

A TATA SIA JV

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THE INFLIGHT MAGAZINE

AIRVISTARA.COM

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2021

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1



The Reboot Issue

TIME TO USHER
IN THE NEW

BEGIN AGAIN

*Dubai's Best-Kept
Wellness Secrets*

ON THE MOVE

*Trends & How to
Navigate the
World in 2021*

REDISCOVER >

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This issue, in fact, resonates with how we at Vistara see 2021 unfolding. We will be focussing on strengthening our fleet and densifying our domestic network while expanding our international footprint. We have always strived to

WELCOME TO 2021—THE TURN OF the decade. This year, more than ever, we have looked forward to the new year with hope and positivity. The year 2020 taught us a lot about life as it continued to challenge us at several junctures. Moving forward, the new year gives us a chance to start afresh in many aspects of our lives, and to reboot our minds. This issue taps into the opportunities and aspirations that 2021 will bring, and the things we can look forward to.

The underlying mood of ‘The Reboot Issue’ is buoyant, and we hope you will channelise this feeling. For starters, the Wellness story serves as a handy guide to embracing 2021 with optimism. It sets the tone for the outlook on travel in the coming year so that you can plan ahead. Check out our Resolve feature for travel resolution ideas that help you travel responsibly.

We also have some exclusive itineraries laid out for you: A few wellness-oriented days in Dubai, a side of the metropolis that is often overlooked; a quick stopover in Kochi, a city where art and heart come together to create a beautiful mélange; and a list of nature trails from around the world, curated to engage every kind of traveller.



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Dubai, known for its frantic pace, can also be a luxurious wellness oasis

2
Stroll, run, hike... nature trails can give you the solitude you need to reconnect with yourself

3
Frankfurt is modern yet rustic with some exciting culinary options

offer you an unmatched experience, and we are more determined than ever to continue raising the bar. Our recent ‘Best Airline’ win at the renowned *Travel+Leisure* India’s Best Awards 2020 and the ‘Favourite Domestic Airline’ title at the *Conde Nast Traveller* Readers’ Travel Awards 2020 are inspiring signs that we are loved by our customers. We’re grateful for the trust you continue to place in us, and we’re eager to help you #FlyTheNewFeeling. ✨

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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2021



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Slow down in Dubai

photographed by Suzana Topita/Getty Images





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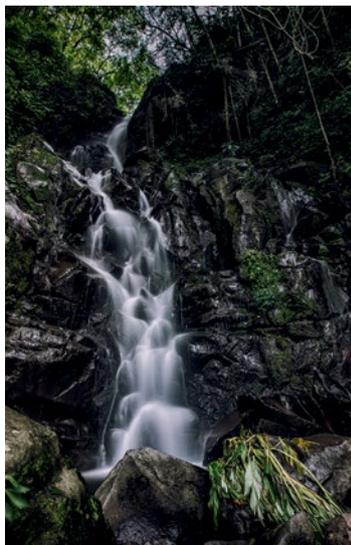
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Papa CJ on the joy of making people laugh during tough times



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GEETIKA SASAN BHANDARI

A lifestyle writer and editor for more than two decades, Geetika spends most of her time writing for publications and digital media, and working on her brand new parenting blog, 'Let's Raise Good Kids'—that's when she's not travelling.



SATARUPA PAUL

After working with several national and international publications, Satarupa now covers travel, culture, food and wellness as a freelance writer and photographer. She loves chasing sunsets, diving into deep seas and hiking up mountains.



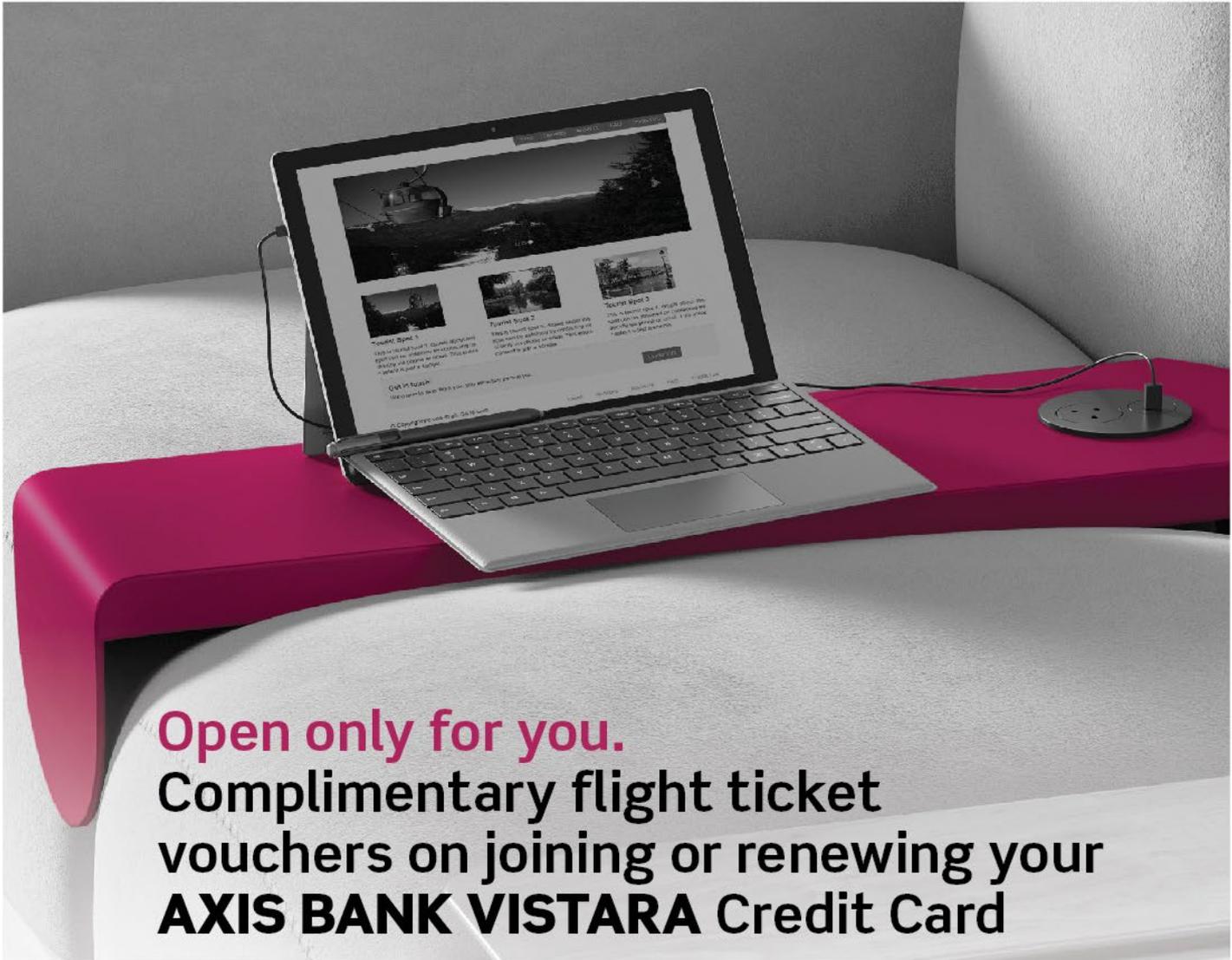
JAPLEEN KAUR

An old-school millennial living in a tiny town surrounded by the Dhauladhar range, Japleen tries to find stories in places that are often ignored. She finds happiness in writing letters and strolling down unknown streets.



ARUN SARIN

Arun—one half of the contemporary artist duo Arun + Anwita—works with his wife on diverse forms, be it photography, illustration, styling or textile design. He has covered indigenous artisans in India, and has a keen eye for dynamic frames.



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VISTA

PERSPECTIVES ON AWE-INSPIRING LANDSCAPES

Maldives

Nestled in the lap of paradise, home to a natural bounty of treasure, and a picture of serenity no matter which direction you're headed in, the Maldives doesn't need to try hard to impress. A mosaic of over a thousand islands, come for the pristine waters that work with the coral reefs and white sand beaches to create a painting, and stay for the feeling of contentment guaranteed to all who make their way here.



"I have always dreamt of going to the Maldives, and when I went, it more than exceeded my expectations. The sheer tranquillity of the crystal clear water; the endless beaches that draw you in. It was like being in a different world: No noise, absolute peace on earth — it is heaven. I loved the Maldives so much that I didn't want to leave and would have happily worked at the resort in order to stay in heaven a little longer!"

ELENA FERNANDES
Activist, Actor & Model



Levente Bodor/Getty Images; image courtesy of Elena Termandas

VISTA **PICTURE PERFECT**

Guwahati

If this is the year you're planning on exploring the wonder that is the Northeast of India, consider Guwahati as your starting point. It offers an immersive look into the culture through its exquisite architecture, delectable cuisine and untouched natural delights. Follow the riverbank of the Brahmaputra to make sublime discoveries and stumble across houses and structures of a bygone era.



"My first glimpse of the mighty Brahmaputra was from Guwahati! It was an unforgettable sight! During this brief visit, I had the opportunity to make some wonderful friends and sample the fabulous local cuisine. I hold many cherished moments from this trip."

PRASAD BIDAPA
Fashion Consultant & Entrepreneur

#TRENDING

YOUR WORLD THIS YEAR

The previous year saw a lot of events fall through, but 2021 is more than making up for it by hosting them in a renewed, mindful and improved form.

TOKYO, JAPAN

2020 Summer Olympics

23 July to 8 August, 2021

Tokyo is prepping to bring back the sporting spirit by hosting the postponed Olympics, while concentrating efforts on taking measures against the coronavirus. Spectators will be limited, but you can always catch the live stream.

olympic.org/tokyo-2020



The Newcomers

This edition sees the entry of a few new sports in the Olympics: Karate, surfing, skateboarding, climbing and both baseball and softball (these two are making a comeback and aren't entirely new to the schedule).



EUROPE

UEFA Euro 2020

11 June to 11 July, 2021

Soccer fans were devastated about the postponement of the Euro 2020 championship, but this year's edition is all set to be even grander. You can visit the official website to cast your vote for the team of the year, and stand to win big—like tickets to the league finals. uefa.com/uefaeuro-2020



DUBAI, UAE

Expo 2020

1 October, 2021 to 31 March, 2022

A space for diverse experiences, innovations and collaborations, the Expo 2020 Dubai UAE will have some attraction for everyone. From food and music to architecture and global dialogues. You can also choose to volunteer or help inspire tomorrow's leaders. expo2020dubai.com



KOCHI, INDIA

Kochi-Muziris Biennale

1 November, 2021 to
28 February, 2022

Slated to be held in 2020, the 5th edition of the Biennale, an international exhibition of contemporary art, will be held this year keeping safety norms in mind. Artists from across the world are gearing up to showcase their work at this four-month-long event. kochimuzirisbiennale.org

GLOBAL

No Time to Die

2 April, 2021

We can agree that the wait for the 25th instalment of the *James Bond* series has been a little too long. Expected to give a fiery end to Daniel Craig's tenure as Bond, the film's official trailer succeeded in restoring the hype.

007.com/no-time-to-die



ZANDVOORT, THE NETHERLANDS

Formula 1 Dutch Grand Prix 2021

2-5 September, 2021

To be held in the Netherlands at Circuit Zandvoort, this is the first Grand Prix of the 2021 Formula 1 European season. If you choose to attend the races in person, be sure to bask in the beautiful countryside, and enjoy great food and the warmth of Dutch hospitality.

flexperiences.com/2021-dutch-grand-prix



SOMERSET, ENGLAND

Glastonbury, UK

23-27 June, 2021

The line-up for the famous Glastonbury music and arts festival is yet to be released for 2021, but artists like Kendrick Lamar, Paul McCartney, Taylor Swift and Diana Ross were on the list for the previous year. If you bought tickets for the June 2020 edition, they could now be reused or refunded.

glastonburyfestivals.co.uk



LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH

Mahindra Sanatkada Lucknow Festival

January to February, 2021

Get a dose of the rich culture offered by Lucknow in one single event that celebrates the city's food, crafts, prose and so on. The dates are yet to be finalised, but registration will open soon.

mslf.in

RAISE YOUR GLASS!



The new year brings with it joy and the possibility of a new beginning. So, to say cheers to that feeling, we've rounded up five beverages that deliver both on taste and feel-good vibes.

APPLE CIDER

Adding a dash of orange juice to your cider adds a hint of citrus to take your drink to the next level.

MEXICAN HOT CHOCOLATE

The touch of cayenne pepper and chilli powder will leave you wanting more.

MULLED WINE

With spices acting as a foil to the sweetness of red wine, this crowd favourite warms your hands and soul.

MARTINI

An ode to the year the next Bond film comes out, it's a classic for good reason.

HOT TODDY

This option changes itself to suit literally everyone: You can have the classic whisky-spiked option, or skip the alcohol and let the tea shine.

All dates are subject to change and are printed as they stand at the time of publishing. Please check the respective websites for the latest updates.



THE INIMITABLE SUMEET

OTT star Sumeet Vyas has a message for the world.

by GAYATRI MOODLIAR

Congratulations, you're a father! How has it been navigating that role?

It's lovely. The only thing I regret is that I can't take my child out freely for a walk, or to the park. These are things I'm afraid to do right now. But the fact that I got to spend all this time at home with him, with my family, was lovely. It was also something that I was not used to. I'm still a little awkward if I have to spend this much time around people—even if it is my own people—because I'm so used to travelling for work all the time, and being on my own. I hope I've gotten better.

Do you think 2021 will give us a chance to have a complete reboot?

It should. It should be a new beginning. We'll all have to reboot our systems and

get used to being a little scared. It's unfortunate, but it's true. The good part about that fear is that people will be a little more cautious, hopefully. Another significant reboot that needs to happen is to be more grateful. The human race has become terribly ungrateful for what we have, be it the resources we have, the air we breathe. Earlier, we could go out and walk freely—we could walk without masks—and now we can't. And it's a lesson that the universe has taught us for being ungrateful. In that sense, this reboot was awaited and much needed.

You had some remote productions. How was that experience?

Great! We made an entire show during lockdown [*Wakaalat From Home*]. I was grateful that I got an opportunity to create something. It was very theatrical, in a very different way. Even while recording, it was all one take. Oddly, in a confined way, it felt like theatre.

Do you think the way we consume content is going to change?

A shift was coming, and this has sealed it. To be able to watch content according to your mood, and in your own time, is something that everybody was getting used to. Having said that, I don't feel people will stop going to the cinema because they have content online. Going to the cinema is experiential, it's not just the film that you're watching: It's going, it's sitting with a bunch of people in a dark room. It's an experience in itself, and I wouldn't want to miss that for anything. I want to hear people laugh, cry, clap.

Your new role in *Dark 7 White* was different from your previous ones. How did you approach it?

The whole reason for me to do the show was the role. I hadn't done a role like this before. But this was a conscious effort that I was putting in: To choose parts that are diametrically different from who I am.



Images courtesy of Sumeeet Vyas

What happens is that if you are a certain personality, people cast you for parts closer to that, but as an actor, it's the least fun because you're just being a version of yourself. But here I was, playing a person who thought, looked and behaved very differently from who I am.

This time has been one of discovery. Is there any new idea or skill that you decided to take a chance on?

I actually got hooked on to audiobooks and going on long walks. So, I kept walking and listening. It was a whole new world that opened up.

Any recommendations?

So many! Benedict Cumberbatch has read *The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka, and he's read it so well. I used to read P.G. Wodehouse, and I lost touch with his work over the years, but I rediscovered him. People probably thought I was crazy; I was just walking and laughing, because I had headphones on and was listening to his books!

Recording an audiobook is a delicate art. Would you ever consider it?

I would love to. In the middle of the lockdown, a lot of theatre people were

doing recitals of plays and poems on Instagram and Zoom. My friend and I read out a few Hindi poems; the undiscovered or the less-talked-about ones.

Are you someone who believes in making resolutions?

No, because I'm never able to keep them! But I do try to stay disciplined. It could be about anything: Being on time, writing these many pages every day, finishing these many books every year, etc. It could be about solo travel, which is something that I've been wanting to do for the longest time, but I haven't managed.

How has your outlook towards self-care changed?

As actors, we are already big on self-care. You have to be disciplined. Instead, I started to share with my loved ones a couple of things that I do. Simple things like putting yourself first, because I've observed that when people start thinking about self-care or fitness, they do drastic things that are hard to otherwise sustain. You can have everything you want, in moderation. Walking is the most underrated fitness activity! It's better for the environment, and it's good for you to have that time with yourself. 🌻

#TRENDING SOCIAL FEED

WHAT'S UP ON SOCIAL?

Tune into all the Vistara chatter on social media.



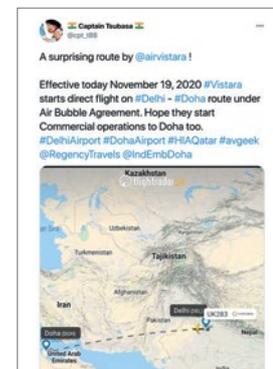
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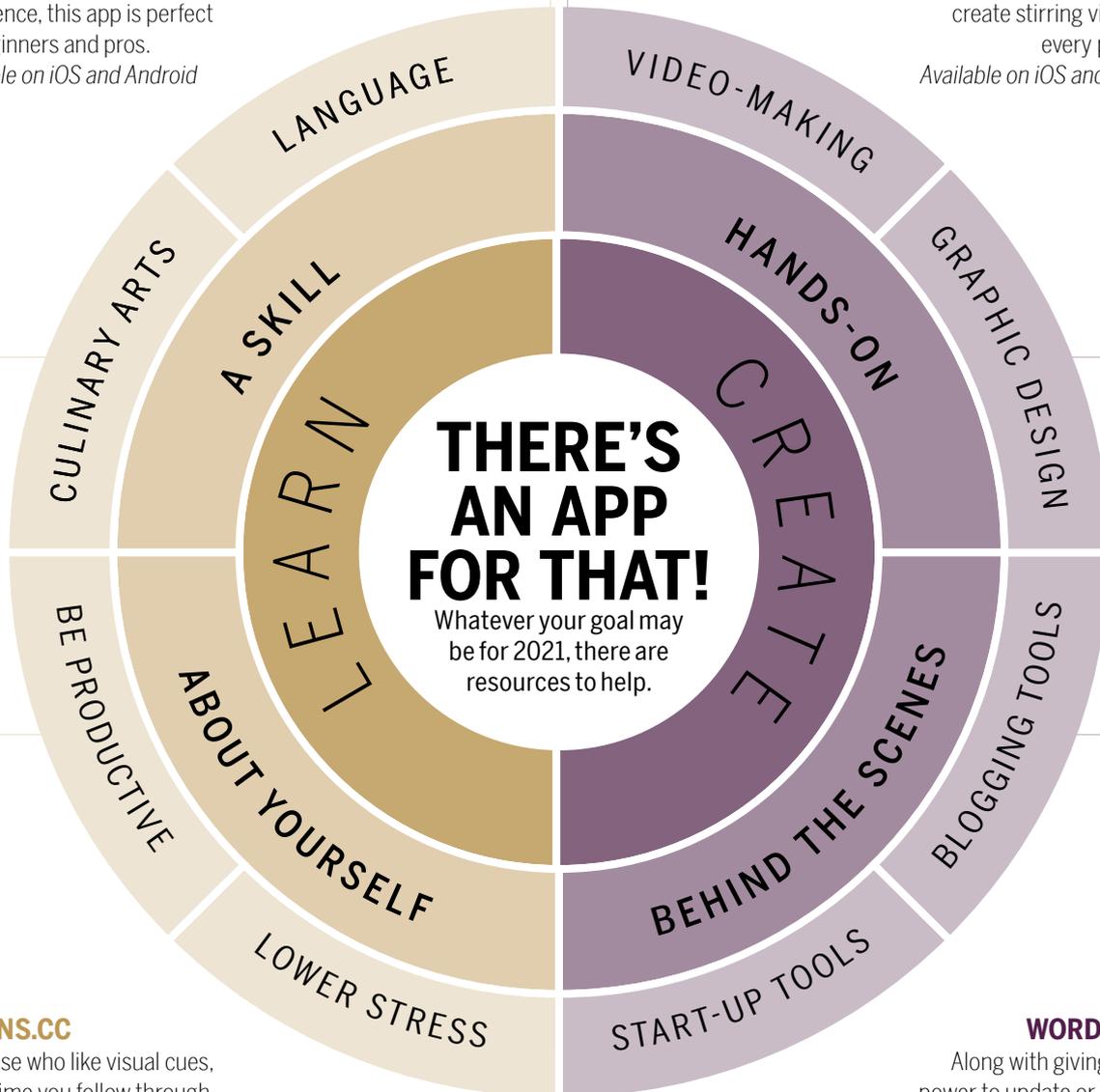
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CHAINS.CC

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Available on iOS

WAKING UP

Spend a few minutes every morning learning how to meditate and understand the purpose it serves.
Available on iOS and Android

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Available on iOS and Android

WORDPRESS

Along with giving you the power to update or edit your blog at any point, the app also tracks its readership.
Available on iOS and Android



#TRENDING BOOKMARK

And books that have inspired you?

I love P.G. Wodehouse's turn of phrase and the historical research that goes into Ken Follett and Jeffrey Archer's books.

Your favourite part about travelling?

Driving beautiful cars to great outdoor locales, meeting up with chefs and sampling food made from local produce.

Travel has changed; virtual travel could be the next big thing. Thoughts?

If you mean whether virtual reality will replace travel then I don't think that will happen. Just as video calls cannot replace being in the physical proximity of someone. You can't derive a heightened sense of pleasure through virtual reality.

Would slow travel be the new normal?

Slow travel is a privilege. You have to be confident in the knowledge that you'll have the opportunity to come back and explore what you missed. For most people, travel usually means going to a place just once in a lifetime, and they wouldn't want to miss out on anything.

Your favourite destinations?

In India, my favourites include Tirthan Valley, Sangla, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Khajuraho, Goa and Kashmir. Abroad, there's New Zealand's South Island, Tasmania, Australia, Wales and Ireland, France, South Africa and the small-town USA.

How can one make travel a priority?

Don't mull over whether you can afford to take the time out to travel or not. Treat it as if you've fallen ill and the only way you'll get better is if you travel. With this mindset, travel will take priority.

Your resolution for the new year?

Hopefully, to be socially intimate and interact with people in real-time rather than virtually. More hugging and handshaking rather than fist-bumping. 🍷

THE QUINTESSENTIAL TRAVELLER

Travel writer, author and photographer Rishad Saam Mehta decodes the new age of travel.

by PALLAVI SINGH



How do you interpret travel?

To me, travel is about the experiences that I am going to have. It can be getting great images of wildlife in a national park, or photographing the stars while on a trek. It can also mean good food in a city or meeting locals and people from other parts of the world.

What makes a good travel book?

A good travel book informs as well as entertains. Its words can paint pictures in a reader's mind, make them taste the food, and entice them to travel.

Top books on your shelf?

My favourite is *River God* by Wilbur Smith. I recently read *Gandhi and Churchill: The Epic Rivalry that Destroyed an Empire* and *Forged Our Age* by Arthur Herman.



FASHION FORECAST

Wondering what your 2021 aesthetic should look like? Consider this your mood board.



THE FLORAL TOUCH

The usage of florals this season is a delicate one, letting the textures shine. (L-R: Erdem; Picchika)



LOOSEN IT UP

If you've gotten used to baggy pants, rejoice, because they're not going anywhere. The range has become wider, if anything, covering every occasion. (L-R: Nike; 11.11/eleven eleven; Ganni)



SLIDE AWAY

Transition seamlessly from lounge footwear to more formal renditions with the help of mules and loafers that straddle both worlds effortlessly. (From top: TOMS; Chloé; Gucci)



PATTERNS GALORE

Let your shirt speak for itself, as collections across the board are united in making them as whimsical and charming as possible. (From top: Fendi; Pull&Bear; Selected Homme)



FASHION FORWARD

While it's beyond just being a trend, brands are refocussing their efforts on upcycling and reducing their waste, making sustainable fashion paramount. (L-R: House of Wandering Silk; Reformation)



FROM THE TOP

When researching a new bag for the new year, keep an eye out for quirky handles that oust the normalcy of what you're used to. (From top: Miu Miu; Perona)



COLOURS OF THE YEAR

Let the Pantone-approved hues of yellow and grey boost your spirit and your wardrobe. (L-R: Prada; Jacquemus)



BE BOLD

It's time to embrace yourself and whatever your style is—it's the year to make a statement. (L-R: Gabriela Hearst; Ray-Ban, Lune)

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Priority Airport Check-in		Premium Economy Counter	Business Class Counter	Business Class Counter
Increased Check-in Baggage Allowance (Weight)		+5 Kg	+10 Kg	+15 Kg
Carry-On Plus			✓	✓
Priority Boarding			✓	✓
Complimentary Vistara FlyEarly Service				✓
Priority Baggage Handling			✓	✓
Exclusive Offers And Promotions	✓	✓	✓	✓
One-Class Upgrade vouchers on Tier Upgrade		1	2	3
One-Class Upgrade vouchers on Tier Renewal		1	3	5
Rescheduling Fee Waiver			1 change per booking for domestic travel	2 changes per booking for domestic & International travel
Complimentary Vistara Select				✓

*Fare difference applicable | Please visit www.airvistara.com/trip for details.

SUITCASE

YOUR GO-TO GUIDE FOR OFFBEAT ITINERARIES



Experience

Gaze at the skyline from the vantage point of an intimate dhow cruise



Unwind

The Doha Film Institute's Drive-in Cinema regularly screens cult favourites!



Relish

Parisa Souq Waqif at the glamorous Ritz-Carlton offers a taste of Persian cuisine



Play

For an escape from the city, take a shot at dune bashing



Stay

Indulge yourself at the grand Mandarin Oriental, Doha



Shop

Souq Al Dira has an array of fabrics that display the region's craftsmanship



Indulge

Anantara's Banana Island Resort will rejuvenate you with its hammam treatments



THE DOHA LUXURY TRAIL

UPGRADE YOUR SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL QUOTIENT



GIVE BACK

Opt for local experiences in the city you visit to give back to the economy



ENJOY THE RIDE

If you're not rushed, consider touring the destination on a cycle or by walking



SINGLE OUT

Carry a reusable water bottle and a handy tote bag to avoid using plastic



LIGHTEN IT UP

Try and stick to the essentials while packing so your luggage is lighter

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: image courtesy of Doha Film Institute; image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company; image courtesy of Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group Limited; image courtesy of Anantara Hotels, Resorts, & Spas; Atit Pheumanglong/EyeEm/Getty Images; Iqshava Maria/Shutterstock; Canon Images/Getty Images; Mint Images - Bill Miles/Getty Images; Benny Marty/Shutterstock; ae productions/Getty Images; Sven Hansche/Shutterstock; Wajaha/Getty Images

Best Foot Forward

Give your travel a whole new spin with these resolutions that are bound to make you a better traveller in 2021.

by GEETIKA SASAN BHANDARI

EVERY NEW YEAR BRINGS WITH IT A glimmer of hope for a transition and the opportunity to wipe the slate clean and start afresh—a reboot. But no other year in the recent past has demanded a dramatic evolution in the way we think, live and travel. So, as 2021 unfolds, it's time to update your travel resolutions, because it really is a whole new world.

GO SUSTAINABLE

While choosing your stay, spend some time looking into the sustainability practices of the property—how do they process their waste, do they invest in rainwater harvesting, are the toiletries packed in single-use plastic or in refillable earthenware or bamboo packaging. Most importantly, what do they do to empower their own staff to support the environment around? Are they ecology warriors? The more we as conscious consumers demand a change, the more the market will comply.

THINK LOCAL

Wherever you roam, support the local community. You can do it in myriad ways: By eating at restaurants that espouse farm-to-table and support

their local community of produce growers; by buying local artefacts and handicrafts; and by shopping indigenous brands.

CHOOSE OFFBEAT

More than ever before, this is the time to pick the road less travelled. Do that Serengeti safari, or the Mt. Kilimanjaro trek or get to the Everest base camp. Remember that scenic wine trail you've always wanted to explore? This is the year to plan breaks that take you away from the madding crowd and into soulful experiences that satisfy not just your sensibilities but also your senses.

PAMPER YOURSELF

Sure, save for tomorrow, but first, live in the present, savour each holiday and make the most of it. In your new live-life-king-size avatar, tailor-make an itinerary that focusses on the things that make your heart sing. So, if it's a detox or a pure spa indulgence, go for it. On the other hand, you may have been wanting to pursue a culinary course or take art lessons, so why not put that at the centre of the holiday and then build around it? It's all about putting yourself first.





PICK MEMORIES

This year, spend on experiences that you can cherish—these can be both solo or with loved ones. Over the years, the memories of these experiences will nourish and sustain you. Look at it this way: A memory is a portable souvenir that can never break or get misplaced and is always easily accessible. 🌟

THIS SPREAD

1. Watch the sunset at a vineyard; 2. Exploring the world is the best way to discover yourself; 3. Shop local to support communities; 4. Safaris are a great way to bond with the family; 5. Properties like Fogo Island Inn, Canada, prioritise sustainability and invest back into the local community





A Work of Art

Weave through the roads of Doha to understand how the city has purposefully worked towards garnering a spot on the global cultural map.

by AMEESHA RAIZADA

1

DOHA'S AIM IS CLEAR: TO MAKE THE world wake up to the city's potential and to help its own people realise their abilities. The city's concerted efforts towards modernisation and cultural appreciation have found magnificent citadels of art worth visiting, so why don't you?

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF QATAR

A notch in the city's architectural belt, the National Museum is a beautiful showcase of Doha as a true melting pot of cultures, at least visually. Designed and constructed by Jean Nouvel—who brings a French flair to the cityscape—the museum serves a neat self-serving purpose. Its design is meant to signify the desert rose and, inside, it traces the city's embrace of modernity over the years (it will be one of the hosts of the 2022 FIFA World Cup). The museum

itself is one such example, with its technology-defying disks and dynamic presence. Full of vignettes that shine a spotlight on Qatar's identity, the museum also has videos that you can't see anywhere else, since they've been custom produced for just these walls.

MATHAF: ARAB MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

This is a museum that prides itself on showcasing the art of the region and fostering the artistic spirit in everyone. It's home to collections that showcase the versatility of contemporary art in the Middle East, and the current exhibition actually traces the pioneering figures who have helped shape an appreciation of the same. If you want to stay a while longer and act on the inspiration all around you—there are over 9,000 breathtaking pieces of

THIS SPREAD

1. The circular disks of The National Museum of Qatar make it easily recognisable; 2. Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art is a treasure trove of discoveries; 3. Words galore await you at the Qatar National Library; 4. Stop by at the Souq Waqif for a traditional bite or a keepsake to take home; 5. The Katara Cultural Village is a hub of art and traditions



2



3 4



5

artwork, so take your pick—the museum holds regular art classes with renowned teachers who will help you hone your skills. Or, you could use the canvas offered to simply break free and express yourself, it's your choice.

KATARA CULTURAL VILLAGE

A place where 'the grace of the past meets the splendour of the future,' the Katara Cultural Village gives Doha the chance to flex its cultural stronghold by merging traditions and fostering unity through art, festivals and performances. Exhibitions are held all year round, and regular workshops will help you come back with a new skill or two.

SOUQ WAQIF

While the new buildings are marvels of modernity, there's an old-world charm awaiting you as well. Situated on an ancient market site, the Souq

Waqif maintains that same ethos of traders flowing in and eager customers sauntering through the serpentine lanes, hustling for a good deal. Along with getting an idea of how the bustling markets of yore functioned and looked, the open market is where you can get the best spices, artefacts, handicrafts and traditional food.

QATAR NATIONAL LIBRARY

When you enter the library, you'll find yourself at the centre of every story—literally. Designed by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, the building opened a fresh chapter in Doha's cultural narrative. Built to accommodate over a million books, everything about this library pushes you to find something new—the open floor plan lets you socialise and read, and the terraced bookshelves let you lose yourself in whatever genre you desire. ⚙️



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: HasanZaidi/Shutterstock; Philip Langer/Shutterstock; Sirio Carnevalino/Shutterstock; Buena Vista Images/Getty Images; Oriolrambix/Getty Images

48 HOURS IN KOCHI

Culture, natural beauty, history and delectable cuisine come together to provide a soulful experience in God's Own Country's most buzzing city.

by ANANYA BAHL



1

DAY 1

Begin your sojourn in Fort Kochi, the city's historic and heritage-infused area. After a hearty breakfast at the Kashi Art Café, walk towards the St. Francis Church. Believed by many to be India's oldest European-built church, it was constructed in the early 1500s. It served as the first burial place for the famous explorer, Vasco da Gama. Then, make a stop at the Indo-Portuguese Museum to know about the Portuguese influence on the region. Through the efforts of the late Dr. Joseph Kureethra, Bishop of Kochi, we can now explore exhibits that showcase Indo-Portuguese Christian art here. From there, you can head to the Paradesi

Synagogue, established to cater to the Jewish community of the city. Don't miss its mesmerising Belgian chandelier and striking clock tower.

For a sumptuous lunch, look no further than the hullabaloo of the Chinese fishing nets. Believed to have been brought to India by Chinese explorer Zheng He in the 14th century, they are a sight to behold. It's fun to help the fishermen catch fresh seafood and carry them to the shacks nearby to be cooked in authentic Kerala style.

End the day with an enchanting performance at the Kerala Kathakali Centre, and follow it up with an intimate meal at Oceanos Restaurant.

THIS PAGE

1. The Chinese fishing nets are steeped in tradition;
2. Kochi's rich culture is an attraction for many;
3. St. Francis Church's sublime architecture makes it a must-visit;
4. Gorge on fresh seafood when in the city



2



3



4



DAY 2

Start your day with a light takeaway breakfast from your hotel's coffee shop and embark on an exciting walking adventure through Fort Kochi. The city has a rich appreciation of the arts, and nowhere is that as clear than when you're strolling down the streets of this part of town. Walls are the city's canvas, and the artists have showcased their talent liberally. It's also a great way to gaze at the architecture Fort Kochi is known for, with unique buildings and houses around every corner.

All this activity will work up a grand appetite. Head to Fusion Bay in the Fort Kochi area. Sample some mouth-watering and homely Kerala Syrian

Christian dishes like spicy fish *pappas* and *pollichathu* (fish doused in masalas, wrapped in a banana leaf and grilled).

For some leisurely post-lunch sightseeing, visit the Kerala Folklore Theatre and Museum, which houses more than 4,000 artefacts and an in-house theatre. Alternatively, you can also spend some time at Fort Kochi beach before it gets too crowded in the evening. Kochi is home to its own set of backwater channels and a calming boat ride would make for a befitting end to your trip in the city. Make this day perfect with a meal at the charming Old Harbour Hotel Restaurant. ⚙️

CHECK IN

These hotels will make your stay in Kochi all the better.

Abad Dutch Bungalow, Fort Kochi, is a gorgeous 375-year-old heritage hotel, where the rooms combine classic design with modern comforts. It's close to Fort Kochi's famed sites as well, making it a convenient stop. (abadhotels.com)

Located at the tip of Willingdon Island, Taj Malabar Resort & Spa, Cochin, offers views of the harbour and Chinese fishing nets. Complimentary backwater cruises every evening, rice boat dining experiences, and the gorgeous Heritage and Tower wing rooms are bound to make your stay memorable. (tajhotels.com)

THIS PAGE

5. The city's beaches make it easy to press pause; 6. Set out on an invigorating boat ride;

7. Take a long walk alongside street art in Fort Kochi





FRANKFURT IN 8 Dishes

Next time you're in Frankfurt, take some time off work to get a true flavour of the city.

by GAYATRI MOODLIAR

THERE'S A LOT TO DIGEST IN

Frankfurt. The city is an amalgam of commercial and financial hubs, a paragon of music and art, a home to towers that seem to be standing on their toes, reaching for the sky. Yet, despite the city's harmonious blend of quite truly everything, it often slips under the radar. But, with a diverse population, a steady flow of cultures are complementing Frankfurt's own traditional one to offer a world like no other—one that is best experienced through its food. Next time you happen to stop by, discover it for yourself with the help of these eight dishes.

APFELWEIN

The city's relationship with *apfelwein* spans hundreds of years—there's even an entire festival devoted to celebrating the tart beverage made from pressed sour apples. Keep an eye out for the vibrant jug, *bembel*, that the drink is traditionally served in.

BEST PLACES TO TRY IT AT

Kanonesteppel Textorstraße 20;

Atschel Wallstraße 7

FRANKFURTER KRANZ

This dessert intersperses layers of sponge cake with buttercream and jam. Some used to associate it with





royalty because of the name—*kranz* translates to crown—but it's now a widespread dessert best enjoyed with a cup of coffee.

BEST PLACE TO TRY IT AT

Café Laumer Bockenheimer Landstraße 67

FRANKFURTER RIPPCHEN

Frankfurter *rippchen's* fame is in its simplicity: The cured pork cutlets are cooked in stock and served with *sauerkraut*—fermented cabbage—and mashed potatoes.

BEST PLACE TO TRY IT AT

Zum Gemalten Haus Schweizer Str. 67

HANDKÄS MIT MUSIK

Sour milk cheese rounds are marinated in oil and vinegar and then served with onions—it may take a while to get used to this one.

BEST PLACE TO TRY IT AT

Atschel Wallstraße 7

GRÜNE SOSSE

Seven herbs merge with sour cream and yoghurt to prepare this green sauce, which you'll usually find poured over boiled eggs or potatoes. Legend has it that it was a favourite of literary pioneer Goethe.

BEST PLACE TO TRY IT AT

Apfelwein Wagner Schweizer Str. 71



FRANKFURTER WÜRSTCHEN

It's unlikely that any discussion on German food would exclude sausages. The Frankfurter *würstchen* is a slender variant, with a touch of smoke that sets it apart.

BEST PLACE TO TRY IT AT

Erzeugermarkt Konstablerwache Konstablerwache

BIBIMBAP

Frankfurt's diversity means that its food culture has had to make room for more. You'd be remiss to not try *bibimbap* here, essentially a Korean rice bowl mixed with meat and vegetables, and served with soy sauce, *kimchi* and a fried egg.

BEST PLACES TO TRY IT AT

Hankook Hainer Weg 100; **Sonamu** Berger Str. 184

MANTI

The city has seen an influx of Turkish culture, and the demand for its food goes without saying. Little parcels of dough stuffed with minced meat, cheese or spinach, garnished with a dollop of yoghurt, make up this dish.

BEST PLACE TO TRY IT AT

Sümela Bornheimer Landstraße 77 🍷



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ESCAPE

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THE 2-MINUTE TRAIL DECODER

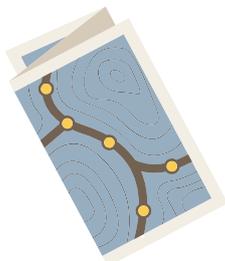
Adventure sports would rock

The Chadar Trek across the frozen Zaskar Lake would definitely count as an extreme adventure sport



Kids like to camp

Consider the Deoria Tal Trek, which takes you through the Himalayas and lets you perch yourself by the mirror-esque lake for the night



I'd like to ditch the trail for a bit

You'll find few people on the Beyul Pamako Trek in Arunachal Pradesh, making it all the more special



I like the hills

The Chembra Peak Trek in Kerala tops off rolling hills and lush tea plantations with a serene heart-shaped lake



Some climbing would be nice

Remember to train before embarking on the Miyar Valley Trek, where steep rocks await you in the Himalayas



Heat is not an issue

The trail through Hampi, a UNESCO Heritage site in Karnataka, immerses you in history and you get to climb boulders!

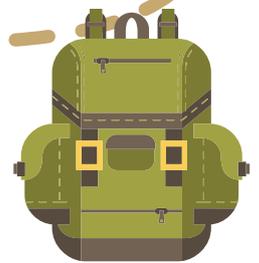


I want the wild

A guided trek through Anamalai Hills in Tamil Nadu offers a surreal close-up with the animals

Don't mind roughing it... a bit

The Snow Leopard Trek will have you battling the elements in Ladakh, but you'll be rewarded with rare sights



Let's keep it easy

Short and simple but with sublime panoramic views of the valley, the Araku Valley Trek in Andhra Pradesh is for you



I want to bike as well, of course

The turns of the trail in Coorg, Karnataka, will challenge any avid biker—an exhilarating pick for adventurers



I'll take my dog

Kotgarh in Himachal Pradesh has some short treks through orchards that are perfect for furry friends!



Reaching the San Ramon waterfall is an easy journey; perfect for beginners



Take it Slow

Wallow in the wilderness to reconnect with not just nature, but yourself.

by AMEESHA RAIZADA

A WHILE BACK, I WAS SAUNTERING barefoot through the Mashobra valley in Himachal Pradesh, India, when there came a point where all I could hear was crickets buzzing, a faint patter of drizzle and pine cones crunching under my feet. I'd been on many treks and hikes before, but this was my first time on a nature walk, and I couldn't help but notice that something felt different. With every step and every breath, I could feel my mind getting clearer, allowing me to take in everything around me with vivid detail.

Shaded by colossal cedars, this trail took me through Seepur to Shali, a quaint little village with freshwater springs, ancient shrines and slate houses. With no rush to reach a destination, I took my sweet time observing the locals going about their daily tasks and working in terraced fields. As I continued walking, fruit-laden orchards greeted me, and every turn bared a fresh vista of the valley. I had never been so deeply influenced by nature before, and the whole experience stayed with me long after I came back to the city, teeming with a fresh zest for life. This trip left me craving for more, and I started looking for more such trails around the world.

As it happens, New Zealand offers one of the greatest nature walks in the

world—The Milford Track. Starting from the picturesque Lake Te Anau, the track goes through the Fiordland National Park, a pristine rainforest with rugged granite tops and spectacular glacier-fed waterfalls. The diverse fauna adds to the drama, and you can even catch a glimpse of the rare, flightless takahē. To preserve the sanctity of the place, limited visitors are permitted and you can pre-book your slot on bookings.doc.govt.nz, and even secure accommodation for this four-day-long walk. The best time to visit is between October to April.

The pandemic has changed how we view travel—it is not just about taking a vacation anymore. It is more about consistently renewing our connection with the world, and nothing does that better than being close to nature. The San Ramon waterfall in Nicaragua is another place adored by nemophilists, as it offers a gentle one-day trail that can be accessed throughout the year. The route is basically the forested foot of a dormant volcano, Maderas, so you will notice old moss-covered trees, vines and bromeliads along the way. Howler monkeys will swing by every once in a while, and the endemic birds and insects will grab your attention.

I've recently discovered the beauty of nature journaling and



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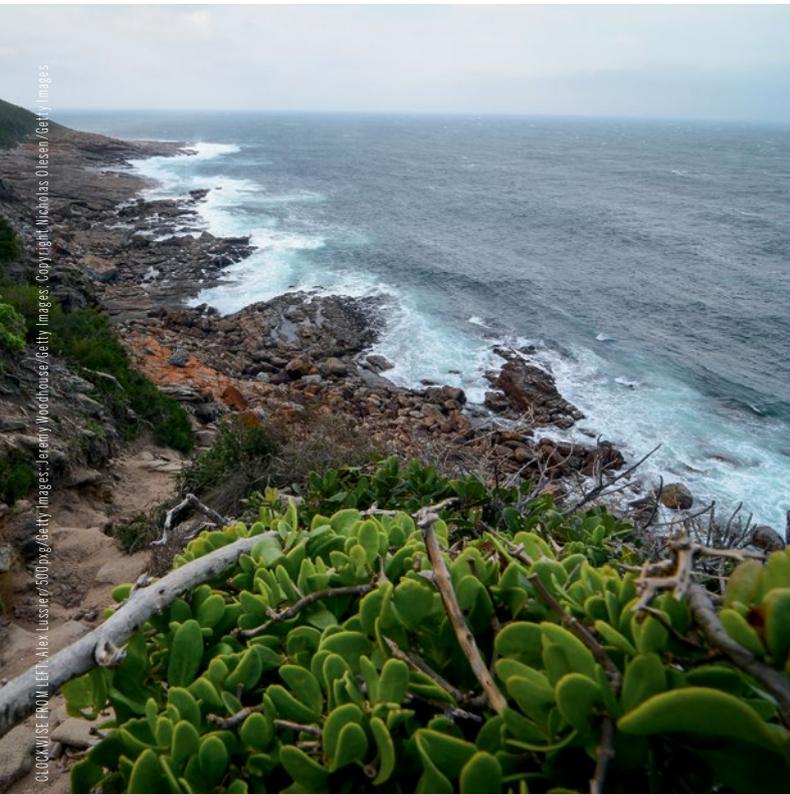
ESCAPE SOUL

THIS SPREAD
1. Sometimes reality is more beautiful than imagination, as can be seen in the view offered by the Milford Track; 2. The Cuchumatanes mountains will make you pause and reassess just about everything; 3. Watch the waves crash against the shore at Robberg Peninsula

how it employs careful observation, helping one delve deep into the facets of the surrounding environment. In case you're travelling with your kids, journaling will keep them engaged and impart great learning in the process. This can't be hurried, so you should opt for a walk with fewer tourists, such as the remote Nebaj-Todos Santos trail in Guatemala. Starting in the 2,000-year-old Mayan city of Nebaj, the incredible landscape of the Cuchumatanes mountains en route will surely take your breath away. On the way, you will find many hospitable local families that allow travellers to stay overnight, and even serve authentic Mayan cuisine. Against the tropical wilderness, the colourful attires of the natives will present a startling yet delightful contrast.

A nature walk doesn't necessarily have to be through a lush forest. In fact, unique terrains offer intriguing experiences, such as the Mount Sinai desert trail in Egypt. You can watch the sunrise from the summit after a three-hour walk, or explore the countless pilgrim routes and mule tracks along the way. Another unique nature hike lies along the Robberg Peninsula in South Africa, which weaves in and out through a variety of landscapes, including a rocky coastline where you can watch seals playing by the water's edge. You can also walk across the sandy peninsula when the tides are low, and feel the ocean mist caress your skin, leaving you imbued with an energy that only the natural world knows how to exude.

Henry David Thoreau once said, "I took a walk in the woods and came out taller than the trees," and nothing could be more apt in summing up the unparalleled wisdom that nature has to offer. No matter which road you take, what matters most is how you walk down it. 🌿



ESCAPE INSIGHT



The 2021 Travel Guide

There's a new lens on travel, and here's what you need to know.

by JAPLEEN KAUR



I SPENT MOST OF 2020 INSIDE MY TINY cottage, surrounded by the Himalayas, feeling absolutely blessed and privileged. But, to live in a place where people come to holiday has its own set of gratifications and downsides. It's given me the chance to see how the travel industry is handling a situation that is changing with every passing day and the sparks of hope that are propping up, making me optimistic about how travel will shape lives this year. Of course, 2021 will see a dramatic change in the way we navigate the world, and here are some of the trends you should be looking out for.

'Workations' and 'staycations' are at the forefront

With most offices still operating remotely—at least till the first half of this year—people have taken *Work from Home* and changed it to *Work from Anywhere*. As a freelancer, I took pride in working from exotic locations, but that has now become the norm for many.

Abhinav Chandel, a travel influencer who left the city life around seven years ago to move to McLeodganj, believes 'workations' are necessary for the travel industry to get back on its feet. "Hostels and hotels will continue to suffer losses even in 2021, and the only way to revive that is to resume travel, albeit consciously. If your work allows location independency, this kind of travel is for you."

'Staycations' in one's own city are also something that travellers are keen on exploring, especially during special occasions, or for quick weekend breaks at peripheral locations.

Luxury galore

This year, people won't mind splurging on experiences that guarantee safety. A secluded cabin in the woods, luxe Swiss tents for camping, suites in hotels that are valuing vigilance and going above and beyond the basic norms, or even

THIS SPREAD
1. Open your mind to the whole world—places like Plitvice Lakes National Park in Croatia await you;
2. Merge work and play, and get the chance to keep exploring



Some destinations featured in this article through images may be shut currently owing to COVID-19. Refer to the latest guidelines issued by the country before making your travel plans.

your very own villa on the beach; everything will now be aligned with making secure decisions to travel responsibly. Having your own safe space is important to attain that peace of mind and ensure a restful trip. Booking a bungalow for just you and your loved ones in an exotic destination is a way to reclaim those missed moments.

Dream destinations

If 2020 has taught us anything, it is that life is indeed too short. People are now looking forward to spending on travel and making it to their dream destinations; they want to live in the now. Hidden gems, unheard of destinations and new experiences will play a key role, as will the need to be a part of something meaningful. This could be in the form of joining hands with conservation forces at these locations, and working with the local communities to give back to society.

On that note, Tanya Khanijow, an immensely popular travel content creator whose YouTube videos are a delight to watch, gave a refreshing take on this topic. “In my opinion, I feel air travel will see a rise. Since many are looking for long-term travel combined with the safety regulations followed by airlines, air travel will get busier in the coming days.” Khanijow was in Kerala, travelling and working on the go, when I spoke to her.

Local and hyperlocal journeys

On the flip side, along with earmarking places in faraway dreamlands, travellers will choose to explore nearby locales and find beauty in the backyard. Proximity to the destination is quite important in the times we’re living in, and for many that will be a game changer. Expect to find offbeat places in your own city, as well as places that are just a short flight away.

In what the experts are calling ‘revenge travel’, in 2021, people are all set to reclaim lost time and head to fantastic locations to travel in a more genuine, eco-friendly and holistic manner. 🌿

Everything will now be aligned with making secure decisions to travel responsibly. Having your own safe space is important to attain that peace of mind and ensure a restful trip.





1

THIS SPREAD

1. Add surreal destinations like Mizoram to your bucket list; 2. The world is full of surprises, like this bridge in Thailand that lets you walk on water; 3. Luxe seclusion awaits you at destinations like the St. Regis Bora Bora Resort in French Polynesia; 4. Make your trip meaningful, whether that's by opting for eco-conscious trips, or for ones that help you discover yourself



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BUCKWISE FROM TOP: Jahnangha Naiting/Shutterstock, Chakar in Wattanamongkol/Getty Images, Image courtesy of Marriott International, Inc. /Sandi Bertonea//500px/Getty Images

ESCAPE COVER STORY

An Oasis *of* Wellness

It may be hard to imagine that in a fast-paced city of concrete and glass, one can find a spot to rest and reboot. But with a selection of indulgent spa resorts and healthy cafés, Dubai can surprise you with its wellness offerings, only if you give it a chance.

by SATARUPA PAUL





Aleksandra Ivanova/EyeEm/Getty Images

ESCAPE COVER STORY

I HAD ARRIVED IN DUBAI MUCH LIKE how I had on my earlier visits here—flustered, over-worked and exhausted from the daily hustle, with frayed nerves that needed soothing and a weary mind that needed calming. But this time, instead of resorting to my regular retail therapy that the city is best known for, or hitting new fine dining spots and glitzy nightclubs, I intended to seek a reboot of a different kind—that which is known to rejuvenate the body, mind and soul in entirety.

Now, Dubai may not be a natural choice for wellness enthusiasts, but look beyond its glass and glamour and you'll find a plethora of offerings in the form of sprawling spa resorts and chic, healthy cafés that can help restore your sense of well-being. And so, I set out to enjoy a weekend of R&R in Dubai, and came back feeling brand new!

Basking in resplendence

The choice of accommodation is the foremost decision one needs to make while planning a wellness getaway, and it was absolutely pertinent that I got this right. I gave the swanky hotels housed in the neck-craning skyscrapers a deliberate miss, and instead, found myself at what seemed straight out of a traditional Arabian fairytale town. Despite being the largest resort in Dubai—with three hotels, 29 boutique summer houses and over 50 restaurants and bars—Madinat Jumeirah exudes an air of tranquillity that has a calming effect from the get-go. Sand-coloured buildings stand sentinel against acres of landscaped gardens and open green spaces, while a seemingly unending network of aquamarine canals winds through the entire estate, giving it a very Venice-esque appearance.

Traditional *dhow*-style boats or water taxis ply through the canals regularly, and one such transported me right to the doorstep of my summer house. Inside, I stepped into a world of ultimate luxury, where charming interiors in muted palettes with an Arabian flair lulled me into a sense of serenity, while my own little garden opened right to the water's edge. I'd have been perfectly happy just spending all my time here—sitting and reading in the garden, taking soothing boat rides through the canals, sunbathing at the private beach or watching the endearing inhabitants of the in-house turtle sanctuary. But I had more indulgences waiting for me.

But this time, instead of resorting to my regular retail therapy that the city is best known for, or hitting new fine dining spots and glitzy nightclubs, I intended to seek a reboot of a different kind.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Image Gap/Getty Images; Peter Pasta Photography/Getty Images; Watiro/light/Getty Images

THIS SPREAD
1. The skyline, dotted with high-rise buildings, can be seen from a position of respite thanks to the myriad luxury hotels in the city; 2. Madinat Jumeirah is a twinkling delight; 3. Drift through the sublime Venice-esque canals

ESCAPE COVER STORY

Nourishment for the soul

My first order of business was to hit the spa for some much-needed wellness therapy. The Talise Spa at the Jumeirah Al Qasr consists of 26 luxurious spa villas and offers a variety of treatments that can be personalised to your needs. Mine started with a dip in the plunge pool, followed by some quality time in the steam and sauna to help relax my aching muscles. I was then ushered into one of the Sanctuary Rooms, where a session of crystal sound healing left me positively energised. Then it was on to an hour or so of deep, soothing full-body massages, which put me into the kind of sound sleep that had eluded me for long.

A wellness journey isn't complete without indulging in wholesome, hearty food, and Dubai has options galore in this regard. At HEAT (Healthy Eats & Treats), a favourite amongst the city's keen fitness enthusiasts, I feasted guilt-free on low-carb pizzas and all-natural pancakes. The trendy Alserkal Avenue with its host of hip dining spaces and artsy galleries left me spoilt for choice; I settled for the delicious *pho* at the eco-conscious upcycling café concept of KAVE, and picked a couple of detox juices and açai bowls from the plant-based and organic Wild & The Moon. And when I found myself craving a culinary feast, it was the airy Summersalt Beach Club with its unique Japanese-Argentine mash-up of fresh treats that had me reaching for seconds.

Needless to say, after all that pampering of the body and soul, I came back from Dubai this time feeling whole, nurtured, and at the risk of sounding trite, reborn! ✨





ALSO STAY HERE



XVA Art Hotel

The ideal choice for those seeking a blend of heritage and comfort.

xvahotel.com



Hyatt Regency

The appeal lies in its proximity to the city hubs and its tasteful design.

hyatt.com



Al Maha Desert Resort and Spa

Located away from the main city, this sprawling estate has something for all.

marriott.com



Four Seasons Resort

Right by the beach, the resort's spa will leave you completely rejuvenated.

fourseasons.com

THIS SPREAD
 1. If your idea of wellness involves movement, Dubai has plenty of scenic trails and paths to follow; 2. The Madinat Jumeirah was made to resemble an Arab town; 3. KAVE is a concept café that regularly hosts upcycling workshops



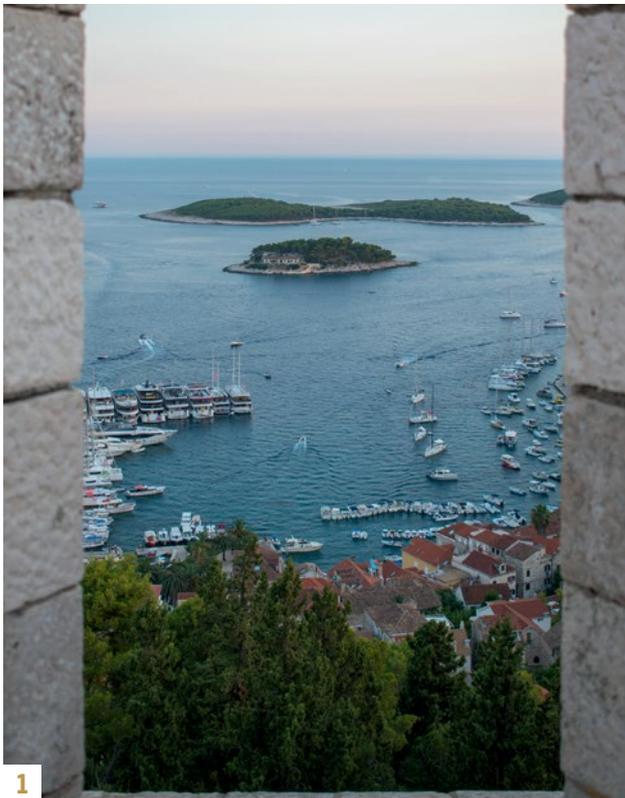
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: XVA Art Hotel; image courtesy of XVA Art Hotel; image courtesy of Hyatt Corporation; image courtesy of Marriott International; image courtesy of Four Seasons Hotels Limited; Burj Al Juma; image courtesy of Getty Images; image courtesy of KAVE café

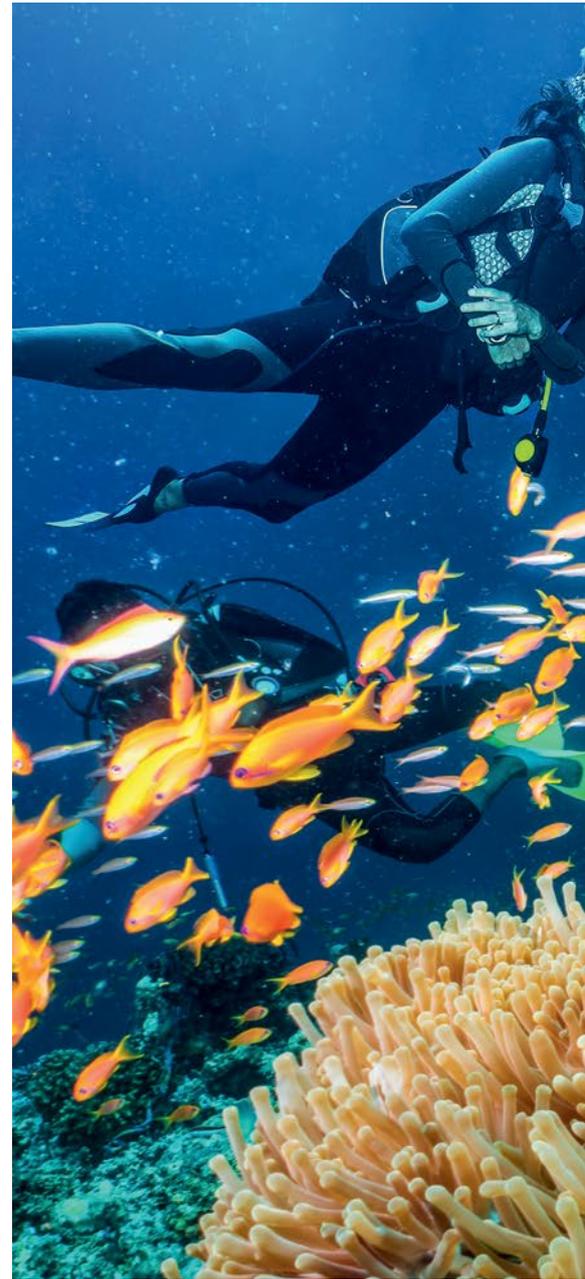
WIDE WORLD, WIDER VIEW

Travel is all about seeing something you haven't seen before. These distinctive views capture stunning and unique first-person perspectives from around the world. Here's to exploration and rediscovery in 2021—even if it's someplace next door.

Curated by ARUN SARIN



1



1

THE VIEW WITHIN A VIEW SLIVER OF BUSTLE

This view is almost like a peek into a bygone era. From the ramparts of the old fort, you can get a lay of the quaint Croatian town of Šibenik and the sea. Whether or not you're a student of history, this is a mesmerising view.



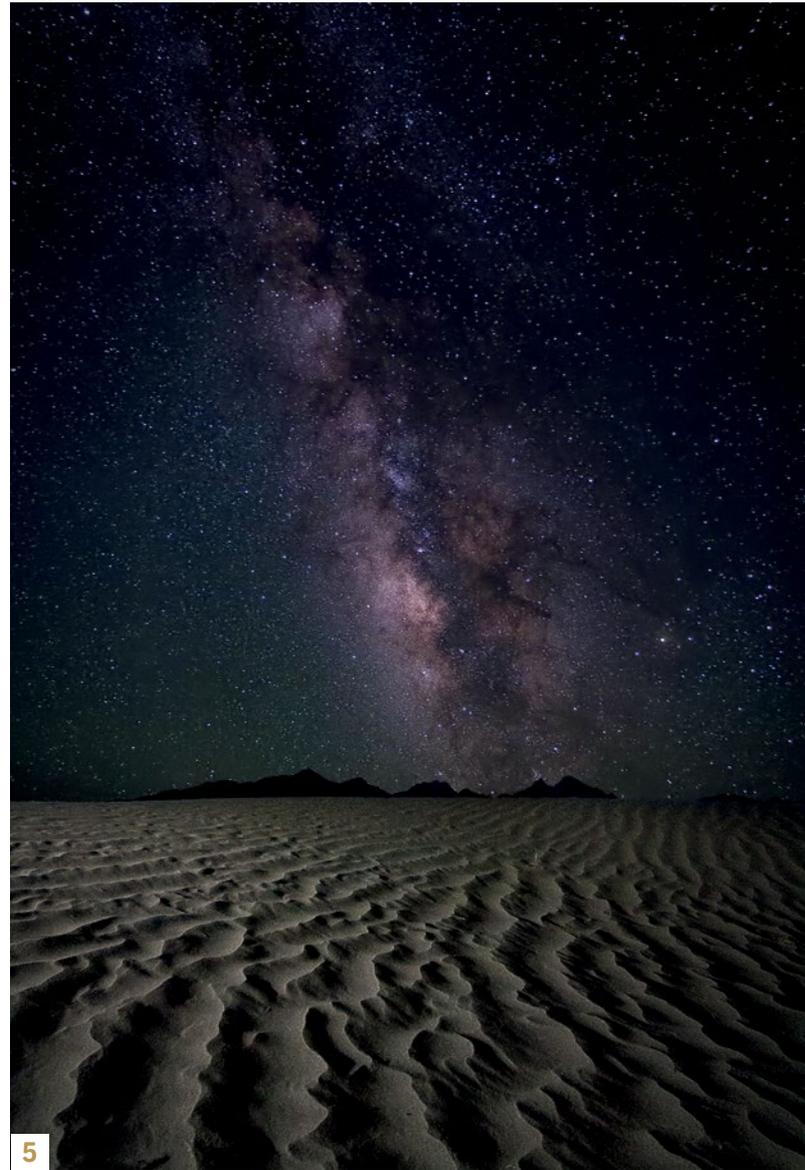
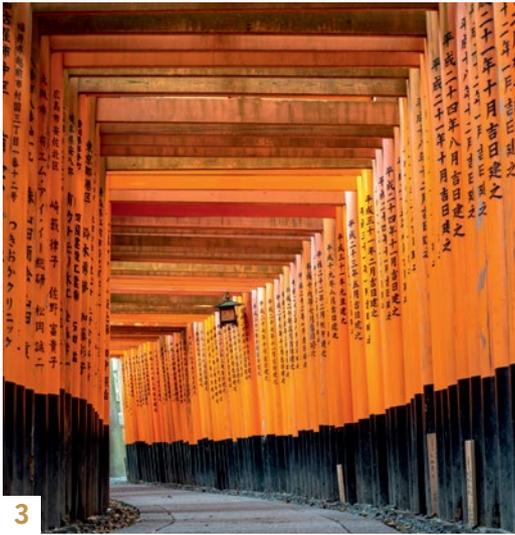
FROM LEFT: crisography/Shutterstock, Sven Hanscher/EyeEm/Getty Images

2

2 THE VIEW WITH COMPANY PARADISE UNDERWATER

Malé and the other atolls in the Maldives are known for their diving, but it isn't easy to surmise the extravaganza that awaits you. The colours are unreal, and every hour changes your perception of the world around you, thanks to the rays of the sun filtering through.

ESCAPE CANVAS



3
**THE VIEW THROUGH
LEGION OF PILLARS**
Lined up in perfect symmetry, the *torii* (gates) at the Fushimi Inari Taisha shrine in Kyoto, Japan, present a veritable geometric portal. The *torii* bear the donor's name, and the calligraphy seems like a key.

4
**THE VIEW FROM THE BASE
SUBMERGED GARDENS**
With a mellifluous mix of green and blue, this first-person view of Yucatán's Ik Kil cenote in Mexico underscores its uniqueness. Here, subterranean wonders meet overflowing shrubbery.



6

5
THE VIEW AT LARGE
SANDS OF THE MOON

As the sun sets over the dunes of Nubra Valley in Ladakh, you see the medley of stars of the Milky Way. It is a sight that you won't forget—it seems to immortalise a place frozen in time.

6
THE VIEW FROM ABOVE
CENTRALLY PARKED

Seen from above, Manhattan's sea of concrete surrounds the island of Central Park. A New York City landmark, this view from a helicopter is surreal in its calmness, because under you is a city that never sleeps.



7

7
*THE VIEW FROM ATOP
CARPET OF WHITE*

Traversing the Tsomgo lake in East Sikkim by yak is an experience, sure, but the winter wonderland around you will introduce you to multiple shades of white. It's like nature's patchwork blanket.

8
*THE VIEW FROM A VIEW
TRACKING INTO GREEN*

There's no sight more pleasant for sore urban eyes than tropical evergreen forests. Travelling north from Bangkok in Thailand, you are flanked by waves of unpunctuated trees.



8



9

9
**THE VIEW ACROSS
 NATURE'S PATHWAY**

You can't unsee the living root bridges of Meghalaya once you've seen them. They are like lingering antiquity, snaking their way into the modern world. This is nature's true and ingenious tapestry.

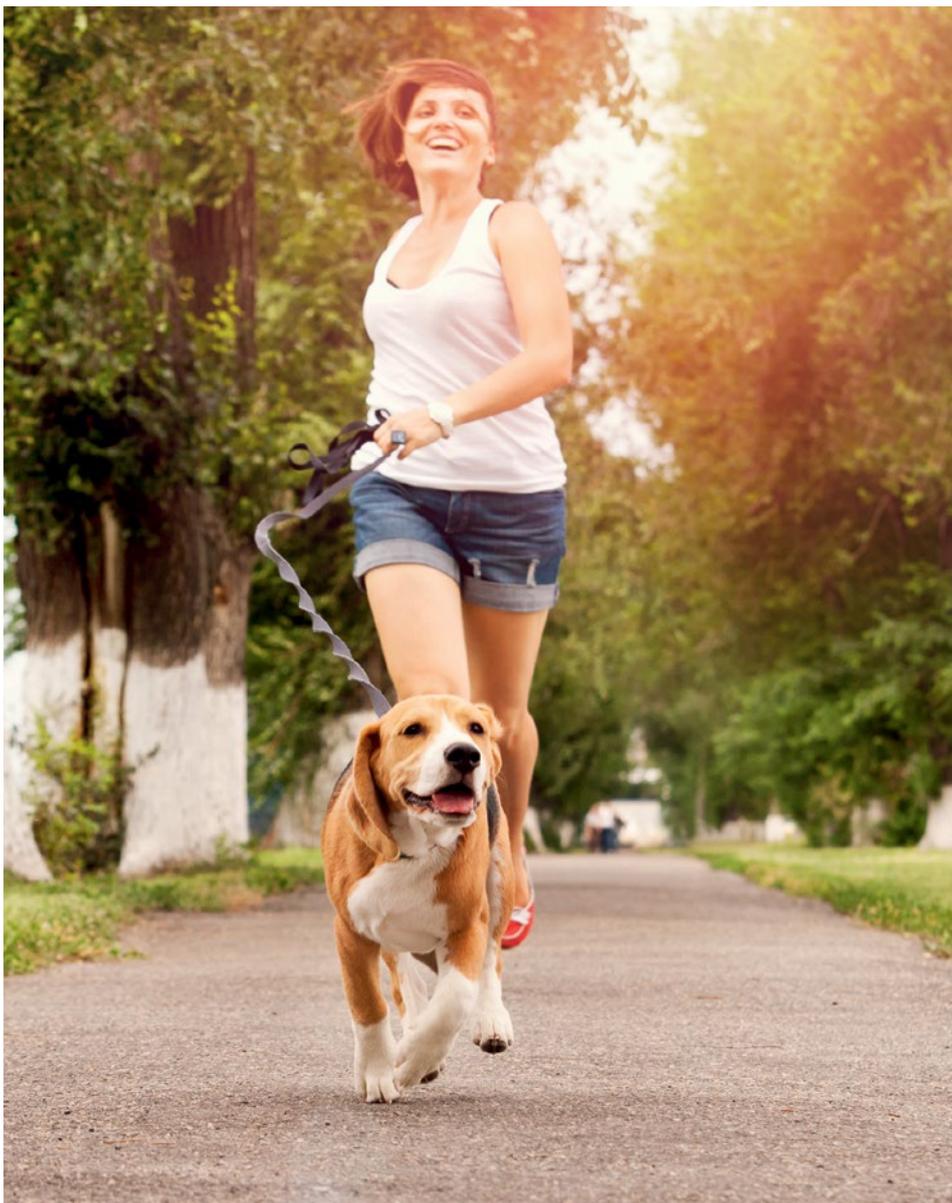
10
**THE VIEW WHILE ADRIFT
 TUNNEL OF LOVE**

The only way to see Venice is by looking up from its canals. Aboard the gondola, no less!

10



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Chris Singhsinsuk/Shutterstock; Puneet Vikram Singh, Nature and Concept photographer/Getty Images; Amitrane/Shutterstock; Spirit Stock/Shutterstock



The Foolproof Guide to Happiness

March into 2021 by becoming the happiest, most cheerful version of you.

by GEETIKA SASAN BHANDARI



The world can be your playground; you just have to channel your inner explorer

NO YEAR IN RECENT HISTORY HAS had to carry the weight of billions of expectations, but 2021 is just that year. A beacon of hope, the light at the end of a dark tunnel, and the vibrant rainbow because a silver lining may not quite suffice.

So, how are you gearing up for this new year? Are you cheerful and hopeful, or have the last few months been too trying, leaving you cynical? Positivity is not a switch, you argue, that can just be flicked at will. The thing is, it just might be. Honestly, sometimes simply making up your mind, flicking that switch in your head and making that instant shift in mindset is all it really takes to pick yourself up.

Chase your passions

This is the year to dig out those unfulfilled dreams from the recesses of your mind and unleash them because it's time you did what makes you happy. So, if you've always wanted to strum like Eric Clapton or Slash, sign up for online guitar or ukulele lessons or find a teacher who comes home. Or perhaps, you've fancied penning

your thoughts but didn't find the time or feared judgement. Use Wix or Squarespace—both highly rated for ease of use—to create a blog and get those words flowing. A short break to a quiet hillside town will provide the inspiration and the persuasion. As for perceptions? Toss those out the window.

Celebrate bonds

If there's anything 2020 has taught us, it's this: Nothing can replace human connections. So, go all out and incorporate all the safety measures to plan that trip with friends and family. Celebrate a milestone that went by quietly last year or coincide it with one that is to come; or, plan a trip even if there's no milestone in view—just getting through last year is reason enough to get together and celebrate. And, since we've all learnt how unpredictable life can be, nothing should take precedence over spending time with those who make you laugh and smile.

Embrace adventure

Skydiving, scuba, a high-altitude trek,

YOUR DAILY DOSE

Imbibe these small hacks in your daily routine to make the most of your day

GET YOUR AM RIGHT

Ditch that habit of checking your phone in the morning. Instead, spend five minutes focussing on breathing—the oxygen clears the head and brings a sense of calm.

GET MOVING

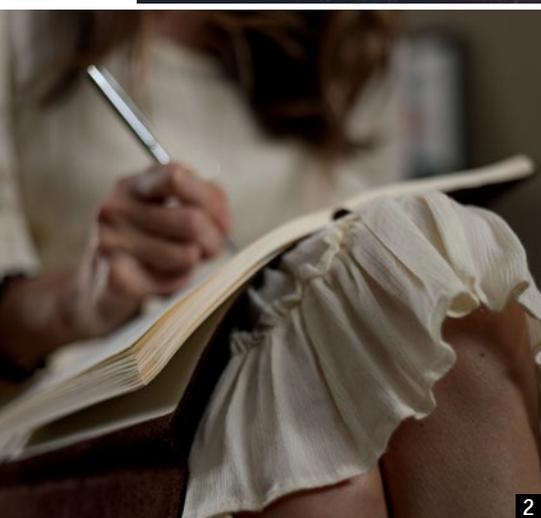
Did you know that even small movements can keep depression at bay? A recent study at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health testifies to this. Study author Karmel Choi says, "Our study didn't say you have to run a marathon, do hours of aerobics, or be a CrossFit master just to see benefits on depression".

GET RESTFUL SLEEP

If you've watched any of lifestyle and fitness expert Luke Coutinho's videos, you'll know that sleep does much more than just making you feel fresh. In a recent Instagram post, he said, "[Nothing] can ever replace what natural sleep and rest can do for our body and mind. We must sleep to heal the mind and body."



1



2

THIS PAGE
1. Now is the time to plan that trip with your family and other loved ones; 2. Writing in a journal every night is a good way to check in with yourself

skiing, whatever it is that you've been putting off, now is the time to dust those cobwebs. Give wings to your adventurous streak because delaying it really doesn't make sense anymore, does it? Remember, there will always be naysayers and those that play to your worries, but if you really want to do something, there is no better time than here and now.

Focus on wellness

Replace all the pent-up fear and uncertainty with a strong shot of rejuvenation by planning a trip that speaks to your soul. If Viva Mayr in Austria—the preferred destination for Bollywood—is where you dream of going for a detox, make that booking. If it's a yoga retreat in the Himalayas, take a like-minded friend and make that your treat. However, if long walks in picturesque winding mountain roads with clear blue skies, simple wholesome food, and long conversations over music and a robust bonfire are your idea of wellness, you'll have tons of options to choose from. Remember, in places like this, you should have just one agenda: Revitalise and reboot.

Check in with yourself

An integral factor of positivity is looking at life from the prism of abundance, and not the prism of deficiency. If you look back at the year gone by, can you think of everything you have to be grateful for? Because, if you try and dig deep, maybe you'll find that you used this time to reconnect with someone, or you discovered the power of giving yourself a break. Whatever it was, write it down: Believe me, journaling is a powerful exercise because it serves as a constant reminder of everything there is to be thankful for. And sometimes, writing a diary works as a cathartic experience, helping you vent even when you didn't realise you needed to. Listening to a podcast, say *On Purpose* by Jay Shetty, can also serve up a shot of inspiration when you need it the most.

Weed out

Cut out negative news and negative people. While this may seem difficult, ration the amount of time you spend watching TV, on social media platforms, and absorbing those potential mood killers that just drop in unannounced: Forwarded messages. You can do this by setting limits on your phone; the minute you cross the deadline, the apps will close and won't open unless you authorise them to. Make a concerted effort to stay away from people who tend to pull you down with their negativity. Start clearing up clutter both in your head and around you. Marie Kondo, whose KonMari philosophy of tidying up has fans worldwide, says you should discard everything that doesn't spark joy. In Kondo's words, "The space in which we live should be for the person we are becoming now, not for the person we were in the past." 🌀

OTTER



PRECARIOUS FUTURE OF OTTERS IN INDIA

High on the 'cuteness' quotient, Otters are energetic, playful, small in size with elongated bodies, long tails and a soft yet thick layer of fur. They are found in freshwater and swamp forests, rice fields, lakes, streams, reservoirs, canals, mangroves and along the coast. Otters are top predators in the food chain, and their presence signifies the health of the ecosystem, especially of the freshwater bodies.

Of the 13 species of otters found worldwide, India is home to three Asian Small-clawed Otter *Aonyx cinerea*; Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra*; and Smooth-coated Otter *Lutrogale perspicillata*. All three species of otters are protected under India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and their international trade is further prohibited under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Despite their protection status, otters continue to be exploited for illegal wildlife trade. They are poached for their extremely soft and lustrous fur used to make coats, hats, trimmings and linings. Globally, the trade in live otters as pets has also been a threat, especially to the Smooth-coated Otter.

Habitat destruction and degradation due to expanding agricultural practices, deforestation, quarrying, pollution and soil erosion also threaten the future of otters in India.



#DYK that the den of an otter is called a holt and the young of an otter is called a pup or a kitten. They stay with their mothers until they're up to a year old, or until the next litter.

YOU CAN HELP!

DO NOT BUY coats, accessories and others products made from otter fur, or keep otters as pets. **SUPPORT** initiatives that help protect wildlife. **CONTRIBUTE!** Scan the QR code to know more.



THE LAST WORD

WHY I TRAVEL

Award-winning comedian **Papa CJ** has performed in over 25 countries and helped charities worldwide with The Happiness Project. He talks about travel and the year 2021.

Your first travel memory?

Travelling from Kolkata to Himachal Pradesh and back, twice a year by train. I studied in a boarding school and it took us 36 hours to get there. I would be in a compartment with 50 other kids, and it was always a blast. I wish I could say the same for the poor teachers who were assigned to escort us!

What kind of traveller are you?

For me, travel is about food and people. I want to try the best food in the region that I'm travelling to, and I want to spend time with locals and get a sense of their vibe, energy and outlook towards life.

Your favourite travel companion?

Anyone who can soak in a destination without feeling the need to run from one place to another just so they can take a photograph in front of something famous. And if you dare ask to take a picture of *my* food before I start eating it, I will stab you with my spoon.

You brought joy during a tough time. How did it feel?

Wonderful, obviously. When the lockdown started, I was sceptical about how stand-up comedy would work online. To my very pleasant surprise, I've found that if you can customise content and make the performance interactive, it can work well.

Something 2020 taught you that you're carrying over?

Not to take anything or anyone for granted, and to cherish and be grateful for all that you have.

We know the importance of balance, but how do you achieve it in your life?

I don't believe in balance. If I enjoy something, I go all out. It so happens that I take an interest in many things and whether it is writing, performing, coaching, biking,



To Vistara, with love

While this is not a part of the interview, I'd like to add that I have loved Vistara since their inception, and have been a frequent flyer and a vocal public advocate of the airline. Last year, however, I had a huge motorcycle accident in Ladakh and needed to be air-evacuated to Delhi immediately to undergo surgery. Vistara changed the ticket dates instantly, upgraded us, so we were closer to the door, had the airport manager come to the hospital in Leh at 11 pm to ensure I got a fit-to-fly certificate, and also arranged for an ambulance to take me right up to the aircraft. This was above and beyond anything I expected and I shall be eternally grateful to them. **Thank you, Vistara.**

Dear readers, you will hear more about this adventure when you come and watch my new show, 'Unbroken'. One of these stories includes performing for the airport staff while lying on a stretcher in the back of the ambulance at Leh airport!

salsa dancing or anything else, when I'm doing it, I give it my all.

Do you believe in keeping new-year resolutions?

So I can disappoint myself within a month? You must be kidding!

What should a global resolution be?

Don't mess with Mother Earth, and please don't eat bats, for God's sake!

Travel has the power to reboot one's state of mind, yes?

All new experiences and interactions stimulate the mind in a new way. This leads to new thoughts and ideas. In addition to enriching my life, I put many of these ideas through my comedy filter and create anecdotes.

Your travel must-dos as things slowly open up?

Putting a mask on my face has helped me unmask what is really important to me. As travel restrictions ease, I'd like to visit at least two or three new countries every year.

Funniest thing you've heard from a fellow passenger?

I've always found it extremely amusing when I'm on a flight and someone asks me where I'm going. I'm like, "We've just boarded a flight to London. That is where my seat is going. Where is yours going?" 🍵



