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On Page 49, We Share The Secrets



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STYLING BY ED GALLAGHER

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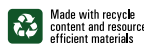
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editor's letter



Make this an epic summer. Go hopelessly bright. Pop bedcovers, printed straw mats, lots of clear glass vases, sunny floral scents to spritz around, and of course, colourful mason jar mugs for those frothy cocktails—my ammunition to battle the heat is out and about. And as usual, this year too, my spreading-the-sunshine spree has started with my balcony. Sunflower fresh cushions have replaced the purple embellished ones, on my favourite once-upon-a-baby-crib-now-a-cool-bench. Sea-mist tea lights have upstaged cinnamon scented candles. The only constant—herbs growing in planters big and small. I've been meaning to brighten up the planters, but that's not all I am itching to do.

After putting together 99 bright ideas to infuse summer into that place you call home, my list of 'must-try' looks endless, too. And yet, I insist, I can't be blamed. When the best of experts and a bunch of us passionate décor junkies put together tips and score the biggest steals and trends for you (starting page 26), and when the house proud women open their homes and show you how to unusually go bold with every corner (page 56), you cannot help but get inspired. However, we understand, it's no fun if there's winter in your heart while summer is all around. So we help you wear the sunshine on your skin, bring it into your wardrobe and let it kiss every aspect of your life. Flip through to get started.

I have often heard friends living in rented apartments using that as an excuse to not do up their pads. No more. We've put together a cheat sheet that'll help you take your rented space from drab to fab without really breaking a bank (and inciting the landlord). Page 49.

A recent study has revealed that selfishness increases your BP. So ban selfishness, be kind and giving. That's a lot, but may not be enough, still. Read our complete story on exercising, relaxation and destressing to stay on the health track, always. Page 86.

Ibn Battuta, a medieval Berber Muslim scholar and a celebrated traveller, once said, "Travelling leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller." Go on, explore the world, bring home some stories, both in words and in the form of souvenirs, and if you are looking for some memorable family holiday deals, zoom to page 77. Let me leave you with this thought to enjoy your holiday, however mini or grand it may be.

JUHI DUA, Editor



From my garden to my plate

This season, I grew both fenugreek and spinach in large pots, and I must say, the results have been very encouraging. Since I obsess over using all I grow in its most natural form, I wanted to use both spinach and fenugreek in salad recipes. This baby spinach salad recipe, which, by the way, my little girl loves to devour, is what I am currently tripping over...

Strawberry Spinach Toss

- In a medium bowl, whisk together sesame seeds, poppy seeds, sugar, olive oil, vinegar, paprika, Worcestershire sauce and onion. Cover, and chill for one hour.

- In a large bowl, combine the spinach, thinly sliced strawberries and almonds. Pour the dressing over the salad, and toss. Refrigerate for 15 minutes before serving.

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BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS

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Fifty years ago producer-director Amarjeet made a film named *Teen Deviyan*. Though, this took place years ago, the magical moment stayed with me throughout my life, and today, when I received my copy of *Better Homes and Gardens*, the magic was recreated. Malaika, Sussanne and Bipasha, too carry the same charisma. I loved how you put together an issue that is power packed with ideas for women to achieve success on their own terms.

—Padma Jagdish, New Delhi

Natural Potions

I have grown up using homemade cures for all my skin concerns. So, it was a delight to read how herbs and flowers have made their way into the beauty industry. Since, I have always been sceptical about using any skincare product—the chemicals in them make me shudder—I thought I would try out one of the products that you recommended in your article *Are You A Herbivorous?* And the effect has been sensational. Thank you team BHG for educating me.

—Papiya Lahiri, Kolkata



An Art Affair

Of late, I have been into buying modern art for adorning my home. Therefore, it was a real pleasure to see eminent artist Satish Gupta's fabulous house. Though I do not have the space to install huge artworks, I have taken a leaf out of his colourful study and have decided to replicate the magenta colour in my own living area. Hope it looks just as good.

—Archana Pande, Lucknow

home renovations. Thank you for the wonderful suggestions and tips. I have already decided to buy a funky ceiling fan, a four-poster bed and an accent mirror (found one in emerald green).

—Viji Rajan, Kochi

Power Entry

I love reading about the various décor ideas suggested by you in every issue. But the *50 Strokes of Power* article coincided with my annual

Write & Win

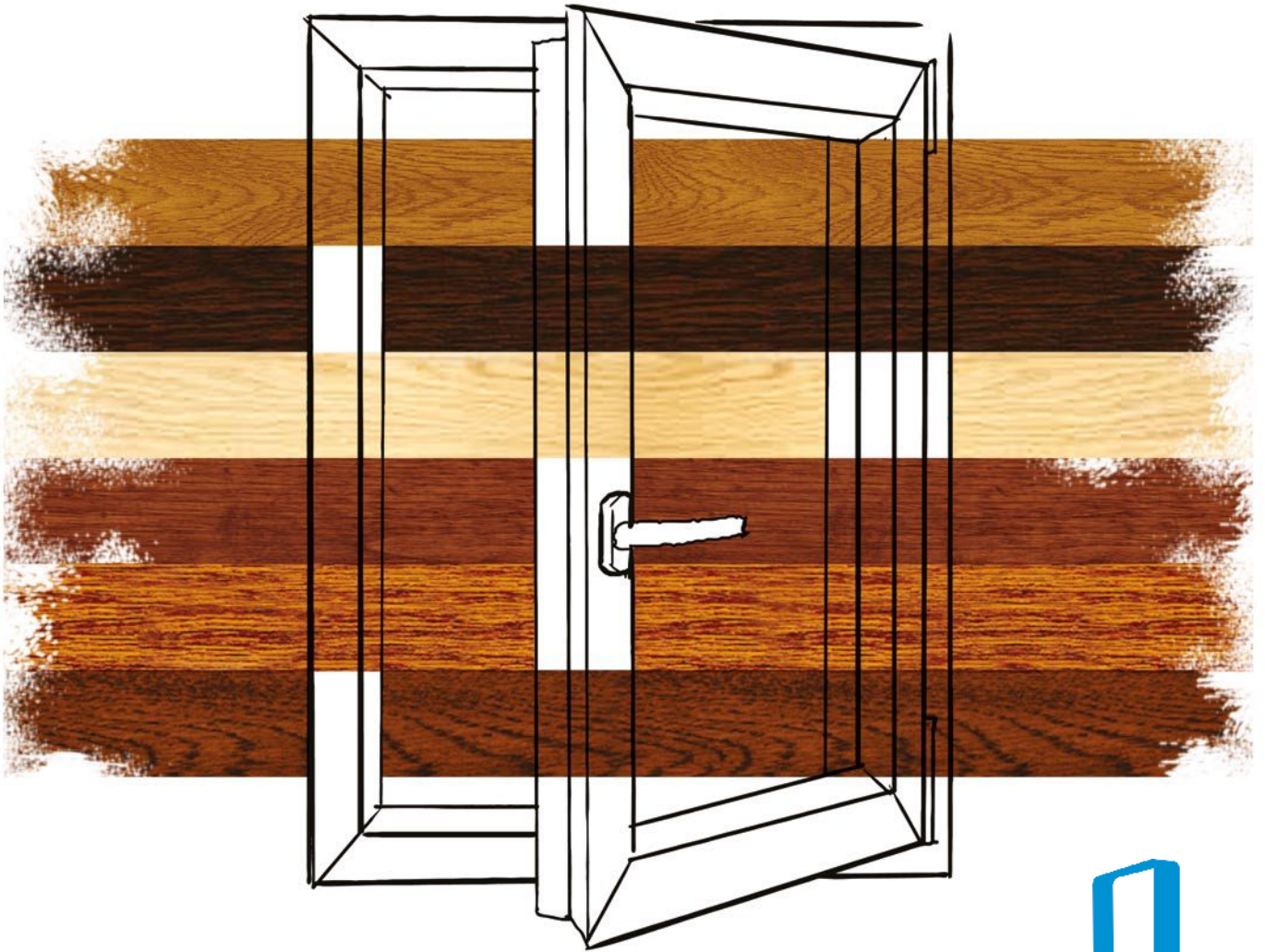


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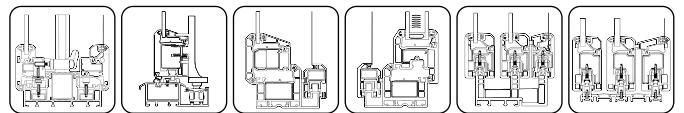


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CONTEST WINNER



Facebook Win It: What is a curved tweezer used for?

a) For plucking eyebrows; b) For applying faux lashes

Answer: B, for applying faux lashes

Lavié clutch goes to: Poonam Jadhav

(Keep a look out for more contests on all our social media platforms.)

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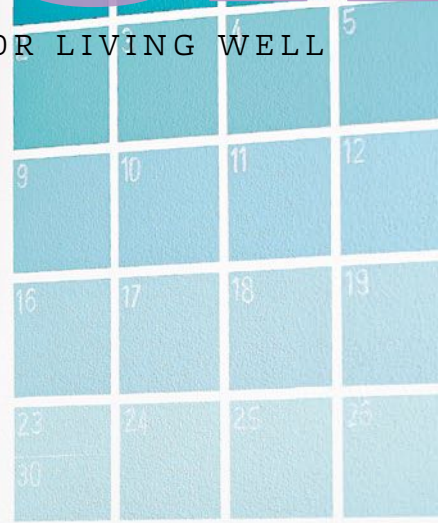
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fresh

IDEAS FOR LIVING WELL

QUICK TIP

Declutter your desk by recording the month's events on an open wall. After taping off a 32×45-inch calendar grid, apply three coats of chalk paint to each 6-inch square.



4



space savers

Revamp the small areas in your home to get the maximum utility out of them. We tell you how.

TEXT BY EMILY ELVERU



1



2



3

walls around desks

Create a clutter-free work area and watch productivity soar.

1 collection bin

Fill small buckets with pens and markers then dangle on hooks above the tabletop to prevent crafting spills. These removable containers easily transport to other work spaces around the home.

2 pinteresting concept

Rethink the standard bulletin board by pinning fabric ribbon in a whimsical pattern on the wall. Pull the ribbon tight and secure with a flat pushpin every 2-3 inches to hold mementos and lists.

3 optimised office

High shelves, magnetic boards and mail sorters climb the walls above a workstation to safely store materials and notes.

4 open to ideas

Let your projects flourish outside of a pocket folder by displaying inspirational ephemera and upcoming assignments on clipboards above the desk (picture on the first page). Assign a project, day of the week or topic to each.



behind the door

Bars, baskets and benches are major must-haves for every tight space.

1 raising the bar

Exchange terry cloth for table linens on a towel rack hung behind a closet door. The rounded bar minimises wrinkles and creases caused by folding and stacking.

2 one-wall wonder

Convert a nearly nonexistent entry into a multifaceted mudroom. Hang coats and bags on high hooks above a bench, place shoes in lined serving trays, and drop keys in a wall-mounted utensil tray.

3 pipe dream

Adorn painted PVC pipe with drilled-in holes, eye hooks, and extenders to hold tools, tape, and cleanup gear for your fast-fix needs.

4 nifty nook

Adding a half-wall between the entry and kitchen creates a drop zone outfitted with a bench, storage baskets and much-needed hooks for assorted essentials. ■

IN PERSON

monica dogra

Singer, actress and fitness freak, Monica Dogra tells us what drives her in life.

TEXT BY DEEPIKA NANDAL



HER STORY 2016 is a big year for Monica Dogra. Her band, Shaa'ir and Func, completed nine years. She also launched her debut solo album, *Spit*. And, she has acted in a romantic thriller (*Teraa Surroor-2*) and a dark comedy (*The Spectacular Jihad of Taz Rahim*). Without a doubt, she's evolved as an artiste. "Earlier, I was choosy, but now, I'm willing to take more risks," says Monica, who is also proud of her contribution to the independent art scene in the country. What's more, not a single day passes in her life without writing. "I'm pragmatic and mercurial. I like doing different things all the time," she asserts.

STYLE MANTRA Rock and roll, bohemian and a sprinkle of sports dictate her style. She likes wearing things that evoke meaning, be it crystal pendants that have metaphysical properties or anything vintage. Currently she's wearing black tourmaline and angel's eye. Her favourite designers are Kanika Goyal, Urvashi Juneja and Payal Singhal; and she loves the Bombay Electric store in Mumbai.

FITNESS DRIVE Monica credits yoga for her great body. She also loves participating in boot camps to undergo high intensity training sessions. "I love juicing every single day for a healthy diet," she says. "My body needs variety, so I do what makes me happy!" ■



FITNESS TIP Monica does Ashtanga yoga thrice a week.



"I love visiting Berlin, Los Angeles and Goa over and over again."



Her fashion muse: British supermodel Kate Moss.

SKIN TALK

Her favourite cleansers are Kama Ayurveda Pure Rose Water, Aveeno Clear Complexion Foaming Cleanser and St. Ives' Apricot Scrub.



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PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANIL CHAWLA | STYLING BY RUCHIKA GOSWAMY



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1 & 9 Candle stands, ₹800 (small); ₹950 (big); side table, ₹6,500, The Wishing Chair 2, 4 & 8. Cushions, ₹2,150 each, Ishatvam 3 & 15. Cushions, ₹2,400; Rs 6,000, Good Earth 5 & 6. Table, ₹31,899; bin, ₹6,999, Casa Pop 7, 10, 11 & 16. Carpet, ₹84,000; lamp, ₹8,400; vases, ₹6,500 (small), ₹7,985 (big); cushion, ₹2,645, InVHome 12. Bamboo containers, ₹799 (small); ₹999 (big), Homestop 13. Cage, ₹995, Chumbak 14. Silk cushion, ₹2,350, Silk Road and Beyond 17. Cake stand, ₹2,000; mugs, ₹500 each, Navya 18. Tray, ₹1,990, Gifts of Love.



FRONT COVER

1. Lamp shade, ₹1,000, Shah and Associates 2, 3, 8 & 9. Wall art, ₹3,200; vase with faux flowers, ₹2,500; tea light holder, ₹345, Home Centre 4. Umbrella, ₹2,200, Good Earth 5. Cutwork vase, ₹1,299, Homestop 6. Jar, ₹750, Home Décor 7. Woollen rug, ₹8,000, The Wishing Chair 8. Camp chair, ₹6,500, Casa Pop 9. Diptique candle, ₹6,500; books, ₹799 each, Moon River 10. Floor lamp, ₹9,500, InVHome 11 & 12. Candle, ₹450; ceramic bookend, ₹3,350, Silk Road and Beyond 13. Candle stand, ₹950, Karigari 14. Photo frames, ₹2,140 each, FCML 15. Kantha runner, ₹1,690, Fabindia.

OUTDOOR DINING

1 & 11. Faux bougainvillea, ₹1,000 per stem; cutlery, ₹500 upwards, InVHome **2.** Cushions, ₹2,600 (yellow); ₹3,000 (ikkat), Good Earth **3, 4 & 14.** Water jug, ₹1,395; basket and glasses, ₹650; lanterns, ₹199 each, Home Centre **5 & 6.** Jute mat, napkins and napkin holders, all ₹390 each, Nur **7 & 15.** Plates, ₹3,000 each; vase, ₹5,500, Moon River **8.** Wire stool, ₹1,999, Chumbak **9 & 10.** Storage trays, ₹990 each; cake plate, ₹1,450, Gifts of Love **12.** Planter, ₹399; Homestop **13.** Shelf, ₹3,375, Crazy Daisy **16.** Papier-mâché bowl, ₹1,095, The Shop **17.** Faux fruits, ₹150 each, Apartment 9. ■



*For more info, see Resources
Location courtesy: InVHome*

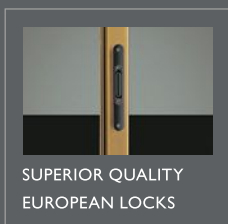


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suit up

Take your pick from our selection of pretty, colourful and stylish summer jackets.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ANIL CHAWLA | STYLING BY RUCHIKA GOSWAMY



1. Motley floral, ₹4,700, Ritu Kumar 2. Orange linen, ₹3,499, Marks & Spencer 3. Lace wraparound, ₹52,000, DVF Kirsten 4. Old-school checks, ₹4,490, Zara 5. Ikat cotton, ₹3,000, Lila 6. Stripe jacket, ₹5,999, H&M 7. Cape (jacket), ₹19,900, Ensemble 8. Throw over jacket, ₹4,500, Good Earth. ■

call of nature

Celebrate Earth Day with chic décor pieces sourced from natural elements.

PHOTOGRAPH BY VINOD AGGARWAL
STYLING BY RUCHIKA GOSWAMY

1, 3 & 9 Bamboo chattai, ₹1,650; runner, ₹1,950; recycled coasters, ₹1,450, Nur 2 & 17. Back to Earth tray ₹899; bowl, ₹399, Homestop 4. Chair and lamp, ₹2,800, InVHome 5. Fabric alphabets, ₹1,375 (set of 40), The Wishing Chair 6 & 8. Oven mitt, ₹850; rattle, ₹250, The Shop 7 & 15. Wood game, ₹790; paper tray, ₹450, Fabindia 10. Cork photo frame, ₹2,915, FCML 11. Chindi mat, ₹150, Crazy Daisy 12. Root man head, ₹1,900, Karigari 13. Jute and wood lamp, ₹14,500, Country Villa Décor 14. Coconut shell candle, ₹180, Home Décor 16. Paper flowers, ₹350 each, Ishatvam 18. Dried silk cocoons and fruit décor, ₹50 each, Moon River. ■

For more info, see Resources

office to party

Transform your work wear with trendy ad-ons that will also work for an outing.

1&9. Check dress, ₹8,200; bangle, ₹3,050, Ensemble **2,7&16.** Mulberry silk dress, ₹5,999; leather keds, ₹3,999; sunglasses, ₹799, H&M **3&12.** Dress, ₹2,490; lace-trimmed pleated top, ₹1,990, Zara **4&5.** Silk skirt and off-shoulder top, price on request, AM:PM **6&11.** Slip on keds, ₹3,999; sling bag, ₹4,999, Steve Madden **8.** Bias silk top, ₹4,000, Lila **10.** Hoops, ₹2,350, Amethyst **13.** Top, ₹5,900, Ritu Kumar **14.** Trousers, ₹2,999, Marks & Spencer **15.** Tie and dye silk scarf, ₹3,420, Second Floor Studio. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY ANIL CHAWLA
STYLING BY RUCHIKA GOSWAMY

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Zigzag clutch, ₹3,305, iamhappee.com



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Golden clutch, ₹4,990, Anita Dongre, shop.anitadongre.com



COLOUR PARTY

Purple patch honeycomb silk clutch, ₹5,600, Karieshma Sarnaa, artbazaar.co.in



RETRO PRINT

Pop art face print antique clutch, ₹3,150, fashionatclick.com



ORIENTAL CHARM

Sakura clutch, ₹7,700, creostore.in



OLD WORLD

Vintage-y print clutch, ₹3,200, thepurplesack.com



GLAM STREET

Swarovski beautification, ₹6,999, totesgallore.com



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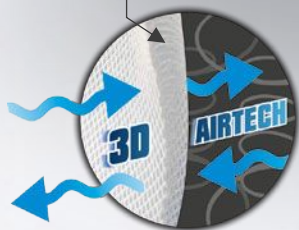
Black fabric clutch, ₹15,551, Bottega Veneta, stylemybasics.com

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back to roots

Meet flautist and singer Rasika Shekar, who studied chemical engineering but ended up being a destiny's child.

TEXT BY DEEPIKA NANDAL

Rasika is working on her first album. She says, someday she would love to learn the cello.



From Billie Holiday's jazz and blues to *ghazal* and Punjabi folk numbers, Rasika knows where to look for inspiration.



PANDORA'S BOX

Born to a Tamil family in Dubai, listening to Carnatic music was a part of Rasika Shekar's childhood. At the age of 11, her family moved to the US. Her mother noticed Rasika's liking for the flute as she used to innocently mimic Lord Krishna on Janmashtami celebrations, so she found her a tutor. But as Rasika grew up, her interests became diverse. Her childhood dream was to become a tennis player and she gave it a good shot. The sport, however, took a backseat after she lost a pro tour. "I loved mathematics and analytics, hence I opted for chemical engineering in college," she says. Before taking up a pharmaceutical research job, she came to Chennai for six months to find out what it was that her heart really wanted. And since then, there's been no looking back for this artist, as music took her into its magical grip.

CATCH THE TUNE

Folk songs performed in Valliyur's beautiful temples (her hometown) were etched in her memory and that inspired Rasika to explore her roots. Endless hours of training—learning Urdu, practising *ghazal* and *thumri*, helped her build a strong base in classical music. During college, she used to do solo shows in the US, until one day, a promoter offered her a chance to tour with the legendary Ustad Ghulam Ali Khan, as a vocalist. "Ghulam sahab has guided me in so many ways," says the 26-year-old.

Music composers, Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy, gave Rasika her first break in Bollywood a few years back. "The flute is a beautiful instrument and music is an ocean; keep learning and exploring," advises the instrumentalist. ■

beauty

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bonnet **SECRETS**

Cover your luscious mane with a stylish hat this summer to keep them damage-free. What's more, the hat will add to your diva moment and make you a showstopper even in the scorching heat.



HELLO, *summer!*

Sun-kissed skin may be every woman's dream, but unfortunately the sun brings with it more tears than kisses. However, the solution to looking 'good enough to eat' is right there in your pantry!

TEXT BY PRERNA SINGH BUTALIA

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTYIMAGES

Sunburn, patchy, dry skin and summer acne, our woes are endless. This warm season, save your skin all that trouble. We've got you some of the best DIY treatments to fix your skin and get your glow back. While home remedies work on most skin types, you need to remember a few rules. Avoid scrubs if your skin is dry, patchy, flaky or sunburnt. You need to calm this angry skin, not flare it up. Hence, a cooling pack is best for you. And, if your skin is oily, stay away from cream, and if it's dry, stay away from citric acid (read lemon). The former will make your skin oilier and the latter will make your skin drier. Most ingredients work well on their own, too. So should you be running short on time, or missing an ingredient, don't go into a flap, just use what you have.

Saffron Wash

GOOD FOR Badly tanned, even sunburnt skin.

MAKE IT For normal skin, boil milk with a dash of saffron, and use as a morning cleanser. Make a pack with saffron and a little honey, to use on alternate days. Apply, leave on for about 15 minutes, then wash off

HOW IT WORKS Saffron is a skin lightening agent, as is milk—thanks to the lactic acid in it. “Honey is an antioxidant and antimicrobial, and a very good moisturising agent, suited for all skin types,” says Dr Jaishree Sharad, vice president of the Cosmetic Dermatology Society of India, CEO of Skinfinity Aesthetic and LASER Clinic, Mumbai, and author of *Skin Talks*. But make sure you're not allergic to the lactic acid—a rare instance, but it could cause hives.

Herbalicious Toner

GOOD FOR Very oily skin, summer acne and blemishes.

MAKE IT Mix one part apple cider vinegar with two parts water and ½ part

IF YOUR SKIN IS OILY, STAY AWAY FROM CREAM, AND IF IT'S DRY, STAY AWAY FROM CITRIC ACID. THE FORMER WILL MAKE YOUR SKIN OILIER AND THE LATTER WILL MAKE YOUR SKIN DRIER.

green tea water. You can play around with the proportions, depending on how your skin responds to it. If you're prone to acne, add a dash of tea tree essential oil and if it's sensitive, add lavender essential oil. If your skin is prone to blemishes, you can infuse the water with thyme, before adding it to the apple cider vinegar. Dab it on with a cotton pad, let dry and then apply your moisturiser. Since apple cider has a pungent smell, you can rinse it off before your moisturiser, too. The mix will still be effective enough.

HOW IT WORKS “Apple cider vinegar is an extremely effective toner as well as a cleansing agent, although stay away if you have dry skin,” says Dr Sharad. While tea water is a diuretic when ingested, it actually hydrates your skin when applied topically. Tea tree oil has antiseptic and anti-acne properties, as does lavender oil, which is also calming. “Thyme, too, has healing properties,” Dr Sharad adds. Go ahead, raid your kitchen garden for the freshest produce.

Oatmeal Obsession

GOOD FOR Nourishing the skin.

MAKE IT Mix ½ cup oatmeal and ½ cup hot water and allow the mixture to settle for 2-3 minutes. Add 2 tbsp yoghurt, 2 tbsp honey and 1 small egg white. Apply a thin layer to your face, leave for 15 minutes and rinse off.

HOW IT WORKS “Oatmeal is an exfoliant with no side effects,” says Dr Sharad. Egg white is a skin tightener and conditioner. Honey is an antioxidant and intense moisturiser, and yoghurt moisturises as well as lightens. It also has an extremely mild peel effect. Together, these ingredients

brighten up your face, leaving you feeling fresh, cool and radiant.

Mango Mania

GOOD FOR Treating the tan and nourishing skin.

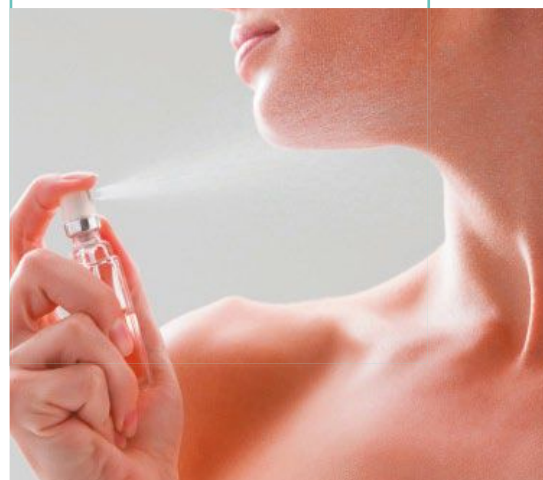
MAKE IT Blend 1 tbsp mango, 1 tbsp sugar and 3 tbsp argan or olive oil into

extra innings

Mysterious Vodka Mist

Bust the myth that alcohol can dry up your skin and buy that bottle.

Vodka can work as a great brightening agent and has a strong ability to firm up your skin. Additionally, it also unclogs skin pores, leaving you with a smooth, glowing appearance. Just take a tablespoon of vodka and pour it into about 10 tablespoons of distilled water. Now add a teaspoon of rosemary oil and a teaspoon of lemon juice and voila, you have a handy facial mist that works as a magic wand for tightening your pores. It also helps set your makeup and soothes irritation. Pour it in a spray bottle and keep it refrigerated for best impact. Handy for refreshing your skin in an instant and oh-so-affordable.



a blendable paste. Apply evenly on your face and neck, and wash off after 10 minutes. The mango and sugar may itch a little, but worry not, that's only the alkaline nature of the mango talking.

HOW IT WORKS The king of fruits and of the season is rich in Vitamin C and beta carotene, both antioxidants. "Vitamin C also fights discoloration and is a natural skin lightener, so it is great for removing tan," says Dr Sharad. Sugar is an exfoliant, and its alkaline nature balances out the acidity of the mango, helping maintain your ideal pH. Argan and olive oils are very good moisturisers, especially if you have dry skin. "But avoided if your skin is too oily," she warns. "Also, avoid this mask if you have acne-prone skin."

Watermelon Peel

GOOD FOR Rejuvenating and cooling skin, fighting blemishes, pigmentation and sunburn.

MAKE IT Beat some hung curd along with watermelon juice and a handful of soaked, ground almonds, into a thick, creamy mixture. Spread it evenly over your face, let dry and rinse off.

ARGAN AND OLIVE OILS ARE VERY GOOD MOISTURISERS, ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE DRY SKIN. BUT AVOIDED IF YOUR SKIN IS TOO OILY.

HOW IT WORKS "Watermelon is rich in Vitamins A, B and C, all antioxidants, and is also a great exfoliant," says Dr Sharad. "Almonds are a gentle moisturiser, while curd is a bleaching and skin-lightening agent." Together the three ingredients work to cool down and soothe the skin, while helping to rejuvenate and gently peel away the damaged skin. ■

The Bubbly Effect

GOOD FOR: Normal to oily skin but should be avoided for dry skin types.

MAKE IT: Champagne can work as a very effective skin toner. To use it, first, cleanse your skin. This is because champagne closes the pores, so it is best to use it on freshly washed skin. Now, pour about 2 tbsp of champagne into your dish and drop your cotton pad

into the champagne. Let the pad soak it up, then run it thoroughly across a cleansed face, neck and décolleté, to tone your skin. Don't rinse off. Follow-up with a light, natural moisturiser like pure jojoba oil or sweet almond oil as both of these are great moisturisers.

HOW IT WORKS Champagne is extremely high in antioxidants due to the grape seed extract and hence packs in more vitamin C and E than your average toning and anti-aging products. Hence, it's one of your best bets for protecting the skin's vital collagen and elastin from environmental free radicals and oxidative stress. Just remember, alcohol in whatever form can be drying for your skin, so only use this treatment 1-2 times per week and be sure to follow with moisturiser. ■

a little professional love

We've picked out some of the best summer facials that salons are offering, this season.



Biguine Bio: Jean-Claude Biguine Salon, Mumbai

This organic facial uses products from the French Biguine Bio range, and is suited for all skin types. The Biguine Bio Balancing treatment helps maintain the skin's pH balance, while the Biguine Bio Anti-Comedons treatment is for congested skin that requires deep purifying and anti-acne cleansing. The facials are done with a personalised one-time usage kit.

Chocolate Facial: YLG Salon, Chennai and Bengaluru

A feel-good treatment with anti-ageing properties, it helps in tan removal and rejuvenates dull skin. The facial uses European Light Therapy, a technology that uses red and blue light to purify and exfoliate skin and improve circulation. The treatment also aids in lymphatic drainage.

Peppermint Facial: Lakme Salons (across India)

This summer special treatment leaves the skin tingling with freshness, glowing and tan-free. Known for cooling and soothing properties, peppermint is good for acne-prone skin too. Refreshing from the first session itself.

KNOW HOW facial masks

3 rules for choosing and using

1 THINK OF MASKS AS THE ULTIMATE PROBLEM-SOLVERS “They contain more concentrated ingredients than regular serums and moisturisers and can jump-start the results from your everyday regimen,” says US-based dermatologist, Ellen Marmur. Don’t save them for special occasions—you should use them once a week or more. Apply a thick layer to freshly cleansed skin, and allow it to soak in for 10 to 15 minutes. “The physical weight of the formula and the amount of time you leave it on help drive the active ingredients into the top layers of your skin,” Marmur says. The best part? “You’ll see a difference.”

2 PRIORITISE YOUR SKIN’S NEEDS Are you feeling Sahara-dry? A cream or gel mask packed with humectants like glycerin or hyaluronic acid will drive water into the skin. Notice blackheads? “Clay or charcoal masks draw out impurities, making pores less noticeable,” says Vanessa Hernandez, an aesthetician for L’Oréal Paris. Skin dull or uneven? You’ll look fresher and brighter after an exfoliating mask with enzymes or alpha hydroxy acid. Think outside the jar with the newest option: sheet masks. Drape a serum-soaked cloth over your face to infuse skin with hydrating or calming ingredients. “This is a quick-fix, pick-me-up option for before an event or even before applying makeup,” Hernandez says.

3 MULTIMASK TO CUSTOMISE This trend is currently blowing up Instagram (#multimasking), but facialists have done it for years on combination skin. Simply put, you use different treatments on different parts of the face—say, a clay mask on oily areas like your nose and chin, and a cream mask on dry spots like your cheeks and forehead. Want extra credit? Spring for an eye mask to deflate undereye bags, and slather a creamy moisturising mask on neck, chest, and backs of hands, Hernandez says.

toolbox

All the extras

Pro-approved accessories make your mask less messy and more effective.

FAN BRUSH Helps you achieve a thick, even coat. Vega Fan Brush, ₹72, nykaa.com.

SEA SPONGE Removes residue from nooks and crannies like those around the nose and mouth. Faces Sea Sponge, ₹169, amazon.in.

MICROCURRENT DEVICE Increases ingredient absorption and lifts over time. NuFace Mini, ₹13,500, amazon.in.



5 EDITOR FAVOURITES



- 1 THE BODY SHOP** Ionic Clay Mask, ₹1,095, thebodyshop.in
- 2 BOTTEGA DI LUNGAVITA** Anti-age Moisturising Face Mask, ₹6,000 for a box, bottegadilungavita.in
- 3 EPIQUE** Express V-Hydralift Facial, ₹750, myepique.com
- 4 LAKME** Clean Up Face Mask, ₹225, lakmeindia.com
- 5 FABINDIA** CHARCOAL FACE PACK, ₹200, fabindia.com. ■



TRICK 'n' TREAT

The need of the hour is to look picture perfect all the time—blame it on selfies, wefies and instant sharing. **BHG** explores some easy makeup hacks to put your best face forward every time.

TEXT BY NANDINI BANERJEE

STROBING

The 'it' makeup trick, strobing is a two-product wonder and can be achieved in under five minutes. As makeup expert Jannat Sethi explains, "It's an anti-contouring technique. It adds shine and light to the high points of the face by using a highlighter to brighten up your features in quick, simple strokes." However, Garima Bhandari, co-founder of Glo, cautions, "Strobing is done to look radiant. Therefore, always do cleansing, toning, moisturising. A primer is a must. And remember, less is always more."

STROBE LIKE A BOSS

Makeup artist Jojo decodes the technique:

- If you've only five minutes, just mix in an illuminating liquid with your foundation to get an all over glow.
- But for that perfect look, first stand under a bright light and look into the mirror. Mark all the places that the light catches on your face, such as the cheekbones and nose. This is where you will apply the highlighter.
- The highlight should be strongest on the apples of the cheeks and then taper

out near the tear ducts. You can also accentuate the brow with a thin layer of shimmer just over the tail of your arches.

- Add a layer of loose shimmer powder on top of your cheek to keep it from looking too greasy.
- You can add another element of shine with clear gloss. Use your fingers to layer the product on top of the highlights. The gel texture makes the skin look dewy and fresh.
- Then apply highlighter down the centre of the nose, in between the brows, centre of the forehead and on the jaw. And you are ready for the selfie of the day!

DIFFUSING

Photoshop your face in real time. Diffusing or blurring conceals flaws like fine lines, wrinkles, and produces an airbrushed effect. Jannat explains, "The

blur-effect makeup products use particles much smaller than other regular makeup. These products reflect light and give an appearance of even skin tone or complexion. The silicone in the products gives it a smooth finish.” This technique is best used when you want to appear ‘naked’. To create this effect, all you will require is a primer, concealer, foundation and brushes.

LOOK FLAWLESSLY AU NATUREL

Jammat shares secrets to achieve fresh-faced look without hassle:

- Moisturise the skin and apply sunscreen. Use a blur-effect primer to prep the face.
- Then conceal the flaws using a blur-effect concealer.
- Use a blur-effect foundation to evenly coat your face and let the makeup breathe for a while so that it gets soaked into the skin and gives you the desired effect.
- If you like, use a light blush, nude cream eyeshadow and a nude lipstick to finish the look. For a party look, highlight the eyes with a copper eyeshadow and bold matt red lips.



CONTOURING

To completely hide the flaws on your face, you need to master contouring. It covers or camouflages the problem areas of the face and makes it look near perfect by accentuating the flattering features. For Garima, the most important tools to achieve this look are a cream contour kit, powder contour kit, highlighter, blusher, contouring toothbrush, angler brush and blender. She says, “Contouring is a technique which defines your features, creating the appearance of higher cheekbones and a slimmer nose and chin. Once you’ve applied your contouring makeup, remember to blend well for a flawless, natural look.”

CONTROL CONTOUR

Jojo gives you handy tips to treasure:

- Prepare your face with a primer. Then apply the foundation from the centre of the face to outwards, blending into the ears.
- Blend the foundation at the chin, jawline and neck. Follow to the forehead, blending evenly into the hairline and the area around the eyes.
- Apply the concealer to the darkest area under the eyes. Then conceal the other imperfections on the face.
- Dab highlighter on your cheekbones carefully so that the highlight doesn’t spread to the under-eye area.
- Highlight the arch of the brow. Then, the top of the Cupid’s bow.
- To contour, take a darker shade of foundation. Apply it behind the ears along the jawbone and sweep towards the chin and blend upwards. Then apply at the hairline (middle of the ear) and blend slightly towards the mouth to sculpt the cheek and get killer cheekbones. ■

Expert Choices

Makeup artistes share their secret arms and ammunitions.



MAC SOFT & GENTLE ₹2,400
maccosmetics.in

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₹4,990, strawberrynet.com



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URBAN DECAY
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maccosmetics.in

THE BALM MARY
LOU MANIZER
LUMINIZER ₹2490
amazon.in





IN THE KNOW

eyebrows

TEXT BY ELLEN MILLER

3 RULES FOR ...

shaping, tweezing and perfecting

- 1 DETERMINE YOUR SHAPE** Pay attention, because it's time for a geometry lesson from Maribeth Madron, a makeup artist and brow guru for Maybelline New York. Grab an eyeliner and place the pencil vertically alongside your nostril. Follow the line up to your brow and mark the spot—here's where the hair should start. Next, angle the pencil toward the outer edge of your iris. Again, follow the line up and mark the spot—this is where your brow should arch. Finally, angle the pencil to line up with the outer corner of your eye and mark that point on your brow—here's where the tail should end. Now, fill in your 'ideal' shape with the liner.
- 2 TWEETZE STRAYS SPARINGLY** "Skimpy brows make you look older than you are," Madron says. To preserve fullness, stand in front of a mirror and tweeze one hair at a time, using what you filled in earlier as your guide. After every three hairs, step back, and look at your face to assess your next move. Now, wipe off your eyeliner stencil.
- 3 FINISH WITH MAKEUP** Skip the brow pencil, which takes a lot of practice, Madron says. Instead, pick some of the easier options: If you need to fill in a bald spot, go for a thick brow putty, which typically comes in a pot. If your brows are grey or fine, try a brow mascara, which adds colour and thickness. To darken lighter hairs, look for a brow powder. Finally, if you just want control and hold without any colour, opt for a clear brow gel.

toolbox

Oh, behave!

Whip unruly brows into shape with these must-haves.

TWEEZERS

Use only fine-tipped, clean tweezers to minimise pain. Hold them like you would a pencil with the open side pointing up.



SCISSORS

To easily snip hair that sticks out, use a curved razor sharp scissor for that perfect arch.



SPOOLIE BRUSH

This is an extremely useful tool to groom errant eyebrow hair. Take a clean brush and wiggle it over your brows or up your lashes to neaten strays.

4 MUST-HAVES FOR YOUR EYEBROW ARSENAL



1

2



3



4

DID YOU KNOW?

There's an app for that! Head to benefitbrowgenie.com and upload a selfie to get more advice on the best brow shape for your face.

- 1 Clear gel** Essence Lash and Brow Gel Mascara, ₹ 249, amazon.in
- 2 Stencil** E.L.F Eyebrow Stencil, ₹ 950; amazon.in
- 3 Powder** NYX Eyebrow Kit With Stencils, ₹ 900; sephora.com
- 4 Mousse** Tweezerman Browmousse, ₹ 1,900, amazon.in.

bon voyage in style

Pack the ultimate beauty kit for the vacations that will take care of all your emergency needs. We pick our favourite travel companions.



1. Avène Thermal Spring Water Spray, ₹1,145, nykaa.com
2. VLCC Matt Look Sun Screen Cream, ₹295, amazon.in
3. Marks & Spencers Florentyna Moisturising Foam Bath, ₹699, marksandspencers.com
4. Natio Gentle Facial Scrub, ₹1,000, nykaa.com
5. Clinique Liquid Facial Soap, ₹1,350, clinique.in
6. Estée Lauder Pure Envy Matte Sculpting Lipstick, ₹2,300, esteelauder.in
7. Oriflame Manicure Kit, ₹699, flipkart.com
8. Vert Smoky Cocoa (with Shimmer) Loose Powder, ₹1,250, verthpc.com. ■

COLOUR THEORY

Coloured hair needs special attention. These shampoos freshen fading and correct brassiness. Choose one that will make your hair look salon-like.

TEXT BY NANDINI BANERJEE | PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG SCHEIDEMANN



PROTECT

Your coloured hair has already gotten much abuse with chemicals—use a shampoo that protects the hair texture and helps it become healthy and glossy again.

TRY Tresemmé Color Revitalize Protection Shampoo, ₹950 for 850 ml.



BAN CHEMICALS

Go gentle with the hair and switch to non-sulphate formula for daily use. You will see a remarkable difference in the texture of your hair.

TRY Schwarzkopf Bonacure Color Freeze Sulfate-Free Shampoo, ₹750 for 250 ml.



ENHANCE SHADE

Get a shampoo that is both gentle and also eliminates residues—it will make the hair feel soft and look glossy. Make sure there is UV protection too in the shampoo.

TRY L'Oréal Expert Vitamino Color Professional Serie Shampoo, ₹475 for 250 ml.



GO NATURAL

If your coloured hair feels dry and frizzy all the time, it's time to seek help from natural shampoos. They are free of silicones, sulphates, colourants and paraben.

TRY The Body Shop Rainforest Radiance Shampoo, ₹795 for 250 ml.



EXTRA SHIELD

Highlighted hair requires more care. It needs to be kept silky, so that the colour stands out. Choose a shampoo that is especially made for highlighted hair.

TRY Kérastase Reflection Bain Chroma Riche Shampoo, ₹2,995 for 250 ml.



SPECIAL CARE

If your hair has become extremely sensitive after a colouring session, you will require a shampoo that treats delicate hair. Make sure it's free of chemicals and has a rich lather.

TRY Matrix Biolage Delicate Care Shampoo, ₹4,000 for 250 ml. ■



Bespoke Service

New luxury salon, Magnifique, in Delhi's Defence Colony is a sight to behold.

Pleasing interiors, fantastic facial treatments and a unique 'private room' concept takes this 'debut' into greener pastures. My therapist was extremely knowledgeable about skin types and its problems. At one glance, she suggested what was required on my badly-tanned skin. I opted for their Thalgo Brightening Facial that claims to help in de-tanning, removing pigmentation marks, improving skin texture and stimulating the production of collagen, while vitamin C protects cells from UV damage. The facial is a four-step process—cleansing, scrubbing, massage and a mask. The additional brightening cream at the end of the treatment is a bonus. After the facial, my skin visibly looked brighter but it was only after a week that I felt the complete benefit of the treatment. Gone were the pigment marks and breakouts. The skin was smoother and I never looked better. Priced at ₹6,000.

new launch

Slick Lipper

Chambor's new Extreme Wear Transferproof Liquid Lipstick is an indulgence for the lips. Pretty shades and intense, rich colour that just does not wear off. The satin-like texture makes it for an everyday wear (it doesn't dry the lips). A must buy. ₹845.



Passionately French

Colorbar's French manicure kit and the Art Effects Nail Appliques are a must have for the summer season.

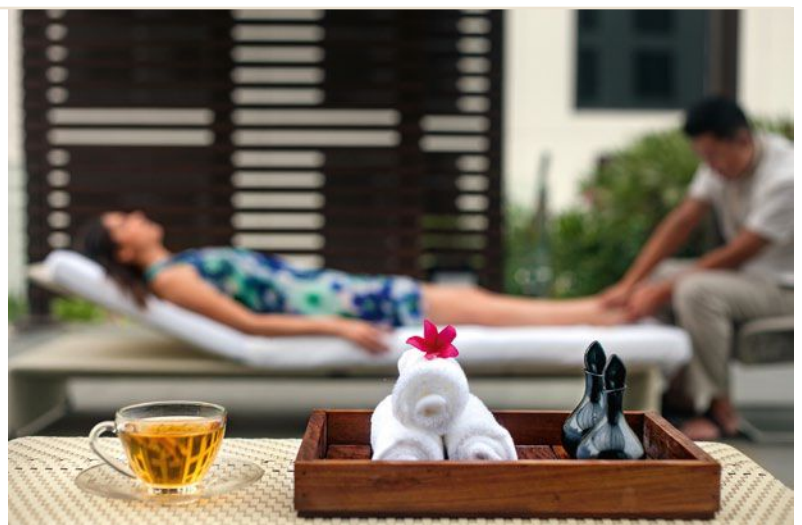


Easy to apply, precision brush, fast drying formula makes the French manicure kit from Colorbar your favourite tool for those perfect summer-fresh tips. The colour is long lasting and the top coat provided enough gloss that gave even our harshest critic, BHG art director, a reason to smile. The new launch, Art Effects Nail Appliques are also a delight. Fun yet elegant, they are extremely easy to apply and lend an instant makeover to the nails without extra effort. Priced at ₹500 (French manicure kit) and ₹250 (nail appliques).

TREAT FOR ALL THE SENSES

The Woo Wellness and Spa at the Pullman New Delhi is a sanctuary for the world weary. The indulgence begins the minute you step into the peaceful spa lounge. After a quick chat about my skin type, I was handed a soothing cup of green tea. I chose aromatherapy massage with orange oil as it suited my sensitive skin. The orange oil is known

for lowering blood pressure, soothing nerves and alleviating water retention. My therapist began with a foot massage, after which I surrendered my tired body to her competent hands. The spa used Kama Ayurveda's essential oil, and it was very easy to slip into a deep sleep during the treatment. ₹3,500 for 60 minutes. ■



All reviews by Nandini Banerjee

beauty know-how

TIPS AND PICKS FOR LOOKING YOUR BEST



FRUITY FLAVOUR

For beautifully refreshed, deeply ` and healthy skin, try Oriflame's Love Nature Fruit Extract Face Wash. There are three variants—Strawberry, Orange and Peach. Suitable for all skin types, the face wash cleanses your skin without over-drying it and has fabulous moisturising benefits. Priced at ₹159 each.

SOFT AND SILKY

Bobbi Brown has introduced the nourishing Lip Color Oil-Infused Shine lipstick, that has a blend of five natural oils and Vitamins C and E. The formula leaves the lips with a silky feel and smooth finish. The hybrid lip colour delivers 24-hour sustained moisturisation; and continues to make the lips softer, smoother and plumper. Priced at ₹2,150.



now on shelves

NATURE FRESH

Yves Rocher brings to you Les Plaisirs Nature range, that makes bath time a moment of pure pleasure. The Body Exfoliant (featured here) is enriched with olive stone powder that eliminates impurities and dead skin cells. The other key ingredients are apricot stone powder, organic shea butter, sweet almond oil and organic aloe vera gel. Priced at ₹1,270 for 200 ml.



SeaSoul unveiled a fruit mask-making machine, which makes healing of skincare problems more effective and organic. You can customise the recipe based on your skin problems. Price on request.



Nailed It

Nykaa.com recently launched its signature beauty range, starting with nail polishes in pretty colours. The other is the bath and body range—French Lavender, Country Rose, Fresh Aqua and Tropical Jasmine. Priced at ₹149 for nail paints.

SCIENCE OF IT

Skeyndor recently introduced its Mesoscience range that is an extra-concentrated formula in phials to transport the active ingredients into the deepest layers of the skin. Mesolift (featured here) creates a continuous lifting feel for the skin. Price on request.



Floral Happiness

Make way for the refreshing oriental charm of Trussardi's A Way for Her perfume. Created by Lucas Sieuzac and David Apel, the top notes of the perfume are bergamot, peach and white tea; middle notes are frangipani, tuberose and jasmine; and base notes are ambroxan, vetiver, musk, sandalwood and vanilla. Priced at ₹4,400 for 100 ml.



For more info, see Resources

Home

WHERE LIFE HAPPENS

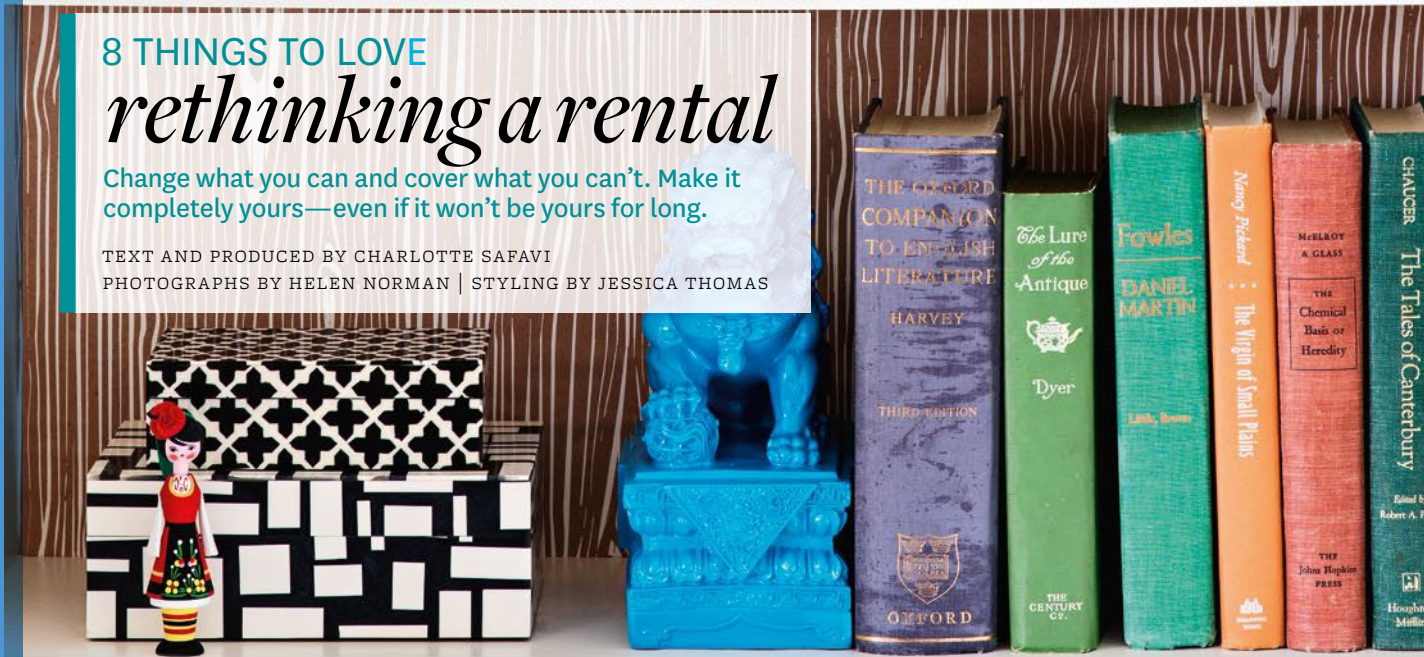


8 THINGS TO LOVE

rethinking a rental

Change what you can and cover what you can't. Make it completely yours—even if it won't be yours for long.

TEXT AND PRODUCED BY CHARLOTTE SAFAVI
PHOTOGRAPHS BY HELEN NORMAN | STYLING BY JESSICA THOMAS





1 CRAFTY CUSTOM

By finding stock bookcases with a just-right fit, Kerra got the look of built-ins, *above*. She upped the style quotient by attaching faux bois paper to shelf backs with spray adhesive.

2 MUST-SEE TV

Kerra integrates her TV into a gallery wall, *left*. “Instead of a black rectangle floating in space, I grouped framed art in similar shapes and different sizes around it,” she says. The key to a tidy look is matching frames and mats.



3 FURNITURE REFRESHERS

A pair of bargain bergères, *above*, is upgraded with silk-look ikaat and white leather upholstery. Visual trick: Allow furniture legs to be seen—it makes the room look bigger. The artwork above the mantel inspired the colour palette.

4 BAR NONE

A family heirloom cabinet, *right*, holds not only barware and beverages on an acrylic tray, but also contains Kerra's handbags behind closed doors. The word artwork hangs above the cabinet, a souvenir from when she lived in Rome.

“I AM A SERIAL RENTER,”

says designer and *Apartment Envy* blogger Kerra Michele Huerta. In nearly 15 years, she lived in eight rentals in many cities before landing in the 600-square-foot, one-bedroom unit she shares with her pup, Atticus, in Washington, US. “We’re a very mobile generation,” the 32-year-old says. “I’ve moved for school, jobs and lifestyle, never staying in one place for long. Renting just makes sense, but it’s important that the place feels like *my* home.” Kerra’s rental shines with her youthful take on laying down roots, however temporary. By investing in key furnishings, upgrading elements with her DIY chops, and, of course, artfully cajoling her landlord, Kerra has created home. “I’m living the renting dream,” she says.





5 THINK BIG “Renters tend to accumulate lots of small, random furnishings, but it’s better to buy fewer pieces with some size,” Kerra says. She reupholstered her clean-lined sofa in emerald-green velvet, *above*, to make a bold statement.

6 COVER UP “Electrical junction boxes, ugly thermostats and old telephone jacks tend to be in obvious, open places in rentals,” Kerra says. Her solution: Cover the eyesore with a hanging basket or a piece of art that’s easy to move, *right*.





LOVELY LIGHT

Kerra temporarily replaced a humdrum fixture with a dramatic drum shade.





Raven Song 390
British Paints



7 CREATIVE CALL
“Every wall in my bedroom had doors,” Kerra says. “I just wanted a solid wall, so I painted all the walls, trim and doors flat black.” She treats doors just like walls and hangs artwork on them, *above*. Reusable poster tack keeps the frames from shifting when Kerra needs to open a door.

8 FOUND SPACE
Kerra turned a walk-in closet in her bedroom into a home office, *left*. She added a crystal chandelier, painted a space-expanding harlequin pattern on the walls, and popped in a pretty desk with a see-through chair. ■

little ideas

Some rented Indian homes that have been given signature looks in a tight budget.



BHG STAFFER INNOVATES

You can dress up a bare wall using temporary wall decals and paperwork. Go ahead, unleash your inner artist.



Clockwise from top right.

ACCESSORISE Transform your boring bedroom into a glamorous boudoir with furry rugs, four-poster bed (with complementing hangings) and a pastel coloured large mirror.

BLOCK IT All that your patio requires is a fresh coat of bright paint on one wall and sturdy outdoor furniture. **POP COLOUR** Persuade your landlord to choose your own shades for the walls before you

move in. Here, the eye-catching cyan transforms a dreary room instantly. What's more, the bright wing chair makes for an impactful statement. And of course, quirky wall shelves are always welcome. ■

TEXT BY KATHY BARNES
PHOTOGRAPHS BY RACHEL MCGINN
PRODUCED BY EDDIE ROSS
STYLING BY YVETTE GONZALES



go BOLD

Welcome to the brilliant world of interior designer Gretchen Bond, whose decorating rules are simple: If it's ugly, paint it. If it's plain, add pattern. And if it makes you happy, go for it. Dip a toe or dive right in.

THE RULE
REPLACE A
WORN FLOOR

BREAK IT
JUST
PAINT IT!

When Gretchen Bond and her husband, Chris, bought their 1912 home in Philadelphia, US, they knew it could turn into a money pit if they remodeled every thing that was outdated or ugly. Paint was her design salvation. The sunroom's dingy brick floor became a showstopper with a coat of high-gloss navy blue paint. The basket-weave pattern added texture to the sheen.

PAINT PICK
BRITISH PAINTS
GLAMOUR
PREMIUM RANGE'S
IMPERIAL BLUE 715



THE RULE
KEEP A ROOM'S
ORIGINAL USE
BREAK IT
CHANGE IT UP

The original kitchen of this big old house became 'the bar room', as shown in this photograph, after a remodel carved a new kitchen out of another space. Gretchen replaced old appliances with a beverage cooler and icemaker and removed an island in favour of a second hand table and flea market chairs. Verdant wallpaper balanced the red countertop and floor, which Gretchen painted here and in several adjoining rooms, to hide a mishmash of wood finishes. She swears by oil-base enamel floor paint. When it shows wear, she just repaints.



PAINT PICK
DULUX VELVET
TOUCH MANISH
MALHOTRA
RED 19YR
14/629





TRADE SECRETS

With a background in textile design, Gretchen is no stranger to the creative process. A favourite way to indulge it is to design her own fabrics and wallpapers and have them custom printed online.

THE RULE
MATCH A TABLE
& CHAIRS
BREAK IT
CONTRAST &
COMPLEMENT

There's nothing stuffy about Gretchen's dining room, *below*. The table is an oversize souvenir from the years her family lived in Bermuda, an experience that informs and inspires Gretchen's fearless colour choices. The table didn't have matching chairs, and that was fine by her. "I don't like seeing the backs of chairs at a table because they block the view of the room," she says. Instead, she opted for fuchsia ottomans. Their gold bases add a little bit of glam and complement the openwork vintage pendant over the table.



THE RULE
SIMPLIFY A
SMALL SPACE
BREAK IT
GO BIG
WITH COLOUR
& PATTERN

The powder room remake started with the graphic blue wallpaper, *above*. "I loved the scale, the colour, the relief of the white," Gretchen says. The bathroom vanity,

though dated, was in a fine working shape, so she painted the whole thing a high-gloss orange. It kept a red and blue room from looking patriotic and also complement the orange rain boot wallpaper (which Gretchen designed) just outside. Round yellow knobs add a pop of unexpected fun. "This room is a mix of my favourite colours," she explains.



THE RULE
WORK SPACES
ARE BORING
BREAK IT
MAKE
THEM FUN!

In the laundry room, *right*, Gretchen used pattern rather than colour to complement the existing black-and-white tile floor. It gives the space personality without

overwhelming the eye. She tried peel-and-stick paper to see if it would be easier to install. Happily, it was. “Wallpaper is an exacting skill that requires patience and measurements, and I’m bad at measuring,” she says. Her trick: Wet the paper first so that, if necessary, you can reposition it before it sticks.



THE RULE
GUT A WEIRD
OLD BATHROOM
BREAK IT
CAMOUFLAGE
THE FLAWS

The sconces in this powder room, *opposite*, were wired too close together to fit a standard-size mirror in between, and Gretchen knew moving them would be an expensive proposition. Her solution? Leave the infrastructure and shop for cosmetic upgrades that work within it. She found the extra-skinny mirror and narrow wall-mount lights. Their geometric pattern was the perfect counterpoint to the animated butterfly wallcovering, another trick that keeps the eye moving around a tight space. She also painted the vanity cabinet, the adjacent radiator cover, and all woodwork in the room a uniform green to unify the space. ■

THE RULE
ONE BIG
PATTERN PER ROOM
BREAK IT
MIX A FEW
THAT SHARE
A COLOUR

“If a little pattern feels good, then a lot feels better,” Gretchen says. She started this room, *left*, with a splurge: A large-scale indigo wallpaper that takes the room halfway to the finish line. Then she reupholstered inexpensive furniture from consignment stores and junk shops with graphic fabrics featuring the same blue. “I like to mix as many patterns on a piece of furniture as possible,” she says. “You just need the courage to do it!” She prefers wood frame furniture because it takes less fabric. P S: Gretchen doesn’t worry about mixing wood finishes in a room.





PAINT PICK
NEROLAC EXTERIOR
EMULSION HUNTLEY
FIELDS 2539



Good tip

Fill the pot till about three-quarters of its depth, leaving enough space for adding more compost and nutrients later.



perfecting the potting mix

When you grow herbs and veggies in containers, soil compaction and rapid depletion of nutrients threaten to kill your chances of having a good crop. We help you tackle these by creating the perfect potting mix.

TEXT BY KAPIL MANDAWEWALA

Planting is only one part and actually the last amongst the three 'P's of successful kitchen gardening: Planning your garden, Preparing the soil, and Planting your vegetables. Often the most ignored, soil and potting mix actually form the basis of successful farming and kitchen

gardening. Healthy soil, a living, breathing organism should be teeming with earthworms, microbes, termites and a host of other subsoil fauna that constantly decomposes organic waste and leaf litter and re-composes it into nutrients that trees and plants can absorb. In the ground, earthworms drill and churn the earth to ensure

it remains soft, crumbly and friable, creating an ideal environment for roots to spread and grow. Plus, in the ground, roots have ample room to search for nutrients. But when we plant the saplings in containers, we are confronted with two major limitations: **Compaction** This is when the soil becomes hard since there are no worms or other subsoil fauna to carry out nature's own form of tilling. **Lack of nutrients** This is simply due to space constraint for roots to spread and seek them out.

Hence, arises the need for potting mix, to recreate some of the soil-conditions that exist naturally in the ground. It helps in overcoming the problems of compaction and lack of nutrients. An ideal potting mix should be light, airy, long-lasting, moisture-retentive and rich in diverse nutrients. Here are a few characteristics of

the potting soil that we need to pay attention to:

Drainage To ensure water passes easily through the mix and doesn't clog your plant's roots.

Aeration To make oxygen available for your roots easily.

Water retention capacity To avoid excessive watering and to maintain sufficient moisture.

Nutrients To provide nourishment to your plants so they can flower and fruit successfully and on time.

Anchorage – to allow the plants to stand with stability.

Microbes and worms To do the crucial work of re-composing organic waste and manure into forms that your plants can absorb.

MAGIC INGREDIENTS FOR YOUR POTTING MIX

To make your own ecologically balanced potting mix, you need to put together the following:

Cocopeat Made from powdered coconut husk, this inert medium has excellent water-holding properties. It is added so your mix retains moisture. Plus, it is light, which helps keep the soil loose, crumbly and well-aerated. Roots require oxygen to carry out their functions effectively and cocopeat helps in the process. It is available either

online or in most nurseries for Rs 200 for a 5 kg block.

Soil: In a potting mix, the role of soil is to provide your plants anchorage—something the roots can hold onto. It is available locally, at almost no cost.

Sand The minute particles help with drainage. Adding sand to the mix helps water penetrate through your pots and containers easily.

Compost This provides the nutrient element to the mix. You can use either *gobar khaad*, vermicompost, home-made compost, leaf compost or a variety of different composts. Plants, like us, love variety in their food. The compost costs between Rs 5-15 a kilo, depending on the quality.

Vermiculite It is a naturally occurring mineral that is mined and processed

into puffy, lightweight granules.

Minute cavities in each granule create root space and help hold nutrients. Specialised nurseries stock vermiculite at about Rs 50-80 per kilo.

Neem khali: This is the residue after the oil has been extracted from neem seeds. This is an organic fertiliser and acts as a fungicide, pesticide and protects plants from ants and parasitic nematodes. You can buy it for Rs 30 per kilo.

Ensure that the container has drainage at the bottom, as it is very important that there is no water stagnation. In case your container has holes larger than a marble, cover them with coconut husk or a small piece of net so that water drainage is facilitated but no potting mix drains out. Fill the pot till about three-quarters of its depth, leaving enough space for adding more compost and nutrients in the future. Remember not to pack the mix too tightly when planting. Once the container is filled, pour in water lightly until all the potting media gets wet and water starts to seep out of the holes.

It is believed that the longevity of a civilisation depends on how well it takes care of its soil. In the same vein, the success of your kitchen garden will depend on how much care you put into creating and maintaining a healthy, nutrient-rich potting mix. Start now! ■

In case your container has holes larger than a marble, cover them with coconut husk or net so that no potting mix drains out.

Recipes for your potting mix

Now that you have your ingredients, let's try a few combinations.

PREMIUM POTTING MIX

- A. 40% VERMICOMPOST
- B. 40% COCOPEAT
- C. 15% NEEM KHALI
- D. 5% VERMICULITE

HIGH-QUALITY POTTING MIX

- A. 33% COCOPEAT
- B. 33% SOIL
- C. 34% COMPOST

BUDGET POTTING MIX

- A. 33% SAND
- B. 33% SOIL
- C. 34% COMPOST

Use these proportions as guiding principles to figure out your own preferred combination. Or better yet, discover what combinations work best with specific plants, and then, note it down for repeated success.



garden know-how

TOOLS & TIPS FOR EVERYONE WHO LOVES TO DIG



Simple Tips for the Stubborn Maali

When growing in confined urban spaces such as pots and planters, the fertilisation of the soil has to be done much more frequently as the roots of the plants have limited space to get the necessary nutrients.

Typically, *maalis* would add some sort of *khaad* twice or thrice a year during season change. Instead, it is very important to provide a diverse set of solid and liquid organic fertilisers regularly. Solid fertilisers like compost, neem khali and bone meal should be added once a month and the liquid ones, once a week. This will keep the soil alive and healthy throughout the year.

Did you know?

A mere teaspoon of good garden soil, as measured by microbial geneticists, contains a billion invisible bacteria, several yards of equally invisible fungal hyphae, several thousand protozoa, and a few dozen nematodes.



Once I have the right potting mix, what else should I do to keep the soil healthy?

- Compost/vermicompost: Add good quality compost once a month to keep your potting mix alive and healthy. A good compost is full of organic matter and has the entire complement of soil micro-organisms. It should smell earthy and fresh, and have a rich, dark colour.

- Mulch: Organic mulches such as leaves, grass clippings, wood chips provide the proper environment for the soil organisms and plenty of organic foods for them to thrive on. Keep the potting mix mulched throughout the year and see the magical benefits.

- Compost Tea: Aerated compost tea is a liquid, easily extracted from compost. These have a high concentration of microbes and can be sprayed on leaf surfaces to out-compete pathogens and pests.

- Sea Weed: It is rich in micronutrients that stimulate plant growth. Use a pinch of sea weed powder in a litre of water and spray on leaves once a week.

This Month in the Garden



NORTH

Various root crops can be planted this month for being ready for consumption in winter. Tapioca, yams and taro or *arbi* can be grown if water is plentiful. Jerusalem artichoke is also a good choice for the winters.



SOUTH

Many plants will flower this month and they should be treated with some fertiliser. Compost tea and sea weed are beneficial sources of diverse nutrients.



EAST

Check drainage, watch for caterpillars above the ground and grubs in pots. Caterpillars can consume entire leaves or just nibble through the plant.



WEST

Most trees have their annual shedding of leaves during this period. There is a wealth of material from which good organic compost can be made. Start a heap now, and do not, under any circumstances, let the *maali* set it on fire.

décor

OF ELEGANT DESIGNS

28

Ideas Brighter than the Bulb

Highlight just one wall of the room where the light falls naturally.

THIS SUMMER, GET YOUR HOME INTO A CHEERFUL MODE WITH SIMPLE DÉCOR CHANGES. WE TELL YOU HOW TO DO IT IN SIMPLE STROKES.

TEXT BY NANDINI BANERJEE





Ideally the flowers should be the same shade as the dominant colour of the room.

KNOCK KNOCK

Make the doors your new canvas. Colour them in striking, contrasting shades for an instant effect.

BREATHE FRESH

To add greenery inside the living room, place a flowering shrub in a pop-coloured planter. Keep it in a lit-up spot.

PRINT IT

Convert any old grandfather's chair into a trendy wing-style by reupholstering it in a bold print fabric.

FLOOR-ED

Who says the rug can only be in solid or dull shades? Go ahead, invest in one that screams colour.

TRIMMINGS

Paint those wooden frames in the similar hue of the walls, but in a brighter shade, for a French effect.

PHOTOGRAPH: LAURA MOSS



PHOTOGRAPH: JAY WILDE
(LACE TABLE)



Colour block to emphasise a statement décor piece.



CUSHIONED COMFORT

Adorn your light coloured furniture with bright *ikkat* print cushions. They add an interesting element to the room.

SPLASH OFF

If you have a monochromatic room, throw in a bold coloured coffee table. Paint it yourself or buy it off the rack—it is an instant mood lifter.

DIY LACE

Paint a table in a bright shade and seal it with a varnish. Now, stick lace strips along the sides of the racks to get your unique side table.



DIY HEADBOARD
Cover the wall behind the bed in patchwork cutouts to gift yourself an amazing statement piece.

BED HEAD

Do away with the traditional headboard to create space in the room. Then pin up a bold bed cover behind the bed to make a gigantic dramatic headboard.

DRESS UP

Paint your old dark dressing table in a peppy colour for a visible uplift to the room. Tip: Place it next to a window to lend an illusion of open space to the room.

LIGHT UP

Think out-of-the-box for your outdoor chandelier requirement. This mason jar chandelier is colourful and can be painted easily at home (with the help of your children)!



Keep the walls white to reflect and enhance natural light.

PHOTOGRAPHS: ADAM ALBRIGHT (HEADBOARD & CHANDELIER) / KIM CORNELIUSON (DRESSING TABLE)



Stick furniture decals on the bed to give it a happy lift.



PHOTOGRAPHS: KING AU (CALENDAR WALL); TRIA GIOVANI (PLANTER); SHUTTERSTOCK (KID'S ROOM)



PHOTO BOMB

Choose two or three primary colours to do up your child's room. Then arrange the soft furnishings (in the same shade) to make it look cheerful. Tip: Add a quirky furniture piece—the kids will love it.

CALENDAR STYLE

Paint a single wall in the nursery in the form of colour chips—it will help in teaching your toddler colours—and also lend a touch of playfulness to the room. Keep the rest of the furniture minimal.

DIY PLANTER

Get your children to help you create this easy marbled planter.





BLOOMS GALORE

Instead of kitchen herbs, keep some fresh flowering pots in the kitchen to add an old-world charm. Place it near the windows for it to flourish.

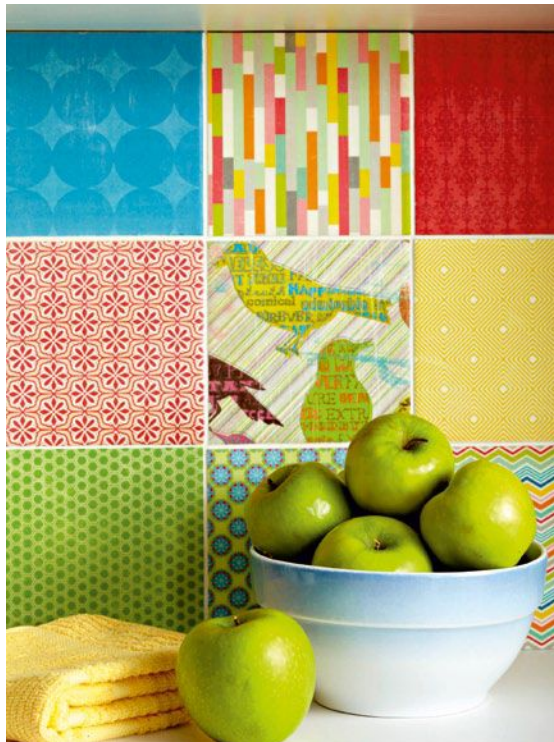
UPLIFT AWAY

Convert the old dining chairs into a trendy style statement. Get a painter to varnish the chairs in a bold colour. Add flowers and other greens to set the table.

PLATED MEAL

Replace boring crockery with cheerful coloured ones—they will perk up the table instantly. Think indigo, emerald, topaz and ruby hues.

ARTY TOUCH
Get an assortment of tiles (instead of a uniform one) to line the open cupboard areas of the kitchen.



PHOTOGRAPHS: KING AU (CROCKERY); JAY WILDE (TILES)





THINK PINK

Keep the boring wood at bay and get a bold coloured high-gloss lacquer paint for the bathroom cabinet.

PAPER UP

Be different and apply waterproof wallpaper to your bathroom walls in a bright print. The pros are that you can change them at a relatively lesser cost, whenever you want. Also, the wallpaper will become a décor element in itself.

FUNKY IDEAS

Add quirky bathroom essentials to buff up the space. If you have ample area, add flowers to your cabinet. The sweet smell will perk you up every morning. ■

Remember to paint a coat of waterproof varnish to avoid damage to the cabinet.



PHOTOGRAPHS: KIMBERLY GAVIN (PEGS & TOOTHBRUSH HOLDER)



favoured fabrics

Reupholster your boring sofas and armchairs with these trendy, colourful options

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANIL CHAWLA | STYLING BY RUCHIKA GOSWAMI

1, 8 & 16. Mashru silk florals, ₹1,790; Herringbone (plain), ₹1,500, Cottons and Satins **2.** Blanket-multi, ₹18,300, Andrew Martin at Apartment 9 **3, 5, 13 & 15.** Apache cushion fabric, ₹3,695; Parador, ₹3,495; Fiesta, ₹4,495; Albin zigzag, ₹1,495, Seasons **4 & 14.** Malenca jewel, ₹4,350; Lillypad, ₹4,300, Sarita Handa **6.** Cotton printed, ₹450, The Wishing Chair **7 & 9.** Self, ₹2,249; floral print, ₹2,499, Maspar **10.** Stripe woven, ₹390, Fabindia **11.** Celadon, ₹1,600, Rumors **12.** Batik, ₹2,150, Nivasa.



(All prices are per metre)

Location courtesy: Apartment 9; Rug courtesy: Casa Pop



1. Herringbone, ₹1,795, Jagdish Stores 2. Multi check, ₹2,100, Atmosphere 3. Linen floral, price on request, Nivasa 4. Melia, price on request, Romo 5. Liberty, ₹10,150, Apartment 9 6. Cherry blossom, ₹1,800, Home Saaz 7. Embroidered, ₹1,800, Sarita Handa 8. Floral cotton, ₹975, Villa D'Este 9. Printed cotton, ₹450, The Wishing Chair 10. Striped satin, ₹1,700, D'Décor 11. Linen stripes, price on request, Nivasa 12. Regalia, ₹5,200, Rumors 13. Amazon, ₹1,600, Rumors 14. Plain fabric, ₹1,200, Cottons and Satins 15. Liberty, ₹10,150, Apartment 9. ■

For more info, see Resources



CLASS ABOVE

Cheer Up

Adorn your home in the happy hues from Rumors Fine Furnishings, a one-stop Bengaluru-based home furnishings brand. Their elegant range of fabrics are available at top furnishing stores across India. Rumors, today, largely benefits from a thriving sales distribution network of its parent company—Ascent Décor Private Limited, under Farook Syed, Mukarram Syed, Gaurav Sureka and Ramachandra Shastri. The company brings forwards premium American and European brands to the Indian market. Price on request.



STYLE STATEMENT
Buffet Time

Beyond Designs has launched its collection of buffet cabinets to lend a unique style to your home. With its warm, traditional appeal and craftsmanship, the collection is not only stylish but also has great utility and storage space. Cabinet with brass work (featured here) ₹2,40,000.



TEA TIME

High tea would never be the same. Fennel launches its newest range of chic porcelain tea sets that have been skillfully designed with a quality that can last generations. The dazzling sets are a blend of style and flamboyance with pleasing, yet quirky designs. Priced from ₹10,500 onwards.



CLEANLINESS DRIVE
Breathe Free

The Philips Air Purifiers with a unique VitaShield technology, freshen the air through a filtration process that removes 99.7% airborne particles. It also has a number of new filters designed for specific environments and complementing smart sensors and light indicators that measure the air quality. Priced at ₹28,995.



SITTING PRETTY

Add interesting poufs to your home for a brighter effect. InLiving's new collection of poufs and stools is a colourful blend of yarn and fabric knotting with metal and wood, woven across a variety of shapes. The compact home accessories provide a multi-utility feature and are available in many textures like wood, steel, wool, denim and silk, made using recycled materials. Priced from ₹3,500 onwards.



TIPS & TRICKS
Layer Right

Rugs and carpets are the ultimate décor accessory but can become a puzzle on how to place them correctly. The Rug Republic's collection will help you choose the rug that you will love to live with forever. With over 6,000 styles for you to choose from, the brand strives to get you the best designs in an affordable price. What's more, they also manufacture poufs, cubes, stools and cushions in a variety of designs. Go ahead, make in India. Priced from ₹17,000 onwards (rugs).

A French Tale

InVHome launches French glassware by La Rochere, inspired by French cuisine, culture, art and style. Priced at (left to right) Vega Lilas Ice Cream Dish, ₹3495 (set of 6), Bubble Ice Cream Dish, ₹2895 (set of 6) and Lyonnais Anthracite Grey Wine Glass, ₹5095 (set of 6).



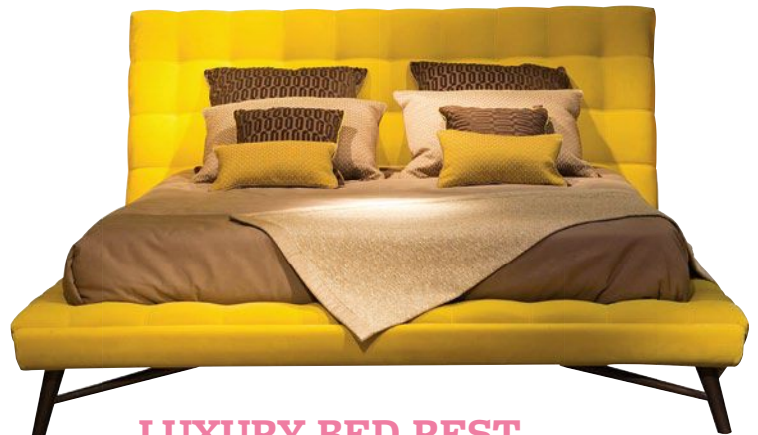
LUXURY BATH

Jaquar Group has come up with Artize-Showertronics iV6, an intuitive electronic thermostatic mixing system, designed to provide an unmatched showering experience. Artize Showertronic iV6 is an intelligent water mixer, which maintains the water temperature and flow rate during showering. Price on request.



GREAT BUYS
Upper Crust

Deck your home with the classy strokes of Grandeur's furniture complements. The brand offers a wide range of modular kitchens, appliances, furniture and accessories from premium European brands. A 360-degree brand, the company provides impeccable service to cater to all your needs. Known for their cutting edge design ideas, the brand strives to design a space that defines you. Price on request.



LUXURY BED REST

Roche Bobois, the French luxury furniture brand, has introduced more designs under its Nouveaux Classiques collection. The range blends classicism with modernism, and offers furniture in sophisticated designs for all living spaces. Here, traditional furniture are reinterpreted and, hence, become true creations. Price on request.



MEGATM BRANDS

India's first industry driven brand book that will comprise top brands from the architecture and construction industry specifically. It is slated to be launched spring-summer 2016. Brands that have been an integral part in building India have been selected to feature in this book.

Coming Soon!

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Would you like to go on a holiday where no one asks for your signature on a cheque? You don't even have to worry about 'what else can we do with the kids?' Read on to start your family vacation planning right away.

COMPILED BY APEKSHA BHATEJA





Resort World Sentosa SINGAPORE

COST From ₹23,000 per person for four days and three nights; till November 30; rwsentosa.com.

INCLUSIONS One-night stay in Hard Rock Hotel Singapore or Festive Hotel; two-night stay in Genting Hotel Jurong; free accommodation for one kid; daily breakfast; passes for Universal Studios Singapore and S.E.A. Aquarium.

BEST FOR Fun with family in Singapore's favourite integrated resort where you can never run out of things to do.



The Westin Turtle Bay Resort & Spa MAURITIUS

COST From ₹45,000 per night; till July 31; westinturtlebaymauriti.us.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation for two adults and two kids below 12 or one teen under 18 in a deluxe family room; all meals included; variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages; complimentary amenities for children on arrival such as a travel journal, a box of colouring pencil and a local activity guide; water sport activities and snorkelling.

BEST FOR A peaceful wellness holiday.



Ashford Castle IRELAND

COST From ₹1,02,000 for two nights; lhw.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in deluxe family room for two adults and two children under the age of 12 years; inclusive of breakfast; estate activities including golf, cycling, billiards, horse riding, tennis, zip wiring; access to the cinema room; one five-course dinner at George V; one three-course dinner at The Dungeon; access to Solarium, sauna and indoor swimming pool.

BEST FOR Those who want to stay in a castle reminding them of Celtic fantasies and Irish ghost stories. For a countryside experience, meet Irish wolfhounds when they come to visit the hotel or take your kids to hawk flying. Babysitting services are also available.



Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp and Resort in Chiang Rai THAILAND

COST From ₹1,42,817 per night; April 1–October 31; goldentriangle.anantara.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in a family suite; daily breakfast, lunch, and dinner and in-room dining; one activity per day including elephant camp, cooking classes, Golden Triangle Discovery Excursion, and Spa Discovery package; roundtrip transfers from Chiang Rai Airport; beverages; complimentary internet access; in-room mini bar; and visit to the Opium Museum.

BEST FOR An adventurous experience of staying in the wild.



The Martinhal Beach Resort & Hotel Algarve **PORTUGAL**

COST From ₹67,735 for four nights; till October 31; martinhal.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in a beach room or one-bedroom garden house for two adults and a baby up to 2 years; inclusive of breakfast; baby welcome pack upon arrival (nappies, baby wipes, diaper cream); bottle warmer and steriliser, changing mat in room; Steiff goody bag with one Fynn teddy bear, bath glove and towel; two hour childcare at Raposinhos Crèche per day for babies between 6 and 24 months; first water experience for baby and parent; a spa treatment for two; a three-course romantic dinner and two hour babysitting service.

BEST FOR Your first holiday with your baby.



Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay **BALI**

COST ₹3,82,401 for three nights; till December 20; fourseasons.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in the two-bedroom family premier ocean villa; daily breakfast for two adults and two children below 18; free meals for children under 12 years; babysitting service for five hours in the evening (once per stay); 50% discount on second villa for children under 18.

BEST FOR Experiencing Balinese culture—take your kids to see shadow puppetry and Ramayana ballet, visit temples and villages. Moreover, this oceanfront resort has a pool, tennis courts, fitness centre and spa, cooking academy and water sports.



Sanya Marriott Yalong Bay Resort & Spa **CHINA**

COST From ₹42,982 for three nights; through the year; marriotthotels.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in garden view room; 30% discount for guests booking a second room for parents above 55 years old; welcome drink on arrival; daily breakfast for two adults at Marriott Café; children under 12 stay free with breakfast and extra bed; children under six order free from the kids' menu; RMB 500 dining credit; one kid's cup for free flow soft drinks at any outlet and a beach ball; four hours free use of facilities in the Kids Club; complimentary activities for children and adults; complimentary use of a DVD player with a wide selection of DVDs; a complimentary pizza; late check-out; and round-trip airport transfers.

BEST FOR A kid-centric holiday. This family-friendly resort has a kids ambassador who helps plan all activities exclusively for kids. For newborns, the resort provides a complimentary baby cot, baby bath and a milk sterilisation set. Wait, there's more—robe and mini slippers for kids, Kids Club, children's pool with waterslide, outdoor adventure play area, a bean bag movie theatre and an indoor play area.

Trident **AGRA**

COST From ₹11,000 for three nights and four days (third night complimentary); till June 30; tridenthotels.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in a deluxe garden view room for two; two kids below 8 years can stay with parents for free; additional room for two children up to 12 years at 50% of the offer price; meals for kids up to six are complimentary; children up to 12 receive 50% discount on buffet meals; Trident breakfast and one major meal for two; happy hours; access to the Kids' Club and special activities.

BEST FOR A glimpse into India's great heritage. Give them a historic tour of the city as you take them to see Taj Mahal, Agra Fort and Fatehpur Sikri.



Marriott Executive Apartments Yeouido Park Centre **SEOUL**

COST ₹33,094 per night; through the year; marriott.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in two-bedroom suite with living room and kitchen for two adults and two children below the age of 12; inclusive of breakfast; kid's bathrobe, slippers and bath amenities; access to swimming pool, sauna and kids' room; entrance ticket to 63 Sky Art; set-up of an Indian tent in room; and a VIP voucher for duty-free shop.

BEST FOR An urbane getaway for an art-loving family.

Four Seasons Explorer in the **MALDIVES**

COST From ₹1,51,000 per person for a three-night cruise; till December 24; fourseasons.com.

INCLUSIONS All meals and beverages; windsurfing, kayaking, water skiing and fishing; fish talks and snorkelling excursions with onboard marine biologist; island hopping and cultural presentations; scheduled dives including full equipment; and all transfers.

BEST FOR A cruise-tripping family.



Gstaad Palace **SWITZERLAND**

COST From ₹3,12,000 for five nights; June 19-September 11; lhw.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in two interconnecting rooms for two adults and two kids; inclusive of breakfast and lunch/dinner; chocolate workshop at Maison Cailler and a tour of the chocolate factory with return train tickets; visit to a local mountain farm; and access to spa.

BEST FOR Spending an indulgent chocolatey summer in Switzerland.

Fairmont Southampton *BERMUDA*

COST From ₹33,565; through the year; fairmont.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in luxury room for two adults; 50% discount on second room for kids from May 1–August 31 and second room free from for stays through April 30, 2016 and September 1–December 31, 2016; welcome amenity for kids; complimentary access to Explorer's Kids Camp; kids 12 and under eat free from the children's menu; and children 18 or under receive 50% off the adult menu.

BEST FOR A dreamy holiday in Bermuda where you can enjoy the privacy of your room while kids stay in an interconnecting room.



Sabi Sabi Bush Lodge *SOUTH AFRICA*

COST From ₹48,565 per adult per night, ₹12,713 per child per night for 4-7 year olds and ₹19,036 per child per night for 8-12 year olds; through the year; sabisabi.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation in luxury suite; all meals, pre-safari refreshments, house beverages; open-vehicle safaris, environmental awareness walking safari; and activities at the Elefun Children's Centre.

BEST FOR Spotting the Big 5 on a family-friendly private game reserve that has a special play area for kids.



The St Regis Rome *ITALY*

COST From ₹85,426 per night; minimum two nights' stay required; through the year; starwoodhotels.com.

INCLUSIONS Accommodation for two adults and two kids in junior suite with personal butler service; late check-out till 4 pm; a daily credit of Euro 50 for Vivendo Restaurant, Le Grand Bar and Family Experiences.

BEST FOR A historic and cultural tour of Rome—tour famous attractions in the city and attend workshops at children's museum. ■

Courtesy: Travel + Leisure India

memorable **SOUVENIRS**

Choosing giveaways during your wonderful vacation can be troublesome, especially if you have picky friends and family. Go ahead, make that extra effort to present them with something that they will cherish forever.

TEXT BY ROMA VERMA



Holidays rock. No horrible bosses. No domestic help who pulls a Mr India on you. No neighbours who stalk you to say that the water tank is overflowing. In fact, the only downside of a great vacation is that your family and friends never seem to be too happy with the gifts you get for them. Actually, nobody cares for that perfume from duty free that

you got at a 20% discount. Those bags of assorted chocolates for the office gang are also a no-go—unless it's for a colleague you just hate because she's so skinny (and scheming). All said, picking souvenirs for family, friends and colleagues can be tricky. So, to take the sting away from presents-gone-wrong, we give you a handy list of cool buys that are a surefire recipe for success and long-lasting relationships.

Silly Friendly Gifts

If you've honest friendships over the years, you will know that criticism for bad gifts will haunt you forever if you make the choices carelessly.

HOMEGROWN INGREDIENTS

There is always that one friend (or friends) who's known for her undying love for food. If there are people in your inner circle who shamelessly

steal prawns off your plate or dig into your fridge, you ought to get them some nibbles. Kashmiri kahva masala, artisanal cheese from Pondicherry, bebinka from Goa, Turkish baklava, fresh coffee beans from Columbia or even locally-grown spices from Kochi are a great buy.

LIQUEURS WITH AN EDGE To add zing to those high intensity gossip sessions, it's absolutely imperative that you get back from your holiday armed with alcoholic reinforcements—because some things never change—just like your friends and their love for wild parties. Limoncello from Capri, sake from Japan, Russian vodka, slivovitz from the Czech Republic, port wine/feni from Goa, toddy from Kerala and so on.

LOCAL ATTIRE *Kutchi* embroidery blouses, *chikankari* suits, *aari* work ponchos, *phulkari* dupattas, Mexican sombreros from Mexico, Thai sarongs, Chinese silk ties... there's always loads to look out for to make the fashionable ones happy. Yes, it can turn out to be an expensive affair, especially if you have a big gang, but then who says you can't buy smaller stuff like scarves, cufflinks, patches, pouches and other cloth stuff?

Formal Office Affair

Not all colleagues put you down at those coffee dispenser meetings. Some actually become friends. To keep them by your side and ensure that they have your back, it's time you told them how much you appreciate their skill at deciphering client infographics and keeping your desk clean!

FLEA MARKET STUFF From vinyl records, traditional lampshades, cutesy hair bands, cheap-as-dirt earrings to quaint wall hangings... The sheer variety of things you can find at flea markets can give you the chance to handpick gifts, based on what interests your colleagues. A little effort is totally worth it for people who fill up for you while you go paragliding over office politics (metaphorically speaking, of course)!

If you're in Switzerland, help yourself to those cute cowbells. Made popular by **Raj and Simran of DDLJ**, they are perfect to mock that Bollywood-crazy family member.



INDIGENOUS HANDICRAFTS Supplement your travel stories by pulling out those gifts from your bag that are a reminder of the local culture and scream heartfelt like nothing else. Think beer mugs from Germany/Czech Republic, Bali masks, inlay work jewellery boxes from Agra, blue pottery from Jaipur, leather accessories from Rajasthan and more. With this, you're not only promoting the local artisan guild but also giving your office mates a valuable piece of that place.

DESK DECORATIONS Not all workstations are created equal. Now's the time to make the good looking ones even prettier and give the sad, unloved ones a chance at redemption. Handmade paper notepads from Pondicherry, papier mâché pen stands from Kashmir, terracotta bowls from Rajasthan, quirky paper clips/staplers/posters from the 'dollar' stores abroad, a pack of funky photo frames from Thailand/Japan, can help your office mates give their desk a much needed makeover.

Family Fun

It's impossible to measure the value of that lovingly rendered oil massage or the feeling behind the half burnt toast 'cooked' by daddy. Or your caring spouse who patiently listens to all your ranting. Your family is your support system. Period. You have to get them a souvenir that speaks a million words—because they deserve the best.

MEMORABILIA Your elder brother's love for history is a great reason to get him an Ampelmann coaster from Berlin. Or the quirky, wood carved fridge magnets, mermaid brass figurines from

Copenhagen, snow globes and other collectibles that can be picked on the go and given to family members with handwritten notes about how much you missed them.

KITCHEN STUFF Quirky oven gloves, a wacky ice bucket, chic salad bowls, futuristic pizza cutters, handcrafted placemats, cupcake moulds, tea cozies and an easy-peasy waffle iron are perfect for your parents who can put these things to good use when they throw a party. Besides giving them a chance to boast about how thoughtful and caring their children are, it'll give them something to hold on to and smile even when you are miles away. The same thought can also work for siblings moving to hostels or getting married. And, it won't be difficult to arm twist that cousin after you gift him a crazy popcorn maker for his 'movie' nights!

GADGETS AND SPECIALS An extra mile for the special someone will never go unnoticed or unappreciated. So, if you're in Hong Kong, for instance, it might be a good idea to pick up an iPhone for your spouse since they were known to be the cheapest there. Plus, it'll be something for the keeps. Similarly, the US is the best place to get Macbooks and Nexus phones for your sibling who has been eyeing them for a while. For cool phone covers and fun accessories like Star Wars charging cables and Pokemon speakers, count on China and the US. Coffee machine from Italy, model train sets from Germany or Lego from UK make for time-honoured gifts as well. These might be a bit steep but don't you want to indulge them? ■



Tourists viewing the Margerie Glacier from a tour boat off Glacier Bay National Park, Alaska.

hearty happy holidays

With families flung in different cities across the world, sometimes a big vacation with grandparents, siblings and kids is the only way to enjoy that special get-together. We explore some destinations that are just perfect.

PARIS

A recent study reveals that 60% of people who consider multi-generational travel reported an interest in visiting Europe in the next two years (the highest percentage for an international destination), according to the Preferred Hotel Group survey. One of the most popular is Paris for its shopping, museums and culinary delights. There are many Parisian hotels catering to the entire family, with on-site baby-sitting and kid-friendly activities. Companies like Road Scholar offer great programmes, which are geared for three generations, and includes tailored guided tours to big sites like the Louvre

and the Eiffel Tower (where there's a behind-the-scenes tour too), French language lessons and dinner with a Parisian host family.

When to go/what you'll pay: The best months to visit Paris are April and May or September and October, when the weather is mild, and there are fewer tourists on the streets. However, most of the new multi-generational travel offerings are clustered in the more crowded summer months.

ALASKA

Cruises offer a relatively easy way to travel with the whole family. Parents can let their children roam free on ships,

and there's usually a broad range of entertainment choices aimed at each age group. Alaska's breathtaking scenery, its glaciers, whales and brown bears, and excursions including salmon fishing and dog-sledding, offer enough to engage different tastes. Many cruises include viewings of Glacier Bay National Park, known for its striking glacier-carved terrain, roughly 70 species of mammals including grizzlies and lynx, and more than 250 species of birds; and visits to coastal cities like Juneau and Ketchikan. Passengers who are up for a longer excursion away from the ship can visit Denali National Park, home to Mount McKinley, the

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTYIMAGES. COURTESY: TRAVEL + LEISURE MAGAZINE

tallest mountain in North America.

When to go/what you'll pay: The most popular time to go is the summers, but if you can stand a little nip in the air, you can find better deals and fewer crowds in May and September. Seven-day cruises in September onboard Holland America and Royal Caribbean typically start at about ₹40,000 or ₹47,000 per person.

SOUTH AFRICA

The spectacle of a game drive, where tourists can catch a glimpse of Africa's 'Big 5'—elephants, lions, leopards, buffalo and rhinos—can appeal to just about every age group. South Africa is one of the more popular safari destinations for families because it has better infrastructure than many other African countries, says Lindsey Ueberroth, president of Preferred Hotel Group. Apart from the popular Krüger National Park, a number of resorts and hotels in this safari country cater to multi-generational travel. At Gondwana Game Reserve Hotel in Mossel Bay, there is a year-round Big 5 viewing and five-star cuisine, plus a 'junior ranger programme' that teaches children about African wildlife and nature using sightseeing trips and other activities.

When to go/what you'll pay: Your best bet for a South African safari is between June and September, the

southern hemisphere's winter, when it's not too hot and less likely to be rainy. (The lack of rain also means the trees are less leafy, which make it easier to spot wildlife.)

ARGENTINA

This country is a great place for families because there's lots of culture, diverse landscape and good infrastructure. Opt to start with the culinary, shopping, and historic attractions of Buenos Aires. Also, check out the Recoleta (Evita Peron is buried in this old cemetery) and grab a steak (an Argentine speciality) at one of the many sidewalk cafes. Switch gears and head to the Patagonia region, where you can fish and boat or ride horses over mountains and lush grassy terrain.

When to go/what you'll pay: While Patagonia is best seen in the southern hemisphere's spring and summer months (November through April), the beginning and end of that period are the best time as it's least likely to be hot in Buenos Aires. One of the best ways to tackle Argentina is by booking a custom guided tour. A 14-day trek through Argentina, which takes visitors to Buenos Aires, Patagonia, Tierra del Fuego National Park and more, costs ₹3,65,130 per person through travel company, Journeys for Families.



Visitors at the Forecourt of the Louvre Museum.



Italian Village & Pirates Island Waterpark.

TURKS & CAICOS

Caribbean beach vacations offer activities for the adventurer (think snorkeling or parasailing) and the sedentary (sunbathing!), and most major beach destinations have all-inclusive resorts. The Turks & Caicos' beaches are less crowded than Jamaica and the Bahamas, and are a big draw. The all-inclusive, Beaches' Turks & Caicos, which sits on a six-kilometre-long beach, hosts a 45,000-square foot water park, and offers activities for the kids that range from an Xbox play lounge to a teen disco to Sesame Street characters on site.

When to go/what you'll pay: Mid-December through mid-April is the high season, therefore premium prices. In November, late April and early May, the temperatures average between 32 to 36 degrees, and visitors can avoid the hottest summer temperatures while still scoring off-season deals. Beaches' Turks & Caicos offers attractive deals starting at ₹21,470 per adult per night and ₹3,634 per child per night. There are direct flights from the US; from New York, the flight takes just about three hours. ■



Following a scooter and bottlenose dolphin in the Caribbean Sea.

easy ways to move more

No time to exercise? No problem! Sneak movement into your everyday routines.

If you're like a lot of people, you don't move as much as you should. On an average, most people spend at least 10 hours a day doing sedentary activities, such as watching TV, surfing the Internet, talking on the phone and reading. According to the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, people who sit for prolonged periods of time are more likely to gain weight faster. And the more you sit, the worse it gets.

Another study found that adults who sit for 11 hours or more, on a daily basis have a 40% greater risk of dying in the next three years than people who spend less than four hours a day in a chair.

Use these tips to incorporate more movement, and thereby a healthier lifestyle, into the activities you're already doing.



1

START YOUR DAY WITH A QUICK WALK AROUND THE BLOCK

Nothing intense, nothing long—just a brisk walk to get you going. Leave your walking shoes by the door before bed so you'll be ready. Listen to your favourite morning news programme on the go.

2

HOOK A PEDOMETER TO YOUR BODY

Studies show that when people are keeping track of their steps, they tend to walk more. You can even get into a friendly competition with your spouse or a coworker. Reliable pedometers are available for less than ₹999. Or just download an app in your smartphone and begin counting.



DON'T WASTE COMMERCIAL TIME

While watching TV, get up and do a minute of jumping jacks or a minute of knee raises every time a commercial comes on. Research shows that people who step in place during commercials burn an average of 148 calories in about 25 minutes.



4



PARK THE CART FOR QUICK TRIPS

If you need just a handful of items at the grocery store, take two reusable bags and throw them over your shoulders. Put your food in the bags as you shop. While you wait to pay, hold the bags by your sides and do shoulder shrugs.



BE INEFFICIENT

Do you have loads of laundry to haul upstairs or downstairs? Take one basket or one handful of clothes at a time. Do you have groceries to carry in from the car? Don't tote them all at once. Deliberately break up daily tasks so you make multiple, frequent trips. ■



*use the
force*

The best approach to moving more is to find a combo of cardio, such as walking at a brisk pace, and resistance training, like these easy moves that you can do with a low-cost, lightweight piece of equipment.



TRICEPS PRESS & PULL

Stand or sit for this upper arm and shoulder-strengthening exercise.

STEP 1 Hold the band directly above your head, one handle in each hand, palms facing in. Lower the band behind your head making a 90-degree bend at the elbow joint. Straighten arms until the band is above your head again and parallel to the floor.

STEP 2 Slowly pull the handles apart and hold for 2 seconds, then return arms to starting position. Lower the band behind the head again to repeat. Repeat 12–15 times.

SHOULDER RAISE

This exercise improves shoulder strength.

STEP 1 Stand with the feet shoulder width apart, grasping a handle of a bow-tie band in one hand with your palm facing down. Place the other handle under the arch of the opposite foot, holding the handle at waist height.

STEP 2 Pull the handle up towards your shoulder, directing the elbow up and out to the side. Lift to shoulder height and then release down to starting position. Repeat 8–10 times and switch arms.



BOW-TIE BANDS

These colour-coded rubber latex tubes allow you to control the exercise intensity.

Red is typically the most difficult, with medium to heavy resistance. Green offers medium resistance. Yellow bands are usually the easiest and the best choice for beginners. Most brands sell all three bands in a set. Check [amazon.in](https://www.amazon.in).

Before you start, check for possible nicks or wear in the bow-tie band. Other tips:

- Be sure the band is secure in your hands or around your foot during exercises.
- Maintain tension in the band by not allowing it to snap back or become slack during exercises.





STANDING SIDE-LEG LIFT

This move tones your core and increases hip strength.

STEP 1 Place the bow-tie band under the arch and over the shoelaces of each foot. Standing with feet hip width apart, keep the band under tension—don't let it go slack.

STEP 2 Flex your knees and hips slightly, stabilising your torso with your abdominal muscles as you lift your leg to the side, about 6–12 inches from the floor. Use your hip to lift the leg with control. You can take the support of a chair or wall. Do 8–10 repetitions and switch legs.



RHOMBOID SQUEEZE

A great exercise for strengthening your chest and upper back, this can be done standing or seated.

STEP 1 Hold one handle in each hand and position the bow-tie band in front of you at chest height with palms facing each other. Keep elbows “soft.”

STEP 2 With palms facing in, keep back straight and pull handles apart, focusing on the muscles between your shoulder blades. Slowly return arms to starting position. Repeat 12–15 times.

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STANDING LATERAL SIDE BEND

This exercise works muscles that support your spine.

STEP 1 Stand with feet hip width apart and place one handle under the arch of one foot. On the same side, grab the other handle with your palm facing your body.

STEP 2 Lean slightly from the waist to the opposite side until you feel the muscle tension, then return to the upright standing position. Do 10-12 repetitions and switch sides. ■



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food

FRESH FROM YOUR KITCHEN

fruit forward

Transform everyday fruits like apples, pears, bananas and nectarines into deliciously healthy breakfasts that everyone will love.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARLA CONRAD | FOOD STYLING BY DIANNA NOLIN

Berry Breakfast Pizzas



Toasted Bagels with
Apple Breakfast Compote

Toasted Bagels with Apple Breakfast Compote

START TO FINISH: 35 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup apple juice
- ½ cup golden raisins
- ⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
- ⅛ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tbsp butter
- 2 apples, cored and cut into wedges
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 2 tbsp honey
- 4 bagels, split and toasted
- 85 gm package cream cheese, softened

PREPARATION

1. In a saucepan, combine juice, raisins,

nutmeg and cinnamon. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, for about 10 minutes or until raisins are plump and juice is reduced by half. Set aside.

2. For the apple compote, in a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add apple wedges; cook and stir for about 5 minutes or until tender but not mushy. Stir in raisin mixture, brown sugar and honey. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes or until apples are glazed and syrup thickens slightly. Remove from heat; cool slightly.

3. Spread cream cheese onto the cut sides of the toasted bagels. Spoon warm apple compote over bagel halves.

Makes 4 (1 bagel) servings.

Per serving 534 cal, 15 gm fat (8 gm sat fat), 39 mg chol, 444 mg sodium, 96 gm carb, 6 gm fibre, 10 gm pro.

Roasted Breakfast Pears

PREP: 15 minutes **BAKE:** 20 minutes
CHILL: 2 hours **OVEN:** 180°C

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large ripe pears
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp butter, softened
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 tsp finely shredded orange peel
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tbsp maple syrup Finely shredded orange peel (optional)
- ¼ cup granola
- 2¼ tbsp sliced almonds, toasted

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 180°C. Halve pears; core. Using a melon baller, scoop out a 1-inch depression in the centre of each pear. Brush cut sides with lemon juice.

2. Spread butter in the bottom of a rectangular baking dish. Sprinkle with brown sugar and salt; add orange juice. Arrange pear halves, cut sides up, in a single layer in the baking dish.

3. Bake for 20 to 30 minutes or until pears are tender, spooning cooking liquid over pears several times during baking.

4. Remove from oven; stir vanilla and orange peel into cooking liquid. Let it cool completely. Cover and chill for up to 24 hours, turning pears in liquid at least once during chilling time.

5. To serve, in a bowl stir together Greek yogurt and maple syrup. Spoon the mixture into each pear half. If desired, sprinkle with additional orange peel. Serve with granola and toasted almonds.

Makes 4 (1 pear) servings.

Per serving 308 cal, 8 gm fat (3 gm sat fat), 11 mg chol, 199 mg sodium, 55 gm carb, 8 gm fibre, 9 gm pro.



TIP

To toast nuts, spread them out in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake in a 180°C oven for 5 to 10 minutes or until nuts are golden brown.

Fruit-Granola Parfaits

PREP: 25 minutes **CHILL:** 1 hour

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup vanilla low-fat yogurt
- ¼ cup fat-free cream cheese spread
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 kiwis, halved lengthwise and sliced
- 1 medium ripe banana, sliced
- 1 medium orange, peeled, quartered lengthwise and sliced
- 1½ cups frozen raspberries, thawed and drained
- 1 cup low-fat granola

PREPARATION

1. In a small bowl, combine yogurt,

cream cheese spread, honey and cinnamon. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until combined. Chill for 1 to 4 hours.

2. In a small bowl, stir together kiwis, banana, orange and raspberries.

Divide the fruit mixture among four parfait glasses or wine goblets.

Spoon the cream cheese mixture over the fruit. Sprinkle with granola.

Serve immediately.

Makes 4 serving.

Make-Ahead Tip: If desired, assemble the parfaits up to a day ahead and add banana and granola just before serving.

Per serving: 326 cal, 2 gm fat (1 gm sat fat), 3 mg chol, 188 mg sodium, 73 gm carb, 9 gm fibre, 8 gm pro.

These colourful parfaits are a healthy and beautiful way to start the day.



Berry Breakfast Pizzas

START TO FINISH: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup granulated sugar
- 4 tsp cornstarch
- Salt to taste
- ½ cup water
- 2 cups mixed fresh berries, such as blueberries, raspberries and/or blackberries
- 1 tsp butter
- 1 tsp finely shredded orange peel
- 100 gm reduced-fat cream cheese, softened
- 2 tbsp orange marmalade
- 2 tsp granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp ground cardamom
- 2 pita bread rounds, split
- 2 tbsp butter, melted
- Powdered sugar (optional)

PREPARATION

1. For berry topping, in a medium saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch and salt. Stir in the water. Stir in ½ cup of berries. Cook and stir over medium heat until thickened. Remove from heat. Add 1 cup of the berries and butter, stirring until the butter melts. Gently stir in orange peel.

2. In a bowl, combine cream cheese and marmalade; beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until smooth. In a small bowl, stir together the rest of the granulated sugar and cardamom.

3. Toast the split pita rounds. Brush pita rounds with melted butter; sprinkle with the sugar-cardamom mixture. Spread cream cheese mixture over split pita rounds. Spread berry topping over cream cheese mixture. Top with the remaining berries. If desired, sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Makes 4 (1 pizza) servings.

Make-Ahead Tip: If desired, make the berry topping and cool completely. Cover and chill at least 2 hours or up to 8 hours before using.

Per pizza: 343 cal, 14 gm fat (8 gm sat fat), 39 mg chol, 359 mg sodium, 51 gm carb, 4 gm fibre, 6 gm pro.



Peach Breakfast Gratin

Peach Breakfast Gratin

PREP: 15 minutes **BAKE:** 25 minutes
STAND: 20 minutes **OVEN:** 220°C

INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup milk
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp butter, melted
- ½ tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp salt
- 4 medium ripe peaches
- ½ cup granola with almonds or pecans
- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- Sugar and maple syrup

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 220°C. In a medium bowl, whisk together milk and eggs. Add flour,

sugar, butter, vanilla and salt, whisking until smooth. Set aside.

2. Peel peaches, pit and slice them.

3. Grease a deep-dish pie plate. Pour batter into pie plate. Arrange peach slices on top of batter.

4. Bake for 20 minutes. Sprinkle with granola. Bake for 5 to 10 minutes more or until batter is light brown and set, and peaches are tender. Let cool for 20 minutes before serving.

5. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir together yogurt and enough sugar to reach the desired sweetness. Serve yogurt mixture with peach gratin. Drizzle individual servings with maple syrup.

Makes 6 to 8 (1 slice) servings.

Per slice: 240 cal, 8 gm fat (4 gm sat fat), 75 mg chol, 179 mg sodium, 36 gm carb, 2 gm fibre, 8 gm pro.



CORING FRUIT

Removing the seeds from halved apples and pears is easiest with a melon baller. The sharp edges of the scoop make short work out of any core. In a pinch, a teaspoon will also get the job done.

Sherried Fruit

PREP: 25 minutes **COOK:** 3½ to 4 hours (low) or 1½ to 2 hours (high)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 can pineapple chunks, undrained
- 3 medium ripe plums, pitted and cut into thick wedges
- 2 medium ripe pears, cored and cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup dried apricots, halved

- 2 medium apples, cored and cut into 1-inch pieces
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- ¼ cup dry sherry
- 2 tbsp quick-cooking tapioca, crushed
- ¼ tsp salt

PREPARATION

1. In a slow cooker, combine pineapple, plums, pears, apples and dried apricots.

In a small bowl, stir together brown sugar, melted butter, sherry, tapioca and salt. Pour brown sugar mixture over fruit; stir to combine.

2. Cover and cook on low-heat setting for 3½ to 4 hours or on high-heat setting for 1½ to 2 hours.

Makes 12 to 14 servings.

Per serving: 148 cal, 4 gm fat (2 gm sat fat), 10 mg chol, 79 mg sodium, 28 gm carb, 2 gm fibre, 1 gm pro.



Grilled Fruit Kebabs

PREP: 25 minutes

GRILL: 8 minutes

INGREDIENTS

170 gm vanilla yogurt

1 tsp grated lime peel

1 tbsp lime juice

¼ tsp ground cinnamon

1 small pineapple, peeled and cored

2 large ripe nectarines or peeled peaches

2 medium ripe bananas

1 tbsp butter, melted

2 tsp lime juice honey (optional)

Grated lime peel (optional)

PREPARATION

1. For the sauce, in a small bowl, combine yogurt, lime peel, 2 tsp lime juice and cinnamon. Cover and chill until serving time.

2. For the kebabs, cut pineapple into 1-inch-thick slices; cut slices into chunks. Cut nectarines into wedges. Cut bananas into chunks. Alternately, thread pieces of fruit on short skewers. In a small bowl, combine melted butter and the remaining lime juice. Brush over kebabs.

3. Grill kebabs on the rack of a covered grill directly over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until starting to brown, turning once or twice. If desired, drizzle kebabs with honey. Serve kebabs with the sauce. If desired, garnish sauce with additional lime peel. Makes 6 kebabs.

Per kabob: 130 cal, 3 gm fat (2 gm sat fat), 7 mg chol, 37 mg sodium, 27 gm carb, 3 gm fibre, 3 gm pro. ■



sweet smoothies

MIXED-
BERRY
SMOOTHIE



GINGER-
MANGO
SMOOTHIE



Making a home-made smoothie is a simple way to pack in a lot of nutrition and refreshment into one on-the-go light meal or snack. Try these bright combos to beat the heat.



Mixed-Berry Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- ½ cup pomegranate juice
- ½ cup frozen mixed berries
- 1 ripe banana, peeled, cut and frozen
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tbsp lime juice

PREPARATION

In a blender, add the yogurt, pomegranate juice, berries, banana, honey and lime juice. Cover and blend until nearly smooth.

Makes 2 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 203 cal, 2 gm fat (1 gm sat fat), 7 mg chol, 44 mg sodium, 39 gm carb, 3 gm fibre, 10 gm pro.

Ginger-Mango Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- ½ cup mango slices
- ¼ cup mango nectar
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ banana
- ½ tsp grated ginger

PREPARATION

In a blender, add the yogurt, mango, nectar, milk, honey, banana and ginger. Cover and blend until nearly smooth.

Makes 2 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 202 cal, 2 gm fat (1 gm sat fat), 10 mg chol, 56 mg sodium, 37 gm carb, 2 gm fibre, 11 gm pro.

PB&J Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- ½ cup milk
- 1 banana
- 2 tbsp grape jam

2-3 tbsp creamy peanut butter
In a blender, add the yogurt, milk, banana, jelly and peanut butter. Cover and blend until nearly smooth.

Makes 2 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 293 cal, 11 gm fat (3 gm sat fat), 12 mg chol, 146 mg sodium, 38 gm carb, 3 gm fibre, 15 gm pro.

Cherry-Almond Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- ½ cup plain almond milk
- ½ cup dark sweet pitted cherries
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp almond extract

PREPARATION

In a blender, add the yogurt, almond milk, cherries, honey and almond extract. Cover and blend until nearly smooth.

Makes 2 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 122 cal, 2 gm fat (1 gm sat fat), 3 mg chol, 56 mg sodium, 20 gm carb, 1 gm fibre, 6 gm pro.

Piña Colada Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup vanilla yogurt
- ½ cup unsweetened coconut milk
- ½ cup pineapple chunks
- ½ banana
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¼ tsp vanilla

PREPARATION

In a blender, add the yogurt, coconut milk, pineapple, banana, honey and vanilla. Cover and blend until nearly smooth.

Makes 2 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 260 cal, 11 gm fat (10 gm sat fat), 4 mg chol, 88 mg sodium, 35 gm carb, 2 gm fibre, 5 gm pro.

Cow Milk ALTERNATIVES

Here's the skinny on several popular cow's milk alternatives to mix up in your next smoothie.

	CALORIES*	FAT*	PROTEIN*	CALCIUM**
SOYMILK	80	2.5 gm	6-8 gm	30-40%
<i>Made from soybeans, soymilk has been shown to reduce the risk of heart disease and has a mildly sweet soy flavour.</i>				
ALMOND MILK	60	2.5 gm	1 gm	45%
<i>Almond milk is made from ground toasted almonds and is rich and creamy with a slightly sweet almond flavour.</i>				
COCONUT MILK	80	5 gm	0 gm	10-45%
<i>Coconut milk tastes distinctively of coconut with a hint of sweetness. While the milk is high in saturated fat, research suggests that fat from coconut can boost the immune system without negatively affecting cholesterol levels.</i>				
RICE MILK	120	2.5 gm	1 gm	30%
<i>Rice milk has a mild flavour, and because it's made from a high-carbohydrate food (rice), it is naturally sweet without added sugar or artificial sweeteners.</i>				
FLAX MILK	60	2.5 gm	5 gm	10-30%
<i>Flax milk is made from flaxseeds and has a slightly sweet, raw vegetable flavour. It provides heart-healthy omega-3 fatty acids.</i>				
HEMP MILK	100	7 gm	2 gm	30%
<i>Made from hemp seeds, hemp milk is rich in omega-3 fatty acids and contains all 10 essential amino acids. Hemp milk has a mild flavour with minimal aftertaste.</i>				
OAT MILK	130	2.5 gm	4 gm	35%
<i>Oat milk has a thick and creamy consistency, tastes reminiscent of oatmeal, and—because it's made with a high-carb ingredient (oats)—is sweet without added sugar or artificial sweeteners.</i>				

*per 1-cup measurement **percentage of daily value

Why switch? With so many cow's milk alternatives available, it's easier than ever to find one that tastes great and meets your nutrition goals. Most are fortified with calcium and other vitamins or boosted with added protein to closely replicate the nutrients in cow's milk. Many dairy-free milk alternatives also rely on sugar or artificial sweeteners to mimic the natural sweetness of lactose. Look for unsweetened varieties to avoid added sugars or sweeteners.

Raspberry-Citrus Swirly Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup frozen unsweetened raspberries
- ½ cup orange juice
- 340 gm vanilla yogurt
- ½ ripe banana, peeled, cut and frozen
- 2 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp vanilla extract

PREPARATION

1. In a blender, add the raspberries and orange juice. Cover and blend until smooth. Divide between two glasses.
2. Wash the blender container with warm, soapy water. In the blender, add the yogurt, banana, honey and vanilla. Cover and blend until smooth. Pour over the raspberry mixture in the glasses. Swirl with a spoon.

Makes 2 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 335 cal, 2 gm fat (1 gm sat fat), 10 mg chol, 87 mg sodium, 74 gm carb, 3 gm fibre, 6 gm pro.

Banana, Peach and Flax Swirly Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup frozen unsweetened peaches
- 1 cup sliced mango
- ¼ cup apricot or peach nectar
- 170 gm plain or vanilla yogurt
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 ripe banana, peeled, cut up, and frozen
- 1 tbsp ground flaxseeds or flaxseed meal
- 2 tsp honey

PREPARATION

1. In a blender, add the peaches, mango and nectar. Cover and blend until smooth. Divide the mixture among three glasses.
2. Wash the blender container with warm, soapy water. In the blender, add the yogurt, banana, milk, flaxseeds, and honey. Cover and blend until smooth. Pour over the mixture in the glasses. Swirl with a spoon.

Makes 3 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 200 cal, 3 gm fat (1 gm sat fat), 5 mg chol, 50 mg sodium, 42 gm carb, 4 gm fibre, 5 gm pro.

Blueberry Swirly Smoothie

START TO FINISH: 10 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups frozen blueberries
- ½ cup apple juice
- 170 gm plain fat-free yogurt
- 1 ripe banana, peeled, cut and frozen
- 2-3 tsp honey

PREPARATION

1. In a blender, add the blueberries and apple juice. Cover and blend until smooth. Divide among three glasses.
2. Wash the blender container with warm, soapy water. In the blender combine the yogurt, banana, and honey. Cover and blend until smooth. Spoon over the blueberry mixture in glasses. Swirl with a spoon.

Makes 3 smoothies.

Per Smoothie: 148 cal, 1 gm fat (0 mg sat fat), 1 mg chol, 41 mg sodium, 34 gm carb, 4 gm fibre, 4 gm pro. ■



Raspberry-Citrus Swirly Smoothie



Blueberry Swirly Smoothie



Banana, Peach and Flax Swirly Smoothie

commit a sin!

Pick a dessert plate that will, literally, make you lick that decadent icing.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VINOD AGGARWAL

STYLING BY RUCHIKA GOSWAMI



- 1. Derby, ₹1,750, FCML 2. Blue pottery, ₹600, Navya
- 3 & 10. Registaan, ₹2,400 (part of four piece crockery set); Babur Tapas, ₹2,400 (set of 4), Good Earth 4 & 9. Japanese porcelain, ₹5,500; floral print, ₹2,500, Moon River 5. Floral, ₹1,350, Ishatvam 6. Oval plate, ₹995, InVHome 7. Prestige, ₹11,900, Versace 8. Glazed pottery, ₹500, The Shop.

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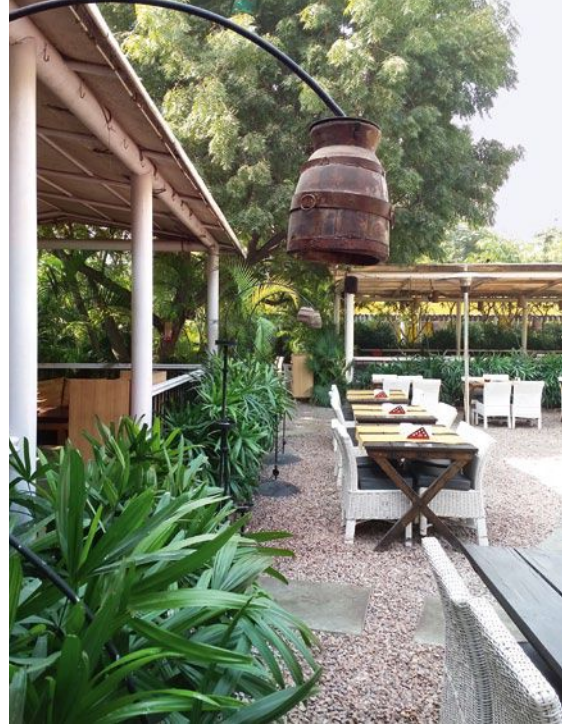
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FANCY DINERS

We turn the spotlight on two thematic restaurants, a forest in Jaipur and a cruise in Mumbai, offering global, mouth watering cuisine. Put it on your must visit list.



the forresta kitchen and bar

LIVE FREE

One of the most popular restaurants in Jaipur, The Forresta Kitchen and Bar is a beautiful outdoor set up in the midst of greens palms and white gravelled paths that transport you into a romantic world instantly. Once you walk past the main door, a thick tree cave opens up into the forest-style setting, complete with water sprinklers and lush greenery. Soft music, cosy lighting and fresh

air cuts you off from the hustle and bustle of the city and is perfect for a candle-light dinner or a boisterous family brunch. Boasting of an extensive global menu, the restaurant has the most delicious Rajasthani cuisine with various avatars for the *lal maas*. However, you won't be disappointed with their scrumptious grilled sole in butter garlic and the wood-fired chicken pizza. Pair the dishes with refreshing cocktails, we tried Mojito and Cosmopolitan—delicious and addictive.

—Ragini Singh

MEAL FOR TWO: ₹1,500.



the captain's table

MARITIME MISSION

In the commercial district of Bandra Kurla Complex in Mumbai, The Captain's Table satiates the cravings of seafood lovers.

The fine dine restaurant has all the plush trappings of a dining room on board a cruise liner. It offers a mix of European and Indian flavours as well as experimental and modern takes on classics. The tuna sashimi salad with coriander coated fish was a brand new flavour and delicious. Next, the butterfly prawns stuffed with crab and apricot chutney was finger-licking good. The eatery's signature poached salmon brought together elements which many may consider too experimental—simplicity of a moist and flaky salmon served on a bed of whole wheat and pumpkin ragout—but we loved it.

—Sayoni Bhaduri

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i did it!

“Every time I walked into the dining room, I was aware of how empty this wall looked. I decided a plate rack would fill the space and provide extra storage.”

—Vanessa Hunt

AT HOME with Vanessa Hunt in Salem, US.

HER PROJECT Build a plate rack. All it took was an afternoon and ₹1,700 worth of supplies.

TRICKIEST PART Figuring out the vertical space in each section. “I wanted to be sure that the shelves would fit my trays and many platters.”

HOME IMPROVEMENT ADVICE “Don’t hurry. There is great value in taking your time. Not only is it kinder to your budget, but it also lets you figure out what you love and not be swayed by trends.”

FUN FACT Vanessa writes the blog *At the Picket Fence* with her sister, Heather Patterson. ■

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