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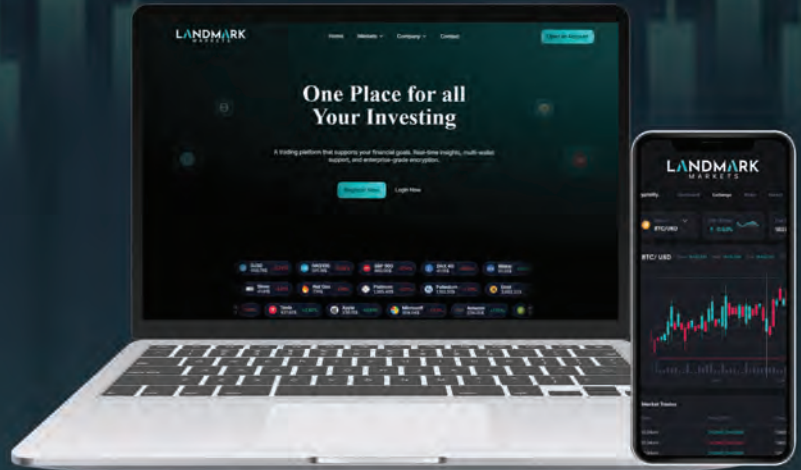
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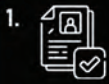


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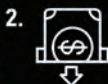


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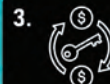
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DEAR READERS,

Welcome aboard SpiceJet and Happy Diwali!

As the radiance of Diwali illuminates our homes and hearts, I extend my warmest greetings to you and your loved ones. This vibrant festival, with its celebration of togetherness, new beginnings, and the triumph of hope, mirrors the spirit of SpiceJet as we soar to new heights with renewed energy and unwavering commitment to excellence.

I am happy to share that SpiceJet has achieved key milestones, reinforcing our strategic vision for sustained growth and our unwavering commitment to excellence. As you plan your holidays this festive and winter season, we are dedicated to providing you with a wider choice of flights, seamless connectivity, and an exceptional flying experience. We are inducting nineteen Boeing 737 aircraft into our fleet, with four more grounded aircraft returning to service by mid of November, taking the total aircraft addition to 23. By November 2025, we aim to more than double our current daily flights and significantly expand our operational fleet.

We are excited to elevate global connectivity, bringing the world closer for our valued passengers. We are thrilled to announce a new interline agreement with Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain. This partnership enables SpiceJet travellers to seamlessly explore destinations across the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Central Asia via Bahrain, while Gulf Air passengers gain effortless access to India's vibrant cities through our extensive domestic network. This collaboration opens a world of opportunities for both leisure and business travellers, making your journeys during this festive season and beyond even more rewarding.

Reaffirming our financial resilience, SpiceJet has secured two back-to-back credit rating upgrades within a month – underscoring our

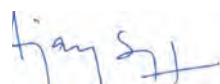


strengthened liquidity, improved credit profile, and unwavering focus on financial discipline. Acuité Ratings & Research, a SEBI-registered credit rating agency, recently upgraded our long-term credit rating to BB (Stable) while reaffirming our short-term rating at A4+.

India dazzled at the 2025 World Boxing Championships in Liverpool, clinching an impressive haul of four medals, including two spectacular golds! It's with immense pride that I congratulate our trailblazing champions, Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) and Minakshi Hooda (48kg), for claiming world titles with their extraordinary grit and skill. A heartfelt salute to Nupur Sheoran (80+kg) for her brilliant silver and Pooja Rani (80kg) for her hard-fought bronze. Their remarkable achievements light up our nation's rising prominence on the global sports stage.

As the glow of Diwali fills our hearts this festive season, we are honoured to be your trusted companion on journeys to reunite with loved ones, cherish timeless traditions, or discover new horizons. At SpiceJet, we are pouring our hearts into ensuring every moment of your travel is safe, seamless, and truly unforgettable. Your unwavering trust fuels our passion, and together, we are soaring toward a future brimming with exciting growth and cherished travel memories.

Wishing you and your loved ones a Diwali overflowing with joy, prosperity, and the warmth of togetherness!



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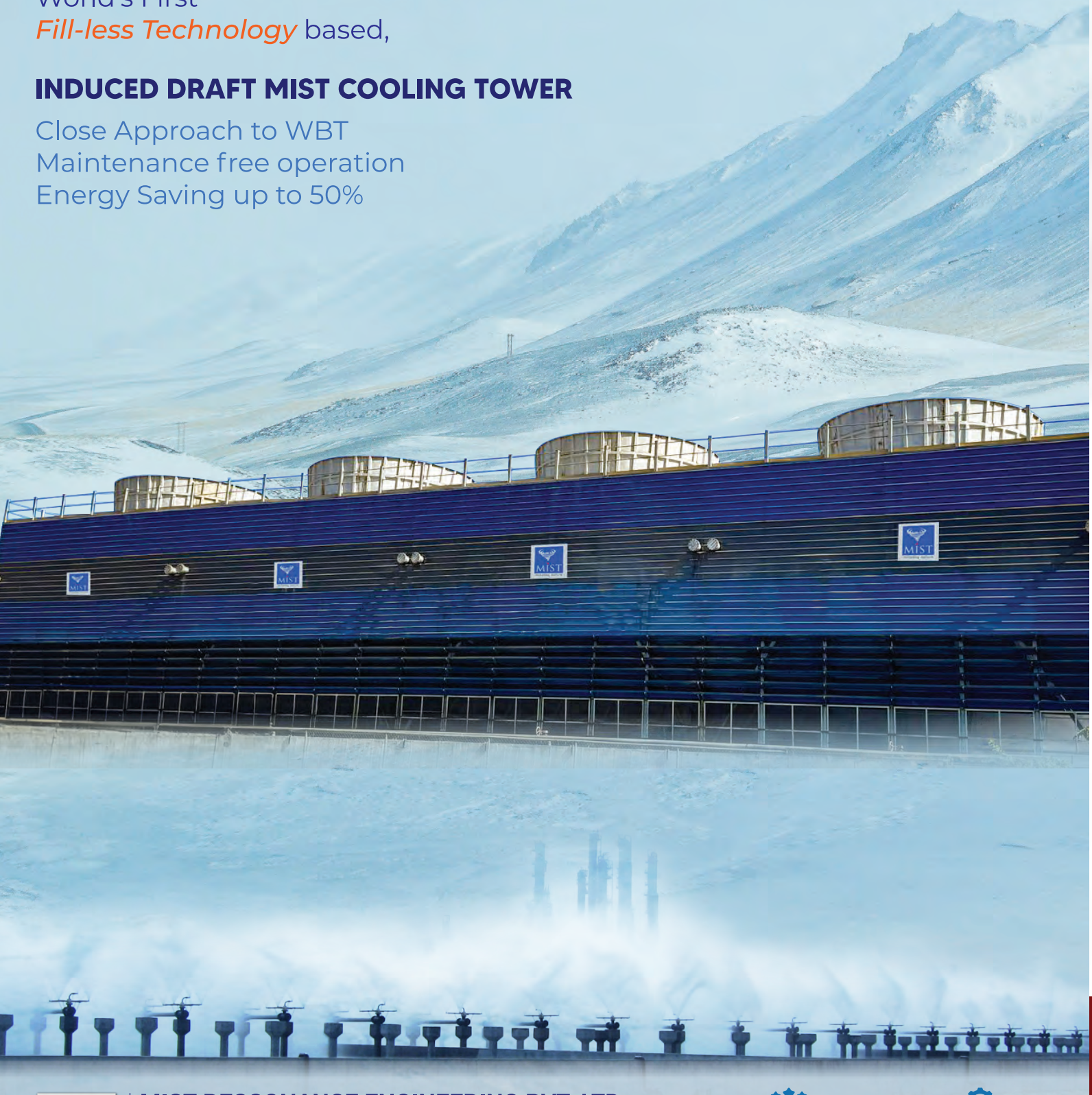
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ARC SHIP Management & Chartering LLC: Charting New Horizons with Visionary Leadership

A Dual Recognition of Excellence

ARC SHIP Management & Chartering LLC is proud to announce its shortlisting as a finalist in two prestigious categories at the Maritime Standard (TMS) Awards 2025:

- **Shipyard/Ship Repair Facility of the Year**
- **TMS Award for Technical Support Services**

Now in its 11th year, the TMS Awards are regarded as the gold standard of recognition across the maritime sector in the Middle East and Indian Subcontinent. The 2025 gala ceremony, scheduled for **29th October at Atlantis, The Palm, Dubai**, will gather over 1,200 top executives, decision-makers, and industry pioneers, making it one of the most anticipated events in the global shipping calendar.

This recognition reflects ARC SHIP's commitment to **technical innovation, operational excellence, and sustainability** in the ever-evolving maritime industry.



From Engine Room to Global Boardroom

Behind this remarkable success stands Mr. Ayoosh Nakkra, the Founder and Chairman of ARC SHIP Group. His journey is nothing short of inspirational—a transformation from a mechanical and marine engineer sailing oil tankers to a visionary business leader driving a multinational conglomerate.

Relocating to the UAE a decade ago, Mr. Nakkra initially served as Technical Director, overseeing vital maritime operations. In 2018, he founded ARC SHIP, starting as a specialized marine service provider. Under his leadership, the company rapidly evolved into **ARC SHIP Group**, a global powerhouse spanning **25 companies** across ship management, marine services, manufacturing, hospitality, real estate, and more.



Strategic Expansion & Industry Milestones

ARC SHIP Group's growth has been both ambitious and calculated. In 2024, the company formed a **Public Limited Company in India**, reinforcing its long-term vision for financial strength and market credibility.

Adding to its forward-looking strategy, ARC SHIP invested in **Dubai Maritime City (DMC)**, securing land to expand into **ship manufacturing and dry docking facilities**—a strategic move that positions it as a frontrunner in the global maritime industry.

With a strong presence across **Oman, India, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore**, the company is on track to expand into 15 more countries in the coming years.

Innovation with a Human Touch

What truly sets ARC SHIP apart is its blend of business ambition with social responsibility. Through the **ARC SHIP Foundation**, the company supports community-driven initiatives, including **skill development programs for women in India**, enabling them to achieve financial independence through trades like weaving and stitching.

It also prioritizes creating **employment opportunities for skilled workers from underprivileged backgrounds**, further cementing its reputation as a socially responsible corporation.

Looking Ahead

ARC SHIP's journey mirrors the maritime sector's evolving landscape, where adaptability, sustainability, and innovation are key drivers of success. Under Mr. Nakkra's dynamic leadership, the company is not just competing—it is shaping the industry's future.

Looking forward, ARC SHIP also envisions becoming **global manufacturers of life-saving equipment at sea**, further strengthening its commitment to safety, sustainability, and innovation.

As ARC SHIP Management & Chartering LLC awaits the final results at the TMS Awards 2025, its recognition as a finalist already stands as a testament to its role as a trailblazer in ship management, repair, and technical excellence.

A Transparent Path to Recognition

The TMS Awards' rigorous selection process ensures credibility and fairness. Each nomination is reviewed by an independent panel of maritime experts, scored meticulously, and shortlisted purely on merit.

The fact that ARC SHIP Management & Chartering LLC has been recognized in two distinct categories reflects its **technical strength, innovation, and positive industry impact**.



Conclusion

From its roots as a niche maritime services provider to its position today as a **global leader in ship management and technical solutions**, ARC SHIP exemplifies **visionary leadership, sustainable innovation, and unwavering excellence**.

The shortlisting at the Maritime Standard Awards 2025 is not just an honor but a milestone in its journey toward **reshaping the global maritime industry**.



V Legal and Beyond

*In Conversation with Its Founder,
Vishal Tinani*

From a Law graduate in Baroda to owning your own Law firm in the UAE. When did you dream of making it so big in life?

My vision was always bigger than geography. I saw law not just as a career, but as a calling to create change beyond the place I started. From my first moot court competition in Baroda, I knew I wanted to build something beyond myself: a platform that could influence industries, guide entrepreneurs, and stand tall in international markets. Baroda gave me my roots, the humility to start small, and the grit to keep going. The UAE gave me that canvas, and the journey has been about painting it with courage, patience, and persistence. The dream was never a single leap; it grew quietly through steady steps, case by case, client by client, proving that even the impossible can take shape when determination meets opportunity.

Did you always want to be an entrepreneur, or was it a gradual

***progression?
Tell us the story behind
V Legal.***

The entrepreneur in me appeared disguised as a lawyer. Initially, I was driven by cases, contracts, and courtrooms. But as I advanced in the profession, I realised that clients weren't only seeking legal answers; they wanted a partner who could think like a legal strategist and an entrepreneur. V Legal was born from that realisation: a firm that not only advises but also enables businesses to thrive.

While V Legal offers a bouquet of services, what is the brand's core expertise?

Our DNA is corporate law, M&A, white collar crimes, and dispute resolution. What makes us stand out is our ability to combine traditional legal depth with forward-looking sectors like AI, blockchain, aviation, and insurance. We



Rapid Fire

How do you spend your leisure time?

Exploring new places, diving into good books, and recharging with family time.

Are you big on gymming or partying (or both)?

I prefer the gym because it keeps me disciplined, and while parties are rare but legendary.

How do you start your day?

With gratitude, a coffee, and the firm belief I'll ignore emails until 9 a.m.—a belief I break by 7:30 AM.

Are you a techno geek?

Not really — to me, Kishore Kumar and Rafi will always outshine anything a smart speaker can play.

don't just fix problems, we anticipate them and structure businesses so they can grow without stumbling on legal hurdles.

Tell us about your top 5 mantras that have made this meteoric growth a reality for you.

Integrity is non-negotiable.

Build trust first, contracts later.

Stay ahead of the curve. Law is slow, technology is fast, so bridge the two.

People over profits — always.

Never stop learning,

Can you list 3 Challenges as well as 3 Best practices of doing business in the UAE?

Challenges:

Jurisdictional layering when doing business in the UAE involves more than just one law; it requires understanding the interplay between federal laws, emirate-specific regulations, and international free-zone regimes. The opportunity is significant, but it demands a high level of sophistication.

Cultural alignment with global ambition success in the UAE depends on respecting the local way of doing business while structuring deals to meet international investor expectations. Balancing both worlds is an art as much as it is a legal science.

The UAE's velocity of change allows it to reinvent itself more quickly than most markets. Laws, regulations,

and entire sectors can evolve within months. Businesses must build with agility, not rigidity, if they want to stay relevant.

Best practices:

Build strong relationships before business.

Respect the culture, it will respect you back.

Compliance isn't a burden; it's your competitive edge.

What is your vision for V Legal? Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?

V Legal's vision is to make the law more accessible, practical, and protective for businesses and communities alike. In the next five years, I envision us expanding not only in size but also in the positive impact we create, helping society feel more secure, supported, and empowered through the law.

What is your advice to young lawyers who want to start their own firm?

Don't start a firm to be your own boss; start it to serve better. Build networks before you build offices. And remember: reputation travels faster than business cards.

How do you manage to strike the perfect work-life balance?

I don't — I blend it. My work is my passion, but I recharge through travel, family, and the occasional Netflix binge. Balance isn't about equal hours; it's about equal energy.



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Expanding its presence across the globe, Amul has been exporting Amul Milk, renowned for its long shelf life, to several Asian and African countries. In 2024, Amul made its biggest international stride by launching Amul Milk in the USA, introducing Amul Taaza, Amul Gold, Amul Shakti, and Amul Slim 'n' Trim. Continuing this momentum, Amul made its mark in European markets by launching Amul Milk in Spain and Portugal in 2025, further strengthening its global footprint and bringing the Taste of India to international shelves.



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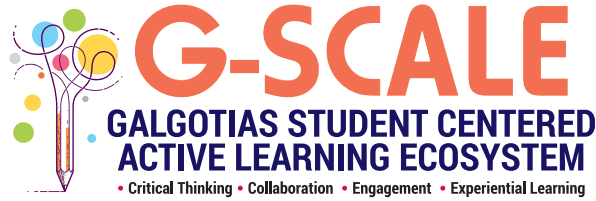
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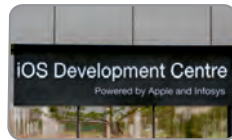
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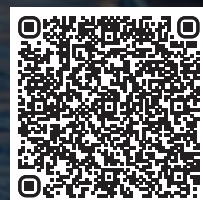
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FESTIVE INDULGENCE

Celebrate Diwali with **KHOYA's** specially curated hampers that merge tradition and innovation. With sugar-free mithai to the recently introduced White Chocolate Aam Papad Barfi, every piece is crafted to the best. Traditional favorites such as Rose & Chocolate Kaju Katli and Ornate Orb with high-end nuts highlight artisanal skills and festive refinement. With a wide range of carefully curated savouries, from savoury South Indian Mixture to tangy Amla & Supari Mukhwas, KHOYA makes sure there is something for everyone. These festive hampers are gift-worthy keepsakes that make the season special and indulgent.

What: Festive hampers by KHOYA

Where: Available online & on Instagram @khoya_official



what's TRENDING



TOKYO DELIGHT

Harajuku Bakehouse has arrived in Delhi's Punjabi Bagh with an 800 sq. ft. space offering signature Japanese-inspired desserts, breads, and beverages. The menu ranges from indulgent Mochi Pancakes, Sakura Yuzu Basque Cheesecake, and Rainbow Slice to savoury Yakisoba Buns, Miso Chicken Puffs, and Croque Monsieur. Drinks include bubble teas, ceremonial matcha, artisanal coffees, and refreshing coolers. With ambitious expansion plans and a pet-friendly vibe, the new outlet brings a slice of Tokyo to one of Delhi's liveliest neighbourhoods.

What: Harajuku Bakehouse

Where: Central Market, West Punjabi Bagh, Delhi



FRAGRANT LUXURY

The domestic brand, **Eze Perfumes**, brings a sophisticated range of unisex perfumes that are ideal for celebrating the festivities. Taking inspiration from India's scentscape heritage, the collection blends traditional fragrances such as rose, sandalwood, and jasmine with contemporary, international inspirations. Their Elevate range, with favorites such as LIT, Boujee, and Magic, provides enduring fragrances that marry luxury with affordability. Designed to be vegan and cruelty-free, Eze Perfumes exudes sophistication without being prohibitive.

What: Eze Perfumes

Where: Online at ezeperfumes.com



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IMMERSIVE STORYTELLING

YOUFORIA Chp. पार्थ redefines live entertainment with the world's finest HEXAIMMERSIVE™ audio-visual concert. Brainchild of lyricist-composer-director Hrutul, the show is a fine confluence of film, music, theatre, dance, and philosophy. Boasting 17 original songs, the performance takes viewers through six high-energy screens, producing visuals that go beyond the conventional. Viewers can look forward to a redefinition of Indian mythology and history in an immersive 90-minute experience.

What: YOUFORIA Chp. पार्थ

Where: Saath Sangath, Ahmedabad

When: 11 & 12 Oct 2025



FLAVOURFUL EXPANSION

Delhi NCR's vibrant pizzeria and taqueria **Bomba** has opened its third outlet in Gurugram's Sector 62. Famous for strong flavours and fun vibe, the new 2,500 sq. ft. outlet seats 80 and takes on a warm, colourful interior with a cocktail-oriented atmosphere. The menu features signature pizzas, flavourful tacos, and lively drinks, offering the best blend for week-day lunches, post-work gatherings, or celebratory evenings. With its vibrant neighbourhood of offices and homes, Bomba is all set to become the premier dining destination, injecting Gurugram with its own brand of flavour and fun.

Where: Good Earth Trade Tower, Sector 62, Gurugram



IN FOCUS

Art & Artist

Art is the essence of pain, perseverance, passion, presence, and patience.
An Artist preserves the plan, pairs the process, and lays the plank.

Art is like a candlelight dinner, glowing with a soothing aroma.
An Artist burns the midnight oil, surrendering sleep to bring creation alive.

Art is a compound of consistency, courage, curiosity, creativity, and compassion.
An Artist is a curator who converses with the canvas.

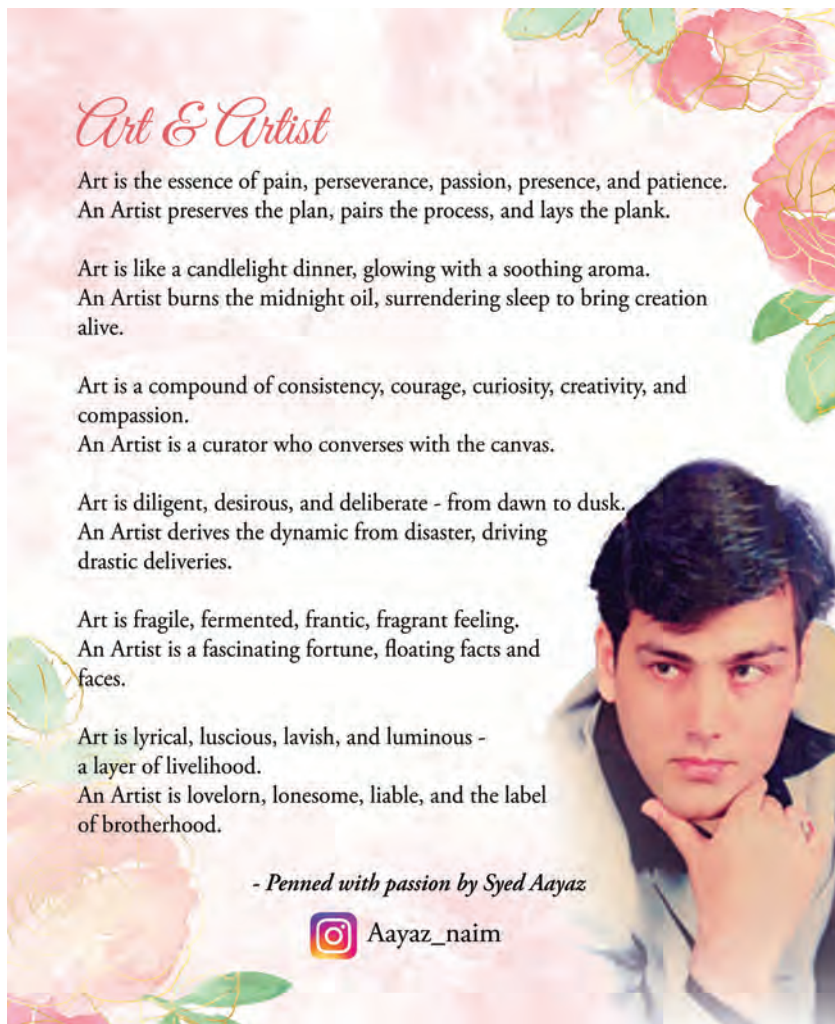
Art is diligent, desirous, and deliberate - from dawn to dusk.
An Artist derives the dynamic from disaster, driving drastic deliveries.

Art is fragile, fermented, frantic, fragrant feeling.
An Artist is a fascinating fortune, floating facts and faces.

Art is lyrical, luscious, lavish, and luminous - a layer of livelihood.
An Artist is lovelorn, lonesome, liable, and the label of brotherhood.

- Penned with passion by Syed Aayaz

 Aayaz_naim



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DUGASTA

PROPERTIES

On May 6, 2025, a significant milestone was achieved in Dubai's ever-evolving skyline. Our Chairman, Tauseef Khan, alongside CEO Azaan Khan and President Eifaad Khan, proudly officiated the groundbreaking ceremony for Terra Tower, a premier residential project by Dugasta Properties.

Set in Dubai land, the heart of the bustling metropolis of Dubai, is Terra Tower by Dugasta Properties. Rising majestically above the city skyline, Terra Tower is a testament to modern architectural brilliance. This premium residential tower offers an unparalleled collection of studio, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes, each meticulously crafted to embody the essence of luxury and sophistication.

With its futuristic and aesthetic design, Terra Tower redefines the concept of urban living. The interiors are thoughtfully curated, combining functional layouts with lavish finishes. Enjoy breathtaking views of the city from the private balcony while basking in the serene ambience of a family-friendly community. Inspired by the color of the Earth, Terra Tower is strategically located near major highways and renowned landmarks, offering the perfect blend of convenience and tranquility.





SpiceJet Finalises Lease Agreement for Eight More Boeing 737 Aircraft

Total Fleet Additions Rise to 18 for Winter Schedule 2025

SpiceJet has signed lease agreements for the induction of another eight Boeing 737 aircraft, further strengthening its fleet ahead of the Winter Schedule 2025. With this, the airline's planned fleet additions rise to 18 aircraft, reinforcing its commitment to meet the rising demand for air travel during the upcoming festive and winter season.

The latest announcement comes on the back of two earlier lease agreements covering the induction of 10 Boeing 737 aircraft, scheduled to join the fleet starting October 2025.

Debojo Maharshi, Chief Business Officer, SpiceJet, said, "We are delighted to announce the addition of eight more Boeing 737 aircraft to our fleet, taking our total planned inductions to 18 aircraft for the Winter Schedule 2025. These additions reaffirm our commitment to expanding capacity, ensuring seamless connectivity, and offering a superior flying experience to our passengers. With the upcoming festive and winter travel season, these aircraft will allow us to enhance frequencies on key routes and cater to the growing passenger demand."

SpiceJet Signs Interline Agreement with Gulf Air to Enhance Global Connectivity

Partnership to Provide Access to Gulf Air's Vast Network Across Middle East, Africa, Europe & Central Asia via Bahrain

SpiceJet has signed an interline agreement with Gulf Air, the national carrier of the Kingdom of Bahrain. This partnership will provide SpiceJet passengers seamless access to Gulf Air's expansive network across the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Central Asia via Bahrain, while Gulf Air customers will gain enhanced connectivity to India through SpiceJet's extensive domestic network. Ticket sales under the new agreement are expected to commence by early next year.

An interline agreement allows passengers to book connecting flights across different airlines under a single itinerary.

In its existing India network, Gulf Air currently operates direct flights to eight Indian cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Goa, Kochi, and Thiruvananthapuram.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, said, "This partnership with Gulf Air marks an important milestone for SpiceJet as we expand our global reach and provide our passengers with more travel options than ever before. The interline agreement will not only connect our

passengers seamlessly to Gulf Air's vast network across the Middle East, Africa, Europe, and Central Asia but also bring Gulf Air's passengers closer to the length and breadth of India through our domestic network. Together, we are committed to making travel more convenient, affordable, and accessible for both leisure and business travellers."

Jeffrey Goh, Chief Executive Officer, Gulf Air Group, stated, "We are pleased to announce our interline agreement with SpiceJet, an important enhancement in travel options for passengers. This partnership will allow travellers from both Gulf Air and SpiceJet to enjoy seamless travel experiences. This agreement embodies our commitment to fostering greater connectivity and cultural exchange between Bahrain and India, and beyond. With Bahrain's strategic position as a hub and SpiceJet's extensive domestic network, passengers will have convenient access to a diverse range of destinations, enriching their journeys and experiences."

This partnership reflects the commitment of both SpiceJet and Gulf Air to explore new avenues of growth beyond network expansion, leveraging each other's strengths to deliver enhanced connectivity and superior travel experiences.



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Teams Applaud proudly presents the 10 Heroes of India – Your Story Deserves the Spotlight. These visionary leaders are transforming industries through innovation, passion, and excellence. With bold ideas and unwavering resilience, they are redefining success and inspiring millions in today's ever-evolving world.



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**Khushi
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My culinary cottage is a haven for recipes with simple, soulful explanations to craft delicacies. Expanding into table styling, I've received immense love for my grazing tables. With recipe development for cafés and hotels in the pipeline, I'm steadily inching closer to my cherished dream—a cookbook of my own. @myculinarycottage



**Pooja Lalwani
Tamang**

Pooja Lalwani Tamang is the founder of Fit Face — India's first face gym with their flagship studio in Bandra, Mumbai. She pioneered face workouts designed to sculpt, tone, and strengthen the face, creating a new standard in precision beauty beyond creams and serums.

Dr. Mishil Parikh

**M.B.B.S., M.S. (Ortho.),
M.Ch. (Ortho.)**

Dr. Mishil Parikh, a Musculo-skeletal Oncosurgeon at Sir H. N. Reliance Foundation Hospital, specializes in treating bone and soft tissue tumors. Trained at Tata Memorial, he has performed over 2000 surgeries in 8 years. He's also an academic, journal editor, and founder of the Sarcoma Education Foundation.



**Vivek Vishal
&
Mohit Kumar**

**Director and
Additional Director**

Benensa Tech Private Limited, based in Gurgaon, delivers innovative SaaS solutions for businesses. Its flagship products include WAPon (WhatsApp Business API) and ExpertDID (Meta Ads solution). Led by Vivek Vishal and Mohit Kumar, Benensa specializes in automation, streamlining operations, and empowering organizations to scale efficiently and confidently across industries.



**Tanay Tulsaney
&
Vaibhav Sharma**

In 2014, Tanay Tulsaney and Vaibhav Sharma founded DigiLantern with a shared vision. Tanay, with his consulting and healthcare expertise, and Vaibhav, with his global sales and strategy experience, combined their strengths to grow DigiLantern into a full-service digital agency. Today, with a strong focus on innovation and client-centric solutions, they continue to scale the company into one of India's leading digital solution providers.

With 10,000+ surgeries to his credit, Dr. Saurabh Bansal practising at New Delhi, India is among India's foremost laparoscopic and gastrointestinal surgeons. Founder of The Clinics, located in heart of south delhi he fuses surgical excellence with innovation, building next-generation surgical teams with day-care surgical hubs designed to provide excellent care. He also practices with National Herat institute, apollo spectra and apollo hospitals Delhi. Voted as Best laparoscopic and gastrointestinal surgeon in delhi for 3 consecutive years by Delhi medical association.



**Dr. Saurabh
Bansal**



**Kuruva
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Murthy**

Kuruva Venkataramana Murthy pioneers a new leadership model by uniting dharma with artificial intelligence. His book AI-Driven Leadership addresses modern leadership challenges in the AI era, guiding organizations to adapt with awareness, amplify ethics, and accelerate with alignment. He equips leaders to thrive with clarity, resilience, and human intelligence.



Dr. Biswanath Gouda, a renowned Gastrointestinal Surgeon and Director of Bandra Lakeview Healthcare, specializes in advanced laparoscopic surgeries for digestive disorders, liver, gall bladder, and pancreatic disorders. Known for bariatric procedures in metabolic and diabetic patients, he's been voted among India's best GI surgeons by India Today for six consecutive years. He practices in Mumbai and is attached to Lilavati Hospital and Holy Family Hospital Bandra.

dr.biswanathgouda@gmail.com



**Dr Biswanath
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**Dr. Vinay Prakash
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**Founder of LTP Calculator
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Dr. Vinay Prakash Tiwari, is a SEBI & BSEASL registered adviser with 14+ years in financial markets. Creator of the popular LTP Calculator which is India's most advanced option chain analysis tool with reversal prices. His residential School is known for teaching financial education from class 6 onwards.

DIWALI

IN ALL ITS DIVERSITY

BINDU GOPAL RAO

Come October, and the most adored and anticipated festival of the year is here to light up your life. Yes, it's Diwali!





The stunningly illuminated Golden Temple

If there's anything that unites India, it's her festivals—especially Diwali. There's something about the Festival of Lights, and the joy with which Indians from across the land embrace it. What makes the country shine bright on this autumn night is the belief that light can prevail over dark, good can overcome evil, and most importantly, hope can conquer despair. North India celebrates with Lakshmi Puja and Bengal with Kali Puja, but everywhere, Diwali is all about family reunions, great food, and festive fervour.

Community Vibes in Punjab

On Diwali, Punjab celebrates Bandi Chhor Diwas, when the Golden Temple in Amritsar is lit up with the glow of thousands of earthen lamps, transforming this hallowed space and its surroundings into a magical panorama. Bandi Chhor Diwas, incidentally, commemorates the release of the sixth Sikh Guru, Guru Hargobind, and 52 other prisoners from Gwalior Fort. This is why Diwali is double the fun, and the night sees a spectacular

fireworks display, after which the *diyas* are lit. The serene waters of the sacred *sarovar* that encircles the temple are also illuminated with the reflection of the lights, lending the occasion an unforgettable ambience. The *langar* that is served here is a must-try, more so on a day such as this.



SPICEJET FLIES DIRECTLY
TO **AMRITSAR** FROM DUBAI





A female dhaaki infusing magical rhythm at a Kali Puja pandal




SPICEJET FLIES DIRECTLY TO **KOLKATA FROM DELHI, GUWAHATI, MUMBAI, JAIPUR AND BAGDOGRA**

Bengal's Ode to Kali

Make your way to Kolkata to experience the unique festivities of Kali Puja, which is how West Bengal celebrates Diwali. The city is decked out with decorative lights, and *rangolis* adorn the streets. While Goddess Lakshmi is serenaded elsewhere, Kolkata worships Goddess Kali, known to be the destroyer of evil. You'll come across temporary idols made with clay, and a public celebration where the goddess is offered red hibiscus flowers, rice, lentils, sweets, savouries—even fish and meat. The rituals come from ancient tantric rites that continue to be followed to this day. Step into the Kali temples to witness these elaborate ceremonies, alongside performances of devotional songs. And at the conclusion of Kali Puja, the idol of the goddess is immersed.

A New Dawn in Goa

In a community celebration that unites the denizens of Goa, effigies are burnt on the eve of Diwali to celebrate the victory of Lord Krishna over the demon Narakasura. People come together to build Narakasura's effigy with papier-mâché, grass, and paper—so striking are these likenesses that they're hard to miss. Despite all the effort that goes into creating them, the effigies are always burnt at dawn, symbolising the victory of good over evil. The five-day festivities gather steam on Naraka Chaturdashi, when the effigies are set alight, following which lamps are lit and Goans get ready to rejoice with food and gifts. They also crush a bitter berry called *karit* under their feet, to signal the defeat of Narakasura.



SPICEJET OFFERS DIRECT FLIGHTS TO **GOA FROM MUMBAI AND PUNE**



The effigy of the demon Narakasura before being burnt

Magical stay at Evoke Dholavira
on the Khadir Bet island

Festive Staycations

If you are looking for a Diwali with a difference, escape the ordinary and celebrate the Festival of Lights in a place where time stands still. Evoke Dholavira in Gujarat offers a unique retreat for travellers seeking serenity, history, and a sense of wonder. On the island of Khadir Bet in Kutch district, 44 thoughtfully designed cottages open onto vast salt plains and star-filled skies, while quiet gardens and a welcoming clubhouse provide space to unwind. During Diwali, the place comes alive with traditional décor, rows of flickering *diyas*, colourful *rangolis*, and festive lights casting a gentle glow across the grounds. Evenings feature special meals inspired by local flavours, served under moonlight.

You can also celebrate the month of Karthika the Kerala way, at the sublime Marari Beach Resort, near Alappuzha. Partake in the *diya* lighting ceremony and create a traditional *rangoli* on Diwali day. Guests also get to enjoy a specially crafted festive menu. It makes for a serene and elegant celebration of Karthika, while taking nothing away from the charm of the resort's white sandy beaches, lined with coconut trees, and its wonderful facilities.



SPICEJET FLIES
DIRECTLY TO **KOCHI**
FROM MUMBAI

The very famous diya lighting
ceremony at Alappuzha



A Deepavali Feast

Food is an integral part of any festival, and if you're planning an exclusive dinner date with family, enter the world of the Nizams for a truly memorable celebration at the Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad. Treat yourself to Hyderabad Biryani, Bagara Baingan, and Khubani ka Meetha (among delectable menu items), and experience the essence of a cuisine once favoured by the royals of yore.

In fact, destination dining is now a popular trend, as retreats make a conscious effort to present patrons a fine-dining experience to remember. For example, Sterling Holiday Resorts serves local cuisine at its properties, including at The Malabar at Sterling Wayanad. Here, Diwali guests can look forward to indulging in regional specialities such as Chemmeen Biryani, Erachi Puttu, Malabar Mango Cloud Fish, Chakka Pathiri Nirachathu, Mathanga Erissery, and Cheera Parippu Curry.

It's a festival vacation that promises to satisfy your soul *and* satiate your appetite. Have a sparkling Diwali ●



Unique Rituals

Andhra Pradesh and **Telangana** celebrate Diwali with the recitation of Harikatha, a form of storytelling centred around the life of Vishnu. In **Maharashtra**, people design miniature mud forts and decorate them by displaying figurines of soldiers, in a nod to the legacy of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Tamil Nadu celebrates with a custom of making a herbal medicine called *marundhu* or *legiyam*, which includes traditional herbs and spices meant to improve digestion. Meanwhile, miniature *gharondas*, or mud houses, are built inside homes in **Jharkhand**, **Bihar**, and **Uttar Pradesh**, for the faithful believe that Goddess Lakshmi resides in them.

Budhi Diwali is celebrated in **Uttarakhand** and **Himachal Pradesh** after 30 days, usually on Amavasya (moonless night), as it is believed that news of Rama's return to Ayodhya reached this area a month later.

In **Odisha**, as per the Kaunria Kathi ritual, jute stems (*kaunria*) are lit and waved to shower blessings on ancestors. And **Karnataka** celebrates Bali Padyami with stories of King Bali and forts made from cow dung, which are placed in front of homes along with the *rangoli*.





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Wonders of the **Rann**

ANIL MULCHANDANI

Spanning around 7,500 sq. kms, the Great Rann of Kutch is one of the world's largest salt deserts. A result of geological factors stopped the flow of the waters of the Arabian Sea into the Rann, and this led to the formation of a thick crust of salt that extends to the horizon, creating a shimmering white desert.



For our trip to the Rann of Kutch, we chose a full-moon night, when the moon is reflected in the saline marshes, and its radiant light makes the salt crystals sparkle. Our destination was Khadir Bet, one of the largest islands in the Rann, dotted with many archaeological and geological heritage sites.

From Kandla to Bhuj, the highway passes through villages specialising in different crafts. While Dhamadka and Ajrakhpur are centres of the intricate Ajrakh print, Anjar is known for its metal crafts, and Dhaneti for the exquisite embroidery of the Ahir community. Indeed, there are plenty of hubs dedicated to these Kutchi handicrafts, which one can buy along the way. Once past Bhuj, we drove towards Khavda, passing craft settlements such as Bhirandiara and Sumrasar, noted for the embroidery work of the Meghwals, Sodha Rajputs, and Muslim pastoralists like the Jats. The road here took us through grasslands and lakes, where we were lucky enough to spot flamingos, spoonbills, and various other water birds.

After Khavda, we got onto the 'Road to Heaven,' the name given by biking enthusiasts to a stretch of highway between Khavda and Khadir Bet. Some 32kms long, the road resembled a ribbon

Left and Below

A camel drawn carriage at sunset

In Dhaneti village, known for its colourful embroidery



SPICEJET OFFERS
DIRECT FLIGHTS
TO **KANDLA** FROM
MUMBAI

Photos by Dinesh Shukla

of tar cutting through the vast expanse of salt flats on both sides. At places, vendors were renting out Meghwal costumes that visitors could wear for selfies and other photos — you could even hire photographers for shoots!

Finally, we arrived at Khadir Bet, which would be our base for the next few days. And as evening approached, musicians gathered at the resort to regale the guests. The folk and religious composition they sang were in Kutchi, a dialect of Sindhi, and among their accompanying instruments were the Bhorrindo, Manjira, Morchang, Jodia Pawa, and Ravanahatha. It was a performance to savour, under a limpid desert sky.

Back through the mists of time

The next day, we made our way to Dholavira, an archaeological site of great significance. The museum at this UNESCO World Heritage Site offers fascinating insights into the Indus Valley (or Harappan) civilisation, which thrived here for about 1,500 years, from 3000 BCE to 1500 BCE. Maps and models at the museum showcase Dholavira's advanced town planning, featuring a well-structured grid layout and distinct areas like a fortified castle, ceremonial ground, middle and lower town, and a sophisticated water-harvesting system incorporating a series of reservoirs.

The museum also houses artifacts like beads, seals, and pottery found at the site. Our local guide Nagjibhai took us on a tour of the spot, one of the largest Indus Valley remains covering some 245 acres. He pointed out the check dams, reservoirs, and stormwater channels



which made up the infrastructure that helped harvest water and harness rain-fed streams. The reservoirs, we found, are set at gradients to enable the water to cascade, a system that was surely much ahead of its time.

Construction in the town was carried out using large neatly-cut and smoothed stone blocks, demonstrating the technical, stone-carving and masonry skills that existed among the Harappans here. One of the site's most remarkable discoveries can be seen

at Dholavira's northern gate, a panel featuring ten characters from the Indus script that has been dubbed the Dholavira Signboard.

From Dholavira, we drove to the Wood Fossil Park on the edge of the island, facing the white salt flats of the Rann. Khadir Bet is noteworthy as a geological and paleontological spot where

Clockwise from Top
The salt desert of the Rann of Kutch shimmers under the sun

The iconic archaeological site at Dholavira

Local musicians perform under a full moon

dinosaur, marine, and Jurassic plant fossils have been unearthed. The landforms here are diverse, comprising cliffs of sandstone, claystone, and fossiliferous limestone, and revealing the area's marine and estuarine past. Among the park's exhibits are petrified plant fossils measuring as long as eight metres. The wood fossils, meanwhile, date back to the Jurassic period, which began around 200 million years ago.

Following this fascinating history lesson, and with the light slowly fading, we were back on the Road to Heaven, and found a suitable spot to admire the setting sun. We stayed on after dark to wait for the bright full moon, resplendent in the starry sky, for a view of the pure white salt in the moonlight ●

Getting there

From Kandla Airport, it is a journey of about three-and-a-half hours to Dholavira. You can drive to Rapar, from where the road to Dholavira goes through the Rann of Kutch, with a view of the salt flats on each side. Alternatively, you can proceed via Bhuj and Khavda, and continue on the Road to Heaven.

Where to stay

Praveg Resort, Evoke Dholavira, and Rann Resort are among the best options for accommodation at Dholavira.





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Soni Ravi
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Was flying with my family on SG16 in 2nd Aug flight was delayed @flyspicejet flight, but the amazing service from the cabin crew truly made up for it! Special thanks to [Vanshika, jemini, pragya, kuldeep for her warm hospitality and professionalism
Great job, PNR : D8KJ6F #SpiceJet



Raja Bhadoriya
@bhadoriyaraja2

Follow

I would like to appreciate @flyspicejet their excellent service on my recent journey from Srinagar to Indore. Everything from boarding to landing was smooth and on time.



Er Gull
@ErGull216204

Follow back

@flyspicejet Mohammad Rauf
I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Mohammad Rauf for delivering an outstanding customer service experience during my recent journey with SpiceJet. His professionalism, attentiveness, and genuine care made a significant experience.



Zahid ayoub
@Zahidayoub1

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@flyspicejet @AjaySingh_SG

Special thanks to Mr inam mehraj From SXR airport who went above and beyond to assist me with proper professionalism.



Zahid ayoub
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Their positive attitude and dedication reflect very well on your airline and contributed to a memorable travel experience for passengers Please pass on my gratitude and recognition to the team
Regards
Zahid ayoub
Nursing officer .
SG8914
Dnr Ar SDGI



Jaydeep Bose
@JaydeepBose

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Got On time service with @flyspicejet SG184. The checkin duty staff and air hostess Jalsa and others were cordial and helpful. Keep it Up



Ravsa Chuhan
@chuhan_ravsa

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Hello @flyspicejet your staff at Hyderabad airport @rgia was very good kudos to Mr Ahmed & Mr Akbar Shaik I love to travel again with RED hot Spicy SpiceJet. And I enjoyed the services which was proved by Mr Ahmed & Mr Akbar Shaik i suggest my friends as well to choose SpiceJet



Maj Gen (Dr) Yash...
@YashMor5

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Taking off from Leh. Thanks to Spice Jet for making it happen inspite of so much pressure as three days of cancellation made it very difficult. Doing it with limited access to internet and without any extra charges made it a good experience.

@flyspicejet
#ladakhtrip



Aabid, MD, DrNB
@Aabid_Oncologist

Follow

Huge thanks to Mr. Inam Mehraj, ground staff at Srinagar Airport, for his outstanding support and professionalism during my @flyspicejet flight (SG-8914, PNR: DIZIKX). Becau of him, I've genuinely started liking #SpiceJet! 🙌🇮🇳
@AjaySingh_SG - hope this appreciation reaches him.



ساحل مشاق
@Sa_ahil_

Follow

Just flew with @flyspicejet and had the pleasure of being assisted by Moomin Mir (Ground Staff) — truly a gem! He helped me resolve my bag issue at Srinagar (PNR: MH79PN | Aug 4) and followed up in Delhi too.
Grateful for the support and kindness. Happy to fly with SpiceJet again



sarmad
@rah_zann

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@flyspicejet Kudos to Mr. Inam Mehraj at SXR Airport for his exceptional professionalism & genuine help. His positive attitude made my travel memorable. Please convey my gratitude to him. SG-948 | PNR: QB4MPS @ajaysinghsg



Tanya garg
@garg_tanya_

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PORT BLAIR FOR THE PERFECT ISLAND BREAK

Port Blair (recently renamed Sri Vijaya Puram) is perhaps the most fascinating part of the Andaman and Nicobar archipelago. Whether you're a seeker of adventure, history enthusiast or foodie, the town's small size makes it possible for you to cover a lot within 24 hours.



7:30 AM

IN THE CALM OF CORBYN'S COVE

Spend your morning at peaceful Corbyn's Cove, just a few kilometres from the city centre. With its soft, golden sand and rows of tall coconut trees, this beach will help get you into the ideal frame of mind for the day. Dawn here is serene, the gentle waves creating a soothing atmosphere for a dip, a few minutes of meditation or yoga—or an invigorating glass of fresh coconut water.

10:30 AM

BOAT RIDE TO ROSS ISLAND

Ride the waves to Ross Island (now known as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island) for a tryst with history. Once the seat of British administration, the island calls out to the visitor with stories of its colonial past, for all that its churches, offices, and homes are gradually yielding to thick vegetation. Yet, there's charm even in the ruins. History lesson

over, partake of a light and leisurely brunch at any of the island's quaint cafés. Offering an engaging blend of curiosity and comfort, Ross Island makes for an enjoyable diversion.

2:00 PM

FOR THRILLS UNDER WATER

Snorkelling or scuba diving on your mind? North Bay Island is a paradise for water-sports enthusiasts like you. But



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that's not all. Here, in waters tranquil and blue, you can swim with tropical fish or admire breathtaking coral reefs without having to go far. Even when you'd rather remain dry, you can gaze upon the abundant and dazzling marine life from the comfort of a glass-bottom boat. North Bay's mix of adrenaline and natural splendour promises an unforgettable excursion.

5:30 PM

WHERE HISTORY COMES ALIVE

Towards evening, make your way to the Cellular Jail, an imposing yet dignified monument to India's fight for freedom. As dusk sets in, the Sound and Light Show here brings to life the prison's



past, using history as a backdrop to depict the courage and sacrifices of the freedom fighters, through moving images and soul-stirring narration. It's an experience that's as poignant as it is enriching.

7:00 PM

SHOP TILL YOU DROP

After the emotion of the sound and light show, treat yourself to a visit to bustling Aberdeen Bazaar, the commercial hub of Port Blair. The shops and stalls here boast a colourful range of products, from handicrafts and woven fabrics to aromatic spices and basic provisions, for you to take back home as souvenirs. Not too far away is Sagarika Emporium, with its carefully



chosen display of tribal arts and locally crafted items, each a wonderful slice of Andamanese culture. It's a chance for you to connect with the local traditions, pick up meaningful gifts, and support the region's artisans.

8:30 PM

SEAFOOD GOURMET

End your day with a delicious seafood dinner, the catch fresh off the boat, served in both traditional and contemporary styles. Take your pick from smoky grilled lobster cooked in butter and native herbs; tangy fish curry prepared in rich coconut milk with tamarind and spices; or, for those who yearn for a more robust taste, tandoori fish and barbecued prawns marinated

and grilled to juicy perfection. Light House Residency boasts an upscale setting and thoughtfully prepared seafood dishes, while Mandalay at Fortune Resort Bay Island tempts with casual, outdoor vibes in which you can enjoy regional and coastal favourites sat under the stars, kissed by the ocean breeze ●



ISLAND HOPPING

Hop on a boat at Port Blair and indulge in an island tour. Baratang features limestone caves and mangrove creeks, while Havelock has beautiful coral reef formations, alongside the most pristine and peaceful beaches—Radhanagar here has been consistently ranked among the cleanest beaches in Asia.



CHIDYA TAPU

Found at the southern end of the islands, Chidya Tapu (Bird's Island) is renowned for its stunning sunset views. The island's quiet beaches and forest walks make it an ideal destination for nature enthusiasts—and for anyone looking to get away from the hubbub of city life.

BEST TIME TO VISIT

Plan a vacation anytime between November and April, when the weather is pleasant and the ocean is perfect for water-sports. Avoid summers (hot and humid) or the monsoon, the latter season characterised by frequent downpours and turbulent seas.

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REKHA BHARDWAJ

PALLAVI SINGH

‘My music gives me joy & sukoon’

The immensely talented Rekha Bhardwaj reflects on the people and experiences that have shaped her musical journey. A National awardee and artiste extraordinaire — her repertoire spans Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Punjabi, and Malayalam hits — her unique voice, as soulful as it is versatile, and evocative renditions have made Bhardwaj a fan favourite, and one of India’s most acclaimed singers.

First things first: How did your musical journey begin?

As a child, I had music in my family. My father was an ardent lover of Hindustani music and my mother was very appreciative of it, especially classical music. Listening to the radio was an essential part of growing up, be it classical, devotional, semi-classical, *ghazals*, *thumris*, or plays based on literary novels, and the best of film songs being played in the

evening programmes. My eldest sister was learning music at Gandharva Mahavidyalaya from a young age, and I remember her doing *riyaaz* at 4:30 in the morning.

A monthly *baithak* was held in our house where like-minded friends of my father would come and perform different genres of music. These *mehfils* lasted till the wee hours, with infinite rounds of tea and snacks. Our parents encouraged all of us

to sing (we are five sisters and one brother). When I was six, my elder sister composed a *ghazal* for me, which I sang. Even my mother would sing songs of C.H. Atma and Surendra Nath, who were her favourites. One of my sisters played tabla and flute sometimes, and even my father tried violin. He would quiz us about *ragas* in film songs, and every year we would attend Vishnu Digambar Jayanti at Kamani Auditorium, where I heard the best artists of our country.



Rekha Bhardwaj with her husband Vishal Bhardwaj

Birthdays never meant cakes. Instead, we had a mehfil at home. All of this music I heard in mehfil and music conferences, got absorbed in my subconscious and shaped me into who I am.

Who was your early inspiration?

Apart from my sister and mother, listening to Madhurani Faizabadi, Girija Devi, Begum Akhtar, Mehdi Hassan, Farida Khanum, and Jagjit Singh had a great impact on me for ghazals and thumris. In classical, I love Kishori Amonkar and Pandit Jasraj, whose voice and surmandal could melt you. Ustad Amir Khan of the Indore gharana and my Guruji Pandit Amarnath were huge inspirations to me. And my first love, Lata ji, has been my idol since childhood.

Amongst all the musical genres, which one is your favourite and why?

I like all genres, as long as they give me joy and sukoon. For dancing, it has to

be upbeat and interesting music to groove to—like hip hop. I loved dancing to Abba and Boney M in my growing-up years. I also loved listening to The Beatles, Eric Clapton, John Denver, etc. Though my all-time go-to music is Hindustani classical and ghazals.

Of all the songs in your career, which one is the most memorable?

Tere Ishq Mein from my album 'Ishqa Ishqa'. It marked my inner journey into Sufism, which is a way of life for me, a path to walk on. *Namak Ishq Ka*, for I discovered I could sing sensuous, playful, mischievous songs. It helped me rediscover the naughty girl inside me and to realise that gayaki is my forte. *Sasural Genda Phool* revealed the rawness and folk element in my voice.

Which was the most challenging song?

Namak Ishq Ka was the most

challenging at that time. *Darling* too, and *Ghagra*. *Mileya Mileya* felt outside my genre but Sachin-Jigar encouraged me. *Judaai* was tough due to a very low pitch but turned out beautifully. Sometimes composers see what you don't, like Pritam and Ayan with *Kabira*.

How did the success of *Namak Ishq Ka* change how you were seen?

It was a turning point in my career. Before that, I had sung *Ek Woh Din Bhi* for 'Chachi 420' and *Rone Do Jiya Kare* for 'Maqbool' just for Vishal but after *Namak Ishq Ka*, I sang the best of songs for almost every composer. And with *Genda Phool* of 'Dilli-6', I reached every household.

Awards and accolades—what do they mean to you?

The National Award for *Badi Dheere Jali Raina* from 'Ishqiya' was special. It validated the sincerity towards my music and the years of *riyaaz* after learning from my guru Pt. Amarnath ji. Music is *ibadat* to me. I feel responsible to do justice to the gift of voice, *roohdaari*, and *thehrav* that's been showered upon me by the Divine. The Filmfare and Mirchi Awards gave me



more confidence and acceptance in the film fraternity. But the real reward is the process of creating and the audience's appreciation.

Favourite language to sing in?

Hindi-Urdu (Hindavi), being my mother tongue, is natural to me. My father studied in Urdu medium, and my mother was a voracious reader of Hindi literature. Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi are also close to me. Languages of the south are harder, though I sang in Malayalam for 'Carbon' (2018), which was loved by everyone. I love to sing in Persian and English too.

What makes your music so loved?

The soulfulness and the healing quality, plus the correct pronunciation, adds deeply to my music. My music gives me joy and heals me, and that same

healing gently flows to my listeners. I feel blessed to be the hollow flute of the Divine carrying its melody through my voice. Gulzar saheb and Vishal have taught me hard work and to have success on your terms. Guruji always said the biggest riyaz is to listen to yourself, which I do till today.

You were initially trained by your older sister. What was her role?

She was my first guru and being 11 years older, she has been more like a mother. Now me at 61 and she at 72, we share a strong bond, more like friends. She's spiritual, simple, and content. She being a postgraduate in Hindi literature, we discuss poetry, literature, and do riyaz together. After my mother, she became my guiding light.

Artists you'd like to work with?

I'd love to collaborate again with Arijit. Internationally, I love Cassandra Wilson, K.D. Lang, Billie Eilish, Adele, Neil Diamond, Sting—and Jacob Collier, whose harmonies are magical. I'd also like to work with hip-hop and lounge-music producers.

Words of wisdom for aspiring singers?

Listen to yourself and learn your craft. Constant conscious learning and a consistent practice is really important to hone your skills. If your foundation is strong, you will rise higher and higher •



All-time favourite destination

Kashmir / Turkey

Next pitstop

Ladakh, Latin America, and Greece

Favourite album

'Ishqa Ishqa' (2002); 'Dil Padosi Hai' (1987: Asha ji, R.D. Burman, Gulzar saheb); in instrumental music, 'Call of the Valley' (Shivkumar Sharma, Hariprasad Chaurasia, Brij Bhushan Kabra)

Favourite singer

In playback, Lata ji always; and among current singers, Arijit Singh

Favourite movie'

Ijaazat' (1987), the first film Vishal and I watched together

Food preference (restaurant dining or home-cooked?)

Restaurant if a celebrated chef is cooking a Chinese or Continental meal; otherwise, always a home-cooked meal

Holiday preference (leisure or activity-packed?):

Leisure, always

Beaches or mountains?

Both. Beaches were my first love, but mountains—especially Mussoorie, Himalayan peaks, Harsil (Uttarakhand), Darjeeling—give a different strength. Sunsets over mountains or seas, changing colours and hues, are equally magical





Photo by Harsh
(Dubai - Delhi)



Photo by Payal and Kingshuk
(Delhi - Kolkata)



Photo by Sidharth Bokil
(Delhi - Mumbai)

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Photo by John Jo Varghese
(Guwahati - Bagdogra)

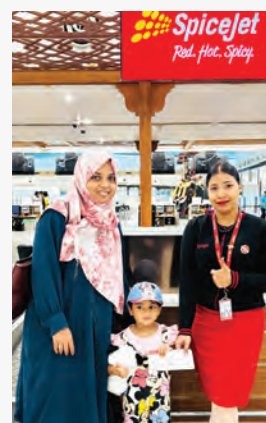


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Hosting with heart

For many, Diwali is synonymous with gatherings of friends and family, and décor plays a pivotal role in shaping these experiences. Krsnaa Mehta, Founder & Design Director at India Circus, believes that festive styling begins with comfort and layered with style. "By prioritising comfort and personal expression, I create a warm and inviting space that's perfect for hosting friends and family" he says. Mehta recommends plush textiles in warm, earthy tones offset by subtle cool shades, enriched with statement rugs, throws, and curated accent pieces. On colour, Mehta suggests understated sophistication with sage-and-white, and warm hues like rust and orange.

Layered lighting

Lighting is no longer just functional decoration; it can also double up as an art form. Designers Prateek Jain and Gautam Seth of Klove emphasise this principle. "This year we are especially excited about our new Kandil Collection handblown lamps, designed to be both light and art. They can be the perfect addition to any Diwali décor, sitting beautifully in corners or on tables and layering seamlessly with traditional diyas," they share. The duo's approach combines multiple textures and materials like glass, brass, textiles, etc., with layered light sources such as soft lamps, diyas, and candles. The result is a cosy, textured glow that elevates any room and invites celebration.

Light, colour, and soul

Diwali décor for a modern home

NIVI SHRIVASTAVA

The much-awaited festival of lights is more than just an occasion to illuminate spaces; it's an annual tradition to transform homes into warm, welcoming havens. From rich jewel tones and earthy palettes to thoughtfully layered lighting and sustainable décor, Diwali is about balancing tradition with new age sensibilities. Whether it's through a sage-and-white living room, jewel-toned tablescape, or thoughtfully lit garden paths, the joyful occasion becomes an immersive experience that celebrates all moods and shades of life. We spoke to India's leading interior designers and décor experts to uncover how to create spaces that feel personal, festive, and enduring.



Poonam Akash



Beauty meets mindfulness

Sustainability is increasingly central to modern Diwali décor, proving that conscious choices need not compromise on beauty or warmth. Riddhima Khandelwal, Co-founder and Creative Head at *ellementary*, says, "This year, we are also seeing a lot of love for earthy neutrals paired with pops of saffron or deep maroon, which strike a balance between understated elegance and festive vibrancy. The idea is to create a layered, welcoming environment that feels festive but still true to your personal style." Khandelwal emphasises on eco-friendly touches such as terracotta or cow-waste diyas, soy or beeswax candles in reusable holders, and biodegradable natural elements like marigolds, mango leaves, or foraged branches," she notes.

A celebration to remember

Lighting is not only a focal point but a mood-maker, infusing spaces with warmth and personality. "Lighting is always the hero," stresses Poonam Mehta, Co-Founder of décor brand Poonam Akash, who favours layered illumination such as chandeliers, candles, and floor lamps over uniform brightness. Her approach blends jewel tones with earthy neutrals, accented with brass or copper for a celebratory shimmer. Adds Mehta, "Opt for timeless pieces like hand-crafted metal trays,

terracotta bowls, or woven baskets that you can use beyond the season. Another favourite is mindful lighting with beeswax candles or warm LEDs, to create the perfect ambience while being energy-conscious."

Modern Yet Traditional

Balancing modern design with tradition is the essence of a thoughtful Diwali set-up. Rishabh Khosla, CEO at Freedom Tree, recommends starting with colour. "Traditionally, golds, deep reds, and jewel tones like emerald or indigo work beautifully during Diwali

because they reflect light and instantly make a space feel celebratory. That said, a lot of modern homes are moving toward softer palettes, warm neutrals layered with metallic accents, or earthy shades paired with a single pop of festive colour."

Lighting and intimate corners remain essential, he notes, with layered votives, lanterns, and floor lamps enhancing depth and sparkle. To add a touch of sustainability, he suggests, "Instead of plastic décor, opt for clay diyas, brass urlis, or reusable fabric buntings. Potted marigolds, banana leaves, and seasonal flowers bring organic charm, while textiles like runners and handwoven throws add festive spirit without waste" •



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SpiceJet SUPERSTARS

Meet the achievers of the month from the SpiceJet family, who have stood out for their outstanding work.



RAMAN SHARMA

Customer Experience

Experience with SpiceJet

Working at SpiceJet has been such a great journey full of learning and growth. Every day is a new learning and this is what keeps me going. The support that I receive from my teammates and managers makes everything easier and more exciting. SpiceJet is an organisation where hard work is noticed and appreciated.

Internal Appreciation

We at SpiceJet would like to sincerely appreciate the contributions made by Raman. He has been an epitome of calmness, dedication, and integrity. His consistent hard work and honesty reflect in every task he undertakes, setting a high standard of professionalism for the entire team. His contribution to SpiceJet's Social Media team is commendable and brings great value to the organisation.



IFTAKHAR KAUNAIN ASHHAR

IT Department

Experience with SpiceJet

I joined SpiceJet in 2023 as a fresh engineering graduate. Stepping into my first role as a software engineer was both challenging and enlightening. I was given the opportunity to be actively involved in a variety of projects. Developing the SpicyCrewPortal app provided invaluable experience. Supported by my awesome teammates, I have not only enhanced my technical skills but also grown as an individual.

Internal Appreciation

Iftakhar joined us as a young graduate and has since demonstrated remarkable dedication, diligence and outstanding organisational abilities. He is great at handling his tasks efficiently and effectively. He has successfully developed two major and critical mobile applications for Spicejet in a short span of two years. He is an invaluable asset to our team and we wish him all the best for his future.



AVINASH SHEKAR KOTIAN

Catering

Experience with SpiceJet

My decade-long journey at SpiceJet has been truly remarkable. The days here have been filled with continuous learning and challenges that have shaped my professional and personal growth. I have been fortunate to receive the support and guidance of my HODs and colleagues, which has been an invaluable asset. As I look ahead, I am eager to continue this journey with renewed energy and passion.

Internal Appreciation

Avinash has consistently demonstrated exceptional dedication and sincerity in everything that he undertakes. He is a true team player who actively contributes, maintains strong focus, and ensures seamless collaboration. His proactive communication skills and timely updates play a key role in the smooth execution of our responsibilities. We greatly value his contributions and are fortunate to have such a dependable and dedicated professional as part of our team.

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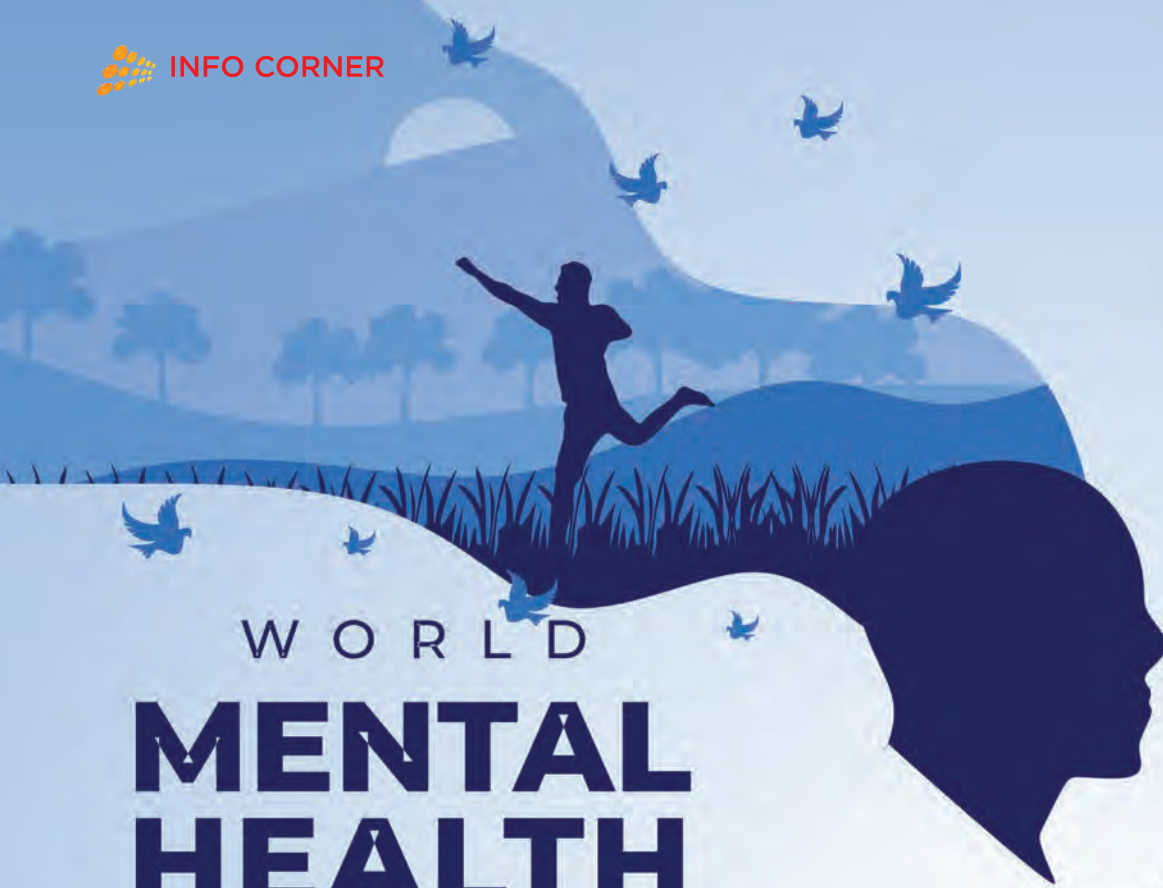
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WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

On 10 October every year, the world commemorates World Mental Health Day, a day set aside to focus awareness on mental healthcare and mobilize support for mental well-being.

Origins and Purpose

World Mental Health Day was initially launched in 1992 by the World Federation for Mental Health. It has since been commemorated every year, with a new theme every year to bring emphasis on important features of mental health. The objective has always remained the same to minimize stigma, create advocacy, increase awareness, and make mental well-being a matter of international priority.

Theme 2025

Every year has a new theme that captures the challenges and issues of that time. The theme for 2025 is "Access to Services – Mental Health in Catastrophes and Emergencies." This highlights the importance of receiving help in times of crisis, such as conflict and natural disasters, when individuals are most at risk and services become

even more essential.

Why It Matters

Mental health is also closely related to physical health, community functioning, and overall productivity. Poor mental health impacts relationships, education, work, and social participation. Stress at work, stigma, unsafe working conditions, and discrimination are some of the things that can spoil mental health, and the absence of proper services only makes it more difficult to recover.

Conversely, supportive environments, inclusive policies, access to treatment, and open communication regarding mental wellness facilitate individuals to thrive. The emphasis on "Mental Health at Work" reveals how workplaces can support or sabotage mental health, based on structures and support systems present •



Actions Everyone Can Take

Advocate: Support policies that provide accessible and affordable mental health services.

Reduce Stigma: Be open, break down stereotypes, and encourage people who live with mental health conditions.

Raise Awareness: Utilize platforms, whether it is social media, schools, or workplaces, to share positive messages about mental health.

Support Access to Services: Encourage provision of timely and quality assistance, particularly in crisis.



Uncle Peter's Pancakes

As seen on

Shark Tank India

India's Only Authentic Pancake Brand

Founded in 2019, Uncle Peter's Pancakes boasts of being India's one and only pancake brand that serves authentic American style pancakes in egg-less versions. The amount of innovation that is there in the menu, is not available with anyone else. Apart from pancakes UPP has a wide range of waffles, crepes and beverages as well.

Our Presence

Uncle Peter's Pancakes which is headquartered in Bengaluru started giving out franchise in 2021 and is currently placed across 100+ outlets in 35 cities in India with an aim to be at 500+ by 2028.

Our Offerings

Pancakes, waffles, Crepes, boba beverages, hot chocolate, sandwiches, fries and more.



Franchise Opportunity

Investment

Total Investment

16L Onwards

ROI

Average ROI

14-18 Months

Sales Potential

Average per store sales

INR 7-10 Lakhs per month

Models

Operational Models

FOFO/FOCO

Space Required

Minimum space requirement

80-300 sq feet

Target Group

Based on age bucket

Ages 16-45

Royalty Percentage

Monthly Royalty Percentage

Flexible Plans

Years of Agreement

Total years of operation license

5

Partner Selection Criteria



Extremely passionate about food and the F&B industry



Strong financial background to support setup and operations



Acts as a **flag-bearer and ambassador** for the UPP brand



Sincere, process-driven and compliant with all SOPs



Eager to grow with the brand, not just earn from it



Marketing-minded and proactive in local promotions



Fully compliant with the brand guidelines and quality standards



Possesses strong financial and **business acumen**



Actively involved in day-to-day business operations



Has the **vision to scale** and open multiple outlets in a short time



Engages consistently with the brand and its campaigns



Prior QSR or retail experience is an added advantage



If you believe that you are a perfect fit and you have it in you what it takes then scan and fill up the form and our team will get in touch with you

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BON APPETIT

THE SWEET TASTE OF Diwali

CHEF DAVINDER KUMAR

No Indian festival is complete without a sugar rush, whether before or after meals — or even alongside tea or coffee. Give in to your sweet cravings with these three delectable *mithais*, each a stunning fusion of culinary styles.

KAJU KATLI TRUFFLE

A 'blended' dessert that reimagines the classic Indian sweet, Kaju Katli, into an elegant, bite-sized confection with a melt-in-your-mouth centre of rich cashew fudge, expertly rolled into a truffle-like ball.



Ingredients

- ◆ 200g cashews
- ◆ 180g granulated sugar
- ◆ 100ml water
- ◆ 1tbsp ghee
- ◆ 30g fresh cream
- ◆ 150g couverture chocolate
- ◆ 1 gold varq

Method

- In a food processor, grind the cashews into a fine powder
- In a heavy-bottomed pan, combine sugar and water. Heat the mixture over medium heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves completely.
- Reduce the heat to low and add the cashew powder to the sugar syrup, stirring continuously to prevent lumps
- Continue to stir the mixture until it thickens forming a soft dough-like mass. This should take about 10-12 minutes
- Transfer the dough to a parchment paper. Let it cool until it is warm enough to handle. Add ghee and knead the dough.

- Take small, uniform portions of the Kaju Katli dough and shape them into rectangles. Place the truffles on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper
- Refrigerate for 15-20 minutes to allow it to firm up.
- Place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl and melt it at 40C-50C, stirring well until it is fully melted
- Cool the chocolate by bringing its temperature down to 27C, before raising it to 31C to work some more on it
- Using a dipping tool dip each truffle into the melted chocolate, allowing any excess to drop back into the bowl
- Place the chocolate-coated truffles back on the parchment-lined baking sheet
- Refrigerate the finished truffles for another 15-20 minutes and let it harden.
- Garnish with gold varq, or gold brush

CARAMEL BANOFFEE LADOO

An inventive fusion dessert that combines the rich, sweet flavours of the classic British Banoffee Pie with the traditional Indian laddoo. The result? A harmonious yet decadent bite that is both comforting and exotic.

Ingredients

- ◇ 210g sugar
- ◇ 40g liquid glucose
- ◇ 120g butter
- ◇ 320g fresh cream
- ◇ A pinch of salt
- ◇ 300g digestive biscuits
- ◇ 1-2tbsp mashed ripe banana
- ◇ 1tbsp unsalted butter, melted
- ◇ 150g milk chocolate

Method

- In a saucepan, add sugar and liquid glucose. Stir gently to combine, then place the pan over medium heat. Cook until the sugar turns into a clear syrup
- Increase the heat to medium-high. Let it simmer until it begins to turn a light amber colour
- Once the sugar has turned amber, remove the pan from the heat.



- Carefully add the butter, and whisk until it's completely melted.
- Slowly pour in the warmed heavy cream while whisking constantly thereafter add a dash of salt
- Let the caramel sauce cool in the pan before carefully pouring it into a heatproof container, such as a glass jar
- Place the digestive biscuits in a food processor and mix until you have a fine, sand-like powder
- In a mixing bowl, combine the remaining biscuit powder with the melted butter. Mix well until the powder is evenly coated and has a moist, crumbly texture
- Add 60g of the prepared caramel sauce and the banana extract (or mashed banana) to the biscuit mixture
- Mix everything together with your hands.
- Lightly grease your hands with a little butter or ghee to prevent the dough from sticking. Take small, even portions of the dough and roll them firmly between your palms to form smooth, round laddoos
- Refrigerate the laddoos for at least 30 minutes to an hour, to help them set and firm up



LAYERED CHANA DAL BARFI

An elegant and traditional Indian sweet that presents two distinct flavours and textures in a single, beautiful confection. The bottom layer is a dense, fudgy base with a deep, earthy flavour, on top of which is a tender, moist barfi infused with the aroma of fresh or desiccated coconut.

Ingredients

- ◇ 1 cup chana dal (split Bengal gram)
- ◇ 2tbsp ghee
- ◇ 125g sugar
- ◇ 75g cup milk
- ◇ ¼tsp cardamom powder
- ◇ A pinch of saffron strands
- ◇ 300g desiccated coconut

- ◇ 200g sugar
- ◇ 125g milk
- ◇ 1tbsp ghee
- ◇ ¼tsp rose water

Method

- Wash the chana dal and soak it in water for 2-3 hours. Drain the water completely. Grind the dal into a coarse paste without adding any water
- Heat the ghee in a heavy-bottomed pan over low-medium heat. Add the chana dal paste. Roast it, stirring continuously until the mixture becomes crumbly and fragrant
- Add the sugar and milk to the roasted chana dal mixture. Stir continuously until the sugar dissolves.

This will take about 5-7 minutes

- Stir in the cardamom powder and saffron
- Immediately transfer this mixture to a greased tray or plate. Use a spatula to spread it into an even, firm layer. Set this aside to cool while you prepare the second layer
- In a heavy-bottomed pan, combine the sugar and milk. Stir over medium heat until the sugar dissolves completely
- Add the desiccated coconut and mix well. Continue stirring over low-medium heat
- Stir continuously for about 8-10 minutes as the mixture starts to thicken.
- Stir in the ghee and rose water. If you are using food colouring, add a few drops at this stage and mix well
- While the coconut mixture is still warm, quickly spread it over the cooled and set chana dal layer. Use a spatula to press it into an even layer
- Garnish with finely chopped pistachios or edible silver leaf for a beautiful finish ●

Chef Davinder Kumar is Vice President of F&B and Executive Chef at Hotel Le Meridien, Delhi

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KOCHI (COK)

KATHMANDU (KTM)

LEH (IXL)

MADURAI (IXM)

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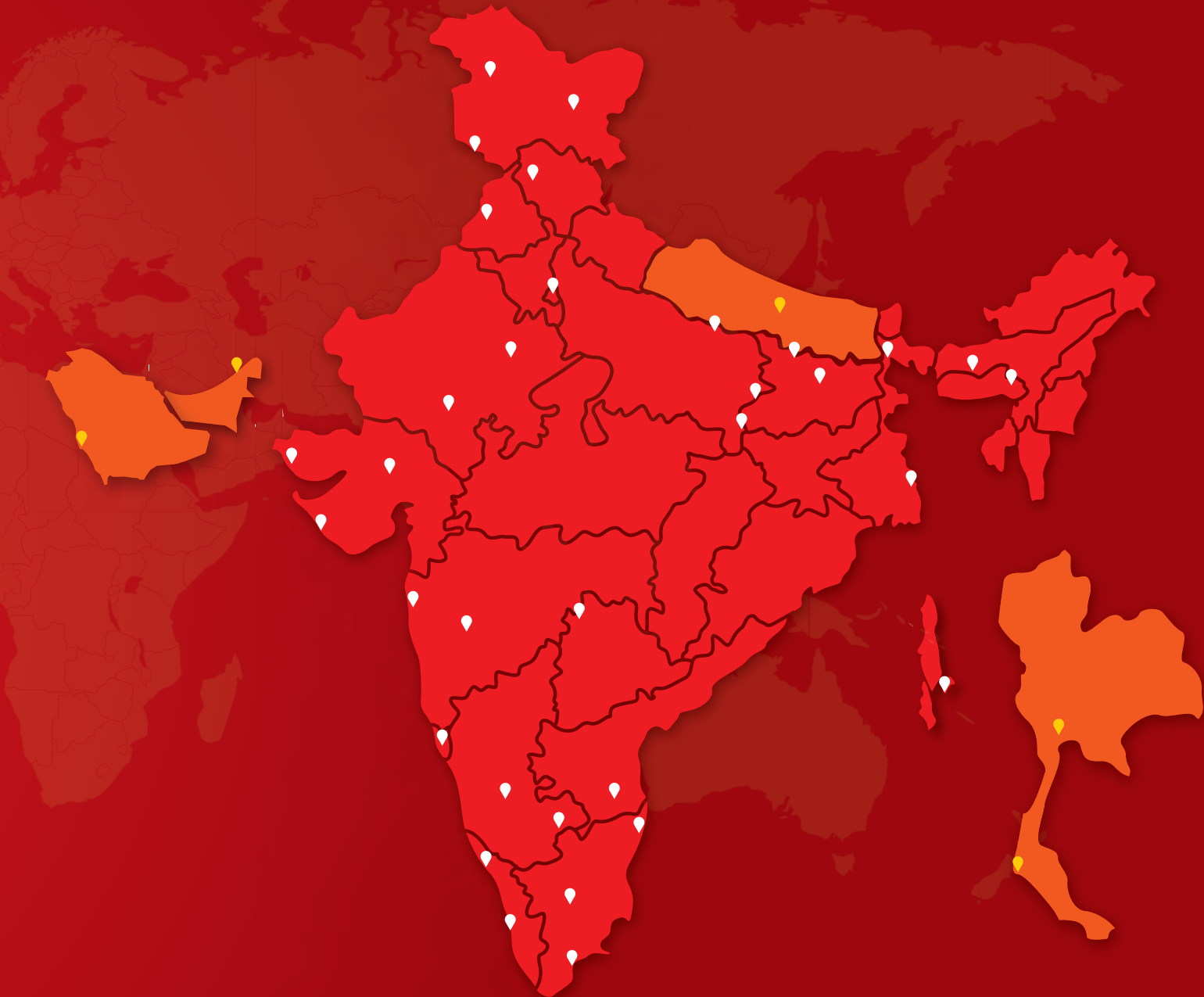
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SpiceJet was a pioneer in India's UDAN scheme, launching regional flights in July 2017 and connecting remote regions like Porbandar, Kandla, Pakyong, Kishangarh, Lilabari, Jharsuguda, Jaisalmer, and Adampur. It also led India's first seaplane trials, inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reaffirming its commitment to serving unserved and underserved regions.

Domestic — 

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India connects with SpiceJet.

Flight schedules are subject to regulatory approvals and changes.

Map not to scale, graphic representation only. Content as on 30th September, 2025.



My Town

In our series, we travel to various Indian destinations with a SpiceJet family member. This time, Richa takes us around her home town, Kolkata.

Where is your hometown, and what makes it so special?

Kolkata, lovingly called the 'City of Joy'. What makes it truly special is its unique rhythm—a harmony of contrasts. On the one side, you'll find the lively lanes redolent of street food, and the timeless yellow taxis weaving through the crowds. On the other, the serene ghats on the Ganga at sunset offer a moment of peace, the golden hues of the sky reflecting in the waters, and life seeming to slow down. Kolkata thrives in its paradoxes. It's a place where chaos dances hand in hand with calm, where every corner tells a story. It's not just a city but an emotion—one that stays with you forever.

The one thing that keeps on bringing you back again and again...

74 | SPICEROUTE

It's the feeling of home that nothing else can replace. The familiar lanes, the aromas of street food, the evening breeze by the Ganga, and the quiet comfort of being surrounded by people who speak your language and understand even your silences—all of this makes Kolkata feel like a warm hug I keep coming back to. More than a place to which I belong, the city is where my roots, memories, and emotions intertwine.

Which is the perfect hangout spot in Kolkata?

For long, lazy conversations, Roastery Coffee House is always my go-to. Tucked away in its leafy courtyard with the whiff of freshly brewed coffee lingering in the air, it's one of Kolkata's most loved cafés. And when



MS. RICHA SHARMA
SENIOR CABIN CREW

I feel the need to escape the rush, Eco Park becomes my sanctuary. On quiet weekdays, walking by the water or simply watching the sky melt into shades of gold and pink feels like pressing pause on the city's hustle and bustle. These spaces are what make Kolkata feel endlessly reassuring; a city that knows when to hold you close and when to give you space to breathe.

Name one restaurant you would recommend to a visitor, and a can't-miss delicacy on the menu...

Peter Cat on Park Street for their legendary Chelo Kebab, a dish that's almost synonymous with the city's

dining scene. But to truly taste Kolkata, you have to lose yourself in its vibrant street-food culture. Start with *puchkas* that explode with tangy spice, then grab a roll from Kusum, or savour steaming-hot momos from humble roadside stalls. Of course, nothing defines Kolkata quite like its iconic *biryani*—subtly fragrant, with that melt-in-your-mouth potato, which locals treasure as much as the meat. To end on a sweet note, there's no resisting the baked *rosogolla* and creamy *mishti doi* from Balaram Mullick & Radharaman Mullick, or the classic, spongy *rosogolla* from K.C. Das. These flavours don't



just satisfy your hunger pangs—they stay with you, becoming memories you carry long after you've left the city.

What is the best season to visit Kolkata and why?

In October, during Durga Puja. It's the most magical time, when the entire city comes alive. Streets brim with music and laughter, food stalls tempt with their irresistible aromas, and every pandal feels like a masterpiece of art and imagination. From the rhythmic beats of the *dhak* to the glow of thousands of *diyas*, the city pulses with a joy that's contagious. Pujo's more than just a festival—it's a celebration of life, faith, and community, a time when strangers become friends. For those few days, Kolkata feels like the beating heart of India, humming with an energy that stays long after the festivities end.

Which must-visit places would you recommend back home?

The grandeur of the Victoria Memorial, the artistic charm of Kumortuli, and the evergreen buzz of Park Street are experiences no visitor should miss. Personally, though, it would be the ghats on the Ganga. As the sun dips below the horizon, the river comes to life; boats float by gently, and the majestic Howrah Bridge begins to glow against the twilight. Sitting there, kissed by a breeze carrying whispers of the city, is one of the most soulful experiences Kolkata has to offer ●



PLACES FOR A QUICK DAY TRIP NEARBY...

Each of these getaways carries a different rhythm, yet together they reflect the soul of Bengal beyond the city:

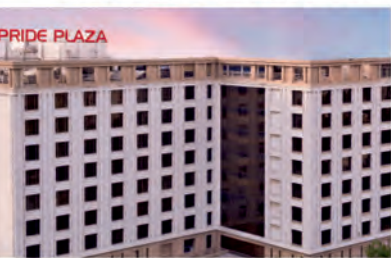
Shantiniketan: A beautiful retreat steeped in Tagore's legacy, a place where creativity blooms in every corner.

Diamond Harbour: With its wide stretches of the Ganga meeting the horizon, a peaceful—and perfect—riverside escape.

Sundarbans: For a brush with raw, untouched nature, nothing compares to the Sundarbans. Its mysterious mangroves, winding waterways, and incredible wildlife—including the elusive Royal Bengal Tiger—leave you utterly mesmerised.



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STAR TIME

PREDICTIONS

October 2025

Dr. Prem Kumar Sharma

(Astrologer, Palmist, Numerologist, Vaastu Consultant & 3-Time Limca Book of Records Holder)

email: psharma@premaastrologer.com | web: www.premaastrologer.com



ARIES

Money matters shine with steady growth, adding a comforting sense of security. Professional progress may appear gradual, but real estate prospects brighten your future. Health remains consistent, and a peaceful home atmosphere keeps you grounded. Love could test your patience, and travel may not deliver expected rewards. Keep your focus on strengthening financial roots and let smaller frustrations fade.

Lucky No.: 17

Lucky Colour: Navy Blue



TAURUS

Home remains your sanctuary, offering affection and reassurance despite minor disagreements. Romantic life sparkles, bringing heartfelt joy. Income continues to flow steadily, and career progress builds slowly but surely. Physical energy may dip, so nurture yourself with rest. Leisure trips refresh the mind, though property matters move at a gentle pace. Blend tenderness with wisdom to ensure smooth sailing.

Lucky No.: 2

Lucky Colour: Pink



GEMINI

Your natural enthusiasm lights up every space, while love fills your days with delight. Family bonds remain steady, providing emotional balance. Professional challenges might stretch your patience, and financial decisions demand extra care. Property matters bring encouraging news, while travel offers a mix of outcomes. Creativity and optimism are your strongest allies in navigating hurdles with grace.

Lucky No.: 8

Lucky Colour: Green



CANCER

Recognition at work fuels confidence and unlocks new opportunities. Family ties strengthen, bringing warmth and emotional joy. Health remains supportive, while real estate ventures show promising rewards. Monetary stability is assured, though your romantic sphere may feel unsettled. Travel enriches your spirit, even if scattered concerns weigh lightly. Stay centred on growth and avoid needless emotional turbulence.

Lucky No.: 1

Lucky Colour: Silver



LEO

Investments in property promise rewards, giving you lasting assurance. Travel opens doors to rejuvenation and a change of scenery. Professional, financial, and health matters stay steady, though family ties may require patience to mend small strains. Romance offers comfort but little thrill. Anchor yourself in long-term aspirations while keeping relationships calm and balanced.

Lucky No.: 3

Lucky Colour: Yellow



VRGO

Your career shines with steady upward momentum, while finances give you peace of mind. Domestic life feels soothing, creating space for relaxation. Good health is guaranteed, and property interests move forward smoothly. Romance offers calm companionship rather than fiery passion. Travel may invite obstacles, making it wiser to delay plans. Embrace both professional and personal balance with pride.

Lucky No.: 6

Lucky Colour: Red



LIBRA

Vitality may dip, nudging you to prioritise self-care. Family life feels cordial, and finances bring comfort. Travel may not thrill, and property matters could move slower than expected. Career growth, however, brings recognition and satisfaction, while romance adds sparkle to your routine. Channel your energy into love and professional pursuits for rewarding results.

Lucky No.: 4

Lucky Colour: Sky Blue



SCORPIO

Home life feels steady, while money matters provide reassurance. Property dealings take shape positively, though career progress may seem average. Love could lack vibrancy, and journeys might not deliver much joy. Daily responsibilities move seamlessly, keeping you composed. Strong health boosts resilience, ensuring you stay active and in control.

Lucky No.: 7

Lucky Colour: Saffron



SAGITTARIUS

Travel and property matters offer modest outcomes, demanding practical expectations. Personal connections, however, bring comfort and strength. Supportive family members uplift your spirits, and romance fills you with happiness. Health and work move at a calm pace, though finances might feel tight. Lean on relationships to carry you forward with courage and positivity.

Lucky No.: 5

Lucky Colour: Beige



CAPRICORN

A surge of vitality pushes you to achieve more, while romance blossoms beautifully, making life feel rewarding. Career proceeds smoothly, and travel or property dealings bring excellent returns. Family ties remain neutral, while money matters stay manageable. Miscellaneous tasks turn out favourably, giving you reasons to celebrate small wins along the way.

Lucky No.: 2

Lucky Colour: Green



AQUARIUS

Professional triumphs put you in the spotlight, enhancing respect and status. There's reassurance on the money front, and family life feels heartening. Property affairs progress impressively, while romance stays steady. Health needs extra care, and travel might not inspire much. Even so, professional achievements and supportive connections ensure that you shine bright.

Lucky No.: 3

Lucky Colour: Orange



PISCES

Strong health enhances both confidence and joy. Domestic life offers stability, and financial situation remains comfortable. While career may feel static, love seems peaceful but uneventful. Real estate matters advance positively, though travel could face delays. Day-to-day life runs smoothly, giving you much-needed serenity and inner balance.

Lucky No.: 6

Lucky Colour: Magenta

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