

November & December 2025

Expresso

Magazine

Aaditi
POHANKAR

RISING WITH PURPOSE



CRISANTO
JEWELLERY BY BHARTI BANGUR

Editor

Rituparna Sengupta

Editing & Proof

Sharib Jamil

Art & Creative

Gourav Basu

Website & Social Media

Vidya sagar

SEO Specialist

Erum Zabi

Cover Story by

Rituparna Sengupta

Contributor

Srabanti Chakravarti

Nilay Majumder

Roopa Sengupta

Dr. Blossom Kochhar

Ayan Mukherjee

Sayeri Roy

Vaishnavi Mishra

Sharib Jamel

Shayak Sanyal

For Advertising/ Alliances / Collaborations

Mr. Rahul Tyagi

Ph - 9212100179

Email - rahulhappeningsdelhi@gmail.com

Visit Our Page

@ @expressomagazine

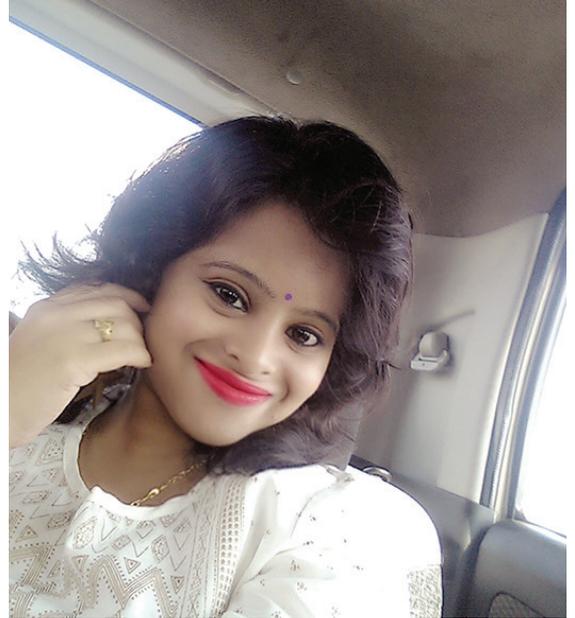
✉ expressomagazin1

📄 expresso-magazine

Our Website

www.expressomagazine.com

**EDITOR'S
LETTER**



This season's edition is shaped by momentum, ambition, and stories that refuse to stay still. At its heart stands our cover star, Aaditi Pohankar, who arrives with the fire and focus that have defined her evolution on screen. With Ziddi Ishq, her latest release, she leans into a character carved with intensity and emotional volatility, and in conversation she opens up about the grit behind her performances, the choices that sharpened her craft, and the journey that has steadily brought her closer to roles that truly resonate with her voice as an artist.

We continue this narrative of depth and discipline with an insightful interview with Manoj Bajpayee, who returns with Family Man Season 3. He offers a clear-eyed look into the cultural impact of the franchise, the challenges of sustaining a beloved character across seasons, and the nuanced layers he brings to a role that has become iconic in Indian streaming.

In fashion, this issue captures the energy of the Blenders Pride Fashion Tour, Delhi edition. The runway this year brought forward a confident interplay of structure, movement, and modern Indian expression. To complement it, our Festive Wardrobe Guide zeroes in on key silhouettes, textiles, and accessories that promise ease, elegance, and relevance through the celebratory months ahead.

For travel, we spotlight a unique destination that encourages you to step off the well-trodden path. This season's pick offers solitude, scenic unpredictability, and the kind of quiet charm that restores perspective.

Our food section rounds out the issue with a set of quick, flavour-forward snack recipes crafted for busy days and impromptu gatherings. These are effortless bites designed to elevate everyday indulgence.

Together, the features in this issue reflect the season's spirit: expressive, purposeful, and beautifully unafraid of reinvention.

FASHION

- ▶▶ Blenders Pride Fashion Tour: Welcome to the Futureverse
- ▶▶ Indigenous Australian Luxury Lights Up the Capital
- ▶▶ Bridal Glow, Redefined
- ▶▶ Festive Fashion Forecast
- ▶▶ Spotlight on Festive Style

BEAUTY

- ▶▶ From Skincare to Style: The Ultimate Grooming Guide for Grooms

RUNWAY

- ▶▶ **Mararikulam**: A Seaside Whisper Where Time Slows Down

COVER STORY

- ▶▶ Exclusive Interview with **Aaditi Pohankar**

GRUB HUB

- ▶▶ Crunch, Munch & Savor Every Bite
- ▶▶ A Fresh Wave of Flavours

CONTENTS

HEALTH & WELLNESS

- ▶▶ First Trimester Care: Steps to Support a Healthy Pregnancy

INTERVIEW

- ▶▶ Exclusive Interview with **Manoj Bajpayee**

REVIEW

- ▶▶ Web Series **Delhi Crime**

ENCIRCLE

LOV # 1

CLASSIC

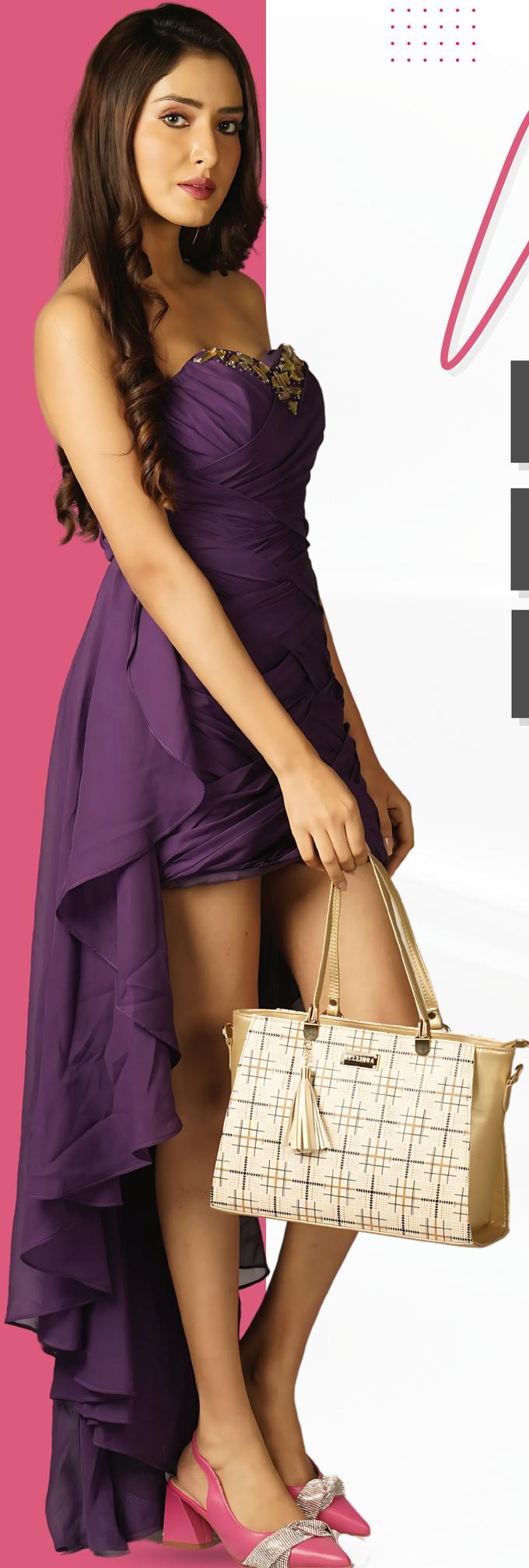


- The original bra with beautifully crafted Side-Shaper Panel
- **Cotton-Rich** fabric provides ultra comfort for all day long.
- Adorned with delicate scalloped elastic and a feminine centre bow
- Full coverage cups that contain busts.
- Wide wings that add to 24 x 7 firm support

www.lovableindia.in

 @LovableIndia_  @lovableindia1


Bellissa®



Women's
**Luxury
Hand
bag**

AVAILABLE ON



Myntra





FASHION TOUR

Welcome to the Futureverse

The night began like a whisper — a hush settling over Gurugram as the lights dimmed, screens flickered awake, and anticipation rippled through the air. And then, in a single breath, Blenders Pride Fashion Tour pulled the city into another dimension. The Futureverse of Fashion wasn't merely unveiled; it unfolded like an immersive world, blurring the edges between couture and code, body and motion, imagination and reality.

What emerged was not a traditional runway show. It was a cinematic odyssey.

This year's theme, Fashion's Next Move, expanded into its boldest interpretation yet: a visual, sensory

ecosystem where haute couture transcended fabric and form to exist in a space sculpted by AI, digital interaction, and immersive storytelling. Guiding this transformation were the creative forces of Falguni Shane Peacock and the tour's long-standing collaborator, the Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI), together forming a nucleus of innovation.

At the heart of this edition lay a powerful truth: today's audiences no longer wish to observe fashion passively — they want to feel it breathe. And so, the runway became a living canvas. Every step triggered motion-sensing visuals; every silhouette



activated a shift in the digital landscape surrounding it. Outfits mirrored the ethos of the future not only through sculptural lines and iridescent textures, but also through thought — bold, global, and unapologetically forward.

The spectacle crescendoed through moments that felt almost unreal.

Tamannaah Bhatia ignited the stage alongside humanoid robots, a tableau that could have been lifted from a high-fashion sci-fi universe. Dynamic projections stitched the narrative into a seamless continuum, while models appeared to move through portals of light. And then came Shahid Kapoor's holographic entrance — a fleeting, feather-light apparition that bridged the physical and the virtual, leaving the audience questioning where reality ended and performance began.

This was fashion as futurism. Fashion as a living pulse of technology.

Debasree Dasgupta, CMO of Pernod Ricard India, encapsulated the essence of the night: "We've taken a bold step into the Futureverse — a dynamic, interactive space where design is experienced in motion. It reflects our commitment to reshaping the very language of fashion."

For designers Falguni Shane Peacock, the Futureverse was a playground of possibility. "This edition captures the spirit of what lies ahead," they shared. "Innovation and creativity are not just tools — they are the new narrative."

FDCI Chairman Sunil Sethi echoed the significance of this partnership, calling the Gurugram edition "a celebration of creativity and culture that sets the pace for what's next in Indian fashion."

Even for seasoned showstoppers, the experience was transformative. Shahid Kapoor described it as "stepping into a new era," praising the seamless interplay between couture and technology. Tamannaah Bhatia called it "an electrifying glimpse into the future of the industry."

By the time the final visuals dissolved into darkness, one thing was certain: Indian fashion had crossed a threshold. The Futureverse was no longer an imaginative projection — it was here.

As the lights dimmed on Gurugram's futuristic runway, the message was unmistakable: Indian fashion is no longer merely catching up with the world — it is actively creating the new global vocabulary of style-tech symbiosis.

Fashion Design Council of India



Indigenous Australian Luxury Lights Up the Capital

By Rituparna Sengupta

Australian First Nations fashion arrived in New Delhi with quiet power and striking beauty, as the Australian High Commission, Kirrikin, and the Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) came together for a showcase that felt both intimate and momentous. In a city where couture heritage meets contemporary experimentation, Kirrikin's Indian debut unfolded like a cultural tapestry woven across continents.

The evening championed the luxury label founded by Amanda Healy, a proud Wonnarua woman whose vision has positioned Kirrikin at the forefront of Indigenous Australian fashion. Known for translating hand-painted First Nations artworks into modern, opulent silhouettes, the brand reflected a story far larger than fashion. Designed in Australia and meticulously crafted in Noida, Kirrikin stood as a living embodiment of a new creative and economic dialogue between the two countries, strengthened through the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement.

The very name Kirrikin, meaning "Sunday's best clothes" in the Wonnarua language, added emotional resonance to the evening. It represented not only elegance but also cultural reclamation. Every piece on the runway carried the imprint of land, spirit, and ancestral memory, reimagined for a global audience.

Australian High Commissioner to India, H.E. Philip Green OAM, spoke to the energy in the room, describing the event as a celebration of creativity, resilience, and the rich cultural legacy of Australia's First Nations communities. His words carried the weight of a partnership that has steadily deepened across trade, design, and artistic collaboration.

For Amanda Healy, the moment was profoundly personal. She reflected on the pride of bringing First Nations narratives to India, a country with its own deep traditions of craft and textile storytelling. The showcase, she said, honoured not only contemporary Indigenous designers but the long continuum of artistry that has shaped their identities.

FDCI Chairman Sunil Sethi echoed this sentiment, calling the collaboration a refreshing convergence of aesthetics. He underlined fashion's ability to serve as a bridge, connecting cultures through

visual language and craftsmanship. The runway, in his view, became a space where two distinct creative worlds met with ease and mutual respect.

The Centre for Australia-India Relations also played a pivotal role, with Chair Swati Dave noting its ongoing commitment to supporting First Nations businesses and amplifying their global footprint. The showcase, she said, demonstrated the powerful ways in which design can carry stories across borders.

The night concluded with traditional First Nations music and dance, bringing texture, rhythm, and ceremony to the Delhi setting. Against this backdrop, Kirrikin's pieces seemed to move with a renewed sense of purpose, grounded in heritage yet destined for new horizons.

The showcase didn't just introduce a brand; it introduced a cultural movement, one that asked India's fashion capital to witness the craftsmanship, identity, and quiet luminosity of First Nations Australian design. In a world hungry for authenticity, Kirrikin offered something rare: luxury with lineage, beauty with memory, and style that speaks in its own timeless language.



Bridal Glow, Redefined

As winter ushers in the season of celebrations, Kolkata comes alive with love, laughter, and the timeless charm of weddings. This season, the city's premier jewellers invite you to adorn every moment with elegance and sparkle. From show-stopping statement pieces that elevate bridal ensembles to heirloom-quality treasures that honour cherished rituals, each creation reflects a perfect blend of heritage craftsmanship and contemporary design. Whether you're the bride, part of the wedding party, or a guest seeking the ideal shimmer, discover jewellery that captures the magic of the season and becomes a lasting part of your family legacy.

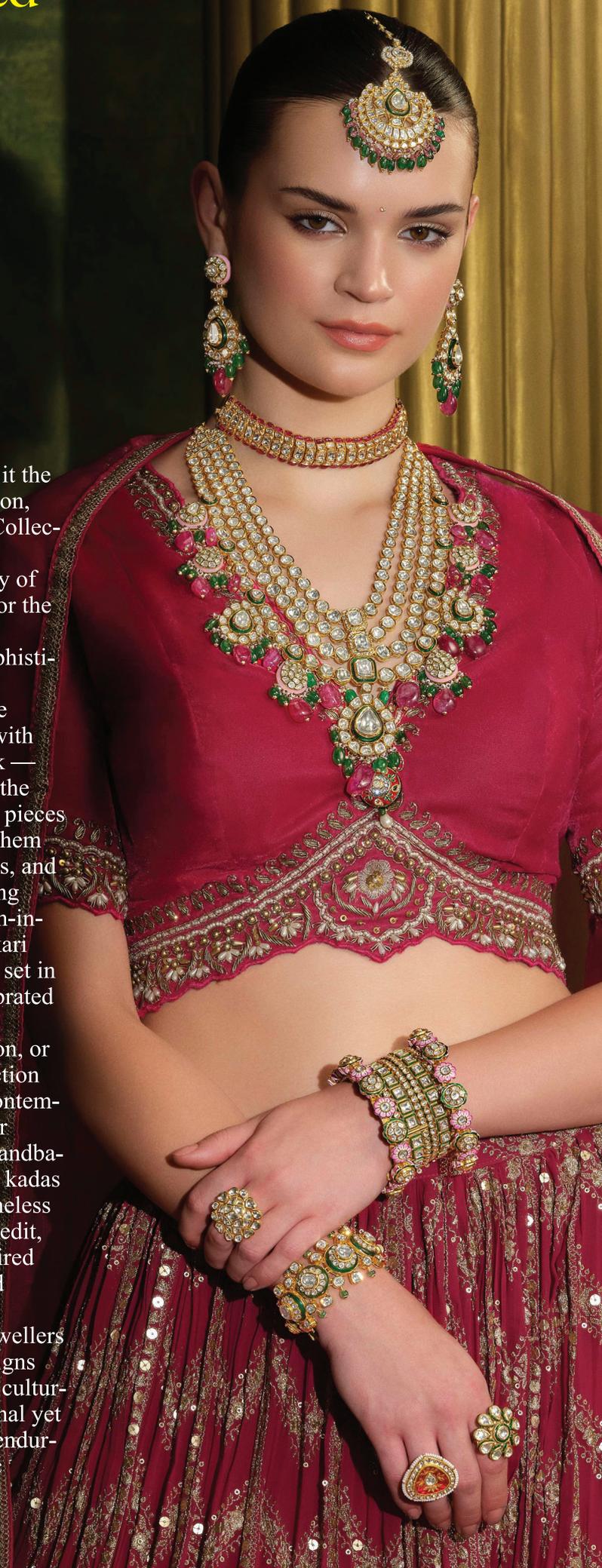
Mahabir Danwar Jewellers

As the winter wedding season returns, bringing with it the promise of celebration, elegance, and timeless tradition, Mahabir Danwar Jewellers presents the Rajnandini Collection — a regal bridal jewellery line inspired by the opulence of Rajwada culture and the enduring artistry of Rajasthan. Rooted in royal heritage yet reimagined for the modern Indian bride, each creation in the Rajnandini Collection pays tribute to the grace, strength, and sophistication of Mewar's legendary queens.

For brides seeking to embody true regal elegance, the collection showcases antique gold chokers adorned with rubies, pearls, and intricate semi-precious stone work — the crown jewels of this curation. Designed to drape the neckline with commanding richness, these statement pieces echo the grandeur of royal armour. Complementing them are jadau bridal sets, polki chokers, kundan rani haars, and intricately detailed maatha pattis, all handcrafted using age-old techniques. Each jewel tells a story: heirloom-inspired designs reminiscent of palatial courts, meenakari detailing that mirrors traditional frescoes, and stones set in rich gold that reflect the mastery of Rajasthan's celebrated karigars.

Whether for traditional pheras, a grand royal reception, or an intimate winter celebration, the Rajnandini Collection offers a harmonious blend of cultural richness and contemporary sophistication. Brides can explore bold choker necklaces layered with precious stones, oversized chandbalis, ornate haathphools, and majestic Rajputana-style kadas — transforming every ensemble into a portrait of timeless royalty. The collection also includes a refined men's edit, featuring sherwani buttons, brooches, and kalgi-inspired accessories, offering grooms a touch of distinguished elegance.

With the Rajnandini Collection, Mahabir Danwar Jewellers honors India's rich craft legacy while presenting designs that resonate with today's confident, expressive, and culturally rooted couples. Luxurious yet wearable, traditional yet modern, this collection is a testament to the brand's enduring dedication to craftsmanship, heritage, and artistic excellence.



Avama Jewellers

As winter unfolds its timeless charm, the season of love and celebration takes center stage. Capturing this spirit of radiance and renewal, Avama Jewellers by Abhishek Kajaria unveils 'Taraani' — a dazzling bridal collection inspired by the brilliance of stars and the golden warmth of sunlight.

Meaning “radiant like a star”, Taraani celebrates the luminous bride — confident, graceful, and timeless. Every piece in the collection embodies love, heritage, and artistry, brought to life through Avama’s masterful craftsmanship and a contemporary sensibility that honors tradition while embracing modern elegance.

From statement chokers and layered necklaces to majestic jhumkas, intricate bangles, and heirloom-worthy rings, each creation in Taraani is handcrafted in 22-carat gold and adorned with uncut diamonds, polki, and precious gemstones including rubies, emeralds, and sapphires. Inspired by royal artistry, with motifs echoing the grandeur of Mughal palaces and sacred temple designs, these jewels remain refreshingly modern — perfect for the bride who celebrates both legacy and individuality.

Taraani’s true magic lies in its versatility. Whether it’s the solemn beauty of the pheras, the exuberance of a sangeet, or the intimacy of a winter soir e, every piece is designed to shine across moments — just like the bride herself.

With Taraani, Avama Jewellers continues to redefine bridal elegance, blending artistry, emotion, and innovation into treasures that transcend time. Each jewel is more than an adornment — it is a keepsake of light, love, and legacy, destined to be cherished for generations.





Madanji Meghraj Jewellers

As winter paints the world with its serene charm, it brings with it romance, celebration, and the promise of new beginnings — misty mornings, starlit evenings, and weddings that fill the season with joy. In perfect harmony with this festive spirit, Madanji Meghraj Jewellers, synonymous with heritage and masterful craftsmanship, presents its Winter Wedding Edit 2025 — a curated collection of jewels designed to be cherished for a lifetime.

Blending the richness of Indian tradition with contemporary elegance, the edit features an exquisite array of designs: uncut polki chokers, antique gold necklaces, and diamond-and-emerald sets that exude understated sophistication. Each piece is crafted to complement winter's regal hues — deep velvets, shimmering silks, and opulent brocades — ensuring that every bride, groom, and guest discov-

ers jewellery that is as timeless as it is enchanting.

With boutiques in Kolkata and Bengaluru, Madanji Meghraj Jewellers continues to weave together tradition and innovation. The Bengaluru showroom at 109 Barton Centre celebrates South India's enduring love for artistry, featuring Temple Jewellery, Nagas Work, and Antique Gold Bridal Sets — each piece echoing the divine elegance of heritage design.

Every creation from Madanji Meghraj Jewellers reflects the brand's philosophy: to craft jewellery that transcends fleeting trends, tells stories of love and legacy, and becomes treasured heirlooms for generations. This winter, adorn yourself in jewels that embody the true spirit of an Indian wedding — a celebration of love, light, and timeless beauty.



Bharti Bangur Fine Jewels

As winter blankets the season in its serene charm, bringing with it celebrations, romance, and timeless elegance, Bharti Bangur Fine Jewels presents its latest bridal masterpiece — “Elara – The Winter Wedding Collection 2025”. Inspired by the celestial glow of winter, Elara captures the ethereal beauty of the season, where each jewel becomes a whisper of romance and a reflection of the modern bride’s grace and spirit.

Crafted in gold and adorned with natural diamonds, Polki, and exquisite coloured gemstones, the collection fuses traditional artistry with contemporary design. From statement chokers and layered necklaces to delicate earrings and elegant

bangles, every piece is designed to shine across wedding moments — whether it’s the pheras, the sangeet, or a grand reception.

True to Bharti Bangur Fine Jewels’ signature style, Elara celebrates the confident, graceful, and ever-evolving woman of today. The jewels are versatile, timeless, and designed to transcend fleeting trends, making them treasures that can be worn and cherished across seasons.

The collection also features a refined selection of gifting pieces, crafted in fine gold and diamond settings — ideal for bridesmaids, family, and loved ones. Subtle yet striking, these jewels add warmth and sparkle to every winter celebration.



Indian Gem & Jewellery Creation

Winter weddings hold a charm like no other — deep, rich hues, crisp air, and an ambiance steeped in timeless romance. Capturing this enchanting spirit, Indian Gem & Jewellery Creation presents ‘Noor’, its latest bridal collection celebrating light, love, and luminosity. Inspired by the word “radiance,” Noor reflects the brilliance every bride carries within, translating it into jewellery that shines as beautifully as she does.

In today’s weddings, a bride seeks more than mere adornment — she desires emotion, meaning, and legacy in every piece she wears. The Noor collection embodies this sentiment, seamlessly blending regal craftsmanship with contemporary elegance. Each creation tells a story of heritage and modernity, making it a perfect companion for the season’s grandest celebrations.

From statement chokers and layered rani haars to intricate jhumkas, graceful bangles, and heirloom-inspired rings, every piece in Noor is meticulously handcrafted in 22-carat gold and adorned with uncut diamonds, polki, and precious gemstones like rubies and emeralds. Drawing inspiration from traditional Indian artistry — temple motifs, meenakari detailing, and Mughal influences — the collection offers jewellery that is at once classic and refreshingly modern.

With Noor, Indian Gem & Jewellery Creation continues its legacy of designing masterpieces that transcend trends and time. Each jewel is crafted not just to be worn, but to be treasured — a symbol of love, light, and heritage, destined to be passed down through generations.

This festival season spread
Joy through

*Graceful
Gifting Ideas...*



www.fns.co.in



Available on :



· CUTLERY · DINNERWARE · BARWARE · STONEWARE

FNS INTERNATIONAL PVT. LTD.

313, 3rd Floor, ITL Twin Tower, B-09, Netaji Subhash Place,
Pitampura, New Delhi - 110034

Ph : +91-11-47098686 | E-Mail : info@fns.co.in | Website : www.fns.co.in



Festive Fashion Forecast

Party season arrives with its annual appetite for shine, and this year, the memo is crystal clear: go bold, go glossy, and let your wardrobe catch the light. Sequins, satin, and high-impact sparkle dominate the landscape, but the trend is less about excess and more about intentional glamour. Designers are taking familiar festive codes and elevating them with precision cuts, sculptural silhouettes, thoughtful textures, and refined embellishment.

The Rise of Luxe Shine

Sequins are no longer confined to the predictable all-over shimmer dress. The new direction is engineered sparkle: tonal sequins, mosaic placements, metallic gradients, and textural layering. Whether used to highlight movement or structure, sequins are being treated as surface architecture.

Satin, on the other hand, holds its ground as the fabric of fluidity. It shapes evening dressing with a

soft, luminous finish that works beautifully in minimal and maximal forms alike. From bias-cut slips to statement draped gowns, satin's quiet glamour serves as a counterbalance to the season's bolder elements.

Sparkle rounds out the trio, appearing through crystal work, metallic embroidery, foil detailing, and jewellery-led accents stitched directly onto garments. These touches offer a sophisticated flicker rather than a flash, delivering high shine without overwhelming the wearer.

A Curation of Designers Defining the Season

This season's curation brings together distinct creative voices who are steering the conversation on festive dressing:

Sarab Khanijou sharpens the festive wardrobe with tailored pieces that merge structure with sheen. His play on power dressing reimagines evening formality for the modern celebrant.



Swatee Singh brings sculpted glamour with silhouettes that glide. Her draped dresses and cinched shapes offer a beautiful harmony between softness and statement.

Ozeqo leans into contemporary sparkle with experimental cuts and surface detailing. Expect pieces that carry the spirit of the party without compromising comfort.

House of Fett delivers print-forward glamour, blending festive motifs with fluid movement. The result is effortless celebration wear that stands out without trying too hard.

Label Naibah focuses on clean lines, metallic finishes, and bold geometry. These are pieces that speak to the woman who prefers her shine with structure.

Abhishek Sharma continues to champion high-glam eveningwear, from embellished drapes to sequined textures that sparkle under soft light.

Ranna Gill brings a global festive sensibility through rich embroideries, signature prints, and silhouettes made for dancing.

Richa Khemka infuses sparkle into everyday luxury. Her ensembles transition seamlessly from intimate gatherings to high-octane nights out.

Dressing the Holiday Calendar

The beauty of this lineup lies in its versatility. These pieces adapt effortlessly to the varied rhythm of the season:

- For dinners and intimate celebrations, satin slips, metallic co-ords, and softly embellished dresses create understated glamour.
- For destination parties, fluid drapes, statement prints, and engineered shimmer offer movement and presence.
- For New Year's Eve, structured sparkle, high-shine sequins, and sculptural silhouettes capture the mood of celebration.

The Mood of the Moment

People are gravitating toward pieces that deliver both impact and ease. The season calls for dressing that is expressive but not cumbersome, festive yet functional, luminous without being loud. Sequins are smarter, satin is bolder, and sparkle is more strategic.

As the holiday calendar fills up, fashion embraces a new vocabulary of shine. The result is a wardrobe that celebrates light, movement, and mood, with designers crafting pieces that reflect the season's joy. The party has officially begun, and the dressing is set to shimmer all month long.





Spotlight on Festive Style

Celebration dressing gets a fresh update with collections that balance heritage craftsmanship and modern design. With smart accessories, radiant beauty picks, and fluid festive silhouettes, the season calls for style that feels expressive, effortless, and unmistakably you.

Typsy Beauty

Typsy Beauty introduces the Pout Cloud Matte Lip Balm, a tinted soft-matte formula designed for effortless everyday colour. The balm delivers a sheer-to-buildable payoff with a lightweight, cushiony texture that feels plush without drying the lips. A cooling metal-tip applicator ensures precision, freshness, and a hygienic glide, making application both easy and indulgent.

Infused with peptides, ceramides, and vitamins E and C, the formula nourishes while creating a blurred, velvety finish. Available in six flattering shades, from warm rose-browns and mocha tones to peachy corals and rich berry hues, it offers care and colour in one seamless step.



Fastrack Bags

Fastrack Bags turns up the volume on party dressing with Glitz 2.0, a capsule built for those who love owning the spotlight. The collection blends sleek silhouettes with glossy, high-impact finishes, creating accessories that match the pace and energy of long nights out.

The edit features the bold Vibecheck Shoulder Bag, the playful Minibae Sling in black and white, and the polished Lil Spark Sling for a touch of glam precision. Designed to be functional yet undeniably statement-making, Glitz 2.0 delivers compact forms, clean lines, and just the right dose of drama. Perfect for dancing, house-party hopping, or any moment when main-character energy is non-negotiable.

Herbelin

Herbelin's latest Novelties collection distills feminine elegance into four refined timepieces that balance heritage with a modern French sensibility. The Art Déco in Rose Gold PVD revisits 1920s glamour through its petite tonneau case and guilloché dial, while the Steel and Rose Gold PVD variant offers a chic interplay of cool and warm tones suited to both daywear and evening polish.

Powered by Swiss quartz movements, each watch is crafted for women who appreciate subtle luxury, timeless form, and the confidence of pieces that elevate everyday style.



Attrangi

Attrangi introduces Almaaz, a collection that channels the brilliance and fluidity of light into contemporary fine jewellery. Defined by sculpted diamonds, architectural earcuffs, modern chandbalis, and elegant, free-flowing silhouettes, Almaaz brings together craftsmanship and bold design with effortless harmony.

Each piece is handcrafted to mirror the duality of today's woman: powerful yet graceful, striking yet refined. From subtle shimmer to statement sparkle, the collection transforms every ensemble into a luminous moment.



Mosey

Mosey introduces a refined approach to bodycare that is both mindful and modern, rooted in plant-led science and fully biodegradable formulations. The brand champions a philosophy that aligns with the skin's natural rhythm, proving that luxury and responsibility can coexist with quiet confidence.

Each lotion, wash, and mist is crafted to feel sensorial, soft, and restorative, offering indulgence without environmental compromise. By placing biodegradability at its core, Mosey ensures that every product nourishes not just the body but the planet as well.

The result is bodycare as an intentional ritual: a moment to pause, reconnect, and choose solutions made with purpose. Mosey's gentle yet thoughtful creations leave a lasting positive impact on skin and self, while treading lightly on the world around us.

LEAFBERRY

LEAFBERRY introduces the Japan Ritual Scrub, a luxurious exfoliator inspired by traditional Japanese self-care practices and designed for modern, barrier-conscious skin. Infused with Fermented Rice Water for luminosity, Aloe Vera for calm hydration, Lotus Flower Extract for antioxidant balance, Hyaluronic Acid for moisture retention, and Squalane for protective softness, the formula delivers a sensorial yet gentle treatment.

Its ultra-fine, Japanese-inspired soft scrub particles lift away dead cells, dullness, and daily pollutants without irritation, leaving the skin smoother, brighter, and visibly refreshed. With benefits ranging from improved texture and reduced pigmentation to enhanced absorption of skincare products, the scrub remains suitable even for sensitive skin.

A weekly ritual that mirrors the serenity of Japanese bathhouse traditions, the Japan Ritual Scrub offers a spa-like moment of clarity and renewal, all within a single jar.



Innisfree Green Tea Ceramide Milk

This lightweight, fast-absorbing milk moisturiser delivers uncomplicated hydration for men with dehydrated or stressed skin. Powered by Jeju-grown green tea to soothe and replenish, and ceramides to reinforce the skin barrier, it absorbs instantly without residue. The result is calm, strengthened, well-hydrated skin with zero heaviness, making it an effortless daily essential.



Siyaram

Devo, a Siyaram's initiative, launches Gulposh, a festive menswear collection crafted for modern grooms and destination weddings. Inspired by Mediterranean calm and Indian craftsmanship, the line features kurta-jacket sets in lightweight Chanderi and Voile for all-day comfort.

Traditional jaal and Mughal tile motifs meet contemporary silhouettes, with shorter jackets, fluid drapes, and voluminous bottoms creating a relaxed yet refined look. Two design stories, Flora-Fauna Lattice and Jungle Tales, highlight intricate embroidery, sugar beads, satin stitches, and subtle sequins.

A versatile palette spans deep evening tones and fresh daytime pastels, paired with coordinated Mojaris. Gulposh reflects the rising demand for fluid, comfortable occasion wear and reinforces Devo's pursuit of elegant, precision-driven design for the modern Indian man.



SWITCH to

Veg KERATIN

for fabulous hair

#SWITCHtoVegKERATIN

BY INCREDIBLE NATURE
atulya



100% NATURAL ACTIVES

KERATIN &
WHEAT PROTEIN

Range



SHOP ONLINE myatulya.com

FOR ATTRACTIVE OF OFFERS & MORE

ALSO AVAILABLE AT amazon.in [Nykaa](http://Nykaa.com) [Flipkart](http://Flipkart.com) [purple](http://purple.com) [meesho](http://meesho.com)

From Skincare to Style: The Ultimate Grooming Guide for Grooms

By **Sweetie Malakar**

Why modern weddings demand a better—sharper, cleaner, elevated—grooming playbook for men.

For decades, bridal beauty has commanded the spotlight—rightly so—with elaborate rituals, skincare calendars, couture-inspired makeup, and ornate hair. Yet, somewhere between the sherwanis, saafas, and baraat revelry, the groom’s grooming narrative has been treated almost as an afterthought. But today’s groom is rewriting that script.

As contemporary weddings become more curated, photographed, and aesthetically aligned, grooms are embracing a more intentional approach to their appearance. Grooming is no longer limited to a rushed haircut or borrowed cologne; it has evolved into a holistic regimen that blends skincare, styling, wellness, and refined personal taste.

This is the groom’s moment—and here is the definitive guide to getting it right.

Skincare: From Basic to Bespoke

Modern grooms are approaching skincare with intention, recognising that clear, healthy skin is crucial for high-resolution wedding photography. The process should begin at least four to six weeks before the big day with a consistent routine that includes a gentle cleanser, a nourishing moisturiser, twice-a-week exfoliation, hydrating serums such as hyaluronic acid,

under-eye creams to combat fatigue, and daily SPF to maintain an even skin tone. For those seeking enhanced radiance, in-clinic treatments like hydrafacials, chemical peels, and LED therapy offer quick, effective results. Grooms who shave regularly should also pay attention to post-shave care by using calming balms, soothing gels, and products that prevent ingrown hairs to avoid any last-minute redness or irritation.

Hair: The Crown Needs Its Time

While brides often plan elaborate hairstyles, many grooms still arrive with a rushed haircut, but the modern groom understands the value of thoughtful preparation. Ideally, he should get his haircut seven to ten days before the wedding to allow it to settle naturally, and consider mild hair spa sessions or deep-conditioning treatments to improve texture and manageability. Those experiencing thinning hair can rely on volumising mousses or scalp serums to enhance density and achieve a fuller look. For pre-wedding functions like the sangeet or engagement, light styling creams help create a polished yet natural appearance. Most importantly, grooms should avoid experimenting with new hair colours or drastic changes close to the wedding day.

Beard and Brows: Sculpted, Not Overdone

A well-shaped beard and



neatly maintained brows sharpen the face instantly without appearing artificial. To achieve this, grooms should focus on regular trimming and shaping, use nourishing beard oils to keep the hair soft, and opt for a dedicated beard wash instead of harsh shampoos. Those who prefer a clean-shaven look should rely on precision shaving techniques paired with a post-shave calming gel to ensure a smooth, irritation-free finish. Brows, meanwhile, should be lightly cleaned and groomed without excessive threading to maintain a natural, masculine appearance.

Hands, Nails, and Hygiene: Small Details, Big Impact

From exchanging varmalas to placing rings, the groom's hands receive considerable attention, making well-maintained nails and moisturised hands essential rather than optional. To ensure they look their best, grooms should schedule a professional manicure and pedicure, focus on cuticle care, opt for heel buffing, and consider a neutral nail buff for a clean, healthy sheen. Good grooming also extends to oral hygiene, where whitening treatments and breath-freshening solutions can help maintain confidence throughout the festivities.

Fragrance: Crafting the Groom's Signature

Fragrance is the groom's invisible accessory, subtly enhancing presence and elevating the overall impression. For weddings, choosing a scent that conveys elegance and offers lasting power is essential. Woody notes like cedar and sandalwood, spicy profiles such as cardamom and saffron, fresh fragrances featuring bergamot or vetiver, and oriental blends with oud or amber all work exceptionally well for different moods and settings. A lighter, fresher fragrance suits daytime events, while richer oud- or amber-based scents create depth and allure for evening celebrations. To ensure longevity, grooms can also layer their fragrance with a mild-scented body lotion that helps the perfume adhere better to the skin.

Style and Skincare Coordination

Grooming should always complement the wardrobe, creating a unified and intentional look. A matte finish pairs well with heavy traditional outfits, while dewy skin enhances the softness of pastel sherwanis. Sleek, pulled-back hair is the ideal match for a tuxedo, whereas a slightly tousled texture suits tropical or beachside weddings. Aligning grooming choices with the wedding theme ensures a cohesive visual identity that photographs beautifully and feels thoughtfully curated.

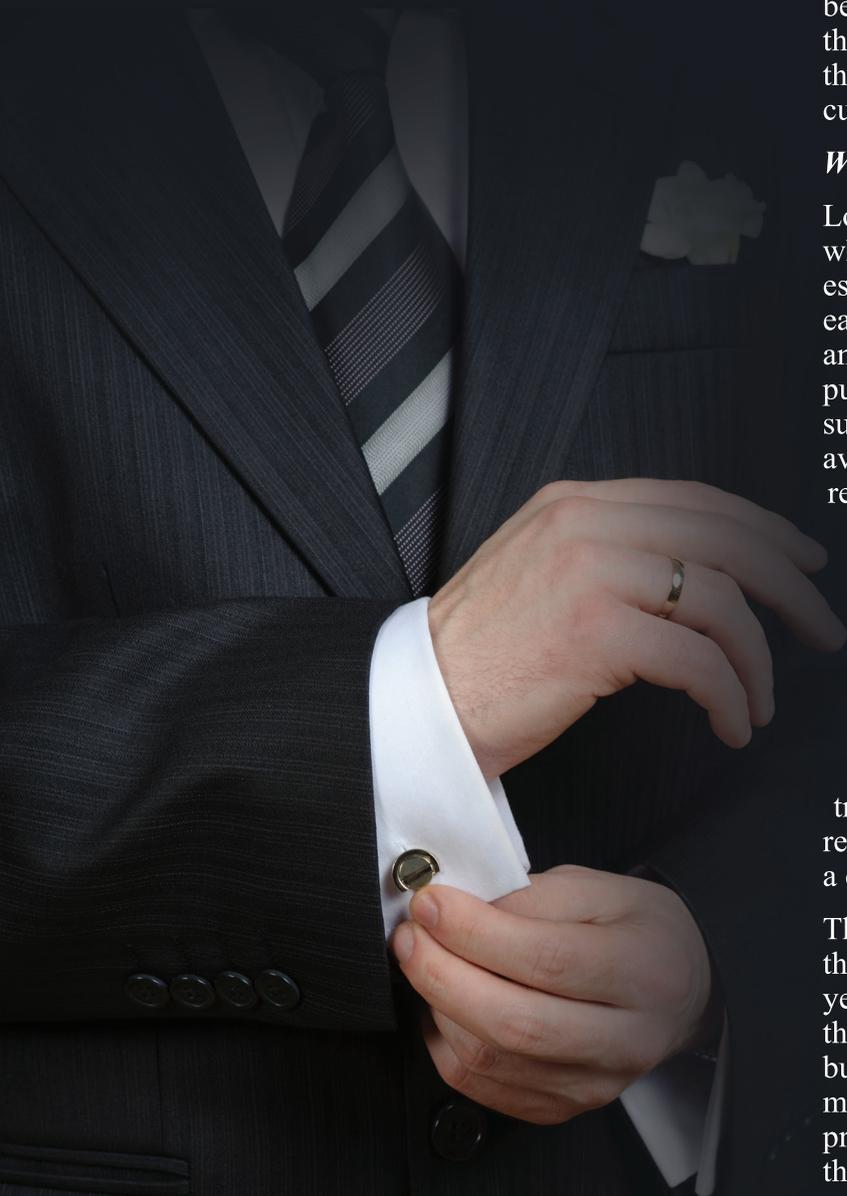
Wellness: Calm Mind, Confident Groom

Looking good is impossible without feeling good, which is why pre-wedding wellness rituals are essential. Adequate sleep, proper hydration, and clean eating form the foundation for maintaining energy and radiance, while limiting alcohol helps prevent puffiness and dehydration. Light workouts or yoga support better circulation and reduce stress, and avoiding last-minute crash diets ensures the body remains stable and balanced. Together, these habits minimise fatigue, brighten the skin, and enhance overall vitality in the days leading up to the wedding.

The Groom's Emergency Kit

A compact, functional set of essentials ensures the groom stays immaculate throughout the day, and should include blotting papers, a lip balm, a travel-size perfume, hair gel or hair spray, a refreshing face mist, a clean handkerchief, mints, and a compact powder to control shine.

The groom's grooming story is finally stepping into the light—and rightly so. Today's groom is polished yet effortless, refined yet authentic. He understands that weddings are not only a moment of celebration but a visual legacy that lasts a lifetime. As couples move towards equality in planning, presentation, and presence, bridal beauty now has a worthy counterpart: the groom's own, well-earned moment of shine.





Mararikulam: A Seaside Whisper Where Time Slows Down

By Anurati Bhattacharya

Mararikulam is not a place you arrive at; it is a place that quietly arrives within you. Long before the road unfurls into coconut groves and the sea comes into view, something shifts—your breath loosens, your thoughts quieten, and your heart begins to listen. This village on Kerala's coast feels like a memory you never lived, a dream you somehow recognise. The wind moves differently here, carrying the scent of salt, cool shade, and stories whispered by fishermen who have loved this shoreline for generations.

The mornings rise like a prayer—slow, golden, and generous. The sun paints the sky in tender hues, waves roll in with the certainty of ancient wisdom, and palm trees sway as if keeping time with the earth's oldest lullaby. Nothing rushes. Nothing demands. The world narrows to the hush of the sea, the warmth of the sand, and the quiet understanding that here, you are allowed to simply be.

Tucked between Alleppey and Kochi, this beachside village doesn't seek attention; it simply enchants. This is not a coast for crowds or noise but for slow sunsets, the lull of waves, and days that drift by like a soft, unending dream.

If you've ever wanted to step away from the world and return to stillness, Mararikulam is where you'll find it—an exhale you didn't know you were holding, a reminder that peace is a place, and it lives by the water's edge.

A Village Where the Sea Is Family

Unlike the commercial beaches of Kovalam or Varkala, Marari Beach still belongs to its fishermen. Early mornings bring the sight of vibrant boats returning from the sea, men casting nets with effortless rhythm, and children running barefoot alongside. You're not just witnessing life here—you're part of it.

The beach stretches endlessly—golden sands merging with turquoise waters, framed by lazy coconut palms. What sets it apart is the lack of commercialization. No hawkers, no plastic chairs, no blaring speakers. Just you, the waves, and the feeling that you've stepped into a postcard Kerala forgot to share.

Not Just a Beach—A Way of Life

Mararikulam isn't about doing things. It's about being. It's the kind of village where mornings begin with fresh coconut water, days melt into hammock naps, and evenings are reserved for walks under a pink-orange sky.

Yet, for the curious soul, the village offers plenty. Cycle through narrow bylanes past thatched houses and tiny shrines. Visit coir-making workshops, where locals still hand-spin coconut husks into rope—a centuries-old tradition. Engage with the fishing community, some of the warmest and most welcoming people in Kerala. Attend an early morning yoga session at one of the eco-resorts. Book a quiet canoe ride through Marari's hidden canals—its own backwater secret, far from Alleppey's busier routes.

Stay Like a Local

The real charm of Mararikulam lies in its eco-conscious homestays and boutique resorts, most of which blend into the landscape without disturbing it. Think clay cottages with open-air bathrooms, verandahs with a single cane chair, and gardens full of hibiscus and curry leaves.

Recommended stays include:

- Marari Beach Resort – an eco-luxury escape rooted in sustainability
- Heritage Marari – a family-run homestay with simple elegance
- Palm Heaven Homestay – ideal for budget travellers seeking authenticity

Most stays offer home-cooked Kerala meals: fluffy appams with stew, fiery fish curry, and the freshest banana chips you'll ever taste.

Food: A Coastal Symphony on the Plate

In Mararikulam, food is not just sustenance—it is an expression of land and sea. The cuisine is shaped by coconut groves, spice plantations, and the Arabian Sea, bringing dishes that are fragrant, soulful, and full of flavour.

Karimeen Pollichathu—pearl spot fish marinated in fiery spices and grilled in banana leaf—is coastal Kerala at its finest. Nadan Meen Curry, with its tangy tamarind base and vibrant red chilli notes, is a staple in almost every home.

Prawn lovers find their bliss in Chemmeen Roast: spicy, aromatic, unforgettable.



Vegetarians are equally indulged, thanks to Kerala's love for coconut. Thoran—a dry stir-fry of vegetables and grated coconut—turns simple ingredients into perfection. And starting your day with Appam and Stew feels like a warm embrace from the village itself.

Small thatched shacks along the beach serve seafood straight from the morning catch, making every meal intimate and deeply authentic—like eating in a local home.

The Rhythm of Mararikulam

Time in Mararikulam moves in earthy beats—the clink of coir-making tools, the flap of fish-drying tarps, the call to prayer from a distant temple, the whisper of palms in the afternoon breeze. Somewhere between all this, your own rhythm slows. You begin to notice how sand feels different at dusk, how the sea breathes in and out, how silence is not empty but full of life.

It's the kind of place that teaches you to live gently.

Getting There

- Nearest Airport: Cochin International Airport (75 km)
- By Train: Mararikulam has its own railway station, with frequent trains from Ernakulam and Alleppey.
- By Road: A short 30–45 minute drive from Kochi or Alleppey.

Best Time to Visit

November to February is ideal—cool, sunny, and perfect for long beach walks. June to September brings the monsoon: lush greenery, dramatic skies, and roaring seas, though some activities may be restricted.

Places You Must Explore

Marari Beach

Untouched and uncrowded, this is the heart of the village—perfect for meditation, sunrise strolls, and sunset watching.

St. Augustine's Church

A peaceful, centuries-old structure reflecting Kerala's multicultural past.

Mararikulam Shiva Temple

An ancient, spiritually rich temple. Visit during evening aarti for an immersive experience.

Kumarakom (40 minutes away)

Backwaters, bird sanctuaries, and luxury houseboats—ideal for a day trip.

Alleppey

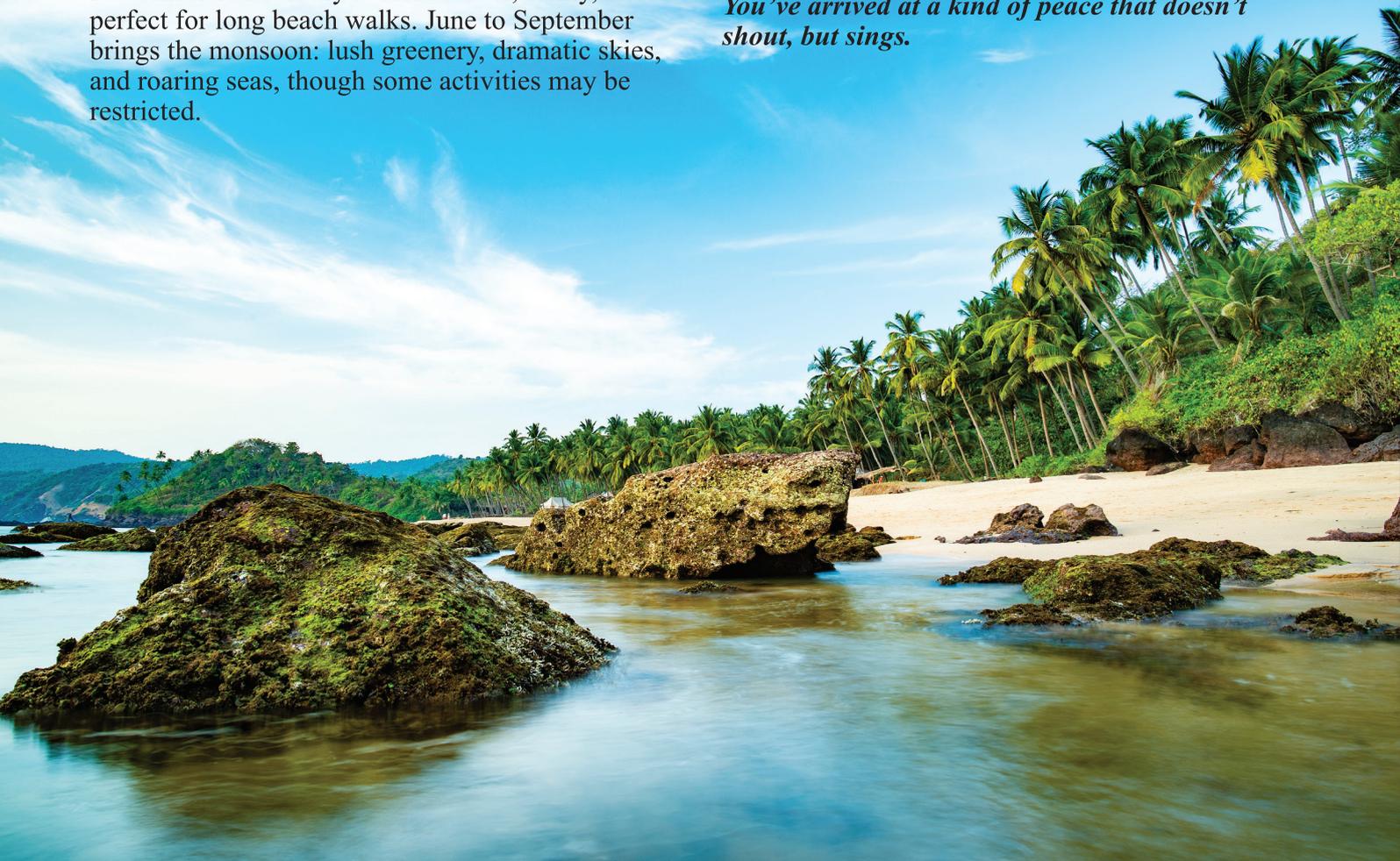
A short drive away for canal cruises, paddy fields, and toddy shops.

Why Mararikulam Leaves an Impression

Because some places don't try to impress you—they simply exist in their quietness, waiting for the few who can hear that silence. Mararikulam is not a postcard you send to others; it is a place that sends a message to your soul—a reminder to slow down, to listen, to breathe, to live.

When you're walking barefoot along its untouched beach, watching the sun slip behind the sea with no audience, no applause—just the sigh of waves—you'll know:

You've arrived at a kind of peace that doesn't shout, but sings.



SALWAR
KAMEEZ
BRA

Labella



Lovable

DAISY DEE™
AIRY LIGHTLY LOVELY



Features

- Crafted from soft cotton fabric that allows your skin to breathe
- No seams, no stitches and no crease on the cups
- Double lined seamless cups provide smooth finish to your sensuous curves
- Uniquely styled to give perfect fit, added comfort and full coverage to the bust

Colors: White, Black, Skin, Dark Maroon, Carrot, F. Pink, L. Wine, E. Pink

Sizes: 30B, 32B, 34B, 36B, 38B, 40B, 32C, 34C, 36C, 38C, 40C

www.lovableindia.in



daisydeeindia



DaisyDeeByLovable

COVER STORY

Aditi Dohankar

Beyond the Spotlight

By Rituparna Sengupta

Aaditi Pohankar's journey began at 16 on the theatre stage, but her evolution as a performer is far from over. Fearless, grounded, and endlessly curious, she navigates film, theatre, and multiple languages with equal finesse. In *Ziddi Ishq*, she brings vulnerability and fire to a story of unrequited love, embodying characters with depth and authenticity. For Aaditi, every role is a new beginning—a chance to grow, explore, and challenge herself, guided by patience, persistence, and an unshakable commitment to her craft.

When you look back at your journey from your early days to now, which moment feels like the true beginning of “Aaditi the performer”?

Aaditi : Looking back at my journey, from my earliest days to where I stand today, I feel that every new script marks a fresh beginning for me as a performer. For an actor, there is never a point of arrival. My mentor, Makarand sir, always reminded me that the moment you believe you've “arrived,” your growth stops. That thought has stayed with me. I've never paused to measure how far I've come; I simply stay committed to my work and trust the rest to the divine.

You've worked across mediums and genres. How has that diversity shaped your identity as an actor?

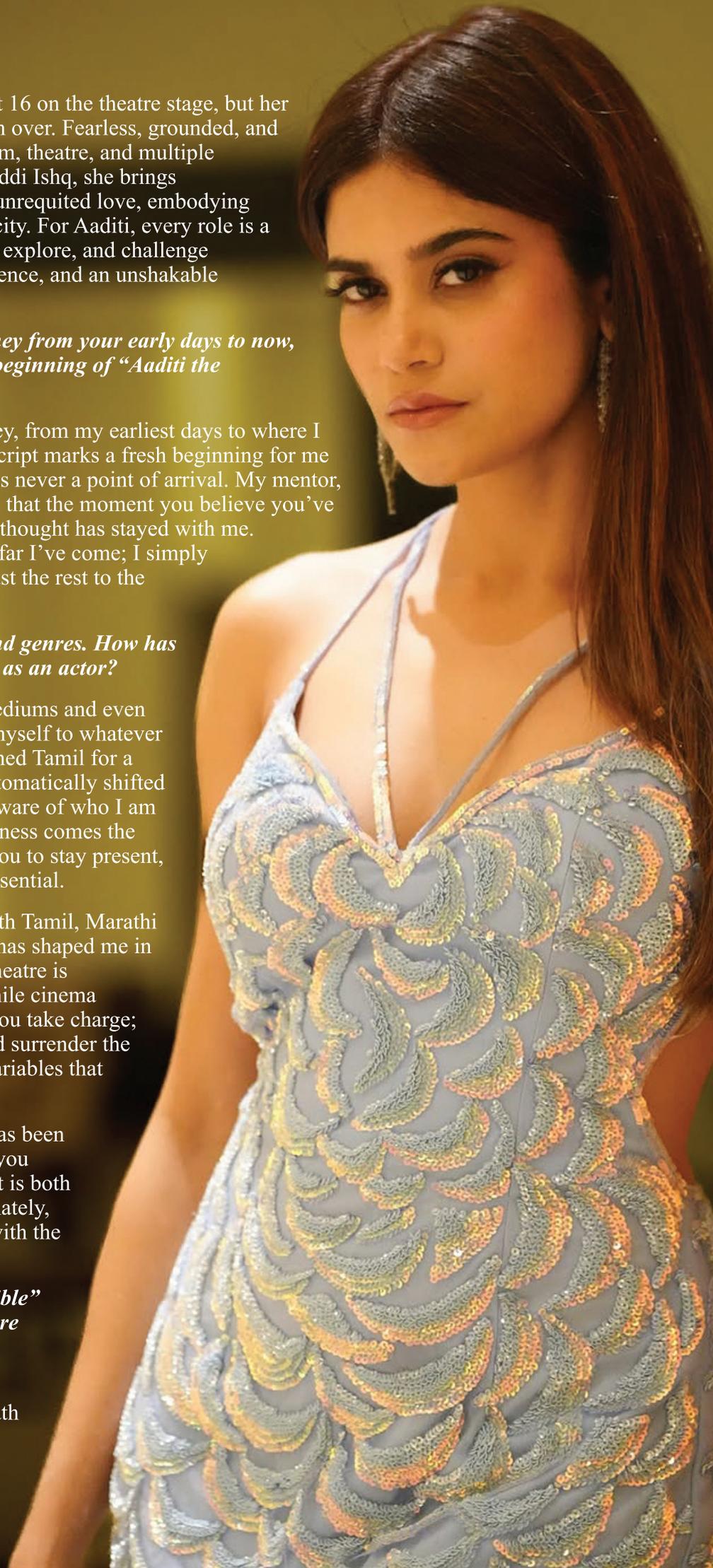
Aaditi : Working across genres, mediums and even languages has taught me to adapt myself to whatever the moment demands. When I learned Tamil for a project, I noticed how my mind automatically shifted gears. I became more alert, more aware of who I am as Aaditi, and only after that awareness comes the character. A new language forces you to stay present, and for an actor, that presence is essential.

I feel fortunate to have engaged with Tamil, Marathi and Hindi, because each language has shaped me in a different way. As for mediums, theatre is fundamentally an actor's space, while cinema belongs to the director. On stage, you take charge; on set, you contribute your part and surrender the rest to the director and the many variables that shape a film.

The most significant shift for me has been learning to let go. Theatre teaches you command, film teaches you flow. It is both complex and simple, because ultimately, you must allow yourself to move with the medium.

Many actors talk about the “invisible” struggles of the industry. What were the struggles that no one saw, but shaped you the most?

Aaditi : I've never looked at my path as a struggle. Even while growing, both as an actor and as a person, I





often heard people say they were “struggling,” but I never related to that. If I’m preparing for an audition, working on a play, or rehearsing for an ad, I’m fully prepared. When you’re getting ready for a part, say that of a singer, you may not know whether you’ll actually land the role, but you still give it everything. In that process, your work connects you to other forms of art. So for me, it’s not struggle; it’s resilience, and a commitment to constantly refining your craft.

What has shaped me most are the phases when I didn’t have work. I used to give three or four auditions a day when I had just started out. Today, I meet directors, read scripts, share my perspectives, and engage collaboratively because I now understand what is expected of me. Filmmakers like Imtiaz sir and Prakash sir have played a significant role in shaping me, but reaching that point required the groundwork of those early years when opportunities were scarce. That period wasn’t struggle. It was preparation, shaping me into a better version of myself as an actor.

Was there ever a moment when you thought of stepping away? What pulled you back?

Aaditi : There has never been a moment when I felt the need to step away. I began acting in theatre at 16, and the fascination has only grown. Every day,

every experience, every emotion still feels new to me, and I try to channel all of that into the scripts that come my way. I want to explore romance, comedy, and every shade of life I’ve lived, shaping them to fit the character I’m entrusted with. That, to me, is the essence of being an actor.

It feels as if someone hands you an identity and says, “This is who you are now; go live this life.” You step into a new world each time. The chance to inhabit so many different lives is extraordinary, and I think that wonder is what keeps me going.

How do you navigate self-doubt and the pressure to constantly reinvent yourself?

Aaditi : I focus on learning as much as I can, because it helps me grow not just as an actor but as Aaditi in my personal life. Reading a monologue or exploring a piece of text each day keeps me energized and eager to engage with people and ideas. That level of involvement leaves very little room for doubt. When I’m fully invested in the work, uncertainty simply doesn’t find space.

How would you define your character in Ziddi Ishq? What aspects of her personality hooked you immediately?

Aaditi : In Ziddi Ishq on Hotstar, I see my character as deeply vulnerable, yet driven by an inner fire.

What drew me to Mehul was her relentless passion and her unwavering determination to uncover the truth. She is someone who will go to any extent to get to the bottom of things, and that quality resonated with me immediately.

In many ways, I'm similar. I don't dwell on setbacks or accept that something "can't happen." I believe there is always a way through, but it demands hard work, perseverance, and patience. These are qualities we often overlook today, in a time when everyone wants instant results. I've always felt that whatever comes quickly tends to fade just as fast. For me, the beauty lies in waiting, working, and earning the moment.

Did this role challenge you in any new ways compared to your previous work in She, Aashram, or other projects?

Aaditi : Portraying Mehul truly pushed me as an actor. The entire narrative rests on unrequited love and the many layers that come with it, and capturing that emotional spectrum was both demanding and rewarding. Stepping into her journey from a young, innocent girl to someone consumed by passionate love and eventually driven toward revenge required navigating a wide and intricate arc.

Across the series, Mehul's evolution is clear and deliberate, and I believe that transition, that emotional graph, has come through convincingly on screen.

Were there any scenes that demanded unexpected vulnerability or pushed you out of your comfort zone?

Aaditi : Certain moments, especially the scene where Shekhar Da (Parambrata Chatterjee) commits suicide, were particularly difficult for me. It was an emotionally vulnerable space and definitely pushed me beyond my comfort zone. The very idea of such an act is something I personally don't relate to, so I had to dig deeper to understand what could drive someone to that point.

When you're inhabiting a character, you inevitably slip into their mindset, and that exploration was intense. It challenged me in ways I didn't expect and forced me to confront emotions I don't naturally access.

Did any particular day of shooting stay with you—either for how challenging or how fulfilling it was?

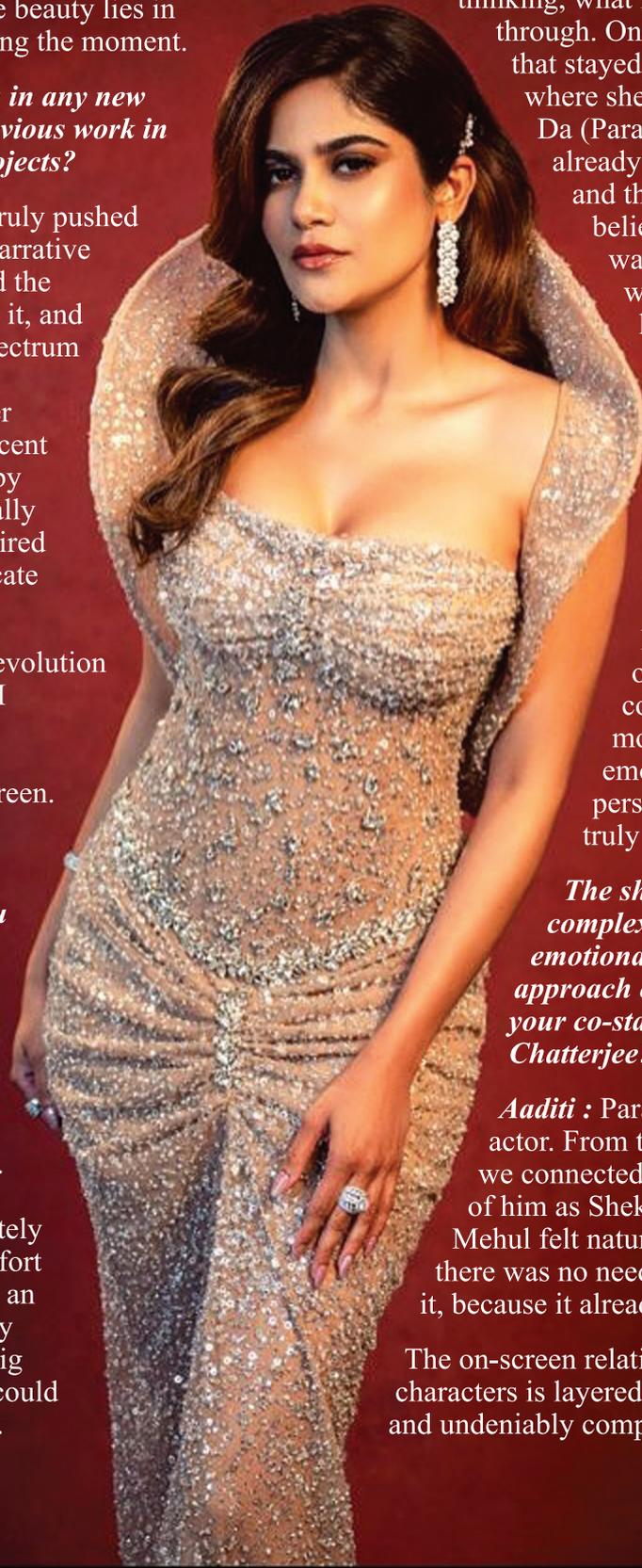
Aaditi : There were many days on set that lingered with me because Mehul's emotional arc kept shifting so sharply. I often found myself thinking, what is this girl really going through. One moment in particular that stayed with me was the scene where she discovers that Shekhar Da (Parambrata Chatterjee) already loves someone else, and that the affection she believed was meant for her was never hers to begin with. Portraying that heartbreak, that innocence crashing into reality, affected me deeply.

What touched me even more was how many viewers reached out on Instagram afterward, saying they had experienced similar one-sided love and felt connected to that moment. Knowing that the emotion resonated so personally with people was truly meaningful.

The show relies heavily on complex relationships and emotional tension. How did you approach creating chemistry with your co-star Parambrata Chatterjee?

Aaditi : Param is an exceptional actor. From the very first reading, we connected instantly. The dynamic of him as Shekhar Da and me as Mehul felt natural from the outset; there was no need to force or search for it, because it already existed between us.

The on-screen relationship between our characters is layered, emotionally charged, and undeniably complex. But I've always



felt that when you stay true to the emotional intent of the lines, everything else falls into place. That approach worked seamlessly for both Param and me, and it shaped the authenticity you see in our performances.

What is one detail about your character that the script never explicitly states but you secretly built into your performance?

Aaditi : The respect Mehul has for Shekhar Da isn't overtly written into the script, but it's present in the undertones. I strongly felt that layer while playing her. She respects him for who he is, she admires and adores those qualities, and that deep regard naturally evolves into love.

What's the biggest lesson life has taught you that the industry reinforced?

Aaditi : To be resilient, persistent and work extremely hard, because an actor's life seems very cushy and glamorous, however, it requires a lot of hardwork.

As you've evolved professionally, what has changed the most about you personally?

Aaditi : Professionally, I have grown, but on a personal level, what has truly changed in me is my patience. I've realized that if you want something meaningful, you need to wait for it. Earlier, I just had a sense of it, but now I truly understand it, and I'm patiently waiting for the right scripts to come my way.

How do you stay grounded in a world that constantly demands reinvention and validation?

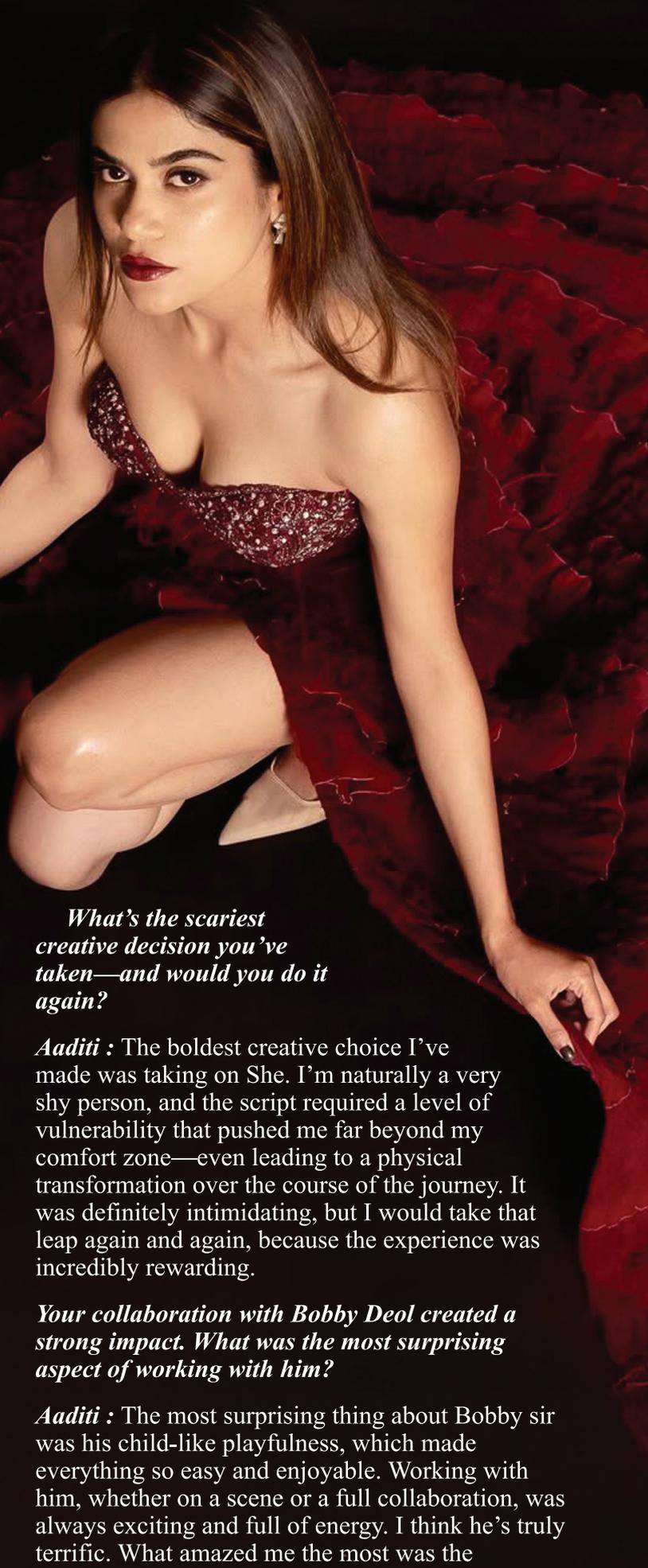
Aaditi : I don't seek validation; I seek advice, and I value it from those close to me—like my sister or my acting mentors. I don't need everyone's approval for everything. When people whose opinions I respect share their thoughts or critiques, I reflect on them; otherwise, I let them be. To stay grounded, I draw strength from my spiritual practice and certain teachings of the divine, which resonate deeply with me. This spiritual side also connects with my work in acting and performance, so it feels completely natural. My background in running has also shaped me—every script requires you to become a new person and give your best. As a runner, even after winning at the national level, you still have to go back and perform at the district level. That discipline, learned early on, continues to guide me in my career.

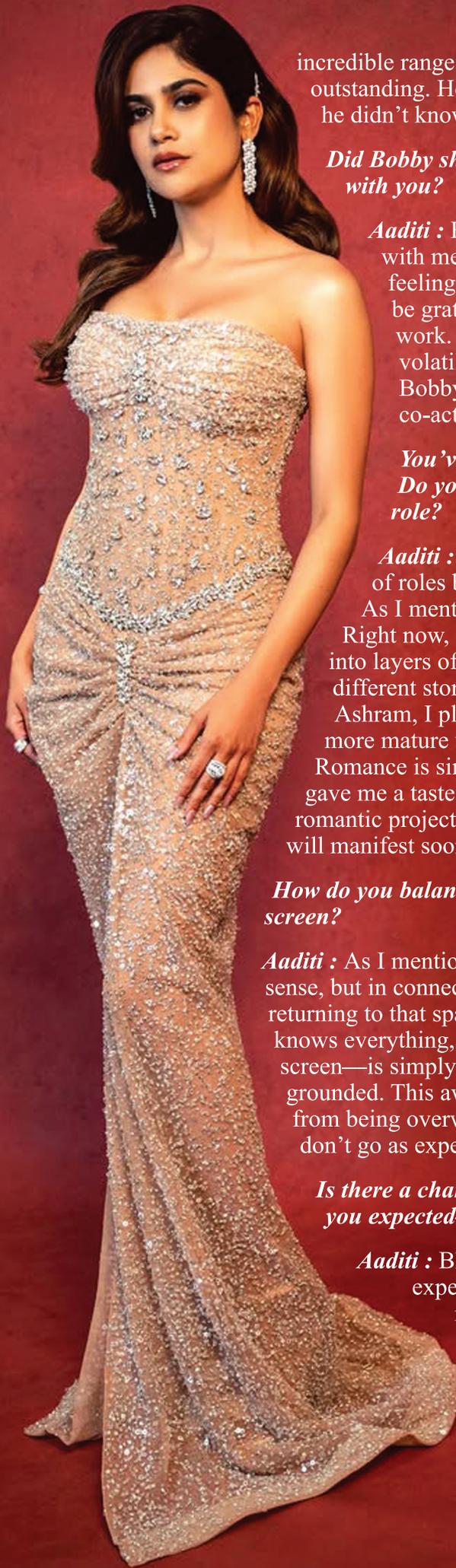
What's the scariest creative decision you've taken—and would you do it again?

Aaditi : The boldest creative choice I've made was taking on She. I'm naturally a very shy person, and the script required a level of vulnerability that pushed me far beyond my comfort zone—even leading to a physical transformation over the course of the journey. It was definitely intimidating, but I would take that leap again and again, because the experience was incredibly rewarding.

Your collaboration with Bobby Deol created a strong impact. What was the most surprising aspect of working with him?

Aaditi : The most surprising thing about Bobby sir was his child-like playfulness, which made everything so easy and enjoyable. Working with him, whether on a scene or a full collaboration, was always exciting and full of energy. I think he's truly terrific. What amazed me the most was the





incredible range he possesses—his portrayal of Baba Nirala was simply outstanding. He always came fully prepared; there was never a moment he didn't know his lines, and that dedication was remarkable.

Did Bobby share any advice—personal or professional—that stayed with you?

Aaditi : He has shared some advice with me that has always stayed with me. I specifically remember one day we had off, and I was feeling very happy, when he said, “You're young, and you should be grateful to have work. Don't focus on holidays—look for work. Things don't always stay the same; this industry is very volatile. Be thankful to the divine that you have opportunities.” Bobby sir is my favourite—I truly love working with him as a co-actor.

You've become synonymous with powerful, layered characters. Do you ever worry about being boxed into a certain kind of role?

Aaditi : I don't really worry about being boxed into certain types of roles because I simply don't take on roles that try to box me in. As I mentioned, I have a lot of patience, and I'm willing to wait. Right now, I'm interested in exploring romance. I've already delved into layers of intense emotions in *She* and in *Ashram*—two completely different stories, with different languages, regions, and characters. In *Ashram*, I played a young girl, whereas in *She*, I portrayed a much more mature woman. So I don't feel restricted, nor do I worry about it. Romance is simply something I'm excited to explore. Playing Mehul gave me a taste of it and has made me eager to take on a full-fledged romantic project. I'm confident that now, since it aligns with my desire, it will manifest soon.

How do you balance the person you are with the persona people see on screen?

Aaditi : As I mentioned, I have a spiritual inclination—not in a religious sense, but in connecting with my inner self, with my origin, and constantly returning to that space. There's a part of me that is fully aware, the part that knows everything, while the exterior self—the persona people see on screen—is simply performing. Staying connected to your roots keeps you grounded. This awareness—that acting is a job you're doing—prevents you from being overwhelmed and helps you remain steady, even when things don't go as expected.

Is there a character you've played that stayed with you longer than you expected—maybe even when you didn't want it to?

Aaditi : Bhoomi from *She* stayed with me longer than I expected—maybe even longer than I wanted—because the role was so intense, and I initially wanted to move on quickly. Naturally, I'm a very simple, playful, and goofy person; I like to live life lightly, without much intensity. On screen, of course, it's all performance—I'm not really that person. But yes, Bhoomi lingered with me, followed closely by Pammi as well.

What is one misconception people have about you that you wish to correct?

Aaditi : One misconception people often have about me is that I'm an intense person. I'd like to clarify that—those who know me, especially my team, know I'm anything but intense. I'm actually very relaxed and easygoing.

What creatively nourishes you outside of acting?

Aaditi : Nothing! Acting is like an ocean, you feeling filling drops of different modalities, creative ways and techniques like music, dance, which are connected to acting but still separate. That really creatively nourishes me because you learn so much and it's so exciting, it's like always doing something new.

How do you disconnect and reset when the intensity of the industry becomes overwhelming?

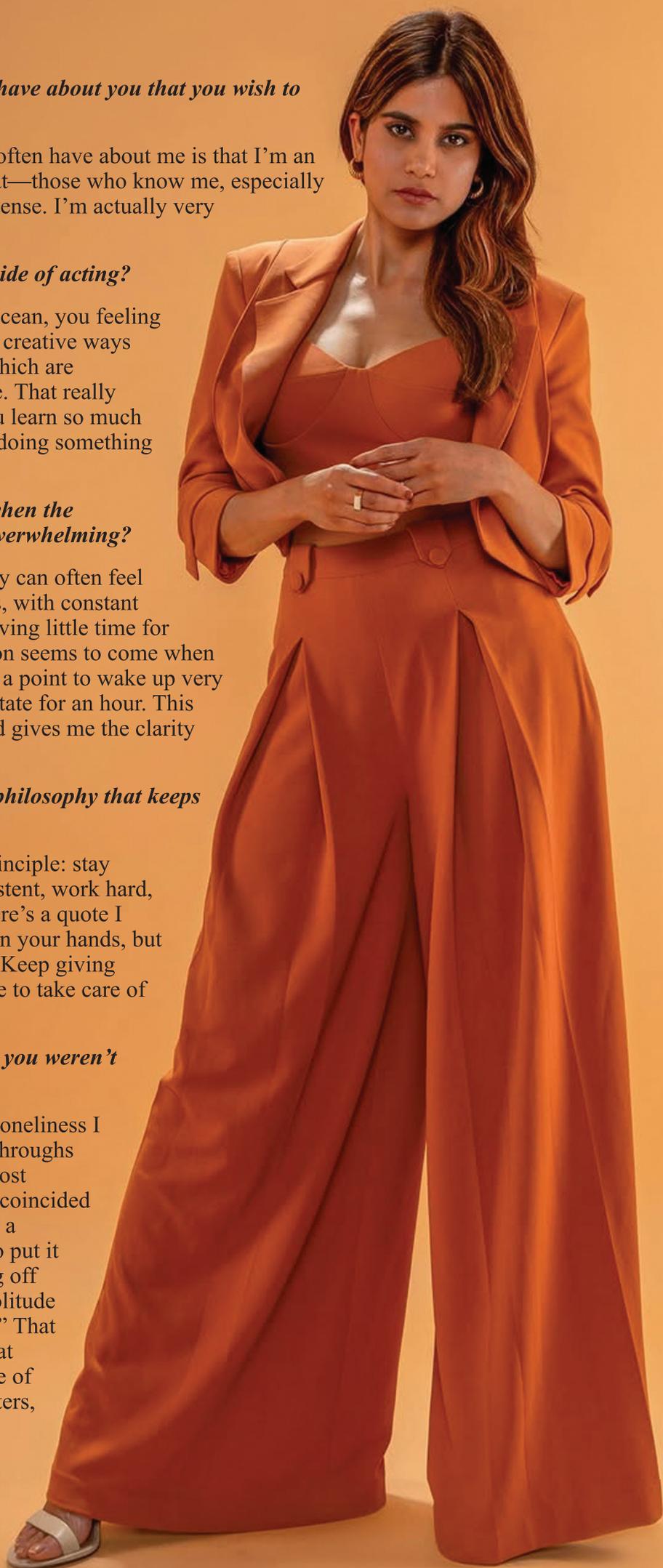
Aaditi : The intensity of this industry can often feel overwhelming, especially nowadays, with constant events, awards, and appearances leaving little time for yourself—the only real disconnection seems to come when you sleep. To counter this, I make it a point to wake up very early, around 4:30–5 a.m., and meditate for an hour. This practice sets the tone for my day and gives me the clarity and focus to move forward.

What is the one personal ritual or philosophy that keeps you aligned with your true self?

Aaditi : I follow just one guiding principle: stay grounded, stay determined, be persistent, work hard, and let the rest unfold naturally. There's a quote I deeply believe in: "Act as if it's all in your hands, but pray as if it's the divine guiding it." Keep giving your best, and then trust the universe to take care of the rest.

Did success ever bring a loneliness you weren't prepared for?

Aaditi : Success did bring with it a loneliness I hadn't anticipated. My initial breakthroughs with *She* and *Ashram* happened almost simultaneously, but that period also coincided with the loss of my father. It created a profound sense of isolation—like, to put it simply, "while fireworks were going off outside for Diwali, inside me, my solitude was screaming, trying to talk to me." That experience made me truly realize that success isn't everything; it's the love of your family and close ones that matters, and finding that balance is essential.





After a difficult rejection, what is your internal dialogue like? Do you ever find yourself questioning your place in the industry?

Aaditi : I haven't really faced any particularly harsh rejections. Sometimes, it's simply a matter of not being the right fit for a role. Recently, something like that happened—a director explained exactly why I didn't fit the part and what he was looking for. I reflected on it briefly and realized he was right. When you try to understand someone else's perspective, you don't feel inadequate without reason. Actors often internalize these things, thinking they're not good enough, but I don't dwell there. I focus on doing my best, trust that the right opportunities will come, and then let it be.

What daily habit or ritual keeps you grounded amid chaos?

Aaditi : My daily routine revolves around meditation, healthy eating, practicing yoga, and surrounding myself with positive company. If good company isn't around, I choose to spend time with myself. I steer clear of gossip and avoid gatherings filled with unnecessary chaos. As an artist, energy is your greatest asset—so why waste it?

When people say they find your performances

“fearless,” what does that word actually mean to you?

Aaditi : People often tell me that they find my performances fearless, and to me, that means my work is resonating with people, so I take it as a genuine compliment.

When others ask, “What's next?” or assume I'll continue getting the same kind of roles, I want to clarify that it doesn't work that way. An actor's strength lies in versatility—I can dance, from Kathak to Bollywood styles, I can sing, and I adapt to whatever the character demands. That ability to transform is, in itself, another form of being fearless.

What kind of legacy do you ultimately want to leave—as a performer, and as a woman who navigated this industry with grit?

Aaditi : Talking about legacy feels too soon. Let me first do ten more powerful, impactful scripts—once I've achieved something monumental, then I'll think about legacy. For now, I'm just looking forward to many exciting roles. I'm genuinely thrilled about life in general—the unknown is the most exciting part. I love the uncertainty, the anticipation of what's next, and what's different. I'm not focused on legacy right now, but on the work itself, and that keeps me happy—and those around me too.

Crunch, Munch & Savor Every Bite

Say goodbye to boring snacks and hello to flavor-packed bites! These recipes bring together creativity, texture, and bold seasonings to make every snack moment memorable. From quick munchies to party favorites, your cravings are in for a delicious ride.

Recipes curated by : Nikhil Solanki, Head Chef, Café Lilliput, Goa





Chicken Tenders

Chicken tenders are a classic comfort snack—crisp on the outside, tender on the inside, and perfect for both a quick appetizer and an indulgent evening meal. This simple recipe uses everyday pantry ingredients and delivers restaurant-style results right at home.

Ingredients

▶ 300 g boneless chicken strips, 1 egg, ½ cup breadcrumbs, 2 tbsp all-purpose flour, 1 tsp garlic powder, 1 tsp paprika, Salt and pepper to taste, Oil for shallow frying

Preparations:

▶ Place the chicken strips in a bowl and season them evenly with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and paprika. Toss gently to coat. Set up a simple dredging station with three bowls:

- Bowl 1: all-purpose flour
- Bowl 2: beaten egg
- Bowl 3: breadcrumbs

Working one piece at a time, coat each chicken strip lightly in flour, dip it into the beaten egg, and finally roll it in breadcrumbs until evenly coated.

Heat oil in a pan over medium flame. Shallow fry the coated chicken strips in batches, cooking each side until golden brown and fully cooked through. Remove and drain on a paper towel. Serve the chicken tenders hot with a simple mayonnaise or mustard dip. They pair beautifully with fries, salads, or even inside a wrap.



Fish Rechado

Fish Rechado is one of Goa's most iconic preparations—fiery, tangy, and bursting with coastal flavour. The word “rechado” comes from the Portuguese *recheado*, meaning “stuffed,” and traditionally refers to fish marinated or filled with a vibrant red spice paste. This simplified pan-fried version preserves all the bold flavours while keeping the method quick and home-friendly.

Ingredients

▶ 4 medium fish fillets (pomfret, mackerel, or any firm white fish),
3 tbsp Goan rechado paste, 1 tbsp
vinegar, Salt to taste, Oil for
pan-frying

Preparations:

▶ In a small bowl, mix the Goan rechado paste with vinegar until smooth. Adjust salt if required, depending on the saltiness of your paste. Coat each fish fillet generously with the marinade, ensuring all sides are well covered. Allow the fillets to rest for 20–30 minutes so the flavours absorb fully. Heat a little oil in a pan over medium flame. Place the marinated fillets gently on the pan and cook each side until crisp, lightly charred at the edges, and flaky inside. Avoid overcooking to keep the fish moist. Serve the hot Fish Rechado with fresh lemon wedges, sliced onions, and, if you like, a side of warm Goan *poi* or steamed rice.



Prawns Rawa Fry

A beloved staple along the Konkan coast, Prawns Rawa Fry offers the perfect balance of gentle spice and irresistible crunch. The prawns are lightly marinated, coated in semolina, and shallow fried to a golden crisp—simple, quick, and deeply satisfying. This dish works beautifully as an appetizer or even as a side to a traditional coastal thali.

Ingredients

▶ 300 g medium prawns, cleaned and deveined, 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste, 1 tsp chilli powder, ½ tsp turmeric, 1 tbsp lemon juice, Salt to taste, ½ cup semolina (fine or coarse), Oil for shallow frying

Preparations:

▶ In a bowl, combine the ginger-garlic paste, chilli powder, turmeric, lemon juice, and salt. Add the cleaned prawns and mix well to ensure an even coating. Set aside for 10 minutes to allow the flavours to develop. Spread the semolina on a plate. Lightly press each marinated prawn into the semolina until coated on both sides. This gives the signature crisp exterior. Heat oil in a pan over medium flame. Arrange the prawns in a single layer and fry until they turn golden brown and crisp on both sides. Avoid overcooking to keep them juicy inside. Serve Prawns Rawa Fry immediately with a fresh salad, onion rings, or a squeeze of lime. They pair wonderfully with chilled beverages or alongside a coastal-style meal.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE CITY

A Fresh Wave of Flavours

From Bengaluru's modern bistros to Kolkata's avant-garde kitchens and Goa's coastal hideaways, restaurants nationwide are rolling out menus that push the boundaries of creativity. With chefs spotlighting regional ingredients, sustainable practices, and cutting-edge techniques, India's new menu season signals a bold leap forward.



Como Agua

If you have visited Goa recently, you have likely heard someone rave about Como Agua—the Assagao pizzeria and bar that has steadily built a reputation as one of the most compelling culinary stops on the coast. Celebrated for its wood-fired pizzas, house-made mozzarella, and cocktails that strike the sweet spot between inventive and approachable, Como Agua has now unveiled a new menu that feels distinctly attuned to the season: fresh, playful, and deeply flavour-forward.

At the centre of this evolution is Chef Amit Kumar, whose culinary sensibility balances coastal comfort with global inflections. His dishes continue to champion simplicity at first glance, only to reveal surprising depth with every bite. The Zucchini Fritters, beautifully crisp and paired with a house-made sweet chilli dip, set the tone. Then comes the “Not” Fish and Chips—a cheeky reinterpretation of a classic, finished with a tropical nuance that situates the dish firmly within Goa’s gastronomic vocabulary.

The Red Snapper Ceviche underscores the chef’s finesse. Bright and buttery, it arrives alongside a sculpted potato stack, coconut cream, and curry leaf oil, bringing together textures and temperatures in a way that nods to tradition while pushing it forward.

For diners inclined toward indulgence, the Baked Brie with Goan Chorizo is an unapologetic crowd-pleaser—gooey, warm, and elevated by the unmistakable spice of Goa’s beloved sausage. This richness is beautifully offset by the Chef’s Special Raw Papaya Salad, a dish that resets the palate with its cooling freshness. The Seafood Linguine continues the theme of coastal abundance, weaving together blue mussels, calamari, and prawns in a broth that is generous, aromatic, and deeply comforting.

And then, of course, there is the pizza. Como Agua’s reputation for wood-fired perfection is well earned, and the new additions only strengthen its standing. The Ciao Picante—layering fresh mozzarella, cheddar, jalapeños, and chipotle—brings heat with harmony. Meanwhile, the Pesto Crumble, with its crunchy pesto base, chilli oil, and sharp parmesan, showcases how flavour can be bold while still rooted in Italian tradition.

Dessert loyalists will be relieved to know that the Como Honey Toast remains untouched. Some classics are best left as they are. With its buttery milk bread, whipped cream, vanilla ice cream, and salted caramel, it is a dessert that evokes nostalgia while satisfying thoroughly in the present moment.



IDYLLL, Bangalore

In the heart of Bangalore's ever-evolving dining landscape, IDYLLL stands out as a destination that redefines how Indian cuisine can be experienced. Here, tradition is not simply preserved; it is elevated, interpreted, and transformed. From the earthy, monolithic interiors to the precise artistry of each plate, IDYLLL offers a sensorial journey that celebrates India's cultural and culinary depth with thoughtful modernity.

The newly curated menu is a testament to this philosophy. It operates as a vibrant canvas—one that marries nostalgia and innovation with equal intention. Each dish is designed not just to satisfy but to narrate: stories of heritage, technique, and emotion expressed through refined textures and unexpected pairings.

Among the standouts, the Paneer Khurchan Tacos reinterpret a familiar North Indian favorite with playful finesse, while the Ajmeri Kadi Kachori pays homage to Rajasthan's culinary traditions with a delicate yet daring twist. The Kaffir Lime Fish Tikka brings a citrus-forward brightness to a classic, balancing coastal freshness with contemporary nuance. Meanwhile, the Lamb Tikki with Onion Jam showcases IDYLLL's mastery of contrast—rustic flavors presented with precision and sophistication.

This commitment to storytelling extends seamlessly to the bar. IDYLLL's cocktail program delves into India's pantry with curiosity and courage, resulting in creations that feel both rooted and refreshingly original. The Squirrel & A Negroni is a striking example: an umami-rich blend of almond-infused gin and walnut campari that turns a beloved classic on its head. Malabar Roots channels the earthy vitality of the southwest coast with shatavari gin, ginger, turmeric, and honey. The Kashmiri Old Fashioned, infused with raisin bourbon, almond syrup, and house bitters, captures the sensory richness of the valley in a single sip.

At IDYLLL, every bite and every sip is an invitation to pause, savor, and engage with the multilayered heritage of Indian cuisine. In a city known for its culinary dynamism, this restaurant offers something rare: a space where tradition is not merely revisited, but reborn.



The Nook Café

In the vibrant by-lanes of Bandra, a new space is quietly redefining how Mumbai pauses. The Nook is not just a café-bar; it is an atmosphere, a mood, and an invitation. Imagined as a soulful “third space” where mornings begin with coffee, evenings unfold over cocktails, and conversations find their natural pace, The Nook encourages guests to slow down and truly inhabit the moment.

The interior language reflects this philosophy. Mid-century modern influences meet unpolished, tactile textures, warm earthy shades, and light that shifts like a cinematic frame — crisp and bright by day, mellow and golden by dusk.

The Nook’s menus deepen its storytelling approach. The coffee program moves from classic brews to inventive signatures such as the Croissant Latte and Café Bombón, offering comfort with a hint of playfulness. The cocktail philosophy is built around three dimensions — Light, Brew, and Craft — each highlighting a facet of the café-bar’s personality. Smoke & Soil, featuring mezcal, pandan, and turmeric kombucha, delivers a smoky earthiness, while The Grind blends rum, black sesame, and coffee into a drink that captures both calm and intensity.

The food echoes this intuitive balance. Dishes are layered, shareable, and created with intention, designed to spark both conversation and curiosity. Cashew Essence paired with wasabi pea mousse and sake gel, or the Fig Crostini draped in habanero-ginger honey and goat cheese, showcase The Nook’s ability to make familiar flavors feel new while keeping their soul intact. Each plate feels like a quiet statement — confident, approachable, and subtly bold.

More than a new spot on the map, The Nook is shaping a cultural shift toward slower, more meaningful urban spaces. With plans for curated experiences, artistic collaborations, and community-focused evenings, it is poised to evolve organically with the people who walk through its doors.



Bonne Femme

Bonne Femme, Kolkata's favourite address for inventive fusion dining, is whisking the city away to the sun-soaked shores of Goa with its Goan Food Carnival — a vibrant culinary showcase running from 24 November to 7 December, 2025. For two immersive weeks, the restaurant reimagines Goa's most beloved flavours through its signature lens of creativity, offering a menu that honours coastal traditions while adding modern nuance.

The festival is an invitation to taste Goa one dish at a time. Classics come alive with the Goan Fish Curry, where tender Bhetki is slow-cooked in a fragrant coconut-based gravy layered with hand-pounded spices. The Prawn Dangar delivers a crisp, golden crunch — a shallow-fried prawn cutlet enriched with warming spices and paired with a tangy Kokum labneh. For those seeking heat, the Prawn Balchao presents a fiery burst of flavour, its prawns simmered in a bold hot-and-sour pickled masala, ideally savoured with the rustic Poee Bread, Goa's much-loved buckwheat bread.

Seafood lovers have much to indulge in, especially with the show-stopping Tender Coconut Thermidor. This decadent dish fuses daab malai, cream cheese, egg yolks, tiger prawns, and oyster mushrooms, baked gently inside a tender coconut for a luxurious coastal experience. Familiar Goan favourites like the Ros Omelette — a street-side classic served with warm, aromatic curry — and Chicken Cafreal, marinated in fresh coriander and earthy spices, bring the comfort of homestyle flavours to the table.

For meat enthusiasts, the menu goes deeper into Goa's culinary heartlands. The Mutton Xacuti is rich and robust, blending coconut milk and roasted coastal spices into a velvety curry, while the Pork Vindaloo offers its trademark tangy punch. The Pork Recheado — a semi-dry preparation bursting with spice — and the authentic Chorizo Rice made with Indian-origin chorizo further amplify the festival's coastal authenticity.

Refreshing beverages add a tropical counterpoint to the feast. Guests can sip on Kokum Solkadhi, a soothing mix of kokum and coconut milk tempered with mustard seeds and curry leaves; Tender Coconut Feni, a spirited blend of tender coconut water, fermented cashew-ginger kombucha, lime, and curry leaves served in a tender coconut shell; or the Bonne Femme Piña Colada, presented inside a fresh pineapple for a true island moment.

The festival's finale is unabashedly sweet. Savour Bonne Femme's interpretation of Bebinca, the clove-scented, slow-cooked Goan layered dessert, or opt for the airy Serradura, a Portuguese-style unbaked pudding lush with cream and biscuit crumble.



Fusion Fantasea

This November, Fusion Fantasea builds on that spirit of memory and belonging with a festival that nourishes both palate and nostalgia.

Titled “From Forest to Flame — A Tribal Feast Born of Earth, Fire and Heritage,” the month-long celebration is a sensory journey into India’s indigenous kitchens, where food is inseparable from identity, community, and land. Here, the flame is not merely a cooking tool—it is tradition, technique, and a bridge to ancestral ways of life.

The festival brings forward the elemental signatures of tribal cooking: meals shaped by fire, carried by hand, and meant for communal sharing. Expect preparations where red rice and meat steam within mutton casings, rice flour transforms into rustic breads, and desserts arise from staples such as jaggery, sesame, and grain.

At its core, From Forest to Flame presents seven curated combinations that capture distinctive patterns of tribal dining. Guests can customise their experience by choosing freely among the platters, each accompanied by unlimited Soru Chakli—a soft tribal flatbread—and unlimited soft drinks, encouraging the unhurried, communal ethos that defines many indigenous meals.

The festival offers a selection of thoughtfully curated thalis, beginning with Thali 1, which includes one glass of Tanka Turani, two pieces of Bansa Pora Chicken Roll, two pieces of Jhupu Pishi Mutton, Jadoh Rice, Onion or Prawn Kheer, and Tribal Paan, priced at ₹649.

Thali 2 features one glass of Tanka Turani, two pieces of Bansa Pora Mutton Roll, two pieces of Jhupu Pishi Mutton, Jadoh Rice, a choice of Onion, Prawn, or Shahi Kheer, and Tribal Paan for ₹699.

Thali 3 comprises one glass of Tanka Turani, Patro Pora Mutton, one piece of Bansa Pora Chicken Roll, Wild Red Rice, a choice of Kori Gassi, Kukuraku Masoo, or Arsa Chum Chicken (four pieces), along with Onion or Prawn Kheer and Tribal Paan, priced at ₹649.

Thali 4 includes one glass of Tanka Turani, one piece of Nagatok Fish, one piece of Bansa Pora Chicken Roll, Wild Red Rice, a choice of Kori Gassi, Kukuraku Masoo, or Arsa Chum Chicken (four pieces), served with Onion or Prawn Kheer and Tribal Paan for ₹599. For younger diners, the Student Thali offers one piece of Bansa Pora Chicken Roll, Wild Red Rice, four pieces of Kori Gassi Chicken, Onion or Prawn Kheer, and Tribal Paan at ₹399.

The festival is the result of months of culinary research. The restaurant itself transforms into a gentle tribute to the forested landscapes that inspire

the menu. Bamboo installations, warm lighting, and soft tribal rhythms create an atmosphere of quiet respect. There is no theatricality—only moments meant to be felt: the unsealing of bamboo at the table, the rise of aromatic steam, the whisper of smoke in the air.



First Trimester Care: Steps to Support a Healthy Pregnancy

Dr. Maneesha Singh (MBBS, DGO)

*Consultant-Obstetrician & Gynaecologist,
Apollo Cradle & Children's Hospital, New Delhi*

The early weeks of pregnancy can be both exciting and overwhelming, as expectant mothers navigate a period of rapid change and vulnerability. While miscarriages can occur, several steps can help support a healthy first trimester. Reducing the risk of miscarriage involves a combination of healthy lifestyle choices, medical awareness, and proactive prenatal care, all aimed at supporting early fetal development and optimizing maternal well-being. One of the most important steps is to begin prenatal care as early as possible—even before conception—so that pre-existing medical conditions such as thyroid disorders, diabetes, or hormonal imbalances can be identified and managed. Taking a daily prenatal vitamin with folic acid is strongly recommended, as it supports early neural development and reduces the risk of certain birth defects that can contribute to pregnancy loss.

Early Prenatal Care and Nutrition

Maintaining a balanced, nutrient-rich diet is essential for stabilizing blood sugar,

supporting hormone regulation, and creating a healthy environment for pregnancy. Include plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, iron-rich foods, lean protein, and healthy fats, while limiting highly processed foods, excessive sugar, and trans fats. Staying well-hydrated optimizes circulation and nutrient delivery to the embryo.

Avoiding harmful substances is crucial. Smoking, alcohol, and recreational drugs are directly linked to higher miscarriage rates, and even secondhand smoke can affect pregnancy outcomes. Caffeine intake should also be moderated, with many health professionals recommending a limit of around 200 mg per day.

Stress Management and Sleep

Chronic high stress can disrupt hormone balance and sleep, both of which are vital in early pregnancy. Gentle stress-reduction practices such as prenatal yoga, meditation, breathing exercises, walking, or light



stretching help maintain emotional and physical equilibrium. Prioritizing restorative sleep supports immune function, hormonal regulation, and overall health.

Infection Prevention and Maternal Health

Some infections, including listeria, toxoplasmosis, and certain sexually transmitted infections, can increase miscarriage risk. Food safety precautions—such as avoiding unpasteurized dairy, undercooked meat, and raw fish—and good hand hygiene are essential. Weight management is also important: both obesity and being significantly underweight can increase the likelihood of pregnancy complications. Achieving a healthy weight before conception and maintaining gradual, appropriate pregnancy weight gain under medical guidance supports maternal metabolic health.

Physical Activity and Professional Guidance

Regular but moderate physical activity strengthens the cardiovascular system and improves mood, but it should be tailored to pregnancy-safe levels, avoiding high-impact or high-risk sports. Communication with healthcare professionals is key, especially if there is a history of miscarriage, autoimmune disease, blood-clotting disorders, or known genetic conditions. Some cases may require specialized treatments such as progesterone supplementation, low-dose aspirin, or other targeted interventions if recommended by a doctor.

Emotional Well-Being

Many miscarriages are caused by chromosomal abnormalities that cannot be prevented. Practicing self-compassion and seeking support can help reduce guilt or anxiety associated with pregnancy loss. While it is impossible to eliminate all miscarriage risk, adopting healthy

habits, staying informed, and working closely with a healthcare provider create the best possible foundation for a healthy first trimester and beyond.

Reducing miscarriage risk in the first trimester is largely about creating a supportive environment for both mother and baby through mindful lifestyle choices and early medical guidance. While not every pregnancy loss can be prevented, proactive nutrition, prenatal care, stress management, and avoidance of harmful substances significantly strengthen the chances of a healthy pregnancy. Staying informed, following professional advice, and nurturing physical and emotional well-being empower expectant mothers to navigate early pregnancy with confidence.



INTERVIEW

“This Time, Srikant Isn’t Winning”:

Manoj Bajpayee

By Ayan Mukherjee

The third season of *The Family Man* marks a dramatic shift in the franchise's narrative landscape, and no one feels that evolution more deeply than Manoj Bajpayee. Returning as Srikant Tiwari, he steps into a version of the character we've never encountered before: a man pushed to the brink, hunted, doubted, and stripped of the control he once effortlessly commanded. In this conversation, Bajpayee reflects on the intense challenges woven into Season 3, the psychological and emotional toll on Srikant, and the high-stakes world where the beloved *Family Man* is recast as the Most Wanted Man. With his signature candor and insight, he offers a rare glimpse into the turmoil, vulnerability, and reinvention at the heart of the new season.

This season seems to put Srikant Tiwari through intense pressure. What can you share about the challenges he faces in Season 3?

Manoj Bajpayee: There are several major challenges this time. What I can say is that Srikant Tiwari isn't seen winning anywhere this season. The core question becomes: in the middle of all this chaos, how far can he actually save himself? His entire journey has shifted from being the *Family Man* to becoming the Most Wanted Man.

What drives the tension in his arc this season?

Manoj Bajpayee: He has to protect himself, prove his innocence, and survive in a landscape where the antagonists are constantly ahead of him. Jaideep's character, Nimrat's character—these individuals are ten steps ahead of Srikant. The balance between what he manages to overcome and where he fails creates the real tension.

Does this season raise the stakes for Srikant and his family?

Manoj Bajpayee: Absolutely. His life is in danger, and so is his family's. This season pushes the protagonist you've always seen winning, improvising, and staying in control right to the edge.

What makes Srikant's journey compelling this time?

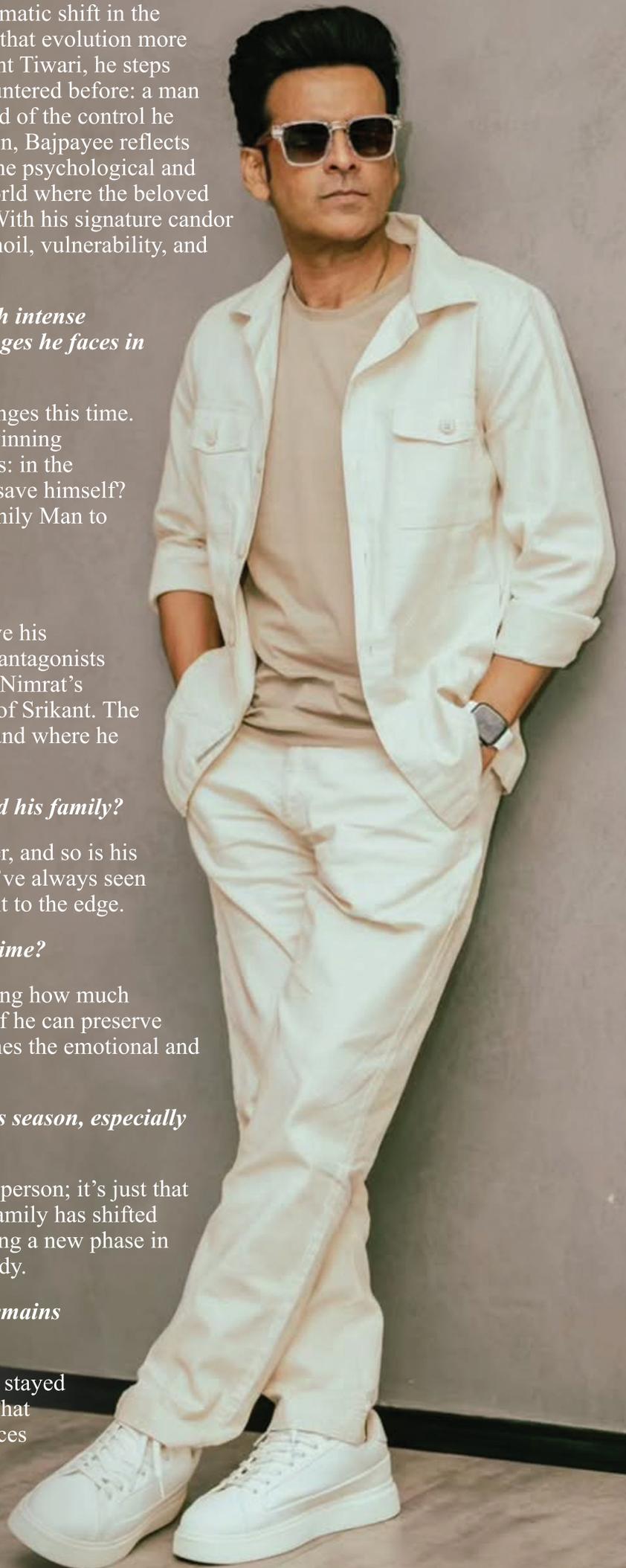
Manoj Bajpayee: The real intrigue lies in watching how much Srikant Tiwari can hold on. How much of himself he can preserve when everything around him is collapsing becomes the emotional and dramatic core of the story.

How would you describe Srikant's evolution this season, especially in terms of his personal relationships?

Manoj Bajpayee: Srikant is essentially the same person; it's just that time has moved forward. His dynamic with his family has shifted because the kids are older now, and he's navigating a new phase in his marriage, trying to keep that relationship steady.

Is there any relationship in Srikant's life that remains unchanged?

Manoj Bajpayee: Yes. The one equation that has stayed exactly as it was in Season 1 is Srikant and JK. That bond is unshakeable. No matter what circumstances change, that relationship remains constant.



This season features two formidable adversaries. How important was it for you to establish synergy with them?

Manoj Bajpayee: Very important. I know both Jaideep and Nimrat. I've met Jaideep more often, and although I've met Nimrat only a handful of times, we were actually supposed to work on a film together years ago before it got shelved. I've admired her work for a long time, so finally sharing the screen was something I genuinely looked forward to.

What did the day-to-day rhythm of shooting this season look like for you?

Manoj Bajpayee: The grind stays the same: waking up at 5 am, reaching set by 7, and ending every day with our usual routine. I'd tell DK, 'I'm done for the day, we'll continue tomorrow,' and he'd give his classic reply: 'Just one more shot... one small scene.' That's the rhythm of our set, and honestly, I enjoy it.

You've said you speak to the directors whenever necessary. What does that communication usually involve on set?

Manoj Bajpayee: We talk whenever the situation demands it. It could be during a scene, between shots, or even when something suddenly comes to my mind. Sometimes it's about a dialogue, sometimes a moment, sometimes a new idea. That discussion and debate keeps going throughout the shoot.

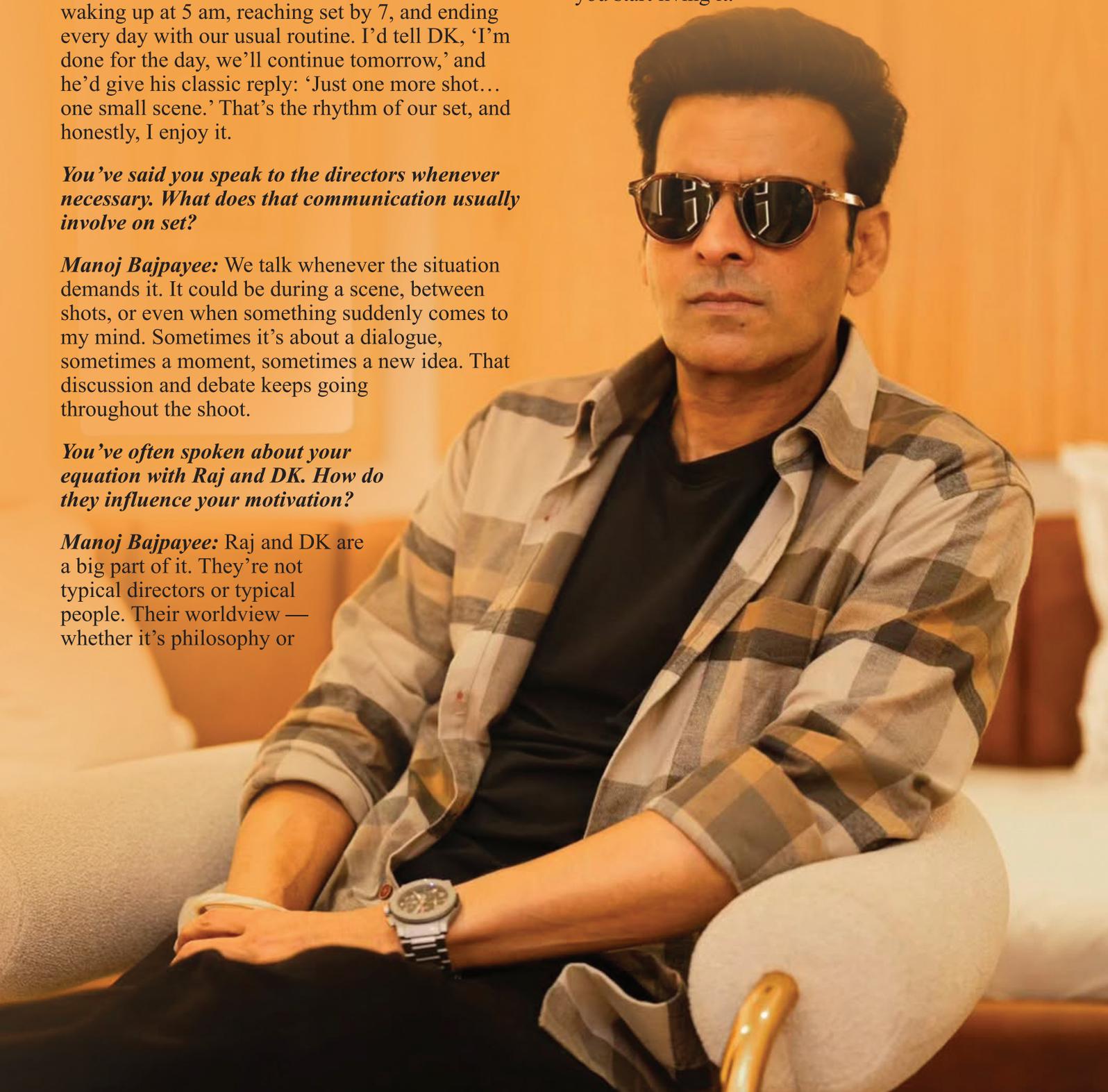
You've often spoken about your equation with Raj and DK. How do they influence your motivation?

Manoj Bajpayee: Raj and DK are a big part of it. They're not typical directors or typical people. Their worldview — whether it's philosophy or

politics — aligns a lot with mine. Working with them feels like being at home. There's no conflict, no clash, at least not on the fundamental things. We're very clear and very much on the same page, which makes collaborating with them truly exciting.

You mentioned that while the writers create the script, the performance often reveals new possibilities. How does that shape your approach?

Manoj Bajpayee: Once an actor performs something, he immediately understands what feels easy, what needs to be added, what can be removed, and what can be refined. That requires a lot of brainwork. So the written material evolves as you start living it.





You've said you constantly ask for the script and read it repeatedly. What drives that habit?

Manoj Bajpayee: I'm lucky in that sense. I read a lot, and I'm always asking, 'Give me the script, give me the script.' It's something I rely on heavily.

You've also admitted you're a very nervous actor. How does that nervousness influence your preparation?

Manoj Bajpayee: I'm a nervous actor, and my nervousness shows. That's why I want the script all the time. Reading calms me, prepares me, and gives me clarity. And since my nervousness reaches the directors as well, I keep talking to them in between readings.

Given that the directors are handling so many things at once, how do you manage to get that time with them?

Manoj Bajpayee: It's not easy because they're juggling a lot. Still, whenever I get even half an hour, I sit with them, talk through things, and then get back to work. These conversations happen in pockets of time but they continue until the shoot wraps.

You joked that if you're nervous, everyone else should be nervous too. How does that energy play out on set?

Manoj Bajpayee: If I'm nervous, why should I suffer alone? I make the others nervous too. But in a good way. That tension keeps everyone focused and involved. It becomes part of the process.

When you know a shoot is coming up, what does your preparation process look like?

Manoj Bajpayee: If I know I'm leaving in a month, I want to be fully prepared. Any responsible actor would. They've hired me believing I'm a professional, so I have to live up to that. I can't land on set and ask, 'Sir, what's the story this season?' They'll faint. They'll think I've lost my mind. Preparation is non-negotiable.

Once you arrive on set with your homework done, how do the directors shape the next stage?

Manoj Bajpayee: After I've prepared on my own, the directors explain things in their way. We discuss, clarify, adjust, and then start shooting. But the foundation is mine. I must arrive as Shekhar Tiwari already built in my head. That internal nervousness pushes me to do that work.

You've said the first day always makes you nervous. What goes through your mind at that point?

Manoj Bajpayee: The first day is always tricky. You're thinking about how the scene will unfold, how you're looking, how everyone else fits into



the moment. A lot has to align. That pressure remains with me on every project.

You sometimes change your blocking or positioning based on instinct. How does that come into play?

Manoj Bajpayee: Sometimes I feel, 'I won't stand and say this line; I'll say it sitting.' Or I realize, 'This moment won't work sitting down. Can I stand instead?' Those instincts appear on the spot. It's part of the constant back-and-forth that shapes a performance.

How long does it take for you to feel fully settled into the character each season?

Manoj Bajpayee: The nervousness stays for quite a while. For the first ten to twelve days, the doubt lingers: Did I get it right or not? It takes time before that confidence settles in and the character feels fully anchored.

What continues to motivate you as an actor, especially after all these years in the industry?

Manoj Bajpayee: This is a very good question. I know exactly what motivates me. There are two primary reasons. First, I love acting. It isn't just my profession; it's my passion. I've sacrificed a lot in my life to become an actor, so I try to enjoy every moment of it.

What role does the new generation of actors play in inspiring you?

Manoj Bajpayee: A significant one. Watching the actors who come after me, seeing how brilliantly they perform, is incredibly motivating. When you watch people like Jaideep and Nimrat doing such exceptional work, you naturally feel, 'I should rise to that level too.' The people you work with constantly inspire you.

When you put all of this together, what keeps you going every day?

Manoj Bajpayee: All these factors motivate me. They're what push me to go to work every day. And the truth is, I simply love being an actor. If someone told me, 'Don't work, take the money, just stay home,' I don't think I could do it. I love putting on the costume, saying the lines, living the role. I just love this job.

Srikant Tiwari is the boss at work, but in your personal life, who is the real boss at home?

Manoj Bajpayee: In my personal life, the real boss is my daughter. As she grows older, she has started giving me 'problems' in the sweetest way. She tells me how to walk, how to sit, and even guides me on fashion. She corrects my English, and in return, I work just as hard to improve her Hindi. So it all evens out — we're balanced that way.

LOUIS STITCH



Heartcrafted Shoes, Made With Love!



Gurgaon

Ardee Mall

MGF Mall

DLF Mega Mall

Delhi

Lajpat Nagar

Karol Bagh

Paschim Vihar

Ghaziabad

Mahagun Mall

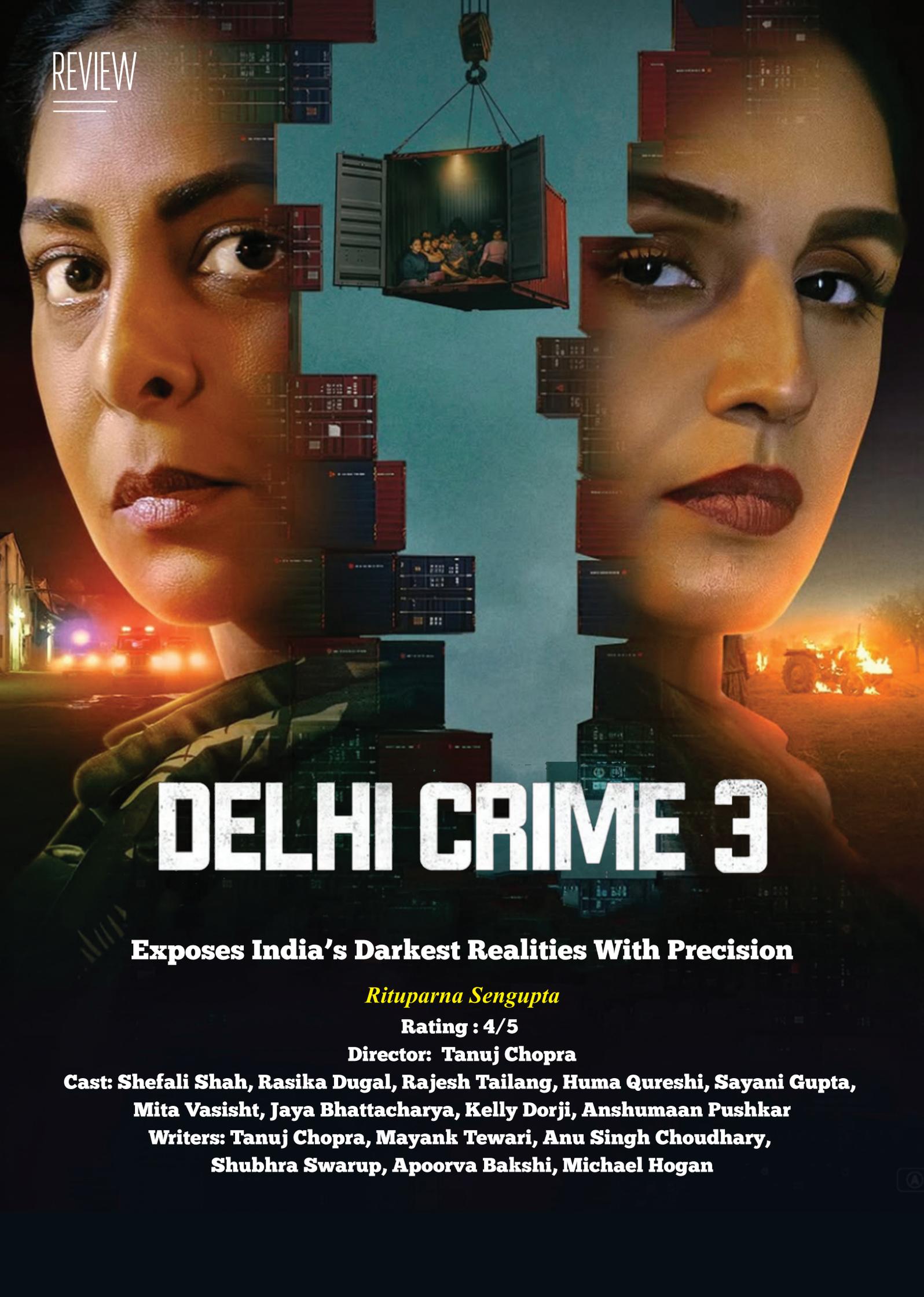
Noida

G.I.P Mall

Customer Delight no/. +91-7827832027

www.louisstitch.com

REVIEW



DELHI CRIME 3

Exposes India's Darkest Realities With Precision

Rituparna Sengupta

Rating : 4/5

Director: Tanuj Chopra

Cast: Shefali Shah, Rasika Dugal, Rajesh Tailang, Huma Qureshi, Sayani Gupta, Mita Vasisht, Jaya Bhattacharya, Kelly Dorji, Anshumaan Pushkar

Writers: Tanuj Chopra, Mayank Tewari, Anu Singh Choudhary, Shubhra Swarup, Apoorva Bakshi, Michael Hogan

Three years after its last season, Delhi Crime returns with a compelling third chapter that reaffirms its status as one of India's most accomplished police procedurals. Venturing into the grim realities of human trafficking, the season balances procedural tension with deeply human storytelling. Taut, empathetic, and unsettling, Season 3 challenges not only the moral compass of its characters but also the audience's understanding of justice and the human cost of crime.

Two Cases That Converge Into One Chilling Reality

The narrative opens with two seemingly unrelated events: an injured two-year-old, Noor, abandoned in a Delhi hospital, and a tip-off from Silchar, Assam, about teenage girls being trafficked to the capital. DIG Vartika Chaturvedi (Shefali Shah), now posted in Silchar, calls upon Inspector Bhupendra Singh (Rajesh Tailang), setting in motion the Special Crimes Unit's most complex investigation yet. Meanwhile, ACP Neeti Singh (Rasika Dugal) searches for Noor's missing mother, unintentionally uncovering a sprawling trafficking network run by the ruthless Meena, known as Badi Didi (Huma Qureshi).

A Pan-India Trail of Exploitation

Traversing geographies — from Assam's quiet lanes to Rohtak's rigid social structures and Delhi's chaotic underbelly — the season exposes the commodification of women in both bride markets and the sex trade. The storytelling never sensationalises the crime; instead, it centers empathy, examining the ripple effects on law enforcement, perpetrators, and survivors alike.

Humanised Officers at the Heart of the Story

At its core, Delhi Crime 3 thrives on its portrayal of

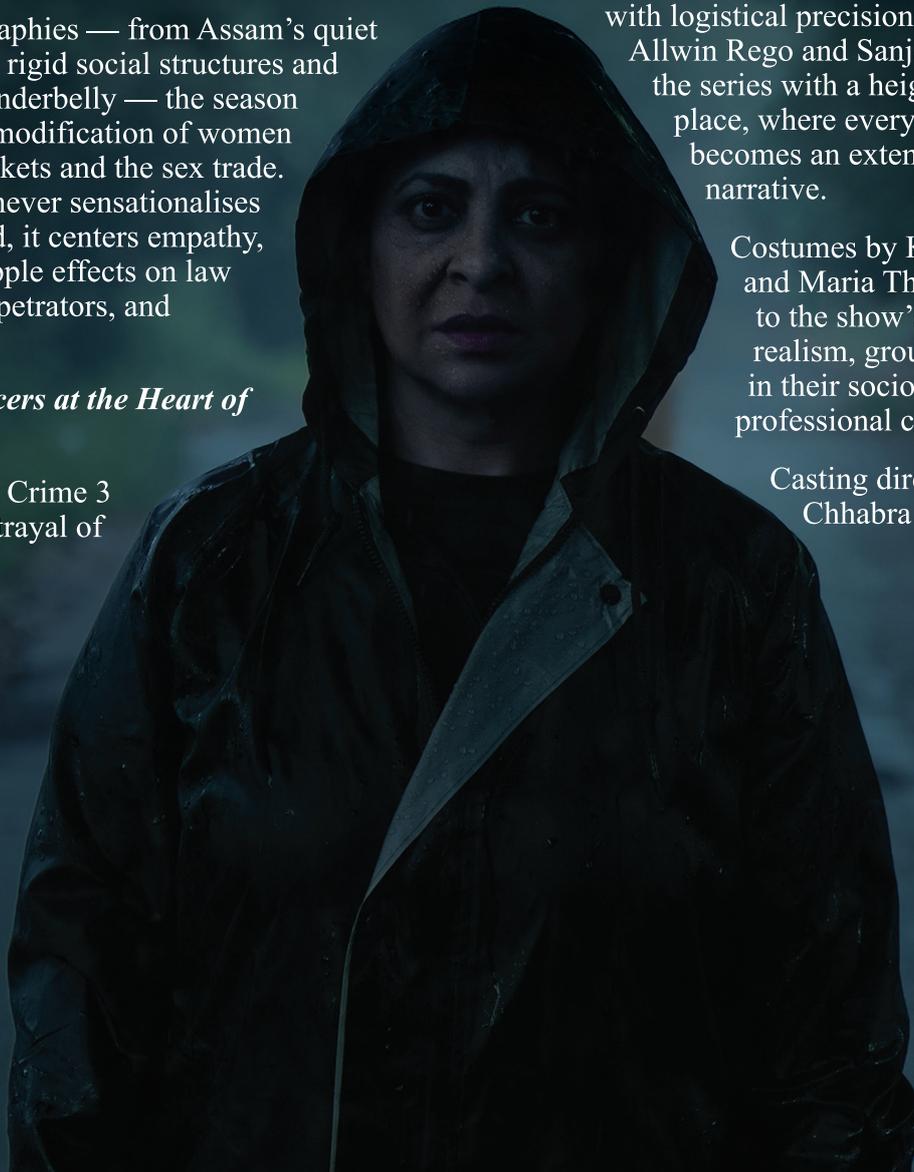
humanised police officers. Vartika is not a flawless hero; she is a woman negotiating duty, despair, and moral uncertainty. The series explores her internal conflicts — when to trust instinct, when to restrain anger, and how to balance empathy with professional responsibility — giving the season its emotional heartbeat.

Tanuj Chopra's Grounded Direction and Creative Precision

Writer-director Tanuj Chopra, returning from Season 2, demonstrates assured narrative control, balancing procedural urgency with intimate, quiet moments. The camaraderie among Vartika, Bhupendra, and Neeti drives the story with both momentum and depth. The dialogues, crafted by Anu Singh Choudhary, remain sharp, textured, and true to Delhi's linguistic rhythms—amplifying the show's realism. Johan Aidt and Eric Wunder Lin's cinematography adds vérité-style realism, while Ceiri Torjussen's score underscores the moral unease without succumbing to melodrama. The production design captures both the bureaucratic sterility of police offices and the gritty reality of trafficking operations, enhancing the show's authenticity. The production operations are further strengthened under Series Producer Vicky Vijay, ensuring that each narrative beat is matched with logistical precision. Sound designers Allwin Rego and Sanjay Maurya infuse the series with a heightened sense of place, where every ambient noise becomes an extension of the narrative.

Costumes by Kirti Kolwankar and Maria Tharakan contribute to the show's understated realism, grounding characters in their socio-economic and professional contexts.

Casting director Mukesh Chhabra once again



curates a powerful ensemble, led by Shefali Shah's formidable performance as DCP Vartika Chaturvedi. The supporting cast, new additions, and recurring characters collectively bring depth and legitimacy to the season's expansive storyline.

Performances That Anchor the Season

The performances are uniformly strong. Shefali Shah delivers a powerhouse portrayal of Vartika, blending authority, exhaustion, and compassion. Rajesh Tailang is a steady, grounding presence. Rasika Dugal's Neeti Singh shines in moments of vulnerability and determination, especially in her scenes with Noor. Huma Qureshi's Meena is chilling and controlled, her accent and measured fury making her a formidable antagonist. Sayani Gupta and Mita Vasisht are convincing in their cold efficiency. Among the supporting cast, Gopal Dutt, Jaya Bhattacharya, and Sidharth Bhardwaj stand out, though Sano Dinesh's Vijay feels slightly underdeveloped.

Reflection Over Shock: The Show's Greatest Strength

What distinguishes this season is its ability to provoke reflection without relying on shock tactics. It is as much about systemic failures and societal apathy as it is about crime. Quiet, human moments — a frightened glance, a weary sigh, a bureaucratic setback — deliver emotional impact with restraint.

Where the Season Falls Short

The narrative does occasionally falter: its wide geographic sprawl can feel unwieldy, and certain emotional beats echo past seasons, softening the rawness that once defined the franchise. Some subplots, such as ASI Simran's arc or Neeti's personal struggles, are introduced but not fully realised. Meena, though menacing, lacks the layered enigma that might have elevated the season's tension.

A Resonant Chapter With Lasting Impact

Yet despite these shortcomings, Delhi Crime 3 succeeds in presenting a socially resonant and emotionally grounded exploration of human trafficking. It remains faithful to the franchise's core strengths: empathetic storytelling, moral complexity, and exceptional performances. The season may not reach the relentless intensity of its predecessors, but it still delivers a powerful and affecting narrative marked by quiet heroism and a clear-eyed critique of systemic apathy.

As the franchise moves forward, this chapter serves both as a reminder of what Delhi Crime does best and a prompt for sharper writing and deeper introspection in the future. Season 3 stands as an important and unsettling portrayal of crime, courage, and conscience — one that lingers long after the final frame.





AVAMA
JEWELLERS

Expresso

E-Magazine

Fashion & Entertainment Based E-Magazine

Social Media Handle :  @expressomagazine  expresso-magazine  ExpressoMagazine1

Website : www.expressomagazine.com