

SHOWBIZ
MY JOURNEY
WON'T BE
COMPLETE
TILL I DO A
FILM WITH
RAJINI &
KAMAL SIR:
VIVEK
P3



Bombay Times

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2024
ADVERTORIAL, ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY
PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

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I'VE ALWAYS GIVEN A DON'T-MESS-WITH-ME VIBE, SAYS SUNNY

Onkar Kulkarni

Sunny Leone began her career in the Indian film industry with *Jism 2* (2012), and later was seen in a number of songs in Hindi as well as South films. In the wake of the #MeToo Movement in the Malayalam film industry, following the Hema Committee Report, the actress shares her thoughts on how she believes women in the film industry need to speak up instead of suffering in silence and how she dealt with unpleasant situations.

'WE CAN ALWAYS FIND ANOTHER JOB, BUT WE CAN'T DEAL WITH TRAUMA LIKE THIS'
Sunny feels it is important to raise an alarm and be a part of movements like #MeToo. She says, "You must speak up because if you don't, then it will keep going on and on. And what if somebody does something extremely horrible to someone because you didn't speak up? What if a life could have been saved? In a moment, a woman's life can change. And it changes forever. And it's not just her own, but her entire family's life at stake. So, if you are going through a moment like this, speak up. We can always find another job, but we can't deal with trauma like this."

CONTINUED ON P 6

Because of my background, I always had that shield around me. Also, Daniel (husband) has always been with me. He filters things before they reach me. Yet, I did meet people who gave me the heebie-jeebies



ARTISTE'S FANBASE, LOCAL SPENDING POWER: WHAT MAKES YOUR CONCERT TICKET PRICEY?

From the frenzy over securing a Diljit Dosanjh concert ticket to the affordability of the now upcoming Coldplay show, ticket pricing has sparked a debate. We ask experts how it works

P4

In cities where an artiste has a strong following, like Delhi for a Punjabi artiste, ticket prices can be higher

Increasingly, fans are not worried about paying a higher price if they can get a better experience

Transactions, the credit card system, and managing money in your wallet have all become easier, along with more convenient venues – but above all, demand for concerts is driven by FOMO



Buzzstop

VIRAL KOREAN OLYMPIC SHOOTER SCORES FIRST ACTING ROLE AS ASSASSIN

South Korean pistol shooter Kim Ye-ji, whose skill and nonchalance won the internet at the Paris Olympics, has landed her first acting role as an assassin. The 32-year-old took silver in the women's 10m air pistol in July and her ultra-calm demeanour, combined with her wire-rimmed shooting glasses and baseball cap, turned her into a worldwide sensation.

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Level: Medium **SUDOKU CHALLENGE**

		6	8					
7			5					9
1	8	6						
		8	7	2		3		
		3				7		
	2	3	5	8				
				1		2	5	
9				8				6
				6	1			

HOW TO PLAY
Fill in the grid so that every horizontal row, every vertical column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9, without repeating the numbers in the same row, column or box. You can't change the digits already given in the grid. Every puzzle has one solution.

Level: Medium **TIMES KAKURO**

		3	7		9	12			
9	23	4		4			7	14	
23				11					
7		20	8	15		10	12		
		19	4		6		20		
15	13		15						
14		3	4	14		4	10	11	
26						17			
		3				3			

HOW TO PLAY
The numbers in the coloured squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the coloured square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 2 boxes below 12 must contain 2 digits that add up to 12, whereas for 20, the 3 boxes placed horizontally next to it must add up to 20. No zeroes are used here, only the digits one through nine.

NOTE
A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance in the example, we cannot have the combination of 8+4+8 for 20.

LOOP THE LOOP

RULES

- Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A).
- Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B).
- Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines.
- You can't draw lines around zeroes.
- Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

HOW TO BEGIN:
Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a deadend (Fig B).

THE DAILY CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13			14	15				16				
17				18				19				
20			21			22						
23				24		25				26		
27				28				29				
30						31		32				
33								34				
35												
36												
37												
38								41				
39				40								
42						43		44		45	46	47
48												
49												
50												
51												
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54												
55												
56												
57												
58												
59												
60												
61												
62												
63												
64												

By Ricky Sirois 21/09/2024

ACROSS

- Part of the healing process
- Hiss source
- Network, say
- Giant automaton of Greek mythology
- French pronoun
- Number two
- Lingo
- Animal in the creation myth of the Achomawi people of Northern California
- Hybrid pastries
- Hazelnut
- Range rovers?
- Coastal birds
- Stable diet
- Revelation
- Shepherd in a 1995 Oscar-nominated film
- Yak
- 29-Across, for one
- Sch. with the second-most NCAA team championships
- One who spends a lot of time in cabs
- Like a roller derby track
- Cellular messenger
- Letter abbr.
- Shape-shifting prefix
- Prevents an actor from getting a breakthrough role, perhaps
- Demonstrate one's humanity
- Pursued
- Comedian Trevor
- Turns the page?
- Result of a successful collaboration
- Conan O'Brien's first talk show
- End

Friday's Puzzle Solved

C	A	R	T	B	R	A	S	S	L	I	P			
A	G	U	A	B	O	C	A	A	I	R	E			
R	E	N	O	C	E	H	T	D	N	U	O	R	A	
A	L	L	O	W	E	A	U	N	I	L				
C	I	A	N	O	S	Y	A	D	E	M	O	S		
A	N	T	S	S	N	A	S	A	D	A				
S	E	E	N	L	I	P	S	L	P	N	S			
M	A	H	I	E	P	E	E	S	C	A	B			
P	A	I	R	S	E	E	L	S	A	L	A			
E	S	R	U	O	C	E	U	D	N	I	T	B	S	
A	C	A	H	A	H	E	A	S	E	S				
B	A	C	K	T	O	T	H	E	F	U	T	U	R	E
O	R	E	O	S	A	U	R	A	M	I	T			
A	S	I	A	T	H	A	N	S	T	A	T			

GARFIELD

HEY, GARFIELD, I BROUGHT DINNER. GREAT! I NEED TO FIGURE OUT A SIDE, THOUGH. LET'S SEE IT. WHAT GOES WITH RAT? A TETANUS SHOT?

ARCHIE

HOT DOG'S STILL PLAYFUL AS A PUPPY! HE ALWAYS JUMPS UP ON ME WHEN HE SEES ME WITH A CAN OF FOOD! I MIGHT BE FEEDING HIM TOO MUCH!

DENNIS THE MENACE

"DO WE HAVE TO SAY GRACE EVEN OVER STUFF I DON'T EAT?"

SPELLATHON

Today's Ratings: 03-average | 04-good | 05-outstanding

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown in today's puzzle? In making a word, a letter can be used as many times as it appears in the puzzle. Each word must contain the central letter. There should be at least one seven letter word. Plurals, foreign words and proper names are not allowed. British English Dictionary is used as reference.

SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters in the four word jumbles, one letter to each square/circle, to make four ordinary words

DOOER
POLIS
CRTYLU
CIMTDU

It is the ___ man who is always ___, and the ___ man who is always ___ - H L Mencken (4,4,4,4) (two words twice)

HOW TO PLAY
Now arrange the letters in the circles to form the answer to the riddle or to fill in the missing word as indicated

FINOLEX FORTUNE

See what the stars have in store for you - according to your moon sign.

ARIES: The ability to sway or persuade can be enhanced. One of the most positive uses of this transit involves taking steps to better ourselves. You might solve a problem that has been in existence for some time, or capitalise upon a resource that was previously hidden.

TAURUS: A partner might take issue with how you spend your money. Support from others may not be as forthcoming as it may have been in the past, and this requires you to assume more independence in terms of making your living.

GEMINI: Your personal interests grow, and you might take on a number of new projects or studies. Be careful not to overload yourself, or you might find that your life has become too hectic. You might align yourself with a group or network that helps you to feel supported.

CANCER: Educational and communication opportunities present themselves. You may increase your knowledge and skills set, and find enjoyment in doing so. You express your ideas with more enthusiasm and positivity.

LEO: Don't let fear of failure hold you back from doing what your instincts tell you is right and proper. And certainly don't let the thought that other people might not approve of your actions slow you down in any way.

VIRGO: You feel happy and joyful today, especially if you have the time to please yourself and do what you want. Personal relationships are blessed today because your good feelings rub

off onto those around you. **LIBRA:** Whatever duties and obligations you have as the new week begins you don't have to get on to them immediately. In fact the planets indicate that, as the full moon approaches, it might be a wise move to postpone them.

SCORPIO: Good news of one kind or another will come your way today and it's likely you will be on the move either this evening or early tomorrow. Make sure you plan your route well in advance. And have a fall back plan ready, just in case there's a hold-up.

SAGITTARIUS: Don't let a friend or work colleague pass the buck and make you feel guilty about something that was not your fault. The planets warn if you they will put the blame on you every time something goes wrong.

CAPRICORN: The more you worry about something, the more power you give it to disrupt your life, so make a conscious decision to put it out of your mind and never think about it again. By far, the best way to deal with your fears is to ignore them altogether.

AQUARIUS: This is a great day to explore real-estate negotiations or check out new apartments or homes. Likewise, it's a good day to invite friends over. If shopping for lovely things for your home, be careful about going overboard.

PISCES: Your studies may become easier, and you might see greater success in your courses. It's a good time to mend relationships with people you've had conflicts with recently. Don't let pride get in the way—reach out, show there's no bad blood, and express your desire to be friends again.

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Written & Directed By BHARAT DABHOLKAR

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Bharat Dabholkar
Kausub Savarkar
Mohan Azaad
Dr. Deepa Bhajekar
Mangesh Desai
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SOLUTIONS TO GAMES/PUZZLES

TIMES SUDOKU

8	6	1	9	5	2	7	4	3
9	2	7	8	2	1	6	6	6
5	2	6	1	7	6	4	9	8
1	9	8	5	6	2	7	7	7
2	5	7	8	1	6	6	9	9
4	6	2	9	7	8	1	5	9
6	7	7	2	6	8	1	9	1
6	9	6	1	5	2	7	4	7
2	1	2	6	4	9	5	6	7

LOOP THE LOOP

TIMES KAKURO

2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

SPELLATHON
ATTRACT, cart, cart, cart, cart, cart

SCRAMBLE
It is always dull. It is the dull man who is always sure, and the sure man who is always dull. - H L Mencken

Registration No. MAHENG/2000/2180, VOLUME No. 24, ISSUE No. 305
Published for the proprietors, Bennett, Coleman & Company Ltd. by R. Krishnamurthy at The Times of India Building, D. N. Road, Mumbai 400001. Tel. No. (022) 4653535, 2273355. Fax: (022) 2773 1144 and printed by tm at (1) The Times of India Suburban Press, Akurdi Road, Western Express Highway, Kurla (E), Mumbai 400 101. Tel. No. (022) 29870324, 29870330. Fax: (022) 29874230. (2) The Times of India Press City, Plot No. 4, TTC Industrial Area, Thane Belapur Road, Airoli, Navi Mumbai 400708. Tel. No. (022) 27609999; (022) 27605275. Editor: Madhureeta Maheshwari. Responsible for selection of news under FRP Act, 1958. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without the written permission of the Publisher is prohibited.



Vivek Oberoi says, "Every one of us should work together to remove exploitation"

My journey won't be complete till I do a film with Rajini & Kamal sir: Vivek

Roopa Radhakrishnan

Vivek Oberoi made his on-screen debut in 2002 with Ram Gopal Varma's film *Company*. Since then, he has worked on many projects, including ones in all four South Indian film industries, and with some of the biggest names. This includes essaying the role of the antagonist to Ajith in *Vivegam* (2017). In a chat with us, he talks about his desire to work with Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan, being anti-exploitation and more.

'THE FAN FOLLOWING OF RAHMAN SIR AND ANIRUDH IS HUGE AND NOT NORMAL'

I've done a film in every single South Indian language and it was my dream to do that. That gave me a kick. The people in the South Indian film industries are extremely committed. The same can be said about the fans, as they love so deeply. If you look at the fan following of

Rahman sir and Anirudh, it's huge and not normal.

'IF THEY REACH OUT TO ME FOR INSIDE EDGE SEASON 4, I'LL DO IT IN A HEARTBEAT'

I loved playing Vikrant Dhawan in *Inside Edge*. Its makers are like family to me. I started my OTT journey with them in 2016, when people didn't know what OTT was. It was so new in India at the time. If they reach out to me for season 4, I'll do it in a heartbeat. But that's a creative decision that they have to take.

'EXPLOITATION, EVEN OF MONEY AND POWER, IS CANCER TO SOCIETY AND ANY INDUSTRY'

Any kind of exploitation, whether it is sexual, financial, or emotional, is absolutely wrong. I'm anti-exploitation. You



have to be fair and honest in life and have integrity. When you have stardom, the least you can do is facilitate harmony and live without

exploiting people who are poorer or weaker than you. Exploitation is cancer to society and any industry. Every one of us should work together to remove exploitation.

Keep tabs on you favourite stars with [bombaytimes](#)



Vivek and Ajith pose for a selfie during *Vivegam* shoot

'Ajith anna treated me like a younger brother'

Every actor in my generation has a dream to work with Rajini sir and Kamal sir. My journey will not be complete till I do a film with them. Also, I love working in Tamil cinema because the talent here is brilliant. It was fantastic working in *Vivegam*. The film's team felt like a family, and Ajith anna is amazing to work with. What a gentleman he is! He gave me so much love and treated me like a younger brother.

'When I'm in front of the camera, I get into a state of meditation'

I've been busy building my entrepreneurial side. Business gives me a sense of purpose. Because of this, I haven't been fair to the actor in me, as I haven't done enough films. My fans keep complaining and ask me, 'Why aren't you doing more movies?' Acting is my passion. When I'm in front of the camera and hear 'action', I get into a state of meditation.

I started my OTT journey with them (*Inside Edge*) in 2016, when people didn't know what OTT was. It was so new in India at the time

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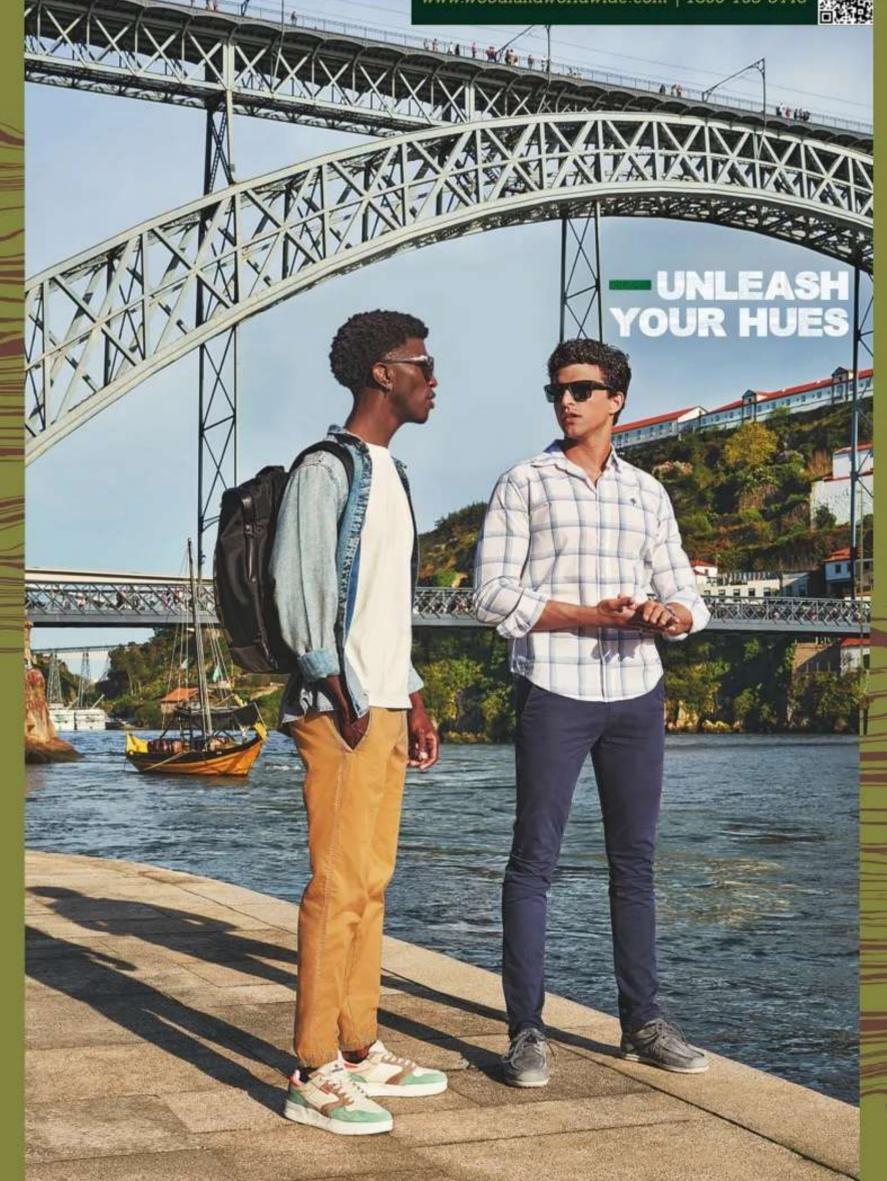
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ARTISTE'S POPULARITY, VENUE, DEMAND: DECODING CONCERT TICKET PRICING



Riya Sharma

Do you have a ticket for Diljit Dosanjh's concert? It's a question that's been gnawing at fans ever since the *Lover* singer announced his 10-city tour in the country. Amid the flurry of memes, complaints about the high ticket prices, and joy among those who managed to snag one in what felt like a race against time, many wondered: how is concert ticket pricing decided?

Turnout for past concerts, an artiste's understanding of the scale of the show, their popularity, and the spending power of consumers in an area are all factors that determine the cost of a concert ticket. Industry experts explain the dynamics of ticket pricing and highlight the shift in consumer habits in the post-COVID era.

The criteria of deciding venue size

Concert venue size depends on the stature of the artiste. It can be broadly divided into three parts:

- Club-level**
Usually an artiste who has a couple of viral songs and will not attract a large crowd
- Mid-level**
An established artiste whose show can be done in a mall or a similar mid-size space
- The big name**
The superstar performer who can easily sell out stadiums and organisers only need the name to sell the tickets

— inputs from Deepak Choudhary, founder and MD of EVA Live

Internationally, Taylor Swift and Beyonce are selling tickets for over ₹1,00,000 each - prices that were previously unheard of. This trend has reached India, where artistes like Karan Aujla and Diljit Dosanjh are selling out shows with tickets priced at ₹30,000 to ₹40,000. The enthusiasm for high-priced concert experiences has firmly taken hold

— Mohit Bijlani, founder, Team Innovation, which is organising Karan Aujla's concert

'Prices change based on the artist's fanbase, the spending power of a city'

Ticket prices for a multi-city tour vary based on the artiste's popularity and the local consumer's spending power in each city. Mohit Bijlani of Team Innovation tells us, "The infrastructure costs associated with producing the event in each city play a significant role. The local spending power and willingness of people to pay for live events can differ. For instance, a ticket for an artist in Mumbai might be priced at ₹4,999, while the same ticket in Ahmedabad could be set at ₹1,999." "In cities where the artiste has a strong following, ticket prices can be higher. In cities where the artist is newer, like Bengaluru or Guwahati for Punjabi acts, prices might be lower to build a fanbase," points out Avadh Nagpal of Souldout. "Another factor is past experience. Like Bryan Adams came in 2018 so we study the price sales from the past experience. A lot of times, the artiste does give you an idea that this is the size of their show or they don't want the tickets to be more expensive than a certain amount. Then pricing is also defined by the area. So you average out a cost, build up a 20-30% margin to it and then define a formula. For Ed Sheeran's Mumbai concert, tickets worth more than 55 crore were sold. That has not happened before in India," explains Deepak Choudhary of EVA Live.



Live industry is shaping up. Our artistes are growing, and they are finally becoming the Beyonces of the world. We are finally creating brands. I think that's what Diljit and Karan have shown us

— Deepak, founder and MD of EVA Live, which is bringing Bryan Adams to India

Diljit's show is priced at ₹12,999 onwards in Delhi, the concert is priced at ₹4,499 onwards in Indore, ₹5,499 in Chandigarh

Demand for Diljit Dosanjh's concert tickets has escalated with his stardom. He became the first Punjabi singer to perform at Coachella last year, collaborated with *Chandelier* singer Sia, recently appeared on Jimmy Fallon's *The Tonight Show* and closer home, shared the stage with *Shape of You* singer Ed Sheeran earlier this year



When Karan Aujla announced his tour in July this year, the Delhi show witnessed a 20,000 record sale of tickets and was sold out within a few hours of Early Birds tickets going live. The team had to add two more shows to meet the demand

'FOMO is one of the biggest reason why people are attending live concerts'

The live concert market has seen a significant surge in the post-COVID era. "Transactions, the credit card system, and managing money in your wallet have become easier, along with more convenient venues - but above all, it's driven by FOMO. Most people have bought the tickets for Diljit because of FOMO. It is like 'I am not a cool guy if I am not in that concert', and that's what we live on as promoters. For Bryan Adams, the Mumbai show sold out in 48 hours and that created a hype. It is not challenging if you are getting an artiste of that size or scale to sell out a show," Deepak Choudhary, founder and MD of EVA Live.

What are Early Bird tickets?

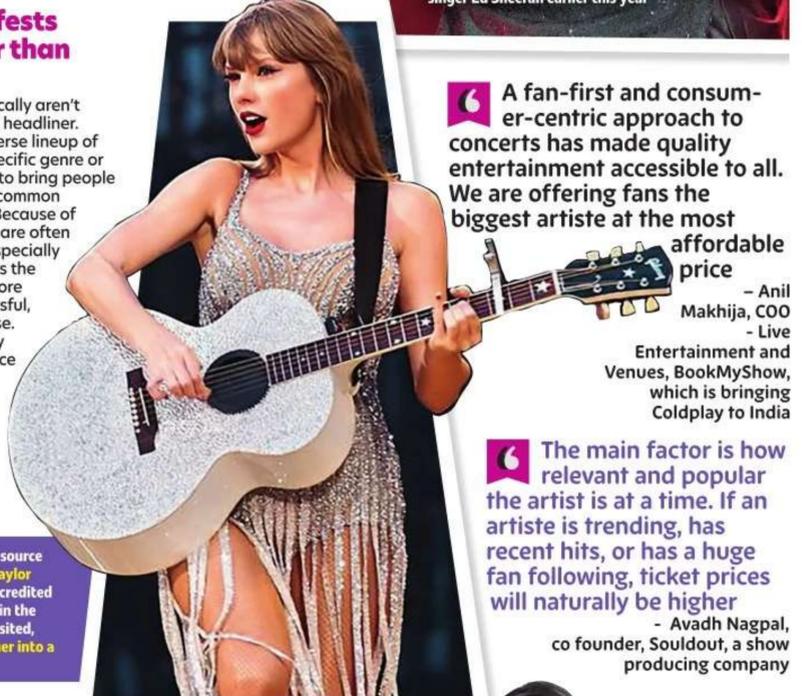
Concerts are divided into categories like General, VIP, and Fan Pit. "These are further segmented into various pricing phases based on demand. For example, an Early Bird General Arena ticket may be priced at ₹999. Once this batch sells out, the next pricing phase, Phase 1, would be ₹1,499 for the same ticket," shares Mohit. "We

don't open more than 12-15% in Early Bird tickets as they are just meant to create hype. What's happening now is that fans are not worried about paying high prices if they get a better experience," adds Deepak Choudhary, founder and MD of EVA Live. "The price you pay depends on how early you buy your ticket. If you buy early, you benefit from the lower price. After each phase sells out, prices increase," adds Mohit Bijlani.

How music fests are cheaper than concerts

Music festivals typically aren't focused on just one headliner. "They feature a diverse lineup of artistes within a specific genre or community, aiming to bring people together around a common theme or concept. Because of this, festival tickets are often more affordable, especially in the early years. As the festival becomes more popular and successful, ticket prices increase. The pricing strategy depends on audience response to the lineup and festival concept, with prices rising as the festival scales up over time," says Mohit Bijlani.

Concerts and tours are a major source of income for global artistes. Taylor Swift's *The Eras Tour* has been credited with boosting local economies in the cities and the countries she's visited, and the tour itself has turned her into a billionaire



A fan-first and consumer-centric approach to concerts has made quality entertainment accessible to all. We are offering fans the biggest artiste at the most affordable price

— Anil Makhija, COO - Live Entertainment and Venues, BookMyShow, which is bringing Coldplay to India

The main factor is how relevant and popular the artist is at a time. If an artiste is trending, has recent hits, or has a huge fan following, ticket prices will naturally be higher

— Avadh Nagpal, co founder, Souldout, a show producing company

Best-dressed celebs at Milan Fashion Week



Rashmika Mandanna attended the Onitsuka Tiger show in a black ensemble



Gossip Girl star Kelly Rutherford attended several shows, including Roberto Cavalli and Antonio Marras

After New York and London, celebrities are putting their most fashionable foot forward at Milan Fashion Week



Kissing Booth Actress Joey King at the Max Mara show. King's ensemble featured details like ruching and a subtle cutout, elevating the classic shirt dress silhouette



Bridgerton star Simone Ashley at the Prada show in a simple LBD with blinged out straps



David Beckham looking dapper as he attends the Boss show



Jameela Jamil looks very demure wearing a gray trench coat at Brunello Cucinelli show. She also attended the Alberta Ferretti show

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Bizarre



Cat vanishes in Yellowstone National Park, turns up 1300 kms away

A cat named Rayne Beau, who went missing during a camping trip in Yellowstone National Park, USA, turned up 60 days later on the streets of a California

town more than 1300 kms away. The cat's parents don't know Rayne Beau managed to travel so far, but are glad that they had him microchipped.

Oprah, JLo, Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts: Star-studded livestream for Harris

Several A-listers were among the thousands who joined a live-streamed event hosted by Oprah Winfrey, that united the many grassroots political groups supporting Kamala Harris' presidential campaign.

At the beginning of the Unite For America call, Winfrey shouted out Meryl Streep, Chris Rock, Ben Stiller, Julia Roberts, Jennifer Lopez, Tracee Ellis Ross and Bryan Cranston for Zooming in. She also highlighted the grassroots groups that have hosted their own Zoom events supporting Harris in recent months, including Win with Black Women, White Dudes for Harris, Win with Black Men, Republicans for Harris, Swifties for Kamala, among others.



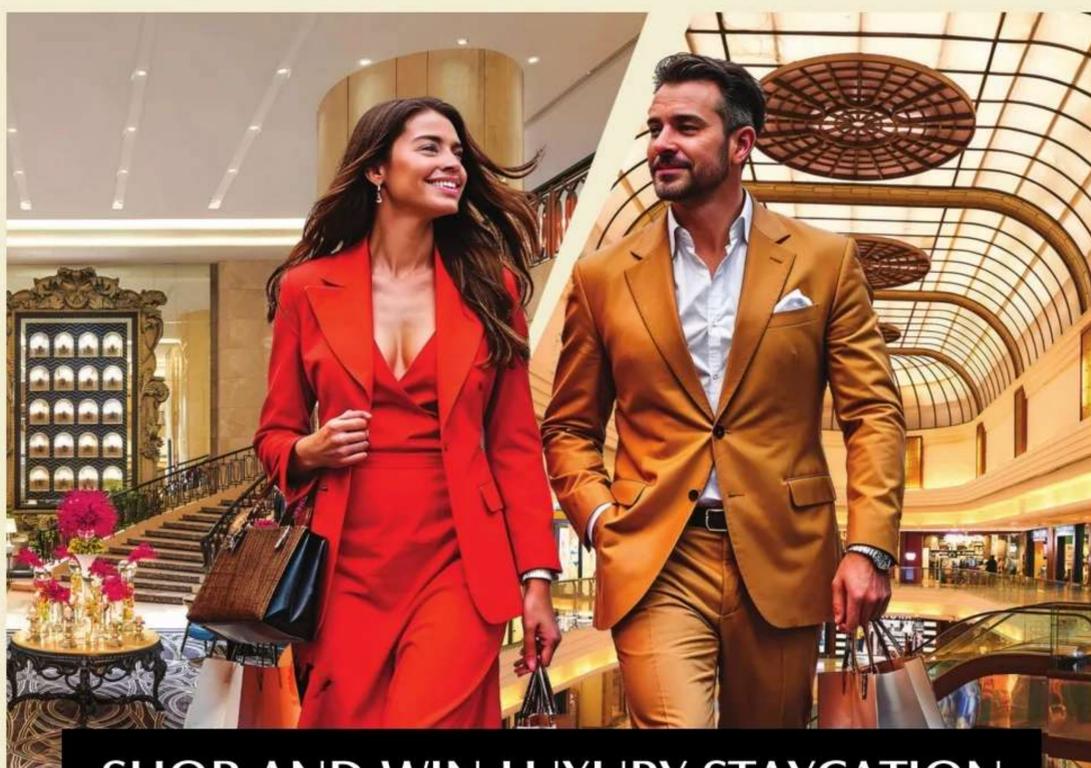
Kamala Harris and Oprah Winfrey



The celebs spoke about what they hope from Harris' presidency. "The surround of hatred and venom and toxicity and encouraging some segment of Americans to hate other segments of Americans is preventable. It's just crazy and nobody wants it. We're done, we're done with it," said Streep. Rock added, "I wanna bring my daughters to the White House to meet this Black woman president. I think she would make a great president and I'm ready to turn the page, man. All of the hate and the negativity - It's gotta stop." Julia noted that this will be the first time her children are able to vote in an election, and she "couldn't be more excited for them to have the legacy to say that their first vote they ever cast for president was for you"

15
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Daniel is like an angel in my career: Sunny

CONTINUED FROM R 1

Ask Sunny whether she has faced any unpleasant situations, especially at the beginning of her career in India, and she replies, "Because of my background and how I entered the industry, I always had that shield around me." The actress also credits her husband, Daniel Weber, for standing by her: "My husband has been like a little angel on my shoulder so far in my career. He filters things before they reach me. Yet, did I meet people who gave me the heebie-jeebies? Yes, of course. I think whether you're a man or a woman, you find these people that give you the creeps. But I have been very headstrong and always given people the don't-mess-with-me vibe," she adds.



Daniel Weber and Sunny Leone

TV actors have a blast at Munisha's b'day bash



(L-R) Rashami Desai, Dipshikha Nagpal, Delnaz Irani, Bhakhtyar 6, Tannaz Irani, and Percy Karkaria



Munisha Khatwani and Sameer Thakur



Ridhima Pandit

Actress and tarot card reader Munisha Khatwani, who was last seen in the OTT version of *Bigg Boss*, celebrated her birthday surrounded by industry friends and family. Munisha shared, "It was such an incredible feeling to have all my friends come together for my birthday. The night was filled with laughter, joy and unforgettable memories."

Munisha's husband, Sameer Thakur, flew in from Africa to be with her. She said, "Sameer made the day even more memorable by flying down for my birthday."

— Neha Maheshwari



(L-R) Adhvik and Neha Mahajan, Abhay Vakil, Sheezan Khan and Ashnoor Kaur



Sharad Malhotra



Urvashi Dholakia



Sumbul Touqeer



Mouli Ganguly and Mazher Sayed



Munmun Dutta and Nisha Rawal

SHOPPING MART TIMES *interact*

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TIMES *interact*

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EASY-BREEZY SILHOUETTES

Amidst the glitter of festive attires, comfort often takes a backseat. But Lath believes that this can't be attributed to a lack of better alternatives. "One must look and ask for relaxing and easy-to-carry apparel for elaborate celebrations. For men, there's no better option than dhoti pants in solid color."

Anubhav

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The perfect pairing of comfort and glamour

Use this guide to flaunt flattering silhouettes and ace your look as you ring in the festivities on a fashionable note

rary twist. Likewise, a blouse with multiple layers, like pepum-style cholis or those with attached capes, back knots, and other embellishments, will make the outfit one-of-a-kind," recommends Bhanushali.

ON THE FASHION RADAR

If you're somebody who swears by the latest fashion trends when shopping for festive wear, Shweta Lath, the founder of Gaurangi, a fashion brand, lets us in on the reigning styles: "Consider saris with pre-stitched drapes or those fused with pants or gowns. As opposed to minimalistic prints, intricate embroidery, sequins, detailed mirror embellishments and beadwork are mak-



ours or subtle patterns for a modern yet traditional look. A long, flowy kurta paired with well-fitted trousers will also provide a sleek and elongated silhouette. Moreover, look for pathani suits in breathable fabrics like cotton, updated with modern cuts and unique prints and textures," she explains.

SHOP SMART

Consider what you own before hitting the stores. For instance, Urvi Solkar, a sales supervisor, has identified pieces from her wardrobe that she plans to refurbish for the upcoming festivities. "I will restyle a beautiful Patiala salwar featuring statement prints with a new monochrome, collared blouse for a modern appearance, and a silk dupatta for an ethnic touch," she describes.

FLAUNT YOUR STYLE WITH CONFIDENCE

- Opt for light and comfortable textiles like chiffon, georgette, or cotton
- Ensure that your festive wear is well-tailored and fits perfectly
- While trends are enticing, shop for what makes you feel the most confident
- Prioritise sustainable fabrics like bamboo fibre and recycled apparel
- Experiment with make-up looks and hairstyles to elevate your outfit

Similarly, architect Chaitanya Sarjani has ordered a custom Bandhgala for his kurta set which he has barely worn after last year's celebrations. He expresses, "Moving past the practice of not repeating outfits, I've purchased a designer jacket which can be styled in multiple ways with my existing ensembles, ensuring I make an auspicious apparel purchase for the occasion while staying sustainable." By incorporating these creative sugges-

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tions, you can make a memorable impression with style and elegance on any festive occasion.

■ **Saundarya Jain**
@timesofindia.com

Be it garba evenings during Navratri or Diwali celebrations—the revelry kicks in only once you're dressed to the nines. With many occasions lined up, it's time to take stock of your wardrobe and plan outfits that showcase your sartorial prowess.

MODERN TWISTS ON TRADITIONAL WEAR

Shivani Bhanushali, the

owner of Shivani Creations, a designer clothing store, shares, "From saris and lehengas to Anarkali suits and kurta sets, Indian ethnic wear is timeless and welcoming of trends. So this festive season, aim to elevate traditional weaves with creative and playful styling." Take, for instance, the iconic chaniya choli. "You can invest in a skirt featuring intricate prints, such as block print and ikat designs, or an asymmetric hemline for a tempo-



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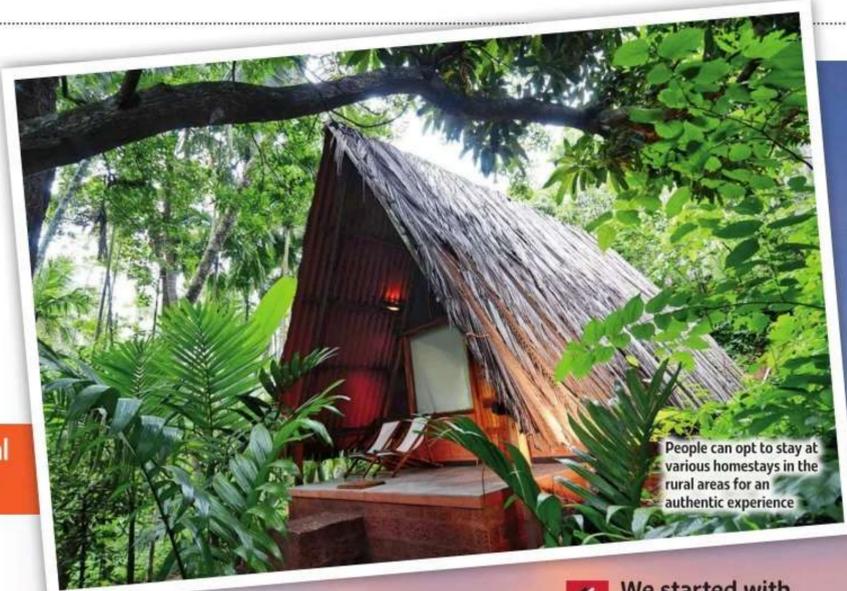
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Travellers turn to rural tourism to explore the slow and sustainable life

From curated walks in the Himalayas, to exploring rubber plantations and spice gardens in Kerala, rural tourism is finding a lot of takers as travellers choose enriching experiences over popular destinations



People can opt to stay at various homestays in the rural areas for an authentic experience



Travellers can opt to try their hands at farming, learning various cuisines and experiencing myriad cultures and traditions

Cost of a rural experience
₹1200-5000
(excluding travel fare)

Anukriti Sharma
A getaway to a remote part of Uttarakhand proved to be a perspective-changing experience for Paridhi Kumar, a marketing consultant from Bangalore. In need of a break from work, Paridhi chose to ditch fancy hotels at tourist destinations for a blend of nature and local culture. "It was the best decision," she reflects, adding, "I immersed myself in the slow rhythm of the village life with radio tunes playing softly in the background as people went about their chores. Watching something simple as kids playing outside instead of being glued to screens was a nostalgic throwback." With popular destinations becoming more crowded, travellers are now increasingly drawn to rural and sustainable tourism that offer a deeper, more enriching travel experience.

A SUSTAINABLE GRASSROOTS TRAVEL EXPERIENCE
A growing interest in community-driven experiences has led travel organisers to offer tours that immerse visitors in the local life. Manisha Pande, co-founder and managing director of a travel company, highlights that these flexible itineraries allow travellers to live in community homestays and explore untold stories and culture of the region. "Our sustainable tourism model focuses on diverting tourists from crowded hotspots to offbeat locations, offering authentic experiences like farming, bird watching, and local cooking," she explains. Local walks, cooking classes with indigenous groups, and festival visits are part of these experiences. Vishal Bali, who organises tours in Rajasthan, explains that the state's varied regions — like Aravalli, Shekhawati and Thar — feature unique customs. "Travellers often miss these details while visiting tourist destinations. Our goal is to bring them to the grassroots level for an authentic experience while adding an extra layer of intrigue," adds Vishal.

\$198.3 billion
Expected market size of rural tourism globally by 2033
(Source: Future Market Insights)

We started with local communities of five villages in Uttarakhand, and have so far assisted many villages across different states to set up community-owned guest houses. Our guides are also from the same areas
— Manisha Pande, co-founder and managing director of a travel company

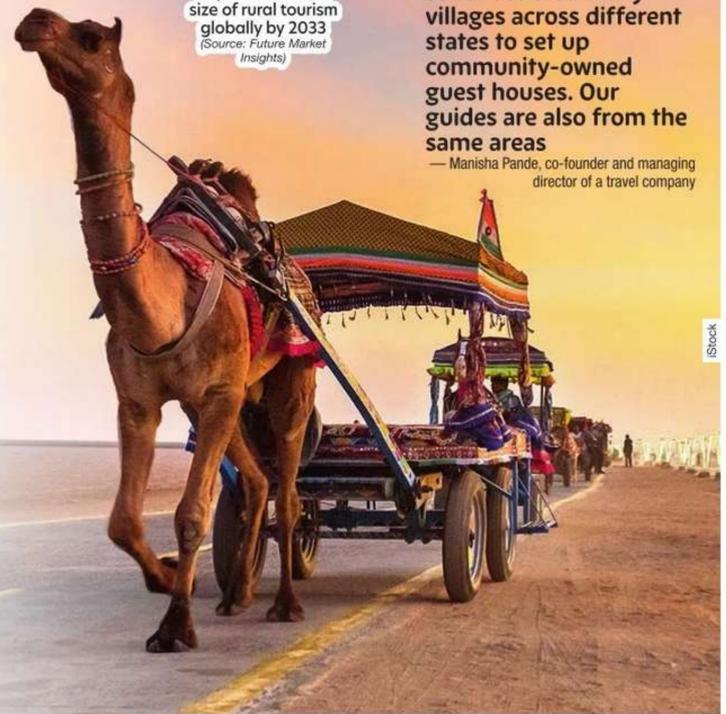
Breaking myths and misconceptions
Travelling in the rural parts of the country isn't devoid of myths and misconceptions. While it is important to travel responsibly, Malika Viridi, founder & CEO of a community-led tourism initiative, explains that there is a deep disconnect between urban and rural lives. "What people fail to see is that rural India has changed. People are aware and a lot of urban travellers are surprised to witness that. People in rural India have a smaller ecological footprint and a genuine relationship with nature. Therefore, they are far ahead when it comes to living responsibly. This can be a lesson for the travellers to learn to slow down and become less consumptive," she explains.



Pics: Village Ways

Travel Diaries

On local treks during my trip, I heard captivating folk tales and learned to cook *bhatt ki churkani*, a traditional Himalayan black soybean dish. I embraced the village's slow rhythm. It was a refreshing dive into a simpler, more authentic way of life
— Paridhi Kumar, who went on a rural tourism experience in Uttarakhand



Places to visit
● Pochampally, Telangana
● Khijadiya Village, Gujarat
● Sarodhadadar Village, Chhattisgarh
● Menar Village, Rajasthan

● Kurauana, Uttar Pradesh
● Raghurajpur Village, Odisha
● embarthi Village, Telangana
● Hampi Village, Karnataka
● Cotigao Village, Goa
● Diveagar, Maharashtra
(Source: Rural Tourism, Ministry of Tourism India)

Super Bowl favourite, pop culture love: Guacamole captivates foodies globally

On Guacamole Day today, we celebrate how this beloved dip has transcended its culinary roots, breaking world records and becoming a Super Bowl staple. From its appearances in shows like *The Simpsons* and *Friends* to its status as a pop culture icon, guacamole is more than just a dip. With modern twists like Chrissy Teigen's cheesy version, it continues to captivate food lovers worldwide.



LARGEST GUACAMOLE EVER

On November 20, 2022, Peribán, Michoacán, Mexico set a world record for the largest batch of guacamole, weighing 4,970 kg (10,961 lbs). Over 300 people, including avocado producers and volunteers, contributed to this achievement. The event, held in the 'avocado capital of the world,' aimed to promote the region's avocado industry and its global significance.

Pop culture references

The Lego Movie: Guacamole gets a fun shoutout during the party scene in Cloud Cuckoo Land, where everything is seemingly perfect and Emmet is offered "super cheesy guacamole," capturing its appeal as a go-to party food.
Brooklyn Nine-Nine: Jake Peralta is always cracking jokes about food, and guacamole gets a mention in one episode. When discussing a crime scene, he compares the ideal investigative team to "guacamole with the right amount of lime."
How I Met Your Mother: Guacamole is mentioned multiple times throughout the show, with the characters often craving it or using it as a metaphor.
The Simpsons: In the episode *The Wettest Stories Ever Told*, Marge makes guacamole while stranded on a boat with Homer and Bart.



Chrissy Teigen's Cheesy Guacamole

INGREDIENTS
● 4 ripe avocados
● 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese
● 1/2 cup sour cream
● 1/2 cup finely chopped onion
● 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
● 2 cloves garlic, minced
● 1 lime, juiced
● 1 jalapeño, minced (optional for heat)
● 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
● Salt and pepper to taste
METHOD
Prepare avocados: Halve, pit, and scoop avocados into a bowl. Mash to desired consistency.
Mix ingredients: Combine avocados with cheddar cheese, sour cream, red onion, tomatoes, garlic, and jalapeño (if using).
Season: Add lime juice, salt, and pepper. Stir gently. Fold in cilantro.
Serve: Enjoy immediately with tortilla chips or as a topping.



Indulge in a royal savoury platter this festive season

If you thought festivals were only about *mithais*, think again! To amp up your festive platter, we sought traditional savoury dishes from erstwhile royal families across India. Be it the *Podi kura mamsam* or the Bhopali *rezala*, you'll be spoiled for choice.

Festive thali, Dhenkanal

Yuvraj Amaryoti Singhdeo and Yuvrani Meenal Kumari Singhdeo of Dhenkanal tell us, "Festivals at Dhenkanal Palace are celebrated with great fervour and are marked by the preparation of special dishes that are symbolic and steeped in tradition. *Manda pitha* (made of wheat flour and jaggery with a sweet coconut filling) is a must during festivals." They also offer a variety of traditional Odia dishes, including the simple *Simba rae* (broad beans in mustard)." The dish is the signature recipe of the palace.



Meenal Kumari Singhdeo and Amaryoti Singhdeo

Special thali served during festivals



Podi kura mamsam, Vijayanagaram

"Podi kura mamsam was created in the kitchens of the Vijayanagaram royals and the Raja Vellamma zamindars. It is dry shredded lamb cooked twice, which gives it its crispy texture. It can be had with *rotis* or rice," explains Vidya Gajapathi Raju Singh, niece of the last coronated Maharaja of Vijayanagaram. She adds, "It was a popular dish to carry when kings went hunting during festivals. I serve it during special dinners at home."

Vidya Gajapathi Raju Singh

Bhopali rezala, Bhopal

An integral part of Bhopal's culinary heritage, this chicken *rezala* version is known for its distinct colour. "Our signature *rezala* is green because of the ample use of coriander in it. Our begum was very fond of *haryali*, and that's how the *khansama* came up with a special recipe. It's a delicacy relished in the monsoons," says the royal family.



Nawab Sultan Jahan Begum



— Inputs by Arijeet Palit, Kathakali Dutta, and Shikha Shah

CELEBS ARE BUILDING A NEW FANBASE WITH FOOD VLOGGING

Social media is replete with celebrities posting about their love for food and it's getting them a huge number of likes, followers and endorsements

Natasha Coutinho

Bollywood's connection with good food is as old as the industry itself. It is said that *yakhni pulao* was the all-time favourite dish of both Raj Kapoor and father Prithviraj. The story goes that Dilip Kumar loved *pakodas* and spicy food and wife Saira Banu would keep him on a strict diet to

monitor his calorie intake. Over the years, stars have made certain dishes their own - for example, Jackie Shroff has turned *Kaanda Bhindi Sookha* or *Anda Kadi Patta* into his signature dishes. Many celebrities are now using food vlogging and recipes posted on social media to connect with their fans.

Transparency in disclosing paid partnerships is crucial, as is interacting with followers

- Digital marketer Murtuza Rampurawala

I'VE CONNECTED WITH A NEW UNIVERSE THROUGH MY FOOD REELS: ASHISH VIDYARTHI

Although Ashish Vidyarthi cannot cook, his videos of sampling food from across the country have garnered a massive following. "Food vlogging is an aspect of my personality, and I've always loved and appreciated food. Thanks to these food reels, I've connected with a whole new universe; people from all walks of life and ages have connected with me. While traveling for my motivational talks, I share posts about food from even the smallest of places, which makes a difference to those businesses. My first reel of eating a vada pav was well-appreciated, and that's when I began making more videos," says the actor, who started food vlogging during the pandemic.

HOW MUCH CAN VIRAL VIDEOS PAY?

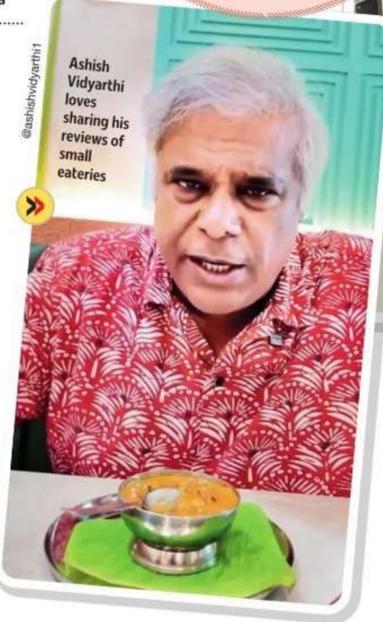
- For 1 million views, YouTube payment ranges between ₹20K to ₹2L
- Collaboration and endorsement fees for a single post on Instagram can go as high as ₹50L depending on the celebs' popularity, number of followers, and engagement ratio

Bhagyashree posts her health tips and recipes for home-cooked meals in her vlogs



I LOVE SHARING MY HOME-COOKED MEALS WITH MY AUDIENCE: BHAGYASHREE

Post-recovery from a frozen shoulder, Bhagyashree took a deeper interest in food, which led her to share her knowledge on the internet. She says, "After being diagnosed with a frozen shoulder and bursitis, I studied health and nutrition and worked on my own recovery. This inspired me to share my knowledge of home-cooked meals and exercise routines online. The audience connected with my content as it's relatable - not going fancy, but cooking at home, in regular utensils. Also, a follower who contacted me for a pumpkin soup recipe offered to help manage my YouTube content."



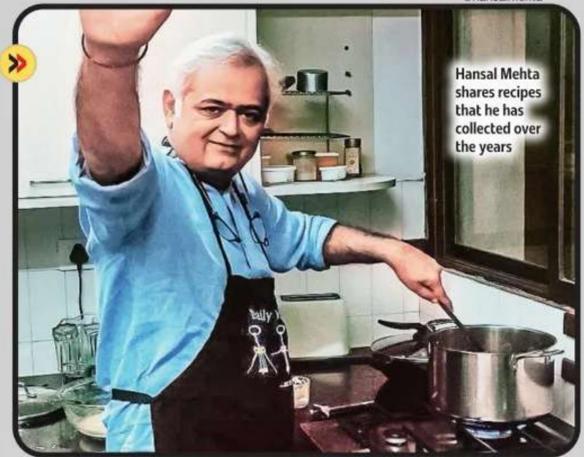
Ashish Vidyarthi loves sharing his reviews of small eateries



Jackie Shroff has won hearts on the internet for his simple recipes

FRIENDS REACH OUT WHEN THEY'RE TRYING A RECIPE I'VE POSTED: HANSAL MEHTA

Having directed Sajeed Kapoor's iconic *Khana Khazana*, Hansal Mehta has shared a deep connection with food over the years. Often sharing posts with recipes as proof of his culinary skills, he engages with his audiences regularly. He says, "Even after a long day on set, cooking gives me the time to reflect and de-stress. I travel with my kitchen equipment while on outdoor shoots, and enjoy collecting recipes and sharing them on social media. Many friends reach out when they're trying a recipe I've posted and there's nothing more gratifying than inspiring others to cook." Mehta is currently designing a new kitchen in his village home, which will have a dedicated space to film his culinary videos.



@hansalmehta

Hansal Mehta shares recipes that he has collected over the years

CELEBS WHO ARE POPULAR FOR FOOD CONTENT ON YOUTUBE

6.05M subscribers	2.06M subscribers	1.31M subscribers	626K subscribers	376K subscribers
Bharti Singh Shares off-beat recipes like Punjabi-style <i>rasam</i> and pickle recipes	Ashish Vidyarthi Reviews food from local joints across the country and interacts with the cooks	Madhuri Dixit Posts recipes of salad, local dishes, and beauty tips with edible ingredients	Farah Khan Collaborates with celebrities and influencers who cook along with her	Bhagyashree Shares home-made quick and healthy recipes, along with fitness videos

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I'm an aunty and proud of it: Zeenat

Veteran actress Zeenat Aman's social media posts are always unique. In her latest, she decided to address the term 'aunty' and asked, "Which genius decided that 'aunty' is a derogatory term." Waxing eloquent about the "Indian aunty", she wrote, "Where would we be without those ubiquitous older women who make our lives comfortable and warm and secure. The Indian aunty is everywhere, and she doesn't even have to be related to you. She provides a shoulder

to lean on, an ear to your problems, a hot meal, a silly joke, a welcoming home, a righteous scolding, a pearl of wisdom. When you hear the word 'aunty' you can imagine a frumpy nag, or you can truly think about the older women in your life and see what I see. In my life I had my stepmother Shamim aunty, who was a huge support to me when my sons were young. She would cook us meals and babysit the boys and check-in on me everyday."



"Me? I'm an aunty and proud. It's a tag I'll happily wear on my sleeve, or in this case, across my chest," Zeenat Aman wrote

Kylie Minogue announces biggest tour in a decade

Popstar Kylie Minogue, 56, has announced her biggest world tour in more than a decade, and a sequel to her comeback album *Tension*. The 13 tracks on *Tension II* will be released on October 18, with the global tour kicking off in her home country Australia in February, before swinging through Asia and the UK. In a statement, the pop icon said she is "beyond excited" to be "celebrating the *Tension* era and more" with fans.



The popstar also appeared in the 2009 Hindi film *Blue* and sang *Chiggy Wiggy*



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