

# Aerocity LIVE

GMR AEROCITY MAGAZINE

TRAVEL, WORK & DINE



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PERSPECTIVES



**Kamal Kant Pant**

Principal, IHM Pusa on diversity  
being in the DNA of hospitality



**Executive Chef**

**Amit Kumar's**

Journey from Motihari to Airtel



**Deepika Verma**

Vice President, Kristal Ja



**Mukul Singhal**

Co-Founder & Partner,  
Pravega Ventures



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## AEROCITY, EPITOME OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

How this modern and cosmopolitan  
ecosystem of hospitality involves  
visitors from all backgrounds while  
providing equal opportunities for all

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# Aerocity's Inclusive Ethos

**ANNURAG BATRA***anurag.batra@businessworld.in*

I often thank the modern corporate culture for helping us overcome many of the deep-seated notions we harboured for long. Notions of superiority based on colour, caste, region, religion and gender were so ingrained, we not only didn't question them, we laughed along when popular movies made fun of people who were different from us. Any difference became a subject of caricature.

I salute to the brave spirit of the service industry, especially hospitality, who involve people in their growth story. In this issue dedicated to Diversity and Inclusion in the Aerocity hospitality district, we bring to you interviews of persons who have broken stereotypes and are performing challenging roles in various departments of hotels. It could be Devinder Basera, working at the Front Desk at Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd; Chandan, an employee with hearing and speech impairment, working in-room dining and F&B service at Andaz Delhi; or Ambika, fulfilling her ambition to be a chef at Holiday Inn rubbing shoulders with largely male staff in the Kitchen.

The process of sensitisation of the entire staff so that there is no hurt or bias at workplace is equally commendable. Thus, Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd actually trains its entire 6,500-strong staff in Indian Sign Language so that they can communicate with their colleagues with hearing and speech impairment. Such narrative of courage and empathy lends a new meaning to 'hospitality'.

As an extension of the theme of Diversity and Inclusion, we also bring to you various facets of diversity in Delhi. As Delhi made waves after waves of armies, traders, seers and professionals its home, and amalgamated all the cultural elements these people brought with them, the city became richer for it. And how better to assess this diversity than on the platter. In our section on Delicacies in Delhi, read about some of the hot spots for food in Delhi.

Also read the account of Amit Kumar, who hails from Motihari in Bihar and who is featured in Chef's Profile in this issue. He broke the language barrier to rise up in the hospitality industry and is Executive Chef at Hotel Aloft Aerocity. He has mastered Italian cuisine along the way.

The issue has much more in terms of diversity, like some fascinating destinations, books that provide insights into the diversity of Delhi, and thoughts on how diversity is also connected to our wellbeing.

Happy Reading.

# Dimensions of Diversity in Aerocity



**AMAN KAPOOR**  
CEO Airports Land Development GMR Group

**W**here does one find an amalgamation of luxury and an inclusive environment at the same place? Well, it's to be found in the modern-day hospitality industry, and GMR Aerocity is the best example of that. In this path-breaking hospitality district, you will find people from all walks of life converging to enjoy our cultural and business events, and equally importantly, the hospitality staff from very diverse backgrounds rubbing shoulders to offer the best experiences to guest.

Our constituent hotels, while being world-class in their service, have opened gates for persons with orthopaedic or hearing and speech impairment and also persons with down syndrome, people from hinterland, people representing gender diversity and women trying to enter domains earlier dominated by male colleagues. In this issue, our team has laboriously explored the back-stage operations of various hotels to understand how inclusive these workplaces are. There is no religion or caste here, only that of "service enhancers". Some of the experiences are truly inspiring.

There is no end to opportunities, irrespective of your background, and the interview with Executive Chef Amit Kumar of Aloft New Delhi Aerocity best brings this to light. Kumar hails from Motihari in Bihar and despite the language barrier, has risen up the ladder through perseverance, and has also mastered the Italian cuisine. Read our 'Chef's Interview' for this inspiring account.

As an extension, Delhi truly represents the ethos of diversity, and in this issue, we bring to you 'Must Visit Spots' that are representative of this diverse ethos, and 'Dishes in Delhi' which also showcase various cultures. Similarly, our 'Essential Reads' section brings to light the uniqueness of communities residing in Delhi, and how Metro brings all these communities together.

Finally, this issue also takes you to two destinations in India that are diverse in every way possible – Indore, the cleanest city of India, and a foodies' hub offering the best in Central and West-Indian cuisine; and the state of Mizoram, where women empowerment has been taken up notches higher and they actually manage certain markets, including butcher shops, a male domain elsewhere in India.



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Cover Photograph by  
Suresh Gola  
Representative Image

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Aradhana Lal



Vineet Mishra



Deepika Verma



Amit Kumar



Saumya Chandra



Mukul Singhal

# EVENT CALENDAR

## THEATRE

### **Kaligula**

Written by: Albert Camus

Directed by: Varun Sharma

Where: Dass Auditorium, The Little Theatre Group (LTG), Copernicus Marg, Mandi House

When: Ongoing; till March 26

Distance from Aerocity: 17.6 km

## CULTURE

### **Santoor Recital by Jonathan Voyer from Canada, disciple of Pt Satish Vyas**

Where: CD Deshmukh Auditorium, India International Centre

When: 22 March 2023, 06:00 pm

Distance from Aerocity: 15.5 km

### **Delhi Oddisi Utsav**

Where: Jagannath Temple, Tyagraj Nagar, Delhi

When: April 1

Distance from Aerocity: 16.1 km

## FILMS

### **Habitat International Film Festival**

Featuring over 60 films from 20 countries, to be screened over 10 days. Focus country - Australia

Where: India Habitat Centre

When: March 17 - 26, 2023

Distance from Aerocity: 16.7 km

## EXHIBITIONS

### **App Deepo Bhuv**

#### **A Tribute to Maestro SH Raza on his 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday.**

Curated by: Seema Bhalla

Where: Gallerie Nvyā, Triveni Kala Sangam

When: Ongoing; till March 30

Distance from Aerocity: 17.6 km

## TRADE SHOWS

### **Aahar**

#### **International Food & Hospitality Fair**

Where: Pragati Maidan

When: March 14-19

Distance from Aerocity: 19.3 km

### **Water India**

#### **On all facets related to water management**

Where: Pragati Maidan

When: March 27-30

Distance from Aerocity: 19.3 km

### **Digital Art & Design Trade Show**

Where: Art Space, D-49 Defence Colony, New Delhi

When: April 7-9

Distance from Aerocity: 17.7 km



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## Palate Fest Delivers a Satiating Gastronomical Experience



The event at Aerocity showcased the best in food traditions and experimental cuisine, accompanied by some great musical performances

By Team Aerocity Live

**T**he recently concluded Palate Fest was a two-day extravaganza of food, fun and games at the brand new venue, the versatile Aerocity Grounds at GMR Aerocity. Palate Fest being one of the largest in the Indian subcontinent, satiated discerning palates across all ages with their host of gastronomical delights on a February weekend. The brainchild of Ruchi Sibal and Aditi Kapoor, the event provides a common platform for interaction, business generation and the exchange of ideas for all the associated culinary brands.

The new, beautifully landscaped venue at Aerocity ensured that the fest was approachable and convenient for residents of







both Delhi and Gurugram, especially because of the conveniently located Aerocity Metro station, making traveling hassle free. The much-awaited family affair once again brought together India's finest restaurants, food enthusiasts, chefs, entertainers and musicians, a smorgasbord of food tastings, entertainment and was an overall palate-pleasing affair.

### Perfect Winter Fare

The food festival had stalls set up by leading names in the culinary space, including from the kitchens of five-star hotels in the city. The Delhi winters made for a great time to savour delicacies from the coal fired ovens of Koyla Kebab who were present at the venue. Those with a taste for more continental cuisine headed straight to Burgerama to enjoy their triple patty burgers. With the popularity of Asian food growing in the capital, the fest's directors brought to the visitors Kylin's famous spicy avocado rolls, and many flavours of dumplings from the Art Of Dumpling.

For everyone with a sweet tooth, there were a host of bakeries, old and new alike, which made for great sandwich and coffee pitstops, such as Red Moon Bakery, Bloom Café and Basque Cheesecake, to name a few, present at the fest. The coffee stalls made for quaint pitstop as one traipsed around, exploring the gigantic venue.

The festival also offered gastronomic delights within the curated Market Square, with over 50+ stalls that had the finest products and ingredients, as well as plenty of stations where one quenched their thirst, such as The Original Shikanji.

Other popular activities included masterclasses by leading chefs Chef Dhruv Oberoi, Vanshika Bhatia and Chef Anahita across the two days. The Palate Fest also kept a dedicated 'kids and youth zone' which included activities such as segway, mini golf, painting and doodling and more.



### Music For Company

The culinary-focused festival witnessed enthralling performances that catered to the versatile audience that was in attendance. The first day saw an extravaganza of electronic dance & music from the popular duo, Midival Punditz, which was followed by Jasleen Royal, a contemporary multi-lingual artist who wowed the audience with her performance. Day two of the fest had Sufi masters Salman-Zaman perform, after which Benny Dayal crooned to the audience. Unlimited Greens, a unit of Greenways Nursery boosted the nature quotient with sapling planting, which was combined with curated art installations by Studio Paradise, truly making for a wonderful day out.

The fest also flashed a glimpse of the Palate Mkt App, an e-commerce app that is on its way to becoming the biggest online marketplace for all things food and gourmet. ■



# Delhi Airport Adjudged Cleanest Airport In Asia Pacific



## IGAI bags ACI-ASQ's Best Airport award fifth year in a row

**D**elhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) has achieved Asia-Pacific region's 'Cleanest Airport' status while securing the 'Best Airport' of Asia-Pacific region award for the fifth year in a row.

IGI Airport received this prestigious Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Best Airport recognition for 2022 from Airports Council International (ACI) in the category of over '40 Million Passengers Per Annum (MPPA)'.

The newest category of recognition incorporated in the programme, 'Cleanest Airport' in the Asia-Pacific region award, has also been bagged by Delhi Airport.

The ASQ programme is the world's leading airport customer experience measurement and benchmarking programme. This recognition is based on live research via surveys gathered at the airport—direct from the traveler—rating their satisfaction on the day of travel.

From over 465,000 responses collected from passengers in 2022, 144 awards have been won by 75 airports around the world. The surveys cover over 30 performance indicators across key elements of the passengers' airport experiences. These include ease of direction, smooth check-in experience, shopping and dining offerings at airports etc.

The IGI Airport was previously adjudged as the best airport in the highest category of more than 40 MPPA for four consecutive years in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 in the Asia-Pacific region.

The ASQ Awards Ceremony will be held on September 6, 2023, as part of the annual ASQ Forum and Customer Experience Global Summit in Incheon, Republic of Korea.

# Thai Food Fest at Pullman

**P**ullman New Delhi Aerocity hosted the 'Thai Food Festival' from 10th-19th February' 2023 at its Pan-Asian restaurant - Honk. The 10-day event provided a gourmet opportunity to taste a range of authentic Thai cuisine under the direction of renowned Chef Vina from Thailand. The Thai Food Festival was a celebration of the rich heritage of Thailand.

**Speaking on the occasion, Chef Vina said,** "Thai Cuisine has been much liked in the south and it is now becoming popular in the northern cities of the country as well. With this thought, I am excited to join hands with Pullman New Delhi Aerocity to bring this specially curated menu of traditional Thai delicacies for all the lovely visitors of the capital state."

Pullman New Delhi Aerocity introduced a specially curated Thai menu, including appetizing dishes like *Pad Med Mamuang*, *Pad Thai Noodle*, *Gaeng Kiew Waan*, *Rak Baw Kab Naphung Sos* and *Thaptim Krop*.



## NEW BEGINNINGS

### Deepak Behl joins Holiday Inn New Delhi International Airport as the Director of Sales and Marketing

**B**ehl joins the company with an experience of 15 years excelling in the fields of Sales, Marketing, Revenue and Team Management.

At Holiday Inn Aerocity, he will be responsible for streamlining constructive sales strategies, demonstrate a creative approach for optimising revenues and enhance the brand's visibility.

Behl hails from Delhi and pursued his post-graduation from Symbiosis Institute of Management, Pune. In his previous tenure he was associated with Crowne Plaza Today Gurugram as their Director of Sales and Marketing. Prior to this he has worked with Le Meridien Jaipur (a Marriott property), Hyatt, Hilton, Starwood and IHG hotels.





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- ▶ Bambro Koyo Ganda (Ft. Innov Gnawa) - Bonobo, Innov Gnawa
- ▶ As It Was - PREP
- ▶ Good 4 Me - Vindata
- ▶ Hututu - A.R. Rahman, Shashaa Tirupati
- ▶ Andromeda - Be Svendsen

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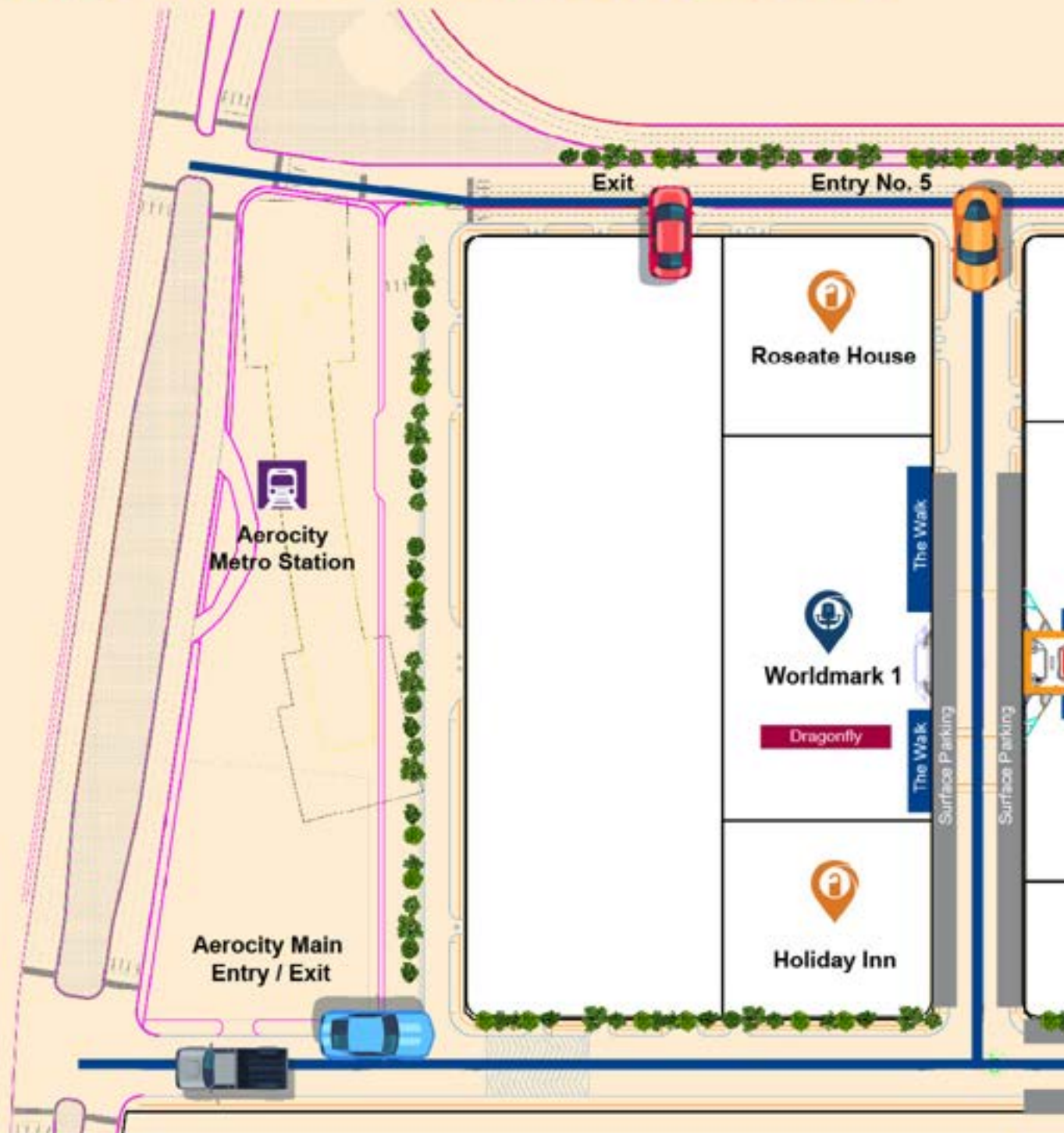
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Miniso  
Looks Salon





### The Walk

Starbucks	Reve Cafe	Costa Coffee	Dhaba
Kampai	Daryaganj	Mesa Bistro	One 8 Commune
Chayos	La Roca	Cafe Delhi Heights	Food Capital (Food Court)
Aerocity Social	Liv Bar	Plum By Bent Chair	
Punjab Grill	Farzi Cafe	Beer Cafe	
Monsoon	Nua Cafe	Kylin Experience	



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# A Melting Pot of Cultures & Aspirations

GMR Aerocity attracts a mindboggling diversity of visitors round the year. And it's on account of diversity of experiences that it offers, from food and fests to facilities

By Meha Mathur and Yukta Raj

A metropolis that Delhi is, in GMR Aerocity, it has an ecosystem that best exemplifies a cosmopolitan spirit. This one sq km area has something for each one. Visitors from the US, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa and other countries rub shoulders with local families from Delhi, corporate travellers from across India, employees from constituent hotels and offices located there, and leisure travellers from the country. The range of choices is vast for various nationalities, regions of India, genders and age group, and one is assured a rich experience, sans bias. The brave new spirit is in evidence at every step.

The first impression, of course, is of a uniformly laid out landscape with the outside façade of buildings quite akin to each other. But a keen observer will notice the differences that perhaps skip one's eye at the first instance. For example, a Gen Z colleague working on this story found Holiday Inn lobby to be very youthful and 'vibey'. Aloft, with its art installations, including traditional paintings was classy and aesthetic. At Pullman the emphasis was on the mesmerising effect of lights,



Representative image



Roseate keeps its décor quite subdued and at IBIS, the décor was youthful, colourful and functional. Each nook and corner of constituent properties is purposefully designed, giving out a clear signal of its intent.

Ditto for the creatively designed open spaces at the fountain, the shopping boulevard at the Plaza and the Sunken Plaza and the Food Court, where one is surprised to find such a diverse mix of nationalities enjoying their meals on a week day.

### Food Brings 'em Together

Food occupies a pride of place in this unifying theme. In between high-end restaurants in hotels run by highly-celebrated chefs to stand-alone restaurants to the food court, there is a world of cuisine on offer. North and South Indian cuisine in both staple form and creative avatars, Mediterranean, East Asian, Continental, what is not on

the menu card! At lunch time, the din of groups of international and Indian office goers working in MNCs operating from Aerocity enjoying their meals and cracking jokes is enchanting.

In the sunny open areas, moms treating their kids to ice cream, elderly visitors occupying a green spot and sipping coffee, and Millennials and GenZ visitors enjoying the meals in open sitting arrangement of restaurants is equally captivating. People with different purposes, different paces converge to enjoy their Aerocity visit.

Food is a great binding factor and Aerocity has taken its engagement with food notches higher. The best of food traditions from across India and the world are presented here. If we have Daryaganj and Dhaba serving authentic North Indian food amid great interiors, Sagar Ratna, famous for its South Indian servings, has an outlet. And there are specialised restaurants like Kampai for Japanese cuisine and Reve Café for French cuisine

“ It is green, has good vibes. Good food and drinks. And it has so many people from everywhere

Din from New Zealand ”

(also read our restaurant review in this issue). The hotels, with their renowned chefs also serve global cuisine on the platter, and organise special events like the Thai Food Fest, Italian Food Fest, and Indian festive occasions. And there have been several mega Food Fests organised by Aerocity where, besides food stalls for visitors, there have been demo sessions by renowned chefs.

### Celebrating Differences

Another manifestation of diversity is the celebration of events round the year. Its meticulously planned event calendar is an ode to rich texture of our society with its



**FOOD IS A GREAT BINDING FACTOR AND AEROCITY HAS TAKEN ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH FOOD NOTCHES HIGHER. THE BEST OF FOOD TRADITIONS FROM ACROSS INDIA AND THE WORLD ARE PRESENTED HERE.**

“When I got here, I was amazed. There were people from all over the world here. And Indians from everywhere in the country, speaking all kinds of language, English, Hindi, Bengali, etc. This is a great place, so interesting and amazing. I am glad that I came here.

**Sky Tandberg** from the US

”

religious, regional, gender diversity, as well as diversity of interest areas. The décor and lighting changes overnight to coincide with the event; the central fountain comes to don a new motif; new installations emerge at the Plaza and new food and activity stalls come up. One can't help comparing the sudden transformation to the magical transformation of settings that happens in Harry Potter movies.

And celebration is not restricted to mega festivals like Holi, Diwali, Eid and Christmas, and national festivals of Independence Day and Republic Day. To



begin with, sports is almost a religion and Soccer World Cup, Cricket World Cup and other sporting events draw diverse crowds at the amphitheatre, and these occasions also turn to be festive ones. Children's Day, Earth Day, World Mountain Day, World Soil Day are also commemorated.

Each event sees food stalls, activity stalls, and often artisanal activities, and

gives an outlet to communities to showcase their crafts and skills. So Diwali time could see *rangoli* making competitions, *diya* colouring and gift wrapping and origami décor workshop, music night as also food stalls; Republic Day time sees showcasing of cuisine, and other traditions of the four regions of India; and Holi, sees special Holi food being on sale, and colourful art installations and displays. Similarly, constituent hotels also celebrate occasions like Holi, Diwali, Valentine's Day, Onam, Pongal and Baisakhi through special offers and activities.

Health and wellness is a major focus area for Aerocity. Round the year, there are dance, music, yoga, and other activity workshops to engage visitors and to spread health awareness.

The experience is enriched with several lifestyle stores opening up. Though high end, they showcase some of the best trends in fashion, beauty products, home furnishing and gifting.

With so much on offer, in safe and hygienic surroundings and green and cheerful ambience one that is well-connected thanks to the super-fast Airport Metro connectivity, it's natural for the ecosystem to emerge as a microcosm of a metropolis that Delhi is. ■





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# Inclusion Begins At Home

Aerocity hotels welcome talented persons from diverse backgrounds to handle various operations – be it front office to behind-the-scenes work. They are thus the trailblazers of D&I narrative

By Meha Mathur and Yukta Raj

**A** brave narrative of involving persons from all walks of life in serving guests has unfolded in constituent hotels of GMR Aerocity. A person could be from a deprived socio-economic setup, could have come from small-town India, from far-flung states of the North East, be orthopaedically, or speech and hearing or visually impairment, a person with down syndrome, an LGBTQ community member, or a woman with ambition and trying to break gender stereotypes that certain roles are not meant for women. But if you have the ambition, career clarity and the perseverance to hold on to your dream, then you have landed at the right place to give wings to your dreams. Aerocity hotels are going out of their way to fuel those dreams.

Here are some path-breaking initiatives that some of the constituent hotels have launched, and how individuals have been empowered as part of that initiative.

## Initiatives at Andaz Delhi

Andaz Delhi gives persons with specially abled the opportunity to work on the front desk, kitchen and F&B service.







**Chandan**

Ranjana Pal, Director-HR describes that they interact with the candidate, understand their background and assess what tasks they can perform, before assigning roles. The training that the employee gets gives them a source of livelihood, and also self-esteem. **Chandan** is one such employee with hearing and speech impairment, employed in the in-room dining and F&B service of the hotel. A class XII passout, he did a basic training with an NGO, before being hired at Andaz. Conversing with the help of a sign language expert of the hotel, he tells us about the sense of empowerment that the job has given him. He drives to his work place, works in all shifts, wears a badge to indicate his speech impairment and in case of any communication problem with guests, he asks them to write down their request.

**Vishnu's** is another brave story. A person with down syndrome, he has been employed in the culinary department, and performs tasks like chopping cutting, weighing and delivering things and works in the 9.00 am to 6.00 pm shift. He did his basic skills training from an NGO called Aadi before being absorbed here. Vishnu shares that he developed interest in cooking at home, and started cooking Indian and Chinese dishes for his family. At Andaz, he likes the cleanliness, and also that veg and non-veg food is cooked and kept separately.

Andaz Delhi has another initiative called RiseHY which seeks to empower talented youth from socio-economically challenged environment by training them and absorbing them. From language training to shopfloor training, the candidates are exposed to every facet and function of the hotel to make them understand how demanding the work is and to know their interest level.



**Vishnu**

Pal shares the transformation it brings about, and how comfortably they can interact with guests and other staff.

A case in point is **Ishika Rishi** from Delhi who originally planned to do nursing course but got convinced by her friend to join hospitality instead. While she had a brief training in Hotel Management before joining Andaz, the hotel too provided extensive training upon absorbing them. Ishika has joined In-room dining and F&B service.



**Ishika**

Work pertains to delivering order, clearing plates after meals, asking if they liked the food, and it has been a year since she has been part of this operation. Proud to make her family happy and about the financial empowerment, she says, "I have a dream to have an experience outside country, maybe Hyatt Dubai. For that I need to learn a lot."

## Empowerment with Holiday Inn

Like Ishika, **Ambika** is also striving to fulfil her dreams. A native of Pauri Garhwal in Uttarakhand who has done her schooling from Delhi, she says, "I always dreamt to be a chef as I saw my father cooking. From him I got the spirit to be a chef." With that in mind, she did her training at Indian Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM) Badarpur before joining Holiday Inn as a chef, at the newly launched L'Osteria Bella.

She describes her experience as "rollercoaster but good". She adds, "It was hard in the beginning but I have adapted. I was initially in the pantry, then started making a few salads and now make pizzas. Everything I have learnt I have learnt here."

It's a global phenomenon that women find it harder to get into this profession.

About this, Ambika says, "We all are chefs and behave like one - no male or female. The only difference is when it comes to lifting heavy utensils." But she does feel that there should be more female chefs, which is not the case right now.

**Chaitali Khanna**, Director of Revenue, also appreciates how the hotel has enabled her to rise up in her journey. She started as fashion designer, then joined travel industry, did her training in ITC Maurya, and started her hospitality career with reservations. She then went into revenue management which involves a lot of creativity. She says there is a great scope for growth in this industry for anyone, irrespective of gender.



**Ambika**



**Chaitali**



**Amit & Sominlal**

Regarding IHG, she informs that they have a measurable strategy towards the diversity wherein "we get targets as a hotel of having a diversity ratio amongst the employees".

Holiday Inn also supports persons with speech and hearing impairment and employs them in various operations, like laundry service. *Aerocity Live* met two such employees on the shopfloor. **Amit**, who has been working at Holiday Inn Aerocity, has seven-year experience in the industry. A Xth standard passout, he completed his training and education from an ITI and started his career with Le Meridien in 2015. His senior **Sominlal**, also speech and hearing-impaired, has diverse experience across industries of over 21 years. He is glad to be part of the work environment at Holiday Inn and



he says, "I feel happy to come to work each day."

The sense of fulfilment and the support and camaraderie that Amit and Sominlal feel, are testimony to the success of the initiative.

### How Lemon Tree Led the Way

Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd set upon induction of persons with disability as a trial in 2007, and following an evaluation regarding their work efficiency, which showed they are as efficient as any other employee, the hotel decided to induct them as part of their business model. "There is no pity. There is no charity. They are regular employees like anyone else.," says Aradhana Lal, Senior Vice President - Sustainability & ESG, Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd.

And sure enough, employees with various impairments working at Lemon Tree Hotels showcase that spirit.

**Devinder Basera** from Pithoragarh is orthopaedically handicapped, having lost his right arm in an incident. He completed his higher education from Delhi University, got further trained with the help of EFICOR NGO of US, and worked as a telephone operator in a few private enterprises before coming to Lemon Tree in 2013.

"I didn't have a Hotel Management background. They really encouraged me and trained me well," he shares

Working at Front Desk, Basera gets reservation calls. An important responsibility is that of filling details of foreigners staying with the hotel, like checking validity date of passport, filling the arrival and departure register, submitting it to the ACP's office and getting a new register

issued. Aradhana Lal adds, "If we don't do that efficiently and in a timely manner, we are breaking the law."

During Covid, when the hotel was a quarantine facility, and several Front Office employees had also taken ill, Basera held the fort with another employee, managing all calls, and staying at the hotel during the entire period.

Normally prone to work long hours, he won the ABCD (Above and Beyond the Call of Duty) Award in 2014 when he stayed with a guest who had fallen ill the entire day in the hospital and kept his cash safe, something that was not part of his duty.

Basera says he has grown attached to the place as there is no partiality. And he feels happy to be scolded too



Devinder

(when he does not perform a task correctly). It has been a life altering experience which has enhanced his position in the community and get married to a person without an impairment. His dream? "To become a Duty Manager".

Equally spirited is **Seema Rawat** with a cheerful demeanour, who conversed with *Aerocity Live* through sign language expert Priyanka. Rawat, a mother of two (hearing) kids, works in Housekeeping for which she got trained at the hotel after she joined. She performs a range of tasks like mopping, cleaning, clearing garbage, and often also helps guests in the coffee shop. She shares that if a guest has any problem, she asks them (via gestures) to write on a piece of



Seema Rawat



**Arnab Ghosh**

paper or else asks a colleague to help out. Guests specifically share feedback on her high energy levels and beautiful smile.

Her work with Lemon Tree is also a cause of happiness to her family, including her speech and hearing-impaired husband who works at a post office, and (hearing) mother-in-law, who appreciates the fighting spirit of the couple.

Yet another story of empowerment is that of **Arnab Ghosh**, a person with Down Syndrome, who works in the F&B Service team at Clever Fox Café in Red Fox Hotel, located in the same premises. Ghosh has been working here for 10 years now.

He converses with *Aerocity Live* with the help of Surender, a special educator and the Senior Employment Manager at Muskaan NGO. Arnab describes the work he does each day, like serving tea and coffee to guests, welcoming them, setting up the buffet, wiping, folding napkins, in-room dining, doing the tea/coffee set up in meeting rooms and attending the 4 pm internal briefing. It's hard to miss the twinkle in his eyes and a touch of naughtiness as he describes the fun activities on occasions like birthdays and festivals.

### Taking Pride in Hospitality

As Hotel Pride Plaza looks at expanding across the nation, Mohit Khanna, Executive Assistant Manager says the hotel is also embarking on a new initiative to rise above religion, caste, creed, gender and region and to treat each staff member as a 'service enhancer'. "We don't see community, caste, creed or where they belong to. We only select as per their talent. And look at people who have something to contribute," he adds.

A few spirited and talented employees from the North East already exemplify that spirit. **Sonia Chanu** from Manipur, a science graduate and working in the F&B department of the hotel is one such person. She has done her training in hospitality under the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Grameen Kaushal Yojana, and is



**L-R: Sonia Chanu, Kaveri Kathuria and Papilon**





**Pritam**

supporting her family as the only earning member. Her dream to become a bar tender is finally taking shape here.

**Papilon** from Manipur, who has joined the front office, says that while initially nervous about interacting with guests, today she handles guests from several nationalities and has also got good response on Trip Advisor.

**Kaveri Kathuria** from Guwahati, Assam says she spent two years as crew and ground staff with Vistara before starting to look for an HR role in hospitality.

Now working as an HR professional and looking at recruitments, she says they only look at communication skills plus talent. Nothing else matters. For example, the hotel has employed a hearing impaired person, **Pritam**, at the front office and he is performing his role efficiently.

## Pullman's D&I Thrust

Poulomi Bhattacharya, Director, Talent & Culture, Pullman and Novotel Aerocity reveals that they go for the best talent, irrespective of background. The hotel has persons with hearing and speech impairment in several departments, including F&B and front office, laundry and housekeeping, and also kitchen, i.e. in all the major operational areas, and as Bhattacharya shares, they are very efficient in their work.

**Mohit**, who hails from Muzaffarnagar, has been employed in the in-room dining function by the hotel. He is grateful to the hotel for providing him training and the job. It takes time to learn, he tells us with the help of sign language expert, and adds that when the staff is kind it becomes easy.

Kindness doesn't translate to being soft on them, or as Bhattacharya says, putting them on a "mustard pillow". In the impartial ecosystem of Aerocity hotels, each one is equal, and has to work extra hard to climb up the ladder.



**Mohit**

# Training & Sensitisation

Onboarding a person is the beginning of a journey, but providing a safe and enabling environment and tools to perform task efficiently are critical for success of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) measures. What do some of the HR and D&I heads say about it?



“Before absorbing people, we do the sensitisation for the existing people. And there are regular sign language classes to interact with persons with speech and hearing impairment. We have got respect, empathy, wellbeing and integrity, Inclusion and Experimentation as our core values. So when you look at all these core values, this would not allow an individual to go and disrespect any individual under any terms and condition. When we do orientation for all new joiners, we ensure to impart these values. Care is imbibed in the purpose of the company and that includes not only guest but associate, include outsource on roll, casuals, guest vendor everyone. So, at no point you can deviate from the word care. It has become their lifestyle now. And for any complaint, the company has an open-door policy. HR is walk away or talk away – they can walk up to us or make a call any time of the day. And they will definitely get a response”

**Ranjana Pal**

Director-HR, Andaz Delhi



“We not only hire, but we also try and accelerate their (women employees') growth. We try and put them into accelerator development programme. Inter Continental Hotel Group (IHG) has two such programmes available. One is called 'Mini Rise' for people who are into frontline till assistant manager category for female colleagues. Under this development programme and they get mentored by female General managers. The second program is 'Rise'. This is for female managers who want to become general manager and becoming days. There is an all-female group that works really well. They meet on monthly basis and they interact based on their specific requirement or any new idea which they want to bring to the table. This group is also headed by one of the female leader here. Also, POSH sensitisation embedded in our onboarding programme. For persons with physical impairment, any engagement activity or townhall recognition we have, we ensure to involve them. We have designed those recognitions in such a way that at least one colleague gets that recognition. That plays an important role and they don't feel left out”

**Mukesh Kumar**

Director of Human Resources,  
Holiday Inn





“The beauty of this industry is its diversity. There are youngsters working with middle-aged people and elderly people coming from different backgrounds, different languages, cultures. But our goal is to serve our guests. We provide multiple levels of skilled and behavioural training which are part of our initial induction programme before somebody goes and starts interacting with our guest.

When they come, of course they are not very clear as to what to expect. Once they join, go through the training and start working, they realise there is so much to learn. It's like you pull out one layer, and there is another layer waiting for you.

### Saumitra Chaturvedi

Deputy GM, ibis New Delhi Aerocity



“At Pullman New Delhi Aerocity, we holistically foster diversity and inclusion in our culture. Our staff members include the specially-abled across various departments.

This Valentine's Day, Pullman New Delhi Aerocity celebrated love in all forms with the campaign 'LOVE BUDS'. From your beau to your pet and your sibling to your friends, 'LoveBuds' commemorated the true essence of love, regardless of the relationship. Our initiative to promote 'LoveisLove' is represented via a portrayal of an LGBTQ couple as the face of the campaign.

'LOVE BUDS' garnered a phenomenal response, especially from the younger generations. Our initiative to promote love in all forms, irrespective of shape, gender, colour or size has been well received by audiences

### Parinita Samanta

Director Of Marketing and Communications, Pullman and Novotel Aerocity



“ ”

We have a very robust sensitisation culture. We call our employees as 'Heartists'. And we organise sensitivity sessions for our heartists from time to time. That really enables people to understand persons with impairment better.

And diversity has been engrained in the hotel since day one. Because of that, there is no resistance to people of diverse backgrounds being employed. Specially-able employees are never treated as special; there is no distinction. You should see the interaction that happens among all the employees – you will never realise there is a difference.

### **Poulomi Bhattacharya**

Director, Talent & Culture,  
Pullman and Novotel Aerocity



“ ”

For us, Talent is Talent. It is above caste, creed, gender and background. We are building a culture in our hotel by a new initiative of 'Service Enhancers'.

We offer openness to new team members to speak of their experience while working with us, share their creativity and challenges during the monthly Coffee sessions. A monthly 'Skip Level' meeting with the existing employees opens up a world of gratitude, headway ahead and explore new potentials.

Accepting diversities, extending support, focusing on strengths and being fair to our team members defines us.

### **Mohit Khanna**

Executive Assistant Manager,  
Pride Plaza Aerocity, New Delhi



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# Diversity Is In The DNA Of Hospitality Industry

In this field, anybody can progress to the highest possible level in hierarchy, with right skillset and attitude



Kamal Kant Pant

By Kamal Kant Pant

**D**iversity in the composition of a society, managed effectively, is the greatest strength any society could ever have. Having diverse points of view in any situation is an antidote against mediocrity resulting out of groupthink and stereotypical views. Many great countries of our times have painstakingly incorporated the diversity in their demographics. Take for example the diversity visa scheme in practice in the US, which micromanages inculcation of diversity in their society by offering the diversity visa lottery programme, targeting nationalities and ethnicities from across the world, not only making it the largest economy and the undisputed global superpower, but a multicultural society which attracts the best talent from across the world, paving way for it to become stronger and yet more developed. What works for a society at the macro level also works for organisations and industries at the smaller scale.

In the third world, hotels were considered to be oasis in the deserts of poor civic amenities and sanitation by the travellers from the first world. For the people working in the hospitality, their work life was no less than a glimpse into the developed world. The interaction with multicultural, multilingual, multinational, and multi-ethnic communities was believed to have emancipated the outlook and the worldview of the people working in the hotels to cultivate a totally diverse culture in the hotels. The converse of this statement holds true too, wherein hotels became like oasis of equality, meritocracy and growth for employees coming from societies riddled with caste, creed, language, religious and other types of prejudices in the larger society.

Having worked in this industry for over three decades, I can vouch that in this industry, anybody





**I have witnessed numerous success stories of people who have emerged from not only rural areas but from the tribal hinterland of central India and mastered the hospitality proficiencies well enough to make a mark for themselves**

could progress to the highest possible level in hierarchy, irrespective of one's name, ethnicity, or the place of origin, provided he has been committed to his profession, loyal to his employers has been honing his skills consistently -both trade and people skills. If the founding fathers of our nation had come back and landed in the environment of a hotel, they would be very satisfied seeing their vision of one India to have taken shape, I wish they could say the same even if they landed outside the hotel's environment.

Hotel and the allied industry, popularly termed as the hospitality industry, by nature, ingrains the diversity in its employees and having realised its benefits, the industry is taking further strides in many strategic areas. One, in which I feel proud that hospitality industry has been playing a pioneering role, is the inclusion of differently able persons. There are specific areas where specially-able people have excelled and performed as well if not better than the normal people in instilling a sense of welcome and care in their clients. There are a few pioneering thought leaders who have taken the early lead in this domain and developed successful models of employment for such people for the others to follow

Cities and suburban areas used to be the source market for the service providers of the hospitality industry initially. With the preference shifting to IT enabled service sectors and other knowledge work areas, the source ground for hospitality is now shifting to rural areas and small towns by large corporate houses under the skill India mission. I have witnessed numerous success stories of people who have emerged from not only rural areas but from the tribal hinterland of central India and mastered the hospitality proficiencies well enough to make a mark for themselves iconic establishments in large cities. With such success stories, the positive spin off is that investors are more and more confident to develop experiential products in the hinterland which has nature and wildlife as the main attraction and provide employment opportunities in the interiors of the country curbing the migration of people to cities.

Hospitality industry has always been a pioneer in gender equality, opening its doors to women, allowing them to excel in certain areas of operations. The scenario having changed, sees women in all departments of the businesses, including the board rooms. Lately, when our society started accepting the presence of the third gender, this industry is again the front runner in accepting them in the workforce. It is in this area that the hospitality industry has taken a bold step by opening their doors to this section of society and skill them in the mainstream vocations and providing them the ecosystem and the respect that they deserve.



Some of these may be the baby steps, but looking at their potential, coming years are going to witness success stories of such people coming from differently able, rural and the third gender domains. The hospitality industry would provide the example of a nursery for yet another dimension of diversity and set benchmarks for the other sectors to emulate. ■

- The author is Principal & Secretary,  
Institute of Hotel Management,  
Catering and Nutrition (IHM) Pusa

# Diverse Teams Foster Better Work Culture

**Satish Kumar**, Sr Director **Talent & Culture, Accor India and South Asia**, talks about how D&I is central to the high-performance culture



Satish Kumar

**We have dedicated modules and sessions wherein we help employees uncover feelings of bias that may be hidden underneath the surface**

**B**usiness leaders around the world have started to recognise the importance of Diversity & Inclusion in the workplace in the past years. Studies (by Mc Kinsey) have shown that companies that are more gender diverse are 15 per cent more likely to outperform others; ethnically diverse companies are 35 per cent more likely to outperform others. Organisations are putting diversity, equality and inclusion at greater focus over the last few years.

At Accor, Diversity and inclusion has been a historic and significant initiative. We believe diverse teams foster better workplace culture and allow us to learn from each other and to open up to differing viewpoints which lead us to make better decisions and thus drive high performance cultures. We methodically create a culture that promotes diversity and inclusion; and our commitment in this direction is quite simple and unique

- Fostering gender equality and diversity
- Integration of people with disabilities
- Promoting social, ethnic, racial and cultural diversity
- Welcoming LGBTQI+ talents and creating an inclusive work environment

At Accor, we all (across levels) are responsible to live and contribute to this





commitment and we continue to focus on enablers

Enhancing diversity is a priority for all and therefore it becomes the KPI for every leadership position across group to continue to work towards enhancing diversity.

*Opportunities for all:* We lay strong emphasis on ensuring equality of opportunity for employees with the same professional skills, in all areas of work and at all stages in their working life - recruitment, training, remuneration, geographical mobility, and career development.

We also have a group recruitment charter that outlines good practices and details what they can and cannot do and the questions that can or cannot be asked during the recruitment process.

We have tailor-made hospitality skill development programmes for underrepresented groups such as people coming from economically marginalised

community. We have supported 12 cohorts till date providing necessary skills and training to over 500 young talent across the functions in a hotel.

*No tolerance for discrimination:* We ensure that every employee is able to flourish in a working environment based on tolerance, openness and respect for others.

*Enhancing awareness against unconscious biases:* Understanding bias and building awareness is a first step towards real change and makes inclusion a seamless process. We have dedicated modules and sessions wherein we help employees uncover feelings of bias that may be hidden underneath the surface.

For managerial level, every Accor designed training course includes a module specifically devoted to diversity and inclusion. This aims to raise managers' awareness about issues such as non-discrimination and combating

stereotypes. This also helps them to conduct themselves in a manner that they contribute to the organisational priority of enhancing diversity and inclusion.

We believe in promoting pay equity by continuously doing pay gap analysis and ensuring no differentiation in salaries for people performing similar job, and knowledge and experience sharing through dedicated mentoring programs and networking platforms.

We also have a unique initiative 'RiiSE' for the purpose of championing equal chances & equal choices for all. RiiSE is guided by the group's shared values of generosity, solidarity and kindness and act as talent revealers, enablers and guardians.

We celebrate every success big or small and living our commitment on daily basis for promoting our diversity philosophy. ■

TAKE ON

# “All our 6,500 Employees Know Indian Sign Language”

**Aradhana Lal**, Senior Vice President- Sustainability & ESG, Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd., delineates the importance of diversity and inclusion measures for the hotel industry

**A**radhana Lal, Senior VP- Sustainability & ESG, Lemon Tree Group Hotels Ltd., is a founding team member of the company, now in its 21st year. Lemon Tree became a trailblazer in inclusion measures 16 years ago when it started hiring persons with speech and hearing impairment. Lal talks about the impact the initiative has had on the hotel's operations, and the connect with guests. Excerpts:

## **What is Lemon Tree's approach to diversity and inclusion?**

Sustainability and ESG is a very big portfolio. One aspect of it is inclusion and diversity. We started this work in 2007, 16 years ago. At that juncture our Chairman & Managing Director asked our HR Head to look into the possibility of hiring people with disability. So, it started as a trial. And in about 2 years, we had roughly 20



people who were all speech and hearing impaired, across 5 of our hotels.

Then a proper evaluation was done as to how they were settling down at work, if they had completed their training and got the certification and whether they were they able to do morning shift, afternoon shift, night shift? In short, could they function like any other team member? And the answer was a big resounding yes.

We also realised that the training must be provided in Indian Sign Language (ISL) so that they understand their tasks very well. We brought ISL interpreters to help us with training





**Aradhana Lal**

because just showing the video or demonstrating it in a roleplay is not enough. Trainees might have questions regarding the SOP (standard operating procedure), regarding the kind of cleaning agents that are being used, the fabrics, the mops, and so on.

That's how the story started. Our decision after those two years was that this should be part of our business model. So, there is no pity. There is no charity. They are regular employees like anyone else. What is different is they have special needs. So, we have to provide the right environment and provide training in a manner that they can understand.

### **So, after the initial phase of trial, what impact was felt for the overall company?**

The business benefits are clear. When we open the doors to people with disability, we start accessing a bigger talent pool. In the hotel industry, hotels keep looking for talent all the time. All hotels go to the same hotel and aviation schools and sometimes they look at other hotel companies to hire people. Everyone is struggling to fulfil their shortfall. When we opened our doors to people with disability, we suddenly widened the talent pool.

They are more creative because when they have a disability, their other abilities become sharper and better. Maybe a speech and hearing-impaired person cannot hear or speak, but he/she sees better than anybody else. We find that these team members sometimes come up with more creative solutions.

Another aspect is the attrition. The attrition numbers of people with disability are half the attrition numbers of the company. So, if the attrition level in a company is, say, somewhere around 50-55

per cent, attrition of our employees with disabilities would be somewhere around 30 per cent. This is a very big factor.

And one more aspect is higher engagement levels. We find that the team members and managers (who don't have a disability) are very engaged at Lemon Tree for two reasons. One is the quick career growth they have seen and the other is they feel very satisfied and proud because of our inclusion/diversity work. This has emerged in surveys, like 'Great Place to Work' and it is not just our own thinking. We have evidence.

### **What kind of sensitisation needs to be done for the other employees so that there is no bias at workplace?**

In Indian society, disability is still considered to be a taboo and even within family, people with disability are kept excluded or they are looked upon differently. So, it is natural that this thinking originally exists amongst our employees too. Hence, we have to find a way to sensitise and teach them. To address this, we conduct regular sensitisation sessions across our 87 properties in 53 destinations, including two outside India i.e. Dubai and Thimpu (Bhutan).

We conduct these sessions regularly, sometimes monthly or by-monthly depending on the requirement. We brief them about disability in general and then about a specific disability. There are classes done in every hotel twice a month on the date of joining where, for 2-3 hours, we teach the Indian Sign Language. The outcome is that 6,500 employees know Hindi, English and the Indian Sign Language. We are very proud of this.

### **What has been the perception of the guests to have persons with various disabilities serving them?**

What we have seen is, many of our frequent guests choose Lemon Tree because of our inclusion work. Let's talk about the customers who come for the first time and who may not have heard about this initiative before. When the employee with disability shows them the ID card indicating that he/she is deaf and would be very happy to help the guest if they could write down what they need, the change of expression, the reaction is always positive. And the mood changes favourably.

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18. **Prof. Rajeev Gowda**, Member of Parliament Rajya Sabha
19. **Dr. Swaroop Sampat Rawal**, Educator, Top Ten Teachers of the World 2019, Global Teacher Prize Finalist, Indian Actres
20. **Dr. Anju Seth**, Director, IIM Calcutta
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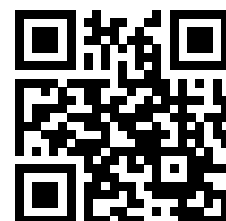
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## MUST VISIT SPOTS

# Lotus Temple, Space For Meditation

Followers of all denominations are welcome to spend peaceful time at this serene location



By Himanshu Ojha

**L**otus temple, the final of seven major Baha'i temples built across the world, is constructed in the shape of a lotus flower and is located east of Nehru Place in Delhi. The construction of temple located amid beautifully planted grounds, was finished in 1986.

The whole structure of temple is made up of white marble and the lotus shape was chosen by the architect Furiburz Sabha as the emblem shared by Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Islam. Everyone is allowed to enter the temple and practise meditation.

While it appears that the structure's top is open, it actually has a glass and steel



roof that lets in natural light. The overall impression is of a floating lotus flower that is about to bloom and is encircled by its leaves.

There are nine water ponds surrounding the flowering petals that glow in the natural light. Three layers of nine petals make up the majority of the Lotus Temple's structure. The building is elevated by raising each rank of nine petals on a pedestal. The first two of the three levels are built with an inward curve that appears to cover the inner dome, while the third level is created with an outward curve.

Because there are no straight lines in the geometry of the Lotus temple design, building the complex double-curved structure was difficult for everyone involved, including the architect and technicians.

The 26-acre Lotus Temple is divided into a number of buildings, including the main structure, which serves as the centre of worship, as well as administrative and library buildings, a reception area, restrooms, etc. ■



Distance from Aerocity: 18.3 km



Nearest Metro Station: Kalkaji, Violet Line



# Qudsia Bagh, Witness to Peace and Tumult

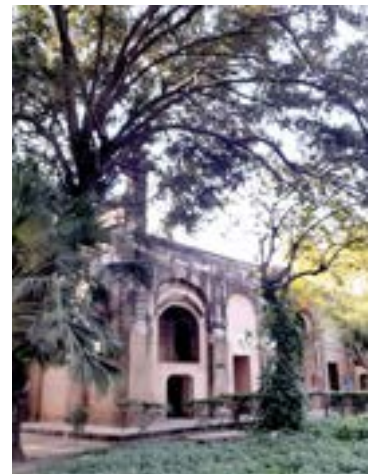
Witness to significant historical events, this place provides respite from the humdrum of the present day

By Yukta Raj

**B**uilt for Qudsia Begum, wife of Mughal emperor Muhammad Shah Rangila around 1748 and located north of the Walled City, Qudsia Bagh has been the scene of action during several path-breaking events in Indian history, including the Revolt of 1857.

The Bagh had a rich variety of flowering plants and trees, with birds flocking to the place. The palace that had been built for Qudsia Begum was destroyed in the aftermath of 1857 Revolt. But the Qudsia Mosque remains, and is now an ASI protected monument. Though in ruin, it's still impressive.


While a pale shadow of the garden as it would have existed during the later Mughal rule, it serves as a green oasis in the heavily congested Kashmere Gate and ISBT (Bus Terminus) area. One can spot friends chilling together or lovers having



their quality time. It's also an apt location for photography classes. Occasionally, heritage walks also attract history buffs.

One significant gathering that took place at this location had a bearing on the Freedom Struggle. Right before the revolutionaries Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt detonated bombs in the Assembly in 1929, they gathered here for their final dinner with other comrades. ■



 Distance from Aerocity: 21.7 km

 Nearest Metro Station: Kashmere Gate

## Dolls, More Than A Toy For Girls

Visiting Shankar's International Dolls Museum will definitely make you reconsider old notions



By Yukta Raj

**T**he museum, which Dr S Radhakrishnan, the president at the time, inaugurated in 1965, boasts the greatest collection of costume dolls in the world, with approximately 7,000 items from 85 different nations. Keshav Shankar Pillai, popularly known as Shankar, a recipient of Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan, was a much-celebrated cartoonist and journalist. After receiving his first doll as a gift from the Hungarian Ambassador, he developed a passion for collecting costume dolls.

A trip to the museum will take you to numerous historical periods of several countries. This place has it all, from the famed Japanese doll collection to an exhibition of Australian dolls from the 1800s to the 1990s showing the transformation of societies visually.

Not only does it have the collection of costume dolls across boundaries but the last section of museum beautifully highlights the Indian culture - from Punjab's Karwa chauth to Gujarat's Garba and Kerala's Kathakali. There are dolls that represent the steps to drape a saree to the dolls wearing regional costumes across states and the 10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. All of these make the museum not just a visual treat but a hub of knowledge too.

The dolls on display also showcase the diversity of material - dolls are made of plastics, there are rug dolls, puppet dolls, pot dolls, wooden dolls, and so on. The dolls from Czech Republic stands out due to their similarity to the famous cartoon 'Gali Gali Sim Sim'.

There is also a diversity of priorities and worldviews on display. While the dolls from Italy are mainly women-centric, the dolls of Japan exhibit Boys Festival and Judo. However, the centre of attraction of the museum still remains the vast Virgin Mother Mary Open Showcase. ■

📍 Distance from Aerocity: 18.7 km

🚇 Nearest Metro Station : ITO (460 mt) on Violet Line



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**WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE ON JURY MEMBERS AND THE NOMINATION PROCESS.**

# SHOPPING SPOTS

From the biggest of brands to the export surplus markets, Delhi has it all. A shopper's delight, here is a look at four markets in Delhi that offer a diversity to shopping lovers in Delhi

By Tarannum Manjul



## Paharganj

### Bagful of Bohemian Items

**S**trategically placed near the New Delhi Railway station, this is not a market for the weak hearted. You can bargain to your heart's delight to get a good deal here. It's easily accessible through metro and even other modes of transport. Wear comfy shoes if you plan to shop here because you would need to walk a lot.

**What to buy:** Shop for books, clothes, bags or shoes. The market has good options for hippy and bohemian outfits too. You can find T-shirts with quirky quotes and comfortable pyjamas at as low as Rs 200. One will come across various jewellery stores which sell handcrafted jewellery, bangles and rings at a decent price. The market is also known for wrought iron crafts and furniture shops.

**Biggest attraction:** For those who are looking to buy new handbags and backpacks, Paharganj has got an exclusive range of exotic bags at a very reasonable price. Look for leather bags and you may crack a good deal on a replica.



## Janpath

### Ethnic Fare Easy on Pocket

**O**ne of the biggest export surplus market in Delhi, Janpath is strategically placed near Connaught Place and is easily accessible through public transport as well. It is a true shoppers delight and one can find good deals if you know how to bargain well.

**What to buy:** You can find some amazing junk jewellery here if you love bohemian jewellery. You can also find western outfits like denims and tops (check for brand labels too) at throwaway prices.

**Biggest attraction:** The Gujarati Lane. This lane has the most colourful outfits, bags and other accessories and is popular amongst the teenage girls, college students and in fact, women of all ages. The lane has items for home decor as well and is managed by gypsy artisans and craftswomen from Gujarat.



Distance from Aerocity: 17.1 km



Nearest Metro Station: Janpath Metro Station, Violet Line



Distance from Aerocity: 17 km



Nearest Metro Station: New Delhi Metro Station (0.6 km away) on Airport Express Line





## Majnu Ka Tila

**T**he Tibetan hub near North Campus, Manju ka Tila is not just a foodies' paradise, but a shopper's delight as well. Over the years it has gained popularity not just among students from North Campus but youngsters across the city. One can shop for Tibetan robes, bright coloured silk scarves, woollens and socks in terms of apparels, and beautifully handcrafted Tibetan jewellery in vibrant colours and beautiful designs. The prices are slightly on a steeper side, but one can always bargain here.

**What to buy:** If you are a Tibetan jewellery lover, check this place out. It not just has semi-precious Tibetan jewellery, but has pure silver jewellery too. You need to have a keen eye to identify it though.

**Biggest attraction:** The beautiful silk robes and scarves are a big attraction here. They have designs from Buddha's life and can perk up any outfit.



Distance from Aerocity: 24.7km



Nearest Metro Station: Vishwavidyalaya Metro Station

## Lajpat Nagar Middle Class Go-To Place

**T**his place, conveniently located between central, south and east Delhi, offers fanciful fare at reasonable prices. A treasure house for fabric and tapestry material, it is know for several other categories of merchandise.

**What to buy:** Fabric of every kind, readymade garments, footwear, jewellery (real and imitation), wedding decorations and packaging material, trousseau material like lehngas, decorative borders, trinkets, household items, furniture (including *mooras*), tapestry, photo frames, kitchen utensils and much more.

**Biggest attraction:** A shop opposite 3Cs selling bangles and *kadaas* to match every possible shade of ladies' attire, in most mesmerising combinations



Distance from Aerocity: 16.9 km



Lajpat Nagar Metro Station on violet and pink lines



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Vineet Mishra

## “We Are Vibrant, We Are Fun”

**Vineet Mishra**, Cluster General Manager, **Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity** describes the warmth of the industry and the unique features of Pullman & Novotel

---

By Meha Mathur

**V**ineet Mishra was drawn to the hospitality industry because of its ethos of service. His vast experience in the industry – in all parts of the country and diverse operations – has only strengthened his belief in the hospitality industry's ability to connect to people. In an interview to *Aerocity Live*, he describes this dimension of the industry, and his own hotel's USPs. Excerpts:



**“ We have two hotels, so we are able to take care of a wide array of market segments, be it MICE or socials or small meetings and conferences, and no two things overlap ”**

### **How did you get inspired to join hospitality as an industry? What has been your journey and biggest reward of working in this industry?**

Hospitality was not my first choice. I come from a family of doctors, so my mother, father, and elder brother, all are doctors. But my father always said that 50 per cent of treatment is about medicine and the other 50 per cent is how you treat someone, which leads to recovery. He would make me sit at the reception and meet patients and talk to them. And I got amazing insights into care.

I also had the option to join medicine. But I got into IHM Mumbai. When I went to the institute the first time, the class in baking was in progress and there was the aroma of fresh bread being cooked over there. The sweet smell was in contrast to the smell that pervaded hospitals in those days. And it made me think that hotel is a happy and welcoming space that makes you feel special. That was the tipping point. And I decided, this is what I want to do.

I initially wanted to be a chef and worked in a kitchen for sometime. But my first job was in sales and marketing. And after a short stint, I did my management training from the Oberoi Centre for Learning. That gave me a real opportunity of actually working in various departments and different genres of hospitality, like F&B, front office, revenue management and also opening a few hotels and renovating a few restaurants.

### **How has Pullman leveraged its position in Aerocity in terms of infrastructure? And how do you position yourself, vis-à-vis other hotels in the ecosystem?**

Pullman-Novotel is a unique property. It's a combination of two hotels with one heart. Of course, Aerocity is, I think, the best hospitality district right now in the country. This place gives our guests so many options. It also gravitates everyone to come to this place.

Pullman has its own unique advantage. We are a beautiful young brand. We are vibrant, we are fun and we have pretty much everything for our guests. We have two hotels, so we are able to take care of a wide array of market segments, be it MICE or socials or small meetings and conferences.

We are able to serve purpose of why you here and we will be able to take care of it, and no two things overlap. And our F&B offerings are extremely popular. Our associates whom we call 'heartists' (an amalgamation of heart and artist) bring their own unique personality. The views are nice, and there are rooms from where you can see planes landing.

### **What are the most popular food and beverage offerings at the hotel?**

Honk is an award-winning Asian food restaurant. It has an amazing reputation of consistency and a personalised service. Then there is Farmers Basket. We have a little kitchen garden of our own and seasonal vegetables get plucked from there and displayed. You can pick up your choice and the chef will create something for you. Our Brunch is also extremely popular, and so is our bar where we have a few lady mixologists too. Our food reputation also is extremely popular in terms of banqueting areas.

### **What has been the Covid time learning and how has the hotel shifted its priorities?**

We are very fortunate that Accor as an organisation really looked after the heartists. We also had fund that was created to support those impacted by Covid. The second part is that some efficiencies have come about since Covid. We have worked on how we can do our business better and more efficiently, and maybe together, for example, working closely with nearby community, especially hospitals, for everyone's benefit. A lot of learnings happened on aspects that were taken for granted earlier.

### **What is the hotel's approach to diversity and inclusion?**

This Valentine's Day, as we spoke about love, our posts were not about only romantic love. We spoke about your love towards anything in life, be it your pet, your parent, or your partner. We welcome whoever you love. We ensure that privacy and comfort is maintained on that front.

Also in terms of D&I, we have close to two per cent of our and power, which is specially abled. And recently we celebrated 100+ women in our hotel. We just don't speak about it. We practice it on ground. ■

## “Everything Is Well taken Care Of”

**Deepika Verma**, Vice President at **Kristal.ai**, talks about the advantage of working from a co-working space in Aerocity



Deepika Verma

**K**ristal.ai is a Singapore-headquartered company with offices in Hong Kong, India and UAE, offering a range of financial solutions like wealth management, investment solutions and family office solutions.

Deepika Verma, who has an experience as a financial planner of about 17 years, manages Family Office Clients at Kristal.ai.

The company has co-work space in Worldmark 1 at GMR Aerocity New Delhi, and Verma works from there. She says that for her and other colleagues, as well as for clients in Gurugram and South Delhi, commute to Aerocity is a easier than to many other parts of the city. She says the location is also apt for calling over clients and business partners for meetings, since the co-working space is well-managed, and the staff conducts itself very well. “There is no difficulty; everything is well taken care of. All the systems are in place. You don’t have to wrack your brains for basic amenities like water, cleanliness in washrooms and AC. Other office basics like printer facility are there; and they take care of you very well. And there is ample parking space. There is lunch and dinner facility, and festivals are celebrated here.”

From safety perspective too, it’s a preferred location. There is nothing to worry about, even if working late, and the walk to the Metro Station is also safe. There is easy availability of cabs too. On the premises too there is a locker facility and one’s belongings are safe, she informs.

Verma also likes the green lanes and walking spaces. And she is also happy about the transformation that has taken place in the last five years, with so many events like food festivals lined up round the year, and shopping outlets opening up, besides the eating options. The diversity of people that the place attracts is something that Verma feels very thrilled about. ■



# "Proximity to National Highway & Airport"

**Mukul Singhal**, Co-Founder & Partner, Pravega Ventures, shares why the office location of Aerocity is advantageous

By Team Aerocity Live

**F**uelling the dreams of many young startups is Pravega. As its website states, "Pravega, believing deeply in the transformative power of entrepreneurs, invests financial and professional resources, to build the future leaders of India's Fintech and Enterprise sectors."

Among the outfits it has funded are MintOak, Property Share, Workex, Safegold and Questbook.

Mukul Singhal, Co-Founder & Partner, Pravega Ventures, says they are pretty much focussed on technology. Asked what is it that they look at when funding a startup, he explains, "We do it very early. There isn't enough data. And there are business models, but these do change. What we bet on is team and see how passionate the founders are, and whether they are doing it for the right reasons. And it's not an easy journey, a lot of emotional ups and downs are there." He further adds, "We also look at the micro trends. And we don't want to invest in businesses of the past. We want to see how consumers will behave 10 years down the line."

Despite the slowing down of the economy, Singhal is optimistic about the growth of startups and the increased penetration of technology. He elaborates, "Those challenges are there. And startups are part of the economy so those challenges will be faced by startups as well. But technology companies are still not dependent on growth in overall market. Because there is a lot of migration happening from offline payments to digital. Look



Mukul Singhal

“

**Flying in and flying out is the biggest advantage here. I can do meetings very effectively. From India perspective there are very few offices that are so well connected**

”

at the way UPI is growing, and the kind of infrastructure that the government is bringing in. So, we have to consolidate from here."

## Office Location Matters

Singhal admits that he was initially not looking at working from Aerocity. "I was settled in another office space. But Covid brought disruption. We started working here. And we thought it will be for a few months but now its two years."

Among the reasons for their sticking on to the present office space is proximity of the national highway, which is very convenient. "A lot of founders come to meet us, who are in Gurugram or Delhi. Two, flying in and flying out is the biggest advantage here. I can do meetings very effectively. From India perspective there are very few offices that are so well connected. There are hotels and people coming for meetings can stay there."

He sums up, "Even if you compare other metros like London, Hong Kong and Tokyo, the airports are really far off. It's one of the unique advantages that Aerocity has." ■

# CHEF'S PROFILE

## “Three Things Important: Temperature, Taste and Time”

By Meha Mathur and Yukta Raj

**Amit Kumar**, Executive Chef at Aloft New Delhi Aerocity describes his understanding of food, his own preferences and the thought that goes into the planning of the menu

**A**mit Kumar's journey from Motihari in Bihar to the kitchen at Hotel Aloft has been nothing short of phenomenal. Working with experienced chefs, reading about changing global trends and overcoming language barriers, he has come a long way to don the hat of Executive Chef. He describes his journey, and his food philosophy, in an interview to *Aerocity Live*. Excerpts:

### Can you share with us your background, and how did you get interested in hospitality and culinary profession?

I am from Motihari in Bihar, from where I did my +2. After that I came to Delhi for higher studies and did my BCom. But I wasn't too good at it and was looking at a field which would not entail much academic work. Which is where hotel management came into picture. I did my training in Kitchen at Trident Gurugram.

Once I joined, however, I realised that this is not the case and a lot of study is entailed. Every single day, people's preferences and food philosophy are changing, and with that, recipes are changing. So we have to study a lot.

### Can you elaborate on the changes in the food philosophy?

To give an example, if you go back 14-15 years back, there was a lot of carving, like fruit carving and ice carving, presented in the buffet. You won't see anywhere. Because people are now aware about wastage now. We have to think about what we are leaving behind for our next generation. Also, earlier, people used to visit hotels to have rich food. Now they are turning vegan, they are on different types of diets like Keto diet, and healthy eating habits which throws a lot of challenges towards us now.



Amit Kumar





the temperature has to be right, and you have to serve at the right time. If any of the three factor is wrong, then the dish goes for the a toss.

### How do you ensure minimum food wastage in the kitchen?

Smart menu design is the key to that. Every part of the vegetable, including the peel, has been used somewhere in the menu.

And we closely monitor our waste bins and keep a watch as to which kitchen and which area is causing more wastage.

### What other factors go to the designing of a menu?

The first factor is location of the restaurant. For example, the demand in Aerocity hotels is different from hotels in Gurugram. Corporate travellers staying in Aerocity hotels have to catch a flight and have limited time to spare. On the other hand, leisure travellers have time and want to enjoy the dining experience.

That being the case, the menu here has been designed in such a way that we are able to dispatch every single dish within 20 minutes from the kitchen. I have not kept a single thing on the menu which takes more than 20 minutes to cook.

The other focus is on local produce. There are a few farmers in Chhattarpur to whom we are connected and we try to buy seasonal best produce. And we design our menu to incorporate those elements, like peas, carrot etc. Using these ingredients, we can keep on changing our buffet menu and the marriage menu.

### What kind of challenges did you face, in terms of language, food and cultural nuances?

Culturally it wasn't much different because Delhi and Bihar are similar in terms of culture. The main difference which I felt initially was in terms of communication in English. In Bihar, it didn't matter if you were not great at English. Here, English is needed for all the studies that I do. But with time I overcame that.

### What is your own favourite food, what do you like cooking and what do you like eating?

I like to eat simple food, but when it comes to cooking, I like to cook the most fashionable food. Almost everyday we are in the kitchen for 12 or 13 hours so we don't really have the appetite. I prefer my *Daal Chawal*, *Chokha* which is a mashed potato dish from Bihar. The other dish that I like eating is spaghetti with olive oil, garlic and a bit of chilli.

I am not fond of sweets, but one thing that I like is Tiramisu, as most of my culinary journey has been in Italian kitchen and that's where I developed a liking for it.

### What is your food philosophy?

My philosophy food is very simple. We have to keep three things in mind - temperature, taste and time. The taste has to be there,

### How has your family, and those around you in your native place, responded to your career choice?

When I started work in 2008, people in my native place were thinking only in terms of engineering or medicine. They were actually surprised that I will be cooking. Now, of course, everyone knows what a chef is.

### Cuisine from other parts of India, like Daal Makhani have arrived internationally. What are you doing to promote recipes from Bihar?

We do have Litti-Chokha in our breakfast buffet, and we also have an innovative take on that. In *ala carte*, with limited time that people have, there has to be a recall value. But in buffet we do a lot of experiments.

The problem is people only talk of Litti-Chokha or Champaran Meat from Bihar. But there are other dishes too. Like we serve *Sattu Paratha* and *Oal ki Chutney*. But we choose only those dishes which will be liked by larger audience.

### Which chef has inspired you the most?

The way I started looking at food changed with Tanvir Kwatra, GM of W Goa. We have worked together for almost five years. A lot of credit goes to him.

## Steamed zucchini involtini with silken tofu sauce

A healthy dish which is easy to make and at the same time looks good too. Stuffing made with quinoa, broken wheat and dates. This vegan dish inspired by Italian involtini

Chef Amit Kumar's Recipe

### INGREDIENTS

- Pearl Millet- 20gms
- Barley- 20gms
- Quinoa- 15gms
- Sorghum- 15gms
- Boiled Chickpeas- 30gms
- Broccoli flowerets - 30gms
- Cherry tomatoes- 15gms
- Chukkakura leaves- 15gms
- Lime juice- 7ml
- Extra virgin olive oil- 4ml
- Organic Natural Honey- 10gms
- Salt- as per taste
- Crushed black pepper- 2gm
- Roasted crushed cumin- 3gm

### METHOD

- Take one green zucchini and yellow zucchini and slice them
- Now blanch the zucchini and keep it aside
- With the help of spiral maker, take out the spirals of zucchini
- keep it aside

### MIXTURE

- Mix the Quinoa, dates, broken wheat, coriander and season it well
- Arrange the alternate slice of zucchini and make it a bed.
- Roll the zucchini sheet enclosing the mixture.
- Blend the silken tofu and kikkoman soy.
- In a pan, saute garlic in oil, add zucchini spiral and season it nicely
- Plate the zucchini roulade and Zucchini spiral.
- Pour the sauce and garnish it with microgreen.





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## A French-Mediterranean 'Dream'



*International Cocktail*

For Beetroot Burrata, Tuna Niçoise and much more, Rêve Bistro Moderne is the place to head to

By Deep Majumder

**R**eve Bistro Moderne is a restaurant situated in a quiet corner of Worldmark 1, Aerocity, with the sole aim of bringing French-Mediterranean cuisine to Delhi. "Inspired by the travels all around the European continent," says the Aerocity website and it could not be more accurate.

The restaurant strives to introduce delicacies of French Cuisine to the Indian taste palette and at the same time, in the words of the restaurant manager Jean Pierre Emile himself, 'revise' some of the popular French dishes from time to time. Reve, meaning 'Dream' in French, is one of those hidden gems in Delhi NCR that is often missed out upon due to its subtlety.

### First Impressions: Décor & Ambience

The restaurant has a simple and rustic interior, which is more like a norm these days for eateries that want an 'out-of-the-box' aesthetic. However, I got the feeling that for Reve, it was more than just posturing. Rather, it was an integral part of their theme. The dim lighting, the woody poplar columns and the rustic walls, everything blended together really well. The music takes care of the rest. By doing away with popular songs and going for classical music instead, Reve is able to offer an ambience that is hard to find these days.



Another major element of the restaurant's ambience is the staff. A brief conversation with restaurant manager was enough to help forget the arduous journey from Greater Noida to Aerocity. Jean Pierre Emile, originally from Mauritius (referred to as 'JP' by his staff), has over 17 years of experience in the hospitality business and is a charismatic personality. "I like to look at things differently," is what he said about his approach while handling the restaurant during one of our conversations. His idea of interacting with customers and educating them about the food is a nice touch to the overall dining experience. I also had a brief chat with sous-chef Kamal Sodari, who was just as delightful and friendly. He too has about 17 years of experience in the business under his belt.

### Must-Haves

- Beetroot Burrata
- Tuna Niçoise
- Crispy Pork Belly
- Ratatouille Crepes

The Reve menu was just as elegant as everything else in the restaurant. Simple, articulate and none of the complicated stuff you see these days. I started with the Beetroot and Burrata, a dish that I had no knowledge about. Little did I know, it would later turn out to be the best thing I would eat that day. The burrata is essentially a cheese with no flavour of its own. The burrata adds creaminess and texture to the diced beetroots and 'arugula', also known as salad rocket. This was followed by the Crispy Pork Belly. The pork was accompanied by a conglomerate of brown butter apple, mashed potatoes and sautéed spinach. The platter on which this was served on was artistically decorated with a splatter of carrot orange pure. It is a delight for the eyes as well as the taste buds. Although crispy, as name suggests, the pork was

tender as well.

Just as I thought it couldn't get any better, I was introduced to the Tuna Niçoise. This dish is a prime example of how Reve tries to make itself stand out. It does something that can be best described as 'controlled innovation'. The Tuna Niçoise is a dish that originates from the French city of Nice. It is usually made with canned tuna, hard-boiled eggs, Niçoise olives and olive oil dressing, or in some cases, a vinaigrette. Instead, Reve serves tuna Carpaccio (thinly sliced fresh raw tuna) with cured Kalamata olives and grated egg whites. The tuna slices have a black pepper and brown sugar crust and are cooked medium rare. This dish is definitely one to look out for.

The final dish in the agenda was the Ratatouille Crepes, a dish originating from northern France. The crepes came lathered in cheese sauce and acted as a perfect closing act to my ordeal with Reve.

### Verdict

I strongly believe that a restaurant is best judged by how it makes the visitors feel rather than just the food. A good restaurant will offer homely comfort for casual conversations and an exquisite environment with just the right food to titillate the taste buds. Music, of course, plays a pivotal role in this. Coming across a restaurant that gets all of the above aspects right is a rare sight.

The restaurant has all the boxes checked, be it the music, décor, ambience, an interactive staff, music or food. The concept of a cuisine-specific restaurant does sound risky in today's market where eateries are constantly trying to please customers with 'fusion'. Regardless, Reve is doing a great job and that too in style. Seating is limited so you might have to wait for a spot during peak hours but it's totally worth it. ■



Tuna Niçoise



Beetroot Burrata



Pork Belly

## Serving Up Diversity

By Tarannum Manjul



### Thupka, Momos and Fruit Beer

An ideal Tibetan combination, this trio hits the taste buds at the right places. Thupka is the Tibetan noodle soup which is spicy and warm. Momos are the Tibetan version of dimsums, although momo lovers beg to differ. The humble fruit beer is a non-alcoholic beverage that's made from plums, strawberries, raspberries and other fruits. Together this combination forms a complete meal.

**Where to find it best:** The Arunachal Pradesh Food Stall at Dilli Haat

### Raja Mircha, Bamboo Shoots and Fried Rice

Bhoot Jolokia chilli is colloquially known as 'Raja Mircha' in Nagaland. It is one of the spiciest chillies grown in India. The north-eastern cuisine of India has skillfully included this chilly in a number of dishes and if you can handle spices, you should try this out. Bamboo shoots are dishes made from soft bamboo



shoots and they are either a part of a soup, or a spicy dish that goes well with the fried rice combination.

**Where to find it best:**  
The Nagaland Kitchen at Dilli Haat



### Narikol Pitha and Luchi Bhaji

Narikol pitha is a traditional Assamese dish, that is made during Bihu. Crispy outer shell of rice flour and soft filling of coconut makes this dish a real delight. Along with luchi bhaji, which is the eastern version of north's *poori sabji*, this too is a complete meal in itself.

**Where to find best:** Assam Stall at Dilli Haat



### Momos and Bao

While most of the Delhi sells the Nepali style momos, if you are looking for authentic Tibetan momos, there are actually a very few places that you can try it out. While the momos are small steamed balls, the bao is bigger in size and is traditionally a steamed bun filled with meat or veggies and spices.

**Where to find best:** at Majnu Ka Tila near North Campus







## Shawarma

**T**his Middle Eastern meat dish has found immense love with the non veg lovers of Delhi. Made from shredded meat, while the chicken version of shawarma finds more takers, the meat version has its own connoisseurs too.

**Where to find best:** Al-Bake outlets across the city

## Litti Chokha

**T**he Bihari delicacy of *litti chokha* too has wooed the foodies of Delhi and one can enjoy this traditional street food from Eastern UP and Bihar both at premium cafes and road side stalls. Made from wheat flour, the *litti* balls are dipped in *chokha* made from mashed potatoes, roasted brinjals and tomatoes. This is a light, but filling dish that is available across the national capital.

**Where to find best:** Cafe Lota at National Crafts Museum, Bhairon Marg, Pragati Maidan ; Bhoj Puria at Sector 22, Dwarka, Shop 9, Ground Floor, DDA Market; near UPSC Bhawan and also Mandi House.



## Southern Flavours: Thalīs at Telangana Bhawan



**N**ame change from Andhra Bhawan to Telangana Bhawan notwithstanding, this Central Delhi spot is a hot spot for office goers and families of Delhi as well as tourists for its meals. It's not just on account of authentic fare – curries and fries of chicken, mutton and fish; prawn curry, and vegetarian *thalīs* – but in equal measure because of the super speedy service. In a non-descript and rather dark hall, amid din of the staff announcing which guest is to be seated where, which seat is vacant, and orders to be placed, guests are served sumptuous meals. While the menu has expanded over the years to include an assortment of *daals*, sambhars and vegetables, an array of condiments like pickles from the region on display on each table, and a sweet to douse the spice level, what has not changed is the quintessential feel of the place, with waiters ready to refill with four-vessel containers. The taste levels continue to be equally accentuated. The visit is not complete without purchasing other assortments from the region like pickles and *chutneys* to *papads* and sweets that are available at the stalls lining the lane at the entrance and even on the main road.

By Meha Mathur

## Glimpses of Diverse Cultures in Delhi

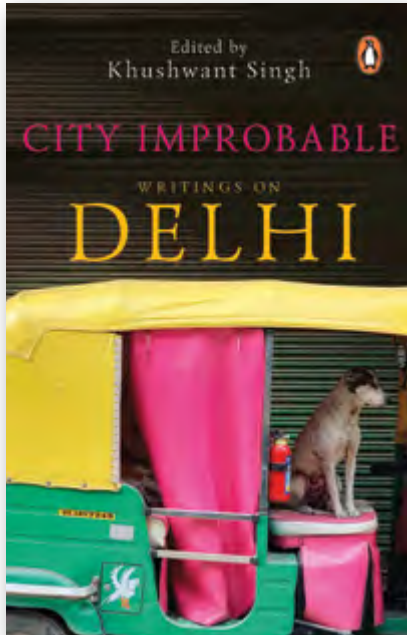
Delhi has inspired travellers as well as those who made the city their home, to write words of praise, and also of disgust. We bring to you a selection of books, written through different prisms

By Meha Mathur

### A Tinge of Love, Even in Loathing

Book Name: **City Improbable: Writings on Delhi**  
 Edited by: **Khushwant Singh**

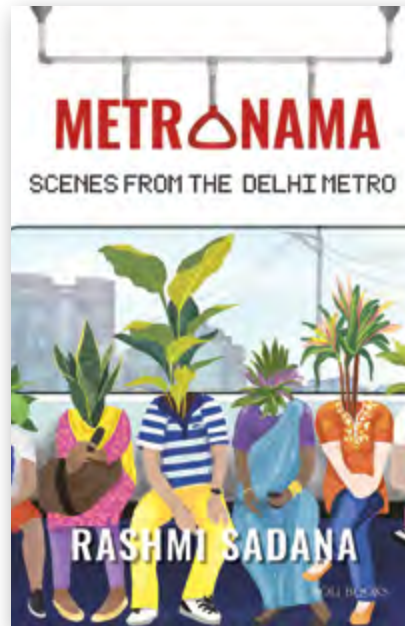
A ce journalist and writer Khushwant Singh, with roots in Delhi, had written introducing this book, "Having spent much of my life in Delhi, I can tell you that there is much to love about the city as there is to loathe." True enough, the writings he has picked up for this book have some words of admiration for the city, even if observers are bewildered by other facets of it. Singh has picked up writings of medieval conquerors, travellers and saints and their first impressions of the city; experiences of the British in the city and the love of anguish of Urdu poets at the passing of an era as the Mughal power faded away. But more importantly, the book has a collection of writings of contemporary observers – Kamleshwar, Ruskin Bond, Namita Gokhale, Sadia Dehlvi, Madhu Jain, Pawan Verma and Mrinal Pande, among others – showcasing how Delhi is different things for different people. Even in describing a minute facet of the city life – morning walkers at Lodi gardens, community life in Lodi colony, the *dastarkhans* in Old Delhi or life in NOIDA, the writings tell us how diverse this city is.



### Transition on Tracks

Book Name: **Metronama: Scenes from the Delhi Metro**  
 Author: **Rashmi Sadana**

This book chronicles the transformation of Delhi in the last two decades brought about by Metro. At one level, Metro has empowered communities living on Delhi's peripheries and allowed them to take up jobs at the heart of the city. Many would remember the hapless commuters earlier had on their way to workplaces as they hung precariously on to the last step of DTC buses. On the other hand, the book also highlights the travails of those whose life as it existed would have been shattered as land was acquired for railway stations, taking over their green stretches and in some cases even their residence, and the railway track now existing uncomfortably close to their living spaces, or even school compounds.



There have been prolonged disputes over whether the track should be underground or overground and on which side of the road should the metro station be built. Both stand points are valid, and this ethnographic study beautifully carves a narrative of a city under change. Some fascinating aspects of the cityscapes have been described, for example the coaching classes district of Laxmi Nagar on Blue Line.



## What Delhi Eats

Book Name: **The Delhi Walla: Food + Drink**

Author: **Mayank Austen Soofi**



If there is one person who can comment with authority on what Delhi eats, it's Mayank Austen Soofi, who writes a regular column in a national Daily on common people of the city. He has traversed perhaps every gali-mohalla, talking to a cobbler here, a butcher there, bringing to light the hopes and aspirations of myriad communities of

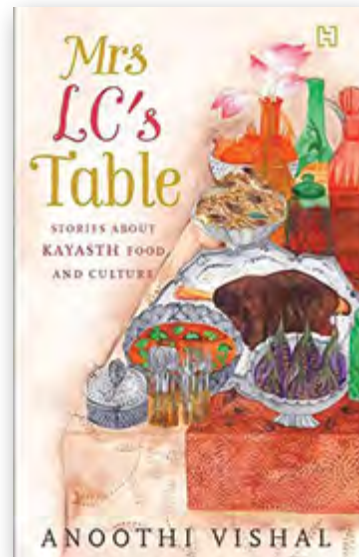
Delhi. In the book under discussion, he takes up popular dishes of Delhi, from snacks to mains to desserts, and traces their origin, the recipe and the joy of eating it. Be it *tandoori chicken*, *daal makhani*, *badaam pasanda* or *rabri*, Delhiites relish their food without a sense of guilt at the indulgence.

## Community Flavours

Book Name: **Mrs LC's Table**

Edited by: **Anoothi Vishal**

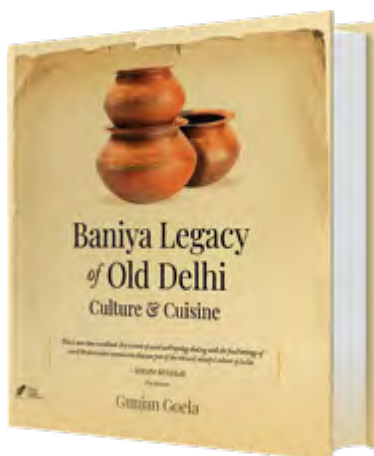
Written by a Mathur Kayasth, this book touches at the cord of a fellow Mathur. Harbours a superiority complex, and considering themselves to be at the top of pecking order, Mathurs take immense pride in their *khana*, *pakana* and *gana* (eating, cooking and singing). Many a spirited youngsters have tried to rebel against this self-proclaimed supremacy and obsession with culture, but ultimately there is no running away from roots, and from our childhood love for Mathur food, as described so fondly in the book. The dishes are a result of a great deal of fusion that came about as Mathurs served at various courts, including the Mughals. The *kebabs*, *kaliya*, *yakhni pulao*, *bharwan karele*, *takke paise* (a variation of Rajasthani gate), and faux non-veg fare for those who are vegetarians (especially ladies), *mota* (thick) papad vegetable and festive cooking of *papri*, *gujia* and *kanji-bada* keep the Mathurs preoccupied. The book, while being about food, is also a study in lifestyle of a community that made Delhi its home for centuries.



## Quintessential Vegetarian Cuisine

Book Name: **Bania Legacy of Old Delhi**

Author: **Gunjan Goela**



Banias are among the communities that have long made Delhi their home. The mercantile community, with its vegetarian eating habits, has shown that vegetarian food can be as interesting as non-veg fare. The author, with her roots in Old Delhi, provides the social setting in which the recipes evolved. Among the popular recipes of Banias are *aaloo-poori*, *panchmel sabzi*, *kadhi* using butter milk and *badaam halwa* and the book strives to go beyond what's visible to the outsiders on the surface. The book, priced above Rs 2,000 is costly but it's worth the cost to understand how to make a vegetable ingredient tasty. ■



## Plan the Vacations With **RIGHT** ACCESSORIES

By Deep Majumdar

It's travelling season, people! Be it the mountains of Spiti or the tea gardens of Coorg or the luxury of a hotel in a metropolis, if there's one thing that travelling needs along with planning, it's accessories. That is why we have curated a list of must-have travel accessories just for you. These items have been picked based on the present generation of travellers and their specific needs



### Power Banks

Today's gadget-reliant generation needs a reliable portable power source no matter where they go. Travelling is all fun and games until power runs out and the photography is put on hold. Carrying a power bank while traveling is a very smart choice. Power banks come in many shapes and sizes these days and it is important that you choose the right one. You can pick power banks like the AmbraneAerosync PB 10, the Mi 20000 or the Urbn 20000. You can also go for the Croma 10W Fast Charge power bank if you're low on budget.





### Torch Light

You will thank us later for this one. Trekking and camping are activities that will often have you in the middle of nowhere without any electricity or light. In such cases, a flashlight/battery powered torch can be extremely useful to navigate the way. You can easily get an affordable travel flashlight on Amazon, Flipcart or Decathlon. Just make sure that the flashlight has a brightness above 10 Lumens because anything below that would be useless.

### Trekking Bags

For people who love to trek in the mountains and be one with nature, a good trekking bag can make a world of difference. They are essential for carrying everything else we need for our travels. While buying a trekking bag, it is always better to focus on quality than the price. A good quality product will not only last longer but it will also lead to less frustration in the longer run. Forclaz trekking bags are great in terms of performance as well as price. You can get them from Decathlon stores. Other recommended brands are Wildcraft and Trawoc.



### Water-resistant Tents

People who like to trek and camp, this one is a no-brainer for you. You need to set up camp once the sun goes down and for that you need a good tent. A good quality tent will provide you shelter during rains, snowing and whenever you need to make shelter for the night. Decathlon has a vast range of tents to choose from. AmazonBasics has some great water-resistant tents as well.



### Mosquito repellents

Travel to any part of the country and you will feel the need for one. From the trusted Odomos



and Good Knight (latter might be difficult to carry on a flight) to the new age wrist bands and stickers which especially fascinate kids, these must-carry items will ensure your stay isn't hampered by the tiny ubiquitous irritants and you don't carry back an irksome itching or fever. For that matter, do carry the essential medicines and first aid with you. .

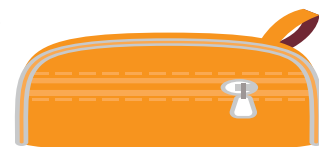
### Camping Mug

We could not, in good conscience, make a list of must-have travel accessories and leave out the stainless-steel travel mug. A good old fashioned travel mug is about 0.3 to 0.4 litres in volume and offers a ton of utility. You can easily grab one online or from Decathlon for a few hundred bucks. This is, especially, a must-have for trekkers and campers.



### Travel Toiletry Bag

Travel gear is not limited to only camping and trekking, you know? Sometimes it simply involves staying at a hotel. Although most hotels do provide toiletries these days, it is always better to carry your own. Travel toiletry bags are saviours in such cases as they offer convenience and help you organise. This is also a great travel accessory for women who take feminine hygiene seriously. You can get a great deal on toiletry bags on online retail stores.



### Neck Pillow

How can we forget the good old neck pillow? This is probably the most-underrated travel accessory in history. A good neck pillow is just the thing you need if your travel involves long and tiresome flights. Neck pillows are available in abundance on online retail stores and if, by chance, you forget to get one, you can always rely on the retail stores at the airport.

Remember that every travel itinerary needs some sort of planning and mindful packing, even the spontaneous ones. Travel smart and travel safe, always. ■

# A Clean Sweep FOR INDORE

By Tarannum Manjul and Meha Mathur

This city in Central India takes pride in its Holkar heritage, rich food tradition, and of course, being declared the cleanest city year after year



**T**he royal city of the Holkars, Indore connects the ancient with the new. The capital of the Holkar dynasty, birthplace of Lata Mangeshkar, and the stage for a great Hindi journalism movement that gave to the country some leading newspapers and journalists, Indore now enjoys the privilege of being the cleanest city in India. And it's not a hype. The super-clean streets literally sparkle now, reflecting the sunlight. With a keen sense of pride, 'Indoris' are now mindful about not littering on the roads and wait for the municipal vehicles to arrive (which come to each locality every hour!) to dispose of their garbage. Not only that, roads leading up from the airport and railway station are decorated with traditional wall art.

## Tourism spots

One of the major tourist attractions of Central India and a confluence of multiple influences, including Maharashtrian, Gujarati, Sindhi and also North Indian, Indore is the perfect city for all kinds of tourists. In the last few years, much work has been done to preserve heritage complexes - and to beautify the river front - and bring them to light







Photo courtesy:  
My Delicious Journey

for heritage enthusiasts. The Khan river that flows through city has also been rid of effluents to a great extent. Here is a look at some of the famous tourist places of Indore.

**Rajwada:** This imposing structure is the poster icon of Indore. Built by the Holkar Dynasty, the Rajwada palace is a seven-storied structure, divided into two major sections. One part is a temple and the other part is a grand palace. What is visible in picture postcards is the front façade of the palace with *jharokhas* at multiple levels. The interiors were out of bounds for the public and had government office running from them for many decades. Now, however, with heritage consciousness on the rise, heritage walks are organised occasionally.

Nestled between the vibrant streets of Khajuri market, the Rajwada faces an enticing garden which flaunts the statue of Ahilya Bai & several beautiful fountains.

The Holkars built another palace, the Lalbagh palace in mid-19th to early 20th Century, on the bank of Khan River, and where European architectural influence is visible everywhere, especially the oval ceiling and ornate pillars in a grand hall.

**Krishnapura Chhatris:** Nestled on the banks of Khan river, these chhatris have gained tremendous popularity for their architectural marvel. These cenotaphs provide a vivid glimpse of Maratha architectural style with spires that leave the tourists awe-inspired by their grandeur.

The chhatris was constructed in the memory of Holkar rulers during the late 1800s. There are three chhatris among which the first one is dedicated to Maharani Holkar and the remaining two were built as a tribute to Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar II and Shivaji.

**Chhatri Bagh and Hari Rao Chhatri of Holkars:** The former complex has recently come up on the tourism map of the city. In a quiet and green compound, guarded by a massive gate and flanked by a high and wide wall atop which you can actually walk

along the periphery of the complex, you will find some stunning structures.

At the centre of the complex is a pond with step wells, and on the bank of this pond, exist intricately carved chhatris in North Indian temple architecture style. A huge lamp post is a special attraction.

At a small walking distance is another temple complex of Holkars, secluded and peaceful, where amid a large number

of native trees and bushes exist similarly intricately carved temples. Look closely and you will find in the carvings figures of royal courtiers and soldiers, with head-gear typical of the era. Western influence is already visible there.

**The White Church:** Built in the year 1858 by Sir Robert Hamilton, this church depicts European style architecture. Being the oldest church in the city, it hosts several festivities throughout the year.

One can also find many restaurants and cafes in the nearby area which serve their customers with local food items. White Church is located on the popular AB road which is a 33-minute ride from Holkar airport.

**Vijay Balla:** Located near the Indore Museum and Zoo, this giant size bat was installed to commemorate Indian team's success against England and West Indies in early '70s. Passionate that Indoris are about everything under the sun, they actually had the bat painted with black tar after a humiliating defeat in 1974.

**The Many Lakes:** A picnic along the multiple lakes were a favourite pastime in Indore, but lifestyle changes and shrinking waterbodies have had an impact. Still, some great nature spots that attract people wanting to be near nature are Sukhniwas Lake, Pipliahana Lake, Pipliapala Lake and Sirpur Lake.

### Food, A Way of Life

A rich tradition of food has evolved in the city over centuries thanks to the mingling of cultures, with Marathi, Gujarati, Jain and Malwa cultures contributing their elements to food diversity that exists today. The *Daal Bafla* of Malwa (with minor variation from Rajasthani *Daal-Baati*) *Poha*, *Sabudana*, preparations of corn (*Bhuttakees* and *Bhutta Pakoras*), *Srikhand* and *Aamras* are commonplace to most Indori homes now, but the fast food culture with eating out is equally evolved.

When in Indore, don't miss the following two locations.

# DESTINATION



Photographs by: Meha Mathur



## Chhappan Dukan

One of the most popular places for the food junkies, the place got its name 'Chhappan Dukan' with a total of 56 shops serving you toothsome delicacies of Indore.

The place offers a combination of Indian snacks and street food. The street bursts with life from morning 6:00 a.m, where you can enjoy the luscious *Poha* for breakfast and it's bursting with life till 10.00 pm

The popular food outlets of Indore like Agarwal sweets, Gangaur sweets, and Madhuram sweets have their outlets here. In the evening time, the market witnesses a flock of visitors including



## Flights to Indore

Air India - 1 | Alliance Air - 3  
Indigo - 29 | Vistara - 14

Total: 49 weekly departures from Delhi



Photographs by: Meha Mathur

shops to the local food vendors.

The night market attracts a large number of locals as well as tourists who love to explore the local taste of the city. The neon sign boards, lip-smacking food stalls and an enthusiastic crowd jostling to get space define the usual scenario of the Sarafa Bazaar.

**Popular food items:** *Bhuttakees* served with coriander Chutney & lemon juice forms the special dish of the market. You can also relish the taste of crispy *Garadu* and *Ratalu Chaats*, *Khopra* (coconut) patties, *Sabudana Khichri* and *Tikki*, *Egg Benjo*, and massive sized *Jalebi*.

Most of the spots described here within Indore are less than 10 km away from the Indore airport, and easily accessible by cabs and autos.

Indore is also strategically located for a further visit to a few other popular destinations, especially Mandu, the city of forts, located at a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Indore, and Maheshwar, another seat of Holkars on the banks of Narmada which is popular for Maheshwari weaves, about two-hour drive from Indore. ■

couples, youngsters, kids, and families.

**Popular food items:** *Gararu Chaat*, *Poha*, *Sabudana*, *Bhuttakees* .... You demand it and the dish is there. Not to forget other regional cuisines like the South Indian platter, and Western fare and Chinese items too. The most popular takeaways from the market, which you can carry back for your friends and family, are the *namkeens*, especially the 'sev' with dollops of clove amping up spice quotient, and sweet-sour mixture.

## Chhappan Dukan

As shops in Chhappan Dukan down their shutters for the day, another location is getting ready for its daily food fare. The Sarafa Bazaar at the back of Rajwada, which has traditionally been a jewellery market, comes alive as a foodie hub around midnight. The market is considered to have had its origin some hundred years ago when the shop owners encouraged night hustle and offered the area around their



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## DECODING THE UNEXPLORED MIZORAM

A place where women are truly empowered, where new and old cultures coexist and Korean influence holds sway, that's the North-Eastern state for you

By Yukta Raj

**T**he kingdom of Lushai Hill, Mizoram, that lies in the North-eastern part of the country remains one of the most unexplored places. However, the beauty of North-East never fails to please the eyes. The state, which gained statehood in 1987, makes a golden triangle and shares the boundaries with Bangladesh and Myanmar.

True, it is not easy to visit Mizoram, primarily due to the accessibility issue - no direct road/rail routes are available, and air travel is the best bet. Two, one has to mandatorily get an Inner Line Permit. However, once you get inside, the land of rolling hills, valleys, rivers and lakes will enchant you with its astonishing natural and man-made creations, be it waterfalls or churches. And I was fortunate to have spent a semester as a student of IIMC Aizawl campus in this beautiful place in 2022, exploring the beautiful surroundings.

Here are some of the facts about Mizoram that will blow your mind and make you plan for your next trip, definitely to Mizoram:

### The Sunday Lockdown

The word 'Lockdown' takes us to that worst phase, when stepping out of home became a crime. But do you know, this Lockdown practice is nothing new for Mizos. For long, people have been practising this, wherein from shops to roads, all remains shut on Sundays. Surely, Sunday there is a Fun-Day, a complete holiday. The reason behind this is the Sunday Church Service as majority of the population, i.e., 87 per cent, are Christians.

One would wonder, how do they spend the rest of the Sunday, when market and public transport remains shut?

Due to a close-knit society, people there either know each other or are relatives. Thus, the residents first don their traditional attire, visit the church and then they assemble at some relative's/ friend's place and have gala time. They eat, play, sing and dance.

### Women-Centric Market

Mizoram is among the few states of India which has an all women



market. The market named Bara Bazaar, which lies in the heart of Aizawl city and is full of women entrepreneurs, from butchers to vendors and greengrocers. This not only represents the importance of women in economy, but also exemplifies the women empowerment that we talk of.

And this is nothing new to Lushai hills. Since ages, women in Mizoram have been working on the forefront, be it inside or out.

### Influence of Korean Culture

Stepping into the streets of Aizawl truly gives the feel of being in any of the cities of South Korea. Although, the K-Culture influence has now spread to all parts of the country, but the influence on youngsters of Mizoram is deep indeed. Not only do they love dressing up like Korean stars but they have actually started behaving like the one. Be it following the fashion by wearing loose fitting clothes, bucket hats, spring dresses or taking a formal education in Korean language and practising food habits, the youth, including on the streets of Mizoram University, have actually imbibed Korean culture.

### Co-existence of new and old

The beauty of Mizoram lies in its ecosystem of co-existence. While the inhabitants follow latest trends in music, food or fashion, on the other hand, people are connected to their roots. They have retained several old habits, like doing all the household chores by themselves.

Apart from the custom, traditions and diversity, what blows the mind is its rich flora and fauna. It has ample of greenery to adore and lots of different kinds of reptiles and animals to be scared of.

### Food

Being a place where majority of people are non-vegetarian, finding pure veg food remains a challenge. But the state's delicacy of vegetarian food lies in its simplicity, Bai, being the signature dish.



### Places to Visit

- **Solomon's Temple:** LB Sailo, the founder of this Church, is claimed to have seen this architecture in his dreams in 1991. Soon, he laid the foundation stone, and it took 20 years to build this vast creation. In 2017, the church was inaugurated with the Christmas service.
- **Ailawng Film City:** Ailawng is a village in the Reiek block of Mamit district of Mizoram. On 22 March, 2022, this village was converted into a film city to be utilised for shooting movies and documentaries.
- **Reiek Tlang:** It is a mountain peak, 29 kms away from the state capital. If hiked on a clear day, the boundaries of Bangladesh can be seen from the hill-top since it is at an elevation of 4,806 feet.
- **Thenzawl:** Thenzawl, which lies in the Serchhip district, 90 kms away from Aizawl, has the traditional Mizo handloom industry. Here, you can buy beautiful puans, traditional dress of Mizoram.
- **Tuirihiau Falls:** Located 5 kms south of Thenzawl, this is the most spectacular of all waterfalls in Mizoram. The uniqueness of this waterfall lies in the caves behind this waterfall, from where the falls can be experienced. ■



*Parking of the first flight*

## Manohar International Airport Becomes Operational

Indigo's flight 6E 6145 from Hyderabad with 179 passengers was the first flight to land on Day One

**N**ew Goa Manohar International Airport, developed by GMR Goa International Airport Limited (GGIAL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of GMR Airports Infrastructure Limited, on January 5 commenced scheduled domestic flight operations from New Goa Manohar International Airport at Mopa, Goa.

Indigo flight 6E 6145 from Hyderabad was the first commercial aircraft to touch down at the airport at around 09.00 AM.

The aircraft was given a traditional water canon salute on arrival and passengers were welcomed by the airline and airport staff at the picturesque terminal.

The New Goa Airport is designed to handle 16 ATM per hour during its peak capacity.

This airport was inaugurated by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 11, 2022. It will unleash the true potential of Goa by strengthening its connectivity nationally and internationally.





### Some highlights of the occasion:

- Indigo's flight 6E 6145 from Hyderabad with 179 passengers is the first flight to land
- Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia, Union Minister for Civil Aviation, flags off DEL-GOX Flight# 6E 6301
- The airport handled 14 flights on the first day till 04:00 pm
- 2441 passengers experienced the true essence, culture, and spirit of Goa at the new state-of-the-art airport today till 04:00 pm
- The state of the art baggage handling system of the new airport handled 953 number of baggage till 04:00 pm
- In Phase I, the airport will cater to around 4.4 million passengers per annum, with a saturation capacity of 33 MPPA
- The integrated Passenger Terminal Building has contemporary world-class amenities and gives a feel of the Goan culture
- It is designed to be a zero-carbon footprint airport



Speaking on the occasion RV Sheshan, CEO-GGIAL, said, *"The commencement of flight operations at the New Goa Manohar International Airport marks the beginning of a new chapter of growth for Goa. Through this airport, GGIAL will constantly work towards providing a world-class experience for travelers, airlines, and all stakeholders. Goa is an International tourism destination and we aim to cater to the world with the best of facilities."*

Built on 2,132 acres, the New Goa Airport is located at Pernem Taluka in North Goa. It is a state-of-the-art 24x7x365 international airport serving all the segments of inbound and outbound tourism.

### Salient features of the airport in Phase I are:

- Main Runway: 3.5 km long and 60 meters wide code 4E compliant runway; capable of handling the world's largest aircraft like Airbus A380/equivalent
- Parallel Taxiway: similar specification as the main runway, with 2 Rapid Exit Taxiways & 6 Cross Taxiways
- Parking Bays: 14 numbers, out of which five are aerobridges.
- Provides adequate night parking facilities for aircraft
- Comprehensive underground fuel hydrant system backed up with 7,500 Kilo Litres of ATF storage.
- Expansive 25,000 Metric Tonnes temperature-controlled cargo terminal
- 18 check-in counters and 4 self-baggage drop facilities
- 12 immigration and 8 emigration counters
- Integrated terminal building with contemporary world-class amenities
- State-of-the-art and independent air navigation infrastructure
- Adequate in-flight catering services
- Airside and terminal infrastructure are expandable in a modular manner to meet future demand

### Environmental sustainability initiatives the airport include:

- The New Goa Airport is designed to be a zero-carbon footprint airport and will join the elite club of green airports across the world.
- A 5-MW Solar PV Power Generation Plant within the airport premises.
- Bridge Mounted Equipment has been installed to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions from auxiliary power units (APUs) of Aircraft.
- The Airport has a state-of-the-art 625 KLD capacity sewage treatment plant (STP) making the airport a zero discharge unit.
- The airport has a solid waste management plant with a capacity to process 2 tonnes of biodegradable waste every day & 3 tons of non-biodegradable waste per day.
- >5 Lac native species tree saplings have been planted in & around the project site

GGIAL has set up Aviation Skill Development Centre, which will skill & empower the local Goan youth and make them employable. About 2,000 people are likely to be employed in the airport operations and it is expected that more than 5,000 people will be indirectly benefitted from the airport.

The new airport flaunts a designated area especially curated for flea markets where local artisans and craftsmen are encouraged to display and market their products. ■

Every day is  
**A Woman's Day**  
at GMR AeroCity Hyderabad

Everyone has the right to work with dignity and feel safe in the place they have chosen to harness their skills. At **GMR AeroCity Hyderabad**, we believe all employees should be involved, developed, empowered and trusted!

Gone are the days of old. Knowledge, skills and experience are the new currency of business. And gender diversity and equity are non-negotiable in this race to success.

The full potential of an individual can only shine through unconditional support from their community, which includes the workspace. Equal opportunities and support are the building blocks of business inclusivity that enable fresh ideas, better strategies and unparalleled growth.

GMR AeroCity Hyderabad is a meritocracy with equal opportunities at the heart of its strategy. We enable fairness and transparency at every step, from recruiting through onboarding, professional development and delivery. With women leading many departments, we extend support, flexibility and equal opportunities to advance for all, along with a commitment to their well-being.



GMR AeroCity Hyderabad continues to evolve by focusing on the needs of an individual independent of gender. Our promotions and pay processes work to meet diversity targets across our long-term workforce plans. We have also created an environment where work-life balance is not just a dream but an easily achievable feat.

From a crèche facility that caters to the needs of a new mother to integrated transportation to and from the city, we offer resources to our employees to ensure emotional security and flexibility. We also provide an ecosystem where an individual can work and access social infrastructure like educational institutions, housing, gyms, retail destination and health and banking facilities, all within the vicinity.

With an empowering environment and a resourceful ecosystem, it is hardly any wonder that every day is a woman's day at GMR AeroCity Hyderabad!

**GMR** AeroCity Hyderabad celebrates all these hardworking women every day, but on the 8<sup>th</sup> of this month we wish them

Happy *Women's* Day 2023!



## Gourmet Trail at Nook, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity

Fusion Monday, Coastal Reef on Wednesday and much more in terms of dining experience



**E**xperience the delight of seasonal celebrations and exceptional dining experience at Nook, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, where you can savour a wide variety of exquisite scrumptious delicacies from all around the globe, along with handcrafted beverages, live-action and other delightful offerings.

The Nook has introduced 'Fusion Monday', a perfect occasion for guests to enjoy the unique blend of Indian cuisine with a touch of fusion.

Every Wednesday, it offers 'Coastal Reef', where you can relish the mouth-watering East-West coastal cuisine. For its 'Fri-Yay Street Food Series', you can savour the impeccable flavours of street food from around the world. And on a 'Lazy Sunday Brunch', you can indulge in an appetising and lavish food spread paired with specially crafted concoctions.

Delve into a lavish food spread that features live cooking stations, where you can relish the delectable recipes prepared by Chef Amit Kumar, the Executive Chef at Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, using locally sourced ingredients.

**Day:** Every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Sunday

**Price:** Rs 2,000 onwards, per person

**For Reservations, please call:** 011-45650098

**Venue:** Nook, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity

## Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity Launches 'Own The Show'

**T**his Women's Day, Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity has launched 'Own The Show', a campaign which aims to celebrate the incredible strength and resilience of each woman, working and being everything all at once. By spreading the message of - Why be one, when you can be many things, the campaign highlights women as multitasking leaders in the society.

The campaign depicts the idea of - Everything All At Once, in the form of a musical which brings out different aspects of female protagonists and their capabilities. The musical video takes a deep dive into the everyday multifaceted and vibrant life a woman leads,

## Enjoy Luxurious Dining At Holiday Inn

The Fabulous Sunday Brunch at Viva All Day Dining

**Day:**

Each Sunday

**Time:**

A spread of scrumptious delicacies is to be had 12:30 pm onwards.

**For Reservations, please call:**

8130496069

## Hangar Bar and Lounge

Enjoy the Happy hours on IMFL - 05:00 PM-08:00 PM, everyday



## Ladies' Night Out at ibis

**Start Date:**

1st March

**End date:**

indefinite

**Offer:**

50 per cent off for women on their choice of beverages. The idea is to express our heartfelt gratitude towards women because they work twice as hard and deserve to let their hair down.

who is also in complete control of all that she balances, professionally and personally. The film features the employees of Pullman & Novotel including women HODs, F&B, spa, security, front office and sales and marketing team members. The narrative unravels through the medium of a catchy song and memorable dance routines to bring out the strong, fun and vivid personalities of the women, with depictions of them going against what is expected of them.



आपकी इकोनॉमी  
आपकी भाषा







# A hotelier's bi-monthly inspiration



**BW**HOTELIER

B W H O T E L I E R . C O M

Partner with us: [partner@businessworld.in](mailto:partner@businessworld.in)



# Dine Amid The Charm Of **ITALIAN SETTING**

Great food is about all sensory experiences. And at L'Osteria Bella, the pleasing interiors greatly contribute to that





## By Team Aerocity Live

**L**'Osteria Bella, located at the lobby level of Holiday Inn Aerocity, was reopened in an all-new avatar a few months ago. With a seating capacity of over 100 guests, L'Osteria Bella's casual and trendy setting are refreshing to the eyes. The feast has begun even before the food arrives.

Spread across two levels with two private dining rooms, an open interactive kitchen counter, and a trendy bar, the restaurant exhibits an eclectic décor with quirky design elements.

What strikes a visitor as one enters the dining space is its inviting colours, bright but not overpowering. There

is a harmony in all the colours used.

Italian Pop art and memorabilia invigorate the ambience. The intricately patterned mosaic floor contrasts with the straight-lined furniture. The Italian-themed murals and retro Italian travel posters in monochromatic frames accentuate the Italian vibe and spirit.

Contemporary pendant lamps, natural wood panelling and bold furniture with striking upholstery add to the character and vibrant mood of the restaurant while the Monstera leaves panels seamlessly attempt to embrace the outdoors with the indoors. ■



# “We Focus On What Individuals Bring To The Plan”

By Himanshu Ojha and Yukta Raj

GMR-owned Dubai Capitals captain Rovman Powell, and his team members Robin Uthappa and Chirag Suri share their team building process, and camaraderie that has developed in the team

**G**MR Group, owner of Delhi Capitals, also owns cricket franchise Dubai Capitals in the International League T20, held in the UAE. There are six franchise teams playing in the ILT20. Captain Rovman Powell. Aerocity Live interviewed captain **Rovman Powell**, former Indian opener **Robin Uthappa**, and Indian-origin batsman from UAE **Chirag Suri** from to know their thoughts on the league, about their sport, team dynamics and fitness regime. Excerpts:

## What is the experience of leading Dubai Capitals team?

**Rovman Powell (RP):** It's been good so far in the sense that there are lot of experienced guys, good coaching staff and so far, the experience has been very good.

## Robin what does this league mean to you? What has been your experience of being part of the Dubai Capitals team?

**Robin Uthappa (RU):** This league is very interesting. It's truly played from the perspective of improving UAE cricket and I think the process has begun. It's a great league for international cricketers as well because you get to play nine internationals in a game and also for the UAE youngsters, such as





“

This league is very interesting. It's truly played from the perspective of improving UAE cricket and I think the process has begun

”

**Robin Uthappa**

Chirag and a lot of other cricketers here in the UAE. They get to rub shoulders with a lot of international cricketers and learn and improve their game so it's a massive opportunity for them to learn as much as possible.

**Chirag, the love for cricket has been fostered by your father but when did you realise that you want to be a cricketer?**

**Chirag Suri (CS):** If you are born in India you're born with the love for game and that holds true for other parts of the subcontinent too. It was dream for playing for the UAE for me. That was the goal for me growing up and moving to the UAE. It's a great achievement and I want to keep on progressing and further getting better.

**One habit of your entire cricket journey which has still not changed?**

**RU:** The preparation for each match. I think that's something that hasn't changed at all. I think the way I prepare for a game is extremely crucial. You can't guarantee results but it's the processes that actually help you to achieve as consistently as possible.

**Chirag, you're inspired by the Uthappa and you guys are good friends on and off the field. One secret of him that you can share with us.**

**CS:** He has stopped eating dinners now. So, after 4pm I tried to convince him to eat. I even tried to tease him to get him into eating something after 4pm after a game or something, but he doesn't give in.

**Who is the most challenging baller you have faced?**

**RP:** I struggled miserably against wrist spin bowlers; especially guys like Rashid Khan would be very difficult for me to face and also sometimes fast bowlers when 150 clicks at the end, I guess nobody would prefer.



“

I think T 20 does teach you a lot a lot of skills. This is the fastest format and, in this format, every single ball counts

”

**Chirag Suri**

**Which is your favourite format of cricket?**

**RU:** Test cricket. Because I think it's the test of not just cricketers' abilities but also his mentality as a human being.

**Do you think the T20 cricket is more productive to your skills?**

**CS:** I think T 20 does teach you a lot a lot of skills. This is the fastest format and, in this format, every single ball counts and you got to be in your A game every single minute of it, as you just have 120 balls. So, I think it is very skilful sport and very skilful format. That's what we're seeing now, being encouraged all over the world because people love watching it and it's very entertaining.

**Who is your current favourite batsman and what would be a piece of advice for him?**

**RP:** My current favourite batsman is Virat Kohli and what advice can I give him, just keep going.

**What do you do to come out from bad form or bad phase?**

**RU:** I focus on the basics. I think sometimes when you go through bad form you forget the most basic things, you forget stuff like watching the full journey of the ball from the bowler's hand. Those aspects become extremely crucial. I remember reading it in one of the cricket books by a wonderful West Indian called Rudi Webster. In that book, he was interviewed Vivian Richards about how he returns from bad form or how he makes a comeback. He says he focuses on the most basic things, such as just watching the ball. And you know when you're when you're in good form, kind of take that for granted. And I think nothing beats keeping it simple and focusing on the basics.

**What has been your learning as you have shared cricket journey with lot of legends?**

**CS:** Doing the basics, and when you try to do something different or you're trying to complicate this game, this game can get very, very complicated. But keep it as simple as you can because, at the end of the day, you got to watch the ball you got to hit the ball, and that's what the best guys say. And even being around the best, they just tell you to just focus on your game. Believe in your game, you got to do no different. You can have idols, you can get inspired by the guys but at the end of the day, you still got to know what your strengths are. And that's what we discuss, even in this team. I think everybody's got a role to play and you know your game best and you just got to follow that.







“

I strongly believe that there's an individual component in a team and especially in franchise cricket. So, once you as an individual bring your piece to the puzzle, then other guys have the opportunity to do so

”

**Rovman Powell**

### **Any one particular sports person who inspires you?**

**RU:** The one sports person who's inspired me the most would be Muhammad Ali. I take a lot of inspiration from him and you can always go back to someone like him. But there have been so many others as well. Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal, these are people that I actually look up to.

### **Who is your cricketing ideal and why?**

**CS:** Mine is also Virat Kohli. Watching him since he's under 19. And the way he progresses, the way he evolved as a cricketer, and even the achievements he's achieved, I think it's just very, very inspiring.

### **Any dressing room memory which you will always remember?**

**RU:** One of the things that stands out at this point that comes to the top of my mind is the KKR 2014 season in the IPL where we lost.

We won one game out of seven and we needed to win nine in the row to qualify, and we ended up doing that, I think to be able to achieve that was something that was really special for the team. The conviction that we had within the group, the intensity brought on the field within the dressing room was amazing.

### **What message you have for your fans?**

**CS:** I think the fans have been great guys. Thank you so much for following all of us and, this is your team, the Dubai Capitals.

We've been blessed with amazing weather, sometimes a little bit too rainy but in Dubai we don't complain when we have the rains. Thank you for the support, guys.

### **One learning that you've had during the ILT20?**

**RU:** One learning will definitely be the wickets. I haven't played in conditions in Dubai where it's been cold and the wickets have been very different. Especially the Sharjah, you generally used to see Sharjah have a little bit more bounce and it's a completely different, it's like chalk and cheese as compared to Abu Dhabi and Dubai. For me, that's been a big learning. So, I know that coming back here next season, my approach to the wickets in Sharjah will be very different. Having said that, I think that's definitely been my biggest learning season. ■

### **FUN FACTS**

**Name someone, you look up to who is not a cricketer?**

**CS:** Michael Phelps

What is your favourite cheat meal?

**RP:** KFC

**What is that one thing that you miss the most when you are away for a game?**

**RU:** My family

**Name one dream player, playing or retired, you would want in your squad?**

**CS:** Hardik Pandya

Best meal you have had in Dubai?

**RU:** My friend took me to a place called My Hammock, there we had Shawarma and Avocado juice.

**Which is your go to place when in Delhi?**

**CS:** I think the food in Delhi is really good. So, I would say Sita-Ram Chhole Bhature.

**RP:** ITC

**RU:** Karim's

**What are some of the other passion that you have apart from Cricket?**

**RU:** I bake and it is something that I enjoy doing.

**CS:** I think I like entrepreneurial things.

**RP:** I love cooking, not on the baking side.

**Strangest rumour you have heard about yourself?**

**RU:** That I am very arrogant.

**CS:** There is no rumour, everything is true

**RP:** I am arrogant

**Have you been to Aerocity?**

**RU:** Honesty, I can't say I have.

**CS:** I have been many times and I like it a lot. Roseate and couple of other hotels are really nice.

# Movement Precludes Mood Upliftment

Why exercising is important to wellbeing, even if you don't feel like stepping out

By Saumya Chandra

*"Depression hates a moving target. A little bit of exercise every day helps to keep the mind at bay."*

- **Brad Stulberg**, author and well-being coach

**F**or many people, lacing up their running shoes can take them on a journey out of a dark place in their lives. Regular movement can help prevent, manage, and even treat depression. The same is true for anxiety where the reasons could be biological (chemicals in the brain), psychological (confidence), social (community), or some reasons still unknown.

Intrusive thoughts and feelings are stubborn. This is why "think positive" usually fails. Carving out at least 20 minutes of physical activity into your day helps. Even if it feels like you are forcing yourself or just going for a walk. The idea is to show up and do it regularly. One mantra that always holds true is "mood follows action". You don't need to feel good to get going, you need to get going to feel good. Sometimes you have to get out the door for a run or a walk and then your thoughts and feelings will eventually catch up. Don't wait for the motivation to be there before you act.

"If I'm down or in a rut, I force myself to move my body, even if only a little bit. This helps shift my



Saumya Chandra



**You don't need to feel good to get going, you need to get going to feel good. Sometimes you have to get out the door for a run or a walk and then your thoughts and feelings will eventually catch up**

perspective and reset my operating system and more often than not, the sun starts shining again," says Rich Roll, author and ultra-endurance athlete.

There must be some science behind this, if all articles and books point in this direction. As we face our fears, we develop a different relationship with them and learn to let them go. Running offers a gateway into this. An important question to ask is, "What is my reason?" If it's enjoyment, freedom, time out from the demands of life or to develop strength, then running can be a good way of developing positive qualities. Running can also form a part of treatment because it allows you to develop a plan, to build activity back into your day and gives you some short-term goals to work towards each day. It gives you a sense of achievement, connection with others, enjoyment and makes you physically fit. In the long term, running lowers depression, generalised anxiety, helps improve self-esteem, enhances sleep and boosts brain health.

It is very important to note that exercise is not a cure-all for mental health. For some people it can be enough. For others it is not. It is probably best thought of as a tool in the toolkit which includes therapy, medication, nutrition, and sleep hygiene but it is not prescribed enough.

Physical movement should be considered a part of everyone's job, even if they don't consider themselves an "athlete". Whatever your "job" may be, whether an athlete, writer, executive, founder, parent, or musician, think of exercise as a part of it. Too many people neglect exercise because they see it as something

separate from their main work. Exercise is a foundational habit which will help in just about anything that you do.

Many esteemed philosophers, from Kierkegaard to Thoreau, held their daily walk as something sacred, the key to generating new ideas. "Methinks that the moment my legs begin to move, my thoughts begin to flow." Thoreau famously penned in his journal.

In ancient Greece, when Althenian culture was flourishing and at its peak, Plato and his contemporaries didn't separate physical from intellectual education and development. Sound mind and sound body go hand in hand.

Did you know that according to a study, the mental health of Norwegians doesn't dip in winter. Getting outside for a run even in bad weather can help you feel that winter isn't limiting your opportunities for recreation. Researchers found that a positive winter mindset was linked with greater life satisfaction.

Exercise ought to be prescribed more seriously in treatment protocols, in the same way that talk therapy and medication are.

As Mark Twain said "It is easier to stay out than to get out". Get outside and get going. Mood follows action. Give yourself this gift. ■

*- The author is founder of Mindful Running*

*Article courtesy BW Wellbeing*

# There's Beauty In Differences

If everyone had similar backgrounds, features or thought process, it would lead to boredom, stifle creativity

By Sangeeta Natarajan

Once a CEO of a company told his co-founder that we need to focus on diversity. "I want you to hire more people who look different, but think just like me," he clarified.

That can't be the true essence of diversity. Let us get a different perspective to it. A toddler asked her mother to explain diversity and the mother replied, "My dear daughter, just like you have brown hair and I have black hair, and your dad has no hair - everyone's hair is different, with different colours, styles, lengths."

"Likewise you're a girl and your little brother is a boy. You are both human but different. I'm old and you are young. We are different ages. Your friend lives with her brother and father and her mother lives in another state. They are a family like us. But there are differences. We live in a villa house but they live in an apartment, they are both places to live but they are different. You like the pink colour and your brother likes red, both are colours but the colours are different."

As the mother explained, the daughter understood that even though things are the same, they are different and that is diversity. She added, "I like being different. I can't imagine everyone and everything being the same."

Likewise, according to the NASA's report called 'Curiosity Rover, 2015', Our Blue Planet, Earth has orange-red sunsets, while the red planet Mars has blue sunsets. All of the planets have different sunsets. Diversity is everywhere in the Universe.



Sangeeta Natarajan

If everything is same, it won't create any excitement or interest or difference. Synchronisation of various functions together in a machine creates the movement that leads to creating a desired product. Likewise different people create energy that transforms into synergy, and that synergy in turn creates all the difference in outcomes that touch the heights of excellence.





**Diversity creates an eco-system that fosters creativity and helps bring together different perspectives, ideas, and voices that can produce a unique idea, output or strategy**

If the things or the components are same and deliver the same function, we would be unable to innovate or create anything.

#### Symbiotic Relationship

Diversity has many faces, like cultural, racial, religious, age diversity and gender diversity. There is also bio-diversity, which again can be in the form of different species, different genetics, and ecological diversity.

But one thing is common to all the types of diversities - it brings in innovation and creativity. It creates an ecosystem that fosters creativity and helps bring together different perspectives, ideas, and voices that can produce a unique idea, output or strategy.

For example, we have person 1 who has a different set of values and there is person 2 who has altogether different set of beliefs and values and same is for the person 3 who is altogether different from the other two. Now, when they come together and communicate, they learn from each other from their different origins, races, social groups and religious beliefs. This learning becomes possible with finding goodness in others, being appreciative of others and feeling grateful to each other. They tend to live and motivate each other, adopt a wider perspective and become adjustable, adaptable and fit in the society as a whole and add value to the whole.

We generally form a view point that applies to everything that exists in the universe, "To be is to be related." We are inseparable from all our surroundings. Even if we go to the jungles or mountain where there is no human life, but we are not alone there as we are surrounded by the environment that consists of air, water, sunlight, trees, bushes, birds, animals, fruits, fauna and flora etc. We can't exist without all these even if we are not connected with human beings around us.

Diversity as a value can be primarily described as acknowledging the benefits of the differences and similarities. Sustainability comes only through diversity.

If Diversity is a fact, inclusion is an action.

Hence, we can say that proactively pursuing actions and building attitudes should be integrated both in professional realm and into everyday life that promotes not only a culture, but also a sustainable modus operandi for all.

A simple statement can convey it well, "I'm because others are". It is common to think that an inclusive model of behaviour has to do with others. But it starts with us. The more we work on ourselves, the easier it will be to be sensitive to others and the more natural operating in an inclusive way will be.

When we talk about inclusion as an action it means having sensitivity towards others' behaviour, style, culture, beliefs, values, class, colour, creed. We can follow the given strategies to create conducive environment of existing together. Let us make diversity as a blessing.

1. The easiest thing is to listen to others and talk to others carefully. Getting to know others' opinion and respecting others' opinion by showing sympathy and empathy towards others
2. Challenging your unconscious biases through self-reflection. Be non-judgmental
3. Getting educated through mentoring, workshops on diversity and inclusion. It will improve the quality and effectiveness of relationship towards our work and people. Celebrating the cultural diversities. Being cultural sensitive. Respecting others' working styles. We broaden our perspective and become more adaptable
4. It creates greater opportunity to evolve and grow as an individual
5. Becoming accommodating by developing new, beneficial and good feelings towards others. For example respect and gratitude towards others.
6. Let us know thyself and drive innovation and inspire creativity. Let everyone be comfortable around us, by following the standards of social etiquettes.

We surely can perform better and become more productive by learning with and by each other, thereby creating greater opportunities for personal and professional growth and benefitting humanity at large. We now realise that, "Diversity is the mix, and inclusion is getting the mix to work together." ■

**- The author is a life coach and author of 'Soul of a Leader'**

# WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHICH....



## VIGNETTES OF DELHI

**1. The popular Phool Walon Ki Sair is an annual procession and a cultural event involving people of various religious denominations that is organised in ..... area of Delhi.**

- a. Mehrauli
- b. Shahjahanabad
- c. Tughlaqabad
- d. Siri

**2. Traveller Ibn Battuta described the four Delhis as they existed in 1334 – Delhi proper (old Delhi of those days), Siri, Taghlaq Abad and Jahan Panah. Who was the founder of this last settlement, whose kingdom Ibn Battuta had visited?**

- a. Allauddin Khilji
- b. Firoz Shah Tughlaq
- c. Mohammad Bin Tughlaq
- d. Ibrahim Lodi

**3. Delhi College, which imparted modern education in sciences and maths since 1825, now functions as....**

- a. St Stephen's College
- b. Hindu College
- c. Indraprastha College for Women
- d. Zakir Husain College

**4. The enclave of Lodi Gardens was earlier called ....**

- a. Lady Hardinge Park
- b. Lady Irwin Park
- c. Lady Willingdon Park
- d. Coronation Park

**5. The oldest church of Delhi, built in 1836, is ....**

- a. St Stephen's Church
- b. St James Church
- c. St Michael's Church
- d. St Anthony's Church

**6. New Delhi Times, a 1986 movie showcasing corruption in the corridors of power and the travails of honest journalists, was penned by ....**

- a. Javed Akhtar
- b. Gulzar
- c. Govind Nihlani
- d. Gulshan Nanda

**7. Baitbazi, a traditional form of entertainment that has developed in and around Delhi pertains to....**

- a. Story telling
- b. Kite flying
- c. Pigeon flying
- d. Urdu poetry

**8. Which of these literary works does not have Delhi as its setting?**

- a. *Paper Moon* by Rehana Munir
- b. *The Heart Has its Reason* by Krishna Sobti
- c. *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga
- d. *Rich Like Us* by Nayantara Sahgal

**9. Spic Macay society for promotion of Indian arts and culture was founded by Kiran Seth, a professor-emeritus of....**

- a. JNU
- b. University of Delhi
- c. Jamia Millia Islamia
- d. IIT Delhi

**10. Architect Raj Rewal has given to the Delhi's landscape several prominent iconic buildings. Which of these buildings has he not designed for Delhi?**

- a. The Hall of Nations
- b. Satish Gujaral House
- c. Jang-e-Azadi Memorial and Museum
- d. World Bank Regional Mission

### Answer key

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. a. Mehrauli                   | 6. b. Gulzar   |
| 2. c. Mohammad bin Tughlaq       | 5. d. St James Church  |
| 3. d. Zakir Husain College       | 4. c. Lady Willingdon Park                                     |
| 4. a. Paper Moon by Rehana Munir | 10. c. Jang-e-Azadi Memorial and Museum (in Kartarpur, Punjab) |
| 5. d. IIT Delhi                  |  |
| 6. a. Javed Akhtar               |  |
| 7. d. Urdu poetry                |  |



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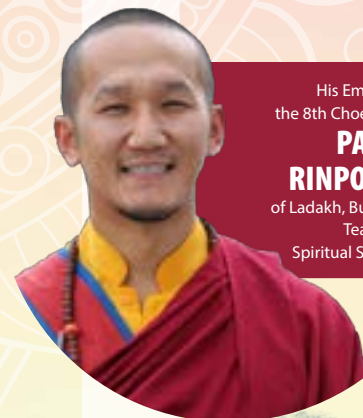
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