HOTTEST **FASHION TRENDS** OF 2024

# Any feedback related to stories in Chennai Times? MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2024 @ chennaitimes@timesofindia.com ADVERTORIAL, ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY PROMOTIONAL FEATURE hemailime

# Patience and positivity: Celebs reflect on 2024



## 2024 taught me to keep my hopes up: Divya Prabha

Generally, in life, I am a very hopeful person, even when I don't have work. While working on Payal Kapadia's All We Imagine As Light, I held on to this hope. You don't take on a project thinking it will lead to more work or oppor-tunities; everyone involved in this film was driven by passion, and the film achieved great heights. When I started my career, I used to attend the International Film Festival of Kerala, and later, I had my own films screened there. Now, having had a film at Cannes has made this a very important year for me and strengthened my hope for the future.

CONTINUED ON 2 4

# In 2024, I stopped looking outward for understanding: Nithya Menen

One beautiful thing that happened to me this year is that I stopped looking outward for understanding and acceptance. It's not something you can intellectualise - it has to happen to you in a real way. Something needs to change inside you for good. A lot of my angst came from not being able to understand why the world around me was the way it was. Now, I recognise and understand the inner motives of people. I no longer take on others' shortcomings as my own. I let them keep those where they belong. And I'm on my way.



I wish that people had used more of my abilit Arshad

Amina Ashraf

rshad Warsi, known for his nemorable performances in films like Munna Bhai MBBS and Dedh Ishqiya, recently spoke to us about his career and changes he's seen in the entertainment

Noting that today's platforms, especially OTT, have made it easier for new talent to thrive, he said, "It's always been difficult to be an actor, but it's easier now than when I started. Back then, we didn't have the luxury of multiple platforms, it was just films. Either you succeeded in films or you went back home. Actors today have more spaces to showcase their craft."

#### ONCE PEOPLE SEE YOU IN A GENRE, IT STICKS WITH THEM'

When asked if he would approach his career differently if he debuted today, he said, "I wouldn't have started with comedy. Once people see you in a genre, it sticks with them and you end up doing more of the same. But for me, it worked out because I started with comedy and then took on serious roles." On whether OTT has affected traditional cinema, Warsi shared, "There are certain things you can only enjoy on the big

screen. Movies like Pathaan and The Avengers cannot be enjoyed on a small screen." When asked if he felt apprehen-

sive about working on brief roles, he shared, "It doesn't make me apprehensive. I'm interested in doing films that I will be proud of when I get old."



I have an immense amount of talent and I feel I'm wasted. No matter how many years later you ask me this question, I'd still say I wish people had used more of my ability

Arshad Warsi

in a still from Dedh Ishqiya

and (inset) with

Naseeruddin Shah

# 'Nemo took away Shivanna's pain; he is now cancer-free'

ctor Shivarajkumar and his wife Geetha Shivarajkumar posted an emotional note on social media, mourning the loss of the their pet dog, Nemo.

Penning a note, Geetha wrote: "From the past one month, Nemo, who usually sleeps with me, was seen sleeping very close to my husband, Shivarajkumar. My daughter Nivedita said maybe Nemo was aware of what Shivanna was going through and hence stayed by him quiet-

ly. I couldn't have agreed more. Nemo's absence has created a huge void in our lives. He will always be in our hearts. They say our pets take away our pain and our Nemo left us, and took Shivanna's pain with him. Shivarajkumar is now cancer-free."



# **Zeenat Aman: Had** resigned myself to a quiet retirement

eflecting on a busy year, Zeenat Aman shared a post, reminiscing about her initial retirement plans. She wrote, "Spending the last few mornings of 2024 relishing the Bombay chill, accompanied by my trusty shadow Lily. I've been quiet on here but my what a busy year it's been! Shoot schedules in Shimla and Rajasthan, speaking engagements across the country, social media collaborations with some wonderful brands, test photo shoots with my team and more... Two years ago I had quite contentedly resigned myself to a quiet retirement with the odd job thrown in to temper the monotony. Now I find myself struggling to find a spare date on my calendar... Take it from a veteran who's both scraped the depths of despair and tasted dizzying success. So let me sign off for the year with the gentle reassurance that if things are looking bad for you,



# From swaras and rasas to sambars and rasams:

# Has the Margazhi music season now turned into a festival for foodies?

Praveen Kumar S

uring the entire December music season, if we keep the average price of a ticket at 250, concerts bring in just over ₹1.3 crore at Chennai sabhas. Meanwhile, food at sabha canteens brings in ₹6 crore! Concert ticket sales are nowhere near canteen sales; people from various parts of the city think there is a food festival going on and dine at the canteens," shared historian and secretary of The Music Academy V Sriram in his recent speech on the topic 'The Economics Of The Season'.

Over the years, sabha canteen food has become one of the highlights of the Margazhi music season that not only attracts rasikas, but foodies as well. Caterers have been cashing in on the hype by offering an array of delectable dishes throughout the day. In fact, one caterer, Mountbatten Mani Iyer Catering, headed by K Srinivasan, has started holding a Margazhi Mahotsavam Food Kutcheri, which happens not in a sabha but in a wedding hall!

CONTINUED ON 3

Mangalore bonda



been people who come only with the intention to taste our food

— RS Kumar, Sattvaa Catering

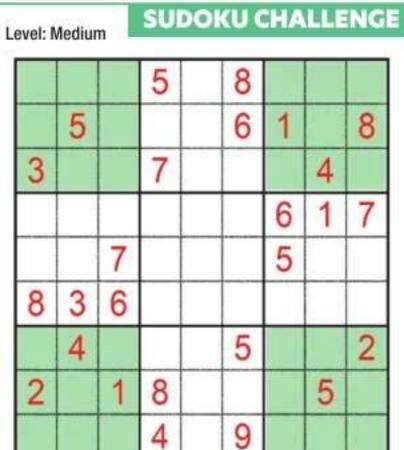
## One season, close to 200 dishes

Over the years, the range of dishes that are being offered has only expanded. If rasikas get to enjoy around 60 dishes at Sri Sasthalaya Catering's canteen at Narada Gana Sabha, Mountbatten is serving close

to 200 dishes this year, informs a member from its catering team. While the breakfast menu includes everything from the regular idlis and dosais to not-so-common kavuni arisi idiyappam with thengai paal and Kumbakonam kadappa, evening snacks range from the nombu adai, ammini kozhukattai to items

like apple and pineapple bajjis. And fusion dishes like pizza dosai make up the dinner menu. Then there are the sweets, such as Kasi halwa, Ashoka halwa, gulkand halwa, kova jangiri and akkaravadisal.





Games

**ENJOY A HOST OF** 

READY FOR

OUR ROAD

TRIP?

**ENGAGING PUZZLES** 

**AND GAMES EVERY DAY** 

PHOEBE AND I SPENT SOME

SPELLATHON

How many words of four

or more letters can you

shown in today's puzzle?

In making a word, a letter

times as it appears in the

puzzle. Each word must

contain the central letter

There should be at least

and proper names are not

one seven letter word.

Plurals, foreign words

allowed. British English

Dictionary is used as

reference.

make from the letters

can be used as many

QUALITY TIME TOGETHER TODAY! RIGHT, BABE?

**Today's Ratings:** 

13-average 115-good 1

17-outstanding

ARCHIE

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.

HOW

TO PLAY

I SHOWED HER ALL MY SPORTS TROPHIES AND TOLD HER THE

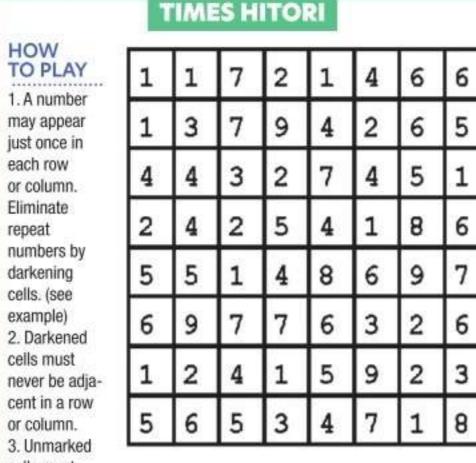
STORIES BEHIND THEM!

Play now! Scan the QR code or visit toi.in/games

LET ME

GET MY

COFFEE



cells must create a single continuous area, undivided by darkened cells. Every time you darken a cell, you can automatically circle its vertical and horizontal neighbours, which means they cannot be eliminated. Any cell "sandwiched" between neighbours of the same value can be circled. (e.g. 6 4 6 ) 6. A "triple" is a special case of sandwich. Circle the centre cells, and

darken the ends. (e.g. 6 6 6

THAT WON'T

FIT IN THE

CUPHOLDER

JTM DAV15 11-16

**DENNIS THE MENACE** 

.0

WE CAN

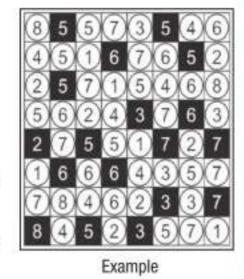
STRAP IT

TO THE

ROOF

BORING IS A

QUALITY!



RULES 3-2-2-2 2 2 2 2 · Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single 2 3 2 loop (Fig A). · Crossovers or branches are not . . . . 2 2 2 allowed (As shown by dotted lines Not allowed in Fig B). (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.

LOOP THE LOOP

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).

#### SCRAMBLE Rearrange the

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

ARIES: Try to view

the developments in

your life as intriguing

and full of potential.

Approach them from

a different point, and

you may discover

that facing these

challenges with a

positive and fearless

attitude brings out

TAURUS: Be mindful

not to let negativity

embrace opportunities.

personally.

judgment. If a financial matter has been

weighing on you, a solution could be presented

that could help to put your mind at ease, initially

GEMINI: If you have an outstanding project on

your plate, you should be able to find the energy

and focus you need to plow through and bring

it to completion. You may feel a strong urge to

focus on physical well-being. Ensure that you

draw your own conclusions based on evidence.

CANCER: Someone you're interested in may

start to turn their attention elsewhere, but don't

worry - plenty of people are quietly admiring

you. Avoid letting stubborn people get under

your skin, and try adjusting your mindset to

LEO: Romantic energy is highly favourable for

you now, and there's no reason not to be happy

with someone loving by your side. Get ready

for positive networking opportunities that could

enrich your life both professionally and

VIRGO: Trust in your ability to follow your

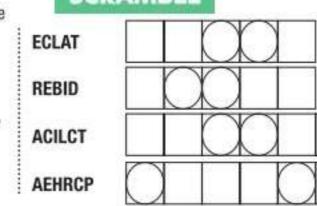
dreams today. You are shining brightly, and the

person by your side is incredibly lucky. Your

creativity and emotions are enhanced.

the idea will not seem appealing

helpful results.



HOW TO

Learn by \_\_\_\_. - Martha Graham (8)

**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

LIBRA: Today is the

most favourable

day of the week to

take action. Don't

hesitate from

makeing changes,

even if they seem to

be very small or a

little insignificant.

Everyone will seem

to be on a different

wavelength today.

SCORPIO: A burst

**FINOLEX** FORTUNE 

Book Anupam V Kapil for appt/written predictions: 9822042295 or anupamykapil@gmail.com.

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

community

of positivity shines or selfishness take over, as it could cloud your on your romantic life today. Focus on your deeper needs beneath the surface, and avoid letting daily challenges undermine your confidence. Think of others before you act. SAGITTARIUS: Others may see you as being from another realm, but don't let that make you feel disconnected. You may think that you don't have anyone to turn to but lean on your

> CAPRICORN: Your idealistic view of the world may not always align with others' perspectives. Stay focused on what's important and prioritise your tasks to avoid falling behind. You're driven by the desire to improve situations around you, though you may feel off-balance when interacting with coworkers today.

AQUARIUS: Focus on your needs and start communicating them openly with your loved ones. It's an ideal time to focus on your health, and you'll find great joy in creative and artistic pursuits. Social activities will also help balance your energies

PISCES: Your finances continue to improve and opportunities continue coming your way by the people within your circle. Make use of your connections as a word of mouth will be helpful in getting you where you want to go.

# 30/12/2024 Saturday's Puzzle Solved

THE DAILY CROSSWORD

By Micah Sommersmith

ACROSS 1 Vision-correcting surgical beam 6 Topiarist's target 10 No-frills grocer based in Germany

14 Words on a Wonderland cake 15 "¿Cómo usted?" 16 Woodwind insert 17 Moves briskly 18 Symbols like :-)

and :-( 20 Precarious plan, metaphorically 22 Sinus MD 23 JFK successor 24 Mai : cocktail 25 Poetic sphere 28 Many a "Men in

Black" character 30 Tissue that covers the iris and pupil 32 Pink Floyd co-founder Barrett

34 Events with sprints and relays 36 Go in one's \_\_: replace 38 Penn of "Harold & Kumar" films

39 Cooks quickly, as tuna

40 Corporate executive's perk 43 On the \_\_: furtively 44 Punch combo 45 Ordinary writing

47 Half a score, or a perfect score 48 Doc intended to protect confidentiality 50 German pronoun 51 Smallish batteries 54 "I don't need that

back," and what can be said about the starts of 20-, 34-, and 40-Across 57 Anthropomorphic

11 Sign before Virgo 12 TV room 13 Employee badges, e.g., for short 19 Figures of speech 60 Over the top 21 Memorial bio 61 Not close 25 NBA star with the 62 Change to fit in,

POPTART NOMAD ARMBEYHIVE GREATDANE LOGAN TALIESIN ORATE 28/12/2024 hit rap album "Shag

DEPICTS

EGOTRIPS

MOOSECALF

©2024 Tribune Content Agency, LLC

64 Elevator direction

5 Flip, as a property

6 Slim Jim product

10 Pickleball paths

8 Ferret kin

65 Double-hyphenated

63 Spud

DOWN

REVISES

Diesel\* 26 Have another go at 27 Chilean sea 28 Change to fit in

digits, for short 29 Civil rights gp. since 66 Three-ingredient 1909 sweet treat 31 Witherspoon of "Walk 1 Mythical river of the Line"

forgetfulness 32 Pebble, e.g. 33 Country south of Saudi 2 Slugger Judge who was the 2017 AL Rookie of Arabia the Year 35 Woodwind instruments that need 16-Acrosses 3 Portly, or porter 4 CPR experts

36 Kilt wearer, often 37 Occur to 41 Small lumps 7 "Semper Fi" military 42 Pebble, e.g. 46 Units of paper 49 Corrosive compounds

9 Porkpie's place, perhaps 51 ls : probably will 52 Broadcast network 53 Fixed gaze 54 Crochet need 55 Similar (to)

56 Test 57 Consumed 58 Airborne mystery

59 Gaping mouth

**SOLUTIONS TO GAMES/PUZZLES** 

**TIMES SUDOKU** 181629888 9 9 7 8 4 8 6 268919872 3 6 1 6 7 9 2 8 9 7 9 6 4 1 7 2 2 9 3 8 4 6 1 7 9 7 7 1 6 4 8 9 9 2 4 2 3 6 1 7 8

LOOP THE LOOP × ×0×5×1×5×1 3 5 . . 1 × × 5 3 × 5 × 5

Going solo on NYE?

t is that time of the year when 'table for two' and 'couple

passes' is the default setting in social spaces. But if you

plan to go solo on New Year's Eve, you are not alone.

number of Indians are celebrating their solitary, not

single by choice. Apart from dodging all manner of

In a world fascinated by couple goals, a significant

lonely, existence. In fact, there's a sizeable population of

the urban middle-class who are in their 40s today - and

questions by family, relatives, acquaintances and house-

hold help, most enjoy the freedom of choices that single-

You are not alone

172548369 SPELLATHON

widen, wind, wine, wined sine, sinew, snide, SWINDLE, swine, wend, dine, lend, lien, line, lined, send, sewn,

SCRAMBLE

Answer: Learn by practice. - Martha Words: Cleat, bride, lactic, preach

# **EVENTS**

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MARGAZHI CONCERTS

Narada Gana Sabha's Isai Natya Nataka Vizha: Pooja Suresh and Supraja Suresh at 8.30am, JA Jayanth at 10am, Hrudayesh R Krishnan at 12.15pm, Divya Ravi at 1.45pm, Ananya Ashok at 2pm, Vignesh Ishwar at 4pm, and Abhishek Raghuram at 7pm, at Narada Gana Sabha, TTK Road, Alwarpet

Madhuradhwani Music Festival: Sruthi

Ramakrishnan and disciples at 10am, Yadhushree at 1.30pm, Jaivignesh at 3pm, Anahita and Apoorva at 4.30pm, and Malladi Suribabu at 6.30pm, at Arkay Convention Center, Luz, Mylapore.

Sastra Satsangh Margazhi Mela: Suchitra Balasubramanian at 7am and Kashyap Mahesh at 6.30pm, at Sastra Chennai Campus, Vadapalani. Krishna Gana Sabha Margazhi Mela: L

"FILL 'ER UP, MOM. IT WAS A LONG DAY!

MAYBE JUST LEAVE THE CARTON, TOO."

Ramakrishnan at 4pm, and Lakshmi Parthasarathy at 7pm, at Krishna Gana Sabha, Maharajapuram Santhanam Salai, T Nagar.

Naada Inbam December Music Festival: Kalyanapuram Aravind at 10am, Abhirama Bode at 4pm, and Sangeetha Sivakumar at 6.15pm, at Raga Sudha Hall, Mylapore.

Kartik Fine Arts Festival: Bhairavi Venkatesan at 9am, BU Ganesh Prasad at 10am, Sindhu Shyam at 11am, Ritvik at 12.15pm, Mukund Bharadwaj L at 2pm, Janani Narayanan at 4pm, Krithika Natarajan

at 4.15pm, Bala Devi Chandrashekar at 5.30pm, Sirkazhi G Sivachidambaram at 6.30pm, and performance by students of Krishnakumari Narendran at 7pm, at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Mylapore.

Brahma Gana Sabha December Art Festival: UVM Aishwarya at 1.15pm, Archana Sri at 2.30pm, Ramana Balachander at 4pm, and Mono Drama Stage Creations at 7pm, at RR Sabha, Mylapore.

Bharat Kalachar Margazhi Mahotsav:

Swarathmika Shrikanth at 10.30am, Dhanush Anantharaman at 4.30pm, Nathya Dance Theatre at 5.30pm, and Sri Sai Nrithyalaya at 7.15pm, at Sri YGP Auditorium, T Nagar.

Hamsadhwani: Mathrubhasha Choir at 5.15pm and Shishir Kumar at 7pm, at Youth Hostel, 2nd Avenue, Indira Nagar, Adyar.

Sastra Satsangh: Suchitra Balasubramanian at 7am and Shri Kashyap Mahesh at 6.30pm, at Sastra, Chennai Campus, Vadapalani.

The Music Academy: B Sairam at 9am, RP Shravan at 11.45am, V Venkatanagarajan at 1.30pm, A Kanyakumari at 4pm, and Sandeep Narayan at 6.45pm, at The Music Academy, TT Krishnamachari Road, Royapettah.

The Mylapore Fine Arts Club: Bhargavi

Chandrasekaran at 9am, Manasa Suresh at 10.15am, DB Ashwin at 4pm, and Javanthi Kumaresh at 6.30pm, at Mylapore Fine Arts Club.

Chennai Fine Arts Music Fest: Sembanarkoil SRGS Mohandass and party at 9.30am, Darshan Padmanabhan at 1.15pm, Hamzini Vaitheeswaran at 2.30pm, Dr S Radhakrishnan at 4.15pm, and Carnatica Brothers at 6.30pm, at Srinivasa Sastri Hall, Luz, Mylapore.

The Indian Fine Arts Society: Devotional music by Telugu Taruna Music group at 7.30am, Sudharsan A at 9am, Sivashree Kumar at 10.05am, RN Thailasanthoshi at 11.10am, Sahaana Sukumar at 12.15pm, Jahnave S at 2pm, Madumita R at 3.05pm, Bharatanatyam by Adithi Arunkumar at 4.30pm, dance drama by Sree Nruthya Kala Nilayam at 6pm, and a group presentation by students of Sri Sathyasai University at 7.15pm, at Ethiraja Kalyana

Nilayam, 87, TTK Road, Alwarpet. Sri Thyaga Brahma Gana Sabha: K Giridharan at 10am, Varadhavallabha at 1pm, K Subhiksha at 2.15pm, Sthree Thaal Tharang at 4pm, and Malladi Brothers at 6.30pm, at Vani Mahal, GN Road, T Nagar.

Email us at chennaitimes@timesofindia.com

# Singles, try this viral grape ritual on New Year's Eve!

swear by the

sharing stories of their

viral trend

even weddings

ocial media users are reviving the Spanish tradition of eating 12 grapes at midnight on New Year's Eve, claiming that it brings romantic luck. Also known as uvas de la suerte, the

ritual which has now gone viral, symbolises blessings for each month of the year. The custom involves eating a grape coinciding with each chime of the clock at midnight on December 31 to welcome the New Year.

While skeptics dismiss it as superstition, many are ditching dating apps to try

this fun, fruity tradition. After all, what's the harm in a little grape-fuelled hope? Agencies

Daniel & T

I think the "grape theory" tradition for New Year's Eve is a fun, quirky way for singles to approach the new year with hope and optimism. While it may seem like a lighthearted superstition, it's a reminder that sometimes, small rituals or beliefs can inspire us to take risks, make connections, and embrace new possibilities in life.

Social media platforms are abuzz with discussions on the grape theory



Singles like Izzy Dwyer and Liliana Tuskia took to Tik Tok to swear by its success, newfound relationships and

> Bibs @abbiebah · Dec 25 Maybe I should try the grape theory

EXTRAJORDANARY 16h @jordanbianca - 16h

brings you good luck in love for 2025

The streets are saying that, if you eat 12 grapes under a table on NYE it

start to the process.

#### least 23 per cent of young Indians are not interested in marriage. The focus, instead, is on career, self-care, priorities that begin from the personal. Holiday season is no exception.

In her column for

dom offers them. Ac-

Youth in India report

by the National Statis-

tics Office (NFO), at

cording to the 2022

Time magazine, sexologist and dating coach

Myisha Battle talks about how society, peers and family can judge being single as 'inherently bad', making it almost 'hard to exist' in an environment of expectations. On the other hand, more people are choosing singledom and enjoying it emphatically. This has been a metaphor for freedom. Without the

plus-one baggage, you are the master of your choices. Solo travel, a spa date, adventure sports, a culture walk through your own town, taking up a hobby, delving into the arts, finishing a book or a movie - the choices are endless.

And then, there's solo dining. Reports suggest Indians are warming up to the idea of enjoying a quiet meal by themselves. Ergo, the tone of incredulity at a table for one request has gone down - in favour of buying power. In a patriarchal, family oriented culture such as ours, this is quite a celebration of singlehood, freedom, and

breaking of stereotypes. Especially if you are a woman. Whether by choice or by circumstance, people - even younger people - are increasingly looking inward, holidays included. While crazy NYE parties go viral, the focus is also on the 'self.' There is a need to normalise being alone - not lonely - as much as we embrace relationships.

And staying single on New Year's Eve, despite the pressures of being seen with a partner, is perhaps an apt

Agree? Disagree? Got a POV idea? Write to us at: pov@timesofindia.com



TARIL | KANNADA | TELUGU | HINDI | HALAYALAH UFO FVR WW BOD @ 1

Deepthi Suresh enjoying the food at The Music

Academy

Pics: Praveen Tyagarajan

Badam halwa

sion board for 2025 could

This Margazhi, music plays second fiddle as food takes the centre stage



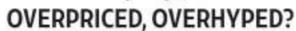


food during the season at The Music Academy for the past eight years. "Our elai saapaadu has 25 items, including a payasam, pachadi, kootu, kalandha sadham, and more. We make sure that the dishes served on any given day do not repeat for the duration of the sea-

whose Sastha Catering Services has been serving

Services at Mylapore Fine Arts Club. "I tried the food served by Arusuvai Arasu Caterers at Sri Parthasarathy Swami Sabha. While nothing seemed really exclusive, the dishes were delicious nonetheless. I had gone there during a weekday, and the place was packed," shares Preethi Udhayaraja, a dentist.

son," states Saptarishi, who runs ABC Catering



cheppankizhangu roast,

vazhaipoo vadai, and pineapple rasam, all of which are served on a banana leaf. And on New Year's Day, there is a special lunch with more dishes on the menu," says RK Venkatesan,

However, not all foodies are in awe of sabha canteens and their food. Over the past couple of years, the pricing of the meals — the Kalyana Saapaadu begins at ₹350 and goes up to even ₹600 — has become a point of discussion on social media. RS Kumar, the managing director of Sattvaa Catering, which has canteens at four sabhas this year, says footfalls have been very encouraging this year, thanks to their leaf meal costing ₹350. "We are serving over 600 leaf meals during lunch alone every day. We introduce new items every day as our aim is to make people happy. As a result, about 60 per cent of our diners have been people who come from outside with the only intention to taste our food," he says.

And some, like stylist Ratikha Venugopal, express disappointment at the food on offer this year. "I understand that food at sabha canteens is expensive, but I came away disappointed as the caterer served Kerala-style food during Margazhi season in Chennai. I don't see the point in that. I wanted to try a proper Tamil kalyana virundhu," she explains.

She also brings up another important, but often overlooked, point. "The canteen got overcrowded pretty quickly, and there was no waiting area or any amenities. Also, some caterers still do not post their menu online. So, you get to know the menu only when you've reached the canteen, and you eat what they serve," she points out.





I came away



Seetha pazha paniyaram



# End the year on a high: Hacks to ace your New Year's Eve celebrations

Elai saapaadu at ABC Catering Services

Shrestha Mukherjee & Shweta Watson

s the countdown to 2025 begins, Hyderabadis are gearing up to celebrate New Year's Eve in style. Whether you're hitting the city's hottest parties or planning an intimate celebration, we've got the ultimate guide to partying right. From trending hotspots to tips on staying stylish, satiated, and safe, here's how to make your NYE unforgettable.

For a themed house party, you can never go wrong with a classic black shirt paired with relaxed yet stylish pants. If you want to keep it versatile, a casual blazer with a sweatshirt and baggy pants works perfectly. For a more formal vibe, nothing beats a well-tailored suit to welcome the year in style

Ajit Shukla, an actor/model



The hottest party spots in Chennai: Marina Beach OMR Anna Nagar Nungambakkam

This season, we've noticed a significant spike in orders for cheese platters and grazing boards. Barbecues are also particularly popular right now, as they're perfect for the cold weather

- Arpita Gupta, founder of The Board Story Safety first: How to have a secure night out

Celebrations can get overwhelming, so keeping safety in mind

Plan your ride: Use a reliable cab service or designate a sober

Stay with your group: Partying with friends is fun and safer Limit alcohol consumption: Know your limits and avoid overindulging

## Fashion tips to dance through the night

Dress to impress, but remember: comfort is key. New Year's Eve is the time to shine - literally - with sequined dresses, metallic jumpsuits, and classic black outfits trending this year. To complete the look, opt for footwear you can comfortably dance in, such as block heels or stylish sneakers. "Accessories are your best friends," suggests Meera Nair, who is attending a rooftop party this year. "A statement necklace or sparkly earrings can elevate even the simplest outfit."



celebrations, but pacing is key. Start with a light meal - grilled chicken, quinoa salads, or soups – to stay energised without feeling sluggish. At the party, go for finger foods like sushi rolls, sliders, or fruit platters to maintain stamina. Avoid heavy, greasy dishes, and hydrate by alternating every drink with water to prevent hangovers.

"Grazing boards and cheese platters are a favourite this season because they're fuss-free and don't require servers," says Arpita Gupta, founder of The Board Story. "They bring people together, offer flavours for all palates, and pair wonderfully with drinks, making them perfect for hosting."





'This year was all about self-care and empathy'

CONTINUED FROM **■** 1

LUXURY, BUT

LOUD



Rooted in glamour and unapologetically loud, the maximalist

or loud luxury aesthetic screams 'more is more'. Think rich

colours, bold and mood uplifting prints and patterns, big on

logos, and opulent fabrics and textures. Kendall Jenner's loud

fur jackets, Sabrina Carpenter's 1994 Chanel faux fur set, and Emily's wardrobe in the second season of Emily in Paris, were

proof that maximalism did take over 2024.

# to a teacher: PR SREEJESH

An era of my life concluded in 2024, and a new one began as I retired as a player and embarked on my career as a coach. I can't definitively say what the year taught me, but I did learn a great deal about transitioning from being a student to becoming a teacher. There was a lot of excitement leading up to my retirement. It wasn't an overnight decision — it took time and careful reflection. I learned how important it is to make such decisions with patience. Now, I'm focused on preparing to navigate the challenges that my new role as a coach has brought.



sporty-yet-

What's on the 2025

fashion platter

If the Spring/Summer 2025 global runway

showcases are to go by, the year is set

to see a return of boho aesthetics, with a

continuation of animal print and maximalist

aesthetics, cherry-coded looks, and sporty

fits that blend the functional with luxe vibes.

luxe look

In 2025, I'm committed to focusing on my well-being, and going on solo trips: RAGHU DIXIT

I feel that I have neglected health the past year; juggernauting through shows being my focus. Now, I have decided to focus on my health in 2025. I also learned that I did not travel for the love of travelling but for work. Next year, I want to go back to taking solo trips.

# 2024 has taught me to appreciate others' efforts: PANKAJ ADVANI

This year, I've realised that we often tend to focus on the negative aspects of situations and people. Instead of dwelling on shortcomings, we should strive to appreciate the positive qualities and efforts of others. For instance, in my field of sports, we often focus on negatives like poor accommodation or logistical issues. I believe a more positive and empathetic approach can improve our experiences. I've also noticed that it's important to appreciate others' efforts, even if it's just a simple gesture like a compliment. This can have a significant impact on their motivation and self-esteem. In today's world, a sincere compliment can go a long



 Inputs by Anna Fernandes, Gopika IS, Devika V Menon, Paul Nicodemus, Roopa Radhakrishnan and Shweta Watson

luxury wear. Take cue

leopard print dress

embellishment, or

Kim K's co-ord set

that she posted a

photo of recently,

which made

leopard print

worthy.

**Patience and** 

perseverance have been my greatest

seem daywear-

Nandini Ganguly

from Tamannaah Bhatia's panelled,

with subtle

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