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The setting sun
paints a stunning sky
at Lytham Windmill
in Lancashire,
England

EDITOR'S NOTE

Look around and you will see there is a quiet shift in travel. Privacy over accessibility, understated refinement instead of loud ostentation, ritual over rush.

It is what the discerning traveller is veering towards, and in our Cover Story section we have showcased luxury escapes that firmly put the power in pause.

In Botswana's Okavango Delta, you can glide through the water on a *mokoro* (a dugout canoe) and get up close and personal with creatures of all kinds. It is the kind of ride you will never forget. Or do a road trip from Birmingham and discover exceptional food in unexpected places like a converted 18th-century warehouse on the water or eat at a restaurant in a field—some of them have Michelin stars too. Perhaps you would prefer to cycle on trails flanked by summer blooms in the Savoy region of the French Alps, which becomes a hyper-local wine producing region once the snow melts. Or take a step back in time in the ancient Roman city of Pompeii, set against the backdrop of Mount Vesuvius. These trips feed into what luxury is really about—exclusivity and the ability to take in a place at your own pace.

Elsewhere, we take you to Haputale in Sri Lanka, where you can live on a historic tea estate, taking leisurely walks amid verdant tea bushes. We also show you Udaipur through the eyes of resident Olympian Maheshwari Chauhan.

The festival calendar is kick-starting, and to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi, we share a day's itinerary in Pune. In our well-received 8 Dishes to Try, we take you to Seoul to savour their iconic fare. In Body, discover some underrated natural spaces in and around Vancouver so you get your steps in and explore the city.

Travel is ultimately an expression of who you are and we encourage you to build your holidays unrestricted by bucket lists and fixed itineraries.

Happy exploring and happy reading!

— **Namaste.ai** Editorial Team

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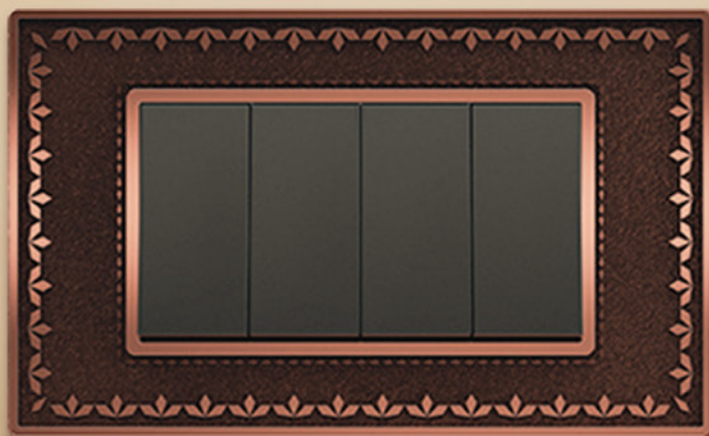
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On The Cover

A traditional *mokoro* or dugout canoe, on the Okavango Delta in Botswana.

Cover image courtesy

Andrew Howard

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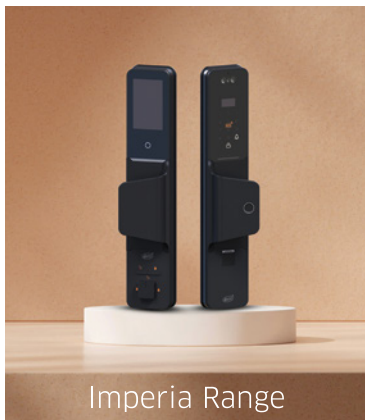
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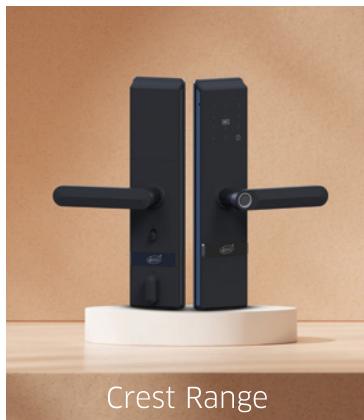
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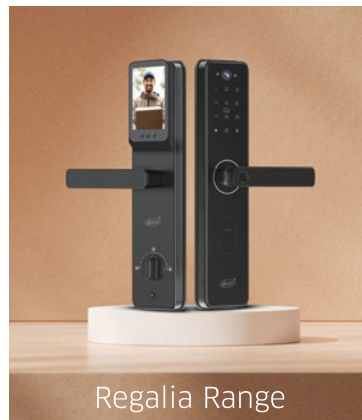
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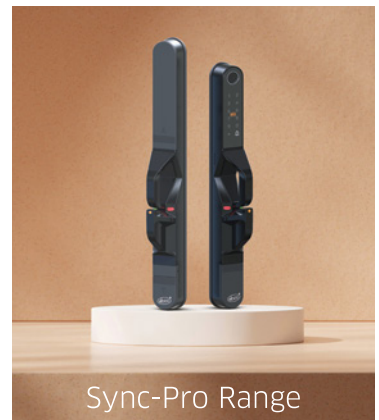
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An engineer, author, motorcyclist, and TEDx speaker, Rishad has four books to his name, including *The Long Drive Home*. He largely writes about food, cars, and road trips. He chronicles his delicious, and Michelin-starred, culinary sojourn in Lancashire, en route from Birmingham, England. **page 18**



➔ Shalbha Sarda

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A freelance travel and design writer based in Jaipur, Shalbha enjoys exploring the finer things in life. When she is not turbo typing or packing for her next trip, she is happily binge-watching documentaries narrated by Sir David Attenborough. She takes us on an unforgettable *mokoro* ride in Botswana's Okavango Delta. **page 14**



➔ Dr. Jaishree Sharad

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With over 26 years of experience, Mumbai-based Jaishree is one of India's most celebrated cosmetic dermatologists. A TEDx speaker and author, she seamlessly bridges science, aesthetics, and human psychology, making complex dermatological concepts meaningful. She shares a five-day nutrition plan for healthier skin. **page 96**



➔ Mukul and Shilpa Gupta

He, an Army veteran. She, a former journalist. Together, they are two hodophiles devoted to slow travel and the joy of feeling, finding, and connecting with people and places. This writer-photographer duo returns from their peregrinations with memories, souvenirs, stories, and photographs. They take us on a 12-hour whirlwind trip across their home city Pune. **page 38**



➔ Maheshwari Chauhan

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An Olympian at the Paris 2024 Summer Games, Udaipur-based Maheshwari is one of India's leading skeet shooters. Introduced to shooting by her grandfather, she made history with an international skeet medal in 2017. For this issue, she shares her favourite spots of her home city. **page 76**



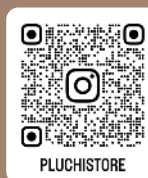
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Great Plains Conservation

- 14 ➔ WILD FORAY
- 18 ➔ CULINARY TRAIL
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A DIFFERENT KIND OF RIDE

In Botswana's Okavango Delta, water transforms a desert into an oasis of hidden waterways, offering a wilderness experience untouched by time

words by
Shalbha Sarda

The Okavango Delta is one of the few places in the world where you can experience a safari on a traditional mokoro, an ancient dugout canoe used for centuries to navigate these waterways



A kaleidoscope of white lilac-tip butterflies erupts into the air as my helicopter lands in Botswana's Okavango Delta, the world's largest intact inland delta.

Minutes later, my guide, Mike Ngande, collects me in a Land Rover, pushing through water that rises halfway up the wheels. All around is a maze of papyrus-fringed shallow channels, dotted with hundreds of water lilies. Nearby, a bloat of hippos grunts and jostles in the water.

It is hard to believe I am inside the Kalahari Desert, and that this same ground was a dusty animal highway, baked bone-dry beneath the African winter sun just a few weeks ago.

The water beneath me fell months earlier (as rain in Angola's Highlands) before travelling over 1,000km as a torrential river to reach this inland delta. Just a few kilometres from this location, instead of finding the sea, it fans out across nearly 22,000sqkm before magically vanishing into the desert.

As the annual flood arrives, the dry ground starts to swell into deep, swirling channels. Island boundaries, which are actually termite mounds, warp and dissolve, and thousands of animals are thrown into a frantic, claustrophobic scramble for the remaining patches of high ground.

It is this unique geography, and the extremes of too wet and too dry, that has led to the equally extraordinary adaptations of life here, both wild and tamed. The Delta has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2014. Here, large land mammals have evolved surprisingly semi-aquatic behaviours. Lions hunt prey in deep water, antelopes have developed wide hooves for better footing in the marshes, and African wild dogs have learnt to take advantage of these seasonal swimmers as prey.

Several water-based luxury camps, including Great Plains Conservation's Sitatunga Private Island and Wilderness Vumbura Plains, also occupy these rare islands of high ground. Their sheer remoteness and difficult accessibility allow them to operate as private concessions, following a high-revenue, low-impact philosophy. Many have fewer than 10 rooms, offering guests the rare privilege of being the only tourists for vast distances.

These camps, though mostly temporary structures, have mastered the art of creating a cocoon of luxury—an illusion of familiar comfort, safety, and every conceivable convenience in the middle of nowhere. From free-standing bathtubs and private plunge pools to handcrafted metal sinks and such thoughtful touches as



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
A mokoro safari is an intimate way to experience the Okavango Delta; Luxury camps usually organise picnics post the safari; Wildlife encounters can happen right at your doorstep; Visitors can also spot the wattled crane.

FACING PAGE
Great Plains Sitatunga Private Island offers a front-row seat to the Delta's abundant wildlife

yoga mats, reading glasses, and even high-end DSLR cameras—every detail is considered with remarkable precision.

The only way to explore around here is by boat, including a *mokoro*, a traditional dugout canoe used by the indigenous people of the Delta for centuries. The Delta is one of the few places on earth where this ancient form of navigation offers an intimate safari and an up-close perspective of the wilderness.

I adjust myself into the slender canoe, barely longer than my own body. Mike takes his place at the back, gripping the *ngashi* (pole) that will guide and push us forward through the water. The *mokoro* is very narrow and I instinctively draw my hands and



legs inward to avoid brushing against the towering grasses that rise around me. Sitting so low that the water is at level with my fingertips, I feel as if I am floating directly upon its surface, separated from the wild world beneath by only a thin layer of fibreglass.

Without the hum of motors and engines, the only sounds I hear are the soft knock of the pole against the riverbed, the croak of frogs, the zither

of cicadas, the squawk of a lone bird, and the deep rumble of a large animal in the distance.

I flinch each time colourful locusts or spittlebugs leap into the canoe. There is nowhere to move without risking my balance. Eventually, I pull my socks as high as they go and surrender to the fear of animals and insects that I carried from my anthropocentric city life.

I ask Mike what exactly we are



looking for. “No lions,” he says, breaking the silence in his deep baritone, leaving me unsure about whether he means I should look for them or not look out for them. “But there are six-metre-long Nile crocodiles.”

“Living fossils,” he calls them, because their millions-of-years-old body design is so ingenious that they have barely needed to change.

The delta is a refuge for wistful rarities and delicate survivors whose evolutionary stories stretch far beyond the brink of extinction. Here lives a fishing spider that abandoned web-building for hunting, the wattled crane (Africa’s largest), and the elusive sitatunga antelope, adapted to the swamps so perfectly that it vanishes into the reeds at the slightest hush.

Mike promises to open a bottle of champagne if we spot one before the ride ends.

While I am looking around, he suddenly stops the boat and points to something. It is a long reed frog, and for a split second, I wish I had brought my reading glasses. Its

barely two-centimetre body, almost translucent and gem-like, is in perfect disguise among the lily pads. I take out my phone to capture a close-up, but the camera fails to distinguish it from a mere bulge on the stalk it is perched on. Thanks to the DSLR cameras provided to every guest at Great Plains Conservation camps, I finally managed to capture its portrait.

Mike is not worried about my big-game dreams here. He knows there are enough savannah camps in Botswana for that. The Okavango Delta is the antidote to anything big.

“This is where you should begin your safari,” he says.

“Just like animals, we need to adapt to the things we are not used to seeing. A *mokoro* ride brings you one-on-one with the wild. There is anticipation. Sometimes, perhaps most times, anticipation is better than reality.”

It is my evening in the *mokoro*, and the vulnerability I felt among the tiniest creatures of the delta that day changed the way I would see the larger wildlife ahead.



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From Johannesburg, fly to Maun, Botswana, and then take a charter flight directly to your safari camp. Some stays may also require a helicopter transfer for the final stretch, which comes at an additional cost.



The gourmet CIRCUIT

Oft overlooked, the food scene around Birmingham offers many luxurious surprises—a village pub, for example, has a Michelin star

words by **Rishad Saam Mehta**





I read menus with rather more concentration than most consider necessary; often before visiting the establishment. By the time the server arrives, I have usually made my choices, cross-referenced the specials, and prepared at least one question about where the lamb spent its life. So, when I set out to plan a long weekend that began and ended in Birmingham, I plotted it around six kitchens and let the road do what roads do best—fill in the gaps between them with something worth looking at.

Friday: Lunch on the Wyre, dinner on the Lune

Starting from Birmingham Airport, I drove about 100 miles along a medley of motorways—to reach Little Eccleston for lunch. Here, on a historic crossing of the River Wyre, sits The Cartford,

the Bowland Fells rising beyond it in a long, brooding sweep. Its kitchen is run by head chef Chris Bury, whose two AA Rosettes and Michelin Guide recommendation are backed by Fleetwood seafood and local game with a French undertow. His French onion soup is the dish regulars order on principle—rich, dark, and unfussy. Then came a Fleetwood fish pie—cod, salmon, smoked haddock, and prawns in white wine and cream, beneath mashed potato and Gruyère; sea and cheese in easy balance.

I carried on north along the Wyre, open countryside gradually giving way to Lancaster, 17 miles later. Cobbled streets and a castle that once tried witches gave way to the quayside, where Quite Simply French occupies a converted 18th-century warehouse by the Lune river. Head chef Luke



TOP AND BOTTOM
Lancaster Castle is famous for the Pendle Witch trials; The lobster at The White Swan.

FACING PAGE
(top and bottom) The Inn at Whitewell's crème brûlée; Wildman Charcuterie Plate at Eight at Gazegill.

TOP TO BOTTOM

Confit shoulder of lamb at The Inn at Whitewell; Their board of specials; The White Swan at Fence.

FACING PAGE

(left and right) The Lake District Lamb dish at Northcote, near Langho; TOTI Royale Afternoon Tea at The Cartford in Little Eccleston.



Johnson has run the kitchen since 2017, 15 years into a career that began with classical French training and a teenage obsession with Raymond Blanc. Dinner was French in the way I enjoy—familiar dishes treated with enough care to make it interesting without turning it into theatre.

My main course was confit duck leg—the meat falling away at the first touch, skin crackled above crisp new

potatoes, a cherry and red wine jus giving the plate a gentle sweetness. Breakfast the next morning brought scrambled eggs of absurd creaminess and hand-churned butter.

Saturday: Lunch in the moors, dinner in the valley

The road out of Lancaster climbs into the Forest of Bowland, 312 miles of a moorland the 21st century has

forgotten to visit—and delivered me 25 miles later to The Inn at Whitewell, a 14th-century building on a bend of the River Hodder. Head chef Jamie Cadman has been here for over two decades, insisting on ingredients he can see from the windows—grouse from the moor, and lamb and beef from farms below. I went for the steak, with mushrooms and spinach followed by a cheese board and a crème brûlée with a satisfying crack. My walk into the moors afterwards felt less like exercise and more like a necessary digestive directive.

Twelve scenic miles south is Northcote (near Langho), its lawns falling toward the Forest of Bowland. Nigel Haworth arrived in 1984 and won the restaurant a Michelin star in 1996. Lisa Goodwin-Allen joined him in 2001, became head chef at 23, and has kept the star alive since Haworth stepped back from the kitchen in 2018. Dinner here was an event, opening with a Negroni given an unexpected dash of caramel, before the five-course tasting menu progressed through the landscape and the seasons.



Lake District Lamb was the high point, pink and glossy against young turnip and *pennyroyal*, and by the time the Valrhona chocolate arrived for dessert, I understood why this place has held its star so long without losing its Lancashire character.

Sunday: Lunch on the farm, dinner at the pub with a star

Twelve miles north-east, the road narrows into Rimington, where Eight at Gazegill sits among the fields of a working organic farm that has stayed in the same family for generations. Chef Patron Doug Crampton, who spent years running James Martin's Manchester kitchen, joined the restaurant in 2023, and here, farm-to-table is less a philosophy and more a description of the distance between kitchen and field. Rare-breed meats, seasonal vegetables, orchard fruits, and herbs come from just outside the door, the menu rewritten regularly around whatever the land is offering, and rounded out by a small network of local producers who share the same organic, ethical instincts.

Sunday lunch opened with garden herb focaccia and organic foraged chipolatas, moved through a Gazegill organic roast sirloin with sticky short rib, red wine gravy, and dripping roasties, and closed with a carrot and



sunflower seed cake, citrus curd, and raw milk soft serve—proof that the same care extends as naturally to a cake as it does to the Sunday roast.

Ten minutes further into the hills is Fence, home to The White Swan, a whitewashed stone pub with dark timber and a gilt mirror, the comfortable air of a place that has fed these hills for generations. Head chef Tom Parker trained under Nigel Haworth at Northcote before taking over and in 2018, won it a Michelin star, making it one of only three in Lancashire at the time—a star it has held ever since, alongside three AA Rosettes.

I had been particularly keen to eat here, which created the pleasant problem of having rather too much time between lunch and dinner. I drove to Barley and walked the Pendle Sculpture Trail, wandering beneath Pendle Hill while lunch slowly moved from stomach to history. It was just about enough exercise to make dinner seem like a sensible proposition again.

I began with Orkney scallops, but it was the lobster that stayed with me: sweet meat surrounded by bright green

beans and leaves, a vivid green sauce beneath, and fine curls of crisp pastry scattered over the top, demanding concentration for about 30 seconds before hunger took over.

Monday: Back to Birmingham

The drive back was uneventful in the way only a good weekend allows, Birmingham drawing closer as the fells shrank into the rear-view mirror. Lancashire does not announce itself, and that is precisely its charm—a county content to let its Michelin stars sit quietly. Somewhere between Little Eccleston and Fence, I stopped taking notes and simply ate.

GETTING THERE

Air India flies non-stop to Birmingham from Delhi and Amritsar.

TWO THOUSAND YEARS OF FOOTSTEPS

Skip the day-trip rush and explore Pompeii at leisure, in the shadow of a volcano that still looms over the site

words by
Nive Raitz von Frentz

The Forum (of Pompeii) was the centre of the city's religious, economic, and municipal life

Immortalised by its destruction, Pompeii, a provincial town by the Gulf of Naples, goes hand in hand with Mount Vesuvius. Said in the same breath, forever romantically, tragically connected, forever in the shadow of that magnificent mountain. The volcano looms innocently, quietly green; the first sight sets my spine tingling. Last active in 1944, Vesuvius has earned its place in the pantheon of lore—the (in)famous volcano is the subject of countless novels and even more theories as to when it might next erupt.

Most people 'do' Pompeii as a day trip from Naples or Rome. Our unhurried, unrushed itinerary enabled us to reimagine it—noisy, bustling, squalid, luxurious, hedonistic—a pot pourri reflection of our times in a way. To have history so clearly crystallised and literally follow in the footsteps of 2,000 years ago was a privilege.

Wisely, numbers into the archaeological site are limited to 20,000 per day. This might seem a lot, but it is so vast, there is little sense of feeling hemmed in. Our flamboyant guide, Carlo, declared he would show us “one of everything”, but to get a real essence of the ruins, just one round does not do it justice. Do note, that apart from some plane trees, there is no shade, so slap on your sunscreen liberally.

Orientating ourselves based on the paper map provided (the site is roughly fish-shaped), the well preserved, gargantuan amphitheatre, dwarfed by Vesuvius rising majestically in the distance, is our first port of call. Closed for refurbishment, we were denied a peep into its ancient interior. Despite checking the website for temporary closures, it is tricky to know in advance what will or will not be accessible on a given day.

Spoiled for choice by multiple routes thereon, we made a beeline to where Pompeii was accidentally discovered in the late

16th century (though excavations began in earnest 150 years later), treading reverently on the massive boulders of the original stone roads. The Roman reputation as nifty town planners is visible everywhere, starting with the roadways grid bisecting the town—the broader *Cardo* arteries running north to south, and the slimmer east to west *Decumano* streets. It is easy to picture wooden chariot wheels grinding along these same thoroughfares, going about their daily business.

TOP AND BOTTOM

Pompeii lies in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius; A bronze statue of a centaur, a Greek mythological creature, in the city.

STYLISH STAYS

Hotel Forum Pompeii

Tucked midway between the archaeological site and new town, it features larger-than-life lemon shrubs that decorate the breezy al fresco terrace, ideal for unwinding.

HABITA79

With panoramic Mount Vesuvius views, this spacious and luxury hotel is great for sundowners and hearty meals.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
Painted walls are still visible across the site; The unique public fountain spotted by the author; When in Pompeii, do try the local lemons.

Keep an eye out

Known for its magnificent lemons, a whole cottage industry has sprung up in Pompeii around lemon-themed ceramics, including hand-painted tiles. Lemons are also used in the production of the famous local liqueur, *limoncello*. Savoured as a cocktail or digestif, look out for the inventively-shaped bottles crammed in shop windows.



Rich red, pale blue, buttery yellow, and jet black are the natural colours on villas with immaculately painted walls. Most villas had similar open-plan designs with a central garden to allow for aerial and cross ventilation. The family altar with busts of gods held pride of place and the attention to detail is striking—from the intricate floor mosaics to the striated pillars with intact corning at their tops. Life in the day of this ancient city, I gathered, would have been one of style, grace, and luxury;

citizens ensconced in the finer things of life.

Sadly, their slaves led pigeonholed lives, three to four squished into tiny quarters—the oil in the well-run Roman machinery. I passed a public fountain—the one sporting an ornate woman's head design, the 'O' of her mouth must have been where the water pipe originally emerged.

All major elements of a Roman town are present—a forum alongside a number of temples and courts of justice. A visit to the museum offers

a close up of 'preserved' bodies extracted from the ruins, a grave reminder of the poor Pompeians' fate.

Excavation in Pompeii continues unabated. Photography was not allowed in the active dig but my inner eye recalls climbing a ramp to peer down into new villas being delicately and painstakingly unearthed, complete with trademarked painted walls and amphorae stacked neatly in kitchen corners, as if the owners had just stepped out for a bit.

I do regret not returning to the ruins to explore the many missed bits, especially the theatre district, but there was some consolation in yet another divine *gelato* at De Vivo.

GETTING THERE

Air India flies non-stop to Rome from Delhi. Take a connecting train to Naples with our Interline Partner, Trenitalia.





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HIDDEN TREASURE

Post the ski season, the Savoy region in the French Alps stakes its claim as a hyper-local wine producer

words by **Tejashee Kashyap**



Savoy, a historic alpine region, produces red, white, rosé, and sparkling wines

The French Alps, particularly the region of Courchevel, has built a reputation based around skiing. Between the discourse around ski runs, going off-piste, and après-ski parties, wine rarely enters the conversation. So, when someone asked me which regional wines I had tried, my mind immediately went to the French stalwarts of Burgundy and Bordeaux. The idea that the Alps might have a hyper-local wine culture of their own, with vineyards edging the pistes, seemed hard to believe.

But it is true. Courchevel sits within Savoy, a historic alpine region that is one of France's smallest and most overlooked wine regions. Many vineyards here are planted on slopes that are difficult to access and even harder to manage. The residents here align their lives with the seasons—teaching skiing, running ski schools or guiding during winter, before returning to the vines in summer. When the snow melts, the wine culture comes into bloom. Skiers are also replaced with hikers and cyclists.

Of hills and vineyards

As you drive from Geneva through the rolling foothills of Savoy and onwards to Courchevel, vineyards appear unexpectedly between the mountains. “The region has its own indigenous grape varieties, many of them found almost nowhere else in the world,” a sommelier explains as we happily work our way through a glass of exceptional white in Courchevel.

The white wines are indeed a class apart—cool, crystalline, and refreshing as a mountain stream. They are dry and light-bodied with delicate floral aromas.

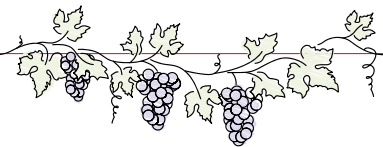
The villages of Apremont, Chignin, and Cruet, and the town of Montmélian are among the best places to discover the wine culture. Head to vineyards like Domaine Jean-Charles Girard-Madoux or Domaine de l'Idylle—they are often



modest in scale, with only around 2,000 hectares of the region under vine.

All about terroir

On one such visit, I understood why these wines taste the way they do. The vineyards are often on steep alpine slopes, basking in long hours of sunshine but cooled by sharp temperature drops at night. Those conditions give the wines their signature freshness, finesse, and minerality. Production is limited to small batches, yet, they are easy to find across Courchevel, thanks to its wide-ranging dining scene—from Michelin-starred restaurants like Le 1947 à Cheval Blanc to local watering holes like Brasserie de Laroche. What also makes these wines special is that they are hard to find outside the region, even though they have been recognised as exceptional. Local wineries like Domaine Chevallier Bernard and Cave de Cruet have won multiple medals at the prestigious Concours Général Agricole competition



INDIGENOUS GRAPES

White

Jacquère: Pairs beautifully with fondue, raclette, and tartiflette

Altesse (aka Roussette): Complements lake fish and aged cheeses

Gringet: Goes with rich alpine cheeses like fondue and raclette, as well as fresh mountain trout

Red

Mondeuse: A natural match for charcuterie and mountain meats



SUMMER PLEASURES

Once the snow melts, Courchevel transforms into an expansive outdoor playground, with a wide network of well-marked hiking and cycling trails through alpine forests, meadows, and mountain passes. Personally, one of the most rewarding routes was the hike to the spectacular Merlet Lakes.

adrenaline you want to take home with you. When my legs complained, I hit the Aquamotion, one of Europe's largest mountain wellness centres—sitting in a thermal pool and watching the Alps through a glass floor-to-roof window as the crisp air bit at my skin.

Most people only return to Courchevel for skiing. But I have seen the locals' eyes light up when they speak of Savoy and Courchevel in summer. Perhaps they know the real luxury: the rare privilege of having the Alps almost entirely to yourself.

FINE WINE

Air India's 'Regional Wine Programme' aims to offer guests a true taste of the destination they are flying to. For instance, if you are flying to Paris, you can enjoy wines from some of France's most iconic regions, including Champagne, Bordeaux, and Burgundy. Similarly, guests flying to Rome or Milan can sample elegant Italian selections from Tuscany and Veneto. The collection also features Californian Chardonnay, German Riesling, Australian Shiraz, and New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc, creating a journey through the world's most renowned wine destinations without ever leaving your seat.

in Paris in 2025 and 2023, respectively. Perhaps its low profile is exactly what has helped preserve Savoy's wine heritage.

Meandering through villages

Although there is a good chance the delicious wines will keep you occupied, it is worth working off a glass or two with a walk. I realised Courchevel is made up of a string of villages, and wandering between them feels like moving through different layers of its personality—probably how a Savoyard mountain community would be. The lower you go, the deeper you get into Savoy's history; the higher you climb, the more you encounter the polished, almost improbable glamour of Courchevel 1850 (the villages are named based on altitude)—the shops of Chanel, Rolex, and a Michelin-starred restaurant, all within 50 metres.

By now, I should have been immune

to the views. I was not. From our room, the green Alps, dusted with patches of snow, seemed so close that we found ourselves perpetually staring at them. And Courchevel has no shortage of reasons to stay out after dark either. Dancing, eating out and late-night revelry are as much a part of its summer personality as its mountain trails. Summer, however, has its own, quieter offers—the restaurants bring Savoy's rooted flavours to the fore. You cannot pass up a meal at Ariondaz Farm Inn, a family-run spot, without trying its memorable Sérac tiramisu.

Alpine adrenaline

Remember those mountain rivers we drew as children, winding down from the peaks? It becomes thrillingly real when you canoe, raft, and canyon through rivers here that look like that. The rush of paddling through white water is thrilling—the kind of

GETTING THERE

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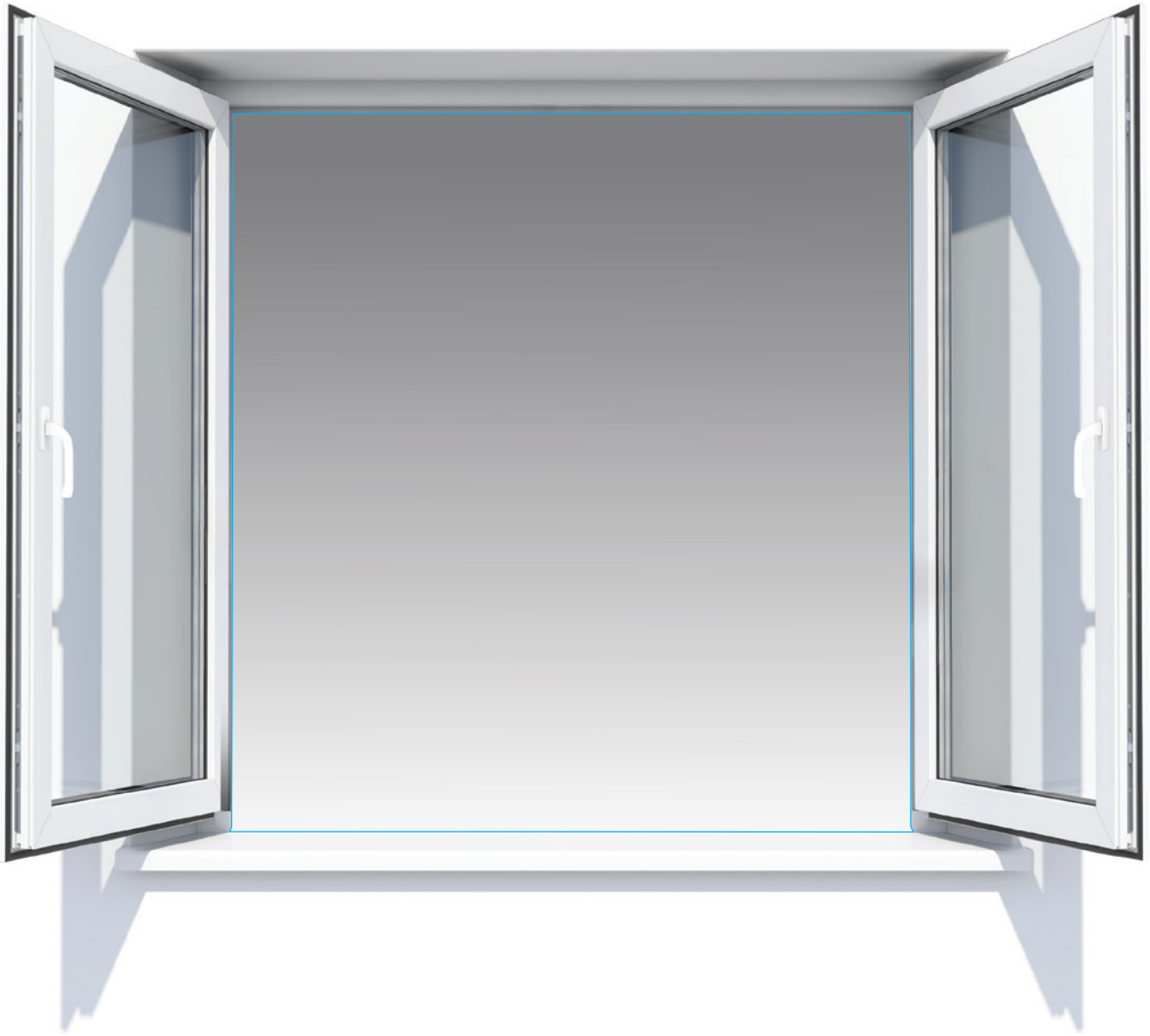
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OPTION 2 ☐





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- 36 ➔ IN FOCUS
- 38 ➔ ON THE CLOCK
- 42 ➔ EVENTS
- 46 ➔ FOOD
- 52 ➔ DISCOVER
- 54 ➔ NOW TRENDING
- 62 ➔ BOOKS





A RARE SIGHT TO BEHOLD

The British Museum is hosting the monumental Bayeux Tapestry for the very first time

words by **Mignonne Dsouza**

It is an almost 70-metre-long piece of embroidered linen that commemorates the only successful invasion of England in 1066. But that is not the only reason why the exhibition at the British Museum in London, titled *The Bayeux Tapestry*, is already receiving widespread interest. Though the Tapestry has always been on display in France, this is the first time it has been loaned to the United Kingdom. The work of art was moved in a secret, overnight operation under heavy guard.

Featuring the Norman invasion of England by William the Conqueror and his subsequent win over the Anglo-Saxon King Harold II at the

battle of Hastings, the artwork is an extraordinary record, depicting castles, warfare, and ships along with the clothing, food, and furniture of its time (the 11th century).

Recognised by UNESCO as part of the 'Memory of the World' Register, this is a unique work, as there is nothing similar to compare it with.

Tickets for the exhibit at the Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery are expected to be heavily in demand, with the first batch already sold out. So, visitors planning to see this seminal artwork should plan their trip well in advance.

10th September 2026-11th July 2027
britishmuseum.org



TOP AND BOTTOM

The Tapestry is an important record of the Norman period; This artwork has been insured for an estimated £800 million.



GETTING THERE

Air India flies non-stop to London (Heathrow) from Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, and to London (Gatwick) from Amritsar and Ahmedabad.





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PUN(E) INTENDED

The Aga Khan Palace boasts Italian arches, grand halls, and sprawling gardens

Heritage and history. Shopping and supping. And, above all, the frenzy of Ganeshotsav. Explore Maharashtra's cultural capital

words by Mukul and Shilpa Gupta

🕒 08:00 AM
Nature therapy

📍 Pu La Deshpande Udyan

Start your day in the meditative setting of this Japanese-style outdoor space. Modelled on the 300-year-old iconic Korakuen Garden of Okayama, it provides a therapeutic escape by combining the five elements, and features streams, lawns, pagodas, bridges, ponds, and more.

🕒 09:30 AM
All aboard

📍 Joshi's Museum of Miniature Railways

Handcrafted. Miniature. Detailed. The three pillars on which this Lilliputian world of wonder stands tall. Working models of trains and locomotives from all over the world make up a scintillating show (running every half hour). It serves to not only chronicle the evolution of the railways but also brings alive the curious child in you.

🕒 10:30 AM
History lesson

📍 Aga Khan Palace

How did a palace become a tribute to India's freedom struggle? The answer lies in its lived history: MK Gandhi, along with a few other nationalist stalwarts, was detained here. Today, this 19th-century architectural gem is a museum housing Gandhiji's photographs and personal objects.

🕒 11:45 AM
In service of the nation

📍 War Memorial Southern Command

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checklist on the clock

STYLISH STAYS

1/ Conrad Pune: Right in the central business district, the property boasts a decadent spa and classy rooftop restaurant.

2/ The Ritz-Carlton, Pune: Along with luxurious rooms, it also offers a temperature-controlled pool.

3/ Wellesley Hotel: A restored and reinvented boutique option set in a heritage building, it exudes quiet elegance.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
Pu La Deshpande Udyan; Shrewsbury biscuits are an iconic treat; A model at Joshi's Museum of Miniature Railways; The Lord Ganesha idol of Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple.

GETTING THERE

Air India flies non-stop to Pune from Delhi.

🕒 01:00 PM
Heritage flavours
📍 MG Road

Pick up treats that make the city's Irani bakeries shine—Shrewsbury biscuits from Kayani Bakery, walnut pies and garlic toasts from City Bakery, and *bruns* from The Royal Bakery. Then, head to Maratha Samrat for a true Maharashtrian meal. Try the seafood and mutton thalis.

🕒 03:00 PM
Echoes of yore
📍 Peths

Ditch your vehicle and navigate the historic localities (*peths*) on foot to get a peek into Maratha and Peshwa legacies in landmarks like Shaniwar Wada, Lal Mahal, and ancient temples, alongside old-fashioned markets for jewellery, Puneri saris, and more. Take a breather with *mastani*, Pune's sweet concoction, at Sujata Mastani.

🕒 07:00 PM
In reverence
📍 Shrimant Dagdusheth Halwai Ganpati Temple

Over 100 years old, Dagdusheth is among the city's most-visited sites. During the 10-day Ganeshotsav, footfalls increase owing to the epic scale and concept of the temple's pandal. Soak up the fervour with the rhythmic beats of *dhol tasha*.

🕒 09:00 PM
Party time
📍 Kalyani Nagar

Round off your day at this hip stretch that has acquired the identity of being the coolest spot for buzzy nightlife with the choicest of pubs, live music bars, and global eats. Grab craft beer (and dishes with a twist) at the stables-turned-hotspot, Toit. Then, head to Cobbler & Crew for signature cocktails and a carefully-curated dinner menu.



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HEAD OUT

From a Pokémon event to stargazing—we have quite the range this month



ANNUAL CELEBRATION OKTOBERFEST

📍 **Munich, Germany**

19th September-4th October

Held at the Theresienwiese, the 191st edition will have beer tents pouring exclusively from six Munich breweries, alongside fun rides and stalls. oktoberfest.de

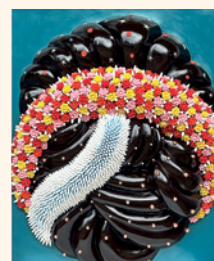
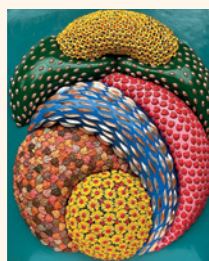


SPORTS MEDLEY ASIAN GAMES

📍 **Aichi-Nagoya, Japan**

19th September-4th October

Watch athletes from across Asia in a series of competitions across 43 sports—from archery and wrestling to diving and boxing, and more. aichi-nagoya2026.org



ART OF THE MATTER

THE DICHOTOMY OF DIMENSION

📍 **Bengaluru, Karnataka**

Till 3rd October

This landmark solo show by internationally-acclaimed sculptor G Ravinder Reddy at Gallery Sumukha features five sculptures created between 2018 and 2026, including the monumental *Portrait of Parvati* (2019) and four new wall-mounted reliefs being showcased for the very first time. sumukha.com



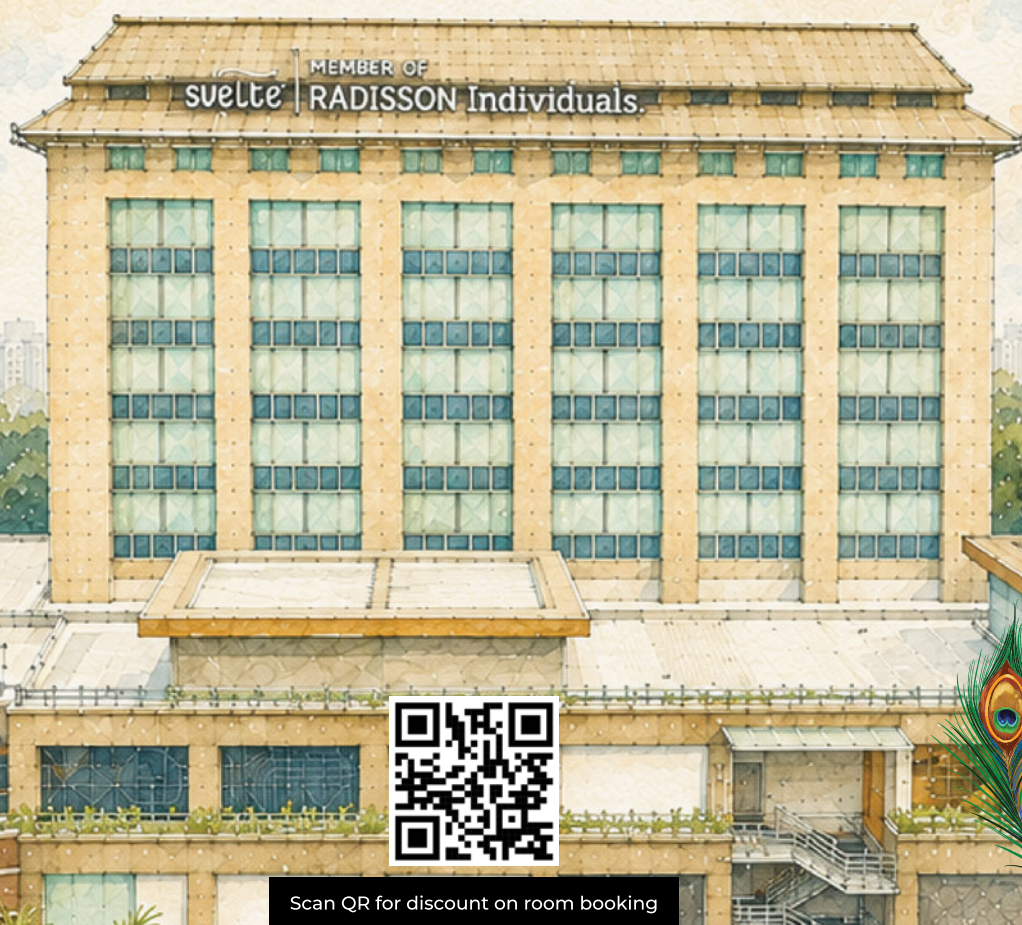
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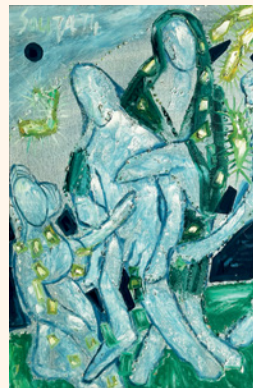
POKÉXCITING!

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

12th and 13th September

The 30th anniversary celebration will feature Malaysia's first-ever stunning Pokémon-themed drone show illuminating the skyline behind the Petronas Twin Towers. KLCC Park will also be completely immersed in the world of Pokémon.

my.portal-pokemon.com



BRUSH STROKES

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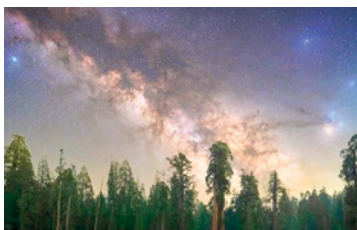
New Delhi

Till 30th September

Catch this group exhibition that will showcase works by SH Raza, FN Souza, MF Husain, Sohan Qadri, GR Santosh, Jamini Roy, and Haku Shah at Kalakaar Art Salon.

kalakaarart.in

ON THE RADAR



DARK SKY FESTIVAL

California, USA

11th-13th September

This event will happen across Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks. Visitors can set up telescopes and attend presentations.

sequoiaparksconservancy.org

RUHBARU-ORCHESTRAL QAWWALI PROJECT

Hyderabad, Telangana

20th September

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district.in



KWITA IZINA

Kinigi, Rwanda

4th and 5th September

The 21st Gorilla Naming Ceremony will bring together communities, conservation partners, and invited guests to name Rwanda's newest baby mountain gorillas, followed by a music concert the next day in Kigali.

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8 dishes TO TRY IN SEOUL

The city's dining scene—stretching beyond barbecue—offers a delicious introduction to Korean culinary traditions

words by **Raul Dias**



← NAENGMYEON

Nothing is more welcome during Seoul's humid summers than a chilled bowl of this noodle preparation. Traditionally made from buckwheat noodles, it comes in two variants—*mul naengmyeon*, where it is served in an icy meat broth, and *bibim naengmyeon*, where the noodles are coated in a spicy chilli dressing. Originally from North Korea, the dish travelled south during the Korean War and soon became a beloved staple throughout the country. Crisp pear slices, cucumber, and boiled egg complete this refreshing bowl.

Where to try it: Woo Lae Oak, 62-29 Changgyeonggung-ro, Jung-gu

→ BIBIMBAP

Few dishes capture the Korean food philosophy of balance as beautifully as this. A bowl of steamed rice is topped off with an assortment of seasonal vegetables, mushrooms, egg, and *gochujang* paste before being vigorously mixed together.

Its roots go back centuries, with historians linking it, paradoxically, to both royal court cuisine and rural farming traditions, where leftovers were combined into one satisfying meal. Every ingredient lends its own texture, colour, and flavour, making each mouthful different. When cooked and served in a sizzling stone bowl, it is known as *dolsot bibimbap*.

Where to try it: Mokmyeoksanbang, 71 Toegy-e-ro 20-gil, Jung-gu



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➔ BOSSAM

This dish celebrates the beauty of simplicity. Pork belly is gently simmered with aromatics until it is melt-in-your-mouth tender, before being sliced and wrapped in crisp lettuce or napa cabbage leaves with kimchi, garlic, chilli, and *ssamjang*, a savoury paste made with fermented soyabean paste and *gochujang*. The dish became closely associated with *kimjang*, Korea's communal autumn tradition of preparing kimchi. It remains a convivial meal that brings families and friends together.

Where to try it: Wonhalmeoni Bossam, 249-24, Jangchungdan-ro, Jung-gu



➔ JAPCHAE

During the rule of the Joseon Dynasty—centuries before sweet potato glass noodles became part of the recipe—*japchae* was intended to be a vegetarian dish created specially for royal banquets. Today, no Korean celebration is complete without it. The noodles are stir-fried with vegetables and sesame oil before being lightly seasoned with soya sauce. Their glossy appearance and springy texture distinguish them from wheat noodles, while the subtle seasoning allows every ingredient to shine. Although often had as a side, it is equally satisfying as a meal.

Where to try it: Hangaram, 25 Namdaemun-ro 5-gil, Jung-gu

➔ BINGSU

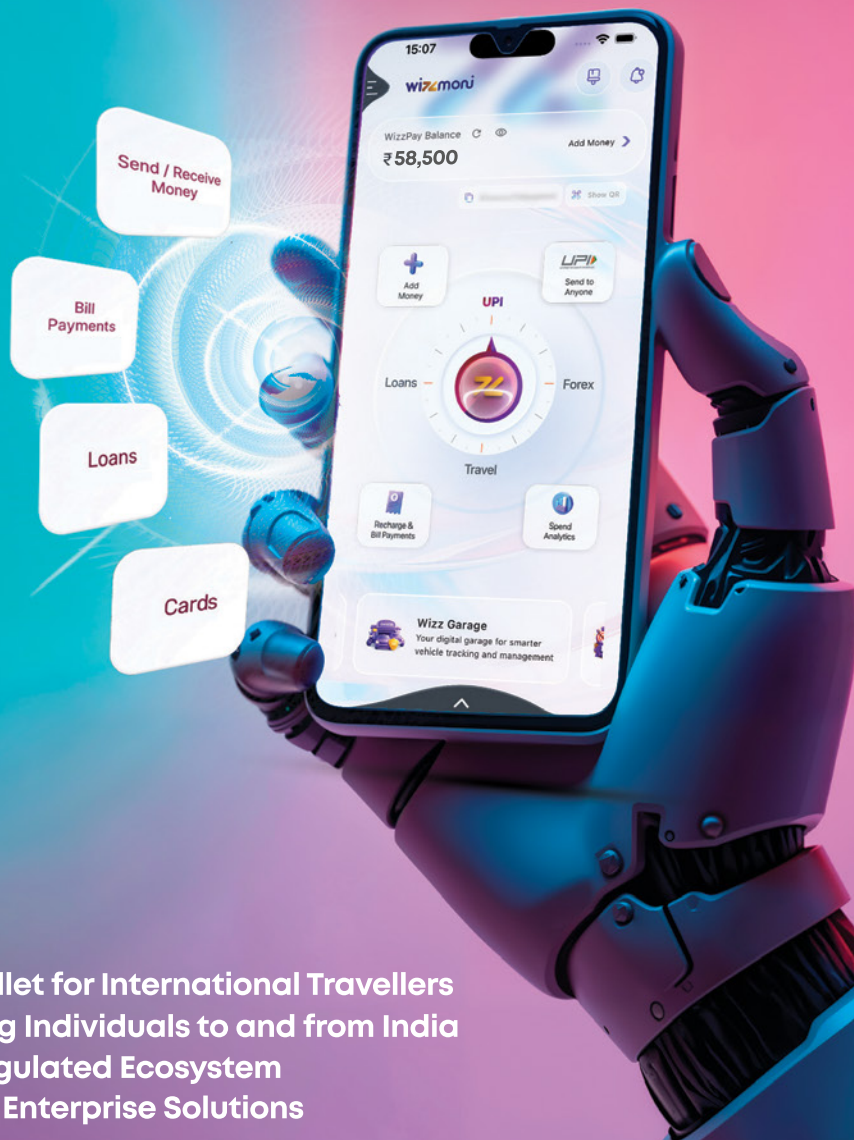
With roots dating back to the Joseon Dynasty and refined into its modern form during Korea's colonial era, *bingsu* has evolved into one of Seoul's signature desserts and has travelled far and wide—even to India. Finely-shaved milk ice forms the base before being topped with sweet red beans, fresh fruit, condensed milk, matcha, chocolate or *injeolmi* (soft rice cakes dusted with roasted soyabean powder). Once a seasonal indulgence, it is now enjoyed year round, with cafés continually reinventing this classic.

Where to try it: Sulbing (multiple branches across Myeongdong)



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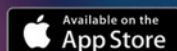
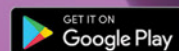
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🔥 DAKGALBI

Born in Chuncheon during the 1960s as an affordable alternative to pricier grilled meats, *dakgalbi* has become a favourite across South Korea. Bite-sized morsels of chicken are stir-fried on a large iron griddle with cabbage, sweet potatoes, onions, perilla leaves, and chewy rice cakes—all coated in a fiery *gochujang*-based sauce. The meal traditionally ends with rice being tossed into the remaining sauce, creating a delicious finale that no table willingly skips.

Where to try it: Yoogane Myeongdong, 19, Myeongdong 8ga-gil, Jung-gu

🔥 SUNDUBU-JJIGAE

Served bubbling hot in a black earthenware pot, this is one of Korea's most comforting dishes. Its defining ingredient is *sundubu*, an exceptionally soft, unpressed tofu that lends the stew its delicate texture. Simmered with *gochugaru*, garlic, and vegetables, it may also include seafood, egg or mushrooms depending on the region or season. A bowl of steamed rice is always served alongside, offering the perfect foil to the stew's warming spices.

Where to try it: Gamchon Sundubu, 19 Jong-ro, 5F, Jongno-gu



🔥 GANJANG GEJANG

Nicknamed 'the rice thief', this dish is famed for making diners reach for one bowl of rice after another. Fresh blue swimmer crabs are marinated in a deeply-savoury soya sauce infused with garlic, ginger, and aromatics, allowing the flesh to become silky while retaining its sweetness. The rich crab roe is considered the highlight and is often mixed directly into the warm rice.

Where to try it: Jinmi Sikdang, 186 Mapo-daero, Mapo-gu



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FINDERS KEEPERS

Australia's Dirty Janes Bowral is a marketplace filled with quirky objects, vintage finds, and handmade goods

words by **Kiran Mehta**



Bowral is just a 90-minute drive from Sydney, but once you reach, it seems like a different world. The town has a nostalgic charm and you can feel the drop in pace.

While the Bradman Museum and a local winery (to sample award-winning wines) are certainly means to start exploring the town, of all the unique experiences, the one that you should absolutely not miss is Dirty Janes Bowral.

How it got its name

This antique market with a refreshing vibe is home to over 90 sellers showcasing their wares. The open-plan, sprawling space allows conversations to flow freely between visitors and sellers. In one such interaction, I find out that the quirky name is inspired by an Irish girl, Jane Dumphrey, who was transported to Australia for theft and then worked at a general store in Gundagai. The unique moniker comes



from when Jane arrived covered in dust and mud, prompting her boss to call her 'Dirty Jane'.

Beyond the ordinary

It is this story that inspired Jane Crowley and her father, Athol Salter, to name their venture Dirty Janes in Bowral (there are two other locations now).

As I walk through the bazaar, I am struck by the

sheer variety. There are vinyl records older than I am—a blue embroidered coat that adorns a mannequin with an orange hat, gramophones, retro cameras, metal napkin holders, hand-painted postcards, and much more. From AU\$25 to thousands of dollars, you will find something interesting. It makes for good keepsakes. And memories!



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↑ MODERN ICONS

Cartier has recently introduced six new editions of its iconic LOVE bracelet, featuring vivid gemstone combinations and diamond accents that reinterpret the celebrated design with contemporary flair.

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↑ FIREBACK AND BARBACK OPEN IN HYDERABAD

Why: For the bold flavours of Thai cuisine and a cocktail bar inspired by Bangkok's Chinatown.

Where: The Loft, HITEC City **Recommendation:** Pumpkin and sweet potato, Pineapple som tam, Chilli oil dumplings



↑ A TIMELESS STATEMENT

Le Creuset India has unveiled *Bleu Riviera*, a Mediterranean-inspired range across its cookware and tableware collections, blending iconic craftsmanship with coastal elegance and enduring sophistication.



← COURT SIDE COMFORT

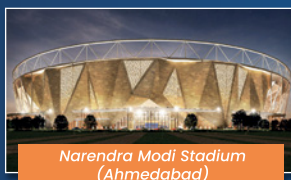
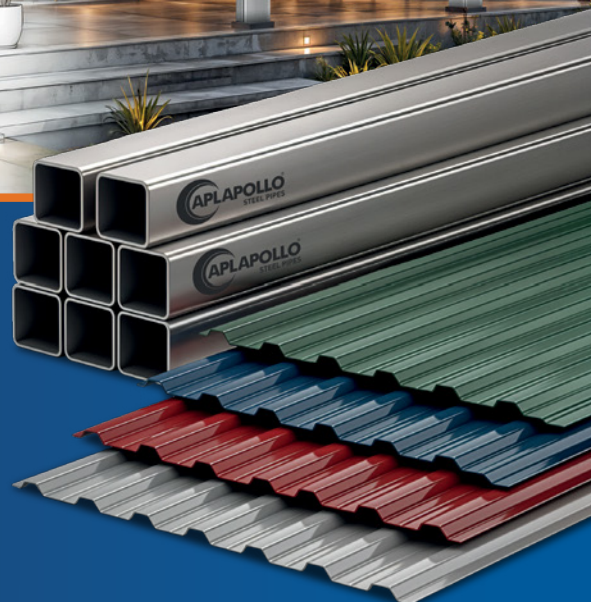
Onitsuka Tiger has launched the *Rotemit*, a court sneaker inspired by 1980s volleyball shoes, blending archival design, premium materials, modern cushioning, and everyday street-ready versatility.



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📌 FRESH OFF THE COAST

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📷 PRINTS CHARMING

FUJIFILM India has launched instax mini 13, featuring instant printing, new two- and 10-second self-timers, matching accessories, and a playful, rounded design in Dreamy Purple, Candy Pink, and Frost Blue for effortless, on-the-go photography.



↔️ FOR ALL SEASONS

Anamika Khanna's ready-to-wear label has launched *AKOK Resort* at Selfridges London, featuring lightweight cottons, linens, and silks in a sun-faded palette of chalk, sand, and olive.

📌 DUMBO'S NEW CHAPTER IN DELHI

Why: For classic Florentine-style sandwiches alongside a beverage programme of coffee and matcha. **Where:** D Block, New Friends Colony **Recommendations:** Sandwiches like Halloumi & Chilli Crisp Lola, Burrata & 'Nduja Viola, and matcha creations like Lavender Ube and Collagen Seafoam



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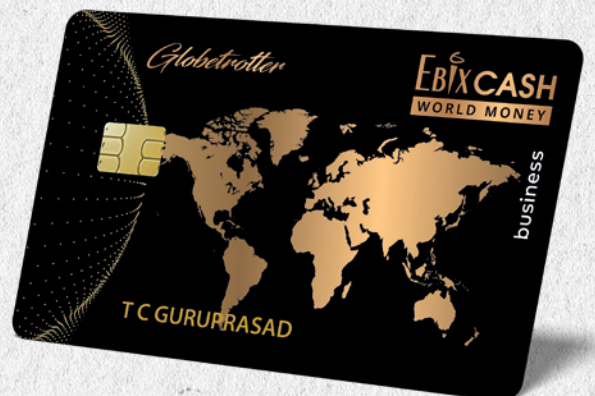
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↑ → ALL IN THE DETAILS

VIYA by Vikram Goyal brings India's artistic traditions into contemporary living with its *Festive Edit*—a handcrafted curation of home décor, tableware, and gifting. From sculptural candle stands and diyas to statement serveware—the pieces blend storytelling with timeless design.



↓ LOVE ME TENDER

L'Occitane's reimagined *Amande Sublime* collection brings Provence's slow-beauty philosophy to modern body care, combining Mediterranean almond oil and face-grade actives for smoother, softer skin and an indulgent almond scent.



↓ TIME AFTER TIME

Baume & Mercier's Hampton XS reimagines its Art Deco icon in a mini 28 x 17.75mm case, pairing sculpted geometry with a distinctive diamond-shaped bracelet for contemporary elegance and everyday sophistication.



↑ KAMARI OPENS IN GOA

Why: For lovely world cuisine paired with progressive cocktails, contemporary design, and views of the Arabian Sea.

Where: Anjuna, North Goa

Recommendations: Millet Tabouleh, Avocado Edamame Toast, Zucchini Burrata Curry, Garlic Butter Lamb Chops, John Dory Fish



All images courtesy respective brands

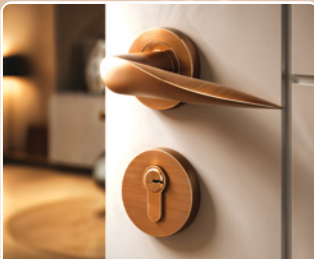
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THE SEARCH WITHIN

Author **Chris Barkley** on fiction, hidden meanings, and the questions that endure

Did the atmosphere of unease and memory in your book *The Man on the Endless Stair* emerge naturally or was it intentional?

That is a great question. Unease and memory are ideas that have been percolating in my mind for a long time. What is memory and where does it exist? Is it stored in the brain or is it something outside us? The book also plays with questions of mind—where it exists and how time interacts with it. Perhaps time is something the mind generates, which may sound radical in the West but feels more intuitively understood here. Unease is also fun to work with as a writer. Making readers uneasy is important because it pushes them to ask questions and engage more deeply.

What unseen part of writing affects you most?

Listening. For me, writing depends on developing attention and learning to really listen. It is not obvious in the writing itself, but understanding what people mean beneath their words matters. We often say one thing and mean another. Observing this helps in writing characters. It is fascinating

because no two people function in the same way.

Has teaching writing changed the way you write?

Yes. Teaching forces you to become conscious of what was once instinctive. Explaining craft helped me recognise what I was doing unconsciously and made me more aware of my process. At the same time, teaching can make you overly focused on craft and lose sight of emotion. So, balance matters.

What recurring question resurfaces in your work?

I often return to questions like: What is my place in the world? Why am I here? What is the nature of reality and time? These are grand ideas, and a murder mystery is a wonderful way to explore them. While the protagonist searches for a murderer, they are also searching within themselves.

How do you find your own voice in a literary city like Edinburgh?

By respecting the writers and traditions that came before while still doing your own thing.

—As told to **Shrabasti A Mallik**

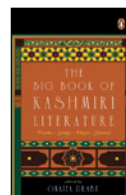
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A RAINBOW OF SENSATIONAL OFFERINGS AT PURPLE MARTINI

Nestled in Goa's tropical landscape, Purple Martini serves up delicious cuisine and cocktails amid chilled-out afternoons, gorgeous sundowners, and star-studded nights



SAARTHAK GUPTA
CEO/Founder, Purple Martini

A beacon of culinary excellence, Purple Martini is a much-loved destination among locals, tourists, and celebrities. Founded by Saarthak Gupta, the restaurant began as a passion project and has since ascended to the pinnacle of Goa's dining scene. Purple Martini is not merely a dining experience, it is a symphony of flavours, an embodiment of luxury, and a testament to Saarthak's unwavering commitment to gastronomic innovation. With its stunning sunset views, eclectic menu, impeccable service, and an ambience that fuses sophistication with a relaxed Mykonos-style vibe, Purple Martini, a gem along the Anjuna coast, remains a place where unforgettable memories are crafted. Whether you're seeking culinary delight or a brush with stardom, this lively restobar offers an experience that transcends expectations, making it an enduring icon of Goa's culinary landscape.

DELICIOUS BLISS

Be transported into a world of relaxation and indulgence as soon as you walk in. The bar features a wide selection of signature cocktails, including the famous Purple Martini, Stylish Turkey, Red Decor, and the Floral Whiskey Sour. The menu also boasts an impressive selection of wines, beers, and spirits from across the globe.

But it's not just the drinks that make



Purple Martini a must-visit spot in Goa. The kitchen also offers a delectable cuisine selection that blends Indian and international flavours. From appetisers like Peri-Peri Chicken Skewers and Recheado Prawns to entrées like Banana Wrapped Snapper with fiery chillies and tamarind, the menu has something that tantalises every taste-bud.

Purple Martini's crown jewel, however, is its breathtaking sunset views. With its beachfront location, guests can enjoy a front-row seat to the spectacular hues of orange, pink, and purple that light up the sky during sunset—the perfect backdrop for a romantic dinner, a lively get-together with friends, or a relaxing evening alone. No wonder it's the top restobar in Goa.

ABOUT THE FOUNDER

Saarthak Gupta, an alumnus of The Doon School and the University of Leeds, has been recognised as a leading entrepreneur in the hospitality industry. With his passion for hospitality, astute leadership, marketing prowess, and an eye for detail, he has transformed Purple Martini into one of



the most popular restobars in Goa. His commitment to excellence has been recognised by various institutions, and he has received several prestigious awards for his contributions to the hospitality industry, as well as being named amongst the Times 50 Most Influential Personalities.

Purple Martini has won several accolades, including the Times Nightlife Award for the Best Sundowner Bar and The Most Popular Restaurant four years in a row. The restaurant has also been featured in various publications, including *Conde Nast Traveller*, *Vogue India*, and *The Economic Times*. And we expect many more under Saarthak's leadership in the coming years!

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Steeped in Stillness

Living on a Sri Lankan tea estate wrapped in history and solitude is an experience in quiet luxury

words by
Nikhil P Merchant

Haputale is perched high on a mountain ridge, with endless tea estates, offering a peaceful escape in the midst of nature

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Lipton Seat is a vantage point for gorgeous views and also has a seated statue of Sir Thomas Lipton; The award-winning high tea at the estate.

The drive out of Colombo runs smooth for most of its length, the Southern Expressway carrying you clear of the city before the road narrows into the hills; the final hour a slow climb toward Haputale's heights, about 4,695ft above sea level. By the time the gates appeared, the hills I had been climbing toward wrapped themselves in squally winds, with a change in air pressure. Walking up the path to a stone edifice painted white, a slatted green roof overhead, I come to Thotalagala, a 19th century planter's bungalow which opened as a boutique property in 2015.

The next morning, my alarm is birdsong, and the clatter of a filigreed porcelain cup against its saucer, filled with black tea fresh from the estates a couple of miles away—lilting music as I peer at the Haputale hills. Mist rolls through, sun and cloud trading the sky every half hour. Later in the day, I opt for the tea plantation visit—a 45-minute tuk-tuk ride up to Lipton's

Seat, the meandering road lined with tea bushes and towering turpentine trees. It is where the tea estate idea started. In the late 1880s, when coffee rust wiped out the tea crop, Sir Thomas Lipton bought the land, folded it into the neighbouring Dambatenne estate, and by 1910 had a factory running that still processes the region's sought-after Broken Orange Pekoe.

Entirely functional, the factory was partly automated in 2010. Even now, fresh-plucked tea leaves are dried for 14 hours by hand-turned trough, fermented for three hours, and re-dried at high heat into the black tea that gets

graded down to Broken Orange Pekoe and bottom dust. The building still smells of both fresh leaf and dried tea before you have climbed the first flight of stairs.

Early next day, I take the 4km self-guided trek, a loop through sloping tea estates, flora, and fauna. Ask, and any of the staff will point you to the best vistas or help you set off on Pekoe Trail hikes—Sri Lanka's 300km, multi-stage hiking route through the central highlands. This is a popular trail specially visited by casual day-hikers to those chasing all 22 stages over several weeks. Among them, four trails—11 through 14—thread directly through Haputale and its estate roads, ridgelines, and villages, which is reason enough to lace up even if you have no intention of finishing the whole trail.

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Haputale is a sleepy town, its main street holding a local bakery, a few textile shops, and St. Andrew's Church, a historic chapel with a graveyard full of tea planters who never left, Reverend Walter Senior among them. The village nearby is alive: music floating by some evenings. There is no gym, and none is missed; the better exercise is walking into town, past churches, perhaps with a naturalist for bird watching.

I come back to a quick lunch of Kalu Uru-Mas (Sri Lankan black pork curry), which I learn at a cooking class in the front yard. After a siesta, I spend the late afternoon wandering around the house. The property's older bones show in the original building: what is now the library was once one of two living rooms, and the cigar lounge beside it is panelled in the same 150-year-old Burma teak, with a fireplace for cold nights. The seven rooms, including the Sir Thomas Lipton Suite, where I am staying, have been redesigned with a collector's eye and every suite is unique, named after a man from the estate's history—Major Rogers, the elephant hunter; Reverend Walter Senior, and John Duncan, who built parts of the railway still running the Nine Arches route nearby.

LEFT AND RIGHT

The 19th century bungalow is surrounded by verdant greens; You can sample seven single-estate teas at the property.

The prime takeaway, though, is what you do with your own company. Coming from a city that grows louder and more mind-numbing by the year, the silence here felt disorienting at first, almost a vacuum. But sit with it long enough and it resounds with a kind of plenitude: the rustle of the trees and chattering monkeys, and even the lone midnight spotting of a shooting star. There is a physical settling that comes with it too—a cortisol drop you feel in real time and your parasympathetic system resetting. Self-imposed peace is a rare sensation. I found myself carrying my teacup outdoors simply to be near it, unwilling to let something this pleasing to the eye stay confined to a room.

There is no shortage of things to do here. But the real luxury is what happens when you stop doing them—the rare opportunity to sit still, entirely undistracted yet shrouded in tranquillity. It is a quality getaways rarely manage: being fully in nature while still, unmistakably, in the lap of quiet luxury.

STAY AT THESE TEA ESTATES IN INDIA

- **Glenburn Tea Estate:** Set on a working tea estate in the Himalayan foothills near Darjeeling, West Bengal, the roster of activities for visitors includes a tea experience, hiking, and fishing.
- **Wild Mahseer:** Tucked in the Brahmaputra valley in the Eastern Himalayas, near Tezpur, Assam, this 22-acre property bills itself as a bio-diverse 'Ark' and an elusive natural and cultural paradise. Guests can go hiking, cycling, and birding, or just settle down in the in-house library.
- **Talayar Valley Bungalow:** Operated by the Woodbriar Group, this bungalow in Munnar, Kerala, is surrounded by tea gardens and offers many spaces for quiet contemplation, including hammocks and a flower garden.



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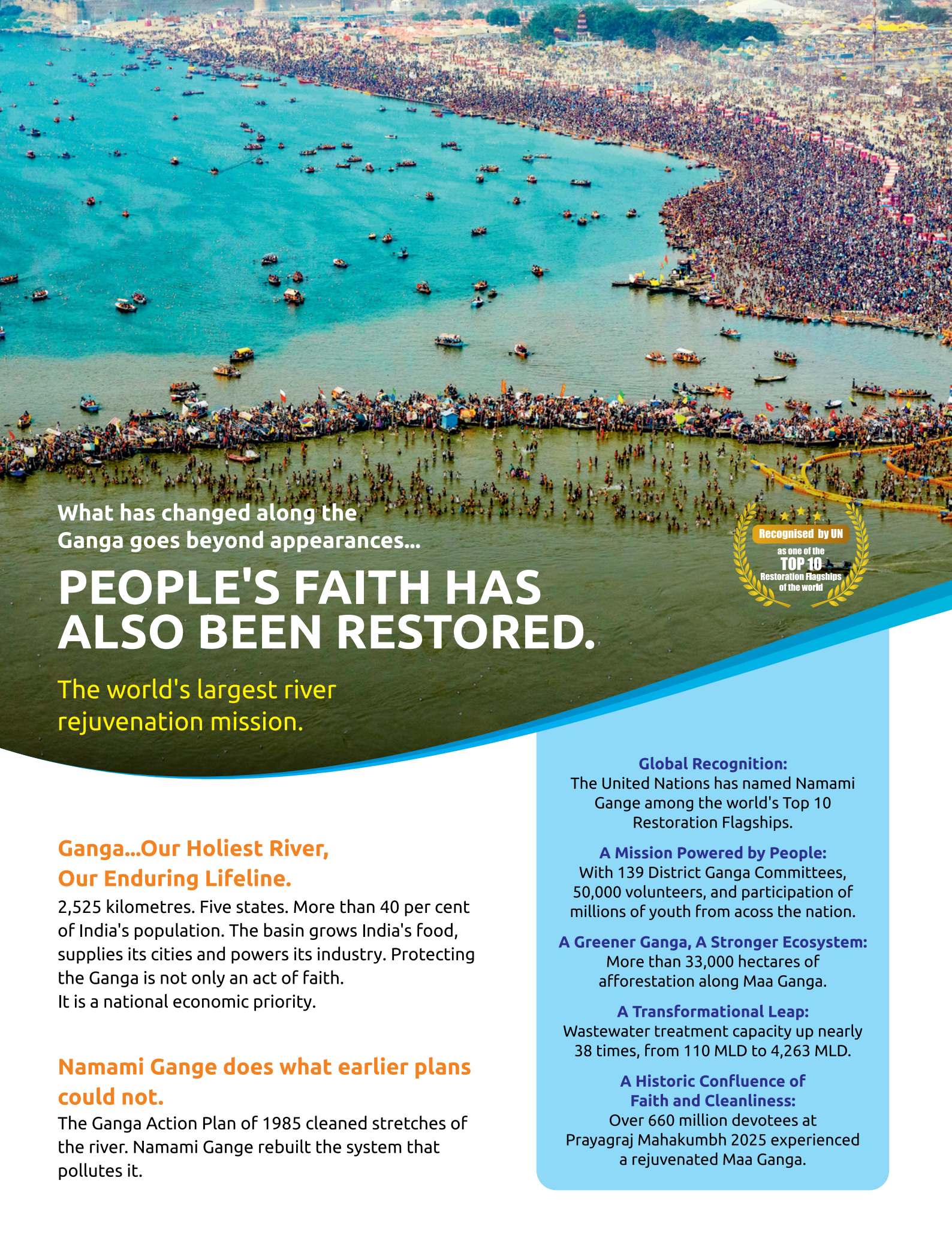
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- **THE INDIAN SKIMMER.** 1,150 counted in the Chambal in 2026 — a record, and triple the 2003 count. Over 700 chicks fledged from sandbars guarded by trained villagers.



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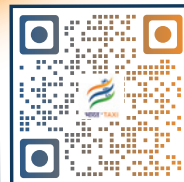
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WHY I LOVE Udaipur



Olympian skeet shooter **Maheshwari Chauhan** gives us
an insider's view of her home city

*Udaipur is defined
by its lakes*



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MY RECOMMENDATIONS

I would suggest exploring Ranakpur or Kumbhalgarh, both easy day trips that showcase another side of Rajasthan's history and landscape. I would also encourage people to spend time with the city's artists. Watching miniature painters or learning about *pichwai* art gives you a much deeper appreciation of the incredible craftsmanship of the state.

The Kumbhalgarh Fort is a UNESCO World Heritage Site

I had visited Udaipur often as a child, and it is my favourite city in Rajasthan. I am always captivated by the lakes, the winding streets of the old city, and the feeling of crossing the water by boat. It feels peaceful yet full of life. What continues to amaze me is how seamlessly the city coexists with the environment. It is rare to find a place where lakes, hills, and heritage are so beautifully intertwined. Living so connected to nature is something I value deeply, and it is one of the reasons this city feels so restorative.

Over the years, I have watched the city evolve. Tourism has flourished, which has brought wonderful opportunities, but I also hope we continue to protect what makes Udaipur special. Preserving the lakes, the surrounding hills and green spaces, improving waste management, and safeguarding the city's heritage are

all incredibly important. I hope every visitor leaves Udaipur a little better than they found it because it deserves to be cherished for generations to come.

Iconic attractions

No matter how long I have lived here, I never tire of the lakes, the palaces, and the old havelis. They are quintessentially Udaipur and somehow feel different every single time you visit.

One of my favourite experiences is a sunset boat ride on Lake Pichola. Watching the light change over the City Palace and Jagmandir Palace is incredibly peaceful and reminds me why I love this city so much. I also love how many heritage homes have been thoughtfully restored into beautiful hotels, cafés, and design spaces. It is wonderful to see centuries-old

architecture finding a new purpose.

Whenever I want to escape the bustle, I head towards the quieter lakes and the hills. The area around Madar Lake is particularly beautiful, with peaceful walking trails. Hiking in the Aravallis for panoramic views of Udaipur is another favourite way to spend an evening. Those hidden lakes scattered around the city are some of its greatest treasures.

Browse and buy

Shopping in Udaipur is always about discovering craftsmanship. When it comes to jewellery, I love visiting Gem Arts Emporium for its beautiful, traditional pieces. For clothing, one of my favourite city-inspired brands



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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT
A pichwai painting; Amet Haveli; The author;
A stunning piece from Gem Arts Emporium.

is Oodeypore, and what makes it especially meaningful is that it is a women-led brand working with skilled artisans from the nearby village of Bhujra. I also love browsing for miniature paintings. The level of craftsmanship is extraordinary. Finally, for *pichwai* art, Vipul Shah's collection is exceptional and showcases one of the state's most celebrated traditions.

Beyond the city

The Eklingji temple is one of the most peaceful places near Udaipur. It has retained its old-world charm, and I especially love the jasmine tree in the temple courtyard. When it is in bloom, the fragrance fills the entire space and creates an incredible sense of calm.

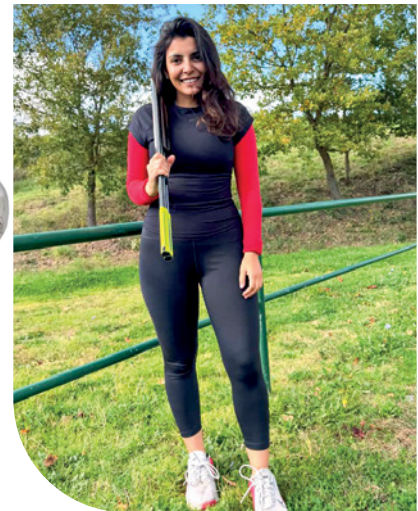
For relaxed afternoons with friends, the Raaj Bagh restaurant is one of my favourite spots. Sitting by Fateh Sagar Lake over a leisurely brunch is also one of the simplest ways to experience the city.

As an athlete, I spend much of the year travelling. Coming back to Udaipur always feels like pressing the reset button.



WORTH A BITE

One of my favourite meals is at Amet Haveli. And I also enjoy the food at Royal Repast, the restaurant inside Bedla House. For local fare, I happily make the drive to the Eklingji temple complex for fresh *mirchi vadas*. They are a tradition for me whenever I visit the temple.



GETTING THERE

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REWIND AND PLAY

Concerted efforts have ensured that ancient Indian traditional board games are getting a fresh lease of life

words by **Shrabasti Anindita Mallik**

Ask a millennial to name Indian board games and they will respond with ludo, snakes and ladders, and chess. Ask a boomer, and they might add bagatelle. Reality is, ancient board games go beyond these popular ones. We had *chakram* (a two- to four-player game played with cowries), *baagh bakri* (the traditional Indian predator-prey strategy game), and *pretwa* (a classic jump-capture game), among many others.

With rapid globalisation and easy access to Western toys and games, India's traditional ones took a back seat. But Khol Khel is bringing these nostalgic, deep-rooted games into the limelight. And in doing so, also empowering *karigars* (craftsmen) to uphold the finest of Indian traditions on the international stage.

Along with a focus on revival, Khol Khel also reimagines ancient Indian board games as décor pieces, like this wood-carved chess set

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"It all started with four little girls—my daughters and my nieces. When they were growing up, it was difficult to find traditional games that not only ensured fun but also encouraged cognitive learning and strategy building skills," explains Aman Gopal Sureka, Founder and CEO, Khol Khel, who is working with artisans to revive the practices of play, reimagine them for our times, and bring them back into collective life. So while you can choose from pocket-sized versions of almost-forgotten ancient strategy board games like *navakankari*, *charal* or *kattam kattu*, there are also gorgeous chess sets that are, in equal parts, meant to be played, gifted as souvenirs or used as home décor pieces.

From a silver *meenakari* chess set (Jaipur, Rajasthan) and a miniature ebony carving of *chaturanga* (Murshidabad, West Bengal) to a blown glass chessboard (Firozabad, Uttar Pradesh), and more—each piece, displayed in their retail store at The Kunj (a handicraft hub inaugurated by the Ministry of Textiles in Delhi's Vasant Kunj), is a testament to the prowess of Indian craftsmen.

"Although Khol Khel was founded in 2021, what you see today is the result of 15 years of R & D. We had countless trials and errors, where it took an artisan several years and numerous attempts to bring an unmatched level of intricacy," Sureka points out. And the minutest details are visible—even down to the folds of a caparison on an elephant carved in mahogany wood for a chessboard. "Miniature carvings are best done on sandalwood but because it is not available in Murshidabad, where my artisan is from, it is done on locally-sourced mahogany wood; and it is a difficult material to work with. But we still did it because Murshidabad was once a flourishing centre of ivory carving, so carving is a skill that is passed down generations," he adds.

These games, Sureka believes, would not only bring generations together but will also enhance strategic thinking, mathematical skills, and spatial awareness while teaching resilience, patience, and resource management.

Select games can be purchased from their website, kholkhel.com

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

A craftsman sculpts a 2.25" miniature chess piece on mahogany wood in Murshidabad; Rajju Sarpa (ancient snakes and ladders); Four-inch dokra pieces from a traditional chaturanga set.

KHOL KHEL MILESTONES

- The Qboid, their innovative play compendium, won the Toychathon 2021 in the 'Social Values' category.
- Curated and commissioned six installations on Indian play traditions for Prerna, the model school programme under the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education.
- Curated and displayed the private collection as the first "museum of Chaturanga" at the Red Fort as part of the Red Fort Biennale, inaugurated by the Prime Minister in 2023.
- Conducted workshops on play with the support of institutions like the Indian Knowledge Systems, IGNC, CEPT, IIT, and Ministry of Education.
- Partnered with different government bodies to curate installations representing the play traditions of India.

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CREATING HOMES THAT ENDURE

Harkaran Boparai reimagines luxury through thoughtful architecture that nurtures comfort, balance and everyday well-being



Luxury has always evolved with the way we live. Today, it is no longer defined by rarity alone, but by the feeling a home leaves behind. A beautifully-crafted space must do more than impress. It should bring comfort, restore balance, and create a setting where everyday life feels calmer and more meaningful. At Harkaran Boparai Studio (HBS), this belief shapes every project, where luxury is guided by thoughtful design and wellness grows naturally from the spaces people inhabit.

For founder Harkaran Boparai, true luxury is deeply personal. It begins with understanding how people live, move and unwind within their homes. Every project is designed around these rhythms, creating spaces that support both daily routines and

moments of pause. The result is homes that feel warm, welcoming, and effortless to live in.

Nature plays a quiet yet constant role throughout this experience. Daylight is invited deep into the home through generous openings, while gardens, courtyards and carefully-framed outdoor views become an extension of the interiors. Fresh air, greenery, and changing natural light shape the mood of every space, creating homes that feel connected to their surroundings rather than separated from them.

The journey through the home is equally intentional. Open layouts, gentle transitions, and thoughtfully-connected spaces encourage movement without haste. Every room flows naturally into the next, creating

a sense of ease that allows the home to breathe. Instead of being overwhelmed with visual excess, the architecture offers clarity, comfort, and a lasting sense of calm.

Material choices further strengthen this relationship with wellbeing. Natural stone, warm timber, handcrafted finishes, and tactile fabrics bring texture and authenticity while ageing gracefully over time. These materials appeal not only to the eye but also to the senses, making each space feel grounded, inviting, and deeply comfortable. Every detail is carefully considered, allowing craftsmanship to enhance everyday living without drawing unnecessary attention to itself.

This philosophy extends beyond private residences into HBS's work on temples and gurudwaras, where light, openness, natural

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT:

Thoughtful lighting shapes the mood, adding warmth, depth, and timeless elegance; Luxury finds its truest expression in spaces designed for pause, reflection, and comfort; Harkaran Boparai.

FACING PAGE

Rich materials and considered design transform gathering spaces into one of comfort and connection



materials, and thoughtful proportions create spaces that encourage reflection, peace, and togetherness. These projects reinforce the studio's belief that architecture has the power to shape how people feel long after they enter a space.

For HBS, wellness is not achieved by adding dedicated lifestyle features. It begins with thoughtful architecture that works in harmony with nature and the people who inhabit it. When sunlight fills a room, fresh air flows freely, natural materials surround everyday life and every space is designed with care, luxury becomes more than something we see. It becomes something we experience. In homes like these, design does not simply create beautiful interiors. It quietly supports healthier, happier, and more fulfilling lives.





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On the move **IN VANCOUVER**

Get out and about to discover the city's underrated scenic spots and give yourself a workout amid stunning vistas

words by
Vaishali Kolpe Sabherwal

Stanley Park, one of the city's largest, boasts a 400-hectare West Coast rainforest and offers stunning waterfront views

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After a whirlwind three-day celebration of my daughter's graduation ceremony at the University of British Columbia (UBC), our bodies begged for a reset from the jubilant festivities. We craved some downtime with our family while making memories from what Vancouver has to offer—lush, natural environs to meander through with spring in full bloom, and also enjoy the cuisine of this beautiful, ethnically diverse city.

Vancouver seemingly hides a network of pocket-sized parks, endless shoreline walks with fragrant lavender bushes skirting both sides of the path, and forest trails where mountains slide into the open arms of the ocean.

We opted for lesser-known but equally impressive locales where we soaked in British Columbia's fresh air, beautiful sunshine, stunning landscapes, and great food.

A walk in the park

Located literally on the edge of the UBC campus, the Pacific Spirit Regional Park is densely forested with giant Douglas fir and cedar trees with trunks resembling pillars of a cathedral. The smell of musky cedar, moist earth, and a hint of sea salt seemed therapeutic, and we instantly felt recharged while navigating this immersive yet perfectly accessible trail. We also caught fleeting views of the silvery coastline cradling the park. Choose from the more relaxed Admiralty or Lily of the Valley

trails. Post exploring, grab freshly-brewed coffee and muffins at Bean Around the World Coffee House nearby.

A secret garden

Within the sprawling grounds of Queen Elizabeth Park, lie the Quarry Garden and the domed Bloedel Conservatory. While the former enchants with its streams and waterfalls, the latter attracts with its koi ponds, tropical birds, and over 500 exotic plants.

We had a hearty brunch at Seasons in the Park. This highly-recommended fine-dining restaurant serves sweeping views of the city skyline, North Shore Mountains, and the Pacific Ocean, along with the best Smoked Salmon Benedict and Sunburnt Lemon Pie.

LEFT AND RIGHT

During low tide, a strip of land emerges, exposing the way to Whyte Islet at Whytecliff Park; The postcard-worthy Entrance Island is one of the few such that one can spot during the ferry ride from Vancouver to Victoria via the Strait of Georgia.

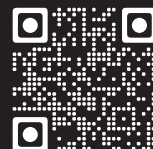
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Holiday Inn Vancouver-Centre (Broadway)

Centrally located, this family-friendly chain hotel offers excellent connectivity across the city.

Granville Island Hotel

Steps away from the Granville Island Public Market, this boutique stay offers scenic views of False Creek and the city skyline.

A little magic on the coast

A designated Saltwater Marine Protected Area, Whytecliff Park is set against the backdrop of a riotous forest, and offers stunning vistas of tranquil coastline lacing crystal blue waters. At low tide, a strip of land almost magically emerges, exposing the way to Whyte Islet. We stuck around here much longer than anticipated, as we marvelled at the soft, cottony clouds clinging to the mountaintops in the distance. We were also charmed by the foamy waves touching the shore rhythmically, even as boats glided past and seabirds chirped above. Pro tip: Plan ahead and check the tide timings.

A life-altering sunset

Imagine stepping into the prettiest postcard in a souvenir store. That is exactly how it feels when you walk through Horseshoe Bay, a tiny harbour village surrounded by a forest mirrored onto impossibly clear waters, with ferries bobbing along every once

in a while. It was here that we witnessed the most mesmerising sunset—molten gold that changed several hues before becoming one with the horizon.

My daughter then walked us to the quieter edges of the bay, where we spotted playful seals sunning themselves alongside colourful starfish.

A coastal getaway

If you have time for a day trip, take the ferry to Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. We sailed through the Strait of Georgia past pretty islands that resembled lucid brush strokes on a painting. This

enchanting city instantly felt like a warm hug with its intimate coastal charm. For brunch, we savoured perfectly-poached eggs Benedict and French toast served with fresh whipped cream and homemade berry compote at Blue Fox Cafe. We strolled along the pretty flower-filled harbour front lined with cute boutiques, bakeries, and cafés.

By the end of our trip, not only had we just celebrated a milestone but were returning with several mini-victories—soulful treks, shared laughter on a ferry deck, introspective sunsets, gourmet delights, and so much more.

Starfish (left) and harbour seals (right) are common sights at both Whytecliff Park and Horseshoe Bay

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* Upcoming
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5 DAYS TO Better Skin

Cosmetic dermatologist **Dr. Jaishree Sharad** underlines the importance diet plays in maintaining good skin and tells you which foods work best

Diet is a major 'inside-out' driver of skin health. It will not replace sunscreen or a good routine, but it strongly influences oil production, inflammation, collagen quality, pigmentation, and how fast your skin ages.

If skincare and procedures equal external repair and protection, then

diet and lifestyle equal internal fuel, inflammation control, and building blocks for collagen and barrier function. Patients who clean up their diet see fewer breakouts, less dullness, and better response to treatments.

Focus on four pillars:

- Choose whole grains (millets, brown rice, whole wheat rotis), legumes, and plenty of vegetables. Pair carbs with protein and fibre to blunt sugar spikes.

- Choose anti-inflammatory, antioxidant-rich foods like bright vegetables and fruits (greens, berries, citrus, papaya, pomegranate, tomatoes). Opt for nuts, seeds, olive oil, fatty fish (if non-vegetarian) for omega-3s.
- Include adequate protein for collagen and repair. Make sure you have dals, *chana*, *rajma*, paneer, curd, eggs, fish, chicken, tofu or sprouts in main meals.
- Ensure regular water intake, plus fermented foods (curd, buttermilk, idli/dosa, *kanji*) for the gut-skin axis.

The ideal diet for you

Oily or combination skin

Avoid high-glycaemic load foods like sugary drinks, juices, sweets, white bread, and *maida*-based fare (pizza, pasta, biscuits, pastries, fried potatoes). These spike insulin, increase sebum and inflammation, and lead to the development of more acne.

Also, it is best to stay away from excess dairy, especially skim milk and whey protein. This is linked to more breakouts via IGF-1 and cause adverse hormonal effects on oil glands due to the hormones present in milk (primarily due to antibiotics and hormones fed to cows and buffaloes). Restrict fried and fast food because trans fats and inflammatory oils worsen redness and acne.

Finally, irregular meals and sugar cravings cause blood



SUN DROP OF GREEN ENERGY

REFLECTIONS OF TOMORROW

9.2 GW

RENEWABLE ENERGY
TOTAL PORTFOLIO



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SOLAR



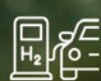
WIND



HYBRID



BESS



GREEN
HYDROGEN



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sugar swings that aggravate oiliness and breakouts.

I would also like to caution against food options that appear to be 'healthy' but are, in reality, high-sugar choices. These include flavoured yoghurt, granola bars, fruit juices, and smoothies with added sugar. Similarly, an overload of refined carbs in one meal (large portions of white rice, white roti, and noodles) coupled with little protein or fibre lead to big glucose spikes and, correspondingly, T-zone breakouts. Skipping meals and then overeating late at night also disrupts hormones and sleep, both of which are critical for skin repair.

Dry or sensitive skin

Avoid going on very low-fat or no-oil diets. Since the skin barrier needs essential fatty acids, trying to eliminate them causes skin to get drier, flakier, and more reactive. Another mistake is not eating enough protein, because collagen and repair processes need an adequate supply. Crash dieting also shows up as dull, dry skin. Consumption of excess caffeine and alcohol without enough water and electrolytes also dehydrates skin and worsens sensitivity and redness. Finally, super spicy and salty, ultra-processed foods can cause flare-ups, sensitivity, and rosacea-like redness in some people.

Ten useful foods for good skin

The key is dietary diversity and adequacy; no individual food can reverse photo ageing, acne or established dermal atrophy.

- **Fatty fish** (salmon or mackerel) provide necessary EPA/DHA and protein; although omega-3 should not be oversold as an acne treatment
- **Tomatoes** provide lycopene; tomato/lycopene interventions have shown modest photoprotective and photodamage-related effects
- **Guava, citrus fruits, and berries** provide vitamin C, and polyphenols; vitamin C is required for normal collagen synthesis
- **Leafy greens** provide folate, carotenoids, magnesium, and fibre
- **Carrots, pumpkin, and sweet potato** provide carotenoid precursors and fibre
- **Lentils, beans, and chickpeas** provide protein, fibre, zinc, iron, and a lower-glycaemic carbohydrate source
- **Nuts** provide vitamin E, minerals, protein, and unsaturated fats
- **Seeds** (flax, chia, pumpkin, and sesame) provide fibre, minerals, and unsaturated fatty acids
- **Eggs and tofu** provide complete or complementary protein needed for tissue maintenance
- **Avocado and extra-virgin olive oil** provide monounsaturated fat and aid fat-soluble nutrient absorption



TOP AND BOTTOM
Avoid high-glycaemic foods like pizza as they spike insulin and increase inflammation; Amlas are a source of vitamin C.

TRADITIONAL FOODS TO SUPPORT SKIN

From an Indian context, these are safe and time tested when used sensibly.

- **Amla:** Rich in vitamin C and antioxidants; great for collagen and pigmentation
- **Turmeric (in food):** Both anti-inflammatory and antioxidant; useful in curries, warm milk (if you tolerate dairy), or golden water
- **Neem and tulsi (as teas or in food):** Antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory; helpful for acne-prone individuals
- **Coconut (in moderation):** Lauric acid has antimicrobial properties; coconut water is hydrating and electrolyte-rich



WHY EMPATHY IS OUR STRONGEST BUSINESS STRATEGY

Today, business success is often measured by scale, speed, and profit, but at DavaIndia, we believe true growth begins with empathy.

EMPATHY FIRST

Healthcare is not just a service; it is a deeply personal experience. Every customer who walks into a pharmacy carries more than a prescription — they carry concerns and hopes. Recognising this reality has shaped our approach from day one. Empathy allows us to listen before we act, to understand before we advise, and to serve with intention rather than transaction.

For us, empathy translates into accessibility and affordability. By making quality medicines available at significantly lower prices, we aim to reduce the financial stress that often accompanies medical treatment. This is not merely a business decision — it is a commitment to ensuring that healthcare remains a right, not a privilege.

EMPATHY AS A STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE

Empathy also defines how we work

internally. A culture built on mutual respect, trust, and shared purpose empowers our teams to perform with sincerity and accountability. When employees feel valued and heard, they naturally extend the same care to customers. This creates a virtuous cycle where compassion strengthens performance and purpose fuels productivity.

In an era increasingly driven by automation and efficiency, empathy is sometimes viewed as intangible or secondary. We see it differently. Empathy builds trust, and trust builds long-term relationships. It turns customers into advocates and transactions into meaningful connections.

At DavaIndia, empathy is not a soft value — it is a strategic advantage. It guides our decisions, shapes our culture, and anchors our vision of becoming a truly neighborhood-trusted pharmacy brand. Because when businesses lead with empathy, they don't just grow — they make a difference.



"DavaIndia is a pioneering force in the healthcare industry, reshaping the landscape by making high-quality generic medicines affordable and accessible to all. Our vision is to create a healthier and more equitable future for everyone we serve."

Dr. Sujit Paul,
Group CEO,
Zota Healthcare Limited



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*T & C Apply

Five-day skin-supportive diet

This is a broad adult template, not a therapeutic prescription. Portions should be adjusted as per age, body size, activity, diabetes, renal disease, pregnancy, allergies, and regional dietary practices.

Day 1

Breakfast: Moong dal *cheela* with mint chutney, green tea

Mid morning: 1 guava

Lunch: 1–2 whole wheat/ millet rotis + mixed veg *sabzi* + dal + salad + curd

Evening: Coconut water or buttermilk + roasted *chana*

Dinner: Grilled fish/ tofu *bhurji* + sautéed vegetables + small portion brown rice/ millet

Day 2

Breakfast: Oats *upma* with peas, carrots, beans + 1 boiled egg or sprouts

Mid morning: 1 kiwi or a small bowl of berries

Lunch: Quinoa or brown rice pulao with lots of veggies + *rajma chhole* + cucumber tomato salad

Evening: Herbal tea + walnuts or roasted peanuts

Dinner: Vegetable + paneer/ tofu stir fry/ baked chicken with minimal oil + 1 roti or small millet portion

Day 3

Breakfast: Smoothie bowl: blended curd/ plant yoghurt + berries + chia/ flax seeds + a few nuts (no added sugar)

Mid morning: 1 *amla* (or *amla* juice, unsweetened)

Lunch: 2 *jowar/ bajra* rotis + veg or chicken or fish + *chana* dal + salad with lemon

Evening: Green tea + roasted *makhana*

Dinner: Lentil (dal) soup + grilled chicken/ fish or tofu + sautéed greens

Day 4

Breakfast: Vegetable *poha* with peanuts + 1 fruit (orange/ guava)

Mid morning: Coconut water + a few pumpkin seeds

Lunch: Brown rice + sambar with lots of veggies or chicken or fish + curd

Evening: Buttermilk with jeera + a small fruit

Dinner: Egg white *bhurji* or paneer *tikka* + mixed veg + 1 small roti

Day 5

Breakfast: Besan/ moong flour *cheela* stuffed with grated veggies + mint coriander chutney

Mid morning: Papaya or watermelon bowl

Lunch: 2 multigrain rotis + veg or chicken or fish + dal + salad

Evening: Green tea + a small handful of mixed nuts

Dinner: Vegetable *khichdi* (brown rice + moong dal) + cucumber *raita*

General rules across all days:

- No sugary drinks, packaged juices or energy drinks
- Stop maida, biscuits, cakes, pastries, and deep-fried snacks
- At least 2–3 servings of colourful vegetables and 1–2 servings of fruit daily
- Protein in every main meal

For texture, prioritise foods rich in vitamin C, vitamin E, and good fats (omega-3) to support collagen, elasticity, and barrier function.

All views expressed in the article are that of the author

YOUR AIR INDIA



The Air India cabin crew with the first made-for-Air India Boeing 787-9

FLEET

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p 104 

ROUTES

We present our latest global connectivity, offering you unparalleled access worldwide

p 105 

PARTNERS

Through our Codeshare and Interline partnerships, we try to bring the world closer

p 114 

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- If this does not work, try an alternative browser and type <https://byod.airindia.com>.
- Power your device off and on, then repeat the steps.

SCAN TO STREAM



Lights Out AT THE MUSEUM

A sleepover among dinosaur displays or aquatic species can be a memorable experience for kids

words by **Mignonne Dsouza**



One way to make an overseas vacation memorable is to plan a sleepover at a museum or aquarium. Many institutions across USA, Europe, and Asia offer such experiences, open to kids aged three years and above.



American Museum of Natural History New York, USA

This is the one that featured in the beloved *Night at the Museum* films, so there is an actual thrill about the sleepover here. The experience features guided flashlight tours of the museum's fossil halls (that house dinosaur exhibits), group games, scavenger hunts, karaoke, a bedtime story, and more, along with snacks and a light breakfast. amnh.org

SEA LIFE Sunshine Coast Aquarium Mooloolaba, Australia

The 'Sleep Under the Sea' experience

here invites visitors to sleep inside the Ocean Tunnel, where they can gaze at sharks and giant rays. There are guided tours and an exclusive presentation with resident seals, among several other highlights. visitsealife.com

California Academy of Sciences San Francisco, USA

The 'Penguins+Pajamas Sleepover' adventure includes an overnight stay in an exhibit area, access to the rainforest area till 8pm, private planetarium showings, late-night milk and cookies, and a breakfast snack, rounding off with next-day admission to the Academy. calacademy.org

Natural History Museum London, UK

'Dino Snores' gives kids the chance to explore the exhibits by torchlight, participate in an interactive activity with palaeontologists, and enjoy an educational show. Morning brings a chance to revisit galleries before the museum opens. nhm.ac.uk

Ocean Park Hong Kong

The 'Ocean Night Wonders' package gives families the opportunity to stay in tents and spend the night observing the marine creatures of the Grand Aquarium. oceanpark.com.hk

OUR WINGS

A look at the aircraft in Air India's fleet*

Airbus A319



03

Boeing 777-300ER



19

Airbus A320neo



86

Airbus A320ceo



04

**Boeing 787-9
Dreamliner**



10

Airbus A321ceo



13

**Boeing 787-8
Dreamliner**



26

Airbus A321neo



10

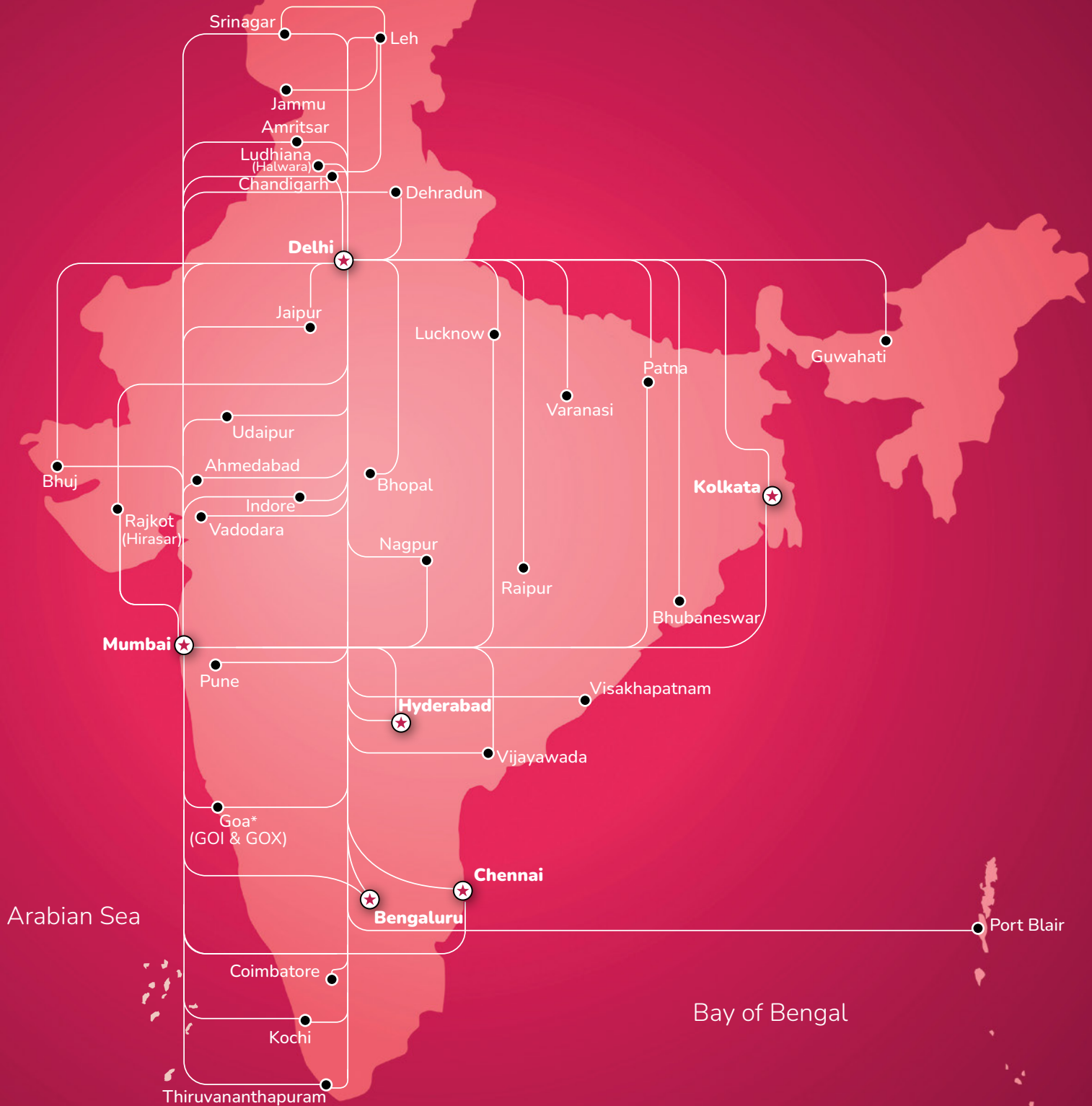
Airbus A350-900

06

**FLEET
STRENGTH
177**

*Total number as on 11th August 2026;
This fleet count is exclusive of Air India Express
(Air India Group's low-cost carrier)

DOMESTIC CONNECTIVITY



*Mumbai-Goa is operational via GOI; Delhi-Goa is operational via GOI (DEL-GOX is currently under temporary suspension)

Map not to scale. The depiction and use of routes and boundaries are for informative purposes only

This route map pertains only to destinations served by Air India

Route map as on 14th August 2026

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIVITY

Air India flies non-stop to 40 destinations across five continents from multiple Indian cities (pinned on the map of India)

Europe



Amsterdam (AMS)	←————→	DEL	
Copenhagen (CPH)	←————→	DEL	
Frankfurt (FRA)	←————→	DEL	BOM
Milan (MXP)	←————→	DEL	
Paris (CDG)	←————→	DEL	
Rome (FCO)	←————→	DEL	
Vienna (VIE)	←————→	DEL	
Zurich (ZRH)	←————→	DEL	

UK



Birmingham (BHX)	←.....→	DEL	ATQ	
<u>London</u>				
Gatwick (LGW)	←.....→	ATQ	AMD	
Heathrow (LHR)	←.....→	DEL	BOM	BLR

North America



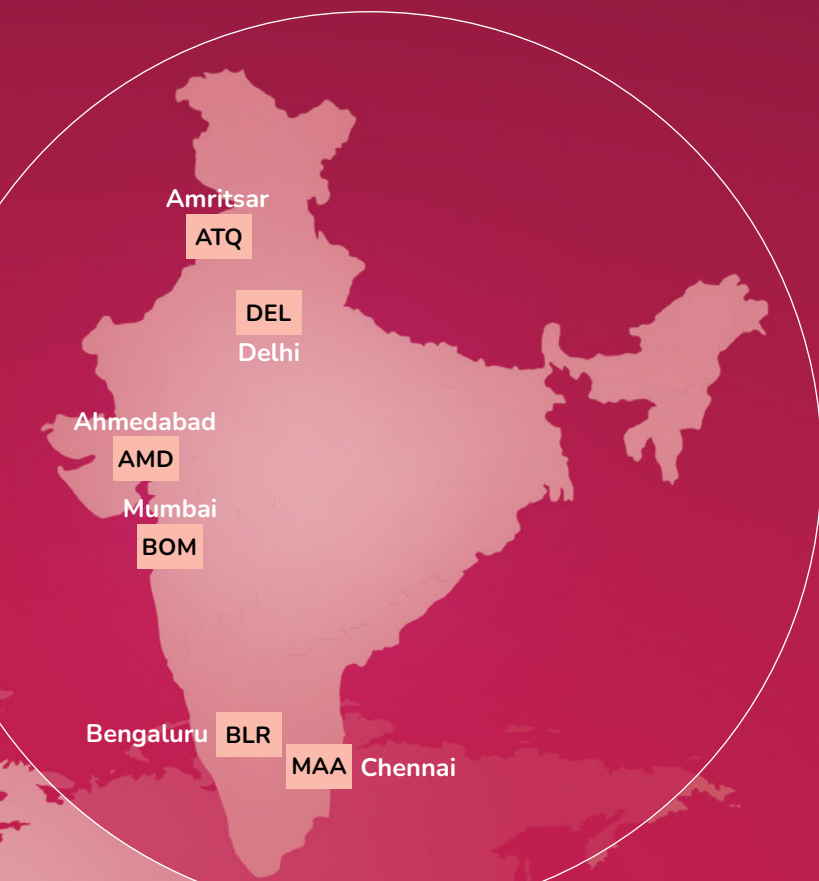
Newark (EWR)	←————→	DEL	BOM
New York (JFK)	←————→	DEL	BOM
San Francisco (SFO)	←————→	DEL	
Toronto (YYZ)	←————→	DEL	
Vancouver (YVR)	←————→	DEL	

Middle East



Dammam (DMM)	←.....→	BOM	
Doha (DOH)	←.....→	DEL	BOM
Dubai (DXB)	←.....→	DEL	BOM
Jeddah (JED)	←.....→	DEL	BOM
Riyadh (RUH)	←.....→	DEL	BOM

Connect beyond Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru to over 50 Indian destinations with Air India and Air India Express. Please turn to page 109 to see domestic route connectivity via Air India Express.



Far East

Hong Kong (HKG)	↔	DEL
Seoul (ICN)	↔	DEL
Shanghai (PVG)	↔	DEL
Tokyo (HND)	↔	DEL BOM



South East Asia

Bali (DPS)	↔	DEL
Bangkok (BKK)	↔	DEL BOM
Hanoi (HAN)	↔	DEL
Ho Chi Minh City (SGN)	↔	DEL
Kuala Lumpur (KUL)	↔	DEL
Manila (MNL)	↔	DEL
Phuket (HKT)	↔	DEL
Singapore (SIN)	↔	DEL BOM MAA*



Australia

Melbourne (MEL)	↔	DEL
Sydney (SYD)	↔	DEL



Africa

Mauritius (MRU)	↔	BOM
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Indian Subcontinent

Colombo (CMB)	↔	DEL BOM
Dhaka (DAC)	↔	DEL BOM
Kathmandu (KTM)	↔	DEL
Malé (MLE)	↔	DEL
Yangon (RGN)	↔	DEL

ABOARD AIX

A look at the aircraft in Air India Express' fleet*

 **Airbus A321neo**
04

 **Airbus A320neo**
20

 **Airbus A320ceo**
9

 **Boeing 737-800 NG**
24

 **Boeing 737-800 Max**
53

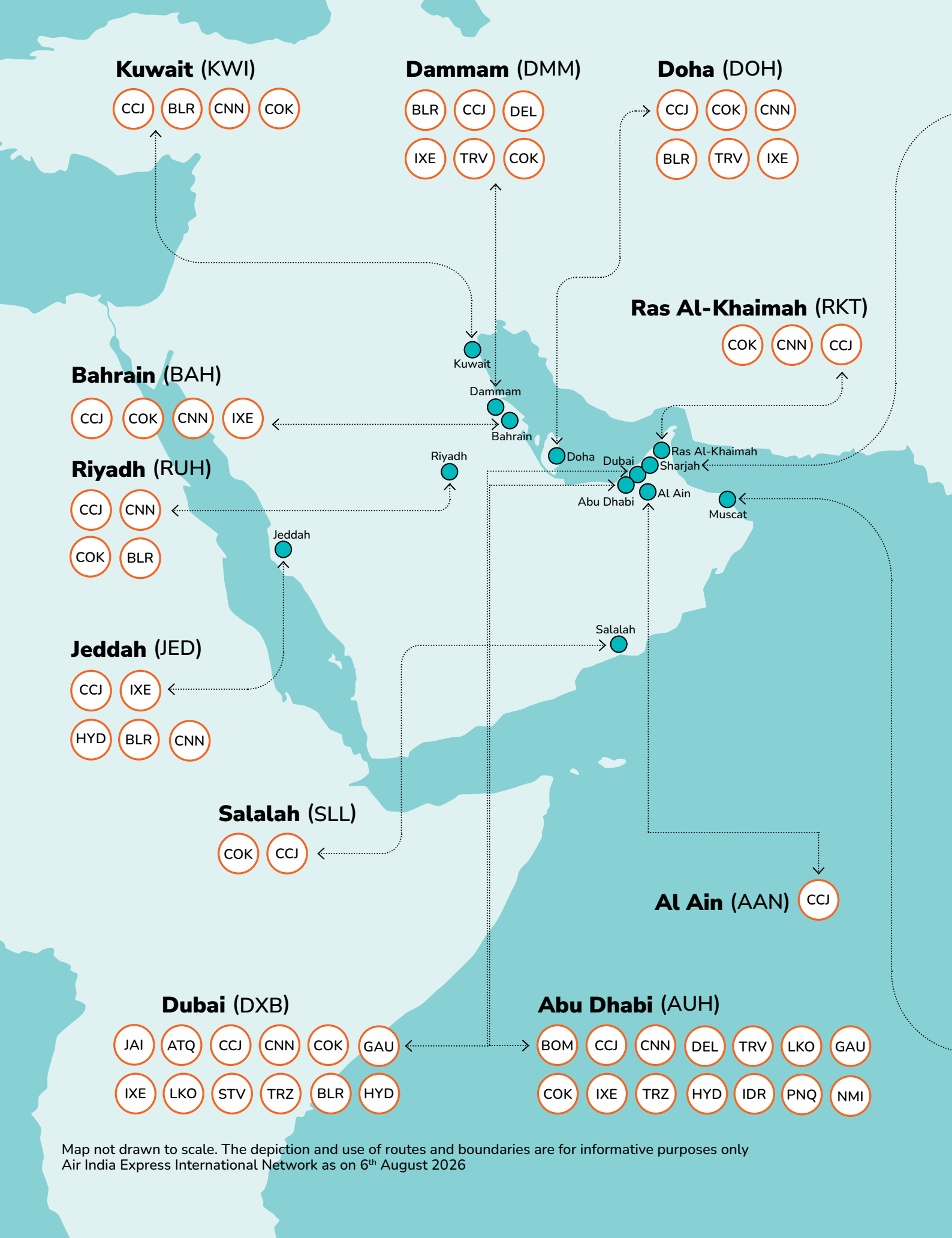
**FLEET
STRENGTH
110**



*Total number as on 19th August 2026

DOMESTIC CONNECTIVITY





AIR INDIA
express

**INTERNATIONAL
CONNECTIVITY**

Sharjah (SHJ)



Bangkok (BKK)



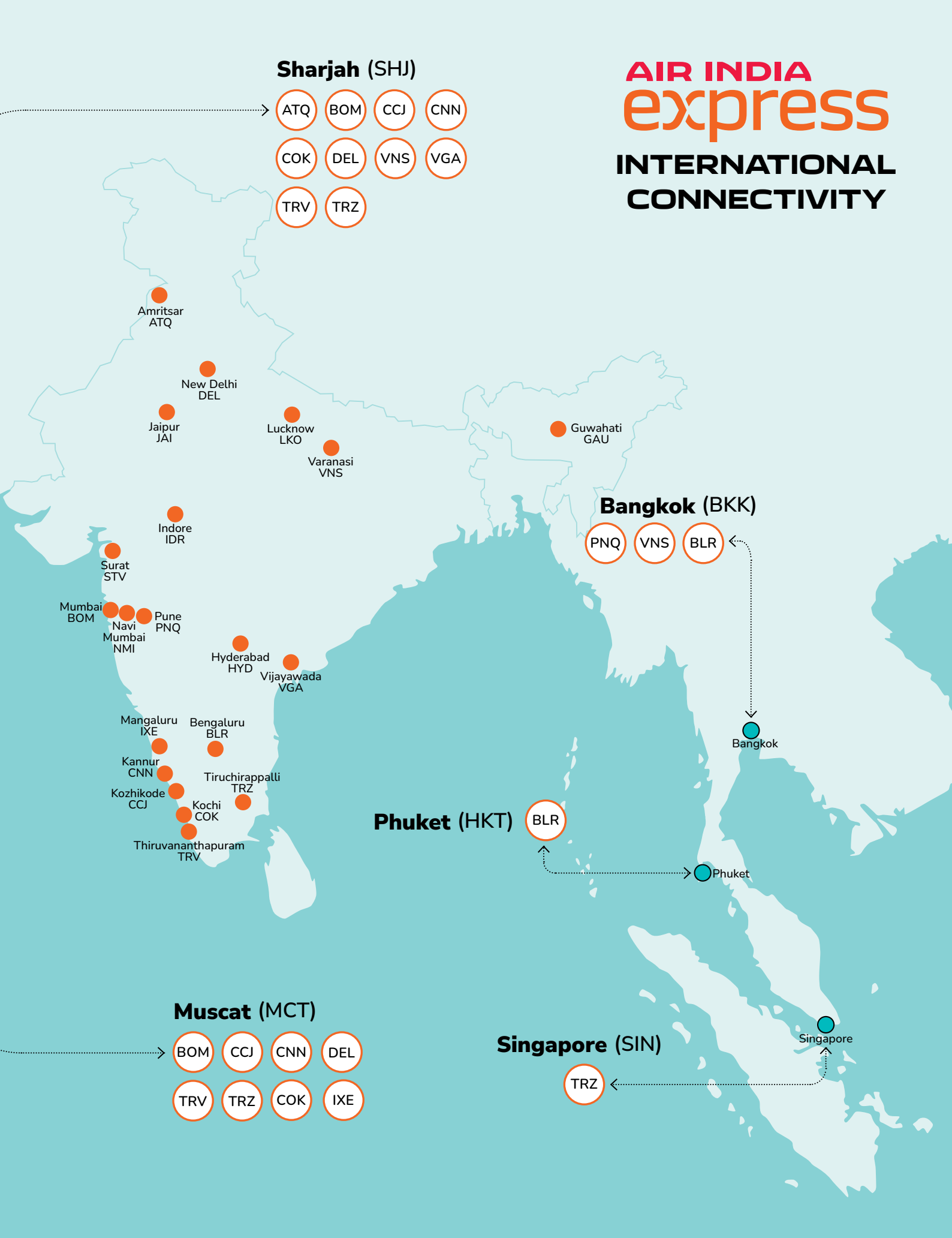
Phuket (HKT)



Muscat (MCT)



Singapore (SIN)





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Bulgaria Air
Condor
Cyprus Airways
Finnair
Hahn Air
Iberia
ITA Airways
KLM
KM Malta Airlines
Lufthansa City Airlines
Scandinavian Airlines
Turkish Airlines
Virgin Atlantic
AccessRail

Deutsche Bahn (Rail and Fly)

Asia

Air Cambodia
Air China
Air Macau
Azerbaijan Airlines
Bangkok Airways
Batik Air Malaysia
Biman Bangladesh
Cathay Pacific
China Airlines
China Eastern Airlines
China Southern
Garuda Indonesia
Hainan Air
Hong Kong Airlines
Japan Airlines
Jeju Airlines
Juneyao Airlines

Kam Air
Korean Air
Malaysia Airlines
Maldivian
MIAT Mongolian
Myanmar Airways
Nepal Airlines
Philippine Airlines
Scoot
Shandong Airlines
Shanghai Airlines
Shenzhen Airlines
Starlux Airlines
Thai Airways
Vietnam Airlines

Middle East

El Al Israel
Emirates
Etihad Airways
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Kuwait Airways
Middle East Airlines
Oman Air
Qatar Airways
Royal Brunei Airlines
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Royal Air Maroc
Rwand Air
South African Airways
Uganda Airlines

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Air Niugini Limited
Fiji Airways
JetStar
Qantas

*Both Codeshare and Interline Partners

Some airlines are represented under their respective group names
Codeshare and Interline partnerships as on 11th August 2026



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Take a bus, taxi or shuttle service to Old Town Square, Prague, the Czech Republic



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MISSION LIFE

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Mission LiFE is a global mass movement, launched by Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, to inspire people to protect and conserve the environment. Its purpose is to make people aware of the environment and motivate them to take steps to protect the environment.

AIR-SEWA

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय ने अपने एयर-सेवा पोर्टल को अपग्रेड किया है जो उपयोगकर्ताओं को ऑनलाइन शिकायतें जमा करने, ट्रैक करने और भारत में हवाई यात्रा के बारे में जानकारी प्राप्त करने की अनुमति देता है। सेवा संबंधी किसी और जानकारी के लिए, आप airsewa.gov.in पर लॉगिन कर सकते हैं।

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has upgraded its Air Sewa portal that allows users to submit and track grievances/complaints online and get information about air travel in India. For any further service-related information, you can login to airsewa.gov.in

DIGI YATRA

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- टर्मिनल के अंदर; •विमान तक, या विमान से दूर जाने वाले वाहनो में; •विमान के बाहर; •लैंडिंग के दौरान; •हवाई अड्डे पर; •पुशबैक, टैक्सीइंग, टेक-ऑफ के दौरान, और जब विमान 10,000 फीट से नीचे उड़ रहा हो।

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FOR FLIGHTS ARRIVING IN DELHI (DOMESTIC FLIGHTS OPERATING FROM TERMINAL 2)

हम आपको सूचित करना चाहते हैं कि 26 अक्टूबर से प्रभावी रूप से, चार अंको वाली आंतरिक उड़ान, जिनके नंबर 'AI 1500 से 1999' के बीच हैं, टर्मिनल 2 से संचालित होगी। यदि आप एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की उड़ान से कनेक्ट कर रहे हैं, तो कृपया टर्मिनल 1 पर जाएं। टर्मिनलों के बीच हर 10-मिनट में फ्री शटल बस सेवा उपलब्ध है, टर्मिनल 2 और टर्मिनल 3 के बीच यह सेवा उपलब्ध नहीं है। दोनों टर्मिनलों के बीच पैदल चलने का समय 10-मिनट है। आपके आगमन पर यदि किसी प्रकार की सहायता की आवश्यकता हो, तो कृपया हमारे ग्राउंड स्टाफ से संपर्क करें।

Effective 26th October, domestic flights with 4-digit numbers starting from 'AI 1500 to 1999' will operate from Terminal 2. If you are connecting on Air India Express, please proceed to Terminal 1. Free shuttle buses are available every 10 minutes between terminals, except between T2 and T3, which are connected by a convenient 10-minute walk. Should you require any assistance upon arrival, please feel free to approach our ground staff.



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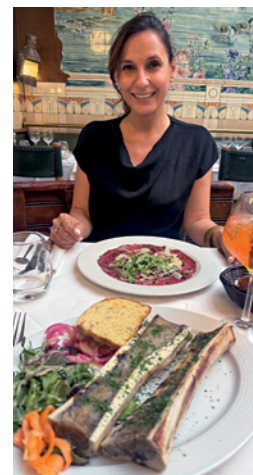
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A TRAVELLER'S TALE



A FRIENDLY VIBE

Creative entrepreneur and content creator **Ramona Arena** found a sense of connection in Brussels



MY LOCAL EXPERIENCE

People make the place for me—and the people in Brussels are so warm and friendly, you cannot help but feel happy. We reached at 6am, and as we were lugging our suitcases to our hotel, a street sweeper smiled and welcomed us, wishing us a wonderful stay. Another time, my partner Zoyebb was clicking pictures of me, and a sweet, jolly old gentleman started to tease us and wanted to be in the picture with me. You need not speak the same language—kindness, respect, and laughter are enough.

AN UNFORGETTABLE MEMORY

I am a huge tennis fan, and a Novak Djokovic Wimbledon match was happening at the same time as the FIFA World Cup—with the home team Belgium playing Spain. Every restaurant and bar had screens tuned to the football match—and my hunt to find the tennis seemed futile until I reached the O'Reilly's

Irish Pub. The sweet owner agreed to switch to Wimbledon on one of his TVs.

A FARE TO REMEMBER

Maison Vincent. This is where locals go for a perfect, meaty meal and it was one of the best ones of my life. I highly recommend the beef carpaccio, bone marrow, and steak. Also do not miss out on waffles, fries with the famous Andalouse sauce, mussels, beer, and, of course, Belgian chocolate.

I RECOMMEND

Belgian Beer World, an interactive experience centre, is housed in what was once the Brussels Stock Exchange. The ticket includes a free beer on the terrace. You can also participate in a chocolate-making workshop with a professional chocolatier at Choco-Story and take home as much chocolate as you manage to make.

— As told to **Mignonne Dsouza**

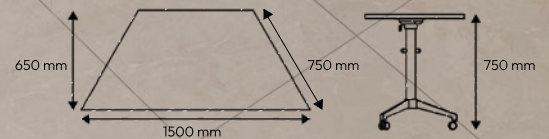
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