

FEMINA

Be unstoppable

SHE-ECONOMICS
THIS WOMEN'S DAY,
LET'S PLEDGE TO TAKE
CHARGE OF OUR MONEY

KANGANA RANAUT
FINDS THE WARRIOR
IN THE QUEEN

Does your boss
like you?
Answer on pg 38

Your fave
dessert is missing
something



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GAME
FACE ON
Add punch
to your
work look



WATCH THE BEHIND
THE SCENES OF THIS
COVER SHOOT.
FOR INSTRUCTIONS,
TURN TO PAGE 12

THIS IS US

From #MeToo to #HappyToBleed,
this is our feminist manifesto

MISSION
MISSIONARY
HEATING UP
A CLASSIC

STOP
BROWSING
AND FIND
LOVE

EDITOR'S LETTER



Exactly a year ago, *Femina* had fronted a social media movement #NotMyShame.

From our cover girl Sonam Kapoor to me and my team members, we'd spoken about our encounters with sexual predators. It was a pain we didn't want to touch then, but each one of us fought the agony and spoke up—the experience was cathartic. That was our Women's Day focus for 2017.

THIS WOMEN'S DAY, FEMINA CELEBRATES THE FIGHTING SPIRIT IN YOU, ME, HER. OUR SPECIAL FASHION STORY TRACKS THE SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAGS THAT GAVE EVERY WOMAN A CHANCE TO BE THE CHANGE.

Six months down the line, a worldwide movement spread virally in October 2017. #MeToo spoke of sexual harassment at the workplace and brought most of Hollywood's exploitative moghuls, including Harvey Weinstein, down. Hashtag activism has its critics, but social media gives voice to the many who need to be empowered through empathy. This Women's Day, *Femina* celebrates that fighting spirit in you, me, her.

Our special fashion story tracks the social media hashtags that united us and gave every woman a chance to be the change. Listen up!

Speaking of change, the two aspects that can transform a person's destiny and give her power are: education and financial independence. Raise your hand if you've heard at least one woman in your circle say: 'I'm comfortably off; don't need my own money.'

At the cost of being called a too-pushy activist, I've argued with friends/friends' friends/complete strangers whenever I've heard a woman say that. Because when you have your own money, you can make choices for yourself.

Our campaign She-economics kicks off with this issue and continues for a full year with the intent to clear the mist and decode financial jargon in just one read. Be on top of your finances and say with clarity: I choose!

Tanya Chaitanya

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ON THE COVER

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LA PERLA; OVERSIZED METAL CHAIN
EARRING, RED BOX



Kangana Ranaut takes charge on Femina's latest cover. Catch all the action in the behind-the-scenes video of the making of the cover.

How to make sense of Femina's augmented reality (AR) special

VIEW THE AR FEATURE EMBEDDED IN THIS ISSUE WITH THREE EASY-AS-PIE STEPS

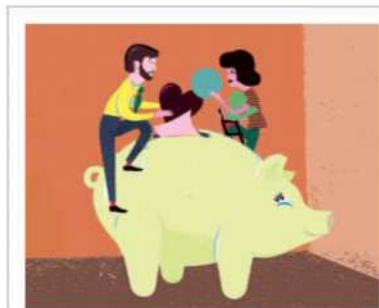
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WE HEAR YOU!

Write to us at femina@wmm.co.in

The interview with Anjali Lama (Reality, *What it takes to be*) in the February 1, 2018 issue was definitely impressive. It felt great to see *Femina* motivating a transgender icon to come forward and present her story to the world. The magazine is a mélange of different minds, which gives it a unique voice.

Kinari Desai,
Ahmedabad

In the February 1, 2018, issue, I particularly liked the guide on how to do burgundy eye makeup (Beauty, *Masterclass*). The article on simple switches that one could make to get lean was also useful (Beauty, *Fitness bulletin*). Often when we concentrate on toning our bellies and losing fat on our thighs, we forget to pay attention to nutrition, but your take was very holistic.

Anuradha Sagar,
Mumbai

The February 1, 2018 issue of *Femina* covered some really interesting topics. The story of the women who changed the course of their lives (The Big Story) was a great read. I would also like to mention the story on Mansi Shah (Reality), the girl who founded a palliative care home for underprivileged children. I love the fact that the articles in the magazine present a very balanced perspective.

Kermin Poonawala,
Pune



The February 1, 2018 was a cracker of an issue. The story on how five women rose from the ashes to become real-life heroes (The Big Story) moved me to tears. The interview with Shruti Haasan (Reality, *Cover girl*) was like the icing on the cake. I love the way *Femina* has taken shape in the last couple of years.

Akruti Sachdev, via email

I read and re-read the stories of the five women survivors who have given a new meaning to their lives (The Big Story), in the February 1, 2018 issue. It was motivating to read the story of actor Anu Aggarwal, who is determined to better the lives of street kids. Thank you, *Femina*, for bringing such women to the limelight.

Jamuna Prabhu,
Bangalore

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WIN!

AN EXCITING GIFT FROM LAVIE

These five letters will win this spacious tote from Lavie. This printed handbag will add that much-needed drama to your style.

SHE-C₹N♀OMICS

The cover of India's Economic Survey this year was coloured pink to show support for women's rights. A bit of glib tokenism for sure, but the contents of this document make a more compelling argument—the country will not reach its full growth potential until women are empowered to make their own decisions. Let's forget about the country for a minute. Are *you* empowered to make your own money decisions? Do *you* decide where to invest and how to save? Is *your* future secure?

It's ironic that in a country where women hold top positions in many financial institutions, from top banks to LIC and CRISIL, a majority of its female population depends on male family members to handle their money. *Femina* believes it's time for change. We want to put you in the driver's seat. Through our year-long campaign, She-economics, we'll address various aspects of personal finance and present you with the information you need to make the best choice for your unique situation. Find out how to plan for your retirement in your 20s, how to not just make money but create wealth, and how to better steer family investments. Ignorance is not cool, helplessness is not a strategy and money is nothing to fear. So this year, let's get you past those inhibitions and in the pink of wealth.



FINANCE GETS PERSONAL

When it comes to money planning, one size cannot fit all. Your income, expenses and goals all depend on your age and the stage of life you're at.

You'll be better prepared to face the future if your financial plans change with you. **Anika Mohla** gets experts to customise strategies that work best for who and where you are at the moment

IF YOU ARE UNMARRIED AND WORKING

Here's what you have going for you in your mid-20s: the freedom to try new things with few or no dependents to account for and plenty of time on your side. Many people this age, however, have limited knowledge of personal finance, are unclear about their money goals and tend to be undisciplined with their spending. All of this hurts investment potential, but you can turn things around by doing better starting now. Let's do this step by step.

First, cover your health: Rather than relying solely on your employer's mediclaim policy, get a personal health cover too. It protects against co-payment

loss, where the company pays only a part of your bills, or unpredictable health issues, which could either mean a higher premium or not getting a health cover at all, warns SEBI-registered wealth adviser Vinit Iyer. Life or term insurance is something you need if you have dependents or debts to pay off. Reenita Hora Malhotra, a Hong Kong-based financial journalist and co-author of *Money Smart: The Indian Woman's Guide To Managing Wealth*, has a word of advice. "Insurance companies may offer you a short-term policy—one that expires in, say, 10 or 15 years—with a lower premium than a policy that lasts 20 years. It can be tempting to go for a lower premium, but the costs may not benefit you in the long run," she says.

Second, set a goal: A financial goal is any commitment that requires saving half your monthly income. Hora Malhotra says, "For

**CUT AND
KEEP**

MAKE A BUDGET

GET A HEALTH COVER

START LONG-TERM
INVESTMENTS

Purpo





short-term investments, flexi accounts, bank FDs and liquid funds are the best bet. For mid- or long-term, choose an equity-based mutual fund, preferably midcap, for at least five years.” Iyer says a good way to manage money is to employ the 50:30:20 rule—50 per cent for your living expenses, 30 per cent for savings and investment, and 20 per cent for leisure. If there are loans to be paid, then the ratio will be 70:20:10—70 per cent for living expenses and EMI, 20 per cent for investment, and 10 per cent for splurging.

Third, start small: To experience the magic of compounding, start early with investments. Certified Financial Planner Kartik Jhaveri illustrates, “₹5,000 invested for 25 years earning 15 per cent interest every year will turn into ₹1.65 crore; step up the input by 10 per cent every year and you can make it ₹2.56 crore.” Remember, patience and persistence pays. Any investment into equities should be for at least five years.

Fourth, build a fund: To keep you afloat in between jobs or during any emergency, it’s always a good idea to build a contingency fund to cover you for at least six months. Create the fund with 10 per cent of your annual income, and gradually take it up to 30 per cent.

Fifth, consider retirement: Warren Buffet said, “If you don’t find a way to make money while you sleep, you’ll work till you die.” Disciplined investments geared towards retirement should be something to consider early in your career. “For those who have trouble saving, the National Pension Scheme, Unit Linked Insurance Plan and Public Provident Fund make more sense because of their lock-in and tax-saving nature,” says Iyer. “With a thoughtfully built corpus, you can choose to become a weekend hairstylist or buy a summer house in the hills—that’s true financial freedom,” says Jhaveri. >



IF YOU ARE MARRIED AND WORKING

Post-marriage, look beyond your own financial independence and study money management.

Besides paying your own bills and building monthly savings, you must jointly review household budget, investments and financial liabilities with your husband.

Talk terms: Having a life insurance and health cover should top your priority list, even more so if you have a child. If you are below 40, choose a term policy that provides a cover equivalent to at least 10-15 times your annual income.

Divide and rule: Be it your monthly spends, children's education or

investments, divide the expenses proportionate to your earnings. "It's not only a healthy financial practice, but the law too expects an earning woman to contribute in the running of the house," says matrimonial lawyer Mrunalini Deshmukh.

Pool your resources: While you should never give away full authority, many investors advise in favour of a joint account citing its ease of

operation and contribution to common financial goals. "A joint creation appreciates with time, and it's also good from an inheritance and continuity point of view," says Jhaveri. Legal experts, though, sound a note of caution.

"Create an account

CUT AND KEEP
 GET A LIFE COVER
 DIVIDE THE EXPENSES
 CONTRIBUTE TO COMMON FINANCIAL GOALS

Don't put all your eggs in one basket. SPREAD YOUR PORTFOLIO ACROSS EQUITIES, property, gold, debt securities, etc.

where you both pool in money for common goals and expenses, so that you don't give away your financial freedom," says Deshmukh.

Play the market: A regular income flow affords you the opportunity to have a slightly aggressive investment stance. Apart from conventional instruments, Hora Malhotra suggests, "Invest in stocks and be prepared to stay in for a longer period. For long-term, you can also put money in property and debt instruments like bonds. Balanced funds and liquid funds are also a great alternative." She warns, however, against putting all your eggs in one basket. Spread your portfolio across equities, property, gold, debt securities etc.

Home in: Immovable assets should ideally be in joint possession. It offers a sense of ownership to both parties and is better for you from tax-saving and loan eligibility points of view too. "Being co-owners of a property and co-borrowers of the loan makes the house equitable, and none holds absolute right on it," says Jhaveri.

Make that will: This is also the time to consider estate planning and create a will. Think about what you have accumulated already—property, securities, other assets—and what else you might acquire in future. It is better that your heirs have a clear idea as to what they can expect to receive. "In the absence of a will, inheritances are disbursed according to religious law," says Hora Malhotra. >

IF YOU ARE A HOMEMAKER

Think beyond managing household expenses and become an active voice in your family's financial decision-making. This way, you'll be able to secure your own future and make better choices for others too.

Move that cash: The best and worst thing about hoarding cash at home is this: It's not going anywhere. It's a deadweight depreciating with each day. The journey to make it work for you begins with a bank account. Iyer says, "These days, many banks offer online account opening facilities.

You can look at accounts created or marketed for women—while they may not have exceptional benefits, some of them do offer facilities like a lower minimum balance, insurance cover, cash-back on debit cards etc."

Park smart: To earn on money you've set aside, put it in FDs, flexi deposits or recurring deposits. Eventually, move it to liquid funds for higher interest rates, low risk and easy accessibility, suggests Iyer.

Talk money: Take active part in financial conversations with your spouse. Jhaveri says, "Make yourself aware of his bank account details, loan EMI, insurance and investment details, etc., so you're not caught off-guard in case of any eventuality." Maintain a common record of all financial assets and liabilities of the family, investment



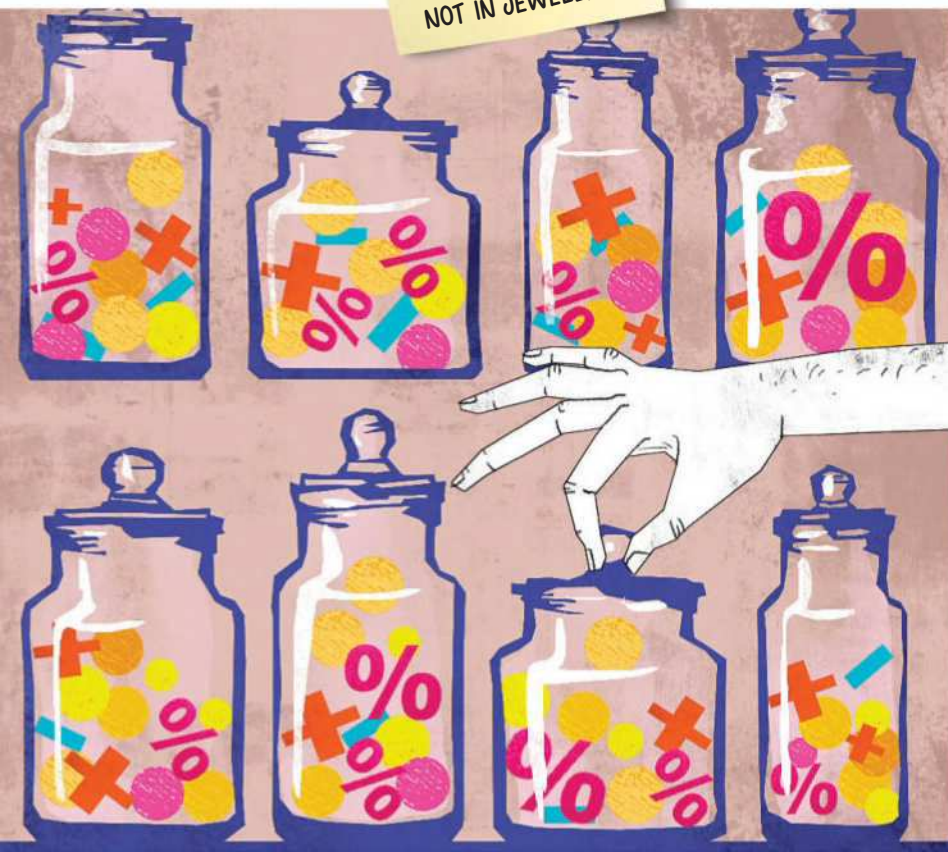
and insurance details, and other financial documents.

Don't bank on gold: Making charges, purity issues and storage costs are some of the reasons why gold jewellery as an investment has lost its lustre. "You are better off investing in paper gold, mutual funds ideally, or gold in electronic form," says Hora Malhotra. Iyer adds, "You can also convert existing jewellery into sovereign gold bonds for a safe investment and assured returns."

Think life-saver: While health cover is a must, getting a life insurance may be near-impossible if you don't have a source of income or financial assets—that's why it's important for your husband to have an adequate term plan. "A man can also build a safety net for his wife/kids by buying an insurance policy under the Married Women's Property Act, 1874. Under this, the court can't attach the policy sum to any financial liabilities of the husband," says Iyer.

Maintain a common record of all ASSETS AND LIABILITIES of the family, investment and insurance details, and other financial documents.

Hedge your bets: A married woman has a right to residence and maintenance, but there's no specific law on division of marital assets. Deshmukh suggests if you come into a marriage with existing assets, retain those in your name. If you must add your husband's name, make sure you keep at least 50-60 per cent of the assets for yourself as financial security. >





IF YOU ARE DIVORCED

While a divorce is certainly an emotional setback, it can become a financial nightmare too, what with increased living expenses, a changed risk profile and your reduced borrowing eligibility. So it's important for you to not only budget your money, but also invest it smartly.

Get the essentials sorted:

The importance of term and health covers at this stage can't be overstated. If you're a single mother, take a higher cover to secure your kid's future. Assuming you have that in place, change nominees not just in your personal policies, but also in those provided by your company.

Play it safe: Alimony can be given either in a lump-sum or as monthly

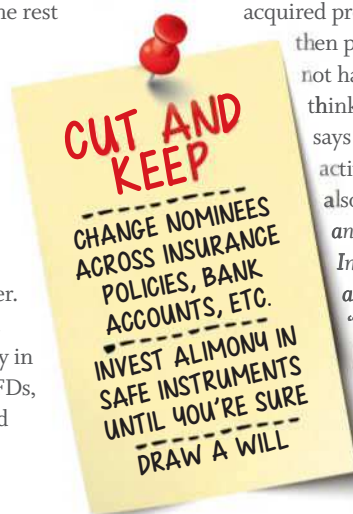
maintenance. While the former itself is not taxable, the investment returns you earn on it may be taxed. "Monthly maintenance, on the other hand, may become taxable if the annual net income, pooling all sources—salary, alimony and any other income—comes under the tax bracket," says Deshmukh. Iyer suggests that if you are working, you invest the monthly maintenance for future needs. In case you get a lump-sum, use at least part of it to pay off any debts and create an emergency fund, while investing the rest in mutual funds.

According to Hora Malhotra, equity-linked mutual funds make sense for young, risk-tolerant women, while debt securities are best for ones who want to play it a bit safer. If you are unsure about either, park your money in solid instruments like FDs, liquid funds, or a hybrid savings account.

Joint credit cards must be cancelled AND JOINT ACCOUNTS CLOSED AFTER DIVIDING the money with mutual consent.

Go solo: Joint credit cards must be cancelled, and joint accounts closed after dividing the money with mutual consent. You can also block all cards till such time, so that money can't be withdrawn without the authorisation of both partners. Supreme Court advocate Raavi Birbal says, "Possessions in the form of inheritance can't be divided, but joint properties like a house bought after marriage are eligible for division." Deshmukh suggests keeping your assets under your control, including any jewellery. In case your spouse owns a loan-bound asset for which you are only deemed the guarantor, your first order of business should be withdrawing your name to negate any liability if your ex defaults.

Find the will: Contrary to popular belief, a nominee is not an actual beneficiary but only a receiving hand, who is legally bound to distribute the assets in case there are lawful contestants. And that's where a will comes in. "If you have acquired property and have children, then plan your estate. If you do not have heirs, you still need to think about your inheritance," says Hora Malhotra. Lawyer-activist Kirti Singh, who also authored *Separated and Divorced Women in India: Economic Rights and Entitlement*, says, "Apart from listing the beneficiaries, you must also appoint a guardian/trustee for your child, if he/she is a minor." >



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Isn't it time we did away with the
'perfect body' myth? Let's talk.
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IF YOU ARE WIDOWED

Finding yourself on your own after years of sharing your life with someone can be bewilderingly painful.

You may not want, at such a time, to consider things like legal and financial processes. Reach out and take help from a friend with the list below, which will help you secure your future and afford you the time you need to heal.

List the basics: Begin with assessing your assets and liabilities, and consider your present and

Till you're ready, park the corpus in safe instruments such as FDs, LIQUID FUNDS, flexi savings account, etc.

future needs. You also need to locate documents such as your husband's birth certificate, insurance details, marriage certificate and paperwork involving investments, savings, etc. Things are easier if your husband left behind a will, but if not, religious laws decide succession.

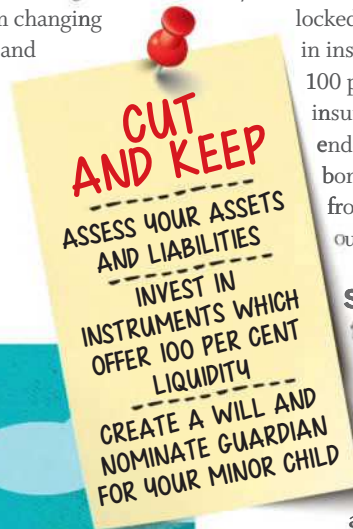
Chalk out a plan: While you need to follow a timeline for certain financial decisions, such as paying off your husband's existing liabilities, you don't need to rush to make decisions about the entire inherited corpus. Till you're ready, park the amount in safe instruments such as FDs, liquid funds, flexi savings account, etc. Apart from changing titles on bank accounts and properties, you'll also

need to make the change on health and life insurance policies. Then comes saving and investing. If you are dependent on the inherited corpus to pay your bills, you can't expose it to too much volatility; so invest it in low-risk funds. "You can also invest it in systemic withdrawal plan, in which a specific amount is returned to your bank account on a specific date," says Iyer. If your existing earnings can take care of your needs, then invest the surplus in debt or balanced mutual funds.

Keep it fluid: If you don't have high-risk capability or a fallback plan, you can't afford the money to be locked in for long, so invest in instruments that offer 100 per cent liquidity. "Avoid insurance policies, close-ended funds, long-dated bonds, long-tenure FDs, etc, from which you can't come out soon," says Iyer.

Secure your child's future: Jhaveri says most child policies are of the money-back variety and poor in terms of investment merit. Hora Malhotra too says only a few such policies are actual performers. It may be a good idea to put money in MFs or PPF on behalf of your child, which can grow until he/she becomes an adult. It's also important to remember that while you are a single mother, your needs and personal goals are as important—plan assets for your future and retirement as well.

Guard the estate: Do not make the mistake of neglecting estate planning. "If you have accumulated assets, the last thing you want is for your heir/s to be fighting over it after your demise," says Hora Malhotra. And, most importantly, appoint a guardian for your minor child. **F**



VOX POP



“Getting the chance to defy gender stereotypes. The condescending attitudes I have faced while making personal and professional choices have helped me become independent, mentally, emotionally and financially. It is why I cherish and celebrate womanhood.”
Vasudha Iyer, 27, content writer



“The ability to wear many hats with equal flair. As women in India, we are breaking free from stereotypes. We juggle work, home and family every day—all while taking care of ourselves too. We’re emerging as a force of resilience and strength, and I’m proud of it.”
Prerana Miriyala, 21, student

What is the best part about *being a woman?*

“We are inherently nurturing and we constantly work on our relationships. I especially love the close friendship that develops between women. We are sharers and tend to be open books when we are around our best friends. Our bond with them is based on intimacy and trust. Such intense relationships cannot be replaced easily and must be cherished!”

Meghana Choraria, 22, freelance content writer



“Having two little humans grow within me, listening to their hearts beat for the first time and finally, holding my babies for the first time in my arms—the best experience ever!”

Michelle Job, 35, photographer



“We express our feelings and aren’t afraid of showing the world our emotional side. We’re unapologetic—about being opinionated, about fighting the naysayers, about being vulnerable or sensitive. We are feminine and proud.”
Annie Preethisa, 25, software engineer



I never have a hard time getting dates. In fact, I am one of those girls who almost always have romantic plans on a Saturday night. The problem, however, is that most of these meet-ups never materialise into a relationship,” says Sanchaita Sinha, a 25-year-old content writer. Finding someone to love and not just date—that’s not easy at all and often takes many failed attempts. But don’t worry. You can improve your chances by working on your courtship technique. Both men and women make some common mistakes that get in the way of happiness, or you know, a second date. Avoid these ones and Cupid might just aim his bow at you next.



Hit, miss

Do you have a clear idea about the kind of guy you want to settle down and live the rest of your life with? Dr Gitanjali Sharma, Delhi-based family and marriage counsellor of DGS Counselling Solutions, suggests you give this some thought. “Write down 10 traits you want in a man and highlight the five that you are non-negotiable and you are not willing to compromise on,” says Sharma. This will help you identify the points that may be

LUCKY IN LOVE

Wondering why your dates never materialise into relationships? Break out of these vicious cycles and have better luck the next time, says **Anindita Ghosh**



“IF YOU HAVE IMPOSSIBLE EXPECTATIONS, IT WILL BE QUITE EVIDENT IN YOUR BODY LANGUAGE.”

too exacting. For instance, if money or good looks or social savviness is high on your priority list, you need to think whether you should replace them with empathy, kindness, a caring nature or sensitivity. In other words, traits may hold

you in better stead in the long run. “If you have impossible expectations, it will be evident in your body language and amply clear to the man you are dating that he does not quite match up,” says relationship mentor, Dr Kamal Khurana.

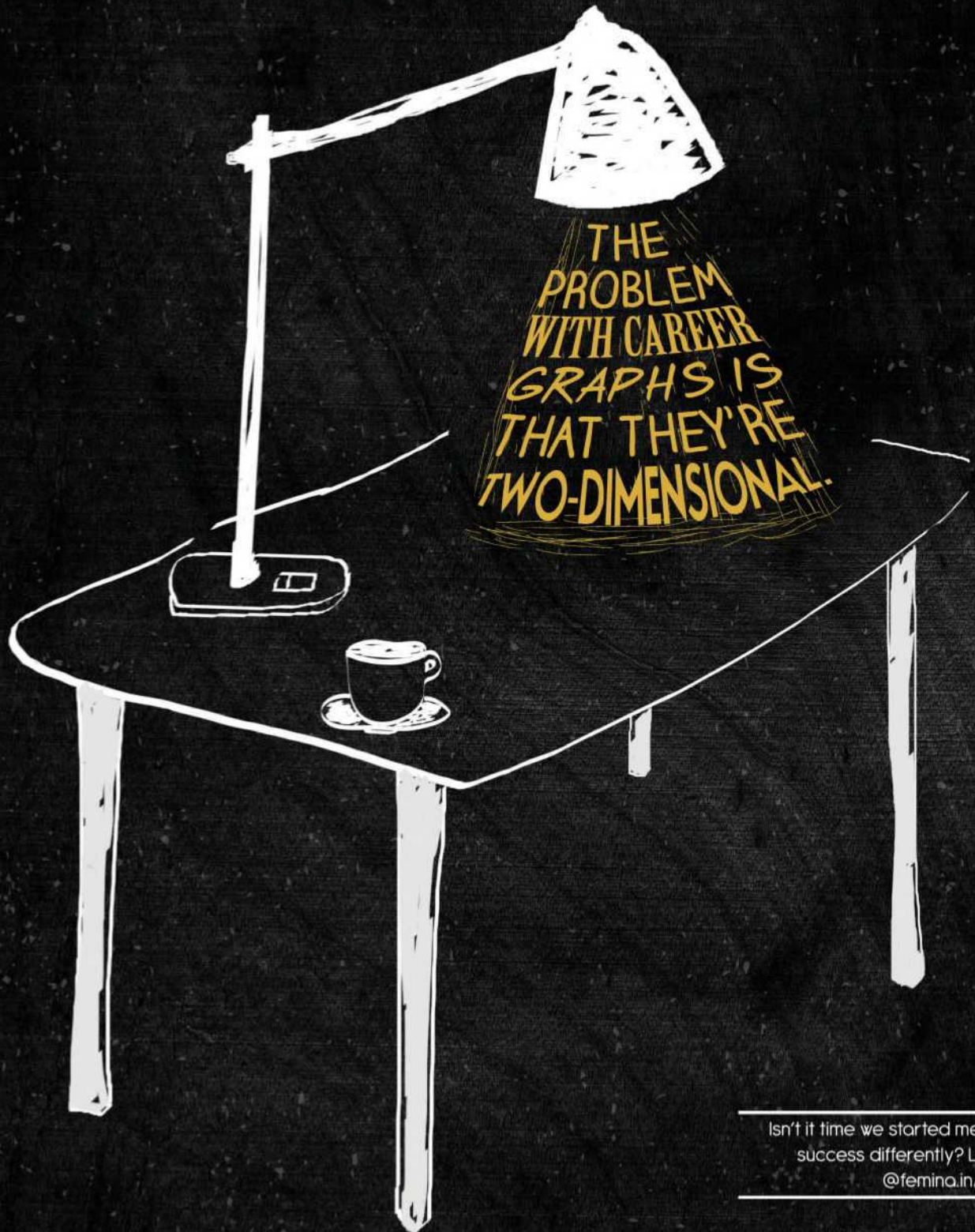


Where’s Waldo?

Urban singles are increasingly looking to the internet for love. Sadly, however, only a few of the men you meet online are there for a life partner. “If you are single, shy and looking for love, a dating app can be a great way to meet men and break the ice,” says Kavita N, >

FEMINA

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Isn't it time we started measuring success differently? Let's talk.
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a 30-year-old freelance writer. “Unfortunately, I discovered that most of the men I was meeting were just interested in casual sex or out for some fun on the sly to allay the boredom of their marital lives.”

So, think twice when you swipe right and don’t get taken in by a profile. If you are convinced that your online date seems like the real thing, fix a date with him. “Don’t delay it. If he’s in the same city, meet him within a week or two,” says Dr Khurana.



Settling seems better

Sometimes desperation can push you into the arms of someone you might otherwise have no interest in. After all, it’s better than being single, right? “Well, actually it’s not,” says Dr Sharma. “When you ignore your own misgivings about a man and, perhaps, even warnings from friends and family, you are setting yourself up for disappointment. Go back to your checklist of must-have qualities in a man and if you find that your date does not match up, it is unlikely that this will ever mature into a successful long-term relationship.”

Also, some people in the dating game may not be ready for a long-term relationship. That’s okay, as long as you’re both honest about what you want.



Is the fear of commitment holding you back?

BEFORE JUMPING BACK IN THE DATING POOL, SEE IF THERE ARE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE PATTERNS YOU’VE FALLEN INTO.



Mirror, mirror


Before jumping back in the dating pool, see if there are self-destructive patterns you’ve subconsciously fallen into. Run through all the breakup speeches of your past. Is there a common thread there? Ask a friend to help you with this to see if there could be something to your ex’s criticism. Dr Sharma says, “Remember, when you are dating a guy, you

are also under scrutiny. So, if you fiddle with your phone when you are out together or insist that the conversation revolve only around yourself or behave badly with the server, he is not going to be impressed.”



‘I do’ or ‘do I’?

Contrary to what popular perception may have you believe, it’s not always the men who are commitment-phobic. In the

Indian scenario, it’s often the woman who needs convincing to go forward in a relationship. “Women often start getting cold feet when a man gets serious. This is especially true in the Indian context where the girl has to think about considerations like moving into the man’s home, convincing her parents, and dealing with issues of caste and community,” says Dr Khurana. Ask yourself if you are ready to make a commitment. It’s completely okay not to want to be committed, but, in that case, you need to admit it before you drive yourself nuts wondering why your relationships never make it to stage two. And perhaps, date guys who are on the same page as you are. 

LAY OF THE LAND

The good old missionary is everyone's favourite fail-safe position. But is there a way to heighten its pleasures? **Chirag Mohanty Samal** says yes

The missionary position has acquired a bit of a bad rep for being the plain Jane of the sex world—simple and boring. It lets you lie back and be lazy, while your partner does most of the work. But we believe this form of horizontal mambo has enough room for experimentation. Wondering how adventurous you can get? We help you stretch your imagination. Go on and make the first position you ever tried the best one ever.

Straighten up

Something as simple as straightening your legs can add variety to the romp. When he gets inside you, bring both your legs together so that his legs are on the outside of yours and try moving your hips in tandem with his thrusts. This will put pressure on his shaft and the rhythmic movement will create adequate friction to set the nerve endings on your vagina tingling.

Rub shoulders

As he begins to grind into your vaginal lips, lift your legs and place them on his shoulders. This minor alteration gives him enough depth for pleasurable long strokes. The upside for you is that your G-spot gets the attention it needs.



Introducing handcuffs or letting your man tie your hands could heighten the excitement.

Let it slide

Awaken a new set of nerves by introducing lube into your bedroom moves. And you don't have to restrict it to your intimate areas, either. Slather it on his thighs, chest and abdomen, and give him a good massage. Let him return the favour by applying it all over you. As the missionary position

allows maximum close contact, using a lube could lead to better lubrication and introduce new pleasurable sensations. "At times, your body takes time to reach the same page as your mind. You may be turned on but you may not get that wet easily. A lube takes your mind away from such anxieties and lets you focus on the act," says sexologist Mahesh Nawal.

Bell the CAT

CAT stands for coital alignment technique. The reason why missionary gets a thumbs-down from some women is because it does not offer enough clitoral contact. Ian Kerner, author of *She Comes First: The Thinking Man's Guide To Pleasuring A Woman*, says, "While he is on top of you, have him raise his torso so that the base of his penis is directly aligned with your clitoris." This way, he touches your clitoris every time he thrusts into you, unleashing a whirlwind of sensations.

Pillow talk

Place a pillow or two under your butt before you let him in. This elevates your hips, tightens your pelvic floor muscles and gives him better access to your G-spot. It's a win-win situation, where your tightened vaginal muscles create just enough friction, leading to a delirious climax for you and him.

Shades of grey

Introducing handcuffs or letting your man tie your hands could heighten the excitement, especially if you are blindfolded too. The guessing game about where he is going to touch you next or what he would do to you will turn every tiny touch into an intense sensation. **F**

Don't be silenced

When Kim Kardashian West posted a nude selfie of herself, a lot of criticism flew her way. In response, Kardashian West wrote an essay, on her website, where she said, "I am empowered by my body. I am empowered by my sexuality. I am empowered by feeling comfortable in my skin. I am empowered by showing the world my flaws and not being afraid of what anyone is going to say about me. And I hope that through this platform I have been given, I can encourage the same empowerment for girls and women all over the world. The body-shaming and slut-shaming—it's like, enough is enough."



NOT MY SHAME

Don't let slut-shaming get you down. Fight back like these divas, says **Simran Ahuja**

Start a movement

In October last year, American model Amber Rose organised the third annual Amber Rose SlutWalk in LA, wherein people across genders, age, class and professions came together to promote women's rights and gender equality. "It's (SlutWalk) just a safe place for women to come, wear what they want, dress how they want, and talk to other people that can relate to them and what they've been through, and for them to know that they're not alone," she said, in an interview with an American website.



Support a sister

Last year, an image of Mahira Khan and Ranbir Kapoor smoking together emerged on the internet. While no one commented on Kapoor, Khan received backlash for both smoking and for what she was wearing. The comments on the internet ranged from "how could a Muslim girl wear semi-naked dress" to others asking how a mother could "behave like this". Many came to her support, including actor Parineeti Chopra. When asked about the entire situation, Chopra said, "It's a little unfair. Everybody knows it's unfair and it'll stop. Today, because of social media, everything becomes too big a deal." Who better than a woman to support another, right? 

Be you

In 2017, YouTuber Lilly Singh, also known as Superwoman, was slut-shamed for the outfits she wore in her Instagram pictures. Singh's response was worth taking note of. She addressed the issue on the social media platform through a caption that said: "I wear what I feel comfortable wearing. Sometimes that's a turtleneck and sometimes that's a bikini. Either way, it doesn't warrant your opinion, mistreatment or assumption. I think I look cute and if you disagree, feel free to dress differently."



Tank the trolls

When Priyanka Chopra met PM Narendra Modi last year, she was the subject of backlash due to the "inappropriate" knee-length dress she was wearing. Instead of calling out haters, Chopra chose to answer by uploading a picture with her mother, on social media, with both of them showing off their toned legs!





BOSS WHISPERER

Starting a new job? Don't let your fear of the big boss keep you from making an impression. **Simran Ahuja** gives you tried-and-tested ways to network upwards

In June 2017, Ruhi Pandey was fresh out of college and all set to start her new job at an advertising agency. Among worries about pay and whether she would be able to do her job well was another nagging concern: would her

boss like her? "I find seniors to be intimidating, so I was quite concerned about how I would get my new boss to like me. What if he or she turned out to be like Miranda Priestly from *The Devil Wears Prada*?" asks Pandey, a 22-year-old assistant account executive.

***"WE SPEND MORE TIME AT WORK
THAN WE DO WITH LOVED ONES.***

***SO, A BAD RAPPORT WITH YOUR BOSS
WILL LEAD TO YOU BEING UNHAPPY."***

Many young freshers will relate to that fear. But their fear might be holding them back despite their willingness to work hard and go the extra mile. According to a 2016 global study of 19,000 working millennials and 1,500 hiring managers, conducted by leadership consultancy Reputation Leaders, Indian millennials claim the longest working week at 52 hours. "Since we spend more of our waking hours in an office than we do with our loved ones, a lack of a good rapport with your boss will just lead to you being unhappy and feeling under-valued at work. Besides this, a good relationship with your superiors will also help you grow in the company and in your career," says Mumbai-based career coach, Ajay Goyal. How exactly do you go about building a relationship with someone you see only occasionally and never in a relaxed setting?

We asked the experts and they gave us five great opening lines to get the dialogue going. >



'HOW AM I DOING?'

"If it's a new job, wait around 10 days or so and then ask your boss for feedback," says Prateek Bhargava, CEO of Mindler, a website for online career assessment and counselling. This will help you stand out in your boss's mind as someone who is willing to take the initiative to improve. Follow up by taking action on the feedback. "Schedule quarterly sessions with your boss and seek suggestions on how you can work on your weaknesses," says Goyal.

INSTEAD OF PRETENDING YOU UNDERSTOOD EXACTLY WHAT YOUR BOSS EXPECTS, ASK QUESTIONS TO CLARIFY.



'QUICK HEADS-UP'

During the time of her annual appraisal, Anita Sharma*, a 32-year-old content strategist, found that her colleague received a higher rating than her. Though Sharma worked hard too, her colleague ensured that their boss was in the loop and knew what she was doing. Keep in mind, however, that no boss likes being spammed with too many updates. "While updating your boss, indicate the impact of your efforts too. For example, if you are managing your company's social media, give your boss an update about the new strategy that you've implemented and the increase in traffic it has led to," says Bhargava. Goyal further suggests you inform your boss about challenges you faced and seek advice on tackling them better.



Constructive feedback can help you grow



'MY LIPS ARE SEALED'

Don't let venting ruin your chances of having a good relationship with your boss. Be careful about what you tell your peers when your boss isn't around or word will get around. "Instead of whining and cribbing, take responsibility and address the complaint to the person who can solve it," says Goyal.



'ACTUALLY, I DISAGREE'

If you think there are certain areas that need improving or you are facing challenges, be open and let your boss know. "Better yet, think of solutions to tackle the problem. This way your boss will notice that you are an employee who takes initiative in improving things for the company," says Bhargava. Also remember, instead of pretending you understood exactly what your boss expects, don't hesitate to ask questions to clarify the same.

GOOD TO KNOW

In a LinkedIn article on how to wow your boss, Ryan Holmes, founder and CEO of Hootsuite, a social media management tool for business, expands on the following:

- Write shorter emails, retaining only the most essential points in the body, since this will save your boss's time greatly.
- Pay extra attention to the tiny details to stand out more from the crowd.
- Civility and courtesy are traits bosses often value highly, so respect everyone in your office, from an attendant to your boss and superiors.
- Instead of failing due to incompetence, it's better to take risks and fail at something because of ambition.



'PERMISSION TO SPEAK FREELY?'

Bhargava suggests getting to know a company's culture and adapting to your boss's communication style. "Observe how your colleagues communicate with your boss and adapt the same method," says Bhargava. For example, some bosses prefer pitches or suggestions being sent over email, some prefer discussing these only at formal meetings and others ask for ideas to be sent on team WhatsApp groups. The chances of a response are stronger if you adopt their preferred way to communicate. **f**

HIGH NOTES

Fashion is in a groovy mood this season. Our spring/summer '18 report offers bright ideas and shining stars to add to your daily look



AKRIS

ROKSANDA

AALTO

DANIELA GREGIS

DRIES VAN NOTEN



Denim shirt,
₹1,799,
Monte Carlo



Viscose blend skirt,
₹1,990, **Cover Story**



Metal hoops,
₹1,600, **Anaqa**



Leather and wooden loafers,
price on request, **Clarks**

Mesh
handbag,
price on
request,
Fendi



POWER PLAYERS

Stay on-point this summer with these key pieces, which will take your look up a notch



MAX MARA

BOTTEGA VENETA

ERDEM MORALIOLU

PURPLE HAZE

This delicate hue makes for an Instagram-friendly alternative to millennial pink. Lavender looks at Max Mara and Erdem came with big scoops of chic.

COMING UP ROSY

This sophisticated shade gets a shot of energy with high-octane silhouettes and luxe details. We saw it scorch the runways at Victoria Beckham and Tom Ford.



Silk blend cape, **Kukoon the Label**



Leather kitten heels, **Balenciaga @ Le Mill**



Leather watch, **Casio**



CHRISTOPHER KANE

MARNI

ROBERTO CAPUCCI

POP-EYED

Featuring everything from primary shades to neon splashes, this season promises colour overdose. Get inspired by the runways at Marni and Christopher Kane, both of which exploded with a vibrant energy. >

SUMMER LOVIN'

Here's a breakdown of our favourite spring/summer trends, straight off the runways



Cotton polo T-shirt, **GAP**



Tulle skirt, **Cover Story**



SIES MARJAN

TOM FORD

VICTORIA BECKHAM



Polyester blend dress, **United Colors of Benetton**

Cotton scarf, **Wrap Studio**



Acetate frames, **Polaroid**



Denim trousers, **FCUK**

THE PLASTICS

Life's fantastic when wrapped in plastic—well, as long as it's Chanel. Burberry will help us take on the June showers with ponchos, trenches and over-the-knee boots.



CALVIN KLEIN

MISSONI

VERSACE



Vinyl trench, Diane Von Fürstberg

PU and satin heels, Zara

PU sandals, Koovs.com



ISABEL MARANT

ACNE STUDIOS

CALVIN LUO

DRESS TO EXPRESS

Spring's motifs inspired by graphic novels, comics and art get a hefty dose of cool. Our top picks? All the fun prints at Versace and Calvin Klein.



Cotton blend dress, H&M



CHANEL

BURBERRY



Acetate sunglasses, Marc Jacobs

Satin heels, Christian Louboutin

MARY/KATRANTZOU

MOULIN RUCHE

Ruches are the new ruffles this season, as seen at Isabel Marant, who presented ruched off-shoulder tops and mini dresses. Acne, meanwhile, used the detail to emphasise the waist.



Cotton blend blouse, Pepe Jeans



Cotton blouse, Juna Rose



Cotton blouse, Only



ALL BLOWN UP

Voluminous, puffy sleeves get the high-fashion nod of approval. Bring your silhouettes to life by adding overblown drama to the shoulders, à la Stella McCartney and Rochas.



Cotton blend dress, Zara

Cotton blend dress, Gul Hurgel @ Matchesfashion.com



Cotton blend blouse, Max Fashion

SHORT SUPPLY

To everyone's surprise, shorts have made a big comeback and will continue to be a frontrunner in the upcoming seasons too. At Chloé and Nina Ricci, these fashion-forward pieces were seen in tailored and long-line versions.



Denim shorts, Vero Moda

Denim shorts, Pepe Jeans

Embellished shorts, Bhaavya Bhatnagar



FIFTIES' SHOW

Wriggle into the season's hottest silhouette—the classic pencil skirt. Check out Hermès and Balenciaga to see how an ageless style can be revived with a few modern details.



CHLOÉ

ANNA DANIELSSON

NINA RICCI



Polyester skirt, Tommy Hilfinger



Cotton blend skirt, Ritika Bharwani



Viscose skirt, Only

ROCHAS

STELLA MCCARTNEY

ANREALAGE

BALENCIAGA

N21

HERMÈS

FINDING FANNY

We can deny it no longer—the fanny pack is here to stay. You can pair it with a sporty look like Fenty Puma or go the luxe route, like Ferragamo.



PUMA X FENTY

SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

ROCHAS



Woven hat, Accessorize



Cane hat, Maison Michel



Straw hat, Miu Miu

HATS ON

We're totally obsessing over these cool toppers for summer, whether they come oversized like at Jacquemus or twisted into a bow, like at Delpozo.



LOEWE

DELPOZO

JACQUEMUS



Be Legendary Lipstick, Smashbox

Pop Lip Colour + Primer, Clinique

CHERRY BLOSSOM

Stained, glossy or matte, cherry lips add a pop of colour that the season simply demands. Take makeup inspiration from the catwalks of Dolce & Gabbana and Temperley London.



DOLCE & GABBANA

TEMPERLEY LONDON

BADGLEY MISCHKA



Polyester fanny pack, H&M



Leather fanny pack, Louis Vuitton



Studded fanny pack, Valentino

FRUIT OF THE LOOM

No one can breathe life into textiles like Raw Mango's Sanjay Garg. **Anindita Ghosh** speaks to the designer about his journey and his abiding passion for the magic of the warp and the weft



(Clockwise from far left) The designer; a runway look from the designer's recent show; a weaver works on a Raw Mango piece; lookbook image from a recent collection; motif development; (Top) Aditi Rao Hydari in Raw Mango

While the rest of the world goes gaga over buzzy phrases like handloom revival and the re-emergence of the sari as a fashion staple, Sanjay Garg, the reclusive founder of Raw Mango, seems almost distressed by the brouhaha. For the designer, whose love affair with the indigenous textiles of India long predates the hoopla around it, would hate to see handlooms casually relegated to obscurity once another fad comes along.

Garg, however, needn't be concerned about the spotlight moving away from his brand anytime soon. His exquisite creations are universally coveted by any woman who can afford them, and not just his celebrity fans like Kangana Ranaut, Alia Bhatt, Sonam



Kapoor, Vidya Balan and Kiran Rao, who are all frequently spotted in Garg's saris and stitched garments.

With roots in small-town Rajasthan and a rustic, down-to-earth persona, Garg has steadfastly refused to become cool or try too hard to become a part of the fashion inner circle. He prefers to reach his audience through shows and exhibitions in his key markets instead of succumbing to the pressure of fashion weeks, even though he has participated a couple of times. His flagship stores are in Delhi and Mumbai and five of his saris are displayed in the permanent collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, UK.

Tell us a little bit about your background.

I come from a tiny village called >



(Clockwise from above) A closer look at the weaving process; an image from a recent lookbook; a weaver prepares the yarns; the designer's famous brocade lehengas; Raw Mango textiles

“MY FAMILY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH TEXTILES OR DESIGN AND I HAD NO EXPOSURE TO FASHION WHEN I WAS GROWING UP.”

Mubarikpur in Rajasthan—it's so small that it still does not have a police chowki and owning a car is considered a luxury! My father has a chemical and fertiliser business there and also sells farming implements. I studied in a Hindi-medium village school.

Did your upbringing have any role in influencing your choice of career?

Not really. My family had nothing to do with textiles or design and I had no exposure to fashion when I was growing up. I grew up seeing leheriya being worn on Teej, but I cannot say it was my primary influence. I did not know of any design colleges until my graduation. I went to Jaipur for my B.Com, and then found out that NIFT exists but still had no idea about NID. Before I enrolled in NIFT Delhi for a course in textile design, I went to the Indian Institute of Craft and Design to study textiles. After



my NIFT course, like everyone else, I wanted to study abroad. I got through many colleges like Central Saint Martins in London but since I wanted to pay the fee myself, I took up a job with Shades of India, a textile company. That is when I also started consulting with the Ministry of Textiles. It was during this time that I was introduced to Chanderi (the town in Madhya Pradesh famed for its eponymous weave). It was a life-changing event because that's when I decided that I would not go abroad. This is where I would be.

Tell us about your love affair with Chanderi.

I love how the fabric is so delicate, light and perfect for our tropical weather. After I started working with Chanderi,

I made a collection where I edited and simplified the design. I showed this collection to Jayaji (Jaya Jaitly) for a mela that she was organising and she liked it. When I took it back to my weavers in Chanderi, however, they refused to weave them as they were not convinced that anyone would want to buy saris that were so simple! But since I had promised a collection to Jaya Jaitly and had borrowed ₹90,000 from my parents to get started, I got the line made. The collection was showcased for 10 days at the Coomaraswamy Hall in Mumbai and on the fifth day, I had to call for fresh stock. The whole collection sold out. That is how I ended up in this business.

You have been credited with contemporising the sari and >



(Clockwise from left) Garments on display at the brand's flagship store in Mumbai; the designer's spring/summer 2017 line; a recent capsule collection of printed saris Nandita Das in Raw Mango at the Cannes Film Festival 2017

making it more wearable. How did you do this?

I edited the layouts, made the designs simpler, made the drape softer, and used a variety of colours. Earlier, weavers would put in everything they knew, from geometric patterns to graphic designs, on one sari. I got rid of that practice for my saris and stuck to a few classic motifs. The work that we did on the drape was very crucial because a lot of people wouldn't wear saris because they were uncomfortable. We washed out the starch and stiffness, and made the saris soft. Washing the saris after we make them also ensures that if the colours are *kachcha*, they bleed with us, rather than at your home.

You work with more than 500 weavers across the country. How have they benefited by the renewed interest in handlooms?

The wages of the weavers have multiplied by a factor of six, especially in places like Chanderi and Benaras. They have a lot of work on their hands. We have taught them to build a collection and showed them how to create something new. Earlier they would keep making similar saris year after year. Now we have showed them how the same thing can look different every year, every season.

What projects have excited you after Chanderi?

The brocade lehengas that we made



for my LFW show in 2014. There were no brocade lehengas before 2014; we were the first to make them—and thank god it was documented because I did a fashion show. Now there are numerous people making such lehengas. The Mashroo saris that we made were also a landmark achievement. There was no Mashroo sari before that. Besides these, other projects like the block-printing one in Akola have kept me excited.

What is the challenge in working with stitched fabrics?

It was difficult because a lot of

“EARLIER, WEAVERS WOULD PUT IN EVERYTHING THEY KNEW, FROM GEOMETRIC PATTERNS TO GRAPHIC DESIGNS, ON ONE SARI. I GOT RID OF THAT PRACTICE FOR MY SARIS AND STUCK TO A FEW CLASSIC MOTIFS.”



You tend to stay away from the frenzy of fashion weeks. Why is that?

It's quite simple. Handloom cannot follow the fashion cycle or produce collections twice a year. I have a limitation—my techniques and my handloom have limitations. And in India, the impact of a fashion show is very small. It is just done for the media, nobody else watches it. So why not put my energy into something with a wider reach? I'd prefer to go to Coimbatore or Lucknow and do a show. **F**

materials that work for saris do not work for other clothes. Garments are stitched very differently as they need to withstand the stresses of the body. Preserving the drape and softness of the material were the biggest challenges. I had to weave it separately and redesign and re-create my fabric. For example, for the panel lehengas, the patterns had to be made on the loom.

NEW CROP

Shorts have gotten all grown-up this season. We show you three ways to wear your cut-offs at work, play and after-hours



MATCH POINT

Jersey T-shirt, ₹2,099, FCUK; linen vest and shorts, both prices on request, Michael Kors; PU sneakers, ₹845, Koovs.com

EARN MAJOR STYLE POINTS WITH A CROPPED TWIN-SET PAIRED WITH A SLOGAN TEE AND WHITE SNEAKERS.

ADD A DASH OF AFTER-DARK GLAM TO A TURTLENECK CROP TOP WITH SHORTS AND GLITTER BOOTS.

TWINKLE TOES

Wool jumper, ₹3,999, Tommy Hilfiger; linen shorts, price on request, Michael Kors; sequined boots, stylist's own



FLASH FORWARD

Chiffon blouse, ₹2,999, Marks & Spencer; linen shorts, price on request, Michael Kors; leather heels, ₹4,295, Woods; metal earrings, ₹1,145, Accessorize

NIX THE MONDAY BLUES WITH A BRIGHT SHIRT TEAMED WITH CHECKERED SHORTS. F

Go, JLo!

We are so excited to see Jennifer Lopez fronting the spring 2018 campaign for Guess Jeans. Shot by fashion photographer Tatiana Gerusova, the images capture the singer in the season's hottest trends like denim overalls, checkered shorts and body-hugging jumpsuits. We are quite thrilled to see JLo channel her signature retro vibe and can't wait for these pieces to hit the racks.



NIGHT VISION

Designer Sanjay Garg continues to impress us with his ingenuity. His latest collection, Midnight, is a range of saris and other womenswear with botanical motifs. Hand-painted images of night flowers have been digitally transferred onto sheer silks in sultry purples, blues and charcoals.

PRICE: ₹19,800 onwards
AVAILABLE AT: **Raw Mango store, Colaba**



Trending

Femina's round-up of the latest news, views and buzz in fashion

HEART OF GOLD

Multi-designer jewellery platform Nimai has launched its first-ever in-house product named Promise, in collaboration with acid attack survivor Laxmi. Promise is an edgy bangle with a secret compartment to store a hand-written vow. It comes with a commitment from the brand that every month, 3 per cent from the sales will go towards fulfilling Laxmi's dreams. We totally support this novel idea.

PRICE: ₹2,990
AVAILABLE AT:
Shoynimai.com



LAUNCHES WE LOVE

Hyderabad is all set to welcome designer Masaba Gupta's largest-ever flagship store. The retail space in Banjara Hills will feature the entire House of Masaba range, plus an in-house café. Meanwhile, diamond boutique Zoya has launched its second store in Mumbai at Palladium mall. The store comes with a private viewing area, which allows customers to interact with Zoya's designers.

Long view

The classic Ray-Ban aviators has turned 80. To celebrate this iconic milestone, the brand has collaborated with artist Dewey Saunders to bring to life its story of innovation over the years with illustration and graphics on its website. Get drawn into the history of the Aviator, Wayfarer, Clubmaster and round sunglasses, all of which are presented through a captivating storyline.


AVAILABLE AT: **Ray-ban-reinvention.com**



LA DOLCE VITA

Rose-coloured silhouettes, both daring and demure, are having a major fashion moment. These B-town ladies prove that there is a shade of rouge for every woman



(From left) Kangana Ranaut in **Tony Ward**; Katrina Kaif in **Reem Acra**; Esha Gupta in **Sachin & Babi**; Alia Bhatt in **Teuta Matoshi Duriqi**; Kareena Kapoor Khan in **Rami Al Ali** 

FIGHT LIKE A GIRL

There are feminist movements and then there are inclusive feminist movements. We unite, speak up, be the change. Through a series of pristine whites and bold reds, we capture the essence of millennial women on a mission

On Jantee: Spandex bikini set,
₹6,990, **Kai Resortwear**
On Neelakshi: Spandex monokini,
price on request, **Nidhi Munim** >

I am more than my shell.

#IAMALLWOMAN

I am more than your perception of me.



*You are not alone.
In solidarity, we find strength.*

#METOO

Jersey blend
jumpsuit,
price on request,
Bhaavya
Bhatnagar

Metal rings, ₹1,145.
Accessorize

The colour of my skin doesn't define my worth. I stay un-fair.

#STAYUNFAIR



What I wear isn't a sign of consent.

My sexuality is not an invitation.

#NOTASKINGFORIT

On Neelakshi: Cotton blend dress, stylist's own

On Jantee: Cotton acrylic bodycon, price on request.

Rhea Pillai Rastogi

I march ahead.

I am unstoppable.

#WOMENLEAD

Cotton bodysuit, ₹1,399,
Srstore.in; silk organza jacket,
₹6,500, silk organza trousers,
₹5,200, both The Third Floor;
leather stilettoes, ₹3,999,
Marks & Spencer

My body is a miracle, whole and pure.

I don't need to hide at that time of the month.

#HAPPYTOBLEED

Cotton blend gown,
price on request.
Nikhil Thampi >

FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE

Since when did sticking out like a
sore thumb become a bad thing?
Let's talk. [@femina.in/gossip](https://www.instagram.com/femina.in/gossip)




IT'S BETTER
TO BE HATED
BY EVERYONE,
THAN BE KNOWN
BY NO ONE.

#GIRLSFIGHTBACK

I won't recoil, I won't give in.



I won't hold back and take it.

Mesh jacket, price
on request, Rhea
Pillai Rastogi 

PHOTOGRAPHS: SUSHANT CHHABRIA; SENIOR CREATIVE DIRECTOR: MEETESH TANEJA; HAIR AND MAKEUP: FLAVIA TOABH MODEL MANAGEMENT;
MODELS: JANTEE TOABH MODEL MANAGEMENT AND NEELAKSHI; ASSISTANT FASHION EDITOR: PRACHITI PARAKH; FASHION INTERN: NIKHITA
NIRANJAN; SENIOR PHOTO SHOOT COORDINATOR: SHRADDHA KHARPUDE; SHOOT COORDINATOR: KHUSHI BHATIA

FEMINA

BEAUTY

ADD A DASH OF **POP** TO WORK

One of the downsides of adulthood is that you have to get a job and dress the part. But if you don't want to leave your fun side at the door when you swipe in, we have the perfect solution. This fresh take on pop makeup will brighten up your Monday mornings.

POLYESTER BLEND BLAZER, PRICE ON REQUEST
MINKIE, SEE US IN KEE DOO, METAL AND PEARL EARRINGS
AND NECKPIECE, YASUNOHARA, PRICE ON REQUEST

Turn to find out how to get this look.

GET THE LOOK

Makeup artist Morag Steyn shows **Samreen Samad** how to take the pop makeup trend to work



1 After cleansing and moisturising, apply a mattifying primer on the face.



2 Follow with a BB cream for light coverage. Dab a little concealer under your eyes to brighten them up.

3 Dust translucent powder all over the face to set the base.



4 Contour face lightly to add dimension and apply a neutral blush on the apples of the cheeks. >

5 Use brown powder to fill the blank spaces in your brows to make it look fuller.



6 Apply a bright blue eyeshadow to the inner and outer corners of your eyes. Keep the centre of your eyelids bare.




7 Apply pop blue mascara on the upper and lower lashes.



FOR THE EYES, TAKE YOUR PICK FROM BOLD COLOURS LIKE GREEN, PINK AND YELLOW.



8 Finish with a brown lipstick for a 90s' vibe. 



POP-COLOURED EYES

Masked HERO

Whether your skin needs a bit more moisture, or a lit-from-within glow, these face masks will sort you out, says **Madhura Sansare**



1. **Glamglow** Bubblesheet Oxygenating Deep Cleanse Mask, ₹850 2. **Shiseido** Ihuki Beauty Sleeping Mask, ₹2,600 3. **Clinique** City Block Purifying Charcoal Clay Mask + Scrub, ₹3,300 4. **Sisley Paris** Radiant Glow Express Mask, ₹6,800 5. **The Body Shop** Japanese Matcha Tea Pollution Clearing Mask, ₹1,995 6. **L'Oréal Paris** Pure-Clay Mask, ₹850 7. **M·A·C** Mineralize Reset & Revive Charcoal Mask, ₹2,700 8. **Clarins Paris** Super Restorative Replenishing Comfort Mask, ₹5,255 9. **Kiehl's** Cilantro & Orange Extract Pollutant Defending Masque, ₹1,350 10. **Blossom Kochhar** Aroma Magic Hydrating Seaweed Pack, ₹395 11. **Forest Essentials** Facial Treatment Masque, ₹1,650 12. **Kiko Milano** Bright Lift Mask, ₹1,050 13. **Malu Wilz** Energy AHA Peel & Prepare Mask, ₹1,499



8

7

10

12

13

11

9

MAC
MINERALIZE

RESET & REVIVE
CHARCOAL MASK
MASQUE
100 ML / 3.4 FL. OZ e

CLARINS
PARIS

Masque-Baume
Repulpant
Multi-Intensif
Super Restorative
Replenishing
Comfort Mask

overnight
leave
on pack

aromatherapy skincare essentials



Blossom Kochhar
aroma
magic
hydrating
seaweed
pack

**BRIGHT
LIFT
MASK**

INTENSIVE LIFTING
EFFECT MASK
MASQUE LIFTING
INTENSIF
ALL SKIN TYPES
TOUS TYPES DE PEAUX

KIKO
MILANO

MALU WILZ
ENERGY

AHA PEEL & PREPARE
MASK

Peelingmaske
mit Fruchtsäuren

Kiehl's 1851

CILANTRO & ORANGE EXTRACT
POLLUTANT DEFENDING MASQUE

...against the visible signs of pollution such as dull, congested skin. Cilantro Extract, our hydrating, antioxidant-rich and natural oil extract, soothes and brightens skin while helping to prevent irritation from pollutants, appears smoother and looks radiant.

3.4 fl. oz. - 100 ml

FOREST ESSENTIALS

FACIAL TREATMENT
MASQUE

Mysore Sandalwood
& Nagkikyar

50g e / 1.7 oz

Kriti Sanon

NICE AND EASY

This bun is simple, glamorous and retro-chic all rolled up in one sassy knot, says **Tatiana Dias**

Bring out your glamorous side with a low bun that's tweaked to add vintage oomph to your look. If you're looking for a style to take you from brunch to cocktails with no touch-ups, your search ends here. Kriti Sanon serves up inspiration by taking this red-carpet look out into the real world.

TAKE YOUR LOW BUN FROM BRUNCH DATE TO BALLROOM.

Begin by washing your hair with a volumising shampoo and follow with a smoothing conditioner. Blow-dry and then run a paddle brush to detangle any knots. Generously spritz some texturing spray, especially around the front and the crown of your hair. Taking a rat-tail comb, part your hair in the centre till the mid-point of your scalp and then back comb the rest. Tease your crown and gently pat it down for a fuller effect. With a curling iron, create light waves at the front—run your fingers to loosen the curls for a more natural effect. Pull the hair back into a low ponytail and secure with a hair-tie. To create the bun, simply twist and wrap your hair around the ponytail and hold it together with a hair-tie and bobby pins. Delicately loosen the front of your hair with the end of rat-tail comb, making sure it covers a part of your ears. Finish with some extra hold hairspray and a shine spray for extra gloss. **F**

ACCESSORISE THE BUN WITH A BLINGY BARRETTE OR FUNKY HAIR CLIPS.



Toni & Guy Sea Salt Texturing Spray



BaByliss PRO Curling Iron



BBLunt Full On Volume Shampoo



MoroccanOil Smoothing Conditioner



Schwarzkopf Professional OSiS+ Shine Spray



Wella EIMI Super Set Extra Strong Finishing Spray

FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE



Isn't it time we did away with the
'perfect body' myth? Let's talk.
[@femina.in/fitness](https://www.femina.in/fitness)



Naked SKIN

Every skin tone requires a different shade of nude. **Madhura Sansare** gathers the best of the crop for every colour in the rainbow

1. **Aila Cosmetics**, I'm Naked! I'm Naked! ₹1,475 2. **Nykaa** Salon Pro Gel Shine Nail Lacquer, California Dreams, ₹325 3. **Rimmel London** Lycra Pro Nail Polish, Beige Style, ₹275 4. **Chambor** Gel Effect Nail Lacquer, 303, ₹325 5. **BeYu** Matt Color Nail Lacquer, Classy Nude, ₹425 6. **Oriflame** The One Long Wear Nail Polish, Cappuccino, ₹306 7. **O.P.I** Nail Lacquer, Chocolate Moose, ₹850

HOT RIGHT NOW

All that's fresh and fun on the beauty shelf

LIP LOVIN'

Smashbox expands its 'Always On' range of liquid lipsticks with 24 new, hyper-pigmented shades. Some nude, some bold, and some fiercely metallic — there's one for every mood and occasion in here. With its Advanced Polymer Technology, this budge-proof, non-feathering, water-resistant formula promises a luxurious matte finish for up to eight hours, while its Primer Oil Complex shows your lips some love and keeps them comfortable.

PRICE: ₹1,900

AVAILABLE AT: Nykaa.com



OBSESSION CENTRAL

Chambor's Extreme Matte range of products now has a brand new foundation. While it is formulated to give you a rich matte finish, your skin will thank you for the bonus hydrating action. It blends in seamlessly to accentuate your natural skin tone without caking or creasing. This shine-free, satin-finish foundation comes in four shades that are made to match Indian skin tones.

PRICE: ₹1,145

AVAILABLE AT: **Leading retail stores**



ROUND THE CLOCK

Clinique's newly launched Beyond Perfecting Super Concealer Camouflage + 24-hour Wear is the fuss-free concealer you've been looking for. Promising to be 'life-proof' (read water-, humidity-, sweat- and transfer-proof), this full-coverage concealer claims to hide every imperfection you can name without caking, creasing or fading all day. Packed with a mix of polymers and silicones, it blends flawlessly for a perfectly matte finish and feels weightless on your skin. It is available in 13 shades to pretty much match every skin tone out there.

PRICE: ₹1,950

AVAILABLE AT: **Clinique**

SORRY, NOT SORRY

shazé's bold new perfume is an ode to the woman who loves to challenge notions of feminine virtue. Aptly named 'Good To Be Bad', this seductive eau de parfum is keen on shaking off the idea that femininity is sweet. The fierce blend of woody aromas with just a hint of fruits, spices and musk is formulated to unleash your inner temptress. The bottle, complete with its silver 'devil' cap, is a total keepsake.

PRICE: ₹5,999 (100ml)

AVAILABLE AT: **Leading retail stores**



INSTANT UPGRADE

Find out what it's like to have your very own hair and makeup artiste on call with these revolutionary beauty apps. **Madhura Sansare** does a quick install

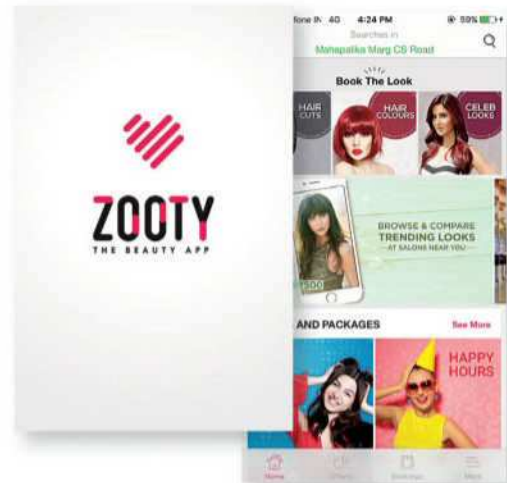
There has never been a better time to be a beauty geek. Entrepreneurs and their IT teams are working double-time to make your smartphone a combination of beautician-makeup-artiste-hairstylist. There's also a personal shopper thrown in there somewhere. Apps today can locate the best salon in your neighbourhood, demo makeup trends customised for you, and create genius skincare routines based on specific needs. Let's introduce you to the top players in the industry and explain how they're changing the way you use your phone and see yourself in the mirror.

ZOOTY

If you always find yourself unsure about where to go for your next haircut or beauty appointment, Zooty is the app for you. It made its debut in the Indian beauty industry in March 2017, and already has 6,000+ salons and spas on its database across five cities— Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Pune and Bangalore. The app lets you scroll through the best salons in your locality, compare rate cards and book an appointment. Sheetal Vasnaani, head of marketing for the brand, says, “The beauty service industry is in its infancy and is set to evolve rapidly in the next five years. While some brands have done an effective job of organising the industry, 80 per cent of it is still quite unorganised. The beauty customer of today is both discerning and value-conscious.” Besides connecting you to local salons and spas, Zooty lets you check out the latest trending looks out there—haircuts, hair colours and celebrity hairstyles; you choose the look you want to get before heading out to the salon. Vasnaani says, “Beauty services are sold merely on the stylist's descriptions and the customer can only hope that the final result turns out to be the same,” Zooty offers a one-of-a-kind ‘Book the look’ service, which allows you to combat this. With this feature, you can “choose an exact look before the service instead of getting a rude surprise later,” says Vasnaani. It also lets you get a view of offers in every salon in your vicinity, to ensure that you get the best bargain.

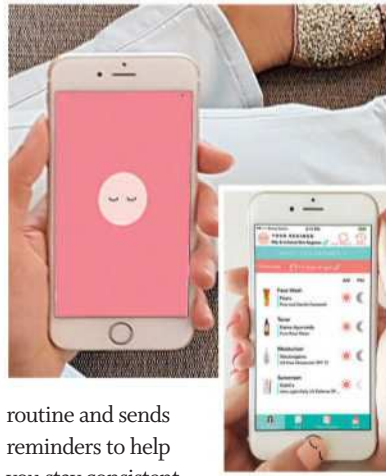
Available on: iOS and Android >

PHOTOGRAPHS: SHUTTERSTOCK



BEAUTY BUTTON

Delara Lalwani, the founder of this app, got the idea for it when she was travelling for work in South Korea. "Almost all Korean women have an amazing skin. Most people assume it's just good genes, but my decade-long career in the beauty industry told me otherwise. Koreans religiously follow skincare regimens with multiple steps. In fact, some follow as many as 18 steps daily. An average Indian woman follows two-three steps." Beauty Button lets you create and maintain a customised skincare regimen. It takes into consideration your skin type, age, issues and even the weather. Once you input your details, the app's proprietary algorithm cleverly customises a regimen, which can last a few days to a few weeks. The app lets you track your



routine and sends reminders to help you stay consistent. It also tells how many products you can use on your skin, and what time of the day is best to use them. You can read product reviews, discover trends and get skincare tips through the app. Its Photo Compare feature allows you to monitor your skin's progress.

Available on: iOS and Android

BEAUTYSTASH

Beauty junkies have numerous makeup products, and it can be a pain to keep a track of them all. The BeautyStash app organises your makeup kit by making an inventory of all the products you own. The app is divided into four parts: products, looks, collections, and tags. The products page holds images, descriptions, shade names, as well as storage unit. You can even record details of the date, price and stock where you purchased your products from, making it easier to restock or return them. The looks page lets you store any inspirations that you come across as images with details like name, description and products used. You can store looks that you have seen in magazines, on Instagram, and even ones you've created yourself. The collections page helps catalogue your storage units. You just add an image of your drawer, and type in all the products in there. This way, you'll always know exactly where your products are. Finally, the tags page lets you list out your collection to view and sort it out. This app is a makeup hoarder's dream come true.

Available on: iOS

YOUCAM MAKEUP & VISAGE MAKEAPP

"I was inspired by my own needs and frustrations as a beauty lover, particularly the process of learning about new products and trying on makeup looks," says Alice Chang, CEO, Perfect Corp, who are the creators of YouCam Makeup. By combining augmented reality and branded beauty products, YouCam Makeup attempts to address these common concerns quickly and efficiently. "The app's smart facial detection gives you the most true-to-life makeup application in real-time or on selfies," adds Chang. "You can even mix and match hundreds of different makeup and beauty products to find the perfect look for every occasion." If you're happy with your look, you can buy the actual products through the app. YouCam also offers makeup tutorials and reports on trending looks.

Available on: iOS and Android

Developed by Visage Technologies, a Swedish-based private computer-vision company that specialises in face-tracking and analysis, Visage MakeApp is technologically advanced. Kristina Šekrst, senior web developer and marketing engineer at the company, says, "As our face tracking is state-of-the-art, users can see how their makeup looks in most of the lighting conditions, different angles and distances, which reflect the natural everyday usage."

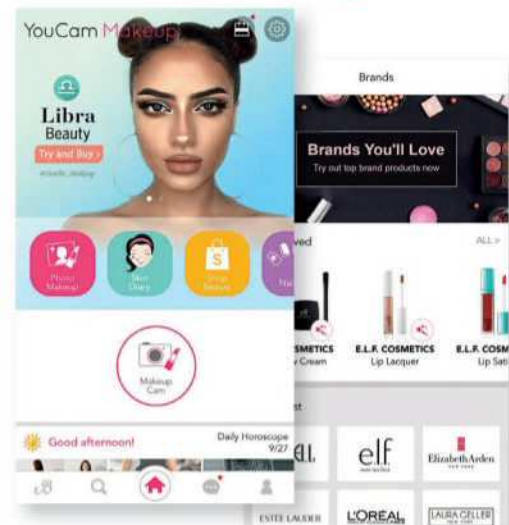
Available on: iOS and Android



MY HAIR WEATHER LITE

We've all dealt with days where our hair has forced us to throw our hands up in the air and just stuff it all up in a messy bun. What if we told you that you can drastically reduce your number of bad hair days? Enter My Hair Weather Lite. It has the weather forecast for the day in many cities around the world and predicts the state of your hair considering humidity levels, etc. It gives you tips on how to prevent frizz, limpness and other issues too. If you end up spending for the pro-version, you can get a seven-day forecast, along with a list of products to stock up on.

Available on: iOS





SEX AND THE CYCLE

Your period might make you cranky, but did you know it could also help you have great sex? **Madhura Sansare** explores the connection between sex, sensitivity and menstruation

It is often said that just like the tides, women too are ruled by the moon. Now the scientific accuracy of this statement is debatable, but there is one natural phenomenon that does rule our lives. We're talking about menstruation, of course. The menstrual cycle plays a large role in the day-to-day functioning of our lives. Even a woman's sexual experiences are governed by the highs and lows of the cycle. For example, a sexual act that felt absolutely fantastic during the middle of your cycle might feel terrible towards its end. But before we puzzle out why this happens, let's do a quick recap of Periods 101.

INSIDE YOUR MENSES

An average menstrual cycle spans 28 days, but the length may vary from woman to woman. "It is brought about by the interaction between the hormones in the body," says Dr Kiran Coelho, HOD, OB/GYN, Lilavati Hospital and Hinduja Healthcare, Mumbai. The cycle has four phases, namely menstrual, follicular, ovulation, >

and luteal. "Menstruation is the shedding of the uterine lining," says Coelho. The level of estrogen in the body is low, and fatigue and menstrual cramps caused by uterine contractions are commonplace during this time. This is followed by the follicular phase. "The pituitary gland produces Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH) that acts on the ovaries, which contains a number of eggs. Only one egg ripens out of millions as a result of FSH," she adds.

Estrogen rises, making you feel happier and sexier. Around day 12-16 of your menstrual cycle, the ovulation period begins. Orgasms are more intense and attainable during this time. So if you're someone who finds it difficult to reach climax, this is when you should go for it. "Once the egg grows to a certain dimension and size, a feedback mechanism is provided to the brain, which sets the pituitary gland off to secrete the next hormone in the chain, the luteinizing hormone," says Dr Coelho. Now this is the hormone that starts the descent of your fun play-time, and the onset of the luteal phase. "This hormone is responsible for the rupturing of the egg. This ruptured egg is then picked up by the fallopian tube, where it can get fertilised if sperm is introduced within 48 hours," she says. This egg also causes the secretion of large amounts of progesterone to thicken the uterine lining. "Progesterone also causes water retention, bloating, irritability and pre-menstrual tension among women," adds Dr Coelho. If pregnancy does not occur, these remnants disintegrate and hormonal levels are lowered, eventually prompting the next menstruation. And thus it continues, in cycles, for the largest part of a woman's life.

TALK ABOUT SEX

"It has long been recognised that there is a clear link between periodic sexual behaviour and the cyclic nature of the ovarian hormones," says Dr Saloni Suchak, consultant obstetrician and

EAT RIGHT

During menstruation, consume foods such as avocados, walnuts and chia seeds which are rich in fatty acids, to regulate the mood shifts caused due to lowered hormone levels. Sprouted and fermented foods like yoghurt and bean sprouts help break down and metabolise the rising estrogen during the follicular phase. Fresh juices and vegetables, rich in antioxidants and fibre work well to deal with the high levels of estrogen during the ovulatory phase, while foods rich in calcium and magnesium like green leafy veggies, as well as those containing vitamin B like quinoa and buckwheat help combat those dreaded mood swings during the luteal phase.



gynaecologist, Suchak Hospital, Mumbai. The periodic rise and fall of the hormones through the menstrual phases are responsible for variations in sexual preferences and behaviour. These hormones also affect the body. "Nature has intended that when estrogen increases, mucus secretion from the cervix is increased too, to enhance the mobility of the sperm," explains Coelho. Basically, not only does estrogen work to improve your mood and increase your sexual desire, it also goes ahead and facilitates sex itself. This is why sex feels amazing at specific points in your menstrual cycle. "Typically, libido is at its peak during the mid-follicular (post-menstrual) phase, but for some, it can also be during the late luteal (pre-menstrual) phase," says Dr Suchak. "Studies have shown that the maximum sexual activity among women is during the mid-follicular phase."

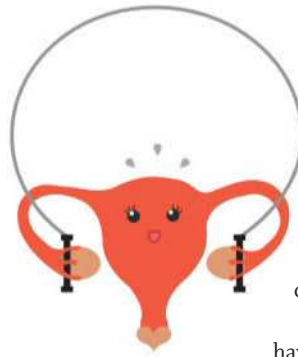
TAKE YOUR POSITIONS

A well-documented element of fertility tracking also shows a slight rise in the positioning of the cervix as you near ovulation, but there hasn't been enough research on this phenomenon. This rise of the cervix, which is likely to be positioned relatively low in the abdomen on most other days, can also be the reason that deeper-entry positions feel more comfortable around ovulation. "Sexual organs are most sensitive just >

**THE LEVEL OF ESTROGEN
IN THE BODY IS
LOW, AND FATIGUE
AND MENSTRUAL
CRAMPS ARE
COMMONPLACE DURING
MENSTRUATION.**

before menstruation as well as around ovulation due to increased blood flow towards the uterus. This happens because of the increase of estrogen in the body,” says Dr Coelho. “Even the tactile sensitivity of the breasts increases, reaching its maximum at mid-cycle because of the rise of estrogen,” adds Dr Suchak. Paying attention to these changes can help you determine your preferences to touch during different times in your cycle, and make any changes if required.

Your pain threshold is also impacted by these cyclic changes. Estrogen helps increase your tolerance to discomfort and pain, which is why you might notice that you prefer rougher stimulation during the middle of your cycle, when estrogen is high in your body. A study published in the December 2008 issue of *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* also noted that the clitoris itself increased



MENSTRUAL CYCLE WORKOUT

MENSTRUATION
YOGA, SWIMMING,
WALKING

FOLLICULAR
STRENGTH TRAINING,
HIGH-INTENSITY
INTERVAL TRAINING

OVULATION
PILATES, RUNNING

LUTEAL PHASE
POWER YOGA, INDOOR
CYCLING

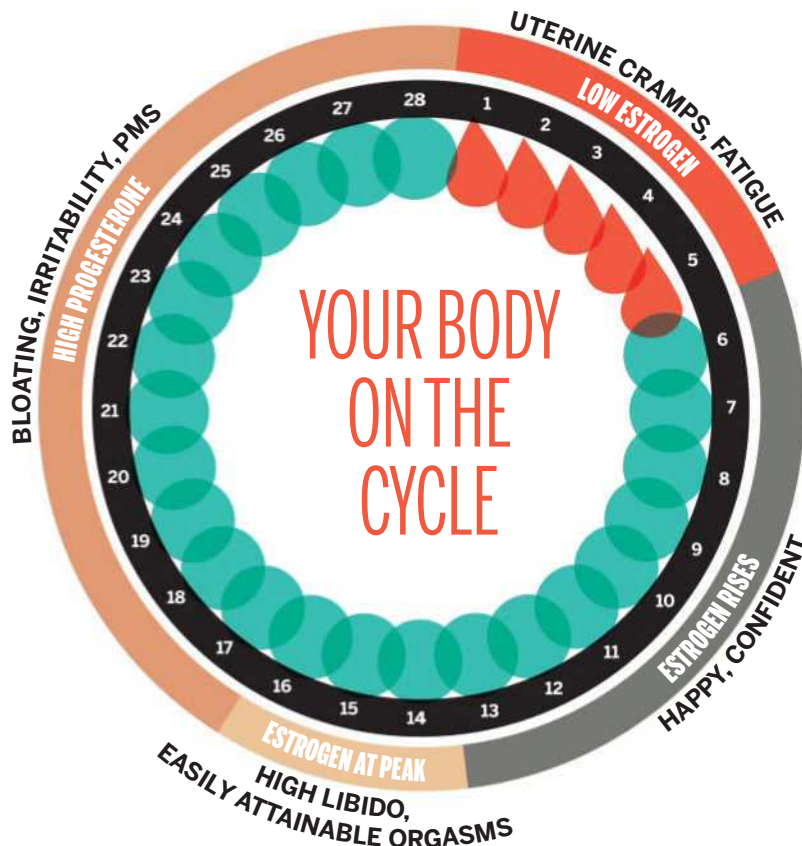
by about a fifth of its size around ovulation, and decreased before menstruation.

Now though these observations have been noted to be similar among women, they cannot be taken as a given. “Different individuals are affected differently by the menstrual cycle, thus making it difficult to draw generalisations,” says Dr Suchak. “Some women may lose all or most of their libido during the menstrual phase, while others may feel highly excitable during this time.”

NOW YOU KNOW

The best way to deal with these constant changes is to understand what is happening to your body and when. For example, during menstruation itself, opt for some light exercises to up the serotonin levels in your body, and keep you focused on the good things in life. The follicular period is the best time to have fun with sex, and experiment to your heart’s desire. As you move towards ovulation and start experiencing hormonal changes, eat healthy to combat the tiredness, the intense emotions and the occasional breakouts on your face. As the progesterone rises in your body, causing bloating and soreness in the breasts, it’s a great idea to exercise more. Cutting down on caffeine, avoiding sugar and making sure you stay hydrated can also help ease the discomfort. Despite the lowered libido, this might be a good time to explore and find out what works for you.

Though your body does go through cyclic changes and has a major say in how you feel at what time, your hormones don’t have to dictate everything. The idea is not to have sex when you don’t feel like it, but instead to explore the opportunities and not be enslaved by your menstrual cycle. We’re already breaking the chains that try to restrain a woman’s power in society—what’s another one, right? **F**



Shelter from the storm

Has anyone ever told you you're too sensitive? Smarita Sengupta, who provides a safe space for survivors of human trafficking, is proof that there is no such thing.

Nikita Sawant chats with the crusader

Growing up, Smarita Sengupta was a shy kid. By her own admission, she wasn't particularly brilliant and had self-esteem issues. So much so that her parents were concerned about how she would get on in life. She was also a very sensitive child. Seeing a child work in a tea shop or a security guard standing for hours on duty would make her sad. It wasn't until much later that she realised she didn't have to look away from such injustices—she could make a difference by getting closer to the problem.

The epiphany came when Sengupta started working in an NGO called Apne Aap, where she was introduced to the gory world of sex trafficking. She recalls, "During my stint there, I visited brothels and shelter homes. I became close to the children who were trafficked and rescued, started thinking about their future, and that sort of pushed me towards working for this cause."

Sengupta set up Destiny Foundation in Kolkata in 2008 for just this reason—to rehabilitate trafficking survivors. A sustainable hybrid model, the foundation has both charitable and business wings. "The charitable wing caters to

younger victims of sex trafficking. We have training programmes for different age groups. We motivate them to study, help them boost their creativity and intelligence, equip them with job-oriented skills, and help them restore their mental health," says Sengupta. The business wing of the foundation is where survivors are trained to earn a livelihood. "We train women to make fashion accessories like scarves, clutches, bags, bookmarks and other items that we sell worldwide. We're planning to set up a website where people can buy our products; as of now, whoever wants to buy our products have to write to us."

Currently, Destiny Foundation has 21 full-time employees who work with over 150 survivors. The foundation has partnerships with shelter homes across West Bengal where survivors are placed post rescue. The team works with a lot of children who were victims of sex trafficking. "They all come with a lot of mental baggage, mistrust and anger issues. Many of them are minor mothers who have had babies at the age of 15 or 16. Some of them have damaged bones due to severe beating in brothels. Many of them were cheated by their neighbours, family members,



"These survivors have helped me become efficient, impact-oriented and, of course, a better human being."

boyfriends and husbands," says Sengupta. Helping these survivors may be rewarding, but the work never gets easy. "I get courage from the women and children I work with, but it is emotionally draining. These survivors have helped me become efficient, impact-oriented and, of course, a better human being," she says.

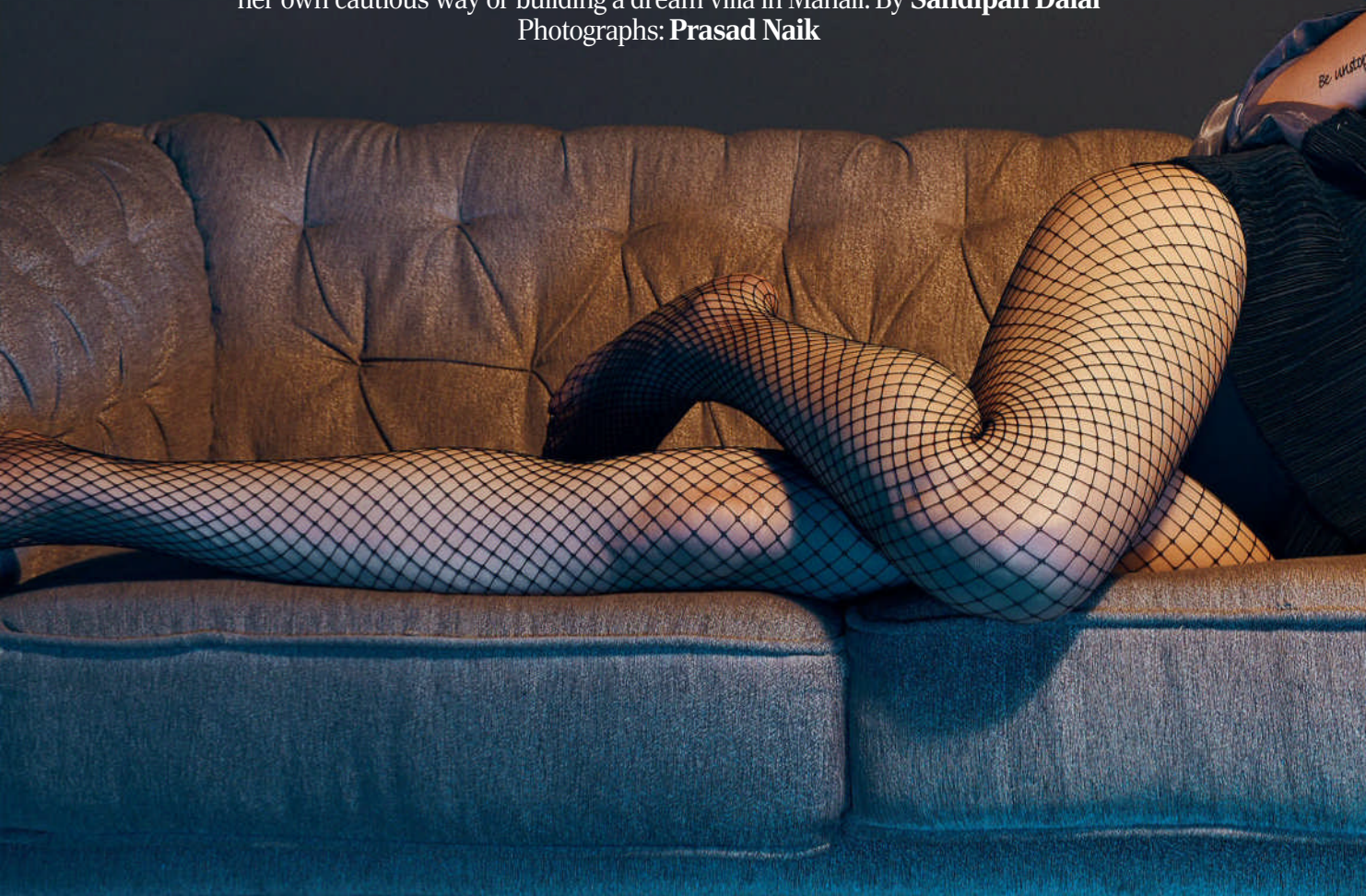
Sengupta adds, "It's nice to see young women who were once victims

trying to find out ways to stop trafficking. Some survivors have also taken up leadership roles within the organisation."

The story doesn't end there—not if Sengupta has any say in the matter. "We don't just consider ourselves a safe place to get trained and earn a livelihood. We want to grow as a business, too, and provide these women with a platform to showcase their products."

WARRIOR QUEEN

For someone who's been in the news so much, Kangana Ranaut still has the power to surprise you—whether she's defying death on the sets of her new film, looking for love in her own cautious way or building a dream villa in Manali. By **Sandipan Dalal**
Photographs: **Prasad Naik**





L

Looking back on 2017, one moment lights up Kangana Ranaut, the memory of it breaking her face into a divine smile. Collecting snowflakes in her palms outside her eco-friendly villa nestled in an organic farm in Manali on a cold December evening. For the 30-year-old star, it was another personal milestone—her farm has been nearly two years in the making. Turns out, the year was just as significant for her personally as it was for her fiery public persona, which has been a tabloid and front page staple.

In September, she started work on what she acknowledges as the most challenging film of her life, *Manikarnika: The Queen Of Jhansi*, in which she plays Rani Lakshmbai. It's a historical figure Ranaut looked up to during her growing years. Determined to do justice to the role, the actor performed stunts that left her with 15 stitches on her forehead, a visible scar and a painful ligament injury. As work on the film wraps up and Ranaut approaches her 31st birthday on March 23, we catch her in an introspective mood.

You've just finished taping for your film *Manikarnika: The Queen Of Jhansi*, which left you with several stitches on your forehead and a twisted ankle. Was it the most challenging film of your life?

According to me, Rani Lakshmbai is one of the most prominent feminists India has ever seen. Even before she started the rebel movement in 1857 and led an army of women, she fought for important things. She has always been an inspirational figure to me, and I have been meaning to do a film based on her life and times for a few years now. A few collaborations were in the making, but they fell through for various >

reasons. As director R Krishna and his writers (who wrote *Baahubali*) narrated their vision of Rani Lakshmi Bai, I literally started clapping—even though their story focused on the warrior in Rani Lakshmi Bai. I just had to do the film, and it required me to train under stunt and action director Nick Powell (*The Three Musketeers*, *The Bourne Identity*) in various disciplines for a month, including combat, sword fighting and horse riding. This role turned out to be the most challenging one of my life. I got injured a few times during some death-defying stunts with real swords. Of course, they were blunt, but they left me with a deep cut on my forehead between my eyebrows—my bone was left exposed. But luckily, we were filming in Hyderabad and I could get a good surgeon to stitch it up. I also tore a crucial ligament in my ankle. This film has literally taken my blood (laughs).

Simran was inspired from true events, too. All your characters are strong, empowered women. Do you make a conscious decision to pick such parts?

It's high time that as women artistes we started essaying these roles because we don't have the right role models on screen today. *Simran* received its fair share of criticism, but the underlying message was that a divorced woman cannot be denied her right to a life. I'm glad times are changing, and I'm getting roles to play that are empowering not only for the audience, but for me too. It's very liberating.

You have also been a trailblazer from your family, being the first woman to start working in theatre even while you were in college and then becoming an actor on your own steam.

The dignity of women and children in our country is underrated. People feel that young children cannot be their own person. But the truth is, you become your own person from a very young age.

I feel this lack of dignity and respect in the environment where I grew up pushed me to become who I am and shaped my life and career.

The other historical film that has been in the news is *Padmaavat*. Have you seen the film?

Honestly, I have not seen the film.

Swara Bhasker wrote an open letter to Sanjay Leela Bhansali on what she felt while watching the film, and many dismissed it as an attention-seeking tactic. What did you make of it?

As an artiste, I can tell you that a film's story, theme and morale can sometimes be in sync, and sometimes, it can also be a sceptical paradox. So a film about

"THE TRUTH IS,
YOU BECOME
YOUR OWN
PERSON FROM
A VERY
YOUNG AGE."

great brutality can also teach you lessons in humanity. But a filmmaker has the liberty to tell his narrative. It's up to him if he wants to make frivolous stuff or work with a higher purpose. Coming to *Swara*, it's very disturbing to see how she is being called names and slut-shamed into silence. It only goes to show that society has become scared of the movement women professionals have started in this country. The people who are trying to silence Swara are the people who treat women badly; why else are they so affected by this letter? What is so offensive about it? She has written a courteous and decent piece. We live in a toxic society so hostile to women that unimaginable crimes happen against us. The only remedy is to give attention to women's voices. I read

somewhere that Mr Bhansali has said *jauhar* was the character's way of winning the war. That's equally controversial, and one of the most insensitive things to say. Why isn't anyone saying anything to that? Do you see the sexism there? There is no reaction to that because a man said it.

What does feminism mean to you today?

Two years ago, feminism was a word that no one wanted to be associated with in the film industry. I was asked pointedly on a talk show if I considered myself a feminist. I paused because I didn't want to be perceived as a male-basher. But today, the connotation has changed around the globe and all we are asking for is equality. I feel we should encourage everyone to be a feminist. Whether you are a woman or a man, you can be a feminist if you believe in equality and in protecting your own rights.

You are also a screenplay writer. Are there any stories close to your heart that may find their way to the big screen?

I have a few ideas but I'm committed to my acting assignments for now. My next film is *Mental Hai Kya*, which is written by a woman screenplay writer, Kanika. The story is about a woman who could be a murderer or a mentally ill person. It talks about mental health, but also has a light-heartedness to it.

How does it feel to be on the cover of *Femina's* Women's Day issue for the second time?

I'm thrilled! Apart from being the largest women's magazine, you all have been consistent in encouraging girl love. It's really a Women's Day gift for me.

For the last cover, you had collaborated with your sister Rangoli Chandel, who was your manager and spokesperson at the time. What's your relationship with your sister today?

Rangoli has never been an ambitious

"WHETHER
A WOMAN OR
MAN, YOU CAN
BE A FEMINIST
IF YOU BELIEVE
IN EQUALITY."

person. She has always had a close set of people that she cares deeply for and confides in. And today as mother to her baby (Prithviraj), she is even more exclusive. This baby is the centre of Rangoli's existence today. Sometimes I only get to talk to her once in three days. I feel bad that her priorities have changed today (smiles). And I don't have the attention, love and companionship that I had received from her in the past. It was a big shift for me when Rangoli decided to move back to Manali with her husband (Ajay) to concentrate on her family life. They are also building a hotel there. My nephew is cute and it was a special feeling when I held him for the first time because he bears an uncanny resemblance to Rangoli and me. But I cannot deny that I miss the old days with my sister.

Today, you are on your own in a manner of speaking, and you have conducted yourself well even when your paths crossed somewhat messily with Karan Johar on his talk show last year. What have your interactions with him been like since?

We are not the best of friends, as you're probably aware. But we had a professional interaction. I don't mind a creative collaboration with him, even if we don't subscribe to the same ideologies. I'm not going to miss out on a work opportunity over this. Also, as an actor I want to remain close to my audience through TV and digital platforms too. >

SPANDEX SWIMSUIT: ₹6,699; CALVIN KLEIN: LEATHER JACKET, PRICE ON REQUEST; DIOR: FISHNET STOCKINGS; STYLIST'S OWN: CRYSTAL EARRINGS: ₹10,900; SWAROVSKI: METAL RING: ₹4,891; METAL RING: ₹9,528; BOTH MERAKIN; PVC STILETTOS, PRICE ON REQUEST; CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



"I WANT TO HAVE CHILDREN BUT MY WORK WILL ALWAYS BE MY FIRST BABY."



person you are. It's easier to find love during your growing years because one is so raw, undefined and easy-going. As time goes by, you want something else, and it's hard to find.

What are your expectations from your partner today?

In my early 20s, my idea of a partner was more *filmi*; my expectations are very different today. As you get older, you no longer want to put the other person ahead of you. Your own fulfillment becomes important and you want someone who can keep up.

Your last relationship with an actor ran its course, and the break-up was widely reported. Are you more cautious today?

I was cautious then and even the other person was. We didn't have unreal expectations from each other. But, unfortunately, events that unfolded in his life pushed him to make false promises. It was not wrong all along. And it's not that I could have helped him because these are events in his life. There are relationships where I had made mistakes but this one has to be one of the relationships where I was unlucky.

Have you met any eligible men in recent times?

Yes, I have, and I'm at the stage that comes before dating.

Do you believe in the institution of marriage?

I do. I definitely want to get married. I'm thinking more and more about finding a solid relationship and having a family. Meeting the right guy is on the to-do list. Frivolous dating and going for midnight walks and drives are not things that interest me anymore. I want to have children, but my work will always be my first baby. Actually, Prithvi is as good as my own baby. **F**

Do you manage your own finances today?

Yes, it has been a big shift and I'm learning on the job. I filed my taxes last year with help from my chartered accountant.

What do you like to invest in?

People think property is not the best investment option today, but I have recently bought an office space in Pali Hill in Bandra, Mumbai. It's not functional yet, but I want it to be clean and chic. I want a lot of natural stone, wood work and greenery.

Your eco-friendly farmhouse in Manali is ready, and you brought in the New Year there. Was it a dream come true?

I'm an environmentalist and I'm glad I could manage to get the house ready in December. The house is surrounded by a lot of cultivable land that I intend to use to grow vegetables and fruits in. I'm planning to grow strawberries, avocado, wheat, broccoli and kiwi.

You live life in the fast lane. Does it leave you with any time to have a relationship?

Honestly, it's not about the work, but the

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SPEED DEMON

Mira Erda has been flirting with the physics of Formula One racing since she was nine. **Nikita Sawant** catches up with the 17-year-old in a tearing hurry

Mira Erda may look like a regular teenager who does regular teenager things like going to college, hanging with friends and having slumber parties. But there's much more to her than meets the eye. This young woman from Vadodara has been living life in the fast lane since she got into a go-kart as a little girl. Erda is now a Formula One racer and is the youngest woman to have entered the Euro

JK series, one of the highest classes of formula racing in the country. Among her many achievements is ranking third at the JK Tyre-MMS Rotax Rookie Cup 2011 and fifth at the All Stars Karting 2012 Invitational Yamaha SL International. Erda, who has participated in about 75 races already, tells us about the thrill of the race.

Was there a pivotal moment that brought you to racing?

I was eight when my dad opened a go-karting shack in Vadodara and I'd often go there with my cousins. I started racing at the age of nine and I enjoyed it immensely. My dad noticed my interest and asked me if I wanted to take up motorsports seriously. I thought, why not give it a try. So we went to Pune to participate in a go-karting championship. I trained for a couple of days there, had six days of practice, and entered the competition.

Did racing cars so young change your personality in any way?

Of course. Racing has helped me see that if >



**“RACING HAS HELPED ME
SEE THAT IF I WANT SOMETHING,
I HAVE TO PUSH MYSELF
TO GET IT.”**



“I’M A TOTALLY DIFFERENT PERSON WHEN I’M ON THE TRACK. I FORGET EVERYTHING AND JUST RACE.”

I want something, I have to push myself to get it. When I started, there weren’t many girls in racing. Many of the guys I raced with didn’t really appreciate a girl competing with them. They would try to push me off the track and demotivate me. My friends didn’t exactly know what I did, either. Later, when they came to know that I race and that I’m actually pretty good at it, they started encouraging me.

You’re the youngest female driver to have competed in the Euro JK series. How did you pull that off?

It was quite a big deal for me to participate in this series. I remember when I went to Malaysia, I saw this stunning Formula BMW car and I dreamed of driving it someday. I used to drive a Formula LGB car till last year. I won the National Rookie Championship in Formula LGB, which gave me the chance to race in Euro JK this year. It was a thrilling experience; I was used to driving at a top speed of 180 km/hour, and I touched 230 km/hour in this series. But before I could participate, I went to Malaysia again to learn to drive the

Formula BMW and trained under racer Armaan Ebrahim.

How would you describe the experience of driving a car at 230 kmph?

I can only say that I’m a totally different person when I’m on the track. I forget everything and just race. It makes me feel like the track is where I belong and racing is what I was born to do. One thing I would say is that the people who drive recklessly on the streets, showing off their cars, are not racers. People who think that street racing is the real deal are mistaken. Genuine racing happens in a closed circuit and in a controlled environment, with safety precautions in place.

What’s the most dangerous form of racing?

According to me, the most risky form of racing is rallying, which takes place on roads in modified cars. It’s possible to lose control of the car since sometimes races happen on gravel and even on mountainsides. But if the driver has complete control over his car, there’s no reason for it to be dangerous.

What aspect of physical fitness is most sorely tested by racing?

I think it is stamina. The guys I competed with were much tougher and had more stamina than me. Compared to them, I would get tired easily and give up. Upper body strength is also something race-car drivers need to focus on. Our arms need the strength to control the steering and keep the car on track.

Do you follow a routine before a big race?

Absolutely. 10-15 minutes before a race, I just shut myself off from everyone. I visualise the circuit and how I should drive in order to win.

What’s the next big milestone?

Racing in international championships! We don’t have any Formula One drivers from India right now. We had Narain Karthikeyan and Karun Chandhok, of course, but there hasn’t been a girl who has represented India so far. I really want to be the first female to do so. I’ve done international go-karting competitions, but it’s time to try out Formula One now. 

NO FILTER REQUIRED

Amyra Dastur has been making news as a rising star and someone who isn't afraid of being seen for who she is. Chirag Mohanty Samal speaks to the gutsy young actor

In Bollywood, where newcomers are expected to walk a tightrope, Amyra Dastur did the unexpected. She was just two films old when she spoke to *Bombay Times* in a front-page interview about her anxiety, depression and anger issues. "Yes, I am undergoing therapy right now. After this interview, I am going to meet my psychiatrist. I feel very depressed at times." She revealed a side of her that many in the entertainment industry work hard to hide.

Professionally, Dastur is going places, quite literally. Besides Hindi films, she's also worked in Tamil cinema, has signed on a Telugu project, and was seen opposite Jackie Chan in the Indo-Chinese movie, *Kung Fu Yoga*. We talk to the 23-year-old about what it's been like to navigate this short but eventful career so far.

You had smashed your wrist into a glass table as a kid when your mother didn't pick your call and had to drop a year of school as you couldn't write for nine months. What made you speak about your anger issues?

I don't see anything wrong with being honest. My life is far from perfect. When I check my Instagram, Twitter or Facebook page, I always see one or two comments from my fans saying that I've inspired them somehow. Those comments are what make me want to talk about my issues. I want to show my fans and the world that it's okay to be imperfect, and the more accepting we become of this fact, the more it will help us overcome our issues.

How did you deal with your anxiety issues?

To be honest, I'm still dealing with anxiety and anger issues. Things, however, have definitely >





gotten better. What happened with me had more to do with the company that I had surrounded myself with. In my case, it took one bitter individual to make me feel bad about myself. The day I cut off from that person was the day I truly started respecting myself again. So my advice to people is to surround yourself with family and friends who make you feel happy and contented.

Onto happier things, how did you land a role with Jackie Chan in *Kung Fu Yoga*? What has been your biggest learning from him?

I just auditioned for it! I got a call from (casting director) Mukesh Chhabra, asking me to come audition for an English film. He didn't tell me the name of the film or the part that I was trying out for. He just gave me a reference in terms of the character's look (Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft). It took me 30-40 minutes to learn the lines and then I went in for the audition. I didn't hear back from the team for a month, so I forgot about it. Mukesh called me a couple of weeks later and told me I had got the part in this full-blown Hollywood production, a Jackie Chan film! I still can't believe I had the honour of sharing screen-space with the legend himself. Jackie is one of the nicest celebrities I've ever

“My advice to people is to surround yourself with family and friends who make you feel happy and contented.”

met. He came from a humble background and counts his blessings every single day. He told me to remember where I come from and never be ashamed of who I was.

Bollywood can sometimes be unkind to outsiders. What has your experience been?

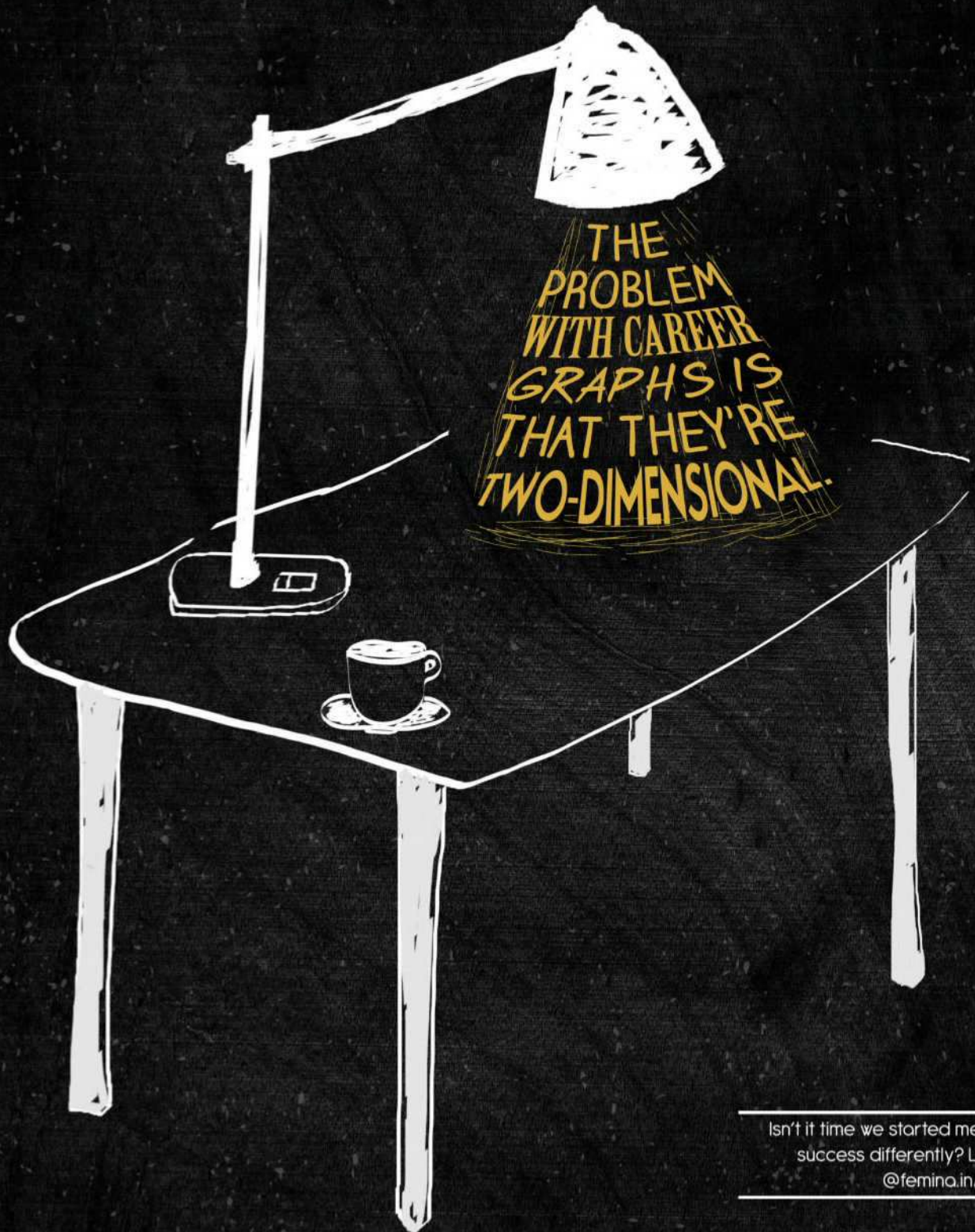
I do feel like an outsider sometimes, not because of the people in the industry, but because I'm still learning the ropes. I've dealt with my fair share of idiots, but that hasn't fazed me. I haven't been in any really horrible situations, but I also never go to a meeting or audition alone. My long-term manager always accompanies me and that itself limits any chances for unprofessional conduct. It's true that this has been quite a struggle, but every job has its ups and downs.

How are the southern film industries different from Bollywood?

The south has been more receptive towards me. My Tamil film *Anegan* was a super hit and earned me a lot of love and support. >

FEMINA

BE UNSTOPPABLE



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QUOTE UNQUOTE

"I do feel like an outsider sometimes, not because of the people in the industry, but because I'm still learning the ropes."

"Starting my career at the age of 16 was the best thing I could've done. It gave me a sense of independence at a young age."

having someone make me feel inadequate was too much for me. Speaking to a counsellor helped me gain some clarity and tackle my situation better than I thought I could. Bottling up your feelings can do great harm to you. It took a lot of time for me to build up the courage and tell my parents that I needed to speak to someone apart from my friends and family (about depression). They understood, and I began healing slowly, but it was a start to something better.

Friendships and relationships can be difficult to form and maintain in the film industry, or so we hear. What's your take on it?

Relationships in our line of work are extremely hard to maintain. We travel for months at a time for shoots and that can create a rift between partners. Starting a relationship with someone is easy, but sustaining that relationship takes a lot of time, energy, understanding and maturity from both parties. I feel a little too young for relationships at this point in my career, and I've realised that I genuinely do not have time for one now. However, I do have friends in the industry, like Erika Packard, Sapna Pabbi, Rahul Jhangiani and Nora Fatehi.

You've been modelling since you were 16. How has it shaped you as a person?

Starting my career at the age of 16 was the best thing I could've done. It gave me a sense of independence at a young age. I see some of my contemporaries learning things now that I learnt back then.

What's the road ahead for you?

I'm working on a Tamil film called *Odi Odi Uzhaikkanum*, and I'm doing a special appearance in a Bollywood film that I'm not allowed to discuss yet. All I want to do is work hard and do good films. **f**

"I feel a little too young for relationships at this point in my career, and I've realised that I genuinely do not have time for one now."

Acting in another language was really hard for me in the beginning, but I got the hang of it soon and now I can't wait for my next Tamil film to complete production and release.

After joining Bollywood, you revealed that you were undergoing therapy for depression. Tell us about that phase.

That was a really hard time for me. I was in the middle of two movie promotion schedules (*Anegan* and *Mr X*) and was in bad company. The pressure of the movies combined with





‘MY EARLIEST MEMORIES ARE OF MUSIC’

Singer par excellence Arijit Singh talks to **Nikita Sawant** about his earliest music memory, what inspires him and his first-ever India tour

My Wiki page in my words

CHILD'S PLAY

I come from a small place called Jiaganj in West Bengal. I was passionate about music since childhood. I would perform at a lot of local clubs, and learned to play tabla at a pretty young age.

EARLIEST SONG

I've been singing for as long as I can remember. I once sang Raag Bhoopali for 30 minutes—it's one of my earliest memories. I think I was in class 2 at the time.

HIGH NOTES

My *guruji* wanted me to leave Jiaganj and start working in cities like Kolkata and Mumbai, because there were more opportunities there. I did everything he wanted me to do. He passed away in 2007, but his words have always served as my inspiration. >



“MY BAND AND TECHNICAL TEAM ARE WORKING VERY HARD TO MAKE EVERYTHING PERFECT FOR MY FIRST-EVER INDIA TOUR.”

PERFORMING VS RECORDING

Both are very different experiences. I can interact and enjoy with the audience while performing live; you don't have to think of perfection that much. But studio recording is very technical and requires precision.

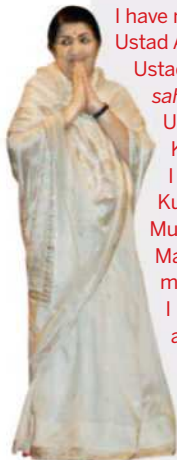
FIRST TIME EVER

My band and technical team are working very hard to make everything perfect for my first-ever India tour that will take place over four months. If we achieve what we are working on, then it's going to be an amazing experience for everyone. We are trying to do something we have never done before. My first show took place on December 24 in Kolkata. I was interacting constantly with the audience and it was exhilarating to see them respond with equal enthusiasm. It was something else altogether. We're going to have shows in Chandigarh, Gurgaon, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Indore and Mumbai as well.

Rapid fire

One song you wish you had sung.
I used to feel that way about certain songs before, but not anymore.

Your favourite singer.
I can't name just one. I have many favourites—Ustad Amir Khan *sahab*, Ustad Rashid Khan *sahab*, Ravi Shankar, Ustad Amjad Ali Khan *sahab*. I love Kishore Kumar, Hemanta Mukherjee and Lata Mangeshkar. From more recent times, I love Jagjit Singh and Sonu Nigam—they are my idols. KK, Atif Aslam and Papon are my current



favourites. From the west, I admire Robbie Williams, John Legend and John Mayer.

Your favourite film score.
Jab Harry Met Sejal.

Your favourite music genre.
Ghazals and semi-classical Indian.

One international artiste you want to collaborate with.
Norah Jones. I love her music.

Your perfect Sunday afternoon.
It would definitely involve good food and music.

Describe your singing style.
Relatable, passionate, for the fans.

Your favourite beverage.
Chai.

Your definition of great music.
It should be something people feel connected to.

Your favourite book growing up.
I don't have one favourite book, although I love classic Indian literature.

One song you've been listening to on loop.
Songs based on Raag Bhoopali.



Trends *this fortnight*

The latest in food, travel and interiors



TANGY DELIGHT

Red onion jam

2 tbsp olive oil
1 kg red onions,
thinly sliced
1 cup dry red wine
1/3 cup light
brown sugar
1 tbsp fresh
thyme, chopped
1/2 tsp freshly
ground black pepper
2 tbsp balsamic
vinegar
1/2 tsp salt

1. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium heat and then add the thinly sliced

onions. Cook until softened, stirring occasionally.

2. Add red wine, brown sugar, thyme, vinegar and salt.
3. After bringing to a boil, reduce the heat and let it simmer until the mixture thickens

and becomes syrupy, while stirring continuously.

4. Turn off the heat and transfer to a bowl. Let it cool before serving.
5. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to two weeks.



LOCALLY SOURCED

Designed to help you identify the best things to see and do in dozens of cities around the globe, Musement allows you to live like a local wherever you go. As all its information comes from the people who know

the place best—the natives—this app offers a 'can't miss' experience. Book tickets to museums, attractions, sporting events or make reservations at restaurants and get the tickets instantly delivered to the app. Simply select a destination and use the filters to choose from a range of experiences. Available for over 350 destinations around the world, including Budapest, Naples and Pisa, download the app for free on Android and iOS.

DÉCOR DIY

Mini marquee light



You need: Foam board, poster board, scissors, paper, hot glue gun, battery operated LED lights, spray paints, pencil

→ Trace a word of your choice



the word on to the foam board.

→ Use the tip of a pencil to poke holes from the front and back.

→ Cut two-inch

wide strips from the poster board.

→ Holding the strip up to your word, mark with a pencil where it needs to fold.

→ Score this mark and fold along it. Keep re-fitting it around your work, while marking the next fold.

→ With the help of a glue gun, stick the cut strips to your word.

→ Once you're done outlining the letter, spray paint it.

→ Poke your lights through the holes until no wire shows from the front.

→ Place this either at your work desk or next to your bedside.



Repinned by [Femina](#) on to [DIY](#)

SUGAR & SPICE

Vishal Atreya, executive chef at JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu, introduces you to the joys of infusing dessert with herby, spicy flavours. By **Gia Claudette Fernandes**

SMOOTH PUNCH MANGO & NUTMEG PANNA COTTA



1 litre
cooking cream

200 g
caster sugar

200 g
mango pulp

10 g nutmeg
powder

1/2 tsp vanilla
essence

30 g gelatine

**Calorie
count:**
300 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: 4 > PREP TIME: 15 minutes > COOKING TIME: 40 minutes

1. Pour the cream, caster sugar, mango pulp and nutmeg powder into a pan and bring to boil, while stirring continuously.
2. Add vanilla essence and take off the heat. Cool the mixture in an ice bath.
3. Meanwhile, melt the gelatine and pour into the mixture.
4. Mix well and transfer to a glass dish or mould. Refrigerate until set.
5. Serve chilled.

TIP: NOT A FAN OF NUTMEG? YOU CAN SUBSTITUTE IT WITH ALLSPICE OR CINNAMON.

CREAM DROP

TULSI GULAB JAMUN CHEESECAKE

1 kg cream
cheese
750 g caster
sugar
9 whole eggs



5 g tulsi leaves,
chopped
200 g Angoori
gulab jamun

SERVES: 4 > **PREP TIME:** 15 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 40 minutes

1. In a mixing bowl, beat together the cream cheese and caster sugar, while adding the eggs one at a time.
2. Once the mixture is fluffy, add chopped tulsi leaves.
3. Bake at 160°C for 35 to 40 minutes.
4. Serve in a glass bowl, topped with Angoori gulab jamun. >

**Calorie
count:**
350 calories
(per serving)

TIP: FOR A MORE REFRESHING SMACK, YOU CAN REPLACE THE TULSI WITH MINT LEAVES.

FRESH CRUNCH

ROSEMARY & APPLE TART



For the tart base
(sweet paste)

- 500 g butter
- 250 g caster sugar
- 750 g flour

For the filling

- 500 g apples
- 15 g caster sugar
- 5 g butter
- 2 g rosemary

Calorie count:
300 calories
(per serving)

SERVES: 4 > **PREP TIME:** 20 minutes > **COOKING TIME:** 15 minutes

1. Combine the flour, butter and caster sugar to make a dough.
2. After kneading, refrigerate the dough for at least three hours.
3. Once set, make a tart shell of the sweet dough and bake at 180°C for 15 minutes.
4. To make the filling, cut the apples into cubes and toss and cook them in a mixture of caster sugar and rosemary.
5. Add butter to the cooked mixture and stir well.
6. Once the mixture has cooled and set, pour it into the baked sweet tart shell. **F**

TIP: SWAP THE SWEET PASTE WITH PUFF PASTRY FOR A CRUNCHIER, FLAKIER TEXTURE.

SWEET CHARIOT

The Lucknow Cookbook by mother-daughter duo Chand Sur and Sunita Kohli is a tribute to the city's rich traditions and culture, especially in the kitchen. Here are three desserts from the book's 'Meetha' section

Rabarhi

(Milk pudding)

INGREDIENTS

- 3 litres milk
- 350 g sugar
- 5 drops khus water
- 12 pistachios, slivered
- 2-3 chandi varq (silver leaf)

METHOD

- Pour the milk into a kadhai and bring to a boil. Reduce to a low flame, stirring continuously for 20-25 minutes.
- Then stir every five minutes until the milk is reduced to approximately four cups and has acquired a granular consistency.
- Remove from the fire and add the sugar, stirring continuously until completely dissolved. Then stir in the vetiver (khus) drops. Let it cool.
- Transfer into a serving dish and garnish with the pistachio slivers. Refrigerate. Before serving, decorate with silver leaf.



Aam malai

(Mango cream dessert)

INGREDIENTS

- 6 well-ripened mangoes, puréed
- 3/4 cup + 1 tbsp heavy cream
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp powdered gelatine or 1 1/2 unflavoured envelopes

METHOD

- Add the cream and sugar to the mango purée, and mix well.
- Prepare the gelatine by

dissolving it in half a cup of boiling water, stirring continuously until it is fully dissolved. Pour into the mango mixture and whisk well.

- Transfer the mixture into a serving bowl, swirl a tablespoon of cream over the top and refrigerate for three to four hours, until the mango cream is set.
- Serve chilled.
- This can also be set and served in individual glass bowls.

Phirni

(Rice pudding)

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup basmati rice
- 1 litre milk
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 1 tbsp kewra water
- 2 drops rose water
- 1 tsp saffron
- 1 tsp green cardamom, freshly crushed
- 2 leaves chandi ka varq (silver leaf)
- For garnishing
- Rose petals
- 4 tsp almonds/pistachios, slivered

METHOD

- Wash the rice and soak it in water for an hour. Drain and pound the rice. Add a little milk to it to make a fine paste.
- Boil the rest of the milk with crushed green cardamom pods and add the rice paste to it. Stir continuously so that lumps do not form. When the mixture becomes thick and creamy, add sugar and cook for five minutes. Add both the essences and cover. Take off the fire, add the saffron and stir continuously while it cools.
- Transfer into a large glass or earthenware dish (shikoras) or into individual glass bowls/ramekins.
- Leave to set and cool in the fridge for half an hour. Before serving, pour into a serving bowl, decorate with silver leaf, rose petals and slivered nuts (almonds or pistachios). Phirni can also be prepared a day before it is required to be served. It keeps well in the fridge.

Note: If using the shikoras, rinse in running water and then immerse in a pot full of water for 25 minutes. Remove and pat dry before using them. 📷



PLOT YOUR PORTIONS

This one is a no-brainer but it can be tough to manage. Eat smaller portions at lunch to avoid keeling over even before the clock strikes 3. A small salad, a portion of veggies, some rice or rotis, and a bowl of dal is more than enough to keep you going until snack time.

POWER LUNCH

Your midday meal can affect everything, from your mood to your productivity levels. **Gia Claudette Fernandes** has pointers on making it a good one

It's early in the week and you're already drowning under the pile of work that's been steadily rising. So, you think of softening the blow by ordering your favourite comfort food for lunch. Hold that thought though, because the choices that you make could very well heighten those weekday blues. You want to eat

a lunch that keeps you going and doesn't just sit in your tummy, overstaying its welcome. You want foods that will help you stay alert and focused after lunch and not leave you permanently hooked to the coffee machine. You want a few easy pointers on how to put together this magical meal. That's where we come in.

BEWARE THE SPIKE

Avoid refined and processed foods as they leave you groaning and dozing at your desk the rest of the day. Stay away from refined white flour, sugar and potatoes. Yes, you love them, but all they will do is spike your blood sugar levels and bring your energy crashing down soon after, leaving you hungry and craving for more.



LEAN INTO PROTEIN

Lean protein is really good for you, so you can happily reach out for eggs, tofu, pulses and legumes. These foods energise you and take longer to digest, keeping you satiated for a while.

FORAGE FOR FIBRE

Fibre helps with controlling blood sugar as it slows down the absorption of carbohydrates as well sugars. Besides, all the roughage it provides will leave you feeling happy the morning after. So, eat your veggies and salads, and eat lots of them.



START OFF SWEET

Try avoiding sweets after lunch because they could just leave you with strong cravings shortly after. But if you must indulge your sweet tooth and can't resist a little pick-me-up in the middle of the day, then eat it before your meal and not after.

FANCY FLUFF

The Pillow Company, a luxury home décor brand, offers an exquisite range of classic and urban products. For a touch of sophistication, bring home Gentleman's Pursuit (monochrome cushions and pillows) or Dinner Table Flamboyance (gold-edged cotton twill napkins with co-ordinated gilded napkin rings). Add a touch of style to your space with Lush Lodge (felt cushions) and Bohemian Spring Brunch (textured pillowcases).

PRICE: On request

AVAILABLE AT: thepillowcompany.com



HOME BOUND

Furnishing brand Durian offers an extensive range of home and office furniture, all designed keeping comfort and style in mind. Turn any space in your home into a comfortable retreat with Juno, the single-seater sofa with soft cushioning. Or wow your guests with Walker, a solid wood set of a dining table, chairs and a bench for a mix of seating.

PRICE: Juno: ₹22,935; Walker: ₹1,50,700

AVAILABLE AT: Durian stores and www.durian.in



ON THE SHELF

The most exciting new excuses to shop for your home and family



QUITE QUAIN

Tresorie by Sonali Arora's Victorian Soiree collection comprises a versatile line of home décor accessories ideal for gifting or just to show your living space some love. Choose from antique serve-ware sets in silver and gold, square-ridged brass trays, metallic and glass vases and embossed shot glasses. For a more subtle look, opt for the tropical-themed storage sets, silverware, serve-ware sets and accessories.

PRICE: On request

AVAILABLE AT: Tresorie, Mumbai



BOTTOMS UP

ArgentOr Silver, a silver and gold objet d'arts brand, has launched a contemporary and ultra-stylish range of bar accessories. The collection consists of sterling silver bar essentials such as champagne and ice buckets, tongs, wine glasses and nut bowls, all of which spell style and master craftsmanship.

PRICE: ₹17,500 to ₹72,000

AVAILABLE AT: argentorsilver.com

MODERN MOROCCAN

Nothing says Moroccan better than the quintessential blue-and-white colour palette and traditional shapes

1. White pendant lamp, price on request, **The Kaleido Store**
2. Grapa sofa, ₹88,000 (excluding fabric), **Red Blue & Yellow**
3. Aqua cushion cover, ₹950 (set of two), **Surprise Home Linen**
4. Indigo silk cord cushion cover, ₹1,550, **Nur at Tranceforme**
5. Woven cushion cover, ₹2,500, **Abaca**
6. Rectangular cushion, price on request, **Tranceforme**
7. Silver tray, ₹1,650, **Magnolia**
8. Mini tulips, ₹1,650, **Spacio**
9. Teapot set, ₹6,700, **Abaca**
10. Blue stool, price on request, **Toy Bank at Abaca**
11. Décor baubles, ₹3,550, **Spacio**
12. Marble platter, ₹5,450, **Spacio**
13. Shalimar rug, ₹41,510, **Shyam Ahuja**
14. Blue round tray, ₹1,700, **Abaca**
15. Decanter, ₹850, **CAC**
16. Indigo bottle, ₹1,900, **CAC**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
GoodHomes
INDIA

1. Bed, price on request, **Natuzzi**
2. Aqua cushions, price on request, **Freedom Tree**
3. Digital cushion cover, ₹2,200, **AA Living**
4. Indigo silk cord cushion cover, ₹1,550, **Tranceforme**
5. Silver décor piece, ₹2,250, **Spacio**
6. White inlay chevron bedcover, ₹11,900, **AA Living**
7. Indigo bedspread comforter, ₹4,250, **Surprise Home Linen**
8. Aqua blue comforter, price on request, **Maspar**
9. Blue tray, price on request, **Tranceforme**
10. Blue jar candle, price on request, **Tranceforme**
11. Faux fur throw, ₹15,000, **AA Living**
12. Focus bolster cover, ₹1,995 (set of two), **Surprise Home Linen**
13. Shalimar rug, ₹41,510, **Shyam Ahuja**
14. Ikat salad bowl, ₹3,150, **Tranceforme**
15. Silver pot with flowers, ₹2,500, **Magnolia**
16. Grey poof, ₹7,800, **Defurn**
17. Malabar white candle lantern, ₹3,400, **Freedom Tree**
18. Floor lamp, price on request, **Natuzzi**



PIN UP

If you've been looking for a budget-friendly and convenient recipe or note holder for your kitchen, consider the humble clothespin. Screw or glue a clothespin to the inside of the bottom of an upper cabinet such that it's facing downwards, and you're ready to get pinning anything from your favourite recipes to grocery lists and reminders.



GOOD TO GRATE

You can now get rid of the cheesy clinger-ons on your grater by running the bristles of a dry toothbrush back and forth across them till they're loosened. If you've used your grater on something stickier, like garlic, you need to soak it first.



CLUTTER BUSTER

Stop splurging on pricey storage units, and instead simply use a tension rod inside your closet to hang all of your scarves, belts and dupattas. Or bust out some shower hooks and loop them on a hanger to use anywhere.

LOST AND FOUND

Solve all your missing sock woes by putting them together in a mesh bag before putting them into the washing machine. They'll all stay in one place, so no more wasting time rummaging through the whole pile of washed clothes to find a buddy.



RAIN READY

Don't let the rains wash out your favourite pair of shoes. Make them water-proof by rubbing beeswax on them generously. Later, using a blow dryer, melt the wax and leave the shoes for 30 to 45 minutes before using.



HOME HACKS

Smart ways to tidy up, heal, and set your life in order



FRESH ROAST

If you happen to use your coffee-grinder to grind some spices and it ends up reeking of cumin, don't fret. The best way to make sure your coffee doesn't taste any different is to grind some uncooked white rice in it first.

IRON MAN

You can bring to life your dirty iron with the powerful cleaning duo of vinegar and baking soda. Mix one tablespoon of vinegar and two tablespoons of baking soda, apply over the stains and rusty areas. Once dry, wipe off with a damp soft cloth.



TAKE A CHALK

Keep all your metal tools and hardware rust-free by placing them together in a toolbox with a few pieces of blackboard chalk.



PHONE SAVER

If your electronic gadgets get wet, turn them off immediately and dry them with a towel or dry cloth. Then place them in a large bowl with uncooked rice grain and leave for 48 hours. The rice soak up all the moisture.



A GLASS CASE

Repair tiny holes in glass windows with clear nail polish. Apply a generous coat in the crack and once dry, keep adding layers following the same process.



MEDITERRANEAN SECRET

One of Europe's sunniest spots, Croatia has become a top holiday destination for island hoppers, beach bums and culture vultures. One of the reasons for its recent popularity is, of course, the fact that hit TV series *Game of Thrones* was partially filmed here. But if that hasn't sold it to you, this short tour of its best attractions just might.

Make Croatia the venue of your next big European adventure, says **Sunitra Pacheco**



Brijuni National Park



Plitvice Lakes National Park



Sunny coast of Croatia

Spectacular beaches

The Croatian coast is stunning with sandy, pebbled beaches and the turquoise blue waters of the Adriatic Sea. This Mediterranean paradise is also home to 800 national parks, including the astounding Plitvice Lakes National Park, which boasts vivid green waterbodies. Or take a dip in the KRKA National Park lake fed by a gigantic waterfall. If you prefer to not wander too far from the beach, there are over 1,000 islands for you to pick from.

History hour

Ancient ruins and historical sites are strewn all over Croatia in the form of temples, walls and underground cellars. Besides the medieval glory of Dubrovnik, another must-visit includes the Brijuni National Park with its magnificent Roman and Byzantine ruins. >

Byzantine Tower, Kornati National Park





Hvar, a shopper's paradise

Hipster Hvar

A cheap ferry ride away from Dubrovnik, Hvar Island is a charming port city. The town is full of cobblestone streets and small shops selling clothes, locally made shoes and jewellery. It also has some beautiful waterfront restaurants, cocktail bars and ice-cream

parlours. Its nightlife has something for everyone, whether you want to get a cheap vodka lemon on the steps of a bar or party all night on a yacht. Outside of the main town, you will be met by lavender fields, olive tree fields and vineyards. Not to mention, beaches!



Croatia has over 800 national parks, and over 1,000 islands to explore



Cafe culture

Throne city

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the walled city of Dubrovnik is bound to fill you with wonder. After a day of strolling and shopping at the quaint souvenir shops, enjoy a hearty meal at an outdoor café. Seafood is the star of most menus here. *Game of Thrones* fans would be pleased to know that a number of scenes set in King's Landing have been filmed in Dubrovnik's Old Town. Don't miss the two-hour GOT walking tour held daily.



Old Town, Dubrovnik

Party central

The surge in the number of music festivals happening at the Adriatic has made this an exciting party destination. It boasts impressive line-ups, including the likes of Martin Garrix and Deep Purple, at stunning concert venues. 



Rocking live music scene

TREKMATE

Seasoned trekkers won't set off on any adventure without these essentials in their backpack, says **Annabelle D'Costa**



DRY DIAL

You've armed yourself with a smartphone that has it all. From a great GPS system to a camera, but how do you plan on using this lifesaver during an unforeseen downpour? Invest in a weather-proof case that will save your phone from dust and water while you ramble through those treacherous, slippery slopes.



BUZZ OFF

Dengue and malaria are common health problems during the monsoons. Creams and lotions may provide protection, but not if they're washed away. Arm yourself with mosquito repelling wrist bands, available online and at medical stores to keep those tiny vampires at bay.



CLEAR SIP

As important as it is to keep yourself hydrated, you need to be careful about the quality of the water. The only way to do that is to carry your own water purifier. These water purifying bottles help transform almost any tap or clear natural water into the kind safe enough to drink. They also indicate when the cartridge needs to be changed so you can plan ahead.




PEE BUDDY

Using unclean washrooms and public toilets put you at an increased risk of contracting a urinary tract infection. Designed exclusively for women, female urination devices, available online, allow

you to pee while standing. These smart hygienic products are made either from silicone or waterproof coated paper and are compact enough to stock in your purse.



HANDYMAN

Monsoon treks are magical. Make sure you're equipped for just about any eventuality, from setting up tents to repairing broken straps, with a basic multi-tool set or pocket knife. Get one with a compass and you're good to go exploring anywhere. 

WATER PURIFYING BOTTLES HELP TURN TAP OR NATURAL WATER SAFE FOR DRINKING. THEY ALSO INDICATE WHEN THE CARTRIDGE NEEDS TO BE CHANGED.



NIDHHI AGERWAL

ON LIFE AFTER MUNNA MICHAEL

The actor talks about taking the modelling route to Bollywood and lessons learnt on the job

YOU WENT FROM BEING A YAMAHA FASCINO MISS DIVA 2014 FINALIST TO THE FEMALE LEAD IN *MUNNA MICHAEL* (2017). WAS IT A DREAM COME TRUE?

I always wanted to be in the movies, but my family has no connections in the industry. So the only logical way forward was to prove myself as a model, and then try my hand at films. I got lucky with *Munna Michael* because of my training in dance and a good audition.

WOULD YOU HAVE MADE A CAREER AS A DANCER, IF FILMS HADN'T HAPPENED?

I cannot imagine myself doing anything apart from movies. I grew up watching Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan and Rani Mukerji films. Luckily, my parents are movie buffs too! Recently, I met Shah Rukh at a birthday party, and we spoke, but I can't remember what I said as I was so overwhelmed.

NOT TOO MANY PEOPLE KNOW YOU ARE A TRAINED BALLET DANCER. HOW DID YOU DISCOVER YOUR PASSION FOR DANCE?

I have to credit my mother for that. She enrolled me in ballet class, as she wanted me to learn at least one classical form of dance. I started to enjoy it; I also had a very encouraging teacher, so I studied it for seven years. I'm currently learning Kathak, and it's my favourite dance form.



WHAT DID YOUR DEBUT FILM TEACH YOU?

Since I'm not a trained actor, I was oblivious to a lot of things. But (co-star) Tiger (Shroff) was extremely helpful and non-judgemental. He taught me a lot of basic things. I couldn't have asked for a better first co-star.



DO YOU HAVE A 4 AM FRIEND?

My round-the-clock friend is my golden retriever puppy, Happy.



YOU ARE CURRENTLY FILMING THE TELUGU FILM, *SAVYASACHI*, WITH NAGA CHAITANYA AND R MADHAVAN. HOW IS THE EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT FROM YOUR TIME IN THE HINDI FILM INDUSTRY?

Since I grew up in Bengaluru, Telugu is not entirely foreign to me. But, I do need to memorise my lines. I usually get my lines the night before the shoot. It's an action film, and I play a working girl. I'm also preparing for my next Hindi film, which is produced by Prerna Arora (of *Rustom* and *Toilet: Ek Prem Katha* fame). **f**

—By Sandipan Dalal