-happy family?

This is the first time I’m playing an evil character; I’ve played negative leads before, but this is pure evil. I was nervous on two accounts. One is because I’m playing this for the very first time. And second, because a very prominent Gujarati actor had done this in the earlier film ‘Vash’ - and had done a brilliant job. I knew that the comparison would be there. I wanted to play it very differently. I wanted to use a little bit of charm. I also kept in mind that this guy has done what he’s doing to the family in this room 107 times before and succeeded. So I wanted a smugness to him, I wanted a sense of being overconfident and knowing that whatever he is going to do is going to work anyway. So I wanted to play that with a smug charm. In all frankness, I was very nervous before the release, because I wasn’t so sure how it was going to be looked at. But God’s grace, it really worked out well for me, and I’m thrilled with the outcome.

“‘Shaitaan’ is the first time that I’m playing an evil character; I’ve played negative leads before, but this is pure evil... I wanted to play that with a smug charm. I was very nervous before the release but God’s grace, it really worked out well for me.”






SHAITAAN

"'Rocketry', for me, was a passion project, it was God-sent. It was probably meant to tell me what my true potential was. One of the things that did teach me was the power of cinema."

Your directorial debut – 'Rocketry: The Nambi Effect' (2022) won much attention. It also brought into public consciousness the life of Nambi Narayanan...

'Rocketry', for me, was a passion project, it was God-sent. It was a project that was probably meant to tell me what my true potential was. One of the things that did teach me was the power of cinema. Mr Narayanan is a boon for me and knowing him has been an honour of a lifetime. But to see the impact that the film had on him... Becoming a national icon, signing autographs for seven-year-old kids who knew who he was, being treated as a VIP in every corner of the country... goes to show what true storytelling is capable of achieving. And to know that I had a small hand to play in that is a reward and award of a lifetime!

Will direction play an important part in your journey in cinema? What stories would you like to tell?

I'm not so sure how much of a film director I want to remain... It's a huge responsibility and I do not know how qualified I am to pull off another film. But I do know that if I do end up directing, then that is going to be a story that comes from within the heart because I don't want to do it as a profession. Secondly, I have not trained as a director or in any technical aspects of filmmaking, it's always learnt on the job. Sometimes, that's an advantage because you're at the cutting edge of storytelling, fighting the battles from the frontline, so you have an idea of what's working. It's also a disadvantage because your roots are still floating in the air and you're hoping that you will find the basics somewhere and make sense of the gist of the story that you want to tell.

Regarding the second part of your question, I think that we, as a film industry, have not delved into one aspect of India, which is the extremely empowered, confident and forward-looking Indian that he has become today. With world leaders having their roots in India, with technological and IT experts around the globe having roots in and from India, there's a certain sense of empowerment that Indians feel across the world. And I want to touch on subjects that portray the Indian in that sense, and show India playing from the front foot. I'm done with the freedom struggle, and the terrorist attacks and stuff, which I think has become the norm. In terms of acting or storytelling, I want to show the Indian as a world leader.



"With world leaders and technological and IT experts around the globe having roots in India, there's a certain sense of empowerment that Indians feel across the world. I want to touch on subjects that show India playing from the front foot."



You have also seen immense success in the South as an actor.

I've been lucky enough to know both the languages that I'm making movies in - Tamil, as well as, Hindi. So it becomes convenient to portray the characters convincingly with my limited abilities as - let's say, a star - in terms of my dancing or singing ability. I have to dwell on aspects that I'm strong, playing the characters as real as possible. The films that I'm very proud of are 'Alai Payuthey' (2000), my first film, 'Minnale' (2001), 'Anbe Sivam' (2003),' Karnathal Muthamittal' (2002), 'Thambi' (2006), 'Vikram Veda' (2017), 'Irudhi Suttru' (2016) – all this in Tamil. And in Hindi, of course, I've done very limited films but I'm lucky to have been part of some very iconic ones, right from 'Rehnaa Hai Terre Dil Mein' (2001), 'Guru' (2007), '3 Idiots' (2009) to 'Rang De Basanti' (2006), 'Tanu Weds Manu' (2011), and 'Tanu Weds Manu Returns' (2015). Then there have been the web series, 'Breathe' (2018) as well as 'Decoupled' (2021) and 'Railwaymen' (2023) - all three of which I'm very proud of. And 'Rocketry', of course, and now 'Shaitaan'. I've been very blessed with all my selections in Hindi.



A young lad from Jamshedpur, did you ever dream you would be where you are today?

When I was in Jamshedpur, I remember an overwhelming feeling that I used to have whenever I entered the room: That everybody should at least have a glance and see who has just entered. I should be able to draw everybody's attention. I do not know why or how I had that. From there, to achieving that, in the true sense of the word, has been a blessing. It has truly been the game of destiny. I am always overwhelmed with a sense of gratitude, because I do not know if I deserve it all. But I do know that the amount of talent that the good Lord has given me has yet to be exploited completely.



“I don’t know how much of an actor I am. But I don’t think anybody can quite beat me in my sense of screenplay. And I proved that over and over again with my movies and my OTT series.”

Some of your most fulfilling achievements, and also challenges you are proud to have overcome...

I’m really proud of the fact that I stay relevant after almost 27 years in the industry - and if you count the television era, it has been close to 30 years, and I’m still growing, I’m still relevant, and I’m still able to tell the stories that I want to. Speaking of achievements and challenges... You know, pulling through films and finishing them despite the biggest struggles or swallowing my pride and ego when I’m wrong and apologising and getting things done. Taking up a film like ‘Rocketry’, for instance, in a field which I have no experience in, like direction or editing or script, writing a screenplay and having pulled it all off to get the National Award, I think has been my biggest achievement. But one achievement I’m really proud of? I think I have one of the best senses of screenplay in the industry, even if I say so myself. I don’t know how much of an actor I am. But I don’t think anybody can quite beat me in my sense of screenplay. And I proved that over and over again with my movies and my OTT series.

Women find your rough-around-the-edges magnetism extremely attractive.

In all frankness, when somebody calls me sexy or says I’m attractive or good-looking at my age, I have an out-of-body experience, almost like they’re talking about somebody else because I’ve never actually revelled in that idea. I have always wanted to be a nice guy, somebody who’s honest and just, somebody easy to approach and have a conversation with, who would share his life experiences with you in the hope of making your life slightly better than before you met me. To be considered good-looking and a symbol for the ladies to be attracted to, to put it mildly, (laughs) is something that I never expected and I’m very grateful for it. I do look at myself sometimes in the mirror and say, ‘Sexxxaaay’. But that’s about all I ever do.

“To be considered good-looking and a symbol for the ladies to be attracted to, to put it mildly, (laughs) is something that I never expected and I’m very grateful for it. I do look at myself sometimes in the mirror and say, ‘Sexxxaaay’. But that’s about all I ever do.”











“I have been in awe of Vedaant because of his commitment to his beliefs and desires.”

Your son Vedaant has been consistently making waves in competitive swimming. What are your emotions as he dreams of Olympic gold?

Vedaant has been a labour of love as well, but more labour from my wife’s side as opposed to mine. Because of my constant travels, I’ve only followed what he’s done remotely at times, and being there to motivate him and to talk to him has been my only contribution. I have been in awe of Vedaant because of his commitment to his beliefs and desires. Right now I can just hope and pray, look at the records and look at the results, and pray even harder. Sarita and I have been very blessed, and we hope it stays that way.

You and Sarita evidently share a rock-steady marriage, what are the elements that go into its making?

I’m very lucky to have found Sarita as a wife. It’s not easy being the wife of a celebrity, especially of a film actor, all the insecurities do set in and we had to field that the way we did together. I cannot take credit for the success of the marriage. It’s mostly Sarita’s achievement. We have all the challenges that any couple faces in today’s world; we still get into nasty fights and arguments. But, over a period of time, we realise that we are the best fit for each other. So we do what it takes to get back to the companionship that we both enjoy as opposed to the arguments. There is a lot of give and take. And there’s a lot of losing oneself. There’s a lot of compromise in the beliefs that one has, to stay together. And the best part is the person you’re willing to stay together with is worth all the effort.

You recently opened up about your most expensive purchase (after your sprawling house) – a 40-foot yacht which you are qualified to sail yourself.

Hey, much has been spoken about that little boat of mine but it’s just something that I enjoy doing because it’s one of the materialistic impulsive purchases that I’ve made. Being on it fulfills a childlike desire that I’ve had of being a captain of a boat. And although it’s not as big or glamorous as the one shown in pictures with reference to my yacht, I still feel very proud of it and I spend a considerable amount of time on it, speculating about the stories I’m about to do or sitting around with friends and just enjoying the bobbing of the sea. It’s very soothing, and I’m very grateful to God for it.

“In marriage there is a lot of give and take. And there’s a lot of losing oneself. There’s a lot of compromise in the beliefs that one has, to stay together. And the best part is the person you’re willing to stay together with is worth all the effort.”

Health Wise

Four renowned doctors share keen insights on staying physically and mentally fit.

Prioritising Wellness In The Digital Age

Dr Suyesha Khanijao, leading IVF Specialist, Cosmetic Gynaecologist, Obstetrician & Gynecologist at Angel'sHope IVF, a unit of Sawan Neelu & Angels Hospital, Saket, New Delhi.



In today's hectic world, it's easy to get caught up in the chaos and neglect our well-being. Common issues like high workload, competition and stress, all impair physical and mental health. Consumption of highly refined carbohydrates can increase the risk of obesity and diabetes. A decrease in the function of the gut barrier (leaky gut) has been linked to an "unhealthy" gut microbiome resulting from a diet low in fibre and high in saturated fats, refined sugars and artificial sweeteners.

What we fuel our bodies with, directly affects our energy levels, immune system and overall vitality. Creating environments and developing measures that promote healthy, nutritious diets, while decreasing the consumption of "junk" food, may provide benefits beyond the well-known effects on physical health, including improved psychological well-being.

The concept of wellness plays a big part in healthy aging. Embracing a healthy lifestyle has the twin benefits of enhancing our overall well-being and empowering us to lead happier and more productive lives. A healthy lifestyle involves balanced nutrition habits, managing stress, regular physical activity, doing spiritual growth supportive activities, keeping interpersonal relationships alive and taking responsibility for these issues.

Micronutrients Matter: Supporting Health Across Generations

Dr Radhika Raturi, MD, Consultant Gynaecologist & Obstetrician at GR Hospital, Dehradun.



Nutrition is a critical aspect of maintaining health at all stages of life. Micronutrients, required in small amounts, are crucial in health and well-being from infancy to old age. During infancy and childhood, adequate intake of micronutrients is essential for developing cognitive functions, immune system strength, and bone health. The adolescent phase is characterised by rapid growth spurts and hormonal changes. Micronutrients like calcium, iron, and zinc play vital roles in bone development, hormone regulation, and immune function. While adults generally are at lower risk of vitamin or mineral deficiency, they still may be at risk of micronutrient deficiency. This is due to lifestyle choices. Adolescent and adult women need to ensure that their iron intake is adequate. Older adults are at risk of general malnutrition due to decreased appetite, impaired absorption and chronic health conditions. Micronutrient deficiencies, particularly vitamin D, vitamin B12, and calcium, are common among older adults and can contribute to health issues.

Supplementation can also play a role in meeting specific needs across different stages of life. Supplementation of vitamins and minerals becomes increasingly important to compensate for age-related declines in nutrient absorption and metabolism. Micronutrients are indispensable for optimal health across all stages of life.

Nurturing Your Liver: The Vital Organ

Dr Rajesh Rajora, MD Consultant Physician, Aastha Hospital, Ghaziabad.



In the intricate tapestry of human health, the liver emerges as a silent guardian, diligently performing myriad functions crucial for good health. The well-being of the liver is largely influenced by the food we consume. Ensuring a nourishing and proportionate diet is vital. Restricting processed food and alcohol consumption can significantly help maintain normal liver health. An excess of fatty foods can result in the accumulation of fat in the liver, leading to fatty liver. A balanced diet enriched with antioxidants from fruits, vegetables, and lean protein can uphold a healthy liver.

Tips to help keep the liver healthy:

- Consume liver-friendly food like berries, nuts, fatty fish, and green tea.
- Manage chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight through a balanced diet and exercise.
- Micronutrients and antioxidants play a crucial role in supporting liver health by providing essential nutrients and combating oxidative stress.
- Certain vitamins, minerals and antioxidants have been shown to have protective effects on the liver, aiding in detoxification, reducing inflammation, and promoting regeneration. Vitamin E, for example, acts as a potent antioxidant, scavenging free radicals and protecting liver cells from damage. Vitamin C and selenium help neutralise oxidative stress and support the liver's detoxification processes. Supplementation may be beneficial for individuals with specific liver conditions or those at risk of deficiency.

Nutritional Foundation: The First 1,000 Days Of Life

Dr Niti Vijay, Senior IVF Specialist & Consultant Gynecologist; an incisive professional with over 7 years of cross-functional experience in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, with a special interest in Assisted Reproductive Technology.



The first 1,000 days of life are the most crucial years for a child's future. According to research, the diet, weight and lifestyle choices of the mother affect the infant's immune system, organ development and metabolism. The child's health suffers when the mother's diet and health are impaired. Preconception care is simply a logical extension of care during pregnancy, yet this small measure will make a major impact in ensuring that the mother and baby are not at risk.

An undernourished mother inevitably gives birth to an undernourished baby. During the lactation period, mothers are at an increased risk of nutritional deficiencies due to improper dietary patterns and physiological changes. This makes it more challenging for mothers to replenish the nutrient stores of the baby. At each stage during the 1,000-day window, the developing brain is vulnerable to poor nutrition. Optimal nutrition and health care of both the mother and infant during these days are closely linked to growth, learning potential and neurodevelopment.

Eight vital nutrients play a specific role throughout the first 1,000 days of life, namely, carotenoids (lutein + zeaxanthin), choline, folate, iodine, iron, omega-3 fatty acids, and vitamin D. Other nutrients for maternal, newborn and toddler health include magnesium, vitamin A, vitamins B, and other trace minerals. Antenatal and postnatal supplementation with multiple micronutrients can improve birth outcomes, and health of the baby and the mother.

Legends & Achievers

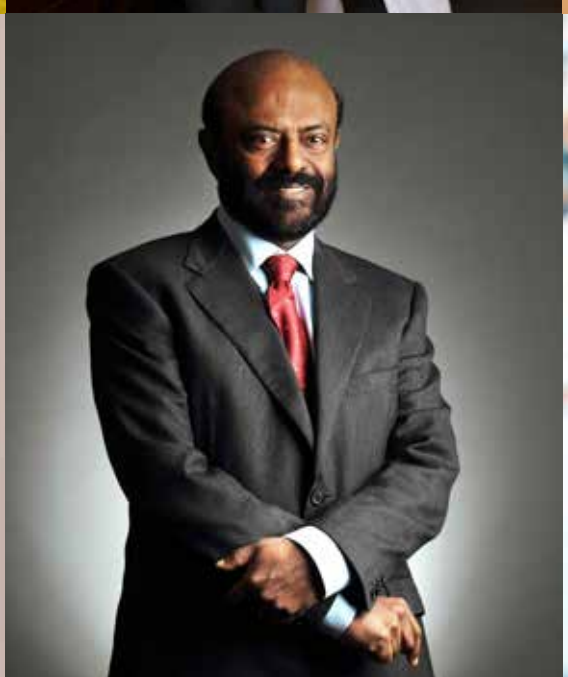
Changing the game comes easily to this lineup because they have the gumption to see things through. They are driven, determined and daring... with no intention of hanging up their boots!













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Shiv Nadar: The Man Who Transformed India's Tech Landscape

A deep insight into tech genius, educationist and philanthropist Shiv Nadar's visionary legacy, and how his resolve has changed what IT means for the Indian youth.

By Stuti Kute



Think back to the 1970s, the decade considered by historians rife with pivotal changes worldwide. In the Western world, political upheaval and the parallel post-war innovation were afoot. India then was still a young country finding its footing post-independence and still a lick away from the all-changing liberalisation of the 1990s. It was during this time in 1976 that Shiv Nadar founded HCL Technologies with five friends in his garage in Delhi. Coincidentally, Steve Jobs too, founded Apple Computers the same year, also in his garage. Nadar, one of the country's earliest technopreneurs, came from humble beginnings.

Born in the quaint hamlet of Moolaipozhi, Tamil Nadu, he made his way up through education and grit – to be the pioneering visionary we know today who transformed India's IT sector. Hindustan Computers Limited (HCL) started out with a focus on computer hardware, especially calculators and microprocessors. At this time, the Indian IT landscape was nascent and Nadar had to navigate the murky waters of an overregulated and underfunded market with a population that was inflexible at best and hostile to change, at worst. But this was soon to change, as the changing tides of tech globally ensured HLC's expansion into IT and personal computing. A strategic shift at a time when personal computers were expensive and far and few, and accessibility was not on the agenda. All of this was just the beginning of Nadar's contribution to the Indian IT sector and his role in shaping the IT revolution to come. A man in relentless pursuit of excellence and unwavering commitment to leverage technology for positive change.

In 2023, Shiv Nadar was number 3 on the 'Forbes' Richest in India list and the richest man in Delhi. Today, HCL Technologies is no longer just a national entity but an international IT conglomerate with a revenue of $12.6 billion.

In 2023, Shiv Nadar was number 3 on the 'Forbes' Richest in India list and the richest man in Delhi. Today, HCL Technologies is no longer just a national entity but an international IT conglomerate with a revenue of $12.6 billion. All owing to Nadar's willingness to understand his customers and their immediate needs instead of inventing new wants. This philanthropic spirit coupled with his entrepreneurial drive has fostered a culture of innovation at HCL that still delivers cutting-edge, low-cost solutions.



India's First Personal Computer & International Foray

In the 1970s, IBM was the only company manufacturing and distributing computers worldwide. Due to political turmoil in the country, IBM was in the process of leaving India when Shiv Nadar founded HCL Technologies. A young country on the cusp of change and technological breakthrough needs computers, so thought Nadar and gave us the HCL 8C. It came with the Rockwell PP 8 microprocessor and used BASIC language with a powerful Soft/Merge Package. Just enough to meet the IT needs of small and medium-sized companies. Before the HCL 8C, computers took up an entire room that required separate air conditioning and a lot of hardware maintenance. Like the IBM 1401, which was very slow and used second-generation transistor technology. IBM leased these out for ₹50,000 per year while HCL 8C could be bought outright for a lump-sum amount of ₹3 lakh. This changed everything, as IBM finally got the push to leave the country and India got a homegrown Personal Computer from a man who recognised the shortcomings of a country getting only the tail-end of global technological innovations.

A testament to Shiv Nadar's commitment to people and not just profit is the fact that HCL was one of the first companies in the country to go for a Public-Private Partnership with the Government of Uttar Pradesh in 1978. What started with an initial bootstrapped investment of ₹18,700 from Nadar himself for HCL, drew interest and the additional investment of a whopping sum of ₹20 lakh from the Government of Uttar Pradesh in exchange for 26% of the company ownership. An interesting tidbit about the company's name is that due to the UP Government's contribution at the ground floor, they wanted Nadar to name it Uttar Pradesh Computers Limited or UPCL. But Nadar was insistent about his national vision and instead chose the name Hindustan Computers Limited.



It is often said that great leadership comes with an innate talent of keen foresight and an almost wizardlike ability to predict the future. In 1979, sensing an oncoming global revolution of the information age, Nadar expanded internationally. By then the company was worth ₹3 crore. He set up Far East Computers in Singapore and began providing IT services internationally. This was a brilliant move for what was to come. As the world loosened its tightly held boundaries, more opportunities to expand came forth as the decade passed. In just the first year, Nadar's Singapore operation was turning in sales north of ₹10 lakh. Taking this opportunity, he incorporated an arm of his company called HCL Overseas Limited as the provider of IT development services, which then became what we today know as HCL Tech Limited. For what it has grown to be today, we can say that the common denominator for the company's early successes was none but Nadar's intrinsic business acumen and instinct.

His philanthropic spirit coupled with his entrepreneurial drive has fostered a culture of innovation at HCL that still delivers cutting-edge, low-cost solutions.

Educational Ventures

Origin stories of fictional characters are interesting because they humanise our heroes. The same can be said for real-life heroes who to us plebeians seem to have superseded humanity and reached a God-like status. Keeping with this, Shiv Nadar's contribution to the education sector is well-known now, but the origins of his educational philanthropy remain interesting. His father passed away in the final years of his high school education. This created a financial vacuum for a small-time family like Nadar's which could've easily led his life in a different direction. However, he was awarded a scholarship to study at PSG Tech that changed everything and cemented the importance of access to education in his mind. The power of education was transforming for him, a key to a future he wanted to build for himself and an empowering platform that allowed him to utilise his talents. In 1996, he established the SSN College of Engineering in memory of his father Sivasubramaniya Nadar. Today, SSN College of Engineering is one of the top 10 engineering institutions in Chennai and also one of the few colleges that boasts of a research department engaged in new-world, cutting-edge research nationally – keeping Nadar's vision alive. In a similar thread, his philanthropic ventures for higher education continued with the establishment of the Shiv Nadar University in 2011 in Noida, to encourage engaging research and individual student growth.



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Shiv Nadar is one of the most prolific philanthropists of recent times, also called "India's Most Generous Billionaire" – having donated ₹2,024 crores during the 2022-23 fiscal year. His philanthropic beginnings can be traced back to 1994 when spurred by the preliminary taste of success, he went on to establish the Shiv Nadar Foundation at the behest of his mother who wanted him to give back to society. Today, the Shiv Nadar Foundation boasts a legacy that will far outlive its namesake. The foundation's contribution in bridging the gap between quality education and socio-economic barriers as well as the urban-rural educational hiatus, has made quantifiable changes for the meritorious but poor students of the country. Working primarily with younger students, the foundation practices 'creative philanthropy', a model that allows sustained institutionalised philanthropy for 'high-impact socio-economic transformation'. A mode practiced by Shiv Nadar himself before it was concretised into a model.

Shiv Nadar is one of the most prolific philanthropists of recent times, also called "India's Most Generous Billionaire" having donated ₹2,024 crores during the 2022-23 fiscal year.

The Nadar Women: Philanthropy, Business & Art Done With Style

Shiv Nadar is not the only one from his family to be known for his stellar vision. The women of his family have left a similar trailblazing impact. Kiran Nadar, wife of the tech mogul, is a story in herself. She met Nadar while she was at an advertising firm and he was still in the preliminary stages of building HCL. Always having had a passion for art, she got an opportunity to nurture it later on in life, the result of which was the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art – India's first private philanthropic museum. She is one of the trustees of the Shiv Nadar Foundation and keeps a varied philanthropic profile while overseeing the SSN Trust, Rasaja Foundation, Public Health Foundation of India (PFHI), and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation – all of which work for education, public health, infrastructural development, women empowerment and more.



Their daughter, Roshni Nadar Malhotra, took over HCL Tech in 2020. In Forbes 100 Most Powerful Women 2023, Roshni ranked 60th along with the four Indian women in the list and is the first ever Indian woman to lead a listed IT company in India. Of course, in no small part to her brilliant father and scintillating mother. Today, she continues her father's legacy with commendable pluck and HCL Tech keeps up its upward trajectory.

Nadar – The "Magus" Or Wizard In Old Persian

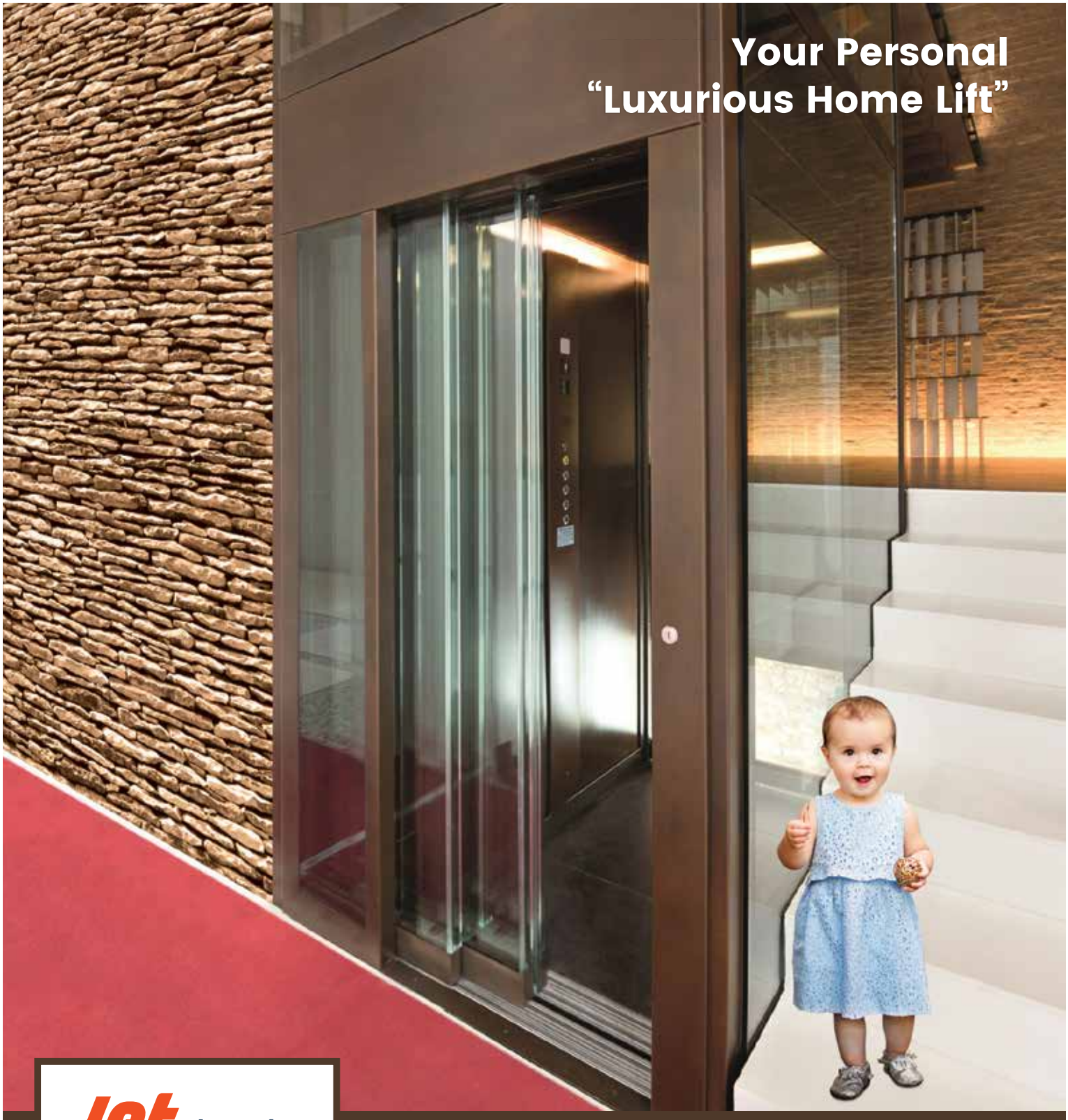
Those who knew Nadar from his early days saw his brilliance light up his will to do something for his people and country. They nicknamed him "Magus" or wizard in old Persian, and he has truly lived up to his name and built an indelible legacy for generations to come. This is not just through his philanthropic efforts but also with his hand in paving the road for India to be the global IT hub it is today. His vision for the country, however, as a global IT powerhouse is yet to be materialized fully: For us to be the cradle of original innovation and birth trailblazing changemakers, and not just be the executors of someone else's change.

He retired from his position of Managing Director of HCL Tech in 2020 and passed the baton to his daughter who has proved to be an incredibly competent helmsman under her father's guidance. Today, his net worth stands at $33.3 billion but his contribution, to our youth and the nation, is immeasurable.



Those who knew Nadar from his early days saw his brilliance light up his will to do something for his people and country. They nicknamed him "Magus" or wizard in old Persian, and he has truly lived up to his name and built an indelible legacy for generations to come.





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Falguni & Shane Peacock: “We’ve never been afraid to dare to dream big!”

Twenty years of Falguni Shane Peacock is the perfect time to catch up with the gifted designer duo (Falguni & Shane Peacock) who are entrenched as trailblazers in the realm of fashion design. They open up about their success and significance, future goals and more...



By Nichola Marie





Falguni Shane Peacock is regarded as a trailblazer in the world of design, including the red carpet and the silver screen. What has helped the label achieve this significance and standing?

This year marks the 20th anniversary of our brand Falguni Shane Peacock and there are many factors that have been a catalyst in achieving everything that we have to date. But if we had to narrow it down, we'd say it's our ability to dream big and then work hard and smart to achieve what we've set out to. We've never been afraid to dare to dream big. Looking back, some of our goals may seem absolutely crazy that we'd set for ourselves, but we're so glad we went with our gut instinct and worked tirelessly to achieve our goals. The second would be our meticulous attention to detail and being hands-on with even the smallest of tasks that we have lined up for the day. We enjoy what we do so much that we like to be involved in every step and every part of the process — right from the ideation to the final touches.



You have placed India on the global map by creating enduring, evocative couture pieces that revive Indian artisanship with contemporary resonance. How interesting was the process of achieving this amalgamation?

Our aesthetics from the very beginning have leaned towards Western, modern and contemporary. So when in 2015-16, we set out to solidify our presence in India, we didn't want to do away with our signature aesthetics just because we were venturing into Indian wear. We knew we had to blend it into Indian, traditional elements to create something that was an amalgamation of both. And so we did that and created something that was unique and quite never-seen-before in the traditional bridal wear scenario like adding opulent feathers to a traditional *lehenga* and blouse or giving the veil a modern, contemporary twist. We enjoy ideating newer ways to infuse both the elements in our Indian wear.

How do you look back at the early days?

The last 20 years have been a rollercoaster ride and a thrilling experience. Back then, we were starting out and weren't scared to take the risk. For example: After London Fashion Week, we decided to do New York Fashion Week and then, after a decade, take a break internationally to grow our presence in the Indian market. We wanted to set up our Indian wear line and we did end up successfully setting it up. And now, we have everything from prêtwear to advanced contemporary to ready-to-wear and traditional ensembles to offer. We've done all of this with the intent of building a fashion house that leaves behind a legacy.

Can you take us through some of the milestones in the journey of the brand?

For us, every small and big milestone is special and we look at them with equal importance as they've taken us a step further and helped us set the bar at each step. So be it dressing up Fergie decades ago or retailing at Harrods or our recent comeback at the New York Fashion Week — each of them is fulfilling in its own special way.

"We didn't want to do away with our signature aesthetics just because we were venturing into Indian wear... We knew we had to blend it into Indian, traditional elements to create something that was an amalgamation of both. We created something that was unique and quite never-seen-before in the traditional bridal wear scenario like adding opulent feathers to a traditional *lehenga* and blouse or giving the veil a modern, contemporary twist."



"It may sound unbelievable but we do everything together and that's because we enjoy each other's company too much! It's like working with your best friend who understands you completely. Work has never felt like work. It's never tedious or cumbersome as we tend to have fun at work with whatever we do."



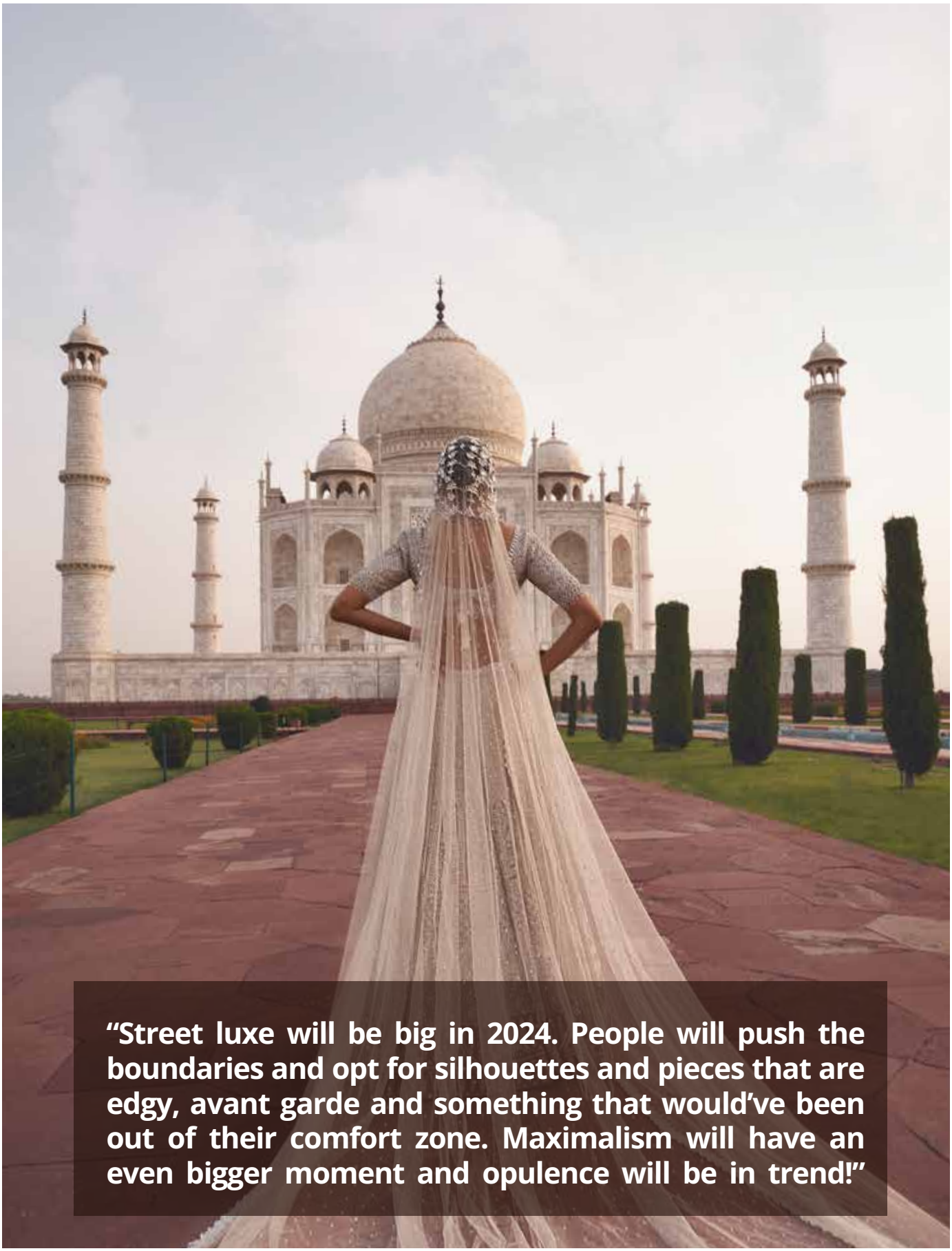
Partners in design and in life, what are each of your individual strengths and how do you meld together as a team?

It may sound unbelievable but we do everything together and that's because we enjoy each other's company too much! It's like working with your best friend who understands you completely. Work has never felt like work. It's never tedious or cumbersome as we tend to have fun at work with whatever we do. We both put our heart and souls into whatever we take on, and that makes it easier. Of course, we have our share of disagreements as well, but when we look at the bigger picture, we easily tend to come to a middle ground and work on it together.

Do give us a glimpse into your creative process.

For us, travel holds immense significance and serves as a fountain of inspiration for all our collections. Exploring different places in India and internationally allows us to understand and study diverse cultures, traditions and architectural marvels. When we visit places like Udaipur, Agra, Kashmir, Paris, New York etc we have the opportunity to get to know its rich heritage, artistic aesthetics and breathtaking landscapes. The vivid colours of the city, local craftsmanship, historical monuments and palaces in these places serve as a starting point for our design process. We like to observe local customs, interact with artisans and appreciate the craftsmanship found in each of these cities. It provides us with fresh perspectives. This enables us to translate the beauty and essence of different cities into wearable works of art i.e. our couture.





"Street luxe will be big in 2024. People will push the boundaries and opt for silhouettes and pieces that are edgy, avant garde and something that would've been out of their comfort zone. Maximalism will have an even bigger moment and opulence will be in trend!"



Your personal style game is always on point. How would you each describe your individual style and fashion sense?

We both have quite dissimilar tastes when it comes to person style. While Shane loves his blacks and neutrals, I'm all about subtle, pastel colours. I like silhouettes that are elegant and classic, whereas Shane prefers smart casuals. Both our wardrobes have some classic pieces from other luxe brands that we style in different ways.

What is your reading of the fashion scenario in India today?

Street luxe will be big in 2024. People would want to experiment with styles that they possibly would've shied away from in the past. We'll see them push the boundaries and opt for silhouettes and pieces that are edgy, avant garde and something that would've been out of their comfort zone. Maximalism will have an even bigger moment and opulence will be in trend!

What goals are you excited for?

While there are a lot of things we are working on that will be revealed soon, one goal that we seek to achieve in 2024 would be to expand and have numerous stores in India and then internationally; we recently opened our Kolkata store.

"One goal that we seek to achieve in 2024 would be to expand and have numerous stores in India and then internationally; we recently opened our Kolkata store."



Vivek Ramaswamy: The Man Who Bid To Be US President

No longer part of the US 2024 presidential race, Vivek Ramaswamy has nevertheless won international attention and could be considered for Trump's potential cabinet. Discover more about the US biotech entrepreneur with roots in Kerala...



By Nichola Marie

In March this year, news emerged that former President Donald Trump had passed over Indian-American billionaire entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy as his running mate, but was supposedly considering Ramaswamy for a position in his Cabinet if he clinches the 2024 presidential polls. Buzz goes that Ramaswamy could be a possible pick for Homeland Security secretary, among other positions. His strong public speaking skills are seen as a definite pro. Additionally, his background as an Indian American immigrant's son could possibly help counter criticism of Trump's immigration policies. The game is, indeed, far from over for Ramaswamy.

Last year, Ramaswamy, the 38-year-old US biotech entrepreneur with Indian roots, drew attention with his bid for the Republican nomination for president of the United States. "Virtually unknown before he announced his run for president, Ramaswamy rose to third place in national polls over the summer, amid a slew of appearances on cable news," notes 'The Guardian'. With millions of dollars made over his career in the biotech industry, Ramaswamy became one of the most visible candidates via a blitzkrieg of media appearances and constant engagement in culture battles. The majority of his campaign's fundraising had been fuelled by his fortune: From February to July 2023, Ramaswamy had loaned his campaign more than $15 million; there was approximately $9 million in cash in hand when his campaign ended in the second quarter of 2023. While his fundraising lagged far behind Donald Trump's and Ron DeSantis', it was ahead of most of the other Republican primary candidates.

The youngest person running for the Republican nomination, and the son of Indian immigrants, Ramaswamy naturally stood out in a field that has been dominated by older white men. However, he raised even more eyebrows as he presented himself further to the right than even some of his older Republican rivals. Making waves during the course of his campaign, he claimed that the "climate change agenda" was a "hoax", and that he would increase fossil fuel production. He also declared that he would "universally" deport all undocumented immigrants living in the US and vouched he would admit "darn close to zero" refugees. He also sought to appeal to Christian nationalist voters, who are an important part of the Republican base, maintaining that the US was founded on Judeo-Christian values, which he shares.



"Virtually unknown before he announced his run for president, Ramaswamy rose to third place in national polls over the summer, amid a slew of appearances on cable news."
- 'The Guardian'



Coming from relative obscurity, Ramaswamy swiftly reached the position of being one of the key contenders to challenge Trump's lead in the initial months of the campaign season. He wasn't holding anything back, reportedly doing approximately 30 interviews in a single day! Appearing on more than 150 podcasts in the previous six months, his performance at an August debate was dubbed "a breakout moment" by CNN. Later, he lost ground to DeSantis and Haley, finishing fourth against Trump and the other challengers in the Iowa Republican caucus on January 15, 2024. That night, suspending his campaign, he told supporters he "called Donald Trump to tell him that I congratulate him on his victory. And now, going forward, he will have my full endorsement for the presidency."

"This country would be lucky to have him serve in the next administration and beyond. In the meantime, Vivek is focused on driving change in the private sector and reforming our economy, including by continuing to push back against the ESG cancer in corporate America."
- Tricia McLaughlin

Though he failed to clinch the presidential nomination, Ramaswamy's strategy is seen as having been effective in boosting Trump's support and earning him a position on the platform at campaign rallies.

Responding to reports of his future role in Trump's possible Cabinet, Ramaswamy's spokesperson, Tricia McLaughlin, told 'The New York Post', "This country would be lucky to have him serve in the next administration and beyond. In the meantime, Vivek is focused on driving change in the private sector and reforming our economy, including by continuing to push back against the ESG cancer in corporate America."

Indian Roots, American Wings

Tamil-speaking Brahmins hailing from Kerala, Ramaswamy's mother worked as a geriatric psychiatrist, while his father was an engineer and patent lawyer at General Electric. The couple moved to the United States in the 1970s, where Ramaswamy was born in 1985 in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has often alluded to the piece of advice he received from his father, which set the course for his life: "If you're going to stand out, then you might as well be outstanding." A nationally ranked tennis player, he was valedictorian of his high school, St Xavier. He earned a Bachelor's degree in biology at Harvard University in 2007. Going on to work for a hedge fund, he had $7 million in seven years. Earning a law degree in 2013 from Yale University, it was here that he also met his future wife, Apoorva Tewari, a medical student who later became a throat surgeon. In 2014, aged 29, Ramaswamy started a pharmaceutical company, Roivant Sciences, where he oversaw the development of five drugs that went on to become FDA-approved. By the year 2023, he had made at least a quarter million dollars in personal income from the company.



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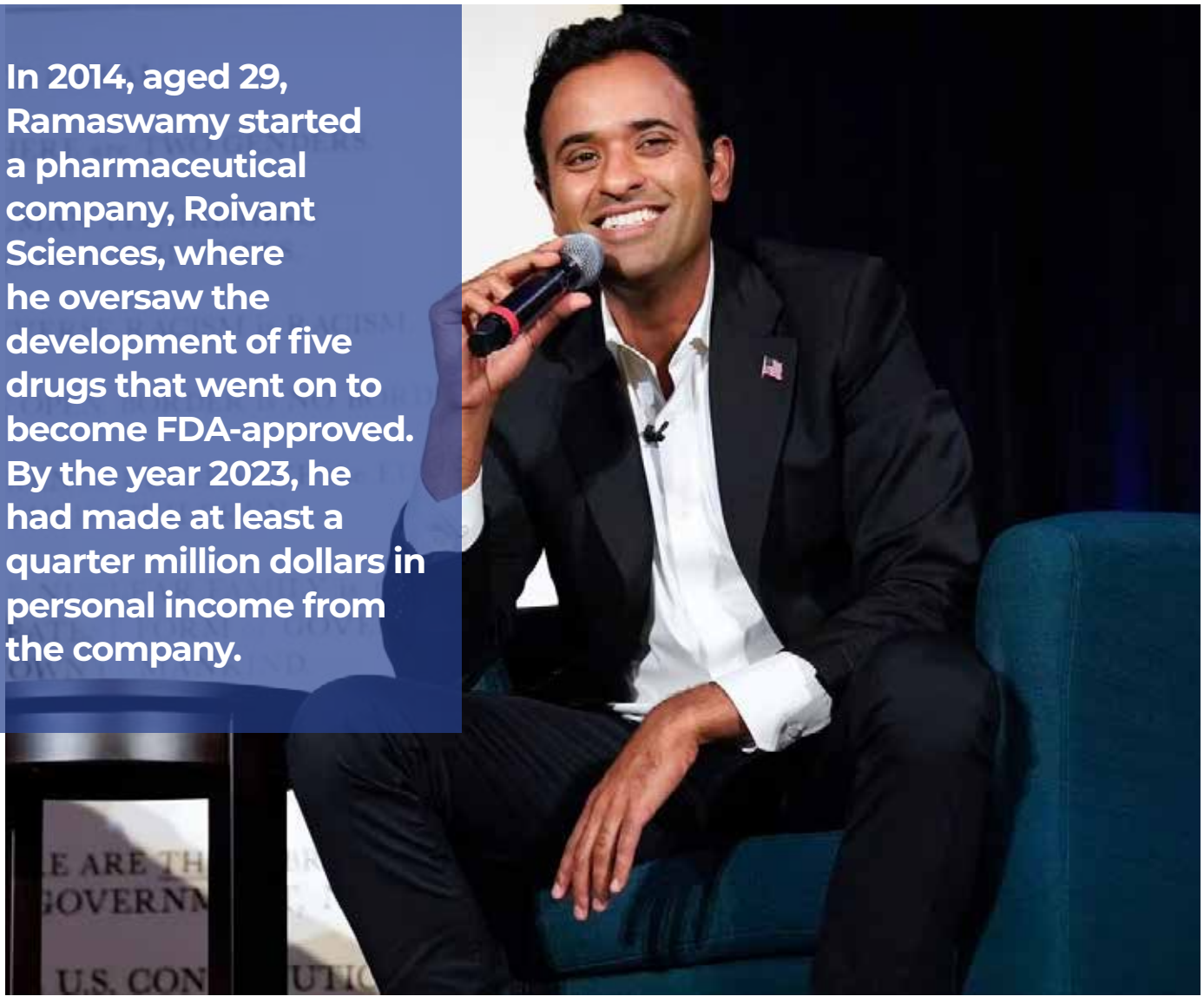
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In 2014, aged 29, Ramaswamy started a pharmaceutical company, Roivant Sciences, where he oversaw the development of five drugs that went on to become FDA-approved. By the year 2023, he had made at least a quarter million dollars in personal income from the company.



Rise To Attention

He would go on to be dubbed one of the "intellectual godfathers of the anti-woke movement" ('Politico') by the left-leaning media, the "right's leading anti-ESG crusader" ('Axios' and 'Bloomberg'), and "The C.E.O. of Anti-Woke," by 'The New Yorker'.

His frank objection to environment, social, and governance (ESG) investing is what brought him a wave of attention. In an interview with 'The Wall Street Journal', claiming he was apolitical before 2020, he deplored partisan politics for interfering in the corporate sector.

Stepping down as Roivant's CEO in January 2021, he published his first book later that year, titled 'Woke, Inc.: Inside Corporate America's Social Justice Scam'. In the book, he criticised corporations for wading into social issues by practices such as instituting diversity quotas in hiring or by divesting from companies that pollute the environment. He panned the practice for being cynical, namely a ruse to increase profits or divert attention from unethical deeds. He also deemed it corrosive to democracy as it imposed social priorities on the public. Citing the example of Delta Air Lines, Inc. criticising new laws in Georgia on the grounds that they would suppress voter turnout, Ramaswamy said the company had failed "to explain why Americans should care whether a voting law matches the values of an airline company."

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The following year, he founded an "anti-woke" index fund provider called Strive Asset Management LLC. He cited it as the antithesis of other asset management companies like BlackRock, Inc., that purport publicly to invest in an ESG framework. He assured that Strive would offer investment funds without asking companies to "push political agendas." Backed by Peter Thiel and Narya Capital, the venture capital firm belonged to JD Vance, Ramaswamy's friend from law school, who would be elected to the US Senate in late 2022. In September 2023, as Ramaswamy was surging in opinion polling for the Republican primary elections, Strive revealed that its assets had crossed $1 billion. Ramaswamy's personal net worth was hovering around $1 billion, around the same time.

Though he failed to clinch the presidential nomination, Ramaswamy's strategy is seen as having been effective in boosting Trump's support and earning him a position on the platform at campaign rallies.



Entering The Race 2024

In 2023, at a time when the Republican race already included political heavyweights like Donald Trump and Nikki Haley, Ramaswamy began his presidential run. Via a video announcing his bid, he declared that in the US "new secular religions like Covid-ism, climate-ism and gender ideology" were replacing "faith, patriotism, and hard work." During his presidential run, he announced his support for the Republican position on issues such as abortion bans. Alongside, he also promoted certain unorthodox policies which included raising the standard voting age to 25, restricting birthright citizenship, and sending the US military to Mexico to "annihilate" drug cartels. Taking a tougher stance, he vowed to dismiss more than 75% of the federal workforce; disband the FBI, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Department of Education; and also to abolish teacher unions. He further courted controversy arguing that people should "be proud to live a high-carbon lifestyle," claiming that "more people are dying of bad climate change policies than they are of actual climate change."

Whatever lies ahead, Ramaswamy is bound to stand out as well as be outstanding!





Married to Apoorva, a throat surgeon and Assistant Professor at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, the couple has two sons.

Did You Know?

- According to a profile in 'Politico', Ramaswamy lives in a $2 million estate in the suburb of Upper Arlington, in Columbus, Ohio. His net worth is reported to be $950 million.
- According to reports, he has tried to develop a good understanding of Eastern and Western cultures and traditions. Reportedly a monotheistic Hindu, he is fluent in Tamil and is a practicing vegetarian. In 2020, he wrote, "I believe it is wrong to kill sentient animals for culinary pleasure."
- Ramaswamy is also a 'New York Times' bestselling author. Besides 'Woke, Inc.: Inside Corporate America's Social Justice Scam', he has penned 'Nation of Victims: Identity Politics, the Death of Merit, and the Path Back to Excellence', and 'Capitalist Punishment: How Wall Street is Using Your Money to Create a Country You Didn't Vote For'.
- Married to Apoorva, a throat surgeon and Assistant Professor at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center, the couple has two sons.



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The Incredible Victoria Beckham



Building and expanding her fashion empire, being one half of a world-famous power couple, and raising a brood of four which has now expanded to include a daughter-in-law, Victoria Beckham's life is a series of admirable achievements. But they didn't exactly come easy...

By Nichola Marie

It has been 10 years since pop sensation turned fashion entrepreneur Victoria Beckham (VB) was named the UK's top entrepreneur of 2014 by the British business magazine 'Management Today'. Her eponymous fashion label, launched in 2008, went on to become a global phenomenon. Cut to 2022, the brand's revenue increased by 13%, valuing it at nearly $50 million. This success has only continued to snowball, with annual revenue surging by 42%, propelling the label's worth to an estimated $70 million.

It's Raining Profit

And Ms Beckham isn't letting the grass grow under her stilettoed feet. This month, news broke of her pivoting from high-end fashion to the high street. Retail chain Mango announced it was collaborating with the Spice Girl turned designer on a collection of slip dresses, knitwear and accessories, describing it as "a perfect blend of classic British luxury." In an interview, VB said that she had decided to work with Mango to "speak to a wider audience in a way that feels relevant to my brand and retains my aesthetic and DNA."

According to 'The Guardian', 2022 was a milestone year for VB, with her reportedly "turning a profit for the first time after 14 years in business." The financial report filing saw special credit given to her beauty line, which includes bestsellers such as a $50 highlighter stick and a $40 eyeliner.

The report also states, "The decision to re-stage her fashion show at the Paris Fashion Week also paid off with an earned media value of more than £16m. Ahead of the show, she unveiled her debut fragrance collection, which, according to Launchmetrics, generated an extra £1m in media impact value in discussions both online and on social media." VB has clearly been making all the right moves.

Gaining Acceptance

VB has long since proved she is much more than the 'Eliza Doolittle' of fashion. Her impeccable insight on what women want to wear and her keen ability to capitalise on her celeb value, have held her in good stead, marking her as far more than a figurehead. As she said in an interview, "The final decision is always mine. It's really important that every aspect of what we do – the clothes, the swing tags, the shelves, everything – represents my point of view, because that's what the brand stands for." Known for its cutthroat nature, the fashion industry, in turn, embraced her choices. And the recognition followed... The Victoria Beckham label was named designer brand of the year at the British Fashion Awards in the UK in 2011. The following year, the brand was assessed as the star performer in the Beckham family's business interests. The 'Daily Telegraph' noted the transition from WAG to fashion designer had been more successful than most had predicted. "She has gathered a significant celebrity following and won over the scathing fashion pack who now clamour for a ticket to her bi-annual show at New York Fashion Week." In 2017, her victory was complete when she was appointed an OBE (Order of the British Empire) in the 2017 New Year Honours for services to the fashion industry.

Her impeccable insight on what women want to wear and her keen ability to capitalise on her celeb value, have held her in good stead, marking her as far more than a figurehead.







The Thrill Of It

Asked whether she had already achieved everything she had wanted to, in an interview with 'Vogue France' (October 2023), VB shared, "This is just the beginning. I have lots of ambitions, and I work hard to achieve my goals. I never wait for things to just fall into my lap. It's such an exciting time. This year, we made a profit! This takes time, especially for an independent brand. ...I want the house to develop, all while remaining authentic, whether that be fashion, beauty, perfumes... There are so many things I want to do."

Pointing out that they have four collections per year: Two main collections, and two pre-collections, she clearly enjoys the challenge. "It's my job," she says. "People ask me if I feel the pressure, but that's my role. If I didn't do this, I don't know what I would do. I like this intellectual exercise because it's not just ready-to-wear. It's not just clothes. There are handbags, shoes, glasses, makeup, beauty, perfume... It's a lot to manage but I also have an incredible team." At the core of her success is her unrelenting drive.

Passion For Fashion

Fashion is something VB has always been drawn to. At school, she would personalise her school uniforms and those of her classmates too. "I also started a trend that consisted of wearing a pair of socks pulled up high, then another pair worn over them, pulled down low, creating the illusion of longer legs. Then, you shorten the skirt." The trend took off and spread all around the school! She was around 12 at the time. While her fairly simple background meant she didn't know anything about big labels, she always took an interest in clothes and appreciated them when her mother took her shopping.

"People ask me if I feel the pressure, but that's my role. If I didn't do this, I don't know what I would do. I like this intellectual exercise because it's not just ready-to-wear. It's not just clothes. There are handbags, shoes, glasses, makeup, beauty, perfume... It's a lot to manage but I also have an incredible team."
- Victoria Beckham



"This is just the beginning. I have lots of ambitions, and I work hard to achieve my goals. I never wait for things to just fall into my lap."
- Victoria Beckham

All that changed when, aged 20, she became one of the five young women selected to create the music group Spice Girls. The 1974-born Victoria Adams was christened 'Posh Spice' by the media; the moniker was to endure. Global fame came when the band's debut album 'Spice' released in 1996, selling more than 20 million copies worldwide. The Spice Girls became a cultural phenomenon. A year later, the group released a second full-length album, Spiceworld, and appeared in 'Spice World: The Movie'. This period also marked her serious affair with fashion.

As VB shared, while the other Spice Girls weren't too excited when they received clothes, she was different. "I took things into my own hands and I managed to receive Tom Ford and Gucci clothes. It was amazing as I would never have been able to buy clothes like that for myself. This was the moment when I first started getting passionate about fashion. One of my first big fashion experiences, during the Spice Girls era, was when Donatella Versace invited me to a fashion show in Milan along with my best friend. The first place that her team took me was the Versace store. They told me that I could have what I wanted - a real 'pinch me, I'm dreaming' moment."

She would make small alterations to the designer clothes too, so that they would suit her better. It was soon after she and husband David Beckham enjoyed success with their celebrity perfume, and she was also working as a designer for other labels, that she decided to launch her label. And there has been no looking back.

Growing In Stature

In 1997, VB began a relationship with English football (soccer) player David Beckham. Dubbed 'Posh and Becks', the couple had a son, named Brooklyn, in March 1999. Four months later, they married in a lavish ceremony at a castle outside Dublin. Their family further grew with the birth of two more sons, Romeo (2002) and Cruz (2005), and a daughter, Harper (2011). Subjected to intense scrutiny from the British media from the early days of the marriage, the attention hasn't dimmed. The lens has softened, though, with respect, admiration and love for her and her famous family growing enormously.

"One of my first big fashion experiences, during the Spice Girls era, was when Donatella Versace invited me to a fashion show in Milan along with my best friend. The first place that her team took me was the Versace store. They told me that I could have what I wanted - a real 'pinch me, I'm dreaming' moment."
- Victoria Beckham





In 1997, VB began a relationship with English football (soccer) player David Beckham. Dubbed 'Posh and Becks', the couple had a son, named Brooklyn, in March 1999. Four months later, they married in a lavish ceremony at a castle outside Dublin.



Growing increasingly open over the years, VB regularly shares insights into their charmed life, whether it's celebrating Easter 2024 on a yacht, wearing fluffy bunny ears, or even darker periods which followed news of her husband's alleged affair with his personal assistant which VB discussed in the Netflix series 'Beckham'. She called it, "The hardest period for us because it felt like the world was against us. And here's the thing: We were against each other, if I'm being completely honest."

While she credits social media with helping people see her real personality, namely as a hard worker, a loving wife, a devoted mother, and also a doting mother-in-law to son Brooklyn's wife, Nicola Peltz, she also points out that she never posts to prove anything to anyone. "I stopped worrying about what people think of me a long time ago." Touché, Ms Beckham!

After braving the many storms, as she hit 50 on April 17th, she basks in the love of family, friends and fans. Commemorating the occasion with a montage of clips of her of various ages and with their children, husband David posted on Instagram: "Happy birthday to my beautiful wife. As you head into this birthday, you should look back and be proud of what you have accomplished, achieved & what you have built, Posh Spice, business woman & of course marrying an England captain," he teased. "But your biggest success is your children, you guide them, love them & teach them... They love you beyond words, we all love you so much x Have a special day, you deserve it all, 50 and fit."

Of course, he didn't need to add 'fab' – we know that already.

"I stopped worrying about what people think of me a long time ago."
- Victoria Beckham





Mukesh Rishi: Firing Up The Screen!

Scorching. Memorable. Thunderous. ...Just a few adjectives that best describe veteran character actor and sought-after villain Mukesh Rishi's acting abilities that help him steal the hearts of audiences!

By Andrea CostaBir



What makes Mukesh Rishi a thespian in the Indian film industry? His immeasurable talent, of course. Add to that his filmography across film industries – Hindi, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi, Marathi, and Tamil – which is a testament to his determination and dedication.

Since his debut more than three decades ago, Mukesh Rishi has evolved into a legendary villain and character actor. Films like 'Sarfarosh', 'Gupt', 'Sooryavansham', 'Singham' and 'Koi... Mil Gaya' delighted audiences – and he blazed forward! As he continues to be part of big ticket films across the country, we wonder what keeps him flying high?!

Excerpts from the interview...

Please give us a few insights into your upbringing...

I was born in Jammu and went to school and college there. Deeply interested in sports, I used to play cricket. So, when I was told that Chandigarh was the best place for sports, I left for Chandigarh and did my graduation there. I played cricket and became the Vice-Captain of my college team. I enjoyed karate as well, and I loved exercising. Then I went abroad for some time, did some fashion shows and decided to get into acting...

You are a leading character actor, having established yourself in Hindi and Telugu films. You have also appeared in Malayalam, Kannada, Punjabi, Marathi and Tamil films. And popular TV serials. Please give us a brief overview of the most significant aspects of your career so far...

First of all, I did the 'Tipu Sultan' serial where I had the role of a villain. Though I didn't benefit from it work-wise, I learnt a lot, and I will never forget that. Coming from a non-film family, I didn't have any knowledge of the film industry, nor was I a trained actor, though I did do short courses from Roshan Taneja and Madhumati. But this serial helped me learn a lot.

Moving to my first film, 'Gardish'... I was introduced as a villain and it was a very challenging role for me. It had all the big stars – Jackie Shroff, Raj Babbar, Amrish Puri, Dimple Kapadia.

Raj Babbar supported me a lot. He kept telling me that this was a very important role and helped me get into character. Of course, Priyadarshan is a great director, Santosh Shivan was the DOP, R Mohan (GoodKnight Mohan), Priyan*ji* – they all helped me a lot. They were senior people, and they knew exactly how to handle other people.

After that, I worked in 'Sarfarosh', a completely different film from what I was doing at that time. Aamir (Khan) was very cooperative, and the joy of working with him was something else only.

John Matthews' preparation for every character was very solid and I just had to look at John to understand my role, what I had to do because he had so much information about the characters. I felt like I didn't have to do anything, if I just followed him, my work would be done!

"My first film, 'Gardish'... I was introduced as a villain and it was a very challenging role for me. It had all the big stars – Jackie Shroff, Raj Babbar, Amrish Puri, Dimple Kapadia."





What's your method for getting into character when preparing for a role?

I don't have any method because I don't come from any institute where acting is taught from A to Z, like the National School of Drama. So, my biggest method of preparation was life itself as I lived in the regular, real world before coming to films. My best education was living among people, going to different places with friends. I am well aware of the background of the Army, of the Police... All these experiences were very beneficial for me when I started acting.

Could you share a particularly challenging moment in your acting career, and how you overcame it?

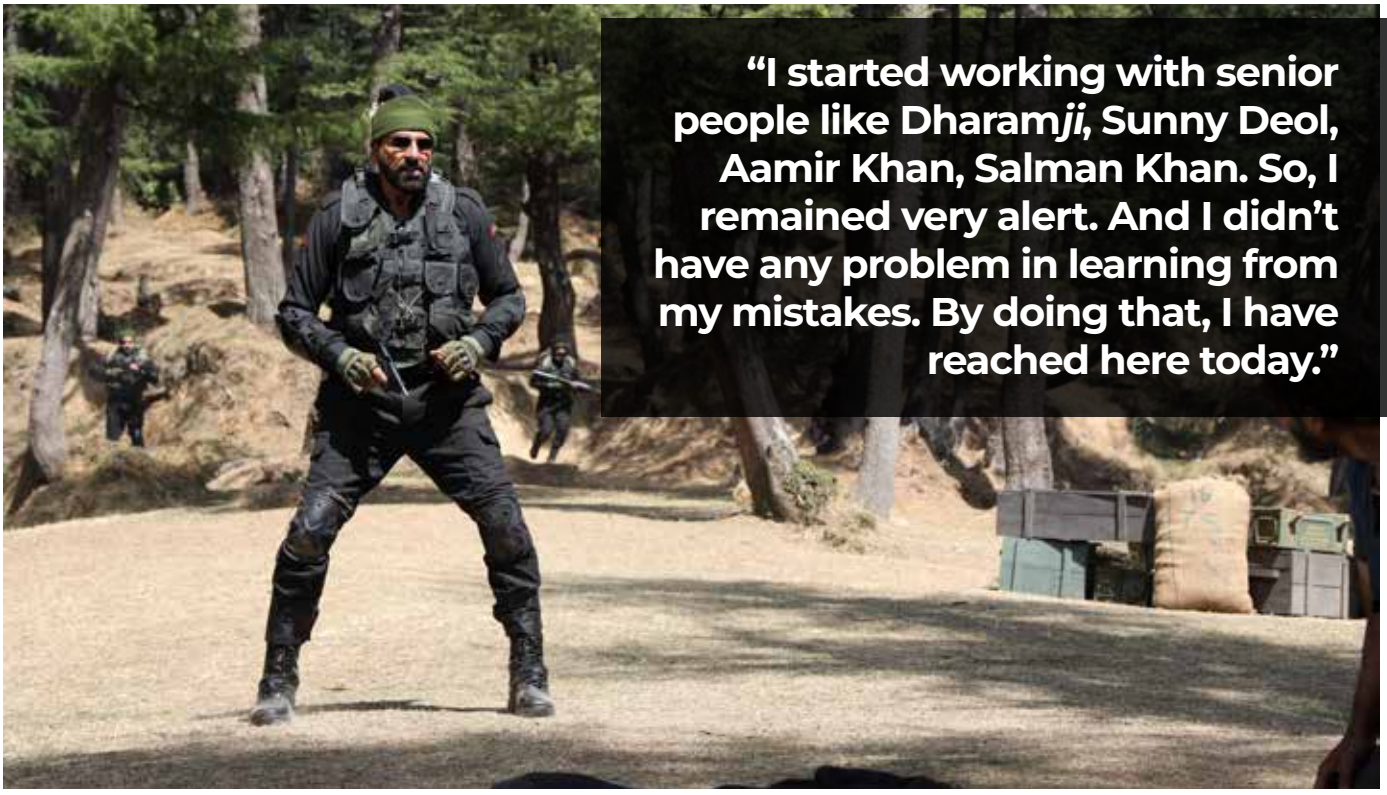
Challenging moments are always there... When you are not from a filmi background, you have to be prepared at every moment. You have to be alert. And I started working with senior people like Dharam*ji*, Sunny Deol, Aamir Khan, Salman Khan. So, I remained very alert. And I didn't have any problem in learning from my mistakes. By doing that, I have reached here today.

How do you approach portraying complex or villainous characters?

Let me tell you one thing: When I entered the film industry, there was a particular way of performing a villain's role. So, I followed that as the directors too were happy with that. Whatever I did was with the guidance of the director. But what happened later was that the roles for the villains started to decrease. There wasn't much colour left in them. Now this was a different challenge. So, we changed a few things around and if the director said okay, then we used to be happy that the director liked it.

"My best education was living among people, going to different places with friends."





"I started working with senior people like Dharam*ji*, Sunny Deol, Aamir Khan, Salman Khan. So, I remained very alert. And I didn't have any problem in learning from my mistakes. By doing that, I have reached here today."



"Follow films. Follow trends. Live in the world. Meet people. Before getting into films, make sure you have all kinds of knowledge in your kitty."

Could you describe a memorable experience working on set with a particular producer, director or co-star?

So, I met a lot of good people. John Matthews, as I mentioned earlier; then KC Bokadia, who used to make his own kind of films. I worked with Sunny. He has his own style, he's quiet but talks to his close friends. I was happy to spend whatever time I got with him. Salman's nature is to meet in the evening and whenever I got the chance to exercise or go to a club with him, I was happy. Bobby Deol is very friendly and I did films with him too.

What advice would you give aspiring actors?

The film industry is an open book. You can get a lot of information on it online, especially through YouTube. So, do film-related courses and learn things. Follow films. Follow trends. Live in the world. Meet people. Before getting into films, make sure you have all kinds of knowledge in your kitty. All the information is available. Take advantage of it. And prepare yourself completely. Remember that when we do not learn to swim in the sea, once we reach half-way, we drown. We have to learn to swim before diving in. It's the same with the film industry.





Also, it is very important for new people to be disciplined – especially with their work timings. Discipline is a part of acting. Don't separate it from acting. It is very important because we don't work only for ourselves, we work for others. They invest in us. So, it is our duty to not make them feel that they have invested so much in a person and are not getting what they wanted.

What do you consider your biggest career milestone?

My first film was 'Gardish', and it was very challenging for me. So, I would say that it was a milestone. Then 'Sarfarosh' released and people liked it. Similarly, there were two Telugu films which became very popular. One was 'Narasimha Naidu' with Balakrishna. B Gopal, the very famous director, directed it. Then there was 'Indra' with Chiranjeevi. It was very successful. Similarly, there was a film called 'Ramana' which I did in Tamil. I did two films with Vijayakanth. Those were also big hits.

Do tell us about your journey towards achieving a healthy work-life balance.

Being a sportsman, I have been taking care of my health from the beginning. Post that too, I never stopped exercising – at that time, gyms were few, but I exercised in stadiums and playgrounds. This experience has been very beneficial for me. Exercise is a system of life. As life goes on, it is important to breathe. It is important to be healthy. Don't think of it as a burden. If you keep enjoying it, you will see its benefits. To live and work with health, to enjoy your work, is fun! Don't look at the dividends and benefits first. You will get it gradually when you have discipline.

"When I entered the film industry, there was a particular way of performing a villain's role. But what happened later was that the roles for the villains started to decrease. There wasn't much colour left in them. Now this was a different challenge. So, we changed a few things around."

Tell us about your family...

My girlfriend, who was with me in college in Chandigarh, and who became my wife, has helped me a lot. She helped me follow my dream and supported me wholeheartedly. I have reached here today because of her.

We have a daughter who is very interested in music and is doing a music course in America. Our son Raghav (Rishi) has done two films in the lead role. One is 'Khule Asmaan Ki Oar' and one is a Punjabi film, 'Nidarr'.



Family is very important. When children grow up, it is very important to be with them, to understand them.

To sum up, where does Mukesh Rishi go from here? Any exciting projects in the pipeline?

Right now I am doing a very big Telugu film, 'Kannappa'. Mohan Babuji, who is a very big producer and actor, is producing the film. His son Vishnu Manchu, is the hero of the film. I have also done a Punjabi film called 'Nanak Naam Jahaz' which is releasing in May 2024.

This same film was made by Prithviraj Kapoor many years ago. Today, I had the chance to do the same role in the same film. Hence, I am very happy!

"My wife helped me follow my dream and supported me wholeheartedly. I have reached here today because of her."

IPL Fever: Players That Are Bringing The Heat Or Feeling It!

The IPL 2024 Season is burning up – some players are going above and beyond, while others are under pressure to do just that. We take a look at six players who have all eyes on them at the moment.

By Mark Pais

Virat Kohli

King Kohli, Chiku, and whatever else you may call him, Virat Kohli is a run machine and is showing it again this Tata IPL 2024. At 35, where you'd expect a drop in batting performance, he just seems to be getting better, and is currently one of the frontrunners to win the Orange Cap (most runs scored in a season). However, while Virat Kohli might look as dangerous as ever, the rest of the team? Meh! Last in the league with just one win to their name, the question arises, can one of the most successful cricketers pull off the miracle of pushing his team to a cup? Don't bet against the King is all we'd advise.



Virat Kohli is currently one of the frontrunners to win the Orange Cap.

Sunil Narine

Imagine being a great spinner, but that's all that you ever were, a spinner who could smash a couple of sixes and then lose his wicket on the opposite end. Well, imagine you became the opening batsman for a team run by the adored 'Shah Rukh Khan'. That's Sunil Narine, and to be fair to him, he could maybe be the best player in the tournament, at the moment. With a bowling economy of just 7 runs at a time in cricket where 200+ is no biggie, along with already scoring centuries, Sunil Narine looks to be a star in this IPL 2024.

With a bowling economy of just 7 runs at a time in cricket where 200+ is no biggie, along with already scoring centuries, Sunil Narine looks to be a star in this IPL 2024.



Hardik Pandya

The new captain of the Mumbai Indians is one of the few who has had an up-and-down season. No one can doubt Hardik Pandya's abilities, but facing the pressure of captaining the IPL's biggest side, the Mumbai Indians, might just be taking its toll on the young captain. However, Mumbai has shown some decent form recently, especially with the return of Surya Kumar Yadav. Will the man with an unmistakable swagger rise to the challenge or crumble under the pressure?

No one can doubt Hardik Pandya's abilities, but facing the pressure of captaining the IPL's biggest side, the Mumbai Indians, might just be taking its toll on the young captain.





Rishabh Pant

Rishabh Pant is a story if there ever was one. In 2022, Pant's Mercedes SUV crashed north of New Delhi, causing him multiple injuries as the car flipped over and caught fire. Now that he's back, everyone's been wondering: Will Rishabh Pant still be Rishabh Pant? And Pant has delivered. With top-notch performances in each game, he is making a strong case for being included in the T20 World Cup 2024, set to happen later this year.

With top-notch performances in each game, Rishabh Pant is making a strong case for being included in the T20 World Cup 2024, set to happen later this year.

Pat Cummins

Pat Cummins must love Indian pitches because ever since captaining the Australian side that won the ICC ODI World Cup in India and crushing over a billion people's dreams, the Aussie is back wrecking rampage on IPL teams. With scores of 287 for 3 against the Royal Challengers Bangalore, and 277 against Mumbai Indians (MI), the Sunrisers Hyderabad seem to be in a league of their own. One could credit that to the skipper, Pat Cummins.

With scores of 287 and 277, the Sunrisers Hyderabad under Pat Cummins' lead seem to be in a league of their own.





MS Dhoni

"Thala for a reason" – well, that seems to be all that cricket fans speak about online. MS Dhoni humbly gave up captaincy this year to Ruturaj Gaikwad, which subtly hints that this might just be his final season. With a fan following deprived of his presence, it's no surprise that every time Dhoni steps up to bat, the viewership in the IPL increases in lakhs. Dhoni has also had incredible performances despite visible knee pain, and a flurry of boundaries every time he bats. While Chennai has looked a little dicey in fifth position, there are crores of fans who will be chanting "Thala" with the belief that with him, anything is possible.

Dhoni has also had incredible performances despite visible knee pain, and a flurry of boundaries every time he bats.

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Our life goal is to respect and practice the art of salvaging trees and transforming them into fine hardwood tables, and furniture in the most organic way possible. Each slab of wood that becomes a table can be traced back to an exact location, and reason for being felled, be it by natural causes, due to tree sickness, or danger to a nearby home.

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Lifestyle

Laughter yoga expert Pranali Dhamankar breaks down the benefits of this therapy. Chef Vicky Ratnani shares some cheesy insights. Celebrities flaunt their vintage rides. Ar Ponni M Concessao introduces us to some spectacular designs. Kajal Fabiani Hiranandani's disco-inspired jewellery designs.

'Society Achievers' brings you all this and more...












Food



Gourmet Cheese? Yes, Please!

Shedding its snobbish tag, gourmet or artisan cheese has come within enticingly easy reach. Discover its many charms with Nichola Marie.

"A meal without some cheese is like a beautiful woman with only one eye." When famous French philosopher and avid cheese lover Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin made this audacious statement back in the late 1700s, he was merely 'spitting facts', as GenZ likes to say. Cheese — and gourmet cheese, in particular — has long exerted a fantastic sensory pull that shows no sign of slackening.



What Is Gourmet Cheese?

Gourmet or artisan cheese is usually handmade according to traditional methods using natural ingredients like high-quality milk, enzymes and natural colours. It is prepared in small batches with proper care and the steps required to ensure the finest taste. Free of unhealthy chemicals and preservatives, it acquires a distinct taste, flavour and texture as it ages and ripens. Its taste is more pronounced and distinct compared to the standard salty versions of processed cheese.

The good news is that gourmet cheese has been consistently becoming less expensive, and more accessible to all. Here are some of the most favoured gourmet cheeses from across the world...

Parmigiano Reggiano

Country of Origin: Italy

This cow's milk cheese has a sharp and complex nutty/ fruity savoury taste. With a texture that's gritty, grainy and crumbly, it is best for pasta dishes, risotto, and the classic carbonara.

Raclette

Country of Origin: Switzerland

This mildly nutty, salty, slightly sweet-flavoured cheese is made from cow's milk. Firm, smooth and creamy in texture, it is best melted and scraped over grilled or boiled potatoes, vegetables, meat and steaks.

Mozzarella

Country of Origin: Southern Italy

Made of the milk of water buffalo, the flavour of this cheese is delicate and tangy with a milk-like freshness. Soft and moist in texture, it is ideal for pizza, grilled cheese sandwiches and mashed potatoes.

Parmesan

Country of Origin: Italy

This fruity, nutty-flavoured cheese is made from cow's milk. Hard and gritty in texture, it is best for pasta, carbonara, soups and risottos.

Greek Feta

Country of Origin: Greece

Made of sheep's milk, or a mixture of sheep and goat's milk, this tangy-flavoured cheese has a soft and crumbly texture. It is ideal for Greek salad, pastry and cheese boards.

Roquefort

Country of Origin: France

With a sharp metallic tang and sweet burnt-caramel flavour, this blue cheese made of sheep's milk has a soft, crumbly, moist texture. It is best enjoyed as part of cheese boards, salads, and in blue cheese pasta.

"Cheeses like ricotta, mozzarella, cheddar and gruyere can all be incorporated into Indian dishes. Additionally, mozzarella and burrata are great for pizza, cheddar and emmental for sandwiches, and Swiss cheeses for fondue."

- Chef Vicky Ratnani



Aged Gouda

Country of Origin: Netherlands

Made of cow's milk, this buttery, caramel-like, slightly nutty-flavoured aged cheese is semi-hard to hard in texture. It is perfect for sandwiches, crackers, mac and cheese and other pasta.

Edam

Country of Origin: Netherlands

Cow or goat's milk goes into making this mild, slightly salty, and nutty-flavoured cheese that is semi-hard and springy in texture. It makes an ideal match with potatoes, sandwiches, bread, and also as part of a charcuterie board.

Halloumi

Country of Origin: Cyprus

Made of goat and sheep or even cow's milk, this cheese is mellow, feta-like and tangy. With a semi-hard texture. It is best for salads and casseroles and is also a popular meat substitute for vegetarians.







The good news is that gourmet cheese has been consistently becoming less expensive, and more accessible to all in India.

Brie De Meaux

Country of Origin: France

This cow's milk cheese has a sweet and buttery flavour with almond undertones. Soft, slightly sticky in texture, it is best enjoyed with bread paired with wine, and on a cheese board.

Burrata

Country of Origin: Italy

This milky, buttery-flavoured cheese made of cow's milk has a texture that is soft and buttery. It is best for salads.

Indian Artisanal

In India, one of the world's largest dairy producers, exposure to cheese has grown well beyond the predictable *paneer*, as well as local cheeses like the Kashmiri cheese *kalari* and *bandel* from West Bengal. Here's a glance at some artisanal cheese brands to savour...

Spotted Cow Fromagerie, Mumbai

Kumaoni Blessings, Delhi NCR

Eleftheria, Mumbai

Käse, Chennai

Kodai Cheese, Kodaikanal

Does Gourmet Cheese & Indian Food Go Well Together?

"Most definitely!" vouches noted celebrity Chef Vicky Ratnani. "Cheeses like ricotta, mozzarella, cheddar and gruyere can all be incorporated into Indian dishes. Additionally, mozzarella and burrata are great for pizza, cheddar and emmental for sandwiches, and Swiss cheeses for fondue."

A few suggestions...

- Use dollops of ricotta to add richness and texture to gravy-based dishes such as *palak paneer* or *murg tikka* masala.
- Add younger gouda to *malai paneer* or vegetable *korma*, and older gouda to non-vegetarian dishes like *mutton kofta* or chicken *kathi* rolls.
- Choose mozzarella as a base for *pakoras.*
- Amp up street food items like bun *maska* and *vada pao* with cheddar.

Cheese & Wine: Perfect Pairings

- Hard cheeses such as cheddar, parmigiano reggiano and manchego are best paired with a medium bodied red like a cabernet sauvignon or a rioja.
- Soft cheeses such as brie and camembert can be paired with fruity red wines like a pinot noir or Beaujolais, as well as rosé.
- Blue cheeses like stilton, roquefort and gorgonzola go well with sweet options like Sauternes, port, or sweet sherry.
- Goat cheese pairs best with sauvignon blanc as well as a crisp dry Provençal rosé or a fresh fruity red such as Beaujolais.
- Melted cheese classics like fondue and raclette pair well with a crisp or aromatic white wine.



Laugh To Be Happy & Healthy!

Pranali Dhamankar, Dubai-based laughter yoga expert and event management entrepreneur, cues Andrea CostaBir into the myriad benefits of laughing one's way to great health and immense happiness!

What drew you to the concept of laughter yoga?

During my teenage years, I observed elderly individuals laughing heartily in parks, prompting my curiosity about their seemingly spontaneous amusement. Upon inquiry, one of them explained that laughter served as their pastime... Years later, having established my own company specialising in a management for education, corporate, and wellness sectors, a client approached me for a unique event idea. The concept of laughter yoga crossed my mind, and I suggested conducting a session for their attendees. With the laughter yoga session attended by 100 people receiving overwhelming positive feedback, I realised the potential of laughter yoga in enhancing well-being.

Motivated to delve deeper into its benefits, I did extensive research and discovered its myriad health advantages. Recognising the value of professional certification, I committed to obtaining leadership credentials in laughter yoga. This decision aimed to equip me with the skills necessary to conduct more sessions effectively across corporate, educational, and wellness settings. Moreover, I aspire to offer the gift of laughter yoga to society, recognising its potential to enrich lives and promote well-being.





Does laughter yoga differ from traditional yoga practices?

While traditional yoga primarily focuses on physical postures *(asanas),* breathing techniques *(pranayama),* and meditation to promote physical, mental and spiritual well-being, laughter yoga emphasises laughter as a form of exercise. Traditional yoga focuses on achieving inner peace and harmony through physical and spiritual practices, laughter yoga uses laughter as a tool to promote physical, mental and emotional well-being in a light-hearted and enjoyable manner.

Are there any proven benefits of laughter yoga for physical and mental health?

Research studies and anecdotal evidence demonstrate the following benefits:

- Reduces stress by triggering the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. It also decreases the production of stress hormones like cortisol, leading to a sense of relaxation and well-being.
- Improves your mood as the act of laughing releases neurotransmitters like dopamine, which contribute to feelings of happiness and positivity, pleasure and reward.
- Regular practice of laughter yoga has been linked to improved immune function. Laughter increases the production of immune cells and antibodies, helping the body to better fight off infections and illnesses.

"I aspire to offer the gift of laughter yoga to society, recognising its potential to enrich lives and promote well-being."

- Laughter has natural pain-relieving properties due to its ability to increase blood flow and trigger the release of endorphins.
- It benefits heart health by reducing blood pressure, improving circulation, and promoting relaxation. Laughter stimulates the cardiovascular system and increases oxygen intake, leading to better overall cardiovascular function.
- Since it is typically practiced in a group setting, it fosters social interaction and promotes a sense of belonging and community.
- Laughter yoga has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression by providing a distraction from negative thoughts and feelings.



Now that you conduct your own laughter yoga sessions for corporates and students in Dubai and elsewhere, what are the techniques you use to induce laughter in participants?

Some common techniques include:

- Structured activities specifically designed to stimulate laughter. Examples include 'Milkshake Laughter', where participants pretend to shake a giant milkshake and then drink it with exaggerated gulps, or 'Greeting Laughter', where participants greet each other with laughter instead of words.
- Participants engage in role-playing scenarios that are inherently humorous, such as pretending to be animals, celebrities, or fictional characters. This encourages spontaneity and creativity, leading to laughter.
- They practice laughter meditation, where they close their eyes and focus on the sensation of laughter within their bodies. This technique encourages deep belly laughter and helps release inhibitions.
- Practitioners make eye contact with each other and engage in laughter, which creates a sense of connection and increases the contagiousness of laughter within the group.





"Laughter yoga uses laughter as a tool to promote physical, mental and emotional well-being in a light-hearted and enjoyable manner."

Please share a memorable insight from your work with laughter yoga.

Regardless of age, gender or cultural differences, laughter is a universal language that transcends barriers and brings people closer. It is heartening to see how laughter acts as a powerful tool in building bridges, promoting empathy, and cultivating a sense of belonging within the group. It is a reminder of the inherent human need for joy and connection.

Please advise us on practicing laughter yoga on our own...

- Start with deep belly breathing *(pranayama)* to relax your body and mind. Deep breathing helps oxygenate your body and prepares you for laughter.
- Fake it till you make it! Fake laughter often leads to genuine laughter as you continue, so don't be afraid to initiate laughter even if it feels unnatural initially.
- Incorporate laughter prompts or cues to stimulate laughter. This could be imagining funny scenarios, using laughter exercises, or simply smiling and laughing at yourself in the mirror.
- Be playful and imaginative by engaging in role-playing, storytelling, or playful activities to evoke laughter and creativity.
- Practise regularly as consistency is key. Set aside time for regular laughter yoga practice, even if it's just a few minutes each day. The more you practise, the easier it will become to laugh naturally.
- Find laughter partners to amplify the laughter experience. Invite friends, family members, or colleagues to join you in laughter yoga sessions to share the joy and benefits together.
- Approach laughter yoga with an open mind to let go of inhibitions. Allow yourself to embrace the joy of laughter without the fear of judgment.

Now go ahead, make laughter yoga a part of your daily routine, and enjoy the many physical, mental and emotional benefits it brings... Have fun!!

"Approach laughter yoga with an open mind to let go of inhibitions. Allow yourself to embrace the joy of laughter without the fear of judgment."

Vintage Rides

Celebrities show off prized pieces from their vintage car collections.

Whether you're a collector looking to add to your collection or simply a lover of classic automobiles, the allure of vintage cars is undeniable. They are not just cars; they are works of art, testaments to a time when craftsmanship and elegance reigned supreme on the open road. And these celebrities and businessmen will agree...



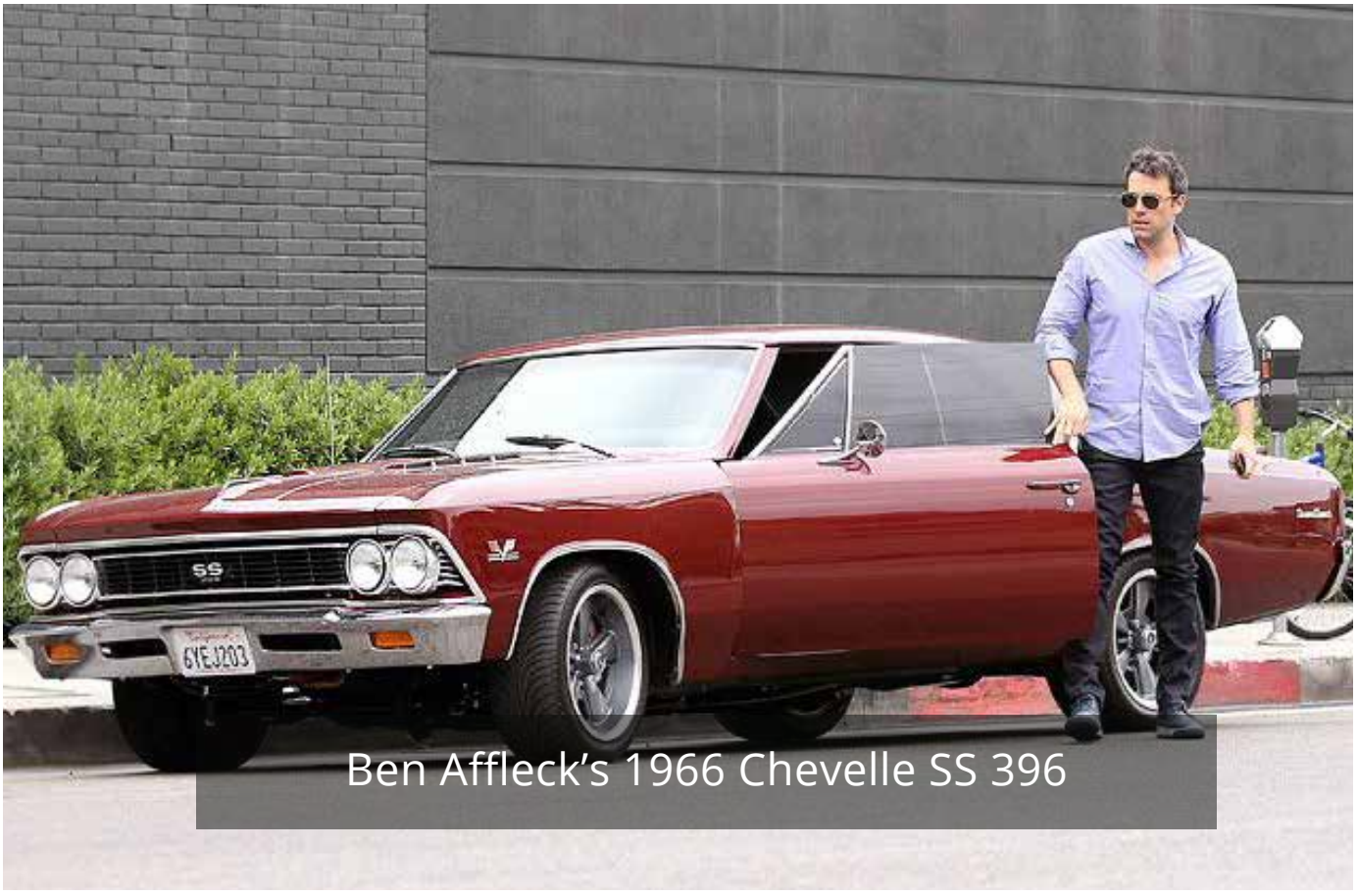
Yohan Poonawalla's Rolls Royce Phantom III



Amitabh Bachchan's Ford Prefect



Arnold Schwarzenegger’s Bentley Continental GTC



Ben Affleck’s 1966 Chevelle SS 396



Gautam Singhania's 1934 Packard 1107 Coupe Roadster



George Clooney's 1958 Chevrolet Corvette V8 C1



Jackie Shroff's SS Jaguar 100



Nick Jonas' 1960 Ford Thunderbird

Spectacular!

Ar Ponni M Concessao's relentless passion for the finer aesthetics of life and work makes her a role model for the budding talent in our country.

Oscar & Ponni + Rahul Architects is an esteemed architectural and interior design firm based in Chennai. The firm was founded by the husband-wife duo, Architect Oscar G Concessao and Architect Ms Ponni M Concessao. Their dedication and contribution to the field of architecture has earned them recognition from prestigious universities. Adding to the family's legacy in architecture, their son Rahul has also joined the practice. He earned his B.Arch degree from Measi Academy of Architecture and participated in the Design Studio Program at Sci-Arch in Los Angeles.

Here's a glimpse of some of their most prominent projects:

Telangana State Secretariat, Hyderabad

The Telangana State Secretariat in Hyderabad is a grand and iconic architectural project spanning 12 lakh sq ft. The building's total height is an impressive 265 ft. The planning concept for this State Secretariat is based on Vastu, incorporating traditional Hindu architectural principles. The predominant architectural style is Classical Deccan Kakatiya, which symbolises the region's secular and heritage continuity.

"The dome and other architectural features draw inspiration from Hindu Deccan Kakatiya architecture and also from the domes of the Hanuman Temple at Salangpur. The overall design philosophy reflects the fusion of diverse cultures and heritage from Telangana's dynamic history."

- Ponni M Concessao



Explaining the design concept, Ponni shares, "The design inspiration is derived from two sources: The cultural and harmonious blend of heritage architectural styles of Telangana, particularly from temples and palaces, and the influence of Lord Shiva, with reference to the Neelakanteshwara temple near Hyderabad and Wanaparthy Palace. The dome and other architectural features draw inspiration from Hindu Deccan Kakatiya architecture and also from the domes of the Hanuman Temple at Salangpur. The overall design philosophy reflects the fusion of diverse cultures and heritage from Telangana's dynamic history."

The building's exterior is adorned with red sandstone cladding for the podium and beige Dholpur sandstone for the central tower. Beige represents reliability, flexibility, modernity, calmness and relaxation. The interior features a grand entrance atrium with Telangana Mural Art and a LED wall showcasing Telangana's developments. The building overlooks a large landscaped central courtyard, contributing to environmental control and reducing carbon emissions. The interior courtyard, called 'Brahmasthanam', is adorned with a red sandstone podium wall.

Despite the building's heritage architectural planning principles, the electrical, mechanical, and plumbing systems are futuristic, integrating the latest cutting-edge technology. Sustainability and COVID-proofing the building using green architectural norms are essential aspects of the design. The Telangana State Secretariat in Hyderabad is an architectural masterpiece that skillfully combines traditional heritage architecture with modern technology, reflecting the state's rich cultural heritage and commitment to sustainable and futuristic design principles.

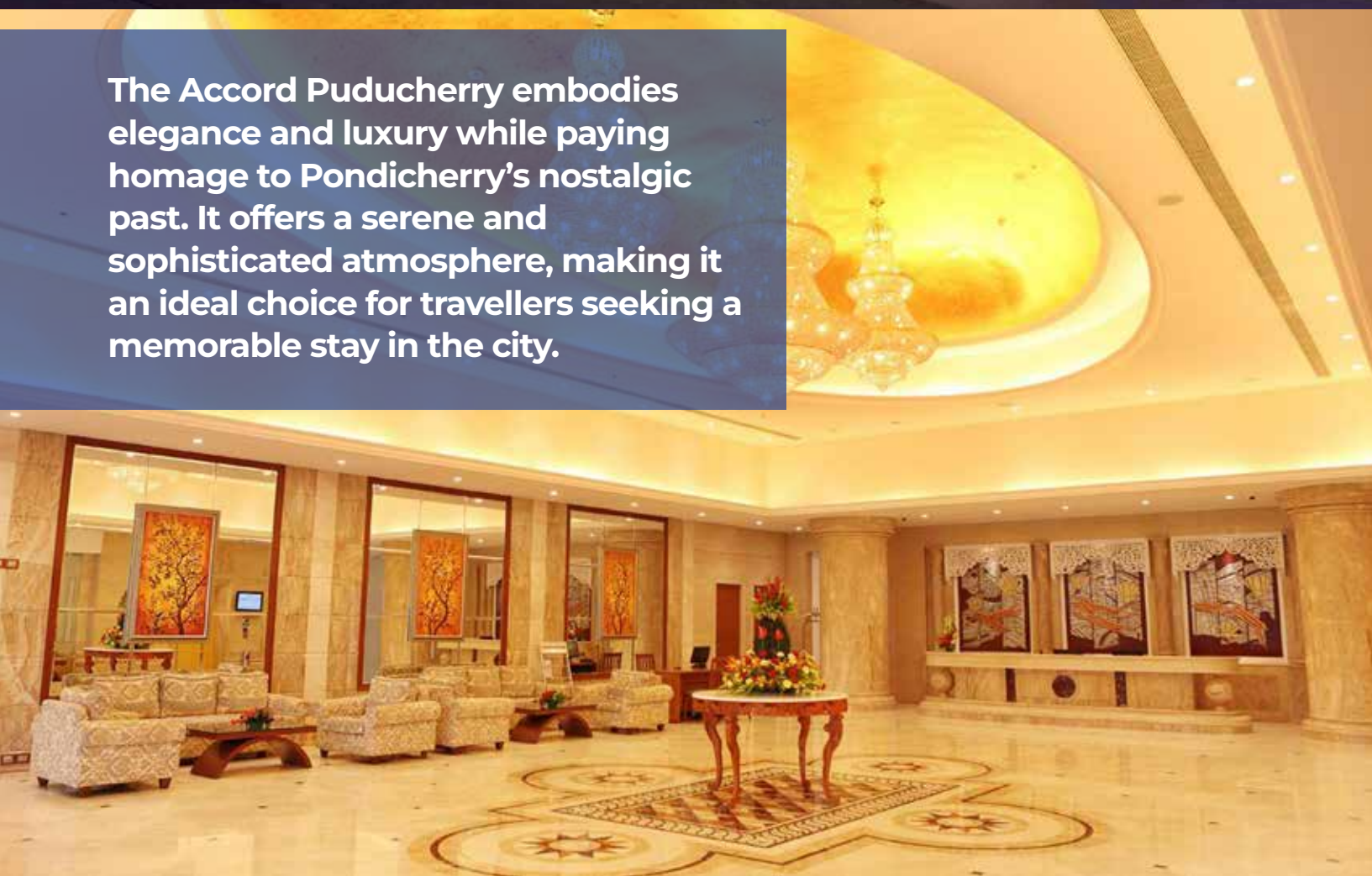
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The Accord Puducherry embodies elegance and luxury while paying homage to Pondicherry's nostalgic past. It offers a serene and sophisticated atmosphere, making it an ideal choice for travellers seeking a memorable stay in the city.



Accord Hotel, Puducherry

The Accord Puducherry is a hotel that offers a luxurious and unforgettable experience. The architectural style of the hotel is neoclassical, which reflects the colonial influence prevalent in the city. The exterior elevation combines elements such as Indian Dholpur stone, toughened glass, textured paint and wood, creating an elegant and harmonious design. The horizontal and vertical lines of the building contribute to its simplicity and balanced proportions.

As you enter the hotel through the sweeping Indian-dressed granite driveway porte-cochere, reminiscent of French colonial architecture, you are greeted by a breathtaking double-height lobby. The lobby is entirely marble-clad, with a magnificent golden oval ceiling adorned with three cut glass chandeliers, emphasizing the grandeur of the space. The Italian marble flooring, with its geometric motifs and varying shades, showcases a fine display of Florentine marble design.

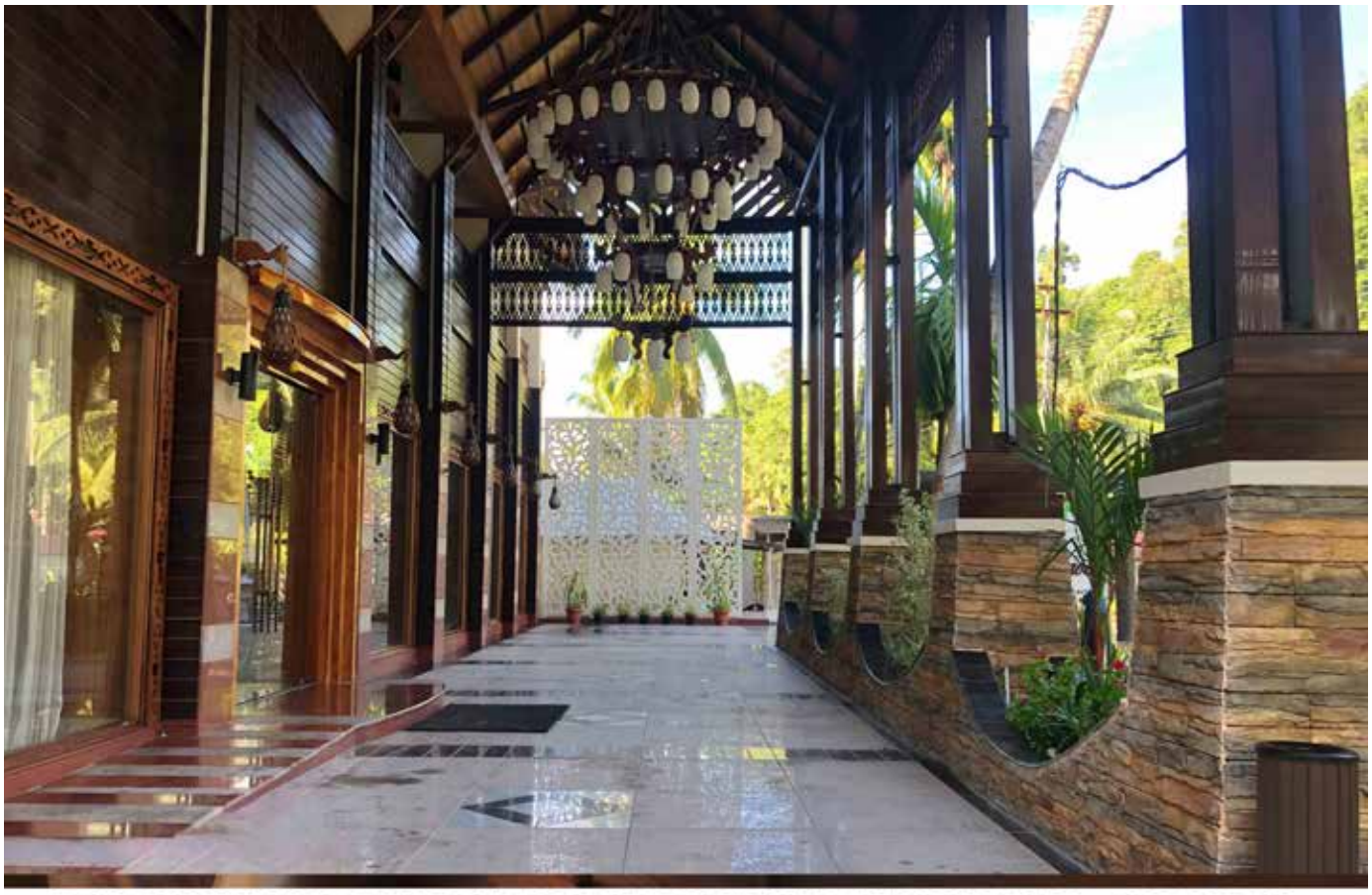
The eastern wall of the lobby is adorned with large mirrors featuring specially commissioned artwork as the centerpiece. The pre-function area is defined by a row of magnificent tall marble columns, reminiscent of Renaissance palaces, with modular marble motifs creating a pleasing sequence of spaces. Overall, the Accord Puducherry embodies elegance and luxury while paying homage to Pondicherry's nostalgic past. It offers a serene and sophisticated atmosphere, making it an ideal choice for travellers seeking a memorable stay in the city.

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Sandyy Wavess RCS Beach Resort, Havelock Islands, Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Innovation is at the core of the Sandyy Wavess Beach Resort's design, which incorporates elements of local Andaman architecture. The wood-framed roofs, covered with metal sheets typical of the region, are accentuated by Dormer windows, and wooden eaves enhance the slopes. The resort utilises a soft colour palette of white, brown, and beige, representing tropical architecture while incorporating modern touches, such as the glass-fronted restaurant. The focus on eco-friendliness is evident through the use of natural and local materials, like wood and granite.

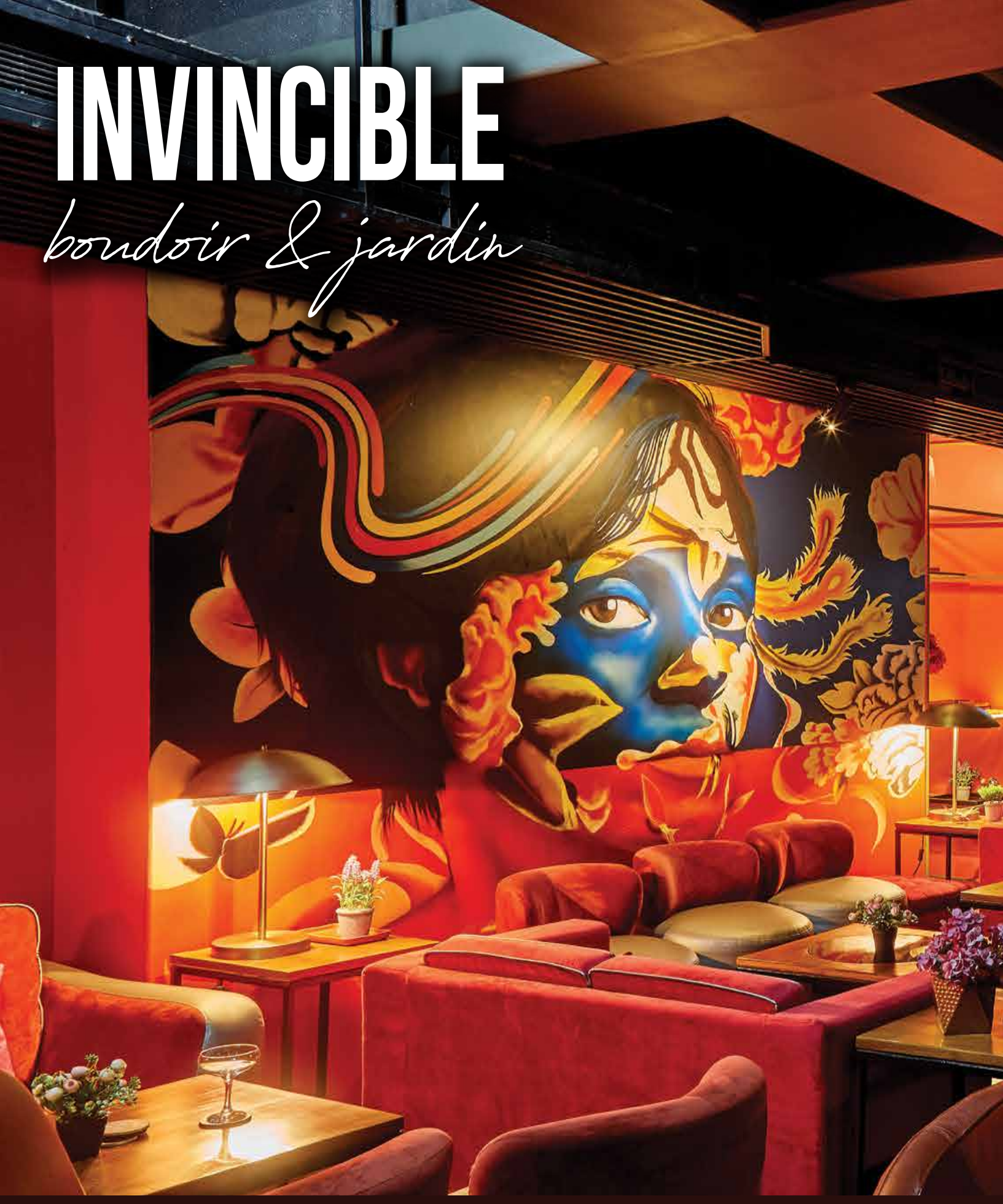
The appeal of Sandyy Wavess Beach Resort lies in its combination of tropical modernism and ethnic island architecture. The resort features expansive open spaces, local materials, and a strong focus on ventilation and cooling. Positioned along a private beachfront, the resort offers mesmerizing views from various perspectives. The buildings are designed in an angular formation, considering the island's weather conditions, with splayed shapes to improve air circulation and protect against cyclone damage.

The landscape areas and pathways within the resort showcase diverse indigenous flora, creating a pleasant interaction between guests and the environment. The swimming pool with a sunken bar adds to the unique experience, while outdoor seating spaces and pavilions allow guests to enjoy the beautiful weather. The architecture seamlessly blends built and unbuilt spaces, providing visitors with an unforgettable experience in this exotic island locale.

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Overall, Oscar & Ponni + Rahul Architects' projects are a testament to architectural excellence, blending cutting-edge technology with environmental sensitivity to create remarkable and awe-inspiring landmarks across the world.

This article has been excerpted from our sister publication 'Society Interiors & Design'.



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Playin' It Cool

Amber Dias dives headfirst into some chilling cocktails.

The weather outside is sizzling, and that just makes coolers all the more delightful. They are icy, refreshing and bursting with flavour. The secret to delivering some much-needed relief from the heat? Keeping it light and fizzy with a lot of ice. Often a combination of low-alcohol spirits, liqueurs, or fortified wine with a carbonated beverage, these cocktails lighten up any occasion.

Pick Your Spirit

The trick to a good cooler is to keep it light and simple. Here are some popular spirits that find their way into classic summer cocktails.

Gin

The perfect fit for fizzy, refreshing drinks, gin is a summertime favourite. It works exceptionally well in citrus-forward cocktails. While there are plenty of different types of gin to choose from, a dry gin often works best to bring out intricate flavours, but feel free to mix it up and play with combinations.







Tequila

Versatile with a slightly sweet finish, tequila is the spirit of choice if your palette leans towards tropical flavours. A lighter, fruity style of tequila is an excellent choice for citrus-based cocktails, while a more aged version is preferred for cocktails that require depth and complexity.

Rum

White or dark, rum is another versatile summer favourite. They play nicely with fruity tropical flavours, packing quite the punch.



Vodka

Vodka is a fan favourite, especially when you're hosting a party. It is flexible and low in calories, just right to help cope with the extra rays.

Bourbon

While usually favoured for warm drinks, bourbon has its place in icy concoctions too - Mint Julep, anyone? Note that it must be used carefully so as not to overpower the drink.

Cool Sips



Watermelon Vodka Cocktail

Watermelons are the belle of the season and make a delicious, cooling cocktail. Simply muddle a lime wedge with watermelon cubes – deseeded, of course. Add vodka, ice and simple syrup. Shake and strain into a highball glass over crushed ice. Top off with soda and serve.

Blue Hawaii

Bring home a taste of the islands with this cool blue cocktail. To whip it up, shake ice, white rum, vodka, blue curaçao and pineapple juice. Strain into a rocks glass over ice and garnish with a pineapple wedge and cherry. Enjoy!

Summertime Sangria

Whether you prefer white or red wine, a chilly sangria is just the drink to sip on lazy summer afternoons. This is a pitcher drink and you can play with different fruits, the most commonly used are slices of orange, lime and apple. Add a little rum to punch it up, some ice, a bit of sugar and a bottle of wine of your choice.



Coconut Sunrise

Whip up your own slice of the tropics with the deliciously nutty cocktail. It'll cool you down and for just a little bit, transport you to paradise. All it takes is some coconut tequila, orange and pineapple juice, and a touch of grenadine. Just shake 'em up, pour into a highball glass over ice, sit back, relax and sip away.

Frozen Piña Colada

A summertime classic, nothing delights the senses quite like a Piña Colada. All it takes is blending ice, frozen pineapple, cream of coconut and white rum. Pour into a cocktail glass, add a wedge of pineapple, a little umbrella and chill out.

Cucumber-Basil Cooler

Sometimes the best way to cool down is to give in to the refreshing vibes of basil and cucumber. Simply muddle some basil leaves in a mason jar and add a pinch of salt. Slide in some slices of cucumber, vodka, lime and ice. Top off with a soda or a fizzy drink of your choice

Fun In The Sun

When making summer coolers, don't be afraid to experiment with different flavours and ingredients, the possibilities are endless. The key is to keep them light, refreshing and hydrating. They are a fabulous way to wind up the week and blissfully ignore the scorching heat, even if just for a little while. Here's to a deliciously cool summer!



A Dance Of Diamonds

Go bold and brilliant with an eclectic collection of jewels from Kaj Fine Jewellery.



Stunning forms imbued with a bold and vibrant energy set the tone for the Vincenza collection from Kaj Fine Jewellery, founded by Kajal Fabiani Hiranandani. The epitome of elegance, this beautiful array of earrings, bracelets and rings have been meticulously crafted to embody the vibe and spirit of the '70s and '80s - the disco era - and offer something for every occasion.



Gold & Diamond Oval Reverse U Bracelet

"KAJ is a way for me to express my passion for everyday luxury in a way that is modern and accessible. The Vicenza collection is a tribute to the glamorous spirit of the disco era, where boldness and freedom reign supreme. With this collection, we aim to capture the essence of that time while infusing it with contemporary elegance and sophistication," says Kajal.



Diamond & Gold Mesh Earrings



Diamond Filigree Concave & Convex Clips



Diamond Oval Meshwork Bracelet



Dome Asymmetrical Cocktail Ring



Interlocking U Hoops With Diamonds



Diamond Sphere Dome Ring



Crossover Cocktail Ring



Basket Hoops

*Prices on request kajfinejewellery.com

Read & Be Merry!

Nichola Marie gives you a peek at the latest book releases.



Thriller Killer

Author: Rajan Narayan

Price: ₹270

A crime thriller novel, 'Thriller Killer' is the story of a serial killer and the women being stalked. On the killer's trail is ACP Malati. The killer is ruthless, merciless and leaves no trail. Except for a string of gruesome, unsolved murders. Will she get to the killer before the killer strikes again?



Defying Conventions: A Maverick Healthcare Odyssey

Publisher: AsiaOne Media Group

Price: ₹595

Discover the remarkable achievements and enriching experiences of Dr Minnie Bodhanwala, visionary CEO of Wadia Hospitals, whose tireless efforts have facilitated access to affordable healthcare, nutrition, education, and livelihood for millions through impactful community outreach initiatives.



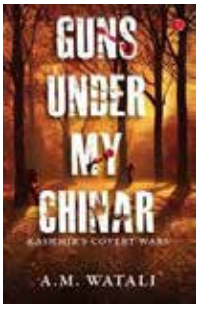
Goagr@m: Misadventures of an Influencer

Author: Bina Nayak

Publisher: HarperCollins

Price: ₹399

Mesmerised by the world of social media influencing, Madhur Chopra aka Maddie, escapes from Covid-infested Delhi to tranquil Goa which provides the perfect backdrop for her vlogs. A spirited tale of resilience and reinvention, Goagram takes you behind the scenes to reveal the pain and the goop behind the pouts and glitter on screen.



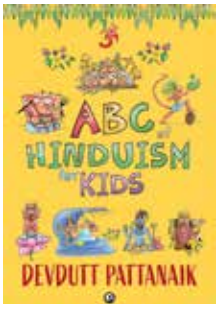
Guns Under My Chinar: Kashmir's Covert Wars

Author: AM Watali

Publisher: Rupa Publications

Price: ₹495

A gripping account — by former chief of police AM Watali of the Kashmir Valley — of how covert warfare, espionage and geopolitical manoeuvres have shaped and reshaped the geopolitical landscape of Kashmir. A fearless exploration of the big games played by vested interests, it provides a rare glimpse into a clandestine world with its wealth of untold stories and valuable insights.



ABC of Hinduism for Kids

Author: Devdutt Pattanaik

Publisher: Aleph Book Company

Price: ₹399

Renowned mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik reimagines a Hindu way for young readers. From major Hindu deities, to complicated ideas of atma and the caste system, the book explores 26 ideas and figures from Hindu myth, each corresponding to a letter of the alphabet. Its simple writing style and colourful illustrations make it a perfect introduction to the Hindu way of life for the little ones.

In Focus

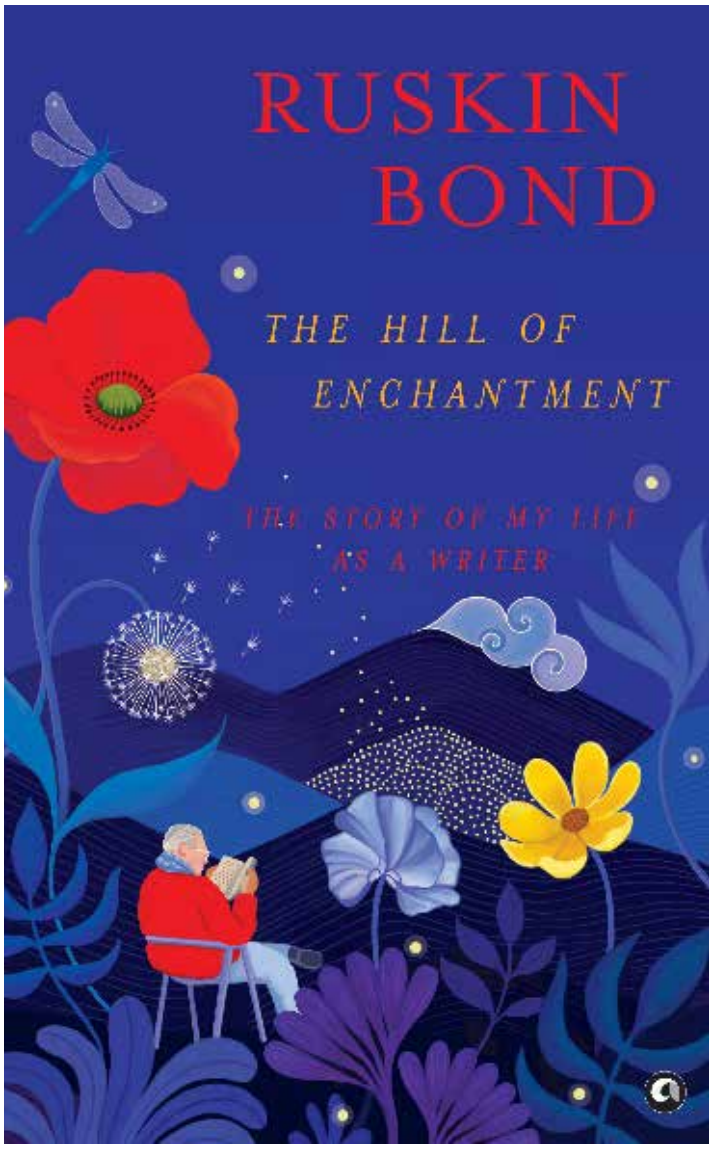
The Hill of Enchantment: The Story of My Life as a Writer

Author: Ruskin Bond

Publisher: Aleph Book Company

Price: ₹399

India's most beloved writer Ruskin Bond turns 90 this May. To commemorate the occasion and celebrate his exceptional journey, Bond's new memoir - 'The Hill of Enchantment: The Story of My Life as a Writer' shares captivating insights into his extraordinary life as a writer. Offering readers a rare glimpse into the man behind the timeless stories, Bond, with the heartfelt prose he is renowned and adored for, unveils the influence of nature, solitude, and the view from his house. Looking back on his rich and varied life as an author, he talks about the experiences that have shaped him, the events that inspired his most famous books and stories, and how the mountains, solitude, and Pari Tibba, Fairy Hill (that he can see from his window) have impacted his work. A book of wisdom, beauty, calm and wonder, this is a journey behind the scenes of numerous widely read books and the life of one of India's literary luminaries. His insights also enrich readers' understanding of his creative process and the essence of his writing.



Looking back on his rich and varied life as an author, he talks about the experiences that have shaped him, the events that inspired his most famous books and stories.



The Name's Bond...

Ruskin Bond is the author of several bestselling novels and collections of short stories, essays and poems. He was awarded the Padma Shri by the Government of India in 1999, the Lifetime Achievement Award by the Delhi Government in 2012, and the Padma Bhushan in 2014. He received the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship in 2021.

His works include: 'The Room on the Roof' (winner of the John Llewellyn Rhys Prize); 'A Flight of Pigeons'; 'The Night Train at Deoli'; 'Time Stops at Shamli'; 'Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra' (winner of the Sahitya Akademi Award); 'Angry River'; 'The Blue Umbrella'; 'Delhi Is Not Far'; 'Rain in the Mountains'; 'Tigers for Dinner'; 'Tales of Fosterganj'; 'A Gathering of Friends'; 'Upon an Old Wall Dreaming'; 'Small Towns, Big Stories'; 'Unhurried Tales'; 'A Gallery of Rascals'; 'Rhododendrons in the Mist'; and 'Miracle at Happy Bazaar' (winner of the Kalinga Literary Festival Children's Book of the Year, 2021), among others.

Off The Rack

A peek at some of our favourite things.



Floral Chic

Dolce & Gabbana Floral-Print Short-Sleeve Belted Midi Shirtdress

Fun, flirty and breezy, this floral print shirtdress makes a fabulous addition to your summer wardrobe. It is light on the skin and the flared silhouette is flattering. The pale hue is offset by the vibrant floral print that is sure to grab eyes.

₹2,92,298 **Check it out at: dolcegabbana.com/en-in/**



Scent Sure

Bond No.9 New York Lafayette Street Eau de Parfum

A woody and spicy scent, this cologne oozes sophistication. Notes of bergamot, coriander, vanilla, tonka bean and grey amber come together to create a scent that is long lasting and pulls the best compliments.

₹ 40,535 **Check it out at: bondno9.com**

Cool Dude

Tom Ford Corduroy 2-Pocket Overshirt

Amp up your cool factor with this suave corduroy overshirt. Made in Italy, it is casual and fits well, the point collar and double flap pockets give it a smart finish. A great choice if you're getting dressed to impress.



₹1,03,588 **Check it out at: tomford.com**



Beach Bliss

Ramy Brook Kezia Cutout One-Piece Swimsuit

'Tis the season to break out the swimwear and this piece will definitely heat things up. This one-shouldered suit comes with adjustable drawstrings and offers moderate seat coverage. Whether you're lounging by the pool or hitting the beach, it is a great pick.

₹21,439 **Check it out at: ramybrook.com**

Keepin' It Smart

Brunello Cucinelli Straight-Fit 5-Pocket Pants



Dressy yet comfortable, these pants are perfect for a day at the office or a semi-formal affair. The cuffed hems give them a causal touch. Made in Italy, these pants offer a classic fit and pair well with formal and casual shirts.

₹76,565 **Check it out at: brunellocucinelli.com/en/**



Silk Fling

Tumi Search Nylon Backpack

Step out in style in these printed sandals. These 4" stilettos come with an adjustable ankle wrap that offers the right amount of support. A stunning pair, they pair well with pants or dresses, and give solid hues a vibrant lift.

₹89,626 **Check it out at: asia.christianlouboutin.com**

Hot Stepper

Givenchy G4 Patent Leather Low-Top Sneakers

Casual goes chic with these glossy, patent leather sneakers. The flat heel and perforated round toe design make them a comfortable fit for any occasion. If you're looking to make a statement, these sneakers are a must-have.



₹62,603 **Check it out at:givenchy.com/int/en/**



Alluring

Creed Wind Flowers Eau de Parfum

Inspired by movement, this perfume is floral and fresh. It opens with sweet jasmine, wrapped around the zesty scent of Tunisian orange blossom. Tuberose petals and a soft rose extract add depth and texture to this fragrance, while a warm flurry of sandalwood is twisted around a haze of iris and musk. A certified winner for the senses.

₹40,084 **Check it out at: creedfragrance.com**

*Prices may vary

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