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MAY-JUNE 2020 THE INFLIGHT MAGAZINE | AIRVISTARA.COM | VOL 06 | ISSUE 5

For the love of words
Journeys inspired by literature

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ROYAL BENGAL TIGER

Panthera tigris



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**POACHING for its skin, bones, canines & other body parts
THREATENS the FUTURE OF TIGER in India!**

**YOU CAN HELP: Do not buy products made from tiger skins and other body parts and derivatives. It is a punishable offence and can lead to imprisonment, fine, or both.
Say 'No' to illegal wildlife trade.**

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

TRAFFIC is a leading non-governmental organisation working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. In India, it operates as a programme division of WWF-India.

www.trafficindia.org; www.traffic.org; www.wwfindia.org



50
YEARS IN INDIA



Travelling through streets of literature

Adapting to the new normal is the need of the hour. These are extraordinary times that call for a resilient approach to steer through and emerge stronger. The safety and well-being of our passengers will continue to be our priority. We will be introducing some temporary modifications in our inflight services and implementing stringent preventive measures once we resume operations. We will also be maintaining social distancing norms across all touch points in compliance with the guidelines from authorities.

While we are in an uncertain time and the way we travel will undergo changes, you could always use some travel inspiration for your future journeys. Books are a great way to do that. They have the power to vividly evoke the places they describe and transport you to faraway lands, stimulating you to travel. Wouldn't it be great to explore destinations where literary luminaries lived, worked, and were inspired to write their stories? Wouldn't you want to seek out cities around the world steeped in rich literary history?

In this specially curated digital-only issue of the Vistara inflight magazine, we bring you stories of cities that embody all things literature. Get whisked away to Edinburgh, home to world-famous writers including Conan Doyle (*Sherlock Holmes*) and J.K Rowling (*Harry Potter*) to discover how the city shaped their narratives and key characters, in our Chronicles feature on pages 36-39. Saunter down College Street in Kolkata - a paradise for book lovers, in our Travel Special feature on pages 20-23. Get a glimpse into Yadavgi, Mysuru, the small town that inspired the celebrated literary work *Malgudi Days* by R.K Narayan in our Leisure feature on pages 32-35. Discover beautiful libraries worth travelling for in our Story Frames feature on pages 46-57. And lastly, check out our recommendation on web series to binge-watch and books to read on pages 10-11 and 12-13 respectively.

Sit back in your favourite armchair and get ready for your literary journey. Stay safe and happy reading!



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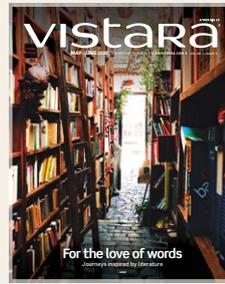
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MAY-JUNE 2020



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Ajay Awtaney @LiveFromALounge · 19h
 #Vistara changes service protocols in preparation for service resumption after #Covid19 Lockdown : livefromalounge.com/vistara-covid19...
 #AirVistara by Ajay

Photo credit: Ajay Awtaney

manisha singhal @manishasinghal · Apr 16
 That's a nice way to connect with your fliers @airvistara ...all digital edition of Vistara's inflight magazine ..brought a smile,felt closer to that cabin experience
 And I guess #inflight #magazines will go all digital, may be more interactive,for at least the near term!

Photo credit: Manisha Singhal

Amit Agarwal @AmitAgarwal22
 For viewing pleasure only! 😊 @airvistara 📷
 ©Hendrik S

Photo credit: Amit Agarwal

Sanket Mishra @LovePinkWinx · Apr 25
 It's been 4 years since I first flew @airvistara
 Still believe that nothing compares to the quality service provided by this airline! ❤️
 And yes, I still do have my very first #Vistara boarding pass 🥳
 #VistaraLove

Photo credit: Sanket Mishra

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APRIL 16

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649pardeeps Bro i think typo err it's 787-9

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View replies (1)

649pardeeps ❤️🔥😂

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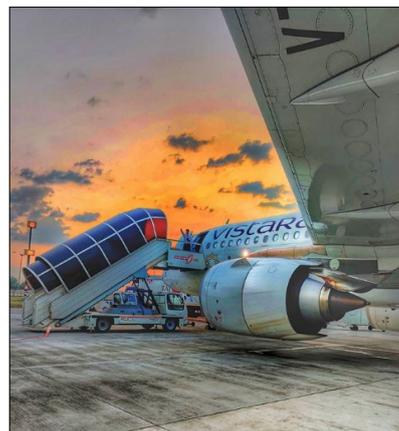
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csiaspotter8 Brooooooo stop it! You are burning down Instagram 🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄

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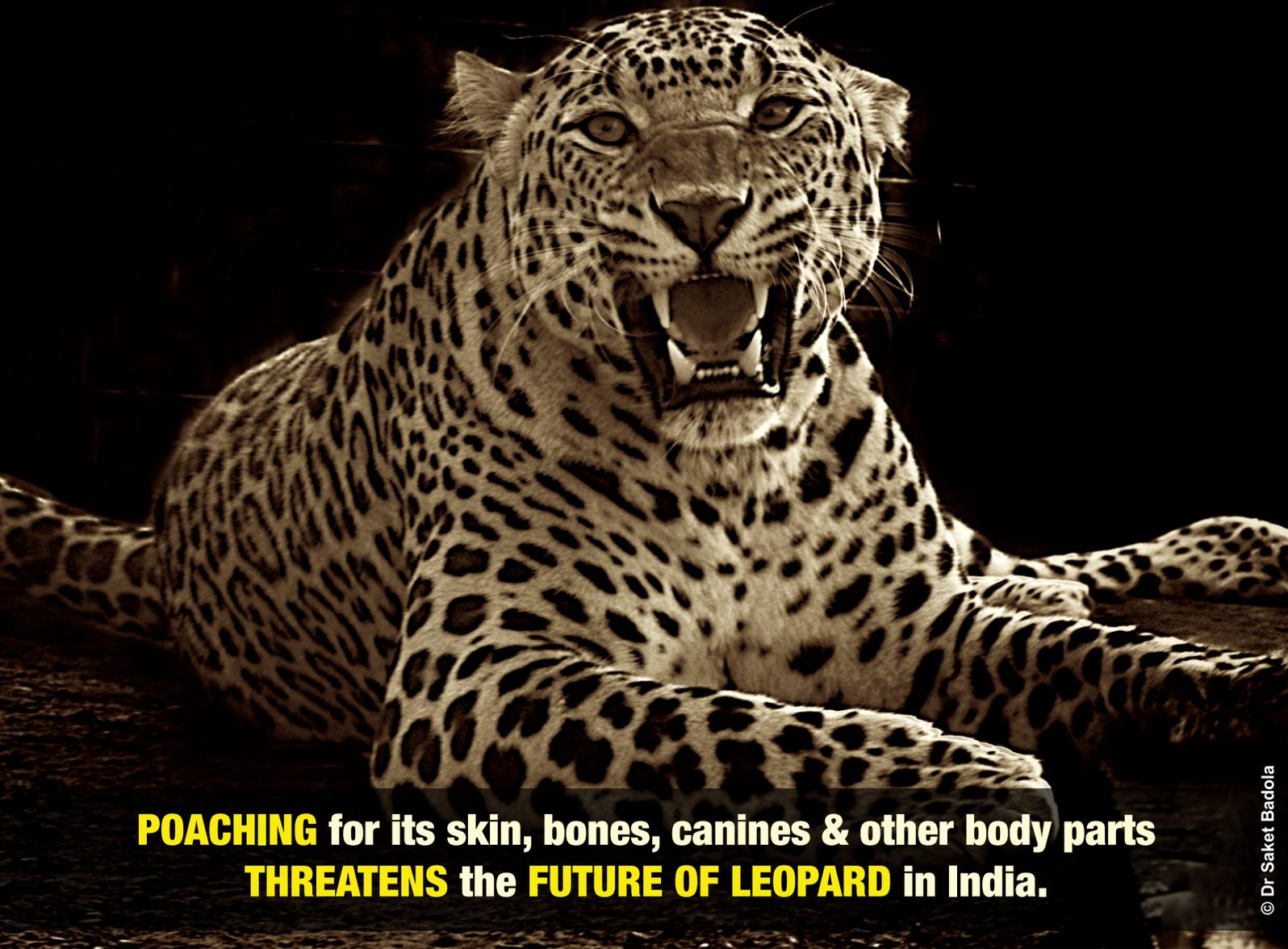
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THREATENED BY ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE



COMMON LEOPARD

Panthera pardus



POACHING for its skin, bones, canines & other body parts
THREATENS the **FUTURE OF LEOPARD** in India.

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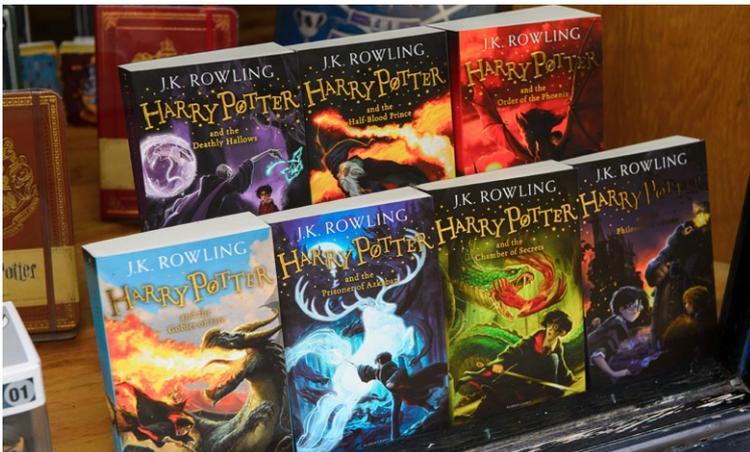
POTPOURRI

A collage of happenings from the world of travel, entertainment, technology and current affairs



Virtual tour of history

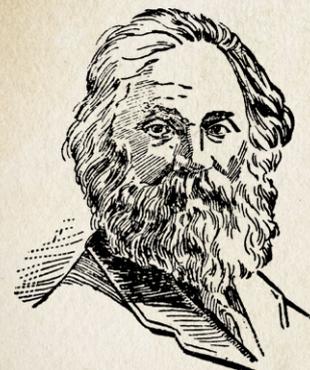
Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities announced the release of five new virtual tours of Egypt's historic sites, that can now be explored from the comfort of home. The tours showcase the tomb of Meresankh III, the tomb of Menna, the Ben Ezra Synagogue, the Red Monastery and the Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Barquq. Each virtual experience features detailed 3-D imagery through which users can 'walk' by clicking hotspots along the structures' floors.



Reconnecting with Hogwarts

Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling launched a new online hub named Harry Potter at Home, for students and teachers. The website is full of craft tutorials, educator resources and some interesting Potter trivia knowledge. Newcomers to the wizarding world can read interviews with some of the film franchise's actors or learn how to draw a niffler.

This Month, That Year



On May 31, 1819, American poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892) was born in Long Island, New York. His poem Leaves of Grass is considered an American classic. His poetry

celebrated modern life and took on subjects considered taboo at the time. Known as the father of free verse, Whitman was "influenced by the long cadences and rhetorical strategies of Biblical poetry."

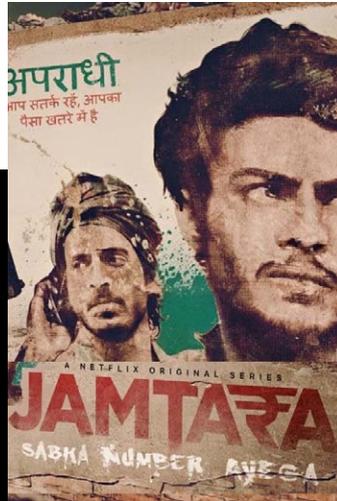
WEB SERIES

The Forgotten Army: Azaadi ke Liye

Director: Kabir Khan, Anil Senior

Cast: Sunny Kaushal, Sharvari Wagh, TJ Bhanu

Streaming on: Amazon Prime

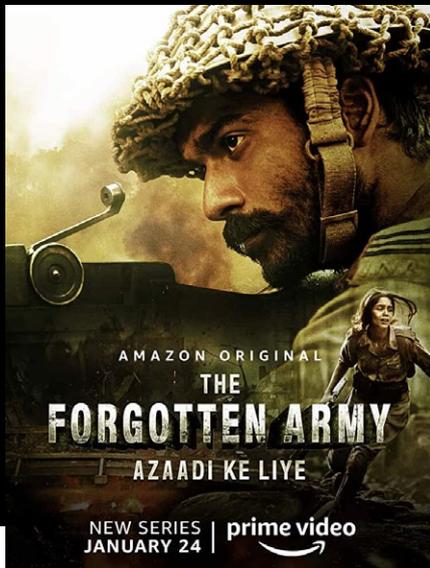


Jamtara: Sabka Number Aayega

Director: Soumendra Padhi

Cast: Amit Sial, Dibyendu Bhattacharya, Aksha Pardasany, Sparsh Shrivastav, Monika Panwar, Anshuman Pushkar

Streaming on: Netflix



Money Heist

Creator: Álex Pina

Cast: Úrsula Corberó, Álvaro Morte, Itziar Ituño

Streaming on: Netflix



Little Fires Everywhere

Developed by: Liz Tigelaar

Cast: Reese Witherspoon

Kerry Washington

Joshua Jackson

Streaming on: Hotstar



Broadchurch

Created by:
Chris Chibnall

Cast: David
Tennant

Olivia Colman
Jodie Whittaker

Streaming on:
Netflix

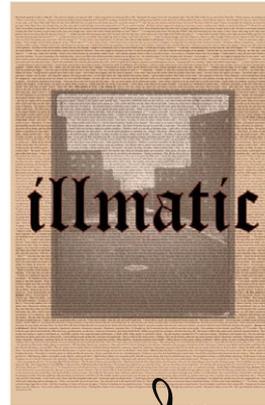


MUSIC ALBUMS



The New Abnormal by The Strokes

Released in April 2020, it is an indie rock album with elements of 1980s pop music. The album offers a vintage feel into modern-day.

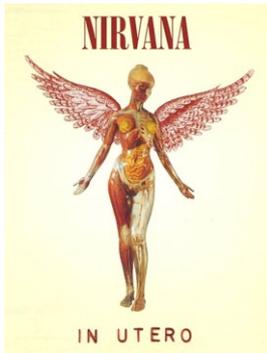


Illmatic by Nas

The sounds and style of 90s New York comes to life with Illmatic, a hip-hop album. It has a perfect combination of DJ Premier, Pete Rock and Q-Tip's jazz-and-funk indebted grooves with Nas's rap storytelling lyrics.

Kind of Blue by Miles Davis

Jazz lovers can always go back to Kind of Blue for its simple combination of instruments and smooth and relaxing tunes. It lures listeners with the slow, luxurious bass line and gentle piano chords.



In Utero by Nirvana

The album brings to life dark, heavy and bone-crunching side of Nirvana while synthesising Kurt Cobain's love for pop melodies, screeching guitars, murky textures and sardonic lyricism.



Sleep by Max Richter

An eight-hour collection, composed with the help of neuroscientists, has 31 uninterrupted pieces that can help aid sleep. Many of the pieces are known to conjure dreamy states and make the world around you seem softer.



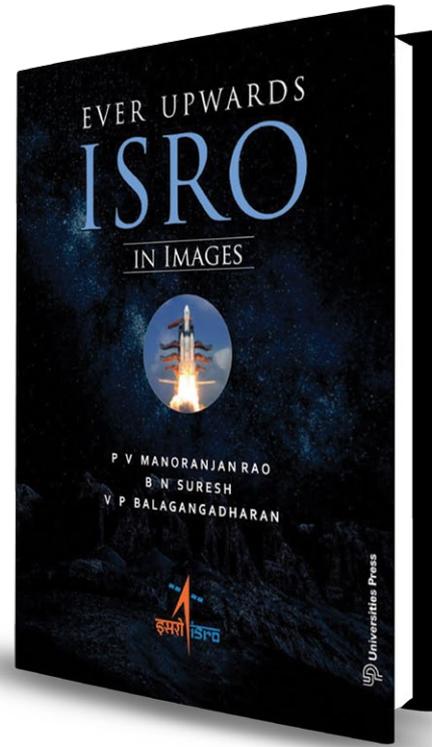


5

BOOKS TO READ THIS SUMMER

“There is no friend as loyal as a book.”

- Ernest Hemingway



Ever Upwards: ISRO in Images

Written by: PV Manoranjan Rao, BN Suresh, and VP Balagangadharan

Published by: Universities Press

The book is a treasure trove of photographs tracing the journey of ISRO—most of the photos being made public by ISRO for the first time. This coffee table book, with over 350 photos, showcases ISRO's past and present with intimate knowledge about the organisation penned down by three former scientists of ISRO.

Available on Amazon and on the ISRO website

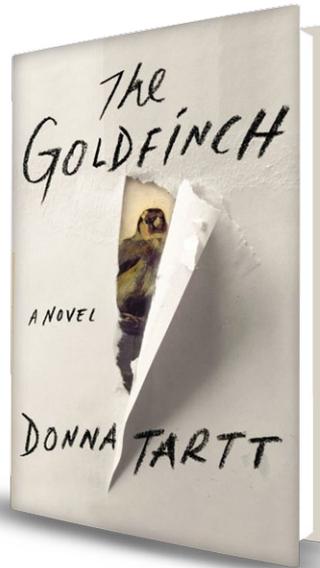
The Goldfinch

Written by: Donna Tartt

Published by: Little, Brown and Company

It is an odyssey through present-day America and a drama of enthralling power. Combining unforgettably vivid characters and thrilling suspense, it is an addictive triumph - a story of loss and obsession, of survival and self-invention, of the deepest mysteries of love, identity and fate.

Kindle edition available on Amazon



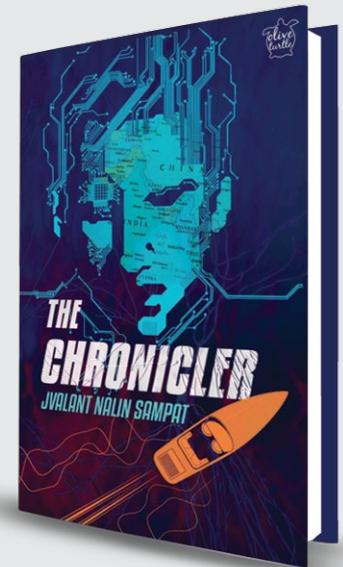
THE CHRONICLER

Written by: Jvalant Nalin Sampat

Published by: Niyogi Books

Memories are usually treasured, sometimes in emotions, sometimes in prose and poetry, and sometimes in photographs. But what if someone told you that they could be stored...in a hard drive? That a dead person's memories could be accessed by playing them through a living person's—the Chronicler's—mind? Caught in the vortex of a high-stakes game between governments, spy agencies, and powerful organizations across international borders, *The Chronicler* is the unputdownable thriller.

Kindle edition available on Amazon



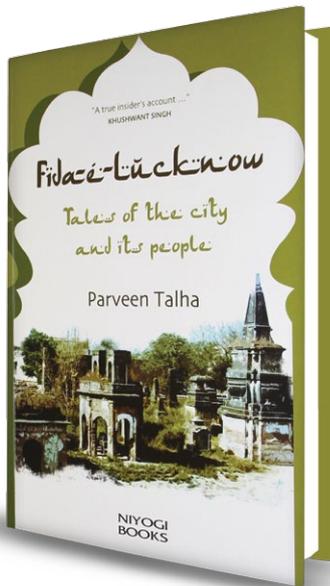
Fida-e-Lucknow

Written by Parveen Talha

Published by: Niyogi Books

Steeped in the flavours and textures of life in Lucknow, the collection is a beautiful blend of history, relationships and vignettes of city life. Woven through these stories is the history of its Ganga-Jamuni culture and the changes which came over the city and its people in the post-Independence period. *Fida-é-Lucknow* is also the story of Lucknow's women. Be it Qudsia Begum, Zulekha, Amina or Ghengaran—all of them are liberated in the truest sense of the word.

Kindle edition available on Amazon



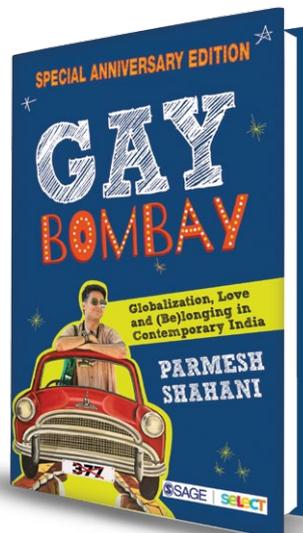
Gay Bombay: Globalization, Love and (Be)longing in Contemporary India

Written by: Parmesh Shahani

Published by: SAGE Publications India

The book attempts to provide various macro and micro perspectives on what it means to be a gay man located in the online-offline Gay Bombay community in the late 1990s and early 2000s. On a broader level, the book critically examines the formulation and reconfiguration of contemporary Indian gayness in the light of its emergent cultural, media and political alliances.

Kindle edition available on Amazon



Lord of the shire

Once known for its dairy products, Matamata underwent a makeover after the Alexander Brothers' Farm turned into the Shire for Peter Jackson's *Lord of the Rings*.

words // Mohona Banerjee

It is remarkably easy for most sleepy towns to become comfortable in sedimenting into a forgotten corner of the world and sink into oblivion.

Matamata was on its own slow journey to such dreamy non-existence. A certain Peter Jackson and a billion dollar movie franchise later, the horsey country town has transformed into a major tourist destination point of New Zealand and witnesses a massive footfall of tourists every year.

Long before it became a global hotspot for cine lovers and fantasy enthusiasts, Matamata had made a rather remarkable name for itself for raising exceptional thoroughbreds and churning delicious dairy products, a tradition which continues even to this day. The rolling green pastures and the picturesque settings attracted the film industry and when the Alexander Brothers' Farm turned into the Shire for Peter Jackson's

Lord of the Rings, the region underwent an extreme makeover. *The Hobbit* film built a lot of Hobbit holes for the movie. A decision by the government which allowed the movie props to go on undisturbed, soon began to attract droves of tourists who wanted the authentic Middle-earth experience of magic, waifs, warlocks and wizards as seen in the movie.

The Hobbiton which consists of over 44 Hobbit residences is one of the main attractions of Matamata. Fans are treated to a detailed tour which includes fascinating commentary about how the Shire came to being and the development of the movie sets. Apart from movie locations, the wind mills, doubled arched bridges and the intricate architecture make for a delightful visit for every travel enthusiast.





MORE THAN HOBBIT HOLES

The magic which first attracted the film phenomenon is intrinsic and embedded in the very nature of the place. Located under the magnificent Kaimai ranges about 15 km northeast of Matamata, the Wairere falls, which also happens to be the highest waterfall in the North Island region, offers a glorious view of the valleys and the Waikato Plains.

If one still hasn't had their fill of

the beautiful scenery, they can head off to Te Tapui Scenic Reserve. The reserve is home to two peaks—Te Tapui at 492m and Maungakawa at 495m. The Te Tapui loop track to the Maungakawa summit starts west of Matamata and can be walked in clockwise or anticlockwise directions. The view from the Maungakawa summit is equally stunning and worth the long and treacherous trek. Also worth

an experience is the picnic lunch on one of the benches installed at the summit. Another popular attraction of the town is the famous Firth Tower. Built by one Josiah Firth back in 1882, the 18m tower used to be a very popular landmark and a status symbol. Now converted into a museum, it is filled with Mori and pioneer artifacts. The tower is surrounded by other historic buildings which include a fascinating jail building, a church and a school giving one a

These Hobbit holes offer an authentic Middle-earth experience of magic, waifs, warlocks and wizards as seen in the movie.



Hobbit hole in Hobbiton



remarkable insight into how life, law and religion functioned in the region in the past. The tower and the buildings which are located within walking distance provide a perfect getaway for museum-lovers and history enthusiasts.

DIVERSE EXPERIENCES

Matamata is full of surprises. Not many know that the Matamata Clay Target Gun Club Inc is one of the oldest shooting ranges in the world. Due to its high standards and exacting rules, the shooting range is frequented by Olympians and champions from around the world.

The town has its own small world charm. The beautiful Centennial Drive happens to be a refreshing botanical park which winds its way to the heart of Matamata. The botanical park has a diverse variety of trees from all over the world. The drive was formed in the early 1900s when the settlement of Matamata was divided into sections, leaving a 40m wide plantation reserve. Over time this reserve was planted and developed into Centennial Drive.

Dedicated to nature and its beauty, Matamata hosts an annual flower exhibition. Matamata Festival of Flowers is generally held in April to best exhibit the glory of spring season and draws considerable crowds every year. The exhibition of

ESSENTIALS

COUNTRY
New Zealand

LANGUAGES
English & Maori

CURRENCY
New Zealand dollar (NZD)

BEST TIME TO VISIT
October to May





How to reach

The serene lush farmland is situated two hours south of Auckland in Hamilton-Waikato region. The beauty of the farmland is its easy accessibility. Located by the state highway 27, the closest airport to Matamata is Hamilton International Airport. Intercity buses at a frequency of three vehicles ply regularly from Hamilton to Matamata. Also, buses from Cambridge, Rotorua and Tauranga to Matamata are regularly available.



Left and Above: The scenic beauty of Matamat is full of flora and fauna and offers a real rejuvenation for the senses

What makes Matamata a perfect tourist getaway is the plethora of options it offers to travellers with varied budgets, interests and tastes.

rare and cultivated flowers is generally accompanied with seminars on green-house methods and gardening techniques.

What makes Matamata a perfect tourist getaway is the plethora of options it offers to travellers with varied budgets, interests and tastes. The town is filled with beautiful bed-and-breakfast lodges, motels and even farms which allow visitors to have a wide range of options varying from luxury to sinking into the authentic local way of life.

Matamata is a time portal. The beauty of the place is a constant reiteration which echoes in every nook and corner of the place. Films may have put the idyllic town on the global map but Matamata has a charm that calls on to the spirit of every nature travel lover and its beauty lives on for a long time. ✿





Illustration: B. Jaya

College Street

A colony of books

Knowledge Street, the hub of intellectualism, could be the right expression that aptly describes College Street of Kolkata.

words // Partha Mukherjee & Priyanka Mukherjee

Honking cabs, ramshackle public transport, clanging tram cars, hollering cart pushers, vociferous hawkers and cackle of students, coffee, tea and books turn the vicinity into a polychromatic collage of life. Though ravages of time are visible everywhere, College Street still lives in the heart of Kolkata. It has a magic of its own that has attracted writers, painters, athletes, academicians, celebrities and more for years who ended up becoming regular visitors of this place like the rest of the city. Historians have it that the Street was built in the 19th century, courtesy Lord Wellesley. It was a part of the Great Arterial Road which connected the north of the city to its south. The stretch owes its name to Hindu College (later known as Presidency College and very recently, Presidency University).

For an authentic experience, find some time at your disposal and saunter up and down the alley, and indulge yourself in a long poesy of a part of the city that was once the intellectual capital of India.

PRICELESS EXPERIENCE

As you enter the College Street, the sight of books overwhelms you—it is the largest centre of shops selling old books in Asia. Vertically set wooden shelves and a tungsten lamp aid the job of enlightening upon the voluminous novels. Approximately 150 stalls, lined-up end-to-end in long rows, wind their way, like ribbons of paper laid out along every bylane and alley in the vicinity.

A reel of vignettes, brown with time, unwinds slowly before your eyes: Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, bare-chested in a knee-length dhoti, walks briskly into the precinct of Sanskrit College; Henry Vivian Louis Derozio is lost in the editorial pages by Dr John Grant in the *Indian Gazette*; Prof. Suniti Chatterjee, the famous linguist, browses over the pages of a tome, setting the bridge of his pince-nez with the tip of his forefinger; Satyajit Ray stands deeply engrossed in the pages of an album of old paintings related to the lifestyle of the Nawab of Awadh in the 19th century, or an ecstatic Soumitra Chatterjee browses through the pages of an old copy



of *Lust For Life* by Irving Stone. Gunter Grass with a sketchbook held open on his knees captures a candid moment of an old bookseller flooding his client with volumes of books and arguing over their prices and antique value.

Amidst the back streets, one finds different types of bookshops. Some of them are even 100 years old with the latest foreign bestsellers, cramped cubby-hole-type shops set along the boundary wall of the Presidency University. Hawkers sitting on the pavement, selling indiscriminately anything that has pages.

In these stalls are sold not only old and rare books, but also dreams that leave you excited. You might discover a dust-ridden copy of Bhaskaracharya's *Leelavati* or Giraldi Cinthio's *Gli Hecatommithi* (a title, that inspired William Shakespeare to write his timeless creation, *Othello*). As you stumble over Bertrand Russell's *Roads to Freedom*, the word freedom rings in your heart; you pick up the dust-ridden copy and try hard to read a few pages, and you have the first taste of the political theory of anarchism.

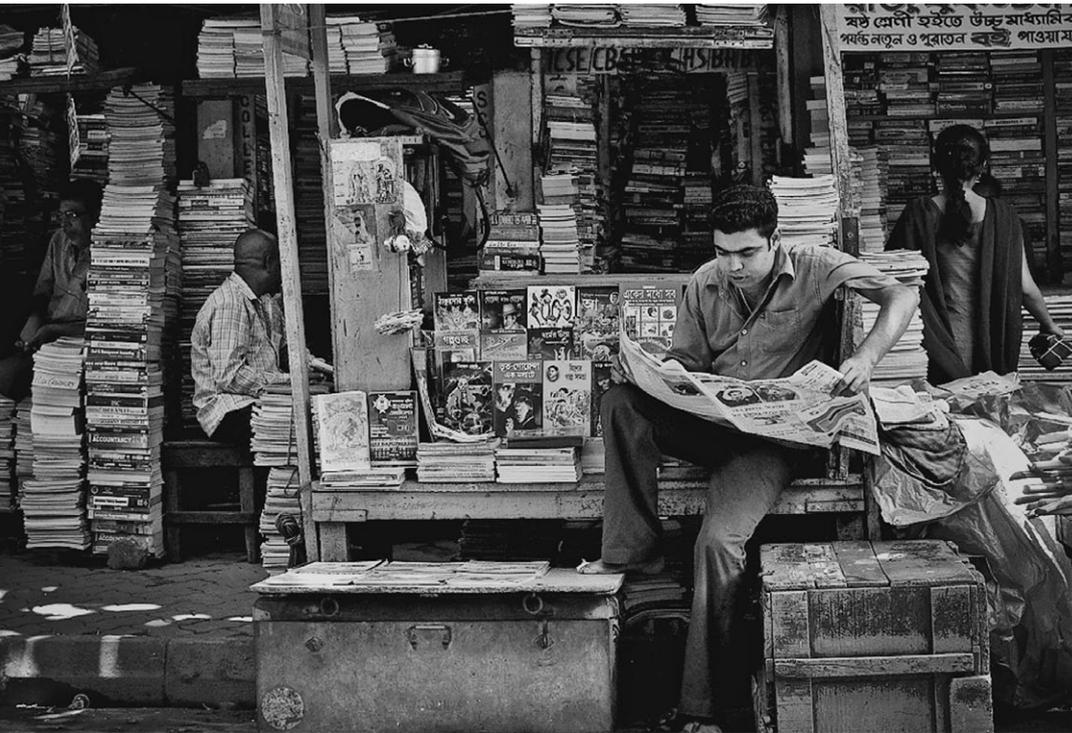
UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

Presidency College

The hallowed portal of Presidency College (University) inspires one to delve deep into the annals of history and re-evaluate the present. One can still feel the voices of stalwarts reverberating in the portico that leads to the central library where the dog-eared register still bears names of awe-inspiring alumni like Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Subhas Chandra Bose, Michael Madhusudan Dutt and Satyajit Ray; the list seems to be endless.

Coffee House: The Heart

College Street Coffee House (Albert Hall) is where life is baked on the toaster of intellectualism. Housed in Albert Hall – an assembly hall, opened by Keshab Chandra Sen in 1876, where chieftains of the Brahmo community would assemble, the coffee house began its journey as an outlet of Indian Coffee Board in 1942. Better known as the most happening place in the city, it bred intellectuals with 'infusion' of black and strong coffee. Its main charm is the non-stop 'adda', which draws people of all ages and across spectra; bureaucrats to technocrats; litterateurs to film-makers; painters to musicians, to be precise, from all social platforms. In fact, with time it has become a cauldron of intellectualism in Kolkata.



A bookshop keeper reading the newspaper at College Street

Did you **KNOW?**

In 1958, the management decided to shut down the Coffee House at College Street, but it re-opened after professors of Presidency College filed a petition to the government.

Foodies have plenty to dig into during their visit to College Street. The best sweet shops are Putiram and Mouchak, famous for rasogollas, sandesh, ladcanny and dorbesh.

Sir Ronald Ross, C.V. Raman, Rabindranath Tagore, Amartya Sen and Mother Teresa, are five brilliant scholars and Nobel laureates of Kolkata. Satyajit Ray was one of the first Oscar winners in the country.



A view of the Coffee House at College Street in Kolkata

EXPLORE

University of Calcutta

Founded in 1857, the University of Calcutta, once the largest of any Indian university with students from Lahore to Myanmar (known as Burma in the past) and Sri Lanka (Ceylon, at that time), stands as the custodian of all academic institutions in the area. Scholastic gravity of the university still continues to draw students from all over the world. The austere past associated with names like Sir Ashutosh Mukhopadhyay, Shyama Prasad Mukhopadhyay, Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, C. V. Raman, Sir J. C. Bose, Swami Vivekananda and Amartya Sen adds to the gravity of the building.

College Street's Coffee House (Albert Hall) is where life is baked on the toaster of intellectualism.

Sanskrit College

Near where Bankim Chatterjee Street meets College Street stands the hallowed portal of one of the oldest institutions in the subcontinent. As one stands near the building, opposite to Coffee House, his mind flies back to those days when this college reverberated at lectures given by a galaxy of erudite scholars and educationists like Ramkamal Sen, Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Mahamahopadhyay Pandit Mahesh Chandra Nyayratna Bhattacharyya, C.I.E and Surendranath Dasgupta. The cream and saffron colours of the building, its Corinthian pillars, perhaps, reflect on the ethos of the sanctity built in the institution for over 190 years. Founded on January 1, 1824, the college happened to be one of the finest seats of academic excellence in matters related to

Hinduism, eastern philosophy, ancient Indian history and ancient Indian languages like Pali and Prakrit.

Medical College

“Whatever thy hands findeth to do, do it with thy might.” The biblical inscription on the wall of the Medical College, Kolkata inspired Dr Bidhan Chandra Roy immensely. A famous physician and the second chief minister of West Bengal, Dr Roy was a student of this college where he completed his MD. It was here that the first dissection of a human corpse by Madhusudan Gupta, an Indian student, took place in 1836 and is considered to be a landmark in the history of growth of western medicine in British India. Founded on January 28, 1835, on a piece of land donated by Mutty Lal Seal, the famous philanthropist of the then Bengal, it is the second college to teach European medicine in Asia (after Ecole de Médecine de Pondichéry) and the first to teach the subject in English.

College Square

On the eastern bank of College Street is College Square, which is almost entirely filled up with a large water tank – utilised as one of the most happening venues for aquatic sports.

Paramount - The Sherbat Paradise

Founded in 1918, the juice shop is said to have offered ‘cool’ respite to many firebrand sons of the soil. One among them happened to be Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. Even scientists like Acharaya Jagadish Chandra Bose, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy included the list of regulars. ✨

Literary cities

Where soul speaks through
literature



Literary tourism is the answer to an incorrigible obsession with libraries, a fascination with book-themed venues or homes of classic authors. And for those deeply devoted to the pursuit of books, a perfect bucket list includes these UNESCO's Cities of Literature:

words // Punita Malhotra



1 | MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay

Uruguay's capital Montevideo is the epitome of timelessness with its classic architecture, riverside promenades and a thriving cultural scene. Its small historic district of Ciudad Vieja makes for a delightful stroll with its newly restored colonial mansions, quirky cafes, majestic museums, antique stores and bookshops. 'The Athens of the Rio de la Plata' rose to literary prominence with the creative genius of many renowned authors in the league of Mario Benedetti, Delmira Agustini, José Enrique Rodó, Julio Herrera y Reissig, Juan Carlos

Onetti, Antonio Larreta, Eduardo Galeano, Carlos Vaz Ferreira, Marosa di Giorgio, Cristina Peri Rossi and Felisberto Hernández. During the 1950s, these Uruguayan authors shaped the contemporary Uruguayan intellectual identity forever. This cradle of Gaucho literature has the distinction of being the only UNESCO City of Literature in Latin America.

Diomedes Libros, Las Karamazov and Escaramuza are some of the bookstores worth peeking into. But the piece de resistance

is Más Puro Verso, a striking Art Nouveau building from 1917, with a flamboyant glass frontage opening. A sweeping marble staircase, ornate stained-glass window and soaring ceilings showcase a fabulous collection of books over two floors. Upscale piazza gives way to flea-market exuberance at the Sunday Feria de Tristán Narvaja in the Cordón neighbourhood. Hours flit by under the hypnotic spell of book bargaining along the long tables overflowing with old books and magazines.



2 | LJUBLJANA, Slovenia

Under the shadow of a 900-year old hilltop medieval castle that overlooks a mythical green dragon perched on an iconic bridge, Ljubljana is a welcoming city. Lively riverside bars line the banks of the gently meandering Ljubljanica River, which separates the baroque eye-candy of its historic, car-free cobbled cultural centre from a more modern and green west bank.

Designated World Book Capital by UNESCO in 2010 and City of Literature in 2015, thanks to its rich literary culture, Ljubljana commands pride of position as the literary centre of Slovenia. Its national heroes are the scholars, poets and writers, who made history by influencing social, political and cultural issues, and it is they, who stand immortalised in bronze and stone in all major central squares.

Ljubljana's national heroes are the scholars and poets who stand immortalised in bronze and stone.

Bibliophiles can embark on the 'Ljubljana for Poetry Lovers' tour for an introduction to eleven of the greatest Slovene poets or be inspired by visits to various famed authors' homes along the Slovenian Writers Trail. A book reading at the iconic Trubar House of Literature and some pottering around the massive selection of 70,000 book titles in the two-level Konzorcij bookstore, add to a brush with culture. Ljubljana's grassy parks are venues for casually laid-out cartons of books and comfy cushioned deck-chairs washed by the warm sun.



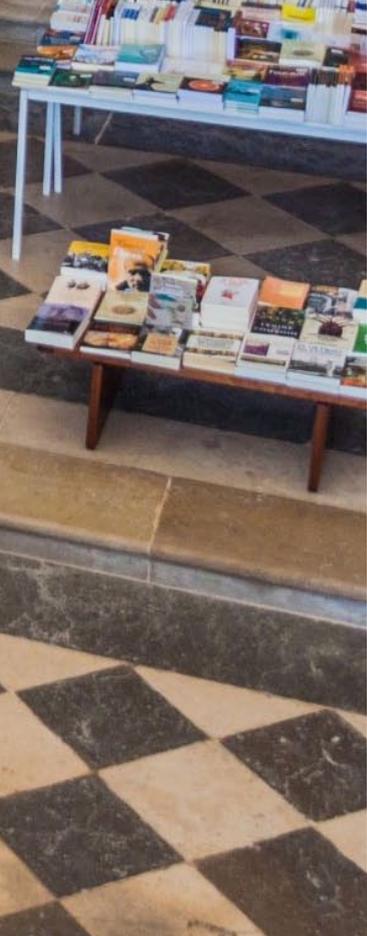


3 | OBIDOS, Portugal

A centuries-old medieval town protecting an ancient castle, a maze of cobblestone alleys and whitewashed homes with bright blue-yellow painted trim, has been reborn as the youngest book town in the world. Half a million books to 3,000 residents, a dozen new bookstores and an international lit-fest called FOLIO, featuring debates, reading marathons, screenings and concerts for artists, Obidos has successfully reinvented itself as the literary hub of Portugal.

Book-worming temptations in Obidos are not limited to the annual literature festival. A 13th

century architectural Gothic icon, the Church of Santiago, has been rebranded as the most unusual bookshop in this part of the continent. Inspiration enough for many other unique places to buy a book, including an old fire station, a vegetable market, and even a wine cellar. And that's not where the quest for redesigned historic spaces ends. The innovation hits crescendo at the Literary Man, a literary-themed hotel. Fans of print can spend hours lusting after the collection of 65,000 books displayed in the luxe property, and give into indulgence by buying anything that catches fancy.





4 | BUCHEON, South Korea

Seoul's biggest satellite city Bucheon has an unusual claim to fame. It has a well-organised network of 128 libraries, including miniature versions in markets, offices and even subways. For the residents of Bucheon, a book, a lecture or an educational program is always within five minutes of reach. Book exchange facilities between public and university libraries and special library services for the elderly, differently-abled and visually impaired, ensure that no one is left craving the written word.

This burgeoning thirst for knowledge is credited to the time of Korea's rapid industrialisation, when workers turned to night school to protect their civil rights. Cut to today and Bucheon boasts of being the leading cultural city of Korea, with festivals of international-scale in music, film and animation. Native writers like Mok Il-sin, Yang Gui-ja, Jeong Ji-yong, and American author Pearl S. Buck, who wrote two novels set in Korea, flagged off the creative journey. Decades later, the literary legacy gained new momentum with the new-age Korean poets, Byun Yeongro (Suju) and Chong Chi-yong.

Lovers of books can follow one of the literary trails named after Buck and Ji-yong that cover the prominent city sights. The romantic at heart can check out The Street of Poetry and Flowers. A visit to the Korea Manhwa Museum can give insight into the power of illustrations in storytelling and highlight the role of cartoons and comics in the region's literary tradition.



5 | MELBOURNE, Australia

The second city of Australia has an enduring appeal that extends beyond the boundaries of its sports stadiums. Multicultural and diverse, sophisticated and free-spirited, intellectual and artsy, its lively, modern vibe proudly showcases a quaint Victorian lineage like no other. Melbourne's thriving music scene, world-class museums, legendary street art, lineup of festive events and vibrant nightlife make it as the undisputed cultural capital of Australia.

The highest consumption of

books and the most number of community book clubs than any other city in the country bear testimony to the eternal Melbourne bibliophilia. Homegrown celeb writers like Marcus Clarke, Peter Carey and Helen Garner and treasured events like Melbourne Writers Festival, Digital Writers Festival, and Feminist Writers Festival, add to its flourishing literary character.

Lit fans can pay homage to the celebrated State Library of Victoria, attend a book launch at the

Wheeler Centre and zone out under the octagonal dome of the La Trobe Reading Room decorated with quotes by famous writers. Other recommended must-dos include book browsing at the Saturday market in Fed Square, witnessing poetry readings at the Drunken Poet under a portrait of Oscar Wilde and making a trip to the 'vertical laneway' of the Nicholas Building, where Gregory Roberts penned the famous novel, *Shantaram*. Fantasy peaks at the iconic Cole's Book Arcade, a.k.a Palace of Intellect, while tracking invisible fingerprints of Rudyard Kipling and Mark Twain on the shelves that hold two million books. An inscription on the locally loved cultural institution, Athenaeum Library, defines the moment succinctly—'Pleasure of Words'. ✨

Melbourne's world-class museums and lineup of festive events make it the undisputed cultural capital of Australia.

Days of Malgudi in Mysuru



Have you grown up reading *Malgudi Days*? Did you know that famous Indian author RK Narayan's fictitious town, Malgudi, drew inspiration from Mysuru? Take a walk down memory lane and trace the parallels between Malgudi and the small town of Yadavagiri in Mysuru that inspired his tales.

words // Mita Nair illustrations // B Jaya



Simple, unassuming, spartan—RK Narayan's home-turned museum in Yadavagiri, Mysuru is quite like the man he was. The spot is unmissable, thanks to a signboard that says 'RK Narayan's House' with his photo on the facade. It was in this two-storey house on Vivekananda Road where the legendary author envisaged the fictional town of Malgudi. Lauded by critics as India's Maupassant and Hemmingway, Narayan spent over four decades at this place and wrote over 29 novels. Narayan would take long strolls in his neighbourhood and at the market and converse with locals and shopkeepers. His interactions gave him fodder for his books and characters.

RK Narayan's museum, like his simple, insightful prose, was shorn of any ostentation or grandness. From the outside, the house looks like any other in the area with whitewashed walls surrounded by bushes with wildflowers and lawns, while a large frangipani tree stands in front. There is no entry fee for visitors who wish to explore his home; only a scribble in a register gives one access. However, you have to leave your footwear outside and walk around the house barefoot.

FROM HOUSE TO MUSEUM

For decades, after Narayan sold the house and moved to Chennai, the place had lain dilapidated and unkempt. Later, both, the house and the surrounding land, were acquired by real estate contractors who planned to raze it down and build an apartment complex in its stead. However, citizen groups and the Mysore City Corporation stepped in to repurchase the building and land and then restored it. Later, it was converted into a museum in 2016.

The two-storey house is connected by a spiral staircase while the rooms are spacious and wide. It looks bright with natural light if you visit during the day. The white walls are bare except for black and white photos, quotes and information panels that offer an insight into the life of the author. There are also honorary doctorate degrees and awards that line the walls and shelves. One of the shelves displays what looks like a pair of reading glasses and a few old school ink pens that belong to the author.

Towards the rear side of the house is a dining hall that constitutes of a kitchen, a small dining table and four chairs. But the most fascinating



part of the house is on the floor above, which was Narayan's study. The room has eight windows that afforded him a view in every direction, including a view of the Chamundi Hills. In his biography titled *My Days*, he mentioned listening to the call of the woodcock in the still afternoons, and the cries of a variety of birds perching on the frangipani tree from these windows. The room also has a comprehensive collection of all

his novels and short stories on display. In the chamber adjoining his study, one can see the author's clothes hung neatly, including old stitched shirts, mufflers, worn-out sweaters, shawls, dhotis and frayed coats that gleam in the room with his presence.

BEYOND THE HOUSE

If you are a fan of *Malgudi Days*, a visit to this museum will only give you a partial glimpse of that world.



Around the station, one gets to explore narrow lanes with old houses frozen in time and avenues where life seems to proceed at an unhurried pace.

In addition, one should also go on a bespoke tour (Malgudi Days tour) organised by the local travel and tour companies. These tours help to explore an overarching theme of austerity that filled his stories with simplicity and meaning.

The tour begins at Narayan's former house in Lakshmiapuram (also in Mysuru) and takes you around the modest place, surrounded by an old-world charm with two large iron gates on either side of the compound. A visit to their rented house where the author did a substantial part of his writing before building the house in Yadavgi is also a must. The tour also takes you to the place where he usually had breakfast, the localities where he took a stroll every day, including a printing press that he frequented, some of his favourite grocery shops, and the tea stall where he used to sit and chat with his friends.

THE FAMOUS RAILWAY STATION OF MALGUDI

Just a few minutes away from the museum is the iconic Chamarajapuram railway station. Though at first glance, it may look

like an ordinary railway station like any other station in a small town, but upon a closer look, it will take you back to your vivid memories from reading the book, *Malgudi Days*. Tucked away from the main road, the station seems like it is stuck in a different era. A platform made of chipped concrete dotted with old stone benches and a gabled tiled roof supported by pillars is reminiscent of a scene right out of the book.

In his biography, *My Days*, Narayan has admitted that he first conceived the idea of Malgudi with an image of the railway station. As a matter of fact, Narayan's brother and legendary cartoonist RK Laxman had once illustrated Swami and his friends (characters from *Malgudi Days*) at a station which was identical to the Chamarajapuram railway station.

Around the station, one gets to explore narrow lanes with old houses frozen in time and avenues where life seems to proceed at an unhurried pace. There is no traffic and no trappings of the contemporary world. Everything seems like you have entered into the world of one of Narayan's books. ✿

Did you KNOW?

RK Narayan's first published work wasn't a novel or a short story, but a book review of *Development of Maritime Laws of 17th Century England*.

The manuscript of *Swami and His Friends* was sent to English novelist Graham Greene, who recommended it to the famous publisher, Hamish Hamilton.

His famous novels include *Swami and his Friends*, *The Guide*, *The Financial Expert*, *The Dark Room*, *The Man-Eater of Malgudi*, *A Tiger for Malgudi*, *The English Teacher*, *Mr Sampath*, *Waiting for the Mahatma* and many more.





Drama dawns at the first glimpse of the Gothic skyline that defines Edinburgh's medieval old town.

The tight sprawl of ancient multi-storied buildings lining the hilly, winding cobbled streets challenges imagination. The rapidly evolving 18th century New Town is Edinburgh's eye of epicureanism. From the traditional tune of bagpipes to the creative quirks of its Fringe Festival, the city is a chronicle that artfully blends the past with the present. A bubbling cauldron where hundreds of curious stories have unfolded.

LUMINARIES OF LITERATURE

Crowned as the first UNESCO City of Literature in 2004 for its legacy of world-class literature and learning since centuries, Edinburgh's commitment to the literary scene continues unfazed.

The distinguished list of its famous scribblers includes Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson and Robert Burns, Kenneth Grahame, Muriel Spark, Ian Rankin and Alexander McCall Smith. They are just some of the luminaries that the city is proud of.

Love for the written and spoken words drips from wall posters announcing creative writing courses, theatre performances, book reading sessions and invitations to book clubs. A wide network of library and information services offers a haven to book lovers, both locals and visitors. At the National Library of Scotland, bookworms can gloat over a rare letter submitted by Charles Darwin with a manuscript of 'On the Origin of Species' and gleefully scan the First Folio

Edinburgh

A cauldron of curious chronicles

Windswept remote highlands, forgotten castles and sloping summits of nude Munros humming songs of silence. Cocooned in the serenity of this Scotland countryside is its thousand-year-old capital city—Edinburgh, which inspired some of the finest literary geniuses that have walked the earth.

words // Punita Malhotra



Local **INSIGHTS**



NICKNAMES

The city is affectionately nicknamed *Auld Reekie* (means 'Old Smokey' in the Scots dialect) for the views of the smoke-covered Old Town. The city is also called the 'Athens of the North' for a variety of reasons. Sir Walter Scott referred to it as "yon Empress of the North". Whereas Robert Louis Stevenson once wrote that Edinburgh "is what Paris ought to be."



POTTER-THEMED STAY

Edinburgh also offers Harry Potter-themed apartments for Potter fans. Rooms resembling a carriage from the Hogwarts Express or decorated like a Gryffindor dormitory (gold and red decor), gilded mirrors, old books, and various Harry Potter-themed cutlery and vintage knick-knacks provide a real experience of the magical world.

of Shakespeare. The Writers' Museum is a mecca for fans of Scott, Stevenson and Burns, the giants of Scottish literature. Visual treats include Burns' writing desk, Stevenson's riding boots and the printing press that produced Scott's novels. Book-buffs can pamper their literary palate at the city's many antique and contemporary bookshops. Deserving pitstops on this pilgrimage are Armchair Books, Golden Hare Books and Lighthouse Bookshop.

Poetry fans can reserve time to admire the full archive of Edwin Morgan, one of Scotland's most iconic modern poets at the strikingly modernist Scottish Poetry Library housing. St. Andrew Square is the outdoor hub that celebrates poetry events. Literary extravaganza in the city reaches its climax every year when the bibliophile community converges at the Charlotte Square to attend the renowned Edinburgh International Book Festival (EIBF).



On a statue-spotting expedition, one can pay tribute to bohemian poet Robert Fergusson, philosopher Robert Hume, economist Adam Smith, and author Robert Louis Stevenson.



LITTERED WITH LANDMARKS

From the name of its train station, Waverly, to one of the tallest monuments, Edinburgh commemorates its most famous native, Sir Walter Scott joyously. Quiet corners, open squares and important streets display permanent toasts to Edinburgh's greatest writers. On a statue-spotting expedition, one can pay tribute to several local literary idols, like bohemian poet Robert Fergusson, philosopher Robert Hume, economist Adam Smith, and author Robert Louis Stevenson. Edinburgh's hauntingly beautiful graveyards also make unusual, but fascinating literary destinations because of the many tombstones of essayists, poets and intellectuals who rest there.

To the keen eye, real-life locations from favourite pages jump out of the stone-studded streets of the Old Town. Whodunnit fans can soak up nostalgia at the Conan Doyle pub, feel goosebumps at the author's birthplace and learn about Joseph Bell, the surgeon who inspired the inimitable Sherlock Holmes. Another famous setting is the Oxford Bar, featured in the more modern Inspector Rebus series of Scottish crime writer, Ian Rankin. A pint at the atmospheric interiors of the Jekyll and Hyde pub fuel the thirst for more intense exploration.

LEAFING THROUGH LEGENDS

From the many tempting literary-themed walking tours, the Edinburgh Book-Lover's Tour offers an engrossing insight into the lives of famed authors, their works, historical contexts and their residences. On the other hand, amusement and entertainment set the tone for the

Edinburgh Literary Pub Tour, a humour-tinged exploration of the city's pubs giving a different perspective into three centuries of Scottish literature.

Decidedly, 'classic' is the apt tag for the 'Jekyll and Hyde' tour, set against the backdrop of the dark and dingy era of the infamous 19th century murderers. Peering down the narrow streets and dark closes, one can visualise the scenes that sparked off the idea for Robert Louis Stevenson to pen his acclaimed novel, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. The most recognised landmark along this trail is Deacon Brodie's pub. It is believed that Stevenson's infamous two-faced maniac Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde was based on the late city councillor, Brodie's double life.

For many, the final indulgence in Edinburgh is the Potter Trail. Besotted followers of the series queue up in hordes to visit J K Rowling's many writing haunts, including the cute little Elephant Cafe, where she wrote her first Harry Potter book. Two other popular locations are the graveyard headstone which inspired the character of *He Who Must Not Be Named* and George Heriot's School, which bears an uncanny resemblance to the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Pottermania reaches its peak at the colourful, multi-storied Victoria Street - the inspiration behind Diagon Alley. Pop into Museum Context (aka Diagon House) to buy some Harry Potter memorabilia or check out the Joke Shop. Unfortunately, it's not managed by Fred and George Weasley.. ✨

Treasure trove of delicacies

In uncertain times like these, cooking can prove to be quite therapeutic and calming. Chef Priya Vatsyayan of Vistara revives and simplifies some lost recipes to spice up your quarantine cooking.



Bread Pudding

To serve - 2 portions

Bread	100 gm
Butter	30 gm
Milk	250 ml
Sugar	60 gm
Eggs	02 nos
Raisins	30 gm
Cashew nuts	30 gm
Nutmeg	pinch
Lemon rind	pinch
Vanilla essence	¼ tsp

- Butter the bread and break into small pieces.
- Boil some milk in a pan and pour it over the bread pieces. Set this aside for 30 minutes.
- In another bowl, beat eggs with sugar, lemon rind and nutmeg.
- Pour the egg batter over the bread mix. Add vanilla essence.
- Add raisins and cashew nuts to the mix
- Mix the entire mixture lightly and transfer it into a greased mould.
- Cover the mould with a butter paper and steam it for 30 minutes
- Your dish is ready! Serve it warm.

Paneer Pasanda

To serve - 4 to 6 portions

Paneer	400 gm
Curd	150 gm
Salt	to taste
Rose water	1 tbsp
Saffron	few strands
Ghee	50 gm

Masala A

Poppy seeds	50 gm
Charoli seeds or almonds	25 gm
Desiccated coconut or coconut milk	25 gms/40 ml
Cashew nuts	25 gm

Masala B

Green Cardamom	06 nos
Cloves	4 nos
Mace	02 Blades
White pepper powder	½ tsp





Poulet Sauté Maryland

To serve - 4 to 6 portions

Can be served with Stuffed Tomatoes and Pommes Duchess (optional)

Chicken	8 pieces
Refined flour	15 gm
Eggs	02 nos
Breadcrumbs	100 gm
Banana	01 no
American corn	100 gm
Clarified Butter	150 ml
Salt	to taste
Pepper	to taste

Stuffed Tomatoes

Tomatoes	02 nos
Cheese	20 gm
Herbs	05 gm
Bread crumbs	05 gm
Butter	05 gm

Pommes Duchess

Potatoes	02 nos
Cream(optional)	
Salt	to taste
Pepper	to taste
Egg yolk	01 no

Method for Chicken:

- Cut, clean, and season the chicken with salt and pepper.
- You need to do a 3 step coating – flour, eggs, and bread crumbs. Crumb fry this in hot butter till golden brown. Keep this chicken aside.
- Fry slices of banana. Sauté the American corn.
- Place the chicken pieces in the centre of the dish and surround with fried slices of banana and sautéed corn.

Method for Stuffed Tomatoes:

- Remove the eyes of the tomatoes and cut the base to flat.
- Scoop out inside of the tomato and fill it with cheese and herbs of your choice.
- Sprinkle some bread crumbs on the tomatoes and dot them with butter.
- Bake this for 10-15 minutes in the oven on medium heat.

Method for Pommes Duchess:

- Boil, peel, and mash the potatoes very fine with the help of a fine sieve.
- Make sure no lumps are formed in the process.
- Add salt and pepper to taste. Add some cream to give flavour.
- Pipe or scoop the potato mash in a greased dish.
- Give it a slight egg wash and bake for 10 minutes in the oven on medium heat.



Priya has been a chef at various prestigious hotels and commercial kitchens for over a decade. At Vistara, she handles the mammoth task of ensuring that the stereotype of 'airplane food doesn't taste good' is broken every time a passenger flies Vistara.



Method:

- Slice paneer into ½ cm thick pieces and cut into triangles.
- Deep fry Charoli seeds and cashew nuts in ghee until light golden brown and keep them aside.
- Use the same pan to roast the poppy seeds.
- Grind all the above with coconut using some curd. This is Masala A
- For Masala B – grind the spices together.
- Beat remaining curd, add masala A and B, rose water and saffron. Mix this well and fold in the paneer triangles.
- Place paneer in a greased pan and pour the mixture and the remaining ghee on top and dum/steam for 20 minutes.
- Serve hot with lachha paranthas or rotis.





Lone Fox Dancing

Maplewood Lodge, Mussoorie. The Summer of 1963. The forest is still, silent; until the cicadas start tuning up for their performance.

On cue, like a conductor, a barbet perched high in the branches of a spruce tree begins its chant: 'Unneeow—unneeow-unneeow!'

words // Ruskin Bond

I sit in my garden, contemplating my old Olympia typewriter. Still writing stories, still trying to sell them. I am to spend many summers, monsoons, winters in this cottage of Mussoorie. Mornings in the sun. Evenings in the shadows. Some mornings I carry my small table, chair and typewriter out on to a knoll below one of the oaks, and take a little help from the babblers and bulbuls that flit in and out of the canopies of leaves. White-hooded babblers; yellow-bottomed bulbuls. Never still for a moment, they help me with my punctuation.

For dialogue I depend more on the crickets, cicadas and grasshoppers who keep up a regular exchange, debating the issues of the day. But for reflective and descriptive writing I look into the distance, at the purple hills merging with an

azure sky; or I examine a falling leaf as it spirals down from the tree and settles on the typewriter keys. The sun bathes everything with clear, warm light. Somewhere high up on the hill, cows are grazing. I don't see them, but I hear the bells tied around their necks. I write in leisure; there is no hurry.

I write *Panther's Moon* and *Angry River*. I meet a lovely, smiling girl on the hillside, twirling a blue umbrella, and she becomes Binya of the *Blue Umbrella*. A crow visits me from time to time, and tells me his story. I call it 'A Crow for all Seasons'...

when I moved in, Maplewood Lodge (in Mussoorie) had been nestling there among the old trees for over seventy years. It had become a part of the forest. Birds nested in the eaves; beetles

burrowed in the woodwork; a jungle cat lived in the attic. Some of these denizens remained even during my residence.

I'd first seen the cottage in spring, when the surrounding forest was at its best—the oaks and maples in their fresh green raiment; flashy blue magpies playing follow-the-leader among them. There was one very tall, very old maple above the cottage, and this was probably the tree that gave the house its name. A portion of it was blackened where it had been struck by lightning, but the rest of it lived on, a favourite of woodpeckers—the ancient peeling bark harboured hundreds, perhaps thousands, of tiny insects. It was the Himalayan maple, of course, which is quite different from the North American maple; only the winged seed-

Pods are similar, twisting and turning in the breeze as they fall to the ground, for which reason the Garhwalis call it the Butterfly Tree.

A steep, narrow path ran down to the cottage from the main path that went past the Wynberg Allen School. During heavy rain, it would become a watercourse and the earth would be washed away, leaving it very stony and uneven. Actually, the path ran straight across a landing and up to the front door of the first floor, where I had my rooms. It was the ground floor that was tucked away in the shadow of the Bala Hissar hill; it was reached by small a flight of steps going down, which also took the rush of water when the path was in flood. Miss Bean, who was in her

mid-eighties, lived in two small rooms on the ground floor.

Maplewood was the first place I saw, and I did not bother to see any others. The location wasn't really ideal. The cottage faced east, and as it was built in the shadow of the hill, while it received the early morning sun, it went without the evening sun. By three in the afternoon, the shadow of the hill crept over the cottage. This wasn't a bad thing in summer (even though Mussoorie summers were never hot), but in winter it meant a cold, dark house. There was no view of the snows from inside the house, and no view of the plains. But the forest below the cottage seemed full of possibilities, and the windows opening on to it probably decided the issue. And the whistling thrush, which had sent its song up the ravine to enchant me at exactly the right moment that afternoon.

I made a window seat and through the changing seasons, I wrote more—and I think better—than at any other time of my writing life. Most of my stories were written in Maplewood—the stories that went into *Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra*, *The Night Train to Deoli* and *Time Stops at Shamli*. The journals from that time provided material for the non-fiction books that followed the novellas and story collections. That old cottage was kind to a struggling young writer. There were very few distractions. Not only was I mostly on my own for the first couple of years—except in summer, when some visitors came up—Mussoorie itself was a very

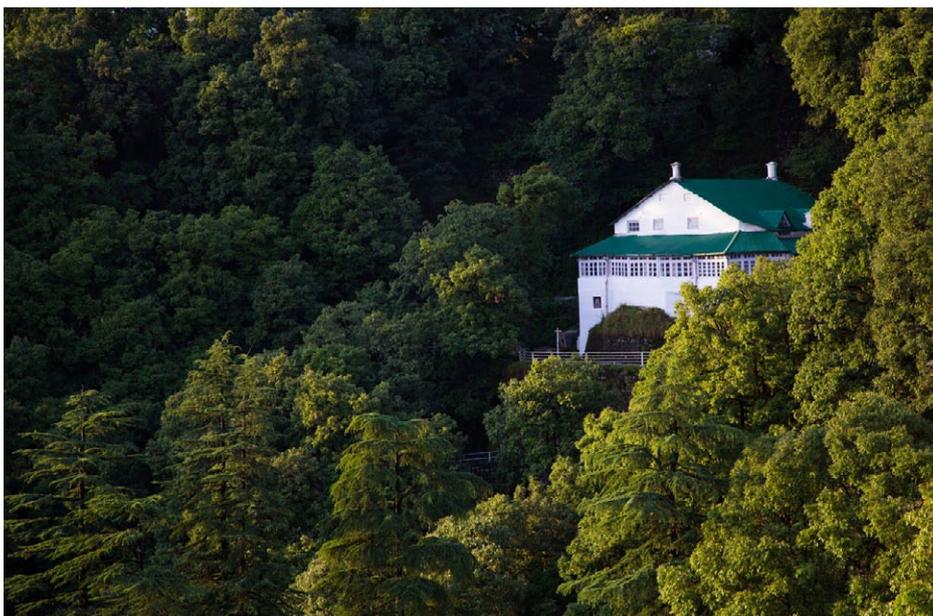


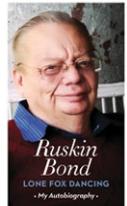
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quiet place, especially in the rains and in winter. Like all hill stations set up by the British, Mussoorie was in decline in the 1950s and '60s; the Mall was not half as busy as it is today, and in winter all the hotels and most of the shops would shut down. Only a couple of restaurants would stay open for the local residents. It wasn't tourism that sustained Mussoorie in those days; the boarding schools were the main economy, and when these, too, closed for the winter holidays, the little town would be deserted.

On the outskirts of the town there were a number of abandoned houses. Most of Mussoorie's older cottages had been built by British residents, and all but a few of them had left in a hurry after 1947, giving their houses away or making distress sales. Property prices went down sharply, so that the houses were of little value, and as there were few takers as tenants either, many of the vacant houses were sold by the new owners to the kabaris. And the kabaris didn't want them as residences; they proceeded to dismantle the houses, taking out the doors and windows, all the metal, the wooden flooring, the tin from the roofs, the bathroom fittings, and anything else that could be recycled or sold as scrap. Empty shells—just stone walls and bits of roof—dotted the outskirts of Mussoorie, inhabited by wild cats, bandicoots, owls, goats and the occasional coal-burner or mule driver, or the rare vagrant. ✨



 <i>Ruskin Bond</i> LONE FOX DANCING - My Autobiography -	Excerpted from:
	<i>Lone Fox Dancing:</i> <i>My Autobiography</i>
	Written by: Ruskin Bond
	Published by: Speaking Tiger Publishing Private Limited

Biblio halls of fame

Take a virtual tour of these libraries from across the world, each more fascinating than the other, that store in them many treasures and continue to foster a love for reading. Don't judge a book by its cover, they say. But these libraries are as striking in architecture as they are rich in content. Here are some libraries that offer a silent sanctuary for those seeking a biblio-renaissance.





Seattle Public Library

Established in 1890, the Seattle Public Library has a rich collection of about one million books. Some of its special collections include oral history collection, aviation history collection, genealogy records and historical documents about Seattle. Its 26 branches and a mobile library system consist of 2.3 million books and materials including CDs and DVDs. The building is covered by a striking glass and steel structure, supporting sustainability.





Morgan Library and Museum, New York

Declared as a National Historic Landmark in 1966, it is a complex of buildings serving as a library and research centre in the heart of New York City. The Morgan Library and Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan, one of the pre-eminent collectors and cultural benefactors. Opened to the public in 1924, today the library's immense holdings include music and historical manuscripts, rare materials, Renaissance paintings, early printed books and much more.





State Library of Victoria, Melbourne

Established in 1854, the library's vast collection includes over two million books and 350,000 photographs, along with the diaries of Melbourne's founders, John Batman and John Pascoe Fawkner. One of the library's most transformative projects, Vision 2020 saw the reopening of The Ian Potter Queen's Hall as a public reading room and events space, and the creation of innovative new spaces for young learners and entrepreneurs..

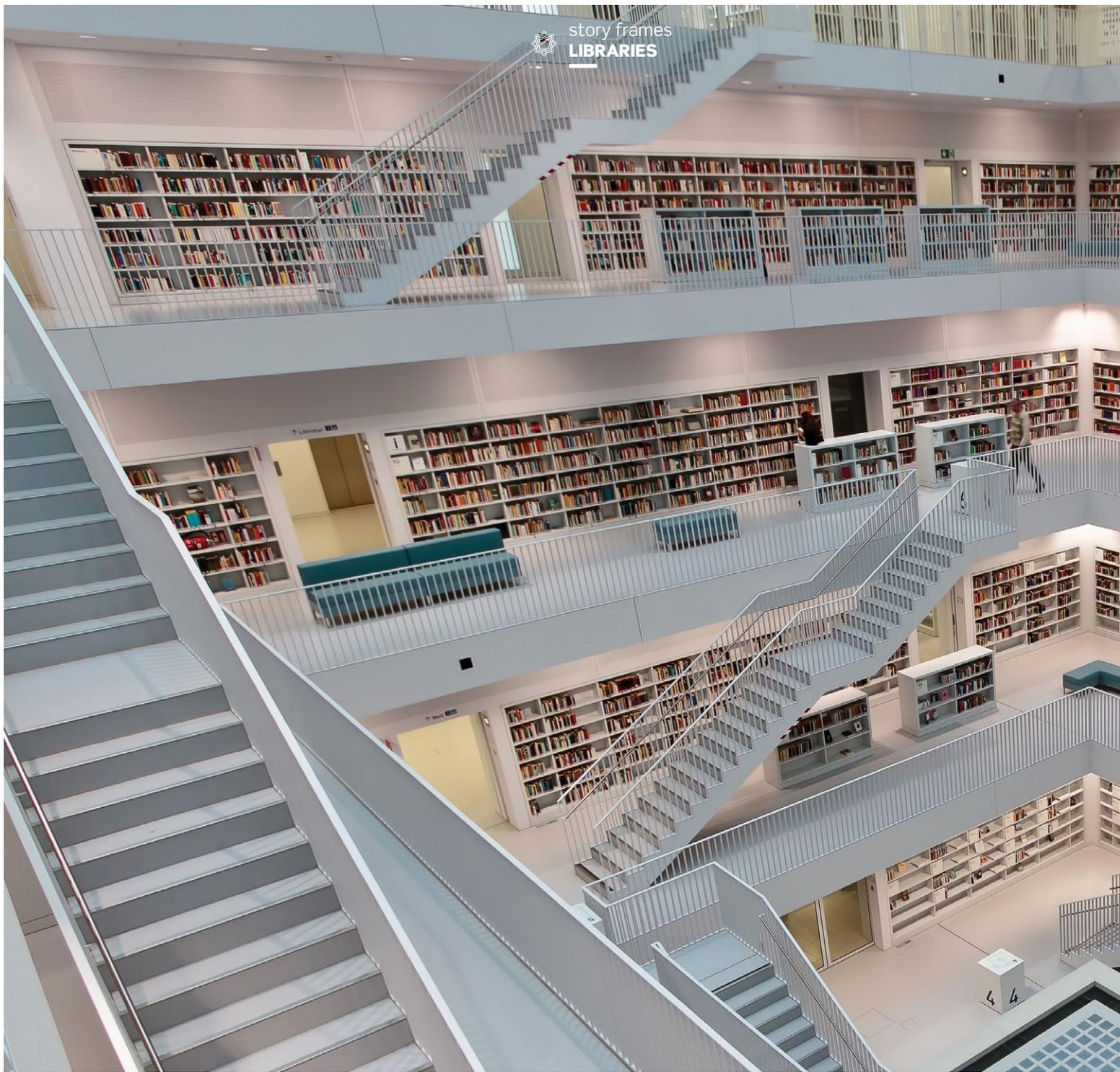


story frames
LIBRARIES



Strahov Monastery Library, Prague

With 200,000-odd prints mostly from between the 16th and 18th century, 3000 manuscripts and 1500 first prints, Strahov Monastery Library is one of the best-preserved historical libraries. Located inside the 12th century monastery, this magnificent Baroque library has two splendid halls – the Theological Hall and the Philosophical Hall, dominated by ceiling frescoes by Siard Nosecký and Anton Maulbertsch.



Stuttgart City Library, Germany

The white wonder, opened in 2011, has an inverted ziggurat reading room and rotating photovoltaic roof panels. The library has a collection of quality literature, including fiction in 25 different languages. Created as a monolithic cube, the building is a storehouse of words. The word 'library' is installed in four languages—on the North wall in German (the local language), West in English (lingua franca), South in Arabic (the language of ancient knowledge and of Stuttgart's sister city, Cairo) and East in Korean (Yi, the architect's native language).







Austrian National Library, Vienna

The largest library in Austria, with 12 million items in its various collections, is located in the Hofburg Palace in Vienna. The complex—in baroque style with gold, marble and stucco work blended together—houses four museums. Its manuscript collection includes antique, medieval and modern manuscripts from almost every literate culture.



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