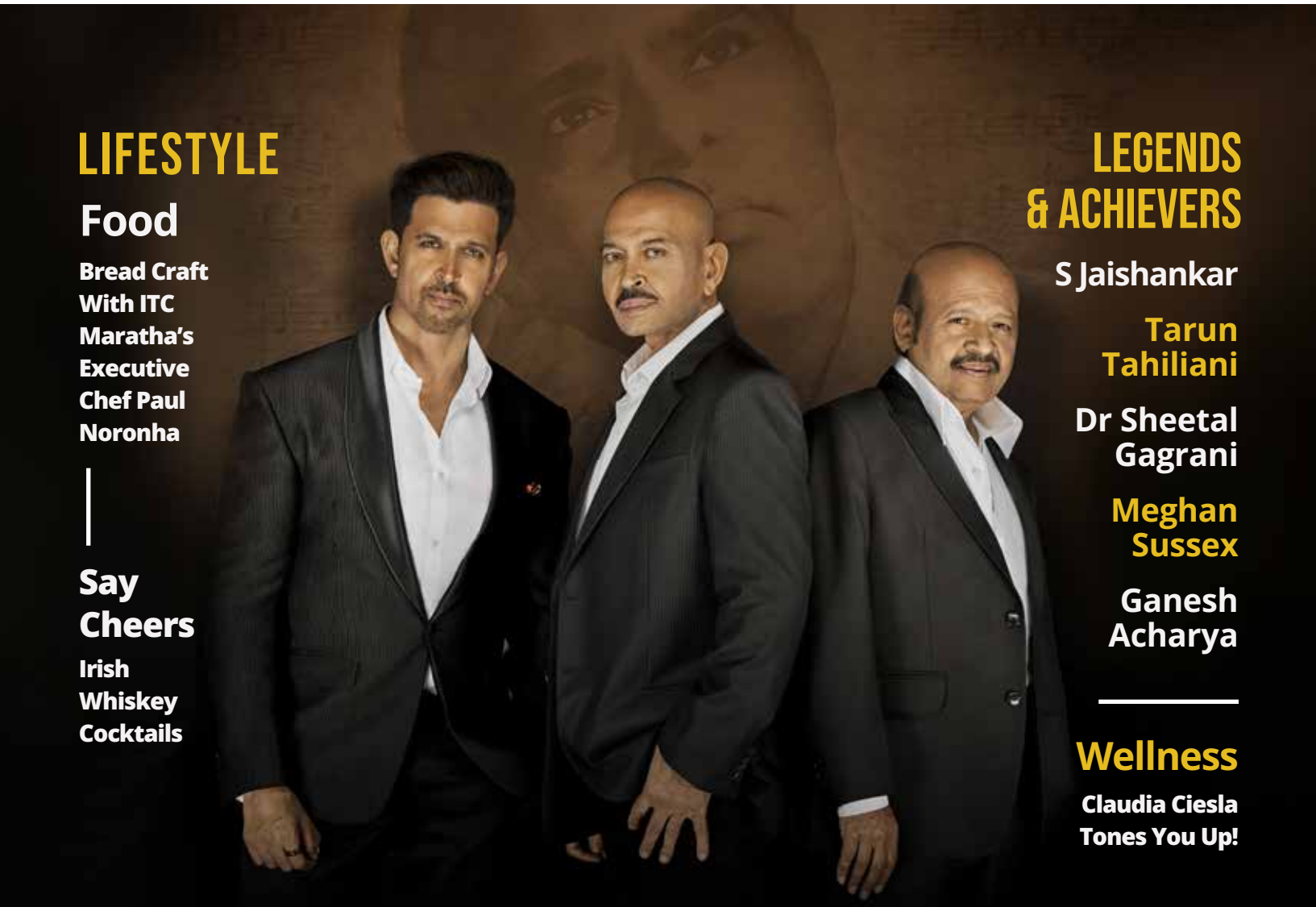
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April 2025



LIFESTYLE

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Irish Whiskey Cocktails

LEGENDS & ACHIEVERS

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Tarun Tahiliani

Dr Sheetal Gagrani

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Wellness

Claudia Ciesla Tones You Up!

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RAKESH ROSHAN

on his high-achieving mindset, family & beyond



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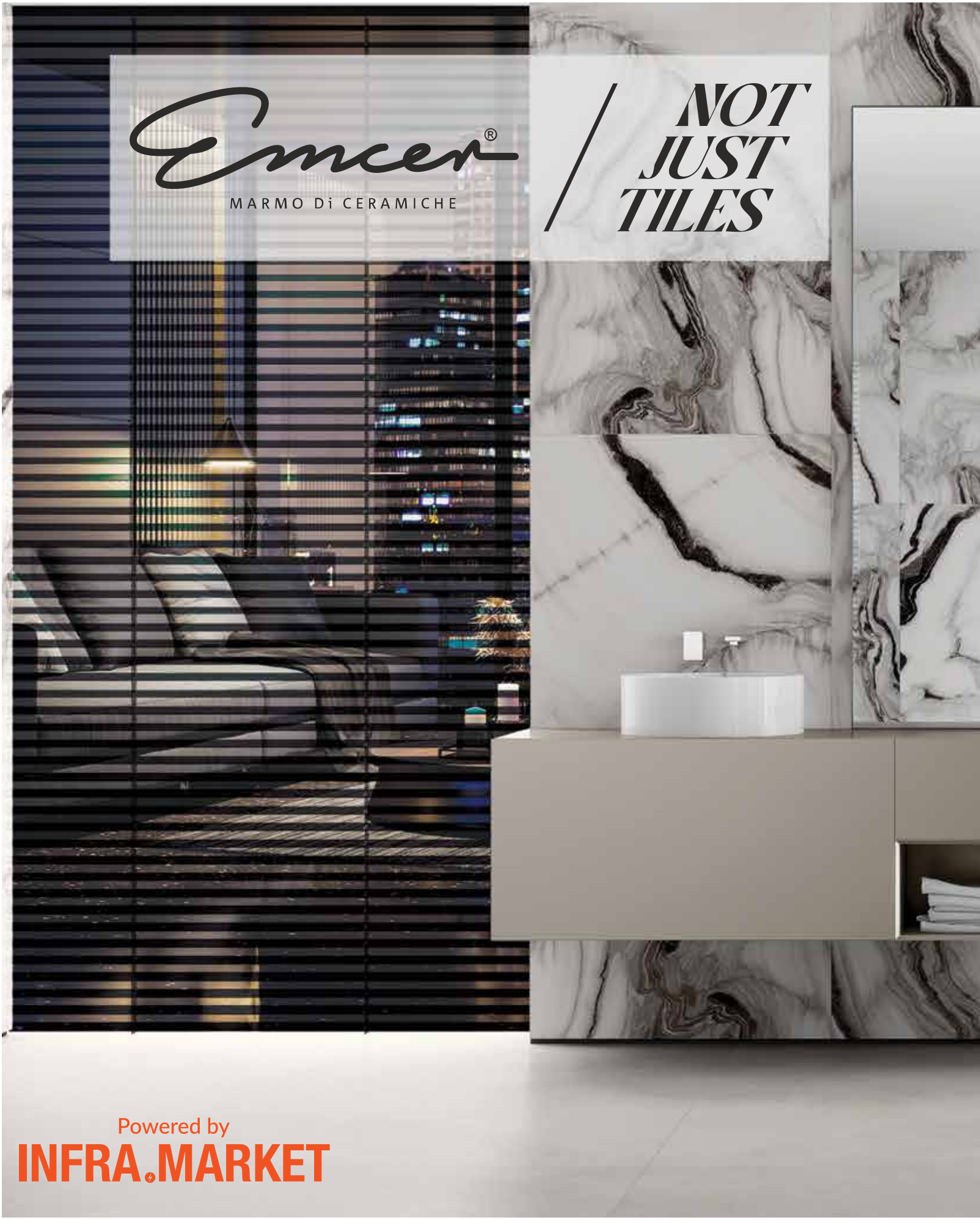
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Insight



We are thrilled to announce that starting this month, in addition to our e-magazine, subscriptions, website, and social media platforms, the print edition of 'Society Achievers' will now be available at stands across India and at airports. This expansion will allow us to reach an even wider audience and connect with more readers than ever before.

Our latest issue, featuring the Roshans on the cover, is a perfect blend of glamour and relevance. The Cover Story with Rakesh Roshan offers an incredible glimpse into his extraordinary journey, and we're sure you'll enjoy every bit of it.

Alongside this, our regular features promise to be an enriching read, adding value to your life in more ways than one.

Happy reading, and we look forward to connecting with you next month!

Regards,

Ashok Dhamankar

Society ACHIEVERS

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Editor's Note



Success encompasses talent, vision, determination, resilience and reinvention. And our cover personality actor-producer-director **Rakesh Roshan** has these qualities in abundance. In his **Cover Story**, he gives us deep insights into his admirable way of living... From loved actor to mammothly successful producer-director, Roshan has been lighting up the big screen worldwide. And he's proved that success belongs to those who dare to adapt.

In **Legends & Achievers**, we spotlight trailblazers who are shaping the narrative to create inspiring legacies. While India's External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar's** leadership redefines India's influence on the global platform; India's iconic and influential fashion designer **Tarun Tahiliani** shares insights into the phenomenal evolution of his fashion empire. Then we have international icon **Meghan Sussex** reinventing modern royalty by weaving magic through content creation, and the dynamic **Dr Sheetal Gagrani** championing cyber safety, menopause awareness and holistic well-being. Finally, renowned choreographer **Ganesh Acharya** makes the world dance to his nimble steps!

Our **Lifestyle** edit dives into life's fizz – ITC Maratha's **Executive Chef Paul Noronah's** artisanal bread craft, wellness expert **Claudia Ciesla's** get fab secrets, **Rahul Kadri's** exotic and sustainable architectural designs, and Irish whiskey cocktails that are made to please.

'Society Achievers' is about the dreamers, the doers, the "determinators" – the changemakers who light up our paths, plus the goodies that satiate our senses! So, stay engaged with us for a spirited ride!

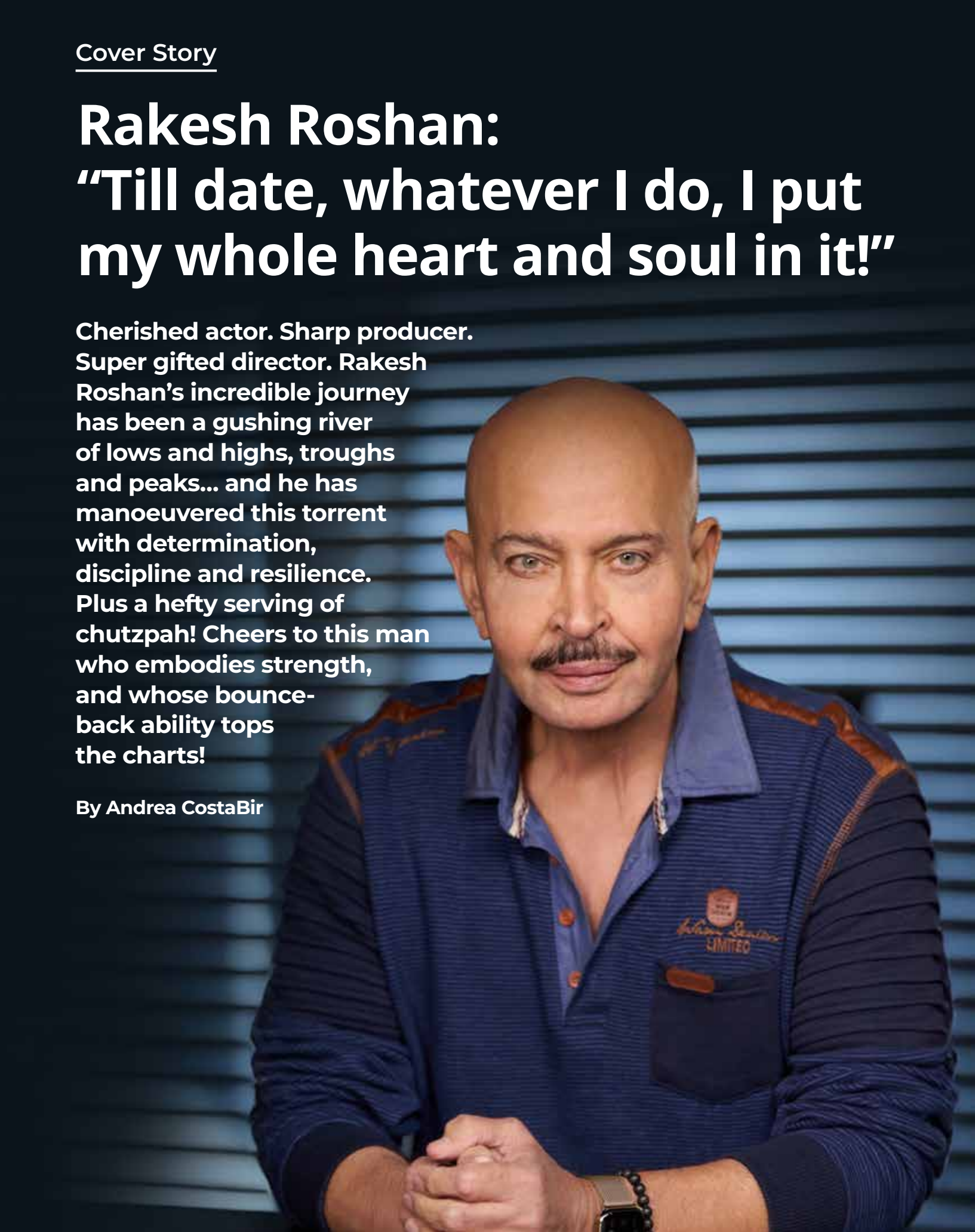
- Andrea CostaBir

Photograph: Viraj Shirodkar

Rakesh Roshan: “Till date, whatever I do, I put my whole heart and soul in it!”

Cherished actor. Sharp producer. Super gifted director. Rakesh Roshan’s incredible journey has been a gushing river of lows and highs, troughs and peaks... and he has manoeuvered this torrent with determination, discipline and resilience. Plus a hefty serving of chutzpah! Cheers to this man who embodies strength, and whose bounce-back ability tops the charts!

By Andrea CostaBir



From an actor who was well-loved but didn't quite get his due, to transforming into one of Bollywood's most successful filmmakers, your journey has been incredibly unique and inspiring. How would you encapsulate it?

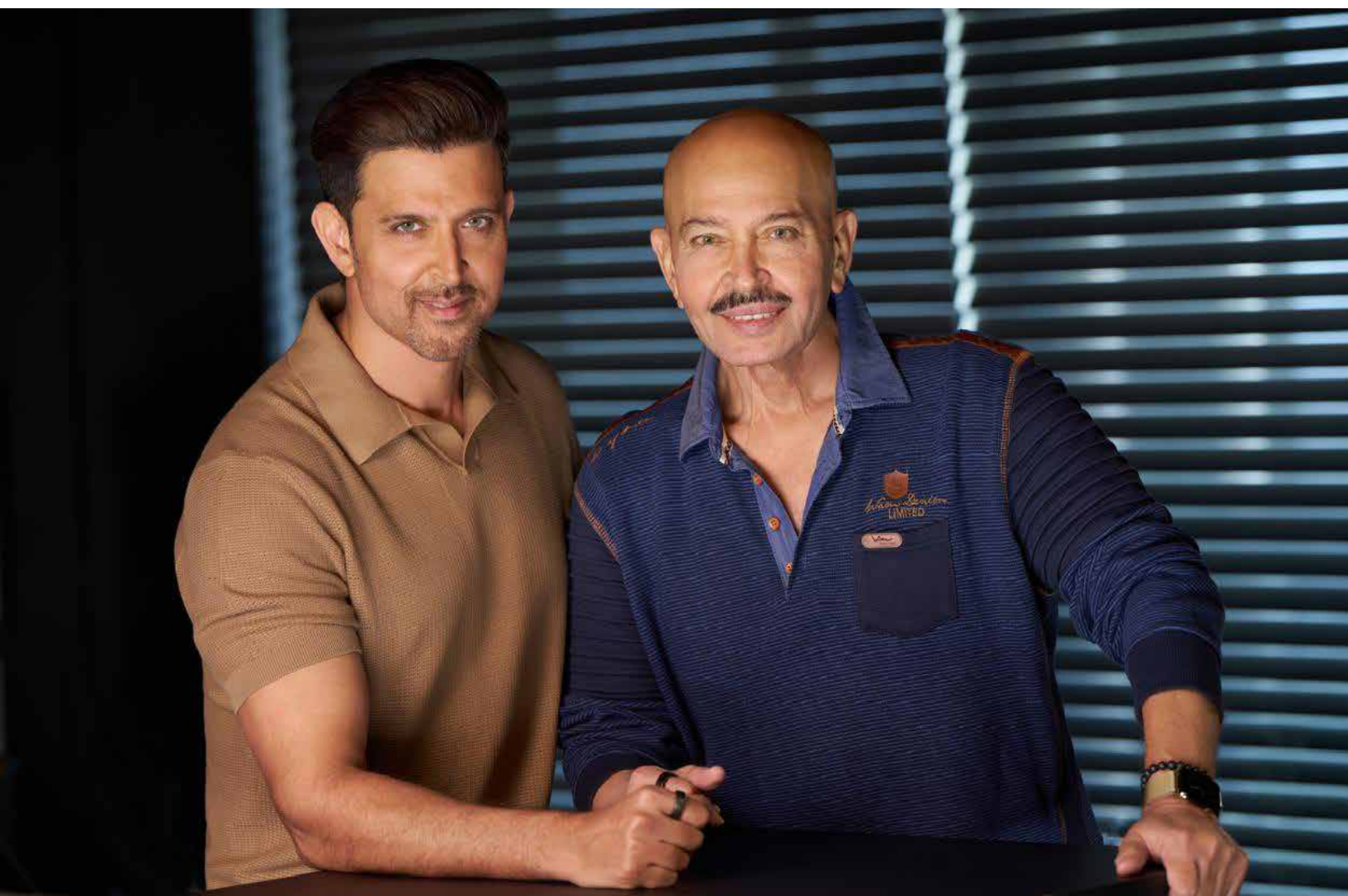
I was always sincere about my work and very hardworking. But as an actor, I wasn't reaching the level I aspired to, and my films didn't perform well enough to push me forward. Some of my films like 'Khel Khel Mein', 'Dhanwan', 'Aankhon Aankhon Mein', and 'Paraya Dhan' did well, but they didn't open doors to better roles. I was frustrated that I wasn't achieving what I wanted.

However, I always had a dream of owning my own production house, much like RK Studios. Even while acting, I would stay back on set, observing directors and their approach. I often felt I could execute certain scenes differently or perhaps better, but as an actor, I never voiced my opinions. That instinct gradually grew, and I realised I wanted my own studio and banner.

Slowly, I drifted towards filmmaking. In a way, Rakesh Roshan the actor made Rakesh Roshan the producer, and then the producer made Rakesh Roshan the director. It wasn't an overnight transition — I took my time, refusing small acting roles and focusing on understanding production. I wanted to learn every aspect of filmmaking — casting, story development, screenplay, music, marketing, and distribution.

After gaining experience as a producer over four films, I decided to direct. But I made a firm decision — I would not cast myself. That allowed me to explore a broader spectrum of storytelling. I challenged myself with diverse subjects — after making 'Khoon Bhari Maang', which was accepted by audiences and critics alike, many filmmakers would have followed up with something similar. Instead, I made 'Kishan Kanhaiya', followed by 'King Uncle', 'Karan Arjun', 'Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai', and 'Koi... Mil Gaya'. I always sought to push creative boundaries rather than chase commercial trends.

"I never made a film simply because it was 'commercially viable'. I was drawn to unconventional stories — concepts that made people wonder, "Is this possible?""



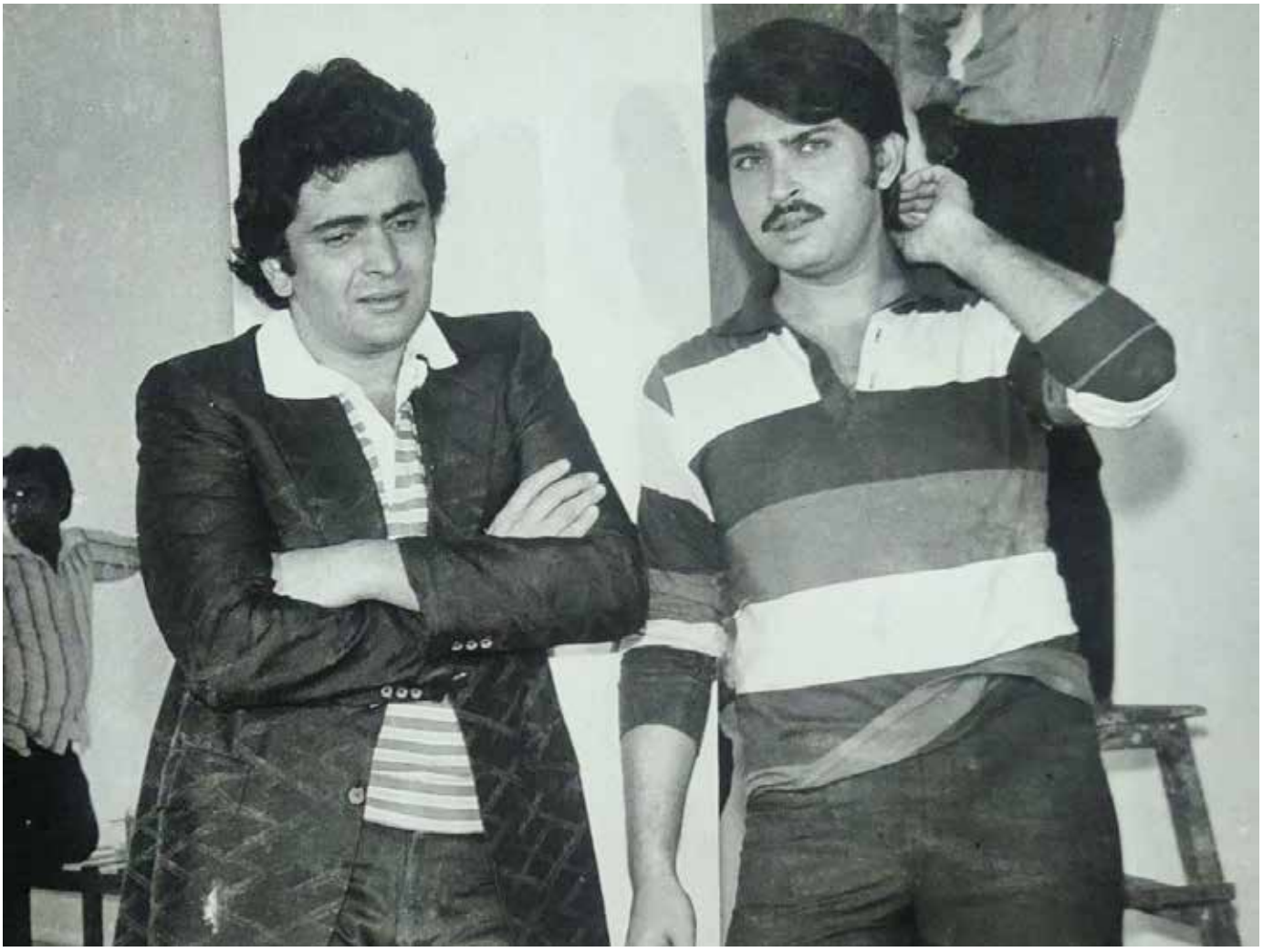
I never made a film simply because it was 'commercially viable'. I was drawn to unconventional stories — concepts that made people wonder, "Is this possible?" Whether it was reincarnation in 'Karan Arjun' or the unique love story in 'Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai', my goal was always to surprise audiences while ensuring the films had strong entertainment value. God was kind — He gave me the right thoughts at the right moments. I would say it was 20% my hard work and 80% luck, but that 20% hard work was more than 100% dedication.

I was about to say that! Years ago, I interviewed your wife, Pinkie, and she spoke about your work ethic. She told me, "You can't imagine how hard he works — he's involved in every department, from music to editing, even on his birthday!"

For me, nothing is ever "good enough" to ignore. Whether it's music, editing, or sound recording — I immerse myself in every process. There's a saying: 'When talent doesn't work hard, make hard work your talent'. That's exactly what I did — I just kept working, staying disciplined and punctual. That discipline has shaped my career.

Even on New Year's Day and my birthday, I work. I'm not an outgoing person who enjoys attending industry parties. My friends are mostly outside the industry, and that keeps me grounded. People say we learn from failures and successes. I disagree. Failures are painful, and when a film doesn't do well, I have sleepless nights. Success, on the other hand, doesn't "teach" anything — it only builds confidence. The only constant is hard work.

"For me, nothing is ever "good enough" to ignore. Whether it's music, editing, or sound recording — I immerse myself in every process."





It's been 25 years, and the magic of 'Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai' continues to unfold. With 'The Roshans' on Netflix revisiting that phase, what are your most cherished memories from the film?

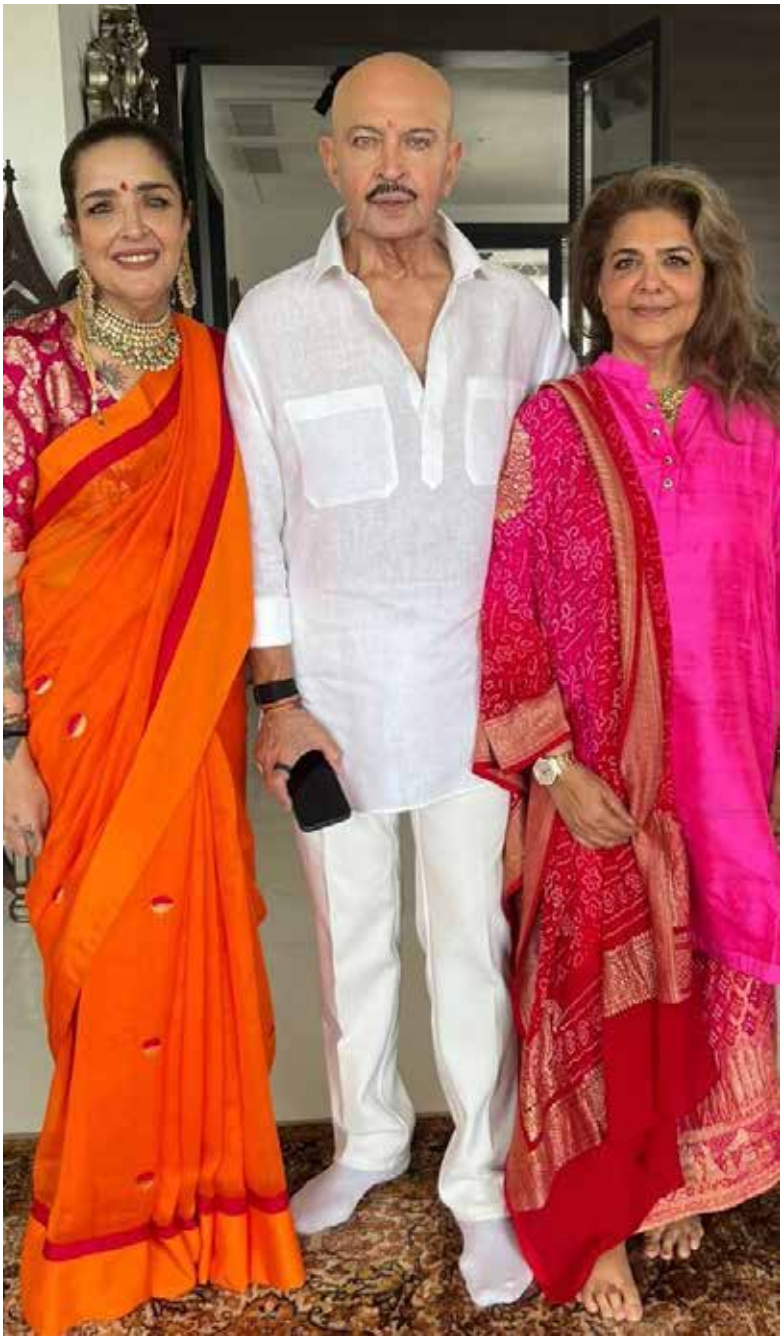
I wanted to make a romantic film and launch newcomers. Hrithik was 24-25 at the time, which was the age I had planned for his debut — not earlier. At 24-25, one is more refined in terms of personality and presence. I didn't want Hrithik to be labelled a "chocolate hero" like I was.

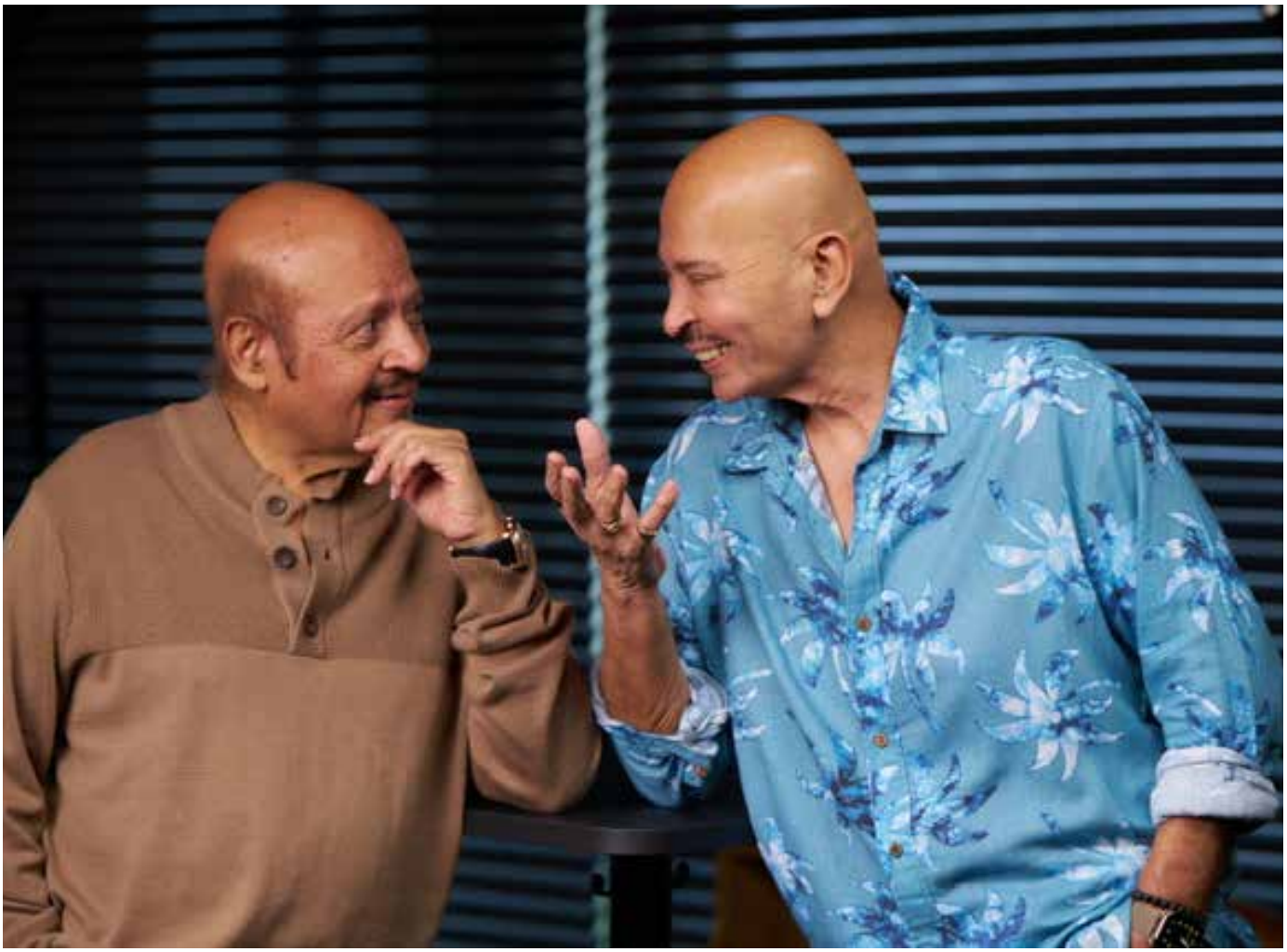
Since I was making a love story, I wanted breathtaking locations that hadn't been seen before in Indian films. We shot in New Zealand and Krabi, Thailand. Krabi had beautiful rock formations in the ocean, while New Zealand provided stunning landscapes for Raj's introduction.

The 'Krrish' series revolutionised Indian superhero cinema. What were the biggest challenges in bringing this universe to life? Also, when is 'Krrish 4' set for release?

The idea of 'Krrish' came organically from 'Koi... Mil Gaya'. Since Jaadu gave Rohit powers and then left, I realised I could continue the story — Rohit's son could inherit those abilities and become a superhero. We introduced Krishna in the mountains — running, crossing rivers, climbing trees — before transforming him into Krrish. The gradual build-up helped audiences accept him.

"Hrithik joined me as an assistant director and worked on three films over five years. By the time I launched him, I knew his strengths and weaknesses."





For action, I found Tony Ching from China. Hrithik trained with him for three months. We also brought in technicians from Los Angeles for VFX. A film like 'Krrish' requires conviction. Emotions are key. Look at 'Avatar' — James Cameron took us to a whole new world, but it was the emotions that resonated. Similarly, in 'Krrish', I ensured emotions remained central.

Are you working with international teams for 'Krrish 4', and when do you start shooting?

Yes, absolutely. Their expertise makes the process smoother; and we will begin shooting next year.

Your collaborations with Hrithik have created some of Bollywood's most unforgettable films. How has your working relationship evolved?

Hrithik joined me as an assistant director and worked on three films over five years. By the time I launched him, I knew his strengths and weaknesses. Giving him a double role in his debut was a big risk, but I was confident he would pull it off. Working with him is very comfortable. He's punctual, dedicated, and deeply involved. He knows exactly what I want because he sits on the story with me. And I know exactly what he is going to do. So it's a big and very, very good rapport between us. Our rapport makes the process seamless.

"My brother Rajesh and I share a deep understanding. We are very, very close. He doesn't compose thinking, "I'm making music for my brother." He just focuses on creating the best tune."

Rakesh Roshan films are known for their timeless music, thanks to your collaboration with your brother Rajesh Roshan. How important is music in shaping a film?

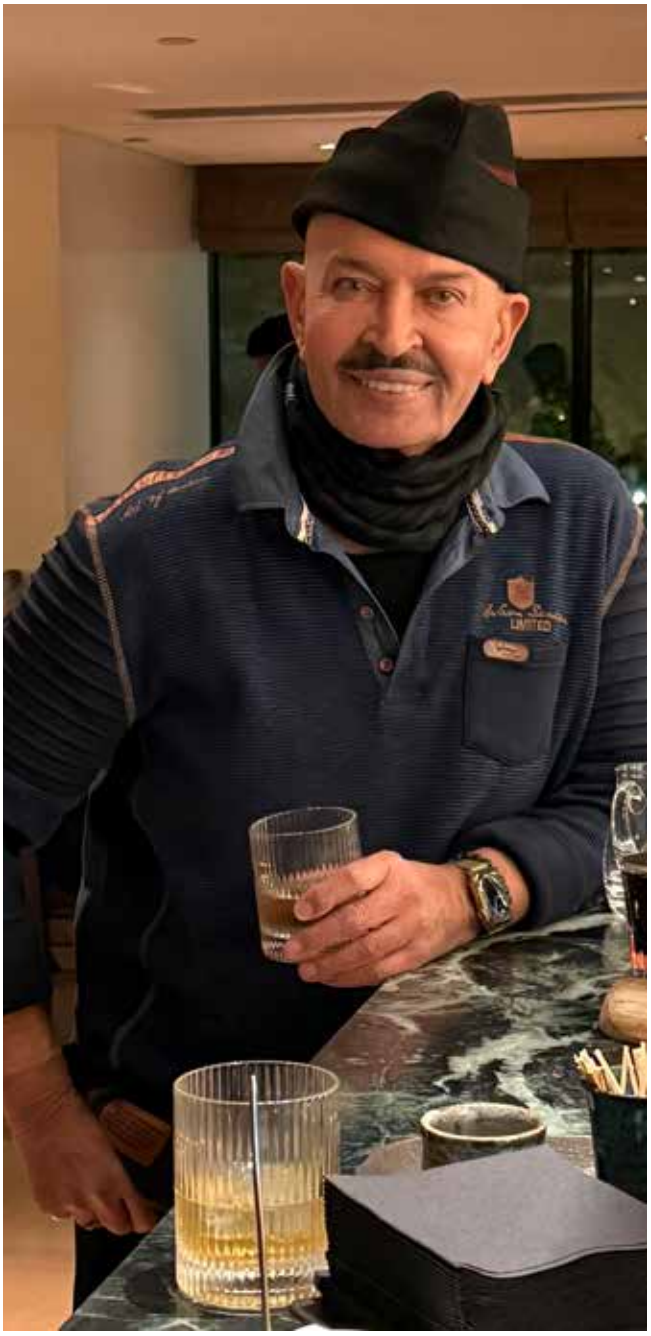
Music is one of the most important aspects of a film, second only to the script. My brother Rajesh and I share a deep understanding. We were brought up together, and we lived together. We are very, very close. He doesn't compose thinking, "I'm making music for my brother." He just focuses on creating the best tune. Since I finalise locations beforehand, I describe exactly how the song will look. If I say there's going to be a waterfall, there will be a waterfall. So you know, even his imagination becomes wider. That helps him visualise and compose the songs accordingly.

With platforms like Netflix redefining storytelling, do you see yourself venturing into OTT projects?

I haven't ventured into OTT yet, but you never know. It's a great platform for storytelling without padding up with commercial items and all that. But my visions are very big. So, let me see if I come to that stage where I can compromise on my visuals and make a small film for the OTT platform.



"I wish for Sunaina and Hrithik to continue on their paths. The key is honesty with oneself. There are no shortcuts."



You have decades of experience in the industry, what advice would you give aspiring directors?

Today's filmmakers are making good films, but not "wider" films. They focus on realism, but cinema should transport audiences to another world. Films should entertain — they should make you laugh, cry, and immerse you in visuals and music. It should take you out of your daily humdrum of life.

Your children Sunaina and Hrithik have overcome life's challenges with immense strength. Do you think they inherited this resilience from you? … Because you too are highly resilient – having faced many professional challenges and personal health issues too. What do you hope for, for Sunaina and Hrithik, today?

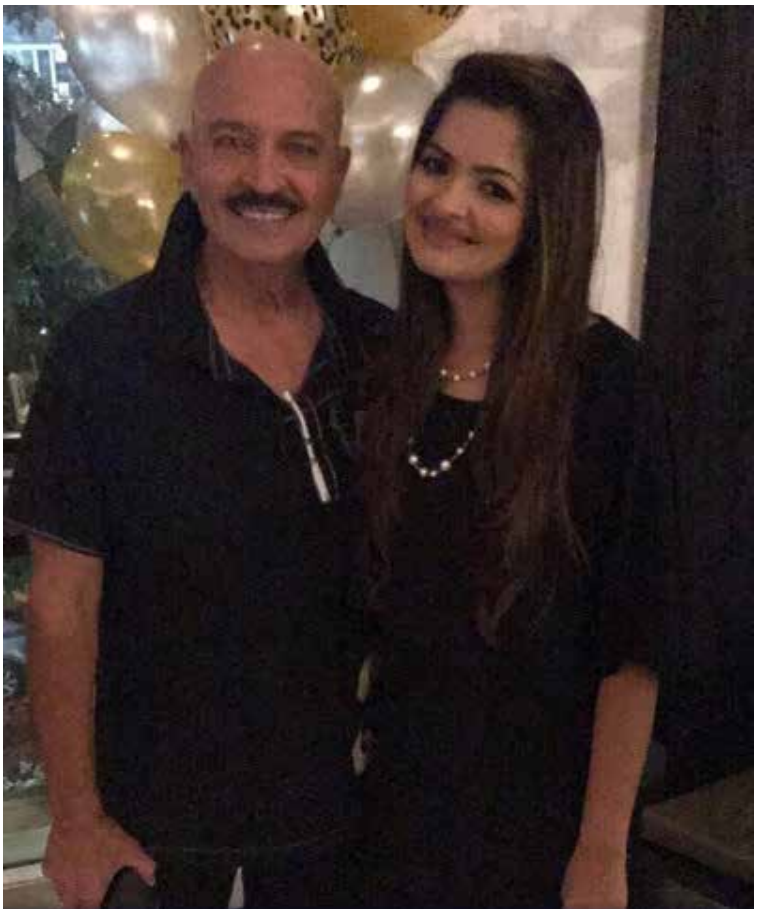
I never deliberately passed on resilience to them, but they must have learnt from watching me. They have seen my struggles – as an actor, when I got shot, when I got cancer. I took all these things very lightly. I am shot, it's okay. I got cancer, I will remove it. Don't worry. I work out every day; if I have some pain, it's not that I will not work out the next day. I will work out. I have to remove the pain. And removing the pain is only possible if I work out. This is always my attitude in life. My focus is always on work. I believe in confronting challenges head-on.

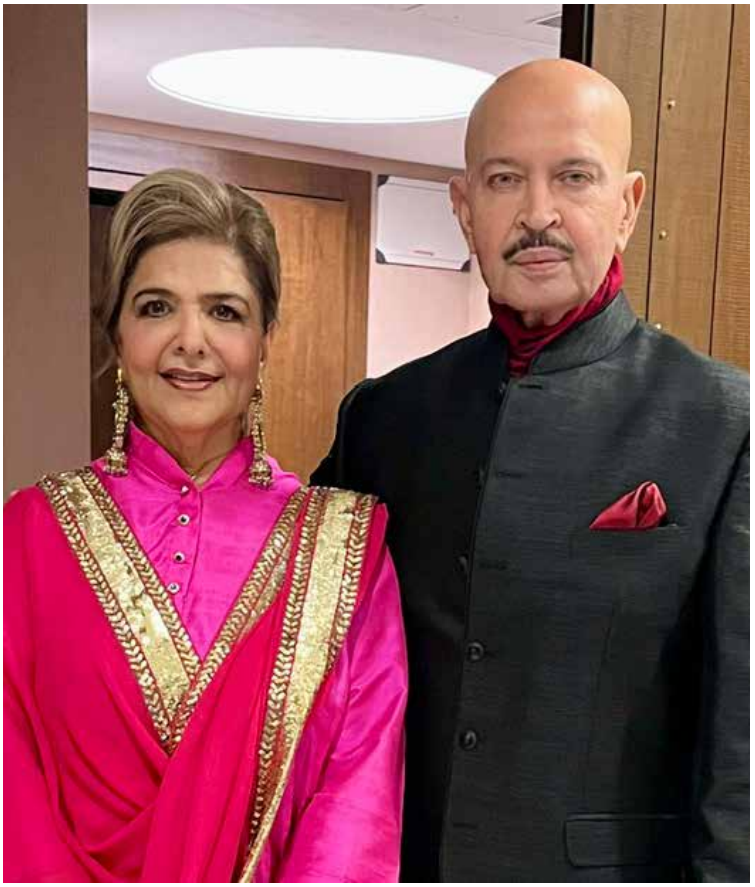
I wish for Sunaina and Hrithik to continue on their paths. The key is honesty with oneself. There are no shortcuts. For instance, Sunaina used to cheat on her diet earlier, but for the past two years, she has been disciplined. Now she sees the difference, and I am very proud of her. That is real transformation.



"My granddaughter, Suranika, is incredibly gifted in baking. Her cookies, bread and cakes are outstanding. My elder grandson, Hrehaan, is in Boston studying music on a scholarship. The younger one, Hridhaan, is also very talented and can play multiple instruments."







“We (Pinkie and I) share a very strong bond and no matter what, we never give up on each other. Over time, we have learnt to adjust and make each other happy.”

You share a close bond with your grandchildren — Suranika, Hrehaan, and Hridhaan. What role do you play in their lives? Do you see any creative sparks in them that remind you of yourself or Hrithik?

My granddaughter, Suranika, is incredibly gifted in baking. Her cookies, bread and cakes are outstanding. She studied abroad and honed her skills, and I’m extremely proud of her. As for my grandsons, both are musically inclined. My elder grandson, Hrehaan, is in Boston studying music on a scholarship. He writes, sings and composes his own songs. The younger one, Hridhaan, is also very talented and can play multiple instruments. I hope the legacy continues, and it certainly looks like it will. I share a very warm and friendly bond with all of them.

You and your wonderful wife, Pinkie, have stood by each other for over five decades. What’s your secret sauce for a long and happy marriage?

In five decades, we did have normal arguments on and off, but then you only fight with someone you love.

We share a very strong bond and no matter what, we never give up on each other. Over time, we have learnt to adjust and make each other happy.

Communication strengthens a relationship. If something bothers you, express it. If I unknowingly hurt her feelings, she tells me, and I realise my mistake. The same goes for her. Love and respect for one another has kept us together for 55 years by God’s grace.



“I fear the day I’ll need help just to stand up, so I’m doing everything I can to delay that. Old age is inevitable, but if I can push it back by some years through exercise, why not?”

Your workout posts are hugely inspiring — though you haven’t posted any for a while! What drives you to maintain such discipline?

I don’t post every day because I don’t want people to get bored of me! I post once in a while just to let them know I’m still at it. My goal is to inspire people.

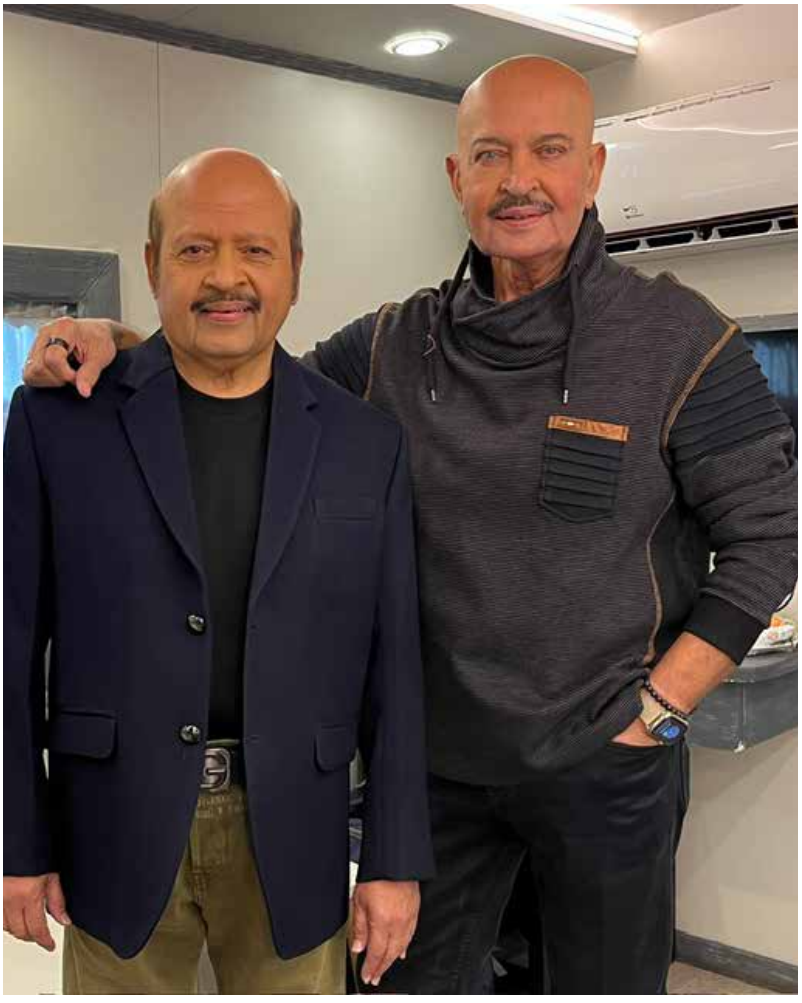
Even after your surgery, you got back to exercising. What keeps you going?

It’s not just about discipline; it’s about staying active to prevent health issues. I fear the day I’ll need help just to stand up, so I’m doing everything I can to delay that. Old age is inevitable, but if I can push it back by some years through exercise, why not?

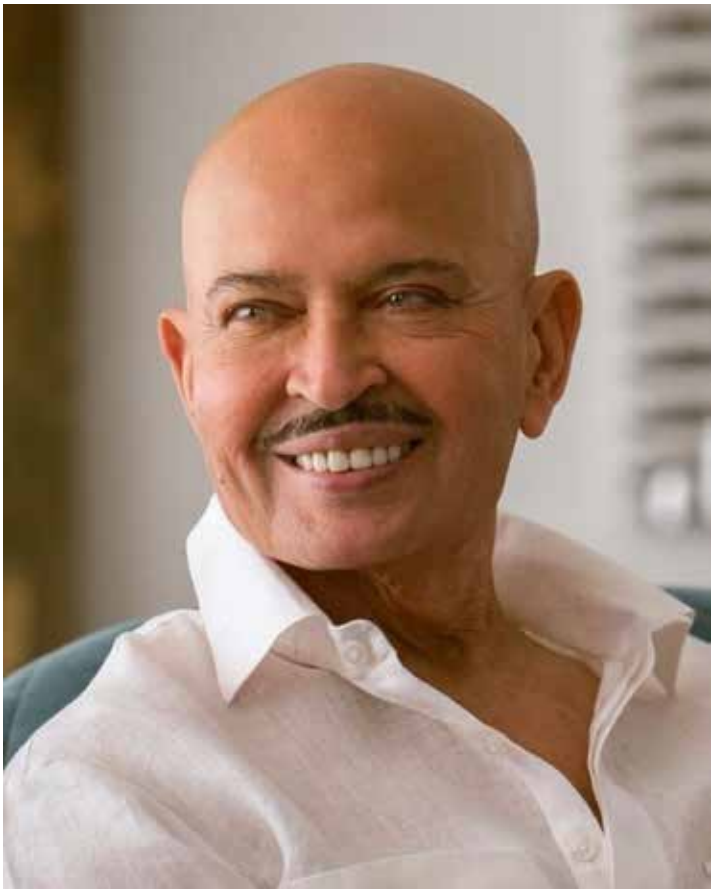
What’s your advice to people about staying fit?

Age is just a number. You have to prioritise your health. Discipline is essential — if you need to catch a bus, you have to go to the bus stop; the bus won’t come to pick you up. Similarly, you have to take responsibility for your well-being.

When I was diagnosed with cancer, I realised that money is meaningless without health. At one point, I couldn’t even swallow food. That experience changed my perspective. Money is important, but only to a certain extent — to live comfortably and save a decent amount for a rainy day. Beyond that, what’s the point if you don’t have good health? To truly enjoy life, you have to stay fit.







“When I was diagnosed with cancer, I realised that money is meaningless without health. To truly enjoy life, you have to stay fit.”



To sum up, how would you define this attitude of yours – to be strong, to be resilient, to move on?

Maybe it’s the struggle that I saw in the beginning. See, many people have come from villages and small towns to become actors, and they made themselves. But I was from the industry as my father was a great musician.

When he passed away, I was only 17 years old. So, the whole responsibility of our household was on me. He didn’t leave any factory or business that I could continue to run. Life became zero suddenly.

What will happen? How will I survive? What will I do?

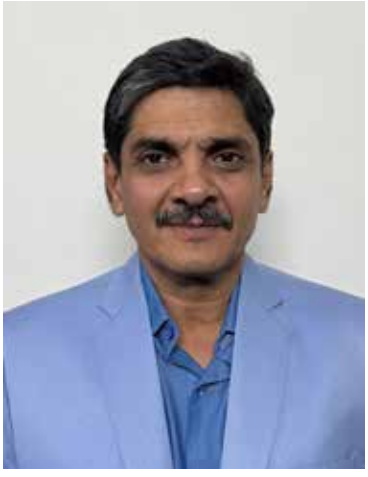
We had two cars – an Impala and another one. In a week’s time, I told my mom to lock the cars in the garage. I told her I will not use them; I will go by bus. I wanted to make myself. ...Thereafter, my every step was to make myself. And till date, whatever I do, I put my whole heart and soul in it.

Take Charge

Four renowned doctors share insights to help women take charge of their reproductive and menstrual health.

Managing Menstrual Health

Dr Chandrakant Sankalecha, MD, FICOG; Lead Consultant at Sankalecha Hospital and Maternity Home; Former President, IMA Nashik and Nashik Obstetrics and Gynecological Society.



Menstrual health is a vital aspect of a woman's well-being, evolving through different life stages. During adolescence, young girls may experience irregular cycles, cramps and hormonal fluctuations. Establishing healthy habits like maintaining a balanced diet, staying active and tracking cycles can help manage symptoms and support long-term reproductive health.

In the reproductive years, cycles often become regular, but issues like PMS, heavy bleeding or irregular periods may arise due to stress, lifestyle or conditions like PCOS or thyroid imbalances. Prioritising nutrition, hydration and exercise, while monitoring changes, is essential. Women trying to conceive should stay attentive to their menstrual health, as irregularities may signal fertility concerns.

Approaching perimenopause in their 40s, women often face unpredictable cycles, hot flashes and mood swings. A nutrient-rich diet with calcium, vitamin D and omega-3 fatty acids can help ease symptoms. Regular gynecological check-ups remain important for monitoring changes.

After menopause, hormonal shifts can affect bone health, metabolism and cardiovascular health. Staying active, maintaining a healthy weight, and managing stress are crucial for overall well-being. Understanding menstrual health at every stage empowers women to take proactive steps towards better health and quality of life.

Ideal Nutrition During Perimenopause

Dr Bharathi Rajashekhar, President, KSOGA; MD, DGO, FICOG, FKCOG; IMA State Vice President.



Perimenopause, the transition leading up to menopause, usually begins in a woman's 40s and can last several years. Fluctuating estrogen and progesterone levels can cause symptoms like irregular periods, hot flashes, mood swings, weight gain and decreased bone density. Proper nutrition plays a key role in managing these changes, supporting overall health, and reducing long-term risks such as osteoporosis and heart disease.

Key nutrients for perimenopause include calcium (found in dairy, leafy greens and almonds) to support bone health, and vitamin D (from sun exposure, fatty fish and fortified foods) to aid calcium absorption. Magnesium (nuts, seeds, whole grains) helps with bone strength, muscle function and mood regulation. Omega-3 fatty acids (fatty fish, flaxseeds, walnuts) reduce inflammation, support heart health and improve mood, while fibre-rich foods (whole grains, fruits, vegetables) aid digestion, weight management and blood sugar regulation.

Beyond essential nutrients, plant-based compounds like soy isoflavones (from black soybeans) mimic estrogen and may help reduce hot flashes, night sweats and mood swings. Black cohosh, a traditional herbal remedy, is known for alleviating hot flashes, sleep disturbances and hormonal fluctuations.

A nutrient-rich diet during perimenopause can help manage symptoms and promote long-term well-being. Making these dietary adjustments, along with regular exercise and stress management, can help women navigate this transition with better health and vitality.

Understanding Premenstrual Syndrome

Dr Priya Gupta, MBBS, MS (Civil Hospital, Ahmedabad), FICOG; Gold Medallist, Diploma in Advanced Endoscopy and Urogynaecology (Keil, Germany); Sr Consultant Obstetrician; Gynec Laparoscopic Surgeon; Infertility Specialist at Kota Heart & Shriji Hospital, Kota (Raj).



Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS) affects millions of women worldwide, typically in the days leading up to menstruation. It involves a range of physical, emotional and behavioural symptoms that can vary from mild discomfort to severe distress. Hormonal fluctuations, particularly in estrogen and progesterone levels, along with serotonin imbalances, often contribute to symptoms like mood swings, irritability and anxiety.

Common symptoms include bloating, breast tenderness, headaches, fatigue, food cravings and difficulty concentrating. Some women may also experience sleep disturbances and heightened stress sensitivity. Lifestyle factors like poor diet, lack of exercise, high caffeine intake and inadequate sleep can worsen symptoms.

Managing PMS effectively involves maintaining a balanced lifestyle. A nutrient-rich diet with foods high in magnesium, calcium and vitamin B6 can help alleviate symptoms. Reducing salt, sugar and caffeine intake may minimise bloating and mood swings. Regular physical activity, stress management techniques, and adequate sleep are also beneficial.

While PMS can be challenging, adopting healthy habits can significantly improve well-being. If symptoms become severe and interfere with daily life, seeking medical advice is essential for effective management and relief. Understanding PMS empowers women to take proactive steps towards better menstrual health.

Fertility Health

Dr Nibedita Roy, Gaheer Senior Obstetrician and Gynaecologist, Kolkata, with special interest in High-Risk Obstetric Care and Infertility.



Conceiving a child is a personal journey that can be challenging for some women due to lifestyle, hormonal imbalances or health conditions. Optimising fertility through healthy habits can significantly improve the chances of pregnancy.

A nutrient-rich diet with folic acid, omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, iron and zinc supports reproductive health, egg quality and hormone regulation. Maintaining a healthy weight is essential, as both underweight and overweight conditions can disrupt ovulation and menstrual cycles.

Tracking ovulation helps identify the fertile window for the best chances of conception. Methods like ovulation predictor kits, basal body temperature tracking, and cervical mucus observation can be effective. Additionally, limiting caffeine, avoiding alcohol and quitting smoking can enhance fertility and reduce pregnancy risks.

Taking prenatal vitamins before conception, especially folic acid, vitamin D, and Coenzyme Q10, supports reproductive health. Women struggling to conceive for over a year (or six months if over 35) should seek medical advice. Conditions like PCOS, thyroid disorders and endometriosis can affect fertility, and early diagnosis ensures timely management.

By making positive lifestyle changes, women can improve their reproductive health. With patience, self-care and medical support, the path to conception can become a smoother and more hopeful experience.

Legends & Achievers

Masters of their respective crafts, these men and women know a thing or two about putting their best foot forward and not shying away from hurdles, and have emerged as true icons.











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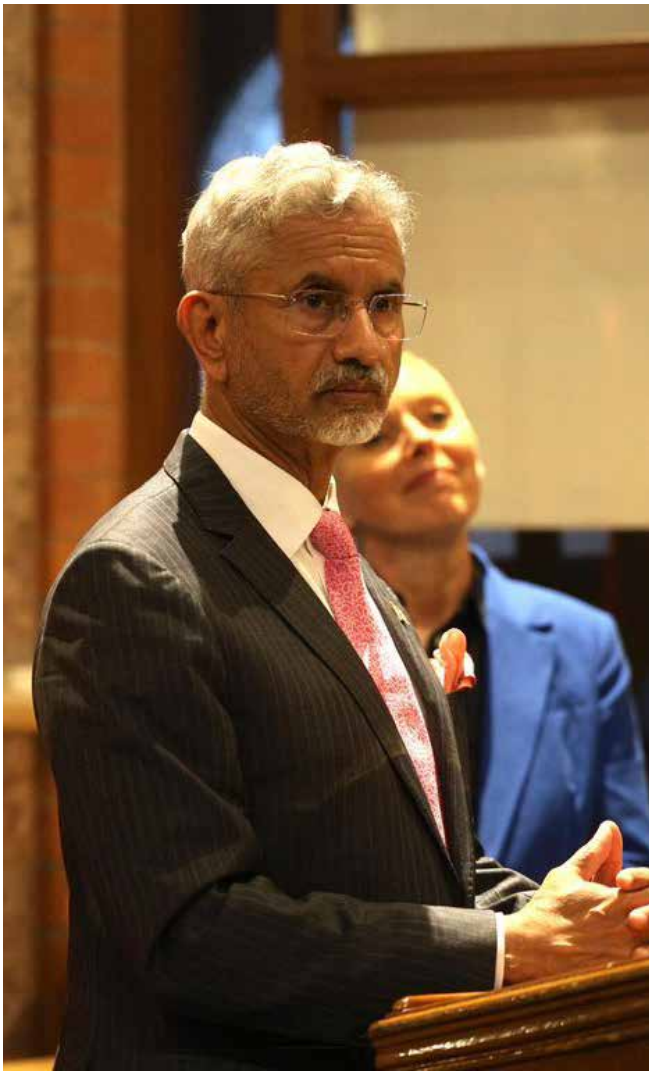
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Subrahmanyam Jaishankar: Navigating India's Foreign Policy Through The Changing Tides

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's leadership has helped redefine India's influence, positioning the country as a key player in global discussions on security, trade, and multilateral collaboration.

By Nichola Marie



Over the span of a few days in March 2025, India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar — or S Jaishankar, as he is better known — wrapped his UK visit after 'injecting fresh momentum' into a comprehensive strategic partnership between the two countries; signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Armenia for cooperation in the field of medical products regulation; and strengthened bilateral ties with Ireland, setting the stage for economic cooperation. Alongside, he has been calming any panic over US President Donald Trump's fresh moves, pointing out that several priorities of Trump and his administration were promising for India. (Don't forget, he had occupied a prime front-row seat at Trump's inauguration earlier this year, where he had also held talks with US officials and joined the Quad meeting.) And, as usual, he has not fought shy of stating bluntly, "If Pakistan vacates PoK, the Kashmir issue will be 'solved'."

All in a couple of days' work for Jaishankar, a highly skilled diplomat with deep expertise in international relations. Known widely for his calm demeanor and sharp intellect, he is regularly praised for his strategic approach to foreign policy and his ability to represent India on the global stage with dignity and confidence. Having drawn praise from personalities as diverse as ex-Pakistan PM Imran Khan, top US diplomats, the UAE Minister for Artificial Intelligence, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and even senior opposition Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, it's obvious that the man is doing something resoundingly right!

...No easy task, given the country's foreign policy which does not fit into any single geopolitical camp. If India is a member of the Quad security partnership with the US, Australia and Japan, it also participates in the China-led Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and has resisted Western pressure to condemn and sanction long-time military supplier Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. Navigating the tricky waters with aplomb, Jaishankar is out there doing his job and doing it well, whether through his skillful diplomacy, tough negotiating tactics or strategic vision.

The 'Crisis Manager'

Known to be PM Modi's go-to person in times of crisis, since his appointment as India's External Affairs Minister in 2019, Jaishankar has worked on prioritising India's relationship with key partners such as the US and Japan. Through initiatives such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue with the US, Japan, and Australia, he has worked on expanding India's global influence. He came in for particular attention for the part he played in the peaceful resolution of the Doklam border dispute with China, which seemed to be at risk of escalating into a larger military confrontation. He has been at the forefront of India's stand on the Russia-Ukraine war where India condemns the violence but continues buying oil from Russia. Besides foreign policy, he has also focused on issues such as climate change, global health, and India's efforts to provide vaccines to developing countries. More importantly, on several international platforms, he has made it clear that India won't give in to any pressure as it serves the interests of its people first. His leadership and expertise will be relied on increasingly in an international landscape that grows progressively complex as he helps shape India's foreign policy and global standing.

How it All Began

After joining the Indian Foreign Service in 1977, Jaishankar went on to hold key roles during his career including stints as High Commissioner to Singapore, and Ambassador to China and the United States. He also played a significant role in negotiating the Indo-US civilian nuclear agreement. He served as India's Foreign Secretary from January 2015 to January 2018. Apparently having enjoyed the PM's trust during his term in South Block, he also had a good working relationship with Sushma Swaraj, whose post he was eventually offered just 16 months after retiring as Head of the Indian Foreign Service. A highly-regarded diplomat, Jaishankar is the first former Foreign Secretary to be given political control of the External Affairs Ministry. He is probably also the first bureaucrat to become a cabinet minister so soon after retirement. His appointment to helm the Foreign Ministry had been largely hailed as an excellent choice. It was seen as India falling in with global trends of the Foreign Minister having strong domain knowledge from day one. Former Ambassador Gurjit Singh, who had served with Jaishankar in the Indian High Commission in Colombo, called his appointment, "A bright, out-of-the-box idea, like Jaishankar himself brings to the table," adding, "we need nimble-footed diplomacy and we have the most agile diplomat as our minister."

Known to be PM Modi's go-to person in times of crisis, since his appointment as India's External Affairs Minister in 2019, Jaishankar has worked on prioritising India's relationship with key partners such as the US and Japan.



Making An Impact

The 1955-born S Jaishankar is the son of K Subrahmanyam, a prominent international strategic affairs analyst, journalist and former Indian civil servant, who is considered the father of modern strategic thought in India. Educated at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jaishankar had been part of the 'Free Thinkers'. Not affiliated with any political party, it was a forum to debate different ideologies.

As MEA's Joint Secretary for the Americas, he had been involved in the intensive negotiations for the India-US nuclear deal during the UPA government. After leading the Indian negotiating team for the Separation Plan and the 123 Agreement, he was posted as India's High Commissioner to Singapore in 2007. From there, he was appointed Ambassador to China, during which time key bilateral events included the suspension of military contacts over China's refusal to give a visa to the Northern Command Chief and the stand-off at Daulat Beg Oldi. Appointed Ambassador to the United States, he arrived at a time when relations were low, but ended his tenure with the historic visit of President Barack Obama as the first-ever chief guest from the US to the Indian Republic Day parade in January 2015. He had also won the admiration of PM Modi on the latter's high-profile trip to the US in 2014. By then, there was no doubt of him having left his mark.

His leadership and expertise will be relied on increasingly in an international landscape that grows progressively complex as he helps shape India's foreign policy and global standing.





Walking The Talk

Even as some believe Jaishankar's job is less the managing of external relations, than it is managing external public relations, he cannot be faulted for showing the world a mirror, unpleasant as the reflection may be. Here are a few instances...

When asked about India's downgrading by two of the leading democracy rating agencies – the US-based NGO Freedom House and Sweden-based Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute (2021), he was scathing in his response: "It is hypocrisy. We have a set of self-appointed custodians of the world who find it very difficult to stomach that somebody in India is not looking for their approval, is not willing to play the game they want to play. So they invent their rules, their parameters, pass their judgements and make it look as if it is some kind of global exercise."

Defending India's growing energy imports from Russia (2023), he said Europe had taken six times as much energy from Russia during the same period. India, with a per capita income of US$2,000, is not in a position to pay high prices for oil at a time when European states were diverting supplies from the Middle East and putting pressure on the global oil markets, he pointed out. "If the European political leadership would like to soften the impact on their population, I think it's a privilege they should extend to other political leaderships as well," he said.

"If the European political leadership would like to soften the impact on their population, I think it's a privilege they should extend to other political leaderships as well."

- S Jaishankar

Defending his characterisation of Pakistan as the "epicentre of terrorism," he said, "I could use much harsher words than epicentre. Considering what has been happening to us, I think epicentre is a very diplomatic word because this is a country which has attacked the Parliament of India some years ago [and] the city of Mumbai... which every day sends terrorists across the border."

Addressing Indo-China issues at the Hindustan Times Leadership Summit 2022, he made it clear that "unless there is peace and tranquillity in the border areas... unless there is an observance of agreements and no unilateral attempt to change status quo... the situation cannot be, and is not, normal."

Speaking at the UNSC Open Debate on 'Maintenance of International Peace & Security: New Orientation for Reformed Multilateralism' (2022), he pitched for New Orientation for a Reformed Multilateral System or NORMS to reflect present-day geo-political realities. He said: "We not only need to increase stakeholdership but also enhance the effectiveness and credibility of multilateralism in the eyes of the international community and in the eyes of global public opinion. If this is to happen, member states from Latin America, Africa, Asia, and the Small Island Developing States should have credible and continuing representation in the Security Council. Decisions about their future can no longer be taken without their participation."

"We need nimble-footed diplomacy and we have the most agile diplomat as our minister."

- Former Ambassador Gurjit Singh





Fast Facts

- **Party:** Bharatiya Janata Party
- **Father:** (Late) Krishnaswamy Subrahmanyam
- **Mother:** Sulochana Subrahmanyam
- **Educational Qualifications:** B.Sc., M.A. (Political Science), M.Phil., Ph.D. (International Relations) Educated at: University of Delhi, Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- **Countries Visited:** Singapore, UK, Japan, USA, China, UAE, and Fiji, among others.
- **Family Matters:** S Jaishankar had reportedly met his first wife Shobha while in university at JNU. They had two children – Dhruva and Medha. Shobha passed away due to cancer. On a posting from 1996 to 2000, he met Kyoko Somekawa. They later married. They have one child – Arjun.





"We not only need to increase stakeholdership but also enhance the effectiveness and credibility of multilateralism in the eyes of the international community and in the eyes of global public opinion."

- S Jaishankar

Referring to unresolved border issues at the Ram Nath Goenka lecture (2019), he said: "Taking risks is inherent to the realisation of ambitions. A nation that has the aspiration to become a leading power someday cannot continue with unsettled borders, an un-integrated region and under-exploited opportunities."

In an interview with an Austrian publication, he bravely spoke about the tectonic shift in the world power structure. Pointing out that the world order is still Western, he said it needs to be replaced by a world of "multi-alignment" where countries will choose their own "particular policies and preferences and interests."

All this and a sense of humour too... This is the man who smartly sidestepped a loaded question during an interview last year. Asked if he would prefer to have dinner with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un or Hungarian-American billionaire George Soros, Jaishankar smiled, "I think this is Navratri, I am fasting!"

Way to go, Mr Jaishankar!



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Tarun Tahiliani: “You have to grow for everyone around you to grow”

One of India’s most iconic and influential fashion designers, as well as, among its pioneers, Tarun Tahiliani shares insights into the phenomenal evolution of his fashion empire.

By Nichola Marie





“I was very lucky to have someone like my wife to push me and believe in me.”

Tarun Tahiliani entered the Indian fashion scene when it was still in its infancy, earning the moniker “Armani of India” for his inherent elegance and sophistication. As his career progressed, he revolutionised traditional designs, merging them with modern sensibilities while maintaining high standards of quality and expanding production. Today, he leads a team of over 1,000 designers, craftsmen, and seamstresses, all while staying captivated by design, which he views as both “evolutionary and absolute.”

Excerpts from the interview...

With a mother who was the first woman engineer in Maharashtra and a father who was an admiral in the Indian Navy, plus an MBA from Wharton, what ignited your unexpected passion for fashion and design?

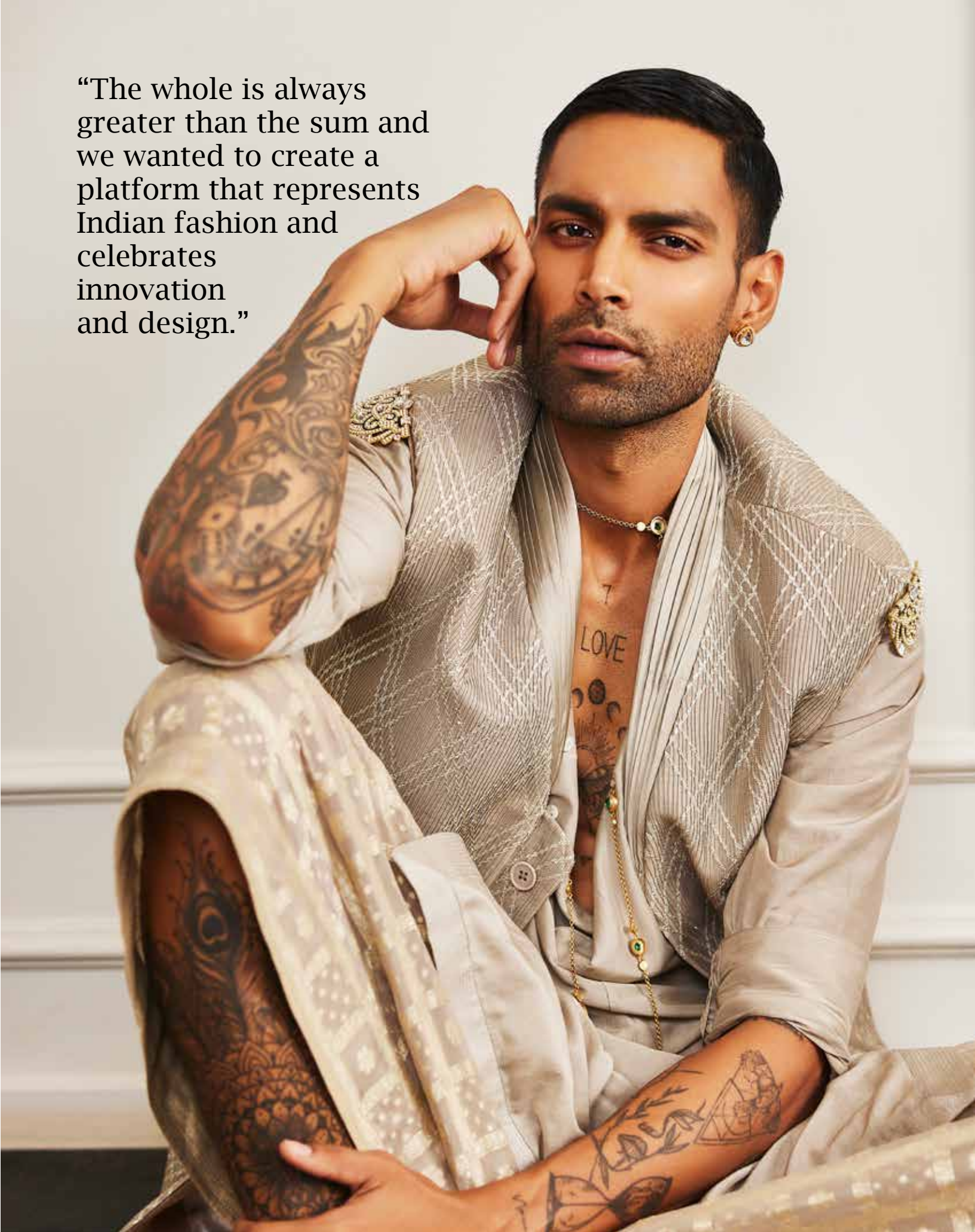
One day, this big fashion show by Pierre Cardin came to Bombay (Mumbai). My wife, whom I had met in college in New York, went to see if she could be an usher or help out in any way, and she got picked to model in the show. And that is how I saw my first fashion show. I was fascinated. I thought: My God, I have always sketched, but I never knew this existed. It was lyrical, poetic, effortless and utterly beautiful. It really was perfection. I came back and sketched and sketched. Simultaneously, my wife started modelling. I accompanied her to a campaign she was involved in. There, this famous makeup artist Mickey Contractor; Rohit Khosla — who was the designer in charge of the campaign and had just returned from New York — and I talked about how there was so little being done in fashion in India; there was so much talent that was going outside.

We saw beautiful things abroad, but we couldn't find anything in India. That night, my wife had the idea of starting a store to promote Indian design. Women in our generation were finally switching to jeans and dresses.

Our family business had an abandoned warehouse space which we were permitted to use. That is how the idea of Ensemble was born, which was the first multi-designer store in India. It was a nice big space — bare, minimal and modern — and it was shocking when it opened (1987). Everything was made in India and the clothes looked like they belonged in a gallery or a museum like the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

"While Bombay (Mumbai) was an important starting point in my journey as a designer, it was Delhi that fuelled my creativity and shaped my design language."




“The whole is always greater than the sum and we wanted to create a platform that represents Indian fashion and celebrates innovation and design.”
LOVE

What inspired you to pursue an associate degree at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York City?

Once, there was this big French festival in India with Yves Saint Laurent, who was a genius of his time. There would be a competition and they were going to take back three people — one designer, one model and one photographer — on a three-month exchange fellowship to France. I made it to the finals, but then there were some dynamics where someone was trying to get someone else in, and the French got cheesed off. So, they decided to take two models and drop the designer category. And I really went into depression. I thought, forget if I never got in, but is there really no Indian designer good enough to go even for an apprenticeship for three months? Finally, my wife told me to stop moping. "If you want to do it, then go and learn," she said, and that is how I went to study design for a year at the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. I would have otherwise fallen flat on my face. I was very lucky to have someone like my wife to push me and believe in me.

After enhancing your technical expertise in design, you moved from Mumbai to Delhi in 1995 and founded the Tarun Tahiliani Design Studio. How did the city of Delhi help shape your creativity and define your design style?

We settled into an "urban village" in Chirag Dilli, with a design team of six tailors and four other members. Delhi's close proximity to the crafts belt in Lucknow, Bareilly, and Jaipur also provided easy access to a vast variety of artisans and a plethora of fabrics. While Bombay (Mumbai) was an important starting point in my journey as a designer, it was Delhi that fuelled my creativity and shaped my design language. It showed me a new India – away from the Anglicised schools and clubs and military establishments. For me, this was the real India.

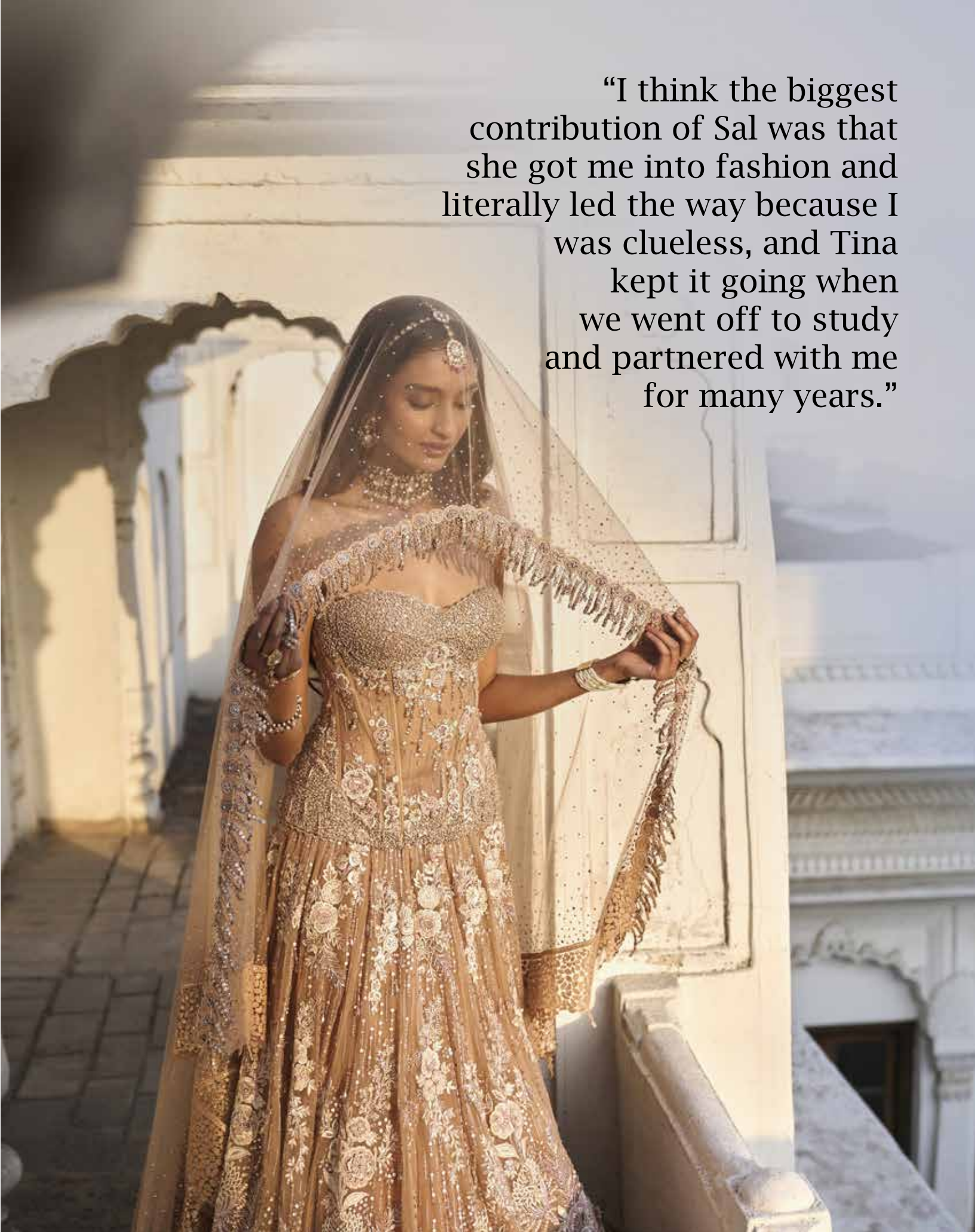
As the studio grew, we shifted operations to a more expansive space in Mehrauli, located adjacent to the Qutub complex. This was an important period for me as a designer: While my style continued to reflect a particular Indianness, my structured designs were a break away from tradition. And in 2010, we moved to our current atelier in Gurugram, which is a 45,000 sq ft space that houses a trusted 1,000+ team of designers, master craftsmen, tailors, drapers, and seamstresses.

Along with six other designers and a businessman, you founded the Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) in 1999, launching India's first Fashion Week-cum-trade show. What motivated you to be part of this groundbreaking effort?

Setting it up came from a sense of creating a belonging and it was the need of the hour. It came from an interest of the designers to create a marketplace for fashion in India. The whole is always greater than the sum and we wanted to create a platform that represents Indian fashion and celebrates innovation and design.

"Our signature drapes, our world-class corsetry, the sheer bridal veils, structured fluted blouses, intricate *kaashida*, and the craft of *chikankaari*, and fine crystal work are a few of the elements that are integral to the studio."





"I think the biggest contribution of Sal was that she got me into fashion and literally led the way because I was clueless, and Tina kept it going when we went off to study and partnered with me for many years."

As the first Indian designer to showcase at Milan Fashion Week in September 2003, what did you bring to the event, and what new insights or learnings did you gain from it?

We were there at a good time too; the world was finally paying enough attention to the talent and versatility of the Indian fashion industry. We showcased jewel trompe l'oeil T-shirts with medieval Mughal miniatures, tone-on-tone chikan separates, saris and bridal lehengas to an audience sitting in the Palazzo della Permanente. For us, this was the birth of the signature 'India Modern' Tarun Tahiliani design aesthetic.

In the course of your career, what are some of the significant techniques and structures that the Tarun Tahiliani studio has innovated and brought to the forefront?

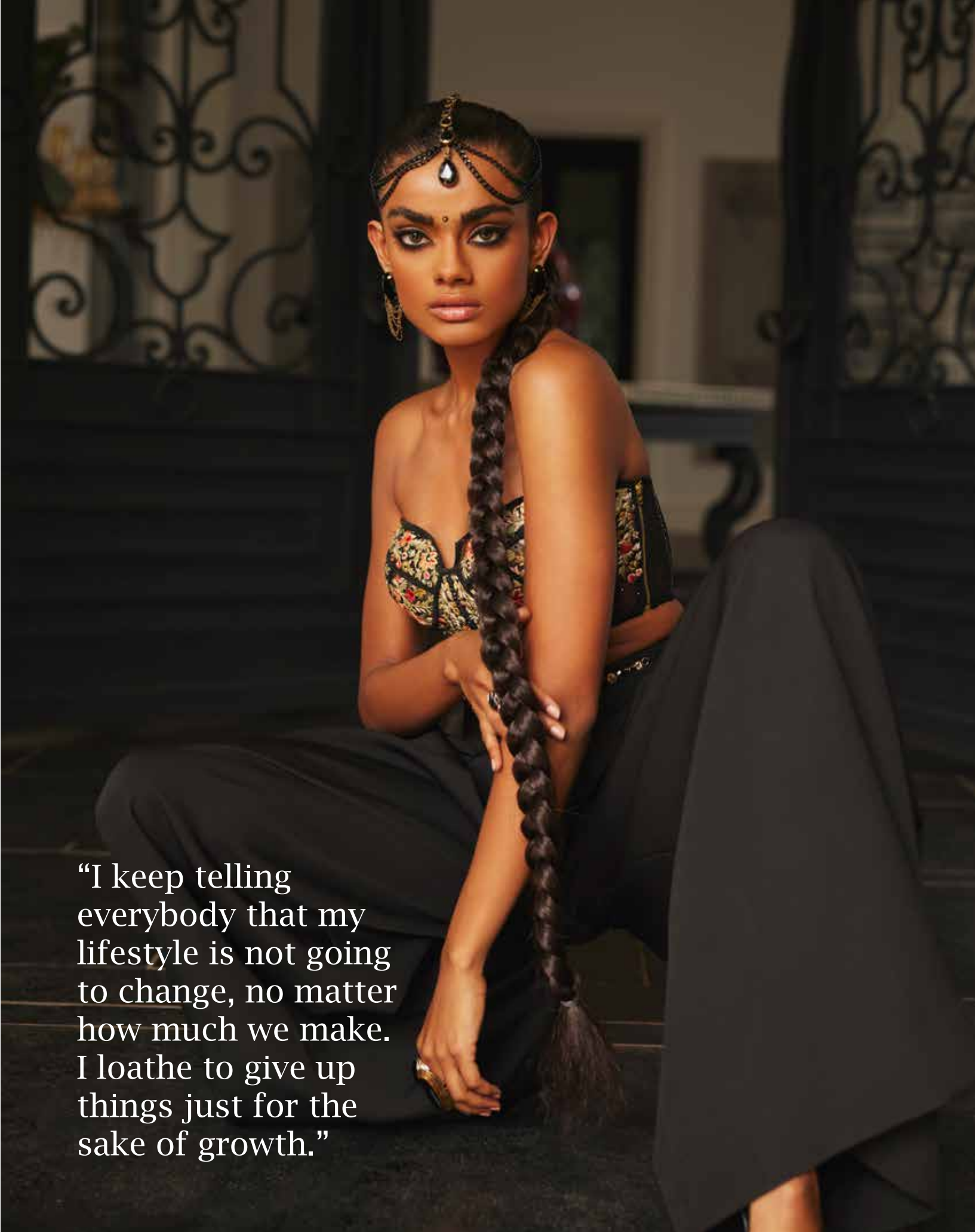
Over the last 25 years, the studio has developed techniques and structures that are synonymous with our brand. Our signature drapes, our world-class corsetry, the sheer bridal veils, structured fluted blouses, intricate *kaashida*, and the craft of *chikankaari*, and fine crystal work are a few of the elements that are integral to the studio.

With over 1,000 artisans, designers, and craftsmen working in your 45,000 sq ft atelier, what's the vibe like during a regular day at your studio?

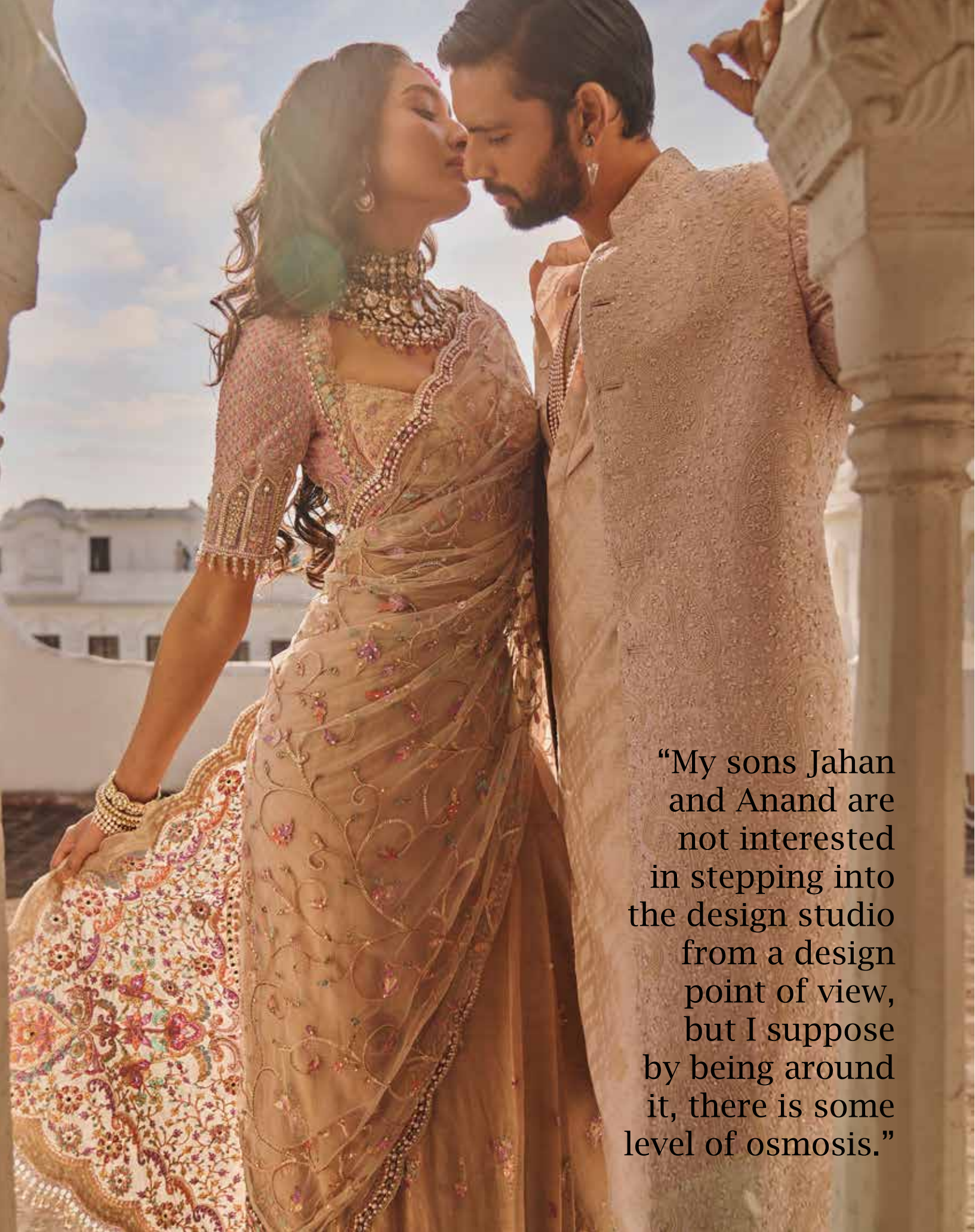
A normal day is very much like that, as I would imagine most people get to work between 8 and 8:30 a.m to avoid the traffic. By this time the factory is buzzing, and so I do one walk around just to look at all the pieces that are on the floor, which I might not see normally, and through the two-three ateliers that are doing new things, and by that time I am pretty much in my mood board room carrying on from the day before. I really like to keep my mornings for design meetings because once I get into more admin or other stuff, it is hard to go back. Some days, we have fittings; normally, I have lunch at 12:30 – 1 p.m, and I try to leave by 4:35 p.m so we have missed the traffic coming back into town. I normally carry stuff back with me so that after my workout, I can do a couple of hours if I need to. However, today, with WhatsApp and emails, you are at work constantly, just not physically in the studio. There was a time I spent a lot more time going out to embroidery units and all, but now it comes to me. On days that I do TASVA, I go across to the TASVA building, which is three-four buildings away, and there are always a million things to do with our stores and the new factories. At the moment, we are completing projects, but otherwise I would go to the architectural office and work over there. (TASVA, a joint venture between the House of Tarun Tahiliani and Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Ltd (ABFRL), was launched in 2021 as a more relaxed and affordable alternative to celebrated menswear.)

"I really like to keep my mornings for design meetings because once I get into more admin or other stuff, it is hard to go back."





“I keep telling everybody that my lifestyle is not going to change, no matter how much we make. I loathe to give up things just for the sake of growth.”



"My sons Jahan and Anand are not interested in stepping into the design studio from a design point of view, but I suppose by being around it, there is some level of osmosis."





"I probably did not strike the work-life balance, and let me tell you, even at this stage, I work harder than I did before, but at this point, I barely go out, so I think I have the balance."

Is the quest for growth something that can ever be completely satisfied, or do you still have aspirations yet to be realised?

Unfortunately, in this sort of business, unless you stay very small and couture, I think you are only going to keep great talent if they grow – and you have to grow for them to grow, for everyone around you to grow. So, it is a very, very competitive environment. Unfortunately, it is also viewed as a relative game, so without dropping standards, which is the easiest thing to do, one has to see how one can find the right balance between growth and quality. I keep telling everybody that my lifestyle is not going to change, no matter how much we make. I loathe to give up things just for the sake of growth.

How has the involvement of your wife, Sailaja (Sal) Tahiliani, and sister, Tina Tahiliani Parikh, enriched your design journey and the growth of the brand?

I think the biggest contribution of Sal was that she got me into fashion and literally led the way because I was clueless, and Tina kept it going when we went off to study and partnered with me for many years. Now, of course, she has her own retail company, which is ENSEMBLE, and we run it. Sometimes, you need people who will just tell you the brutal truth, as Sal does. That is invaluable, apart from everything else.

Are your sons Jahan and Anand considering a future in the fashion industry and potentially joining the Tarun Tahiliani Design Studio?

Jahan and Anand are not interested in stepping into the design studio from a design point of view, but I suppose by being around it, there is some level of osmosis. I think that I have many great people being groomed in the company whom this company should logically pass on to for its future, just as European brands have shown to be possible. They will be the real custodians of the brand.

How do you manage to juggle the demands of work and personal life?

I probably did not strike the work-life balance, and let me tell you, even at this stage, I work harder than I did before, but at this point, I barely go out, so I think I have the balance, have the time to exercise, have the time to read, and since I am not very social, I do see the few people in my family.

To you, what is the essence of design?

...evolutionary but absolute!

The Rise Of Meghan Sussex

Success and happiness — both personal and professional — are aligning with the efforts of Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, who believes this is just the beginning...

By Nichola Marie

A few months in and already 2025 shows distinct signs of being the year of Meghan Markle Sussex (this is how the Duchess of Sussex would rather be addressed, as she reminded her guest Mindy Kaling on her new Netflix series 'With Love, Meghan'). For starters, she is officially back on Instagram as of January 1, returning to the social media platform after a seven-year hiatus with a video posted to her new handle, @meghan. Then she debuted her lifestyle brand As Ever, a curated collection of products "inspired by her long-lasting love of cooking, entertaining, and hostessing with ease." Her new Netflix series 'With Love, Meghan' has made it to the platform's global Top 10, and a second season has already been announced. And now, she has revealed that she's re-entering the podcast space, with the first episode of her new show debuting on April 8 - 'Confessions of a Female Founder'. The stars finally seem to have aligned for the 1981-born American actress, vocal advocate for social issues, and Duchess of Sussex, who has been the subject of intense media scrutiny ever since she married into British royalty.



Navigating A New Life

It has been five years since Harry and Meghan, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, who wed in 2018, made the shocking decision to leave the UK after stepping down from official royal duties, to chart their own path. They had done so at the time, over concerns about media intrusion and other issues. While they retained their Sussex titles, they are no longer addressed as his or her royal highness (HRH), and Harry also gave up his military titles. The couple moved to California in June 2020, stating they wanted space to raise their first child Archie; their daughter Lilibet was born there in 2021. When Harry's father Charles became King, the couple's two children became Prince Archie and Princess Lilibet of Sussex.

According to the BBC, as working royals, they received 95% of their annual income from Harry's father, then Prince of Wales, while the taxpayer-funded Sovereign Grant made up the other 5%. When they stepped down as senior royals, King Charles gave them "a substantial sum" to help establish their new life. The couple went on to set up the Archewell Charitable Foundation and entered into a number of commercial arrangements with private companies. In February 2024, they launched their Sussex.com website, which said they were "shaping the future through business and philanthropy." In March 2024, Meghan launched American Riviera Orchard.

Their media company, Archewell Productions, makes programmes for the Netflix streaming service under a deal thought to be worth millions of dollars. In April 2024, Archewell revealed two new series were in production, one celebrating "the joys of cooking & gardening, entertaining, and friendship", and another exploring the world of professional polo. While 'Polo' was broadcast in December 2024, 'With Love, Meghan' - which Netflix described as a lifestyle show blending "practical how tos and candid conversation" - began on 4 March.

The couple had previously featured in the 'Harry and Meghan' documentary series, where they talked about life in the Royal Family, and 'The Heart of Invictus' series, which discussed the Duke's emotional "unravelling" after military service in Afghanistan.

Archewell also made podcasts for Spotify under a contract thought to be worth $25 million. This included a series called Archetypes, which featured the Duchess in conversation with other well-known women. While the arrangement ended in June 2023, in February 2024, Meghan announced a new podcast deal with Lemonada Media, with the first programme expected later in 2025.

"I appreciate everyone who gave me the grace to make mistakes and figure it out and also to be forgiving with myself through that. It's a learning curve."



A Fresh Start

At the centre of the spotlight remains Meghan, her every move up for intense examination — and this time around, as she builds her brand, she seems to be charting the right course. Alluding to recent trademark issues surrounding the previous brand name American Riviera Orchard, she told 'People' magazine that the experience has been defined by growth. "I appreciate everyone who gave me the grace to make mistakes and figure it out and also to be forgiving with myself through that. It's a learning curve," she said, giving one the feeling that she was referring to more than just the contested brand name.

She is also opening up about the Sussex name, which was bestowed upon her and Harry by Queen Elizabeth on their wedding day, revealing that it holds a deeper significance post-motherhood than she could have earlier imagined. "It's our shared name as a family... I love that that is something that Archie, Lili, H and I all have together. It means a lot to me," she revealed in the 'People' interview, adding that the name is "is part of our love story."

"It's (Sussex) our shared name as a family... I love that that is something that Archie, Lili, H and I all have together. It means a lot to me."





Honeymoon Again

She calls this period — a natural extension of her pre-royal life — "super joyful", adding, "as a woman, a mom and a wife, to be able to find yourself again — in a way that was always present but that you maybe couldn't put as much attention on as you now can when your kids are a little bit older — is a wonderful feeling."

Wisely, this time around there is no mention of the royal family at all, though Prince Harry does make a brief appearance in the final episode.

She reveals that she now sees "this spark in his (Harry's) eye when he sees me doing the thing that I was doing when he first met me," referring to 'The Tig', her blog on food, travel and wellness which she had launched in 2014, while filming the legal drama series 'Suits' in Toronto.

"It's almost like a honeymoon period again," she adds, "because it's exactly how it was in the beginning when he'd watch me scribbling away, writing newsletters, fine-tuning edits and just really being in the details of it. I think he loves watching as much as I love doing that creative process. It's just been fun. This is who I've always been."

"As a woman, a mom and a wife, to be able to find yourself again is a wonderful feeling."

Beyond The Imagery

The show might paint a picture of domestic bliss but Meghan does not consider herself a "tradwife" (short for traditional wife) either. She shares, "I like being able to do a hybrid." So while Chinese food delivery is a favourite at their home, she will "try to plate it beautifully." She says, "The series is about doing what you can do and doing it with love," encouraging others to strive for balance, not perfection, despite her show's beautiful imagery.

While her friends, who have quietly supported her through the challenges, are thrilled with her success, she has also put the necessary effort into becoming part of the Montecito community. What with school drop-offs and playdates with the children, she and Harry have hosted different families at their home and been able to get to know the parents better, with friendships growing from school ties into deeper connections. In turn, the community has become protective of the Sussexes, she believes, and desires for them to have the same normalcy as the rest of them do, despite their unique situation.

"I think he (Harry) loves watching as much as I love doing that creative process. It's just been fun. This is who I've always been."



Did you know...?

- **Meghan was born in Los Angeles to Doria Ragland, an African American former television studio intern who later became a social worker and yoga instructor, and her husband, Thomas Markle, a lighting director who was white. The couple divorced when Meghan was a young child, but both remained active in her life.**
- **After graduating from Immaculate Heart High School, an all-girls Roman Catholic school, in 1999, she studied theatre and international studies at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois (B.A., 2003).**
- **Embarking on her acting career in Los Angeles, she landed guest roles and also freelanced as a calligrapher, before being cast as paralegal Rachel Zane in the popular USA Network legal drama series 'Suits' (2011–19). She also played leading roles in films such as 'Random Encounters' (2013) and 'Anti-Social' (2015).**





"Being able to have my own little girl, as I've spent so much of my life championing the rights of girls and women, and to be able to see this as a multigenerational story — Archie is of course included in that, my husband is of course included in that..."

A Loving Legacy

The show also offers her the opportunity to let the world see her identification of food as one of her love languages, to put kid-friendly recipes to the test, and to have her children watch her at work and understand what she is working to create and share. "Being able to have my own little girl, as I've spent so much of my life championing the rights of girls and women, and to be able to see this as a multigenerational story — Archie is of course included in that, my husband is of course included in that — but I love the heritage feeling of it and knowing this is something that I can create in front of my daughter and teach her what it's like to be a working mom," she says. "This is something that hopefully can be part of her legacy too."

Life for Meghan in Montecito has fallen into a relaxed pattern. On non-working days, she and Harry enjoy "day dates," where they share a quiet lunch together. Evenings are for "nightcap recaps" as they unwind with a drink as they chat about their day, make lunch boxes, and also catch up on TV together.

In a chat with Godmothers bookstore, she named one of her "pet joys": Saturday morning cartoons in bed. "In the UK, they call it a 'duvet day' and I've always found that sweet. Our little family, snuggled up for an easy family morning, followed by pancakes and bacon. The dream."

She now looks ahead to what's in store, adding, "This is just the beginning. Life is full of surprises."

Dr Sheetal Gagrani: Healing Beyond Medicine

Petite, personable, pretty... and packed with tigress-like mental and physical power – that's Dr Sheetal Gagrani in a nutshell. Her journey from radiology to social reform is filled with passion and purpose. A gold medallist at medical school turned NHS consultant in the UK, she champions menopause awareness, cyber safety, and holistic well-being. By balancing career, family and social impact, she's defining what it means to care — in medicine and in life.



By Andrea CostaBir

Dr Sheetal Gagrani's journey is a testament to perseverance, adaptability and a relentless drive to make a difference. She seamlessly balances a thriving medical career with meaningful social initiatives. Whether advocating for menopause awareness, tackling cyberbullying through 'Brush of Hope', or championing holistic well-being, she has dedicated herself to transforming lives. As the wife of Dr Bhushan Gagrani, the Commissioner of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), she actively engages with communities, proving that true leadership extends beyond titles. In this candid chat, she shares her inspiring story, perspective on healthcare, and her vision for a healthier, safer future.

"As a radiologist, I see the entire spectrum of diseases across the body. This exposure has given me immense gratitude."

Excerpts from the interview...

Could you share your journey as a radiologist and what led you to work at the University Hospital of Sussex in the UK? With such impressive credentials (MBBS, MD, DMRE, FRCR), what inspired you to pursue radiology?

My journey wasn't planned — it unfolded naturally. I was studying medicine in Raipur, Madhya Pradesh (Raipur was part of MP then), and I was a merit holder in my college. I would have done my post-graduation there only, but during my final year of MBBS, I got married to Bhushan, who is an IAS officer; I was all of 22! He was posted in Maharashtra and if I wanted to pursue my post-graduation, I would have to stay on in MP. We were in an arranged marriage and our parents said, right now, don't live separately. Bhushan then told me, "Whenever the time comes, I'll stand behind you in your career, and you will take your decisions about your career." After a six-year gap due to motherhood, I chose radiology, which was rapidly advancing at that time, and found myself deeply enjoying it.



I completed my MD from Mumbai University as a gold medallist. During my exams, I learned that my sister-in-law in the UK had breast cancer. While visiting her, my brother encouraged me to take the FRCR exams. Despite my initial reluctance, I cleared them step-by-step, eventually obtaining GMC specialist registration.

By chance, my brother's hospital in Yorkshire needed radiologists, and they offered me a role. I took it up for six months, which later extended into flexible work arrangements. This balance allowed me to manage both my career and family. Over time, my experience led me to the University Hospital of Sussex, where I eventually accepted a permanent consultant role. That's how I started dividing my time between India and the UK; and it's only thanks to the support I received from Bhushan and my mother (she came down to help look after my son every time I was in the UK) that I could work out this long-distance arrangement.

In India, radiology is a dependent specialty, but in the UK, NHS (National Health Service) consultants play a pivotal role in managing resources and patient investigations. The work-life balance, autonomy, and ethical framework in the NHS appealed to me. I also valued the independence — my achievements and failures were mine alone, away from societal expectations that come with being the wife of an IAS officer.

How has your work impacted your perspective on healthcare?

As a radiologist, I see the entire spectrum of diseases across the body. This exposure has given me immense gratitude. There are countless illnesses, yet having a healthy body is often taken for granted. My work has reinforced how incredibly fortunate we are to be healthy, shifting my perspective from focusing on imperfections to appreciating well-being.

What led to your current semi-sabbatical, and what does your work-from-home role involve?

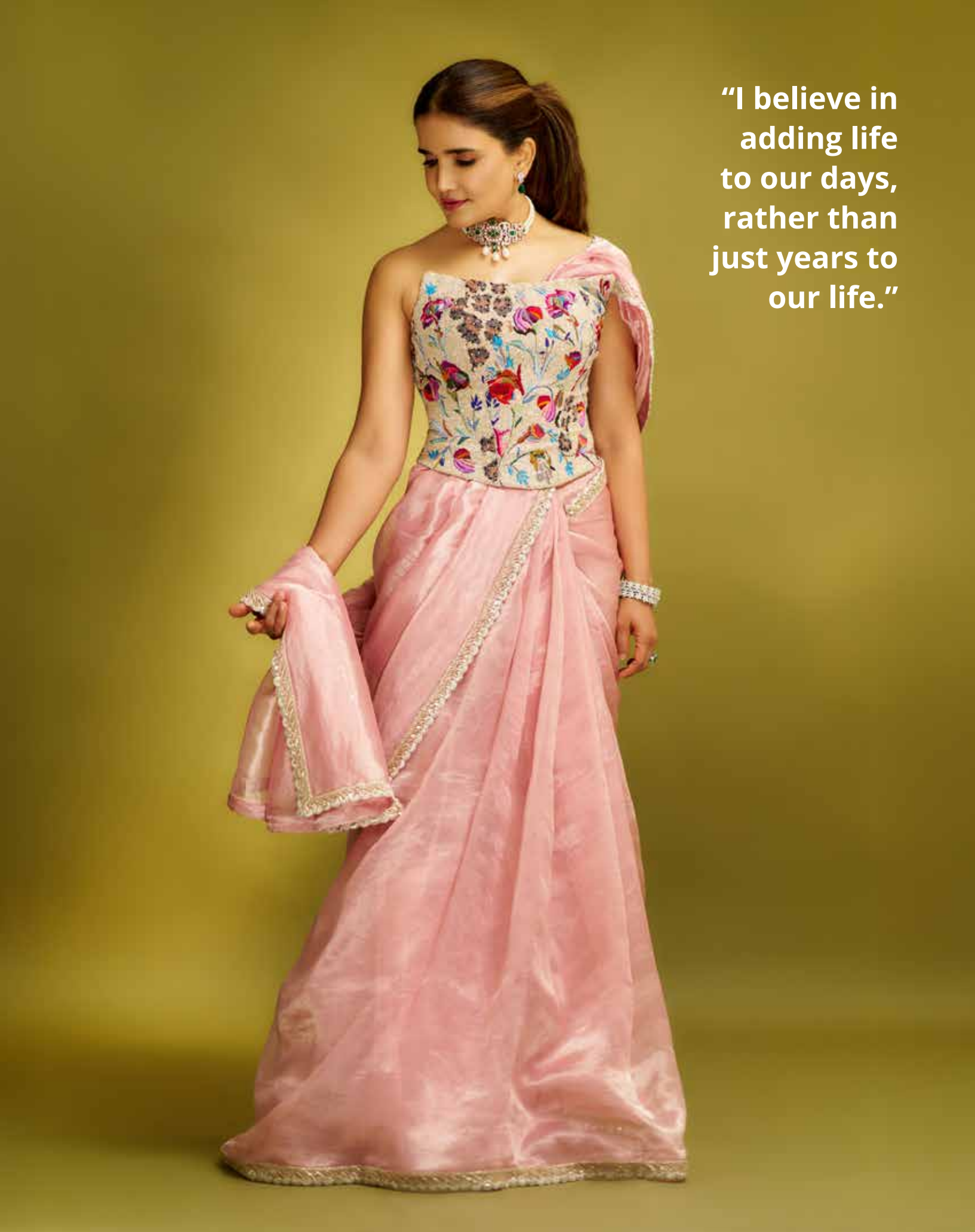
I took a sabbatical from my role in Sussex but continue tele-radiology, reporting MRIs for a few hours daily. This flexibility allows me to spend time with my husband, Dr Bhushan Gagrani, and participate in social initiatives, especially in healthcare, education and cleanliness. While I don't handle official duties, I accompany him on visits, engaging with communities and adding value where I can.

What inspired you to advocate for menopause awareness?

My personal experience. At 48, I faced typical menopause symptoms and also noticed changes in my decision-making and energy levels. In India, HRT (Hormone Replacement Therapy) was rarely discussed, but in the UK, I saw many women benefitting from it. A pivotal moment was when a GP told me she would have quit her job if not for HRT. That led me to research, start HRT, and see a significant improvement in my quality of life. Now, I openly discuss menopause, strength training, and breaking myths around HRT to encourage women to seek proper healthcare.

"I took a sabbatical from my role in Sussex but continue tele-radiology, reporting MRIs for a few hours daily. This flexibility allows me to spend time with my husband, Dr Bhushan Gagrani, and participate in social initiatives, especially in healthcare, education and cleanliness."




“I believe in adding life to our days, rather than just years to our life.”

You had shared an interesting aside with me... of how you "believe in having a health span, not a lifespan." Could you elaborate on this philosophy and how it influences your approach to life and health?

Life isn't just about longevity — it's about quality. A long life without mobility or energy isn't fulfilling. Prioritising a strong, disease-free body through exercise, nutrition and modern medicine, like HRT, enhances the years we live. I believe in adding life to our days, rather than just years to our life.

How did losing your niece, Swara, lead to the creation of 'Brush of Hope'?

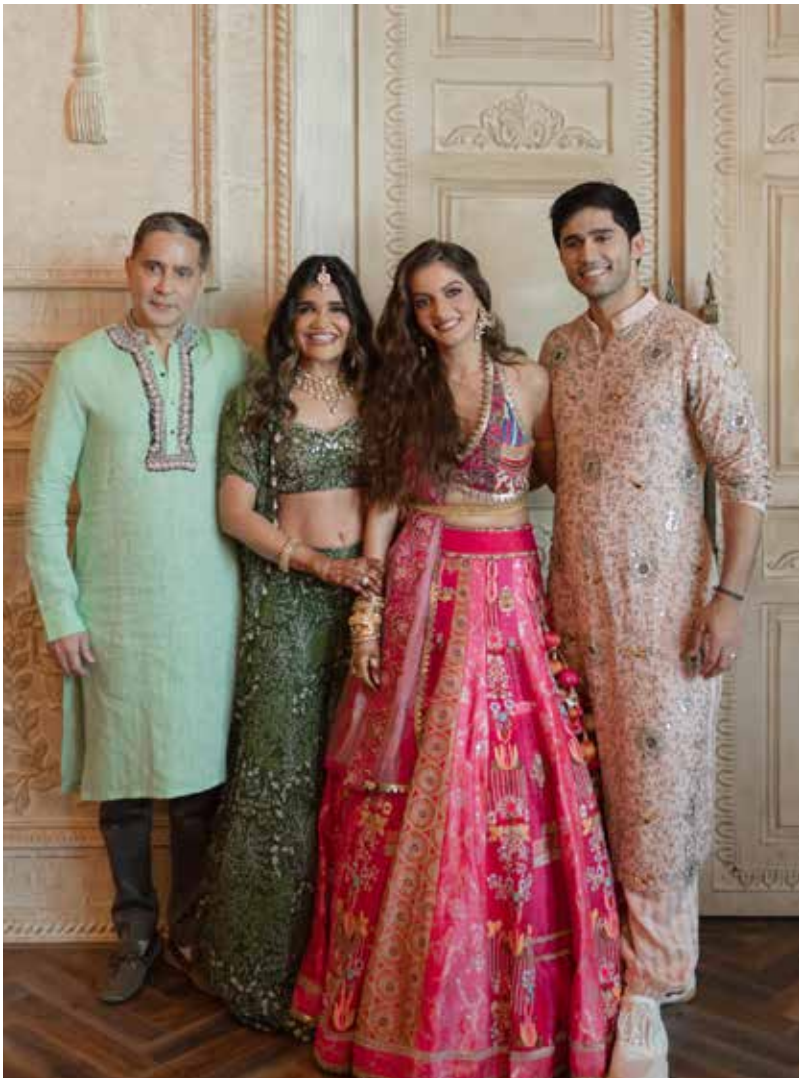
Swara passed away after her NEET exam, initially believed to be due to exam stress. Later, through her diaries, we discovered she had a stalker. Even in her death, there was fear of societal judgment, highlighting how victims are often silenced.

'Brush of Hope' was born with a deep purpose to combat non-financial cyberbullying, sextortion, and online abuse by providing victims with counseling, legal guidance, and intervention support. In partnership with Maharashtra Cyber, Brush of Hope is creating a safer digital space where individuals, especially young people, can seek help without fear.

How has your family's experience shaped your approach to tackling cyberbullying?

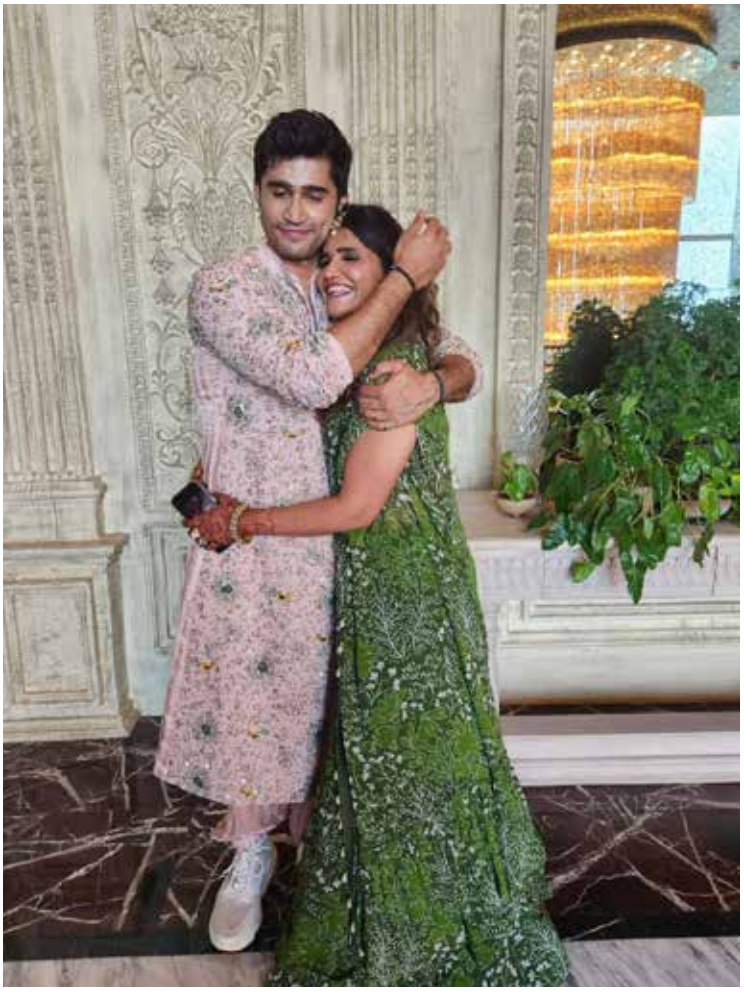
It made me realise how little support exists for victims. We have set up a helpline and collaborated with experts to educate parents and teens about digital safety. Our aim is to ensure victims don't suffer in silence, but receive the support they need.

"Fitness is also a priority — I exercise every morning with Bhushan, ensuring we start our day on a positive note."





“Nisarg, now 29, is independent, and our relationship has evolved into mutual respect and friendship.”



You’ve worked with cybersecurity experts to tackle cyberbullying. Can you tell us about these collaborations and their outcomes so far?

We’ve worked on awareness campaigns and initiatives to curb cyber harassment. The goal is to create safer digital spaces by advocating for stronger policies and providing victims with access to resources and support.

Balancing a demanding career, diverse social impact initiatives, and your role as the wife of Dr Bhushan Gagrani, the Commissioner of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), must be challenging. How do you manage these responsibilities while staying true to your passions?

Discipline and prioritisation. I maintain a balance by dedicating time to work, family and social causes. Fitness is also a priority — I exercise every morning with Bhushan, ensuring we start our day on a positive note. This routine also gives us some bonding time together, before our hectic work day begins.

You and your husband prioritise fitness. What advice would you give others for a healthier lifestyle?

Consistency is key — 80% discipline, 20% fun. I introduced fitness at home, gradually getting Bhushan into strength training, and now he’s regular. A healthy lifestyle isn’t just about looking fit — it’s about respecting the body we are blessed with.

You live in a beautiful colonial home and have refurbished part of it amazingly... Do tell us what a day in the life of the wife of the BMC’s Commissioner is like.

It’s dynamic. From managing my work to joining Bhushan on visits to worker colonies or schools, each day is different. While I stay away from official duties, I enjoy being part of initiatives related to healthcare, cleanliness and education.

Tell us about your bond with your son, Nisarg. According to you, what role do parents play once a child becomes an adult?

Nisarg, now 29, is independent, and our relationship has evolved into mutual respect and friendship. As parents, our role shifts from guiding to supporting, ensuring our children have space to make their own choices while knowing they always have our backing.

Whether in healthcare, cyber safety or fitness, what’s your vision for the future?

I want to continue driving awareness and change in these areas — helping women navigate menopause, ensuring mental and digital safety for youth, and promoting a holistic approach to health.

Brush of Hope

Helpline Number: 022-65366666

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Ganesh Acharya: The Master & His Moves

Behind Bollywood's most electrifying dance numbers is Ganesh Acharya. A man who learnt to use the art to cope with grief and find the spirit of what gets the country grooving. Acharya's is a story of resilience coupled with an unbreakable spirit. From the slums of Bombay (Mumbai) to the big screens in Bollywood, read on to know his remarkable story.

By Tsunami Costabir



Few choreographers in Bollywood have left as indelible a mark as Ganesh Acharya. With a career spanning decades, he has crafted some of the most electrifying dance sequences in Indian cinema, working with the biggest stars and creating steps that become national trends.

Acharya's beginnings were beyond humble. His father, a dancer and choreographer, passed away when Ganesh was just 10 or 11 years old. This loss compelled him to leave school and seek employment to support his family. He chose dance as his path, inspired by his father's legacy.

A significant turning point in Acharya's career was his collaboration with actor Govinda and director David Dhawan. But how did he get there? In a recent interview, Acharya opened up about his story. His sister told him to meet Govinda, she saw that they had similar styles and believed they could do great work together.

Acharya spent six months outside of Govinda's building hoping to meet him and another six to choreograph a song together. But after that, there was no looking back. Govinda introduced him to his friend, director David Dhawan who gave him the opportunity to choreograph the song 'Tum Toh Dhokebaaz Ho' for the film 'Saajan Chale Sasural'. The next film he landed garnered widespread acclaim, establishing him as a sought-after choreographer in Bollywood. This was 'Goriya Churana Mera Jiya' and 'Husn Hai Suhana' for the film 'Coolie No. 1'.



From high-energy numbers like ‘Malhaari’ and ‘Beedi’, to peppy dance hits like ‘Oo Antava’ and ‘Chikni Chameli’, Acharya’s choreography blends technical brilliance with raw energy, making his work instantly recognisable and unforgettable.

Acharya considers Govinda his ‘godfather’ and has stated that Govinda took him out of a slum and made him who he is. He has also been vocal about his dance style getting boxed into terms like ‘dehati’ (often used as a slur meaning ‘villager’ or ‘uneducated’) and ‘massy’ (for the masses, not classes).

As for Acharya, he took those terms and changed the connotation behind them. He kept doing good work, taking leaps of faith in himself and his intuition, making waves in the industry. His choreography has been essential in driving audiences to the cinema and making music memorable.

Beyond his mastery of dance, Acharya has also stepped into direction, acting, and mentoring aspiring artistes, ensuring that his legacy extends beyond just choreography. His journey — from starting as a background dancer to becoming one of Bollywood’s most sought-after choreographers — is a testament to talent, hard work, and sheer passion for the craft.

In this exclusive conversation, he opens up about his creative process, the evolving landscape of Bollywood choreography, his experience working with top stars, and his vision for the future of dance in Indian cinema. He also shares insights on how social media and digital trends are reshaping the industry.

Edited excerpts from the interview...

Has social media and OTT platforms changed the kind of choreography and steps that go viral?

Yes, of course! Simple steps can go viral very easily. Digital platforms play a major role in spreading dance movements to a wider audience.

What is your process for developing choreography, and what inspires you?

I believe I am God-gifted. I don't follow a set formula — I listen to the song, focus on the lyrics, and understand the director's vision. Every song has its own emotion, and I create steps based on that.

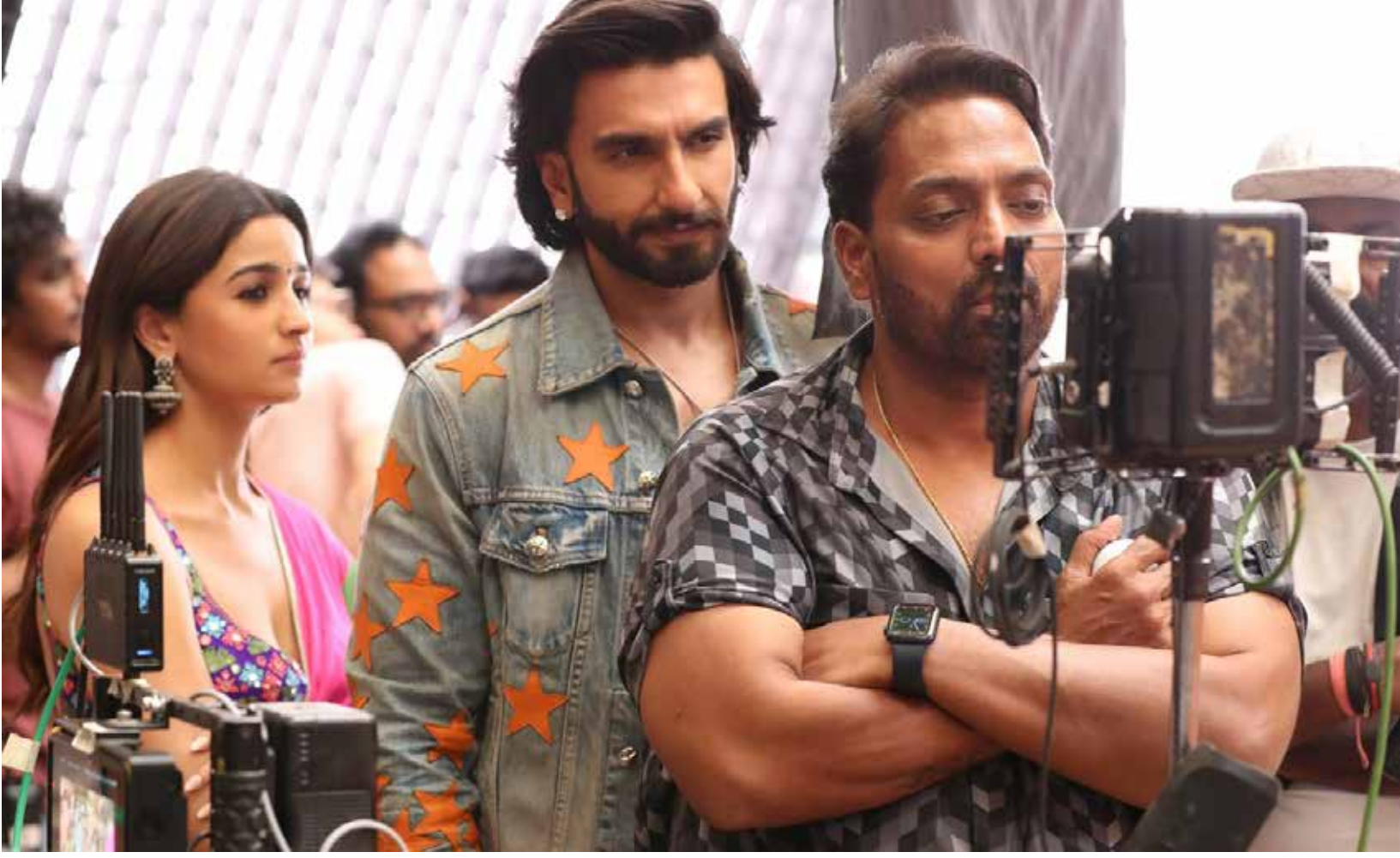
What makes an item song truly iconic?

For me, an item song is just another song in the film. It could be a festival song, a celebration song, or a commercial dance number, but it should serve the film's story and fit the characters.



Acharya spent months outside of Govinda's building hoping to meet him. Govinda then introduced him to his friend, filmmaker David Dhawan.







Beyond dance steps, what other elements make a song iconic?

The emotions behind the movements matter. For example, 'Khalibali' had to reflect Khilji's madness, 'Malhaari' had to showcase Bajirao's energy. The choreography must match the hero or heroine's character and the film's narrative.

Which upcoming actor do you think has the most potential as a dancer?

Today's generation learns dance from a young age. Everyone is picking up steps and evolving, so it's hard to name just one.

What has been your favourite film to work on recently?

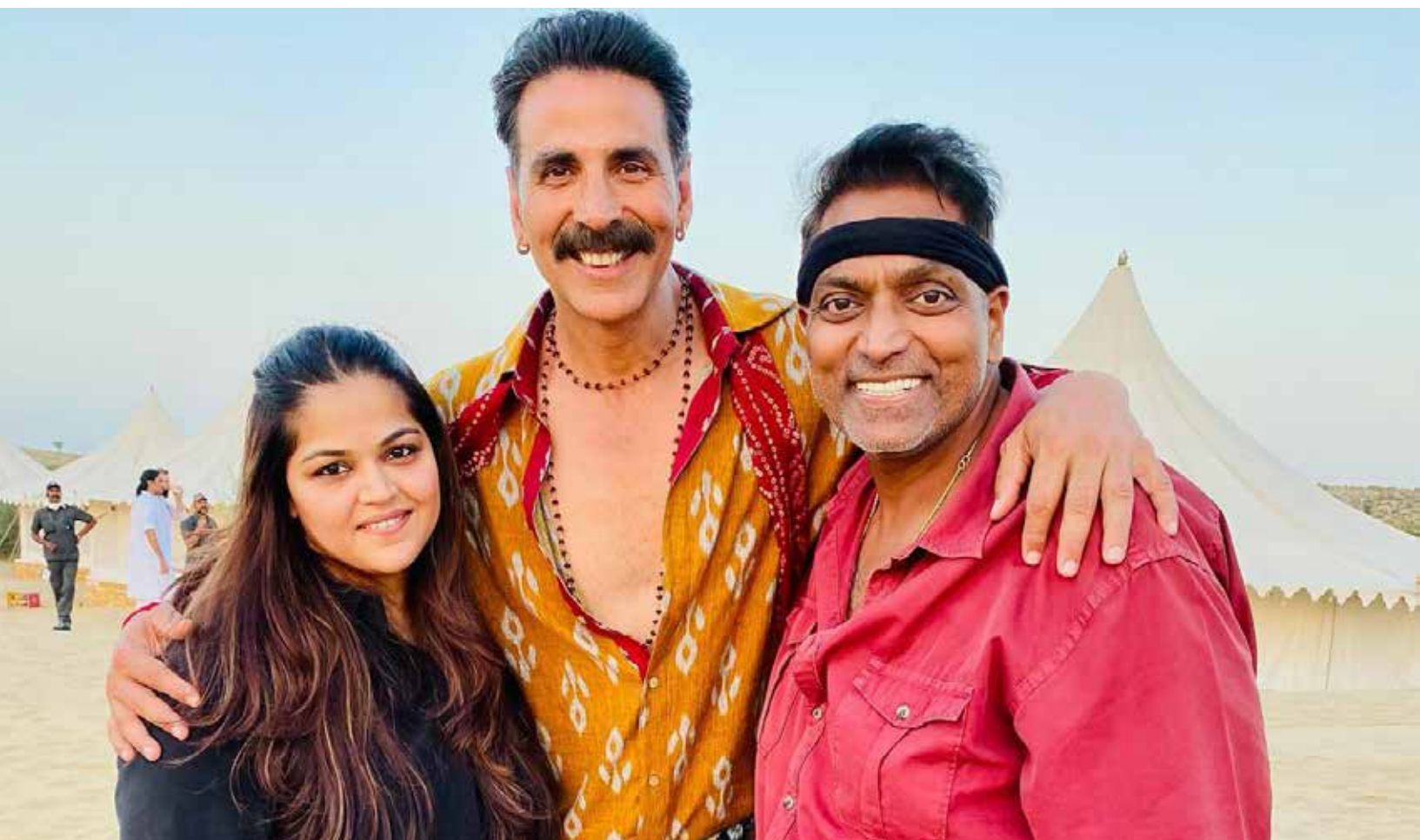
'Pushpa', and now 'Pushpa 2'!

Acharya considers Govinda his 'godfather' and has stated that Govinda took him out of a slum and made him who he is.

“I believe I am God-gifted. I don’t follow a set formula — I listen to the song, focus on the lyrics, and understand the director’s vision.”







“It’s not about being fat or slim. The important thing is to stay healthy, eat well, sleep well, and take care of your body.”







You’ve undergone a major body transformation. Has it impacted your dance career and energy levels?

It’s not about being fat or slim. The important thing is to stay healthy, eat well, sleep well, and take care of your body.

Any upcoming projects you’d like to talk about?

‘Son Of Sardaar 2’, ‘De De Pyaar De 2’, and a Dharma Productions film with Varun Dhawan. Plus, a lot of South Indian films are lined up.

What would you want your legacy to be?

I want to be remembered as a grounded person and a lifelong learner.

You’ve seen massive career success, what keeps you coming back for more?

I always want to remain a student of dance. That’s what drives me.

Who are your biggest inspirations in dance?

My late gurus — Kamalji, Saroj Khan, and PL Raj. But today, I learn from young dancers, and they are my role models.

What advice do you have for aspiring choreographers?

Always be a student. Keep learning, watch others, and never think you know everything.



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“Eat Right, Stay Fit & Live Healthy”

Well-known for her stint in the Hindi entertainment industry, Claudia Ciesla has seamlessly transitioned to wellness entrepreneurship. With her book ‘Keep Eating Keep Losing’ and her global health platform ‘Claudia’s Concept of Healthy Living’, she is on a mission to help people achieve lasting well-being. In this exclusive conversation with Andrea CostaBir, Claudia shares her insights on how small lifestyle changes can lead to big transformations.



Excerpts from the interview...

You started your career as an actress. What inspired your transition into nutritional coaching and wellness entrepreneurship?

In 2009, I moved to India to pursue an acting career. I’ve appeared in several reality shows, including ‘Bigg Boss’, and participated in films, notably ‘Khiladi 786’ with Akshay Kumar. The warm reception I received in India has been overwhelming, and I now proudly call Mumbai my home. Alongside my acting career, I developed a passion for nutrition, quickly realising the pivotal role that food and exercise play in maintaining my appearance and well-being. Initially driven by a desire for glowing skin, shiny hair, unlimited energy, and weight management, I eventually felt a deeper call to promote holistic nutrition and a healthy lifestyle.

In 2016, I authored my first book ‘Keep Eating Keep Losing: Weight-Loss Secrets’. I also launched an online global platform called ‘Claudia’s Concept of Healthy Living’ (ClaudiasConcept.com), offering 12 programmes designed to help people achieve their health goals, from weight loss to disease recovery. In 2023, my nutrition talk show ‘Weight & Watch’ debuted on Tata Play Fitness, D2H, and Dish TV.

Tell us a little about the work you do...

My mission is to transform the lives of 1,00,000 people; empowering them to thrive and reach their fullest potential. Nature offers all we need for a healthy, disease-free life. Yet, obesity has become an epidemic, and India is now the diabetes capital of the world, with rates that continue to climb. Childhood obesity is also a growing concern. We provide our clients seeking weight loss with effective solutions that show results in just three months. We recently helped a client lose 25 kg, and I am confident that I'm the last nutritionist he will ever need. We do more than just coach; we help clients transform their habits, ensuring their weight loss is permanent and that they avoid repeating past dietary mistakes.

Hippocrates wisely said, "Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food." Unfortunately, today, unhealthy diets and incorrect lifestyles cause 80% of chronic diseases such as obesity, cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and fatty liver. The good news is that these diseases are largely preventable through prioritising health. Additionally, adopting a healthy lifestyle can decrease dependency on medications and, in many cases, reverse conditions like diabetes and fatty liver disease. At Claudia's Concept, our mission is to profoundly improve people's quality of life. We aim to increase awareness, helping individuals understand that a diagnosis of chronic disease is not the end. There is a path forward, so let's begin the journey of healing together.

What are the most common health and wellness challenges your clients face, and how do you help them overcome these?

Change is often the most challenging aspect for many. My clients frequently need to unlearn long-established habits, recognise how these habits affect their bodies, and begin implementing changes. Neuroscience explains that change is difficult because old habits have forged strong neural pathways in the basal ganglia, making them hard to override. This is why merely providing a diet plan often fails to be effective for weight loss; a diet alone is insufficient. Successfully losing weight or reversing diabetes requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses multiple factors. At our clinic, we employ a variety of innovative techniques to help clients rewire their neural pathways and alter their habits. During this transformative process, we also ensure that clients are mindful of their food choices and stay motivated. This holistic approach is crucial for making lasting changes.



Your book 'Keep Eating Keep Losing' promotes sustainable weight loss. What's the biggest myth about dieting that you'd like to debunk?

Crash diets and restrictive diets are ineffective. Many individuals, before joining us, tried these quick-fix diets, only to experience the yo-yo effect where they not only regained all the weight lost but often ended up heavier than before. Restrictive diets tend to slow down metabolism.

To achieve sustainable weight loss, it's crucial to approach it correctly. Often, weight gain occurs over years, yet when people decide to lose weight, they seek immediate solutions, hoping to see results within days. Our bodies operate 24/7, so it's time to rethink our weight loss strategies. It's about nourishing the body, not depriving it. Sustainable weight loss rests on four pillars – balanced nutrition, regular exercise, adequate sleep, and emotional well-being. These elements are intertwined and must work in harmony to promote optimal health.



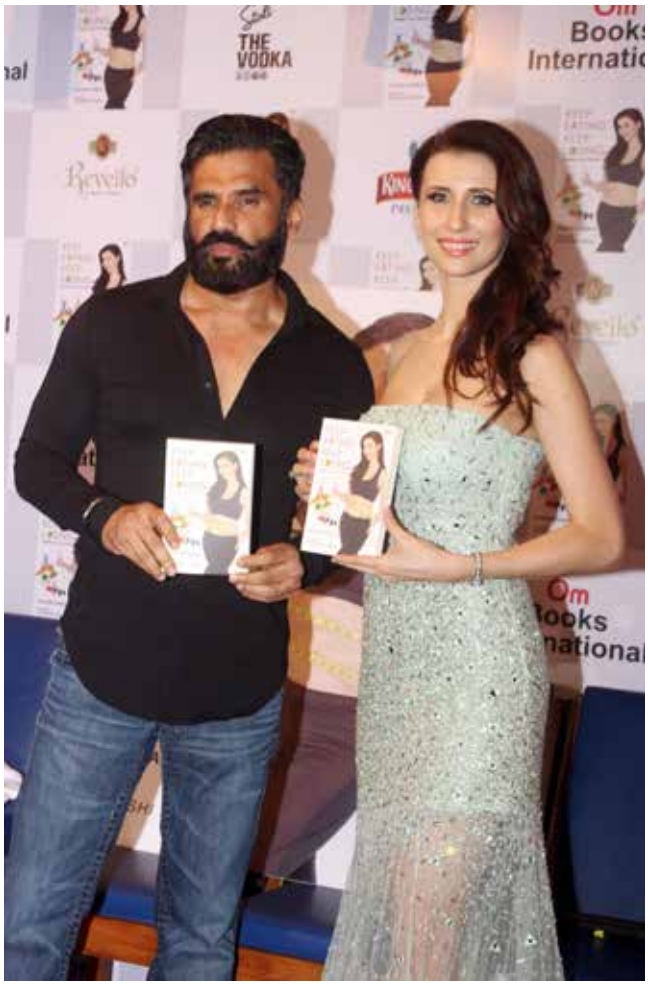




Gut health plays a vital role in overall well-being. What are your top tips for maintaining a healthy gut?

The gut is often called our second brain and is teeming with trillions of bacteria. It not only aids in digestion but also produces 90% of serotonin, the "happy hormone," enhancing mental health. Additionally, the gut contains 70% of the body's immune cells, playing a vital role in fighting infections. To maintain a healthy gut, I recommend a few key strategies: Include a diverse array of fiber-rich foods in your diet to nourish beneficial gut bacteria, stay hydrated, and avoid overly processed foods that can disrupt gut balance. Incorporating probiotics, found in yogurt and fermented foods like kimchi and sauerkraut, can also support gut health, though they may not be suitable for everyone, particularly those with existing gut issues. Furthermore, exercise is crucial for gut health as it enhances muscle contractions that facilitate food movement through the digestive system and reduces stress, another indigestion trigger. By adopting these practices into your daily routine, you can maintain a healthy and vibrant gut.

"Alongside my acting career, I developed a passion for nutrition, quickly realising the pivotal role that food and exercise play in maintaining my appearance and well-being. Initially driven by a desire for glowing skin, shiny hair, unlimited energy, and weight management, I eventually felt a deeper call to promote holistic nutrition and a healthy lifestyle."



"For those with limited time, a high-intensity interval training (HIIT) routine can be very effective and can be done from home within 20-30 minutes. These workouts alternate short bursts of intense activity with periods of rest or lower-intensity exercise."





Emotional eating is a common struggle. How can people develop a healthier relationship with food?

Firstly, one must address the root causes of emotional eating, whether it be stress, boredom, anxiety, relationship issues, or work conflicts. Awareness plays a crucial role. In cases of emotional eating, we often prioritise improving and developing a healthier relationship with food, which includes recognising the triggers of emotional eating. Many clients find it helpful to maintain a food diary, recording what they eat and how they feel at that time. This practice helps clients become aware of patterns and triggers, enabling them to make better and more conscious food choices. Additionally, we work with them on mindfulness, and some find meditation very helpful in coping with emotions. Since different techniques work for different people, it's important to explore and discover what works best for each individual.





"Sleep, mental health, nutrition, and exercise are interconnected."

For busy professionals, what's an easy-to-follow fitness routine that ensures overall well-being?

For those with limited time, a high-intensity interval training (HIIT) routine can be very effective and can be done from home within 20-30 minutes. These workouts alternate short bursts of intense activity with periods of rest or lower-intensity exercise. Additionally, integrating physical activity into daily routines like walking or biking to work, standing desks or standing up for 2-3 min once every hour, climbing the staircase etc can contribute to overall well-being without requiring extra time. It's not always about exercise, it is about incorporating more movement into your daily routine.

Stress and poor sleep are major barriers to a healthy lifestyle. What are your personal strategies for managing both?

Sleep serves as the ultimate detox for the brain. For instance, if you've had only 3-4 hours of sleep, you'll likely experience brain fog the next day, making it difficult to concentrate and focus. This can increase stress, particularly if you're expected to work. Additionally, insufficient sleep often leads to increased carbohydrate cravings, making dietary control more challenging. Furthermore, if you compromise on your sleep, there's a 95% chance that your workout routine will suffer as well. This scenario perfectly illustrates how sleep, mental health, nutrition, and exercise are interconnected.

Exercise is scientifically proven to reduce stress. Try running on a treadmill for 20-30 minutes to see how it affects your mood. If you're short on time, a few minutes of dancing to loud music can be equally transformative. Regarding sleep, if you're stressed, you might find yourself restless and irritable in bed. However, performing some breathing exercises beforehand can help you relax and fall asleep more easily. While there are numerous techniques to manage both stress and sleep, inaction is not advisable.

What advice would you give someone looking to start their wellness journey but feeling overwhelmed?

I advise against quick fixes and trendy diets. Instead, consult a nutritionist who can offer a sustainable solution tailored to last a lifetime.

Bread Craft

Chef Paul Noronha, Executive Chef, ITC Maratha, Mumbai, gives us a masterclass in artisanal breads from around the world.



A journey of flavour and tradition, artisanal bread has been a staple of human cuisine for thousands of years, with each region and culture developing its own unique bread-making traditions. From the crusty baguettes of France to the soft, fluffy naan of India, artisanal breads offer a fascinating glimpse into the culinary heritage and daily lives of people around the world.

European Artisanal Breads

In Europe, artisanal breads are a cornerstone of many national cuisines. France, famous for its bread-making traditions, boasts an array of artisanal breads, including the iconic baguette, the rustic pain de Campagne, pain de Genes (a sweetish kind of bread), croissants, buttery brioche, boule (which is round and crusty), and the wholemeal bread - le pain complet.

Italy, meanwhile, is home to a staggering variety of artisanal breads, each with its own unique flavour profile and texture. From the crusty ciabatta to the hearty grissini, focaccia - a popular flatbread, and piadina which is akin to the tortilla made with wheat flour. Coppia ferrarese is a uniquely shaped bread made by intertwining two pieces of dough to create a star shape. Italian breads are renowned for their simplicity, freshness and flavour.

In Germany, Austria and Switzerland, artisanal breads are often denser and darker than their European counterparts, with a focus on whole grains, seeds and nuts. The schwarzbrot, a dense, dark bread; the famed pumpernickel which has high fibre; the sourdough bread schwarzwaelder (Black Forest bread) from Germany; and Kaiser rills from Austria are classic examples of this tradition.

France, famous for its bread-making traditions, boasts an array of artisanal breads.





Middle East & Asian Artisanal Breads

In the Middle East and North Africa, artisanal breads play a central role in daily meals and social gatherings. Pita bread, a soft, fluffy bread with a pocket-like interior, is a ubiquitous favourite, often served with dips like hummus and baba ganoush.

Naan, a leavened flatbread from India and Pakistan, is also popular, often topped with spices, herbs and other ingredients. In Morocco, the crusty khobz is a staple bread, often served with tagines, stews and other slow-cooked dishes.

In the Middle East and North Africa, artisanal breads play a central role in daily meals and social gatherings.

Artisanal Breads In Asia

Artisanal breads vary greatly from country to country. In Japan, the soft, fluffy milk bread is a staple. Other popular breads include shokupan, koppepan and hokkaido – often served with breakfast or as a snack. In China, bao, a steamed bread which can also be stuffed; mantou; bing, a leavened flatbread; and rou jia mo - also known as a steamed burger bun - are popular.

In India, a wide range of artisanal breads are enjoyed, including the flaky, buttery paratha; the puffed, deep-fried puri; and the crispy, fermented dosa. Breads such as poli; panke; undo; kakan (bangles); and korpriyal are also quite popular breads from the coastal territory of Goa.

In Korea, the sweet, steamed pang is a favourite snack, often filled with red bean paste or other sweet fillings.







In the Americas, artisanal breads are heavily influenced by European and indigenous traditions.

American & Latin American Artisanal Breads

In the Americas, artisanal breads are heavily influenced by European and indigenous traditions. In the United States, artisanal breads like crusty baguette, cornbread, bagels and fluffy dinner rolls are staples.

Latin American countries like Mexico, Argentina and Chile offer a range of delicious artisanal breads, including the crispy, savoury tortilla; the sweet, anise-flavoured rosca de reyes; and the hearty, crusty chilenito; the small a bolillo; rosca de reyes; panadero; and the famed puerquito.

The Art Of Artisanal Bread-Making

Artisanal bread-making is an art that requires patience, skill and dedication. From the initial mixing of ingredients to the final shaping and baking of the loaf, each step in the bread-making process requires attention to detail and a deep understanding of the craft. Artisanal bread-makers use only the finest ingredients, often sourced locally and sustainably, to create breads that are not only delicious but also nutritious and environment-friendly.





Artisanal bread-makers use only the finest ingredients, often sourced locally and sustainably, to create breads that are not only delicious but also nutritious and environment-friendly.

Take A Bite

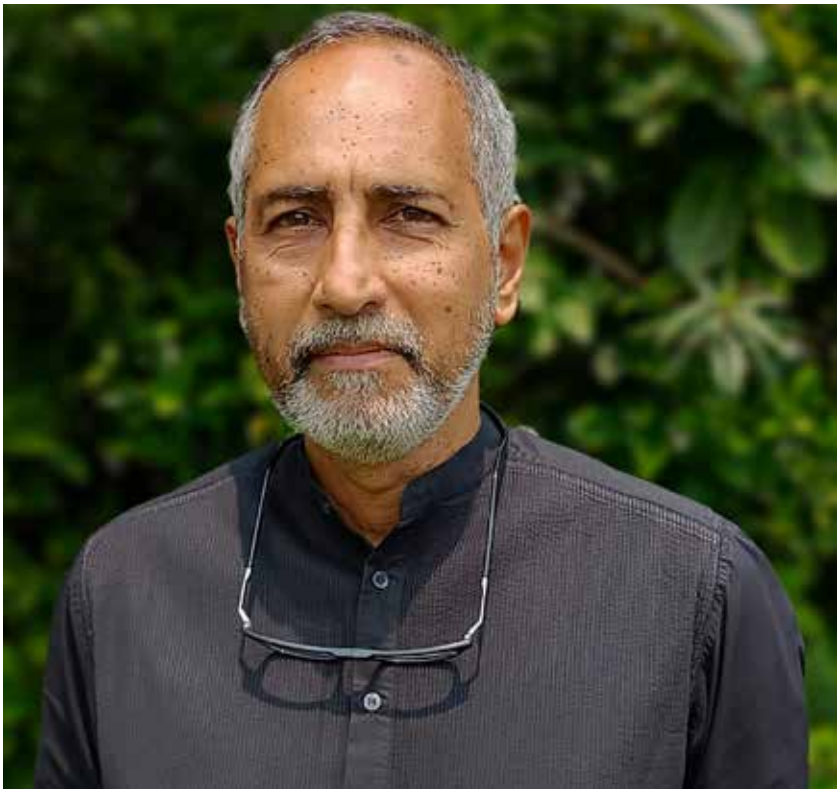
Artisanal breads from around the world offer a fascinating glimpse into the culinary heritage and daily lives of people from diverse cultures and traditions. They are a testament to human ingenuity, creativity, and passion for good food. As we explore the world of artisanal breads, we are reminded of the importance of preserving traditional craftsmanship, supporting local communities, and promoting sustainable food systems. Whether enjoyed as a simple snack or as part of an elaborate meal, artisanal breads have the power to bring people together, foster connection, and inspire joy

Balancing Form & Function

Rahul Kadri's journey through various architectural projects, ranging from educational institutions to resorts and healthcare facilities, showcases a commitment to blending functionality with aesthetics, always with an eye towards sustainability.

Rahul Kadri needs no introduction, he is one of the most respected and critically acclaimed architects who has taken IMK Architects to new heights of success. Rahul is an expert in Urban Development, Policy Making, Public Transport Systems, Housing and Slum Redevelopment, Ecological Planning, and modern Healthcare Design.

Here are some key projects from his portfolio, highlighting diversity and scale.



VEE Technologies, Salem, Tamil Nadu

The new workplace for VEE Technologies, an IT service management company based in Salem, Tamil Nadu, blurs the boundaries between an office and a garden, creating a positive, invigorating environment for 450 people to work, collaborate, and engage with the outdoors. Interspersed with landscaped sit-outs, the design of the office invites people to step away from their screens and into nature, all within the building premises.





The office building is constructed using recyclable and reusable materials like steel and a flexible structural grid.

As the first building in the nine acre high-tech commercial business park, this 30,000 sq ft office paves the way for sustainability for the upcoming buildings. The office building is constructed using recyclable and reusable materials like steel and a flexible structural grid. The design offers a cost and time-effective solution, for remodelling the building to fit a different function once the business park is fully operational in a few years.

Symbiosis University Hospital & Research Centre (SUHRC), Lavale, Pune

Established on the lower slopes of a hill, amidst the sprawling 40 acres of land of Pune's renowned educational institute Symbiosis, SUHRC has been developed on a forested hill, in a discrete and quiet location. Envisaged as a multi-specialty hospital to provide excellent healthcare facilities and a state-of-the-art centre that would enhance skill development in the field of Medicine, the development envisions to educate and empower medical students.

To enable a natural, original, and permanent finish on the building, which would be maintenance-free, brick was adopted as the material of choice for the double skin on the façade with deeper shading projections that would reduce heat gain. The inner courtyards seem like a continuation of the hill, where the built form amalgamates with the site. Allowing nature to be a part of the hospital and integrating it as a comforting element for the patients, the hospital creates a space for recovery and rejuvenation.

Brick was adopted as the material of choice for the double skin on the façade with deeper shading projections that would reduce heat gain.








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Club Mahindra Madikeri Resort, Coorg

The Madikeri Resort in Coorg, Karnataka, is a hospitality project that is designed for Club Mahindra Holidays and Resorts. The design takes cues from the indigenous Kodava culture and upholds biophilia as a central element to create a site-sensitive habitat that is in harmony with nature. Amidst the vast rainforest, the lush tropical cardamom valley below, and the terraced paddy fields beyond, the building blocks have been strategically positioned and seem to rise from the site naturally.

The architectural style for the building has been inspired from the local vernacular Ainmane houses that have been in existence from the 8th century CE. With maximum exposure to nature, the soul of the design lies in the interaction between people and the outdoors. Through the revival of the age-old vernacular techniques, the resort creates a green resort amidst the hills.

The design takes cues from the indigenous Kodava culture and upholds biophilia as a central element to create a site-sensitive habitat that is in harmony with nature.





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The architectural style for the building has been inspired from the local vernacular Ainmane houses.



Arunyam, Kondiwade

Located at an altitude of 2,185 meters, Arunyam is nestled in the lap of nature surrounded by forests, hills and a lake. Arunyam, derived from a Sanskrit word that translates to 'forests', is designed to offer an experience of an urban retreat in a rustic setting with modern comforts, offering a connection to nature. The 'designing with nature' approach focuses on building alongside the site's natural elements.

The villas enjoy views of the lake and lush forests, maintaining the connection with nature even from indoors. Curved, meandering pathways connect these villas and other amenities in the development, to create a forest-like experience. Exterior walls have exposed bricks with rooftop gardens that include vegetation and climbing vines that blend with the forests and hilly backdrop.

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

Liquid Luck

Amber Dias tries out delectable cocktails with an Irish twist.



Smooth, light and delectably sweet, Irish whiskey has been a favourite for centuries. It offers a unique experience for seasoned connoisseurs and whiskey novices. While sipping it neat has its charm, Irish whiskey's unique flavour profile makes it an ideal base for cocktails that are crowd winners.

For The Love Of The Irish

Irish whiskey dates back to the 12th century when Irish monks brought the technique of distillation to Ireland. Unlike Scotch whisky, which is often peaty and smoky, Irish whiskey is typically triple-distilled, resulting in a lighter, smoother spirit. The word "whiskey" itself is derived from the Gaelic phrase "uisce beatha," meaning "water of life."

During the 19th century, Irish whiskey was the most popular spirit in the world, but a combination of Prohibition in the US, the Irish War of Independence, and trade restrictions caused its decline. However, in the late 20th century, Irish whiskey experienced a resurgence, leading to its current status as one of the fastest-growing spirits globally.

Cocktails With An Irish Twist

Irish whiskey's smoothness and subtle vanilla, caramel, and fruit notes make it a perfect ingredient for cocktails. While classic whiskey-based cocktails like the Old Fashioned and Manhattan are often associated with American bourbon or rye, Irish whiskey provides a unique twist on these classics. The global resurgence of Irish whiskey, fueled by brands like Jameson and Redbreast, has inspired bartenders to create innovative drinks that highlight its depth while keeping it approachable. The growing interest in heritage spirits has also made these cocktails a go-to choice for those seeking both quality and easy-drinking appeal.

Some of the most popular Irish whiskey cocktails include:

Irish Coffee

Created in the 1940s by Joe Sheridan, this is perhaps the most iconic Irish whiskey cocktail. It combines hot coffee, sugar and Irish whiskey, topped with lightly whipped cream. This simple yet delightful drink became an instant favourite and is still widely enjoyed today, particularly on chilly evenings.



Whiskey Sour (Irish Twist)

The classic Whiskey Sour, traditionally made with American whiskey, takes on a smoother, more refined taste when made with Irish whiskey. A combination of Irish whiskey, lemon juice, simple syrup, and an optional egg white creates a well-balanced, refreshing cocktail.





Dublin Mule

A variation of the Moscow Mule, the Dublin Mule swaps vodka for Irish whiskey. The blend of whiskey, ginger beer, and lime juice makes for a zesty, refreshing drink with a touch of spice from the ginger beer.

Emerald

Often referred to as the "Irish Manhattan," the Emerald combines Irish whiskey with sweet vermouth and orange bitters. It is a sophisticated and well-rounded cocktail, perfect for those who enjoy the elegance of a Manhattan but prefer a milder whiskey profile.









Fun Facts

- Ireland was once the undisputed ruler of the whiskey world, boasting over 30 distilleries.
- For a whiskey to be legally classified as Irish whiskey, it must be distilled and aged in Ireland for at least three years in wooden casks.
- Allegedly, during the 19th century, Ireland's distillers spelt whiskey with an 'e' as a way to differentiate their whiskeys from Scotch.
- Irish Coffee was originally served at an airport to warm up passengers arriving from transatlantic flights.
- Irish whiskey cocktails see a massive spike in consumption around St Patrick's Day, with bartenders crafting everything from Irish Coffees to green-hued whiskey drinks to celebrate the occasion.





Here To Stay

Irish whiskey cocktails offer a delightful mix of tradition, history and innovation. Whether you prefer a warming Irish Coffee, a citrusy Whiskey Sour, or a refreshing Dublin Mule, there's an Irish whiskey cocktail for every palate. As the global love for Irish whiskey continues to grow, so too does the creativity in how it's served. So the next time you are browsing the drinks menu, consider giving Irish Whiskey cocktails a shot. Sláinte!

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TOTE & TELL

A sneak peek at what the rich and famous are toting around in their fashionable carry-ons.

A well-curated bag is more than just an accessory, it is a reflection of personal taste, status, and lifestyle. From timeless designer handbags to exquisite fragrances and statement-making essentials, every item tells a story of elegance and indulgence. Whether you're a jet-setter, a connoisseur of fine craftsmanship, or simply someone who appreciates the finer things in life, discover the must-have pieces that define luxury — one exquisite detail at a time.



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Hermès Kelly 28 in Noir Togo Leather
₹18,00,000



Roja Parfums Haute Luxe
₹2,75,000



La Prairie Skin Caviar Luxe Cream
₹65,000



Louis Vuitton Christopher PM Backpack in Monogram Eclipse

₹3,50,000



Dior Blacktie 254FS Sunglasses

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Tom Ford Oud Wood Eau de Parfum

₹24,000



Montblanc Meisterstück Le Petit Prince Fountain Pen

₹95,000

*Prices may vary



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Something To Talk About

Nichola Marie turns the spotlight on personalities who are creating quite the buzz.



Zelensky – Committed To Ukraine's Interests

After a verbal clash ensued at the Oval office, Ukraine's President Zelensky showed surprising resilience. Referring to the incident as "regrettable," he emphasised his respect for the US despite the tensions. His measured response shows his desire to maintain diplomatic relations and highlights his commitment to Ukraine's interests amidst challenging circumstances. Zelensky's effective use of media to communicate Ukraine's plight is remarkable.



Earth, Finally, For Sunita Williams

After spending over nine months aboard the International Space Station (ISS), astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore have safely returned to Earth. Their journey home commenced on March 18, 2025, at 10:35 AM IST, when they undocked from the ISS aboard SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft. Following a 17-hour trip, they successfully splashed down off the coast of Florida at approximately 3:27 AM IST on March 19, 2025.

Williams and Wilmore's extended mission began in June of the previous year. They had embarked on what was intended to be a brief test flight of Boeing's Starliner on its first crewed mission. However, propulsion system issues rendered the spacecraft unfit for the return journey, leading to an unplanned nine-month stay aboard the ISS.

The news of Williams' safe return has sparked celebrations in Jhulasan village, located in Gujarat's Mehsana district — the ancestral home of her father, Deepak Pandya, in India. Villagers who had been offering special prayers for her well-being and had lit an Akhand Jyot (eternal flame) at the local temple of Goddess Dola Mata, are rejoicing in the success of her homecoming.

Haute Steppers

Fab new looks to strut in this season.



Louis Vuitton Button Front Denim Mini Skirt

₹1,65,000



Gucci Fine Silk Polo Top

₹1,91,814



Hermes Bride de Gala en Fleurs Belted Tunic

₹2,83,362



Gucci Diagonal Short Sleeve Jacket

₹3,31,316



Versace Barocco Silk Shirt Mini Dress

₹3,37,000



Versace Gabardine Overshirt

₹1,55,100



Louis Vuitton Damoflage Jacquard Pants

₹1,87,000



Hermes Saint Germain Fitted Pants

₹74,110

*Prices may vary

A Grand Wedding Spectacle In Udaipur

Rajasthan, the land of royal palaces and rich heritage, recently hosted one of its most opulent weddings — the union of Ishita Mohta and Anirudh Singh Baveja.

Set against the stunning backdrop of a palace overlooking Fatehsagar Lake, the celebrations blended grandeur with deep-rooted tradition. The festivities began with a vibrant mehendi ceremony, where family members danced to folk music amidst pastel-hued floral decorations flown in from Singapore. The sangeet was a high-energy affair with choreographed performances by loved ones, dazzling fairy lights, and a spectacular fireworks display as the couple exchanged rings.

The wedding day unfolded like a royal procession, with Anirudh arriving in a vintage Rolls Royce, carrying his ancestral sword. Ishita, draped in an exquisite red Sabyasachi lehenga, walked beneath a floral canopy as the air filled with the fragrance of marigolds. The ceremony, steeped in tradition, ended with a soulful Sufi night featuring renowned musicians.

The reception was a grand affair in the palace's ballroom, where guests, including dignitaries and celebrities, indulged in an elaborate feast of Indian and international delicacies. With live music, folk dancers, and heartfelt toasts, the evening celebrated love, heritage, and family bonds — leaving everyone mesmerised by its magic.

















Off The Rack

Some of our favourite things...

Breezy

Badgley Mischka Belted Cap-Sleeve Pique Midi Shirtdress

This shirtdress exudes timeless elegance with its tailored silhouette and refined details. The notched lapels and cap sleeves add a sophisticated touch, while the waist-cinching self-tie enhances the feminine shape. Crafted from textured piqué, it offers a structured yet breathable feel. With on-seam pockets for practicality, this dress is a perfect blend of style and function.



₹38,183 **Check it out at: badgleymischka.com**



Cool Dude

Tom Ford Men's Rinsed Selvedge Slim-Fit Jeans

This pair of jeans offers impeccable craftsmanship and a sleek silhouette. The premium selvedge denim provides durability with a refined finish, while the slim fit ensures a modern, tailored look. Featuring a classic five-pocket design and a secure button-zip closure, these jeans balance luxury and everyday wear effortlessly.

₹80,705 **Check it out at: tomford.com**

Arm Candy

Jimmy Choo Ana Zip Suede Hobo Bag

This bag is a perfect blend of sophistication and everyday luxury. Crafted from supple suede with leather and brass accents, it exudes effortless elegance. The flat shoulder strap with JC lettering adds a signature touch, while the zip-top closure keeps essentials secure. With well-designed interior pockets, it's both stylish and practical for daily use.



₹1,21,057 **Check it out at: row.jimmychoo.com**



Bagged

Ferragamo Gancio Leather Crossbody Bag

This bag is a sleek and sophisticated accessory for modern men. Crafted from premium grained leather, it exudes timeless elegance and durability. The adjustable crossbody strap ensures a comfortable fit, while the exterior zip pocket offers quick access to essentials. Finished with a flap top and signature Gancio clasp, it's the perfect blend of function and style.

₹1,46,657 **Check it out at: store.ferragamo.com/asia**

Sleek

Dyson Airstrait™ Wet-to-Dry Straightener

This hair straightener is a game-changer for effortless styling. It dries and straightens simultaneously, reducing styling time while preventing heat damage. Engineered for multiple hair types, it delivers a sleek, natural finish with innovative airflow technology. With precise temperature control, a powerful motor, and an LCD display, it's a must-have for those seeking efficiency, shine, and hair protection.



₹43,388 **Check it out at: dyson.in**



In Tune

Daqi Concept JinGoo Bluetooth Sound Lantern - The Phoenix

This sound lantern is a stunning fusion of art, light, and sound. Its elegant birdcage design elevates any space, while the high-quality speaker delivers rich audio via Bluetooth. With adjustable ambient lighting and a sophisticated aesthetic, it's both a conversation piece and a functional delight.

₹39,050 **Check it out at: toytoise.com**

Say Cheese

Michael Aram Cherry Blossom Small Cheese Board With Knife

Crafted from marble with delicate golden and pink enamel accents, this cheese board brings a touch of luxury to any gathering. The matching stainless steel knife complements the design beautifully. Perfect for entertaining or gifting, this exquisite piece adds charm to any tablescape.



₹13,624 **Check it out at: michaelaram.com**



Crystal Clear

Lalique Caldera Decanter

Inspired by volcanic calderas, the circular form and intricate cracked patterns of this decanter symbolise nature's renewal. Handcrafted from lead-free satin crystal, it exudes elegance and sophistication. A true statement piece, this decanter enhances any collection, making it a perfect choice for connoisseurs and lovers of fine design.

₹3,16,745 **Check it out at: neimanmarcus.com**

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