

TODAY'S traveller

CORPORATE, BUSINESS, AVIATION, MICE & LEISURE TRAVEL MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2021 - ₹50

GUJARAT'S
MOST SCENIC
ECO TRAILS

HONEYMOON
DESTINATIONS

ROMANCING
BANGALORE

XMAS
DESSERTS
TO WOW

**DREAMY
DESTINATIONS**

TODAY'S
traveller



14TH ANNUAL TODAY'S TRAVELLER AWARDS 2022



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SINGAPORE: SETTING THE STANDARD FOR GREEN MICE EVENTS

Known worldwide as a “Garden City”, Singapore has always put sustainability at the heart of its development plans. Launched in early 2021, the Singapore Green Plan 2030 sets a vision across various aspects of sustainability: from urban development and renewables adoption to resource conservation and food security. All sectors have taken steps to support these national efforts, and the MICE industry is no exception.



Photo credit: Fairmont Singapore and Swissôtel The Stamford



Photo credit: Singapore Tourism Board

FACILITATING MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE ON SUSTAINABILITY

Events play an integral role in raising awareness and uncovering solutions to the world’s collective climate challenges, and Singapore takes pride in hosting platforms that inspire such necessary dialogue and action.

For example, Temasek’s Ecosperity Week gathers leaders from across sectors and geographies to share insights and best practices on sustainable development. Conversations are also being held at the industry level, including at the annual Asia Sustainability Reporting Summit and even at the Singapore FinTech Festival where green financing has become a central area for discussion.

A PLACE FOR GREEN EVENTS

Besides hosting various sustainability-related events, Singapore also has infrastructure for events to take place with minimal environmental impact. The country’s MICE venues have stepped up to the challenge of reducing their carbon footprints and waste.

The Sands Expo and Convention Centre is Singapore’s first carbon-neutral MICE venue and is supporting the nation’s green energy targets through investments in Renewable Energy Certificates. Resorts World Sentosa is home to one of the country’s largest solar panel installations which can produce enough electricity to power 108 four-room flats every year. Fairmont Singapore and Swissôtel The Stamford have an urban aquaponics farm that champions sustainable agriculture practices in the industry.

Despite its constraints in size and natural resources, Singapore is paving the way for a sustainable future for all. It will continue to blaze trails for a greener tomorrow, and the business events industry is taking up this mantle.

Plan your next business event at [VisitSingapore.com/MICE](https://www.visit-singapore.com/mice).



**Singapore is
set to become
a “City of Green
Possibilities”
– with the
MICE industry
is doing its part.**

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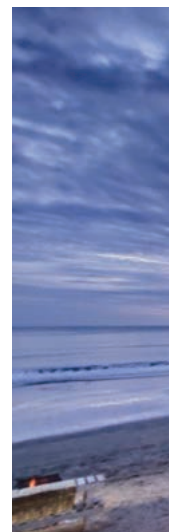
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GUJARAT'S MOST SCENIC ECO TRAILS

From rolling hills to thick groves, from misty waterfalls to amazing biodiversity, Gujarat offers an unforgettable adventure for nature lovers

TT BUREAU

The state of Gujarat offers us an endless combination of wonders, surprises, and adventures. Walking up and down a beautiful nature trail, spending the night under a starry sky in a tent by the river, or touring the shimmering silver sands of the Great Rann of Kutch are just a few of the top delightful ecological experiences. We have rounded up a few eco-tourism destinations for the New Year.

THE WILD BEAUTY OF THE FOREST

Mahal Campsite

Right at the heart of Purna Wildlife Sanctuary is the Mahal eco campsite. Flanked by Purna and Gira Rivers, this beautiful nature camp is made up of little huts. Tented accommodation and a few tree houses are available upon request. Don't forget to book a guide for night safaris.

WHEN NATURE CALLS

Vishal Khadi Campsite

Forests ranges, ancient forts and Jain temples dot the landscape of Vishal Khadi campsite – which lies only 20kms from Rajpipla. Extremely popular with eco-tourists and nature lovers, this destination is known for its scenic Karjan, Deriyapada, and Dang Forest ranges. Bathing Ghats of river Narmada at Chanchod and Garudeshwar offer the perfect spot to enjoy some quality time with nature. The fort of Dhaboi and the Jain Temple at Jagadiya take you straight back to the era of kings and queens. The campsite at River Karjar is a cool place to hang out with friends.



PLEASURES OF A HILLY HOLIDAY

Padamdungari Campsite

Situated among the Sahyadri ranges by the Ambika river, the Padamdungari camp is known for its scenic beauty, adventurous nature trail, and thriving biodiversity. Located 30 km from the Vyara town and eight km from the Unai village, the campsite is known for its rolling hills, sunset points, observation towers and medicinal groves.

A HEAVEN FOR HERBS

Waghai Botanical Garden

The Waghai Botanical Garden, which is situated only two km from the town of Waghai, is known for its wide variety of native and exotic plants. Pay a visit to this herb garden to know all about plants.



TRIBAL HEARTLAND

Purna Wildlife Sanctuary

Spread across a total area of almost 161 square kilometres, the Purna Wildlife Sanctuary falls in the tribal district of Dangs. The landscape here is filled with rolling hills, plateaus, small valleys of Western Ghats and is drained by the beautiful Purna river. Lofty teak trees stand tall in the company of other plants, such as Sadad, Timru, Bamboo, Khair, etc. The lush forest is interspersed with rivers, rivulets, scattered agricultural fields and tribal villages.

CALL OF THE WILD

Vansda National Park

A fertile ground for trees, the forest is the home to 450 species of plants, of which 443 are flowering in nature. The forest is also a bird watcher's paradise and is known for its staggering variety of birds — 155 species, including, the Racket-Tailed Drongo, Paradise Flycatcher, Pompadour Pigeon, Peafowl, Spotted Owlet, the Indian Great Black Woodpecker, Malabar trogon, Shama and Emerald Dove are found here.

A MISTY ADVENTURE

Girmal Waterfalls & Gira Waterfalls

The Girmal Waterfalls plunges from a height of 100 feet, making this the tallest waterfall in Gujarat. Since the water here falls from a great height, it creates a fog-like condition that is very alluring. The Gira Falls can only be experienced during the peak monsoon season. Located only three km from the Waghai town, the water here falls from a height of 30 metres into the Ambika river.



CAMP ADVENTURE

Kilad Nature Education Campsite

Who doesn't want to spend a night under the stars, falling asleep to the gurgling sound of the river? Welcome to Kilad Nature Education Campsite, which is situated in the Dang Forest division on the way to the Waghai Botanical Garden. Start your morning with a guided tour of the nearby forest area. At night, pitch a tent on the bank of the Ambika river and enjoy a campfire with family and friends.





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WEDDING

ROMANCE

DREAMY RETREATS FOR NEWLYWEDS

India is a never-ending treasure trove

TT BUREAU

Auli, Uttarakhand

When it comes to offbeat dreamy retreats and unexplored hideaways, India is a never-ending treasure trove. There is enough to see and do in this magnificent country, from the north to the south.

And no matter how many new places you visit, there are always new and lesser-known possibilities that go largely unexplored. There are several fantastic spots in India that are as far away from tourist crowds as possible and promise a great retreat, from hidden beach towns to villages with unique traditions.

Some areas, such as Goa, Kerala, Mumbai, Shimla, and Darjeeling, are more popular than others. These are beautiful locales, but they are not the only ones that India has to offer. There are a number of places in the country that should be visited. Here, we share some of the lesser-known dreamy unexplored locations for newlyweds.

AULI, UTTARAKHAND

Get dreamy at the winter sports hub of India...Auli. Not only do you have the beauty of snowy mountain slopes but also sunshine and clear blue skies. And how about a bit of adventure to spice up romance...skiing down these amazing slopes!

The majority of us associate skiing with the snow-capped mountains of France, Switzerland, Canada, or Australia. However, you might be surprised to learn that India has its own ski resort in Auli.



Majuli, Assam

Auli, in Uttarakhand, is part of the Himalayan Mountains and is ideal for both skiing and trekking. Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned skier, this snow-covered hill station will provide you and your loved one a memorable togetherness experience.

MAJULI, ASSAM

Visit the romantic island district of Majuli in Assam to marvel at its breathtaking beauty! This place is rich in natural beauty, has an intriguing culture, and it is located on the banks of the Brahmaputra River.

Aside from enjoying each others company and the scenic beauty all around, you'll have the opportunity to get to know the tribes' cultures and participate in some fun events.

LAMBASINGI, ANDHRA PRADESH

Catch some snowflakes in southern India? Here is an attention grabber for couples wanting to pick a new destination in Andhra Pradesh.

Snowfall in India is limited to certain of the northern portions of the country for the majority of us. However, you might be shocked to learn that there is a little hill region in India's south where you can witness snowfall.

Lambasingi is located in the state of Andhra Pradesh, around 100 kilometres from Vishakhapatnam. The temperature here in the winter is below 10 degrees Celsius, and even in the summer, it is cold.

You and your loved one can have a wonderful time exploring Lambasingi's stunning waterfalls, huge coffee and pepper plantations, and picturesque hills. If you both like the outdoors there are some great walking trails and opportunities for hiking and camping under the stars.

TARKARLI BEACH, MAHARASHTRA

Here is a little known and unexplored surprise - India's unexplored beach getaway. If you and your partner want to have a superb beach experience without the crowds, you should visit Tarkali Beach in Maharashtra.



Tarkarli Beach, Maharashtra



Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh



Patan, Gujarat

This beach, located in Maharashtra's Singhudurg District, is one of the nicest white sand beaches in the Konkan region.

Tarkali is known for its lengthy coastline and pristine waters. The ultimate addition is water adventure activities for you both. spend your days being water babies - enjoy scuba diving, kayaking, banana boat riding, jet skiing, and other activities. End your day with a romantic boat ride while watching dolphins and a great sunset.

TAWANG, ARUNACHAL PRADESH

When it comes to dreamy destinations, the northeastern area of India has the most awesome and unexplored destinations to explore together. It is in this section of the country where the rarest of natural jewels can be found.

Tawang, in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, is one such gem. This place, which is 10000 feet above sea level, is filled with lakes, valleys, rivers, and waterfalls that will take your breath away.

The Sela Pass, Tawang Monastery, Gorichen Peak, Taktsang Gompa, Nuranang Waterfalls, and other attractions in Tawang are perfect for taking pictures, enjoying the outdoors, and creating memories. Definitely a not to be missed destination for honeymooners.



Querim Beach, Goa

QUERIM BEACH, GOA

When we think about Goa, some of the beaches that come to mind are Calangute Beach, Baga Beach, and Anjuman Beach. While these beaches are fun and exciting, they are often overcrowded, particularly during peak seasons. You must visit Querim or Keri Beach in Goa if you enjoy peace and tranquilly, or if you want to spend quality time with your companion.

It is located in Goa's northernmost region and features a lengthy stretch of sand where you may stroll or relax with your sweetheart. On the beach, there are a few little shacks that sell delicious fish. So, if you're seeking togetherness and tranquilly in Goa, Querim Beach is the place to go.

PATAN, GUJARAT

While Ahmedabad and Baroda are well-known in Gujarat, there is one town in the state that couples who are culture buffs must-see. It is an ancient town with some interesting forts and monuments that was founded around 745 AD.

Rani Ki Vav, a unique water resource and storage system as well as a beautiful example of Khajuraho style craftsmanship, is the one monument you must see here.

Patan is also known for its Patola sarees, and you should take advantage of this opportunity to tour a Patola saree

manufacturing operation, and of course buy some to add to your wedding trousseau.

KAMSHET, MAHARASHTRA

If you're seeking a weekend getaway from Mumbai or Pune, Kamshet is the place for couples to go. This small town, located in the Pune area, is away from the main metropolis and so attractive and tranquil.

The Kondeshwar temple, Pawna Lake, Bhairi caves, Bedsa caves, and other unusual and beautiful attractions can be found here. Apart from these great locales, it's a fantastic site for couples to get an adrenaline high and check out paragliding.

LEPCHAJAGAT, WEST BENGAL

Darjeeling is regarded as one of India's most popular honeymoon destinations. While it is a romantic location, nearby lies Lepchajagat, a little village as lovely as Darjeeling. If you're searching for a pleasant, quiet spot to spend some quality time with yourself or your sweetheart, Lepchajagat is the place to go.

This little community is located in a highly forested location with spectacular views of the Kanchenjunga peaks. You may enjoy the natural beauty of the area as well as the unusual animals, and you can also spend some quiet time together here without being distracted.

HOGENAKKAL, KARNATAKA

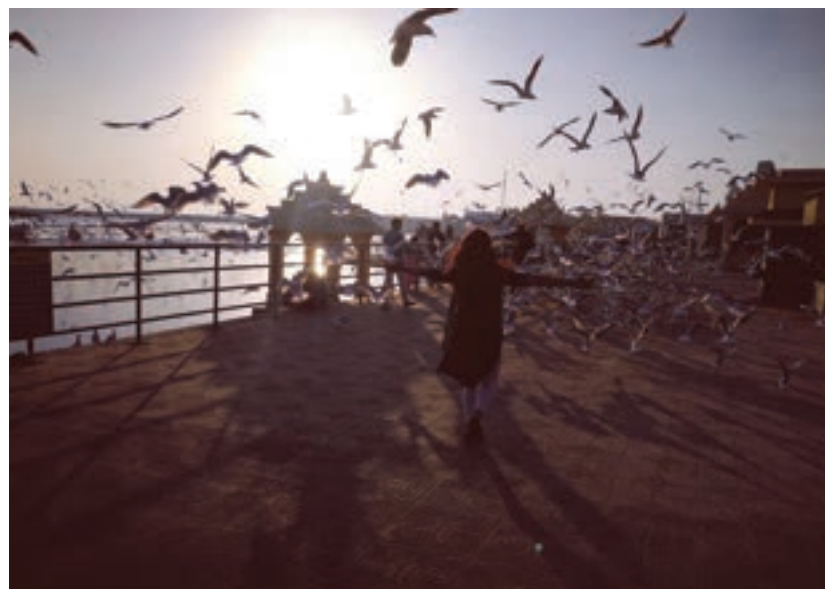
Couples get captivated at The Hogenakkal Falls, also known as the "Niagara of India," is located in India. It's many streams of waterfalls from the Kaveri River, and the scenery is truly beautiful. It is located in Hogenakkal, Karnataka.

Apart from the spectacular waterfall, Melagiri Hills, Mettur Dam, Pennagram Village, and other attractions in Hogenakkal are ideal places to visit by honeymooners. Hogenakkal is the place to go if you want to feel like you both are one with nature.

These are just a few of India's lesser-known or interesting destinations. There are many wonderful places in the country that have yet to be discovered.



Lepchajagat, West Bengal



Kamshet, Maharashtra



Hogenakkal, Karnataka



HONEYMOON DESTINATIONS PERFECT FOR YOU

So, which are the romantic destinations for a honeymoon in 2021

TT BUREAU

India's many romantic destinations will leave you speechless. Its beauty and diversity have no match to anything. To help lovebirds find the ultimate postnuptial getaway, here are some of the best honeymoon destinations in 2021 to consider:

SHIMLA

The state capital of Himachal Pradesh, surrounded by cedar, rhododendron, fir, and Himalayan oak trees, is among India's most popular hill stations and popular with honeymooners due to its good weather and gorgeous surroundings.

It is one of the best hill station destinations to visit in North India for a honeymoon because of its luxury hotels and

pleasant temperature. Do visit the imperial Viceregal Lodge, the graceful Christ Church, Gaiety Theatre, Gorton Castle, Barnes Court and several buildings that are part of the colonial architectural heritage of the town.

PLACES NEWLYWEDS CAN VISIT IN SHIMLA

Shimla offers everything from romantic dining to spellbinding views, and memorable activities like a couple-dip in the natural springs, horse riding, hiking and even ski-ing and other winter sports depending on the time of the year.

Considered a must-visit honeymoon place in Shimla, Naldehra Peak showcases a scenic golf course located at 2000 meters with wonderful views of snow-covered mountain

peaks and soft mist-covered valleys.

Leaving newlyweds spellbound is Kufri which at 7000 m above sea level is a most popular attraction. Togetherness activities include skiing and horse riding. Not to be missed is a romantic walk in the lush green meadows and a trek through deodar thickets.

Chail is known for its stunning beauty and thickly covered oak forests. This scenic outpost, 55 km far from Shimla, also provides opportunities for honeymooners to go horse riding or seek divine blessings at well-known Temples here.

Jakhoo is all about treks and winding trails in soothing green hilly surroundings! At 8000 m Jakhoo presents romantic trails – which honeymoon couples will love.

DARJEELING

Would you like to plan your honeymoon in an absolutely beautiful destination? Then look no further than Darjeeling in West Bengal. This hill station in West Bengal is a hidden treasure noted for its youthful atmosphere as well as modern and colonial charm. Its stunning snow-capped peaks that overlook the town, lovely tea plantations on the undulating hillsides, orchids, pines, and much more will leave you awestruck.

Darjeeling is perfect to take in the snow-covered panoramas of the greater Himalayas, and the mouth-watering local hill cuisine. This picture-postcard hill town offers the great outdoors like you have never experienced before, excellent trekking trails as well as a range of adventure sports.

PLACES NEWLYWEDS CAN VISIT IN DARJEELING

Visiting Tiger Hill is a memorable experience for newlyweds as here is an observatory hill with stunning panoramas of the Greater Himalayas. It is a 13 km drive from Darjeeling. Tiger Hill stands at an altitude of 2590 meters. The summit of Ghoom is the highest point of Tiger Hill which is well known for its mesmerizing display of a golden sunrise at Mt Kanchenjunga and on a clear day even of Mt Everest, the town of Kurseong as well as the rivers Teesta, Mahananda, Mechi and Balason.

An excursion to Tinchuley Village offers an experience of rustic life amidst pine trees, tea gardens, and an old Buddhist monastery.

An experience of the picturesque Darjeeling Himalayan toy train is a must. Check out the unique design of the magnificent Batasia Loop which allows the track to wrap itself around through a hilltop tunnel.

A day spent at a tea garden is super for newlyweds. Breathe in the fragrance of well-manicured tea shrubs in a lush green wonderland, where you can engage in tea plucking and tea tasting. There are homestays too which offer a most romantic experience.

A must-do activity for couples is a ride on the Darjeeling Ropeway cable car which offers birds view of panoramic landscapes, the wonderful snow-capped mountains to green valleys and charming local villages and tea estates.

JAIPUR

What better way to celebrate your honeymoon than visiting breathtakingly beautiful palaces that will give you Royalty's feeling. Jaipur is the first planned city in India, having been designed by Vidyadhar Bhattacharya.

Rajasthan's capital city, known worldwide for its coloured gems, mixes the charm of its ancient heritage with all the benefits of a metropolis. For all you couples who are history buffs, this place is just for you.

PLACES NEWLYWEDS CAN VISIT IN JAIPUR

The beautiful pink city of Jaipur, with its old-world charm is home to many UNESCO World Heritage sites, including Amer Fort and Jantar Mantar. This heritage city holds magnificent forts, palaces, temples and museums not to speak of famous old bazaars full of handicrafts and traditional weaves. The city





is famous for its local cuisine, and popular dishes like Pyaaz Kachori and Dal Baati Churma and the sweet Ghewar. Save a full day to visit the Forts and Palaces which recreate romance and history. A heritage tour Jantar Mantar Observatories & Planetariums, Hawa Mahal - Palace of Wind, Nahargarh Fort, Jaigarh Fort, Birla Mandir Temple and City Palace of Jaipur is a full-day activity.

If you want to catch your breath, opt for serenity and check out the Smirti Van - a Biodiversity park. Here you can hear the twitter of birds as winding paths through natural foliage makes for romantic strolls. Another beautiful place at Lal Dungi is the Sisodia Rani Garden, an architectural marvel offering peace, tranquility, and charm. With picturesque fountains, pavilions, fresh green gardens, and art galleries with the paintings of Radha- Krishna's eternal love, everything about this place is idyllic for a date with your loved one.

GOA

With its gorgeous beaches and laid-back atmosphere, Goa is yet another destination to choose for a romantic getaway. There are several places to visit for a good time such as exploring the numerous forts and enjoying a romantic dinner along the beach.

With endless sandy beaches, water sports, wildlife, forts, ancient Portuguese architecture, and more than 7000 bars and restaurants, Goa is an ideal honeymoon destination.

PLACES NEWLYWEDS CAN VISIT IN GOA

The waterfalls here also have a romantic atmosphere to them and create such a captivating scene that you and your partner will be fascinated as you sink into the eternity of love. Goa has a wide range of hotels, resorts, and guest homes to suit every budget and taste.

Couples can breathe in exotic aromas and spend a fascinating day at the Tanshikar's Working Spice Farm & Ecological Rest House. Here you can see how spices grow using organic farming. Check out the various spices like pepper, vanilla, cardamom, chili, nutmeg, and turmeric. The tour includes other unusual crops like betelnut, coffee beans, as well as beekeeping, and all-natural honey.

Foodie couples will fall in love again! The delicious Portuguese and Goan flavors, fresh seafood, coconut and spices create signature meals that are distinctive. Try out a fiery Goan specialty, Vindaloo, a great meat curry made with palm vinegar and red chili peppers or Xacuti, a mouth-watering curry with poppy seeds, chili, and coconut.

A day at Old Goa is a must-visit. Visit attractions dating back to the 16th century, the Basilica de Bom Jesus, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1999.

Goa has interesting local markets, which are lively and full of chatter. The most well-known is the Anjuna Market which



opens every Wednesday at Anjuna Beach. Anything and everything from a hammock, to a trinket, t-shirts, spices, and toys to beaded jewellery is all there. Don't forget the snacks and street food which is tempting and delicious. Haggling, bargaining and light-hearted exchanges are all part of the fun while visiting these local markets.

SHILLONG

For all you music lovers out there, Shillong in the state of Meghalaya is just the place for you. If you're a musician, you will enjoy this beautiful Northeastern destination.

Shillong's modern reputation is based on its love of music, and the city has produced many great musicians. Shillong has various faces: there are calm neighbourhoods, food with whistling pines, but there is also a bustling downtown centre for a livelier experience.

PLACES NEWLYWEDS CAN VISIT IN SHILLONG

The 12 km Uiam Lake is a water sports haven with activities like water skiing, yachting, pedal boating, high-speed boat ride, cruising, and scooter water ride.

Walk together on natural trails absorbing the natural beauty and invigorating fresh air of your surroundings. Trekking opportunities are particularly good if you both are interested in following trekking trails through waterfalls and forests to interesting places which are quite far away like Living Root Bridge, Kyllang Rock, and David Scott Trail.

Hold hands as you explore adventure-filled caves in Shillong like the Mawmai caves and the Mawjymbuin Caves.

If you and your life partner enjoy a round of golf, then the Shillong Golf Course is a classic and its scenic beauty is an additional plus.

A bit of adrenaline to race the pulse? Try canoeing at the Sohra river and enjoy a bit of trekking and perhaps even a swim on your honeymoon.



MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF A PANDEMIC



From intimate gatherings to open-air spaces, the pandemic has led to a host of changes in the way weddings are organised. Here's a look...

TT BUREAU

Restrictions fuel creativity. This is particularly true for organizing a wedding during a pandemic. Although the restrictions on weddings have recently been lifted in India, fears of Omicron – a new variant of the Covid-19 virus with multiple mutations – threaten to spoil our plans.

As such, wedding trends that were spawned by the early waves of the pandemic might just outlive the global scourge and become a regular feature of the wedding landscape in India as well as across the world.

"Weddings have become what the GenZ always wanted, more inclusive and intimate and yet very classy. The pandemic,

however, has triggered another change and that is 'Last-Minute' bookings because there is constant fear and this has made us total experts in last minute planning," says Birju C Gariba, Founder & CEO, Iskra Events & Celebrations.

From sustainable practices to small gatherings, from no-touch menus to immunity-boosting platters, here are some trends that we can expect at wedding events.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

Despite the declining number of cases and a rise in vaccination numbers, large gatherings might just be a thing of the past. Indian weddings traditionally have been

grand events spread across several days. However, when the pandemic struck last year, wedding lists were severely hacked with couples restricting the guest list to close family and friends.

This trend is likely to continue this year as well. Speaking to a leading English-language daily, Ahana Choudhury, a Gurugram-based wedding planner, said, "We have done very small-scale events, involving no more than 20-30 guests, which we never thought we would ever do."

With a new variant on the rise, hosts are now focussing more on intimate gatherings, detailing, higher customization and experiential offerings. Many hosts are insisting on guests being fully vaccinated. In a recent wedding of two popular Bollywood stars, 120 guests were asked to get

saplings were given to guests. In addition to adopting these ideas, you can also opt for e-invites, a digital menu, recyclable decoration items and handmade signages to cut down on waste.

GO LOCAL

Weddings may have become smaller, intimate affairs, however splurging on weddings has not gone down. But instead of spending money on expensive foreign brands, couples are now spending more on indigenous brands and supporting local businesses.

Traditional handloom will make a comeback this season, with weaves like Banarasi, Phulkari and Kanjeevaram dominating bridal trousseau. Industry pundits say that this will



their double doses before coming to the event. Those who were not fully vaccinated were asked to take an RT-PCR test before arriving at the wedding venue.

SUSTAINABILITY GOES A LONG WAY

The pandemic has undoubtedly forced us to get our priorities sorted. It has also forced us to confront the damage we have done to the environment as a whole.

Sustainability, as a practice, is being embraced by wedding couples, who are opting for eco-friendly measures at their weddings. From reducing waste to doing away with plastic disposables, couples are resorting to a variety of ways to go green.

Nupur Agarwal, a marketing consultant from Kolkata, who had a green wedding last year, made sure that her wedding generated the least amount of waste. She sourced all her flowers locally to ensure the minimum amount of carbon footprint. The groom arrived in an electric car, while



not only help the local economy in general but also give the much-needed boost to traditional master weavers.

DESTINATION WEDDINGS

With the Omicron variant making the rounds, international flights will be out of bounds for the next few months. As such flying off to exotic locales to get hitched will be out of bounds. However, this seems to augur well for local destinations such as Rajasthan, Goa and Kerala.

Instead of the shimmering white sands of the Maldives or the tranquil environment of Lake Como, wedding couples are more likely to tie the knot against the backdrop of a crumbling medieval palace or the verdant backwaters of God's Own Country. A related trend seems to be the preference for a local chain of hotels and resorts. Nearby places are chosen because of the proximity to the couple's hometown and the fact that several hotel chains are now offering big fat discounts for extended wedding packages.



While the hotel industry has seen a massive increase in bookings for weddings over the past months, fears of a new wave are leading a few NRIs and corporate clients to cancel their weddings. The domestic market is likely to remain untouched.

OPEN SPACES

There's no doubt that the wedding and hospitality industries have been irrevocably transformed because of the pandemic. While most hotel chains are following Covid protocols and getting their staffers vaccinated, they are also rethinking the layout of wedding venues.

Most couples are now preferring to opt for open weddings in gardens, balconies and large terraces with protocols of social distancing in place. This wedding season, it is advisable to opt for lush open-air weddings, decorated with socially distanced cabanas and canopies to ensure maximum safety.

IMMUNITY-BOOSTING FOOD

A show-stopper wedding menu is a one-way ticket to ensure success. However, hotel chains are witnessing a demand for immunity-boosting food instead of simple, tasty food.

Cold and warm welcome drinks are being replaced with kadhas (a traditionally prepared concoction to treat sore throat); there's a lot of emphasis on soul-warming soups, fresh vegetables, and superfoods.



Speaking to a media house, Rongon Neogi, one of the top chefs of Calcutta, said, "We have introduced immunity-boosting dishes like sauteed broccoli, cauliflowers, bell peppers, buttery barley grains and corns to prepare salads. We are using a lot of garlic, ginger and yoghurt in our cooking."





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EXOTIC WEDDING DESTINATIONS OF THE WORLD



Couple Marriage Groom Bride

Exotic wedding destinations are all the rage! Immortalize your special day in these beautiful destination wedding locations in 2021

TT BUREAU

The scenic background and the beautiful memories stay in your heart for eternity and beyond. These exotic wedding destinations have the perfect atmosphere for your special day. Here are some dreamy destination wedding ideas for you.

The hospitality of the destination and the locals who wish for your happiness add another unique dimension to the grand event. Plan your wedding to these unique destination wedding locations for an experience of a lifetime.

FIJI: Walk down a passageway of delicate white sand to the rhythmic sound of aquamarine waves for a tropical Fijian wedding. With a cluster of 3000 islands making up this archipelago in the South Pacific, you'll be spoilt for choice with regards to choosing the ideal island for your unique day. In this tropical desert spring, palm trees line the seashores, and

dynamic coral reefs lie on pause to be investigated. If you and your partner dream of an extraordinary wedding, this is one of the finest beach wedding venues that you two will adore.



Idyllic Beach Fiji Tranquility Sea

SANTORINI: For a location that matches any lady of the hour's delightful wedding dress, the Greek island of Santorini is perfect. Here, whitewashed houses stick to the stunning precipices, while their popular cobalt blue rooftops match the perpetual spread of the sparkling sea beneath.

Turn up the warmth with a wedding service on one of the island's volcanic sand beaches. For something else, head to the hypnotizing dark sand of the island's East coast or the red sand coast of the South. Here is one of the best wedding destinations you can dream of.



The Greek Island Of Santorini

TUSCANY: Do you want a destination wedding? At the core of Italy lies the magnificent area of Tuscany. The main list of must-do activities involves its experiences, culture, and sentiment. Tuscany's capital Florence is home to the world's most well-known craftsmanship and design, perfect as a setting for one of the world's most exotic wedding destinations.

Simply a short drive out of this stunning city lies the moving Tuscan slopes. With unlimited fields of dazzling grape plantations, this enchanting Italian destination will move your wedding to a universe of peacefulness and sentiment. With dream dusks that have a place in the ultimate lexicon, a wedding in Tuscany is an unbelievable experience to begin your new partnership.

ROME: Set a point of reference for a marriage that will endure over the extremely long haul in a city that has done as such for centuries. For quite a long time, world voyagers have travelled to Rome to experience the many versions of the city that has been created by history's most critical figures, including Julius Caesar and creative masters Leonardo Da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael. Make your snapshot of history by inviting your



Vineyard Grapes Winery Tuscany

future bride and your guests to this immortal city - one of the most exotic wedding destinations. With dazzling sights, including the Trevi Fountain, Colosseum, and Spanish Steps, to be discovered, a wedding in Rome will be out and out amazing.



Rome Attraction Newlyweds

JAIPUR: A romantic desert wedding – here is a magical and extraordinary destination. For couples looking for dreamy destination wedding ideas, the Pink City of Jaipur is perfect. Known as one of the most popular destination wedding locations in India, wedding planners love the romance of historic palaces converted into hotels, ancient forts, the rolling Aravalli hills, and the royal heritage settings amidst blue lakes. The city is a charming, authentic wedding destination with vintage Havelis, grand domes, and frescoes. Newlyweds can soak up the magnificent history of the city - with streets lined with traditional handicrafts and local culinary delicacies. Celebrating a special day in an exceptional manner means creating the wedding venue in beautiful panoramic gardens, hanging lamps with a spectacular palace as a backdrop.



Rajasthan Amber Fort Maota Lake Jaipur, India

PARIS: One of the most romantic places to get married is Paris. In France's capital city, sentiment waits noticeably all around. Paris has consistently ranked as one of the leading destination wedding locations and has been inseparable from adoration, making it easy for newlyweds looking to create a memorable wedding. Flaunting architectural beauty, romantic locations, and, obviously, the Eiffel Tower here is one of the most exotic wedding destinations.

Finding the ideal spot amongst so many ideal locales in this beguiling city presents no difficulties. Regardless of whether you pick a sunlight function in the nurseries or an evening occasion as the city illuminates and the Eiffel Tower sparkles, Paris is an ageless, exemplary wedding destination.



Honeymoon Bride Wedding Paris Luxury

AMALFI COAST: If your wedding dreams comprise shimmering turquoise waters, sheer bluffs enhanced with scenic landscapes and fascinating blossoms, and an ideal blue sky, check out the Amalfi Coast. This 50 km stretch of Southern Italy's coastline offers a truly flawless perspective for bride and groom from a wedding point of view.

Regardless of whether you select Positano, Praiano, Capri or Amalfi from the coast's perpetual line of sparkling islands, you're coming up for a memorable encounter.

Go through your unique twosome day, exchanging promises by the ocean before feasting on a dinner of exotic fish and drinking Amalfi's popular Limoncello. Go ahead, book your wedding here!



The Amalfi Coast, The Mediterranean Sea, Italy

FRENCH RIVIERA: One of the world's finest retreat locations, the French Riviera has been loved by celebrities going back centuries to the current day. A playground for the rich and famous, it has been the home of celebrities ranging from Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse to Winston Churchill and Somerset Maugham to Elton John and Brigitte Bardot, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie to the Cannes film festival. With 310 to 330 days of sunshine each year and 115 km of coastline extending across Saint Tropez, Cannes, and Monaco, it's understandable why the world is infatuated with this splendid destination.

If you can imagine lavish settings, stunning blue waters, shimmering clear skies, supercars and superyachts, and beautiful blossoms at your wedding, this is the best wedding destination that should hold the first spot on your list.



Taormina Sicilian Market

SICILY: Surrounded by the shining Mediterranean ocean, Sicily's perfect seashores are by all accounts not the only thing that makes it one of the world's best wedding destinations. Outfitting the entirety of the components, this island joins flawless waters with beautiful mountain ranges, a smoking spring of gushing lava, and a new island taking birth. Sufficient to rank among the world's most exotic wedding destinations.

In case that isn't sufficient to draw you to Sicily for your wedding, consider the rich culture and history that will entice and tempt you to come here for your special day. Set your wedding in one of the best places to get married against a background of Byzantine mosaics or in an antiquated Baroque royal residence for a forever memory.

PORTUGAL: If fantasy palaces, stowed away seashores, and top-notch fish dishes are on your explorer's list of must-dos, Portugal is the wedding destination you've been looking for for a long time. Bordered by Spain, this destination has something for everybody. From the turquoise sea bays of

Lagos to the unconventionally splendid shaded palaces of Sintra, Portugal gives the ideal setting to a genuinely out-of-this-world wedding.

Come and choose from this list of the most exotic wedding destinations and you can be sure that if you use your imagination these can be perfectly affordable wedding locations. Select from a range of seafront fortresses and



Portugal Martinhal Family Hotels & Resorts

converted monasteries to white sandy beaches and palm-lined resorts, from clifftop chapels and quaint quintas there is a special wedding venue for every couple.



Monaco

ROMANCING BANGALORE

What are the most romantic activities for couples in Bangalore? We have some wonderful experiences lined up for you and your loved one

TT BUREAU



Bangalore is known for its excellent weather, lovely parks, and numerous lakes. Because of well-maintained gardens and parks in the city, such as Lal Bagh, Cubbon Park, and others, Bangalore has been called the City of Gardens and provides cozy places for couples.

Bangalore is known for its eateries, street food stands, eccentric cafés, coffee roasters, and pubs, which are dotted across the city and serve cuisines from across the world. Bangalore offers it all: brunches, buffets, burgers, rooftop cafés, and late-night food.

ROMANTIC ACTIVITIES FOR COUPLES IN BANGALORE

WATCH THE SUNRISE AT NANDI HILLS - The Nandi Hills, nestled in the Aravali hills, will definitely revitalize your romantic spirits. What could be more romantic than sharing the first rays of the morning light with your loved one while enjoying the lovely weather and scenery? This is a great one day outing in Bangalore for couples.

Arriving early at the Nandi Viewpoint you won't miss this once-in-a-lifetime sight. At an altitude of 1500 metres, Nandi

Hills. offers spectacular views of the hills and valleys. It is a favourite instagrammable spot and one of the best private places for couples to spend time together as they shoot and store their cellphones with memories.

While you're here, you can also see Tipu Sultan's Fort, Tipu's Drop, and Amruth Sarovar Lake. Nandi Hills is one of the most romantic places for couples and with good reason. So come and visit here with your partner on a one-day vacation from Bangalore.

Location: 60 km from Bangalore

Timings: 6:00 am to 6:00 pm; every day

Best Time: September to February

How to Reach: Cab services are available

WINE TASTING TOUR

Take a vineyard tour to watch the winemaking process and partake in a wine tasting session to celebrate the strength and dedication of your love. There's a guarantee that a dash of aged wine will bring out the finest in your romantic life. The following are some of the greatest wine tours in Bangalore:

GROVER WINE TOUR

Location: Devanahalli Road

Timings: 10:30 am to 1:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm; every day

COST

Weekdays – ₹850 per person

Weekends – ₹1000 per person

HERITAGE WINE TOUR

Location: Channapatna

Timings: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; every day

Cost: ₹250 per person

STAR GAZING AT NEHRU PLANETARIUM

Make your way to the Nehru Planetarium, where you may participate in the Know Your Stars Sky Gazing Program and study the sky through binoculars and telescopes. Relax under the gleaming sky's colours and lose yourself in each other's embrace.

Location: Sankey Road

Timings: 10:30 am to 05:30 pm; closed on Mondays and second Tuesdays

Entry Fee: ₹ 50 per person

Know Your Stars* – ₹ 30 per person (The show is conducted on the first Sunday of every month, at 6:30 pm.)

TAKE A STROLL THROUGH LAL BAGH

Lal Bagh Botanical Garden is a great place to spend quality time with your partner away from the hustle-bustle of city life. This garden is quite famous among the city's lovebirds because of its picturesquely stunning surrounds and appealing flower





beds. It also boasts an aquarium, a glasshouse, and a lake, all of which contribute to its charming charm. Take a romantic stroll around Lal Bagh's strolling pathways, holding hands with your loved one, and feel captivated all over again..

Timings: 6:00 am to 7:00 pm; every day

Entry Fee: ₹ 20 per person

GO BIRDWATCHING AT HEBBAL LAKE

For nature-loving couples, birdwatching at Hebbal Lake, a paradise for birdwatchers and photographers, is a must-do activity. The wide variety of birds that can be observed in abundance in the area surrounding this beautiful lake in Bangalore will charm you.

Location: Outer Ring Road

Timings: 07:00 am to 08:00 pm; every day

Entry Fee: No entry fee

Boating charges: ₹ 20 per person

BE ONE WITH NATURE AT CUBBON PARK

Cubbon Park, located in the city's centre, is unquestionably one of Bangalore's most romantic spots. It's an exquisite setting for lovebirds, with meticulously constructed green spaces and wonderfully kept lawns.

Location: Kasturba Road

Timings: 06:00 am to 06:00 pm; closed on Mondays and second Tuesdays

Entry Fee: No fee

TAKE A MORNING WALK OR DO BOATING AT ULSOOR LAKE

Ulsoor Lake, with its several little islands and beautiful green environs encompassing over 120 acres, is an ideal area for

couples to go for an early morning walk while listening to soulful music. Alternatively, you might go for a pedal boat trip in the evening with your loved one and enjoy the lovely sunset. You may also relax in the recreation complex's swimming pool or participate in other gaming activities.

Location: Near MG Road

Timings: 06:00 am to 08:00 pm; closed on Wednesdays

Boating Charges

Motor Boat per person (maximum 8 person):

Rs. 20 per round

Peddle Boat 2 seater: ₹ 80 (30 minutes)

Peddle Boat 2 seater (with top): ₹ 100 (30 minutes)

Peddle Boat 4 seater: ₹ 100 (30 minutes)

Peddle Boat 4 seater (with top): ₹ 120 (30 minutes)

MICRO LIGHT FLYING

Want a ride in the sky, far above the garden city? Book yourself a microlight flight and allow your flight of fancy to fly you into the sky giving you a wonderful aerial view of the city. The experience is out of this world as you soar 4000 ft into blue skies. Here is a 10 minute hi-adrenaline experience that will spike your romance. The flight seats only 2 people and as one of you is the co-pilot, it is a magnificent adventure activity. The microlight flying experience at Jakkar, Bangalore is taken up under the guidance of an expert pilot who will fully brief you on the aircraft to ensure your safety and ensure a great flight experiercer.

Distance from Bangalore: 16 km

Best Time: September to March

Location: Hosakere Lakeside, Ramanagara

How to Reach: Since it is close to the city area, a private cab or private vehicle would be recommended.
 Timings: 10:00 AM - 05:30 PM
 Cost: Approx Rs 3000 and above depending on the season/-

ENGAGE IN 7D ENTERTAINMENT

We've all heard about three-dimensional. but these 7D flicks, which at first appear to be conventional 3D blockbusters, take you on a voyage that defies scientific explanation. What better way to spend this one-of-a-kind immersive journey than with the person you care about? You can visit:

- 7DVR Voyage: Garuda Mall
- 7DVoyage: Central Mall, Bellandur
- 7DMastii: Element Hall, Nagwara
- 7DMastiii: Forum Neighborhood Mall, Whitefield

All of these venues have one or more attractions that perform at various times throughout the day, with varying admission pricing. Have Fun at Lumbini Gardens Lumbini Gardens will undoubtedly be the game-changer, thanks to its tranquil atmosphere and fun-filled activities. Take a soak in its pool, go boating around the shores of Nagawara Lake, or try your hand at Jet skis and other water sports; Also don't forget to have your meal at the nearby floating restaurant.

- Location: Hebbal
- Timings: 11:00 am to 07:00 pm; every day
- Entry Fee: ₹ 50 per person

SHAKE A LEG WITH YOUR PARTNER AT A DANCE CLUB

Bangalore boasts the most popular dancing clubs, which are also popular with couples. So let your hair down, have a good time, and dance the night away with your special someone. We've compiled a list of some of Bangalore's must-see dancing clubs for couples:

Big Brewski (Sarjapur Road)

1. Timings: 12:30 pm to 01:00 am; every day
2. Cost for two: ₹1600 (approx.)

Pebble (Sadashiv Nagar)

1. Timings: 7:00 pm to 11:30 pm (Sunday to Thursday)



7:00 pm to 1:00 am (Fridays and Saturdays)
 Cost for two: ₹ 1500 (approx.)

Skye (Lavelle Road)

- Timings: 5:30 pm to 11:00 pm (Sunday to Thursday)
- 5:30 pm to 1:00 am (Fridays and Saturdays)
- Cost for two: ₹ 2500 (approx.)

Loft 38 (Indira Nagar)

- Timings:
 - a. 12:30 pm to 11:30 pm (Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday)
 - b. 12:30 pm to 12:30 am (Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday)
- Cost for two: ₹ 2100 (approx.)

Couples may have a great time in Bangalore because there are so many activities to do and locations to see.



STUNNING SECLUDED BEACHES FOR NEWLYWEDS

Watch out for these stunning secluded beaches in India for newlyweds

TT BUREAU

Newlyweds can hole up in these quiet beach getaways and sunbathe and swim, or head to a nearby coastal town to sample local cuisine and revel in quaint surroundings.

BETUL BEACH, GOA

Betul Beach is a small beach among Goa's beaches, located along the southern bank of the Sal River. Betul beach's serene beaches offer total seclusion for postnuptial relaxation. Swimming, strolling on the beach, and a perfect 'time-out' will be experiences you and your new spouse will never forget. And, of course, no trip would be complete without a private couples candle-lit dinner on the beach. Ever wanted to try your hand out at fishing? Then Betul beach is just the place to visit. The quiet Betul beach, often known as Goa's fishing beach, is

well-known for its secluded environment. Because the fishing port located nearby is fully developed, there is much to explore and enjoy beyond the beach.

KELVA BEACH, MAHARASHTRA

For a real treat, twosomes who want a private beach all to themselves, Kelva beach known by the names Kelve and Kelwa is the real deal. Kelwa Beach is located about 80 kilometres north of Mumbai.

This beach is in the Indian state of Maharashtra has many secluded areas although it is also a popular weekend destination for visitors from Mumbai, Gujarat, and the surrounding areas. The beach stretches for roughly 8 kilometers. This beach is perfect for people who love enjoying the beach without the crowds.





MANDVI BEACH, GUJARAT

The Mandvi beach is a golden-brown sand stretch that runs along with the southern point of Gujarat's Kutch district. It is located south of Bhuj, which is an important intersection. The quiet beach is a welcome addition to the town for visitors. With the sunset and the bustle of snack stalls and balloon sellers, the evenings are especially enjoyable. Explore these beautiful beaches without the hustling and bustling crowd.

Newlyweds who dream of spending their days on the water should consider celebrating their honeymoon in the secluded beach, where duos can cozy up in a hammock and sip fresh coconut water .

VALLIKUNNU BEACH, KERALA

Kerala offers some of the world's best beaches, which are serene, quiet, and enchanting. At the Vallikkunnu beach in Malappuram district, you can surf, tan, create sandcastles, or simply sift sand through your toes. The Kadalundi River and a beach resort built in the middle of a coconut grove are the main attractions here.

There is a beautiful Bird Sanctuary, which is only a short distance away where several hundred bird species can be found. Whimbrels and Brahminy Kites are an attraction and can be spotted. There is a wide variety of mussels, crabs, and fish to be enjoyed.

Known for its brilliant sunsets and languid waters, this lovely beach is tailor-made for newlyweds. Anything you do here will relax you and help you unwind.



CHANDIPUR BEACH, ODISHA

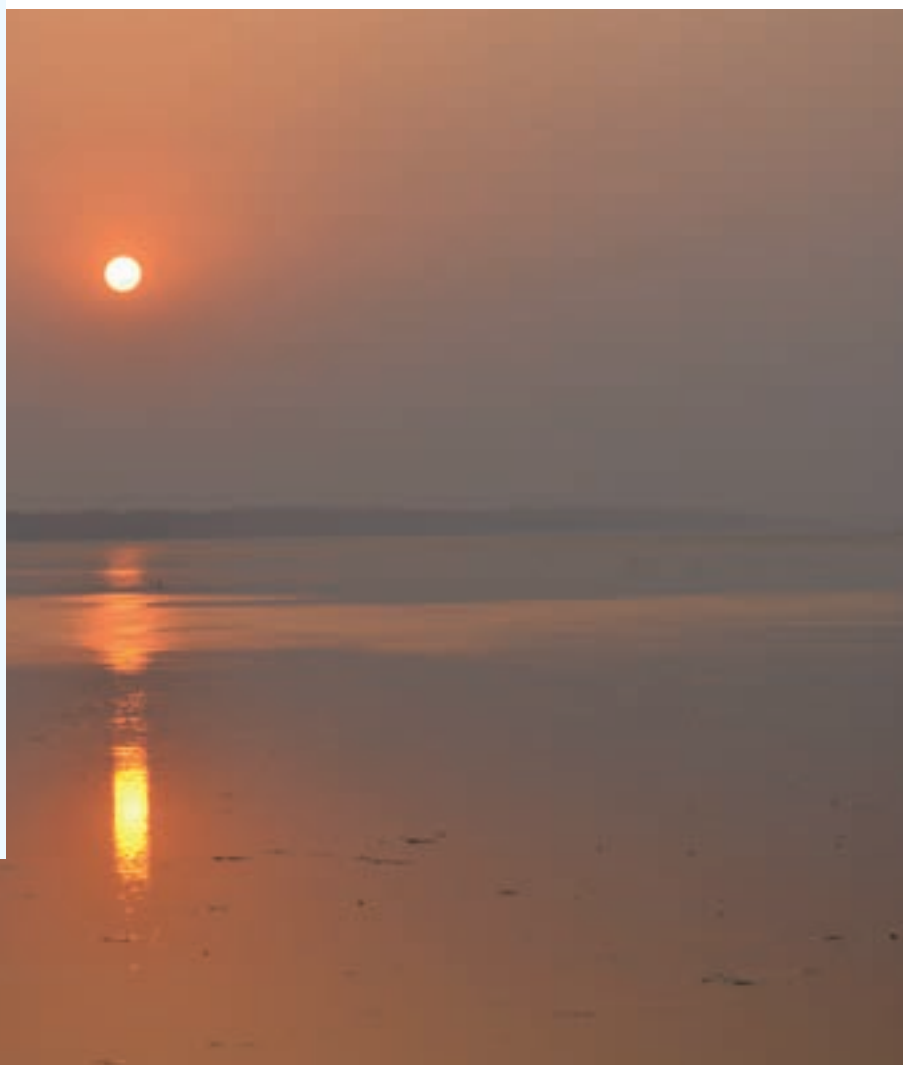
Chandipur Beach is unlike any other. The waters of the sea recede up to 5 km during low tides, allowing tourists to walk on the seabed. This one-of-a-kind phenomenon aids the beach's similarly one-of-a-kind biodiversity. Horseshoe crabs, starfish, and sea urchins, to name a few, can all be found there.

What's more, the 'Vanishing Sea' phenomenon occurs twice a day and when the waters recede at low tide, couples can grab the opportunity to walk into the sea, even ride a bike or drive a car! The very notion of being able to venture fearlessly into the seabed is an awesome experience.

The spectacular seashore lends an air of romance and idyll to Chandipur's unexplored coastline. Relaxing together on the soft white sands and watching the sea recede and advance with the tides is a memorable experience.

Whether you and your spouse are looking for a relaxing honeymoon or one filled with adventure, Chandipur Beach has you covered. Here, you can simply relax on soft powdery beaches or explore sand dunes, rocky coasts, verdant Casuarina groves or get a glimpse of a wide range of biodiversity - the rare Horseshoe crab and tiny red crabs to name a few.

The beach is well known for its seafood. Couples can try out the small beach shacks peppering the shore for mouthwatering Odisha-style fried prawns and pomfret.



KARAIKAL BEACH, PONDICHERRY

Karaikal Beach is a prominent beach in Karaikal, Puducherry U.T. It is located on the coast of Karaikal city in the Bay of Bengal. The Karaikal sandy beach is one of the most beautiful natural beaches in Tamil Nadu's south-eastern region. Activities such as kayaking, boating, and canoeing are among the many things to do at Karaikal Beach.

Couples can pass the time boating, filling up on wonderful local dishes, or simply sunbathing by the seaside. There are attractive seats made of trunks of trees by the walkway on one side and a lovely flowing river with fishing boats on the other. There are good lighting arrangements by the walkway which makes an evening stroll extremely attractive. When one has explored the beachfront, a trip to the mangrove trees on the backwaters is a delightful excursion.

TILMATI BEACH, KARNATAKA

Known for its special dark sandy beach, the Tilmati beach in Karwar is located in Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka. The beach is dubbed Tilmati because the sand looks like black sesame. The number of people visiting this beach is far lower than that of adjacent beaches. The beach is noted for its stunning sunsets and breathtaking views of the sea in the evenings. It's great for couples who want to spend some time relaxing and unwinding.



This beach is a great choice for honeymooners looking for both relaxation and adventure. There is a lovely 1 km hike to Majali Village as couples cross a small stream, then climb a small hill with the Arabian Sea on one side.

During the day, couples can walk to Majali Village to enjoy activities like kayaking, rowing, pedaling, and nature walks. There is also the chance of taking a romantic boat trip. Adventure activities include rock climbing, dolphin watching, bird watching, and a cruise ride.

ELLIOT BEACH, TAMIL NADU

Because of the presence of the elite society and government bureaucrats, Elliot Beach is regarded as a good and clean stretch of beach. Within a one-km radius of Velankanni Church, the Karl Schmidt Memorial, and Arupadai Veedu Temple, this is a relatively busier beach with visitors going to this beach near the Marina. This is a popular area for visitors to spend their evening hours.

Enjoy beautiful ocean views and many architectural wonders like the Ashtalakshmi Temple and the Velankanni Shrine. Couples can try the many tasty treats at local snack stalls and restaurants serving great South Indian cuisine.

KILTAN BEACH, LAKSHADWEEP

Here is a coral paradise of the Lakshadweep archipelago that is a tropical fantasy in a brilliant blue sea. On the international trade route between the Persian Gulf and Sri Lanka, the uninhabited Island of Kiltan is located 51 km northeast of Amini Island.

A high storm beach can be seen on the island's northern and southern ends. The island is lush with vegetation and fertile. In Kiltan, the summer nights are warmer, and it is common for



people to sleep outside their homes, on the beaches. You too can step into the wild side, and sleep outside on the sand as you say hello to the stars.

The beach offers the best of both worlds: a laid-back setting and great local food with different appeals to a different kind of couple. Relax on this beautiful beach and enjoy the folk dances and culture of the inhabitants.

WANDOOR BEACH, ANDAMAN, AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

A picture-perfect destination, Wandoor beach is located 25 km from the airport and is one of Port Blair's most secluded destinations. The beach itself is isolated and can only be reached by travelling down winding roads through the woods. The trip to the beach is spectacular because you're occasionally greeted by a sudden jump of wide blue sea visible through the forest canopy.

With colourful corals to explore, natural caves carved by high tides to tour and trails to hike, the Wandoor beach is a great place to vacation with your new spouse. Couples can sprawl across miles of shoreline or enjoy short treks through the thickets or just walk along a scenic shoreline.

Newlyweds who desire privacy can feel perfectly comfortable in the wide expanse of the seaside with no one else for long distances. An occasional swim in the calm blue waters is truly refreshing, and there are changing rooms and sit-outs built for visitors.



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AMAZING ANDAMAN - COOL UNDERWATER EXPERIENCES



Clownfish in Sea Anemone

Explore the magic of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands - a dream destination on the bucket list of people across the globe

ANURAG KAREKAR

Rich history, nature, and culture are what pulls and attract tourists. The history and culture of the various tribes, the coral reefs, tropical forest, endemic and rare wildlife, extraordinary geological features - there is so much to explore. It makes Andaman a place to visit again and again. When I came to these islands as a

Naturalist, I realized that extraordinary wildlife was visible on every beach yet there were no activities curated to experience marine life in the field with its explanation. You may watch the dazzling corals and flamboyant marine animals in scuba dive and snorkelling but yet tourists are left with no understanding of what corals are and what are the threats they are facing.

What are sea sponges, clams and how are they and the other million filter-feeding animals in the reef responsible for the crystal clear water of Andamans?

Tourists can be powerful agents of change and development for a destination like Andaman, but if they do not learn about these delicate ecosystems that made their travel experience magical then they won't be custodians for its protection.

Activity centre at Seashell Resort in Havelock Island aka Swaraj Dweep, I take the tourist first through the Mangrove which is home to Kingfishers, Hermit Crabs, Fiddler Crabs.

Here I explain and show how the mangrove protects the coast, its unique evolutionary characters, and its medical uses. Next, we reach the Sea Grass Patches where guests can find juveniles of various species of fish, fish that breathe out of the water, adorable little pygmy squids, Gubby fish, and



Fiddler Crab

Hence I curated an experience where guests would get a first-hand interactive experience of exciting fauna. These experiences include Marine trails, Sting ray Watch, and Snorkeling with sea turtles.

Marine Trail is an activity that happens during the low tide so the moon decides what time we do this activity. Andaman has fringing reefs which have an inner reef flat and a reef edge. So these Inner reef flats get exposed during low tide and sort of small pools and lagoons are left behind. Tourists can explore these walking in as shallow as just ankle-deep waters. You can watch a nature documentary unfold live in front of you!

These beaches also have Mangroves by the shore. So on my Marine trails that I conduct for the newly created Ecotourism



Pygmy Squid



Hermit

Snapping shrimps living together in burrows. Explaining how these habitats are crucial nurseries and protective havens for Juvenile marine animals.

For all the fish that live out in the open ocean, these habitats of mangroves, Seagrasses, and rocky reefs are necessary. As we reach the reef the sea stars, Sea cucumbers in all shapes, sizes, and colours, Clams and Christmas tree worms in dazzling colours that would make even fashion designers at MET Gala jealous, Crabs, Mantis shrimps, and many more lifeforms which are alien to most people make an appearance.

During Full moon and New Moon weeks, special versions of the trail are possible as we can venture into the reef during the night. The animals seen during this time are seldom

seen. Brittle stars that hide under the rocks in the day come out. Cowries, Cone snails, Crabs prowling in search of their prey. Decorator crabs which are masters of camouflage hide in plain sight, and on a rare occasion, you will see Octopus too.

But that's not it yet. The real magic begins when we take out the UV torches! Under this light, Corals and Sea anemones light up in neon colours, making the Reef reminiscent of a Rave party. After 3 years of regularly conducting this activity still till date, we are finding new species of sea anemones and other animals along with the guests, some of which have puzzled even the Marine researcher friends of mine.

These are scenes of Clown Fish living in Sea Anemones, a Hermit crab carrying Sea anemones on their back, and so on.

Then there is the Sting Ray. Watch one of the rarest activities we have curated as this happens only at a specific tide, time and beach. Vijay Nagar beach of Havelock has a very gentle sandy and seagrass bed beach. This beach is home to many tiny shrimps and crabs. Where there is prey there will be its predators which on this beach are baby Stingrays.

The discovery of the presence of Stingrays was accidental and has a funny story. This beach in the day is often frequented by tourists, and one of those tourists was my father, who accidentally dropped his ring in the water. In the hope of spotting it during low tide, we returned with torches in search of the low tide.

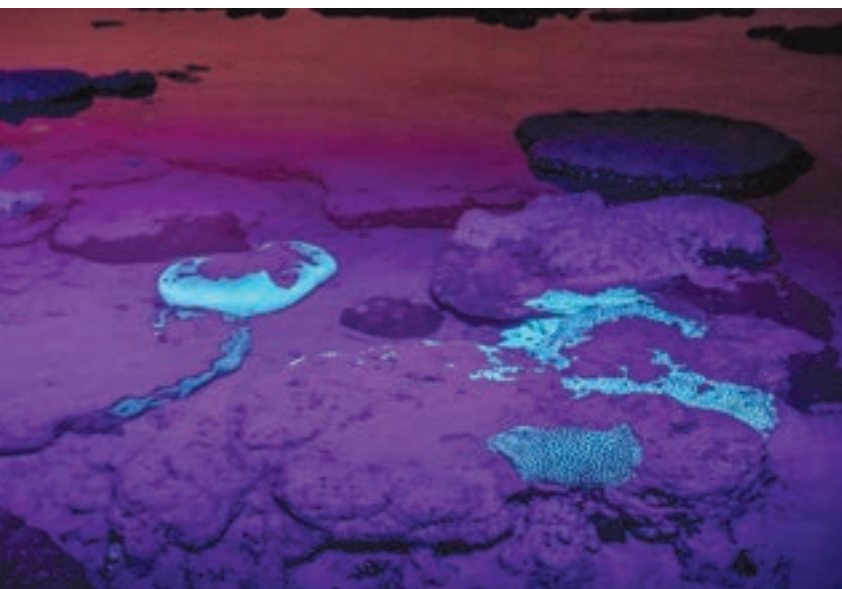
But the water hadn't receded completely so we had no luck with the ring, but as we were returning my sister was looking at the billions of stars in the dark sky while I looked at the skrimps skipping on water. As she was about to take her next step I pulled her back and brought her attention to a baby stingray that she was about to step on!

I was thrilled about that sighting, I wondered was it pure luck or had I stumbled on the habitat of many baby stingrays like it. After a couple of repeated observations, the hypothesis was confirmed and I knew this beach was home to many different varieties of Stingrays. And that was the beginning of a new thrilling activity.

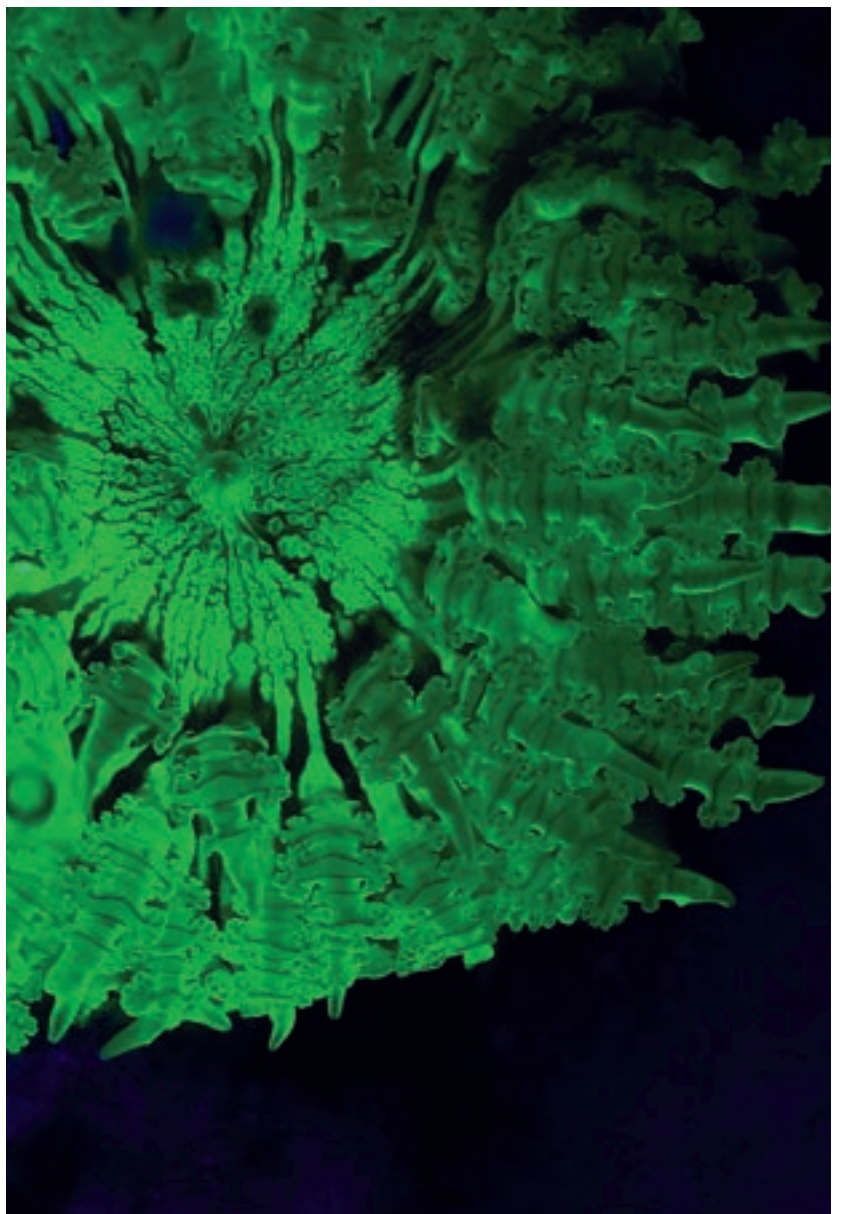
Now there are many myths, misconceptions, and fears about these animals in the minds of the people and that's



Christmas Tree



Biofluorescence of Corals



Rock Flower Sea Anemone

exactly what I tackle and educate about in these trials. These animals are completely defensive in nature and do not deserve to be feared. When rules are followed and necessary care is taken, one can experience these rare animals without diving or snorkelling up close.

The best part of these trails and activities is that you don't need any special gear, equipment, Training of scuba, or Swimming abilities for any of these experiences. If you can walk you can enjoy these activities. So from kids to the elderly, anyone can avail this opportunity.

Then for thrill-seekers, there is Snorkeling in Search of Sea Turtles. Now Snorkeling is not new to the islands but if one understands animal behaviour and habitats one can increase their chances of spotting sea turtles. I am that someone. On the far side of the famous Radhanagar beach are seagrass patches adjacent to the beach.

These underwater pastures attract Green Sea turtles. During the snorkelling trip, we explore and scan this region for the turtles. If lucky, we can spot the Turtle, sometimes once, sometimes more than once, and sometimes none. After that,



Feather Duster Worm

we head to the reef where we watch a plethora of fish species, big and colourful Sea Stars, cute Pufferfishes - sometimes if lucky we can see Octopus, Adult sting rays etc.

These are the exciting ways one can watch the marine wonders.

(Anurag Karekar is a professional Nature Interpreter and Activity Centre Manager of Seashell Resort in Havelock Andaman Islands and has curated some brand new ecotourism activities on Havelock Island. People can observe live interactions between various symbiotic species and the exciting phenomenon of Biofluorescence.)



Guest on a Snorkeling trip



Octopus

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FOOD


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My little
MYSTERY!

RAJASTHAN

THERE'S MORE TO RAJASTHANI FOOD THAN HEAVENLY GHEWAR

The food of warrior kings and brave queens? Rajasthani food is known for its iconic and distinct features which reflect the warrior ethos and history that this state is known for

TT BUREAU



Ker Sangri

Here is a food history that tells its own story in the ingredients and spices used and offered to guests as they sample the wonderful aromas and tastes of royal kitchens and local specialties.

Rajasthani food is the cuisine of North-West India's mountainous Rajasthan area. It was influenced by both the residents' warlike habits and the scarcity of ingredients in this dry location. It boasts delectable dishes that will make your mouth water. While Ghewar is already known as a global signature dish from Rajasthan, there's more to Rajasthan food than this delicious crispy and porous, traditional sweet associated with Rajasthan Festivals. For the uninitiated foodie, Ghewar is a disc-shaped, handmade sweet cake with flour and soaked in sugar syrup.

foods in ways that captivate the senses and delight the palate. One such typical combo is a dish of sweet Churma, spicy Dal, and Baati. A fantastic companion to Churma is fresh Baatis dunked in scorching hot Dal.

MOHAN MAAS- Mohan Maas, a non-vegetarian meal from Rajasthan that is also one of the spiciest, falls in between Laal Maas and Safed Maas from the same region. The colour that this meal achieves just via the use of a variety of chillies astounds everyone. It was once considered a Royal dish, but nowadays it has won over tastebuds and local restaurants whip up this dish for guests to appreciate this delectable preparation. Special food tip: Top the Mohan Maas with fresh coriander and a dollop of cream.



Dal Bati Churma

SPECIALTIES OF RAJASTHANI FOOD

Here are some amazing specialties of Rajasthani food and some dishes for you to try on your trip to Rajasthan.

DAL BATI CHURMA- It's a classic Rajasthani food made with Dal, Bati (wheat rolls), and Churma (powdered wheat balls). Rajasthanis are known for combining sweet and savoury



Mohan Mass



Pyaaz Ki Kachori

PYAAZ KI KACHORI- Rajasthani food is known for its Pyaaz ki Kachori. It's a deep-fried snack recipe made with simple flour and onion stuffing that's crunchy and flaky. It can be eaten for breakfast or as a late-night snack. Pyaaz ki Kachori has achieved an iconic street food status and is often served as a street snack among other chaat cuisines. It is often made well in advance and served with Chutney and Sev toppings.

KER SANGRI- Ker Sangri is a traditional Rajasthani food cooked from a blend of dry beans and berries found in the state. It's frequently prepared as a spicy dry vegetable. Chefs also add a little bit of sweetness to the spice. Ker Sangri's richness is enhanced by the inclusion of raisins in the preparation. The dish goes well with Kadhi, Phulkas, and Steamed Rice, not to mention the ghee.

GATTE KI SABJI- Here is a delicious traditional Rajasthani curry recipe made with besan sausages cooked in a spicy yogurt-based stew, and it's usually made without tomatoes or onions, using curd as the main ingredient. Gatta or Gatte (plural) are roundels made from Gramme flour (Besan) that are served with a curd-based sauce. Gatte ki Sabji can be served with Roti, Parathas, Jowar Roti, or Bajra Roti. This Besan ki Sabji goes well with steaming Rice or Jeera Rice.



Gatte ki Sabji

MALPUA- Malpua is a sweet pancake that may be found in Rajasthan, Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, and Maharashtra. It is also popular and widely produced in Nepal and Bangladesh, two adjacent countries. After each religious function or auspicious day, Malpua and Kheer are offered as a tradition. Malpua is available in a variety of styles and flavours. Malpua is eaten with Kheer after being fried and dipped in sugar syrup.



Laal Mass

LAAL MAAS- The most famous Rajasthani food that is now almost cosmopolitan in its availability across the country and even globally is Laal Maas. This is a preparation of Mutton cooked with Ginger-Garlic paste, yogurt, turmeric, and other spices. It's designed to be spicy, and it's produced using a mix of Kashmiri red chillies and other traditional Rajasthani spices. In Rajasthan, this dish is frequently the main dish for important occasions and festivals. This fiery dish goes well with hot whole wheat parathas and jeera pulao on the side.

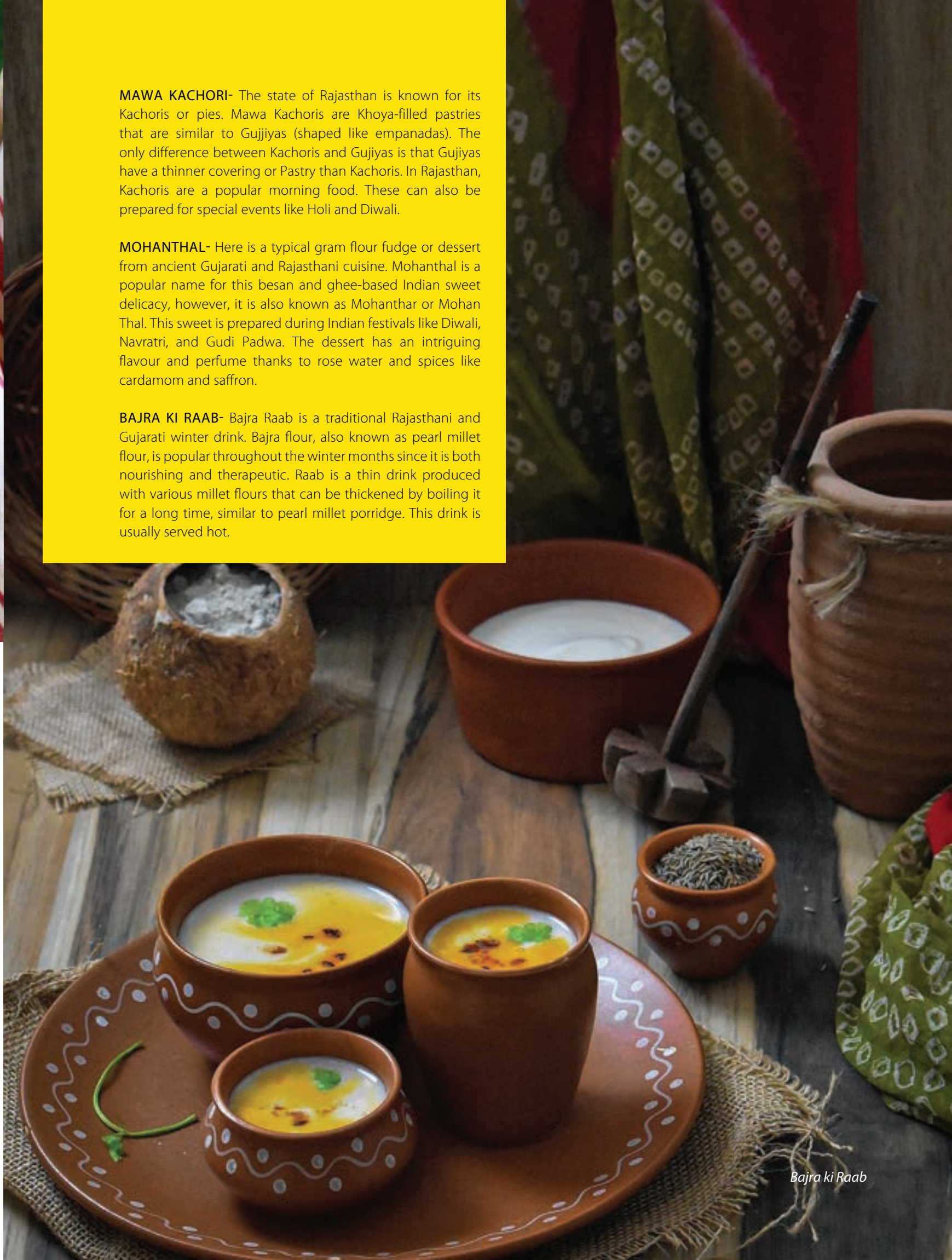


Mal Pua

MAWA KACHORI- The state of Rajasthan is known for its Kachoris or pies. Mawa Kachoris are Khoya-filled pastries that are similar to Gujjiyas (shaped like empanadas). The only difference between Kachoris and Gujjiyas is that Gujjiyas have a thinner covering or Pastry than Kachoris. In Rajasthan, Kachoris are a popular morning food. These can also be prepared for special events like Holi and Diwali.

MOHANTHAL- Here is a typical gram flour fudge or dessert from ancient Gujarati and Rajasthani cuisine. Mohanthal is a popular name for this besan and ghee-based Indian sweet delicacy, however, it is also known as Mohanthar or Mohan Thal. This sweet is prepared during Indian festivals like Diwali, Navratri, and Gudi Padwa. The dessert has an intriguing flavour and perfume thanks to rose water and spices like cardamom and saffron.

BAJRA KI RAAB- Bajra Raab is a traditional Rajasthani and Gujarati winter drink. Bajra flour, also known as pearl millet flour, is popular throughout the winter months since it is both nourishing and therapeutic. Raab is a thin drink produced with various millet flours that can be thickened by boiling it for a long time, similar to pearl millet porridge. This drink is usually served hot.



Bajra ki Raab

THERE'S MORE TO KERALA FOOD THAN YUMMY APPAM

Check out these amazing Kerala dishes that will suit your taste buds and leave you wanting more

TT BUREAU

Kerala food is inextricably related to the state's history, geography, demography, and culture. Because many Hindus in Kerala are vegetarians by religion, and because the state contains a large minority of Muslims and Christians who are generally non-vegetarians, Kerala cuisine offers a wide variety of vegetarian and non-vegetarian foods.

PUTTU- Puttu is a breakfast meal popular in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and parts of Karnataka in South India, as well as Sri Lanka. In Tamil and Malayalam, puttu means "portioned." It's made of steamed ground rice cylinders stacked with coconut shavings, and it's sometimes filled with a sweet or savoury filling. Puttu is best served hot or heated with kadala curry, vegetable stew, or potato stew.

RAMASSERY IDLI- Idlis are a traditional south Indian breakfast dish. Idlis are steamed foods that are both healthy and light. The Ramassery idli is traditionally produced only using rice



from Palakkad, cooked in a muslin-covered clay pot, then de-moulded with a particular leaf that imparts a faint smell to the rice cake. They make a complete meal when served with Sambar and Chutney and can be eaten at any time of day.





MUTTON ULARTHIYATHU- Malayalam word Erachi Ularthiyathu means toasted. Mutton pieces are cooked in freshly ground spices and sautéed with onions and coconut slices before being slowly roasted to a dark brown colour and flavour. This is another popular Thattukada (Kerala's version of fast food) and Kallushap/Toddy Shop dish. This Kerala Style Mutton Roast goes nicely with kuthari choru (Kerala Red Rice) or practically any parotta, appam, or roti/paratha you can think of.



CHEMMEEN MOILEE- Kerala Style Chemmeen Moilee Recipe - Shrimp Meal is a comforting curry made with creamy coconut milk and shrimp. Moilee is a popular meal in Kerala, and it's cooked using a variety of fish.

The whole spices like cardamom pods, cinnamon sticks, and whole peppercorns give this curry a powerful flavour without the addition of tamarind. With Steamed Rice or Kerala Parotta and Cabbage Thoran, serve the Kerala Style Chemmeen Moilee Recipe.



THALASSERY BIRYANI-Thalassery biryani or Malabar biryani hails from Kerala's Malabar region and is known for its distinct scent and flavour, which derives from an unusual rice variety known as Jeerakasala. Unlike other popular biryanis, which are cooked with basmati rice, thalassery biryani is made with a premium quality short grain rice called in Kerala as kaima rice or biryani rice. With onion raita, serve Malabar biryani.



PAAL PAYASAM- Paal Payasam, also known as Rice Kheer, is a traditional Indian festive meal served during festivals all over the country.

Paal Payasam is a rich rice pudding cooked by slowly boiling rice with milk and sugar until a pudding-like consistency is achieved. After the Chettinad Vegetable Biryani Recipe and Tomato Onion Cucumber Raita, serve the Paal Payasam Recipe (Rice Kheer/ Pudding) as a warming dessert.



KOZHI PERALAN- Kerala Chicken Roast, also known as Malabar Chicken Peralan or Kozhi Peralan in the region, is a popular dry chicken roast from Kerala, India.

This is a recipe for a spicy dry chicken roast. It's a traditional Kerala dish. It's particularly well-liked among the Malayali Christian community. It's commonly served with Dal and Rice, Bisibela Bhat, or plain chapatis and a side of curry.

ADA PRADHAMAN- Ada Pradhaman is a Kerala Rice Ada Pudding with Jaggery and Coconut Milk that is traditionally offered as a dessert during Kerala's Onam celebration. Ada is made from ribbon-shaped dried rice flakes that have been soaked in hot water and then cooked slowly in jaggery and coconut milk. Onam Sadhya is incomplete without this traditional dessert (traditional meal). Serve Ada Pradhaman warm or cold with a Kerala- style Onam dinner.



KURUMULAKU KANJI-

Kurumulaku Kanji, also known as Pepper Porridge, is a delectable meal with roots in Kerala's traditional cuisine. After the third day of conveyance, this planning is usually recommended to ladies, and it should be done every day for a month. It's a filling supper with the perfect balance of flavour and health.



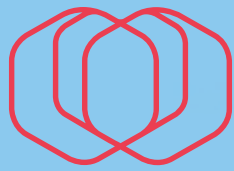
ALLEPPEY FISH CURRY-

Alleppey fish curry, also known as Paccha Mange keen Curry or Thenga Paal Meen Curry, is a sour Kerala fish curry made with raw mangoes or tamarind. It's traditionally prepared in a Chatty, a Keralite earthen pot. It's cooked in coconut milk with raw mango and spices, which give the dish its distinct flavour and tanginess. Serve the fish curry hot with brown rice.



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*Christmas
Gingerbread*

XMAS DESSERTS TO WOW THE WORLD

As we approach the end of the year, it is time to get cozy with friends, enjoying our favourite Christmas desserts and music besides the fireplace

TT BUREAU

Children get ecstatic when they hear stories of Santa Claus leaving them with treasures. The most beautiful treasure is the memories of family get-togethers and Christmas desserts made each year with our family and friends. For adults, it is a time to take a week-long break and bond with the family and of course close friends. The festive season in December calls for

scrumptious treats and elegant Christmas desserts. Travelling to a destination where Christmas holds significant value, don't forget to try these limited-time period treats. Otherwise, you might have to wait until next year to fully enjoy the atmosphere and these scrumptious full-scale or mini Christmas desserts.. Gluttony shall take over and once done you may beg for recipes of popular Christmas desserts.

BIBINGKA, PHILIPPINES: Bibingka, a sort of sweet, glutinous rice cake is eaten lovingly during the Christmas season. This delicacy is prepared by families from September onwards in the Philippines.

The tasty cakes were at first introduced as contributions to pre-pilgrim divine beings or were given as gifts to respected visitors. Today, bibingka is a sought-after delight among Filipinos, who regularly have it for breakfast or just after the nine-day sunrise masses during special times of the year. One of the famous festive Christmas desserts is likewise shared in the Christian-larger part spaces of Indonesia.

BUNUELOS, MEXICO: This light, firm, sweet dessert is an adored treat in Mexico during the Christmas season, a tradition brought by the Spanish colonizers. Made of seared batter, buñuelos are then sprinkled with sugar or absorbed piloncillo syrup (produced using natural sweetener).

The formula and shape change from one state to another. For example, in Veracruz, they come in various flavours, like yam, pumpkin, or almond, and some are little balls or doughnuts seared in grease and tidied with sugar. In other Latin American nations, like Colombia, buñuelos are ball-molded and loaded up with cheddar. These Christmas desserts come together with laughter and family bonding.



Colombia Bakery Buñuelos



Rose Cookies



KAHK, EGYPT: In Egypt, making kakh (which implies treats) is just about as old as the pharaohs. Drawings and motifs portraying ladies making kakh were discovered etched on the dividers of pharaonic sanctuaries in the ancient cities of Thebes and Memphis. On occasions, kakh were frequently loaded down with dates and figs. Today the shortbread-like treats, engraved with a mathematical example, are made with an assortment of stuffings – dates, pistachios, pecans – or flavoured with cinnamon, cloves, and ginger, and some of the time likewise fennel seeds, anise seeds, and mahlab (the seed of an acrid lively pit).

ROSE COOKIES, INDIA: This conventional delicacy is highly sought after during Christmas in the Indian territory of Goa, which was introduced by the Portuguese 500 years ago.

Referred to in Portuguese and Goan as rose de coque, rose treats are not treats at everything except rather singed batter injected with cardamom and vanilla. They are also called rose cookies because of the inclusion of coconut milk in the batter.

In Mangalore it is known as 'Kokkisan' and in Kerala as 'Acchappam'. The rose cookies are named such because they look like roses not in color but in terms of the floral pattern. The shape comes from using Rosette irons which are available in various shapes and sizes.

MALVA PUDDING: Malva pudding, or malvapoeding in Afrikaans, is a rich and sweet cake well established in South Africa's Cape Dutch culture. While not arranged only for Christmas, but it's desired to be eaten during unique events too. Otherwise called lekker (which means heavenly) pudding, the conventional sweet is embraced by all South Africans.

It's decorated with apricot jam and a little malt or balsamic vinegar, which give the treat a caramelized surface. Some fixing varieties incorporate ginger, liquor, or potentially Amarula alcohol. After heating, the cake is then doused with a rich sauce while still hot. This is critical, as the cake ingests the sauce while cooling, transforming into a tasty pudding. The pastry is a traditional Christmas dessert. in Cape Town.



Cape Malva Pudding by HarshLight

STOLLEN, GERMANY: An authentic German symbol, this conventional cake-like food created from ground bread covered in icing sugar started in Dresden. In the Middle Ages, stollen was a hard bread made of oats, flour and water.

With time, the story goes, the Vatican allowed bakers to utilize other rich ingredients like raisins, marzipan, and candy-coated orange strip —that were once illegal during Advent — to make their Christmas bread. Nonetheless, the pastry specialists needed to pay a fine just as a token to their ruler. On one occasion this was with an inexorably enormous stollen, the biggest, in 1730, weighing an amazing 1.8 tons. The stollen custom continues at the yearly Dresden Stollenfest, occurring

on the Saturday before the subsequent Advent which always takes place in the month of December.

BEIGLI, HUNGARY: This sweet, roll-moulded is baked with a thick, swirly filling of poppy seeds or pecans is a Christmas delicacy in Hungary. Beigli traces back to age-old customs in which both poppy seeds and pecans had their emblematic importance: pecan gave assurance against wizardry spells or reviles, while poppy seeds, imported by the Ottomans, implied flourishing. Beigli's cousin, flódni, is a Jewish-Hungarian pastry stacked with layers of apple, pecan, and poppy seeds.

The omnipresent Christmas treat as it is realized today came to Hungary in the latter half of the nineteenth century, during the Austro-Hungarian Empire. At first prepared uniquely in the home as a family custom, beigli at last spread to cukrászdas, or confectionaries.

BABKA, POLAND: There are numerous heavenly euphoric sweets in Poland. Babka is one of the most notable. This Chocolate Almond Babka is sweet with chocolate filling and sprinkled with squashed almonds.

Babka is generally eaten on vacations and gifted to friends and family notably on Easter and Christmas. It is a soft dense cross between a cake and a break. The dough takes the form of a loaf and is filled with raisins, currants, rum, and walnuts. A soft bite is bombarded with crunchiness, your mouth bubbles up and continues to do so.

Xmas Cake Pudding

Glazed Gingerbread Christmas Pastries



Stollen Tunnel Cake



Bibingka



Gingerbread



CHRISTMAS CAKE AND GINGERBREAD TREATS:

The conventional British Christmas Cake is served all through England (and in numerous other Western nations throughout the planet) during the Christmas season. English Christmas includes moist zante currants, sultanas (golden raisins), and raisins that have been soaked in brandy, rum, whisky, or Sherry. After the cake has taken shape, it is time for the icing to give the season effect and decorated with ribbons, small eatable Christmas trees, and stars.

The Scottish variation of the traditional Christmas cake is called the whiskey Dundee which is made from scotch whiskey. This makes the cake very fluffy and fluttery along with delicate flavors of candied peel, raisins, sultanas, etc.

Both Christmas cake and a conventional Christmas pudding are well known in many areas of the planet, adjusting this British culture into their customs.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING: This quintessential British dessert originated in Medieval England as a porridge called "frumenty." Over time, this thick gruel would include bread, dried fruits such as prunes (which were referred to as plums), and spices.

It became the dish we know today during England's Victorian era, where it would go from being boiled in a cloth to getting shaped in a mould and being given the name Christmas Pudding in a recipe by 19th-century cookbook author Eliza Acton. Christmas pudding is also part of a centuries-old custom known as "Stir-up Sunday."

This tradition, which falls on the last Sunday before Advent, promotes spending some serious time in the kitchen to prepare for the classic Christmas desserts feast.

COLOURS OF INDIA

The “Colours of India” from an artist perspective is an attempt at connecting pixel by pixel digitally showcasing the diversity of India’s

SARTHAK PALWANKAR

Sarthak Palwankar presents his artworks which he made recently keeping ‘My India’ as a theme where he paints some unique places across India including Albert Hall Museum, The Golden Temple, Varanasi Ghat, the Sihagad fort, and the Dal lake.

“This is a tribute to the place I come from. I wish to share these artworks with a greater audience so more people can appreciate the beauty and vividness of this land,” he shares.

THE ALBERT HALL MUSEUM-JAIPUR

I was fascinated by the incredible detail and the facade as it is an example of Indo-Saracenic architecture. It just defines the word Royal to me. Everything is grand about

this museum keeping that in mind I wanted to emphasize depicting external and internal beauty as well so I choose a cool background colour and added warmth by the lighted interiors and the elements such as birds and horse carriage add to its beauty.

THE GOLDEN TEMPLE-AMRITSAR

The Golden Temple is spiritually the most significant shrine in Sikhism covered in gold foil and surrounded by a man-made pool, It is believed that Lord Buddha used to meditate at this sacred site. The facade is shining in the gleaming ray of light. Just in the backdrop are the stratus clouds. The painting has a meaning stating that in your darkest days don’t lose hope



Colours of India The Albert Hall Museum-Jaipur Sarthak Palwankar

because every dark cloud has a silver lining and God will shower you with his blessings.

VARANASI GHAT -BANARAS

Located on the shores of the holiest River Ganges, this place is most lively during early mornings and at night. There are 88 ghats, the most popular ones being the Assi Ghat, Chet Singh Ghat, Darbhanga Ghat, Dashashwamedh Ghat, Manmandir Ghat, and Manikarnika Ghat to name a few. In the early morning fog, the view across the ghats creates a mesmerizing aura which is an ideal setting for artists, photographers, and the travellers. The stillness of the water, the boats, the reflection, and the pandits performing rituals and praying to the Sun God are easy to capture.



Colours of India The Golden Temple Sarthak Palwankar

SINHAGAD FORT-PUNE

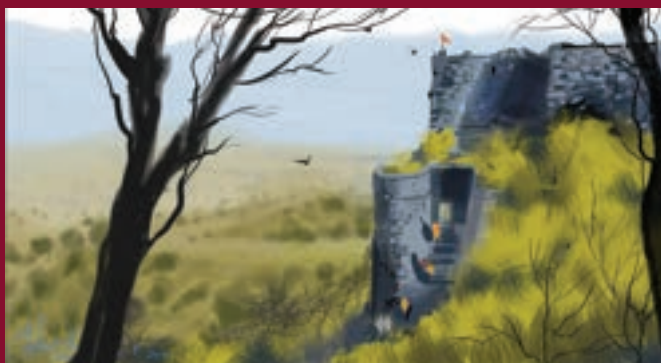
Located approx 40 km from Pune Maharashtra. It is at a strategic location at a height surrounded by steep valleys and arid terrain. There are two gates to the fort. The battle of Sinhagad was the most famous battle fought by Tanaji Malusare. It is said that the steep cliffs of the fort were scaled by the Marathas using tamed monitor lizards against the Mughals during which Tanaji lost his life but the fort was captured.

DAL LAKE -SRINAGAR, JAMMU & KASHMIR

The Dal Lake locally is also known as the jewel of Srinagar as a major attraction for tourists, travel enthusiasts, and nature lovers. The famous houseboats are moored on the shores and the mirror-like reflections over the water of the place is a sight to see, The most popular time to visit is between June to August where the weather is pleasant.



Colours of India Varanasi Ghat -Banaras Sarthak Palwankar



Colours of India Sinhagad Fort-Pune Sarthak Palwankar



Colours of India Dal Lake - Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir Sarthak Palwankar

HOTEL FUTURAMA IS AN ABSOLUTE MUST-READ

Rajinder Mohan Bhatia's Hotel Futurama is a remarkable book about a hotel that we hope to see in the future

TT BUREAU



Futurama : noun: a preview of something that is not yet a reality: indication of potential. True to its name, the book was written ahead of its time around 2008 and the original manuscript slated the story to take place in the year 2015, but the year 2015 came and went and the hotels are yet to advance to this stage as on date.

Part of Hotel Futurama's predictions are now coming true for hospitality and yet so much more has to be adapted in technology. It took a pandemic to start many aspects in motion like mobile phone access, facial recognition, and digitalization of menu cards, sensor taps in guest rooms, to say the least. The setting has therefore pushed the story into 2025.

Like the name of the Hotel – Futurama – the actual hotels are somewhat there but not yet a reality. But in the Hotel Futurama we get a glimpse of the future, and yet with technology changing faster than we can imagine, would there be an actual hotel like this or it would always not yet be a reality?

The Hotel is situated in San Francisco and tells the story of Rajinder Mohan Bhatia (Raj) (as the author himself, a renowned hotelier) who visits the hotel to understand its USP and explore this technologically advanced mini-city of a hotel.

Rajinder Mohan Bhatia takes you through the journey of a 3-day stay at Hotel Futurama. It is an eye-opener of what can be. From his experience at the reception to the exploration of a hotel as a mini-city, every part of it is a journey into a possible future.

There are several other interesting stories on different topics
Love Is Blind: If love is blind then what makes us perceive love?
Lucky Charm: Would you consider a successful thief lucky?

The Marriage Proposal: How many proposals for marriage have been made too late in anticipation of the right time, would you give up, or

The Withering Flower : To what extent will a father go for his daughter's happiness?

All this and more in delightful stories by Rajinder Mohan Bhatia are presented for the reader to enjoy.

About the Author: Rajinder Mohan Bhatia (fondly known as Raj Bhatia or R.M.) (1939-2020)

Rajinder Mohan Bhatia lived his life in Gujranwala, Delhi, Singapore, Mumbai, and Gurgaon but travelled across the world extensively in his life. The early years of his career were spent with the Oberoi Group of Hotels. It was his 15 years with the Oberoi Group that enabled him to travel and get exposure to the best of hotels in the world. His passion for hospitality grew. He was part of purchasing and starting many hotel properties with Mr Oberoi himself. He travelled widely across the globe absorbing and reflecting on many life experiences.

Thereafter he started a Consultancy service: "United Hospitality Services". His hobbies included sports like tennis and squash, reading, and later in life penning down his stories, views and creating a well-known e-newsletter called "United Newsletter" which he diligently sent out every month to an email list of several hundred in the hospitality industry, friends and family.

It was in this newsletter that the book - Hotel Futurama (earlier under the title "Hotel Bill Gate") was born and became so popular that he was asked to repeat the series.

Besides Hotel Futurama, there are interesting stories on life experiences – love, marriage, temptation, the daily survival of a street dog, and an employee's unwavering love for his work and trust that puts him in a precarious situation and changes his destiny. One of the longer stories, a short novel in itself "Ten Days After My Death" has quotes after each chapter that lead you into a family saga after the Head of the family passes away suddenly.

He quotes Abraham Lincoln: "The people when rightly and fully trusted will return the trust"

Unfortunately, Rajinder Mohan Bhatia could not release it as a book in his lifetime and so his children, Ritu and Rachna, have taken the onus to make true his dream of publishing his book. While reading the book I virtually felt as if I was accompanying him on the trip and experiencing the hotel being described. Many hoteliers will find this book interesting and so will the students undergoing courses in Hotel Operations."

His love for books and travelling, was also passed on to both me and my sister. From reading stories to telling stories and writing stories, his memory lives on and I hope you will enjoy them as much as we have.

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